

**VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE
REPORT FOR THE VILLAGE COUNCIL MEETING
JANUARY 19, 2010 AGENDA**

SUBJECT:	TYPE:	SUBMITTED BY:
Economic Development Corporation Sign Amendment	Resolution ✓ Ordinance Motion Discussion Only	Tom Dabareiner, AICP Community Development Director

SYNOPSIS

An ordinance has been prepared amending Chapter 28, Zoning Ordinance, Article XV, Signs. The amendment would allow properties in the B-3 zoning district with at least 260 feet of frontage and is at least 2.5 acres to have a monument sign that is 15 feet tall and 60 square feet.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

The Five Year Plan and Goals for 2008-2013 identified *Exceptional Municipal Government*. Supporting this goal is the objective *Top Quality Core Services Responsive to Current and Future Community and Citizen Needs*.

FISCAL IMPACT

N/A.

UPDATE & RECOMMENDATION

This item was discussed at the January 12, 2010 meeting. During that discussion, members of the Village Council requested a summary of sign ordinance variation requests and a summary of sign related PUD amendments. This information is summarized below:

Total Petitions	
Number of Petitions Approved	9
Full or Partial Denials	10
Total Number of Petitions	19
Sign Variation Petitions	
Number of Sign Variation Petitions Approved	5
Full or Partial Denials	10
Total Number of Sign Variation Petitions	15
PUD Amendment Petitions	
Number of PUD Amendment Petitions Approved	4
Full or Partial Denials	0
Total Number of PUD Amendment Petitions	4

In addition, members of the Village Council requested that staff compile a list of the 21 affected properties which have already constructed new, compliant signs. The summary table below indicates the location, business name and sign size of the 21 affected properties and whether the signs conform

under the current sign ordinance and whether the sign at the location conform under the proposed amendment.

Address	Business Name	Sign Size (sqft)	Sign Height (feet)	Conforming?	Conforming Under Proposal?
3300 Finley	Fry's Electronics	90	15	No	No
2000 Butterfield	Home Depot	200	20	No	No
2920 Finley	Kohl's	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2800 Finley	West Suburban Bank	51	20	No	No
3131 Finley	Finley Grill Room	33	9	Yes	Yes
3200 Finley	X-Sport Fitness	90	15	Yes (by variation)	Yes (by variation)
2900 Highland	Fmr Circuit City	153	20	No	No
1021 Butterfield	Fmr Home Depot Expo	65	20	No	No
1432 Butterfield	Best Buy	250	20	No	No
1434 Butterfield	Toys R Us	92	17	No	No
1150 Ogden	Jewel (Ogden)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Main / 63rd	Jewel (63rd)	48	15	No	No, a pole sign
1940 Ogden	Wannemaker's	212	15	No	No
3150 Ogden	Extended Stay America	190	18	No	No
2300 Ogden	Bill Kay GM	126	20	No	No
1601 Ogden	Bill Kay Nissan	36	10	Yes	Yes
2311 Ogden	Ziegler	36	10	Yes	Yes
2424 Ogden	Max Madsen	36	10 & 13	Yes (by variation)	Yes

Finally, members of the Village Council requested that staff summarize the customer service/facilitation approach for gaining compliance from property owners prior to the sign ordinance compliance date of May, 2012. In 2010 Village staff will create and distribute information to property owners via postal mail. In addition, staff will work with the Economic Development Commission and the Chamber of Commerce to publicize the information. Staff will also utilize local media and the Village website in an effort to publicize the information.

The Plan Commission recommended approval of the text amendment with modifications as reflected in the attached ordinance. Staff recommends denial of the petition on the January 19, 2010 active agenda; however, staff does not object if the approval is granted per the Plan Commission's recommendation.

BACKGROUND

The Downers Grove Economic Development Corporation (EDC) is requesting a text amendment to the Zoning Ordinance. Specifically, the EDC proposes modifying the sign regulations as they relate to commercial properties that are larger than 2.5 acres and have frontage of more than 260 feet along a public street. The sign ordinance permits all properties to have at least one monument sign. The ordinance provides a hierarchy for size and height of monument signs depending on the width of the lot. Shopping centers with more than 500 feet of frontage have the ability to install the largest signs. The current regulations are summarized in the table below:

Table 1: Existing sign regulations for commercial properties

Frontage	Maximum Height	Maximum Size	Maximum Total Sign Area
<100 feet	8 feet	24 square feet	300 square feet
>100 feet	10 feet	36 square feet	300 square feet
>500 feet (shopping center only)	15 feet	60 square feet	No Maximum (dependent on # of tenants)

The EDC submitted the petition to fill a gap in the Village’s standards for monument signs. The gap, as identified by the EDC, affects larger, single-user properties which are at least 2.5 acres with a frontage of at least 260 feet. The amendment would allow all commercial properties that meet these minimum size standards to have a free-standing sign which is 15 feet tall and 60 square feet. Commercial properties that are not 2.5 acres and at least one frontage of at least 260 feet would not be affected by this change. The EDC’s petition would not increase the total sign size for subject properties. The total maximum sign area would remain 300 square feet, including monument, wall and awning signs, for all single-user properties.

The Plan Commission reviewed the petition at their November 2, 2009 meeting. The Plan Commission discussed the request and concurred that there is a gap in the sign ordinance. The Commission found that the EDC’s petition generally filled the gap. However, the Commission recommended modifying the language to ensure the original intent and goals of the sign ordinance were maintained. As such, the two modifications were recommended: (1) limit the scope of the amendment to the B-3 zoning district, and (2) increase the side yard setback for the larger signs from 25 feet to 100 feet.

A summary table of the current regulations, the EDC’s proposal and the Plan Commission’s proposal is provided below:

Table 2: Summary of existing and proposed regulations

	Frontage	Maximum Height	Maximum Size	Maximum Total Sign Area
<i>Existing Ordinance</i>	<100 feet	8 feet	24 square feet	300 square feet
	>100 feet	10 feet	36 square feet	300 square feet
	>500 feet (shopping center only)	15 feet	60 square feet	No Maximum (dependent on # of tenants)
<i>EDC Proposal</i>	260-500 feet and 2.5 acres	15 feet	60 square feet	300 square feet
<i>Plan Commission Recommendation</i>	260-500 feet and 2.5 acres in B-3 District only	15 feet	60 square feet	300 square feet

Staff Findings

As background information for the Village Council, two substantive amendments have been proposed for the sign ordinance since its adoption in 2005. One amendment, drafted by Village staff, proposed larger signs for users along the Butterfield Road-Finley Road corridor and the other, presented by School District 99, proposed permitting electronic message signs for institutional properties. Both amendments were recommended for approval by the Plan Commission. Ultimately, these amendments were denied by the Village Council. As such, staff recommended denial to the Plan Commission as

there has been no apparent direction to amend the sign ordinance to date.

Staff reviewed the petition to determine the impact on the Village's commercial corridors. Staff agrees that the proposed petition helps to fill a gap in the sign ordinance requirements as they relate to large, single-user retail properties. Most of these properties already have signs that exceed the proposed height of 15 feet and size of 60 square feet. The businesses would still need to reduce their overall signage to come into compliance with requirements of the sign ordinance.

Village staff believes the additional size and height may be desirable for larger retail properties and would help to fill the gap in the ordinance. Larger retail properties tend to be located along busy arterial streets and have buildings that are setback further from the street with multiple access points. Larger signs tend to be more visible, provided there is not visual pollution from other signs, utility poles and street lights. Setbacks for signs can help alleviate this issue.

Also, staff believes larger, taller signs for larger properties may improve their visibility and help drivers identify the business and proper driveway earlier, which may reduce rear-end collisions. Shopping centers were originally given additional signage to account for their unique characteristics (e.g. many tenants, large properties, multiple access points and large setbacks from the road). Many large-scale retailers share some of these characteristics – specifically large setbacks and multiple points of access.

Plan Commission Review and Recommendation

As noted above, the Plan Commission considered the petition at its November 2, 2009, meeting and recommended approval a modified version of the request with a vote of 5-1. The Commission noted that the amendment was beneficial to larger properties in the B-3 zoning district and would fill an apparent gap in the existing sign code. However, the Plan Commission recommended two modifications: the first would limit the larger signs to properties in the B-3 zoning district. This modification is important as it limits the number of affected properties to 21. The EDC's petition would open the amendment up to most of the properties within the Village's office and industrial parks. The Plan Commission did not wish to have the sign amendment apply to that many properties and in locations which do not require the same benefit afforded by larger signs.

The second modification recommended by the Plan Commission was to increase the side yard setback from 25 feet to 100 feet. By increasing the side yard setbacks, the Commission believes there is less chance of creating sign clutter throughout the commercial corridors. Staff believes both modifications are important to maintain the goals and intent of the original sign ordinance amendments.

The dissenting Plan Commission member indicated concerns about making a general change to the sign ordinance which may not be appropriate given the goals of the Village's master corridor plan for Ogden Avenue. The member also indicated that where appropriate, the variation process may be an acceptable course of action.

Staff recommended denial of the petition but agrees that a gap in the sign ordinance could be filled by an amended version of the EDC proposed text amendment. Staff does not object to the Plan Commission recommendation.

ATTACHMENTS

Ordinance

Monument Signs

ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SIGNAGE PROVISIONS

BE IT ORDAINED by the Village Council of the Village of Downers Grove in DuPage County, Illinois, as follows: (Additions are indicated by **shading/underline**; deletions by ~~strikeout~~):

Section 1. That Section 28.1502.01 is hereby amended to read as follows:

28.1502.01 Monument Signs and Shingle Signs.

Unless otherwise specifically provided herein, each zoning lot is allowed either one monument sign or one shingle sign.

A. Monument Signs.

(1) Monument Signs may have signage on a maximum of two (2) sides only and shall comply with the following height and area limitations based on the indicated zoning lot widths **and lot size requirements**:

Zoning Lot Widths (ft.) and lot size	< 100 (ft.) All lot sizes	1001+259 (ft.) All lot sizes	260+ (ft.) And lot size of at least 2.5 acres for properties in the B-3 district only
Height (ft.)	8	10	<u>15</u>
Area (SF per side)	24	36	<u>60</u>

(2) Any monument sign fronting a street shall be setback ten (10) feet. No monument sign shall be located closer than twenty-five (25) feet from the lot line of any adjacent zoning lot. **Monument signs that are greater than ten (10) feet in height and greater than thirty-six (36) square feet shall be setback at least one hundred (100) feet from the lot line of any adjacent zoning lot.**

(3) Monument signs shall be subject to setback and vision safety requirements of Section 28-1102.

(4) Monument signs must contain the numerical street address of the property which shall be no less than eight (8) inches and no more than ten (10) inches in height. Such sign copy shall be excluded from the total sign surface area allowed.

(5) Zoning lots with more than one street frontage shall be allowed two (2) monument signs one on each street frontage of the same size placed no closer together than one hundred (100) feet.

(6) Shopping Centers:

a. Shopping centers with multi-tenants and a minimum of five hundred (500) linear feet of frontage along the public roadway may have two (2) monument signs of the same size placed no closer together than two hundred (200) feet. The maximum height shall be fifteen (15) feet with a maximum area of sixty (60) square feet. Such signs shall contain the names of more than one tenant. The maximum height shall be fifteen (15) feet with a maximum area of sixty (60) square feet. Each tenant's panel sign shall not be counted toward allowable sign surface area.

b. Shopping centers having between one hundred (100) and five hundred (500) linear feet of frontage along the roadway shall be allowed only one (1) monument sign with a maximum height of ten (10) feet and a maximum area of thirty-six (36) square feet. Such signs shall contain the names of more than one tenant. Each tenant's panel sign shall not be counted toward allowable sign surface area.

c. Shopping centers with less than one hundred (100) linear feet of frontage along the roadway shall be allowed one (1) monument sign with a maximum height of eight (8) feet and a maximum area of twenty-four (24) feet. Such signs shall contain the names of more than one tenant. Each tenant's panel sign shall not be counted toward allowable sign surface area.

Monument Signs

(7) Tollway Corridor: For properties that are directly adjacent to the I-88 and/or I-355 corridor, the regulations of this Section 28-1500, et seq. shall apply with the following exceptions:

a. In addition to the signage allowed by this Section 28-1502.01, one (1) additional monument sign shall be allowed for properties with a minimum tollway frontage of one hundred (100) feet or one hundred (100) feet of frontage on an IDOT right-of-way which fronts the tollway.

b. Such monument sign shall be placed adjacent to the tollway.

c. Such monument sign may not exceed two hundred twenty-five (225) square feet in sign surface area and shall not exceed twenty (20) feet in height.

d. Such monument sign shall be placed at least thirty (30) feet away from an existing tollway sign.

e. Such monument sign shall not be counted toward allowable sign surface area.

B. Shingle Signs.

(1) Shingle signs shall have a maximum of ten (10) square feet per side with a maximum height of seven feet (7'). The sign can be no closer to any side lot line than eight feet (8') there shall be no front yard setback.

Section 2. That all ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict with the provisions of this ordinance are hereby repealed.

Section 3. That this ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage and publication in the manner provided by law.

Mayor

Passed:

Published:

Attest: _____
Village Clerk