

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY  
Date Entered: \_\_\_\_\_  
Application ID # \_\_\_\_\_

Guilford Planning and Zoning  
**Sign Permit Application**  
**Permanent Sign**

**(Submit TWO copies plus fee of \$50.00 per sign)**

Name of Business, Organization or Enterprise: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Property Owner: \_\_\_\_\_

Property Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Assessors Map #: \_\_\_\_\_ Lot #: \_\_\_\_\_ Zone District: \_\_\_\_\_

Tenancy: \_\_\_ Single \_\_\_ multiple (state number of tenants): \_\_\_\_\_

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Sign Design (must submit rendering, drawing or sketch)

Type of material: \_\_\_\_\_

Lettering style: \_\_\_\_\_

Colors: \_\_\_\_\_ Pantone Color: \_\_\_\_\_ Pantone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Dimensions: \_\_\_\_\_ Scale: \_\_\_\_\_ Height above grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Method of mounting: \_\_\_\_\_ Free standing \_\_\_\_\_ Applied to wall \_\_\_\_\_

Method of lighting if any: \_\_\_\_\_

Total sign area on lot: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of sign(s): (MUST submit map & drawing or photo of building with proposed sign)

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Owner, if multiple tenancy

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Guilford Sign Regulations

### DEFINITIONS:

**SIGN** – Any billboard illustration, insignia, lettering, picture, display, banner, pennant, flag or other device, however made, displayed, painted, printed, supported or attached, which advertises, announces, directs, identifies, publicizes, notices or warns, when located out of doors and is visible from any street or from any lot other than the lot on which it is located. The term “sign” shall also include any continuous strip lighting. Any such billboard, illustration, insignia, lettering, picture, display, banner, pennant, flag or other device may be double-facing, except that if the two faces are at any point more than two feet from one another, they shall be considered as two signs. [AMENDED May 07, 2003]

**SIGN, DIRECTLY ILLUMINATED** – Any sign listed in the sign definition which includes an artificial light source, visible directly or through transparent or translucent material. Light sources include but are not limited to neon, continuous strip lighting, LED and OLED (light emitting diodes), LCD (liquid crystal display), fluorescent, incandescent lamps and exposed lamps configured as signs. [AMENDED December 03, 2008]

**SIGN, INDIRECTLY ILLUMINATED** – A sign illuminated with a light so shielded that no rays from it are visible elsewhere than on the lot where said illumination occurs. If such shielding device is defective, such sign shall be deemed to be a directly illuminated sign.

## ARTICLE VII

### Signs

The purpose of these regulations is to insure that signs, as defined in § 273-2, placed in the Town of Guilford shall not be overly intrusive, unnecessarily large, excessively high, or inappropriately located.

#### **§ 273-58. Conformance required; conflicts with other standards; signs in Historic District.**

- A. No sign as defined in § 273-2 shall be installed, constructed, or altered except in compliance with this article. All signs shall be reviewed by the Design Review Committee. Signs allowed without a permit (273-58. H.) and temporary signs (273-58. J.) and signs required to be approved by the Historic District Commission are exempt from review by the Design Review Committee. In the event of conflict between this article and other sections of these zoning regulations, the standards of this article take precedence. Signs affixed to buildings shall be in harmony with the architectural style and integrity of the buildings.
- B. Signs within the Town of Guilford Historic District must be approved by the Historic District Commission. Copies of Historic District Commission rules of procedure may be obtained from the Building Department.
- C. Trademark buildings shall be considered to be signs and shall not be allowed. A trademark building is a building which, by virtue of its architectural style identifies the owner or occupant of the building. The architectural style may be trademarked or be so distinctive as to be generally associated with the particular owner or occupant. Buildings whose architecture is itself an advertising image, detract from the coherent and distinctive identity of the Town of Guilford. Franchise businesses may be allowed only

if their buildings are designed to harmonize with the historic and distinctive character of the town.  
**[Added 11-3-1999]**

- D. Measurements. All dimensions for signs shall be based on measurements to the outside edge of the sign, excluding any structure necessary to support the sign. The area of signs shall be computed from either the outer dimensions of the frame or as the area of a quadrilateral, including the outer edges of all lettering, whichever is greater.
- E. Location. No sign shall be located on any roof. Any sign attached to or painted on a building shall not extend beyond the limits of the wall of the building.
- F. Projecting and hanging signs. No sign shall project over any sidewalk, driveway, walkway, roadway or accessway, except those signs attached to the wall of a building. No sign, other than a directional sign, shall be located within or overhang the right-of-way of any street. With the exception of blade signs as defined in § 273-59. I., no sign may project more than two feet from a building.
- G. Obstructions. No sign shall be located or maintained so as to be a hazard to traffic or pedestrians or to obstruct any door, window, ventilations system, fire escape or exit or to cause any other hazard to the public health or safety.
- H. In all Districts the following signs are allowed without a permit:
- (1) A sign which does not exceed two square feet in size, when it is the only sign displayed on the structure or lot, and is in compliance with Table 3C, Signs.
  - (2) Historical plaques not exceeding two square feet in size affixed to structures.
  - (3) Bulletin boards for religious and public buildings, not to exceed 12 square feet.
  - (4) Business hours, parking information, directional or safety signs or legal notices, not exceeding 3 square feet in size, but not legal notices with specific size requirements mandated by state statutes.
  - (5) Four temporary real estate “For Sale” signs relating to one particular property, located on the road frontage of the property, and provided that each sign does not exceed four (4) square feet in size and is removed upon the completion of the sale of the property.
  - (6) Real Estate “Open House” Signs. Not more than four (4) signs per property or subdivision, each not to exceed four (4) square feet, posted not more than one day before the open house and removed not later than one hour after the event, not exceeding two days per week, maximum.
- I. The following signs shall not be permitted:
- (1) Any temporary sign other than as specifically allowed in Table 3C. Signs.
  - (2) Any truck, van, wagon or sound broadcasting vehicle used mainly for advertising or as a substitute for a billboard.
  - (3) Any sign which obstructs the view of vehicular traffic.
  - (4) Any sign which may in any way be misconstrued as a traffic signal or may distract drivers.
  - (5) No flashing, cycling, intermittent, light-reflecting, revolving, moving, continuous strip lighting or image display (LCD, LED, etc) signs will be permitted, except for barber poles. (Examples include, but are not limited to, mirrored surfaces, neon lights, banners, and balloons.)
  - (6)
    - Billboards.
    - Advertising signs painted on building walls.

- A-frame/sandwich board signs except as allowed under § 273-58. J. (1) (e) & (f)
  - Trailer signs.
  - Banners, flags & pennants (except as provided in Table 3C with a temporary sign permit application).
  - Time and or temperature display signs.
- (7) Any sign pertaining to a building or property the use of which has been discontinued for a period of six (6) months.

#### J. Temporary Signs:

- (1) The following temporary signs must be registered with the Zoning Enforcement Officer, on a form provided by the Town. This registration may apply to multiple locations and expires on January 1st of every year. Temporary signs may not be illuminated.
- (a) **New Construction Signs** – One or more signs not exceeding 16 square feet in total area of signage for a commercial project and 6 square feet for a residential project, designating the owner, contractor and other pertinent information related to the construction project. Such sign shall be removed within 5 days after the issuance of a final Certificate of Occupancy.
- (b) **Renovation Signs** – One or more signs not exceeding 6 square feet in total area of signage designating the contractor and the service being provided may be displayed on a residential lot. Such sign shall be removed within 5 days after the completion of the renovation work.
- (c) **Non Profit Group Activity/Informational Signs** – Any signs of a civic, charitable, religious, educational, patriotic, political or similar non-profit organization when erected on its own property or on another property with consent of the owner, provided that said signs shall not exceed 9 square feet in size and 4 ft. in height and shall not be displayed at the same location for more than 20 consecutive days, and shall be no closer than 50 feet to any other similar sign.
- (d) **Auction Signs & Special Events** – Not more than two (2) signs per event, each not exceeding six (6) square feet, posted not more than two (2) days before and removed not later than one hour after the event. This sign may only be used two (2) times per year for the same location.
- (e) **A-frame and sandwich board signs** - One sign per lot, not exceeding 12 square feet, located on the ground of the property, but not in the public right of way, or street easements. For lots with street frontage greater than 100 feet, one additional such sign shall be allowed for each additional 100 feet of frontage. In no case shall more than four (4) such signs be placed on any lot. Said signs shall be placed in locations that do not obstruct vehicle sight lines or interfere with pedestrian facilities. **[Added 04/30/2010]**
- (f) **Temporary signs shopping plazas** – One permanently affixed free standing, unlighted, landscaped, temporary sign holder, up to 15 square feet in area, and not more than five feet above the average level of the ground within a radius of 10 feet, located near the entrance, but not in the public right of way, or street easement may be erected for tenants of the shopping center.

#### K. Sign permits; specifications.

All signs not specifically excluded by these regulations, or allowed by right, shall require a permit and must comply with all applicable sections of these regulations before any sign is erected. Sign permits shall be as

provided in this article. Additional requirements, as set forth by the Commission, are indicated in the specific subsections.

- (1) Sign permit. The Zoning Enforcement Officer shall approve the application for a sign, unless indicated otherwise under specific subsections.
  - (a) The Commission shall determine the form and the fee for the sign permit.
  - (b) The sign permit shall be submitted in triplicate, completely filled out, and signed and dated by the applicant. The application form shall be supplemented with the following graphic material:
    - (1) The overall sign design shall be prepared by a sign designer and shall include materials, colors, font styles, sizes and colors, dimensions and shall include a view of the sign(s) drawn to scale on a building elevation with height above grade and method of support (freestanding or applied to wall).
    - (2) Photographs of the building where the sign will be erected and of surrounding buildings and signs.
    - (3) Method of lighting (if any).
- (2) Completed sign applications submitted to the Planning and Zoning office, will be approved, approved with conditions or disapproved within the following time limits:
  - (a) Five working days for sign applications requiring approval of the Zoning Enforcement officer.
  - (b) Thirty calendar days for sign applications requiring approval of the Commission and thirty-five days for sign applications requiring review by the Design Review Committee, unless otherwise specified in these regulations
- (3) Appeals of Zoning Enforcement Officer decision. In addition to any right to appeal to the Zoning Board of Appeals, any person aggrieved by the decision of the Zoning Enforcement Officer on a sign permit may request the Planning and Zoning Commission to review the decision of the Zoning Enforcement Officer. The Planning & Zoning Commission may make recommendations to the Zoning Enforcement Officer, who shall be authorized to modify his/her decision in response to the Commission's recommendations.

#### L. Other requirements

- (1) Sign lighting shall be shielded so that the light source is not visible. LED illumination is allowed only as a concealed lighting source for a sign, or, when used as a display, with fixed, monochromatic characters, not exceeding 15" in height.
- (2) A two-faced sign will be considered as one when calculating the area, provided that the opposing faces are no more than two (2) feet apart and that both sides are identical.
- (3) All signs must be located totally on the property they serve.
- (4) Buildings with two or more separate commercial tenants shall be considered multi-tenant buildings. Signs on multi-tenant buildings shall be of the same general type, character and relative location so as to provide a harmonious design. In multi-tenant building(s) on one lot in a commercial zone other than

C-1, the maximum aggregate area of all signs will be one square foot per linear foot of storefront as set forth in §273-59G., provided that;

- (a) There is an approved site plan for the lot in accordance with Article IX and §273-97.
  - (b) A sign design plan is submitted to and approved by the Commission based on recommendation of the Design Review Committee. A sign design plan shall be prepared by a qualified sign designer, graphic artist, or architect, and shall include all proposed sign locations and designs per 273-58 K. (1) (b)(1), including method of mounting, method of lighting, and position on walls. The plan shall include a drawing showing the sign(s) dimensioned and to scale on the façade of the building(s) it will be attached to.
  - (c) All other requirements of this article are met.
  - (d) Any nonconforming signs are removed.
- (5) All new sign applications for a multiple-tenant commercial building shall conform to this sign design plan. Where no sign design plan exists, the Zoning Enforcement Officer, based on the advice of the Design Review Committee, will select either an existing sign on the building, or the sign submitted for approval as a prototype for all future signs, as they are replaced, to achieve a harmonious integrated design in lieu of § 273-58. L. (4) (b) above.
- (6) An existing, non-conforming sign may be replaced with one of the exact same material, dimension, shape, area, lighting and location. Prior to replacement of the sign, the Planning and Zoning Office shall be provided with a plan of the proposed sign.
- (7) The area of any sign or signs attached to a building shall not exceed 10% of the area of the wall on which such sign or signs are attached.
- (8) Non-conforming uses. Where a use exists in a residential zone, which use does not comply with requirements of that zone either because it is nonconformity or by variance, the sign area requirements of the particular use shall be determined by the Commission. The Commission shall take into consideration the type of use, location, visibility from neighboring properties and reasonable needs for advertising the particular use. In no case shall the total sign area on a lot exceed the total area allowed in the most restrictive commercial zone where the use would be conforming.

#### M. Noncommercial Signs:

Notwithstanding any other provision in this Section or these Regulations to the contrary, any sign authorized in these Regulations may contain any noncommercial copy in addition to, or in lieu of, any other copy.

#### N. Severability:

The provisions of these Sign Regulations are declared severable, to the maximum extent permitted by law. If any provision or provisions of these Sign Regulations or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid or unlawful, it is the intent of the Planning and Zoning Commission that said invalidity shall not affect other provisions of these Regulations, which shall remain in full force and effect as if such portion so declared invalid or unlawful were not originally part of these Regulations, even if the surviving parts of the Regulations result in greater restrictions after any unlawful provisions are stricken. In particular, and without limitation, in the event any portion of these Regulations are declared invalid as applied to noncommercial signs,

the Regulations, or any surviving portions thereof, shall remain in full force and effect as applied to commercial signs.

### **§ 273-59. Signs for Shopping Centers**

In addition to conformance with § 273-58, for each shopping center except in the SCW Zone, a sign design plan reviewed by the Design Review Committee and approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission shall be on file. Signs for all shopping centers, as defined in § 273-2, shall comply with the following standards, in addition to the requirements and standards set forth in § 273-58 and Table 3C:

- A. Design. All exterior signs for new shopping centers shall be designed as an integral part of the shopping center's architectural design and shall be of the same type, character and relative location on the buildings so as to provide an integrated, harmonious design.
- B. A sign design plan for all proposed signs, whether attached or freestanding shall be submitted to the Commission in duplicate for review and approval, with a letter or signed notation on the plans indicating approval by the architect of the shopping center.
  - (1) The sign design plan shall be submitted together with the zoning application for the project and prior to the application for a sign permit and fabrication of the signs, and shall include the date of submission and the words "Approved - Guilford Planning and Zoning Commission" with a place for the date and signature of the Chairperson.
  - (2) The Commission shall approve, approve with conditions or disapprove said sign design plan within 65 days of receipt of the same. The applicant shall be notified of the decision in writing, with the reasons stated for any disapproval.
- C. Shopping center identification sign. One freestanding sign identifying only the shopping center name and street number shall be allowed along the main street frontage and may extend to within 10 feet of any street line. No portion of such sign shall be more than 10 feet above the average level of the ground within a radius of 10 feet, nor shall the area of any such sign exceed 48 square feet.
- D. Tenant directory sign. One freestanding directory sign, identifying tenants, shall be allowed. No portion of such sign shall be more than 6 feet above the average level of the ground within a radius of 10 feet. Each tenant shall be allowed a 2 square foot sign on the directory sign, displaying only the tenant's name. In addition to the names, the directory may contain a layout of the center or other graphic information not exceeding 6 square feet.
- E. Type. Signs shall be of individual-letter type or of signboard type, but the two types shall not be mixed on the facade of the buildings on any single shopping center.
- F. Colors and lighting. Sign colors and lighting method shall be coordinated throughout each shopping center and shall be shown on the sign design plan and elevations in sufficient detail to indicate the proposed final sign design.
- G. Determination of size. The total exterior sign area for any individual store shall not exceed one square foot for each linear foot of storefront. (The word "store" as used herein shall mean a retail store or any

other permitted use in subject building). The length of storefront shall be measured on a horizontal line along the front of the store between exterior intersecting walls or between the centers of the intersecting party walls. The front of a store shall be the wall of the store in which its main public entrance is located. If a store has two or more public entrances, only one wall may be designated as the front for the purpose of determining the total allowable exterior sign area.

- H. Content. Signs shall designate the proper name of each individual store, and shall not include any slogans, brand names of merchandise.
- I. Blade signs. Blade signs shall be located on storefronts perpendicular to the main building façade, and maintain a minimum clearance of 8 feet above the sidewalk. The maximum size of each face shall not exceed 9 square feet, the maximum copy size of each face shall be 4 square feet, and both sides shall be identical. Blade signs may not project more than 4 feet from any wall.
- J. Directional signs. Signs providing directions to the tenant premises may be placed within a shopping center when approved by the Commission. Such signs shall not be visible off the lot and each sign may not exceed four square feet.

New signs in existing shopping centers may be based on a sign design plan per § 273-59. B, or may be considered as multi-tenant properties subject to § 273-58. L. (4) (b).

**273-60 Non-Conforming and Temporary Signs**

All temporary signs not in conformance with this regulation at the time of adoption shall be removed and/or brought into compliance with these standards. Since, by definition, temporary signs are allowed for a limited period of time, non-conforming rights do not apply to them.

**273-61 Signs Advertising the Seasonal Sale of Farm or Forestry Products**

Signs advertising the seasonal sale of farm or forestry products are permitted in addition to other signage which may be allowed pursuant to this regulation. Two such signs not exceeding 12 square feet in total and not extending more than five feet above ground level may be erected. The product advertised must be grown on the lot upon which the sign is erected unless the lot is in a commercial zone in which case the product must be grown in Guilford. Said sign(s) shall be removed when the seasonal sale is over.

		<b>Residential</b>	<b>Marine recreational, commercial and industrial</b>	<b>Government non profit and farms</b>	<b>PRD</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>Setbacks</b>	10' to street or lot lines	W/n 10' of Street line or face of building, whichever is closer	W/n 10' of Street line or face of building, whichever is closer	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Location</b>	Not on roof	Not on roof	Not on roof	Not on roof
<b>3.</b>	<b>Projection</b>		2' or less		



4.	<b>Directional for Government or, non profit</b>			4 unlighted at 3sf off lot, not more than 4' in any direction	
5.	<b>Warning/traffic</b>	3 square feet	3 square feet	3 square feet	3 square feet
6.	<b>Temporary Real estate</b>	4 at 4 sf Subdivision: 3 lots - 10 sf 6 lots – 20 sf	1 sign at 4 sf per vacant space		
7.	<b>Temporary signs merchandising</b>		1 sign at 12 sf per lot, up to 15 sf in plazas with permanently affixed temporary sign holders.		
8.	<b>Banners, flags, pennants</b>	Not regulated	1 banner up to 16 sf, not more than 8' in any dimension, up to 10 weeks per year	1 banner up to 16 sf, not more than 8' in any dimension, up to 10 weeks per year	1 banner up to 16 sf, not more than 8' in any dimension, up to 10 weeks per year
		<b>Residential</b>	<b>Marine recreational, commercial and industrial</b>	<b>Government non profit and farms</b>	<b>PRD</b>
9.	<b>Lighting</b>	Indirect	No flashing, moving, led, lcd or neon except as in § 273-58. I. (5)	No flashing, moving, led, lcd or neon	No flashing, moving, led, lcd or neon
10.	<b>Total signage allowed p/lot</b>	Occupant identification, 2 at 2sf, accessory use only 1 at 2sf Subdivision 5 lots – 1 at 10sf not more than 10' high	75 sf except PV, C-1 & MR1 -48 sf total, allocated as percentage of floor area leased Freestanding 48 sf total, not higher than 20 feet	Governments and governmental agencies, flags or pennants containing symbol, seal, or insignia of said agency or signs for traffic or legal notices do not apply Farm, 1 at 16 sf Seasonal farm and forestry, 2 at 12 sf not more than 5' above ground	10sf / PRD plus: Commercial - 1 p/occupant up to 8sf with maximum of 40sf for all commercial uses
11	<b>2 or more tenants in commercial building or buildings on lot</b>		With site plan approval 1sf p/linear foot of storefront		With site plan approval 1sf p/linear foot of storefront