



City Council Staff Report

Meeting Date: October 18, 2021

TO: Marco Island City Council

FROM: Daniel J. Smith, A.I.C.P., Director of Community Affairs

DATE: October 7, 2021

RE: Change to Section 30-526 (g) regarding signs for commercial, public use and community facility districts.

DESCRIPTION:

The applicant, McDonald's Corp./Kim Seyer, is requesting a text change to the sign code allowing for a six-foot high maximum digital menu sign and presell sign with a total square footage of no more than 30 square feet. The change to the City's sign code would also provide that the area of the digital and presell sign would be based on the area covered by its graphics, not the sign area.

PLANNING BOARD:

The Planning Board heard this item. There was discussion regarding the size of signs, the location of the signs, brightness of the signs, and the need for a presell sign. The Planning Board voted 7-0 to allow for the digital menu board per the applicant's request, removing the language allowing for a presell sign. The Planning Board also added language that the digital menu board must be screened from the road.

ANALYSIS

Section 30-526 (g) of the City of Marco Island Code of Ordinances currently allows a monument sign, not to exceed 24 square feet, and a maximum of 8 feet tall or a three square-foot electronic sign above the service lane. Section 30-526(g) provides as follows:

- (g) *Signs adjacent to drive through lanes:* A property with a drive through service lane may provide one of the following signs for each permitted drive through lane:
 - (1) **One monument sign, not to exceed 24 square feet and eight feet in height, located within three feet of, and oriented towards, the drive through lane;** or
 - (2) One electronic sign, not exceeding three square feet, located directly above the drive through service lane. Graphics, pictures, logos, motion or flashing are prohibited. Text changes shall occur only when there is a change in the availability of services in the drive through lane.

The applicant proposes to add the following underlined language to allow for a one digital menu sign consisting of 20 square-feet of graphics area, and a presell sign consisting of ten square-feet of graphics. A presell sign is a sign that highlight or attracts customers to choices on the menu. The proposed language reads as follows:

- (g) *Signs adjacent to drive through lanes:* A property with a drive through service lane may provide one of the following signs for each permitted drive through lane:
 - (1) One monument sign, not to exceed 24 square feet and eight feet in height, located within three feet of, and oriented towards, the drive through lane; **or if digital menu boards are used, they are not to exceed six (6) feet in height and graphics may not exceed 20 square feet. Presell boards are limited to six (6) feet in height and graphics may not exceed 10 square feet. All digital equipment will need to automatically adjust the brightness based on the daylight. Location must be shown at time of site plan approval.**
 - (2) One electronic sign, not exceeding three square feet, located directly above the drive through service lane. Graphics, pictures, logos, motion or flashing are prohibited. Text changes shall occur only when there is a change in the availability of services in the drive through lane.

Staff is not opposed to digital menu boards or presell signs. Staff understands technology has improved the readability of signs with shaper images, which automatically adjust brightness based on the ambient light. However, staff is not in support of increasing the total sign area, which is part of this request. Objective 1.7 of the Future Land Use Element of the City’s Comprehensive Plan provides:

The city will enforce existing and future Land Development regulations to eliminate and/or reduce uses of land inconsistent with the Future Land Use Map and the community’s character.

And Policy 1.7.1 of the City’s Comprehensive Plan states:

The City will continue to enforce adopted architectural and site design regulations in the adopted Land Development Code.

Staff believes more sign area does not support the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan. Staff can support however the use of a digital menu board and presell sign consistent with the 24 square feet in total area allowed in the LDC. In light of Staff’s concerns, Staff could support the following revision to Section 30-526:

Sec. 30-526. Signs in commercial, public use and community facility districts.

The following standards apply to all permanent signs in commercial districts.

- (g) *Signs adjacent to drive through lanes:* A property with a drive through service lane may provide one of the following signs for each permitted drive through lane:
 - (1) One monument sign not to exceed 24 square feet and eight feet in height, located within three feet of, and oriented towards, the drive through lane; or

- (2) One electronic sign, not exceeding three square feet, located directly above the drive through service lane. Graphics, pictures, logos, motion, or flashing are prohibited. Text changes shall occur only when there is a change in the availability of services in the drive through lane; or
- (3) One digital menu board and presell board, together not to exceed 24 square feet in total and eight feet in height, located within three feet of, and oriented towards, the drive through lane; All digital equipment will need to automatically adjust the brightness based on the daylight.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the City Council approve the proposed amendments outlined in the staff report and recommended by the Planning Board in allowing for a digital menu board not to exceed 20 square feet, 6 feet in height, with the requirement that the sign (s) must be screen from the road.

The proposed language is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, and in particular Future Land Use Element Objective 1.7.

Daniel J. Smith, AICP
Director of Community Affairs.