

PROHIBITED SIGNS

The following signs are prohibited in all districts within Watertown:

- Animated signs or signs that have intermittent flashing or attention catching devices (example: flashing or moving “OPEN” signs are not permitted);



- Window signs which exceed 20% of the window area;
- A-Frame advertising signage located on the public right-of-way;
- Any other signage not specifically permitted in the town’s zoning ordinance.

TYPICAL SIGN VIOLATIONS

The most common examples of sign violations are:

- Signs installed without permits;
- A-Frame- (sandwich board) signs placed on the Town’s sidewalks, rights of way, and squares;
- Signs on utility poles, Town trees;
- Signs exceeding the maximum area;
- Over abundance of window signs;
- Flashing or animated “OPEN” signs.

WHO ENFORCES THE SIGN CODES?

When the Code Enforcement Officer notices or receives a complaint regarding signage, he/she can issue a Notice of Violation. In most cases, signage issues are resolved with a personal visit from the Officer to discuss the violation, before a Notice of Violation is issued.

If a Notice of Violation is found to be required for non compliance, such notice will indicate the following:

- Provision being violated;
- Steps to correct violation; and,
- A deadline to correct the violation.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ABANDONED / OBSOLETE SIGNS?

Any abandoned sign or structure is the responsibility of the owner of the premises on which the sign is located.

Obsolete signs or advertising of a business that is no longer in operation shall be removed, or in lieu of removal the sign shall be replaced with a blank sign face made from the same type of material.

TOWN OF WATERTOWN DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING



TOWN OF WATERTOWN
Zoning Enforcement Office
149 Main Street, 2nd Floor
Watertown, MA 02472

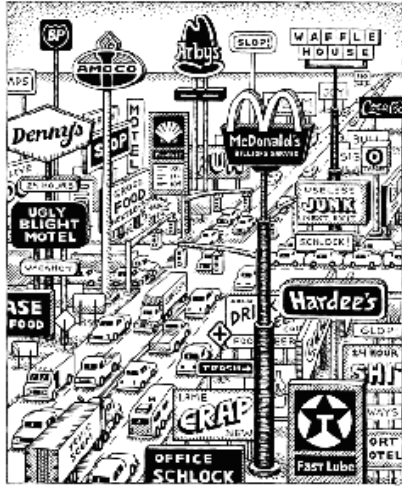
Telephone: 617-972-6427

Facsimile: 617-926-7778

WHY REGULATE SIGNAGE?

The Town adopted its first sign regulation in 1948, to set perimeters to decrease the amount of visual blight and clutter that an overwhelming amount of signage on our streets and in our neighborhoods could create.

Having a balanced ordinance for signage placement, type, design, and size allows for a safe and appealing display of signage. This benefits both businesses and the community when communicating between each other and in the urban environment.



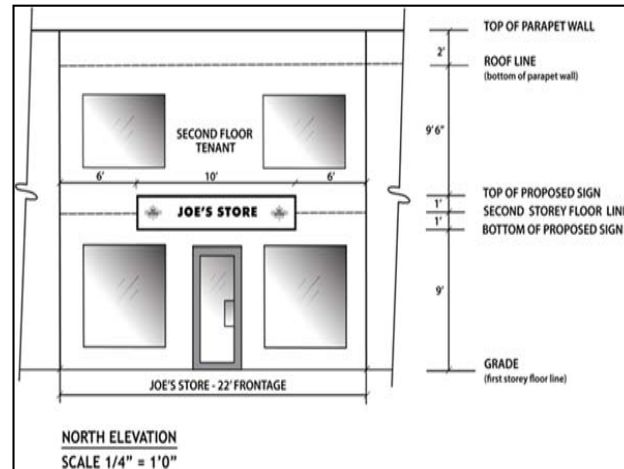
WHEN IS A SIGN PERMIT REQUIRED?

A permit is required for each permanent sign prior to placing, erecting, moving, reconstructing, altering, or displaying any exterior signs. A building or electrical permit may also be required depending on the size and weight of the sign and if the sign will be lit, internally or externally.

WHAT IS REQUIRED TO OBTAIN A PERMIT?

You are required to submit a Sign Permit Application for all permanent signage with our Building Division. Required submittal materials are listed below:

- Signed **application** by the building/property owner;
- **Site Plan** indicating location of the sign;
- **Building elevation** showing the dimensions of the building-, tenant frontage, and proposed sign;
- **Cross section** of the building, showing where the sign is to be placed, with dimensions to show how far from the building the sign will project;
- **Detail** of the sign with dimensions, colors, and materials listed;
- Appropriate application **fees**.



Example of an elevation. See example full plan set submittal at www.watertown-ma.gov, zoning page.

ARE SOME SIGNS EXEMPT FROM PERMIT?

Yes, Temporary Signs as defined in the town's zoning ordinance do not require a permit from the Town; however, ALL signs whether temporary or permanent must meet the minimum and maximum standards in the zoning ordinance as it relates to location, size, setbacks, etc. **Please contact the Town's Zoning Office prior to posting any temporary signs** to ensure you are meeting ALL ordinance requirements.

Three (3) Types of Temporary Signs:

A Temporary Accessory Sign is accessory to an activity on the premises, and may be placed on the ground or attached to a wall.

A Temporary Non-Accessory Sign refers to an event not related to the premises and may be in the form of a placard or banner attached to posts or trees on private property only.

A Temporary Identifying Sign identifies the business at the location where it is, or will be, erected during the period of construction or alteration, or during the replacement of an obsolete sign.

WHERE CAN I FIND THE SIGN CODE ORDINANCE?

The Town's sign regulations can be found in the Watertown Zoning Ordinance available online at www.watertown-ma.gov, by stopping by our office at 149 Main Street, or by calling the town at 617.972.6427.