

## AGENDA # 1

City of Madison, Wisconsin

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REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION      **PRESENTED:** March 28, 2007

**TITLE:** To adopt and Confirm Amendments to the Madison General Ordinances as set forth in attached Exhibit X pursuant to Sec. 66.0103, Wis. Stats. Repealing and recreating Chapter 31 and amending portions of Chapter 28 and Chapter 1.

**REFERRED:**

**REREFERRED:**

**REPORTED BACK:**

**AUTHOR:** Alan J. Martin, Secretary      **ADOPTED:**      **POF:**

**DATED:** March 28, 2007      **ID NUMBER:**

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Members present were: Paul Wagner, Chair; Ald. Noel Radomski, Lou Host-Jablonski, Todd Barnett, Bruce Woods, Lisa Geer, Cathleen Feland and Michael Barrett.

### **SUMMARY:**

At its meeting of March 28, 2007, the Urban Design Commission **REFERRED** consideration of this item to their meeting of April 11, 2007. Appearing and speaking on behalf of the ordinance amendments were Matt Tucker, Zoning Administrator, Kathy Voeck, Assistant Zoning Administrator, Assistant City Attorney Lara Mainella, and Alan J. Martin, Secretary of the Urban Design Commission, all of which represent and are members of the Sign Text Amendment Staff Team. Also in attendance was Carla Schaeffer. Staff noted that the scope of the project was originally established as referenced in a memo dated July 2, 1998 to various licensed sign erectors, referencing that the function of the Sign Text Amendment Team involved "...considering ordinance changes in regards to ground signs. ... trying to determine appropriate sign limitations for shopping centers and other inner-connected type locations (Planned Commercial Sites) and ... how to measure the square footage of all types of ground signs." Based on this original charge, the Sign Text Amendment Staff Team noted that the revisions within the Draft Street Graphics Ordinance was originally a housekeeping measure involving these areas of concern and was expanded with additional revisions based on requests from the Urban Design Commission, the Plan Commission, aldermanic representatives and members of the community. The staff team noted that this "housekeeping measure" was not a comprehensive rewrite of the Street Graphics Ordinance. The staff team referenced a distributed memo dated March 27, 2007 that highlighted the more substantive changes within the revised ordinance. The staff team noted that the revised ordinance, as well as its highlights were the subject of a review with licensed sign erectors held on Monday, March 26, 2007; where issues relevant to the lighting/intensity of signage and changeable copy graphics were noted as the most significant concerns. Initial discussion with the Commission centered on the issue that the revisions to the sign ordinance were not a comprehensive rewrite, as anticipated as part of a reevaluation of the values of the community as a whole, as signage relates to the aesthetics and architecture of the built environment. Staff provided an overview of specific issues addressed with the revisions such as wall signs on extended parapets, the definitions for above roof and roofline, including the provisions for vertically oriented building signage above the second story. The Commission felt that the allowances for vertically oriented buildings were too high on the building façade and too big. Allowances for signage on non-vision or spandrel glass were of concern, especially in regards to dimensional mullions, as being architectural detail. The need to redefine and provide more definition to the provisions relevant to architectural detail in regards to finish, color, texture and other

variables was also noted. Resolve of the footcandle versus watts issue in regards to facelit signage was discussed with an emphasis to delete the reference provisions relevant to wattage, a reduction in footcandle level across the face of a sign at less than 70 footcandles, and a return to the foot lambert's measurement for facelit signs rather than footcandles. Staff was instructed to further investigate these issues in conjunction with Harry Sulzer of the Neighborhood Preservation and Inspection Division. A discussion relevant to changeable copy electronic graphics emphasized the Commission opposition to this type of graphic, the lack of support for allowing for the frequency of change of message to anything less than the current two minute requirement, as well as the deficit in good design with signs utilizing electronic reader boards. A request to define major and minor architectural detail within the code was also requested to be pursued. Prior to the conclusion of discussion on this item, the Commission noted that it would need more time to discuss issues relevant to the ordinance provisions, as well as provide additional feedback to staff on its other concerns. Staff suggested that a proposed future informational meeting with licensed sign erectors and the public be delayed to provide for a continued discussion between the Commission and the Sign Text Amendment Staff Team. Staff suggested that prior to consideration of a potential special meeting on April 18, 2007 that each of the Commissioners provide direct details of their concerns to the Secretary so as further discussion on issues yet to be explained and resolved could be provided at the next special meeting.

**ACTION:**

This was intended as an informational discussion with no formal action on the ordinance amendments.

No rankings were submitted on this item.