

Initial Project Review

Sign Variance: Rite Aid Store #5264 – Canyon Road

Application Number: 952735

Parcel Numbers: 0319121028, 0319121093, and 0319121094

Mid-County Advisory Commission Meeting: April 13, 2021, at 6:30 p.m., Due to COVID-19 restrictions, this meeting will be held virtually. To participate, visit www.Zoom.com and click “Join a Meeting” or call 253-215-8782, then enter the Meeting ID: 953 9306 0901 and Passcode: 034010, or click on the following link:

<https://piercecounitywa.zoom.us/j/95393060901?pwd=ZGs1c2lGZTJpVWlU5dENUdFFnZz09>

For additional questions regarding the virtual meeting process, contact Tiffany Aliment at 253-798-3226 or tiffany.aliment@piercecounitywa.gov.

Proposal: The applicants request a Variance from the allowed sign square footage for the main entrance of the building. The applicant has applied for a 30-square foot sign on an additional street facade. This sign is exceeding the 30 square feet allowed by 30 square feet.

Project Location: The site is in the Community Center (CC) zone classification, in the Mid-County Community Plan area, located at 11220 Canyon Road East, Puyallup, WA 98373, within Section 12, T19N, R03W, W.M., in Council District #5.

Staff Recommendation: County Staff is reviewing this proposal for compliance with all applicable policies, codes, and regulations. The County recommends approval of the proposed sign variance subject to regulatory requirements and recommended conditions of approval.

State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA): SEPA review is not required for this proposal.

County Contact: Kaycee K. Hathaway, Associate Planner, kaycee.hathaway@piercecounitywa.gov
253-798-3297

Pierce County Online Permit Information:

<https://pals.piercecounitywa.gov/palsonline/#/permitSearch/permit/departementStatus?applPermitId=952735>



Project Data

Complete Application Date: February 22, 2021

Initial Project Review Sent: April 6, 2021

Property Owner: Isador Schreiber & Associates LLC
650 South Orcas Street, Suite 210
Seattle, WA 98116

Applicants: Rite Aid Store #5264
11220 Canyon Road East
Puyallup, WA 98373

Agent: Tracey Diehl
6487 Hillard Drive
Winchester, OH 43110
tracey@expeditethediehl.com

Legal and Public Notice

- *March 8, 2021:* Notice of Application and Public Meeting Notice, was sent to property owners within a radius of 300 feet, but not less than two parcels deep, around the exterior boundaries of the site.
- *Month 15, 2021:* Public Notice sign was posted on the site, confirmed with a Declaration of Posting.
- *March 8, 2021:* Legal notice was published in the official County newspaper (*Tacoma News Tribune*) advertising the Mid-County Advisory Commission (MCAC) public meeting.

2017 County Aerial



Figure 1: Project will be occurring on the highlighted parcels.

Proposed Site Plan

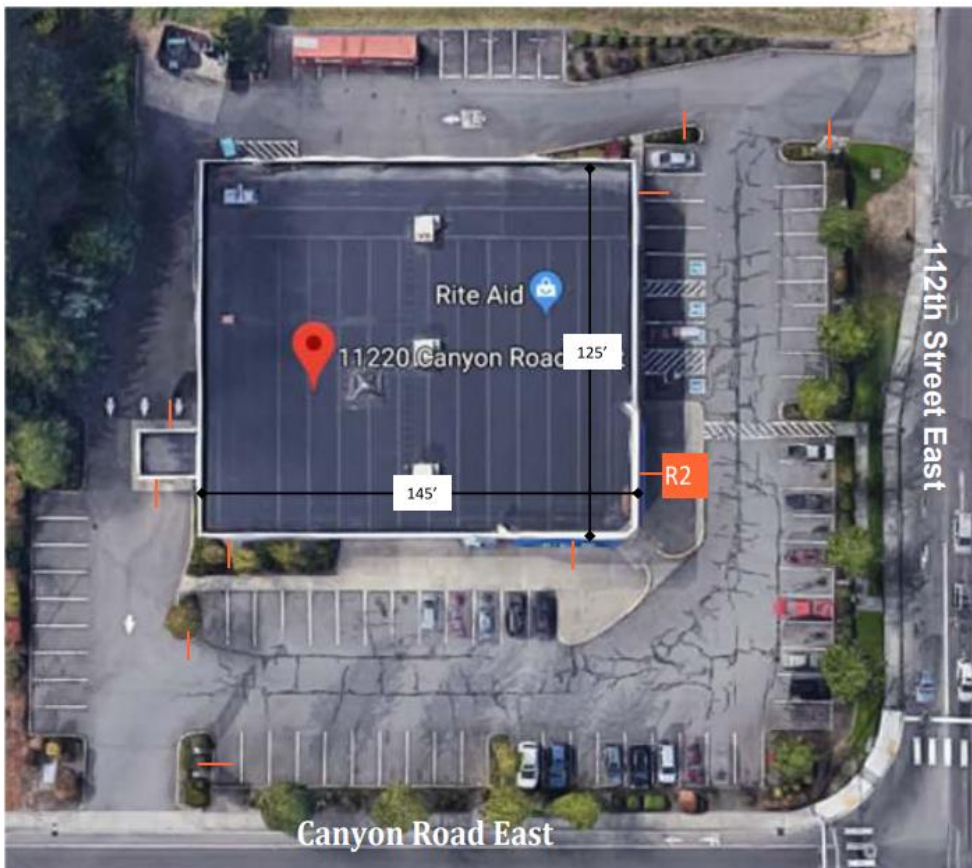


Figure 2: Site Plan

Comments from the Public and Agencies

- Comments received on this proposal may be found by accessing the online permit information referenced on page 1.
- No comments have been received from the public.

Surrounding Land Use and Zoning Designation

LAND USE		ZONING
North	112 th Street East	N/A
South	Shell Gas Station, Car Wash, Mini Mart, Taco Bell and wetlands	Community Center (CC)
West	Commercial Land with Single Family Residence	Community Center (CC)
East	Canyon Road East	N/A

Initial Staff Review for Consistency with Applicable Land Use Policies and Regulations

The proposal is subject to review for conformance with Pierce County plans, codes, and regulations.

Title 19A Pierce County Comprehensive Plan

The County Comprehensive Plan addresses signs with the goal that they establish a system of sign controls that is uniform, balanced, and minimizes the number and size of signs while ensuring an opportunity for effective advertising.

- D-16.1 Adequately control the size, type, design, and location of signs.
- D-16.3 Promote the clear identification of and direction to businesses.
- D-16.5 Encourage visual consistency at street level and for passing motorists.

Staff Comment: The application meets the policies of the Countywide Comprehensive Plan.

Mid-County Community Plan (Pierce County Code, Title 19A)

The community plan sets new standards for signs as a means of enhancing the streetscape of Canyon Road and 112th Street East. Policies and regulations strive to reduce the number and size of signs. In commercial complexes with multiple businesses, signs will be consolidated to diminish the visual clutter. New pole signs will be prohibited and monument signs encouraged.

- MC D-10.1 No new billboards shall be permitted. SH D-16.2 Ensure that signage is integrated with the overall architectural framework and structural elements of the building, reinforcing the shape and proportion to the façade through such techniques as detailing, use of colors and material and placement.
- MC D-11.1 Prohibit the use of flashing or rotating signs, video signs, roof signs, trailing signs, inflatable signs, and signs attached to private light standards.
- MC D-11.2 Prohibit signs that result in glare onto adjacent properties.
- MC D-11.4 Encourage monument and wall signs

- MC D-11.5 Require consolidation of signage within commercial development to reduce visual clutter along streets and the freeway.
- MC D-11.7 Prepare standards that limit total sign area to a proportion of the length of the building façade.

Staff Comment: The application meets the policies of the Mid-County Community Comprehensive Plan. The applicant is removing a canvas Canopy sign which is now prohibited and replacing with an allowed wall sign. The sign to be removed dominated the street façade and did not compliment the building’s architecture. The proposed sign will not dominate or intrude upon the character of the area or building and will complement the existing structure.

Title 18B Development Regulations – Signs

- **Building and Wall Signs (Title 18B.20.040):**
Temporary and permanent building, window and wall sign area shall not occupy more than 20 percent of the total area of the building facade or the total maximum area allowed in the applicable Sign Table, whichever is less. For purposes of this calculation, signs such as open/closed, store hours, address, and other similar information shall not be included;

Staff Comment: The proposal is not meeting the sign table allowed square footage and a sign variance is being applied for.

- **Mid-County Community Plan Area Table 18B.30.090-1 – CC Zoning**
The Community center (CC) zone allows for a maximum square footage of the building sign and logo for each tenant, by size of tenant’s interior square footage.

Staff Comment: The building that the wall sign will be located on is about 16,500 square feet in size, meaning that the allowed wall signage is 30 square feet in size. The applicant has applied for a 30-square foot wall sign on each road frontage facade. This sign requiring the variance is exceeding the 30 square feet allowed by 30 square feet. The proposal is not meeting this standard and the applicant has applied for a sign variance.

- **Variances (18B.10.080)**
An applicant who seeks an exception from the provisions of Title 18B PCC may pursue a sign variance.

1. **Exceptional or unusual circumstances, not resulting from any act of the applicant, apply to the project location and not generally to other properties in the vicinity;**

Applicant Response: This is a corner lot, all other businesses on the corner lots have more signage. This is a reduction of the existing nonconformity – the other businesses on the corner lots also exceed the Ordinance.

Staff Response: Staff believes that this condition is being met, as 30 square feet of signage on a corner lot is not sufficient to advertise, when the corner lot is on two arterial roads. Also, the applicant is reducing the amount of nonconforming signage from 420 square feet to 30 square feet.

2. The sign proposal is outstanding in design;

Applicant response: The façade is being renovated - resulting in the removal of the existing signs and replacing them with channel letters.

Staff Response: Staff believes that this condition is being met. The sign matches all signs proposed on the property. Design requirements outlined within the code are being met for the design of the sign.

3. The variance request is the minimum necessary to serve its intended purpose;

Applicant response: The variance requested is necessary for the signs to be visible at posted speed limits in a busy intersection.

Staff Response: Staff believes that to adequately direct customers, a sign is necessary on both arterials. Staff believes that a Wall Sign of 30 square feet on each road frontage façade is large enough to catch the attention of customers prior to each entrance of the Rite Aid.

4. The variance request is consistent with the purpose and intent of the Comprehensive Plan and the Development Regulations; and

Applicant response: The regulation of signs in Pierce County achieves the following purposes:

- A. To allow businesses, institutions, and individuals to exercise their right to free speech by displaying information on a sign and to allow audiences to receive such information.
 - The proposal will allow the business to have signage that is compatible with the surrounding properties – all of which have signs on multiple elevations when on a corner lot.
- B. To promote and maintain visually attractive residential retail commercial, historic open space, and industrial districts.
 - The signs proposed reduce the existing nonconformity and are in keeping with the intent to maintain attractive aesthetics. Channel letters are appropriate for a commercial space.
- C. To provide for reasonable and appropriate communication and identification for on - premises signs in commercial districts in order to foster successful businesses.
 - The signs proposed are reasonable in size and necessary for clear visibility for motorists that are trying to locate this destination at a busy intersection.

- D. To provide for reasonable and appropriate communication for on-premises signs within industrial districts. The signs proposed are for a commercially zoned property.
- E. To encourage the use of creative and visually attractive signs.
 - This project will provide the façade with a facelift and the removal of the existing awning. The replacement of the awning is a reduction of overall sign area and the new signs will be very attractive and visually pleasing.
- F. To ensure that the type and location of signs are designed to reduce sign distraction and confusion that may be contributing factors in traffic congestion and accidents and maintain a safe and orderly pedestrian and vehicular environment.
 - The signs identify the façade of the building; they are small and do not produce clutter on the very large façade. The signs are designed to reduce distraction and confusion.
- G. To protect property values.
 - An upgrade to this location with paint, removal of awnings and new signage will enhance the overall property value.
- H. To promote the public health, safety and welfare by avoiding conflicts between signs and traffic control devices, avoiding traffic hazards, and reducing visual distractions and obstructions.
 - The signs promote the health and safety of residents, as this is a pharmacy and adequate branding is necessary for patrons that are seeking medications and health related [potentially] life saving services.
- I. To protect and preserve the aesthetic quality and physical appearance of the County.
 - The upgrade to the signage will reduce the existing nonconformity and enhance the appearance overall.
- J. To provide a balanced and fair legal framework for design, construction and placement of signs.
 - The signs are for fair competition throughout. This location is on a corner where others also have multiple signs. It's important for them to be able to take their place in the community with their new trademarked logo.
- K. To provide fair and consistent permitting and enforcement.
 - The signs will be permitted properly according to all requirements.

Staff Response: Staff has found that the proposal is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and Development Regulations.

5. Applicable community plan and Comprehensive Plan objectives and goals are being met through this design proposal, and no objective of the applicable community plan or Comprehensive Plan is being deviated from.

Applicant response: Unified Design Elements for the Canyon Road and 112th Street Corridors. These Corridors define the core of the Plan area (see Maps 18J.70-1 to -4). Within this core area, the intent is to ensure a unified appearance and consistent application of functions and design elements. The standards in this Section apply primarily to new development and redevelopment proposals. This property is an existing retail pharmacy. The scope of work does not alter more than 60% of the property. This is a renovation to sign area only and to remove the awnings from the façade. The design objective for the CC zoning is being met. This proposal will provide a cohesive and consistent visual identity for Rite Aid while responding to functional characteristics of the existing retail pharmacy. There will be no architectural alterations here. The proposal is in keeping with the community plan objective. The community plan objective discourages backlit awnings. This project will remove the back lit awnings.

Staff Comment: Staff has found that the proposal is consistent with the Community Plan and Comprehensive Plan objectives and goals.

Regulatory Requirements and Recommended Conditions of Approval

Should the Examiner approve the project the following regulatory requirement should be included in the decision.

1. Completion or substantial progress toward completion of the approved project shall occur within two years of the effective date of the Examiner's approval of the Variance, or all approvals granted herein shall automatically become null and void.

Rite Aid #5264-Canyon Road IPR MCAC-KH.docx