Chapter 84:
Sign Regulations

Village of Williamsville

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§ 84-1 PURPOSE & APPLICABILITY

A. **Purpose**. The purpose of this Chapter is to permit the use of signage within the Village of Williamsville, while also promoting and protecting the health, welfare, and safety of the public. The intent of this Chapter is to achieve the following objectives:

1) Ensure right to free speech as protected under the United States Constitution;

2) Establish a clear and impartial process for those seeking to install signs;

3) Protect property values, create a more attractive economic and business climate, and protect the physical appearance of the community;

4) Provide structures and uses with effective means of identification while reducing visual clutter through the prevention of excessive and confusing sign displays;

5) Reduce traffic conflicts or hazards by minimizing visual distractions or obstacles in or visible from the public rights-of-way;

6) Reduce the adverse effects of signage on the desirable aesthetic of the Village and on the general environment of the community; and

7) Enforce and encourage the objectives and goals of the Village Community Plan.

B. **Applicability**.

1) The regulations of this Chapter shall govern and control the erection, enlargement, expansion, renovation, operation, maintenance, relocation and removal of all signs within the Village visible from any street, sidewalk, public right-of-way, or public space.

2) The provisions of this Chapter shall not apply to safety signs, road signs, historical markers, highway directional signs, or signs erected by governmental agencies.

3) Notwithstanding any other provision within this Chapter to the contrary, any sign proposed on local historic landmarks or within historic districts as designated by Chapter 47 of the Village Code shall be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Commission, and are not subject to review under this chapter. Following the application procedures of this Chapter, the Commission may approve, approve with conditions, or disapprove the sign based on the design criteria of this chapter. They are also tasked with guiding the designs to fit with the Landmark or District where the signs are proposed.

4) This Chapter shall in no event be construed or employed in any manner to prohibit the customary decoration of premises in any district during religious, patriotic or holiday seasons.

§ 84-2 DEFINITIONS

A. Boards and Officers. For the purposes of this Chapter, the following references to agents or officers of the Village shall be interpreted as noted below.

1) **PLANNING BOARD** — The Village of Williamsville Planning and Architectural Review Board as provided for by Chapter 112 of the Village Code.

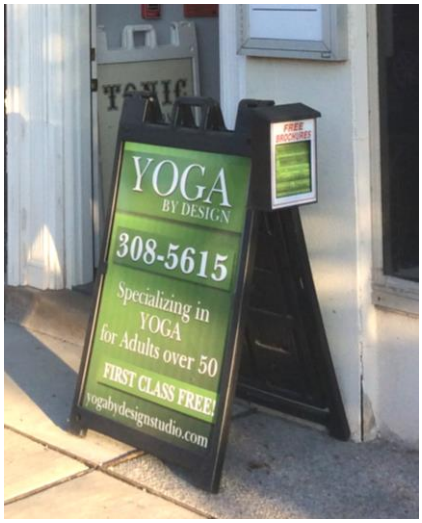
2) **SIGN OFFICER** — The administrator and enforcer of this Chapter as appointed by the Village of Williamsville Board of Trustees, and/or their designee.

B. Terms Defined. The following terms and definitions shall apply to this Chapter for the purposes of administration and enforcement.

1) **A-FRAME SIGN** — A freestanding sign that is comprised of two sign faces diverging at an angle of no more than 45 degrees from their adjoined edge.

2) **ALTERATION** — Any construction or physical change to a sign or the supporting members of a sign.

3) **AWNING** — An architectural fabric or canvas projection that provides weather protection, identity or decoration and is wholly supported by the building to which it is attached, generally comprised of a lightweight frame structure over which a cover is attached.



A-Frame Sign Example

4) **AWNING SIGN** — A sign that is part of or attached to an awning.

5) **BANNER** — A length of fabric or similar material, temporarily strung between two points, upon which a message is imprinted.

6) **CHANNEL LETTER** — A fabricated or formed three-dimensional letter into which a light source, such as a neon tube, may be placed.

7) **CHANNEL LETTER, REVERSE** — A channel letter than has a face and sides, but no back, and is pinned out from a background surface so as to produce a halo effect around the letter when illuminated.

8) **COMMERCIAL MESSAGE** — Any message where the primary purpose of which is the commercial advertisement or promotion of a commercial product, event, or service (including content on an internet website operated for a commercial purpose).

9) **DIRECTIONAL SIGN** — A freestanding sign commonly associated with and limited to noncommercial information and directions necessary and convenient for persons coming on the property, including signs marking entrances, parking areas, one-way driveways, rest rooms, pickup and delivery areas, drive-through ATM machines, and hours of business.

Directional Sign Example

10) **FREESTANDING SIGN** — A sign not attached to any building or structure, which may be supported by columns or posts.

11) **GOVERNMENTAL SIGN** — A sign erected and maintained pursuant to and in discharge of any governmental function or required by any general law, local law or governmental regulation.

12) **GROUND SIGN** — A type of freestanding sign that is mounted on a base flush with the ground or supported by one or two columns or posts provided the distance between the ground and bottommost edge of the sign is no greater than four feet.

13) **ILLUMINATION, INTERNAL** — Illumination by a light source contained within the sign structure or lettering.

Ground Sign Example

14) **ILLUMINATION, EXTERNAL** — Illumination by a light source located outside of the sign structure or lettering that is directed at the sign face.

15) **INCIDENTAL SIGN** — A sign containing no commercial message and typically erected to identify addresses, entrances, exits, restrooms, hours and days of operation, public utility locations, emergency addresses and telephone numbers, etc. These examples are not given by way of limitation, an incidental sign can contain any noncommercial message in accordance with this Chapter.

Incidental Sign Example

16) **INTERNAL SIGN** — A sign that is not intended to be viewed from outside the property and located so as not to be legible from any public right-of- way or from any adjacent property, including any signs in interior areas of shopping centers, commercial buildings and structures, stadiums, and similar structures of a recreational nature.

17) **LAWN SIGN** — A sign constructed of materials not intended for permanent installation that are attached to a single or multiple posts for support and stuck into the ground. The height of a lawn sign shall include any posts or supports. Political campaigns, garage sales, and charitable events, for example, are often advertised with lawn signs.

Lawn Sign Example

18) **MARQUEE SIGN** — A permanent structure attached to the front of a building and which incorporates a large message area. Typically illuminated and often ornate in design, a marquee sign projects over the entrance of the building and provides a canopy over at least a portion of the sidewalk or street. Marquee signs are often used by movie theaters and concert halls.

19) **MONOPOLE SIGN** — A type of freestanding sign that is supported by one column or post with a distance exceeding four feet between the ground and the bottommost edge of the sign.

20) **NEON SIGN** — A sign that incorporates illumination through the use of neon type gas.

Monopole Sign Example

21) **NONCONFORMING SIGN** — Any lawful sign existing at the time of adoption of this Chapter, or any subsequent amendments thereto, which does not conform to the regulations of this Chapter or to the regulations of the district in which it is located.

22) **PAINTED SIGN** — A type of sign in which a commercial message, logo, graphic, and/or other visual elements have been painted on an approved sign material, or painted directly on a building façade. Painted signs shall be regulated as wall signs.

23) **PENNANT** — A length of fabric, or similar material, suspended from overhead, upon which a message is imprinted.

24) **PILLAR SIGN** — A type of freestanding sign that is supported by two columns or posts with a distance exceeding four feet between the ground and the bottommost edge of the sign.

25) **PROJECTING SIGN** — A sign which is wholly dependent upon a building for support and which projects more than six inches from such building.

Pillar Sign Example

26) **ROOF SIGN** — Any sign erected upon the roof of a building, or sign where any portion thereof extends above the roofline of the building.

27) **SIGN** — Any object, device, display or structure, or part thereof, situated outdoors or adhered to, or located within three feet of an exterior window that is used to advertise, identify, display, direct or attract attention to an object, person, institution, organization, business, product, service, event or location by any means, including but not limited to words, letters, figures, designs, symbols, fixtures, colors, illumination or project images. "Signs" shall also include all sign structures. A sign for the purposes of this Chapter does not include the following:

    a. A flag or emblem of any nation, organization of nations, state or city, or any fraternal, religious or civic organization;

    b. Merchandise, pictures or models of products or services incorporated in a window display;

    c. Official notices issued by any court or public office or officer in the performance of a public or official duty;

    d. Traffic control signs as defined in the NYS Vehicle and Traffic Law; and

    e. Works of art, including murals, which do not contain any commercial message, logo, graphic, business name or trademark.

28) **SIGN BOARD AREA** — A horizontal band extending the full width of the building facade and located between the highest first floor windows and the cornice, or if there is more than one story, the highest first floor windows and the bottom of the second-floor windows.

Sign Board Area Example

29) **SIGN TYPE** — The design and/or structure of a sign, including ground signs, wall signs, projecting signs, suspended signs, awning signs, and window signs.

30) **SUSPENDED SIGN** — A sign attached to and supported by the underside of a horizontal plane.

31) **TEMPORARY SIGN** — A sign which is not intended to be used for a period of time exceeding 30 days and is not attached to a building, structure, or ground in a permanent manner. Such signs usually being constructed of poster board, cardboard, masonite, plywood, or plastic material and mounted to wood, metal, wire or rope frames or supports.

32) **USE** — Any business, commercial tenant, event, or other such activity occurring on any given lot and/or within any building or structure.

33) **VALANCE** — A projection of fabric below the main frame of an awning to create a decorative edge.

34) **WALL SIGN** — A sign fastened to the wall of a building or structure in such a manner that the wall becomes the supporting structure for or forms the background surface of the sign and which does not project outward more than six inches from such building or structure.

35) **WINDOW SIGN** — A sign visible from a sidewalk, street or other public place, painted or affixed on glass or other window material, or located inside within three feet of the window, but shall not include graphics in connection with customary window display of products.

§ 84-3 SIGN PERMITS

A. Permit Required. Except as hereinafter provided, no person shall erect, alter, construct, relocate or cause to be erected, altered, constructed or relocated any sign without first having obtained a sign permit.

B. Permit Exceptions. The following situations shall not require the issuance of a sign permit provided such maintenance, changes, or alterations do not in any way alter the physical size, design, or nature of the sign.

1) Repainting, repairing, changing of parts, or ordinary maintenance of signs, sign area, or sign supports.

2) Changing the message of a sign using changeable letter sets as previously approved.

C. Any sign for which a permit has been issued shall not be modified, relocated, altered, or replaced, unless an amended or new sign permit is obtained from the Sign Officer. Alterations include, new faces, new vinyl lettering and/or logos, awning re-covers etc.

D. Expiration. A sign permit shall expire if the sign for which the permit has been issued is not fully constructed within 180 days from the date of issuance of the sign permit.

E. Revocation. The Sign Officer or designee may, at any time for a violation of this regulation, issue a notice of violation. A written notice of the violation including all reasons for the violation shall be mailed to the property, building, and/or sign owner. Said violation must be corrected within 30 days of the date of notice, otherwise the sign permit shall be revoked and the sign in question shall be required to be removed.

§ 84-4 APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

A. Application Submittal.

1) Sign applications shall not be processed until all required materials have been submitted to the Sign Officer, within the timeframes established by the Sign Officer.

2) Incomplete applications will not be processed. The Sign Officer shall provide written or electronic notice of application deficiencies to applicants. If such deficiencies are not corrected within 30 days of said notice, the application will be considered withdrawn.

B. Application Requirements. The following information shall be provided in all applications for a sign permit. The Sign Officer may require application materials to be prepared by a licensed engineer or sign professional if deemed necessary for adequate review of the proposed sign.

1) Name, address, contact information, and signature of the applicant.

2) Name, address, and signature of the building and/or property owner (if not the applicant), and a statement of consent for the applicant to seek such sign permit.

3) All application fees as determined by the Village Board.

4) Site plan and elevations indicating the size, shape, construct, materials, layout, and proposed location of the proposed sign(s) drawn to scale.

5) Photos of the site or building upon which the sign is to be located.

6) Color illustrations and/or photos of the proposed sign and sign area.

7) Proposed illumination system, if any, and the type of lighting to be used.

8) Samples of signage materials shall be required when requested by the Sign Officer or Planning Board.

9) Any additional information as requested by the Sign Officer or Planning Board that is deemed necessary for the adequate review of the proposed sign.

§ 84-5 REVIEW PROCEDURES

A. Review by Sign Type.

1) Sign permit applications shall require administrative review by the Sign Officer and/or Planning Board review, depending upon the sign type and its design. The table below indicates the required level of review by sign type.

TABLE 84-5: Required Review by Sign Type

	SIGN OFFICER	PLANNING BOARD
A-FRAME SIGN	●	
AWNING SIGN		
Within Valance Area	●	
Outside Valance Area		●
DEVELOPMENT SIGNAGE PLANS		●
EXTERNALLY ILLUMINATED SIGN		●
GROUND SIGN		●
MARQUEE SIGN		●
PAINTED SIGN		●
PROJECTING SIGN	●	
SUSPENDED SIGN	●	
TEMPORARY SIGN	●	
WALL SIGN		
Area 16 Square Feet or Less	●	
Area Over 16 Square Feet		●
WINDOW SIGN		
As Sole Signage for Use	●	
As Additional Signage for Use	●	

2) Applications for signs that are consistent with a sign plan or program previously approved by the Planning Board for a project or building may also be administratively reviewed, regardless of the sign type.

B. Administrative Review Procedures.

1) The Sign Officer may approve, approve with modifications, or deny a sign application for any signs listed on table 84-5 as not requiring a Planning Board review, or any non-structural or non-dimensional modifications of a sign previously approved under this chapter. (e.g., sign face changes, awning re-coverings etc.) The Sign Officer shall issue a sign permit only if the sign conforms to all the applicable standards and requirements of this Chapter as well as any previous requirements of the Planning Board.

2) The Sign Officer may, at his or her discretion, refer any sign application back to the Planning Board for review and/or determination.

3) Any sign application decision made by the Sign Officer may be appealed to the Planning Board by any aggrieved person within 30 days of the date of the permit determination by the Sign Officer. This appeal should be filed with the Building Department.

C. Planning Board Review.

1) The Planning Board shall review and decide upon all sign applications received from the Sign Officer, or an appeal to the Planning Board regarding an application. Such review may occur at any regularly or specially scheduled Planning Board meeting.

2) The Planning Board may approve, approve with modifications, or deny a sign permit application. The Sign Officer shall issue a sign permit within 30 days of approval by the Planning Board.

3) Development applications subject to review and approval by the Planning Board may have proposed signage reviewed and approved as part of the site plan or architectural review process. In the event of such review, all required sign permit application materials shall be provided to the Planning Board as part of the site plan or architectural review application.

4) With respect to any sign application subject to Its review (including appeals from a determination by the Sign Officer) the Planning Board may waive any requirements of this chapter upon a showing by the applicant that unique characteristics of his or her property render strict application with such requirement(s) Impractical and that such waiver is consistent with the overall Intent of this chapter.

5) Any decision by the Planning Board on a sign application is subject to judicial review as provided by New York Village Law Section 7-740

D. Review Criteria. The review of sign permit applications by the Sign Officer and Planning Board shall be based upon the following criteria:

1) The scale, color, texture and materials of the sign will be compatible with the style, color, texture and materials of the building on which it is located, but also allow for the keeping of logo integrity such as a trademark logo design and/or color;

2) The sign is neither confusing or distracting, nor will it create a traffic hazard or otherwise adversely impact public safety;

3) The sign follows the design guidelines outlined in Section 84-16 to the greatest extent practicable; and is otherwise compliant with this Chapter.

§ 84-6 MEASUREMENT

A. Sign Area.

1) Single Sign Face. The area of a sign shall be computed by means of the smallest square, circle, rectangle, triangle, or geometric combination thereof that will encompass the extreme limits of the writing, representation, emblem, graphic, and/or other display, together with any material, backdrop, or structure on which it is placed. See Figures 1 and 2.

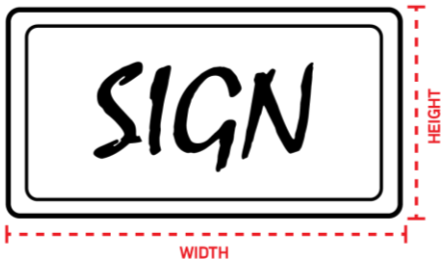


Figure 1: Single Sign Face Area

2) Multi-Faced Signs. In the case of a multi-faced sign only one side of the sign is considered in determining sign area if the sides of the sign are back-to-back or diverge at an angle of 45 degrees or less.

Figure 2: Individual Letter Sign Area

B. Sign Height.

1) Freestanding Sign. The height of a freestanding sign shall be calculated by measuring the vertical distance between the top part of such sign or its structure, whichever is highest, to the elevation of the ground directly beneath the center of the sign. See Figure 3.

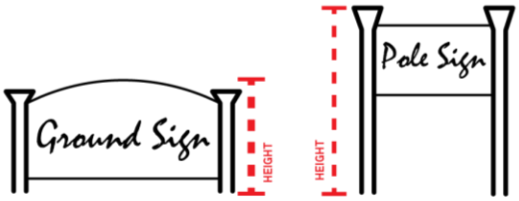


Figure 3: Freestanding Sign Height

2) Other Signs. The height of an awning, projecting, suspended, wall, or window sign shall be determined by measuring the vertical distance between the top part of the sign face or structure, whichever is highest, to the bottommost edge of the sign face.

§ 84-7 SAFETY PROVISIONS FOR ALL SIGNS

A. No sign shall be erected in such a manner as to obstruct free egress from a window, door or fire escape or to become a menace to life, health or property.

B. No sign shall be erected at or near any intersection of streets, alleys, or railways in a manner that obstructs free and clear vision for pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists.

C. No sign shall be of a shape or color that may be confused with any authorized traffic control device.

D. No rotating beam, beacon, or flashing illumination resembling an emergency light shall be used with any sign display.

E. The erection of any sign and its supports, including any wiring and/or electrical components utilized therein, shall be consistent with generally accepted standards and requirements of the NYS Building Code.

F. The erection of any sign, its supports, wiring, or other structural and/or electrical elements may be subject to inspection and approval by the Sign Officer.

§ 84-8 CONSTRUCTION

A. All signs shall be constructed of permanent, weather resistant, and durable materials, except for banners, flags, temporary signs, and window signs otherwise in conformance with this Chapter.

B. Where applicable, signs shall be supported by sign structures that are designed to resist wind pressures, dead loads, and lateral loads in accordance with the appropriate provisions of the NYS Building Code. All sign supports shall be reviewed as part of the sign design.

C. All sign lettering shall be permanently affixed to the sign. Manual changeable copy signs shall be enclosed and locked.

D. No sign may be constructed of untreated, unfinished, or unpainted wood, or other unfinished materials. All wood components of signs must be sealed and protected from the elements. Raw metal signage, such as sandblasted metal signs, are allowed at the discretion of the Sign Officer or Planning Board, provided that the mounting methods comply with this chapter.

§ 84-9 ILLUMINATION

A. In no event shall any illuminated sign or lighting device be placed so as to permit the beams and illumination therefrom to be directed upon a public street, highway, sidewalk or adjacent premises so as to cause glare or reflection that may constitute a traffic hazard or nuisance.

B. All lighting fixtures shall be dark sky compliant and directed so as not to cast an illumination of more than two foot-candles on adjacent nonresidential properties or more than one-tenth (0.1) foot-candle on adjacent residential properties.

C. All illumination shall be a steady, continuous burning of bulbs or lights. The flashing, blinking, oscillating, rotating or intermittent turning on and off of any illuminating device is prohibited.

D. Overhead wires or exposed wires on a sign or its supporting members are prohibited.

E. Permitted lighting fixtures include lanterns, goosenecks, and shielded, architectural-grade spot lights (See Section 112-16I of the Village Code). Single bar fluorescent tube fixtures are prohibited.

F. Channel lettering and reverse channel lettering may be utilized in districts where illumination is permitted.

§ 84-10 LOCATION

A. No sign shall obscure, alter, or cover the architectural features of any building.

B. Off-premise signs are prohibited. All signs shall be located on the site of the use being promoted, identified, or advertised.

C. All freestanding signs, unless otherwise noted within this Chapter, shall be no closer than five feet from the outer edge of the public sidewalk or 15 feet from the curb edge, or pavement edge of the public roadway, whichever is greater.

§ 84-11 VISIBILITY AT INTERSECTIONS

No freestanding sign or any part thereof exceeding three feet in height, other than a supporting pole or brace no greater than 18 inches in width or diameter, shall be located within the designated clear sight triangle of any intersecting streets. The clear sight triangle shall be defined by the triangle formed by the curb lines of the intersecting streets measured 15 feet outward from the point of intersection of said curb lines along such curb lines. This shall apply to all street corners. See Figure 4.

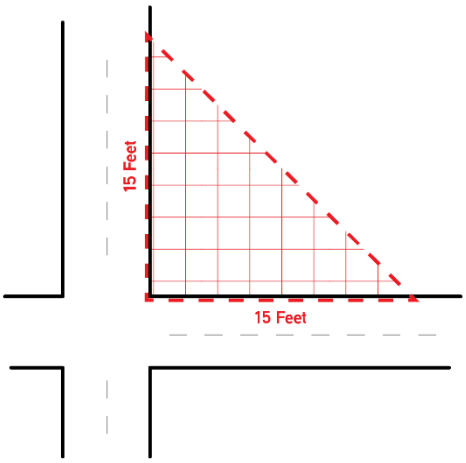


Figure 4: Clear Sight Triangle

§ 84-12 MAINTENANCE & REPAIR

All signs shall be maintained in safe and good structural condition, in compliance with all applicable building and electrical codes, and in conformance with this Chapter at all times. Such maintenance includes replacement of all defective bulbs, parts, materials, painting, repainting, cleaning, replacement of copy, and other acts required for maintenance of such sign. If any sign does not comply with these standards, the Sign Officer may require its removal.

§ 84-13 REMOVAL OF SIGNS

A. Any sign that becomes obsolete, meaning the business, product, service, event, or other such topic to which it relates ceases operation or is no longer applicable, must be removed within 60 days of such termination. An extension may be granted by the Sign Officer upon written request by the sign owner.

B. The removal of signs shall be the sole responsibility of the sign owner and/or sign permit holder. If said sign is not removed within 30 days of the date of written notice by the Sign Officer, the Sign Officer is authorized to effect its removal.

C. The removal of signs shall include the removal of all sign elements and related structural supports, returning the building, site, or structure to its original state.

D. The Sign Officer may remove any sign that is found to be in violation of this Chapter. The property and/or sign owner shall subsequently be given written notice of such sign removal. If the sign is not claimed within 10 days of the written notice, the Sign Officer may dispose of said sign.

E. Any costs incurred for the removal of a sign shall be fully reimbursed to the Village of Williamsville by the sign owner and/or sign permit holder. All expenses incurred by the Village in removing such sign shall be a charge against the property and shall be added to the next taxes assessed against the property if not paid within 30 days after notice of said charge is delivered to the owner by certified mail or equivalent means.

§ 84-14 SIGNS AUTHORIZED WITHOUT A PERMIT

The following types of signs may be erected in the Village without obtaining a sign permit. Although permits are not required for these signs, they shall conform to all other requirements of this Chapter or may be subject to removal by the Sign Officer in accordance with Section 84-13.

A. **Directional Signs**. Non-illuminated direction signs do not require a permit provided the following conditions are met:

1) Directional signs shall be located entirely on the property to which they pertain and shall not contain a commercial message (e.g. business name).

2) The total of directional signs on any one property shall not exceed an area of six square feet in a residential district, or 16 square feet in a nonresidential district.

3) Directional signs shall not exceed three feet in height.

4) Directional signs may not extend above the first floor of any given structure or project beyond property lines.

B. **Gasoline or Vehicle Charging Station Signs**. Signs attached to a gasoline pump or vehicle charging station shall not require a permit provided they do not exceed six square feet in area.

C. **Governmental Signs**. Any official sign, public notice, or warning sign authorized by federal, state or local law, including but not limited to signs erected and maintained pursuant to and in discharge of any government functions. (Example: NYS inspection station or authorized repair shop identification).

D. **House Numbers and Nameplates**. Address and name of occupant of premises for a residential structure, not including designations as to employment or home occupation, are to be limited in size to four square feet per dwelling unit.

E. **Incidental Signs**. Incidental signs shall conform to the following standards:

1) No sign may be illuminated.

2) No sign may exceed three feet in height and four feet in area.

3) The cumulative area of all signs shall not exceed 12 square feet.

F. **Internal Signs**. Signs within a building not legible from the public right-of-way or adjacent lots, or any sign within an enclosed outdoor space, such as an athletic field, where such sign is not legible beyond the property lines.

G. **Lawn Signs**. Lawn signs shall be in conformance with the regulations below.

1) No sign exceeds 4 square feet in area, and the cumulative area of all signs on the lot does not exceed 12 square feet.

2) Business signage placed after a project is completed must be removed 10 days after the issuance of a CO or Job Completion, whichever is shorter.

3) No sign is illuminated.

H. **Neon Signs**. Neon signs located within a window area shall not require a sign permit provided they conform to the following:

1) The neon sign is located within a nonresidential district.

2) No more than one neon sign per window, covering no more than 10% of the window area.

3) No more than two neon signs per use.

§ 84-15 PROHIBITED SIGNS

A. Any sign for which no sign permit was issued, for which a sign permit was revoked, or any other sign not explicitly authorized herein.

B. Any sign that may be confused with a traffic control sign, signal or device or the light of an emergency or road equipment vehicle or any sign which hides from public view any traffic or street sign, signal, or device.

C. Any sign that flashes, blinks, rotates, or revolves, or utilizes unshielded lighting devices, mirrors, or reflectors to outline or provide the background of a sign.

D. Any derivation of digital or electronic signage which displays animated or illuminated content.

E. Any sign employing vertical louvered blinds, mechanically changing, or movable materials.

F. Any sign that is not properly maintained, considered structurally unsound, hazardous, or otherwise unsafe.

G. Any sign that contains words or pictures of an obscene or pornographic nature.

H. Any sign that emits audible sounds, odor, or visible matter.

I. Any sign prohibited within a residential district that is located in an adjacent nonresidential district and is not set back at least 10 feet from the adjacent residential district property line.

J. Any sign that is located off-premise from the use and/or structure to which it serves, unless otherwise permitted by this Chapter.

K. Any sign that is obsolete or abandoned, advertising an activity, business, product or service no longer conducted or available on the premises on which the sign is located.

L. Any sign placed on a curb, sidewalk, hydrant, utility pole, tree or other object located on or over any public street unless otherwise permitted by this Chapter.

M. Any monopole sign.

N. Any sign that is mounted on wheels or mounted on any structure on wheels.

O. Any banner, poster, pennant, ribbon, streamer, spinner, or balloon, unless otherwise authorized by this Chapter.

§ 84-16 SIGN DESIGN GUIDELINES

The following sign design guidelines are intended to provide applicants, the Sign Officer, and the Planning Board with guidance for best practices in addressing issues related to sign compatibility, legibility, placement, and color. Please refer to the Village of Williamsville Sign Design Preferences Gallery for visual depictions of these guidelines.

A. Compatibility.

1) Signs should be constructed of high quality materials that are compatible with the building form and the desired character of the area in which they are located.

2) Signs should be appropriately scaled for the building or site upon which they are located, so as not to dominate the façade or streetscape.

3) Signs on buildings that have a monolithic or plain façade should be used to create visual interest through appropriate sign design features, scale, and proportions.

4) Signs should be designed to include relief in the lettering or sign face to create shadows and provide depth and visual interest.

B. Legibility.

1) Hard to read, intricate typefaces should be avoided. The number of lettering styles on a single sign should be limited to two for small signs and three for larger signs.

2) Letters and words should not be spaced too closely together. Generally, letters should not occupy more than 75% of the sign area.

3) Large areas of blank spaces should be avoided. Generally, 50% or more blank area should be avoided for boxed sign areas or framed signs.

4) Strangely shaped or unnecessarily narrow signs should be avoided. If an unusual shape is not symbolic it is more likely to be confusing.

C. Placement.

1) Signs should be so located to respect and compliment a building's façade, utilizing logical signage areas created by existing architectural details or ornamentation.

2) Signs should be placed at or near the public entrance to a building to indicate the most direct access.

3) Signs located on a building façade should be located in the sign board area.

D. Color.

1) Signs should feature substantial contrast between the color and material of the background and text or symbols.

2) Sign colors should complement the materials and colors of adjacent buildings, including accent and trim colors, where applicable.

3) Use of color and color combinations utilized for signs should be limited. Generally, a sign should not utilize more than three colors, including accent colors.

4) Day-Glo or florescent colors should be avoided.

§ 84-17 PERMITTED SIGNS BY ZONING DISTRICT

A. Sign Types. The following table indicates the sign types permitted within the Village's zoning districts, as established in Chapter 112 of the Village of Williamsville Code.

1) A "●" indicates that the sign type is permitted and may be illuminated.

2) A "O" indicates that the sign type is permitted but may not be illuminated.

3) A "-" indicates that the sign type is not permitted.

TABLE 84-17(A): Sign Types Permitted by Zoning District

	ZONING DISTRICTS				
SIGN TYPE	R-1, R-2, R-3	R-3M	NMU, MU	M-1	REQUIREMENTS
MAX NUMBER OF SIGNS	1 sign per use	1 sign per use	2 signs per use	2 signs per use	As Permitted
A-Frame[1]	-	O	O	O	§ 84-18(A)
Awning	-	-	O	O	§ 84-18(B)
Ground	O	O	●	●	§ 84-18(C)
Marquee	-	-	●	-	Determined by Planning Board
Painted	-	-	●	●	§ 84-18(H)
Pole	-	-	●	●	§ 84-18(D)
Projecting	-	O	●	●	§ 84-18(E)
Suspended	-	-	O	-	§ 84-18(F)
Temporary[1]	O	O	O	O	§ 84-18(G)
Wall	O	O	●	●	§ 84-18(H)
Window[1]	-	O	O	O	§ 84-18(I)

NOTE: (1) A-Frame, Window, and Temporary signs shall not be included in the count of total allotted signage for any one use.

B. **Additional Signage for Developments.** Due to the unique identification needs of residential and multi-tenant commercial developments, additional signage may be permitted in accordance with Table 84-17(B) below. All signs must be in conformance with Section 84-18, where applicable.

TABLE 84-17(B): Additional Development Signage

	NUMBER	TYPE
Residential Development	1 per entrance[1]	Ground Sign, max height 4 feet & max area 24 square feet
Multi-Tenant Commercial Development		
Per Tenant	2	As permitted
Per Lot	1	Ground Sign, max height 10 feet & max area 32 square feet
Multi-Story, Multi-Tenant Commercial or Mixed-Use Building		
First-Floor	1 per tenant	As permitted
Upper-Floor	1 building identification sign	Special Planning Board Approval Required
Corner Buildings	1 additional	As permitted[2], must be identical to signage on primary façade

NOTES:
(1) Shall only apply to entrance points from public streets.
(2) Freestanding signs may not be duplicated. Additional signage must be located on façade.

§ 84-18 REGULATIONS BY SIGN TYPE

A. A-Frame Sign. A freestanding sign that is comprised of two sign faces diverging at an angle of no more than 45 degrees from their adjoined edge.

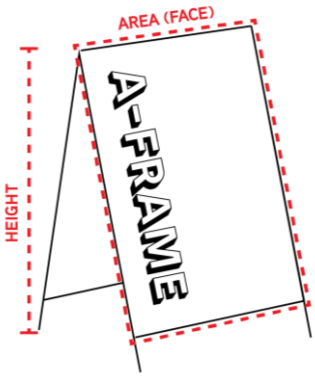
1) **Requirements by District.**

	R-1, R-2, R-3 Districts	R-3M District	NMU, MU Districts	M-1 District
Maximum Number	-	1 per use	1 per use	1 per use
Maximum Area	-	6 square feet	6 square feet	6 square feet
Minimum Height	-	3 feet	3 feet	3 feet
Maximum Height	-	4 feet	4 feet	4 feet
Illumination	-	-	-	-

2) **Additional Regulations.**

a. The sign must be brought in each day at the close of business.

b. An a-frame sign may be placed within the Village public right-of-way provided it does not impede pedestrian traffic and does not block snow storage areas in winter months.



B. Awning Sign. A sign that is part of or attached to an awning.

1) **Requirements by District.**

	R-1, R-2, R-3 Districts	R-3M District	NMU, MU Districts	M-1 District
Maximum Number	-	-	1 per awning	1 per awning
Maximum Area	-	-	4 square feet	4 square feet
Maximum Height	-	-	2 feet	2 feet
Minimum Clearance[1]	-	-	9 feet	9 feet
Illumination	-	-	-	-
NOTE: (1) Measured from the elevation of the ground directly beneath the center of the awning to the bottommost edge of the awning				

2) **Additional Regulations.**

a. Awning signs shall be permitted on first-floor awnings only.

b. A single use may utilize no more than two awnings for signage. Where a single use has more than one awning, each awning shall match in color and style.

c. Where an awning relates to more than one use, each use shall be entitled to one sign on such awning provided the color and style of the signs are the same.

Awning Sign Example

d. Awnings upon which a sign is to be placed shall be comprised of high-quality, weather-resistant materials designed for exterior use.

C. **Ground Sign.** A type of freestanding sign that is mounted on a base flush with the ground or supported by one or two columns or posts provided the distance between the ground and bottommost edge of the sign is no greater than four feet.

1) **Requirements by District.**

	R-1, R-2, R-3 Districts	R-3M District	NMU, MU Districts	M-1 District
Maximum Number	1 per lot	1 per lot	1 per lot	1 per lot
Maximum Area	6 square feet	16 square feet	20 square feet	30 square feet
Maximum Height	3 feet	3 feet	4 feet	6 feet
Minimum Setback	10 feet	10 feet	10 feet	10 feet
Illumination	-	-	Internal or External	Internal or External
Note: For residential and multi-tenant commercial development ground sign requirements see Table 84-17(B).				

2) **Additional Regulations.**

a. All ground signs shall have a landscaped area at the base of the sign. The landscaping shall fully surround the sign and utilize appropriate plantings so as not to obscure the visibility of the sign.

b. All plantings shall be properly manicured and maintained as the season may require. Dead or decaying plant material shall be replaced by the sign owner within 30 days of written notice by the Sign Officer.

c. Segmental block and/or non-mortared stone is permitted for sign base materials only if like materials are in use throughout the principal structure. Landscape timbers are not permitted sign base materials.

d. External lighting fixtures may be mounted on the ground or on the sign. Lighting fixtures mounted on the ground shall be shielded and directed so as to illuminate only the sign face.

e. The use of neon tubes may be permitted with Planning Board review and approval.

D. Pole Sign. A type of freestanding sign that is supported by two columns or posts with a distance exceeding four feet between the ground and the bottommost edge of the sign.

1) **Requirements by District.**

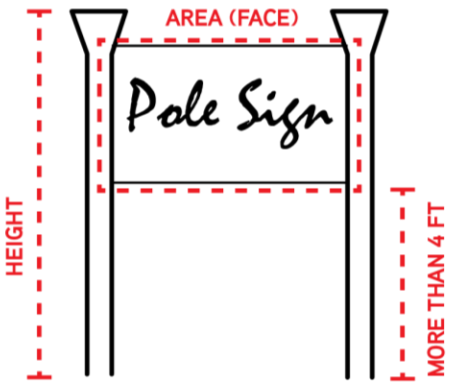
	R-1, R-2, R-3 Districts	R-3M District	NMU, MU Districts	M-1 District
Maximum Number	-	-	1 per lot	1 per lot
Maximum Area	-	-	64 square feet[1]	64 square feet[1]
Maximum Height	-	-	12 feet	12 feet
Minimum Setback	-	-	10 feet	10 feet
Illumination	-	-	Internal	Internal

Note: (1) For every foot over four feet that the sign face is elevated, the maximum area allowable shall decrease by two square feet.

2) **Additional Regulations.**

a. All pole signs shall have a landscaped area at the base of the sign. The landscaping shall fully surround the sign and utilize appropriate plantings so as not to obscure the visibility of the sign.

b. All plantings shall be properly manicured and maintained as the season may require. Dead or decaying plant material shall be replaced by the sign owner within 30 days of written notice by the Sign Officer.



E. **Projecting Sign.** A sign which is wholly dependent upon a building for support and which projects more than six inches from such building.

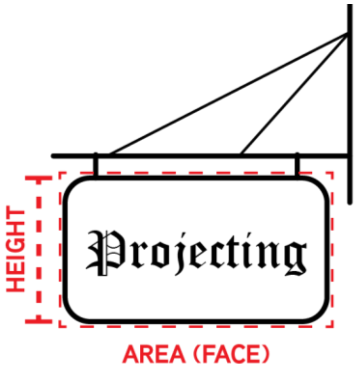
1) **Requirements by Districts.**

	R-1, R-2, R-3 Districts	R-3M District	NMU, MU Districts	M-1 District
Maximum Number	-	1 per use	1 per use	1 per use
Maximum Area	-	4 square feet	6 square feet	8 square feet
Maximum Height	-	2 feet	2 feet	3 feet
Minimum Clearance [1]	-	9 feet	9 feet	9 feet
Illumination	-	-	External Only	External Only
NOTE: (1) Measured from the elevation of the ground directly beneath the center of the sign to the bottommost edge of the sign.				

2) **Additional Regulations.**

a. Signs shall be located in the sign board area, unless otherwise approved by the Planning Board.

b. The use of neon tubes may be permitted with Planning Board review and approval.



F. **Suspended Sign**. A sign attached to and supported by the underside of a horizontal plane.

1) **Regulations by District**.

	R-1, R-2, R-3 Districts	R-3M District	NMU, MU Districts	M-1 District
Maximum Number	-	1 per use	1 per use	-
Maximum Area	-	6 square feet	6 square feet	-
Maximum Height	-	2 feet	2 feet	-
Minimum Clearance [1]	-	9 feet	9 feet	-
Illumination	-	-	-	-
NOTE: (1) Measured from the elevation of the ground directly beneath the center of the sign to the bottommost edge of the sign.				

2) **Additional Regulations**.

a. Signs shall be located in the sign board area, unless otherwise approved by the Planning Board.

G. Temporary Sign. A sign which is not intended to be used for a period of time exceeding 30 days and is not attached to a building, structure, or ground in a permanent manner.

1) **Regulations by District.**

	R-1, R-2, R-3 Districts	R-3M District	NMU, MU Districts	M-1 District
Maximum Number	1 per use	1 per use	1 per use	1 per use
Maximum Area	6 square feet	12 square feet	24 square feet	24 square feet
Maximum Height	3 feet	3 feet	6 feet	6 feet
Illumination	-	-	-	-

2) **Additional Regulations.**

a. No sign shall be displayed for more than 30 days in a 90-day period.

b. The display of a sign may be extended for up to two additional 30-day periods upon written request to the Sign Officer setting forth the special circumstances requiring such extension.

c. No sign shall project above the first floor of any given building or beyond property lines.

d. Incidental banners, posters, pennants, ribbons, streamers, spinners, or balloons may be permitted in conjunction with temporary signage at the discretion of the Sign Officer and/or Planning Board, provided they are in conformance with this Section.

H. Wall Sign. A sign fastened to the wall of a building or structure in such a manner that the wall becomes the supporting structure for or forms the background surface of the sign and which does not project outward more than six inches from such building or structure.

1) **Regulations by District.**

	R-1, R-2, R-3 Districts	R-3M District	NMU, MU Districts	M-1 District
Maximum Number	1 per structure	1 per structure	1 per façade [1]	1 per façade [1]
Maximum Area	4 square feet	8 square feet	20% of façade OR 50 square feet, whichever is less	20% of façade OR 50 square feet, whichever is less
Maximum Height	2 feet	2 feet	4 feet	6 feet
Illumination	Not Permitted	Not Permitted	External Only	Internal or External
Note: (1) All wall signs on any given façade shall be considered as one collective sign provided the cumulative area of signage does not exceed the maximum area allowable.				

2) **Additional Regulations.**

a. Signs shall be located in the sign board area, unless otherwise approved by the Planning Board.

I. Window Sign. A sign meant to be visible from a sidewalk, street or other public place, painted or affixed on glass or other window material, or located inside within three feet of the window, but shall not include graphics in connection with customary window product displays.

1) **Regulations by District.**

	R-1, R-2, R-3 Districts	R-3M District	NMU, MU Districts	M-1 District
Maximum Number	-	-	None	None
Maximum Area	-	-	25% of window area	50% of window area
Illumination	-	-	-	-

2) **Additional Regulations.**

a. Window signs shall not be counted towards the total allotted signage for any use.

§ 84-19 NONCONFORMING SIGNS

A. Any sign that does not comply with this Chapter is eligible for characterization as a legal nonconforming sign if the sign complied with all requirements in effect at the time it was erected.

B. Nonconforming signs must be brought into compliance with this Chapter under the following conditions:

1) The sign is altered in any way, such as size, design, structure, or type of illumination (except for normal maintenance).

2) The sign is relocated or replaced.

3) The property or business to which the sign relates changes ownership or primary use.

C. Any nonconforming sign that is removed from its position or siting and not replaced in-kind within 60 days shall be presumed to be abandoned and discontinued, and therefore may not be restored or re-erected except in compliance with this Chapter.

D. No nonconforming sign may be altered in any way that would increase its nonconformity with the regulations of this Chapter, including but not limited to area, height, setback, and illumination.

E. A nonconforming sign shall not be repaired, reconstructed or replaced, except in conformity with all the provisions of this chapter if it is damaged to an extent that the cost of repairing the sign to its former condition or replacing it with an equivalent sign equals or exceeds 50% of the replacement value of the sign so damaged, including labor.

F. Nothing in this section shall relieve the owner or user of a nonconforming sign or owner of the property on which the nonconforming sign is located from complying with the provisions of this Chapter regarding safety, maintenance and repair of signs. Any repainting, cleaning, or routine maintenance or repair of the sign or sign structure shall not be deemed to modify the sign in any way.