

Minutes Of Regular Meeting  
Town Of Saugus Sign By-Law Committee  
1/7/02  
6:00 P.M.

Committee Members In Attendance:

Peter A. Rossetti, Jr. Chairperson

Dennis R. Robitaille, Clerk

Ellen Burns

Edward L. Carlson

Albert J. DiNardo

Thomas S. Gannon

Donald Wong

Others Present:

Corey Berkowitch, owner of Sachem Signs in Saugus.

To the best of my recollection and interpretation the following events occurred: (Recorded by Committee Clerk, Dennis Robitaille.) Meeting was called to order at 6:02 P.M. by Chairperson, Peter Rossetti. The minutes of the previous meeting held 12/10/01 were accepted.

Peter Rossetti presented Committee Members with a draft of 6 items to be considered for inclusion into the Town Meeting Warrant. The first item dealt with banners. Dennis Robitaille suggested that the draft be amended to limit banners to non-profit organizations and municipal purposes. Ellen Burns corrected the language - "Subject to Selectmen for S-1 permit," to S-2 permit. Ed Carlson and Al Di Nardo mentioned that Mass Electric also had to approve of the pole location. The restrictions were amended "Subject to approval of Board of Selectmen and as allowed by Utility Company." The \$50 fee was dropped since the by-law was limited to only non-profit and municipal organizations.

The second item dealt with grand opening banners. Tom Gannon and Al DiNardo suggested that the word "business" be added, so that the item would state "Business Grand Opening Signs". There was a brief discussion of when a "grand opening" flag could be allowed, such as when a business changed ownership or when a different product was sold.

The third item dealt with the reconstruction of signs and the issue of the 133% or greater cost to repair / reconstruct. Dennis Robitaille pointed out that other cities and towns had 1 to 5 year grace periods before all signs had to be made conforming to the Sign By-Laws of those communities. Saugus did not have time restrictions on pre existing non conforming signs and that the reconstruction cost provision was the only way for the Town to have an opportunity to have signs brought into compliance with the Sign By-Laws. For the time being it was decided to leave the 133% provision alone and maybe consider something regarding when a business is sold and there is a different use of the property.

The fourth item dealt with vehicle signs. Committee Members were in agreement that only vehicles used in the business and be parked within 100 feet of the business property be allowed.

The fifth item dealt with the strip mall directory signs. Committee Members agreed that placing a sign at the end of a strip mall building was not a bad idea. The ratio of sign sizes for the different business was discussed. Donald Wong gave the example of a business that might occupy two spaces within a strip mall or a dominant business within the strip mall. While on this item, the issue of sign illumination was raised. Ellen Burns suggested that a sign light be shut off when the business was closed. Guest, Corey Berkowitch talked about how Reading, MA requires background lighting, which means only the lettering is illuminated and not the entire sign. Committee Members agreed this method would help reduce light pollution.

Item six dealt with the "open and seasonal flags. Committee Members suggested that the term "obstruct public view" be changed to "obstruct public safety." The use of seasonal flags was redefined to state "single seasonal flag." The Committee agreed that further refinement of the open and seasonal flag item was needed.

The following are the revised items in their entirety. REVISED 01/07/02

1. Street Banners – Subject to Selectmen for S-2 permit. This applies only to non-profit or municipal use only. The size of sign is limited to 30 feet by 4 feet. Maximum time up is 30 days. Wording and illustration is subject to approval of the Selectmen. Locations are limited to Main St, Essex St., or Lincoln Ave at locations approved by utility companies.
2. Business Grand opening sign - Fee is \$50.00. Subject to approval of Building Inspector. Sign can be no larger than 8ft. by 4ft and can not remain up for more than 10 days. Placement of the sign is subject to the Building Inspector. The sign is limited to once for each opening.
3. Reconstruction of signs - Issue is the 133%- Change or not? GRANDFATHERING ISSUES AND CHANGES IN OWNERSHIP
4. Vehicle signs – Vehicle must be registered and functioning and within 100 Ft of the business property for which is providing advertising. Location of parking area must be designated by the building inspector.
5. Strip Mall directory sign – A strip mall is a series of connected buildings without a common entrance. Located on wall at end of Mall. Size limited to 3ft by 4ft. Sign will contain names only of businesses in the mall. Sign must be backlighted.
6. Open and Seasonal flags - Flag allowed by Building inspector. Flag can only say OPEN. Size is limited to 3ft by 4ft. Flag can not interfere public safety. Flag will be used only with business is open. A single Seasonal flags that are NOT advertising are permitted. Maximum size is 3ft by 4ft. No trade symbols are allowed on seasonal signs.
7. Lighted signs must be turned off within one hour after the close of business daily.

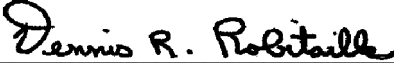
Towards the end of the meeting Ellen Burns brought up the issue of portable and temporary signs and how some people and businesses seemed to be ignoring the prohibition against portable signs. The issue of job site signs was also briefly discussed. Peter Rossetti mentioned that he thought there was a certain size sign that may be allowed.

Ellen also provided the Committee with copies of Sign By-Laws sent to her by Don Schmidt, a state official who advisors cities and towns about zoning issues. Ellen copied the parts which seemed significant for Saugus. These included by-laws pertaining to political signs, vehicle signs, non-conforming signs, signs located off-premises, temporary signs for openings and special events, abandoned signs and signs for uses no longer on property and other items such as illumination restrictions.

Next meeting was set for 1/28/02 at 6:00 P.M.

Motion to adjourn was made and seconded.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:10 P.M.

Clerk, Dennis R. Robitaille 

Chairperson, Peter A. Rossetti \_\_\_\_\_