



Planning & Development Services

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Memorandum

To: **Planning Commission**

From: Michael Cerbone, AICP
Nick Schmeck, Long Range Planning Intern

Date: June 27, 2019

Re: **Planning Commission Workshop – Docket Item C-7**

Summary:

Planning and Development Services (PDS) is providing this staff report in advance of the July 2, 2019 Planning Commission workshop on docket item C-7 modifying Skagit County Code (SCC) 14.16.820(3)(c) from “Building permits shall be required...in excess of 32 square feet or greater than 6 feet in height” to “...as required by the currently adopted International Building Code (IBC). Revisions include an exemption for short free standing signs and wall-mounted signs that do not project.

Action Requested of the Planning Commission:

Action requested from the Planning Commission is a recorded motion approving docket item C-7 to be accepted as a 2019 Comprehensive Plan amendment.

Background/Discussion:

RCW 36.70A.130 – Comprehensive Plans – Review procedures and schedules – Amendments (GMA), authorizes the County to make revisions to the Comprehensive Plan no more than once per year through the Docket. On March 19, 2019 the 2019 Docket for amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Map, and/or Development Regulations was voted into action by Skagit County’s Board of County Commissioners (BoCC’s) via approval of Resolution R20190052. SCC 14.08.080(6) and (7) requires code revisions to be reviewed by the Planning Commission.

County-Initiated Amendment C-7 was identified by the current planning and building department sections of Planning and Development Services (PDS). Appendix H of the IBC gathers the various building code provisions that are applicable to the construction of outdoor signs into one document. The goal of the amendment is to correct the code so building permits are only required when warranted by Appendix H of the IBC.

Next Steps:

After the Planning Commission Workshop on June 18, 2019:

- Planning Commission may task PDS with next steps such as research and development
- Planning Commission will host a public hearing prior to deliberating and deciding on a recommendation
- The recommendation will then be passed onto the BOCC's who will host a public hearing and consider the recommendation
- If approved, PDS staff will implement the code amendment as part of the development review process

Applicable County Policies:

County Wide Planning Policies

- Goal 7.4: New implementing codes and amendments shall provide clear regulations to reduce the possibility of multiple interpretations by staff and applicants.

County Comprehensive Plan Goals and Polices

- Development Any manmade change to improved or unimproved real estate, including but not limited to buildings or other structures, mining, dredging, filling, grading, paving, excavation, or drilling operations. Any action requiring a land use permit or approval regulated by Titles 14 and 15, SCC, including, but not limited to, subdivisions, binding site plans, site specific rezones, unclassified special use permits, variances, building permits, shoreline permits, or flood area development permits (Pg. 350)

List of Attachments:

Attachment A: Title 14 Unified Development Code (Chapter 14.16)

Attachment B: International Building Code

Attachment A

Plain text = existing code with no changes

~~Strikethrough~~ = existing code to be deleted

Underlined = new code to be added

~~Double Strikethrough~~ = existing code moved to another location

Double Underline = existing code moved from another location

Italics = instructions to code reviser

Chapter 14.16.820 Signs

14.16.820 Signs.

(1) Purpose. This Section regulates the construction, erection, maintenance, electrification, illumination, type, size, number and locations of signs in order to protect the health, safety, property and welfare of the public as well as to ensure that Skagit County retains a neat, orderly and attractive appearance. The intent of these provisions is to preserve and enhance the rural character, unique scenic beauty and the business, recreational, educational, and tourism potential of the County.

(2) Definitions. The sign definitions outlined in the current adopted International Building Code (Appendix H) are hereby adopted by reference.

(3) General Sign Regulations. The following general requirements shall apply to sign regulations in all zoning districts in Skagit County.

(a) Conformity to Adopted Building Codes. All signs and other advertising structures shall be constructed and maintained in strict conformity with building code(s) as adopted and referenced in Chapter 15.04 SCC.

(b) Highway Advertising Control Act—Scenic Vista Act. The control of signs in areas adjacent to State and Federal highways shall be governed by Chapter 47.42 RCW.

(c) Building Permits. Building permits shall be required for the erection, alteration, or reconstruction of wall-mounted signs, electrified signs and freestanding signs ~~in excess of 32 square feet, or greater than 6 feet in height~~ as required by the currently adopted International Building Code. Free standing signs less than 7 feet in height and wall-mounted signs that do not project from the building do not require a Building Permit. A change in information on the face of an existing sign shall not constitute an alteration.

Attachment B: International Building Code (Appendix H)

<https://codes.iccsafe.org/content/IBC2018/appendix-h-signs>



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Memorandum

To: **Planning Commission**

From: Michael Cerbone, AICP
Nick Schmeck, Long Range Planning Intern

Date: July 8, 2019

Re: **Planning Commission Workshop Follow up – Docket Item C-7**

This is a supplemental staff report outlines questions from planning commissioners from the July 2, 2019 Planning Commission workshop on docket item C-7. Questions and responses from staff are outlined below.

Question: Why was appendix H not adopted under the 2016 International Building Code (IBC)?

Response: There are other sections within the International Building Code that cover structural design and basic standards that the County applies to the regulation of signs. The Building Official is not recommending adoption of Appendix H at this time.

Question: Why is 7 feet in height the threshold between needing and not needing a building permit? Why is there no width dimension?

Response: The 7 foot threshold was decided based on the definition of a fence in section one of the IBC. The Building Official said there is little to no risk for a sign up to 7 feet and the risk is similar to a basic fence.

Question: Why is the general public not able to print out the IBC?

Response: The general public does not have the ability to print directly from the IBC website, however there are third party websites to print from if need be. The name of one of the websites where it can be printed is called Upcodes.

Here is a link to Upcodes: <https://up.codes/viewer/washington/ibc-2015/chapter/1/scope-and-administration#1>