

POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING
May 12, 2010
6:00 p.m.
County Complex, Building A

1) Roll Call

Present

Mr. Jack Fraley, Chair
Mr. Reese Peck
Mr. Chris Henderson

Absent

Mr. Al Woods

Other Commissioners Present

Mr. Joe Poole
Mr. Mike Maddocks

Others Present

Mr. Allen Murphy
Mr. Chris Johnson
Ms. Melissa Brown
Ms. Jennifer VanDyke

Mr. Jack Fraley called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2) Minutes – March 17, 2010

The minutes for the March 17, 2010 meeting were deferred since they were not delivered in the packet of materials.

3) Old Business –

None.

4) New Business –

A. ZO-0001-2010 Pedestrian Wayside Signage

Ms. Melissa Brown presented the proposed changes to the Ordinance regarding signage.

Ms. Brown stated blade signs permitted in Mixed-Use districts will no longer count against the total allowable building face signage for a particular unit. Instead, each unit is permitted one, twelve square foot blade sign and additional signage in accordance with current building face sign limits of one square foot of signage per linear foot of store frontage up to 60 square feet.

Ms. Brown stated pedestrian-scale directional sign area would be increased from 16 square feet to 24 square feet to better accommodate maps and way-finding information on the sign board.

Mr. Chris Henderson asked if there will be a limit to the number of directional signs in a given development.

Ms. Brown stated no. This is not an anticipated problem.

Mr. Fraley stated that he would like the DRB to be notified that this is a concern.

Mr. Henderson stated that there should be chosen locations. It would not be appropriate to have the signs in residential areas.

Mr. Fraley stated he is not comfortable with granting permission to all areas designated Mixed Use.

Mr. Allen Murphy stated that this would only be granted to those Mixed Use developments with a DRB.

Mr. Fraley asked if this would pertain to Prime Outlets.

Ms. Brown stated no; Prime Outlets is zoned B-1.

Ms. Brown stated sandwich board signs displaying daily specials will now be permitted in Mixed Use districts and other areas that are included in binding area studies with design guidelines approved by the Board of Supervisors (BOS). There are limitations on the size and location of such signs and all sign material must be removed each day at close of business.

Mr. Fraley asked if each business in this designated area could potentially put a sandwich board sign up.

Ms. Brown stated yes.

Mr. Henderson recommended granting another governing body the ability to regulate the number of signs permitted.

Ms. Brown stated an exception clause is proposed to provide one additional building face sign per unit when the applicant can prove that due to location, topography, separation of grade or the location of driveways in relation to the location of businesses and traffic flow patterns, a hardship is imposed on the business. The business must be located within a Mixed-Use district.

Mr. Fraley asked who would determine the hardship.

Ms. Brown stated that it would be up to the Zoning Administrator and, can be appealed to the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA).

Mr. Fraley asked what brought on this initiative.

Ms. Brown stated that staff had been working with some business owners in New Town that had expressed a need for certain allowances. County Administration asked that we address outstanding issues.

Mr. Henderson asked if the signs would be illuminated.

Ms. Brown stated that the signs could be illuminated on the exterior.

Mr. Henderson stated that having internal illumination may be advantageous. It may eliminate some maintenance issues.

Mr. Murphy stated that staff could look into this.

Mr. Henderson stated that he is concerned about too many sandwich board signs.

Ms. Brown stated the language reads that signs cannot impede pedestrian traffic. Also, the sign shall not exceed twelve feet in area.

Mr. Mike Maddocks asked if all signs would be reviewed by the DRB.

Ms. Brown stated yes. All proposed signage is seen by the DRB and staff.

Mr. Joe Poole stated that he too does not want to see a proliferation of signs. He stated that his greater concern is with temporary signs.

Mr. Reese Peck concurred.

Mr. Henderson stated that he would like to see some uniformity with the signs.

Ms. Brown stated that the Ordinance would not restrict color or style, though the DRB likely would.

Mr. Murphy stated that it is up to the DRB's discretion.

Mr. Fraley asked Ms. Brown to relay the concerns of the Policy Committee to the DRB.

Ms. Brown stated that she would.

Mr. Chris Johnson presented the recommendations made by the Subdivision and Site Plan Review Improvement Team (SSPRIT).

Mr. Fraley stated that those items related to amending the purview of the Development Review Committee (DRC) should be discussed by the entire Planning Commission.

Mr. Maddocks stated that within the business community there may be a perception of the County as being difficult to work with.

Mr. Fraley stated views offered by the Business Climate Task Force (BCTF) is representative of only one perspective.

Mr. Fraley stated that he did not see a bottleneck of cases occurring with the DRC.

Mr. Fraley stated that his exposure to the process has led him to believe that the applicant must share partial responsibility with regards to plans not progressing in a timely fashion.

Mr. Henderson stated the most time exhaustive cases are the commercial Special Use Permits (SUP). Is it the smaller "mom and pop" businesses that have problems going through the review process due to lack of experience?

Mr. Johnson stated that lack of familiarity with the County's Ordinance is not the only problem.

Mr. Henderson asked if staff had researched key problems.

Mr. Johnson stated that staff spent time researching development plans that required a greater number of resubmittals, though it was difficult to identify a common theme for delays in the review and approval process.

Mr. Peck stated that overall the proposed changes seem to make sense.

Mr. Henderson asked for an explanation regarding the proposed changes in the review times.

Mr. Johnson stated the new time requirements are consistent with the length of time needed for each review.

Mr. Peck asked staff to review those changes that impact requirements triggering DRC review.

Mr. Henderson discussed the authority granted to the DRC by the Ordinance.

Mr. Peck stated that staff should spent greater time researching the problems that need to be addressed.

Mr. Peck questioned the role the DRC plays with respect to administrative reviews.

Mr. Fraley stated that the language in the Ordinance may be interpreted in different ways. He gave one example: "must fit in the surrounding area".

Mr. Peck stated if the proposed measures improve the perception of the County's review process than it would be a significant achievement.

Mr. Fraley stated that he is uncertain of the proposed amendments making any real improvement. Mr. Fraley stated it may be advantageous to eliminate DRC review of sidewalk waivers. This could be done administratively.

Mr. Peck suggested organizing a subcommittee to review staff's proposed changes.

Mr. Maddocks stated that the proposed changes seem promising.

Mr. Murphy stated that the proposed changes are a narrow approach. Broader changes will be evaluated and made during the Ordinance revision process.

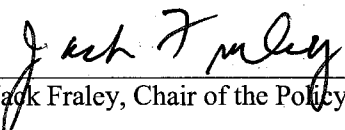
Mr. Poole stated he does not feel comfortable changing the building size threshold from 30,000 to 50,000 square feet.

Mr. Peck suggested Mr. Fraley and Mr. Rich Krapf review the proposed changes and return with suggested modifications.

5) **Adjournment**

Mr. Henderson moved to adjourn.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15pm.



Jack Fraley, Chair of the Policy Committee