



July 30, 2023

Michael Klein, AICP
Community Development Director
Planning Division
100 Civic Center Way
Calabasas, CA 91302

RE: Story Pole Modification Request

Dear Mr. Klein,

The purpose of this letter is to outline the details of our alternate story pole proposal as presented to the Planning Commission on June 15th and July 6th.

Background

On May 1, 2023, after over a year and a half of extensive community outreach, we filed an entitlement application with the City to improve a portion of The Commons at Calabasas, which we opened in 1998 and have owned and operated for the last twenty-five years. As you know, per the Story Pole Procedures, story poles are required in order to move forward in the public review process; however, in cases where it is not feasible or practical to install story poles, an alternative may be proposed to the City stating the basis of the justification.

On June 6, 2023, we submitted a request to modify the City's story pole requirements because, as demonstrated in our request, it is not feasible to install story poles at The Commons at Calabasas.

At the Planning Commission meeting on June 15, 2023, we proposed the use of Augmented Reality (AR) in lieu of story poles. We illustrated how the use of AR would

effectively and more accurately demonstrate the Project’s proposed height and scale, thus meeting the spirit and intent of the Story Pole Procedures. The Planning Commission concurred that the use of AR was a viable option and directed us to move forward with AR, but return to the Commission with details related to signage. The Commission also asked that we explore limited physical representation alternatives that would not adversely impact operations, tenants or public safety.

At the Planning Commission meeting on July 6, 2023, we proposed a “hybrid” approach—using augmented reality and a physical representation. However, the Planning Commission voted not to approve the modification request.

Proposal

The “hybrid” approach presented to the Planning Commission is outlined below and shown in the attached exhibit.

Augmented Reality

As supported by the Planning Commission, AR will be the primary tool available to help the community visualize the location, mass, and height of the proposed buildings.

- Duration: As required per the Story Pole Procedures, the AR will be publicly available no later than four weeks prior to the Project’s first public hearing and will remain available until a final decision is rendered on the project.

Physical Representation

As requested by the Planning Commission, we have thoroughly reviewed alternatives to represent the maximum height of the proposed buildings and propose the following, subject to review and approval by relevant government review authorities.

- Physical Depiction:
 - Two timber “utility” and/or composite poles will be placed behind the theater building to illustrate the elevation of Building A. One pole (near the western edge of the existing theater) will illustrate

the maximum top of roof for the proposed amenity space and top of roof of the pool deck, the other pole (near the eastern edge of the existing theater) will demonstrate the top of roof of the pool deck. If requested, we can also demarcate the top of parapet. Together, the poles will illustrate the general footprint of Building A. These poles will be buried underground, avoiding the need for guy wires.

- Two timber “utility” and/or composite poles will be placed in the existing surface parking lot to illustrate the building height to top of roof. If requested, we can also demarcate the top of the mansard roof.
- All four poles will include a security fence enclosure.
- In lieu of flags which increase the structural load on the poles, the tops of the poles will be painted in a bright color, to illustrate the top of roof and top of architectural details, as appropriate. As the proposed buildings vary in elevation, height may be illustrated (i.e., the poles will be painted) at multiple intervals.
- Duration: Consistent with Story Pole Procedures, the poles will be installed no later than thirty days prior to the Project’s first public hearing and will remain available until a final decision is rendered on the project.

Community Notification

To promote continued community engagement and transparency, we propose a robust marketing program to complement our plan, as follows.

- Signage: Two signs will be placed along Calabasas Road in front of Citibank on the northwest portion of the property and in front of King’s Fish House on the northeast portion of the property. The sign specifications are proposed as follows:
 - Size: approximately 4-feet x 8-feet or 32-square-feet
 - Sign Color: White background with black lettering

- Material: ½-inch MDO Plywood, ¼-inch Coroplast (corrugated vinyl), or similar material designed to withstand the elements.
 - Height: The sign will be at least three feet off the ground.
 - Lettering: Professionally lettered, using an easy-to-read business typeface (Arial or similar).
 - Content: The signage will include (1) at least one project rendering, (2) the date, time and place of the hearing; the name of hearing body; and a general explanation of the matter to be considered, (3) the Project web address, and (4) details on the physical representation and augmented reality.
 - Duration: The signage will be installed no later than four weeks prior to the Project’s first hearing and will remain up until a final decision is rendered on the project.
- Kiosks: Four kiosks will be placed in the existing shopping center near the theater building, pond, rose garden, and Park Sorrento. The specifications are proposed as follow:
 - The kiosks will include the following: (1) at least one project rendering, (2) directions on how to use the AR technology, (3) details on the physical representation, and (4) our contact information. Note: in the event a member of the community does not have a smartphone, an iPad will be provided by our team.
 - Duration: The kiosks will be installed no later than four weeks prior to the Project’s first hearing and will remain up until a final decision is rendered on the project.
 - An additional kiosk will be provided to the City, at its request, to be posted at the Civic Center. The exact location will be at the City’s discretion. [ADDED AFTER THE PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING ON 7/6/2023, PER THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT’S REQUEST.]

- Website: Information regarding the AR technology and poles will be included on our website at: thecommonslane.com. The website will also contain videos showing the AR.
- Public Notice: If the City is amenable, we propose to include information about the AR and poles on the City's project website and in the public notices required per Section 17.78.020 of the City of Calabasas Code of Ordinances.

Conclusion

Implementation of the AR technology combined with the physical poles as outlined above, will not only meet, but exceed the purpose of the Story Pole Procedures.

We look forward to next steps and thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Chris Robertson

Chris Robertson, AICP, LEED AP

Vice President, Planning, Government and Community Relations