

MEMORANDUM

TO: Ben Perry
FROM: Roger Waldon
SUBJECT: Comparison of Proposed Signage Guidelines for Obey Creek to Existing Sign Regulations in Chapel Hill's LUMO
DATE: May 18, 2015

This memorandum offers additional information about the Signage Guidelines we are proposing for Obey Creek.

At a recent Town Council Negotiation Session for Obey Creek, we presented a revised version of our draft Design Guidelines for the proposed development. Included in the Guidelines is a section on Signage that is to serve as a Unified Sign Plan for Obey Creek.

Council members expressed interest in seeing a comparison of these draft Signage Guidelines to the sign regulations currently existing in the Town's Land Use Management Ordinance. This memorandum offers that comparison.

It has also been suggested that it might be helpful to add in information about sign guidelines that are part of the Ephesus-Fordham Form Based Code, and that are part of the Glen Lennox Development Agreement. For Glen Lennox, the Development Agreement simply states that Town LUMO regulations will be used, so there is nothing further to add there. There are new sign guidelines set out in the Ephesus-Fordham rules, and I have included information from that document in the comparison table below.

Overview Observations

The proposed Obey Creek Signage Design Standards are considerably more detailed and illustrative than the Sign section of the Land Use Management Ordinance, and this level of detail will help assure achievement of the character we all have been envisioning for Obey Creek. Obey Creek is intended to be an interactive mix of commercial, office, and residential uses with emphasis on placemaking, pedestrian orientation, and multi-modal mobility. Signage is an important ingredient in helping that all come together. I especially like these two quotes from the Design Standards, that I think capture the intent of the development: "Pedestrian circulation is vital to the success of this project. The majority of project signs work to move people out of their cars and into pedestrian mode of circulation." And, regarding open space and plaza signage, "the signs within this category function largely as place-making. The intent of signage and graphics within plazas and spaces is to foster human comfort and help create a sustainable community." I think the signage within Obey Creek will be attractive and will enhance wayfinding to, from, and within the development.

Summary of Key Differences

The most obvious difference between the Obey Creek Signage Guidelines and LUMO regulations is the introduction of graphic illustrations. The photographs and maps in the Guidelines help convey the intent and expectation for what will be on the ground.

The second key difference is a palette of sign types in the Obey Creek guidelines, with differentiation for size and content of signs depending on where in the development a sign is to be placed. A map is provided in the guidelines that shows the locations for each type of sign. For example, signs placed for viewing from the 15-501 corridor are larger than interior signs, and also will contain less information than interior signs. Here is a list of the types of signs included in the Obey Creek Design Guidelines that are not specifically called out in LUMO regulations:

- Vehicular Scaled Directional
- Building-mounted Project Identity
- Pedestrian Project Gateway
- Pedestrian Directional
- Project Identity
- Park/Open Space Identity
- Parking Entry Identity

The third key difference is the emphasis on pedestrian signs within the development, to help with wayfinding and to help establish character and identity. The table below compares the dimensional and content similarities and differences.

Comparing the Obey Creek proposed sign guidelines to the Ephesus-Fordham sign guidelines, there are many similarities (including the use of graphic illustrations). One key difference is project entry signage, where Obey Creek proposes that only the name of the development be shown. LUMO regulations allow, additionally, the names of individual establishments within the development to be displayed. For Ephesus-Fordham there are no limitations on content. For interior wall-mounted signs, the Obey Creek guidelines limit content to the name of the establishment and logo (no tag lines allowed). This more restrictive than the Ephesus-Fordham rules, which simply require that the content of signs be related to the activity taking place on the site.

How the Standards Will Be Used

The Signage Guidelines section of the proposed Obey Creek Design Guidelines will serve in a manner similar to the Unified Sign Plan framework that is currently set out in the LUMO. Before any sign can be erected, a Development Agreement Compliance Permit will need to be obtained from Town staff, confirming that the particular sign aligns with and is consistent with the Obey Creek Signage Guidelines.

Comparison Table

The LUMO has multiple standards for signs, depending on the zoning district in which a property is located. The table below was constructed using LUMO standards for the Mixed Use-Village zoning district and the Planned Development – Mixed Use district. Also shown is information drawn from the Ephesus-Fordham Development Agreement. Glen Lennox sign rules are not displayed, because that Agreement defaults to LUMO requirements.

	Obey Creek	LUMO	Ephesus-Fordham
Ground Sign Size (Entrance)	Height: Max 10' Size: Max 200 sf <i>(Secondary Identity signs Max area 90 sf)</i>	Height: Max 14' Size: Max 144 sq ft	Height: Max 10' Size: Max 32 sq ft
Ground Sign Content (Entrance)	Project Name Only	Names of all Establishments on Site Permitted	No Limitations
Wall Sign (Example Façade: 100' x 40')	Exterior Project Identity: Max 200 sf Interior Retail Tenant Sign: Max size: 1.5 sf per linear ft frontage (Max for Example Façade: 150 sq ft) Interior Office Tenant Sign: Max size: 2.0 sf per linear ft frontage (Max for Example Façade: 200 sf)	Max Size: 5% of Façade (Max for Example Façade: 200 sq ft)	Max size: 5% of Façade (Max for Example Façade: 200 sq ft)
Projection Signs	Max Size: 9 sq ft Min Clearance: 10'	Max Size: 8 sq ft Min Clearance: 8'	Max Size: 9 sq ft Min Clearance: 10'
General Limitations on Content to be Displayed on Sign	Varies by sign type. Entrance: Project name only Tenant Wall Signs: Only name of tenant/logo; no tag lines allowed	- Names of Project and tenants permitted on all signs	Content to be associated with operation of the use on the site
Unified Sign Plan	Signage Guidelines to perform that Function	Required in LUMO	Guidelines provided to perform that function