

May 1, 2008

Mr. William J. Mueller,
Village President, and
Board of Trustees
Village of Lombard

Subject: PC 08-11: Text Amendments to the Lombard Sign Ordinance (Valet Parking Signs)

Dear President and Trustees:

Your Plan Commission transmits for your consideration its recommendation regarding the above-referenced petition. The Village of Lombard is proposing Sign Ordinance text amendments to Section 153.241 (B) to modify the permitted size of valet parking signs and to Section 153.241 (F) to modify the permitted number of valet parking signs.

After due notice and as required by law, the Plan Commission conducted a public hearing for this petition on April 21, 2008.

Stuart Moynihan, Associate Planner, presented the petition. He stated that the Community Development Department is proposing to amend the General Provisions of the Lombard Sign Ordinance as it pertains to Valet Parking Signs. The amendments would increase the permitted number of said signs and increase the permitted square footage of said signs.

The intent of the proposed amendments is to allow a reasonable amount of signage that will increase functionality of valet parking services operating within the Village. Staff came to review the valet parking sign provisions with the submittal of the Westin Hotel's application for valet parking. The current provisions permit only one Valet Parking Sign per place of business and a sign surface area not to exceed five (5) square feet. Staff believes that both of these provisions are insufficient for the proper and efficient operation of a valet parking service. Mr. Moynihan stated that the Planning Department thought it best to create a text amendment that would be applicable to the entire Village rather than to simply grant relief to the Westin.

The practical application of valet parking signage of five (5) square feet in size caused staff to revisit the applicable signage provisions. In some circumstances, a valet parking sign of five (5) square feet in size neither allows for a sufficient visual presence to alert patrons nor a sufficient surface area to include all necessary information. Mr. Moynihan stated that the signs proposed by the Westin were of an appropriate size and nature.

It is the opinion of staff that Valet Parking Signs serve a function similar in nature to Motor Vehicle Promotional Signs in that both are meant to direct and inform patrons once they have entered a site. Motor Vehicle Promotional Signs are permitted to have a surface area of sixteen (16) square feet. Therefore, the Village proposes that sixteen (16) square feet be permitted for Valet Parking Signs as well.

The Village also proposes to increase the number of permitted Valet Parking Signs. Most of the newly permitted signage would be intended to serve an informational function and would most often be located at the valet parking loading area. The Village proposes to allow two (2) signs of this nature per place of business. Information on these signs would include an indication of where to stop the vehicle, the name of the business, the valet parking rate, and information on the valet parking operator.

The need for additional signage is exacerbated by the sight and driving distances associated with larger sites. For many sites, additional signage is necessary simply to direct the driver to the valet parking loading area. Therefore, the Village proposes to allow one (1) additional Valet Parking Sign for each driveway (access and egress points) to a site. The Westin has indicated such signage on their submitted site plan. These signs shall be located at the driveway entrance to serve a directional function.

Mr. Moynihan read the proposed text amendments. Mr. Moynihan suggested that at Village Counsel's request the word "permitted" be used rather than the word "allowed" in paragraph F.

Mr. Moynihan stated that staff has addressed the Standards for Text Amendments within the staff report and believes them to be met. Therefore, staff is recommending approval of the request as proposed.

Chairperson Ryan then opened the meeting for public comment. There was no one in the audience to speak in favor of or against the petition. He then opened the meeting for discussion among the Commissioners. Commissioner Sweetser stated that she had some curiosity as to the wording in paragraph F. It states that two valet parking signs "shall be allowed" and that one additional valet parking sign "may be allowed" at driveway entrances. Why is there a difference in wording? William Heniff stated that every business valet operator is required to submit a valet parking plan. Staff is proposing "may be permitted" to allow staff a level of discretion regarding this signage relative to clear line of sight and operational issues.

Commissioner Sweetser asked if the wording on page 3 of the staff report in paragraph F, using the word permitted would take precedence. Mr. Heniff answered yes.

May 1, 2008
Re: PC 08-11
Page 3

After due consideration of the petition and the testimony presented, the Plan Commission found that the proposed text amendments do comply with the standards of the Lombard Zoning Ordinance. Therefore, the Plan Commission, by a roll call vote of 4 to 0, recommended to the Corporate Authorities, approval of PC 08-11.

Respectfully,

VILLAGE OF LOMBARD

Donald F. Ryan
Chairperson
Lombard Plan Commission

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