

MEMORANDUM



TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Planning Commission

SUBJECT: Planning Commission Recommendation on Zoning Text Amendment TXT2012-00234,
Mayor and Council of Rockville, applicant

At its meeting on April 25, 2012 the Planning Commission reviewed and discussed Text Amendment Application TXT2012-00234. The Commission received a presentation from Planning and Zoning Division staff, which recommended approval of all but one of the proposed text revisions. The Planning Commission heard testimony from one citizen who spoke in support of the application.

After discussion, the Planning Commission voted to approve the recommendations of the staff for the reasons set forth in the staff report. In recommending approval, the Commission does wish to provide comments on several of the proposed revisions that the Mayor and Council should consider during their deliberations on this proposed amendment.

With regard to the proposal to amend Sec. 25.18.05 to exempt signs inside windows from the sign regulations (except for the 20% size limitation), the Commission is concerned that this would allow for signs that can blink, flash or otherwise be animated. The Commission is concerned that this could be a possible safety issue as a distraction for motorists.

With regard to the proposed revisions to allow additional colors, the Commission supports the allowance for multi-colored logos (Sec. 25.18.06) for up to 20% of the permitted sign area. However, allowing the logos combined with the additional accent colors that are proposed to be allowed raises the concern that the potential multiplicity of colors conflicts with the intent to maintain consistency of the signs within a development. It may be worth considering allowing any accent color to only reflect the colors within a logo, if included. Testimony was received that indicated that in the case of multi-tenant projects the owner or leasing agent has to approve any sign designs before they can apply for a sign permit from the City.

The staff has recommended that the provision in Sec. 25.18.14.b.1.(c) allowing for an existing multi-tenant project to apply for a comprehensive sign package not be approved. While the Commission supports the staff recommendation, some of the Commissioners expressed some concern as to whether

there might be a fairness issue in treating existing projects differently from new developments or comprehensive redevelopments.

Therefore, on a motion by Commissioner Hadley, seconded by Commissioner, Callistein, the Planning Commission recommends approval of text amendment application TXT2012-00234 with the exception of the provision allowing multi-tenant projects to apply for a comprehensive sign package, and with the comments noted above, with Commissioners Hadley, Callistein, Ostell, Tyner and Hill voting in favor of the motion, and with Commissioners Cook and Trahan absent, at its meeting on April 25, 2012.