



City of Olathe

City Planning Division

**STAFF REPORT**

**Planning Commission Meeting: March 25, 2019**

<b>Application:</b>	<b><u>PR19-0006</u></b>	<b>Revised preliminary site development plan for Garmin wayfinding signs</b>
<b>Location:</b>	1200 E. 151 <sup>st</sup> Street	
<b>Owner:</b>	Garmin Realty, LLC, Patrick Desbois	
<b>Applicant:</b>	Gould Evans, Dan Zeller	
<b>Engineer:</b>	Phelps Engineering, Judd Claussen	
<b>Staff Contact:</b>	Sean Pendley, Senior Planner	

<b>Site Area:</b>	<u>96.1± acres</u>	<b>Proposed Use:</b>	<u>Business Park - Wayfinding Signage</u>
<b>Zoning:</b>	<u>BP/ C-2</u> (Business Park/ Commercial District)	<b>Plat:</b>	<u>Garmin Properties, Phase 1</u>

	<b>Plan Olathe Land Use Category</b>	<b>Existing Use</b>	<b>Current Zoning</b>	<b>Site Design Category</b>	<b>Building Design Category</b>
<b>Site</b>	<b>Employment Area</b>	<b>Offices</b>	<b>BP/ C-2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>E</b>
<b>North</b>	Conventional Neighborhood	Single Family Residential	R-1	-	-
<b>South</b>	Community Commercial	Parking lot	C-2	-	-
<b>East</b>	Conventional Neighborhood	School/ Single Family Residential	R-1	-	-
<b>West</b>	Employment Area	Commercial	C-2/ CP-2	-	-

**1. Comments:**

The following is a revised preliminary site development plan to allow new wayfinding signage for the Garmin campus. The directional signs will be located along public streets and within the campus along private drives. The applicant has submitted a project

summary and design plans for the proposed wayfinding signs as part of a Campus Wayfinding Sign Package(attached).

Some of the proposed signs do not meet *Unified Development Ordinance (UDO)* requirements for community information signs, including height or sign area for directional signs. However the UDO does allow for sign exceptions to be considered on a case by case basis. The applicant is requesting an exception for these sign requirements, in accordance with the UDO, which may be considered as part of a revised preliminary development plan to be approved by the Planning Commission and City Council. There are no changes proposed for buildings or parking areas or any other areas of the preliminary development plan.

A zoning amendment and revised preliminary development plan (RZ-15-007) was approved for the Garmin campus in 2015. The revised plan included the new warehouse building on Mahaffie Circle. In addition, a revised development plan (PR-15-008) was approved in 2015 for the parking garage on Garmin Way.



*Aerial photo of Garmin campus*

2. **Sign Requirements:** Below is a summary of the City's requirements for signage and description of the signs being requested as part of the Campus Wayfinding Sign Package (Sign Package).

- a. **Community Information Signs** – These types of signs are used to provide direction, traffic control and identification of buildings and are considered different than monument signs or complex signs. Community information signs for planned developments shall be approved as part of an overall sign plan. According to UDO requirements, the maximum height for community information signs is six (6) feet and each sign face shall not exceed 20 square feet. The minimum setback requirement is one (1) foot from property lines. The applicant is requesting increases in height up to nine (9) feet and sign face area up to 36.3 feet as noted below in the requested sign exceptions.
- b. **Proposed Wayfinding Signs** – The applicant is proposing 20 different directional signs to be located throughout the campus to provide direction and identify different buildings. In addition, there are traffic control signs proposed along the interior drives to provide direction for truck deliveries. The Sign Package shows the locations and dimensions for proposed signs. Most of the directional signs meet UDO requirements for height and sign area.

The applicant has also provided photo simulations for the signs to show the size and scale of the signs in relation to the existing buildings and streets.



*View from Ridgeview Road looking west*

- c. **Requested Sign Exceptions** – The applicant is requesting exceptions for nine signs that exceed the height or sign area for community information signs. The three signs located along public streets are nine (9) feet tall and 36.3 square feet. These signs are identified as the “yellow dots” on the sign plans and are located at the entrances on Ridgeview Road, 151<sup>st</sup> Street and Mahaffie Circle.

The UDO requirements for information signs are six (6) feet in height and 20 square feet so these signs exceed the height requirement by 3 feet and 16.3 square feet in sign area.

The other exceptions are for the interior parking entrance signs which are identified as “green dots” on the plans. These signs are six feet tall but have a sign area of 22.5 square feet so they exceed the UDO requirement by 2.5 square feet.



*View from 151<sup>st</sup> Street and Mahaffie looking east*

### **3. Analysis for Sign Exceptions:**

According to UDO 18.50.190.W, deviations or exceptions to sign requirements may be approved by the Planning Commission and City Council upon a finding that the following conditions are met:

- a. That the deviation requested arises from such condition which is unique to the property in question, is not ordinarily found in the same zone or district and is not created by an action or actions of the property owner or applicant.*

The Garmin campus is very large, 96 acres, and there is over 2 million square feet of total building area. The size and area of this campus is unique for the City of Olathe. In addition, there are access drives along three different public streets and there have been several traffic improvements recently constructed to serve the development. These public improvements have improved access, however there is a need to provide better direction and identification to new buildings on the subject property.

- b. That granting the deviation will not adversely affect the rights of adjacent property owners or residents.*

The proposed wayfinding signs are located along public streets and internal private drives. The signs that are closest to adjacent residential properties are five (5) in height and meet UDO requirements for size and setbacks. The signs are not

illuminated and will not be visible from adjacent residential properties. The requested exceptions for height and sign area will not adversely affect surrounding properties.

- c. *That the strict application of the provisions of this ordinance would constitute unnecessary hardship upon the property owner represented in the application.*

Garmin has noted on-going issues with visitors trying to find the appropriate entrances and locations for buildings and trucks not following the delivery routes. The applicant has indicated that it will be very difficult for motorists to see the wayfinding signs if they are only six feet in height and 20 square feet. Garmin previously installed mock-up signs at 6 feet tall and they did not provide adequate visibility from the streets or within the campus.

- d. *That the deviation desired will not adversely affect the public health, safety, moral order, convenience, prosperity, or general welfare.*

The proposed sign exceptions do not pose a threat to the public health, safety or general welfare of the community. The signs meet requirements for setbacks and intersection sight distance.

- e. *That granting the deviation will not be opposed to the general spirit and intent of this ordinance.*

The proposed exceptions for wayfinding signs do not conflict with the general intent of the UDO requirements for information signs. The proposed signs will provide better direction and identification for the buildings and should limit truck traffic through the interior of the campus which causes conflicts for internal traffic and pedestrian access. Due to the large size and scale of the campus and setbacks from streets, staff supports the proposed exceptions for UDO sign requirements.

#### **4. Recommendation:**

Staff recommends approval of the revised preliminary site development plan (PR19-0006) subject to the following stipulations:

- a. Exceptions shall be granted for the maximum height of information signs up to nine (9) feet as identified in the Campus Wayfinding Sign Package dated March 4, 2019.
- b. Exceptions shall be granted for the maximum area of information signs up to 36.3 square feet as identified in the Campus Wayfinding Sign Package dated March 4, 2019.
- c. Sign permits shall be approved for information signs as proposed and with exceptions granted by the Governing Body. All other signs shall comply with UDO requirements.