



February 17, 2009

Dear Community Representative:

On Wednesday, January 14, 2009 the Department of City Planning held a public hearing to address the issue of the regulations for LED (light emitting diode) billboards. That evening the weather did not cooperate and the combination of rapidly accumulating snow at rush hour and a Mellon Arena Penguins' game resulted in a monumental traffic jam which made it challenging to attend the meeting. Consequently we will be having a second public meeting to solicit input on the issue of amending city regulations to allow for the provision of LED billboards.

This issue is being addressed as a result of actions this past summer relating to the placement of a LED advertising sign (electronic billboard) on the new Grant Street Transportation Center. As a result, City Councilman Burgess, working with the City of Pittsburgh Department of Law, crafted legislation that defines regulations for LED advertising signs. It permits such signs so long as they conform to all advertising sign regulations; approval is through the Zoning Board of Adjustment's special exception process. There are currently over 900 billboards in the City of Pittsburgh.

While the regulation revision effort will provide a means for the industry to employ LED's it was not intended to facilitate more billboards or unrestrictive conversion of nonconforming signs to LED's. The City Planning Commission is concerned with the impacts of LED's compared to static billboards, the number of billboards that currently exist in the City of Pittsburgh, and the effects of the proposed regulations. They would like further public input to assist them in making decisions related to the proposed legislation.

The Planning Department will be discussing research conducted on the issue and comments made at the previous meeting held on January 14, 2009 and will follow up related to those comments.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11, 2009 AT 5:30 P.M.

200 ROSS STREET, JOHN P. ROBIN CIVIC BUILDING

1ST FLOOR, PLANNING DEPARTMENT CONFERENCE ROOM

Sincerely,

Noor Ismail, AICP
Director