

From: Liliana Somma [mailto:liliana@schoolofdanceandmusic.com]
Sent: Monday, May 18, 2020 1:08 PM
To: DG_PlanningCommission <DG_PlanningCommission@hermosabeach.gov>
Subject: Request to keep the non-conforming sign temporarily – 400 PCH

To the Planning Commission

Request to keep the non-conforming sign temporarily – 400 PCH

Request to keep the non-conforming sign temporarily through our lease and then as landlords have it replaced when a new business comes in. The following are some things I am hoping the planning commission will consider

- We newly acquired this building as owner-users which makes us also the now the landlords of the property. Since most of the profits of a small business goes to rent, especially in the south bay prime location, we have worked hard over the last 20 years to be able to acquire the building and now with everything going on do not have an option to get out of our own lease and are terrified.

- We wanted to move our dance and music studio to this location and did get approved for a cup not too long ago but then found out that the Liquor store wanted out of the lease (before this whole covid thing happened) and we were thrilled so we are now back again requesting one more room for our ballet soloist to practice etc.

-However, having been a landlord for just a few months now I am starting to understand why a Liquor store (one of the top 10 businesses doing great through the pandemic right) would be easier than fighting for the arts to continue, even though we have been successfully doing this for last 20 years.

- I am not only begging the city to help businesses like mine to succeed in the community instead of forcing up to take down this visible sign to a short building that mostly faces a residential street.

-I would like to remind the planning commission that we took a liquor store out (with all the illegal signs put out every day) in addition to taking out an outdated, not-looked-after coin laundry place that I recently found out tended to have people "hang out" near the trash during the last cup.

-I would like to remind the city we are upgrading the outside of the building to make it look up to date, modern, and clean, we already agreed to redoing the parking lot, and somehow get rid of an old phone booth. We even promised the city to fill the meters with coins to help out the nearby residences.

-My businesses along with many others have been closed since March 13th and with their other rent and mortgage, we are paying over \$70,000 **a month** with no assistance from the government what-so-ever and when the assistance does come I am only allowed to use 25% of it. What's even scarier is that schools may not even open for live classes this fall.

-My recent ballet at a performing arts center which is how we pay rent for 4 months was cancelled. All the Broadway Shows have been cancelled and not going to open any time soon.

-Most of our families in our last survey have told us that unless the schools open they simply do not feel comfortable adding anything else to their schedule right now.

- This all may not be an issue as I don't see how we are going to make it for much long. We have already told our landlords that we are requesting out of the lease and to find other possible tenants. 400 PCH is our newly purchased building that is our last hope to survive.

-The non-conforming sign is old but it is visible. It would be another \$15,000 for somewhat of a visible sign which is money we don't have but to be honest that Dan and I do think that the existing one is not only cheap to use with a new plastic insert but DOES stand out. Due to the layout of the building and how small and short it is, it would help us greatly.

-I would think the Hermosa Beach city would not only allow me the sign but would WANT to support everything my business is about. That sign has been advertising Liquor for years and years, is it not time for it to advertise something positive like the health and the arts?

- The last national conference call I was on told us that only 50% of our industry will survive through the summer.... Fall nor this school year had not even been spoken of.

- Please help me fight and not just give up and call the liquor store back. I am not trying to be a victim as I see myself as a strong role model for all the girls I work with and always teach them to be strong and to stand up for things they believe in.

- I cannot promise that I will stay in business, but I am asking to keep the sign and have us as landlords change it once the dance and music business ends its lease.

- Lastly, please note our location and think the residences that live right across the street would have a lit sign directly in front of their houses vs one that is higher up in the sky

Thank you for reading.

Liliana

School of Dance & Music

Video example of what we do

<https://video214.com/play/P9Tt3enlkSVQkr81Bq0myQ/s/dark>

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