

## §267-33. Signs.

Friends Of Harford: Signs are the backbone of the advertising industry. Businesses live and thrive because they have signs to inform the public of where they are and what they do. The problem with signs in Harford County is the competition which drives business to make their sign a little taller, brighter, glitzier and more striking than the sign of their neighbor's business. We can see examples of sign wars in various parts of the County. A drive down Route 1 is a good example of competing signs. Our County seat is a sea of signs. There are places in the U.S. where signs are not allowed to overwhelm the architecture, landscaping and natural beauty of the area. We propose that Harford County become one of those places.

Current County Code Restrictions



Bel Air Code



### 1§267-33. Signs.

#### A. Zoning Certificates; fees.

- (1) Zoning Certificate requirement. It shall be unlawful for any person to erect, alter or relocate any sign or other advertising structure, as defined in this Part 1, without first obtaining a Zoning Certificate and making payment of the required fee.

Requirement that illuminated or electrically operated signs are subject to the County Electrical Code is in section G.

- (2) Application. Application for a Zoning Certificate for a sign shall be signed by the property owner or authorized agent. The Zoning Certificate application shall require the name and address of the sign owner or the sign erector, drawings showing the copy design, dimensions, height and location of the sign and such other pertinent information as the Department may require to ensure compliance with the laws of Harford County, Maryland. Whenever an application for a Zoning Certificate is filed for the erection of a sign on property designated as an historic landmark, the application shall be subject to the approvals of the Historic District Commission and the Department.

(No B.)

C. General Provisions. The following broad categories of sign types are regulated by this Section unless otherwise provided herein:

- (1) Canopy signs. A canopy sign must have its lowest point no closer than 8 feet to the ground **NOT TO EXCEED 10 FEET IN HEIGHT.** **New**

- (2) Freestanding signs. The maximum area of any freestanding sign shall not exceed ~~120~~ **32** square feet. The setback measured to the edge of the sign shall be equal to 1/3 of the required building setback. Unless otherwise provided herein, the maximum height allowed for any freestanding sign is ~~20~~ **10** feet measured from the ~~base~~ **TOP** of the sign. ~~Electronic message boards shall be regulated as freestanding signs; however, in no instance shall an electronic message board exceed 60 square feet in size.~~

FoH: This will allow a sign 4' X 8' sign. We recommend limiting the height from the top of the sign, not the base. When one measures from the base the square footage is the only limitation on height. Freestanding signs are the least pleasing to the eye aesthetically. When one sign competes in height, width or color with a neighboring sign, competition creates pandemonium of design. All electronic signs should be eliminated. The basic decision for this elimination is to promote safety on the highway. Existing signs will be nonconforming use and not be allowed to be replaced.

Old sign area is 1 sq. ft. of sign for every foot of road frontage not to exceed 200 sq. ft. New sign area shall not exceed 120 sq. ft. Old setback is 1/3 or the building setback. New setback is the same. Old maximum height is 35' above nearest road grade. New maximum height is 20' from the base of the sign. New language: "Electronic message boards shall be regulated as freestanding signs; however, in no instance shall an electronic message board exceed 30 sq. ft. in size."

- (3) Wall signs. Wall signs shall include all flat signs which are placed against a building or other structure and attached to the exterior front, rear or side wall of any building or other structure. Flat wall mounted signs may be located on any wall of a building and may ~~not extend~~ ~~not more than 8 feet~~ above the parapet wall or roofline of the building to which they are attached. However, no window, or part of a window, shall be covered by the sign area or its supporting structure.

- (4) Temporary signs. ~~One~~ **temporary signs per parcel** may be displayed for ~~a periods~~ not exceeding 30 consecutive calendar days and not exceeding 60 calendar days in any 1 year. Temporary signs shall be set back not less than 10 feet from the property line, shall have a maximum sign area of ~~32~~ **10** square feet and shall not exceed a height of 6 feet. ~~Portable signs will not be allowed except for use by the SHA or Sheriff's Department.~~

FOH: 32 square feet is too large for a temporary sign. We should not allow multiple signs on one property which was not spelled out. Portable signs are normally those signs on a frame with changeable lettering. They can be illuminated or lighted. The Sheriff's Office uses this type of sign to show a car's speed.

- (5) Projecting signs. Projecting signs may not extend over public rights-of-way, or project more than 4 feet from the wall of a building. Projecting signs may not have less than 10 feet clearance, as measured vertically from the ground to the bottom of the sign or supporting structure, and shall not exceed ~~a height of 25 feet, the height of the building~~ as measured vertically from the ground to the top of the sign or supporting

structure. Projecting signs shall have a maximum sign area of 60 32 square feet. **Added: Projecting signs shall have a maximum sign area of 60 square feet.**

FOH: Under this definition a sign may be 10 feet off the ground and on a one-story 20 foot building it may reach over the rooftop. Limiting the size to a uniform 32 sq. feet throughout the code will enable less interpretation of which sign type applies where.

(6) Directional signs. The maximum area of any directional sign shall not exceed 6 square feet. Directional signs can be located at the nearest intersection of any major collector or arterial road and set back 10 feet from the property line. Unless otherwise provided herein, the maximum height allowed for any directional sign is ~~6~~ 4 feet above the nearest public road grade. **Signs must be for public, charitable, educational or religious functions.**

**Rewritten. Increased sign area from 2 sq. ft. to 6 sq.ft. Removed requirement that signs must be for public, charitable, educational or religious functions. New language requires signs to be located at nearest intersection of any major collector or arterial road. Old requires 10' setback from road right-of-way. New requires 10' setback from property lines. Old maximum height is 4'. New maximum height is 6'.**

FOH: Retain original 4 foot height maximum. Retain use limitations as in old code. Otherwise intersections of major collector or arterial roads could be littered with 6 square foot signs directing them to go any and everywhere.

(7) Billboards.

(a) General. ~~Billboards shall be permitted in the General Industrial (GI) District only. New billboards may not be constructed within the U.S. Route 40 Commercial Revitalization District (CRD) or the Edgewood Neighborhood Overlay District (ENOD).~~ **New: Billboards are permitted in the GI Dist. only. New billboards may not be constructed within the U.S Rte. 40 CRD or the ENOD.**

FOH: We do not support permitting any new billboards.

(b) ~~Location. Billboards shall be limited to 1 per parcel. Billboards shall not be permitted to be erected within 750 feet of any residence, historic structure or building as defined in §267-4 (Definitions), public square or the entrance to any public park, public, private or parochial school, library, church or similar institution. All such signs shall be set back from the front property line the distance required for a principal building in the zoning district in which located. No billboard shall be permitted to be erected within 100 feet of a road intersection unless the base of the sign is not less than 10 feet above ground level or road surface, whichever is higher. No billboard shall be erected within 660 feet of any highway which is part of the interstate highway system.~~ **New. Billboards limited to 1 per parcel. New: Cannot be erected within 750' of any residence, historic structure or building.**

(c) ~~Height. A billboard shall be no more than 30 feet in height from road grade. Old maximum height is 40' from road grade. Variance can be granted due to uniqueness of property. New maximum height is 30' from road grade and no variance mentioned.~~

(d) ~~Area. The maximum area of any billboard shall not exceed 300 square feet. Old allows single or double-faced, no more than 2 faces in the same direction, not to exceed 600 sq. ft. Painted bulletins limited to an individual face not to exceed a total of 900 sq. ft. per face. New: "Maximum area of any billboard shall not exceed 300 square feet."~~

(e) ~~Illumination. Illumination shall be in accordance with the provisions of this Section.~~

(8) Permanent residential entrance, and Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC) signs. Residential entrance, development project identification and CCRC signs, with letters or advertising area not to exceed a total area of 32 square feet, shall be permitted on the property, provided that it is located not less than 10 feet from the road right-of-way. In addition, the height of the sign or structure shall not exceed 6 feet. If the parcel or lot has a multiple frontage of at least 50 feet, additional signs with letters or advertising area, not to exceed a total of 32 square feet, shall be permitted. Such sign or structure shall not exceed 6 feet in height and shall not be located less than 10 feet from the road right-ofway. Said signs may be split entrance signs; however, the overall advertising area may not exceed 32 square feet. **No change other than to add CCRC.**

FOH: Recommends retaining this provision as it is written here. If this is a monument sign the height of the enclosing structure may be 6 feet.

D. Exemptions.

The following types of signs are exempt from all the provisions of this Section, except for construction and safety regulations and the following standards:

(1) Public signs. Public signs, erected by, or on the order of, a public official in the performance of duty, such as directional signs, regulatory signs, warning signs, informational signs and legal notices. **In old Code Special Event signs. Omitted**

(2) Integral signs. Integral signs that are carved into stone, concrete or similar material or made of bronze, aluminum or other permanent type construction and made an integral part of the structure, as well as signs forming an integral part of or attached to pumps dispersing fuels, vending machines and service appliances. **Omitted “signs designating names of buildings, dates of erection, monumental citations, commemorative tablets and plaques”**

(3) Political campaign and public issue signs, except for billboards, signs announcing candidates seeking public office and advocating the support or defeat of public issues shall be permitted, provided that the total area of the signs does not exceed 16 square feet for each premises in a residential district and 32 square feet in an agricultural, business or industrial district. These signs shall be confined to private property. No sign shall be placed within 60 feet of the center of a road intersection or in such a manner as to impede vision. These signs may be displayed 45 calendar days prior to the primary election and shall be removed 15 calendar days after the general election or within 15 calendar days after the primary if the candidate is not a candidate for the general election.

(4) Agricultural identification signs. Agricultural identification signs not to exceed 32 square feet in area and not to be located less than 35 feet from the center line of the road or 10 feet from the road right-of-way, whichever is greater.

(5) Directional signs. Directional signs for any public, charitable, educational or religious function to be set back 10 feet from road right-of-way. These signs shall not exceed 2 square feet in sign area and shall not exceed 4 feet in height above the road grade.

(6) Private traffic control. Signs directing traffic movement onto a premises or within a premises, not exceeding 4 square feet in area for each sign. Illumination of these signs shall conform to the provisions of this Section.

(7) Real estate signs. Real estate signs not exceeding 6 square feet in area and located on the subject property tract. They shall be removed within 14 calendar days after execution of a lease or contract for sale of the property.

(8) Noncommercial and **commercial or business use** flags. On site flags **one each per parcel** -of a nation, state, political subdivision, educational institution, or noncommercial organization, provided that any flagpole utilized to display such flag is not more than 30 feet in height above the ground. **Omitted language referring to business and industrial uses.**

**FOH: Commercial flags of any size may be strung together to form an advertisement of sorts. Route 1 has many car lots strung with small waving multicolored pennants or small “flags”. While it is not exactly a flag, large tethered helium balloons soaring 50 or more feet into the sky should be eliminated as a sign or beacon of sorts.**

(9) Public Transit Stop Shelters. Signs integrated into the structure of a public transit stop shelter, installed by a government entity or at the direction of an entity having a contractual relationship to a governmental entity, for the purpose of erecting or maintaining public transit stop shelters. **New**

(10) Ballpark Signs. Signs installed on public property, with the permission of the Department of Parks and Recreation, at ball fields owned or operated by the County Department of Parks and Recreation. Said signs shall not exceed 6 square feet in size and shall be erected for no longer than 4 months. **New**

(11) Project development sign. Temporary signs for undeveloped parcels to be set back at least 10 feet from the road right-of-way and not to exceed ~~10~~ 6 feet in height above the road grade. One sign shall be permitted for each road frontage of at least 50 feet. **Signs may be installed at the start of landclearing and must be removed when development of the advertised phase is finished.** The maximum sign area shall not exceed 32 square feet.

**Formula for calculating maximum sign area changed from being based on the amount of road frontage to one sign permitted for each road frontage of at least 50’, not to exceed 32 sq. ft.**

E. Calculation of advertising or sign area.

(1) Double faced signs. One face of a sign having obverse and reverse faces shall be considered in calculating the advertising area. In the event that the faces of a sign are of a different area, the face having the larger area shall determine the advertising area of the sign.

(2) Multi-faced or curved surface signs. The advertising area of a multi-faced or curved surface sign shall be calculated from dimensions derived from its greatest plane projection.

(3) Irregularly shaped signs. The advertising area of irregularly shaped signs shall be calculated by totaling the area of 1 or more rectangles completely enclosing the extremities of the sign.

(4) Modular signs. The advertising area of signs consisting of 2 or more individual letters, characters, numbers or figures shall be determined by the area of a described rectangle completely enclosing the extremities of all of the individual letters, characters, numbers or figures; provided, however, that if individual modules are mounted on a background, other than an integral structure component of a building, the entire area of such a background shall be calculated as advertising area.

(5) Cylindrical signs. The advertising area of cylindrical signs shall be computed by multiplying  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the circumference by the height of the sign.

#### F. Illumination.

(1) The light from any illuminated sign or from any light source, including the interior of a building, shall be so shaded, shielded or directed so that the light intensity or brightness shall not interfere with the vision of motor vehicle operators and shall not adversely affect surrounding or facing premises.

. Reworded: Old: light intensity or brightness shall not adversely affect surrounding or facing premises nor adversely affect the vision of motor vehicle operators. New: light intensity or brightness shall not interfere with the vision of motor vehicle operators. Omitted "shall not adversely affect surrounding or facing premises"

FOH: The provision where illumination may not adversely affect surrounding or facing premises has been removed from all residential districts, AG, RR, R1 – R4 and VR. Considering the many special exceptions permitted in residential areas we believe it is critical to protect the surrounding homes from light. Ballfields with banks of night lights, golf courses and their parking lots with after dark uses, restaurants and their parking lots are a few uses allowed in residential areas which have lighting and lighted signs. We may not think of a lighted sign as intrusive until we live next door to it. We should make every effort to protect residents. Replacing the missing text does not harm, but goes the extra mile to protect.

(2) No sign shall have blinking or flashing lights. ~~With the exception of electronic message boards, as defined in §267-4 (Definitions),~~ no sign shall have illumination devices which have a changing light intensity, brightness or color or which are so constructed and operated so as to create an appearance or illusion of writing. Nothing contained in this Section shall be construed as preventing the use of lights or decorations commemorating religious and patriotic holidays. Added "With the exception of electronic message boards," Omitted: Beacon lights or search lights shall be temporarily permitted for advertising special events.

FOH: We believe that safety on the highways should outweigh distracting sign use. As our population grows, so does the number of cars driving our roads. We need less distraction, not more.

(3) No exposed reflective type bulbs, and no strobe lights or incandescent lamps exceeding 15 watts, shall be used on the exterior surface of any sign so as to expose the face of the bulb, light or lamp to a public street or adjacent property.

Omitted, "except signs designed to show the time, temperature, and other public service messages."

(4) A sign may be 'internally' illuminated or lighted from an external source.

FOH: There has always been a distinction between the 2 types of lighting. There appears to be no definition for an 'externally' lighted sign.

#### G. Structural requirements.

All signs and supporting structures shall comply with the pertinent requirements of the International Building Code and National Electrical Code, as adopted by Harford County, Maryland.

#### H. Prohibited signs.

The following signs are prohibited in all districts and shall be removed in accordance with this Section.

(1) Signs containing statements, words or pictures of an obscene, indecent or immoral character that offend public morals or decency of the community.

(2) Signs of a size, location, movement, content, coloration or manner of illumination which may be confused with or construed as a traffic control device or, which hide from view, any permitted signs, or which distract or obstruct the view of road or pedestrian traffic in any direction at a road intersection.

(3) Unless authorized by the utility, signs posted on any building, fence, pole or other property owned, leased or controlled by a public utility.

(4) Except as provided in this Section, signs that are placed within the County or State right-of-way. in old code, relating to signs in County or State rights-of-way, omitted: signs shall be removed immediately by the enforcement officer or appropriate highway authority.

(5) Freestanding signs advertising business uses in ~~planned residential development projects~~ districts. FOH: This needs to be much more inclusive than written. See K (2) (b)

#### I. Inspection, maintenance and removal.

- (1) All signs and supporting structures shall be kept in good repair and in a safe and attractive condition. Signs for which a Zoning Certificate is required may be inspected periodically by the Zoning Administrator for compliance with this Section
- (2) In the event that a billboard ceases to be used for advertising or falls into disrepair for a period of 3 months, the billboard will be deemed abandoned. Solicitation for advertising to be displayed on a billboard does not constitute advertising. Once a billboard has been abandoned, the Zoning Administrator shall notify the owner of the property and the owner of the billboard that the billboard has been abandoned and must be removed. The owners shall be responsible for taking all necessary steps to dismantle the billboard and remove and dispose of all visible remnants and materials from the subject parcel 90 calendar days after notification by the Zoning Administrator that the billboard has been abandoned. **New.**

(3) The Zoning Administrator may order the removal of any sign, erected or maintained, in violation of this Section. Written notice shall be given to the owner of such sign, building, structure or premises on which such sign is located, to remove the sign or to bring it into compliance with this Section within 10 calendar days from the date of the notice. Upon failure to remove the sign or to comply with this notice, or if it appears that the condition of the sign is such as to present an immediate threat to the safety of the public, the Department may remove the sign immediately without any additional notice. Any cost of removal incurred by the Department shall be assessed to the owner of the property on which such sign is located, and may be collected in the manner of ordinary debt or in the manner of taxes and such charge shall be a lien on the property. **Completely rewritten and expanded. Gives P&Z authority to remove signs if owner fails to comply, costs of removal assessed to the owner and can be collected in the manner of ordinary debt or in the manner of taxes and such charge shall be a lien on the property.**

**FOH: We should be very sparing of the use of a lien on a property for such a this type of infraction. There appears to be no second notice required. If we can put a lien on a house and sell the house because an owner may be ill or not at home for 10 days, for a sign they may not know about, is a very serious step to take. We ask for some lesser final penalty.**

#### J. Nonconforming signs.

(1) All signs or other advertising structures which were lawful prior to the enactment of this Part 1 or subsequent amendments, and which do not conform to regulations and restrictions under the terms of this Part 1 or amendments thereto, shall constitute nonconforming signs. Unless otherwise provided herein, nonconforming signs shall be replaced to conform to the requirements of this Section when a site is redeveloped **or the sign is in disrepair** as defined in this Part 1. **Rewritten. Old: omitted nonconforming signs are permitted to exist except that they may not be structurally altered or relocated unless there is compliance with the provisions of this chapter. New: Unless otherwise provided herein, nonconforming signs shall be replaced to conform to the requirements of this Section when a site is redeveloped as defined in this Part I.** **FOH: A nonconforming sign may be refurbished and renewed as long as the "site is not being redeveloped. We feel this is too much leeway for interpretation.**

(2) All other signs or other advertising structures which were erected in violation of the law, or which are erected in violation of the provisions hereof, shall be removed, altered or replaced so as to comply with this Section within 6 months of the effective date of this Part 1.

#### K. Sign Standards by Zoning District and Development Type.

##### (1) Agricultural District.

In addition to the requirements set forth in this Section, signs in the Agricultural (AG) district must comply with the following standards:

(a) Commercial signs (including agricultural public events, agricultural retail and any sign in connection with an approved special development or permitted non-residential use). One externally lighted sign, not exceeding 16 square feet in area, on lots not exclusively used for residential purposes, shall be permitted. These signs may be attached flat against the building, or, if freestanding, located not less than 20 feet from the road right-of-way. Freestanding signs may not exceed 6 feet in height.

(b) Permanent institutional signs. One **externally** lighted sign setting forth the name of places of worship, service clubs, civic organizations, public or service centers, public institutions, schools or other similar uses shall be permitted. These signs shall be located not less than 20 feet from the road right-of-way, shall not exceed 40 square feet in area and shall not exceed 8 feet in height

**FOH: see F (4)**

(c) Permanent residential entrance or continuing care retirement community (CCRC) signs are permitted pursuant to the provisions of Subsection C(8).

(d) Construction signs. One sign shall be permitted for all construction contractors, 1 for all professionals and firms and 1 for all lending institutions on sites under construction. Each sign shall not exceed 16 square feet in area, and no more than 3 such signs shall be permitted on 1 site. The signs shall be confined to the construction site, construction shed or trailer and shall be removed within 15 days after the beginning of the intended use of the project

(e) Directional signs. One directional sign, not exceeding 6 square feet in sign area and 6 feet in height above the road grade, shall be permitted per business use if set back 10 feet from the road right-of-way and located at the nearest intersecting arterial road

(f) Home occupation signs. One lighted sign, not exceeding 2 square feet in area, and attached flat against the building, is permitted in conjunction with approved professional or home occupations

(g) For permitted temporary uses (see §267-28), 1 temporary sign shall be permitted, provided that the sign shall not exceed 32 square feet or 6 feet in height and shall be located not less than 20 feet from the road right-of-way

(2) RR, R1, R2, R3, and R4 Residential Districts.

In addition to the requirements set forth in this Section, signs in the RR, R1, R2, R3, and R4 district must comply with the following standards:

(a) Home occupation signs. One lighted sign, not exceeding 2 square feet in area and attached flat against the building, is permitted in conjunction with approved professional or home occupations.

FOH: See F (4)

(b) Freestanding signs may be permitted as a special exception, subject to approval of the Board, provided they are located at least 10 feet from the road right-of-way, shall not exceed ~~6~~ 4 feet in height, and must not have a sign area exceeding 4 square feet. **Old Code allows freestanding and wall signs constructed of wood, brass, bronze, not internally lighted, external lighting permitted. New: Freestanding signs are permitted as Special Exceptions subject to Board approval, if they are located at least 10' from the road right-of-way, not exceeding 6' in height, and not exceeding 4 sq. ft. in sign area.**

FOH: Freestanding signs are not an amenity in residential areas. We are tempted to restrict all freestanding signs in residential areas, but leave this to the discretion of the Board.

(c) Permanent institutional signs. One **external** lighted sign setting forth the name of places of worship, service clubs, civic organizations, public or service centers, public institutions, schools or other similar uses shall be permitted. These signs shall be located not less than 20 feet from the road right-of-way, shall not exceed 32 square feet in area and shall not exceed 6 feet in height. **Old Code allows signs for housing for the elderly, CCRC, nursing homes and assisted living facilities not to exceed 1 sq. ft. of sign for each foot of building frontage, not to exceed 400 sq. ft. No advertising indicating the accessory uses of the CCRC can be placed along the boundary of the property. New: One lighted sign showing the name of places of worship, service clubs, civic organizations, public or service centers, public institutions, schools or similar uses are permitted. Must be located no less than 20' from the road right-of-way, cannot exceed 32 sq. ft. in area nor 6' in height.**

(d) Permanent residential entrance or continuing care retirement community (CCRC) signs are permitted pursuant to the provisions of Subsection C(8). **New**

(e) Construction signs. One sign shall be permitted for all construction contractors, 1 for all professionals and firms and 1 for all lending institutions on sites under construction. Each sign shall not exceed 16 square feet in area and no more than 3 such signs shall be permitted on 1 site. The signs shall be confined to the construction site, construction shed or trailer and shall be removed within 15 days after the beginning of the intended use of the project. **New.**

(f) For permitted temporary uses (see §267-28), 1 temporary sign shall be permitted, provided that the sign shall not exceed 16 square feet or 6 feet in height and shall be located not less than 20 feet from the road right-of-way. **for permitted temporary uses 1 temporary sign is permitted not to exceed 16 sq. ft. or 6' in height located no less than 20' from the road right-of-way.**

(3) RO Residential Office District.

In addition to the requirements set forth in this Section, signs in the RO district must comply with the following standards:

(a) Signs shall be constructed in an unobtrusive manner which compliments the architectural element of the building and reflects the architectural period of the building.

(b) One freestanding sign per parcel, which shall have a maximum of ~~16~~ 8 square feet in area, shall be no more than 6 feet in height, shall be placed perpendicular to the road, and shall be no more

than 20 feet from the right-of-way. Old allows 1 F/S sign per parcel, maximum of 8 sq. ft. in area, 6' in height, placed perpendicular to the road. New allows 1 F/S per parcel, maximum of 16 sq. ft. in area, maximum of 6' in height, placed perpendicular to the road, no more than 20' from the right-of-way.

FOH: Retain old sign measurements.

(c) A wall sign for each use, which shall be attached only to the front of a building, shall be adjacent to the front entryway and shall be no larger than 4 square feet in area.

(d) ~~Freestanding and~~ wall signs shall be constructed primarily utilizing the materials and colors of the primary structure on the site. They may be externally ~~and~~ or internally illuminated. **New.**

FOH: External and internal lighting for one sign is not needed. Freestanding signs should not be allowed in a residential area.

(e) Home occupation signs. One lighted sign, not exceeding 2 square feet in area and attached flat against the building, is permitted in conjunction with approved professional or home occupations

(f) Construction signs. One sign shall be permitted for all construction contractors, 1 for all professionals and firms and 1 for all lending institutions on sites under construction. Each sign shall not exceed 16 square feet in area and no more than 3 such signs shall be permitted on 1 site. The signs shall be confined to the construction site, construction shed or trailer and shall be removed within 15 days after the beginning of the intended use of the project.

(g) Permanent institutional signs. One lighted sign setting forth the name of places of worship, service clubs, civic organizations, public or service centers, public institutions, schools or other similar uses shall be permitted. These signs shall be located not less than 20 feet from the road right-of-way, shall not exceed 32 square feet in area and shall not exceed 6 feet in height.

(h) Permanent residential entrance or continuing care retirement community (CCRC) signs are permitted pursuant to the provisions of Subsection C(8).

(i) For permitted temporary uses (see §267-28), 1 temporary sign shall be permitted, provided that the sign shall not exceed 16 square feet or 6 feet in height and shall be located not less than 20 feet from the road right-of-way

#### (4) VR Village Residential District

In addition to the requirements set forth in this Section, signs in the VR district must comply with the following standards:

(a) Signs shall be constructed in an unobtrusive manner which compliments the architectural element of the building and reflects the architectural period of the building.

(b) Home occupation signs. One lighted sign, not exceeding 2 square feet in area, and attached flat against the building, is permitted in conjunction with approved professional or home occupations

~~(c) Freestanding signs may be permitted as a special exception, subject to the approval of the Board, provided that they are located not less than 10 feet from the road right-of-way, do not exceed 6 feet in height and do not have a sign area exceeding 4 square feet.~~

FOH: . Freestanding signs should not be allowed in a residential area.

(d) ~~Freestanding and~~ wall signs shall be constructed primarily utilizing the materials and colors of the primary structure on the site. They may be externally ~~and~~ or internally illuminated.

FOH: External and internal lighting for one sign is not needed. Freestanding signs should not be allowed in a residential area.

(e) Permanent residential entrance or continuing care retirement community (CCRC) signs are permitted pursuant to the provisions of Subsection C(8).

(f) Construction signs. One sign shall be permitted for all construction contractors, 1 for all professionals and firms and 1 for all lending institutions on sites under construction. Each sign shall not exceed 16 square feet in area and no more than 3 such signs shall be permitted on 1 site. The signs shall be confined to the construction site, construction shed or trailer and shall be removed within 15 days after the beginning of the intended use of the project.

(g) Permanent institutional signs. One **externally** lighted sign setting forth the name of places of worship, service clubs, civic organizations, public or service centers, public institutions, schools or other similar uses shall be permitted. These signs shall be located not less than 20 feet from the road right-of-way, shall not exceed 32 square feet in area and shall not exceed 6 feet in height.

(h) For permitted temporary uses (see §267-28), 1 temporary sign shall be permitted, provided that the sign shall not exceed 16 square feet or 6 feet in height and shall be located not less than 20 feet from the road right-of-way.

(5) VB Village Business

In addition to the requirements set forth in this Section, signs in the VB district must comply with the following standards:

(a) Signs shall be constructed in an unobtrusive manner which compliments the architectural element of the building and reflects the architectural period of the building.

(b) One freestanding sign per parcel, which shall have a maximum of 18 square feet in area, shall be no more than 6 4 feet in height, shall be placed perpendicular to the road, and shall be no more than 20 feet from the right-of-way.

(c) A wall sign for each use, which shall be attached only to the front of a building, shall be adjacent to the front entryway and shall be no larger than 10 square feet in area.

(d) Freestanding and wall signs shall be constructed primarily utilizing the materials and colors of the primary structure on the site. They may be externally ~~and~~ or internally illuminated.

(e) Home occupation signs. One lighted sign, not exceeding 2 square feet in area and attached flat against the building, is permitted in conjunction with approved professional or home occupations

(f) Construction signs. One sign shall be permitted for all construction contractors, 1 for all professionals and firms and 1 for all lending institutions on sites under construction. Each sign shall not exceed 16 square feet in area and no more than 3 such signs shall be permitted on 1 site. The signs shall be confined to the construction site, construction shed or trailer and shall be removed within 15 days after the beginning of the intended use of the project.

(g) Permanent institutional signs. One **externally** lighted sign setting forth the name of places of worship, service clubs, civic organizations, public or service centers, public institutions, schools or other similar uses shall be permitted. These signs shall be located not less than 20 feet from the road right-of-way, shall not exceed 32 square feet in area and shall not exceed 6 feet in height.

(h) Permanent residential entrance signs are permitted pursuant to the provisions of Subsection C(8).

(i) For permitted temporary uses (see §267-28), 1 temporary sign shall be permitted, provided that the sign shall not exceed 16 square feet or 6 feet in height and shall be located not less than 20 feet from the road right-of - way.

(6) B1 Neighborhood Business, B2 Community Business, B3 General Business, Commercial Industrial, Light Industrial and General Industrial Districts

In addition to the requirements set forth in this Section, signs in the B1, B2, B3, CI, LI and GI districts must comply with the following standards:

(a) Signs erected on and attached to commercial or industrial buildings. The total area of all signs erected on, and attached to, commercial or industrial buildings shall not exceed 2 square feet per each linear foot of building width, measured along the front wall or entrance wall of a building. If a building is located on a lot having frontage on 2 streets, then the sign area for each side shall be calculated separately. The following types of signs shall be permitted:

[1] Wall signs.

[2] Projecting signs.

[3] Marquee signs.

[4] Roof signs.

[5] Canopy signs.

[6] Temporary signs.

(b) ~~Two~~ **One** freestanding sign, identifying commercial or industrial activity other than Integrated Community Shopping Centers, shall be allowed on each road frontage if the property has a minimum of 40 feet of road frontage. The sign area shall be calculated on the basis of 1 square foot of sign for every foot of property road frontage, and the maximum sign area shall be determined in accordance with the restrictions contained in Subsection C(2) of this Section. **FOH: A corner parcel would have 4 signs available to it. Too many signs.**

(c) For permitted temporary uses (see §267-28), 1 temporary sign shall be permitted, provided that the sign shall not exceed 32 square feet or 6 feet in height and shall not be located less than 1/3 of the setback requirements of the zoning district where the use is permitted. **FOH: Need finite time restriction,**

(d) Construction signs. One sign shall be permitted for all construction contractors, 1 for all professionals and firms and 1 for all lending institutions on sites under construction. Each sign shall not exceed 32 square feet in area and no more than 3 such signs shall be permitted on 1 site. The signs shall be

confined to the construction site, construction shed or trailer and shall be removed within 15 days after the beginning of the intended use of the project.

(e) Permanent institutional signs. One **externally** lighted sign setting forth the name of places of worship, service clubs, civic organizations, public or service centers, public institutions, schools or other similar uses shall be permitted. These signs shall be located not less than 20 feet from the road right-of-way, shall not exceed ~~54~~ 32 square feet in area and shall not exceed 6 4 feet in height.

(f) Permanent residential entrance or continuing care retirement community (CCRC) signs are permitted pursuant to the provisions of Subsection C(8).

(g) An overall signage plan and architectural renderings of the signs shall be submitted as part of the site plan approval process. The signage shall be compatible in quality, style, color and materials to the building(s). ~~Creative modifications to the standard signage package used by large corporations and innovative sign lighting is strongly encouraged.~~ **New**

FOH: Using the words "is strongly encouraged" does not legally say anything. In that case, if we have no further design standards to impose, we should say nothing in a document of law.

#### (7) Mixed Office District.

In addition to the requirements set forth in this Section, signs in the MO district must comply with the following standards:

(a) Signs erected on and attached to commercial or industrial buildings. The total area of all signs erected on, and attached to, commercial or industrial buildings shall not exceed 1 square foot per each linear foot of building width measured along the front wall or entrance wall of a building. If a building is located on a lot having frontage on 2 streets, then the sign area for each side shall be calculated separately. The following types of signs shall be permitted:

- [1] Wall signs.
- [2] Projecting signs.
- [3] Marquee signs.
- [4] Roof signs.
- [5] Canopy signs.

(b) Signs shall be considered an integral part of the design and shall incorporate the architectural elements and materials utilized. In all instances, consideration shall be taken to ensure each sign does not restrict sight distance for motor vehicle operators. ~~and shall not adversely affect surrounding or facing premises.~~

(c) An overall signage plan and architectural renderings of the signs shall be submitted as part of the site plan approval process. The signage shall be compatible in quality, style, color and materials to the building(s). ~~Creative modifications to the standard signage package used by large corporations and innovative sign lighting is strongly encouraged.~~ **New**

FOH: Using the words "is strongly encouraged" does not legally say anything. In that case, if we have no further design standards to impose, we should say nothing in a document of law.

(d) Freestanding identification signs shall be limited to 1 sign for each road frontage. The maximum size of any sign shall not exceed 50 square feet. The maximum height of the signs shall not exceed 10 feet, and signs must be set back a minimum of 10 feet from the road right-of-way.

(e) Directional information signs shall be adequately provided and design coordinated.

(f) Permanent institutional signs. One **externally** lighted sign setting forth the name of places of worship, service clubs, civic organizations, public or service centers, public institutions, schools or other similar uses shall be permitted. These signs shall be located not less than 20 feet from the road right-of-way, shall not exceed 54 square feet in area and shall not exceed 6 feet in height.

(g) Construction signs. One sign shall be permitted for all construction contractors, 1 for all professionals and firms and 1 for all lending institutions on sites under construction. Each sign shall not exceed 16 square feet in area and no more than 3 such signs shall be permitted on 1 site. The signs shall be confined to the construction site, construction shed or trailer and shall be removed within 15 days after the beginning of the intended use of the project.

(h) The following types of signs shall **not** be permitted for any project located in the MO District:

~~[1] Billboards.~~

~~[2] Flashing, revolving, rotating or changing light intensity or changing color signs.~~

FOH: Not needed

[3] Temporary or portable signs.

#### (8) U.S. Route 40 Commercial Revitalization District (CRD)

In addition to the requirements set forth in this Section, signs in the CRD district must comply with the following standards:

(a) Signs erected on, and attached to, commercial or industrial buildings. The total area of all signs erected on, and attached to, commercial or industrial buildings shall not exceed 2 square feet per each linear foot of building width, measured along the front wall or entrance wall of a building. If a building is located on a lot having frontage on 2 streets, then the sign area for each side shall be calculated separately. The following types of signs shall be permitted:

- [1] Wall signs.
- [2] Projecting signs.
- [3] Marquee signs.
- [4] Roof signs.
- [5] Canopy signs.

(b) An overall signage plan and architectural renderings of the signs shall be submitted as part of the site plan approval process. The signage shall be compatible in quality, style, color and materials to the building(s). ~~Creative modifications to the standard signage package used by large corporations and innovative sign lighting is strongly encouraged.~~ **New**

FOH: Using the words "is strongly encouraged" does not legally say anything. In that case, if we have no further design standards to impose, we should say nothing in a document of law.

(c) ~~Two~~ **One** freestanding sign identifying commercial or industrial activity other than community shopping centers shall be allowed on each road frontage if the property has a minimum of 40 feet of road frontage. The sign area shall be calculated on the basis of 1 square foot of sign for every foot of property road frontage and the maximum sign area shall be determined in accordance with the restrictions contained in Subsection C(2) of this Section.

[1] Signs shall be setback from the right-of-way 1/3 of the required front yard setback for the underlying zone.

(d) One directional sign, not exceeding 4 square feet in area or ~~6~~ 4 feet in height above the road grade, shall be permitted per business use if located at the nearest intersection of any major collector or arterial road and set back the required distance for the district. However, the maximum number of directional signs shall not exceed 3 per intersectional quadrant.

(e) Existing billboards located on sites within the Rte. 40 CRD may remain and may be replaced subject to approval of necessary permits. Should the billboard be located on a site with an existing use, expansion of the use by more than 20% shall require the removal of said billboard. Should a billboard be located as the sole use on a site as of the effective date of the legislation, future development of the site, for other permitted uses, shall require the removal of said billboard. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the owner of a site upon which a billboard is located, within the Rte. 40 CRD, shall be permitted to redevelop the site for other permitted uses or expand the current use by more than 20% subject to the following conditions:

- (1) The site is subject to a lease with a third party for the billboard;
- (2) The owner submits, to the Zoning Administrator, an affidavit that the owner has made good faith efforts to terminate the billboard lease, which efforts have failed;
- (3) The lease term shall end no later than 2 years from the date of the issuance of the building permit for the property and the owner provides evidence of termination of the lease to the Zoning Administrator;
- (4) The owner shall provide to the Zoning Administrator, a bond in an amount equal to 115% of the cost to remove the billboard at the end of the lease term; and
- (5) The owner shall record, among the Land Records of Harford County, Maryland, a permanent easement for the benefit of the County to permit the County to enter upon the property to remove the billboard in the event the billboard is not removed within the time period set forth.

(f) Construction signs. One sign shall be permitted for all construction contractors, 1 for all professionals and firms and 1 for all lending institutions on sites under construction. Each sign shall not exceed 16 square feet in area and no more than 3 such signs shall be permitted on 1 site. The signs shall be confined to the construction site, construction shed or trailer and shall be removed within 15 days after the beginning of the intended use of the project.

(g) Permanent institutional signs. One **externally** lighted sign setting forth the name of places of worship, service clubs, civic organizations, public or service centers, public institutions, schools or other similar uses shall be permitted. These signs shall be located not less than 20 feet from the road right-of-way, shall not exceed 32 square feet in area and shall not exceed 6 feet in height.

(h) For permitted temporary uses (see §267-28), 1 temporary sign shall be permitted, provided that the sign shall not exceed 32 square feet or ~~6~~ 4 feet in height and shall not be located less than 1/3 of the setback requirements of the zoning district where the use is permitted.

(9) Edgewood Neighborhood Overlay District (ENOD)

In addition to the requirements set forth in this Section, signs in the ENOD district must comply with the following standards:

(a) Signs erected on and attached to commercial or industrial buildings. The total area of all signs erected on, and attached to, commercial or industrial buildings shall not exceed 2 square feet per each linear foot of building width measured along the front wall or entrance wall of a building. If a building is located on a lot having frontage on 2 streets, then the sign area for each side shall be calculated separately. The following types of signs shall be permitted:

- [1] Wall signs.
- [2] Projecting signs.
- [3] Marquee signs.
- [4] Roof signs.
- [5] Canopy signs.

(b) An overall signage plan and architectural renderings of the signs shall be submitted as part of the site plan approval process. The signage shall be compatible in quality, style, color and materials to the building(s). ~~Creative modifications to the standard signage package used by large corporations and innovative sign lighting is strongly encouraged.~~ **New** FOH: Using the words "is strongly encouraged" does not legally say anything. In that case, if we have no further design standards to impose, we should say nothing in a document of law.

(c) Freestanding identification signs shall be limited to 1 sign for each road frontage. The maximum size of any sign shall not exceed 50 square feet. The maximum height of the signs shall not exceed 10 feet from the base of the sign, and signs must be set back a minimum of 10 feet from the road right-of-way line.

(d) Signs to identify the use of an occupant shall be designed as part of the architectural design of the building and attached thereto.

(e) Directional information signs shall be adequately provided and design coordinated.

(f) Construction signs. One sign shall be permitted for all construction contractors, 1 for all professionals and firms and 1 for all lending institutions on sites under construction. Each sign shall not exceed 16 square feet in area and no more than 3 such signs shall be permitted on 1 site. The signs shall be confined to the construction site, construction shed or trailer and shall be removed within 15 days after the beginning of the intended use of the project.

(g) Permanent institutional signs. One **externally** lighted sign setting forth the name of places of worship, service clubs, civic organizations, public or service centers, public institutions, schools or other similar uses shall be permitted. These signs shall be located not less than 20 feet from the road right-of-way, shall not exceed 32 square feet in area and shall not exceed 6 feet in height.

(h) The following types of signs are not permitted for any new or redevelopment project located in the Edgewood Neighborhood Overlay District:

~~[1] Billboards.~~

~~[2] Flashing, revolving, rotating or changing light intensity or changing color signs.~~

FOH: Not needed.

(h) One temporary ~~or portable~~ signs shall be permitted in the area designated as the main street only. Signs may not exceed 8 square feet in area, be located so as not to inhibit the normal flow of pedestrian traffic and in front of the specific business that is being advertised.

(10) Integrated Community Shopping Center (ICSC). Signs for an ICSC shall comply with the following:

(a) Signs erected on, and attached to, commercial or industrial buildings. The total area of all signs erected on, and attached to, commercial or industrial buildings shall not exceed 2 square feet per each linear foot of building width measured along the front wall or entrance wall of a building. If a building is located on a lot having frontage on 2 streets, then the sign area for each side shall be calculated separately. The following types of signs shall be permitted:

- [1] Wall signs.
- [2] Projecting signs.
- [3] Marquee signs.
- [4] Roof signs.
- [5] Canopy signs.

(b) An overall signage plan and architectural renderings of the signs shall be submitted as part of the site plan approval process. The signage shall be compatible in quality, style, color and materials to the building(s). ~~Creative modifications to the standard signage package used by large corporations and innovative sign lighting is strongly encouraged.~~ **New**

FOH: Using the words “is strongly encouraged” does not legally say anything. In that case, if we have no further design standards to impose, we should say nothing in a document of law.

(c) Freestanding signs, identifying Integrated Community Shopping Centers are allowed, but the maximum sign area shall be determined independently from the sign area restrictions contained in this Section. Freestanding signs shall not exceed 1 square foot in area for each linear foot of road frontage or ~~200-~~ 32 square feet, whichever is smaller. One such sign shall be permitted for each road frontage, or not more than 2 signs shall be permitted along any frontage which exceeds 500 feet. The sign height shall not exceed ~~40-~~ 20 feet and shall be set back not less than 20 feet from the front property line.

FOH: A 200 square foot sign is entirely too large. A uniform 32 square feet would be adequate given that no other sign will exceed that size.

(d) Directional information signs shall be adequately provided and design coordinated.

(e) The following types of signs shall **not** be permitted in an ICSC:

~~[1] Billboards.~~

~~[2] Flashing, revolving, rotating or changing-light-intensity or changing-color signs.~~

[3] Temporary signs.

FOH: Not needed here.

NOTE: Section on Variances in existing code was omitted in draft code. (§219-17, pg. 14)  
Section on Administration; Violations and Penalties, (§219-18, pg. 14) was also omitted because the Sign Code was incorporated into the Zoning Code.

#### Future Code Results - California

