

Signage

Because Historic Dublin is a fairly small area of modest scale and closely-spaced buildings, commercial signage can have a significant impact upon the district's character. The quality of designs and materials in commercial signage are of prime importance. The City of Dublin's Sign Code governs such signage, and signs are also addressed in Section 153.183 of the ordinance establishing the Architectural Review Board. In addition, see the Historic Dublin Sign Guidelines in the appendix for specific requirements. The discussion and recommendations below will help guide signage design.

Historic Dublin, which developed over a long period from the early 19th century on, generally did not have signage typical of a traditional downtown commercial district. The district had, for example, few commercial structures with large display windows or signboard areas above the windows, so large signboards or signs painted on glass were relatively uncommon. More typical were wall or projecting signs, small in scale, usually painted directly on the building or on wooden signboards that could be attached to the building. These could be mounted flush on the building wall, but they also could be suspended out over the sidewalk, perpendicular to the building.

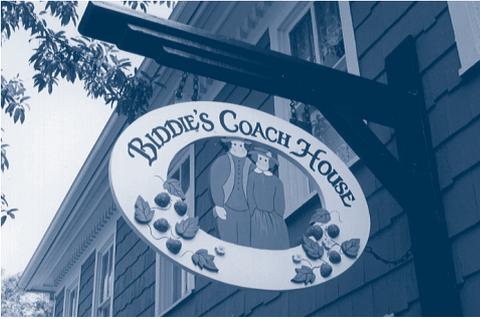
Signage of this type persisted into the early 20th century, when electric lights broadened the visibility of signs: they could be seen after dark, and lights drew attention to signs that might otherwise be overlooked.

In many signs developed from the 1940s through today, the lighting and the sign are indistinguishable. Plastics have permitted great flexibility, with the result that many commercial signs have grown ever larger in competition with adjacent signs, and interior-lighted signs have become the most common type. Fortunately such signs have never significantly taken hold in Historic Dublin, and the great majority of the district's signs are of traditional early- and mid-19th century design – wall signs, window signs, and some post signs. Barber poles are among the most modern – not to mention most recognizable – signs in Historic Dublin.

Signage of a size, scale, and design compatible with Historic Dublin's character is critical to maintaining the district's high visual quality. When considering replacement of existing or installation of new signage, look closely at some of the well-done signs in the district. The key to successful signage is to encourage diversity and creativity while maintaining visual harmony through careful use of sign design, materials, size, color, and placement. As signs change with changes in building use, there is an opportunity to evaluate existing signage for modification. Appropriate signage takes its cues from the historic character of the buildings and the streets but still effectively communicates the image and the message of the particular business.

The following types of permanent signs, and methods of employing them, are appropriate for Historic Dublin:

- a. **Wall signs:** These are among the oldest type of signage, usually made of wood as separate panels and mounted flush against the building wall. This type remains popular today and is appropriate for Historic Dublin. The best signs usually are the simplest, ones which avoid ornate ornamentation and lettering.



(Photos 94 and 95) These projecting signs are modest in scale and have materials and designs appropriate to the buildings on which they are mounted. For both pedestrians and motorists, this type of sign provides excellent business identification.

- b. **Projecting signs:** Traditionally used in a pedestrian environment such as Historic Dublin, projecting signs are intended to make it easy for people on the sidewalk to find a business. Usually mounted perpendicular to the building wall, these signs generally consist of a mounting bracket and a signboard which hangs from the bracket. For best visibility, projecting signs should be hung above head height, but not more than eight or nine feet above the sidewalk. The signs and supporting brackets should be simple in design and should avoid ornate details and lettering.
- c. **Window signs:** Another still-popular early form of signage, the window sign is applied directly to glass, usually as individual letters. The sign is applied on the inside, to protect it from weathering and damage. The most popular window signs are painted on or applied as decals; opaque wood signboards or other types of signs that obscure the window are not appropriate. Window signs usually are done in light colors – white and gold are typical – in order to have enough contrast to stand out against the glass.
- d. **Awning signs:** These are painted directly onto the fabric awnings that shelter many storefronts, on the hanging valance at the awning's edge. This type of sign works best when done in a single light color – usually white – that stands out against the color of the awning fabric, and when designs and lettering are kept simple and plain.
- e. **Sandwich board signs:** Usually hinged at the top, these self-supporting two-panel signs are placed on the sidewalk to draw attention to a business. Most sandwich board signs are painted wood; some are made in a “chalkboard” design that permits changing of sign text. These signs, and the merchandise displays that often accompany them, should be temporary in nature, should be used during business hours only, should not impede traffic, and should be as small as possible. Confer with the Planning Division of the City of Dublin before placing any sandwich board signs or merchandise displays.

Recommendations

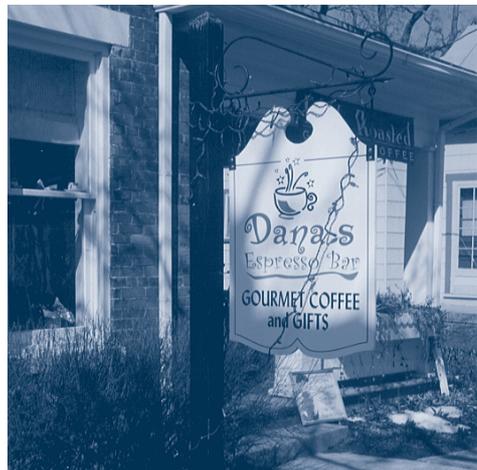
1. Good quality designs with simple graphics and simple messages are encouraged. Although common geometric forms, such as a rectangle, square, circle or oval, are encouraged, other signage shapes may also be appropriate. Letter sizes and styles should be easily readable. Use of one letter size and one type style is best. Avoid painting signs directly on building walls.

2. Choose sign materials that complement the architectural character of the district. Wood can be painted or carved; metal can be shaped, painted or polished; and canvas can be used for awnings. Wood signs should be painted; natural wood in signs should be avoided as it was not traditionally used and would not be appropriate to the area's architectural character. Plastic is also discouraged as a signage material as it is incompatible with historic building materials.
3. New signage should always be pedestrian in scale. This means that the signage relates more to the sidewalk than it does to the street and is intended for viewing by people who are walking rather than driving.
4. Temporary signs are sometimes necessary to announce sales or special events. Such signs must receive a permit from the City of Dublin's Division of Planning before installation. The signs should be kept small, time on display should be limited, and signs must be placed so they do not block the view of drivers on the street.
5. Colors for signs on or associated with historic buildings should be chosen for compatibility with the age, architecture and colors of the buildings. Signs should be readily visible but should avoid incompatible colors such as "hot pink" or "day-glow." All "fluorescent" colors are prohibited. Accent colors or corporate identity colors or logos can be used with restraint, but such colors should not dominate a sign, and logos should be kept as small and unobtrusive as possible. The color scheme on a sign should be simple, with a maximum of three colors on a single sign.
6. If signs are to be illuminated, lighting should be provided externally. Modern internally-lit signs are not appropriate for Historic Dublin. Lighting for signs should be of a traditional type such as shaded "gooseneck" fixtures or similar simple, plain incandescent or fluorescent lights that shine only on the sign.
7. In addition to conforming to the Historic Dublin Sign Guidelines, signs should be proportionate to the size of the building where they are installed. They should not appear to dominate smaller structures, and doors and windows should not be obscured by signs. The street address and the building name, if any, should be included on signs.



(Photo 96) This hanging sign is placed parallel to the street and sidewalk and is an appropriate way of identifying businesses, especially those in buildings with porches. Use of such signs avoids having to mount signs on building walls or in windows. Note how the ornate sign is profiled to fit the historic ornamentation of the porch.

(Photo 97) For buildings set back from the sidewalk, an appropriate type of projecting sign is a small post sign mounted in the yard. Such a sign is traditional and is easy to build and maintain, and it brings the business identification out to the sidewalk's edge where it is easily noticed.



Historic Dublin Sign Guidelines

Section 1 - Purpose:

The guidelines have been adopted by the Architectural Review Board pursuant to Sections 153.170 through 153.187 of the City of Dublin Zoning Code for the purpose of preserving the Early American character of the CCC and CB Districts of Historic Dublin. These guidelines are not meant to replace but to supplement the regulations of Chapter 153.150 through 153.164, all of which shall apply to signs in Historic Dublin as modified by these guidelines.

Section 2 - Number:

No business or use shall display more than one sign; however, any business or use with a second entrance opening onto a parking area to the rear of the business may request a second sign identifying the rear entrance, provided that the second sign is not visible from the public right-of-way which fronts the building. In addition, signs exempted in Section 153.157 may be displayed provided they conform to Section 5 of these guidelines.

Section 3 - Size and Height:

The size and height of signs shall conform to the following table:

	<u>Maximum Area</u>	<u>Minimum Height</u>	<u>Maximum Height</u>
Wall Signs	6 sq. ft.	4 ft.	12 ft.
Ground Signs	6 sq. ft.	none	8 ft.
Projecting Signs	6 sq. ft.	8 ft.	12 ft.
Window Signs	10% of window area up to a maximum of 4 sq. ft.	none	top of second floor window

Note: Maximum area shall include the frame but shall not include the supporting structure. See Sec. 153.158.

Window signs shall be limited to ground floor or first floor windows only, unless the use is located in the second floor of a building and this use has no first floor occupancy. (Revised 3/28/90)

Section 4 – Illumination:

No sign shall be illuminated from within or behind. Illumination shall be by flood-lights properly shielded as specified in Section 153.158.

Section 5 – Design:

Section 5.01 - General Principles:

All signs must in their design and appearance complement the nineteenth century Early American character of the district. They may do so by incorporating design features characteristic of signs of the 1800s (i.e., Federal, Victorian, or turn-of-the-century periods).

Signs which give a predominantly contemporary impression in conflict with the Early American character of the district shall not be permitted.

Section 5.02 - Material:

Signs may be of any material but must give the illusion of natural or painted wood, tin or iron. Window signs painted directly on the glass are also acceptable.

Section 5.03 - Shapes:

No sign shall be in the shape of a product or logo. Early American shapes, including features like a broken pediment, are preferred.

Section 5.04 - Color:

No sign shall display more than three colors (i.e., two colors in addition to the natural background). Only earth tones and demonstrable Early American colors shall be used on signs. Sign colors shall be coordinated with the colors of the building to which they refer. Black and white are considered colors.

Section 5.05 - Lettering:

Lettering shall be in traditional nineteenth century letter styles.

Section 5.06 - Logos and Illustrations:

Logos or illustrations are permissible provided that (a) they conform in color and design to these guidelines, and (b) their presence is compatible with the Early American character of the sign. The general acceptance of a widely recognized logo is, in itself, not sufficient justification for inclusion in a sign in this district.

Section 6 – Prohibited Signs:

In accordance with Section 153.154, the following signs or similar devices are prohibited: Banners, pennants, streamers, spinners, bench signs, portable signs, mobile placards, marquee-type signs with changeable message, flashing or blinking signs, and animated signs or signs with moving or moveable parts. Signs on vending machines, trash bins, or other devices serving any premises shall be screened from view from any public right-of-way.

Section 7 - Multiple-Occupant Buildings on Premises:

For buildings or premises occupied by two (2) or more occupants or uses, a total sign plan must be submitted by the owner of the building or premises before a sign permit will be issued to any occupant or tenant.

This plan must include scale drawings of the building and premises to show the size and location of all signs and identification features (entrance signs, arrows, etc.) that may in the future be requested by any occupant or tenant.

Content, material, and design need not be included at this stage. Upon approval by the Architectural Review Board, this plan will remain on file for use in consideration of sign applications by tenants of the site. No signage will be approved for any tenant that does not conform in size and location to the approved sign plan. Care should be taken to anticipate signage needs of all future tenants.

Revision in the original sign plan may be approved by the Architectural Review Board, but these revisions may be restricted by signs already approved or may require the removal or modification of existing signs.

Section 8 - Administration:

Prior to the erection of any sign, except as otherwise noted, a permit shall be secured from the administrative officer. In applying for such permit, the applicant shall submit to the Architectural Review Board:

- (1) a scale drawing or drawings of the proposed sign showing materials, colors, letter styles.
- (2) a plot showing the proposed location of the sign in relation to adjacent buildings. Upon approval of application by the Architectural Review Board, a permit may be obtained from the administrative officer. A fee schedule is available at the City of Dublin Land Use and Long Range Planning Office.

Section 9 - Temporary Signs:

A temporary sign, consistent with the spirit of these guidelines, can be displayed only if an application is on file with the Architectural Review Board of the City of Dublin and is awaiting action by the Architectural Review Board.

Section 10 - Penalties:

In accordance with Section 152.230, penalties may be assessed for violation or assistance in violation of any provision of the City of Dublin Sign Ordinance, or any other zoning ordinance.

Here are some of the approved fonts that can be used on signs in Historic Dublin. For information on others contact Land Use and Long Range Planning.

Approved Sign Lettering Styles

SERIF

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZÆCEØ 1234567890
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyzæceø

DOMINANTE

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ 1234567890
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

GARAMONT

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ 1234567890
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

GARAMONT SEMIBOLD

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ 1234567890
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

SOUVENIR BOLD

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz 1234567890

SOUVENIR DEMIBOLD

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZÆCEØ 1234567890
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

TIMES BOLD

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZÆCE
1234567890

TIMES BOLD TITLING

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZÆCEØ 1234567890
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyzæceø

VOLTA BOLD

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZÆCEØ 1234567890
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyzæceø

SERIF

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZÆCE 1234567890
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyzæceø

BASKERVILLE SEMIBOLD

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ 1234567890
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

BASKERVILLE

A A B B C C D D E E F F G G H H I I J J K K L L M M N N O O P P Q Q R R
STUUV VW WXY YZÆCEØ 1234567890
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyzæce

BOOKMAN

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZÆCEØ 1234567890
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyzæceø

BULLETIN TYPEWRITER

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz 1234567890

CASLON ANTIQUA MEDIUM

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZÆCEØ 124567890
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyzæceø

CLARENDON LIGHT

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZÆCEØ 1234567890
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyzæceø

CLARENDON BOLD

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ 1234567890
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

SERIF

Americana

**Americana
Ex. Bold**

**American
Typewriter Bold**

**American Typewriter
Bold Cond.**

American
Typewriter Lt.

American
Typewriter Med.

Ancient Egyptian

Aster

Aster Bold

Caslon Bold

Caslon No.540 Italic

Clearface Bold

**Clearface Ex.
Bold It.**

Fat Face

Firenze

Grouch

Korinna

Korinna Bold

Korinna Outline

**LSC Book Bold
Italic**

LSC Caslon Bold

LSC Caslon Light

Lubalin Graph
Medium

Lubalin Graph
X-Lite

Palatino

Palatino Bold

Perpetua Bold

**PlstIII Roman
Black**

Serif Gothic

Serif Gothic Bold

Souvenir Light

Souvenir Light Italic

Souvenir Medium

**Souvenir Medium
Italic**

Souvenir Outline

Tiffany Heavy

Tiffany Light

Tiffany Medium

Times Roman Bold

Trooper Roman

Trooper Roman Italic

Windsor Outline

**ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZÆŒØ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyzæœø 1234567890**

WINDSOR

SERIF

Albertus

Annie Extra Bold

Annie Extra Bold *Italic*

Antique Olive Medium

Antique Olive Bold

Antique Olive Compact

Baskerville

Baskerville Old Face

Berling

Berling Bold

Berling Italic

Beton Medium

Brush Script

Bulletin Typewriter

CHARRETTE

Chisel

Cooper Black

Cooper Black *Italic*

Caslon Antique

Caslon 540 Italic

De Vinne Ornamented

Eckmann Schrift

Fat Face

Friz Quadrata

GOLD RUSH

Kalligraphia

L&C Stymie Liteline

Manuscript Caps

Olive Antique

Optima

Old English

Optima

Palace Script

Playbill

Premier Lightline

PROFIL

QUENTIN

RODEO

ROMANTIQUES No. 5

SAPPHIRE

Serif Gothic

Serif Gothic Bold

Souvenir Bold

Souvenir Light

STENCIL BOLD

University Roman

Visa

Welt Extra Bold

DECORATIVE

Acapulco Light

Alfereta

Bookman Bold

*Bookman Bold
Italic*

Book Jacket Italic

Caslon Antique

Chisel

Cooper Black

*Cooper Black
Italic*

DAVIDA BOLD

Fraktur

GOLD RUSH

Gorilla

Mucky Hill Bold

Old English

Parisian

Playbill

PROFILE

QUENTIN

RODEO

University Roman

Visa

MISCELLANEOUS

*ABCDEFGHIJKLMN OPQRSTU VWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz 1234567890*

ART SCRIPT

*ABCDEFGHIJKLMN OPQRSTU VWXYZ 1234567890
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz*

COMMERCIAL SCRIPT

**ABCDEFGHIJKLMN OPQRSTU VWXYZ 1234567890
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyzæœ**

ENGRAVERS OLD ENGLISH

**ABCDEFGHIJKLMN OPQRSTU VWXYZ
1234567890**