

SIGN VARIANCE:

AMAZON GO

APPLICATION NO. 1003751

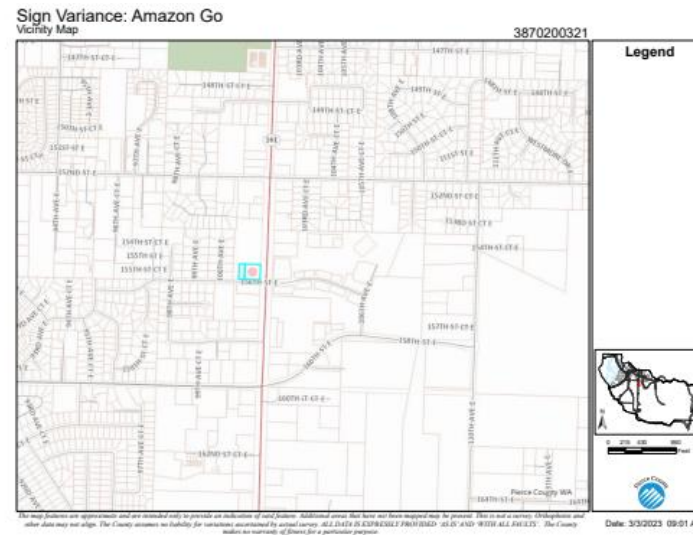
Donna Rhea, Associate Planner
Pierce County Planning & Public Works

March 6, 2023

South Hill Advisory Commission (SHAC)

- Applicant seeks approval of a sign variance to increase the maximum allowed wall signage for a tenant space < 20,000 sq. ft. from 30 sq. ft to 90 sq. ft. (increase of 60 sq. ft.).
- The proposal is 30 sq. ft. of signage on each of the north, south, and building elevation that faces Meridian East.
- The parcel is zoned Town Center (TCtr) and is located within the South Hill Community Plan area.
- The maximum allowed wall signage within the TCtr zone classification is 30 sq. ft.
- All legal and public notice was sent to property owners within 300-feet of the proposal and two parcels deep as well as published in the official County newspaper (Tacoma News Tribune).
- The public notice sign was never received by the applicant, so staff had to order another sign. That sign was just received and posted March 3, 2023. The sign was hung and confirmed with a Declaration of Posting.

- The parcel is located on the southeast corner of the intersection of Meridian East and 156th Street East.
- The Parcel is surrounded by the TCtr zone classification and following uses:
 - North and West – Pierce County Library
 - East – Meridian East
 - South – 156th Street East

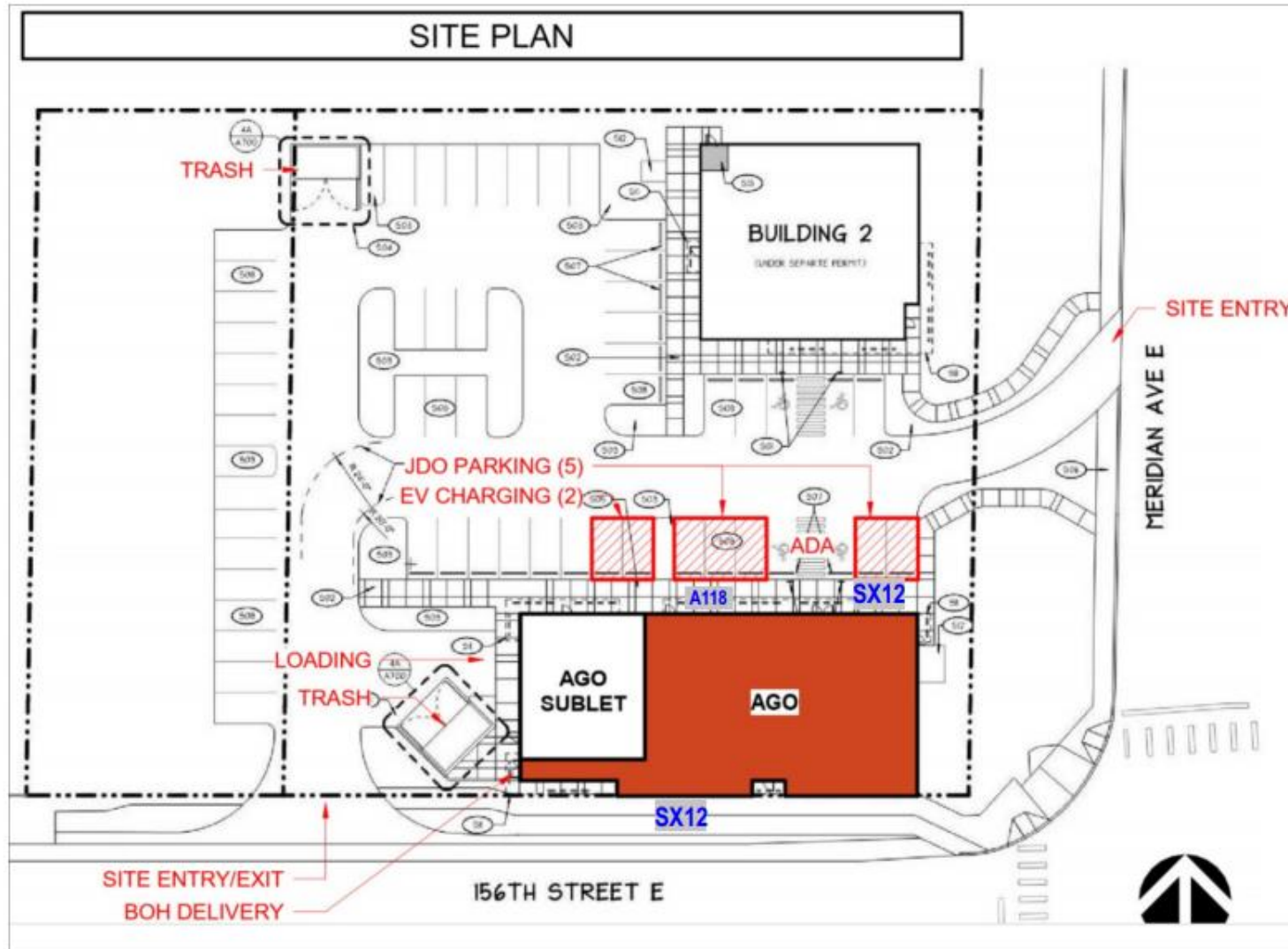


- The access to the site is provided from the proposed private roadway from 72nd Avenue East, which is located to the east of the project site.

Sign Variance: Amazon Go
2021 Aerial Photograph



Site Plan – February 28, 2023



Building Elevations – February 28, 2023

The original variance request was to seek approval of 30 square feet of signage on the north and south building elevations and building elevation facing Meridian East.

After conducting the site visit, staff agreed with the proposed 30 square feet of additional signage on the south building elevation; however, could not support the 30 square feet on the building elevation facing Meridian East. The building elevations shown on this slide were revised from the original drawings after discussion with the applicant that staff could not support the 30 square feet of wall signage on the building elevation facing Meridian East.



Development Regulations–Signs–Title 18B

Chapter 18B.080 – Sign Variance

B. *Review Process.*

3. An application for sign variance to deviate more than 20 percent from a numerical regulation, or from a non-numerical regulation, shall be decided by the Hearing Examiner.

Staff Comment: The deviation is greater than 20 percent which requires approval by the Hearing Examiner.

C. *Review Criteria.* The applicant shall demonstrate compliance with all of the following review criteria:

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;

Staff Comment: Staff finds that there are exceptional or unusual circumstances that exist on the subject parcel that could be considered for granting of a sign variance.

- The subject parcel has two new commercial shell buildings that were constructed with the primary entrances facing each other within the interior parking lot. Primary signage is customarily installed above the primary entrances of each tenant space which directs patrons to the business. If the applicant splits that 30 square feet of signage up between two or three building elevations, it will not provide the necessary advertisement for the business.
- The parcel would be allowed to have a monument sign of up to 80 square feet; however, no monument signage is proposed for the site. A monument sign would allow an additional 26 square feet of signage divided up between the three tenants which would help to identify businesses within the commercial complex.

- When driving south on Meridian East, less than 30 square feet of signage on the north building elevation might not provide the necessary advertisement for Amazon Go by vehicle traffic passing by. Staff agrees with the proposal to have 30 square feet of signage on the north building elevation.
- If the full 30 square feet of signage were maximized on the north building elevation, vehicles traveling north along Meridian East would not have any way of identifying what business exits. Staff agrees with the proposed 30 square feet of signage on the south building elevation.
- When driving north or south along Meridian East or looking across the street from Sunrise Village Shopping Center, staff disagrees with the 30 square feet of signage proposed on the east building elevation as the signage on the north and south building elevations can be seen.

2. The sign proposal is outstanding in design;

Staff comment: The proposed signage is similar to other commercial signage within the immediate vicinity.

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

Staff Comment: Staff agrees with the applicant that the 30 square feet of wall signage on the north and south building elevations is the minimum signage necessary for the business to be seen by vehicle traffic. Staff is not recommending approval of the proposed 30 square feet of wall signage on the east building elevation that abuts Meridian East as the signage on the north and south building elevation can be seen.

- Staff finds that extenuating circumstances exist for consideration of granting of the sign variance and finds the proposed deviation for 30 square feet of wall signage on the north and south building elevations to be in conformance with Development Regulations and the South Hill Community Plan.

QUESTIONS?

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