



Mr. Deane Mellander, Zoning Administrator
City of Rockville
111 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, MD 20850

Dear Mr. Mellander:

Thank you for your letter of October 3, 2011 with your proposed text amendment to the sign ordinance. While we concur with many items in your proposal, the Rockville Chamber of Commerce has some other changes that we believe need to be made:

- 25.18.04 c.
 - 2. Should read “Each sign is limited to five (5) square feet in area”
 - 3. Eliminate the phrase “and must be set back a minimum of two (2) feet from the property line.”
- 25.18.06 a.4. (a) This is unclear. Can you please explain the intent of the change.
- 25.18.14 b.1.(c) Please change the sentence to read “*Optional Comprehensive Sign Package* - An applicant for a multi-tenant project may submit a comprehensive sign program to the Sign Review Board that deviates from the above requirements of subsection b.1. above

In addition to these specific changes, we have identified several broader issues that we believe need to be addressed. The first is that the rules of procedure of the Sign Review Board should be updated, published for public comment, adopted and then made available on the website. We are not in support of a rule of procedure that would limit resubmission for one year. This puts a tremendous burden on businesses and seems to serve no useful purpose. It should be clarified that amended sign packages can be resubmitted. Perhaps the same exact variance for the same sign cannot be repeatedly requested after denial but the bar for re-filing should be limited and the bar should be a shorter time period.

The next issue we find problematic is the cost of requesting a variance. The fee is a burden for small businesses and puts them at a disadvantage at a time when we are concerned with the trend toward national chain stores and away from local businesses.

The above are all things that we believe can be easily changed. The Chamber will continue to study this issue and will continue to get input from its members. We may bring larger issues with long-term solutions to you in the future. For the time being, however, we are willing to move ahead with the problems which can be easily remedied. Please move forward with requesting the Mayor and Council introduce the revised sign ordinance as soon as possible.

The Rockville Chamber has enjoyed the opportunity to work cooperatively with staff to bring this sign ordinance revision forward.

Sincerely,

Andrea Jolly, Director
Rockville Chamber of Commerce