



March 31, 2015
Edgewood City Council/Planning & Zoning Board
Sign Workshop #3

Attendees

Ray Bagshaw, Mayor
John Dowless, Council President
Mike Hendrix, Council Member
Dan Drummond, Council Member
Neil Powell, DDS, Council Member

Planning & Zoning

Regina Dunay, Chairwoman
Marion Rayburn
Chris Rader

Staff

Chris Francisco, Police Chief
Bea L. Meeks, City Clerk
Drew Smith, City Attorney
Ellen Hardgrove, AICP
Debbie Cabales, Code Enforcement Officer
Sandra Repp, Administrative Assistant

Council President Dowless opened the Joint Workshop at 6:32 p.m. Council President Dowless dispensed with the invocation and Pledge of Allegiance. He acknowledged the Planning & Zoning members in attendance. Mayor Bagshaw requested all in attendance introduced themselves. City Clerk Meeks said a sign-in sheet will be provided for everyone to sign in, so that there is a record of the attendees who introduced themselves. City Clerk Meeks said the contact information provided will also be used to send updates. She reminded everyone that the information provided on the sign-in sheet is public information.

Council President Dowless introduced Planner, Ellen Hardgrove, who referred to the support documents in the agenda packet. She gave a brief explanation of the background regarding the beautification of Orange Avenue. She said there is nothing new; the bottom line is that with the sign

changes, the amortization has passed and that means all the signs in the City of Edgewood should be in compliance. The question is how should Code Enforcement address the signs? Additionally, how should Code Enforcement address landscaping? Mayor Bagshaw confirmed that nothing is being voted on in the workshop. The purpose of the workshop is for discussion. He said that the City is trying to make it work for the City and the businesses. The Mayor said before an Ordinance is drafted, the businesses will know the changes. Council President Dowless said the City contracted with ULI who also addressed the concerns. He said the City wants the front door to look as good as the back door. Planner Hardgrove said she does not think the regulations are broken, but they could be tweaked. She said the biggest problem with signs, are window signs. She said there should no more than 35% coverage, but there are some that are totally covered which gives the appearance of being cluttered. She said shopping centers need to be looked at because of the big signs. She said shopping centers over 5 acres need to be looked at as a single unit. Multi-tenants need to be looked at in detail. Council President Dowless asked about multi-signs. Planner Hardgrove said that some signage had been added to. She said there are a lot of banners and free standing signs that are allowed by code, but there are specific Code requirements (she referred to the executive summary). She said sign copy cannot exceed 100 sq. ft. She said banner signs are temporarily allowed.

Planner Hardgrove addressed landscaping. She said when a plant dies, replant. She said this was required in 1974 and nothing has changed. She addressed irrigation and dumpsters. She said there was not a lot wrong with the regulations. She said partnership with ULI, MetroPlan and property owners is important in making "this" a success.

Council President Dowless referred to City Attorney Smith, who noted that the first step is to send a friendly letter to all business owners with or without a violation, to say this is what the City is trying to do. He said make the letter an invitation showing that the door is being opened to amicably address. Depending on who comes in or not, step two (2) is sending a letter of a possible code violation however, the matter is not going before Code Enforcement. Attorney Smith said the letter should indicate that the City has looked at a property, these are the violations and this is how you cure them. City Attorney Smith said staff will be cognizant of prioritizing so that landscape and signage do not overlap. He said there will probably be two months involved with the first two letters. Chief Francisco agreed with Council President Dowless, who said everyone will be treated fairly. He said the Mayor started the beautification process with City Hall, City signage and the island at the split at Orange and Hansel. City Attorney Smith said that Code Enforcement will not enforce until the new Code in place.

Council President Dowless asked Planner Hardgrove to again outline the more difficult areas. Planner Hardgrove said the multi-tenant and shopping centers over five acres are the difficult areas. Planner Hardgrove said that due to setbacks, some pole signs may not be able to be dropped. The Mayor said the City will be addressing setbacks, and it could be an advantage for the businesses.

Planner Hardgrove explained rights-of-way. She said the sign regulations now state that signs can be 20 feet from the curb, not the property line. Planner Hardgrove confirmed that if there is wording on the window it is a window sign. Mayor Bagshaw said he wanted to caution on the tint because the Police Officers cannot see into the window. He said he wants to make sure there is safety for the business and for the Officers. The owner of Regal Cleaners asked about her enclosed dumpster. Planner Hardgrove explained the requirement which went into Code a "long" time ago. The Mayor said this is also something that can be considered during the process.

Mayor Bagshaw asked how the City can engage the business owners more. He noted that the City is sending letters but what else can the City do. Another business owner (inaudible/back of the room) said that he was part of the process before and there were some grants. The Mayor said that he and Council President Dowless are attending meetings to help get the City involved, and get some funding. The Mayor said he is also concerned because the City does not have any cross-walks. The Mayor noted that there are 377 businesses within the City's 2-mile stretch. He said he has been trying to get reclaimed water for three years, but the County does not want to come through the City because of the costs. He said the City is anxious to help grow the businesses because they want to keep them in the City.

Council President Dowless said that Planner Hardgrove was asked to explain the changes to show how there have been continued delays. He said "this" Council wants to follow-thru. He said due to the lack of questions, does this mean that the business owners are okay with the direction the City is going with signage and landscaping. The indication was yes. The Mayor asked if a business owner was willing to head up and form a committee. John Moccio (SDM Automotive) volunteered to head up a private group of the business owners. City Attorney Smith said that Council should start off with updates. Council President Dowless encouraged everyone to look at the City's website for upcoming meetings. City Clerk Meeks said she will send the agenda out to those business owners who provided their email on the sign in sheet. In response to Council Member Drummond, no business owners raised their hands to show that they are happy with the appearance of Orange Avenue. Council Member Drummond said Council wants to be mindful that there are some businesses that the Code may not fit for their business. Council Member Drummond said he is very interested in hearing from the business owners regarding pole signs. John Moccio referenced his business' pole sign and noted the problems he would have if he brings a pole sign down to the ground. He said the signage is changeable so those walking by can remove letters off the sign. He said there is a two story building for businesses behind him, but no one knows it is there because of the layout of the property. No one wants to rent because there is no visibility. He said he has six tenants but cannot rent out because of the visibility and limitation on signage. City Attorney Smith said variance procedure could be built into the Code for situations like this.

(Sandra Repp left the meeting)

Mr. Moccio also pointed out that it could be a problem to sell the property if the sign is not compliant. Council Member Drummond said that looking at it from a community point of view, did Mr. Moccio think the community would be improved by eliminating the pole signs. Mr. Moccio said yes but it needs to be a case-by-case basis. Council Member Drummond said the City does not want to create a business hazard.

Tim Bartlett (Adrenaline Films) asked about the landscaping. He said he thought his sign was compliant but worried about the landscaping. He said he is concerned about anything that walks, as it relates to the three foot hedge (to hedge the vehicular use area) . Mayor Bagshaw said that he believes this was required so that headlights did not shine onto the street causing a hazard. Planner Hardgrove said Mr. Bartlett's property has been specifically discussed and the property is fine. Council President Dowless said that this is an area that needs clarification (hedges).

Resident Bonnie Bagshaw, said that for the past four years since her husband has been Mayor, there were changes on Colonial Drive (SR 50), i.e. Mills 50. She said these areas formed committees and became involved in changing their area. She said she prescribes to the Mills 50 newsletter. She explained that every time she receives their newsletter, there is a new business opening. She said the purpose of what the City is doing is to make it so that businesses are clamoring to open their business in Edgewood. She referenced areas that do have landscaping that causes site issues. She said she agrees that the business owners need to look at their spots. She said if the business owners are interested, she will send them the information about Mills 50. She referred to the Edgewood District website. She said if they have something going on that they want her to post, let her know, she will post it.

Dan Riederich, Dan Saw & Tool said if he had to go to a drive-by business, he would not stop. He said the speed limit needs to be reduced at least by five miles per hour.

Chris Rader, Planning & Zoning Board, said he is an engineer and understands the Code and the process. He said he has attended every workshop and says the goals and intent of Council is to help the businesses. He said he views what Council is doing as a partnership.

Mayor Bagshaw said he wants the City to become a City that Realtors want to do their business in.

Chief Francisco introduced Code Enforcement Officer Debbie Cabales. He said he has an open door policy and if there are ever any concerns or problems see him or Sgt. Jackson, who is Code Enforcement Officer Cabales' supervisor.

City Attorney Smith said the next step is tweaking the Code regarding signage and landscaping and working on the drafts. Mayor asked John Moccio to let the City know if they are anticipating a large attendance, as the City may have to move the meeting.

Meeting adjourned 8:06 p.m.

ATTEST:



John Dowless
Council President



Bea L. Meeks, MMC, CPM, CBTO
City Clerk

Approved by Council on April 21, 2015 .