To: Mission Planning Commission

From: Laura Smith, City Administration

Date: May 23, 2018

Re: Case # 18-02- Sign Code Changes

Background

In early 2015, in response to increased feedback by the community and City Council, staff proposed a process to conduct an inventory of existing signs, examine the current sign code regulations, and to recommend possible changes before initiating expanded sign code enforcement efforts. After much conversation and discussion resulting from that process, the Planning Commission recommended revisions to the sign code in March 2017.

The Council adopted the final revisions in April 2017. Following adoption, education and enforcement efforts were initiated throughout the City. In the course of enforcement, both Council and staff continued to hear feedback regarding various prohibited sign types, primarily pole signs. The Council discussed the issues at several committee meetings in 2017 and 2018, and ultimately asked staff to draft proposed revisions which might allow for the reuse of prohibited sign types on a limited, case by case, basis.

In addition to the potential reuse of prohibited sign types, staff also took the opportunity to clean up other portions of the code for clarity and ease of administration.

Analysis of Proposed Code Changes

The proposed revisions to the sign code suggest changes to Section 420.220 relating to non-conforming signs. The changes detailed in the redlined version attached are intended to make this section easier to interpret and administer.

The revisions also include the addition of Section 430.130 which creates a new sign category - Signs of Historic Significance. The code section is intended to provide a mechanism to preserve or maintain signage that contributes to Mission’s unique character, history or identity, but would otherwise be prohibited.

The code establishes specific criteria for considering a designation of historic significance, and is written to allow the consideration of any existing sign, including those which may be legal non-conforming uses or currently prohibited sign types. The Planning Commission will decide whether or not to approve the application for the historic designation; the sign owner may appeal an adverse decision to the City Council.

Signs classified as a sign of historic significance would be exempted from the sign regulations regarding type, height, area, and location as set forth in the City Code. In addition, signs of historic significance that are nonconforming as to type, size, height, or location are exempt from the regulations governing nonconforming signs and abandoned signs. However, changes to the sign may not increase the nonconformity unless a variance is granted by the Board of Zoning Appeals. Classification as a sign of historic significance would not prevent a current or future owner from demolishing or removing the sign at a later date.

The addition of Section 430.130 seeks to offer flexibility in considering signs or sign types which may have value in creating or maintaining a sense of place or providing historical context, but to do so on a limited basis.

Next Steps

Staff asks that the Planning Commission conduct the public hearing as advertised, discuss the information presented above and the proposed changes, and make a recommendation to the City Council.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends approval of the proposed changes to the code as presented in the redline copy. Text shown as strikethrough will be removed in final version.