

## Sign Regulation Committee – Summary of Meeting

Monday, May 18, 2009

Conference Room 1, Urban Government Center

### Present:

Paul Whitty, Bob Rueff, Paul Ackermann, Steven Ward, Donnie Blake, Jo Bishop, Debbie Brent.

### Staff:

Christopher French, Bob Keesaer, Debra Richards, 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 include a continuation of the discussion of portable/temporary signage.

He reviewed the handout and provided the "current draft" information. This was a basic review of what has been changed in the regulations since the May 4, 2009 meeting.

He asked the Committee to decide if signs which are permanently affixed to glass and/or permanently etched in glass should be considered "attached signage" and not "temporary signage". Bob Rueff said most of this type of signage is vinyl lettering and can be removed with a razor but not washed off. Mr. French asked if any lettering/signage that is attached to the window, permanent or not, should be considered a window sign and be subject to the 25% rule. The Committee members agreed that it should.

Mr. French introduced the topic of small freestanding business signs and asked the Committee to decide if these should be permitted for all non-residential uses no matter what zone they are in. Non-residential means that institutional uses could use these, also (churches using sidewalk sandwich board signs, etc.) This would not have any effect on yard-sale signs. It was agreed that the prohibition against *permanent* freestanding signs should remain in the regulations; however, it was agreed to remove the zoning restrictions for small freestanding signs and put in "non-residential uses".

Regarding temporary small freestanding business signs, Mr. French explained the existing restrictions (no LED signs of this type; not located in the right-of-way; no longer than 120 days in a calendar year, etc.) In response to a question from a Committee member, Mr. French said he has not heard of complaints about this

time restriction. However, the 120-day-rule has been difficult to enforce. Bob Rueff said he is concerned about these signs because the ones that are not professionally manufactured and installed can be unsafe (not windproof; extension cords used, not grounded electricity, etc. He said some are full LED signs.)

Mr. French asked if these signs should be allowed for properties that do not have readerboards or LED readerboards, as a way for businesses to advertise a special or a sale, for a certain period of time. In response to a question from a Committee member, Mr. French said churches and schools are permitted to use these for special events (already permitted under the Code.)

Paul Whitty said he is in favor of restricting these signs. He feels there is already too much visual clutter, and that these signs could cause safety issues. In response to a question from a Committee member, Mr. French said small businesses are the ones who are strongly advocating these signs.

Mr. French suggested getting rid of “temporary freestanding signs” and use “special events” only. Steven Ward said he was concerned that this might open up uses in neighborhoods/residential areas. Mr. French said this could be restricted to non-residential areas and/or form districts where these are not prohibited.

After some discussion, it was decided to leave the “special events” category and use form districts to limit them to non-residential uses only. They will be prohibited on properties that already have a readerboard or LED sign.

Acting on a suggestion by Bob Keesaer, it was agreed to add “time restricted by permit” to allow the signs to remain for only a specified period of time (usually, the 120-day time limit; can be broken up into 30-day time periods.)

Mr. French asked if temporary special events signs should allow illumination (LED, etc.)? Mr. Whitty said no. Mr. French said he would research some examples that have been used in other form districts.

Regarding temporary banner signs, Mr. French asked if these should be permitted for all non-residential uses no matter the zone? He said there have been allowances for churches and schools. In response to a question from a Committee member, he said most of the complaints received about banners have not been about the size, but the number (for example, one business had 8 on one building.) Banner signs on stakes in a yard are already not permitted.

In response to a question from an attendee, Mr. French said that banners on fences are not permitted, because this puts the banner in the right-of-way.

He said the timing restrictions on banners is the same as it has been for many years; 30 consecutive days, no more than 90 days per calendar year. He asked if the Committee would like to change that. Committee members said no, and one suggested making the special event signs the same as the banners (so they would both be 120 days.)

Debra Richards asked about permanent banners (permanent signs made of banner material.)

In response to a question regarding window signs, the Committee agreed that, if it's a window sign and it's permanently affixed to and/or part of the glass, then it would be considered an "attached" sign. Any "temporary" window sign (glued on, etc.) would be restricted under the 25% rule.

Mr. French said he will go back to the draft presented today, and make the changes to the draft that had been discussed today. He said the next meeting will discuss content neutrality issues.

**The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:00 p.m.**