

Angelo Poulich – Testimony – May 27, 2021 – WC & WP subcommittee

Good morning everyone. I am the owner of the Bruster's Ice Cream in New Stanton Pennsylvania and I would like to provide some insight to the non transparency of our boroughs code as a small business owner.

I recently remodeled my entire location without one square inch of New construction. My last task of the remodel was to replace my sign which was an Electric message board to the latest technology known as an Electronic (digital) variable message board.

The sign was built to spec on the same footer, with the same electric, less bright, the same sight distances and in the exact same location of the property. The sign is also all LED and very energy efficient.

Our zoning officer called and emailed on October 27 of 2020 and saw that we were replacing our sign and informed me that it would be 500 dollars to have a public hearing about my sign plus whatever the ad would cost to post it in our local tribune review. Then if the sign was approved by the planning committee and for Conditional Use by council I could then go and buy the permit which is a percentage of the total value of the sign.

My question to our officer was please show me where in the code is there any language or reference to
1. updating, replacing, maintenancing or altering of a sign?

And the most important

2. Where is the structured fee chart?

He could not give me an answer but just kept insisting that this was proper protocol and I needed to apply. The fees were not in the code or on the permit application.

I was never by no means opposed to paying for a permit but as a small business owner I don't have capital for lawyers to handle my business. So I decided to read neighboring boroughs and townships codes to look for structured fee charts and I found them. I just applied and planned to represent myself.

Our code was written in 2007. Since then technology and terminologies have changed many times over. By not updating these ambiguities in the codes and the non transparent fees leaves the borough open to suspicious activity, hardship, and lawsuits.

And For the business owner it creates hardship, construction and or business delays, and possibly loss of income.

I'm not here today to be confrontational or ask for special treatment but rather to thank you for listening! I'm 7 months, \$714.00 into this project and I still haven't received a price on the permit. So where does it end? You don't come to get ice cream with no pricing on the menu! Or order a vanilla cone and get a vanilla milkshake! All I'm asking is to be able to open the code, see what I need and how much it will cost without any disruptions to my business. Then I can make a decision if it fits into my budget and what direction I want to go.