

September 17th, 2024

Attn: Alex Tellez, Assistant Planner
Nimisha Agrawal, Senior Planner

Planning Commission, City of Sunnyvale
1500 Warburton Avenue
Santa Clara, CA 95050

Subject: Request for Variance (Signage) - Lorien - 3131 Homestead Road (PLN24-0343)

Greetings -

Scott AG, on behalf of EQR-Lincoln Laguna Clara LP, is seeking a variance for signage at Lorien, a multi-family residential project located at 3131 Homestead Road (Parcel# 290-24-071).

Lorien is a multi-story, multi-family project similar to other residential aspects of mixed-use developments in Santa Clara. The size, location and character of the development requires a level of signage that exceeds the current maximum allowable signage of 75sqft for residential developments. Other aspects of the existing table of signage allowable in residential zones are inadequate to a project of this scale. For example:

D. Residential Zones. Table 3-8 (Signs Allowed in Residential Zones) provides regulations for permanent signs in residential zones (not including mixed-use zones), and legal nonconforming residential uses in nonresidential zones. In the case of inconsistency between regulations provided in the table and regulations provided for specific sign types, the regulations for specific sign types shall take precedence.

**Table 3-8
Signs Allowed in Residential Zone**

Sign Class	Allowed Sign Types	Maximum Number	Maximum Sign Area	Maximum Sign Height	Notes
Name Plate Single-Family Uses	Wall	1 per single-family use	4 sq ft	Below eave of roof or parapet	18.42.110(L)
Identification sign Multifamily uses	Wall or Freestanding	1 per multi-family use	24 sq ft	Wall signs shall be below the eave of the roof or parapet. Freestanding sign: 6 ft	18.42.110(E) 18.42.110(L) Cabinet signs and internally illuminated signs are prohibited
Residential Subdivision Entry Signs	Freestanding (monument)	2 per primary entrance	40 sq ft for both signs	6 ft	18.42.110(E) 18.42.110(L) Cabinet signs and internally illuminated signs are prohibited

- *More than 1 sign is needed*
- *Maximum size insufficient for placement / visibility*
- *Illumination is needed*

This project is one of several that are currently under construction in Santa Clara of similar size and character, and thus require a similar level of signage to appropriately identify the projects and safely navigate visitors and residents to and around the properties.

For reference, the nearby Nuevo Lawrence Station Area Plan Master Sign Program (Ref: PLN2020-14603) provides a typical framework for appropriate signage applied to this scale of residential construction. Provisions for suitable wall, canopy and freestanding signs in the Nuevo MSP are substantially aligned with Lorien proposed signage and are typical for projects of this scale.

The recent code update to the Tasman East Specific Plan also provides suitable allowances for projects similar to Lorien.

Our submittal takes the form of what would normally be a Comprehensive Sign Program if submitted as one of the project types defined in SCCC 18.42.050. However, current Santa Clara City Code (SCCC) does not provide for the submission of a Comprehensive Sign Program for residential projects. As defined in **SCCC 18.42.050 - Comprehensive Sign Program: A. Applicability**. *A Comprehensive Sign Program is required for all new commercial, mixed-use, office, and industrial developments with five or more signs and optional for all new commercial, mixed-use, office, and industrial developments with less than five signs.* This definition excludes residential-only projects.

18.42.040 – Sign Permit Required

A Sign Permit is required for all signs, except those specifically exempted in Section 18.42.070 (Exempt Signs), below. Signs that require a Sign Permit shall be subject to approval by the Director or Commission according to the standards specified in Section 18.42.100 (Standards for Signs Requiring a Sign Permit).

18.42.050 – Comprehensive Sign Program

- A. Applicability.** A Comprehensive Sign Program is required for all new commercial, mixed-use, office, and industrial developments with five or more signs and optional for all new commercial, mixed-use, office, and industrial developments with four or less tenants. If a Comprehensive Sign Program is required for a project, no Sign Permit shall be approved for any sign until the Comprehensive Sign Program has been approved by the Review Authority as conforming to the requirements of this Chapter.

In discussion with Santa Clara Planning, an effort is currently underway to revise Santa Clara Code to allow for more comprehensive and current signage guidelines for residential projects of this scale, similar to the update recently completed for the Tasman East Specific Plan. Due to the state of construction and expected completion date however, we request that a variance for size, illumination and number of signs be granted for the Lorien signage program while other measures such as code revisions are being considered.

On behalf of Scott AG and the entire project team, thank you for your consideration.



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