

Staff Update

Business Improvement Districts

March 16, 2017

Joint BID Memo

As part of the FY 2018 work plan and budget submissions, the Ballston, Crystal City and Rosslyn BIDs submitted a joint memo requesting the Board address five issues that were of joint concern by all BIDs:

1. Commercial Signage
2. Non-Commercial Signage/Wayfinding
3. Special Events
4. Streetscape and Lighting
5. Alcohol Sales/Consumption in Public Parks

Issue 1: Commercial Signage

- Consider implementing more sign area allowance, or alternate ways of calculating sign area allowance within BID commercial areas.
- Explore non-traditional, non-permanent and/or short-term creative signage.

Staff Update:

- Alternate ways of calculating and/or increasing retail sign area is currently included in the 2017 – 2018 Community Planning, Housing and Development (CPHD) work plan.
- No plans currently exist to address non-permanent and/or short-term creative signage.

Issue 2: Non-Commercial Signage

- Allow for both temporary and permanent free standing signs, additional signage types such as wall or projecting signs which combine both commercial and non-commercial speech for the purpose of direction, identity and wayfinding around and within a District.

Staff Update:

- Non-commercial “wayfinding” signs are permitted in the Zoning Ordinance via an amendment adopted in June 2016 that allows the County Manager to place non-commercial signs in the public right-of way, subject to County Board approval.
- Signs allowing a combination of commercial and non-commercial information in the public right-of-way are currently not permissible.
- These and other requests for commercial sign area revisions are not anticipated to be included in the 2017- 2018 CPHD work plan.

Issue 3: Special Events

- Challenges still exist for certain temporary pop-up events that take place in commercial spaces.

Staff Update:

- The Zoning Administrator received and processed seven short term use CO applications. None were denied.
- Issues identified by applicants during FY 2017:
 - Inability to permit temporary signage for short-term uses
 - Inability to permit live entertainment as part of a temporary event

Issue 4: Streetscape and Lighting

- A more streamlined process for implementation of streetscape elements with administrative approval of individual streetscape elements once the overall plan has been approved.

Staff Update:

- Staff is utilizing the Rosslyn Streetscape Implementation and Master Plan as a pilot project.
- A Master Plan is expected to be finalized by staff and presented to the County Manager and the County Board by the Rosslyn BID in April 2017.
- Once approved, implementation would progress on an on-going basis with administrative approval for each streetscape element or implementation stage.

Issue 5: Alcohol Sales and Consumption in Public Parks

- Arlington should consider alcohol sales and/or consumption in certain urban public parks and plazas.

Staff Update:

- The Public Spaces Master Plan (PSMP) update MAY recommend allowing the County Manager to issue permits for more widespread sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages in certain designated public spaces.
- A draft plan will likely be developed by the end of this year.
- Implementation will depend on timing of the PSMP approval AND support for a potential recommendation. Realistically, implementation of any plan would likely begin in FY 2019 at the earliest.