

SECTION 12.0 – SIGNS

12.1 Permit Required

No sign shall hereafter be located, erected, moved, reconstructed, extended, enlarged, converted, or structurally altered without a sign permit, except those signs permitted under Section 12.2, and without being in conformance with the provisions of this Chapter and Section 84.30 of the Wisconsin Statutes. The sign shall also meet all the structural requirements of local and state building codes. Normal maintenance and routine repair of signs, including changes to sign copy or message, shall be allowed without a sign permit.

12.2 Signs Permitted in All Districts Without a Sign Permit

The following signs are permitted in all zoning districts without a permit subject to the following regulations:

- (1) Signs Over Show Windows or Doors of a nonconforming business establishment announcing without display or elaboration only the name and occupation of the proprietor, not to exceed 2 feet in height and 10 feet in length.
- (2) Agricultural Signs pertaining to the sale of agricultural products on a farm or to membership in agricultural or agricultural-related organizations, consisting of up to 2 signs with each sign face totaling not more than 32 square feet in display area.
- (3) Real Estate Signs not to exceed 16 square feet in display area per side which advertise the sale, rental, or lease of the premises upon which said signs are temporarily located.
- (4) Name, Occupation, and Warning Signs not to exceed 2 square feet in display area located on the premises, and not closer than 50 feet between signs.
- (5) Bulletin Boards of public, charitable, or religious institutions not to exceed 16 square feet in display area on one side located on the premises.
- (6) Memorial Signs, tablets, names of buildings, and date of erection when cut into any masonry surface or when constructed of metal and affixed flat against a structure.
- (7) Official Signs, such as traffic control, parking restrictions, information, and notices.
- (8) Political Signs for political candidates which shall not be larger than 32 square feet per side.
- (9) Temporary Signs that are to be displayed for 30 days or less.

(Amended by Ordinance 030303B)

- (10) Temporary Signs that are to be displayed for more than 30 days, when authorized by the Planning and Zoning Committee by issuance of a conditional use permit.

(Amended by Ordinance 030303B)

12.3 Signs Permitted in All Commercial and Industrial Districts

The following signs are permitted in the Commercial and Industrial Districts with a permit and are subject to the following regulations:

- (1) Wall Signs placed against the exterior wall of a building shall not extend more than 18 inches from the wall, and shall not extend above the roof line or beyond any building wall upon which it is erected. The maximum area of all wall signs shall not exceed an area equal to 3 square feet for each lineal front foot of building.
- (2) Projecting Signs fastened to, suspended from, or supported by building structures shall not exceed 100 square feet in display area on all sides for any one premises, extend more than 6 feet from the building wall, be less than 10 feet from all lot lines, exceed a height of 6 feet above the roof line, or be less than 10 feet above a sidewalk or other pedestrian way, nor less than 15 feet above a driveway or an alley.
- (3) On-Premise Ground Signs in the commercial and industrial districts are subject to the following requirements:
 - (A) Such signs shall be limited to one (1) sign for each individual business premises and advertise the business name, services offered, or products sold on the premises.
 - (B) Such signs shall have a maximum height of 30 feet.
 - (C) No sign in a commercial district shall be located within 25 feet of the existing right-of-way of any federal, state, or county trunk highway, or of any town road. The setback shall be measured horizontally along a line perpendicular to the center of the highway or road.
 - (D) No such sign in an industrial district shall be located within 10 feet of the existing right-of-way of any federal, state, or county trunk highway, or of any town road. The setback shall be measured horizontally along a line perpendicular to the center of the highway or road.
 - (E) No such sign shall be constructed within any vision triangle created under Section 8 of this Chapter.

- (F) Unless a sign is located at least 40 feet from the existing right-of-way of any federal, state, or county trunk highway, or of any town road, with the setback measured horizontally along a line perpendicular to the center of the highway or road, no sign shall exceed 50 square feet in display area on any one side, nor 100 square feet in display area on all sides for any one premises. If the sign is located at least 40 feet from the existing right-of-way, a sign exceeding 50 square feet in display area on one side and exceeding 100 square feet in display area on all sides may be constructed, provided that any such sign shall not exceed 100 square feet in display area on any one side, nor 200 square feet in display area on all sides for any one premises.
- (G) The requirements of this subsection providing minimum setbacks from rights-of-way may be reduced by the Planning and Zoning Committee by issuance of a conditional use permit under either of the following circumstances:
1. If a pre-existing sign is required to be moved because such sign was located in an area acquired by governmental authorities for a right-of-way; or
 2. Where compliance with the minimum setback requirements will have a substantial negative effect on visibility of the sign.
- (Amended by Ordinance 100801)
- (4) Two (2) wall signs, projecting signs and/or on-premise ground signs shall be permitted for each commercial or industrial use.
- (5) Window Signs shall be placed only on the inside of commercial buildings and shall not exceed 25% of the glass area of the pane upon which the sign is displayed.
- (6) Off-Premise Ground Signs in the commercial and industrial districts are subject to the following requirements:
- (A) Such signs shall be placed only along federal and state trunk highways, and along that portion of any county trunk highway located within 1500 feet of the municipal limits of the City of Janesville or City of Milton.
 - (B) No sign shall be located within 50 feet of the existing right-of-way of any federal, state, or county trunk highway. The setback shall be measured horizontally along a line perpendicular to the center of the highway.

- (C) No sign shall be located within 2000 feet of any other off-premise ground sign; shall not exceed 30 feet in height.
- (D) No sign shall exceed 300 square feet in display area on any one side, nor 600 square feet in display area on all sides
- (E) No sign shall be located within 1000 feet of a residential district.

(Amended by Ordinance 31300)

12.4 Signs Allowed by Conditional Use Permit in Agricultural Districts and Rural Residential District

(Section Created by Ordinance 091205B)

(1) Subject to the limitations set forth in this section, upon issuance of a conditional use permit by the Planning and Zoning Committee, on-premise ground or wall signs may be placed in an agricultural district or a rural residential district for the purpose of advertising any of the following lawful or legal nonconforming uses in those districts:

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| (A) Churches | (I) Hospitals |
| (B) Public Schools | (J) Clinics |
| (C) Group Day Care Centers | (K) Sanitariums |
| (D) Montessori Schools | (L) Libraries |
| (E) Colleges | (M) Museums and other community buildings |
| (F) Universities | (N) Private Clubs |
| (G) Business and Vocational Schools | (O) Fraternities |
| (H) Charitable and Philanthropic Institutions | (P) Any non-commercial use which is substantially similar in character to the uses listed above. |

(2) Any sign permitted under a conditional use permit hereunder shall not require a separate sign permit under this section, but the Planning and Zoning Committee may, in its discretion, require the applicant to comply with any requirements that would be imposed upon an applicant for a sign permit under this section. A zoning permit shall be required, but no separate fee shall be required for the zoning permit.

(3) Any application for a conditional use permit for a sign hereunder shall include a drawing showing the size, design, and proposed location of the sign.

(4) Any conditional use permit for a sign hereunder shall require compliance with the following minimum standards:

- (A) Lighting: Lighting of signs shall be permitted in the discretion of the Planning and Zoning Committee only if such lighting will not cause unnecessary annoyance to neighbors. Light fixtures, if permitted, in addition to complying with other lighting restrictions set forth in this section, shall be fully shielded to eliminate all horizontal or upward projection of glare. Under no circumstances shall flashing lights or animated messages be permitted.
- (B) Content: The content of any such sign shall be limited to the name of the institution or organization conducting operations on-site or the professional name and profession of a professional individual conducting business on-site, the address, contact information, hours of operation, and notices of non-commercial events or activities occurring on-site.
- (C) Professional Office in a Residence: A sign advertising a professional office in an agricultural district is subject to all of the restrictions set forth above except to the extent a more restrictive provision appears in this subsection. A sign for a professional office in a residence in the Rural Residential district shall be permitted only as a wall or door plaque or attached to a mailbox, shall not exceed 2 square feet in size, and shall advertise only the name and profession of the individual.
- (D) Traffic: The sign shall comply with all standards set forth in section 12.5.
- (E) Number of Signs: No more than one sign is permitted for each individual premises unless a particularized need for additional signs is shown and the Committee is satisfied that additional signs will not create unnecessary clutter.
- (F) Size: No sign shall exceed 32 square feet per side, or a total of 64 square feet for a two-sided sign, unless a particularized need for a larger sign is shown and the Committee is satisfied that a larger sign will not unduly detract from the aesthetic atmosphere of the neighborhood.
- (G) Height: No ground sign shall exceed 72 inches in height, measured from ground level to the highest point on the sign, unless a particularized need for a higher sign is shown and the Planning and Zoning Committee is satisfied that a higher sign will not unduly detract from the aesthetic atmosphere of the neighborhood.
- (H) Setback:
 - 1. No sign shall be located closer than 10 feet from the right-of-way of any federal, state, county, or town highway unless a particularized need for a sign with a lesser setback is shown and the Planning and Zoning Committee is satisfied that a sign will neither unduly detract from the aesthetic atmosphere of the neighborhood nor cause a traffic hazard. The setback shall be measured horizontally along a

line perpendicular to the center of the highway. The Committee may require a sign with a setback of less than 10 feet to be reduced in size from the size that would otherwise be permitted.

2. No sign, other than a small sign of less than 2 square feet located on a mailbox, shall be located closer to an adjacent lot than the distance permitted for accessory buildings under the side yard setback provisions of this Chapter.
 - (I) Aesthetic considerations: The Committee shall give due consideration to the overall appearance of any sign in determining whether to grant a conditional use permit under this subsection, and may choose to deny a permit if the shape, size, coloring, or general design of the sign is of a type that may unnecessarily detract from the appearance of the neighborhood.
 - (J) General neighborhood considerations: The Committee may, in its discretion, deny a conditional use permit for a sign under this subsection if it finds that the character of the neighborhood in which the sign is proposed to be erected is such that a sign will detract from the character and appearance of the neighborhood.
- (5) Decorative architectural lettering attached to the wall of a building which states only the name and/or address of the institution or organization shall be permitted in any case and shall not be deemed a sign under the terms of this section.
- (6) In the event a sign is allowed by conditional use permit under this subsection and there is a substantial change in the nature of the activity or use constituting the purpose for which the sign was created, the conditional use permit shall become invalid unless and until the Planning & Zoning Committee approves the use of the sign for the new activity or use. Such approval shall be dependent upon the reasonable satisfaction of the Committee that the original conditional use permit would have been issued if the new use or activity had been the original use or activity. If an activity or use for which the Planning & Zoning Committee has approved use of the sign is terminated, and no application for a different activity or use is made within 90 days, the sign shall be removed upon order of the Town Board.

12.5 Traffic

Signs shall not resemble, imitate, or approximate the shape, size, form, or color of railroad or traffic signs, signals, or devices. Signs shall not obstruct or interfere with the effectiveness of railroad or traffic signs, signals, or devices. No sign shall be erected, relocated, or maintained so as to prevent free ingress to or egress from any door, window, or fire escape. No sign shall be attached to a standpipe or interfere with traffic visibility, nor be lighted in such a way as to cause glare or impair driver visibility upon public ways.

12.6 Existing Signs

Signs lawfully existing at the time of adoption or amendment of this Zoning Ordinance may be continued even though the use, size, or location does not conform to the provisions of this Chapter. However, such signs shall be deemed nonconforming uses or structures, and the provisions of Section 9 shall apply.

12.7 Bonds

Every applicant for a sign permit shall, before the permit is granted, execute a surety bond in a sum to be fixed by the Zoning Officer, but not to exceed \$25,000. The surety bond shall be of a form and type approved by the Town Attorney, indemnifying the municipality against all losses, costs, damages, or expenses incurred or sustained by or recovered against the municipality by reason of the erection, construction, or maintenance of such sign. A liability insurance policy issued by an insurance company authorized to do business in the State of Wisconsin, and conforming to the requirements of this section, may be permitted by the Town Attorney in lieu of a bond.

12.8 Moveable or Temporary Signs

(Deleted per Ordinance 030303B)

12.9 Lighting of Signs

Illuminated signs are permitted when the lighting is one sustained impulse. No blinking lights or group of lights shall be allowed as part of a sign after the effective date of this Zoning Ordinance.

12.10 Roof-mounted Signs

Signs erected on the roof of a building are prohibited by this Chapter.

12.11 Areas of Special Control

Areas of special control may be designated by the Town Board. In such areas, the Town Board may establish special regulations for signs which may be more or less restrictive than this section. The areas of special control shall be as follows:

- (1) Architectural, historic, or scenic areas whose special and unique characteristics or whose natural beauty requires special sign regulations to ensure that all signs used within the area are compatible with each other and with the area.
- (2) Integrated centers of intensive business areas over 5 acres whose character

indicates that signs should be permitted under regulations which are different from those which would otherwise be applicable under this Chapter.

12.12 Permit Fees for Signs

The applicant, for issuance of any requested sign permit, shall pay a fee to the Town of Harmony in accordance with the following schedule:

- (1) \$2.00 per square foot up to and including 165 square feet; and
- (2) \$3.00 per square foot for all square footage in excess of 165 square feet.

The above schedule of sign permit fees may be increased or decreased at any time by resolution of the Town Board.

(Permit Fees set by Resolution 090711C)