Part 12
SIGN REGULATIONS

§ 27-1201. Purposes of the Sign Regulations. [Ord. No. 688, 6/4/2018]

It is the purpose of these provisions to place strict limitations on the display of signs as will assure that they will be appropriate to the land, building or use to which they are appurtenant and be adequate, but not excessive, for the intended purpose of identification, protection, or advertisement.

1. The regulations of this chapter relating to signs shall be strictly construed. In addition to the sign specifically prohibited, signs not specifically permitted by the provision of this chapter shall be deemed to be prohibited. Signs shall only be erected and maintained when in compliance with the provisions contained herein.

2. It is the intent of these provisions that the signs listed in § 27-1202 shall be exempt from permitting requirements. Such signs are generally for public service purposes or are temporary or minor in nature.

3. Regulated signs, which are not exempt from permitting requirements, shall comply with the standards of sections of regulated signs.

4. Additional sign requirements shall apply to signs erected in the Borough of Wellsboro Historic Overlay District to ensure that new signs are harmonious with the general character of the historic district and the architecture of its important buildings.

§ 27-1202. Exempt Signs - No Permit Required. [Ord. No. 688, 6/4/2018]

The following sign types do not require a permit or license and shall not be counted toward the maximum sign area.

1. Any sign which is less than two square feet in area, or a sign for a home occupation or home business which shall not exceed four square feet in area.

2. Public Service or Highway Sign. A sign located for the purpose of providing traffic safety or information, a public service message or directions towards or indication of a use not readily visible from a public street (e.g. traffic signs, rest rooms, telephone, parking, office, service bay, shopping district, no trespassing, no fishing etc.). Such signs may bear no commercial advertising and shall not exceed nine square feet. Civic organization-sponsored public service signs shall not be considered commercial advertising.

3. "For Sale" or "For Rent" Signs. A sign advertising a property being sold or rented which shall not exceed eight square feet in size and shall be removed within 10 days of the sale or rental of the premises. A maximum of two such signs may be maintained for the property being sold or rented.

4. Memorial signs or tablets and signs denoting the date of erection of buildings which shall not exceed four square feet in total area.

5. Temporary, non-permanent signs, placed so as not to impede the normal flow of pedestrian

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or vehicle traffic, nor shall such signs impede the line of sight of or cover any existing business sign and traffic sign or any entrance or exit to any property or business.

6. Devices relaying information to the general public (i.e., time, temperature, etc.)

7. Construction signs, which shall not exceed 32 square feet, may identify those involved in design, development, construction, demolition or financing, when displayed during the activity described. The sign shall be removed when the project activity has ceased. Only one such sign per property is allowed.

8. Signs mounted on interior walls.

§ 27-1203. Sign Descriptions/Definitions. [Ord. No. 688, 6/4/2018]

The following specific uses and definitions apply to signs regulated by this chapter:

ABANDONED — A sign which has not identified or advertised a current and/or operational business, service, owner, product or activity for a period of at least 365 calendar days.

ADDRESS/NAME PLATE — A sign that designates the street number and/or street name for identification purposes, as designated by the United States Postal Service, less than two square feet. The address/name plate sign does not require a permit.

ANIMATED — A sign depicting action, motion, or light or color changes through electrical or mechanical means.

AWNING — A sign painted on or attached to a removable frame, of the hinged, rolled or folding type, that may have a covering, either combustible or noncombustible.

BALLOON — A lighter-than-air, gas-filled balloon, tethered in a fixed location, which contains an advertisement message on its surface or attached to the balloon in any manner.

BANNER — Any cloth, bunting, plastic, paper, or similar non-rigid material attached to any structure, staff, pole, rope, wire, or framing which is anchored on two or more edges or at all four corners. Banners are temporary in nature and do not include flags.

BLADE — A type of projecting sign mounted on a building facade or storefront pole or attached to a surface perpendicular to the normal flow of traffic.

BUSINESS DIRECTORY — A sign stating the name(s) of a business located off-premises.

CANOPY — Any sign that is part of, or attached to a canopy.

CHANGEABLE COPY — A sign or portion thereof on which the copy or symbols change either automatically through electrical or electronic means, or manually through placement of letters or symbols on a panel mounted in or on a track system. The two types of changeable copy signs are manual changeable copy signs and electronic changeable copy signs, which include: message center signs, digital displays, and tri-vision boards.

DIGITAL DISPLAY — The portion of a sign message made up of internally illuminated components capable of changing the message periodically. Digital displays may include but are not limited to LCD, LED, or plasma displays.

FEATHER/SWOOPER FLAGS/SIGNS — A sign typically of 10 feet to 20 feet in height, composed of lightweight fabric on a structure, which may be of the flutter"or windless variety.

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FLASHING — A sign whose artificial illumination is not kept constant in intensity at all times when in use and which exhibits changes in light, color, direction, or animation. This definition does not include electronic message centers signs or digital displays that meet the requirements set forth herein.

FREE-STANDING PERMANENT — Any non-movable sign not affixed to a building.

HOME BUSINESS — A sign identifying an approved and legal home occupation, not exceeding four square feet.

HOME OCCUPATION — A sign identifying an approved and legal home occupation, not exceeding four square feet.

INFLATABLE — A sign that is an air-inflated object, which may be of various shapes, made of flexible fabric, resting on the ground or structure and equipped with a portable blower motor that provides a constant flow of air into the device.

INTERACTIVE — An electronic or animated sign that reacts to the behavior or electronic signals of motor vehicle drivers, officially used by the Wellsboro Police Department (WPD) for speed control.

MANUAL CHANGEABLE COPY — A sign or portion thereof on which the copy or symbols are changed manually through placement or drawing of letters or symbols on a sign face.

MARQUEE — A sign painted on, attached to, or consisting of an interchangeable copyreader, on the face of a building, or as part of a freestanding sign.

MECHANICAL MOVEMENT — A sign having parts that physically move rather than merely appear to move as might be found in a digital display. The physical movement may be activated electronically or by another means, but shall not include wind-activated movement such as used for banners or flags. Mechanical movement signs do not include digital signs that have changeable, programmable displays.

MESSAGE CENTER — A type of illuminated, changeable copy sign that consists of electronically changing alphanumeric text often used for gasoline price display, time, temperature, special notifications associated with premises, etc., not exceeding 50% of the sign area.

MULTI-TENANT — A directory, on or off premises, used to identify specific enterprises that are located within a multiple-tenant commercial, industrial, business or office center.

NON-PERMANENT — A sign displaying a message that is temporary in nature and relates to a specific event or occurrence, which is not intended for permanent installation.

1. Examples of non-permanent signs include a banner advertising a sale or promotion at a retail establishment, or a lawn sign promoting a particular candidate for an election. There are two types of non-permanent signs:

    A. Limited duration signs are a type of non-permanent sign that can be displayed on private property for greater than 30 days, but are not intended to be displayed for an indefinite period. Limited duration signs require a sign permit, which is valid for up to one year, and can be renewed annually.

    B. Temporary signs are a type of non-permanent sign that can be displayed on private property for not more than 30 consecutive days, up to twice per calendar year.

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Temporary signs do not require a permit.

2. Both limited duration and temporary signs are restricted according to the type of the sign, with permanent and non-permanent wall/window signs together covering no more than 20% of the wall or window surface in the CB District, non-permanent wall/window signs covering no more that 20% of the wall or window surface in other districts where permitted, and sandwich board/sidewalk signs not exceeding four feet in height and two feet in width.

OFF-PREMISES/BILLBOARD — A sign that directs attention to a business, commodity, service or entertainment conducted, sold or offered at a location other than the premises or land on which the sign is located.

ON-PREMISES — A sign that directs attention to a business or profession conducted, or to a commodity or service sold, offered or manufactured or to an entertainment event offered on the premises where the sign is located.

PERMANENT — A sign attached or affixed to a building, window, or structure, or to the ground in a manner that enables the sign to resist environmental loads, such as wind, and that precludes ready removal or movement of the sign and whose intended use appears to be indefinite.

PORTABLE — A sign designed to be transported or moved and not permanently attached to the ground, a building, or other structure.

PROJECTING — A sign other than a wall sign that is attached to and projects from a face or wall of a building, or from a structure whose primary purpose is other than the support of the sign.

ROOF — A building-mounted sign erected upon, against, or over the roof of a building.

SANDWICH BOARD/SIDEWALK — A portable sign having changeable letters or sign face that may have up to two sign areas for temporary placement on a sidewalk or other frontage.

SNIPE — A sign tacked, nailed, posted, pasted, glued, or otherwise attached to trees, poles, stakes, fences, public benches, streetlights, or other objects, or placed on any public property or in the public right-of-way or on any private property without the permission of the property owner.

TRI-VISION BOARDS — An outdoor sign unit with a slatted face that allows three different copy messages to revolve at intermittent intervals.

VEHICULAR — A sign affixed to a vehicle in such a manner that the sign is used primarily as a stationary advertisement for the business on which the vehicle sits or is otherwise not incidental to the vehicle's primary purpose.

WALL — A sign fastened to or painted on the wall of a building or structure in such a manner that the wall becomes the supporting structure for, or forms the background surface of the sign and does not project more than 10 inches from such building or structure.

WINDOW — A sign affixed to the surface of a window, or within the display area of a window, with its message intended to be visible to and readable from the public right-of-way, and/or from adjacent properties.

§ 27-1204. Signs and Zoning District Interface. [Ord. No. 688, 6/4/2018]

The table[1] below summarizes the potential eligibility of the above sign types in each of the zoning districts, subject to further restrictions and guidance in this article. The Code used for this

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description is as follows:

§ 27-1205. Regulated Signs - Zoning (Sign) Permit Required. [Ord. No. 688, 6/4/2018]

1. Maximum Sign Area for Regulated Signs. A lot upon which a building(s) is situated regardless of the number of occupants therein shall be entitled to a maximum sign area of two square feet for each lineal foot of building face parallel or substantial parallel to a street line. See Part 2 for definition of sign area.

   A. Where a lot fronts on more than one street, the sign area allowed for the smaller building face shall be allowed for each frontage.

   B. A lot without a building situated thereon shall be entitled to a maximum sign area of 50 square feet.

   C. There shall be no limit on the total number or types of signs provided that the maximum sign area for the building shall not be exceeded and that the standards for the types of signs found below shall be met.

   D. Maximum Sign Area for Shopping Centers Not Facing a Public Street Plaza. The building front facing parallel to the parking lot rather than the street line shall be utilized to calculate the maximum sign area for any shopping center with store fronts facing an interior parking lot rather than a public street.

2. Standards for Regulated Signs.

   A. Awning Sign RH/CB/HC/H/CM Districts. A sign painted on or attached to a moveable metallic frame, of the hinged, roll, or folding type, which may have a covering either combustible or in combustible.

      (1) Awning signs may be placed anywhere on a structure where such awning has a ground clearance of 10 feet and extends no more than five feet from the building facade.

      (2) No back-lit, flat-metal or wood canopies will be permitted.

      (3) Lettering is to be restricted to the name of the business, secondary description, address and phone number. Lettering will be restricted to no more than nine inches in height.

      (4) Any logo or graphic design will not exceed 20% of the awning surface (see Illustration III).

   B. Business Directory Sign. A sign stating the name(s) of a business located off premises.

      (1) The maximum sign area regardless of the number of businesses listed on the sign shall be 120 square feet for the CB/HC/CM Districts and 16 square feet for all other districts.

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1. **Editor's Note: The Table of Sign Types is included as an attachment to this chapter.**

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(2) Such signs are not included in computing total sign area allowed.

(3) Such signs shall not be located upon a public right-of-way.

C. Free Standing Sign. A self-supporting sign in a fixed location and not attached to any building or structure.

(1) Such sign shall have no more than two faces.

(2) HC/CM Districts. Free standing signs shall not exceed 30 feet in height or 100 square feet in area for each face and may be internally lighted.

(3) Hospital District: The area of each sign face shall not exceed 36 square feet. Internal lighting is permitted.

(4) RR/RT/RH/CB Districts: The area of each sign face shall not exceed 12 square feet, unless a sign for a church, school or government use which shall not exceed 36 square feet. There shall be no internal lighting of the sign.

(5) There must be no exposed connecting wires.

(6) Such signs shall be erected so as not to obstruct free egress to or from any building, or public right-of-way. Such signs shall not be located upon a public right-of-way.

D. Projecting Sign - CB/HC/H/CM Districts. A permanent sign that is hung at a 90° angle from the face of and affixed to a building or structure and extends 12 inches or beyond the building wall, structure or parts thereof.

(1) Each face shall not exceed 12 square feet.

(2) Such sign must be hung at right angles, and shall not project beyond four feet of the building face.

(3) The bottom of said sign shall have an eight foot pedestrian clearance from sidewalk level.

(4) Banners will be considered as a projecting sign and follow the same restriction. Banners hung across the street are prohibited.

E. Flat Facade Sign - CB District. A sign which is attached parallel on the exterior surface of a building or structure.

(1) Flat facade signs placed flush with the building, will be placed below the second floor or lower window sill of a second-story window and be no larger than 25% of the first-floor facade square footage (see Illustration I). Square footage is measured by multiplying the width of the storefront by the height, as determined by the distance of the lower second-floor window sill to the sidewalk.

(2) A maximum of one flat, per business, per building will be permitted. Where a building's side facade faces a side street, rear alley or parking lot, a maximum of one flat sign per facade will be permitted.

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(3) Flat signs or signboards will have a maximum height of four feet with sign letters being no larger than 24 inches in height.

(4) Sign lettering will be restricted to the name of the business, one secondary description, address and phone number.

(5) Where two or more businesses occupy one building, on the street level, the overall sign area for all signs shall be no larger than 25% of the first-floor facade square footage.

(6) Signs representing businesses on any of the upper floors shall be limited to one sign per business with each sign being no larger than 10% of the overall square footage of the upper building facade of which it is a part.

F. Wall Sign - CB District. Wall signs, wall murals or wall painted signs shall occupy no more than 20% of the wall area or facade of which they are a part and may not exceed an area of 120 square feet.

G. Wall Sign - HC/H/CM Districts. A sign which is attached parallel on the exterior surface of a building or structure.

(1) A wall sign shall not project more than 15 inches from the building surface.

(2) The sign shall not obscure architectural features of the building (including but not limited to cornices, lintels, transoms) to which the sign is attached.

(3) Such signs shall not extend above the lowest point of the roof, nor beyond the ends of the wall to which it is attached.

H. Window Sign - CB/HC/H/CM Districts - A permanent non-illuminated sign painted on the inside or outside glass of a window.

(1) Window signs on windows shall occupy no more than 20% of window area and letters no larger than eight inches in height.

(2) A maximum of three signs will be allowed for any one business.

(3) Neon signs are permitted only within a store interior and are restricted to the same size limitation of window signs.

§ 27-1206. Sign Application and Permit. [Ord. No. 688, 6/4/2018]

A sign permit shall be obtained from the Zoning Officer before any sign is erected, displayed or structurally altered so as to change its overall dimension. Every application for a sign permit shall be accompanied by payment of a permit fee required in accordance with a schedule of fees adopted by the Borough Council and by plans showing: the area of the sign, the size, structure, character and design proposed; the method of illumination, if any, and the exact location proposed for the sign. In the case of a roof sign or outdoor advertising structure, complete specifications and method of anchoring and support are required. Each sign shall have the permit number and date of issuance affixed.

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§ 27-1207. Illumination of Signs. [Ord. No. 688, 6/4/2018]

A sign may be illuminated artificially by means of electricity, gas, oil, or fluorescent paint.

1. Illuminated signs are permitted as long as the external light sources are aimed at the sign they are illuminating and not positioned in such a manner so as to shine onto the adjoining property or into the eyes of a passing pedestrian or motorist.
2. Internally lit signs are not permitted except in the case of free standing and wall mounted signs in HC or CM Districts, provided they are restricted under the Wellsboro Historic District Ordinance.
3. There must be no exposed connecting wires.

§ 27-1208. Setback Requirements. [Ord. No. 688, 6/4/2018]

Unless otherwise specified in this chapter, signs are exempt from setback requirements.

§ 27-1209. Supports and Brackets. [Ord. No. 688, 6/4/2018]

A sign shall not exceed needlessly above the cornice line of the building to which the sign is attached.

§ 27-1210. Prohibited Signs. [Ord. No. 688, 6/4/2018]

In addition to and/or as further description of signs specifically prohibited in one or more of the zoning districts as per § 27-1204, the following are also prohibited:

1. Portable or moveable signs other than as temporary signs.
2. Signs carried or worn by pedestrians, unless for special occasions.
3. Any sign which flashes or blinks on and off or contains moving lights or which is otherwise illuminated on an intermittent basis.
4. Any neon sign other than a window sign.
5. Any backlight awning which has lettering on it in the CB District.
6. Any sign mounted on the rooftop of a building.
7. Any sign which, by reason of its size, location, content, coloring or manner of illumination, constitutes a traffic hazard or a detriment to traffic safety in the opinion of the Zoning Officer by obstructing the vision of drivers, or detracting from the visibility of any traffic sign or control device on public streets and roads.
8. Any sign which obstructs free ingress to or egress from a required door, window, fire escape or other required exit way or which obstructs a window, door or other opening for providing light or air or interferes with proper function of the building.
9. Any sign or sign structure which:

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A. Is structurally unsafe;

B. Constitutes a hazard to safety or health by reason of inadequate maintenance, fading of paint, dilapidation or abandonment;

C. Is not kept in good repair, or;

D. Is capable of causing electrical shocks to persons likely to come in contact with it.

10. Signs which make use of words phrases, symbols, or characters in such a manner as to interfere with, mislead, or confuse traffic.
11. String lights used in connection with commercial premises for commercial purposes other than Christmas decorations.
12. Spinners and streamers.
13. Any sign now or hereafter existing which no longer advertises a bona fide business conducted or product sold. To be removed at owner's expense.
14. Any sign affixed to a fence, utility pole or utility structure, or tree, shrub, rock or other natural objects.
15. Off premise signs unless a Business Directory Sign (see § 27-1205(2)B).
16. Signs which depict nudity or sexual conduct.
17. Feather/swooper flags/signs.
18. Permanent and non-permanent signs on grassy median strips or gaslights on the boulevards.

§ 27-1211. Variance. [Ord. No. 688, 6/4/2018]

An application for variance to any sign regulation may be filed with the Zoning Hearing Board as allowed in Part 16 of this chapter.

§ 27-1212. Maintenance. [Ord. No. 688, 6/4/2018]

Each sign shall be maintained in a secure and safe condition. If the Zoning Officer is of the opinion that a sign is not secure, safe or in good state of repair, it shall give written notice of this fact to the person responsible for the maintenance of the sign. If the defect in the sign is not corrected within the time permitted by the Zoning Officer, the Zoning Officer may revoke the permit to maintain the sign and may remove the sign and keep possession of same until the owner pays the cost of removal.

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