

7.2 Signage

A. PURPOSE

This Section is intended to promote the public safety and welfare by providing standards to control the location, area, number, illumination and overall design of signs in order to prevent undue distraction of motorists and pedestrians, to ensure compatibility of signs with permitted land uses, to provide reasonable standards by which uses within the various zones may relate their function to the public, and to aid in preserving and enhancing the aesthetic and historical values of the community.

B. PERMIT REQUIRED

A zoning permit for a sign shall be obtained from the Commission or its duly authorized officer prior to the erection or installation of any sign except for:

- a. The alteration, reconstruction or replacement of any sign meeting the requirements of this Section, provided the sign area is not increased.
- b. The normal maintenance of any sign meeting the provisions herein.
- c. A sign listed in Subsection 7.2.C of these Regulations or elsewhere in Section 7.2 as not requiring a Zoning Permit.

C. SIGNS PERMITTED IN ANY DISTRICT

The following types of signs are permitted in any zone without a Zoning Permit provided that any such sign shall comply with other provisions of Section 7.2:

Type of Sign	Maximum Number	Maximum Size / Area
1. Traffic control signs required or approved by the Traffic Authority of the Town of Ridgefield or by the State of Connecticut.	n/a	n/a
2. The insignia of any nation, or any governmental or religious organization.	n/a	n/a
3. Historic structure plaques issued by the Ridgefield Historical Society.	One (1) sign per structure	n/a
4. Temporary political signs	n/a	n/a
5. Real estate signs advertising the sale or rental of the premises, provided that the maximum height of said sign does not exceed five (5) feet.	One (1) sign per street frontage	Four (4) square feet on each of two sides
6. Real estate directional signs for open houses between the hours of 12 p.m. and 4 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays, on the premises or on off-site private property with permission of the owner.	One (1) sign per open house	Four (4) square feet on each of two sides

<p>7. Temporary signs of the building contractors or professionals on the premises where the work is being performed, provided that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. no such sign exceeds ten (10) feet in height, and b. such sign is removed promptly upon completion of the work. 	<p>One (1) sign per premises</p>	<p>Not more than six (6) square feet per any one side</p>
<p>8. Temporary street signs within subdivisions prior to road acceptance.</p>	<p>One (1) sign per intersection</p>	<p>n/a</p>
<p>9. Necessary directional signs within the premises of a permitted use, providing that no such sign shall exceed five (5) feet in height.</p>		<p>Not more than three (3) square feet per any one side</p>
<p>10. Community Sign Boards in sizes and locations approved by the Commission (may be located within the setback area and/or on Town property).</p>	<p>As approved by the Commission</p>	<p>As approved by the Commission</p>
<p>11. Temporary signs for special non-profit community events in the Town of Ridgefield (such as those held for charity, fund-raising, the arts, education, seasonal fairs, and other similar events sponsored by non-profit organizations) may be posted on designated Community Sign Boards provided that::</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. no sign shall be posted more than two (2) weeks before the special event; b. the sign(s) shall be removed within 48 hours of cessation of the event; c. no sign shall be posted outside of the sign area of the Community Sign Board; and d. no tag sale signs are permitted except for those held as non-profit events by non-profit organizations. 	<p>One (1) sign per organization per Community Sign Board</p>	<p>Two (2.0) feet high and two (2.0) feet wide</p>
<p>12. Digital/Electronic Signs (Special Permit required)¹</p>	<p>Determined by Commission</p>	<p>Determined by Commission</p>

¹ A-23-2 Amended effective 07/14/2023

D. SIGNS PERMITTED IN RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS

1. The following types of signs are permitted for residential uses in a residential zone provided that any such sign shall comply with other provisions of Section 7.2:

Type of Sign	Maximum Number	Maximum Size / Area
a. A sign bearing the name and/or permitted home occupation of the resident (no permit required)	One (1) for each permitted use or dwelling	Two (2) square feet in total area

2. The following types of signs are permitted for non-residential uses in residential zones (such as religious institutions, libraries, museums, art centers, historical societies, schools, municipal uses, non-profit agencies) provided that any such sign shall comply with other provisions of Section 7.2:

Type of Sign	Maximum Number	Maximum Size / Area
a. One or more wall signs provided that the total area of all wall signs does not exceed twenty (20) square feet (Zoning Permit required)	One (1) sign per street frontage	Twenty (20) square feet in total area
b. One or more wall signs (Special Permit required) ³	One (1) sign per street frontage	Twenty-five (25) Square feet
c. A freestanding sign erected or placed perpendicular or parallel to the public street or highway to which the building or structure fronts or abuts provided that the sign does not exceed five (5) feet in height (Zoning Permit required) ²	One (1) free-standing sign per street frontage	Twenty (20) square feet in total area per side
d. Temporary signs for special events with the following restrictions (no permit required): i. no sign shall be posted more than two (2) weeks before the special event; ii. the sign(s) shall be posted only on the premises where the event is taking place, behind the front property line and not in any street right-of-way; iii. no sign exceeds six (6) feet in height iv. the temporary sign(s) shall be removed within 48 hours of cessation of the activity or use to be conducted thereon; and v. the special event is limited to an activity scheduled for specific dates and not for continuous activities or on-going programs.	Not more than two (2) signs shall be posted at any one time	The area of any one side of the sign shall not exceed six (6) square feet

E. SIGNS PERMITTED IN NON-RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS

² 2007-056 Amended effective 6/29/07

³ 2018-047 Amended effective 11/09/2018

The following types of signs are permitted in a non-residential zone provided that any such sign shall comply with other provisions of Section 7.2:

Type of Sign	Maximum Number	Maximum Size / Area
1. One (1) wall sign displaying the name of the owner or occupant of the premises and/or the activity conducted thereon (Zoning Permit required)	One sign per tenant except as may be allowed by Subsection 7.2.E.3 or Subsection 7.2.E.4	One (1) square foot per lineal foot of facade of the tenant space but not more than twenty-five (25) square feet or not more one (1) square foot per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area, whichever is greater
2. One projecting sign (in lieu of a wall sign) displaying the name of the owner or occupant of the premises and/or the activity conducted thereon (Zoning Permit) provided that there is at least fourteen (14) feet of clearance under the sign for vehicular traffic and at least eight (8) feet of clearance under the sign otherwise (Zoning Permit required)	One sign per tenant except as may be allowed by Subsection 7.2.E.3 or Subsection 7.2.E.4	One (1) square foot per lineal foot of facade of the tenant space but not more than twenty-five (25) square feet per sign
3. One (1) additional wall sign or projecting sign displaying the name of the owner or occupant of the premises (Special Permit required)	One additional sign for a maximum of two (2) signs total	For both signs, maximum of one-and-a-half (1.5) square feet per lineal foot of main facade of the tenant space but not more than twenty-five (25) square feet per sign
4. An entrance identification sign for a rear entrance into a building or tenant space from a parking area (Zoning Permit required)	One sign	Four (4) square feet in area
5. Sign(s) identifying store hours and non-advertising notices (no permit required)	n/a	Two (2) square feet in total area per tenant space
6. For a residence in a non-residential zone, a sign bearing the name and/or permitted home occupation of the resident (no permit required).	One (1) for each permitted use or dwelling	Two (2) square feet in total area

Type of Sign	Maximum Number	Maximum Size / Area
7. Permanent window sign(s) on store windows for a permitted conforming use provided that a "permanent window sign" permit has been obtained (Zoning Permit required)	Two (2) window surfaces	Fifteen (15) percent of the window surface to which applied
8. A freestanding sign erected or placed on the premises provided that the maximum height of such sign does not exceed ten (10) feet (Zoning Permit required) ³	One (1) freestanding sign per premises	Twenty-four (24) square feet in total area for all sign faces
9. A temporary sign announcing special events directly related to the activity or use conducted within the premises provided that no more than four (4) permits per tenant for such special events signs shall be issued in any one calendar year (Zoning Permit required)	One (1) sign per business or occupant for up to two (2) weeks but no more than one (1) sign per property at any one time	Twelve (12) square feet in total area
10. Temporary window sign for a permitted conforming use (no permit required), provided that: a. Such sign shall not be displayed for more than forty –five (45) days. ⁴		Fifty (50) percent or twenty (20) square feet, of the window surface, whichever is less
11. Digital/Electronic Signs (Special Permit required) ⁴	Determined by Commission	Determined by Commission

³ 2007-056 Amended effective 6/29/07

⁴ 2018-046 Amended effective 11/09/2018

⁴ A-23-2: Amended adopted 07/05/2023 effective 07/14/2023

F. SIGN LOCATION AND CONSTRUCTION

1. No sign, other than official street or highway signs, shall be erected or maintained within street or highway rights-of-way.
2. No sign shall project over any private property line without the express written permission of the affected property owner
3. No sign shall be placed so as to:
 - a. interfere in any way with the vision of pedestrian or vehicular traffic, traffic signals or signs, or
 - b. endanger traffic on a street or public way by obscuring a clear view of, or by confusion with, official street signs, highway signs, or signals.
4. No sign shall be affixed to the roof of any building; nor shall any sign affixed to any wall of any building project above the top of said wall.
5. All signs shall be designed, constructed, erected and maintained in accordance with the standards specified in the state building code.
6. No sign shall consist of, contain, or appear to contain rotating, vibrating or moving materials such as paper, cloth or metal, whether attached to a fixed sign or used independently thereof.
7. No sign shall be constructed, illuminated, or function in a way so as to appear to rotate, vibrate, move, or otherwise be animated.

G. SIGN ILLUMINATION

1. The illumination of permitted signs shall be non-animated and non-flashing, unless specifically approved by the Commission via Special Permit.
2. No sign shall be externally illuminated by other than white incandescent or white fluorescent lights, unless specifically approved by the Commission. The color temperature of lights should be 3000 kelvin or less whenever possible; no light shall exceed 4000 kelvin unless specifically approved by the Commission.
3. Any internally illuminated sign shall consist of a dark or opaque background with lighter-colored lettering unless specifically approved by the Commission. Digital or electronic signage, or any other self-luminous sign, when approved by Special Permit, shall be designed and/or controlled with luminosity limit of 150 nits during nighttime/dark conditions, and 5,000 nits during daytime/sunlight conditions. Automatic control of luminance based on ambient lighting conditions, with the range defined above, is encouraged.⁵
4. Light sources shall be so located to preclude light trespass into the street or any adjoining property.
5. Spotlights or floodlights for signs shall be shielded so that:
 - a. the source of light shall not be visible from any point off the premises on which the sign, building or structure being illuminated is erected, and
 - b. only one (1) sign is directly illuminated thereby.

⁵ A-23-2: Amended effective 07/14/2023

H. SIGN DESIGN AND REVIEW PROCEDURE

1. All signs shall be designed so as to be harmonious and compatible with the architectural character of the building(s) or premises to which they refer and with due consideration to the protection and enhancement of Ridgefield historic character and tradition.
2. A sign application shall be referred to the Architectural Advisory Committee (AAC) for review when the wall sign, projecting sign, free-standing sign, or other permanent sign:
 - a. is located in the CBD District,
 - b. is located in the B-1 District,
 - c. is located in another non-residential district and has a sign area exceeding ten (10) square feet, or
 - d. is located in a residential district and has a sign area exceeding ten (10) square feet.
3. For such signs, the Architectural Advisory Committee shall act within fifteen (15) days of the date of submission of a complete application or the sign design shall be considered approved as submitted and a permit shall be granted by the Zoning Enforcement Officer provided that the sign complies with other provisions of Section 7.2.
4. A request from the AAC for resubmission of the application based on the AAC recommendations shall not be considered failure to act.