

# TOWN OF WINDSOR

Town Elected Officials  
 Carita J. Richardson, Mayor  
 Wesley F. Garris-Vice Mayor  
 Clint Bryant  
 Durwood V. Scott  
 Greg Willis  
 N. Macon Edwards, III  
 Patty Fleming



Established 1902

Town Manager  
 Michael R. Stallings, Jr.

Town Clerk  
 Terry Whitehead

Town Attorney  
 Wallace W. Brittle, Jr.

August 5, 2014

Memorandum

To: Honorable Mayor and Council

From: Dennis W. Carney, Planning and Zoning Administrator

**Subject: Update on Temporary Signs and Banners**

The Planning Commission had requested Staff to ask the business community to attend the July 23, 2014 Planning Commission meeting to give their views on the temporary signs and banner ordinance. This was to create a more "business friendly" Ordinance that could be more fairly and evenly administered. Twenty seven letters regarding the meeting were sent out ten days in advance of the meeting to businesses that have used temporary signs before or that could reasonably be expected to use such signs.

At the Planning Commission meeting, Mrs. Shannon Kokot of M.A.M.A.s Creative Sweets spoke and pointed out that businesses just needed to talk to Staff about the Sign Ordinance and she found Staff to be most helpful for her business. The fee of \$25, although not huge, if permits had to be acquired several times a year and just the taking of time to get the permits, created a burdensome business environment. Councilman and businessman Mr. Durwood Scott also spoke about the need for a more business friendly Ordinance that is not so cumbersome. No other business people attended the meeting. Mayor Carita J. Richardson and member of Council, Patty Flemming, also were present and spoke in varying degrees on the temporary sign issue. A very good discussion occurred on how the Ordinance could be liberalized to make the Ordinance more business friendly. It was felt that the Ordinance should be amended to lengthen the time-frame of a temporary sign permit from its current thirty day length to sixty days and allow a temporary sign permit to approve two such time periods. The Planning and Zoning Administrator should be given the latitude to permit longer periods for temporary signs based on seasonal or other factors (Christmas, Grand Openings, etc.). A better definition of a temporary sign was discussed. The "sandwich board" or "v" shaped portable signs should be permitted as long as they are taken in at the close of business. The number of banners and other signs was discussed with a potential solution of road frontage length being the determining factor. The time spent going through the procedure and the costs were potential reasons for the noncompliance of many businesses. It was

easier to ask for forgiveness by either acquiring the permits or just removing the temporary sign than it is to acquire the permit in the first place.

Finally, the cost of temporary sign permits was discussed. The fee of \$25.00, although not great, was a problem to the small business person, particularly if they had to acquire several such permits in a year. The issue of the \$25.00 permit fee is one that the Planning Commission has no jurisdiction. Because the setting of this fee is strictly a Town Council matter, it was felt that Council would need to address this issue and if Council was so inclined, to amend the fee accordingly.

After this lengthy discussion, the Planning Commission requested Staff to craft an Ordinance that would better define what a temporary sign is, lengthen the time-frame of a normal temporary sign permit to sixty days from its current 30 day period, permit seasonal and other factors, allow a second time frame to be approved for a subsequent or second time period under the same temporary sign permit, permit "sandwich board" signs to be used and taken in at the close of business, and come up with a reasonable manner to regulate the number and quality of flag and banner signs both on and off of buildings. Staff is still working on these potential amendments as of this writing and with any comments or suggestions from Town Council will be taken back to the Planning Commission at the August 27<sup>th</sup> meeting.