

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES OF JANUARY 24, 2011**2010-7127: Secondary Signs** (Study Issue) - AM (Continued from January 10, 2011.)

Andrew Miner, Principal Planner, presented the staff report. He said staff recommends Alternative 1 and Alternative 6.a, to amend the Code to increase allowable sign area, incorporate secondary signs into total sign area allowance, and allow wall signs on more than one face of the building; and apply changes only to property in the C-4 and M-S zoning districts along the south side of West Evelyn Avenue between Bernardo Avenue and Pastoria Avenue, and on Commercial Street between Arques Avenue and Kifer Road.

Comm. Dohadwala asked staff about current enforcement of secondary sign issues and whether there is an urgency to resolve this issue now. **Trudi Ryan**, Planning Officer, discussed the postponement of enforcement for over a year, working with people towards compliance, and penalties if non-compliant. Mr. Miner discussed a related sign code study issue that Council recently recommended that the Planning Commission did not have the opportunity to rank. Ms. Ryan said the Study Issue workshop is scheduled for Friday, January 28, 2011 and said staff would not know until the workshop whether the potential Study Issue to Amend the Sign Code would be selected for study.

Comm. Hungerford discussed Alternative 2 with staff saying that Alternative 1 gives the business owners more flexibility in the location of the signs. Comm. Hungerford discussed with staff possible sub-options under Alternative 1. Comm. Hungerford inquired about a limit to three signs.

Comm. Larsson discussed the study issue ranking process with staff. Staff said that the calendar with the new study issues scheduled would be approved by Council in February.

Vice Chair Hendricks discussed with staff Alternative 6.a and possible scenarios if it were recommended to Council and then Council recommended the Sign Code be rewritten. Vice Chair Hendricks asked questions about the process of bringing existing signs into compliance and other possible scenarios if different options were recommended. Ms. Ryan said the Commission could continue this item until after the Council has adopted the 2011 calendar on February 15, 2011 which would allow time to see if the Council selects the Amended Sign Code for study.

Comm. Larsson discussed additional scenarios with staff. He confirmed with staff that language could be added to tonight's recommendation as a provisional option, that if

Council decides to move forward with amending the Sign Code that tonight's recommendation would be folded into that study.

Vice Chair Hendricks opened the public hearing.

Tom Trago, owner of Anchor Auto Body in Sunnyvale, said he has signs on the side and front of his building. He said customers have commented that it is difficult to find their business as the front of the building is hard to see from Evelyn Avenue. He said he thinks that signs on the side of the building help customers locate his and other small businesses. He said he wants to work with the City on this as he wants the signage to look professional and also help customers locate his shop.

Comm. Sulser asked Mr. Trago if he preferred any of the alternatives in the report. Mr. Trago said he would like to see a fair and equitable decision made for the businesses along Evelyn Avenue regarding the signage.

Vice Chair Hendricks closed the public hearing.

Ms. Ryan said staff recommends a modest change to deal with the signage situation along Evelyn Avenue. She said it is possible that the Council may select as a Study Issue to Amend the Sign Code which could affect this sign issue. She said this recommendation could be a short-term fix, while the sign code is being looked at. Ms. Ryan said she does not think any harm would be done by addressing the immediate issue on Evelyn Avenue and bringing the businesses into a similar frame of signage.

Comm. Larsson made a motion for the staff recommendation to amend the Code to increase allowable sign area, incorporate secondary signs into total sign area allowance, and allow wall signs on more than one face of the building; and that the changes are based on location in the City applying changes only to property in the C-4 and M-S zoning districts along the south side of West Evelyn Avenue between Bernardo Avenue and Pastoria Avenue, and on Commercial Street between Arques Avenue and Kifer Road. Comm. Sulser seconded the motion.

Comm. Larsson said the staff recommendation is a good, short-term compromise. He said he thinks it is good to give businesses more flexibility. He said as a member of the community it is difficult to find businesses on Evelyn Avenue, and this is a great step in the right direction.

Comm. Sulser said he supports the motion as he thinks this is a reasonable, narrowly-tailored solution that addresses a problem on one or two streets.

Comm. Dohadwala said she would be supporting the motion, agreed that it is difficult to locate businesses on Evelyn Avenue, and said these changes should help customers locate businesses and reduce driving hazards.

Vice Chair Hendricks said he would be supporting the motion and that he likes that this recommendation is targeted and not broad. He said he is considering an amendment to strongly encourage the Council to rank the potential Sign Study Issue high at the Study Issue workshop. Ms. Ryan said a separate motion could be made rather than an amendment since the motion is related to this item.

ACTION: Comm. Larsson made a motion on 2010-7127 to recommend to City Council Alternative 1, and 6.a.; to amend the Code to increase allowable sign area, incorporate secondary signs into total sign area allowance, and allow wall signs on more than one face of the building; and that the changes are based on location in the City applying changes only to property in the C-4 and M-S zoning districts along the south side of West Evelyn Avenue between Bernardo Avenue and Pastoria Avenue, and on Commercial Street between Arques Avenue and Kifer Road. Comm. Sulser seconded. Motion carried 5-0, with Chair Travis and Comm. Chang absent.

APPEAL OPTIONS: This item is scheduled to be considered by City Council on February 15, 2011.

Vice Chair Hendricks made a motion for the Planning Commission to recommend that the Council consider a high ranking for the potential study issue on signs (that includes a comprehensive sign code revision) being considered at the Study Issue Workshop. Comm. Hungerford seconded the motion.

Comm. Sulser said he would not be supporting the motion as he would like to see the Council give high rankings to the items that the Commission has already ranked high.

Vice Chair Hendricks said Comm. Sulser's comment is compelling.

Comm. Larsson said he would be supporting the motion and he is happy with the vagueness of the term "high" and he would like to see a comprehensive review of the Sign Code.

Mr. Miner commented that the Commission could recommend the Council to consider a comprehensive sign review in their deliberation.

Comm. Larsson said he would still like the sign issue ranked high.

Ms. Ryan explained several options to the Commission regarding this issue.

ACTION: Vice Chair Hendricks made a motion on 2010-7127 to recommend that the Council consider a high ranking for the potential study issue on signs (that includes a comprehensive sign code revision). Comm. Hungerford seconded. Comm. Hungerford seconded. Motion carried 3-2, with Comm. Sulser and Comm. Dohadwala dissenting, and Chair Travis and Comm. Chang absent.

APPEAL OPTIONS: This recommendation will be provided to the City Council for consideration at the Study Issue Workshop scheduled for January 28, 2011.