



City of Calistoga Planning Commission Agenda Item Summary

DATE	November 18, 2020
ITEM	ARCO Signage at More for Less – Sign Permit SP 2020-3
APPLICANT	Paul Coates Construction
PROPERTY ADDRESS	940 Petrified Forest Road
ASSESSOR’S PARCEL NOS.	011-370-024
GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION	Community Commercial Petrified Forest Gateway Area
ZONING DISTRICT	Community Commercial
STAFF CONTACT	Zach Tusinger, Planning & Building Director
POTENTIAL CONFLICTS	Paul Coates
RECOMMENDATION	Consider approving the sign permit application.
SUGGESTED MOTION	“I move that the Planning Commission adopt a resolution approving the sign permit for the ARCO/More for Less at 940 Petrified Forest Road”

CALISTOGA PLANNING COMMISSION

STAFF REPORT

To: Calistoga Planning Commission
From: Zach Tusinger, Planning & Building Director
Meeting Date: November 18, 2020
Subject: **Sign Permit Application for the ARCO/More for Less at 940 Petrified Forest Road**

ITEM

Consideration of a sign permit application for the ARCO/More for Less.

KEY ISSUE

- Refresh of canopy, including a blue LED light bar

BACKGROUND

1 The ARCO at 940 Petrified Forest Road has applied for a sign permit to refresh the gas
2 station pump canopy. The canopy refresh would prominently feature the ARCO name
3 and logo and would also feature a blue LED 'laser line/lightbar' that wraps around three
4 sides of the canopy. Also planned for the project is a refresh of the gas station pumps
5 (which can be approved at the staff level). No changes to total sign area or the location
6 of signs are planned.

7 While sign permits are generally reviewed at staff level, there are some types of sign
8 permits that either are required to go to the Planning Commission for review, or which are
9 unique and staff elects to refer to the Planning Commission for the final decision. This
10 came up recently when the 76 Gas Station similarly wanted to make updates to its
11 signage and canopy.

DISCUSSION

Zoning Code

14 Review of this application is subject to Chapter 17.58, Signs and Advertising, of the
15 Zoning Code. The purpose of this chapter is to:

16 (A) provide standards for the regulation of signs in order to promote and protect
17 the public health, safety and welfare;

18 (B) provide for signage that effectively presents a business name or message for
19 public convenience, while also preserving and enhancing the scenic beauty of
20 Calistoga as an economic asset; and

21 (C) prevent excessive and confusing signs which can result in visual clutter and
22 increase hazards to pedestrians and motorists. (CMC 17.58.010)

23 The Sign Code does not specifically address LED signs like those proposed here.
24 However, "neon and interior illuminated signs" may only be approved by the Planning

25 Commission (CMC Section 17.58.060.B(11)). Under CMC Section 17.58.060.A, the
26 Planning and Building Director may also refer any sign permit application to the Planning
27 Commission for review. The LED and interior lighting necessitates such a referral in this
28 case.

29 In terms of design requirements for neon and interior illuminated signs, Section 17.58.070
30 says that:

31 *A. For neon signs, their design shall be required to complement the*
32 *architectural character of the building and adjoining structures relating to*
33 *design, light intensity, color and other similar design characteristics, and*
34 *shall not be illuminated when a business is closed...).*

35 *B. For interior illuminated signs, their design shall be required to*
36 *complement the architectural character of the building and adjoining*
37 *structures relating to design, light intensity, color and other similar design*
38 *characteristics.*

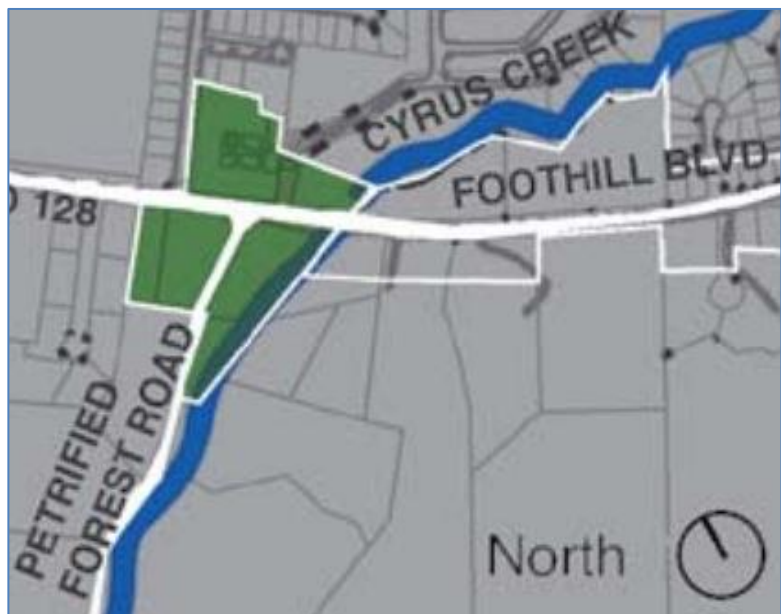
39 It should be noted that while the ARCO is a formula business, the formula business
40 ordinance is not at issue here. There is no proposed change to the use of the property,
41 rather it is an update to signage and lighting related to the business' branding.

42 In order to maintain and enhance Calistoga's small-town character and the urban design
43 quality of the City, development in the CC: Community Commercial Zoning District is to
44 be guided by relevant policies of the General Plan's Community Identity Element and the
45 character areas, gateways and entry corridors of the Land Use Element.

46 Calistoga General Plan

47 The Community Identity
48 Element of the General Plan
49 states that "attention to urban
50 design criteria can help ensure
51 that future development fits
52 within the existing built
53 environment and permit the
54 continued growth of Calistoga in
55 a manner which maintains its
56 existing small-town
57 atmosphere. Landscaping,
58 signage, traffic and noise all
59 play a key role in enhancing the
60 quality of life."

61 The subject property is located
62 in the Urban Design Plan's
63 Petrified Forest Gateway. This
64 Gateway is intended to convey
65 a sense of arrival and provide a



Petrified Forest Gateway (in green)

66 transition from rural setting between Santa Rosa and Calistoga and to accommodate
67 visitor and commuter traffic.

68 The General Plan also features ‘Dark Sky’ policies. Objective OSC-5.4 is to “minimize
69 obtrusive glare and wasted energy from excessive nighttime lighting and preserve views
70 of the nighttime sky.” Additionally, development should “be designed to respect and
71 enhance Calistoga’s small-town rural character and the natural environment” (LU P3.2-
72 1).

73 At issue for the Planning Commission is whether the proposed signage, particularly the
74 blue LED laser line/light bar on the canopy is in accordance with the various policies of
75 the General Plan and Urban Design Plan, as well as the Zoning Ordinance.

76 **RECOMMENDATION**

77 Staff recommends that the Planning Commission discuss the proposed sign design
78 application and either approve, approve with conditions, or decline to approve the
79 application.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Vicinity Map
2. Draft Resolution
3. Application Materials