



Requesting Department:
Development Services

TO: Planning and Zoning Commission

THRU: Brett Burningham, Development Services Director

FROM: Erik Swanson, Interim Planning Administrator
Sarah Clark, Senior Planner/Project Manager

RE: Discussion and Possible Approval of P19-0106 Fat Cats Comprehensive Sign Plan, a request from Rob Friend of Fat Cat Entertainment, for approval of a Comprehensive Sign Plan at the Fat Cats entertainment venue located approximately 575-feet west of the northwest corner of Ellsworth and Riggs roads.

DATE: April 8, 2020

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of P19-0106 "Fat Cats Comprehensive Sign Plan", subject to the Conditions of Approval outlined in this report.

PROPOSED MOTION

Move to approve P19-0106 "Fat Cats Comprehensive Sign Plan", subject to the Conditions of Approval outlined in this report.

RELEVANT COUNCIL GOALS



Secure Future

SUMMARY

This proposal consists of a request from Rob Friend of Fat Cats Entertainment, for approval of a Comprehensive Sign Plan at the Fat Cats entertainment venue located approximately 575-feet west of the northwest corner of Ellsworth and Riggs roads

HISTORY

Sept. 16, 2015: Town Council approved the Pecan Plaza Planned Area Development Rezone (Ordinance 576-16), rezoning a portion of the subject site from R1-43 to C-2/PAD.

- June 6, 2018: Town Council approved the Pecan Lake PAD (Ordinance 664-18), where the subject property was split off from the Pecan Plaza PAD to become part of the Pecan Lake PAD.
- Jan. 29, 2020: Planning Commission recommends approval of Fat Cats PAD Amendment (P19-0108) and Site Plan (P19-0107).
- Feb. 5, 2020: Town Council approves Fat Cats PAD Amendment – Ordinance 720-20 (P19-0108) and Site Plan (P19-0107).

PROJECT INFORMATION													
Project Name	Fat Cats Comprehensive Sign Plan												
Site Location	Approximately 575-feet west of the northwest corner of Ellsworth and Riggs roads												
Current Zoning	C-2/PAD												
Surrounding Zoning	<table border="0"> <tr> <td style="padding-right: 20px;">North</td> <td>R1-5 PAD (Pecan Lake)</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Riggs Road</td> </tr> <tr> <td>South</td> <td>Sonoqui Wash</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>R1-12/PAD (Toll Brothers at Bridle Ranch aka Ranchos Legante)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>East</td> <td>C-2/PAD (Pecan Plaza)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>West</td> <td>R1-18/PAD (Pecan Lake LDS Church Site)</td> </tr> </table>	North	R1-5 PAD (Pecan Lake)		Riggs Road	South	Sonoqui Wash		R1-12/PAD (Toll Brothers at Bridle Ranch aka Ranchos Legante)	East	C-2/PAD (Pecan Plaza)	West	R1-18/PAD (Pecan Lake LDS Church Site)
North	R1-5 PAD (Pecan Lake)												
	Riggs Road												
South	Sonoqui Wash												
	R1-12/PAD (Toll Brothers at Bridle Ranch aka Ranchos Legante)												
East	C-2/PAD (Pecan Plaza)												
West	R1-18/PAD (Pecan Lake LDS Church Site)												
Acreeage	7 acres (net)												

DISCUSSION

The Fat Cats entertainment center is located on a 7-acre site and includes a 61,040 square foot building with:

- 8 movie theaters
- 20 lane bowling alley
- Arcade games
- Dining
- Indoor miniature golf
- Party rooms

The applicant is requesting approval of a Comprehensive Sign Plan for the Fat Cats venue.

A Comprehensive Sign Plan has been submitted to outline the sign standards being requested. In total, the request includes:

- One (1) 10-foot tall double-sided led animated free-standing monument sign along Riggs Road
- Six (6) various wall-mounted identification signs

- Twelve (12) movie poster cases

The proposed CSP only accounts for the Fat Cats use. The pad site located in the center would follow the current Zoning Ordinance signage requirements.

Three (3) deviations from the Zoning Ordinance are proposed. The applicant is requesting approval for the following features that exceed or deviate from signage standards as set by the Zoning Ordinance:

LED Animated Monument Sign:

Proposed Monument LED Animated Monument Sign Modifications		
Standard	Required by Zoning Ordinance	Fat Cats Proposed Standards
Animated Signage	Animated signs are prohibited by the Zoning Ordinance	One (1) 38.5 square foot LED animated monument sign (changing static images every 8-10 seconds). The sign will be illuminated 24/7, but will be dimmed by 50% beginning at dusk.

Article 7.2.B Prohibited Signs states that animated signs, which are defined as any sign or part of a sign which changes physical position by any movement, rotation, or undulation or which gives the visual impression of such movement, rotation or undulation are prohibited. This category of signs includes but is not limited to banners, pennants, flags and spinners as well as signs with flashing intermittent or sequential illumination.

Article 7.2.A.9 Comprehensive Sign Plan of the Zoning Ordinance, it states that a Comprehensive Sign Plan that proposes electronic signage shall be reviewed and approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission.

The applicant is proposing one LED monument sign which displays a static image that changes every 8 to 10 seconds. The applicant has proposed that the sign will progressively be dimmed starting at dusk and be dimmed by 50% once it is dark. The sign meets all other requirements for monument signage including maximum height and square footage. The monument sign incorporates stone, slump block, and a concrete cap, which is consistent with the materials used in the screen walls for the site.

Applicant Justification: The applicant has provided the following justification for the proposed deviation.

Sign animation is necessary to provide LED display of static images for movie trailers identifying to the public the movies currently being shown in the theaters. The deviation is supported by the following:

- a) *Fat Cats shares the vision of the Town of Queen Creek master plan to provide family-friendly entertainment for the community. Animated signage is a key component of Fat Cat's business model, as signage of this nature is expected in the family entertainment business.*
- b) *Customers rely on the signage for information of events and shows on site. Fat Cat is a unique entertainment venue, different from any other retailer. The difference from other retailers is that the LED messaging provides customers with information that a new movie*

is “Now Showing”/“Coming Soon”, or that a special event such as “Family Night” or “Polar Express Event” is taking place.

- c) The proposed monument sign is consistent with other unique entertainment venues such as the Horseshoe Park & Equestrian Center on Riggs Road.
- d) These visual images help create a sense of place and arrival for customers that promotes repeat patronage of the entertainment center.
- e) The visual images on the monument sign are lower in height than the building and are, therefore, appropriately screened from the emerging residential development to the north and will be more than 150 feet from the rear yards of proposed residential development on the south across Riggs Road.
- f) The proposed development exceeds standards in that only 1 freestanding is provided, where one per frontage is allowed. Additionally, the design of the sign is tasteful and includes elements of a high quality development.

Building Mounted Wall Signage (Increasing Maximum Sign Square Footage and Increasing Maximum Aggregate Sign Square Footage):

Proposed Wall Sign Modifications					
Elevation	Frontage	Zoning Ordinance Requirement	Zoning Ordinance Allowed Square Footage	Proposed Standard	Proposed Square Footage of Signage
Front	379'10"	1.5 sqft. of signage per linear foot of frontage	569.8 sqft.	2.6 sqft. of signage per linear foot of frontage	989 sqft.
Side (East)	136'-9".	0.5 sqft. of signage per linear foot of side wall	68.4 sqft.	2.2 sqft. of signage per linear foot of side wall	298 sqft.
Side (West)	176'-9"	0.5 sqft. of signage per linear foot of side wall	88.4 sqft.	0.8 sqft. of signage per linear foot of side wall	142 sqft.
Rear	379'10"	0.5 sqft. of signage per linear foot of rear wall	189.9 sqft.	No signage in the rear permitted	0 sqft.

Proposed Wall Sign Aggregate Area Standards	
Required by Zoning Ordinance	Fat Cats Proposed Standards
Total wall signage shall not exceed two-hundred fifty (250) square feet.	1,429 sqft. of signage

As part of the Comprehensive Sign Plan the applicant is proposing the following wall signs for each of the building frontages:

- The lineal footage of the building occupancy frontage is 379'-10". On the front elevation, the applicant is proposing a total of 989 sqft. of signage, including:
 - 389 sqft. white acrylic LED illuminated Fat Cats logo
 - 226 sqft. painted bowling ball
 - 226 sqft. "Cinema Grill Arcade Bowling" internally illuminated sign with black channel letters
 - 48 sqft. movie poster cases
- The lineal footage of the east side is 136'-9". On the east side elevation, the applicant is proposing a total of 298 sqft. of signage, including:
 - 156 sqft. "Cinema Grill Arcade Bowling" internally illuminated sign with black channel letters
 - 142 sqft. painted sign
- The lineal footage of the west side is 176'-9". On the west side elevation, the applicant is proposing a 142 sqft. painted sign.
- No rear signage is proposed and will not be permitted per the CSP.

The applicant is proposing a total of 1,429 sqft. of wall signage for the building.

The maximum wall sign size calculation as defined in the Zoning Ordinance is based on the linear frontage of a building; it does not factor in the height of a structure. The calculation results in the same sign size allowed for a building that is 15-feet in height (for example) and for a building that is 50-feet. The Fat Cats building is approximately 48-feet in height at the front entry tower and the roof parapet of the remainder of the building varies from 44-feet to 35-feet in height. Most commercial buildings in Town range from 20-feet to 30-feet in height. Due to the increased height of the Fat Cats building, the proposed signage appears balanced with the wall face and does not appear oversized or excessive.

The applicant has stated that the wall signs will not include a dimmer. Staff has expressed some concern with not installing a dimmer for the white front entry logo sign in particular, which is common for some building mounted signage, in the event that future issues with brightness arise.

Applicant Justification: The applicant has provided the following justification for the proposed wall sign area and total deviation.

Fat Cats recommends that the signage standards be modified and tailored to this distinct development. This will enable Fat Cats to display its corporate identification, similar to other large developments or anchors in the Town of Queen Creek. It is noted that the proposal includes 1 building with multiple entertainment options - bowling, arcade, dining, and theater uses - that are typically ran by separate business entities. These are combined under one roof, which has the effect of reducing the overall impact of multiple signs on the property and providing a consistent style. Also, the proposed building is set back far into the site, which will reduce any impact on the surrounding properties. The maximum sign area for wall signs is based on linear foot of the building, but it does not factor in the height of the building. The wall signage amount being requested appears balanced and proportional to the size of the building. Additionally, the scale of the signs are appropriate to the scale and type of this unique development, and they are designed with high quality design and materials that complement the architecture of the project. No rear signage will be allowed on the building to minimize impact on the adjacent neighbors.

Based on the unique use and the scale of the building in relation to sign size, Staff has reviewed the deviations and supports the applicant's requests.

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

1. This project shall be developed in accordance with the plans attached to this case and all the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance applicable to this case.
2. Any temporary signage shall be subject to review and approval under the Temporary Sign Permit application process.
3. All signage shall be permitted under a building permit, following approval of the Comprehensive Sign Plan from the Planning and Zoning Commission.
4. All painted signs shall maintained in good condition.
5. LED Monument sign shall be dimmed to by 50% by dark.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Fat Cats Aerial Exhibit
2. Fat Cats Comprehensive Sign Plan

Project Name: Fat Cats Comprehensive Sign Plan (P19-0106)



Hearing Date: April 8, 2020 (Planning Commission)

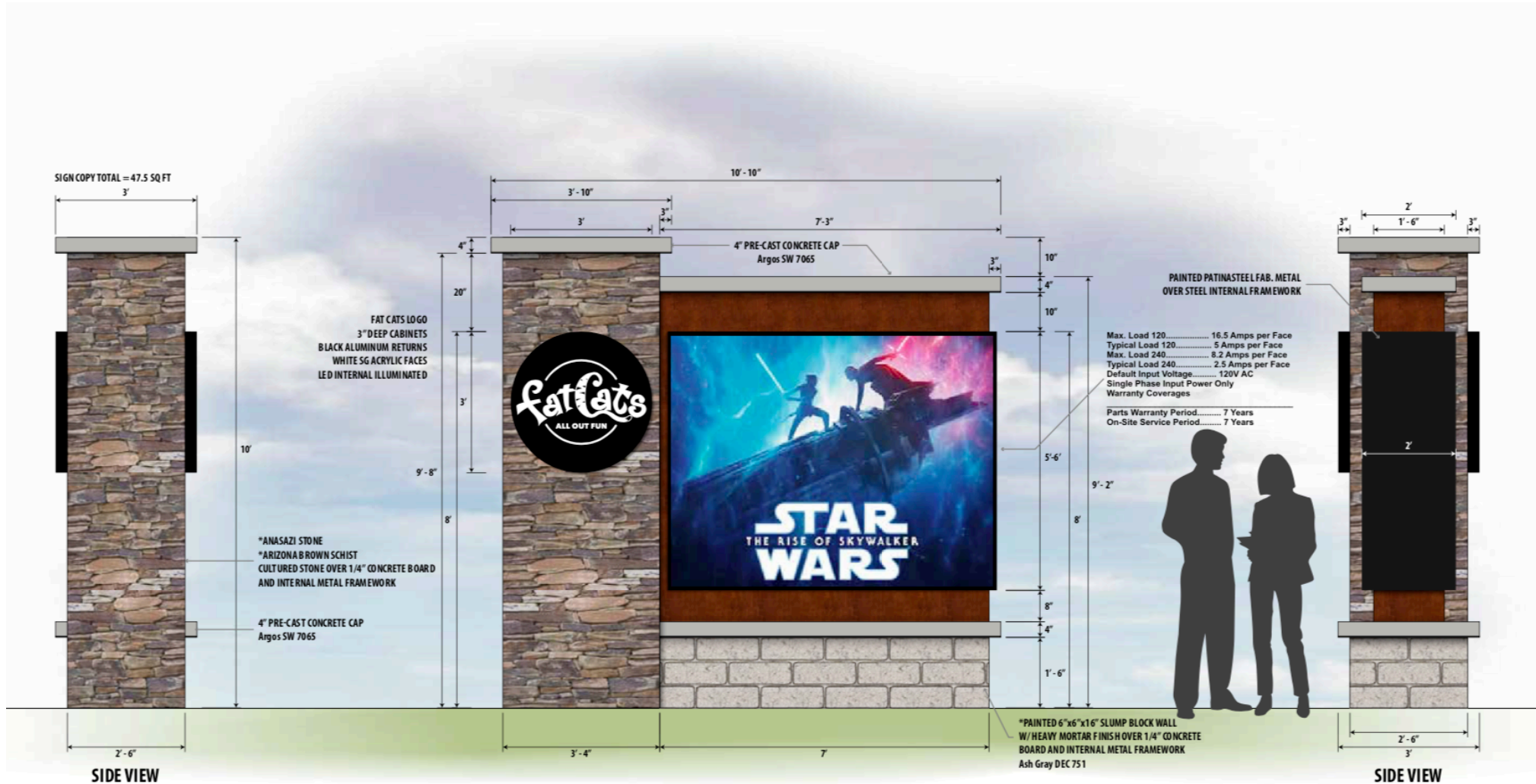


Comprehensive Sign Plan

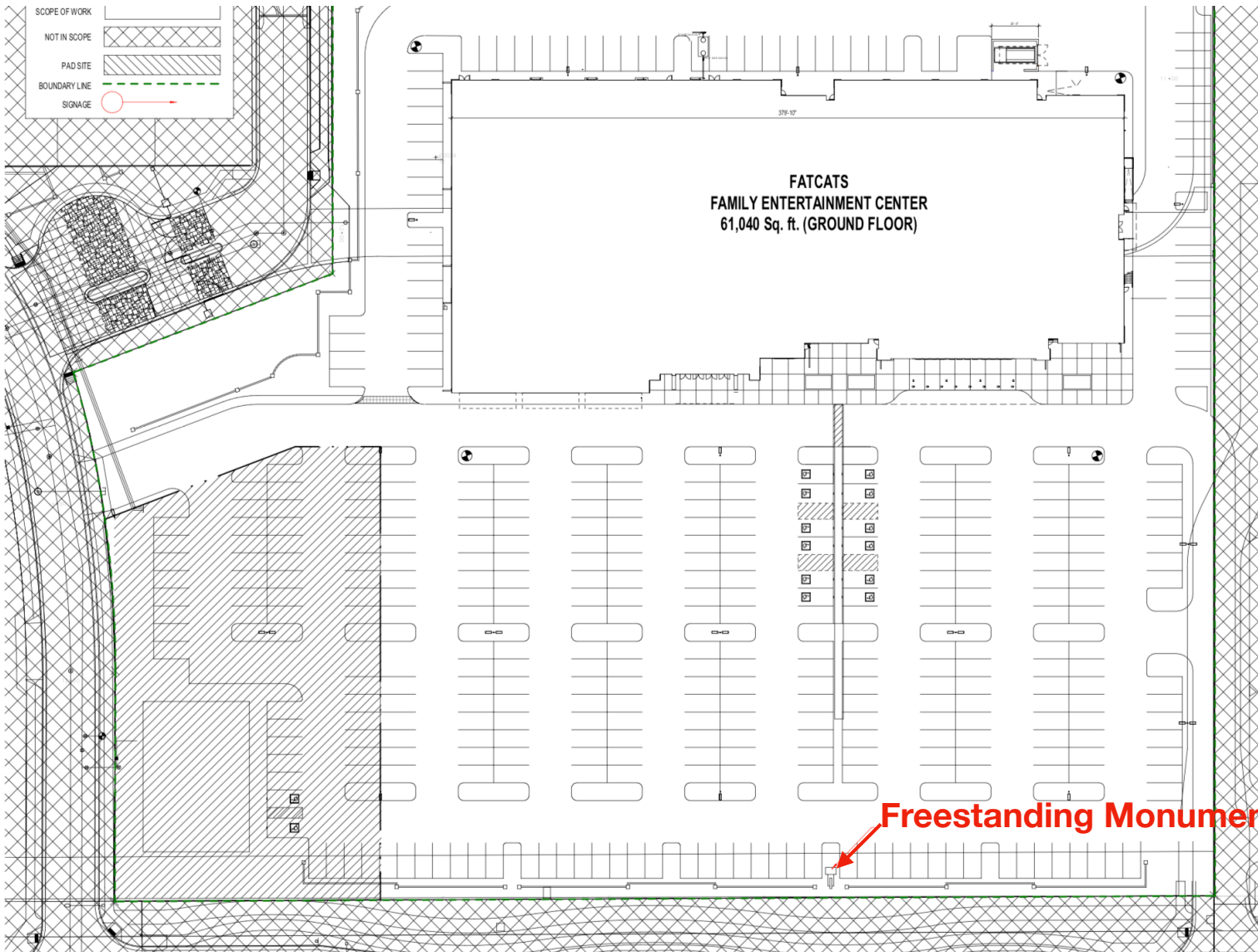


West of Northwest Corner of Ellsworth and Riggs, Queen Creek, AZ
February 2020

Freestanding Monument Sign Rendering



Freestanding Monument Sign Site Plan



Freestanding Monument Sign

Freestanding Monument Sign

Ordinance Section 7.2.A.1.C.2.B and Section 1, SIGN, ANIMATED; and SIGN, CHANGEABLE COPY

Such ground sign shall not exceed forty-eight (48) square feet in sign area, nor shall it exceed eight feet (8') in height above grade nor shall it extend or project over any street or alley line.

Any sign or part of a sign which changes physical position by any movement, rotation, or undulation or which gives the visual impression of such movement, rotation or undulation. This category of signs includes but is not limited to banners, pennants, flags and spinners as well as signs with flashing intermittent or sequential illumination.

A sign or portion thereof with characters, letters, or illustrations that can be changed or rearranged without altering the face or the surface of the sign. A sign on which the message changes more than eight times per day shall be considered an animated sign and not a changeable copy sign for purposes of this Ordinance. A sign on which the only copy that changes is an electronic or mechanical indication of time or temperature shall be considered a "time and temperature" portion of a sign and not a changeable copy sign for purposes of this Ordinance.

Proposed Standard:

The sign copy on the proposed Freestanding Monument sign will not exceed eight feet (8') in height above grade, and the sign area is 47.5 square feet. Proposed Freestanding Monument sign will incorporate static images that change every 8 to 10 seconds, and the sign will be illuminated 24/7, but will be dimmed by 50% during the evening.

Justification:

Sign animation is necessary to provide LED display of static images for movie trailers identifying to the public the movies currently being shown in the theaters. The deviation is supported by the following:

- a) FatCats shares the vision of the Town of Queen Creek master plan to provide family-friendly entertainment for the community. Animated signage is a key component of FatCat's business model, as signage of this nature is expected in the family entertainment business.
- b) Customers rely on the signage for information of events and shows on site. FatCat is a unique entertainment venue, different from any other retailer. The difference from other retailers is that the LED messaging provides customers with information that a new movie is "Now Showing"/"Coming Soon", or that a special event such as "Family Night" or "Polar Express Event" is taking place.
- c) The proposed monument sign is consistent with other unique entertainment venues such as the Horseshoe Park & Equestrian Center on Riggs Road.
- d) These visual images help create a sense of place and arrival for customers that promotes repeat patronage of the entertainment center.
- e) The visual images on the monument sign are lower in height than the building and are, therefore, appropriately screened from the emerging residential development to the north and will be more than 150 feet from the rear yards of proposed residential development on the south across Riggs Road.
- f) The proposed development exceeds standards in that only 1 freestanding is provided, where one per frontage is allowed. Additionally, the design of the sign is tasteful and includes elements of a high quality development.

Building Signage Elevations



SOUTH ELEVATION - RENDERED



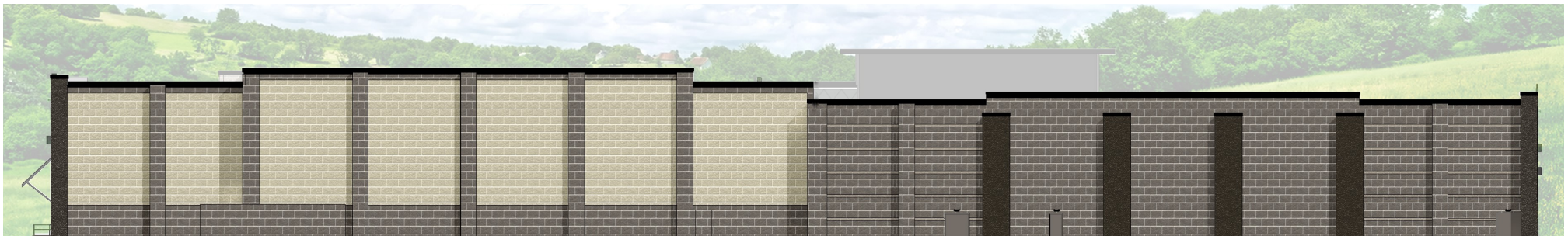
EAST ELEVATION - RENDERED

Building Signage Elevations



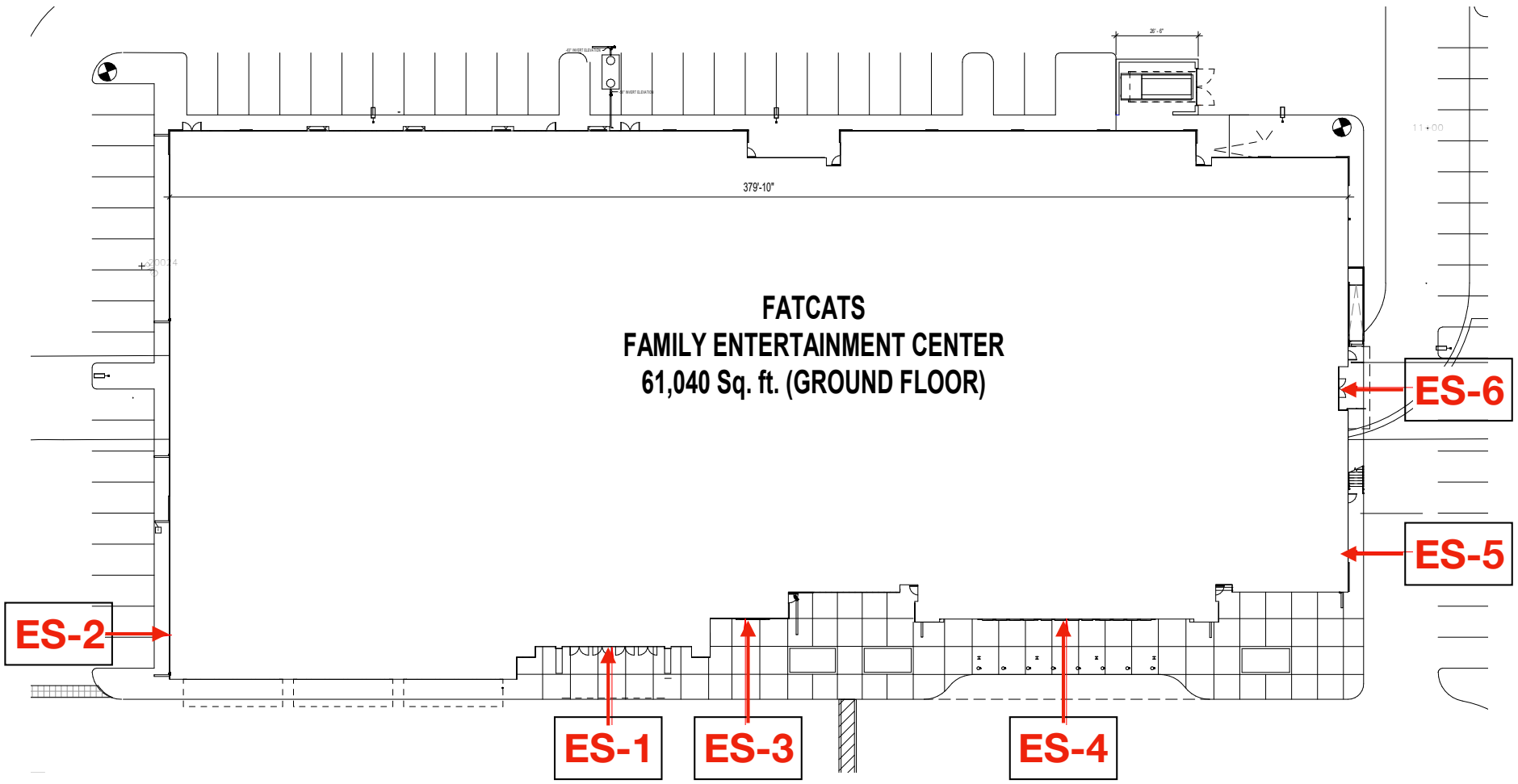
WEST ELEVATION - RENDERED

Note: Signage on the North elevation will not be requested or permitted



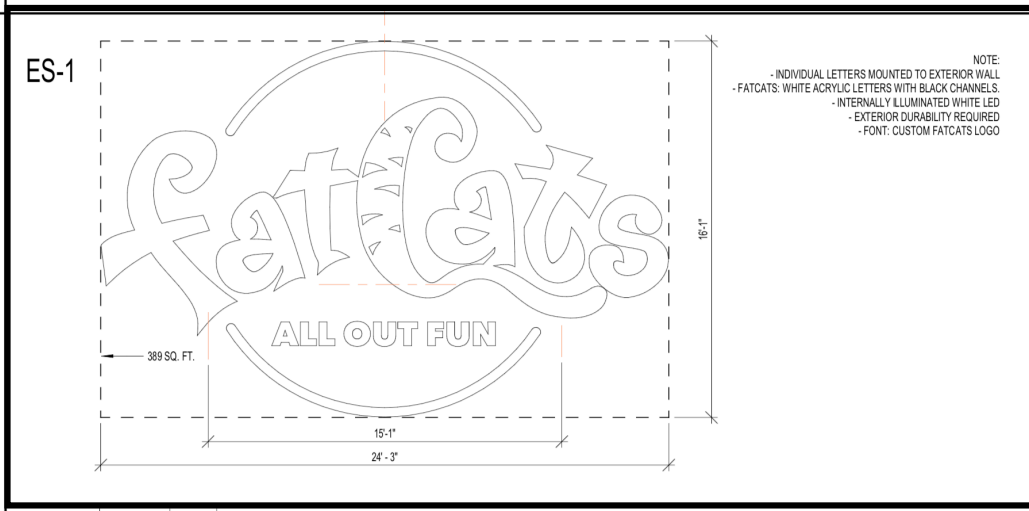
NORTH ELEVATION - RENDERED

Building Signage Site Plan

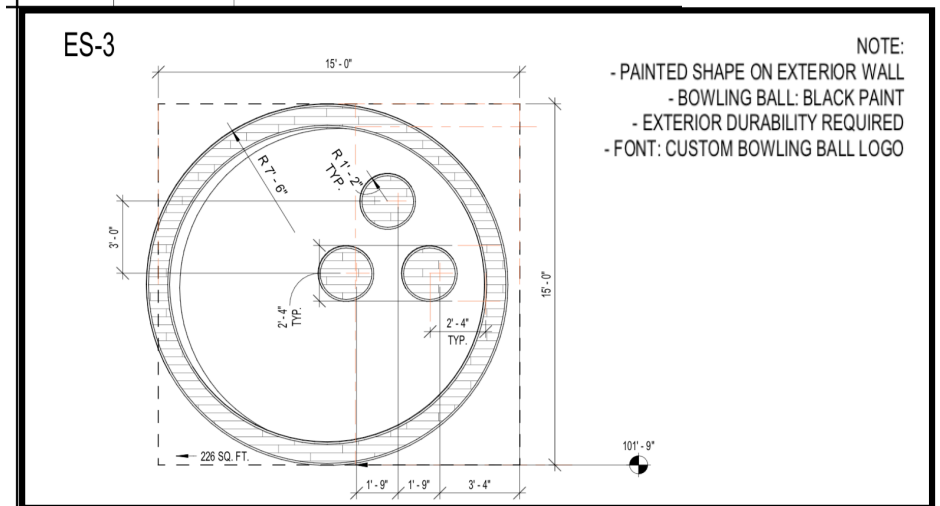


Building Signage Sign Detail

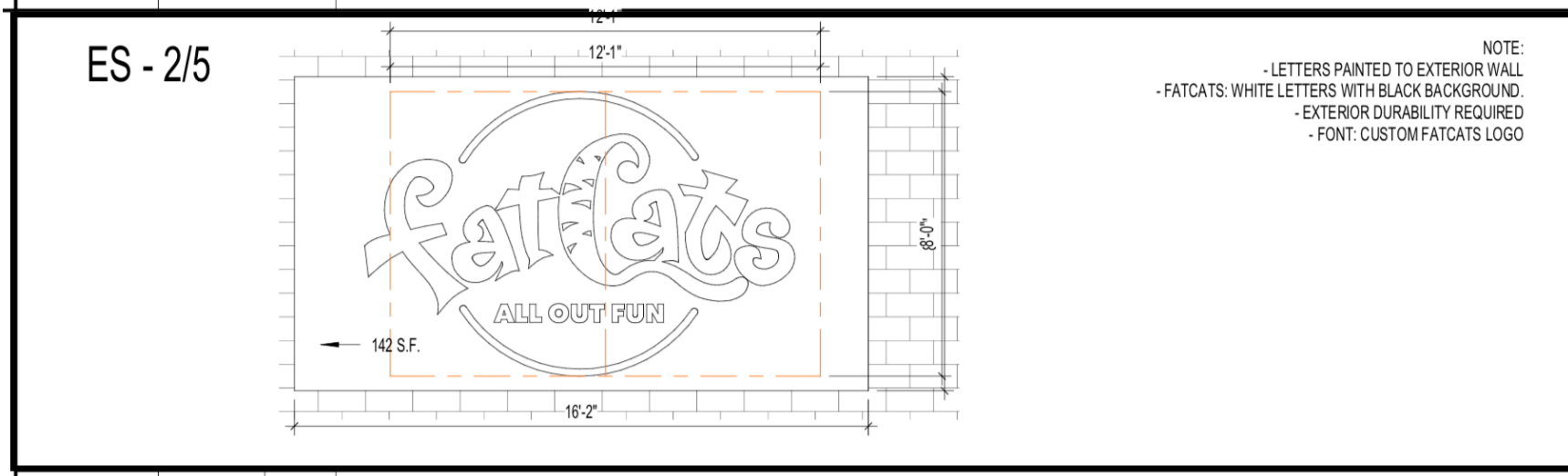
Front Facade Sign



Bowling Ball

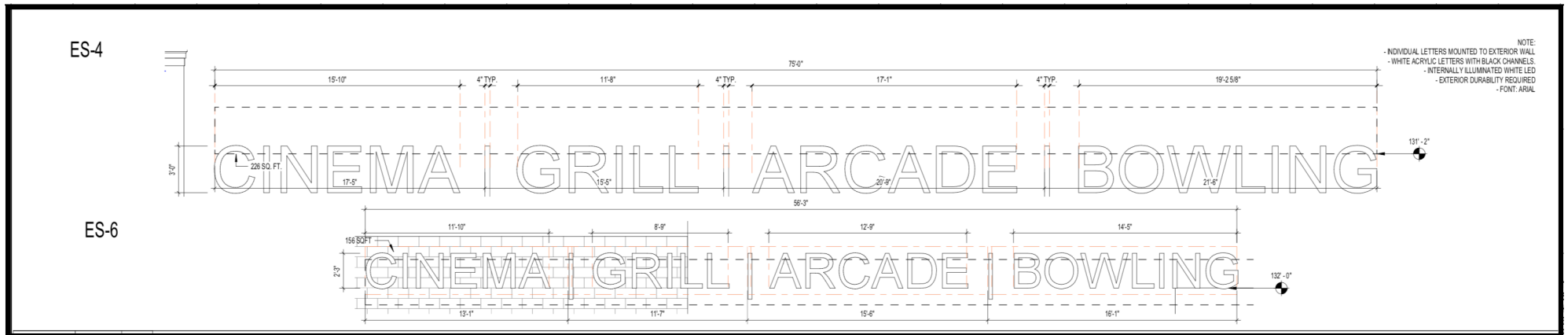


East and West Elevation



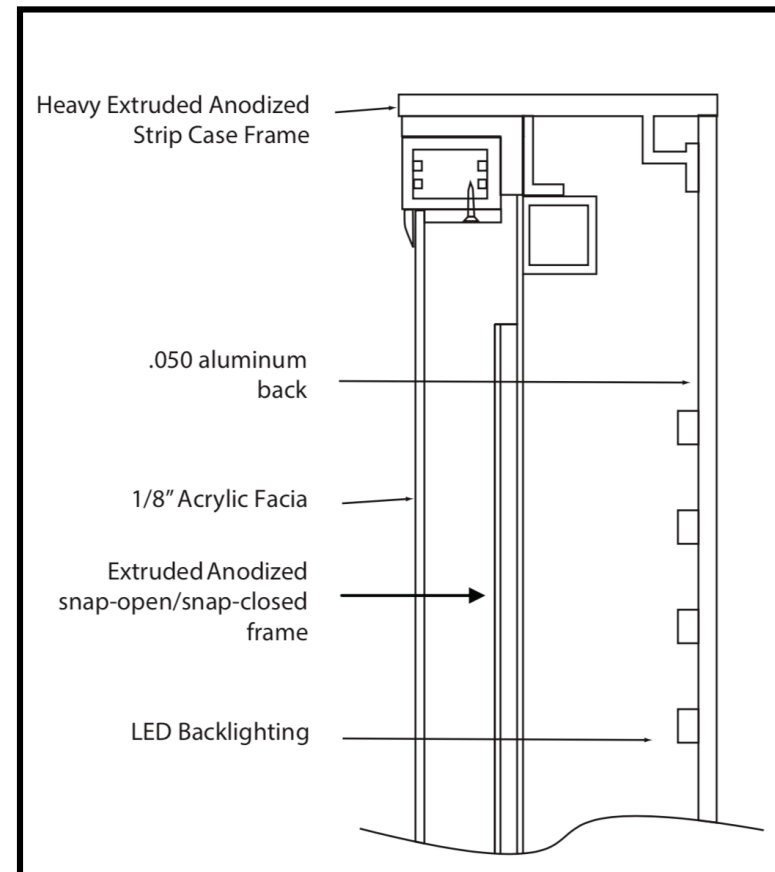
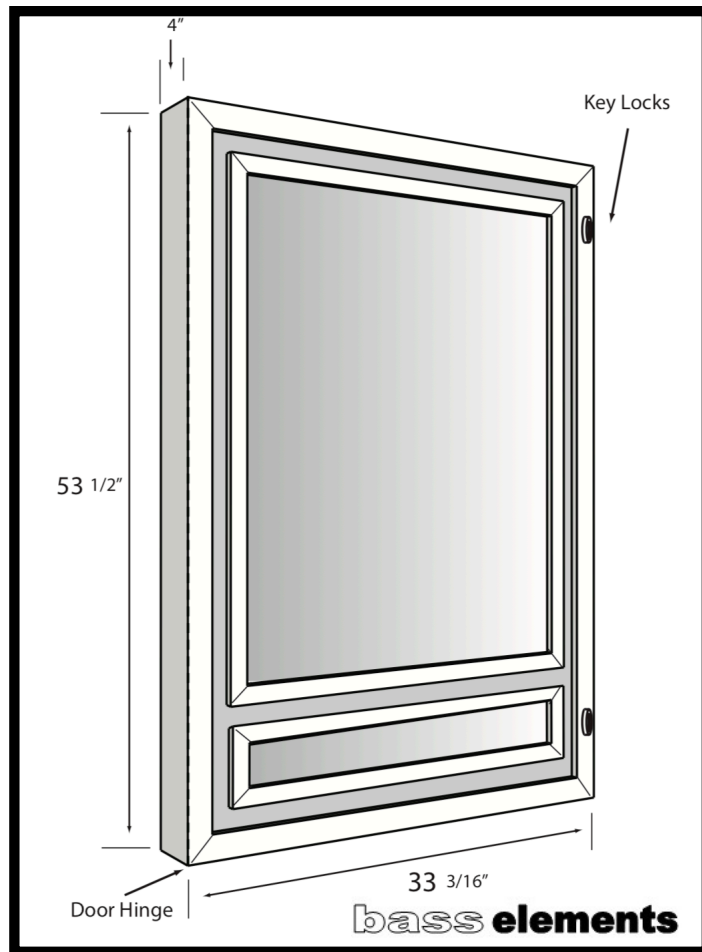
Building Signage Sign Detail

Cinema, Grill, Arcade, Bowling



Building Signage Sign Detail

Movie Poster Cases - Quantity 12



Building Signage

Ordinance Section 7.2.A.3.C.1.A and B and C and F

- a) Building front wall signage shall not exceed one and a half (1 1/2) square feet of sign area per lineal foot of building occupancy frontage
- b) Side wall signage shall not exceed one-half (1/2) square feet of sign area per lineal foot of side wall;
- c) Rear wall signage shall not exceed one-half (1/2) square feet of sign area per lineal foot of rear wall.
- f) Total wall signage shall not exceed two-hundred fifty (250) square feet.

Current Signage Calculations:

The lineal footage of the building occupancy frontage is 379'-10". Proposed signage on the front is a 389 SF logo, 226 SF bowling ball, 226 SF Cinema Grill Arcade Bowling sign, and 148 SF movie poster cases for a total of 989 SF.

The lineal footage of the east side is 136'-9". Proposed signage on the east side is a 156 SF Cinema Grill Arcade Bowling sign and a 142 SF painted sign, for a total of 298 SF.

The lineal footage of the west side is 176'-9". Proposed signage on the west side is a 142 SF painted sign.

Proposed Standard:

The proposed standard for the FatCats project is as shown on the building signage elevations and detailed above in the Current Signage Calculations

Justification:

FatCats recommends that the signage standards be modified and tailored to this distinct development. This will enable FatCats to display its corporate identification, similar to other large developments or anchors in the Town of Queen Creek. It is noted that the proposal includes 1 building with multiple entertainment options - bowling, arcade, dining, and theater uses - that are typically ran by separate business entities. These are combined under one roof, which has the effect of reducing the overall impact of multiple signs on the property and providing a consistent style. Also, the proposed building is set back far into the site, which will reduce any impact on the surrounding properties. The maximum sign area for wall signs is based on linear foot of the building, but it does not factor in the height of the building. The wall signage amount being requested appears balanced and proportional to the size of the building. Additionally, the scale of the signs are appropriate to the scale and type of this unique development, and they are designed with high quality design and materials that complement the architecture of the project. No rear signage will be allowed on the building to minimize impact on the adjacent neighbors.