EMD Sign Standards approved by Planning Commission 11/3/25

Under 3.26 Signs; D. General Sign Standards

26. Electronic Message Display (EMD) Signs:

(a) General Standards for EMD Signs: EMD signs are permitted on municipal and public-school properties in the Village Mixed Use (VMU) and Neighborhood (N) Districts for community/public service content only, subject to conditional use review by the Development Review Board, and shall meet the following standards:

1. An EMD sign shall not have any distracting appearance of motion, including, but not limited to, flashing, blinking, shimmering, pulsating as well as animation, streaming, or video displays.
2. An EMD sign shall have characters of sufficient size to be easily discerned and must not constitute a safety hazard by being a distraction to drivers. All characters will be a minimum of 6" tall.
3. An EMD sign display shall consist only of alphabetic and numeric characters and related symbols on a plain background, and shall not include any graphic, pictorial, video or photographic images.
4. The message display area may have a maximum of four lines of characters, including all letters, numbers, spaces, or other symbols.
5. A maximum of two colors shall be used for an electronic message or at the discretion of the Development Review Board.
6. Messages must have a display time of no less than eight (8) seconds unless modified by the Development Review Board.
7. When the display of an electronic message changes, it must change as rapidly as is technologically practicable with no phasing, rolling, scrolling, flashing, or blending.
8. An EMD sign shall include ambient light sensors that automatically adjust the brightness level of its display to natural ambient conditions and shall not exceed 250 nits during nighttime or 5,000 nits at any time unless modified by the Development Review Board.
9. An EMD sign shall automatically shut off between the hours of 11 p.m. – 6 a.m.
10. An EMD sign shall contain a default mechanism that freezes the sign in one position, or shuts off the device entirely, if a malfunction occurs.

(b) Design & Mounting Standards for EMD Signs

1. All EMDs shall be incorporated only into a free-standing, ground-mounted monument sign. Single-post-mounted, roof-mounted, wall-mounted or box-cabinet-only EMDs are prohibited.
2. The EMD display must be designed as an integral element of the monument sign face and shall be fully enclosed with a permanent frame or cabinet constructed of materials

that match or complement the principal building or adjacent historic structures (e.g., painted or stained wood, natural stone, brick, or architectural metal).

3. The decorative frame or cabinet shall extend not less than six (6) inches beyond the EMD display area on all sides to ensure a finished, recessed appearance.
4. The illuminated EMD panel shall comprise no more than eighty percent (80 %) of the total sign face area permitted for the monument sign.
5. The free-standing, ground-mounted monument sign containing an EMD shall not exceed forty-eight (48) square feet in overall size and shall not exceed ten (10) feet in overall height.
6. Frames and bases shall use non-reflective, low gloss finishes in earth tone colors earth tones and traditional New England hues. Bright or metallic finishes are prohibited.
7. During Conditional Use Review the Development Review Board shall determine that the proposed monument sign, including the EMD panel, frame, base, and any landscaping, is compatible with the scale, materials, and architectural character of surrounding properties and streetscape. The Board may require material samples or renderings to make this determination.

(c) Portable Electronic Message Display (PEMD) Signs: PEMD signs any self-contained, trailer-mounted, or otherwise easily movable electronic sign capable of being relocated without dismantling, including message boards powered by solar panels, batteries, or generators. PEMD's may be permitted by the Zoning Administrator in all districts for municipal, school, and non-profit civic events, and for emergency management purposes subject to the following conditions:

1. PEMD signs shall be displayed for no longer than 14 consecutive days per deployment and not more than 4 times per site per calendar year with at least 30 days between removals and redeployments.
2. PEMD signs shall not be located within a public road right-of-way, within 20 feet of a neighboring property line, or within seventy-five (75) feet of an intersection (signs within public road rights-of-way are under the jurisdiction of the Select Board and are not regulated by this bylaw).
3. PEMD signs shall meet the same General Standards as EMD signs in section 3.26(D)(26)(a).
4. PEMD signs shall be removed immediately after the authorized period or upon order of the Zoning Administrator if the sign becomes a hazard, malfunctions, or violates any of the above standards.