

NEW HAVEN CITY PLAN COMMISSION ADVISORY REPORT

RE: **ZONING ORDINANCE TEXT AMENDMENT.** Amendment creating a new Section 60.3 to the Zoning Ordinance, amending and restating Sections 27 and 44 pertaining to On-Premises Signs in all zoning districts, including minor edits to Section 44.1 Off-Premises Signs. (Alder Richard Furlow)

REPORT: 1558-11

ADVICE: Approval

BACKGROUND

Currently, signage regulations for residential zones and commercial/industrial zones fall in different sections of the code. The signage regulations are very general and challenging to administer. The City of New Haven has experienced an emergence of new signage that warrants new categorization and clearer regulations.

PUBLIC HEARING

A public hearing was held on June 19, 2019.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Considerations under the Charter of the City of New Haven

Section(s) 181 and 182 of the Charter of the City of New Haven requires the following finding: The City Plan Commission finds that the proposed text amendments comply with Sections 181 and 182 of the Charter of the City of New Haven in that they are (i) uniform for all properties in the city, (ii) made in accordance with the comprehensive plan, (iii) designed to lessen congestion in the streets, secure safety from fire, panic and other dangers, promote health and the general welfare, provide adequate light and air, prevent the overcrowding of land, avoid undue concentration of population, facilitate the adequate provisions for transportation, water, sewerage, parks and other public requirements, and (iv) made with reasonable consideration as to the character and quality of life in all portions of the city and with a view to conserving the value of buildings and encouraging the most appropriate use of land throughout the City.

Considerations under the Comprehensive Plan

New Haven Vision 2025, Housing & Neighborhood Planning, Section IV-20: *Streetscape Details*. Pedestrian comfort can be vastly improved through attention to public and private signage as well as better quality and organization of street furniture. Sign standards, including a prohibition of pole signs, are recommended.

This ordinance amendment is consistent with the comprehensive plan because it is paying due attention to private signage. It creates the sign standards called for under the comprehensive plan. It treats pole signs differently by not permitting them in residential districts, redefining the term “pole sign” and differentiating them from electronic signs.

Considerations under the Zoning Ordinance

The Commission is charged with taking into account the various factors favoring or disfavoring a change in accordance with the Zoning Ordinance, Section 64(d)(2) as follows:

- a. Errors in the existing ordinance, changes that have taken place in the city and in patterns of construction and land use, the supply of land and its peculiar suitability for various purposes, the effect of a map change on the surrounding area, the purposes of zoning and the comprehensive plan of the City of New Haven;

Sections 27 and 44 no longer reflect the signage proposed in the City of New Haven in 2019. The ordinance currently distinguishes between Directly Illuminated Signs, Indirectly Illuminated Signs, and Non-Illuminated Signs. It defines types such as Belt, Pole, Ground, and Blade. This has become inadequate for types of sign applications brought to the City Plan Department and the Building Department. The proposed regulations create a menu of options, clearly defined, and the path to obtaining the desired signage.

Section 44.1 pertaining to Off-Premises signs was amended in 2018 to remove Bulletin and Poster Signs from the ordinance. The minor changes proposed clarify the section and carry out the intent of the 2018 amendment.

- b. Whether some other method or procedure under the zoning ordinance is more appropriate; and

The reorganization of the zoning ordinance is clearer and easier to navigate. Signage regulations for all types and all zones are consolidated into one section and belong to a new Article called "Site Requirements." This is clearer than where site-specific regulations currently exist, which is in the Article titled "Other Districts."

- c. In the case of a map change, the size of the area involved. As a general policy, the City Plan Commission shall not consider favorably any petition which would result in a total contiguous area (separated only by streets, and excluding the area of streets) of less than two acres in the case of a residence district, less than one acre in the case of a Business District, or less than four acres in the case of an Industrial District.

Not applicable.

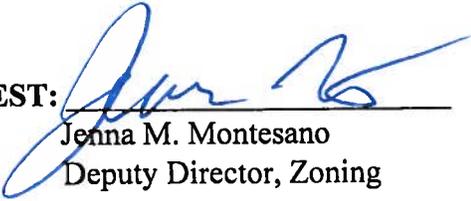
FINDINGS

The proposed ordinance complies with all the above planning considerations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on all the above, it is the determination of the Commission that the text amendments are in full compliance with the standards and requirements of Section(s) 181 and 182 of the Charter of the City of New Haven and Section 62(d)(2) of the New Haven Zoning Ordinance and should be approved. The City Plan Commission notes that the definitions for this Section are found at the end of Section 60.3, and if that section is not approved, the definitions should be added to this Section to complete it.

ADOPTED: June 19, 2019
Edward Mattison
Chair

ATTEST: 
Jenna M. Montesano
Deputy Director, Zoning