

SIERRA VISTA PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
January 20, 2015
CITY HALL FRONT PARKING LOT/CITY MANAGER CONFERENCE ROOM
Meeting Minutes

The Regular Meeting of the Sierra Vista Planning and Zoning Commission was called to order at 5:00 p.m. in the City Hall front parking lot.

Members Present: Joe Kraps, Chair
 Kevin Jorgenson, Vice Chair
 Sharon Lake
 Bruce Piepho
 Ruben Miranda
 Bob Simon
 Dave Grieshop

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Donald Brush, Community Development
 Jeff Pregler, Community Development
 Tina Moore, Community Development

Others Present: Councilmember Huisling
 Councilmember Gray
 Councilmember Calhoun
 Councilmember Ash
 Kevin Adams, Culver's Restaurant
 Bob Gent, Tourism Commission/Astronomer
 Gene Fenstermacher, EAC Commission
 Ted Forte, Huachuca Astronomy Club
 Craig Liming, Business Owner
 David Roemer, Huachuca Astronomy Club
 Amy Carter, EAC Commission/Private Citizen
 Glen Cobb, Sierra Suites
 Kyle Behrens, Daktronics
 James Carpentier, Arizona/International Sign Association
 Adam Curtis, Sierra Vista Herald
 Rick Burke, Huachuca Astronomy Club
 Mike Houchins, High Desert Sign Company
 Aaron Meeks, High Desert Sign Company

ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA:

Mr. Jorgenson made the motion to accept the agenda. The motion was seconded by Ms. Lake.

VOTE: Approved by a vote of 7-0.

WORKSESSION:

The Commission congregated in the City Hall front parking lot to view a demonstration on daytime nit levels on a digital display sign. The demonstration included nit levels of 12,000, 7,500, 5,000, 2,000, and 1,000 nits. The Commission completed a score card to determine the appropriate level of daytime nits.

After the demonstration the Commission moved to the City Manager Conference Room for further discussion on Electronic Message Center (EMC's) signs.

ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES:

1. Mr. Miranda made the motion to accept the minutes of January 6, 2015. The motion was seconded by Mr. Grieshop.

VOTE: Approved by a vote of 7-0.

CHAIR COMMENTS

Mr. Kraps stated that Dan Coxworth, representing the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), will provide a presentation to the Commission on February 3rd, to discuss the extension of Buffalo Soldier Trail from State Route 92 to Moson Road.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Mr. Kraps opened the meeting to the public.

Mr. Craig Liming stated that the Commission should consider safety and potential driver distraction when making recommendations for EMC's.

Mr. Kraps closed the meeting to the public.

UPDATES ON PROJECTS

Mr. Brush gave an update on the following:

- 1) The sign permit for the Sierra Vista Regional Health Center was submitted to the City. The sign at the Colonia De Salud entrance will remain and be painted and renamed to be consistent with the other signs. The name of the new hospital is Canyon Vista Regional Health Center.
- 2) An open meeting law reminder that replying to all in an email violates the open meeting law rules.

CITY COUNCIL LIAISON COMMENTS

None

Work Session:

The Commission reviewed proposed draft amendments to Development Code Articles 151.02, *Definitions*; 151.10, *Sign Regulations*; and 151.11, *Outdoor Light Control*.

Article 151.02, Definitions

No discussion on these amendments.

Article 151.10.007, Electronic Message Centers

Number of signs.

Staff is recommending one free-standing sign per business. In addition, staff is stating that each conforming sign on the property can also be replaced with a conforming EMC sign. The Commission recommended additional clarification for "conforming" which should include height, size, and distance requirements.

Area of Signs.

Staff is recommending that all EMC signs not exceed a sign face area of 32 square feet. This is the current standard for all free-standing signs. The Commission asked whether 32 square feet was sufficient for EMC signs especially when constructing a 75 square foot tenant identification sign for shopping centers and commercial subdivisions. The Commission discussed both the percentage of the sign that should be electronic and the functionality. Some Commissioners noted that the signs should not change and would function similar to the existing tenant identification sign which only identifies the name of the business. Staff will follow-up with revised language to clarify this issue.

Message Transition.

Staff recommended an instantaneous message transition. The Commission deferred a recommendation on this item until they observed the various transition times at the sign demonstration following the meeting.

Length of Message Display.

Staff is recommending 5 minutes for the length of message display. Commission deferred a recommendation on this item until they had a chance to observe the differences in display length at the sign demonstration following the meeting.

Sign Brightness.

Staff is recommending that EMC signs have a maximum brightness level of 100 nits if the sign is located in or is facing a residential zoning district. The Commission discussed whether a distance requirement should be included in the language. It was decided that the word "adjacent" was sufficient to protect residences from the light impacts of EMC signs.

Staff is recommending a daytime nit level of 2000 nits. After observing the sign demonstration, the Commission determined that a daytime nit level was not needed, and requested that the language relating to daytime nits be removed.

Staff is recommending that the signs be equipped with photo cell sensors that are factory locked and dim the sign at sunset at the appropriate nit level. The Commission requested that the language be amended to state that the photo cell sensors dim the sign to an appropriate light level during the day and the required nit level between sunset and sunrise.

Non-Conforming Signs.

Staff is recommending that non-conforming signs can be replaced with an EMC sign provided they meet the previously stated brightness requirements and that the signs reduce their height per the chart provided in the sign code. This language is included as an incentive for businesses to replace their bright non-conforming signs with less bright EMC signs. The Commission discussed the idea of reducing the sign face proportionally with the height of the sign at their previous meeting. As a result, staff included language that reduced the sign face area in proportion to the sign height. Based on their discussion, the Commission decided to remove the language that reduces the sign face area because this requirement would eliminate the incentive for a business owner to replace their existing sign with an EMC sign.

Sign Illumination.

Staff recommended that internally illuminated signs have dark or opaque backgrounds to reduce the amount of illumination for the sign. The Commission discussed whether the dark or opaque background was appropriate since only the lettering would be seen at night. Staff will review and provide some additional clarifying language.

Article 151.11 Outdoor Light Control

No additional comments.

Mr. Kraps opened the meeting to the public for additional comments.

Mr. Carpentier stated that EMC signs provide an economic benefit to the business and therefore should function as an effective tool for advertising goods and services. He stated that electronic tenant identification signs should be used effectively because they will not provide the same function as a static sign.

Mr. Carpentier also referenced safety studies and stated that the distraction factor for EMC signs is minimal.

Mr. Gent complimented staff for acknowledging dark sky issues during the amendment process. He further mentioned that additional signs, to include EMC signs, will provide a negative aesthetic to the community.

Mr. Forte indicated that signs detract from the scenic beauty of Sierra Vista. To further his point he stated that visitors come to see the natural beauty of the community and not the signs.

Mr. Roemer stated that the maintenance of the signs could create a negative aesthetic and need to be addressed.

There being no additional comments, Mr. Kraps closed the meeting to the public.

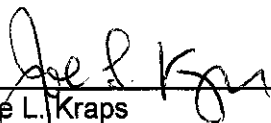
Conditional Use Permit for Verizon Communication Tower

Mr. Pregler provided a staff presentation on the Conditional Use Permit. He stated that the tower will be located at 2050 E. Wilcox Drive (Vista Transit Transfer Station) and will be 59 feet in height. The tower will be designed to resemble a pine tree.

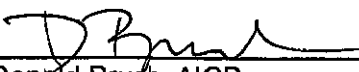
The Commission completed their discussion in the conference room and reconvened in the City Hall parking lot for an EMC demonstration on brightness, animation, message length, and transition time. The Commission completed score cards to determine preferences and provided staff with the results. Staff will provide the results at the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

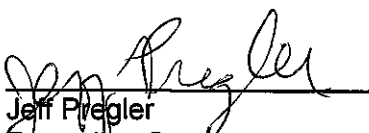
Mr. Kraps adjourned the meeting at approximately 7:30 pm.



Joe L. Kraps
Chair
Planning & Zoning Commission



Donald Brush, AICP
Executive Secretary
Planning & Zoning Commission



Jeff Pregler
Recording Secretary