

Lynnwood Planning Commission
Meeting of August 28, 2003

Staff Report

Agenda Item: **E-1**

**PRC Sign Regulations
Code Amendment**

- Public Hearing**
- Informal Public Meeting
- Work Session
- New Business
- Old Business
- Information
- Miscellaneous

Lynnwood Dept. of Community Development — Staff Contact: Lee Michaelis 425.670.6642

Recommendation:

After receiving public testimony, the Planning Commission will be asked to make a recommendation to the City Council on the proposed Planned Regional Center (PRC) Zone Sign Code Amendment.

Background:

At the August 14 Work Session, the Community Development Department staff presented to the Planning Commission a draft code amendment for the regulations pertaining to signs within the PRC zone. At that time the code amendment proposed the following changes:

- ◆ Identification signs would be eliminated and Freestanding signs would be allowed. Freestanding signs are defined as pole, monument and ground signs. Please see Attachments B-D for examples of each type of sign. The number of freestanding signs is determined by the following schedule:

Street Frontage per Street Pole	Signs Allowed
1 – 300 feet	1
301 – 600 feet	2
601 – 900 feet	3
901+ feet	4

- ◆ Wall signs would be allowed on all sides of a building. The total allowable sign area for each business for signs attached to a building frontage including mural signs shall be 60 square feet, or one square foot for each lineal foot of building frontage, whichever is greater, up to a maximum of 200 square feet.
- ◆ Internal Information Signs would be permitted; such signs are intended to be seen by the public within a business site, oriented away from the street and not readable from the public right-of-way and adjacent property shall not be regulated as signs. Such signs shall include but are not limited to internal directory signs, certain incidental signs and menu boards, except that such signs within the PRC zone may be oriented toward and readable from the street and adjacent property if such sign is counted toward the number of free standing signs allowed above.

- ◆ Electronic Changing Message Signs would be allowed in the PRC zone. These signs would be regulated so that: "No sign shall have blinking or flashing lights; provided, however, electronically changing message signs shall be allowed. These signs shall not change displays or images at a rate less than one every five seconds except for signs which provide alternate messages only as to times and temperature, which may change at a rate of not less than one message every two seconds. All such signs shall be equipped with a device which automatically dims the intensity of the lights during hours of darkness."
- ◆ Temporary Commercial Event Signs would be allowed in the PRC zone subject to the following conditions: "No more than two portable signs a maximum of six square feet per side and two banner signs shall be allowed. Such signs are only allowed for temporary special events in commercial zones. Such signs shall not be placed without a temporary special event license. These signs shall only be placed on the property where the temporary event is to occur and only during the temporary event. These signs shall not be placed in the ground, on walkways, in parking areas, drive aisles, or anywhere that creates a safety hazard."
- ◆ "Searchlights shall only be permitted if they meet the following criteria:
 1. That the duration of time for display of the searchlight shall not be more than 10 days;
 2. That no permit for display of a searchlight shall have been approved for the same applicant during the six-month period prior to the most recent application;
 3. That the searchlight be so located as to minimize interference of driver visibility at intersections or at points of ingress and egress;
 4. That the searchlight be located 35 or more feet from the right-of-way; and directed away from traffic on nearby streets;
 5. The intensity and color of light and the duration of its operation shall not constitute a nuisance as defined in LMC 10.08.200; and
 6. That a fee of \$25.00 shall be paid in connection with any such permit."
- ◆ The following changes are also proposed to the **Scope and Exclusion** section of the sign code (LMC21.16.200). Item G of that section would be amended to read signs not visible from a "public street" would be exempt from the sign regulations. Also, signs on buildings that face a public area intended for use by pedestrians and not vehicles would be exempt from the sign regulations.

Since the Work Session, staff has revised the proposal based on discussion and comments received from the Commissioners. The revised code amendment is included in this report as Attachment A.

Key Features:

The following are the issues that were brought up during the Work Session; staff has prepared a response to each of these issues.

1. *Why isn't the Mervyn's Plaza, and Target Shopping Center not part of this amendment?*

Currently, these properties are zoned Planned Commercial Development (PCD). Properties zoned PCD, benefit from the proposed amendments because they are

allowed in the PCD zoned. To be part of the PRC zone, these properties would have to go through the rezone process.

2. What are the characteristics that define the different types of signs?

There are three types of freestanding signs: pole, monument, and ground.

- A. Pole signs have a maximum of 75 square feet in area and 25 feet in height. For those signs within 500 feet of Interstate 5, the maximum height is 30-feet. Pole signs must be at least 35-feet from the street and 10-feet from interior property lines, except they must be 25-feet from adjacent property zoned residential. See Attachment B for examples of pole signs in the city.
- B. Monument signs range from 25 square feet to 65 square feet in area. They range from approximately 4 feet to 20 feet in height. Monument signs must be at least 10-feet from the street and 10-feet from interior property lines, except they must be 25-feet from adjacent property zoned residential. See Attachment C for examples of monument signs in the city.
- C. Ground signs are 25 square feet in area and cannot exceed 3-1/2 feet in height. Ground signs must be setback at least 5 feet from all property lines. See Attachment D for examples of ground signs in the city.
- D. Wall signs are attached to walls and vary in size depending on the building elevation, however each tenant is allowed at least 60 square feet in area.

3. Are the proposed signs permanent signs or portable signs?

All signs attached to a wall or defined as a freestanding sign listed above are permanent signs. The only types of signs that are not permanent are real estate signs, construction signs, and temporary banners or A-Frame signs permitted during a special event.

4. Can these signs be spinning around or flashing signs?

Signs with blinking or flashing lights are not allowed, however, electronically changing message signs are allowed. These signs cannot change messages faster than one every five seconds. Signs that provide alternate messages only as to times and temperature, may change at a rate of not less than one message every two seconds. Revolving signs and signs with moving parts are not allowed.

5. Are signs such as warning signs regulated?

The following types of signs are excluded from the sign regulations:

- A. Traffic, bicycle or pedestrian control signs or signals and signs used by the public works department as permitted by other city regulations;
- B. Building address numbers;
- C. Signs on the inside of buildings with doors closed and signs on the inside of windows;
- D. Regulatory, informational, identification or directional signs installed by, or at the direction of, a government entity;
- E. Signs required by law; however, not all signs required by law are exempt, for example, gasoline price signs;
- F. Official public notices or official court notices;
- G. Signs or displays not visible from streets, rights-of-way, sidewalks, adjacent property, parking lots or other areas open to the public;
- H. The flag of government or noncommercial institutions such as schools;

- I. Structures intended for separate use such as phone booths and recycling containers; provided, that no advertising oriented to the public right-of-way is attached to such structures;
- J. Reasonable seasonal decorations within a recognized public holiday season;
- K. Sculptures, fountains, mosaics, murals, building architecture, design features and other works of art that do not incorporate business identification or commercial messages;
- L. Historic or commemorative site markers or plaques; and
- M. Lettering or symbols painted directly onto or flush-mounted magnetically onto a licensed and operable motor vehicle operating in the normal course of business.

6. *Did the Alderwood Mall management initiate the code amendment?*

Yes, as part of the mall expansion the owners of Alderwood Mall would like to propose signs that currently are not allowed in this zone. A representative from Alderwood Mall will be in attendance at the Public Hearing to present the mall's proposal.

7. *Would the searchlights be permanent?*

Searchlights are only be permitted if they meet the following criteria:

- A. That the duration of time for display of the searchlight shall not be more than 10 days;
- B. That no permit for display of a searchlight shall have been approved for the same applicant during the six-month period prior to the most recent application;
- C. That the searchlight be so located as to minimize interference of driver visibility at intersections or at points of ingress and egress;
- D. That the searchlight be located 35 or more feet from the right-of-way; and directed away from traffic on nearby streets;
- E. The intensity and color of light and the duration of its operation shall not constitute a nuisance as defined in LMC 10.08.200; and
- F. That a fee of \$25.00 shall be paid in connection with any such permit.

8. *Are the informational signs to be visible vs. readable from the public street?*

The intent of the current code is that informational signs cannot visible from the street or adjacent properties. The proposed changes would allow these signs to be visible from the street as well as adjacent properties. The intent is to also make them readable from public right-of-way but not from the flow of traffic on the adjacent arterials.

9. *Wouldn't the increase in the number of signs result in the "butchering of landscaping" that has occurred in other portions of the city?*

There are property owners out there that feel that signs are more important than landscaping. To mitigate this potential impact, staff has reviewed the number of signs proposed and reduced that number by half. Reducing the number of signs allowed would ultimately keep the existing street frontage landscaping along 33rd Ave W, 184th St. SW and Alderwood Mall Parkway. This reduction is outlined in the attached draft amendment.

10. Are these signs intended to be tenant signs or directional signs?

Freestanding signs listed above are intended to be tenant advertising signs to be seen from the public street. Informational signs, also known as directional signs, are intended to direct customers to areas of the mall or shopping center once on the site.

11. Can tenants use or propose neon and bright color on signs?

Currently the code requires that all sign exterior consist of materials and colors that minimize reflection capabilities and are similar and complementary to those of the primary buildings on the property where the sign is located. Bright colors are not permitted to be used on structures; therefore, could not be used on signs. Neon tubing can be used as accent lighting as well as lettering on signs.

12. What is the maximum number of street frontage signs?

The current code allows either a pole sign or a monument on each public street. At the Work Session of August 14, it was identified that a maximum of 6 signs could be located along the east side of Alderwood Mall Parkway if the sign amendment were adopted. Since that meeting, staff has revised the proposal to allow a maximum of 2 signs along any public street. Those two signs may be of any type of freestanding sign.

Based on these issues and concerns, staff has modified the draft amendment and has included it as Attachment B to this report.

Environmental Review:

The Environmental Review Committee is continuing to review the draft amendment. A SEPA threshold determination is not required for the Planning Commission to make a recommendation to the City Council. A decision by the ERC will be issued prior to City Council taking action on this item.

Upcoming Scheduling:

The Planning Commission is scheduled to hold a Public Hearing on this item at the August 28 meeting. Upon completion of the hearing the Planning Commission will be asked to make a recommendation to City Council.

Attachments:

- A. Draft Code Amendment
- B. Examples of Pole Signs
- C. Examples of Monument Signs
- D. Examples of Ground Signs



Draft Code Amendment

21.16.320 Signs in planned regional shopping center zone.

Only the following signs are permitted, subject to the following limitations:

- A. ~~Identifications Signs. Signs identifying the shopping center are permitted; however, the number shall not exceed the number of public streets abutting the property. Such signs may be either monument or pole signs and shall be subject to the setback, sign area and height regulations of LMC 21.16.310.~~ Freestanding signs are allowed, provided such signs shall be subject to the regulations of LMC 21.16.310(A) and the number of freestanding signs is determined by the following schedule:

Street Frontage per Freestanding Sign	Signs Allowed
300 feet – 900 feet	1
901+ feet	2

- B. ~~Wall Signs. Wall signs are permitted, provided such signs shall be subject to the regulations of LMC 21.16.310(B), except wall signs are only allowed on building frontages.~~
- C. Electronic Changing Message Signs. Electronic Changing Message signs are permitted, provided such signs shall be subject to the regulations of LMC 21.16.310(D)
- D. Internal Information Signs. Internal information signs are permitted, provided such signs shall be subject to the regulations of LMC 21.16.310(E), except that such signs in the Planned Regional Shopping Center zone may be oriented toward and readable from the street if located more than 50 feet from the property line. The number of Internal Information signs is limited to the number of driveways an individual or multiple business site has.
- E. Temporary Commercial Event Signs. Temporary Commercial Event signs are permitted, provided such signs shall be subject to the regulations of LMC 21.16.310(G)
- F. Searchlights. Searchlights are permitted, provided such signs shall be subject to the regulations of LMC 21.16.310(H)
- ~~G.G.~~ Real Estate Signs. Real estate signs shall comply with the regulations of LMC 21.16.310(I).
- ~~D.H.~~ Construction Signs. Construction signs shall comply with the regulations of LMC 21.16.280.

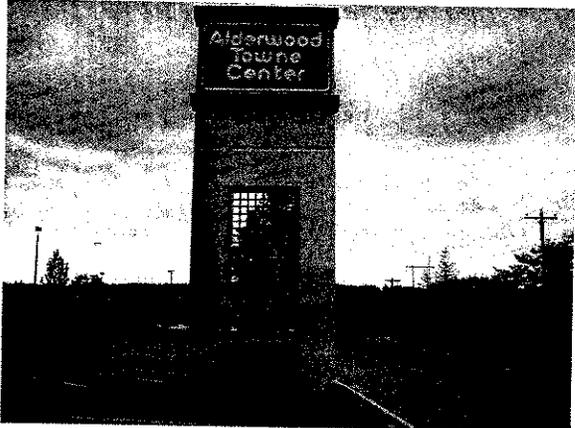
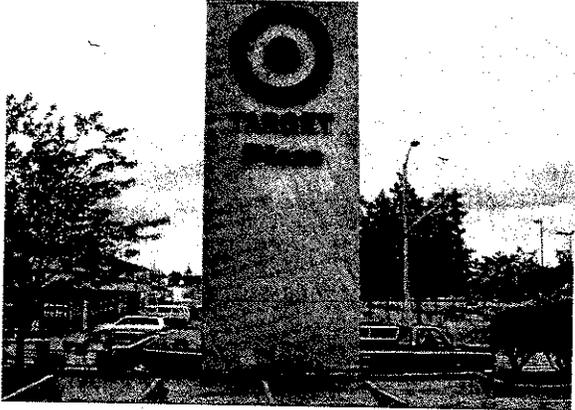
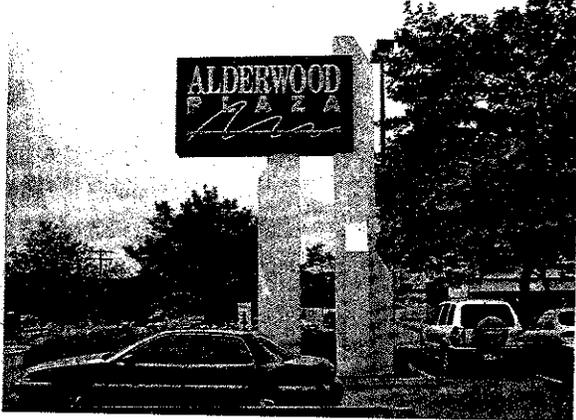
21.16.200 Scope and exclusions.

This chapter applies to all signs erected or altered within the city of Lynnwood. The following signs or displays are exempt from the regulations of this chapter:

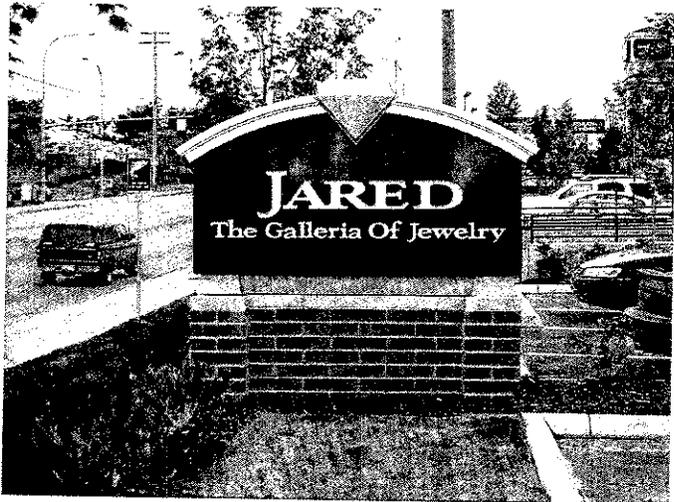
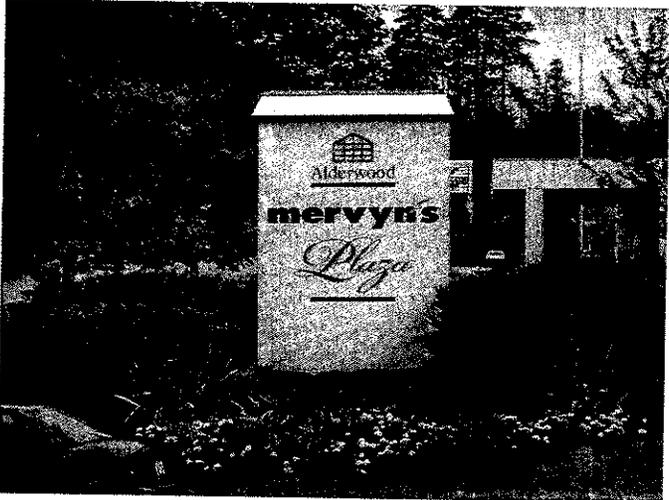
- Traffic, bicycle or pedestrian control signs or signals and signs used by the public works department as permitted by other city regulations;
- Building address numbers;
- Signs on the inside of buildings with doors closed and signs on the inside of windows;
- Regulatory, informational, identification or directional signs installed by, or at the direction of, a government entity;
- Signs required by law; however, not all signs required by law are exempt, for example, gasoline price signs;
- Official public notices or official court notices;
- Signs or displays not visible from public streets, rights-of-way, sidewalks, adjacent property, adjacent property parking lots or other areas open to the public that are predominantly intended for use by pedestrians and not vehicles;

- H. The flag of government or noncommercial institutions such as schools;
- I. Structures intended for separate use such as phone booths and recycling containers; provided, that no advertising oriented to the public right-of-way is attached to such structures;
- J. Reasonable seasonal decorations within a recognized public holiday season;
- K. Sculptures, fountains, mosaics, murals, building architecture, design features and other works of art that do not incorporate business identification or commercial messages;
- L. Historic or commemorative site markers or plaques; and
- M. Lettering or symbols painted directly onto or flush-mounted magnetically onto a licensed and operable motor vehicle operating in the normal course of business.

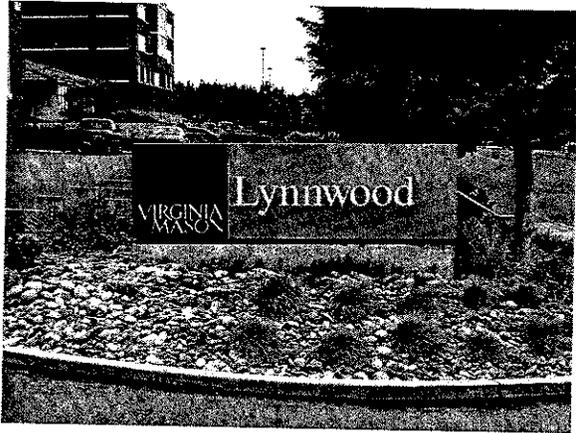
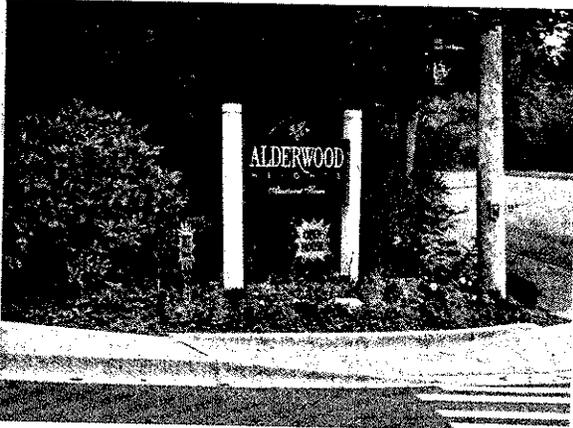
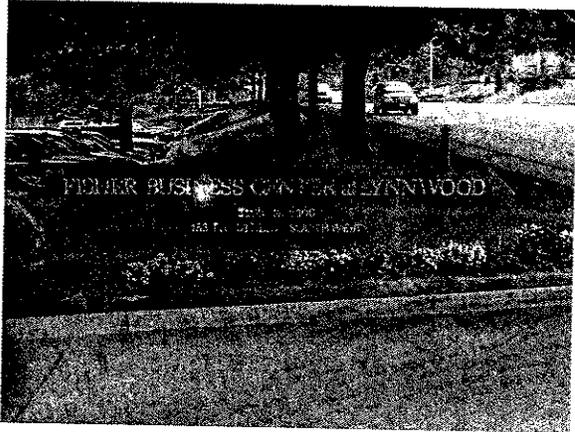
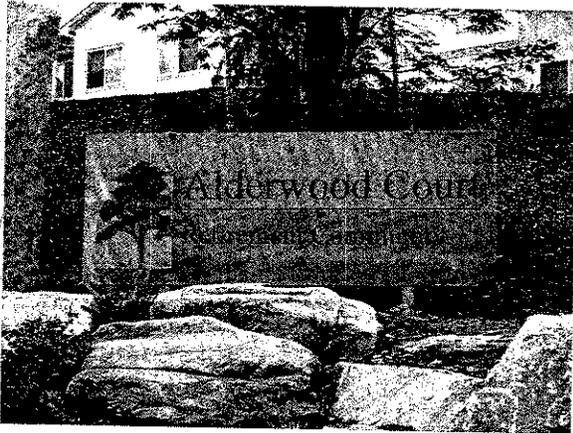
Examples of Pole Signs



Examples of Monument Signs



Examples of Ground Signs



**Lynnwood Planning Commission
Meeting of August 28, 2003**

Staff Report

Agenda Item: I

Upcoming Commission Meetings

- Public Hearing
- Informal Public Meeting
- Work Session
- New Business
- Old Business
- Information
- Miscellaneous

Lynnwood Dept. of Community Development — Staff Contact: Ron W. Hough, Planning Manager

■ The following schedule is for planning purposes – subject to adjustments.

Note: A joint meeting of the Commission and City Council is being planned. A date has not been set but the meeting may be held in late August or September.

August 28	Public Hearing:	<u>PRC Zone Sign Regulations Code Amendment</u>
	Work Session:	<u>TBA</u>
Sept. 11	Public Hearing:	None Scheduled
	Work Session:	None Scheduled
Sept. 25	Public Hearing:	<u>TBA</u>
	New Business:	<u>Capital Facilities Plan – Review for Plan Compliance</u>
	Work Session:	<u>Zoning Code Amendment – New P-2 zone, etc.</u>
Oct. 9	Public Hearing:	<u>TBA</u>
	Work Session:	<u>TBA</u>
Oct. 23	Public Hearing:	<u>TBA</u>
	Work Session:	<u>TBA</u>
Nov. 13	Public Hearing:	<u>TBA</u>
	Work Session:	<u>TBA</u>