

Sign Regulations Update

CPHD, Planning Division
November 1, 2011



Schedule – Selected Items

- **November**

- County Board RTA Selected Topics* (Nov 19)
- Planning Commission Consideration of Selected Topics* (Nov. 28)

- **December**

- County Board consideration of selected topics*

*selected topics: sidewalk signs, umbrellas, signs for public parking facilities

- June – RTA full sign regulations
- July – Consideration of full sign regulations revisions

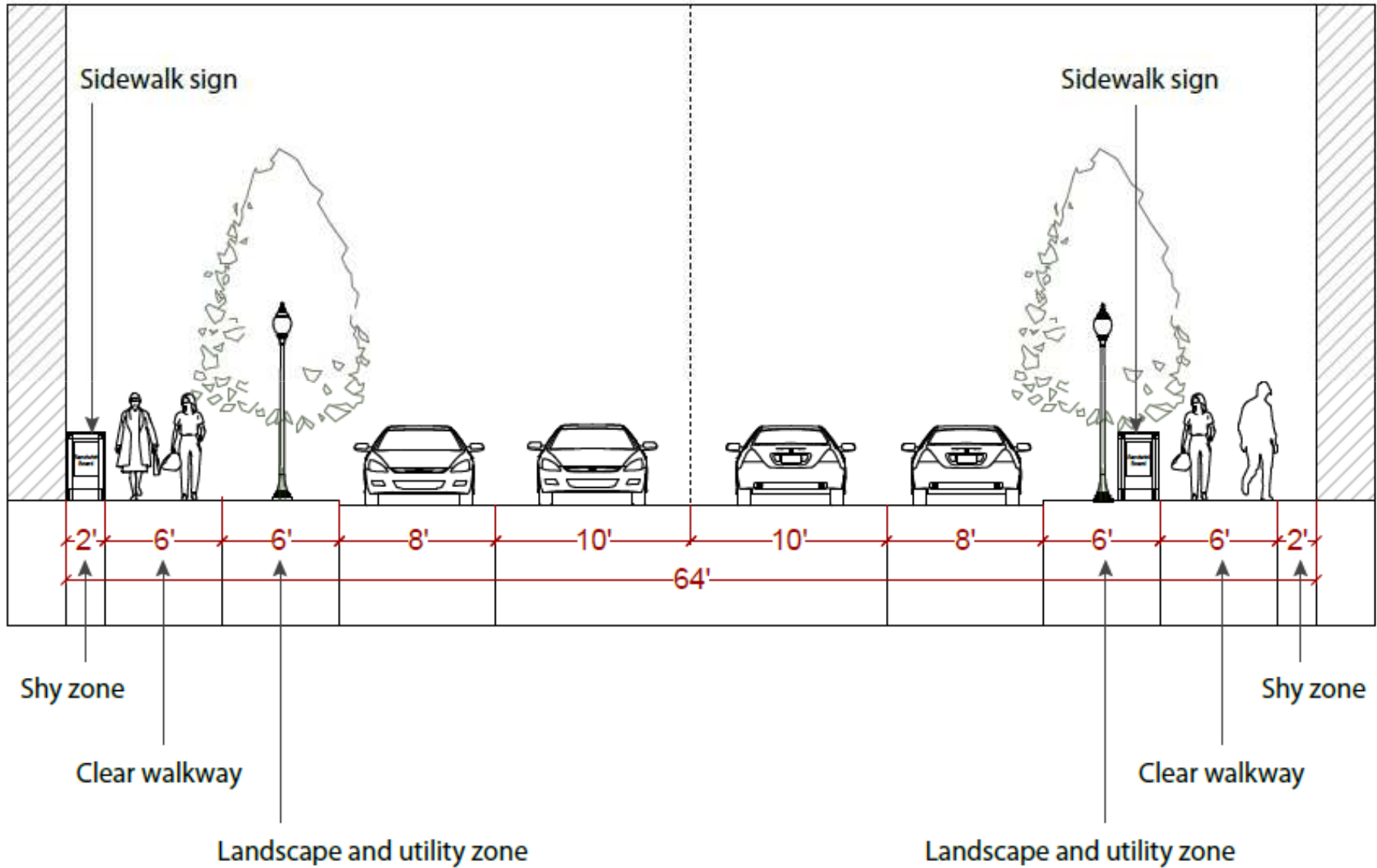
Sidewalk Signs



Temporary sidewalk sign

- **Context/Issue**
 - Provide an inexpensive way for businesses to promote themselves
 - Maintain pedestrian walkway through standards for placement and timing
- **Sidewalk Signs**
 - Within Commercial, mixed-use, Public, Special Districts
 - One per entrance from sidewalk to establishment
 - Minimum 6-ft clear walkway required
 - Required clear walkway maintained and, sign placed within landscape and utility zone or area adjacent to the building not part of clear walkway
 - Maximum 3.5 ft(h); 7 sf (area per side)
 - Self-supporting with no protruding legs beyond the plane of the sign

Sidewalk Signs



Umbrella Signs

- Context/Issue
 - Provide outdoor café owners with a means to promote identity and contribute to a vibrant streetscape through signs on umbrellas
- Umbrellas
 - Up to a maximum of 4 sf total area of commercial messages per umbrella within permitted outdoor cafes



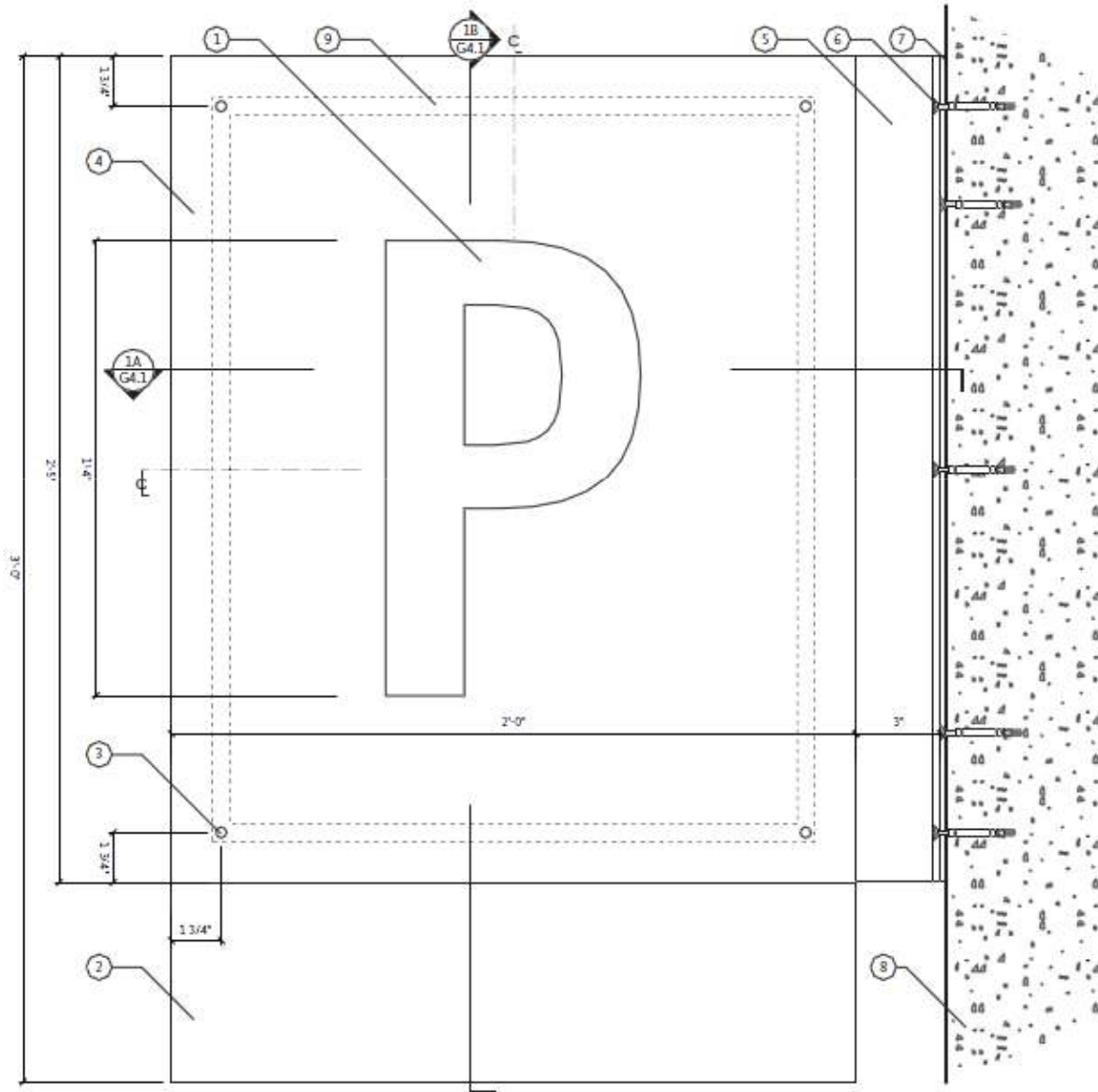




Public Parking signs

- Context/Issue:
 - A parking way finding system can help reduce congestion by reducing unnecessary travel by lost motorists
 - Extension of a pilot program in Rosslyn
- “P” identification signs currently permitted in Rosslyn extended to all parking garages providing public parking during defined hours
- Up to 6 ½ sf









Schedule – Sign Regulations Update

- June – RTA comprehensive sign regulations revisions
- July – Consideration of comprehensive sign regulations revisions

Goals of Proposed Revisions

- Update of Arlington County Sign Regulations (ZO Section 34)
 - User-friendly format including tables, graphics and examples to make the ordinance easier to use and administer
 - Incorporate best practices and Arlington-specific practices
 - Reduce the frequency with which issues require County Board attention
 - Ensure compliance with Virginia Code and other requirements and facilitate public health, safety and welfare



Highlights of Changes

- New format and organization
- Modification of sign regulations (subsection 34.3)
 - No option to modify requirements
 - All signs administratively approved
 - All comprehensive sign plans administratively approved
- Lighting Standards (subsection 34.10)
- New Sign Types and Regulations
 - Signs for garden apartments/condominiums (subsection 34.6)
 - Temporary sidewalk signs (subsection 34.7)
 - Codification of current practices for commercial signs (subsection 34.7)
 - Signs for institutional uses (subsection 34.8)
 - Electronic changeable copy (subsection 34.11)
 - Revised and clarified methodology for calculating sign area (34.17)



Areas not proposed to change

- Areas where no significant changes are proposed
 - Prohibited signs (subsection 34.4)
 - Signs in single-family districts (34.5)
 - Total sign area permitted for commercial buildings in commercial/mixed-use/industrial districts (subsection 34.7)
 - Signs in the ROW placed by public authority, including NC signs, banner systems (i.e. system of banners for a revitalization area) (subsection 34.9)
 - Sign Permits (subsection 34.12)
 - Freestanding signs (various subsections)

- Modification of Regulations (34.3)
- **Context/Issue:**
 - Reduce frequency with which issues require County Board attention
 - Codify current practices
- **Why Codify an Administrative Process?**
 - Increase predictability by providing clear standards
 - Increase efficiency of process by codifying consistent practices
 - Ensure consistent application of standards

Highlights

- Signs in the public right-of-way (subsection 34.9)
- Context/Issue:
 - Ensure consistent regulations with regard to sign content in the right-of-way
- Signs permitted in medians
 - Type 1: Commercial and noncommercial temporary signs
 - Temporary signs up to 1.5 sf
 - Between Friday sundown and Sunday sundown
 - Directional signs for activities within ½ mile of sign location
 - Type 2: Noncommercial temporary signs
 - Temporary signs up to 4.5 sf
 - Up to 31 consecutive days before an election



Outreach

- **Public Workshops/Forums for all stakeholders**
 - April – why and how we regulate signs in Arlington
 - September – policy overview and discussion
 - October – draft ordinance overview and discussion
- **Outreach to Arlington Citizens**
 - NCAC (10/13)
 - Focus Group (10/27)
 - Civic Federation (11/1)
- **Citizen Advisory Groups and Commissions**
 - Economic Development Commission/Retail Task Force (9/13)
 - HALRB (9/21)
 - Pedestrian Advisory committee – sidewalk signs (10/14)
 - FBC AWG – FBC Revisions for sign ordinance compatibility (10/12)
 - Disabilities Advisory Commission – sidewalk signs (10/18)
 - Transportation Commission (11/3)
 - ZOCO/Planning Commission (multiple meetings)
- **Outreach to Industry**
 - NVBIA/NAIOP (8/24)
 - Sign Industry (9/14)
 - Arlington Chamber of Commerce (9/23)
 - Brokers/Property Managers (10/3)
 - BIDs/Partnerships (10/6)
 - Business/Restaurants (10/13)

Feedback

- Concern about no more modification of regulations
 - Ability to address unusual uses and unique situations
- Concern about ability to place neighborhood yard sale, lost cat, Civic Association meeting signs
 - In medians, on weekdays, residential sandwich board signs, signs on private property
- Concerns about proliferation of signs in medians
- Lighting standard proposal needs further explanation and refinement
- Concerns that ordinance is too restrictive/too permissive
- Concerns that the breakdown of zoning districts is too broad
- Concerns about enforcement
- Some of the language in the draft is confusing



Next Steps

- ZOCO Review
 - November 15
 - December 6
 - Two additional meetings monthly through May, as needed
- Public Meeting – Spring
- Advisory Groups and Commissions, as appropriate for selected topics
- June – RTA full sign regulations
- July – Consideration of full sign regulations revisions

- How will additional feedback be reviewed throughout the ZOCO review?
 - Sign regulations web page (type “signs” into the search box on the County home page)
 - Use the “give us your feedback” link to provide comments
 - Staff will maintain comment/response matrices
 - Attend ZOCO meetings or follow the meeting summaries
 - Stay tuned for revised proposal and spring public meeting