

**8.0 SIGN REGULATIONS**

~~8.1 Signs perform important functions in the community such as communicating messages and providing information about goods and services available. Because signs potentially have detrimental impact on the visual and perceptual environment, signs must be regulated. The sign regulations contained herein are intended to: 1) facilitate efficient communication; 2) avoid conflict between signs and other features of the streetscape; 3) support economic vitality and opportunity; and 4) encourage compatibility and harmony with surrounding buildings, land and land uses.~~

~~Thus, it is the intent of Section 8.0 of the zoning by-law to balance the need for communication, economic vitality and free speech with the desire for an attractive community with signage that is complimentary in scale and vernacular to its context and the character of the Town. protect property values, create an attractive business climate, enhance and protect the physical appearance of the community and to encourage the most appropriate use of the land. This Section 8 will also assist those installing signs within the Town of Reading by setting forth the process governing the application, installation, and maintenance of such signs.~~

~~-add section on how to use bylaw: What district are you in? What's permitted within your district — find applicable section of bylaw. What types of signs are permitted? What type of sign do you want? How big can it be? See table.~~

**8.1.1~~2~~ Applicability**

A sign may be erected, placed, established, painted, created or maintained only in conformity with the provisions of this Section.

**8.1.2 Administration**

~~The Building Inspector is hereby empowered to:~~  
~~a administer this bylaw which includes the issuance of sign permits where the proposed sign conforms to this bylaw and all other applicable bylaws of the Town;~~  
~~b keep records of any application received, permits and orders issued, inspections made;~~  
~~c order the correction of any work which is being or has been improperly done under a permit, or is done in contravention of the terms and conditions of a permit or of this bylaw or any other bylaw of the Town;~~  
~~d order the cessation of work that is proceeding in contravention of this bylaw or any permit issued pursuant to this bylaw;~~  
~~e revoke a permit where there is a violation of any term or condition of the permit or a contravention of this bylaw or any other bylaw of the Town;~~  
~~f order the removal of a sign for which there is no valid and subsisting permit or which sign does not conform to this bylaw or any other bylaw of the Town;~~  
~~g order the painting, repair, alteration or removal of any sign which has become dilapidated or is abandoned, or which constitutes, in the opinion of the Building Inspector a hazard to the public safety or property.~~

**8.1.3 Permit Required**

~~No person shall construct, place, erect, display, alter, repair, or relocate a sign, unless exempted by this Section— without a valid sign permit issued pursuant to this bylaw.~~

**Comment [JM1]:** When all changes are ready, go back through and make sure formatting is consistent & numbering correct.

**Comment [JM2]:** From Hopkinton bylaw

**Comment [JM3]:** Add more re: natural, historic, aesthetic qualities of Town?

**Comment [JM4]:** From Kelowna, CA bylaw

**Comment [JM5]:** From Kelowna, CA bylaw

**8.1.4** **Zoning Districts**

The zoning districts are as shown on the official zoning map which is on file with the Engineering Department and the Town Clerk’s Office and can also be found on the Town website. Reading has also adopted a Downtown Smart Growth District (DSGD) and a Gateway Smart Growth District (GSGD). Please refer to Section 10.5 for DSGD regulations and Section 10.4 for GSGD regulations.

**Comment [B6]:** Add PUD/PRD stuff

**Comment [JM7]:** Add reference to these sections in Table. Also, confirm that Section references are correct.

**8.1.5 Navigating the Sign Bylaw**

-Any person wishing to construct, place, erect, display, alter, repair or relocate a sign, is advised to adhere to the following process:

1. Determine the zoning district of the property containing or to contain such sign (see Zoning Map or Town of Reading online GIS mapping system);
2. Determine the sign types permitted within that zoning district (see Table ---);
3. Determine the dimensional requirements for signs within that zoning district (see Table ---);
4. Consult with the Town’s Community Development Director;
5. Submit a Sign Permit Application to the Building Inspector.

**Comment [B8]:** Expand or clarify this?

**8.2 Definitions (add graphics for certain sign types)**

For the purposes of Section 8.0., the following terms shall have the meanings hereby assigned to them:

**Comment [JM9]:** Nick has agreed to do this – look at Dennis bylaw

**Sign:** A name, identification, description, display or illustration, which is affixed to, painted or represented directly or indirectly upon a building, or other outdoor surface which directs attention to or is designed or intended to direct attention to the sign face or to an object, product, place, activity, person, institution, organization or business and where sign area meets the space enclosed within the extreme edges of the sign for each face, not including the supporting structure or where attached directly to a building wall or surface, the outline enclosing all the characters of the word. Signs located completely within an enclosed building, and not exposed to view from a street, shall not be considered a sign for the purposes of the bylaw herein. Each display surface of a sign or sign face shall be considered to be a sign.

**Animated Sign:** A sign or portion thereof with characters, letters or illustrations that change or are rearranged without altering the face or surface of the sign or signboard, on a continuous or periodic basis, more than eight times per day.

**Awning Sign:** A sign painted on or attached to the cloth, canvas or metal cover of a movable or stationary frame of the fixed, hinged, rolled or folding type of awning.

**Banner or Pennant:** Any sign of lightweight fabric or similar material that is mounted or affixed at one or more edges.

**Beacon:** A stationary or revolving light, not primarily illuminating a sign, which flashes or projects illumination, single color or multi-colored, in any manner which is intended to attract or divert attention, except any such fixture which is required by the Federal Aviation Administration or a similar agency, and is installed and operated under the safety regulations of such agency.

**Billboard:** A sign that is static and changes messages by any electronic process or remote control.

**Comment [JM10]:** Need better definition to include digital & non-digital, see Outdoor Advertising

**Bulletin Board:** Any sign erected by a charitable, educational, or religious institution or a public body on its property for purposes of announcing events which are held on the premises.

**Electric Sign:** Any sign containing electric wiring. This does not include signs illuminated by an exterior floodlight source.

**Electronic Sign:** A sign that changes its message or copy at intervals by digital, electronic or mechanical processes, by remote control or other programming device. A sign on which the only copy that changes is an electronic or mechanical indication of time or temperature shall be considered a "Time and Temperature" portion of a sign and not an Electronic Sign or Reader Board.

**Comment [JM11]:** Should this be combined with "Animated Sign" above?

**Façade:** The area of the face of a building, typically the principal or front wall of a building.

**Comment [JM12]:** See 8.2.6.4.1a

**Flashing Sign:** Any illuminated sign on which the artificial light is not maintained stationary or constant in intensity and color at all times when such sign is in use. For the purpose of this Bylaw, any moving illuminated sign shall be considered a flashing sign.

**Comment [JM13]:** Combine with Animated and Electronic?

**Comment [B14]:** Not referenced anywhere, except we prohibit "signs that flash"

**Free-Standing Sign:** A sign erected and maintained on a freestanding frame, mast or pole not attached to any building, and not including monument signs.

**Government Sign:** A government sign is a sign that is constructed, placed or maintained by the Federal, State, or Local government or a sign that is required to be constructed, placed or maintained by the Federal, State, or Local government either directly or to enforce a property owner's rights.

**Halo Lighting:** Light emitted from the back of or from within a letter or graphic shape out towards the surface that the letter or graphic is mounted on without having any light visible through the face or sides of the letter or graphic.

**Comment [B15]:** Not referenced

**Identification Sign:** A sign which identifies an address, a structure, a common area containing a group of structures or a group of persons or businesses (alternate: "commercial uses" in lieu of "businesses") operating on the same lot.

**Comment [TD16]:** This would cover house numbers, building names, etc. Will need to add dimensional controls

**Instructional and Directional Signage:** A sign that has a purpose secondary to the use of the lot on which it is located, such as those required for the safe flow of vehicular or pedestrian traffic or to enforce government regulations.

**Comment [TD17]:** Should meet the narrowly tailored to serve a compelling government interest test

**Integral Sign:** a sign that is embedded, extruded or carved into the material of a building facade.

**Comment [B18]:** Looking for better word, is this even referenced?

**Marquee** A canopy or covering structure bearing a signboard or copy projecting from and attached to a building.

**Marquee Sign:** Any sign attached to or made part of a marquee.

**Monument Sign:** A sign which extends from the ground, or has support which places the bottom of the sign less than two (2) feet from the ground.

**Comment [JM19]:** Is this referenced?

**Off-Premises Sign:** Any sign which directs attention to an off-site business, commodity, service, entertainment venue, attraction or other commercial or non-commercial activity, including any outdoor advertising billboard, Animated Sign or Electronic Sign on which display space may or may not be leased or rented.

~~Off-Premises Sign: (Alternate using IMLA guide): Any sign which directs attention to goods, products, services or commercial uses which are not sold, manufactured or distributed on or from the premises, facility or site on which the sign is located, including any outdoor advertising billboard, signs affixed to vehicles, Animated Sign or Electronic Sign on which display space may or may not be leased or rented.~~

**Comment [B20]:** To be discussed with full Board

**Original Art Display:** A hand-painted work of visual art that is either affixed to or painted directly on the exterior wall of a structure with the permission of the property owner. An original art display does not include: mechanically produced or computer generated prints or images, including but not limited to digitally printed vinyl; electrical or mechanical components; or changing image art display.

**Outdoor Advertising:** A sign which advertises goods, products or services which may or may not be not sold, manufactured or distributed on or from the premises or facilities on which the sign is located.

**Comment [B21]:** May not be referenced

~~Commercial Message: Any sign wording, logo or other representation that directly or indirectly names, advertises, or calls attention to a business, product, service, sale or sales event or other commercial activity.~~

**Comment [SN22]:** See Outdoor Advertising, for discussion with whole board

**Portable Sign:** Any sign not permanently attached to the ground or any permanent structure, or any sign primarily designed to be transported in any way, regardless of modifications that limit its movability, including signs converted to "A" or "T" frames and/or menu and sandwich-board signs.

**Projecting and Blade Sign:** A sign which is affixed to a building or other structure where the sign face is approximately perpendicular to the building facade.

**Reader Board:** A sign or portion thereof with characters, letters or illustrations that can be changed or rearranged without altering the face or surface of the sign or signboard. A sign on which the message changes more than eight times per day shall be considered an Animated or Electronic sign.

**Comment [B23]:** Somewhere we need to allow for LED reader boards, if we want

~~Roof Line:~~

**Comment [JM24]:** Insert definition to clarify this

~~Roof Sign: A sign located on or above the roof of any building, not including false mansard roof, canopy or other fascia.~~

**Sign Area:** The area contained entirely within the signboard or if no signboard is present, the area contained entirely within the smallest rectangle which completely encloses the outer extremities of all graphic material of a sign.

**Signboard:** The flat surface of durable material upon which letters or other graphic content of a sign is displayed.

**Sign Height:** The distance from the base of the sign at normal grade to the top of the highest attached component of the sign or sign structure. Normal grade shall be construed to be the lower of:

- 1 Existing grade prior to construction, or
- 2 The newly established grade after construction, exclusive of any filling, berming, mounding, or excavating solely for the purpose of locating the sign. In cases in which the normal grade cannot be reasonably determined, sign height shall be computed on the assumption that the normal grade is the elevation of the nearest point of the crown of the public street along which the lot has frontage or the grade of the land at the principal entrance to the principal structure on the lot, whichever is lower.

**Temporary Sign:** An unlit banner, pennant, poster or advertising display constructed of paper, cloth, canvas, plastic sheet, cardboard, wallboard, plywood or other like materials and that appears to be intended to be displayed for a limited period of time.

~~**Temporary Construction and Redevelopment Signs:** A temporary unlit free standing sign or wall sign affixed to a structure or fence identifying the project name, project team, project description and/or business to be conducted on the premises.~~

~~**Wall-Mounted Sign:** A sign affixed directly to or painted on or otherwise inscribed on an exterior wall and confined within the limits thereof of any building and which projects from that surface less than twelve (12) inches at all points.~~

**8.2.4 Exempt / Authorized Signs**

Signs for which no sign permit is required are identified in Table 8.2.3 and Section 8.2.4. The following signs ~~are exempt from this Section 8.0~~are authorized in every district and may be installed ~~without permit upon receipt of a building permit (as needed)~~, provided that the following is complied with:

- a ~~Government Authorized~~ signs in every zoning district which form the expression of this government when erected and maintained according to law. Such signs may be installed or required to be installed by the Town of Reading, or the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, or Federal Agencies, or with the express written permission thereof, for the purposes of traffic control or traffic or pedestrian safety or convenience, identification of public facilities or streets, or for direction to same; public notices and warnings required by and erected by Town, State, or Federal Agencies and shall include the following:
  - i. Traffic control devices on private or public property must be erected and maintained to comply with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) adopted in this state and if not adopted by this state, with the MUTCD adopted by the Federal Highway Administration.

**Comment [TD25]:** suggest allowing an additional temporary unlit free standing sign or wall sign affixed to a structure or fence for properties with an ACTIVE building permit- Though according to Myares & Harrington letter this would be OK under Alito's concurrence

**Comment [JM26]:** change to wall sign?

**Comment [JM27]:** Fix subheadings to make formatting consistent

ii. Each property owner must mark their property using numerals that identify the address of the property so that public safety departments can easily identify the address from the public street. Where required under this code or other law the identification must be on the curb and may be on the principal building on the property. The size and location of the identifying numerals and letters if any must be proportional to the size of the building and the distance from the street to the building. In cases where the building is not located within view of the public street, the identifier shall be located on the mailbox or other suitable device such that it is visible from the street.

**Comment [JM28]:** Could this be "may" or is this a public safety requirement?

**Comment [TD29]:** Not every house has a curb

**Comment [JM30]:** TBD by Town

iii. Where a Federal, State, or Local law requires a property owner to post a sign on the owner's property to warn of a danger or to prohibit access to the property either generally or specifically, the owner must comply with the Federal, State or Local law to exercise that authority by posting a sign on the property.

iv. A flag that has been adopted by the Federal government, this State or the Local government may be displayed as provided under the law that adopts or regulates its use.

**Comment [JM31]:** Limit number of flag poles, location and size of flags

i-v.

~~b Directional signs, building markers.~~ Instructional and Directional Signage that is unlit and either less than 0.75 square feet or required by government regulation or entity. *Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices*

~~b Political signs on private properties or vehicles only, provided that such sign shall not exceed six square feet in sign area, shall not be placed in such location as to constitute a traffic or pedestrian safety hazard, and shall not be displayed for more than forty-two days prior to the applicable election or more than two days following such election. For forty-two days before and two days following an election, private properties may display up to five (5) signs such that no individual sign shall exceed six square feet in sign area and no sign shall be placed in such a location as to constitute a traffic or pedestrian safety hazard.~~ *Need to add limits for cars*

~~eb Signs for churches and other federally tax exempt institutions.~~ Signs on property occupied by churches or religious institutions or owned by other federally tax-exempt institutions.

**Comment [TD32]:** Add owned by federally tax-exempt institutions, seems too broad a definition, may want to add size limits

~~d Holiday lights and decorations which contain no commercial messages and which are displayed during the appropriate season.~~ *Remove entirely and enforce signage when needed.*

~~ec Works of art which contain no commercial messages with prior Town Planner or CPDC written approval.~~ Original Art Display: Original hand crafted works of visual art that are either affixed to or painted directly on the exterior wall of a structure, with the permission of the property owner. An original art display does not include: advertising, mechanically produced or computer generated prints or images, including but not limited to digitally printed vinyl; electrical or mechanical components; or changing image art displays.

**Comment [SN33]:** Content based? But in keeping with other IMLA notes

**Comment [TD34]:** Text from IMLA Model sign Code

**g** Fuel pump information signs, only as required by State law, are allowed and shall not affect the computation of allowable number of signs or aggregate sign size on a property.

**h** Any sign within a structure, not attached to any window or door, which is not visible from other properties or from any street right-of-way.

**i** ~~Signs showing resident's name, historical plaque or marker, street address and/or name of a lawful home occupation taking place on the premises.~~ Identification signage that is unlit and less than one (1.0) sq.ft. in area

**Comment [JM35]:** Is this covered under A.2?

**Comment [TD36]:** Home occupation should be handled as business in residential zone

**j Temporary Signs, Generally:**

Temporary signs are permitted in all zoning districts as follows:

1. Each privately-owned property in Town shall be allowed a maximum of three (3) temporary signs simultaneously on display. Such signs shall be no more than six (6) square feet each in area.

2. In addition to the three (3) temporary signs, additional temporary signs may be allowed for each of the following:

i. Construction Signs: on a site that is under active construction, where a demolition or building permit has been issued and where at least site preparation work has commenced, one (1) temporary signs not exceeding 32 square feet in area or 10 feet in any dimension may be displayed for a period of up to 1 year. Temporary Construction signs shall be removed after the construction, repair or renovation work is completed or within 7 days after the issuance of a final occupancy permit.

ii. Redevelopment Signs: on a site for which construction has not begun, but which has been issued a building or demolition permit or has an approved site plan, one (1) temporary signs not exceeding 32 square feet in area or 10 feet in any dimension may be displayed for a period of up to 1 year. Upon written request and approval of the CPDC the display period for a Temporary Redevelopment sign may be extended.

iii. Real Estate Sales Signs: on a site that is for sale through a licensed real estate agent, by owner, or through advertising in a local newspaper of general circulation, one (1) temporary sign not exceeding six (6) square feet may be displayed. Temporary Real Estate signs shall be removed within fifteen (15) days following the date on which a contract of sale has been executed by a person purchasing the property.

iv. Open House Signs: on a day when a property owner is opening the property to the public, signs not exceeding four (4) square feet each, may be placed at a rate of one (1) per agency per intersection per property and one (1) on the open house property.

v. Garage / Yard Sale Signs: for up to seven (7) days before and three (3) days after a Garage or Yard Sale, temporary signs not exceeding six (6) square feet may be displayed. Such signs shall be limited to one (1) sign on the property on which the Garage or Yard Sale is taking place, and one (1) at each of no more than two intersections of public streets.

vi. Political Signs: for a period of time beginning 30 days before a municipal, state or federal election and ending two (2) days after the date of the election, there shall be no maximum number of temporary signs permitted.

3. e Any establishment located in a Business or Industrial Zoning District may display during hours of operation:

Comment [JM37]: I updated this section and accepted "changes" – they will be reinserted into the final version. CPDC should review this re: substance.

Comment [JM38]: Add definition for this, or change wording entirely?

Comment [JM39]: We should discuss size & height requirements

Comment [JM40]: We should discuss size & height requirements

Comment [JM41]: We should discuss size & height requirements

Comment [JM42]: Add size & height requirements?

- i. A-Flag - with dimensional requirements not to exceed four (4) feet by six (6) feet-
- ii. A minimum ground clearance of eight (8) feet shall be provided for flags that hang over walkways, sidewalks and entrances of businesses. Ground clearance shall be defined as the distance between the lowest hanging portion or bottom of the flag and the grade directly below.

**8.2.5 Prohibited Signs**

No private sign shall be installed or placed on public property, except by express permission of the Town or as otherwise allowed herein. The following signs are prohibited in any zoning district:

- a Signs which interfere with traffic or pedestrian safety, including any which may obstruct or interfere with traffic or pedestrian visibility or movement at any intersection, along any public sidewalk, or into or out of any property, or which by reason of position, shape, or color may interfere with, may obstruct the view of, or be confused with any authorized traffic sign, signal, or device; or which makes use of the words "STOP," "LOOK," "DANGER," or any other word, phrase, symbol or character in such a manner as to interfere with, mislead or confuse motorists or pedestrians.
- b Signs placed or painted on any tree (other than street address), rock (other than street address), utility pole (other than yard sale sign), traffic safety sign, or similar fixture; painted on any building wall, bench, pavement, parking bumper or curb (other than a "Reserved" marking), or other similar outdoor surface.
- c Internally illuminated signs, unless the background or signboard completely blocks illumination or glow except through the letters and graphics.
- d Signs which contain a beacon of any type; which contain a spot light providing direct illumination to the public; which flash, revolve, rotate, move, or blink, or which fluctuate in light intensity; and animated signs, signs, that is, which use lighting to depict action or to create an illusion of movement or a special effect or scene.
- ~~e~~ e-Any self-illuminated or backlit signs which use LCD, LED, electronic messaging or digital technology, neon or similar signs except as displayed on the inside of windows subject to the provisions of Paragraph 8.2.6.2.c.
- f Free-standing signs in a Business-B Zoning District (except as permitted at service stations).
- g Internally illuminated signs in a Business-B Zoning District (except as permitted at service stations).
- h Banners as permanent signs. Banners are allowed only as temporary signs four times a year for an annual total of 56 days with a sign permit, refer to Section 8.2.6.2.h for full details.
- i Signs located on any portion of a lot except a front yard or a side yard directly abutting a public street.
- j Signs which do not meet and are not maintained to meet the provisions of this Section and all applicable building, wiring, health, and safety codes; ~~or which are not neatly and legibly lettered.~~
- k Reader Board Signs are not allowed except as price displays at gas stations.
- l Balloons or tethered blimps used as signs, a movable poster or panel sign, umbrellas containing any commercial message; or signs attached to or painted on vehicles traveling or parked on, or visible from any public right-of-way, unless such vehicle is used in the normal day-to-day operation of a business.
- m Off-Premises Signs, with the exception of temporary signs.

**Comment [JM43]:** Look at definitions and make sure everything that we want prohibited is listed here.

**Comment [JM44]:** MaryEllen asked for this to be added somewhere, I thought this was a good location for it

**Comment [JM45]:** This is redundant, as these regulations should be stated in the table and under the section specifically devoted to Business B. The Prohibited Signs section should be signs that are generally prohibited all over Town.

**Comment [JM46]:** We should avoid putting regulations in more than 1 place.

**Comment [JM47]:** We should think about this.

**Comment [JM48]:** Here's another reference to signs on vehicles

## n Billboards

no Signs affixed on or above the roof line of a structure

Comment [JM49]: Need to define.

### 8.2.6 Signs by Zoning District

Signs are allowed or permitted in each Zoning District and are specified in Table 8.2.3 and as follows:

#### 8.2.6.1 Business or Commercial Signs in Residential Zoning Districts:

Legal nonconforming business or commercial operations in any residential zoning district shall follow the Business B-Zoning District regulations as specified in Subsection 8.2.6.4 except that such signs shall be set back a minimum of twenty feet from any other lot and shall not be illuminated except during hours of operation.

#### 8.2.6.2 Signs in Business and Industrial Zoning Districts

The following signs are allowed in all Business and Industrial Zoning Districts. In addition, please refer to Table 8.2.3:

- a All awnings and canopies shall be impervious to light so that no illumination or glow can be seen through it. Awnings may contain letters up to four inches in height stating only the name of the business and the street number without requiring a sign permit. Such lettering shall not count toward allowed sign area. All other awnings or canopies with lettering or graphics shall require a sign permit and count as part of the allowed sign area. All awnings and canopies shall have a minimum ground clearance of eight feet. Ground clearance shall be measured between the lowest point of the awning or canopy and the ground or sidewalk.
- b Bulletin boards are allowed, provided that no free-standing or wall-mounted bulletin board may exceed twelve square feet in size
- c Window Signs Window signs are encouraged on the inside surface of the glass. Permanently affixed, weather resistant, individual letters that are not subject to wear and tear are permitted on the exterior of the window. Temporary or permanent signs may without permit be attached to the inside of the glass surface of a window (a single structurally supported sheet of glass or a sash) or door, or placed within the premises closer than five feet from any window or door and situated or designed so that the sign's graphic content is visible from the outside through an window or door, provided that any such sign shall
  - 1 Be uniformly located only in thirty percent (30%) of the glass sheet or sash;
  - 2 Contain no letters larger than eight (8) inches in height;
  - 3 Be professional in appearance and good order shall be maintained at all times. Not be restricted with respect to graphic or message content, whether of a permanent or temporary nature, nor be restricted with respect to materials;
  - 4 Have a sign area not to exceed six (6) square feet if the sign is not illuminated;
  - 5 In addition to the above, any illuminated sign shall be placed only in a window, and not in a door, and shall also:
    - a Have a sign area not to exceed four (4) square feet;
    - b Be placed no closer than ten feet from any other internally illuminated window sign on the premises. In cases where there is a door or other architectural break in the façade this buffer shall be reduced to seven

(7) feet;

c Be placed only in a window which contains no other signs of any type; and ~~Be~~be illuminated only during hours of operation of the business establishment.

d Notwithstanding the above, window signs shall also be allowed in conformity with the provisions of Paragraph 8.2.6.2.h below.

~~d Instructional and directional and informational signs displaying text only, no corporate logos, or slogans~~ are allowed provided that such signs shall be limited to wall and free-standing signs with a maximum sign area of four square feet ~~per sign~~of sign area. One such sign, not exceeding six (6) feet in height, may be placed at each vehicular entrance or exit on a lot to identify such entrance or exit provided such sign does not constitute a traffic hazard; such signs shall not affect the computation of allowable number of signs or aggregate sign size on a property. One such sign, not exceeding six feet in height and four square feet of sign area, may be placed in conjunction with each drive-up bank teller window or machine provided that such sign shall not constitute a traffic hazard.

e Marquee signs are prohibited except when used in conjunction with an indoor movie theater and attached to the outside wall of the building, provided that the size of the marquee sign shall not exceed twenty-four (24) square feet, and the bottom of the marquee sign shall not be of a height of less than 8 feet above the grade directly below.

f Outdoor menu boards are prohibited except:  

- As a portable sign with a sign permit issued by the Board of Selectmen.
- When used in conjunction with a restaurant having a drive up window. No more than three menu boards are allowed. The maximum aggregate sign area is 100 square feet. No one menu board may exceed 50 square feet. Any lettering shall not be legible from any other property or any street right-of-way.

~~g Instructional informational and directional signs are allowed in all business and industrial zoning districts with a maximum sign area of four square feet per sign in accordance with Table 8.2.3.~~

~~hg~~ Temporary signs intended for business openings and re-openings, open houses, and special sales and promotional events for an individual business, are allowed, provided that:

- The individual business shall place no more than four (4) such signs per calendar year for an annual total of 56 days (except in conjunction with an organized Town-wide common special event as specified below);
- All temporary signs
- ~~shall~~ have received a sign permit from the Building Inspector;
- No such sign shall exceed sixteen (16) square feet in sign area or thirty (30) square feet in sign area for businesses that have a setback more than fifty (50) feet from the primary street upon which the business is located;
- ~~Any such sign shall be printed or legibly lettered on a rigid signboard or fabric banner;~~
- In cases where renovation or construction includes removal of permanent signs, a temporary sign is allowed as follows:

Comment [JM50]: Fix lettering

Comment [SN51]: We can add "for safety, traffic" etc language according to IMLA and Alito

Comment [SN52]: Should technically be attached to a marquee

Comment [JM53]: This needs to be clarified – we are currently having an issue interpreting it

- Dimensions shall be the same as temporary signs
- May be used as a permanent sign *Permanent?*
- May remain during construction provided the construction or renovation is expeditiously pursued
- Must be removed upon the installation of the permanent sign
- No such sign shall be placed so as to constitute a hazard to motorists or pedestrians;
- If placed upon a window, any such sign shall be included in the aggregate window area specified in Paragraph 8.2.6.2.c above.

**Comment [SN54]:** This line follows "...provided that" above. Does this imply that the temporary sign is only allowed if it can be used as a permanent sign?

**Comment [TD55]:** • Should these be indented more ?

In the case only of common special events organized by a recognized association of businesses for which events a license has been granted by the Board of Selectmen, an individual participating business may display a temporary sign in conjunction with such an event, provided that such signs related to said events shall not exceed four per year. Grand opening events for a new business may display for fourteen (14) days, upon issuance of a sign permit. Non-illuminated temporary banners, flags, balloons and streamers provided they are mounted in a way that does not pose a hazard to pedestrian or vehicular traffic and sight lines as determined by the Zoning Enforcement Officer. Only one grand opening sign permit per business may be issued until the property undergoes a change of use or change of ownership.

**Comment [TD56]:** Should this be bulleted?

i Farm Stands and Garden Stands which do not have permanent windows shall be allowed, without permit or limitation as to number or material, to display temporary signs identifying goods offered for sale on the premises, provided that such signs are kept in good order and that the aggregate total sign area of all such signs on a lot shall not exceed one square-foot per lineal feet of frontage of such lot. Decorative ~~noncommercial~~ flags may be displayed for sale.

**Comment [SN57]:** Non-advertisement...according to IMLA Alito...

j Clocks, not to exceed eight square feet in surface area per side or twelve feet in height, are allowed, ~~provided that they display no advertising or commercial material.~~

**Comment [SN58]:** Non-advertisement...according to IMLA Alito

k Time and temperature displays may be included in any free-standing or wall sign, and no more than ~~twelve additional square feet of sign area~~ may be added to the otherwise allowable sign area of such sign.

**Comment [TD59]:** Limit to clock face only?

**Comment [SN60]:** Seems like a lot

l For commercial buildings containing more than one business requiring wall signage, any wall sign provided for any such business must be in conformity with the requirements of this Section 8.0 and in accordance with the following stipulations concerning an overall master signage plan for such building. The master signage plan shall show not more than one wall sign per business within the building. However, at the owner's election not every business within the building need be provided with a wall sign within the proposed assemblage. No wall sign shall be issued a sign permit for any building for which a signage plan has been submitted or approved that is not included in or is not in conformity with the applicable signage plan. The master signage plan need not show the specific message content for any individual sign contained therein, so as to provide for change in business occupancy which may from time to time occur within the building:

1 In all Business and Industrial Zoning Districts, the building owner may submit for approval to the Community Planning and Development Commission (CPDC), a master signage plan in accordance with the

provisions of Section 8.2.6.4.1. The CPDC may issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the building showing the allocation within the maximum sign area as allowed according to Table 8.2.3. hereof among wall signs for businesses within the building. This master signage plan shall show the size, placement, materials, framing, graphic and design standards for each such sign and the assemblage thereof proposed within said allowable maximum sign area, together with proposed lighting and methods of attachment of all such signs. Once the Certificate of Appropriateness has been approved by the CPDC, the Building Inspector shall issue a sign permit for any individual business sign if it conforms to the master signage plan.

**8.2.6.3 Signs in Business-A Zoning Districts**

Please refer to Table 8.2.3 for additional regulations relating to signs in the Business A Zoning Districts.

**Allowed Signs (also specified in Table 8.2.3)**

- Free-Standing
- Wall
- Projecting
- Internally illuminated
- 

**Prohibited Signs – Specific to Business A (see also Section 8.2.5)**

- ~~Banners as permanent signs~~
- A free-standing and wall sign for buildings that are not multi-tenant

All internally illuminated signs shall have a background or signboard that completely blocks illumination or glow such that light is only visible through the letters and graphics. All illuminated signs shall be turned off at the close of business

**Comment [JM61]:** Removed b/c this is included in General Prohibited section

**Comment [SN62]:** This is an odd way to phrase this prohibition since each sign type is permitted. This list is about prohibited sign types

**Comment [TD63]:** Add provision to turn off lighting in other districts?

**8.2.6.3.1 Signs in Business-A Zoning Districts Special Conditions**

A lot which contains ~~not more than only~~ one establishment shall be allowed one freestanding sign ~~or OR~~ one wall sign ~~or OR~~ one projecting sign only.

A lot which contains more than one establishment shall be allowed a maximum of the following signs, all of which shall in every respect conform to the requirements of this Section:

- One free-standing sign identifying the property, and
- One wall or projecting sign per business occupying the ground floor and front wall of the building, except in cases where the provisions of Paragraph 8.2.6.2.L. are utilized, and
- One joint identification sign ~~listing the names and logos of the establishments on the premises but containing no other advertising matter~~, mounted either on an appropriate building wall or on two posts, provided that such joint identification sign shall not exceed four (4) square feet in sign area, shall not exceed eight (8) feet in height, and shall not be located within a front, side, or rear yard as required in Subsection 6.0. hereof.

**Comment [SN64]:** Why "two"? can it be 1 or 3 or 4...?

**8.2.6.4 Signs in Business-B Zoning Districts**

[Please refer to Table 8.2.3 for additional regulations relating to signs in the Business B Zoning Districts.](#)

**Allowed Signs**

- Wall
- Projecting
- Awning Sign
- Externally illuminated signs

**Prohibited Signs – Specific to Business B (see also Section 8.2.5)**

- Free-Standing Signs (except as permitted at service stations or by special permit)
- Internally illuminated signs
- ~~Banners as permanent signs~~

No sign permit shall be issued for any permanent sign in the Business-B Zoning District without the sign having been granted a Certificate of Appropriateness (Subsection 8.2.6.4.1). Freestanding, wall and projecting signs permitted in any Business-B Zoning District are specified in Table 8.2.3 No internally illuminated, or Reader Board signs shall be permitted anywhere in a Business-B Zoning District. Free-standing signs will be allowed only for service stations or by special permit from the CPDC. Signs for properties containing more than one establishment:

**Comment [SN65]:** Add this control to other districts?

**Comment [JM66]:** Gas stations? Add under prohibited

**8.2.6.4.1 Signs in Business-B Zoning Districts Special Conditions**

For a lot which contains more than one business, a Certificate of Appropriateness may be granted for more than one sign, and a maximum of the following signs are allowed, all of which shall in every respect conform to the requirements of this Section:

- a** A business occupying the ground floor is allowed two (2) signs if one sign is a wall sign and the second one is a projecting / blade sign, an awning sign, or a wall sign that is located on a different building façade than the first wall sign.

The allowable sign area for the primary sign is equal to 2 square feet per linear footage of length of the front wall of the building occupied by the establishment to which the sign relates in accordance with Table 8.2.3. The secondary sign area shall not exceed half of the sign area allowed for the primary sign located on the principal frontage.

- b** One joint identification sign is allowed ~~listing the names and logos of establishments on the premises~~ provided the following conditions are met:

- No additional advertising
- Shall be mounted on the building wall closest to the entrance
- Shall not exceed four (4) square feet in sign area
- Shall not exceed eight (8) feet in height
- Shall not project beyond the property line

**Comment [SN67]:** Allowed per IMLA and Alito

- ~~**c** Allowance for an Additional Wall Sign: In addition to signs allowed above, a street address sign shall be permitted as follows:~~

**Comment [JM68]:** These are exempt

- ~~Not to exceed four (4) square feet in sign area~~
- ~~Not to exceed six (6) feet in sign height~~
- ~~Shall only display the street address and number of the property~~

**8.2.6.4.4~~2~~ Certificate ~~of~~ ~~Appropriateness~~ / ~~Community~~ ~~Planning~~ and Development Commission (CPDC)**

The CPDC shall establish procedures for receiving and reviewing applications for signs in the Business B Zoning District, and for providing written decisions to the Building Inspector. The CPDC shall, in reviewing such applications, consider the design, arrangement, location, texture, materials, colors, lighting, and other visual characteristics of each proposed sign and its compatibility with its general surroundings with regard to the purposes outlined in Paragraph 8.1.

If the CPDC shall refuse to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for any proposed sign, it shall state in writing the reasons therefore, with suggestions as to how the proposal may be modified so as to be approved.

If the CPDC shall fail to issue or refuse to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness within forty-five (45) days of the date of a completed application being submitted, the Certificate shall be deemed to have been issued. An appeal from any decision of the CPDC may be made within twenty days of such decision being filed with the Town Clerk, to the Board of Selectmen, who may uphold, modify or overrule the action of the CPDC and grant a Certificate of Appropriateness. In those cases where proposed signs are included as part of plans for approval under Site Plan Review (Section 4.6) or PRD Special Permit review (Section 11.2), a Certificate of Appropriateness separate from such approval shall not be required and shall be combined with the review of said permit.

**8.2.6.5 Signs in Business-C Zoning Districts**

Please refer to Table 8.2.3 for additional regulations relating to signs in the Business C Zoning Districts.

~~The allowed signs in the Business-C Zoning District are subject to the corresponding provisions of Paragraph 8.2.6.3. (Business-A).~~

**Allowed Signs**

- Free-Standing
- Wall
- Projecting
- ~~Internally illuminated signs~~
- 

**Prohibited Signs – Specific to Business C (see also Section 8.2.5)**

- ~~Banners as permanent signs~~
- A free-standing and wall sign for buildings that are not multi-tenant

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Comment [SN69]: This is an odd way to phrase this prohibition since each sign type is permitted. This list is about prohibited sign types

**8.2.6.5.1 Signs in Business-C Zoning Districts Special Conditions**

~~The allowed signs in the Business-C Zoning District are subject to the corresponding provisions of Paragraph 8.2.6.3. (Business-A). In addition, a wall sign consisting only of the name and corporate logo of the principal occupant of a building located within eighteen hundred feet of the centerline of an Interstate Highway may have an additional wall sign to be displayed between the top course of windows and the parapet of such building provided that all the following apply:~~

- ~~• the sign area not exceed fifty percent of the surface area described by the tops of such windows, the parapet, and the wall corners;~~
- ~~• that letters and logo contained in or constituting such sign shall not exceed eight feet in height;~~
- ~~• that the lowest point of such sign shall not be closer than 48 feet above the ground immediately below;~~
- ~~• that such sign shall not be illuminated between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and sunrise, and~~
- that such sign shall be located on the building wall most directly facing said highway.

**Comment [TD70]:** Too far from highway, decrease to 900 feet?

**8.2.6.6 Signs in Industrial Zoning Districts**

[Please refer to Table 8.2.3 for additional regulations relating to signs in the Industrial Zoning Districts.](#)

~~The allowed signs in the Industrial zoning district should conform to the provisions of Section 8.2.6.5 (Business-C).~~

**Allowed Signs**

- Free-Standing
- Wall
- Projecting
- Internally illuminated

**Prohibited Signs – Specific to Industrial Zones (see also Section 8.2.5)**

~~Banners as permanent signs~~

- A free-standing and wall sign for buildings that are not multi-tenant

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**8.2.6.6.1 Signs in Industrial Zoning Districts Special Conditions**

~~The allowed signs in the Industrial zoning district should conform to the provisions of Section 8.2.6.5 (Business-C).~~ In conjunction with a Special Permit to Construct a Planned Unit Development (PUD) granted in accordance with Section 11.1. hereof, the Community Planning and Development Commission (CPDC) may, consistent with Subsection 8.1., allow modifications to any provision of this Section. The CPDC may allow one additional free-standing sign, not to exceed thirty-five feet in height or 144 square feet in sign area, in that portion of the PUD parcel's landscaped perimeter buffer area most closely adjacent to Route 128 but not closer than 500 feet from any other public street existing at the time of submission of a relevant Preliminary PUD Plan.

**Comment [SN71]:** This is an odd way to phrase this prohibition since each sign type is permitted. This list is about prohibited sign types

**8.2.6.7 Signs in a PUD**

Notwithstanding anything in this Section 8.2 to the contrary, signs are allowed or permitted in a PUD only in accordance with Section 11.1.5.6. of these bylaws.

**8.2.6.8 Signs in Residential Districts**

Please refer to Table 8.2.3 for additional regulations relating to signs in the Residential Zoning Districts.

**Allowed Signs**

- Wall
- Projecting
- Externally illuminated signs
- ~~Decorative non-commercial banners or flags displayed on residential lots shall not be construed as signs for purposes of this bylaw.~~

**Comment [TD72]:** This contradicts Nos sign in any residential Zoning District shall be illuminated

**Comment [SN73]:** Non-advertisement...seems we can say this

**Prohibited Signs – Specific to Residential Zones (see also Section 8.2.5)**

- Internally illuminated signs
- Free-standing signs (except as allowed by special permit)
- ~~Banners as permanent signs~~
- Except for identification signs (8.2.4.i) or signs allowed in Subsection 8.2.6.1, no sign in any Residential Zoning District shall be illuminated in any manner.

**Comment [JM74]:** Not in Table

**Comment [JM75]:** Direct contradiction with Externally Illuminated

**8.2.6.8.1 Signs in Residential Zoning Districts Special Conditions**

~~Decorative non-commercial banners or flags displayed on residential lots shall not be construed as signs for purposes of this bylaw.~~ In connection with any Special Permit to Construct a Planned Residential Development (PRD) granted in accordance with Section 11.2. hereof, the Community Planning and Development Commission may allow modifications to any provision of this Section which is not inconsistent with the Purposes of this Section as specified in Subsection 8.2.1.

**Comment [SN76]:** Non-advertisement...seems we can say this

**8.2.7 Removal of Defunct Signs**

In the event a business, other than a seasonal business, ceases operations for a period of time in excess of thirty days, the sign owner or lessee, or the property owner, shall immediately remove any identification or advertising of said business or any product or service sold thereby. If the sign conforms to the provisions of this Section, and if a permit has been requested within said thirty-day period for altering the same sign in conformity with this Section to identify a new business in the same location, such alteration shall be allowed. Changes in legend on any directory sign shall be exempt from the provisions of this paragraph.

**8.2.8 Nonconforming Signs**

A nonconforming sign may not be enlarged or altered in any way which would increase its nonconformity. Should any nonconforming sign be damaged by any means to an extent of more than fifty percent of its replacement cost at the time of damage, it shall not be reconstructed except in conformity with the provisions of this Section 8.2.

**8.2.9 Signs by Special Permit**

The CPDC may grant a Special Permit for a free-standing sign within the side setbacks identified in Table 8.2.3 or Section 8.2.6.3 if it finds that the sign complies with the purposes of this by-law, abutting properties are not unreasonably impacted by sign placement, and the sign conforms in all other respects with Section 8.2 with

specific attention to Section 8.2.5.a regarding impact on traffic and pedestrian safety.

- a The CPDC may grant a Special Permit for a free-standing sign in the Business-B or Residential Zoning Districts if it finds that the sign complies with the purposes of this bylaw, abutting properties are not unreasonably impacted by sign placement and there is no negative impact on traffic and pedestrian safety. The CPDC may consider the following items when reviewing the Special Permit request, considerations for the character of the surrounding neighborhood, the principal use of the property or business, the location of the parking, landscaping in the front yard setback and other signs on the property

**8.2.3 Signs Permitted According to Zoning District**

Type	Permit Required	Max Sign	Max Sign	Setbacks:		Maximum Number
		Area (square feet)	Height (feet)	Front (feet)	Side (feet)	
<b>All Zoning Districts:</b>						
1. Personal Message	N	4	6	NA	20	1/lot
2. Identification (Joint or Area)	N	4	8(a)	NA	NA	1/lot entrance
3. Construction	N	32	NA	NA	20	1
Add 1 sign when active building permit						
4. Subdivision Sales	(c)	48	NA	NA	NA	1/sub-division
Add 1 sign when building for sale						
5. Subdivision	(c)	24	NA	NA	NA	1/ sub-division
6. Real Estate Sales	N	8(g)	6	NA	20	1/lot
Add 1 sign when building for sale						
7. Temp Open House	N	4	NA	NA	20	1/agency per lot
8. Garage and Yard Sale	N	4	NA	NA	20	1/lot
9. Informational - Instructional - Directional	N	4	6	NA	NA	NA
10. Temporary Business	Y	16 or 30	(See Section 8.2.6.2.h)			
11. Portable A-Frame	Y	Regulated by the Board of Selectmen – Annual Permit				
<b>Business-A, Business-C and Industrial Zoning Districts:</b>						
12. Free-Standing	Y	50(d)	20	0	20(i)	1/lot (k)
13. Wall	Y	2/4(e)	(a)	NA	10	1/business (k)
14. Projecting / Blade	Y	8	(a)(h)	NA	10	1/business (k)
<b>Business-B Zoning Districts:</b>						
15. Wall	Y	2(f)	(a)	0	0	2/businesses
16. Projecting / Blade	Y	8	(a)(h)	-4	0	1/business
17. Free-Standing (Service Stations only)	Y	35	14	0	20	1/lot
		<b>Max Sign Area</b>	<b>Max Sign Height</b>	<b>Setbacks:</b>		
	<b>Permit</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Height</b>	<b>Front</b>	<b>Side</b>	<b>Maximum</b>

Comment [TD77]: Renumber based on moving the table. Add white space for readability.

Comment [JM78]: Change to just Portable

Type	Required	(square feet)	(feet)	(feet)	(feet)	Number
18. Free Standing	SPP(j)	35(d)	10.5	0	20	1/lot
<p><b>NOTES:</b></p> <p><b>a</b> <u>No portion of such sign shall extend higher than the bottom of the sills of the windows of the second floor of a building or higher than the lowest portion of the eaves or, in the case of a gabled wall, no higher than a line equal in height to the lowest portion of the lower eave of any adjoining building wall, whichever of the above is lowest.</u></p> <p><b>b</b> <u>Aggregate sign area of all applicable signs.</u></p> <p><b>c</b> <u>Only as shown in Definitive Subdivision Plans as approved by the Community Planning and Development Commission consistent with Paragraph 8.1.</u></p> <p><b>d</b> <u>If more than one business occupies the lot, the sign may not exceed 75 square feet. * See Section 8.2.6.4</u></p> <p><b>e</b> <u>If the minimum distance from the building wall on which the sign is mounted is less than 100 feet from the centerline of the street which the sign faces, the maximum sign area shall be equal to 2 square feet per linear foot of said wall occupied by the establishment to which the sign relates; if such distance is more than 100 feet, maximum sign area shall be equal to 4 square feet per linear foot of said wall so occupied.</u></p> <p><b>f</b> <u>No wall sign for any non-residential establishment shall exceed a sign area equal to 2 square feet per linear footage of length of the front wall of the building occupied by the establishment to which the sign relates.</u></p> <p><b>g</b> <u>Real Estate Signs in the Industrial Zoning Districts are allowed one sign per business with a maximum sign area equal to 2 square feet per linear foot of said wall occupied by the establishment to which the sign relates without a sign permit.</u></p> <p><b>h</b> <u>Projecting/Blade Signs shall be at least eight (8) feet from the ground and may project no more than four (4) feet from the structure.</u></p> <p><b>i</b> <u>A Special Permit may be granted by the CPDC. See Section 8.2.9 for Special Permit Criteria.</u></p> <p><b>j</b> <u>Free-standing signs shall be permitted only where the principal business entrance is located more than 40 feet from the centerline of the street in front of the lot. CPDC may waive the 40' business entrance setback requirement for signs in existence as of the effective date of this amendment. See Section 8.2.9.a for Special Permit Criteria.</u></p> <p><b>k</b> <u>Per 8.2.6.3, A lot which contains only one establishment shall only be allowed one freestanding sign OR one wall sign OR one projecting sign.</u></p>						

**Additional Topics for Discussion from Tony and MaryEllen:**

- 1) Add limits for Internal Signs
- 2) Add sign for Parking in Back
- 3) A-Frame Discussion – is it possible to administer all signs similarly?
- 4) What are we losing with this revision?
- 5) Height of business signs –as Town “revamps” Main Street; could include generous non-conformity clause.

