

## Sign Code Update

August 21, 2019

Meeting Summaries

Open House 4-5PM

Displays for both the draft housing and sign codes were placed throughout the room. Meeting began with an introduction from Glen DeVries (City of Wenatchee Community Development Director) and Bob Bengford (Makers Architecture and Urban Design). Some question and answer followed on both housing and sign code updates. One notable comment on the sign code:

- A meeting attendee posed a question regarding the pole sign amortization concept, particularly if the sign was new. Bob responded that the draft code update doesn't recommend going that approach (instead using option B – which requires an updated sign once subject business leaves and new business takes over). Also, he noted that if we were to pursue the amortization route that we had intended to allow additional sign "life" for such new signs – for example, giving each sign at least 10-years of life before requiring a new conforming sign.

### Planning Commission Meeting 5:30PM -8:30PM

Bob Bengford (MAKERS Architecture and Urban Design) conducted a presentation on the updated sign code – which included comments and discussion as needed for PC members:

- Question/suggestion about window sign standards and how they are /should be measured. The draft notes: 30% of the total tenant window area. Commissioner Bollinger wondered rather than specify a percentage of total window area, that it be applied only to windows between 30" and 10' of the storefront façade. In other words – if the windows are generally floor to ceiling – maybe we don't count the portion of the windows below 30" in height since those low areas are less useful/appropriate to signage. Reaction: It's a reasonable thought that we might wordsmith and illustrate.
- Digital signs – we had a healthy discussion on this and the multiple issues/components –
  - Video/dwell time min: there appeared to be consensus that "new" video signs should no longer be allowed. We had a debate about the appropriate dwell time minimum – and we seemed to land between 8-10 second minimum dwell times.
  - One PC member asked about having different dwell time standards for different streets; I noted that was possible, but likely adds complication; I don't believe others expressed support for this concept and we didn't discuss further.
  - Brightness limits: Yes, they supported such limitations
  - Clutter management: Yes, they supported measures (though we didn't agree on specific technique). They agreed that when new digital signs are permitted, the applicant needs to prepare a sign management program that complies with applicable codes – including no video, dwell time minimums, brightness limits, and clutter management program.
  - We also discussed the differing types of technology and digital sign styles – ultimately concluding that we wanted to allow flexibility provided dwell time minimums, brightness limits, and clutter management program was complied with.
  - PC asked about existing signs and Glen noted that legal (permitted) signs would be grandfathered in.
  - We discussed issue involving what maximum percentage of the sign could be digital (to allow digital directory/changing message function); the draft included options of up to

between 33-50%. Per discussion, as technology is evolving, PC members seemed to be OK with no limit – provided dwell time, brightness, and clutter management provisions are met.

- Approach re non-conforming pole signs – while Commissioner Bollinger supported the amortization option (C), all other PC members appeared to support Option B (update sign when business changes) as a good compromise. PC members worried about legal challenges and contentiousness of the amortization approach.
- What about billboards? We noted that new billboards are not allowed, but Bob noted that the draft did not address amortization in such signs – and that we’d get back to PC on the issue.
- Signs with “effects”? I noted that we had largely kept existing provisions in the code – and that based on the discussion, we’ll want to take a closer look. When asked about it – they appeared to have agreement that such signs should only be allowed as a part of special event signage – and not allowed as permanent signs
- Sail/feather signs – they appeared to support tighter restrictions on this – and when told about proposed standards, didn’t have further comments (assume they support the draft approach).