

**SANDPOINT PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
5:30 P.M. CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
MINUTES OF August 20, 2019**

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Slate Kamp, Travis Sherman, Forrest Schuck, Cate Huisman

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT: Jason Meyer, Tom Riggs, John Hastings

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Planning & Community Development Director Aaron Qualls, Planner Ryan Shea (minutes)

Huisman called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

Matters from the Public: None.

Approval of the Consent:

Commissioner Schuck moved to approve and Commissioner Sherman seconded to approve the minutes of July 16. **Motion passes unanimously.**

Agenda Item B: Title 8, Chapter 5 (Sign Code) Updates

Qualls gave a presentation on sign code. Qualls said that one of the biggest reasons the Commission is now looking at sign code is because of a recent Supreme Court case: Reed v. Town of Gilbert. There are many sign codes throughout the country that now have sign codes that run afoul of this ruling. This case ruled against the Town of Gilbert saying that their distinction of *types* of signs was content based and therefore unconstitutional. Regulation of signs should be relegated to time, place, and manner only.

Huisman said that she recalled bonuses for artistic signs and asked what where that is in code. Qualls said that this is called “Master Sign Program” within the sign code and allows for additional # of signs and more square footage if the applicant can tie together the project with a cohesive design that fits with the building. Qualls said that mural signs are also allowed and are approved through the Arts Commission.

Qualls said that based on his experience of administering this code he has many ideas of ways it could be improved. One way would be providing matrices to better explain the details of the code.

Huisman asked the Commissioners if they had additional goals. The other Commissioners did not. Huisman said an additional goal should be:

- Create a sign code that the community supports.

Qualls went through the preliminary schedule.

Kamp asked if there was an example of a nearby town with a good model. Qualls said that he is trying to identify codes that have been modified/created after 2015 and are nearby – Whitefish being one. Staff is also looking at the International Code Council’s version of sign code and other organizations’ best practices for regulating signs.

Huisman asked about temporary banners and specifically Super 1 and an issue they had with wanting larger banners that could be seen from the other side of the parking lot. Qualls said that this code was implemented in 2014 to allow certain larger businesses like Super 1 that are setback far from the street.

Huisman asked about any allowances that allow for granting of historic status for signs. Qualls said that yes, there are allowances for historic signs in the code and by designating a sign historic it allows older signs that may not meet current code requirements could be removed and repaired and still have the right to remain.

Qualls said that some of the areas that the Commission that may want to pay extra attention to in the new code are: districts and sign sizes, prohibited signs, and exempted signs – especially in relation to content neutrality. Qualls said that the window coverage is also another area that should be specifically addressed.

Schuck wondered about how the backlit real estate listing signs located in downtown fit into sign code. He said that these signs can contribute a significant amount of light pollution.

Qualls said that currently the code classifies some signs with different standards than others – real estate signs for instance. This type of regulation may be in conflict with the Reed v. Gilbert ruling.

The Commission discussed the yard sales in the triangle on Boyer Ave and wondered if this should be addressed in the sign code. Qualls said that the sign code will generally address signs only on private property.

Kamp suggested on doing a survey for getting public feedback for this process. Qualls agreed and said perhaps an image-preference survey would be appropriate for sign code. Huisman agreed it’s important to have images in order to better make judgement calls and that a survey would be appropriate.

MATTERS FROM STAFF: Huisman asked to not be elected Vice Chair at a future meeting but asked if Staff could add it to the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.