

**MONROE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN
SIGNAGE GUIDELINES WITHIN HISTORIC DISTRICT
[Restated]**

GENERAL SIGN GUIDELINES.

- (A) All signs should comply with the guidelines for "appropriate sign types" set forth herein.
- (B) Where feasible, signs should be of material that was, or could have been, used at the time the building was erected. Substitute materials with the same appearance may be appropriate.
- (C) Fluorescent, neon or other bright colors should be avoided. Historic colors and earth tones are recommended.
- (D) Lettering should be of a style compatible with the time the building was erected.
- (E) Three-dimensional signs should be of a style used at the time the building was erected and should pertain to the type of business conducted within.
- (F) Externally illuminated signs should be illuminated by fixtures compatible with the period in which the building was erected.
- (G) Signs should be constructed or painted in a workmanlike manner and lettering should be of an appropriate size and style.
- (H) Signs of a period other than when the building was erected may be approved if of special design merit.
- (I) Any original sign that was used at any time on a building prior to the year 1900, or an authentic facsimile thereof, may be replaced on that building.
- (J) Signs should identify only the name of the business and the general type of goods, products, or service offered. In addition to lettering, graphics may include a trademark, symbol or other representation directly related to the use but should not advertise a specific brand sold within the building. A brand name or symbol may be included; however, if the business is a franchise and/or it is the major brand sold or service offered on the premises.
- (K) The style, composition and appearance of signs within the Historic District should comply as much as possible with the design of the building.

INAPPROPRIATE SIGNS. The following signs are generally not appropriate within the Historic District and will be eligible for a certificate of appropriateness only upon a showing that due to the particular design, placement or configuration the public safety and historic character of the District will not be adversely affected:

- (A) Mobile and portable signs except as listed in "signs exempt from certificate" section of these guidelines.
- (B) Attention-getting devices including searchlights, and strings of light bulbs, except for special occasions such as grand openings.
- (C) Propellers, pennants, streamers, ribbons, spinners, and balloons unless such device is inventory displayed for sale.
- (D) Signs, including the posts or other supports thereof, that advertise or identify an activity, business, product or service no longer conducted on the premises where such sign is located.
- (E) Signs which have blinking, flashing or fluttering lights, except digitally displayed time and temperature signs.
- (F) Signs which rotate, revolve, or have any movable part, including signs which give the appearance of movement.
- (G) Signs which produce movements achieved by normal wind currents, other than weather vanes or wind chimes unrelated to business or commerce.
- (H) Roof signs.
- (I) Signs that contain statements, words or pictures of an obscene, indecent or immoral character, such as those that will offend public morals or decency.
- (J) Signs which advertise illegal activities or items.
- (K) Any sign or sign structure which constitutes a hazard to public health or safety.
- (L) Signs which by reason of size, location, content, coloring or manner of illumination obstruct the vision of drivers, or obstruct or detract from the visibility or effectiveness of any traffic sign or other traffic-control device on public streets and roads.
- (M) Signs which are structurally unsafe or are in disrepair.

**MONROE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN
SIGNAGE GUIDELINES WITHIN HISTORIC DISTRICT [Restated]**

Page 2

- (N) Permanent commercial advertising signs located off premise.
- (O) Sound devices used in conjunction with any street sign in such a manner as to allow the sound to travel into any such street or sidewalk in tones, volume or decibels audible to a person of ordinary hearing capacity.
- (P) Signs using human beings or live animals as part of the message or display which is visible from any public street.
- (Q) Private signs which contain words such as "Stop," "Look," "One-Way," "Danger," "Yield," or phrases, symbols, lights or characters in such a manner as to interfere with, mislead or confuse traffic.
- (R) Multiple signs designed to circumvent the spirit and intent of this plan.
- (S) Signage with interior illumination, unless the Historic Preservation Commission finds that internal illumination is more appropriate than external illumination in the particular sign application.
- (T) Exposed neon tubing, except on those neon tube signs displayed indoors as window signs.
- (U) Vehicle signs, unless part of a functioning vehicle actively involved in the pursuit of the business advertised on the vehicle, as outlined under the "signs exempt from certificate" section of these guidelines.
- (V) Message boards with changeable letters and messages, including electronic message signs except as indicated under the "appropriate sign types" section of these guidelines.

SIGNS EXEMPT FROM CERTIFICATE. No certificate of appropriateness is required for the following signs unless a building permit is otherwise required to construct or install such sign.

- (A) Incidental signs to direct and inform the public, such as signs identifying entrances, exits, parking and no parking areas, restrooms, public telephones, walkways and similar features or facilities, as well as regulatory signs such as "no trespassing" and "no hunting." Such signs should generally not exceed twelve square feet per side.
- (B) American Flags.
- (C) Decorations clearly incidental and customary and commonly associated with a national, local or religious holiday provided they are displayed for a period of not more than 60 days for each holiday.
- (D) Public signs such as traffic-control signs, informational signs erected or required by governmental bodies, railroad crossing signs, legal notices, safety signs, signs indicating the location of underground cables, and the like.
- (E) Identification signs that include the house number and name of occupant located on the lot to which the sign pertains. Such signs should not exceed two square feet in area.
- (F) Integral signs carved into stone or inlaid so as to become part of the building and containing such information as date of erection, name of building and memorial attributes.
- (G) Interior signs located in the interior of any building or within an enclosed lobby or court of any building or group of buildings, provided such signs are not visible from the exterior of the buildings.
- (H) Utility company signs that serve as an aid to public safety or that show the location of public telephones, underground cables, and the like.
- (I) Temporary window signs such as, but not limited to, posters and advertisements for on-premises activities or sales, and community educational, cultural or entertainment events. Such temporary window signs should not be displayed for periods of more than 30 consecutive days and should not cover more than 20% of the window.
- (J) Vehicle signs, provided the sign is painted or attached directly to the body of the original vehicle and does not project or extend beyond the original manufactured body proper of the vehicle.
- (K) Window decals or emblems such as, but not limited to, those that represent membership in a civic, political, professional, commercial, charitable, philanthropic or religious organization, and do not exceed 36 square inches in size.
- (L) Incidental signs posted in conjunction with doorbells or mail boxes, which do not exceed 16 square inches in size.
- (M) Signs not visible beyond the boundaries of the lot or parcel upon which they are situated or from any public thoroughfare or right-of-way.

**MONROE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN
SIGNAGE GUIDELINES WITHIN HISTORIC DISTRICT [Restated]**

Page 3

- (N) Portable signs located in the B-1 or B-2 zoning districts when located within the legal boundaries of the commercial property and not on a public right-of-way. Such signs should identify only the name of the business and the activities conducted on the premises where said signs are located and should not obstruct pedestrian traffic or access to the premises. Such signs should be constructed and painted in a workmanlike manner, utilize historic colors and earth tones, and should be compatible with their surroundings in the Historic District. Portable signs should not exceed twelve square feet in area per side, and there should be no more than two portable signs displayed at a business at any given time.
- (O) Minor supplemental signs such as, but not limited to, those pertaining to real estate sales, garage/yard sales, political campaigns, construction sites and development sales offices. Such signs should be limited to a single sign per property. Freestanding signs may be attached to a simple metal frame bracket. Permanent installation of the minor supplemental sign is not required. Such signs should be limited to 12 square feet per side. Freestanding signs should not intrude into or project over any public right-of-way. Structural supports of any freestanding sign should be situated at least ten feet from the public right-of-way.
- (P) *Developer's signs.* For the purpose of this section "Developer's sign" means an on-premise sign erected by the legal or beneficial owner or owners of a lot or of any land included in a proposed development including the holder of an option or contract to purchase, or other persons having enforceable proprietary interests in such land.
 - (1) Developer's signs should be placed only from time of project approval until construction is complete.
 - (2) Developer's signs should conform to the maximum sizes set forth below, and should generally be no higher than 12 feet above ground level.
 - (3) There should be no more than one developer's sign per development tract unless the development is abutting two streets, in which case two separate signs may be appropriate.
 - (4) Developer's signs should not exceed in size twelve square feet per side.
 - (5) Any freestanding developer's sign should not intrude into or project over any public right-of-way. All structural supports of any freestanding sign should be situated at least ten feet from the public right-of-way.

APPROPRIATE SIGN TYPES. The following signs are generally appropriate unless the Historic Preservation Commission finds that the particular location of configuration is not appropriate:

- (A) *Window signs.*
 - (1) Permanent window signs should be limited to one per window.
 - (2) The total coverage of all permanent, neon and temporary window signs should not exceed 20% of the total glass area of the window. Individual sections of glass encased by mullions will not generally be considered an individual window.
 - (3) Neon tube signs displayed indoors are generally appropriate as permanent window signs. Such signs should be limited to one per window.
- (B) *Wall signs.* For aesthetic and safety reasons, exterior wall-mounted signs are preferred to freestanding signs.
 - (1) Exterior wall signs should be limited to one per business or use per building side.
 - (2) Exterior wall signs should generally not be larger than 2 square feet per lineal foot of building frontage comprising the main entrance to the business.
 - (3) Exterior wall signs may be located either on the front of the building abutting a street or on either sidewall perpendicular to the street frontage or alley.
 - (4) Exterior wall signs should generally be affixed flat against the building wall. Any projection should be limited to the necessary mounting frame and should not extend more than four inches.
 - (5) Exterior wall signs should generally be affixed to a wall at a height of four or more feet above the sidewalk or ground.
 - (6) Exterior wall signs should generally not cover wholly or partially any wall opening or architectural

**MONROE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN
SIGNAGE GUIDELINES WITHIN HISTORIC DISTRICT [Restated]**

Page 4

feature, or project beyond the ends of the wall or beyond the top of the building to which it is affixed.

- (7) Fully enclosed and weather-tight bulletin boards are generally appropriate. Such boards should generally not exceed three square feet in area, and such boards should be firmly attached to a building in the same manner as a wall sign. Bulletin boards should be limited to two per storefront.

(C) Projecting signs.

- (1) Projecting signs are generally appropriate for commercial or institutional activities, but should be limited to one projecting sign on the building in which that activity occurs per street frontage.
- (2) Projecting signs should not exceed 12 square feet in area unless the Historic Preservation Commission finds that a sign larger in area is appropriate to the scale of the building façade on which such sign is placed and does not adversely affect adjoining properties or public safety.
- (3) Projecting signs, including the frames, braces and supports, should be securely built and designed.
- (4) Projecting signs should clear sidewalks by at least 7½ feet and should project no more than four feet from the building or closer than two feet to the curb line, whichever is less.
- (5) Projecting signs should generally not extend more than 15 feet above the ground unless the Historic Preservation Commission finds that a sign extending more than 15 feet above ground is appropriate to the scale of the building façade on which such sign is placed and does not adversely affect adjoining properties or public safety.
- (6) Projecting signs at the intersection of streets are generally not appropriate except at right angles to a building front.

(D) Marquees.

- (1) There should generally be only one marquee sign per marquee face per building and a marquee sign is generally not appropriate if there also exists a wall sign directed to the same street frontage.
- (2) Marquee signs should generally be mounted on the vertical edges of the face of the marquee proper. Marquee signs should not be erected above the roofline of the marquee.
- (3) The signable area for marquee signs should not extend beyond the marquee face on which the sign is located. Signs should not be placed on or over the roof of said marquee.
- (4) The surface area of a marquee sign should not exceed 40% of the signable area of a marquee attached to a building front.
- (5) Marquee signs should be constructed of a non-combustible type material.
- (6) Marquees should be supported solely by the building to which they are attached. Columns or posts are generally not appropriate as supports.
- (7) The lowest point of a marquee should generally be 7½ feet or more above the level of the sidewalk or other public thoroughfare. If the marquee extends beyond two-thirds of the distance between the building and curb its lowest point should generally be 12 feet or more above the sidewalk.
- (8) Marquees should generally not extend beyond a point two feet inside the curb line.
- (9) Marquees should be designed to withstand a wind pressure of 80 miles per hour.
- (10) The roof of any marquee should be designed and constructed to support a live load of 60 pounds per square foot.
- (11) The roofs of all marquees should be used for no other purpose than to form and constitute a roof.
- (12) The roofs of all marquees should be properly guttered and connected by downspouts to a drain so that the water therefrom will not drip or flow directly onto public property.
- (13) Marquee signs should be harmonious in scale and proportion with the building they are mounted to and with the architectural elements of the building. A marquee sign should not visually overpower those elements nor detract from the composition of the building façade.
- (14) The outlined shape and silhouette of a marquee sign should be simple and compatible with the building it is mounted on. Shapes that disrupt the architectural order and composition of building facade are generally not appropriate.

(E) Canopies.

- (1) There should generally be only one canopy sign per canopy face per business.
- (2) Canopy signs should generally be mounted only on the vertical edges of the face of the canopy

**MONROE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN
SIGNAGE GUIDELINES WITHIN HISTORIC DISTRICT [Restated]**

Page 5

proper.

- (3) The signage area for canopy signs should not extend beyond the canopy face on which the sign is located. Canopy signs should not be placed on the roof of the canopy.
- (4) The lowest point of a canopy should generally be 7½ feet or more above the level of the sidewalk or other public thoroughfare.
- (5) Canopies should generally not extend beyond a point two feet inside the curb line.
- (6) Canopy supports should be designed so as not to obstruct the continuous flow of pedestrian traffic along any sidewalk.
- (7) Canopy signs should be harmonious in scale and proportion with the building they are mounted to and with the architectural elements of the building.
- (8) The outlined shape and silhouette of a canopy sign should be simple and compatible with the building on which it is mounted.

(F) Awnings.

- (1) An identification sign may be painted on or otherwise permanently placed in letters on the front and side portions of an awning. Such letters should generally not exceed 20 inches in height
- (2) Awnings should be securely attached to and supported by the building. Posts or columns beyond the building line are generally not appropriate.
- (3) The lowest point of an awning should generally be 7½ feet or more above the sidewalk or other public thoroughfare.
- (4) Awnings should generally not extend beyond a point two feet inside the curb line.

(G) Freestanding signs.

- (1) Freestanding monument style signs should generally be limited to one on any street front of any lot.
- (2) Freestanding signs should generally not exceed 48 square feet in area per side.
- (3) Freestanding signs should be securely built, constructed and erected upon posts and standards or footings of sufficient depth to prevent overturning, and all signs should be installed to the satisfaction of the Building Inspector. The Historic Preservation Commission may require as a condition for approval that a freestanding sign be certified safe by a registered architect or engineer.
- (4) When attached to a post or other supports, the top edge of a freestanding sign (including supporting structure) should generally not exceed 15 feet in height from the finished normal grade.
- (5) A freestanding sign should generally not intrude into or project over a public right-of-way. Structural supports of a freestanding sign should generally be situated at least ten feet from the public right-of-way.
- (6) A freestanding sign should generally not be erected closer than ten feet to a side or rear lot line.
- (7) A freestanding sign within three feet of a driveway, parking area or maneuvering area should be completely surrounded by a curbing that should generally be three or more feet from the outermost perimeter of the sign, unless the sign is mounted on a concrete base of at least three feet in height.

(H) Temporary signs.

- (1) Certain portable signs may be appropriate on a property to promote special community activities and special events such as grand openings or activities of nonprofit organizations. Such signs should not be maintained continuously or placed with such regularity as to become virtually a continuous display.
- (2) More than one temporary sign on a parcel of property, except for temporary window signs, is generally not appropriate.
- (3) Portable signs should generally not exceed 12 square feet in sign area per side.

(I) Automobile service station signs. The following sign guidelines apply to automobile service stations:

- (1) *Wall signs.* There should generally not be displayed more than two wall signs per automobile service station, placed on separate walls of the building.
- (2) *Canopy signs.*
 - (a) Canopy signs should generally not be displayed on more than three faces (vertical edges) of a freestanding canopy at an automobile service station. Changeable copy for the price of fuel offered for sale is appropriate if no other price signage is placed on the premises.

**MONROE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN
SIGNAGE GUIDELINES WITHIN HISTORIC DISTRICT [Restated]**

Page 6

- (b) The surface area of a canopy sign should not exceed 10% of the surface area of the face of a canopy.
- (c) Canopy signs should not exceed the width of the canopy.
- (d) Canopy signs should not project more than six inches from the canopy proper.
- (3) *Freestanding signs.*
 - (a) There should generally not be more than one freestanding sign on the property.
 - (b) The freestanding sign should generally not exceed 12 feet in height from grade and should conform to the Appropriate Sign Types and Sign Illumination Guidelines set forth herein.
 - (c) A changeable copy board may be incorporated into the overall sign design for the purpose of providing gasoline-pricing information.

SIGN ILLUMINATION GUIDELINES.

- (A) *Externally illuminated signs.*
 - (1) White light should generally be utilized unless a color is clearly appropriate for the particular circumstance.
 - (2) Beacon lights, colored lights and illumination by flame are generally not appropriate.
 - (3) The light which is cast upon any illuminated sign should be shaded, shielded or directed so as to avoid the creation or continuation of any nuisance or traffic hazard and avoid excessive glare or illumination to adjacent property.
 - (4) The lighting intensity of any sign should generally not exceed 75 foot-candles measured with a standard light meter perpendicular to the face of the sign at a distance equal to the narrowest dimension of the sign.
 - (5) Signs should not be either directly or indirectly illuminated in such a manner as to adversely affect the use and enjoyment of nearby buildings.
- (B) *Internal illumination and backlighting of signs* is appropriate only where such form of lighting is either consistent with signage on neighboring properties or where such lighting will not adversely affect the overall appearance of adjoining building facades.

CALCULATION OF SIGN AREA. In general, sign area should be calculated as follows:

- (A) The area of an attached sign where the sign consists of words, numerals or symbols painted on or affixed to a wall should be the entire area within a contiguous perimeter enclosing the extreme limits of each word, symbol, numeral, group of symbols, or groups of numerals, where the symbols or numbers are meant to be read as a unit. Where there is a symbol that encompasses or partly encompasses the message of the sign, the sign area should be the entire area within a contiguous perimeter enclosing the extreme limits of the symbol.
- (B) The area of a suspended, attached, or projecting sign, where the letters, numerals, or symbols are on a sign surface which is hung or affixed to a structure, should be the total area of the hung or affixed surfaces.
- (C) The area of a freestanding monument sign should be the total area of all surfaces (excluding poles) visible from the public right-of-way or other point from which the sign is intended to be viewed.
- (D) The area of a monument sign should not include the surface area of the base of the sign, which is not designed to contain any copy area.

The area of any sign not specifically provided for herein, should be determined as nearly as practicable using the principles contained in this section.