

**DUBLIN CITY COUNCIL
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
Tuesday, February 22, 2022 – 5:00 p.m.
5555 Perimeter Drive
Council Chamber**

Meeting Minutes

Mr. Reiner called the February 22, 2022 Community Development Committee meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Members present: Mr. Reiner (Chair), Mr. Keeler, and Ms. Amorose Groomes

Staff present: Ms. Rauch, Mr. Ranc, Ms. Willis, Mr. Anderson, Mr. Boggs, Mr. Krawetzki

Also present: Brent Swander, CEO, Columbus Realtors, and Paul Ghidotti, President, The Daimler Group

Minutes of the November 30, 2021 Meeting

Mr. Keeler moved to approve the minutes of the November 30, 2021 CDC meeting. Ms. Amorose Groomes seconded the motion.

Vote: Mr. Keeler, yes; Ms. Amorose Groomes, yes; Mr. Reiner, yes

Temporary Sign Regulations

Ms. Rauch gave an overview of Temporary Sign revisions starting with Council approving amendments to the temporary sign ordinance in April 2021. She stated that staff is bringing forward non-residential for sale/for lease signs and the Code requirements around those. Ms. Rauch shared a provision comparison between the Code requirements prior to the 2021 amendment and what current Code allows. The size and height were reduced for ground signs. There was a significant change to the duration. It has been limited to no more than 30 consecutive days or 90 days in a calendar year. Those changes have brought about concern from commercial property owners and brokers about impacts on marketability of those properties. Ms. Rauch stated that staff has met with property owners and brokers on multiple occasions and has done some additional benchmarking. Based on research, many sign regulations are based on sale/lease (not a number of days). This item was referred to the Committee by Council at their January 24 meeting with the following items for consideration: sign size/height and duration, consistent sign design, marketing tools and practices. Ms. Rauch stated that staff has had great conversations with commercial real estate representatives on potential solutions. She stated that they are considering Council's original goal of how to make these temporary signs that somehow in some instances become permanent, look more in line with Dublin's expectations. Staff also is taking into

account representatives' concerns and the background on marketing tools. These properties are marketed differently than the Multiple Listing Service (MLS); there is not one place on the commercial side. Multiple tools are necessary to find properties for sale and driving around is a big part of that, thus making signage important.

Ms. Rauch offered potential solutions for consideration. She shared the ultimate goal of increasing the quality of the sign with a uniform sign design while still maintaining size and height limitations and allowing for additional duration. The potential solution looks at one sign per parcel with the addition of a sign for frontage on the freeway. Regulations would maintain the similar size and height as recommended in the previous version as well as adopted Code while looking at the creation of uniform sign design. Staff is considering the allowance for duration for 6 months with the option for a 6-month renewal if property is still for sale or lease. Ms. Rauch shared uniform sign examples. She posed the following questions for the Committee:

1. Does the Committee support incorporation of a uniform sign design for all non-residential for sale/lease signs?
2. Does the Committee support the duration of 6 months with a 6-month extension?
3. Does the Committee find the proposed amendments balance the concerns raised by Council with the needs of the property owners?

Mr. Reiner stated that he thinks it is great that staff worked with people in the business community. He asked what MDO stands for; he assumes it includes plywood. Ms. Rauch explained that MDO is medium density overlay. It includes plywood but is intended for outdoor use; it is not a typical plywood.

Mr. Reiner asked if anyone in the audience wished to speak.

Paul Ghidotti, The Daimler Group, 1533 Lake Shore Drive, Columbus, thanked the Committee and shared that they have worked with staff for the past four or five months. He stated that he understands that Council sees this as a decluttering but there is a need to balance what makes the community great and that is aesthetics and income tax generation. There is not an MLS or Zillow to get this information. He gave the example of two acres at 6640 Perimeter that they have owned since 2005. They have had to replace the sign four times. They have interest in the site from a rehab facility and they called from the sign. Mr. Ghidotti explained that there are services to host this information but CoStar would cost \$6,000/month for realtors to share information and Xceligent, LLC went bankrupt. There is no commonplace for people to get this information. He referenced the Corners Project, and stated that they still only have three leases signed. They have two parcels left to build. He shared to concern of people calling Dublin to find out about properties and not being able to get information outside of the 8-5 workday. Mr. Ghidotti stated that they would like to suggest coming up with uniform signs. Easton is an example. They have a sign that is designed and

property owners have to get a permit on an annual basis. That is a way to let people know that they have arrived in Dublin. He suggested that is the balance between making Dublin feel special and having property put to positive use.

Mr. Reiner stated that he likes the suggestion of uniform design. Mr. Ghidotti stated that they arrived at that suggestion through cooperation with staff. Metro Center has a lot of signs. Leasing office space during a pandemic has been horrible. He stated that we have to find a way to change the clutter in the right way where it is controlled and looks appropriate.

Brent Swander, CEO of Columbus Realtors, 5515 Lockbourne Court East, Dublin, echoed Mr. Ghidotti's comments regarding the great work with staff. He stated that they did their due diligence to educate staff on the difference between MLS and a Commercial Information Exchange (CIE). He stated that Columbus Realtors does offer a solution with Catalyst but when Xceligent went bankrupt it led to difference entities to offer solutions with some pricing structures that are astronomical for some brokers. Mr. Swander stated that the question remains as to why there is not just one. He shared that MLS is actually facing multiple federal anti-trust issues now because theirs is the only one. There have been multiple cases filed in Illinois and Minnesota.

Ms. Amorose Groomes asked how burdensome it would be to not put different names of different individuals on the sign. She asked if it can be limited to one name as there is only one phone number. Mr. Swander stated that there are Ohio Revised Code (ORC) regulations on what must be on all advertising and marketing material. He would have to go back and figure out how that could be done but there is ORC on how teams must be advertised. Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that she thinks this is probably the way to go. She stated that it would be silly to put that along highway frontage because there is no way people can read that at 65 miles per hour from 100 yards away. Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that she likes the Dublin examples and thinks the green is nice though they may not want to choose green because of logo colors. She feels that to simplify them would be better. Mr. Swander stated that they had a conversation on color and they are agnostic on color. He noted that the Ohio Division of Real Estate Licensing and ORC (4735) dictate what must be on all marketing materials and it must be the brokerage and a contact on that sign.

Mr. Keeler stated that he is supportive of uniform sign. He prefers green. He stated that we need to be careful when it comes to time constraints. Mr. Keeler stated that he is not aware of other communities that have time constraints and setting a time limit sets Dublin at a competitive disadvantage at a time when economic development in the region is marketing.

Mr. Swander stated that this is an ongoing concern. The average days on residential listings is 26 days on market and for commercial it is 19.4 months. There is a concern

with duration and that is where we jumped the gun. 90 days is severely limiting. Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that she feels the duration is appropriate not for removal of the sign but for revisiting the sign. Mr. Ghidotti stated that they are okay if it is a permit that has to be renewed each year, even if they have to show a picture of the sign, even subject to staff's approval. He stated that if we start creating scenarios where we t signs must come down, it hurts owners as well as the City. He stated that do not want to create a competitive disadvantage. Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that she would like to see something in terms of having to check in on these signs. She is in favor of time constraints; maybe it is an annual renewal where an applicant would have to come forward and state their case as to why the sign should remain. Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that if there is no time limit and the sign doesn't come down even once the space is leased, at least once a year, the City would catch that.

Mr. Swander stated that some of these will have ongoing vacancies in perpetuity. Mr. Reiner suggested a renewal at one year or year and a half. Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that renewing annually is not too much to ask.

Mr. Ghidotti stated that other high quality communities have an annual renewal. It is not a problem. Mr. Reiner stated that he understands that companies don't need to be applying every six months. The Committee agreed to one-year duration with the opportunity for renewal. Mr. Reiner stated that posts have a way of decomposing. He likes the outline and thinks green is interesting. He stated that he would choose that or the bronze. Ms. Rauch stated that they do have to be mounted on something. The post can be painted to match sign colors. Mr. Keeler stated that he doesn't care for black but prefers green first and bronze second. Mr. Keeler asked about the sign in the center of the examples. Mr. Reiner stated that it is for a residential lot. Ms. Rauch confirmed that it is for a residential lot. Mr. Ghidotti stated that the commercial signs in New Albany are either 4 feet by 8 feet or along the freeway, they can be 10 feet by 10 feet. That post is meant to show uniformity of signage and would not work for a 16-square-foot sign. M. Ghidotti confirmed the square footage is for each side. Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that is how we calculate all sign square footage.

Ms. Rauch will bring a formal request forward to Council.

City Entryway Signs

Mr. Ranc provided background on entryway signs noting that previously the Committee selected Lucida Bright font and directed staff to remove accolade badges. He provided physical examples of sign options for a pedestal post sign with shadowing and without. Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that she thinks the sign with the shadowing looks significantly better. The Committee agreed.

Mr. Ranc asked the Committee if they felt that level of detailing is appropriate. Staff could outsource the sign manufacturing for increased detailing. Mr. Keeler asked if there was a film on the sign. Ms. Willis answered affirmatively and explained that there

is an anti-graffiti film added that will help protect the signs and make them easier to clean. Mr. Reiner stated that if staff can deepen the shadow, that would make it easier to read. Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that short of pin-mounted letters, that example is as good as it will look. The shadows read better. Ms. Willis stated that staff would work on better details in house. This is just meant to be a representation of what the sign shop can do.

The Committee is in agreement on signs made in-house with shadowing.

Mr. Ranc shared options for posts. Aesthetic preference and cost are the considerations. The options range from \$323,000 and \$39,000. Ms. Amorose Groomes confirmed that the amount is \$3,300 per post versus \$200 per post and the difference is for a pole anchor versus a concrete foundation. Mr. Ranc answered affirmatively. Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that the upcharge is about \$6,000 with 25 locations. Mr. Ranc stated that we can work with a few signs at first so that the cost does not occur all at once. Mr. Keeler asked about plastic poles (similar to vinyl fence posts). The powder coated posts chip or crack after 4 or 5 years. Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that they may not exist in black. Ms. Willis stated that is not a typical material used in public rights of way. She stated that she is unsure if that is due to wind load or longevity or fading but products typically used are masonry or powder coated metal. Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that she feels \$150,000 over the course of ten years to greet everyone that comes into our city is a worthwhile investment. The Committee is in agreement on Option B. Mr. Keeler stated that if there is a way to cut cost or extend longevity, he advised staff to go for it. Ms. Willis stated that these signs can be an exact scaled replica of the larger way-finding sign system to be consistent across the City which would be an enhancement and improve branding. She stated that a different product may not have the ability to match exactly. Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that if there is a product out there to extend the life of the signs, she would be in favor. She is supportive of Option B given the cost over the lifespan. Mr. Ranc stated that staff will write that recommendation up for Council. They will look at the current budget and work with Finance. Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that it would be prudent to do five every year.

Monument Signs

Mr. Ranc stated that at the previous meeting, the Committee selected the example with stacked stone and wooden mast arm. He shared five new options. There are Celtic knot icons on each option that can be switched out. The sign size on each is 3 feet 6 inches.

1. Wood cantilever;
2. Stacked stone column with wood cantilever
3. Stone column with standard cap with;
4. Stone column with dome cap and curved mast arm;
5. Stone column with dome cap and black background.

Mr. Reiner referred to the example from last meeting and stated that the scale is so much nicer. On the others, you read the pilasters and "Dublin" disappears. Mr. Ranc referenced Concept 2 and stated that it most closely mirrors the original design. Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that this is two signs (the icon and the sign itself). She would prefer nothing but the stone and the sign. The inspiration is the simplicity of stone walls and columns around the community. She stated that she thinks this should be of uniform diameter rather than obelisk. The Committee prefers the first example provided (from previous meeting). The Committee advised staff to take inspiration from example sign. Ms. Amorose Groomes would prefer stone cap over copper and she feels staying true to who we are already would be appropriate. Mr. Ranc confirmed this is the recommendation and it will be brought to Council as a recommendation. Mr. Reiner stated that a stone cap is fine. Ms. Amorose Groomes prefers a standard cap. Mr. Keeler stated that the stone shown in the preferred example is different. He confirmed staff will be using Ohio limestone (blue-veined limestone). Mr. Ranc answered affirmatively. He stated that this sign will be going in 5 locations.

Ms. Amorose Groomes stated parks signs look poor. That would be next thing relative to signs. Ms. Willis stated that staff just had a conversation with a wayfinding consultant. They have been asked to think about what a full secondary wayfinding sign system would like.

Mr. Reiner referenced street signs and wondered if staff could come up with better poles. Ms. Willis stated that staff has heard that this is of interest to committee. Several different sign aesthetics exist in Dublin already. Staff felt that this is a topic in and of itself and will come back at a future meeting date with more information including costs. They will also research what other communities around Ohio are doing. They will have a more complete picture to try to make this decision. Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that it is a good topic for a Homeowners Association (HOA) meeting to gather information and there may be some partnerships with HOAs. Maybe they would be interested in offsetting some of those costs. Mr. Ranc stated that they will put all of this together a cost estimate with a full recommendation.

In response to a question about stone material, Mr. Krawetzki explained that they will use broken slabs of stone so that it will look like stacked stone. They will probably have a concrete base rather than a CMU base. Mr. Reiner suggested staff look at filleted limestone. He worries about pre-cast synthetic cultured stone. Ms. Amorose Groomes suggested staff take inspiration from existing stone walls in the community.

"Champions Park" Concept

Mr. Ranc stated that this is still very much conceptual in nature. The previous feedback from the Committee was for staff to consider a more active area specifically looking at Coffman Park. Staff does think the area around the Coffman Park pavilion is a good location. They have come up with the idea of creating plazas at the pavilion. Staff

recognizes that they still need to identify specific champions that will be honored. They are considering archways to identify the area and there is substantial room on both sides that exists already for pavers. They are going to try to identify as many historic champions as possible. There are 616 8-inch by 8-inch pavers just in one area. There is an immense amount of room for expansion. There are existing tree wells. Mr. Ranc shared images of pavers identifying high schools and stated that Staff will come back with far more detailed options. He provided a rough cost estimate of \$257,787. Staff will work with the school district to determine which "champions" to recommend for inclusion and see if they want to partner with the City.

Ms. Amorose Groomes asked what is there now. Mr. Ranc answered that it is crumbling concrete.

Mr. Keeler stated that this location is ideal. Ms. Amorose Groomes agreed. It is an active space. People that come back to Dublin would frequent this space. She suggested that instead of emblems in pavers, maybe there could be a bench for each area that might say the school on the bench in the area and those pavers would be put in that general area. Mr. Krawetzki stated that the Dublin Veteran's Park has a piece of stone on the ground and his thought was that each school would have one of those identifying the area. Ms. Amorose Groomes agreed. She does not want school logos since they change. Mr. Reiner stated suggested that the pavers be designed so that each award winning team has their paver but can it be reproducible and all can be equal. Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that the goal is to declutter. She thinks we would go to the schools and ask for a significant partnership. She suggested Staff work up the cost to reconstruct what is existing because that burden is on the City and find out what the add-on cost of this and ask them to split it. Mr. Ranc confirmed that the Committee is supportive of the location and the concept. Staff will work with the school and come back.

I-270 Interchange/Sawmill Road Interchange Landscape Improvements

Mr. Ranc stated that at the October 11, 2021 City Council meeting, there was a request to consider an improved landscape plan at the interchange. Mowing is already being taken care of and is in the operating budget. Mr. Reiner asked about who maintains the landscaping approaching Tuttle Mall. Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that the Tuttle Crossing Association for all of the office buildings that maintains the intersection. Mr. Ranc stated that staff is now coming back with concepts for consideration. Each one adds something and there are associated cost considerations. He outlined the following three concepts.

- A. The basics: This option adds trees and attractive landscaping in quads and along Sawmill Road. It utilizes large street trees, ornamental flowering trees, Scottish Links grass, etc. and would refurbish lawn areas;
- B. This option takes concept A and adds stone walls at the triangles;

- C. This option takes A and B and adds limestone-walled stormwater dry-basins with river rock bottom.

Mr. Reiner asked if stone walls would be a hazard. Ms. Willis answered that they could be. Placement would be critical. They would have to be located outside of the free zone; free and clear so someone could regain control and enter back into the freeway. Mr. Krawetzki explained that it is basically 30 feet.

Mr. Ranc shared renderings and costs. Costs range from \$564,287 to \$3,102,931. Considerations include the fact that the City is taking on significant maintenance cost to improve maintenance at the existing interchange. There is the expectation that the City of Columbus or ODOT would not contribute but staff will ask. Mr. Reiner asked about adding "Dublin". Mr. Krawetzki stated that they would be limited to 1 to 2 feet. Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that given that the intersection largely is not in the City of Dublin, it is not clear that would be possible. Mr. Keeler stated that he is very impressed. He envisioned some topsoil, grass, and fewer weeds and staff brings this. He recommended Option A. It is better than the best scenario in other cities. Mr. Ranc stated that staff penciled out \$50,000 to \$60,000 additional for maintenance. Option C would add on \$7,000 to \$8,000. Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that the existing condition is not problematic for Columbus or ODOT. Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that it would be nice to do some upgrade. It would be interesting to have a really robust dialogue about spending money to upgrade property that is not entirely within city limits. Mr. Keeler stated that this is bigger than he imagined. He can justify Option A as a gateway to the City. That is the first thing people see and he can see it as a little bit of an economic development tool. They have the opportunity with a lot of folks moving to central Ohio to wow them and the current conditions are not acceptable. He thinks \$500,000 is palatable. Mr. Reiner stated that we want people to know they are entering Dublin. It has marketing value. It is a simplistic plan. It identifies a different environment. It is important to identify Dublin. The City has been very modest with signage. Mr. Ranc asked if the Committee is comfortable with Concept A. Ms. Amorose Groomes asked for this to be taken to Council as a whole before putting it in CIP. They need to have the conversation. She stated that she would like to see if the bridge over 270 is successful and if this would then be necessary. In response to the question of existing maintenance, Mr. Anderson stated that in-house staff has maintained the western side for the past several years. Mr. Reiner asked why. Mr. Anderson stated that they just chose to go the extra mile. It clutters up quickly and they are doing it for aesthetics. Mr. Ranc stated that staff would be taking on the east side along with the concrete medians. It is unfortunate but we want that maintained look and were not getting maintenance out of ODOT or the City of Columbus. Ms. Amorose Groomes suggested adding street sweeping. Mr. Anderson stated street sweeping goes out to bid in April and they can add that in. Mr. Ranc stated that everything from the Committee will go back to Council.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 6:36 p.m.


Deputy Clerk of Council