

**SANDPOINT PLANNING COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING  
5:30 P.M. CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
MINUTES OF AUGUST 6, 2013**

**COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:** Cate Huisman, Tom Russell, Yuri Simon, Deb Fragoso, Collin Beggs, Kathleen Hyde-Bordenave

**COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT:** Jeff Kuhns

**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:** Senior Planner Joan Bramblee, Planning Assistant Melissa Bethel

**COUNCIL PRESENT:**

Chairman Huisman called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

**Matters from the Public:** None

**Approval of Minutes:**

Commissioner Russell moved and Commissioner Fragoso second to approve the minutes from July 23, 2013. Motion passes unanimously.

**Sign Code Workshop:**

Bramblee explained each change made to the sign code based on the previous discussions of the Commissioners.

Bramblee explained the one change was the definition of banner sign. Commissioner Hyde-Bordenave stated the definition is misleading. Commissioner Beggs agreed and stated the discussion is centered on the tear drop signage. Bramblee stated the word banner sign was utilized because the definition encompasses the different names for this type of signage. Commissioner Simon stated he agreed with staff because the sizes and shapes are changing and there are over 100 different names for that type of banner.

**The Commission agreed to change the name of these types of banners to “feather banner”.**

Bramblee stated the definition of mural sign was changed to clarify only that part which by definition is signage incorporated in the mural will be calculated as signage. **The Commission agreed to the new definition clarifying signage within the mural will be the only part calculated as signage.**

Bramblee explained the boundaries for the Sand Creek overlay zone. Bramblee stated the Commission needs to decide if the Chamber of Commerce building to the north of Gas N Go should be included in the Overlay. **The Commission agreed to extend the Sand Creek Overlay north to include the Chamber Building.**

Bramblee explained the code has been clarified to allow roof signs subject to the lowest peak on the roof. **The Commission agreed.**

Bramblee stated the changes for sign sizes reflect allowing Sandcreek businesses one additional creative wall sign. Commissioner Hyde-Bordenave clarified the code will allow businesses with frontage only along Sandcreek the same signage as those with street frontage. The Commission discussed the uniqueness of Sand Creek frontage and how to balance the business needs with keeping the area unique to the natural aesthetic. **The Commission agreed businesses which have Sandcreek frontage will be allowed one extra creative sign.**

Bramblee stated the Commission had discussed changing the bonus allowed for unlit wood signs from 10% to 40%. **The Commission agreed to the increase in bonus.**

Bramblee explained the Commission agreed to make a change where Reader Board changeable copy signs will not exceed 50% of the businesses sign area. Chairman Huisman clarified the change was to encourage businesses to invest in permanent signs. Commissioner Russell clarified the business will not be penalized 50% of their signage for the white or yellow background as in the past, they just will not be able to utilize more than 50% as the white or yellow internally lit background.

Commissioner Fragoso inquired if there were any opinions from the reading Grimm distributed. She stated the one idea she picked up on was the Comprehensive Plan should be taken into context and she expressed concern the sign code revisions are not based on anything other than it sounds right. Commissioner Fragoso inquired if there is a vision for what the City wants as signage. Commissioner Simon stated right now the City is creating a code before the public comes in and comments. Commissioner Beggs stated there should be a vision and banner flags are not part of the vision of the Comprehensive Plan. Commissioner Beggs stated the idea of creative signs is a good start and should be carried throughout town. He commented the historical aspect of our town is scant and signage is a huge part of maintaining the feel.

Commissioner Hyde-Bordenave inquired how many commissioners have spoken to downtown businesses. Commissioner Beggs argued it is not specifically about businesses but creativity, artistry, and beauty. Commissioner Hyde-Bordenave stated in the 1990's downtown could have creative signage and it was a mess and that was why the City changed the code. The creativity was there, but there was no quality control. Commissioner Hyde-Bordenave stated with the diversity of exterior on buildings how would the City come up with a clear vision.

Commissioner Beggs stated there is a variety of signage downtown, but there is also continuity with the presence of several unique wooden signs. Commissioner Fragoso stated other towns put Urban Renewal money into changing the faces of buildings back to the original facades.

Chairman Huisman stated the purpose of making changes to the sign code is to address issues which have come up and the City is addressing them by making changes to the sign code.

Commissioner Hyde-Bordenave stated she comes from a business and cost effectiveness perspective. Commissioner Fragoso stated a local contractor told her there is not a significant difference between a wood sign and banner.

Chairman Huisman inquired if the Commission should continue in discussions with the changes to sign code, or scrap the present code and start over. Commissioner Beggs stated he would just like to have dialog of what the vision is for signage in our City. He stated the City allows sandwich signs which are quaint and old fashion, but it still needs to address new signage. He stated a cohesive sign and design code is important.

The Commission discussed if comprehensive public involvement is needed for the sign code. **The Commission agreed to move forward with the revisions discussed and further discussions of the sign code can be addressed at a later date.**

Bramblee stated it was unclear from her notes and the minutes if the bonus for the Master Sign Program should be 24% or 25%. **The Commission agreed to a maximum bonus of 25% for a Master Sign Program.**

Bramblee stated the provision for A-frame signs is being changed to allow an additional border. **The Commission agreed no additional border is needed and A-frames will stay within the 6 square feet per side.**

Bramblee explained a provision was added to the code to keep feather flags from rotating and allow them only under the provisions for portable signage. In addition, feather flags will not be allowed in the ROW and other feather flags will not be allowed in addition to the one feather sign. **The Commission agreed to the provisions as specified by staff.**

Bramblee explained the setback for freestanding signs was clarified. **The Commission agreed to staff recommendation as presented. The Commission also agreed to the language presented by staff for exempting non profit signage.**

Bramblee explained the code was clarified to prohibit portable signs with wheels. **The Commission agreed the marquee signs have been relaxed to allow those businesses which use the portable signs with wheels to change to marquee and agreed with the code as presented.**

Creative Signs:

The Commission discussed in depth what lettering and signage would be appropriate facing the by-way. Discussion centered on maintaining the beauty and recreational aspects of Sand Creek while allowing adequate signage for businesses who front Sand Creek.

Bramblee explained a traffic engineer stated based on 650 feet, the minimum lettering would be 20 inches.

Straw Poll Vote: What height should lettering be along Sandcreek?

Commissioner Simon: Commissioner Simon stated he would agree with a minimum of 20 inches.

Commissioner Russell: Commissioner Russell stated he would agree to a maximum of 20 inches.

Commissioner Hyde-Bordenave: Commissioner Hyde-Bordenave stated she would agree with allowing a maximum height of 24 inches.

Commissioner Fragoso: Commissioner Fragoso stated she would agree with lettering of 20 inches.

Commissioner Beggs: Commissioner Beggs stated he would approve of letting at a maximum height of 16 inches.

Chairman Huisman directed staff to use lettering at 20 inches for the hearing.

Discussion regarding allowing feather signs within the provisions of the portable sign code:

Bramblee stated the draft is written as allowing feather signs as a portable sign, 10' tall and with a maximum 12 square feet of banner material.

Commissioner Russell stated a benefit of these types of signs is that they are low cost. He suggested maybe allowing them for a limited duration with a onetime permit. The Commission discussed the pros and cons of allowing feather signs. Commissioner Fragoso stated we live in a disposable society and these are disposable signs and not sustainable which is the opposite direction the City is heading. Commissioner Simon stated he use to support this type of signage, but he has looked at feather signs, how they are used, and stated he thinks enforcement is going to be an issue. He stated these types of signs are always changing and the City could become unsightly.

Straw Poll Vote: Should feather signs be permitted?

Commissioner Simon: No

Commissioner Russell: Commissioner Russell stated personally he does not like them but feels there should be a business interest with our own personal aesthetic.

Commissioner Hyde Bordenave: Commissioner Hyde-Bordenave stated the business sector was vocal about getting the rules changed to allow banners and the City has placed code in place which seems to be working. She stated she would allow them with restrictions.

Chairman Huisman: Chairman Huisman stated she would be in favor of allowing the feather signs and added Commissioner Kuhns was leaning towards allowing them.

Commissioner Fragoso: Commissioner Fragoso stated she would not allow them. However, she may be favorable to a 30 day restriction.

Commissioner Beggs: No

The Commission agreed to advertise they are undecided on whether to allow feather flags within the City.

**Matters from Staff:**

Bramblee stated the public hearing on the sign code could be advertised for September 17<sup>th</sup>.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting adjourned at 8: 00 p.m.

---

Chairman Huisman