



City of Woodland

REPORT TO MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR
AND CITY COUNCIL

DATE: June 10, 2008

SUBJECT: Appeal of Planning Commission Denial of Design Exception for the Petrovich Development Company's Best Buy Store Elevation at the Woodland Gateway Center

Report in Brief

The Petrovich Development Company requested a design exception for The Best Buy Store, modifying the approved elevation design in order to allow an exterior "blue wedge", a contemporary signature architectural design for Best Buy Store (See Enclosure 1). The Planning Commission denied the request, expressing that the design modification was out-of-character with the approved elevations and the historic design requirements of the City's Community Design Standards for commercial development in the Entryway Overlay Zone (EOZ).

Staff recommends that the City Council support the appeal of the project proponent, thereby approving the design exception for The Best Buy store through incorporation of a "blue wedge" in its design.

Background

Any person dissatisfied with any decision by the Planning Commission may appeal to the City Council at any time within fourteen (14) days after the rendering of the decision by the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission rendered its decision on May 15, 2008, and the Petrovich Development Company appealed the Planning Commission decision on May 16, 2008.

On May 4, 2006, the Planning Commission recommended to the City Council approval of the Woodland Gateway Commercial Center and on May 23, 2006, the City Council approved the Woodland Gateway Center Project. The City Council approval included the elevation designs for the buildings within the Woodland Gateway Center.

The Woodland Gateway Commercial Center is located within the City's Entryway Overlay Zone (EOZ), as designated in the City's Community Design Standards. The Woodland Gateway Center elevations as approved, complied with the City's Community Design Standards and the EOZ design

requirements. The EOZ provides architectural design requirements for all development within the EOZ area.

Purpose

To provide Entryway Design elements reminiscent of historic Woodland, using more traditional design elements and colors dating from the 1880s.

Standards

The exterior design of the building to fit the image of “Historic Woodland” and less contemporary in appearance. Building elevation shall have traditional materials, forms, colors, and massing.

Discussion

The Woodland Gateway Commercial Center was approved through a Development Agreement (DA) and Conditional Use Permit. Condition No. 11 from the Conditional Use Permit specifies that any and all exterior modifications comply with the Community Design Standards. It must also be remembered that there are provisions within the Community Design Standards that provide for design exceptions, if it is found that there are peculiarities within the project, that justify the design exception.

Staff’s recommendation in support of the “blue wedge” reflects the fact that the proposed Best Buy elevation is a relatively minor element in the overall design for the center, as well as the fact that exceptions may be called for as a means of responding to specific needs of retailers, if it is believed that such retailers are contributing component to the center, and will be beneficial to the community overall.

It was further noted by staff that the floor area and frontage of the proposed Best Buy also represented approximately 6% of the entire center, and therefore was a minor element in the overall center. Also, based upon a staff survey of the greater Sacramento region, only one Best Buy store, out of all those surveyed, including Sacramento, Roseville, and Natomas had no “blue wedge”. The vast majority (over 90%) did incorporate the “blue wedge” in their design.

In general, the discussion over the design exception by Planning Commissioners was both engaged and heartfelt. Some commissioners believed the justification to support a design exception had not been met, while others thought that downtown is supporting a mix of architectural styles, and that a new center modeled after this historic downtown should be allowed to do so as well. There was a sincere desire by all commissioners to support the establishment of a Best Buy in Woodland.

Fiscal Impact

The Best Buy Store will generate tax revenue for the City, but without the design exception allowing the “blue wedge”, Best Buy has indicates that they may not locate within the Gateway Center, in Woodland.

Commission Recommendation

The Planning Commission denied the request for the design exception for the Best Buy Store, to allow an exterior blue wedge, a contemporary signature architectural design for Best Buy Store, on the basis that the project did not qualify for a design exception. The majority of the Commission on a 4 to 3 vote did not believe that there were unusual circumstances preventing the project from meeting one or more of the standards due to the peculiarities of the project. They also felt and that the overall intent of the design standards would not be met within the Woodland Gateway Center with the proposed design exception.

As an outgrowth of the discussion between Planning Commissioners over whether or not the proposed “blue wedge” met the test of a Community Design exception, the Commission thought that the Design Review Standards, themselves deserved a review, to ensure their relevancy today. Staff was therefore directed to undertake a review of the Design Standards.

Alternative Courses of Action

1. Support the appeal of the project proponent, thereby approving the design exception for The Best Buy store through incorporation of a “blue wedge” in its design.
2. Support the Planning Commission’s conclusion and deny the appeal with findings that the project does not meet the City’s Community Design Standards and does not qualify for a design exception. That the overall intent of the design standards will not be met within the Woodland Gateway Center with the proposed design exception.

Recommendation for Action

Staff recommends that the City Council approve Alternative No. 1.

Prepared by: Paul L. Hanson, AICP
Senior Planner

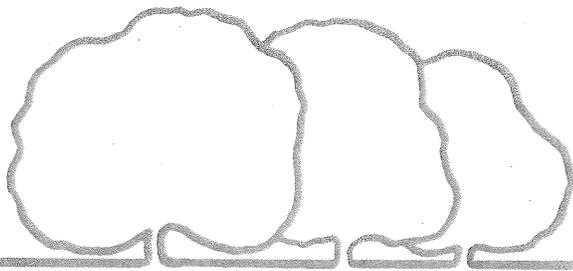
Reviewed by: Robert MacNicholl
Planning Manager

Reviewed by: Barry Munowitch, AICP
Assistant City Manager

Mark G. Deven
City Manager

Enclosure 1: Planning Commission memo dated May 15, 2008

ENCLOSURE 1



City of Woodland

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
(530) 661-5820

520 COURT STREET
(530) 406-0832 FAX

WOODLAND, CA 95695
<http://www.cityofwoodland.org>

MEMORANDUM

TO: MEMBERS OF THE WOODLAND PLANNING COMMISSION

FROM: Paul L. Hanson, AICP, Senior Planner

SUBJECT: Design Exception for the Petrovich Development Company's Best Buy Store at the Woodland Gateway Center

DATE: May 15, 2008

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends that the Planning Commission review and approve the requested design exception for the *Best Buy* Store at the Woodland Gateway Commercial Center (See Attachment A - Best Buy Design Exception Elevation - Blue Wedge).

BACKGROUND: On May 4, 2006, the Planning Commission recommended to the City Council approval of the Woodland Gateway Center project and on May 23, 2006, the City Council approved the Woodland Gateway Center Project. The City Council approval included the elevation designs for the buildings within the Woodland Gateway Center.

The Woodland Gateway Commercial Center is located within the City's Entryway Overlay Zone (EOZ), as designated in the City's Community Design Standards. The Woodland Gateway Center elevations as approved, complied with the City's Community Design Standards and the EOZ design requirements.

The EOZ provides architectural design requirements for all development within this area.

Purposes

To provide Entryway Design elements reminiscent of historic Woodland, using more traditional design elements and colors dating from the 1880s.

Standards

The exterior design of the building to fit the image of "Historic Woodland" and less contemporary in appearance. Building elevation shall have traditional materials, forms, colors, and massing.

ISSUE: The Petrovich Development Company is requesting a design exception for The Best Buy store, modifying the approved elevation design in order to allow an exterior blue wedge, a contemporary signature architectural design for Best Buy Stores.

This design modification request appears to be out-of-character with the design requirements of the City's Community Design Standards for commercial development.

DISCUSSION: The Woodland Gateway Commercial Center's was approved through a Development Agreement and Conditional Use Permit. Condition No. 11 from the Conditional Use Permit specifies that any and all exterior modifications comply with the Community Design Standards:

Comply with the design requirements in the Community Design Standards for new construction beyond that which was approved and for any and all exterior modifications. The Community Development Department shall review proposed project for compliance.

The City's Community Design Standards provides for exceptions to the design requirements.

Exceptions

It is envisioned that the great majority of projects will comply in their entirety with these Design Standards. However, it is possible that there may be unusual circumstances where a project may not be able to meet one or more of the standards due to the peculiarities of the project. In such instances, the Community Development Director or the Planning Commission may approve an exception provided that the overall intent of the Design Standards is still being met.

A design exception may be approved by the Planning Commission provided the overall intent of the design standards is upheld.

The Best Buy store will be approximately 30,000 square feet in area and represents approximately 6% of the total 525,000 square foot of the approved Gateway development. This minor design exception is needed to facilitate inclusion of Best Buy within the Gateway development.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends that the Planning Commission approve the Woodland Gateway Best Buy Store design exception by making an affirmative motion as follows:

MOTION #1: Move That The Planning Commission Approve The Design Exception For The Woodland Gateway Best Buy Store Subject To The Following Findings.

Findings

- That the project is not able to meet the City's Community Design Standards due to the peculiarities of the project.
- That the overall intent of the design standards is still being met within the Woodland Gateway Center.

-OR-

Should the Commission decide to deny the design exception, the motion should be made as follows:

MOTION #2: Move That The Planning Commission Deny The Design Exception For The Woodland Gateway Best Buy Store, Based On The Identified Findings Of Fact.

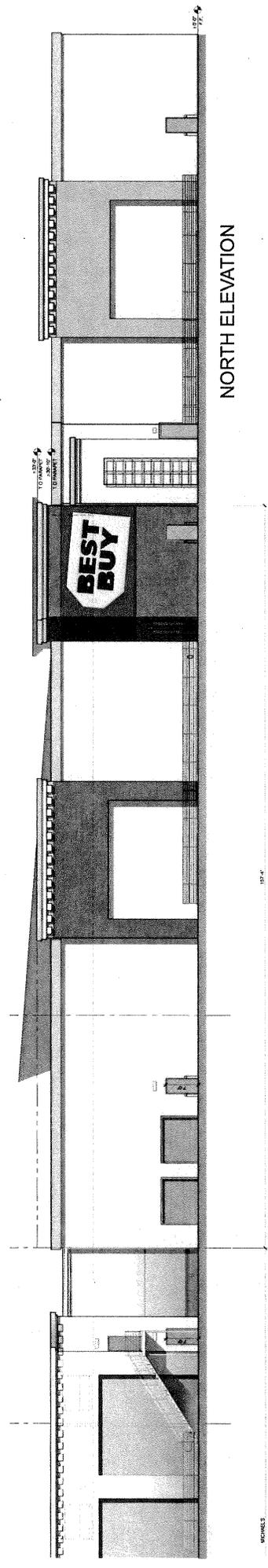
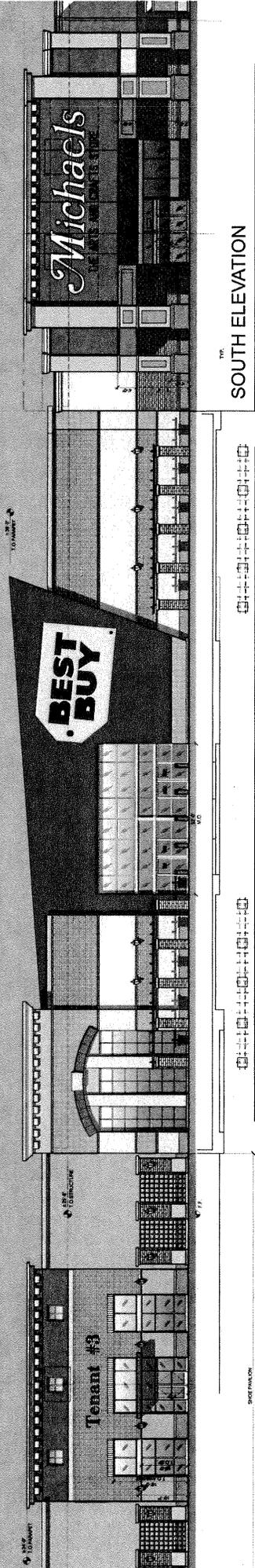
Findings

- That the project does not meet the City's Community Design Standards and does not qualify for a design exception.
- That the overall intent of the design standards will not be met within the Woodland Gateway Center with the proposed design exception.

Attachment A: Best Buy Design Exception Elevation - Blue Wedge

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ATTACHMENT A



**WOODLAND GATEWAY
WOODLAND, CALIFORNIA**

Petrovich Development Company
5046 Sunrise Boulevard, Suite One
Fair Oaks, California 95628

ELEVATIONS



DATE: MAY 6, 2008
ARCH: JMB
DATE: OCTOBER 2008

REVISIONS:

NO.	DESCRIPTION	DATE

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