

ARTICLE 12: SIGNS

Section 12.10 Definitions

Unless otherwise expressly stated, the following terms, for the purpose of this Article shall have the meanings herein indicated:

- (a) **Approved Combustible Material.** Wood or material less combustible than wood and located at a safe distance from electrical equipment. The term “noncombustible material” means any material which will not ignite or actively support combustion in a surrounding temperature of twelve hundred degrees (1,200) Fahrenheit during an exposure of five (5) minutes.
- (b) **Business Sign.** Any sign which directs attention to a business, industry, profession, entertainment or service that is conducted, maintained, sold or offered on the premises where the sign is located.
- (c) **Decorative Trim.** The molding, battens, capping, nailing strips or representations in cutout or irregular form which are attached to the sign.
- (d) **Erect.** To build, construct, attach, hand, place, suspend or affix, and shall also include the painting of wall signs. It shall not mean or include repairs.
- (e) **Illuminated Sign.** Any sign which has characters, letters, figures, designs or outlines illuminated or motivated by electricity.
- (f) **Location.** Any lot, premises, building wall or any structure whatsoever upon which a sign is erected, constructed, painted or maintained. Two (2) street fronts shall be deemed two (2) locations.
- (g) **Person.** Any agent, lessee, individual, person, firm, partnership, association, corporation, company or organization of any kind.
- (h) **Sign.** Every sign, ground, pole, wall or roof sign, illuminated sign, projecting sign, temporary sign, portable sign, marquee sign, awning, canopy, exterior clock or thermometer, and shall include any announcement, declaration, demonstration, display, illustration, device, insignia or symbol used to identify and promote the interest of any person, business, corporation or group, when the same is placed in view of the general public.
- (i) **Sign Area.** The total area made available by a sign for the purpose of displaying the advertising message, excluding decorative trim.

Section 12.20 General Provisions

No sign shall be erected or maintained in the Town of Seabrook Island except in conformity with the provisions of this Article. (Ordinance 1996-10, 11/26/96)

Section 12.30 Exempt Signs

§12.30.10 Street Signs

Street signs for traffic, direction and names in all areas of the Town shall be exempt from the provisions of this article. (Ordinance 1996-10, 11/26/96)

§12.30.20 Municipal Signs

Municipal signs, legal notices and temporary emergency or non-advertising signs are exempt from these provisions.

Section 12.40 Applicability of Other Ordinances

The erection of all signs shall be subject to all applicable Town ordinances. Whenever a conflict exists, the most restrictive requirement shall control. (Ordinance 1996-10, 11/26/96)

Section 12.50 Prohibited Signs

No flashing, rotating or animated signs or devices shall be erected, constructed or maintained nor shall any such signs or devices be installed on, within or behind any window, door, building facade or store front so as to be visible to the general public. This requirement shall apply to all existing as well as new uses. No neon, day glow or similar hue will be permitted to be installed on, within or behind any window, door, building facade or store front so as to be visible to the public from outside the establishment. (Ordinance 1996-10, 11/26/96)

Section 12.60 Allowable Signs

Except as hereinafter provided, no other type of signs shall be erected or maintained. (Ordinance 96-10, 11/26/96)

§12.60.10 Real estate signs

Real estate signs, not exceeding five (5) square feet in area, which advertise the sale, rental or lease of only the premises upon which the signs are located and where allowed by subdivision covenants.

§12.60.20 Identification Signs

§12.60.20.10 Identification signs not over twenty (20) square feet in area each for public, charitable or religious institutions when such signs are located on the premises of the institutions.

§12.60.20.20 All new single-family construction projects shall have a sign that, at a minimum, names the general contractor performing such work. Signs denoting the owner of the project, architect, and general contractor, when placed upon work under construction, shall be limited to one (1) sign each per location.

- (a) Such signs shall not exceed sixteen (16) square feet in area per sign.
- (b) Placement of the sign is to be on the street frontage only and is to be located not less than one (1) foot nor more than ten (10) feet from the property line.
- (c) The sign shall be fabricated to the specifications on file with the Zoning Administrator, and shall be comprised of two (2) - four (4) inch by four (4) inch treated wood posts, with eased edges at the top, on each end of the sign.
- (d) The display area of the sign will be comprised of a plywood sheet measuring forty-eight (48) inches by thirty (30) inches by 3/4 inches, treated with acrylic paint.
- (e) All building permits and other approvals shall be placed on the rear of the sign, and shall not be discernable from an area used by the general public.
- (f) The job site sign shall be removed from the premises prior to requesting final review and inspection of the premises.

§12.60.30 Professional/Occupational Signs

Professional or occupational signs not to exceed five (5) square feet in area.

§12.60.40 Memorial Signs

Memorial signs or tablets, names of buildings, and dates of erection, cut into masonry or noncombustible material not to exceed two (2) square feet in area.

§12.60.50 Directional Signs

Directions, phone, public conveniences, areas of public interest, and similar public facility signs not exceeding six (6) square feet in area for a ground sign or two (2) square feet in area for any other type of public sign.

§12.60.60 Political Signs

Temporary political signs relating to elections not to exceed five (5) square feet.

- (a) Such signs shall not be erected prior to thirty (30) calendar days before the election involved, and must be removed no later than two (2) calendar days after the election.
- (b) Location of signs must be approved by the Zoning Administrator in writing. No temporary political signs will be allowed on any property or right-of-way owned, operated or maintained by the Town.

§12.60.70 Community Signs

Community signs, which establish a theme for the entire community and which are located at strategic, highly visible locations along the primary access routes to or through the Town. Community signs shall not advertise anything more than the areas or communities which they are associated with, and each shall be in keeping with the other community signs found in the Town.

§12.60.80 Commercial Area Signs

Each commercial area of the Town may erect signs which identify and direct customers to the businesses, goods and services available in that area. The signs shall be of approved size and color as allowed by this chapter.

§12.60.90 Layout/Map Signs

Each commercial area of the Town may erect a layout or map of the area which identifies and directs customers to the businesses, goods and services available within that area.

§12.60.100 Vending Machine Signs

Vending machine signs are to be only those signs that are incorporated in their manufacture. Internally illuminated signs or signs that contain a visible light source are prohibited.

§12.60.110 Door Entry Signs

Each place of business within the Town may utilize a door entry sign. Door signs shall not contain any information other than the name of the business, its address and hours of operation. (Ordinance 1996-10, 11/26/96)

§12.60.120 Food Service Establishment Signs

A food service establishment may place one (1) sign not exceeding twelve (12) square feet on or near each entry door to the establishment. Such sign must comply with the requirements of Section 12.110 of this ordinance. EXHIBIT 1. Such sign may only contain the name, address, hours of operation, menus (food and wine) and pertinent marketing information of the business. (Ordinance 1997-17, 1/27/98) (Ordinance 2006-01, 2/28/06)

§12.60.130 Temporary Signs

Temporary signs may be permitted by the Zoning Administrator for a period of three (3) months or less when the application indicates the proposed life of the sign. Temporary signs, with a use span of longer than thirty (30) days, must be constructed to meet the requirements of this chapter. (Ordinance 96-10, 11/26/96)

§12.60.140 Boat Sales/Charter/Rental Signs

- (a) **Boat Sales Signs:** "FOR SALE" signs may be affixed to the boats for sale in the marina. The sign may not exceed three (3) square feet and must be of professional quality material as approved by the Zoning Administrator. The sign shall be positioned at the dockside location on the boat. EXHIBIT 2 & 3 (Ordinance 2006-01, 2/28/06)
- (b) **Boat Sales/Charter Burgee (Flag):** "For Sale", "Charter" burgee (flag) may be affixed to the boats for sale in the Marina. The sign shall be positioned at the dockside location on the boat. The sign may not exceed six (6) square feet and must be of professional quality material as approved by the Zoning Administrator. EXHIBIT 2 & 3 (Ordinance 2006-01, 2/28/06)
- (c) **Boat Rental Signs:** Boat Rental Signs may be placed in the front console of the boats for rent. The signs may not exceed 12 x 24" and must be of professional quality with background and lettering that complies with the requirements of this ordinance. Such signs are limited to one (1) sign per boat. EXHIBIT 10 (Ordinance 2006-01, 2/28/06)

§12.60.150 Take Away Flier Boxes

- (a) **Charter Sales/Boat Rental Fliers:** “Take Away” boxes for charter and boat rental information may be affixed to the post at the entrance of A-Dock. The boxes may not exceed 8.5 x 11” and must be made of clear Plexiglas with hinged covers. EXHIBIT 4 (Ordinance 2006-01, 2/28/06)
- (b) **Service Establishment Fliers:** “Take Away” boxes may be affixed next to the entrance door of service establishments. The boxes may not exceed 8.5 x 11” and must be made of clear Plexiglas with hinged covers. EXHIBIT 5 (Ordinance 2006-01, 2/28/06)

§12.60.160 Real Estate Display Sign at Real Estate Office

Real Estate Property for Sale Signs: Signs depicting homes/property for sale may be positioned in the inside of the primary two (2) windows adjacent to the entrance door. The signs may not exceed six (6) square feet each and must be of professional quality as approved by the Zoning Administrator. EXHIBIT 6 (Ordinance 2006-01, 2/28/06)

§12.60.170 Establishment’s Hours of Operation

Open/Closed/Hours of operation signs may be affixed to the inside of the primary entrance door or adjacent window of all establishments. The sign may not exceed 8.5 x 11” and must be of vinyl material, with white background and black lettering and the business logo. No other type sign is allowed. EXHIBIT 7 (Ordinance 2006-01, 2/28/06)

§12.60.180 Promotional/Marketing Signs

Promotional/Marketing Signs may be located in the main breezeway of the marina. All merchants may place one (1) marketing brochure not to exceed 8.5 x 11” made of vinyl material, with white background and black lettering and the business logo. Three sign frames, not to exceed twelve (12) square feet each, represent the three categories of merchants (i.e. restaurants, shopping and services). EXHIBIT 8 (Ordinance 2006-01, 2/28/06)

§12.60.190 Reserved Parking

Reserved Parking Signs for specific merchants may be placed in no more than two (2) parking spaces per merchant during times of over capacity and special events. The sign shall be no higher than 31 inches above the grade of the sidewalk and in the form of an 18 x 12” sign attached to 4 x 4” treated wood timber and supported by same material. The sign and the mounting post shall be painted to match the

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color of the building in front of which it is placed. Lettering of the sign shall be white and the sign material shall meet the requirements of this ordinance. EXHIBIT 9 (Ordinance 2006-01, 2/28/06)

Section 12.70 Permits Required

It is unlawful for any person to erect, repair, alter, relocate or display within the Town of Seabrook Island, any sign or other advertising device as defined in this article without first obtaining a sign permit from the Zoning Administrator and paying all fees as required by this chapter. Permits shall not be required for ordinary repair and maintenance of a sign. Such ordinary repair and maintenance includes changing of light bulbs, painting (provided the sign's legend is not changed), and other minor work which does not involve structural or color changes. (Ordinance 96-10, 11/26/96)

Section 12.80 Permit Applications

Applications for sign permits shall be filed with the Zoning Administrator. Applications shall include the following, in addition to information required by the Town:

- (a) A working drawing, showing all colors to be used, shall be submitted at the time of application, and no work shall proceed until the sign is approved. .
- (b) A plan drawing showing fonts and sizes of letters; and specifications for the sign, including material to be used and details of construction; and methods of attachment of the sign applied for to the building or to the ground. Similar information, as appropriate, is to be submitted with awning permit applications.
- (c) Written consent of the owner of the building, structure or land to which or on which the sign is to be erected shall be filed with the application.
- (d) An illustration of the proposed sign and a color photograph(s) of the area and, if applicable, the building facade upon which the proposed sign is to be erected shall be submitted with each sign application, showing in detail the physical conditions within the sign area, as well as the facades of any adjoining buildings. (Ordinance 96-10, 11/26/96)

Section 12.90 Permit Fees

Every applicant, before being granted a permit hereunder, shall pay to the Town a fee as required by the Town's adopted fee schedule for each sign.

Section 12.100 Approval

All signs must be approved by the Zoning Administrator before a permit may be issued. The following procedures shall apply to all applications for the placement of signs within the Town:

§12.100.10

An applicant shall file all information and specifications required by this article along with the applicable fee with the Zoning Administrator. The Zoning Administrator shall review the application to determine its technical compliance with this article.

§12.100.20

At all times, the Zoning Administrator shall determine the appropriateness of a proposed sign by utilizing the following criteria:

- (a) Whether the sign is appropriate in size, shape and scale for its location;
- (b) Whether the sign detracts from or otherwise affects the harmonious appearance and development of the Town and/or the commercial area;
- (c) Whether the sign in any manner affects public health or safety; and
- (d) Whether the sign properly reflects the aesthetic theme of the community as a whole.

§12.100.30

Upon compliance by an applicant with the terms of this chapter and the requirements of the Zoning Administrator, the Zoning Administrator shall issue all necessary permits.

§12.100.40 Identification

The Zoning Administrator is granted the discretion to make as a condition of the issuance of a sign permit, the requirement that each sign erected, constructed or maintained shall be plainly and permanently marked with the name of the person erecting, constructing or maintaining such sign. (Ordinance 96-10, 11/26/96)

§12.100.50

Any person aggrieved by the decision of the Zoning Administrator may file an appeal in accord with the provisions of §19.40 of this Ordinance. (Ordinance 96-10, 11/26/96)

Section 12.110 General Requirements

§12.110.10 Construction (Ordinance 96-10, 11/26/96)

§12.110.10.10 Wind loads. All signs exposed to wind pressure must be so constructed as to withstand a minimum wind pressure of not less than thirty (30) pounds per square foot area or the minimum wind load requirements of the Standard Building Code whichever is greater.

§12.110.10.20 Materials. All permanent signs shall be constructed of treated wood, cedar or redwood, either sandblasted or routed, or aluminum painted to resemble the appearance of the approved woods. Any other material having the appearance of wood that satisfies the terms of this article may also be used with the written consent of the Zoning Administrator. (Ordinance 2006-01, 2/28/06)

§12.110.20 Design

§12.110.20.10 Lettering. All lettering shall be proportioned in size to the size of the sign erected, except in the case of window and entry door signs, whose letters shall not, under any circumstances, exceed five (5) inches in height.

§12.110.20.20 Tinting. No neon, day glow or similar tint will be permitted on any sign, nor shall a sign be permitted to display colors which may be confusing to emergency equipment operators. Company logos may be used provided the Zoning Administrator determines their use is in accordance with the provisions of §12.100.20 of this ordinance.

§12.110.30 Placement

No sign shall be erected, maintained or constructed so as to obstruct any fire passage, egress window, door or other required opening.

§12.110.40 Maintenance

The owner of any sign as defined and regulated by this chapter shall properly maintain such sign. All signs, together with their framing, supports, braces, guys and anchors shall be kept in repair and proper state of preservation. The display surfaces of all signs shall be kept neatly painted or posted at all times, free from paint scaling or breaks, tears and defacing. (Ordinance 96-10, 11/26/96)

Section 12.120 Requirements for Specific Sign Types

§12.120.10 Ground Signs

- (a) Ground signs shall include any sign supported by one (1) or more uprights upon the ground with or without braces and not attached to any building or structure.
- (b) Ground signs may be erected to a height not to exceed eight (8) feet above the average grade of the ground level at the base of the uprights.
- (c) Every ground sign having an area in excess of twelve (12) square feet shall have an open space of not less than two (2) feet between the lower edge of such sign and the average grade of the ground level at the base of the uprights and shall be landscaped.
- (d) Ground signs in excess of twelve (12) square feet may only be lighted by landscaped up lighting with a proper reflective shield.
- (e) No ground sign shall be permitted closer than six (6) feet to the property line adjacent to the sign. In case of a natural obstruction, the Zoning Administrator may permit a change in the location of the sign. (Ordinance 96-10, 11/26/96; amended Ordinance 1998-07, 4/28/98)
- (f) Ground signs shall be securely built, constructed, and erected upon two (2) posts or standards which shall be adequately anchored to the ground.
- (g) Only one (1) ground sign shall be permitted for each building location or premises, per public street frontage.
- (h) A ground sign shall not exceed forty-eight (48) square feet in area on any one (1) side, and shall not exceed twelve (12) feet in one (1) dimension. (Ordinance 96-10, 11/26/96).

§12.120.20 Wall Signs

- (a) Any outdoor sign recessed or affixed in any manner to any wall of a building or to any structure except roofs, shall be considered a wall sign. Signs shall not be painted directly onto the outside face of any building, part of a building or wall.
- (b) Wall signs must be securely and safely attached to the wall of a building or to the supporting structure by means of corrosive-resistant metal anchors, bolts or expansion screws of not less than 3/8 of an inch in diameter.

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- (c) All signs shall be located at five (5) feet above ground, or floor level or above a main entrance. No sign shall be permitted in, between, or above second story windows or the second story facade. A wall sign or a supporting framing shall not project above the eave or above the roofline of the building.
- (d) Wall signs shall be permitted only on the street front or front face of a building for each corporation or business enterprise per location, except wall signs shall also be permitted on a building's face which has direct public access from a public or quasi-public area such as a parking lot. (Ordinance 96-10, 11/26/96)
- (e) A wall sign shall not be attached to any building or structure so that it will interfere with possible operations of the fire department.
- (f) In shopping complexes with individual stores that exceed one hundred (100) lineal feet of front facade, a wall sign may be erected, but shall not exceed fifty (50) square feet in size or be above the roof line. (Ordinance 96-10, 11/26/96).

Section 12.130 Existing Signs and Compliance

§12.130.10

All existing signs erected prior to the date when this ordinance becomes effective shall comply with and be subject to all of the provisions of this article with respect to annual inspections, maintenance and safety, and all replacements or reconstructions of such existing signs shall comply with this chapter.

§12.130.20

All nonconforming signs currently displayed shall be authorized to remain in place until such time as it shall require maintenance, repair, or replacement, or for a period of one (1) year, whichever occurs sooner. (Ordinance 96-10, 11/26/96)

Section 12.140 Unlawful Signs

§12.140.10

Any outdoor sign erected, constructed or maintained subsequent to the adoption of this ordinance or date, not in compliance with the provisions of this chapter shall be considered an unlawful sign.

§12.140.20

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In addition to the provisions of §12.170, the Zoning Administrator shall notify by mail, the person who maintains any such unlawful sign, to correct specified violations or omissions so as to comply with this chapter or remove such sign within ten (10) days from the date of such notice, in default of which the Zoning Administrator may remove such sign or make the sign comply with this chapter at the expense of such person. (Ordinance 96-10, 11/26/96)

Section 12.150 Unsafe Outdoor Signs

§12.150.10

Should, in the opinion of the Zoning Administrator, any outdoor sign be or become insecure or in danger of falling or otherwise become dangerous or unsafe, the person owning or maintaining the same shall, upon written notice from the Zoning Administrator, forthwith secure the same in a manner approved by the Zoning Administrator in conformity with the provisions of this chapter or cause the same to be removed.

§12.150.20

Should the sign owner fail to remove an unsafe sign as ordered or, whenever in the opinion of the Zoning Administrator, a violation of this chapter exists which requires immediate action to abate a direct hazard or immediate danger to the health and safety of the occupants of a building or of the public, the Zoning Administrator may, without prior notice, take such direct action as is necessary to abate the hazard or danger. (Ordinance 96-10, 11/26/96)

Section 12.160 Recovery of Expenses

Expenses incurred pursuant to §12.150 of this article shall be paid by the owner of the sign or by the owner of the property should the sign owner refuse to pay. Town Council may institute a suit in the name of the Town to recover such expenses against any person liable for such expenses or may cause such expenses to be charged and assessed against the property as a lien. (Ordinance 96-10, 11/26/96)