

APPENDIX A – Zoning Code, Article VII. - Signs

Sec. 700. - Purpose.

The purpose of this section is to create the legal framework for a comprehensive and balanced system of signage in the City of Center Line to facilitate communication between people and their environment and to avoid the visual clutter that is potentially harmful to community appearance, traffic and pedestrian safety, property values, and business opportunities. To achieve this purpose, Article VII, Signs, has the following objectives:

- (1) To protect the aesthetic quality of the city.
- (2) To protect the general public from damage and injury caused by the distractions, hazards, and obstructions caused by excessive signage.
- (3) To preserve the value of property by assuring the compatibility of signage with surrounding land uses.
- (4) To keep signs within a reasonable scale with respect to the buildings to which they relate.
- (5) To prevent off-premises signs from conflicting with business, residential, and public land uses.
- (6) To prevent the placement of signs in a manner which will conceal or obscure other signs or adjacent businesses.
- (7) To prevent hazards due to collapse, fire, collision, decay, or abandonment of signage.
- (8) To provide signage that will harmonize with the building upon which it is placed and the adjoining properties.

(Ord. of 10-12-18(1))

Sec. 701. - Signs and billboards.

(A) **District regulations.** Any publicly displayed sign, symbol or notice on premises shall be regulated as follows:

- (1) R-1, R-2, R-M and NT districts. For each dwelling, 1 nameplate not exceeding 2 square feet in area. For structures other than dwelling units, 1 sign not exceeding 18 square feet. For rental and/or management offices in a multiple-housing development, 1 sign not exceeding 6 square feet.
- (2) RM-1 and CC districts. No sign shall project beyond or overhang the wall, or any permanent architectural feature, by more than 1 foot, and shall not project above or beyond the highest point of the roof or parapet. One freestanding sign shall be permitted per lot, not to exceed 35 feet in height and 36 square feet in area.
- (3) B-1A, B-1B, and B-2 districts. Signs, whether freestanding or attached to a building, shall conform to the height and re-relocation regulations of the zoning district in which it is located in Article VII, Signs; except that in those instances where a use has 120 feet of frontage or more on a major thoroughfare, signs may be constructed to a height not to exceed 35 feet. No sign shall project beyond or overhang the wall, or any permanent architectural feature, by more than one foot. No sign shall project into the public right-of-way. Wall mounted signs shall not exceed 15 percent of a building facade and three feet in height. One roof, ground, or freestanding sign shall be allowed subject to requirement of Article VII, Signs, in addition to the wall sign requirement.
- (4) M-1 and M-2 districts. No sign shall project beyond or overhang the wall or any permanent architectural feature by more than 1 foot and shall not project above or beyond the highest point of the roof or parapet. The total signage area shall not exceed 11/2 square feet per lineal foot of

building frontage or 100 square feet, whichever is least. Billboards shall be permitted and shall comply with all setback requirements of the district.

(B) **Special conditions.** The following conditions shall apply to all signs and billboards erected in any use district:

- (1) The zoning board of appeals may, upon application by the property owner, grant an exception the area of sign permitted where, in unusual circumstances, no good purpose would be served by compliance with the requirements of this section.
- (2) All signs established by the city, county, state, or federal governments, shall be permitted in all use districts.
- (3) Illumination of signs shall be directed or shaded downward so as not to interfere with the vision of persons on the adjacent highway or adjacent property owners.
- (4) No signs or billboards shall be located on any street corner which would obscure the vision of drivers using said streets, or conflict with the traffic-control signals at the intersection of any street.
- (5) Permanent or temporary signs placed on or near store windows shall not cover more than 15 percent of total window area.
- (6) No sign or billboard shall be erected or altered until approved by the building inspector and a permit issued.
- (7) Freestanding billboards not to exceed 300 square feet in area shall be permitted so long as they meet all the requirements of Article VII, Signs, of this ordinance.
- (8) Signs and billboards shall be expressly prohibited from all public rights-of-way and dedicated public easements.
- (9) Buildings located on corner lots shall be permitted one wall-mounted sign on each side facing a street with a maximum of two wall signs per lot.
- (10) One freestanding or roof mounted sign shall be permitted. Where parcel frontage total is 60 feet or less, the total sign area shall not exceed 48 square feet. Where the total parcel frontage exceeds 60 feet, the total sign area shall not exceed 3/4 of a square foot per lineal foot of parcel frontage, up to a maximum of 200 square feet.
- (11) Any two freestanding signs shall be separated by a distance of 40 feet.
- (12) Any two freestanding signs shall be separated by a distance of 40 feet. Where compliances with this standard would not be possible due to the close proximity of existing signs on adjacent parcels, installation of a ground or freestanding sign on an intervening parcel shall be permitted provided said sign is located midway between signs on adjacent parcels.

(C) **Prohibited signs.** The following signs are prohibited, notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this chapter:

- (1) Animated signs.
- (2) Banner signs, except as authorized by the building department as temporary signs.
- (3) Rotating signs.
- (4) Signs with flashing, blinking or moving lights, including moving message boards.
- (5) Signs with exposed incandescent lights.
- (6) Balloons, excepting as approved by the building department as temporary signs.
- (7) Strings of lights, excepting holiday decorations.
- (8) Any sign which is structurally unsafe or is capable of causing electrical shock.
- (9) Any sign which obstructs a window, door or other opening used for a fire escape.

- (10) Any sign containing obscene matters. For purposes of this ordinance, "obscene matters" are those which would be prohibited by Michigan's obscenity statute (MCL 752.361 *et seq.*).
 - (11) Any sign unlawfully installed or erected.
 - (12) Any sign attached to a standpipe, gutter drain or fire escape, or any sign designed or erected as to impair access to a roof.
 - (13) Any sign that would project into any public right-of-way or other access way.
 - (14) Any sign which is attached to a tree, fence, or utility pole.
 - (15) Portable or temporary signs except as authorized by the building department as temporary signs.
 - (16) Sidewalk signs.
 - (17) Projecting signs over public property.
 - (18) Bench signs.
 - (19) Any other sign not specifically permitted by this Section.
- (D) **Temporary signs.** Temporary signs requiring approval by the building department include portable signs, banner signs, and balloons. (Sidewalk signs are specifically prohibited by this ordinance.)
- (1) Permit required. No temporary sign shall be displayed upon any land within the city without prior approval for such display having been obtained from the building department except no permit shall be required for temporary signs (i) not exceeding 36 inches by 36 inches in size; (ii) that are displayed for no more than 21 days per calendar year in a commercial district or 30 days per calendar year in a residential district; and (iii) that otherwise satisfy the requirements of Section 701(B) and 701(C) above.
 - (2) Requirements for approval. The building department shall not signify its approval for the display of a temporary sign unless the following requirements have been met:
 - (a) That such proposed display shall be for definite consecutive dates not to exceed 14 days.
 - (b) That the director of public safety or his designated representative shall certify that the proposed location of the temporary sign will not cause traffic congestion, impede traffic, block access to off-street parking spaces, conflict with traffic signalization or signage, or otherwise interfere with orderly traffic movement.
 - (c) That the proposed location of the temporary sign shall not be on any public right-of-way.
 - (d) That the proposed location for the placement of the temporary sign shall not be closer than ten feet from any driveway, road, streets, alley, sidewalk or other public property.
 - (e) That each application for a permit for a temporary sign shall include a description or sketch showing how such sign shall be affixed to the ground or some stationary structure which will prevent the sign from rolling, tumbling, blowing, or being pushed onto any driveway, street, alley, or other public property.
 - (f) For the purposes of this subsection a shopping center shall be considered one premise.
 - (g) That no temporary sign shall exceed 32 square feet in area.
- (E) **Nonconforming signs.**
- (1) Signs erected, constructed or installed prior to the effective date of this ordinance and which do not conform to the regulations and restrictions contained in this chapter shall be deemed to be a "nonconforming sign."
 - (2) Nonconforming signs:
 - (a) Shall not be changed to another nonconforming sign.

- (b) Shall not have any changes made in the words or symbols used or the message displayed unless the sign is specifically designed for periodic change of message.
 - (c) Shall not be structurally altered so as to prolong the life of the sign or so as to change the shape, size, type, or design of the sign.
 - (d) Shall not have the face or faces changed when such sign is of a type of construction to permit such a complete change of the face.
 - (e) Shall not be repaired or replaced after being damaged if the repair or replacement would cost more than 50 percent of the cost of an identical new sign.
- (F) **Electronic message signs.** Shall be permitted within the B-1A, B-1B, B-2, M-1 and M-2 zoning districts. Such sign must be freestanding. Such sign shall be allowed subject to the sign regulations for each zoning district and subject to the following additional regulations:
- (1) An electronic message sign is permitted and regulated as a ground sign per Section 17.07. Wall signs are prohibited.
 - (2) A maximum of one (1) electronic message sign is permitted per property, business or business center occupied by multiple businesses, uses or buildings.
 - (3) The electronic display shall not flash, pulse or scroll.
 - (4) The frequency of the message change shall:
 - (a) Not exceed once every ten seconds.
 - (b) Be completed in one second.
 - (c) Occur simultaneously over the entire face of the electronic message sign.
 - (5) The maximum area of all electronic message signs shall not exceed 50 percent of the total permitted sign area.
 - (6) The maximum elevation of an electronic message sign shall not exceed six (6) feet. Such sign shall be setback ordinance requirements inclusive of the sign structure. Elevations are measured from grade level to top of sign structure.
 - (7) The width of an electronic sign shall not exceed eight feet.
 - (8) No sign shall orient to face a residentially zoned property.
 - (9) The intensity of the display on any variable electronic message sign shall not exceed the levels specified in the chart below:

Intensity Levels (NITS)		
Color	Daytime	Nighttime
Red Only	3,150	1,125
Green Only	6,300	2,250
Amber Only	4,690	1,675
Full Color	7,000	2,500

- (11) Prior to issuing a permit for an electronic message sign, applicant shall provide a written certification from the sign manufacturer that the light intensity has been factory pre-set not to exceed the levels specified in the chart above, and the intensity level is protected from end-user manipulation by password-protected software or other method deemed appropriate by the

Department. The characters on any variable electronic message sign must be lighted against a darker or less luminous background.

- (12) The property owner and sign operator shall provide contact information for a person that is available to promptly turn off the variable electronic message sign after a malfunction. The property owner and sign operator shall correct the malfunction or remove power to the sign within twenty-four (24) hours of a request by the City of Center Line.
- (13) A sign base and side supports shall be installed. The top of the base shall be set a minimum one (1) foot above grade level. The base and side supports shall be faced with material matching the texture and color of the principal building.
- (14) An electronic message sign shall be required to be shut off between the hours of 10:00 p.m. or the closing time of normal business hours, whichever is later, and 7:00 a.m. or the opening of business hours, whichever is earlier.
- (15) Signs which constitute nonconforming uses under Article VII, Signs, of this ordinance, or as to which variance(s) has/have been granted for sign size, height, location, or number, must be eliminated or brought into conformity with all currently applicable ordinance limits prior to the issuance of a variable electronic message sign permit for the business, business center, and/or regional center to which such nonconforming sign(s) pertain(s).
- (16) An electronic message sign which does not comply with the provisions of this subsection shall not be permitted in any zoning district in the City

(Ord. of 10-12-18(1))