

## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 17-226, **Version:** 1

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Presenter

*Christopher J. Looney, Planning and Community Development Director*  
*clooney@nbtexas.org*

**SUBJECT:**

Discuss and consider approval of a Conditional Sign Permit for subdivision entry signage at the Settlement at Gruene Subdivision, located at the intersection of Oaklawn Drive and Rock Street.

**BACKGROUND / RATIONALE:**

**Case No.:** PZ-17-002

**Council District:** 4

**Applicant/Owner:** Gruene Rock LLC (Darren Gerloff)  
14955 Bulverde Road  
San Antonio, TX 78247  
(219) 490-2777  
Darren@gerloffinc.com

**Staff Contact:** Holly Mullins, Sr. Planner  
(830) 221-4054  
hmullins@nbtexas.org

Settlement at Gruene is a new 240-lot residential subdivision accessed from Rock Street just north of Loop 337. The subdivision entrance and six residential lots are within the City limits and zoned "R-2" Single and Two-family District, but the remaining lots are outside the city limits.

The Sign Ordinance allows subdivision entry signs, but limits them to monument signage or a sign on a screening or decorative wall. They can be no larger than 40 square feet per sign face with a maximum height of six feet. Where a sign consists of individual letters, words or symbols the sign area is the area of the smallest geometrical shape that completely encompasses all such letters, words or symbols. Each word or symbol is calculated separately. Signs must be constructed of masonry, stone, brick, wood, or other material compatible with surrounding development, and include a landscaped area twice the size of the sign face.

Other than a subdivision entry sign, the Sign Ordinance does not permit freestanding signs in residential zoning districts.

**Proposal:**

The applicant is proposing a multifaceted subdivision entry design to identify the Settlement at Gruene Subdivision that consists of several freestanding features including rock walls, towers, columns and individual words carved out of metal suspended in air. The proposed entry design involves two open space lots located on either side of Oaklawn Drive at the intersection with Rock Street. The open space lots will also contain drainage and utility easements, and will be owned and maintained by the homeowners' association.

The suspended words consist of one-inch thick "rusted" metal letters suspended from steel tubing and attached to a stone structure (Attachment 3). The sign face (suspended lettering) on the main sign, located on Lot 1, Block 2 (Attachment 4), is approximately 67 square feet within an open area measuring approximately 19 feet wide by 6 feet tall

(117 square feet). With the support, the entire sign structure is 30 feet wide and 11.5 feet in height.

The secondary sign, located on Lot 1, Block 1, has a sign face of approximately 27 square feet suspended within an open area measuring 11.5 feet wide and 4 feet tall (46 square feet). The entire sign structure is 14 feet wide and 9 feet in height.

Each sign structure includes a curved rock wall that serves as a backdrop, 9 feet tall for the main sign and 7 feet tall for the secondary sign. The main sign also has a 90 square foot landscape planter in front of it.

In addition to the sign support structures, the applicant proposes three randomly-spaced rock towers and eight columns as part of the entry design. There are two sizes of towers, Tower A is proposed to be 22 feet tall and Tower B would be 27 feet tall. Both are open-sided rock structures with metal roofs. The eight rock columns are 8 feet tall. The site plan (Attachment 4) illustrates one Tower A and six columns on Lot 1, Block 1; and two towers (one A and one B) plus two columns on Lot 1, Block 2. The structures are decorative, and not habitable.

**Rationale:**

The applicant's intent is for all of these structures together to give the effect of an old settlement, identifying and branding the Settlement at Gruene subdivision. Therefore, the Conditional Sign Permit was submitted as a complete package including signage, towers and columns.

**General Information:**

Size: Lot 1 Block 1 (secondary sign) - 0.43 acres;  
Lot 1, Block 2 (main sign) - 0.36 acres

**Surrounding Zoning and Land Use:**

North - R-2; Outside city limits/ Single-family residences  
South - Across Rock Street, C-1/ Undeveloped  
East - C-1, C-1A/ Railroad ROW  
West - R-2/ Single-family residences

**Comprehensive Plan/ Future Land Use Designation:**

Commercial; Low Density Residential

**Improvement(s):**

None

**ADDRESSES A NEED/ISSUE IN A CITY PLAN OR COUNCIL PRIORITY:**

	Yes	<b>City Plan/Council Priority: 2006 Comprehensive Plan Pros and Cons Based on Policies Plan</b>	<b>Pros: Objective 12A: Maintain fair and reasonable regulations for signs so that signs harmonize with the special qualities and appearance of New Braunfels.</b> The applicant believes the proposed signage is in harmony with and characterizes the special qualities of the Settlement at Gruene Subdivision.
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**FISCAL IMPACT:**

N/A

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:**

N/A

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

The Sign Ordinance provides specific standards for subdivision entry signs and staff does not

recommend deviations from those standards unless a hardship or other justification is demonstrated. However, the Conditional Sign Permit process is intended to allow an applicant the flexibility to create unique signage designs, and for City Council to consider such designs in the context of a specific location. The proposed subdivision entry design does provide an attractive entrance that could not otherwise be created within the current Sign Ordinance standards.

Should City Council be inclined to approve the request, staff recommends the Conditional Sign Permit be applied to the entire subdivision entrance including signage, towers and columns as indicated on the site plan (Attachment 4), and include the following conditions:

1. Any lighting must be fully shielded so the light source cannot be seen from the street rights-of-way.
2. Add a minimum 36 square foot landscape planter in front of the secondary sign.

**Attachments:**

1. Aerial Map
2. Application
3. Proposed Signs
4. Site Plan
5. Comparison Table