

Brandon Select Board Hearing
Proposed Amendments to the Brandon Land Use Ordinance
July 23, 2018

Board Members Present: Seth Hopkins, Doug Bailey, Brian Coolidge, Tracy Wyman

Also in Attendance: Ethan Nelson, Stephanie Jerome, Mike Frankiewicz, Dave Atherton, Ray Counter, Bernie Carr

1. Open Hearing

Seth Hopkins, Board Chair, opened the hearing for public comments at 6:30PM.

Mr. Hopkins advised this is the second Select Board public hearing relating to the proposed amendments to the Brandon Land Use Ordinance (BLUO) and asked if anyone has comments relating to this subject. Mr. Hopkins noted there were comments provided to the Planning Commission following the first Select Board hearing.

Seth Hopkins was not clear on the process for the adoption of the amendments due to the suggestions from the first hearing that the Planning Commission had acted upon. The Town Manager was going to clarify whether an additional hearing was needed due to the changes. Stephanie Jerome advised she could obtain clarification from the VLCT. She hopes that the process would not need to start again as the hearing process is to obtain comments.

Ms. Jerome reported the Planning Commission had discussed the recommendations from the first hearing and will incorporate the changes in the final draft that will be sent to the Select Board. Mr. Hopkins confirmed the Select Board had no problems with Section 104 or 619. Mr. Hopkins requested clarification for Section 407c (4) that indicates all signs will be constructed of wood, metal or natural materials because sandwich boards or temporary signs are not constructed of this material. Stephanie Jerome suggested a change could be that all permanent signs are to be constructed of natural materials, and sandwich boards and other temporary signs would not need to comply with this standard. Sandwich boards are listed under Item 407c (2).

Ethan Nelson advised the current BLUO has 21 pages of what not to do with a signs and new business owners found this process arduous. The Planning Commission received feedback to truncate the sign ordinance to a manageable ordinance. Instead of 21 pages of what not to do, the Planning Commission has placed a more positive approach of what to strive for. Mr. Hopkins noted the Select Board appreciates the Planning Commission's efforts.

Mr. Hopkins did not agree with the Planning Commission's concept regarding outdoor lighting, Section 614(f), as he thinks it is helpful for businesses to keep their outside

lights on after the close of business for partly for safety reasons. Doug Bailey advised Mr. Hopkins and he viewed the downtown after business hours and noted there is professional signage in the downtown that would be required to be turned off according to the new ordinance. Mr. Nelson advised that the Planning Commission had reviewed the contents of the previous ordinance and lights off at the close of business was standard language. Mr. Bailey stated he had originally agreed with the change, but thought that the soft lighting of the professional signs would also assist with lighting the sidewalk. Ms. Jerome advised the Planning Commission would like to discourage large business signs from being lit after the close of business. Ms. Jerome stated the Planning Commission's intent is to encourage business, not discourage it. Mr. Hopkins agreed that internally lit signs should be turned off at the close of business.

Mr. Hopkins advised the Town Manager had confirmed that State statute indicates the process for the hearings notes that minor changes do not require a re-hearing, but any major changes to the proposed amendments would require another hearing. It was not thought that any of the changes recommended during the hearings would be considered major changes and would not warrant additional hearings. Ms. Jerome requested the Select Board advise the Planning Commission if they feel that anything in the Town Plan or BLUO poses a major problem, as they would like to address any issues. The Planning Commission will submit a final proposed amended BLUO to the Select Board for their approval.

2. Close Hearing

Seth Hopkins closed the hearing at 6:53PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlene Bryant
Recording Secretary