



**To:** Members of Dublin City Council  
**From:** Dana L. McDaniel, City Manager */DMC/dm*  
**Date:** October 8, 2015  
**Initiated By:** Vincent A. Papsidero, FAICP, Director of Planning  
Rachel S. Ray, AICP, Economic Development Administrator  
**Re:** Resolution 72-15 – A Resolution Adopting the Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines

### Summary

The proposed Bridge Street District (BSD) Sign Guidelines explain the zoning review process for signs and assist applicants with using and applying the BSD sign requirements. Most importantly, the Guidelines reinforce the vision for the BSD by allowing and encouraging creative and unique sign designs while preventing cluttered and unattractive streetscapes.

### Background

During the adoption process for the BSD Code, the sign provisions received extensive discussion at all levels of review. City Council, Planning and Zoning Commission, and Architectural Review Board members individually and jointly discussed, at length, appropriate numbers and types of signs permitted throughout the BSD.

Soon after the adoption of the BSD zoning regulations, City Council and the Planning and Zoning Commission began to discuss regulatory approaches to improve quality sign construction and create strategies to encourage creative design. While the BSD Code provisions state, "All signs shall be designed with the maximum of creativity and the highest quality of materials and fabrication," [Section 153.065(H)(4)], the signs that had been approved in the Bridge Street District had not always, in the opinion of some members, achieved the intent of this requirement. To address this, Planning contracted with design review consultants specializing in sign design to review and make recommendations on sign proposals reviewed through the BSD Minor Project Review process to verify that they were in keeping with the intent for signs in the Bridge Street District.

As part of the 2013-2014 update to the BSD zoning regulations, the City engaged one of these consultants, Studio Graphique, to assist with drafting amendments related to sign quality. Based on their review of communities throughout the country, Studio Graphique recommended amendments that were ultimately incorporated into the Code as Zoning Code Section 153.065(H)(4)(e), Sign Materials, with provisions for minimum construction standards. With regard to sign character and design creativity, Studio Graphique recommended that, in lieu of regulations to require more imaginative signs, the City explore the possibility of sign design guidelines to illustrate intent. Studio Graphique indicated that many other communities use sign guidelines, particularly in areas similar to the BSD, to demonstrate desirable sign qualities.

In their recommendation to City Council in November 2014 for the amendments to the BSD regulations, the Planning and Zoning Commission recommended that sign design guidelines be prepared after the adoption of the revised Code provisions. Since that time, Planning has worked with Studio Graphique and Kolar Design to prepare the draft BSD Sign Guidelines.

The draft Sign Guidelines were reviewed by the ARB, who made a recommendation of approval to the Commission at their meeting on August 26, 2015, and by the ART, who made a recommendation of approval to the Commission at their meeting on August 27, 2015. The Planning and Zoning Commission recommended approval of the Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines at their September 3, 2015 meeting.

### **Overview**

The BSD Sign Guidelines include the following sections:

1. **Purpose & Intent**  
Explains intent for signs in the Bridge Street District, intent for signs in the Historic District, and how the guidelines should be used.
2. **Applicability**  
Illustrates the Bridge Street District and Historic District boundaries, as well as the neighborhood zoning districts, to demonstrate to applicants which requirements apply to their site.
3. **Process**  
Describes the zoning review and sign permitting process.
4. **Master Sign Plans**  
Outlines the purpose of Master Sign Plans, as well as information that must be included.
5. **Requirements Summary**  
Explains how to determine the number of permitted signs and summarizes sign types.
6. **Quality & Character**  
Reiterates the BSD Code requirements for high quality materials and construction, and the preference that signs are designed by professional graphic designers and installed by professional sign fabricators.
7. **Sign Character Principles**  
This section includes descriptions and images illustrating the six principles for desirable sign character: Architectural Integration, Illumination, Colors & Secondary Images, Graphic Design & Composition, Dimensionality, and Context.
8. **Sign Type Requirements**  
Illustrates the dimensional requirements for each of the main types of signs, including ground, wall, projecting, awning, window, building identification, and sandwich board signs.

Also includes precedent images demonstrating good examples of each type of sign, as well as “what to avoid.”

### **Images**

The images included in the guidelines are intended to be illustrative, providing a range of design, material and installation approaches to be considered on a site-by-site basis. These images should be used to inform the design process undertaken by future tenants/owners, graphic designers and sign fabricators.

To make sure the intent is clear, a statement in the Purpose & Intent section notes that: “(T)he graphics and photos in this document are used to illustrate design concepts, and should not be viewed as an exclusive inventory of acceptable signs...Further, some of the signs in this document may not meet all of the dimensional or specific design requirements for signs in the Bridge Street District.”

There are other similar references throughout the Guidelines intended to direct applicants to verify specific sign requirements for specific sites and sign proposals. It is also important to note that even though some of the signs depicted in the Guidelines may not meet the specific zoning requirements, similar signs could be approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission or Architectural Review Board, as applicable, through the Master Sign Plan process if they are determined to meet the design intent of the Guidelines.

### **Recommendation of the Planning and Zoning Commission**

The Planning and Zoning Commission initially reviewed the Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines on June 18, 2015, and again on September 3, 2015 following additional reviews by the Architectural Review Board and the Administrative Review Team. Minor modifications were made to the introductory pages of the document to clarify the desired sign characteristics, as well as the purpose and intent of the document. The Commission responded positively to the proposed Guidelines and commented on the need to encourage unique, interesting, and well-designed signs throughout the Bridge Street District.

The Planning and Zoning Commission recommended approval of the Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines at their September 3, 2015 meeting.

### **Recommendation**

Staff recommends approval of Resolution 72-15, adopting the Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines to serve as a policy guide for the production and review of signs in the Bridge Street District, at the October 12, 2015 City Council meeting.

# RECORD OF RESOLUTIONS

Dayton Legal Blank, Inc., Form No. 30045

72-15

Resolution No. \_\_\_\_\_ Passed \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_

## A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE BRIDGE STREET DISTRICT SIGN GUIDELINES

**WHEREAS**, the City of Dublin strives to preserve and enhance the unique high quality of life, community character, and fiscal well-being offered to those who live or work in the community; and

**WHEREAS**, since 2010, the City of Dublin has prioritized the implementation of the Bridge Street District plan to reinforce the City's competitiveness, create a vibrant and walkable environment with a dynamic mix of land uses and housing types, and enhance the City's long-term sustainability; and

**WHEREAS**, the built environment defines Dublin's community image, characterized by tasteful signs and graphics; and

**WHEREAS**, City Council adopted zoning regulations for the Bridge Street District, including the Historic District, on March 25, 2012 (and as amended), including provisions for signs; and

**WHEREAS**, the Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines are intended to encourage creative and unique sign designs that reinforce the vision for the Bridge Street District; and

**WHEREAS**, the Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines explain the zoning review process for signs and assist applicants with using and applying the Bridge Street District sign requirements; and

**WHEREAS**, the intended audiences for the Sign Guidelines are sign designers and contractors who prepare and submit applications for new signs in the Bridge Street District; business owners/building tenants that commission signs; and reviewing bodies, such as the Architectural Review Board, Planning and Zoning Commission, and Administrative Review Team; and

**WHEREAS**, the Architectural Review Board reviewed the Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines on August 26, 2015, recommending approval of the proposed resolution; and

**WHEREAS**, the Administrative Review Team reviewed the Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines on August 27, 2015, recommending approval of the proposed resolution; and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning and Zoning Commission reviewed the Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines on September 3, 2015, recommending approval of the proposed resolution.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Council of the City of Dublin, \_\_\_\_\_ of its elected members concurring, that:

**Section 1.** The attached Bridge Street District Sign Guideline document is hereby adopted by City Council as a policy guide for the production and review of signs in the Bridge Street District.

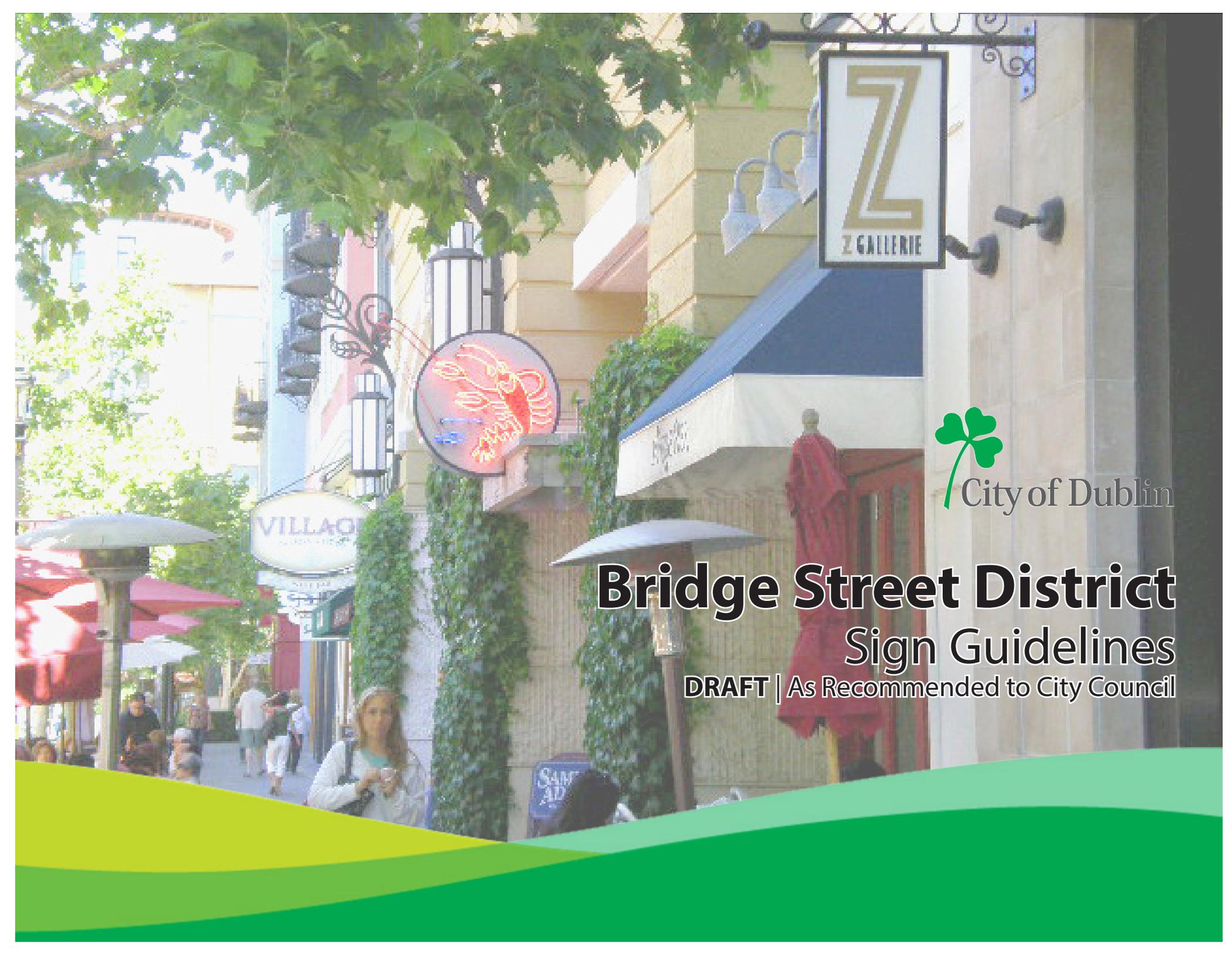
**Section 2.** This Resolution shall take effect upon passage in accordance with Section 4.04(a) of the Revised Charter.

Passed this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2015.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor - Presiding Officer

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk of Council



# Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines

DRAFT | As Recommended to City Council



## Bridge Street District Sign Characteristics

The following terms should be used to describe Bridge Street District signs:

### ONE-OF-A-KIND

Visitors know that they are in the Bridge Street District in part due to the unique and interesting signs that adorn the streetscape.



### EDGY

When summed up in a single word, signs in the Bridge Street District should be described as: "cool!" Sometimes this includes signs with cutting edge graphics and materials.



### CONTEXT SENSITIVE

Signs can be appreciated individually for their attention to design while respecting and harmonizing with their surroundings.



### PICTORIAL

Signs rely on design quality, symbols, and graphic composition to communicate their intended message.

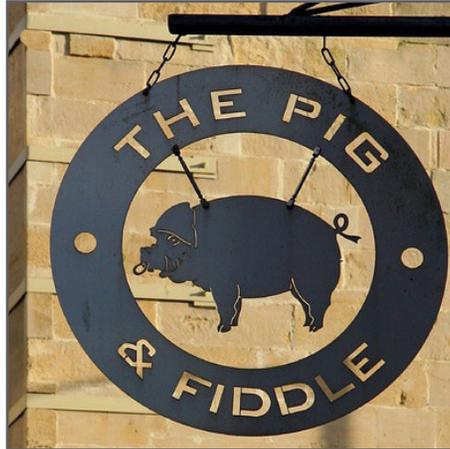


### WORKS OF ART

Signs in the Bridge Street District can feel like public art installations; individual signs are designed with attention to detail and a sense of whimsy.

## CLEVER

Bridge Street District signs take full advantage of the unexpected; they incorporate the unique features of a specific site and brand to create visual interest.



## ECLECTIC & SOPHISTICATED

When it comes to Bridge Street District signs, less is more - but does not have to be at the expense of visual interest or brand expression.



## MEMORABLE

Signs in the Bridge Street District are truly photo worthy in and of themselves.



## ON-BRAND

Colors, fonts, and even dimensions are carefully selected to represent the brand of the business or tenant they are intended to advertise.

## FORWARD-THINKING

Master Sign Plans allow applicants and sign designers to put forward the most innovative, interesting, and technologically savvy sign proposals that don't always meet specific Code requirements.

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*The built environment defines Dublin's community image, characterized by tasteful signs and graphics.*



The Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines are intended:

- To maintain the City of Dublin's standards of quality and character;
- To encourage excellence in sign design, both as a communication tool and as an art form;
- To allow and encourage creative and unique sign designs while preventing cluttered and unattractive streetscapes;
- To provide basic parameters for creative signs that may be as varied and unique as the businesses they represent.

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*Renderings show the character of future mixed-use development in the Bridge Street District.*



## Purpose and Intent

### The Bridge Street District

The Bridge Street District vision builds on the unique character of the Dublin Historic District and seeks to expand the range of places that feature a strong sense of identity meant to be experienced primarily by pedestrians and bicyclists. The vision calls for a dynamic mix of land uses and housing integrated with the natural wonders of the Scioto River and Indian Run that unify this special area at the heart of the City of Dublin.

### Intent for Bridge Street District Signs

The built environment defines Dublin's community image, characterized by high quality office buildings, well-landscaped sites and streetscapes, quality architecture, and tasteful signs and graphics.

The Bridge Street District zoning regulations were adopted in March 2012 to realize the vision for the Bridge Street District. Because signs are a critical ingredient in establishing a unique sense of place, the new Bridge Street District zoning regulations include special provisions for signs.

Signs in the Bridge Street District are expected to maintain the City's standards of quality and character; however, the role of signs with respect to the built environment is very different in the Bridge Street District than the rest of the city. Signs in this area should be designed to be experienced by pedestrians at close range, while remaining visible to those traveling by car or bicycle.

Signs should adorn and enhance the distinctive buildings constructed in the Bridge Street District, placed in a manner that respects the architectural character of the structures.

***All signs should contribute to the creation of vibrant, highly pedestrian-oriented environments to provide visual interest and a special sense of place.***

Signs should be carefully designed and placed to enhance and not distract from high quality pedestrian-oriented environments planned in the Bridge Street District. At the same time, some consideration is needed for auto-oriented customers as well, and signs oriented toward those users should emphasize visibility and safety, carefully coordinated with site design and architecture.

### Intent for Signs in the Historic District

Historic Dublin embodies a unique sense of place, in contrast with the newer areas of the Bridge Street District. Because Historic Dublin is a fairly small area of modest scale and closely-spaced buildings, signs play an even more important role in defining the District's character.

Appropriate signs take their cues from the historic character of the buildings and the streets that form their surrounding context, while effectively communicating the image and the message of the particular business. Attention should be given to sign placement and installation to avoid damaging historic structures or detracting from significant architectural features.

For historic buildings in particular, sign design and materials should complement the architectural character of not only the buildings to which they are attached, but also adjacent buildings on the same block. In the Historic District, context sensitivity is the primary character principle.

## Purpose and Intent, continued

### Bridge Street District Sign Requirements

All signs must meet the requirements of the Zoning Code. The Bridge Street District sign regulations (Zoning Code Section 153.065(H)) provide detailed requirements for sign design, lighting, dimensions, construction details, placement, and other objective development standards.

In the event of a conflict between the Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines and the Zoning Code provisions for signs, the Zoning Code provisions shall prevail unless otherwise approved as part of a Master Sign Plan.

### Purpose of the Sign Guidelines

In addition to the intent statements described on page 4, the Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines are intended to serve as a guide for applicants in understanding and applying the specific design and quality-related sign requirements of Zoning Code Section 153.065(H).

The Sign Guidelines also provide guidance for designing signs in the Historic District, as well as signs associated with buildings that were constructed prior to the enactment of the Bridge Street District zoning regulations.

Lastly, the Sign Guidelines outline the contents of Master Sign Plans, which are intended to allow greater flexibility and creativity in sign design and display where signs are used as a placemaking tool. The guidelines are *not* intended to dictate sign design.

### Using the Sign Guidelines

The Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines demonstrate how the zoning regulations should be applied to sign proposals. They are intended to provide general guidance to property owners, design professionals, and business owners regarding the design, maintenance, and installation of signs.

The Guidelines are also intended to be used by decision makers (Administrative Review Team, Architectural Review Board, Planning and Zoning Commission) in their review of sign proposals.

***Applicants should review the Bridge Street District zoning requirements and Sign Guidelines before creating sign designs and preparing application materials to ensure proposals meet the intent of the regulations.***

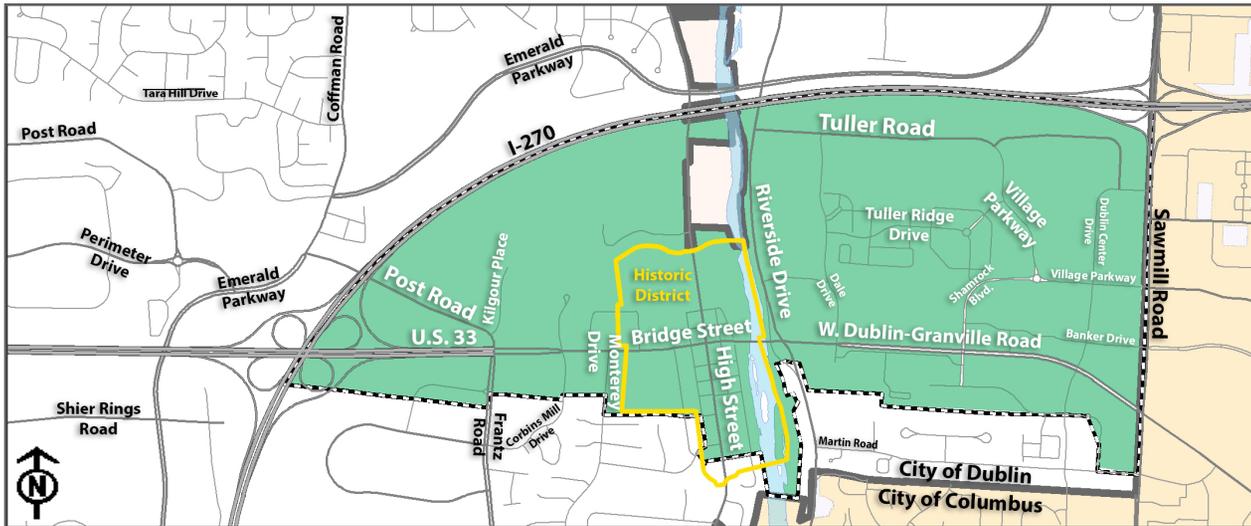
There are many acceptable ways to conform to the standards, and infinite opportunities to design unique and attractive signs that complement the Bridge Street District's sense of place. The graphics and photos in this document are used to illustrate design concepts, and should not be viewed as an exclusive inventory of acceptable signs.

Some of the signs in this document may not meet all of the dimensional or specific design requirements for signs in the Bridge Street District; however, applicants are strongly encouraged to design and propose unique and interesting signs meeting the intent of the regulations for consideration by the required reviewing bodies through the Master Sign Plan process.

Refer to Section 4, *Master Sign Plans*, for more information.

## Applicability

Bridge Street District Map



### The Bridge Street District

The Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines apply only to signs and properties within the Bridge Street District boundaries.

The Bridge Street District is located south of I-270, between the I-270/US 33 interchange and Sawmill Road, and generally along State Route 161/Bridge Street. The Bridge Street District includes all of the Dublin Historic District.

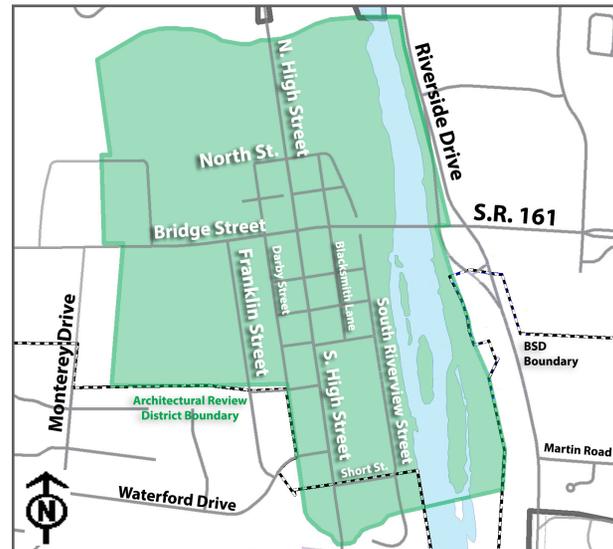
Most signs in the Bridge Street District are approved by the City's Administrative Review Team (ART) prior to sign permitting, with the exception of signs in the Historic District (see below) and Master Sign Plans for signs that either do not meet specific Zoning Code requirements or are intended to be highly coordinated with an overall project development plan.

Please contact the Planning Division at 614.410.4600 for information about signs outside of the Bridge Street District.

Ground and wall signs for a business in the Historic District.



Historic District Map



### The Historic District

Special provisions apply to signs in the Historic District, which is a subarea of the Bridge Street District.

The Historic District is defined by the Architectural Review District boundaries shown on the map to the left. Zoning districts that fall within the Architectural Review District boundaries include the BSD Historic Core, BSD Historic Residential, BSD Public, and BSD Historic Transition Neighborhood Districts.

Signs in the Historic District require review and recommendation by the Administrative Review Team followed by Architectural Review Board approval prior to sign permitting, regardless of the zoning district in which they are located.

## Applicability, continued

### Special Bridge Street Zoning Districts

Special sign provisions apply to new development in the Bridge Street District (BSD) Neighborhood Zoning Districts. Since much of the new development in these zoning districts is expected to be coordinated, larger-scale mixed-use development, Master Sign Plans are **required** for the shopping corridors (the areas of highest pedestrian activity) to encourage imaginative, creative, and highly coordinated signs that enhance the sense of place in these zoning districts.

The BSD Neighborhood Districts, shown on the map to the right, include the BSD Indian Run Neighborhood, BSD Historic Transition Neighborhood, BSD Scioto River Neighborhood, and BSD Sawmill Center Neighborhood Districts.

### Master Sign Plans

The purpose of a Master Sign Plan is to allow a greater degree of flexibility and creativity in sign design and display. Master Sign Plans are also intended to coordinate multiple signs for either a single building, or a group of related buildings, to ensure that the requested signs work in a coordinated fashion to meet the intent for signs in the Bridge Street District.

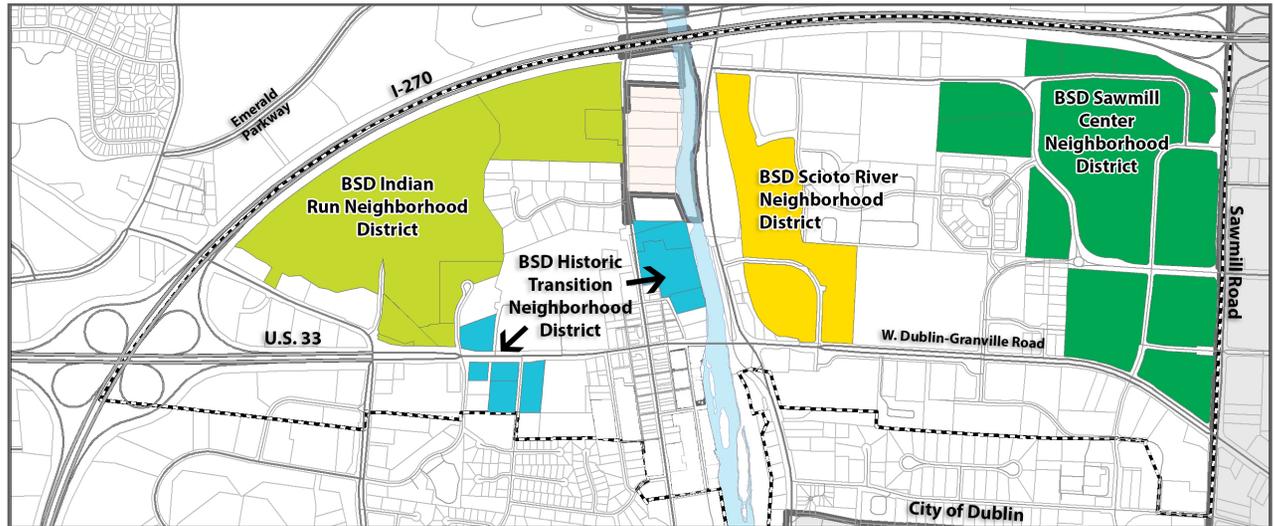
**If a sign (or group of signs) does not meet one or more requirements of the Zoning Code, a Master Sign Plan is required.**

Master Sign Plans require review and recommendation by the Administrative Review Team and approval by the Architectural Review Board for signs in the Historic District, and approval by the Planning and Zoning Commission for signs everywhere else in the Bridge Street District. Refer to Section 4, *Master Sign Plans*, for more information.

### Signs with Special Provisions

Special provisions apply to signs in certain zoning districts. Refer to Sections 5 & 8 for more information.

Bridge Street District (BSD) Neighborhood Zoning Districts



Master Sign Plans are required for mixed-use developments in BSD Neighborhood Districts and may include specific standards.

Sample Calculation Matrix		
<b>PRIMARY IDENTIFICATION SIGNS: Allowed 1 Primary I.D. Sign</b>		
Sign Type	Max. Allowable per Criteria	Actual Sign Area
Fascia Sign	75 sf.	63 sf.
Marquee /Canopy Sign	75 sf.	
Feature Sign	75 sf.	
Awning Sign (primary)	75 sf.	
<b>Maximum Allowable Primary</b>	<b>79 sf.</b>	<b>63 sf.</b>
<b>SECONDARY IDENTIFICATION SIGNS: Allowed 3 Secondary I.D. Signs</b>		
Sign Type	Max. Allowable per Criteria	Actual Sign Area
Projecting Blade Sign	10 sf.	10 sf.
Awning Sign (secondary)	20 sf. (per awning)	40 sf.
Plaque & Medallion Sign	4 sf.	
Window / Door Sign	10 sf. (per structural bay)	
Shadow Box	6 sf.	
Poster Display Case	60 sf.	
Banner	50 sf.	
Flag	24 sf.	
Display Stand/Easel	8 sf.	5 sf.
<b>Maximum Allowable Secondary</b>	<b>(39.7 + 16') = 55.7 sf.</b>	<b>55 sf.</b>
<b>Total Maximum Allowable Sign Area:</b>	<b>(63 + 55.7) = 118.7 sf.</b>	<b>118 sf.</b>

ANNA'S FLOWERS: 5,609 sf., 52'-11" total frontage

## Process

### Zoning Review

Zoning review is required for all signs in the Bridge Street District (BSD) prior to sign permitting. The zoning review process involves the following:

1. Pre-Application
2. Zoning Application Review
3. Zoning Decision

Sign permitting follows the zoning review process.

#### Pre-Application

Applicants should review the BSD Sign Guidelines to understand sign design intent and determine the appropriate review process prior to submitting an application for zoning review.

Next, applicants should check the property's zoning district (contact the Planning Division at 614.410.4600) and review the BSD zoning regulations (Zoning Code Section 153.065(H)) to determine the applicable zoning requirements for signs, such as number, height, size, color, and design. For any sign provisions not covered by Zoning Code Section 153.065(H), defer to the general sign requirements of the City of Dublin Zoning Code (Sections 153.150-164).

#### Zoning Application Review

Individual signs in the Bridge Street District that are not part of a Master Sign Plan or Site Plan Review are processed as applications for **Minor Project Review**. The zoning review process begins when a complete application, including all required supporting materials, are submitted to the Planning Division along with the application fee.

The Administrative Review Team (ART) meets on a weekly basis and is comprised of the following (and/or their designees): Planning Director, City Engineer, Chief Building Official, Parks and Recreation Director, Washington Township Fire Chief, Police Chief, Economic Development Manager, and others as appointed by the City Manager, including design consultants as deemed necessary.

The Architectural Review Board (ARB) meets once a month (typically the third or fourth Wednesday of each month). The ARB includes five members appointed by City Council.

Applications for signs in the Historic District require a **Minor Project Review** application by the ART, who then makes a recommendation to the ARB for the final zoning decision.

**Minor Project Reviews** for signs in all other parts of the Bridge Street District require review and approval only by the

ART. Refer to Section 2, **Applicability**, to determine applicable review procedures.

#### Zoning Decision

The ART is required to make a decision on applications for Minor Project Review within 14 days from the submission of a complete application. For projects in the Historic District, the ARB is required to make a decision on the application for Minor Project Review within 28 days of the ART's recommendation.

**Master Sign Plans** require review by the ART, who makes a recommendation to the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC; meets typically twice per month) or the ARB as applicable. As an exception, for Bridge Street District projects involving a development agreement, City Council may determine the required reviewing body at the Basic Plan Review (refer to Zoning Code Section 153.066(L)(8) for more information).

A Certificate of Zoning Plan Approval is required for all **sandwich board signs**. Please contact the Planning Division at 614.410.4600 for more information.

## Zoning Review Timeline

For more information, please visit [dublinohiousa.gov/planning/development-application/](http://dublinohiousa.gov/planning/development-application/)

PRE-APPLICATION		ZONING APPLICATION REVIEW (14-28 DAYS)		ZONING DECISION	SIGN PERMITTING
Applicant reviews BSD Sign Guidelines for design intent.	Applicant reviews Zoning Code Section 153.065(H) for sign requirements.	Applicant submits complete application to Planning Division for zoning review ( <b>Minor Project Review</b> or <b>Master Sign Plan</b> ).	Application is introduced at an ART meeting.  Signs may be reviewed by a sign consultant, who provides a recommendation to the ART.	Administrative Review Team <b>determination</b> , or <b>recommendation</b> to and determination by Architectural Review Board or Planning & Zoning Commission.	Applicant submits Permanent Sign Permit application to Dublin Building Standards Department (614.410.4670) following zoning approval.
Applicant contacts Planning Division for assistance, if needed, at 614.410.4600.					

## Process, continued

### Required Application Materials

The following materials are required for an application for zoning review to be considered complete:

**1. Application Form**

Complete the "Application for Development" form available on the City's website or from the Planning Division office. The current property owner is required to sign and authorize the applicant to submit the application and, if applicable, act on the owner's behalf.

**2. Project Description**

Provide a cover letter describing the proposed sign(s), how the proposal meets all applicable zoning requirements, and whether the proposal is consistent with the BSD Sign Guidelines. If the proposal deviates from any particular zoning requirement, a **Master Sign Plan** (requiring review by the ARB or PZC as applicable) is required. The Project Description should identify any requirements that are not met.

**3. Proposed Sign Exhibits**

An exhibit showing all proposed signs should be provided. The Proposed Sign Exhibit should include photos of existing conditions, as well as photo simulations showing the proposed sign(s) in a finished state, preferably as it will appear on the building or site. A separate exhibit showing the proposed sign with adjacent/nearby tenant spaces visible is also recommended, where applicable (such as a "streetview." Depending on the type of illumination, day/night views should also be provided. Most importantly, the Proposed Sign Exhibit should be scaled and dimensioned to verify applicable zoning requirements are met.

**4. Site Plan**

A Site Plan is required to show sign setbacks for ground signs and to show the dimensions of tenant spaces, entrance locations, and lengths of the building walls on which the proposed sign will be attached (for building-mounted signs).

**5. Sign Construction Details**

Sign construction details are required to determine whether the proposed signs meet the quality and performance standards of the BSD zoning regulations and recommendations of the BSD Sign Guidelines.

*Sample Proposed Sign Exhibit*

- Includes photo of existing conditions
- Includes photo simulation of proposed sign in finished state, with appropriate dimensions
- Shows proposed sign scaled and dimensioned
- Shows construction details, colors, etc.

**DOUBLE SIDED HANGING BLADE SIGN**  
SCALE: 3/4" = 1'  
TOTAL SQ. FT: 6

**COLORS**

- RED (PAINTED SINTRA)
- WHITE (PAINTED SINTRA)
- BLACK (PAINTED SINTRA)
- GOLD (VINYL)

**CLIENT REVIEW STATUS**

<input type="checkbox"/> APPROVED	<input type="checkbox"/> APPROVED AS NOTED
<input type="checkbox"/> REVISE & RESUBMIT	
NAME: _____	DATE: _____

**NOTE: SQUARE FOOTAGE OF THE "BAKED FRESH" RIBBON (SECONDARY IMAGE) EXCEEDS 20% OF THE OVERALL SQUARE FOOTAGE OF THE SIGN.**

OVERALL SIGN SQUARE FOOTAGE: 6.0  
20% OF SIGN SQUARE FOOTAGE: 1.2  
DIMENSIONS OF RIBBON: 5.25"(h) x 33.00"(w)  
OVERALL SQUARE FOOTAGE OF RIBBON: 1.203

**THIS IS NOT A SHOP DRAWING**

<b>Archer Sign</b>	CUSTOMER: BRUEGGER'S	LOCATION: DUBLIN	SALESPERSON: JERRY ARCHER	DRAWN BY: MC	REVISIONS: R2/21/22 (AA) - Remove Gold Accent per BSC Code R26/21/22 (AA) - Add Height from Grade R27/21/22 (AA) - Change Per Zoning Requirements R27/21/22 (AA) - Change Per Zoning Requirements	THIS ORIGINAL DESIGN IS THE EXCLUSIVE PROPERTY OF THE DESIGN FIRM. CONSTRUCTION AND IT PROTECTED BY PATENT, COPYRIGHT, TRADE, AND PROPRIETARY. THE CONSTRUCTION OF ANY SIGN IDENTICAL TO THE ONE SHOWN HERE IN, IS EXPRESSLY FORBIDDEN AND WILL
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### Sign Permitting

Permanent sign permits are administered by the City of Dublin Building Standards. [Contact Building Standards at 614.410.4670](tel:614.410.4670) following zoning review for information about sign permitting.

- Shows height measured to the top of the sign
- Includes dimensions of all lettering, logos, secondary images, etc.
- Includes mounting details and profile/side views
- Specifies all materials used

EXISTING



PROPOSED



## Master Sign Plans

### Purpose & Intent

Master Sign Plans allow greater flexibility and creativity in sign design and display, providing the mechanism for expanding the range of unique and interesting signs available to a building or site. **Master Sign Plans must be submitted in the following circumstances:**

#### Signs for Buildings in Shopping Corridors

A Master Sign Plan is required for buildings in designated shopping corridors in the BSD Neighborhood Zoning Districts (refer to Sec. 2, *Applicability*, for more info).

Shopping corridors are the centers of activity in highly pedestrian-oriented shopping and entertainment districts. Signs and graphics in these special areas should contribute to the vibrancy of these highly pedestrian-focused districts through the placement of high quality graphics that assist with navigation, provide information, and identify businesses primarily for pedestrians and secondarily for vehicles.

#### Signs that Fail to Meet a Code Requirement

Instead of processing a request for a variance or a Waiver, signs that do not meet a specific Bridge Street District Code requirement (or multiple requirements) may be reviewed as a Master Sign Plan.

Master Sign Plans are *not* intended to be used simply to permit larger or more visible signs, or additional signs than may be permitted without any consideration for unique sign design and display. In approving a proposed Master Sign Plan, the required reviewing body will verify that the purpose and intent of the sign and graphic standards of Code Section 153.065(H) and as described in this document are upheld.

#### Signs for any Building or Group of Buildings

A Master Sign Plan request may be submitted for individual buildings where the applicant wants to ensure that sign locations and designs are properly coordinated with architectural character.

### Approvals

After a recommendation from the Administrative Review Team (ART), the Architectural Review Board reviews and renders determinations on all Master Sign Plans for projects in the Dublin Historic District (refer to Section 2, *Applicability*, for more information).

The Planning and Zoning Commission reviews and renders determinations on all Master Sign Plans for all other areas of the Bridge Street District, following a recommendation from the ART. For projects requiring a development agreement, City Council may determine the required reviewing body for a Master Sign Plan at the Basic Plan Review. Refer to Zoning Code Section 153.066(L)(8) for more information.

The ART may approve Master Sign Plans for any building or group of buildings for which there are no departures from any of the requirements of Zoning Code Section 153.065(H).

Master Sign Plans can eliminate the need for individual Minor Project Reviews for each individual sign or sign change - once the Master Sign Plan is approved, no subsequent zoning approvals are required, provided the signs are consistent with the approved plan. Permanent sign permits issued through the City of Dublin Building Standards Department are however required prior to installation. Refer to Section 3, *Process*, for more information.

### Content

In addition to demonstrating consistency with the purpose and intent for Master Sign Plans, the following information should also be provided:

#### *Introduction & Project Description*

Describes the intent of the proposed Master Sign Plan, specific to the project/site.

#### *Design Principles*

If applicable, provides a description of the design principles informing the Master Sign Plan concept.

#### *Description of Conformance with BSD Code Requirements*

Describes which Bridge Street District sign requirements (Zoning Code Section 153.065(H)) are maintained, and which are requested to be modified through the Master Sign Plan. This information may be described verbally or in table format.

#### *Permitted Sign Types*

Provides an overview of the types of signs that are permitted through the Master Sign Plan, including new sign types not already addressed by the Bridge Street District requirements.

#### *Sign Character Examples*

Pictures demonstrating desirable (and, if applicable, undesirable) types of signs, sign designs, etc.

#### *Calculation Matrix*

If applicable, provide a matrix showing the number and types of permitted signs for tenants, buildings, districts, etc.

#### *Site Plan*

If applicable, provide a site plan to show where the various types of signs may (or may not) be installed. A site plan should also be used to show locations for ground signs, placemaking and gateway signs, and any other types of special signs created specifically as part of the Master Sign Plan.

#### *Building Elevations*

Include all elevations for all buildings where signs are permitted, showing permitted sign locations, maximum permitted sign sizes, etc. The purpose of the building elevation diagrams is to ensure a high level of architectural integration while accounting for future tenant changes.

#### *Sign Installation & Construction Information*

The applicant should describe special standards for sign quality, fabrication/construction, installation methods, illumination, etc. where the requirements exceed the provisions of Zoning Code Section 153.065(H)(4)(e).

## Requirements | Summary

### Number of Permitted Signs

Total number of permitted signs depends on a number of factors. The information summarized on this page is intended to help applicants determine how many of each of the various types of signs are permitted for a property. Applicants should verify answers to these questions (contact the Planning Division at 614.410.4600 for assistance).

The information on this page should be used in conjunction with Zoning Code Section 153.065(H)(6) and Table 153.065-H, Ground Sign Requirements, Table 153.065-I, Building-Mounted Sign Requirements, Table 153.065-J, Building Identification Sign Requirements, and Table 153.065-K, Requirements for Other Permitted Signs.

#### 1. What is the site zoned? Is the site in the Historic District?

Special sign provisions apply to properties located in the Historic District, with signs in this area intended to match the general character and scale of Dublin's original village commercial center.

First, refer to Section 2, *Applicability*, or contact the Planning Division at 614.410.4600 to determine whether the property is located within the Architectural Review District (Historic District) boundaries. Properties in this area (zoned BSD Historic Core District, BSD Public District, BSD Historic Transition Neighborhood District, and BSD Historic Residential District) are referenced specifically in the Bridge Street District zoning regulations for signs (Zoning Code Section 153.065(H)).

For non-Historic District properties, sign requirements are referenced under the provisions applicable to "All Other BSD Zoning Districts."

#### 2. How many building-mounted signs are permitted?

Building-mounted signs include wall signs, projecting (or "blade") signs, awning signs, and permanent window signs.

Building-mounted signs for properties in the Historic District are counted as part of the total number of permitted signs for a building or tenant. Number of permitted signs is also based on whether the building is a single tenant building or a multiple tenant building, and whether the property has frontage on one or multiple streets. Refer to Zoning Code Section 153.065(H)(6)(d) for more information.

For all other Bridge Street District zoning districts, the number of permitted building-mounted signs is based on whether the building is a single-tenant or a multiple-tenant building, and whether or not the tenant has a storefront. Refer to Zoning Code Section 153.065(H)(6)(b)-(c) for more information.

#### 3. Are ground signs permitted? If so, how many?

Ground signs for properties in the Historic District are counted as part of the total number of permitted signs for a building or tenant. Number of ground signs are also based on whether the building is a single tenant building or a multiple tenant building, and whether the property has frontage on one or multiple streets. Refer to Zoning Code Section 153.065(H)(6)(d) for more information.

For all other Bridge Street District zoning districts, one ground sign is permitted per building or parcel, per street frontage, not to exceed two ground signs. Ground signs in these zoning districts are permitted in addition to other permitted signs.

#### 4. What other types of signs are permitted?

While ground and building-mounted signs are primarily intended for permanent tenant identification, several other types of signs, including building identification signs, public entrance signs, secondary public entrance signs, directory signs, (temporary) display signs, and sandwich board signs, may also be permitted.

Number and dimensional requirements for these "specialty" signs vary greatly based on whether the property is in the Historic District and whether the proposed sign is for a single tenant building or a multiple-tenant building, with or without storefronts. Refer to Zoning Code Section 153.065(H)(6)-(7) and Table 153.065-J, Building Identification Sign Requirements, and Table 153.065-K, Requirements for Other Permitted Signs, for more information.

# Requirements | Summary

## Sign Types

The various types of signs permitted in the Bridge Street District are outlined below. Specific requirements are illustrated on pages 22-35.

### Sign Types Permitted in Bridge Street District Zoning Districts

Tenant Identification	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Ground Signs (p. 22-23)</b> Intended primarily for buildings with greater front and corner side required build zones or setbacks.</li> <li><b>2. Building-Mounted Signs (p. 24-31)</b> Provide visibility for pedestrians and vehicles approaching from different directions and to create a diversity of signs along an active streetscape. Includes wall, awning, projecting, and permanent window signs.</li> </ol>				
Building Identification	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>3. Building Identification Signs (p. 34-35)</b> Intended to identify major building tenants and large-scale mix-use development. Building names or street address numerals may be used in lieu of tenant names.</li> <li><b>4. Identification Plaques</b> Plaques, medallions, or other smaller identification signs intended for pedestrian use may be used to identify individual building names or addresses, denote significant historical or building characteristics, etc.</li> </ol>				
Other Permitted Signs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>5. Directory Signs (p. 34)</b> Directory signs are intended to provide identification for upper story tenants and/or tenants that are otherwise not permitted an individual sign. Directory signs may also be used for restaurant menus and other similar uses.</li> <li><b>6. Display Signs</b> Display signs do not require a permit and are intended to advertise goods or services. They may be displayed in windows as temporary signs.</li> <li><b>7. Sandwich Board Signs (p. 32-33)</b> Sandwich board signs are intended to be used in areas with high pedestrian and commercial activity and are only permitted in the Historic District or as approved with a Master Sign Plan. They require approval of a Certificate of Zoning Plan Approval.</li> </ol>				

## Quality & Character



### Intent

Signs are required to be designed and fabricated with high quality, durable, and low-maintenance materials (refer to Zoning Code Section 153.065(H)(4)(e) for more information).

As noted throughout the Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines, the type of material selected for signs should be compatible with the associated building's façade and other materials in the surrounding area. Traditional materials are preferred over plastic signs.

### General Material Requirements

The following primary materials are required to be used for sign faces. Other materials may be used for sign construction provided they are only used in supplementary parts of the sign, such as framing materials or other similar uses. The required reviewing body may approve other materials if it determines that the proposed materials provide appropriate high quality, durability, and design features.

#### Metal Faces

Minimum .125-inch aluminum or 4mm composites for 3 foot and greater spans to avoid "oil canning" (rippling) of faces. Thinner material may be used for shorter spans.

#### Moldable Synthetic Materials

Solar Grade (SG) acrylics and polycarbonates (or equivalent) to avoid fading, typically no less than .125-inch.

#### Metal Returns

Returns must be sanded, primed, and painted aluminum.

#### Paints

Paints, when used, must be acrylic polyurethane paint systems with zinc chromate primers, or equivalent.

#### Wood Materials

High density urethane (HDU), cedar, redwood, treated lumber, and equivalent materials are required. Signs must be properly sealed to prevent moisture from soaking into the wood.

#### Window Signs

Window signs must be composed of pressure sensitive vinyl (PSV) and similar. For exterior use, "High Performance" materials that have higher tack values and avoid premature fading must be used. Printed PSV decals must have an exterior laminate added to ensure exterior durability.

### Fabrication Details

Signs must be fabricated, constructed and installed to conceal fasteners and/or other methods of attachment that are not integral to the sign design.

### Sign Design & Character Principles

All signs in the Bridge Street District are expected to be designed with the maximum of creativity and the highest quality of materials and fabrication. For this reason, it is strongly recommended that all signs be designed by a professional sign or graphic designer with careful consideration of how well the proposed sign integrates with and complements the adjacent architecture. Similarly, it is strongly recommended that signs are installed by a qualified sign builder or contractor to ensure proper installation and durability over time.

The purpose of this section is to outline a series of general sign design principles that should be considered for each sign proposed in the Bridge Street District. The Character Principles on the following pages are intended to correspond with Zoning Code Section 153.065(H)(4).

### Exceptions

For every Character Principle, there are undoubtedly countless exceptions that result in quality, well-designed signs. The Sign Character Principles are not intended to dictate, but **guide** sign design. The required reviewing bodies may consider approval of signs that fail to meet specific elements of some of the overall principles, provided the proposed sign design is informed by sound graphic design principles, and that the overall intent for signs in the Bridge Street District is maintained.

## Character Principles | Architectural Integration

All signs shall be designed to fully integrate with the building architecture and overall site design, and to enhance the pedestrian experience in the Bridge Street District to create memorable places for people to enjoy.

### 1. Building-Mounted Signs

Signs in the Bridge Street District are required to be designed with opportunities for thoughtful sign placement, including sign bands, awnings, canopies, and ganged windows. Wherever possible, building-mounted signs should be placed and scaled proportionally to these specific locations on the buildings.

For buildings that were constructed prior to the enactment of the Bridge Street District zoning regulations, applicants should carefully consider the existing building architecture and select locations that are either centered or balanced within the architecture associated with a tenant space, or centered within a particular building elevation or architectural feature. Projecting signs should be located near the entrances to the tenant spaces in areas that are primarily visible to pedestrians.

For historic structures, building-mounted signs should be installed in locations that avoid irreversible damage to the original structure. Signs should also be placed in a manner that avoids blocking or obscuring significant architectural features, and those of adjacent historic structures.

### 2. Ground Signs

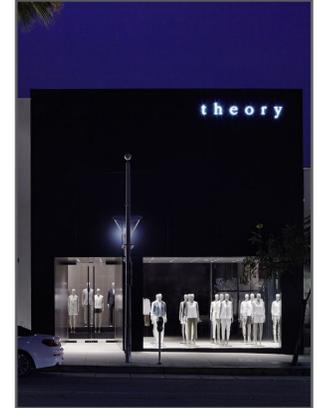
Where site conditions allow the placement of a ground sign, the ground sign should be designed with materials that coordinate with or are used on the building with which the sign is associated, or incorporated into a landscape feature such as a wall. Ground signs should also correspond with the design of associated building-mounted signs.

Whenever possible, ground signs should be placed to avoid blocking pedestrian movement, and may be incorporated within architectural elements such as seating walls or landscape features.

### 3. What to Avoid

- “Off the shelf” sign designs, and signs that are not customized to a specific building on a specific site. An example of this could be a sign with traditional elements, such as frames with routed edges, associated with a contemporary building.
- Signs that are not appropriately dimensioned to fit proportionally on a building elevation or architectural element.
- Colors that clash with adjacent building elements.
- Ground signs that bear no visible relationship to the adjacent building or architectural character.
- Sign lighting that is out of character with the building’s architectural character, with fixtures placed on the building façade without regard to centering or integrating the fixtures with the building design.
- Sign supports or a sign base that is out of proportion (too large or too small/too narrow) with the sign size.

*Signs exhibiting strong architectural integration.*



## Character Principles | Illumination

The illumination of signs is strongly encouraged to help add a sense of liveliness and activity to the Bridge Street District. Well-designed signs use lighting as an accent rather than a distraction designed to compete for attention in a busy urban streetscape. Lighting should enhance and not violate or detract from prominent viewsheds and natural environments.

### 1. External Illumination

Signs may be externally illuminated, provided that all exterior lighting meets the requirements of Bridge Street District Zoning Code Section 153.065(F).

### 2. Internal Illumination

Internally illuminated pan channel or cabinet signs are permitted, provided that the sign is creatively designed with high quality materials and fabrication (refer to "Character - Dimensionality" on page 15 and Section 6, *Quality & Character*). Awning signs and sandwich board signs may not be internally illuminated.

### 3. Indirect Lighting

Indirect lighting, such as "halo" lighting, soft glowing back lighting, concealed uplighting, and linear light courses serve to accent and highlight sign copy without the lighting becoming too bright or garish.

Consider the use of indirect lighting to create shadows as an integral design element.

### 4. Colors

Unique colors other than white light may be used as a soft accent, provided it is well-integrated with the site's architectural character.

### 5. Construction

Illuminated signs shall be constructed so that raceways, conduit and piping for electrical sources are not exposed to view.

### 6. Dimension

Lighting should be used to provide a dimensional quality to the sign design.

### 7. What to Avoid

- Translucent (non-opaque) sign cabinets.
- "Off the shelf" light fixtures that are not well-integrated in the building's architectural character.
- Overly bright, direct lighting designed to call attention rather than highlight sign copy.

Signs with well-designed lighting.



## Character Principles | Colors & Secondary Images

Colorful signs can add character and interest to buildings and the overall streetscape throughout the Bridge Street District; however, in no case shall the use of color and supporting graphics distract from the creation of attractive signs with simple, easy to understand messages.

### 1. Sign Color Selection

Signs in the Bridge Street District are intended to be vibrant, attractive, and interesting. Sidewalks should be lined by pedestrian-oriented architecture with pops of color, individuality, and interest provided through thoughtfully placed and well-designed signs.

Bright colors are encouraged; however, as a general rule, the brighter the color(s) used as a primary component of the sign design, the fewer colors and design elements should be used.

### 2. Sign Color Regulation

Colorful logos and signs are encouraged to help add character and interest to the building and streetscape.

Signs are limited to three colors, including black and white. Background colors are considered one of the three colors, unless channel or pin-mounted letters are used, in which case the background is not considered one of the three colors.

### 3. Logos, Corporate Trademarks, and/or Symbols - Color

Logos, corporate trademarks and/or symbols, or other secondary images used to convey information about the business or use of the building or lot, must be compatible with the size, design, and scale of the sign.

While signs are, overall, limited to three colors, the colors used in a corporate trademark or symbol are not limited in number. The logo or corporate trademark is considered “one” of the three permitted colors. Sign copy or background shall use one of the colors used in the

registered corporate trademark or symbol, in addition to one more permitted color.

### 4. Logos, Corporate Trademarks, and/or Symbols - Size

Signs with a corporate trademark or symbol that is *less than 20% of the sign area* are limited to three colors as described above.

The cumulative area of corporate trademarks or symbols *and other secondary images* shall not exceed 20% of the sign area.

Where a corporate trademark or symbol *exceeds 20% of the sign area*, signs shall have a maximum of five colors including symbols, sign copy, and background color. The background color is included in the maximum permissible colors, unless channel letters are used and affixed directly to a building or other support structure. *No additional secondary images are permitted.*

### 5. What to Avoid

- Signs with clashing colors.
- Complicated sign designs with too many secondary images that obscure the primary image or main sign message.
- Secondary images and logos that resemble generic “clip art” rather than images that represent the business’ brand.
- Signs that use bright colors as a means of grabbing attention rather than highlighting a creative sign design.

## Definitions

### Primary Image

The name of the use or business identified on a sign, usually displayed in text.

### Logo, Registered Corporate Trademark, or Symbol

A non-text graphic representation of a corporate trademark, or symbol of a company name, trademark, emblem, figure, element, abbreviation, etc., uniquely designed for recognition.

### Additional Secondary Images

Any and all text, graphics, or images displayed on a sign in addition to the name of the use or business and/or logo, including but not limited to pictorial representations, tag lines, products, prices, and phone numbers.



**Logo:**  
*Less than 20% of sign area*

Logo and all other secondary images may not exceed 20% of the sign area; limited to three colors total.



**Logo:**  
*Exceeds 20% of sign area*

Limited to five colors overall; no additional secondary images permitted.

## Character Principles | Graphic Design & Composition

Unique, interesting signs that contribute to a memorable, pedestrian-oriented environment generally demonstrate strong adherence to accepted graphic design principles. Signs should be designed thoughtfully, with consideration for aesthetically pleasing composition, and should invite pedestrian interest and contribute to street ambience.

### 1. Simple Messages

Sign copy should be clear and easy to understand. Graphics should support the sign design and avoid obscuring the message.

### 2. Graphics

Logos, trademarks, and other secondary images should reflect the business brand. Color selection should enhance legibility, and the sizing and placement of graphics should reflect a thoughtful composition rather than haphazardly attempting to fit as many design components as possible onto the sign face.

### 3. Negative Space

Signs should be designed to frame the copy and supporting graphics, with an appropriate amount of negative space around the design elements to ensure the sign appears balanced, well-composed, and not visually crowded.

Negative space can be exaggerated to call attention to minimal text and graphics, while cut-outs and shadows can enhance sign messages in creative ways.

### 4. Fonts

Sign copy should use branded fonts wherever possible, although lettering should always be clear and easy to read up close and at a distance. Unique typography enhances the aesthetic interest of signs, minimizing the need for excessive colors and graphics.

### 5. Balance

Signs should be framed by their structural components or the architectural elements of the buildings to which they are affixed. Sign graphics and text should be centered vertically or horizontally, unless a sign design that makes use of negative space calls for a unique arrangement.

Signs with off-center elements (such as the “Heritage Bicycles” sign, at right) may be appropriate if designed to deliberately highlight a specific architectural feature (such as the dimensions of the blank wall).

### 6. Legibility

In a composed sign design, fonts, colors, graphics, lighting, and arrangement are all thoughtfully coordinated to result in a sign that is pleasing to look at and easy to understand.

### 7. What to Avoid

- Sign designs that obscure the primary message of the sign by using a lot of secondary text and graphics.
- Generic fonts, and fonts that are difficult to read because they are too thin or have too many flourishes.
- Sign designs with unbalanced and/or off-center elements, such as signs that are not vertically centered within a building fascia.
- Signs with insufficient space around the outside of the main copy, which are visually crowded and lack balance.

Signs that demonstrate attention to graphic design & composition.



## Character Principles | Dimensionality

Signs should be constructed to stand the test of time, designed to be weather and fade-resistant. High quality signs are also designed to appear substantial, with three-dimensional elements that give the sign presence without appearing overly heavy. Quality signs also conceal structural elements that are not integral to the sign's overall design.

### 1. Architectural Integration

The structural supports used for signs should be just as thoughtfully planned as the design of the sign itself. Brackets, support beams, ground sign bases, and other supporting elements should be designed to coordinate not only with the character of the sign, but also the building with which the sign is associated.

### 2. Texture & Three-Dimensional Elements

The most attractive signs are not only well-composed from a graphic design standpoint, but they also incorporate three-dimensional elements that enhance sign character through the use of interesting lighting, shadows, layering sign components, and unexpected cut-outs that help a sign stand out in a subtle way.

Interesting materials, such as metals with textures and rough-hewn wood, are encouraged.

### 3. Sculptural Construction

In urban environments, signs are meant to be experienced up close, just like buildings, instead of at a distance in a moving vehicle. As a result, signs should be designed as individual pieces of art, with strong attention to detail in construction as much as composition.

Ground signs are particularly encouraged to be designed in a sculptural manner, with consideration of unique lighting, texture, and three-dimensional elements.

### 4. Mass & Durability

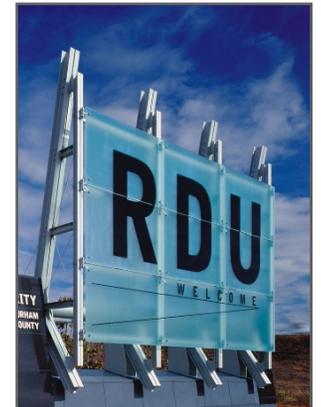
All signs should be designed with durable, fade- and weather-resistant materials (refer to Section 6, *Quality & Character*, for more information).

High quality materials with depth and three-dimensional elements give a sense of mass to a sign, which in turn emphasize its permanence, character, and interest.

### 5. What to Avoid

- Signs with supporting elements (such as brackets, frames, or bases) that are out of character with the building with which the sign is associated. For example, a traditional sign bracket may be inconsistent when affixed to a building with a modern architectural character.
- Flat internally illuminated cabinets and/or panels with flat lettering.
- Simple rectangular cabinets with “off the shelf” lettering and construction elements.
- Ground signs with cabinets that are wider or deeper than the base of the sign and thus appear top-heavy.
- Signs that look flimsy because they lack texture, are too thin or flat, and/or are constructed with low quality materials.

Examples of dimensional signs.



## Character Principles | Context

Well-designed signs enhance the streetscape throughout the Bridge Street District, and avoid distracting, damaging, and/or detracting from the highly pedestrian-oriented streets in this part of the city. Signs should be thoughtfully designed and installed in appropriate locations on building façades. Context is particularly important in the Historic District, where there is an established character with a strong sense of architectural identity.

### 1. Reflecting & Enhancing Character

From the historic streets in Dublin’s original village center to lively streets in new mixed-use entertainment districts, signs should be designed to reflect the character of the surroundings. This can be accomplished through careful attention to sign size, placement, material selection, and other design details.

### 2. Reinforce Architectural Character

Some of the most effective signs are designed to highlight unique architectural features; however, in all cases, signs should be sized and dimensioned to fit on a building elevation without appearing out of place or obscuring significant architectural elements.

### 3. Highlight Viewsheds

The Bridge Street District is positioned with many of its most prominent streets leading toward the Scioto River and Historic Dublin. Particularly along major thoroughfares like Bridge Street, High Street, Riverside Drive, West Dublin-Granville Road, Bridge Park Avenue, and John Shields Parkway, signs should be designed to avoid obstructing views of the Bridge Street District’s exceptional natural features and iconic public amenities such as parks, bridges, scenic vistas and corridors, and historic architecture.

When eye-catching signs are used, they should be sensitively placed to avoid cluttering and competing with these important views.

### 4. Reference Local History & Culture

Where appropriate, sign materials and design should celebrate the Bridge Street District specifically, as well as the City of Dublin as a whole. Signs should not be “off-the-shelf,” but designed specific to the character of the District, including the unique and well-established character of Historic Dublin.

### 5. Adjacent Building Façades

Sign designers should take adjacent storefronts and building façades into consideration when preparing sign designs to ensure that the proposed sign is complementary to the streetscape character.

### 6. What to Avoid

- Signs placed in ways that block views along the street.
- Signs installed in locations that block other signs.
- Signs that are incompatible with significant architectural features on the buildings to which the signs are attached (and/or on immediately adjacent buildings).
- Signs that are overly dominant along view corridors that are intended to compete for pedestrian and vehicular attention in terms of placement, shape, color, or movement.
- Signs that are inconsistent with the quality of the building to which the sign is attached (and immediately adjacent buildings).

Signs that relate well to their surroundings.



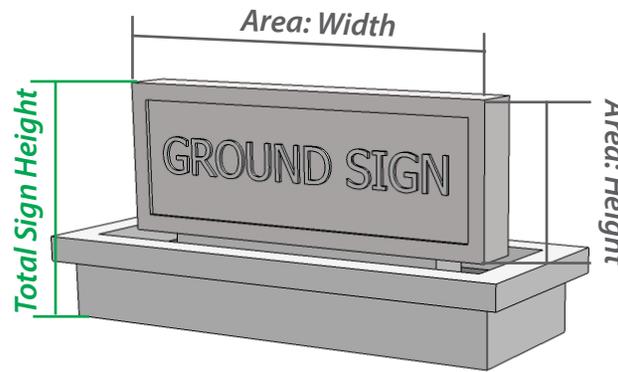
## Requirements | Ground Signs

Ground signs are primarily intended for buildings with greater front and corner side setbacks, where their placement will not interfere with pedestrian activity.

Sites with Existing Structures often have greater setbacks, where ground signs can be installed in conjunction with landscape features and assist with visibility for both pedestrians and motorists.

In urban environments, such as the Historic District and new Bridge Street District developments, ground signs should only be used if there is enough space on site to meet the setback requirements while avoiding interruptions to the pedestrian realm. Ground signs in these areas should have smaller profiles, since they are intended to be visible primarily to pedestrians, and should be integrated into architectural elements if available.

In addition to the quality and character requirements for all signs described in Section 7, *Character Principles*, on pages 16-21, the following requirements apply to ground signs in the Bridge Street District.



## Ground Sign Requirements | General

### Measurement

Height is measured from the established grade at the base of the sign to the top of the sign or its frame or support. Area is measured as the entire area distinct from the sign base (such as the cabinet or field on which the copy is applied).

### Design

Ground signs may be attached to a freestanding wall or other similar structure on the same lot as the building or use.

### Foundations

Foundations may not be exposed. Ground signs should be mounted on a masonry base or a base clad in material compatible with the sign material and the principal structure containing the use with which the sign is associated.

### Landscaping

Ground signs must be landscaped where appropriate to site conditions, such as sites with space to meet the minimum setbacks and where the sign is incorporated into a landscape feature or planting area.

### Historic District

#### Size

Max. 8 sq. ft.

#### Location

Min. setback of 8 ft. from property lines and street rights-of-way.

Permitted only for Historic Cottage Commercial building types (refer to Zoning Code Section 153.062(O)(10)).

#### Height

Max. 6 ft.

### All Other BSD Zoning Districts

#### Size

Max. 24 sq. ft.

#### Location

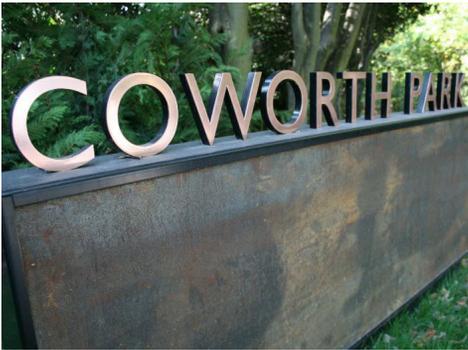
Min. setback of 8 ft. from property lines, Required Building Zones, and/or street rights-of-way.

If two ground signs are used, they must be located on different street frontages.

#### Height

Max. 8 ft.

### Ground Sign Examples



#### Recommended Character Elements

Ground signs in an urban environment should be compact and highly coordinated with their surroundings in terms of materials, architectural character, color, and details.

Interesting structural, sculptural, and architectural designs are encouraged.

All signs should have three-dimensional elements. Flat designs are discouraged.

Minimal text and simple graphics are preferred.

Contemporary designs coordinating with the modern architectural character envisioned in most of the Bridge Street District are preferred. Modern signs with traditional elements may be appropriate in the Historic District, such as the Oscar's sign (top right).

Simple colors are encouraged. The brighter the color, the fewer colors overall should be used.

Sign bases should be structurally integrated and coordinate with the overall design of the sign.

*Some of the signs on this page may not meet all of the zoning requirements for signs in the Bridge Street District. These signs were selected because they depict desirable character elements described above. Refer to Zoning Code Section 153.065(H) to verify applicable sign requirements.*

#### Avoid



Illegible and mismatched fonts.

Traditional sign designs, which are inappropriate for the contemporary development character planned for the Bridge Street District.



Signs that are too large to fit appropriately in an urban environment without interfering with pedestrian movement.

## Requirements | Building-Mounted Signs

### Wall Signs

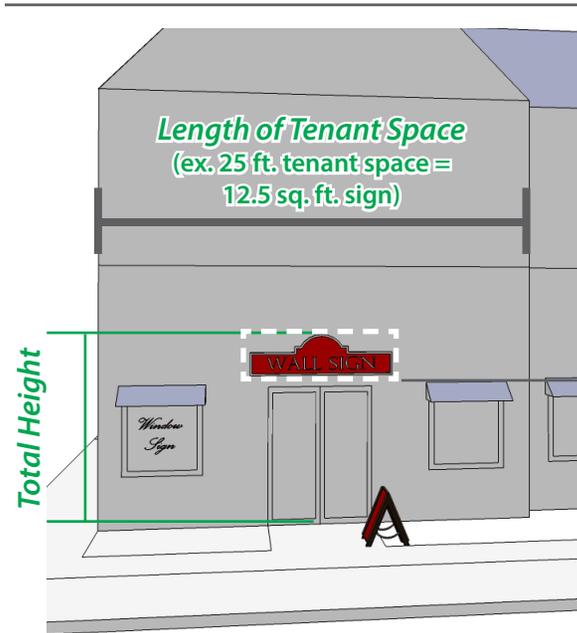
Wall signs are one of four types of building-mounted signs that provide visibility for pedestrians and vehicles approaching from different directions and allow for a diversity of signs along an active streetscape.

In urban environments, such as the Historic District and new Bridge Street District developments, wall signs should be highly integrated with the building's architecture. Wall signs should be installed on portions of buildings intended for signs, such as sign bands, unless unique sign designs allow for creative sign placement, such as wrapping the corner of a building.

Wall signs should be scaled to match the proportions of the building, and should become a seamless element of the building's façade.

For historic structures, wall signs should be attached in locations that avoid irreversible damage to the original structure. Signs should also be placed in a manner that avoids blocking or obscuring significant architectural features.

In addition to the quality and character requirements for all signs described in Section 7, *Character Principles*, on pages 16-21, the following requirements apply to wall signs in the Bridge Street District.



#### Historic District

##### Size

Max. 8 sq. ft.

##### Location

Walls facing a public street, and walls associated with the tenant space for multiple-tenant buildings, and/or within 6 ft. of the public entrance. Wall signs may not extend more than 14 in. from the face of the building to which they are attached.

##### Height

Max. 15 ft., not extending above the roofline.

### Wall Sign Requirements | General

#### Measurement

Height is measured directly beneath the sign from the established grade at the base of the structure to which the sign is attached to the highest portion of the sign.

Area is measured by multiplying the full width of the overall sign (frame, cabinet, or extent of the sign lettering where channel or pin-mounted letters are used) by the overall height of the sign (frame, cabinet, or extent of sign lettering) in a rectangular manner, regardless of the shape of the sign or the arrangement of the graphics.

**Area: (Total Height) x (Total Width)**

#### All Other BSD Zoning Districts

##### Size

1/2 sq. ft. per lineal foot of building wall or storefront, up to a max. 50 sq. ft.

##### Location

(Same as Historic District)

##### Height

Max. 15 ft. for Existing Structures (buildings constructed prior to the effective date of the BSD zoning regulations in April 2012), or within the first story for buildings constructed under the BSD Building Type requirements of Zoning Code Section 153.062(O).

### Wall Sign Examples



#### Recommended Character Elements

Wall signs in pedestrian environments should be interesting to look at, adding vibrancy to a streetscape. Wall signs should be three dimensional, with textured lettering.

Lighting should be used as a highlight or architectural element, rather than a means of attracting attention.

Wall signs should be architecturally integrated with the building and the tenant's brand.

Wall signs should have simple, legible messages.

Simple colors are encouraged. The brighter the color, the fewer colors overall should be used.

Thoughtful framing, centering, and use of negative space can enhance a wall sign with a simple message. Avoid filling the entire cabinet or sign frame with text, logos, secondary images, etc.

*Some of the signs on this page may not meet all of the zoning requirements for signs in the Bridge Street District. These signs were selected because they depict desirable character elements described above. Refer to Zoning Code Section 153.065(H) to verify applicable sign requirements.*



#### Avoid



Flat, two-dimensional cabinets out of scale with the storefront.

Illegible and mismatched fonts.

Distracting use of colors and clip art.



Two-dimensional internally illuminated cabinets.

Over-complicated sign copy.

Poor architectural integration.

## Requirements | Building-Mounted Signs

### Awning Signs

Awning signs are another one of the four types of building-mounted signs that contribute to the creation of a vibrant pedestrian-oriented streetscape while enhancing tenant visibility.

In all locations, and particularly in urban environments, awning signs should be highly integrated with the architectural character of the building. Traditional awning styles may be appropriate in the Historic District, while minimal, modern awnings should be installed on contemporary buildings elsewhere in the Bridge Street District.

Awning signs should be installed on architecturally appropriate portions of buildings, such as above windows and doors, primarily on the ground floor. Awnings should also be scaled to match the proportions of the building, and should be seamless elements of the building's façade. Refer to Zoning Code Section 153.062(H)(3) for additional architectural requirements for awnings and canopies.

For historic structures, awnings should be attached in locations that avoid irreversible damage to the original structure. If used, awnings should also be placed in a manner that avoids blocking or obscuring significant architectural features.

In addition to the quality and character requirements for all signs described in Section 7, *Character Principles*, on pages 16-21, the following requirements apply to awning signs in the Bridge Street District.

#### Measurement

Maximum height is measured directly beneath the awning from the established grade at the base of the structure to the top of the awning.

Awning sign area is measured by multiplying the full width of the overall sign copy (lettering and/or logo applied to the awning) by the overall height of the sign copy in a rectangular manner, regardless of the arrangement of the graphics.

#### Awning Material & Design

Zoning Code Section 153.062(H)(3)(b) requires awnings that are open on the underside and made of durable and fade-resistant canvas, decorative metal with metal used for the internal structure, or an alternative, high-quality durable material, if determined to be architecturally appropriate by the required reviewing body.

Awnings may not be internally illuminated.

#### Historic District

##### Size

20% of the cumulative surface of all awnings (8 sq. ft. max.).

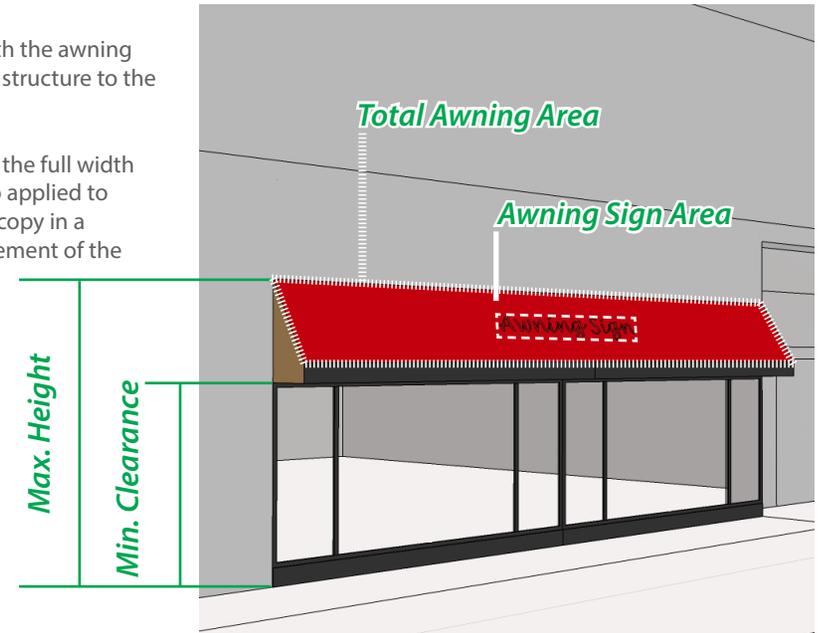
##### Location

Awning signs may be on any portion of the awning, affixed flat to the surface. Awning signs may not extend beyond the limits of the awning.

##### Height

Max. 15 ft., with the lowest portion of the awning at least 8 ft. above the sidewalk.

### Awning Sign Requirements | General



#### All Other BSD Zoning Districts

##### Size

(Same as Historic District)

##### Location

(Same as Historic District)

##### Height

Within the first story of the building. The lowest portion of the awning must be at least 8 ft. above the sidewalk.

## Awning Sign Examples



### Recommended Character Elements

Awning designs should be coordinated with the architectural character of the storefront. For example, only use traditional awnings with scalloped edges with buildings that have traditional architectural elements.

Simple awning forms are recommended, such as flat planes with or without enclosed sides.

Awning sign graphics should be limited to simple text and logos.

Awning color should be subdued, and/or coordinated with storefront design. As a general rule, the brighter the color, the fewer colors overall should be used.

*Some of the signs on this page may not meet all of the zoning requirements for signs in the Bridge Street District. These signs were selected because they depict desirable character elements described above. Refer to Zoning Code Section 153.065(H) to verify applicable sign requirements.*

### Avoid



Too many bright colors.

Complicated awning forms and designs that are unrelated to the architecture of the building to which the awning is attached.



Imbalanced and over-complicated graphic design.

Illegible fonts.

## Requirements | Building-Mounted Signs

### Projecting (Blade) Signs

Projecting (or “blade”) signs are another one of the four types of building-mounted signs that assist with providing visibility along a highly pedestrian-oriented streetscape while contributing to the architectural character and interest of a building.

In all locations, and particularly in urban environments, projecting signs should be highly integrated with the architectural character of the building. Traditional projecting sign shapes may be appropriate in the Historic District, while unique sign shapes could be appropriate to the more contemporary buildings elsewhere in the Bridge Street District.

Projecting signs should be installed on architecturally appropriate portions of buildings, such as above and adjacent to doors and windows. Projecting signs should also be scaled to match the proportions of the building, and should be seamless elements of the building’s façade.

For historic structures, projecting signs should be attached in locations that avoid irreversible damage to the original structure. Projecting signs should also be placed in a manner that avoids blocking or obscuring significant architectural features.

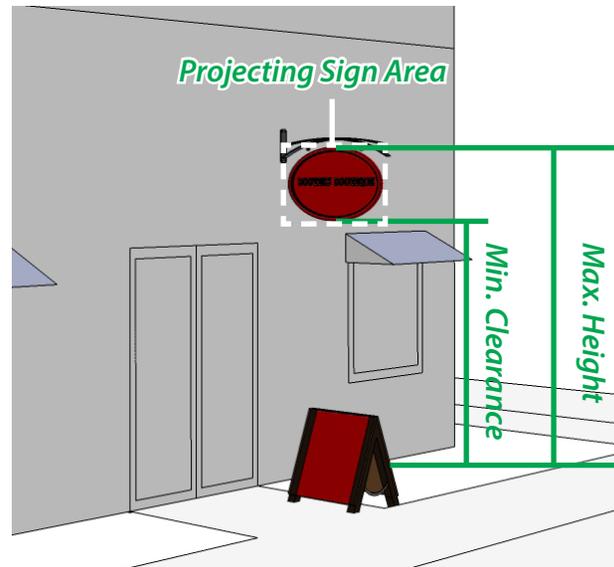
In addition to the quality and character requirements for all signs described in Section 7, *Character Principles*, on pages 16-21, the following requirements apply to projecting signs in the Bridge Street District.

### Projecting (Blade) Sign Requirements | General

#### Measurement

Projecting sign height is measured directly beneath the sign from the established grade at the base of the structure to which the sign is attached to the top of the highest portion of the sign (not including brackets or equipment used to attach the sign to the building).

Area is measured by multiplying the full width by the full height of the sign in a rectangular manner, regardless of the shape of the sign. Brackets and equipment are not included in the projecting sign area.



#### Historic District

##### Size

Max. 8 sq. ft.

##### Location

Within 6 ft. of the public entrance for multiple tenant buildings, separated at least 10 ft. from adjacent projecting signs. Wall signs may not extend more than 6 ft. from the face of the building to which they are attached.

##### Height

Max. 15 ft. (not extending above the second story sills), with the lowest portion of the sign at least 8 ft. above the sidewalk.

#### All Other BSD Zoning Districts

##### Size

Max. 16 sq. ft.

##### Location

(Same as Historic District)

##### Height

Within the first story of the building. The lowest portion of the sign must be at least 8 ft. above the sidewalk.

### Projecting (Blade) Sign Examples



#### Recommended Character Elements

Sculptural, architecturally interesting projecting sign designs are encouraged. All building-mounted signs, and particularly projecting signs, should be more than just a cabinet affixed to a building.

Projecting signs should appear substantial and not flimsy.

If a projecting sign is internally illuminated, it should use simple illumination to highlight the sign character and message.

Three-dimensional elements are strongly encouraged, along with the creative use of textures, shadows, negative space, cutouts, etc. to give the sign dimensionality and interest.

Projecting signs should incorporate thoughtful framing and placement of text and graphics, as well as the use of negative space.

The bracket or attachment device should be architecturally appropriate to the building design. Only use traditional brackets with traditional architecture.

As a general rule, the brighter the color, the fewer colors overall should be used.



#### Avoid



Thin, flat signs that appear flimsy and temporary.

Over complicated sign designs, with conflicting fonts and too many images and secondary text.



Clunky “off the shelf” cabinets with no architectural character.

Lack of three-dimensional elements.

Internal illumination used to draw attention rather than highlight the sign design.

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## Requirements | Building-Mounted Signs

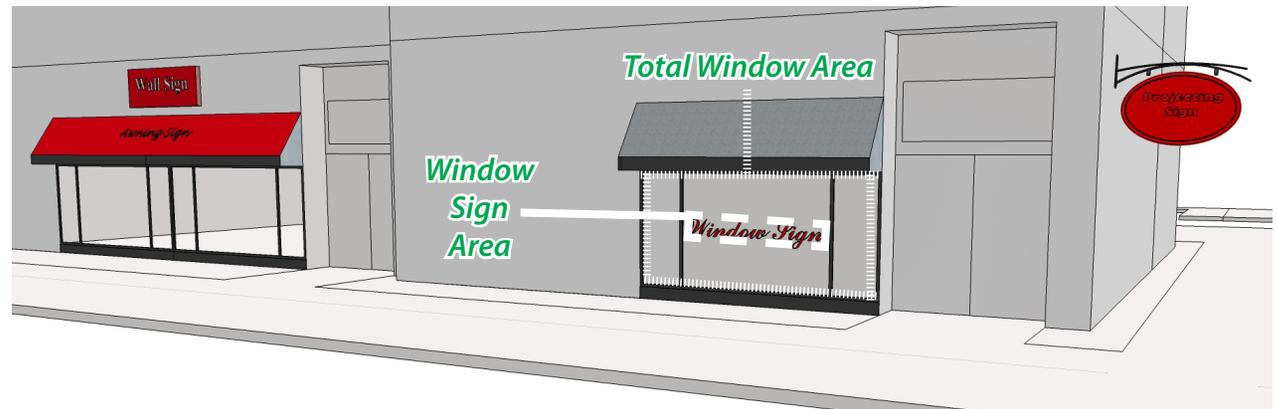
### Window Signs (Permanent)

Permanent window signs that identify a tenant are the fourth type of building-mounted signs. Combined with other types of building-mounted signs, window signs can provide great interest to window-shopping pedestrians while providing eye-level tenant identification.

In addition to the quality and character requirements for all signs described in Section 7, *Character Principles*, on pages 16-21, the following requirements apply to window signs in the Bridge Street District.

#### Measurement

Window sign area is measured by multiplying the full width of the overall sign copy (lettering and/or logo applied to the window) by the overall height of the sign copy in a rectangular manner, regardless of the arrangement of the graphics.



### Window Sign Requirements | General

Window panes separated by muntins should not be counted separately, but included in the cumulative square footage.

#### Historic District

##### General

Where permanent window signs are used, window display signs (temporary) are not permitted.

##### Size

20% of the cumulative surface area of the window to which it is attached, up to a max. 8 sq. ft.

##### Location & Height

Ground floor only, except tenant spaces located above the ground floor may be identified by a window sign (or directory sign, or projecting sign adjacent to a common public entrance providing access to the upper floor tenant spaces).

#### All Other BSD Zoning Districts

##### General

(Same as Historic District)

##### Size

(Same as Historic District)

##### Location & Height

Ground floor only. All signs located within three feet of the window pane are considered window signs (temporary signs are "Display" signs; permanent signs are "Window" signs).

### Permanent Window Sign Examples



#### Recommended Character Elements

Permanent window signs should ensure visibility in and through the windows into the tenant space beyond.

Minimal colors and simple graphics and messages are recommended.

Well-designed window signs incorporate interesting fonts, designs, lettering, and even unique lighting, personalized to the tenant space; they should be more than just a decal affixed to a window.

If other signs are used, window sign designs should be coordinated with the other signs.

As with all signs, thoughtful placement of window signs is critical. Centering, framing, or unique offsets can enhance the character and interest of these signs.

*Some of the signs on this page may not meet all of the zoning requirements for signs in the Bridge Street District. These signs were selected because they depict desirable character elements described above. Refer to Zoning Code Section 153.065(H) to verify applicable sign requirements.*

#### Avoid



Too many bright colors, intended to draw attention rather than add visual interest to the tenant space.

Signs that obscure views to the interior of the tenant space.



Too many messages, with signs designed to advertise rather than identify the tenant.

Signs that lack character and fail to add interest to the storefront.

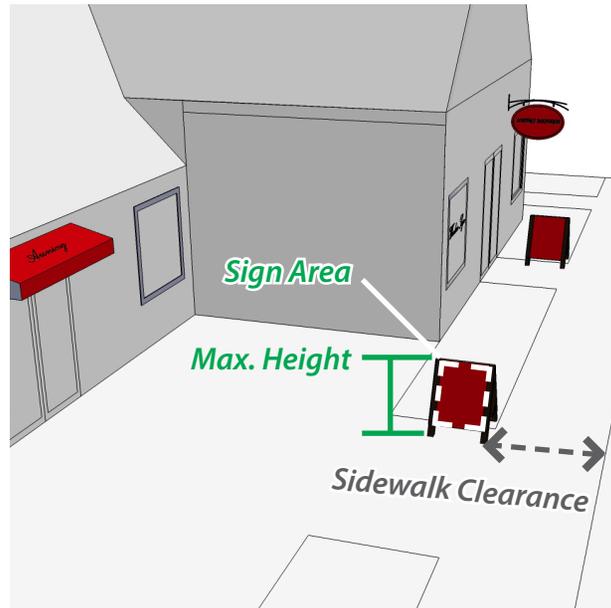
## Sign Requirements | Sandwich Board Signs

Sandwich board signs are intended to be used in areas with high pedestrian and commercial activity, advertising tenants as well as specials, sales, and goods and/or services offered. Well-designed sandwich board signs can greatly enhance streetscape character and contribute to a vibrant pedestrian experience.

**Sandwich board signs are only permitted in the Historic District as a unique character element. Refer to Section 2, Applicability, for more information.**

A Certificate of Zoning Plan Approval is required for all sandwich board signs. Please contact the Planning Division at 614.410.4600 for more information.

In addition to the quality and character requirements for all signs described in Section 7, *Character Principles*, on pages 16-21, the following requirements apply to sandwich board signs in the Historic District.



### Historic District

#### Size & Height

Max. 6 sq. ft. per side; max. 3 ft. tall.

#### Location

Permitted only immediately in front of the building containing the activity described on the sign. Signs must be placed within 6 ft. of the primary ground floor public entrance of the business, generally along the same plane as other sandwich board signs to ensure consistent sidewalk clearance.

Signs must maintain an unobstructed 5-ft. clearance on sidewalks.

## Sandwich Board Sign Requirements

### General

Sandwich board signs may include chalkboard and whiteboard elements.

The sandwich board sign structure must be constructed with subdued colors.

Sandwich board signs must be removed and stored indoors or in a location not visible to the public during non-business hours.

### Measurement

Sandwich board sign area is measured by multiplying the full width of the overall sign frame by the overall height of the sign frame, on each side (as applicable).

### All Other BSD Zoning Districts

Not permitted, unless otherwise approved as part of a Master Sign Plan.

## Sandwich Board Sign Examples



### Recommended Character Elements

Sandwich board signs should be considered movable art with interesting character rather than distracting billboards or mobile ground signs.

Messages should change frequently (such as every 30 days), advertising sales, services, food and beverages, and specials.

Sandwich board signs should be constructed with wood or aluminum, with neutral or low chroma.

Handwritten messages and graphics are encouraged. Simpler messages and graphics are encouraged, unless they are hand drawn.

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### Avoid



Too many bright colors.

Permanent sign copy, which functions more as a movable ground sign than a temporary advertisement of the tenant's goods or services.



Signs that lack character and creativity.

## Requirements | Other Permitted Signs

Other signs permitted in the Bridge Street District include directory signs and building identification signs and others as described in Zoning Code Section 153.065(H).

### Directory Signs

Directory signs are intended to provide identification for upper story tenants, and/or tenants that are otherwise not permitted individual identification signs. Directory signs should not be used as a wayfinding device - they should direct visitors to a specific tenant or suite number once they have already arrived at the correct building.

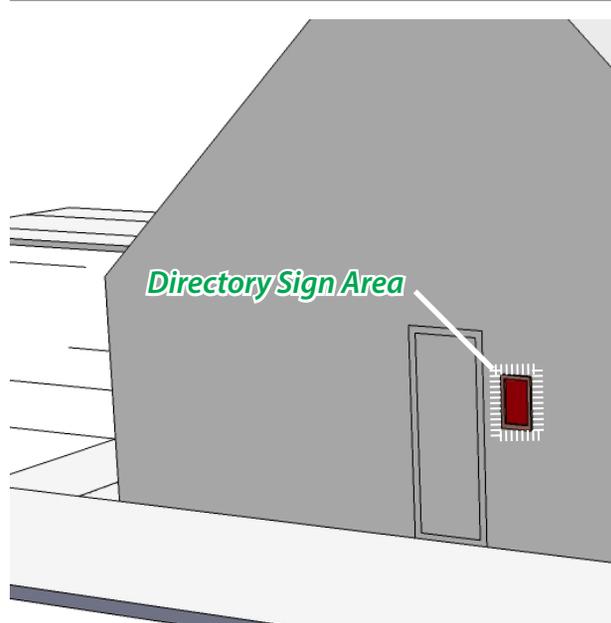
Directory signs may also be used for restaurant menus and other similar uses.

### Building Identification Signs

Building identification signs are intended to identify major building tenants and large-scale commercial development in the Bridge Street District, both for pedestrians as well as people arriving by bus, car or bicycle.

Building names or street address numerals may be used in lieu of a tenant name.

In addition to the quality and character requirements for all signs described in Section 7, *Character Principles*, on pages 16-21, the following requirements apply to directory and building identification signs in the Bridge Street District.



## Directory Sign Examples



## Directory Sign Requirements

### Historic District

#### Size

Max. 4 sq. ft.

#### Height

Ground floor only (when mounted to and visible from the exterior of the building).

#### Location

Within 6 ft. of the entrance, mounted flat to the wall.

### All Other BSD Zoning Districts

(Same as Historic District)

### Recommended Character Elements

Directory signs may range from simple to unique designs, but in all cases should be architecturally integrated with the building character.

Directory signs should be easy to update with new tenant or menu information.

Directory signs should use minimal color, legible fonts, and simple lighting (if any).

## Building Identification Sign Requirements

### Historic District

Not permitted

### All Other BSD Zoning Districts

#### Size

1/2 sq. ft. per lineal ft. of building frontage, max. 100 sq. ft.

#### Height & Location

Building identification signs must be installed on street-facing building façades and may not extend above the roofline.

#### Design

Individual pin-mounted or channel letters are required.



## Building Identification Sign Examples



### Recommended Character Elements

Sculptural, architecturally interesting building identification signs are encouraged. Three-dimensional elements and the creative use of textures, shadows, negative space, cutouts, and lighting should give the sign dimensionality and interest.

Building identifications signs should incorporate thoughtful framing and placement of text and graphics, as well as the use of negative space.

The sign design should be architecturally appropriate to the building design and scale of adjacent development, in terms of character, size, and placement.

## Image Credits

### Cover Photo

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## Acknowledgments

### City Council

**Michael Keenan**, Mayor  
**Richard Gerber**, Vice Mayor  
**Marilee Chinnici-Zuercher**  
**Tim Lecklider**  
**Greg Peterson**  
**John Reiner**  
**Amy Salay**

### Planning & Zoning Commission

**Victoria Newell**, Chair  
**Christopher Brown**, Vice Chair  
**Cathy De Rosa**  
**Bob Miller**  
**Deborah Mitchell**  
**Amy Salay**, City Council Representative  
**Stephen Stidhem**

### Architectural Review Board

*Including former Board members*

**David Rinaldi**, Chair  
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**Neil Mathias**

### Administrative Review Team

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**Matt Earman**, Director of Parks and Recreation  
**Colleen Gilger**, Economic Development Director  
**Alan Perkins**, Fire Marshal, Washington Township  
**Aaron Stanford**, PE, Senior Civil Engineer  
**Jeff Tyler**, Chief Building Official  
**Fred Hahn**, *Former Director of Parks and Open Space*

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**Nicki Martin**, Planning Assistant  
**Logan Stang**, Planning Assistant  
**Lia Yakumithis**, Planning Assistant  
**Katie Ashbaugh**, Planning Assistant  
**Andrew Crozier**, Planning Assistant

### With Additional Assistance

**Cathy Fromet**, Studio Graphique  
**Andy McEntee**, Studio Graphique  
**Joell Angelchumbley**, Kolar Design

**Adopted (Date)**  
**Resolution XX-XX**



# **Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines**

DRAFT | As Recommended to City Council | October 2015

**PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**

**RECORD OF ACTION**

**SEPTEMBER 3, 2015**

The Planning and Zoning Commission took the following action at this meeting:

**3. Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines  
15-040ADM**

**Administrative Request**

Proposal: Creation of guidelines intended to help applicants understand and apply the sign requirements in the Bridge Street District and provide direction for sign design and placement in a pedestrian-oriented environment.

Request: Review and recommendation of approval to the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Applicant: Dana L. McDaniel, City of Dublin.

Planning Contact: Rachel S. Ray, AICP, Economic Development Administrator.

Contact Information: (614) 410-4630, rray@dublin.oh.us

**MOTION:** Victoria Newell moved, Chris Brown seconded, to recommend approval to City Council for this Administrative Request with one condition:

- 1) That the modifications discussed by the Commission regarding the text changes and sign characteristics are forwarded to City Council in the final draft.

**VOTE:** 7 – 0.

**RESULT:** A recommendation of approval will be forwarded to City Council.

**RECORDED VOTES:**

Victoria Newell	Yes
Amy Salay	Yes
Chris Brown	Yes
Cathy De Rosa	Yes
Bob Miller	Yes
Deborah Mitchell	Yes
Steve Stidhem	Yes

**STAFF CERTIFICATION**

  
Rachel S. Ray, AICP  
Economic Development Administrator

- 2) The applicant work with Planning to locate the sign to the north side of the existing stone wall;
- 3) The applicant ensure the final sign location is out of any easements and does not conflict with any existing utilities in the area;
- 4) The sign base and column be altered to incorporate limestone in lieu of the proposed metal cabinet; and
- 5) The plans should be revised to show the required landscape material around the base of the sign, with the submission of a sign permit.

\*Philip Radke agreed to the above conditions and clarified where the stone base would be required.

Ms. Newell asked that staff clarify the portion of the sign to have a stone base.

Ms. Rauch agreed to make it clearer.

Mr. Radke asked if they could use a synthetic stone base because many of the signs are a foam compressed material.

Ms. Rauch said it could be a manufactured stone, which is permitted.

Mr. Brown clarified that it should be a limestone native to Dublin meeting the character of the rest of the area.

Mr. Radke agreed.

### **Motion and Vote**

Chris Brown moved, Steve Stidhem seconded, to approve this Amended Final Development Plan application because the proposed sign modifications meet the requirements within the Indian Run Meadows development text, and are consistent with surrounding signs with five conditions. The vote was as follows: Ms. De Rosa, yes; Ms. Mitchell, yes; Ms. Newell, yes; Ms. Salay, yes; Mr. Miller, yes; Mr. Stidhem, yes; and Mr. Miller, yes. (Approved 7 – 0)

### **3. Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines 15-040ADM**

#### **Administrative Request**

Ms. Newell said the application is a request to create a set of sign guidelines intended to help applicants understand and apply the sign requirements in the Bridge Street District and provide direction for sign design and placement in a pedestrian-oriented environment.

Rachel Ray stated that the intent of the sign guidelines was to assist applicants with preparing their application materials when they are proposing signs within the Bridge Street District. She said they are also intended to illustrate the intent of the zoning regulations. She explained that once the guidelines are in effect, they will be used by applicants as they are preparing their sign design proposals, as well as by Staff in evaluating and making recommendations on the proposals. She noted that the reviewing bodies are also expected to use the guidelines as a guiding document when reviewing applications for signs. She reiterated that it is tailored for signs in pedestrian oriented environments.

Ms. Ray said that City Council approved the most recent round of Bridge Street District Code updates including some amendments to the sign provisions in December 2014. She reported that as a follow up, Staff was tasked with preparing sign guidelines to help illustrate the intent of those requirements. She said they worked with a sign design consultant as they were reviewing the Code Amendments, and the consultant's recommendation was that the sign requirements in the Zoning Code went about as far as

possible when it comes to regulating for creative and high quality signs that everyone wants to see in the Bridge Street District. She reported that the consultant recommended that the best approach is to show the intent of the Zoning Code regulations through the sign guidelines. She recalled that the Planning and Zoning Commission and Architectural Review Board (ARB) reviewed the draft guidelines in June 2015, and the ARB and Administrative Review Team reviewed the final version last week, both of whom recommended approval to the Commission with conditions related to a few minor changes to wording.

Ms. Ray said since the June review, Planning added a 6<sup>th</sup> Character Principle, "Context," which is an important factor particularly in the Historic District as well as the Bridge Street District as a whole. She said they added a "preface" which is the first two pages in the document to show at a glance what about the entire document is about. She said at the June meeting, the Commission had discussed the idea of having "tech savvy" signs, and opportunities for more futuristic signs that keep up with new technologies, and she tried to address those considerations in the preface. She noted that these would more than likely still require Master Sign Plan review if something very different were to be proposed.

Ms. Ray said the ARB had also recommended that there be additional references to the Historic District throughout the document.

Ms. Ray said Planning modified the outline of the document to make it more user friendly. She provided a brief overview of the six Character Principles (Architectural Integration, Illumination, Colors & Secondary Images, Graphic Design & Composition, Dimensionality, and Context). She reiterated that for the Sign Requirements section of the document, there is a two-page layout for the different types of signs illustrating how to measure signs, along with a summary of the requirements for the Historic District and elsewhere in the Bridge Street District. She referred to the photos of good examples of each type of sign, accompanied by a brief description of what it is that makes it a successful example, and pointed out that examples of "what to avoid" had also been included.

Ms. Ray said that a recommendation of approval to City Council is requested this evening, unless there are further comments by the Commission.

Ms. Newell asked if there was anyone from the public that would like to speak with respect to this application. [There were none.]

Mr. Brown referred to page 15 and the reference to the use of pressure sensitive vinyl. He asked if this was intended to be used for permanent window signs that serve as the primary identification for a tenant, rather than for temporary window sticker signs.

Ms. Ray confirmed it is intended for the permanent permitted signs.

Mr. Brown noted that sandwich board signs are permitted in the Historic District but not in the rest of the Bridge Street District, and asked why.

Ms. Ray said there had been some internal debate about where the sandwich board signs should be permitted. She said historically they have been permitted only in the Historic District to set apart that particular area as a unique character element. She said limiting the signs to this particular area also makes them easier to manage because sandwich board signs can get out of control. She added that they are primarily used in highly pedestrian-oriented areas, which has historically been just the Historic District in Dublin. She said the City has kept them limited to the Historic District primarily for those reasons. She said now that walkable, mixed-use development is planned for a much larger area through the entire Bridge Street District, Planning has discussed whether sandwich board signs would be appropriate throughout the BSD, rather than continuing to limit them to the Historic District where they will remain a unique character element. She said regardless, for the time being, the Code only allows sandwich board signs in the Historic District, as before, although anyone can request sandwich board signs through the

Master Sign Plan process, where the Commission can get a better idea about where they will be permitted and what they are going to look like.

Mr. Brown referred to a common urban condition where restaurants have menu signs on display close to the sidewalk, or a hostess stand with a sign to describe a special, and asked if those would be permitted.

Ms. Ray said the menu signs would likely be considered directory signs, which would not require a permit if they meet Code. She said if they wanted to do a bigger sign, or something different like a sandwich board in the sidewalk area, they would only be permitted as part of a Master Sign Plan.

Mr. Brown asked about valet signs.

Ms. Ray said currently there are no requirements for valet signs in the Code. She said that as these types of signs come forward, Staff will need to evaluate how they are regulated. She said currently, they are being dealt with on a case by case basis in the Historic District, but she expects they will be part of the urban environment.

Ms. Salay asked about host stands that sometimes have signs on the front, and how those will be reviewed, or whether they will be permitted.

Ms. Ray said there is no requirement in the Code for these types of signs because we have not had enough experience with them to determine a good standard to apply, or how they should or should not be regulated.

Mr. Brown asked the liability with the "sign spinners."

Mr. Hartmann said they will continue to study the issue and figure out a uniform way to apply the regulation, based on a recent Supreme Court decision.

Mr. Stidhem asked if the "spinning signs" should be referenced in the guidelines or in Code.

Ms. Ray said they are already prohibited by Code as "off premise signs" or signs with movable elements, and typically Code Enforcement is sent to address the situation.

Ms. Newell said the text is well written. She said if she was submitting a project and was looking at the text, she said she thought it would be very easy to follow. She said she liked the layout and thought the document was clean and concise. She said she felt like if she knew nothing about the Bridge Street District that the document did a great job explaining what it is and what types of signs are envisioned.

Ms. Salay agreed and said she liked the "pattern book" approach. She pointed out that the Bridge Street Code allows for two ground signs and a wall sign in some areas, which is more than any place else in the City. She asked why this area was approved for more signs.

Ms. Ray said when Planning was looking at the appropriate number of permitted signs to propose when drafting the Code, they considered that in most areas of the BSD, there will not be a lot of space on site to have a ground sign, and if there is, it will be small or might identify a building from a different street. She said there have been a lot of challenges where they have buildings with larger setbacks, or when an Existing Structure with larger setbacks proposes signs. She said generally, it was intended to help pedestrians find where they are going, as well as vehicles. She noted that the sizes for both wall and ground signs are usually smaller than they would be permitted to be elsewhere in the city, which was also discussed during the Code review.

Ms. Salay said she is a proponent of restrictive sign codes, and in a pedestrian environment, she is more open to more creative signs with completely different types of illumination that might not be appropriate elsewhere in Dublin, such as illuminating the sidewalks in front of a business. She asked about the typical plastic sign cases that are internally illuminated with metal around the edges, often with a stone base, and asked how those types of signs would be reviewed in the Bridge Street District.

Ms. Ray said that type of design would be permitted by Code if all other material and dimensional requirements are met. She said that as they have had those types of signs proposed, they have encouraged applicants to make sure that they are at least three dimensional and a little more creative than just a cabinet or a box.

Ms. Salay asked if the Code should be amended to discourage these types of signs if they are not desirable in this District.

Ms. Ray said it is difficult to prohibit a certain type or category of signs across the board. She noted this was what the sign consultants were talking about when they noted that it's difficult to go much further to regulate signs to achieve the type of quality and character desired in the BSD, or anywhere else in Dublin. She said a Code amendment would have to be very specific about the specific aspects of cabinet signs or channel letters that should be restricted, but Planning can review. She said someone could come along and make that very type of sign look unique and interesting. She said the intent of the guidelines is to help sign designers get creative and propose unique signs in this area. She said that how the guidelines will be useful, in directing the design intent where the Code is more limited.

Ms. Salay said she is open to changing the Code or however they can steer applicants in the right direction.

Ms. Newell said the guidelines state that if they are intended to help the Administrative Review Team and the other reviewing bodies make a judgement on sign design beyond simply looking at whether the signs comply with the zoning requirements. She pointed out the guidelines specifically state that signs need to be dimensional, among other things. She said all of those things have come from their discussions about how to regulate the design because they are asking for something both highly creative and highly subjective.

Ms. Ray agreed, and said that Staff can continue to evaluate the requirements.

Ms. De Rosa said the text on page 7 regarding the "Purpose of the Guidelines" could be moved to page 4 where it will be more prominent. She thought the language was very clear about the intent for quality, excellence, and unique design.

Ms. Mitchell agreed with Ms. De Rosa.

Ms. De Rosa said she liked the "preface" on pages 2 and 3. She said at the last meeting, the phrase "sophisticated eclectic" was stated, and thought it was a nice phrase because well done urban environments are both eclectic and sophisticated at the same time, and that is what they are talking about. She referred to the "Clear Message" characteristic on page 3 and said that the picture would work equally well for "Sophisticated Eclectic"

Mr. Brown agreed.

Ms. De Rosa said the sign size requirements are very specific and asked how some of the really interesting signs shown on pages 2 and 3 that are more like public art installations would be regulated.

Ms. Newell said that is what a Master Sign Plan is for. She said if a sign goes beyond the requirements of the Code, they have the option of seeking a Master Sign Plan, which would be approved by the Commission or the ARB.

Ms. Salay asked how many signs are likely to move forward as a Master Sign Plan, as opposed to going to ART for approval of something that meets all Code requirements.

Ms. Ray said that although the Commission has made it clear that they encourage Master Sign Plans for creative signs, and the process will be as streamlined as possible, she is concerned that many applicants will opt for signs that meet all of the Code requirements so they can get an ART approval within a shorter period of time. She noted however that there will be projects that *require* Master Sign Plans based on their locations within a shopping corridor, such as Bridge Park.

Ms. De Rosa asked for the likelihood of businesses changing their signs to something more creative, now that the guidelines will be able to inform them of the possibility that they can potentially go above and beyond what they currently have.

Ms. Ray said car dealerships are a good example – many car dealerships have very specific branding requirements, and many even receive incentives for implementing corporate branding with their signs and buildings. She said national retailers are similar, and for these types of businesses, they are not likely to go too far beyond the norm. She said when Staff has the opportunity to have a conversation with applicants and businesses in advance, they try to steer them in the right direction. She said resources like the guidelines will be a big help with getting the message out.

Ms. De Rosa suggested a proactive approach to getting the guidelines out to existing businesses to raise the bar, to at least give them the option.

Ms. Salay cautioned that many existing businesses received their sign approvals under the Corridor Development District regulations, and now that they are under the Bridge Street District regulations, it would be interesting to see how the signs would change.

Ms. Newell agreed that some applicants have had a hard time getting their signs approved, and when they see these new types of signs going in they are going to wonder why they could not have had a similar sign. She said as an architect, she has designed a lot of signs and said she couldn't say she always put a great deal of design importance on the signs themselves. She said she often just wanted to make sure the signs matched the buildings and complied with Code.

Ms. Salay said that it seems there might still be some barriers in getting the creativity they are seeking, and since graphic designs are not always involved in sign applications.

Ms. Ray said a lot of this comes down to education. She said as applicants come in with new projects they will have the opportunity to set expectations, but she worries more about the existing shopping center owners or tenants.

Ms. Newell said if she had the guidelines to reference, as an architect, she thought she would be able to do some cool things in an affordable manner, since many of the signs in the document are very simple. She said many restaurants for example have graphic designers create their menus and logos. She said there is potential to get what we want out of applicants, and acknowledged that it is harder for Staff and the Administrative Review Team to make the judgement calls.

Ms. Ray said they have already started conversations with existing projects.

Ms. Husak said they have shared the draft guidelines with potential applicants, where they can use them as an example of what the City is looking for. She said the ones that embrace the guidelines have indicated they are looking for very unique signs.

Ms. Mitchell asked if it would help to have case studies showing that well-designed signs can translate to higher revenue and sales. She suggested if there was greater awareness of the benefits of creative signs, it might help make the case for better signs in this area. She said she would try to share the studies with Staff.

Ms. Newell asked if there were additional comments from the Commissioners. [There were none.]

Ms. Newell asked if the comments, made by the Commission could be incorporated into the recommendation.

Ms. Ray suggested a condition that the comments discussed regarding the text changes are incorporated into the draft document forwarded to City Council.

### **Motion and Vote**

Victoria Newell moved, Chris Brown seconded, to recommend approval to City Council for this Administrative Request with one condition:

- 1) That the modifications discussed by the Commission regarding the text changes and sign characteristics are forwarded to City Council in the final draft.

The vote was as follows: Mr. Miller, yes; Ms. Mitchell, yes; Ms. Salay, yes; Ms. De Rosa, yes; Mr. Stidhem, yes; Mr. Brown, yes; and Ms. Newell, yes. (Approved 7 – 0)

### **Communications**

Ms. Husak said they are excited to have Vince Papsidero on board.

Ms. Salay said that City Council discussed the Home2 Hotel at their last meeting. She said there were lots of discussion and was in agreement with the changes to be reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Commission. She said it will be interesting with the property being added into the Economic Development Agreement after it had already been so far in the review process.

Mr. Miller asked what Council thought of the design as it existed.

Ms. Salay said there was some spirited discussion and thought it would be best to review the meeting minutes. She said they will see the changes based on Council comments in the next submittal from the applicant.

Ms. Mitchell asked if they have a public restaurant.

Ms. Husak said they do not have a public restaurant.

Ms. Shelly said they offer a breakfast bar and is not a full service restaurant.

Mr. Miller asked if they will have the ODOT plans prior to the review of Home2 Hotel.

Ms. Husak said those right-of-way plans are not finished.

Mr. Hendershot said the right-of-way plans have been finalized for the project.



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City of Dublin Planning and Zoning Commission

# Planning Report

Thursday, September 3, 2015

## Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines

### Case Summary

Agenda Item	3
Case Number	15-040ADM
Proposal	This is a proposal to create a guide to help applicants understand and apply the sign requirements in the Bridge Street District. The proposed guidelines are also intended to provide direction for sign design and placement in a pedestrian-oriented environment.
Applicant	Dana McDaniel, City Manager, City of Dublin.
Planning Contact	Rachel S. Ray, AICP, Economic Development Administrator   (614) 410-4630, rray@dublin.oh.us
Request	Administrative request for review and recommendation of approval to City Council for Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines.
Planning Recommendation	<b>Recommendation of Approval to City Council</b> Planning recommends that the Planning and Zoning Commission review the proposed BSD Sign Guidelines including the modifications since the June 18, 2015 meeting and make a recommendation of approval to City Council.

## Facts

## Administrative Request

### Previous PZC & ARB Comments

#### *Planning and Zoning Commission*

The PZC reviewed the draft Bridge Street District (BSD) Sign Guidelines on June 18, 2015. The Commissioners commented that the draft was generally effective and met the stated objectives, with some specific comments. The Commission members discussed the urban nature of sandwich board signs and how they can be tastefully designed to enhance a walkable environment, as well as signs with interesting neon lighting, digital signs, and other forward-thinking/high tech signs that the Code does not currently address. The Commissioners discussed the challenge of writing regulations that could yield creative, tasteful, and interesting sign designs, and suggested that the BSD Sign Guidelines make clear to applicants that well-designed signs should be encouraged regardless of whether they meet the specific requirements of the Code. The Commission commented that they would like to see forward-thinking signs proposed through Master Sign Plan requests.

#### *Architectural Review Board*

The ARB reviewed the draft guidelines on June 24, 2015. Board members discussed the proposed Character Principles, and suggested the addition of a sixth principle, "Context," to better address sign design and appropriateness in the Historic District in particular. The Board members agreed that the *Historic Dublin Design Guidelines* recommendations for font and character may be too limiting in terms of the unique and interesting designs and fonts that design designers may propose (citing the Jeni's Ice Cream sign as a good example). However, the Board members also agreed that additional discussion of the intent for signs in the Historic District should be clearer, and that the special considerations for sign placement on historic structures should also be added to the document. The Board also discussed sandwich board signs, and how the guidelines can be used to make their design intent and approval process clearer.

At their meeting on August 26, 2015, the ARB made a recommendation of approval to PZC with a condition that the amendments discussed, including some minor changes to wording, labels, and technical modifications to some of the graphics, are made to the final version presented to City Council.

Both the Planning and Zoning Commission and Architectural Review Board made recommendations for organizing the content in a more user-friendly manner.

#### *Administrative Review Team*

The ART made a recommendation of approval to the PZC at their meeting on August 27, 2015.

## Facts

## Administrative Request

### BSD Sign Guidelines Updates

The following is a summary of the updates to the August 2015 draft BSD Sign Guidelines:

- New cover photo showing more variety in sign types.
- Added the “Bridge Street District Sign Characteristics” spread at the beginning of the document. These pages are intended to set the tone for the sign guidelines and illustrate at the onset the types of signs that are desirable in the Bridge Street District, and the attributes that make them desirable. They are also intended to show how the envelope can be pushed in terms of sign design through the Master Sign Plan process.
- Added references to the Historic District throughout the document where appropriate, and particularly in Section 1, Purpose and Intent.
- Modified the content order to make the document more user-friendly and sequential in terms of explaining the sign intent, review, and design process.
- Added a sixth Character Principle: “Context” at the recommendation of the ARB, given the importance the sign’s location with the Bridge Street District can have in directing the design of the proposed sign.
- Switched out many of the duplicate images.
- Added image credits at the end of the document.
- Technical/formatting/wording updates.

### Intent for Signs in the Bridge Street District

Specific sign provisions apply to the Bridge Street zoning districts that result in a wider variety of available sign options than elsewhere in the City of Dublin. The intent of these sign provisions is to balance the need for the vehicular use of signs with the pedestrian-oriented nature of the Bridge Street District. In addition, special sign provisions apply to properties within the Historic District boundaries due to the intent to preserve and enhance the historic village character of this area.

Signs in walkable, urban environments are meant to be visible to pedestrians from all directions – across the street, the same side of the street, or from parking areas behind the building. While visibility to passing vehicles is also a consideration, it is secondary to the pedestrian emphasis. In this environment, for example, two smaller signs can be more effective and more attractive than one larger sign directed toward vehicles. When carefully integrated into the architectural design of a building, signs can help create a pleasurable, comfortable strolling and window-shopping experience while still providing adequate identification for the business.

## Facts

## Administrative Request

### Case Background

During the adoption process for the BSD regulations, one of the sections that received extensive discussion at all levels of review was the sign provisions (refer to "Intent for Signs in the Bridge Street District," above). City Council, PZC and ARB members individually and jointly discussed, at length, appropriate numbers and types of signs permitted throughout the BSD.

Soon after the adoption of the BSD zoning regulations, City Council and the Planning and Zoning Commission began to discuss regulatory approaches to improve quality sign construction and create strategies to encourage creative design. While the BSD Code provisions state, "All signs shall be designed with the maximum of creativity and the highest quality of materials and fabrication," (Section 153.065(H)(4)), the signs that had been approved in the Bridge Street District had not always, in the opinion of some members, achieved the intent of this requirement.

To address this, Planning contracted with design review consultants specializing in sign design to review and make recommendations on sign proposals reviewed through the BSD Minor Project Review process to verify that they were in keeping with the intent for signs in the Bridge Street District.

As part of the 2013-2014 update to the BSD zoning regulations, the City engaged one of these consultants, Studio Graphique, to assist with drafting amendments related to sign quality. Based on their review of communities throughout the country, Studio Graphique recommended amendments that were ultimately incorporated into the Code as Zoning Code Section 153.065(H)(4)(e), Sign Materials, with provisions for minimum construction standards.

With regard to sign character and design creativity, Studio Graphique recommended that, in lieu of regulations to require more imaginative signs, the City explore the possibility of sign design guidelines to illustrate intent. Studio Graphique indicated that many other communities use sign guidelines, particularly in areas similar to the Bridge Street District, to demonstrate desirable sign qualities.

In their recommendation to City Council in November 2014 for the amendments to the BSD regulations, the Planning and Zoning Commission recommended that sign design guidelines be prepared after the adoption of the revised Code provisions. Since that time Planning has worked with Studio Graphique and Kolar Design to prepare these draft Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines.

## Details

## Administrative Request

### Process

Zoning Code Section 153.232(B)(9) provides "other powers and duties" to the Planning and Zoning Commission, which includes amendments to the Community Plan and recommendations on other planning-related policy documents.

Details	Administrative Request
	<p>The Planning and Zoning Commission is requested to review the proposed Sign Guidelines and provide a recommendation of action to Council. The proposed Sign Guidelines will be forwarded to City Council for final review and potential adoption by resolution.</p> <p>The draft Sign Guidelines were reviewed by the ARB, who made a recommendation of approval to the Commission at their meeting on August 26, 2015, and the ART, who made a recommendation of approval to the Commission at their meeting on August 27, 2015.</p>
Objectives	<p>In addition to explaining the zoning review process for signs and assisting applicants with using and applying the BSD sign requirements, the Sign Guidelines are intended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Maintain the City's standards of quality and character.</li><li>• Encourage excellence in sign design, both as a communication tool and as an art form.</li><li>• Allow and encourage creative and unique sign designs while preventing cluttered and unattractive streetscapes.</li><li>• Provide basic parameters for creative signs that may be as varied and unique as the businesses they represent.</li><li>• Provide guidance for designing signs in the Historic District, as well as signs associated with buildings that were constructed prior to the enactment of the Bridge Street District zoning regulations.</li><li>• Outline the contents of Master Sign Plans, which are intended to allow greater flexibility and creativity in sign design and display where signs are used as a placemaking tool.</li></ul> <p>The intended audience for the Sign Guidelines is primarily sign designers and contractors who prepare and submit applications for new signs in the Bridge Street District, business owners/building tenants that commission signs, and reviewing bodies such as the ARB, PZC, and Administrative Review Team.</p>
Overview	<p>The BSD Sign Guidelines include the following sections, which have been reordered slightly since the June 2015 draft to improve user-friendliness:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Purpose &amp; Intent Explains intent for signs in the Bridge Street District, intent for signs in the Historic District, and how the guidelines should be used.</li><li>2. Applicability Illustrates the Bridge Street District and Historic District boundaries, as well as the neighborhood zoning districts, to demonstrate to applicants which requirements apply to their site.</li></ol>

Details	Administrative Request
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>3. Process Describes the zoning review and sign permitting process.</li><li>4. Master Sign Plans Outlines the purpose of Master Sign Plans, as well as information that must be included.</li><li>5. Requirements Summary Explains how to determine the number of permitted signs and summarizes the sign types.</li><li>6. Quality &amp; Character Reiterates the BSD Code requirements for high quality materials and construction, and the preference that signs are designed by professional graphic designers and installed by professional sign fabricators.</li><li>7. Sign Character Principles This section includes descriptions and images illustrating the six principles for desirable sign character: Architectural Integration, Illumination, Colors &amp; Secondary Images, Graphic Design &amp; Composition, Dimensionality, and Context.</li><li>8. Sign Type Requirements Illustrates the dimensional requirements for each of the main types of signs, including ground, wall, projecting, awning, window, building identification, and sandwich board signs. Also includes precedent images demonstrating good examples of each type of sign, as well as "what to avoid." These pages are intended to function as two-page spreads, similar to the building type tables in the Bridge Street District zoning regulations.</li></ol>
Images	<p>A statement in the Purpose &amp; Intent section notes that: "(T)he graphics and photos in this document are used to illustrate design concepts, and should not be viewed as an exclusive inventory of acceptable signs...Further, some of the signs in this document may not meet all of the dimensional or specific design requirements for signs in the Bridge Street District."</p> <p>There are other similar references throughout the Guidelines intended to direct applicants to verify specific sign requirements for specific sites and sign proposals.</p>

## Recommendation

## Recommendation of Approval

Recommendation of  
Approval to City Council

The proposed Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines explain the zoning review process for signs and assist applicants with using and applying the BSD sign requirements. Most importantly, the Guidelines allow and encourage creative and unique sign designs while preventing cluttered and unattractive streetscapes and reinforce the vision for the Bridge Street District.

Planning requests that the Planning and Zoning Commission review this draft forward a recommendation of approval to City Council for the Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines.



**ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW TEAM**

**RECORD OF DETERMINATION**

**AUGUST 27, 2015**

The Administrative Review Team made the following determination at this meeting:

**2. Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines  
15-040ADM**

**Administrative Request**

Proposal: To create a guide intended to help applicants understand and apply the sign requirements in the Bridge Street District and provide direction for sign design and placement in a pedestrian-oriented environment.

Request: Review and recommendation of approval to the Planning and Zoning Commission for Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines.

Applicant: Dana L. McDaniel, City of Dublin.

Planning Contact: Rachel S. Ray, Economic Development Administrator;  
(614) 410-4630, rray@dublin.oh.us

**REQUEST:** Recommendation of approval to the Planning and Zoning Commission for an Administrative request to create a sign design guide for the Bridge Street District.

**Determination:** This application was forwarded to the Planning and Zoning Commission with a recommendation of approval.

**STAFF CERTIFICATION**

  
Steve Langworthy, Planning Director



## ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW TEAM

### MEETING MINUTES

**AUGUST 27, 2015**

**ART Members and Designees:** Steve Langworthy, Planning Director; Jeff Tyler, Building Standards Director; Laura Ball, Landscape Architect; Alan Perkins, Fire Marshal; Jeremiah Gracia, Economic Development Administrator; Aaron Stanford, Senior Civil Engineer; and Tim Hosterman, Police Sergeant.

**Other Staff:** Marie Downie, Planner I; Katie Dodaro, Planning Assistant; Rachel Ray, Economic Development Administrator; Joanne Shelly, Urban Designer/Landscape Architect; and Laurie Wright, Staff Assistant.

**Applicants:** James Peltier, EMH&T (Case 1); and Richard Bigham, Bigham Services (Case 3).

Steve Langworthy called the meeting to order. He asked if there were any amendments to the August 20, 2015, meeting minutes. The minutes were accepted into the record as presented.

#### INTRODUCTION

- 1. Bridge Park – B Block – Phase 1, Section 2 – Mass Excavation      6490 Riverside Drive  
15-080MPR      Minor Project Review**

Joanne Shelly said this is a request for site modifications including grading and excavation to prepare for future development at the northeast corner of Riverside Drive and Bridge Street. She said this is a request for review and approval of a Minor Project Review under the provisions of Zoning Code Section 153.066.

Ms. Shelly presented the site where demolition occurred and where the removal of the existing slabs and further excavation would occur.

Aaron Stanford asked that the state of underground utilities be clearly marked on the plans. He said labels are needed to indicate blocking of water mains, for example.

Steve Langworthy asked if there were any further questions or concerns regarding this application. [There were none.] He stated the ART determination is scheduled for September 3, 2015.

#### DETERMINATIONS

- 2. Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines      Administrative Request  
15-040ADM**

Rachel Ray said this is a request to create a guide intended to help applicants understand and apply the sign requirements in the Bridge Street District and provide direction for sign design and placement in a pedestrian-oriented environment. She said this is a request for review and recommendation of approval to the Planning and Zoning Commission for Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines.

Ms. Ray said sign requirements for height, width, and square footage, etc. are all included in the Zoning Code but requirements about design are not. She said these Guidelines are meant to address "how" the sign requirements should be met, and encourage the "design" aspect. She indicated the numerous sign examples that will hopefully inspire applicants to 'think outside the box'. She noted that the process, purpose and intent of the Master Sign Plan are explained in the Guidelines.

Ms. Ray explained the intent is to have the Guidelines be available to everyone online so readers can zoom in and out as they please.

Ms. Ray reported that these Guidelines were presented to the Architectural Review Board last night and she received good feedback. She said some wording was modified and the ARB remarked how the context was an important addition. She said approval was recommended to the Planning and Zoning Commission with one condition for their meeting on September 3, 2015, and this will ultimately go to City Council for their final approval by resolution.

Jeff Tyler commended Rachel for a job well done. He said the Guidelines were easy to read and follow. He said he likes the sections that recommend what to do and what to avoid. He asked if images could be replaced with newer signs as they come forward and are approved for the BSD as we are anticipating more creative and innovative signs.

Ms. Ray agreed that would be a good practice to get into.

Steve Langworthy asked if there were any questions or concerns regarding this application. [There were none.] He confirmed the ART's recommendation to the Planning and Zoning Commission for their meeting on September 3, 2015.

**3. Germain Lexus of Dublin – Sign  
15-075MPR**

**6500 Shamrock Boulevard  
Minor Project Review**

Marie Downie said this is a request for the installation of a new monument sign to replace an existing sign for a car dealership at the northeast corner of Shamrock Boulevard and Banker Drive. She said this is a request for review and approval of a Minor Project Review under the provisions of Zoning Code Sections 153.066 and 153.065(H).

Ms. Downie reported the application meets all of the sign requirements and approval is recommended with no conditions.

Richard Bigham, Bigham Services, confirmed the applicant was using the existing base and that the square footage was reduced to 19 square feet.

Steve Langworthy asked if there were any questions or concerns regarding this application. [There were none.] He confirmed the ART's approval of this Minor Project Review with no conditions.

**4. Capitol Cadillac  
15-079MPR**

**4300 W. Dublin-Granville Road  
Minor Project Review**

Katie Dodaro said this is a request to install a new monument sign in place of an existing sign for a car dealership at the northeast corner of West Dublin Granville Road and Dale Drive. She said this is a request for review and approval of a Minor Project Review under the provisions of Zoning Code Sections 153.065(H) and 153.066.



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## ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD

### BOARD ORDER

**AUGUST 26, 2015**

The Architectural Review Board took the following action at this meeting:

**2. Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines  
15-040ADM**

**Administrative Request**

**Proposal:** To create a guide intended to help applicants understand and apply the sign requirements in the Bridge Street District and provide direction for sign design and placement in a pedestrian-oriented environment.

**Request:** Review and recommendation of approval to the Planning and Zoning Commission.

**Applicant:** Dana L. McDaniel, City of Dublin.

**Planning Contact:** Rachel S. Ray, AICP, Economic Development Administrator

**Contact Information:** (614) 410-4630; rray@dublin.oh.us

**MOTION:** Ms. Fox moved, Mr. Rinaldi seconded, to recommend approval to the Planning and Zoning Commission for an Administrative Request with one condition:

- 1) That the amendments discussed at the August 27th Architectural Review Board meeting are incorporated in the final document presented to City Council.

**VOTE:** 4 - 0

**RESULT:** This Administrative Request was recommended for approval to the Planning and Zoning Commission.

**RECORDED VOTES:**

David Rinaldi	Yes
Thomas Munhall	Yes
Everett Musser	Yes
Jane Fox	Yes

**STAFF CERTIFICATION**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Rachel S. Ray, AICP  
Economic Development Administrator

Jennifer Rauch presented the aerial view of the parcel. She noted the house is in the western portion of the property, the garage is along the southern boundary, and the parcel backs up to the Scioto River with a steep 40-foot grade change.

Ms. Rauch reported the applicant has been before the ARB for different modifications over the years. She presented the existing 204-square-foot deck layout and noted the sliding glass door. She said the applicant is requesting to expand the deck to 337 square feet, replace the deck material, and add new railings with panels. She said the footprint of the deck will remain the same but a new set of stairs is added for better access. She presented the rear elevation, noting the new railing and glass panels, replacing the sliding glass door with a single French door and a window to match the other windows on the house.

Ms. Rauch said this application was reviewed and recommended for approval by the ART with no conditions.

The Chair asked if there were any questions or concerns. [Hearing none.]

### **Motion and Vote**

Mr. Rinaldi moved, Mr. Musser seconded, to approve the Minor Project Review with no conditions. The vote was as follows: Mr. Munhall, yes; Ms. Fox, yes; Mr. Musser, yes; and Mr. Rinaldi, yes. (Approved 4 – 0).

## **2. Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines 15-040ADM**

### **Administrative Request**

The Chair said this is a request to create a guide intended to help applicants understand and apply the sign requirements in the Bridge Street District and provide direction for sign design and placement in a pedestrian-oriented environment. He said this is a request for review and recommendation of approval to the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Rachel Ray said the purpose of the Bridge Street District (BSD) Sign Guidelines is to help illustrate what the City is trying to achieve with the sign requirements in the Bridge Street District. She said historically, the *Historic Dublin Design Guidelines* have provided guidance for the design of signs in the Historic District. She said knowing how unique of an area the BSD is as a whole, and particularly the Historic District, and the desire to have some unique, interesting, and creative signs, the intent is to illustrate what the City considers to be unique, interesting, and creative when it comes to sign design. She said that was a result of discussions had during the creation of the zoning regulations for the BSD, discussions with the City Council, the Planning and Zoning Commission, and the ARB, as well as evaluating some of the signs that have gone through the review process. She stated the Code outlines clearly what types of signs are permitted, in addition to size, number, etc. but the design intent is missing since it is very difficult to codify. She reported that when the regulations were recently updated in December 2014, Staff worked with a sign design consultant who indicated that most communities create guidelines to show what they want to see and conversely what they do not want to see rather than try to regulate for creativity. She said once Council adopted the most recent version of the amendments to the BSD Code in December 2014, the process to create the sign guidelines was moved forward. She said the Guidelines were first reviewed by the Architectural Review Board and the Planning and Zoning Commission in June 2015, and they each provided valuable feedback. She thanked the ARB for their comments and said a better document is the result.

Ms. Ray said a sixth Character Principle: Context has been added since the June 24<sup>th</sup> ARB meeting. She said she wanted to underscore the importance of sign context when it comes to creating a sign design; it is not just about the applicant's building and tenant space, it is more about how it fits within the whole streetscape. She said the historic aspects of the building also must be taken into consideration.

Ms. Ray referred to the first two pages of the document that were added as a recommendation from the PZC so that if an applicant ignores the rest of the document, what we are trying to achieve is found at a glance on these first two pages. She pointed out that references to the Historic District were added throughout the document. She noted that the requirements for signs in the Historic District are different from the rest of the BSD. She explained the cover photo was changed and the content order was modified to make the document more user-friendly.

Ms. Ray referred back to the intent of the Guidelines and stated this has been discussed for the BSD as well as signs in the Historic District but going back to the point the ARB made in June, the materials, design, and placement is critically important in the Historic District for signs, perhaps even more so than the rest of the BSD and made sure that was highlighted in the Guidelines.

Ms. Ray presented the **Objectives** of the Sign Guidelines:

- Maintain the City's standards of quality and character.
- Encourage excellence in sign design, both as a communication tool and as an art form.
- Allow and encourage creative and unique sign designs while preventing cluttered and unattractive streetscapes.
- Provide basic parameters for creative signs that may be as varied and unique as the businesses they represent.
- Provide guidance for designing signs in the Historic District, as well as signs associated with buildings that were constructed prior to the enactment of the Bridge Street District zoning regulations.
- Outline the contents of Master Sign Plans, which are intended to allow greater flexibility and creativity in sign design and display where signs are used as a placemaking tool.

Ms. Ray presented the **Table of Contents** and went through each of the eight sections: 1) Purpose and Intent; 2) Applicability; 3) Process; 4) Master Sign Plans; 5) Requirements Summary; 6) Quality and Character; 7) Sign Character Principles; and 8) Sign Type Requirements.

Ms. Ray presented six **Character Principles** that were identified along with examples for each:

1. Architectural Integration

All signs shall be designed to fully integrate with the building architecture and overall site design, and to enhance the pedestrian experience in the Bridge Street District to create memorable places for people to enjoy.

2. Illumination

The illumination of signs is strongly encouraged to help add a sense of liveliness and activity to the Bridge Street District. Well-designed signs use lighting as an accent rather than a distraction designed to compete for attention in a busy urban streetscape.

3. Colors & Secondary Images

Colorful signs can add character and interest to buildings and the overall streetscape throughout the Bridge Street District; however, in no case shall the use of color and supporting graphics distract from the creation of attractive signs with simple, easy to understand messages.

4. Graphic Design & Composition

Unique, interesting signs that contribute to a memorable, pedestrian-oriented environment generally demonstrate strong adherence to accepted graphic design principles. Signs should be designed thoughtfully, with consideration for aesthetically pleasing composition.

5. Dimensionality

Signs should be constructed to stand the test of time, designed to be weather and fade-resistant. High quality signs are also designed to appear substantial, with three-dimensional elements that give the sign presence without appearing overly heavy. Quality signs also conceal structural elements that are not integral to the sign's overall design.

6. Context

Well-designed signs enhance the streetscape throughout the BSD and avoid distracting, damaging, and/or detracting from the highly pedestrian-oriented streets in this part of the city. Context is particularly important in the Historic District, where there is an established character with a strong sense of architectural identity.

Ms. Ray presented the **Requirements** sections that are set up like the building type requirements in the BSD zoning regulations. She pointed out how the layout is designed to help an applicant who may just be interested in designing a wall sign, for example, and allow them to quickly locate that information. She said the guide presents the requirements for the Historic District vs. the rest of the BSD. She noted examples of signs that are recommended and what to avoid are provided for each type of sign.

Ms. Ray said that the *Historic Dublin Design Guidelines* have specific requirements for font, as well as recommendations for more traditional sign elements. She recalled that at the June ARB meeting, the Board members agreed to move away from these sign design considerations to allow greater flexibility to add varied character to the Historic District while recognizing and respecting its historic nature. She said the updated *Historic Dublin Design Guidelines* should have a reference to the BSD Sign Guidelines so applicants know where to look for guidance on sign design.

Ms. Ray said Planning seeks a recommendation of approval to the Planning and Zoning Commission at tonight's meeting. She indicated if the ARB has additional comments, those could be forwarded to the PZC as well.

Ms. Ray confirmed height, width, and square footage requirements are all in the Code. She said these guidelines are meant to address "how" the sign requirements should be met, and encourage the "design" aspect.

David Rinaldi requested consistency in the wording to eliminate any questions an applicant may have with regards to the requirements, particularly for "display signs," vs. "temporary signs." He also noted that some of the labeling for the height requirements on the ground sign exhibit was a little confusing.

Ms. Ray indicated there is more detail in the Code. She said this guide is intended to show that when it comes to measuring area, we look at the dimension of the cabinet/blade and the distance from grade. She offered to make the labels clearer.

Mr. Munhall asked why the ARB makes a recommendation to the PZC on the Guidelines. Ms. Ray answered this will ultimately go to City Council for their final approval by resolution. She said typically, the ARB makes recommendations to the PZC for rezoning and Zoning Code Amendments so Staff thought this was in line with those other policy requests.

Jane Fox stated the Guidelines look great and she liked the changes. She offered to share some of her small editorial comments. She questioned the area highlighted as being the Historic District on page 8, since the boundaries appeared to be slightly off. Ms. Ray said she would review for accuracy.

Ms. Fox said she loved the reference to the website on page 10 but asked if that font could be bold. She said she liked the sign exhibit on page 11 and asked if it could be larger or more prominent since it will be critical for applicants to see and understand what their submittals should include.

Ms. Ray noted that font sizes and visibility of some of the graphics were discussed at the June meeting, which she forgot to mention during the presentation. She indicated some of the text may be difficult to read in paper format, but the intent is not to print many of these Guidelines, but rather that the Guidelines will be available to everyone online, so readers can zoom in as much as they want.

Ms. Fox suggested “Master Sign Plans must be submitted in the following circumstances” under Purpose and Intent on page 12 should be bold. She said she thought the font was small on page 14 in the bars on the left of items 1 – 7. She suggested that wording be added to the first paragraph on page 17 such as “lighting should enhance and not violate or detract from the natural environment or vistas of Dublin’s view sheds” so that when future Board members look at this character principle of illumination they understand the intent. Ms. Ray agreed.

Ms. Fox suggested adding “invite pedestrian interest and contribute to street ambiance” at the end of the first paragraph on page 19. Ms. Ray said she thought that was a great addition.

Ms. Ray indicated the PZC will have some additional comments as well so Staff will incorporate all of the changes into the final document to be presented to Council.

Ms. Fox commended Ms. Ray on the addition of the Context Character Principle and suggested the addition of “iconic public amenities” to clarify a description of a view shed. She also suggested adding “The designer should take into consideration adjacent storefronts and the visual impact the sign brings to the context of the streetscape” to the Context section.

Mr. Musser asked if Staff is aware of any other suburban district that has sign guidelines like this. Ms. Ray replied a lot of other communities have sign guidelines, especially those with historic districts. She said through her research, she did not find anything that served as a similar example with the same elements to serve as a “best practice” example. She asked him if there was something missing that he thought should be included.

Mr. Musser said he wondered if we have any proprietary license on this document in case other communities borrow it. Ms. Ray said she did not believe so, but if other communities point to Dublin as a good example, it certainly will not be the first time.

Ms. Fox added this is an excellent piece of work.

Mr. Rinaldi agreed with Ms. Fox. He stated he loved all the changes, liked the opening pages, and the examples are great and very creative.

Mr. Rinaldi said as he went through the types of signs, he did not find “Display” signs discussed. He said they are addressed in the Zoning Code but he is concerned that Display signs will be misused as another permanent sign.

Ms. Ray said she did not spend a lot of time on temporary signs in the Sign Guidelines since those provisions are clear in the Code but recognized this has the potential to be an issue.

Mr. Rinaldi read from the Code that states “the text may be changed” and not that it *has* to be changed.

Ms. Ray reported that Council just talked about this very topic in their roundtable at their meeting on Monday night. She said Council was concerned whether the regulations are achieving what we set out to achieve. She indicated there might be another opportunity to change what is appropriate for the zoning regulations for signs in the near future.

Mr. Munhall said he would be supportive of eliminating white boards as sandwich board signs.

Mr. Rinaldi reported that Powell just banned all sandwich board signs.

Ms. Ray said she hoped the examples in the Guidelines are positive examples for what we expect to see (no white boards).

Ms. Fox said this is another reason why a walking tour of Historic Dublin would be beneficial; the streetscape could be assessed for clutter, taking planters and benches into consideration.

Ms. Ray asked for a recommendation of approval with the condition that the amendments discussed at tonight’s meeting are incorporated into the final version presented to City Council.

#### **Motion and Vote**

Ms. Fox moved, Mr. Rinaldi seconded, to recommend approval to the Planning and Zoning Commission for the Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines with one condition:

- 1) That the amendments discussed at the August 27th Architectural Review Board meeting are incorporated in the final document presented to City Council.

The vote was as follows: Mr. Musser, yes; Mr. Munhall, yes; Mr. Rinaldi, yes; and Ms. Fox, yes. (Approved 4 – 0).

### **3. Historic Dublin Design Guidelines Update 15-076ADM**

#### **Administrative Request**

The Chair said the following presentation is an update to the *Historic Dublin Design Guidelines*. He said this is a request for an informal review and feedback on this future request for review and recommendation of approval for the *Historic Dublin Design Guidelines*.

Jennifer Rauch said Staff selected a layout that was similar to the BSD Sign Guidelines so the documents are complementary. She indicated Staff will continue to refine the proposed document and wanted to ensure everything that has been discussed up until this point was included to the Board’s satisfaction. She said the intent from the beginning was to make the Guidelines more useful.

Ms. Rauch said the purpose of the Guidelines is to help people understand the difference between preserving an existing structure with recommendations versus additions, alterations, or new construction. She indicated more images and graphics will be added as this moves forward as well as additional content and recommendations. She asked the Board for feedback on the major headings and any suggestion for additional content.

Thomas Munhall inquired about the building types. He asked if a ranch was considered historical architecture and if a page on that was necessary.



## ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW TEAM

### MEETING MINUTES

**AUGUST 20, 2015**

**ART Members and Designees:** Steve Langworthy, Planning Director; Jeff Tyler, Building Standards Director; Matt Earman, Parks and Recreation Department Director; Alan Perkins, Fire Marshal; Colleen Gilger, Economic Development Director; and Aaron Stanford, Senior Civil Engineer.

**Other Staff:** Marie Downie, Planner I; Katie Dodaro, Planning Assistant; Rachel Ray, Economic Development Administrator; and Laurie Wright, Staff Assistant.

**Applicants:** Laura Schweitzer, Sign Vision Co., Inc. (Case 2); Heidi Bolyard, Simplified Living Architecture + Design (Case 3); James Peltier, EMH&T (Case 4).

Steve Langworthy called the meeting to order. He asked if there were any amendments to the August 13, 2015, meeting minutes. The minutes were accepted into the record as presented.

#### INTRODUCTIONS

##### 1. **Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines 15-040ADM**

##### **Administrative Request**

Rachel Ray said this is a request to create a guide intended to help applicants understand and apply the sign requirements in the Bridge Street District and provide direction for sign design and placement in a pedestrian-oriented environment. She said this is a request for review and recommendation of approval to the Planning and Zoning Commission for Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines.

Ms. Ray said she started creating these guidelines the winter of 2014 as a follow up to the most recent amendment to the BSD zoning regulations, since there was a lot of discussion about the sign requirements. She explained she has been working with the City's sign consultants, Studio Graphique, who helped provide images and reviewed the text. She said the Guidelines were first reviewed by the Architectural Review Board and the Planning and Zoning Commission in June 2015, and they each provided valuable feedback. She reported there have been good conversations in the past on this subject from these reviewing bodies as well as with City Council. She said the Commissioners recommended more pictorial references in the beginning of the Guidelines to emphasize forward thinking sign designs, and the Board members suggested the topic of context to emphasize the importance of signs fitting into its surroundings.

Ms. Ray said some of the signs shown in the Guidelines are above and beyond what has previously been permitted in Dublin but are included to allow and encourage creative and unique sign designs – a hint to the applicant to 'bring their best'. She said signs proposed through a Master Sign Plan need to be innovative and as unique as the businesses they represent to be considered. She noted that Dublin has traditionally been more conservative with sign design, but within the Bridge Street District, signs are to help establish a unique sense of place to be experienced by pedestrians and cyclists up close while remaining visible to those traveling by car. She explained the signs should adorn and enhance the distinctive buildings constructed in the BSD that are of high quality materials and architecture in well-landscaped sites and streetscapes.

Ms. Ray requested any additional comments be sent to her this week before the revised Guidelines are to be presented to the PZC at their meeting on September 3rd.

Ms. Ray went through the Guidelines presenting each of the eight sections: 1) Purpose and Intent; 2) Applicability; 3) Process; 4) Master Sign Plans; 5) Requirements Summary; 6) Quality and Character; 7) Sign Character Principles; and 8) Sign Type Requirements.

Ms. Ray said these sign guidelines will replace the sign discussion in the *Historic Dublin Design Guidelines*, an approach to which the ARB has agreed.

Ms. Ray said the ARB has long been concerned with sandwich board signs in their district but the PZC has indicated they would be open to seeing sandwich board signs permitted in the BSD outside of the Historic District as they believe they can contribute to and enhance any urban environment.

Steve Langworthy asked how the use of sandwich board signs outside of the Historic District could be balanced with the unique character that they bring to the Historic District. He said he is not enthused about permitting these types of signs throughout the whole BSD. Ms. Ray answered that sandwich board signs can be a great addition to the urban streetscape.

Ms. Ray reiterated that more creative signs need to be encouraged and proposed for the BSD and the process is through a Master Sign Plan, not a variance or a Waiver.

Ms. Ray noted the pages that address questions that are often asked by applicants, such as process and submission requirement, and noted the Quality and Character principles that are new. She indicated this should help guide sign fabricators and encourage creative sign design. She explained that the rest of the guide is set up like the building type requirements in the BSD zoning regulations. She pointed out how the layout is designed to help an applicant who may just be interested in designing a ground sign and allow them to quickly locate that information. She said the guide presents the requirements as well as examples of signs, both recommended and what to avoid.

Jeff Tyler questioned the font size used in the guidelines. Ms. Ray suggested that the paper copy may be more visible, but the document is intended to reside on the web, which allows them to be maximized or zoomed in as needed for visibility.

Mr. Tyler asked if sign permitting is noted as a "next step" following the zoning review. Ms. Ray pointed out where in the "Process" section that information is highlighted.

Aaron Stanford asked why signs for parking garages were not included. He said from a wayfinding standpoint, he would like to see signs standardized for what we would permit for travelers to find entrances. Ms. Ray said the information provided in the Guidelines was based solely on the types of signs in the Zoning Code, which does not currently address signs for parking structures. She indicated that once a few signs are proposed for parking garages, the ART can better determine what is acceptable for parking garage signs in terms of size, design, location, etc. and then have that information codified.

Mr. Stanford inquired about valet parking and did the ART think that it could be an issue in the BSD. Mr. Tyler asked if valet parking would fall under temporary sign requirements. Ms. Ray said she would default to Code requirements for temporary signs, which (other than sandwich board signs) are not included in the Guidelines.

Mr. Langworthy asked how the ART would use these guidelines to evaluate a sign, ideally. He said the applicant can propose the minimum that meets Code but our hope is that designers would take ideas

from this guide, which would allow them to go further with their design for more creative signs for the BSD. He indicated applicants have been proposing signs that are conservative given Dublin's reputation and submitted for approval in the shortest amount of time.

Ms. Ray said ideally, the applicant would consult these Guidelines prior to the sign proposal submission. She noted these are simply Guidelines, and if a sign meets Code, then the sign would need to be approved. But through Staff's review and analysis, she said Staff consults with Studio Graphique for example for sign design comments when a sign does not meet the intent or character required by the Code for the BSD. She noted that these criteria are a little broader and leave some room for interpretation, for which the Guidelines would be useful. She added this is also guidance to give rationale and foundation to the requirements. She indicated that to do something "really cool" the applicant may need to go to the PZC or ARB for a Master Sign Plan, which has been viewed as a limiting factor due to the additional time, cost, and risk.

Mr. Langworthy concluded that he liked the design and layout of the Guidelines, and that the language read well too. He reiterated that any further comments need to be sent to Ms. Ray as soon as possible.

**2. Capitol Cadillac  
15-079MPR**

**4300 W. Dublin-Granville Road  
Minor Project Review**

Marie Downie said this is a request to install a new monument sign in place of an existing sign for a car dealership at the northeast corner of West Dublin Granville Road and Dale Drive. She said this is a request for review and approval of a Minor Project Review under the provisions of Zoning Code Sections 153.065(H) and 153.066.

Ms. Downie presented the proposed monument sign face design. She explained that the applicant modified their original lollipop-shaped monument sign at the recommendation of Staff to be in line with what matches the architecture of the building. She reiterated that the proposed sign will replace the existing sign in the same location and presented an aerial view of the site to note the sign location.

Laura Scheitzer, Sign Vision Co., Inc., said this has been an on-going process to adhere to the brand standard while meeting the requirements of the City's regulations.

Ms. Downie confirmed that the sign is not internally illuminated.

Steve Langworthy questioned the size of the secondary image. Ms. Downie said she would calculate the size and ensure it meets the Code requirements for size and color. Ms. Scheitzer said she could make any changes necessary.

Rachel Ray inquired about the thin white lines shown on the proposal. Ms. Scheitzer confirmed that those lines are not on the sign but on the proposal just to show that the face of the sign is embossed and formed and not a flat base. She said the protrusion of the plastic base is typically  $\pm 1.5$  inches.

Mr. Langworthy asked if there were any further questions or concerns regarding this application. [There were none.] He stated the determination of the ART is scheduled for next week.



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## ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD

### RECORD OF DISCUSSION

**JUNE 24, 2015**

The Architectural Review Board took the following action at this meeting:

**3. Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines  
15-040ADM**

**Administrative Request**

**Proposal:** To create a guide intended to help applicants understand and apply the sign requirements in the Bridge Street District and provide direction for sign design and placement in a pedestrian-oriented environment.

**Request:** Informal review and feedback on this future request for review and recommendation of approval to City Council for Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines.

**Applicant:** Dana L. McDaniel, City of Dublin.

**Planning Contact:** Rachel S. Ray, AICP, Planner II

**Contact Information:** (614) 410-4656; rray@dublin.oh.us

**RESULT:** The Board discussed the draft BSD Sign Guidelines and commented on potential additions to the document, including more of a description of intent for signs in the Historic District and how signs should be installed on historic structures as well as an additional "Character Principle" related to sign context. Board members also discussed sandwich board signs, enforcement measures, and how to encourage signs that enhance the unique sense of place in the Historic District within the overall Bridge Street District.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

David Rinaldi	Yes
Neil Mathias	Yes
Thomas Munhall	Absent
Everett Musser	Absent
Jane Fox	Yes

**STAFF CERTIFICATION**



Rachel S. Ray, AICP, Planner II

Mr. Mathias said he needed to see a larger sample of the awning with a sample of the paint color before he could vote yes on this application. He said we could have a condition whereby Planning has to approve the colors with those samples.

Mr. Dehner agreed to work with Planning on the colors. Ms. Fox said she had confidence that Planning could decide on the colors. Ms. Rauch said Planning could look at all the samples together to make sure they coordinate. Ms. Rauch said she would change the condition to state the entire color palette will be reviewed.

Ms. Rauch reiterated that two motions and votes that were being requested this evening.

### **Motion and Vote**

Ms. Fox moved, Mr. Mathias seconded, to approve the Minor Project Review with two conditions:

- 1) The applicant provide the entire color palette for review and approval by Planning within 30 days of approval of this application.
- 2) The ground-story window trim on the north elevation be painted to match the existing window trim and not in the color scheme proposed.

Kurt Dehner said he agreed to the revised conditions. The vote was as follows: Mr. Rinaldi, yes; Mr. Mathias, yes; and Ms. Fox, yes. (Approved 3 – 0)

Mr. Rinaldi moved, Mr. Mathias seconded, to approve a request for a Master Sign Plan Review with five conditions:

- 1) A paint sample for the projecting sign is provided along with an updated Master Sign Plan package, prior to sign permitting, subject to approval by Planning.
- 2) The window sign on the north elevation be reduced in size to 20% of the window area.
- 3) The window sign on the east elevation be reduced in size to one-square-foot and one low-chroma color to meet the provision for a business identification sign.
- 4) The projecting signs be dimensionally routed and the mounting hardware be consistent with existing mounting fixtures used for the multi-tenant building.
- 5) The projecting sign on the east elevation be located above the door on either side of the entrance.

The vote was as follows: Ms. Fox, yes; Mr. Mathias, yes; and Mr. Rinaldi, yes. (Approved 3 – 0)

## **2. Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines 15-040ADM**

### **Administrative Request**

The Chair said this is a request to create a guide intended to help applicants understand and apply the sign requirements in the Bridge Street District and provide direction for sign design and placement in a pedestrian-oriented environment. He said this request is for informal review and feedback on this future request for review and recommendation of approval to City Council for Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines.

Rachel Ray said the document is intended for a few different audiences: Applicants; Board Members; and Staff. She stated the distinction between the Zoning Code and this guide is that the guide is just

suggestions and guidance (planned to be adopted by City Council by resolution so there is some “force” behind them) and the regulations of the Code will govern the signs.

Ms. Ray said Staff is looking for sign designs that are appropriate to an urban environment. She said she provided three discussion questions for the Board:

- 1) Do the BSD Sign Guidelines achieve their stated objectives? Should the objectives be modified?
- 2) Are there other Character Principles that should be addressed in the sign guidelines?
- 3) Do the BSD Sign Guidelines appropriately address signs in the Historic District?

Ms. Ray provided a brief history. She said the BSD provisions of the Zoning Code were adopted March 25, 2012. Soon after, she said PZC, CC, and Staff had discussions about the recent signs being approved in the BSD in terms of sign quality, creative design, and whether they met the original design intent. In the meantime, she said Planning contracted with a sign design consultant for services to review signs when it was felt the applicant should be pushed a little further with their sign designs. She said the sign consultants also provided recommendations for the recent Zoning Code amendments. She noted City Council adopted the most recent BSD Code amendments on December 8, 2014, and they requested Planning prepare sign guidelines to demonstrate desirable sign qualities.

Ms. Ray presented the objectives of the Sign Guidelines:

- Encourage excellence in sign design, both as a communication tool and as an art form.
- Allow and encourage creative and unique sign designs while preventing cluttered and unattractive streetscapes.
- Provide basic parameters for creative signs that may be as varied and unique as the businesses they represent.
- Provide guidance for designing signs in the Historic District, as well as signs associated with buildings that were constructed prior to the enactment of the Bridge Street District zoning regulations.
- Outline the contents of Master Sign Plans, which are intended to allow greater flexibility and creativity in sign design and display where signs are used as a placemaking tool.

Ms. Ray referred to her **first discussion question** as she approached the Table of Contents:

- 1) Do the BSD Sign Guidelines achieve their stated objectives? Should the objectives be modified?

Ms. Ray explained that the Table of Contents presents the outline of the document:

1. Purpose & Intent

*Ms. Ray noted that this guide was presented to the PZC on June 18<sup>th</sup> for their initial thoughts and they requested language and perhaps descriptive words that reflect the feelings one should get from viewing signs in the Bridge Street District.*

2. Process

3. Applicability

4. Character

*Ms. Ray explained the Historic District was intentionally not called out separately because many of the character principles listed below should apply throughout the Bridge Street District, including the Historic District, but she welcomes the Architectural Review Board’s thoughts on this topic.*

5. Quality

6. Requirements

7. Master Sign Plans

Ms. Ray presented five **Character Principles** that were identified along with examples for each:

1. **Architectural Integration**  
All signs shall be designed to fully integrate with the building architecture and overall site design, and to enhance the pedestrian experience in the Bridge Street District to create memorable places for people to enjoy.
2. **Illumination**  
The illumination of signs is strongly encouraged to help add a sense of liveliness and activity to the Bridge Street District. Well-designed signs use lighting as an accent rather than a distraction designed to compete for attention in a busy urban streetscape.
3. **Colors & Secondary Images**  
Colorful signs can add character and interest to buildings and the overall streetscape throughout the Bridge Street District; however, in no case shall the use of color and supporting graphics distract from the creation of attractive signs with simple, easy to understand messages.
4. **Graphic Design & Composition**  
Unique, interesting signs that contribute to a memorable, pedestrian-oriented environment generally demonstrate strong adherence to accepted graphic design principles. Signs should be designed thoughtfully, with consideration for aesthetically pleasing composition.
5. **Dimensionality**  
Signs should be constructed to stand the test of time, designed to be weather and fade-resistant. High quality signs are also designed to appear substantial, with three-dimensional elements that give the sign presence without appearing overly heavy. Quality signs also conceal structural elements that are not integral to the sign's overall design.

Ms. Ray referred to her **second discussion question**:

- 2) Are there other Character Principles that should be addressed in the sign guidelines?

Ms. Ray presented the requirements section. She said these pages are laid out similar to the building type requirements in the Bridge Street Code on a two-page spread dedicated to each of the many different types of signs. She said the left page includes a graphic depiction of how to measure the dimensional requirements for signs, such as sign height and area. She explained some of the text on these pages includes a summary that should match the actual Code requirements. She said the right page has positive sign examples and a description of what is desirable about those illustrative signs. She said on the flip side, there are examples on the same page of what is *not* desired in terms of sign design and elements that should be avoided. She indicated all the examples of the signs "to avoid" are extreme to make the point clear.

Ms. Ray said the *Historic Dublin Design Guidelines* include a couple of pages that include some of the zoning requirements that are now out of date, but they also have very specific character recommendations, mainly intended to maintain the historic look and feel of this area all the way down to font selection. She said a lot of the fonts technically recommended here are very calligraphic and historic. She said Staff's recommendation to the Board is to eliminate some of these recommendations to maintain these antiquated design requirements, although they are still an option for applicants who would like to use them. She said Planning would like the Board's thoughts on whether Staff can push the envelope a little bit more, recognizing the character principles and the desire to continue to incorporate each site's architectural context within the sign design. She said the intent with the *Historic Dublin Design Guidelines*, which are also in the process of being updated, is to reference this guide rather than two separate documents referencing signs.

Ms. Ray referred to her **third discussion question**:

- 3) Do the BSD Sign Guidelines appropriately address signs in the Historic District?

Ms. Ray concluded her presentation by opening up discussion with the Board.

Neil Mathias began with the first discussion question regarding objectives. He suggested that enforcement, or what the process is, could be a worthwhile area in terms of if there are fines involved for having illegal sandwich board signs, or the consequences of not following Code. He said when someone obtains a permit they will go through the process and have this give and take discussion with the Board to get the sign approved. He asked what happens in the District when people are putting out sandwich board signs that are not in compliance. He said it should be noted where complaints can be made or information to let people know that if they do not bring in their sandwich board signs at night there would be fines.

Jane Fox said she liked the draft guidelines. She referred to the first discussion question by stating she thought that the guidelines do achieve their objectives, but some of the objectives could be modified. She said she did some research and referred to [planning.org](http://planning.org) and a few other websites that provided her with some resources. She noted one of the things that popped out the most and suggested should be added is that “signs should adorn and enhance distinctive buildings in the Bridge Street District and should be placed to respect and compliment the architectural character and elements of the built structure, landscape, and natural environment.” She said it is important to design each sign in context with its surroundings. She said the word “context” needs to be added as a character principle, because so often we look at individual signs in a vacuum, and what happens is, a sign might look great on the front of a particular building, but when you look at that building next to another building, sometimes we find there is not a good balance.

Ms. Fox referred to her notes and read some suggested text: “signs must respect the scale and proportion of buildings and contribute to the ambiance of a place.” She noted not only should the signs be proportionate but they should enhance the space in which they are located. She read “the goal and end result is a visually appealing environment that attracts customers, maintains a healthy economic climate while complimenting the existing built environment and the natural features of the BSD”. She said the BSD in many ways, is a very complex built environment; it has natural vistas, a lot of strong structure, historic features, is pedestrian friendly, etc. She said the character principle of context relates to the fact that signs and their environment are really one and the same, in a sense, given their prominence on the street. She suggested that a stronger discussion of context be added to the guide. She reiterated that yes, the guidelines meet their stated objectives but she offered to work with Staff to make certain areas clearer and more specific as she did not want to take up the Board’s time this evening.

Ms. Ray said she would be happy to work with Ms. Fox on this guide.

Dave Rinaldi said this was a great place to begin for sign examples, as this is the same thing that has been going on with the *Historic Dublin Design Guidelines*. He stated pictures are worth 1,000 words. He indicated having examples of what to do and what not to do are great to have for the guide. He said we could debate which pictures are appropriate or not appropriate, but the overall document is very helpful.

Ms. Ray said there are some images in the guide that would not meet the Code and would have to go through the Master Sign Plan Review process. She reported that the PZC talked a lot about how they would love to see some of these signs and wants Staff to make clear in this document that applicants should not be afraid to bring forward sign designs that are outside of the box; the PZC recommended a section that shows some of the most interesting signs we could find, and to tell applicants to bring one of

those signs forward, because the PZC would love to have a conversation about how it could work in the BSD.

Mr. Rinaldi said the guide is very creative. He said if a person did not read the entire guide and just went directly to illumination for example, it may not be appropriate to the Historic District specifically. Possible options were discussed.

Mr. Mathias suggested that any photos included in the guide that are of Dublin signs be approved signs. He said the Winan's sandwich board sign for example is too tall and not allowed by Code, so if the reader just looked at the picture they may end up buying a sandwich board sign that was too large for their business as opposed to reading it was included as an example for a chalkboard sign that has a temporary and changing nature, which is recommended, and not an example of permitted sandwich board sign size.

Ms. Ray agreed to switch out that picture.

Mr. Rinaldi affirmed this would be on the website as well and where the images could be enlarged. He referred to the Master Sign Plan images, which were not legible in print.

Ms. Ray said the document will be primarily available online for applicants to access from the City's website and enlarge as much as necessary so that the images are visible; however, she said she intends to include models of approved Master Sign Plans as attachments or appendices to show applicants examples of what the City would like to see from a submittal standpoint.

Ms. Fox believes the Historic District is going to transition itself in many ways. She said it has a unique sense of place in contrast to other areas of the BSD. She said some regulations should protect historic areas (such as landmarks and public vistas). She said the installation of signs should not damage historic structures or detract from the historic character or unique natural features of the landscape. She said the BSD is a complex built environment containing sensitive natural historic landscapes (Indian Run Falls, the Scioto River valley, springs, quarries, stone walls, cemeteries) as well as distinct public spaces (Dublin Community Church, scenic roadways, the bridge over the river, south river views). She said the identity and economy of the community is related to the natural features. She said some of these regulations should ensure that these public amenities are protected. She said she understood the guidelines have to be inherently flexible, but they need to be strong enough so the reader understands so that when each person that sits on the ARB reviews sign proposals, they are basing their opinion from the guide as opposed to expressing a personal opinion. She said the guideline provides the values we are trying to protect.

Ms. Ray agreed that was a great suggestion to ensure the Historic District is appropriately called out in the intent section, as well as referencing suggestions for sign placement to avoid interfering with or damaging historic structures.

Ms. Fox said the positioning of the sign should not compete or obscure significant features of a historic building. She said the placement should always respect the architectural elements in a way that they do not overshadow or overpower those structures and sign installation should avoid any irreversible damage. She suggested adding installation information to the architectural integration character principle.

Ms. Fox said she thought the signs that are not allowed were missing from the guide, such as roof signs, animated signs, video signs, projected images, etc.

Ms. Ray said prohibited signs were discussed at the PZC meeting. She said they liked to consider the changeable copy signs that would not be permitted in the Historic District. She said currently the Code does not permit those signs, but if an applicant brings something innovative forward, it could be

discussed for consideration as part of a Master Sign Plan. She said even though certain signs would not be permitted in the Historic District, a reference could be made to them.

Ms. Fox requested more specificity. She inquired about icon signs that were not mentioned in these guidelines, such as a teapot-shaped sign in front of the tea house. She asked if things like that would be mentioned that they are permitted or in the Code.

Ms. Ray said it would require a Master Sign Plan Review. She said Code does not recognize three-dimensional types of signs as they are tough to regulate across the board; however, images showing that they are encouraged could be provided in the document.

Mr. Rinaldi said the Code has changed so signs in the two-dimensional shape of a tea pot, a dog bone, or a house, for example, are permitted.

Jennifer Rauch asked the Board if they would be opposed to a historic structure having a more modern sign.

Mr. Mathias said he loves the contrast of the Jeni's Ice Cream sign on the traditional building, with the juxtaposition of the pop of color on a neutral building. Again, he said we do not want the whole building to be orange and yellow, but an orange and yellow sign is great. He indicated he would like to see more of those subtle pops of color that do not change the character of the building.

Mr. Rinaldi asked if the adherence to the fonts had been enforced. Ms. Rauch said it had been enforced strictly for a number of years.

Ms. Fox believes the ARB can get away from the little wood signs with bracket, but it has to be in context. She said if it is a historic building, it makes a little bit of a difference. She indicated there should be discretion in this part of the District; she is not sure she wants to see a neon sign on an entirely historic building.

Mr. Mathias suggested that language should be stronger for examples of signs that are not appropriate. He provided the example of sandwich board signs where it states "avoid" and it should state "it is not appropriate" or that "it is prohibited" rather than to mean it is simply "not encouraged." He recommended not leaving gray areas that are open for interpretation.

Mr. Mathias inquired about the process for obtaining an approved sandwich board sign in the Historic District, and asked that the language be clearer.

Ms. Ray said requiring a change in the process for sandwich board signs would be a Code change; however, the existing process can be made clearer in the guidelines.

Mr. Rinaldi inquired about sandwich board signs only being permitted in the Historic District. He said those signs can be attractive and are very typical of urban environments.

Ms. Ray said the PZC questioned that also. And at the moment, she said no Code amendment is being pursued to allow them elsewhere; however, an applicant could make a request for sandwich board signs as part of a Master Sign Plan.

Mr. Mathias said it has been discussed how it is difficult to regulate the content of sandwich board signs and our intent is not for it to serve as a third or fourth sign for a business. He noted that was addressed in the sign guide language. He asked if there was a way to require that the content has to be changed within a certain timeframe.

Ms. Ray indicated that would be a Code amendment but she would explore that suggestion for this guide with Legal, or at least make the intent clearer in the guidelines.

Ms. Fox asked if menus posted outside of restaurants were allowed in the Code.

Ms. Ray said it is in the Code as a “directory sign” and they do not require a permit.

Mr. Rinaldi asked if wayfinding signs on a pedestrian scale have been addressed.

Ms. Ray reported the City is working with a consultant on a wayfinding plan to look at everything from highway oriented wayfinding signs all the way down to pedestrian-scale kiosks. She stated that City Council gave positive feedback on the first level of auto-oriented wayfinding signs this past Monday.

Ms. Rauch referred the Board to the City’s website for more information about the wayfinding signs.

Mr. Mathias asked if there were pending Code changes or if a review was in process.

Ms. Ray confirmed there are no Code changes pending at this time.

Ms. Ray concluded that she would bring this forward in July or August once all the comments are incorporated as the next step in the process. She thanked the Board members for a good discussion and insightful comments.

### 3. Annual Items of Interest

### Administrative Request

The Chair said this is a request to create an Annual Items of Interest list that will be forwarded to City Council for approval. He said this is a request for discussion prior to a formal request for review and recommendation of approval to City Council for Annual Items of Interest.

Jennifer Rauch said she wanted to review the ideas expressed at the May 27<sup>th</sup> meeting that she had consolidated into a draft of annual items of interest list. She suggested the Board review the topics and work with Staff to develop the tasks and desired outcomes. She said once a final list is created and formally recommended by the Board, it will be forwarded onto City Council for approval. She said this would allow City Council to prioritize and provide input and guidance on the topics the Board and Staff should focus on.

Ms. Rauch presented her list of potential items of interest:

- APPENDIX G OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES OUTSIDE THE DISTRICT

**Objective:** Review Appendix G within the City of Dublin Zoning Code. Investigate whether additional properties should be added to the list and the steps needed to undertake this revision.

- INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES IN THE DISTRICT

**Objective:** Update the Ohio Historic Inventory for historic properties within the City. Determine if properties and the information on the inventory should be removed, added, or updated.

- DEMOLITION BY NEGLECT

**Objective:** Research demolition by neglect and the impacts on a community. Investigate and implement best practices regarding regulations and policy decisions to reduce the likelihood of Dublin’s historic properties being demolished because of neglect. Inventory historic properties to determine if any fit the determined description and take steps to remedy.



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## PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

### RECORD OF DISCUSSION

JUNE 18, 2015

The Planning and Zoning Commission took the following action at this meeting:

#### 3. Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines 15-040ADM

#### Administrative Request

Proposal: To create a guide intended to help applicants understand and apply the sign requirements in the Bridge Street District and provide direction for sign design and placement in a pedestrian-oriented environment.

Request: Informal review and feedback on this future request for review and recommendation of approval to City Council for Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines.

Applicant: Dana L. McDaniel, City of Dublin.

Planning Contact: Rachel S. Ray, AICP, Planner II.

Contact Information: (614) 410-4656, rray@dublin.oh.us

**RESULT:** The Commission members agreed that the text and images contained in the draft guidelines are generally consistent with the intent for signs in the Bridge Street District, with suggestions that a few of the images be replaced. The Commissioners discussed how to maximize creativity and encourage sign designers to propose unique and interesting signs that contribute to the character of an urban, pedestrian-oriented environment. Some Commission members suggested including highly innovative and "forward-thinking" signs in the guidelines to depict what might be desirable in this specific part of the city. The BSD Sign Guidelines will be presented to the Commission for review and recommendation to City Council later this summer following review by the Architectural Review Board.

#### MEMBERS PRESENT:

Victoria Newell	Yes
Amy Salay	Absent
Chris Brown	Yes
Cathy De Rosa	Yes
Robert Miller	Yes
Deborah Mitchell	Yes
Stephen Stidhem	Yes

#### STAFF CERTIFICATION

Rachel S. Ray, AICP, Planner II

The Chair invited public comment. [Hearing none.] She closed the public comment portion of the meeting and the Commission began its deliberation of the matter.

Chris Brown stated he believes the Master Sign Plan meets the intent of Bridge Street District; the plan provides dynamic signs; the number and sizes are not overwhelming; and the signs will look appropriate in both the daytime and nighttime.

Cathy De Rosa said she likes the proposal a lot; it is simple and efficient. Both she and Mr. Brown agreed it fits the architecture.

Ms. Newell said her comments were the same. She said she thought the signs were tasteful, proportioned well, and capture the style of the buildings. She said she is not crazy about the idea of allowing signs that exceed the 15-foot height limitation because the Commission has held to that limit for so many places throughout the community, but it is a nice exchange between the height and the amount of signs permitted. She concluded the plan was very creative.

Steve Langworthy said signs have been discussed with the applicant from the beginning of this project and it was determined how suburban the area would look and feel if ground signs were used. He said this proposal has a much more urban feel. Ms. Newell agreed.

### **Motion and Vote**

Ms. Newell made a motion, Mr. Brown seconded, to approve this application for a Master Sign Plan allowing for one wall sign (meeting Code requirements) and three projecting signs that each exceeds the height and area permitted by Code. The vote was as follows: Ms. De Rosa, yes; Mr. Miller, yes; Ms. Mitchell, yes; Mr. Stidhem, yes; Mr. Brown, yes; and Ms. Newell, yes. (Approved 6 – 0)

### **3. Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines 15-040ADM**

#### **Administrative Request**

The Chair, Ms. Newell, said the following application is a request to create a guide intended to help applicants understand and apply the sign requirements in the Bridge Street District and provide direction for sign design and placement in a pedestrian-oriented environment. She said this is a request for informal review and feedback on this future request for review and recommendation of approval to City Council for Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines.

Rachel Ray said this is a great opportunity for the Commission to do some *planning* beyond their typical *zoning review* responsibilities. She said the intent is to provide a guide primarily for applicants that bring forward sign applications, as well as the Commission, Architectural Review Board, and ART members for the reviews. Since there is every type of sign imaginable, she said this guide is specific to how signs should happen in an urban environment.

Ms. Ray summarized questions to guide the Commission discussion:

- 1) Do the BSD Sign Guidelines achieve their stated objectives? Should the objectives be modified?
- 2) Are there other Character Principles that should be addressed in the sign guidelines?
- 3) Are there images in the document that should not be used as exemplary signs to be used in the BSD?
- 4) Are signs with neon-like lighting elements and three-dimensional objects that serve as signs to identify a tenant appropriate in an environment like the BSD and if so, should a future Code amendment to allow these types of signs be considered?
- 5) Other considerations by the Commission.

Ms. Ray started with the intent for signs in the Bridge Street District. She indicated when the regulations were being drafted for signs in the BSD, they discussed the difference between suburban and urban signs. She said the intent for the BSD are signs for walkable, urban environments that are meant to be visible to pedestrians from all directions – across the street, the same side of the street, or from parking areas behind the building. She said when signs are appropriately integrated into an urban environment, they can add character and interest to a streetscape; when carefully integrated into the architectural design of a building, signs can help create a pleasurable, comfortable strolling and window-shopping experience.

Ms. Ray provided a brief history. She said the BSD provisions of the Zoning Code were adopted March 25, 2012. Soon after, she said PZC, CC, and Staff had discussions about the recent signs being approved in terms of sign quality, creative design, and if they were meeting the original intent. In the meantime, she said Planning contracted with a sign design consultant for services to review signs when it was felt the applicant should be pushed a little further with their designs and recommendations were needed for Zoning Code amendments. She noted City Council adopted the most recent BSD Code amendments on December 8, 2014, and they requested Planning prepare sign guidelines to demonstrate desirable sign qualities.

Ms. Ray presented the Objectives of the Guide:

- Encourage excellence in sign design, both as a communication tool and as an art form.
- Allow and encourage creative and unique sign designs while preventing cluttered and unattractive streetscapes.
- Provide basic parameters for creative signs that may be as varied and unique as the businesses they represent.
- Provide guidance for designing signs in the Historic District, as well as signs associated with buildings that were constructed prior to the enactment of the Bridge Street District zoning regulations.
- Outline the contents of Master Sign Plans, which are intended to allow greater flexibility and creativity in sign design and display where signs are used as a placemaking tool.

Ms. Ray said these guidelines apply across the board so these will be used by the ARB as well. She reported these will be discussed with the ARB for their feedback at their meeting on June 24<sup>th</sup> and she will report back to the Commission with their comments.

Ms. Ray referred to her **first discussion question** as she approached the Table of Contents.

- 1) Do the BSD Sign Guidelines achieve their stated objectives? Should the objectives be modified?

Ms. Ray explained the Table of Contents presents the outline of the document:

1. Purpose & Intent
2. Process
3. Applicability
4. Character
5. Quality
6. Requirements
7. Master Sign Plans

Ms. Ray presented five **Character Principles** that were identified along with examples for each:

1. **Architectural Integration**  
All signs shall be designed to fully integrate with the building architecture and overall site design, and to enhance the pedestrian experience in the Bridge Street District to create memorable places for people to enjoy.
2. **Illumination**  
The illumination of signs is strongly encouraged to help add a sense of liveliness and activity to the Bridge Street District. Well-designed signs use lighting as an accent rather than a distraction designed to compete for attention in a busy urban streetscape.
3. **Colors & Secondary Images**  
Colorful signs can add character and interest to buildings and the overall streetscape throughout the Bridge Street District; however, in no case shall the use of color and supporting graphics distract from the creation of attractive signs with simple, easy to understand messages.
4. **Graphic Design & Composition**  
Unique, interesting signs that contribute to a memorable, pedestrian-oriented environment generally demonstrate strong adherence to accepted graphic design principles. Signs should be designed thoughtfully, with consideration for aesthetically pleasing composition.
5. **Dimensionality**  
Signs should be constructed to stand the test of time, designed to be weather and fade-resistant. High quality signs are also designed to appear substantial, with three-dimensional elements that give the sign presence without appearing overly heavy. Quality signs also conceal structural elements that are not integral to the sign's overall design.

Ms. Ray referred to her **second discussion question**:

- 2) Are there other Character Principles that should be addressed in the sign guidelines?

Ms. Ray presented the requirements section. She said these pages are laid out similar to the Bridge Street Code with building type requirements on a two-page spread dedicated to each of the many different types of signs. She said the left page includes a graphic depiction of how to measure sign height and area. She explained this is a summary that should match the actual Code requirements. She said the right page has positive sign examples and a description of what is desirable about those types of signs. She said on the flip side are examples of what is not desired and elements that should be avoided. She indicated all the examples of the signs "to avoid" are extreme to make the point clear.

Ms. Ray concluded these are signs identified by Planning that could be attractive in the BSD. She noted there are a number of images in the document of signs that would not be permitted in the BSD without a Master Sign Plan for a variety of reasons. She said many of the examples are neon lights that are prohibited in the City's Zoning Code across the board.

Ms. Ray referred to her **third and fourth discussion questions**:

- 3) Are there images in the document that should not be used as exemplary signs to be used in the BSD?
- 4) Are signs with neon-like lighting elements and three-dimensional objects that serve as signs to identify a tenant appropriate in an environment like the BSD and if so, should a future Code amendment to allow these types of signs be considered?

Ms. Ray asked the Commission to consider if any of the signs should be removed or added as examples and whether any Code Amendments should result from this process.

Ms. Ray concluded by stating the zoning regulations are the *requirements* for signs in the Bridge Street District; the BSD Sign Guidelines, especially if adopted by resolution, will have some authority, but are still just considered guidelines.

Cathy De Rosa said she questions what the difference is between signs and advertising when it comes to sandwich board signs.

Ms. Ray explained that sandwich board signs are only permitted in the Historic District unless they were to be approved by a Master Sign Plan.

Ms. De Rosa said sandwich board signs are a very urban thing to do.

Ms. Ray agreed. She added if sandwich boards are to be permitted in the BSD, they should not function as moveable ground signs; they are to be designed to be artistic and advertise services or daily specials.

Chris Brown agreed sandwich boards are very urban, and if we are trying to encourage a restaurant district and walkable areas with street-side dining, they are almost a necessity. He said he would hate to restrict potential tenants in a way that does not encourage lots of business; they are the basis of economic vitality.

Ms. De Rosa indicated sandwich boards are fun to read. She used Jeni's Ice Cream as an example where they advertise a flavor or special of the day.

Victoria Newell pointed out text that specifically states the purpose of the sandwich board signs and not meant to be fixed printing. She said she finds that signs that promote a special of the day or a special for a holiday coming up like Father's Day are appropriate.

Ms. De Rosa said more consideration might be given to sandwich board signs in the BSD and what they can advertise on them.

Mr. Brown said he had not noticed in his review of the document that sandwich board signs were just restricted to the Historic District, so if that is the case, that might need to be made more clear.

Steve Langworthy explained the primary image is for the business name and secondary images were for tag lines, addresses, and specials. He said this is certainly getting harder to enforce, and he reported a recent Supreme Court decision that is going to make it even more difficult to legally distinguish between secondary images versus primary images.

Ms. Newell said overall, she thought the sign guidelines were really nice. She said there are a couple of signs she would like to see eliminated. She said the Coldwell Banker sign did not add any character to that building. Ms. Mitchell agreed.

Ms. Newell inquired about the graphics explaining how to measure for a window sign.

Ms. Ray agreed to fix that graphic so it is clearer. She explained that the Code states that regardless of the number of panes separated by divisions, the entire area is considered one big window.

Ms. Newell noted the difference between the storefronts in Historic Dublin as opposed to the really wide storefronts anticipated for the rest of the BSD, which could result in some really large window signs.

Ms. Ray said there is a cap on the size of the window sign, which is 8 square feet or 20% of the entire window area. And in the case of a door between two windows for one tenant, she said it is considered two windows, therefore two signs if one was placed on each side of the door.

Ms. Ray said holiday signs and display signs are permitted as holiday decorations.

Ms. Newell indicated well done neon signs could be appropriate but it would need to be on a case-by-case basis rather than a Code amendment. She said LED lighting is so intense and asked about the permitted illumination levels.

Deborah Mitchell inquired about digital signs, as that is a very fast growing area.

Ms. Ray said the changeable copy signs are prohibited currently throughout the city. She said digital signs could be considered as part of a Master Sign Plan but was not prepared to include those in the guidelines yet.

Mr. Langworthy said electronic messaging has been discussed and there is a lot of public material available with examples of what others have done.

Ms. De Rosa confirmed that an applicant could bring digital signs forward as part of a Master Sign Plan. She said she has not been the biggest proponent of the three-color limitation on many signs. She wonders in this particular instance if there isn't an opportunity to relax some of the rules a bit to see what comes forward. She said there are some really creative signs out there, even in the Columbus area. She said it is hard to imagine a really creative sign until it is presented. She said she thinks that should be encouraged but is uncertain how it should be balanced.

Mr. Langworthy suggested that as more Master Sign Plans come forward, there will be a level of consistency, and if we see more and more similar signs that we like, we could write specific standards into the Code instead of having each applicant come in and request the same thing.

Ms. Ray said the challenge of trying to encourage people to do really unique and interesting signs (neon signs for example, which we would need to see on a case-by-case basis) is that if an applicant is told they can only have it if they go to the PZC, they will often just say they will just do something else that they are permitted to do by right.

Ms. Ray said she agreed with Mr. Langworthy. She said with projects like Bridge Park, where they have to bring forward a Master Sign Plan that is where we can help push the envelope and start to get comfortable with other standards that we could use across the board.

Mr. Brown said the nature of this district is that we push the envelope and encourage people to do so. He used the Arena District as an example for public venues or events.

Ms. Newell suggested getting public comment.

Ms. Newell said she struggles with creativity with what is entirely Code compliant. She noted that if an applicant brings forward a sign that is 100% compliant but it is not very attractive, she asked how the Commission could say no.

Mr. Brown said he does not see how to create an "all-inclusive" guide.

Mr. Brown said the guidelines were great and suggested that they provide definitive examples of what is allowed and what is not. He asked about the process for reviewing bodies for Master Sign Plans and what happens when a tenant wants a sign after a Master Sign Plan has been approved.

Mr. Langworthy said it would depend on the Master Sign Plan that was approved before. He said if it did not meet that, the tenant would have to apply for a new Master Sign Plan.

Mr. Brown suggested that there should be something very prominent and specific stated where unique, artistic, and dynamic signs are encouraged to be brought forth for review.

Mr. Langworthy confirmed that the Commission wanted to encourage applicants to seek Master Sign Plans. He said the same is true for Waivers.

Steve Stidhem said he found some examples in both the positive column and what to avoid sections.

Ms. Ray said she would make the delineations clearer.

The Fuse/Cardinal Health sign at The Shoppes of River Ridge was discussed and Mr. Stidhem said he would not like to see it as a positive example, as it contradicts some of the guideline text.

Mr. Brown asked Ms. Ray what she struggles with the most on these guidelines.

Ms. Ray said a lot of applicants just want to understand what the requirements are and how they can get the biggest, brightest, and most signs possible. She indicated sometimes very little thought has gone into the sign design as they are trying to maximize the space they are entitled to. She said she would use the guide to show the applicants specific examples and discuss how they should proceed in a particular direction to achieve a nice and interesting design.

Ms. Newell asked who selected the pictures and where they came from. She said many of the signs were black and white or very simple two-colored signs.

Ms. Ray said the City's sign consultants, Studio Graphique, helped a lot with the pictures, but many others were selected by Planning, or photos taken in places like Seattle. She said there has been hesitation on having brightly colored signs but she included some great examples, including Jeni's. She added for every rule there is an exception.

Mr. Brown said this is so hard to codify because signs need to meet architectural integration.

Ms. Ray said it is difficult to regulate "taste".

Mr. Brown said when a big corporation or a franchise are coming into the area, certain standards are brought and there is representation with professionals and consultants lined up. He said when a 'mom and pop' shop, hair salon, or a small restaurant comes to Planning in Dublin for this process, it is extremely intimidating. He asked if a specialist or someone within the Planning Department could help the "little guy" if they want to be in the BSD. He said everyone wants the most bang for their buck and if they are spending it all in consultation and design, they are not spending it on the sign itself. He said he is not suggesting the City foot the bill for their design but advocates opening up the avenue for walking through these guidelines and helping them to understand them. He understood the City already offers similar customer service, and the outreach is great, but he asked how that could be conveyed to people to get the maximum result.

Mr. Langworthy said we cannot afford a specialist just for sign design on Staff but this guide is a start down that path. He said Planning has offered the services of the City's sign consultant, which we do pay for, and some of those applicants have taken those suggestions. He said that service is not that expensive and maybe the parameters could be loosened for Studio Graphique.

Mr. Brown indicated that exposure to more dynamic metropolitan areas will tend to provide more ideas.

Various signs around town were discussed.

Ms. De Rosa inquired about the picture on the cover and suggested that something “different” could be explored. She suggested that descriptive words could be incorporated into the introduction using words we would like to use to describe the feeling someone should get from a sign. She said a “personality” can set the tone for this guide. She stated the structure of the guide is excellent.

Mr. Brown said the real danger in the broader spectrum of BSD is that so far we have only one developer doing the core and when that is done, the plan becomes more contrived. He said they have the best intentions but without the different perspectives coming in from various design teams, everything can become “vanilla.”

Mr. Brown indicated he would like to see fun things happen here like he has seen at Easton like sculptures of guys hanging off ladders, etc. He asked how this sort of thing or other type of elements can be permitted or encouraged on the outside of buildings for the BSD that are attractive and enticing to lead pedestrians around the corner to see something else.

Ms. De Rosa asked if vertical banners were allowed. Ms. Ray said the banner would be permitted if it was an architectural feature but if it was a sign then there are limits like any other type of sign, but they could be permitted through the Master Sign Plan.

Mr. Brown said areas can be dressed up for events like the Super Bowl or NCAA with banners to make it an exciting, vibrant place.

Mr. Langworthy said we allow the Events Department to take care of that.

Ms. Mitchell remarked on the elements used for the Memorial Tournament.

Ms. Ray indicated the wayfinding project will be coming forward and anticipates the light poles will have the ability to attach banners. She said a community authority is being established for the BSD to coordinate these types of public realm improvements with the City.

Mr. Langworthy said incorporating public art is another thing they are working on; finding installations to place public art. He noted Crawford Hoying has been very good about designing spaces for future art installations.

Ms. De Rosa inquired about “light” logos where they project on the buildings or the sidewalk in front.

Ms. Ray said she included an example of a sign being projected on a sidewalk that was done in Seattle but that is not currently permitted but could be a cool sign to request as part of a Master Sign Plan.

Ms. De Rosa reported she had done that in the past and it is one of the least expensive things you can do for events.

Ms. Mitchell encouraged incorporating something about technology into the guide. She said this is really growing fast. She said there is a growing group of merchants and retailers that are value conscious and love the idea of visuals that can change allowing for flexibility and “in the moment” responses with what they want to convey. She said there is another group where cost is not the main factor, but how people can be swayed to purchase certain products. She said this is based on face recognition, where the signs change for the various demographics.

Ms. Newell asked how that could be regulated.

Ms. Mitchell said that just by having a section in the guide about the advanced technology aspect, it signals the intent for forward thinking sign designs.

Ms. De Rosa agreed it would signal a desire for creativity.

Ms. Ray said we have probably been more conservative with the signs brought forward thus far in the document, and this discussion lets us know what the Commission finds appropriate and would be interested in seeing.

Mr. Langworthy reiterated that the Commission's comments will be relayed to the ARB and vice versa.

Ms. De Rosa suggested the BSD website be more incorporated and integrated as well.

Ms. Ray said they meet with Community Relations weekly to discuss the website and she would pass this along. She said it is exciting with ground breakings as well as finished projects to advertise.

Mr. Brown inquired about the City's Zoning Inspectors. He said ground signs in Dublin are wonderful but the Zoning Inspectors are quite restrictive when it comes to trimming limbs/branches that impede the visibility of signs. He stated that is a detriment to the community.

Mr. Langworthy said he hoped that was changing as the system has shifted where they are inspectors and not enforcers. He said they go out and point out where the difficulties are and offer suggestions to people about how they may be able to resolve a problem. He said there is delineation between the compliance group and the enforcement side.

### **Communications**

Rachel Ray said there were no communications to be conveyed.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 8:18 p.m.

As approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission on July 9, 2015.