

# SUMMARY NOTES CITY COUNCIL SIGN ORDINANCE TASK FORCE

January 14, 2015– 5:00 PM  
KCDC, 901 N. Broadway

## Call to Order

Chairman Duane Grieve called to order the January 14, 2015 meeting of the City Council Sign Ordinance Task Force at 5:00 p.m. in the Board Room at KCDC, 901 N. Broadway.

## Roll Call

### **Members present:**

Joyce Feld  
Duane Grieve, Chair  
Don Parnell  
Gary Hayes  
Melissa McAdams  
Jim Nixon  
George Wallace, Vice-Chair  
Bill Weigel

### **Members absent:**

None.

### **Staff Members present:**

Cindy Mitchell, City Council Office  
Anne Wallace, Redevelopment Office  
Crista Cuccaro, Law Department  
Peter Ahrens, Director of Building Inspections

### **Staff members absent:**

Mark Donaldson, MPC (Retired)

## Opening Comments

Chairman Duane Grieve recapped the three-year work of the Sign Task Force.

## Items for Consideration

### **1. Vote on reorganization of the sign ordinance.**

Clarification: This vote was not a vote on ordinance content, strictly the ordinance reorganization.

Motion: Joyce Feld moved to approve the sign ordinance reorganization.

Second: Don Parnell

Vote: Unanimous "Aye."

Disposition: The sign ordinance reorganization was approved.

**To track following votes and discussion, please reference attached corresponding ordinance marked as “Exhibit C” dated 9/11/14.**

**2. Vote on Items A through J as follows:**

**A. “C” Definitions**

Clarification: This item is consideration of and clarification of the definitions to the Sign Ordinance. The “replaced definition” to conform to the approved Cumberland Avenue Form Based Code is also included.

Discussion: Don Parnell addressed inconsistencies and typos that need to be cleaned up in final ordinance. Mr. Parnell asked the Law Department to review.  
Motion: George Wallace moved to approve “C” definitions with observations by Don Parnell requesting review by City Law Department for inconsistencies and typos.  
Second: Joyce Feld  
Vote: Unanimous “Aye.”  
Disposition: Motion approved.

**B. “E” Signs Exempt from these Regulations.**

Clarification: These changes were vetted by the City Law Department and added by MPC staff. Modifications to the description of several signs were added.

Discussion: Joyce Feld stated that she has issues with items #22, #24 and #25 in this section.  
Motion: Melissa McAdams made a motion to approve Section “E” except items #22, #24 and #25.  
Second: Bill Weigel and George Wallace.  
Vote: Unanimous “Aye.”  
Disposition: Section “E” approved except items #22, #24 and #25.

**C. “F” Signs Exempt from Permit Requirements.**

Clarification: Sidewalk Signs moved to Section I for “Standards for specific types of signs” so that it can be consolidated with other requirements in Section I.

Discussion: Joyce Feld stated she has issues with items #1 through #4 and #6. Chairman Grieve stated that they would come back to discuss this issue later. (See later in Summary Notes)

**D. “H” General Sign Standards.**

Clarification: Sight triangle is addressed with additional information added by MPC staff.

Discussion: Gary Hayes, Bill Weigel, Joyce Feld, Don Parnell, Peter Ahrens, George Wallace, Melissa McAdams, Crista Cuccaro  
Determination: Every time there is a building permit, the area is currently reviewed and evaluated by the City of Engineering Department that follows ITE Standards for safety and visibility. It becomes superfluous to include the sight triangle in the sign ordinance. It should be dealt with by the City Engineering Department because they make calculations based on each individual incidence rather than arbitrarily setting a number to include all sites since each site is different.

Peter Ahrens: Setbacks and sight triangles are evaluated every time an application is made and the Engineering Department does get involved to insure public safety for pedestrians and motorists.

Discussion: Joyce Feld (aesthetics), Don Parnell (Sight triangles), George Wallace, Melissa McAdams, Crista Cuccaro, Anne Wallace

Motion: Don Parnell made a motion to request the City Law Department to craft proper wording regarding sight triangles to be placed in the sign ordinance stating they will be determined by the City of Knoxville Engineering Department.

Second: Bill Weigel

Vote: Unanimous "Aye."

Disposition: City of Knoxville Law Department will craft proper wording regarding sight triangles for the sign ordinance.

**E. "I" Standards for Specific Types of Signs.**

Clarification: Sidewalk Signs added to this section.

Discussion: Bill Weigel, George Wallace, Anne Wallace, Don Parnell, Peter Ahrens, Melissa McAdams.

Motion: George Wallace made a motion to allow sidewalk signs with guidelines as stated in ordinance. (Currently sidewalk signs not allowed).

Second: Joyce Feld

Discussion: Don Parnell made observations regarding sidewalk signs allowed in some commercial districts and not in others.

Vote: Unanimous "Aye."

Disposition: Approved to allow sidewalk sign with guidelines specified in ordinance.

**F. "L" Signs Permitted by Zone District and  
G. Sign Heights in Office Zone Districts**

MPC Staff recommendation: Exhibit K, Section L-5-(b) (O-1, O-2, and O-3)- would read: For detached signs the maximum height shall be six (6) feet and the maximum sign area shall be thirty-six (36) square feet, except that adjacent to a major arterial road, expressway or interstate, as documented in the Knoxville-Knox County Major Road Plan, the maximum sign height for a detached sign shall be ten (10) feet and the maximum sign area shall be one hundred (100) square feet.

Motion: Melissa McAdams made a motion to approve a 10' sign height in office zones as stated above.  
(Exhibit K, Section L-5).

Second: Gary Hayes

Discussion: Feld, Weigel, Grieve, Hayes, G. Wallace.

Vote: Unanimous "Aye."

Disposition: Exhibit K, Section L-5 approving 10' sign heights as stated in the - MPC Staff Recommendation.

**Exhibit "C", Section L – 6 - a(2) – Wall Signs**

Motion: Don Parnell made a motion to leave it as is at 10%.

Second: Jim Nixon.

Vote: All "Aye" except Joyce Feld who "Abstained."

Disposition: Section L – 6(a)(2) remains same as in Exhibit C, page 22.

**Exhibit “C”, Section L-6-d - Maximum sign area for primary detached signs.**

Motion: Bill Weigel moved to approve 195 square feet.  
Second: Don Parnell  
Vote: “Aye” votes: Grieve, Hayes, McAdams, Nixon, Parnell, Wallace, Weigel.  
“Nay” votes: Feld  
Disposition: Majority agreed to 195 square feet for maximum sign area for primary detached signs except near interstate intersections.

**Scenic Highways -Exhibit “C” – Section L-6-e(2)**

Discussion: Melissa McAdams, Bill Weigel, Gary Hayes, Don Parnell, Joyce Feld, George Wallace.  
Motion: George Wallace made a motion to approve as written to allow signs on Scenic Highways to be no more than 10 feet tall and 100 square feet in area.  
Second: Melissa McAdams  
Vote: “Aye” votes: Feld, Grieve, McAdams and Wallace  
“Nay” votes: Hayes, Nixon, Parnell and Weigel  
Disposition: A majority vote was not accomplished. The motion failed. No other motion was offered.

**H. Abandoned Signs – Exhibit “C”, Section O**

Discussion: Jim Nixon, Peter Ahrens, Gary Hayes, George Wallace, Joyce Feld, Don Parnell.  
Motion: Jim Nixon moved to make the following changes:  
**Section O- 1. – change 60 days to 120 days**  
**Section O- 1-c – change one year (12 months) to 18 months**  
Second: Bill Weigel  
Vote: “Aye” votes: Grieve, Hayes, McAdams, Nixon, Parnell, Wallace and Weigel  
“Nay” votes: None  
“Abstain”: Feld  
Disposition: Motion carried.

**I. Window Signs – Exhibit “C” – Section D “Prohibited Signs” #11.**

Clarification: Section currently reads: “Window signs that exceed twenty-five (25) percent or twenty (20) square feet, whichever is less, of the window area in which they are displayed.

Discussion: George Wallace, Duane Grieve, Bill Weigel, Joyce Feld, Don Parnell, Melissa McAdams.

**Motion#1:** George Wallace moved to accept 25%.  
Second: Melissa McAdams  
Vote: “Aye” votes: Feld, McAdams and Wallace.  
“Nay” votes: Grieve, Hayes, Nixon, Parnell, Weigel  
Disposition: Motion failed.

**Motion #2:** George Wallace moved to change the percentage to 40%.  
Second: Melissa McAdams  
Vote: “Aye” votes: McAdams and Wallace  
“Nay” votes: Feld, Grieve, Hayes, Nixon, Parnell and Weigel.  
Disposition: Motion failed.

**Motion #3:** Gary Hayes moved to exempt window signs from regulation.  
Second: Bill Weigel  
Vote: “Aye” votes: Grieve, Hayes, Nixon, Parnell and Weigel.  
“Nay” votes: Feld, McAdams and Wallace.  
Disposition: Motion carried.

**J. Landscape and Post Coverings – Exhibit “C” – Section H, #5 and #6.**

**Consideration of #5:**

Discussion: Joyce Feld, Gary Hayes and George Wallace.

**Motion #1:** George Wallace moved to Accept #5 – “equal to size of sign area.”  
(Motion withdrawn)

**Motion #2:** Melissa McAdams moved to approve a landscaping requirement 1/2 the size of the sign area.

Second: Joyce Feld.

Discussion: Gary Hayes, Bill Weigel and Melissa McAdams

Vote: “Aye” votes: Grieve, Feld, McAdams, Parnell, Nixon, Wallace and Weigel.

“Nay” votes: Hayes

Disposition: The motion carried. A Landscaping requirement of ½ the size of the sign area was approved.

**Consideration of #6:**

Motion: George Wallace moved to approve #6.

Second: Don Parnell

Vote: Unanimous “Aye.”

Disposition: Motion carried.

**3. Comments for Record**

Joyce Feld, Duane Grieve and Don Parnell made comments for the record.

**4. Miscellaneous Items**

Motion: George Wallace moved to send the sign ordinance (Exhibit C) to City Council as it is with information on votes and recommendations.

Second: Bill Weigel.

Discussion: Parnell, Grieve, Weigel.

Vote: Unanimous “Aye.”

Disposition: Motion carried.

**Adjournment**

The meeting closed at 7:20 p.m.