



**PLANNING COMMISSION  
AGENDA**

Monday, October 24, 2022  
Woodstock Municipal Office, Town Council Chamber  
7:00 p.m.

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- Call to Order
  - Roll Call and Existence of Quorum
  - Adoption of the Agenda
  - Approval of Minutes – September 26, 2022 Planning Commission meeting
  - Commissioner Disclosures
  - Chairman's Statement
  - Remarks by Petitioners
  - Council Representative's Report
  - Committee Reports
  - Old Business
  - New Business
    - *Signs in the Interstate Intersection Corridor Overlay – Text Amendment*  
Chapter 90, Article IV, Section 90-385 Signs in the Interstate Intersection Corridor regarding allowable sign height, number, type, and illumination of such signs
    - *Shared Parking Text Amendment – Discussion Only*
    - *Planning Updates*
    - *Announcements*  
*Public Hearing Nov. 1<sup>st</sup> 7:20 p.m. – Cottage Apartment or Condominium text amendment*  
*Halloween on Court Square - October 29 (11:00a-1:30p)*
  - Adjournment
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**IF YOU REQUIRE ANY TYPE OF REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION AS A RESULT OF PHYSICAL, SENSORY OR MENTAL DISABILITY IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS MEETING, PLEASE CONTACT JILL JEFFERSON, PLANNER, AT 459-3621. THREE DAYS NOTICE IS REQUIRED.**

October 24, 2022

**Planning Commission Staff Report: Signs in the Interstate Intersection Corridor Text Amendment**

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**AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CODE OF THE TOWN OF WOODSTOCK, VIRGINIA, CHAPTER 90, ARTICLE IV, SECTION 90-385 SIGNS ON INTERSTATE INTERSECTION CORRIDOR**

REQUEST DESCRIPTION

Based on concerns from residents in Hisey Park subdivision regarding nearby sign illumination and sign height, as well as a request from a local business dealership for an additional freestanding sign in the Interstate Intersection Corridor, there have been multiple Ordinance Committee meetings and a Planning Commission meeting to discuss signage along the Interstate Corridor.

The Ordinance Committee met February, April and June 2022 to review sign allowances in the Instate Intersection Corridor and to hear comments from residents in the Hisey Park subdivision regarding sign illumination and sign heights. An additional request was received from a business dealership located within the Interstate Intersection Corridor expressing concern with being limited to one freestanding sign. The Ordinance Committee directed staff to research and draft sign ordinance changes with a focus on adjustments to sign height, illumination, number of signs allowed, and overall proportionality of signs to the property on which they are located. The Ordinance Committee recommended the draft text amendments be reviewed by the Planning Commission and address the following:

- Allow up to two signs per commercial site in the IIC, second sign ground mounted, not to exceed roof height.
- Limit the height of all future signs to 35-45 feet
- Limit illumination of signs to not cast light offsite (not cause glare into adjacent homeowners)

The Planning Commission, in their August 22, 2022 meeting, discussed a sign text amendment that offered increased flexibility of the number of signs (the current Code limits business to one freestanding sign per lot) and addressed concerns raised regarding illumination, sign height and overall sign size. Criswell Jeep requested the allowance of more than one freestanding sign be based off the number of commercial entrances.

During the October 4<sup>th</sup> public hearing, a comment from Criswell Jeep reiterated the request for the number of freestanding signs to be based off the number of entrances and that the second sign height be considered at 35 feet, rather than 30 feet. In addition, staff received a request from a resident of Hisey Park subdivision stating her inability to attend the October public hearing and desire to have comments requesting a decrease in the sign height and size in the interstate corridor be shared with the Planning Commission. See comments attached from Ms. May.

The proposed amendment is to Section 90-385 Signs on interstate intersection corridor, and specifies the allowable sign height, square footage allocation, number, type, and illumination of signs in the interstate intersection corridor.

#### AREA DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the Interstate Intersection Corridor Overlay is to provide opportunities for other allowances not permitted elsewhere in the Town Code such as having larger and taller signs oriented toward the interstate. The Woodstock Town Code Section 90-385, regulating signs in the Interstate intersection corridor were amended October 2018 by the Town Council to allow the boundary of the Corridor to include 150 feet along the fairgrounds bordering the interstate; thereby amending the official map of the Interstate Intersection Corridor. Below is a depiction of the highlighted zones that comprise the Woodstock Interstate Intersection Corridor.



#### STAFF COMMENTS

Our Code includes flexibility on freestanding signs in the B-2, Commercial Highway District compared to less flexibility for signs in the Interstate Intersection Corridor Overlay. Based on requests from a local business regarding the number of freestanding signs and community concerns regarding sign height, size and illumination, staff reviewed sign regulations in other localities along interstates and drafted a text amendment for Council consideration.

The Woodstock Town Council and Planning Commission held a joint public hearing on Tuesday, October 4, 2022 to receive citizen comments regarding a proposed amendment to Chapter 90, Article IV, of the Code of the Town of Woodstock, Virginia. One comment was heard from a

representative of the Criswell Jeep dealership. Additionally, a comment from the public was received through an email, included in the packet.

The proposed amendment is to Section 90-385 Signs on interstate intersection corridor, and specifies the allowable sign height, square footage allocation, number, type and illumination of signs in the interstate intersection corridor. The proposed text amendment for Section 90-385 contains the following provisions:

Current Code Sec. 90-385	Proposed Changes
Total area of a freestanding sign ≤ 200 SF	Total area of a freestanding sign ≤ 100 SF
For 2+ buildings on a lot, sign area totals ≤ 400 SF on same pole	For 2+ buildings on a lot, first sign area may be ≤ 100 SF ; second sign ≤ 75 SF
Sign height ≤ 85 ft above grade	Sign height ≤ 45 FT above grade or equal to rooftop of business (or whichever is less)
One freestanding sign per lot	IF PARCEL HAS MORE THAN ONE BUILDING Multiple monument signs are allowed but second sign must be ≤ 30 FT above grade and ≤75 SF in size
	All freestanding signs must be 100 FT apart and 10 FT from lot line

The alternative proposed text for signs stated provided by Criswell was based on the number of entrances per business. The proposed text stated a monument sign shall be allowed for each commercial entrance into the property, up to a maximum of two monument signs per business. The monument sign shall be constructed of materials that architecturally correspond with the advertised business and shall be at a height which is generally consistent with the height of the building.

**RELATIONSHIP TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

Economic vitality, aesthetic charm, and beauty of natural scenic area are goals of the Comprehensive Plan. Signs that promote business that are in keeping with the natural landscape are encouraged. The Comprehensive Plan’s Community Appearance Chapter 9 objective for the Route 42/Interstate area is “to enhance the west area entry into Woodstock by promoting an attractive and distinctive image and encourage visitors to visit the rest of the town.” The Chapter also calls for establishment of a pleasant gateway that will “reduce the visual clutter, yet direct travelers to different parts of town.” The placement of signage with required height, quantity of freestanding signs, square footage allocation of the signage, and illumination restrictions in the proposed text amendment meets the objectives in the Community Appearance Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan.

## STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The Interstate Intersection Corridor signage text amendment implements the Comprehensive Plan's Community Appearance objectives while promoting businesses, meeting both business and residential needs. For these reasons, staff recommends the Planning Commission find the proposed text amendment favorable for the Town Council.

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- A **favorable** motion to recommend approval could read:

**MOVE**, that the Planning Commission forward to the Town Council recommending approval of the text amendment of Section 90-385 Signs on Interstate Intersection Corridor because the request is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan {include one or more reasons such as consistent with the Community Appearance objectives, etc.}.

- A motion to **table** could read:

**MOVE** that the Planning Commission table the text amendment of Section 90-385 Signs on Interstate Intersection Corridor until the November 2022 meeting to allow adequate time for the applicant to address comments and concerns the Commission has identified, which include:

1. Other
2. \_\_\_\_\_

- A motion for an **unfavorable** recommendation on the request could read:

**MOVE**, that the Planning Commission forward the text amendment request to the Town Council recommending denial of approval of the text amendment of Section 90-385 Signs on Interstate Intersection Corridor because the request is: (include one or more reasons, e.g. inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan due to \_\_\_\_\_, etc.).

**AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 90 OF THE CODE OF THE TOWN OF WOODSTOCK, VIRGINIA:**

**BE IT ORDAINED** by the Council of the Town of Woodstock, Virginia, that Chapter 90, Article IV of the Code of the Town of Woodstock, Virginia, be amended as follows:

**ARTICLE IV. - SUPPLEMENTARY REGULATIONS**

**Section 90-385 - Signs on Interstate Intersection Corridor.**

**These regulations are intended to promote signs that are compatible with the use of the property to which they are appurtenant, landscape and architecture of surrounding buildings, are legible and appropriate to the activity to which they pertain, are not distracting to motorists, and are constructed and maintained in a structurally sound and attractive condition.**

Due to the nature of the commercial development along State Route 42 (West Reservoir Road) and Interstate 81 (all of which is known as interstate intersection corridor), the following provisions shall apply to signs therein:

- (1) *Official interstate intersection corridor map—Adopted; identification; location and availability to public.*
- (2) *Freestanding signs.*
  - a. For properties with one main building on a parcel, one freestanding sign is permitted not to exceed 100 square feet in size with a maximum height of either (1) 45 feet above grade or (2) the height of the main structure on the lot, whichever is more restrictive.
  - b. For properties with two or more main buildings on a parcel, one freestanding sign per main building is permitted, provided each sign has a maximum height of 30 feet above grade, a maximum size of 75 square feet, and is of monument style construction. When more than one freestanding sign is constructed, each sign shall be distanced at least 100 feet from all other freestanding signs on the parcel.
  - c. All freestanding signs permitted in this section shall be set back at least 10 feet from all property lines.
  - d. The provisions of this section shall apply to parcels located within the interstate intersection corridor and the provisions of section 90-386 do not apply.
- (3) *Total sign area.* The total square footage of signs, including but not exclusive of freestanding signs, shall be 800 square feet and conform to the following requirements and restrictions:
  - a. The total area of all signs (may be more than one) facing a street, alley or parking area shall not exceed **10** percent of the total wall area of the wall which the sign is being placed.

b. The provisions of this section shall apply to parcels located within the interstate intersection corridor and the provisions of section 90-386 do not apply.

(4) *Validation of signs existing as of July 1, 2006.* All signs existing within the interstate intersection corridor on or before July 1, 2006, although such signs may fail to comply with the existing limitations in section 90-384(b)(9), are hereby accepted and validated as erected. Signs within the interstate intersection corridor erected after **January 1, 2023**, shall fully comply with this article. Signs erected or existing on or before that date which are moved or removed from their existing locations, significantly damaged, or destroyed, shall not be moved to, or replaced at, another location except under the strict provisions and limitations set forth herein, nor shall they be rebuilt at the same location without fully complying with this article. **Should a freestanding sign that is nonconforming due to height or area be modified or replaced, the resulting sign shall have the nonconforming feature (height and/or area) reduced by at least 15%. However, such reduction shall not cause the modified or replacement sign to have a height or area less than permitted in section 90-385(2) above. This section shall not apply if the modification only involves the refacing of the existing nonconforming sign.**

(Ord. of 4-2-91(1), § 29-83.1; Ord. of 3-3-98(2); Ord. of 8-1-2006; Ord. of 5-6-2008; Ord. of 5-5-2009; Ord. of 10-02-2018(2))

**(5) Illumination and lighting of signs**

a. **In no case shall the illumination for any sign in the Interstate Intersection Corridor Overlay District be directed toward any residential district or toward any adjacent street. All freestanding signs shall be illuminated only during hours of operation.**

b. **Signs should not be internally illuminated. Internally illuminated signs shall have a dark background with light letters.**

c. **Electronic message board signs must include a photo cell to control brightness and must automatically dim at sunset.**

Adopted this \_\_\_\_ day of November, 2022.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk

**Citizens of Woodstock  
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

The Woodstock Town Council and Planning Commission will hold a joint public hearing on Tuesday, November 1, 2022 at 7:20 P.M., in the Council Chambers, 135 N. Main Street, Woodstock, Virginia, to receive citizen comments regarding a proposed amendment to the Code of the Town of Woodstock, Virginia Chapter 90, Article I, Section 90-1 Definition of COTTAGE APRTMENT OR CONDOMINIUM (CAC); Article III, Section 90-393 CAC, and Section 90-152.8 R-3 HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT; Section 90-224 B-2 HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL DISTRICT, and Article IV, Supplementary Regulations, Section 90-387 OFF-STREET PARKING.

The amendment provides definition and allowances for a housing sector called Cottage Apartment or Condominiums (CAC), including area regulations, yard requirements, lot size, open space, screening, parking, lighting, and site plan approvals. In High Density Residential Districts (R-3) Districts, the CAC would be a permitted use and in Districts zoned Highway Commercial (B-2), CACs are permitted by special permit. Article IV Supplementary Regulations notes parking spaces per dwelling unit.

Further information and copies of the proposed ordinance are available at the Woodstock Town Office, 135 N. Main Street, Woodstock, 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM Monday through Friday, 540-459-3621.

Mandy Helsley, Clerk  
Town of Woodstock

Keith R. Lantz, Chairman  
Woodstock Planning Commission



DATE: October 19, 2022

FROM: Cheri Davidson May – Resident, Woodstock (Hisey Park)

TO: Woodstock – City Council Planning Committee

RE: Impact of Tall Business Signs on Residential Property Values in the I-81 Corridor

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On February 28, 2022, I submitted a letter to the Woodstock Town Council concerning the unusually tall business signs that are allowed, by town Code, to be erected within the I-81 Corridor. My primary concern is the impact of the unsightly signs on the property values of homeowners who live within the I-81 Corridor. At the time I submitted my letter in February, I also submitted national research findings that proved the validity of my concern.

By combining US Census data, local home price data, and zoning code data with geographic information systems and statistical tools, Jonathan Snyder (Philadelphia, 2011) proved that homes located within 500 feet of large, unsightly signs are valued at \$30, 826 less than homes of equal quality that are located farther away from the signs. Further, for each additional business sign placed anywhere within a mixed development zone, Snyder proved that homeowner property values decrease by an additional \$947. (These numbers are based on 2011 home prices, and would be much higher at today's home prices.)

As mentioned in my first letter to the Town Council, the residents of Hisey Park, appreciate that businesses in the I-81 Corridor have a need to reasonably advertise and to provide way-finding directions to their establishments. However, we also believe the needs of the business community to advertise must be adequately balanced against the needs of homeowners to protect their property values. To my knowledge, this can only be accomplished through a change to the Town Signage Code.

Currently, residential properties within the I-81 Corridor outnumber commercial businesses by a ratio of approximately 4 – 1. Two apartment and/or condo communities, presently in the active planning stages, will bring that ratio to more than 8 residences to each business entity. Land areas designated for future housing development within the I-81 Corridor will continue to add to the numbers of residential property owners.

Given the current and projected numbers of property owners in the I-81 Corridor, I believe it is essential that the town Code be changed NOW, rather than later. It seems quite deceptive to continue inviting people to invest in home ownership in a mixed development area, all while knowing that new property owners are unaware of the risk to their financial investments. Unjust signage rules that allow businesses to project unsightly signs 85 feet into the air, despite the proven damage of those signs to the value of individual homes, must be changed.

I urge the Planning Committee to approve the proposed signage changes immediately as a necessary step to assure that equity for ALL stakeholders...business entities and residential property owners alike, is recognized and preserved.

Thank you.

## ARTICLE IV. - SUPPLEMENTARY REGULATIONS

### Sec. 90-385. - Signs on interstate intersection corridor.

These regulations are intended to promote signs that are compatible with the use of the property to which they are appurtenant, landscape and architecture of surrounding buildings, are legible and appropriate to the activity to which they pertain, are not distracting to motorists, and are constructed and maintained in a structurally sound and attractive condition.

Due to the nature of the commercial development along State Route [42](#) (West Reservoir Road) and Interstate 81 (all of which is known as interstate intersection corridor), the following provisions shall apply to signs therein:

(1) *Official interstate intersection corridor map—Adopted; identification; location and availability to public.*

~~(2) *Freestanding signs.*~~

~~a. One freestanding sign with its parts and support structure shall be located at least ten feet from all property lines.~~

~~b. The total area of freestanding signs shall not exceed 200 square feet. If the signs for two businesses on the same lot are located on the same pole, the total signage permitted is 400 square feet.~~

~~c. Freestanding signs shall not be erected more than 85 feet above the grade, not to exceed an elevation of 1,000 feet.~~

~~d. One freestanding sign is permitted per lot.~~

~~e. The provisions of this section shall apply to parcels located within the interstate intersection corridor and the provisions of section 90-386 do not apply.~~

*(2) Freestanding signs.*

a. For properties with one main building on a parcel, one freestanding sign is permitted not to exceed 100 square feet in size with a maximum height of either (1) 45 feet above grade or (2) the height of the main structure on the lot, whichever is more restrictive.

b. For properties with two or more main buildings on a parcel, one freestanding sign per main building is permitted, provided each sign has a maximum height of 30 feet above grade, a maximum size of 75 square feet, and is of monument style construction. When more than one freestanding sign is constructed, each sign shall be distanced at least 100 feet from all other freestanding signs on the parcel.

c. All freestanding signs permitted in this section shall be set back at least 10 feet from all property lines.

d. The provisions of this section shall apply to parcels located within the interstate intersection corridor and the provisions of section 90-386 do not apply.

(3) *Total sign area.* The total square footage of signs, including but not exclusive of freestanding signs, shall be 800 square feet and conform to the following requirements and restrictions:

- a. The total area of all signs (may be more than one) facing a street, alley or parking area shall not exceed ~~15~~-10 percent of the total wall area of the wall which the sign is being placed.
- b. The provisions of this section shall apply to parcels located within the interstate intersection corridor and the provisions of [section 90-386](#) do not apply.

(4) *Validation of signs existing as of July 1, 2006.* All signs existing within the interstate intersection corridor on or before July 1, 2006, although such signs may fail to comply with the existing limitations in [section 90-384](#)(b)(9), are hereby accepted and validated as erected. Signs within the interstate intersection corridor erected after ~~July 1, 2006~~ **January 1, 2023**, shall fully comply with this article. Signs erected or existing on or before that date which are moved or removed from their existing locations, significantly damaged, or destroyed, shall not be moved to or replaced at another location except under the strict provisions and limitations set forth herein, nor shall they be rebuilt at the same location without fully complying with this article. **Should a freestanding sign that is nonconforming due to height or area be modified or replaced, the resulting sign shall have the nonconforming feature (height and/or area) reduced by at least 15%. However, such reduction shall not cause the modified or replacement sign to have a height or area less than permitted in section 90-385(2) above. This section shall not apply if the modification only involves the refacing of the existing nonconforming sign.**

(Ord. of 4-2-91(1), § 29-83.1; Ord. of 3-3-98(2); Ord. of 8-1-2006; Ord. of 5-6-2008; Ord. of 5-5-2009; Ord. of 10-02-2018(2))

**(5) Illumination and lighting of signs**

- a. **In no case shall the illumination for any sign in the Interstate Intersection Corridor Overlay District be directed toward any residential district or toward any adjacent street. All freestanding signs shall be illuminated only during hours of operation.**
- b. **Signs should not be internally illuminated. Internally illuminated signs shall have a dark background with light letters.**
- c. **Electronic message board signs must include a photo cell to control brightness and must automatically dim at sunset.**