
From: Scott Hayes
Sent: Monday, June 21, 2021 7:44 PM
To: citycouncil@hermosabeach.gov
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Subject: ORDINANCE TO REGULATE OUTDOOR LIGHTING

Please include this in the written communication section for the Council meeting on 6-22-21.

I am concerned that the proposed ordinance to regulate outdoor lighting (Chapter 8.72) is overly broad. There were a few egregious instances where Strand homeowners were lighting up the beach but rather than address those specific issues, the ordinance was written in such a way that almost any exterior light could be in violation.

1. 8.72.010.A – *Excessive light and glare shall be limited by the use of appropriate light fixtures and lighting methods which avoid unwanted illumination of adjacent property. Illumination is considered excessive if it prevents normal perception of objects beyond or in the vicinity of the light.*

The term “normal” is too subjective. If an ordinance is enacted, the ordinance should put a numerical limit on the measurable light emitted.

2. 8.72.010.B.1 – *Light fixtures shall be equipped with prismatic diffusing lenses or other suitable shielding to ensure that the light source (or light bulb) is not directly visible from the public right-of-way or from any abutting property.*

There are hundreds, if not thousands, of homes in Hermosa Beach that currently have exterior light fixtures where the light source/bulb is visible. In nearly all cases, these are not bothering anyone. Is the intent of this ordinance that homeowners

and business owners replace their light fixtures with new fixtures with prismatic lenses? Also, according to the ordinance, any light fixture where the light source is visible will be in violation no matter how bright the light emitting from the fixture. A 10 watt bulb would be in violation of the ordinance as written.

3. 8.72.010.B.2 – *Light fixtures shall be high-efficiency, fully shielded, down cast (emitting no light above the horizontal plane of the fixture), and installed so as ensure light does not spill beyond the property line of the property on which the light source is located.*

The previous item states that the light fixtures are to be equipped with prismatic lenses. This item states that they shall be fully shielded. These items seem to be in conflict.

4. 8.72.010.C - *Except for lighting operated by the City or permitted by another provision of this Code, mercury vapor lights, search lights, laser lights, or any light fixture with a high intensity discharge lamp or bulb, including flood lights and spot lights, shall not be used on commercial or residential structures in a manner that illuminates the Strand or the beach.*

Why are we protecting the beach from high intensity lights but nowhere else in the city? Sections 8.72.010.B.2 requires homeowners to “ensure light does not spill beyond the property line of the property on which the light source is located.” It would seem that 8.72.010.C is not necessary as it is a subset of 8.72.010.B.2. Right or wrong, this section comes across as Strand owners getting special treatment.

5. 8.72.020 – There is no exemption for lighting that was previously installed. The ordinance somehow needs to address the thousands of existing light fixtures that do not comply with this new regulation but are not bothering anyone.
6. 8.72.020.B – If this ordinance is passed it should cover city buildings as well as commercial and residential. Light pollution from a city building is no less bothersome to neighbors than light pollution coming from a commercial or residential building.
7. How many complaints has the City had regarding outdoor lighting? Is it just the few houses on the Strand that are bringing up this issue?
8. The staff report does not discuss how other cities in the area are addressing this issue. We should have an understand of what our neighbors are doing and if their attempts to deal with this issue have been successful.

I don't necessarily object to having some type of regulation of outdoor lighting but this ordinance feels like we are trying to kill a fly with a sledgehammer. The ordinance needs to be more specific and address the actual problems that we are encountering. As another commenter noted, this issue should go before the Planning Commission for further discussion before coming back to council for final evaluation.

Thank you.
Scott Hayes