



# HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

AGENDA

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**TO:** CASA GRANDE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

**FROM:** Laura Blakeman, City Planner

**MEETING DATE:** October 24, 2016

**SUBJECT:** **DSA-16-00084: Certificate of Appropriateness for the Dairy Queen Pole sign**

## REQUEST

**Request by Jeff Trendler, DDQ LLC**, for the following land use request located at 211 E. Florence Boulevard:

- 1. DSA-16-00084: Certificate of Appropriateness for changes to the Dairy Queen Pole sign (replacing the brazier reader sign), a Local Historic Landmark.**

## APPLICANT/OWNER INFORMATION

Applicant  
 Jeff Trendler  
 DDQ LLC  
 2541 E. University Drive  
 Phoenix, AZ 85034  
 P: 602-267-1211

Owner  
 DDQ LLC  
 2541 E UNIVERSITY DR  
 Phoenix AZ 85034

## HISTORY

- March 5, 1915: Ordinance#244: Annexed as part of the Original Townsite of Casa Grande.
- June 15, 1950: According to the Casa Grande Dispatch Dairy Queen was opening its store, in Casa Grande, referred to as the "Triangle Dairy Queen", which was derived from the shape of the plot of ground upon which the building is located:
- November 16, 1987: The site received official zoning of B-2 (General Business) with the adoption of the Zoning Ordinance and map.

September 16, 2003: BP-C2003-58: Building Permit was issued for the renovation and **addition to Dairy Queen Brazier**. Existing building square footage was 1,917 square feet (single story building). The 2<sup>nd</sup> floor was added (590 square feet) for a total of 2,507 square feet, 20 ft. in height. The Dairy Queen sign extending into the roof is included in the plans.

April 18, 2016: Resolution No. 4974: The Dairy Queen Sign Pole sign (including Brazier) was designated as a local historic landmark.

Note: The history as stated above is not inclusive.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### Background

The Dairy Queen sign was designated as a local historic landmark on April 18<sup>th</sup> of this year. As part of the local landmark designation, the “Brazier” reader board sign was included. The Historic Commission Chairwoman and the Chamber of Commerce sent letters in support of the Dairy Queen sign, including the Brazier reader board as a local landmark (see Exhibit A). Staff was recently informed that the “Brazier” reader board sign was added sometime in the mid-eighties (according to the Steinhoff family). Dairy Queen corporate has informed Staff that it was never their intent to designate the “Brazier” portion of the sign as a local landmark (See Exhibit B – Project Narrative).

1950 – 1958:



Current photo:



Staff recently received a sign permit for the Dairy Queen store for the following changes:

- Reader board sign (trapezoid Brazier sign) be replaced with a new electronic reader board
- Add attached signage to the existing façade
- Replace the directional signs
- Repaint the fascia trim to eliminate the signage

An example of the changes are shown in the picture below. Dairy Queen's Corporate Office is requesting these changes to replace the signage with modern DQ signage that is being implemented throughout the country.



The sign permit includes all the proposed signage for the site, however, the only item under consideration for the Historic Preservation Commission is the “Brazier” sign because its was designated as a landmark.

Dairy Queen Corporate has agreed to allow the “lips sign with protruding ice cream” to remain based on the “landmark” status it received in April of this year, however they would like to replace the reader board with the “Grill and Chill” sign which is now uniform throughout the DQ brand.

**CONFORMANCE WITH THE CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS REVIEW CRITERIA**

In accordance with Section 17.62.090 of the City of Casa Grande City Code, the Historic Preservation Commission shall find that the Certificate of Appropriateness application complies with the following review criteria, including Staff’s findings:

**A. In passing upon an application for a certificate of appropriateness, the Historic Preservation Commission shall not consider changes to interior spaces, but**

shall encourage property owner(s) to maintain any interior features that may have historical interest.

N/A.

**B. The Commission's decision shall be based upon the following principles:**

- 1. Properties that contribute to the character of the historic district shall be retained, with their historic features altered as little as possible;**

The "Brazier" sign was added to the pole sign in the mid-eighties, therefore by itself, it would not be considered "historic". The Brazier sign is newer than the lips sign and has not historical integrity at this time. Because there were many "Brazier" trapezoid signs throughout the country, Staff finds that the significance in the sign and the history of Casa Grande is related directly to the "lips" sign.

Staff analysis: Staff is in support of the request that the historic feature of the site is the "lips" sign and that portion of the sign should stay as a "landmark" and preserved.

- 2. Any alteration of existing historic landmark properties shall be compatible with their historic character. Any alteration of existing properties within a historic district shall be compatible with its historic character as well as with the surrounding district;**

N/A.

- 3. New construction shall be compatible with the district in which it is located.**

Staff analysis: The proposed new signage for the site will be compatible with the existing building, as the same paint colors are used within the site as well as the new signage will be compatible with the commercial district in which it is located.

**C. In applying the principle of compatibility, the Commission shall consider the following factors:**

- 1. The general design character and appropriateness to the property of the proposed alteration or new construction;**

Staff finds the proposed work to be appropriate as the changes do not remove the "landmark" status of the lips sign.

Staff analysis: Staff is in support of the request.

2. **The scale of proposed alteration or new construction in relation to the property itself, surrounding properties and the neighborhood;**

N/A.

3. **Texture, materials and color, and their relation to similar features of other properties in the neighborhood;**

The proposed materials being replaced represent the same type of materials that exist in the commercial district area of Downtown.

Staff analysis: Staff is in support of the request.

4. **Visual compatibility with surrounding properties, including proportion of the property's front facade, proportion and arrangement of windows and other openings with the facade, roof shape, and the rhythm of spacing of properties on streets, including setback;**

The sign pole will stay in its existing location; however the "Grill and Chill" sign will be visibly evident as a "new" sign compared to the existing "lips" sign.

Staff analysis: Staff is in support of the request.

5. **The importance of historic, architectural or other features to the significance of the property.**

The property's significance is tied to the Dairy Queen being at this site since the 1950's and the fact that we have a landmark sign located on the property emphasizes the significance of the property. As stated, earlier, Staff's finds that the historical significance relates directly to the "lips sign with protruding ice cream".

Staff analysis: Staff is in support of the request.

**D. As a guide to rehabilitation work, the Commission shall utilize the current edition of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.**

N/A

**Staff's Review:**

As Staff reviews this request for removing the landmark status of the "Brazier" sign, , Staff must evaluate the Historic Preservation element of the General Plan and the Historic Preservation City Code.

**General Plan Goals and Policies:**

The City's General Plan Policy C-7.5.3 states "ensure that the provisions of the

**Historic Preservation Ordinance are enforced** and considered in decision-making by the City.”

Policy C-7.3.3 states **“The Historic Preservation Commission should develop designation priorities based on community concerns, known threats to historic properties** and opportunities for expanded support for the Historic Preservation Program.”

**Historic Preservation Code:**

According to the Historic Preservation Code, 17.62.010A, the code declares that **“as a matter of public policy that the protection, enhancement and perpetuation of landmarks and historic districts is necessary to promote the economic, cultural, educational and general welfare of the public.”**

**Staff’s Analysis:**

Staff is in support of removing the designation of the “Brazier” sign as a “local historic landmark”, based on the following:

- The history of the Dairy Queen (1950’s) and its associated “lips sign with protruding ice cream cone” already designated as a “landmark”, meets the true intent of preserving historical landmarks.
- The Brazier (trapezoid) sign was common and was installed on the site in the mid-eighties.
- The request if approved would still be in compliance with the Historic Preservation Code regarding “landmark designation”.
- The request if approved would still be in compliance with the General Plan Goals and Policies Historic Preservation element.
- The request if approved would be in compliance with the Historic Preservation City Code.

<b>RECOMMENDED MOTION</b>
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**Staff recommends the Historic Preservation Commission approve the Certificate of Appropriateness (DSA-16-00084) to remove the “Brazier sign” from the local landmark designation.**

**Attachments**

- Exhibit A: Letters of Support
- Exhibit B: Project narrative



## Casa Grande Main Street

110 West 2nd Street  
Post Office Box 10062  
Casa Grande, AZ 85130-0062  
(520) 836-8744  
Fax: (520) 421-0676  
www.cmainstreet.org  
downtown@cmailbox.com

June 12, 2015

Mr. Jeff Trendler  
Trenco LLC  
2541 E. University Drive  
Phoenix, AZ 85034

Dear Mr. Trendler:

On behalf of the Casa Grande Main Street organization, I want to share our sincerest congratulations on acquiring and reopening the Dairy Queen location at the entry to our Historic Downtown commercial district. An audible sigh of relief was heard throughout the community knowing it would once again be a gathering place for families to celebrate birthdays, ball games and dance recitals as their parents and grandparent had for so many years.

It has come to our attention that the historic sign may now be at risk. I would like to share with you some history on that sign in hopes you'll be able to justify preserving this vital landmark:

- Casa Grande maintains a proud heritage in the region for preserving and celebrating an authentic historic district that draws visitors to our community for events and tourism year-round
- In 2004, the mid-century modern Dairy Queen Brazier and vintage sign was the focus of a mammoth preservation project in partnership with the City of Casa Grande, the previous owner and our organization as detailed in the attached document. This effort resulted in an award that year for Best Public/Private Partnership by the Arizona Main Street organization.
- Dairy Queen serves as a physical and visual announcement of our historic downtown district on Florence Boulevard, the primary arterial through our town. Modernizing the sign would be incongruous with

both the existing Dairy Queen building and the contiguous historic buildings.

I just attended an adaptive reuse tour of Downtown Phoenix where highly successful redevelopment areas like Roosevelt Row are battling modernization by literally moving historic buildings and signs to vacant lots to prevent them from being demolished. Ironically, the highly entrepreneurial "millennial" generation is leading the charge in preservation, choosing to set up shop in historic homes, warehouses, and motor lodges in lieu of strip malls and big box retail centers.

The residents and leaders of Casa Grande understand the value of retaining our history and roots as many cities are trying to recreate what has already been lost. Please join us in supporting the integrity and authenticity of our historic district by celebrating the charm we have fought so hard to retain and preserving our downtown Dairy Queen and nostalgic ice cream cone sign for generations to come.

Sincerely,



Rina Rien, Director  
Casa Grande Main Street

June 15, 2015

Jeff Trendler  
Trenco LLC  
2541 E. University Drive  
Phoenix, AZ 85034

Dear Jeff:

Re: Dairy Queen Vintage Sign – 211 E. Florence Blvd.

To say it in a few words the mission of Casa Grande's Historic Preservation Commission is to protect, enhance and perpetuate the City's landmarks and historic districts for the economic, cultural, educational and general welfare of the public. Our downtown Dairy Queen is a historic icon for the community and the existing sign is already a local landmark without the official designation.

Historic preservationists and business people across the country are striving to preserve our nation's history. Our community has been aggressive in this regard. We have 56 properties on the local and national register of historic places plus one residential historic district. These properties are all located in the immediate area of the downtown Dairy Queen.

Over the past year the commission has identified vintage signs in the community that are of historic significance and we have plans to begin the process of nominating them as local landmarks. The downtown Dairy Queen sign is one of them. From the standpoint of its ice cream cone design it is definitely unique architecturally. The sign's physical character and the location represent an established and familiar visual feature in the downtown neighborhood for nearly 40 years.

We have been keeping a pulse on this property since it closed in December 2014. The commission and the community is elated that the Dairy Queen has reopened. It is now of paramount concern that the vintage sign can remain in place as a monument to Casa Grande's rich history. As you know, this is a high profile property located at the entryway to our historic downtown. It is a property that has been well maintained and was recognized at the state level in 2004 at the Governor's Rural Development conference for the public/private partnership that took place to renovate this mid-century building which emulates a "retro" design motif and showcases this vintage iconic sign.

Jeff Trendler  
Trenco LLC  
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The commission's primary desire is to protect the Dairy Queen Sign and reader board by keeping it in place. We would like to make an appeal to corporate to continue to grandfather this iconic sign on the building in our historic downtown. If Sedona has been granted teal arches, Casa Grande is asking to be granted the ice cream cone in the spirit being an honorable community partner.

Sincerely,

Marge Jantz, Chairwoman  
Casa Grande Historic Preservation Commission

## Exhibit B

### **Dairy Queen Sign Narrative**

Dairy Queen corporate is requiring a signage change in order to bring the current Dairy Queen located at 211 E. Florence Blvd in Casa Grande up to current standards of brand awareness and continuity. The current owners of the Dairy Queen have worked with the City of Casa Grande and the Historic Preservation Committee to petition Dairy Queen corporate to allow for a variance that would keep the current DQ cone sign in place recognizing its historical significance to the City of Casa Grande. In part, this was accomplished by designating the "lips sign with protruding ice cream" as an historic sign. As of now, Dairy Queen corporate is agreeing to a variance that would allow the store to keep that sign. As part of the new signage requirement, Dairy Queen corporate is requiring a change to the reader board located directly below the "lips sign." This requirement simply necessitates a change of wording from Brazier to Grill and Chill which is now uniform throughout the DQ brand. The "Brazier" name has been slowly phased out of DQ signage and advertising since 1993. It was never the intent of the owners, or DQ corporate of designating the "brazier" portion of the sign as a local landmark and therefore the change should be permitted.