

**TOWN OF FLORENCE
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

**MINUTES OF THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION OF THE TOWN OF FLORENCE
MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, JANUARY 3, 2019, AT 6:00 P.M., IN THE TOWN COUNCIL
CHAMBERS, LOCATED AT 775 N. MAIN STREET, FLORENCE, ARIZONA.**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Pranzo called the meeting to order at 6:07 pm

2. ROLL CALL:

Chairman Pranzo	Present
Vice-Chair Frost	Present
Commissioner Smidt	Present
Commissioner Simmonds	Present
Commissioner Proulx	Present

Council Liaison Hawkins was absent

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

**4. DISCUSSION/APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL of the minutes of the regular meeting
conducted on December 20, 2018.**

**On a motion by Vice-Chair Frost, seconded by Commissioner Simmonds, and carried by
a 5-0 vote to approve the December 20, 2018 Regular Meeting minutes.**

5. NEW BUSINESS

A. Design Review for the Florence Hospital Comprehensive Sign Plan (PZ-18-36-DR)

Presentation/Approval/Disapproval – Request by Florence Hospital of a Comprehensive Sign Plan located south of the southeast corner of Hunt Highway and Franklin Road, 4545 North Hunt Highway. Motion to recommend approval/approval with conditions/disapproval of PZ-18-36-DR and to forward the Planning and Zoning Commission’s recommendation to the Town Council for final action.

Mr. Harmer gave a presentation on the Comprehensive Sign package for Florence Hospital. He stated there are parts in the code that allow a Comprehensive Sign package for certain types of developments, especially those in a Planned Unit Development (PUD). The Hospital is within the Merrill Ranch PUD. Mr. Harmer explained that the development code allows the Comprehensive Sign package some deviations from the sign code. He showed the Commission the location of the hospital in Anthem.

Mr. Harmer discussed the Monument Sign. He said the applicants requested a 5' 9" tall, 54.2 sq. ft. free-standing monument sign. The Town Code allows 32 sq. ft., but the Planned Unit Development agreement for Merrill Ranch allows 48 sq. ft. He showed the location of the previous sign to the north of the entrance and stated the new monument sign is now to the South of the entrance. Chairman Pranzo asked if the sign would be outside the right-of-way. Mr. Harmer said it will be outside of the right-of-way and on private property. Chairman Pranzo explained he got the impression from the packet that the sign was in the right-of-way and needed the approval from the Town Engineer. Mr. Harmer stated the sign is outside the right-of-way but still needs the Town Engineer's approval to verify the sign is on private property and outside the sight visibility triangle.

Vice-Chair Frost asked Chairman Pranzo when to entertain questions. Chairman Pranzo said to ask questions when going through the packet. Vice-Chair Frost stated the new monument sign is going into a heavily landscaped area. He asked if there will be visibility. Mr. Harmer said the sign will be visible because a certain amount of landscaping will be removed and placed elsewhere on the property. Mr. Harmer showed the location of the Emergency Directional sign and how it will signal towards the emergency area. He said the sign is 4' 2" tall, 26.8 sq. ft. and over the code but he will explain the rationale later in the meeting.

Mr. Harmer said there are two General Directional signs set on landscape islands in the driving area. They both help point toward the main entrance and the emergency area to help emergency vehicle drivers, visitors and walk in patients. Each sign is 4' tall, 14.7 sq. ft. and are over the maximum requirements in the code.

Mr. Harmer noted there will be three wall signs on the building. He showed the Commission the building with superimposed signs on it. He stated there is a maximum allowable of 200 square feet for total wall signage. The total wall signage exceeds the maximum standards by 87.6 square feet. Mr. Harmer stated the total sign area was 357.1 square feet, and the applicant is asking for a total deviation of 125.1 square feet.

Mr. Harmer explained the unique situation of the hospital. He mentioned that the Development Code standards are generally for offices, standard retail and commercial complexes. He said a hospital is unique because hospitals operate differently from commercial buildings. They provide a unique service, but most codes do not separate hospitals from commercial uses. He believed this occurs because few towns or cities get multiple hospitals. Larger communities such as Phoenix, Glendale or Mesa may have multiple locations, but a small community like Florence will not have more than one or two. Mr. Harmer mentioned that a larger sign helps visitors navigate and access the site in an emergency. He said anyone visiting this site is already in a stressful situation and Staff does not want to add stress with inadequate signage. Staff feels the request complies with Town Code, and the deviations permitted by the Comprehensive Sign program are for the general well-being of the land use. Staff is in favor of this project and recommends approval of the Design Review for PZ-18-36-DR subject to noted conditions.

Mr. Harmer asked for questions and a representative of the Steward hospital was there to take any questions as well. Vice-Chair Frost stated he agreed the stressful situation warrants larger signs.

Chairman Pranzo asked about the recent legislation that dealt with the content of the sign. He asked if the Commission was moving into that area. Mr. Harmer said this is a different issue because that case dealt with signs in the right-of-way. He stated that there is no violation.

Jacob Golich, the President of Mountain Vista Hospital, stated this is a standard format used throughout the company. He agreed that directional signs should focus on getting people to their destination. He will take the feedback and advise the design company. Chairman Pranzo asked Mr. Golich if there was empirical evidence to support larger signs. Mr. Golich stated that they enlarged the signs because the main issue on the East Coast was that people did not know where to go. He said the emergency letters and arrows for the directional sign probably do need to be bigger so there is no delay in care. He noted a report from Boston that discussed a patient who passed away as a result of becoming lost on the way to the Emergency department. He stated this is something he would not want at any of their properties. Mr. Golich agrees that hospitals have different needs and standards than a storefront property.

Chairman Pranzo asked Staff if a change in the letter size requires the applicant to come back to Commission for approval. Mr. Harmer explained that if the basic configuration and layout are the same, then the changes in letter height can be handled at staff level.

Mr. Golich agreed to focus on enlarging the arrows and locations. Mr. Harmer mentioned he dealt with a similar issue. In another community, the allowable signage was too small to be readable at a certain rate of speed. Stanford University and the Urban Land Institute both have documentation on recognizability, size of letters, and things of that nature while moving through a property or on a highway. He noted this is why Staff agrees with the request. Chairman Pranzo does not disagree and said signage at the VA Hospital in Tucson and the Mayo Clinic in Scottsdale are horrible because people cannot figure out where to go. Mr. Golich said some hospitals require more maps and others have electronic print outs that lead to certain units. Chairman Pranzo said if there is empirical data, then the Commission has a baseline to recommend approval.

Commissioner Proulx asked if the sign is big enough. He asked how the company arrived at the square footage and setbacks. Mr. Harmer stated some studies address these types of signs and the speed, color, and size that makes visibility better. He said the Town went through this recently with the Burger King signage. The Board of Adjustments agreed to the lower level for better sight identification. The sign height is just below the horizon, which is the sweet spot for recognizability. He believes this height is the best for this type of situation. Chairman Pranzo asked if the hospital needs any ADOT signage. Mr. Harmer said it is a possibility, but a different subject. He knows there is a program out for State highways that allows these types of signs. Hunt Highway has a County highway designation and it is unknown whether there is an available program. Vice-Chair Frost emphasized the need to make the words bigger on the directional signs, especially in a high stress situation. Mr. Golich said he would take the suggestion back to the marketing team and to the gentleman who put together the sign package. He said no one should have an issue with the change. Commissioner Smidt mentioned the hospital signs should not be held to the same standards as businesses such as True Value.

On a motion by Commissioner Proulx, seconded by Vice-Chair Frost, and carried by a 5-0 vote to approve with conditions PZ-18-36-DR and to forward the Planning and Zoning Commission's recommendation to the Town Council for final action:

1. Construction of the monument sign and all other signage for the site shall conform to the exhibits presented to the Planning and Zoning Commission on January 3, 2019 and the Town Council on January 22, 2019 as may be amended by the conditions of approval. The final monument sign location must be approved by the Town Engineer.
2. Project to comply with Anthem at Merrill Ranch PUD and applicable Town Codes, including all applicable planning, building, fire and engineering requirements.
3. All monument signage will be located outside the sight visibility triangle.
4. Any expansion of any exterior signage shall be subject to Design Review approval. All new signage will be addressed in an amended Comprehensive Sign Plan that will be submitted for Planning and Zoning Commission review and approval prior to any new sign permits requests for the project.
5. Design Review approval shall expire one year from the Town Council approval unless project is under permit and construction commences prior to such time.
6. Any additional conditions deemed necessary.

6. PRESENTATIONS BY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

A. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS/INFORMATION ONLY

Mr. Harmer reminded the Commission that the second public hearing for the Sign Code and Parking Code update is on January 17th. He said the Commission can take action on the updates after the hearing. Mr. Harmer mentioned a few more Preliminary Plats for Anthem will be coming back to the Commission for reapproval. The Preliminary Plats expired, and Pulte is looking to renew them for a Final Plat. He has not received the applications but expects them in February or March.

7. CALL TO THE PUBLIC/COMMISSION RESPONSE:

Call to the Public for public comment on issues within the jurisdiction of the Planning and Zoning Commission. Individual Commission members may respond to criticisms made, may ask staff to review a matter raised or may ask that a matter be put on a future agenda. However, members of the Commission shall not discuss or take action on any matter during an open call to the public unless the matters are properly noticed for discussion and legal action.

8. CALL TO THE COMMISSION-CURRENT EVENTS ONLY

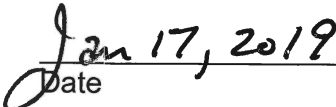
Chairman Pranzo wished everyone a Happy New Year.

9. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Commissioner Smidt, seconded by Commissioner Simmonds, and carried by a 5-0 vote to adjourn the meeting at 6:36 pm.



 Gary Pranzo, Chairman



 Date