

Planning, Streets and Traffic Committee
Monday, December 18, 2023 at 5:30 p.m.
City Service Center – 915 Quarrier Street – Conference Room

Members Present

Mary Beth Hoover, via phone
Jennifer Pharr, Chair
Becky Ceperley
Pam Burka
John Gianola

Staff Present

Dan Vriendt
Terri Allen, via phone
Matt Hartline
Sgt. Oldaker

Members Absent

Kathy Rubio
Bobby Haas

Others Present

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Unfinished Business**
- 3. New Business**

Rezoning: Bill No. 8020 - A Bill amending the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Charleston, West Virginia, enacted the 1st day of January 2006, as amended, and the map made a part thereof, by rezoning from a R-6 district to a C-8 district, the parcel of land identified as 875 Oakwood Road, South Annex District, Tax Map 11, Parcel 22 in the City of Charleston, Kanawha County, State of West Virginia.

Dan presented the staff notes. This is a request from Councilman Pat Jones from a church in his ward that wanted to have a digital panel on their monument sign.

The petitioner seeks to add clarify and expand the parcel's potential land-uses by seeking a wholly C-8 zoning. Such a switch to completely commercial zoning meets the standards of future land use and future development trends. Staff recommends approval for the following reasons: the rezoning is consistent with the future land use map in that it complies with the area's designation as a convenience commercial node within a larger suburban neighborhood; the rezoning clarifies the future uses of the parcel as it relates to other properties in the area, and the rezoning avoids spot rezoning by conforming the proposed commercial zoning to the surrounding development trends along the main artery of the area and maintains a confluence between the commercial and residential zones.

MOTION AND VOTE: Becky Ceperley makes a motion to approve Bill No. 8020. Jennifer Pharr seconded the motion and the motion passed by a unanimous vote of 5-0.

Text Amendment: Bill No. 8014 - A Bill amending the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Charleston, West Virginia, adopted January 1, 2006, as amended, by adding the definition of Digital Display Sign to Section 2-020, amending sections 24-050, 24-060, and deleting section 24-080-07 relating to authorizing the use of digital display signs.

Dan presented the staff notes. This is a request from Councilman Pat Jones from a church in his ward that wanted to have a digital panel on their monument sign.

The bill creates the definition of a digital display sign as: the portion of a sign message made up of internally illuminated components capable of changing the message periodically. Digital displays may include but are not limited to LCD, LED, or plasma displays. Removes the exception for time, temperature, or date signs which makes the ordinance content neutral. Allows digital display signs only as a freestanding sign with an area of 12 square feet or less. The signs must remain static and nonanimated and shall remain fixed for a minimum of 15 minutes. Messages must transition instantly, with no transition graphics. The luminance may not exceed 5,000 nits (candela per square meter) between sunrise and sunset or 250 nits during nighttime hours. Digital display signs are not permitted in the Central Business District or the East End Overlay District.

The proposed Committee Substitute would preserve the limitation of large digital signs continuing to be in and around the Convention Center, the baseball park, and the Clay Center. It also still recognizes the development in quality and growing ubiquity of digital signage in other areas, while recognizing the community hesitancy for large digital signs in more traditional and less dense commercial and residential areas. This chiefly achieved with the limitations set for in the substitute regarding the prohibition against visual distractions through rapid changes, animated transitions, brightness during both daytime and nighttime, and – most importantly – restricting these non-cbd signs to 12 square feet in area.

The proposed changes would address the concerns of digital signage being available anywhere our current signage regulations allow while still providing for increased choice and convenience for those looking to replace traditional display signs.

RECOMMENDATION AND FINDINGS:

If the committee is inclined to allow digital signs, this bill does that in a limited manner through restrictions and performance standards.

Staff feel the performance standards and restrictions will reduce the distracting effect digital signs have by limiting the size, brightness, and location while also requiring the copy to remain static.

MOTION AND VOTE: A motion was made by Pam Burka to approve Text Amendment Bill No. 8014. Jennifer Pharr seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously by a vote of 5-0.

4. Discussion

5. Approval of the Minutes of the November 27, 2023, meeting – Approve at the meeting.

6. Adjournment