

**TOWN OF HOPE MILLS
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS SPECIAL MEETING
MONDAY, MARCH 6, 2017, 6:00 P.M.
BILL LUTHER BOARD MEETING ROOM**

Mayor Jackie Warner called the special meeting of the Hope Mills Board of Commissioners to order on Monday, March 6, 2017 at 6:10 p.m.

GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Jackie Warner, Mayor Pro Tem Bob Gorman, Commissioners Pat Edwards, Frances Jackson, Jerry Legge, and Bryan Marley

GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT. None.

STAFF PRESENT

Town Manager Melissa Adams, Interim Town Clerk Deborah Holland, Planning & Development Administrator Chancer McLaughlin and Town Attorney Dan Hartzog. Also in attendance was Ed Byrne of Cumberland County Joint Planning Board.

The purpose of the special meeting is for the Board to discuss the proposed sign ordinance amendments.

Planning & Development Administrator Chancer McLaughlin presented the updates, various types of signs and solutions to permit usage. Regarding the offsite directional signage, Mr. McLaughlin commented that we did not have to make a change to the sign ordinance to accommodate Trade Street signs as off-site signs, they are allowed by special use permit from the Board of Adjustment. Mayor Pro Tem Gorman directed a question to Mr. McLaughlin regarding the storage of the temporary sidewalk, sandwich board signs. Mr. McLaughlin responded that the signs can be displayed on the sidewalk during business hours and stowed away when businesses are closed. Mr. McLaughlin presented the proposed ordinance amendments as follows:

Temporary signs:

Banners – A proposed solution is to draft a language that permits “temporary” banner/flag signs for a period of one week for advertising purposes only attributed to grand openings of a business and are otherwise prohibited.

Sandwich Boards – Signs would be allowable during business hours and approvable only in the Trade Street Business District

Athletic Signs – The staff explored the option of creating a language to address temporary athletic signs. Based on coordination efforts, it appears that the advertising of upcoming registration of seasonal sports utilizes an alternative method, therefore no change is required. Commissioner Legge inquired of Mr. McLaughlin if signs along the street wouldn't be needed

when sports signups begin. Mr. McLaughlin responded that he could look into this type of signage and explore some language to permit them.

Off-site Signage:

Trade Street Merchant Sign – As abovementioned, the sign ordinance currently allows for these sign types by special use permit approved by the Board of Adjustment. Staff is currently obtaining a new estimate on the design of a sign. Mr. McLaughlin has been in contact with Mr. Hartzog in regards to possibly waiving the special use permit as the Town of Hope Mills is the applicant and the Town would essentially be applying to itself and the Board of Adjustment. Mayor Warner commented that the Trade Street Sign could be installed without the vendor's names/plaques on it until they are purchased. Mr. McLaughlin commented that as merchants come in, they will purchase their name plaque from the Town and we will add them to the sign. Commissioner Legge questioned if the proposal for the Trade Street Merchant Sign calls for it to be lit but Mayor Warner suggested we look into solar lighting.

Sign Maximum Heights:

Ground Signs – The maximum height for these sign types is 30 feet with allowances that permit them at over 100 feet with a ratio tied to setbacks. A proposed solution would be to amend the ordinance to reduce maximum height regulations as follows:

- 0-5 Feet = 5 ft. Setback
- Greater than 5 ft. & up to 15 ft. = 10 ft. Setback
- 15 ft. to 25 ft. = 15 ft. Setback
- Maximum height is capped at 25 ft. unless otherwise allowed.

Pole Signs –The maximum height for these sign types is 30 feet with allowances that permit them at over 100 feet with a ratio tied to setbacks. Signs must maintain a minimum of 9 feet over any pedestrian areas and 14 feet over any vehicular paths. The proposed solution is to amend the ordinance to reduce the maximum height to 25 feet. Pole clearance should be amended to 8 feet minimum for pedestrian clearance and 12 feet over any vehicular paths. Mayor Warner commented that with a grandfathered in clause, we need to be clear that once a business closes, the signage for the new business that takes it's place be in compliance. Mr. McLaughlin responded that any business affected could be given a duration of time compliance and that would be beneficial for a new business when coming into compliance.

Historical Signs:

Historical Signs –The proposed amendment is to create a section in the code for historical signs to be approved by the Town of Hope Mills Historic Commission in reference to size, design and style. Historical signs would not count against allowable square footage for wall signs. Mayor Warner commented that the intent in time is to have uniform signage by each of the Town's historical buildings displaying the name of the building and the year it was built.

Prohibited Signs:

Flag/Portable Signs –A solution to prohibit these types of signs would be to add a more definitive language outlawing flag/portable signs unless allowed under Section 102A-1404, a newly created section allowing banners for grand openings. In the coming weeks, Mr. McLaughlin will be more aggressive in drafting letters prohibiting these types of signs.

Signs in DOT R.O.W. – After extensive conversations with DOT, it was concluded that the Town has the authority to remove any sign within DOT R.O.W. Mr. McLaughlin commented that code enforcement already prohibits these signs therefore no change is needed. Mayor Warner commented that businesses in the DOT right of way have signs that are deteriorating and this needs to be addressed. Mr. McLaughlin responded that these businesses likely didn't know they had signs that were prohibited since the Town stopped enforcing them. Discussion pursued and it was agreed that letters will be sent to these businesses and an allotted amount of time will be granted before the signs must be removed.

In terms of the implementation timeline, Mr. McLaughlin requested the Board's authority to begin drafting the amendment to the ordinance. Mr. McLaughlin will then present these ordinance changes at the next Board meeting for the Board's formal approval. Town Manager Adams asked when Mr. McLaughlin is proposing the public hearing. Mr. McLaughlin responded a public hearing would not take place until the Planning Board approves the changes.

Motion made by Commissioner Legge, seconded by Commissioner Edwards and carried unanimously, to continue this Special Sign Ordinance Meeting on March 20, 2017 at 6:00 p.m.

Mayor Warner recessed the special meeting at 6:43 p.m. with it to be continued on March 20, 2017 at 6:00 p.m.

Jackie Warner, Mayor

ATTEST:

Deborah Holland
Interim Town Clerk