

Article 15. SIGN REGULATIONS**Sec. 22-15-1. Statement of intent.**

The following sign regulations are established to assure compatibility of signs with surrounding land usage, to enhance the economy of the county, to protect public investment in streets and highways, to promote the safety and recreational value of public travel, to preserve natural beauty, and to identify, direct and provide necessary information to motorist and pedestrians. No sign shall be permitted erected or used in the county, except as permitted in this article. (Ord. 6-16-10)

Sec. 22-15-2. General provisions.

(1) Restricted Signs – The following types of signs are prohibited in all zoning districts:

- a. Flashing signs;
- b. Inflatable signs;
- c. Moving signs;
- d. Off-premise signs;
- e. Pennant signs;
- f. Portable signs;
- g. Roof signs;
- h. Any sign that obstructs any window, door, fire escape, stairway, ladder, or opening intended to provide light, air, ingress or egress for any building, as required by law;
- i. Any sign which imitates or resembles any official traffic sign, signal or device, or uses the words “Stop” or “Danger” in close proximity to any public right-of-way, or interferes with any other public traffic sign;
- j. Signs which produce noise or any visible smoke, vapor, particles, or odor;
- k. Signs which advertise any activities which are illegal under state or federal law or regulations in effect at the location of such sign or at the location of such activities; and

- l. Signs that violate state or federal laws, whether or not identified in this ordinance as being permitted.
- (2) Exempt Signs – The following types of signs, as defined in and subject to the regulations in Sec. 22-22-1, are exempt from the sign permit requirements in all zoning districts:
- a. Auction signs;
 - b. Banner signs;
 - c. Construction signs;
 - d. Directional signs;
 - e. Estate signs;
 - f. Public signs;
 - g. Real estate signs;
 - h. Temporary signs;
 - i. Temporary directional signs;
 - j. Warning signs; and
 - k. Window signs.
- (3) Illuminated Signs
- a. Signs may be illuminated, either internally or externally, as permitted by this ordinance, provided that the illumination is fully shielded and directed at the sign and not in a manner as to cause a traffic hazard.
 - b. Where a permit is required, the permit shall not be issued until the location and illumination of the sign has been approved by the zoning administrator, or designee.
 - c. No light from any illuminated sign shall cause direct glare onto any adjoining piece of property, right-of-way, or building other than the building to which the sign applies to.

- d. The copy of electronic message signs may not flash, scroll, move, or change at timed intervals of less than 20 seconds.
- e. All electronic message signs must be equipped with an automatic dimmer that controls the intensity of the light source. The intensity of light allowed for all illuminated signs shall be 85 percent by day and 50 percent at night.
- f. All electronic message signs must be turned off at the close of business, unless displaying time or temperature.

(4) Setbacks

- a. Signs shall be exempt from setback requirements in all zones, provided that no sign shall be located as to interfere with vehicular sight distances at intersections or to create a safety hazard.
- b. Signs shall not be located within any public right-of-way, unless approved by the Virginia Department of Transportation.

(5) Sign Area

- a. The sign area shall be measured as the area of the sign face which includes the advertising surface and any framing, trim, or molding. Two sided sign faces shall be counted as a single sign face.
- b. Area not included – the sign area shall not include any of the support structure or architectural features that are not an integral part of the sign which may consist of landscaping, building structural form complementing the site in general.

(6) Sign Height

- a. The sign height shall be measured as the vertical distance from the normal grade directly below the sign to the highest point of the sign or sign structure, whichever is higher and shall include the base and any support structure.
- b. Signs shall not exceed six (6) feet in height, except as otherwise permitted by this article.

(Ord. 6-16-10)

Sec. 22-15-2.1. Political signs on privately owned property.

- (1) No political sign may be larger than the largest other sign allowed in the zoning district.
- (2) No political sign may be illuminated if it is larger than a business sign allowed in the zoning district.
- (3) Every political sign that is directed toward a particular election issue or candidate may be erected not more than 60 days before such election and shall be removed and lawfully disposed of not more than 10 days after such election. (Ord. 6-16-10)

Sec. 22-15-3. Signs permitted.

- (1) Agricultural (A-1) – The following signs shall be permitted in the A-1, Agricultural, General zoning district:

Type of Sign	Number Allowed	Max. Sign Area	Max. Sign Height
Awning Sign	1 per establishment	6 sq. ft.	N/A
Business Sign	1 per parcel	24 sq. ft. (freestanding or monument)	6 feet
Home Occupation Sign	1 per parcel	12 sq. ft.	4 feet
Projecting Sign	1 per establishment	9 sq. ft.	Roof line of the building
Subdivision Sign	1 per entrance	40 sq. ft.	6 feet
Temporary Subdivision Advertising Sign	1 per public road that property has frontage on	32 sq. ft.	8 feet
Wall Sign	1 per road frontage	3 sq. ft. per 1 lineal foot of building/ tenant frontage*	Roof line of the building

*No more than 50% of the total sign area may be displayed on the front of the building. The remaining 50% may be distributed on the sides and rear of the building, with a maximum of 25% distribution per side and a maximum of 50% distribution on the rear of the building.

- (2) Residential (R-1, R-2, R-4, MHP) – The following signs shall be permitted in the R-1, Residential, Limited; R-2, Residential, General; R-4, Residential, Limited; and MHP, Mobile Home Park zoning districts:

Type of Sign	Number Allowed	Max. Sign Area	Max. Sign Height
Business Sign	1 per parcel	20 sq. ft. (freestanding or monument)	6 feet
Home Occupation Sign	1 per parcel	9 sq. ft.	4 feet
Subdivision Sign	1 per entrance	40 sq. ft.	6 feet
Temporary Subdivision Advertising Sign	1 per public road that property has frontage on	32 sq. ft.	8 feet

- (3) Residential (R-3), Business (B-1, B-C), Planned Unit Development (PUD), and Industrial (I-1, I-2) – The following signs shall be permitted in the R-3, Residential, Planned Community; B-1, Business, General; B-C, Business, Convenience; PUD, Planned Unit Development; I-1, Industrial, Limited; and I-2, Industrial, General zoning districts:

Type of Sign	Number Allowed	Max. Sign Area	Max. Sign Height
Awning Sign	1 per establishment	6 sq. ft.	N/A
Business Sign (standalone businesses or not part of business/ industrial park)	1 per parcel	24 sq. ft. (freestanding) 28 sq. ft. (monument)	6 feet (freestanding) 8 feet (monument)
Business Sign (shopping centers or business/ industrial parks)	1 per shopping center or business park entrance	1.5 square feet of sign area for each lineal foot of building/tenant frontage – up to a maximum of 150 sq. ft. aggregate	10 feet (freestanding) 15 feet (monument)
Canopy Sign	1 per establishment	12 sq. ft.	N/A
Directory Sign	1 per establishment or development	16 sq. ft.	6 feet
Electronic Message Sign	1 per parcel	28 sq. ft.	8 feet

Projecting Sign	1 per establishment	12 sq. ft.	Roof line of the building
Subdivision Sign	1 per entrance	40 sq. ft.	8 feet
Temporary Subdivision Advertising Sign	1 per public road that property has frontage on	32 sq. ft.	8 feet
Wall Sign	1 per road frontage	3 sq. ft. per 1 lineal foot of building/ tenant frontage*	Roof line of the building

*No more than 50% of the total sign area may be displayed on the front of the building. The remaining 50% may be distributed on the sides and rear of the building, with a maximum of 25% distribution per side and a maximum of 50% distribution on the rear of the building.

(Ord. 6-16-10)

Sec. 22-15-4. Administration.

- (1) Permit Requirements – Except as otherwise provided herein, no sign shall be erected, altered, refaced or relocated unless a sign permit has been approved by the Zoning Administrator. Where there is a discrepancy between Fluvanna County and the Virginia Department of Transportation sign regulations, the more stringent shall apply. Where the Fluvanna County sign regulations do not recognize a particular type of sign, the Virginia Department of Transportation regulations shall apply.
- (2) Maintenance and Removal
 - a. All signs shall be constructed in compliance with the International Building Code, as adopted by the Virginia State Code.
 - b. All signs and components thereof shall be maintained in good repair and in a safe, neat, and clean condition.
 - c. The Zoning Administrator may cause to have removed or repaired immediately any sign which, in the Zoning Administrator’s opinion, has become insecure, in danger of falling, or otherwise unsafe, and, as such, presents an immediate threat to the safety of the public. If such action is necessary to render a sign

safe, the cost of such emergency removal or repair shall be at the expense of the owner or lessee thereof.

- d. Any sign that is obsolete, because of discontinuance of the subject activity or any other reason that would cause the sign to be obsolete, shall be removed within thirty (30) days.
- e. Any sign located on property, which becomes vacant and is unoccupied for a period of two (2) years or more shall be deemed abandoned. An abandoned sign shall be removed by the owner or lessee of the property. If the owner or lessee fails to remove the sign, the Zoning Administrator shall give the owner fifteen (15) days written notice to remove it. Upon failure to comply with this notice, the Zoning Administrator may initiate such action as may be necessary to gain compliance with this provision. (Ord. 6-16-10)

Sec. 22-15-5. Non-conforming signs.

- (1) No nonconforming sign shall be enlarged nor be worded so as to advertise or identify any use other than that in effect at the time it became a nonconforming sign.
- (2) Signs lawfully existing on the effective date of this ordinance or prior ordinances, which do not conform to the provisions of this ordinance, and signs which are accessory to a nonconforming use shall be deemed to be nonconforming signs and may remain except as qualified below. Such signs shall not be enlarged, extended or structurally reconstructed or altered in any manner, except a sign face may be changed so long as the new face is equal to or reduced in height and/or sign area. The burden of establishing the nonconforming status of signs and of the physical characteristics/location of such signs shall be that of the owner of the property. Upon notice from the Zoning Administrator, a property owner shall submit verification that sign(s) lawfully existed at time of erection. Failure to provide such verification shall be cause for order to remove sign(s) or bring sign(s) into conformance with the current ordinance.
- (3) Nothing in this section shall be deemed to prevent keeping in good repair a nonconforming sign; provided, however, that no nonconforming sign which has been declared by the Zoning Administrator to be unsafe because of its physical condition,

as provided for in this ordinance, shall be repaired, rebuilt or restored unless such repair or restoration will result in a sign which conforms to all applicable regulations.

- (4) No nonconforming sign shall be moved for any distance on the same lot or to any other lot unless such change in location will make the sign conform to the provisions of this article.
- (5) If a nonconforming sign is removed, the subsequent erection of a sign shall be in accordance with the provisions of this article.
- (6) A nonconforming sign that is destroyed or damaged by any casualty to an extent not exceeding fifty (50) percent of its replacement value may be restored within two (2) years after such destruction or damage but shall not be enlarged in any manner. If such sign is so destroyed or damaged to an extent exceeding fifty (50) percent, it shall not be reconstructed except for a sign, which would be in accordance with the provisions of this article.
- (7) A nonconforming sign that is changed to, or replaced by, a conforming sign shall no longer be deemed nonconforming, and thereafter such sign shall be in accordance with the provisions of this article.
- (8) A nonconforming sign shall be removed if the structure to which it is accessory is demolished or destroyed to an extent exceeding fifty (50) percent of its appraised value.
- (9) The ownership of the sign or the property on which the sign is located shall not, in and of itself, affect the status of a non-conforming sign.

(Ord. 6-16-10)