

CHAPTER 173

SIGNS

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173.01 INTENT AND PURPOSE.

Sign regulations, including provisions to control the type, design, size, location, illumination, and maintenance thereof, are hereby established to protect the public health, safety, convenience, comfort, prosperity and general welfare and to achieve the following purposes:

- (a) To promote attractive residential districts and protect property values therein;
- (b) To provide for reasonable and appropriate methods and conditions for advertising goods sold or services rendered in business districts; and
- (c) To provide for appropriate and harmonious identification of uses and services within office, and industrial districts;
- (d) To promote the public health, safety and general welfare by avoiding conflicts between signs and traffic control devices, avoiding traffic hazards, and reducing visual distractions and obstructions;
- (e) To protect public safety by requiring the removal or repair of damaged signs;
- (f) To limit visual clutter in order to protect and preserve the aesthetic quality and physical appearance of the Township; and

- (g) To establish conditions under which non-conforming signage must be brought into conformity.

173.02 NO LONGER USED. (Adopted 12/12/2016 – Z-2016-1)

173.03 MEASUREMENT STANDARDS.

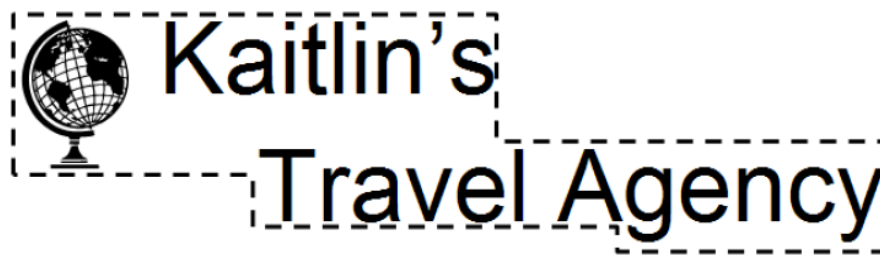
Measurement and computation of the area of signs permitted under this chapter shall be made in accordance with the following:

- (a) The area of a sign shall be measured within a single continuous perimeter enclosing the extreme limits of text, graphics, and other devices used to attract attention, together with any frame as shown in figure 1, or other material or color forming an integral part of the display or used to differentiate such sign from the background against which it is placed, but excluding the necessary supports or uprights on which such sign is placed. Channel letters or other sign elements placed on a wall surface without a frame or other background shall include an area sufficient to enclose all lettering and other projections, including the space between letters, words, and other sign elements as shown in the example in figure 2. The enclosed area may be adjusted using up to ten (10) straight, horizontal or vertical lines as shown in figure 2, to accommodate projections of single letters or other elements.

Figure 1: Signs with a frame



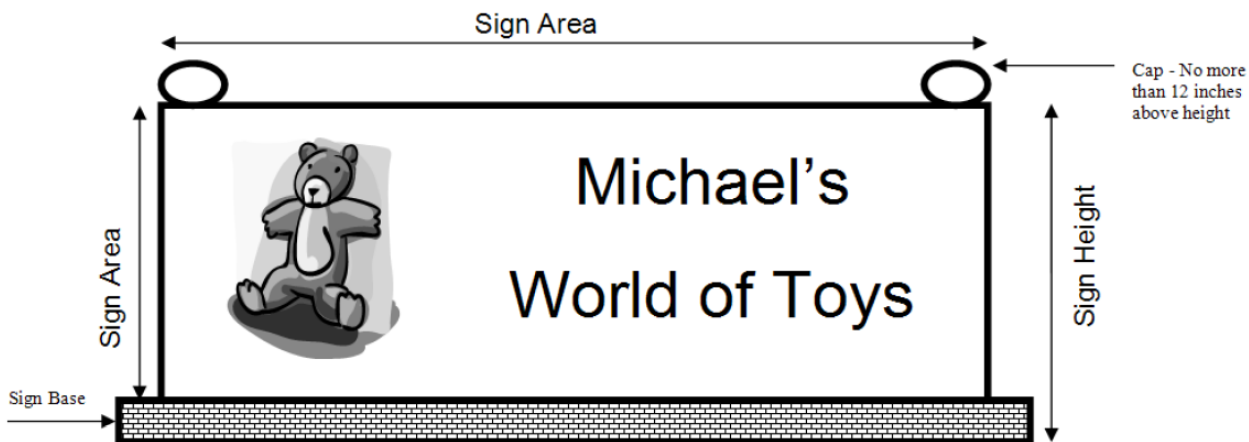
Figure 2: Signs without a frame or background, i.e. channel letters - sign area enclosed by dashed line



- (b) The total area of all signs permitted on a lot shall include the area of all sign faces visible from a public right-of-way, including the area of signs placed upon the surface of windows or doors, but shall not include signs which are less than three (3) square feet in area directing and guiding traffic and parking on private property, or any signs which cannot be seen from a public street, right-of-way, or adjacent properties.
- (c) The frontage of a store, office, service or manufacturing building shall be the number of lineal feet of the façade facing the principal street or of the façade containing the main entrance, as determined by the Zoning Inspector.
- (d) The frontage of a lot not occupied by a building shall be the dimension of such lot abutting the principal street.
- (e) Sign Height shall be computed as the vertical distance from either:
 - (1) The finished grade at the base of the sign as shown in figure 3, or
 - (2) The centerline of road right-of way of the nearest road to which the sign is oriented and on which the lot has frontage to the highest component of the sign, including the support structure, as determined by the Zoning Inspector, provided however, that decorative caps or similar architectural elements not part of the sign face may extend up to twelve (12) inches above the designated height. For purposes of determining sign height, finished grade shall be the grade after construction, exclusive of any filling, berming, mounding, or excavating solely

for the purpose of locating the sign.

Figure 3: Sign Area and Height



173.04 GOVERNMENTAL SIGNS EXCLUDED.

For the purpose of this Zoning Resolution, "sign" does not include those erected and maintained pursuant to and in discharge of any governmental function, or required by any law, ordinance or governmental regulation.

173.05 CERTIFICATE AND COMPLIANCE REQUIRED.

Except as specifically provided in this chapter, no sign shall be erected, constructed, reconstructed, enlarged, extended, moved or altered unless a zoning certificate has been issued therefore, as provided herein. All signs shall conform to the provisions of this chapter.

173.06 PRIOR ZONING CERTIFICATE REQUIRED.

Where the purpose of a sign is to direct attention to a use of land, or to a business or activity conducted thereon, no zoning certificate shall be issued for such sign until a zoning certificate has been issued permitting such use of land, business or activity. If such use of land, business or activity is to be conducted within a building or utilizes a structure for which a zoning certificate is required, no zoning certificate for a sign shall be issued, except for subdivision advertising signs, until a zoning certificate has been issued permitting construction of such building or structure and/or use thereof for its intended purpose.

173.07 SIGN ILLUMINATION.

- (a) Residential Districts. Signs in residential zoning districts shall not be illuminated, except for street number signs, public school signs, conditionally permitted use signs, and permanent signs for entranceways to residential subdivisions.
- (b) Nonresidential Districts. Signs in zoning districts not classified residential may be illuminated, subject to the conditions and limitations provided herein.
- (c) Prohibited Illuminating Devices. Except as permitted for changeable copy signs all illuminated signs and sign lighting devices shall employ only light of constant intensity. No sign shall be illuminated by or contain any flashing, intermittent, rotating or moving lighting device. No strings of lights or other lighting devices, which are not part of a sign, shall be used to attract attention to a sign, or otherwise used to attract attention to a location, business or activity. The colors red or green, whether in direct illumination or reflection, shall not be used where such use may interfere with the sight lines of a traffic signal.
- (d) Electrical Wiring.
Electrical wiring serving any sign shall be installed underground or on or within the structure to which the sign is attached.
- (e) Illumination.
Illumination shall not be of excessive brightness and shall be shielded so as to prevent direct light or glare from being cast into any adjoining residential area or at vehicles traveling on a public right-of-way. Such lighting shall be shielded so as to prevent view of the light source from any adjoining residence or residential district and/or vehicles approaching on a public right-of-way from any direction.

173.08 PROHIBITIONS.

The following are prohibited in all zoning districts:

- (a) Signs which project over or upon any sidewalk, pathway or street, whether public or private.
- (b) Mobile, portable, or wheeled signs.
- (c) Banners, posters, pennants, ribbons, streamers, strings of light bulbs, spinners or other moving devices.
- (d) Any sign in danger of falling or which is otherwise unsafe. Such Signs shall be immediately repaired or removed, upon notice for such action by the Zoning Inspector to the owner or occupant of the premises on which the sign is located.

- (e) Signs placed within the right-of-way of any public street or attached to utility poles, street signs, or traffic control poles except public signs, such as traffic control devices and directional signs.
- (f) Signs located so as to obstruct sight distances for vehicles entering or exiting any property or traveling on a public street.
- (g) Off-premises General Advertising signs except as provided in Section 173.11 (a) (2) (d).
- (h) Signs erected or maintained in such a manner that any portion of its surface or its supports will interfere in any way with the free use of access to any fire lane, exit or standpipe, or so as to obstruct any window so that light or ventilation is reduced below minimum standards required by any applicable law or building code.
- (i) Signs erected or maintained on trees, or painted or drawn upon rocks or other natural features.
- (j) Signs placed on parked vehicles or trailers for the purpose of advertising a product or business located on the same or adjacent property, excepting an identification sign that is affixed to a vehicle regularly operated in the pursuance of day-to-day business or activity of an enterprise.
- (k) Signs placed, inscribed or supported upon a roof or upon any structure that extends above the roof line of any building.
- (l) Inflatable images.
- (m) Signs containing flashing, moving, intermittent, or running lights or which imitate traffic control devices, provided however, that changeable copy signs shall be permitted.
- (n) Signs that employ any part or element which revolves, rotates, whirls, spins or otherwise makes use of motion to attract attention.
- (o) Beacons or searchlights.
- (p) High intensity strobe lights.
- (q) Off-premises Directional Signs.
- (r) Pole signs.
- (s) Projecting signs.

- (t) Nothing contained herein shall be construed to restrict or prohibit holiday signs or decorations.

173.09 SIGNS PERMITTED IN ALL DISTRICTS WITHOUT A ZONING CERTIFICATE.

No Zoning Certificate shall be required for:

- (a) Periodic repair, repainting, or maintenance which does not alter the sign including, but not limited to, the sign face, design, or structure;
- (b) Changing the lettering, graphic, or information on a sign specifically approved as a changeable copy sign, whether automatic or manual;
- (c) Legal notices, warnings, regulatory, informational, or directional signs erected by any public agency or public utility;
- (d) Signs not exceeding three (3) square feet in area directing and guiding traffic and parking on private property, such as signs designating handicapped parking, reserved parking, visitor parking, and loading areas.
- (e) Wall signs not exceeding three (3) square feet in area which cannot be seen from a public street or right-of-way or from adjacent properties.
- (f) Signs identifying the address of the premises.
- (g) Signs for farm markets or roadside stands, provided that such signs shall not exceed twenty-five (25) square feet of sign area per farm. The sign area of farm markets located within platted major subdivisions shall not exceed four (4) square feet.

173.10 RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT SIGNS REQUIRING A ZONING CERTIFICATE.

Upon issuance of a Zoning Certificate, as provided in Section 173.12 signs may be permitted in R-5A and R-3A residential zoning districts in accordance with the following provisions.

(a) Permanent Signs.

- (1) A residential development containing more than ten (10) dwelling units may be permitted one (1) free-standing ground sign at each entrance to the development provided that such sign does not exceed twenty-five (25) square feet in area, does not exceed six (6) feet in height, is located at least twelve (12) feet from any street right-of-way or property line, and at least thirty-five (35) feet from any dwelling unit. In lieu of a standard two sided ground sign, a qualifying residential development which has decorative entrance walls may be permitted one (1) sign, not exceeding twenty-

five (25) feet in area, mounted on the decorative wall on each side of the main entrance to the development.

(2) Approved home occupations, family home facilities, and family day-care facilities may be permitted one (1) sign, which may be either a wall or ground sign, for each lot or parcel, provided that such sign shall not exceed a maximum of four (4) square feet in area and six (6) feet in height, and shall be located at least twelve (12) feet from any street right-of-way and twenty-five (25) feet from any side lot line.

(3) Public schools and conditionally permitted uses may be permitted one (1) wall sign which shall not exceed one-half (1/2) square foot in area for each lineal foot of the building wall or façade which faces the principal street or contains the main entrance as determined by the Zoning Inspector and one (1) ground sign which shall not exceed twenty-five (25) square feet in area and six (6) feet in height. Such signs shall be located at least twelve (12) feet from any street right-of-way and twenty-five (25) feet from any residential property line. Such signs may be changeable copy provided that they comply with all of the requirements for changeable copy signs as set forth in Section 173.11(d) (2).

(b) Temporary Signs.

(1) A residential development containing more than ten (10) dwelling units may be permitted one (1) free-standing ground sign on each street abutting the development which may be displayed from the commencement of actual improvement construction until the latter occurrence of either of the following events:

- a. Completion of the installation of streets and utility improvements within the subdivision; or
- b. Transfer by the developer of eighty percent (80%) of the sublots within the subdivision, other than a bulk transfer of all or substantially all of the unsold lots in the subdivision to a successor or developer.

Each such sign shall not exceed fifty (50) square feet in area or six (6) feet in height. Zoning Certificates for such signs shall be valid for a period not to exceed one (1) year, shall terminate by its terms upon occurrence of the events listed above, and may be renewed if such events have not occurred at the expiration date. If a subdivision is developed in successive phases, the right to display a subdivision advertising sign shall be determined from time to time without reference to phases in which construction of subdivision improvements has not actually commenced.

(2) Non-residential uses permitted in residential districts shall be permitted a temporary sign announcing special events, provided that:

- a. Only one (1) such sign shall be displayed on the property at any given time;
- b. Such signs shall not exceed sixteen (16) square feet in area or four (4) feet in height;

- c. Such signs shall be removed within seven (7) days of the completion or termination of the event;
- d. Such signs do not violate the provisions of Section 173.08; and
- e. No such sign shall be displayed for longer than thirty-seven (37) days.

No fee shall be charged for such signs, provided a Zoning Certificate is obtained prior to erection.

173.11 NONRESIDENTIAL DISTRICT SIGNS REQUIRING A ZONING CERTIFICATE.

Upon issuance of a zoning certificate for a sign, as provided in Section 173.12, signs may be permitted in CB, MUP, P-O, and LIR zoning districts, in accordance with the following provisions: **[Adopted 6-8-2015 – Z-2015-1]**

- (a) Area Limitations. The total area of all signs for each retail, service or office building shall not exceed the number of square feet indicated in the following formulas:
 - (1) Total Signage Area. The aggregate area of all permanent signs for each use, parcel, building, or land under common ownership of record or control shall not exceed one and one quarter (1.25) square feet for each lineal foot of the building wall or façade which faces the principal street or contains the main entrance as determined by the Zoning Inspector up to eighty (80) lineal feet and one (1) square foot for each additional lineal foot of building wall or façade in excess of eighty (80) feet. Buildings or parcels having frontage or a façade facing a second street, may increase the permitted total aggregate sign area for permanent signs as calculated herein by thirty percent (30%).
 - (2) Exclusions from Sign Area Limitation. The following signs shall be excluded from the total sign area limitation set forth in Subsection 1 hereof:
 - a. Directional signs complying with Section 173.09 (d),
 - b. Wall signs complying with Section 173.09 (e),
 - c. Patio umbrellas displaying signage provided that such umbrellas are located in designated patio areas, must be closed when not in use during off-season periods, and are not larger than necessary to accommodate the seating area for individual tables, and
 - d. General Advertising signs of less than sixty (60) square feet in area per face located adjacent to interstate highways to the extent permitted under Ohio R. C. Chapter 5516, provided that Zoning Certificates for such signs shall be obtained as required by Section 173.12, and further providing that before issuing such Zoning Certificate, the Zoning Inspector shall require proof that such sign has been approved by all State authorities having jurisdiction.

(b) Permanent Signs. Total permanent sign area may be allocated to any or all of the following sign types subject to the restrictions and requirements set forth herein:

(1) Wall Signs. Wall signs shall not project more than eighteen (18) inches in front of the building wall nor beyond any building corner. Such signs shall not extend above the height of the building nor more than twenty-two (22) feet above finished grade. Such signs may include provisions for changeable copy in conformance with Section 173.11(d) (2) hereof.

(2) Marquee Signs. One (1) marquee sign shall be permitted for each business, or tenant on its premises. Marquee signs shall not extend above the fascia, and the vertical dimension including fascia shall not exceed four (4) feet.

(3) Window Signs. Window signs shall not obscure more than twenty-five percent (25%) of the glazed surface of any window. No more than ten (10) square feet of any window sign may be directly illuminated with internal or neon lighting or otherwise projected so as to create an illuminated image.

(4) Ground Signs.

a. Each use, parcel, building, or land under common ownership or control shall be limited to one (1) free-standing Ground Sign. Such signs shall not exceed fifty (50) square feet per face in area nor ten (10) feet in height. Where such signs have provisions for changeable copy messages in conformance with Section 173.11 (d) (2), the area of the sign may be increased to sixty-four (64) square feet per face. Ground Signs shall not be located less than five (5) feet from the lot line of another nonresidential lot and not less than twenty-five (25) feet from a residential district line. Ground Signs shall be located a minimum of fifteen (15) feet from any road right-of-way.

b. Commercial Shopping Centers as defined in Section 173.02 (a) (7), in lieu of the signage permitted in Subsection a. hereof, and provided that a comprehensive and cohesive sign package is presented for the entire center, may be permitted one (1) free-standing ground sign which shall not exceed one-hundred (100) square feet per face nor twelve (12) feet in height. Such signs shall be setback a minimum of twenty (20) feet from any road right-of-way, ten (10) feet from the lot line of another nonresidential parcel, and twenty-five (25) feet from any residential district line. Such signs may have provisions for changeable copy in conformance with Section 173.11 (d) (2). Commercial Shopping Centers that take advantage of this provision and which have frontage on two or more streets may have a second free-standing Ground Sign provided that the second Ground Sign is located on a different street and does not exceed fifty (50) square feet per face in area nor ten (10) feet in height and is setback a minimum of fifteen (15) feet from any road right-of-way, five (5) feet from the lot line of another nonresidential parcel, and twenty-five

(25) feet from any residential district line. The minimum separation between Commercial Shopping Center Ground Signs shall be two hundred (200) feet.

- c. Large Commercial Shopping Centers as defined in Section 173.02 (a) (6), in lieu of the signage permitted in Subsection a. hereof, and provided that a comprehensive and cohesive sign package is presented for the entire center, may be permitted one (1) free-standing ground sign which shall not exceed two-hundred (200) square feet per face nor twenty-five (25) feet in height. Such signs shall be setback a minimum of twenty (20) feet from any road right-of-way, ten (10) feet from the lot line of another nonresidential parcel, and fifty (50) feet from any residential district line. Such signs may have provisions for changeable copy in conformance with Section 173.11 (d) (2). Large Commercial Shopping Centers that take advantage of this provision and which have frontage on two or more streets may have a second free-standing Ground Sign provided that the second Ground Sign is located on a different street and does not exceed one-hundred (100) square feet per face in area nor twelve (12) feet in height and is setback a minimum of twenty (20) feet from any road right-of-way, ten (10) feet from the lot line of another nonresidential parcel, and twenty-five (25) feet from any residential district line. The minimum separation between Large Commercial Shopping Center Ground Signs shall be two hundred (200) feet.
- d. Directional Signs for drive-through facilities, provided that such signs comply with the criteria set forth in Subsection (d) (5) hereof.

(c) Temporary Signs. Commercial and industrial properties may be permitted one (1) free-standing Ground Sign on the site during construction or reconstruction of a building for which a valid building permit has been obtained. Such sign may be displayed from the commencement of actual construction until completion and issuance of an occupancy permit. No such sign shall exceed fifty (50) square feet in area or eight (8) feet in height. Zoning Certificates for such signs shall be valid for a period not to exceed one (1) year, shall terminate by its terms upon completion of construction, and may be renewed at the expiration date.

(d) Special Provisions Applicable to Nonresidential District Signs.

- (1) Three Dimensional Figures or Objects. Three-dimensional figures or objects may be permitted to be used as a freestanding sign provided no more than one (1) such figure or object is located on the property. Such figures or objects shall be capable of being enclosed within a box six (6) feet wide by six (6) feet long by six (6) feet high. Any such object must be used in place of or integrated into an otherwise permitted identification sign, but in no case shall the height of the three dimensional sign exceed six (6) feet, measured from the uppermost portion of the figure or object. Any such object shall

count towards the otherwise allowable number of signs and area permitted. Any such object shall be a single continuous figure and shall not be used to otherwise circumvent the regulations regarding the number of faces permitted.

- (2) Changeable Copy Signs. Multiple message and variable message signs which are changed electronically shall conform to the following standards:
 - a. Each message or copy shall remain fixed for at least thirty (30) seconds. Messages shall not flash, include moving video displays or animation, or emit intermittent light.
 - b. Changes to messages, copy, or images shall be accomplished in not more than three (3) seconds.
 - c. Each such sign must be capable of regulating the digital display intensity and the light intensity level of the display must automatically adjust to natural ambient light conditions.
 - d. No such sign shall be of such intensity as to create a distraction or nuisance for motorists.
 - e. Displays shall not emulate traffic control devices.
 - f. Such signs shall contain a default design that will freeze the sign in one position if a malfunction occurs.
 - g. The entire message shall change at once, without scrolling, animation, flashing, blinking or other movement or noise.
 - h. The changeable copy portion of any free-standing Ground Sign shall not exceed seventy-five percent (75%) of the total area of the sign.

- (3) Landscaping. Landscaping comprised of grass, flowers, shrubs, or small trees, shall be installed and maintained around the perimeter of each free-standing Ground Sign in an area equal to the area of the sign face, provided however, that the maximum amount of landscaping required around the base of any sign shall not exceed 100 square feet.

- (4) Treatment of Ground Sign Bases. Sign bases for all signs twelve (12) feet or less in height shall have a decorative brick or stone architectural appearance and the sign face or other skirting must extend upwards from the base of the sign such that no pole or similar support post is visible. Ground Sign bases shall be a minimum average height of six (6) inches across the length of the base. No portion of the sign face may project past the base of the sign.

- (5) Directional Signs for Drive-Through Facilities. Directional signs serving drive-through facilities shall conform to the following standards:
 - a. A maximum of two (2) such signs, consisting of a primary sign and a secondary sign, shall be permitted on any site.
 - b. The primary sign shall be a maximum of thirty-two (32) square feet per face with a maximum of 1 (one) face.
 - c. The secondary sign shall be a maximum of twenty (20) square feet per face with a maximum of one (1) face.

- d. The maximum height of such signs shall be six (6) feet.
 - e. Such signs shall be setback a minimum of seventy-five (75) feet from any road right-of-way line or property line.
- (6) Architectural Design Standards. The following architectural standards shall apply to signs in CB, MUP, P-O, and LIR zoning districts. [**Adopted 11/26/2018 – Z-2018-1**]
- a. Each free-standing Ground Sign shall be designed and constructed of such materials as to be compatible with the architectural treatment of the principal building located on the site as determined by the Zoning Inspector.
 - b. Wall signs shall be proportionate to the wall upon which they are placed and to other signage within the complex. The quantity of wall signs shall be limited to that required to provide a balanced architectural appearance to the building and other signage in the area.
 - c. Specific types and styles of signs, materials, and placements shall be used uniformly throughout all or a portion of each Commercial Shopping Center and each Large Commercial Shopping Center in order to create a consistent architectural appearance.

173.12 ZONING CERTIFICATES FOR SIGNS.
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- (a) Application. When a Zoning Certificate for a sign is required by this chapter, application therefor shall be made by the owner, lessee or occupant of the property upon which a sign is proposed, and shall be submitted as is required and provided for a Zoning Certificate in Section 109.04.
- (b) Issuance. The Zoning Inspector shall issue a Zoning Certificate for a sign upon receipt of a completed application and the required fee, provided that the proposed sign conforms with the requirements of this chapter. A Zoning Certificate for a sign may be applied for and issued in conjunction with a Zoning Certificate for a building, structure or use of land, but shall be administered as a separate permit. Any alteration from submitted drawings and the application after certificate issuance shall require a new application and the issuance of a new Zoning Certificate for a sign.
- (c) Exceptions. Face and lettering changes of existing signs shall not require a Zoning Certificate, but must comply with other provisions of this Resolution. The intent of this section is to allow changes in content without requiring a Zoning Certificate when those changes do not result in an increase in sign area, height, location, or place the sign into a different functional category. The complete removal of a sign, such as a painted sign, or a sign with no sign box expressly dedicated for holding the sign face, shall not constitute a face change and shall require a Zoning Certificate if it is replaced with a new sign.

173.13 NONCONFORMING SIGNS.

Signs which legally existed prior to the effective date of this Resolution or any amendment thereto, but which do not conform with these regulations, may be maintained as a matter of right provided that such signs comply with the provisions hereof regarding safety, maintenance, and repair. Normal maintenance such as painting, cleaning, or minor repairs shall be permitted on all such nonconforming signs. Relocation or replacement of a non-conforming sign or any alteration in the size or structure of such sign, shall cause the sign to lose its status as legally nonconforming and said sign shall be immediately brought into compliance with this Resolution.

173.14 REMOVAL OF SIGNS.

- (a) **Noncompliant Signs.** The Zoning Inspector shall order the removal or modification of any sign erected without a Zoning Certificate or found to be in violation of these regulations. The owner of the sign, the occupant of the premises on which the sign or structure is located, or the person or firm maintaining the same shall, upon written notice of such violation from the Zoning Inspector within five (5) days, remove or modify the sign or structure in a manner approved by the Zoning Inspector. If such sign is not removed or brought into compliance as directed in the notice of violation within five (5) days, the Zoning Inspector may, in addition to other remedies provided by law, institute injunction, mandamus, abatement, or any other appropriate action or proceeding to prevent, enjoin, abate, or remove such violation.

173.15 VIOLATIONS AND REMEDIES.

If any sign is installed, erected, constructed, located or maintained in violation of the provisions of this chapter, the Zoning Inspector shall give written notice to the owner, lessee or occupant of the premises on which such sign is located ordering abatement of such violation. Failure to comply with the abatement order or any provision of this chapter shall be deemed a violation of this Zoning Resolution and punished as provided in Section 109.99.