

BRISTOL VIRGINIA PLANNING COMMISSION
Monday, March 5, 2018
12:00 pm

MEMBERS PRESENT:	MEMBERS ABSENT:	STAFF:	OTHERS:
Kevin Wingard		Sally Morgan	
Todd Buchanan		Amy Thompson	
Jordan Pennington			
Michael Pollard			
Susan Long			

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Pennington called the work session to order at 12:00 p.m.

II. Outdoor Advertising

Ms. Morgan reviewed the information provided at the February 15 Planning Commission meeting which had been an overview of the outdoor advertising regulations in the city zoning ordinance. She also explained what objectives have been guiding her approach to proposing revisions to the ordinance which are:

- 1) Make the regulations simpler and easier to understand, including better organization and graphics. (As a result, shortening the document).
- 2) Add flexibility where warranted and reasonable
- 3) Address issues that have been problems encountered by either property owners or staff to administer
- 4) Compare our regulations with our neighboring jurisdictions
- 5) Ensure compliance with Gilbert vs. Reed court decision (content neutrality)

There was no request by members to change these objectives. Ms. Morgan began discussing Pages 1 through 6 of the proposed revisions to Division 14 including changing the title from Outdoor Advertising to “Signs” or possibly “Signage”, and to rename Section 50-231 from Policy to Purpose. She also went over a proposed numbered list of the purpose of the division as a rewrite of the existing paragraph. There was a request with consensus from the members to alter the order of the listing even though these were not ranked and to add the phrase “natural scenic beauty” in item (b) on the list to reflect the current ordinance wording.

Ms. Morgan went on to go over some succeeding sections of the proposed revisions, although not much progress was made in revising any particular wording. Discussion ensued about off-premises signs and some members questioned why these are prohibited. Ms. Morgan explained that allowing them would lead to additional sign clutter and the city already has a significant number of off-premises signs (billboards) throughout the city. *(Note: Off-premises signs have been prohibited in the city since 2003 and were allowed only in manufacturing zones prior to 2003).*

There was a request for staff to look at other growing cities to find out what kind of regulations they have on signage. There was also a suggestion that we could get input from sign contractors in the area in terms so how our ordinance compares with others in the region.

III. Adjournment

Because several members had to leave, the work session was adjourned soon after 1 p.m. It was consensus that the Commission would continue to meet either as a part of the next regular meeting or at a subsequent work session to work on this section of the zoning ordinance.

Sally H. Morgan, City Planner

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