

MINUTES OF
UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, January 20, 2022 6:30pm
City Hall Council Chambers
800 Game Farm Road, Yorkville, IL

NOTE: In accordance with Public Act 101-0640 and Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamation issued by Governor Pritzker pursuant to the powers vested in the Governor under the Illinois Emergency Management Agency Act, the United City of Yorkville is encouraging social distancing by allowing remote attendance to the UDO Advisory Committee meeting due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:00pm by Chairman Chris Funkhouser and a quorum was established. He also noted the Governor's order allowing remote attendance.

Roll Call & Establishment of Quorum

Committee Members:

Chris Funkhouser, Chairman/Alderman/in-person
Jeff Olson, PZC Chairman/remote attendance
David Schultz, Engineer-HR Green/remote attendance
Deborah Horaz, PZC Committee Member/remote attendance

Absent: Dan Transier/Alderman

Others Present:

Krysti Barksdale-Noble, Community Development Director/remote attendance
Jason Engberg, Senior Planner/in-person
Ruben Shell, Houseal Lavigne/in-person

Previous Meeting Minutes October 21, 2021 and December 9, 2021

The spelling of **Houseal** [Lavigne] will be corrected in both sets of minutes. They were then approved with the corrections.

Citizens Comments None

1. Introduction

Mr. Engberg said Chapter 6 regulates signs and he noted an applicable Supreme Court case. He explained the case and the new regulations Houseal Lavigne drafted concerning types of materials, type of sign, content on sign, etc. to ensure compliance in the city code. Mr. Engberg will review the proposed changes from Houseal Lavigne and he asked the committee for feedback.

2. Staff Review of Materials

a. Presentation and Discussion Chapter 6

Permitted Sign Types

Banner signs and sandwich boards need to be revised, said Mr. Engberg and he asked the committee for input.

Committee Input

Mr. Funkhouser asked about post and yard signs not being permitted in B-2 (primarily downtown area) and he said it should be considered. If those signs are allowed in every other district, downtown business owners might feel singled out and he added that 'for sale' signs must be allowed in the downtown. That signage is not intended

for commercial areas or in the downtown, said Mr. Engberg. Ms. Noble added that people might want small directional or sale signs, venue information signs and she feels it should be reviewed further. Temporary signs should be allowed.

Mr. Olson asked what the difference is between allowing wall-mounted banner signs/ground-mounted banner signs and allowing post and yard signs. Since there are multi-tenant buildings in the downtown, the area could become cluttered if each was allowed a sign, said Ms. Noble.

There is currently a time limit on banner signs and when it expires, the applicant re-applies. A 90-day time limit was suggested. Another solution is to have a maximum number of signs per property in addition to 1-2 temporary signs.

Staff will look at a limit on the number of signs downtown.

Wall Signs

Mr. Engberg reviewed some of the changes made and explained wall sign measurement guidelines. The allowable thickness of a sign was also added. A reduction of the total number of wall signs was recommended to reduce clutter. Also discussed was a new category-- projecting signs. Examples are the signs for Crusade Burger Bar and Juiceheads which are now classified as wall signs. Committee input was to either include both categories or to allow 2 signs on a primary side on a large building.

Single Tenant Monument Signs

Mr. Engberg explained how a monument sign size is determined. The proposed size is to keep 32 sq. ft. maximum, remove all acreages and define what is big or a small sign. The sign height will be kept at 12 feet, there will be an increased monument base size and landscape requirements will be added. If various new materials are incorporated into the sign, perhaps allow an increase of the overall size.

Committee Input

The committee was OK with keeping 32 sq. ft. for the base and they agreed on limiting the sq. ft. area containing text. It was agreed that the criteria regulating materials and percentages of the material should be specified. Ms. Noble added that technology has changed so much and to require brick and masonry adds a cost burden on the developer. Some of the newer materials were discussed. Previously landscaping was required, but it was agreed that a 2-post sign can be attractive and that landscaping requirements could be eliminated. It was noted that landscaping can sometimes cause sight issues and the committee does not want a sign covered by landscaping. It was agreed that all want a higher quality sign, broadening what is allowed and allowing a post sign if certain criteria are met. Mr. Schultz said a sign might not need landscaping if it's well designed. He added that if the developer chooses not to use a premium material, then landscaping could be required. Ms. Noble suggested giving a percentage of credit for use of certain materials. It was agreed that many items need to be clarified.

Multi-Tenant Sign

Some of the proposed changes are to increase sq. ft., eliminate acreage requirement, allow certain sq. ft. in certain zoning districts, height requirements and allow 64 sq. ft. signs for more intense uses. Mr. Engberg said some users will look at old PUD's and not understand why they can't get larger signs, but the PUD's were likely worked out as part of a larger agreement. In general, the more tenants, the larger the sign allowed.

Committee Input

Ms. Horaz asked if landscaping was required in the medians for multi-tenant buildings. This depends on the space available, if there is a sign and sight lines.

The sign height on a house converted to a business was discussed as possibly not meeting the height criteria. This issue will be brought back for review. In a related topic, Mr. Olson asked if there is a height limit for signs on a building or parapet. The code states it must be 1 foot away from the roof line. Ms. Noble said language could be added to say "to not project over the roof line".

Awning & Canopy Signs

This type of signage is only allowed on ground floors, canopies or awnings. Currently, there are not many multi-tenants with awnings, but it could increase in the future. Houseal Lavigne proposed keeping projecting signs at a maximum of 6 sq. ft. for downtown, with restrictions on height and the number. For on-site directional signs, the only change was the dimensions.

Committee Input

It was suggested that language in “other provisions” should say “shall”, not “may” on page 5, item D. Mr. Funkhouser said 6 sq. ft for projecting signs is too small and he suggested increasing the size to 15-20 sq. ft. for more flexibility. Ms. Noble gave examples of larger signs because they straddle more than 1 unit such as YPAC and Crusades.

Window signs are installed on the outside and are semi-transparent like artwork. The committee was asked if they would approve more coverage on a window sign if the sign was higher quality. Ms. Horaz commented it is better to have more signage on the window, than to have blinds.

Mr. Olson noted the abandonment and safety maintenance section does not address monument or pole signs. It should be included in the code to prevent abandoned non-conforming signs as seen in the city and some of the suburbs. He said they should be taken down to grade.

Ms. Horaz asked about painting a sign on a brick building like on an old hardware store. This would be considered a wall sign, said Mr. Engberg. If it is done as a wall mural, it would not be acceptable at this time as it would be considered a wall sign. The committee decided to not add it to the code at this time. Mr. Funkhouser added the city has only allowed murals in the downtown under the overlay, but it cannot be a specific logo or brand which would then classify it as a wall sign with size limitations.

Temporary Signage

Mr. Engberg reviewed the proposed changes or current regulations. New language was included for this category and 8 temporary signs are defined. Language includes allowance of 2 temporary signs at one time, distinction between wall and ground mounted, 6 feet height maximum, 32 sq. ft. maximum or 10% of wall area.

Feather signs--regulations include no limit on how many on a lot, no height regulations, \$25 per month and \$5 for each month thereafter.

A-frame and sandwich board signs--allow for 2 signs, same sign area, adequate room for people to walk.

Post signs--were added with one at a time allowed.

Snipe signs--allow 4 foot in height, 2 at one time and safety requirements were added. During elections, time frames are adjusted and 4 signs are allowed.

Cold air inflatables-- details were added, one a year for 72 hours at a time, no regulation on size, must be on your property, 25' ht., must be far away from power lines.

Committee Input

Feather signs--The max sq. ft. should be 26. On a multi-tenant building, 1 flag per tenant and 25 feet apart on primary frontage, was suggested. (No signs are permitted on any parkway or frontage).

Commercial sign--sign users may want 4' x 8', which the new ordinance would not allow. Mr. Funkhouser had concern for limiting larger signs where property is being sold. Two or even 3 posts would be needed. A new category of “commercial post sign” could be split from “residential post”. Staff was asked to come back with recommendation for a split. Yard signs/election signs--there is concern for the quantity of signs, but the committee wants no limitation on signs during election times for election signs. A limit of 2 signs outside of election time was recommended. Some HOA rules do not allow signs, which would supersede code. Ms. Noble said the election signs are exempt.

Greeting signs—the Committee discussed greeting signs such as Happy Birthday and discussed one letter per sign vs. all on one sign, how long to allow them to remain, the size of the sign(s), allow to be up for 72 hours. Staff was asked to look at guidelines for other communities and this topic will be brought back to committee.

Cold Air Inflatables/Tube Man--currently this category allows the signs to be displayed 72 hours, one time per calendar year, maximum height of 25 feet, they must be supported and 10 feet from danger. Mr. Olson noted that 10 feet from electrical lines is incorrect, rather it is based on electric line voltage, the bigger the line, the farther away. Staff was asked to research this information.

General Sign Standards, Electronic Message Boards

Changes made include requiring a dimmer switch and to allow changeable copy on the sign.

Committee Input

The Committee proposed to allow 80% of the message board be available for changing material while keeping the other portion permanent. This is proposed for just monument signs and multi-tenant signs. Ms. Horaz said she does not favor electronic signs on buildings. Regarding electronic message boards and illumination, Mr. Schultz asked if a statement about metrics is needed regarding allowing light to leave the property when it needs to be zero candle feet at the property line. Staff will look at wall-mounted signage and bring this item back to committee.

Prohibited signs

Proposed changes include prohibiting bent signs or signs attached to fencing.

Committee Input

Chairman Funkhouser asked if the city is exempt since sponsorship signs are placed at ballparks and could be a double standard. Ms. Horaz noted a church on Rt. 47 had a fence sign. A logo sign on a fence would not be prohibited. Mr. Funkhouser said if sign is on an out-parcel, maybe it could be an exception if it's for a common development, added as part of a PUD or stand alone sign. Mr. Olson noted a correction in the abandonment section should reflect "all signs" rather than "wall signs". Mr. Engberg said staff will look at this topic further and he said a detailed exemption list is needed.

3. Committee Comments and Questions

In conclusion, Chairman Funkhouser said Houseal Lavigne is working on Chapters 7 & 8 of the code. No meeting will be scheduled for February due to reviews of material by other city departments. Notes/revisions will be received from Houseal Lavigne for Chapters 3, 4, 5, 6 and Mr. Funkhouser asked that they be disseminated to the Committee in advance of the next meeting either with Houseal Lavigne or just committee members. He would like to wrap up the chapters already reviewed before moving on to additional ones.

In response to committee questions, Mr. Engberg said street/parkway trees and a list of acceptable trees will be discussed when subdivision control is addressed.

4. Adjournment

There was no further business and the meeting adjourned at 8:47pm

Minutes respectfully submitted by Marlys Young, Minute Taker

Not present at meeting, transcribed from digital recording