



**LIGHT-EMITTING DIODE (LED) SIGNAGE
A SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATION ADVISORY BOARD
(LDRAB)**

**SUMMARY OF THE APRIL 16, 2014 SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING
Prepared by Zona Case, Zoning Technician**

On Wednesday, April 16, 2014, the LDRAB LED Signage Subcommittee held a meeting at the Vista Center, Room VC-1W-47, Kenneth S. Rogers Hearing Room at 2300 North Jog Road, West Palm Beach, Florida.

A. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Cross called the meeting to order at 2:05p.m. and asked the participants to introduce themselves.

1. Introduction

LDRAB Subcommittee Members: Terrence Bailey, Jim Knight and Jerome Baumohl.

Interested Parties: Meril Stumberger, Alejandro Zurita, Michelle Cuetara, Jeff Berning and Pete Elgers.

County Staff: Eric McClellan, William Cross, Monica Cantor, Megan Montesino and Zona Case.

2. Election – Chair and Vice Chair

The Committee elected Terrence Bailey as Chair but it was agreed that a more informal meeting would be more suitable to the small number of attendees.

3. Additions, Substitutions and Deletions

Mr. Cross stated that there were no additions, substitutions or deletions.

4. Motion to Adopt Agenda

Motion to adopt agenda by Mr. Knight, seconded by Mr. Baumohl. The agenda was adopted by the LDRAB Subcommittee.

B. OVERVIEW

1. Existing ULDC Regulations

Mr. Cross explained that the goal of the subcommittee is to assist the Zoning Division in addressing code language as it relates to Light Emitting Diode (LED) signage, specifically for gas station fuel pricing in response to Board of County Commission direction. [Editor's Note: Reference to LED was subsequently revised to Digital Signage to acknowledge other similar forms of electronic sign technology.]

Mr. Cross used a Power Point presentation to show current LED signage examples and briefly summed up existing code language on electronic signage as follows:

- Convention centers, concerts, large venues and specialized attractions with very intense traffic, that by their nature have unique signage requirements. Also, signs that display time or temperature are permitted in non-residential zoning districts, e.g. those used on banks.
- Not allowed within 100 feet of a residential zoning district. Must be a minimum of 1,000 feet from existing electronic message signs, and only one electronic message per location is allowed.
- Prohibited in the WCRAO.

Mr. Cross mentioned some of the standards for changeable copy signs, related to the anticipated request from Big Apple Shopping Bazaar site.

2. Amendment Scheduling

The discussion centered mainly on two LED signage related topics:

- 1) Gasoline price signage; and,
- 2) Allowing some changeable LED on a monument sign.

Mr. Cross clarified that Topic #1, Gasoline Fuel Price Signage will go to the LDRAB in Round 2014-01. A decision on the Round with regard to Topic #2, Changeable LED on a monument sign; will depend on the scope of what is being requested. There is a slight possibility of presentation in this Round but the likelihood is that it will be in Round 2014-02 or in Round 1 of 2015.

C. DISCUSSION

1. Advantages and Disadvantages of LED Signage

Participants discussed safety, letters size, illumination levels, auto adjustment glare, colors, and malfunction of lights within some of the factors to be considered in the development of LED signage language.

2. Regulations for Gas Stations Fuel Price

Jeff Berning and Pete Elgers from Florida Petroleum Marketers and Convenience Store Association (FPMA) joined the meeting. Mr. Berning referred to the pending County cash/credit gas price ordinance and stated that the County requires that the highest price be shown on signage. His request is to allow LED signage that toggles from cash price to credit price, approximately every six seconds. He indicated that such signs are being used in Broward County. It was indicated that industry would like to see signs with side-by-side prices.

Mr. Baumoehl stated that he was not in favor of signage toggling between prices and this was supported by other subcommittee members, however Mr. Bailey suggested that consideration be given to having both prices side by side.

Several points were made in the lengthy discussion that ensued:

- LED signage applicable to freestanding signs only and number per site.
- Height of lettering - maximum 12 inches as recommended by staff, with the possibility of allowing up to 18" when the property is separated from roadway by something like a canal or by more than 100 feet. To be noted at LDRAB meeting that some of the subcommittee members were not in favor of 12-inch height letters.
- Colors to be limited to red, green and white.
- Subject to separation from residential as exists now.
- Possible requirement to turn off signs when business is closed.
- Address brightness/glare, with suggestion to include equipment to allow for automatic adjustment for light conditions (night, day, cloudy, etc.). Staff advised both may be difficult.
- Tentative request of photometrics at time of permitting.
- Consideration of setbacks.
- Recommendation against allowing content to change (e.g. the change from cash to credit every six seconds). Members acquiesced to possible compromise that both would be displayed all the time, if this is included in the upcoming BCC Ordinance.

There was consensus among staff and subcommittee members that it was not necessary to schedule another subcommittee meeting as there was sufficient direction to take it to LDRAB.

Motion by Mr. Knight to present to LDRAB, possibly at the May 28, 2014 meeting. Motion seconded by Mr. Bailey. Motion passed (3 - 0).

3. Tentative Use of LED for Other Signs

The main issue relates to retrofits and technology upgrade and tentative application to letters only in changeable copy signs.

Ms. Stumburger and Mr. Zurita, both representing Big Apple Shopping Bazaar, briefly described the nature of the business and their signage request. To assist in helping illustrate the site in question, staff pulled up a Google street view of the sign in question. Ms. Stumburger explained the signage request, as follows:

- Change the horse and put in something more related to Big Apple.
- Put a digital sign in the same area where the current letters are located to be modified remotely instead of going outside to change it manually.
- Message to be change no more than once a day.
- Sign will not flash or rotate to display hours of operation or special events.
- Specified size as discussed is what is already there.
- The illumination to be no more than what it is currently used.

There was a lengthy discussion on letter height, noting that most are currently 6" but that there is currently no limit. The following was proposed:

- Change to be limited to once per day.
- Content to be limited to Special Events or Sales. Staff will check with the County Attorney to see if it is possible to codify due to freedom of speech concerns.

The representatives from Big Apple indicated agreement with the limits.

Motion for staff to proceed directly to LDRAB. A meeting date was not specified but it was clearly stated as understood, that it is conditioned on the PZB/Zoning Director determining priority or assigning it to a later round.

No other sign consultants, contractors or industry representatives attended the meeting so the discussion was generally limited. Usage of LED for other signs was not discussed.

D. NEXT STEP

There was no necessity to plan for a second meeting at this time. Staff will proceed as noted in the items above.

E. ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 4:15 PM