



**REQUEST** Text amendment to Sections 13.102 and 13.110 of the Zoning Ordinance.

**SUMMARY OF PETITION** The petition proposes to:  
 1) add a new definition for "historic signs" and modify the definition for "landmark signs";  
 2) create new regulations and designation criteria for historic sign designation;  
 3) modify the designation criteria for landmark signs; and  
 4) modify the designation procedure for landmark and historic signs.

**Petitioner** Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission  
**Agent/Representative** Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Department  
**Community Meeting** Meeting is not required.

**ZONING COMMITTEE ACTION** The Zoning Committee voted unanimously to recommend **APPROVAL** of this petition with the following modification:

1. Clarifying language added to the end of the first paragraph in Section 13.110(5): "Nonconforming signs considered for landmark or historic designation are not required to be located on historic or landmark designated properties. Designation of a sign is entirely separate from the regulations applicable to historically designated properties, landmarks, and historic districts."

**VOTE**

Motion/Second:	Lipton /Dodson
Yeas:	Dodson, Fallon, Firestone, Lipton, and Rosenburgh
Nays:	None
Absent:	Phipps and Walker
Recused:	None

**ZONING COMMITTEE DISCUSSION** Staff reviewed the text amendment. The purpose of the amendment is to encourage the restoration and retention of nonconforming historically significant signs that have been removed from their original location, and are at least 25 years old. Staff stated that the text amendment is appropriate for approval.

A commissioner requested that two sentences be added to the end of the first paragraph in Section 13.110(5) to clarify that historic and landmark sign designation is not based on the designation status of the property. The proposed language, acceptable by staff, would read as follows: "Nonconforming signs considered for landmark or historic designation are not required to be located on historic or landmark designated properties. Designation of a sign is entirely separate from the regulations applicable to historically designated properties, landmarks, and historic districts." The Zoning Committee was agreeable to this addition.

**STATEMENT OF CONSISTENCY** This petition is found to be consistent with adopted policies and to be reasonable and in the public interest, by a unanimous vote of the Zoning Committee (motion by Commissioner Lipton seconded by Commissioner Dodson).

**STAFF OPINION**

Staff agrees with the recommendation of the Zoning Committee.

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**FINAL STAFF ANALYSIS**

(Pre-Hearing Analysis online at [www.rezoning.org](http://www.rezoning.org))

**PLANNING STAFF REVIEW****• Background**

- Section 13.102 defines a landmark sign as an existing on-premise sign which exhibits unique characteristics, that enhances the streetscape or identity of a neighborhood and as such contributes to the historical or cultural character of the streetscape or the community at large.
- Section 13.110 explains that changes to the sign regulations in 1988 resulted in the creation of many nonconforming signs that were subject to an eight-year amortization period.
- In order to preserve signs with special significance, a text amendment was adopted on February 19, 1996 which allowed existing on-premise signs to be designated as landmark signs under certain criteria. Applications for landmark sign designation were allowed only for a one year time frame between February 1996 and February 1997. After February 1997, a variance has been required to designate a landmark sign.

**• Proposed Request Details**

The site plan accompanying this petition contains the following provisions:

- Adds a new definition for "historic sign" and modifies the "landmark sign" definition:
  - Historic sign: An existing, nonconforming, historically significant sign that contributes to the historical or cultural character of the community at large which has been removed from its original location within Mecklenburg County and is to be reused and relocated to a different location on its original site or relocated to another location within the community.
  - Landmark sign: An existing, nonconforming, on-premise sign, which exhibits unique characteristics, enhances the streetscape or identity of a neighborhood and as such contributes to the historical or cultural character of the streetscape or the community at large.
- Adds and modifies the designation criteria for historic signs and landmark signs. To be designated as either a landmark or historic sign, the sign must:
  1. Be in continuous existence at the present location for at least 25 years to be designated as a landmark sign, or for a historic sign, the sign must be at least 25 years old;
  2. Meet a minimum number of designation criteria to qualify as either a historic sign or a landmark sign;
  3. Comply with the North Carolina State Building and Electrical Codes; and
  4. Be structurally safe or capable of being made so without substantially altering its historical significance.
- Modifies the designation procedure for landmark signs:
  1. Adds historic signs to the designation procedure.
  2. Adds a new provision that only the property owner of a parcel where a proposed landmark sign is located, or the owner of the site where a proposed historic sign is to be relocated, may apply for designation of an existing sign.

Nothing prohibits the owner(s) of a designated landmark or historic sign from removing the sign.

**• Public Plans and Policies**

- The petition is consistent with adopted policies.

**• STAFF RECOMMENDATION (Updated)**

- Staff agrees with the recommendation of the Zoning Committee.

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**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS** (see full department reports online)

- **Charlotte Area Transit System:** No issues.
- **Charlotte Department of Neighborhood & Business Services:** No issues.
- **Charlotte Department of Transportation:** No issues.

- **Charlotte Fire Department:** No issues.
  - **Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools:** Not applicable.
  - **Charlotte-Mecklenburg Storm Water Services:** No issues.
  - **Mecklenburg County Land Use and Environmental Services Agency:** No issues.
  - **Mecklenburg County Parks and Recreation:** No comments received.
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**ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE SITE DESIGN** (see full department reports online)

- **Site Design:** There is no site plan associated with this text amendment.
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**OUTSTANDING ISSUES**

- No issues.
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**Attachments Online at [www.rezoning.org](http://www.rezoning.org)**

- Charlotte Department of Neighborhood & Business Services Review
- Charlotte Department of Transportation Review
- Charlotte Fire Department Review
- Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Review
- Charlotte-Mecklenburg Storm Water Services Review
- Mecklenburg County Land Use and Environmental Services Agency Review
- Application
- Pre-Hearing Staff Analysis

**Planner:** Sandra Montgomery (704) 336-5722