



Agenda Item #: \_\_\_\_\_

# Staff Report

## City of Manhattan Beach

**TO:** Honorable Mayor Wilson and Members of the City Council

**THROUGH:** Geoff Dolan, City Manager

**FROM:** Richard Thompson, Director of Community Development  
Eric Haaland, Associate Planner

**DATE:** January 4, 2005

**SUBJECT:** Consideration of a Planning Commission Decision Approving a Sign Exception to Allow a Second Pole Sign and Total Sign Area Exceeding the Permitted Amount for an Existing Vehicle Sales Use on the Property Located at 1500 N. Sepulveda Boulevard

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### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends that the City Council receive and file the decision of the Planning Commission.

### **FISCAL IMPLICATION:**

There are no fiscal implications associated with the recommended action.

### **DISCUSSION:**

The Planning Commission, at its regular meeting of December 8, 2004, **APPROVED** (3-1, 1 absent) a sign exception for a proposed pole sign on an existing vehicle sales site. A second pole sign was requested due to the addition of a Lincoln Mercury dealership to the existing facility currently occupied only by a Toyota dealership. The sign code permits only one pole sign per site and limits total site sign area when pole signs are present. The Planning Commission granted the exception for a second pole sign and 512 square feet of additional sign area (pole sign area double-counted) based on the large size of the site, signage needs of vehicle sales uses, and the visual separateness of the auto dealerships. Additional facts supporting the approval include: previous existence of 2 pole signs on the site, similar allowances for other large commercial sites, and lack of residential impact. The Commission required that the existing pole sign on the site be relocated within one year of the sign exception approval to reduce visual crowding of the pole signs, which the applicant supported.

One commissioner voted against the project due to concerns that the amount of signage involved was beyond the intent of the city's sign regulations.

The staff report and draft minutes excerpt from the Planning Commission's December 8th meeting are also attached to this report for reference.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

The alternatives to the staff recommendation include:

1. **REMOVE** this item from the Consent Calendar, **APPEAL** the decision of the Planning Commission, and **PROVIDE DIRECTION**.

Attachments:

Resolution No. PC 04-20  
P.C. Minutes excerpts, dated 12/8/04  
P.C. Staff Reports, dated 12/8/04  
Plans (separate/NAE)

(NAE) – not available electronically

- C: Robyn Bentley/ImagePoint, Applicant  
William Adkins, Property owner  
Leo Boese, Dealership General Manager

**D R A F T      CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH      D R A F T**  
**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**DECEMBER 8, 2004**

1    A regular meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Manhattan Beach was held on  
2    Wednesday, December 8, 2004, at 6:40 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, City Hall, 1400  
3    Highland Avenue.

4  
5    **ROLL CALL**

6  
7    Chairman Montgomery called the meeting to order.

8  
9    Members Present:    Kuch, O'Connor, Simon, Chairman Montgomery

10    Members Absent:    Savikas

11    Staff:                Richard Thompson, Director of Community Development

12                         Robert Wadden, Jr., City Attorney

13                         Rosemary Lackow, Senior Planner

14                         Eric Haaland, Associate Planner

15                         Daniel Moreno, Associate Planner

16                         Alex Plascencia, Assistant Planner

17                         Sarah Boeschen, Recording Secretary

18  
19    **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**                October 27, 2004

20  
21    A motion was MADE and SECONDED (Simon/Kuch) to **APPROVE** the minutes of October  
22    27, 2004.

23  
24    AYES:                Kuch, O'Connor, Simon, Chairman Montgomery

25    NOES:                None

26    ABSENT:             Savikas

27    ABSTAIN:            None

28  
29    **AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**    None

30  
31    **BUSINESS ITEMS**

32  
33        **A. Sign Exception to Allow an Additional Pole Sign and Total Sign Area Exceeding the**  
34        **Permitted Amount, for an Existing Vehicle Sales Use at 1500 North Sepulveda**  
35        **Boulevard. (Lincoln/Mercury)**

36  
37    Associate Planner Eric Haaland summarized the staff report. He stated that the proposal is for a  
38    new 18-foot tall pole sign with a 78 square foot cabinet for the recently established  
39    Lincoln/Mercury dealership. He commented that pole signs are limited to one per site, and each  
40    square foot of sign face for a pole sign is counted twice as compared to a wall or monument sign.  
41    He said that with the proposed pole sign, the site will exceed the total amount of signage  
42    allowable. He indicated that the Commission is allowed to grant a Sign Exception if it is

## PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

December 8, 2004

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1 determined that it is not detrimental to the surrounding area; that the exception is necessary for  
2 reasonable use of the property; and that it is consistent with the intent of the Sign Code. He  
3 stated that the subject site is much deeper than most commercial sites in the City, and the sign  
4 area allotted by the Sign Code is based on the width of the site and does not account for the  
5 depth. He stated that the focus of commercial activity on the site is the outdoor paved area  
6 where vehicles are displayed rather than the buildings. He stated that the site previously had two  
7 pole signs for two dealerships, and this location is not highly visible from residential areas. He  
8 commented that concerns for overall visual impacts could possibly be mitigated by reducing  
9 secondary signage; adding a landscape buffer to the signs; reducing the size of the pole sign; or  
10 relocating the proposed and/or existing pole sign. He commented that both the proposed pole  
11 sign and existing Toyota sign are proposed to be in the north half of the site, and spacing them  
12 further apart could reduce visual concerns. He commented that staff is recommending approval  
13 of the proposed Resolution.

14  
15 In response to a question from Commissioner Kuch, Associate Planner Haaland indicated that  
16 staff feels the project satisfies the intent of the Sign Code because the Code addresses smaller  
17 more conventional commercial retail types of uses rather than an expansive automotive use.

18  
19 In response to a question from Commissioner Kuch, Associate Planner Haaland commented that  
20 the existing temporary banner type signs on the site are not permitted and are to be removed.

21  
22 Director Thompson commented that the Toyota and Lincoln/Mercury dealerships are two  
23 separate businesses on one site, and a pole sign would be permitted for each if the dealerships  
24 were on separate sites. He also indicated that staff feels the proposal meets the intent of the Sign  
25 Code because of the large size of the property and frontage along Sepulveda Boulevard.

26  
27 In response to a question from Commissioner Kuch, Associate Planner Haaland stated that  
28 conditions are proposed to be included in the Resolution to reduce the amount of secondary  
29 signage and to provide some landscape buffering for the existing and proposed pole signs. He  
30 indicated that more severe conditions such as relocating or reducing the size of the proposed pole  
31 sign have not been included in the Resolution.

32  
33 **Leo Boese**, representing the applicant, said that the site currently has substantially less signage  
34 and more landscaping since he purchased the property. He indicated that people are used to  
35 seeing corporate signs, and any other signs that do not display the corporate image do not have  
36 the same effect. He stated that he would caution against requiring removal the existing  
37 secondary signs at the ingress and egress because they function to identify access to the site. He  
38 said that the site is substantially more presentable to the community since he has been the owner.

39  
40 In response to a comment from Commissioner O'Connor, **Mr. Boese** stated that he owns both  
41 the Lincoln/Mercury and Toyota dealerships, and he is leasing the property from William

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1 Atkins.

2

3 In response to a comment from Chairman Montgomery, **Mr. Boese** commented that he would  
4 not be opposed to relocating the pole sign. He stated that the existing Toyota sign simply  
5 replaced the original Ford sign for the previous dealership. He indicated that he will most likely  
6 be requested by Toyota to change their sign within the next year, and he would not have a  
7 problem with moving the existing sign at that time. He commented that the existing signs on the  
8 side of the building help to identify and allow safe access to the site. He said that it is easier to  
9 locate the entrance to the dealership with the sign, which reduces accidents.

10

11 Chairman Montgomery suggested moving the pole sign further to the south of the driveway

12

13 **Esther Besbris**, a resident of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, said that exceeding the permitted height limit for this  
14 proposal, as well as the request to exceed the height limit for another issue on the agenda, would  
15 set a bad precedent. She said that a great deal of time and money were spent on the  
16 beautification Sepulveda Boulevard, and a request should not be granted to allow signs above the  
17 permitted height. She commented that suggesting using landscaping to camouflage the signs is  
18 basically admitting that they would be unattractive, and the height of signs cannot be hidden.

19

20 Director Thompson indicated that the proposal does not exceed the height limit, and the original  
21 proposal was reduced from 30 to 18 feet.

22

23 Commissioner Kuch said that he has difficulty reaching the conclusion that the proposal is  
24 consistent with the intent of the Sign Code. He commented that he did not see a concession of  
25 the applicant to comply with removing the existing nonconforming banners on the site. He  
26 commented that the signs providing visibility for access should have safety wording and not  
27 additional advertising. He said that he would not be in favor of the proposal unless there was  
28 significant conditions placed on the signs, and the proposed pole sign is quite substantial.

29

30 Commissioner Simon said that part of the goal of the City is to foster businesses, and he  
31 appreciates that there are two large businesses on the site. He stated, however, that he agrees  
32 with the comments of Commissioner Kuch that the signage as proposed does not meet the intent  
33 of the Code, and it is the type of sign that the City is attempting to avoid. He suggested that the  
34 pole signs be spread out further to avoid appearing clustered together. He indicated that he does  
35 not feel there has been input as to the height of size of sign that would be most appropriate in  
36 terms of providing adequate visibility and accomplishing the goals of the applicant.

37

38 Commissioner O'Connor stated that he appreciates the need for the applicant to provide signage.  
39 He stated, however, that he is also struggling with justifying that the proposal meets the intent of  
40 the Code. He stated that he is not particularly concerned with the configuration of the proposed  
41 signage. He commented that it would seem to him that requiring that the existing sign for

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1 Toyota be moved would be a large burden to place on the applicant; however, there has been a  
2 willingness expressed by the applicant for such an option. He stated that moving the existing  
3 Toyota sign to the south end of the Toyota dealership would help to spread out the signage and  
4 improve the view along Sepulveda Boulevard. He stated that he has no objection to the existing  
5 26 inch letter signs on the front of the building; however, the amount of existing signage does  
6 make it more difficult to approve the pole sign. He indicated that the signs that direct traffic for  
7 access are helpful.

8  
9 Chairman Montgomery said that he would suggest moving the pole sign further south which  
10 would help to eliminate the appearance of the pole signs being clustered.

11  
12 **Mr. Boese** stated that the existing banner signs at the Lincoln Mercury dealership will be  
13 removed. He commented that the existing Toyota sign is in its present location at the instruction  
14 of the City through their original permit process. He said that he has no problem placing the  
15 Toyota sign further to the south, and he would prefer having one sign at each end of the building.

16  
17 Commissioner Simon clarified his position that he feels the existing signage does not necessarily  
18 appear clustered, but it could become clustered with the proposed sign. He said that he would  
19 not be opposed to allowing a time frame to allow for the existing Toyota sign to be relocated.

20  
21 Director Thompson stated that a year would be a reasonable amount of time to allow the existing  
22 Toyota sign to be moved, if that is the option supported by the Commission.

23  
24 Commissioner O'Connor suggested possibly converting the existing Toyota pole sign to a sign  
25 for the Lincoln/Mercury dealership and installing a new sign for Toyota on the south corner of  
26 the Toyota dealership.

27  
28 Commissioner Simon commented that there has been an indication that installing a new sign for  
29 Toyota may take some time.

30  
31 Director Thompson said that Lincoln/Mercury wants a particular configuration for their sign at  
32 the proposed location.

33  
34 Commissioner Kuch said that he would like for the Resolution to be somewhat more restrictive  
35 in requiring the signs to be completed in a closer time frame. He said that he also would want  
36 more of a concession from the applicant to remove some of the existing smaller signs.

37  
38 Commissioner Simon indicated that he appreciates that the applicant must comply with Toyota's  
39 parameters, and he feels a year is probably a realistic time frame to move the Toyota pole sign.  
40 He said that he would not want to penalize the applicant's business by limiting sign exposure for  
41 the Lincoln/Mercury dealership until the new Toyota sign is ready to be installed.

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1  
2 Commissioner O'Connor said that he could support allowing the Lincoln/Mercury sign to be  
3 approved and allowing a year for the Toyota sign to be moved.

4  
5 Director Thompson commented that the applicant has expressed concerns with a height of 18  
6 feet for a new Toyota sign being visible to vehicles on Sepulveda Boulevard because of the  
7 topography of the site. He said that that applicant would have the ability if the Toyota sign is  
8 approved at 18 feet to come back before the Commission if there is a concern with meeting the  
9 condition.

10  
11 Commissioner O'Connor said that he would like it to be clarified that 18 feet for the Toyota has  
12 been defined somewhat arbitrarily and may be possible to be changed if necessary. He said that  
13 the Commission would be willing to renegotiate the height if there is some rationale behind the  
14 request.

15  
16 **Mr. Boese** said that Toyota is in the process of changing their image and is interested in  
17 replacing signs on all of their dealerships. He indicated that he can commit to signing an  
18 agreement with Toyota for a new sign.

19  
20 A motion was MADE/SECONDED (Simon/O'Connor) to **ADOPT** the draft Resolution to  
21 **APPROVE** Sign Exception to allow an additional pole sign and total sign area exceeding the  
22 permitted amount, for an existing vehicle sales use at 1500 North Sepulveda Boulevard with the  
23 condition that the proposed pole sign for Lincoln Mercury be approved subject to the existing  
24 Toyota sign being relocated to the south side of the building within one year with a height not to  
25 exceed 18 feet, subject to administrative approval, and with the conditions included in the draft  
26 Resolution.

27  
28 AYES: O'Connor, Simon, Chairman Montgomery  
29 NOES: Kuch  
30 ABSENT: Savikas  
31 ABSTAIN: None

32  
33 Director Thompson clarified that the understanding of the Commission is that the Resolution as  
34 approved would allow the existing wall signs on the site to remain.

35  
36 Director Thompson explained the 15 day appeal period and stated that the item will be placed on  
37 the City Council's Consent Calendar for their meeting of January 4, 2005.

38 **PUBLIC HEARINGS CONTINUED**

39  
40 **04/1027.1-1 Municipal Code AMENDMENT and Local Coastal Program AMENDMENT**  
41 **Pertaining to Regulation of Telecommunication Facilities on Public Right-of-**

## RESOLUTION NO. PC 04-20

### RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH APPROVING A SIGN EXCEPTION FOR THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 1500 SEPULVEDA BOULEVARD (Image Point)

#### THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH DOES HEREBY RESOLVE AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. The Planning Commission of the City of Manhattan Beach hereby makes the following findings:

- A. The Planning Commission of the City of Manhattan Beach, on December 8, 2004, received testimony, and considered an application for a sign exception for an existing vehicle sales facility on the property located at 1500 & 1510 Sepulveda Boulevard in the City of Manhattan Beach.
- B. The Assessors Parcel Number for the property is 4166-023-019.
- C. The applicant for the subject project is Image Point, sign contractor for Lincoln Mercury. The owner of the property is William J. Adkins.
- D. Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and the Manhattan Beach CEQA Guidelines, the subject project has been determined to be exempt (Class 1) as minor modifications to an existing facility per Section 15301 of CEQA.
- E. The project will not individually nor cumulatively have an adverse effect on wildlife resources, as defined in Section 711.2 of the Fish and Game Code.
- F. The property is located within Area District II and is zoned CG, Commercial General. The surrounding private land uses consist primarily of commercial uses, with single-family residences beyond.
- G. The General Plan designation for the property is General Commercial.
- H. Approval of the sign exception, subject to the conditions below: will not be detrimental to, nor adversely impact, the neighborhood or district in which the property is located since similar signs have existed on-site previously and exist at similar nearby location; is necessary for reasonable use of the subject property as a vehicle sales facility since such use is more pole sign oriented than typical commercial uses, and is consistent with the intent of City's sign code in that the subject site is larger than it anticipates; as detailed in the project staff report.
- I. The project shall otherwise be in compliance with applicable provisions of the Manhattan Beach Municipal Code.
- J. This Resolution, upon its effectiveness, constitutes the Sign Exception approval for the subject project.

Section 2. The Planning Commission of the City of Manhattan Beach hereby **APPROVES** the subject Sign Exception for a second pole sign and sign area exceeding the permitted amount, subject to the following conditions (\*indicates a site specific condition):

#### Site Preparation / Construction

- 1. \* The project shall be constructed and operated in substantial compliance with the submitted plans as approved by the Planning Commission on December 8, 2004, except that the existing site pole sign (Toyota) shall be relocated to the southerly portion of the site prior to December 8, 2005. The Community Development Director shall have administrative authority to issue a sign permit for a relocated pole sign of 18 feet in height above parking lot



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grade with an appropriately proportional cabinet size.

2. \* Total primary site sign area shall not exceed 1,232 square feet, including pole sign area being counted twice as specified by the sign code.
3. All wires and cables shall be installed within related structures or underground to the appropriate utility connections in compliance with all applicable Building and Electrical Codes, safety regulations, and orders, rules of the Public Utilities Commission, the serving utility company, and specifications of the Public Works Department.
4. The siting of construction related equipment (cranes, materials, etc.) shall be subject to the approval from the Director of Community Development prior to the issuance of any building permits.
5. \* Planting shall be installed at the base of each pole sign on the site of minimum areas equal to the sign cabinet area of each sign. A landscaping plan shall be submitted for review and approval concurrent with sign permit application.
6. A low pressure or drip irrigation system shall be installed in the landscaped areas, which shall not cause any surface run-off. Details of the irrigation system shall be noted on the landscaping plans. The type and design shall be subject to the approval of the Public Works and Community Development Departments.
7. Backflow prevention valves shall be installed as required by the Department of Public Works, and the locations of any such valves or similar devices shall be subject to approval by the Community Development Department prior to issuance of building permits.
8. \* The project shall maintain compliance with the city's storm water pollution requirements.
9. No waste water shall be permitted to be discharged from the premises. Waste water shall be discharged into the sanitary sewer system.
10. All defective or damaged curb, gutter, street paving, and sidewalk improvements shall be removed and replaced with standard improvements, subject to the approval of the Public Works Department.
11. This Sign Exception shall lapse two years after its date of approval, unless implemented or extended by the Planning Commission.
12. Pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21089(b) and Fish and Game Code section 711.4(c), the project is not operative, vested or final until the required filing fees are paid.
13. The applicant agrees, as a condition of approval of this project, to pay for all reasonable legal and expert fees and expenses of the City of Manhattan Beach, in defending any legal actions associated with the approval of this project brought against the City. In the event such a legal action is filed against the project, the City shall estimate its expenses for the litigation. Applicant shall deposit said amount with the City or enter into an agreement with the City to pay such expenses as they become due.

**SECTION 3.** Pursuant to Government Code Section 65009 and Code of Civil Procedure Section 1094.6, any action or proceeding to attack, review, set aside, void or annul this decision, or concerning any of the proceedings, acts, or determinations taken, done or made prior to such decision or to determine the reasonableness, legality or validity of any condition attached to this decision shall not be maintained by any person unless the action or proceeding is commenced within 90 days of the date of this resolution and the City Council is served within 120 days of the date of this resolution. The City Clerk shall send a certified copy of this resolution to the

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applicant, and if any, the appellant at the address of said person set forth in the record of the proceedings and such mailing shall constitute the notice required by Code of Civil Procedure Section 1094.6.

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true, and correct copy of the Resolution as adopted by the Planning Commission at its regular meeting of December 8, 2004 and that said Resolution was adopted by the following vote:

**AYES: O'Connor, Simon,  
Chairman Montgomery**

**NOES: Kuch**

**ABSTAIN: None**

**ABSENT: Savikas**

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**RICHARD THOMPSON,**  
Secretary to the Planning Commission

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**Sarah Boeschen,**  
Recording Secretary

**CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Planning Commission

**FROM:** Richard Thompson, Director of Community Development

**BY:** Eric Haaland, Associate Planner

**DATE:** December 8, 2004

**SUBJECT:** Sign Exception to Allow a Second Pole Sign and Total Sign Area Exceeding the Permitted Amount for an Existing Vehicle Sales Use on the Property Located at 1500 N. Sepulveda Boulevard (Holmes)

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission **APPROVE** the subject request, and **ADOPT** the attached Resolution (Exhibit A)

**APPLICANT**

Image Point  
13489 Slover Ave. #B  
Fontana, CA 92337

**OWNER**

William J. Adkins  
3215 Pacific Coast Highway  
Torrance, CA 90505

**PROJECT OVERVIEW**

L O C A T I O N

<u>Location</u>	1500 Sepulveda Boulevard, between MBB & 18 <sup>th</sup> St (Exhibit B: Site Location Map).
<u>Assessors Parcel Number</u>	4166-023-019
<u>Area District</u>	II

## PROJECT DETAILS

	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Proposed</u>	<u>Requirement (Staff Rec)</u>
Parcel Size:	237,600 sq. ft.	N/A	5,000 sq. ft. min
Parcel Frontage:	360 ft.	N/A	50 ft. min.
Primary Sign Area:	717 sq. ft. (*)	1,032 sq. ft.	720 sq. ft. max.
Pole Signs:	1	2	1 max.
Wall Signs (primary):	1 (*)	1	N/A - limited only by area
Wall Signs (secondary):	8	8	Not counted (reduce size/visibility)

(\*) – Existing signs and sign areas do not include 3 Toyota wall signs required to be removed as a result of recent installation of a Lincoln Mercury showroom wall sign.

## BACKGROUND

The subject automobile sales facility has been occupied by either one or two independent dealerships during the past decade. A second (Lincoln Mercury) dealership was recently added to the site, which generated a request for additional signs. In 1996, the city's sign code was revised to include increased restrictions on pole signs. The subject proposal for a new pole sign, in addition to an existing (Toyota) pole sign, requires Planning Commission approval of a sign exception.

## DISCUSSION

The submitted plans propose an 18 foot tall pole sign with a 78 square-foot illuminated cabinet on a 5.5 acre vehicle sales site with 360 feet of frontage along Sepulveda Boulevard and 4 existing buildings set back from the street. The majority of the site is paved for vehicle inventory, parking, and circulation. A landscaped planter strip is provided along the site frontage primarily within the Sepulveda right-of-way. Currently the existing Toyota pole sign and recently installed Lincoln Mercury wall sign utilize all of the 720 square feet of sign area available to the site. Three previously existing Toyota wall signs were required to be removed in exchange for the new Mercury wall sign. Additional secondary (directional, internal oriented) signs are identified within the submitted plans but have not been counted toward primary sign area. Signs that are not visible from outside the property, or are specifically defined by the code as non-identification signs, are exempt from sign regulations.

The 720 square feet of allowable sign area is derived by multiplying the site frontage by 2 as specified by the sign code. The 1996 amendment to the code specifically discouraged pole signs by limiting them to one per site, and allowing only half as much pole sign area as would be allowed for other types of signs. The proposal therefore requests 1 pole sign and 312 square feet of general sign area beyond the allowances of the sign code.

The sign code permits the Planning Commission to approve a sign exception if it finds that: it would not be detrimental to the surrounding area, is necessary for reasonable use of the property, and is

consistent with the intent of the sign code. The following facts might be used to support the applicant's request in this case:

1. **The site is extremely deep.** While signage is allotted by the code based on site width/frontage, this site is more than 4 times the depth of most of the commercial parcels along Sepulveda Boulevard at 660 feet. It is common for sites this deep (e.g. Target, Manhattan Village) to receive approval of additional sign area.
2. **An automotive dealership is more pole sign oriented than typical commercial uses.** The shopping/inventory areas of auto dealers in Manhattan Beach are primarily outdoor paved areas displaying vehicles, and buildings (for wall signs) are less prominent components of their sites. In this case the showroom buildings are clustered within the mid-portion of the site. A recent approval was granted for a second pole sign at the Mercedes Benz (formerly Chevrolet) dealership also located on Sepulveda Boulevard. The size of the proposed Mercury pole sign is intentionally consistent with the size of the second Mercedes pole sign.
3. **The subject site has previously contained 2 pole signs.** Changing dealer tenancies (Ford, Ford/Toyota, Toyota, Toyota/Mercury) have resulted in additions and removals of pole signs installed prior to the code's penalization of pole signs.
4. **The pole sign locations are not highly visible from surrounding residential areas.** The nearest residential properties to the pole signs are across Sepulveda fronting on Oak Avenue. The nearest residences are generally lower than the dealership site and are not oriented toward the site.

Some concerns for visual impacts from the proposed sign exception may exist. Potential alternatives or conditions to mitigate visual concerns include the following:

1. Reduce the size and amount of secondary/directional signage. Painted signs such as "Entrance" and "Customer Service" have not been counted as primary identification signs, and most are oriented internally within the site, but are larger, and more visible than necessary.
2. Modify the proposed pole sign. Reducing the height or area of the sign can reduce visual impact.
3. Relocate one or both site pole signs. The project proposes that both pole signs be located within the north half of the site resulting in less balance and spacing than is possible. The northerly adjacent Residence Inn site contains a pole sign that also may visually accumulate with the dealership signs.
4. Provide additional landscaping at the base of the pole sign(s), or along the site frontage.

Staff has provided the attached draft resolution with findings for approval incorporating the reasons discussed above, and conditions requiring reduced secondary signage and increased landscaping.

Public Input: A sign exception request does not involve any direct notice to surrounding neighbors. Staff is not aware of any signage concerns expressed by neighbors regarding previous signs on the site. Staff does expect the Toyota dealership tenant to address the Planning Commission requesting to re-install a portion of the wall signage that was removed in order to accommodate the new Lincoln Mercury signs.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION**

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and the Manhattan Beach CEQA Guidelines, the subject project has been determined to be exempt (Class 1) as minor modifications to an existing facility per Section 15301 of CEQA.

## **CONCLUSION**

Staff believes that the requested sign exception with incorporation of the recommended conditions, would not be detrimental to the surrounding area, is necessary for reasonable use of the site as a vehicle sales facility, and is consistent with the intent of the sign code, and recommends approval.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

The alternatives to the staff recommendation available to the Planning Commission include:

1. **APPROVE** the project with modifications, and **ADOPT** the attached draft Resolution.
2. **DENY** the project subject to public testimony received, based upon appropriate findings, and **DIRECT** Staff to return a new draft Resolution.

Attachments:

A. Draft Resolution PC 04-

B. Vicinity Map

Plans (separate – not available electronically)

cc: Robyn Bentley/ImagePoint, Applicant  
William Adkins, Property owner  
Leo Boese, Dealership General Manager

**RESOLUTION NO. PC 04-**

**RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF  
MANHATTAN BEACH APPROVING A SIGN EXCEPTION FOR THE  
PROPERTY LOCATED AT 1500 SEPULVEDA BOULEVARD (Image  
Point)**

**THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH DOES  
HEREBY RESOLVE AS FOLLOWS:**

SECTION 1. The Planning Commission of the City of Manhattan Beach hereby makes the following findings:

- A. The Planning Commission of the City of Manhattan Beach, on December 8, 2004, received testimony, and considered an application for a sign exception for an existing vehicle sales facility on the property located at 1500 & 1510 Sepulveda Boulevard in the City of Manhattan Beach.
- B. The Assessors Parcel Number for the property is 4166-023-019.
- C. The applicant for the subject project is Image Point, sign contractor for Lincoln Mercury. The owner of the property is William J. Adkins.
- D. Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and the Manhattan Beach CEQA Guidelines, the subject project has been determined to be exempt (Class 1) as minor modifications to an existing facility per Section 15301 of CEQA.
- E. The project will not individually nor cumulatively have an adverse effect on wildlife resources, as defined in Section 711.2 of the Fish and Game Code.
- F. The property is located within Area District II and is zoned CG, Commercial General. The surrounding private land uses consist primarily of commercial uses, with single-family residences beyond.
- G. The General Plan designation for the property is General Commercial.
- H. Approval of the sign exception, subject to the conditions below: will not be detrimental to, nor adversely impact, the neighborhood or district in which the property is located since similar signs have existed on-site previously and exist at similar nearby location; is necessary for reasonable use of the subject property as a vehicle sales facility since such use is more pole sign oriented than typical commercial uses, and is consistent with the intent of City's sign code in that the subject site is larger than it anticipates; as detailed in the project staff report.
- I. The project shall otherwise be in compliance with applicable provisions of the Manhattan Beach Municipal Code.
- J. This Resolution, upon its effectiveness, constitutes the Sign Exception approval for the subject project.

Section 2. The Planning Commission of the City of Manhattan Beach hereby **APPROVES** the subject Sign Exception for a second pole sign and sign area exceeding the permitted amount, subject to the following conditions (\*indicates a site specific condition):

**Site Preparation / Construction**

- 1. \* The project shall be constructed and operated in substantial compliance with the submitted plans as approved by the Planning Commission on December 8, 2004.
- 2. \* Total primary site sign area shall not exceed 1,032 square feet, including pole sign area being counted twice as specified by the sign code. All existing signs not counted toward this total

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shall: not be visible beyond the subject property, be exempt pursuant to Chapter 10.72 of the Manhattan Beach Municipal Code, or be located at least 100 feet behind the front property line and have copy/letters no greater than 12 inches in height.

3. All wires and cables shall be installed within related structures or underground to the appropriate utility connections in compliance with all applicable Building and Electrical Codes, safety regulations, and orders, rules of the Public Utilities Commission, the serving utility company, and specifications of the Public Works Department.
4. The siting of construction related equipment (cranes, materials, etc.) shall be subject to the approval from the Director of Community Development prior to the issuance of any building permits.
5. \* Planting shall be installed at the base of each pole sign on the site of minimum areas equal to the sign cabinet area of each sign. A landscaping plan shall be submitted for review and approval concurrent with sign permit application.
6. A low pressure or drip irrigation system shall be installed in the landscaped areas, which shall not cause any surface run-off. Details of the irrigation system shall be noted on the landscaping plans. The type and design shall be subject to the approval of the Public Works and Community Development Departments.
7. Backflow prevention valves shall be installed as required by the Department of Public Works, and the locations of any such valves or similar devices shall be subject to approval by the Community Development Department prior to issuance of building permits.
8. \* The project shall maintain compliance with the city's storm water pollution requirements.
9. No waste water shall be permitted to be discharged from the premises. Waste water shall be discharged into the sanitary sewer system.
10. All defective or damaged curb, gutter, street paving, and sidewalk improvements shall be removed and replaced with standard improvements, subject to the approval of the Public Works Department.
11. This Sign Exception shall lapse two years after its date of approval, unless implemented or extended by the Planning Commission.
12. Pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21089(b) and Fish and Game Code section 711.4(c), the project is not operative, vested or final until the required filing fees are paid.
13. The applicant agrees, as a condition of approval of this project, to pay for all reasonable legal and expert fees and expenses of the City of Manhattan Beach, in defending any legal actions associated with the approval of this project brought against the City. In the event such a legal action is filed against the project, the City shall estimate its expenses for the litigation. Applicant shall deposit said amount with the City or enter into an agreement with the City to pay such expenses as they become due.

**SECTION 3.** Pursuant to Government Code Section 65009 and Code of Civil Procedure Section 1094.6, any action or proceeding to attack, review, set aside, void or annul this decision, or concerning any of the proceedings, acts, or determinations taken, done or made prior to such decision or to determine the reasonableness, legality or validity of any condition attached to this decision shall not be maintained by any person unless the action or proceeding is commenced within 90 days of the date of this resolution and the City Council is served within 120 days of the date of this resolution. The City Clerk shall send a certified copy of this resolution to the applicant, and if any, the appellant at the address of said person set forth in the record of the



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proceedings and such mailing shall constitute the notice required by Code of Civil Procedure Section 1094.6.

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true, and correct copy of the Resolution as adopted by the Planning Commission at its regular meeting of December 8, 2004 and that said Resolution was adopted by the following vote:

**AYES:**

**NOES:**

**ABSTAIN:**

**ABSENT:**

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**RICHARD THOMPSON,**  
Secretary to the Planning Commission

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**Sarah Boeschen,**  
Recording Secretary

# Vicinity Map

1500 Sepulveda Blvd.



Proposed Lincon Mercury Pole Sign Location