

Minutes

Joint Workshop of the Lompoc City Council and the Planning Commission
Tuesday, January 25, 2005 - 6:30 p.m.
City Council Chambers/100 Civic Center Plaza

Councilmembers Present: Mayor Dick DeWees, Janice Keller, Mike Siminski, DeWayne Holmdahl, and Will Schuyler.

Planning Commissioners Present: Chair Jack Rodenhi, Ralph Harman, Ann Ruhge, Ed Shoemaker, and Ron Fink.

Staff Present: City Administrator Gary Keefe, Assistant City Attorney Matthew Granger, Community Development Director Arleen Pelster, and City Planner Lucille Breese.

Consultant Present: Paul Crawford, Crawford, Multari, Clark

Mayor DeWees welcomed the audience and briefly discussed the order of the workshop.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS: None

The purpose of this workshop was to discuss the proposed Sign Regulations that, if adopted, would be effective Citywide. The City Council and Planning Commission discussed the revisions and took public testimony. No action was taken regarding the revisions at this workshop.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1:

Consideration of a revision to Zoning Ordinance, *Chapter 3, Article 1 Sign Regulations*
Planning Division File No. TA 05-01

The Sign Regulations address: the installation and construction of signs and advertising devices by businesses in Lompoc; the approval process for signage for businesses; and the signs that are prohibited.

City Planner Lucille T. Breese made introductory comments regarding the Sign Ordinance, identified the tentative dates for upcoming Planning Commission and City Council public hearings for the Ordinance, and introduced Mr. Paul Crawford of Crawford, Multari, and Clark, consultant for the Development Code Update.

Paul Crawford, Crawford, Multari, and Clark, discussed what constitutes legal sign regulations, based upon recent case law; noted that his firm has prepared approximately 80 sign ordinances in California and each reflects the character of the individual community; indicated that there are policy decisions to be made during the upcoming public hearing process; stated that the existing regulations had been re-formatted and reviewed by staff; and noted that it is the City's challenge to determine what is appropriate for the community.

Public Comment:

1. Ray Leslie, business owner, suggested forming a committee to work with the Commission and noted that each sign should be individually judged by the community.
2. Denny Anderson, Chamber of Commerce, noted that the Chamber has no formal position on the proposed regulations; was concerned with subjectivity in Ordinance; and explained that the business community wants to know what is expected.
3. Derek Starbord expressed concern that the revisions were a major change to the existing ordinance and that the proposed standards could be very expensive for small business.
4. Martin Van Enoo, Curves, noted both subjectivity and specific guidelines within the regulations, discussed his experience with the existing ordinance; and asked if the proposal was better for small business.
5. John Linn, business owner, explained that he had worked on the existing Ordinance; provided exhibits of signs and a mural; suggested that a community group should prepare the Ordinance; and indicated that there were inconsistencies within the document.

6. Ken Shields asked about signage on vending machines after close of business.
7. George Bedford indicated a concern with limitations listed in Purpose of Ordinance; conceded with need to update Ordinance but noted need to promote commerce; and suggested review of franchise requirements.

Councilmember Holmdahl indicated that the Ordinance should improve the process for business community and allow the Commission to have authority over design of signs.

Commissioner Fink expressed concern with the subjectivity in the proposed regulations, expressly definition of “obscenity”; wanted requirement for English languages for public safety; and, stated that the business community should have been consulted earlier in the process.

Councilmember Keller provided written comments on the proposed regulations to staff; pointed to internal inconsistencies and subjective areas within proposed regulations; noted importance of fine tuning regulations before adoption; suggested need for a “variance” component; indicated that the need for an updated Ordinance had been discussed at Planning Commission and City Council on many occasions; and expressed concern with proposed banner regulations.

Commissioner Ruhge stated she was pleased to see the participation of business community; expressed a need for additional input; suggested coordination of comments; and expressed concern with building permit requirements in the Ordinance.

Commissioner Harman asked to see murals, flags, and vehicle signs removed; noted that the Uniform Building Code (UBC) already covers construction of signs; balloons should be considered sculpture not signage; and noted that a City the size of Lompoc should not require a 20 page Sign Ordinance.

Commissioner Rodenhi noted that, practically speaking, an Ordinance is a limitation; expressed the opinion that the Ordinance should contain the latitude for staff and/or Commission to make a decision; and noted that the comments received should be presented with options to the Commission.

Mayor DeWees said noted that no Ordinance will make everyone happy and emphasized the need to simplify the process; inquired about staff consultation with business community; and discussed requirements for temporary signs.

Community Development Director Arleen Pelster noted that this workshop is the first step in the process of adopting the Sign Regulations. Staff considered concerns for the business community and separated Sign Regulations from the balance of the Development Code to allow thorough consideration.

There was further discussion regarding enforcement of violations, variance process, problems with building permit requirements, regulations from other communities, and the length of time that the process will ultimately take.

City Administrator Gary Keefe noted that planning approval does not alleviate the applicant from complying with the Uniform Building Code (UBC) requirements for installation.

ADJOURNMENT:

At 8:15 P.M., Mayor DeWees adjourned the City Council meeting to its regular meeting of February 1, 2005 at 7:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers. The Planning Commission adjourned to its regular meeting of February 14, 2005 to be held at 6:30 p.m. in the City Council Chambers.

Dick DeWees, Mayor
City of Lompoc

ATTEST:

Jane C. Green
City Clerk