

A meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Moreau was held on January 7, 2014 in the Town of Moreau Municipal Building, 351 Reynolds Road, Moreau, New York, for the purpose of discussing the Sign Law.

The meeting commenced at 7:08 p.m.

**Town Board Members Present**

Robert J. Vittengl, Jr.	Councilman
Todd Kusnierz	Councilman
Gina LeClair	Councilwoman
Bob Prendergast	Councilman
Preston L. Jenkins, Jr.	Supervisor

**Town Board Members Absent**

None

**Also present:** Jeanne Fleury, Town Clerk; Town Residents: Adele Kurtz and Anne Kusnierz; Amanda Metzger, Post Star Reporter

Supervisor Jenkins stated that there was a Sign Law Committee formed a few years ago and recently Councilwoman LeClair met with Joe Patricke, Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Officer, about the Sign Law. He asked Councilwoman LeClair to recap their meeting.

Councilwoman LeClair stated that there weren't a lot of changes that Joe recommended. She said they basically reviewed Sections 117-3 and 117-4 of the sign law. They talked about limiting the size of commercial signs to 30 or 40 square feet. They talked briefly about signs in residential areas and how small signs in the residential area along Route 32 might not be a problem versus a residential area like, Strawberry Acres, where it is strictly residential and there is no traffic in and out of the development except for people who live in the development. They talked about maybe having exceptions for certain residential areas.

Councilman Prendergast said it has been quite a while since this topic has been discussed and he wanted to refresh his memory of how this all came about. Was it business owners or residential property owners who brought this issue to the Board's attention and what was their main concern?

Supervisor Jenkins replied that it was business owners. Most of the complaint was about temporary signs. They didn't think six square foot was big enough for temporary business signs. They talked about maybe increasing the size of temporary signs allowed to 9 or 10 square feet. One of the problems that it creates is that whatever we say will apply to all temporary signs. He said we don't monitor temporary signs very well. He discussed this earlier today with the Town Clerk and maybe a permit should be required for temporary signs at no fee and the permit would spell out the time frame that the signs would be up for and they would have "x" number of days to remove them.

Councilman Prendergast stated that the current sign law spells out a time period for removal and Councilwoman LeClair and Supervisor Jenkins said it was 60 days.

Supervisor Jenkins stated that in an Ag District we limit temporary signs to 16 square feet.

Councilman Kusnierz said the other issue that was brought to the Board, at that time, was from home business operators. Our sign law does not allow, what are called, sandwich signs that are put out at the open of business each day and taken in at the close of business each day. There was also the issue of signage on large parcels. He spoke on a personal level and how with his family's tree farm off Route 32 they have a permit for a sign that reads "Cut Your Own", but if they add signs that designate parking or fresh cut trees with an arrow then they all add up to the total signage for the property and he doesn't think that was the original intent of the law when it was first drafted.

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Supervisor Jenkins said the law reads that a sign for a home occupation can only be 3 square feet and they can't affix signs to the building and there can't be any free-standing signs. So he isn't sure what they are allowed to have for signs. He said Joe mentioned that there are a lot of people along Route 32 running small businesses that want to put a sign out that reads for instance, "day care".

Councilman Kusnierz said that what also precipitated this was that there were residents who wanted more regulation and there were those on the other side who thought our sign law was a way of controlling.

Supervisor Jenkins said that there is a group from NYS DOT who are doing a study along Route 9 in Moreau and one of the things they recommended is that we take a look at our code and limit things like parking in front of businesses and advertising flags. A lot of people in business over the last few years have had a rough time and taking away from them is not good. He referred to the business on Route 9 where the radio station used to be and how they have a 1/2 dozen cars parked in front of their business and they have some signs, but they are doing a good business and are generating sales tax and they are important. We have to consider how small businesses are struggling to survive. If we limit them too much it is not good.

Councilman Kusnierz stated that regulation in residential areas is very sensitive. One of the things he would like to see is a regulation for the Agricultural District. The properties are spread out and you don't have neighborhood issues like in other areas. It is the state's mantra now to promote local grown products that are healthy and fresh and help local economy and maybe we should have a section in the law that addresses signage in that area.

Councilman Vittengl said that might be an area where sandwich type signs would work good or chalkboards.

Councilwoman LeClair said she likes to ride through the countryside and see signs that read "fresh eggs", etc.

Councilman Kusnierz stated that it is so seasonal and short lived things are changing all the time depending on what time of year it is. It is important to let people know what you are selling and sell your product, because in a week things can change and things that were available a week ago are gone.

Councilwoman LeClair stated that one concern Joe Patricke raised was over the signs that are attached by rope and if they aren't well maintained they are lying on the ground and flapping around by the road. Some of the mobile home sales lots had big signs attached to the sides of the mobile homes and those were out compliance with our regulations.

Councilman Prendergast suggested that each Board Member submit to Joe Patricke in writing what changes they would like to see in the sign law and then he can offer the Board his suggestions and then the Town Board can meet again and discuss them.

Councilwoman LeClair said she thought Joe was going to be at this meeting.

All Board Members agreed with Councilman Prendergast's suggestion.

A motion was made by Councilman Vittengl and seconded by Councilwoman LeClair to adjourn the meeting at 7:22 p.m.

Roll call vote resulted as follows:

Councilman Vittengl	Yes
Councilman Prendergast	Yes
Councilwoman LeClair	Yes
Councilman Kusnierz	Yes

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Supervisor Jenkins

Yes

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanne Fleury  
Town Clerk