



**CITY OF DOVER**

## SIGN COMMITTEE – MINUTES

Meeting Type: Regular Meeting  
Meeting Location: 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room, City Hall, Dover NH  
Meeting Date: Thursday, May 22, 2014  
Meeting Time: 8:00 am

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Gary Green (Chair), Tom Clark, Lee Skinner, Erik Roy

**STAFF PRESENT:** Steve Bird (City Planner), Dave White

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Karen Weston, Steve Brewer

The meeting was convened by Green at 8:02 AM.

### 1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

*Clark motioned to approve the minutes of May 8, 2014, Skinner seconded. Vote: Unanimous*

### 2. Citizens Forum

Weston: For electronic signs, they are important to business owners. I had business owners sign a petition supporting electronic signs with messages, not flashing. Cecil Group says that signage is very important for businesses. Signs are attention getting, but they can be very distracting if flashing. All the business owners I asked signed the petition.

Weston provided a copy of the petition to the committee.

Brewer: I support the reduction of visual clutter with excess signage. Electronic signs are internally illuminated. Freestanding signs in the CBD should be sunsetted and are not needed in the downtown. Window signs in the CBD that are used in convenience stores and gas stations inside windows should be toned down. Off premise signs in traffic islands should be allowed for community and charitable events, but not businesses. Walgreens has a pylon signs on two streets on corner lot. They should be allowed only one. Businesses add signage through vending machines in addition to their permitted signs. Consider regulating those.

### 3. Old Business

#### a. Approve Mill Motif Redraft Discussion – Lee Skinner

Skinner pointed out a few changes he made to the mill motif.

Clark motioned to accept the mill motif as drafted, Skinner seconded.

Green asked for discussion on the motion.

Clark pointed out that fonts are still an issue.

Skinner: I agree that some fonts are still not current.

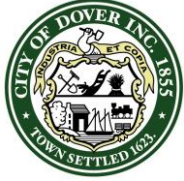
Clark: We should remove the comment about needing work.

Green: This mill motif wording will be included in the final version.

#### b. Approve Report from Tom Clark – How City measures illumination

Clark: I spoke with Jim Maxfield, City Electrical Inspector. He called around to sign companies and municipalities to find out how and if they used NITS. While NITS are still used in some towns, it is not useful for field measurement. I suggest removing sections ii and iii on page 133 under section b. External light is measured in foot candles, but internal light is in NITS.

Roy: We need a checklist for illumination levels.



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Clark: You can't measure NITS in the field. Clark agreed to continue working on developing some wording for the next meeting.

### c. Approve Non Profit sign policy - Erik Roy

Roy: I removed the section on locations and added the requirement that they operate in Dover and supply proof.

Skinner: If you want two locations, do you need two applications?

Roy: No only one application is needed. Corwin liked the form.

Bird: The form will not be in the ordinance, so you should check for consistency.

Skinner: Operating in Dover is not a requirement in the ordinance.

Bird: Corwin could review the form to see what needs to be added to the ordinance. I will discuss with Corwin.

### d. Electronic sign discussions

Skinner: I am not surprised that businesses signed the petition.

Clark: If the mayor asks of course the owner is likely to sign.

Weston: I disagree. I talk to these owners all the time. They are tired of being told they can't use new technology.

Green: The petition addresses the fact that businesses want the option to use electronic signs and there is a demand.

Roy: I want to talk to other merchants also.

Skinner: I don't want to look like Las Vegas. Once you open the door all the signs will be grandfathered. I would put the burden on the businesses to convince me that we can allow some electronic signs without opening the door too wide. Show me how we can allow some electronic signs but not the undesirable signs.

Roy: How can all these electronic signs on the Miracle Mile be grandfathered?

Bird: Some were allowed by variance.

Clark: It was actually an appeal of an administrative decision by Nasser Jewelers. Then others came in and agreed to use the same standards established by the ZBA.

Clark reviewed the history of electronic sign regulation.

Green: I talked to three sign manufacturers and found that a sign can be manufactured to any specification desired, based on the zoning requirements. Sign can be limited to manual changes of text with a keypad. We could limit the electronic portion to a percent of the total allowed sign. Laconia amended their ordinance to make it more liberal. A sign that changes once or twice in 24 hours is not flashing.

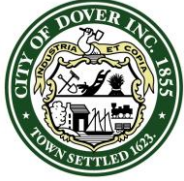
Clark: Now that technology can regulate them, it is worth discussing.

Green: I can have manufacturing company come to a meeting.

Clark: Not necessary to do that.

Skinner: Why would an owner spend \$20,000 on electronic signage if it can't be changed more or less often?

Green: If we go to the Planning Board and get approval to move forward with electronic signs then a committee or staff could draft the propose language. Any changes will be included in the final version submitted.



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Clark: As long as we make specific recommendations.

*Skinner motioned that we formally request of DBIDA, Main Street and the Chamber to provide specific text to permit and control electronic signs; Clark seconded the motion.*

Clark: They can use whatever sources they want.

Roy: I don't understand the motion. This is what we were tasked with.

Green: Commodity pricing only is one option. Skinner's idea might work once we decide to move forward.

Bird: How do you expect three different organizations to come back with specific wording? Each of those groups has representation on this committee.

Skinner and Clark withdrew the motion.

Green: I will work with Roy on coming up with some language for electronic signs.

Clark: We should go to the Planning Board with specific wording.

### **e. Review definition of flashing signs**

### **f. Definition for a non-flashing electronic sign**

Clark: Let's wait for the report from Roy for these two items.

## **4. FINISH WITH PAGE BY PAGE REVIEW**

Green: We will skip this item due to time.

## **5. NEW BUSINESS :**

Clark: The City should budget for I-pads to reduce the amount of paper we use.

## **6. CORRESPONDENCE: NONE**

## **7. MEMBER COMMENTS:**

Skinner: I have had a lot of ordinances sent to me from many communities. I would request that we be given some clue as to what I should be looking at in each ordinance.

Green: I forwarded them and meant to review them before I sent them.

## **8. NEXT MEETING**

Green: Next meeting will be June 5<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 am.

## **9. ADJOURNMENT**

*Clark motioned to adjourn at 9:33 AM. Skinner seconded. Vote: Unanimous*