

Summary of Recent Action by the Los Angeles City Planning Commission (CPC) on the Proposed Commercial Cannabis Sign Ordinance – 12/21/17

CPC action: adopt the staff report (recommending adoption by the City Council of the proposed ordinance), with the following modifications:

- 1) Add *day care centers* and *permanent supportive housing* as sensitive uses (in addition to residentially-zoned property, schools, public parks, libraries and alcohol/drug addiction treatment/recovery centers) protected by the 800 ft. distance limitation on offsite signs/billboards (per CM Wesson suggestion).
- 2) Prohibit certain additional types of signs (per CM Wesson suggestion) – *illuminated, moving, super graphics, inflatable* and *marquee* signs – but allow *pole* or *monument* signs (per the CPC).
- 3) Remove the maximum onsite sign size limitation of 75 sq. feet, i.e., cannabis business signage would remain subject to the same Code sign size limitations as other legal uses, that is, measurement based on linear ft. of property frontage with no maximum limit (per the CPC).

Draft proposed ordinance (without CPC modifications):

<https://planning.lacity.org/ordinances/docs/CommercialCannabisSignOrd/Ordinance.pdf>.

FAQ (prepared by Planning staff; does not include CPC modifications):

<https://planning.lacity.org/ordinances/docs/CommercialCannabisSignOrd/QandA.pdf>.

Audio of CPC hearing (requires device that can play mp3 files):

<https://planning.lacity.org/InternetCalendar/pdf.aspx?Id=59371> (scroll down to item 14, link in blue).

General Observations/Notes:

1. Seven Commissioners were present and voted (absent: Dake Wilson and Mack). Although the final vote was unanimous, during discussion there were split opinions on several issues. Regarding no. 1 above, for example, 4 Commissioners (including President Ambroz) agreed with Wesson and wanted to add day care centers as sensitive uses, but 3 did not; on the other hand, regarding nos. 2 and 3 above, while 3 Commissioners agreed with Wesson and wanted to prohibit pole and monument signs and retain the 75 sq. ft. maximum onsite sign size limitation (including President Ambroz), 4 did not agree (citing concerns about discriminating against legal cannabis businesses and strip mall owners, when other legal uses that are also considered harmful to youth, e.g., liquor stores, smoke shops, strip clubs, are allowed to advertise on pole or monument signs and/or are subject to current Code size restrictions with no 75 sq. ft. maximum limit). Notwithstanding strong arguments presented by Ambroz and others, in the end the Commissioners voted with the consensus (majority) view on each issue.
2. There seemed to be general agreement, among public speakers and Commissioners alike, that the 800 ft. distance limit on offsite signs/billboards (measured from residential zones, schools, parks, etc.) would effectively restrict such signs mainly to Industrial zones and only a few commercially-zoned areas.
3. The Commissioners did not add limits on vehicle or mobile signs (as was also suggested by Wesson) – per the City Attorney, these are either preempted by state law (vehicle signs) or would be redundant (mobile signs, i.e., those towed on a moving platform by another vehicle, are already prohibited in LA).
4. Regardless of the above, applicable Specific Plans will govern signs in commercial areas; note, however, that cannabis businesses will be unlikely in the Palisades (see <http://pacpalicc.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/The-Skinny-on-Los-Angeles-Regulations-%E2%80%93-Commercial-Cannabis-Activity.4.pdf>).
5. The matter will presumably be referred to the Rules and/or PLUM Committee/s in January (TBD); it is unknown whether Committee members will agree with the CPC or whether additional modifications may be adopted/recommended before the City Council votes on the proposed ordinance.