

**MINUTES
CITY OF GLENDALE PLANNING COMMISSION WORKSHOP**

**COUNCIL CHAMBERS BUILDING
CONFERENCE ROOM B2
5850 WEST GLENDALE AVENUE
GLENDALE, ARIZONA 85301**

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2011
6:00 P.M.**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at approximately 6:00pm.

Commissioners Present: Chairperson Kolodziej (Yucca), Commissioner Petrone (Cholla), Commissioner Williams (Ocotillo), Commissioner Sherwood (Sahuaro), Commissioner Shaffer (Cactus) and Commissioner Larson (Mayoral)

City Staff Present: Tabitha Perry, Principal Planner, Horatio Skeete, Assistant City Manager, Jim Colson, Deputy City Manager (arrived at 6:10pm), Jon Froke, AICP, Planning Director, Deborah Robberson, Deputy City Attorney, Somone Johnson, City Manager's Office, Thomas Ritz, AICP, Senior Planner, and Diana Figueroa, Recording Secretary

Chairperson Kolodziej announced that Vice Chairperson Ray Spitzer (Barrel District) has submitted his resignation.

ITEM

Chairperson Kolodziej stated there is one item on the agenda. He called staff's presentation.

ZTA11-01: A request for the Planning Commission to initiate a Zoning Text Amendment to amend the Zoning Ordinance to provide for a new definition and a new section to enact zoning regulations to permit Digital Billboards along the Loop 101 in the Sports and Entertainment District. Staff contact: Thomas Ritz, AICP, Senior Planner (City-Wide).

Ms. Tabitha Perry, Principal Planner, introduced Mr. Horatio Skeete, Assistant City Manager, who provided background information and noted this topic is extremely important to the city and the community. He stated he wished to be part of the process this evening.

Mr. Jon Froke, AICP, Planning Director, stated staff has done much research over the summer to prepare for this topic. He began the presentation with regional background information. He indicated the regulation of billboards has been a regional concern for decades. He reviewed the focus of concerns with the first being to ensure the attractiveness of the freeway and expressway system. He said cities want to ensure that billboards do not negatively impact residential areas. Also, he said cities and the county responded by developing regulations that greatly restricted or completely banned new billboards along the region's freeway and expressway system. Mr. Froke added in order to protect residential areas; cities regulated the placement of billboards in relation to residential areas.

Mr. Froke said in 1993, the City Council approved a comprehensive update of the Zoning Ordinance which included billboard regulations. At this time, the ordinance did not address digital billboards as they were new to the industry. Digital billboards were reviewed on a case-by-case basis. He continued by stating that in 2001 the City adopted the Westgate PAD, which included a large number of outdoor buildings and digital signs. This was new to the City. In 2008, the City took steps to remove multiple billboards from the Grand Avenue Expressway. The following year, 2009, the City Council supported Park and Ride digital billboards on Glendale Avenue and the 101 Freeway. Mr. Froke said during that same year, urban billboards at 51st and Olive Avenues were removed from Olive Marketplace.

Mr. Froke continued by stating on June 2 of this year, Zoning Ordinance Update ZTA09-01 was recommended for approval except for the Freeway Billboard Signs section which was continued to the August 4, 2011, Planning Commission Workshop. He said a section of ZTA09-01, the Freeway Billboard Sign section, was continued to the October 6, 2011, Planning Commission Workshop. Mr. Froke said subsequently, the Freeway Billboard Sign section was withdrawn by the City.

Mr. Thomas Ritz, AICP, Senior Planner, stated staff is eager to receive the Commission's input on standards and regulations for digital billboards. He stated staff is looking for input on location, the height, size, and separation requirements, display restrictions, and operation and safety requirements, and any other items the need to be discussed or defined. Mr. Ritz said the focus is on possible digital billboard standards and will not necessarily apply to traditional billboards.

Mr. Ritz displayed a map indicating possible locations. He said digital billboards are permitted in the Sports and Entertainment District. He added digital billboards are not permitted on the Loop 101 between Bell Road and 51st Avenue. Also, digital billboards are not permitted on the Grand Avenue Expressway, Northern Parkway, or the Loop 303.

Commissioner Petrone stated he is very optimistic and appreciates the information staff has provided and the extension research that has taken place.

Commissioner Larson stated the City has previously agreed not to erect any more billboards. He questioned why the City has changed their position. Mr. Skeete stated the City had the chance to utilize the land at the Park and Ride Lot by installing digital billboards and accepted the opportunity. Mr. Skeete added in some instances a digital billboard is allowed to be erected when a certain number of old style billboards are removed.

Commissioner Larson questioned MAG's position. Mr. Skeete stated MAG is also considering and reviewing digital billboards.

Commissioner Shaffer asked approximately what is the income coming to the City. Mr. Skeete stated there is a ground rental of \$10,000 a month with a percentage of the advertising revenue coming to the City. Mr. Skeete added that the city receives 33% of the total revenue in excess of \$120,000. However, if the total revenue exceeds \$425,000, the City will receive 40%.

Commissioner Shaffer said he wishes not to see any more digital billboards in the City as he feels they degrade the City.

Commissioner Sherwood shared his recent experience in viewing the digital billboards located throughout the valley. He felt the digital billboards enhance areas and wishes not to see them excluded from Grand Avenue or the Loop 303.

Mr. Ritz continued by stating that parameters need to be established for digital billboards. He said some issues are the maximum height, the maximum square footage, the distance between digital billboards, the distance from residentially zoned property, and the distance from the Loop 101.

In addition, others parameters regarding digital billboard displays also need to be defined. Mr. Ritz said items such as the measuring the daytime luminance which is measured in nits, the automatic dimming based upon the ambient lighting conditions whether it is evening or the weather is overcast, the animation and video images, the frequency of the image changes, message sequencing which is the use of multiple digital billboards in a row to convey a message, and that the City require a black display in the event of malfunction.

Mr. Ritz noted another area where input is required relates to limiting the hours of operation, advertisements limited to single frames, and allowing the City the right to pre-empt advertisements for public safety emergencies such as Amber Alerts.

Mr. Ritz said the next step is that staff will return before the Commission at its workshop scheduled for November 3, 2011 with this item, and staff will conduct a neighborhood meeting on November 9, 2011, where staff will present this information to the public and take input from those in attendance.

At this time, Mr. Ritz said this item is scheduled for the City Council Workshop on November 15, 2011. City Council will be asked to consider this text amendment along with parts of the original Zoning Ordinance Update ZTA09-01.

On December 1, 2011, he said another Planning Commission Workshop will be held along with a public hearing.

Last, Mr. Ritz said the City Council will consider this item at their meeting on January 24, 2012.

Commissioner Shaffer stated he does like the idea of billboards being removed in order to allow one digital billboard to be erected.

Commissioner Larson questioned why Staff suggesting that digital billboards not be allowed in the C-3 zoning district. Mr. Froke explained much of the area within the City zoned C-3 is next to residential areas. Restricting digital billboards in the C-3 would keep them away from residential.

Commissioner Petrone liked the idea of being able to preempt messages in order to display emergency messages such as Amber Alerts. He stated he has concern with the 100,000 square foot development requirement.

Commissioner Larson requested examples of the heights so that he could gain a better perspective. He also requested clarification of PAD zoning. He also asked for information regarding the illumination or

the nits. He questioned why an early shut off time for the sign is recommended if the sign is not surrounded by residential. He thought 11pm was too early to turn the sign dark.

Commissioner Shaffer felt quarter mile between signs is acceptable, but half a mile would be preferred. As he stated previously, he likes the thought of a few signs being removed and one digital sign being erected. He appreciates the revenue the signs and their associate fees generate for the City. Last he said he does not like to see very high signs and feels the proposed height standard is too high.

Commissioner Williams prefers half a mile between signs. He added the fewer, the better.

Chairperson Kolodziej stated he was previously in favor of recommending approval of this text amendment. He stated the Sports and Entertainment District is appropriate for these signs, however, north of the freeway is also acceptable. He stated he appreciates staff's work on this item.

Commissioner Sherwood felt the proposal should include the entire Loop 101, Grand Avenue, and Northern Parkway. He would be in favor of increase the distance between signs from 660 feet to possibly 1,320 feet. Overall, he likes the proposal but asks that it be consistent throughout the City.

Chairperson Kolodziej also felt the entire Loop 101 should be included although he is unsure about Grand Avenue and the Northern Parkway.

Commissioner Larson stated he is in favor of establishing some type of renewal process in order to keep standards up to date.

Chairperson Kolodziej called for a motion.

Commissioner Shaffer MADE a MOTION to initiate ZTA11-01. Commissioner Petrone SECONDED the MOTION, which passed unanimously.

There were no further questions.

OTHER BUSINESS

Chairperson Kolodziej called for Other Business. There was none.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:58pm.

Respectfully submitted,


Diana Figueroa, Recording Secretary