

Continuing Sign Code Revision Concerns

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I continue to see areas in the 02-1-1217 Draft of the Revised Sign Code which I believe need to be addressed prior to its submission to the Sign Code Committee or the Planning Commission.

1. Master Sign Program (MSP)

A. Need for program not well articulated. Are there variance data to support the need for applicants to be given flexibility on given standards? Other facts, not wishes?

B. In what zones and in what ways can the MSP be used? Could a matrix/chart be added to show what the code's standards are in type, size/area, height and number for both permanent and portable signs to make that information readily accessible? Specific numerical caps for each category; a percentage cap for each sign or combined signage; or bonus increase for specific features would make clear what variability an applicant can propose.

C. Question of recommended role of Design Review. *The United States Sign Council, Model Code for Regulations of On-Premise Signs, p. 9 states, "Suggested language for Design Review is not included here primarily because Design Review cannot be researched or quantified in an objective manner. Design Review is an inherently subjective process related to aesthetics, and municipalities often place themselves in an awkward legal position in regard to Design Review implementation."*

The authors go on to list "Items that Design Review might properly review under the First Amendment: Style or type of illumination; Sign height; Sign size; Number of signs; Sign placement;; Materials, based on written criteria."

They follow that with another list: "Items that Design Review should strive to avoid: Is the sign harmonious with the building or property on which it is locate?; Mandating specific fonts and lettering styles; limiting so-called "items of information"; Colors; Sign Copy (the messages or the content); Vague and ambiguous language or language clearly open to interpretation."

Given that this publication is listed in the MSP section, p. 15, as a suggested resource, its recommendations may be appropriate to refine the content of 7A.7.

2. Respecting Tucson's Uniqueness

A. Adherence to the Outdoor Lighting Code. If that Code at this time is not well-written or technologically current, the Outdoor Lighting Committee should be given the responsibility to revise it; its use serves an important economic and aesthetic function in Tucson's community.

B. Scenic Corridor Zone Districts' preservation needed. Natural beauty/businesses must co-exist for the benefit of the entire area.