

January 11, 2023

Mr. Dylan Lawrence
Planning Assistant
Los Angeles City Planning
200 N. Spring St., Room 621
Los Angeles, CA. 90012

Re: Request for Exceptions from Regulations of The Hollywood Signage Supplemental Use District for The Egyptian Theatre located at 6710 W. Hollywood Blvd.

Dear Dylan,

We are presenting the following written responses pertaining to the Exceptions from Regulations request for the proposed 32 square foot roof mounted LED display.

Each written response will focus on addressing the required findings listed from LAMC 11.5.7.F.2 (a)-(e) and LAMC 11.5.7. C.2 (a)(b).

In doing so, our intent is to provide the Area Planning Commission with solid reasoning to review and approve the project request based on the primary use of the display, the correlation of the proposed display with the original information sign installed decades ago (shown on archival photographs from the 1920s) and the display not being primarily viewed from the street by vehicular traffic.

The proposed roof mounted LED display was also reviewed by the staff of the Office of Historic Resources (OHR) for compliance with the Historic Cultural Monuments (HCM) requirements. The OHR placed the project design on the agenda of the Cultural Heritage Commission for an informational presentation. This proposed roof mounted LED display was presented to the Commissioners in a public meeting. The scheme was supported by the Commission, and there was no public comment objecting to the display.

In addition, the exterior street-facing marquee was removed with the intent to further restore the theater to its 1920s character. In doing so, the digital display above the Grauman's sign was proposed to the Office of Historic Resources and aligned on as a solution to reintroduce a "now playing" or an informative sign inspired by the original marquee sign from the 1920s for the patrons of the theater and to draw people in. Strict compliance with the ordinance by not including this roof mounted LED display has a direct impact on attracting customers into the theater, resulting in an impact on business operations.

In reviewing the HSSUD, the code allows for a maximum of 300 square feet for a LED wall mounted display. A design could be presented that would allow for a much larger LED display which would be primarily viewed from the street. The proposed 32 square foot, roof mounted LED display limits sign clutter and its placement recalls the spirit of the historic sign that displayed attractions at the venue, while using current technology to provide essential real time information.

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Please see the below written findings which addresses the items for evaluating the Request for Exceptions from Regulations of The Hollywood Signage Supplemental Use District Ordinance:

Ordinance Number 181340

The Hollywood Signage Supplemental Use District

LAMC 11.5.7 F.2 (a)-(e):

2. **Findings.** The Area Planning Commission may permit an exception from a specific plan if it makes all the following findings:

- (a) That the strict application of the regulations of the specific plan to the subject property would result in practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships inconsistent with the general purpose and intent of the specific plan;

The strict application of the regulations of the specific plan for this property for the proposed LED display mounted on the roof, creates the practical difficulty of not being able to inform the patrons of the show times, upcoming events, services, safe entry/exit information, etc. once the patron enters the courtyard from the street.

The Theater's primary building and entrance are setback approximately 100' or more from the sidewalk and there are no other street viewed event informational signs. The proposed 32 square foot LED display would provide the business required information to the patrons at a roof mounted location that matches the spirit and use of a previously roof mounted sign but with modern up to date technology and practicality to changing messages. The design intent of the current revitalization sign project is to assist in maintaining the historical look of the theatre without providing additional allowed signage causing visual "clutter". Any functioning alternative results in the loss of historic character.

- (b) That there are exceptional circumstances or conditions applicable to the subject property involved or to the intended use or development of the subject property that do not apply generally to other property in the specific plan area;

The exceptional circumstances and conditions of the property resulting in the need for the proposed roof mounted 32 square foot LED display are the 100' Theatre building and entrance setback from the sidewalk. Due to the exterior high walls and only one primary gate entry to the courtyard and Theatre, the proposed LED display is the only sign being used to communicate the Egyptian Theatre's events, services and items mentioned above to its patrons once they enter the gate and courtyard.

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Additionally, the property is an Historic Cultural Monument (HCM). This sign recalls the historic sign that displayed attractions at the venue that is documented in archival photographs from the 1920's and later. This sign respects the size, scale and design of the historic building and most importantly, is being used for the identical purpose of the historic sign that formerly existed at the same location, e.g., displaying attractions at the theatre. Any functioning alternative results in the loss of historic character.

- (c) That an exception from the specific plan is necessary for the preservation and enjoyment of a substantial property right or use generally possessed by other property within the specific plan area in the same zone and vicinity but which, because of special circumstances and practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships is denied to the property in question;

The exception to the specific plan is necessary for the preservation and enjoyment of the Egyptian Theatre making it possible to communicate current and upcoming events and services to its patrons. The proposed 32 square foot LED display installed on the roof at the same location of a previous information sign installed some time ago but yet is utilizing up to date technology and practicality of providing real time information to its patrons, is essential to attracting customers into the theatre and its business operations.

Other properties within the specific plan area, in the same zone and vicinity which are currently utilizing LED displays to provide information to their patrons, primarily viewed by vehicular traffic are using much larger displays than the proposed 32 square foot LED display within the Egyptian Theatre Courtyard, which is not primarily viewed from the street. These include:

- *El Capitan Theater*
- *The Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel*
- *The Fonda Theatre*
- *Madame Tussauds*
- *TLC Chinese Theatre*
- *Hard Rock Café*
- *Hollywood & Highland*
- *Pantages Theater*

(d) That the granting of an exception will not be detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to the property or improvements adjacent to or in the vicinity of the subject property; and

(e) That the granting of an exception will be consistent with the principles, intent and goals of the specific plan and any applicable element of the general plan.

Granting of the exception for the proposed roof mounted LED display as presented will not be a detriment and would actually help the public welfare by providing information pertinent to the Egyptian Theatre, viewed by the public walking on Hollywood Blvd as they approach the primary entrance gateway.

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Granting of the exception for the proposed roof mounted LED display is consistent with the principles, intent and goals of the specific plan and the general plan by the following examples taken from The Hollywood Signage Supplemental Use District Ordinance 181340 Sec 2 Purposes. The Amended Hollywood Signage Supplemental Use District is intended to:

A. Provide for the systematic execution of the Hollywood Community Plan and Redevelopment Plan.

B. Promote appropriate and economically viable signage which:

1. Coordinates with the architectural elements of the building on which signage is located;

- *The proposed LED roof mounted display intent and use is based on a previous installed information sign that is seen in many historical photos but utilizing current technology and practicality.*

2. Reflects a modern, vibrant image of Hollywood as the global center of the entertainment industry; and

3. Compliments and protects the character-defining features of historic buildings.

- *The proposed LED roof mounted display is a modern technology form of providing information, using vibrant, professionally designed content and images that will represent the Egyptian Theatre and Hollywood as the global center of the entertainment industry.*
- *The proposed LED display will compliment and protect the character defining features of the historic Egyptian Theatre by mimicking the originally installed information sign, using modern technology and practicality of providing real time information, versus presenting a much larger LED display that could do the same but would not reflect the previous information sign seen on historical photos.*

C. Limit visual clutter by regulating the number, size and location of signs.

- *The exterior street-facing marquee was removed with the intent to bring the theater back to its 1920s state. In doing so, the digital display above the Grauman's sign was proposed to the Office of Historic Resources and aligned on as a solution to reintroduce a "now playing" or an informative sign inspired by the original marquee sign from the 1920s to draw patrons into the theater.*
- *The HSSUD allows for a maximum of 300 square feet for a LED wall mounted display. The proposed roof mounted LED display is only 32 square feet and its location within the courtyard, which is only being viewed by patrons entering the courtyard, limits visual sign clutter dramatically versus proposing a much larger wall mounted LED display designed for a street view application.*

D. Minimize potential traffic hazards and protect public safety.

- *The proposed 32 square foot roof mounted LED display is placed 100' from the sidewalk and is primarily viewed from the courtyard as patrons enter the gateway entrance on Hollywood Blvd and is not primarily viewed from vehicular traffic traveling east and west on Hollywood Blvd, minimizing potential traffic hazards.*

E. Protect street views and scenic vistas of the Hollywood Sign and the Hollywood Hills.

- *The proposed LED roof mounted display will not affect the street view since it is located and primarily viewed within the courtyard, 100' setback from the sidewalk and will not affect scenic vistas of the Hollywood Sign and the Hollywood Hills.*

F. Protect and enhance major commercial corridors and properties.

- *The proposed LED roof mounted display will protect and enhance commercial corridors and properties by displaying professional content information for the Egyptian Theatre and represent Hollywood as the global center of the entertainment industry.*

G. Provide a public benefit and enhancement to the community environment.

- *The proposed LED roof mounted display will provide a public benefit and enhance the community environment by providing professionally designed content for upcoming events, show times and any other real time information from the Egyptian Theatre to the public and its patrons.*
- *The proposed roof mounted LED display will add to the image of Hollywood as being the global center of the entertainment industry by its modern up to date technology and practicality of changing and updating information as needed instantaneously.*

LAMC 11.5.7. SPECIFIC PLAN PROCEDURES.

(Amended by Ord. No. 173,455, Eff. 9/22/00.)

C. Project Permit Compliance Review - Director of Planning With Appeal to the Area Planning Commission.

2. **Findings.** The Director shall grant a Project Permit Compliance upon written findings that the project satisfies each of the following requirements:

(a) That the project substantially complies with the applicable regulations, findings, standards and provisions of the specific plan; and **(Amended by Ord. No. 177,103, Eff. 12/18/05.)**

- *The proposed 32 square foot LED roof mounted display substantially conforms to the allowed not to exceed 300 square feet in area condition.*
- *The proposed LED display conforms to both a daytime and night time illumination, and the night time illumination shall not be as bright as the daytime illumination condition. The LED Display is programed to dim at night from a 7,000 NITS maximum daytime brightness to 700 NITS maximum brightness at night.*

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- *The proposed roof mounted LED display also conforms to being located within the following location, and only along a block frontage that is controlled by a traffic signal:
(a) Hollywood Boulevard between La Brea Avenue and Argyle Avenue.*
- *The proposed roof mounted LED display conforms to the over height from grade requirement: The top of a sign consisting of a Digital Display, as measured vertically, shall not be greater than 75 feet above grade.*
- *The proposed LED roof mounted display is a modern technology form of providing information, using vibrant, professionally designed content and images that will represent the Egyptian Theatre and Hollywood as the global center of the entertainment industry.*
- *The proposed LED display will compliment and protect the character defining features of the historic Egyptian Theatre by mimicking the originally installed information sign, using modern technology and practicality of providing real time information.*
- *The proposed LED roof mounted display will not affect the street view since it is located and primarily viewed within the courtyard, 100' setback from the sidewalk and will not affect scenic vistas of the Hollywood Sign and the Hollywood Hills.*
- *The proposed LED roof mounted display meets the Fire Safety and Dept of Building & Safety guidelines of the HSSUD, all Watchfire LED sign products are UL 48 & CUL 48 listed, FCC compliant and UL Energy Efficiency Certified. The support frame will be manufactured using aluminum noncombustible structural materials and approved polyurethane paint finish.*
- *The proposed LED roof mounted display illumination meets the HSSUD guidelines by not projecting direct light source onto any exterior wall of a residential unit nor into the window of any commercial building being that it is placed 100' from the sidewalk and is primarily viewed within the courtyard by venue patrons.*
- *It is acknowledged that the proposed roof mounted LED display will need to be reviewed through the Project Permit Compliance process and no permit shall be issued by LADBS for the Digital Display unless the Director has issued a Project Permit Compliance approval pursuant to the procedures set forth in Section 11.5.7 of the Code.*
- *It is acknowledged that the proposed roof mounted LED display will need to be approved by the Cultural Heritage Commission pursuant to Article 22.171 of the LAAC being the Egyptian Theatre has been identified as an historic building.*
- *The proposed roof mounted LED display is only 32 square feet and its location within the courtyard, which is only being viewed by patrons entering the courtyard, limits visual sign clutter dramatically versus proposing a much larger code conforming wall mounted LED display designed for a street view application.*
- *It is acknowledged the proposed LED roof mounted display does not meet the Sec. 7. STANDARDS FOR SPECIFIC TYPES OF SIGNS. a. The bottom of a sign consisting of a Digital Display as measured vertically shall be either: (1) Located between 35 and 75 feet above grade, as measured vertically; or (2) Located on a Marquee Sign nor d. A Digital Display shall be permitted on any Marquee Sign, but only if the Marquee Sign proposed for conversion to a Digital Display was legally constructed prior to the effective date of this Ordinance. The proposed LED display would be mounted 26'-2" from grade to the bottom of the display and is not placed within an existing Marquee Sign.*

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(b) That the project incorporates mitigation measures, monitoring measures when necessary, or alternatives identified in the environmental review which would mitigate the negative environmental effects of the project, to the extent physically feasible.

The proposed roof mounted LED display will not have a negative environmental impact based on the following excerpts from marketing material published by BettaLed for this type of application:

- **LED signage eliminates paper waste**

According to the world count statistics the average person uses 2 sheets of paper every hour. Not only is this process unnecessary, but it also produces 264 kilograms of air pollution per ton of paper that is produced. You can eliminate this impact through an LED digital display solution and reduce your carbon footprint associated with the distribution of paper-based signage. Digital signage eliminates the use of the chemicals, inks and adhesives used in the printing process and replace this with a durable energy efficient advertisement platform.

- **LED signage is a long-term solution**

LED is designed to last; we have established that paper-based signage is a temporary and unsustainable method of communication. An LED display consist of several LED Panels that, in turn, consist of several LED's. LED's have numerous advantages, one of the biggest advantages of the LED display is its efficiency and low energy consumption. Aside from being energy efficient, LED's produce and emit light on their own, making them long-lasting and extremely durable.

- **Cost-effective, and easy to use**

LED displays are designed to engage with moving images and changing content. A vivid and crisp display guarantees an increase in revenue. LED signage tends to use much less electricity than LCD signage solution and has no heat or UV emissions. Additionally, changes can be made easily to the display from one computer system through a digital signage content management system or software program.

- **Recycle, Reuse and Replace**

Most LED panels consist of Aluminum, copper, gold, and polycarbonate plastic, which can be directly harvested from the display panels and recycled, melted down, and reused. Polycarbonate plastic is one of the plastics with more sustainable attributes and a minimal impact on the environment. This recyclable plastic can be shredded and granulated and reused.

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MEMO

TO: YESCO

ATTN: STEVE LADDAGA

DATE: JANUARY 11, 2023

Introduction

This memorandum comments on the exterior signage for the Netflix Egyptian Theatre property with respect to compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (36 CFR 68), which is a requirement for the treatment of Historic Cultural Monuments (HCM) in the City of Los Angeles. The property is an HCM. All work is reviewed and must be approved by the Office of Historic Resources of the Department of City Planning.

Comments

1. New box sign to display attractions at the venue, attached to the sloping roof of the front of the north wall of the auditorium building at the rear of the forecourt

This sign recalls the historic sign that displayed attraction at the venue. That sign is documented in archival photographs from the 1920s and later. This sign is proportionately small, respects the size, scale, and design of the historic building, and most importantly, is being used for the identical purpose of the historic sign that formerly existed at the same location, e.g., displaying attractions at the theatre. The ability to display what films are playing at the theatre is an essential function of

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motion picture theatres. This is the only exterior information about what is being presented at the theatre. It is easily reversible (i.e., can be easily removed without damage to the historic building).

There is no acceptable alternative for this location because the sign recalls a historic sign and its location, provides an essential function for theatre patrons, is set back so far to the south from the Hollywood Boulevard sidewalk that it does not function as readable signage from the sidewalk. Any functioning alternative results in the loss of historic character. In particular, the west wall of the forecourt adjacent to the portico is the location of the most significant decorative arts feature of the exterior of the building: a large polychrome mural that was replicated from archival photographs.

In summary, this proposal is the “preservation alternative” that provides the best solution for the property, meets the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards, and best complies with the requirements for the treatment of HCM’s.

Previous Review

The proposed sign scheme was reviewed by the staff of the Office of Historic Resources (OHR) for compliance with the HCM requirements. The OHR placed the project design on the agenda of the Cultural Heritage Commission for an informational presentation. This sign was presented to the Commissioners in a public meeting. The scheme was supported by the Commission, and there was no public comment objecting to the signage.

The owner conducted outreach to stakeholders during the design and approval process. This included multiple meetings with Hollywood Heritage, the Los Angeles Historic Theatre Foundation and the Los Angeles Conservancy. No concerns were raised by any of these groups.

END HISTORIC RESOURCES GROUP MEMO.

Please review the findings presented and let us know if you have any questions or if additional information is required. We appreciate your time and cooperation with the Exception from Regulations Application process.

Sincerely,

Stephen A. Laddaga
Account Executive

Scott Hampton
Permit Expediter

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