

BOARD OF ALDERMEN

ITEM NO. D(5)

AGENDA ITEM ABSTRACT

MEETING DATE: May 15, 2012

**TITLE: Request-to-set a public hearing on Land Use Ordinance Amendments
Relating to Signage Allocation**

DEPARTMENT: Planning	PUBLIC HEARING: YES ___ NO <u>X</u>
ATTACHMENTS: A. Resolution B. Staff Memo C. Main Street Properties Memo with Requested Signage	FOR INFORMATION CONTACT: Patricia McGuire – 918-7327 Christina Moon – 918-7325 Mike Brough –929-3905

PURPOSE

The purpose of this agenda item is for the Board of Aldermen to consider three options for text amendments for the Land Use Ordinance relating to signage, to direct staff toward one of the options, and to set a public hearing on the amendments.

INFORMATION

Currently, commercial sign allocations in the Town of Carrboro are based on linear street frontage. Section 15-276 (c) of the Land Use Ordinance (LUO) provides for up to 0.5 square feet of sign surface area per linear foot of street frontage, up to 200 feet of frontage, and up to 0.75 square feet of additional sign surface area per linear foot of lot front in excess of 200 feet. With a maximum building height of two-to three-stories in the downtown area, this sign allocation system has balanced the interests of local business to advertise their operations, provide sufficient information for wayfinding needs, while retaining the traditional main street feel of historic downtown Carrboro.

Amendments following the Vision 2020 process created an opportunity for higher density--taller buildings--than historically allowed in the downtown area. As new development projects come online, concerns over the amount of signage currently allocated have emerged; the ground breaking for 300 East Main Street hotel and parking deck have brought these concerns to the forefront.

The developers for the 300 East Main Street project have asked the Town to consider text amendments to allow substantially more sign allocation than currently permitted (Attachment C). Staff has reviewed the current requirements for signage, outlined in Article XVII of the LUO and has identified three possible approaches for preparing text amendments to better accommodate this new type of development model. Opportunities and challenges associated with each of these different approaches are discussed in the staff memo included as Attachment B. Staff is seeking the Board's direction toward an appropriate approach for modifying sign requirements prior to preparing text amendments in time for a June 26th public hearing. Staff feels that an ordinance making changes as described in options 1 and 2 could be prepared in time for review for the June public hearing. Option 3 could not be accomplished in that time frame.

FISCAL AND STAFF IMPACT

Public hearings involve staff and public notice costs. Approximately twenty-five hours of staff time will be needed to provide administration for the LUO amendments prior to the public hearing and for Planning Board and TAB review.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Board of Aldermen consider the resolution in *Attachment A*, directing staff to prepare text amendments in accordance with one of the proposals described in the staff memo, setting a public hearing for June 26th and referring the proposed amendments to the Planning Board, Orange County, Appearance Commission, Economic Sustainability Commission, and the Transportation Advisory Board for recommendations and comments.