

Section 18: SIGNAGE

18A. Purpose

The purpose of this section is to promote the public safety and welfare by providing adequate standards to control the number, height, size and location of signs and by providing criteria for the illumination and design of signs. The provisions and controls of this section have been formulated to preserve the right of free speech and expression, and to protect against traffic distractions and hazards, to provide reasonable standards by which permitted uses within the various zones may relate their function to the public and to aid in preserving and enhancing the aesthetic and historical values of the community. The purpose of this Regulation is also to encourage unified, multi-use development in the Gateway Mixed Use Industrial Zone and the Rural Mixed Use Zone by providing additional sign area for such mixed-use development that share common access and shared signs, and that provide a streetscape that emphasizes landscaping or pedestrian-friendly buildings along the street line.

18B. General

No sign shall be established, constructed, structurally altered or moved except in conformance with these Regulations. Except for those signs specified in Section 18E and 18F, a Zoning Permit shall be obtained for all signs in accordance with the provisions of Section 3A.8. of these Regulations. In situations where a proposed sign or signs are one component of a comprehensive construction project, the sign authorization may be incorporated into one comprehensive Zoning Permit for the subject construction project.

Wherever commercial speech is allowed by these regulations, the same degree of non-commercial speech is hereby permitted.

18C. Definitions

The definitions pertaining to signage are found in Section 2 of these Regulations.

18D. Prohibited Signs

The following signs are prohibited:

1. Abandoned Signs
2. Advertising Signs
3. Permanent Banner Signs, except noncommercial banners (such as streetscape banners) installed by public entities.
4. Signs on Structural Canopies.
5. Electronic Message Board
6. Flashing, Rotating, or Moving Signs. This provision shall not apply to clocks or time / temperature signs that have been approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission in connection with a Site Plan or Special Permit Approval.
7. Graphic Light Projection Signs
8. Moving message board, except time / temperature signs.
9. Roof signs
10. Signs that are illuminated in a manner or with such intensity or brightness that they may tend to cause glare, distraction or nuisance to operators of vehicles, pedestrians, or neighboring property owners.

11. Signs including structural elements that may tend to endanger vehicular or pedestrian traffic on a street, driveway or public way by obstructing or obscuring visibility or by causing confusion with traffic control signs or signals.
12. Signs including structural elements that obstruct any window, door, fire escape, stairway or opening intended to provide light, air, ingress or egress from any building or structure, except as may be permitted under Section 18E.8.
13. Pennants, or streamers, aerial signs, inflatable signs or flag-like devices hung from or attached to any part of a building, vehicle, structure or otherwise on a lot for commercial purposes, except where specifically exempted pursuant to Section 18E and 18 F of these Regulations.
14. Structural Canopy Signs
15. Vehicle Signs
16. Signs located in Town Rights of Way except those authorized pursuant to Section 18E of these Regulations.
17. Portable signs, such as sandwich board signs or A-frame signs, which are moveable and not permanently attached to a building, structure or the ground, except as may be authorized on a temporary basis as temporary signs pursuant to Section 18F of these Regulations.

18E. Temporary Signs

1. The following signs are authorized without Zoning Permit approval, provided that they comply with all other applicable provisions of these Regulations and with the specific standards noted below:
 - a. "Help Wanted" signs, provided that the size of any such signs shall not exceed two (2) square feet in area.
 - b. Window signs for authorized commercial uses provided the signs do not cover more than forty (40) percent of the window area, or do not cover more than (25) percent of the glass area of a door used actively as an entrance door, such 25% covering the lower half of the door.
 - c. Political Signs
 - d. Project and Real Estate Signs - Except as noted below, one non-illuminated sign not exceeding six (6) square feet in area, pertaining only to the sale, lease, rental or construction or improvement of the land or building upon which it is displayed;
 - i. Real Estate signs shall be removed within 30 days after the subject property is sold (i.e., the closing has occurred), leased, or rented
 - ii. For construction projects, project signs shall only be displayed during the period of active construction, and removed when construction is complete.
 - iii. For commercial or industrial projects approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission, one non-illuminated sign not exceeding twenty-four (24) square feet in area, pertaining only to the contractors or professionals involved in the project may be maintained on the premises where the work is being performed. Said sign shall be removed prior to the issuance of any Certificate of Compliance and Occupancy permits.
 - iv. For subdivisions containing a new road, one non-illuminated sign not exceeding twenty-four (24) square feet in area may be maintained on the premises, provided it bears only a map of the project, the name of the project, and the name of the contractor and professionals involved in the project. The sign shall be removed after 75% or more of the lots have

been sold. The Commission may approve well-maintained additional signage in connection with the subdivision approval.

- b. Special Events Signs for communitywide public, educational, charitable, or religious events. One non-illuminated sign or banner not exceeding thirty-two (32) square feet in area, for public, charitable, educational or religious events, provided the sign is posted at the site of the event no sooner than twenty-one (21) days prior to the event and provided the sign is removed within 24 hours of the close of the event.. In addition, up to three (3) offsite directional signs are permitted, provided each of said signs does not exceed five (5) square feet in area and provided the signs are posted and removed as per the aforementioned time requirements.
 - c. Signs Associated with Agricultural and Horticultural Sales. One non-illuminated sign not exceeding sixteen (16) square feet in area, provided the sign is located at the stand site, and provided it is utilized only when products are available for sale. In addition, up to 32 s. f. of offsite directional signs are permitted, provided no one sign exceeds eight (8) square feet in area and provided the signs comply with the locational provisions of Section 18K of these Regulations.
2. The following signs are authorized without Zoning Permit approval, provided that the property owner or tenant submits to the Zoning Enforcement Officer a Notice of Intent Form to be provided by the ZEO to install a sign or signs authorized as follows. In all other respects, such signs shall comply with all other applicable provisions of these Regulations and with the specific standards noted below:
- a. Grand Opening Event Signs. One free-standing sign or banner no larger than sixteen (16) square feet in area, subject to the following requirements:
 - i. Grand opening signs shall be permitted only in business and industrial zones.
 - ii. The proposed grand opening event shall be a bona fide opening of a new commercial or industrial business at the site or a bona fide change of business ownership at the site.
 - iii. All grand opening event signs shall be located on the site of the subject commercial or industrial business.
 - iv. All grand opening event signs shall be displayed on the site and remain onsite for no more than twenty (20) days.
 - v. All grand opening event signs shall comply with the location and height provisions of Section 18G of these Regulations.
 - vi. All grand opening events shall be conducted within six (6) months of the business opening.
 - b. Signs for Seasonal or Special Sales.
 - i. Seasonal and special events signs will be permitted for a total period of 120 days annually, as documented by the required Notice of Intent form.
 - ii. All signs for seasonal or special sales must be constructed of weather resistant materials, professionally constructed, and have clear, legible lettering, and may be double sided.
 - iii. All seasonal or special sales signs may be an A-frame sign, self-standing sign, or a banner sign.

- iv. Temporary banner signs for seasonal or special sales shall be no larger than 16 s. f. in size and must be securely and neatly fastened to the building wall located on the business or tenant space.
- v. A-frame or self-standing signs for seasonal or special sales may be 2-sided signs, but shall be no larger than 2 ½feet by 3 ½feet and may not contain materials such as papers, balloons, winds socks, streamers, pennant flags, lights, etc. Such signs shall be installed level, and the height of the sign shall not exceed 4feet from the existing ground, nor be artificially increased above the allowed maximum height by placement of additional materials under the base of the sign, except as necessary to level the sign.
- vi. All A-frame and self-standing signs must be located :
 - 1. on the property the subject of the sale event.
 - 2. a minimum of 100 feet from another temporary sign along the road frontage for single-tenant properties; a minimum of 50 feet for multiple tenant occupancies;
 - 3. outside of any sight line from an ingress/egress;
 - 4. outside of parking spaces, drive lane, or Town or State rights-of-way; and
 - 5. so as not to interfere with pedestrian and vehicular traffic;
- vii. In multiple tenant occupancies, no more than two A-frame and self-standing signs may be permitted at any one time..
- viii. All seasonal or special sales signs must be secured to the ground so as to withstand strong winds so as to not cause a roadway hazard.
- ix. All seasonal and special events signs shall be professionally made and made of weather-resistant materials.
- x. Any seasonal or special sales sign placed in violation of these Regulations will result in a violation notice and will result in the suspension of a business's temporary sign permit privileges for the remainder of the calendar year, upon notice by the Zoning Official.

18F. Permanent Signs Not Requiring a Zoning Permit

The following signs are authorized without Zoning Permit approval, provided that they comply with all other applicable provisions of these Regulations and with the specific standards noted below:

- 1. Public Flags, provided they do not pose an obstruction as set down in Section 18D.5 and 6 and Section 18K of these Regulations.
- 2. Public Signs - Signs erected in the public interest by or on the order of a local, State or Federal official in the performance of duty, such as, but not limited to, traffic control signs and identity signs of public buildings, parks or historical sites, signs for governmentally-funded events, and public banners (such as for streetscape projects). This section does not apply to political signs.
- 3. Residential Name Plate / Street Address/Home Occupation - For any residence, or authorized home occupation on the premises, one name plate with street address and one home occupation sign are authorized, provided neither sign is larger than 0.5 square foot in area if located within 20 feet of the street line, or no more than 3 square feet if located more than 20 feet from the street line. Home occupation signs shall not be internally illuminated and, if lighted externally, the sign shall be lighted only during the hours open for business.

4. "No Trespassing" signs or signs indicating the private nature of a premises or the restricted use of the premises, provided that the size of any such signs shall not exceed two (2) square feet in area.
5. Name plates or public convenience signs for authorized commercial and industrial uses identifying the building occupant, store hours, or other non-advertising notices, provided the size of any such signs shall not exceed two (2) square feet in area
6. "Open / Closed" flag signs (no more than 1 per business), provided the longest side does not exceed 4 feet.
7. In lieu of an "open / closed flag sign permitted in Section 18E.6, above, signs displayed in windows or doors of commercial uses, including neon or LED signs, indicating whether the subject use is "open" or "closed," provided the size of any such sign shall not exceed four (4) square feet in area.

18G. Permanent Signs Requiring a Zoning Permit

The Zoning Enforcement Officer shall issue a Zoning Permit in connection with the following signs within 30 days after receipt of a request demonstrating compliance with these Regulations.

1. Business Identification Signs for Industrial and Commercial Uses (for residential uses, see Section 18E and 18F).
 - a. Wall signs in General Business, Gateway Mixed Use Industrial, and Industrial Zones
 - i. Wall Signs
 - ii. Wall signs shall have an area not exceeding a total area of one-half (1/2) square foot for each linear foot of building front for the first fifty (50) feet of building front; one-quarter (1/4) square foot for each linear foot of building front for the next fifty (50) feet of building front; and one-eighth (1/8) square foot for each linear foot of building front for the third fifty (50) feet of building front, such calculation to be based on the front building wall of each individual occupancy
 - iii. Neon or LED signs are permitted on the exterior of a wall or interior of a window, provided that the sign area is included in the total area of the wall sign as set down above, provided the sign area or face of the neon sign is no more than 25% of the total permitted wall sign area, and provided that the LED sign message is fixed and not intermittently displayed.
 - iv. Entrance canopy signs and awning signs are permitted, provided that the sign face does not exceed 25% of the total canopy or awning area, and provided that the square footage of the sign is including in the total wall sign area allocation.
 - v. No credit for sign area shall be provided for linear building front exceeding 150 feet.
 - vi. Wall Signs may be internally illuminated or externally illuminated
 - b. Freestanding Signs in General Business, Gateway Mixed Use Industrial, and Industrial Zones
 - i. No more than one freestanding sign per lot shall be permitted on a lot or lots comprising a single development in the General Business and Industrial Zones. In the Gateway Mixed Use Industrial Zone, no freestanding sign shall be permitted except as provided in 18.G.1.c.ii below,

- ii. A freestanding sign shall not exceed thirty-six (36) square feet in area, except that such freestanding signs for properties with multiple occupancies may be increased by 12 s. f. for each additional occupancy.
 - iii. Neon or LED signs are permitted as components of freestanding signs provided that the sign area or face of the neon sign is no more than 25% of the total permitted freestanding sign area, and provided that the LED sign message is fixed and not intermittently displayed.
 - iv. A freestanding sign shall be not less than fifteen (15) feet from any lot line, except the front yard setback wherein the setback is 0, or 20 feet from the sight line, whichever is greater.
 - v. A freestanding sign shall be located at least 100 feet from an adjacent residential zone.
 - vi. Maximum height from ground level to the top of a freestanding sign shall not exceed 12 feet.
- c. Total Sign Area in General Business, Gateway Mixed Use Industrial Zone, and Industrial Zones
- i. The total sign area of all signs on the premises shall not exceed three (3) s. f. per linear feet of building front or two-hundred and fifty (250) square feet, whichever is smaller, except as provided in Section 18G.1.c.ii. and 18G.1.c.iii
 - ii. Freestanding Signs in the Gateway Mixed Use Industrial Zone. The Commission may allow one (1) ground sign per street frontage, which sign shall not exceed thirty-six (36) square feet in area and shall be not less than zero (0) feet from any Street Line and not less than fifteen (15) feet from any other lot line; and which sign shall not exceed a maximum height of twelve (12) feet measured from the ground level to the top of the sign. Freestanding signs shall comply with all provisions of this Section 18G.1.b except as specifically waived in this subsection. The purpose of such sign is to identify the name of the development to identify its anchor tenants or occupants. In addition, the Commission may allow one (1) directory sign mounted on the ground or on a building wall, which sign shall not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in area and shall be not less than fifty (50) feet from any Street Line nor less than fifteen (15) feet from any other lot line; and which sign shall not exceed a maximum height of eight (8) feet measured from the ground level to the top of the sign. Such directory sign shall not be located along the travel lane(s) of a primary site access driveway, but shall be located where motorists and pedestrians may safely view it without obstructing through-traffic (such as at a turnoff). The Commission may allow such sign freestanding or directory signs only under the following conditions:
 - 1.The development consists of two (2) or more individual buildings and two or more individual businesses;
 - 2.The development is designed to face inward upon itself to form a village-style design where individual buildings are oriented around a green, a pedestrian plaza, or other central pedestrian-friendly common space;
 - 3.All parking is used by the businesses in common and street access is restricted to one (1) public entrance per lot frontage (the Commission may allow a secondary truck/loading access, which shall not be allowed to have a ground sign, but may have a directional sign per 9B.4.j below;)
 - 4.The development includes a landscaped area along all road frontages, other than access and loading driveways;
 5. No individual building displays a wall sign that is visible from the street;

- 6. Approval of the ground sign and directory sign under this section shall not be precluded by the subdivision of any parcel of land which would otherwise be eligible for such signs, provided that the lot owners agree to a perpetual restriction on individual ground or directory signs absent the approval of the Commission.
 - iii. Directional Signs. The Commission may allow directional signs not to exceed two (2) square feet in area nor higher than four (4) feet measured from the ground level to the top of the sign. Such signs may direct the visitor to businesses located on the site for multi-building or multi-business sites; may identify truck or delivery access driveways or emergency access ways; indicate one-way traffic; identify drive-through aisles; or otherwise assist pedestrians and motorists to navigate their way around the site. All such directional signs shall be identified on the proposed site plan.
- d. Wall Signs in Neighborhood Business Zones and Rural Mixed Use Zones
- i. Wall Signs
 - a. Wall signs for each occupancy shall have an area not exceeding a total area of one-quarter (1/4) square foot for each linear foot of building front for the first fifty (50) feet of building front; and one-eighth (1/8) square foot for each linear foot of building front for the next fifty (50) feet of building front, such calculation to be based on the front building wall of each individual occupancy
 - ii. No credit for sign area shall be provided for linear building front exceeding 100 feet.
 - iii. Wall Signs shall be externally illuminated; internally illuminated signs are prohibited.
- e. Freestanding Signs in Neighborhood Business Zones and Rural Mixed Use Zones
- i. Not more than one freestanding sign per lot shall be permitted on a lot or lots comprising a single development in the Neighborhood Business Zone. In the Rural Mixed Use Zone, no freestanding sign shall be permitted except as provided in 18G1.d.ii below,
 - ii. A freestanding sign shall not exceed eighteen (18) square feet in area, except that freestanding signs for properties with multiple occupancies may be increased by 8 s. f. for each additional occupancy.
 - iii. LED signs are permitted as components of freestanding signs provided that the sign area or face of the LED sign is no more than 25% of the total permitted freestanding sign area, and provided that the LED sign message is fixed and not intermittently displayed.
 - iv. A freestanding sign shall be not less than fifteen (15) feet from side and rear lot lines, and may be 0 feet at the front property line.
 - v. Maximum height from ground level to the top of a freestanding sign shall not exceed 6 feet.
 - vi. Freestanding Signs shall be externally illuminated; internally illuminated signs are prohibited.
- f. Total Sign Area in Neighborhood Business Zones and Rural Mixed Use Zones
- i. The total sign area of all signs on the premises shall not exceed one and one-half (1.5) s. f. per linear feet of building front or one-hundred and fifty (150)

square feet, whichever is smaller. except as provided in Section 18G.1.d.ii. and 18G.1.d.iii

- ii. Freestanding Signs in the Rural Mixed Use Zone. The Commission may allow one (1) freestanding sign per street frontage, which sign shall not exceed eighteen (18) square feet in area and shall be not less than zero (0) feet from any Street Line nor less than fifteen (15) feet from any other lot line; and which sign shall not exceed a maximum height of six (6) feet measured from the ground level to the top of the sign. Freestanding signs shall comply with all provisions of this Section 18G.1.f except as specifically waived in this subsection. The purpose of such sign is to identify the name of the development to identify its anchor tenants or occupants. In addition, the Commission may allow one (1) directory sign mounted on the ground or on a building wall, which sign shall not exceed eighteen (18) square feet in area and shall be not less than fifty (50) feet from any Street Line nor less than fifteen (15) feet from any other lot line; and which sign shall not exceed a maximum height of eight (8) feet measured from the ground level to the top of the sign. Such directory sign shall not be located along the travel lane(s) of a primary site access driveway, but shall be located where motorists and pedestrians may safely view it without obstructing through-traffic (such as at a turnoff). The Commission may allow such freestanding or directory signs sign only under the following conditions:

- 1.The development consists of two (2) or more individual buildings and two or more individual businesses;
- 2.The development is designed to face inward upon itself to form a village-style design where individual buildings are oriented around a green, a pedestrian plaza, or other central pedestrian-friendly common space;
- 3.All parking is used by the businesses in common and street access is restricted to one (1) public entrance per lot frontage (the Commission may allow a secondary truck/loading access, which shall not be allowed to have a ground sign, but may have a directional sign per 9B.4.j below;)
- 4.The development includes a landscaped area along all road frontages, other than access and loading driveways;
- 5.No individual building displays a wall sign that is visible from the street;
- 6.Approval of the ground sign and directory sign under this section shall not be precluded by the subdivision of any parcel of land which would otherwise be eligible for such signs, provided that the lot owners agree to a perpetual restriction on individual ground or directory signs absent the approval of the Commission.

- iii. Directional Signs. The Commission may allow directional signs not to exceed two (2) square feet in area nor higher than four (4) feet measured from the ground level to the top of the sign. Such signs may direct the visitor to businesses located on the site for multi-building or multi-business sites; may identify truck or delivery access driveways or emergency access ways; indicate one-way traffic; identify drive-through aisles; or otherwise assist pedestrians and motorists to navigate their way around the site. All such directional signs shall be identified on the proposed site plan.

18H. Signs Subject to Site Plan Review Approval by the Planning and Zoning Commission

1. Comprehensive Signage Plan

Any use subject to Site Plan Approval by the Planning and Zoning Commission shall be required to apply for any and all signage associated with the application, including the requirement for a comprehensive signage plan for the overall property. The Commission may delegate approval of specific sign details to the Zoning Enforcement Officer. All signs shall be subject to the requirements of Section 16A.3.r and Section 16A.3.x.3.j of these Regulations. The time period for action on these signs shall be the same as for the site plan application for approval of the use.

2. Changeable Copy Signs in Business and Industrial Zones

- a. The Commission may allow a changeable copy sign by Site Plan Review pursuant to Section 16A for up to 20% of either the allowable wall sign area or 20% of the allowable freestanding sign area for purposes of on-premises special event or sale advertizing, which area is in addition to the maximum allowable sign area permitted in Section 18G. No temporary signs or message board signs pursuant to Section 18F and 18I other than a grand opening sign shall be permitted for any property for which a changeable copy sign has been approved. The time period for action on these signs shall not exceed 35 days notwithstanding the provisions of Section 16A.

3. Message Board Signs

- a. The Commission may allow Message Board signs by Site Plan Review, provided that the signs meet the following standards:
 - i. The message board component is integral to the freestanding sign
 - ii. The message component of the sign face shall be encased to provide protection from the weather.
 - iii. The sign shall not be internally lit.
 - iv. The sign shall not exceed 16 s. f. in area, shall count towards either the wall sign or freestanding sign size limitations, as applicable; and shall be no more than 50% of the total area of the sign.
 - v. No temporary signs or changeable copy signs pursuant to Section 18F and 18H other than a grand opening sign shall be permitted for any property for which a message Board sign has been approved
 - vi. The time period for action on these signs shall not exceed 35 days notwithstanding the provisions of Section 16A.

4. Off-site Signs

The Commission may grant a Site Plan Review to endorse the permitting of an off-site sign by the Board of Selectmen within a Town ROW, or by the State DOT within a State ROW, provided that the following standards are adhered to:

- a. The property is in a GB or I Zoning District, or is a bona fide agricultural commercial use in a residential district and does not have frontage on a State Route.
- b. Compliance with the siting requirements of Section 18 L.

- c. The height and size of the sign are in accordance with the requirements for a freestanding sign in a GB or I zoning district.
- d. A freestanding composite sign for multiple properties shall be permitted in accordance with the size requirements of Section 18G1b2
- e. The time period for action on these signs shall not exceed 35 days notwithstanding the provisions of Section 16A.

18I. Special Signage Regulations

In addition to the standards of this Section 18, the following standards shall apply, and in the case of any conflicts, the following standards shall prevail. Signs in this section shall be subject to the approval of a Zoning Permit, which shall be acted on within 30 days of receipt of a sign application:

1. Signs associated with Adult-oriented establishments in GB Zones

No sign visible from the exterior shall contain photographic or artistic representation or written description of the human form, or of any specified anatomical areas as defined in the Town's Adult-oriented Establishments Ordinance

2. Signs Associated with Golf Courses Developed in Accordance with Section 10 of these Regulations:

- a. One free standing sign not to exceed 32 s. f.
- b. No closer than 0 feet from the property line along the public road from which access is provided, but 15 feet from side or rear yards.
- c. No interior lighting
- d. 12 feet maximum height
- e. No interference with visibility or traffic hazard
- f. ID message allowed on reverse side of sign board

3. Signs Associated with Continuing Care Facilities and Multi-family Complexes

- a. Such signs shall be located at the driveway entrance,
- b. Such signs shall be no more than 32 s. f. in area
- c. Such signs may be located on the street line, but shall maintain a 15 foot setback from any side or rear yard.

4. Identity Signs for governmental, non-profit, educational, charitable, or religious institutions

- a. One freestanding sign not to exceed 24 s. f. in area

18J Orientation of Signs in Business and Industrial Zones

- 1. No sign shall face the side of an adjoining lot if such lot is in a Residence Zone.
- 2. No sign shall face a limited access highway or other street from which the lot has no direct vehicular access

18K. Hazards or Obstruction to Vehicular and Pedestrian Traffic

No sign shall be placed so as to obstruct pedestrian or vehicular traffic, or create a sight line impediment to such traffic.

18L. Determination of Sign Area

The area of a sign shall be determined in accordance with the definition of “sign area or face” contained in Section 2 of these Regulations.

18M. Construction / Design

All signs (including temporary signs permitted pursuant to Section 18F) shall be professionally designed and constructed of weather-resistant materials. Special events signs shall not be subject to the same standards as other temporary signs.

18N. Illumination

All signs shall meet the Outdoor Lighting requirements of Section 3A.20 of these Regulations.

18O. Removal of Sign Faces After Termination of Use

All wall and freestanding sign faces shall be removed within 30 days after the permanent closure of any business, but such removal shall not affect the right of the current or future property owner to install a sign within each sign face equal to or less than the area of the sign previously existing on the property. Removal of the structure supporting each sign shall be deemed to be permanent abandonment, and consequently the installation of new signage and structures supporting those signs must conform to these Regulations in effect at the time the new sign is proposed.