

CHAPTER 5

Sign Regulations by District

SECTION 501. INTENT AND PURPOSE

The sign regulations as herein set forth are intended to control the size, location, character, and other pertinent features of all exterior signs within the township. The purpose of this section is to regulate all exterior signs so as to promote and protect the health, safety, and public welfare of the township.

SECTION 502. DEFINITIONS

- (1) Billboard. A billboard is an outdoor sign, structure, or symbol advertising services or products which are not made, produced, assembled, stored, or sold upon or from the lot or premises upon which the billboard is located. Billboards are also known as "off-premise signs" and "outdoor advertising".
- (2) Canopy Sign. A sign that is incorporated into the fabric or material of a canopy with the canopy being attached to an exterior wall or surface of a building. A canopy sign shall be considered a wall sign for purposes of determining sign area. In determining the sign area, only that portion of the canopy containing lettering or message shall be used as a basis for computation.
- (3) Directional Sign. A sign directing and guiding vehicular or pedestrian traffic or parking, but bearing no advertising matter except for the "logo" of the business for which the directional signs are associated.
- (4) Electronic Message Board. A sign with changeable copy in which the copy consists of an array of lights activated and deactivated with a frequency of message change of not less than twenty (20) seconds. Signs that only display the time and temperature may change messages with frequency of no less than five (5) seconds.
- (5) Flashing Signs. Any illuminated sign on which the artificial light is not maintained stationary or constant in intensity or color at all times while in use.
- (6) Free Standing Sign. A sign supported by one or more uprights, braces, or pylons located in or upon the ground or to something requiring location on the ground. Free standing signs are commonly referred to as "pull" signs. Free standing signs include billboards.
- (7) Ground Signs. A free standing sign of limited height firmly attached to the ground through its base or supported by one or more uprights or braces which are typically less than three (3) feet in height when measured from the ground surface to the base of the sign. Ground signs are also commonly referred to as "monument" signs.

- (8) Illuminated Sign. Any sign designed to give forth artificial light, or designed to reflect any such light given from any source which is intended to cause such light or reflection.
- (9) Monument Sign. A type of free standing sign where the base of the sign is directly on the ground or integrated into landscaping or other solid structural instead of support poles.
- (10) Political Sign. Any sign displaying a message and/or image associated with an election, referendum, election campaign, or similar event.
- (11) Portable Sign. Any sign constructed so as to be readily moveable from one location to another and not permanently affixed to a building or the ground. Portable signs include: "trailer" signs.
- (12) Real Estate Sign. A sign advertising that the premises in which the sign is located is for sale, lease, or rent.
- (13) Sign area. The area of the sign shall be computed as the entire area circumscribed by a parallelogram, triangle, circle, or semi-circle, or any combination of these figures, which includes all of the display area of the sign including frames surrounding display areas. For signs that consist of individual letters attached or painted on the wall of the building, with only the wall as background and no added decoration or border, the sign area shall be the geometrical shape formed by an imaginary line along the exterior perimeter of the word, or words as a whole. For purposes of computing sign area, only one side of a sign shall be used.
- (14) Wall sign A sign attached to or placed flat against the exterior wall or surface of any building, no portion of which projects more than twelve (12) inches from the wall.

SECTION 503. REQUIRED PERMITS

A sign permit is only required for the placement of signs in the "B" Community Wide Commercial District. Permit fees shall be based on a cost per foot basis as determined by resolution of the Township Board.

SECTION 504. GENERAL SIGN REQUIREMENTS

1. Signs shall pertain to the sale, rental, or use of the premises on which the sign is located or to the goods sold or activities conducted on the premises.
2. Illuminated signs shall not be of the flashing, moving, or intermittent type. Illumination of signs shall be directed or shaded downwards so as not to interfere with the vision of persons on the adjacent highway or adjacent property owners.
3. Signs advertising developments or subdivisions shall be located on the property to which they apply in accordance with a permit issued by the zoning administrator, not to exceed two (2) years, subject to renewal upon application.
4. All directional signs required for the purpose of orientation, when established by the local, county, state, or federal government, shall be permitted in all use districts.
5. No signs shall be located on any street corner where they would obscure the vision of drivers using said street, or conflict with traffic control signals at the intersection of such streets.

SECTION 505. SIZE AND PLACEMENT RESTRICTIONS OUT BY DISTRICT

1. "R" Rural residential District
 - (a) Home Occupation. A qualified home occupation pursuant to Section 202(67) may have one ground sign per dwelling/property with a maximum size of four (4) square feet.
 - (b) Accessory Occupation. A qualified accessory occupation pursuant to Section 202 (1) may have one ground sign per dwelling/property with a maximum size of four (4) square feet.

- (c) Uses by right or by special permit. Other signs for uses by right or uses by special permit as found in Section 1601 such as churches, cemeteries, golf courses, hunting clubs, campgrounds, and produce growers, may have one on-ground sign, one building wall sign, and one off-premise ground sign with each sign having a maximum size of ten (10) square feet. The off-premise sign shall not be within sight of the on-premise sign (one half mile to one mile apart). The installation of an off-premise sign shall require the written permission of the zoning administrator. The off-premise sign shall not be placed in the right of way or attached to another sign, tree, fence, or utility pole. The off-premise sign shall only apply to a property within the Township.

 - (d) Ground signs shall have a maximum distance of three feet from the bottom of the sign to the ground.

 - (e) No ground or wall sign shall be illuminated, flashing, or have moving parts.
- (2) "A" Agricultural and Woodlot District.
- (a) Home Occupation. A qualified home occupation pursuant to Section 202 (67) may have one ground sign per dwelling / property with a maximum size of four(4) square feet.

 - (b) Accessory Occupation. A qualified accessory occupation pursuant to Section 202 (1) may have one ground sign per dwelling / property with a maximum size of four(4) square feet.

 - (c) Uses by Right or by Special Permit. Other signs for uses by right or uses by special permit pursuant to Section 1601, such as riding stables, cattle raising, greenhouses, shall be allowed one on-premise ground sign, one wall sign on the building, and one off-premise ground sign with each sign having a maximum size of ten (10) square feet. The off-premise sign shall not be within sight of the on-premise (one half mile to one mile apart). The installation of an off-premise sign shall require the written permission of the zoning administrator. The off-premise sign shall not be placed in the right of way or attached to another sign, tree, fence, or utility pole. The off-premise sign shall only apply to a property within the Township.

 - (d) Ground signs shall have a maximum distance of three feet from the bottom of the sign to the ground.

 - (e) No ground or wall sign shall be illuminated, flashing, or have moving parts.

(3) "B" COMMUNITY WIDE Commercial District.

- (a) A sign advertising a business shall not exceed one hundred (100) square feet.
- (b) Only one (1) sign shall be permitted for each business occupying a building on the premises.
- (c) No sign shall project more than one (1) foot from the building and shall not project above or beyond the highest point of the roof or parapet.
- (d) Free standing advertising signs or pylons shall not be over twenty(20) feet in height.
- (e) All signs must comply with the dimensional requirements of the business zone.

SECTION 506. TEMPORARY SIGNS

- 1. Signs used for advertising land or buildings for sale, lease, or rent.
- 2. Seasonal signs placed on the premises for no longer than three (3) months.
- 3. Signs for parties or reunions placed on the premises for no longer than seven (7) days per year.
- 4. Garage or yard sale sign placed on the premises during the term of the sale not to exceed 4 consecutive calendar days (Section 906 (2) (a)).
- 5. Construction sign placed on the premises for the duration of the project not to exceed one year.
- 6. Political signs, including candidate or ballot proposals placed on the premises thirty (30) days prior to an election and fourteen (14) days post-election.

SECTION 507. EXEMPT SIGNS

- 1. All directional signs required for the purpose of orientation when established by the local, county, state, or federal governments.
- 2. Signs designating pipelines and other utilities.
- 3. Township government signs.
- 4. Historical site signs determined by the state historical society.
- 5. No hunting / no trespassing signs.

SECTION 508. PROHIBITED SIGNS

1. Signs with moving parts.
2. Murals.
3. Roof signs.
4. Window signs.
5. Billboards.
6. Vehicle signs.
7. Monuments signs.
8. Balloon signs.
9. String of lights, pennants, streamers, and banners.

SECTION 509. NON - CONFORMING SIGNS

1. A non-conforming sign or sign structure existing and in place as of the date of the enactment of this chapter may continue to have the copy or message on the sign changed and may have normal maintenance performed (such as nails, screws, paint, soap, and water). However, a non-conforming sign existing on the day of the enactment of this chapter shall not:
 - (a) Be changed to another non-conforming sign.
 - (b) Be structurally altered so as to prolong the life of the sign or change the shape, size, location, type, or design of the sign.
 - (c) Be reestablished after the activity, business, or use to which it relates has been discontinued for thirty (30) days or longer, or
 - (d) Be reestablished after damage by any means if the zoning administrator determines that the established cost of reconstruction exceeds fifty percent (50%) of the replacement costs.

SECTION 510. INSPECTION, REMOVAL, AND SAFETY

1. Inspection. Signs may be inspected periodically by the zoning administrator to assure compliance with this chapter and the other ordinances of the Township.
2. Maintenance. All signs and components thereof shall be kept in good repair and in a safe, neat, clean, and attractive condition.

3. Removal of Sign. The zoning administrator may order the removal of any sign erected or maintained in violation of this chapter. Such order shall be made in writing, delivered personally or by ordinary mail, and shall allow the person receiving the order thirty (30) days to remove the sign or to bring it into compliance. Such order shall be directed to the owner of such sign, or to the owner, possessor, or manager of the building, structure or premises on which such sign is located. The zoning administrator may remove a sign immediately and without notice, at the cost to the owner or lessee, if it is the zoning administrator's opinion that the condition of the sign presents an immediate threat to the safety of the public.

4. Abandoned Signs. The sign shall be removed by the owner or lessee of the premises upon which the sign is located when the business which it advertises is no longer conducted on the premises. If the owner or lessee fails to remove it within one hundred eighty (180) days of the termination of business, the zoning administrator, or a duly authorized representative of the Township, may remove the sign at cost to the property owner. When a successor to a defunct business agrees to maintain the signs as provided in this chapter, this removal requirement shall not apply.

5. Traffic Safety. No sign shall be placed so as to obstruct the view of approaching vehicular or pedestrian traffic from any direction or present a hazard to the safe flow of traffic. In the event that any sign violates this requirement, the zoning administrator may remove such sign to protect traffic. The owner of the property, or a business operator where such sign is located, shall first be notified of its impending removal. The property owner or business operator shall be given an opportunity to alter or replace such sign within twenty-four (24) hours to make it comply with this chapter.