

ARTICLE 30

SIGNS

SECTION 30.01. PURPOSE.

Commerce Township is a unique community with conditions that dictate appropriate regulations of signs. Traffic congestion, proximity of buildings and structures to the road, narrowness of lots, and frequency of curb cuts affect traffic safety. Sign clutter exacerbates traffic safety concerns in these circumstances. Aesthetics is another concern, especially in residential areas and in and around areas that have been preserved in their natural state and/or as common land. These conditions call for restraint on the amount and size of signs.

Along corridors where traffic congestion is the norm, such as Haggerty Road, Union Lake Road, Maple Road, Pontiac Trail, M-5 and portions of 14 Mile Road, it is a goal to have clear, concise, and simple signs, so drivers do not have to take their eyes off of the road too long to read the signs. Digital/electronic/LED signs can distract drivers due to their light intensity and their ability to display graphics that move, scroll, and/or flash, and shall be prohibited in most applications. This goal is especially important along Haggerty Road and Union Lake Road, where lots are narrow, setbacks are minimal, and curb cuts are frequent and closely spaced.

Throughout much of the rest of the Township, aesthetics is a guiding interest in sign regulation. Commerce Township is blessed with beautiful unspoiled natural areas, such as: Proud Lake State Recreation Area, Bicentennial Park, Byer’s Homestead Park, Dodge 5 Park, Hickory Glen Park, Long Nature Park, Maple Glen Park, Mill Race Park, Richardson Park plus 11 public school parks, as well as multiple lakes and natural open areas scattered throughout the Township. These natural areas and lakes, which comprise approximately 31% of all Township land, are the backdrop to the many fine residential neighborhoods that are predominant through most of the Township. These neighborhoods, and much of the development in Commerce Township, are unusual because development is not ostentatious or overbuilt; rather the size and height of buildings are in scale with, and do not overwhelm, their natural surroundings. The Township has historically limited building height to two stories and, in fact, the majority of the commercial buildings are one story in height. Again, scale becomes a principal guiding factor to sign regulations. It is a goal of this Article to ensure that signs are similarly in scale with their surroundings.

Visioning sessions conducted by the Township as a part of the development of its Master Land Use Plan identified “open space from the road” as a Township attribute that residents and officials are proud of. Conversely, “excess signage” was identified as something that respondents regretted. To that end, it is incumbent upon the Township, through its Zoning Ordinance, to impose standards that will result in maintenance of roadside open space and a reduction of excess signage. The Master Plan also calls for signage standards as relates to commercial development.

To further this purpose, it is the intent of the Township and the purpose of this Article to regulate and permit signs and other outdoor displays with the following objectives in mind:

1. Oversized signs that are out of scale with surrounding buildings and structures should be prohibited.
2. The placement and design of signs should further the land use planning objectives of the Township as set forth in this Ordinance.
3. Signs should be compatible with neighborhood character and should not adversely affect the value of surrounding properties.
4. Size and placement of signs should maintain and enhance the aesthetics of our community.
5. Size and placement of signs should enhance pedestrian and traffic safety.
6. Size, and time and manner of placement of signs should limit the intrusion of visual messages onto adjacent or nearby private property.
7. Size, construction materials, and time and manner of placement of signs should minimize their adverse effects on nearby public and private property.
8. Signs should be designed and placed in a manner that minimizes driver distraction.
9. Excess signage should be avoided.
10. Scenic views, natural landscapes, and areas of historical significance within the Township should be protected, preserved and enhanced.
11. The economic viability of the Township should be protected and enhanced by assuring aesthetic appeal for visitors, and residents.
12. The use of aesthetically pleasing sign materials and colors should be promoted.
13. Obstacles, distractions, or traffic hazards which impair a traveler’s ability to see pedestrians, traffic signs, or vehicles should be avoided.
14. The right to enjoy scenic amenities should be preserved.
15. Public health, safety, and welfare should be preserved.
16. The effectiveness of necessary directional and warning signs should be enhanced.
17. Air movement and natural light shed should be preserved and enhanced.
18. Property values should be preserved.
19. The blighting influence of signs should be reduced.
20. The night sky should be protected from stray lighting.
21. Adverse lighting or reflection should be avoided.
22. Signs should be structurally safe and secure.
23. It is also the intent of this article to secure and preserve unto the people of the Township the right of free expression guaranteed by the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States; hence this article shall be so construed as to effectuate such intent.

SECTION 30.02. REGULATIONS.

The following regulations apply to all signs except as otherwise provided herein:

A. Construction and Maintenance. All signs shall be constructed or installed in compliance with the State Construction Code, and other applicable building, fire, and electrical codes enforced by the Township; shall be maintained in good repair and working order; and shall present a neat and orderly appearance. Non-galvanized or corrosion-prone materials shall be painted as necessary to prevent corrosion.

All sign faces shall be smooth and no nails, tacks or wires shall be permitted to protrude from any sign. This shall not exclude the use of block letters, decorative elements or other devices that may extend over the top or in front of the sign structure.

No sign shall have wind actuated elements.

B. Illumination. Internal and external sign illumination shall be permitted, subject to the following (see illustration):

1. External sign illumination. External illumination of signs shall be permitted in any zoning district, provided that the light source(s) shall be fully shielded, directed towards the sign face, and designed to concentrate all light on the sign copy area.
2. Internal sign illumination. Signs at parcels with non-residential uses in all zoning districts, except for the sites within the Commerce Village Overlay District, may be internally illuminated.
3. Other Limitations. Sign illumination shall be further limited as follows:
 - a. Sign illumination shall be provided by electronic means or devices, and shall be continuous and without variance in intensity and, subject to this Article, shall not be of a flashing, intermittent, moving or animated type.
 - b. Luminous tube lighting (neon, fluorescent or similar) shall not be directly visible from any road right-of-way or adjacent lot. Such lighting may be used as an indirect light source, or if shielded by translucent panels or similar methods.
 - c. The maximum daylight sign luminance level shall not exceed 62,000 candelas per meter squared at 40,000 lux illumination beginning 1/2 hour after sunrise and continuing until 1/2 hour before sunset and shall not exceed 375 candelas per meter squared at 4 lux illumination at all other times.

C. Measurement. The area of all signs shall be computed by measuring the area of the regular shaped envelope required to enclose the lettering, characters, and/or logo and the structures to which the lettering, characters, and/or logo are attached. This envelope shall be a simple closed curve such as a circle or oval, or shall be a rectangle or triangle.

In the case of a wall sign consisting of open letters attached to the building, the envelope shall be around the letters having common heights. Capital letters, graphics and logos shall be boxed and added to the total.

Permitted areas for freestanding signs are stated as the area for each face of a two-sided sign where both faces are identical in size and content, and the plane of the surfaces of each side of the sign are no greater than twenty-four (24”) inches apart and are parallel or would intersect at an angle of not more than fifteen (15) degrees. Two-sided signs otherwise designed shall be considered a single face sign and the area shall be the total area of both faces. The permitted area per face for signs with more than two faces is determined by multiplying the maximum permitted area for the sign by two (2) and then dividing by the number of faces proposed. The poles or structure supporting a freestanding sign shall not be included in the measurement of sign area unless the poles or structures have printed material thereon or are of such a color or design as to act as a sign or to direct attention.

D. Projection of Signs. Wall signs may project up to twelve (12”) inches from the surface upon which they are mounted. Wall signs may not project above or beyond a roof or parapet line. Freestanding roof signs are not permitted. Signs are not allowed to extend beyond the property line.

E. Height of Signs. The sign height is the distance from the average level of the ground or pavement directly below the sign to the highest point of the sign structure, including any supportive or decorative elements (see illustration). Ground signs shall not exceed six (6’) feet in height, except that ground signs located within a corner clearance area as defined in Article 6, shall not exceed a height of thirty (30”) inches. No wall sign shall extend above the eaves of a pitched roof or above the roofline of a flat or mansard roof. The ground or pavement below a sign shall not be artificially altered with the effect of increasing sign height.

F. Setback. Freestanding signs shall be setback a minimum of fifteen (15’) feet from any setback line, except as follows:

1. Where there exists a pattern of pre-existing legal non-conforming freestanding signs set back less than the required minimum on the same side of the street, then the minimum setback shall be reduced to the average setback of the nearest three (3) freestanding signs within 1,500 feet in either direction on the same side of the street. This exception shall only apply when there is an existing building on the lot upon which the freestanding sign is to be placed.

No such signs shall overhang public property.

G. Quantity. Unless otherwise permitted or prohibited herein, no more than one (1) freestanding sign shall be permitted on any one (1) lot, or unified development site, such as a shopping center, which may contain multiple lots. On corner lots, one (1) free standing sign may be permitted on each road frontage unless otherwise prohibited herein.

H. Prohibited Signs. To better promote traffic safety, prevent blighting influences, promote desired community character, preserve the desired aesthetic atmosphere of the

community, and otherwise accomplish the purposes set forth herein according to the standards and objectives enumerated herein, the following signs are prohibited:

1. Moving signs or animated signs, devices or figures.
2. Inflatable devices such as balloons, product representations or similar devices, except as otherwise permitted in this Ordinance.
3. Beacon lights or search lights.
4. Festoon signs, such as a hanging garland of flowers, leaves, papers, flags, pennants or streamers.
5. Banners, except as specifically provided in this Ordinance.
6. Signs painted on or attached to vehicles that are parked on premises so as to be visible from a public right-of-way.
7. Roof signs, being signs erected upon a roof, or wall signs projecting above the eaves of a pitched roof or above the roofline of a flat or mansard roof, except as specifically permitted in this Ordinance.
8. Projecting or overhanging signs may only be permitted for uses within the Commerce Village Overlay Area and Town Center Overlay as designated in this Ordinance.
9. Signs which contain words or representations of an obscene, indecent, or immoral character such as may offend public morals or decency.
10. Signs which are of a size, location, coloring, manner of illumination, or general appearance which may be construed as a traffic control device; or which hide from view a traffic control device.
11. Neon lights, string lights or other devices that are designed to outline all or part of a building, except decorative lights as regulated in Article 31.
12. Window signs, except as permitted in this Ordinance.
13. No sign shall be placed on public property or in the public right-of-way, except as permitted in this Ordinance.
14. Any sign, banner, or other media attached to a tree or utility pole, except signs posted by a utility company, which owns the utility pole.
15. Signs with missing letters, non-functioning illumination elements or peeling or faded paint, or which are worn or damaged or otherwise difficult to read.
16. Signs not maintained in compliance with issued permits.

17. Pole or pylon signs.
18. No sign shall be placed within a corner clearance area as defined in Article 6.
19. Digital or LED signs, except as otherwise provided in this Ordinance.
20. Banners over public roadways.
21. Signs which include any booby-trap, spring trap, spring gun, razor blades, cutting edges, or any element either intended to, or likely to, maim or injure a person or animal.
22. Any sign not expressly permitted by this Ordinance.

SECTION 30.03. SITE SPECIFIC SIGN STANDARDS

A. Standard Temporary Sign. A single non-illuminated temporary sign may be displayed at a non-vacant parcel in accordance with the following:

1. **All districts except B, TLM and I Districts.** Standard Temporary Signs shall not exceed six (6) square feet in size, and thirty (30”) inches in height.
2. **B, TLM, and I Districts.** Standard Temporary Signs shall not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in size and six (6’) feet in height.

B. Election Date Temporary Signage. In accordance with the following, additional non-illuminated signage may be displayed at a parcel 45 days before an election or at any time between a primary and general election. Such sign or signs must be removed within 15 days after the display period has expired.

1. **All districts except B, TLM and I Districts.** The total amount of area of Election Date Temporary Signage shall not exceed twelve (12) square feet in size, and the height of a sign shall not exceed four (4’) feet.
2. **B, TLM, and I Districts.** The total amount of area of Election Date Temporary Signage shall not exceed twenty-four (24) square feet in size, and the height of a sign shall not exceed six (6’) feet.

C. Parcel Temporary Sign. In accordance with the following, a single additional non-illuminated temporary sign per parcel may be displayed only during times when the parcel on which the sign is located is being offered for sale or lease. A parcel shall be considered as being “offered for sale or lease” for purposes of this section if a Multiple Listing Service (MLS) number has been assigned. Such sign shall be removed within thirty (30) days after sale or lease of property, or in the case of rental property, thirty (30) days after final occupancy has been issued to the entire development for the first time.

1. **All districts except B, TLM and I Districts.** Parcel Temporary Signs shall not exceed six (6) square feet in size and four (4’) feet in height.

2. **B, TLM, and I Districts.** Parcel Temporary Signs shall not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in size and six (6’) feet in height.

a. The sign may be a wall or ground sign.

D. Property Development Temporary Sign. At parcels proposed for rezoning, under construction or residential developments not yet fully occupied, one (1) additional temporary non-illuminated ground sign having a total area not to exceed thirty two (32) square feet and not exceeding six (6’) feet in height may be permitted until thirty (30) days after a rezoning determination has been made, construction has been completed, full occupancy of the development (or for a period of time not to exceed four (4) years on the site of a development), whichever is less.

E. Site Entryway Sign. Site entry features with signage may be erected at the entrance to a residential subdivision, condominium or multiple-family development; elderly or senior housing development; manufactured housing park; or office, research or industrial park, subject to the following (see illustration):

Standards	Site Entry Features with Signage
Maximum number of permitted signs	Two (2) signs per entrance from a public road classified as a collector, arterial or thoroughfare by the transportation plans for the Road Commission for Oakland County or Michigan Department of Transportation.
Minimum required setbacks	Ten (10) feet from any road right-of-way or curblines of any internal access drive.
Maximum sign area	32 square feet.
Maximum sign height	6.0 feet.
Method of illumination	External light sources only.

F. Special Event Signs.

The following temporary signs may be displayed:

1. Signs located upon the site of a special event may be permitted for a period not to exceed: 1) fourteen consecutive days annually, or 2) two seven day periods annually.

G. Closed Road. One temporary ground sign, located upon or adjacent to a closed road, not exceeding twelve (12) square feet and six (6’) feet in height, may be displayed for any establishment affected by the closing of the primary means of public access to the

property for the duration of the road closure. A Closed Road Sign shall require a sign permit.

H. Private Traffic Signs. Any site that contains privately maintained pedestrian or vehicle thoroughfares may erect one (1) Private Traffic Sign per fifty (50') feet of thoroughfare and one (1) sign per entryway into a thoroughfare intersection which is no larger than eight (8) square feet in area and six (6') feet in height. For purposes of this Section a “thoroughfare” shall include designated lanes for vehicle travel but shall not include those areas designated for the parking of vehicles, nor the lanes for travel between parking spaces.

I. Multiple-Exposure of Building Facades. One (1) additional wall sign for a building on non-residential property located on the corner of, or with exposure to, two (2) or more roads, may be displayed provided the following conditions are met:

1. Land use on the opposite side of the road from the sign is non-residential.
2. With conventional signage, identification of the building would be difficult from one (1) or more views.
3. The total area of the primary wall sign and the additional wall sign cannot exceed one square foot of signage per linear feet of building frontage, as measured on the elevation that corresponds to the address of the structure. The maximum total area of signage for all wall signs shall not exceed two hundred (200) square feet.
4. The additional sign shall be so located that identification of the building is visible from the non-residential public right-of-way from which it would otherwise be unidentifiable.

J. Gas Stations. Additional signage located at parcels where gasoline is lawfully offered for sale to the public may be displayed, provided the following conditions are met.

1. Gasoline Pump Signs. One additional sign shall be permitted to be affixed to each gasoline pump, subject to the following conditions:
 - a. The sign shall not exceed two (2) square feet in area.
 - b. The total number of pumps notwithstanding, the total area of all such signage on any property shall not exceed twenty (20) square feet.
 - c. All such signs shall conform in all other respects to the standards imposed by this Ordinance, including but not limited to, standards for illumination.
 - d. Digital signs may be permitted and may display moving images and video, provided that the displays are oriented and/or screened such that the image shall not be visible from any road right-of-way.

K. Building with Awnings and Canopies. Signs on awnings and canopies in commercial, office, and industrial districts shall be permitted, subject to the following standards.

1. **Coverage.**

The total area of the lettering and logo shall not exceed twenty-five (25%) of the total area of the awning or canopy that is visible from the road.

2. **Compliance with Size Requirements for Wall Signs.**

The area of signs on awnings or canopies shall be counted in determining compliance with the standards for total area of wall signs permitted on the parcel.

3. **Projection.**

Limitations imposed by this Ordinance concerning projection of signs from the face of a wall or building shall not apply to awning and canopy signs, provided that such signs shall comply with the setback requirements for the district in which they are located.

SECTION 30.04. DISTRICT STANDARDS.

A. Signs in R, RM, and MHP Districts. The following signs which shall be permitted in all R, RM, and MHP zone districts at a non-vacant parcel:

1. One family and two family residential dwellings with lawful home occupations shall be permitted one (1) non-illuminated wall sign not exceeding a total area of (1) square foot mounted to the wall of the principal building.
2. Multiple family residential shall be permitted one (1) ground sign not to exceed a total area of thirty-two (32) square feet in size.
3. Non-residential uses shall be permitted one (1) freestanding ground sign not to exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in total area for each lot or unified development site and further shall be permitted one (1) wall sign as provided this Article.
4. A bed and breakfast facility is permitted one (1) wall or ground sign with a total area not to exceed twelve (12) square feet, which complies with this Article.

B. Signs in SP Districts. The following signs shall be permitted for uses within an SP zone district at a non-vacant parcel:

1. Freestanding Signs. One (1) ground sign not to exceed a total area of thirty-two (32) square feet for each lot or unified development site.
2. Wall Signs: One (1) wall sign not to exceed one (1) square foot for each linear foot of building frontage identifying the building name.

C. Signs in O Districts. The following signs shall be permitted for uses within an O zone district at a non-vacant parcel:

1. Wall or Freestanding Signs. One (1) ground sign not to exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in area for each lot or unified development, identifying the building name or address, or one (1) wall sign, not to exceed one (1) square foot for each foot of linear building frontage identifying the building name only.
2. Window Signs. Window signs are not permitted in the O zone district.

D. Signs in B, TLM, and I Districts. The following signs shall be permitted for uses within B, TLM, and I zone districts at a non-vacant parcel:

1. Freestanding Signs. One (1) ground sign for each frontage on a major thoroughfare not to exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in area for each lot or unified development site and shall not be greater than six (6) feet in height. Where more than one (1) tenant shares a building, only one (1) freestanding sign shall be permitted.
2. Wall Signs. Wall signs shall be permitted provided that the following conditions are met:
 - a. One (1) wall sign not to exceed a total area of one (1) square foot for each one (1) lineal foot of building frontage shall be permitted for each building. Where more than one (1) tenant shares a building, one (1) wall sign shall be permitted per tenant, provided that the total area of all signs shall not exceed one (1) square foot of sign area per one (1) lineal foot of building frontage. The maximum area for any single sign shall not exceed two hundred (200) square feet except that a building located more than six hundred (600') feet from the frontage road may be identified by letters up to five (5') feet in height with a total sign area greater than two hundred (200) square feet, but not greater than the area required to enclose those letters, and in no event greater than the lesser of five hundred (500) square feet or one (1) square foot for each one (1) lineal foot of building frontage. For buildings having less than twenty (20) lineal feet of building frontage, a sign not to exceed twenty (20) square feet is permitted. A building having corner lot frontage on two (2) public roads shall have only one (1) wall sign. A building with over two hundred (200) lineal feet of building frontage that has a secondary tenant (as defined herein) may have up to two (2) additional wall signs on the addressed side of the building not to exceed twenty (20) square feet per secondary tenant provided that the total sign area does not exceed the maximum sign area permitted, as described above.
 - b. Wall signs shall be permitted on those sides of buildings not adjacent to a road under the following conditions:
 - i. On the rear door of any building or unit in a multiple tenant building, one (1) wall sign not to exceed a total area of two (2) square feet

shall be required on the door to identify the occupant and address for emergency personnel. Such sign shall not be internally illuminated.

- ii. A building in a B zone district with more than one (1) tenant will be permitted one (1) wall sign for each tenant not having exterior walls adjacent to the road, which sign shall be located on the wall not adjacent to the road but adjacent to an on-site parking lot and enclosing the main public entrance for each such tenant. The total area of such signs shall not exceed one (1) square foot for each lineal foot of building frontage on the side of the building facing the parking lot.
 - iii. Wall signs shall not extend beyond the parapet top or above the front, side, or rear elevation of the building.
 - iv. The maximum horizontal distance of the sign shall not exceed three-fourths (3/4) of the width of the building or portion thereof to be occupied by the applicant.
 - v. Wall signs may be internally illuminated.
3. Window Signs. Window signs will be permitted for each building or for each tenant in a multiple tenant building. The total area of such window signs shall be limited to twenty-five (25%) percent of the area of each section of window in which the signs will be placed but at no time shall such window signs exceed fifty (50) square feet for buildings having windows on two (2) or more facades. Window signs do not require a permit if displayed for thirty (30) consecutive days or less.
- a. Window signs may be internally illuminated.
 - b. Window signs shall be considered temporary signs. If window signs are to be displayed longer than thirty (30) days a permit is required. The date of installation shall be noted on the sign in lettering clearly visible from the outside of the building.
4. Projecting Signs. For uses within the B Districts, projecting signs in lieu of a wall sign shall be permitted in the Commerce Village Overlay District, subject to the following standards (see illustration):
- a. Such signs shall be secured to the building by metal anchors, bolts, supports, rods or braces, and shall be located away from the wall at least six (6) inches. No part of the projecting sign structure shall project above the roof.
 - b. Such signs shall have its lower edge at a minimum distance above grade of eight (8) feet.

- c. Such signs shall project from the wall at an angle of 90 degrees.
 - d. One (1) projecting sign shall be permitted per use, with a maximum sign area of twenty (20) square feet per sign face.
 - e. Projecting signs may extend out from the building wall a maximum of four (4) feet or thirty-three percent (33%) of the sidewalk width, whichever is less.
5. Portable Signs. Portable signs are permitted on either private property or the public sidewalk, subject to the following conditions:
- i. No sign shall be placed within a distance of ten (10) feet from any fire hydrant, or in any location where it would imperil public safety, as determined by the Building Director, or his/her designee, or interfere with the function of the fire department.
 - ii. Portable signs shall not interfere with vehicle access, pedestrian movement or wheelchair access to, through or around a site.
 - iii. Portable signs shall not be attached to a tree, light pole, traffic sign or other sidewalk obstruction.
 - iv. Portable signs shall not be located on any publicly owned property or within any public road right-of-way.
 - v. Portable signs shall be removed when weather conditions create potentially hazardous conditions.
 - vi. If public improvements or utility work necessitates the removal of a portable sign, the owner shall remove the sign immediately upon request. If the owner fails to remove the sign, the Township, its agents or representatives, may remove the sign, and the owner will forfeit all rights to its return.
 - vii. There shall be a maximum of one (1) portable sign per building per road frontage. Where more than one tenant shares a building, each tenant shall be permitted one (1) portable sign.
 - viii. All portable signs shall be located a minimum of twenty-five (25') feet from any other portable sign.
 - ix. When a portable sign is located on a sidewalk or similar pedestrian access area, a clear path of five (5) feet must be maintained at all times.
 - x. Each sign shall be placed outside only during daytime hours.
 - xi. Portable signs shall not have more than two (2) sign faces.

- xii. The following design requirements shall apply to all portable signs:
 - 1. Portable signs shall be made of wood or decorative metal or other comparable, weather-proof high-quality material, with cast iron or decorative metal brackets.
 - 2. The use of paper or cloth is not permitted unless located within a glass or plastic enclosure. Plastic, high density foam board, OSB or similar materials are prohibited unless approved by the Building Director and Planning Director.
 - 3. Portable signs on wheels and the use of plastic sign bases and frames shall be prohibited.
 - 4. Portable signs that incorporate banners, flags, balloons, streamers, or pennants shall be prohibited.
 - 5. Portable sign lettering, excluding that which is part of a logo, shall be between 2 to 4 inches high.
 - 6. Changeable letters or individually applied changeable marquee letters shall be prohibited.
 - 7. Temporary hand lettering will be allowed only on a chalk or white board section of a sign. This chalk or white board section may be on one or both sides of the sign.
 - 8. Portable sign designs shall be uncluttered and have minimal text; logos and graphics are encouraged and are not subject to the aforementioned lettering height maximum of 2”-4”.
 - 9. Portable signs shall not be illuminated or have any moving parts or other electronic devices.
 - 10. The sign shall be kept in good repair at all times.
- xiii. No portable sign shall exceed an overall height of forty-five (45) inches or an overall width of twenty-four (24) inches. The maximum height of the sign area shall be thirty-six (36) inches. Sign supports may be a maximum of nine (9) inches in height. The maximum sign area per portable sign is six (6) square feet.
- xiv. Portable signs must receive a permit from the Township Building Department. Permits are valid for a period not to exceed twelve (12) months.

E. Signs in ULR, HRC, TC, and CV Overlay Districts. All signs within the ULR, HRC, TC, and CV zone overlay districts shall comply with the provisions of this Article, except as specifically provided otherwise in this Ordinance.

SECTION 30.05. SIGN PERMIT.

It shall be unlawful for any person to erect, alter or relocate any sign, sign structure or sign area subject to permit or approval under the provisions of this Article, without first obtaining

appropriate permit(s) and/or approvals from the Township and paying the required permit fee according to the Fee Ordinance adopted by the Township Board.

A. Sign Permits.

Except as otherwise provided herein, no sign shall be erected without a valid sign permit. Sign permit applications are submitted to the Building Department. Unless otherwise indicated, temporary signs shall not require a sign permit.

For new developments, sign location shall be shown on site plans and building elevations and shall be approved by the Building Department.

Application fees for sign permits are set forth in the Township Fee Ordinance and shall be paid prior to the issuance of a permit.

B. Required Information for Sign Permit Applications.

The following shall be provided with any sign permit application:

1. Application information. Permit applications shall include the following information:
 - a. The name, address, and telephone numbers for the applicant, property owner, and sign contractor; street address or property location where the sign is to be located; and written consent of the property or sign owner to perform the proposed work.
 - b. Where a proposed sign would encroach into a road right-of-way, copies of permits or approvals from the Township Board and any other agency with jurisdiction.
 - c. Written permission from the landowner to display the proposed sign (if the applicant does not own or lease the property where the proposed sign is to be displayed).
 - d. Any other information required by the Building Director to show full compliance with this Article and other sections of this Ordinance.
2. Plot plan. A plot plan shall include a parcel survey, easements, dimensions, locations of all structures, and all existing and proposed signs on the lot or unified development parcel. If building-mounted signs are proposed, elevation drawings of all buildings on the site shall be provided showing all existing and proposed building-mounted signs.
3. Sign details. Specifications and drawings showing the materials, design, dimensions, structural supports, and method of illumination.

4. License and insurance. Every person who engages in the business of erecting, altering or dismantling signs in the Township shall first submit proof of appropriate licenses or certifications.
5. Removal agreement or performance guarantee. The Building Director may require a signed removal agreement or performance guarantee to guarantee the future removal of a sign.

SECTION 30.06. NONCONFORMING SIGNS.

All existing signs that do not conform to the provisions of this Article and Ordinance shall be permitted to continue as nonconforming signs until removed or altered, at which time they shall conform to the provisions of this Article and Ordinance. Nonconforming signs shall be subject to the following:

A. Good Working Order.

Nonconforming signs shall be maintained with all necessary structural and decorative parts, including but not limited to supports, sign frame, and electrical equipment. All sign copy areas shall be intact and illuminated signs shall be capable of immediate illumination.

B. Servicing.

Painting, servicing, cleaning or minor repairs to a nonconforming sign shall be permitted, provided that the sign is restored to its original design and all work is in compliance with the requirements for all signs specified in this Article

C. Alterations.

Alterations to nonconforming signs shall be prohibited, except as follows:

1. Sign copy area. The sign copy area of a nonconforming sign may be altered, including replacement of sign face, panels and changes to the sign copy, provided that the degree of nonconformity is not increased, and provided that any sign illumination is brought into compliance with the provisions of this Article (Illumination).
2. Sign frame or structural elements. Alterations to the sign frame or structural elements of a nonconforming sign shall be permitted, subject to the following:
 - a. The sign shall be brought into compliance with the maximum sign height and sign area standards for the location and type of sign, as specified in this Ordinance.
 - b. Existing sign wiring and ground sign support structures may be re-used, provided that permitted alterations will not increase any nonconformity caused by inadequate sign setback.

SECTION 30.07. SIGN REMOVAL BY TOWNSHIP ACTION.

A. Unlawful Signs.

The Building Director shall have the authority to determine whether a sign is unlawful, subject to appeal by an aggrieved person, to the Zoning Board of Appeals. The Building Director may order the removal of such signs in accordance with the following:

1. Determination. Written notification of the determination and any order for removal shall be provided by certified mail to the owner, operator or person having beneficial use of the property upon which the sign is located.
2. Removal. Unlawful signs shall be removed by the Owner within 30 days after notification of a determination and order for removal by the Building Director. All support structures and components shall be completely removed.
 - a. Failure to remove the sign within 30 days after notice shall constitute grounds for the Township to exercise any and all legal rights, causes of action, and enforcement measures legally available to remove the sign at the property owner’s expense.
 - b. The owner shall reimburse the Township for removal costs, including legal expenses, or the Township may place a lien on the property for necessary removal expenses.

B. Damaged Signs.

Signs determined to be in a damaged condition by the Building Director shall be repaired or removed by Owner within 15 days after notification to Owner by certified mail.

1. If such action is not taken by the owner, operator or person having beneficial use of the property where the sign is located and an appeal has not been taken as provided for in this Ordinance, the Building Director shall have the authority to order the repair or removal of the damaged sign.
2. The owner shall reimburse the Township for repair or removal costs, including legal fees and expenses, or the Township may place a lien on the property for such expenses.

C. Unsafe Signs.

The Building Director may order the removal of any sign determined to be unsafe without prior notice.

1. After removal, the Building Director shall notify the property owner by certified mail of the action taken and the reasons for the action. If the owner does not reclaim the removed sign within fifteen (15) days of the date of notice, the Township may dispose of the sign.

2. The owner shall reimburse the Township for removal, storage, and disposal or reclamation costs, including legal fees and expenses, or the Township may place a lien on the property for such expenses.

D. Nonconforming Signs.

The elimination of nonconforming signs in the Township is hereby declared to be for a public purpose and for a public use. The Township may purchase nonconforming signs for the purpose of removal, or may initiate condemnation proceedings for nonconforming signs determined to be in violation of the requirements this Article imposes on nonconforming signs.

E. Temporary Signs.

Temporary signs affixed within a road right-of-way or corner clearance area or Township owned property, without a valid permit, or after permit expiration may be removed by the Township without notice. Signs removed shall be discarded.

SECTION 30.08. APPEALS AND VARIANCES.

A. Appeals. Appeal from the ruling of any department or administrative officer concerning the issuance of a permit or the removal of an unlawful sign pursuant to this Article may be made by any aggrieved party within thirty (30) days of the ruling to the zoning board of appeals, sitting as an appeal board under this Article.

B. Variances. Notwithstanding anything contained in this Zoning Ordinance, requests for nonuse sign variances shall be granted only in accordance with the standards set forth in this Section 30.08.B. The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) shall not have the authority to grant use variances for signs. The ZBA shall not have the authority to grant exceptions (as described under Section 41.10 of this Zoning Ordinance) to the restrictions set forth by this Ordinance.

1. Following the receipt of a written request for a nonuse variance, the ZBA shall schedule a hearing on the request within 90 days.
2. A nonuse variance shall be granted only where the Zoning Board of Appeals determines that the variance applicant has demonstrated a practical difficulty in complying with the provisions of this Ordinance. For purposes of this Article, a practical difficulty is established where the variance applicant demonstrates the existence of natural or artificial features of the applicant's property, which obstructs the visibility of the sign from the primary right of way adjacent to the parcel where the sign is proposed and cannot be practically removed or mitigated through the applicant's own reasonable efforts. A practical difficulty must not be self-created.

SECTION 30.09. SUBSTITUTION.

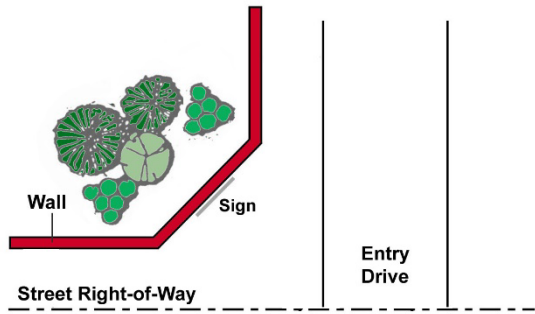
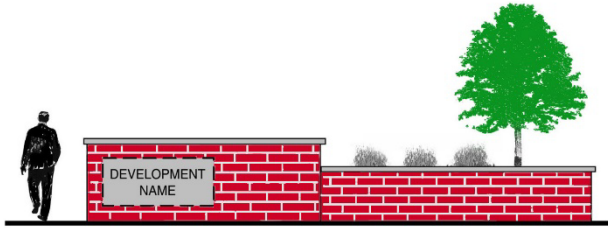
Notwithstanding anything contained in this Article or Zoning Ordinance to the contrary, any sign authorized to be displayed by this Ordinance may contain any non-commercial message. The sign

face may be changed from commercial to noncommercial messages, or from one noncommercial message to another noncommercial message, as frequently as desired by the owner of the sign, provided that the size, height, setback, and other dimensional criteria contained in this Ordinance have been satisfied, and appropriate permits (if required) have been issued and the sign is otherwise in compliance with state law.

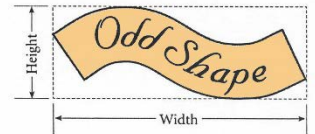
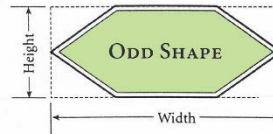
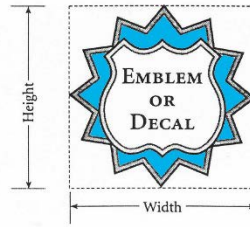
SECTION 30.10. SEVERABILITY.

Without diminishing or limiting in any way any other declaration of severability in this Zoning Ordinance, if any part, section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, sentence, phrase, clause, term, or word of this Article is declared invalid or unconstitutional by the valid judgment or decree of any court of competent jurisdiction, the declaration of such invalidity or unconstitutionality shall not affect any other part, section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, sentence, phrase, clause, term, or word of this Article.

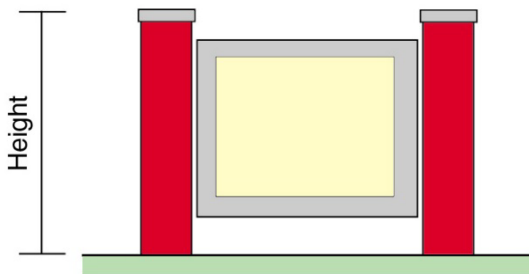
ILLUSTRATIONS



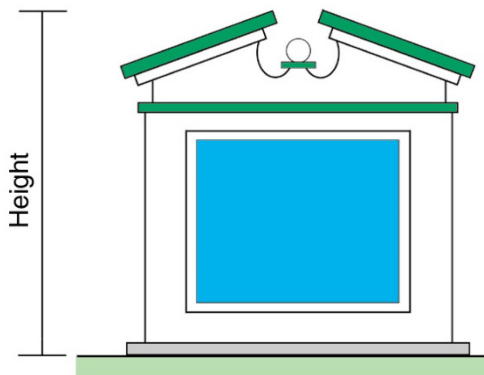
Site Entry Feature with Signage



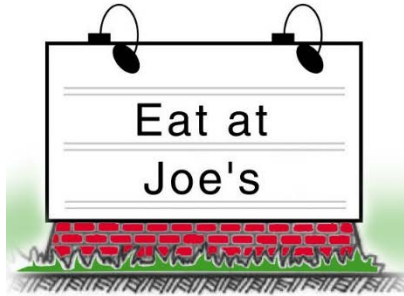
Computation of Sign Area



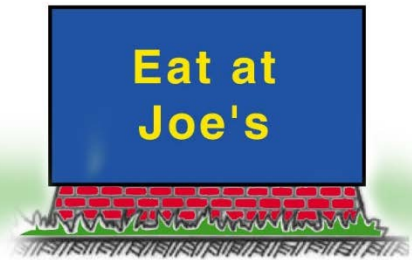
Sign Height



ILLUSTRATIONS



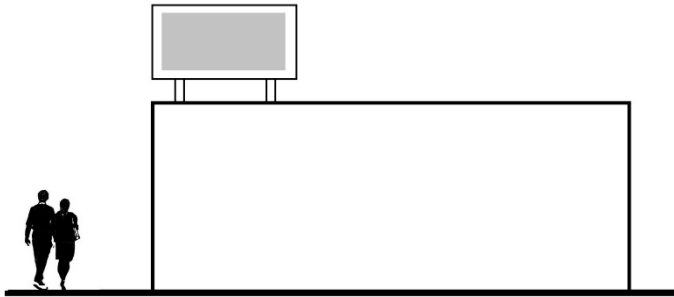
External illumination only



Internal illumination permitted

Sign Illumination

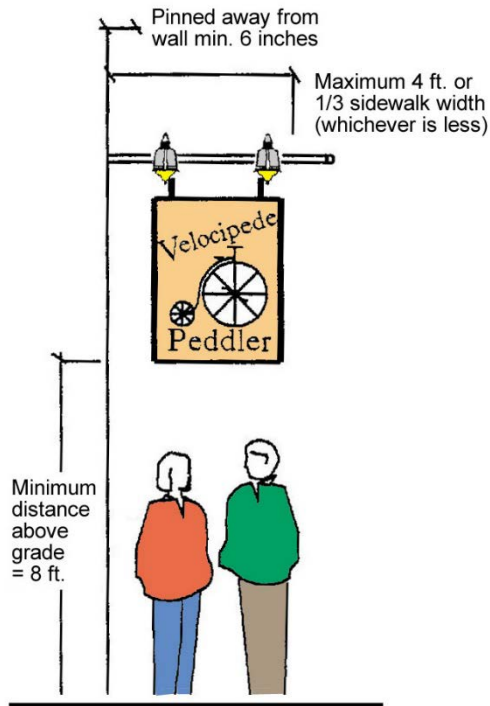
ILLUSTRATIONS



Roof Sign



Portable Signs



Projecting
Sign Detail

ILLUSTRATIONS

