Notice and Agenda

Regular Meeting
of the
La Cañada Flintridge Design Commission

Thursday, September 17, 2026 at 8:00 AM

City Hall
One Civic Center Drive
La Cañada Flintridge, CA 91011

Ara Markari, Chair
Francis Pollara, Vice Chair
Halle Yuhan, Commissioner
Genevieve Bethel, Commissioner

Comments from the Public
The public is encouraged to address the Design Commission on any matter posted on the agenda or on any other matter within its jurisdiction. If you wish to address the Commission, you may do so during the **Comments from the Public** period noted on the agenda. Limited tp 3-minutes per speaker.

Pursuant to provisions of the Brown Act, no action may be taken on a matter unless it is listed on the agenda, or unless certain emergency or special circumstances exist. The Commission may direct staff to investigate and/or schedule certain matters for consideration at a future Commission meeting.

Agenda Materials
Copies of staff reports and supporting documentation pertaining to agenda items are available for public viewing and inspection at City Hall, 2nd Floor Lobby Area, during regular business hours, and on the City's website https://lcf.ca.gov. For further information regarding agenda items, please contact the Planning Department at (818) 790-8881.

SB 343 – Any writings relating to an agenda item distributed to a majority of the Commission less than 72 hours prior to the meeting will be available for public review at City Hall during normal business hours and/or posted on the City's website.

Levine Act - To promote transparency and fairness in government decision-making, the Levine Act imposes contribution prohibitions and disclosure requirements. Specifically, any elected or appointed City officer is prohibited from making or attempting to influence a decision in a proceeding involving a license, permit, or other entitlement for use if the officer received a contribution of more than $500 within the preceding 12 months from a party or their agent. (Gov. Code § 84308(c)(1).) Additionally, parties to proceedings involving a license, permit, or other entitlement for use pending before any elected or appointed City officer must disclose any campaign contributions exceeding $500 that they made within the preceding 12 months. (Gov. Code § 84308(e)(1).) For more information please visit: https://lcf.ca.gov/city-clerk/levine-act/.

Reasonable Accommodations
In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Government Code Section 54953(g), the City Council has adopted a "reasonable accommodations" policy to expedite accommodation requests. The policy can also be found on the City's website. Please contact the City Clerk's Office, (818) 790-8880 to make an accommodation request, or to obtain an electronic or printed copy of the policy.

Please turn off/silence all mobile devices while meeting is in progress.

8:00 AM Design Commission Regular Meeting

Preliminary Business

Call to Order **Next Resolution: 26-19**

Roll Call
Ara Markari, Chair
Francis Pollara, Vice Chair
Halle Yuhan, Commissioner
Genevieve Bethel, Commissioner

Pledge of Allegiance

Comments from the Public
Limited to 3 minutes per speaker for items on the Consent Calendar, items not on the Agenda, or any issue within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Commission. Public comment is limited to a maximum of 20 minutes. Speakers not able to speak due to the 20-minute time limit will be provided with the opportunity to speak at the end of the meeting.

If the matter on which you wish to speak is an Agenda item (other than a Consent Calendar item), you will be provided the opportunity to address the Commission when the matter is considered. Please give a completed Public Comment Card to the Clerk prior to the beginning of the item.

Consent Calendar
Items on the Consent Calendar will be enacted by one motion and roll call vote without individual discussion. If discussion is desired, the item will be removed and considered separately.

1) Approval of Minutes of the Design Commission Meetings
a) Design Commission Regular Meeting of September 3, 2026.

Public Hearings

2) **Design Review (DEV-2026-0032); VJ Signs / Marsh Village Pharmacy; 2143 Foothill Boulevard**: A request to reface an existing pole sign and freestanding sign at 2143 Foothill Boulevard.

Recommendation: Adoption of Design Commission Resolution 26-xx approving Design Review (DEV-2026-0032) for refacing an existing pole sign and freestanding sign at 2143 Foothill Boulevard.

Concluding Business

- Commissioners' Comments
- Staff Comments

Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn
I certify under penalty of perjury that the agenda was posted on the City Hall bulletin board at One Civic Center Drive at least **72 hours** prior to the meeting, in accordance with Government Code Section 54954.2.

Antonio Gardea
Assistant Director of Community Development

REGULAR COMMISSION MEETING

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Markari called the Regular Meeting to order at 8:01 a.m.

ROLL CALL: Chair Markari, Vice Chair Pollara and Commissioner Yuhan.
Commissioner Bethel was absent.

STAFF PRESENT: Assistant Director Gardea, Planner Gjolme, Assistant Planner Fabela and Management Analyst Karaguozian.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Led by Chair Markari.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC: None.

REORDERING OF AND ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA: None.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

1. **Approval of Minutes of the Design Commission Meeting:**
   a) Design Commission Regular Meeting of July 2, 2026.
   (Approved 3 – 0, as recommended)

   Approval of Minutes of the Design Commission Meeting:
   b) Design Commission Regular Meeting of July 16, 2026.
   (Approved 3 – 0, as recommended)

A **MOTION** was made by Vice Chair Pollara, seconded by Commissioner Yuhan, and carried 3 – 0, (Commissioner Bethel was absent) to approve the Design Commission minutes from July 2, 2026.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Yuhan, seconded by Vice Chair Pollara, and carried 3 – 0, (Commissioner Bethel was absent) to approve the Design Commission minutes from July 16, 2026.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

2. Design Review (DEV-2026-0049); BK Signs / Engel & Volkers; 842 Foothill Boulevard.

Planner Gjolme provided a staff report and addressed questions from the Commission.

Chair Markari opened the public hearing at 8:12 a.m.

The following individual provided public comment: Carrie Grochow

DRAFT

Chair Markari closed the public hearing at 8:14 a.m.

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Yuhan, seconded by Vice Chair Pollara and carried 3 – 0, (Commissioner Bethel was absent) to adopt the proposed Design Commission Resolution No. 26-xx approving Design Review (DEV-2026-0049) for two new non-illuminated wall signs at 842 Foothill Boulevard with recommendations.

3. Design Review (DEV-2025-0101); AKC Permit Co. / Drybar; 657 Foothill Boulevard.

Assistant Planner Fabela provided a staff report and addressed questions from the Commission.

Chair Markari opened the public hearing at 8:32 a.m.

The following individual provided public comment: Chris Kelly

Chair Markari closed the public hearing at 8:37 a.m.

A **MOTION** was made by Vice Chair Pollara, seconded by Commissioner Yuhan and carried 3 – 0, (Commissioner Bethel was absent) to adopt the proposed Design Commission Resolution No. 26-xx approving Design Review (DEV-2025-0101) for an illuminated wall sign and associated window signs at 657 Foothill Boulevard with recommendations.

CONCLUDING BUSINESS:

Comments from Commissioners
Vice Chair Pollara noted the Commission's future review of the objective standards.

Comments from Staff
Assistant Director Gardea noted that the City Council did not appoint subcommittee members for the design standards and architectural styles manual. He also stated that the Sign Ordinance was forwarded to the Deputy City Attorney for revisions based on City Council input before returning to the Commission.

ADJOURNMENT

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Yuhan, seconded by Vice Chair Pollara, and carried 3 – 0, (Commissioner Bethel was absent) to adjourn the Regular Design Commission meeting at 8:47 a.m.

_____
Antonio Gardea, AICP
Assistant Director of Community Development

Minutes approved by the Design Commission on _____.

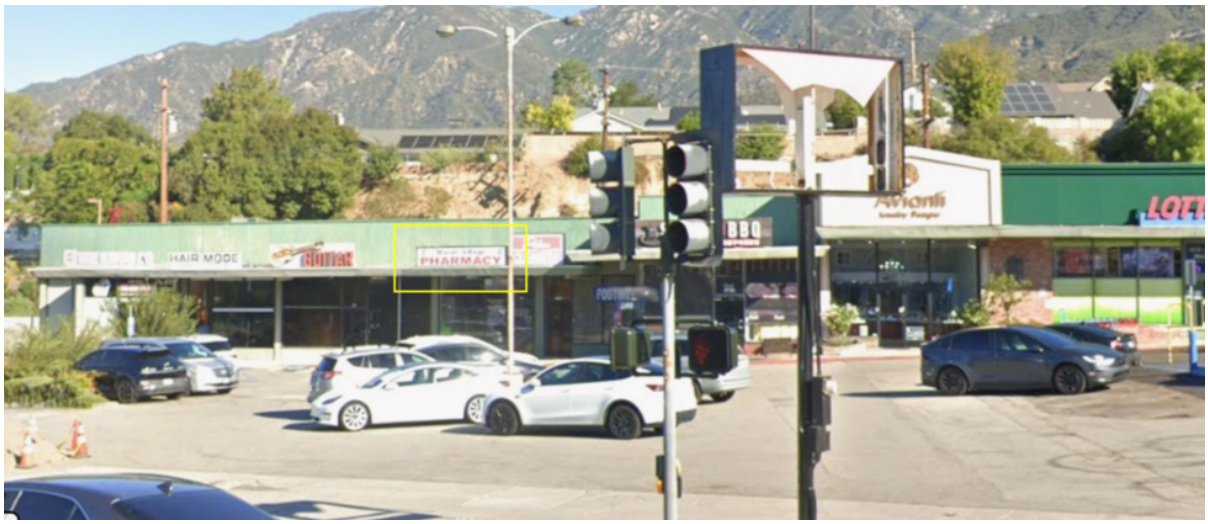
CITY OF LA CAÑADA FLINTRIDGE

Design Commission Agenda Report

Meeting Date:	September 17, 2026
Subject:	**Design Review (DEV-2026-0032); VJ Signs / Marsh Village Pharmacy; 2143 Foothill Boulevard**: A request to reface an existing pole sign and freestanding sign at 2143 Foothill Boulevard.
Presenter:	Chris Gjolme, Planner
Proposed Action:	Adoption of Design Commission Resolution 26-xx approving Design Review (DEV-2026-0032) for refacing an existing pole sign and freestanding sign at 2143 Foothill Boulevard
Environmental Impact:	The project is exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15311(a).
Fiscal Impact:	None

Background:

Marsh Village Pharmacy and Palace Cleaners have been tenants in the Ross shopping center for decades. Signage in the form of two cabinet signs (pole sign and freestanding sign) have similarly served the business for years. The pole sign experienced significant damage over a year ago (below) and refacing is proposed at this time. In turn, the freestanding sign for Marsh Village Pharmacy, which is a cabinet mounted atop the structural awning common to the building, would also be refaced. The damaged pole sign and existing freestanding sign (outlined in the background) are shown below.



Discussion/Analysis:

The refacing of non-conforming signs is allowed since this does not constitute introduction of a new sign. The previous pole sign face included Palace Cleaners atop Marsh Village Pharmacy, with area distributed roughly 60/40. Colors used were blue, red, white and black. Much of the new sign face would be comprised by Marsh Village Pharmacy, which would occupy the top three quarters of the sign. Palace Cleaners would occupy the bottom quarter of the sign face. Sign size would not change since the existing cabinet would be retained. The sign's overall composition would be improved in terms of arrangement and color (elimination of the red field color and oversized lettering is noteworthy) as the comparison below shows:

Although the sign has electrical conduits, bulbs have long since been removed and lighting is not proposed.

The freestanding cabinet sign on the building would be similarly altered with a new sign face matching the basic composition of the pole sign. It would be more elongated given the rectangular shape of the cabinet and would include a logo on the left side. New copy would be noticeably smaller but would still be visible/legible for nearby vehicles and pedestrians. This sign would continue to be illuminated, like other signs positioned along the awning, including the adjacent Palace Cleaners sign, which is also internally illuminated. Though not attached to the building's upper facade, it would continue to function like a wall sign considering its elevated position and the building's deep setback from Foothill Boulevard. A comparison of the sign faces is included on the next page.

Existing sign face - above; Proposed sign face - below

Other than a suggestion to change the lower copy color to black to improve contrast and legibility and match the pole sign, there are no issues with the request given its limited scope and the improved aesthetic that would result.

FINDINGS:

The following findings are required for Design Review approval (Design Review Sec. 11.47.030) :

A. **The design and layout of the proposed development is consistent with the general plan and any design criteria adopted for specialized areas, such as designated historic or other special districts, planned developments, master plans, or specific plans, or adopted for the project through conditions of approval or development agreements.**

The subject tenant spaces and building are within the City's Mixed-Use Zone, which encourages a mix of uses to enhance commercial vitality, and the continued pharmacy and cleaner's use contributes to that objective. Signage supports commercial vitality and, in this instance, the proposal's refurbishment of longstanding signs works well to achieve that objective without

compromising the character of the subject building or the greater immediate area.

B. **The design and layout of the proposed development will accommodate the functions and activities that are proposed for the property, will not unreasonably interfere with the use and enjoyment of neighboring property, and will not create traffic or pedestrian hazards.**

Sign size and location will not change while the refurbished sign faces will continue to reflect the longstanding retail uses. As such, the signs have no potential to interfere with neighboring properties nor create any pedestrian hazards. The pole sign has been in place for years and is proximate to Foothill Boulevard. Although visible from passing cars, it is not of a size, height, unduly distracting composition or vibrancy that would create traffic hazards.

C. **The architectural design of the proposed development is compatible with the character of the surrounding neighborhood and that all reasonable design efforts have been made to maintain the harmonious, orderly, and attractive development contemplated by this title and the general plan.**

The refaced signs would retain their respective positions and would achieve good visibility from Foothill Boulevard and a large parking lot fronting the center. The new sign faces are of improved design and color and represent an aesthetic upgrade to the tenant space and greater property.

D. **The design of the proposed development will provide a desirable environment for its occupants and visiting public as well as its neighbors and that it is aesthetically of good composition, materials, texture, and color that will remain aesthetically appealing with the level of maintenance that might reasonably be expected.**

The refaced signs relate directly to the longstanding uses that continue operating in the subject tenant spaces. The new sign faces are of improved color and composition and will enhance the appearance and functionality of the center, albeit to a limited extent. The pole sign is legal nonconforming due to its height but has a practical purpose in conveying business names and the current uses of property to vehicles traveling along Foothill Boulevard. Communicating these details along Foothill Boulevard would be difficult to do without the pole sign given the building's deep setback and large parking lot that intervenes. Use of acrylic faces ensures minimal maintenance while retention of the existing cabinets allows for ease of repair/replacement if needed in the future.

Options:
Refer to Recommendation below.

Recommendation:
It is recommended that the Design Commission take the following action(s):

1. Open the public hearing, receive public testimony, close the public hearing and consider; and
2. Adopt Design Commission Resolution No. 26-xx approving Design Review (DEV-2026-0032) for a refaced pole sign and freestanding sign at 2143 Foothill Boulevard.

Attachments:
1. Draft Design Commission Resolution 26-xx
2. Project Plans

ATTACHMENT 1

CITY OF LA CAÑADA FLINTRIDGE

RESOLUTION NO. 26-xx

A RESOLUTION OF THE DESIGN COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LA CAÑADA FLINTRIDGE APPROVING DESIGN REVIEW (DEV-2026-0032) FOR REFACING OF AN EXISTING POLE SIGN AND FREESTANDING SIGN AT 2143 FOOTHILL BOULEVARD

WHEREAS, a request by VJ Signs was received for Design Review of a refacing pole sign and freestanding sign signs at 2143 Foothill Boulevard (Marsh Village Pharmacy) said request incorporated herein by reference; and

WHEREAS, the Design Commission, on September 17, 2026, held a public hearing and conducted design review of the request; and

WHEREAS, the Design Commission reviewed the facts contained in the Agenda Report dated September 17, 2026, regarding the application for Design Review approval at 2143 Foothill Boulevard, and heard and considered the testimony of the applicant and the public; and

WHEREAS, the replacement of on-premises signage accessory to (appurtenant to) an existing commercial building is determined Categorically Exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15311 (Accessory Structures); and

WHEREAS, based on the evidence presented by the application materials, staff report, and public testimony, the Design Commission hereby resolves as follows:

Section 1. The above recitals are true and correct, and incorporated herein by reference.

Section 2. Findings Required for Design Review Approval. The Design Commission hereby finds as follows:

A. The design and layout of the proposed development is consistent with the general plan and any design criteria adopted for specialized areas, such as designated historic or other special districts, planned developments, master plans, or specific plans, or adopted for the project through conditions of approval or development agreements because the subject tenant spaces and building are within the City's Mixed-Use Zone, which encourages a mix of uses to enhance commercial vitality, and the continued pharmacy and cleaners use contributes to that objective. Signage supports commercial vitality and in this instance the proposal's refurbishment of longstanding signs works well to achieve that objective without compromising the character of the subject building or the greater immediate area.

B. The design and layout of the proposed development will accommodate the functions and activities that are proposed for the property, will not unreasonably interfere with the use and enjoyment of neighboring property, and will not create traffic or pedestrian hazards because sign size and location will not change while the refurbished sign faces would continue to reflect the longstanding retail uses. As such, the signs have no potential to interfere with neighboring properties nor create any pedestrian hazards. The pole sign has been in place for years and is proximate to Foothill Boulevard. Although visible from passing cars, it is not of a size, height, unduly distracting composition or vibrancy that would create traffic hazards.

C. The architectural design of the proposed development is compatible with the character of the surrounding neighborhood and that all reasonable design efforts have been made to maintain the harmonious, orderly, and attractive development contemplated by this title and the general plan because the refaced signs would retain their respective positions and would achieve good visibility from Foothill Boulevard and a large parking lot fronting the center. The new sign faces are of improved design and color and represent an aesthetic upgrade to the tenant space and greater property.

D. The design of the proposed development will provide a desirable environment for its occupants and visiting public as well as its neighbors and that it is aesthetically of good composition, materials, texture, and color that will remain aesthetically appealing with the level of maintenance that might reasonably be expected because the refaced signs relate directly to the longstanding uses that will be operating in the subject tenant spaces. The new sign faces are of improved color and composition and will enhance the appearance and functionality of the center, albeit to a limited extent. The pole sign is legal nonconforming due to its height but has a practical purpose in conveying business names and the current uses of property to vehicles traveling along Foothill Boulevard. Communicating these details along Foothill Boulevard would be difficult to do without the pole sign given the building's deep setback and large parking lot that intervenes. Use of acrylic faces ensures minimal maintenance while retention of the existing cabinets allows for ease of repair/replacement if needed in the future.

Section 3. Based on the above findings, the Design Commission of the City of La Cañada Flintridge hereby approves Design Review (DEV-2026-0032) for refaced pole and freestanding signs at 2143 Foothill Boulevard (Marsh Village Pharmacy) subject to the conditions of approval listed in Exhibit "A", attached to this resolution.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED this 17th day of September 2026.

_____
Ara Markari
Chair of the Design Commission

ATTEST:

_____
Antonio Gardea
Secretary to the Design Commission

EXHIBIT "A"
CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL
Design Review (DEV-2026-0032)
2143 Foothill Boulevard / Marsh Village Pharmacy

1. Compliance with and execution of all conditions listed herein shall be necessary prior to obtaining final building inspection clearance and/or prior to obtaining any occupancy clearance. Deviation from this requirement shall be only by written consent of the Director of Community Development.

2. This approval is granted for the land or land use as described in the application and any attachments thereto, and as shown on the plans submitted, labeled Design Review (DEV-2026-0032).

3. Prior to obtaining a building permit or when applicable initiation of use, the applicant and property owner shall file with the Secretary of the Design Commission written acknowledgment of the conditions stated herein on forms provided by the Planning Division.

4. All structures, site work and other features including but not limited to, buildings, signs, roadways, parking areas, landscaping and other facilities shall be located and maintained as shown on the project plans labeled Design Review (DEV-2026-0032), except as otherwise stated in these conditions.

5. This approval will expire unless "start of construction" is commenced within 12 months after approval is granted and diligently pursued thereafter. The Director of Community Development may extend the original expiration date by as much as 12 months upon receipt of a written request from the applicant prior to expiration of the original approval if the approved project and applicable zoning standards are unchanged. Start of construction is defined as:

   a. All zoning and related approvals are effective; and

   b. All required building and grading permits for the project have been issued; and

   c. The "foundation inspection" and "concrete slab or underfloor inspection" have been made and received approval from the Division of Building and Safety; i.e., all trenches must be excavated, forms erected, and all materials for the foundation delivered on the job and all in-slab or underfloor building service equipment, conduit, piping accessories and other ancillary equipment items must be in place. Nothing in this definition shall be construed to alter the applicable legal standards for determining when vested property rights to complete the project have arisen.

6. All applicable requirements of any law, ordinance, or regulation of the City of La Cañada Flintridge shall be complied with.

7. This approval is subject to the applicant paying all fees and assessments to the City of La Cañada Flintridge, as established by ordinance, resolution or policy of the City Council.

8. In the event the City determines that it is necessary to take legal action to enforce any of the provisions of these conditions, and such legal action is taken, the applicant agrees to pay any and all costs of such legal action, including reasonable attorney's fees, incurred by the City, even if the matter is not prosecuted to a final judgment or is amicably resolved, unless the City should otherwise agree with the applicant to waive said fees or any part thereof. The foregoing shall not apply if the permittee prevails in the enforcement proceeding.

9. The applicant shall defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the City and its officers, agents, and employees from any claim, action or proceeding against the City or its officers, agents, or employees to attack, set aside, void, or annul this Design Review approval. The City shall promptly notify the applicant of any such claim, action, or proceeding and shall cooperate fully in the defense.

10. An approval granted by the Design Commission does not constitute a building permit or authorization to begin any construction. An appropriate permit issued by the Division of Building and Safety must be obtained prior to construction, enlargement, relocation, conversion, or demolition of any building or structure within the City.

11. The sign faces shall employ a matte finish to reduce glare and reflectivity. This shall be clearly noted on the plan set submitted to Building & Safety for plan check and permits.

12. It is recommended that the lower copy color for the freestanding sign be changed to black to improve legibility and match the pole sign.

# # # # #

ATTACHMENT 2

VJ SIGNS

POLE SIGN

Plexiglass face for exisiting pole sign

818-848-3303 | @vjsigns | vjsigns.com

6914 SAN FERNANDO RD. GLENDALE, CA 91201

VJ SIGNS

BOX SIGN

144 in

30 in

Plexiglass face for exisiting box sign

818-848-3303 | @vjsigns | vjsigns.com

6914 SAN FERNANDO RD. GLENDALE, CA 91201