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TO: Plan Commission
DATE: August 14th, 2023
SUBJECT: Public Hearing Comment Review and Recommendation to Council – Text Amendment to Chapter 550 Zoning.

A request by Lora Martinson, agent for Culvers of Watertown, for text amendments to the City of Watertown Zoning Code - Chapter 550-131 & 550-132 Zoning.

BACKGROUND DESCRIPTION:

Amendment #1:

Current zoning code regarding Electronic Message Signs has inconsistencies with the updated sign code adopted in recent years. This text amendment changes or removes inconsistent language and adds references to the updated sign code in § 550-132 Permitted Sign Rules.

Amendment #2:

Current zoning code allows for a maximum area of 24 square feet for drive-through signs. Culver's of Watertown is requesting that the maximum square footage be increased to 40 square feet. Staff has also included additional changes to clarify and simplify signage requirements in drive-through situations. The text amendments to Table 550-132A(1) provide more flexibility to the different types of requested drive-through signage arrangements.

PROPOSED TEXT AMENDMENT LANGUAGE:

Amendment #1 - § 550-131.1A(2) & § 550-131.1A(3)(a)

§ 550-131.1 Electronic message signs.

A. Electronic message sign. A type of sign that displays a message which may be changed electronically to provide different information, and which includes computer signs, electronic reader boards, video screens, LCD signs, electronic time and temperature signs, and other signs with electronically-controlled changing or moving displays.

(1) Electronic message signs shall be permitted only with a nonresidential land use.

(2) ~~No more than one electronic message sign shall be permitted per site.~~ [The number of permitted electronic message signs shall be in accordance with § 550-132 Permitted Sign Rules.](#)

(3) Electronic message signs may be integrated into the design of the following sign types:
monument signs, wall signs, or drive-through signs.

~~(a) Drive-through signs: no more than 33% of a sign's actual area shall contain an electronic message sign.~~

~~(b)~~ (a) Electronic message signs shall count toward the site's maximum permitted signage.

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Opportunity Runs Through It

Amendment #2 - § 550-132 - Table 550-132A(1)

Table 550-132A(1): Permanent Sign Group ¹								
D. Permanent Changeable Sign Category:*						Sign Area and Height Maximums for Zoning Districts		
Sign Categories and Sign Types	Sign Permit Needed	Number of Signs Allowed	Sign Area Formula (each side)	Sign Location Requirements	Sign Lighting Allowed	ER, CR, SR, TR	MR, SNR, RH, NO, NB	PO, PB, GB, CB, PI, GI, HI
1. Wall-Mounted Changeable Sign	Sign permit required for each new sign.	Limit of 1 permanent Wall-Mounted Changeable Sign for each tenant.	None needed. Use max area limit.	On-building. Maximum 4 inches from wall.	Ambient only	Not allowed.	8 feet maximum area per sign.	
2. Freestanding Changeable Sign		<u>Limit of 1 permanent Freestanding Changeable Sign for each tenant unless used in conjunction with a Drive-Through.</u> <u>Drive-Through use limit of 1 permanent Freestanding Changeable Sign per Drive-Through lane.</u>		<u>Freestanding. Within 10 feet of public entrance.</u> <u>When used in conjunction with a Drive-Through per C.U.P.</u>	<u>Standard</u>		8 feet maximum height per sign. 12 <u>15</u> square feet maximum area per sign. <u>8 feet maximum height per sign.</u>	
3. Drive-Through Sign		<u>Limit of 1 Drive-Through Sign per Drive-Through lane.</u>		Per C.U.P.	Not allowed.	24 <u>40</u> square feet maximum area per sign. 8 feet maximum height per sign.		

PUBLIC HEARING COMMENTS:

No public comments from August 1st, 2023 Public Hearing.

PLAN COMMISSION OPTIONS:

The following are possible options for the Plan Commission:

1. Negative recommendation of the Chapter 550 Text Amendments to Common Council.
2. Positive recommendation of the Chapter 550 Text Amendments to Common Council.
3. Positive recommendation of the Chapter 550 Text Amendments to Common Council, with conditions identified by the Plan Commission.