



DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT STAFF REPORT

Project Name: Northwest Regional Hospital

Applicant: Addie Mentry

Project Location: 2801 North State Road 7

Hearing No. BA-03-2019

Hearing Date: July 16, 2019

Board: Board of Adjustment

I. RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVAL

II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The petitioner is requesting permission to install a third and fourth secondary identification wall sign on the east elevation and two non-conforming directional signs. In addition, the petitioner is requesting relief for the main entrance sign and the address sign. In addition, the existing main entrance sign on the south elevation exceeds the sign area of a general information sign per Section 39.6(F). The existing address numbers on the east elevation exceeds the height limitation of a required sign per Section 39.4(C). Staff is recommending approval of the sign waiver request to allow a third and fourth secondary identification wall sign, allow two directional signs and, sign waiver for the two existing signs based upon positive findings with respect to Section 39.19 of the Margate Zoning Code.

III. ANALYSIS:

1) Description.

The subject property has a land use designation of Transit Oriented Corridor, and a zoning designation of Community Facility (CF-1) zoning district. The subject property is a 250-bed medical center and healthcare complex located at 2801 North State Road 7 (exhibit 1). The hospital has undergone new construction to expand upwards on the eastern portion of the building facing North State Road 7.

The former signs on the east elevation have since been removed due to construction and the petitioner is seeking to update the previously approved Uniform Sign Plan (USP) to accommodate the new expansion. However, the proposed third and fourth secondary identification wall sign, directional signs, and existing main entrance sign and building address numbers do not conform to the Margate Zoning Code. Prior to updating the USP, the petitioner is seeking relief from Sections 39.6(C)(1), 39.6(G), 39.6(F), and 39.4(C) of the Margate Zoning Code.

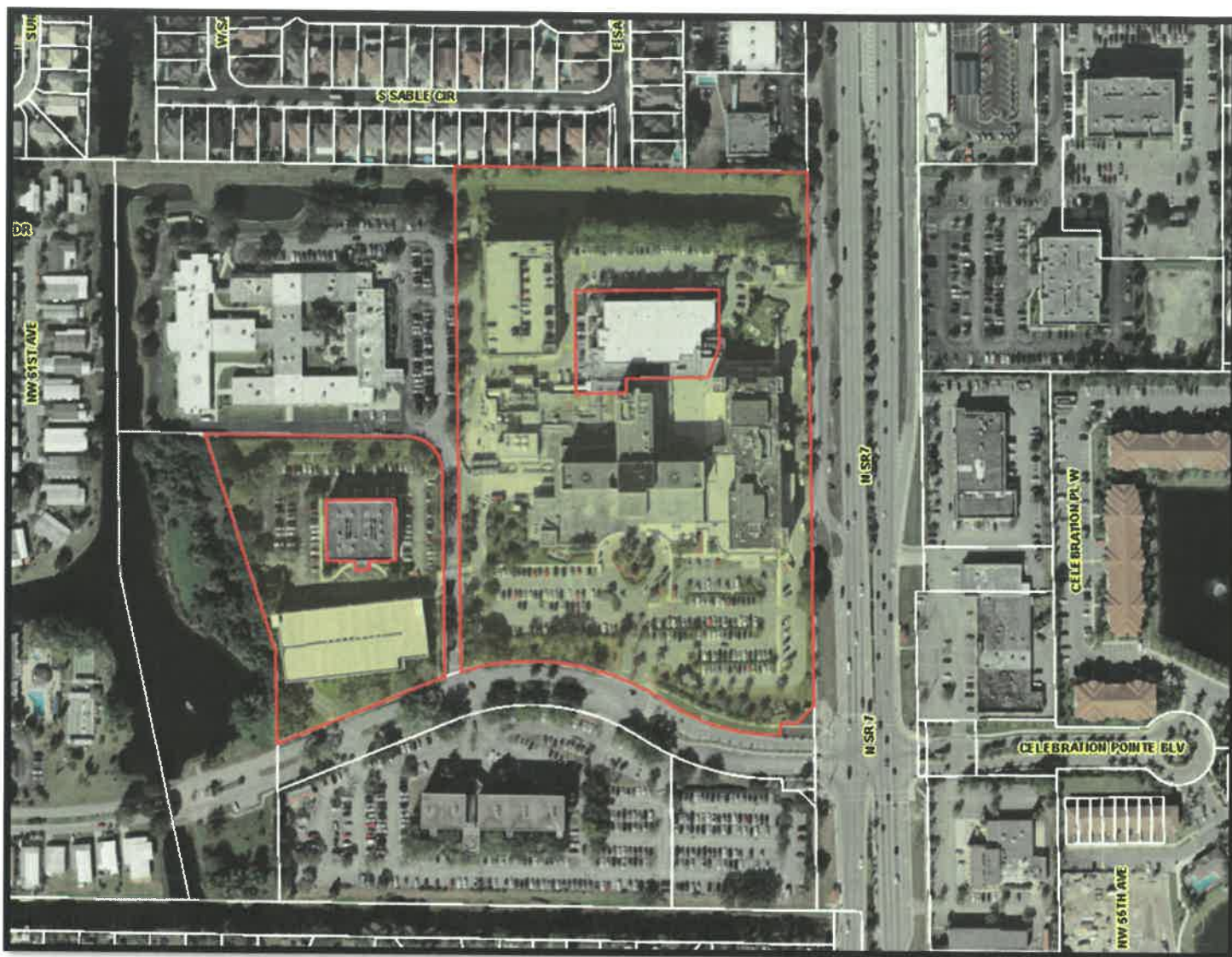


Exhibit 1: Location Map



Sign 1

Sign 2

Sign Waiver CRA-01-2011



Exhibit 2: South Elevation-Existing two main identification wall sign



Sign Location 3

Exhibit 4: South Elevation-Existing Main Entrance sign (General information sign)



Sign Location 4

Exhibit 3: South Elevation-Existing Emergency sign (Special sign)

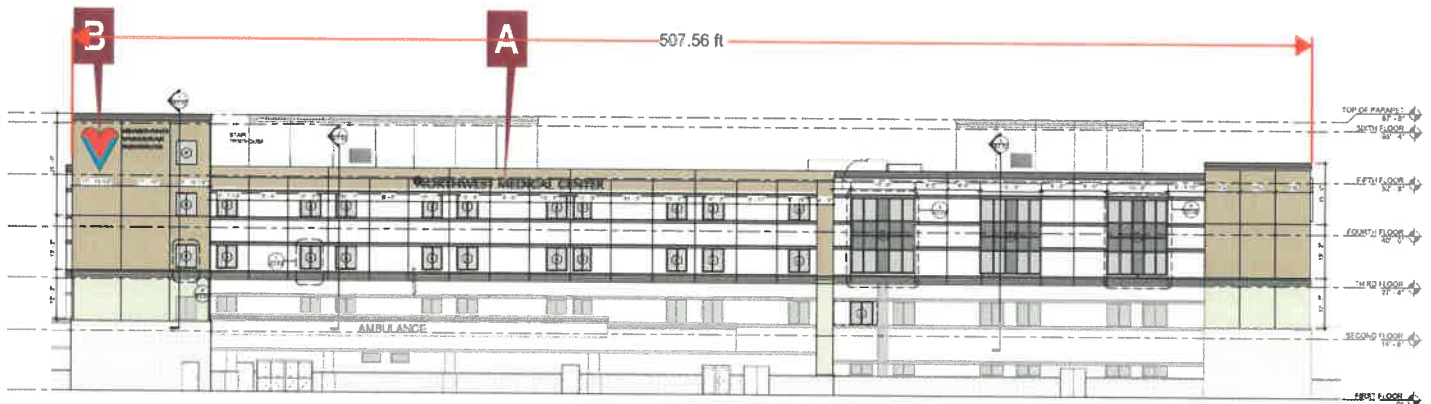


Exhibit 5: Proposed East Elevation Sign Location

SIGN LOCATION 5

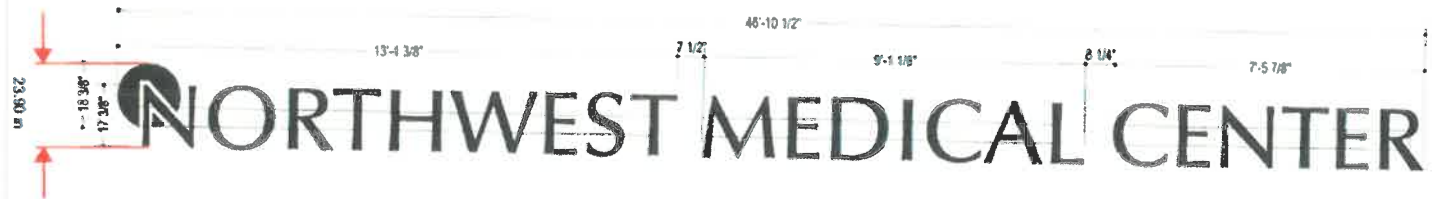


Exhibit 6: East Elevation-Proposed Northwest Medical Center (Secondary ID sign)

SIGN LOCATION 6

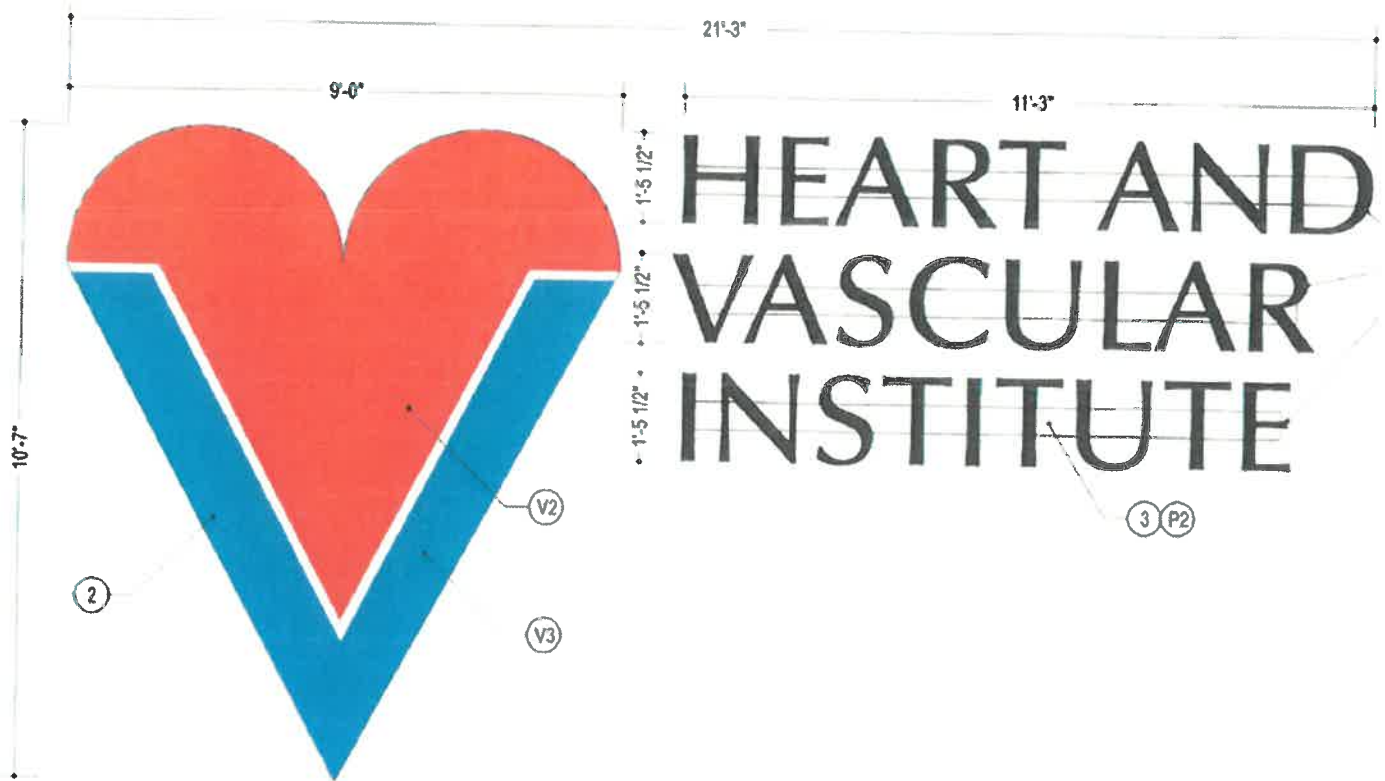


Exhibit 7: East Elevation-Proposed Heart and Vascular Institute (Secondary ID sign)

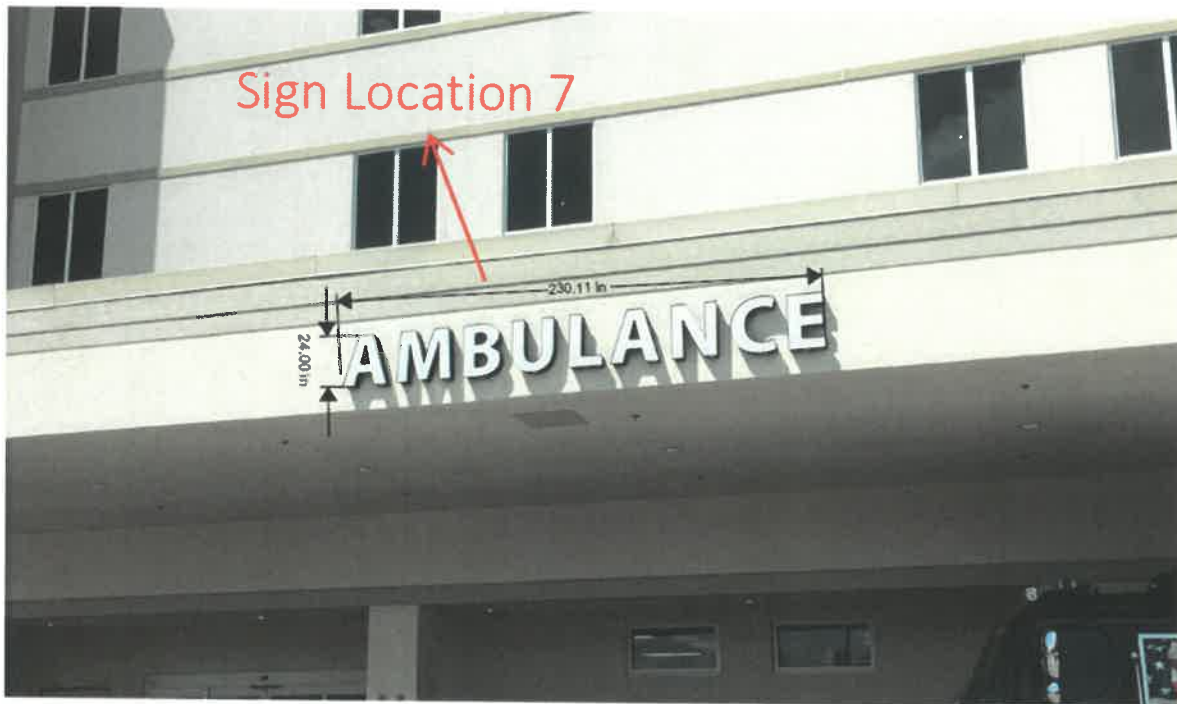
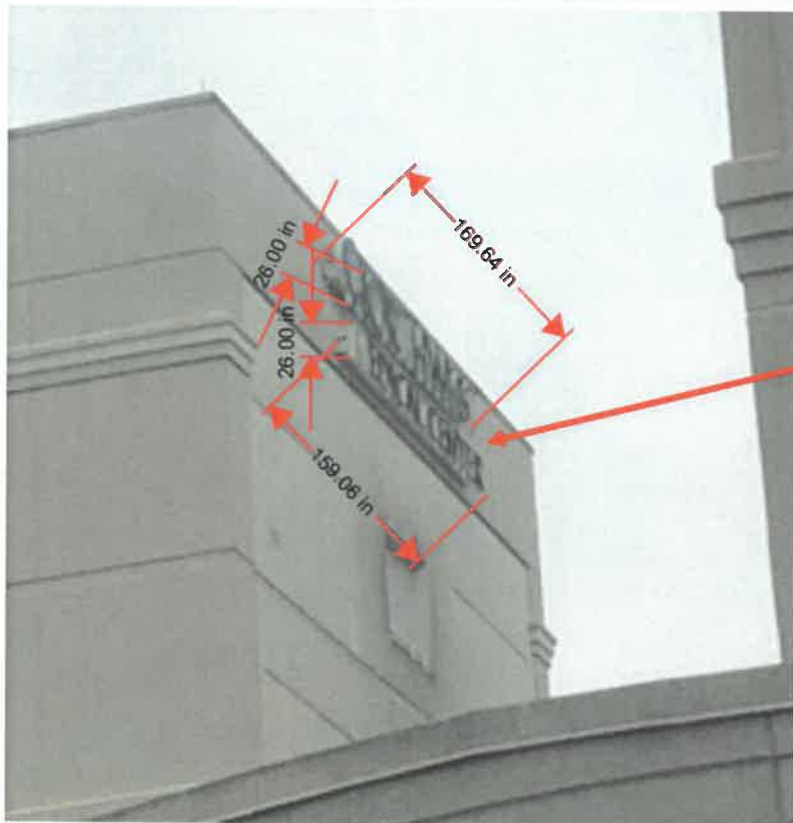


Exhibit 8: East Elevation-Existing Ambulance Sign (Special Sign)



Sign Location 19

Exhibit 9: East Elevation-Existing Northwest Medical Center (Building ID wall sign)

SIGN LOCATION 8



Exhibit 10: North Elevation-Proposed Heart Logo (secondary ID wall sign)

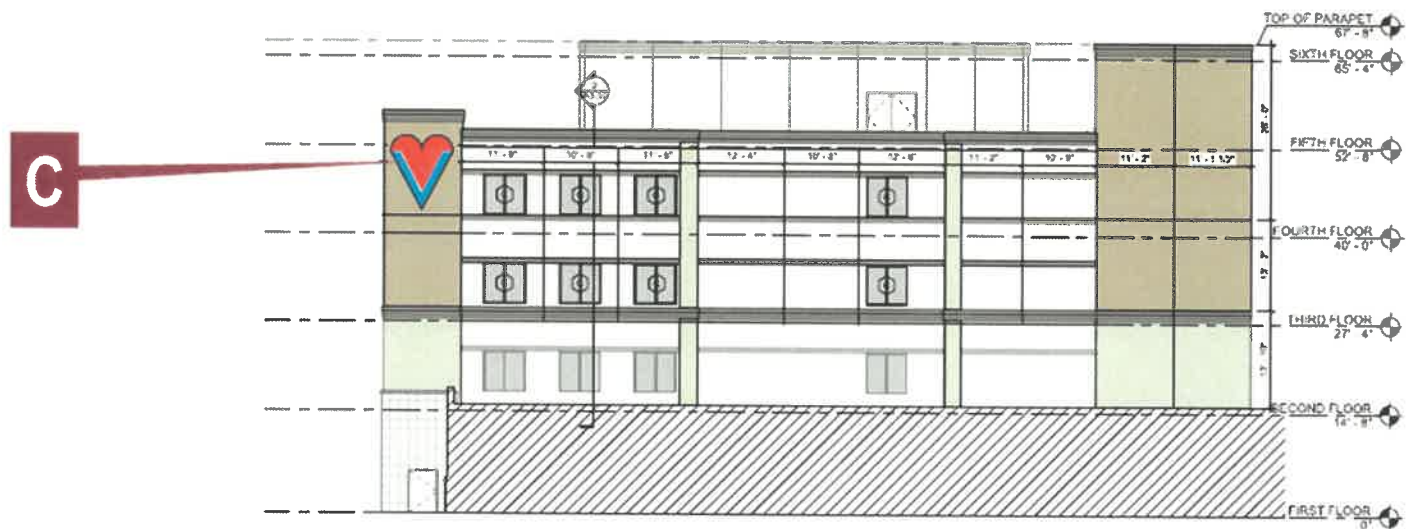


Exhibit 11: North Elevation-Proposed Heart Logo Location

NOTE**
ALL signs on this
page will be removed

Sign Location 16

Sign Location 15

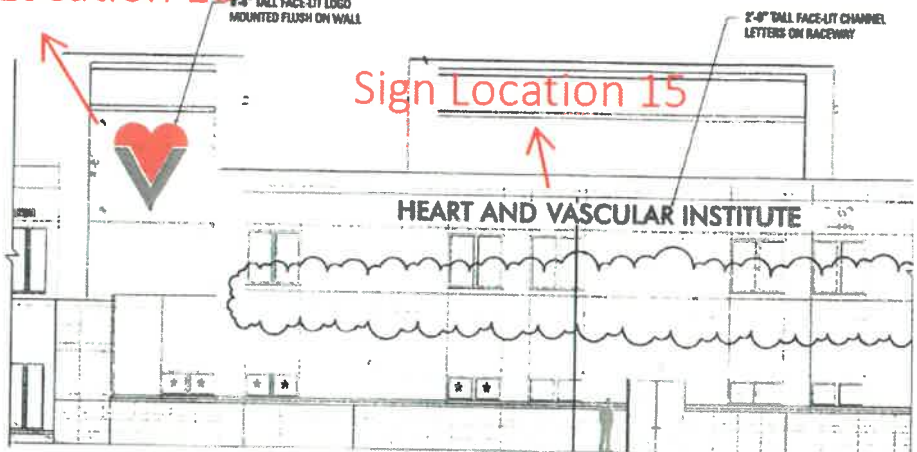


Exhibit 12: East Elevation-Signs removed

Sign Location 18

Sign Location 17

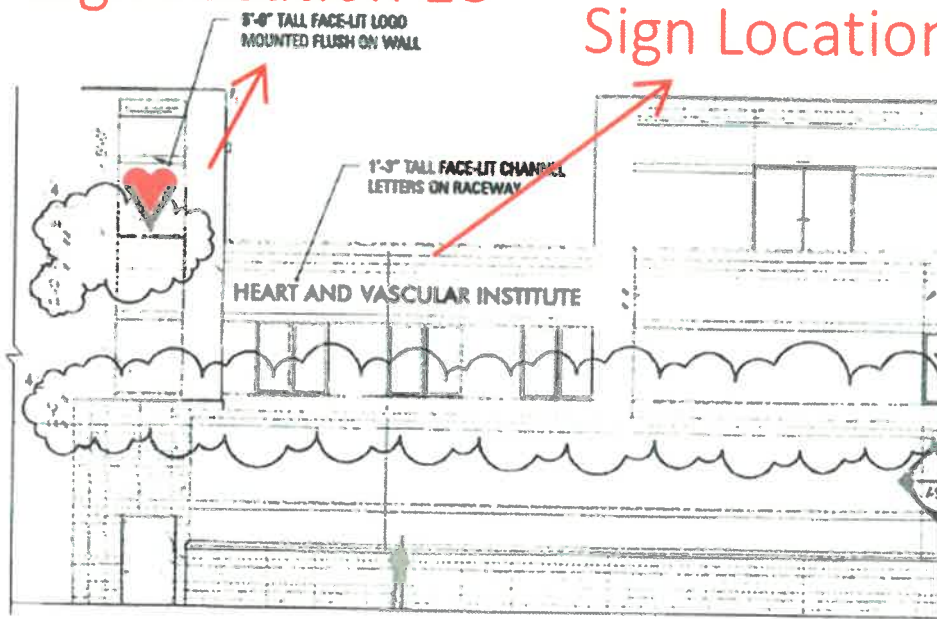


Exhibit 13: North Elevation-Signs removed



Exhibit 14: East Elevation-Existing Northwest and Outpatient Pavilion with address

Sign Location 11

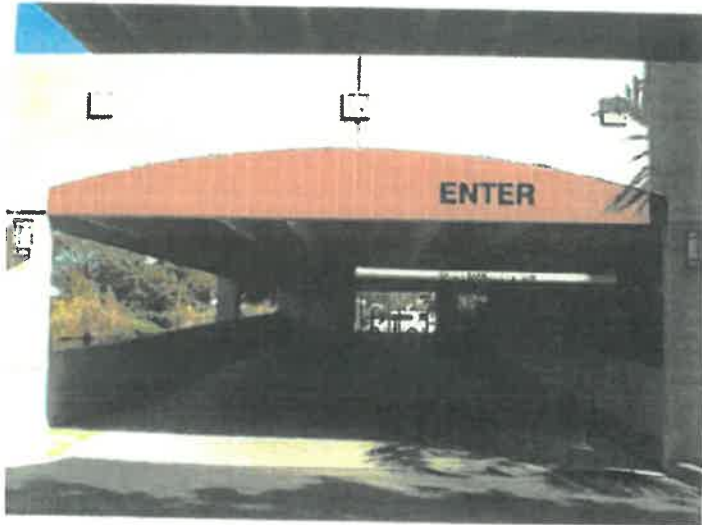


Exhibit 15: Parking Garage (exempt signs)

Sign Location 12





SIGN LOCATION
SET BACK 10' FROM
PROPERTY LINE

Exhibit 16: Location of Proposed Directional Sign 1



Exhibit 17: Proposed Directional Sign 1



Exhibit 18: Location of Proposed Directional Sign 2



Exhibit 19: Proposed Directional Sign 2

2) Compliance with Zoning Code.

Sign Location 1 & 2

The south elevation facing Colonial Drive is considered the eligible frontage for the main identification wall sign. Currently, the south elevation has two existing main identification wall signs. The first main identification wall sign is the "Northwest Medical Center" in black Helvetica bold letter styles (exhibit 2). The second main identification wall sign is the "Heart and Vascular Institute" sign in black Helvetica bold letter styles with the red heart logo (exhibit 2). The first sign is permitted by the Sign Code. On April 11, 2011, the second sign was granted a sign waiver to allow a second main identification wall sign. Therefore, both main identification wall signs comply with the Margate Sign Code.

Sign Location 3

The south elevation also provides an existing main entrance sign which is 9 inches by 82.82 inches or approximately 5 square feet (exhibit 4). This sign is considered a general information sign. Pursuant to Section 39.6(F), the maximum area allowed is 4 square feet and the maximum height allowed is 6 feet. Therefore, the existing sign does not meet the code regulations of the sign area or height. Staff recommends as a condition of approval that the main entrance sign be changed to be consistent with the existing main identification wall sign letter styles and increase the letter height between 15-24 inches.

Sign Location 4 & 7

The south elevation includes the emergency room entrance of the hospital. In addition, the east elevation includes the ambulance entrance for the hospital. Currently, there is an existing red channel lit "Emergency" sign on the south elevation (exhibit 3) and a white channel lit "Ambulance" sign on the east elevation (exhibit 8). Pursuant to Section 39.8(A)(3), special signs, the city may authorize to be erected; signs determined to provide for the health, safety and welfare of the community. The emergency and ambulance signs are in place for the safety and health of the community, to have quick response to the location of the emergency and ambulance entrance. Therefore, both signs are considered a special sign.

Sign Location 19

On the east elevation, facing State Road 7 is considered the secondary wall sign frontage. Currently, there is an existing building identification wall sign "Northwest Medical Center" in black Helvetica bold (exhibit 9). Pursuant to Section 39.6(E), the existing building identification wall signs meets the criteria for a building identification wall sign.

Sign Location 5 & 6

On the east elevation, the petitioner is proposing an illuminated channel letter "Northwest Medical Center" as the third secondary identification wall sign (exhibit 6). In addition, a fourth secondary identification wall sign "Heart and Vascular Institute" with a heart logo with three lines of copy is proposed on the tower feature of the expansion (exhibit 7). Pursuant to Section 39.6(C)(1), the secondary identification wall sign is allowed a maximum of one sign per side with right-of-way frontage and two lines of copy. The petitioner is requesting a sign waiver to the number of allowed signs on the building frontage for both signs and the three lines of copy.

Sign Location 8

On the north elevation, the petitioner is proposing an illuminated heart logo as the secondary identification wall sign (exhibit 10). The proposed sign is 10 feet and 7 inches by 9 feet for a total area of 90.7 square foot. The north elevation is 794.15 feet in width. Pursuant to Section 39.6(E), one square foot for each linear foot of building frontage not to exceed main identification wall sign. Therefore, the proposed sign complies with the Margate Sign code.

Sign Location 9 & 10

The east elevation includes an outpatient entrance of the hospital. Currently, there are existing "Northwest" and "Outpatient Pavilion" as the first and second secondary identification wall sign (exhibit 14). On August 15, 2000 both signs were granted a sign waiver to allow a second and third secondary identification wall sign. Since the first and second wall sign have since been removed because of construction on the east elevation, these signs are now the first and second secondary identification wall sign. Therefore, both signs comply with the Margate Sign Code. However, the address numbers vertically on the building was not granted a waiver. Pursuant to Section 39.4(C), all address signs shall have a minimum three-inch and a maximum of eight-inch letters. The existing address signs exceed the maximum size of 8 inches. Therefore, the petitioner is requesting a sign waiver to Section 39.4(C) of the Margate Zoning Code.

Sign Location 11 & 12

The existing garage "enter" and "exit" signs are exempt from permitting (exhibit 15). Pursuant to Section 39.16(10) of the Margate Zoning Code, signs exempt from permit requirements, the following signs shall be exempt from the permit requirements of this section: traffic regulatory signs with approval from city engineer. Therefore, said signs meet the Margate Sign Code.

Sign Location 13 & 14

These signs are not on the same property as the hospital and therefore, not part of this staff report.

Sign Location 15, 16, 17, & 18

The signs have since been removed from the east elevation due to the expansion of the hospital (exhibit 12 & 13).

Directional Sign 1 & 2

The expansion has created a need for the hospital to provide additional directional signs to navigate patients throughout the site. The petitioner has proposed one directional sign to be located on the entrance of Colonial Drive on the drive isle to the far west (exhibit 16). Another directional sign to be located interior of the site within the same drive isle (exhibit 18). Per Section 39.2, the definition of "monument sign" is a sign which is attached to a self-supporting structure, has vertical sides from base of the sign face to the ground level, has a sign face that is no more than six (6) inches wider on either side than the sign structure, has a concealed means of support and is not attached or affixed in any way to a building or other structure, and has no clearance between the ground and the bottom of the sign. In addition, the definition of a "sign area" provides the following guidance for calculating the size of a monument sign "the square foot area from the ground, excluding first twelve (12) inches, to the maximum height times width is the sign area. Because both signs take the form as a monument sign, the first 12 inches off the ground is not counted. However, the purpose of the sign is a directional sign. Pursuant to Section 29.6(G), directional signs are allowed a maximum area of 4 square feet and a maximum height of 4 feet. The directional sign 1 is a total area of 23.3 square feet and the directional

sign 2 has a total area of 9 square feet. Therefore, the petitioner is requesting a sign waiver to Section 39.6(G) for the size and height.

Section 39.19 of the Margate Zoning Code provides that a decision to grant a sign waiver by the Board of Adjustment must be in conformance with three specified criteria. Those criteria are as follows:

- 1) There is something unique about the building or site configuration that would cause the signage permitted by this article to be ineffective in identifying a use or structure that would otherwise be entitled to a sign.**

The following statement by the applicant:

(Monuments)

"Given the size and number of entry points to our campus, the signage permitted by code would be ineffective for appropriately directing patients and family members to the appropriate building and/or facility entrance."

Due to the expansion of the existing use, the site requires additional signage to accommodate vehicular traffic and guide customers to the different services on the hospital campus. The building is unique in its use and scale as it provides health care services, safety to patients that should be entitled a sign. In addition, the sign code does not address directional signs for multi-service building that would meet a hospital's needs.

(Wall Signs)

"Due to the size of the campus and the multiple vantage points for emergency and vehicular traffic, the wall signage permitted by code would not be sufficient for identifying the building. The campus includes multiple building entrances for specific purposes such as emergency entrances for emergency vehicles, emergency entrances for patients and family, etc."

The nature and scale of the use requires additional signs to accommodate the communication between people and their environment. The code does not provide specific guidelines to a large hospital use that requires additional signs for services. Staff finds that the building is unique in its use and scale as it provides health care services, safety to patients that should be entitled a sign.

- 2) The granting of a waiver is not contrary to the intent of the sign code, or the aesthetics of the area, and does not create a nuisance or adversely affect any neighboring properties.**

The following statement by the applicant:

(Monuments)

"The proposed monument sign conforms with existing monuments signage on campus and therefore would not adversely affect any neighborhood properties."

The proposed directional signs would not be contrary to the intent of the code. In fact, the purpose of the signs would meet the intent of the code to facilitate clear and attractive communication between people and their environment. Additionally, the proposed directional signs create a uniform and aesthetically pleasing manner to the surrounding environment. Also, it assists visitors to navigate the large and complex campus.

(Wall Signs)

"The existing and proposed signage would not be contrary to the intent of the signage code. The signage is meant to concisely advertise the hospital and the intent of the signage is not to take create a nuisance or adversely affect the surround areas. The signage is intended to highlight the proper use of the buildings configuration."

The intent of the code is to facilitate clear and attractive communication between people and their environment. Due to the scale and nature of this use, the proposed sign provides a cleaner and more effective signage with three lines of copy rather than what is permitted by code. The signage permitted by code limits larger scale buildings to two lines which would create signs to be longer along the building frontage. The proposed signage provides stronger identification of the hospital within a uniform and aesthetically pleasing manner. Staff recommends that the existing main entrance wall sign to match the existing main identification wall signs as a condition of approval to be consistent with the aesthetics of the area. Staff finds that the proposed and existing signs do not create a nuisance or adversely affect any neighboring properties.

3) Literal enforcement of this article would result in unreasonable and undue hardship upon the petitioner.

The following statement by the applicant:

(Monuments)

"Enforcement of this signage code would certainly pose an impact to the community and the patients that we serve. Given the nature of our service, it is imperative that patients/community members are able to effectively and easily navigate the campus so as to not delay important medical care."

Due to the expansion of the existing use, the site requires additional signage to accommodate vehicular traffic and guide customers to the different uses on site. Literal enforcement would result in unreasonable and undue hardship upon the petitioner and the safety of customers who need to have quick information to navigate throughout the premises.

(Wall Signs)

"Enforcement of the current signage code would certainly pose an impact to the community and the patients that we serve. Given the nature of the business, it is crucial that patients in distress and community members can effectively and easily navigate the campus so as to not delay urgent medical care."

Currently, the sign code does not provide specific guidelines to a large hospital use, and relies on non-residential sign code standards that are designed for the typical retail stores and business offices. The current sign code does not accommodate the nature or the scale of this use to properly identify a use or structure that would otherwise require more intensive signage than typical retail and office establishments. Literal enforcement would result in unreasonable and undue hardship upon the petitioner and the safety of patients who need to have access to services in a reasonable and affective way.

3) Consistency with Comprehensive Plan.

The plan is silent on this matter.

4) Compatibility with surrounding area.

The proposed directional signs and wall signs with the exemption of the main entrance wall sign are designed in a uniform and aesthetically pleasing manner that is compatible with surrounding area. Staff recommends that a condition of approval that the petitioner changes the main entrance sign to match the existing main identification wall sign letter styles and increase the letter height between 15-24 inches.

IV. RATIONALE:

The granting of the sign waiver will not create a nuisance or adversely affect any neighboring properties. The proposal is in conformance with criterions of Section 39.19 of the Margate Zoning Code. For these reasons, staff recommends approval of this sign waiver with the condition that the petitioner changes the main entrance sign to match the existing main identification wall sign letter styles and increase the letter height between 15-24 inches.



Robert Massarelli, AICP
Director of Economic Development Services