



MEMORANDUM

PLANNING DIVISION
COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

To: Planning Commission

From: Maryann Pickering – Principal Planner
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Date: December 11, 2013

Re: Projecting Building Storefront Signs
PLNPCM2013-00739

The Planning Commission voted unanimously at the meeting on October 9, 2013 to continue the public hearing for the above referenced item. The reason for the continuation was so that staff could provide additional information on the proposed changes. At this meeting, the Planning Commissioners had specific issues that they wanted to have addressed. Below are the responses to those issues raised.

Definitions

As a reminder, the following are the two definitions of the projecting signs discussed as part of this petition.

PROJECTING BUILDING SIGN: A sign attached to a building or other structure whose sign face is displayed perpendicular or at an angle to the building wall.

PROJECTING BUSINESS STOREFRONT SIGN: A sign attached to a building or other structure whose sign face is displayed perpendicular or at an angle to the building wall. Said signs shall contain only the name of the business and/or associated corporate logo.

The only changes being made as part of this petition are to the projecting business storefront signs. The changes are to clarify their size and location along a building at the ground or street level.

Zoning Districts

The petition has been modified to only make the proposed changes in the CSHBD zoning districts. The CC (Corridor Commercial) has been removed and may be considered at a point in the future.

Types of Signs

Proposed changes have been clarified to state that they will only affect the projecting business storefront signs, not the projecting building signs. The two are different and the latter is one that is used for larger multi-story and multi-tenant buildings. Those signs are intended to identify a building

and the business within a building on one sign. The projecting business storefront signs are for the individual tenants that may be contained within a larger building and are intended to be for a business on the street level.

Right-of-Way Projections

Within the Zoning Ordinance, there is language that allows signs to project over the public right-of-way, but they must remain at least two feet away from the back of curb. We have added this language into the proposed ordinance changes for consistency. The measurement from the back of the curb was chosen as sidewalks can have different widths on different streets. For example, if there was a four foot wide sidewalk and a sign was allowed to project three feet, then it would only be one foot back from the street. This could be hazardous to the traffic in the travel lanes. Keeping the signs a minimum of two feet back in all areas provides consistency.

Staggering Signs

It was brought up at the last meeting if the signs should be staggered in order to promote visibility of the signs along a streetscape. Staff would not recommend that this be included as a requirement in the ordinance. The signs are primarily designed for those who are walking and they will be able to readily see the signs as they walk along the street. In addition, most business storefronts will be wide enough so that the signs will not appear to be one top of each other. Should there be a situation where the storefronts are narrow; the business owners will most likely stagger the location of the signs on their own. Staff does not feel that this is something that needs to be regulated in the ordinance.

One Entrance for Multiple Tenants

The proposed changes as part of this request are to modify the projecting business storefront signs for the Sugar House Business District. The proposed changes are not to affect the project building signs. The latter is designed for multi-tenant buildings that might only have one entrance into the building. The projecting business storefront signs are signs that are located along the tenant's leasable space and are typically located at the main pedestrian level or street level.

Minimum Height Less than 10 Feet

Staff would not recommend that the minimum height be less than ten feet due to the fact that the Zoning Ordinance requires this minimum already. To change it for these types of signs in these zoning districts could cause confusion in administration. It's best to leave the standards the same.

Illumination

These types of signs can be internally or externally illuminated per all requirements of the Zoning Ordinance or applicable sections of the City Code.

Sugar House Master Plan Design Guidelines

These types of signs are encouraged in the design guidelines. The community has desired these types of signs for some time. Specific standards from the Design Guidelines that are compatible with these signs are noted below:

- *Implement signage guidelines:*
 - *Signs should be pedestrian oriented and pedestrian scale, emphasizing wall, blade, awnings or monument signs rather than pole signs.*
 - *Off-premise signs are inappropriate and should not be allowed.*

- *Discourage pole signs and encourage wall and blade signs, as well as monument signs consistent with a pedestrian scale.*
- *Design signs and graphics to present their message with clarity; graphics should be clear and easily understood, so that people can orient themselves within the development and locate businesses and facilities easily.*

Urban Design Element View Corridors

The Salt Lake City Urban Design Element outlines policies and associated strategies to strengthen the city's urban form. This document specifically addressed the condition of Salt Lake City's commercial and industrial areas and recommended urban design policies to create a more pleasing environment. With regard to signs in the commercial areas of the city, the document suggests that "signage throughout the commercial/industrial areas need not be overpowering. Patrons to such establishments are coming to the area to do business at a particular establishment; consequently, the signs do not have to compete with other establishment signs." Further, the document also includes a section specifically about signs that discusses the desire to prevent signs from being a dominant feature of the landscape along the city's major boulevards and gateways. This section also includes the following relevant policies:

- *Provide ample opportunities for business to advertise products and service without having a detrimental effect on the community.*
- *Consider sign design and location as an integral part of all development, not as an afterthought.*

In conformance with the above policies, the proposed amendment will allow for ample sign area and height for properties and businesses in the Sugar House Business Districts, while limiting the ability to create an overpowering, distracting visual environment along street frontages. The proposal has been designed to limit the size and location of the monument signs to be compatible with the desired development of the Sugar House Business Districts of the city, preventing signs from being the dominant feature of development.

Other Similar Cities

Carmel, California

One sign is allowed per business. There is a maximum letter size of ten inches and have a maximum area of three feet. They must be located as close as possible to the building entrance and cannot project more than 30 inches from the face of the building. A minimum of seven feet shall be maintained for vertical clearance.

Park City, Utah

Projecting signs are permitted in the city. Signs cannot project more than 36 inches from the face of the building and must maintain an eight foot vertical clearance. It does note that signs cannot project over the applicant's property except over the Main Street sidewalk. The maximum size allowed for any single sign is 12 feet. However, Park City is the only jurisdiction looked at that addresses the number of or spacing of signs on a building. The code does not restrict the number of signs placed on a building, only that the maximum size is adhered to. Multiple projecting signs on a building must be located a minimum of six feet apart.

Telluride, Colorado

All projecting signs can extend a maximum of four feet from the building face and must be located at least eight feet above the sidewalk. When two faces are visible, each side can be a maximum of six square feet in size. If only one side is visible, the maximum size can be up to ten feet.

Public Comment from October 9 Meeting

Below are some of the concerns with the proposed changes raised by members of the public at the last meeting.

1. *The maximum size allowed is 40 feet and this is too large.*
The current Sugar House Business District Standards allow for project building signs (the multi-tenant ones') to be calculated on a linear distance up to a maximum of 40 feet. The proposed regulations for projecting business storefront signs, as presented last time, limit the amount to sign area to 12 feet or six feet on each side of the side.
2. *Location of signs. Signs may be located on a corner to maximize visibility and there is no requirement that it be located along the tenant's leased space.*
Staff understands this concern that was raised and the code requires that businesses would only locate these types of signs along their leased space.
3. *Number of projecting signs.*
Each tenant is allowed to have one sign or two if they are the corner tenant. The concern raised was that each business may seek to have a projecting sign and the concern is that there is no limit. Part of allowing these types of signs is recognizing that each tenant will have a sign. There is no way to fairly regulate who gets a sign and who does not. Staff feels that by the limited size of the signs, there will not be a large cluster of signs.
4. *Location of signs.*
The minimum of ten feet (as noted above) is requirement of the Zoning Ordinance and we do not propose to change that as part of or for this request. A concern was also raised about the maximum height of the signs and if it was a multi-story building that these types of signs are located on, they could potentially be located very high on the building. All projecting business storefront signs are already limited to their location based on Section 21A.46.070.J.6 of the Zoning Ordinance which states:

“Projecting Business Storefront Signs: A projecting business storefront sign shall be located at the main pedestrian entry level of the building.”

Therefore, based on this code section, all signs will be at the main pedestrian level which would typically be the ground floor level of a building.

5. *Concerns were raised about the design and illumination of the projecting signs.*
These signs can be illuminated per all Zoning Ordinance and City Code standards and regulations. A concern was also raised about animated signs. Animated signs are specifically prohibited in Section 21A.46.060. There are no plans to change that and now allow animated signs.
6. *Allowing these types of signs will cause the city to lose control of the streets and open spaces.*
Any sign that projects or encroaches into the public right-of-way would need to obtain approval from Property Management and provide proof of liability. The costs associated with those permits are not something that the Planning Division can regulate through zoning. These proposed changes will not modify the current requirements.

Walkability Studies

There do not appear to be any published studies that show these types of signs encourage walkability or make areas more walkable. However, several jurisdictions from all around the country note in their projecting signs ordinances or standards, that the signs are designed for the pedestrians and at a pedestrian scale.

Analysis and Findings

Findings

Please refer to the October 9, 2013 Planning Commission staff report for a discussion of the analysis and findings. A link to that report is provided below:

<http://www.slcdocs.com/Planning/Planning%20Commission/2013/739.pdf>

Commission Options

The Planning Commission can:

- Recommend denial of the proposed text amendment.
- Recommend the text amendment be approved as proposed.
- Recommend modifications to the proposed text amendment.

The Planning Commission is a recommending body for the matter and this text amendment will be sent to the City Council following the Planning Commission recommendation. The City Council can choose to agree with the Planning Commission recommendation, modify the recommendation, or disagree with the recommendation.

Recommendation

Based on the findings in the staff report, Planning Staff finds the proposed amendment does adequately meet the standards for general text amendments and therefore recommends the Planning Commission transmit a positive recommendation to the City Council to adopt the proposed zoning ordinance text amendment related to allowing projecting signs in both Sugar House Business District zoning designations.

Recommended Motion:

Consistent with Staff Recommendation: Based on the findings listed in the staff report, testimony and plans presented, I move that the Planning Commission transmit a favorable recommendation to the City Council to adopt the proposed zoning ordinance text amendment to allow projecting signs in both Sugar House Business District zoning designations.

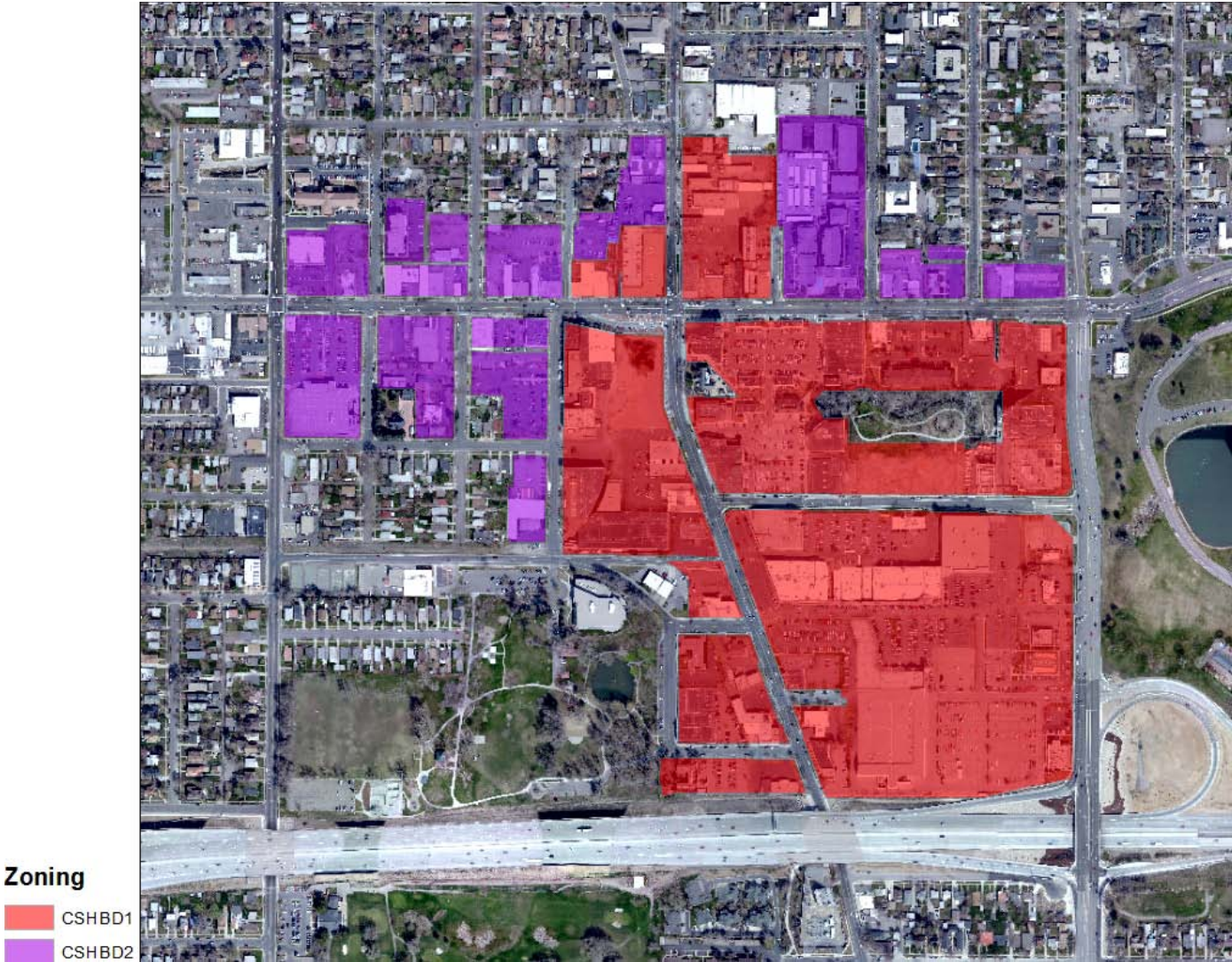
Below is a motion that may be used in cases where the Planning Commission determines that the text amendment should not be approved.

Not Consistent with Staff Recommendation: Based on the testimony, plans presented and the following findings, I move that the Planning Commission transmit a negative recommendation to the City Council to reject the proposed zoning ordinance text amendment to allow projecting signs in both Sugar House Business District zoning designations.

Attachments:

1. Updated Zoning Map
2. Proposed Ordinance Changes
3. Photographs

Attachment 1 – Updated Zoning Map



Attachment 2 – Proposed Ordinance Changes

Section 21A.46.090.D.3

STANDARDS FOR THE CSHBD

| Types of Signs Permitted | Maximum Area Per Sign Face | Maximum Height of Freestanding Signs | Minimum Setback | Number of Signs Permitted Per Sign Type |
|---|--|--------------------------------------|--|---|
| <p><u>Projecting business storefront sign</u></p> | <p><u>Six (6) square feet per sign side, total of twelve (12) square feet.</u></p> | <p><u>See note 1.</u></p> | <p><u>May extend four (4') feet from face of a building and two (2') feet from back of curb.⁵ The minimum of minimum height of ten (10') feet above the sidewalk shall be maintained.</u></p> | <p><u>One (1) per leasable space. Leasable spaces on corners may have two (2). All signs shall be located within the tenant's leasable area and not on any other tenant's leasable space.</u></p> |

Notes:

¹ For height limits on building signs, see subsection 21A.46.070J of this chapter.

⁵ Public property lease and insurance required for projection of property line.

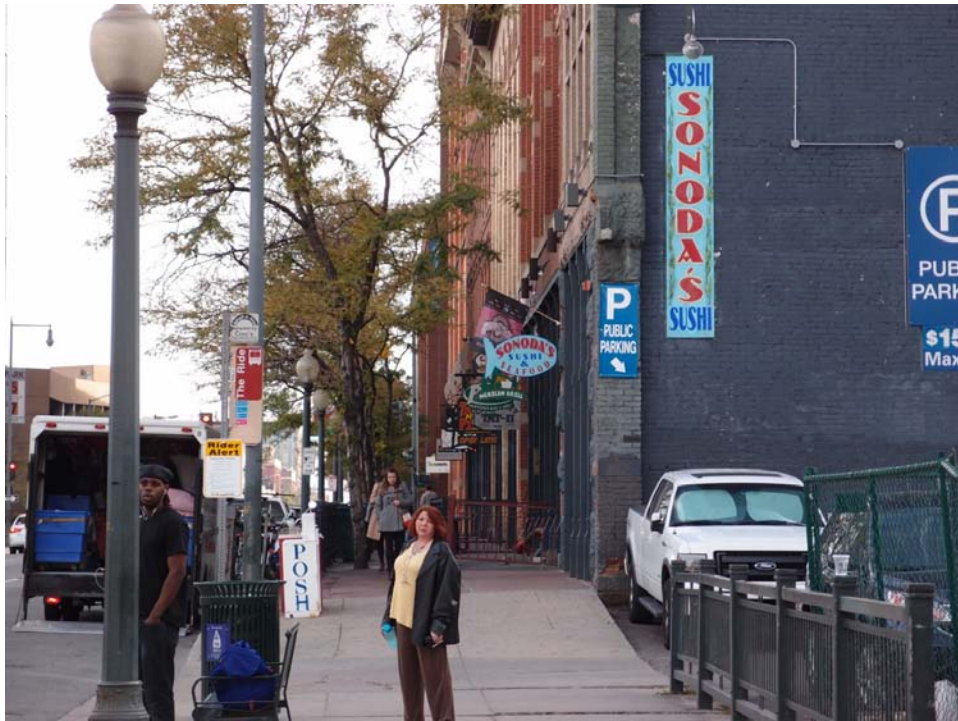
Attachment 3 – Photographs



Historic building in Denver with a projecting sign for the restaurant on the ground floor.



Another restaurant in Denver with a symbol for a projecting sign.



A row of businesses and restaurants in downtown Denver with signs for each business. These signs are not staggered and pedestrians can easily find their way to the business they are looking for.