



AGENDA

SOLVANG DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE THURSDAY DECEMBER 18, 2025 5:00 PM REGULAR MEETING

Committee Members:

Esther Jacobsen Bates, Chair
Richard Boyd, Vice Chair
Melissa Bates
Charlene Goetz
Jennifer Johnson

1644 Oak Street, Solvang, CA 93463
Virtual & in Council Chamber

AGENDA AND SUPPORTING MATERIALS – Available for viewing 8:00a.m.-5:00p.m. at City Hall, 1644 Oak Street, Solvang, and on the City’s website <https://www.cityofsolvang.com/agendacenter>. Additional writings distributed to a majority of the City Council after the posting of the agenda will be made available at City Hall and on the City’s website.

AGENDA POSTING NOTIFICATION - Subscribe to receive email or text message notifications when agendas are posted online through “Notify Me” at: <https://www.cityofsolvang.com/List.aspx>

PUBLIC COMMENT - The public is encouraged to address the City Council in-person, virtually, or in-writing on agenda and non-agenda items. If provided in writing, comments must be submitted to the City Clerk at cityclerk@cityofsolvang.com by 5:00 p.m. on the Friday before the meeting to be considered. Your comment will be recorded and distributed appropriately. Comments on agenda items will be heard at the time each item is considered, including non-agenda items. In-person speakers will be invited to make public comments first. Virtual speakers will follow.

CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTION DISCLOSURE - Pursuant to Government Code Section 84308, any party to a City proceeding must disclose on the record any campaign contributions made to a member of the City Council [or commission] in excess of \$250 in the past 12 months. This disclosure requirement includes contributions by the party’s agent and aggregated contributions from persons or entities related to the party. Please make the disclosure as soon as possible, but not later than the beginning of the proceeding.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT - If, as a participant of this meeting, you need special assistance the City will attempt to accommodate you in every reasonable manner. Please contact the City Clerk at either (805) 688-5575 x206 or cityclerk@cityofsolvang.com. 72- hours’ notice is requested.

LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD! Do you have about one minute a month to help make Solvang better? The City of Solvang is working with FlashVote to engage the community and gather valuable input from residents to inform our decisions. We encourage residents to sign up at www.flashvote.com/Solvang to participate by phone or text only.

PARTICIPATING IN THE MEETING – Design Review Committee meetings will be in person and conducted by video/teleconferencing through Zoom. The meeting will also be broadcast live on Channel 23 and streamed on the City’s website, Vimeo, and YouTube.

- To join by Zoom, visit <https://zoom.us/j/3066529195>. If you wish to speak, please use the “raised hand” symbol.
- To join by phone, call (888) 788-0099 and enter Meeting ID: **306 652 9195#**. The phone line will be open 30 minutes before the meeting.

5:00 PM REGULAR MEETING

Approve a sign permit for a proposed projecting sign and window sign located at 1693 Mission Drive Suite C-1. (APN 139-143-025). The proposed project is categorically exempt from CEQA

1. PRELIMINARY MATTERS

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVE THE ORDER OF THE AGENDA

2. CONSENT ITEMS

Items on Consent are typically routine and will be approved in one motion. The Chair will call on anyone wishing to address the Committee on any Consent item on the agenda, which has not been pulled by the Committee for discussion. Each speaker will be permitted to speak only once and comments will be limited to a total of three minutes.

a. Approve 2026 Design Review Committee Meeting Schedule

3. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS - NON - AGENDA

This section is intended to provide members of the public with the opportunity to address the Committee on items not on the agenda. This section is limited to 30 minutes. Each speaker will be afforded three minutes and may speak only once. State law does not allow the Committee to discuss or act on issues not on the agenda, except to briefly respond or to ask Staff to follow up on such items.

4. DISCUSSION

a. Discussion and possible action for a sign a permit with a sign exception (PA 25-052) located 1665 Fir Ave. (APN 139-143-021) for two (2) wall signs. The proposed project is categorically exempt from CEQA.

5. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

6. CITY STAFF COMMENTS

7. ADJOURNMENT

AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING

I, A. Rafael Castillo, Planning Manager, for the City of Solvang, California, DO HEREBY CERTIFY under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California, that the foregoing notice was posted at the City of Solvang City Hall bulletin board at 1644 Oak Street, Solvang, CA and on the City of Solvang website not less than 72 hours prior to the meeting, per Government Code 54954.2.

Dated December 16, 2025.



DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE STAFF REPORT

AGENDA ITEM: .

MEETING DATE: December 18, 2025

SUBJECT: Approve a sign permit for a proposed projecting sign and window sign located at 1693 Mission Drive Suite C-1. (APN 139-143-025). The proposed project is categorically exempt from CEQA

PREPARED BY: Lisa Scherman, Assistant Planner

DISCUSSION:

The applicant is opening a wine tasting room located at 1693 Mission Drive (APN 139-143-025) Suite C-1 in the Village Mixed Use (VMU) Zoning District. The applicant is proposing 6.04 square feet of total signage. The proposed signage is consistent with Solvang Municipal Code section 11-13-8.

Project Information

Property Owner	SBID LLC	
Applicant:	Rooted Vine	
APN:	139-143-025	
General Plan Designation:	Tourist Related/Village Commercial	
Zoning:	Village Mixed Use (VMU)/ Design District- Village District (DD-1)	

Project Description

The Applicant requests approval for the following:

- One (1) Projecting Sign, approximately 5.01 square feet in size. And One (1) Window Sign, approximately 1.03 square feet in size.
- The Projecting sign will be attached to the north side of the building above the primary entrance. The sign is dimensional, made from wood. The applicant is adding a decorative bracket made of black steel. The window sign will be placed on the door of the primary entrance.

Zoning Ordinance

The proposed signage is consistent with the purpose and intent of the City's Zoning Ordinance based on the table.

Solvang Municipal Code (SMC) Sign Regulations 11-13			
VMU (Village Area) Zoning District Standards	Requirement	Proposed	Meets Standard
Projecting sign max. size	7 sf.	5.01 sf.	Yes
Max. letter height	8 in.	5.5 in. max.	Yes
Minimum clearance from sidewalk	7 ft.	8.54 ft.	Yes
Window Lettering Max. letter height	6 in.	2.75 in. max	Yes ¹
Window Lettering Maximum size	25% of window area	< 25%	Yes

Proposed Wall Sign

A Projecting Sign is defined as, "Any sign which projects from and is supported by a wall of a building with the display surface of the sign perpendicular to the building wall." (11-13-10(B)).

Proposed Projecting sign & decorative bracket



Proposed Window Lettering

Window Lettering is defined as, “The name of the business or establishment painted directly on the inside or outside surface of a glass window. Only the name of the business and/or logo is permitted and is calculated into the allowable square footage maximums.” (11-13-10(A)).

Proposed Window Lettering



CEQA Determination

The proposed project is Categorical Exempt (Class 1) from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (California Public Resources Code §§ 21000, et seq., “CEQA”) and CEQA Guidelines (Title 14 California Code of Regulations §§ 15000, et seq.) pursuant to Section 15301, because the proposed signage is considered a minor alteration of an existing structure that features no expansion of the existing or proposed use.

Findings Required for Approval by the Design Review Committee

The following are pertinent standards from the Solvang Municipal Code that the committee must consider when making their decision. Based on the review the proposed application, city staff recommends the committee make the following facts and findings:

Section 11-13-12(D)(1) Sign Review Criteria

- a. The sign is in proportion to and visually consistent with the architectural character of the building.

FACT: The proposed signage is visually consistent and proportional to the existing building design. The proposed signage conforms to all pertinent sign regulations as established by the Solvang Municipal Code.

- b. There is no needless repetition, redundancy, or proliferation of signage.

FACT: The proposed signage includes one (1) Projecting sign which may be utilized to identify the business from a pedestrian level, and window lettering which may be utilized to identify the business from a pedestrian level.. The signs do not obscure from view or unduly detract from existing signage.

- c. The sign does not obscure from view or unduly detract from existing signage.

FACT: Proposed sign locations do not obscure nor detract from existing signage on the premise.

- d. The size, shape, color and placement of the sign and any lighting is compatible to and harmonious with the building which it identifies and with the areas in which it will be located.

FACT: The size and shape of the signs are compatible with the existing building. The proposed locations provide readily identifiable information for the business. No lighting is proposed.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve a sign permit for 1693 Mission Drive Suite C-1 (APN 139-143-025) for proposed signage: one (1) Projecting sign, 5.01 square feet in size and one (1) window sign, 1.03 square feet in size.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. The Committee could request changes to the proposed signage. Any modifications shall be clearly articulated to the applicant.
2. The Committee could vote to deny the proposed signage. The Committee should make the required findings for denial.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Applicant paid the Design Review Committee Review fee.

ATTACHMENTS:

A – Applicant package

(1) Projecting sign

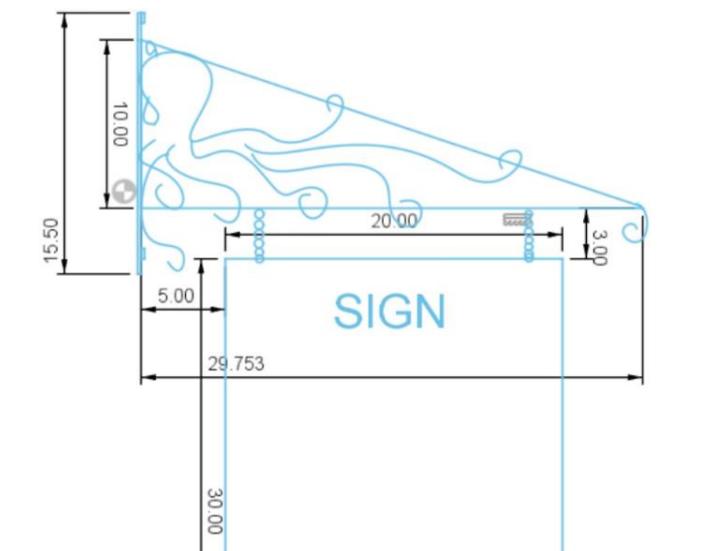
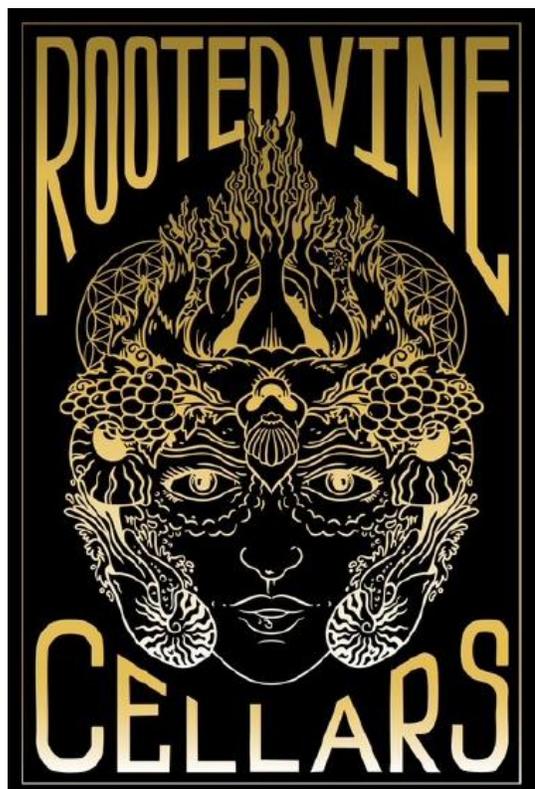
Sandblasted, dimensional wood

5.01SF

5.5" largest font size

8.54' ground clearance

2.08' projection from building facade



Decorative bracket, black steel



(1) Vinyl Window sign

1.03 SF

2.75" largest font size



DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE STAFF REPORT

AGENDA ITEM: 2.a

MEETING DATE: December 18, 2025

SUBJECT: Approve 2026 Design Review Committee Meeting Schedule

PREPARED BY: Rafael Castillo, Community Development Director

DISCUSSION:

Attached is the Draft Design Review Committee schedule for 2026.

ALTERNATIVES:

None.

FISCAL IMPACT:

None.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A – Draft 2026 DRC Meeting Schedule



**City of Solvang
Design Review Committee
2026 Meeting Calendar**

2026 Meeting Dates <i>Third (3rd) Thursday of the Month at 5:00 pm</i>	Agenda Packets Available to the Committee/Public <i>No later than 5:00 PM Friday Prior to Meeting Date</i>	Last Day for Applications to be Deemed Complete by City Staff <i>City Staff has determined the application is complete. All required information is supplied by the applicant to make a determination to the DRC</i>
January 15, 2026	January 9, 2026	December 23, 2025
February 19, 2026	February 13, 2026	January 30, 2026
March 19, 2026	March 13, 2026	February 27, 2026
April 16, 2026	April 10, 2026	March 27, 2026
May 21, 2026	May 15, 2026	April 24, 2026
June 18, 2026	June 12, 2026	May 22, 2026
July 16, 2026	July 10, 2026	June 19, 2026
August 20, 2026	August 14, 2026	July 24, 2026
September 17, 2026	September 11, 2026	August 21, 2026
October 15, 2026	October 9, 2026	September 18, 2026
November 19, 2026	November 13, 2026	October 23, 2026
December 17, 2026	December 11, 2026	November 20, 2026



DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE STAFF REPORT

AGENDA ITEM: 4.a

MEETING DATE: December 18, 2025

SUBJECT: Discussion and possible action for a sign a permit with a sign exception (PA 25-052) located 1665 Fir Ave. (APN 139-143-021) for two (2) wall signs. The proposed project is categorically exempt from CEQA.

PREPARED BY: Lisa Scherman, Assistant Planner

DISCUSSION:

The applicant has an existing repair shop located at 1665 Fir Ave. (APN 139-143-021) in the Village Mixed Use (VMU) Zoning District. The applicant is requesting one exception: the maximum allowable size of two wall signs. The applicant proposes 18.66 square feet of total signage.

Project Information

Property Owner	1651 Fir Properties, LLC	
Applicant:	Solvang Mower	
Address	1665 Fir Ave.	
APN:	139-143-021	
General Plan Designation:	Tourist Commercial/ Village Commercial	
Zoning:	Village Mixed Use (VMU)/ Design District- Village District (DD-1)	

Project Description

The applicant requests approval of 18.66 square feet of signage for the following:

- Two (2) wall signs, 9.33 square feet in size. One sign is affixed to a fence facing Fir Ave. The second sign is affixed to the fence facing Second St. at the primary entrance. The wall signs are made of aluminum and hand painted.
- The applicant requests an exception to the maximum allowable size for wall signs per 11-13-8 of the Solvang Municipal Code (SMC). The applicant is proposing two (2) wall signs 9.33 square feet in size.

Zoning Ordinance

The applicant is requesting a modification for two (2) proposed wall signs for the maximum allowable size and two (2) proposed projecting signs for the permitted number. The remaining signs requested by the applicant are consistent with the purpose and intent of the City's Zoning Ordinance based on the table.

Solvang Municipal Code (SMC) Sign Regulations 11-13

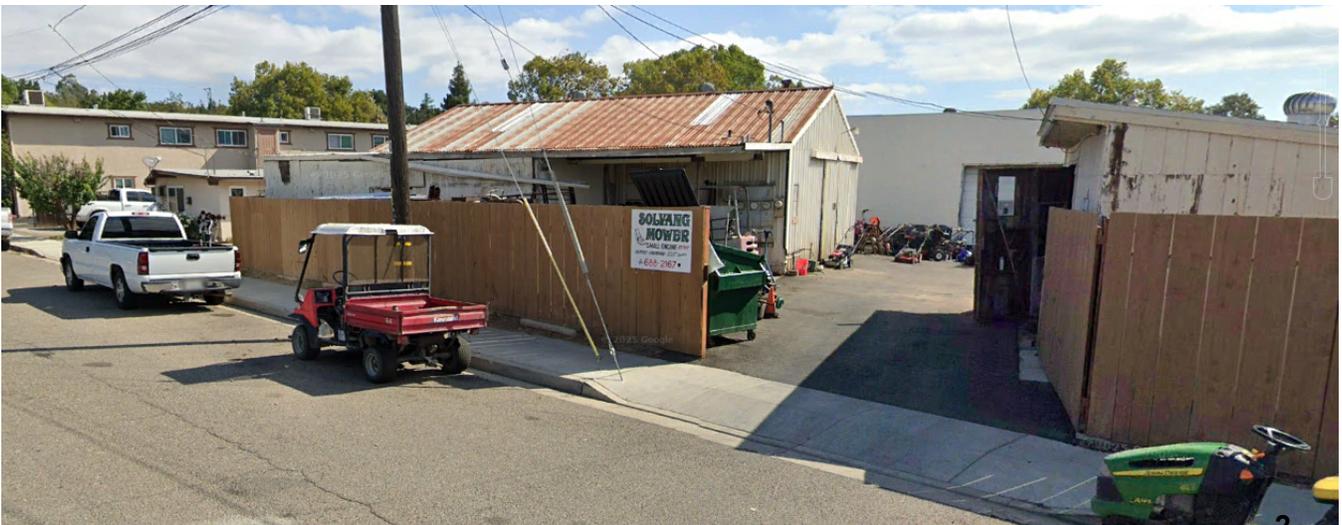
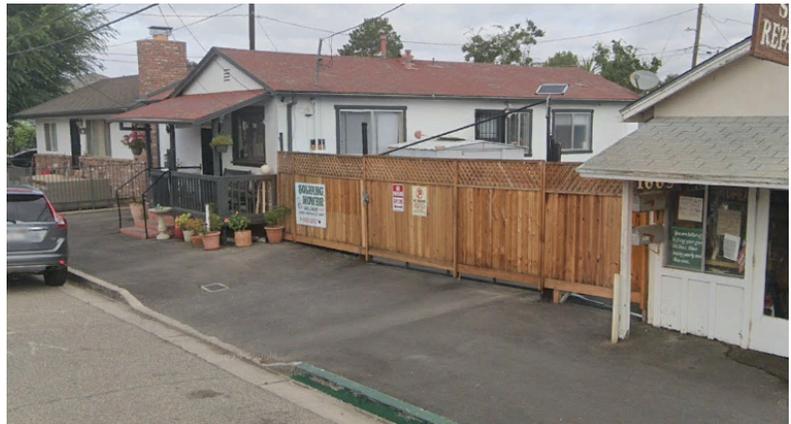
TRC (Village Area) Zoning District Standards	Requirement	Proposed	Meets Standard
Exceptions Requested			
Wall sign max. size	7 sf.	9.33 sf.	Exception required
Max. letter height	8 in.	7 in. max.	Yes
Maximum signage allowed per site	111 sf.	18.66 sf.	Yes

Proposed Wall Sign Exception

The applicant is requesting an exception to the maximum allowable size for two (2) Wall signs. The two signs are identical. The applicant is seeking approval for existing signage. Per 11-13-7(C)(1.d) of the SMC *“If the sign is irregularly shaped, a box shall be drawn around the sign and used to calculate the square footage of the proposed sign”*.

The existing signs have been in place for over two decades, however, no permits were filed and the signs were brought to the attention of city staff due to a code complaint. The applicant states that due to the size of the property, and multiple buildings on the property, that an exception should be granted. Additionally, the applicant cites location of the signs and how these are set back with the belief is that the current signage is appropriately scaled and does not negatively impact the visual character or safety of the area.

Proposed Wall signs, facing Fir and Second St.



CEQA Determination

The proposed signage is Categorically Exempt (Class 1) from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (California Public Resources Code §§ 21000, et seq., "CEQA") and CEQA Guidelines (Title 14 California Code of Regulations §§ 15000, et seq.) pursuant to Section 15301, because the proposed signage is considered a minor alteration of an existing structure that features no expansion of the existing or proposed use.

Findings Required for Exception to Sign Standards

Consistent with Solvang Municipal Code section 11-13-14(F), the following are findings for Approval of an Exception. Granting an exception must be based on at least one of the following findings:

1. There are exceptional or unusual circumstances applying to the property involved which do not apply generally to properties in the vicinity with the same zoning, such as, but not limited to:
 - a. The presence of a legal, nonconforming use;
 - b. Visual obstructions;
 - c. Unusual building location or setback;
 - d. Unusual building design, architectural style, or historic significance.
2. The sign for which an exception is requested is a nonconforming sign that acts as a neighborhood landmark or focal point while not disrupting views of prominent community landscape features. When granting an exception, the design review committee shall require that as many nonconforming elements of the sign as possible be eliminated while allowing its basic form and character to remain.
3. The exception is consistent with the intent and purpose of the sign regulations (see section 11-13-2 of this chapter) and will not constitute a grant of special privilege or entitlement inconsistent with limitations applied to other properties in the vicinity with the same zoning.
4. The sign exception is for superior design and will not result in visual clutter and is consistent with the intent and purpose of these sign regulations.

The applicant is requesting an exception to the maximum allowable size for two (2) wall signs. The DRC will need to make the above findings to grant a sign exception

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Approve a sign permit for 1651 Fir Ave. (APN 139-143-021) for proposed signage: two (2) wall signs, each 9.33 square feet in size for a total of 18.66 square feet of total on-site signage and a determination that the project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).
2. The Design Review Committee may approve a sign permit exception for an exceedance of maximum square footage for two (2) wall signs based on affirmative of the findings consistent with Solvang Municipal Code Section 11-13-14.F.
3. The Design Review Committee may approve a sign permit but direct the applicant to modify the proposed signage. The DRC should be specific in their direction to city staff and the applicant regarding modifications. It is recommended that the DRC direct approval of modifications by the Planning Manager or their designees.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Applicant paid the Design Review Committee fee.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A – Applicant package
- B- Applicant exception request

SIGN PERMIT APPLICATION FOR 1665 FIR AVE SUITE A

ADDRESS: 1665 FIR AVE SUITE A

PARCEL NUMBER: 139-143-021

PROPOSAL FOR 2 SIGNS. ONE LOCATED AT ADDRESS AND OTHER LOCATED AROUND CORNER ON 2ND PLACE AT DRIVEWAY FOR THE BUISNESS

TOTAL SQUARE FOOTAGE FOR BOTH SIGNS 18.70 SQUARE FEET

SIGNS ARE 32" HIGH BY 42" LONG ON FLAT ALLUMINUM SHEETING

HAND PAINTED SIGNS WITH LARGEST LETTER BEING 7"

SIGNS ARE ATTACHED TO FENCING WITH GALVANIZED DECKING SCREWS

SIGNS ARE NOT ILLUMINATED

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED PHOTOS OF THE SIGNS



RECEIVED

Oct 7 2025

CITY OF SOLVANG
PLANNING & BUILDING

Ben Verkler

1651 Fir Properties LLC

1665 Mission Drive

Solvang, Ca 93463

benverkler@gmail.com

805-350-2108

Date: October 7, 2025

To:

City of Solvang Planning Department

411 Second Street

Solvang, CA 93463

Subject: PA 25-02 Request for Sign Size Exemption 1651 Fir Ave Permanent sign application

Dear Planning Department,

I am writing to formally request an exemption from the sign size limitation outlined in Solvang Municipal Code Section 11-13-8, which restricts signage to a maximum of 7 square feet. The existing signs on our property measure 9.31 square feet each and have been in place for over two decades without issue.

Our property, located at 1651 Fir Ave, spans approximately 21,794 square feet. Given the substantial size of the lot and the location of the signs—set back and off the beaten path—we believe the current signage is appropriately scaled and does not negatively impact the visual character or safety of the area.

We respectfully refer to Solvang Municipal Code Section 11-13-13, which allows for modifications to sign regulations based on the size of the building or location. We believe our situation qualifies under this provision and request that the Planning Department consider granting an exemption to allow the continued use of our existing signs.

These signs have served this business and the community reliably for many years, and we hope to maintain them as part of our longstanding presence in Solvang. We appreciate your consideration and welcome any opportunity to discuss this request further.

Sincerely,

Ben Verkler

1651 Fir Properties LLC