

Charter & Ordinance committee
Meeting minutes June 4, 2019

Committee members present: Rebecca Mattis (chair), Chris Etori, Melinda Humphrey, Lisa Ryan

Others present: Tara Kelly, Mayor Allaire, President Davis, Aldermen Paul Clifford and Matt Whitcomb, Brennan Duffy

Meeting convened at 5:31. The purpose of the meeting was mainly educational. It was an examination of current ordinance with examples to show how the sign ordinance works. Tara Kelly passed out binders with organized materials she believed would help the board of aldermen in their process of going through the proposed new sign ordinance.

It became clear that the current ordinance is vague in many areas, and in some cases is in conflict with itself. This can make implementation and enforcement difficult and inconsistent. Some of the larger problems include vagueness in figuring building frontage, inconsistency regarding temporary signs, vagueness around multi-tenant properties, and a lack of consideration of multi-story buildings, which is of particular interest as upper stories are developed downtown.

There was some discussion of how best to involve the business public in the process. Alderman Whitcomb reminded us that there are as many opinions about signs as there are people. The chair agrees, but still values individual examples as a way of understanding what constitutes durable policy. With this in mind, the chair has been talking to business people one-on-one. Mary Cohen at the Chamber of Commerce set up meetings for chamber members to discuss any concerns they may have with the committee chair. The chair urges anyone with hopes or concerns about the sign ordinance, current or proposed, to contact her.

Meeting adjourned at about 6:45. This report is for information only.

Respectfully submitted,
Rebecca Mattis, chair