

VILLAGE OF LOMBARD
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL REVIEW GROUP REPORT

TO: Lombard Plan Commission

HEARING DATE: June 19, 2006

FROM: Department of Community
Development

PREPARED BY: William Heniff, AICP
Senior Planner

TITLE

PC 06-05; Text Amendments to the Lombard Sign Ordinance: The Village of Lombard is proposing amendments to the Lombard Sign Ordinance within the Conservation/Recreation District, as follows:

- A. Within Section 153.501 (B) of the Sign Ordinance:
 1. Add Informational Signs and establishing regulations thereto;
 2. Add Institutional Signs and establishing regulations thereto;
 3. Add Temporary Signs and establishing regulations thereto;
 4. Establish regulations for Sponsor Signage and banners;
 5. Amending Section 153.501 (B)(2) pertaining to the size, height, location and number of permitted free-standing signs; and
 6. Amending Section 153.501 (B)(3) pertaining to the number and area of permitted wall signs.
- B. Amend Section 153.602 – Definitions to include provisions for “sponsor signage” and/or any required companion text amendments associated with the amendments set forth above.
- C. Amend Section 153.206 – Signs Not Subject to a Permit

DESCRIPTION:

The Planning Services Division of the Community Development Department is proposing several text amendments to the Zoning Ordinance associated with various types of signage permitted within the Conservation/Recreation (C/R) District. The proposed amendments are intended to codify the special types of signage commonly found within this district and to establish reasonable regulations for such signage.

Background

Staff has been reviewing the signage regulations within the C/R District. Of particular note, staff finds a number of issues or deficiencies within the existing code including:

- Temporary Signs – right now, the C/R District does not provide for temporary signs. However, entities like the Lombard Park District or selected schools frequently use such signs to advertise their events or to provide general information to the public.

- Sponsor Signage – many sponsors of Park District teams frequently hang banners around the backstops of ball fields. Other signage is associated with special events. As the current Ordinance regulations do not provide for such signage, the Code should be amended to address such activities.
- Freestanding Signs – under current regulations one sign is allowed per street frontage with significant limitations on sign size. However as many parks are several dozen acres in size, this signage limitation does not always provide sufficient signage for the site. The Park District’s signage frequently consists of name identification signs for their respective parks, rather than advertising products or services. Additionally, the size of the existing signs may not reflect the needs of the respective establishment.

Given these limitations, staff is beginning to work with the Lombard Park District to develop modifications to the C/R regulations to provide for requisite signage. As the District is by far the largest property owner of the land within the District, the amendments are intended to accommodate their needs while ensuring that signage on the property is not excessive.

2002 Workshop Session

Staff previously brought forward a workshop session to the Plan Commission to discuss sign size provisions in 2002. The Plan Commission stated a general desire to establish reasonable sign regulations for Park District informational signs. However, the Commissioners also did not want to consider numerous sign variation petitions from various governmental entities - the primary property owners of properties within the C/R District.

Western Acres Annexation petition

In 2005, the Village annexed the Western Acres Golf Course property. The companion annexation agreement included provisions to relax sign standards pertaining to banner signage associated with golf events on the property (it was specifically permitted without sign permits).

Temporary Signage

Staff has also identified other types of signage that has been located on C/R District properties. These include directional signs, temporary signs (e.g., signs denoting Park District activities), and sponsor signage. All of these signs are technically not permitted within the C/R District regulations. However, many of these signs serve a valuable purpose for residents and users of these sites. As such, staff believes the code should reflect the need for a greater variety of signage in the C/R District.

Review of Other Communities’ Regulations

Staff also surveyed a number of other municipalities to determine how they regulate signage for other governmental jurisdictions. Through this survey, staff found that some communities gave blanket exemptions to signage while other request compliance with their respective code. Some communities that do not have a C/R or comparable district, zone parks and schools within a residence district and routinely grant signage variations.

Proposed Amendments

Staff is also considering changes to the signage requirements for the C/R District to increase the allowed square footage for freestanding signs at selected locations and to require minimum setbacks from all property lines. One way to allow for greater signage in C/R Districts while ensuring that the sign size is appropriate with the location of the property is to tie the sign size to the street classification of the abutting street as noted in the Village Comprehensive Plan. For example, sites along arterial roadways could allow for greater signage than those sites that are bounded by local streets. This concept is currently utilized in the Sign Ordinance for the B3 and B4 Districts, where the sign size is related to whether the property fronts a state right-of-way.

The Commission should be aware that any changes considered would be in effect for all property zoned C/R and not just park district property due to First Amendment considerations. If the Commission does not desire to amend the Ordinance, property owners would still have the ability to apply for a signage variation through the Zoning Board of Appeals.

The proposed text amendments are noted below. **Proposed changes to the ordinances are denoted by striking out old text and underlining new text.** Commentary regarding the proposed amendments is offered in *italics*. The Standards for Text Amendments is also included below.

Please also note that before this petition is considered by the Village Board staff will amend all numerical references to reflect the final proposed code changes.

SECTION 2: GENERAL PROVISIONS

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
- 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

SECTION 2: GENERAL PROVISIONS

SPECIFICATIONS BY SIGN

153.236 SPONSOR SIGNAGE

It is unlawful to construct, erect, or maintain any Sponsor Signage without complying with the following provisions:

- A Area: No sponsor sign shall exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in sign area.
- B Location: Sponsor signage shall only be affixed to the following permanent structures: façade of a principal structure, wall of an accessory structure, fence, or permanent freestanding sign. Signs shall only be affixed to a single structure at all corners of the sign and shall not be erected in a manner in which the sign is suspended and/or extending the distance between two separate structures.
- C. Time Limitations: Sponsor signage shall only be allowed on a property in the C/R District, as follows:
 - (1) Sponsor signage associated with a special event approved by the Village shall only be allowed to be affixed or erected on a property for the length of the special event permit application approved by the Village.
 - (2) Sponsor signage associated with all other events shall only be displayed during the period in which the sponsored event is occurring. Such signage must be immediately removed at the end of the sponsored event.

SECTION 5: SIGN REGULATIONS FOR EACH DISTRICT

SIGNS LOCATED IN CONSERVATION/RECREATION DISTRICT

153.501 CONSERVATION/RECREATION DISTRICT REQUIREMENTS

A. Purpose Statement

The C/R Conservation/Recreation District is intended to provide for public parks, forest preserves, wildlife reservations and ecological sanctuaries and other open-space uses or resources to serve the needs of the citizens of the Village of Lombard. C/R Conservation/Recreation District sign regulations are intended to protect such areas from the adverse visual impacts of signage associated with uses incompatible with the intent and purpose of the C/R Conservation/Recreation District.

B. Permitted Signs

All signs located in C/R Conservation/Recreation Districts shall conform to the specific requirements set forth in this Ordinance. In C/R Conservation/Recreation Districts, no sign shall be permitted except the following named signs:

1. Signs not subject to permit in accordance with provisions set forth in Section 153.206.
2. Awnings and Canopies, in accordance with the provisions set forth in Section 153.211.
3. Automatic Changeable Copy Signs, in accordance with the provisions set forth in Section 153.210.
4. Development Signs, in accordance with the provisions set forth in Section 153.215.
5. Freestanding signs, in accordance with the provisions set forth in Section 153.216 In addition, no freestanding sign shall be erected or maintained within any C/R Conservation/Recreation District unless it also meets all of the following requirements:
 - a. Display: No use in a C/R Conservation/Recreation District shall display a freestanding sign unless the use is directly accessible by car and provides a minimum of four parking spaces on the premises where such freestanding sign is displayed.
 - b. Area: No freestanding sign shall exceed thirty (30) square feet in sign surface area. Freestanding signs shall not exceed fifty (50) square feet in sign surface area when located along a minor arterial or a major arterial street, as identified in the Comprehensive Plan.

The purpose of this regulation is to provide for greater signage size for park signage located along major streets, which frequently have higher traffic speeds (e.g., Finley Avenue adjacent to Four Seasons

Park). These facilities frequently are used and are intended to identify parks that are community-wide or regional attractions.

- c. Height: No freestanding sign shall exceed six (6) feet in height. Freestanding signs shall not exceed ten (10) feet in sign height when located along a minor arterial or a major arterial street, as identified in the Comprehensive Plan. In all cases, height shall be measured from grade at the edge of the right-of-way to the top of the sign.

This amendment ties into the size regulations noted in Section b above.

- d. No more than one freestanding sign shall be maintained on any one parcel of property except where a parcel abuts two or more streets, and then one sign per street frontage is permitted. There may be, however, one sign per entrance as long as the distance between signs is 100 feet.
- e. Distance Between Signs All freestanding signs shall be located at least 100 feet apart; provided, however, that if such freestanding signs comply with all other provisions except the requisite distance between signs, and it is not reasonable to so comply with the distance between sign requirements, such freestanding signs shall be allowed to be maintained.
- f. Setback: The leading edge of all freestanding signs located along a minor arterial or a major arterial street, as identified in the Comprehensive Plan, shall be set back at least twenty-five (25) feet from the right-of-way. The leading edge of all other freestanding signs shall be set back a minimum of five (5) feet from the street right-of-way.

6. Informational signs, in accordance with the provisions of Section 153.218.

This will allow the Park District to provide directional signs at entrances, if needed for traffic flow.

7. Institutional signs, in accordance with the provisions of Section 153.219.
8. Sponsor Signs, in accordance with the provisions set forth in Section 153.236.

This amendment provides for sponsors of various events on C/R properties to hang banners concurrent with the sponsored activities at the site, subject to conditions.

9. Temporary Signs, in accordance with the provisions set forth in Section 153.236.
10. Wall Signs: In accordance with the provisions set forth in Section 153.241. In addition, no wall sign shall be erected or maintained in any C/R Conservation/Recreation District unless it also meets all of the following requirements:
 - a. Area: The total sign surface area of all wall signs on any single parcel of property shall not exceed one times the lineal front footage of the property. The total sign surface area of any single wall sign shall not exceed ~~thirty (30)~~ fifty (50) square feet.

The rationale for this amendment relates to the types of wall signage commonly found in the C/R District. Typically such wall signage consist of a building identification sign (e.g., a school name) or the name of a public building. Staff finds that many of these structures are set back far from the adjacent roadway and as such, greater signage could be supported.

- b. Number: No more than one wall sign per street front exposure shall be maintained on any one parcel of property in any C/R Conservation/Recreation District.

SECTION 6: DEFINITIONS

153.601 WORD USAGE

Words and phrases used in this ordinance shall have the meanings set forth in this section. Words and phrases not defined in this section but defined in Title 15 of the Code of Ordinances of the Village of Lombard, also known as the Zoning Ordinance, shall be given the meanings set forth in such ordinance. All other words and phrases shall be given their common, ordinary meanings, as defined in Webster's Unabridged Dictionary (1976 edition), unless the context clearly requires otherwise. Section headings or captions are for reference purposes only and shall not be used in the interpretation of this ordinance.

All references to the Comprehensive Plan shall pertain to the latest version of the Comprehensive Plan adopted by the Lombard Village Board.

153.602 DEFINITIONS

SPONSOR SIGN An sign identifying an organization that pays for, plans and/or carries out not-for-profit event or is directly associated with a recreational or sporting event located within a public or private park or school.

Standards for Text Amendments

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 amendment would be uniformly applied to all properties in the C/R District. This amendment is intended to codify past signage that has been installed on C/R properties and is intended to provide reasonable regulations for all C/R properties.

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

The Ordinance changes are intended to recognize that there is a need to provide varying types of signage in the district beyond that which is already permitted by code. The proposed amendments are intended to supplement the types of uses and activities that are already permitted within the C/R District.

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

The Ordinance would not create any nonconformities.

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

The amendments would make the code more permissive as it would provide a means for the Village to review and permit many types of signage that already exists within the C/R District. The Ordinance also is more permissive as it relaxes the sign regulations for free-standing signs along arterial roadways as well as wall signage in general in order to make such signage more readable.

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

The Comprehensive Plan extensively discusses the need for parks and recreation activities within the Community Facilities Section. The Plan discusses using park facilities to its greatest extent. By providing the ability for sponsors to underwrite the costs of events and activities, the overall costs to the users (i.e., residents) is decreased. Moreover, the proposed amendments attempt to codify activities and signage that has previously been placed on C/R District properties, with consideration for establishing reasonable signage regulations for various temporary signs.

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

The amendments would be consistent with past Village Board actions as evidenced by the signage relief granted as part of the Western Acres Golf Course annexation. Moreover, the Board has approved many Special Events within Lombard parks – this amendment codifies the signage element associated with these activities.

RECOMMENDATION:

Based on the above considerations, the Inter-Departmental Review Committee recommends that the Plan Commission make the following motion recommending approval of the request as proposed. However, staff is requesting that prior to a recommendation being made to the Village Board that the Plan Commission continue the petition to the July 17, 2006 meeting so that staff can share the suggestions provided within this report as well as the comments of the Plan Commission with the Lombard Park District and other open space entities. Staff will offer the comments from these meetings back to the Plan Commission as part of the July 17, 2006 meeting as well.

I move that the Plan Commission **continue** PC 06-05 to the July 17, 2006 Plan Commission meeting so that staff meet with the Lombard Park District and other open space entities to share staff's recommendations and the comments of the Lombard Plan Commission.

Inter-Departmental Review Group Report Approved By:

David A. Hulseberg, AICP
Director of Community Development

DAH:WJH