

Town of Cohasset, Massachusetts

6.1 ADMINISTRATION

1. No sign (except a posting or an identification sign, not exceeding two square feet in area, or a political sign attached to a residence or in the front yard) shall be erected altered or relocated without a building permit. Permit review shall be confined to determining whether the sign conforms to this Bylaw. The Building inspector may require a drawing and other pertinent information before issuing a permit.
2. Removal of new signs: The building inspector shall order removal of any new signs which do not conform to this bylaw.
3. The building inspector shall order the removal of abandoned signs which shall be done by the owner or tenant of the establishment to which it designates. Penalties shall be enforced according to Section 6.1.5 of this bylaw.
4. All signs, whether erected before or after the effective date of this bylaw shall be maintained in a safe condition to the satisfaction of the building inspector.
5. Penalties: Whosoever violates any provision of this section or any lawful order of the building inspector shall be punished by a fine of \$100 per day, each day being a separate offense. Monies derived from such penalties shall be for use of the town.

6.2 SIGNS PERMITTED IN ALL DISTRICTS

1. Sheet Banners: Sheet banners or temporary signs advertising a public entertainment, charitable, religious, or educational event and on issuance of a permit by the building inspector, may be displayed in locations approved by the building inspector fourteen days prior to and seven days after the event.
2. Temporary Signs: A permit for a temporary accessory or business sign may be issued by the building inspector for thirty days and may be renewed for one additional thirty day period during any twelve month period. *(4/6/91 Art. 51)*
3. Existing Signs: Any lawful sign existing before enactment of this bylaw may be continued, although such signs may not conform to this section. If there is an expiration of a special permit issued by the board of appeals after date of adoption of this bylaw, such sign must be made to conform to the provisions herein or be removed.

6.3 SIGNS PROHIBITED IN ALL DISTRICTS

1. Accessory signs which advertise an activity, business, product, or service no longer produced or conducted on the premises upon which the sign is located are prohibited. No such sign shall remain in place in or on vacated premises for more than thirty days from the day of vacancy. Penalties pursuant to Section 6.1.5, will be enforced thereafter.
2. Special promotional signs, pennants, streamers, ribbons, spinners, other moving devices, strings of lights or other similar devices are prohibited.
 - a. Strings of flags or pennants, streamers, ribbons, spinners or other moving devices are prohibited.
 - b. In any business or light industry district, except for the period of time each year beginning with Thanksgiving and ending January 15 of the ensuing year, strings of lights or other similar devices are

prohibited. *(4/6/91 Article 51)*

3. Signs which have blinking, flashing, or fluttering lights or other illuminating devices which have a changing light intensity, brightness, or color, and fluorescent, exposed gaseous tube type, and neon signs are prohibited. This applies whether sign is exterior to a building or designed to be visible through a door or window.

4. Signs illuminated by other than a stationary white or off-white steady light are prohibited. No illumination shall be permitted which casts glare into any portion of any street or residential premises.

5. Signs which are pasted or attached to a utility pole, tree, fence, or other signs or structures which are on or over public or private ways are prohibited except for legal posting of private property (e.g., no hunting, trespassing.)

6. Mechanically active signs are prohibited.

7. Signs painted directly on a wall, rock, tree, or pole are prohibited.

8. Movable or portable signs such as those used in connection with gas filling stations, automobile dealers, and garage activities are prohibited, except for the normal business signs that are permanently affixed to trucks or other commercial vehicles legally parked at a premises, provided that the vehicles are those of the owner or employee of the business conducted on the premises or are on the premises in the course of normal business activity.

9. Signs which obstruct visibility in such a way as to constitute a hazard to safe traveling on a public way are prohibited.

10. No sign shall extend above the main roof line of the building to which it is fastened.

11. No nonconforming sign shall be altered unless such alteration makes it a conforming sign. Repainting and repair shall not be considered alterations.

12. No signs, other than residential signs, shall be illuminated between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m., except that if a business or office is open to the public after 10:00 p.m., the sign may be illuminated until closing.

13.

a. Subject to subparagraph (b) hereof, no billboard or sign of a general advertising nature which does not pertain to a building, structure or use on the same premises as the location of such sign shall be permitted within the town. *(3/25/95 Article 62)*

b. Churches, educational institutions, and other nonprofit organizations which abut public land may, with the written permission of the board of selectmen, erect a sign on such abutting public land so long as the sign otherwise complies with all provisions of this bylaw and describes thereon only the name of the educational institution or other nonprofit organization and its hours of operation or the name and denomination of a church and its hours of service.

(3/25/95 Article 62)

14. No sign, other than identifying accessory signs, shall be posted or affixed upon any public structure or public building, except as may be authorized or required by law.

6.4 REGULATIONS IN RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS

Signs shall be permitted in residential districts which comply with the following regulations:

1. All signs shall be accessory signs except temporary and political signs.
2. Decorative devices shall be permitted.
3. No signs greater than two square feet in area shall be placed within fifteen feet of property lot line unless attached to a building, except signs pertaining to sale or lease of property.
4. No sign in a residential district shall exceed six (6) square feet, except for those in connection with municipal uses.
(3/28/98 Article 37)
5. Not more than two signs, each not more than six feet in area, indicating the home occupation or activity being lawfully conducted on the premises.
6. One unlighted temporary sign not over six square feet in area pertaining to the sale or lease or construction or repair of the premises.
7. Political signs posted by the owner or occupant of the property.
8. Nonaccessory signs are prohibited in residential districts, except as provided for in subsections 6.4.6 and 6.4.7
9. Any sign, the physical condition or appearance of which has substantially deteriorated, shall be removed.
(3/27/04 Article 9)

6.5 REGULATIONS IN BUSINESS AND LIGHT INDUSTRY DISTRICTS

Signs in business and light industry districts shall comply with the following requirements:

1. One accessory sign for each tenant, attached flat against the wall of a building, provided that such sign shall not exceed twenty-five square feet in area per tenant and total sign area shall not exceed ten percent of the area of the wall.
2. One other sign not over forty square feet in area for each multiple of two hundred feet of lot frontage on the principal street; one such sign shall be permitted on a lot having a frontage of less than two hundred feet.
3. One directory of the establishment occupying a building at each public entrance to the building. Such directory shall not exceed an area determined on the basis of one square foot for each establishment occupying the premises.
4. All accessory signs in highway business and light industry districts shall be located not less than fifteen feet from the property line and are not to exceed twenty feet in height.
5. This section shall not apply to signs used exclusively for municipal or public transportation.
6. Unlighted directional signs not exceeding one square foot each in area pertaining to permitted building and uses of premises other than dwellings and their accessory uses.
7. In all business districts, each premise may display one unlettered cloth flag no larger than twenty square feet that may be extended over the sidewalk no closer than two feet from the curb line nor eight feet

above the sidewalk. Lettered flags may be displayed only as temporary signs according to paragraph 6.2.2 of this zoning bylaw. (4/6/91 Article 52 3/25/95 Article 60)