



Community Development Department
271 Falmouth Road
Falmouth, ME 04105
☎ 207.699.5303
💻 www.falmouthme.org

Memorandum

Date: April 28, 2017
To: Town Council
From: Amanda L. Stearns, Community Development Director
Cc: Amy Tchao, Nathan Poore, Justin Brown, Ethan Croce
Re: Update -Permanent Signs – Zoning and Site Plan Review Ordinance and Design Guidelines Amendments

As a follow up to the discussion at the April 12 workshop and introduction, staff have conducted two review sessions of the proposed language. As stated at the introduction, the amendment package was considered to be at 90% completion and both staff and the CDC were hopeful that a more thorough vetting by planning and legal staff would require a level of modification that could be considered non-substantive.

The review uncovered mostly minor suggestions for changes, but the number of modifications resulted in staff recommending out to the CDC to reintroduce the amendment package to avoid any concern of the need for an additional hearing.

VMU-MUC – These districts currently have two sets of regulations, one for the base district and one for the Corridor Overlay (CO). Because the CO regulations are more stringent, they apply. These amendments remove the regulations for the base districts as they are not applied. The CDC specifically did not alter current regulations for signs in these districts as they will be evaluated during the Route 100 zoning work in 2017. This will assure that any changes in signs will be done in conjunction with other zoning changes.

Zoning and Site Plan Review/Subdivision Ordinances - The package included includes the following changes:

1. Moved exemption for street signs from the Subdivision Ordinance to the Zoning and Site Plan Review Ordinance under Section 19-44.
2. Clarified sign definition to refer only to messages that are visible to the public and outside of a building.
3. Clarified definition of directional sign and retained the content restrictions. This is permissible under Reed as they are considered signs that have a compelling public purpose. Also made requirements identical in all districts for directional signs.

4. Struck maintenance section under 19-44 as compliance with codes and public safety is addressed generally elsewhere in the Code of Ordinances.
5. Clarified that signs that are regulated by various Design Guidelines must comply with the Design Guidelines. This is achieved by reference to Design Guidelines as they are not zoning.
6. Corrected the representation of the proposed dimensions of free-standing signs in Section 19-47. This is only for illustrative purposes to compare the current content based regulation with the proposed content neutral regulation.
7. Section 19-50 - Clarify that signs in the West Falmouth Crossing and Tidewater Master Plan Districts are first regulated by the relative design guidelines which are administered by the permitting authority.
8. Section 19-50 - Add separate column for ESRD as it requires Master Plan for signage.
9. Section 19-50- Correct Minimum distance between free standing signs to correspond with the current requirement.
10. Section 19-51 – Remove the Maximum number per lot as wall signs are regulated by the size of any given wall and the maximum size. It was added to the table by mistake.
11. Section 19-50 – Add extra column for ESRD as it is regulated by a Master Sign Plan
12. Section 19-52 – Clarify the districts that prohibit internally illuminated signs. No policy changes made to this section.

Design Guidelines – The design guidelines, while referenced in the Zoning and Site Plan Review Ordinance, are not zoning. In order to maintain a clear separation between the two regulation types, it is recommended that the votes to adopt changes be taken separately.

1. Relabeled sections on Sign Content to Clarity and emphasized the legibility of signs rather than content.
2. Relabeled Multi-Tenant Signage to Property Identification Signs to clarify that content is not being regulated.
3. In Route One Design Guidelines (applies to BP only) remove language on Internally Illuminated Signs as they are not permitted by ordinance.
4. In Exit 10 Design Guidelines removed the reference to Directories as it implies content.
5. In Exit 10 Design Guidelines add the maximum of 40% of the sign display area for letters or symbols (area of light) to be consistent with other districts that permit internally illuminated signs.