

Council Minutes November 5, 2011

STATE OF TEXAS §

COUNTY OF TARRANT §

CITY OF BEDFORD §

The City Council of the City of Bedford, Texas, met in Work Session at 7:30 a.m. at the Bedford Public Library, 2424 Forest Ridge Drive on the 5th day of November, 2011, with the following members present:

Jim Story	Mayor
Chris Brown	Council Members
Ray Champney	
Roger Fisher	
Jim Griffin	
Roy Savage	
Roy W. Turner	

constituting a quorum.

Staff present included:

Beverly Griffith	City Manager
David Miller	Deputy City Manager
Michael Wells	City Secretary
Russell Hines	Building Official
Bill Syblon	Development Director

CALL TO ORDER/GENERAL COMMENTS

Mayor Story called the Work Session to order at 7:35 a.m.

WORK SESSION 7:30 a.m.

1) Council review and discussion of the City of Bedford Sign Ordinance.

City Planner Dan Boutwell presented information regarding the City's current Sign Ordinance. He stated that the regulations regarding signs should follow the philosophy and overall development vision for the City. The two types of signs in the City are permanent and temporary. Permanent signs include wall, pole and monument signs. Temporary signs include portable signs, banners, pennants, balloons, political signs, real estate signs, yard signs, construction signs and window signs. A majority of the regulations are for temporary signs. Regulations include the height and size of the signs, as well as how many can be placed on a piece of property.

Mr. Boutwell then presented an evaluation of current sign regulations.

Permanent Signs

- Primary Wall – The maximum size for these signs is two square feet for each square foot of store width. There is no limit to the number of signs on the building, but they must fit within the square footage requirement. The maximum height is six feet.
- Secondary Wall – These are allowed to be half the size of the primary wall sign.
- Freeway Pole – These have a maximum height of 50 feet and a maximum size of 200 square feet. There is a maximum of one sign per frontage for the entire premise, which can be either a pole or monument sign but not both.
- Non-Freeway Pole – These have a maximum height of 25 feet and a maximum size of 100 square feet. There is a maximum of one per frontage for the entire premise which can either be a pole or monument sign but not both.

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- Pylon – This was part of the latest amendment to the Sign Ordinance. These can be a maximum height of 50 feet and a maximum size of 200 square feet per tenant along the highway. In the community, these can be a maximum height of 25 feet and a maximum size of 100 square feet per tenant. Signage may extend down to three feet from the ground and there is no regulation regarding the number of signs on the pylon.
- Message Board – These are signs that can flash messages. These have a maximum size of 200 square feet along the highway and 100 square feet within the community. The size of the message board is calculated in the maximum square footage allowance for the pole.
- Monument – These have a maximum size of 75 square feet with a maximum height of seven feet. There is a maximum of one sign per frontage for the entire premise.
- Canopy – These have a maximum size of 30 square feet with 18 inch letters. These can be placed on three sides of the canopy.
- Mural – These are not regulated as they are considered to be art forms. However, they can be regulated if they include such things as the name of the business, address, phone numbers and hours of operation.
- Enclosed Frame Changeable Copy – These can be a monument or wall sign which has a frame case to change letters. These have a maximum size of 12 square feet. There are a maximum number of two signs per wall and four signs per site.
- Multi-family monument – These have a maximum of 75 square feet and a maximum height of 7 feet. There is a maximum of one sign per main entrance.
- Subdivision monument – These have the same size and height regulations as the multi-family monument. There is one sign allowed per main entrance of the subdivision.

Temporary Signs

- Portable – These have a maximum size of 50 square feet and a maximum height of six feet. The maximum is one per tenant. They must be a minimum of 200 feet separating each sign so not every tenant of a shopping center can have a sign at the same time. These are limited to being display for 120 days annually with 30 day intervals.
- Banners – These have a maximum size of 50 square feet and are not allowed to extend past the roof line. The maximum number is one per tenant. If a tenant has a banner, they cannot have a portable sign at the same time. There are exemptions for City and holiday banners. These are limited to being displayed for a maximum of 60 days annually for 10 days at a time with 10 day intervals.
- Vertical Banners – These have a maximum size of 35 square feet along the freeway and 12 square feet in the community. They have a maximum height of 35 feet. They must be spaced 50 feet apart and one sign is allowed for every 100 feet of street frontage. They must also be placed a minimum of 25 feet from the side property line.
- New Business Banner – These have a maximum size of 50 square feet and cannot extend past the roof line. These are allowed to be out 60 days before the business opens or 30 days if there is no finish out of the space.
- New Business Now Open Banner– These have a maximum size of 50 square feet and cannot extend past the roof line. These can be displayed starting 30 days after the issuance of the certificate of occupancy.
- Pennants – There are no regulations as far as the size of the pennants but they cannot extend past the roof line. They can be displayed during special events or grand openings.
- Balloons – There are no regulations as far as the size of the balloons but they have a maximum height of 50 feet. They may be displayed during special events or grand openings.
- Inflatables – There are no regulations as far as the size of the inflatable but they have a maximum height of 25 feet. They may be displayed during special events or grand openings.
- Window – They have a maximum size of 25% of the window area. There are no regulations as far as the height or the maximum number.
- Vehicle – These cannot be regulated as they are part of the vehicle.
- Weekend Builders – These have a maximum size of six square feet and a maximum height of three feet. They may be displayed from noon Friday through noon Monday. There are a maximum number of 25 signs and they must be spaced 200 feet or one block apart.
- Open House – These have a maximum size of four square feet and a maximum height of three feet.

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They may be displayed on Saturdays and Sundays one hour before and one hour after the event and are limited to five signs off premise and one sign on premise.

- Rent/Lease – These have a maximum size of four square feet and a maximum height of three feet. They may be displayed on Saturdays and Sundays only and are limited to a maximum of five signs on premise.
- Political – These are regulated as far as State law allows.
- Church/Charity/Civic On Site – These have a maximum size of 50 square feet and a maximum height of 15 feet. These may be displayed starting 10 days prior to the event for a maximum of 30 days.
- Church/Charity/Civic Off Site – These have a maximum size of 12 square feet and a maximum height of 3 feet. These may be displayed starting 10 days prior to the event for a maximum of 30 days.
- US/Texas/Patriotic Flag – These have a maximum size of 100 square feet and a maximum height of 35 feet. These are limited to one flag per type.
- Decorative Flag - These have a maximum size of six square feet and a maximum height of 25 feet. These are only allowed in Multi-Family Districts and are limited to four to eight flags per street frontage.
- Real Estate Land Sale - These have a maximum size of 100 square feet and maximum height of 15 feet. These are limited to two signs per acre and one sign per frontage.
- Residential Construction – These have a maximum size of 100 square feet and a maximum height of 15 feet. These are limited to two signs per acre and one sign per frontage.
- Multifamily for Rent/Lease Banner - These have a maximum size of 50 square feet and cannot extend past the roof line.
- Commercial Complex for Sale/Lease - These have a maximum size of 50 square feet and a maximum height of six feet. There is a limit of one sign per site.
- Commercial Units for Sale/Lease (Wall) – These have a maximum size of 50 square feet and cannot extend past the roof line.
- New Commercial Building – These have a maximum size of 100 square feet and a maximum height of 15 feet. There is a limit of one sign per frontage.
- New Commercial Building on 183, 121, and 157 – This item is left over from the original Sign Ordinance. There is a maximum size of 600 square feet and a maximum height of 50 feet. There is a limit of one sign per complex.
- Video and Digital – These types of signs need to be addressed individually by City staff and the Building and Standards Commission. They are difficult to regulate because they deal with such factors as pixels and intensities which are difficult to measure and enforce.
- Still In Business Banners – These types of signs do not fall under any current classification and are being used during the SH 183 expansion. Currently, City staff has just been permitting them.

Council recessed at 8:47 a.m. to attend the Fire Department Pinning Ceremony. Council reconvened at 9:31 a.m.

Council discussed the following changes to the Sign Ordinance based on balancing the need to be business friendly with the overall aesthetics of the City.

- Freeway Pole – Development Director Bill Syblon stated that he has received feedback from businesses and developers and that the City is likely to see requests for taller and larger pole signs with the SH 183 widening. Council was of the consensus to make the maximum size of these signs 300 square feet and a maximum height of 65 feet. If a business requires additional height to their sign, then they can go to the Building and Standards Commission.
- Non-Freeway Pole – In regards to the condition of these types of signs, Council was of the consensus to add teeth to the regulations regarding maintenance, requiring that the pole be painted and rust-free. Council also discussed the possibility of changing the height of the signs. Mr. Syblon stated that in discussions with developers, they like the current regulation and it is an incentive for them to move in and occupy sites.
- Pylon – Council was of the consensus to require some type of architectural design to this type of sign, such as a cap stone.
- Mural – Council was of the consensus to define “Mural” in the Sign Ordinance.
- Portable – Council discussed further regulations regarding this type of sign and the impact to

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businesses of not allowing these types of signs at all. There was also discussion regarding exemptions for civic and religious organizations, establishing a time period for businesses to come into compliance, and meeting with businesses regarding alternatives to portable signs. Council directed staff to pull the permit records for the last two years in order to contact businesses who have been utilizing portable signs during that time frame. Council was of the consensus to have staff draft language to eliminate portable signs and when the Ordinance comes back before Council, it can be voted on as a whole or the language regarding portable signs can be removed.

- Political – Council was of the consensus to add language to the Sign Ordinance stating that no signs, including political, are allowed on City property.
- US/Texas/ Patriotic Flag – There is a contradiction within the Sign Ordinance as there is language stating that the U.S. and Texas flags are exempt from these regulations. They will remain exempted and will be removed from the temporary use table.
- Commercial Complex for Sale/Lease – Council discussed establishing uniform standards for this type of sign and for making them permanent instead of temporary. Council further discussed incentives for making the signs permanent such as increasing the square footage of a location's permanent signage from 100 feet to 130 feet, with the additional 30 feet being for lease information. Council also directed staff to look at the feasibility of purchasing these signs. This information will be brought back before Council when the Sign Ordinance is voted on.
- New Commercial Building on 183, 121 and 157 – Council was of the consensus to strike this from the Sign Ordinance.
- Video and Digital – Council generally discussed establishing some general rules and guidelines but were of the consensus that it was a low priority.
- Still in Business – Council was of the consensus they are necessary due to the SH 183 expansion and that there needs to be some type of regulation that covers this type of sign during the construction. Council also discussed limiting the number of signs per location.

Council discussed the signage currently used to notify citizens of water restrictions. Staff explained that in the transition to Stage 1 for water restrictions, the water conservation signs were repurposed by adding “mandatory” to the sign. There was no additional cost to the City for these signs. Staff has been discussing alternative permanent signs that would include a phone number and the website to be installed for next year. In regards to the water restrictions, there have been numerous warnings given, but only a few citations. Overall, water usage has been significantly reduced, particularly on Mondays when no outdoor watering is permitted.

2) Council strategic planning to include discussion regarding the Council's visions, goals and related topics.

Mayor Story explained that the City received a call from a television show hosted by Terry Bradshaw called Today in America. They want to do a story on Bedford in a segment called Hidden Gems. He and City Manager Beverly Griffith will meet with the producers on Tuesday morning. The segment will be five minutes long and will air 20 times, both nationally and regionally. The production fee paid by the City will be \$19,800. At the end, the City would have sole rights to the video. There have been discussions with the City Attorney and Bob Hill of Hill Company who both offered cautious comments. There have also been discussions with representatives from Fayetteville, Arkansas which was previously featured on the show and they thought it was fabulous. The show will discuss how small cities are surviving and what they are doing as far as business and economic development. The show will proceed 75 to 90 days after the contract is finalized. The funds for the production fee will come out of the Hotel/Motel Fund. Council was of the consensus to proceed with talks with the producers.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Story adjourned the Work Session at 2:11 p.m.

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Jim Story, Mayor

ATTEST:

Michael Wells, City Secretary