
JOHNSON CITY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
Minutes
August 13, 2019

Members Present: Dr. Tim Zajonc, Chairman
Mr. Bob Cooper, Vice-Chairman
Col. Paul Williamson, Secretary
Dr. Stacey Wild, Asst. Secretary
Dr. Larry Calhoun, City Commission Representative
Mr. Chris Dagenhart, Mayoral Representative
Gen. Gary Harrell
Mr. Jamie Povlich
Dr. Benjamin Whitfield

Members Absent: Mr. Clay Hixson

Staff Present: Preston Mitchell, Director of Development Services, City of Johnson City
Asongayi Venard, Development Coordinator, City of Johnson City
Will Righter, Planner, City of Johnson City
Nicole Lawrence, Recording Secretary, City of Johnson City
Allan Cantrell, City Engineer, City of Johnson City

Chairman Zajonc called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Vice-Chairman Cooper gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of the Johnson City Regional Planning Commission agenda was put forth, Commissioner Williamson made a motion for approval of the agenda as presented with a second from Commissioner Dagenhart. Motion approved 9-0

The minutes of the Johnson City Regional Planning Commission Meeting held on July 9, 2019 were approved unanimously by a 9-0 vote with Vice-Chairman Cooper making the motion and Commissioner Whitfield with a second.

New Business

Consider amendments to Article VII on “Signs” in the Zoning Code - The zoning text amendments submitted for consideration by the Planning Commission and subsequent approval by the City Commission are initiated by staff were as follows:

SECTION 7.1.3.4 ON MINIMUM STANDARDS AND CONFORMANCE FOR SIGN SETBACKS

The proposed amendment will reduce the minimum setback requirement for the types of signs listed from 10 feet to 7.5 feet. The amendment will provide more suitable visibility for businesses to advertise without encroaching in the public right of way or adversely affecting the aesthetic nature of the city roadways. Reducing the setback to 7.5 feet will also provide uniformity within the Zoning Ordinance by aligning it with the 7.5 Drainage and Utility Easement.

SECTION 7.3.4.2 (B) ON PERMITTED SIGNS FOR NONRESIDENTIAL USES

Sign regulations for the B-4 (Planned Arterial Business), B-5 (Planned Community Business), I-1 (Light Industrial), I-2 (Heavy Industrial), and PB (Planned Business) zoning districts are covered in Section 7.3.4.2 of the Johnson City Zoning Ordinance. Sub-section 7.3.4.2 (B) incorrectly includes several references to sign regulations in the B-3 (Supporting Central Business) Zoning District. Sign regulations in the B-3 zoning district are covered in Section 7.3.3 B-2 and B-3 Districts of the Zoning Ordinance. This proposed amendment eliminates each erroneous reference to the B-3 Zoning District in Subsection 7.3.4.2(B) of the Zoning Code.

Currently, the Zoning Ordinance permits businesses or comprehensive developments in B-4, B-5, I-1, I-2 and PB Districts to have either one freestanding sign or one projecting sign per street frontage. The proposed amendment would allow businesses to have a freestanding sign; or, a projecting sign and a ground mounted (monument) sign.

The amendment would eliminate the provision that allows any freestanding sign to be substituted for two ground-mounted signs of at most 200 sq. ft. each. Two such large signs negatively define the character of a corridor, downgrading the value of building and landscape architectures in the corridor.

Per the amendment, minimum setback requirement in the B-4 would be reduced from 10 to 7.5 feet to align with the minimum setback requirement proposed in Section 7.1.3.4. Maximum height of signs erected at a setback distance of 7.5 feet to 25 feet will be 20 feet. Maximum height of signs erected at a setback distance greater than 25 feet will be reduced from 45 feet to 30 feet. This height reduction will allow for uniformity of allowable sign height in the CO (Corridor Overlay), the DO (Design Overlay), and the GO (Gateway Overlay) all of which contain many of the B-4 zoning districts in Johnson City.


The amendment will reduce the maximum allowable square footage of freestanding signs at a setback distance between 7.5 to 45 feet to 70 square feet. Maximum allowable square footage for signs at a setback distance greater than 45 feet and all monument signs will be reduced to 80 square feet.

The Public Hearing was opened; seeing no one wished to speak the public hearing was closed.

The Planning Commissioners and staff went into discussions regarding the square footage of the signs that is currently allowed versus the proposed changes. After much deliberation and discussion with staff it was decided that the sign Ordinance changes regarding the size of the signs being changed from 200 Sq. Ft. to 80 Sq. Ft. be sent to committee for review.

A motion to approve all proposed text amendment changes except for Text 7.3.4.2 section B. number 3. sub section 3.2. *Area of Ground-Mounted Sign: The maximum area of a ground-mounted sign authorized under Section 7.3.4.2(B)(1) shall be 200 sq. ft. (change to 80 square feet)*, was put forth by Vice-Chairman Cooper with a second from Commissioner Williamson.
Motion approved as stated.
VOTE: 9-0

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 7:15 pm.



Chairman - Dr. Tim Zajonc



Secretary - Col. Paul Williamson

9-10-19

Date