

REQUEST	Text amendment to Section 13.110 of the Zoning Ordinance
SUMMARY OF PETITION	The petition proposes to create special regulations for detached business identification signs impacted by government sponsored transportation projects.
PETITIONER AGENT/REPRESENTATIVE	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Department Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Department
COMMUNITY MEETING	Meeting is not required.
STATEMENT OF CONSISTENCY	This petition is found to be consistent with adopted policies based on information from the staff analysis and the public hearing; therefore to be reasonable and in the public interest by a 6-0 vote of the Zoning Committee (motion by Commissioner Firestone seconded by Commissioner Eschert).

ZONING COMMITTEE ACTION	The Zoning Committee voted 6-0 to recommend APPROVAL of this petition with the following modification: 1. Add a new subsection (10) to Section 13.110(8)(d)(i) that reads "Consolidation of multiple individual signs."
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VOTE	Motion/Second: Labovitz/Firestone
	Yeas: Allen, Dodson, Firestone, Labovitz, Low and Eschert
	Nays: None
	Absent: Ryan and Walker
	Recused: None

ZONING COMMITTEE DISCUSSION	<p>Staff provided a summary of the text amendment. A question was asked about consolidating relocated signs into one sign, much like is done for major businesses along interstates, to reduce the clutter of multiple signs. Staff responded that this can be added as one of the considerations the Planning Director, or designee, reviews when approving or disapproving an applications for sign modification.</p> <p>A question was asked about new development projects consolidating signs. Staff responded that developments, like shopping centers, can consolidate their signs now.</p> <p>A Commissioner asked if this text amendment impacted existing and new signs. Staff responded that it was only for existing businesses and signs. New development projects would have to meet the sign standards for the district.</p> <p>A question was asked about how many signs might be impacted along the 9.3 mile corridor of the Blue Line Extension? Staff responded that fewer than one hundred signs could be impacted.</p> <p>A Commissioner asked if CATS purchased any signs that were being enlarged when relocated. Staff responded that no, signs were not being enlarged. Staff reviewed the maximum size of signs permitted in various zoning districts.</p> <p>A question was asked about grandfathered signs and adding a sunset clause so that such signs are removed in the future. Staff responded</p>
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that redevelopment of a site would require adherence to the standards.

There was no further discussion.

STAFF OPINION

Staff agrees with the recommendation of the Zoning Committee.

FINAL STAFF ANALYSIS
(Pre-Hearing Analysis online at www.rezoning.org)

PLANNING STAFF REVIEW**• Background**

- Government sponsored transportation projects (such as public road improvement projects by NCDOT or CDOT, or CATS rapid transit projects) can have a number of unintended consequences for existing business identification signs located on properties that abut the project:
 - The acquisition of additional right-of-way for the project may include property on which an existing detached business identification sign is located and the sign will need to be relocated.
 - The public project may change the elevation of travel lanes from which a detached business sign is oriented, making it difficult to view.
 - The public project may add retaining walls or other features, resulting in impaired visibility of an existing detached business sign.
- In many cases, relocation of the detached sign to meet the existing standards is simple. In other cases, the options available to property owners are limited or non-existent. For example, if the location or type of the detached sign was limited by a conditional rezoning, that location or type of sign may no longer be visible. In other cases, the existing zoning classification may only allow monument signs that can no longer be seen due to the elevation of travel lanes.
- This text amendment will create flexible sign options for impacted properties.

• Proposed Request Details

The text amendment contains the following provisions:

- Creates special regulations for detached business identification signs when a government sponsored transportation project requires either the relocation of an existing detached business identification sign or impairs the visibility of an existing detached business identification sign to the adjacent travel lane.
- Adjustments to the detached sign location and standards may be requested for the following circumstances if the visibility of a sign is impaired as a result of the transportation project:
 - Relocation of business identification signs approved on a conditional site plan.
 - Conversion of ground-mounted or monument business identification signs to a pole sign.
 - Conversion may be requested even if the zoning district or conditional site plan does not allow pole signs.
 - Modifications to the maximum allowable height of a detached business identification sign.
 - Modifications may be requested even if the height is greater than that allowed in the zoning district or conditional site plan.
 - Modification to the allowed height will only be considered if the increase is ten feet or less above the maximum sign height permitted in Section 13.109(4)(a), based on the street classification of the adjacent street.
- Applications for relocation, conversion and modifications to existing detached business identification signs will be submitted to the Planning Department for review and approval by the Planning Director, or designee. Considerations in granting approval include, but are not limited to:
 - Need for relocation due to the government sponsored transportation project
 - Loss of visibility to the adjacent lane of travel
 - Impact of relocated utility lines

- Purpose and intent of sign restrictions on conditional site plan
 - Topographical changes due to the government sponsored transportation project
 - Unusual or unique circumstances
 - If the sign is proposed to be moved, has the distance between the existing and proposed location been minimized
 - If converting to a pole sign, has the requested increase in the sign height been minimized
 - If increasing the maximum sign height, has the increase in the proposed sign height been minimized
 - Consolidation of multiple individual signs.
 - All other sign standards of Chapter 13 and the zoning district in which the sign is located must be met.
 - A new sign permit is required for each sign approved.
 - **Public Plans and Policies**
 - The petition is consistent with adopted policies, provides regulatory flexibility and supports City sponsored capital improvement projects.
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DEPARTMENT COMMENTS (see full department reports online)

- **Charlotte Area Transit System:** No comments received.
 - **Charlotte Department of Neighborhood & Business Services:** No comments received.
 - **Transportation:** No comments received.
 - **Charlotte Fire Department:** No comments received.
 - **Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools:** Not applicable.
 - **Charlotte-Mecklenburg Storm Water Services:** No comments received.
 - **Mecklenburg County Land Use and Environmental Services Agency:** No comments received.
 - **Mecklenburg County Parks and Recreation Department:** 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

- Application
- Pre-Hearing Staff Analysis
- Text Amendment

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