



Town of Lauderdale-by-the-Sea

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To: Planning and Zoning Board
Thru: Bud Bentley, Assistant Town Manager
From: Linda Connors, Town Planner
Date: January 13, 2012
Meeting Date: January 18, 2012

Town Planner Report: Commission Priority 3 - Proposed amendments to Chapter 30, Article VIII. Sign Regulations

At the June 2011 budget workshop the Town Commission established several planning priorities and subsequently hired JC Consulting to assist the Town in the analysis of these priorities. The Planning and Zoning Board recently completed its review of the Architectural Standards (Planning Priority #1) and the B1A and B1 zoning districts (Planning Priority #5).

The purpose of this agenda item is to review the proposed amendments (**Exhibits II, III and IV**) to Article VIII. Sign Regulations, which is the Commission's Planning Priority #3.

Background

The following actions have been taken within the last twelve months regarding the analysis of the Town's sign code:

- December 2010 The Town retained the services of JC Consulting, Inc., to conduct a comparative analysis of the Town's land use and land development regulations.
- March/April 2011 JC Consulting presented their findings to the Town Commission, which included a summary of the guiding principles and goals, objectives and policies within the Town's adopted Comprehensive Plan that are to be implemented through the Town's Land Development Regulations.
- June 2011 The Commission established planning priorities at its June 21, 2011 Budget Workshop.
- November 2011 The Commission approved Resolution 2011-42, which was the Notice of Intent for the review of the sign code.

Justification

The JC Consulting review of the sign code resulted in the recommendation that the Town should amend the sign regulations consistent with the Goals, Objective and Policies (GOP's) and overall guiding principles as expressed in the Town's adopted Comprehensive Plan. Those GOPs supporting these amendments are as follows:

Future Land Use Guiding Principles:

Irrespective of future redevelopment efforts, the Town Land Use Plan provides for "encouraging quality commercial development along Commercial Boulevard."

Future Land Use

Objective 1.3

To provide for local year round, seasonal and tourist resident needs by maintaining business land uses.

Policy 1.3.2 Continue to evaluate and adopt revisions to planning or regulatory means to improve the appearance of the Town's business areas. Efforts could include local signage regulations, provision or requirement for increased property landscaping and open space.

Objective 1.6

To improve the overall physical appearance of the Town's business and seasonal residential areas.

Policy 1.4.1 Where necessary, modify all zoning and subdivision regulations to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan

Policy 1.4.4 Develop and implement land use programs to encourage the elimination or reduction of existing and the prevention of future incompatible land uses.

Economic / Redevelopment

Goal 10.0

To promote the continued economic vitality of the Town's seasonal residential and business areas in a manner sensitive to the overall best interests of existing Town residents.

Objective 10.3.

To broaden the tourist market base by encouraging innovation and modernization in the type, character and appearance of local tourist residential and business uses.

Policy 10.3.3 Working with the local business community and based in part on the Design Guidelines study, the Town shall continue to modify the Land Development Regulations and consider enacting 'amortization' ordinances for landscaping, building façade and signage modifications on existing hotel and business properties.

Proposed Amendments

As part of their study, JC Consulting analyzed the existing signage in the community to determine to what extent those signs met the Sign Code. This exercise identified that in several instances, existing signage did not meet current regulations because the Code is in some parts vague, lacks certain desired definitions and over time has become poorly organized. These deficiencies allowed for inconsistencies in the Code's interpretation with a variety of signage not specifically allowed by code being permitted and/or in place.

To address the issues identified in the sign review, we drafted proposed amendments to the Town's sign regulations that include a comprehensive reorganization of the existing Code, including the addition of definitions, diagrams, and clarifying language to ensure the code is clear, concise and a more user friendly document for both the general public and staff. The amendments include two instances in which regulations have been increased regarding permitted signs. These amendments are as follows:

- Increased the clearance requirement from 7' to 8' to more closely mirror current urban design standards; and

- Removed a provision allowing the increase of a capital letter up to 20% provided that the lowercase letter is decreased by 20%

These proposed amendments as well as the remaining amendments to the code are summarized in this report's exhibits in three ways. First, **Exhibit I** summarizes the proposed amendments, how they differ from the current code and identifies the existing code regulations that would either result in regulations being more restrictive or less restrictive. **Exhibit II** is the sign code as it would read if the proposed amendments are approved. **Exhibit III** identifies the changes from the original code to the proposed code language in a strike thru/underline format with red underlined being new language, blue being relocated and black being the language that remained the same. In addition to the language changes, we propose including illustrations that will either be incorporated into the Sign Regulations themselves or utilized as an attachment to the sign permit applications to explain in detail how to interpret the measurement requirements of the Sign Code. The proposed illustrations are attached as **Exhibit IV**. Please note that because of the amount of reorganization necessary to clarify the Sign Code, the Exhibit III, the redline version of the code, can be somewhat overwhelming to read and may give the casual reader the incorrect impression that wholesale changes are being made to the Sign Code.

Procedure

Staff held two public input meetings on January 12, 2010 specifically targeted to the business community to hear their comments and collect their proposed recommendations. Approximately 25 people attended the meetings. After an extensive review of the proposed changes, the attendees suggested the following:

- Change the first reading of the proposed amendments from February 14th to February 28th;
- Increase the sandwich board provision from allowing only for valet and paid for private parking to allowing for uses in the B1A and B1 district;
- Allowing digital window signs;
- Categorizing real estate listings in windows as inventory;
- Review political signage to determine if signs can be posted on the waterfront;
- Review political signage to consider allowing political signs on public property for the election day;
- Consider feather signs for a certain time frame/number of times per year;
- Review regulations regarding emergency contact information signage; and
- Consider eliminating the proposed amortization period.

Based on the recommendations of the Planning and Zoning Board (January 18th meeting), input from the general public meeting (January 12th), and the results of the Town Attorney's ongoing legal review, we will craft a proposed Ordinance to be considered by the Commission at their February 28th meeting (first reading) and March 13th meeting (second reading).

Exhibits: Exhibit 1 – Table Summarizing Proposed Changes to Sign Code Regulations
Exhibit 2 – Strike-thru/Underline Sign Code document
Exhibit 3 – Clean Sign Code as Amended
Exhibit 4 – Sample of the Proposed Illustrations for the Code