

# HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

October 20, 2021

**HDRC CASE NO:** 2021-531  
**ADDRESS:** 297 LOVERA BLVD  
**LEGAL DESCRIPTION:** NCB 9004 BLK 2 LOT 105, 106 & E 20.5 FT OF 107  
**ZONING:** NC,H  
**CITY COUNCIL DIST.:** 1  
**DISTRICT:** Olmos Park Terrace Historic District  
**APPLICANT:** Agustin Bravo/Bravo Sign Company  
**OWNER:** Louis Palomo/INSURANCE ANALYTICS GROUP INC  
**TYPE OF WORK:** Signage  
**APPLICATION RECEIVED:** September 18, 2021  
**60-DAY REVIEW:** Not applicable due to City Council Emergency Orders  
**CASE MANAGER:** Stephanie Phillips

## REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness to install a new freestanding sign in the front yard of the property addressed 297 Lovera. The proposed sign features a double sided panel with wooden posts. The sign area measures 32 square feet on both sides for a total sign area of 64 square feet. The overall height of the sign is 8 feet and will be externally lit.

## APPLICABLE CITATIONS:

*Historic Design Guidelines, Chapter 6, Guidelines for Signage*

### 1. General

#### A. GENERAL

- i. *Number and size*—Each building will be allowed one major and two minor signs. Total requested signage should not exceed 50 square feet.
- ii. *New signs*—Select the type of sign to be used based on evidence of historic signs or sign attachment parts along the building storefront where possible. Design signs to respect and respond to the character and/or period of the area in which they are being placed. Signs should identify the tenant without creating visual clutter or distracting from building features and historic districts.
- iii. *Scale*—Design signage to be in proportion to the facade, respecting the building's size, scale and mass, height, and rhythms and sizes of window and door openings. Scale signage (in terms of its height and width) to be subordinate to the overall building composition.

#### B. HISTORIC SIGNS

- i. *Preservation*—Preserve historic signs, such as ghost signs or other signs characteristic of the building's or district's period of significance, whenever possible.
- ii. *Maintenance*—Repair historic signs and replace historic parts in-kind when deteriorated beyond repair.

#### C. PLACEMENT AND INSTALLATION

- i. *Location*—Place signs where historically located and reuse sign attachment parts where they exist. Do not erect signs above the cornice line or uppermost portion of a facade wall, or where they will disfigure or conceal architectural details, window openings, doors, or other significant details.
- ii. *Obstruction of historic features*—Avoid obscuring historic building features such as cornices, gables, porches, balconies, or other decorative elements with new signs.
- iii. *Damage*—Avoid irreversible damage caused by installing a sign. For example, mount a sign to the mortar rather than the historic masonry.
- iv. *Pedestrian orientation*—Orient signs toward the sidewalk to maintain the pedestrian oriented nature of the historic districts.

#### D. DESIGN

- i. *Inappropriate materials*—Do not use plastic, fiberglass, highly reflective materials that will be difficult to read, or other synthetic materials not historically used in the district.

- ii. *Appropriate materials*—Construct signs of durable materials used for signs during the period of the building's construction, such as wood, wrought iron, steel, aluminum, and metal grill work.
- iii. *Color*—Limit the number of colors used on a sign to three. Select a dark background with light lettering to make signs more legible.
- iv. *Typefaces*—Select letter styles and sizes that complement the overall character of the building façade. Avoid hard-to-read or overly intricate styles.

#### E. LIGHTING

- i. *Lighting sources*—Use only indirect or bare-bulb sources that do not produce glare to illuminate signs. All illumination shall be steady and stationary. Internal illumination should not be used.
- ii. *Neon lighting*—Incorporate neon lighting as an integral architectural element or artwork appropriate to the site, if used.

#### F. PROHIBITED SIGNS

- i. An abbreviated list of the types of signs prohibited within San Antonio's historic districts and on historic landmarks is provided below. Refer to UDC Section 35-612(j) and Chapter 28 of the Municipal Code for more detailed information on prohibited signs.

Billboards, junior billboards, portable signs, and advertising benches.

Pole signs.

Revolving signs or signs with a kinetic component.

Roof mounted signs, except in the case of a contributing sign.

Digital and/or LED lighted signs, not to include LED light sources that do not meet the definition of a sign.

Moored balloons or other floating signs that are tethered to the ground or to a structure.

Any sign which does not identify a business or service within the historic district or historic landmark.

Any non-contributing sign which is abandoned or damaged beyond 50 percent of its replacement value, including parts of old or unused signs.

Notwithstanding the above, signs designated as a contributing sign or structure by the historic preservation officer shall not be prohibited unless or until such designation is revoked.

#### G. MULTI-TENANT PROPERTIES

- i. *Signage Plan*—Develop a master signage plan or signage guidelines for the total building or property.
- ii. *Directory signs*—Group required signage in a single directory sign to minimize visual color and promote a unified appearance.

### 4. Freestanding Signs

#### A. GENERAL

- i. *Appropriate usage*—Freestanding signs are most appropriate in locations where building forms are set back from the street, such as in areas where historic residences have been adapted for office or retail uses, or in commercial districts where they may be used to identify parking areas or other accessory uses.
- ii. *Placement*—Place freestanding signs near the public right-of-way where they are clearly visible to passing pedestrians and motorists, a minimum of five feet from the street right-of-way and ten feet from all interior side lot lines. No freestanding sign should be placed in a manner that obstructs the pedestrian walkway.
- iii. *Number*—Limit the number of freestanding signs per platted lot to one, unless the lot fronts more than one street, in which case, one sign is allowed on each street on which the lot has frontage.
- iv. *Monument signs*—Do not use —suburban-style monument signs or electronic messaging signs not historically found in San Antonio's historic districts.

#### B. DESIGN

- i. *Height*—Limit the height of freestanding signs to no more than six feet.
- ii. *Area*—The size of new signs should be appropriate within the historic context, and should not exceed 25 square feet on either side, for a total of 50 square feet. Appropriate size shall be determined by considering historic precedent, sign patterns within historic districts, and conditions specific to individual properties.
- iii. *Structural supports*—Use subtle structural elements (in terms of their scale and mass) with historically compatible materials to support a freestanding sign.

### FINDINGS:

- a. The primary structure located at 297 Lovera Blvd is a 1-story residential-form structure constructed circa 1940 in the Minimal Traditional style. The structure is located on a corner lot at the intersection of Lovera Blvd and

San Pedro and features a cross gable roof configuration, lap siding, and a central front porch. The structure is contributing to the Olmos Park Terrace Historic District.

- b. **HEIGHT** – The applicant has proposed an 8’ tall freestanding sign. According to the Guidelines for Signage, the height of freestanding signage should be limited to a maximum of 6 feet. Staff does not find the proposed height consistent with the Guidelines. Due to the edge condition of the property, which directly abuts a residential district, as well as the limited side yard clearance requiring that a sign be partially installed in front of the historic structure’s primary façade, staff finds that the applicant should make every effort to reduce the height where feasible.
- c. **SIZE** – Per the Guidelines, the size of new signs should be appropriate within the historic context, and should not exceed 25 square feet on either side, for a total of 50 square feet. Appropriate size shall be determined by considering historic precedent, sign patterns within historic districts, and conditions specific to individual properties. The applicant has proposed a 4’ x 8’ double sided sign area, or 32 square feet per side, for a total sign area of 64 square feet. Staff does not find the request consistent with the Guidelines or appropriate for the scale and context of the house and block. Staff finds that the signage should be greatly reduced in overall square footage in order to not obstruct views of the house. Staff finds that a vertically oriented monument sign may be most appropriate for the site.
- d. **MATERIALITY** – As noted in finding c, the applicant is proposing a 4’x8’ double sided using MDO sign board primed and painted gloss white. Vinyl cut reflective letters will be cut and applied to the white MDO board. The board will be mounted on to a wooden frame that will also be primed and painted. The signage features more than three colors, and a light background with dark letters, which is inconsistent with the Guidelines. Staff generally finds a panel sign supported by wooden posts may be appropriate, but finds that the colors should be limited to a maximum of three and the overall signage should be reduced in scale and square footage as noted in findings b and c.
- e. **LOCATION** – Per the UDC, for local streets and residential collectors in residential zones, freestanding signs must be set back a minimum of fifteen (15) feet from any public right-of-way and ten (10) feet from side and rear lot lines abutting residential uses. Staff does not find the current location consistent with applicable City code or the Guidelines. Staff finds a front yard freestanding sign generally appropriate but finds that the scale, square footage, and location should be revised to be greatly reduced in scale, minimize the obstruction of the house, and ensure visibility by pedestrians and motorists, especially those turning onto San Pedro from Lovera.
- f. **LIGHTING** – The applicant has proposed a non-internally lit freestanding sign. The sign will be externally lit by a ground light source. Staff generally finds the lighting method consistent with the Guidelines.

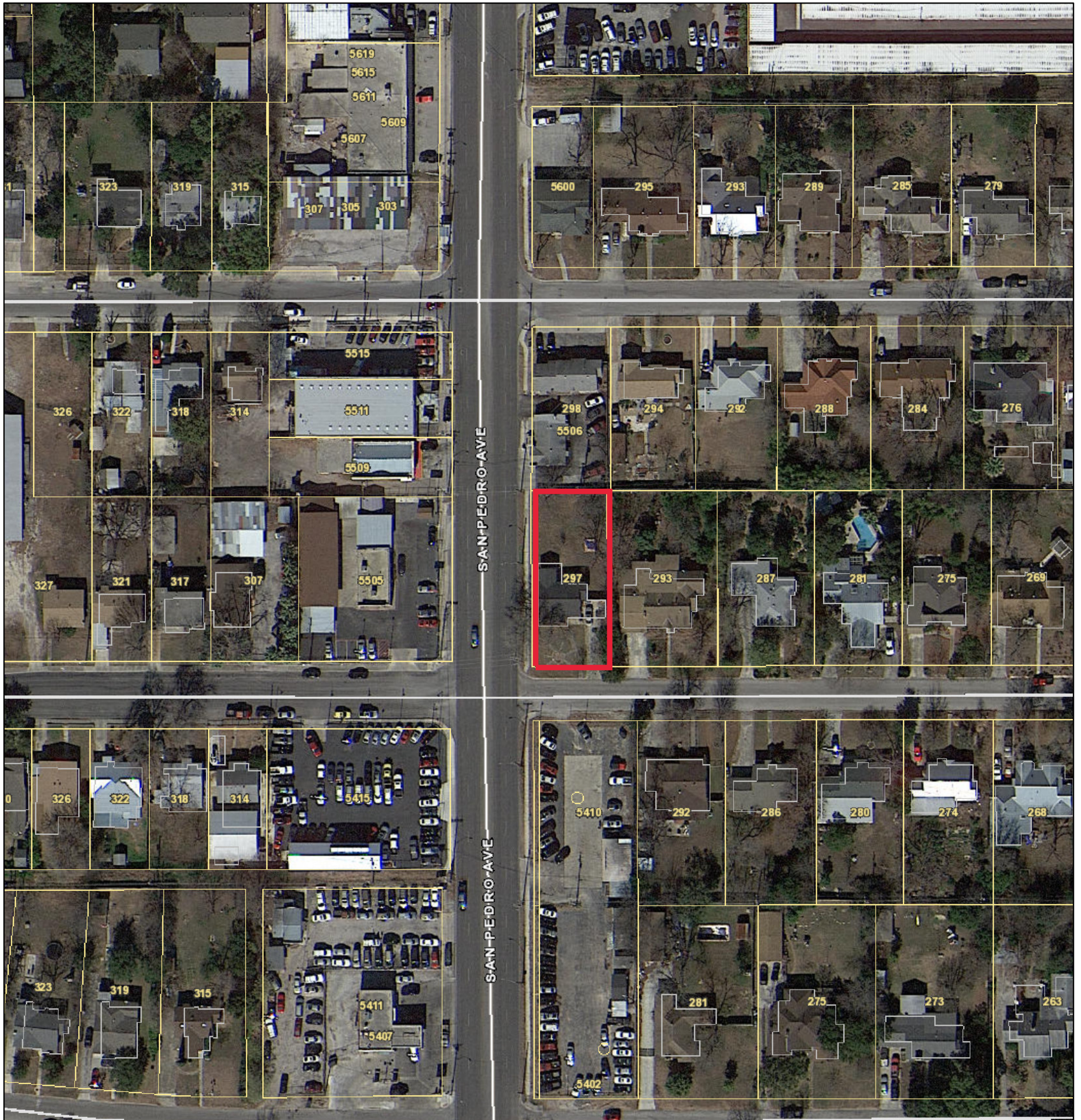
## **RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff does not recommend approval of the sign as proposed. Staff recommends that the applicant submit a proposal that meets the following stipulations:

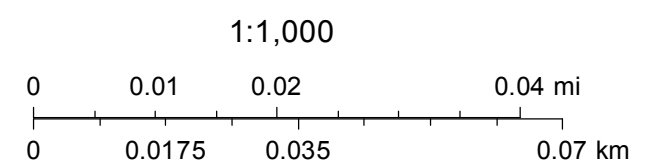
- i. That the signage be greatly reduced in overall height and square footage in order to not obstruct views of the house as noted in findings b through e.
- ii. That the applicant explores revising the horizontal board sign to a vertically oriented monument sign to reduce obstruction of both the primary historic structure and visibility of pedestrian and vehicular traffic as noted in findings b through e.
- iii. That the signage feature a maximum of three colors as noted in finding d. The background should be dark with light letters.
- iv. That the sign be set back a minimum of fifteen (15) feet from any public right-of-way, including San Pedro, as noted in finding e. An updated site plan is required.



# City of San Antonio One Stop



October 15, 2021







SAN PEDRO AVE.

CONTRA

STOP

A-MAX  
AUTO INSURANCE

23









## PLEASE PROOF READ CAREFULLY

With Approval, You Assume Responsibility For Any Errors And All Reprint Charges.

**Either Signature or Email Approval** constitutes your acknowledgement that you have carefully gone over artwork provided.

PLEASE NOTE: Certain colors may appear slightly different in print compared to on-screen. Any questions regarding our approval guidelines please feel free to call or email.

210-364-9710 • bravosignco@gmail.com

Qty: 1	Item: MDO
Single Sided: <input type="checkbox"/> Double Sided: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Color Process: 4/4 Digital Printed Graphics: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Vinyl Cut Graphics: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Notes:	

Lovera Blvd  
300  
Historical District 200

San Pedro Ave  
5400 North Loveland Ave 5400

STOP

210-277-0419

AXAX  
28

297 Lovera Blvd



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