

REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL

DATE: MAY 23, 2012

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: GREG RAMIREZ, CITY MANAGER

BY: MIKE KAMINO, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

SUBJECT: APPROVE RESOLUTION NO. 12-1670, EXTENDING THE ALLOWANCE FOR THE DISPLAY OF TEMPORARY RETAIL BANNERS ON PRIVATE PROPERTY FOR TEMPORARY BUSINESS ENHANCEMENT

The request before the City Council is to approve the attached Resolution No. 12-1670, extending the allowance for the display of temporary banners on private property for temporary business enhancement for an eight-month period, expiring on January 23, 2013.

Since 2008, and through several time extensions, the City Council has allowed the temporary display of retail banners to assist in stimulating local business. Most recently, on August 10, 2011, at the request of the Land Use/Economic Development Committee (LU/EDC), the City Council discussed whether or not to extend the allowance of temporary display of retail banners in the City. The Council supported an additional nine-month extension, expiring on May 24, 2012, with the same criteria as was previously allowed, which includes the following:

1. Retail, restaurant, and hotel businesses shall be entitled to the display of one temporary banner on private property, not to exceed thirty (30) square feet in size, up to four (4) times during the nine-month period, at the discretion of the business owner. The banner may be displayed for a maximum of up to ten (10) days per event, with no limit on consecutive days/events.
2. The temporary banner shall be of a quality design approved by the Director of Planning and Community Development. The banner shall be placed on the building serving the business. Alternate locations for placement of the banner may be approved by the Director where visibility of the banner on the building is negatively impacted.
3. The temporary retail banner shall not be used for real estate advertising or leasing purposes.
4. The banner shall be subject to issuance of a sign permit. The required sign permit fee for temporary banners shall be \$40.00, which is equivalent to the Planning Department plan check fee.

The City Council also requested staff to monitor the program during the nine-month period and attempt to provide a quantitative analysis on the program's benefits to the local retail businesses. During the last nine months, a total of 11 businesses obtained permits for a temporary retail banner display. This total represents a decrease from the 23 businesses who obtained a permit during the previous 12-month period (July 2010 to July 2011). During the last nine months, several businesses displayed retail banners without obtaining a permit, thus involving code enforcement action to be taken.

The City Council began the temporary retail business display program four years ago, in light of the negative impact of the national economy to local businesses, to assist in stimulating local business. Staff agrees with the conclusions made by the Business Task Force in 2010 that it is difficult to determine whether the impact of the banner displays on retail sales can be quantified at all given the lack of information that is available to staff and the variables factored in determining sales revenue. However, staff also agrees with the Business Task Force's assumption that there is an intrinsic value associated with banners that are visible to passing motorists. Based on direction given by the City Council, staff surveyed the eleven (11) businesses that obtained a temporary retail banner permit since August 2011, and received nine (9) responses that are attached for reference. The respondents generally support the program, indicating that the banners did increase sales, and they support continuing the program. Staff also invited them to attend the City Council meeting to share their comments.

Since the program is set to expire on May 24, 2012, staff sought a recommendation from the LU/EDC on whether to proceed with any of the following options regarding temporary retail banner displays:

1. Recommend the current program expire on May 24, 2012, without renewal. New businesses would still be allowed by code to obtain a permit for a 90-day occupancy banner to advertise "coming soon," "grand opening," "now open," and the like.
2. Recommend the City Council temporarily extend the program by Resolution with the current criteria for an additional 8 to 12 months (through the holiday season).
3. Recommend the City Council conduct a Pre-Screen Review for a possible Zoning Ordinance Amendment to permit temporary retail banner displays, with generally the same criteria as currently allowed. By amending the Zoning Ordinance and codifying this allowance, the City Council would not have to reconsider the matter. (This option was preferred by the LU/EDC last year).
4. Any other recommendations of the City Council.

On May 7, 2012, the LU/EDC supported Option 2 above, recommending the City Council continue the program through the holiday season and re-evaluate the program at its expiration. Based on this recommendation, staff has prepared a draft Resolution for the City Council's consideration that would extend the temporary retail banner program for an eight-month period, expiring on January 23, 2013, with the same criteria as is currently allowed.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the City Council approve the attached Resolution No. 12-1670, allowing for the display of temporary banners on private property for temporary business enhancement for an 8-month period, expiring on January 23, 2013.

Attachments: Resolution No. 12-1670
Survey Responses

RESOLUTION NO. 12-1670

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AGOURA HILLS, CALIFORNIA, TEMPORARILY ALLOWING, FOR BUSINESS ENHANCEMENT PURPOSES, THE DISPLAY OF A MAXIMUM THIRTY-SQUARE-FOOT RETAIL BANNER ON PRIVATE PROPERTY THROUGH JANUARY 23, 2013

WHEREAS, the City of Agoura Hills acknowledges the current national economic impact to retail businesses located within the City; and

WHEREAS, retail sales for businesses and commercial leasing opportunities are needed for business sustainability and enhancement; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the City sign ordinance is to support and promote viable business by allowing signage that provides adequate identification; and

WHEREAS, business sign regulations are intended to promote fairness in competition and retain identity in the business community.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the City Council of the City of Agoura Hills as follows:

During the period from May 24, 2012, through January 23, 2013, in addition to the basic sign entitlement permitted in the City Sign Ordinance (Zoning Ordinance Section 9655), the following temporary displays shall be allowed with the issuance of a sign permit from the City of Agoura Hills:

- A. Retail, restaurant, and hotel businesses shall be entitled to the display of one temporary banner on private property, not to exceed thirty (30) square feet in size, up to four (4) times during the nine-month period, at the discretion of the business owner. The banner may be displayed for a maximum of up to ten (10) days per event, with no limit on consecutive days/events. The temporary banner shall be of a quality design approved by the Director of Planning and Community Development. The banner shall be placed on the building serving the business. Alternate locations for placement of the banner may be approved by the Director where visibility of the banner on the building is negatively impacted. The temporary retail banner shall not be used for real estate advertising or leasing purposes.
- B. The required sign permit fee for temporary banners shall be \$40.00, which is equivalent to the Planning Department plan check fee.

Resolution No. 12-1670

PASSED, APPROVED, and ADOPTED this 23rd day of May, 2012, by the following vote to wit:

AYES: (0)
NOES: (0)
ABSTAIN: (0)
ABSENT: (0)

John M. Edelston, Mayor

ATTEST:

Kimberly M. Rodrigues, City Clerk

Questions for applicants that have pulled Temporary Banner Permits

Business Name: Beds Unlimited
Business Owner: Lucie Volotzky
Business Address: 28811 Canwood Street
Telephone Number: 818 314-5074
Sign Permit Number: 12-SP-014 (feather banner sign)

The City Council has asked us to try and determine the effectiveness of the Temporary Retail Banners for individual businesses. We are aware that you obtained a permit for the retail banner in the last nine months and would like your feedback.

Do you find banner signs to be effective?

Response: Yes. Within a five-day period we got at least an extra 5 more customers.

Have you noticed difference in sales when banner is displayed?

Response: Yes, definitely.

What percentage of sales increase or decrease have you experienced from having banner signs?

Response: Increased sales by 20 percent in one week.

Have your customers commented on the banner? If so, what have they said? Did it attract them to your business?

Response: My banner they love it. It is a beautiful, wavy flag banner, not in your face.

What is your opinion of other retail banner signs that you may have seen in the City?

Response: Ferrum Fitness, if they did not have their banner displayed, you would not know they were located there.

Would you recommend Council extend the program?

Response: Of course. I wish we could be allowed bi-weekly banners. The banner has a lingering effect, not just current.

Council will be discussing issue on May 23, 2012. We will send you a notice of the meeting if you would like to attend because Council would like to hear from you.

Response: I would love to attend. Mail the information to me, Ben Volotzky (owner's son) at business address.

Questions for applicants that have pulled Temporary Banner Permits

Business Name: Zandi Rugs
Mazar Rugs

Business Owner: Manoochehr Zandi

Business Address: 28710 Canwood Street, Units 100 and 102

Telephone Number: 818 865-9029

Sign Permit Number: 12-SP-007 and 12-SP-008 (banners on building)

The City Council has asked us to try and determine the effectiveness of the Temporary Retail Banners for individual businesses. We are aware that you obtained a permit for the retail banner in the last nine months and would like your feedback.

Do you find banner signs to be effective?

Response: Yes.

Have you noticed difference in sales when banner is displayed?

Response: Yes, much better. Because people know where we are located.

What percentage of sales increase or decrease have you experienced from having banner signs?

Response: 80% percent sales increase since allowed to put up banner.

Have your customers commented on the banner? If so, what have they said? Did it attract them to your business?

Response: Yes they commented that they saw the banner and they came inside.

What is your opinion of other retail banner signs that you may have seen in the City?

Response: Okay as long as they are nice and clean.

Would you recommend Council extend the program?

Response: I would be very appreciative. If we could have more time to display the banner, it would be much better.

Council will be discussing issue on May 23, 2012. We will send you a notice of the meeting if you would like to attend because Council would like to hear from you.

Response: I will try to attend. Mail the information to 28710 Canwood Street, Unit 100, Agoura Hills, CA 91301

Questions for applicants that have pulled Temporary Banner Permits

Business Name: Mazar Rugs
Business Owner: Manoochehr Zandi
Business Address: 28505 Canwood Street, Suite B (Closed)
Telephone Number: 818 865-9029
Sign Permit Number: 12-SP-006 (banner on building)

The City Council has asked us to try and determine the effectiveness of the Temporary Retail Banners for individual businesses. We are aware that you obtained a permit for the retail banner in the last nine months and would like your feedback.

Do you find banner signs to be effective?

Response: Yes

Have you noticed difference in sales when banner is displayed?

Response: Yes.

What percentage of sales increase or decrease have you experienced from having banner signs?

Response: Sales were not enough to stay open.

Have your customers commented on the banner? If so, what have they said? Did it attract them to your business?

Response: Yes they commented that they could see banner from freeway.

What is your opinion of other retail banner signs that you may have seen in the City?

Response: Okay as long as they are nice and clean.

Would you recommend Council extend the program?

Response: I would be very appreciative.

Council will be discussing issue on May 23, 2012. We will send you a notice of the meeting if you would like to attend because Council would like to hear from you.

Response: I will try to attend. Mailing address is 28710 Canwood Street, Unit 100, Agoura Hills, CA 91301.

Questions for applicants that have pulled Temporary Banner Permits

Business Name: Pizza Hut
Business Owner: National Pizza Company
Business Address: 5146 Kanan Road
Telephone Number: 818 991-7508
Sign Permit Number: 12-SP-005 (banner on building)

The City Council has asked us to try and determine the effectiveness of the Temporary Retail Banners for individual businesses. We are aware that you obtained a permit for the retail banner in the last nine months and would like your feedback.

Do you find banner signs to be effective?

Response: Yes.

Have you noticed difference in sales when banner is displayed?

Response: Yes

What percentage of sales increase or decrease have you experienced from having banner signs?

Response: About a 25 percent increase in the 40 days that we had the banner up.

Have your customers commented on the banner? If so, what have they said? Did it attract them to your business?

Response: Yes, the customers came and said what's going on, what do you have. Because advertising buffet lunch for six dollars. Got word out, all you can eat for \$6.

What is your opinion of other retail banner signs that you may have seen in the City?

Response: They attract people passing by. We are close to the freeway.

Would you recommend Council extend the program?

Response: Yes, please. I know of a lot of people that are struggling or have lost their business. The only way they can be helped is by a banner, because other ways are expensive. If Council wants the City to grow, they have to help businesses.

Council will be discussing issue on May 23, 2012. We will send you a notice of the meeting if you would like to attend because Council would like to hear from you.

Send notice of meeting to:
Behy Amiransari, Manager
5146 Kanan Road
Agoura Hills, CA 91301

Questions for applicants that have pulled Temporary Banner Permits

Business Name: The Traveling Mop Shop

Business Owner: Diane Saunders
Martin Centeno (silent partner/manager)

Business Address: 5166 Kanan Road

Telephone Number: 818 706-2498

Sign Permit Number: 12-SP-003 (feather banner sign)

The City Council has asked us to try and determine the effectiveness of the Temporary Retail Banners for individual businesses. We are aware that you obtained a permit for the retail banner in the last nine months and would like your feedback.

Do you find banner signs to be effective?

Response: Yes. For four months I put the banner up the beginning of every month for 10 days. Every time I put the banner up I got between five to ten new customers. People driving from Malibu to Trader Joe's would notice the banner and come in. I wouldn't have done it the second year if it wouldn't have been effective.

Have you noticed difference in sales when banner is displayed?

Response: Big difference. The increase in sales gives us more money to stay located in the city versus going to another city.

What percentage of sales increase or decrease have you experienced from having banner signs?

Response: 20% to 30 % sales increase.

Have your customers commented on the banner? If so, what have they said? Did it attract them to your business?

Response: I would ask how did they find out about us, and they would say because of the banner.

What is your opinion of other retail banner signs that you may have seen in the City?

Response: They attract more people. For me it makes me aware of businesses that are still in business and not closed.

Would you recommend Council extend the program?

Response: I would because it helps business big time. I would like to have more days to display the banner, and if it cost more, I would not have a problem with the fee going up.

Council will be discussing issue on May 23, 2012. We will send you a notice of the meeting if you would like to attend because Council would like to hear from you.

Response: I would like to attend. Mail the information to me (Martin Centeno) at business address.

Questions for applicants that have pulled Temporary Banner Permits

Business Name: Ferrum Fitness, Inc.
Business Owner: Jessica Unbewust
Business Address: 29056 Thousand Oaks Boulevard
Telephone Number: 818 707-1700
Sign Permit Number: 11-SP-081 (feather banner sign)

The City Council has asked us to try and determine the effectiveness of the Temporary Retail Banners for individual businesses. We are aware that you obtained a permit for the retail banner in the last nine months and would like your feedback.

Do you find banner signs to be effective?

Response: Yes, we have a feather banner sign that we have displayed for 20 days, so far.

Have you noticed difference in sales when banner is displayed?

Response: Yes.

What percentage of sales increase or decrease have you experienced from having banner signs?

Response: Eight additional people signed up compared to previous months, which would be more or less a 15 percent increase in sales.

Have your customers commented on the banner? If so, what have they said? Did it attract them to your business?

Response: A lot of people commented on our banner and said, "You should keep it up all the time." They said it was good advertisement when we are running an event.

What is your opinion of other retail banner signs that you may have seen in the City?

Response: The banners are nice to catch people's eyes and causes people to look over.

Would you recommend Council extend the program?

Response: Definitely recommend they do. I would like the display time to be spread out more than the four events/10 days each, to cover more weekends. People tend to come in more over the weekend to talk to us about personal training.

Council will be discussing issue on May 23, 2012. We will send you a notice of the meeting if you would like to attend because Council would like to hear from you.

Response: I think it is important to attend, so I will make every effort to be there. Send notice of meeting to Jessica Unbewust at business address.

Questions for applicants that have pulled Temporary Banner Permits

Business Name: Sam's Tobacco Store
Business Owner: Bassam Masour
Business Address: 30688 Thousand Oaks Boulevard
Telephone Number: 818 575-9045
Sign Permit Number: 11-SP-73 (banner on building)

The City Council has asked us to try and determine the effectiveness of the Temporary Retail Banners for individual businesses. We are aware that you obtained a permit for the retail banner in the last nine months and would like your feedback.

Do you find banner signs to be effective?

Response: Helped business. I put it up for 40 consecutive days.

Have you noticed difference in sales when banner is displayed?

Response: No because the 40 days (the end of the year) it was displayed was the wrong time of the year to display the banner.

What percentage of sales increase or decrease have you experienced from having banner signs?

Response: No not really.

Have your customers commented on the banner? If so, what have they said? Did it attract them to your business?

Response: Few customers came in. Both ways I have no business.

What is your opinion of other retail banner signs that you may have seen in the City?

Response: I guess they are okay.

Would you recommend Council extend the program?

Response: Oh yes

Council will be discussing issue on May 23, 2012. We will send you a notice of the meeting if you would like to attend because Council would like to hear from you.

Response: If I can get coverage for the shop, I will attend. Mail the information to me at business address.

Questions for applicants that have pulled Temporary Banner Permits

Business Name: The Olive Vineyard
Business Owner: Nichole Shaver (one of the owners)
Business Address: 29145 Canwood Street, Unit A-4
Telephone Number: 818 292-8393
Sign Permit Number: 11-SP-065

The City Council has asked us to try and determine the effectiveness of the Temporary Retail Banners for individual businesses. We are aware that you obtained a permit for the retail banner in the last nine months and would like your feedback.

Do you find banner signs to be effective?

Response: Definitely.

Have you noticed difference in sales when banner is displayed?

Response: Yes.

What percentage of sales increase or decrease have you experienced from having banner signs?

Response: Not a substantial sales increase, about 5 percent.

Have your customers commented on the banner? If so, what have they said? Did it attract them to your business?

Response: Because our name is fairly long, it is not very visible and the banner really helps to attract customers to our sales. The Grand Opening sign is what really brought customers in.

What is your opinion of other retail banner signs that you may have seen in the City?

Response: I don't think they should be permanent. They should be regulated.

Would you recommend Council extend the program?

Response: Yes

Council will be discussing issue on May 23, 2012. We will send you a notice of the meeting if you would like to attend because Council would like to hear from you.

Response: Email the notice of the meeting to me at info@theolivevineyard.com.

Questions for applicants that have pulled Temporary Banner Permits

Business Name: Driven Lube and Wash
Business Owner:
Business Address: 29338 Roadside Drive
Telephone Number: 213 718-0397
Sign Permit Number: 11-SP-80 (banner on building)

The City Council has asked us to try and determine the effectiveness of the Temporary Retail Banners for individual businesses. We are aware that you obtained a permit for the retail banner in the last nine months and would like your feedback.

Do you find banner signs to be effective?

Response: Yes.

Have you noticed difference in sales when banner is displayed?

Response: Yes.

What percentage of sales increase or decrease have you experienced from having banner signs?

Response: 15%.

Have your customers commented on the banner? If so, what have they said? Did it attract them to your business?

Response: Yes. Didn't know we existed before the banner.

What is your opinion of other retail banner signs that you may have seen in the City?

Response: Positive.

Would you recommend Council extend the program?

Response: Most Definitely.

Council will be discussing issue on May 23, 2012. We will send you a notice of the meeting if you would like to attend because Council would like to hear from you.

Response: Yes.