

Stephen K. Yamashiro
Mayor



County of Hawaii

PLANNING COMMISSION

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CERTIFIED MAIL
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Mr. Gregg Kashiwa
Project Planners Hawaii
5375 Kalaianaoale Highway
Honolulu, HI 96821

Dear Mr. Kashiwa:

Sign Variance Application No. 99-04

Applicant: Kona Coast Shopping Center

Request: Variance to Allow Certain Deviations from Article 2 (Kailua Village Signs),
Chapter 3 (Advertising and Signs) of Hawaii County Code, As Amended

Tax Map Key: 7-4-15:1

The Planning Commission at its duly held public hearing on November 5, 1999, voted to approve the above-referenced application. Sign Variance No. 14 is hereby issued to allow certain deviations from the requirements specified within Article 2 (Kailua Village Signs), Chapter 3 (Advertising and Signs) of the Hawaii County Code, as amended. Specific deviations would apply to the height, number and type of signs. The property is located within the existing Kona Coast Shopping Center at the northwest corner of the intersection of Palani Road and Queen Ka'ahuamahu Highway, Keanolu, North Kona, Hawaii.

Approval of this request is based on the following:

The subject parcel is situated within the Kailua Village Special District. This subject development consists of various retail outlets, a supermarket and several fast food restaurants. The surrounding properties are zoned Village Commercial (CV-10), with two major urban type shopping centers, a post office, bowling alley and financial institutions. The property is situated within the County's Village Commercial zone district, sanctioned by the High Density Urban Development designation of the General Plan Land Use Pattern Allocation Guide (LUPAG) Map.

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The primary intent and purpose of the Kailua Village Sign Code is to encourage and foster good sign design in harmony with the Kailua Village Design Plan theme and related elements of building design, scale, proportion, and image. Attractive harmonious integrated signs have been found to promote and enhance business identification within commercial developments. In consideration of the foregoing, there is a need to give special thought to the relationship of signage to building design that is sensitive and reasonable. To implement these objectives within the Village boundaries, special consideration is given with respect to sizes of signs.

Section 3-72 Sign and lettering size states as follows:

- (a) Unless otherwise provided, the maximum permitted surface area of any sign oriented to any public street or vehicular access shall be:

- (1) Twelve square feet on any building or portion of a building under separate management or control having property frontage of thirty feet or less, except the total surface area of all signs shall not exceed, in the aggregate, twelve square feet on any building frontage.

- (2) Forty percent of the building frontage or twenty-two square feet, whichever is less, on any building or portion of a building under separate management or control having a property frontage of at least thirty feet, except the total surface area of all signs shall not exceed in the aggregate, twenty-two square feet on any building frontage.

- (3) Twelve square feet for any sign not fronting a public street or vehicular access or for any sign located within the Kailua Village core.

Section 3-73 Sign and lettering size states as follows:

- (a) Only one sign for any business or one sign for any street or vehicle access on which a building has frontage is permitted.

Section 3-74 Sign and lettering size states as follows:

- (3) Window or Wall sign. A window or wall sign shall not exceed five and one-half feet in height.

Section 3-75 Sign and lettering size states as follows:

- (a) No person shall erect or maintain:

- (1) Any sign or display which is constructed primarily of materials with a shiny, slick or reflective surface such as fiberglass or acrylic plastic.
- (2) Any sign which is displayed on any roof or mansard roof, or when attached to a building extends above the lowest edge of any portion of the roof or mansard roof.

The subject property is located mauka and outside of Kailua Village's defined central core area. The core area, described as that area bounded by Alii Drive, Palani Road, Kuakini Highway and Hualalai Road, allows a maximum sign size of 12 square feet on any building or portion of a building under separate management or control having a property frontage of thirty feet or less, with 9-inch lettering and 1 sign per business for any street or vehicular access. For the rest of the properties and structures within the Kailua Village Special District, the maximum sign size is 22 square feet. The rationale for the smaller sign size within the Kailua Village core was due to the visitor/pedestrian oriented nature of the village.

On June 2, 1987, the Planning Commission approved a Sign Variance for KTA Super Stores. The application was for a variance from Article 2 (Kailua Village Signs), Chapter 3 (Advertising and Signs) of Hawaii County Code, as amended, relating to letter size. The approval allowed 1 sign, a maximum letter size of 15 inches for parallel signs in lieu of the maximum 9 inches.

On September 27, 1990, the Planning Commission approved a Sign Variance for Kailua Village Associates, Inc., the Project Management of Kona Coast Shopping Center. The application was for a variance from Article 2 (Kailua Village Signs), Chapter 3 (Advertising and Signs) of Hawaii County Code, as amended, relating to the number, height, letter size, and size of signs for the Kona Coast Shopping Center. The approval allowed: 1) a total surface area of all signs fronting each store to equal 27 square feet in lieu of 40 percent of the building frontage or 22 square feet, whichever is less; 2) to allow maximum letter sizes of 12 inches for parallel signs in lieu of the maximum 9 inches; 3) to allow two signs per business in lieu of the maximum one sign per business; and 4) to allow one free standing sign for the shopping center, with the logo to be located at six feet in height in lieu of the maximum height of 5.5 feet from the finished elevation. The rationale was the primary dependence upon vehicular traffic in deference to the more distinctive core Village atmosphere along Alii Drive. There is a distinct difference between the scale and size of the shopping center and the existing developments on the makai area of the Kailua Village Special District.

On October 31, 1996, the Ross Dress For Less store was granted a sign permit for the one marquee and one wall sign stating "Ross Dress For Less." The approved signage area was 10 square feet. On December 2, 1996, Ross Dress For Less initially filed a request for a sign variance for 6 signs. On January 7, 1997, the request was given an

unfavorable recommendation by the Kailua Village Design Commission. The applicant subsequently withdrew its application.

Ross Dress For Less submitted a second application for a sign variance. The signage was significantly reduced in size for the front and side signs from 97 square feet to 52 square feet (53 percent of the originally requested size). Specifically the applicant requested the following:

- a. 2 front entrance wall signs, 12.5 square feet, with a 1/4" raised border, painted matte white and semi gloss blue; in lieu of one sign as allowed by Section 3-73(a).

- b. 1 roof sign, 52 square feet in size with 18 inch to 30 inch high lettering, internally illuminated plastic finish; in lieu of the maximum 22 square feet allowed by Section 3-72(c); in lieu of one sign as allowed by Section 3-73(a); and non-acrylic plastic as allowed by Section 3-75(a)(1) of the Kailua Village Sign Code.

- c. 1 roof sign, 45 square feet in size with 12 inch to 30 inch high lettering, internally illuminated plastic finish; in lieu of the maximum 9 inches lettering allowed by Section 3-72(c); in lieu of one sign as allowed by Section 3-73(a); and non-acrylic plastic as allowed by Section 3-75(a)(1) of the Kailua Village Sign Code.

The request was given an unfavorable recommendation by the Kailua Village Design Commission. On June 12, 1997 the applicant's request for a sign variance was held before the Planning Commission. The applicant subsequently withdrew its application.

Ross Dress For Less submitted a third request for a Sign Variance. Specifically the applicant requested the following:

- a. 1 front entrance wall signs, 12.5 square feet, with a 1/4" raised border, painted matte white and semi gloss blue; as allowed of by Section 3-73(a).

- b. 2 roof sign, 32.15 square feet in size with 15 inch to 22 inch high lettering, internally illuminated plastic finish; in lieu of the maximum 9 inches lettering allowed by Section 3-72(c); in lieu of one sign as allowed by Section 3-73(a); and non-acrylic plastic as allowed by Section 3-75(a)(1) of the Kailua Village Sign Code.

- c. I under the canopy sign, double faced, internally illuminated, in lieu of one sign as allowed by Section 3-73(a).

The application was given a favorable recommendation by the Kailua Village Design Commission and subsequently approved by the Planning Commission.

Sign Variance Criteria:

No Variance may be granted unless the Commission finds that:

- I. There are special and unusual circumstances which do not generally apply to surrounding property, buildings or signs in the same district, including but not limited to a sign's long-term historical or traditional association with Kailua Village.

On September 27, 1990, the Planning Commission approved a Sign Variance for Kailua Village Associates, Inc., the Project Management of Kona Coast Shopping Center. The application was for a variance from Article 2 (Kailua Village Signs), Chapter 3 (Advertising and Signs) of Hawaii County Code, as amended, relating to the number, height, letter size, and size of signs for the Kona Coast Shopping Center. The approval allowed: 1) a total surface area of all signs fronting each store to equal 27 square feet in lieu of forty percent of the building frontage or twenty-two square feet, whichever is less; 2) to allow maximum letter sizes of 12 inches for parallel signs in lieu of the maximum 9 inches; 3) to allow two signs per business in lieu of the maximum one sign per business; and 4) to allow one free standing sign for the shopping center, with the logo to be located at six feet in height in lieu of the maximum height of 5.5 feet from the finished elevation.

The current sign variance application would allow 12.5 to 32.15 square feet in lieu of the minimum 27 square feet for the roof signs. This would increase the signage a marginal 5.15 to 15 square feet.

The Kona Coast Shopping Center is heavily dependent upon the visibility to vehicular traffic travelling upon the Queen Ka'ahumanu and Palani Road which serves as the gateway to Kailua Village. Under this circumstance and with the creation of different land and building patterns in this particular area, the physical location of the applicant's retail store is dependent upon exposure to vehicular traffic as well as pedestrian traffic within the shopping mall. Therefore, the primary dependence upon vehicular traffic for this retail establishment in this shopping center in deference to the more distinctive village atmosphere along Alii Drive has to be recognized and evaluated. Attractive harmonious integrated signs have been found to promote and enhance business identification within shopping

II. In consideration of the foregoing, there is a need to give special thought to the relationship of signage to building design that is sensitive and reasonable. In recognition of this difference, there are special circumstances related to the variance request which revolve around the varying signage needs of both areas; the applicant's integrated and organized signage program for the Kona Coast Shopping Center; and the inclusion of the elements of the Kailua Village Sign Code relating to design, material and color criteria within the applicant's request.

II. Special or unusual circumstances either deprive the owner or applicant of substantial property rights which would otherwise be available, or obviously interfere with the best use of signage on the property.

There are special or unusual circumstances submitted or demonstrated by the applicant that there would be a deprivation of substantial property right which would otherwise be available or obviously interfere with the best use of signage on the property. This request is reasonable given the physical factors: the proposed lettering size in relationship to the building design, the location of the shopping center which is mauka and outside of the Kailua Village's defined central core, and the existence of mature landscaping which obscures existing signage.

III. The granting of the variance does not constitute a grant of personal or special privilege inconsistent with the limitations upon other properties under identical ordinances, statutes, or rules.

The applicant has submitted ample evidence that would constitute as special or unusual circumstances for this variance request. Without the necessary substantiation or any special circumstances related to the proposed signage, the granting of this variance would be contrary to the limitation placed on other retail establishments under similar circumstances. The proposed lettering size and illumination is in relationship to the location of the subject development and the Kona Coast Shopping Center's intent to foster a quality and organized signage program for their businesses. The lettering size and illumination is integrated and compatible with the building theme and should not pose a negative visual impact from Palani Road and the Queen Ka'ahumanu Highway.

IV. The granting of the variance does not violate the intent and purpose of the Kailua Village Design Plan or the intent and purpose of this article, does not militate against the County General Plan, and does not materially affect the public welfare and is not injurious to improvements or property rights in the near vicinity.

The granting of the variance would not be in violation of the intent and purpose of the Kailua Village Design Plan. An element of the Kailua Village

Design Plan which was adopted by the County Council in 1979, as Ordinance No. 481 (Kailua Village Sign Code) defined the criteria and requirements for signage within the Kailua Village Special District. The applicant has shown that the proposed variance request would not violate the intent and purpose of the Kailua Village Sign Code. In addition, the Kailua Village Design Commission on October 19, 1999, voted to approve the request.

Based on the above findings, the Planning Commission hereby approves the proposed sign variance.

Approval of this request is subject to the following conditions. Should any of the conditions not be met or substantially complied within a timely fashion, the Planning Director may initiate procedures to revoke the variance permit.

1. The applicant, its assigns, tenants or successors, shall be responsible for complying with all stated conditions of approval.
2. The approval of this sign variance shall be only for what was requested and shall not preclude the compliance with all other requirements of the Kailua Village Sign Code.
3. The applicant shall apply for and secure sign permits for all of the proposed signs unless otherwise exempted by the Kailua Village Sign Code.
4. All other applicable State and County rules and regulations shall be complied with.

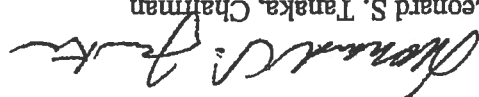
The approval does not, however, sanction the specific plans submitted with the application as they may be subject to change given specific code and regulatory requirements of the affected agencies.

Mr. Gregg Kashiwa

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Should you have any questions, please contact Eleanor Mirikitani of the Planning Department West Hawaii Office at 327-3510 or Alice Kawaha of the Planning Department Hilo Office at 961-8288.

Sincerely,


Leonard S. Tanaka, Chairman
Planning Commission

Lkonacoast01pc
cc: Department of Public Works
Real Property Tax Division
West Hawaii Office
Kazu Hayashida, Director/DOT-Highways, Honolulu
Kailua Village Design Commission
Kona Coast Shopping Center