

ARTICLE 19

TOWN OF EPPING - SIGN ORDINANCE ***(Adopted March 8, 1994, Amended March, 2007)***

- 19.1. **PURPOSES** - The intent of this ordinance, is to regulate the erection of signs, for the purposes of providing information and advertising in an orderly, effective, and safe manner. Restrictions on type, location, and size of signs protect the public from hazardous and distracting displays and to create an attractive environment for the citizens and visitors alike which is conducive to business, industry, and tourism.

Signs associated with non-residential uses or properties are to be regulated by the Planning Board as part of their authority under RSA 674:44 to insure the compatibility of the entire site in terms of health, safety, and aesthetics for the entire community and surrounding land uses.

19.2. **DEFINITIONS:**

- A. Sign: A sign is a name, identification description, display or illustration or any other visual display which is affixed to, painted, or represented directly or indirectly upon a building, structure or piece of land and which directs attention to an object, product, place, activity, person, institution, organization or business. However, a sign shall not include any display of official court or public office notices nor any official traffic control device, nor shall it include the flag, emblem or insignia of a nation, state, county, municipality, school or religious group.
- B. Area: The area of one (1) side of a NOT MORE THAN TWO (2) SIDED SIGN.
- C. Free-Standing: Unattached to any building. Sandwich boards and similar installations shall be considered free standing signs for purpose of regulation in this ordinance.
- D. Permanent Sign: Any sign, unless specifically prohibited, meeting the provisions of this ordinance and intended to be displayed for a period longer than sixty (60) days.
- E. Temporary Sign: Any sign intended to be displayed for no more than sixty (60) days and without permanent frost resistant anchoring to the ground.
- F. Valid, Pre-existing Non-Conforming Sign: A sign lawfully existing at the time of adoption of this ordinance or any subsequent amendment which does not conform to one (1) or more provisions of this ordinance.

19.3 **APPLICABILITY AND VALID PRE-EXISTING NON-CONFORMING SIGNS:**

- A. Any non-conforming sign existing at the time of adoption or amendment of this ordinance will be allowed to continue to exist with the exception of portable signs. Façade and text replacement of such signs shall be permitted by the Building Inspector through the issuance of a building permit provided all applicable structural and electrical codes are in compliance for the sign.
- B. New signs, signs where area is increased, or signs where changes in lighting shall require approval in accordance with Section 19.4.

- C. Any sign conforming to this ordinance existing at the time of adoption or amendment of the ordinance shall be allowed to exist without a permit (verification of same will be required).

19.4. **GENERAL REGULATIONS & APPLICABILITY:**

- A. Signs – Non-residential Uses: Signs that are associated with non-residential uses and/or installed on land that is used for non-residential purposes shall be approved as part of the Site Plan Review Regulations.
 - 1. The Planning Board shall be authorized to adopt regulations for the approval, denial, or conditional approval of sign permits regulating the number, location, construction, placement, materials, lighting, and all other aspects of signage as part of the Site Plan Review Regulations.
- B. Sign Permits: Signs that are associated with residential uses or home occupations and on land that is used residentially shall not be erected or placed without a permit issued by the Building Inspector in accordance with the provisions of this ordinance. An externally lit sign may be permitted provided it is approved by the Planning Board.
- C. Prohibited Signs: The following signs are prohibited:
 - 1. Signs, any part of which moves or flashes or on which the lights appear to travel or are animated.
 - 2. Signs, which by reason of locations, size, color, or design interfere with public traffic or be confused with, or obstruct the view or effectiveness of any official traffic signal or traffic marking.
- D. Internally illuminated signs may be permitted only by the Planning Board in accordance with its Site Plan Review Regulations in the Highway-Commercial Zone, Industrial-Commercial Zone, and the Central Business Zone.
- E. Temporary Mobile and/or Portable Signs: New businesses or businesses replacing a sign may use a temporary mobile sign (or trailer mounted sign) while awaiting the arrival of a permanent sign that has been approved under this ordinance. Such signs shall be allowed only until the permanent sign(s) is installed, or for sixty (60) days, whichever is shorter. A permit shall be secured from the Building Inspector for the placement of such signs.
- F. Maintenance and Obsolescence: All signs and sign structures shall be properly maintained and kept in neat and proper state of maintenance and appearance. All signs of any type and located within any zone which are found by the Building Inspector to be in a state of disrepair or are considered dangerous, shall be repaired or removed on order of the Building Inspector and upon failure to comply with this order within the time specified within the order, the Building Inspector is hereby authorized to cause removal of this sign and any expense resultant thereto shall be borne by the owner/lessee.

19.5. **SIGNS IN THE HISTORICAL DISTRICT:** In addition to the preceding provisions, properties within the boundaries of the Historic District must comply with the Historic District Ordinance, and receive review from the Historic District Commission in accordance with their requirements.

19.6. **SEVERABILITY:** The invalidity of any provision of the article shall not affect the validity of any other provision, of the article, nor of the zoning ordinance as a whole.