



CODE INTERPRETATION

Code interpreted: Sign, Title 19

Date: August 26, 2019

Proposal from Seattle Chocolate:

Seattle Chocolate submitted a proposal for a mural to the City on August 21, 2019. The proposed location for the mural is on the front façade of the building located at 1180 Andover Park W. Due to the texture of the wall the mural will be printed on vinyl, and will be 56 feet by 13 feet. The mural proposal request and the proposed design are attached.

Interpretation:

The question at hand is whether or not murals are permitted in the City of Tukwila. A contradiction in TMC 19 and a desire by businesses to put murals on their blank walls requires a code interpretation to determine what constitutes a mural and what constitutes a sign.

The City's interpretation is that murals that do not convey a message that represents a product, service, or registered trademark, and which do not identify the uses, are not considered signs.

Why this interpretation developed?

There has been growing interest in creating murals in the City. In the industrial and commercial areas of the City there is ample wall space for showcasing artwork and creativity.

To be considered a "sign" under the City's Sign Code, the materials placed or constructed must convey a message or image and be used to inform or attract the attention of the public. Once considered a sign, it must adhere to the size and placement requirements outlined in the code.

A disconnect in TMC 19 has been identified. While a mural could be construed to fit the code's definition of a sign, in TMC 19.20.050.F.4. *Incentive Signage* allows a business to have a building-mounted sign on a wall without a public entrance given they provide architectural interest. One of the allowable options for architectural interest listed in the code is "artwork such as mosaic, mural, or sculptural relief over at least 50 percent of the wall surface."

What is the justification for the interpretation?

Murals in a cityscape can contribute to placemaking and creating a sense of identity and community, which are all elements of goals outlined in the City's Comprehensive Plan.

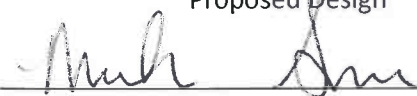
Goal 1.7 of Tukwila's Comprehensive Plan states, "Tukwila's retail areas are characterized by high-quality urban design that accommodates a mix of compatible residential, commercial and light industrial uses." Policy 1.7.7. of this goal is to "encourage placemaking through creative use of signage, art, and high-quality materials."

Moving forward, The City will develop a process for regulating murals and artwork on businesses within the City, as well as for distinguishing a mural from a sign.

Conditions:

- The vinyl must be maintained to avoid fading and deterioration due to weather.
- Any change to the design must be submitted to the City.

Attached: Code Interpretation Request
Proposed Design


Signature of Interpreter Date: 8/27/19


Approved by Director of Community Development Date: 8/27/19



8/21/19

Ms. Meredith Sampson
Ms. Minnie Dhaliwal
City of Tukwila Department of Community Development
6200 Southcenter Boulevard
Tukwila, WA 98188

Re: Zoning verification letter

Dear Meredith and Minnie,

Thank you for working with me on the Kyler Martz art installation for outside our Seattle Chocolate headquarters here in Tukwila. We commissioned Kyler to design something special and arresting for our building that reflected what our company and brands represented in Seattle. Kyler came up with two concepts that we liked, but we agreed that the attached concept was the one that best represented our 80% female staff, love of color and enthusiasm for our business and Seattle. He calls the piece, the Cha Cha's and uses his iconic retro tattoo imagery for their faces.

Our hope for this art installation is that it will stop passersby and they will wonder what the message is and what is going on behind that wall. They'll see that it's thought provoking, but also fun and a celebration of something. Hopefully, they'll come inside and discover our factory, its tour and our chocolate products and we'll have new fans and customers.

We don't believe that the rectangular shapes are unique to chocolate or are obvious communicators of our products as people drive by, like a good sign would be. Therefore, the code and limits that pertain to signs in Tukwila, should not apply to this mural.

There will be one major modification to the Cha Cha's and that is that the legs will cross the bodies more like a Rockette and have less opportunity for low-minded, crude graffiti or selfie posts.

I think this will attract a following and fan base among Washington residents and visitors alike. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Jean Thompson
CEO and Owner
Seattle Chocolate Company

\$375 fee



