

## Article XV

### SIGN REGULATIONS

Signs may be erected and maintained only when in compliance with the provisions of this Article. A sign permit will be required for the erection, alteration or modification of signs as indicated in Appendix B, Table 1.

#### Section 1501 – General Standards

1. Sign Area and Height: The following guidelines shall apply when interpreting area and height regulations in this Section:

- a. Area.

- (1) The area of a sign shall be the area of the smallest geometric shape, such as a rectangle, triangle, or circle, that will encompass all elements of the sign, such as letters, figures, symbols, designs, logos or other displays.
- (2) When the sign is a separate unit, the area shall include any borders, framing, trim, decorative attachments, background, and space between elements; it shall not include any supporting structure unless that structure is illuminated, is in the form of a symbol, or contains advertising elements.
- (3) When the sign is applied to a wall or otherwise has no definable edges, the area shall include all color, artwork, or other means used to differentiate the sign from the surface upon which it is placed.
- (4) When a single sign structure has more than one face and no two sign faces are more than 3' apart at any point, the area shall be computed by determining the greatest total area of all sign faces visible from any single location.

- b. Height: The height of a sign shall be measured from the average ground level beneath the sign to the highest point of the sign. The ground level shall be the lower of the ground level existing at the time of construction or the ground level existing prior to construction and prior to any earth disturbance at the site. This prior ground level may be established by any reliable source, including, without limitation,

existing topographic maps, aerial photographs, photographs of the site, or affidavits of people who are personally familiar with the site. No person(s) shall artificially increase the maximum height of a sign by altering the grade at the base of the sign by any means.

- (1) No sign shall be higher than the height limitation of the district in which it is located.
- (2) The height of freestanding signs shall be controlled by the standards in Table 2.
- (3) Wall signs may be at any height on the wall to which they are attached, except that they may not extend higher than the top of the wall.
- (4) Roof signs may extend no more than five (5) feet above the lowest point where they are attached to the building and may not extend above the highest point of the roof, except when a sign is located on a flat roof, the total height of the sign shall not extend higher than five (5) feet above the roof.

2. General Regulations: The following regulations shall apply to all signs, in addition to the specific regulations and supplemental regulations contained in the following provisions of this article. Where the general regulations are contradicted by the specific or supplementary regulations, the specific or supplementary regulations shall control.

- a. All signs shall reflect the general character of the neighborhood.
- b. All signs shall be constructed of durable materials and maintained in good condition.
- c. When a sign becomes unsafe, the zoning officer shall give written notice to the owner of the premises on which the sign is located that the sign must be made safe or removed immediately.
- d. The areas surrounding all signs shall be maintained in a neat, clean, and attractive condition.
- e. All signs shall be removed within 90 days if the purpose for which they were erected no longer exists.
- f. Each property which displays one or more permanent freestanding signs and which is in an area where street addresses have been

assigned must prominently display the address on one permanent freestanding sign visible from the street. The address must include the street number; the street name is optional. The address must be of a size and design which is easily identifiable and legible from moving traffic in a street at a distance of 100' (3" high lettering/numerals with a  $\frac{3}{4}$ " stroke). The area taken up by the address does not count as part of the sign area. Center signs are exempt from this requirement if multiple addresses apply.

- g. No temporary signs shall be permitted except as authorized elsewhere in this Section.
- h. No sign shall be located within a street right-of-way, except a government sign, a public utility sign, a non-profit organization sign, or another sign approved by the governing body or the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation. Non-profit organizational signs shall not be in conflict with existing or proposed traffic regulatory signs.
- i. No sign more than 30" high, other than a government sign or temporary traffic/pedestrian controls for construction operations, shall be located within the 75' clear sight triangle of any street intersection or in any other position where it could endanger vehicular or pedestrian traffic by obstructing vision.
- j. No signs shall be painted, pasted, nailed, stapled, or otherwise attached to utility poles. Nor shall any signs be painted, pasted, nailed, stapled, or otherwise attached to trees, fences, fire hydrants, or in any unauthorized manner to walls or other signs, except for "warning", "no hunting", "no trespassing" or similar signs.
- k. Any freestanding sign within a floodplain must receive approval as a special exception.
- l. No sign shall be placed so as to obstruct any door, stairway, window, fire escape, or other means of egress or ingress.
- m. No sign shall be placed so as to obstruct ventilation or light from a building.
- n. No overhead sign shall have a clearance of less than 8' between any pedestrian walk and the lowest part of the sign.
- o. No sign that is parallel to and attached to the face of a building shall project more than 18" over a public sidewalk.

- p. No sign that is perpendicular to and attached to the face of a building shall project over a public sidewalk nor extend beyond any property line.
- q. No sign shall have lights or other illuminating devices that constitute a public safety or traffic hazard.
- r. No sign other than authorized governmental signs shall be permitted which imitates or which might be confused with an official traffic sign or signal, such as (1) by containing the words "Stop" or "Danger" or (2) by including red, green, or yellow lights.
- s. No sign or window display shall include revolving beam or beacon of light resembling an emergency vehicle or facility.
- t. No sign shall advertise activities or products that are illegal under federal, state, or local municipal laws or regulations.
- u. No signs shall include statements, words, or pictures that are considered to be vulgar, obscene, or pornographic.
- v. No streamers, banners, pennants, spinners, reflectors, ribbons, tinsel, or similar materials shall be displayed outside a building in all residential zoning districts, or residential uses in the commercial and industrial districts when used to advertise or bring attention to a commercial intent.
- w. Streamers, banners, pennants, spinners, reflectors, ribbons, tinsel, or similar materials are permitted in the forest conservation, agricultural/rural, commercial, and industrial zoning districts when used in conjunction with a commercial or industrial use.
- x. No animated, sequential, intermittent, flashing, rotating, or oscillating signs shall be permitted except for time and temperature signs.
- y. No sign shall emit smoke, visible vapors, particles, sound or odor.
- z. No permanent inflatable sign shall be permitted. Inflatable signs are permitted as a temporary sign in accordance with the applicable regulations governing temporary signs.
- aa. No open flames shall be permitted as part of a sign display.

- bb. Advertising painted upon or displayed upon a barn or other structure shall be considered a sign and shall comply with the regulations of this Part.
- cc. Any sign which has been authenticated as historically significant by the Pennsylvania Historical Museum Commission, whether original or replica, shall be exempt from the regulations of this Section.
- dd. Signs may be interior lighted with non-glaring lights; signs may be externally lighted by lights which are directed downward and shall be shielded so there is no direct light transmitted to other properties or public rights-of-way.
- ee. The light from any illuminated sign shall not adversely affect (1) safe vision of operators of vehicles moving on public or private streets or parking areas, (2) any residential district, or (3) any part of a building or property used for residential purposes.
- ff. No exposed neon tubing or strings of lights shall be permitted to outline buildings, structures, or parts thereof used for commercial, home occupations home businesses or industrial use. Customary holiday decorations may be installed 45 days prior to and removed not later than 30 days after the holiday.
- gg. All electrically illuminated signs shall be constructed to the standards/listing of the Underwriters Laboratories, Inc. and the latest edition of the National Electric Code.
- hh. The display of property address numbers only is not considered a sign under this ordinance and as such is not regulated. If the sign includes other information in addition to the property address number, it shall be regulated under the appropriate sign section.
- ii. Signs shall not be displayed on or attached to any vehicle, equipment, or trailers when stationary placed and not in normal and customary use. No lift trucks and/or-eighteen-wheeler trailer advertising shall be permitted. This shall include a draped banner. Exception; a temporary sign on a 4-foot by 8-foot or smaller trailer.

3. Specific Regulations: Tables 1 and 2 in Appendix C provide regulations for specific kinds of signs in each zoning district. Note that there are also supplemental regulations in Supplemental Regulations which should be reviewed for most kinds of signs; these are referenced in the second column of Table 1 and Table 2.
  - a. Permitted Signs and Sign Permit Requirements. Table 1 indicates, for each zoning district, which kinds of signs are permitted and not permitted, and which kinds of signs require permits. In those parts, an "N" indicates that the sign is not permitted; a "A-P" indicates that the sign is allowed and a permit is required; a "A-N" indicates that the sign is allowed and a permit is not required.
  - b. Permitted Number, Area, Height, and Setback for Signs. Table 2 indicates, for each zoning district, information about the permitted number, maximum area, maximum height, and minimum setback for each kind of sign.
4. Supplemental Regulations: In addition to the regulations contained elsewhere in this Section, the following shall apply to specific kinds of signs. The regulations in Tables 1 and 2 apply in addition to the following supplemental regulations. Where the provisions in the supplemental regulations and Tables 1 and 2 are contradictory, the provisions contained in the supplemental regulations shall control.
  - a. Business Signs are generally regulated in accordance with Tables 1 and 2. Business signs for individual businesses which are permitted by Table 2 must be located so that they are identified with the individual business, i.e., rather than being at the street frontage of a large center, away from the business they are advertising.
  - b. Business Special Event Signs are allowed for a business related event and may be displayed no more than ten (10) days in advance of the event, and must be removed within five (5) days of the end of the event. A business special event sign shall be displayed for a maximum of twenty-one (21) days. A business special event sign shall not be permitted on the same premise more than four (4) times a year. However, in a multi-tenant facility each business tenant is afforded the same right to display a business special event sign.
  - c. Center Signs are allowed for centers such as shopping centers, office complexes, and industrial parks which meet at least two of the three

minimums: (1) 5 commercial units, (2) 20,000-square-feet of building area, and (3) 5 acres of land.

- d. Contractor Signs must be set back at least 10' from the right-of-way, may not be in the side yard setback, and may not be illuminated. Contractor signs must be removed promptly upon completion of the construction. If there are four or more contractor signs on a single lot, they must be combined in a single display by attaching them to a single background panel or frame. The background is not included in calculating the sign area, the height of the display may not exceed 6', and the display may project a maximum of 12" from the wall if attached parallel to the building.
- e. Development Signs are allowed for residential developments. They may include only the name of the development and may not include any commercial advertising.
- f. Election Signs must have a setback of 10' from the right-of-way unless they are less than 30" in height, in which case no setback from the public Right-of-Way is required.
- g. Garage/Yard Sale Signs may be placed no more than one week before the sale and must be removed before the end of the day of the sale.
- h. Government Signs may only be placed by governmental units or with their approval. Size, location, etc. shall be subject to state or federal regulations or as approved by the Township. No permit is required if sign is regulated by state or federal regulations; otherwise a permit is required.
- i. Home Business Signs may include a name, an address, an occupation or activity, and a logo or trademark.
- j. Identification Signs are broken into two classifications, major and minor, based on their size and location and are generally regulated in accordance with Tables 1 and 2. However, two special kinds of identification signs are specifically regulated in accordance with Tables 1 and 2: "Development Signs" and "Public Use Signs".
- k. Incidental Signs must have a setback of 10' from the right-of-way unless they are less than 30" in height, in which case no setback is required.

- l. Nonprofit Organization Signs may be placed in Township street rights-of-way with the approval of the governing body. The governing body may require that they be placed at designated entrances to the community or on common display panels.
- m. Off premise signs may be located in the AR, C, and I Districts as a conditional use where such property is located along an Arterial street as defined in the Comprehensive Plan. Signs must comply with applicable State and Federal regulations.

A sign may have two surfaces with a total of two messages, as long as the surfaces are back-to-back or at an angle of not more than 45°. Each surface may have an area of up to 300-square-feet, whether or not the messages are the same. Each off premise sign structure must have setbacks of (1) 50' from any street right-of-way, or (2) the minimum building setback, whichever is greater, and at least 500' radius from any other off premise sign, regardless of which side of the road it is on. Each off premise sign must be at least 200' from any commercial or residential unit.

- n. Open House Signs must include the words "Open House", the day and time of the open house, and the name of the Realtor. They may be displayed no more than 3 days in advance of the open house and must be removed within 2 hours of the end of the open house. The open house must be attended by the seller or his representative during the entire advertised time of the open house. There may be no more than two off-premise open house signs for each open house, with no more than one sign per intersection. Open house signs shall be limited to use for 6 days per month per lot. The placement of open house signs may not interfere with pedestrian or vehicular traffic and must comply with all applicable General Regulations.
- o. Public Utility Signs are subject to the requirements of a minor Identification Signs except they may be placed in any district.
- p. Real Estate Signs must be removed within 5 days after settlement.
- q. Roadside Stand Signs as permitted for a temporary roadside stand shall be displayed for a period of one hour before the stand opens and shall be removed one hour after the close of business on a daily basis. The signs shall be at least five (5) feet off the shoulder of the road..

- r. Special Event Signs for an event may be displayed no more than 21 days in advance. All special event signs must be removed within 5 days of the end of the event.
- 5. Permitting Procedures and Fees: Permits for the placement of signs are required as indicated by Table 1.
  - a. Sign permit application requirements such as forms, plans, and fees shall be established by Penn Township.
  - b. Fees for the erection of Election signs shall be established by the Penn Township Board of Supervisors. Fees paid will be held in escrow until all signs are removed. If the signs are not removed within the specified time after the election, the fee will be forfeited to the Township to cover the cost of the removal of the signs by the Township staff.
- 6. Nonconforming Signs: Nonconforming signs may continue to be displayed, as long as there is compliance with the following limitations and conditions:
  - a. There may be no expansion or increase in the nonconformity in any way;
  - b. Maintenance and repair of the sign are permitted, if necessary, and its supporting structure may be replaced in the event of damage, any such replacement must be completed within 6 months of the damage occurring; and
  - c. The sign must be brought into conformity if, for a period of at least 3 months, the message has no longer applied to an activity on the premises (this does not apply to off premise signs).

