

## FROM CHESTER, VERMONT, UNITED DEVELOPMENT BYLAWS (2017)

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### 3.26 SIGNS

All signs shall comply with Title 10, Chapter 21, Vermont Statutes Annotated and with the following:

**A. Purpose.** This ordinance acknowledges the importance of signs to inform the traveling public of local businesses, but also recognizes that the Town does not benefit from unlimited signs. The purpose of this ordinance is to help preserve and improve the existing attractive aspects of the Chester environment, to promote the welfare, convenience and safety of its inhabitants and visitors, to conserve the value of property, and to encourage a style and scale of outdoor advertising that is compatible with the more attractive features of Chester.

**B. Sign Permit.** All businesses, home occupations, etc. requiring a sign must obtain a Sign Permit from the Zoning Administrator before such sign can be erected.

#### **C. Sign allowances by Zoning District:**

##### **1. Village Center District (VC):**

The following signs are permitted when located on the premises on which the structure, use, or business is located:

- a. One (1) sign announcing a home occupation or home business, not exceeding six (6) square feet.
- b. For other uses allowed within the district, any two (2) of the following types of signs. Any one sign may increase in size by 25% provided that the total square footage of both signs shall not exceed 48 square feet.
  1. One (1) freestanding sign, no larger than 24 square feet in size; or
  2. One (1) wall sign no longer than 85% of the lineal frontage of the building occupied by the business and in no case shall exceed 24 square feet; or
  3. One projecting sign per business which may not project out from the building any further than 4 feet. When projecting over a public walkway, the bottom of the projecting sign must be a minimum of 9 feet from the surface of the ground.

##### **2. Residential Commercial District (RC):**

The following signs are permitted when located on the premises on which the structure, use, or business is located:

- a. One (1) sign announcing a home occupation or home business, not exceeding six (6) square feet.

- b. For other uses allowed within the district, any two (2) of the following types of signs. Any one sign may increase in size by 25% provided that the total square footage of both signs shall not exceed 48 square feet.
  - 1. One (1) freestanding sign, no larger than 24 square feet in size; or
  - 2. One (1) wall sign no longer than 85% of the lineal frontage of the building occupied by the business and in no case shall exceed 24 square feet; or
  - 3. One projecting sign per business which may not project out from the building any further than 4 feet. When projecting over a public walkway, the bottom of the projecting sign must be a minimum of 9 feet from the surface of the ground.

### **3. Commercial/Industrial (CI):**

The following signs are permitted when located on the premises on which the structure, use, or business is located:

- a. One (1) sign announcing a home occupation or home business, not exceeding six (6) square feet.
- b. For other uses allowed within the district, any two (2) of the following types of signs. Any one sign may increase in size by 25% provided that the total square footage of both signs shall not exceed 48 square feet.
  - 1. One (1) freestanding sign, no larger than 24 square feet in size; or
  - 2. One (1) wall sign no longer than 85% of the lineal frontage of the building occupied by the business and in no case shall exceed 24 square feet; or
  - 3. One projecting sign per business which may not project out from the building any further than 4 feet. When projecting over a public walkway, the bottom of the projecting sign must be a minimum of 9 feet from the surface of the ground.

### **4. Stone Village (SV):**

The following signs are permitted when located on the premises on which the structure, use, or business is located:

- a. One (1) sign announcing a home occupation or home business, not exceeding six (6) square feet.
- b. For other uses allowed within the district, any two (2) of the following types of signs. Any one sign may increase in size by 25% provided that the total square footage of both signs shall not exceed 48 square feet.
  - 1. One (1) freestanding sign, no larger than 24 square feet in size; or
  - 2. One (1) wall sign no longer than 85% of the lineal frontage of the building occupied by the business and in no case shall exceed 24 square feet; or

3. One projecting sign per business which may not project out from the building any
4. further than 4 feet. When projecting over a public walkway, the bottom of the projecting sign must be a minimum of 9 feet from the surface of the ground.

**5. Residential 20,000 Square Feet (R20):**

The following signs are permitted when located on the premises on which the structure, use, or business is located

- a. One (1) sign announcing a home occupation or home business, not exceeding six (6) square feet.
- b. For other uses allowed within the district, any two (2) of the following types of signs. Any one sign may increase in size by 25% provided that the total square footage of both signs shall not exceed 24 square feet.
  1. One (1) freestanding sign, no larger than 12 square feet in size; or
  2. One (1) wall sign no longer than 85% of the lineal frontage of the building occupied by the business and in no case shall exceed 12 square feet; or
  3. One projecting sign per business which may not project out from the building any further than 4 feet. When projecting over a public walkway, the bottom of the projecting sign must be a minimum of 9 feet from the surface of the ground.

**6. Residential 40,000 Square Feet (R40):**

The following signs are permitted when located on the premises on which the structure, use, or business is located:

- a. One (1) sign announcing a home occupation or home business, not exceeding six (6) square feet.
- b. For other uses allowed within the district, any two (2) of the following types of signs. Any one sign may increase in size by 25% provided that the total square footage of both signs shall not exceed 24 square feet.
  1. One (1) freestanding sign, no larger than 12 square feet in size; or
  2. One (1) wall sign no longer than 85% of the lineal frontage of the building occupied by the business and in no case shall exceed 12 square feet; or
  3. One projecting sign per business which may not project out from the building any further than 4 feet. When projecting over a public walkway, the bottom of the projecting sign must be a minimum of 9 feet from the surface of the ground.

**7. Adaptive 3 (A3):**

The following signs are permitted when located on the premises on which the structure, use, or business is located:

- a. One (1) sign announcing a home occupation or home business, not exceeding six (6) square feet.
- b. For other uses allowed within the district, any two (2) of the following types of signs. Any one sign may increase in size by 25% provided that the total square footage of both signs shall not exceed 48 square feet.
  1. One (1) freestanding sign, no larger than 24 square feet in size; or
  2. One (1) wall sign no longer than 85% of the lineal frontage of the building occupied by the business and in no case shall exceed 24 square feet; or
  3. One projecting sign per business which may not project out from the building any further than 4 feet. When projecting over a public walkway, the bottom of the projecting sign must be a minimum of 9 feet from the surface of the ground.

#### **8. Residential 120,000 Square Feet (R120):**

The following signs are permitted when located on the premises on which the structure, use, or business is located:

- a. One (1) sign announcing a home occupation or home business, not exceeding six (6) square feet.
- b. For other uses allowed within the district, any two (2) of the following types of signs. Any one sign may increase in size by 25% provided that the total square footage of both signs shall not exceed 48 square feet.
  1. One (1) freestanding sign, no larger than 24 square feet in size; or
  2. One (1) wall sign no longer than 85% of the lineal frontage of the building occupied by the business and in no case shall exceed 24 square feet; or
  3. One projecting sign per business which may not project out from the building any further than 4 feet. When projecting over a public walkway, the bottom of the projecting sign must be a minimum of 9 feet from the surface of the ground.

#### **9. Conservation/Residential (CR):**

The following signs are permitted when located on the premises on which the structure, use, or business is located:

- a. One (1) sign announcing a home occupation or home business, not exceeding six (6) square feet.

- b. For other uses allowed within the district, any two (2) of the following types of signs Any one sign may increase in size by 25% provided that the total square footage of both signs shall not exceed 24 square feet
  - 1. One (1) freestanding sign, no larger than 24 square feet in size; or
  - 2. One (1) wall sign no longer than 85% of the lineal frontage of the building occupied by the business and in no case shall exceed 24 square feet; or
  - 3. One projecting sign per business which may not project out from the building any further than 4 feet. When projecting over a public walkway, the bottom of the projecting sign must be a minimum of 9 feet from the surface of the ground.

**10. Forest:**

The following signs are permitted when located on the premises on which the structure, use, or business is located:

- a. One (1) sign announcing a home occupation or home business, not exceeding six (6) square feet.
- b. For other uses allowed within the district, any two (2) of the following types of signs. Any one sign may increase in size by 25% provided that the total square footage of both signs shall not exceed 24 square feet.
  - 1. One (1) freestanding sign, no larger than 24 square feet in size; or
  - 2. One (1) wall sign no longer than 85% of the lineal frontage of the building occupied by the business and in no case shall exceed 24 square feet; or
  - 3. One projecting sign per business which may not project out from the building any further than 4 feet. When projecting over a public walkway, the bottom of the projecting sign must be a minimum of 9 feet from the surface of the ground.

Sign type=> ----- District V	Home Occ/ Business	Free standing	Wall Sign	Projecting	Open	Sandwich Board	Window
Village Center	6 square feet	24 square feet	24 square feet	X	1 square foot	2 feet x 4 feet	25 % of area
Residential Commercial	6 square feet	24 square feet	24 square feet	X	1 square foot	2 feet x 4 feet	25 % of area
Commercial Industrial	6 square feet	24 square feet	24 square feet	X	1 square foot	2 feet x 4 feet	25 % of area
Stone Village	6 square feet	24 square feet	24 square feet	X	1 square foot	2 feet x 4 feet	25 % of area
Residential 20	6 square feet	24 square feet	12 square feet	X	1 square foot	2 feet x 4 feet	25 % of area
Residential 40	6 square feet	24 square feet	12 square feet	X	1 square foot	2 feet x 4 feet	25 % of area
Adaptive 3	6 square feet	24 square feet	24 square feet	X	1 square foot	2 feet x 4 feet	25 % of area
Residential 120	6 square feet	24 square feet	24 square feet	X	1 square foot	2 feet x 4 feet	25 % of area
Conservation Residential	6 square feet	12 square feet	12 square feet	X	1 square foot	2 feet x 4 feet	25 % of area
Forestry	6 square feet	24 square feet	24 square feet	X	1 square foot	2 feet x 4 feet	25 % of area

**Note:**

All businesses are allowed 1 of each of the following signs:

Home Occupation, Open Sign and Sandwich Board Sign.

All businesses are allowed to choose 2 of the following:

Freestanding, Wall Sign or Projecting Sign.

See the appropriate zoning district for specific details.

#### D. GENERAL SIGN STANDARDS:

1. All new signs, and/or movement, enlargement, alterations, or reconstruction of existing signs shall be in compliance with the Bylaws as stated herein.
2. All signs shall be constructed of durable materials and shall be maintained in a safe condition and in good repair at all times.
3. Every sign shall be designed and located in such a manner as to:
  - a. Not impair public safety;
  - b. Not restrict clear vision of the street or between a sidewalk and street;
  - c. Not be confused with or obscure any traffic sign or signal;
  - d. Not obstruct any door, window or fire escape;
  - e. Not be attached to a tree or a utility pole;
  - f. Not be within the town highway right-of-way.
4. Signs shall not be located within ten (10) feet of street line, nor within twenty (20) feet of a neighboring property line, nor within seventy-five (75) feet of any intersection unless it is a wall sign.
5. When a sign is made up of individual lettering, the square footage of the sign is to be calculated by the area of the surface required to enclose the lettering.
6. No less than 75% of the surface of each sign shall be of muted, harmonious color tones.
7. **Cross Road Banners:** Those banners crossing a Chester Highway must be approved by the Select Board. All banners must be fastened to secured poles and a certificate of liability insurance provided to the Select Board.
8. **Event Banner:** Event banners no larger than 24 square feet in size are permissible for a maximum of 30 days per event. All event banners must be located on the exhibitor's property. No event banner may be illuminated in any manner
9. **Event Flags:** The Zoning Administrator may permit event flags no larger than 12 square feet in size, nor larger than 5 feet in any one dimension. No flag, in any position, shall hang below 8 feet from the ground level. Event flags are allowed

for a maximum of 30 days from the date of installation. No event flag may be illuminated in any manner.

- 10. Open/Closed Flags:** Any business is allowed one open flag not to exceed 3 feet by 5 feet in size. Any flag cannot obstruct pedestrian travel. All open flags can only be displayed during business hours.
- 11. Open/Closed Signs:** Any business is allowed one open sign which shall not exceed 1 square foot in size.
- 12. Sandwich Board Sign:** Any business is allowed one sandwich board sign not to exceed 2 feet by 4 feet in size. All sandwich board signs must be taken in at the close of business each day. No sandwich board sign may include illumination of any kind.
- 13. Soffit Sign:** Where a covered walkway exists on a building with more than four tenants in separate and unaffiliated ownership, each tenant may have one two-square foot sign which is hung from the soffit. This sign shall be unlighted, hung in front of the entrance to the business which is advertises, and hung in a direction perpendicular to the walkway so that it is legible to pedestrians on the walkway. Soffit signs are permitted in addition to any other sign allowed in this Ordinance.
- 14. Temporary Sign:** One temporary sign, made of rigid material and up to eight square feet in size may be permitted by the Zoning Administrator, and may be displayed for no more than 30 days, under the following circumstances:
  - a. A permit has been issued for a new land use or business establishment;
  - b. A complete sign application has been approved for that use or business
- 15. Window Sign:** Window signs may be displayed, and may cover up to twenty-five percent of the total window area per business establishment on the side of the building where such signs are located. Window stenciling or lettering, placed on the inside of a window is allowed as a part of an establishment's total window coverage. This shall be measured in the same way as other signs: by drawing an imaginary polygon around the outside edge of all letters or emblems as if they were a single sign, and then measuring the size of that polygon.
- 16. Sign Lighting.**
  - a. Internally lit signs are prohibited. All signs not complying with section at the date of the adoption of this ordinance, will be deemed a non-conforming structure and are subject to Section 3.19 of these Bylaws.



b. Externally lit signs shall be shielded so as to not produce glare, undue distraction, or hazard either to the surrounding area or to pedestrian and vehicular traffic. The illumination of said signage shall be properly focused upon the sign. All sign lighting shall be either full cut off lighting or be directed in towards the property. See Figures 1 for an example.

c. Hours of Lighting. All sign lighting shall be turned off one hour after the business is closed or 11:00 p.m., whichever is later.

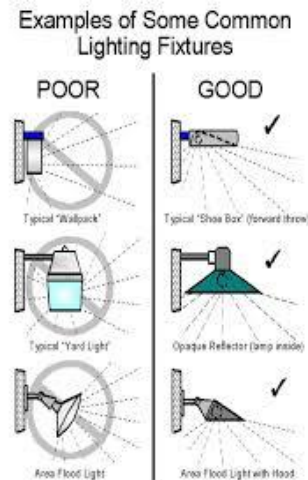


Figure 1

**17. New Sign Permit Required.** A permit is required for a sign when a business changes use and/or replaces a sign. Continuation of a non-conforming sign shall require Development Review Board consideration.

**18. Sign Plaza.** When a property has multiple businesses, the property owner is allowed one sign plaza not to exceed forty-eight (48) square feet nor higher than twelve (12) feet in height from the grade of the public road to the top of the sign, with individual signs on the plaza for each business. The maximum allowable size for any one business is 24 square feet. The total square footage of the allowed additional signage on the building shall not exceed the number of businesses x 6 square feet. The maximum allowable size for any one business is 24 square feet.

**19. Gasoline/Service Stations.** A gasoline/service station shall be permitted the following signs:

1. Gasoline price signs shall be confined to the pump island. The signs shall be limited to one square foot in area and one per pump. One (1) free-standing

sign shall be permitted in accordance with these sign specifications but shall not include pricing.

**OR**

2. Gasoline prices may be incorporated into the single free-standing sign allowed on the lot, provided that this free-standing sign is located in the pump island, and no other pricing signs are displayed.

All signs not complying with section at the date of the adoption of this ordinance, will be deemed a non-forming structure and are subject to section 3.19 of these Bylaws.

**20. Special Signs.** The following special signs may be permitted upon approval by the Development Review Board if the Board finds that such is in the public interest, not detrimental to surrounding properties, and will not create a safety hazard.

**21. Signs necessary or beneficial to the public welfare.**

1. A sign identifying the commonly accepted name of a commercial building which sign shall not exceed sixteen (16) square feet in overall area, two (2) feet in overall height, or ten (10) feet in overall length.
2. State of Vermont Official Business Directory Signs on State and Town Highways.
3. Off-Premise directional signs located out of the highway right-of-way, the area of which shall not exceed four (4) square feet, and which provide directions to places of business offering for sale agricultural products harvested or produced on the premises where the sale is taking place.
4. Roof signs limited to Commercial Districts. Projecting signs mounted on the roof shall in no case exceed forty (40) square feet in overall area nor extend beyond the peak of the roof.

**23. Vending Machines.** Vending machines which are traditionally located outside of commercial buildings, such as those which house or dispense soda, ice, windshield wipers, propane gas cylinders and the like, may incorporate unilluminated sign(s) advertising the product being sold. No vending machine may be internally illuminated.

**24. Signs Which Do Not Require a Permit.** The following signs do not require a permit and are permitted in all Districts:

- a. Signs wholly within the confines of a building up to four (4) square feet in size.
- b. Temporary real estate signs, each of which does not exceed six (6) square feet in overall area. Said sign shall only be permitted on property which is either being sold or leased, and shall be removed within thirty (30) days from the date on which its intended purpose has been fulfilled.
- c. A temporary construction sign located on the property which is being developed. Said sign shall not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in area and shall be removed immediately when its stated purpose has been fulfilled.
- d. Entrance and exit signs located near a driveway not exceeding two (2) square feet each
- e. Residential signs.
- f. Signs to be maintained for not more than two (2) weeks announcing an auction, or a non-commercial campaign, drive or event of a civic, philanthropic or religious organization or for a yard sale conducted on the premises of a homeowner. Each sign shall not exceed two (2) square feet.
- g. Banners to be temporarily placed across the street in the Town Highway right-of-way, do not need a Sign Permit, however, shall have to get permission from the Select Board.
- h. Signs to be erected by the Town of Chester.

**24. Prohibited Signs.** The following signs shall be prohibited in every District:

- a. Signs or outdoor displays which impair public safety or are located within the public right of way.
- b. Internally lit signs.
- c. Any permanent sign or outdoor display located within a highway right-of-way, except for official traffic control signs and civic recognition signs.
- d. Any sign that contains, includes or is illuminated by any flashing, intermittent or moving lights, or contains or consists of pennants, ribbons, balloons, streamers or spinners, or other moving devices, or has any animated or moving parts, except traffic control signs.
- e. Any sign that advertises activities which are illegal under State or Federal law.
- f. Any sign that contains any fluorescent paint or other reflective material.

**25. Compliance.** All signs not complying with the Sign Regulation at the date of its adoption will be deemed a non-conforming structure and are subject to Section 3.19 of these Bylaws.