

banner, or two flags and no banner. It is proposed that current practice be included in the Ordinance, and the addition of a setback, a minimum of the total height of the flag from the streets and parking lots. Section 87.07130 2 A, B, and C, allow for the placement of temporary civic community event signs. Should the locations where signs may be placed along the Town's commercial corridor be expanded, such as the Town's placement of electronic reader boards.

Regarding exempt signs, at this time there are no standards for wall mounted directional signage. During previous Commission discussions regarding variances for Phelps and Hutchins the Commission determined that wall directional signage up to 10 square feet are exempt, and signs stating "Service" and "Express" are exempt also. Staff is requesting the Commission consider providing language to allow such ancillary signs and including previous interpretation into the draft Ordinance. The Ordinance exempts one 32 square foot freestanding real estate sign in the commercial/industrial area but allows no exemption for wall signage. It is proposed allowing for the installation of either or both freestanding and wall signs with both signs remaining exempt from permitting requirements. There are also no standards for multi-family real estate signs. For consideration is modifying exempt residential signs such as allowing multi-family up to 3 units a limit of 9 square feet; 4-20 units 16 square feet; and 21 units plus 32 square feet. Regarding weekend directional signage, Ordinance 156 exempts such signage and states "until such time as a formal kiosk program is implemented by the Town Council..." The ordinance does include a formal Kiosk program which has been implemented, so it is requested the commission consider deletion of this exemption.

For Service Station free standing signage, state law provides strict standards for gas pricing, requiring price numbers to be a minimum of 6" tall, but does not give a minimum square footage that is required. Staff estimates a minimum of 15-20 square feet is required for pricing along. For consideration is to allow standard freestanding sign square footage that is identical to other commercial businesses, plus an additional 20 square feet to allow for pricing. There is also allowance for canopy/building signs in that same section that is limited to two signs, plus one for each additional use, with a cumulative total not to exceed 50 square feet. It is proposed to separate canopy/wall signs, allow up to three canopy signs (if facing street, driveway or parking area) up to a maximum of 15 square feet each, and figure building wall signage identical to other commercial buildings.

For non-electronic changeable copy signs the Commission determined that they should have the same size restrictions as electronic signs or 25% of the sign, with staff level review. It is proposed to include this language into the draft ordinance.

During discussion of the variance request for Town Center Mall for additional freestanding signs, the Commission determined there should be a maximum of one sign allowed per

street. Staff proposes putting this language into the draft and adding additional language requiring the sign to be located near the driveway entrance.

Finally, the Commission determined that statues were to be considered into the sign calculations and it is proposed to include this language into the draft.

Commissioner Bridenstine declared she is a member of the Chamber of Commerce on the Board, but has been assured by staff that she can address the issue of the sign ordinance without conflict.

Kurt Duffy, Yucca Valley, expressed concern that Yucca Valley is different from most cities in the Coachella and Victor Valleys and needs to get away from the attitude that more signage is better signage. There is a need to take a more far sighted approach by having workshops to show people how to design signage that will provide a more holistic environment.

Jennifer Collins, Yucca Valley, representing the Chamber of Commerce, advised of the Chamber Committee that reviewed the ordinance and recommended changes to make it better. Requested the Commission please look at their submittal.

Tom Halls, Yucca Valley, Owner Big O Tires, advised of the issues he has with his business being about 200' off the highway and the difficulty trying to attract business to his site, noting if he had an automotive dealers license he would be able to do whatever he wanted to draw attention but he does fall under the heading of "Fleet Sale". He needs off site flags and banners to draw in more cars.

Jim Lawless, Yucca Valley, representing the Chamber Business Advocacy Committee, distributed a Sign Ordinance summary of recommended changes noting a lot of careful consideration went into the recommendations on tweaking the existing sign ordinance to make it more palatable for everyone, however they do not feel they got the job done on the section regarding fleet exceptions. The Commission has to address that portion because it is not a level playing field. There is also not a level playing field with the gas stations and the other 900 businesses in town.

Robert Billings, Yucca Valley, commented that only certain businesses are allowed to have off site signs and there should be the possibility of new businesses putting temporary signs on empty lots until they get the business established.

Wanda Stadum, Yucca Valley, advised of her assistance with the Chamber Committee, noting the ordinance is workable, it just needs a little massaging. Vinyl Banners are now made of new materials that were not available when the last ordinance was adopted and

should not necessarily be considered temporary in all cases. They can be put up on wall or monument, and as the business succeeds then they can put up an electric sign. With reference to sidewalk signs, at this time a 2X3 sign is allowed on what is specifically stated as a sidewalk. If there isn't a sidewalk the signs are not allowed as the ordinance is written so it needs to say the signs "shall not block driveways or Caltrans right-of-way" but they are ok on sand or gravel "sidewalks" allowing more businesses to have the signs on their property. She noted a lot of the staff suggestions are great but they would like to see a continuance of no fees for temporary signs. Also there should not be a fee for window signs, but 50% coverage is great. The Quality of "B wings" is poor and in an area like ours with so much sun and wind that they tear apart quickly. There should be an allowance for more signs for special events. She also agrees with the fact that everywhere in the ordinance where it mentions 30 square foot maximum or minimum it should be changed to 32 which is more standard. She is happy to see requirement for service stations and believes that statutory should not be considered in the square footage of signage.

Bob Stadum, Yucca Valley, commented it is a difficult balancing act to set minimum standards so that we don't wind up with clutter and trash and yet not restrict creativity, for example limiting statutory. As you consider changes to a reasonably acceptable existing ordinance, look in the direction of being a little more user friendly. When businesses approach the Town and say they want to put up a business, they would really appreciate assistance and support rather than list of what they can't do.

Commissioner Drozd requested an explanation of the kiosk program. Associate Planner Kirschmann advised that the Town does have one and showed an example of one of the existing signs in Town. He advised that those signs are on private property and were installed by the BIA. Commissioner Drozd questioned if some cities have offsite kiosk signs that they operate, noting it might be something to consider. He also questioned the possibility of allowing vinyl signs for new businesses as suggested. Associate Planner Kirschmann advised that vinyl banners are generally considered temporary signs, noting that businesses can get a temporary permit to put up banners signs, but permanent signs are made of more permanent materials.

Commissioner Bridenstine commented she appreciates some of staff's suggestions and thinks some are very good, however, she does have a concern about overregulating and having a whole list of "thou shalt not's". For example, McDonalds asked for a variance for their existing sign after they had put a lot of money into upgrading the façade of their building. When they pulled their CUP it was indicated that they had to update the sign. There was no precedence allow us to give that variance. The current ordinance didn't allow them to have any bigger signs and smaller signs are harder to see. She suggested maybe some of the restrictions are little too restrictive given some of the existing signs that we have been living with and have been functioning well. We have talked about the fact

that although Yucca Valley is a rural community, we still have a commercial corridor. Commerce indicates a need to have marketing, and we need to consider signage as marketing. We don't want 50' signs blocking the mountain views, but if they are below the roof line they are not blocking anything that is not already being blocked. They don't need to be amortized out if they have been working well.

Commissioner Hildebrand questioned if the signs we are asking to be removed if there is new ownership takes into consideration the fact that some might be historical signs. Associate Planner Kirschmann stated that currently the ordinance states if the business is sold or there is a change of ownership the sign must be brought into compliance. Deputy Town Manager Stueckle added that one tradeoff made in 2004 was at business owners request to not have an amortization schedule, and to have the conditions that are now in the ordinance. It is a little bit unusual because amortization schedules are by far the most common used. The schedule sets a time limit for signs to exist based on their value. There is a caveat for landmark signs as a way to deal with an amortization schedule. Commissioner Hildebrand commented as we get older our eyes get worse and we can't see as well, and questioned what the biggest complaint we get about signs. Deputy Town Manager Stueckle commented that all residents have differing opinions. The Ordinance is attempting to identify a balance between the interests and needs of business community and the overall needs of the community as to how our "front door" looks and what kind of perception that makes. Not everyone is going to be happy no matter what we do with the Ordinance. Commissioner Hildebrand commented that off sight signs is going to be a big issue with a lot of people, and we need to try to figure out something to work for them little better.

Commissioner Alberg questioned if discussions regarding off site signage is referring to billboards. Deputy Town Manager Stueckle commented that is what the current definition is in the code. For the most part off sight signs are not allowed except directional and institutional. Commissioner Alberg questioned if technology has changed enough regarding the use of vinyl and whether or not they can be permanent. Deputy Town Manager Stueckle advised that would need some staff discussion.

Chair Humphreville questioned if staff has tried to identify historical signs that might qualify. Deputy Town Manager Stueckle stated they have not. Chair Humphreville advised of the need for a list. He noted the addition of the highway medians are going to make signage more important in the community, adding that maybe buildings with under 20,000 square feet of frontage will need a little more allowance for signs. He also suggested that the measurement of 32 square foot rather than 30 square foot would help businesses. Although we don't want the community to look terrible and we need some code, we could be a little too restrictive right now. We do however need more restriction on political signage. With regard to monument signage, if we are trying to push to all

monument signs, in some instances maybe two monument signs would be appropriate, especially for multi-tenant businesses. Signage for the rear of fast food restaurants need be to look at to change so they don't have to have variance. He stated that Amortization is interesting noting he does think some horrendous signs need to be changed at some point. Also, off highway signage is important, and kiosk signs could be helpful. Perhaps they could be put up in some available places and rented to businesses. He agrees with the additional allotment for service station signs because they have to comply with law. Comments regarding Freestanding or A frame signs was another great point. The discussion regarding window signs and the lack of needing a permit was another good suggestion. Signage for special events is important, and could use some place where some big signage is available, such as signage over highways or in medians like they do in Bishop.

Commissioner Drozd commented it is nice to be able to review the suggestions from the chamber, noting the Town needs something middle of the road that will not be changed much in the future. The Ordinance is pretty good now, it just needs to be tweaked a little.

Chair Humphreville expressed his hope that a meeting with the Council can be scheduled soon.

Commissioner Alberg moved to forward the recommendations to the Town Council on changes to the Code and requested a meeting be scheduled soon. Commissioner Hildebrand seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

CONSENT AGENDA

2. MINUTES

A request that the Planning Commission approve as submitted the minutes of the Special meeting held on February 28, 2012

Commissioner Alberg moved to approve the minutes as presented. Commissioner Bridenstine seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

STAFF REPORTS AND COMMENTS

Deputy Town Manager Stueckle advised of General Plan Outreach workshops that have been scheduled, noting the Commission, at their meeting of May 8th will be holding a "General Plan 101" workshop, including in depth discussion on the land use plan and what we have heard in the workshops to that point. There will also be a special Planning Commission Meeting on Tuesday, May 29, 2012.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS AND REQUESTS

Vice Chairman Alberg requested that appreciation be forwarded to the Town Manager for his letter to the editor regarding the travel section.


ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next regular meeting of the Yucca Valley Planning Commission is Tuesday, May 8, 2012 at 6:00 p.m. in the Yucca Valley Community Center.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Jamie Anderson, MMC
Town Clerk