

ARTICLE XIII

SIGNS

SECTION 1300 **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this section shall be to: establish standards for the design, size and location of signs; establish the review, approval and permit procedures for all signs; regulate the construction and maintenance of signs; and provide for the removal of any unauthorized signs placed within road rights-of-way. All signs within the Township shall conform to the provisions of this Article.

SECTION 1301 **DEFINITIONS**

The definitions which shall apply in the construction and application of this article are specified in Section 200 - Definitions under the definition of "Sign".

SECTION 1302 **BASIC REQUIREMENTS - ALL DISTRICTS**

The following requirements are applicable to all signs in any district:

A. Approval Required

Approval and issuance of a building permit is required prior to the erection, installation, alteration or relocation of any sign, ~~unless specifically exempt from permit requirements elsewhere in this Article.~~ Site plan review and approval shall be required for all signs proposed in conjunction with a proposed development which is required to receive site plan review and approval.

B. Construction and Maintenance

All signs shall be constructed and maintained in compliance with all local building codes and applicable laws and shall be of sturdy construction to withstand normal natural elements. Signs which have missing letters, burned out illumination elements or other damaged or missing parts shall be considered improperly maintained.

C. Signs in Rights-of-way

1. ~~No sign shall be located in, project into or overhang a public right-of-way or easement except as follows:~~

- a. Signs provided by local, county, state or federal governments.
- b. Required legal notices.
- c. Mailboxes and newspaper delivery boxes.

2. All signs located in a right-of-way or easement which are not removed following a written correction notice may be removed by the Township and a fee assessed against the persons responsible for its placement, including the owners of the property and sign, sign erector and advertising agency, if applicable. Such fee shall cover all the costs of pickup, storage, legal and administrative processing. Signs located in, projecting into or overhanging a public right-of-way or easement may be removed immediately by the Township if such sign poses a clear safety hazard either physically or due to blockage of view.

D. Clear Vision Area

No sign shall be erected, established or maintained which will obstruct the view of vehicles and/or pedestrians at intersections with other roadways or driveways in conformance with the provisions of Sections 1201 and 1202. This minimum open area may be increased by the Township due to topography or other site characteristics.

E. Sign Area

Area of a sign shall be determined by multiplying the height, including ornamental features, times the width, including ornamental features. For a circle, the sign area shall be determined from the outer circumference. For a sign which consists of individual letters or other graphic components the area shall be calculated by multiplying the height times the length of a rectangle that would fully enclose all the letters and other graphic components of the sign. For a sign which consists of parallel panels facing in opposite directions, the area of the largest of the panels shall be used in calculating the area of the sign. Any sign with three or more panels facing in opposite directions that are not parallel shall be cause for each separate panel to be included in determining the sign area. The maximum size of a sign is also dependent upon the width of the site upon which it is located. These requirements are set forth in the respective district standards.

F. Moving Signs

Moving signs are limited to those which provide alternating time and temperature or financial indexes. Any moving sign shall be limited to one color of illumination and no more than two (2) revolutions, changes or movements per minute.

G. Sign Lighting

When provided, sign lighting should be of an interior nature (backlighting). Where, due to physical, aesthetic or other reasons related to the need and purpose of the sign, exterior lighting is utilized, all such lighting shall be designed and shielded to avoid any glare onto adjacent property or rights of way and to prevent distractions to motorists or pedestrians.

H. Vehicle Signs

Signs painted on, or otherwise affixed to, trucks, trailers or other vehicles shall be subject to the requirements set forth herein for portable signs unless all of the following conditions are met:

1. The vehicle or trailer has a valid license.
2. The vehicle or trailer is operable and used for transportation, deliveries and/or services related to the principal permitted use which is the subject of the sign.
3. The vehicle or trailer is actively used in such a fashion which requires it to be off the site on a daily basis.
4. Any vehicle which fails to meet these conditions or is parked on the site during non-business hours and which is permitted to be stored on the site under the provisions of the zoning classification in which it is located shall be parked in the rear yard in an area not visible from adjacent rights-of-way.

I. Fees

Fees for site plan review and/or building permits are established by the Township Board and must be paid in full prior to issuance of any permit for erection or placement of a sign.

J. Abandoned Signs

Signs and mountings which have been abandoned shall be removed by the sign owner of the premises. Abandoned signs for the purposes of this ordinance shall mean:

1. Any temporary sign which relates to a use or event which has ceased to exist for thirty (30) or more days;
2. Any permanent sign which related to a building, use or event which has been vacant or inactive for a period of six (6) months or more. A business or activity which is temporarily inactive due to a change in ownership or management, or due to the seasonal nature of the use shall not be deemed abandoned unless the vacancy or inactivity exceeds one (1) year.

K. Prohibited Signs

Signs prohibited in all districts include:

1. Roof signs.

2. Signs containing flashing, intermittent or moving lights. This provision is not intended to exclude signs which give the time or temperature or have other changeable copy with no flashing messages, symbols, or characters and where the display is not changed more than once every 30 seconds (See Section 1302 F).
3. ~~Signs affixed to trees, rocks, shrubs or similar natural features,~~ provided, signs denoting a site of historic significance may be allowed.
4. Signs which imitate traffic signals, traffic direction signs, similar traffic control devices or emergency vehicle warning lights.
5. Temporary signs mounted upon trucks, vans or other wheeled devices. Signs permanently painted on, or, otherwise permanently displayed upon a vehicle, licensed and operating on the public streets and highways, identifying the owners occupation or livelihood or personal signs not directed to business shall be permitted as set forth herein.
6. Signs which make use of words such as "stop", "look", "danger" or any other words, phrases, symbols, or characters in such a manner that is likely to interfere with, mislead or confuse traffic.
7. Any sign containing obscene matter.
8. Any sign unlawfully installed, erected or maintained.
9. "A" Frame, "T" shaped or inverted "T" shaped signs, or any other signs not permanently anchored or secured to the ground or a building in conformance with the regulations set forth herein.
10. Festoon signs.
11. Any sign not expressly permitted herein.

SECTION 1303 SIGNS IN AGRICULTURAL AND RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS

Signs in AG, SF, R-1, R-2 and R-3 districts shall pertain to permitted uses only and shall be located upon the same property to which the sign relates, unless otherwise provided herein, and shall conform with the following:

A. Home Identification Sign

One (1) freestanding sign per dwelling indicating the property number, occupants name or name of a permitted home occupation or limited business use shall be permitted. Such signs shall not be illuminated, shall not exceed two (2) square feet in area, and shall not exceed four (4) feet in height.

B. Agriculture/Horticulture Signs

In the AG - Agriculture and SF - Suburban Farm districts one (1) sign advertising agricultural and/or horticultural products grown on the premises shall be permitted in conjunction with a temporary roadside stand. The sign shall not exceed sixteen (16) square feet in area, four (4) feet in height nor be located closer than fifteen (15) feet to any property line. The sign shall be erected not more than two (2) weeks prior to opening of sales and removed within one (1) week of the end of sales.

C. Trespassing Signs

Trespassing signs, not exceeding two (2) square feet may be located on any property line.

D. Non-Residential Ground Signs Permitted

Other permitted non-residential uses such as churches and schools (excluding home occupations or limited businesses) are allowed one (1) ground sign provided it does not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in area and four (4) feet in height. This sign shall be setback a minimum fifteen (15) feet from any street right-of-way line and fifty (50) feet from any abutting residentially zoned property. Should a permitted use have access to more than (1) roadway a second ground sign of the same size may be permitted to direct the proper flow of traffic.

E. Non-Residential Wall Signs Permitted

Other permitted non-residential uses such as churches and schools (excluding home occupations and limited businesses) may be allowed one (1) wall sign oriented toward the principal means of vehicular ingress and egress. The maximum size of said sign shall not exceed five (5) percent of the building facade upon which it is mounted or fifty (50) square feet whichever is less.

F. Entrance-way Signs

No more than two signs are permitted for each entrance to subdivision, apartment or condominium project. Any such signs are limited to sixteen (16) square feet in area and four (4) feet in height. The placement of any such sign within a public boulevard entrance requires approval of the Road Commission.

G. Directional Signs

One directional sign, not exceeding two (2) square feet in area, may be located at each ingress and egress driveway. Additional directional signs, not exceeding two (2) square feet in area, may be permitted as needed for traffic and pedestrian safety as determined by the

Township. Directional signs shall not exceed four (4) feet in height and shall be setback a minimum fifteen (15) feet from any right of way line.

H. Real Estate Signs

One real estate sign is permitted, in a required front yard, on any lot or parcel which is available for rent, sale or lease. These temporary signs shall not exceed six (6) square feet in area.

I. Temporary Signs

Temporary signs may be authorized for special events by the Administrative Official, for not more than fifteen (15) days at any one time or more than thirty (30) days during any twelve consecutive months. The issuance of a permit shall be limited to public and non-profit organizations. Any such sign shall not exceed thirty two (32) square feet in area, six (6) feet in height and shall be located upon the premises at which the event will occur. In no instance shall any temporary sign be located in a right-of-way or easement.

SECTION 1304 SIGNS IN NON-RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS

Various types of business signs serve to inform potential users of locations, events, availability, products and services. In order to most efficiently and equitably meet these needs there are certain requirements necessary to minimize confusion and distractions to the general public and thereby create a business environment which is more attractive, comprehensive and viable. Sign requirements are as follows:

A. Freestanding Signs

All freestanding signs shall be ground signs unless the criteria outlines in Section 1304.A1, Footnote 2 below are met for a post-pylon sign. Freestanding sign requirement are as follows:

1. Maximum Sign Height

Zoning District	Ground-Sign ¹	Post-Pylon Sign ²
CP	6'	12'
C, LI	8'	15'

Footnotes:

1. For ground signs located on a landscape berm, the berm shall not exceed a height of three (3) feet within fifteen (15) feet of the sign and shall be a part of the approved landscape plan for the site.
2. In instances where it is clearly demonstrated by the applicant that visibility would be seriously impacted by installation of a ground sign, a post-pylon sign may be permitted after site plan review and approval. For purposes of this sub-section, visibility is related only to ingress/egress of pedestrians and vehicles - not to visibility of the building or use advertised by the subject sign. The bottom edge of the post-pylon sign must be a minimum 8' from grade.

2. Minimum Setback to Any Portion of the Sign

Zoning District	Right of Way	Non-Residential District Property Line	Residential District Property Line
CP	15'	25'	50'
C, LI	15'	25'	50'

3. Maximum Size of Signs

The maximum size of sign permitted on a lot or parcel is dependent upon lot width and the maximum size of sign permissible. The smaller of these two figures determines the maximum sign size. See Section 1302.E for explanation of sign area calculation.

Zoning District	Permitted Sign Area Per Front Foot of Lot (Square Feet)	Maximum Size of Sign (Square Feet)
CP	.75	50
C, LI	.75	75

4. Maximum Number of Signs

A maximum of one (1) freestanding sign is permitted per lot or parcel. In instances where a parcel contains a minimum lot frontage of at least four hundred (400) feet a second freestanding sign may be permitted to identify a second principal site use. This provision is contingent upon the second sign being no more than fifty (50) percent of the size permitted the first sign, a minimum one hundred fifty (150) feet separation be between any freestanding signs on the site and that all other setback requirements are met.

B. Wall Signs

The total area of all wall signs shall not exceed ten (10) percent of a (the) wall. The maximum size of any individual wall sign shall be two hundred (200) sq. ft.

C. Window Signs

Window signs shall not cover more than twenty (20) percent of any window or transparent areas.

D. Canopy Entry Signs

Canopy entry signs shall not exceed four (4) square feet in area and no more than one (1) such sign shall be permitted per public pedestrian building entrance. Canopy entry signs

shall be perpendicular to the building and shall have at least eight (8) feet of clearance.

E. Canopy Signs

Canopy signs are considered wall signs for purposes of calculating total size of signage permitted in conformance with Section 1304 B above.

F. Temporary/Portable Signs

Temporary or portable signs may be permitted by the Administrative Official. One such sign may be permitted at any one time for a period of time not exceeding fifteen (15) days in any twelve consecutive months per principal use. In the case of a multiple tenant development the aggregate amount of time allowed for temporary/portable signs shall not exceed sixty (60) days during any twelve (12) consecutive months with each tenant permitted a maximum 15 days. No more than one such sign shall be permitted at any one time and such sign shall not exceed 32 square feet.

G. Trespassing Signs

Trespassing Signs of not over two (2) square feet are permitted along any property line.

H. Real Estate Signs

One real estate sign is permitted, in a required front yard, on a lot or parcel which is available for rent, sale or lease. Such signs shall not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in area or eight (8) feet in height.

I. Directional Signs

One directional sign, not exceeding two (2) square feet in area, may be located at each ingress and egress driveway. Additional directional signs, not exceeding two (2) square feet in area, may be permitted as needed for traffic and pedestrian safety as determined by the Township. Directional signs shall not exceed four (4) feet in height and shall be setback a minimum fifteen (15) feet from any right of way line.

J. Non-Accessory Signs (Billboards)

Non-accessory signs are permitted only in the C and LI districts after site plan review and approval by the Planning Commission in conformance with the following:

1. Maximum Sign Height

Zoning District	Non-Accessory Sign
C, LI	25'

- Footnotes: 1. For non-accessory signs located on a berm, the berm shall not exceed a height of three (3) feet within fifteen (15) feet of the sign and shall be a part of the approved site plan.
 2. The bottom edge of the non-accessory sign must be a minimum eight (8') from grade.

2. Minimum Setback to Any Portion of the Sign

Zoning District	Any Other Non-Accessory Sign	Right of Way	Non-Residential District Property Line	Residential District Property Line
C, LI	1000'	50'	50'	100'

3. Maximum Size of Signs

The maximum size of a non-accessory sign permitted on a lot or parcel shall be in conformance with the following:

Zoning District	Maximum Size of Sign (Square Feet)
C, LI	75

4. Maximum Number of Signs

A maximum of one (1) non-accessory sign is permitted per lot or parcel.

SECTION 1305 POLITICAL SIGNS

Political signs shall not require a Township permit, but shall be subject to the following regulations:

- A. All political signs must be erected on private property. The erection of signs within a public right-of-way or on utility poles is prohibited.
- B. The size and number of political signs shall be as follows:

Zoning District	Maximum Size (Square Feet)	Maximum Number of Signs Per Lot or Parcel
CP, AG, SF, R-1, R-2, R-3	4	1 (Per Candidate or Issue)
C, LI	8	1 (Per Candidate or Issue)

- C. No political sign shall impede visibility and shall be located in conformance with Sections 1201 and 1202.
- D. Political signs shall not be illuminated.

- E. Political signs related to a special, primary or general election shall be erected no more than thirty (30) days prior to the election and shall be removed no later than five (5) days after the election.
- F. The Township Clerk shall furnish a copy of this Section of this Ordinance to any and all candidates seeking election for Township offices or for offices which represent all or portions of Bridgewater Township. Copies shall also be sent to the local offices of candidates for all office seekers wishing to erect signs in Township.
- G. The Township may remove any political signs remaining on public property, i.e. road right-of-way or on utility poles. Costs incurred by the Township may be assessed against the person or entity responsible for erecting the sign.

SECTION 1306 SIGN PERMIT APPLICATION AND REVIEW PROCEDURES

- A. Application for a permit to erect a sign shall be made on forms provided for that purpose by the Township and shall include the following:
 - 1. Completed application form, including signatures of property owner(s) and sign erector(s).
 - 2. The address of the subject parcel.
 - 3. A plot plan of the subject parcel, drawn to scale, including all existing and proposed property lines, improvements, buildings, signs and parking / drive areas, as well as setbacks from all property lines to all signs, buildings and structures. The Administrative Official may require a survey of the subject property if the Administrative Official determines that it is necessary to verify property lines, right of way lines, building setbacks, or other dimensional aspects of the site which are necessary to determine compliance with the sign requirements of this ordinance.
 - 4. A written description of the proposed sign(s) and a scale drawing of the Sign(s), to scale, including all dimensions of the sign and supporting members. The area of the sign (in square feet) and method of calculation shall be included on the plot plan.
 - 5. Sign permit review fee, as established by resolution of the Township Board, paid in full.
- B. The Administrative Official, or designee, shall review the application and plan for conformance with this ordinance prior to issuance of a building permit for the proposed sign(s) in conformance with Section 1902 - Certificate of Zoning Compliance / Building Permits Required.