

# Article 7

## Signs

### 700 Purpose

The purpose of this Section is to permit signs that will not by their reason, size, location, construction, or manner of display endanger the public health, safety, and general welfare and to permit and regulate signs in such a way as to support and complement land use objectives set forth in the purpose of this Zoning Resolution.

### 701 Definitions

Sign: Any surface, fabric, device or display which bears lettered, pictured or sculptured matter, including forms shaped to resemble any human, animal, or product, designed to convey information visually and which is exposed to public view. The term sign shall include all structural members. A sign shall be constructed to be a display surface or device containing organized and related elements composed to form a single unit. In cases where matter is displayed in a random or unconnected manner without organized relationship of the components, each such component shall be considered to be a single sign.

Sign area: That area enclosed by one continuous line, connecting the extreme points or edges of a sign. The area shall be determined using the largest sign area or silhouette visible at any one time from any one point. This area does not include the main supporting sign structure, but all other ornamented attachments, inner connecting links, etc., which are not a part of the main supports of the sign are to be included in determining sign area.

- A. Any sign with three (3) or more sign faces shall have the area calculated by summing the area of the sign faces and dividing by two (2).
- B. On a two-sided (2) sign, only one (1) face is counted in computing the sign's area.
- C. Painted upon or applied to a building: The area includes all lettering, wording, and accompanying designs or symbols together with any background of a different color than the natural color of the building.
- D. Individual letters or figures: When attached or painted on a surface - a building, canopy, awning, wall, or window - the area is that of the smallest rectangle or other geometric shape that encompasses all of the letters or symbols.
- E. Sign frontage: The length in feet of the ground floor level of a building front or side facing a street (or facing a right-of-way accessible from a street) that is occupied by an individual business.

Sign, Abandoned: A sign the use for which it represents having been discontinued for any period of time.

Sign, Banner: A sign intended to be hung either with or without frames, possessing characters, letters, illustrations, or ornamentations applied to paper, plaster, or fabric of any kind. National flags, flag of political subdivisions, and symbolic flags of any institution or business shall not be considered banners.

Sign, Billboard: A non point-of-sale sign which advertises a business, organization, event, person, place or thing, unless such sign is more specifically defined herein.

Sign, Changeable copy (bulletin board): A sign designed so that characters, letters, or illustrations can be changed or rearranged without altering the face or the surface of the sign. This shall also include the changing of copy on a billboard.

Sign, Construction: A sign giving the project name, architect, engineer, contractor, lending institutions, material supplier, or others engaged in work on the construction site on which the sign is located.

Sign, Directional: A noncommercial sign of an instructional nature, such as "parking," "exit," or "entrance," displayed solely for the convenience of the public. No more than twenty-five percent (25 percent) of such sign shall be devoted to the name or logo of the property, business, or profession on the site and shall contain no business advertising, product trade name identification, or listing of any product sold or offered on the premises.

Sign, Freestanding: A sign which is supported by structures or supported in or upon the ground and independent of support from any building not to include portable or mobile signs.

Sign, Home occupation: A sign not to exceed two (2) square feet in area, have no artificial lighting, and have no display that indicates from the exterior of the building that it is being utilized for any purpose other than a dwelling, maximum of one (1) sign. Not permitted in the public right-of-way.

Sign, Illuminated: A sign illuminated in any manner by an artificial light source.

Sign, Mobile or portable: A sign which is affixed to a frame having wheels or capable of being carried, or otherwise portable which does not have a permanent foundation and cannot withstand the stress and wind loads of the building code and designed to stand free from a building or structure. Signs to be affixed to the surface of real estate shall be deemed freestanding signs and not mobile signs, but the mere removal of wheels or temporary securing of a sign to the surface of real estate shall not prevent its being a mobile sign.

Sign, Marquee: A sign attached to and made part of a marquee. A marquee is defined as a permanent roof-like structure projecting beyond a building wall at an entrance to a building or extending along and projecting beyond the building wall

and generally designed and constructed to provide protection against the weather.

Sign, Off-premise: A sign that advertises goods, products, services, or facilities or diverts people to a different location from where the sign is installed.

Sign, On-premise: A sign identifying or advertising a business, person, activity, goods, products, or services located on the premises where the sign is installed and maintained.

Sign, Projecting: A sign other than a wall sign affixed to any building or wall whose leading edge extends beyond such building or wall.

Sign, Real estate: A sign which is used to offer for sale, lease, or rent the property upon which the sign is placed.

Sign, Roof: A sign erected or constructed wholly upon and over the roof of any building and supported solely on the roof structure.

Sign, Snipe: A sign of any material whatsoever that is attached in any way to a utility pole, tree or any object located or situated on public or private property.

Sign, Wall: A sign painted on or attached to and erected parallel to the face of or erected and confined within the limits of the outside wall of any building and supported by such wall or building and which displays only one advertising surface.

Sign, Window: A sign placed inside or upon a window facing the outside and which is intended to be seen from the exterior.

## **705 General provisions**

- A. No sign except as specifically exempted herein shall be erected, displayed, relocated, or altered until a permit has been issued by the Zoning Administrator. The following are the requirements to obtain a permit:
1. A completed application form.
  2. A site plan and/or building elevation drawn showing the location of the proposed sign(s) on the lot and/or building, including setbacks.
  3. Drawing of sign including type of construction, method of illumination, method of mounting and/or erecting.
  4. The written consent of the owner or authorized agent of the underlying property.
  5. A permit fee as required.

## **710 General requirements for all signs and districts**

- A. All signs shall be designed and constructed in conformity with the provisions of Article 14 of the Ohio Basic Building Code and the with the National Electric Code.

- B. All wiring, fittings and materials used in the construction, connection and operation of electrically illuminated signs shall be in accordance with all applicable regulations of the currently adopted and enforced electrical and building code(s) of the Clermont County Building Department.
- C. All signs shall be as designated and supported as to carry the weight of the sign, and shall comply with the local building code in effect.
- D. All signs shall be secured in such a manner as to prevent significant movement due to wind or other natural elements.
- E. Outdoor advertising signs shall be classified as a business use and only be permitted in business, commercial, industrial, and agricultural districts. Signs along interstate and primary highways shall conform to the regulations of the Ohio Revised Code, Chapter 5589.33, and the regulations adopted pursuant thereto.
- F. Any illuminated sign shall employ only light emitting a light of constant intensity; no sign shall be illuminated by or contain flashing, intermittent, rotating, or moving light or lights, and no sign shall be placed so as to direct or permit beams to be cast directly upon a public right-of-way or adjoining property.
- G. No sign shall be located on a vacant lot, except for the purpose of advertising the lot for sale or lease, or for such purpose as the notification of present danger or prohibition of trespassing, except as otherwise herein permitted.
- H. No sign shall be located nearer than eight (8) feet vertically or four (4) feet horizontally from any overhead electrical wires, conductors, or guy wires.
- I. No vehicle or trailer may be parked or stored on a business premises or a lot for the purpose of advertising a business product, service, event, object, location, organization, or the like.
- J. The surface area of a sign shall be computed as including the entire area within a regular, geometric form or combinations of regular, geometric forms comprising all of the display area of the sign and including all of the elements of the matter displayed. Frames and structural members not being advertising matter shall not be included in computation of surface area.
- K. No sign shall employ any parts or elements which revolve, rotate, whirl, spin or otherwise use motion to attract attention. Paragraph E and F shall not apply to that position of any sign indicating time, temperature, day or date.
- L. No sign shall be placed on the roof of any building except those whose supporting structure is screened so the sign appears to be a continuation of the face of the building.
- M. No sign shall contain banners, posters, pennants, ribbons, spinners, streamers, or other moving devices. No strings or lights shall be used to attract attention.

- N. No sign of any type shall be installed or attached in any form to a fire escape or fire exit.
- O. All signs, permanent or temporary, shall be clearly marked with the person or firm responsible for maintaining the sign.
- P. No sign shall be placed in any public right of way except publicly owned signs, such as traffic control signs.
- Q. No sign shall be placed in the required sight triangle of any intersection except publicly owned signs.
- R. No sign shall be attached to or painted on the surface of any tree, utility pole, street light, standard, or dilapidated structure.
- S. No light or sign or other advertising device shall be designed or erected in such a manner or location as to imitate or resemble any official traffic sign, signal or device, phrase, symbol or character.
- T. No sign or combination of wall, overhang, roof, or freestanding signs shall be in excess of one hundred (100) square feet per required street frontage.
- U. No sign is to project into the setback line.
- V. No sign erected or maintained in the window of a building, visible from any public or private street or highway, shall occupy a total of more than fifty (50) percent of the window surface.
- W. Should any sign become unsafe or abandoned, the person maintaining the same shall upon written notice from the Zoning Administrator proceed at once to remove or repair the sign.
- X. Outdoor advertising off premise signs shall be classified as a business use and be permitted in all districts zoned for business, commercial, or industrial purposes. Regulation of signs along interstate and primary highways shall conform to the requirements of the Ohio Revised Code, Chapter 5589.33, and the regulations adopted pursuant thereto.
- Y. Temporary Sign - which is not permanently affixed or mounted and which advertises community, civic projects, charitable, nonprofit organizations or other temporary business promotion.
  - 1. A temporary permit will be given for up to fourteen (14) days. No group or business may receive such a permit within three (3) months of previous issuance.
  - 2. Sign shall not exceed fifty (50) square feet in area and must meet all the general requirements in Section 710 of this Resolution.

**720 Signs permitted in all districts, certificate not required**

- A. These signs shall not require a certificate but are subject to all applicable restrictions contained in this resolution:
1. Signs erected and maintained pursuant to and in discharge of any governmental function or required by any law, ordinance, resolution, or governmental regulation.
  2. Signs not exceeding two (2) square foot in area and bearing only property numbers, name of street, post box number, or names of occupants on the premises.
  3. Real Estate Sign  

One unlighted sign advertising the sale, lease, or rental of the premises shall be permitted and shall not exceed eight (8) square feet in area except in Residential Districts where the display area is not to exceed four (4) square feet in area.
  4. Political Sign
    - a. May be erected with property owner's permission.
    - b. No snipe signs may be used.
    - c. All signs must be removed by the individual or organized group posting the sign within five (5) days of the event.
    - d. Signs may only be erected a maximum of sixty (60) days prior to the event.

### **730 Signs prohibited in all districts**

- A. Mobile signs (except as permitted and regulated in business zones).
- B. Overhanging signs.
- C. Flashing or blinking signs.
- D. Rotating or moving signs.
- E. Streamers, pennants, and tag signs or similar signs or devices.
- F. Abandoned signs.
- G. Any sign which emits any noise, odor, or visible matter for the purpose of attracting attention to the sign.

### **740 Permitted signs in all districts, requiring a certificate**

- A. These signs require a certificate and are subject to the restrictions as specified.
1. Signs or bulletin boards customary to places of worship, libraries, museums, social clubs, or societies shall not exceed sixteen (16) square feet and must be located on the premises of such institution. These signs may explain the name, activities, or services, and may not project into the public right-of-way.
  2. Any sign advertising a commercial enterprise, including real estate developers or subdivisions in a district zoned residential shall not be illuminated, and shall not exceed four (4) square feet in area.
  3. One (1) sign for lots or houses in a new residential subdivision may be erected facing each street in or abutting such subdivision. The display surface shall not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in area, shall not be illuminated, and shall be set back from the right-of-way line of each abutting street according to the requirements for the district in which it is located. The sign must be removed by the developer as soon as the project is complete.
  4. Signs directing property purchasers to houses provided they do not exceed four (4) square feet in area, do not include an advertisement, and are located more than one (1) mile from the entrance. Signs must be removed by the developer upon completion of the project.
  5. One sign is permitted at the entrance to a subdivision indicating the name of the subdivision. No display surface shall exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in area. There shall be no more than two (2) display surfaces and they shall not be illuminated.
  6. Any sign in this section, being replaced, must have a new certificate.

## **750 Signs permitted by districts, requiring a certificate**

- A. Agriculture and Residential (R1), and Residential (R2)
1. Bulletin boards and signs not exceeding an aggregate area of twenty (20) square feet, bearing notice only or pertaining only to the sale of the products grown or produced or services rendered upon the premises, or advertising only the lease, hire or sale of only the particular property upon which displayed; provided, further, that no bulletin board or other sign exceeding four (4) square feet in area shall be erected or constructed into the set back line area as established by this Resolution for Agricultural District. They shall not be located closer than fifty (50) feet from the right-of-way line and not closer than thirty (30) feet to any lot line. Top of sign, or bulletin board, shall not exceed a height of twenty five (25) feet above grade and may not be illuminated.
  2. Home based businesses may display one (1) sign which shall not exceed four (4) square feet in area or have any artificial lighting nor any display that indicates from the exterior of the building that it is being utilized for

any purpose other than a dwelling. Sign is not permitted in the public right-of-way.

B. Business (B1), Commercial (C1), and Industrial (I1)

1. Freestanding On Premise Sign – every commercial or business use may erect and maintain one freestanding on premise sign with two (2) square feet per side of sign display area for one (1) foot of lineal road frontage per establishment.
  - a. In a multiple development, shopping center or any other development involving two (2) or more separate uses in one (1) building or a collection of buildings located on one (1) tract, parcel or real estate there shall be only one (1) freestanding sign for the entire development.
2. Individual letters or figures may be used as part of the total square footage.
3. Directional Sign - as part of the total square footage.
4. Wall Sign - one (1) wall sign per business not to project more than two (2) feet from the face of the building as part of the total square footage.
5. Window Sign - as part of the total square footage.
6. Marquee Sign - as part of the total square footage.
7. Roof Sign - as part of the total square footage.
8. Freestanding Off Premise Sign - every commercial or business use may erect and maintain one off premise sign with a maximum of one hundred (100) square feet display area. Sign may not be more than thirty five (35) feet in height and shall be set back not less than one hundred (100) feet from all road right-of-way lines except as required by the Ohio Revised Code, Chapter 5589.33 which may require a greater set back on highways.
  - a. Off Premise Signs - shall be placed four hundred (400) feet from any Residential or Recreational District and no closer than one hundred (100) feet to any property line.
  - b. Off Premise Signs - shall be spaced two thousand (2000) feet between signs on any single road. In the event of intersections, the signs may not be spaced closer than one thousand (1000) feet to each other.
  - c. Off Premise Signs - must be at least five hundred (500) feet from any freestanding on premise sign.

9. Mobile Signs - limited to one (1) mobile sign for each commercial or business use, not exceed fifty (50) square feet in area, announcing grand openings, special sales, community or civic events or other temporary business promotion for a period of up to sixty (60) days.
  - a. Mobile Signs - must meet all general requirements in Section 710 of this Resolution and maintain the required set backs for the district in which it is located. No mobile sign may be placed in the right-of-way or in such a manner so as to block the necessary sight triangle at any intersection.
10. Wall Signs Pertaining to Non-Conforming Uses – On-premises wall signs pertaining to a non conforming use shall be permitted on the same premises of such use, provided the area of such sign does not exceed twelve (12) square feet. This is the only sign permitted for a nonconforming use.
11. Nonconforming Signs and Structures – Advertising signs and structures in existence prior to the effective date of this Resolution which violate or are otherwise not in conformity with the provisions of this Article shall be deemed nonconforming. All such legal nonconforming signs and structures shall be maintained in accordance with this Article. The burden of establishing the legal non-conforming status of any advertising sign or structure shall be upon the owner of the sign or structure.
12. Loss of Legal Non-Conforming Status – A legal non-conforming sign shall lose its legal non-conforming status and therefore must be brought into conformity with this Article or be removed if the sign is altered in structure; or if it is enlarged, relocated, or replaced; or if it is associated with an establishment which voluntarily discontinues operation for two (2) years. To avoid loss of non-conforming status, a sign owner may contract for minor (up to seventy-five (75) percent) of the replacement cost of the sign reconstruction, or restoration, of damaged signs within ninety (90) days of the damage and complete reconstruction, or restoration, must be completed within one hundred eighty (180) days of the damage. A sign owner may extend a non-conforming sign provided such extension does not enlarge the sign by more than ten (10) percent. A sign owner may substitute a new sign for a non-conforming sign provided the new sign is of the same size, quality and durability as the existing non-conforming sign.

## **760 Compliance with these regulations**

- A. All new signs must comply with these regulations.
- B. All signs erected prior to the effective date of this regulation and which do not meet the requirements will be given a nonconforming status provided they have

received the proper permit and said sign otherwise conforms with all provisions of the current Zoning Resolution.

- C. Should a nonconforming sign or signs collapse, burn, be removed, or require major repair, such sign shall not be replaced, repaired or altered or reconstructed except in full compliance with all the provisions of this amendment. Major repair will constitute seventy-five (75) percent of the replacement cost of the sign.

## **770 Violation**

- A. Any sign or device located within a public right-of-way shall be deemed a public nuisance and the Zoning Administrator shall give twenty-four (24) hours notice by registered mail, certified mail, or hand delivery to the owner or lessee of the land abutting the public right-of-way on which the sign or device is located to remove such sign or device.
- B. Any permanent sign or device in violation shall be deemed a public nuisance and the Zoning Administrator shall give fourteen (14) days notice by registered mail, certified mail, or hand delivery to the owner or lessee of the land such sign is erected upon to remove said sign or device.
- C. Any temporary sign in violation shall be deemed a public nuisance and the Zoning Administrator shall give twenty-four (24) hours notice by registered mail, certified mail, or hand delivery to the owner or lessee of the land such sign is erected upon to remove said sign or device.
- D. If any such sign or device has not been removed on or before the expiration date, it shall be deemed a violation and the Zoning Administrator shall take action for removal of the sign or device.

## **771 Illustration**

See page 7-11 for examples of different types of signs.