

Article 7 Signs

Section 7-1 Intent

Signs are a necessary part of the environment. Some limitations, however, are placed on their use (number, size, location).

Section 7-2 Permit Required

With the exception of those signs specifically authorized in Section 7-11, no sign shall be erected without a permit from the administrator.

Section 7-3 Permit Application

Applications for permits shall be submitted on forms obtained at the office of the administrator. The administrator may waive any required plans if he can determine the proposed sign complies with the sign requirements of this ordinance without them. If required, each application shall be accompanied by plans which shall:

- (A) indicate the proposed site by identifying the property by ownership, location, and use;
- (B) show the location of the sign on the lot in relation to property lines and buildings, zoning district boundaries, right-of-way lines, and existing signs; and
- (C) show size, character, complete structural specifications, and methods of anchoring and support.

Section 7-4 Structural Requirements

Structural requirements for signs shall be those required in the North Carolina State Building Code.

Section 7-5 Sign Area Computation

Sign area shall be computed by the smallest square, triangle, rectangle, circle, or any combination thereof which will encompass the entire sign, including wall work, frame, or supports incidental to its decoration. In computing the area, only one side of the structure shall be considered.

Section 7-6 Maintenance

All signs, together with all supports and braces, shall be kept in good repair and in a neat and clean condition. No sign shall be continued which becomes, in the opinion of the administrator, structurally unsafe and endangers the safety of the public or property. The administrator may order the removal of any sign that is not maintained in accordance with the provisions of this section. Such removal shall be at the expense of the owner or lessee and shall occur within 10 days after written notification has been issued. If the order is not implemented within 30 days, the administrator may remove the sign at the expense of the owner or lessee, if authorized by the Town Board. Any temporary sign shall be removed within 30 days from the date the purpose ceases to exist.

Section 7-7 Location

- (A) No sign shall be erected or constructed so as to interfere with visual clearance along any street or at any intersection of 2 or more streets or highways. No sign shall be located in a street right-of-way.
- (B) No sign attached to a building shall project beyond the street curb or hang lower than 8 feet from the sidewalk or ground level.

Section 7-8 Traffic Safety

- (A) No sign shall be allowed that would, by its location, color or nature, be confused with or obstruct the view of traffic signs or signals, or would be confused with a flashing light of an emergency vehicle.
- (B) No sign shall use admonitions such as "Stop", "Go", "Slow", or "Danger", which might be confused with traffic directional signals.

Section 7-9 Illumination

Except for time or temperature units, no flashing or intermittent illuminated sign shall be permitted. Illumination devices such as, but not limited to, flood spotlights shall be so placed and so shielded as to prevent the rays of illumination being cast upon neighboring buildings and/or vehicles approaching from either direction.

Section 7-10 Nonconforming Signs

Nonconforming signs shall be allowed to remain in good repair for an indefinite period. However, under the following conditions, nonconforming signs shall comply with the regulations of this ordinance.

- (A) Any nonconforming sign on a lot where the principal structure is vacant for a period of 180 days shall be altered to conform to the regulations of this section or removed.
- (B) Any alteration of a nonconforming sign shall make that sign conform to the regulations of this section.
- (C) Any nonconforming sign damaged over 75 percent of assessed value by any means either shall be removed or repaired in a manner to conform with the regulations of this section.
- (D) Nonconforming signs, when removed for other than normal maintenance, may not be erected again, nor may such signs be replaced with another nonconforming sign.

Section 7-11 Signs Permitted in All Districts Without a Permit

The signs listed below shall be allowed in all zoning districts without a permit from the administrator. However, all signs using electrical wiring and connections shall require an electrical permit.

- (A) **Occupant and House Number:** Signs not exceeding one square foot in area and bearing only property numbers, box numbers, names of occupants, or other identification not having commercial connotations. Such signs shall not be illuminated.
- (B) **Public or Private Directional and Information:** Signs erected and maintained by public agencies or a church or civic organization which direct the public to specific sites or provide general information about a structure. Included in this category are historic markers, street and traffic control signs, directional and entrance and exit signs. Such signs shall not exceed 6 square feet, except entrance and exit signs shall not exceed 4 square feet in total area. They may be directly or indirectly illuminated.
- (C) **Professional and Home Occupation:** One professional or home occupation sign per dwelling not to exceed 2 square feet in area, which must be mounted flat against a wall or door or hung from a mailbox or lamp post. Such signs may be directly or indirectly illuminated except in a residential district, where they shall only be indirectly illuminated.

(D) Church or Nonprofit Organization Bulletin Board:

These signs shall not exceed 16 square feet in area. Such signs may be directly or indirectly illuminated.

(E) Temporary Lease, Rent, or Sale: One temporary real estate sign not exceeding 4 square feet in area may be placed on property that is for sale, lease, rent, or barter in a residential district and 16 square feet in a commercial, institutional or manufacturing district. When the property fronts on more than one street, one sign shall be allowed on each street frontage. Such signs shall not be illuminated.

(F) Construction: During the construction, repair, or alteration of a structure, temporary signs which denote builder, or other participants in the project, or its occupant to be, may be placed within the required yard setbacks as ground, wall, or roof signs. The total area of such signs shall not exceed 35 square feet. Such signs shall not be illuminated.

Section 7-12 Signs Requiring a Zoning Permit

(A) Residential Identification Signs (subdivision entrance signage)

- (1) **Zoning Districts Where Permitted:** All residential districts.
- (2) **Number of Signs:** One per entrance or two smaller matching pillars per entrance.
- (3) **Location:** Such signs shall not be located in a public right-of-way.
- (4) **Maximum Size:** Any one sign shall not exceed 18 square feet in area. If matching entrance pillars are constructed at the entrance of a subdivision, neighborhood, school, or similar use, the total sign area shall not exceed 18 square feet.
- (5) **Lighting:** Such signs may be directly, or indirectly illuminated.
- (6) **Height:** Such signs shall not exceed 6 feet in height.

(B) Business Signs: Wall (Attached)

- (1) **Zoning Districts Where Permitted:** B-1, B-1, M-1 and M-2 Districts

- (2) **Number of Signs:** None specified.
- (3) **Location:** Wall signs shall be located on the front of the building. However, they may be located on a side or rear of a building that is adjacent to an off-street parking area or a street right-of-way. Such signs shall be mounted parallel to the building and project no more than 18 inches from the building.
- (4) **Sign Area:** The total area of all attached signs shall not exceed 20 percent of the total wall area. However, the total sign area shall not exceed 100 square feet in B District and 150 square feet in the B-2, M-1 and M-2 Districts.
- (5) **Lighting:** Such signs may be directly or indirectly illuminated.
- (6) **Height:** No sign shall extend beyond the roof line of the building to which it is attached.

(C) Business Signs: Freestanding

- (1) **Zoning Districts Where Permitted:** B-2, M-1 and M-2 Districts.
- (2) **Number of Signs:** Any business may erect one freestanding sign for each 200 feet of frontage on a public street. If the lot fronts on more than one street, these standards shall apply to each street frontage.
- (3) **Location:** Any freestanding sign shall be set back at least 5 feet from the property line.
- (4) **Area:** Sign area shall be one square foot per linear foot of business frontage. However, the maximum size per sign shall not exceed 150 square feet in the B-2, M-1 or M-2 districts.
- (5) **Lighting:** Such signs may be directly or indirectly illuminated.
- (6) **Height:** Any sign shall not exceed 16 feet in height.

(D) Business Signs: Projecting

- (1) **Zoning Districts Where Permitted:** B-1, B-2, M-1 or M-2 Districts

- (2) **Number of Signs Permitted:** One projecting sign per principal building.
- (3) **Location:** Such signs may project horizontally a maximum of 6 feet, but shall be set back at least 2 feet from the back face of the curb or outer edge of the pavement where there is no curb. Setback distances for projecting signs which front on state roads must be approved by the North Carolina Department of Transportation. They shall be erected at a height of not less than 9 feet above the sidewalk or other pedestrian passageway. Also a projecting sign shall not extend above the roof line of the building.
- (4) **Area:** Projecting signs shall not exceed 9 square square feet in the B-1 District and 16 square feet in the B-2, M-1 or M-2 Districts.

(E) Billboards (Off-site Business Signs)

- (1) **Zoning District Where Permitted:** Not permitted
- (2) **Maximum Size of A Single Sign:** NA
- (3) **Spacing Between Signs:** NA

(F) Portable Signs

- (1) **Zoning District Where Permitted:** B-1, B-2, M-1 or M-2 Districts
- (2) **Setback from Curb:** Any sign shall be setback at least 5 feet from the curb or the edge of pavement where no curb exists.
- (3) **Lighting:** No blinking lights shall be permitted.
- (4) **Advertisement:** Only advertisement for goods and services provided on the lot where the sign is located shall be permitted.