

RESOLUTION NO. 743

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF UNIVERSITY PLACE, WASHINGTON, REQUESTING THE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION TO REVIEW AND RECOMMEND AMENDMENTS TO THE SIGN CODE

WHEREAS, the Revised Code of Washington 36.70A.040 requires the City to adopt development regulations which are consistent with and implement the Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, the City's Sign Code is codified in the University Place Municipal Code as Title 19. Zoning, 19.75 Signs; and

WHEREAS, on September 9, 2013, November 12, 2013 and January 21, 2014 the City Council of the City of University Place held study sessions to discuss the City's Sign Code; and,

WHEREAS, the City Council desires to refer the specific Sign Code Provisions to the City's Planning Commission for review and recommendation; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with Council Rules, directives to the City's Commissions including the Planning Commission are to be in the form of a City Council Resolution; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with Ordinance 338 the purpose of the Planning Commission is to advise the City Council on the following topics: growth management; general land use and transportation planning; long range capital improvement plans; and other matters as directed by the City Council.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF UNIVERSITY PLACE, WASHINGTON, AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Review and Recommendations to Specific Sign Code Provisions. The City Council directs the Planning Commission to review and make recommendations regarding only the following Sign Code provisions in accordance with Council direction given below:

A. Purpose Statement

Council Direction: The City has multiple goals it is trying to achieve including promoting economic development and creating an attractive community. The sign code purpose statements should reflect our desire to balance these goals without promoting some goals at the expense of others. For example, the purpose statement: "Provide a reasonable balance between the right of an individual to identify a business and the right of the public to be protected against the unrestricted proliferation of signs;" can be interpreted as offensive to business interests. Consider the public's interest in finding the location of businesses.

B. Applicability

Council Direction: The Sign Code regulates signs visible from the public right-of-way and/or surrounding properties. Should the Sign Code regulate signs visible only from streets and public property or from streets and all surrounding properties?

C. Real Estate and Residential Open House A-board Signs

Council Direction: Consider increasing the number of Off-Site Residential Open House A-board signs allowed. In addition of one non-illuminated real estate sign per lot for sale the Sign Code allows three off-

premise open house a-board signs during daylight hours only when a realtor, seller, or agent is on the property for sale.

D. Off-premise Sign for Abutting Properties

Council Direction: The Sign Code allows up to 25% of an on-site sign to advertise an abutting off-site use. Consider allowing off-premise signs for contiguous properties that are otherwise landlocked and unable to be identified, located or advertised.

E. Window Signs

Council Direction: In most commercial zones the City's design standards require 50% of the ground floor façade of a building be made of transparent glazing so that patrons can look out and the public can look into stores and businesses. Tenants often place multiple window signs, window coverings or obstructions effectively reducing the amount of transparent glazing to 25% percent or less, defeating the intent of the standard. Provide recommendations to align the sign code with the development regulations.

F. Neon Signs in Town Center Overlay Zone

Council Direction: Neon signs have been described as warm, inviting and effective means of advertizing that can be seen from a distance. Others are concerned about the visual impact of multiple colored neon signs. Neon Signs are prohibited in the Town Center Overlay Zone by the Town Center Overlay Design Standards rather than the Sign Code. Any recommendation to amend this provision should be weighed with the impact of amending the Town Center Overlay Design Standards while under contract for its development. Include the current developers of the Town Center Overlay Zone in the discussion.

G. Banners

Council Direction: Banners are considered temporary signs that are allowed for up to 60 days a year. The 60 days may be consecutive or as defined at the time of permitting. The permit cost for a temporary banner is \$68.75 plus a \$26.45 refundable deposit. The time limit and permit fee may be discouraging business. These concerns should be weighed against allowing too many banners at once. The Planning Commission is requested to review and provide a recommendation regarding these issues.

U.S. Open Exception: Consider a separate ordinance providing an exception to the rules on banners and temporary signs during a period leading up to the USGA U.S. Open in June 2015, to promote the city and businesses in the City.

H. Changing Message Signs

Council Direction: Changing message signs are only allowed in the auto oriented Neighborhood Commercial zone. City Council members expressed the following concerns which should be considered in any recommendation:

- i. Equality: Why are some businesses allowed changing message signs and others not.
- ii. Town Center: The City may want a changing message sign for the Town Center Project
- iii. Public Notice: The City may want one or more public notice changing message signs providing digital information. A sign at the intersection of 67th Avenue and Regents Blvd. was mentioned.
- iv. Time and Temperature vs. Advertising: Does not make any sense to restrict some changing message signs to time and temperature only?

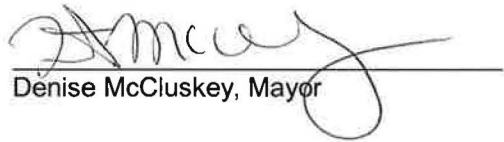
- v. Purpose of Zone: Changing message signs are only allowed in the Neighborhood Commercial zone because it is an auto oriented zone. The Town Center Overlay is a pedestrian oriented zone. Are changing message signs desired in pedestrian oriented zones? For example, should pedestrian scaled changing message sign be allowed in pedestrian oriented zones?
- vi. Proliferation: Given the density of businesses in some areas, allowing changing message signs could create sign blight and/or become overwhelming.
- vii. Shared Signs: A group of businesses such as those in the Narrows Plaza area may benefit from a shared changing message sign. A shared sign could address the equality issue without proliferation of changing message signs.

I. Billboards

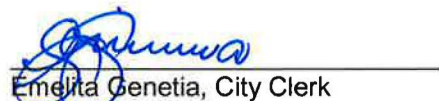
Council Direction: The City prohibited billboards which made them nonconforming signs. While the City managed to bring all other nonconforming signs into compliance, the City has yet to have any billboards removed. Billboard companies are a business in themselves as opposed to signs which are an accessory use. Recognizing the difference and the difficulty in banning billboards, the City Council seeks a recommendation that maintains their nonconforming status, but does not require their complete removal.

Section 2. Effective Date. This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption.

ADOPTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL ON FEBRUARY 3, 2014.


Denise McCluskey, Mayor

ATTEST:


Emelita Genetia, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:


Steve Victor, City Attorney