

The public was notified of this hearing weeks ago. We had a reasonable expectation that the documentation that would be included in the Agenda Packet would be published in a timely manner so that we could study it and be prepared for meaningful discussion when we got here today. That did not happen. We asked for the documentation and did not receive it, until yesterday - less than 24 hours before this hearing. That does not allow the public any time to study the document and submit meaningful comment. I am very curious as to whether or not you, the Planning Commissioners, had time to study the documentation that was just posted yesterday.

The last-minute release of agenda packet materials leaves citizens feeling blindsided by their governments, impedes informed debate, and produces unnecessary costs and delays when new information prompts the continuation of agenda items to future meetings. The deliberations and decisions of local legislative bodies are not truly transparent if the public lacks sufficient access to the writings that shape those deliberations and actions. Providing an adequate period of time to read, consider, and react to the contents of local agencies' regular meeting agenda packets promotes greater public transparency, thereby furthering the fundamental purpose of the Brown Act.

We are here to do the business of the citizens of El Dorado County. I therefore ask that you continue this item so that the public is given time to study the documentation and make meaningful comment.

(Distributed at hearing
by Cheryl Langley)

PC 5/28/15
#2
5 pages

Cheryl Langley
Shingle Springs Resident

TO: Planning Commission

DATE: May 28, 2015

SUBJECT: Sign Ordinance Update; Agenda Item #6; File #13-0086; PC Meeting March 26, 2015

Planning Commission Members:

- The sign ordinance can't be approved (with digital signs) without a finding of **overriding considerations** because the inclusion of digital signs means adoption of the Sign Ordinance Update will have a significant impact under CEQA that must be "overcome" by **substantial evidence** in the record that supports **overriding considerations**.
- The documents cited in Staff Memo 6B that are said to support "substantial evidence" were not provided to the public until approximately 12:30 yesterday (May 27, 2015). Naturally, there has not been enough time for the public to determine whether these cited documents actually support claims. So far I have reviewed only two of the studies, and neither supported claims of overriding considerations.
- Many of the documents appear to be promotional literature from sign companies; their "conclusions" appear to be pure advertisement for the sign companies themselves rather than actually being "case studies" based on science or "fact." (See **Attachment 1**: Watchfire Signs, a sign manufacturer.)
- A traffic safety study, presumably included to support the claim of overriding considerations that **signs improve traffic safety** (5C, page 2), does not conclude that signs **improve** traffic safety, only that—in the case of this one study of interstate highways in Ohio—**signs didn't contribute to accidents**:

Accidents occur with or without billboards (digital or conventional). The accident statistics on sections of Interstate routes near billboards are comparable to the accident statistics on similar sections that have no billboards.¹ (Attachment 2, Executive Summary from report.)

Granted, there may be other studies cited in the Staff Memo that support the claims made, but my (cursory) review of the studies casts some doubt on their ability to support "substantial evidence" for claims of overriding consideration.

Therefore, I ask the following. Please:

- Do not adopt the ROI certifying the EIR for an Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance;
- Do not make Findings of Fact and issue a Statement of Overriding Considerations;
- Do not adopt the ROI to amend the GP Land Use Element, and
- Do not approve the final draft update.

And Finally, I ask that you **please continue this meeting** to allow the public time to review the materials submitted and complete any additional inquiries that may be needed to clarify provisions of the Sign Ordinance Update.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

¹ A Study of the Relationship between Digital Billboards and Traffic Safety in Cuyahoga County, Ohio, Submitted to The Foundation for Outdoor Advertising Research and Education (FOARE), Washington, DC by Tantara Associates, Philadelphia, PA on July 7, 2007, ISA website link: <http://www.signs.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=pNUQ5yCVluo%3d&tabid=768>

Watchfire® Case Study | Watch What Happens

RETAIL & SERVICE :: Waynesboro Landscape & Garden Center — Waynesboro, Va.



AFTER

SIGN SPECS
16mm Color LED
Matrix: 64 x 120
4' High x 6'10" Wide
8 Lines x 24 Characters

Background

Waynesboro Landscape & Garden Center has advertised in print and on the radio for years. But its most effective advertising efforts have always occurred right out front. "Our manual readerboard sign has gotten us the best results by far," Owner Stan Quillen, Jr. said. It's not hard to see why: Roughly 28,000 cars pass by his business every day. So in 2008, he decided to divert a large portion of his annual advertising budget away from traditional media and toward an electronic message center by Watchfire.

The Challenge

After evaluating the yield of his investment in traditional advertising, Stan Quillen, Jr. knew there had to be a better way. "In 2008, we started saving for an LED sign." Quillen's original plan was to purchase a monochrome LED sign, but after an onsite demonstration, he opted for a high resolution color sign. "It gives you credibility in the market, and gives you more versatility than a newspaper or radio ad," he said. Asked if he would make the purchase again if given the chance, Quillen replied, "In a heartbeat."

Case Study

For more than 50 years, Waynesboro Landscape & Garden Center has been a solid, family-owned and operated resource for local residents. Their slogan, "Where your house grows into a home," says it all. Owner Stan Quillen, Jr. attributes his business' continued success to excellent service and a warm, inviting in-store experience.

But as big-box retailers moved into town, Quillen, Jr. knew he had to be forward-thinking. In such a competitive market, it's easy for a mom-and-pop store to get lost in the shuffle. For years, Waynesboro Landscape & Garden Center had advertised in print and on the radio. But those ads didn't yield nearly as much in-store traffic as the store's readerboard sign out front.

While driving around in Gatlinburg, Tenn., Quillen, Jr. noticed an interesting trend in storefront signage. "About every third business had an LED sign," he remarked, indicating that the trip sparked his interest in digital signage for his business. He cut his advertising budget to save for the sign, and in June 2009, approached Eddie Edwards Signs in Harrisonburg, Va. His original plan was to buy a monochrome, text-only LED sign, but an on-site demonstration of a Watchfire LED convinced him to upgrade to a full-color model. "It was the best way to improve our advertising," he said.

"An LED sign gives you credibility in the market, and gives you more versatility than a newspaper or radio ad."

— Stan Quillen, Owner
Waynesboro Landscape & Garden Center

The follow-through by Watchfire's staff, combined with the sign's ease of use and performance, made it a worthy investment. "The Watchfire representative preloaded the sign with product-specific graphics and helped us get it running. Now, it's a piece of cake to run."

Quillen, Jr. knows for sure that passing motorists are taking notice. "I literally see them reading it at the stoplight at the corner." He hopes to partner with garden product brands, offering them advertising space in exchange for wholesale discounts. "The sign will pay for itself," he said. "There's no doubt about it."

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL YOUR LOCAL SIGN DEALER.





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ATTACHMENT 2

A STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DIGITAL BILLBOARDS AND TRAFFIC SAFETY IN CUYAHOGA COUNTY, OHIO

SUBMITTED TO

THE FOUNDATION FOR OUTDOOR ADVERTISING
RESEARCH AND EDUCATION (FOARE)
1850 M STREET, NW, SUITE 1040
WASHINGTON, DC 20036-5821

BY

ALBERT MARTIN TANTALA, SR., P.E.
MICHAEL WALTER TANTALA, P.E.

SUBMITTED ON

JULY 7, 2007

STRUCTURAL
GEOTECHNICAL
SITE/CIVIL
RISK MANAGEMENT
ARCHITECTURAL
TRANSPORTATION
CONSULTING

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this study is to examine the statistical relationship between certain digital billboards and traffic safety, and to determine if any correlation exists. For this study, a study area was identified, data was collected, and an analysis was made. Specifically, this study analyzes the traffic and accident data near seven existing, digital billboards on the 132.07 miles of Interstate routes in Cuyahoga County, Ohio. These seven billboards are located along Interstate routes I-77, I-90, I-271, and I-480. In July 2005, the seven billboards were converted to digital from conventional format; a total of 335 million vehicles drove by these seven billboards in that year.

The analysis has two parts. In the first part, the temporal analysis, the occurrence of traffic accidents near the digital billboards is examined for an equal length of time before and after July 2005, for the purpose of establishing if traffic accidents occurred more or less frequently with the presence of the digital billboards. The second part, the spatial analysis, establishes statistical correlation coefficients between the digital billboards and accidents. Correlation coefficients are statistical measures of the “association” between two sets of data, for example, billboards and traffic accidents. The results are analyzed for various scenarios between accident density to sign density (the number of billboards), to Viewer Reaction Distance (the distance from a billboard that a driver is potentially within the “influence” of a billboard), and to sign proximity (the distance from the accident to the nearest billboard). In each scenario, this study considers accident data, with and without the bias from interchanges or known causes.

The conclusions of this study of Cuyahoga County indicate the following.

- At each of the digital billboards, and for periods of 12 months before and after the conversion (a total of 24 months), the accident statistics and metrics are consistent, exhibiting statistically insignificant variations. The same conclusion also applies for periods of 18 months before and after the conversion (a total of 36 months). The

metrics include the total number of accidents in any given month, the average number of accidents over the 12- and 18-month periods, the peak number of accidents in any given month, and the number of accident-free months. These conclusions account for variations in traffic-volume and vehicle-miles traveled.

- The correlation coefficients demonstrate no statistical relationship between vehicular accidents and billboards (including conventional and the seven, digital billboards). Also, these correlation coefficients strongly suggest no causal relationship between the billboards and vehicular accidents.
- Accidents occur with or without billboards (digital or conventional). The accident statistics on sections of Interstate routes near billboards are comparable to the accident statistics on similar sections that have no billboards.

The overall conclusion of this study is that digital billboards have no statistical relationship with the occurrence of accidents. The frequency of traffic accidents may be much more likely attributable to, and correlated with, other factors, such as DUIs, deer hits, adverse weather conditions, excessive speeding, *inter alia*.