

PETITIONER GUIDELINES FOR THE GREATER ALLISONVILLE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

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INTRODUCTION:

Greetings from the Greater Allisonville Community Council (GACC)! This document serves as a set of guidelines for petitioners and other interested parties who are planning a presentation to the GACC Board of Directors. The GACC serves the northeast Indianapolis area bounded by Kessler Boulevard to the south, Binford Boulevard (S.R. 37) to the east, 82nd Street to the north and Keystone Avenue/ White River to the west. Properties adjacent to these boundaries are also included (example: properties touching the east side of Binford Boulevard).

The primary purpose of these guidelines is to facilitate an efficient exchange of ideas and concerns by making you aware, before we meet, of the kinds of information we need in order to develop an informed position on a proposal. A full presentation and discussion in the first instance may serve to avoid the potential for subsequent meetings and attendant delays.

GUIDELINES:

The Board consists of eleven members. Please plan to bring at least twelve copies of any document that you wish to use during the meeting. The twelfth copy is to be passed around the audience for public review. These copies will not be returned.

If a petition involves a particularly large or potentially contentious matter, the Board will, when possible, appoint an ad hoc committee to meet with the petitioner prior to presentation of the petition at the Board's public meeting, to gather information, share concerns and work to facilitate the overall process.

Each petitioner will have SEVEN MINUTES to state his or her case. The Board will then ask questions and determine if enough information is available for a vote. When the Board is satisfied, the audience will be invited to comment and question the petitioner. The Board reserves the right to limit time for presentation, remonstrance and audience

comment.

The Board will vote on all petitions at the end of the meeting in the order in which they were heard. The results will then be forwarded to the appropriate agency for review. After hearing your petition, GACC has three options: Approve, Oppose, or No Opposition. GACC will generally give "approval" to a petition only when the best interest of the public will result. GACC will generally "oppose" a petition that does not serve the best interest of the public or when the petitioner cannot prove that an undue hardship would result from the current ordinances or regulations. GACC may offer "no opposition" to a petition when the result would offer little or no change to a neighborhood.

CHECKLIST: (Please bring twelve copies of each to distribute to the board. Some items may not apply to your petition.)

- 1 Site Plan – Show all property lines, rights-of-way, easements, structures and parking areas. This can be incorporated into the landscape or civil plans if desired. See Appendix for more information.
- 2 Architectural Drawings - Ask your architect to provide the a) Site Plan, b) Floor Plans and c) Exterior Elevations at the bare minimum. It is often helpful to bring "color renderings" or a model to help the Board understand the project. Your design professionals are always welcome to present their designs and ideas at GACC hearings.
- 3 Landscape or Civil Drawings - These drawings will help explain what plants, groundcover, site lighting, site drainage, parking, etc. are being improved or altered. Location of parking islands should be illustrated, as should all exterior signage. See Appendix for more information.
- 4 Traffic Study - If appropriate, bring an up-to-date traffic study. Explain why the proposed changes will not cause traffic problems or how you will mitigate any problems caused.
- 5 Lighting - Provide as much detail as possible on the type of lighting used (new and existing) and who was responsible for calculating foot-candles. The petitioner should be able to explain what precautions are being taken to prevent "light trespass". See Appendix for more information.
- 6 Zoning Base Map - These 8-1/2" x 11" maps are freely available online at <http://arcimsnt1.indygov.org/prod/GeneralViewer/viewer.htm> or you may purchase pre-printed maps at the City-County Building for \$1.00. The clerk will need the address of the property.
- 7 Photographs - Use wide-angle shots of your property if possible. Include property lines and portions of neighboring properties to provide a frame of reference. Use

close-up shots only when necessary.

- 8 Aerial Photograph - These are freely available on the city's website at <http://arcimsnt1.indygov.org/prod/GeneralViewer/viewer.htm>. Simply zoom to the desired scale, "check" the box on the left labeled "Aerial Photography", refresh the map and print. Be sure to label which property is being discussed in a clear manner.
- 9 Proposed Commitments - For example, it may be appropriate to offer commitments regarding down-lighting, hours of operation, hours of trash pick-up and merchandise deliveries, etc.

APPENDIX: (Note: The information below is offered as a reference only. Petitioners are solely responsible for complying with applicable codes and ordinances.)

A. Lighting

The issues of site lighting and exterior signage lighting are critical in the GACC area. Neighbors have repeatedly expressed a strong concern over past failures to provide effective lighting in local developments. GACC wishes to improve the community by helping developments avoid the negative feelings that result from poor lighting plans. Chief areas of concern are "over lighting", or the ineffective lighting, placement and appearance of light fixtures. While lighting engineers and some lighting sales representatives may be able to correctly specify site lighting that meets the minimum requirements of local ordinances, they may not always have the time or inclination to identify the best solution for the project. GACC asks that all developments be designed to meet or exceed the lighting guidelines listed in Outdoor Lighting Practices in the State of Indiana, a free publication produced by the Indiana Council on Outdoor Lighting Education (ICOLE) that can be found at: <http://icole.home.att.net>

1. Light Trespass

One area of concern is "light trespass". This occurs when unwelcome light spills onto neighboring properties. Light trespass may be prevented in many ways including: properly selecting the appropriate wattage, by aiming fixtures properly, by installing "neighbor friendly" fixtures, etc. It is imperative that all light fixtures be chosen specifically for their intended use and not solely on cost or appearance. Some of the most attractive light fixtures are also the least efficient and most damaging to the environment. Energy spent on illuminating the sky is energy wasted. For more design guidelines and other information on outdoor lighting, visit <http://www.iesna.org/> or <http://www.darksky.org/>. Petitioners should note ICOLE's recommendation of a maximum light level of "0.1 foot-candle" at any given property line.

2. Professional Design

It is often beneficial for both the developer and the tenants to retain the services of his/her architect, engineer or landscape architect to integrate the development's lighting and signage with the architecture and landscaping. This creates a consistent and identifiable "look" throughout a development. Local design professionals can be located through the local chapter of the American Institute of Architects: http://www.aiaindy.org/aia_resources.htm

3. Lighting Terminology

Developers should also understand the terminology of light measurement, i.e. lux, lumen, candela, foot-candle, etc. According to ICOLE, it is widely misperceived that one foot-candle represents the light output of a single candle. However, one foot-candle is defined as the illumination on a surface that is twelve inches from a candle, about 10.76 lux. According to studies then, an illuminated street that measures seventy-seven foot-candles would not be comparable to 77 lighted candles but, depending on the intensity of the fixtures, could appear as 60,000

candles.

4. Light Fixtures

Some light fixtures that will raise red flags are a) floodlights that are aimed upward, b) historic replica "acorn" street lamps that shine light in every direction except downward, and c) most "wallpack" units that direct intense, low-quality light beyond property lines. Light fixtures that utilize a "drop lens" or "sag lens" should also be avoided as they contribute greatly to poor energy usage and light pollution. Preferred lighting fixtures will be those that prevent light from escaping directly upward or outward. When drivers or pedestrians can directly view the actual light source, or bulb, they can temporarily lose their night vision, which creates a safety hazard. Auto accidents can occur, and pedestrians can be blind to their surroundings. One way to avoid glare is to install fixtures that utilize "cut-off shields" which hide the "bulb" from direct view. Cut-off shields greatly reduce glare, and because they direct light more effectively, they achieve the same lighting levels using less wattage.

5. Over-Lighting

Over-lighting of a building should be avoided as this, in effect, creates a virtual billboard. The lighting industry describes this practice as "the moth effect" and openly suggests that it may draw customers to a development. GACC holds a very negative view of this practice. Developers should avoid the temptation to promote their properties with over-lighting, rather than with appropriate signage, landscaping and architecture.

B. Parking

If parking is to be modified or redesigned for the property, be sure to indicate the new number of parking spaces, the size of the "average parking stall" (e.g. 10 ft. by 20 ft.) and how many parking spaces will be permitted before an "island," or planting space occurs.

1. Islands

Parking islands help direct traffic and are responsible for reducing accidents and "road rage" within the property. Islands are also ideal spots for site lighting which in turn provides more lighting options (example: several low-wattage light fixtures on shorter poles are often more effective than a single high-wattage unit on a taller pole, thereby resulting in lower utility bills, a cleaner environment and happier neighbors. See **Lighting** above). Islands can also create a tasteful image for the development. Typical spacing arrangements might be one island between every five to twenty parking spaces, depending on the type of development. More planting islands mean better site drainage and a more attractive project. Fewer planting islands may indicate a lack of concern for the appearance of the property. While broad expanses of pavement may permit easier snow removal, they also create a chaotic "Dodge City" atmosphere for the majority of the year, contributing to accidents, bad publicity and a negative public image of the property.

C. Signage

GACC recommends that outdoor signage and "way-finding" signs match the overall architectural theme of the property. Signage should not simply utilize the maximum square footage permitted by regulations but should instead be designed specifically for each point of installation. The concepts of scale, proportion, color, lighting, etc., should be incorporated to maintain harmony with the built environment. GACC endorses the creative use of architectural and landscape elements to supplement or replace signage (applicable ordinances still apply). These ideas form an identity to the public and are often more effective than any sign. Examples include:

1. Window awnings (with company logos, a signature shape or color)
2. Identifiable outdoor sculptures (Shiel Sexton's "Structure Man" sculpture)
3. Unique architecture (The Pyramids, Houseworks, Galyan's, Emmis HQ)
4. Tasteful use flagpole displays (United Nations HQ, various city halls)
5. Landscape plantings in the form of a logo (Various corporations, theme parks)
6. Tasteful lighting (WW II monument, One Indiana Square/Union Planters)

The definitive test is to envision the development without signage; could the public identify the business(es) inside without help?

Signage types to avoid typically include:

- A. Pole signs
- B. Most "neon" signs
- C. Signs with flashing or moving lights
- D. Most "backlit" Plexiglas signs
- E. Signs with non-permanent lettering
- F. Electronic variable message signs (EVMS)
- G. Billboards

For more information, see the GACC position statement on signage and billboards following this page.

D. Billboards

Billboards are a special area of concern for the GACC. If a property contains a billboard, the petitioner may receive special consideration from GACC if he or she agrees to permanently remove it from the property. For more information, see the GACC position statement on signage and billboards following this page.

E. Pedestrian Access

GACC believes that commercial and residential development should take into account the importance of pedestrian access. As our community becomes more aware of the

importance of "quality of life" issues, we strive to promote pedestrian access along streets and roads by the provision of sidewalks, bike paths and the like. GACC believes a trend is developing to provide these amenities. We encourage petitioners to include them in their development plans.

Adopted 03/22/04

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