
From: Steve Welton <steve@sepps.com>
Sent: Monday, May 02, 2022 11:51 AM
To: City Clerk Group
Cc: Heidi Jones; Laurel Fisher Perez
Subject: May 3 City Council Hearing
Attachments: LTR - CITY COUNCIL - COG Title 17 Amendments - 2MAY2022.pdf

Hello,

Please accept this letter for tomorrow's City Council hearing.

Thank you,
Steve

Steve Welton, AICP
Principal Planner



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2 May 2022

Mayor Perotte & Councilmembers
City of Goleta
630 Cremona Drive
Goleta, CA 93117

CityClerkgroup@cityofgoleta.org

RE: City Council Review of Proposed Title 17 Amendments

Mayor Perotte & Councilmembers,

On behalf of Suzanne Elledge Planning & Permitting Services (SEPPS), we appreciate the opportunity to provide input on the proposed Title 17 Zoning Ordinance Amendments (Case No. 22-001-ORD). With 28 years of professional planning experience in Santa Barbara County, we feel our knowledge of the public review and entitlement processes lends value to the feedback we provide.

SEPPS supports the proposed Title 17 Amendments as outlined in the staff recommendations and we offer the following additional comments that we also believe deserve consideration:

Story Poles & Signage – Public Noticing Requirements (§17.52.050 3,5)

We understand that the intent of the on-site posted Notice and Story Pole requirements is to elevate public awareness and involvement in the public review process. However, the unintended consequences of these recently adopted regulations leads to unmanageable conflicts with existing land uses, excessive noticing costs, and unsightly conditions, as described in greater detail below:

Story Poles: The required duration for story pole installations is excessive, impractical, and unnecessary. Story poles indicating a proposed development's footprint and height typically involves hiring a contractor to erect multiple wood poles with string lines of flags to demarcate the proposed development. In most cases, development projects are proposed on developed property with existing uses. Title 17 requires that the story poles be maintained at the project site a minimum of fourteen (14) days prior to the first public hearing date (usually DRB early in the process) and that the poles must remain in place until the expiration of the project's local appeal period (at the end of a discretionary review decision and appeal period). This means the poles must remain in place and be maintained for sometimes 1-2 years or even longer, depending on the timeframe for a project's discretionary review and approval process.

This timeframe often isn't feasible or practical in the situation where there is an existing operating business on site. Story poles can create impediments for existing developed project sites by limiting vehicular access, maneuverability, and impairing existing and ongoing use of the site.

It would be more practical and effective to require story poles during a certain *phase* of the design review process. Photos of the story poles could be used at future decision maker hearings, or the anticipated decision makers could be invited to view the story poles during the design review process. This procedure is used in other jurisdictions. If necessary, in certain circumstances, story poles could be reinstalled at the time of a decision maker hearing. While still inefficient, that is more desirable than leaving poles in place for several years and would reduce conflicts on site, maintenance, litter, and visual blight.

Noticing Signage: Similar to the requirements for story pole installation and duration, Title 17 requires excessively large signs (similar to billboards) be posted on-site to notice the public of a pending discretionary project. The goal seems to have been to make the larger signs legible as viewed from an automobile, and we question whether this is reasonable or safe. The size of the required noticing signs (4-feet tall by 8-feet long or 32 square feet in size) rival or are larger than on-site business signs. Due to the required size, noticing signs need to be manufactured out of wood in order to withstand wind load and to provide the durability necessary for the long posting timeframe also required, resulting in a huge cost; it can cost nearly \$1,000 for a single wood noticing sign.

The costs for manufacturing and installing the signage and the required maintenance are burdensome and onerous, but could be reduced by enabling reasonable discretion. In our experience, the noticing placards required by the County of Santa Barbara, the City of Santa Barbara, and the majority of other local jurisdictions, are sufficient in providing adequate on-site notice to the surrounding neighbors and others that pass the site.

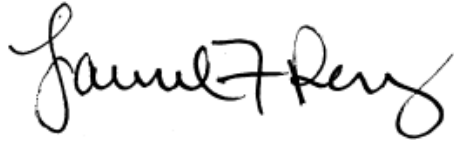
In addition to the excessive size, Title 17 requires a separate noticing sign for each parcel (APN) involved in a proposed development. We often work on projects that involve multiple parcels, and the current code requires installing multiple, large 4-foot by 8-foot signs. Ideally, staff would have the discretion to determine the reasonable number and location(s) of the signs, reducing waste and visual blight.

We recommend that your Council revisit and address the large site signage requirements to reduce the size of the signs required and to allow staff discretion in determining the total number and location of the required signs by balancing the impacts of the duration, cost and visual impacts with the opportunity for reasonable public notice.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact our office at 966-2758.

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Sincerely,
SUZANNE ELLEDGE
PLANNING & PERMITTING SERVICES, INC.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Laurel F. Perez". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Laurel" being more prominent and the last name "Perez" following in a similar style.

Laurel Perez, AICP
Principal Planner