



CITY OF SAINT PAUL
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DATE: August 4, 2014

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Comprehensive Planning Committee

RE: Public Hearing Response to Amendments to Chapter 64 – Signs

Background:

The Saint Paul Zoning Code is established to promote and to protect the public health, safety, morals, aesthetics, economic viability and general welfare of the community. Section 61.801(a) of the Zoning Code requires periodic review and reevaluation of the code, and Section 61.801(b) authorizes the Saint Paul Planning Commission to initiate amendments to the code. A number of minor text edits are needed in order to update and clarify the Zoning Code to better accommodate modern signage, current standards and practice, and interpretations by the Zoning Administrator. On January 24, 2014 the Planning Commission authorized a study of Chapter 64-Signs via Resolution #14-05. Staff has been studying the issue, partnering with staff from the Department of Safety and Inspections (DSI), Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) as well as Saint Paul Parks (Parks).

There are four issues to be addressed by these amendments, which include suggested changes to Chapter 64 - Signs of the Saint Paul Zoning Code: minor text amendments; amendments to accommodate the Lowertown municipal ballpark, which include amendments to the current roof sign prohibition; amendments to bus stop signage; and a new section to accommodate sponsorship signs on bicycle sharing facilities (Nice Ride).

On Friday, July 11, 2014 a public hearing was held to consider the proposed amendments. Comments from four organizations were received via letter on the proposed amendments. No one spoke at the public hearing. No letters were received following the public hearing.

Public hearing testimony

Paul St. Martin with the Department of Public Works suggested editing Sec. 64.122 T. *Transit stop shelter* to read *Transit stop station*, and remove reference to appendix I which refers only to the CBS Outdoor Bus Shelter Franchise and not all transit stop shelters, in order to simplify language and accommodate all types of transit shelters, stations and structures that might be constructed in the future.

Director of Parks and Recreation Michael Hamm submitted a letter in support of the changes, specifically calling out the permit process for roof signs as being particularly important. Related

to that amendment, Executive Vice-president and Owner Thomas Whaley of the St. Paul Saints Baseball Club requested that rooftop signs not be limited to only two sides of the structure, while expressing general support for the proposed amendments.

A fourth letter in support of the proposed amendments was received from Clinton Blaiser and Richard Pakonen, owners of the Northwestern Building, also in Lowertown and proximate to the new ballpark. The letter specifically called out the addition of a provision permitting roof top signs to the code as a positive amendment to the code.

Recommendation

There are five main amendments to the original proposed amendments to Chapter 64 suggested following the July 11 public hearing.

1. Sec. 64.103. A. *Advertising sign*. The reference to bus stop shelters is proposed to be amended to “transit stop stations.”
2. Sec. 64.105 C. *Combination sign*. We propose removing the citation/amendment, given that roof signs are proposed to be permitted via a conditional use permit in B4 and B5 zoning districts.
3. Sec. 64.122. T. *Transit stop station*. Is amended to change the term “shelter” to “station” and remove reference to appendix I.
4. Sec. 64.414. *Roof signs*. Is amended to remove condition “(c)” regarding placement and design of roof top signs, potentially permitting greater flexibility within the conditional use permit process for roof top sign design and placement.
5. Sec. 64.422. *Bicycle sharing facility sponsorship signs*. Condition “(c)” is proposed to be amended to include the word “externally” regarding illumination. This would allow an internal, backlit sign to enhance safety at bicycle facilities and enhance legibility of the text both on the map and sponsorship sign sides of the facility.

See attachments A and B for these amendments. Attachment A has strikeouts, double-strikeouts and underlines and double-underlines in both text and notes in order to highlight the changes in version two. Attachment B is a so-called “clean” copy of the proposed text amendments without any strikeouts or underlines, for ease of reading.

The Comprehensive Planning Committee recommends that the Planning Commission approve the attached amendments, as amended following the public hearing (amendments noted in double-strikeout and double-underline text), and forward them to the Saint Paul City Council and Mayor for approval. A second public hearing will be set at the City Council.

Attachments:

A – Proposed text amendments to Chapter 64 – Signs of the Saint Paul Zoning Code with double-strikeouts/underlines and notes

B – Proposed text amendments to Chapter 64 – Signs of the Saint Paul Zoning code (“clean” copy – no knockout or underline)

C – Written public hearing testimony

D – Planning Commission resolution