



**City of Dallas  
Planning Commission  
Council Chambers - City Hall  
November 12, 2013 7:00 p.m.**

**MINUTES**

1 **CALL TO ORDER**

2 Vice President David Shein called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

3 **ROLL CALL**

4 Commissioners Present: Chris Castelli, Carol Kowash, David Shein, Denise Jones, and Robert  
5 Wilson.

6 Absent: President Chuck Lerwick and Commissioner Les Oehler.

7 Staff present: City Attorney Lane Shetterly, Community Development Director Jason  
8 Locke, Planner John Swanson, and Recording Secretary Patti Senger.

9 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

10 Vice President David Shein presented the minutes of the regular meeting of October 8, 2013. There  
11 were no corrections or additions to the minutes and they were accepted as presented.

12 **PUBLIC COMMENT**

13 Vice President David Shein asked for public comment.

14 Gene Henshaw, 2424 SW Oakwood Drive, Dallas, Oregon said he was working with a group of people on  
15 the sign code revisions. He indicated he wanted the changes to be a collaborative effort and include the  
16 group's ideas. He stated he wanted to make a presentation to the Planning Commission after they had  
17 done more research. Vice President David Shein acknowledged his request and indicated the Planning  
18 Commission wanted public involvement in the sign code revision process.

19 Joe Koubek, 565 SE Mifflin Street, Dallas, Oregon reported that he felt strongly there should be public  
20 notification to bring in citizens to review the sign code. He expressed he did not want a business  
21 dominated sign code and stated he was adamant about getting the word out by advertising in the  
22 Itemizer Observer newspaper and putting information on the City of Dallas website.

23 **PUBLIC HEARING**

24 There were no public hearings.

25 **OTHER BUSINESS**

26 WORK SESSION: DISCUSSION OF DRAFT SIGN CODE

27 John Swanson discussed the content and structure of the draft sign code. He explained this was a  
28 working draft and the desire was to have a final product that was business friendly, met the desired  
29 community standard, and was clear enough not to require interpretation. He pointed out that it was  
30 problematic to administer the existing sign code. He noted the importance of having opportunities for  
31 meaningful participation from the public.

32 Mr. Swanson explained that the draft sign code was shorter than the current sign code and that  
33 obsolete or redundant information had been removed as well as sections that were indefinable and  
34 unenforceable. Mr. Swanson explained that the result would be a standalone ordinance that would fit  
35 into the Development Code.

36 Mr. Swanson reviewed the terminology section of the draft sign code and pointed out that clarity and  
37 usability were important. He explained most of the sign code was functioning very well but there were  
38 nuance things such as temporary signs that needed revision. For example, the current sign code  
39 described temporary as a type of construction rather than a length of time.

40 Mr. Locke stated that new technology required the addition of new terminology, and the Industry  
41 standard language was incorporated into the draft sign code.

42 Mr. Swanson reviewed the exempted sign section and stated that some types of signage should be  
43 exempted from code, such as window displays, hand held signs, alarm service yard signs, and school  
44 activity signs.

45 Audience member Joe Koubek asked if he could make a comment and City Attorney Lane Shetterly  
46 advised that public comment would have to wait until the Public Hearing and would be taken at that  
47 time.

48 Chris Castelli asked about specifically listing school activity signs in the exemption portion of the code  
49 and Mr. Shetterly explained because they were placed in residential zones they would need to be listed  
50 as exempt.

51 Mr. Castelli asked about the definition of video signs and if the one at the Woodburn Outlet Mall and  
52 the one on South Commercial Street in Salem were video signs. Mr. Locke confirmed those were  
53 examples of video signs. Audience member Joe Koubek interjected the code should define them as  
54 digital signs and not video signs. Mr. Locke indicated video was the correct terminology.

55 Vice President Shein asked about signs on cars. Mr. Locke indicated the intent was to alleviate someone  
56 from putting a sign onto a vehicle and parking it in front of a competitor's business. Carol Kowash asked  
57 about vehicles with the large logos painted on the side of them. Mr. Swanson said the difference was a  
58 permanent sign versus a temporary sign and if the intent was for the vehicle to be used as daily  
59 transportation. Mr. Locke added that if the only function was to park on the street for advertising it  
60 would be against the new sign code. Mr. Shetterly reported about a vehicle that pulled a video billboard  
61 on a trailer but did not actually haul anything and stated that it was allowed to drive around town but it  
62 could not be parked.

63 Mr. Locke talked about the lack of exceptions to the current sign code that made it problematic. He  
64 explained that if someone could make the case for a variance, there should be a process similar to the  
65 land use variance process.

66 Mr. Locke discussed sign placement. He explained that there were two distinct areas for sign  
67 placement, private property and public right-of-way (ROW). He stated that traffic and street signage  
68 were placed in ROW and generally, business signs would be placed on private property. He explained  
69 that in certain situations, there was not a lawn to put a sign in and using the sidewalk would require a  
70 different procedure and approval by the City Manager.

71 Mr. Castelli asked about billboards and Mr. Locke explained that billboards were considered off-site  
72 signs and that Dallas currently only had one. He pointed out that under this draft version of the sign  
73 code they would not be allowed. In answer to a question, Mr. Locke stated the current one could  
74 remain.

75 Mr. Swanson discussed the section of the code that allowed temporary signs. He stated the banners  
76 that hung across Main Street required permits from the City and ODOT. He explained that only real  
77 estate and political signs were allowed in residential neighborhoods (and exempt signs). Mr. Locke  
78 elaborated on the issue and stated that temporary signs presented a problem. He ascertained two  
79 schools of thought from other jurisdictions that the Commission would have to decide. He advised that  
80 one route required everyone to pay a permit fee, which was okay if there was staffing to do that. The  
81 other was to self-regulate where it was required to put the date at the bottom of the sign when it was  
82 hung and then it needed to come down after a certain amount of time. Ms. Kowash asked about how  
83 staff felt about adding permitting to the workload and suggested self-policing sounded friendlier.

84 Mr. Locke discussed permanent sign regulations and stated that the draft sign code used some of the  
85 same standards as ODOT; they had done the research and dealt with safety issues. He discussed some  
86 of the trade-offs and pointed out that the downtown central business district would be different than  
87 other commercial areas because they were different. Downtown would be geared to pedestrian and  
88 other commercial areas would be geared to vehicular traffic. Mr. Locke said that the professional sign  
89 makers wanted clarity as well.

90 Mr. Locke discussed some of the things that could not be regulated including number of political signs in  
91 a yard and the signs that were constitutionally protect under free speech. In answer to a question, Mr.  
92 Locke clarified advertising is not the same thing as free speech.

93 Mr. Swanson stated that the other parts of the sign code were working well. He talked about the garage  
94 sale sign system and explained that elected officials wanted uniformity and that was why that system  
95 was implemented. He summarized that staff enforced the community standard as mandated by the  
96 City officials and while staff would remain neutral in conversation about the community standards, he  
97 suggested the Commission not hesitate to make that part of the conversation.

98 Mr. Castelli stated that it was a great first draft and thanked staff for their work on it. He asked about  
99 the next steps for public involvement. Bob Wilson stated that he thought the draft was wonderful and a

100 great starting point and stated that the next step would be to get public input. Vice President David  
101 Shein asked about doing an open house. Denise Jones agreed that the draft sign code was great and  
102 appreciated that it would be included in the Development Code as well. She added that an open house  
103 would be a good way to address input from the public and asked about a theme for the downtown  
104 signage. Mr. Locke noted that clear information that explained why the change in code was happening  
105 with highlights of what was being changed would need to be prepared for the public participation  
106 portion of the process. He stated he would prepare a timeline and email to the Planning Commission.

107 Mr. Locke acknowledged Ms. Jones's question about the downtown signage and explained that the  
108 Urban Renewal District Advisory Committee (URDAC) and Board of Directors set up grant programs for  
109 signage, façade improvements, and painting and the City had only had one taker after the program was  
110 extended to the 600 block of Main Street. He explained the grant would pay for 75% of the  
111 improvements, and \$5,000 was set aside specifically for hanging signs. He stated that after reviewing  
112 photographs of "themed" and "un-themed" hanging signs, it was decided that using consistent, basic  
113 shapes and mounting hardware would bring about the desired look. He announced that the City would  
114 be putting a sign up on the Dallas Public Library.

115 Vice President David Shein asked if the Planning Commission wanted staff to do further research. He  
116 stated that he would like to know what issues other jurisdictions had encountered with their sign codes  
117 so we know what to look out for.

118 **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

119 There were none.

120 **STAFF COMMENTS**

121 Mr. Locke announced that an Oregon Planning Directors' Association would hold a Planning Commission  
122 training day in the spring on a Saturday. He stated that the Main Street Project should be completed by  
123 the middle of the next week.

124 The meeting adjourned at 8:14 p.m.

**APPROVED:**

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President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date