

COUNTY OF ALBEMARLE

STAFF REPORT

<p>AGENDA TITLE: ZTA 2015-12 Phase 2 Route 29 Solutions Business Signage</p> <p>SUBJECT/PROPOSAL/REQUEST: Public Hearing to Address ZTA 2015-12 Phase 2 Route 29 Solutions Business Signage</p> <p>STAFF CONTACT(S): Kamptner, McCulley, Wright and MacCall</p>	<p>AGENDA DATE: October 6, 2015</p> <p>ACTION: X INFORMATION:</p> <p>CONSENT AGENDA: ACTION: INFORMATION:</p> <p>ATTACHMENTS: Yes</p>
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BACKGROUND:

On May 6, 2015, the Board adopted ZTA 2015-04 to implement Phase 1 Route 29 Business Signage. This ordinance amendment allowed those businesses who would lose their permanent signs to extend the time period for temporary signs from 60 days to the length of the Rio-29 grade-separated interchange (GSI) project.

From June to August 2015, County staff reached out to businesses within the corridor to discuss their signage needs. This extensive business engagement process involved multiple forums: email/letter, sign survey, four drop-in times at local businesses, 1 focus group, canvassing drops-ins and an open house. (Attachment C outlines those efforts and a summary of the input received). A majority of participating businesses supported extending the 60-day temporary sign allowance to enhance visibility and allow for additional marketing opportunities prior to and during the construction project. Many supported the reduction or elimination of the \$25 temporary sign fees during the project. They also supported the idea of incentives to encourage multiple businesses on one property to aggregate their temporary signage. On September 9th, the Board adopted the resolution of intent for Phase 2 Route 29 Solutions Business Signage (Attachment B). The Board has asked staff to expedite this amendment to allow businesses to utilize the temporary signage provisions as soon as possible, since construction is underway.

DISCUSSION:

The proposed ordinance (Attachment A) provides additional temporary signage for each parcel within a VDOT construction project under the following criteria:

- During the construction project (on or after notice to proceed and prior to construction completion);
- Not more than one (1) sign per lot;
- The lot has an existing primary use or structure for a pending primary use is under construction;
- The lot abuts a primary arterial or other public street within a project that involves the primary arterial; and
- The lot is zoned commercial or industrial.

While staff and the Board have determined that the Rio-29 GSI project is unique in many respects, the proposed ordinance is not specific to this project and would apply to other projects meeting the criteria. The criteria are consistent with those utilized by the Business Assistance Program in the Tier 2 designation. We intend to utilize this project as a pilot and will assess if any provisions need revision.

To reduce the proliferation of signs in the construction zone and to encourage businesses to work together for creative solutions, the proposed ordinance allows one temporary sign per lot. To encourage consolidation while recognizing the need for larger signs to effectively list multiple businesses, staff recommends an increase from 32 to 48 square feet for those signs which serve four (4) or more businesses.

Staff supports the business community's request to reduce the fee associated with these permits. This fee amendment is being addressed with the general zoning fee schedule increase (ZTA 2015-011). This was discussed with the fee public hearing with the Commission held on September 22nd.

Administration / Review Process:

Although this ordinance amendment will generate additional temporary sign applications, it is not anticipated that it will significantly impact sign permit review times over the long term. Because temporary signs are not reviewed by the ARB, their review process will not be affected.

Housing Affordability:

There is no anticipated impact on housing affordability.

Implications to Staffing / Staffing Costs:

There is no anticipated need for additional staffing as a result of the ordinance amendment.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends that following the public hearing, the Planning Commission adopt the attached Proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment (Attachment A).

ATTACHMENTS:

- Attachment A: Proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment
- Attachment B: Resolution of Intent
- Attachment C: Business Outreach Findings