



City of Yuba City
Planning Division Agenda Report
Planning Commission Meeting

July 28, 2010

DATE: July 22, 2010
TO: Yuba City Planning Commission
FROM: Community Development Department
SUBJECT: Agenda Report – Meeting of July 28, 2010

Public Hearing:

- ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT ZC 10-05: MODIFYING SECTION 8-5.6312 “TEMPORARY BANNER SIGNS FOR ECONOMIC STIMULUS” IN THE YUBA CITY MUNICIPAL CODE; APPLICANT: CITY OF YUBA CITY.**

Project Description:

The proposed Zoning Text Amendment represents a minor modification to the City’s Zoning Ordinance relating to its Sign Code provisions. Specifically, the amendment proposes to extend the time provisions previously allowed for an additional banner sign that can be temporarily installed by businesses during the on-going economic downturn.

Background:

On February 16, 2010, the Council approved ZC 10-01 which amended the Zoning Ordinance to incorporate provisions in the City’s Sign Code that allow commercial business the opportunity to install an additional temporary banner sign for a period of six months. The purpose of the temporary banner sign provisions was to allow businesses more signage that identifies their products and services provided at their place of business during the on-going economic downturn. The provisions for the temporary banner sign are due to expire on August 31, 2010.

The original Zoning Text Amendment was proposed in response to direction provided by the City Council at their December 15, 2009 meeting. At that meeting, the Council was requested to provide staff with direction regarding the continued strict enforcement of the City’s Sign Code as part of the on-going “Corridor Enhancement Strategy” given the on-going economic downturn. The Council directed staff to continue forward with the clean-up efforts of the prohibited signs,

but also directed staff to incorporate provisions for a new “temporary” banner sign that could be installed for businesses during the poor economic climate for a limited duration.

Analysis:

The previously approved amendment provides businesses the opportunity to install a temporary banner upon the wall of their business to advertise services or specials being offered by that business. This temporary provision is in addition to the permanent signage that is allowed under the City’s Sign Code. Under the recent code amendment, each applicable business is allowed to install a maximum of one temporary banner sign on the building wall of their business, not to exceed 33 percent of the linear wall frontage of their business facing a public street. Such restrictions allow appropriate sized signage on individual businesses that do not adversely affect the appearance of the business or create visual clutter on the subject property. Content for the signs will be limited to services or products provided by the subject business or for purposes of identifying that a building (or tenant space) is available for rent or lease. The intent of this provision is to promote new economic development activity.

When the original amendment was approved, the discussion regarding the time limits for this new type of sign varied widely from 60 days, to whenever the economy recovers. Since there was no universal definition of when the economy recovers, staff had proposed a preliminary time limit of six months (from the effective date of the Ordinance – August 31, 2010), with the provision for an extension of time if desired by the Council. Prior to the expiration of the six month time limit, staff was expected to present the extension issue before the Council for their reconsideration of the matter.

To date, a total of sixteen businesses have utilized the provisions of the text amendment and have installed temporary banner signs. Local businesses have commented that such a temporary banner helps their business manage during the troubled economy. Since there are no long-term signs of the economy recovering at this time, staff is proposing that the time limits for the temporary banner sign be extended. Staff is proposing that the time limits be extended another six months until the end of February, 2011, with an opportunity for another six month extension that could be approved by the City Manager if economic conditions have not improved. The proposed changes to the originally approved Zoning Text Amendment are included as Exhibit A.

Environmental:

It has been determined that the project is exempt from review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Section 15061 (b) (3), which states that where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA. A Notice of Exemption has therefore been prepared for the project.

Recommended Actions:

The Planning Division recommends that the Planning Commission take the following actions:

- A. Recommend that the City Council adopt the finding of fact that Zoning Text Amendment ZC 10-05 for the amendment of the City's Sign Code is in the public interest.
- B. Recommend that the City Council adopt the attached Ordinance amending the City's Sign Code to modify Section 8-5.6312 "Temporary Banner Signs for Economic Stimulus" to the Yuba City Municipal Code as shown in Exhibit A.