Planning Association of Washington
Sign Code Update Training

- Mercer Island, Washington
  - June 23, 2017

- WELCOME
Covington Sign Code Amendments

- Purpose: Balance Both Public & Private Interests

- Objectives Include:
  - Maintain City Council’s Community Vision
  - Provide for Economic Well-Being of City
  - Maintain a Balance of Sign Aesthetics
  - Develop User-Friendly Code
Work Completed on Covington Sign Code

- 2015: Study Sessions with Council on Sign Code Vision
- 2016: Workshops with Council on Goals & Objectives for New Sign Code Considering our Community Focus
- 2016: Results-Emphasis on Economic Well-being, Aesthetics, & Sharing of Community Information
- 2016: Desire to Make Regulations Simple & Clear, with Easy Permitting & Enforcement
Work Completed on Covington Sign Code

- 2016: Public Hearing & Adoption of Interim Sign Code
- 2016-2017: Enforcing Interim Code-Reasonable Compliance from Businesses
- 2017: Public Outreach on Switching from Interim to Permanent Sign Code
- 2017: Public Open House in June with Good Response
Major Provisions of Interim Sign Code

- Commercial & Noncommercial Messages Can Be Regulated Differently
- Minimum Standards for Life, Health, Traffic, & Public Safety
- Control Design, Quality of Materials, & Illumination
- Enhance the Appearance of City’s Streetscape
Major Provisions of Interim Sign Code

- Focused on Uniformity of Regulation & Ease of Enforcement

- Prohibited Signs in Roundabouts, Medians, Posted on Utility Poles & Trees in ROW, and Fences

- Reduced Sign Clutter in ROW

- New Code Addition: Allowed One A-Frame or Sandwich Board Sign Per Business on Site
Exemptions from Provisions in New Sign Code

- Signs Not Visible from Public ROW
- Any Form of Public Art
- Signs Required by Local, State, & Federal Law
- Government Signs for Protection of Health & Safety
Prohibited Signs in Interim code

- Animated, Rotating, & Inflatable Signs
- Hazardous, Flashing, & Nuisance Signs
- Portable Signs on Wheels
- Abandoned Signs & Permanent Signs on Vacant Lots
Signs Exempted from Permits

- Changes to Face or Copy of Sign Message
- Normal Repair & Maintenance of Sign
- Window Signs
- Signs on Vehicles
Temporary Signs on Residential Properties

- Shall Only Display Noncommercial Messages
- Allows Signs on Property Actively for Sale or Lease
- No Restriction on Number of Signs
- Shall Be Less Than 16 sq. ft. in Area, 6 sq. ft. Per Side
- Limited to 20% of Façade & 50% of Window Area
Temporary Signs on Commercial Properties

- May Have Commercial or Noncommercial Messages
- Prohibits Changing Images or Electronic Elements
- Allows One Banner per Tenant Space up to 32 sq. ft., But No Longer Than $120$ Days in a Calendar Year
- One Portable A-Frame Sign Allowed per Business, 4 sq. ft. Per Side, Only Dawn to Dusk, 365 Days a Year
Temporary Signs on Commercial Properties

- Window Signs Shall Not Exceed 50% of Window Area
- One Additional Temporary Freestanding Sign Per Street Frontage, up to 32 sq. ft.
- Temporary Signs, Except Window Signs, Require a Permit to Regulate Their Time, Place, & Manner
Temporary Signs in Public ROW & Public Spaces

• Must Be Behind the Curb & Outside of Medians, Roundabouts, or Traffic Islands

• Outside of Sight-Distance Triangles at Corners, & Not Attached to a Tree, Utility Pole, or Fence

• Limited to 6 ft. in Area & 3 ft. in Height in the ROW

• No Limitation in Public Spaces if Placed by the City

• Exception for Banner Hanging Across Street ROW
Permanent Signs

- Either High, Medium, or Low Profile Classification Based Upon Zoning District or Street Location
- Signs Shall be Monument Style, Not Pole Signs
- Signs Shall Meet Design Criteria for Materials, Color, & Architectural Detail
- Must Have Landscaping Surrounding the Base
High, Medium, & Low Profile Permanent Signs

- Maximum Height Varies from 5 to 12 ft., & 80 to 160 sq. ft. in Area Depending upon Site
- One Freestanding Monument Sign Unless Street Frontage is at Least 750 Lineal Feet
- Also Allows Wall & Building Mounted Signs Based upon Street Frontage
- Also Allows Kiosk Sign for Additional Businesses, 6 ft. High and 15 sq. ft. in Area
May Use Marquee, Awning, Wall-Mounted, Projecting, & Electronic Changeable Copy Signs

Shall Not Project Above Roofline of Building

Area Limited to 15% of Exposed Building Face

Number of Signs Varies from 2 to 5 Depending On Total Building Face Area
Major Issues Raised During Public Outreach

- How to Regulate Temporary Real Estate Signs
- How to Regulate Garage Sale Signs
- How to Regulate A-Frame (Sandwich Board Signs)
- How to Regulate Digital Advertising Signs
Thank You!
Contact for Questions

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