

## CHAPTER 19 – SIGNS

**19.1 INTENT AND PURPOSE.** It is necessary to regulate the location, size, placement, and certain features of signs in the Village of Vermontville to enable the public to locate goods, services, and facilities without difficulty and confusion, to encourage the general attractiveness of the community, and to protect property values therein. Accordingly, it is the intention of this Chapter to establish regulations governing the display of signs which will:

- A. Promote and protect the public health, safety, comfort, morals and convenience;
- B. Enhance the economy and the business and industry of the Village by promoting the reasonable, orderly, and effective display of signs, and thereby encourage increased communication with the public;
- C. Restrict signs and lights which overload the public's capacity to receive information or which increase the probability of traffic congestion and accidents by distracting attention or obstructing vision;
- D. Reduce conflict among signs and light and between public and private environmental information systems;
- E. Promote signs which are compatible with their surroundings, are appropriate to the type of activity to which they pertain, and are expressive of the identity of proprietors and other persons displaying signs.

**19.2 ALL ZONING DISTRICTS, PROHIBITED SIGNS.** The following signs shall not be allowed in any district:

- A. Signs which are obsolete, that do not relate to existing business, products or services provided or produced on site.
- B. Signs which are illegal under State laws or regulations and applicable local ordinance or regulations.
- C. Signs that are not clean and in good repair.
- D. Signs not securely affixed to a supporting structure.
- E. Signs that are not official traffic signs which appear to or attempt to regulate, warn or direct the movement of traffic which interfere with or resemble any official traffic sign, signal or device.
- F. Signs which are not consistent with the standards in this Ordinance, or provided in Sections 19.8 through 19.10.
- G. Signs, except official traffic signs, located in, projecting into or overhanging within a public right-of-way or dedicated public easement unless with the express permission of the governmental agency having jurisdiction over such right-of-way or easement.

- H. Signs that project above the maximum height limitation of the use district in which it is located or signs which project above the height of the principal structure on the property.
- I. Signs in excess of twenty (20) feet in height which are supported by their own device.

**19.3 ALL ZONING DISTRICTS, SIGNS FOR ACCESSORY USES.** Signs advertising accessory uses as regulated by Section 8.3 of this Zoning Ordinance, shall meet all requirements of this Section.

**19.4 RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS:** In the RA, RS-1, RS-2, RM and MFR districts the following signs shall be permitted.

- A. One non-illuminated two-sided sign advertising the sale or lease of the lot or building not exceeding six (6) square feet in area on any one (1) lot.
- B. One two-sided sign announcing a home occupation or professional service not to exceed four (4) square feet in area and being placed no closer to the street or highway line than fifteen (15) feet.
- C. One one-sided permanent sign advertising a recorded subdivision or development not to exceed twenty-four (24) square feet of sign area and placed no closer to any street line than fifteen (15) feet. Such sign and supporting structure shall not encompass a total area greater than forty-eight (48) square feet or have a height greater than six (6) feet as measured from the ground up. Such sign may be illuminated provided the total wattage of all sources of illumination does not exceed one hundred (100) watts and all light sources and adjacent reflecting services are shielded from view from adjacent properties.
- D. One semi-permanent, non-illuminated plat sign illustrating the plat, which may indicate such information as lots sold, etc., not to exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in sign area or placed closer than fifteen (15) feet to any street line. Such sign and supporting structure shall not encompass a total area greater than forty-eight (48) square feet of area. Such sign may be placed in the plat or off site in close proximity to the plat, provided that any such sign located off site shall first be approved by the Planning Commission.
- E. Signs containing words such as "NO HUNTING", "NO TRESPASSING", "BEWARE OF DOG", or similar expressions, with a surface area of not more than two (2) square feet.
- F. Required for traffic or parking control in planned developments.
- G. Name plates and numbers identifying the occupant and locations of dwelling units, not to exceed two (2) square feet in area.
- H. Historical markers and public notice signs placed by public agencies.

- I. Political signs with a maximum sign area of eight (8) square feet. Such signs will be allowed two (2) months prior to an election and must be removed immediately following said election.
- J. One construction sign identifying a building project including the names of the developer and the various professionals and contractors involved. Such sign shall be allowed only during the time in which the development is actually under construction, shall not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in sign area, be placed closer than fifteen (15) feet to any street line or located in a side yard setback extended to the street line. Such sign shall require approval as part of the building permit for the construction.

**19.5. GROUP HOUSING AND INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT .** In all districts where allowed by the Village Zoning Ordinance, one sign may be attached flat against a building wall, a freestanding wall or otherwise be made part of the entrance treatment to an apartment or mobile home park, nursing home, camp, church, school and similar development. Such sign shall not exceed twenty-four (24) square feet in sign area and such signs may be illuminated but all light sources and immediately adjacent reflecting surfaces shall be shielded from view off the site.

**19.6 COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS.** In the B-1 and B-2 Districts, signs shall meet the following conditions:

- A. All signs permitted in the RA, RS-1, RS-2, RM and MFR District shall be permitted in the B-1 and B-2 Districts, subject to the same standards and limitations required for those districts as set forth in Section 19.4 of this Chapter.
- B. Permanent freestanding signs shall meet the following requirements:
  - 1) Total sign area shall not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet per sign face or if more than two faces, a total of sixty-four (64) square feet of sign area, indicating the location of a business physically located in the Village.
  - 2) All such signs shall not be located within the road right-of-way or road easement and shall not be located so as to obstruct visibility for pedestrians or motorists. Signs shall not be located in a side yard setback extended to the street line.
  - 3) For signage purposes, buildings housing multiple business shall be treated as a single land use.
- C. Directional entrance signs used to identify driveways and traffic flow shall be limited to one (1) per driveway and shall not exceed four (4) square feet per sign face and eight (8) square feet in total sign area.
- D. Signs made of paper, cardboard or similar degradable material will not be permitted on the exterior walls other than a real estate sign not to exceed sixteen (16) square feet in area limited to signs advertising the sale or rental of the premises on which the same is located.

E. All signs applied to the face of a building in the B-1 and B-2 Districts shall not project more than Fifty Percent (50%) above the roof line of the building [as measured by Fifty Percent (50%) of the height of the sign] and the sign area shall not exceed the lesser of Twenty Percent (20%) of the wall area, or one hundred (100) square feet. Coordinated wall covering signs and “super graphics” not indicating an advertising message are not considered part of the wall signage.

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F. Temporary signs, banners and flags shall be allowed under the following conditions:

- 1) Temporary signs may be in use for one (1) period not to exceed ninety (90) days in any three hundred sixty-five (365) period.
- 2) Flags, pennants and banners may be in continuous use for a period not to exceed thirty (30) days in any one hundred twenty (120) day period,
- 3) All temporary signs shall be securely affixed to permanent structures on the site and shall be located in accordance with the terms of this Section
- 4) The total sign area of signage including temporary signs, flags, pennants, banners and permanent signs shall not exceed the size and area requirements of Section 19.6, B and E.
- 5) Such signs must be kept in good repair.

G. All plans for construction and design of signs shall be submitted to the Zoning Administrator and be approved as part of the land use permit.

**19.7. INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT.** In the Industrial District (D-1), signs shall be permitted and/or meet the following conditions:

- A. All signs permitted in RA, RS-1, RS-2, RM and MFR District shall be permitted in the D-1 District, subject to the same standards and limitations required for those districts as set forth in Section 19.4 of this Chapter.
- B. Not more than one (1) permanent freestanding sign or one (1) wall sign per parcel or lot shall be permitted, subject to the following limitations:
  - 1) Total sign area shall not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet per sign face or if more than two faces, a total of sixty-four (64) square feet of sign area, indicating the location of a business physically located in the Village.
  - 2) All such signs shall not be located within the road right-of-way or road easement and shall not be located so as to obstruct visibility for pedestrians or motorists. Signs shall not be located in a side yard setback extended to the street line.
  - 3) For signage purposes, buildings housing multiple business shall be treated as a single land use.

- C. One (1), one-sided permanent sign advertising a recorded industrial park, subdivision or development shall be permitted. Such sign shall not exceed fifty (50) square feet in sign area and shall be placed no closer to any street line than fifteen (15) feet. Such sign and supporting structure shall not encompass a total area greater than one hundred (100) square feet or have a height greater than six (6) feet as measured from the ground up. Such sign may be illuminated provided the total wattage of all sources of illumination does not exceed one hundred (100) watts and all light sources and adjacent reflecting services are shielded from view from adjacent properties.
- D. Directional entrance signs used to identify driveways and traffic flow shall be limited to two (2) per driveway and shall not exceed four (4) square feet in sign area per sign face and eight (8) square feet in total sign face.
- E. Signs made of paper, cardboard or similar degradable material will not be permitted on the exterior walls than a real estate sign not to exceed sixteen (16) square feet in area limited to signs advertising the sale or rental of the premises on which the same is located.
- F. Wall signs applied to the face of a building in the D-1 District shall not project more than Fifty Percent (50%) above the roof line of the building [as measured by Fifty Percent (50%) of the height of the sign] and the sign area shall not exceed the lesser of Twenty Percent (20%) of the wall area, or one hundred (100) square feet. Coordinated wall covering colors and “super graphics” not indicating an advertising message are not considered part of wall signage.

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- G. All plans for construction and design of signs shall be submitted to the Zoning Administrator and be approved as part of the land use permit.

**19.8 ILLUMINATION.** Illuminated signs shall be permitted in the B-1, B-2 and D-1 Districts as follows:

- A. All illumination of signs and any other outdoor features shall not be of a flashing, moving, or intermittent type.
- B. Illumination of signs shall be directed or shielded so as not to interfere with adjacent highways or adjacent property.

**19.9 CONTINUATION OF NON-CONFORMITIES.** Non-conforming signs may be continued and shall be maintained in good condition, but shall not be:

- A. Expanded or altered so as to increase the degree of nonconformity of the sign;
- B. Re-established after its discontinuance for two hundred and seventy-five (275) days;
- C. Continued in use after cessation or change of the business or activity to which the sign pertains; or

D. Re-established after damage or destruction if the estimated cost of reconstruction exceeds fifty percent (50%) of the estimated replacement cost, as determined by the Zoning Administrator

**19.10. ERECTION OF NEW SIGNS WHERE LEGAL NONCONFORMING SIGNS EXIST.**

On lots where an existing on-premises sign exceeds the sign area allowed by this Section, and in that respect is a legal nonconforming sign, no new on-premises sign, either freestanding or attached to a building, shall be erected until such existing legal nonconforming on-premises sign is brought into compliance with this Section. When a use or parcel is subject to Site Plan Review pursuant to Chapter 21 or an amendment to an existing site plan per Chapter 21 is required, all signs and sign structures shall be brought into compliance with this Chapter 19, within three (3) years of the site plan approval date.

**19.11 BILLBOARDS:** Refer to Section 20.16.