



City of Denton

City Hall
215 E. McKinney Street
Denton, Texas
www.cityofdenton.com

AGENDA INFORMATION SHEET

DEPARTMENT: Department of Development Services

ACM: Cassey Ogden

DATE: March 5, 2024

SUBJECT

Hold a public hearing and consider adoption of an ordinance of the City of Denton, Texas, providing a Special Sign District zoning overlay on an approximately 54 acre property generally located on the southeast corner of State School Road and Interstate 35E in the City of Denton, Denton County, Texas; adopting an amendment to the City's official zoning map; providing for a penalty in the maximum amount of \$500.00 for violations thereof; providing a severability clause and an effective date. The Planning and Zoning Commission voted [5-0] to recommend approval of the request. Motion for approval by Commissioner Villarreal and second by Commissioner Cole. (SD23-0002a, James Wood Autopark Special Sign District, Ashley Ekstedt)

<https://dentontx.new.swagit.com/videos/297464?ts=7784>

BACKGROUND

James Wood Autopark is a 54-acre automotive sales dealership which includes several sales buildings with associated automotive sales parking. Vehicular access to the site includes five driveway connections along the I-35E service road and three driveway connections along State School Road. These driveway connections provide entrances to the various brand dealerships within the overall AutoPark as well as the body shop and parking areas. The proposed signs were previously installed along the I-35E service road and were taken down due to TxDOT right-of-way acquisition for the I-35E widening project. Although the signs had previously been in place on site, they are no longer in compliance with the City's sign code. In order for the signs to be reinstalled in similar locations on the subject property, approval of a Special Sign District for the entire AutoPark is needed.



Due to the large dealership size, number of buildings, large automotive sales parking display area, diverse array of daily activities, various driveway connections, and arrangement of facilities, James Wood AutoPark relies upon signage to effectively direct motorists to their desired locations within the site. Because of these conditions, some proposed ground sign designs, locations, and quantities do not meet the regulations within the Code of Ordinances Chapter 33 (Denton Sign Code). Consequently, pursuant to Section 33.18 of the Denton Sign Code, James Wood AutoPark has requested a Special Sign District to deviate from the regulations with an alternate comprehensive sign plan. The signs will be consistent with the signs on site prior to the TXDOT acquisition and would include a cohesive appearance and adequate size to ensure visibility, promote James Wood AutoPark and associated activities, and direct visitors to a variety of locations within the site.

Specifically, the proposed James Wood AutoPark Special Sign District (JWASSD) includes the following ground signs to be installed along the I-35E service road:

- Ground Sign 1: Entry ground sign for Chevrolet building, approximately 47 feet tall.
- Ground Sign 2: Entry ground sign for Cadillac building, approximately 47 feet tall.
- Ground Sign 3: Entry ground sign for Buick GMC building, approximately 47 feet tall.
- Traffic Control 1: Located at the entrance closest to the service building, maximum height of 8-feet tall and intended to provide directions to motorists.

The number of wall, attached, temporary, and wind device signs is not limited by the JWASSD, but each of these signs must obtain a permit in compliance with Section 33.9 of the Denton Sign Code, and meet all Chapter 33 requirements.

No new ground signs are proposed along the west property boundary (State School Road). An existing Pre-Owned sign set back further into the site is to remain along the I-35E service road, and an existing Body Shop sign is to remain along State School Road. These existing ground signs are acknowledged in the JWASSD.

The proposed amendments to the Sign Code standards are outlined in Exhibit 6 and are summarized in the table below. For any standard not specified in the Special Sign District regulations, Chapter 33 of the Denton Code of Ordinances (Denton Sign Code) would apply.

Standard	Chapter 33 (Denton Sign Code)	Proposed JWASSD	Difference
Permitted Sign Types	Chapter 33 permits a variety of ground and attached signs which have obtained a sign permit except those which are specifically prohibited	Limits the number of ground signs to those existing signs and new signs as shown in the sign district. Wall, attached, temporary, and wind device signs must be consistent with regulations in Chapter 33.	No change

Certain Prohibited Signs Section 33.4	Generally, signs which interfere with vehicle maneuvering, signs on public property, dilapidated signs, motion picture signs, signs which flash, blink or otherwise move, and billboards	Consistent with Section 33.4(i)(1)b.	No change
Maximum Effective Area Section 33.14.2(b)	For signs on I-35, I-35E, or I-35W, 250 square feet	Ground Sign 1: 226.3 sf Ground Sign 2: 226.3 sf Ground Sign 3: 226.3 sf Traffic Control 1: 15.6 sf	Less effective area for the proposed signs noted below: Ground Sign 1: -23.7 sf Ground Sign 2: -23.7 sf Ground Sign 3: -23.7 sf Traffic Control 1: -234.4 sf
Maximum Height Section 33.14.2(b)	For signs on I-35, I-35E, or I-35W, 40 feet.	Ground Sign 1: 47 feet Ground Sign 2: 47 feet Ground Sign 3: 47 feet Traffic Control 1: 8 feet	Taller for the proposed signs noted below: Ground Sign 1: +7 feet Ground Sign 2: +7 feet Ground Sign 3: +7 feet Shorter for the proposed sign noted below: Traffic Control 1: -32 feet
Minimum Setbacks	Section 33.14.2(c). Twenty feet from the curbline of any public street and a minimum setback of ten feet from any side or rear yard property line	Ground Sign 1: minimum 10 feet from the front property line Ground Sign 2: minimum 8.7 feet from the front property line Ground Sign 3: minimum 10 feet from the front property line Traffic Control 1: minimum 10 feet from the front property line	The future I-35E curbline is unknown. Therefore, setbacks will be measured from the property line as it is a known location with the right-of-way acquisition now complete.

	<p>Section 33.14.2(e). Any non-illuminated ground, roof, or projecting sign over ten feet in height, shall maintain a 100-foot setback from any single-family zoning district or property used for a single-family residence if the sign would be visible from that district or property (can be seen from six feet above ground level). Any internally illuminated ground, roof, or projecting sign over ten feet in height, shall maintain a 200-foot setback from any single-family zoning district or property used for a single-family residence if the sign would be visible from that district or property (can be seen from six feet above ground level).</p>	<p>Consistent with Section 33.14.2(e).</p>	<p>No change</p>
<p>Number of Ground Signs</p>	<p>Section 33.14.2(d)(1). Any premise which has street frontage on more than one arterial or collector street may locate one ground sign in the defined front yard of each arterial or collector street</p>	<p>The proposed JWASSD includes six ground signs unevenly spaced along the street frontages, but in logical locations needed to direct traffic.</p> <p>Along I-35E:</p>	<p>Interstate 35E: + 2 signs, Ground Sign 3 and Traffic Control sign spaced approximately 22 feet apart</p> <p>State School Road: -1 sign</p>

	<p>Section 33.14.2(d)(2). Any premise which has more than 500 feet of street frontage on a freeway, arterial or collector street may make use of one additional on-premise ground sign for each additional 500 feet of frontage, or fraction thereof, if each additional sign permitted is located more than 60 feet from another permitted ground sign on the same premise.</p> <p>Interstate 35E: approximately 1,470 linear feet of frontage (maximum three signs)</p> <p>State School Road: 960 feet of frontage (maximum two signs)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Existing sign at the pre-owned entrance 2. One sign at the Chevrolet entrance (Ground Sign 1) 3. One sign at the Cadillac Entrance (Ground Sign 2) 4. One sign at the Buick GMC entrance (Ground Sign 3) 5. One sign at the service entrance (Traffic Control 1) <p>Along State School Road:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Existing sign at the body shop entrance 	
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A full Staff Analysis of the proposed Special Sign District, including a further analysis of the proposed standards, is provided in Exhibit 2.

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

The Planning and Zoning Commission held a public hearing for the request at their February 14, 2024 meeting. During the meeting, Commissioners made inquiries related to the following considerations:

- Question about why Sign Districts do not go to the Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA). Section 33.18.4 of the Denton Sign Code states that the City Council may approve the creation of a sign district. Section 33.18.6 requires the procedures for approval of a sign district and thereafter any amendment of the district, shall be the same as those applicable to a change in zoning classification or regulations. Therefore, Special Sign Districts require public hearings before the Planning & Zoning Commission and City Council.

OPTIONS

1. Recommend Approval
2. Recommend Approval Subject to Conditions
3. Recommend Denial
4. Postpone Item

RECOMMENDATION

The Planning and Zoning Commission recommended approval of the request (5-0).

Staff recommends approval of the request as it complies with the criteria in Section 33.18.4 of the Denton Code of Ordinances for the creation of a Special Sign District.

PRIOR ACTION/REVIEW (Council, Boards, Commissions)

Date	Council, Board, Commission	Request	Action
October 28, 1998	Planning & Zoning Commission	Rezoning from Planned Development (PD-12) to Conditioned Commercial (C(c))	Recommended Approval
November 17, 1998	City Council	Rezoning from Planned Development (PD-12) to Conditioned Commercial (C(c))	Approved (Ordinance 1998-391)
December 16, 1998	Planning & Zoning Commission	Final Plat	Approved
November 10, 1999	Planning & Zoning Commission	Final Plat	Approved
March 22, 2000	Planning & Zoning Commission	Final Plat	Approved
February 14, 2024	Planning & Zoning Commission	Special Sign District (SD23-0002)	Recommended Approval

PUBLIC OUTREACH:

Five (5) notices were sent to property owners within 200 feet of the subject property. Forty six (46) courtesy notices were sent to utility addresses within 500 feet of the subject property. As of the writing of this report, the City has not received any responses.

A notice was published in the Denton Record Chronicle on January 28, 2024.

A notice was published on the City's website on January 25, 2024.

Seven (7) signs were posted on the property on January 2, 2024.

The applicant has not held a neighborhood meeting as of the writing of this report.

DEVELOPER ENGAGEMENT DISCLOSURES

No developer contact disclosures have been provided to staff from members of this body as of the issuance of this report.

EXHIBITS

- Exhibit 1 - Agenda Information Sheet
- Exhibit 2 - Staff Analysis
- Exhibit 3 - Site Location Map
- Exhibit 4 - Zoning Map
- Exhibit 5 - Future Land Use Map
- Exhibit 6 - James Wood Auto Special Sign District (JWASSD)
- Exhibit 7 - Notification Map
- Exhibit 8 - Draft Ordinance
- Exhibit 9 - Presentation

Respectfully submitted:
Tina Firgens, AICP
Deputy Director of Development Services/Planning
Director

Prepared by:
Ashley Ekstedt
Assistant Planner