

**STAFF REPORT
TO THE
FLORENCE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
JANUARY 26, 2010
PC#2009-39**

SUBJECT: Request for text amendment to the Florence County Code, Chapter 30. Zoning Ordinance, Section 30-205. Temporary Signs on Private Property, Section 30-211 and Section 30-212 for portable signs.

APPLICANT: Florence County Public Services and Planning Committee

PORTABLE SIGN POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT:

A committee to review portable signs was formed by Planning Commission on December 22, 2009 to address the portable sign elements of the current county sign regulations. The committee was tasked with incorporating the information gathered in the preceding meetings and public input into an ordinance amendment that would address the concerns of the County Council and members of the community about portable signs. This body met on January 7, 2010, at the County Planning Department. Attending were County Planning Commissioners: Chairman Peter Knoller, Bill Lockhart, and Jody Lane as well as staff members Kevin Griffin, Tripp Ward, Scott Park. City of Florence Planning Commission Chairman Glynn Willis and City of Florence staff member Liz Shaw were also in attendance.

The general consensus of the committee was that adjustments were needed in the current portable sign regulations to make them more viable for the current needs of local businesses. The discussion was focused on review of current and proposed ordinances as well as public input from businesses and citizens. The goal of the committee was to reach a consensus on enforcement, timeframe, spacing, size, colors, setbacks, and permitting for portable signs to provide to the full Planning Commission in order to create an amendment to better serve the public on portable sign regulations.

After each item was reviewed fully, the committee came to the following recommendations:

Timeframe: Portable signs should be erected for no more than 30 days out of every quarter with at least 2 months between postings. Special events for non-profit and not-for-profit entities should be exempt from this requirement.

Spacing: Spacing between signs should be one per parcel; large parcels with multiple businesses a minimum distance of 100 feet must be maintained.

Size: Maintain maximum at 32 sq.ft.

Colors: The committee suggested having no restrictions on colors.

Setbacks: Retain current setbacks as defined in section 30-202 Table VIII for zoned areas and Section 30-111 for Unzoned areas.

Permitting: Provide a visible marker or sticker on the posted sign. Make permit fee annual with planned display intervals clearly outlined by the applicant on the permit. If possible

make the sign company responsible for permitting, liable for signage and subject to fines. Determine if this is feasible.

Real Estate: Make it clear within the ordinance that real estate signs are allowed and are separate from portable signs or posters.

Items for Further Discussion:

Highway Corridors

The committee discussed controlling signage in major highway corridors with suggestion that this proposal be deferred to a later date for more in depth study. Zoning overlay districts were discussed as a method to create uniform portable sign regulations along highway corridors that have different levels of zoning or increased need for uniformity. How do we best address them? Zoning Overlay district? Performance standards for primary highways? Other ideas?

Unzoned Areas

The current code has few restrictions on signs in the Unzoned areas. Should sign regulations be enacted in Unzoned districts or should these areas remain without further restrictions to portable signs? Should problem areas in the Unzoned districts be addressed in a zoning overlay district or performance standards for major highway corridors?

ACTION ITEMS FOR PLANNING COMMISSION ON JANUARY 26, 2010:

Approval or disapproval by the Planning Commission of the committee recommendations on timeframe, spacing, size, colors, setbacks, permitting, and real estate signs.

Path forward on major highway corridors and Unzoned areas.