

January 30, 2002

To: Sutter County Planning Commission

Re: Agenda Item #8: Public hearing on Use Permit #01-27 to allow an externally illuminated off-site advertising sign; M-2 (General Industrial) District; located on the north side of State Highway 20 (Colusa Highway), approximately 3,600 feet east of Southridge Boulevard, Yuba City; A. P. #13-270-005; applicant - Stott Outdoor Advertising/property owner - Hopkins Family Trust (Location: District 3 - Commissioner Barringer)

### **Current Proposal**

#### A. Project Description

The project is a use permit to allow a 12' by 24' (288 square foot), double-faced, 27 foot high externally illuminated off-site advertising sign (billboard sign). Section 1500-9485d of the Sutter County Zoning Ordinance requires a use permit for this type of sign, subject to certain criteria.

#### B. Environmental Consideration

This project is considered categorically exempt pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, Section 15311, Accessory Structures.

### **Background**

#### A. Property Description

The subject property is a 55.96-acre parcel located on the north side of State Highway 20, approximately 1,200 feet east of Southridge Boulevard. The proposed sign will be located approximately 3,600 feet east of Southridge Boulevard, 630 feet west of the southeast corner of the parcel, and 10 feet north of the south property line (along State Highway 20).

B. Surrounding Land Use(s), Zoning District(s) and General Plan Designation(s):

	Use	Zoning	General Plan
<b>Subject Property</b>	Residences (3), industrial shop building, two ag. storage buildings	M-2	Industrial
North	Agricultural, Ag. processing facility	M-2, FPARC	Industrial, FPARC
East	Ag. equipment dealer	M-2	Industrial
South	Agricultural	AG	AG-80
West	Agricultural, Highway 20	AG, M-2	AG-80, AG-20, Industrial

C. Previous Planning Commission Actions/Policies

None.

**Staff Comments**

A. Environmental Health Department (EH):

No comments.

B. Public Works (PW)

No comments.

C. Building Inspection (B)

No comments.

D. State Department of Transportation (Caltrans):

The applicant provided staff a copy of correspondence from Caltrans indicating that an outdoor advertising permit has been approved for the proposed sign.

E. Pacific Gas & Electric Co. (PG&E)

See Condition #5.

F. Planning (P):

The proposal is for a 12' by 24' double-faced sign placed on two, 15' high gray steel I-beam posts. The double faces will be less than 24" apart; therefore, only one side of the sign is counted in the total allowable sign area. The sign will have a total height of 27', and will be externally illuminated. The sign is to be located 10 feet north of the south property line, along the north side of State Highway 20, and will be oriented perpendicular to the highway.

Section 1500-9485d of the Sutter County Zoning Code addresses off-site advertising signs within industrial zone districts. The proposed sign will comply with the following Code requirements:

	<u>Code Requirement</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
Maximum Area Per Sign	300 sq. ft.	288 sq. ft.
Maximum Sign Height	30 feet	27 feet
Location Requirements	Minimum distance of 1,000 feet from another off-site sign on same side of street and 500 feet apart if located on opposite sides of the street.	1 sign proposed on subject property. Proposal meets location requirements.
Lighting allowed?	No internally illuminated signs. May be externally illuminated, with no moving parts.	Externally illuminated No moving parts.

The Planning Commission may approve or conditionally approve a use permit if it finds that the establishment, maintenance, or operation of the use or building applied for will or will not, under the circumstances of the particular case, be detrimental to the health, safety, and general welfare of persons residing or working in the neighborhood of such proposed use, or be detrimental or injurious to property and improvements in the neighborhood or to the general welfare of the County. Additionally, the Commission shall find that the use or activity approved by the use permit is consistent with the General Plan.

Potential aesthetic impacts from over concentration of these types of signs are addressed through the separation distances required by the Zoning Ordinance. Due to difficulty in providing water and maintenance to the remote location of the sign site on the subject parcel, landscaping of the area around the sign is not being required. A condition is being recommended by staff requiring that the sign and support posts be maintained in good repair and that the area around the sign site be maintained free of weeds, garbage, debris, salvage material, and or junk. A condition is also being recommended requiring that lighting for the sign be located as shown on the elevation and that the lighting be concentrated directly onto the sign. With these conditions required, staff believes approval of the request would not create any impacts to the public's health, safety and/or general welfare or be detrimental or injurious to property and improvements in the neighborhood or to the general welfare of the County.

Staff notes that a registered California Historical Landmark commemorating the location where the Thompson seedless grape was developed is located near the southeast corner of the subject property, approximately 500 feet from the proposed sign site. With regard to historical sites, the Sutter County General Plan contains the following policy:

5.B-1 The County shall encourage the preservation of historic sites, buildings, structures, and objects in addition to points of historical interest as identified in the Background Report.

Based on the distance proposed by the applicant from the historical site (500 feet), staff believes the proposal is consistent with the above policy.

With regard to Visual and Scenic Resources, the General Plan contains the following policies:

1.H-1 The County shall require that new development be designed to utilize vegetation for screening structures and parking areas.

1.H-2 The County shall require that new development along Highway 20 incorporate design and development standards that protect views of the Sutter Buttes.

1.H-3 The County shall require that design and development standards be applied to all industrial and commercial areas to improve the aesthetic appearance of those developments.

In these policies, the term "development" refers to commercial or industrial buildings and is not intended to be applied to signs such as the one proposed. Staff therefore believes the proposal does not conflict with the above policies or the Sutter County Design Guidelines and that it is consistent with the General Plan.

### **Recommended Findings**

Based on the information contained in the agenda report and /or testimony received at the public hearing, the Commission finds:

- A. In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and Guidelines, this project is categorically exempt, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15311, Accessory Structures, which allows exemptions for signs.
- B. Approval of the sign, subject to the recommended conditions, will not be detrimental to the public's health, safety, or general welfare or be detrimental to public or private improvements in the area and will be consistent with the Sutter County General Plan and Zoning Code.

### **Recommended Action**

- A. Adopt the findings as recommended by staff.
- B. Approve Use Permit #01-27 subject to the following conditions:
  - 1. The use permit shall be issued for a 12' by 24' (288 square foot), double sided, 27 foot high externally illuminated off-site advertising sign (billboard sign). Location and design of said sign shall conform to the site plan and elevation as approved by the Planning Commission. Minor modifications may be approved by the Planning Division. (P)

2. The sign and support posts shall be maintained in good repair and the area around the sign site shall be maintained free of weeds, garbage, debris, salvage material, and or junk. (P)
3. Lighting for the sign shall be located as shown on the elevation and shall result in the lighting being concentrated directly onto the sign. (P)
4. The applicant shall obtain all necessary permits from the Sutter County Building Division and comply with all other local, state, and federal regulations that may apply to this application and permit. (B)
5. Any relocation or rearrangement of any existing PG&E facilities to accommodate this project will be at the developer's/applicant's expense. There shall be no building of structures allowed under or over any of PG&E facilities or inside any PG&E easements that may exist within the project site. The contractor shall contact Underground Service Alert (U.S.A.) at least two working days prior to commencement of work. (PG&E)

Sincerely,

THOMAS A. LAST  
PLANNING DIVISION CHIEF

Steve Geiger  
Associate Planner

Attachments: Exhibit A - Study Sketch  
Exhibit B - Site Plan  
Exhibit C - Elevation of proposed sign  
Exhibit D - Photos taken from sign site

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