

From: <gsilver4@sbcglobal.net>

Date: Mon, Sep 26, 2011 at 10:18 AM

Subject: Council file 08-2020; 08-3386S1 - Citywide Sign Ordinance

To: Karen Kalfayan-City Clerk <karen.kalfayan@lacity.org>, Ed Reyes <councilmember.reyes@lacity.org>, Ed Reyes <ereyes@council.lacity.org>

Cc: Dennis Hathaway <venicedd@gmail.com>, Jeffrey Ebenstein <jeffrey.ebenstein@lacity.org>, Joan Pelico <Joan.Pelico@lacity.org>, Shawn Bayliss <shawn.bayliss@lacity.org>



Homeowners of Encino

◆ Serving the Homeowners of Encino ◆

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September 26, 2011

Councilmember Ed Reyes, Chair
Planning and Land Use Management Committee (PLUM)
200 No. Spring St.
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Council file 08-2020; 08-3386S1 – Citywide Sign Ordinance

Homeowners of Encino (HOME) has had an opportunity to review the above proposed Citywide Sign Ordinance. We oppose adoption of the revised citywide sign ordinance pending before the City Council PLUM committee, in its present form. It will allow a proliferation of commercial advertising on both private and public property without a significant reduction in existing billboard signage blight. Homeowners of Encino urges you to revise the ordinance that now only encourages more sign blight.

There has been inadequate community input and discussion on this important sign policy. We ask that the PLUM Committee take more testimony, particularly from Neighborhood Councils and homeowner associations. The City's sign policy needs more public discussion and debate. The current proposal suffers from too much industry bias and favoritism.

The proposed sign ordinance does contain some positive elements including recognition of the distinction between on and off-site signs, substantial fines for non-compliance with signage regulations, the primacy of Specific Plans, and other effective elements. However, serious flaws remain that must be remedied before the ordinance becomes law.

The new city-wide sign ordinance in its present form will allow a proliferation of commercial advertising on both private and public property without a significant reduction in existing billboard signage blight. The City must not allow new electronic or digital signage without addressing energy use, light pollution, traffic safety and

aesthetic issues. The City must make major revisions to the ordinance that now only encourages more sign blight.

The ordinance should not permit any new Special Sign Districts. Special Sign Districts are exceptions carved out for any Regional or Commercial Center in Los Angeles, including Ventura Blvd. and Sepulveda Blvd. Special Sign Districts that allow massive billboards run contrary to the over-riding objections of Los Angeles residents. The 2002 Sign Ordinance, overturned by the courts, specifically halted the proliferation of new billboard signage in the City. Unfortunately, currently approved Special Sign Districts may have to remain – as unsightly as they are. However, the City should not approve or “grandfather” any new sign districts that were introduced

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since 2002. Communities should not be subjected to more visual blight as a result of delays in preparing the new ordinance.

There is no justification for the Comprehensive Sign Programs in the new ordinance. The Comprehensive Sign Program allows exceptions for massive new large development projects such as shopping centers. These large commercial developments by their nature have long street frontages and that is a specific reason why they should not be allowed more sign pollution. Gaudy, massive Las Vegas style signage is inappropriate anywhere in Los Angeles, regardless of project size.

The ordinance approved by the City Planning Commission in March 2009 had many good features. However, more restrictions are necessary, including limiting donor signs. Donor signs advertise a donor to a property on the site where the sign is located and would be permitted by-right without any restrictions in size, text or location. This exception will encourage massive corporate logo signage all over Los Angeles.

The proposed sign ordinance doubles the allowable size of temporary signs permitting huge super-graphic style displays for up to 90 days. Finally, the City should not give an automatic 20 percent adjustment in allowed signage without a hearing. This is really a backdoor, automatic 20 percent increase in allowable signage.

It is time for the City to do what is right for Los Angeles residents. It is not a matter of striking a balance between the demands of the egregious sign industry, and the interests of the public. It is rather a matter of preserving the visual environment and not allowing massive signs and billboards to decimate the Los Angeles streetscape. Other cities and states effectively control sign blight – Los Angeles must do the same and not be dictated by the narrow interests of the sign industry.

Cordially your,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gerald A. Silver". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Cc: Councilmember Paul Koretz