

CHAPTER 15

SIGNS

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15.01 PURPOSE. The intent of this chapter is to provide for and regulate the location and construction of signs and to ensure that signs are compatible with surrounding land uses and express the identity of individual proprietor and the community as a whole.

15.02 SIGN TYPES. For the purpose of this chapter, signs shall be classified as follows:

- (1) **AWNING SIGN.** A non-illuminated identification sign affixed flat to the surface of an awning and not extending vertically or horizontally beyond the limits of such awning.
- (2) **BULLETIN BOARD.** Any sign which is characterized by changeable copy, letters or symbols regardless of the method of attachment.
- (3) **CANOPY SIGN.** A sign suspended from or forming part of a canopy or marquee and which does not extend horizontally beyond the limits of such canopy or marquee.
- (4) **GROUND SIGN.** A sign attached to the ground independent of any buildings.
- (5) **PROJECTING SIGN.** A sign other than a wall sign, attached to or supported by a building or structure and projecting more than 12 inches from the face of the building or structure.
- (6) **ROOF SIGN.** A sign erected on or over the roof of a building.
- (7) **WALL SIGN.** A sign which is attached to a wall of a building, projects not more than 12 inches from such wall, and does not extend above the ceiling line of the top floor of the building.
- (8) **WINDOW SIGN.** A sign painted on or affixed to a window.

15.03 SIGN PERMIT REQUIRED. All signs to be located, erected, moved, reconstructed, extended, enlarged, converted, or structurally altered shall conform to the requirements of this chapter. All such sign work, except for those signs specifically exempted by sec. 15.05 below shall require a permit.

15.04 APPLICATIONS FOR SIGN PERMITS. (1) Applications for sign permits shall be made on forms provided by the Clerk-Treasurer and shall contain or have attached the following information:

- (a) Name, address, and telephone number of the applicant.
- (b) Location of the building, structure, or lot to which or upon which the sign is to be attached or erected.
- (c) Name of the person erecting the sign.
- (d) Written consent of the owner or lessee of the building, structure, or land to which or upon which the sign is to be affixed.
- (e) A scale drawing of the sign indicating the dimensions, the materials to be used, the type of illumination, if any, and the method of construction and attachment.

(f) A scale drawing indicating the location and position of the sign in relation to nearby buildings or structures.

(g) A liability insurance policy, issued by an insurance company authorized to do business in the State.

(h) Additional information as may be required by the Building Inspector or the Plan Commission.

(2) Sign permit applications shall be filed with the Building Inspector. He shall review the application for its completeness and accuracy and shall, in writing, approve or deny the application within 30 days of receipt, unless the time is extended by written agreement with the applicant. A sign permit shall become null and void if work authorized under the permit has not been completed within 6 months of the date of issuance.

15.05 EXEMPT SIGNS. The following signs are permitted in all zoning districts without a permit, but subject to the following regulations:

(1) Real estate ground or wall signs not exceeding 8 square feet in area which advertise the sale, rental, or lease of the premises upon which the signs are temporarily located. Such signs may be placed at the right-of-way line.

(2) Ground signs identifying the name and address of the resident, not exceeding 2 square feet in area, and located on the premises. Such signs may be placed at the right-of-way line.

(3) Home occupation and professional home office signs not exceeding 9 square feet in area on any one side; not placed so as to obstruct traffic visibility; and not illuminated after 10:00 p.m. or before 8:00 a.m.

(4) Bulletin boards on ground or wall signs not exceeding 36 square feet in area, located on the premises, and used by public charitable or religious institutions. Such signs shall meet all the setback requirement of the district in which they are located.

(5) Memorial signs, tablets, names of buildings, and date of erection when cut into any masonry surface or when constructed of metal or wood and affixed flat against a structure.

(6) Official ground signs, such as traffic control, parking restrictions, information, and notices. Such signs may be placed at the curb line or up to the pavement edge.

(7) Election campaign signs provided permission has been obtained from the property owner, renter, or lessee and the following provisions are met:

(a) No sign shall be erected more than 45 days prior to the election.

(b) All signs are removed within 7 days after the election.

(c) Only one sign per lot shall be erected in any residential district and it shall not exceed 20 square feet in area.

(d) No more than 2 signs per lot or parcel shall be permitted in any business, agricultural, or industrial district. The combined area of these signs shall not exceed 100 square feet.

15.06 SIGNS IN AGRICULTURAL DISTRICTS. In all agricultural districts, wall or ground signs, which pertain to the agricultural products produced on the premises, are permitted provided that the combined area of all such signs for any one farm shall not exceed thirty (30) square feet.

15.07 SIGNS IN RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS. In all residential districts, for a legal nonconforming business, a wall sign not exceeding 2 feet in height and 10 feet in length which announces without display or elaboration, the name and occupation of the proprietor of the legal nonconforming business. Such sign shall be placed only over a show window or door.

15.08 SIGNS IN RESTRICTED BUSINESS DISTRICTS. In all R-B Restricted Business Districts the following signs are permitted:

(1) Temporary signs when permitted by the Plan Commission. The Commission shall, in each case, determine the structural type of sign permitted, the maximum size permitted, and the time period the sign may remain in place.

(2) Wall signs placed against the exterior walls of buildings and, for any one premise, not exceeding 300 square feet in area or 30% of the signable wall area of the building, whichever is smaller.

(3) Ground signs shall not exceed 20 feet in height above the mean center line street grade, shall meet all setback requirements, and shall not exceed 50 square feet in area on one side or 100 square feet on all sides for any one premises.

(4) The total area of all signs erected or placed on any one premises shall not exceed 40% of the signable area of a building or 400 square feet, whichever is smaller.

15.09 SIGNS IN NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS DISTRICTS. In all B-I Neighborhood Business Districts, the following signs are permitted:

(1) Temporary signs when permitted by the Plan Commission. The Commission shall, in each case, determine the structural type of sign permitted, the maximum size permitted and the time period the sign may remain in place.

(2) Wall signs placed against the exterior walls of buildings and, for any one premises, not exceeding 300 square feet in area or 30% of the signable area of the building, whichever is smaller.

(3) Awning and canopy signs not exceeding 100 square feet in area for any one premises. They shall not extend more than 6 feet into any required yard, shall not extend into any public right-of-way, shall be at least 10 feet from all side lot lines, shall not exceed a height of 20 feet above the mean center line street grade, and shall be at least 7 feet above a sidewalk or 15 feet above a driveway or an alley.

(4) Ground signs not exceeding 40 feet in height above the mean center line street grade. They shall meet all yard requirements for the district in which they are located, and shall

not exceed 70 square feet on one side or 120 square feet on all sides for any one premises. No ground sign shall be placed closer than 80 feet to any other ground sign.

(5) Window signs not exceeding 25% of the glass area of the pane upon which the sign is displayed. To eliminate scattering of copy by wind action, all window signs are to be affixed to the inside surface of the window.

(6) Excepting window signs, the total area of all signs erected or placed on any one premises shall not exceed 60% of the signable area of a building, whichever is smaller.

15.10 SIGNS IN CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT. The following signs are permitted in the B-2 Central Business District:

(1) Temporary signs when permitted by the Plan Commission. The Commission shall, in each case, determine the structural type of sign permitted, the maximum size permitted, and the time period the sign may remain in place.

(2) Wall signs placed against the exterior walls of buildings and for any one premises, not exceeding 300 square feet in area or 30% of the signable area of the building, whichever is smaller.

(3) Projecting signs not exceeding 50 square feet in area for any one premises. They shall not extend more than 6 feet into any required yard, shall not extend more than 4 feet into any public right-of-way, shall be at least 10 feet from all side lot lines, shall not exceed a height of 20 feet above the mean center line street grade, and shall be at least 10 feet above a sidewalk or 15 feet above a driveway or an alley.

(4) Awning and canopy signs not exceeding 100 square feet in area for any one premises. They shall not extend more than 6 feet into any required yard, shall not extend more than 3 feet into any public right-of-way, shall be at least 3 feet from all side lot lines, shall not exceed a height of 20 feet above the mean center line street grade, and shall be at least 7 feet above a sidewalk or 15 feet above a driveway or alley.

(5) Window signs not exceeding 25% of the glass area of the pane upon which the sign is displayed. To eliminate scattering of copy by wind action, all window signs shall be affixed to the inside surface of the window.

(6) Excepting window signs, the total area of all signs erected or placed on any one premises shall not exceed 60% of the signable area of a building or 400 square feet, whichever is smaller.

15.11 SIGNS IN HIGHWAY BUSINESS DISTRICTS. In all B-3 Highway Business Districts the following signs are permitted:

(1) Temporary signs when permitted by the Plan Commission. The Commission shall, in each case, determine the structural type of sign permitted, the maximum size permitted, and the time period the sign may remain in place.

(2) Wall signs placed against the exterior walls of buildings and for any one premises, not exceeding 300 square feet in area or 30% of the signable area of the building, whichever is smaller.

(3) Projecting signs not exceeding 100 square feet in area for any one premise. They shall not extend more than 6 feet into any required yard, shall not extend into any public right-of-way, shall be at least 10 feet from all side lot lines, shall not exceed a height of 20 feet above the mean center line street grade, and shall be at least ten (10) feet above a sidewalk or fifteen (15) feet above a driveway or an alley.

(4) Awning and canopy signs not exceeding 100 square feet in area for any one premise. They shall not extend more than 6 feet into any required yard, shall not extend more than 3 feet into any public right-of-way, shall be at least 2 feet from all side lot lines, shall not exceed a height of 20 feet above the mean center line street grade, and shall be at least 7 feet above a sidewalk or 15 feet above a driveway or alley.

(5) Ground signs not exceeding 40 feet in height above the mean center line street grade. They shall meet all yard requirements for the district in which they are located and shall not exceed 80 square feet on one side or 160 square feet on all sides for any one premises. No ground sign shall be placed closer than 80 feet to another ground sign.

(6) Roof signs not exceeding 10 feet in height above the roof. They shall meet the height requirements for the district in which they are located, and shall not exceed 300 square feet on all sides for any one premises.

(7) The total area of all signs erected or placed on any one premises shall not exceed 60% of the signable area of the building or 500 square feet, whichever is smaller.

15.12 SIGNS IN INDUSTRIAL DISTRICTS. In all Industrial Districts (I-1 and I-2), signs which are auxiliary to the use of the property are permitted after review by the Town Board.

15.13 SIGNS IN CONSERVANCY AND PUBLIC AND SEMI-PUBLIC DISTRICTS. All signs are prohibited in Conservancy (C-1) and Public and Semi-Public (P-1) Districts except those specifically exempted under sec. 15.05 of this chapter.

15.14 SIGNABLE AREA. The signable area of a building is a rectangular or square area of the facade, up to the roof line, which is free of windows, doors, or major architectural detail. In computing signable area, only a building facade, which faces a public street right-of-way, may be utilized.

15.15 SIGN RESTRICTIONS. (1) **FACING.** Within 100 feet of any residential district boundary, no sign shall be permitted to face such district except those exempted by sec. 15.05 of this chapter

(2) **LIGHTING AND COLOR,** Signs shall not resemble, imitate, or approximate the shape, size, form or color of railroad or traffic signs, signals, or devices. Signs shall not obstruct or interfere with the effectiveness of railroad or traffic signs, signals, or devices. Signs shall not be placed so as to obstruct or interfere with traffic visibility, nor be lighted in such a way as to cause glare or otherwise impair driver visibility upon public streets. Signs may be illuminated but shall not be flashing.

(3) **PLACEMENT.** Signs shall not be erected, relocated, or maintained so as to prevent free ingress or egress to any door, window, or fire escape and no sign shall be attached to a stand-pipe or fire escape.

(4) **OFF PREMISES SIGNS.** Only signs which carry advertisement strictly incidental or accessory to a lawful use of the premises on which they are located are permitted.

15.16 SIGN MAINTENANCE. The owner of any sign shall keep it in good maintenance and repair including restoring, repainting, or replacing a worn or damaged, legally existing sign to its original condition.

15.17 EXISTING SIGNS. Signs lawfully existing at the time of the adoption of or amendment to this chapter may be continued although their size or location does not conform to this chapter. However, all nonconforming signs shall be deemed to have exhausted their economic life after 7 years from the time they become nonconforming. Nonconforming signs, after this 7 year period, shall either be made to conform to this chapter or shall be removed either by the owner, agent, or person having beneficial use of the property. Nonconforming signs, during the 7 year grace period, shall be kept in good repair but the cost of maintenance shall not be considered grounds for their continued use beyond the 7 year grace period. The Building Inspector shall, after the 7 year grace period, notify the property owner or person having beneficial use of the property that the grace period has expired and shall order the sign removed within 30 days.