

# Civic Federation Input to Sign Ordinance Revisions

## Straw Votes on Items Recommended by the Planning & Zoning Committee for Consideration

### 1. Sign Ordinance Preamble

- Expand the Preamble to explain the rationale behind the treatment of commercial and non-commercial signs.
  - Agree: 49
  - Disagree: 0
  - Can't Decide At This Time: 5

### 2. List of Legally-Placed Signs

- Include examples of the types of commercial and non-commercial signs allowed on private property and on public property.
  - Agree: 51
  - Disagree: 0
  - Can't Decide At This Time: 3

### 3. Provide Definitions

- Define the terms public land, public lands, public property, public right-of-way, and public easement area.
  - Agree: 49
  - Disagree: 0
  - Can't Decide At This Time: 2
- Clarify treatment of government property that is not Arlington County property.
  - Agree: 48
  - Disagree: 2
  - Can't Decide At This Time: 1

### 4. Public Easement Areas

- The revision should seek to reduce restrictions on reasonable signage in the utility strip in between the sidewalk and curb in low-density (especially residential) areas. Rules for the placement of signs in the area should be drawn, to the extent feasible, with respect to the physical conditions rather than harder-to-discern underlying property rights.
  - Agree: 26
  - Disagree: 9

- Can't Decide At This Time: 19
- The Sign Ordinance should include information about how easements affect the property owner's right to display both commercial and non-commercial signs.
  - Agree: 50
  - Disagree: 2
  - Can't Decide At This Time: 0

#### **5. Signage in the Public Right-of-Way**

- Expand exceptions to include temporary signs for the above-mentioned types of events during a reasonable period related to the event.
  - Agree: 56
  - Disagree: 1
  - Can't Decide At This Time: 3

#### **6. Political Signs**

- Enable signs on public or private property related to a political event occurring at that property.
  - Agree: 40
  - Disagree: 4
  - Can't Decide At This Time: 15
- Clarify when and where issue-oriented signs are permitted on public and private property.
  - Agree: 59
  - Disagree: 1
  - Can't Decide At This Time: 3

#### **7. Lighted Signs**

- The Sign Ordinance should include luminescence standards for lighted signs.
  - Agree: 61
  - Disagree: 0
  - Can't Decide At This Time: 0

## **8. Site Plan Exceptions**

- The Sign Ordinance — or another section of the Zoning Ordinance — should require that exceptions have public notice before being approved via Site Plan.
  - Agree: 60
  - Disagree: 0
  - Can't Decide At This Time: 4

## **9. Sandwich Board Signs**

- Allow retail and restaurant establishments to use one sandwich board sign, which would not be part of their total signage calculation, provided that the sign is no larger than six square feet; is located on a frontage that has adequate sidewalk clear-width; and is placed so that it does not diminish or encroach into the pedestrian clear zone.
  - Agree: 34
  - Disagree: 16
  - Can't Decide At This Time: 5

## **10. Organization**

- Reorganize the Sign Ordinance to make it easier for different kinds of users to access the information they need.
  - Agree: 54
  - Disagree: 0
  - Can't Decide At This Time: 5

## **Individual Delegate Input**

1. Construction signs. Construction signs for projects now include far more information than the name and contact information of the developer/builder. This is inappropriate. Please regulate.
2. Sign pollution. The Civic Federation has taken a position in the past against sign pollution.
3. Safety. Please add safety to the Preamble that explains the reason why Arlington regulates signs.
4. Site Plan Exceptions. It is inappropriate for Site Plans to be a vehicle for getting a type of sign specifically not allowed in the Sign Ordinance or by variance.
5. Categories of Signs. To commercial, non-commercial, and political, please add and address religious signs non-profit signs. (2 people)

6. Sign Removal. Require people who put up signs to remove them when the signs are no longer valid.
7. Backlighting of Signs. Backlighting should be included when considering luminescence standards. (He have an example of a sign that was not approved to be lighted as subsequently being backlit.)
8. Luminescence. Please consider color and other aspects of intensity for illuminated signs.
9. Temporary Signs. Allow temporary signs and banners such as a Blood Drive banner.
10. Sign Changes. Be aware that a neighborhood sign may be used to display different messages at different times. (This is not a reference to an electronic sign.)