

VILLAGE OF WILLIAMSVILLE
SIGN CODE COMMITTEE
KICKOFF MEETING
February 22, 2018 – 6:30pm

The meeting was opened at 6:30pm. The following members were in attendance:

Vic Paquet, Chairperson
David Chiazza, Iskalo Development
Joe Reinhart (attending for Chris McCaffrey), Ulrich Signs
Wes Stone, Planning Board Member and HPC Member
Bill Tuyn, Zoning Board Member
David Vitka, Catholic Health Systems

John Steinmetz, Steinmetz Planning Group
Molly Gaudio, Steinmetz Planning Group
Garret Wyckoff, Steinmetz Planning Group
Deb Rogers, Village Trustee Liaison
Lynda Juul, Village Administrator

The following members were absent:

Kim Addelman, Nest and Realty USA)
Rick Andrews, Zoning Board Member
Scott Mergler, Winters Signs
Chris McCaffrey (represented by Joe Reinhart), Ulrich Signs

John Steinmetz and Molly Gaudio of Steinmetz Planning Group gave a PowerPoint presentation and discussed various planning aspects related to signs with the group. This included what is and isn't working currently, the freedom of speech issue, what should and should not be regulated, and the various types of signs. Free standing pole signs are currently prohibited in the Village code, unless the sign is a directory sign. All non-conforming signs were given 7 years from the date of adoption of the last sign code, and such signs must be removed by November 28, 2018. Also of note is that content of signs should not be regulated due to freedom of speech issues. Color is another item that should not be regulated. All temporary signs should be treated with the same restrictions, or restrictions should be tied to the sign type and the district that the sign is in.

John asked that those present give their goals from the project. Responses were as follows:

Vic Paquet – Relieve applicant frustration and improve the process. There are inequities in appropriateness that need to be rectified. Need clearer guidelines on what should and should not be discussed regarding signage.

Deb Rogers – Create guidelines for use of A-frame signs.

Lynda Juul – Need to expedite the process to alleviate difficulty and amount of time required to obtain a sign.

David Chiazza – Predictability and efficiency.

Joe Reinhart – Code should be clear in its requirements. Introduction of more sign types.

Wes Stone – Streamline the sign code. Have items spelled out in the code. Alleviate Planning Board getting bogged down with materials and maintenance issues.

David Vitka – Speed to market. Address size of sign v. speed on Main St. How to design details. Wayfinding.

Bill Tuyn – Need a comprehensible code. Goal is walkability in a historic place. There are interesting models nearby (Niagara on the Lake, etc.). Business owners want to use a suburban model (i.e. Transit Rd.), not what is appropriate in the Village. Promote the village, walkability, and the aesthetic beauty of the Village. Education of committee members and the public.

David Chiazza – Community wants branded and local retail. If businesses don't want to deal with Village regulations, they can move across the Village line into the Town. Need to balance this.

John advised there would be 3 or 4 more meetings over the next 5 to 6 months. Committee meetings will stay scheduled on the 4th Thursday of the month at 6:30, and will be cancelled if necessary. The next step in the process is to engage the community through stakeholder interviews and/or a community workshop.

The next meeting will be a public meeting, to be held on Wednesday March 28th at 6:30pm at Village Hall. Steinmetz Planning Group will prepare materials to notify the public. The Village will disseminate on its web site and on Facebook, and will request the WBA notify its members via Constant Contact.

The meeting was closed at approximately 8:30pm.

Lynda L. Juul
Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer