

ARTICLE VII

Signs

§ 246-50. Applicability.

- A. Purposes. This article is intended to promote and maintain overall community aesthetic quality; establish reasonable time, place and manner of regulations for the exercise of free speech, without regulating content (excepting obscenity that is prohibited by state law or language that incites violence); promote traffic safety by avoiding distractions and sight distance obstructions; and protect property values and ensure compatibility with the character of neighboring uses.
- B. Permit required. A zoning permit shall be required for all signs except for signs meeting the requirements of § 246-52, and nonilluminated window signs constructed of paper, cardboard or similar materials and that are not of a permanent nature. Only types, sizes and heights of signs that are specifically permitted by this chapter within the applicable district shall be allowed.
- C. Changes on signs. Any lawfully existing sign (including nonconforming signs) may be painted or repaired or changed in logo or message without a new permit under this chapter, provided that the changes do not increase the sign area or otherwise result in noncompliance or an increased nonconformity with this chapter.

§ 246-51. Nonconforming signs.

- A. Signs legally existing at the time of enactment of this chapter and which do not conform to the requirements of the chapter shall be considered nonconforming signs.
- B. An existing lawful nonconforming sign that was lawful when it was initially placed may be replaced with a new sign, provided that the new sign is not more nonconforming in any manner than the previous sign. A nonconforming sign shall not be expanded in a manner that does not conform to this chapter.
- C. Unlawful signs. If a sign was placed without a required permit by the Township, and does not comply with this chapter, it shall not be considered lawful, and shall be required to be removed. See the enforcement notice requirements in Article I.

§ 246-52. Miscellaneous signs not requiring permits.

- A. The following signs shall be permitted by right within all zoning districts within the following regulations, and shall not be required to have a permit under this article:

Miscellaneous Signs Not Requiring Permits				
Type and Definition of Signs Not Requiring Permits	Maximum Number of Signs Per Lot	Maximum Sign Area Per Sign ¹ on Residential Lots ² (square feet)	Maximum Sign Area Per Sign ¹ on Nonresidential Lots (square feet)	Other Requirements
Agricultural sales or Christmas tree sign: advertises the seasonal sale of agricultural products or Christmas trees	2	8	30	Shall only be posted during seasons when such products are actively offered for sale.

Miscellaneous Signs Not Requiring Permits				
Type and Definition of Signs Not Requiring Permits	Maximum Number of Signs Per Lot	Maximum Sign Area Per Sign ¹ on Residential Lots ² (square feet)	Maximum Sign Area Per Sign ¹ on Nonresidential Lots (square feet)	Other Requirements
Charitable event sign: advertises a special event held a maximum of 9 days in any calendar year that primarily is held to benefit a legitimate tax-exempt nonprofit organization or charity	2	4	40	Shall be placed a maximum of 30 days prior to event and removed a maximum of 7 days after event.
Contractor's sign: advertises a building tradesperson, engineer or architect who is actively conducting significant work on a particular lot that is not such person's place of business	2	8	40	Shall only be permitted while such work is actively and clearly underway and a maximum of 10 days afterward. Such signs shall not be placed on the lot for more than 1 year, unless a 1-year extension is granted by the Zoning Officer. Shall not be illuminated.
Directional sign: provides information indicating traffic direction, entry or exit, loading or service area, directions to apartment numbers or parking courts in a development, fire lanes, parking or closely similar information regarding the same lot as the sign is on, and that does not include advertising	No maximum	3, in addition to signs painted on pavement	3, in addition to signs painted on pavement	Directional signs within a residential development shall not be illuminated.
Flag: a pennant made of fabric or materials with a similar appearance that is hung in such a way to flow in the wind; see also "special sale signs" below	1	20	20	Flags of governments and flags that simply include colors or patterns are not regulated by this chapter, provided they do not exceed 10 in number.
Garage sale sign: advertises an occasional garage sale/porch sale or auction	2 per event	2 per sign	2 per sign	Shall be placed a maximum of 48 hours before permitted garage sale or auction begins, and be removed a maximum of 24 hours after event ends.
Home occupation sign: advertises a permitted home occupation	1	1	2	Shall not be illuminated, except a sign of a medical doctor may be externally lit. Shall be set back a minimum of 10 feet from the street right-of-way, unless printed on a mailbox. May be freestanding, attached flat on a building wall or within a window.
Identification sign: only identifies the name and/or occupation of the resident and/or the name, street address and/or use of a lot, but that does not include advertising	1	1, except 2 for a principal nonresidential use	6	Maximum height of 8 feet.

Miscellaneous Signs Not Requiring Permits				
Type and Definition of Signs Not Requiring Permits	Maximum Number of Signs Per Lot	Maximum Sign Area Per Sign ¹ on Residential Lots ² (square feet)	Maximum Sign Area Per Sign ¹ on Nonresidential Lots (square feet)	Other Requirements
Open house sign: advertises the temporary and periodic open house of a property for sale or rent	2 per event	4	4	Shall be placed a maximum of 5 days before open house begins, and be removed a maximum of 24 hours after open house ends. Such sign shall not be posted more than 5 consecutive days.

Miscellaneous Signs Not Requiring Permits				
Type and Definition of Signs Not Requiring Permits	Maximum Number of Signs Per Lot	Maximum Sign Area Per Sign ¹ on Residential Lots ² (square feet)	Maximum Sign Area Per Sign ¹ on Nonresidential Lots (square feet)	Other Requirements
Political sign: advertises a person or party seeking political office or a political cause or opinion on a referendum or matter of political concern and which relates to a scheduled election or matter of upcoming vote by a governmental body (Note: As of 2003, there was a requirement for a Township permit for a political sign, under a separate ordinance)	No maximum	Maximum total of 30	Maximum total of 60	Shall be placed a maximum of 30 days prior to election, vote or referendum and removed a maximum of 5 days after such election, vote or referendum. Persons posting political signs shall maintain a written list of locations of such signs, unless posting signs on their own property.

Miscellaneous Signs Not Requiring Permits				
Type and Definition of Signs Not Requiring Permits	Maximum Number of Signs Per Lot	Maximum Sign Area Per Sign ¹ on Residential Lots ² (square feet)	Maximum Sign Area Per Sign ¹ on Nonresidential Lots (square feet)	Other Requirements
				Political signs shall not be placed on private property without the prior consent of the owner. If a political sign does not meet these requirements, then it shall be regulated as an "off-premises sign."

Miscellaneous Signs Not Requiring Permits				
Type and Definition of Signs Not Requiring Permits	Maximum Number of Signs Per Lot	Maximum Sign Area Per Sign ¹ on Residential Lots ² (square feet)	Maximum Sign Area Per Sign ¹ on Nonresidential Lots (square feet)	Other Requirements
Public services sign: advertises the availability of rest rooms, telephone or other similar public convenience	No maximum	2	2	

Miscellaneous Signs Not Requiring Permits				
Type and Definition of Signs Not Requiring Permits	Maximum Number of Signs Per Lot	Maximum Sign Area Per Sign ¹ on Residential Lots ² (square feet)	Maximum Sign Area Per Sign ¹ on Nonresidential Lots (square feet)	Other Requirements
Real estate sign: advertises the availability of property on which the sign is located for sale, rent or lease	1 per street the lot abuts	6	30	Shall only be placed on the property while it is actively for sale, lease or rent, and shall be removed a maximum of 7 days after settlement or start of lease
Service organization/place of worship sign: an off-premises sign stating name of a recognized incorporated service organization or place of worship and that states the place and times of meetings or services and/or an arrow directing persons to such location	2	2	2	Maximum of 2 such signs per such organization or place of worship
Special sale signs: temporary banners, flags and other signs that advertise a special sales event at a lawful principal commercial business; a portable sign may be used under this provision	5 per lot	Not permitted	Total of 60 square feet for all such banners, flags and other temporary signs; no one banner, flag or sign shall exceed 40 square feet	Shall be displayed a maximum of 7 consecutive days per event, and a maximum of 5 events per year. Such signs shall not flash, be internally illuminated, nor obstruct safe sight distances.
Time and temperature sign: with a sole purpose to announce the current time and temperature and any nonprofit public service messages	1	Not permitted	30	
Trespassing sign: indicating that a road is private, that trespassing is prohibited on a lot, or controlling certain activities such as hunting and fishing on the lot	No maximum	2	4	

NOTES:

- ¹ Maximum sign areas are for each of two sides of each permitted sign, measured in square feet.
- ² For the purposes of this section, a "residential lot" shall mean a lot occupied by a principal residential use, or an undeveloped lot in a residential district.

- B. In addition, the following types of signs are not regulated by this chapter:
- (1) Historic sign: memorializes an important historic place, event or person and that is specifically authorized by the Township or a county, state or federal agency.
 - (2) Holiday decorations: commemorate a holiday recognized by the Township, county, state or federal government and that does not include advertising.
 - (3) Not readable sign: not readable from any public street or any exterior lot line.
 - (4) Official sign: erected by the state, county, Township or other legally constituted governmental body, or specifically authorized by Township ordinance or resolution, and which exists for public purposes.

- (5) Required sign: only includes information required to be posted outdoors by a government agency or the Township.
- (6) Right-of-way sign: posted within the existing right-of-way of a public street and officially authorized by the Township or PennDOT.

§ 246-53. Freestanding, wall and window signs (on-premises signs).

A. The following are the on-premises signs permitted on a lot within the specified districts and within the following regulations, in addition to exempt signs and temporary signs permitted in all districts by other provisions of this article. See definitions of the types of signs in § 246-60.

Zoning District or Type of Use	Total Maximum Height of Freestanding Signs	Total Maximum Area of Wall Signs	Total Maximum Area of Window Signs	Total Maximum Area and Number of Freestanding Signs
Residential districts				
Residential districts, with signs in this table limited to allowed principal nonresidential uses	8 feet	30 square feet on each side of a principal nonresidential building	May be used in place of a wall sign with the same restrictions	1 sign on each street the lot abuts, each with a maximum sign area of 30 square feet
For home occupation signs, see § 246-52. No new signs in these districts shall be internally illuminated.				
See also entrance signs for major residential developments in § 246-62.				

Zoning District or Type of Use	Total Maximum Height of Freestanding Signs	Total Maximum Area of Wall Signs	Total Maximum Area of Window Signs	Total Maximum Area and Number of Freestanding Signs
NC Neighborhood Commercial District	12 feet	10% of the area of the building side on which the signs are attached, but in no case exceeding an absolute maximum of 200 square feet per establishment; there shall be a maximum of 5 wall signs per establishment	Temporary nonilluminated window signs are not regulated; other window signs shall be considered wall signs	1 sign per street that the lot abuts, each with a maximum area of 30 square feet ^{1, 2}
HC, LI, GI and any other district not listed above	16 feet	10% of the area of the building side on which the signs are attached, but in no case exceeding an absolute maximum of 200 square feet per establishment; there shall be a maximum of 5 wall signs per establishment	Temporary nonilluminated window signs are not regulated; other window signs shall be considered wall signs	1 sign per street that the lot abuts, each with a maximum area of 40 square feet ^{1, 2}

NOTES:

¹ If a lot includes two or more distinct principal nonresidential uses, the maximum freestanding sign area may be increased by 10 square feet for each principal nonresidential use beyond the first nonresidential use. For example, in HC, if a lot includes three such uses, the maximum freestanding sign area shall be 40 plus 20, which equals 60 square feet.

NOTES:

- ² If a lot includes a portable sign of over 20 square feet that was lawfully placed with a Township sign permit, and that portable sign is permanently removed from the lot, then an additional 20 square feet of sign area on a single freestanding sign post shall be allowed to include changeable messages to replace the demand for the portable sign.
- B. Maximum height of wall signs. The maximum height of wall signs shall be equal to the top of the roof along the wall to which they are attached. However, the sign may be attached to a parapet roof that vertically extends up to 10 feet above the structural roof, provided the parapet roof appears to be an architectural extension of the building.
- C. Portable signs (including "signs on mobile stands") and other temporary signs.
- (1) Purpose. These standards recognize portable signs as a particular type of sign that has the characteristics of a temporary sign but that has been inappropriately used as a permanent sign. This section is based on the policy that, if a use desires to regularly display a sign for regularly changing messages, it erect a permanent sign within all of the requirements of this chapter.
 - (2) The definition of a "portable sign" shall be a freestanding sign that is attached to a chassis or legs that allows it to be towed or carried from one location to another and that is not permanently attached to the ground.
 - (3) Portable signs are prohibited in all districts, except as a temporary charitable event sign permitted by § 246-52.
 - (4) Businesses are encouraged to provide an area on a permanent sign that displays changeable messages, as opposed to using a separate sign for such purpose.
- D. Wiring of signs. Signs shall be prohibited that involve electrical cords laying across parking lots, driveways or sidewalks, except on a residential property for seasonal lighting.
- E. Signs on freestanding walls. A freestanding sign may be attached to a decorative masonry or stone wall with a maximum height of six feet and a maximum length of 12 feet, without being regulated by the wall setback regulations of this chapter and with the wall itself not counting toward the maximum sign area.

§ 246-54. Abandoned or outdated signs.

Signs advertising a use no longer in existence (other than a sign relating to a building that is clearly temporarily vacant and being offered to new tenants or for purchase) shall be removed within 180 days of the cessation of such use.

§ 246-55. Location of signs.

The following shall regulate the location of signs:

- A. Setbacks.

- (1) All signs shall be set back a minimum of 10 feet from the existing street right-of-way, and shall not be located within the existing street right-of-way. However, a directional sign showing entrances and exits may be located without a ten-foot setback.
 - (2) A freestanding illuminated sign for a commercial or industrial business shall not be located within 10 feet from an abutting lot line of principally residential lot.
 - (3) These setbacks shall not apply to official signs, nameplate signs, public service signs and directional signs.
- B. Sight clearance. No sign shall be so located that it interferes with the sight clearance requirements of § 246-65.
- C. Off-premises. No signs except permitted off-premises, official, political or public service signs shall be erected on a property to which they do not relate. A major development sign may be located on one lot in a subdivision to advertise uses throughout the subdivision.
- D. Permission of owner. No sign shall be posted on any property or sign pole or public utility pole, unless permission has been received by the owner.
- E. Utility poles. No sign shall be attached to a utility pole using metal fasteners, except by a utility or government agency.

§ 246-56. Illumination of signs.

See § 246-42, Control of light and glare, in Article V.

§ 246-57. Vehicles functioning as signs.

Any vehicle, trailer or structure to which a sign is affixed in such a manner that the carrying of such sign(s) no longer is incidental to the primary purpose of the vehicle, trailer or structure but instead becomes a primary purpose in itself shall be considered a freestanding sign and shall be subject to all of the requirements for freestanding signs in the district in which such vehicle, trailer or structure is located.

§ 246-58. Prohibited signs.

The following prohibitions on signs shall apply in all zoning districts:

- A. Any moving object used to attract attention to a commercial use is prohibited. However, certain flags and banners may be allowed as provided in § 246-52.
- B. Flashing, blinking, twinkling, animated or moving signs of any type are prohibited. Signs may change their message from time to time, provided that each message is visible for at least 10 seconds, except that time and temperature signs may change more frequently. In addition, flashing lights visible from a street shall not be used to attract attention to a business. This restriction specifically includes window signs, but does not prohibit Christmas lighting or displays, within § 246-52.

- C. Signs which emit smoke, visible vapors or particles, sound or odor are prohibited.
- D. Signs which contain information that states that a lot may be used for a purpose not permitted under this chapter are prohibited.
- E. Signs that are of such form, shape or color that they resemble an official traffic sign, signal or device or that have any characteristics which are likely to confuse or distract the operator of a motor vehicle on a public street (such as prominent use of the word "Danger") are prohibited.
- F. Signs or displays visible from a lot line that include words or images that are obscene or pornographic are prohibited.
- G. Balloons of greater than 50 cubic feet that are tethered to the ground or a structure for periods of over a day and that are primarily intended for advertising purposes are prohibited.
- H. Floodlights and outdoor lasers for advertising purposes are prohibited.
- I. To avoid distractions to motorists, neon lighting of more than 10 square feet per lot shall be prohibited as part of signs and if attached to the outside of a building.

§ 246-59. Construction of signs.

Every permanent sign permitted in this section shall be constructed of durable materials and shall be kept in good condition and repair. The Zoning Officer shall by written notice require a property owner or lessee to repair or remove a dilapidated or unsafe sign within a specified period of time. If such order is not complied with, the Township may repair or remove such sign at the expense of such owner or lessee.

§ 246-60. Sign definitions and measurement.

- A. Sign definitions. The following definitions shall be used in determining whether signs meet the measurement and type requirements of this article:

BUILDING FACE — The vertical area of a particular side of a building, but not including the area of any slanted roof.

FREESTANDING SIGN — A sign which is self-supporting upon the ground or which is primarily supported by poles attached to the ground and not primarily supported by a building.

HEIGHT OF SIGN — The vertical distance measured from the average ground level surrounding a sign to the highest point of the sign and its supporting structure. Religious symbols, when not accompanied by lettering, shall not be restricted by the sign heights of this article when attached to a tower or spire of a place of worship.

ILLUMINATED SIGN, INTERNALLY — A sign illuminated by light from within the sign rather than a source adjacent to or outside of the sign. A sign within a display case with lights only shining onto the front of the sign shall be considered to be externally illuminated.

OFF-PREMISES SIGN — See Article II.

SIGN — See Article II.

WALL SIGN — A sign primarily supported by or painted on a wall of a building. A wall sign may also be displayed upon an awning or canopy, provided that other requirements of this chapter are met.

WINDOW SIGN — A sign which is readily visible and can be at least partially read from an exterior lot line and which is attached to a window or transparent door or that can be read through a window or transparent door.

B. Measurement of sign area.

- (1) Sign area shall include all lettering, wording and accompanying designs and symbols, together with related background areas on which they are displayed. One freestanding sign may include several signs that are all attached to one structure, with the total sign area being the area of a common geometric form that could encompass all signs.
- (2) The sign area shall not include any structural supports that do not include a message.
- (3) Where the sign consists of individual letters or symbols attached to or painted directly on a building or window, other than an illuminated background that is a part of the sign, the sign area shall be the smallest rectangle that includes all of the letters and symbols.
- (4) The maximum sign area of sign shall be for each of two sides of a sign, provided that only one side of a sign is readable from any location.
- (5) Unless otherwise specified, all square footages in regards to signs are maximum sizes.

§ 246-61. Off-premises signs (including billboards).

- A. Purposes. Off-premises signs are controlled by this chapter for the following purposes: to ensure that a physical environment is maintained that is attractive to desirable types of development, especially light industrial and office parks; to prevent visual pollution in the Township and protect property values, especially in consideration of the fact that most commercial areas of the Township are within close proximity to existing residences; to prevent glare on adjacent property and streets; to avoid the creation of additional visual distractions to motorists, especially along busy arterial streets that involve complex turning movements and numerous traffic hazards; to recognize the numerous alternative forms of free speech available in the Township, including existing nonconforming off-premises signs, on-premises signs and temporary signs and printed and electronic media; and to carry out the purposes listed in § 246-50.
- B. Nonconforming off-premises signs. This section is not intended to require the removal of an existing lawfully placed off-premises sign that is in structurally sound condition.

- C. PennDOT sign. Signs erected and maintained by PennDOT are permitted by right in all districts.
- D. Permitted off-premises signs. Except for other types of signs that are specifically allowed by this section to be off-premises, an off-premises sign is only permitted if it meet the following requirements:
- (1) District. An off-premises sign is only permitted in the HC District.
 - (2) Location. An off-premises sign shall be set back a minimum of 25 feet from all lot lines and street rights-of-way.
 - (3) Maximum sign area shall be 300 square feet.
 - (4) Spacing. Any off-premises sign shall be separated by a minimum of 1,000 feet from any other off-premises sign with a sign area greater than 20 square feet, including signs on either side of a street and including existing signs in other municipalities. No lot shall include more than one off-premises sign, except as allowed in Subsection D(6) below.
 - (5) Maximum height shall be 35 feet above the elevation of the adjacent street, measured at the street center line.
 - (6) Attached. No off-premises sign or sign face shall be attached in any way to any other off-premises sign, except that a sign may have two sign faces of 300 square feet each, provided that the angle between the signs does not exceed 45°.
 - (7) Control of lighting and glare. See standards in § 246-42. Lights shall be directed so they do not shine into the eyes of motorists nor residents of homes.
 - (8) Residences. No off-premises sign greater than 20 square feet in sign area shall be located within 200 feet from an existing dwelling.
 - (9) Condition. The sign shall be maintained in a good and safe condition, particularly to avoid hazards in high winds. The area around the sign shall be kept free of debris. If the message of a sign is no longer intact, it shall be replaced with a solid color or a "for lease" sign.

§ 246-62. Major residential development signs.

- A. Residential development sign.
- (1) If a subdivision or land development is approved to include over 20 dwelling units, then an additional sign shall be permitted at each entrance to the project from exterior public streets. Such sign may have two sign faces on one structure, or one sign face on each structure on each side of the entrance.
 - (2) Each such sign shall have a maximum sign area of 30 square feet. Such signs shall have a maximum total height of six feet. The sign may be attached to a stone or decorative masonry wall or fence constructed of weather-resistant wood or materials with a similar appearance. In such case, the wall or fence shall have a maximum total height of six feet and a maximum length of 12 feet.