



City of Oregon City

625 Center Street
Oregon City, OR 97045
503-657-0891

Meeting Minutes Planning Commission

Monday, October 27, 2014

7:00 PM

Commission Chambers

1. Call to Order

Chair Kidwell called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Present: 5 - Paul Espe, Damon Mabee, Denyse McGriff, Charles Kidwell and Tom Geil

Absent: 2 - Zachary Henkin and Robert Mahoney

Staffers: 2 - Tony Konkol and Laura Terway

2. Public Hearing

2a. [PC 14-127](#) Oregon City Sign Code Update (Planning File: L 14-01)

Chair Kidwell opened the public hearing.

Laura Terway, Planner, presented the staff report. She discussed the project goal, public input process, and changes from the May 12th draft Code. The changes included minor edits and organizational changes, freestanding signs were not allowed in residential zones, projecting signs were allowed in residential zones and for conditional uses, banners on street light poles were allowed, there would be no compensation for public murals, A-frame signs in non-residential zoned right-of-way could be displayed from 9 am to 10 pm, and signs may be changed three times a day. She summarized examples of the Code in different zones, signs in the right-of-way, public murals, and prohibited signs. She entered her presentation and public comments received since the last hearing into the record. Staff recommended approval of the draft Sign Code.

Commissioner McGriff suggested for the Arts Commission that was to be formed to have someone who was not an artist on the committee as well. Tony Konkol, Community Development Director, said the Code stated there would be two at-large members.

There was discussion regarding the murals list and regulations. Staff had looked into prohibiting advertisements in the mural regulations, and did not see a way in which they could legally look at the content of the mural. They could regulate the size and say there was no compensation. There was further discussion regarding being content neutral and not being able to regulate advertisement or text.

Commissioner McGriff suggested calling them "public art murals" instead of "public murals".

Commissioner Geil did not think A-frames should be limited to one per property frontage, especially downtown where there were several businesses on one block and they could not put signs on the building due to the awnings. It limited the small businesses to let people know that they were open. He thought the businesses on

Main Street needed the A-frame signs.

Commissioner McGriff thought there were other ways to show a business was open. Commissioner Espe said too many signs would make it difficult for pedestrians to navigate the sidewalk, especially those in wheelchairs. Chair Kidwell thought there were other sign options besides A-frames that could be used. He did not think A-frames were good for vehicular traffic as people driving by did not have time to read them. They were only good for pedestrian traffic. Commissioner Mabey thought there would be too many signs if every business was allowed a sign. There was continued discussion regarding how many signs would be allowed per property frontage downtown, most which would be five or six per block.

Chair Kidwell thought it would be easier to understand and enforce if it was one sign per property frontage. There were other sign types available other than A-frames and businesses could negotiate with their property owners for placement of other signs.

Jonathan Stone, Executive Director of Downtown Oregon City, said regarding A-frames most buildings downtown would not be impacted by the one per property frontage but several would be impacted. The tax lots were delineated differently between 7th and 8th in terms of tax lot dimensions, and they would be restricted differently than other businesses in the district. He did not think there would be sign clutter if they changed the measurement to primary business entrance.

Daryl Wynan, Governmental Affairs Specialist with Portland Metropolitan Association of Realtors, appreciated the ancillary signs and use of A-frames on private property. He asked that A-frame signs be allowed in the public right-of-way in residential zones for a short period of time for open houses. The Code said they would have to get a permit for those types of signs in the right-of-way, but he preferred not getting a permit as the sign was only there for a short amount of time and sometimes there was no other place to put the sign.

Ms. Terway clarified the permit would be site specific, and they could not get a permit and move the sign around to different sites.

Mr. Wynan said the open house was for a limited amount of time and for a duration that they would establish, such as 10 am to 3 pm.

Ms. Terway said for signs in residential zoning designations, signs could be displayed Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday between noon and 8 pm and from 6 am to 1 pm on Tuesdays. They could change the language to not require permits in residential zones, but they were still subject to the same Code requirements. For ancillary signs, two were allowed without a permit on residential property. These would be political or for sale signs. A-frames could be placed on private property without a permit, but there would be a fee for signs in the right-of-way.

There was discussion regarding allowing temporary signs to not be permitted for the limited hours.

Tom O'Brien, resident of Oregon City, thought the sale of homes was very important. He suggested a consideration be given to realtors and thought a floating permit could be established so they did not have to designate where it would be placed. There was a need to have the signs in the right-of-way and it needed to be simple and easy for realtors to do business in the City. There was concern about allowing these signs during limited hours because of garage sale signs going up and never being taken down.

Chair Kidwell closed the public hearing.

There was consensus that A-frames in the right-of-way in residential zones did not require permits during the restricted hours listed by staff, the property frontage regulations for A-frames in commercial zones would remain, and the name would be changed to "public art mural".

Commissioner McGriff asked clarifying questions about the proposed Code.

The Commission wanted to have illegal signs either removed or modified to be conforming within a certain timeframe. They recommended to the City Commission that enforcement was implemented along with the Sign Code.

A motion was made by Commissioner Mabee, seconded by Commissioner Espe, to recommend to the City Commission approval of the Oregon City Sign Code Update (Planning File: L 14-01) as amended and to strongly recommend the City Commission to fund and implement an enforcement policy in order to make the Sign Code viable. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 4 - Paul Espe, Damon Mabee, Denyse McGriff and Charles Kidwell

Nay: 1 - Tom Geil

3. Communications

Mr. Konkol said AT&T had withdrawn the application for the proposed cell tower at McLoughlin Elementary School. The next Planning Commission meeting would be December 8. Four Planning Commission positions would need to be appointed, and staff would be scheduling interviews.

Commissioner McGriff reported on the Willamette Falls Legacy Project meeting with Metro.

4. Adjournment

Chair Kidwell adjourned the meeting at 8:48 PM.