



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Planning and Economic Development Division

m e m o r a n d u m

TO: Bruce K. Walden, Chief Administrative Officer

FROM: April D. Getchius, AICP, Director

DATE: November 9, 2000

SUBJECT: Proposed Interim Development Ordinance (IDO) concerning Outdoor Advertising Sign Structures

Introduction

This memorandum addresses a proposed Interim Development Ordinance (IDO) intended to significantly limit the placement of new Outdoor Advertising Sign Structures (OASS), commonly known as "billboards", for a period of 180 days while the existing regulations are reviewed.

Background

Recently a number of problematic OASS are being placed in the Champaign-Urbana area that call into question the adequacy of our current regulations. The issues regarding the OASS include their placement, design, and compatibility with surrounding properties. Please refer to the discussion below and attached photographs for a better understanding of these issues.

The purpose of an IDO is to promote/permit the effective implementation of a zoning or land use regulation study... The IDO shall regulate changes in land use or development which are expected to conflict with the purpose underlying a contemplated land use or zoning proposal. Therefore, in order to allow the necessary time to undertake a thorough review of the OASS regulations, without additional permits being requested. Staff has initiated the process to establish an Interim Development Ordinance (IDO).

The City's regulations concerning OASS, which are a portion of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance, date from 1984. The language adopted at that time is a result of a settlement agreement for a court case

between the City and C & U Poster Company. These regulations have remained largely unchanged since 1984.

The City of Champaign has proposed a similar IDO to significantly limit OASS permits for a period of 180 days while a thorough review of sign regulations is conducted. The City of Champaign opened the public hearing concerning their OASS IDO on November 7, 2000 and will hold continued public hearings on November 21, 2000.

Discussion

Staff has identified a number of goals that should be addressed in undertaking a comprehensive review of the current OASS regulations. These include:

- (1) To preserve and protect the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of the City by preventing the erection of new OASS which conflict with the intent of the Zoning Ordinance.
- (2) To determine whether new technology in the OASS industry has made current regulations inadequate or obsolete.
- (3) To ensure that permitting procedures are adequate to determine that proposed OASS are in complete compliance with regulations.
- (4) To establish aesthetics criteria for OASS including placement, landscaping, dimensions of appurtenances, and color and design in context of surrounding properties.
- (5) To prevent disproportionate number of OASS permit requests which could occur as a result of proposed IDO for City of Champaign.

A draft IDO Ordinance is attached to this report. It contains a statement of purpose, boundaries, use regulations, duration, and provisions for variations or exceptions. Also included in this memorandum are photographs of recently constructed OASS in Champaign and Urbana.

Recommendation

The only action requested at this time is for Council to open discussion on the proposed Interim Development Ordinance . Formal consideration of this IDO is scheduled for November 20, 2000.

Prepared by:

Tim Ross, Planner

Attachments: Draft Interim Development Ordinance

Photographs of recently constructed OASS OASS REGULATIONS

Draft IDO

I. Statement of Purpose - The purposes of the regulations contained in this Article are:

- (6) To preserve and protect the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of the City by preventing the erection of new OASS which conflict with the intent of the Zoning Ordinance.
- (7) To determine whether new technology in the OASS industry has made current regulations inadequate or obsolete.
- (8) To ensure that permitting procedures are adequate to determine that proposed OASS are in complete compliance with regulations.
- (9) To establish aesthetics criteria for OASS including placement, landscaping, dimensions of appurtenances, and color and design in context of surrounding properties.
- (10) To prevent disproportionate increase in OASS permit requests which could occur as a result of proposed IDO for City of Champaign.

II. Boundaries - All property within the City limits in all zoning districts which currently permit the construction and operation of an OASS. As stated in the Urbana Zoning Ordinance, these areas are along FAP or FAI routes in areas zoned B-3 (General Business), B-4E (Central Business Expansion) and IN (Industrial) and within 660 feet of either side of such FAP/FAI routes; in B-3, and IN districts along Lincoln Avenue north of Bradley Avenue; and in B-3, B-4, B-4E and IN districts along Vine Street between Main Street and University Avenue.

III. Use Regulations - All permitted or provisional uses as currently allowed by the Zoning Ordinance are permitted, except OASS. No new permits shall be issued for construction of an OASS.

IV. Duration - 180 calendar days from (date of adoption)

V. Variation or Exception

- (1) Replacement - The Zoning Administrator may authorize issuance of a permit to replace an existing OASS if said OASS is damaged, through no fault of the owner, to the extent that complete removal and replacement is required.
- (2) Relocation - The Zoning Administrator may authorize issuance of a permit for a new OASS in exchange for an existing OASS being removed if the following criteria are met:
 - a. It is determined that the new location is consistent with the intent of the Zoning Ordinance.
 - b. It is determined that the location of the sign to be removed is inconsistent with recommendations of an adopted plan for any area of the

City of Urbana, and the location of the new sign is consistent with said plans.

- (3)Hardship - The Zoning Administrator will authorize the issuance of a permit for a new OASS when the owner of the property can demonstrate that disallowing such a permit would eliminate any reasonable use of the property.

ORDINANCE NO. 2000-11-138

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CITY OF URBANA 1990 MODEL CODES
ADOPTION ORDINANCE
(OASS Permits)**

WHEREAS, the Urbana City Council has determined that there may be safety issues regarding the construction of OASS; and

WHEREAS, the Urbana City Code may need to be amend to better assure for the safe construction of OASS known as “cantilevered”; and

WHEREAS, in order to provide sufficient time to review these ordinances the Urbana City Council has determined that the City should temporarily suspend the approval and issuance of building permits for said cantilevered OASS’s.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED THAT the City of Urbana 1990 Model Codes Adopting Ordinance is amended to add the following section:

Section 2904.5 Temporary Suspension of OASS Building Permits. Effective November 21, 2000 through December 31, 2000, the Code Official or his/her designee shall not issue any building permits for the construction of Outdoor Advertising Sign Structures that utilize a cantilevered construction technique.

The City Clerk is directed to publish this Ordinance in pamphlet form by authority of the corporate authorities, and this Ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage and publication in accordance with Section 1-2-4 of the Illinois Municipal Code.

PASSED by the City Council this _____ day of _____, 2000.

AYES:

NAYS:

ABSTAINS:

Phyllis D. Clark, City Clerk

APPROVED by the Mayor this _____ day of _____, 2000.

Tod Satterthwaite, Mayor

FRAUENHOFFER LETTERHEAD

November 14, 2000

Ms. April Getchius
City of Urbana Community Development
400 S. Vine Street
Urbana, Illinois 61801

Subject: Billboard Construction

Dear Ms. Getchius:

I have noticed the construction of several new billboards in both Urbana and Champaign and have come to learn that some of these billboards may have out-of-state ownership. Cantilevered billboards can be successfully designed and constructed safely. However, I am concerned that due to the fact that there is no structural redundancy in these structures, that failure in a wind event could be very dangerous to the public.

I recommend that when permits for cantilevered billboards are issued, that the City consider requiring **the construction drawings be sealed by an Illinois Licensed Structural Engineer. Such a requirement would be congruent with building construction requirements currently in force in the two cities and also would be congruent with the Department of Transportation's requirements for sign structures.**

Sincerely,

John Fraenhoffer, PE, SE

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