

Councillor Question Time

Question from Cr Pearl

Councillor Pearl stated that he had been contacted by a number of residents who have placed signs on their properties in relation to Councils budget position. Local Laws Officers have visited their properties to inform them that were liable for a \$800 fine if they did not remove the signs immediately as they did not have a planning permit under the heritage provisions of our planning regulations. Residents were unable to get confirmation from the local laws officer under which section of the act the offence would be charged. The signs are approximately 60cmx40cm and are of an educational nature. My reading of the Planning Scheme paragraph 52.5-10 indicates that the sign does not require a permit. Can officers please inform Council of the exact details of what permit is required for these signs to be temporarily installed at properties across the City under any one of the Councils planning schemes?

Response

Clause 52.5-10 of the Port Phillip Planning Scheme outlines a variety of signs that do not require a planning permit to construct or put up for display. A temporary sign benefits from this exemption, when the sign publicises a local political, cultural or educational event not held for commercial purposes. If a sign does not clearly identify that it relates to a particular political, cultural or educational event it would not fall within the planning scheme exemption. The relevant clause from the planning scheme, provides that, despite any provision in a zone, overlay, or other particular provision of the scheme, a planning permit is not required to construct or put up for display the following signs:

- A sign with a display area not exceeding 5 square metres publicising a local educational, cultural, political, religious, social or recreational event not held for commercial purposes. Only one sign may be displayed on the land, it must not be an animated or internally illuminated sign and it must not be displayed longer than 14 days after the event is held or 3 months, whichever is sooner. A sign publicising a local political event may include information about a candidate for an election.

This exemption is based on a particular identifiable event taking place as this is the basis upon which the durations are calculated. It is noted that "local educational event", "local cultural event" and "local political event" are not defined in the Planning Scheme, thereby making the exemption above unclear and potentially confusing. To limit any confusion, Council, in particular the Statutory Planning Unit, would always encourage members of the community to discuss their intentions prior to the construction or display of any signage on their property.

**Please note: answers to any questions in Public Question Time which were answered at the meeting are included in the minutes of that meeting.*