

## **Sign Regulation Committee – Summary of Meeting**

**Monday, March 23, 2009**

**Conference Room 1, Urban Government Center**

### **Present:**

Steven Ward, Greg Williams, Maggie Harlow, Donnie Blake, April Robbins, Debbie Brent, Jo Bishop, Bob Rueff, and Paul Ackermann.

### **Staff:**

Christopher French, Charles Cash, Debra Richards, Dave Marchal, Theresa Senninger and Chris Cestaro (notes)

### **Summary of the Meeting:**

Items for discussion were handed out by staff prior to the beginning of the meeting.

Christopher French introduced the subjects of today's meeting, which are a finalization of the sign definition amendment; a discussion of a proposed Sign Review Board; and a discussion of non-conforming signage.

### **Proposed Sign Definition amendment**

Mr. French briefly reviewed the last meeting (see summary of the March 9, 2009 meeting).

It was agreed that the words "draw attention to" should be removed from the final draft of the sign definition. In response to a question from April Robbins, it was explained that these words should be removed because they were too broad. In response to a question from Charles Cash, Mr. French said that Chapter 8 would be the only place in the Code where the definition of a sign would appear.

Theresa Senninger said she had some concerns about the meaning of "advertise" as it related to this definition. She asked for some clarification. After some discussion, Mr. Cash said that "identify, announce, direct or inform" should be used instead of the word "advertise". The present Committee members agreed to this language.

Mr. French read the final proposed definition of a sign, which is:

**[INSERT FINAL PARAGRAPH HERE]**

The Committee agreed to the final proposed definition by general consensus.

## **Sign Review Board research – brief update**

Mr. French said he and Ms. Senninger had discussed this issue. It was suggested that a Sign Review Board should be a subcommittee of the Planning Commission. Ms. Senninger said she and Mr. French will work on this issue and present a handout describing the proposed board at the next Sign Regulation Committee meeting.

## **Non-Conforming Signage**

Mr. French described current Chapter 8 regulations. The “50%” rule was discussed (existing part of the Chapter 8 regulations regarding replacement of non-conforming signage.) Keeping the sign’s original size and shape, but replacing the face, was also discussed.

The Committee talked about the preservation of historic signage (the large L & N sign was used as a case in point.) Mr. French said that, if historic attached signs were kept, they would not count as part of the total square footage of attached signage on a building. An historic sign could be determined as one which “contributes to the character of the neighborhood”. It was suggested that the board could make a list of signs that are historic.

Mr. French discussed non-conforming signs that are being converted to LED. This could be considered a “face change” if the frame is not altered. This could apply to a non-conforming sign that already has internal lighting.

Ms. Senninger said a non-conforming sign may not have the right to an indefinite extension. A one-to-one replacement might violate the law.

Mr. French said the maximum percentage of a sign that can be LED may change, depending on the historic characteristics of the sign. Mr. Cash said gas station owners are primarily the ones who are calling for information about this.

Mr. French asked if a Sign Review Board could assume some of the authority for the handling of some non-conforming signs. Some possible duties of the proposed board were discussed.

Mr. Rueff asked if this would add to the time needed to approve a project.

After further discussion, it was decided that the 50% rule would be left in; any other changes could go to the Sign Review Board.

Mr. French asked if a sign could be proactively designated as historic, or if it should be the owner’s responsibility? Upon further review, it was decided that it will be the business owner’s responsibility to maintain a historic sign.

It was asked if it would be possible for a new owner of a business to “undesignated” a historic sign. It was decided that, if the sign has been designated as a historic landmark, that case should go before the sign review board for review.

The next Sign Review Committee meeting is scheduled for **April 6, 2009**.

**The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:10 p.m.**