

ARTICLE 7 SIGNS

7-7-1: GENERAL PROVISIONS:

7-7-1.1: FINDINGS AND PURPOSE:

The following findings and purposes are hereby adopted:

- A. A multiplicity of signs is distracting to motorists and a hazard to vehicular and pedestrian traffic.
- B. A proliferation of off-premises signs obscures the legitimate effort of local business establishments to reasonably identify the location and nature of their businesses.
- C. It is a legitimate public purpose to limit signs in the Village to those reasonably necessary to identify local businesses. Such limitations and all other sign regulations herein are established so as to accomplish one or more of the following purposes:
 - 1. To protect the safety and welfare of the public.
 - 2. To protect those uses which are adequately and appropriately identified from too many and too large signs in their environs.
 - 3. To enhance the economy and the business and industry of the Village by promoting the reasonable, orderly and effective display of signage, and encouraging better communication with the public.
 - 4. To protect commercial districts from sign clutter.
 - 5. To protect the public's ability to identify uses and premises without confusion.
 - 6. To eliminate or limit unnecessary distractions which may jeopardize pedestrian or vehicular traffic safety.
 - 7. To assure the maintenance of signs.
 - 8. To implement the objectives expressed in the Comprehensive Plan.
 - 9. To preserve and enhance the natural beauty of the landscape and residential and commercial architecture, one of the prime assets of the Village.
 - 10. To control and abate the unsightly use of buildings or land.
 - 11. To protect the property values and economic well-being of the Village.
- D. It is necessary for the promotion and preservation of the public health, safety and welfare of the Village that the erection, construction, location and maintenance of all signs be

regulated and controlled. (Ord. 1985-0-34, 5-20-85)

7-7-1.2: SCOPE:

It is unlawful for any person to construct, maintain, display or alter or cause to be constructed, maintained, displayed or altered, a sign within the Village, except in conformance with this Chapter. (Ord. 1985-0-34, 5-20-85)

7-7-1.3: DEFINITIONS:

For the purpose of this Chapter, certain words and terms are hereby defined:

ABANDONED SIGN: A sign which no longer correctly directs or exhorts any person, advertises a bona fide business, lessor, owner, product, activity conducted or product available on the premises where the sign is displayed.

ALLEY: A private or dedicated public way which affords only a secondary means of access to contiguous property.

AWNING, CANOPY, MARQUEE SIGN: Any sign attached to or constructed in, or on the front, sides or under an awning, canopy or marquee.

BUILDING: Any covered structure securely affixed to the land which is designed for the support, shelter, enclosure or protection of persons, animals, chattels or other tangible property.

BULLETIN BOARD: A sign which accommodates manually changeable copy and which displays information on activities and events on the premises.

CANOPY SIGN: See "Awning, Canopy, Marquee Sign".

CONSTRUCTION SIGNS: A temporary sign which denotes the architect, contractor or engineer, when placed on the lot which is a construction site of such architect, contractor or engineer.

COPY: The wording on a sign surface.

DIRECTORY SIGN: A sign identifying the location of occupants of a building or group of buildings which are divided into rooms or suites used as separate offices or studios.

DISTRICT: One of the fourteen (14) use districts into which the entire Village is divided pursuant to article 4 of the Zoning Ordinance.

DWELLING, MULTIPLE-FAMILY: A building having more than two (2) dwelling units.

DWELLING, SINGLE-FAMILY: A building having not more than one dwelling unit.

DWELLING, TWO-FAMILY: A building having two (2), but not more than two (2) dwelling units.

ELECTRIC SIGN: Any sign containing electrical wiring which is attached or intended to be attached to an electrical energy source.

ELECTRONICALLY-CONTROLLED MESSAGE SIGN: A sign such as an electronic or an electric-controlled time and temperature sign, message center or reader board, on which copy changes.

ESTABLISHMENT: Any one of the following:

A. An institutional, business, commercial or industrial activity that is the sole occupant of one or more buildings having at least one frontage on a public street or roadway.

B. An institutional, business, commercial or industrial activity that occupies a portion of a building.

EXTERIOR-ILLUMINATED SIGN: Any sign, any part of which, is illuminated from an exterior artificial light source mounted on the sign, another structure or the ground.

FREESTANDING SIGN: A sign not attached to any building and having its own support structure.

FRONTAGE: All the property on one side of a street between two (2) intersecting streets measured along the street line, or if the street is a dead end, then all the property abutting on one side between an intersecting street and the dead end of the street.

GRADE: The elevation of the sidewalk at the midpoint of the lot line to which a sign is most closely located.

GROUND FLOOR: Any floor which is not more than three feet (3') above or below grade.

GROUND SIGN: See "Freestanding Sign".

GROSS AREA: See "Surface Area".

HEIGHT OF SIGN: The vertical distance measured from the grade at the closest street right-of-way line where the sign is located to the highest point of such sign.

HOSPITAL: A place with a full-time staff of resident licensed physicians and registered nurses and with complete facilities for the general diagnosis, treatment and care of in-patients suffering from illness, disease, injury, deformity or other abnormal physical condition and offering customary out-patient services as an accessory use.

IDENTIFICATION SIGN: Any sign identifying an institution, occupant, apartment, residence, school or church, and not advertising any product or service.

INTERIOR-ILLUMINATED SIGN: A sign, any part of which, has characters, letters, figures, or any portion of the sign face or outline thereof illuminated from an interior light source.

ITEM OF INFORMATION: A word, an abbreviation, a registered trademark, a number, a symbol or a geometric shape, excluding standard punctuation.

LOT: A zoning lot, except as the context herein shall indicate a lot of record.

LOT, CORNER: A lot having two (2) intersecting lot lines which are also street lines.

LOT LINE: A boundary of a zoning lot.

LOT LINE, FRONT: Any street line, except that in the case of a corner lot, the front lot line shall be that street line which is approximately parallel to the alley, abutting the lot; provided, however, if there is no alley or there are two (2) alleys abutting the lot, then the front lot line shall be determined by the Zoning Officer, as provided in section 5.12 of the Zoning Ordinance.

LOT, THROUGH: A lot which may be a corner lot, with a street line on each of two (2) parallel or approximately parallel streets.

LOT, ZONING: A parcel of land, at least one lot line of which is a street line, which is located within a single block, and which is used or is to be used, developed or built upon as a unit. A zoning lot may or may not coincide with a lot of record.

MARQUEE SIGN: See "Awning, Canopy, Marquee Sign".

MENU BOARD: A device which lists items for sale at a drive-thru restaurant.

NONCONFORMING BUILDING OR STRUCTURE: A building or structure lawfully existing upon the effective date of this Chapter, which thereafter fails to conform in some respect with the regulations of the district in which it is located.

NONCOMMERCIAL SIGN: Any sign which directs attention to or is intended to communicate a position on any public issue or policy.

NONILLUMINATED SIGN: A sign with no internal or external artificial light source and only incidentally illuminated by ambient light conditions.

OFF-PREMISES SIGN: Any sign which directs attention to a business, service, product or entertainment not sold or offered or only incidentally sold or offered on the premises on which the sign is located.

ON-PREMISES SIGN: Any sign identifying or advertising a business person, activity, goods, products or services located on the premises where the sign is installed and maintained.

PERMANENT WINDOW SIGN: Any window sign which is displayed for more than thirty (30) consecutive days in any ninety (90) day period.

POLITICAL SIGN: A sign intended to draw attention to or communicate a position on any issue, candidate or measure in any national, State or local election.

PORTABLE SIGN: Any exterior sign which is mounted or designed to be mounted on a self-propelled or towed vehicle, and shall include, but not be limited to, mobile advertising signs attached to a trailer or other vehicle.

PREMISES: A building or unified complex of buildings on one zoning lot.

PROJECTING SIGN: A sign which extends out from a building face or wall so that the sign face is perpendicular or at an angle to the building face or wall.

ROOF SIGN: Any sign located on or attached to and extending above the roof of a building.

SCHOOL: A public elementary or high school or a parochial or private school having a curriculum equivalent to that of a public elementary school or high school and having no rooms regularly used for the overnight accommodation of students.

SIGN: Any visual device or representation designed or used for the purpose of communicating a message or identifying a product, service, person, organization, business or event, with the use of words or characters, visible from outside the premises on which such device is located.

SIGN AREA: See "Surface Area".

SIGN FACE: The visible sign proper including all characters and symbols (excluding essential structural elements which are not an integral part of the display).

SIGN STRUCTURE: Any structure or material which supports, has supported or is capable of supporting or helping maintain a sign in a stationary position, including decorative covers.

STREET LINE: A lot line which is also the boundary line of the right of way of an existing or dedicated street or public way.

STRUCTURE: Anything constructed or erected with a fixed location on the ground, or attached to something having a fixed location on the ground. Without limitation on the foregoing, a structure shall include buildings, fences, walls and signs.

SURFACE AREA: The area of the largest single face of the sign within a perimeter which forms the outside shape including any frame that forms an integral part of the display, but excluding the necessary supports or uprights on which the sign may be placed. If the sign consists of more than one section or module, all areas will be totaled. Any irregular shaped sign area shall be computed using multiple perimeters composed of squares, rectangles or triangles, which enclose the entire sign face.

TEMPORARY SIGN: Any sign which remains in use not more than sixty (60) days or such other period limited to the duration of a condition or activity specified in this Chapter.

TEMPORARY WINDOW SIGN: A window sign which identifies a sale or promotional item and shall not be displayed for more than thirty (30) consecutive days in any ninety (90) day period.

WALL SIGN: A sign attached to, painted on or erected against the wall of a building with the face in a parallel plane of the building wall.

WINDOW SIGN: A sign which is affixed to, in contact with, or mounted within twelve inches (12") of a window or the glass surface of a door, and is visible from the public right of way. See also "permanent" and "temporary" window sign.

7-7-2: SIGN REGULATIONS:

7-7-2.1: PERMIT REQUIRED:

No sign shall be constructed, maintained, displayed or altered within the Village except pursuant to a sign permit obtained as provided in this Chapter, unless the sign is specifically exempted from permit requirements. (Ord. 1985-0-34, 5-20-85)

7-7-2.2: EXEMPT SIGNS:

The following signs shall be allowed without a sign permit and shall not be included in the determination of type, number or area of signs allowed in each zone district or in calculations of items of information.

- A. One construction sign not more than sixteen (16) square feet in surface area in residence districts and not more than sixty four (64) square feet in surface area in nonresidence districts, which denotes the architect, contractor or engineer, when placed on the lot which is a construction site of such architect, contractor or engineer.
- B. One bulletin board not more than twelve (12) square feet in surface area for a church, library, school or other public building, provided such sign shall be located on the same lot as the principal building.
- C. Warning signs, such as, no trespassing, beware of dog, etc., each not more than one square foot in size and not to exceed four (4) per zoning lot. (Ord. 1985-0-34, 5-20-85)
- D. Official Federal, State or local government flags, banners, emblems or historical markers.
 1. Local government banners shall include banners affixed to, or erected on, Village property on the public way which identify a geographic business area within the Village of Oak Park and for which the local business association, representing the geographic business area, has applied to the Village for permission to affix or erect same on the public way.
 - a. If the purchase of individual banners is funded by individual sponsors, the name of the sponsor may appear in no more than the lower twenty five percent (25%) of the surface area of the banner, while no less than the top seventy five percent (75%) of the surface area of the banner shall identify the subject general business area.
 - b. While such banners are not subject to the sign regulations set forth in [Chapter 7, Article 7](#) of the Oak Park Village Code, the installation of such banners on the public way shall be subject to the requirements of the Village for the placement of such objects on the public way.
 - c. The Village reserves the right to remove such banners from the public way at any time, including, but not limited to those times when the Village, in its sole discretion, deems it reasonably necessary to remove same for the proper maintenance of the public way. In the event that the Village shall remove such banners, the banners will be returned to the representatives of the business association which filed the original application with the

Village for permission to affix or erect such banners on the public way. (Ord. 1994-0-29, 6-6-94)

- E. Official Federal, State or local government traffic, directional and informational signs and notices issued by any court, person or officer in performance of a public duty or any other sign that is required to be posted by any government agency.
- F. Temporary signs warning of construction excavation or similar hazards so long as the hazard exists.
- G. Temporary holiday decorations.
- H. Political signs.
- I. Noncommercial signs.
- J. Temporary window signs.
- K. Miscellaneous permanent information signs in nonresidential zones, such as address, hours and days of operation, whether a business is open or closed, credit information, instructional information, name(s) of occupant, and telephone number provided that such items of information do not exceed six inches (6") in height.
- L. Signs showing the location of public telephones and signs placed by utilities to show the location of underground facilities.
- M. Directory signs not more than six (6) square feet in surface area.
- N. In residential districts, one real estate sign not more than eight (8) square feet in surface area, except not more than thirty (30) square feet in surface area for condominium multiple-family dwellings and in commercial, business and industrial districts, one real estate sign not more than sixteen (16) square feet in surface area per street frontage, which advertises the sale or rental of the premises on the lot upon which the sign is located.
- O. One menu board not more than twenty (20) square feet in surface area and not more than five feet (5') in height and no less than twenty (20) feet from any lot line. (Ord. 1985-0-34, 5-20-85)

7-7-3: SIGN STANDARDS:

7-7-3.1: GENERAL:

The following standards apply to signs located in all zone districts unless specifically noted.

- A. Maintenance: All signs, canopies, awnings and marquees shall be kept and maintained in a safe, neat and orderly condition and appearance, and shall be repainted or otherwise maintained periodically by the owner to prevent corrosion or deterioration caused by the weather, age or any other condition, and to keep the same in a safe, neat and orderly condition and appearance.

- B. Moving Signs: No sign or part of any sign shall move or give the illusion of movement in any manner.
- C. Multiple-Surface Sign: One-half (1/2) the total surface area and one-half (1/2) the total number of items of information of a multiple-surface sign shall be counted in computing the permitted surface area and items of information.
- D. Awning, Canopy and Marquee Signs: Signage painted, placed or installed upon any awning, canopy or marquee shall be considered as wall signage and shall be regulated as such and shall be calculated as such against the total signage allocation of that premise.
- E. Traffic-Control Signs: Traffic-control signs and other such signs, other than advertising signs, designed for the public safety and convenience, may be authorized by the Board of Trustees of the Village.
- F. Sign Structure and Installation: Supports and braces shall be an integral part of the sign design. Angle irons, chains or wires used for supports or braces shall be hidden from public view to the extent technically feasible.
- G. Portable Signs: Portable signs are allowed in nonresidential districts only, when their use is limited to eight (8) consecutive days of any ninety (90) day period and when they are wholly located on the lot to which they are accessory, and when they do not exceed fifty (50) square feet in surface area. Portable signs shall not be included in calculations of sign size nor number of items of information.
- H. Time and Temperature Signs: Time and temperature signs shall not be included in calculations of sign size nor number of items of information.
- I. Temporary Window Signs: A premise may display one or more temporary window signs at any time provided that the total area of all window signs, permanent and temporary, shall not exceed fifty percent (50%) of any window or group of adjacent windows through which such signs may be seen. For purposes of this Section, adjacent shall mean not separated by more than twelve (12) inches. Temporary window signs shall not be counted against the total sign allocation nor items of information for that premise. Such temporary window signs are allowed only in nonresidential districts.
- J. Permanent Window Signs: Permanent window signs shall be considered as wall signs and shall be subject to all such applicable regulations. A premise may display one or more permanent window signs at any time, provided that the total area of all window signs, permanent and temporary shall not exceed fifty percent (50%) of any window or group of adjacent windows through which signs may be seen. For purposes of this Section, adjacent shall mean not separated by more than twelve inches (12").
- K. Roof Sign: No sign shall be erected on the roof of a building.
- L. Illuminated Signage; Illumination: All illuminated signage is subject to the following limitations:
 - 1. Lighting for exterior-illuminated signs shall be so arranged that it does not create a hazardous glare for pedestrians or vehicles, either in a public right of way or any private

premises.

2. No flashing or blinking lights or other means not providing constant illumination shall be permitted, except as permitted under Sections [7-7-2.2E](#) and F and [7-7-3.3A,3](#) herein.

M. Changeable Message Signs: Changeable message signs, where the items of information are changed manually, are permitted as an integral portion of a permanent sign and shall be included in calculations of sign size, but not included in calculation of items of information.

7-7-3.2: SIGNS IN RESIDENCE AND HOSPITAL DISTRICTS:

A. Permitted Signs in Residence and Hospital Districts; Identification Signs: For each dwelling unit in a single-family dwelling or two-family dwelling, one sign not more than two square feet in surface area and bearing only property numbers and/or names of occupants of the premises. For multiple-family dwellings and other buildings permitted in a residence district, one sign not more than nine (9) square feet in surface area and bearing only the name and address of the building and the name of the management thereof. For uses permitted in the "H" District, one sign not more than thirty (30) square feet in surface area, and bearing only the name and address of the building and the management thereof on each frontage of an identifiable distinct hospital/medical center complex.

B. Standards: In addition to the general standards set forth in Section [7-7-3](#), the following regulations shall apply to signs in residence and hospital districts.

1. Illumination: No sign shall be either directly or indirectly illuminated in such a manner as to affect adversely the use and enjoyment of nearby residential buildings.

2. Height Level: No sign shall extend above the height of the first story of the principal building or twenty feet (20') above grade, whichever is lower.

3. Projection: No sign shall project into any street, sidewalk or alley.

7-7-3.3: SIGNS IN BUSINESS, COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL ZONE DISTRICTS:

A. Signs Permitted in Business, Commercial and Industrial Zone Districts shall include:

1. Any sign permitted in a residence district.

2. Advertising signs relating only to articles, goods or services offered for sale on the lot where such advertising sign is located. No wall sign or projecting sign shall be located on any portion of the premises other than that portion of the premises in which is located the establishment to which the sign is accessory.

3. Electronically-controlled message signs; provided, however that:

a. No message, word or symbol may be displayed for a period of less than two (2) seconds duration;

b. No "rolling" messages are displayed, i.e., messages, words or symbols that move or appear to move, across the display face, either horizontally or vertically;

c. All messages, words or symbols displayed relate only to goods or services offered on the same lot or to community service announcements.

4. Establishments other than ground floor establishments shall be permitted window signs only, which shall not be included in calculation of sign size or items of information.

B. Standards: In addition to the general standards set forth in Section [7-7-3](#), the following regulations shall apply to signs in commercial or industrial districts or business zone districts located on State routes.

1. Each establishment is permitted to display twenty five (25) items of information in the aggregate for each defined type of signage as shown below:

a. Twenty five (25) items of information in the aggregate for all wall and permanent window signage.

b. Twenty five (25) items of information in the aggregate for all projecting signage.

c. Twenty five (25) items of information in the aggregate for all ground signs.

Electronically-controlled message signs and changeable message signs are excluded.

2. Illumination: No sign shall be either directly or indirectly illuminated in such a manner as to affect adversely the use and enjoyment of nearby buildings containing residential dwelling units.

Projecting and/or freestanding signs located on or within twelve feet (12') of a mixed commercial and residential use property shall not be illuminated beyond the closing time of the business to which the sign relates or nine o'clock (9:00) P.M., whichever occurs later, except:

a. Where the sign is located more than twelve feet (12') from the nearest dwelling unit window.

b. Where the top edge of the sign is below the bottom edge of the sill of any dwelling unit window within twelve feet (12') of the sign, or

c. Where the affected dwelling units are occupied by the business and/or property owners or their agents.

3. Height Level:

a. No sign shall extend beyond the roof line of a building or twenty five feet (25') above grade whichever is less; or in the case of a building with a parapet wall or mansard roof, no sign shall extend higher than the parapet wall or mansard to which it is attached or twenty five feet (25') above grade, whichever is less.

b. The lowest portion of any projecting sign or freestanding sign which projects over the public right of way shall be not less than nine feet (9') above grade.

c. The maximum height of any freestanding sign shall be twenty five feet (25') above grade. Where a freestanding sign is located closer than twenty five feet (25') to the structure to which that sign relates, and where that structure has a maximum height of twenty five feet (25') or less, then the maximum height of the freestanding sign will be the same as the height of that structure. For purposes of this Section, the distance between a freestanding sign and the related structure will be determined by locating the portion of the sign or its support structure which is closest to the related structure and measuring the distance in a straight line from that point to the nearest portion of the related building. For purposes of this Section, grade shall be determined at the nearest point of public right of way.

4. Projection: A projecting sign must be pinned away from the wall at least six inches (6"). No sign shall project more than six feet six inches (6'6"), into the public right of way, and in no event, more than within two feet (2') of any street or alley; provided, however, where more than one-half (1/2) of the frontage in a block is located in a residence district, no sign, other than a sign permitted in a residence district, shall project more than twelve inches (12") beyond the face of the building or structure, unless a yard is provided, the depth of which is in excess of that required in the business district, in which case, a sign may project into the nonrequired portion of such yard, but in no event shall such sign be closer to the street line than:

a. The required residential setback; or

b. The actual average setback, for the residentially-zoned portion of the frontage, whichever is less. Unless such sign is one hundred feet (100') or more from the residentially-zoned property, then said sign shall project not more than six feet six inches (6'6") into the public right of way and in no event more than within two feet (2') of any street or alley.

5. Size:

a. The surface area of all exterior signs, including permanent window signs, shall not exceed, in the aggregate, three (3) square feet per lineal foot of width of lot for the first one hundred (100) lineal feet, and one square foot per lineal foot of width of lot for each lineal foot in excess of one hundred (100).

b. The surface area of all exterior freestanding and projecting signs shall not exceed, in the aggregate, nine-tenths (0.9) square feet per lineal foot of width of lot for the first one hundred (100) lineal feet and three-tenths (0.3) square feet per lineal foot of width of lot for each lineal foot in excess of one hundred (100). Further, any lot with a width of less than thirty five feet (35') may be permitted projecting signage, the surface area of which shall not exceed in the aggregate, thirty (30) square feet.

c. Width of lot shall be measured at the front lot line; provided, however, for lots having more than one street line, width of the lot shall be measured at the street line of the greatest dimension lying in a frontage which is wholly within a commercial or industrial district; or, in the street line of the shortest dimension if the lot has no street line lying in a

frontage which is wholly within a commercial or industrial district.

d. For lots and buildings with portions under separate management or control, each portion shall be allotted a maximum share of the total permitted surface area of signs for the lot. The maximum share for each portion shall be proportionate to the amount of street frontage occupied at the width of the lot as defined in subparagraph B5c of this Section.

e. In addition to the above, in all cases where a lot or building has frontage on two (2) or more street lines, each separate tenant space which does not have frontage on the lot line which determines the sign allocation (paragraph c hereinabove) shall be permitted exterior signage not to exceed three (3) square feet per lineal foot of width of establishment for the first one hundred (100) lineal feet, and one square foot per lineal foot of width of establishment in excess of one hundred feet (100').

7-7-4: NONCONFORMING SIGNS:

7-7-4.1: ABATEMENT OF NONCONFORMING SIGNS:

Signs which do not conform to the provisions of this Chapter but which lawfully existed and were maintained prior to June 21, 1983 shall be removed or made to conform within sixty (60) days after written notice by the Department of Code Administration when:

- A. The use of the establishment changes and the exterior of the building or other site conditions are to be altered; or
- B. A sign is damaged by any cause resulting in replacement or repair cost equal to or greater than one-half (1/2) of its replacement value at the time the damage occurs; or
- C. When a sign has been fully amortized in accordance with the amortization schedule outlined in Section [7-7-4.2](#).

7-7-4.2: AMORTIZATION OF NONCONFORMING SIGNS:

- A. Signs which do not conform to the provisions of these regulations, but which lawfully existed and were maintained prior to June 21, 1983 shall be removed or made to conform after written notice by the Department of Code Administration, in accordance with the following schedule:

If original value is:	The amortization period is:
Less than \$2,000	2 years
\$2,000 to \$2,999	3 years
\$3,000 to \$4,999	4 years
Greater than \$5,000	5 years

In the case of painted wall signs, such signs shall be removed or painted over.

B. For purposes of this Section, all nonconforming signs shall be considered to have an original value of less than two thousand dollars (\$2,000.00), unless the owner or user of a nonconforming sign shall furnish acceptable proof of greater than two thousand dollars (\$2,000.00) initial cost in the form of:

1. An original bill of sale;
2. A depreciation schedule from State or Federal income tax returns; or
3. A written appraisal by a sign manufacturer.

Such proof must be submitted to the Department of Code Administration within sixty (60) days of notification by the Village that the sign is nonconforming.

C. The time periods in the aforementioned schedule shall commence June 21, 1983.

D. If a sign becomes nonconforming due to the amendment of these regulations, the period for abatement shall be measured from the effective date of the amendment.

E. If more than one sign on a premises is or becomes nonconforming, the original cost of all such nonconforming signs shall be aggregated for the purpose of determining the amortization period.

7-7-4.3: NOTICE TO OWNERS OF NONCONFORMING SIGNS:

The Code Administration Department shall give written notice to the owner of signs which do not conform to the provisions of these regulations, informing them of the nature of nonconformity, their responsibilities under this Chapter and of the Village's intent to enforce these regulations.

7-7-5: OBSOLETE, ABANDONED OR UNSAFE SIGNS:

7-7-5.1: OBSOLETE OR ABANDONED SIGNS:

Any sign, retractable canopy or awning, whether existing on or erected after the effective date of this Chapter, which advertises a business no longer being conducted or a product no longer being sold in or from the premises to which the sign relates, shall be taken down and removed by the owner, agent or person having the beneficial use of the building, structure or premises upon which such sign is found. Removal shall be effected within twenty (20) days after written notice from the Director of Code Administration. If such a sign is not removed after such twenty (20) day period, the Director of Code Administration is authorized to cause the sign to be removed forthwith. Any reasonable cost incident thereto shall be filed as a lien against the property upon which the sign was located.

7-7-5.2: UNSAFE SIGNS:

When any sign becomes insecure, in danger of falling, or otherwise unsafe, or if any sign shall be unlawfully installed, erected or maintained in violation of any of the provisions of this Code, the owner thereof or the person or firm maintaining same, shall, upon written notice of the

Building Official, forthwith in the case of immediate danger, and in any case within not more than ten (10) days, make such sign conform to the provisions of this Section or remove it. (Ord. 1985-0-34, 5-20-85)

7-7-6: COMMUNITY DESIGN COMMISSION ACTING AS DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION FOR SIGN VARIATION REQUESTS:

7-7-6.1: COMMUNITY DESIGN COMMISSION AS DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION:

The Community Design Commission shall act as the Design Review Commission for the purpose of hearing requests for variations from the Village sign ordinance and make recommendations on same to the President and Board of Trustees.

- A. Conflict Of Interest: No member of the Commission shall participate in discussion or vote on requests for a sign variation from any client he/she is serving or from any business or property in which he/she has a financial interest or of which he/she is an owner, officer or employee.
- B. Commission Secretary: The Zoning Administrator shall serve as secretary to the Commission, but shall not be a member thereof.
- C. Duties Of The Chairperson: The chairperson shall have the duty of calling all meetings and shall preside at all meetings of the Design Review Commission.
- D. Meetings Of The Design Review Commission:
 - 1. All meetings of the Commission shall be held at the call of the chairperson or any four (4) members and may be scheduled on the regular meeting date and time of the Community Design Commission. Four (4) members of the Commission (including the chairperson) shall constitute a quorum. A majority decision of members present at a duly constituted meeting shall be required for all Commission actions.
 - 2. The Commission may adopt its own rules of procedure, not inconsistent with this Section.
 - 3. All meetings of the Commission shall be open to the public.
 - 4. The Commission shall keep minutes of its proceedings and official actions.
- E. Powers And Duties: The Design Review Commission shall have the following powers and duties:
 - 1. To consult with and cooperate with other commissions, Village departments, other governmental bodies and interested persons on matters affecting a sign variance request.
 - 2. To hold public hearings in connection with applications for sign variances, and to make recommendations to the President and Board of Trustees regarding the application.

3. Such other powers and duties granted herein or imposed by the President and Board of Trustees. (Ord. 1997-0-32, 8-4-97)

7-7-6.2: REGULATORY POWERS OF THE COMMISSION:

The Commission shall have authority to recommend, after thorough and conscientious review and study, approval or denial of a request for a sign variance. Such recommendation to be made to the President and Board of Trustees.

A. Procedure For Sign Variance:

1. **Zoning Administrator's Review:** It shall be the duty of the Zoning Administrator, after an application for any sign permit, to determine and advise the applicant whether under the provisions of this Section, a sign variance is required.

2. Preliminary Conference:

a. Any applicant or prospective applicant for any permit that requires a variance may file a written request for a preliminary conference with the Commission. At such conference, the Commission shall give consideration to preliminary exterior drawings, sketches or photographic examples, landscape and site plans and materials on a specific project, and shall provide the applicant with guidance in the development of a plan which would be consistent with the requirements and purposes of this Section.

b. Notice of this preliminary meeting shall be provided to tenants within two hundred fifty feet (250') of the subject property. Notice will be by mail and shall be given not more than thirty (30) days nor less than fifteen (15) days before the meeting. Such notice shall include the time and place of the hearing, a general description of the contents of the request to be heard and the address or location of the property to which the request applies.

3. Application for Variance and Hearing:

a. An applicant for any sign permit that requires a variance shall apply to the Commission for such variance. Upon receipt of such application, the Commission shall schedule a meeting at which meeting the applicant shall be given an opportunity to make a presentation and any interested party shall be given the opportunity to comment.

b. Notice of public hearings on requests for variances shall be given not more than thirty (30) days nor less than fifteen (15) days before the hearing by publication in a newspaper of general circulation in the Village. Such notice shall include the time and place of the hearing, a general description of the contents of the request to be heard, and the address or location of the property to which the request applies. The published notice may be supplemented by such additional form of notice as provided by rule of the hearing body.

c. Filing fee for a sign variance shall be fifty dollars (\$50.00).

d. At the time of the hearing, the applicant shall provide the Commission with the following documents depicting exterior design features: Drawings which shall include plans and elevations site plans; landscaping and screening plans (where appropriate);

renderings and specifications for signs; and, a statement as to kind, color and texture of materials. All such documents shall be drawn to scale. The Commission may make recommendations as to changes in the exterior design features which in the judgment of the Commission would tend to achieve the general purpose of the appearance guidelines which are on file in the office of the Village Clerk.

e. After hearing and considering the materials presented, the Commission shall recommend a variance if it finds that:

- (1) The applicant's plans are substantially consistent with the criteria for design herein.
- (2) The proposed exterior design features of the sign are suitable and compatible with the character of neighboring buildings and structures existing or under construction and with the character of the neighborhood and the applicable zoning district, and enhance the environment of the Village.
- (3) The exterior design features of the sign will not be detrimental to the harmonious and orderly growth of the Village.
- (4) The exterior design features of the sign will not cause a substantial depreciation in the property values in the neighborhood.

f. The Commission shall render its decision within sixty (60) days of the conclusion of the meeting and shall notify the Zoning Administrator and the applicant thereof.

g. The concurring vote of four (4) members of the Design Review Commission shall be necessary to grant a variance. The order of the Commission shall be by written resolution and contain its findings of fact. No order granting a variance shall be valid for a period longer than twelve (12) months from the date of such order unless an application for building permit is filed within such period or the use is commenced within such period. The Board may grant one additional extension of time not exceeding twelve (12) months, upon written application made within the initial twelve (12) month period, without further notice or hearing; said right to so extend said time shall not include the right to grant additional relief by expanding the scope of the variance.

h. The Zoning Administrator shall forward the Commission's recommendation to the President and Board of Trustees for action at its next regular meeting. The President and Board of Trustees may:

- (1) Adopt by ordinance the decision of the Commission;
- (2) Overrule or modify the decision of the Commission and direct the issuance or denial of a certificate; or
- (3) Refer the variance request back to the Design Review Commission for further consideration.

i. Amendments to a variance may be obtained by application in the same manner as provided for an original variance.

B. Follow-up by the Zoning Administrator:

1. Upon the granting of a variance or amendments thereto, the exterior drawings, sketches, landscape and site plans, renderings and materials upon which said variance or amendment was granted shall be turned over to the Zoning Administrator whose responsibility it shall be to determine upon completion, that there have been no deviations therefrom. Such deviations shall constitute a violation of this Chapter, in which event the Zoning Administrator may stop work on the project in the same manner as for a violation of the Building Code. Work may not be resumed until such deviations are corrected.

2. It shall be the duty of the person to whom a variance has been granted to comply with the requirements of the variance and to obtain such inspections as may be necessary in order to assure compliance. The Zoning Administrator shall give notice to said person of any deficiencies found to exist. Failure to correct any deficiencies within ten (10) days after receipt of notification of such deficiency shall constitute a violation of this Chapter.

7-7-6.3: CRITERIA FOR DESIGN:

A. The purpose of these criteria is to establish a checklist of those items relative to signage that affect the physical aspect of Oak Park's environment. Pertinent to signage is the design of the sign and its relation to building and structures, planting, street furniture and miscellaneous other objects.

B. The following criteria for sign variances are not intended to restrict imagination, innovation or variety, but rather to assist in focusing on design principles that can result in creative solutions that will develop a satisfactory visual appearance within the Village, preserve property values and promote the public health, safety and welfare.

1. Every sign shall have good scale and proportion in its design and in its visual relationship to buildings and surroundings.

2. Sign materials, size, color, lettering, location and arrangement shall be an integral part of site and building design.

3. The colors, materials and lighting of every sign shall be restrained and harmonious.

4. The number of graphic elements on a sign shall be held to the minimum needed to convey the sign's major message, and shall be composed in proportion to the area of the sign face. Text should be kept to a minimum.

5. Lighting for signs shall be in harmony with the signs' and the project's design. If outside lighting is used, it should be arranged so the light source is shielded from view.

6. Sign supports and braces shall whenever possible be an integral part of the sign design. Necessary supports or braces shall whenever possible be hidden from public view.

7-7-6.4: RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ORDINANCES:

A. Nothing herein contained shall be deemed or construed to modify or alter the provisions of

any other chapter of the Village Code. In the event of a conflict between the requirements of this Chapter and those of any other chapter of the Village Code, the latter shall prevail and control.

B. If any section, paragraph, clause, phrase or part of this Chapter is for any reason held invalid, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining provisions of this Chapter; and, the application of these provisions to any persons or circumstances shall not be affected thereby. (Ord. 1985-0-34, 5-20-85)