

From: Dick Wagner [rrdickwagner@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, January 05, 2015 7:40 PM
To: All Alders
Subject: Billboard Ordinance

Date: Jan 5, 2015

To: Members of the Common Council

From: R. Richard Wagner, Chair UDC

After reading the memo from Adams on the billboard ordinance I felt a need to explain the Urban Design Commission's view on the proposal. The Commission considered the proposal at two publicly noticed meetings.

The only reasons advanced for civic benefits presented to our members was that existing billboards might block desired re-development. This might be a reality because of a refusal to relocate a billboard or too high a price to buy out the value of the billboard.

No testimony was presented on any general need or public purpose to be served by a total trading of billboards. The Commission was also sensitive to possible neighborhood reactions to a new billboard going up in their neighborhood.

Such a change would go against the city's long standing policy to let existing billboards disappear after their useful life. Certainly we have plenty of advertising in our lives without repealing the basic policy. As a result the commission requested the city attorney's office to draft a substitute focused on the re-development related billboards.

Many of the items mentioned in the Adams memo were raised in the deliberations. We believe the city's professional staff is able to apply the language in a professional manner. The bridge issue for road and traffic changes was also discussed. Staff indicated in most instances these are resolved in the design of traffic improvements and cited instances.

The Urban Design Commission felt the focused revised version would permit the city to grow and redevelop in a reasonable manner consistent with city policies.