

# Memo

To: Plan Commission

Fr: Trevor Fuller, Planning and Zoning Administrator

Re: DISCUSSION OF SIGN CODE

Date: 20 October 2015

The village adopted the current sign code in 2012 as a means to preserve the residential character of the village. Over the past year and a half, the village has received numerous requests by property and business owners to amend the sign code to allow for more square footage for the monument/ground signs.

Our current sign code allows for 32 square feet per side per property of sign space. These standards do not provide exception to tenants in multi-tenant buildings. Many of the requests to amend the sign code have come from multi-tenant spaces. Attached is an excerpt of the sign code for Germantown, WI, which provides requirements for multi-tenant signs.

The plan commission is asked to review the ground sign requirements from Germantown and discuss if these are something the staff should investigate further.

2. Ground signs shall be landscaped with small shrubs, ornamental grasses, and perennials a minimum of 2 to 4 feet in height at the time of planting, depending on the height of the sign. Shrubs shall include evergreen varieties to provide green plantings year round.
3. The landscaping shall be placed and maintained as to not obstruct the view of an address placed on a monument sign.

**TABLE 1. GROUND SIGN REQUIREMENTS**

Building Type/Area and No. of Tenants	Maximum Sign Area (square feet)	Maximum Height (feet above mean centerline of adjacent roadway)	Minimum Setback (feet from property line)
Single and Multi-Tenant (< 3 tenants and < 25,000 SF gross building area)	80 SF per side 160 SF total	10 feet	5 feet
Multi-Tenant (4 to 9 tenants and 25,000 to 50,000 SF gross building area)	120 SF per side 240 SF total	15 feet	5 feet or ½ total sign height whichever is greater
Multi-Tenant (> 10 tenants and > 50,000 SF gross building area)	160 SF per side 320 SF total (or as approved by Plan Commission)	20 feet (or as approved by Plan Commission)	5 feet or ½ total sign height whichever is greater (or as approved by Plan Commission)

- (d) Roof signs shall not exceed 10 feet in height above the roof, shall meet the height requirements for the zoning district in which they are located, and shall not exceed 300 square feet on all sides for any one premises.
- (e) Temporary signs (as defined in section 17.08) shall be permitted subject to the following requirements: (Am. Ord. #3-01; Am. Ord. #11-01; Am. Ord. #07-09; Am. Ord. #15-09; Am. Ord. #21-09)
  1. Signs shall not exceed a total of 32 square feet in area (all sides).
  - 2.

signage;

5. The sign area used for the off-premises sign shall not exceed 50 percent of the total sign area.

(h) **ELECTRONIC MESSAGE BOARDS.** (Cr. Ord. #28-14) Electronic message boards may be permitted by the Plan Commission but only as an integral and subordinate portion of a freestanding monument or ground sign (and not a wall, projecting, window or any other sign) provided said monument sign complies with the provisions set forth in section 17.46(7)(c) above. Electronic message boards may be allowed with approval by the Plan Commission and shall meet all of the following requirements:

1. Electronic message boards may be allowed for permitted and conditional uses located within the B-1, B-2, B-3, B-4, B-5, I, M-1 and M-2 zoning districts, except on those lots within the boundaries of the Germantown Business Park and Willow Creek Business Park of Germantown;
2. Electronic message boards shall not be located within 150 feet of a residential zoning district boundary, or, be located, designed or operated in such a manner as to create in the opinion of the Plan Commission at the time of sign approval a negative visual impact on property used for existing residential uses;
3. Electronic message boards may be installed as part of an existing monument or ground sign which is in compliance with all applicable requirements of this chapter and other applicable requirements of law. No electronic message board may be installed on or otherwise be made part of a nonconforming sign;
4. Electronic message boards shall only display static messages. Messages shall not contain animation, effects simulating animation, or video. Messages shall not contain text or images that dissolve, fade, scroll, travel, flash, spin, revolve, shake or include any other type of movement or motion during the message interval. The message interval, i.e. the minimum amount of time a message is required to be displayed, shall not be less than 7 seconds. The transition interval, i.e. the maximum amount of time allowed to transition from one message to the next message, may include fading, dissolving or traveling but shall not exceed 3 seconds;
5. The sign area or display face of the message board shall be included in the calculation of sign area for the monument or ground sign to which it is attached, and, shall not exceed 40 percent of the total sign area allowed for the monument or ground sign to which it is attached;
6. Electronic message boards shall be equipped with a sensor or other device that is programmed to automatically determine the ambient light level and adjust or dim the message board light level to not exceed a maximum brightness level of 0.3 foot-candles above ambient light conditions during both daylight hours (i.e. sunrise to sunset) and night time hours (i.e. sunset to sunrise);
7. The electronic message board shall be programmed or set in such a manner that the display face will turn dark and emit no light in case of a malfunction;
8. The owner of the property upon which a ground sign containing off-premises signage is located is responsible for preparing and keeping up-to-date information in an electronic message board use and maintenance agreement that identifies the name and contact