

Zoning Code Section 11.12 D. Downtown Sign District

11.12 D. DOWNTOWN SIGN DISTRICT

1. Purpose. The purpose of this section is to establish regulations for properties within the Downtown Design Overlay District and the South Main Historic District, the boundaries of which may be amended from time to time. The provisions of this sign district are intended to reflect the need to preserve, protect and promote the unique historic character and architecture of Downtown Fond du Lac. The regulations shall apply to any new sign, and/or the restoration, relocation, replacement, modification or alteration any existing sign or sign area.
2. Approval. The business owner, property owner, and/or sign contractor shall submit photographs and/or a rendering of the affected building, and details of the proposed sign including design, size, location, materials, lighting and color to the Community Development Department for review and approval by the Downtown Architectural Review Board prior to the issuance of a building permit as may be required by this section. Certain minor actions that do not affect the character of the Downtown Design Overlay District may be approved by the Community Development Department such as the repair, modification or replacement of an approved sign. Community Development staff shall determine if a structure and/or site is of historic or architectural significance, and if so, whether requirements of the Historic Preservation Ordinance apply. Where a property is a City-designated historic site or structure, the Historic Preservation Commission shall review new signage, and if compatible, approve; review by the Downtown Architectural Review Board is not required.

Where an applicant wishes to contest a decision of the Downtown Architectural Review Board, the applicant may submit a written appeal to the Board of Appeals. The Board of Appeals shall consider the regulations of this ordinance, the *Downtown Fond du Lac Partnership Design Guidelines*, and the particular circumstances of a proposed project as it relates to the property and surrounding area, in action to affirm, modify or deny an appeal of a decision by the Downtown Architectural Review Board.

3. Sign Design. Sign shape, color, materials and illumination shall be complimentary to the character and architecture of the building for which it is affixed. Signage shall reflect, to the extent practical and appropriate, the *Downtown Fond du Lac Partnership Design Guidelines*, as may be amended from time to time by the Downtown Fond du Lac Partnership.

Zoning Code Section 11.12 D. Downtown Sign District

4. Projecting Signs

- a. Sign area shall not exceed 8 square feet in area and 6 inches in thickness; the supporting arm shall be decorative in design. For a building with a linear frontage greater than 40 feet, the maximum sign area is 12 square feet.
- b. On the main façade of a building, one projecting sign and one wall sign may be permitted. The total area of a projecting sign and a wall sign shall not exceed the maximum for the façade as allowed by Section 11.12 H. Schedule X. Where an awning with signage and a projecting sign are utilized, wall signage is not allowed on that particular façade.
- c. The top of a projecting sign shall not be installed above the window sill of the second story or 18 feet above grade, whichever is less.
- d. No projecting sign shall interfere with public fixtures installed within the right-of-way including, but not limited to, street trees, street lights, directional signs, traffic devices or streetscape elements.
- e. No projecting cabinet sign installed prior to September 1, 2012 shall be modified, altered, refurbished or replaced, including the replacement or refacing of sign panels, except where such sign has previously been approved by the Downtown Architectural Review Board. Special consideration may be given to modification or replacement of a projecting cabinet sign that is architecturally or historically significant, or unique in design or structure to complement the building to which it is affixed. A nonconforming projecting cabinet sign shall be removed prior to the installation of any new signage for the property.

5. Wall Signs

- a. No sign shall be affixed to a building or installed so as to obscure the architectural features or openings of the building.
- b. Ground floor businesses in multi-story buildings may not install wall signs higher than the bottom of the second floor window sill.
- c. A wall sign shall be placed no higher than the bottom window sill of the second floor or 18 feet, whichever is less. No sign shall obstruct any window, door, fire escape, stairway or any

Zoning Code Section 11.12 D. Downtown Sign District

opening intended to provide air, egress or ingress for any building or structure. Signs shall not obscure the prominent architectural features of a building such as ornamental masonry.

- d. No wall cabinet sign installed prior to September 1, 2012 shall be modified, altered, refurbished or replaced, including the replacement or refacing of sign panels, except where such sign has previously been approved by the Downtown Architectural Review Board. Special consideration may be given to modification or replacement of a wall cabinet sign that is architecturally or historically significant, or unique in design or structure to complement the building to which it is affixed. A nonconforming wall cabinet sign shall be removed prior to the installation of any new signage for the property.
6. Hand Painted Signs.
 - (a) Where a projecting sign and/or wall sign is permitted, the sign composition may include commercial or professional hand painted art work (text, graphics, background, etc.).
 - (b) Hand painted signs shall be kept in good condition for the life of same, taking care to address color fading, degradation of materials and vandalism. A hand painted sign shall be removed when it becomes unsightly and/or is not maintained.
 - (c) Murals: See Section 11.12 E.18.
 7. Prohibited Signs.
 - (a) Electronic message board signs; manual changeable copy signs.
 - (b) Inflatable, moving, animated and revolving signs.
 - (d) Sheet metal, sheet plastic and thin plywood (less than $\frac{3}{4}$ inches thick) and other thin flat materials including stick-on vinyl lettering, except when such materials are used as backing panels.