



Chatham County Planning Board Agenda Notes

Date: February 2, 2010

Agenda Item: VI. A.

Attachment #: 2

- Subdivision**
 Conditional Use Permit
 Rezoning Request
 Other: Ordinance Text Amendments

Subject:	Public hearing request by the Chatham County Board of Commissioners to consider amendments to the Zoning Ordinance, Off-Premise Sign Ordinance, and Lighting Ordinance. The proposed amendments are for changes to temporary signs, non-conforming provisions, internally illuminated signs, and dimensional requirements for signs in the O&I zoning district.
Action Requested:	See Recommendation
Attachments:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Zoning Ordinance Amendments 2. Off-Premise Sign Ordinance Amendments 3. Countywide Lighting Ordinance Amendments 4. Summary of Proposed Ordinance Amendments

Introduction & Background

The Board of Commissioners directed staff to review the sign regulations in the Zoning Ordinance and propose amendments to address special event signage and non-conforming signs. Planning Staff also proposed amendments to further address other temporary signs, provide additional definitions of signs in the Definitions section of the Zoning Ordinance, clarify the prohibition of internally-illuminated signs and add two exceptions in the Lighting Section of the Zoning Ordinance, and provide additional language addressing non-conforming signage. There are also amendments to the Off-Premise Sign Ordinance addressing non-conforming signage, as well as amendments to the Countywide Lighting Ordinance (adopted September 21, 2009) to correct section references and clarify that internally-illuminated signs are prohibited.

Discussion & Analysis

A public hearing was held on these proposed ordinance text amendments on January 19, 2010. At the public hearing, four citizens spoke in favor of the proposed text amendments. One citizen who spoke at the public hearing was concerned with the amount of time political signs would be allowed to be erected under the proposed text amendments. The current Zoning Ordinance states that all

political signs “shall be erected no sooner than 30 days prior to the date of the election and shall be removed not later than 10 working days after the date of the election to which they pertain.” The proposed amendment states that all political signs “shall be erected no sooner than the filing period deadline for the election for which a candidate is seeking office and shall be removed within 10 working days after the date of the election to which they pertain.” Staff prepared the proposed amendments for political signs to allow as much flexibility as possible and based on previous discussion with the Board of Commissioners, which expressed a desire to allow political signs to be erected during the early voting period.

The proposed language prohibiting internally-illuminated signs is a clarification of how staff has been interpreting the existing lighting section of the Zoning Ordinance. Attachment 4 also includes detailed information about all of the proposed amendments.

Recommendation

Planning staff recommends approval of the proposed text amendments to the Zoning Ordinance, Off-Premise Sign Ordinance and Countywide Lighting Ordinance.