



HISTORIC
Bellefonte™
Est. 1795

Design Guidelines Manual

Borough Business Signage ■ Historic Districts

Volume I
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HISTORIC
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Est. 1795

Design Guidelines Manual

a publication of

The Borough of Bellefonte

in collaboration with

Downtown Bellefonte, Inc.

Bellefonte Historical and Architectural Review Board (HARB)

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Table of Contents

Introduction

1. Purpose of the Design Guidelines	7
2. Applicability	8

General Guidelines for Business Signs in the Historic District

3. Summary of Borough Ordinance Standards & Approval Process	11
Ordinance Standards for Signs in the Historic District	13
4. Design Guidelines for Signs in the Historic District	15
Getting Started: Dos and Don'ts	17

Guidelines by Sign Type & Borough Ordinance Standards

5. Projecting (Bladed) Signs	20
6. Wall Signs	22
7. Freestanding Signs	24
8. Window Signs	26
9. Awning Signs	28
10. Lighting Guidelines	30
11. Temporary Signs and Banners	32
12. Businesses in Residential Areas	34
Home Occupation Signs	
Bed-and-Breakfast Signs	
13. Interpretive Signs	36
14. Murals & Public Art	38
15. File Management & Permissions	39



Purpose

These design guidelines were developed to help business owners design and implement signs that meet the needs of their business and make a positive contribution to the historic character of Bellefonte Borough.

Business signs help visitors to Bellefonte Borough understand the different commercial opportunities available in the business districts. To be effective, signs must draw attention to the businesses and create an identity for an establishment. They also contribute to the overall image of an active business district, adding variety and liveliness to both the building facades and the streetscape.

Historic Bellefonte Borough has developed a

vision for cohesive character and branding of its business and historic districts. Because business signs are a large part of how the historic district is experienced, signs should reflect the historic character while still balancing the needs of individual businesses.

The signage ordinance sets the enforceable standards for signage, and the process for approval and enforcement. One part of this process is review by the Historical and Architectural Review Board (HARB). This document incorporates relevant parts of the borough ordinance, as well as guidelines and examples that can help navigate the process of review by HARB.

Design Guidelines do:

- ✓ Serve as a base for objective decision-making
- ✓ Protect existing architectural character
- ✓ Improve the aesthetic quality of exterior improvements
- ✓ Prevent incompatible new improvements
- ✓ Increase public awareness of architectural quality
- ✓ Protect the value of investment in a historic structure

Design Guidelines do not:

- × Regulate growth
- × Restrict the uses of a property (use is controlled by zoning regulations)
- × Control interior changes to historic buildings

Applicability

The guidelines in this document apply to all commercial, marketing, and other business signage in both designated historic districts in Bellefonte Borough:

- The local Bellefonte Historic District
- The National Register Historic District

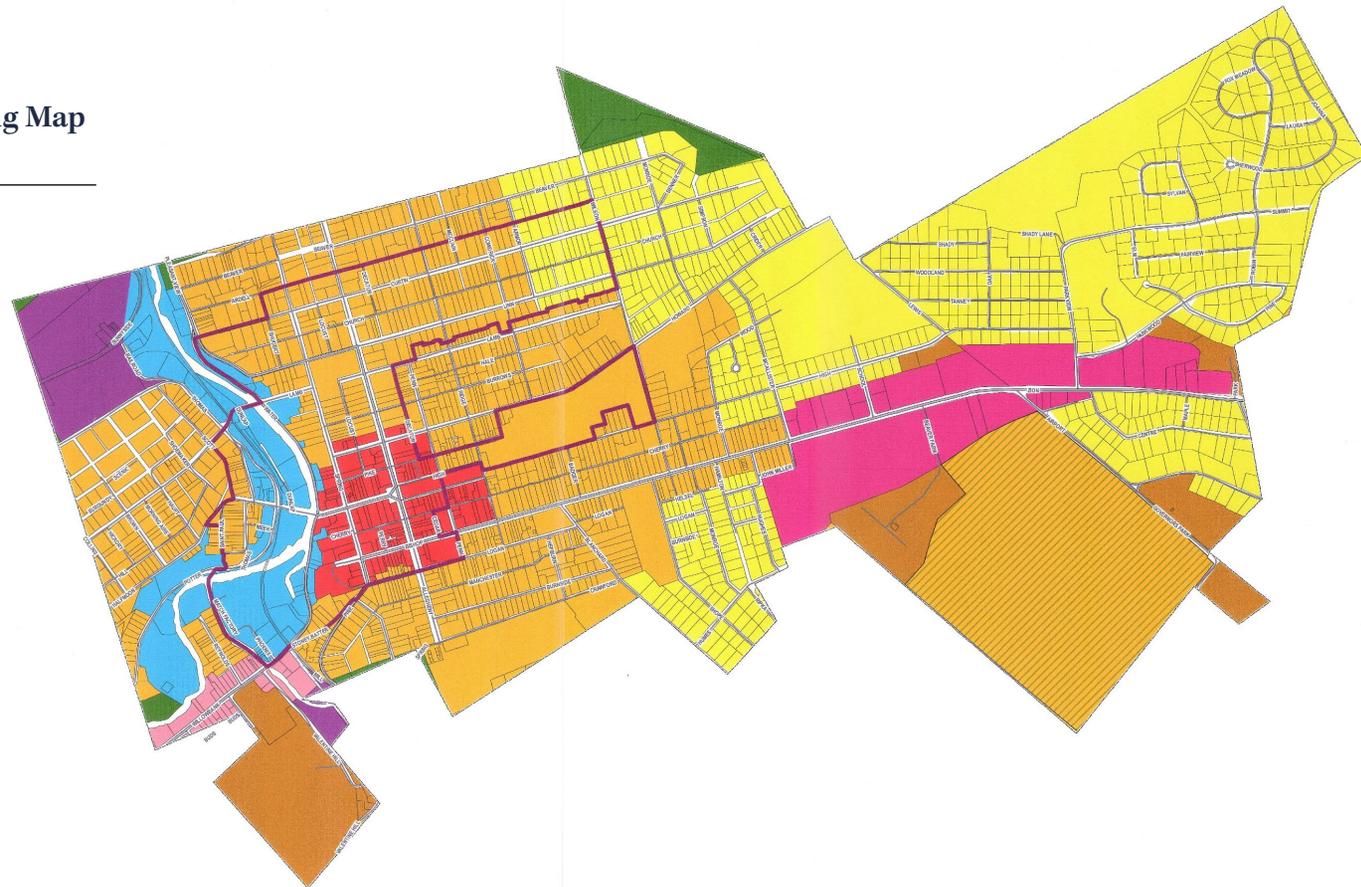
Guidelines apply to all properties in the Historic District, including but not limited to properties zoned:

- Central Business District (CBD)
- Waterfront Business District (WBD)
- Town Residential District (R-2)

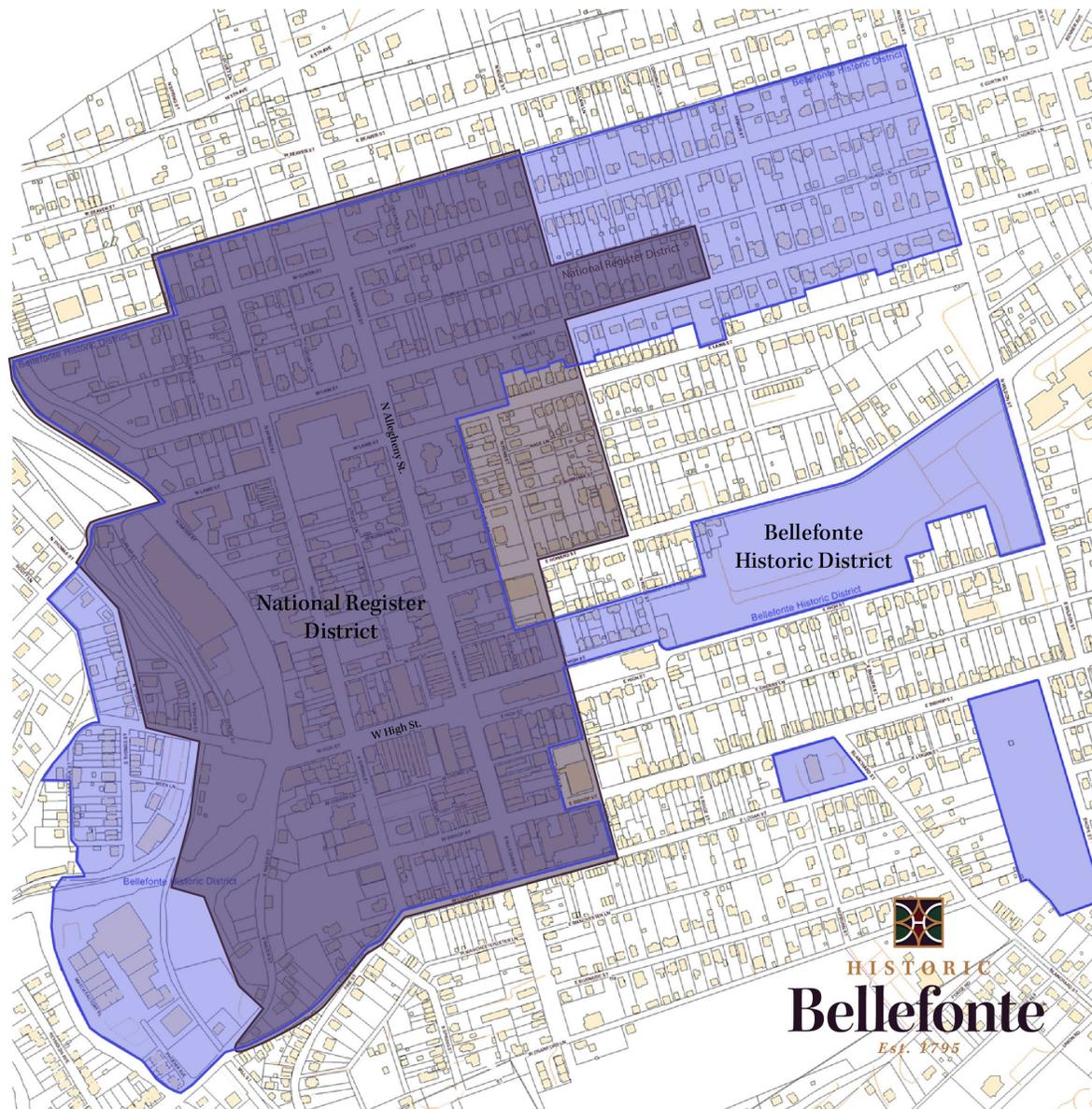
- Suburban Residential District (R-1)

Guidelines, as well as the requirements of the signage ordinance of the Borough of Bellefonte, apply to all newly installed or altered signage. Signs that are pre-existing on a property will be subject to the requirements of the ordinance beginning three years after its passage.

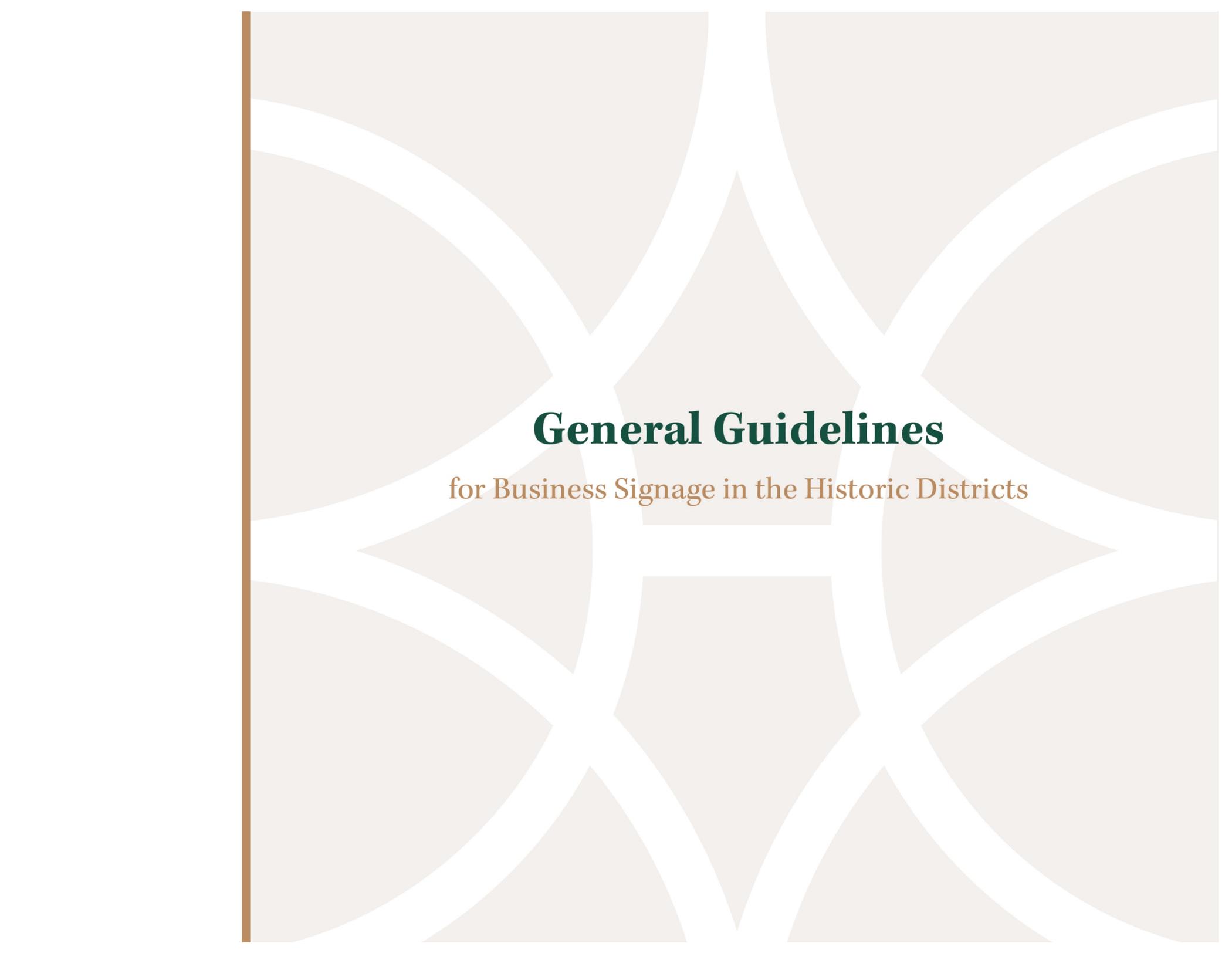
Bellefonte Borough Zoning Map
Rev. 2018



Bellefonte Borough Historic Districts



Note: Historic Bellefonte Armory, owned by Bellefonte Borough, is not shown on this map. The National Register listed property is not within the boundary of the Historic Districts.



General Guidelines

for Business Signage in the Historic Districts



Summary of Borough Ordinance Standards

The following is a summary of the requirements of the signage ordinance of Bellefonte Borough, Article XXI, Section 57. These regulatory standards are enforceable by the Borough Zoning Administrator. In the case of a discrepancy between this guide and the ordinance, the ordinance is to govern.

The signage ordinance serves many purposes, among them to preserve property values and the overall attractive character of Bellefonte Borough. In the Historic Districts these considerations are especially important. To preserve the aesthetic that makes the Historic District special, there are some additional requirements for signage.

The Role of HARB

The Historical and Architectural Review Board (HARB) is an advisory board of experts and stakeholders that makes recommendations to Borough Council. HARB encourages appropriate alterations and new construction in the Historic District to preserve the historic character of the borough. The HARB design review ensures that proposed signs fit in with existing buildings and preserves architectural character. This helps protect and enhance your property values.

Your business sign must be certified by HARB as appropriate for its specific location, even when it meets all the requirements for your zoning district. Not all permitted signs are compatible with all types of buildings in the Historic District, or with the surrounding architecture and streetscape.

The Process for Approval

Application for all business signs must be made through the Zoning Administrator. For signs in the Historic Districts, the Historical and Architectural Review Board (HARB) will review the application and make a recommendation to the Borough Council. Based on this recommendation, Council will determine whether to authorize a certificate of appropriateness. Once the certificate of appropriateness has been authorized, the Zoning Administrator may issue a permit for the proposed sign.

If your sign does not meet the requirements of the ordinance for the underlying zoning district, it may still be issued a certificate of appropriateness if it is proposed based on a historical sign type. Submit documentation to HARB showing that your proposed sign is historically accurate for the location where it will be installed.

Please Don't

- × Install signs without a permit
- × Place signs in the right-of-way
- × Place temporary banners without approval
- × Place temporary signs on your property that do not meet the requirements of the ordinance
- × Place signs for your business off the premises

Please Do!

- ✓ Submit an application to the Zoning Administrator
- ✓ Pay the required fee according to the Borough fee schedule
- ✓ Respond to requests by the Zoning Administrator or HARB for additional information
- ✓ Consider the impact of your sign on neighboring businesses
- ✓ Consider how your sign contributes to the Historic District
- ✓ Use available resources to research the historic condition of your property (see below)
- ✓ Contact Bellefonte Borough for clarification of these guidelines if necessary
- ✓ Install signage consistent with your application once you have received a permit from the Zoning Administrator



The diamond in the center of Bellefonte (from the Fred D Smith Collection, courtesy of Bellefonte Historical and Cultural Association)

Ordinance Standards for All Districts

No more than three (3) signs may be erected on any premises except when a premises is located on a corner lot and has public entrances on two or more public ways, or where a building has both a front and rear public entrance, in which case one additional sign shall be allowed.

More detailed standards are included in the guidelines for specific sign types addressed in this document.

Ordinance Standards for the Historic Districts

Signage in the Historic District generally must still comply with the standards for the underlying zoning district (e.g., Town Residential, Central Business District). In addition, signs in the Historic District are

governed by the special standards in Borough ordinance Section 575-126, Signs in the Historic District.

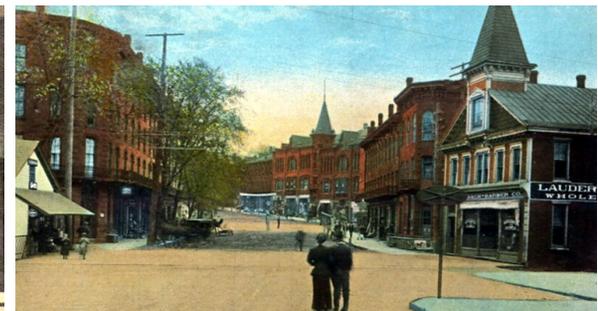
For all sign types, install your sign in a traditional location, placed so that it does not obscure the architectural features of the building.

The colors of the sign should be historically accurate based on your building and the Historic District as a whole. Consider any existing signs on your building and the neighboring buildings when choosing colors, to make sure that they will be compatible.

More detailed standards are included in the guidelines for specific sign types addressed in this document.

See the facing page for permitted and prohibited sign types.

Below: West Bishop Street (left) and West High Street ca. 1910 (from the Fred D Smith Collection, courtesy of Bellefonte Historical and Cultural Association)



Please Don't

Do not use these signs in *any district*:

- × Signs with flashing or moving illumination
- × Signs designed with moving parts, including those moved by wind
- × Light sources that are not shielded from view of adjacent properties
- × Signs that obstruct the view of drivers on a road or driveway
- × Signs that obstruct or detract from traffic signs or controls
- × Signs that obstruct a building exit or windows
- × Signs in the public right-of-way
- × Signs attached to natural objects or utility poles
- × Searchlights or pennants, except with special permission as temporary signs
- × Roof signs

Do not use these signs in the *Historic Districts*:

- × Internally lit cabinet signs
- × LED/LCD signs
- × Billboards
- × Internally lit soft-drink-dispensing machines

Please Do!

Use these signs in the Historic District:

- ✓ Signs framed on a background
- ✓ Signs painted on a building or mounted on a board
- ✓ Individual letters cut out and mounted
- ✓ Small plaques
- ✓ Etched or painted signs on window glass
- ✓ Bladed or projecting signs

Below: The beautifully restored Temple Court Building (left) and a stunning Mansard roof of Historic Bellefonte (right)
(photography by Nancy Perkins)





Guidelines for the Historic District

In addition to the required standards of the signage ordinance, the following guidelines provide suggestions to assist you in meeting expectations for historic appropriateness in the Historic Districts. While HARB reviews signage applications on a case-by-case basis that considers each design in the context of its immediate surroundings, following these guidelines may help you navigate the HARB process and expedite approval for your sign.

General Design Principles

Signage should be harmonious in form, graphic design, scale, and proportion with the character of the building with which it is associated. Multiple signs or types of signage on one site should be compatible with each other. Using multiple signs and other decorative elements, such as awnings, should be planned carefully to avoid a cluttered or disorganized appearance.

Mount signs in such a way as to minimize damage to historic materials. On masonry buildings, it is preferable that bolts extend through mortar joints rather than through masonry units. Wherever possible, existing holes should be used to mount proposed signage.

While creativity is encouraged, simplicity and legibility is a key to good design. In general,

signs should only contain the name and logo of the business. Additional information – including telephone numbers, hours of operation, or services provided – should not be included on the sign. A logo or landmark for the business can be included but should not advertise other specific brands sold as a part of the business. As the business brand allows, consider lettering that is compatible with the time the building was erected.

Materials

Signs within the historic districts should be of a material that was, or could have been, used at the time the building was constructed. Substitute materials that have the same appearance may also be appropriate.

Historically appropriate materials include wood, cast metal, and flat sheet metal. Unfinished pressure treated lumber is not recommended.

Historically appropriate techniques for creating lettering and designs generally include:

- ✓ Paint or gilded characters on a flat surface
- ✓ Individual letters or logos cut-out and mounted on a smooth sign surface or building wall
- ✓ Cast metal signs where the sign board and lettering is of one piece

Techniques generally not historically appropriate include:

- × Sand-blasting of wood (or other methods) leaving raised letters on a heavily-textured background
- × Spray painted or air-brushed characters that have indistinct or blurred edges

Color

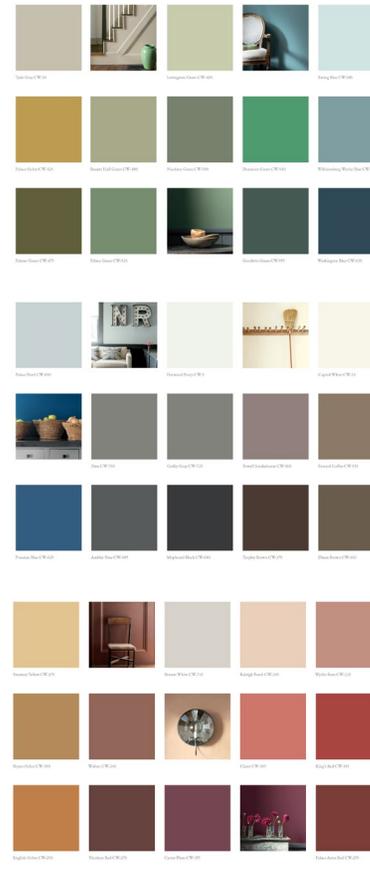
Colors used should be consistent with the color scheme of the structure to which they relate

Fluorescent, neon, or other bright colors should be avoided, and used only as accent colors as business branding requires. Historic colors and earth tone or neutral colors are recommended.

For reference, images of some historical commercial paint color palettes are shown here for reference only (far right). Most modern “historical” palettes, such as Colonial Williamsburg by Benjamin Moore (at right) incorporate modern tastes into their palette. These colors are often appropriate for inclusion in signage even if some swatches are not based on historical research. Refer to HARB for guidance.

Business signs are certainly not limited to historic colors, but are encouraged to use a compatible palette. One tool that may assist business owners in choosing unique but compatible colors for their signs is an online color scheme generator, for example the Colors Color Scheme Generator at <https://colors.co/>.

Colonial Williamsburg by Benjamin Moore



file:///C:/Users/csarson/Downloads/Williamsburg%20Color%20Card.pdf

Period Color Sample Chips



<http://oldhouseblog.blogspot.com/2010/12/historic-paint-colors-for-victorian.html>

Getting Started: Dos and Don'ts

This guide uses examples of real-world signage to illustrate Guidelines with preferred and less preferable signage in the Historic Districts. In some cases, the signage pictured

under the left column is prohibited by the ordinance. Reading the notes associated with each entry will help you understand why a particular image is preferred or not.

Please Don't



Don't use flags that are oversized, obstruct the pedestrian way, obscure architectural features, or are distracting to drivers.



Don't use temporary or advertising signage that is oversized or contains any moving components. Don't obstruct the right-of-way or pedestrian way. Off-premises temporary signs or advertising is prohibited.

Please Do!



Use flags that attract the attention of pedestrians, are clearly associated with the building, and are proportionate to permanent signage and the size of your storefront.



Use temporary signs that attract the attention of pedestrians, are associated with the building where the service is provided, and are proportionate to your building.

Please Don't



Don't use internally lighted plastic cabinet signs of any type.



Avoid a cluttered appearance and redundant signs.



Don't obscure architectural features on your building or neighboring buildings with oversized or misplaced signage.

Please Do!



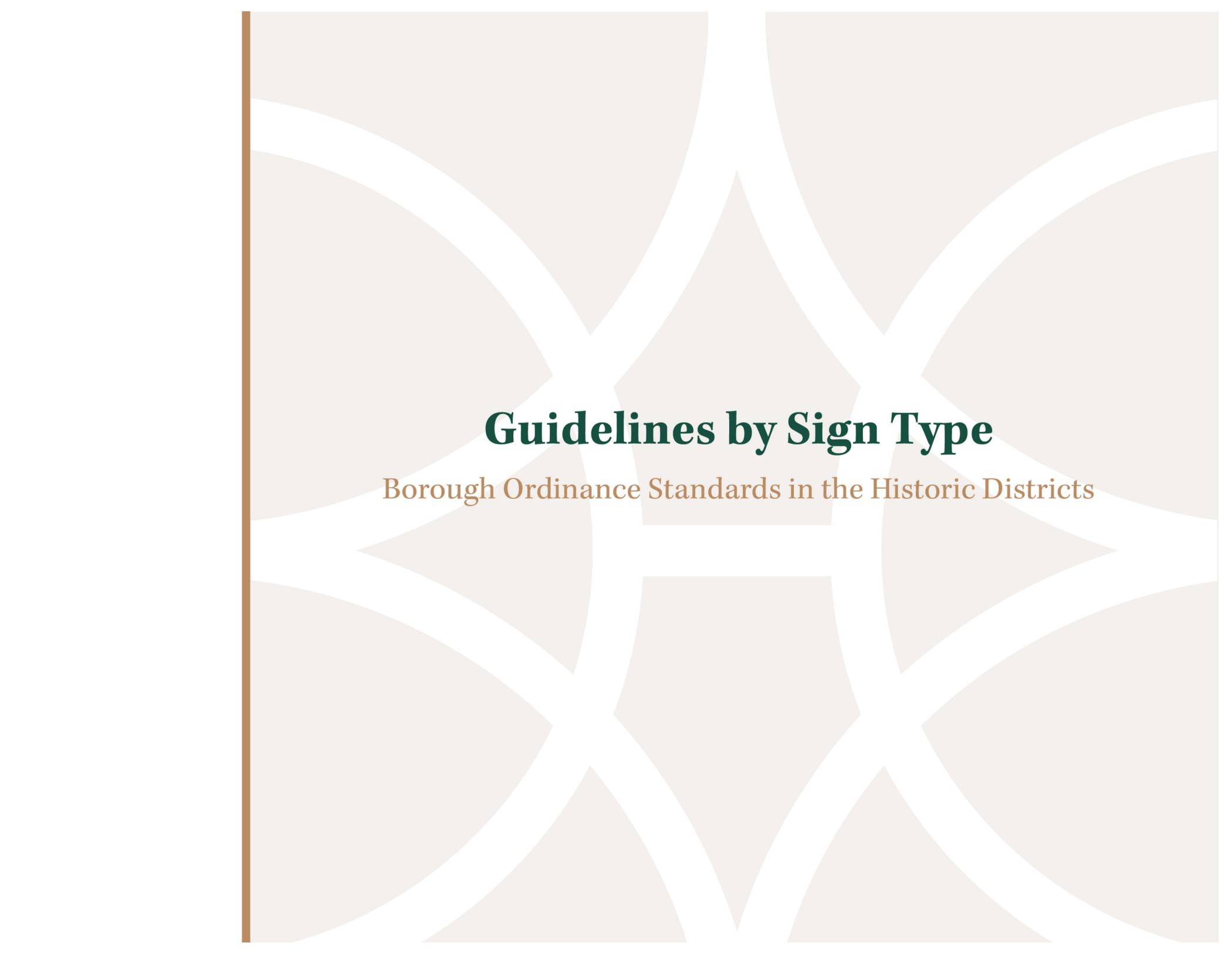
Use historically appropriate, externally lighted sign panels.



Choose coordinated signage with only one of each sign type per frontage.

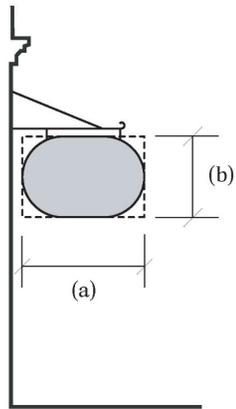


Choose unique and appropriate pedestrian-oriented signage and awnings that fit the architecture and scale of your building.



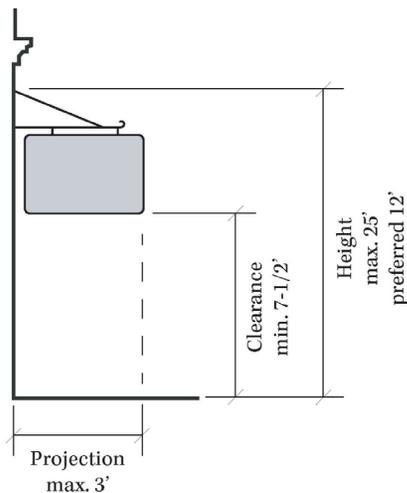
Guidelines by Sign Type

Borough Ordinance Standards in the Historic Districts



Sign area = (a) x (b)

For an irregularly-shaped sign panel, calculate the area as a rectangle that encompasses all parts of the sign face (shown by dashed line).



Projecting (Bladed) Signs

A projecting, or bladed, sign projects from and is supported by the wall of a building.

Standards

A business location may not have more than one projecting sign, unless it is on a corner lot or has public entrances on more than one side.

Each sign may have a maximum area of six square feet per side. See the figure, below, for how to determine the area.

Signs may not project more than 3' from the face of the building. The maximum height of all signs in Bellefonte Borough is 25'. Projecting signs that are hung over a sidewalk or public right-of-way must also have a minimum clearance of 7 1/2' below the lowest part of the sign so that pedestrians can pass safely.

Guidelines

Projecting signs are mounted on a building using horizontal standards or brackets. The bracket and sign board should be sized such that the sign board is not touching the building face.

While the Borough ordinance permits projecting sign brackets to be installed up to 25' above the sidewalk, in the Historic Districts it is preferable to have a pedestrian-oriented signage guidelines. For effective pedestrian signage, the sign panel should hang so that the top of the panel is not more than 12' above the sidewalk. If the storefront also uses an awning, install the sign above or below the awning so pedestrians' view of the sign is not obstructed.

Please Don't



Don't use historically inappropriate materials, fonts or excessive color, or internally illuminated signs of any type



Don't place signs in a way that obstructs historical features, is historically inappropriate, is above pedestrian height, or is blocked by an awning

Please Do!

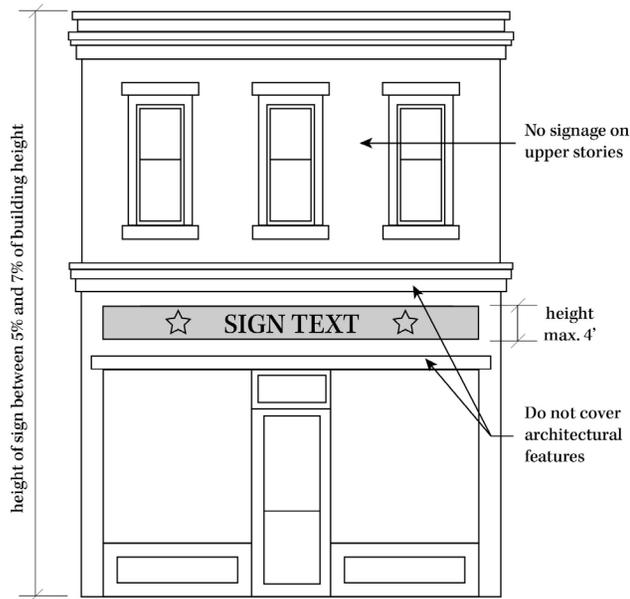


Consider historic context when choosing font, color, and layout; mount your sign at pedestrian height



Showcase your unique brand in a way that complements your building's architecture and respects neighboring properties

Wall Signs



A wall sign is attached directly to or painted on a building wall. Types of wall signs that are appropriate for the historic district include:

- ✓ Signs framed on a background
- ✓ Signs painted on a building or mounted on a board
- ✓ Individual letters cut out and mounted
- ✓ Small plaques

Standards

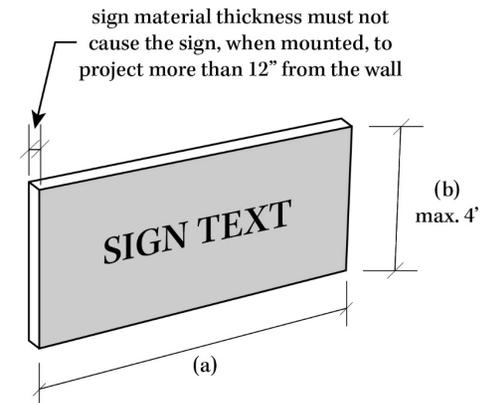
A wall sign must not extend above the roof line, or beyond the left or right edge of a building. The sign board plus any raised lettering or logo must not project more than 12" from the wall.

Each sign may have a maximum area of 6 square feet, and be no more than 4' in height.

Guidelines

Proportion of the wall sign should respect the proportions of the building façade. For buildings with more than one story, wall signs should have a height of between 5% and 7% of the overall building height. A wall sign should never cover any part of a window, window frame or ornamentation.

Signs and lettering should be used on the first story only. Appropriate materials for wall signs are wood or fiber-cement board panels.



Please Don't



Don't place signs on the second floor of the building; cover the cornice line; or use historically inappropriate materials, frames, or finishes; or place sign so that it projects more than 12" from the wall



Don't use any internally lighted components

Please Do!

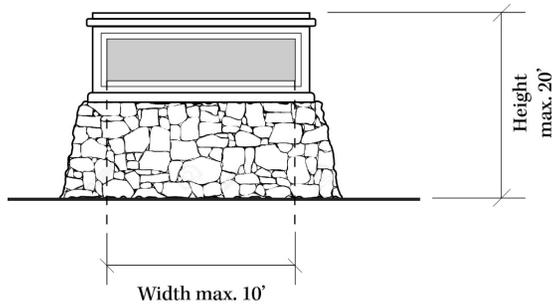


Consider historic context when choosing font, color, and layout; gold leaf paint was common in Victorian and early-20th-century signage. Unique or contemporary signs can selectively incorporate historically appropriate materials, techniques or colors to complement the building they are applied to while making your brand stand out.

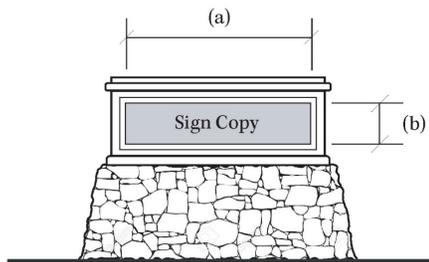


Use raised lettering mounted directly on the wall; use small plaques to reinforce a consistent brand identity; retain and reflect existing historic lettering (see "Broadbent - Stiteler")

Monument Sign dimensions

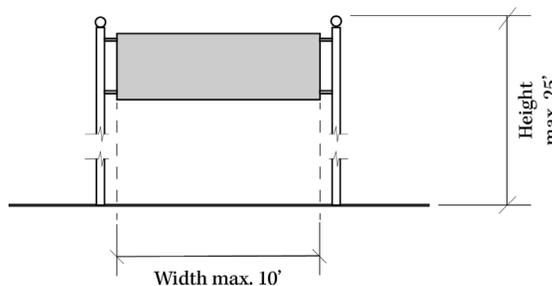


Calculating the area of a sign face



No sign copy on base:
Sign area = (a) x (b)

Pole Sign dimensions



Freestanding Signs

A monument, or ground, sign is freestanding, completely self-supporting and has its base on the ground, versus on poles or supports.

A pole, or pylon, sign is a freestanding sign on a supporting structure that holds the sign face above the ground. Even if the supporting poles are covered, the sign falls under the guidelines for pole signs.

Standards

All parts of the freestanding sign must be behind the property line and out of the public right-of-way, but can be placed within the building setback.

Only one freestanding sign is permitted, unless a corner lot has public entrances facing more than one public way.

Monument signs are limited to 20' in height, and pole signs may be 25' tall. Sign area is limited to 25 square feet per face (50 square feet for two faces). No sign face can measure more than 10' in any direction.

Guidelines

A monument sign base should be compatible with and, if appropriate, incorporate the

materials of the building into its construction, including both the color and pattern of any masonry building elements.

In no case should a monument sign be constructed of masonry materials that are not found in the neighborhood where it is placed. This includes rustic-style and cultured stone products that may be popular but are not specifically intended for use in Historic Districts. Brick colors, masonry patterns, and any concrete caps used are all design elements that should have some basis in existing historic elements of the district.

Monument signs that include copy or logos on the base of the sign are not historically appropriate.

Pole sign panels that stretch to the ground are inappropriate in the Historic District.

The top of the sign should not rise above the typical top of the street level storefront of a traditional commercial building.

Refer to general Historic District guidelines and wall sign guidelines for design of the sign face.

Please Don't



Don't choose signs, however attractive, that use a material or style that is not consistent with existing architectural style, such as this rustic masonry and contemporary panel



Organize text and graphics for hierarchy, and don't use excessive bold graphics that distract from the message. Don't attach extraneous sign parts or advertise multiple services.

Please Do!



Post and Panel

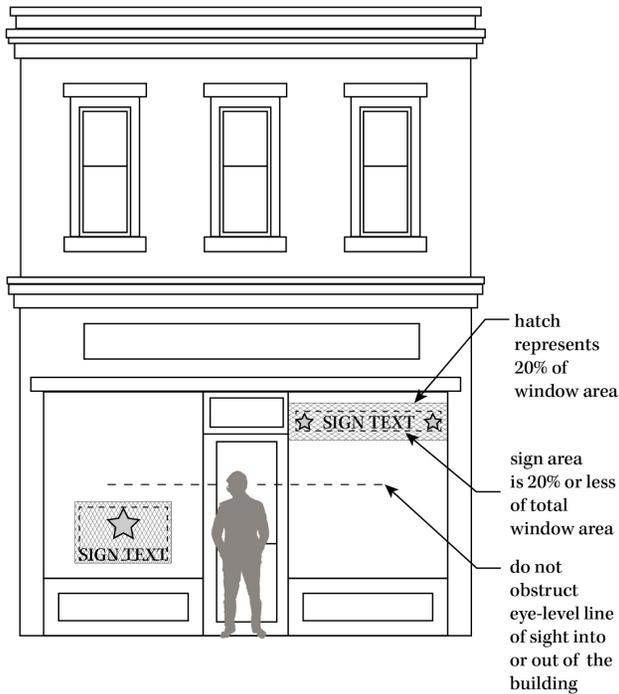


Match sign material to the style of the building it serves and neighboring properties. Consider historic context when choosing font, color, and layout.



Select a sign size that is appropriate for the proposed location. Size the sign face to contain all necessary information.

Window Signs



A window sign includes any picture, symbol, or text that communicates the activity, business, commodity, event, sale, or service that can be seen from outside. In the historic district, appropriate window signs include:

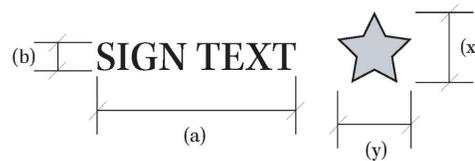
- ✓ Etched signs
- ✓ Signs painted on the window glass

Standards

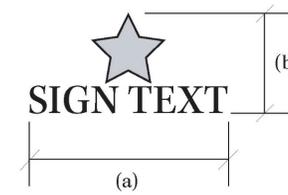
Window signs in the Historic Districts must cover no more than 20% of the glass on the window(s) where they are applied.

Graphics below show methods of determining the area of different orientations and compositions of window signs.

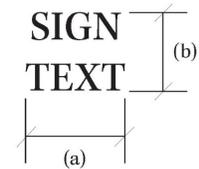
Calculating the area of a Window Sign



$$\text{Sign area} = (a) \times (b) + (x) \times (y)$$



$$\text{Sign area} = (a) \times (b)$$



$$\text{Sign area} = (a) \times (b)$$

Guidelines

Window signs should be located so that they do not block the view into the business from the street, or from the business to the outside. For example, lettering should not be placed to block the view of patrons seated in the window of a restaurant. On a shop window, signs should not block the view into the shop at pedestrian eye level.

As with any business signage, colors, fonts and graphics should be compatible with other signage used for your business, neighboring properties, and the Historic Districts in general. Gilded lettering with flourishes and serifs was very common during Victorian times, and should be used when appropriate on buildings from this era.

Please Don't

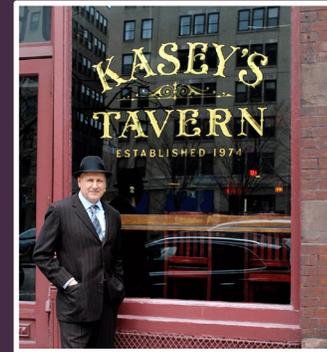


Don't opt for large letter size, excessive use of primary colors, or extraneous information such as a phone number that are inappropriate for a Historic or pedestrian-oriented district



Don't choose a trendy, contemporary or overly large graphic that is inappropriate for the Historic Districts

Please Do!



Consider historic context when choosing font, color, and layout; gold leaf paint was common in Victorian and early-20th-century signage



If additional information is to be provided in a window sign, it should be clearly subordinate to the business name and should not obstruct the view

Awning Signs

Awning signs refer to any signage that is an integral part of, or is attached to, an awning, canopy, or other protective cover on a door, window, or outside area. Marquees are not considered canopies.

Standards

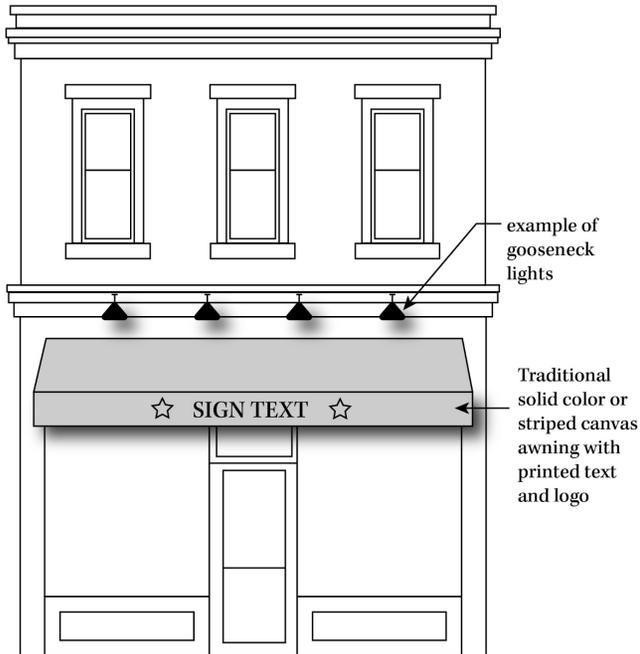
Awning signs are permitted in the Historic Districts, provided the awning is of traditional material (e.g., canvas) and design (e.g., retractable and sloping rather than fixed or rounded).

Guidelines

Awnings that do not match the character of the Historic Districts can have a big positive – or negative – impact on the aesthetics of a neighborhood. Avoid awnings that stand out in terms of color, scale, or material from neighboring properties with awnings.

Historical photos or other drawings can be particularly useful in determining whether awnings are appropriate for the type of architecture and ornamentation of your building.

Awning signs should never be backlit. Rather, light awning signs with gooseneck or other traditional external illumination.



Please Don't



Don't use colors that detract from the character of your building or neighboring properties



Don't use fixed awnings or a backlit awning sign

Please Do!



Use a retractable canvas awning



Stick to traditional colors and patterns that are compatible with neighborhood character



Lighting Guidelines

Lighted signs help activate a business district and draw attention to businesses that are open in the evening. Lighting for your sign and storefront should be carefully designed to provide the necessary illumination while avoiding negative impacts on the surrounding businesses and streetscape.

Standards

No sign in the Historic District, including those on soft-drink-dispensing machines, shall be internally lighted. Illumination of signs in the Historic District shall be either by neon or by indirect lighting only, and shall be shielded or otherwise arranged to prevent glare.

Lighting must not in any way distract drivers or detract from the visibility of traffic signals or signage.

Guidelines

Due to advances in technology, there are far more lighting options available today than would have been available during the historic period of significance. This does not mean that newer lighting types or styles cannot be

appropriate in the Historic District. Some considerations include:

Color temperature. LED lights are a much “cooler” temperature than other types of lighting. Opt for LEDs that offer a “warm” light color. Fluorescent bar lights may also be used, but should match the traditional incandescent range of warm color (2,700K-3,000K preferred) to maintain the historic character of the district. Ensure that lighting on bladed signs is positioned to illuminate both faces of the sign board.

Lighting direction. Owners of valuable historic buildings may want to highlight architectural character or signage with uplighting. Uplighting is not appropriate in the Historic District and contributes to light pollution. Opt instead for gooseneck fixtures that focus light on signage and facades while minimizing negative impacts. During daytime hours, traditional style fixtures add character and interest to facades if installed appropriately.

Ensure that lighting on bladed or other two-sided signs is positioned to illuminate both faces of the sign board.

Please Don't



Don't use any internally lighted cabinet, light box, internally lit letters or other components



Don't add non-traditional illumination that detracts from the message of your sign, or does not match your overall storefront lighting

Please Do!



Explore the many styles and finishes of external lighting that can add interest to your signage during daytime and evening hours



Carefully consider how contemporary lighting trends can be selectively used to minimize negative impacts

Temporary Signs & Banners

A temporary sign announces or advertises a special, limited-time offer. Permitted types of temporary signs include:

- ✓ A-frame or sandwich board signs
- ✓ Feather signs
- ✓ Banners
- ✓ Real estate signs

Temporary signs announcing events or sales at Historic District businesses do not require HARB review or a certificate of appropriateness, but still need to meet the requirements of the Borough ordinance Section 575-124G.

Standards

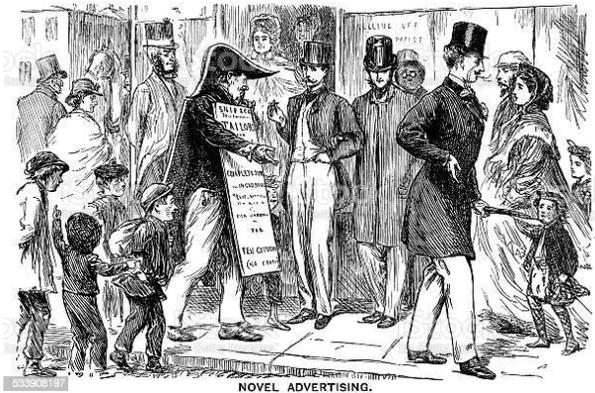
Only one sign per event may be posted at each public entrance. A sign cannot be larger than 30% of the display window or public entrance, and never more than 10 square feet. This includes all outdoor signage such as pennants, feather signs, and banners.

Temporary signs must be removed after the advertised event or promotion. Signs cannot be posted for more than 28 consecutive days, then must be removed for at least 14 days before posting another temporary sign. Temporary signs cannot be displayed for more than 84 days out of the calendar year.

Guidelines

Historically, advertising messages were applied to rigid boards or pasted on walls or in windows. The original sandwich boards of Victorian times were worn by men paid to advertise the event or product depicted (see “Novel Advertising,” below). These signs were by their nature temporary and not a fixed element of the business district. Temporary signage should be used for the minimum period of time necessary to attract attention to a special event or offer. Temporary sign types should never be used continuously as a way to supplement permanent signage.

Temporary signs should be proportional to the storefront where they are placed. They should never cover windows or other architectural features of your building or obscure neighboring structures.



Please Don't



Don't cover windows, use redundant signs, obscure architectural elements, advertise the brands sold on the premises, or use temporary sign types such as feather signs to supplement permanent signage.



Don't use redundant signage that results in a cluttered appearance or is distracting to drivers. If it is necessary to use large or historically inappropriate advertising for a special event or offer, limit signage in number and size to what is allowed by the ordinance, for the minimum reasonable time before the event.



Don't hang banners or signs on fences, utility poles, trees, freestanding walls, or other architectural elements or furnishings.

Please Do!



Use sandwich boards or other pedestrian-oriented signage that can be customized with appropriate colors, materials, fonts and graphics to coordinate with your building and neighboring buildings. Take care not to obstruct the pedestrian way.



Use eye-catching banners or signage for limited-time special events to draw attention to your business, such as this "grand opening" banner. Banners should be neatly hung and never obscure the window frame.



Businesses in Residential Districts

Businesses located in a residential district must be especially sensitive to their context to preserve residential character and property values.

Standards

All business signs, except for places of worship or recreation facilities, are prohibited in low- and medium-density residential districts. In high-density residential districts, wall signs are permitted for a boardinghouse or rooming house, nonprofit club, funeral home, or similar businesses.

Illuminated signs are prohibited in all residential districts except for street address signs, doctor's offices, churches and other places of worship, and public safety signage.

Signs may be a maximum of 25 square feet (50 square feet on a double-faced sign).

Special standards apply to:

Home Occupation Signs

Home-based businesses may have one sign, not more than one square foot in size.

Bed and Breakfast Signs

Signs may be double-faced and may not exceed six (6) square feet on any one side. Sign height must be in scale with the building, subject to site analysis by HARB.

Signs can be mounted on the building, on post(s), or on brackets.

Signs are to be made with wood, precision signboard, or wrought iron. Sign colors must be coordinated with the palette of the house. Sign lettering should reflect the period of the building's construction.

Lighting is permitted, although the amount and style is subject to site analysis by HARB.

Guidelines

The top of a sign in the residential district should not rise above the typical front porch railing height of a traditional residential building.

It is generally not recommended to mount business signs on structures that were not originally designed as commercial buildings. A double pole mounted sign or cantilevered sign is preferred.

Because business signs in residential districts may be smaller and better blend in with their context, it is important that the lettering is in a font and size that is readable. A recommended minimum letter height of 3" is readable at up to 100' away, with maximum visual impact at 30'. For more ornate fonts, a larger size or high-contrast color choices should be considered.

Please Don't



Don't add extraneous ornamentation or structures, or use stylized fonts that are historically inappropriate



Don't use a sign that is so small, ornate, or uses such colors that it becomes illegible from the public right-of-way

Please Do!



Use historically appropriate colors and fonts. For a small, ornate font use techniques such as high-contrast color or an enlarged capital in the logo in order to increase readability



Context-sensitive projecting signs are permitted. For very small lettering, consider using a more readable font, as in "Bed & Breakfast," above

Interpretive Signage

All interpretive signage installed in Bellefonte Borough must comply with National Park Service (NPS) guidelines. Following these guidelines will ensure that interpretive signs are consistent, effective, and accessible.

Signs mounted on posts or pylons shall overhang a maximum of 12 inches, with a height between 27 and 80 inches above the ground. Signs should never be installed in a way that they reduce the clear width of the path required for ADA accessibility (generally 36 inches).

The NPS guidelines include specifications for graphic and print content and should

be referenced when developing individual sign content.

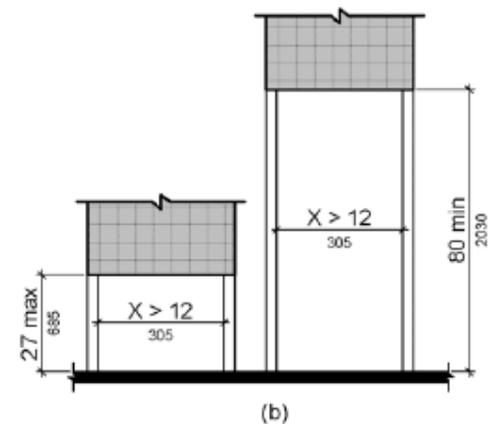
All content must be verified as true and correct with the assistance of HARB, and the final design approved by Bellefonte Borough

References

For details and explanations of these guidelines, see:

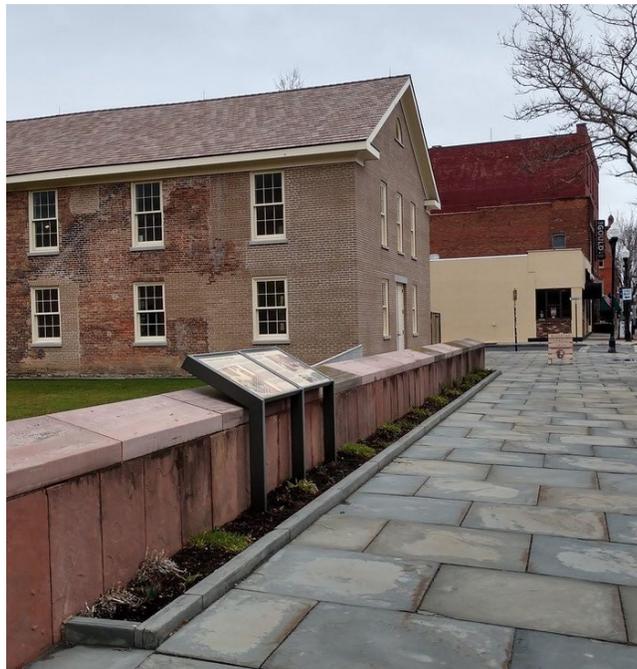
Programmatic Accessibility Guidelines for National Park Service Interpretive Media, Version 2.3, May 2017

Standard Detail for Interpretive Sign Dimensions National Park Service, 2017



The standard NPS double post mounted interpretive signage design (below, left and right), with the panel angled between 30 and 45 degrees, is shown installed in two ways. The recommended height for this type of signage is 32 inches from the bottom of the exhibit frame to finished grade.

Custom signage mounts (right) can contribute to the character of a site, but still must meet the specifications found in the NPS guidelines. The recommended height for such upright exhibits is between 24 and 36 inches from the bottom of the exhibit frame to finished grade, depending on sign panel size.



Murals and Public Art



All murals and public art in the Historic District are subject to HARB review and must obtain a certificate of appropriateness, as well as a permit from Bellefonte Borough.

Murals

A mural is a painting located on the side of the building whose content, generally, should reflect a cultural, historic or environmental event(s) or subject matter from the district.

Mural content should be appropriate to the Historic District and the immediate surroundings. A mural may not depict a commercial product, brand name or symbolic logo that is currently sold (this does not apply to historic “ghost signs” painted on historic buildings).

A mural should be incorporated as an element of the overall building design. It should complement the wall on which it is placed. A mural should never obscure key features of a historic building. In order to preserve historic architecture, a mural may be painted on boards that are then mounted on the building wall.

Examples of murals shown on this page are located in (top to bottom) Claysville, PA; Montgomery, MN; and St. Marys, PA.

Public Art

Public Art should be planned as an integral component of the urban environment and should be strategically located to enhance outdoor public space.

Public art should be compatible with the historic context. An art installation should not impede the ability to interpret the historic character of the district. Locate public art so that it does not obscure the character of historic buildings.

Art installed on a historic property should be compatible with the historic resource. It should preserve key features that contribute to the property’s significance. Art installations must be reversible so that key features of the property remain intact.

File Management and Permissions

The following is a discussion of file management and permission standard operating procedures for Bellefonte Borough.

File Location

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File Permissions

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Internal Request Procedures

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