

AGENDA ITEM: VI-A

DATE: March 2, 2011

ACTION: APPROVED

CITY OF MORRO BAY
PLANNING COMMISSION
SYNOPSIS MINUTES

(Complete audio- and videotapes of this meeting are available from the City upon request)

Veteran's Memorial Building
Regular Meeting, 6:00 p.m.

209 Surf Street, Morro Bay
February 16, 2011

Chairperson Rick Grantham

Vice-Chairperson John Diodati
Commissioner Paul Nagy

Commissioner Jamie Irons
Commissioner John Solu

Rob Livick, Secretary

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chairperson Grantham called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Gerald Bednorz of Beach House Bistro led the pledge.

III. ROLL CALL

Chairperson Grantham took roll and noted that Commissioner Diodati is absent but all other Commissioners are present.

Staff Present: Rob Livick, Kathleen Wold, and Sierra Davis.

IV. ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA

Irons moved to accept the Agenda and Solu seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously (4-0).

V. DIRECTOR'S REPORT/WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

Rob Livick briefed the Commission on action taken by the City Council at the February 8th meeting and for the upcoming February 22nd City Council meeting.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairperson Grantham opened the Public Comment period.

- Liz Bednorz, business owner of Morro Bay spoke about the blue directional City of Morro Bay signs requesting they be re-aligned to point towards North Morro Bay business establishments.
- Ken Vesterfeldt, resident of Morro Bay announced on April 16th from 8-5pm there will be an emergency vehicle car show for the first time. Also, the annual Car show has almost 400 entries

already. Mr. Vesterfeldt also spoke against having A-frame signs or imposing a time limit for businesses.

Hearing no further comment, Chairperson Grantham closed Public Comment period.

VII. CONSENT CALENDAR

A. Approval of minutes from the meeting on February 7, 2011.

MOTION: Irons moved the Planning Commission approve the minutes. Nagy seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously (4-0).

VIII. PRESENTATIONS – None

IX. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS – None

X. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. **Site Location:** Citywide

Applicant: City of Morro Bay

Request: The City of Morro Bay is holding a public workshop on the proposed Sign Ordinance Amendment (Amendment #AO0-010 City-Wide Text Amendment). The purpose of the workshop is to solicit input from the public on the Draft Sign Ordinance. The purpose of this amendment will be to update the City's current sign regulations to provide regulations that result in an information system that expresses the character and environment of the City of Morro Bay and its community. The new sign regulations will recognize the importance of business activity to the economic vitality of the City. Specifically, these regulations are intended to:

A. Encourage communications which aid orientation and identify businesses and activities.

B. Preserve and enhance the aesthetic character of the City.

C. Apply basic principles of good design and sensitivity to community appearance to signage.

D. Restrict signs that overload the public's capacity to receive information, violate privacy or which increase the probability of accidents by distracting driver's attention or obstructing a driver's vision.

Recommended CEQA Determination: No further environmental review necessary beyond that previously approved for the 2005 Zoning Ordinance Update.

Staff Recommendation: Receive public input on Draft Sign Ordinance.

Staff Contact: Kathleen Wold, Planning Manager (805) 772-6211

Chairperson Grantham opened the Public Comment period:

- Robert Hide, resident of Morro Bay, spoke against A-frame signs and stressed the importance of enforcing the sign ordinance.
- Joe Yukich, business owner of Morro Bay, stressed better public noticing of meeting to allow more citizen involvement.
- Craig Schmidt, CEO of the Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce, explained to the Commission components of a directional pole sign program used in Healdsburg as an alternate approach to A-frame signs.

- Susan Stewart, resident and business owner of Morro Bay stressed importance of considering location of sidewalk signs and encouraged the Commission to consider allowing fin signs.
- Janice Peters, resident of Morro Bay spoke regarding sandwich board signs and stated that in the past, they were only allowed for certain business locations and encouraged uniformity in quality, attractiveness, and stability.
- Gerald Bednorz, business owner of Morro Bay, stressed the importance of considering the proximity of sidewalk, the location of business and safety regarding A-frame signs and also feather signs and encouraged the Commission to be business friendly.

Wold presented the staff report and Livick provided additional clarifying information regarding the current encroachment permit fee of \$118, the need for minimum sidewalk width and alternate sign styles.

Commissioners discussed with staff A-frame signs versus projecting pub signs. Irons suggested allowing businesses a choice between a 24 inch projecting pub sign or an A frame sign as a way to balance business needs but not obstruct pedestrian walkways.

Commissioners had discussion on A-frame signs including:

- Waiving the permit fee until June 2012 at which time the fee would be reduced from \$118 to \$40.
- Maintain a four foot right of way,
- Limiting hours of operation to during business hours only
- Include City on their insurance binder
- Allow one A-frame per business or per frontage.

Commissioners had discussion on feather and banner signs including:

- One per business or one per frontage
- Whether to limit hours of operation or limit number of consecutive days to display signs
- Differences between feather and banner signs and the proper placement of each
- Difference between temporary and permanent signs

Commissioners also discussed with staff the City of Atascadero's sign program as an example as well as the City of Healdsburg's directional pole sign program and the applicability of these programs to the City of Morro Bay.

Wold clarified for Commission the three categories of signs: permanent, temporary and intermittent.

Commissioners discussed the unique signage needs of North Morro Bay compared to the Embarcadero area businesses.

Chairperson Grantham called for a 5 minutes recess.

Grantham re-opened the Public Comment period to allow additional public input after staff report.

- Liz Bednorz, business owner of Morro Bay, spoke in favor of recognizing that each section of town has unique signage needs.
- Mollie Beaumont, business owner of Morro Bay, spoke in favor of feather flags.

- Susan Stewart of Morro Bay noted that the City is different than Atascadero and has its own unique needs comparing downtown to North Morro Bay.
- Janice Peters of Morro Bay spoke in favor of having different sign needs for different parts of town and to make regulations easy to enforce.
- Joe Yukich of Morro Bay spoke in favor of human signs.
- Craig Schmidt, CEO of the Chamber of Commerce, stated that the directional sign program used by the City of Healdsburg is geared toward pedestrians.
- Alex Hardy, business owner of Morro Bay, spoke in favor of feather flags and help drivers notice businesses.

Hearing no further comment, Chairperson Grantham closed public comment period.

Commissioners continued discussion on the merits of creating different sign requirements for different areas of town versus one sign requirement and whether to allow owners the choice between A-frame or feather signs.

Staff clarified that A-frame, feather, or banner signs are considered an exception to the sign ordinance and not used in calculating allowable sign square footage which is only for permanent sign calculations.

Commissioners agreed the \$40 sign fee would be a one-time fee and not an annual fee.

MOTION: Irons moved the Planning Commission forward the draft sign ordinance with Attachment E for the City of Atascadero A-frame sign ordinance that would include the following:

- One A-frame sign per business per frontage during business hours only,
- A-frame or feather sign to be allowed,
- Fee shall be waived until June 2012 for the A-frame signs whereby it would be set at \$40 as a one time permit fee,
- Allow for provisions for directional pole signage as brought forward by Mr. Schmidt of the Chamber of Commerce to include in this ordinance,
- To include corrections of the projection signs section from 12 to 24 inches and
- Include vacation rentals under the Real Estate section.

Solu seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously (4-0).

XI. OLD BUSINESS

A. Current Planning Processing List/Advanced Work Program

Commissioners reviewed the work program.

XII. NEW BUSINESS - None

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Chairperson Grantham adjourned the meeting at 8:10p.m. to the next regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting at the Veterans Hall, 209 Surf Street, on Wednesday, March 2nd, 2011 at 6:00 p.m.

Rick Grantham, Chairperson

ATTEST:

Rob Livick, Secretary