

Article 8

Sign Regulations

Township of Alabaster Rural Zoning Ordinance

Adopted November 2006

and Amended in 2013

by the

Alabaster Township Board of Trustees

Article 8: Sign Regulations

Section 801. Purpose of Sign Regulations

Sign regulations herein regulate the size, location, character, height, and other pertinent physical features and operating characteristics for all exterior signs in the community. The purposes and intentions of the regulations:

- A. To control the scale and quantity of signage, particularly in business, extractive and manufacturing districts, in order to limit and mute their visual impact on motorists, as it may be a distraction to public safety for traffic on streets, roads, and highways.
- B. To reflect community standards for the quantity, scale, character, and impact of signs on the visual environment, including aesthetic concerns, property values, social standards, health, safety, and general welfare.
- C. To define the appropriate location, scale, lighting, and spatial placement of signs in the districts in which they are located.

Signs subject to regulation are those defined in Article 2, Definitions, and specifically the terms, "Billboards and Outdoor Advertising" and "Signs."

Section 802. Billboards and Outdoor Advertising Signs

The following regulations pertain to billboards and other outdoor advertising signs located off-premises of a related business.

- A. Billboards and outdoor advertising signs in the township are permitted only on numbered United States or numbered State of Michigan highways; only in business, manufacturing, or extractive zoning districts; and not closer than three hundred feet (300') to any residential dwelling.
- B. The size of the advertising face of billboards shall not exceed the dimensions of twelve feet (12') in height and thirty-six feet (36') in length or a total area of more than four hundred thirty-two (432) square feet. Billboards shall not have a total height greater than thirty feet above the average unmodified grade between sign supports.
- C. Billboards shall not be located any closer to the road right-of-way than the permitted setback for buildings in that district and shall not be located any closer than twelve hundred feet (1,200') to any other billboard. Only a single billboard may be installed at any one site, except that such billboard may have advertising faces in both directions.
- D. Billboards and outdoor advertising signs along state trunk lines designated by the Michigan Department of Transportation are subject to this zoning ordinance for some

regulations, but are also regulated by and require a permit from that Department. Such signs are permitted only in business, manufacturing, and extractive districts along state and federal trunk lines.

Section 803. Permit

Prior to construction, placement, or establishment of any permanent sign in a business, manufacturing, or extractive district, a permit shall be obtained from the zoning administrator. Said permit shall be valid for a period of six months after issuance. If the sign installation has not been completed within six months, the permit is null and void.

A permit shall not be required for changing text in accordance with a name change, for replacing existing copy with identical or similar copy, for changing copy on a marquee type sign, for sign maintenance purpose, or for temporary signs identified in each district.

Section 804. Removal of Illegal Signs

Illegal signs shall be removed within thirty days of notification of their illegal nature by the zoning administrator. Signs that were conforming prior to adoption of this ordinance shall be deemed non-conforming structures and shall comply with provisions for such non-conforming structures in Article 3 of this ordinance.

Section 805. Removal of Temporary Signs

Any temporary sign hereafter authorized in this ordinance for such purposes as an election, real estate sale, or special event shall be removed within ten (10) days after the election, sale, or event. In the case of election signs, they are not permitted to be in public view more than thirty (30) days before an election. If such sign is placed more than thirty (30) days before an election or not removed within ten days, the township may cause to have the sign removed and may assess the cost of such removal to the candidate, real estate or sales firm, or event sponsor.

Real estate sale signs are prohibited from any property except the property and/or dwelling to be sold.

Section 806. Signs Prohibited from Public Right-of-Way or Corner Clearance

No sign, either temporary or permanent, shall be erected or placed in the public right-of-way or corner clearance area as defined in Section 303. Any sign in the public right-of-way is a public nuisance that is illegal and shall be removed within five (5) weekdays, unless the sign is placed by the owner of the contiguous property and pertains to the property. Such signs shall not exceed four (4) square feet in area.

Section 807. District Regulations

The following sheets summarize the specific sign regulations for each zoning district in the township.

A. Agricultural Zoning Districts

1. Manner of Mounting, Location, and Placement of Signs:

- a. Permanent signs are limited to a single house identification or home occupation uses business per Section 315 of this ordinance. Such signs shall be mounted on a building, shall be unanimated and non-illuminated, and shall have a surface area of six square feet or less. Exceptions to a dwelling mount sign may be made by the planning commission depending on unique conditions of the site such as distance of the building from the road right-of-way, obscuring vegetation or structures or the architectural design of the building.
- b. A sign mounted or painted on an agricultural accessory building may identify the name and/or character of the farm and shall be limited to not more than thirty-two (32) square feet in area.

2. Number of Signs Permitted:

- a. One sign shall be permitted on each dwelling.
- b. One agricultural accessory building may identify the name and/or character of the farm.
- c. One sign of thirty-two (32) square feet or less and related to an agricultural business or service on the premises shall be permitted.

3. Animation and Illumination:

- a. No animation or illumination is permitted in conjunction with any sign in this district.

4. Off-site Advertisement Prohibited:

- a. The sign may not advertise a product, a service, or a business that is not located in the dwelling as a legal home occupation use.

5. Temporary Signs Allowed:

- a. Portable signs displayed to identify a personal or household event, providing: (a) it does not have blinking, flashing, or moving lights or parts; (b) it does not exceed forty (40) square feet in area on either of two back-to-back sides; and (c) it

is not displayed for more than three days in a row, nor more than ten total days per year.

- b. Agricultural signs, such as test plot signs, permitted during the growing season, providing: (a) they are not located on the public right-of-way; (b) they are not more than 4' x 8' in dimensions [thirty-two (32) square feet in area]; and (c) they are not closer than two hundred feet (200') to any adjacent property line or residential unit.
 - c. Construction signs, limited to one sign of not more than six (6) square feet in area only during the duration of construction.
 - d. Real estate sales and/or political campaign signs not larger than sixteen (16) square feet in area. Such signs are to be removed within ten (10) days of sale, lease or election and other provisions of the section on Removal of Temporary Signs, this Article, are to be met.
 - e. Street banners approved by the Township Board of Trustees.
6. Exempt Signs Not Subject to these Controls: (All such signs must be four (4) square feet or less in area.)
- a. Public and non-profit institutional signs
 - b. Private traffic control signs
 - c. Postal box identification signs
 - d. Rental signs
 - e. Architecturally integrated signs, such as relief or chiseled.
 - f. Free standing welcome/decorative residential signs at the driveway to the residence.

B. Residential Zoning Districts

1. Manner of Mounting, Location, and Placement of Signs:

Permanent signs are limited to a single house identification or home occupation use (business) per the Home Occupation section in Article 3 of this ordinance. Such signs shall be mounted on the structure and shall have a surface area of six (6) square feet or less.

2. Number of Signs Permitted:

One sign shall be permitted on each dwelling.

3. Animation and Illumination:

No animation or illumination is permitted for any sign in this district.

4. Off-Site Advertising Prohibited:

The sign may not advertise a product, a service, or a business that is not located in the dwelling as a legal home occupation use.

5. Temporary Signs Allowed:

a. Portable signs, if displayed to identify a personal or household event, providing: (a) it does not have blinking, flashing, or moving lights or parts; (b) it does not exceed six (6) square feet in area on either of two back-to-back sides; and (c) it is not displayed for more than three days in a row, nor more than ten total days per year.

b. Construction signs, limited to one sign of not more than six (6) square feet in area and only during construction.

c. Real estate sales and/or political campaign signs, but not larger than sixteen (16) square feet in area and providing they are removed within the ten (10) days following the sale, lease or election and providing other provisions of the section on Removal of Temporary Signs, this Article, are met. Street banners must meet requirements for approval as approved by the Township Board of Trustees.

6. Exempt Signs Not Subject to These Control: (All such signs must be four (4) square feet or less in area.)

a. Public and non-profit institutional signs.

b. Private traffic control signs.

c. Postal box identification signs.

d. Rental signs.

e. Architecturally integrated signs, such as relief or chiseled signs.

f. Free-standing welcome/decorative residential signs at the driveway to the residence.

7. Other Regulations:

Multiple family or subdivision project signs at entrance roads are permitted providing they do not exceed forty (40) square feet in area.

C. Business, Manufacturing and Extractive Zoning Districts:

1. Manner of Mounting, Location, Area and Placement of Signs:

- a. Flat wall signs may be located anywhere on the principal building,
- b. Projecting or freestanding signs shall have a minimum clearance of eight feet (8') above a sidewalk or fifteen feet (15') above driveways, alleys, and/or parking lots.
- c. Freestanding or ground-mounted signs may be located within any yard area. Freestanding, pole- or pylon-mounted signs may extend no more than twenty feet (20') above the average ground surface. Ground-mounted signs shall not exceed a height of five feet (5') above the ground.
- d. Signs attached to a business structure shall not extend more than three feet (3') above the highest part of the roof.
- e. The area of signs for each business in a structure may not exceed forty (40) square feet.
- f. Permanent joint signs for a business complex may be used for a business complex with multiple tenants and may include up to one hundred twenty (120) square feet of area on each side of the sign.

2. Number of Signs Permitted:

- a. One outdoor sign shall be permitted on the building for each business in a structure, and
- b. One freestanding sign is permitted if the street frontage is more than one hundred feet (100'), providing the lot size exceeds 25,000 square feet.
- c. Another sign is permitted for each additional increment of two hundred fifty feet (250') of street frontage over the first one hundred feet (100').
- d. An additional wall-mounted sign is permitted if the building is set back more than one hundred fifty feet (150') from the right-of-way line.

3. Animation and Illumination:

- a. No sign animation is permitted in conjunction with any permitted sign.
- b. All direct or reflected light from signs shall be shaded, shielded, or muted so that

the light is not objectionable to adjacent properties or does not constitute a hazard to nearby street or road traffic.

4. Off-Site Advertising Prohibited:

- a. The sign may not advertise a product, a service, or a business that is not located in the building as a legal use.
- b. No sign or part thereof shall have lights, size, shape, design, or appearance so as to be confused or construed as a traffic control sign or device.
- c. No sign may contain copy or symbols that are pornographic, discriminatory or unlawful.

5. Temporary Signs Permitted:

- a. Portable signs, displayed to identify a business, personal or household event, providing, (a) it does not have blinking, flashing, or moving lights or parts; (b) it does not exceed forty (40) square feet in area on either of two back-to-back sides; and (c) it is not lighted before 6:00 a.m. or after 10:00 p.m., unless the business on the site is open.
- b. Construction signs, limited to one sign of not more than fifty (50) square feet in area and only during construction.
- c. Real estate sales and/or political campaign signs, but not larger than sixteen (16) square feet in area and providing they are removed within the 10 days following the sale, lease or election and providing other provisions of the section on Removal of Temporary Signs, this Article, are met. Street banners must meet requirements for approval as approved by the Township Board of Trustees.
- d. Show or display windows.
- e. Street banners approved by the Township Board of Trustees.

6. Signs Not Subject to These Controls:

- a. Public and non-profit institutional signs.
- b. Private traffic control signs or postal box identification signs.
- c. Rental signs less than four (4) square feet in area.
- d. Architecturally-integrated signs, such as relief or chiseled signs.

7. Other Regulations:

Identification signs are permitted for commercial subdivisions or parks, multiple family projects, or subdivision project signs at entrance roads, providing they do not exceed forty (40) square feet in area.

Article 9

Special Land Use Permits

Township of Alabaster Rural Zoning Ordinance

Adopted November 2006

and Amended in 2013

by the

Alabaster Township Board of Trustees