

## 137-17 Signs

[Amended 9-11-2003 by L.L. No. 8-2003]

### A.

Definitions. As used in this section, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated:

#### SIGN

Any display of lettering, numbering, logos, design, colors, lights, or illumination visible to the public right-of-way, which either conveys a message to the public or intends to advertise, direct, invite, announce or draw attention, directly or indirectly, to a use conducted, events goods, products, services or facilities available.

#### SIGN AREA

Includes the surface area of a sign as described below:

##### (1)

When such sign is on a plate or framed or outlined, all of the area of such plate or the area enclosed by such frame or outline shall be included.

##### (2)

When such sign consists only of individual letters, designs or figures engraved, painted, projected or in any manner affixed to the ground or to a structure, the sign area shall be deemed to include the area within which all of the sign material may be inscribed.

#### SIGN, ADVERTISING

Any sign promoting products sold or services provided.

#### SIGN, COPY-CHANGE

A permanently mounted sign that allows a message to be created and changed from time to time by way of inserting permanent letters into a frame.

#### SIGN, ELECTRONIC MESSAGE-CHANGE

A sign or device that displays a message composed of multiple small lighted points that are or may be controlled by electronic mechanism so as to vary its display, either to vary the text of the message itself or the manner in which the lighted message is displayed (e.g., flashing, appearing to move across a screen).

#### SIGN, INDIRECTLY ILLUMINATED

A sign that is illuminated from a shielded light source focusing light onto the sign from the outside, as opposed to internally illuminated signs.

#### SIGN, INTERNALLY ILLUMINATED

A sign consisting of translucent facing materials with lettering or images and lit from inside by bulbs, tubes, or other light sources. This includes individual letters, designs, or figures consisting of translucent materials that are lit from an internal light source and mounted on the side of a building.

#### SIGN, PERMANENT

Any sign permanently affixed to the ground or structure.

#### SIGN, PORTABLE

A sign that is designed to be movable and not structurally attached to the ground, a building, a structure or another sign. Portable signs include but are not limited to those that allow the creation of customized messages by way of inserting letters into a frame.

#### SIGN, WALL

Any sign that shall be affixed parallel to the wall or printed on the wall of any building in such a manner as to read parallel to the wall on which it is mounted.

#### SIGN, WINDOW

Any sign erected, constructed and internally mounted on or in a window or door of a building which is visible from a public area.

#### B.

General regulations.

#### (1)

Sign permits.

#### (a)

No permanent sign, for a new building or new lot, may be constructed, erected or installed unless a sign permit is first approved and issued by the Building Inspector pursuant to site plan approval by the Planning Board or Architectural Review Board, as applicable. Temporary signs permitted pursuant to Subsection 1 of this section shall also require a sign permit approved and issued by the Building Inspector prior to installation.

[Amended 5-13-2004 by L.L. No. 3-2004]

#### (b)

A fee of \$10 shall be charged for sign permits.

#### (2)

Window signs, where permitted, shall not cover more than 50% of the window and shall be placed so as not to obstruct the view inside the building.

#### (3)

No sign shall be higher than the principal building to which it is accessory.

#### (4)

Any sign that overhangs a sidewalk shall be installed at least nine feet from the sidewalk to the bottom of the sign. No sign shall project over a public street or over the ingress or egress of a lot.

(5)

Off-premises signs. Signs displaying information on uses, events, goods, products, services or facilities offered at locations other than on the tax lot where the sign is located are prohibited, with the following exceptions:

(a)

General directory or directional signs, subject to approval by the Planning Board or Architectural Review Board, as applicable, for properties with shared access pursuant to § 137-11. General directory or directional signs shall be no larger in area than two square feet and shall include only the name(s) of the establishment and basic directional information in lettering no higher than five inches. Such directory signs are typically internal to the common accessway and are not intended to serve as additional advertising signs, but only to direct the public within a business or industrial park.

(b)

Where businesses are using shared access pursuant to § 137-11, limited business signage shall be permitted at the intersection(s) of the shared accessway with the public road in order to reduce a proliferation of signs while still providing reasonable identification, as follows: one sign not more than 10 square feet is permitted identifying the business park name or the name of the primary use(r) of the site. The Planning Board or Architectural Review Board may require lettering on such signs to be at least five inches tall where needed in order to ensure adequate visibility on highways with a posted speed limit greater than 45 miles per hour. In addition to the business park place name sign, an additional sign or signs not collectively totaling more than 10 square feet in size shall be permitted to list up to three tenants or businesses within the business park.

(c)

An off-premises business sign may be located on a different tax lot than the tax lot of the place of business, provided that the tax lots are part of the same property held in common ownership.

[Added 8-5-2004 by L.L. No. 6-2004]

(6)

No sign shall be erected on a street name sign, a public utility pole, traffic structure or traffic control device, except municipal and emergency services shall be allowed to place directional signs on street name signs.

(7)

Where any building, structure or use requires site plan approval, then sign size, design, materials, color and construction, height, location and lighting is subject to review and approval by the Planning Board as part of site plan review. In cases where a sign was not approved as part of a required site plan review, the property owner shall be required to apply for and obtain site plan approval of the proposed or existing unlawful sign(s) pursuant to this chapter. The Planning Board shall review such application and either approve said application or provide comments to the applicant within 30 days after a complete application is made. In the event that the Town of Crawford establishes an Architectural Review Board that is separate from the Planning Board, the Planning Board shall refer sign review and approval to the said Architectural Review Board. For all sign applications not otherwise requiring site plan approval pursuant to this chapter, a sign application may be referred by the Building Inspector to the Planning Board or Architectural Review Board, as appropriate, for comment. Said Board shall review and respond to the Building Inspector within 30 days.

(8)

A permanent sign that lawfully exists and complies with then-existing sign regulations at the date of adoption of this § 137-17 shall be considered a lawful nonconforming sign. However, all such signs must be brought into compliance with this section and any amendments thereto within 10 years of the effective date of this section (the "amortization period"). A nonconforming permanent sign authorized pursuant to a site plan approval granted by the Planning Board shall be exempt from this requirement. A temporary sign existing at the date of adoption of this section shall be brought into compliance with this law or removed within six months after such effective date.

(a)

A sign owner may submit a request to the Town Board to extend the amortization period for a permanent sign. Such request must be made in writing within 60 days prior to the expiration of the amortization period and must include credible evidence establishing that due to specific circumstances the amortization period is unreasonable and will result in a substantial loss of investment. The Town Board may, after consideration of the evidence provided, grant an extension of the amortization period for such sign. The burden of proof lies with the sign owner.

(b)

If any nonconforming sign is abandoned, removed, not maintained, or enlarged during the amortization period, such amortization period as applied to such sign shall immediately terminate, and the sign shall be deemed an illegal sign.

(9)

Internally illuminated signs are discouraged. Indirect sign illumination is encouraged where illuminated signs are permitted pursuant to this chapter.

(10)

Sign colors. The following colors shall be encouraged:

(a)

White letters on a dark green or dark red background.

(b)

Black letters on a white background.

(c)

Gold letters on a dark red, dark blue or dark green background.

C.

Prohibitions.

(1)

No sign shall be illuminated in a way that produces excessive glare or hazardous conditions to pedestrian and automotive traffic; nor shall any sign be illuminated so as to cause glare or light spillover onto adjoining properties.

(2)

No sign shall consist of lights that flash or move or appear to move, nor shall any sign consist of nor include any objects attached to the sign that move or appear to move.

(3)

No sign shall be installed or designed such that it may compete with or be mistaken for a traffic sign. This shall include all signs that incorporate any shape that imitates or resembles a traffic

sign, or signs that are not official traffic signs that include or bear the words "stop," "caution," "warning," "go slow," "turn back" or similar words.

(4)

All signs must be permanently affixed to a permitted building or structure, or permanently mounted on pole(s) and/or to the ground, except as may otherwise be specifically allowed in this chapter.

(5)

The outlining of a perimeter of a building with lights (except as part of a temporary seasonal display of holiday lighting lasting not longer than 60 days) is prohibited.

(6)

The outlining of a display window with lights, including the outlining of a window with neon or colored light, is prohibited. This shall not be construed to prohibit temporary seasonal display of holiday lighting lasting not longer than 60 days.

(7)

Gas-filled figures or objects, whether tethered to the ground or to any part of a building, are prohibited. This shall not be construed to prohibit the tying of balloons not exceeding 14 inches in diameter to a structure as part of a temporary use extending not more than three consecutive days, except that in no case shall such balloons extend above the height of the building soffit.

(8)

Portable signs, except as otherwise specifically permitted in this chapter, are prohibited. In no case shall any temporary or permanent signs resting on or attached to trailers, parked vehicles or other moveable objects be used as a means to circumvent the provisions of this chapter.

(9)

Electronic message-change signs are prohibited in all districts, and shall not be used under any circumstances, including but not limited to a window sign, as a freestanding sign, or on a building.

D.

Lighting hours. No sign shall be illuminated between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. unless the premises are open for general business during such hours.

## E.

Exempt signs. The following signs are exempt from approval and permit requirements, except that, where noted below, size, quantity and other limitations shall apply as indicated for the specific type sign. In addition, maintenance of all signs shall be required and may be enforced in the manner set forth in this chapter.

### (1)

House numbers and nameplates (nonilluminated) for each residential dwelling unit, not to exceed two square feet, total all faces, indicating the name of the occupant and/or the location.

### (2)

"No Trespassing," "No Dumping," "No Hunting" or similar signs not to exceed 1 1/2 square feet in area per sign, spaced evenly along the property, spaced no closer than 250 linear feet as measured along the property line; however, one such sign will be permitted on each side of the property regardless of spacing.

### (3)

Nonilluminated directional or instructional signs as reasonably necessary to provide direction or instruction and located entirely on the property to which they pertain, signs identifying rest rooms, public telephones or walkways, or signs providing direction, such as parking lot entrances and exit signs and those of similar nature, except that where the project is subject to site plan review, at the discretion of the Building Inspector, these signs may require application to the Planning Board for approval and must be shown on approved site plans where site plan approval is required.

### (4)

Flags, emblems or insignia-type signs of any nation, state or political subdivision, or corporate flag. The maximum permitted height for these type signs shall be 30 feet in all zones. No more than three such signs, flags, emblems or insignia in total shall be installed or displayed, unless the additional signs are approved by the Planning Board as an element of a site plan.

### (5)

Governmental signs for control of traffic and other regulatory purposes, street signs, danger signs, railroad crossing signs and signs of public service companies indicating danger and aids to service or safety which are erected by or on the order of a public officer in the performance of his or her public duty.

### (6)

Temporary holiday decoration signs of a primarily decorative nature, clearly incidental and customary and commonly associated with a national, local or religious holiday.

(7)

Interior signs located within a building or stadium or within an enclosed lobby or court of any building.

(8)

Memorial signs, tablets, plaques or names of buildings and dates of erection when cut into any masonry surface, inlaid or otherwise directly fastened to the building so as to be part of the building or when constructed of bronze or other noncombustible material.

(9)

Permanent copy-change signs not over 20 square feet in area for medical, public, charitable, civil or religious institutions, where the same are located on the premises of said institution.

(10)

Public notices. Official notices posted by public officers or employees in the performance of their duties.

(11)

Public signs required or specifically authorized by any law, statute or ordinance, which signs may be of any type, number, area, height above grade, location, illumination or animation required by the law, statute or ordinance under which the signs are erected.

(12)

Religious symbols, commemorative plaques of recognized historical agencies or identification emblems of religious orders or historical agencies, provided that no such symbol, plaque or identification emblem shall exceed four square feet in area.

(13)

Warning signs alerting the public to the existence of a temporary danger but containing no advertising material, of a size as may be necessary, to be removed upon subsidence of danger.

(14)

Political campaign signs pertaining to candidates for public office, political parties or public referenda or other public issues. Such signs must be displayed only on private property. The Town of Crawford encourages but does not require that said signs be displayed no earlier than 30 days prior to the relevant election or referendum and that they be removed no later than 10 days after such election or referendum.

(15)

At gasoline stations:

(a)

Integral graphics or attached price signs on gasoline pumps, and graphics or company identification on island canopies; however, the size or shape of the canopy shall not be modified to expand the same for purposes of additional signage use. This does not exempt canopies from the required reviews and approvals of the Building Inspector and Planning Board.

(b)

Two price, product or promotional signs, each not exceeding six square feet in size, if located on the pump island, or set not closer than 10 feet to the edge of the roadway pavement, nor exceeding eight feet above grade, nor situated so as to impair visibility for pedestrians or motorists.

(16)

Not more than one temporary unlighted "For Sale" or "For Rent" sign not exceeding 12 square feet in size located on a property that is for sale or for rent, which sign shall be removed upon the sale or rental of the property. Where a property that is for sale or for rent abuts more than one public right-of-way, one unlighted "For Sale" or "For Rent" sign shall be permitted at each right-of-way. In addition, for development projects under construction and actively marketing sites, lots or dwelling units, no more than a total of two "For Sale" or "For Rent" signs, each not exceeding 12 square feet in size, shall be permitted at entrances to the development project, which sign(s) shall be removed upon occupancy of the project.

[Amended 8-5-2004 by L.L. No. 6-2004]

(17)

Not more than two temporary unlighted "For Sale" or "For Rent" signs not exceeding 16 square feet in size located on a property that is for sale or for rent, to be removed upon completion of the sale. Where a property that is for sale or for rent abuts more than one public right-of-way, up to two additional unlighted "For Sale" or "For Rent" signs shall be permitted.

(18)

Temporary banners, pennants and related signs will be allowed in residential districts in conjunction with an open house or model home demonstration not to exceed a total period of 15 days.

(19)

Banners, pennants and related signs pertaining to temporary fairs, carnivals and other events requiring special permission of the Town Board pursuant to the requirements of this chapter shall be addressed within the purview of such Town Board approval.

(20)

Signs for agricultural row crops.

F.

Construction specifications. All signs shall comply with the provisions of the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code

Editor's Note: See Ch. 87, Fire Prevention and Building Code Administration. and the National Electrical Code, or their successor code for the year of latest revision, and the additional construction standards hereinafter set forth in this subsection.

(1)

Obstruction to exits. No signs shall be erected, constructed or maintained so as to obstruct any fire escape, required exit, window or door opening used as a means of egress.

(2)

Obstruction to ventilation. No sign shall be attached in any form, shape or manner which will interfere with any opening required for ventilation, except that such signs may be erected in front of and may cover a transom when not in violation of the provisions of the Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code.

(3)

Clearance from high-voltage power lines. Signs shall be located in such a way that they maintain horizontal and vertical clearance of all overhead electrical conductors in accordance with National Electrical Code specifications, depending on voltages concerned. However, in no case shall a sign be installed closer than 24 inches horizontally or vertically to any conductor or public utility guy wire.

(4)

Freestanding sign materials. All freestanding sign structures or poles shall be self-supporting structures erected on or permanently attached to concrete foundations.

(5)

Wind loads. All signs except those attached flat against the wall of a building shall be constructed to withstand wind loads of 30 pounds per square foot of the total face area of the letters and other sign surfaces.

(6)

Sign anchoring. Signs shall be anchored to prevent any lateral movement that would cause wear on supporting members or connections.

G.

Removal and disposition of signs.

(1)

Maintenance and repair. Every sign, whether or not a permit or permit fee is required, shall be maintained in a safe, presentable and structurally sound condition at all times, including the replacement of defective parts, painting, repainting, cleaning, and other acts required for the maintenance of said sign. The Building Inspector shall require compliance with all standards of this chapter. If the sign is not made to comply with adequate safety standards by the property owner, the Building Inspector shall require its removal in accordance with this section.

(2)

Dangerous or defective signs. No person shall maintain or permit to be maintained on any premises owned or controlled by him any sign which is in a dangerous or defective condition. Any such sign shall be removed or repaired by the owner of the premises.

(3)

Unlawful signs. No person shall erect on any premises owned or controlled by him any sign which does not comply with the provisions of this chapter.

(4)

Street improvements projects. Where the construction or the widening of a street or driveway causes an existing sign to overhang the street or driveway, said sign shall be deemed unlawful and shall be removed or relocated at the owner's expense.

#### H.

Removal of signs by the Town. In addition to and not in lieu of other remedies and penalties for violation of the zoning law, unlawful or dangerous signs may be removed by the Town pursuant to the provisions below.

#### (1)

The Building Inspector shall cause to be removed any sign that endangers the public safety.

#### (2)

Where the Building Inspector determines that a sign is dangerous or unlawful, the Building Inspector shall prepare a notice which shall describe the sign and specify the violation and shall state that if the sign is not removed or the violation is not corrected within 30 days, the sign may be removed by the Town in accordance with the provisions of this subsection. All notices mailed by the Building Inspector shall be sent by certified mail, return receipt requested. Any time periods provided in this section shall be deemed to commence on the date of the mailing of the certified mail. The notice shall be mailed to the owner of the property on which the sign is located as the ownership is shown on the latest assessment roll for the Town. Any person having an economic interest in the sign or in the property on which the sign is located may appeal the determination of the Building Inspector ordering removal or compliance by filing a written notice of appeal with the Zoning Board of Appeals within 30 days of the notice.

#### (3)

In cases of emergency, as determined by the Building Inspector, the Building Inspector may cause the immediate removal of a dangerous or defective sign without notice or within a time period less than 30 days.

#### (4)

If the owner fails to comply with the Building Inspector's order, the Town may cause the sign to be removed at the property owner's expense. Any sign so removed shall become the property of the Town and may be disposed of in any manner deemed appropriate by the Town. The costs of removal and disposal of the sign by the Town shall be deemed a debt owed to the Town by the owner of the property and may be recovered in an appropriate court action by the Town or by levy and assessment against the property in the same manner as real property taxes. Said costs shall also include any and all costs and expenses, including reasonable attorney's fees, incurred by the Town in connection therewith.

#### (5)

In cases of unlawful signs that are of a temporary and nonsubstantial value, including but not limited to paper, cloth, flags or cardboard signs affixed to telephone poles or stuck in the ground, the Building Inspector may remove such signs on the spot or direct the immediate removal of such signs without notice.

1.

Temporary signs.

(1)

Temporary unlighted signs, banners or flags will be allowed by a business, by permit, for no more than 30 days. A new permit may be issued two weeks after expiration of a prior permit. Permits for temporary signs will be approved and issued by the Building Inspector, provided that the guidelines and requirements of this law are followed. Routine or regular seasonal use of flags or banners may be approved only where such use is specifically determined to be consistent with surrounding neighborhood character.

[Amended 5-13-2004 by L.L. No. 3-2004]

(2)

Temporary unlighted signs erected by and for social organizations to advertise events such as suppers, banquet, benefits, and fund-raising sales may be erected for a thirty-day period without permit in any district, provided that the signs do not constitute a traffic hazard and shall be removed within one week after the advertised event.

(3)

Temporary unlighted signs erected to advertise garage sales may be erected no more than for seven days before the sale, without permit, in any district, provided that the signs shall not constitute a traffic hazard and shall be removed within one week after the advertised event.

(4)

A new business or a business in a new location outside the Center Hamlet District may utilize a portable sign for a period of not more than 60 days while awaiting installation of a permanent sign. Where used, portable signs shall be placed on the property so as to not to obstruct any pedestrian traffic or vehicular sight distance or otherwise pose a hazard or nuisance. If illuminated, portable signs shall be internally illuminated and shall not include any flashing lights. No portable sign shall exceed 16 square feet in size.

(5)

Any sign not removed in the time provided for above is a violation of this law. Each day such violation continues is deemed a separate and distinct violation.

J.

Residence and residence/agriculture districts. In addition to any applicable exempt signage addressed in Subsection E above, the following signs shall be permitted:

(1)

Home occupation signs. One nonilluminated sign per home occupation no larger in area than two square feet indicating the name, address, phone number and purpose of the home occupation is permitted. Such sign should be placed as close as possible to the intersection of the driveway and the public road, but shall in no case be located so as to interfere with sight distance.

(2)

For seasonal roadside farm stands, not more than two signs per lot shall be permitted, no greater than 12 square feet each, pertaining to the articles being sold.

(3)

For a house of worship, one nonilluminated sign not exceeding 12 square feet in size shall be permitted per lot, which sign shall be subject to site plan approval. Depending on the hours of operation of such use, the Planning Board or Architectural Review Board (as may be applicable) may allow such sign to be illuminated.

K.

Office-Residence District. In addition to any applicable exempt signage addressed in Subsection E above, the following signs shall be permitted. Except for roadside farm stand signs, any proposed nonexempt sign shall require prior approval by the Planning Board or, where applicable, the Architectural Review Board.

(1)

Home occupation signs. One nonilluminated sign per home occupation no larger in area than two square feet indicating the name, address, phone number and purpose of the home occupation is permitted. Such sign should be placed as close as possible to the intersection of the driveway and the public road, but shall in no case be located so as to interfere with sight distance.

(2)

For seasonal roadside farm stands, not more than two signs per lot shall be permitted, no greater than 12 square feet each, pertaining to the articles being sold.

(3)

For all other permitted and specially permitted uses in the Office-Residence District, one nonilluminated sign not larger than six square feet identifying the use is allowed as approved by the Planning Board (or Architectural Review Board as may be applicable) pursuant to site plan approval. Such sign should be placed as close as possible to the intersection of the driveway and the public road, but shall in no case be located so as to interfere with sight distance. Depending on the hours of operation of such uses, the Planning Board (or Architectural Review Board as may be applicable) may allow such sign to be indirectly illuminated.

(4)

For a religious house of worship, one nonilluminated sign not exceeding 12 square feet in size shall be permitted per lot. Depending on the hours of operation of such uses, the Planning Board (or Architectural Review Board as may be applicable) may allow such sign to be indirectly illuminated

L.

Center Hamlet District and Business Park District. In addition to any applicable exempt signage addressed in Subsection E above, the following signs shall be permitted. Except for roadside farm stand signs, any proposed nonexempt sign shall require prior approval by the Planning Board or, where applicable, the Architectural Review Board.

[Amended 5-13-2004 by L.L. No. 3-2004]

(1)

One freestanding or ground-mounted business sign identifying, pertaining to or advertising the business or businesses conducted on the premises shall be permitted with a maximum area of 32 square feet, including the frame.

(2)

In addition, one wall sign per business shall be permitted, not exceeding one square foot in size for each horizontal foot of building wall on which it is mounted. If the business faces two streets, the Planning Board (or Architectural Review Board as may be applicable) may approve a second wall sign not exceeding one square foot in size for each horizontal foot of building wall on which it is mounted, facing the second street. The wall sign(s) must be shown on a site plan submitted to and approved by the Planning Board (or Architectural Review Board as may be applicable).

(3)

Window signs conforming with the requirements of § 137-17C are permitted, but discouraged.

(4)

For seasonal roadside farm stands, two signs per lot shall be permitted, no greater than 12 square feet each, pertaining to the articles being sold.

M.

Industrial District. In addition to any applicable exempt signage addressed in Subsection E above, the following signs shall be permitted. Except for roadside farm stand signs, any proposed nonexempt sign shall require prior approval by the Planning Board or, where applicable, the Architectural Review Board.

(1)

One freestanding or ground-mounted business sign identifying, pertaining to or advertising the business or businesses conducted on the premises shall be permitted with a maximum area of 50 square feet, including the frame.

(2)

In addition, one wall sign per business shall be permitted, not exceeding one square foot in size for each horizontal foot of building wall on which it is mounted. If the business faces two streets, the Planning Board (or Architectural Review Board as may be applicable) may approve a second wall sign not exceeding one square foot in size for each horizontal foot of building wall on which it is mounted, facing the second street. The wall sign(s) must be shown on a site plan submitted to and approved by the Planning Board (or Architectural Review Board as may be applicable).

(3)

Window signs conforming with the requirements of § 137-17C are permitted, but discouraged.

(4)

For seasonal roadside farm stands, two signs per lot shall be permitted, no greater than 12 square feet each, pertaining to the articles being sold.