

Town Council Summary from the August 25, 2014 Town Meeting:

- Approved the Town Council Minutes from August 11, 2014.
- Held a Sign Variance Hearing for 3711 Plyers Mill Road for an existing sign that had been altered without first obtaining a sign permit, along with other discrepancies. The property owner and the Town Council agreed that the sign may stay as long as certain conditions were met. The Council motioned to have the Town staff draft a Resolution in favor of the Sign Variance request for the September 8, 2014 Council Meeting.
- Held a Public Hearing on Ordinance O-02-2014 to amend Chapter VI of the Town Code "Signs and Commercial Regulations." *The public record will remain open until the close of business (4:00 pm) on October 27, 2014.*
- Held a work-session following the Town Council Meeting to discuss amendments to Chapter VI of the Sign Code. An additional work-session was scheduled for Monday, September 29, 2014 at 7 pm to discuss a revised draft of the amendments.

August 25, 2014

Town Meeting 7:05 p.m.

Mayor Fosselman, Council Members Bartram, Furman, McMullen and Sexton, Town Attorney Ferguson, Town Manager Daily, Assistant Town Manager Hoffman and Clerk-Treasurer Engels were present. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and a Moment of Silence was observed.

Minutes from the August 11, 2014 Town Meeting were reviewed and approved. See Council Actions.

From the Mayor and Town Council –

Mayor Fosselman stated he received a request from the Kensington Service Station to host a car show on Saturday, November 1st from 10 am to 2 pm. Council Member Furman suggested an alternate location then the proposed Howard Avenue because of the Farmers Market; the Mayor suggested the Town Hall lot.

Council Member McMullen stated a Traffic Committee Meeting will be held Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. to discuss parking recommendations and to review a request for an additional speed hump on Calvert Place.

Council Member Furman reported that Maier Warner will be assisting the Town in developing a strategic plan for the distribution and use of the Town map, and will be meeting to discuss the project further after Labor Day.

Council Member Sexton expressed his gratitude in advance for the efforts of our Parade and Festival Coordinators in organizing the 47th Annual Labor Day Parade and Festival on September 1st.

The Mayor and Council heard a sign variance request for 3711 Plyers Mill Road. The property owner, John Aravanis, discussed the history of the existing sign and noted that it was permitted

by the County in 1992. Mr. Aravanis also questioned why the sign was no longer compliant with the Town's regulations. Town Attorney Ferguson stated the sign was no longer compliant because alterations were made to the sign, which triggered certain regulations within the applicability of the Town Code. Specifically, the sign exceeded not only the distance between two sides of a sign (angled greater than 30 degrees), but also measures greater than the Town's 50 square feet maximum for a ground sign.

Chris Bruch stated he recalled the property owners project years ago and thought, at that time, it was recommended to Mr. Aravanis to have an angled sign in order to eliminate the need for two signs on the property. Mr. Bruch also stated it was never the intent of the sign ordinance to include the base in the allowable sign calculation.

Town Attorney Ferguson stated regardless of the original intent, the Town may not be less restrictive than the County's regulations, and that the County ordinance language includes provisions on any support with a width greater than four (4) feet to be considered an integral component of the sign and is to be included within the allowable sign calculation.

After discussing possible options to remedy the sign, the Council and Mr. Aravanis agreed to a compromise that would allow a variance for the size requirement provided the following conditions are met: create a landscaped area around the base of the sign (required by Code); change the facing of the sign to bring the sign into compliance, and to file for a new sign permit. See Council Actions.

From the Public –

Jack Gaffey, on behalf of the Kensington Historical Society (KHS), thanked the Mayor, Council, and Staff for including KHS concerts in the last newsletter; he spoke in support of the new park signs, and noted the need for a new Town Directory. The Mayor and Council discussed a new directory and suggested organizing a committee of block captains that would obtain the necessary information.

Ordinances, Resolutions, Regulations –

A Public Hearing was held on Ordinance No. O-02-2014, an Ordinance to amend Chapter VI "Signs and Commercial Regulations" of the Town Code. Town Attorney Ferguson stated that the amendments are mostly necessary for clarification purposes and that additional input is needed to determine appropriate signage regulations. It was noted that an open work session would follow the Council Meeting to discuss the proposed amendments further.

Mayor Fosselman clarified that the proposed amendments are separate from the current requirements that all pole mounted signs be removed by September 1, 2014. Town Manager Daily noted that the Town staff will refrain from enforcing the pole sign regulations until later this fall; once the new County zoning language takes effect. Town Attorney Ferguson stated that the current zoning language would make it difficult for businesses to replace their existing pole signs with monument signs, and by waiting for the new language to officially take effect would help with the transition from pole to monument signs.

Chris Bruch, a Council Member during the adoption of the current regulations, commented that it was the Town's intent at the time to remove signs off of the streets and onto the buildings, which would create a more aesthetically pleasing visual. Mr. Bruch also mentioned that the creation of the original sign regulations came about from the use of large 'plexiglass' signs at a storage facility.

Mr. Bruch continued by stating that the following recommendations should be considered for the proposed changes: 1) use the existing County language for the regulation of interior window signs instead of enforcing through separate regulations; 2) continue to allow for the use of neon signs, per County regulations; 3) suggested listing the landscaping requirement separately; 4) suggested including 'historical significance' within the variance procedure; 5) suggested adding graphics or a guidebook to Chapter VI.

Al Carr suggested the use of external down lighting instead of internal lighting for signs in an effort to help eliminate light pollution. Mr. Carr also suggested within the variance procedures that more than just the contiguous and abutting neighbors be notified of a sign variance.

Jack Gaffey suggested adding confronting neighbors to the sign variance procedure.

Council Actions –

Council Member Furman moved to approve the Minutes from the August 11, 2014 Town Meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Council Member Sexton moved to have the Town staff prepare a Resolution granting a variance on the size of the sign at 3711 Plyers Mill Road, with the following conditions: create a landscaped area around the base of the sign; change the facing of the sign to bring into compliance, and to file for a new sign permit. The motion passed unanimously

Council Member McMullen moved to hold the public record open on Ordinance O-02-2014 to amend Chapter VI of the Town Code "Signs and Commercial Regulations" until the close of business on Monday, October 27, 2014. The motion passed unanimously.

Council Member Sexton moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Work Session 9:00 p.m.

Mayor Fosselman, Council Members Bartram, Furman, McMullen and Sexton, Town Attorney Ferguson, Town Manager Daily, Assistant Town Manager Hoffman and Clerk-Treasurer Engels were present.

The Mayor, Council, and Town staff discussed the proposed amendments to Chapter VI "Signs and Commercial Regulations" within Ordinance No. O-02-2014. Specifically, the regulation of monument signs, a-frame (sidewalk) signs, and possible regulation of certain materials and

lighting aspects were discussed.

Town Attorney Ferguson agreed to prepare a revised draft of the Ordinance for the Council, which will be reviewed at a second work session on September 29th.

The work session was adjourned at 10:06 p.m.