

**STATE OF MINNESOTA
COUNTY OF MILLE LACS
PRINCETON TOWNSHIP**

ORDINANCE NO. 2024-2

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 600 OF THE TOWNSHIP
ZONING ORDINANCE AS IT RELATES TO AMENDMENTS TO
THE SIGN REGULATIONS IN SECTION 600:200 TO SECTION
600:265.**

**THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF PRINCETON TOWNSHIP
ORDAINS:**

SECTION 1. Section 600:203 and Section 600:204 are to be added and Section 600:205 is to be amended to read as follows:

600:200 SIGNS.

600:203 SUBSTITUTION CLAUSE. The owner of any sign which is otherwise allowed by this sign ordinance may substitute non-commercial copy in lieu of any other commercial or non-commercial copy. This substitution of copy may be made without any additional approval or permitting. The purpose of this provision is to prevent any inadvertent favoring of commercial speech over non-commercial speech or favoring of any particular non-commercial message over any other non-commercial message. This provision prevails over any more specific provision to the contrary.

600:204 CONFLICT WITH ZONING ORDINANCE. If there is a conflict that occurs between this Section and other provisions of this Ordinance, as amended, the conditions as set forth in this Section, as amended, shall prevail.

600:205 DEFINITIONS.

~~**Abandoned Sign** — a sign which no longer identifies or advertises a bona fide business, lessor, service, owner, product, or activity, and/or for which no legal owner can be found.~~

Area — (See “Sign, Area of”)

Awning — a shelter projecting from and supported by the exterior wall of a building constructed of non-rigid materials on a supporting framework.
(Compare “Marquee”)

Awning Sign — a sign painted on, printed on, or attached flat against the surface of an awning.

Banner Sign – a sign made of fabric or any non-rigid material with no enclosing framework.

~~**Billboard** – a sign erected and used for the purpose of advertising a product, event, place, person, or subject not related to the premises on which the sign is located. (See off-premises sign)~~

Building Face – the exposed face of a building, including windows and doors, from ground level to the eave line.

Canopy – a rigid multi-sided structure covered with fabric, metal, or other material and supported by a building at one or more points or extremities and by columns or posts embedded in the ground at other points or extremities. May be illuminated by means of internal or external sources. (Compare “Marquee”)

Canopy Sign – a sign affixed or applied to the exterior facing surface or surfaces of a building or freestanding canopy.

Changeable Copy Sign, Electronic and Manual - A sign or portion thereof that displays electronic, nonpictorial text information in which each alphanumeric character, graphic, or symbol is defined by a small number of matrix elements using different combinations of light emitting diodes (LEDs), fiber optics, light bulbs or other illumination devices within the display area. Electronic changeable copy signs include computer programmable, microprocessor controlled electronic displays. Electronic changeable copy signs include projected images or messages with these characteristics onto buildings or objects. Electronic changeable copy signs do not include official signs. Manual signs include those with characters, letters, or illustrations that can be changed or rearranged manually without altering the face or the surface of the sign.

~~**Construction Sign** – a temporary sign identifying an architect, contractor, subcontractor, and/or material supplier participating in construction on the property on which the sign is located.~~

Copy – the graphic content of a sign surface in either permanent or removable letter, pictographic, symbolic, or alphabetic form.

Double-faced Sign – a sign with two faces, essentially back-to-back or v-construction, provided the angle of separation does not exceed 30 (thirty) degrees.

Dynamic Display - Any characteristics of a sign that appear to have movement or that appear to change, caused by any method other than physically removing and replacing the sign or its components, whether the apparent movement or change is in the display, the sign structure or any other

component of the sign. This includes displays that incorporate technology or methods allowing the sign face to change the image without having to physically or mechanically replace the sign face or its components as well as any rotating, revolving, moving, flashing, blinking or animated display and any display that incorporates rotating panels, LED lights manipulated through digital input, digital ink or any other method or technology that allows the sign face to present a series of images or displays.

Electrical Sign – a sign or sign structure in which electrical wiring, connections, or fixtures are used.

Electronic Graphic Display Sign - A sign or portion thereof that displays electronic, static images, static graphics or static pictures, with or without text information, defined by a small number of matrix elements using different combinations of light emitting diodes (LEDs), fiber optics, light bulbs or other illumination devices within the display area where the message change sequence is accomplished immediately or by means of fade, repixelization or dissolve modes. Electronic graphic display signs include computer programmable, microprocessor controlled electronic or digital displays. Electronic graphic display signs include projected images or messages with these characteristics onto buildings or other objects.

Façade – the entire building front including the parapet.

Face of Sign – the area of a sign on which the copy is placed.

Freestanding Sign – any sign supported by structures or supports that are placed on or anchored in, the ground and that are independent from any building or other structure.

Height (of a Sign) – the vertical distance measured from the highest point of the sign, excluding decorative embellishments, to the grade of the adjacent street or the surface grade beneath the sign, whichever is less.

Illegal Sign – a sign which does not meet the requirements of this code and which has not received legal non-conforming status.

~~**Incidental Sign** – a small sign, emblem, or decal informing the public of goods, facilities, or services available on the premises, e.g., a credit card sign or a sign indicating hours of business.~~

~~**Institutional Sign** – any sign erected and maintained by a church or other religious institution for the identification of said church or religious property, or facility.~~

Marquee – a permanent roof-like structure or canopy of rigid materials supported by and extending from the façade of a building. (Compare “Awning”)

Marquee Sign – any sign attached to or supported by a marquee structure.

Monument Sign – a sign where the extent of the sign surface is attached to the ground or a foundation in the ground; and where there are no poles, braces, or other visible means of support other than attachment to the ground.

Multivision Sign - Any sign composed in whole or part of a series of vertical or horizontal slats or cylinders that are capable of being rotated at intervals so that partial rotation of the group of slats or cylinders produces a different image and when properly functioning allows on a single sign structure the display at any given time one of two (2) or more images.

Non-conforming sign – a sign which was erected legally, but which does not comply with subsequently enacted sign restrictions and regulations.

Off-premise Site Sign – a sign structure advertising an establishment, merchandise, service or entertainment which is not sold, produced, manufactured, or furnished at the property on which said sign is located, e.g., “billboards” or “outdoor advertising.”

On-premise Site Sign – a sign which pertains to the use of the premises and/or property on which it is located.

Owner – a person recorded as such on official records. For the purposes of this ordinance, the owner of property on which a sign is located is presumed to be the owner of the sign unless facts to the contrary are officially recorded or otherwise brought to the attention of the Administrator, e.g., a sign leased from a sign company.

Painted Wall Sign – any sign which is applied with paint or similar substance on the surface of a wall.

~~**Point of Purchase Display** – advertising of a retail item accompanying its display, e.g., an advertisement on a product dispenser, tire display, etc.~~

~~**Political Sign** – a temporary sign used in connection with a local, state, or national election or referendum.~~

Portable Sign – any sign designed to be moved easily and not permanently affixed to the ground or to a structure or building.

Projecting Sign – a sign, other than a flat wall sign, which is attached to and projects from a building wall or other structure not specifically designed to support the sign.

~~**Real Estate Sign** – a temporary sign advertising the real estate upon which the sign is located being for rent, lease, or sale.~~

Sandwich Sign – two sign faces that are back-to-back and are connected together at the top and apart from each other at the bottom.

Sign – any device, structure, fixture, or placard using graphic, symbols, and/or written copy for the primary purpose of identifying, providing directions, or advertising any establishment, product, goods, or services.

Sign, Area of – includes the space inside a continuous line drawn around and enclosing all letters, designs, and background materials exclusive of border, trim and structural supports.

Special Event – an event of limited duration. ~~Examples of special events include but are not limited to: grand openings, anniversary celebrations, community celebrations, tournaments.~~

Temporary Sign – a sign not constructed or intended for long-term use. ~~Such sign is intended for special events, prior to a permanent sign, etc.~~

Under-canopy Sign – a sign suspended beneath a canopy, ceiling, roof, or marquee.

Video Display Sign - A sign that changes its message or background in a manner or method of display characterized by motion or pictorial imagery, which may or may not include text and depicts action or a special effect to imitate movement, the presentation of pictorials or graphics displayed in a progression of frames that gives the illusion of motion, including, but not limited to, the illusion of moving objects, moving patterns or bands of light, or expanding or contracting shapes, not including electronic changeable copy signs. Video display signs include projected images or messages with these characteristics onto buildings or other objects.

Wall Sign – a sign attached essentially parallel to and extending not more than twenty-four (24) inches from the wall of a building or beyond the edge of the eave with no copy of the sides or edges. Wall signs shall not extend horizontally beyond the edges of the wall the sign is attached to. This definition includes painted, individual letter, or cabinet signs.

~~**Window Display** – use of the window area for display of merchandise, seasonal scenes, or similar. If advertising is included in a window display, it shall be included in the calculation of wall signage.~~

Window Sign – lettering placed directly on a window surface. The area of permanent window signs shall be included in the calculation of wall signage. Window signs shall not cover more than 40% of the window area.

SECTION 2. Section 600:225.10 and 600:225.11 is amended to read as follows:

600:225 ON-SITE SIGNS IN COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT.

10. Permitted Signs in Commercial/Industrial District. The following signs are permitted in commercial/industrial district. A sign permit is required for each sign.
- a. ~~Signs on Construction Sites. Two signs shall be permitted upon a construction site. Each sign shall not exceed sixty four (64) square feet in area per surface; shall be limited to a single surface; shall be located upon the subject construction site; shall be set back ten (10) feet from the right of way; and shall be removed upon completion of the construction site improvements and release of the financial guarantee.~~
 - b. ~~Temporary Signs. No sign permit shall be issued for a temporary sign for a duration of more than twenty one (21) days at one time or for more than three (3) twenty one (21) day periods in any calendar year. Permit periods may run consecutively without interruption if approved by the Town Board. Only one (1) temporary sign shall be allowed on a property at one time. In cases of properties with multiple tenants, one (1) temporary sign per tenant shall be allowed at one time.~~
 - a. Changeable Copy Signs - Manual and Electronic.
 - 1) One (1) manual or electronic changeable copy sign shall be allowed per site provided that the changeable copy area is integrated into the allowed sign and subject to the following:
 - (a) Changeable copy signs shall be allowed on freestanding and wall signs.
 - (b) The sign shall not directly face a residentially zoned property and shall be set back at least fifty (50) feet from any side or rear lot line abutting a residential or agricultural district.
 - (c) The changeable copy portion of the sign shall not occupy more than forty (40) percent or more than forty (40) square feet, whichever is greater, of the actual copy and graphic area of the sign.
 - (d) The sign message shall not change less than every eight (8) seconds. Hour, minute, date, or temperature

information shall change not less than every three (3) seconds.

(e) Signs shall include prominent illumination of only the text and/or logo portion of the message; the background should be a dark or muted color.

2) Electronic Sign Illumination

(a) Electronic signs shall be shielded to prevent lights from being directed at oncoming traffic in such brilliance that it impairs the vision of the driver and may not interfere with or obscure traffic signs or signals. Lighting may not illuminate any adjacent properties, buildings, or streets.

(b) No sign incorporating LED lighting may be illuminated in any way so as to exceed a maximum intensity of five thousand (5,000) nits during daylight hours or five hundred (500) nits from sunset to sunrise measured at the sign face at maximum brightness.

(c) Signs using fluorescent, neon or incandescent light sources shall not exceed twelve (12) watts per square foot of sign surface area.

(d) All signs incorporating LED lighting installed shall be equipped with a mechanism that automatically adjusts the brightness to ambient lighting conditions to conform to the requirements of this subsection.

(e) The owner of any LED illuminated sign shall provide certification as to compliance with the subsections of this section to the Township upon request by the Zoning Administrator.

11. Signs Permitted Without Sign Permit.

a. ~~Temporary real estate or construction signs. Such signs shall be removed within thirty (30) days when property is sold, developed, or occupied.~~ Temporary Signs. One sign shall be allowed per street frontage when the building or site is under construction or offered for sale or lease, provided that:

a) The area of the sign shall not exceed thirty two (32) square feet.

- b) Freestanding signs shall be limited to a maximum height of eight (8) feet.
 - c) The sign shall not be illuminated.
 - d) Such sign shall be removed within one year of the date of issuance of a building permit or when the project is completed, whichever is sooner.
- b. ~~Political signs per Minnesota Statute 160.27 or current state law.~~ Campaign Non-Commercial Speech Signs. All campaign non-commercial signs no more than eight (8) square feet in size and totaling no more than two (2) per property may be posted beginning forty six (46) days before the state primary in a state general election year until ten (10) days following the state general election, in accordance with Minnesota State Statutes, as amended.
 - c. Banners, sandwich boards or pennants commemorating a special event not connected with a business when installed not more than forty-five (45) days prior to the event and removed within five (5) days following the event. Sign allowance to be permitted three (3) times per calendar year.
 - d. Banners, sandwich boards or pennants for ~~business anniversaries, grand openings, and other~~ special events and promotions are allowed only for a maximum of fifteen (15) days. Sign allowance to be permitted five (5) times per calendar year.
 - e. Banners, sandwich boards or pennants for seasonal business shall be allowed during the time the seasonal business is open but shall be removed three (3) days following the close of the business.

SECTION 3. Section 600.235 is amended to read as follows:

600.235 ON-SITE SIGNS IN RESIDENTIAL, AGRICULTURAL, RIVER CONSERVATION, AND RURAL RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS. No signs shall be permitted in Residential, Agricultural, River Conservation, and Rural Residential Zoning Districts with the following exceptions:

- 1. ~~Home Occupation signs located on the property wherein the Home Occupation is engaged, shall be limited to No more than two signs each limited to eight (8) square and shall contain only the name and occupation of the occupant of the building. Home Occupations are occupations engaged in by the occupant of one's own dwelling, including also the office of a person engaged in a professional occupation and located in his~~

~~or her own building, provided that the appearance of the dwelling may not be changed.~~

- ~~2. Signs not exceeding eight (8) square feet in area and pertaining to the lease, hire, or sale of a building or premises on which the sign is located. In the erection and maintenance of such signs, for purposes of setback requirements, the signs shall be deemed a building, which must comply with such setback requirements.~~
- ~~3. Agricultural farm related signs, provided they do not exceed eight (8) square feet, and no more than two (2) per parcel.~~
1. Two (2) signs per parcel for schools, churches or public buildings, provided they do not exceed eight (8) square feet each. ~~and no more than two (2) per parcel.~~
2. Front, Rear and Side Setbacks. Signs shall meet the followings setback requirements:
 - a. Front yard, highway or service road right-of-way shall not be less than five (5) feet from any portion of the sign or sign support.
 - b. Rear yard shall not be less than fifty (50) feet.
 - c. Side yard shall not be less than twenty (20) feet.

SECTION 4. Sections 600.245, Section 600.255 and Section 600.265 are amended to read as follows:

600.245 NOTICE OF VIOLATION; ORDER TO REPAIR OR REMOVE SIGN. The Township may cause the following action to be taken:

1. When, in the opinion of the ~~Town Board~~ Zoning Administrator, a violation of the Code exists, the ~~Town Board~~ Zoning Administrator shall issue a written order to either the owner of the sign or the owner of the property on which the sign is placed. The order shall specify those sections of the Code involved, shall describe the violation and shall direct that the violation be corrected within thirty (30) days from the date of the order.
2. If, upon inspection, the ~~Town Board~~ Zoning Administrator finds that a sign is abandoned or is structurally or electrically defective, or in any way endangers the public, the ~~Town Board~~ Zoning Administrator shall issue a written order to the owner of the sign and occupant of the premises stating the nature of the violation and requiring repair or removal of the sign within thirty (30) days of the date of the order.

600.255 REMOVAL OF SIGNS BY TOWNSHIP

1. The ~~Town Board~~ Zoning Administrator may cause the removal of any illegal sign, any sign remaining after a business closes, or any sign not properly maintained in cases of emergency, or after failure to timely comply with written orders for removal or repair. After removal or demotion of the sign, a notice shall be mailed to the sign owner and owner of the property where the sign was located stating the nature of the work and the date on which it was performed and demanding payment of the costs together with an additional 50% for inspection and incidental costs. If the amount specified in the notice is not paid within thirty (30) days after mailing of the notice, it shall become a lien against the property where the sign was located and shall be certified as an assessment against the property together with 10% interest for collection in the same manner as the real estate taxes.
2. The owner of the property upon which the sign is located shall be presumed to be the owner of all signs thereon unless facts to the contrary are brought to the attention of the ~~Town Board~~ Zoning Administrator, as in the case of a leased sign.
3. For purposes of removal, a sign shall be deemed to include all sign embellishments and structures designed specifically to support the sign.
4. In case of emergency, the ~~Town Board~~ Zoning Administrator may cause the immediate removal of a dangerous or defective sign without notice. Signs removed in this manner must present a hazard to the public safety as defined in the most current State Building Code.

600.265 APPEALS. Any failure to respond to an application within fourteen (14) days of receipt or any decision rendered by the ~~Town Board~~ Zoning Administrator in denying a permit or in alleging a violation of this subdivision may be appealed as provided in Section 300:190 of the Zoning Regulations.

SECTION 5. The Planning Commission of Princeton Township held a public hearing at their June 3, 2024, meeting, took comments from the public, and recommended that the Board of Supervisors approve amendments to the sign regulations in Section 600.200 to Section 600.265.

SECTION 6. The Board of Supervisors of Princeton Township held the first reading of this Ordinance at their June 18, 2024, meeting and second reading at their July 16, 2024, meeting.

SECTION 7. This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect upon its passage and publication.

ADOPTED this 16th day of July 2024 by the Board of Supervisors of Princeton Township.

PRINCETON TOWNSHIP



Eugene Stoeckel, Board Chair

ATTEST:



Tandra Langfeld, Town Clerk