

NOTE 20 - SIGN CONTROLS

1. Purpose

It is the intent of these regulations to provide for attractive, coordinated, informative and efficient signing for uses in the city. Each site plan application shall include a sign plan, showing the specific design, location, size, construction and illumination, in compliance with the following regulations.

2. General Regulations

The following regulations shall apply to all permitted and pre-existing non-conforming signs:

- a. Only those signs identifying the name, business, occupant, service, address or product offered or sold on the premises shall be permitted to be erected. Coming events, community bulletin boards and time and temperature signs shall also be permitted.
- b. Signs within the interior of a structure, designed to be seen and read from the exterior, shall be considered as part of any maximum signs area.
- c. Signs attached to a principal structure shall not extend above the roof line of the parapet.
- d. No flashing, moving or apparent moving signs shall be permitted, except for time and temperature and changeable copy displays.
- e. Unless otherwise stipulated in this ordinance, the top of free-standing signs shall not exceed the height limit of principal structures in the zone where located or 25 feet, whichever is less.
- f. With the exception of awning or canopy signs in the CRO and RC&S districts, no sign, whether permanent or temporary, other than municipal, county or state signs, shall be erected within the right-of-way of any street or approved sight easements nor shall any sign be located to constitute a traffic hazard. No sign, be it of a political, educational, charitable, civic, professional, religious or like nature, or of a personal nature, shall be erected upon any utility pole, tree, light standard, or monument located within the right-of-way of any street or on any public property. [Amended 09-03-98 by Ord. No. 20-98].

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- g. All temporary signs, excluding banner signs for business or commercial establishments, announcing or advertising any political, educational, charitable, civic, professional, religious or like campaign or event, shall be removed by the advertiser within five days after the event shall have taken place. No permit shall be required for such temporary signs, provided that:
- (1) Only one sign is permitted per lot or parcel held under common ownership;
 - (2) The area of an individual sign does not exceed 16 sq. ft. in a residential district and 64 sq. ft. in a commercial or industrial district;
 - (3) The height from the ground to the top of the sign shall not exceed 6 ft in a residential district;
 - (4) The minimum setback for signs in a residential district shall be 5 ft. from a right-of-way line or side property line provided that no sign shall be placed in a sight triangle.
- h. Advertising signs shall not be permitted in any zoning district in the city.
- i. Whenever a sign shall become structurally unsafe or endangers the safety of the building or the public, the building inspector shall order such sign be made safe or removed. Such order shall be complied with within ten (10) days of the receipt of such order by the person owning or using the sign, or the owner of the building or premises on which such sign is affixed or erected.
- j. Freestanding signs shall not be located closer than the following distances to the street rights-of-way:

<u>Area of Sign</u>	<u>Minimum Distance</u>
Less than 25 square feet	20 feet
26-75 square feet	25 feet
76 or more square feet	30 feet

The Planning Board shall be authorized to waive the strict application of this paragraph if, because of local site conditions, strict adherence would cause inconvenience to the public or constitute a hazard or be inconsistent with acceptable landscaping design.

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- k. The area surrounding ground signs shall be kept neat, clean, free of litter and landscaped. The tenant, owner or occupant to which the sign applies, shall be responsible for maintaining the condition of the area.
- l. Directional signs having areas of less than four and one-half square feet (4.5 sq. ft.) are exempt from area and location regulations, but shall be shown on an approved site plan and further providing they do not constitute a hazard to the traveling public.
- m. All signs shall be kept in good repair, which shall include replacement or repair of broken structural elements, casings or faces, maintenance of legibility, and all lighting elements working. Whenever a sign shall become structurally unsound or a hazard to the public or a building, the building inspector shall order the sign to be made safe or removed. Such order shall be complied with within ten (10) days of the receipt thereof by the building owner or the occupant to which the sign applies.
- n. Any location where business goods are no longer sold or produced or where services are no longer provided shall have 90 days to remove any remaining or derelict on premises signs following notification by the city and at the expense of the owner of such property. Where due written notification has been given by the city and compliance has not been made within the required 90 day period, the city may cause removal of such sign and charge the cost of such removal to the owner.
- o. Applicants shall also comply with all applicable county, state and federal sign regulations.
- p. No sign shall be erected containing information on it which states or implies that a property may be used for any purpose not permitted under the provisions of the City's Zoning Ordinance as it applies to the property on which the sign is located.
- q. No sign shall be illuminated between the hours of 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. the following morning, unless the business or use so advertised is open to the public later than 10 p.m. in which case the establishment may keep its sign illuminated until the business closes, but not after.

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- r. Portable signs shall be permitted only in the RC&S and CRO districts subject to compliance with the regulations in Section 8 of this Note. Portable signs shall not be permitted in any other zoning district of the city. All signs shall be appropriately anchored.
- s. Banner signs shall be permitted at business or commercial establishments provided that: there shall be no more than one (1) banner signs per establishment at one time up to a maximum four (4) signs per year; such signs shall be erected for no longer than thirty (30) days per sign; the text of these signs shall not be repeated during any calendar year (January 1st to December 31st) at each establishment; the total area of banner signs per establishment shall not exceed thirty (30) square feet; and banner signs shall be affixed to the building facades only. The permit number and expiration date of the sign shall be written in two (2) inch high black letters and located in the lower right hand corner of the sign. Prior to erection of banner signs, the owners of each establishment must file an application form, prepared and provided by the Building Inspector, and application fee of \$10.00 per sign with the Building Inspector. No banner signs will be permitted in the Historic District without prior approval from the Gloucester City Historic Preservation Commission. Failure to submit the required application and fee, or failure to remove a banner sign by the expiration date may result in a fine of \$50.00 per day fro each day that the sign is erected illegally.

3. Name Plate and Identification Signs for Single-Family Dwellings

A sign indicating the name or address of the occupant may be permitted, provided that the sign shall be no larger than two square feet (2 sq. ft.). A permitted home occupation may be included with the name of the occupant. Only one sign per dwelling unit is permitted in addition to a mailbox identification sign.

4. Sales or Rental Signs

Signs advertising the sale or rental of the premises upon which they are located may be permitted, provided that:

- a. The size of any such sale or rental sign shall not exceed eight square feet (8 sq. ft.) The height of any such sign shall not exceed six feet (6 ft.);
- b. Not more than one sign is placed upon any property;
- c. Such signs shall be promptly removed when premises are sold or rented;

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- d. Developments with four or more homes for sale or industrial or commercial properties may be advertised on a sign not to exceed 32 square feet (32 sq. ft.) in an area eight feet (8 ft.) in height. One such sign shall be permitted on each frontage, if the development fronts on more than one street. All development signs shall be removed with 96 percent (95%) of the lots have been initially sold.

5. Institutional Signs

Signs of schools, colleges, churches and other institutions of a similar public or semi-public nature may be erected and maintained, provided that:

- a. The size of any free-standing sign shall not exceed 30 sq. ft., the height no more than 8 ft., and not more than one such sign is to be placed on a property, unless such property fronts upon more than one street, in which instance a sign may be erected on each frontage.
- b. Signs affixed to the facade of the structure shall be permitted, provided the sign shall not exceed five percent (5%) of the building facade.

6. Signs In Non-Residential Districts, Excluding the CRO and RS&C Districts, for Single-Tenant and Single-Structure Developments

Business signs may be erected and maintained when in compliance with the following provisions:

- a. The total gross advertising area of all signs, other than free-standing signs, on any one property shall not be greater than five percent (5%) of the area of the building face fronting on the street. The maximum area of all signs, except free-standing signs, shall not exceed 100 sq. ft.
- b. One free-standing sign shall be permitted on any property. The total advertising area shall not exceed five percent (5%) of the building face fronting on the street, but in no event shall it be greater than 100 sq. ft.

7. Signs for Planned Developments, Shopping Centers or Industrial Parks

Shopping centers, industrial parks, planned developments, multi-tenant structures or multi-structure uses shall be governed by the following regulations:

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- a. Each such development shall submit a signing plan to the Planning Board for approval. Such signing plan shall include details on:

- (1) letter style,
- (2) lighting,
- (3) color,
- (4) construction and materials,
- (5) height of sign,
- (6) height above grade or below roof line,
- (7) locations; and
- (8) standards.

- b. The signing plan shall be based on an integrated design theme to include all of the elements of (1) through (8) above. All of the above elements shall be designed to be in harmony and consistent with each other, the architectural and materials of principal structures and the landscaping plan.

The Planning Board shall determine if a proposed signing plan meets the goals and objectives of this subsection.

- c. The total area of all signs affixed to a structure shall not exceed five percent (5%) of the building facade of the structure. The Planning Board may permit total sign area up to seven percent (7%) of the building facade if, in the Planning Board's judgment, such additional area shall assist in developing a harmonious and integrated sign plan in accordance with the goals and objectives of this subsection.

- d. Only one free-standing sign shall be permitted on any single property, regardless of the number of establishments on the property, except that the Planning Board may authorize an additional free-standing sign if the property has access from more than one public street.

8. Sign Control Applicable in the CRO and RC&S Districts

- a. The total area of all building mounted signs, including, but not limited to wall, projecting and window signs shall not exceed 5% of the facade of the building that faces the street.
- b. Signs shall be themed to be consistent with the styles and materials shown in sub-section f.

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- c. Wall signs shall be placed below the window on the second floor but no higher than 15 feet above the sidewalk.
- d. Awning or canopy signs may be installed provided that:
 - (1) The style of awning or canopy is compatible with the architectural character of the building.
 - (2) The maximum size of the lettering on the awning or canopy shall be 1 foot.
 - (3) There shall be a minimum vertical clearance of 7.5 feet between the bottom of the awning or canopy and the sidewalk.
 - (4) Awning or canopy signs may extend up to 4 ft. into the street right-of-way.
- e. Sandwich board signs or easel signs advertising daily specials for cafes and restaurants shall be permitted provided that:
 - (1) The maximum height of the sign shall not exceed 4 ft. and the maximum area shall not exceed 12 sq. ft.
 - (2) The signs do not block public access.
 - (3) The signs are placed adjacent to the building.
 - (4) The signs are removed nightly.
- f. Sign Materials and Theming for the CRO and RC&s Districts

The following plates depict the types and style of signs appropriate for uses in the CRO and RC&S districts.