

Naperville Sun

Committee debates tougher business sign restrictions

May 13, 2008

By Paige Winfield

A proposal to tighten requirements for signs posted by Naperville businesses raised ire Monday at a content-packed meeting of the Legislative Committee of the Naperville Area Chamber of Commerce.

On a list of changes that includes a ban on hand-held signs and people in costumes serving as signage, the most contentious was a regulation that nondelivery vehicles bearing signs may only be parked near the business for half of its operating hours.

The proposition is in response to complaints from business owners who find their own signs blocked by such vehicles, said Naperville Operations Manager John Rutkowski.

"The majority of complaints we get is the big box trucks parked close to a business," Rutkowski said.

Staff members considered chronic signage complaints as they drafted the changes, which are intended to improve business identification, safety and aesthetics, Rutkowski said.

But many chamber members voiced concerns that putting restrictions on vehicles with signs could push small or home-based business owners out of the city.

The proposed changes, which can be viewed in full at www.naperville.il.us/signordinanceupdate.aspx, will be presented to the City Council at its June 10 meeting.

Chamber members also voted unanimously to oppose the Structural Work Act and an inclusion of private projects in the Prevailing Wage Act - two House bills they feel would burden Illinois businesses and dramatically increase the cost of private projects if passed.

State Sen. Randy Hultgren, R-Wheaton, gave an update on state budget standstill in Springfield.

"A lot is happening and at the same time nothing is happening," Hultgren said.

As usual, party leaders are tied up with disputes that would take a miracle to resolve, Hultgren said. He said he's hoping rank-and-file legislators can at least gather enough bipartisan support to pass a baseline budget.

"That's the only hope, but even that is a long shot," he said.