

Legislation Text

File #: 170504, Version: 1

To amend Title 14 of The Philadelphia Code, entitled "Zoning and Planning," by revising certain provisions of Chapters 14-200, entitled "Definitions," and 14-900 "Signs," all under certain terms and conditions.

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA HEREBY ORDAINS:

SECTION 1. Title 14 of The Philadelphia Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

Key:

1. In Tables that contain bracketed table notes, and in the table notes, deletions are indicated by { } rather than [].

TITLE 14. ZONING AND PLANNING.

* * *

CHAPTER 14-200. DEFINITIONS.

§ 14-203. Definitions.

For purposes of this Zoning Code, the following definitions shall apply; words, phrases, and terms not defined herein, but defined in Title 4 (The Philadelphia Building Construction and Occupancy Code), shall be construed as defined in Title 4.

* * *

[(279) Sign, Accessory Digital News Ticker.

A digital, illuminated horizontal sign band, with or without flashing images, that displays a scrolling stream of news and informational messages, including but not limited to stock prices, sports scores, headline news, and entertainment news.]

(279) *Reserved*

* * *

[(281.1) Sign, Digital Display.

A sign that uses light emitting diodes (LEDs), charge coupled devices (CCDs), plasma or functionally equivalent technologies used to display a series of still images or full motion, usually remotely programmable and changeable. Digital displays do not include animated illumination signs

or static illumination signs.]

* * *

(283) Sign, Free-Standing.

Any sign that is supported by a structure of one or more *frame, pole, or other support structure* [columns, uprights, or braces] *permanently* erected in or upon the [ground, or affixed to outdoor business equipment or fixtures.] *ground*. Freestanding signs include monument signs, pylon signs, pole signs, and *other permanently affixed signs*. [A-frame signs.]

(284) Sign, Marquee.

A sign attached to or integrated into a marquee, which is an overhanging, substantially horizontal structure of permanent construction attached to a building, whether or not supported by the ground or sidewalk, that projects more than 18 in. over a sidewalk, *walkway*, or [other] right-of-way, but not including balconies or bay windows. The sign may be located on any face, top, or underside of the marquee.

* * *

(287) [Reserved.] Sign, Portable.

Any sign that is movable and not permanently attached to a structure or the ground. Portable signs include standing or upright, feather flag, banner, pennant, inflatable, wind-activated, and other movable signs. A-frame signs are not included in this definition.

* * *

(289) Sign, Projecting.

A sign of any material, *including text, images, or both text and images*, that is in any manner affixed to, printed, or painted on any exterior wall of a building or structure such that the sign extends more than 12 in. from the face of the building or structure to which it is attached. *This includes signs on the side of an awning.*

* * *

(295) Sign, Wall.

A sign, not including a window sign, that is in any manner affixed to, printed, projected, or painted on any exterior wall of a building or structure such that the sign extends forward of that wall by 12 in. or [less; or] *less*. [a] *A sign attached to or integrated into the front or sloped panel of an awning or canopy shall be considered a wall sign.* Wall signs include a sign that extends by 12 in. or less from the wall of a bay window parallel to the building façade.

* * *

(296.2) Sign Illumination, Animated.

Illumination of part or all of a sign drawing attention to a sign through an internal [or external] light source [or neon illumination] that exhibits changing intensities or colors, *including the following types of Animated Sign Illumination:*

- (a) *Digital Sign. A type of illumination that uses light emitting diodes (LEDs), charge coupled devices (CCDs), plasma or functionally equivalent technologies used to display a series of still images, usually remotely programmable and changeable.*

- (b) *Electronic Message Sign. A type of illumination that uses light emitting diodes (LEDs), charge coupled devices (CCDs), plasma, or functionally equivalent technologies to display a series of electronically changeable still messages consisting of alphanumeric text, such as those often used for gas price display signs and athletic scoreboards.*

- (c) *Accessory Digital News Ticker. A horizontal sign band that uses light emitting diodes (LEDs), charge coupled devices (CCDs), plasma, or functionally equivalent technologies to display a scrolling stream of messages, including but not limited to stock prices, sports scores, headline news, and entertainment news.*

(296.3) Sign Illumination, Static.

Illumination drawing attention to a sign through an internal or external light source or neon illumination that does not change intensities or colors. [Static illumination does not include digital displays.]

* * *

900. SIGNS.

* * *

§ 14-904. Accessory Sign Controls.

(1) Controls that Apply in All Zoning Districts.

These controls apply to specific types of signs in all zoning districts in addition to any other controls imposed by this Zoning Code.

(a) Signs on Awnings and Canopies and Marquee Signs.

(.1) Awnings, canopies, and marquees shall comply with the requirements set forth in §11-603 of the Philadelphia Code in addition to the requirements of this code.

(.2) *External lighting is permissible under an awning, provided that the lighting is directed toward the area beneath the awning and does not substantially back-light the signage or the awning.*

(a.1) Animated Sign Illumination.

* * *

[(b) Digital Display.

(.1) Location.

(a) Digital Displays are permitted in base zoning districts as set forth in Table 14-904-1.

(b) Digital displays are prohibited within 200 ft. of any intersection of any two or more streets.

(c) Digital displays are prohibited within 150 ft. of a residential district or facing any residential district within 300 ft. of the digital display.]

[.2] (.4) Sign Standards for *Animated Illumination*.

(a) Except for Accessory Digital News Tickers, the duration of *each message using animated illumination* [digital display] shall be no less than eight seconds. The change time between messages shall be no more than 0.25 seconds.

(b) During daylight hours, luminance shall be no greater than 1500 nits for all signs incorporating animated illumination. At all other times, luminance shall be no greater than 150 nits. Automatic dimming is required to maintain the appropriate illumination levels at all times.

[(c)] (b) Directional Signs.

* * *

(.4) Animated [illumination, digital displays] *illumination* and mechanical movement signs are prohibited.

* * *

[(d)] (c) Extension of Signs over Public Rights-of-Way.

* * *

[(d.1)] (d) Menu Board Sign.

* * *

(i) Window Sign.

(.1) Window signs shall be limited to the ground floor, except that in CMX-2, CMX-2.5,

CMX-3, CMX-4, CMX-5, CA-1, and CA-2 districts, window signs for businesses that are not located on the ground floor shall also be permitted in second floor windows. The total area of signs placed within a window or transparent glass door [signs per floor] shall not exceed 20% of the total transparent glazed area of [all] the window[s and] or transparent glass door[s on that floor] within which they are placed, as defined in §14-203 (Definitions) ”.

(.2) The amount of area [used] permitted for a window sign is [permitted] in addition to the maximum sign area permitted in § 14-902(4)(2) (Controls Applicable to Specific Zoning Districts and Defined Areas).

(.3) [Digital Displays are] *Animated illumination is* permitted on window signs in CMX-2, CMX 2.5, and CMX-3 districts, provided [the digital displays] *such signs* do not exceed 4 sq. ft. [total per building frontage] *within any door or window.*

(j) *Portable Sign.*

(.1) *Portable signs shall be temporarily secured to resist rolling, blowing away, tipping over, or otherwise moving from their secured location.*

(.2) *Portable signs shall not be located in the right-of-way.*

* * *

(2) Controls Applicable to Specific Zoning Districts.

(a) Sign Controls Table 14-904-1

Additional sign regulations applicable to specific zoning districts are shown in the following tables, collectively labeled Table 14-904-1.

* * *

(.3) Sign Characteristics

(.c) Digital [Display] Sign.

A “Yes” in the row labeled “Digital [Display]” Sign” indicates that digital [displays] signs are permitted for the sign type on the corresponding column. A “No” indicates that digital [displays] signs are prohibited.

(.e) Electronic Message Sign.

A “Yes in the row labeled “Electronic Message Sign” indicates that electronic message signs are permitted for the sign type in the corresponding column. A “No” indicates that electronic message signs are prohibited.

(f) *Accessory Digital News Ticker.*
 An accessory digital news ticker shall be permitted only in the Market Street East Advertising District, subject to the requirements of §14-906(6).

Table 14-904-1: Accessory Sign Controls for Specific Zoning Districts

RSD-1/2/3, RSA-1/2/3, RTA-1, RMX-1/2			
		Permitted Sign Types	
		Wall	Freestanding
Standards	Maximum Number	N/A	N/A

Maximum Area (sq. ft. {per} for each lot frontage) Home Occupations ⁴⁹²

<[http://library.amlegal.com/nxt/gateway.dll/Pennsylvania/philadelphia_pa/title14zoningandplanning/chapter14-900signs?f=templates\\$fn=document-frame.htm\\$3.0\\$sq=\\$x=>](http://library.amlegal.com/nxt/gateway.dll/Pennsylvania/philadelphia_pa/title14zoningandplanning/chapter14-900signs?f=templates$fn=document-frame.htm$3.0$sq=$x=>) (except as provided in § 14-604(10) <[Non-Residential Uses: 15 Home Occupations: Prohibited](http://library.amlegal.com/nxt/gateway.dll?f=jumplink$jumplink_x=Advanced$jumplink_vpc=first$jumplink_xsl=querylink.xsl$jumplink_sel=title;path;content-type;home-title;item-bookmark$jumplink_d=pennsylvania(philadelphia_pa)$jumplink_q=%5bfield%20folio-destination-name:%2714-604(10)%27%5d$jumplink_md=target-id=JD_14-604(10)>(b).(1): 1></p>
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Non-Residential Uses: 15			
	Maximum Height	The lower of the roof line or second floor window sill	7 ft.
	Additional Requirements	N/A	Prohibited in required setbacks
Permitted Sign Characteristics	Static Illumination	Yes	Yes
	Animated Illumination (all)	No	No
	{Digital Display}	{No}	{No}
	Mechanical Motion	No	No

RSA-4/5 and RM-1			
		Permitted Sign Types	
		Wall	Freestanding
Standards	Maximum Number	N/A	N/A

Maximum Area (sq. ft. {per} for each lot frontage) Home Occupations ⁴⁹³

<[http://library.amlegal.com/nxt/gateway.dll/Pennsylvania/philadelphia_pa/title14zoningandplanning/chapter14-900signs?f=templates\\$fn=document-frame.htm\\$3.0\\$sq=\\$x=>](http://library.amlegal.com/nxt/gateway.dll/Pennsylvania/philadelphia_pa/title14zoningandplanning/chapter14-900signs?f=templates$fn=document-frame.htm$3.0$sq=$x=>) (except as provided in § 14-604(10) <[Non-Residential Uses: 15 Home Occupations: Prohibited](http://library.amlegal.com/nxt/gateway.dll?f=jumplink$jumplink_x=Advanced$jumplink_vpc=first$jumplink_xsl=querylink.xsl$jumplink_sel=title;path;content-type;home-title;item-bookmark$jumplink_d=pennsylvania(philadelphia_pa)$jumplink_q=%5bfield%20folio-destination-name:%2714-604(10)%27%5d$jumplink_md=target-id=JD_14-604(10)>(b).(1): 1></p>
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Non-Residential Uses: 15			
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	Maximum Height	The lower of the roof line or second floor window sill	7 ft.
	Additional Requirements	N/A	Prohibited in required setbacks
Permitted Sign Characteristics	Static Illumination	Yes	Yes
	Animated Illumination (<i>all</i>)	No	No
	{Digital Display}	{No}	{No}
	Mechanical Motion	No	No

RM-2/3/4 and RMX-3			
		Permitted Sign Types	
		Wall, Projecting, and Marquee	Freestanding
Standards	Maximum Number	N/A	N/A

(sq. ft. {per} for each lot frontage) Home Occupations ⁴⁹⁴

<[http://library.amlegal.com/nxt/gateway.dll/Pennsylvania/philadelphia_pa/title14zoningandplanning/chapter14-900signs?f=templates\\$fn=document-frame.htm\\$3.0\\$q=\\$x](http://library.amlegal.com/nxt/gateway.dll/Pennsylvania/philadelphia_pa/title14zoningandplanning/chapter14-900signs?f=templates$fn=document-frame.htm$3.0$q=$x)> (except as provided in § 14-604(10) <[Non-Residential Uses: 24 Home Occupations: Prohibited](http://library.amlegal.com/nxt/gateway.dll?f=jumplink$jumplink_x=Advanced$jumplink_vpc=first$jumplink_xsl=querylink.xml$jumplink_sel=title;path;content-type;home-title;item-bookmark$jumplink_d=pennsylvania(philadelphia_pa)$jumplink_q=%5bfield%20folio-destination-name:%2714-604(10)%27%5d$jumplink_md=target-id=JD_14-604(10)>(b)(1): 1</p>
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Non-Residential Uses: 15			
	Maximum Height	The lower of the roof line or second floor window sill	7 ft.
	Additional Requirements	N/A	Prohibited in required setbacks
Permitted Sign Characteristics	Static Illumination	Yes	Yes
	Animated Illumination (<i>all</i>)	No	No
	{Digital Display}	{No}	{No}
	Mechanical Motion	No	No

CMX-2 and CMX-2.5			
		Permitted Sign Types	
		Wall, Projecting, and Marquee	Freestanding
Standards	Maximum Number	Wall: N/A Projecting: 1 per frontage	1 per building

	Maximum Area	Lots with one building frontage: Lots with more than one building frontage:	3 sq. ft. per lin. ft. of building frontage Side(s): 3 sq. ft. per lin. ft. of building frontage side: 2 sq. ft. per lin. ft. of building frontage	100 sq. ft. total
	Maximum Height	The lower of roof line or second floor window sill		20 ft.
Permitted Sign Characteristics	Static Illumination	Yes, except that in the CMX-2.5 district internally-illuminated cabinet signs shall be prohibited.		Yes
	Animated Illumination (<i>all</i>)	No		No
	{Digital Display}	{No}		{No}
	Mechanical Motion	Yes		Yes

CMX-3				
		Permitted Sign Types		
		Wall, Projecting, and Marquee		Freestanding
Standards	Maximum Number	N/A		1 per building
	Maximum Area	Lots with one building frontage: Lots with more than one building frontage:	6 sq. ft. per lin. ft. of building frontage Side(s): 6 sq. ft. per lin. ft. of building frontage Lot 4 sq. ft. per lin. ft. of building frontage	100 sq. ft. per face; up to 2 faces
	Maximum Height	The lower of roof line or second floor window sill		20 ft.
Permitted Sign Characteristics	Static Illumination	Yes		Yes
	Animated Illumination (<i>all</i>)	No		No
	{Digital Display}	{No}		{No}
	Mechanical Motion	Yes		Yes

CMX-4/5			
		Permitted Sign Types	
		Wall, Projecting, and Marquee	Freestanding
Standards	Maximum Number	N/A	1 per frontage

	Maximum Area	2 sq. ft. per lin. ft. of ground floor frontage; 100 sq. ft. per sign	50 sq. ft./face; up to 4 faces
	Maximum Height	The lower of the roof line or window sill	10 ft.
	Additional Requirements	Notwithstanding § 14-904(d), projecting signs shall not be more than 24 in. over any wayN/A	
Permitted Sign Characteristics	Static Illumination	Yes	Yes
	{Animated Illumination}	{Wall: Yes Others: No}	{Yes}
	<i>Animated Illumination: Digital Sign</i>	Wall: Yes Others: No	Yes
	<i>Animated Illumination: Electronic Message Sign</i>	Wall: Yes Others: No	Yes
	<i>Animated Illumination: Accessory Digital News Ticker</i>	Yes, as provided in §14-906(6)	Yes, as provided in §14-906(6)
	{Digital Display}	{Wall: Yes Others: No}	{Yes}
	Mechanical Motion	Yes	Yes

		CA-1		
		Permitted Sign Types:		
		Wall, Projecting, and Marquee	Freestanding	Portable
Standards	Maximum Number	N/A	1 per lot	1 per building frontage
	Maximum Area	10 sq. ft. per lin. ft. of ground floor frontage of the business or use which the sign is associated	200 sq. ft. / face, up to 4 faces	10 sq. ft.

	Maximum Height	The roof line or the higher {lower} of the roof line or parapet wall, if applicable {second floor window sill}	40 ft.	5 ft.
Permitted Sign Characteristics	Static Illumination	Yes	Yes	No
	{Animated Illumination}	{No}	{No}	
	Animated Illumination: Digital Sign	Wall: Yes Others: No	Yes	No
	Animated Illumination: Electronic Message Sign	Wall: Yes Others: No	Yes	No
	Animated Illumination: Accessory Digital News Ticker	No	No	No
	{Digital Display}	{Wall: Yes Others: No}	{Yes}	
	Mechanical Motion	Yes	Yes	No

CA-2 Permitted Sign Types: Wall, Projecting, and Marquee Freestanding Portable Standards
 Maximum Number N/A per 15,000 sq. ft. of lot area per building frontage
 Maximum Area 100 sq. ft. per lin. ft. of ground floor frontage of the business or use with which the sign is associated
 150 sq. ft. / face, up to 4 faces
 10 sq. ft. clbrdr
 Maximum Height The roof line or the higher {lower} of the roof line or parapet wall, if applicable {second floor window sill} 40 ft. 5 ft.
Permitted Sign Characteristics
 Static Illumination Yes Yes No
 {Animated Illumination} {Wall: Yes Others: No} {Yes} Animated Illumination: Digital Sign Wall: Yes Others: No Yes No
 Animated Illumination: Electronic Message Sign Wall: Yes Others: No Yes No
 Animated Illumination: Accessory Digital News Ticker No No No
 {Digital Display} {Wall: Yes Others: No} {Yes} Mechanical Motion Yes Yes No

IRMX and ICMX			
		Permitted Sign Type	
		Wall, Projecting, and Marquee	Freestanding
Standards	Maximum Number	N/A	1 per lot frontage
	Maximum Area	Lots facing one street line: 100 sq. ft. / face, of building frontage Lots facing one street line: 3 sq. ft./lin. ft. of building frontage on the short side, of building frontage on the	up to 4 faces
	Maximum Height	The lower of the roof line or window sill	20 ft.
Permitted Sign Characteristics	Static Illumination	Yes	Yes

	{Animated Illumination}	{Wall: Yes Others: No}	{Yes}
	<i>Animated Illumination: Digital Sign</i>	<i>Wall: Yes Others: No</i>	<i>Yes</i>
	<i>Animated Illumination: Electronic Message Sign</i>	<i>Wall: Yes Others: No</i>	<i>Yes</i>
	<i>Animated Illumination: Accessory Digital News Ticker</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>
	{Digital Display}	{Wall: Yes Others: No}	{Yes}
	Mechanical Motion	Yes	Yes

I-1			
		Permitted Sign Types	
		Wall, Projecting, and Marquee	Freestanding
Standards	Maximum Number	N/A	1 per lot frontage
	Maximum Area	100 sq. ft. per lot frontage	100 sq. ft. / face, up to 4 faces
	Maximum Height	The lower of the roof line second floor window sill	20 ft.
Permitted Sign Characteristics	Static Illumination	Yes	Yes
	{Animated Illumination}	{Wall: Yes Others: No}	{Yes}
	<i>Animated Illumination: Digital Sign</i>	<i>Wall: Yes Others: No</i>	<i>Yes</i>
	<i>Animated Illumination: Electronic Message Sign</i>	<i>Wall: Yes Others: No</i>	<i>Yes</i>
	<i>Animated Illumination: Accessory Digital News Ticker</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>
	{Digital Display}	{Wall: Yes Others: No}	{Yes}
	Mechanical Motion	Yes	Yes

I-2/I-3/I-P			
		Permitted Sign Types	
		Wall, Projecting, and Marquee	Freestanding
Standards	Maximum Number	Others: N/A	1 per lot frontage
	Maximum Area	1 street front: 15 sq. ft./lin. ft. on building frontage 2+ street fronts: 15 sq. ft./lin. ft. on side, 5 sq. ft./lin. ft. on long	100 sq. ft. / face, up to 4 faces

	Maximum Height	The lower of the roof line second floor window sill	20 ft.
	Additional Requirements	N/A	N/A
Permitted Sign Characteristics	Static Illumination	Yes	Yes
	{Animated Illumination }	{Yes}	{Yes}
	<i>Animated Illumination: Digital Sign</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Yes</i>
	<i>Animated Illumination: Electronic Message Sign</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Yes</i>
	<i>Animated Illumination: Accessory Digital News Ticker</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>
	{Digital Display}	{Yes}	{Yes}
	Mechanical Motion	Yes	Yes

* * *

(3) Building Identification Signs in CMX-4, CMX-5, IRMX, ICMX, and I-1 Districts

* * *

(d) Building identification signs with animated illumination [or digital displays] shall require a special exception approval.

SECTION 2. This Ordinance shall take effect immediately.