

**St. George Planning Board
St. George Town Office
December 10, 2019 – 7 p.m.**

Public Hearing -- Town of St. George (Draft) Sign Ordinance

A Public Hearing was scheduled for 7 p.m. Present were: Chair Anne Cox, Jane Brown, Mary K. Hewlett, Michael Jordan, Alan Letourneau, Crystal Tarjick, and Ray Emerson. Also present were: CEO Terry Brackett, Richard Bates and Joline Wilson.

At 7 p.m., Chair Cox declared the public hearing open. (The summary has been edited.)

Wilson stated she did not have a chance to review all of the draft sign ordinance and asked if this was an old ordinance which the Planning Board was revising? Chair Cox explained there were very few things in the town's current ordinances dealing with signs. She said this issue comes up periodically, so the Planning Board decided to tackle the whole issue while trying to preserve the character of the town.

Chair Cox: In our ordinances, there have been bits and pieces (particularly in the Shoreland Zoning section) regarding requirements about signs. So, the Planning Board is trying to put it all together. We are not revising an ordinance. We are writing a new one, pulling small sections from what we have had.

Wilson: One thought that I have as far as fitting into the character of St. George would be something that I see adversely. For instance, the school sign. I guess they are trying to comply with something, but I for the life of me, cannot read those little tiny letters because they are complying with something. But the community would like to know what it is that they are doing. But we cannot see it because of these rules, I think.

Chair Cox: The school sign is in the Shoreland Zone. (Brackett stated that is correct.) There are some state requirements that are more stringent than what we can permit outside of the Shoreland Zone. I was not here when the school sign was set up, but I think that was to comply with the Shoreland Zone Ordinance on the size of signs.

Jordan: Under existing state requirements, the size of the sign is limited to six square feet in the Shoreland Zone.

Chair Cox: It would be 2' x 3'.

Wilson: Six square? (Unintelligible.) It's not that big.

Jordan: You can have two signs but neither of them can be larger than six square feet.

Chair Cox: For instance, the library sign that is hanging on the stone pillar. That is six square feet and the sign that says Library in granite on the wall - that is also six square feet. Those are the largest signs because that is in the Shoreland Zone.

Wilson: So, maybe the school is not really trying to be so in compliant. It is just that they don't have the right size for people to be able to see it.

Chair Cox: They probably could make their sign different, but they are limited to only six square feet.

Hewlett: They could put in bigger letters, if they wanted to but I think the problem is the sign was constructed with those size letters. (Cox: Or reconstruct the sign.)

Wilson: The Salvation Army (SA) had a very nice digital clock and it was wonderful to drive in town and know whether or not you were late for where you were going. A few of those exist but they made them (SA) take it down. It seems a little crazy when you see ugly buildings going up and things like that. It just does not seem to all fit. I guess as far as public goes, my concern is that I'm a business owner, but I also am just a "dub around farmer." If I have extra cucumbers, tomatoes, or anything else and if I want people to be able to have them, they put money in a box.

Chair Cox: You do not need a permit for that. It cannot be anymore than seven square feet on a side. Your sign that says cucumbers or whatever would be the size of a real estate sign.

Wilson: Those are seven feet?

Chair Cox: Seven square feet is the size.

Wilson: I thought those were like 24" by... They can't be 7 feet.

Brackett and Hewlett: Seven *square* feet.

Chair Cox: It would be like 2 ½ feet by 3 feet.

Wilson: If I wanted to take a chalkboard that size or a wax board and lean it against my stand, I couldn't do that?

Hewlett: It could be that big.

Letourneau: (He drew two illustrations on the dry erase board and explained.) This could be six feet. This could be potentially seven.

Chair Cox: So, it would be in the larger rectangle (pointing to the illustration on the dry erase board).

Wilson: But I actually have one of those wax board things that I can just lean against the stand and bring it in at night. Because sometimes your prices change, and it is nice to be able to erase it.

Hewlett: It cannot be as big as the board mounted on (this) wall.

Wilson: If it is not in the ground? It is just leaning there on my stand.

Hewlett: I think that would be pretty hard for you to bring in and out, so it is probably not that big.

Wilson: It is not a big board and it is not a big deal, just lay it down on the ground.

Chair Cox: If you wanted a larger sign, you could apply for a permit and it can be a larger sign. This is just for signs that you do not need a permit for.

Wilson: Is where you are going with this – is that I would have to get a permit for every single sign that I decide to put up?

Chair Cox: No. Not for signs that are small. That is a good size (pointing to the dry eraser board) sign, so you would not need a permit to put up a sign that says cucumbers for sale. But if you wanted to go larger than that, then you would need to. Because the larger signs would indicate that this is not just an occasional sign that is put out, it is a more permanent sign.

Wilson: What about the kind that is in a real estate frame. (Cox: Perfect.) And you just stick it in the ground, and I would say 'HomeAway.com' on it or something. Is that okay?

Chair Cox: Yes.

Wilson: All right. And again, these little yard sale things that have the coat hanger wire?

Chair Cox: Yes. That's okay. So when folks want to put up a thing for yard sales or if you have an event and you get permission from people to stick a sign down the road in their yard (Hewlett: for weddings) or something like that. You cannot keep it up there forever but that is fine. A lot of this is the way we are doing business now. (The way things are now.)

Brackett: Most of this is not any different than it has been.

Wilson: The Barn sign. You must be familiar with the sign. It is a wooden thing that is in the driveway and practically in the road. Do you know where I mean? (Brackett: The Seaside.) But it is not the Seaside, it is The Barn. That is a pretty high wood thing that folds out like that. Are those going to be allowed?

Brackett: If it folds out or is a sandwich board, they cannot be more than 4 feet high and they cannot be more than 3 square feet on a side.

Chair Cox: The other thing is that this ordinance says: all signs that are currently in use. We are not going to go around and be the sign police and say you have to take your sign down if it is currently there.

Brackett: Sandwich board signs - a maximum total sign area is 24 square feet and the maximum height is 5 feet. So, the sign board itself cannot be more than 5 feet high and you cannot have more than 12 square feet to the side. (Cox: Each exposed face, 12 square feet.) So, it would be 3 feet x 4 feet.

Wilson: So, what about (unintelligible) coming off from the road?

Chair Cox: Safety is primary.

Jordan: There is a state law on that. (Brackett: Yes.)

Wilson: So, the town is under the state law and does anybody know what that is?

Brackett: Yes. Thirty-three (33) feet from the center of a public way. Twenty (20) feet from the outside edge of a paved portion of any public way with more than two lanes of travel and within the full width of the right of way of any public way.

Wilson: Okay. It looks like you pretty much have all that in there, then.

Hewlett: If you want another copy of the draft sign ordinance, it is available online. People can look at it online.

Hearing no further comments, at 7:27 p.m., Chair Cox declared the public hearing closed.

Respectfully submitted,

Marguerite R. Wilson
Planning Board Recording Secretary