

Glenda Wiles

From: Larry Keogh [Larry@OasisMontana.com]
Sent: Friday, October 12, 2012 9:14 AM
To: Ravalli County Commissioners
Subject: Sign Ordinance

12 Oct 2012

Dear Commissioners,

We don't need to have huge signs along the highways in Ravalli County. The existing signs are enough of an eyesore and, in my opinion, bigger isn't better.

I am strongly encouraging you to leave well enough alone. If it ain't broke don't fix it. This ain't broke and it don't need fixing right now so please leave it alone. Your decision from a meeting in Sept 2011 is correct.

Leave the ordinance in place for the time being. The planning department can be called on to provide recommendations however to actually change the ordinance I suggest that we would be better served by having the recommendations from the Montana Land Use Law Clinic (2008) reviewed by the citizens and then have the citizens provide a recommendation for change? I just about choked when I saw that a politico indicating that the removal of political signs favored granting 30 days for sign removal instead of the counties more rigorous 10 day requirement. Hello! What fox wouldn't prefer that the hen house be unsecured at night?

As I recall, there have only been two permit requests during the period of 2008~ late 2011. Two requests in the past 3 plus years doesn't seem to be much of a call for reform-in my opinion. I certainly appreciate it when our public servants work on real problems that occur during the course of everyday life. This smacks strongly of seeking out a problem that didn't (doesn't) exist in an effort to show that something is being done, perhaps in an effort to show that the governing body actually functions. WTF! Did one of your neighbors choose this issue to distract you from something that really needs attention? Puhleeze! Suzy Foss-is this your doings? Perhaps it is past Commissioner Matt Kanenwisher's observation that there isn't a means of enforcing the existing ordinance and his impact on the commission includes creation of mountains when the field is actually full of molehills. Don't do it, don't change our exiting ordinance for the sake of change. Let a real problem surface before taking action. Two requests (for new signs) in the past three plus years doesn't indicate a pending problem, in my opinion.

Every area of Montana has its own beauty. The Bitterroot's beauty comes from venues that include unobstructed views of mountains and valley's. It doesn't include the perception that we need to have a billboard placed squarely in the midst of our view.

Leave it alone, it ain't broke, get those grubby little fingers out of the potential pie and leave it alone.

100' setbacks are just fine. We don't need to have encroachment on our lines of sight from the highway. There is a genuine need to have unobstructed view of the creatures that we share the valley with. All manner of creatures make significant impacts on our trucks and cars when struck. We darn sure don't need to have hidey holes for our four legged friends.

Huge signs are going to a little harder to ignore but over time we will ignore them too. I don't know of anyone that uses signs as a marker (when you get to the big ass sign turn right). I have some sincere doubts that we need to have a sign exceeding current sizes smack dab in the middle of our by-ways and hiways.

As I understand it you are seeking input from your constituents. Here is some input from one of them: leave it alone and go find some real work to perform. This ordinance as written in 2000 was based on input from the people and communities within the valley. Where do you as county commissioners get off on deciding that the valley residents didn't know what they were doing when the ordinance was passed? How can you arbitrarily decide to change the desires of the population? I will ask that you abstain from the notion of saving us from ourselves.

Suzy Foss is quoted in the Ravalli Republic as saying that she was seeking more input from all parties in the form of a “citizens committee” that would represent both sides of the issue. When I see that there are 20 emails and comments saying leave it alone and the only voices raised in concern are those of the commissioners, I see a conflict of interest where the commissioners are in essence appointing themselves as saviors from unknown, unseen or unrecognized hazards.

Leave it alone. Listen to the people and leave it alone.

Larry Keogh
262 Cooper Lane
Hamilton MT 59840

Glenda Wiles

From: Steven and Madeline Levine [silmg1@att.net]
Sent: Tuesday, October 09, 2012 3:17 PM
To: Ravalli County Commissioners
Subject: Revising the sign ordinance

To the Commissioners:

Please do not destroy Ravalli County's precious viewscapes by overturning the sign ordinance we have now. Those of us who live here, and folks who come to visit or to scope out the area for a potential second home, value the beauty we have all around us. Businesses are not hurting because their signs aren't gigantic. Businesses will hurt if tourism drops off because you have made our valley less attractive.

Please leave well enough alone. Listen to the people of this county and do not vote to allow gigantic, or even very large, signs on our county's roadsides.

Thank you,

Madeline Levine

Steven Levine

325 Saint Mary Drive
Stevensville

Glenda Wiles

From: Terri Roeper [edensor@accessmtwildblue.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 11, 2012 11:58 AM
To: Ravalli County Commissioners
Subject: sign ordinance

Please **do not allow** the billboards in our beautiful valley to increase in size! I urge you to vote against increasing the size of these signs

thank you,

Rob & Terri Roeper

Victor

Glenda Wiles

From: Laurie Minns [laurieminns@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 11, 2012 12:02 PM
To: Ravalli County Commissioners
Subject: please do not change the sign ordinance

Dear County Commissioners,

Please do not change the sign ordinance in Ravalli County to allow for large signs along county roads. We have enough sign opportunities along 93 and allowing for large signs to crop up along out county roads will only affect the beauty of our valley. These signs can also pose a safety concern as there are no proposed setbacks. Finally, the signs will negatively affect property values of adjoining land and this drop in value will have a negative affect on our economy.

respectfully,
Laurie Minns
Hamilton, MT

Glenda Wiles

From: Colleen Murphy-Southwick [colleen.murphysouthwick@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 11, 2012 12:21 PM
To: Ravalli County Commissioners
Subject: sign ordinance

Dear County Commissioners,

Signs of 672 square feet on the highway and 336 square feet on all other roads are TOO LARGE.

Please leave the sign ordinance as it is or make it smaller. Signs hurt the landscape and our landscape is important to tourism and quality of life. There are now so many other and better media sources for such information.

You will be leaving the county uglier and less attractive for the important industry of tourism - please don't make this the result of your time in office.

--

Colleen Murphy-Southwick
Email: colleen.murphysouthwick@gmail.com
Cell: 406 360-5695

Glenda Wiles

From: Bill and/or Becky Peters [b-bpeters@webband.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 11, 2012 12:44 PM
To: Ravalli County Commissioners
Subject: don't change the sign sizes!

Leave our Sign Ordinance alone please!
-Becky Peters
369-5210

Glenda Wiles

From: Warren Worth [warren@westernmtengineering.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 11, 2012 12:53 PM
To: Ravalli County Commissioners
Subject: Large Signs on the Eastside Highway

Folks,

Please do not allow large signs to be placed along this route. I drive it everyday, and I am always poised for a deer strike. Trees, tall grass, high banks, and deep barrow pits are quite common between Stevensville and Florence. Deer already appear out of nowhere. More obstacles will only serve to delay notice.

Whatever it does for others, it will clearly increase hazards for those of us using the road.

Warren Worth
Western Montana Engineering

Glenda Wiles

From: Jody Mohoff [jodymarie09@hotmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 11, 2012 1:08 PM
To: Ravalli County Commissioners
Subject: No sign ordinance

As a local business owner and strong community supporter, hearing about the new sign ordinance is incredibly disheartening. Living in a low income rural area as it is, its difficult enough to run a successful business. Our signs are everything. They display our passion, intensions and advertise information of what we offer. Clients/customers need to be able to see these signs for them to get the proper message across. We follow city rules as it is. Please dont make it any harder for our local businesses to grow to success. Jody Mohoff
Cranial Sacral Therapy LLC

Glenda Wiles

From: Janine Benyus [janinebenyus@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 11, 2012 1:33 PM
To: Ravalli County Commissioners
Subject: Sign Ordinance
Attachments: Billboards highway.jpg

Dear Commissioners,

I am deeply disturbed to hear that you are changing the ordinance that clearly expresses the desire of the people of this valley to *restrict* off premise signs. Increasing size to 672 sf on Highway 93 (by virtue of excluding Highway 93 from the ordinance), and increasing size to 336 sf on Eastside and other county roads is a shortsighted and irresponsible action.

I moved to this valley 22 years ago to enjoy the views, the agricultural heritage, and the relative absence of billboard and light pollution. I think you are endangering our real estate values as well as our general well-being. Many people move here or visit *because* of our amenities, chief among them being our graceful views, our scenic corridors, and our ability to see the stars at night. Adding these out-sized signs is an affront, and a shameful foot-shooting for the valley. We need to instead aspire to be a designated Scenic Highway. That would do far more for economic development in the valley, attracting tourists, homeowners, and new businesses who would take pride in this designation. By giving our roads the look and feel of industrial, commercial corridors, we lose what is our true wealth--our beauty!

By rewriting existing publically-approved policy, you are engaging in the non-transparent government action. As a republican majority, I would think you would be in favor of MORE democratic freedoms, not a back-room governance.

This new ordinance also reflects a "big government" attitude, using public policy to strip rights that we the majority taxpayers are currently enjoying in order to benefit a minuscule number of residents. A highway corridor of giant billboards (with their attendant visual and light pollution) **does not** benefit the majority of residents. We elected you to consider the whole of your constituencies, not just a few business owners.

Please reconsider this rewrite. I vote for keeping, in its entirety, the off premise sign ordinance we have now.

Thank you for this consideration, Janine



just say no

--

Janine Benyus

Author & Biologist at the Design Table

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Glenda Wiles

From: pxtts@copper.net
Sent: Thursday, October 11, 2012 1:52 PM
To: Ravalli County Commissioners
Subject: SIGNS

Commissioners,

Do not change the sign ordinance. I have not heard any county residents or tourists grumbling about the lack of giant billboards. The natural beauty is the best advertising for our our county. Lets keep it that way.

Tom Potts
Victor

Glenda Wiles

From: Marina Weatherly [cw@bridgemail.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 11, 2012 2:46 PM
To: Ravalli County Commissioners
Subject: Sign Regulations-Clarifications & impacts
Attachments: Clarification-Imacts-Sign Regs..docx

Ravalli County Commissioners: Please find attached my letter to you concerning changing the existing sign regulations. Since my last letter, I have had access to the existing and proposed sign regulations and would like to clarify any confusion there may be regarding what the existing sign ordinance covers, and what the actual impacts would be if it were changed. Thank you for your consideration.

Marina Weatherly
441 Timber Trail, Stevensville MT
777-3546

Glenda Wiles

From: Colleen Wall-hoeben [cwallhoeben@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 11, 2012 2:56 PM
To: Ravalli County Commissioners
Subject: sign ordinance

October 11, 2012

Dear County Commissioners,

Signs of 672 square feet on the highway and 336 square feet on all other roads are TOO LARGE.

Please leave the sign ordinance as it is or smaller. Signs hurt the landscape and our landscape is important to tourism and quality of life. There are now so many other, better media sources for such information.

You will be leaving the county less attractive for the important industry of tourism - please don't make this the result of your time in office.

colleen Hoeben
cwallhoeben@yahoo.com

Glenda Wiles

From: Judith Burhop [jimburhop@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 11, 2012 2:57 PM
To: Ravalli County Commissioners
Subject: leave it alone

Please do not change our current sign ordinance!!! The new ideas for massive billboards sounds absolutely horrible!!! Judith Burhop

Glenda Wiles

From: Marina Weatherly [cw@bridgemail.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 11, 2012 3:13 PM
To: Ravalli County Commissioners
Subject: Existing Sign Ordinance- Hwy 93

Ravalli County Commissioners: To clarify: I double checked, and the the existing sign regs. clearly DO cover Hwy 93 corridor. There is nothing in the document that omits it, not even in section 8.00, Exemptions. We must include Hwy 93 corridor in our new regs, or the the proposed section **8.1.1 Purpose** will contradict itself, as the size will automatically revert to the State max. size of 672'. Thank you, Marina Weatherly

Glenda Wiles

From: Beth Underwood [underhogg@montana.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 11, 2012 3:38 PM
To: Ravalli County Commissioners
Subject: sign ordinance

To: Commissioner of Ravalli County

The scenic beauty of the Bitterroot Valley is not only a calming respite for local residents and commuters but a strong draw for the many visitors that drive through and seek out our valley for their own pleasure and recreation. It is also likely an enticement for new businesses to settle here knowing it is a place where employees will like to live.

I strongly encourage you to put aside all efforts to change our existing **Sign Ordinance** that the citizens of Ravalli County have worked so hard to establish for the enjoyment of all. Losing local control of sign regulations along Hwy 93 S. and other county roads would be a sad turnabout for our beautiful valley. The signs that are in place are good and work well. More and bigger would be distracting, unnecessary, and ugly and likely hurt our local economy and our sense of pride of place.

Sincerely,
Beth Underwood and Jack Hogg
194 McCalla Creek Dr.
Stevensville, MT 59870
406-642-3035

Glenda Wiles

From: ckroubik [ckroubik@juno.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 11, 2012 4:02 PM
To: Ravalli County Commissioners
Subject: Sign Ordinance

October 11, 2012

To the Commissioners:

For the sake of clarity and to avoid the appearance of a hidden agenda or disguised purposes, please explain at the Monday, 10/15/12 meeting why any revision of the Sign Ordinance is being considered at this time (who requested it, why and what further aspects are considered beyond any specified in the original request).

The ordinance as it stands has served the vast majority of the County very well for over a decade. I see no reason to make **any** changes (if it ain't broke then don't fix it).

But if you might be seeking suggestions for changes, then I might suggest these:

- 1) Prohibit **all** off-premises signs in the County except those now listed in Section 8,
- 2) Prohibit election signs earlier than sixty days before an election,
- 3) Increase the outdated penalty for infractions to an appropriate amount.

Please keep in mind the positive effect of the tourist dollar on income to many, many businesses in the County, and how quickly this might diminish as scenery is impaired by obnoxious signs benefiting only a very few. When there are conflicting views within the County, your moral obligation (presuming legality and other things being equal) is to meet the wishes of the majority.

Chuck Roubik
1003 S. Third Street
Hamilton 59840

Glenda Wiles

From: Robert Schumaker [bobcat@montana.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 11, 2012 12:59 PM
To: Ravalli County Commissioners
Subject: Sign Ordinance

I am totally against the proposed sign ordinance changes. I don't like billboards at all, and certainly don't want to see them increase in size. In fact, I haven't talked to even one person who supports the changes. Please listen to the people of Ravalli County and do not allow this to happen.

Sincerely,

Barbara Schumaker

Glenda Wiles

From: Rcfurlong1 [rcfurlong1@aol.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 11, 2012 4:14 PM
To: Ravalli County Commissioners
Subject: Sign/Billboard Ordinance

I'm writing regarding the upcoming meeting on the billboard ordinance. I'll keep it short.

Please do not allow any increase in the size of even number of billboards in Ravalli County. I live in Missoula but own a business with an office in Hamilton. Billboards are a blight on the landscape, less and smaller would be much better than more and larger.

The argument over harm to businesses is not valid; I grew up in Hawaii which allows NO billboards of any type, and has banned them for decades. Despite this, Hawaii has a very robust economy full of small businesses that thrive even without large, intrusive and downright ugly signage. One of the things that attracts people to both Hawaii and Montana is the natural beauty, which is marred by large billboards. Hawaii has been wise enough to protect their viewshed, which promotes travel as well as attracting business to the island. Ravalli County should follow that example and leverage the natural beauty into more tourism and business. If an outright ban on all billboards (my preference) is not possible, please do not allow them to increase in size or number.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Roger Furlong
Missoula MT

Glenda Wiles

From: Elena Weatherly [elena.weatherly@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 11, 2012 4:23 PM
To: Ravalli County Commissioners
Subject: Sign Ordinance for Highway 93

To Serving Commissioners,

I am writing because I strongly oppose the proposed decision to be made on Monday, October 15th to change the permit of installing mega- billboards along the Highway 93 corridor in our beautiful Bitterroot Valley.

Travelers along Highway 93 have both been able to enjoy the Bitterroot view shed and read the existing billboards perfectly fine. Advertising is necessary to our economy and the current size is perfectly visible without destroying the natural beauty of our valley. Tourists and recreationists who contribute to our local economy will no longer be attracted to the natural beauty of the Bitterroot Valley if it is defiled by large scale commercialism and will hesitate to make this area a destination. This unique valley will become like anywhere USA.

We need to protect and respect the unique natural beauty of the valley, not destroy it. To do so would have long term negative impact on our local economy and contribute to unnecessary visual pollution. The existing sizes are fine as is. We can see them, read them and we can also enjoy the view as we drive.

If you care about preserving the scenic beauty of the Bitterroot Valley, or the affects it would have on our tourism and the overall feel of our valley, please do not let this ordinance be passed.

Thank you so much for your time and consideration,

Elena Weatherly

Glenda Wiles

From: Dorinda [dorinda@imt.net]
Sent: Thursday, October 11, 2012 8:06 PM
To: Ravalli County Commissioners
Subject: proposed change of existing sign ordinance

Dear Commissioners:

Please do not change the existing sign ordinance. A consensus of valley residents arrived at a livable ordinance before your time. I would personally prefer the signage to be even less intrusive to us view-loving residents than it is. Driving into Hamilton is not pretty. It is getting to look more like Lolo and south Missoula all the time.

I drive a short distance to work each morning, and the first thing I look for are the Bitterroot Mountains. They nurture me, they begin my day -- whether they are pristine against a bright blue sky, fog-covered, snow-sprinkled, or even smoky. I drive along the river frequently, and am very interested in seeing the water level, the color of the cottonwoods and the occasional fisherperson. Having more and/or larger signs would be a misguided blight on this lovely place we live in.

Sincerely,

Dorinda Troutman
PO Box 174
Hamilton MT 59840
406-363-1806

Glenda Wiles

From: klmckillip@centurylink.net
Sent: Thursday, October 11, 2012 8:12 PM
To: Ravalli County Commissioners
Subject: Ravalli County Sign Ordinance

Commissioners:

I urge you NOT to change the sign ordinance currently in place for Ravalli County. The current size limits are reasonable. A change to allow a 336 sq ft sign is a blight on our landscape. Please do not add further clutter to our roadsides.

Very Truly Yours,
Kerry McKillip
Darby

Glenda Wiles

From: W. Clem Small [clemsmall@hotmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 11, 2012 8:56 PM
To: Ravalli County Commissioners
Subject: NEW SIGN RULING

Dear Commissioners,

Please don't degrade the beauty we all love with the suggested larger signs. We all love Montana, - you, me, everyone - and signs are not beautiful, even the best designed, and best intended. It saddens me greatly to think of such signs as are proposed.

Clem Small
Corvallis, Montana

Glenda Wiles

From: Alene Tunny [alene_tunny@hotmail.com]
Sent: Friday, October 12, 2012 1:19 AM
To: Ravalli County Commissioners
Subject: Signs

Consider our beautiful Bitterroot Valley and don't cave to the commercialism of a few!!!!
Leave our sign ordinance alone. Many of us are opposed to this new plan.

Alene Tunny

Sent from my iPad

Glenda Wiles

From: RON NECITA Owner [kog@centurylink.net]
Sent: Friday, October 12, 2012 7:04 AM
To: Ravalli County Commissioners
Subject: Proposed Changes to Sign Ordinance

Current signage requirements are adequate for advertising purposes. Please do not adopt the proposed super-size changes to the sign ordinance.

Ron Necita-Darby

Glenda Wiles

From: Jenifer Callahan [jcallahan44@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, October 12, 2012 8:37 AM
To: Ravalli County Commissioners
Subject: NO change to the sign ordinance

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to encourage you NOT to change the sign ordinance. Please do NOT allow bigger signs nor more frequent signage along our roadways.

We have a beautiful valley, allowing large billboard type signs will not help our home in any way. Preserve the beauty that draws the tourists (and their dollars here) by maintaining and preserving our beautiful views not cluttered with signs. No change to ordinance.

Thank you,

Jenifer Callahan
536 Blodgett Camp Rd
Hamilton, MT

Glenda Wiles

From: Larry Keogh [Larry@OasisMontana.com]
Sent: Friday, October 12, 2012 9:14 AM
To: Ravalli County Commissioners
Subject: Sign Ordinance

12 Oct 2012

Dear Commissioners,

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Suzy Foss is quoted in the Ravalli Republic as saying that she was seeking more input from all parties in the form of a "citizens committee" that would represent both sides of the issue. When I see that there are 20 emails and comments saying leave it alone and the only voices raised in concern are those of the commissioners, I see a conflict of interest where the commissioners are in essence appointing themselves as saviors from unknown, unseen or unrecognized hazards.

Leave it alone. Listen to the people and leave it alone.

Larry Keogh
262 Cooper Lane
Hamilton MT 59840

Glenda Wiles

From: bradlar401@gmail.com
Sent: Friday, October 12, 2012 9:45 AM
To: Ravalli County Commissioners
Subject: billboards

The natural landscape of the Bitterroot valley is well known for its scenic landscape and much of our economy depends on it for tourist dollars. One thing I often hear when people first visit is what a wonderful place we live in and how ironic it is that Highway 93 is such a terribly ugly road. The existing billboards along the side of 93 are already the main cause for such a contrast to the beautiful natural views that we have. Let's not make it worse with even uglier and larger sign's.

Brad Stevens
675 Blodgett Camp Rd
Hamilton, MT.
59840

Glenda Wiles

From: Alexander Shaffer [alexshaffer@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, October 12, 2012 10:12 AM
To: Ravalli County Commissioners
Subject: AGAINST changing Ravalli County sign ordinance

Ravalli County commissioners,

I am strongly opposed to changing (weakening) the current sign ordinance to allow larger signs on the highway or on any other county roads. Tourism is one of the most important parts of our economy and could be a growth industry. If we do not protect the beauty of our area and allow the trashing of our vistas by a proliferation of signage, fewer people will want to vacation in the Bitterroot Valley.

I urge you to actually move in the other direction and enact legislation to encourage the removal of large billboards which already pollute the views along the highway.

Sincerely,
Alex Shaffer

.....
801 South 3rd Street
Hamilton MT 59840
.....

Glenda Wiles

From: Stevensville Main Street Association [stevimainst@cybernet1.com]
Sent: Friday, October 12, 2012 10:27 AM
To: Ravalli County Commissioners
Subject: Sign regulations - Stevensville Main Street Association

Tuesday, October 12, 2012

To: Commissioner, Greg Chilcott
Commissioner, J. R. Iman
Commissioner, Jeff Burrows
Commissioner, Suzy Foss
Commissioner, Jeff Burrows

This letter is to advise the objections the Board of Directors of the Stevensville Main Street Association and its Design Committee have against the proposed changing of existing billboard regulations in Ravalli County.

The existing billboard regulations came about by many hours of volunteer time researching, recording and analyzing verbiage that made the existing regulations compatible to the tourist, business owner and property owner. We respect the time and efforts of these volunteers and see no reason that would hold merit to change them.

It is our understanding that the proposed changes will allow billboards along Hwy 93 to increase in size by 2000%, side roads 1000%. This change would not enhance the 93 roadway system. Furthermore, it would not support the Montana Brand Platform. That platform references:

- More spectacular unspoiled nature than anywhere else in the lower 48. This is what distinguishes Montana from our competitors.
- Vibrant and charming small towns that serve as gateways to our natural wonders. This pillar mitigates the perception of Montana being remote without denying it.
- Breathtaking experiences by day and relaxing hospitality by night. This pillar leverages Montana's strengths (nature and scenery) with qualities our audience desires (comfort and exhilaration).

We want to be the place that meets the tourist/visitor desires of unchanged, unspoiled nature, spectacular in their views and we have all of the pillars of the Montana Brand right here in the Bitterroot Valley and we need to respect that. Oversized signage does not direct or inform any better than a more conservative approach that respects the environment it is in and the intelligence of the visitor to be able to get the message without being assaulted by it.

Please give thought to the Montana Brand before you make changes that will go against it and destroy the very assets we have.

We appreciate your consideration of our request and hope that you will give support to our request to not change the existing billboard regulations. in Ravalli County.

Sincerely,
Joan Prather, Director
Board of Directors
Design Committee
Stevensville Main Street Association

Check out the Website: mainstreetstevensville.com



Stevensville's Community Development,
Business Advocacy & Information Center