

MEMORANDUM

TO:

LOMBARD PLAN COMMISSION

Donald Ryan, Chairperson

FROM:

Chris Stilling, Assistant Director of Community Development

DATE:

May 21, 2012

SUBJECT: PC 12-12; Text Amendments to the Zoning and Sign Ordinances

At the April 16, 2012 Plan Commission meeting, staff presented text amendments to the Zoning and Sign Ordinances related to the following:

- The Zoning Ordinance requirement that fences or walls within fifteen (15) feet of any multi-family, business, office and industrial buildings must be of a fire resistant type of construction was proposed for removal.
- Add generators and amend new central air-conditioning units, as permitted encroachments into rear yards.
- The Sign Ordinance provisions relative to balloons have been examined and are also being requested for amendment accordingly.

At the April 16, 2012 Plan Commission meeting, Plan Commissioners continued the text amendments associated with PC 12-12 to the May 21, 2012 meeting to allow staff time to further research the topics relative to generator noise emission and the balloon provisions. The following is a summary of staff findings:

Generators

Emergency standby generators are currently not listed as a permitted encroachment within any required yards. As residential generators are similar to the size and operation to that of a central air-conditioning unit, staff believes that generators should be regulated in the same manner as a new central air-conditioning unit. Staff believes that it would be in the public interest to allow both generators and new central air-conditioning units within a portion of the rear yard area, as opposed to a side yard encroachment, to minimize impacts and encourage a location with minimal impact. Staff has witnessed an increased demand for emergency residential generators. To fulfill the demand to allow these units while minimizing the potential impact onto adjacent properties, staff is proposing to also provide a restriction to ensure that emergency generators are for standby electrical power only and not as a primary power source.

For clarification, staff notes that the proposed text amendments would allow emergency generators and new central air conditioning condensers to be placed ten (10) feet into the required rear yard only; however, both items would still be prohibited in the required side yard

setback. A majority of the discussion centered on the State noise emission requirements and the Village's ability to enforce certain noise requirements. As noted at the meeting, staff has concerns about adding additional restriction pertaining to noise requirements due to the lack of training and equipment needed to enforce such requirements. Furthermore, the costs of hiring an outside consultant to review issues as they arise is also very costly.

Staff's Findings Pertaining to Generator Noise

In order to verify that the residential emergency generator units that have been approved by the Village have been operating per the State's Sound Emission Standards and Limitations For Property Line-Noise-Sources, staff reviewed generator permits approved over the last two years and compared them to the State requirements. Staff found that highest capacity residential unit (20 kW) (that received a permit) operates at 60Hz and had a sound output of 66 dB(A), when measured at 23 feet at normal operating conditions. Moreover, the unit has a sound output of 60 dB(A) during its exercise period, which is 12 minutes per week. The following is the State of Illinois requirements pertaining to noise pollution:

TITLE 35: ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

SUBTITLE H: NOISE

CHAPTER I: POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD

PART 901

SOUND EMISSION STANDARDS AND LIMITATIONS FOR PROPERTY LINE-NOISE-SOURCES

Section 901.102 Sound Emitted to Class A Land

a) Except as elsewhere in this Part provided, no person shall cause or allow the emission of sound during daytime hours from any property-line-noise-source located on any Class A, B or C land to any receiving Class A land which exceeds any allowable octave band sound pressure level specified in the following table, when measured at any point within such receiving Class A land, provided, however, that no measurement of sound pressure levels shall be made less than 25 feet from such property-line-noise-source.

Octave Band Center Allowable Octave Band Sound Pressure Levels (dB) of Sound Frequency (Hertz) Emitted to any Receiving Class A Land from

Class A Land (Residential)

31.5	72
<i>63</i>	71
125	65
250	57

PC 12-12 Continuance Memo May 21, 2012 Page 3

500	51
1000	45
2000	39
4000	34
8000	32

As the table above illustrates, a unit operating at the 63Hz level would be have a maximum allowable sound emission to a Class A land (residential) of 71 dB(A). As previously mentioned, staff found that highest capacity residential unit (20 kW) permitted by the Village operates at 60Hz and had a sound output of 66 dB(A), which meets the State's sound emission requirements. To put this in perspective, a typical lawnmower has 60dB(A) when measured from 30 feet.

Surrounding Communities Generator Provisions

In order to provide additional information on the topic, staff also reviewed regulations of surrounding communities that were also experiencing similar issues pertaining to emergency generator location. Staff found that in 2011, the Village of Burr Ridge amended their zoning regulations to permit standby generators in side yards, which were previously permitted in rear yards only. Upon speaking with Burr Ridge staff, they indicated that their research indicated that most, if not all, generators create equal or less noise than central air conditioning units, which they also permit in side yards. Village of Burr Ridge staff also indicated that the amendments have not caused any issues relative to noise complaints caused by standby generators being located in the side yard. It should be noted that Burr Ridge's noise requirements are "75 decibels measured 23 feet from the generator". Burr Ridge also has some landscaping screening requirements as well; however, staff notes that the proposed Village of Lombard amendments would allow emergency generators to be located in a portion of the rear yard only. While additional screening and size provisions could be beneficial, staff believes that allowing emergency generators in the rear yard only will keep them a far enough distance to be within the State guidelines and not create a nuisance to surrounding properties. It is not staff's intent to create additional provisions for the side yard as new generators would have to meet the respective zoning district's setback requirements.

Balloons

There has been an increasing demand from the business community to have greater flexibility to be able effectively advertise their businesses. To address such need, the sign provisions were amended in 2011 (as part of PC 11-16) to allow balloons that are less than two feet when measured in any dimension on a lawfully-established sandwich board. Staff is now proposing further amendments to the signage provisions relative to balloons. As there has been a growing desire by the business community to effectively draw attention to their establishment, staff is proposing to remove reference to 'balloons (less than two feet in diameter)' as an attention-getting device and relocate 'balloons (less than two feet in diameter)' to Section 153.206 'Signs Not Subject to a Permit'. With this amendment, businesses would be able to have balloons, 2' or less in diameter, year round and without needing a permit.

Staff's Findings regarding Balloons

Staff reevaluated the proposed balloon amendments in consideration of the over-advertising and hazard concerns raised by the Plan Commission. While staff believes that the proposed amendments will provide businesses with another tool to effectively draw attention to their establishment, it is important to ensure that the Village remains aesthetically-pleasing. Most businesses do take it upon themselves to actively monitor their own property, as to avoid becoming unsightly, but the balloon issue has become an ongoing code enforcement activity. Even with a full prohibition, businesses will continue to display balloons. Staff believes that it would be more productive to have regulations in place and allow balloons as opposed to a prohibition with negative results.

There are certain prohibitions in place that prevent certain structures, including signs, in clear line of sight areas. The Plan Commission raised concern relative to the placement of balloons in areas that could also pose a line of sight hazard. While balloons would not be able to be placed on structures within clear line of sights areas, staff would like to revise the proposed amendments to ensure that balloons remain clear of clear line of sight areas. As such, staff is proposing to further amend the definition of 'Balloons' to include language that prohibits balloons from being more than two (2) feet from the structure by which it is attached to. The balloons would still be required to be two (2) feet or less measured in any dimension, but the revision would require that the balloons be located a required distance (two feet) from the structure to ensure that the balloons do not end up in clear line of sight areas or become obstructions.

Staff is proposing the same amendments to balloons with the following revisions being made to the definition of 'balloon':

SIGN, BALLOONS

A type of inflatable sign which retains its shape from inflating with air, helium, or other gaseous elements, and is two (2) feet or less measured in any dimension, which is affixed to a structure by means of attachment less than two (2) feet in length.

Summary

Staff recommends that the Plan Commission proceed with the fence and generator amendments as previously proposed, and attached hereto as Exhibit A. Staff also stresses that the intent of such amendments is to make it easier to install emergency generator units in rear yards only in order to minimize impacts on adjacent properties. Lastly, staff recommends that the Plan Commission also adopt the revised amendments relative to balloons.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the above findings, the Inter-Departmental Review Committee recommends that the petition as presented does meet the standards set forth in the Zoning Ordinance and recommends that Plan Commission make the following motion recommending **approval** of this petition:

Based on the submitted petition and the testimony presented, the requested text amendments **comply** with the standards required by the Lombard Zoning Ordinance; and, therefore, I move that the Plan Commission accept the findings and recommendations of the Inter-Departmental Report as the findings of the Plan Commission and I recommend to the Corporate Authorities **approval** of PC 12-12.

Inter-Departmental Review Group Report Approved By:

William J. Heniff, AICP

Director of Community Development

Exhibit A

CHAPTER 155: ZONING CODE

SECTION 2: GENERAL PROVISIONS

155.205 "Fences, Wall and Hedges"

- (1) Fences or walls in Residential Districts.
- (a) Fence or Wall Materials Fences or walls in residential districts shall not include the use of barbed wire or other material intended to maintain security by means of bodily injury. Electrified fences shall not be permitted in residential districts. Fences or walls within fifteen feet (15') of any multi family building must be of fire resistant type of construction, as approved by the Building Division. Materials for fences or walls in the clear line of sight area shall meet the requirements of Section 155.205(A)(1)(e) of this Chapter.
- (2) Fences or Walls in Business and Office Districts
- (a) Fence or Wall Materials The use of barbed wire shall be permitted only around approved outside storage areas and only at a height greater than six feet (6') and less than eight feet (8') above the ground. No electrified fences shall be permitted. Fences or walls within fifteen feet (15') of any building must be of fire resistant type construction, as approved by the Building Division. Materials for fences or walls in the clear line of sight area shall meet the requirements of Section 155.205(A)(2)(e) of this Chapter.
- (3) Fences or Walls in Industrial Districts
- (a) Fence or Wall Materials. The use of barbed wire shall be permitted only around approved outside storage areas and only at a height greater than eight feet (8') and less than ten feet (10') above the ground. No electrified fences or walls shall be permitted. All fences within fifteen feet (15') of any building must be of fire resistant type of construction, as approved by the Bureau of Inspectional Services. Materials for fences or walls in the clear line of sight area shall meet the requirements of Section 155.205(A)(3)(e) of the Chapter.

155.212 "Permitted Obstructions In Required Yards"

Types of Structure or Use Obstruction X = Permitted Obstruction	Front & Corner Side Yard	Interior Side Yards	Rear Yard
Central air-conditioning systems, new			Must meet footnote F
Emergency Generators, provided for standby			Must meet footnote F

electrical power but not as a primary power		
source	<u></u>	

F. The unit shall not encroach more than four ten feet (410') into the requisite yard.

CHAPTER 153: SIGNS

153.206 SIGNS NOT SUBJECT TO A PERMIT

The following named signs will not require a permit unless the sign is illuminated. They shall meet any requirements incorporated in this ordinance.

- (A) Residential Directional Signs
- (B) Political Campaign Signs, which are sixteen (16) square feet or less in area
- (C) Window Displays
- (D) Rummage or Garage Sale Signs
- (E) Nameplates
- (F) Real Estate Signs for Single Family Residences
- (G) Flags
- (H) Holiday Decorations
- (I) Motor Fuel Promotional Signs
- (J) Traffic Control Signs
- (K) Sponsor Signage
- (L) Balloons

153.602 DEFINITIONS

ATTENTION GETTING DEVICE

Any flag festoon, valance, propeller, pole covers, spinner, streamer, searchlights, balloons two (2) feet or less measured in any dimension, and any similar device or ornamentation designated for the purposes of attracting attention, promoting or advertising, without conveying a specific message or copy.

SIGN, BALLOONS

A type of inflatable sign which retains its shape from inflating with air, helium, or other gaseous elements, and is two (2) feet or less measured in any dimension, which is affixed to a structure by means of attachment less than two (2) feet in length.

PC 12-12 Continuance Memo May 21, 2012 Page 8

Standards for Text Amendments

For any change to the Zoning Ordinance, the standards for text amendments must be affirmed. The standards and staff comments are noted below:

1. The degree to which the proposed amendment has general applicability within the Village at large and not intended to benefit specific property;

The proposed amendments will be applicable throughout the entire Village.

2. The consistency of the proposed amendment with the objectives of this ordinance and the intent of the applicable zoning district regulations;

The proposed amendments are consistent with the objectives of the ordinance and intent of the applicable zoning districts in that they do not change the intent of any current regulations. Rather, they are meant to clarify the language currently within the Village Code.

3. The degree to which the proposed amendment would create nonconformity;

The proposed amendments would create no nonconformities as they actually make the Zoning Ordinance more permissive.

4. The degree to which the proposed amendment would make this ordinance more permissive;

The proposed amendments will make the ordinance more permissive by allowing a greater variety of fences materials within fifteen (15) feet of any multi-family, business, office and industrial buildings; generators as permitted encroachments into certain required yards; and, balloons less than two (2) feet in any dimension without a permit.

5. The consistency of the proposed amendment with the Comprehensive Plan;

Staff believes that the proposed amendments would be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

6. The degree to which the proposed amendment is consistent with village policy as established in previous rulings on petitions involving similar circumstances.

The Village has a history of amending its Zoning Ordinance to address evolving circumstances presented by petition or otherwise. The proposed amendments are consistent with established Village policy in this regard.



TO: Lombard Plan Commission HEARING DATE: April 16, 2012

FROM: Department of PREPARED BY: Michael S. Toth

Community Development Planner I

TITLE

PC 12-12; Text Amendments to the Zoning and Sign Ordinances:

The Village of Lombard is requesting the following text amendments to the Zoning and Sign Ordinances:

- 1. Section 155.205 of the Zoning Ordinance relative to fencing materials.
- 2. Section 155.212 of the Zoning Ordinance relative to permitted encroachments.
- 3. Chapter 153 (Sign Ordinance) relative to balloons.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Petitioner:

Village of Lombard

ANALYSIS

DESCRIPTION

The Village has a history of amending its Zoning and Sign Ordinances to address evolving circumstances presented by petition or otherwise. As a result, staff is proposing to amend the Zoning Ordinance requirement that fences or walls within fifteen (15) feet of any multi-family, business, office and industrial buildings must be of a fire resistant type of construction. Staff is also requesting to add generators, and amend new central air-conditioning units, as permitted encroachments into rear yards. The Sign Ordinance provisions relative to balloons have been examined and are also being requested for amendment accordingly.

INTER-DEPARTMENTAL REVIEW COMMENTS

PRIVATE ENGINEERING SERVICES

Private Engineering Services has no comments.

Lombard Plan Commission Re: PC 12-12 Page 2

PUBLIC WORKS

Public Works Engineering has no comments.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Fire Department has no issues or concerns with the proposed amendments.

BUILDING DIVISION

The Building Division has no comments.

PLANNING

Proposed Amendments

There are three text amendments being requested as part of this petition:

Section 155.205 of the Zoning Ordinance relative to fencing materials.

The Zoning Ordinance currently requires that fences or walls within fifteen (15) feet of any multifamily, business, office and industrial buildings be of a fire resistant type of construction. Typically, any requirement relative to the material of a structure (including fences) is specifically addressed in the Building Code. As the current Building Code no longer requires fire resistant type of construction for fencing adjacent to commercial structures, staff is proposing to eliminate this provision. The proposed amendment will also help create consistency in the style and design of the fencing.

Section 155.212 of the Zoning Ordinance relative to permitted encroachments.

Staff has witnessed an increased demand for emergency residential generators. As generators are not listed as a permitted encroachment, they are currently required to be placed in the buildable area of a property (must meet current setbacks). Unlike a structure, such as a fence or shed, there are more critical elements involved with the piping and electrical components of a home that make generator placement more complicated. As residential generators are similar to the size and operation to that of a central air-conditioning unit, staff believes that generators should be regulated in the same manner as a new central air-conditioning unit.

Staff believes that it would be in the public interest to allow both generators and new central air-conditioning units within the rear yard area. New central air-conditioning units are currently listed as a permitted encroachment in the rear yard only, as long as the unit does not encroach more than four (4') feet into the rear yard. Staff is proposing provisions that would allow both generators and new central air-conditioning units to encroach up to ten (10') feet into the required rear yard area. The revised setback would allow for greater opportunity for placing such structures away from the principal structures on neighboring properties. This amendment would also benefit non-conforming properties that do not meet the current rear yard setbacks. To ensure minimal impact onto adjacent properties, both new structures would still be prohibited in the side yard.

Lombard Plan Commission Re: PC 12-12

Page 3

As previously stated, current code does not specifically make reference to generators and they are therefore regulated as accessory structures. As part of this amendment, staff is proposing to specifically identify generators within the "Permitted Obstructions" list of Section 155.212. To minimize impact on adjacent properties with noise, staff is proposing to provide a restriction to ensure that emergency generators are for standby electrical power only and not as a primary power source. It should be noted that through staff's research, we have found that emergency generators will turn on for a self-diagnostic check a few times per week for up to 20 minutes.

In 2009 (PC 09-19), the Village approved text amendments to the Lombard Zoning Ordinance to establish replacement central air-conditioning systems as permitted obstructions in certain side and rear yards as long as a) the unit does not further encroach into the requisite yard than the previous unit and b) the unit does not encroach more than four feet (4') into the requisite yard. Staff recognized that the costs associated with the relocation of a central air conditioning unit. Therefore, staff found that allowing replacement air conditioning systems to be listing as a permitted encroachment in the interior side yard (with provisions) would reduce the number of variation requests, encourage residents to obtain a permit, eliminate relocation costs and maintain the existing character of residential properties throughout the Village.

Chapter 153 (Sign Ordinance) relative to balloons.

There has been an increasing demand from the business community to have greater flexibility to be able effectively advertise their businesses. To address such need, the sign provisions were amended in 2011 (as part of PC 11-16) to allow balloons that are less than two feet when measured in any dimension on a lawfully-established sandwich board. Staff is now proposing further amendments to the signage provisions relative to balloons.

When the Village approved the text amendments as part of PC 09-26, relative to the regulation of temporary signage, the definition of attention-getting devices was amended to include balloons (less than two feet in diameter) as attention-getting devices. Under the attention-getting device regulations such devices (including balloons (less than two feet in diameter)) require a permit and can only be displayed for a certain time period. The permits are restricted to 14 days each with four permits being allowed for the calendar year. As there has been a growing desire by the business community to effectively draw attention to their establishment, staff is proposing to remove reference to 'balloons (less than two feet in diameter)' as an attention-getting device and relocate 'balloons (less than two feet in diameter)' to Section 153.206 'Signs Not Subject to a Permit'. With this amendment, businesses would be able to have balloons, 2' or less in diameter, year round and without needing a permit. Provisions related to property maintenance and removing deflated balloons would still be applicable.

Staff finds that the proposed amendments will not be detrimental to public safety or neighborhood aesthetics, but rather will provide businesses with another tool to effectively draw attention to their establishment.

Lombard Plan Commission

Re: PC 12-12

Page 4

The following are the proposed text amendments for the Sign Ordinance. Proposed changes are denoted by <u>underlining</u> new text with text to be removed denoted by a <u>strikethrough</u>.

CHAPTER 155: ZONING CODE

SECTION 2: GENERAL PROVISIONS

155.205 "Fences, Wall and Hedges"

- (1) Fences or walls in Residential Districts.
- (a) Fence or Wall Materials Fences or walls in residential districts shall not include the use of barbed wire or other material intended to maintain security by means of bodily injury. Electrified fences shall not be permitted in residential districts. Fences or walls within fifteen feet (15') of any multi-family building must be of fire resistant type of construction, as approved by the Building Division. Materials for fences or walls in the clear line of sight area shall meet the requirements of Section 155.205(A)(1)(e) of this Chapter.
- (2) Fences or Walls in Business and Office Districts
- (a) Fence or Wall Materials The use of barbed wire shall be permitted only around approved outside storage areas and only at a height greater than six feet (6') and less than eight feet (8') above the ground. No electrified fences shall be permitted. Fences or walls within fifteen feet (15') of any building must be of fire resistant type construction, as approved by the Building Division. Materials for fences or walls in the clear line of sight area shall meet the requirements of Section 155.205(A)(2)(e) of this Chapter.
- (3) Fences or Walls in Industrial Districts
- (a) Fence or Wall Materials. The use of barbed wire shall be permitted only around approved outside storage areas and only at a height greater than eight feet (8') and less than ten feet (10') above the ground. No electrified fences or walls shall be permitted. All fences within fifteen feet (15') of any building must be of fire resistant type of construction, as approved by the Bureau of Inspectional Services. Materials for fences or walls in the clear line of sight area shall meet the requirements of Section 155.205(A)(3)(e) of the Chapter.

155.212 "Permitted Obstructions In Required Yards"

Types of Structure or Use Obstruction X = Permitted Obstruction	Front & Corner Side Yard	Interior Side Yards	Rear Yard
Central air-conditioning systems, new			Must meet footnote F
Emergency Generators, provided for standby electrical power but not as a primary power source			Must meet footnote F

Lombard Plan Commission Re: PC 12-12

Page 5

F. The unit shall not encroach more than four ten feet (410') into the requisite yard.

CHAPTER 153: SIGNS

153.206 SIGNS NOT SUBJECT TO A PERMIT

The following named signs will not require a permit unless the sign is illuminated. They shall meet any requirements incorporated in this ordinance.

- (A) Residential Directional Signs
- (B) Political Campaign Signs, which are sixteen (16) square feet or less in area
- (C) Window Displays
- (D) Rummage or Garage Sale Signs
- (E) Nameplates
- (F) Real Estate Signs for Single Family Residences
- (G) Flags
- (H) Holiday Decorations
- (I) Motor Fuel Promotional Signs
- (J) Traffic Control Signs
- (K) Sponsor Signage
- (L) Balloons

153.602 DEFINITIONS

ATTENTION GETTING DEVICE

Any flag festoon, valance, propeller, pole covers, spinner, streamer, searchlights, balloons two (2) feet or less measured in any dimension, and any similar device or ornamentation designated for the purposes of attracting attention, promoting or advertising, without conveying a specific message or copy.

SIGN, BALLOONS

A type of inflatable sign which retains its shape from inflating with air, helium, or other gaseous elements and is two (2) feet or less measured in any dimension.

Standards for Text Amendments

For any change to the Zoning Ordinance, the standards for text amendments must be affirmed. The standards and staff comments are noted below:

I. The degree to which the proposed amendment has general applicability within the Village at large and not intended to benefit specific property;

Lombard Plan Commission Re: PC 12-12 Page 6

The proposed amendments will be applicable throughout the entire Village.

2. The consistency of the proposed amendment with the objectives of this ordinance and the intent of the applicable zoning district regulations;

The proposed amendments are consistent with the objectives of the ordinance and intent of the applicable zoning districts in that they do not change the intent of any current regulations. Rather, they are meant to clarify the language currently within the Village Code.

3. The degree to which the proposed amendment would create nonconformity;

The proposed amendments would create no nonconformities as they actually make the Zoning Ordinance more permissive.

4. The degree to which the proposed amendment would make this ordinance more permissive;

The proposed amendments will make the ordinance more permissive by allowing a greater variety of fences materials within fifteen (15) feet of any multi-family, business, office and industrial buildings; generators as permitted encroachments into certain required yards; and, balloons less than two (2) feet in any dimension without a permit.

5. The consistency of the proposed amendment with the Comprehensive Plan;

Staff believes that the proposed amendments would be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

6. The degree to which the proposed amendment is consistent with village policy as established in previous rulings on petitions involving similar circumstances.

The Village has a history of amending its Zoning Ordinance to address evolving circumstances presented by petition or otherwise. The proposed amendments are consistent with established Village policy in this regard.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the above findings, the Inter-Departmental Review Committee recommends that the petition as presented does meet the standards set forth in the Zoning Ordinance and recommends that Plan Commission make the following motion recommending approval of this petition:

Based on the submitted petition and the testimony presented, the requested text amendments comply with the standards required by the Lombard Zoning Ordinance; and, therefore, I move that the Plan Commission accept the findings and recommendations of the Inter-Departmental Report as the findings of the Plan Commission and I recommend to the Corporate Authorities approval of PC 12-12.

Lombard Plan Commission Re: PC 12-12

Page 7

Inter-Departmental Review Group Report Approved By:

William J. Heniff, AICP

Director of Community Development

WJH:MT

H:\CD\WORDUSER\PCCASES\2012\PC 12-12\Report 12-12.doc