

Chapter __

SIGNS

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[History: Adopted by the Planning Board of the Town of Dover July 13, 2009]

S. ___-1 Authority

These regulations are adopted pursuant to the Zoning Bylaw, Section 185-35.

S. ___-2 Definition

A sign is defined as an identification, description, emblem or display which is affixed to, printed on, or represented directly or indirectly upon the exterior of a building or structure, or upon a parcel of land, which is visible and intended to be visible from public places and which directs or calls attention to a person, place, product, institution, business, organization, activity or service. Mail boxes, occupant name plates, house and apartment numbers, historical markers and holiday decorations are excluded from this definition:

S. ___-3 Purpose

The Dover Planning Board has adopted this chapter with the following objectives:

- A. To provide guidance to residents and business owners regarding the size, number and other characteristics of signs that are appropriate and acceptable in various locations.
- B. To encourage attractive and functional signs that enhance the visual environment.
- C. To discourage visual clutter.
- D. To implement the Section 185-35 (Signs) of the Zoning Bylaw by establishing administrative procedures for the submission to, and review and approval by, the Planning Board of requests for sign permits.

S. ___-4 Commercial signs

- A. In general, each commercial establishment shall be limited to a maximum of 2 permanent signs, unless the Planning Board determines that additional signs are needed due to unusual circumstances.
- B. No more than one temporary sign shall be permitted to announce the pending opening of a new establishment, or a scheduled event. Such temporary sign shall be displayed for a limited duration of no more than 30 days or the duration of the special event, whichever is less, unless the Planning Board determines that an additional duration of time is needed due to unusual circumstances.

Temporary signs in residential districts advertising a company performing landscape, construction or maintenance work on the premises shall require a permit from the Planning Board if their use will exceed either the duration of work or a maximum of 30 days within any 60-day period, whichever is less. A maximum of 4 such signs may be displayed at any one time.

- C. Signs identifying and/or promoting a residential subdivision, whether temporary or permanent, shall be considered a commercial sign for the purposes of this bylaw.

S. ___-5 Non-commercial signs

- A. There shall be no more than one permanent non-commercial sign on the premises, other than warning or instructional signs as provided for in C. below.
- B. Temporary non-commercial signs in residential districts expressing personal, religious and other non-commercial messages containing no advertising matter are subject to the following condition:
 - The placement of such signs shall be such that they do not interfere with sight distance for operators of vehicles passing or entering or exiting the premises.
- C. Warning or instructional signs, such as those advising passers-by or visitors not to hunt or trespass; to beware of a dog or other hazard on the property, to park in a certain location or enter the house via a particular entrance, and similar signs, are subject to the following conditions:
 - 1. Such signs shall be limited to a maximum of 1 square foot.
 - 2. No more than one such sign shall be posted within a reasonable distance of another such sign with the same or similar message. Fifty feet shall be considered a reasonable distance.
- D. Signs in residential districts shall not be lighted.

S. ___ - 6 Design Standards Permanent Signs

- A. Freestanding signs shall be compatible in style with the architecture and/or the inherent character of the building and surrounding landscape.
- B. Wall signs shall be positioned to respect the design of the building and not cover up important architectural details. Typically, the sign should be centered horizontally on the vertical surface to which it is attached.
- C. Signs should be proportional in size to the area where they are located.
- D. Sign colors and finishes should be compatible with the color of the building.

S. ___-7 Procedures

- A. Submission of request for sign permit
 - 1. Any person or organization seeking consent of the Planning Board under Section 185-35 of the Zoning Bylaw for installation of a sign requiring a permit shall apply to the Planning Board by filing a written request that includes the following:
 - a. An application form provided by the Planning Board. The form shall include contact information of the applicant and owner of the premises, a statement indicating the purpose of the sign, a statement documenting that the sign complies with Section 185-35 of the Zoning Bylaw and these regulations, and a nonrefundable filing fee of \$250.
 - b. A design to scale of the sign including dimensions, colors and materials, including supporting structures.
 - c. A plan illustrating the location of the sign on the building, or in the case of a free-standing sign, the location on the property.
 - d. A detail of any proposed lighting for a commercial sign.
 - e. Details of any proposed landscaping associated with a free-standing sign.
 - f. The Planning Board reserves the right to request a photo simulation of the proposed sign in its proposed location.
- B. Timing. The Planning Board shall consider the application at a meeting held within 45 days of submittal.
- C. Decision. The Planning Board shall make a decision within 60 days from the date of submittal unless a longer time is agreed to by the applicant. The Board may approve the sign application as submitted, approve it with conditions, or disapprove the application. The decision shall be in writing. Failure of the Board to make a decision within 60 days shall be deemed to be approval of the sign.

- D. Exemptions. Permanent noncommercial signs and temporary signs (displayed for a maximum of 30 days within any 60-day period) in compliance with these regulations shall not require a permit.

S. ___-8 Enforcement

- A. Filing Requirement. Failure to file an application for a sign, when Planning Board permission is required under Section 185-35 of the Zoning Bylaw shall be grounds for an order by the Building Inspector to remove any such sign that was not authorized by a permit from the Planning Board under these regulations.
- B. Compliance. Signs shall be subject to an order by the Building Inspector for their removal for failure to comply with the conditions of the sign permit duly issued by the Planning Board, or the sign owner subject to a fine as authorized by the Zoning Bylaw and by Chapter 20 of the Code of the Town of Dover or other remedial measures as the Planning Board deems necessary. Any sign permit not used within two years of its issuance shall be void and require application for a new permit.
- C. The Building Inspector shall have the authority to enforce the provisions of this chapter.