

**CITY OF EL MIRAGE  
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
AUGUST 19, 2009**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Hugh Flisyn called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

**II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Chair led all present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**III. ROLL CALL AND SWEARING IN OF NEW MEMBERS**

Members present were Chair Hugh Flisyn, Doug Doede, Brandon Forrey, Ben Lewis, and Bill Morrison. Staff present were Community Development Director George Flores, Management Assistant Sharon Antes, City Attorney Rick Flaaen, and Senior Planner Mark Smith. Rick Flaaen swore in new Commission member Brandon Forrey.

**IV. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR**

Doug Doede nominated Hugh Flisyn for Chair. Hugh Flisyn nominated Doug Doede for Vice-Chair. Ben Lewis said he had experience as an HOA president and said he was available for Chair. Roll call votes were taken for Chair and Vice Chair with the following results:

<u>Member:</u>	<u>Vote for Chair:</u>	<u>Vote for Vice-Chair:</u>
Hugh Flisyn	Hugh Flisyn	Doug Doede
Doug Doede	Hugh Flisyn	Doug Doede
Brandon Forrey	Ben Lewis	Doug Doede
Ben Lewis	Ben Lewis	Doug Doede
Bill Morrison	Ben Lewis	Doug Doede

Hugh Flisyn ceded the Chair to Ben Lewis and they traded seats.

**V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The new Chair asked for corrections of the minutes of July 15, 2009. Doug Doede referred to three typos, and the Chair added another. Doug Doede then moved for approval of the minutes as amended. Bill Morrison seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

**VI. WITHDRAWALS AND CONTINUANCES [NONE]**

**VII. NEW BUSINESS**

**1. Discussion on Possible Sign Code Amendments**

George Flores introduced the topic and turned it over to Mark Smith for a PowerPoint presentation including definitions for a sign, sign area, wall signs, freestanding signs, and menu boards, followed by an

overview of the existing code requirements, the staff's perception of the problem areas, and possible solutions. Topics included the following:

- Eliminating the maximum sign area on commercial front facades
- Allowing signage on the side or rear of multiple-tenant buildings
- Allowing more and taller freestanding signs for commercial centers
- Allowing larger freestanding signs for commercial sites and centers
- Increasing the number, area, and height of restaurant menu boards
- Increasing the time allowed for special event signs from 15 to 30 days
- Establishing standards for signs advertising garage and yard sales
- Amending standards for political signs to allow for freedom of speech
- Considering elimination of painted and backlit box signs from the code

There was some discussion on garage and yard sale signs. The Chair asked how much staff time was spent on removing garage sale signs. Mark Smith deferred the question to Code Coordinator Anthony Kern who was in the audience. He said it was a lot. Hugh Flisyn said that Public Works had one man spending 4 hours every weekend on them. George Flores said that all Streets employees and Code Enforcement Officers were instructed to remove them and even he had taken one down. It was difficult to regulate since they are not addressed in the code. One HOA had requested signs for a group yard sale, and there are no standards. This is why staff is asking for direction on them. Doug Doede said his was the HOA with community yard sales twice a year. Hugh Flisyn said his HOA had owners running perpetual sales, putting signs on every corner. Ben Lewis asked what the fines were. George Flores said they were difficult to prosecute without specific requirements. Hugh Flisyn said their HOA was waiting for the City to set the standards; everybody was waiting for someone else to do it.

George Flores referred to the recommendation for improving quality of development during the Design Charrette for the General Plan Update. He said painted signs could be called graffiti by some, but there was nothing now in the ordinance to prohibit them. Staff had to be creative and require that commercial businesses have a contractor. Doug Doede said he thought they were a hindrance to traffic down so low against the road. Ben Lewis thought they should be restricted. Hugh Flisyn said that the picture provided not only showed the painted sign violation but also showed a sandwich sign violation. Mark Smith stated that painted signs were not a violation. George Flores said if the City continued to allow them, we were not moving forward. He reminded the Commission that existing painted signs would be grandfathered, but any redevelopment would be subject to the new code. Sign packages may be approved for creative new mixed use developments, but these are done for a specific user only and are not grandfathered.

**2. Discussion on Regulation of Storage Containers**

Rick Flaaen said that Hugh Flisyn and a council member had asked for better regulation of storage containers in the City. His purpose was not to discuss it but to introduce draft regulations that prohibited them in the residential areas except for construction or temporary cleanups. They would be allowed temporarily for up to four months in B-1 & B-2 and allowed permanently in B-3 or I zones if placed on paved surfaces. They could not be used as a residence or have any utilities in them.

**VIII. COMMENTS FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS [NONE]**

**IX. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

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Mark Smith, Senior Planner

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Ben Lewis, Commission Chair

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George Flores, CD Director

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Rick Flaaen, City Attorney