

**MINUTES OF THE WILLOWS PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**  
**HELD APRIL 1, 2009.**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair Person Domenighini.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Commissioner Woods led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**PRESENT:** Woods, Warren, Domenighini, Alves

**ABSENT:** Thur

**AGENDA REVIEW:** There were no recommended changes by the commission or Staff and the agenda for April 1, 2009 was accepted as presented.

**DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

Mr. Forrest Sprague had some procedural questions for the Planning Commission. Chairperson Domenighini addressed Mr. Sprague's concerns before moving on to the scheduled discussion items.

**Comprehensive Sign Law**

Laura Flannery, owner of Hot 4 Handbags, stated that she would like to know when there will be some movement on the sign law. She is concerned about the sign law being so restrictive that businesses can't advertise adequately and thus will become extinct. She is worried that the sign law is stifling businesses rather than supporting them. Chairperson Domenighini asked her to put her concerns in writing and send them to the Planning Commission so that they can review the language of her specific concerns.

Cynthia Mello from Willows Quality Thrift stated that while she agrees that we shouldn't have a multitude of signs cluttering the town she thinks it would be a great idea to have a community sign at each end of the town advertising businesses. She also stated that she had a question on 10.03 (2) asking if her "open" sign would fall under the "prohibited signs" category. Chairperson Domenighini said no, that her sign was perfectly fine. Ms. Mello also asked if she had a banner for a special occasion would she be able to get permission to put that banner up. Chairperson Domenighini said that the City regulates this by getting permission from the City Manager to put up temporary banners for celebration purposes. Ms. Mello also asked about vehicle signs specifically 10.03(12) she wanted clarification on whether or not a magnetic or painted sign on your car would be prohibited under this section of the code. Commissioner Warren addressed the issue saying that there has been some confusion on that provision before. This provision does not speak to magnetic or painted signs on your car that you drive around but rather an inoperable vehicle painted and parked for the sole purpose of advertisement.

The Commissioners then discussed what size sandwich board would be an appropriate sign for the ordinance. There was a variety of responses, the consensus being no more than 12 sq. ft. each side no more than 4 feet tall.

Karen Roberts, owner of the Health Habit, said that downtown businesses bring in tax dollars and that tax dollar is dwindling so something as little as a sign could drastically improve the situation of our downtown. Ms. Roberts stated that we need to not nit pick our existing businesses and support them because it is a win-win situation for the City of Willows.

Chairperson Domenighini inquired about some language on Table 10.18A. He stated that in the downtown section the language sounds as if pole signs are discouraged but are not prohibited. Chairperson Domenighini expressed some concern over this as his preference is to not see pole signs

in the downtown area. Commissioner Warren agreed that she would prefer not to see pole signs downtown either. However the commission decided not to strike the language in case at some time it would be practical for a future business in the downtown area to have a pole sign.

Commissioner Alves was concerned about the definitions of a monument sign and a pole sign, she felt that the definitions provided in the ordinance were unclear and may confuse the citizens; however there was no consensus on any new language.

Ms. Roberts asked about the new gateway monument signs being constructed at the entrances to the city on both sides of Tehama Street; she wanted to know if it would be possible to place a "Historical Downtown Willows" sign along with the other signs for the Rotary Club, the Lions Club, etc.

There was discussion between the commission and some members of the public regarding directional signage and signage on private property. The code however, is very clear that there is no offsite signage regardless of whether it is on someone's private property.

Brian Millar asked Chairperson Domenighini if he wanted a resolution on the sign ordinance for the next meeting or not. It was decided by the Commission that there would be one more review of the sign ordinance before they have a resolution to recommend it to the City Council.

Chairperson Domenighini began the discussion regarding storage containers. Commissioners Woods & Alves both state that they think a storage container in a residential area would be fine as long as all other code requirements are met.

There was some discussion between the Commissioners and Building Official Clay Dawley, it was the consensus of the commission that storage containers would not be allowed in the Central Commercial District or the Entryway District but that they would be allowed in residential areas provided they meet all the zoning requirements and they have a permit. Further there would be building department issues such as a permanent foundation and other requirements depending on the situation.

Discussion ensued between the commissioners on various topics regarding storage containers such as paint, door locks, setbacks, zoning etc. however no consensus was reached and it was decided to continue the discussion at the next Planning Commission meeting.

### **COMMISSION COMMENTARY**

1. Chairperson Domenighini asked Brian Millar if there was anything in the hopper for the rest of the month of April and for May. Brian stated that there isn't as of yet but that something could come in at any time.
2. Commissioner Woods wanted to know if Basin Street is still in contact. Mr. Millar said we are going through that process right now and still getting comments from other agencies.
3. Chairperson Domenighini informed the Commission that there is a provision to Forrest Sprague's original design review in 2006, the planning commission voted to have a subcommittee look at designs for his development. The subcommittee is comprised of Chairperson Domenighini and Building Official, Clay Dawley and they are in the process of reviewing eight of Mr. Sprague's designs.
4. It was decided among the Commissioners not to put off having another meeting as they want to finish up with the container & sign ordinances. They decided to have a special meeting on April 22, 2009 as opposed to their regularly scheduled meeting on April 15, 2009.
5. Commissioner Woods wanted to know what was happening with Wal-Mart. Clay Dawley stated that the City has gotten a couple of calls from the company that is building the water tank so there is movement on the project, however it is very slow.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 10:37 p.m.

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LARRY DOMENIGHINI, Chair

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Hollie Johnson, Minute Clerk