



*"Placerville, a Unique Historical Past Forging into a Golden Future"*

## Planning Commission Staff Report

**Meeting Date:** December 1, 2020

**Prepared By:** Andrew Painter, City Planner

### ITEM 3: 150 PLACERVILLE DRIVE – SPR90-11-R2 – KWIK SERV

**Request:** To consider Site Plan Review (SPR) 90-11-R2, an amendment to the Site Plan Review to allow for business signs; new exterior paint scheme to re-image an existing convenience store with gas pumps (former Shell branded facility) to a Kwik Serv branded site; to change the canopy lights with flush mounted lights; and, to consider a categorical exemption from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per CEQA Guidelines Section 15301, "Existing Facilities."

Proposed signs and color scheme for this request are shown on the applicant exhibits provided in Attachment A of the staff report, and described in Table 1.

**Representatives:** Gus Ortega, Sign Development Inc., Applicant  
Balkar Singh, Elements Petroleum, Inc., Property Owner

**Location:** 150 Placerville Drive, Placerville **APN:** 323-120-054

**General Plan:** Commercial (C)

**Zoning:** Commercial (C)

#### Decision Making

**Authority:** Per Placerville Zoning Code (PZC) 10-4-9(P): Site Plan Review Changes; Section 10-4-17(H): Sign Regulations, the Planning Commission is the decision-maker for site plans and major changes.

#### Recommendations:

- 1) Adopt the staff report as part of the public record;
- 2) Determine the project can be found exempt from environmental review pursuant to Section 15301 – "Existing Facilities" of the CEQA Guidelines; and,
- 3) Approve Changes to Site Plan Review 90-11-R2 based on the findings identified in the Staff Report and subject to the recommended Conditions of Approval

**Project Site, Size, Location and Parcel Number:** The 0.5-acre project site is located at 150 Placerville Drive; northwest corner of the intersection of Placerville Drive and Armory Drive. Assessor's Parcel Number: 325-120-054. See Figures 1 and 2.

Figure 1. Vicinity Map – 150 Placerville Drive



Source: EL Dorado County GOTNET

Figure 2. 150 Placerville Drive (street view)



**Table 1 –Proposed Signage**

<b>Proposed Signage</b>	<b>Lighting</b>	<b>Overall Sign Dimension and Area</b>	
Sign #1: Reface existing ground sign (southeast corner): white manual price numerals, “Sultan Blue” background w/ “Golden Yellow” lettering and graphic images; base structure painted gloss black	Internally illuminated	8’ 3/8” x 5’ 4 3/8”	43 Sq. Ft.
Sign #2: Pump Canopy Wall Sign (south elevation): sign cabinet, “Sultan Blue” background w/ “Golden Yellow” lettering and graphic	Internally illuminated	11’ 5” x 1’ 2”	13 Sq. Ft.
Sign #3: Pump Canopy Wall Sign (north elevation): sign cabinet, “Sultan Blue” background w/ “Golden Yellow” lettering and graphic, sign copy and appearance match Sign #2.	Internally illuminated	11’ 5” x 1’ 2”	13 Sq. Ft.
Sign #4: Wall Sign (west elevation): sign panel, “Kwik Serv Blue” background w/ “Basket Beige”, “Hopsack,” and white lettering, wall mounted above convenience store entrance.	Non-illuminated	116” x 30 ¼”	24 Sq. Ft.
	Total Aggregate Sign Area:		93 Sq. Ft.
<b>Incidental and Accessory Signage</b>	<b>Lighting</b>	<b>Overall Sign Dimension and Area</b>	
Sign #5, #6 and #7: Incidental signs with white lettering, sign text: “Car Wash” and “Exit” along south elevation; and, “Enter” sign text along north elevation.	Non-illuminated	Total:	12.63 Sq. Ft.
Pump signage decals (tags) and colors to match scheme for site.		Total:	Unknown Sq. Ft.

**Building Color Scheme**

New exterior paint colors for the Kwik Serv brand re-image would be incorporated with the request.

Pump canopy: Fascia: “Kwik Serv Blue,” with yellow vinyl trim.

Pump columns: white.

Pump island curbs: black.

Island bumper poles: “Kwik Serv Blue.”

Convenience Store Building:

Building base color: “Basket Beige.”

Building fascia color: “Kwik Serv Blue.”

Building Wainscot color: “Hopsack.”

### **Canopy Lighting**

Existing under canopy lighting would be replaced with new flush mounted (recessed) fixtures. Fixture details were not provided. Staff will ensure that during the construction permit process, proposed fixtures will be subject to and comply with the Outdoor Lighting Standards of shielding, level of illumination, type of illumination and hours of illumination under PZC 10-4-16(E), unless the Commission conditions the request alternatively.

### **PUBLIC NOTICE AND COMMENT**

Written notice for this public hearing was mailed to property owners within five hundred feet (500') of the project site, posted at Placerville City Hall as well as the City's website (cityofplacerville.org), and published in the Mountain Democrat. No public comments were received as of November 24, 2020.

### **DISCUSSION**

#### **Surrounding Uses**

	<b>General Plan</b>	<b>Zoning</b>	<b>Current Land Use</b>
<b>On-Site:</b>	Commercial	C	Existing convenience retail and gasoline service
<b>North:</b>	Commercial	C	Commercial retail and financial services
<b>South:</b>	Commercial	C	Veterans' Hall, museum and El Dorado County Fairgrounds
<b>East:</b>	Commercial	C	Commercial retail and El Dorado County Fairgrounds
<b>West:</b>	Commercial	C	Auto service, commercial retail, and vacant restaurant, and child care center

**Existing Site Development and Site Plan Review Background:** The subject site contains an approximate 2,440-square foot convenience store and carwash building, paved driveway and parking area, exterior lighting, drainage system, street frontage improvements of curb, gutter and sidewalk and landscaping, and signage were approved and constructed in 1991 under the Planning Commission's approval of SPR90-11 and CUP90-13 for a Shell convenience store with carwash and fuel pumps.

Figure 2 shows the existing condition of the subject site. Temporary banner signs for the Kwik Serv business have been placed on-site. Temporary banner signs are permissible during grand openings and special events for a limited time. Existing landscaping contains a combination of trees and groundcovers, with some areas of the landscape missing plants that would be expected to exist after approximately 30-years since their installation.

An amendment to SPR90-11 was authorized in 2004 by City Council on appeal, involving a re-image and a new sign plan for the Shell branded facility. Three canopy signs totaling 43 square feet, one ground sign (monument price sign) totaling 43 square feet and a wall sign on the convenience store totaling 36 square feet were authorized by the City. Total aggregate area of approved signs in 2004 was 122 square feet.

The City's Sign Regulations (PZC 10-4-17) were adopted in 2002. As mentioned, the Planning Commission approved the original sign plan in 1991, with City Council approving a revision to the Sign Plan in 2004.

**Applicable General Plan Goals and Policies:** The project site is designated Commercial on the General Plan Land Use Map. To approve the proposed project, the Planning Commission must determine that the request is consistent with applicable General Plan goals and policies. Staff has identified the following goals and policies as most relevant to the proposed project:

Community Design Element

*Goal A: To preserve and enhance the overall visual attributes of Placerville.*

*Goal F: To promote the visual enhancement of Placerville Drive.*

*Policy 1. The City shall encourage the development of Placerville Drive in conformance with high design standards as a commercial district and discourage strip-commercial development.*

*Goal J: To promote development of aesthetic and functional signage and reduce visual clutter.*

Policy 1. *The City shall only allow new signs that are appropriate in design and scale, while making adequate provisions for business identification.*

**Zoning Regulations:**

**Major Change**

Under PZC 10-4-9 (P), a "major change" to an approved SPR is any change that would alter the appearance, character or intent of the approved site plan. Sign modifications and color changes are listed under this section as examples of a major change.

Major changes to an approved SPR may only be approved by the Planning Commission after conducting a public hearing. The Commission is required to consider the criteria provided under subsection (G) of the Site Plan Review Ordinance before it may approve, approve with conditions, or disapprove a Site Plan Review application, including a request for a major change to an approved SPR.

The following SPR criteria appear relevant to building design, business signs and exterior lighting.

*PZC 10-4-9(G) Criteria*

*4. Building Design*

- (e) Colors shall be harmonious to site and surrounding area. The use of standardized, bright, bold, glossy non-earth tone colors is discouraged, as they generally do not project the historic foothill character of the community.*
- (g) Exterior lighting shall be part of the architectural concept. Fixtures, standards and all exposed accessories shall be harmonious with building design.*

*5. Signs*

*Signs:*

- (a) Wall signs shall be accomplished in continuity with the architectural concept. Size, color, lettering, location and arrangement shall be harmonious with the building design, and shall be compatible with approved signs on adjoining buildings. Signs shall have good proportions.*
- (c) Materials used in signs shall have good architectural character and be harmonious with building design and surrounding landscape. Wherever possible, signs shall be incorporated within the building components such as fascias, and/or eaves.*
- (d) Every sign shall have good scale in its design and in its visual relationship to buildings and surroundings.*
- (e) Colors shall be harmonious and used with restraint. Lighting shall be harmonious with the design. If external spot or floodlighting is used, it shall be arranged so that the light source is shielded from view.*

**Lighting Regulations**

The City's Outdoor Lighting Standards are provided under PZC 10-4-16: Exterior Lighting Regulations. Their purpose of these regulations are to balance security and safety needs for lighting, with the City's desire to reduce light glare and preserve nighttime skyline. Existing under canopy lighting would be replaced with new flush mounted (recessed) fixtures. Fixtures were not provided.

**Sign Regulations**

Regulations for the installation and use of signs within the City are provided under PZC 10-4-17: Sign Regulations. These regulations provide minimum standards to help safeguard life, health, property, and the public welfare in keeping with the unique aesthetic and historic character of the City by regulating and controlling the size, height, design, quality of materials, construction, location, etc. Applicable regulations for this SPR90-11-R2 request are as follows:

Sign Regulations (PZC 10-4-17)

10-4-17(B) Definitions:

*Business Frontage: The lineal foot frontage of a building or portion therefore devoted to a specific business or enterprise, and having an entrance/exit opens to the public.*

10-4-17(G)1. General Regulations:

*b. Aggregate Area of Signs: Unless otherwise authorized herein, the aggregate area of on-premise signage shall not exceed two (2) square feet of sign area for each one (1) lineal foot of business frontage for each business entity or occupancy, unless authorized by the Planning Commission, under the provisions of the Master Sign Plan or Conditional Use Permit referenced herein.*

10-4-17(G)5. Wall Signs:

- b. The area of a wall sign or combination of wall signs shall not exceed two (2) square feet of sign area for each one (1) lineal foot of business frontage for businesses that have up to fifty (50) feet of business frontage and an additional sixty-seven (.67) hundredths of a square foot for businesses with street frontage greater than fifty (50) feet, not to exceed a total aggregate area of two hundred (200) square feet.*
- d. Internally illuminated wall signs shall have an opaque background and shall be designed so that only the lettering or advertising copy is visible at night. Externally illuminated signs shall utilize light fixtures which are fully shielded and designed to focus light only on the sign surface.*

**STAFF ANALYSIS**

**Environmental Review**

This project qualifies as a Class 1 categorical exemption pursuant to Guideline 15301 of the California Environmental Quality Act (Existing Facilities), in that the request involves exterior alterations but no expansion of an existing commercial use.

**Signs**

Aggregate Sign Area

The business has business frontage along Placerville Drive totaling 60 linear feet. Per the Sign Regulations, a maximum of 120 square feet of aggregate (total) sign area would be authorized for a site with 60 linear feet of business frontage. Requested new signs total 93 square feet, well under the maximum for the site, noting that incidental signs are exempt from Zoning Code, and that gas pump signage have typically been considered accessory to the use, not calculated against total sign area. Proposed wall signs are consistent with PZC 10-4-17(G)1b involving aggregate sign area.

### Wall Sign Area

Proposed wall sign area is 50 square feet of the total aggregate sign area of 93 square feet. This total is substantially less than the maximum wall sign area of 106.7 square feet the Sign Regulations would authorize for a site with 60 lineal feet of business frontage. Proposed wall signs are consistent with PZC 10-4-17(G)5b involving wall sign area.

### Materials and Colors

Proposed signs utilize colors, materials and finishes that have continuity with the color scheme and materials used onsite and are compatible with each other. They also are designed at a scale appropriate for their wall locations. Proposed signs are consistent with Goals A, F and J of the Community Design Element of the General Plan, with the Site Plan Review Criteria under PZC 10-4-9(G)5(a), (G)5(c), (G)5(d) and (G)5(e); are consistent with the use of opaque background materials per PZC 10-4-17(G)5d.

### Internally Illuminated Signs

Proposed sign faces for the pump canopy signs (Sign #2 and Sign #3) on the canopy's north and south elevations are designed so that the sign text or sign copy would be illuminated at night and not the opaque background. The refaced ground sign cabinet (Sign #1) near the southwest corner of the site is conditioned so that the background of the sign copy will not illuminate, only the price numerals and the sign copy may illuminate at night. Signs are consistent, as conditioned, with PZC 10-4-17(G)5d involving internal illumination.

Should this request be approved staff has added conditions of approval. Construction permits for new signs authorized by the Planning Commission are required, and removal of all temporary signs shall be done within 10-days after the installation of City approved and inspected signs.

### **Building and Canopy Color Scheme**

The proposed Kwik Serv re-image of the site utilizes dark blue and earth tone brown and beige colors for proposed signs, and building and building and canopy fascia color applications. This scheme contrasts dramatically from the bold and bright colors of the trademarked Shell branded facility that formally occupied the site. Proposed colors are well related to each other and are well-integrated and related with the proposed on-premise signs. Proposed colors improve and enhance Placerville Drive commercial corridor and are therefore consistent with Goals A and F and Policy F-1 of the Community Design Element, along with PZC 10-4-9(G)4(e).

### **Lighting**

Existing under canopy lighting would be replaced with new flush mounted (recessed) fixtures. Fixtures were not provided. Staff will ensure that during the construction permit process, proposed fixtures will comply with the Outdoor Lighting Standards of shielding, level of illumination, type of illumination and hours of illumination under PZC 10-4-16(E), unless the Commission conditions the request alternatively.

**SPR90-11 Conditions of Approval in 1990 and the Major Change in 2004:** The conditions and compliance status are provided as Attachment B. City records and onsite inspection revealed that Conditions a and c from the 1991 approval have been met. Condition b from 1991 involves the approved landscape plan for the commercial site. However, the condition of existing landscaping as of November 23, 2020 is not consistent with the approved plan due to missing species that have been removed or died over the approximately thirty years since installation. To ensure compliance with the approved landscape plan, a recommended condition for the SPR90-11-R2 request will require the property owner to plant and re-plant approved landscape plantings, as analyzed in Attachment B, to achieve substantial compliance with the 1991 landscape plan after inspection by staff. This condition will occur prior to issuance of a construction permit for Planning Commission approved signs under the SPR90-11-R2 request. Conditions a, b and c from 1991 will be eliminated. Condition b will not be necessary due to proposed conditions on this SPR90-11-R2 request.

SPR90-11 was approved under the Site Plan Review regulations that existed prior to the changes in 1991 for Site Plan Review applications, specifically the change that added the requirement that a landscape maintenance agreement between the applicant (property owner) and the City to ensure the ongoing maintenance of approved landscaping. The SPR90-11-R2 request allows the City to incorporate this regulation. Staff has recommended as a condition of approval compliance with this regulation.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends the Commission take the following actions.

- I. Adopt the Staff Report as part of the public record.
- II. Make the following findings:
  - A. The request involves the minor alterations to the exterior of an existing commercial facility, and therefore is Categorically Exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), per Section 15301 of the CEQA Guidelines.
  - B. The SPR90-11-R2 Sign Plan is consistent with Goals A, F, J, and Policy J-1 of the Community Design Element of the General Plan, the Site Plan Review design criteria under PZC 10-4-9(G) 5(a), (G)5(c), (G)5(d) and (G)5(e), and the Sign Regulations under PZC 10-4-17(G)1b, (G)5b and (G)5d, in that signs utilize colors, materials and finishes that have continuity with the color scheme and materials used onsite, are compatible with each other, and enhance and improve the site and the Placerville Drive commercial corridor; signs are designed at a scale appropriate for their wall locations; and, signs are consistent with the Sign Regulations of aggregate and wall sign area, internal illumination, material and colors.
  - C. The SPR90-11-R2 exterior color scheme contains dark blue and earth tone brown and beige colors for proposed signs, and building and building and canopy fascia color applications. This scheme contrasts dramatically from the bold and bright colors of the trademarked Shell branded facility that formally occupied the site. Proposed colors are well related to each other and are well-integrated and related with the proposed

on-premise signs. Proposed colors improve and enhance the Placerville Drive commercial corridor and are therefore consistent with Goals A and F and Policy F-1 of the Community Design Element, along with PZC 10-4-9(G)4(e).

- III. Conditionally approve SPR90-11-R2 request subject to the following Conditions of Approval:

SPR90-11-R2 Conditions of Approval

1. Approve SPR90-11-R2, located at 150 Placerville Drive, APN 323-120-054, involving changes to the approved Site Plan Review 90-11 for the site.

Approval is based upon the analysis provided in staff's December 1 2020 report to the Planning Commission, and limited to compliance with the project description, the Applicant Submittal Package set forth below, except were deviated under a separate Condition of Approval, and all other conditions of approval set forth herein:

- Planning Application and Project Narrative received October 28, 2020; and,
  - Sign Elevations and Site Plan (Pages 1 through 7), dated October 23, 2020, prepared by Sign Development Inc., received October 28, 2020.
2. SPR90-11-R2 authorized activity shall expire and become null and void eighteen (18) months after the date of Planning Commission approval unless a construction permit been issued for activity construction.
  3. SPR90-11-R2 shall apply only to the address specified, regardless of any change of ownership, but may not be transferred to another parcel.
  4. SPR90-11-R2 conditions of approval shall be binding on the applicant and all successors in interest in the event the project site is sold to another party.
  5. Permits. The applicant shall obtain a construction permit for the Commission approved scope of work. Two complete copies of plans shall be submitted to the Development Services Department for processing. Plan submittal shall incorporate as a separate page/sheet all Conditions of Approval for SPR90-11-R2.

Applicant shall provide with construction permit application the grant deed with legal description of subject property.

6. New internally illuminated wall cabinet signs authorized under SPR90-11-R2 shall conform to the City's Regulations for On-Premise Signs (PZC 10-4-17(G)), requiring the sign shall have an opaque background and be designed so that only the lettering or advertising copy is visible at night.

7. Prior to issuance of construction permit(s) for signs and new under canopy lighting, the property owner shall plant species missing within the site as of November 23, 2020, with the plant species identified in the Plant Legend and where indicated on the approved 1991 landscape plan, prepared by Robert H. Lee & Associates, Inc., dated April 10, 1991, with the exception of areas planned for lawn where an alternative, low-growing shrub listed on the City's Development Guide's Appendix A. Plant List. The property owner shall also replace trees for the three extensively trimmed trees along Placerville Drive, and the two similarly trimmed trees along Armory Drive, with 15 gallon sized trees , planting them where indicated on the landscape plan.
8. The property owner shall record a Landscaping Maintenance Agreement on a form prepared by Development Services staff prior to the issuance of a construction permit for activities authorized under SPR90-11-R2, in accordance with PZC 10-4-9 (G)3(n).
9. Under pump canopy lighting shall require a construction permit per Condition 5, and shall conform to the City's Outdoor Lighting Standards (PZC 10-4-16(E)),
10. Other Applicable Requirements. The project approval is subject to all applicable requirements of the Federal, State, City of Placerville and any other affected governmental agencies.
11. Substantial Conformance. The use shall be implemented in substantial conformance to the Site Plan Review as approved by the Planning Commission. Any proposed future change to the site or modification to the application beyond what is authorized under this permit shall be submitted to the Development Services Department for a determination of appropriate procedures.
12. Construction Hours. All exterior construction shall be limited to the daylight hours between 7:00 am to 7:00 pm on any weekday, and 8:00 am to 5:00 pm on weekends and state and federal recognized holidays.
13. All temporary signs shall be removed within 10-days after the installation of City approved and inspected signs under SPR90-11-R2.
14. Conditions a, b and c, approved in 1991 under SPR90-11, and Conditions 1, 2, 3 and 4 that were approved in 2004, are eliminated as analyzed in Attachment "B" of Staff's December 1, 2020 report to the Planning Commission.

**Attachment A**  
**Applicant Submittal Package**

**Attachment B****1990 and 2004 SPR90-11 Conditions of Approval and Compliance Status for SPR90-11**

<b>Conditions of Approval</b>	<b>Compliance Status</b>
<b>Planning Commission: January 15, 1991</b>	
a. The applicants shall comply with the departments comments identified in the staff report dated January 7, 1991.	Condition met. Permits issued and finalized consistent with approval.
b. The landscaping plan shall be amended to reflect additional street trees along Armory Drive and Placerville Drive. Type and location of the proposed trees are subject to review and approval by staff.	Condition not met. Condition to be eliminated due to recommended conditions under SPR90-11-R2 as provided in the staff report. Landscape and Irrigation Plan approved by staff during April 1991. Condition of landscaping as of 11-23-20 revealed plant species missing, including prominent trees and shrubs. Also, existence of extensive recent trimming of existing trees west of the Placerville Drive driveway encroachment, as well as extensive recent trimming of existing trees and missing tree along Armory Drive. In addition, there are four missing Mugo Pine trees at the northeast corner of the site, adjacent to the carwash aisle. Staff met with property owner representative on 11-23-20. Their intent is to plant missing species on site and replace the extensively trimmed trees along Placerville and Armory Drives with 15 gallon tree sizes, where indicated on approved 1991 landscape plan.
c. The pole sign shall be limited to the size drawn by staff (6 foot pecten with the other signs being 2 feet) on a side by side pole and raised 5 feet from grade level and in addition to the informational/directional signs the applicant shall be permitted one wall sign or canopy fascia sign as approved by staff.	Condition met. The pole sign was removed from the site at an unknown time, and the other components were modified under the 2004 Major Change approval by City Council.
<b>City Council: September 28, 2004 Major Change</b>	
1. Provide construction drawings for plan review and permit processing.	Condition met.
2. Secure building permit prior to construction.	Permits issued and finalized consistent with approval.
3. Any proposed future change to the site or modification to the application beyond what is authorized under this permit shall be submitted to the Community Development Department for a determination of appropriate procedures.	No change as condition is advisory.
4. That the blue fascia be eliminated in favor of the other approved colors used on the building.	Condition met

