

TEXT AMENDMENT

RZ09-07

Text Amendment to the Roswell Zoning Ordinance regarding changeable copy-board and changeable electronic variable message signs within the city.

Brad Townsend stated that this was another text amendment that was initiated by the mayor and city council. This relates to changeable copy board, changeable electronic variable message signs and changing signs. It also deals with LED signage as a light source. This item has been work shopped as well as discussed by committee in the mayor and city council. They are adding three new definitions: changeable copy board signs, changeable electronic variable message signs, and changing signs. They are providing that regular entities that hold regular performances would be allowed to have a changeable copy sign. That ground signs are permitted with the use of a convenience store with fuel pumps would be allowed to have changeable copy signs for the price of the fuel. Any ground sign under this section that is allowed a portion of the sign area to be allowed as a changeable copy sign and that the changeable copy shall only be the display of the time, temperature and date. They are including three prohibited signs that would be changeable electronic variable message signs unless the sign is used other than traffic management or the type of display of time, temperature and date. They are adding as a prohibited sign LED signs except if they are used for a sign that is completely covered and that they return by an acrylic or aluminum or a similar sign face. When it is covered it means that one is not seeing the light source of the sign. They are also including that LED signs shall be equipped with an automated dimming device to lower the intensity of the illumination of the sign at night.

Karen Geiger stated that Article 22, Section 22.16 E and F, she does not understand what the returns...does this make sense to someone who knows signs? It says the LED is behind acrylic, aluminum or similar sign face and returns in such a manner that the LED modules are not visible from the exterior of the sign.

Brad Townsend pointed out the side of a building, he showed the end of the sign, what one has is the face on the end is covered so that one cannot see the light source of the sign. If this was the front of the building the sign would be here and this would be an acrylic face across it. The return is the portion on the ends of the sign. That is what the reference is to the return on the ends. One does not see a light source covering the sign.

Geiger stated that she guessed her question is that someone who understands lighting and signs will know what this means because it doesn't make sense to the layperson. Brad Townsend stated that was correct. Geiger's next question is they say that it needs to have a dimming device so that the intensity is reduced. Are they not giving them any guidance about how much it is supposed to be reduced?

Brad Townsend stated that there is a section of the code that deals with illumination. The standard dimming device usually decreases it by 50 percent. That may be language that they want to include. Section 22.16 deals with illumination. Light from any illuminated sign shall not be of an intensity or brightness which will interfere with the peace, comfort, convenience and general welfare of the residents or occupants of the adjacent property. That is a caveat catch all that says okay, if I think it is too bright, director of planning go out there and tell him that it is too bright. It doesn't have a standard in there.

Susan Baur asked Brad Townsend if that was not just going to be determined by most judges as being arbitrary and get thrown right out of court? Brad Townsend stated that that would be for the city's legal department to determine.

Karen Geiger stated that if they added by 50 percent at the end of section F that would be perfectly feasible. Townsend stated that that would be perfectly feasible.

Susan Baur asked if there were any other questions for staff. Hearing none she asked if there was anyone from the public that would like to speak in favor of this text amendment. No one came forward. Baur asked if there was anyone from the public that would like to speak in opposition to this text amendment. No one came forward. Baur asked if there were any other questions.

Loren Conrad stated that under 22.18 that only applies to changeable copy board signs? He is having trouble here. Where are LED signs allowed? Brad Townsend

stated that LED signs are not allowed at all right now. So what they were including is they are only going to allow the LED as a light source. If a Subway moves into a retail establishment, what is happening with the industry is they are using LEDs because they use a lot less power and last a lot long. So they are becoming very efficient as the light source behind an acrylic Subway name. That is where the city is going to allow them. What they are not allowing is letters to be formed by LEDs. Conrad clarified that the sign on the bank at the corner of Holcomb Bridge Road and....where it has the streaming numbers on it? That is illegal anymore? Townsend stated that was correct. Conrad clarified that that kind of an electronic sign with changeable copy electronically is not going to be allowed. Townsend stated that it was not. Conrad stated that he does not buy that. That is a step backward in time. Townsend stated that the objective also is any....the Walgreen's at the corner of SR 9 and Mansell, milk for \$2.99, Coke for \$3. That changeable copy will no longer be allowed anymore either. Loren Conrad stated that he does not like it.

Susan Baur asked if there were any other questions for staff.

Mark Renier asked about the dimmer device. When does that dimmer go on, because obviously these are lit up only at night. Are they going to be dimmed from the get go? Brad Townsend stated that usually the photo-electric cell that is included on the sign is part of the way it is originally manufactured. Usually LED signs already include these as a standard photocell to them. The signs with the LED may be on all the time and the dimmer would dim it down 50 percent if that is the way that the Commission recommended the amendment to be included with that.

Susan Baur asked if there were any questions for staff? She thanked Brad Townsend and asked for discussion among the Commission members or a motion.

Loren Conrad stated that he would like to go on record that he thinks that some of these ordinance, especially one like this that eliminates current technology from being used to change the copy on a sign is ridiculous. He does not know why they are doing this.

Karen Geiger stated that she does not really have a problem with this because if one looks at places where people talk about how attractive things are, like Hilton Head, SC. The signs are a lot more restrictive than what Roswell has now. They don't use any technology there. They are not lit up, they are wooden signs they are not big. They are nicely set off the highway and Geiger thinks that the idea is to try and find some kind of middle ground for Roswell where it is not trying to look like a resort community but on the other hand, it is not having things look so overbuilt, over lighted up, over moving that one starts having things look aesthetically unsatisfactory and also create problems on major highways with all

sorts of distractions. She personally does not think that is a big problem. What they need to do is make sure that Roswell signage is uniform enough so that they do have a look, that Roswell has a look. And part of that look has always been fighting the bigger, more garish signs and lighting and so on.

Loren Conrad stated that he did not disagree with that. But he thinks just because the letters are produced by electrons rather than paper copy or plastic shouldn't make a difference.

Susan Baur called for a motion.

Motion

Karen Geiger made a motion that RZ09-07 the text amendment concerning changeable copy board, changeable electronic, variable message signs within the city be approved with one amendment.

Article 22.16 Section F be amended to add by 50 percent of capacity at the end of the sentence.

Cheryl Greenway seconded the motion.

The motion passed 4-2. Karen Geiger, Susan Baur, Sarah Winner and Cheryl Greenway voted in favor of the motion. Loren Conrad and Mark Renier voted in opposition to the motion. There were no abstentions.