

Joe Colangelo

From: Peter Erb <hinesburgzoning@gmavt.net>
Sent: Monday, December 10, 2012 2:44 PM
To: Andrea Morgante; 'Joe Colangelo'; 'Jon Trefry'; 'Mike Bissonette'; Phil Pouech; Tom Ayer
Cc: Alex Weinhagen; VT1320@aol.com
Subject: HVFD public bulletin board

Memorandum

To: Selectboard
From: Peter Erb.
Date: December 10, 2012
Re: HVFD Bulletin board

I would like to offer the following as background to your discussion tonight about the request by the fire department for a “public bulletin board”.

Our ordinances allow them as follows “ **d) Public bulletin boards** (e.g., for a school or similar public structure)

My interpretation of the ordinance is that **public** doesn't mean informing the public but that public means a town entity. While the relationship between the fire department and the town is not entirely clear to me, I think it is basically a nonprofit entity utilizing a building owned by the town. While it is the fire department that wants the sign, it is the town that will actually be responsible for applying for it.

I have several concerns about this sign. While the DRB has approved two LED lighted signs thus far, a LED sign is so visibly effective because the light source itself is what is seen. I have had several complaints about their brightness, however feel that little can be done by me. LED signs were not anticipated when the sign ordinance was adopted, and they are not specifically addressed. It seems obvious to me, however, that the sign ordinances, by banning neon, discouraging light backgrounds, fluorescent paint etc. would not have included LED signs if it had existed at the time. The ordinances, as well, prohibit all other lights from having their source visible from off of the site, and I'm not sure how this impacts signs except to say that they are obviously outside of the intent of the regulations, but possibly not technically illegal.

So yours is the choice of whether the town wants to promote a sign that pushes the envelope of the ordinances, and as well sets the stage for all signs to come or whether you feel that this type of lighting shouldn't be encouraged for signage in Hinesburg. Both the town hall and the elementary school chose another type of bulletin board, albeit more labor intensive and much less intrusive, to get their messages across. You may want to consider this option.

Peter.