

**Before the Zoning Administrator in and for the
County of Monterey, State of California**

In the matter of the application of:

SALINAS SELF STORAGE (PLN190348)

RESOLUTION NO. 21-001

Resolution by the Monterey County Zoning
Administrator:

- 1) Find the project consists of construction, or placement of minor structures accessory to (appurtenant to) existing commercial facilities which qualifies as a Class 11 Categorical Exemption pursuant to section 15311(a) of the CEQA Guidelines; and there are no exceptions applicable as described in Section 15300.2 of the CEQA Guidelines; and
- 2) Adopt a resolution to approve a Variance increasing the maximum allowable height for an on-site advertising sign (17 feet by 12 feet, 204 square feet) from 35-feet to a maximum height of 50-feet.

[PLN190348, Salinas Self Storage, 201 Harrison Road, Salinas Road, Salinas, Greater Salinas Area Plan (APN: 113-091-006-000)]

The Salinas Self Storage application (PLN190348) came on for public hearing before the Monterey County Zoning Administrator on January 14, 2021. Having considered all the written and documentary evidence, the administrative record, the staff report, oral testimony, and other evidence presented, the Zoning Administrator finds and decides as follows:

FINDINGS

1. **FINDING:** **PROJECT DESCRIPTION** – The proposed project is a variance increasing the maximum allowable height for an on-site advertising sign (17 feet by 12 feet, 204 square feet) from 35-feet to a maximum height of 50-feet.

 EVIDENCE: The application, project plans, and related support materials submitted by the project applicant to Monterey County Housing and Community Development Planning Services for the proposed development found in Project File PLN190348.

2. **FINDING:** **CONSISTENCY** – The Project, as conditioned, is consistent with the applicable plans and policies which designate this area as appropriate for development.

 EVIDENCE: a) During the course of review of this application, the project has been reviewed for consistency with the text, policies, and regulations in:
 - the 2010 Monterey County General Plan;
 - Greater Salinas Area Plan

- Monterey County Zoning Ordinance (Title 21);

No conflicts were found to exist. No communications were received during the course of review of the project indicating any inconsistencies with the text, policies, and regulations in these documents.

- b) The property is located at 201 Harrison Road, Salinas (Assessor's Parcel Number 113-091-006-000), Greater Salinas Area Plan. The parcel is zoned Light Commercial (LC), which allows non-habitable accessory structures as a Use Allowed. In addition, Section 21.60.090 - *Commercial and industrial zoning district sign regulations*; signs up to but not exceeding 300 square feet in total are allowed without a requirement of a discretionary permit. Therefore, the project is an allowed land use for this site.
- c) The project planner conducted a site inspection on October 10, 2020 to verify that the project on the subject parcel conforms to the plans listed above.
- d) The proposed project was not reviewed by the Greater Salinas Land Use Advisory Committee (LUAC) since there is no LUAC for this area.
- e) The site is outside of Salinas Sphere of Influence. Although the site is outside of the City of Salinas Sphere of Influence, County staff forwarded the project materials to the City of Salinas for review due to its location (northern approach to the City boundaries along Highway 101 and Russell Road). The City of Salinas stated that they would not be supportive of the sign if it were in their jurisdiction because the Salinas Zoning Code would not allow highway signs for a mini-storage business. Only visitor serving uses such as restaurants, gas stations, and hotels are eligible for a Conditional Use Permit for a sign of this nature under City code. In addition, the City stated the proposed sign is too big in their opinion. County Staff considered comments from the City, however, MCC Section 21.60.090 allows a sign up to but not exceeding 300 square feet in total, so the applicant is well within this requirement. Furthermore, since the site is in a commercial zoning district, the applicant is allowed to advertise their business. The only issue remaining for consideration then, is that the height proposed does not meet the height requirement, hence the request for a Variance.
- f) The application, project plans, and related support materials submitted by the project applicant to Monterey County Housing and Community Development Planning Services for the proposed development found in Project File PLN190348.

3. **FINDING:** **SITE SUITABILITY** – The site is physically suitable for the use proposed.

EVIDENCE: a) The project has been reviewed for site suitability by the following departments and agencies: Housing and Community Development Planning Services, Monterey Regional Fire Protection District, Housing and Community Development Engineering Services, Housing and Community Development Environmental Services and Environmental Health Bureau. There has been no indication from these departments/agencies that the site is not suitable for the proposed development. Conditions recommended have been incorporated.

- b) Pursuant to Monterey County Code, Section 21.60.090 - *Commercial and industrial zoning district sign regulations*; signs up to but not exceeding 300 square feet in total are allowed. There is currently a 165 sq. ft. sign that is 35 feet tall installed at the site. The proposed new sign would be 20% larger at 204 sq. ft. which meets the size requirements but would be 15 feet taller than allowed at a total of 50 feet. A mini storage complex has been established at the site since approval by the Planning Commission in 1996 (Salinas Self Storage – Resolution No. 96009/PC95088). The previous approval included a General Development Plan and elevation plans that identified the existing 35-foot-tall sign.
- c) In September 2004, construction of the Sala Road Interchange and southbound Highway 101 Overcrossing at Russell Road and Espinosa Road in north Salinas was completed by Caltrans. The work was done to ensure safer travel along Highway 101 between Sala Road and Boronda Road in north Salinas. Part of that construction involved an off-ramp from Highway 101 adjacent to the subject site. With the elevated construction of this off-ramp, it created a limited view of the Salinas Self Storage business in addition to covering up most of the current 35-foot pole sign. It now appears the sign is sitting 10 feet off the ground instead of 35 feet because the construction of the ramp created an approximately 20-foot change in elevation between the highway surface and the property. According to Caltrans data, the clearance for the bridge connecting to the adjacent off ramp is at 19’9” and the roof of the bridge is at 23’5”. As such, by adding the additional height to the sign, the view of the signage from Highway 101 would be similar to the pre-interchange views of the 35-foot sign.
- d) Staff conducted a site inspection on October 10, 2020 to verify that the site is suitable for this use.
- e) The application, project plans, and related support materials submitted by the project applicant to the Monterey County Housing and Community Development Planning Services for the proposed development found in Project File PLN190348.

4. **FINDING:** **HEALTH AND SAFETY** - The establishment, maintenance, or operation of the project applied for will not under the circumstances of this particular case be detrimental to the health, safety, peace, morals, comfort, and general welfare of persons residing or working in the neighborhood of such proposed use, or be detrimental or injurious to property and improvements in the neighborhood or to the general welfare of the County.

EVIDENCE: a) The project was reviewed by Housing and Community Development Planning Services, Monterey Regional Fire Protection District, Housing and Community Development Engineering Services, Housing and Community Development Environmental Services and Environmental Health Bureau. The respective agencies have recommended conditions, where appropriate, to ensure that the project will not have an adverse effect on the health, safety, and welfare of persons either residing or working in the neighborhood.

- b) There are no onsite water treatment system (OWTS) onsite. The property is served by a private onsite well. However, the sign does not contain any plumbing fixtures and thus does not require water or septic connections.
 - c) Staff conducted a site inspection on October 10, 2020 to verify that the site is suitable for this use.
 - d) The application, project plans, and related support materials submitted by the project applicant to the Monterey County Housing and Community Planning Services for the proposed development found in Project File PLN190348.

- 5. **FINDING:** **NO VIOLATIONS** - The subject property is in compliance with all rules and regulations pertaining to zoning uses, subdivision, and any other applicable provisions of the County's zoning ordinance. No violations exist on the property.

- EVIDENCE:**

 - a) Staff reviewed Monterey County Housing and Community Planning and Building Services records and is not aware of any violations existing on subject property.
 - b) Staff conducted a site inspection on October 10, 2020 and researched County records to assess if any violation exists on the subject property.
 - c) There are no known violations on the subject parcel.
 - d) The application, plans and supporting materials submitted by the project applicant to Monterey County Housing and Community Planning Services for the proposed development are found in Project File PLN190348.

- 6. **FINDING:** **CEQA (Exempt):** - The project is categorically exempt from environmental review and no unusual circumstances were identified to exist for the proposed project.

- EVIDENCE:**

 - a) California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15311 categorically exempts construction, or placement of minor structures accessory to (appurtenant to) existing commercial facilities.
 - b) The project is a replacement of an existing commercial sign. Therefore, the proposed development is consistent with the parameters of this Class 11 exemption.
 - c) No adverse environmental effects were identified during staff review of the development application during a site visit on October 10, 2020.
 - d) None of the exceptions under CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 apply to this project. The project does not involve a designated historical resource, a hazardous waste site, development located near or within view of a scenic highway, unusual circumstances that would result in a significant effect or development that would result in a cumulative significant impact.
 - e) Staff conducted a site inspection on October 10, 2020 to verify that the site is suitable for this use.
 - f) The application, project plans, and related support materials submitted by the project applicant to Monterey County Housing and Community Planning Services for the proposed development found in Project File PLN190348.

7. **FINDING:** **VARIANCE** - The project meets the findings for a variance as required by Title 21 section 21.72 (Variances). Pursuant to Section 21.18.010 of the Light Commercial (LC) zoning district, the purpose of this Chapter is to provide a zoning district to accommodate and maintain a broad range of light commercial uses suitable for the convenience of nearby residential areas. Staff finds that a Variance can be supported, and the necessary findings made based on the following:
- EVIDENCE:**
- a) Special circumstances are applicable to this property due to the substantial change in grades introduced by the highway improvements that significantly limit the visibility of any signage from Highway 101 which would meet the height limits for this site.
 - b) This circumstance does not constitute a grant of special privilege inconsistent with other properties in the vicinity and zoning area since nearby businesses have similar commercial signs which were not affected by the elevation change of Highway 101 and are still visible
 - c) The variance would not grant a use not authorized within the Light Commercial zoning designation since Commercial zoning districts in Monterey County allow for advertisement of businesses.
8. **FINDING:** **APPEALABILITY** - The decision on this project may be appealed to the Planning Commission
- EVIDENCE:** Section 21.80.040 of the Monterey County Zoning Ordinance states that the proposed project is appealable to the Planning Commission.

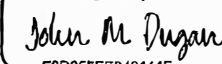
DECISION

NOW, THEREFORE, based on the above findings and evidence, the Zoning Administrator does hereby:

1. Find the project consists of construction, or placement of minor structures accessory to (appurtenant to) existing commercial facilities which qualifies as a Class 11 Categorical Exemption pursuant to section 15311(a) of the CEQA Guidelines; and there are no exceptions applicable as described in Section 15300.2 of the CEQA Guidelines.
2. Adopt a resolution to approve a variance increasing the maximum allowable height for an on-site advertising sign (17 feet by 12 feet, 204 square feet) from 35-feet to a maximum height of 50-feet.

All in general conformance with the attached sketch and subject to the attached conditions, all being attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 14th day of January, 2021.

DocuSigned by:

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John M. Dugan, FAICP Monterey County Zoning Administrator

COPY OF THIS DECISION MAILED TO APPLICANT ON 1/15/2021

THIS APPLICATION IS APPEALABLE TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION.

IF ANYONE WISHES TO APPEAL THIS DECISION, AN APPEAL FORM MUST BE COMPLETED AND SUBMITTED TO THE PLANNING DIRECTOR ALONG WITH THE APPROPRIATE FILING FEE ON OR BEFORE 1/25/2021

This decision, if this is the final administrative decision, is subject to judicial review pursuant to California Code of Civil Procedure Sections 1094.5 and 1094.6. Any Petition for Writ of Mandate must be filed with the Court no later than the 90th day following the date on which this decision becomes final.

NOTES

1. You will need a building permit and must comply with the Monterey County Building Ordinance in every respect.

Additionally, the Zoning Ordinance provides that no building permit shall be issued, nor any use conducted, otherwise than in accordance with the conditions and terms of the permit granted or until ten days after the mailing of notice of the granting of the permit by the appropriate authority, or after granting of the permit by the Board of Supervisors in the event of appeal.

Do not start any construction or occupy any building until you have obtained the necessary permits and use clearances from Monterey County Housing and Community Development-Planning and Building Services Department office in Salinas.

2. This permit expires 3 years after the above date of granting thereof unless construction or use is started within this period.

Form Rev. 5-14-2014

Monterey County HCD Planning

Conditions of Approval/Implementation Plan/Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan

PLN190348

1. PD001 - SPECIFIC USES ONLY

Responsible Department: HCD-Planning

Condition/Mitigation Monitoring Measure: This Variance (PLN190348) allows a 50 foot tall pole sign (17'x12') to exceed the 35 foot height limit. The property is located at 201 Harrison Road, Salinas (Assessor's Parcel Number 113-091-006-000), Greater Salinas Area Plan. This permit was approved in accordance with County ordinances and land use regulations subject to the terms and conditions described in the project file. Neither the uses nor the construction allowed by this permit shall commence unless and until all of the conditions of this permit are met to the satisfaction of the Director of HCD - Planning. Any use or construction not in substantial conformance with the terms and conditions of this permit is a violation of County regulations and may result in modification or revocation of this permit and subsequent legal action. No use or construction other than that specified by this permit is allowed unless additional permits are approved by the appropriate authorities. To the extent that the County has delegated any condition compliance or mitigation monitoring to the Monterey County Water Resources Agency, the Water Resources Agency shall provide all information requested by the County and the County shall bear ultimate responsibility to ensure that conditions and mitigation measures are properly fulfilled. (HCD - Planning)

Compliance or Monitoring Action to be Performed: The Owner/Applicant shall adhere to conditions and uses specified in the permit on an ongoing basis unless otherwise stated.

2. PD002 - NOTICE PERMIT APPROVAL

Responsible Department: HCD-Planning

Condition/Mitigation Monitoring Measure: The applicant shall record a Permit Approval Notice. This notice shall state:
"A Variance (Resolution Number 21-001) was approved by the Zoning Administrator for Assessor's Parcel Number 113-091-006-000 on January 14, 2021. The permit was granted subject to 2 conditions of approval which run with the land. A copy of the permit is on file with Monterey County HCD - Planning."

Proof of recordation of this notice shall be furnished to the Director of HCD - Planning prior to issuance of grading and building permits, Certificates of Compliance, or commencement of use, whichever occurs first and as applicable. (HCD - Planning)

Compliance or Monitoring Action to be Performed: Prior to the issuance of grading and building permits, certificates of compliance, or commencement of use, whichever occurs first and as applicable, the Owner/Applicant shall provide proof of recordation of this notice to the HCD - Planning.

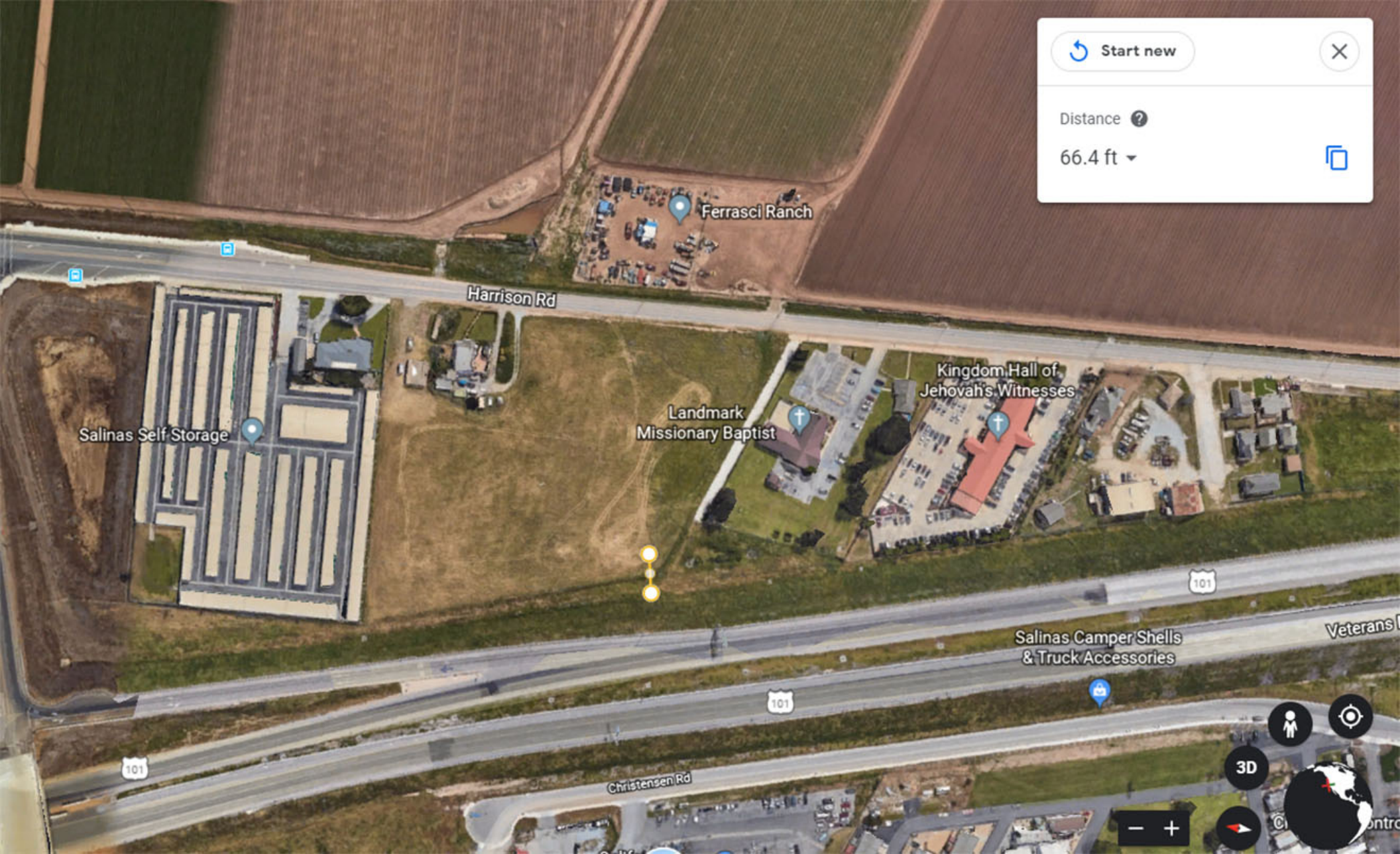


Start new



Distance ?

66.4 ft ▾



Ferrasci Ranch

Harrison Rd

Salinas Self Storage

Landmark
Missionary Baptist

Kingdom Hall of
Jehovah's Witnesses

101

Salinas Camper Shells
& Truck Accessories

Veterans

101

101

Christensen Rd

3D



16130 Highway 156, Salinas, CA 93907
(831) 200-9680
www.signsbyvan.com
License #: 866499

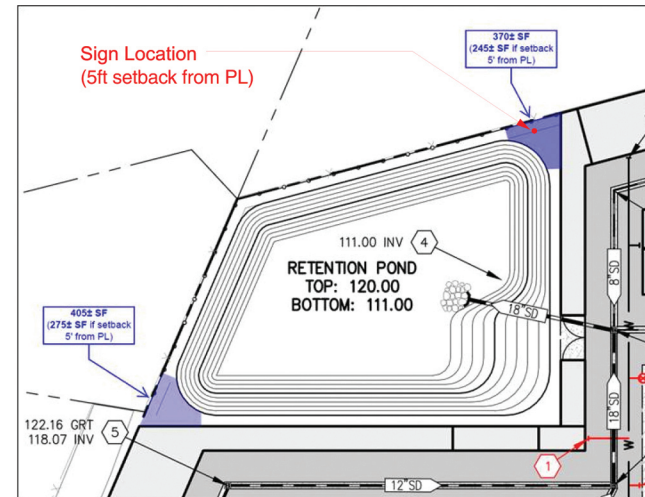
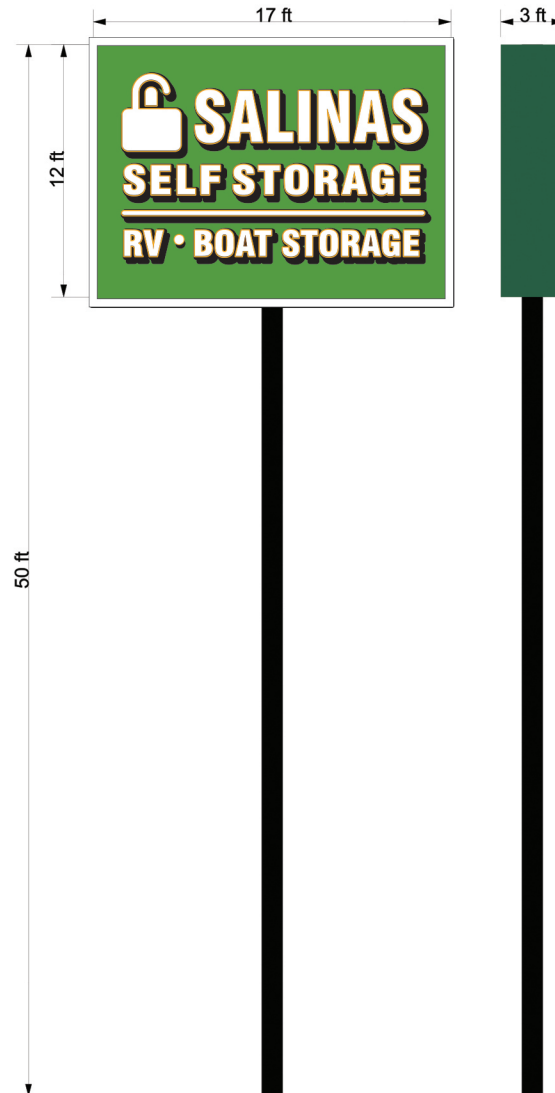
Client:



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