

ARTICLE XX

SIGN STANDARDS

SECTION sec.05 – INTENT and PURPOSE

The intent and purpose of this Article is to:

- (A) Ensure that the constitutionally-guaranteed right of free speech is protected and allow signs as a means of communication;
- (B) Ensure that signs are located, designed, constructed, installed, and maintained in a manner that protects life, health, property, and the public welfare;
- (C) Protect public safety by prohibiting signs that: are structurally unsafe or poorly maintained; cause unsafe traffic conditions through distraction of motorists, confusion with official traffic control signs, or hindrance of vision; and impede safe movement or access of motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists;
- (D) Reduce visual distractions and obstructions to motorists travelling along, entering, or leaving streets, thereby maintaining or improving public safety;
- (E) Preserve the existing and desired residential and rural character of the Township;
- (F) Prevent off-site signs from conflicting with commercial, residential, and public uses;
- (G) Prevent visual blight and protect the desired aesthetic qualities of the Township by preventing visual clutter, protecting views, and preventing intrusion of commercial messages into non-commercial areas;
- (H) Prevent the proliferation of temporary signs that contribute to visual blight;
- (I) Limit the amount of light emitted by signs to protect the Township's natural, existing, and desired dark skies;
- (J) Allow for adequate and effective signage for commercial speech, non-commercial speech, and dissemination of public information, including, but not limited to: public safety information and notification as may be required by law;
- (K) Prevent the placement of signs in a manner that will conceal or obscure signs of adjacent businesses; and
- (L) Keep signs within a reasonable scale with respect to the buildings they identify.

SECTION sec.10 – SCOPE of ARTICLE

A sign shall not be installed, constructed, reconstructed, altered, or maintained without receiving a Sign Permit, except as outlined in this Article.

SECTION **sec.15** – PROHIBITED SIGNS

The following signs shall be prohibited.

- (A) **Off-Site Signs:** Signs that advertise a business or product that is not available on the site on which the sign is located shall be prohibited.
- (B) **Flashing Signs:** Signs that contain flashing, blinking, or strobe lights or signs that have the appearance of lighting associated with emergency vehicle lighting, traffic signals, or other official warning signs shall be prohibited.
- (C) **Confusing Signs:** Signs that have the appearance of official signs or use text similar to those used on official signs that may confuse motorists shall be prohibited.
- (D) **Moving Signs:** Signs that move, have moving parts, or simulate movement, including pennants, spinners, streamers, banners, balloons, and spotlights, shall be prohibited. This does not apply to non-commercial flags.
- (E) **Roof Signs:** Signs located above the roof line of the building shall be prohibited.
- (F) **Vehicle Signs:** Signs attached to, painted on, or on inoperable motor vehicle, recreational vehicle, trailer, or watercraft use primarily as a sign and not for its intended use shall be prohibited.
- (G) **Snipe Signs:** Signs attached to utility poles, light poles, trees within the right-of-way, or other public facilities shall be prohibited.
- (H) **Signs that Obstruct Access:** Signs that prevent free and unobstructed access to any door, window, fire escape, or other required exist shall be prohibited.
- (I) **Signs that Obstruct Vision:** Signs that obstruct or interfere with an official sign, signal, or device or obstruct or interfere with a driver's view of approaching, merging, or intersecting traffic, even when consistent with setback and other location standards, shall be prohibited.
- (J) **Signs in Right-of-Way:** Signs, other than official signs, located in, encroaching on, or overhanging street rights-of-way shall be prohibited.
- (K) **Signs on Fences:** Signs, including banners, attached to fences shall be prohibited.
- (L) **Signs in Clear-Vision Zone:** Signs, other than official signs, located in, encroaching on, or overhanging a clear-vision zone shall be prohibited.
- (M) **Unsafe Signs:** Signs that are structurally unsafe or are constructed in violation of the Building Code shall be prohibited.
- (N) **Illumination:** The following types of illumination shall be prohibited:
 - (1) **Temporary Signs:** Temporary signs shall not be illuminated.
 - (2) **Traffic Hazards:** Illumination that could distract motorists or otherwise create a traffic hazard shall be prohibited.
 - (3) **Glare and Non-Shielded Illumination:** Use of glaring, undiffused luminaires shall be prohibited.
 - (4) **Illumination by Other Sources:** Illumination by bare bulbs or flames shall be prohibited.
- (O) **Other Signs:** Any sign not expressly allowed in this Ordinance shall be prohibited.

SECTION **sec.20** – SIGNS NOT REQUIRING A SIGN PERMIT

The following signs do not require a Sign Permit. The standards of this Ordinance shall still apply to signs not requiring a Sign Permit.

- (A) **Official Signs:** Signs installed by a governmental agency for traffic control or public notice shall not require a Sign Permit.
- (B) **Official Flags:** Official flags shall not require a Sign Permit.
- (C) **Murals:** Murals that do not contain a commercial message shall not require a Sign Permit.
- (D) **Window Signs:** Window signs shall not require a Sign Permit.
- (E) **Temporary Signs:** Temporary signs shall not require a sign permit if they are displayed for sixty (60) days or less and are less than six (6) square feet in area.
- (F) **Maintenance of Signs:** Maintenance of existing signs, including replacement of sign faces, shall not require a Sign Permit.

SECTION **sec.25** – GENERAL SIGN PROVISIONS

- (A) **Determination of Sign Area:** Signs shall not exceed the maximum sign area allowed for that type of sign or zoning district. The sign area shall be expressed in square feet, measured to the nearest tenth of a square foot, and shall be computed as follows:
 - (1) **Single-Faced Signs:** Sign area for single-faced signs shall be the square footage of the sign face as measured by enclosing the most protruding points or edges of the sign face within a parallelogram, rectangle, circle, or triangle, excluding any frame.
 - (2) **Double-Faced Signs:** Sign area for signs with multiple faces shall be the area of the largest of the sign faces, provided all faces are part of the same structure and are no more than eighteen (18) inches apart. Otherwise, the sign area shall be the sum of all the areas of all the faces.
- (B) **Sign Materials:** Permanent signs shall be designed to be compatible with the character of building materials and landscaping to promote an overall unified and consistent aesthetic effect.
- (C) **Construction Standards:** The following standards shall apply to all permanent signs:
 - (1) **Fastenings:** All signs shall be erected in such a manner and with such materials to remain safe and secure during the period of use and all bolts, cables, and other parts of signs shall be kept painted and free from corrosion.
 - (2) **Support Location:** Poles, cables, or other supports or any nature shall not be placed within or above any right-of-way.
 - (3) **Sign Safety:** All signs and support structures shall have a clearance of at least four (4) feet from any electrical transmission lines, electric light pole, street light, traffic light, or other public or utility pole. All signs shall comply with the minimum wind pressure and other standards of the Building Code.
- (D) **Sign Maintenance:** Signs shall be maintained in a manner constructed and maintained in a manner consistent with the Building Code. Signs shall be kept neatly painted, stained, sealed, or preserved, including all frames and supports.
- (E) **Location:** Signs may be placed as outlined below.
 - (1) **Freestanding Signs:** Freestanding signs shall be placed in a front or waterbody yard and shall not be located within any clear-vision zone.

- (2) *Wall-Mounted Signs:* Wall-mounted signs shall be facing a front or waterbody yard or shall be facing an on-site or shared parking lot for the site.
 - (3) *Window Signs:* Window signs shall be located on the interior of the window.
 - (4) *Awning and Canopy Signs:* Awning and canopy signs shall be located on an awning attached to a structure and shall be facing a front or waterbody yard or facing an on-site or shared parking lot for the site.
 - (5) *Flags:* Flags shall be attached to a freestanding or building-mounted flagpole.
- (F) **Illumination:** Permanent signs may be illuminated only by steady, stationary, shielded light sources using approved electrical devices directed solely at the sign or internal to it, according to the following standards:
- (1) *Timer Controls:* Illuminated signs shall be equipped with a functional timer control. Signs shall not be illuminated after 10:00 pm or one half (1/2) hour after the use ends for the day, whichever is later, nor before 6:00 am or one half (1/2) hour before the beginning of the use for the day, whichever is earlier.
 - (2) *Non-glare, Shielded Lighting:* Use of glaring, undiffused luminaires shall be prohibited. Lights shall be shaded and/or shielded downward with light directed away from adjacent properties and streets.
 - (3) *Traffic Hazards:* Illumination that could distract motorists or otherwise create a traffic hazard shall be prohibited.
 - (4) *Illumination by Other Sources:* Illumination by bare bulbs or flames shall be prohibited.
 - (5) *Backlighting:* Signs with internal illumination shall have the lettering and graphics in a lighter color than the background to the maximum extent practical.

An administrative adjustment may be granted by the approving authority from this standard if all of the following are true:
 - a. Meeting this standard would require alteration of a trademark; and
 - b. The alternate design will not otherwise negatively impact the intent and purpose of this Article.
 - (6) *Wiring:* Wiring to illuminated signs not attached to a building shall be located underground.
- (G) **Electronic Message Signs:** Electronic message signs shall meet the following additional standards:
- (1) *Sign Area:* The electronic message sign area shall not exceed fifty (50) percent of the total sign area.
 - (2) *Message Changes:* Messages or images shall be displayed for at least thirty (30) seconds and the time to change the message or image shall be one (1) second or less.
 - (3) *Appearance of Movement:* Scrolling words or images or the appearance of movement shall be prohibited.
 - (4) *Light Intensity:* Electronic message signs shall not display light of such intensity to cause glare, impair the vision of an ordinary driver, or constitute a nuisance. Maximum luminance shall not exceed three-tenths (0.3) footcandles above ambient light levels at a distance, measured perpendicularly from the sign face, based on the size of the electronic message sign area as outlined in the table below. Maximum luminance shall not exceed one-tenths (0.1) footcandles above ambient light levels at adjacent lot lines of residentially-zoned or residentially-used lots.

Sign Area	Distance Measurement is Taken
10 square feet	32 feet
15 square feet	39 feet
20 square feet	45 feet

- (5) *Dimming*: Signs shall have automatic dimmers that lower the intensity of light at dusk.
- (6) *Certification*: The applicant shall provide written certification from the sign manufacturer that the light intensity has been factory-programmed not to exceed the above light intensity.
- (7) *Emergency Messages*: Sign owners shall allow Township, state, and federal governments to post messages in the event of an emergency.
- (H) *Window Sign Area*: Window signs shall have a maximum sign area of twenty-five (25) percent of the glass area of that façade.
- (I) *Substitution*: Any commercial sign may also be used for a non-commercial message.

SECTION **sec.30** – TEMPORARY SIGNS

- (A) *Temporary Signs*: Temporary signs shall meet the standards outlined in the table below.

Zoning District	Number of Signs ⁽¹⁾	Spacing ⁽²⁾	Maximum Area ⁽³⁾	Maximum Height ⁽⁴⁾⁽⁵⁾	Minimum Setbacks ⁽⁶⁾
AG, RC	1 sign per 650 feet of frontage or fraction thereof	600 feet	8 square feet	8 feet	Side -yard- 10 feet
PL	1 sign per 650 feet of frontage or fraction thereof	100 feet	10 square feet	6 feet	Side -yard- 10 feet
RR, LR, CU, MH	1 sign per frontage	60 feet	6 square feet	5 feet	Side-yard- 10 feet
C-1	1 sign per frontage, plus 1 additional sign per unit, maximum of 4 signs	30 feet	16 square feet	8 feet	Side-yard- 15 feet Waterbody yard- 50 feet

- (1) *Number of Signs*: Additional temporary signs shall be allowed as follows:
- One (1) additional temporary sign shall be allowed when the lot or a unit on the lot are listed for sale or lease.
 - Five (5) additional temporary non-commercial signs shall be allowed per lot for the period six (6) weeks prior to an election through one (1) week following an election.

- c. One (1) additional temporary sign shall be allowed when a commercial service is being provided to the lot for a period one (1) week prior to and one (1) week following the beginning and conclusion of the commercial service.
- (2) *Spacing*: The horizontal distance between other signs located on the same lot. This standard shall not apply to additional temporary signs permitted in §xx.30(A)(1).
- (3) *Sign Area*: The area enclosing the most protruding points or edges of all sign faces of a sign within a single geometric form or combinations of such forms, excluding framing.
- (4) *Sign Height*: The vertical distance between from the average grade along a sign to the highest point of the sign, including framing and support structure.
- (5) *Sign Height*: This standard does not apply to wall-mounted temporary signs.
- (6) *Setbacks*: The horizontal distance between any portion of a sign and lot lines, structure, and other features.

(B) Illumination: Temporary signs shall not be illuminated.

(C) Sign Permit: Temporary signs with a sign area of at least six (6) square feet installed or intended to be installed for more than sixty (60) days shall require a Sign Permit.

SECTION **sec.**35 – PERMITTED SIGNS

(A) Freestanding Signs: Freestanding signs shall be permitted accessory to a permitted or special land use and shall meet the standards outlined in the table below.

Table xx.35(A)					
Monument Signs					
Zoning District	Number⁽¹⁾	Maximum Area⁽²⁾	Maximum Height⁽³⁾⁽⁴⁾	Setbacks⁽⁵⁾	Lighting
AG, RC	1 per frontage	24 square feet ⁽⁸⁾	6 feet	Front- 20 feet Other- 30 Adjacent Dwelling- 50 feet	Yes ⁽⁶⁾
PL	1 per frontage	24 square feet	6 feet	Front- 10 feet Other- 20 feet Adjacent Dwelling- 50 feet	Yes ⁽⁶⁾
RR, LR, CU, MH	1 per frontage	20 square feet ⁽⁸⁾	4 feet	Front- 15 feet Other- 20 Adjacent Dwelling- 50 feet	Yes ⁽⁷⁾
C-1	1 per frontage	32 square feet ⁽⁹⁾	8 feet ⁽⁹⁾	Front- 15 feet Other- 20 feet	Yes
Pole Signs					
Zoning District	Number⁽¹⁾	Maximum Area⁽²⁾	Maximum Height⁽³⁾	Setbacks⁽⁵⁾	Lighting
RC	1 per frontage	24 square feet	?? feet ⁽¹⁰⁾	Front- 20 feet Other Lot Lines- 30 feet Adjacent Dwellings- 50 feet	Yes
C-1	1 per frontage	32 square feet	?? feet ⁽¹⁰⁾	Front- 15 feet Other Lot Lines- 20 feet	Yes

- (1) *Number*: This number includes all freestanding signs, both monument and pole signs.
 - (2) *Sign Area*: The area enclosing the most protruding points or edges of all sign faces of a sign within a single geometric form or combinations of such forms, excluding framing.
 - (3) *Sign Height*: The vertical distance between the average grade along a sign to the highest point of the sign, including framing and support structure.
 - (4) *Setbacks*: The horizontal distance between any portion of a sign and lot lines, structure, and other features.
 - (5) *Administrative Adjustment of Setback*: A reduced front-yard setback may be granted by the approving authority if all of the following are true:
 - a. *Site Conditions*: The topography or other structures on or adjacent to the site would prevent the sign from meeting the front-yard setback and still be reasonably visible;
 - b. *Safety*: The reduced front-yard setback shall not result in a condition less safe than if the sign met the required setback;
 - c. *Condition*: Condition here.
 - (6) *Lighting*: Illuminated signs located in the Agriculture, Recreation Conservation, and Public Lands Districts shall be connected to a timer and shall be turned off from 10:00 pm until 6:00 am.
 - (7) *Lighting*: Illuminated signs in Rural Residential, Lake Residential, Common Use Residential, and Mobile Home shall not be backlit.
 - (8) *Multiple-Dwelling Developments*: Residential developments with more than ten (10) lots shall have a maximum sign area of thirty (30) square feet.
 - (9) *Business Center Sign*: A sign located on business center shall have a maximum sign area forty (40) square feet and a maximum sign height of ten (10) feet.
 - (10) *Ground Clearance*: Pole signs shall have a ground clearance of at least six (6) feet.
- (B) *Wall Signs*: Wall, awning, and canopy signs shall be permitted accessory to a permitted or special land use as outlined in the table below.

<i>Zoning District</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Maximum Area⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾</i>	<i>Lighting</i>
AG, RC	1 per street-facing façade	8 square feet	No
PL	1 per street-facing façade	12 square feet	Yes
RR, LR, CU, MH	1 per frontage	6 square feet	Yes
C-1	1 per frontage plus 1 per unit	12 square feet or 10 percent of the façade area, whichever is greater	Yes

- (1) *Sign Area*: The area enclosing the most protruding points or edges of all sign faces of a sign within a single geometric form or combinations of such forms, excluding framing.
- (2) *Sign Area*: This area excludes window signs.
- (3) *Depth*: Wall and canopy signs shall not extend more than one (1) foot from the façade. Awning signs shall not extend more than four (4) feet from the façade.
- (4) *Ground Clearance*: Wall, awning, and canopy signs shall have a ground clearance of at least eight (8) feet.

SECTION **sec.**40 – LEGALLY NONCONFORMING SIGNS

The continued use of legally nonconforming signs shall be permitted, as outlined in this Section. Such signs shall not be enlarged, expanded, or extended, with the intent that legally nonconforming signs shall eventually be eliminated or replaced upon their natural deterioration or destruction. The continuance of legally nonconforming signs shall be subject to the standards of this Section.

- (A) **Structural Changes:** The faces, supports, or other parts of legally nonconforming signs shall not be structurally changed or enlarged unless the resulting changed, altered, substituted, or enlarged sign conforms to the standards of this Ordinance.
- (B) **Damages:** Legally nonconforming signs that have been destroyed or damaged by more than fifty (50) percent of its replacement cost shall not be reconstructed except in conformity with the standards of this Ordinance.

SECTION **sec.**45 – REMOVAL OF SIGNS

- (A) **Permanent Signs:** Permanent signs erected or maintained in violation of this Ordinance shall be removed.
- (1) **Notice:** The Zoning Administrator shall order the removal by sending a written notice to the property owner. The notice shall order removal of the sign or outline what action would bring the sign into compliance with this Ordinance and shall outline a reasonable length of time, at least fourteen (14) days, for removal or compliance.
 - (2) **Removal:** Upon failure to remove the sign or bring the sign into compliance, the Township may remove the sign immediately and without further notice, at its discretion. Any cost incurred for removal may be assessed to the property owner.
- (B) **Dangerous Signs:** Signs that pose an immediate threat to safety shall be removed immediately.
- (1) **Notice:** The Zoning Administrator shall order the removal by sending a written notice to the property owner, except as outlined in this Article. The notice shall order removal of the sign or outline what action would bring the sign into compliance with this Ordinance and shall outline a reasonable length of time for removal or compliance.
 - (2) **Removal:** Upon failure to remove the sign or bring the sign into compliance, the Township may remove the sign immediately and without further notice, at its discretion. Any cost incurred for removal may be assessed to the property owner.
 - (3) **Emergency Removal:** The Township may remove a sign that poses an immediate threat to safety without sending notice to the property owner if the Zoning Administrator certifies the nature of the immediate threat and that a delay resulting from noticing the property owner is likely to cause harm to individuals or property.
- (C) **Signs in Right-of-Way:** Signs erected within the right-of-way in violation of this Ordinance may be removed by the Township without notice. Any cost incurred for removal may be assessed to the sign owner.

SECTION **sec.**50 – SIGN PERMIT PROCESS

(A) **Application:** Sign application permits shall be reviewed and approved by the Zoning Administrator.

- (1) **Sign Application:** The application shall include a completed sign application signed by the applicant and the property owner, if different.
- (2) **Site or Plot Plan:** The application shall include a site plan or plot plan showing the location of the proposed sign and setbacks.
- (3) **Sign Detail:** The application shall include sign details, including, but not limited to: height, dimensions, sign area, and illumination information.
- (4) **Other Information:** The application shall include other information necessary to determine compliance with this Ordinance.

(B) **Inspection:** Signs shall be inspected by the Zoning Administrator or designee.

- (1) **New Signs:** An inspection shall be conducted prior to and following installation of new signs requiring a Sign Permit.
- (2) **Existing Signs:** Signs requiring Sign Permits may be inspected periodically to ensure continued compliance with this Ordinance.

(C) **Amendment:** Sign Permit applications may be amended prior to installation of the sign.

(D) **Revocation:** A Sign Permit approval may be revoked if the sign is installed in a manner inconsistent with the approval or with this Ordinance.

(E) **Expiration:** A Sign Permit approval shall expire if the sign has not been completely installed within one hundred eighty (180) days of the approval date. A single, thirty (30) day extension may be granted upon request of the applicant with a demonstration that the sign will be installed during the extension period.

SECTION **sec.**55 – VIOLATIONS

The installation, construction, reconstruction, alteration, or maintenance of a sign requiring a Sign Permit without receiving a Sign Permit or the installation, construction, reconstruction, alteration, or maintenance of a sign in any manner inconsistent with this Ordinance is a violation of this Ordinance.

- (A) **Party to Violation:** Any person, agent, or property owner who causes a sign to be in violation of this Ordinance shall be a party to the violation.
- (B) **Separate Violation:** Each sign in violation of this Ordinance shall be considered a separate violation. Each day a sign is in violation of this Ordinance shall be considered a separate violation.
- (C) **Nuisance Per Se:** Any sign maintained in violation of this Ordinance is considered a nuisance per se. (SEE THIS ARTICLE)
- (D) **Municipal Civil Infraction:** Violation of the provisions of this Article shall be a municipal civil infraction.

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