

To: **Mayor and City Council**
Through: **Ryan Schroeder, City Manager**
From: **Jim Hartshorn, Community/Economic Development Director**
Date: **November 23, 2020**

Subject: Signage Ordinance Review

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Some members of the Council have asked to review the current sign ordinance, as it relates to non-commercial signs:

NONCOMMERCIAL SPEECH. Dissemination of messages not classified as commercial speech which include, but are not limited to, messages concerning political, religious, social, ideological, public service and informational topics.

The sign ordinance allows one free standing sign per lot (6 square feet or less without a permit in a residential district). Larger signs, up to 32 square feet (for one sign, this is not cumulative), would require a permit and install by a licensed installer. These can only be a monument sign (affixed to the ground) or an awning/canopy sign

153.436 PERMITTED SIGNS BY DISTRICT.

- (A) Within the R Districts, signs must comply with the following regulations.
(1) Signs shall not exceed 32 square feet in gross area and six feet in height.

Window signs - The ordinance addresses commercial window signs. The ordinance is silent on window signs within a residential district.

153.434 Prohibited Signs in all zoning districts include:

(M) Signs painted, attached or in any other manner affixed to fences, roofs, other than integral roof signs, trees, rocks or other similar natural surfaces, or attached to a pole in the right-of-way, or bridges, towers or similar public structures; (note: regardless of size in any district which has been a problem in the past)

153.435 General Provisions:

(D) Signs in all districts shall be located at least ten feet from all lot lines. Except as otherwise stated, no more than one freestanding sign shall be located on any single lot.

To summarize our Code for signs in an R district:

- 1 sign/lot (regardless of zoning district)
- Up to 32 sq. ft. (1 sign not multiple signs cumulatively)
- If more than 6 sq. ft. you need a permit and licensed installer
- Monument or canopy only

Other Communities Non-Commercial Sign Ordinances:

1. Hastings – No restrictions on non-commercial signs.
2. South St. Paul – 6 feet max in R-1 through R-3, and 24 square feet max in R-4, which is multifamily.
3. Mendota Heights – 25 square feet max for a three-month period.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Review Sign Ordinance and direct staff.

Jim Hartshorn

From: Melissa Sonnek
Sent: Wednesday, November 18, 2020 11:45 AM
To: Jim Hartshorn
Subject: RE: Sign Ordinance

Prohibited signage –

§ 153.434 PROHIBITED SIGNS.

The following signs are prohibited in all zoning districts:

(M) Signs painted, attached or in any other manner affixed to fences, roofs, other than integral roof signs, trees, rocks or other similar natural surfaces, or attached to a post or pole in the right-of-way, or bridges, towers or similar public structures;

§ 153.435 GENERAL PROVISIONS.

(D) Signs in all districts shall be located at least ten feet from all lot lines. Except as otherwise stated, no more than one freestanding sign shall be located on any single lot.

(F) Window coverage.

(1) Window signs may be placed within a building in Commercial and Industrial Zoning Districts, however the window coverage shall not exceed 30% of each window.

(2) There shall be no more than a maximum area of 80 square feet per street frontage for window signs.

Sincerely,

Melissa Sonnek
City Planner

Office: 651-552-4134
1616 Humboldt Avenue
West St. Paul, MN 55118



www.wspmn.gov



From: Melissa Sonnek
Sent: Wednesday, November 18, 2020 11:38 AM
To: Jim Hartshorn <JHartshorn@wspmn.gov>
Subject: RE: Sign Ordinance

Here is the section on signs that do not require permits –

§ 153.433 EXCEPTIONS.

The following signs shall not be required to obtain a license or permit for the installation of the sign pursuant to §§ 150.105 through 150.110, and shall be permissible in all zoning districts; these exceptions shall not be construed so as to excuse the installer of the sign, or the owner of the property upon which the sign is located, from conforming to the other provisions of this chapter, or the city code.

- (A) Building markers;
- (B) Noncommercial flags;
- (C) Official or public notices issued by a court or governmental agency;

- (D) Signs six square feet or less in gross area located on property used as residential use and located in an R District;
 - (E) Directional signs that are six square feet or less; and
 - (F) Signs on bus shelters.
- (Ord. passed 10-11-1963)

Sincerely,

Melissa Sonnek
City Planner

Office: 651-552-4134
1616 Humboldt Avenue
West St. Paul, MN 55118



From: Melissa Sonnek
Sent: Wednesday, November 18, 2020 11:00 AM
To: Jim Hartshorn <JHartshorn@wspmn.gov>
Subject: RE: Sign Ordinance

Jim,
Here is link to the ordinance - https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/weststpaul/latest/weststpaul_mn/0-0-0-6902

And here is the language –
§ 153.438 NONCOMMERCIAL SPEECH.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this chapter, all signs of any size containing noncommercial speech may be posted from 46 days before the state primary in any general election year until ten days following the general election and 13 weeks prior to any special election until ten days following the special election.
(Ord. 10-09, passed - -; Ord. passed 10-11-1963)

Sincerely,

Melissa Sonnek
City Planner

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From: Jim Hartshorn <JHartshorn@wspmn.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, November 18, 2020 10:57 AM
To: Melissa Sonnek <MSonnek@wspmn.gov>
Subject: Sign Ordinance

Can you send me the part of the Sign Ordinance that shows non-commercial signs. Thanks.