



TOWN OF BURLINGTON
SIGN BYLAW SUBCOMMITTEE (SBS) of the
ZONING BYLAW REVIEW COMMITTEE (ZBRC) MINUTES
June 7, 2021

Call the Meeting to Order

Chairman Sally Willard called the June 7, 2021, Sign Bylaw Subcommittee to order at 5:35 PM on Zoom.

Voting Members Present: Sally Willard, Ernie Covino, Mike Murray, Betsey Hughes

Voting Members Absent: Shari Ellis, Andy Ungerson

Non-Voting Members Present: none

Also Present: Sonia Rollins

1. Introduction and Overview:

- a. Sonia Rollins spoke to the committee about past efforts to create standards for the Town Center Business District (TCBD): 3A and Town Center committees (3A/TC). Sonia noted that it was generally accepted that design (including sign) standards would need to be addressed within an overlay zone. The design of buildings and signs go together. The view that prevailed was of a colonial look to both buildings and signs so that people would have a feeling they had arrived (in the TCBD).
- b. Sonia noted that the various plazas could have plaza signs with a colonial feel, as a first step toward upgrading signage in the district. Referencing the 3rd Ave section of the NW Park PDD, Sonia said that the "Main Street" signage at 3rd Ave would be a reference.
- c. Regarding the process, Sonia noted that changes to the general and zoning bylaws would go back to the Planning Board and Planning Department for inclusion in the Town Center design criteria. This is important
- d. Colonial "feel": no backlighting/backlit or neon signs. Signs would have material and lighting specifications, with a preference for wood with up lighting/accent lighting/gooseneck lighting from above. Regulations should include dimensions. Identification of plazas with monument signs would help both the businesses and the people looking for them.
- e. Betsey asked if physical attributes such as colors and tones were addressed in prior efforts. Sonia answered "No, because the goal was to pass zoning changes." ZBA and Planning Board members involved were aware of the recommendations of the 3A/TC and have incorporated those in subsequent actions.
- f. Ernie noted that there is a set of design guidelines. The planning board does not have the authority to specify sign design. The design criteria reference in the zoning bylaw enables the planning board to discuss building design when considering building design changes. The same reference is needed in the sign bylaw.
- g. Sonia noted that the reference to the "living" document rather than regulating design in the bylaw, would allow greater flexibility to the boards in the future. Safeguards were created.
- h. The 3A/TC committees discussed the benefit plaza monument signs provide both businesses and customers. Additionally, allowing A-frame type signs that meet specific criteria and regulations, would allow businesses to further promote themselves.
- i. The philosophy was that there could be a sunset clause allowing businesses time to update their signs. Ernie noted that we don't want to overburden businesses. Sonia suggested that



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- the Town might provide incentives to encourage people to change. Signage might be addressed when a business requests a zoning change.
- j. Without the general bylaw can we reference the design criteria? The inclusion of the specific reference to the Town Center Overlay and to the Design Criteria in the bylaw would allow the Planning Board to address design and signs.
 - k. Sonia recommended that we describe whatever we are referencing.
 - l. Sonia suggested that a committee be created whose role would be to review sign applications and make recommendations to the Building Department. An independent committee of 2 or 3, with design experience, who would apply the current design criteria to the review and sign off on the sign.
 - m. General discussion of various points above.
 - n. Sonia offered help with research as we move forward.
 - o. Sonia left the meeting at 6:40 pm.
2. Review and approval of minutes of prior meetings: By consensus, March 1, March 15, May 24
- a. Motion made and seconded: approved 4-0-0
 - b. Zoning Bylaw Article XIII Section 13.3:
Ernie noted that a sign can fit into more than 1 category, for example a menu sign can also be an electronic message board. Sally suggested we can specify the requirements and limits within that type of sign. A sign must meet the rules for all of the types sign involved. An example would be a menu sign that is on an LED screen. With the goal of the “colonial look” in the TCSD, electronic signs of any type would be prohibited.
3. Zoning Bylaw Definitions
- a. Building Front
 - b. Continuous Awning
 - c. Parapet
Mike asked if it was prudent to bring these definitions forward now or wait until we bring the sign bylaw forward. It was decided to put this on the back burner. The term building was changed to business front.
4. Other Business
- a. Mike asked that we come up with a list of questions for the signage person he has invited to a future meeting. Please submit your questions to Sally.

Documents Referenced:

- General Bylaw
- Zoning Bylaws
- Town Center Districts Design Review Rules & Regulations

Motion to Adjourn: 7:01pm 3-0-0

*Respectfully Submitted,
Sally Willard, Chair*



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Approved: August 9, 2021, ZBRC Signage Sub meeting (4-0-1)