

David Betz

From: Bill Eddy <beddy@midwesttechnical.net>
Sent: Wednesday, January 28, 2015 10:28 AM
To: David Betz
Cc: Susie Ross; Jim Hrivnak; Brian Lorenz; Tom Counts; Steve Lutz
Subject: Temporary and Portable Sign Issue

To: Director of Development, City Manager, City Council and City Clerk

From: Bill Eddy, Partner MidWest Technical Associates LLP

Subject: Signage Discussion and Potential Changes to Signage Code

I am writing to you because I am not able to voice my opinions directly to council due to commitments I have on Wednesday, 28 January 2015. I request that my concerns go on record and if possible, addressed to council during the 7:00PM meeting.

MidWest Technical is now celebrating its 10th year here in Powell. Since the company's inception, many changes have taken place in downtown Powell. Some for the better like fabulous restaurants, grocery stores, pharmacies, child care and clothiers. And of course, some other changes have occurred that are not necessarily good. One example of this is the significant increase in traffic. Though I do not blame this necessarily on just business growth, other factors are to blame for this including, during the summer The Zoo traffic and more recently the increase in CSX traffic, which if you have noticed, is partially due to the transportation of oil from fracking wells.

The traffic on Powell Road has become so congested, that people no longer casually drive through Powell and glance at the different businesses. This was a talking point for HDPI's Economic Restructuring Committee back in 2008. Drivers can no longer look around and see store signs because the off/on, fast/slow flow of traffic. Many businesses are so tucked back from the road and are barely visible when driving 25-35 MPH through the city. An example of this is the new business Fringe (opened in August I believe) located opposite side of the tracks from my business. I asked a neighbor of mine last month if she has been in the shop. She didn't know what business I was referencing; and she drives to Wedgewood every day. Another example, is a customer walked into my shop early last year and asked how long I have been open. When I told him 10 years he huffed, "I drive through Powell every day and just noticed your sign." When I assured him that I really have been at this location almost 10 years he then stated, "Well, then that must be a new sigh out front!"

Many of the businesses in Powell are hampered by visibility from the road. The fact that the drivers on Olentangy/Powell Road are on a mission to their destination and cannot just casually glance around while driving looking at businesses and their signs. That is why businesses like mine need to have a sandwich board out front, closer to the road. The other option is to ease the restrictions on the size of our main signage, like Margello Land Management's large sign in front of Auto Assets.

I think before tighter restrictions are put into place, a thorough review of this issue needs to be made keeping in mind that further barriers to business does not send a positive message.

I will finish with the following questions:

Why is this issue revisited every two years or so? Are there complaints? Is it from the local citizenry? Other businesses? Who? Can we have access to the recorded complaints?

I understand the view that some signs are an eyesore. What about the restaurants that use sandwich boards to display what's being served? How about the clothiers that have a sign that shows the daily discounts? Why are realtors allowed to use stick signs but they don't have any restrictions?

Can the city put this on their next survey and get some real data on the views from the local residents?

Thank you for your time, and service.

Bill

Bill Eddy

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