CHAPTER 6

SIGN AND BILLBOARD REGULATIONS

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Section A – Permitted Signs for Which No Certificate is Required

The following signs shall be permitted in the unincorporated area of Clark County that is subject to these Regulations, according to the following regulations. No Zoning Certificate shall be required for any sign constructed or erected under the terms of this Section.

1. Signs for Sale, Lease, or Rent of the premises on which the sign is located. Not more than two (2) signs shall be displayed on any lot or parcel. Such signs shall not be illuminated and shall not exceed six (6) square feet of area per side with not more than two (2) sides, or signs of the same size identifying the builder or contractor. All such signs shall be removed within thirty (30) days after occupancy.
2. Vehicular Signs. Directional or other incidental signs pertaining to vehicular or pedestrian control on private property shall be permitted provided the said signs are located outside the right-of-way of any public street or road, do not exceed two (2) square feet of area per side, and do not interfere or obstruct visibility when entering or leaving said property.
3. Name and address of Occupant of residential property. Such signs shall not be more than two (2) square feet in area per side and shall be located outside the right-of-way of any public road. Said sign shall not be higher than three (3) feet above the ground and not more than one (1) sign shall be permitted.
4. Temporary Signs announcing special public or institutional events. Such signs shall not exceed two (2) square feet in area per side in any “R” District, or twenty (20) square feet in area per side if relating to a church, school, community center, or other institutional or public building. Such signs shall not be permitted more than thirty (30) days prior to the planned event nor more than seven (7) days after said event, and no such sign shall be closer than twelve (12) feet to the right-of-way of any public road unless attached to the building.
5. Signs approved in Planned Development District. Plans of Development, provided that the approved sign is constructed in strict compliance with the approved guidelines.
6. Farm Signs denoting the name and address of the occupants, denoting produce or products for sale on the premises, and denoting membership in organizations. No more than one (1) sign of any type may be permitted and it shall be located at least forty (40) feet distant from the road right-of-way; provided, however, that if such sign is located within one hundred (100) feet of any principal building having a greater setback or front yard than required for such District, such sign shall not be erected nearer the road right-of-way than the established building line on such road, but need not exceed a distance of one hundred (100) feet, except that at the intersections of any state or federal highway, or major or secondary thoroughfare, the setback of any sign shall not be less than one hundred (100) feet from the established right-of-way line of each highway or thoroughfare, unless erected on or adjacent to the wall of a building or other structure or in such other manner as not to interfere with or obstruct clear vision of the intersection in any direction. No such billboard or sign shall be permitted which faces the front or side lot line of, or which faces any public square, entrance to any public park, public or parochial school, library, church, or similar institution within three hundred (300) feet thereof. Advertising signs may not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet of area per sign and all other signs shall be limited to four (4) square feet in area per side.

Section A (continued)

7. Political Signs shall not be erected or posted in any A-1, R-1, R-1A, R-2, R-2A, R-2B, R-3, R-4, R-MHP or PUD District promoting any candidate or candidates seeking nomination or election or the passage of any issue in any general, primary or special election sooner than ninety (90) days immediately preceding the day of the election in which such candidate is seeking nomination or election or in which such an issue is to be decided. All such signs as are erected not in violation of the preceding portion of this paragraph shall be removed within fifteen (15) days following the date of such election. Provided, however, that such signs shall not be affixed to any pole or post owned by the County or by any public utility nor may such signs be placed upon lands owned by the County. [eff: 2-14-85]

Section B – Permitted Signs for Which a Certificate is Required

The following signs shall be permitted in the unincorporated area of Clark County that is subject to these Regulations, according to the following regulations. Zoning Certificate shall be required for any sign constructed or erected under the terms of this Section.

1. Signs for Home Occupations. One (1) on-premise sign per lot shall be permitted for the purpose of announcing a home occupation. Such signs shall not be illuminated and shall not exceed two (2) square feet in area and shall be attached to the dwelling. No off-premise signs shall be permitted. [eff: 3-29-90]
2. Off-Premise Signs. Advertising a product or service not located upon the premises on which the sign is located shall be classified as a business use and shall be permitted in all Business Districts, the Industrial District, and /or lands used for agricultural purposes subject to regulations set forth herein.
   a) Off-premise signs located adjacent to and intended for primary visibility on any street, road or highway in the unincorporated area of Clark County, shall not exceed one sign face with a total of one thousand two hundred (1,200) square feet, or two sign faces exceeding a total of one thousand two hundred (1,200) square feet on any single lot or location, excluding supports, decorative trim, or other embellishments. [eff: 3-29-90]
   b) Off-premise signs shall conform to all applicable height regulations for the appropriate zoning district, except off-premise signs located along the interstate system may be constructed at a greater height in accordance with the provisions contained in Chapter 5516 of the Ohio Revised Code. [eff: 3-29-90]
   c) No off-premise sign shall be constructed closer than 350' to another off-premise sign located on the same side of any thoroughfare in the unincorporated area of Clark County, unless the natural terrain or other obstructions prevents both signs from being seen at the same time along the main travel way. Off-premise signs along the Interstate System shall be separated by no less than 800' from any other off-premise sign on the same side of the highway.
   d) Off-premise signs shall not be located closer to the public right-of-way than the established building set-back requirements of the district in which the sign is located.
   e) No off-premise sign site shall be more than two displays facing in the same direction of the main travel way.

Section B (continued)

3. On-Premise Signs. Fee standing, building mounted, or ground signs identifying or advertising commercial or industrial uses on the premises. If the signs are located within the Planned Commercial Development District or are erected pursuant to a Conditional Use, the location of said signs must be in strict compliance with the Development Plan or Conditional Use requirements, in addition to any restrictions imposed herein.

   a) No more than one (1) free standing or ground sign shall be provided for each business use, and in no case shall a lot containing more than three (3) free standing or ground signs. [eff: 3-29-90]

   b) No free standing, ground, or building mounted sign shall have a surface area of greater than one hundred (100) square feet per side. [eff: 3-29-90]

   c) No business, industry, or use shall maintain a gross sign area exceeding three hundred (300) square feet on the premises. [eff: 3-29-90]

   d) Free standing on-premise signs shall not exceed thirty-five (35) feet in height or the height of the principal building in the respective zoning district, whichever is the greater height. [eff: 3-29-90]

   e) Free standing or ground signs shall not be located closer than twelve (12) feet to any existing or proposed street right-of-way, and not closer than thirty (30) feet to any adjoining lot line. [eff: 3-29-90]

4. Portable Signs. Portable signs announcing a special event or advertising a product or service. Such signs shall be considered a Temporary Use and shall be permitted subject to regulations set forth herein.

   a) All signs shall be located in compliance with all state and federal regulations controlling the same.

   b) Such signs shall not be permitted for more than a total of ninety (90) days per calendar year.

   c) Said signs shall be located outside the right-of-way limits of the road and shall not interfere with the visibility of vehicular traffic either entering or leaving any property or entering, leaving, or operating on any thoroughfare.

   d) No illumination device shall be used which causes unnaturally high light levels to be cast upon adjacent residential lots, or which permits the direct beaming of light onto adjacent thoroughfares thereby creating a hazard to vehicular traffic. The lighting requirements contained in Section D of this Chapter shall apply.

   e) Said signs are capable of posting and removal without destruction of public or private property.

Section C – Prohibited Signs and Billboards

The following signs shall be prohibited in the unincorporated area of Clark County:

1. All signs not specifically permitted by the express terms of these Regulations.
2. Signs or advertising devices erected and maintained on trees or painted or drawn upon rocks or other natural features.

Section C (continued)

3. Signs characterized by flashing lights or air-activated attraction devices, except for signs indicating time and temperature which operate by means of lighting changes alternating on not less than a five (5) second cycles.
4. Except for identification signs on agricultural buildings, no sign or billboard shall be painted directly upon the wall or roof of any building or structure. This restriction shall not restrict the use of aesthetic graphics such as murals or other illustrative or decorative paintings that are intended to be cosmetic devices.
5. No sign or billboard shall be painted on or attached to any awning, canopy, or balcony. No sign shall be attached to any fence within the right-of-way of any road, and no sign shall be attached to any board or wooden fence regardless of location without the permission of the owner of the fence.
6. Signs or advertising devices which attempt or appear to attempt to direct the movement of traffic, or which interfere with, imitate, or resemble an official sign, signal, or device.

Section D – Design Standards for Signs and Billboards

The following design standards shall apply to all signs and billboards located and erected within the unincorporated area of the County, regardless of type, style, location, design, or other classification.

1. Location. No sign shall be located within or project over the right-of-way of any public or private road. No sign shall be erected or maintained within six hundred sixty (660) feet of the edge of the right-of-way of a thoroughfare on the interstate or primary highway system without complying with the provisions of Chapter 5516 of the Ohio Revised Code, and the regulations promulgated and enforced by the Director of the Ohio Department of Transportation, and the regulations specified herein. No sign in a "B", O-1, or I-1 District shall face the side of any adjoining lot located in any "R" District unless the sign is located not less than fifty (50) feet from the lot. Said sign or signs shall be located in strict compliance with these Regulations, in strict compliance with the approved Development Plan or restrictions imposed by the Board of Zoning Appeals.
2. Lighting
   a) Signs may be illuminated when such sign does not constitute a public safety or traffic hazard. Where illumination is provided it shall be placed or directed so as not to permit the illumination there from to be directed or beamed upon adjacent property or public street.
   b) No illuminated sign shall be constructed which will interfere with the operation or safety of any traffic control signal.
   c) No flashing, rotating, or moving light source shall be permitted on any sign.
   d) All wiring, fittings, and material used in the construction, connection and operation of signs shall be in accordance with the provisions of the Building Code. [eff: 3-29-90]
3. Height. No sign shall be erected to a height greater than the maximum permitted height for the District in which the sign is located, except that signs located within six hundred sixty (660) feet of the edge of the right-of-way of a thoroughfare on the interstate highway system may be erected to a greater height, as may be specified by the Director of the Ohio Department of Transportation or his/her authorized representative, in accordance with the provisions contained in Chapter 5516 of the Ohio Revised Code.

Section D (continued)

4. Sight Interference. No sign shall be permitted which interferes with the visibility of pedestrian or vehicular traffic entering, leaving, or operating on thoroughfares.
5. Maintenance. All signs or billboards constructed or erected shall be maintained so that all sign surfaces, supports, braces, guys, and anchors shall be kept in repair and in a proper state of preservation by painting or otherwise.
6. Abandoned Signs
   a) If any sign or billboard shall become abandoned, in the manner defined herein, such a sign or billboard is declared to be a public nuisance by reason that continued lack of use results in lack of reasonable and adequate maintenance, thereby causing deterioration and blighting influence on nearby properties.
   b) A sign or billboard is abandoned if it meets any one (1) of the following criteria:
      1) Any sign or billboard associated with an abandoned Non-conforming Use.
      2) Any sign or billboard that remains after the termination of a business. A business has ceased operations if it is closed to the public for at least one hundred and eighty (180) consecutive days. Seasonal businesses are exempted from this determination.

Section E – Non-Conforming Signs and Billboards

1. Any sign or billboard in existence within the unincorporated area of the County prior to the effective date of these Regulations that does not conform with the provisions of this Chapter is considered to be Non-conforming.
2. Any sign or billboard that does not conform to the provisions of this Chapter shall be allowed to continue in its Non-conforming status provided the sign or billboard was erected in compliance in all respects with applicable laws in existence on the date of its erection.
3. A Non-conforming sign or billboard shall not be structurally relocated or replaced unless it is brought into compliance with the provisions of this Chapter. Should any replacement or relocation take place without being brought into compliance the sign or billboard shall be existing illegally.
4. A Non-conforming sign or billboard shall be maintained or repaired in accordance with the following provisions:
   a) The size and structural shape shall not be changed or altered.
   b) The copy may be changed provided that the change applies to the original Non-conforming Use associated with the sign or billboard and that the change is made by the owner of the sign or billboard at the time the sign or billboard became Non-conforming; the copy area shall not be enlarged. Any subsequent owner or user shall bring the sign or billboard into compliance.
   c) In the case where damage occurs to the sign or billboard to the extent of fifty (50) percent or more of either the structure or the replacement value of the sign or billboard, the sign or billboard shall be brought into compliance. Where the damage to the sign or billboard is less than fifty (50) percent of the structure or its replacement value, the sign or billboard shall be repaired within sixty (60) days.

Section F – Certificate Required

No signs, except as provided for in Section A of this Chapter, shall be erected prior to the issuance of a Zoning Certificate by the County Zoning Inspector.

1. The applicant for a Zoning Certificate herein shall pay such fee as is prescribed by the Board of County Commissioners.
2. The Zoning Certificate issued pursuant hereto shall be valid so long as the owner complies with the terms and conditions of these Zoning Regulations or any amendment thereto.
3. The application for a Zoning Certificate for posting a sign or billboard that is considered a Temporary Use shall indicate the name and address of the person charged with removal of the sign or billboard.
4. All signs and billboards erected within the unincorporated area of the County are subject to inspection, whether a Zoning Certificate is required or not prior to erection. Such inspection may be made at any reasonable time and the County Zoning Inspector may order the removal of any such sign or billboard that is not maintained in accordance with the provisions of these Regulations.
5. In the event that the owner of any sign or property fails to comply with the terms of these Zoning Regulations, said permit may be revoked upon compliance with the following terms:
   a) The County Zoning Inspector shall notify the owner of any deficiency or violation of these Regulations. Notice shall be served personally or by ordinary mail at the last known address of the permit holder. The permit holder may seek a hearing on said notice by complying with the provisions of Chapter 9 of these Regulations. Failure to correct deficiencies or to appeal the decision of the Zoning Inspector within twenty (20) days will result in cancellation of the permit for such sign and said sign shall then be removed as provided by these Regulations.
6. The County Zoning Inspector may effect removal of any sign illegally placed within the right-of-way of any road within the unincorporated area of the County. The Zoning Inspector shall maintain said sign and shall notify the owner thereof of its location, by ordinary mail. If the owner of any sign fails to claim the same within on hundred eighty (180) days after mailing of notice by the Zoning Inspector, said sign may be destroyed.

Section G – General Requirements [eff: 3-29-90]

1. No projecting sign shall be erected or maintained from the front face of a building a distance of more than two (2) feet, including those projecting from the face of any theater, hotel, or motel marquee.
2. No sign shall be placed on the roof of any building, except those signs whose supporting structure is screened so the sign appears to be a continuation of the face of the building.
3. No sign or part thereof shall contain or consist of banners, posters, pennants, ribbons, streamers, spinners, or other similar moving devices.
4. No sign of any classification shall be installed, erected, or attached in any form, shape, or manner to a fire escape or any door or window giving access to any fire escape.
5. All signs hung or erected shall be marked with the name and the telephone number of the person or firm responsible for maintaining the signs.
6. No vehicle or trailer may be parked on a business premises or a lot for the purpose of the advertising a business, product, service, event, object, location, organization, or the like.

Section H – Governmental Signs Excluded [eff: 3-29-90]

1. For the purpose of these Regulations, “sign” does not include signs erected and maintained pursuant to and in discharge of any governmental function, or required by any law, ordinance or governmental regulation.