

City of Tukwila

Department of Community Development

Jim Haggerton, Mayor

Jack Pace, Director

Sign Code Committee

Meeting #6

Date: October 16, 2008

6:00 PM-9:00 PM

Council Chambers, 6200 Southcenter Blvd
Tukwila, WA 98188

- A. Billboards (30 min)
- B. Special Event Signage in Commercial and Industrial Zones (45 min)
- C. "A" Boards (30 mins)
- D. Murals (30 mins)
- E. Master Sign Program (45 mins)
- F. Other (10 mins)

Agenda Item "A"
Billboards
Sign Code Meeting #6
October 16, 2008

Issue:

Should Billboards be allowed under the City's new sign code?

Background:

Billboards are common place along many highways throughout the country. The City currently defines billboards as "...a sign or visual communication device, its structure and component parts, whose principal use is the advertising or promotion of a service or product normally available in the general market area but not for sale or rent of the immediate premises (TMC 19.08.050)".

The City bans billboards in most areas of the City. New billboards are permitted on West Valley Highway south of S. 180th Street and along Interurban Ave South north of Interstate 5. New billboards may not be located closer than 500 feet to an existing billboard. The billboards must be a single post and cannot have an area greater than 300 feet in area.

The City has 19 existing billboards within the City, with most of the billboards being located along TIB and East Marginal Way South. All of the City's existing billboards are located within annexation areas of the City. Prior to annexation, King County and Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) regulated the placement of signs within these annexation areas. Both King County and WSDOT had relaxed land use regulations which allowed for billboard construction.

Analysis

At the first and second meeting of the Sign Code Advisory Committee we created the "purpose" section of the new sign code. Our draft purpose section notes, "The overall purpose of this Code is to enhance the City's aesthetic character, to promote the public health, safety and general welfare...". Do billboards help enhance the aesthetic character of the City?

Billboards do provide a small cash flow for property owners where they are located. Yet, while this cash flow would be a good asset to a small business that is located on the site; it also works to help prevent redevelopment of the site since the property owner is receiving income from the billboard.

Removing billboards once they are established can be very difficult and expensive. At the last meeting we had discussed implementing a sign amortization program for the removal of non-conforming signs. Billboard companies typically fight amortization programs which require cities to incur legal cost to implement policies for the removal of billboards.

Options

- A. The City should not allow additional billboards within the City.

The City currently allows billboards in two areas of the City. Under this option, the City would have a complete prohibition on billboards within the entire City.

- B. The City should continue to allow billboards in certain areas of the City.

If this option is favored by the Committee, staff would have to determine which areas billboard would be most appropriate. Most likely the two areas of the City that currently allow billboards would remain.

- C. The City should allow billboards citywide with the exception of residential areas.

Planning staff would have to determine the specific development standards for billboards. This option would be contrary to the City's redevelopment goals both in the TUC and along TIB.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that option "A" be incorporated in the new sign code. Preventing new billboards within the City would be consistent with the goals of the new sign code that the Committee has established. At this time Planning staff is not recommending that existing billboards be amortized.

Agenda Item "B"
Special Event/Temporary Signage
Sign Code Meeting #6
October 16, 2008

Issue

Should businesses within commercial and industrial zones be permitted to display "special event" signage and if so under what provisions?

Background

Many businesses have a desire to install temporary/special event signage to advertise a grand opening, sale, or other special event. Common examples of special event signage include banners, "A" Boards, balloons, wind animated devices, search lights and pennants.

The City's current sign code only allows businesses that are having a "grand opening" event to display balloons and other "carnival like" devices for up to seven days. All businesses within the City are allowed to use banners for up to 30 days once a quarter. If a business uses one banner it can be no greater than 64 square feet and if the business wants to use two banners the two banners combine cannot exceed 64 square feet.

The City of Bellevue's restrictions are very similar to the City's current regulations:

From Bellevue's Sign Code:

Temporary Event Signage. Signs, posters, banners, strings of lights, clusters of flags, blinking lights, balloon, and search lights are permitted for a period of one month to announce the opening of a completely new enterprise, and anytime thereafter for two weeks each occurrence (searchlights excepted) to announce the opening of an enterprise under new ownership, a substantial remodel, or a going out of business sale.

However, the City of Bellevue does provide additional provisions for signage that is not provided by the City of Tukwila.

Bellevue's code notes:

Temporary Joint Sales Signage. Signs, posters, banners, strings of lights, clusters of flags, blinking lights, balloon, and search lights are permitted for a period of two weeks to announce a special sales events sponsored by more than one commercial enterprise. Such special sales event must be held on the premises of one or more of the sponsoring enterprises, and all participating enterprises must be located on the same site or abutting

sites. The signage allowed under this section may be permitted no more than four times per year for any participating enterprise.

The City of Issaquah's provisions on temporary signs is much more flexible than both Tukwila's existing code and Bellevue's code. For example, Issaquah allows balloons on sites and allows decorative banners. Balloons and decorative banners would be prohibited under the City's existing sign code.

Included with your packet is a handout from the City of Renton which provides information on Renton's temporary sign regulations.

Analysis

Tukwila is one of the prominent commercial centers in the State. The urban center area has one of the largest concentrations of retail square footage in the state. On the weekends, people from all over Western Washington visit the city to shop and dine. It is these visits to the City that many people use to draw conclusions about Tukwila.

Often times businesses tend to install prohibited devices as way to create a "destination" and to attract attention to their sites. Many of these businesses install the signs, despite repeat visits from Code Enforcement and Planners. But should there be more flexibility in allowing temporary, special event signs? It's unclear what, if any impacts, these signs have on drawing customers to a site. Does someone really buy a new car because the new car lot was inundated with balloons and because a giant gorilla was on the roof?

Allowing these types of signs requires carefully navigating the interest of a particular business while at the same time ensuring that the City's commercial and industrial areas look like first class commercial environments. Another thing to remember is that signs are part of the entire built environment. The built environment includes trees, parking lots, buildings and signs. Temporary signs are typically placed within parking lots and within landscaped areas.

Options

There are several options related to regulating how "special event" signage is regulated:

A. No change from current sign code.

Only new enterprises within the City would be permitted balloons and other carnival like devices. All businesses would still be allowed a banner to be displayed for up to 30-days.

B. Each business could be allowed a prescribed number of special events per year. The business could display a wide variety of objects as part of the special event.

This would be a departure from the current sign code regulations. Balloons and other "carnival like" devices would be located within parking lots and within landscaped areas.

The City could limit the number of total sign devices per business and could limit the types of devices, for example search lights or large inflatable objects could be prohibited.

Recommendation

- A. Staff recommends that option "A" be adopted within the new sign code. The new sign code will provide a wide variety of changes to the new sign code. Many of these changes will allow additional signs for Tukwila businesses. The goal of the sign code update has been to improve the visual image of the City, allowing special event signage would not be with keeping with this goal.

Attachments

- A. Renton's Temporary Sign Regulations





RENTON
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Temporary Sign Permits and Regulations

[Temporary Event and Grand Opening Permit Application](#)

TEMPORARY and GRAND OPENING SIGN REGULATIONS

All commercial, industrial, public and quasi-public uses and mixed-use developments (commercial combined with multi-family residential) will be allowed to display temporary event signage with a valid permit. Permit fees will vary depending upon the types of signs displayed. Fees for the temporary event signage can range from a minimum of \$15 to a maximum of \$180. Fees for the grand opening event signage will be \$25.

A temporary event sign is a display device, constructed of cloth, canvas, light fabric, cardboard, wall board or other light materials, with or without frames, intended to be displayed for a limited period of time only. Temporary event signage includes but is not limited to balloons, banner, flags, pennants/streamers, wind animated devices, inflatable statuary, rigid portable signs, portable reader-boards, and searchlights. Other types of display devices will require the approval of the Development Services Director.

Signage for a grand opening event will be permitted for a thirty-day period and will only be issued to new business or existing business relocating to an entirely new location. Temporary event signage will be permitted for thirty days with a maximum of four temporary event sign permits issued to a business per calendar year. A fifteen-day separation period will be required between the end of one event period and the start of another permit period.

Temporary and Grand Opening Sign Permit Application and Descriptions can be downloaded or picked up at the City of Renton's Building Permit Center on the 6th floor of Renton City Hall, located at 1055 S. Grady Way. If you have questions regarding the regulations, please call (425) 430-7200.

SIGN OPTIONS

BANNERS

Any sign of lightweight fabric or similar material that is mounted to a pole and/or building by any means. National flags, state or municipal flags, holiday flags, or the official flag of any institution or business shall not be considered banners. A banner is not defined by shape and may be square, rectangular, round, triangular/pennant shaped, etc

Banner - wall strung:



A banner attached to a building, where the banner lies flat against the building surface at all times. (*maximum size 100 sq. feet*)

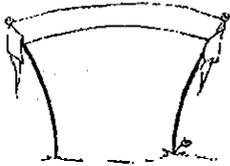
Banner- hung from single pole:



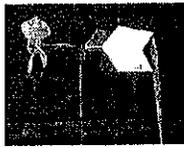


A banner attached at its top and bottom to a pole or light standard by extensions from the pole. (maximum size 20 sq. feet)

Banner - strung between wall and pole or between poles: A banner attached at its top and bottom corners strung between buildings, poles, and/or light standards. (maximum size 100 sq. feet)



Wind Animated Devices: Any device (e.g. windsocks, pinwheels, whirligigs, etc.) whose primary movements are caused by the wind or atmospheric conditions, attached by a tether. A balloon or inflatable, with or without moveable parts, is not considered a wind-animated object.



Balloon: A spherical, flexible, nonporous bag inflated with air or gas lighter than air, such as helium, and intended to float in the air.



Flag: A piece of cloth or plastic, supported by a vertical or horizontal staff which is intended to flutter in the wind. (National, State, County, Municipal, and Corporate flags exempt).



Inflatable Statuary: An inflated advertising device that is the likeness of an animate or inanimate object or cartoon figure and is used to attract attention, advertise, promote, market, or display goods and/or services.

PENNANT/STREAMER: AN INDIVIDUAL OBJECT AND/OR SERIES OF SMALL OBJECTS MADE OF LIGHTWEIGHT PLASTIC, FABRIC, OR OTHER MATERIAL, WHICH MAY OR MAY NOT CONTAIN TEXT, WHICH IS SUSPENDED FROM AND/OR TWINED AROUND A ROPE, WIRE OR STRING.

Streamers: hung on wall



Pennants: Connected (strung together between wall and pole or between poles).







Portable Reader Board: A sign which is self-supporting but not permanently attached to the ground or building and can be moved from one location to another and is typically internally illuminated. Portable reader-boards are also known as "trailer signs."



Rigid Portable Sign: A sign which is not permanently affixed and designed for or capable of movement. A rigid portable sign is not considered to be a portable reader-board or "trailer sign." (*maximum size 32 sq. feet and maximum height 6 feet*).



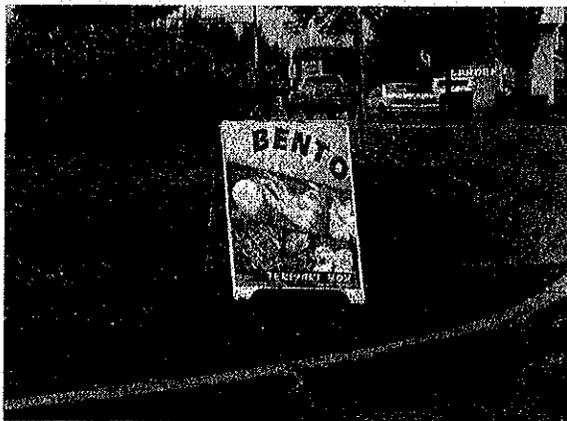
Agenda Item "C"
"A" Boards aka Sandwhich Boards
Sign Code Meeting #6
October 16, 2008

Issue

Should provisions be made in the new sign code to allow the installation of "A" Boards within the City?

Background

The City's current sign code specifically prohibits the use "A" boards within the City's commercial and industrial zones.



"A" Boards are a cheap and convenient sign option used by some businesses. They are typically placed on sidewalks or landscaping and are typically directed at people in cars. Some businesses due to limitations placed by landlords or the City are not able to be listed on a freestanding sign. These businesses choose to use "A" boards as a way to circumvent their inability to be listed on a freestanding sign.

For comparisons the staff looked at the cities of Issaquah and Bellevue to research how they regulate "A" boards:

The City of Issaquah allows "A" boards to advertise special events for which a special event permit has been issued by the City. An example of a special event given in their code is their annual Salmon Days event. The signs are allowed only to assist in traffic and crowd control for the event. "A" boards can also be used by outdoor vendors such as Christmas tree lots, fruit stands, and other limited activities.

The City of Bellevue prohibits most types of "A" board signs. However, the City of Bellevue specifically notes that "A" boards worn by a person are allowed. The City of Tukwila does not regulate signs that are worn by humans¹.

Analysis

When regulating "A" boards it is important to remember that a business has other sign options available that they could utilize. For example a business could be listed on a freestanding or building mounted sign. Many businesses choose to utilize "A" boards when they cannot be listed on a freestanding sign either because of restrictions placed by the landlord, restrictions placed by the City, or financial limitations of the business.

The use of "A" boards by businesses present two main issues:

- 1) Safety: Often times "A" boards are located on City sidewalks. While the City is improving and installing wider sidewalks throughout the City, most City sidewalks are five to six feet in width. When an "A" board is located on a City sidewalk it requires pedestrians to navigate around the sign. These signs present safety hazards for people using the sidewalks and could create legal liability for the City.
- 2) Aesthetics: One "A" board on a property would most likely have minimal aesthetic impacts. As with all signs it is several signs that can create aesthetic issues. Tukwila has developments that contain numerous businesses, if each business was allowed one "A" board sign the entire front yard of a property would be covered with "A" boards.

It is interesting how Issaquah allows "A" boards for special events as a way to essentially assist in traffic and parking control. The City's current sign regulations do not provide flexibility to allow a business to install "A" boards for such a purpose. In our discussion about freestanding signs we noted that freestanding signs are used for *way finding*, *advertising*, and to provide *economic value to a property*. "A" boards, if used correctly, could assist in way finding for motorists and pedestrians.

The City's existing code also does not allow the usage of "A" boards for outdoor vendors. Outdoor vendors do not have nor would it be practical for them to utilize permanent signage.

Options

There are several options related to how the City could regulate "A" boards.

- A. No change from the current sign code.

¹ Regulating signs worn by people presents several legal issues and its staff position that "human" signs will not be regulated under the sign code.

The use of "A" boards within commercial and industrial zones would be strictly forbidden.

B. Allow each business to have at least one "A" board.

Each business would be permitted to have one "A" board displayed. Since many of the properties within the City contain numerous businesses, the front of properties would be cluttered with "A" boards.

C. Allow "A" boards for limited events in order to assist in traffic, parking, and crowd control

As noted the City's current sign code does not provide provisions for using "A" boards for special events. Using "A" boards for a limited time for special events could assist both a business and the City in controlling traffic, helping people find parking and crowd control.

The signs could not be used for advertising and the City would have to approve of the installation. The use of the "A" boards should be limited to extremely large events and not "special" sales. Good examples of when "A" boards could be used would be when the Sounders play at Starfire or during the holiday shopping season at the mall.

D. Allow "A" boards for temporary outdoor events such as firework stands, Christmas tree lots, and other similar uses.

These types of uses would only be allowed to use banners under the existing sign code. However, banners may not be appropriate in all situations. Staff could create provisions that allow "A" boards for these seasonal outdoor businesses.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that option "C" and "D" be adopted into the new sign code. Staff will finalize the specific details before the proposed sign code is presented to the Planning Commission and City Council.



Agenda Item "D"
Murals
Sign Code Meeting #6
October 16, 2008

Issue

Should provisions be made in the new sign code to allow the installation of "murals" within the City?

Background

A mural is a large painting or photographic attached directly to a wall. Some cities allow murals as a way to add visual interest to blank walls. Murals throughout the region display a wide variety of images, however most tend to display historical images and events.

The City of Tukwila has no restrictions on installing a mural within the City. If a property owner wanted to paint a mural that depicted a natural scene the City would not consider the image a sign. However, if the mural advertised goods or services available on the property, the mural would be considered a sign and would be subject to the size limitations for wall signs and would count towards the maximum number of signs permitted per the business.

Other cities provide specific regulations for the placement of murals.

For example:

The City of Grandview notes:

"Murals which are based upon accurate historical facts, and which have been approved by the city of Grandview's beautification commission for application upon any external or interior wall¹, are subject to this section. Murals located on the walls of a building within the city of Grandview must, prior to painting or affixing to such wall, be submitted and approved by the beautification commission".

The City of Port Townsend specifies the following regarding placement of murals:

"Mural Signs. In addition to the allowable sign area prescribed in subsection A above, additional mural signs are allowed subject to prior approval of the Port Townsend historic preservation committee. Upon application, the historic preservation committee may authorize such mural signs upon a finding that the design and placement of the proposed sign contributes to the historic district.

¹ The City of Tukwila would not regulate the placement of a mural within a building.

The historic preservation committee may also authorize specific placement of such mural signs off-premises or in a manner which exceeds the applicable size or height limits prescribed herein”.

Included with your packet are handouts from the cities of New Westminster and Vancouver, British Columbia which detail those two cities requirements for the placement of murals. Also, included with the packet is an update to your visual dictionary that includes photos of two murals, one is in Olympia on a Lowe's and the other mural is at the Phil Smart Dealership in Seattle.

Analysis

Murals could be used in various parts of the City to improve the visual quality of the built environment. However, murals could also be used as a backdoor way to get additional signage for a business. The two murals included in your packet would be allowed in the City under the existing sign code. Since the murals are not advertising goods or services available on the site or off-site they would not be considered signs.

Options

There are several options related to how the City could regulate murals:

- A. No change from the current sign code.

If the proposed murals were purely artistic and did not advertise goods or services available on site or offsite they would not be considered signs and thus would not be subject to the City's sign regulations. If the murals were used for advertising they would be subject to the limitations of the sign code.

- B. Allow all walls to display murals with no parameters.

This option could make Tukwila a city known for its great murals or a city known for very large wall signs. Businesses would most likely use this method as a way to get additional signs, signs that would be very large.

- C. Allow murals under specific conditions and parameters.

The placement of murals could be permitted under a design review process. The Director and/or Board of Architectural Review, depending on the type of application, could allow murals under the following parameters.

Parameters could include:

1. Themes of the murals are not limited, however preference will be given to murals that celebrate Tukwila and/or South King County History, the natural setting, or images that display replicas of historical ads that are at least 50 years old.

2. The use of text and logos on the mural shall be limited and shall be related to the artistic intent of the mural.
3. The mural shall be consistent with the building style. The mural shall not obscure window openings.
4. Murals shall use durable, graffiti resistant, and weather resistant materials.

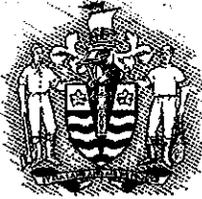
Recommendation

Staff recommends that option "A" be adopted into the new sign code. Option "A" would be keeping with the current sign code and does not require that the City essentially judge art. Option "C" is appealing; however the option would require that the City review the content of murals and would also create a bureaucratic procedure for someone who wanted to install a mural that was purely artistic in nature.

Attachments:

- A. Additional Pages for Visual Dictionary
- B. Vancouver, BC Mural Guidelines
- C. New Westminster, BC Mural Guidelines





City of Vancouver *Land Use and Development Policies and Guidelines*

Community Services, 453 W. 12th Ave Vancouver, BC V5Y 1V4 ☎ 604.873.7344 fax 873.7060
planning@city.vancouver.bc.ca

50c

MURAL GUIDELINES

Adopted by City Council November 29, 1988

These guidelines are to be used in conjunction with the **Zoning and Development By-law** for development permit applications involving murals and in conjunction with the **Sign By-law** for sign permit applications involving signs in conjunction with a mural.

- (1) The location, scale and content of a mural should be in keeping with and enhance the building, wall, fence or hoarding on which it is located, as well as the local environment; it should enhance community identity; and it should contribute to the visual delight of passers-by and the visual quality of the city.
- (2) A mural should not be permitted where any adjacent sign or development may detract from the appearance or effectiveness of the mural.
- (3) A sign in conjunction with a mural should not dominate or compete with the principal mural theme.
- (4) No two murals, with or without signs in conjunction with either of them, should be located closer than 1,000 feet of one another when facing the same traffic direction unless their themes are directly related.
- (5) All development permit applications for murals or sign permit applications for signs in conjunction with a mural should be referred by the Director of Planning to the Urban Design Panel, the Art in Public Places Sub-committee of Council, or any other relevant advisory group*, with a request for a submission before he makes a decision.
- (6) A mural should be properly maintained and cleaned or repaired as necessary.
- (7) The Director of Planning should consult with any applicant prior to refusal of an application for a mural in order to offer the applicant an opportunity to redesign the mural, if appropriate.

* Note to Staff: On April 9, 1991, Council approved the establishment of an advisory Public Art Committee. When this Committee is operational, applications for murals should be referred to it. Please contact Bryan Newson in Social Planning for further information.

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Mural Policy and Guidelines

Corporation of the City of New Westminster

Planning Department

Mural Review Policy and Application Procedure

Murals should meet the following criteria:

1. Professional Art: done by a qualified artist. The mural should be signed and dated.
2. Design Review stages:
 - a) portfolio review by mural committee and/or Director of Planning;
 - b) review and approval of mural design and location by mural committee and/or Director of Planning.

Consultation with the local business association and neighbouring businesses is recommended. The mural committee can assist with this.

3. Design Guidelines:
 - a) Colour: consistent with the building. On historic buildings heritage colours are encouraged. On non-heritage buildings, classic colours are encouraged.
 - b) Material: durable, graffiti resistant and weather resistant materials.

c) Workmanship: any support/ attachments must be approved by a professional structural engineer (e.g. wind loads); work on site not done by the artist must be supervised and approved by the artist.

d) Theme: themes are not limited to, but could include themes that celebrate New Westminster's history, natural setting, or that promote tourism. However, other themes would be encouraged as well. Consideration will be given to themes that are of a purely artistic expression.

e) Design: the mural should be consistent with the building style (e.g. heritage style on heritage building) and not obscure window openings.

Note: Murals may not be appropriate for some heritage buildings.

4. The identification of the sponsor(s) should be limited (i.e. no more than 10% of the mural surface). Other related text may be included up to a total of 25% of the mural area if this is consistent with the artist's approved concept. If there is a community notice component that can be used to promote community events (e.g. May Day, Hyack Parade, Fraserfest), consideration may be given to increasing the area for text if this is consistent with the artist's approved

concept. Any increase in the area of text requires the approval of the Director of Planning.

5. Community projects must be undertaken under the direction of a professional artist.

Mural Application Procedure:

1. An application may be made at any point in the design review process.
2. When the design review process is completed the application will receive "Preliminary Approval".
3. The application fee is \$50.00
4. When the mural installation has been completed the mural will receive an inspection by the Planning Department. If the finished mural is consistent with what was approved at the completion of the Design Review process the application will receive "Final Approval". This signed, final approved application form is to be considered the mural permit.

Guidelines for Mural Production

Public art murals can do much to beautify the urban environment and encourage community pride. Proper preparation of the site and mural production will guarantee that these pieces of neighbourhood art will remain in good condition for years to come.

Site Selection

Brick, plaster and concrete walls offer the best surfaces for the creation of murals. Wood and aluminium are not recommended for permanent murals, although marine grade plywood can be used if the edges are sealed properly. Murals can either be painted directly on the final surface, or on panels, which are fixed to the wall either before, or after painting.

Ideally, the mural surface will be smooth, although many murals have irregular shapes and rough plaster. Either way, the artist must inspect the surface before agreeing to paint it.

The major cause of damage to murals is water. Ensure that there is no water seepage from roof or ground level, and that there will not be snow piling against the wall. Also, check that the wall is sound, because if the mural is intended to last for a long time, the wall must do the same!

Wall Preparation

Concrete, Plaster and Brick Surfaces

- Pressure wash the surface to remove any dirt and existing paint, and ensure the surface is completely dry before proceeding further
- Scrape the wall to remove any additional loose material and ensure a smooth, solid surface
- Spackle or another type of filler should be used to fill cracks and holes

and to level uneven surfaces. Lightly sand the entire surface to even out the filled areas and to ensure the primer will adhere.

- Prime the wall with a latex primer to provide an even surface for the mural.

Reminder: As with any paint job, the quality of the surface preparation will determine the quality of the finished product. Make sure to follow all preparation steps, and consult with a qualified paint professional to determine the best type of filler and primer products to be used.

Paint

The paint possibilities are endless, and the best materials and methods should be determined by the nature of your project and in consultation with a qualified paint professional. Some of the options include:

Latex is much easier to work with than alkyd (oil) paint as it is water-soluble and easy to apply. Latex is definitely suitable for any interior murals or on surfaces that are sheltered from the elements. Latex paint should follow a latex primer

Alkyd (oil) paint, while initially harder to work with and requires the use of solvents, is more durable and resistant to fading and weathering caused by the elements. Oil paint should follow an oil primer.

Artist's *acrylics* can also be used, usually on top of a latex primer.

It is *strongly* recommended that an anti-graffiti topcoat be rolled on top of the mural after it has been completed. Besides providing protection from potential vandalism, this topcoat contains an ultra-violet ray protector to prevent fading of colours due to sun exposure. Make sure the artists apply a test patch of the topcoat, as some paints will crack or yellow or become water-soluble upon application.

Supplies

2" and 3" brushes can be used in large-scale projects, and artist brushes can be used for smaller details, especially portraiture.

Surgical gloves and masks can be used with oil paints if the artists have allergies to paint or solvent.

Reminder: The selection of paint and paint supplies should be made in discussion with a qualified paint professional and based on the needs of each individual project.

Maintenance

Pollution and water seepage cause the greatest damage to murals, and annual washing of the surface with a gentle soap will help minimize this damage. Water damage usually requires the scraping and repainting of the affected areas, but remember that effective surface preparation and a protective topcoat should eliminate this hazard.

The City disclaims any liability arising from reliance on information contained in this guide.



For more information, please contact:

Planning Department
City of New Westminster
511 Royal Avenue
New Westminster BC V3L 1H9

Telephone: (604) 527-4532
Fax: (604) 527-4511
E-mail: plnpost@city.new-westminster.bc.ca
Web Site: www.city.new-westminster.bc.ca

Murals

Mural on the side of Lowe's on Martin Way in Olympia.



10/10/2008

Visual Dictionary, Meeting #6,
Agenda Item D

Murals

Mural located at the Phil Smart Dealership on Airport Way in south Seattle.



10/10/2008

Visual Dictionary, Meeting #6,
Agenda Item D

Agenda Item "E"
Master Sign Program
Sign Code Meeting #6
October 16, 2008

Issue:

Should the new sign code include provisions to allow the City to review the signs for large and unique properties under a master sign program?

Background:

Throughout the sign code update process the Committee has been briefed on how there are many sites within the City that present challenges in adopting a new sign code. A notable example is the Mall which is the largest mall in the Pacific Northwest and clearly has sign issues not faced by other properties.

A master sign program could be used to address situations, like the mall, where a one fit sign code is not practicable. Planning staff could not find any cities within Washington State that used a master sign program. The City of Milbrae, California did have language within their sign code regarding a master sign program

From the City of Milbrae Sign Code:

10.10.160 Exceptions and variances.

The planning commission may grant exceptions and variances to the regulations prescribed in this chapter relating to the height, area, location or number of signs under the following circumstances.

A. Master Sign Program Exception. The planning commission may grant an exception in connection with the approval of a master sign program (see Article VII, Master Sign Program) if it finds that strict adherence to the requirements of this chapter would unduly impede or interfere with the ability of one or more businesses, facilities or enterprises to adequately identify themselves to the public, or a segment of the public likely to patronize them. The planning commission shall also find that the signage is harmonious and compatible with the development of the property on which it is proposed and with other development in the immediate vicinity.

10.10.330 Master sign program and requirements

A. General. The threefold purpose of a master sign program is to identify the (1) maximum permitted sign area allowed on a particular site; (2) on-site areas which are suitable for signs; and (3) permitted on-site signs. A master sign program is subject to review and approval by the planning commission. Once approved, individual businesses may apply for proper permits to erect new signs in compliance with the sign program.

B. Applicability. A master sign program is initiated by a property owner and is required for all new developments with more than one principal building, all new multiple tenant buildings, all new planned development projects and existing multitenant buildings where significant facade improvements will require the removal of signage. A master sign program is recommended for existing sites with more than one principal building, for existing multitenant buildings and for individual buildings where the site would benefit from a coordinated signage plan.

C. *Required Information.* A master sign program shall contain at least the following information:

1. An accurate site plan;
2. Location of buildings, parking lots, driveways and landscaped areas;
3. Computation of the maximum permitted sign area;
4. An accurate indication on the site plan of the location of each proposed sign, including any signs which are to remain or be removed; and
5. Scaled drawings of the proposed signs shown on elevations of the building(s) and any freestanding signs showing sign size, copy, graphic style, type of lighting and color scheme.

D. *Procedures.* Any sign which conforms to an approved master sign program may be approved by the community development department. Approval of a master sign program does not waive the permit requirements for individual signs.

E. *Amendment.* A master sign program may be amended by filing a new master sign program that conforms with all requirements of this section.

F. *Exceptions to Regulations.* Exceptions to sign regulations for height, area, location or number may be permitted subject to review and approval of a master sign program. See MMC 10.10.160(A).

G. *Existing Signs Not Conforming to a Master Sign Program.* If any new master or amended sign program is filed for property on which existing signs are located, it shall include a schedule for bringing into conformance all signs not conforming to the proposed or amended program, or this chapter.

H. *Binding Effect.* After approval of a master sign program, no permanent signs shall be erected, placed, painted or maintained, except in conformance with such plan, and such plan shall be enforced in the same way as any provision in this section. The master sign program shall be attached to the lease agreements for all leasable space within the project. In case of any conflict between the provisions of such a plan and any other provisions in this chapter, this section shall control. (Ord. 626, § 2; 1976 Code § 10-2.701).

A master sign program could be used to allow exceptions to certain sign requirements, such as the number of signs permitted, height, setbacks, size, and/or other development regulations. The master sign program could also be used as a way to encourage the developer to provide certain amenities on a site that are not necessarily related to signage. For example, the City is currently updating its Tukwila Urban Center plan and drafting a new Shoreline Management Plan; both plans call for establishing open space areas. The City could use the ability to obtain additional signs as an incentive for a property owner to provide additional public space beyond any prescriptive code requirements.

Analysis

A master sign program would provide the flexibility to deal with large sites where there are unique sign issues and development issues. There are some issues that the City should consider when deciding to implement such a program:

- A. **Fairness.** A master sign program may appear to other property owners as a grant of special privilege to a select, limited number of property owners. Property owners may see signs being installed on adjacent properties and ask why they are not allowed to have such signs. However, not all properties are the same and some properties require flexibility as part of the development review process.
- B. **Signs as incentives.** As noted, signs could be used as incentives to encourage other amenities on a site that helps the City achieve development patterns that would be consistent with other

adopted plans. The City's Tukwila International Blvd Design Guidelines use this same approach as a way to work with developers along TIB. For example landscaping and setback requirements can be waived for new developments along TIB, when the developer provides certain pedestrian amenities.

- C. **Workload.** Who would approve the master sign plan? At the last meeting we discussed having the Board of Architectural Review (BAR) possibility review and approve master sign programs. Members of the BAR are also members of the Planning Commission and the Planning Commission's workload will continue to increase in the next several years with the required update of the Comprehensive Plan scheduled for 2010. The BAR may not have time to add additional work to their schedule.
- D. **Development Standards.** What development standards should be waived under a master sign program? Could offsite signs be allowed? If the development standards waived through a master sign program are so extreme other property owners not eligible for a master sign program would complain.

Options

- A. The City should allow a master sign program for the following types of development:
 - 1. Sites those gross square footage exceeds 20 acres and contains a building or buildings with more than 250,000 square feet of area.
 - 2. Uses that provide an essential public service (i.e. hospitals' emergency rooms, etc) where public safety may be jeopardized by strict compliance to the City's sign code.

Under this option, very few properties would qualify for the master sign program. The master sign program would be optional and a property owner could install signs subject to the provisions of the sign code. Criteria would have to be established as to what exceptions can be granted under a master sign program. Overall the exceptions granted under the master sign program should be generally keeping with the overall goal of the new sign code. For example the master sign program should not be a method of obtaining pole signs or freeway interchange signs, both sign types the Committee has noted they do not wish to see under the new sign code.

Given the multiple demands placed on the BAR/PC, the Director of Community Development would have the authority to review all applications for a master sign program as type II decision.

- B. The new sign code could not provide for a master sign program.

All properties owners would be required to fully comply with the new sign code.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that option "A" be incorporated in the new sign code.