

BACKGROUND AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Based in part on the feedback received from business and property owners at the Business Roundtable Workshop held in May 2002, the City Council gave direction to staff to research possible changes to the Zoning Ordinance relative to parking and signage. Changes to the parking ordinance were adopted by the City Council in February 2003.

In August 2003, staff presented a pre-screen application regarding proposed revisions to the City's sign ordinance to the City Council. The City Council provided direction to staff and established a Sign Committee consisting of one Councilmember, one Planning Commissioner and one Architectural Review Board member. The Sign Committee (Councilmember Denis Weber, Planning Commissioner Curtis Zacuto, and Architectural Review Board member Gary Roller) met five (5) times over the course of several months to consider and make recommendations on the proposed revisions.

During the review of the proposed revisions by the Sign Committee, a draft of the proposed sign ordinance revisions was sent to representatives of the shopping centers in town and the Chamber of Commerce. A meeting was held to discuss the proposed changes in July 2004, Representatives from the following shopping centers and/or businesses were in attendance: Whizin, Twin Oaks, Agoura Hills City Mall, Agoura Hills Town Center, Agoura Meadows, Kanan Village, I-HOP, Amcal (located in the old Charter Bank building), Canwood Medical Plaza and the Chamber of Commerce. Two businesses (Mann Theater and Kanan Plaza responded by phone. Several of the participants indicated they were pleased that the City was revising the ordinance and had invited them to participate in a meeting to discuss the changes. The discussion focused mainly on the City requirement for 50% shade coverage and how the required landscaping blocks views of signs. Freeway facing signs and "for lease" signs were also discussed and participants generally expressed support for allowing more colors for shopping center signs.

After the Sign Committee finished reviewing the sign regulations and guidelines, the proposed revision were sent to the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission held five (5) public hearings to review the proposed changes. During the discussion on lighting of businesses signs, the Planning Commission directed staff send letters to all the shopping center owners and the Chamber of Commerce advising them that the Planning Commission would be discussing this issue at their meeting of February 6th. Staff received one phone call from a representative of the Agoura Cinema Center on Agoura Road. He indicated that he would have no problem with requiring signs to be turned off at night because the signs weren't that visible in the center and he thought it would be a cost saving for the tenant.

During the Planning Commission discussion on changes to sign regulations in the Old Agoura Overlay, staff met with two members of the Old Agoura Homeowners Association (OAHA) to discuss the proposed changes. Staff also had numerous discussions with the Robert Evren, who was designated as the Old Agoura representative. The representatives from OAHA also attended several of the Commission meetings. The OAHA have advised staff that they concur with the final proposed changes to the Old Agoura Overlay.