

Following our discussion on Thursday, and given I will not be in town for the next four meetings, I thought it would be appropriate to share my thoughts about the sign question we are grappling with.

While we do have to listen when people, or one person, brings requests for changes in the ordinance, it does not mean we have to do something about it.

Our choices are:

1. Do nothing and leave the ordinance as is.
2. Bring the hospital up to the same standard as other commercial properties.
3. Allow the hospital to have a bigger sign than our current code, either the size it is now or larger.

I do not think it is appropriate to reward people for not adhering to our code. The fact that the hospital has a sign bigger than allowed for their district and even bigger than allowed for commercial, and has been allowed by code enforcement, should not influence us.

I am in favor of #2 bring the hospital district in line with other commercial properties on Route one.

My reason is that it is right to treat everyone equally and to avoid the consequences of a larger sign i.e. we will find ourselves having to answer questions down the road as to why the hospital is allowed a larger sign than other commercial business. Honestly, I do not have an argument that convinces me and could not justify it.

If the purpose of a sign for other commercial business is to easily facilitate the public to find them and Rockport residents have decided the size we have, 30 sqft per signface, works with a maximum of 60 sq. ft. per business. Why does that not work for the hospital? I am not able to answer that question.

Regarding the H, for example, there are two as you travel from route 90 to the hospital, one showing you are in the right road and another warning you that you are 1000 ft. from the entrance. In addition, they have a traffic light at the entrance. I could not find an H sign coming from Glen Cove (?) and I am not able to find any logical reason as to why the sign should be increased above the 30 sq. ft. per face to accommodate it. That is a matter for those who have the responsibility to design the sign in a way that accommodates what they want the sign to say within the given parameters.

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By the way, I believe the intention of the way the code is currently written for commercial is that no sign can be bigger than 30 square feet and the total of all signs cannot exceed 60 square feet. Therefore a single sided sign cannot be bigger than 30 square feet and a double sided sign cannot be bigger than 30 sq. ft. on each side.

I understand I may be out of step with others both on the ORC and Select Board but in the absence of any real data to convince me that the hospital should have a larger sign than other commercial properties, I have no rationale for the changes they have requested.

I take Will Gartley's point...we are all volunteers and do the best we can, we are not "gods" So, if it comes to what should be recommended for the November warrant, and we have different opinions, then I would be in favor of offering the town a choice. Put all three questions on the ballot and ask people to choose.

Regards

John Alexander

Chairman, Rockport Planning Board.

James P. Francomano

From: James P. Francomano
Sent: Friday, January 30, 2015 11:47 AM
To: 'William B. Gartley'
Subject: RE: Hospital Sign
Attachments: image001.png

I don't know the Town's comfort level for appearances of the "spot zoning" boogeyman. To avoid that issue it occurs to me that we could use the presence of the "H" itself as the standard that allows you to bump up from 30 to 50 SF.

We would want to be sure that only hospitals get to use the "H," of course, but I think that whatever weirdo in the future tries to use this provision to bump up sign area for a different use would be relatively easy to enforce without even having to write that part in. MDOT or state law might weigh in on that unlikely possibility of someone using the "H" who shouldn't.

So, leaving that aside the suggestion that one property be called out in the text, I agree that this approach is defensible. Personally I think larger than 50 SF would be a better result but I realize after John's contributions you might be thinking about how the language will fare at the Planning Board stage.

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From: William B. Gartley [mailto:wgartley@gartleydorsky.com]
Sent: Friday, January 30, 2015 9:33 AM
To: James P. Francomano
Subject: FW: Hospital Sign

Jamie,

What do you think of this compromise. It is just for the hospital, the 30 sf matches the surrounding 907 district and the bonus to 50 sf is only if it includes the "H". Seems very defensible to me.

The following standards are applicable to the Hospital property within the District 909:

- a. **The maximum sign area for free standing signs shall be 30 square feet per side or for a single faced sign. The size may be increased to 50 square feet if it includes the universal symbol for hospital (White "H" on a blue background) as part of the sign. No free standing sign shall exceed 20 feet in height.**
- b. **Only signs placed outside in direct view of any public way are subject to this ordinance.**

William B. Gartley, P.E.



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