

AGENDA # 1

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

PRESENTED: November 19, 2014

TITLE: Creating Section 31.112 and Sec. 31.11(2)(o) and Amending Sections 31.11(1) and 31.05(2)(b) of the Madison General Ordinances to Create a Process for Advertising Sign Banks and Replacement Advertising Signs, and Amending Sec. 31.04(5)(k)4.a. Regarding Illumination of Certain Signs. (35036)

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Alan J. Martin, Secretary

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: November 19, 2014

ID NUMBER:

Members present were: Richard Wagner, Chair; Dawn O’Kroley, Richard Slayton, Melissa Huggins, Tom DeChant, Lauren Cnare and Cliff Goodhart.

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of November 19, 2014, the Urban Design Commission **RECOMMENDED APPROVAL** of a draft alternate to create a process for advertising sign banks and replacement advertising signs, and amending the section for illumination of certain signs. Appearing on behalf of the project were Jason Saari, representing Adams Outdoor Advertising; Rod Ripley, representing FCS Plan B, LLC. Matt Tucker, Zoning Administrator explained changes to the draft alternate ordinance, stating that the only way to bank square footage would be through a redevelopment, otherwise the policy continues that billboards not banked for square footage, as they deteriorate would not be replaced.

Jason Saari commented on the following:

- There was discussion at the previous meeting about whether or not the signs on older structures would be eventually falling over. All but a few of their signs are made of steel, and the few made of wood have large utility poles. That type of construction is made to last.
- Signs would be moved throughout the City on a continuous basis. It is very costly and time consuming to move one of these signs. It requires knowing the ordinance, identification of potential sites, prep for zoning, have good visibility, a willing property owner...it can take years to relocate a sign on an extremely limited number of sites. Several years ago the City allowed 8 permits for new signs; to date only four of those have been built. That speaks to the evidence that signs are not that easy to build.
- Regarding the development only the language, they think it’s problematic from the standpoint of what constitutes new development, and what is the trigger. The draft ordinance states that sign relocation is only eligible when the sign is removed to accommodate the new improvement. “Accommodate” is subjective; for example, the southern sign that was located at the Villager Mall property wouldn’t be eligible to be removed under this, this sign was in the middle of the parking lot. What happens when the sign is in front of a window? Would that be eligible? If the ordinance is passed and they are able to

move the sign from the “Cannonball Bridge” the issue is resolved as far as Adams Outdoor Advertising is concerned. In researching other ordinances he was unable to find one with redevelopment language. Under a general cap and replace type of system they would be more inclined to work with developers if they know they are able to replace sign faces.

- Under the 5-year sunset provision, when a sunset hits the credits expire. If someone four years from now wants Adams to remove a sign, they only have one year to replace it, which could be problematic. Perhaps it could be reworded to “five years from the time you get your credit” so it doesn’t just expire.

Tucker explained that there will be interpretation as this unfolds. A parking lot can be a redevelopment. But in some cases square footage should not be banked. Cnare inquired if there could be more specific language (numbers or percentages) that could help. Tucker responded that they did work on that but found they couldn’t put it into a single box. In comparison to the demolition ordinance, it hasn’t worked very well with stricter definitions.

The Commission had the following comments:

- The language as we have here, I don’t have a problem with it (draft alternate ordinance).
- There are still vision obstruction issues to be worked on.

ACTION:

On a motion by Cnare, seconded by DeChant, the Urban Design Commission **RECOMMENDED APPROVAL** of the draft alternate ordinance. The motion was passed on a vote of (6-0).