

AGENDA ITEM: A- 1

DATE: August 21, 2013

ACTION: APPROVED

SYNOPSIS MINUTES – MORRO BAY PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING – JULY 17, 2013
VETERANS MEMORIAL HALL – 6:00 P.M.

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

PRESENT:	Rick Grantham	Chairperson
	John Solu	Vice-Chairperson
	John Fennacy	Commissioner
	Michael Lucas	Commissioner
	Robert Tefft	Commissioner
STAFF:	Rob Livick	Public Services Department
	Kathleen Wold	Planning Manager
	Cindy Jacinth	Associate Planner
	Erik Berg-Johansen	Planning Intern

ESTABLISH QUORUM AND CALL TO ORDER
MOMENT OF SILENCE / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
PLANNING COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairperson Grantham opened Public Comment period.

Stan Trapp, Morro Bay business owner, asked staff to clarify whether it is the City's intention to eliminate window signs that advertise products or window signs that do not display a business name. He expressed concern that the proposed sign ordinance may negatively affect the character of businesses.

Chairperson Grantham closed Public Comment period.

Berg-Johansen addressed Trapp's comment. He stated the proposed ordinance prohibits advertising *brand names* in windows, but it does not prohibit businesses from advertising the *type* of business.

PRESENTATIONS – None.

Unless an item is pulled for separate action by the Planning Commission, the following actions are approved without discussion.

SYNOPSIS MINUTES – MORRO BAY PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING – JULY 17, 2013

CONSENT CALENDAR

None.

A. PUBLIC HEARINGS

B-1 Public hearing continued from May 15, 2013.

Case No.: Coastal Development Permit #CP0-246

Site Location: 360 Cerrito in the R-1 zoning district

Proposal: Appeal of Administrative Coastal Development Permit #CP0-246 approval for the demolition of an existing 1,183 square foot single-family residence and removal of two trees, and the subsequent construction of a 2,155 square foot single-family residence and an associated 648 square foot garage. This site is located outside of the appeals jurisdiction of the California Coastal Commission.

CEQA Determination: Categorically exempt, Class 1 and Class 3

Staff Recommendation: Continue the Public Hearing to August 7, 2013 to allow additional time for the applicant to comply with the Commission's previous direction.

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

Commissioner Tefft recused himself from the discussion as he owns property within 500 feet of the subject site.

Chairperson Grantham opened Public Comment period.

Berta Parish, resident of Morro Bay, asked the Commission to confirm the date of the appeal hearing for this item.

Chairperson Grantham closed Public Comment period.

Staff confirmed with the Commission there will be a quorum for a Planning Commission meeting on August 21, 2013.

MOTION: Chairperson Grantham moved to continue Coastal Development Permit #CP0-246 to the August 21, 2013 Planning Commission meeting. Any plans submitted for that meeting are to reflect the Volbrecht land survey that was previously approved by the Court and the Commission.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Solu and the motion passed unanimously. (4-0).

Commissioner Tefft returned for discussion.

B-2 Public hearing continued from July 3, 2013.

Case No.: Zoning Text Amendment #A00-015 (continued originally from June 20, 2012 meeting)

Site Location: Citywide

Proposal: The City of Morro Bay is proposing a Municipal Code Amendment modifying Section 17.68 "Signs." Recommendations from the previous sign workshops, sign survey

SYNOPSIS MINUTES – MORRO BAY PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING – JULY 17, 2013

results, previous work for the 2004 Planning Commission report and direction from City Council (2012) will be presented at the June 19, 2013 meeting. The Planning Commission will review these items, take public testimony and provide direction to staff.
CEQA Determination: To be determined.

Staff Recommendation: Review draft ordinance, take public testimony, and provide direction to staff.

Staff Contact: Erik Berg-Johansen, Planning Intern (805) 772-6291

Berg-Johansen presented the staff report, with specific attention to the Quintana District.

Chairperson Grantham opened Public Comment period.

Amber Badertscher, Morro Bay business owner, explained how it is difficult for the public to see her business from the street. She would like to see fair representation for small business and for the Quintana District.

John Weiss, Morro Bay business owner, expressed concern that neon “Open” signs would be not be allowed to be turned on during daylight hours under the proposed ordinance. He stated he would like to know if there is an exception for these signs. He also stated he is concerned about how public notices (e.g. for community events) in windows would be regulated as many business owners post window signs of this kind. Weiss hopes there is an appeal process for business owners to recommend adjustments to the proposed ordinance.

Chairperson Grantham closed Public Comment period.

Chairperson Grantham discussed the existing condition of signs along Quintana. He noted there are only a few signs north of the traffic circle that are disproportionate to the building. He also stated he is sympathetic to Weiss’s comment regarding “Open” signs and agreed they should be illuminated during business hours. Lastly, he acknowledged Badertscher’s comment regarding signage for small businesses and stated the Commission will develop a fair approach to advertising businesses that are not visible from the street.

Commissioner Fennacy asked staff to clarify how “Open” signs would be treated under the proposed ordinance. Berg-Johansen stated that only illuminated signs *larger than 10 square feet in area* shall not be turned on during the day, indicating that conventional neon “Open” signs *would* be allowed to be turned on during the day.

Commissioner Fennacy asked staff if businesses would still be able to apply for Sign Exception permits. Wold clarified the purpose of the ordinance update is to make the sign ordinance fair for all types of businesses and easy for the public to understand. Sign Exception permits should be reserved only for properties that are unique or different. Fennacy supported Wold’s explanation and noted how important signage is along Quintana.

Commissioner Fennacy asked staff to clarify whether the proposed ordinance will reflect the discussion from the previous meeting regarding allowing equal façade percentages on all sides of a building. Livick stated staff may have missed this comment as the minutes were not yet

SYNOPSIS MINUTES – MORRO BAY PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING – JULY 17, 2013

completed from the July 3, 2013 meeting. He stated those comments will be incorporated when the minutes become available.

Commissioner Fennacy would like to see façade percentages increased in the Quintana District and consistent with the other districts. He stated businesses should be allowed to install equal amounts of signage on primary *and* secondary facades.

Commissioner Lucas stated he agreed with Fennacy's comments. Lucas also suggested staff consider the distance of the building from the street when determining appropriate façade percentages.

Commissioner Lucas asked staff how the Master Sign Program (MSP) would be applied in this zone. Wold stated there are many small businesses in shopping centers along Quintana that cannot afford to install larger pole or monument signs, so although the ordinance allows them in their zone, they are too cost prohibitive. Lucas and Wold agreed there needs to be more flexibility in the proposed ordinance so that it is easier for smaller businesses to be appropriately advertised.

Commissioner Tefft stated he agreed with Wold's statement regarding providing more flexibility in the proposed ordinance. He stated monument signs may be more effective than increasing façade percentages.

Commissioner Tefft clarified with staff that taller pole signs are prohibited within 200 feet of the right-of-way of Highway 1. He also asked staff to review the criteria for pole signs in the proposed ordinance and re-examine what is appropriate in the Quintana District.

Wold further explained the proposed ordinance could be revised to require that architectural or monument signs shall be placed a certain number of feet away from each other in order to avoid clutter.

Tefft suggested allowing one monument sign per entryway for shopping centers, especially for shopping centers with varying topography.

Commissioner Solu suggested creating a separate section in the proposed ordinance for shopping centers, as has been done for lodging establishments.

Commissioner Solu asked staff to clarify how the allowable area for surface signs is calculated under the existing ordinance. Staff clarified one square foot of signage is allowed per linear foot of frontage when more than one sign proposed.

Commissioner Fennacy made the following comments:

- He stated he favors the idea of allowing one monument sign per entry to a shopping center but stated he is concerned about the associated cost. He stated something "creative" could be done about this.
- He suggested utilizing rights-of-way or city properties for additional signage for business owners in the north Quintana area.
- He stated he would like to increase façade percentages to 20 percent for all sides.

SYNOPSIS MINUTES – MORRO BAY PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING – JULY 17, 2013

- He recommends dividing architectural and monument signs into separate categories.

Wold clarified with Fennacy that he would like to allow only the primary and secondary facades 20 percent. Fennacy stated more than one architectural sign should be allowed per entry to shopping centers.

Commissioner Fennacy clarified with staff that 20 percent of façade area may be too excessive, and that 15 percent or less would be adequate.

Chairperson Grantham stated he would like to discuss time limits on “Sale” signs.

Wold clarified that the purpose of the Master Sign Program is to make the sign permit application process simpler and easier for applicants.

Commissioner Tefft agreed with Solu that shopping centers should be treated differently than individual businesses. He stated he would like the definition of the term “shopping center” to include that it is not related to ownership.

Staff and the Commission discussed how to distinguish a shopping center. Wold stated the designation is based on the associated zone district. Tefft clarified the designation is also based on the number of occupants.

Commissioner Solu suggested moving the architectural sign to the bonus section of the proposed ordinance.

Wold asked the Commission for direction on how to classify public artwork and murals. Staff clarified art, as defined in the proposed ordinance, is not a sign and thus not affected by the proposed sign ordinance. Tefft stated he would like to add the following to the definition of public art:

1. There should not be any logos in the artwork.
2. There should be a limitation on the size of the plaque.

Chairperson Grantham called for a five minute break.

Berg-Johansen continued to present the staff report, with specific attention to the Tourism-Oriented Sign Plan.

Chairperson Grantham stated he would like staff to include public safety as one of the objectives of the Tourism-Oriented Sign Plan.

Chairperson Grantham opened Public Comment period.

Craig Schmidt, Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce, stated both Alternatives 2 and 3 should be considered for adoption in the Downtown and Embarcadero Districts. Both alternatives were successful and self-sustaining in Healdsburg, CA.

SYNOPSIS MINUTES – MORRO BAY PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING – JULY 17, 2013

Chairperson Grantham closed Public Comment period.

Commissioner Tefft suggested combining the first two alternatives to create an additional alternative which would call for directional signs with the ability to change the copy.

Commissioner Tefft stated he favors revising Alternative 3 so that is more oriented toward the pedestrian by making the signs lower and making the individual signs smaller and closer together. Regarding the three locations for the directional signs, he stated all three should be on the water side as that is where the majority of people walk. He also suggested installing directional signs near Giovanni's to encourage pedestrians to continue around the curve. He favors installing numerous smaller signs rather than a few larger ones.

Commissioner Solu agreed with Tefft regarding combining the first two alternatives to create an additional alternative as business along the Embarcadero change often. He also expressed concern about the maintenance of the signs. Berg-Johansen stated the City would maintain the signs. Livick stated, however, from a budgetary standpoint, the City would want to partner with another agency to have them maintain the signs. Livick suggested the City could impose a maintenance fee to be paid by business owners to offset the maintenance costs.

Commissioner Fennacy stated he favors Alternatives 2 and 3, and would like to see a hybrid of both.

Commissioner Lucas stated he would like to see improved linkages, flow, indication of pedestrian infrastructure, and indication of restaurants along the Embarcadero. He stated he would like to see Alternatives 1 and 3 combined in some way.

Chairperson Grantham asked staff to consider installing a pedestal sign with a directory of all businesses along the Embarcadero.

Livick suggested a way in which the directional sign could include a map of the Embarcadero as well as a directory of businesses.

Commissioner Tefft stated he would like to see the directory include retail establishments as well as points of interest.

Commissioner Fennacy discussed the benefits of the directory sign.

Commissioner Lucas stated the City should be aware of ADA regulations when installing the signs.

Livick stated a directional sign would be installed at the base of the Centennial Stairway.

MOTION: Commissioner Solu moved to continue Zoning Text Amendment #A00-015 to the August 21, 2013 Planning Commission meeting.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Fennacy and the motion passed unanimously. (5-0).

SYNOPSIS MINUTES – MORRO BAY PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING – JULY 17, 2013

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- C-1 Current and Advanced Planning Processing List
Staff Recommendation: Receive and file.
Upcoming Projects: To be determined.

Wold reviewed the Work Program with the Commission.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

DECLARATION OF FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:35 pm to the next regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting at the Veteran's Hall, 209 Surf Street, on Wednesday, August 21, 2013 at 6:00 pm.

Rick Grantham, Chairperson

ATTEST:

Rob Livick, Secretary