

**AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND AND REENACT CHAPTER 106 OF THE SHREVEPORT CODE OF ORDINANCES RELATIVE TO OUTDOOR BOOK EXCHANGE BOXES, AND OTHERWISE PROVIDING WITH RESPECT THERETO.**

**BY: Councilman Jeff Everson**

**BE IT ORDAINED** by the City Council of the City of Shreveport, in due, legal and regular session convened, Chapter 106 of the Shreveport Code of Ordinances is hereby amended as follows:

**ARTICLE IX. - SUPPLEMENTARY REGULATIONS**

**Sec. 106-1131. – Outdoor Book Exchange Box**

An outdoor book exchange box is an accessory structure maintained by a property owner on private property where books, recorded performing arts and media are kept for public and/or exchanges with no fees or sales and are publicly accessible. An outdoor book exchange box shall be governed by the provisions of this section and are not subject to the provisions of 106-1177 of the Shreveport Code of Ordinances.

1. **General Requirements:** All book exchange boxes shall be subject to the following:
  - a. No Book exchange box shall be located as to impede pedestrian access or circulation, obstruct parking areas, or create an unsafe condition.
  - b. Boxes shall not be constructed in a manner that obstructs visibility of intersections as defined in Sec. 106-1142 of the Shreveport Code of Ordinances.
  - c. Boxes shall not be allowed in the public right of way.
  - d. Each box shall be designed and constructed in such a manner that its contents are protected from the elements. All media shall be fully contained within a weatherproof enclosure that is integral with the structure that comprises the book exchange box.
  - e. All book exchange boxes shall be subject to registration with the Zoning Administrator. Such registration shall require a plot plan that indicates the size and location of the proposed box. Once the box is installed a site inspection will be required to verify compliance with this section. A \$50.00 registration fee will be required for processing.
  - f. Boxes are limited to a maximum height of six feet and six inches (78 inches to the highest point on the structure), and a maximum width and depth of three feet.
2. **Outdoor Book Exchange Box in Single and Two Family Residential Districts.** All book exchange boxes located in Single Family and Two Family Residential Zoning Districts (R-1A, R-1B, R-1C, R-1D, R-1H and R-2) and shall be subject to the following requirements:
  - a. Book exchange boxes shall only be allowed to front on streets classified as a residential streets (residential collector, principal or minor streets) or residential private streets as defined in Chapter 82 of the Shreveport Code of Ordinances. Boxes shall be allowed on corner lots where the box faces a residential street and the adjacent street is classified as a non-residential street provided that the access to the structure is oriented to the residential street.
  - b. Boxes are permitted only in the front yard or side corner yard and shall be located a minimum of five feet from any property line.
  - c. Temporary foundations comprised of concrete or masonry pavers or other similar movable materials shall be utilized for all Book Exchange Boxes. Single metal or wooden posts set in concrete for pedestal mounted boxes or to provide additional stability to ground mounted boxes are allowed. Permanent concrete slab foundations are prohibited.

3. **Outdoor Book Exchange Box in Commercial and Multifamily Residential Districts.** All outdoor book exchange boxes in the Commercial and Multifamily Residential Zoning Districts (B-1, B-2, B-3, B-4 and R-3 and R-4) and shall be subject to the following requirements:
- a. Book Exchange Boxes are allowed only for:
    - i. Single occupant commercial buildings with more than 2500 square feet of gross floor area.
    - ii. Individual tenants in a multi-tenant commercial building that have at least 30 lineal feet of store front.
    - iii. Office, Maintenance or Clubhouse Buildings associated with an apartment complex.
    - iv. High-rise apartment buildings.
  - b. No more than one book exchange box shall be located per building façade.
  - c. Book exchange boxes shall be flush against the façade of the principal structure, and shall not project into required building setbacks.
  - d. Book exchange boxes shall be placed on impervious surface such as concrete or asphalt.

**BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED** that the remainder of Chapter 106 of the Shreveport Code of Ordinance, shall remain unchanged and in full force and effect.

**BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED** that any provision or item of this ordinance application thereof is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions, items or applications of the ordinance with can be given effect without the invalid provisions, items or applications; and to this end, the provisions of this ordinance are hereby declared severable.

**BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED** that all ordinances or parts thereof in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

**APPROVED AS TO LEGAL FORM:**

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City Attorney's Office

METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION  
STAFF REPORT- September 2, 2015

Agenda Item No.19

**CASE NO: C-37-15: ORDINANCE TEXT AMENDMENT - Remanded**

**Applicant: METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION**

**Request: Amend Shreveport Code of Ordinances relative to Outdoor Book Exchange Boxes**

**GENERAL INFORMATION:**

In recent years book exchange boxes, commonly known as "Little Free Libraries", have grown in popularity in the United States and throughout the world. As with many new concepts and trends, the majority of municipal regulations and ordinances frequently do not recognize these contemporary uses. Since this type of operation has become prevalent in several Shreveport neighborhoods, it seems prudent to amend the ordinance in order to properly regulate the use in order to protect general welfare of the citizens and to allow this desired amenity to be utilized by the public.

This proposed amendment (refer to the attached documents) will update the existing zoning ordinance in order to regulate book exchange boxes. The ordinance provides a regulatory framework to allow the use in certain zoning districts within the City limits of Shreveport.

The proposed ordinance was recommended for approval by the MPC on April 1, 2015 and forwarded to the City Council for adoption. After some deferment, the ordinance was eventually remanded back to the MPC for reconsideration after receipt of expressed concerns from citizens. In recent weeks MPC staff has received recommendations and comments that were suggested by citizens and now offer a revised ordinance for consideration by the MPC.

**ORDINANCE CONSIDERATIONS:**

The revised proposed ordinance attempts to address several challenges in the regulation of this use and to address concerns expressed by citizenry regarding the first draft of the ordinance. The amendment objective is to define the appropriate zoning districts where the use should be allowed, identify the physical characteristics of the use appropriate to the districts where the use will be allowed, permit the use as an accessory structure within the required front yard, and define other issues where the proposed use might conflict with the public interest.

In addressing the above referenced challenges, staff recommends that the following be incorporated in to the proposed ordinance. The items that are in bold type reflect changes from what was originally proposed.

- **The title has been changed to reflect "Outdoor Book Exchange Boxes". The intent is not to regulate the use of book exchange boxes that are located indoors.**
- **The use will be allowed in commercial and residential districts with distinct regulations that govern both types of use (previously recommended to be limited to One Family Residential Districts).**
- **Book exchange boxes would be allowed at Multi-Family Developments provided that they are located at the Office, Club House or High Rise Apartment facility and not individual apartment units.**
- **In commercial zoning districts only one book exchange box would be allowed per building façade and would be required to be located against the building façade, but not project into the required building setback in the district where it is located.**
- **The use should be allowed as an accessory structure within the required front yard setback (at single family lots in residential districts only).**
- **The use should be limited to residential street classifications only (applies only to residential districts where the boxes are allowed in the front yard setback).**
- **Structures should not be allowed in the public right-of-way or obstruct visibility at street intersections.**
- **The structure should be non-permanent in construction and limited in size to avoid impairing the sight distance in the front yard setback (an additional 6 inches was added to the maximum height to allow for some architectural embellishment).**
- **Temporary foundations comprised of concrete or masonry pavers or other similar movable materials shall be utilized for all Book Exchange Boxes. Single metal or wooden posts set in concrete for pedestal mounted boxes or to provide additional stability to ground mounted boxes are allowed (similar to mailbox installation). Permanent concrete slab foundations are prohibited.**
- **All book exchange boxes would require registration with the Zoning Administrator along with a nominal fee of \$50.00. (Previously it was recommended that a building permit be required).**

**STAFF RECOMENDATION:**

Staff recommends that the MPC Board forward this proposed ordinance amendment to the Shreveport City Council with a recommendation of approval.

**BOARD'S DECISION**

The Board voted 9-0 to recommend that the City Council approve this amendment as submitted.

The information stated herein is the result of discussion by a staff review team. The Board members will use all information made available to them in making their decision. The decision in the case of an ordinance text amendment is a recommendation only. Final ordinance decisions will be made by the governing body (either by City Council or Parish Commission).