

**NEWBERG ELECTRONIC SIGN
AD HOC COMMITTEE AGENDA
3 p.m., Thursday, December 3, 2009
Newberg City Hall, Permit Center Conference Room
414 E. First Street, Newberg, Oregon**

- I. ROLL CALL**
- II. OPEN MEETING**
- III. MEETING MINUTES** – approve October 1 and November 5, 2009 minutes
- IV. WORKSHOP: SAFETY/DRIVER DISTRACTION ISSUE**
 - Review of studies
 - Comments by Brian Casey, Chief of Police, Newberg-Dundee Police Dept.
- V. WORKSHOP: FUTURE SIGNS – TECHNOLOGY AND TRENDS**
 - Presentation by Ken Mahoney, Young Electric Sign Company (YESCO)
 - Videos of recent YESCO animated sign projects
- VI. FOLLOW-UP ITEMS FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING**
 - Size of existing electronic signs in Newberg
 - Summary of electronic sign regulations: Hillsboro & Gresham, OR, Minnetonka, MN, Bloomington, MN, San Antonio, TX, Seattle, WA, Mesa, AZ
- VII. OTHER BUSINESS**
- VIII. NEXT MEETINGS – tentative schedule**
 - January 7, 2010: Field trip in Newberg – sign experiments
 - February 4, 2010: Discuss code amendments
 - March 4, 2010: Vote on code amendments & recommendation
- IX. ADJOURN**

FOR QUESTIONS PLEASE STOP BY, OR CALL (503)537-1240, PLANNING & BUILDING DEPT. - P.O. BOX 970 - 414 E. FIRST STREET

ACCOMMODATION OF PHYSICAL IMPAIRMENTS:

In order to accommodate persons with physical impairments, please notify the City Recorder's office of any special physical accommodations you may need as far in advance of the meeting as possible and no later than 48 hours prior to the meeting. To request these arrangements please contact the city recorder at (503)537-1283. For TTY service please call (503)554-7793.

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**NEWBERG ELECTRONIC SIGN
AD HOC COMMITTEE MINUTES
3-5 p.m., Thursday, October 1, 2009
Newberg City Hall, Permit Center Conference Room
414 E. First Street, Newberg, Oregon**

I. ROLL CALL:

Present: Nick Tri (Chair) Claudia Stewart Stephen McKinney
Kristin Horn Michael Sherwood Dennis Lewis

Absent: Julie Want (excused) Loni Parrish (excused)
Fred Gregory (excused)

Staff Present: Steve Olson, Associate Planner
Dawn Karen Bevill, Recording Secretary

II. OPEN MEETING:

Chair Nick Tri opened the meeting at 3:08 p.m. and asked for roll call.

III. MEETING MINUTES:

<p>MOTION #1: Sherwood/McKinney moved to approve the September 3, 2009 minutes as submitted. (6 Yes/ 0 No/ 3 Absent [Want, Parrish, Gregory]) Motion carried.</p>
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Before beginning the workshop, Steve Olson addressed follow-up questions posed by committee members at the last meeting:

Where does the sign code fit? There is a summary of the sign code in the application packet, but the sign code is not a separate document. It's part of the Development Code, which is part of the Municipal Code. The Municipal Code includes the city charter and code of ordinances, which are the laws of the City.

Is there LEED for signs? No, but signs can help buildings earn LEED points (if the signs include recycled material, for example, or reduce energy usage).
ODOT regulations on off-premise signs are essentially that there can be no net gain in off-premise signs.

Claudia Stewart asked if Newberg High School wanted a sign at 99W and Elliott, would they need to take down the sign at the High School? Steve Olson replied no, but they would need to remove some other off-premise sign along 99W. ODOT wouldn't permit a new off-premise sign unless another one was taken down. ODOT's rule is probably aimed at billboards along the major state highways, but it applies in Newberg, as well.

IV. WORKSHOP:

REVIEW OF A MODEL SIGN CODE:

Steve Olson began the overhead presentation by explaining the source of the model code. The code was funded by a grant from the Signage Industry Foundation; a non-profit foundation that supports the sign industry. Staff thought the model code was good for discussion, and included a good analysis of legal issues.

Framework of a sign code:

Readability and comprehension are influenced by the sign design and location. There isn't a "one size fits all" approach so the code should cover all sign types by being comprehensive and broad based, as well as content-neutral and allowing standards to vary by "character" area.

Legal considerations:

Local governments have authority to regulate signs but there are limits. Sign codes can sometimes conflict with the First Amendment's guarantee of freedom of expression, so it is best if the code is content-neutral. Sign regulations based on content or on the identity of the sign user are content based. Churches need to be treated the same as other institutional uses, such as schools.

Claudia Stewart asked if that is true if the zones are different. Steve Olson replied that standards can vary in different zones, but within each zone the institutional uses should be treated the same.

Steve Olson continued by reviewing the Fifth Amendment's protection of property rights. The "sunset clauses" requiring the removal of non-conforming signs are common and are considered legally sound if they have reasonable time limits. Signs typically must be brought into compliance if modified or rebuilt. The "sunset clause" is commonly acceptable to courts if the time allowed is substantial. Newberg's sunset clause is 10 years. Also, permit fees need to be reasonably related to costs of administration and enforcement.

The Fourteenth Amendment guarantees due process of law and equal protection under the law. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that local governments could regulate signs based on concerns about traffic safety and aesthetics, including EMCs, (Electronic Message Centers), without providing any hard evidence of safety problems (Metromedia case).

Objective permit review standards for signs are best. A subjective design review process may be legally suspect, but could be okay if it is optional. Variances allow some flexibility, but can also be considered subjective (which is why Newberg does not allow sign variances). They are discretionary and may make an applicant more likely to challenge decisions on constitutional grounds.

The Lanham Act protects federally registered trademarks regarding changes to color, typescript or shape.

Stephen McKinney gave the example of the City of Sherwood not allowing Les Schwab to paint their building red and white; only allowing their sign to be in those colors. That mentality costs the City of Sherwood business.

Model regulatory guidelines:

Different types of signs may be permitted in each character area. A downtown area may favor projecting signs and limit freestanding signs, due to limited space. Wall signs with deep setbacks could be allowed to be larger. Height and size guidelines are included in the model code. Newberg's height and size limits generally fall in the low to middle area of each range. The "sunset clause" for removal of non-conforming signs is in the best interests of the business community and the City. Spinning and

flashing strobe signs are prohibited. EMCs should be allowed because they are cost effective advertising for businesses.

An EMC code can adapt to concerns regarding frequency of message change, limit EMC to certain percentage of sign area, can make motion unlimited for small signs, add automatic dimming capability requirements, and include definitions for EMCs and animation.

Newberg currently limits animated signs to 10 square feet in most areas, but the whole sign can be electronic. Animated signs are prohibited in the downtown C-3 zone. An animated sign is defined as one where the display changes more than once in a ten-minute period.

REVIEW OF OTHER CITIES' SIGN CODES:

The City of Beaverton prohibits signs with a changing electronic message except time and temperature signs. Their "sunset clause" is 10 years to remove non-conforming signs.

The City of Tigard prohibits flashings signs or animated signs, where the message interval is less than two seconds. Their sign illumination standard is quite obscure. EMCs are allowed in C-G (General Commercial) and CBD zones only. One EMC is permitted per premise. Traveling light patterns (chaser) are prohibited. The "sunset clause" is 10 years.

City of Sherwood states frequency must not change more than once in 30 seconds. Movement or flashing is not allowed. EMCs are limited to no more than 35% of sign area. Changing image signs (animated or video signs) are prohibited. In residential areas, EMCs are allowed under existing area, height, and setback standards.

City of McMinnville prohibits flashing and video signs. Video signs are defined as electronic changeable copy signs providing information in both a horizontal and vertical format, capable of continuously changing sign copy in a wide spectrum of color, shade and intensity. In residential areas, electronic changeable copy signs can be included in the sign but needs to be turned off between 8 p.m. – 7 a.m. Electronic changeable copy signs can be included in a sign at a church.

Electronic changeable copy (ECC) signs in the City of McMinnville allow one per site, as part of a freestanding or wall sign. ECC portion is to be no higher than 12'; not to exceed 24 square feet in area. The setback is to be at least 10' from all property lines and the ECC sign area is calculated at rate two times that of other signs. No temporary signs are allowed if there is an ECC and the ECC must be a permanent sign. The "sunset clause" is 8 years. There are no ECC signs permitted downtown.

Kristin Horn asked for clarification on how a sign is measured. Steve Olson explained in Newberg it's measured by a rectangle or triangle around where the letters are only, not the frame.

Claudia Stewart is curious to know how the McMinnville sign codes affect new facilities, such as McMinnville High School and whether they were allowed electronic reader boards.

V. PILOT PROGRAM: Review of updates from the pilot program participants

Steve Olson explained that the pilot program participants have been given authorization to experiment with animation and messages, and have agreed to collect data and comments. The Electronic Sign Ad Hoc Committee will interview participants and can work with the City Manager to direct experiments.

Lewis Audio and Video: Dennis Lewis reported it is difficult to ascertain the effective difference in business credited to a change in operation of the electronic sign; he will say they have been able to operate the sign in a much more efficient manner and their business for the same period compared to last year is even. They've been able to promote community events, give more accurate information about goods and services, and simply use the sign as an asset. Mr. Lewis stated he's willing to advertise community events as long as they are valid. There's a time clock that will stop advertising the event after the date it's finished.

Mountain View Middle School: Wayne Strong stated a survey was conducted of parents at the back to school nights with regard to font size. Sixty-one respondents chose the font with the larger size and one respondent chose the small font size. They've personally spoken with about half the residents that live in the neighborhood to determine if they have found the sign to be a nuisance. There's been no indication of a problem, even at night.

A Storage Place: Scott Cassidy reported no negative comments have been heard but rather positive comments. The sign is good advertising, but business is down, however.

Walgreens: Dan Rouse loves the ability to use the sign. They're using a five second delay. They've reported the flexibility is good, have advertised community messages, and have received no comments for or against. He gave specific percentages showing customer numbers have been up May – August.

Questions and Comments:

Claudia Stewart stated Mountain View Middle School is not a drive-by school. The sign can only be viewed from the parking lot. Reminders and messages are so important to schools.

Michael Sherwood offered his opinion as a business owner who has operated an electronic sign, himself. His business would skyrocket when advertised on his electronic sign. Radio advertisement was not as successful.

Stephen McKinney appreciates Dan Rouse showing the customer percentages in his letter. He represents an industry where they know the value of the electronic signs. A few banks in town are awaiting the decisions made by this committee with regard to the boards. Standards need to be set that will be beneficial to Newberg schools, as well.

Dennis Lewis stated signs could be used to notify citizens of City Council Meetings, School Board Meetings, etc. The community will be affected positively through advertising community events.

Claudia Stewart would like to hear from the participants on what would improve their signs and how a code change would benefit them, such as message intervals, whether to turn the sign off at night, etc. Steve Olson stated time limits could certainly be set up on signs in residential areas. Commercial would be treated differently. Dennis Lewis stated personally, he wants his message board available to drivers at all times of the day and night. Many drivers come through the community only at night and advertising all night is an advantage.

Kristin Horn stated in her experience, print ads are virtually dead. Businesses will have to become more and more creative in the way they advertise. Stephen McKinney agreed with Ms. Horn and stated as time goes on, fewer papers will be available to advertise.

Claudia Stewart asked when community aesthetics comes into play. Steve Olson replied that aesthetic issues can be considered anytime the committee sees fit. When we review other cities' codes we are looking at the balance they struck between business interests and community aesthetic interests.

Dennis Lewis' opinion is Newberg looks nothing like it did a long time ago, even though the downtown is considered to be a historical area. He's seen many stores disappear in Newberg. Personality is needed in business. Not every business should look alike downtown. Kristin Horn believes the sign code allows for a much more eclectic mix in Newberg and much time was spent in talking with the community when writing the code for downtown. People want an individual type of area and the code reflects that for better or not. Michael Sherwood stated customers like the downtown areas because they can park their cars and walk to stores.

Stephen McKinney understands the concerns. Different areas need different goals. City Council encourages this committee to be leaders in the community; building a standard applicable to the merchant's needs and that of the community. We all want to see a vibrant downtown. Maybe the upcoming cultural area should be the first area with a marquee advertising events, etc. Different signs for different areas are needed.

Dennis Lewis stated the electronic sign he has now is considered an antique. The performance of a sign today as compared to 3 years ago is very different. A marquee sign can be a work of art with a picture in high density color or low density with a message alone. Mr. Lewis asked the committee members to subscribe to the periodical he emailed to them so they can view examples.

Steve Olson will poll the pilot participants to see if they'll be available to attend the next scheduled meeting on November 5, 2009. Dennis Lewis will be out of town but can have someone else attend from his business, if needed.

VI. OTHER BUSINESS:

Steve Olson stated a possible field trip for the December meeting to view EMCs.

VII. NEXT MEETING: The next scheduled meeting is November 5, 2009.

VIII. ADJOURN: The meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

Approved by the Electronic Sign Ad Hoc Committee this 3rd day of December, 2009.

AYES:

NO:

**ABSENT:
(List Name(s))**

**ABSTAIN:
(List Names(s))**

Recording Secretary

Electronic Sign Ad Hoc Committee Chair

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**NEWBERG ELECTRONIC SIGN
AD HOC COMMITTEE MINUTES
3-5 p.m., Thursday, November 5, 2009
Newberg City Hall, Permit Center Conference Room
414 E. First Street, Newberg, Oregon**

I. ROLL CALL:

Present: Nick Tri (Chair) Stephen McKinney
Michael Sherwood Julie Want
Kristen Horn (arrived at 4:00 p.m.)

Absent: Claudia Stewart (excused) Dennis Lewis (excused)
Fred Gregory (excused) Loni Parrish (sick)

Staff Present: Barton Brierley, Building and Planning Director
Steve Olson, Associate Planner
Dawn Karen Bevill, Recording Secretary

Others Present:
Dan Rouse, Walgreens Scott Cassidy, A Storage Place
Wayne Strong, Mountain View Middle School

II. OPEN MEETING:

Chair Nick Tri opened the meeting at 3:14 p.m. and asked for roll call.

III. MEETING MINUTES:

The October 1, 2009 meeting minutes will be voted upon at the next scheduled meeting, December 3, 2009 due to the lack of a quorum.

IV. WORKSHOP:

Follow-up question from last meeting:

Could we approve an Electronic Message Center (EMC) downtown under the C-3 zone point system? Steve Olson showed a possible example and explained yes, the point system is flexible enough to approve an EMC downtown. It could not be animated, however, so the message would have to be static for at least 10 minutes. Many of the codes we have reviewed from other cities do not allow animated signs in downtown or historic districts.

Review of other cities' sign codes:

Spokane – recent code update:

The City of Spokane, updated their sign code on June 22, 2009. Their goal was to balance the needs for public safety, maintaining an attractive community, and providing for adequate identification, communication, and advertising.

Electronic Message Signs (EMS) are not permitted in the CBD and CC4 zones, or for residential uses in the residential zones (CBD is Central Business District zone; CC4 is a Mixed Use Transition zone between the core and residential areas.).

Electronic Message Signs are allowed for institutional uses in the residential zones; 25-square feet maximum area (50% of total allowable sign area) and shall be shut off between the hours of 10 PM and 6 AM.

EMS signs are allowed in other zones with no limits to hours of operation but with limits on size.

Brightness/dimming interval is as follows: EMS shall comply with standards (Table 4 of SMC 17C.240.240J), and also requires a letter from the owner certifying the sign complies with the brightness standards. Steve Olson stated Spokane's measurement method is very understandable. If the committee chooses to address brightness then this would be a workable example to follow.

Regarding EMS interval/mode of operation, any display for less than two seconds is considered flashing. Except in the GC, LI and HI zones, no video display methods are permitted. Where permitted, the minimum duration of videos displays shall be two seconds and the maximum shall be five seconds.

Spokane defined a frame effect as a visual effect on an EMS applied to a single frame to transition from one message to the next.

Salem – recent code update, staff report including summary of other cities' codes:

Steve Olson explained the City of Salem just revised their sign code in August of 2009, after a thorough review process. The staff report that the City Council considered is included in the meeting packet because it contains a lot of good information about other cities and safety studies.

The code states that no electronic display sign in a Residential zone may be erected without first obtaining a conditional use permit, and are not permitted within a historic district.

The change of display must occur within two seconds, and the message must be displayed at least eight seconds.

Regarding the electronic display sign brightness, Mr. Olson explained the City of Salem uses NITs (illuminative brightness measurement) and different measurements for the colors red, green and amber. Some colors are considered more intrusive at night. The standard seems overly complicated. Spokane's code was simpler and seemed easier to apply.

In Residential districts, if a sign is within 100 feet of a residence or hospital then no animation or flashing is permitted between 12 PM – 7 AM.

Steve Olson summarized the EMS definitions (A – F) located on page 14 of the meeting packet.

Mr. Olson summarized the July 13, 2009 staff report to Salem City Council. The findings included a discussion of aesthetics, safety concerns, free speech concerns, brightness limitations, and a prohibition in historic areas.

Mr. Olson reviewed the table summarizing the sign codes of: Salem, Keizer; Portland; Hillsboro; Gresham, Minnetonka, MN; Bloomington, MN; San Antonio, TX; Seattle, WA; Mesa, AZ (see meeting packet pages 16 – 18).

The Salem information to be discussed at the next meeting includes a report by Jerry Wachtel regarding the safety impacts of electronic display signs, and a literature review of safety studies by Jon Lazarus of ODOT.

V. NEXT MEETINGS – tentative schedule:

Steve Olson reviewed the following tentative schedule:

- December 3, 2009: Safety/distraction issues, sign company representative – future trends
- January 9, 2010: Field trip in Newberg – sign experiments
- February 4, 2010: Discuss code amendments
- March 4, 2010: Vote on code amendments & recommendation

While awaiting the Pilot Program participants, Steve Olson showed the committee video he took of the various signs in the pilot program, as well as the Dodge dealership and signage he viewed while in Chicago.

Kristen Horn arrived at 4:00 PM

VI. PILOT PROGRAM: Interview the participants in the pilot program & review public comments

TIME - 4:08 PM

The Pilot Program participants are Walgreens, Lewis Audio Video, A Storage Place, and Mountain View Middle School.

Steve Olson reviewed the questions for the Pilot Program participants:

1. What other types of advertising do you use?
2. If you could change your sign, what would you change?
3. Any specific suggestions for code changes?

Items for discussion:

Some negative public comments – animated signs are dangerous distractions, visual pollution, and make Newberg look like Anywhere, USA.

Are there any experiments this committee would like the Pilot Program members to try with their signs? Newberg City Staff and the Sign Committee Members introduced themselves and gave their affiliations to the Pilot Program participants.

Dan Rouse explained Walgreens uses all types of advertising media. They advertise nationally as a company but the reader board also shows advertisements and promotions in the store that haven't been advertised elsewhere, such as ice which sold in great quantities over the summer.

Scott Cassidy, A Storage Place, stated their sign is a localized medium. They became interested in reader boards after seeing the success from business associates who use reader boards for advertising. Mr. Cassidy explained there is short-term advertising; the immediate call to action; a community-building component; and longer term advertising. He has had positive comments from the public and has seen a change in traffic regarding the purchase of boxes, which is advertised on their reader board. Mr. Cassidy explained they also have a facility in Albany on 99W, which has a bigger sign and allows for more complete messaging on the reader board.

Kristen Horn asked if staff has received any complaints concerning the electronic message signs. Barton Brierley received quite a few when the Walgreen's sign first went up as well as the Dodge Dealership sign.

Michael Sherwood asked Dan Rouse if the Walgreens sign is the maximum height the code allows. Dan and Steve Olson both replied yes, they thought so.

Stephen McKinney commented that the A Storage Place reader board sign is user friendly and believes it's noticed more by drivers due to it being at the right height level. Julie Want believes it is not as user friendly when the messages stream which she finds distracting at the current height level. Mr. McKinney understands her opinion and stated the messages have to be streamed in order to get the message out under the current restrictions. Scott Cassidy stated they would love to move away from the streaming message but would need a bigger sign to do so and isn't sure if he would want the sign any higher. Michael Sherwood believes the lower sign is classier.

Stephen McKinney asked Wayne Strong his opinion on their sign being too small. Mr. Strong replied the sign they have was the maximum allowed but would have gone bigger if it was possible. They can't use this entire sign with animation. Prior to the Pilot Program, only two-thirds of the sign could be used, which is a minimal message. Less static messages with a bigger sign are what they'd like to see, flashing 4 - 5 messages at a glance as opposed to streaming.

Stephen McKinney asked if the Walgreens' sign could post Amber Alerts. Mr. Rouse replied yes, the sign would be taken over by the corporation any time Amber Alerts were needed, overriding whatever is being advertised at that moment.

Michael Sherwood asked when a public service message is done do people ask or is it solicited. Mr. Rouse replied people come in and ask. However, corporate approval is needed, even when the Girl Scouts are selling cookies outside. He doesn't want the community to see Walgreens as only a corporate business but a local one, as well.

Scott Cassidy stated not everyone has electronic signs but the cost is coming down with the anticipation of having more in Newberg. The capital expenditures are still great although the power utilization is very efficient and not very expensive to operate. Dan Rouse agreed and stated changing the signs with suction cups and letters are time consuming opposed to changing the signage from a computer.

Wayne Strong stated the cost of the Mountain View sign didn't come from school district dollars but rather from money raised by parents. If you drive around the other schools, they have the suction cup

letters up as Mr. Rouse said and the information tends to stays up too long due to the lack of labor to go out and change the sign. He can change the EMS from his home or on his office computer. Mr. Strong stated the simpler the message on the sign the better. He would prefer lower, double-faced signage due to surrounding trees.

Dan Rouse would like to change the height of the Walgreens sign, raising it up due to trees blocking it during the summer. Julie Want stated the traffic lighting blocks the sign as well if driving in a particular direction.

Steve Olson told the committee they would be able to speak with the participants again if there are questions later on or if they desire feedback regarding code changes. The program began in May 2009 and can run up to 18 months.

Stephen McKinney would like to have the business owners' input on the code changes as the process develops. He's noticed various cities are engaged in restricting signage when in reality, the print media is evaporating and there will be more reader boards in the future. Newberg needs an applicable ordinance that plans for the future. There has to be a balance for the business, community, owner, reader, etc. He appreciates the spirit of the committee and participants. There are a number of schools interested in seeing the codes that come about from this process, as well.

Kristen Horn stated she's pleased with the signs although the Mountain View Middle School sign is very hard to read, even when driving through the school parking lot. Wayne Strong agrees and stated the static sign is large, limiting the electronic reader board due to the size limitations in a residential area.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS:

Steve Olson stated he will be contacting a sign company representative regarding future trends and technology in the sign industry.

IX. ADJOURN: The meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

Approved by the Electronic Sign Ad Hoc Committee this 3rd day of December, 2009.

AYES:

NO:

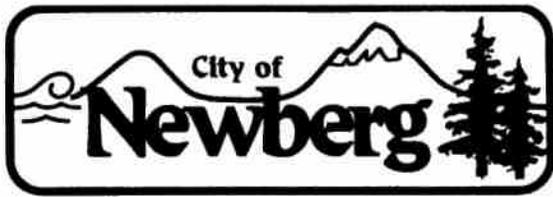
ABSENT:
(List Name(s))

ABSTAIN:
(List Names(s))

Recording Secretary

Electronic Sign Ad Hoc Committee Chair

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Memorandum

To: Electronic Sign Ad Hoc Committee
From: Steve Olson, Associate Planner
CC: Barton Brierley, Dan Danicic, Mayor Bob Andrews
Date: November 25, 2009
Re: Sign code workshop on December 3, 2009

The next Electronic Sign Ad Hoc Committee meeting on December 3, 2009 will include a discussion of the safety/driver distraction issue, and a presentation on future trends and technology in the sign industry.

Safety/driver distraction discussion: What are the impacts of animated signs?

Brightness:

Flashing strobe lights can be very bright and are obvious traffic hazards that could blind drivers at night. Most, if not all, sign codes ban this type of lighting on signs.

The existing electronic signs in Newberg do not seem bright enough to harm a driver's night vision. New technology, however, will probably allow electronic signs to be brighter; Newberg can adopt a brightness limitation (as Spokane, Salem, and other cities did) to address this aspect of driver safety.

Driver distraction:

The other potential safety issue is whether animated electronic signs are too distracting for drivers. Concerns about "driver distraction" have become more common in recent years, probably due to the increased use of cell phones, navigation systems, and other electronics in cars. Some states now ban texting while driving, or require drivers to only use cell phones "hands-free". The City of Salem staff report about electronic signs included several studies that addressed the effect of signs on driver distraction and safety.

"Safety Impacts of the Emerging Digital Display Technology for Outdoor Advertising Signs" was prepared by Jerry Wachtel of The Veridian Group in April, 2009 (please refer to page 209 of 342 in the 11/5/09 sign packet). This report is a review of many existing studies that relate to driver distraction and signs. One of the findings was that technology is changing so rapidly that none of the studies cover the latest developments in sign technology. Many of the studies found that items like digital billboards can capture and hold a person's attention, which detracts from their primary task (driving, in this case). They also found that driving is complicated, however, and that there are many factors that

can distract drivers and affect driving performance. This makes it difficult to assess how much impact a distracting sign has on driver distraction and traffic safety. Research sponsored by the sign industry generally concludes there is no negative impact. Independent researchers often conclude that digital signs can cause significant driver distraction, depending on factors such as brightness, message duration and message change interval, location near interchanges, and roadway geometry. The author noted that new LED signs are brighter, will allow full motion video, and can even be hung on moving vehicles, which may increase driver distraction.

Another report was “Literature Review – June 6, 2008. The use of commercial advertising on large scale electronic billboards for highways and their relation to driver safety and driver distraction”, by Jon Lazarus of ODOT (please refer to page 250 of 342 in the 11/5/09 sign packet). The literature review concluded that many states were concerned about driver distraction from electronic billboards but that there were no uniform standards or federal guidelines. Regulations vary from state to state, city to city. More studies and federal guidance was needed.

Questions to think about:

- What is your experience? Do you find animated electronic signs to be minor distractions or are they significant enough to affect traffic safety? How do they compare to other driver distractions, such as cell phones, radios, navigation systems, or kids in the back seat?
- Research seems to agree that some signs can be distracting but does not provide clear guidelines to apply to a specific sign and tell whether it will be too distracting. Are there any sign design factors (besides strobe lights) that would automatically make a sign too distracting?

Comments by Brian Casey, Chief of Police, Newberg-Dundee Police Department.

Chief Casey has agreed to attend the meeting and will share his thoughts on driver distraction and animated signs.

Future signs - What technologies and trends can we expect to see in the future?

Ken Mahoney from Young Electric Sign Company has agreed to attend the meeting and will talk about sign technology, trends in the industry, and what kind of signs we can expect to see in the future.

We will also review videos of recent animated sign projects from the Young Electric Sign Company website.

Follow-up question from the previous meeting:

1. How large are the existing signs with large electronic message centers (EMC) in Newberg:

Location	Size of EMC	Total size of sign	Percent of sign that is EMC
Walgreens	28 sf	85.3 sf	33%
Lewis AV	21 sf	49 sf	43%
Storage Place	20.8 sf	50.8 sf	41%
Mtview MS	15 sf	26 sf	58%

This will be useful as a measuring stick when the committee considers potential changes to the sign code. For example, at least one city we looked at limited EMCs to 50% of the total sign area. If Newberg adopted that standard then the Mountain View Middle School sign would become non-conforming and would need to be changed.

Summary of Electronic Sign Regulations from other cities (page 17 of 342 in 11/5 packet)

The City of Salem compiled a summary of other cities' electronic sign standards during their code revision project. Please read through the table on page 17 of 342 in the November 5th packet. At our last meeting we looked at the Salem, Keizer, and Portland standards. At the December 3rd meeting we will review the rest of the table: Hillsboro; Gresham; Minnetonka, Mn; Bloomington, Mn; San Antonio, Tx; Seattle, Wa; Mesa, Az.