

VILLAGE OF MENOMONEE FALLS

DESIGN GUIDELINES



Signs and Awnings

Adopted 10-30-02

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Adopting Resolution

Resolution #001-ACB-02

Village of Menomonee Falls
Architecture Control Board

DESIGN STANDARDS

Sign and Awning Design Standards

WHEREAS, The Department of Community Development was directed by the Village Board to revise the procedure for review of signage within the Village; and

WHEREAS, Staff drafted said new procedure; and

WHEREAS, part of the new procedure involves the use of design standards for Staff to use when signs are reviewed; and

WHEREAS, the Architectural Control Board has reviewed the proposed standards;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Sign and Awning Design Standards are hereby approved by the Architectural Control Board this 30 day of October, 2002


Lyle Fenske, Architectural Control Board Chairman


Richard A. Parrakopf, Village Manager Clerk / Treasurer

Purpose

Welcome to the Village of Menomonee Falls Design and Development Guidelines Manual—Signs. Its purpose is to further explain and graphically depict many community guidelines. We organized the Development Guidelines Manual to allow you to understand our design standards. These guidelines are contained in multiple booklets. These booklets consist of Commercial, Office, Industrial, Mixed Use, Multi-Family Residential, Single Family Residential, Signs and Awnings, and booklets for specific design districts.

Signs are an important part of any successful business, but it is often forgotten that signs become an important part of the landscape. The Village of Menomonee Falls has developed these sign guidelines to help promote strong business practices while preserving the image of the Village. The complete sign code is available on line at www.municode.com or for purchase through the Village Clerk's Office. We hope this information is helpful. If you have any questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact the Department of Community Development at 262-532-4200.



Design Concepts for Review of Signs and Awnings

Goals and Objectives

It is the intent of these guidelines to ensure that the design and location of signs and their materials and colors are consistent with the character and scale of the buildings to which they are attached and are visually harmonious with surrounding development.

- *Reinforcing distinctive areas and districts and creating a sense of place;*
- *Creating a gracious neighborhood environment harmonious with Menomonee Falls natural, architectural, and village character;*
- *Achieving creative architectural solutions;*
- *Complementing the architectural character of unique neighborhoods.*
- *Promoting visual harmony between new and old buildings;*
- *Enhancing the pedestrian experience; and*
- *Using high-quality materials*



General Guidelines

The are many guidelines that relate to all signs that are within the Village of Menomonee Falls. These guidelines are indicated below.

1. All sign cabinets, bases, channel letters, and other elements shall coordinate with the overall color scheme of the property.
2. All multi-tenant buildings and shopping centers shall have coordinated signage design and a master sign program. (See Master Sign Programs on Page 14).
3. No more than four colors shall be allowed on a sign in addition to Black and White. Shades of the same color shall count as one color such as a variation from light grey to dark grey.
4. All signs shall be architecturally integrated with their surroundings in terms of size, shape, color, texture, and lighting so that they are complementary to the overall design of the building and are not in visual competition with other signs in the area.
5. All signs shall convey their message clearly and legibly.



A Raceway mounted sign with the raceway finished to match the background wall and two examples of a flat sheet sign with trimmed edges raised letters.



6. To minimize the visual mass and projection of the sign, all electrical transformer boxes and raceways should be concealed from public view. If a raceway cannot be mounted internally—behind the finished exterior wall—the exposed metal surfaces of the raceway should be finished to match the background wall, or integrated into the overall design of the sign.
7. All signs shall be vandal-proof and weather resistant
8. Signs, which incorporate a mixture of media, such as a cabinet sign with a rim of neon, are not permitted.
9. Dark colored or white backgrounds on signs are generally encouraged. Extremely bright background colors such as bright red, orange or yellow are discouraged.
10. Flat sheet signs (such as plywood) shall have a raised edge or frame to improve the finished appearance of the sign. Raised letters shall also be provided.



An example of a primary sign and a directional sign coordination.



Directional and Operational Signs

1. Driveway directional signs shall only be used for projects where circulation is complex and traffic must proceed through the site along a specific path for service. Where the layout of the parking lot and driveways are obvious and clearly apparent to the driver entering from the street, directional signage is not appropriate. When not appropriate or needed, such signage can visually clutter the site and will be discouraged.
2. Directional and Operation signs shall simply indicated enter, exit, service areas, parking areas, restrooms, or other such signs relating to the functional operation of the building or site. These types of signs shall not be designed with company names, logos.

Installation

1. No sign shall conceal architectural features or details of a building.
2. All exposed conduit shall be concealed from public view.
3. To minimize irreversible damage to masonry, all mountings and supports drilled into masonry (including terra cotta) should be into mortar joints and *not* into the face of the masonry.
4. Removal of signs shall include the re-tuck pointing of all masonry, replacement of any masonry, patching and repainting of all stucco, EIFS, and metal panels or façade material.
5. These potential maintenance problems shall be addressed during the design phase of the project.

Sign Message/Copy

1. Signage must be designed to fit properly into the sign location. In some cases, the corporate identification and/or logo must be split into two or more lines to fit attractively into the space.
2. Extremely small letters on the sign face (or very small individual letters used as part of a sign) do not read well and are discouraged.
3. When designing a cabinet sign, an ample border around letters is encouraged.

Wall Signs



Examples of wall signs that compliment the building architecture, coordinated tenant signage, and signs that are proportionate to the building.

1. Wall Signs should be mounted in locations that respect the design of a building, including the arrangement of bays and openings. Signs should not obscure windows, grillework, piers, pilasters, ornamental features, etc.
2. Wall-mounted signs on friezes, lintels, spandrels, and fascias over storefront windows should be sized to fit within these surfaces and not extend above, below, or beyond them.
3. Wall-mounted signs should be centered over the tenant space.
4. Neon backlit signs with opaque, reverse channel letters, neon backlit signs with dimensional plexiglass letters, channel letters are appropriate for many locations.
5. All exterior mounted raceways shall have a finish that is identical to the wall to which it is mounted.
6. Changeable copy letter signs shall have a lockable cover design.

- 7. Graphics applied to windows or awnings of commercial structures shall be coordinated with the color scheme of the building and surrounding properties.
- 8. Signs shall be proportionate to the dimensions of their location. Cabinet signs or individual sign letters which overwhelm their location on a parapet or other designated area on the building are not allowed. Existing over-sized cabinet signs shall be replaced with more appropriately sized signage at the time of a sign application.
- 9. Type of wall sign. Individual letter signs are preferred to box signs. When box signs are used, the sign shall be framed to create a clearly defined edge, provide shadow relief and offer a substantial appearance.
- 10. Exposed supports or guy wires to stabilize signs are strongly discouraged.
- 11. Individual letters are often the best choice for office identification signs. Cabinet signs are generally not appropriate for office buildings.
- 12. The color of the trim caps shall match the color of the letter face or the cabinet return.
- 13. The use of roof signs shall be avoided where possible. However, if the applicant submits information indicating there is not other options than the sign may be considered. Where roof signs are the only feasible option, ensure that the bottom of the letters or sign are mounted closely to the roof. The highest portion of the sign shall not project above the highest point of the roof (see Section 78 of the Municipal Code). Mounting details shall be provided in the application to ensure that the roof sign will be mounted appropriately.
- 14. The use of plastic foam letters are not allowed.



Free Standing Signs

1. Freestanding monument signs are appropriate throughout the village. In some instances a pole sign or other similar sign is more appropriate due to site conditions.
2. Sign materials shall compliment the character of the building the sign identifies.
3. Free-standing sign bases shall be made of permanent, durable materials such as concrete or brick.
4. Landscaping shall be designed around the base of freestanding signs to integrate the sign with the ground plane and screen out any low level flood lights. Irrigation systems shall be designed so they do not damage the sign.
5. Freestanding signs on poles, which have a top-heavy appearance, are discouraged.
6. When a pole sign is used the pole shall have a shroud. The shroud shall have a substantial appearance (width).



Awnings

1. Awnings should be mounted in locations that respect the design of a building, including the arrangement of bays and openings. In general, they should not obscure transom windows, grillework, piers, pilasters, and ornamental features, etc.
2. In openings with transoms, the awnings should be mounted on the horizontal framing element separating the storefront window from the transom.
3. Awnings should be designed to project over individual window and door openings and *not* be a continuous feature extending over masonry piers or arches.
4. Shed and box awnings, with no end panels, are preferable to convex (bullnose) or domed awnings. Convex-shaped (domed) awnings may, however, be appropriate for some locations with round-arched window/door openings.
5. Awnings with back-lit graphics or other kinds of interior illumination are not permitted.
6. Awnings with a solid color are preferred. Striped awnings may be appropriate for some buildings without ornamental facades. Striped awnings with highly contrasting, bright colors may be visually blaring and inappropriate.
7. Awnings should be of woven fabric or durable long lasting material. High gloss finishes shall not be permitted.
8. Metal (or glass) canopies may be appropriate on some buildings if they are compatible in scale and overall design. Canopies should be simple in design and not obscure architectural features.



An example of sign illumination with ground mounted lighting screened by vegetation. Notice the floodlight located within the plantings.

Sign Lighting

1. Arrange all external spot or flood lighting so that the light source is screened from direct view of passersby. Sign lighting shall not shine onto adjacent properties into the eyes of motorists and pedestrians.

2. Halo-lit or back-lit letters convey a subtle and attractive appearance and are very legible under moderate ambient light conditions and as such are highly encouraged for both office and retail use. Face illuminated letters may be appropriate for retail use.
3. Illumination of individual letter signs by shining light upon them is discouraged for signs placed high on building walls.
4. Where signs face residential areas, a low level of brightness shall be maintained. This can be achieved using halo-lit letters.
5. Projecting lighting fixtures used for externally illuminating signs should be simple and unobtrusive in appearance. They should not obscure the graphics of the sign.
6. All signs shall not be overly bright for their surroundings

Window Signage

1. Window signage shall not clutter the window.
2. Window signage shall be positioned within the window so as to allow emergency response units a clear area to see into the business.
3. Appropriate materials for window signage are etched glass, applied vinyl letters, or similar effects.
4. Plain butcher paper, and similar materials shall not be used for window signage.
5. The overall design of the window sign such as font, color, position, proportion and character shall compliment the architectural style of the building.



Master Sign Programs

1. Master sign programs shall be designed to complement the style, color and materials of the building. The best sign programs are integrated to become a natural part of the building facade.

2. Sign programs which provide attractive combinations of type and styles encouraged. Within the master sign program, the background sign color should be consistent.
3. The minimum distance between adjoining signs should be 36 inches or as defined by an approved master sign program.
4. Repetitious signage information on the same building frontage shall be avoided.
5. Multi tenant building shall provide a master sign program.
6. New and remodeled building designs shall provide logical sign areas, allowing flexibility for new users as the building is re-tenanted over time. Designs which provide for convenient and attractive replacement of signs are encouraged.

Submittal Requirements

The following requirements are found in Section 78 of the Municipal Code. The entire sign code may be found at www.municode.com.

(c) *Application.*

(1) *The application for a permit for erection of a sign shall include:*

a. *Survey. A survey by a licensed land surveyor, showing lot lines, existing buildings, existing site features, existing signs, and proposed sign(s) location(s) may be required.*

b. *Drawing. A scaled drawing of the proposed sign(s) showing all dimensions (height, width, depth, etc.).*

c. *Materials. Samples of materials and replications of the exact colors proposed to be used.*

d. *Context. Photographs of or at the quality of 35 mm format shall be submitted showing the existing buildings and existing sign(s). These photographs shall be enlarged to a size sufficient to show all details. A color rendering of proposed*

buildings and signs shall be submitted for new projects.

e. *Specifications. Set of construction plans and specifications of the proposed sign. The department of community development may prescribe regulations consistent with the provisions of this chapter concerning the form and content of all applications for the various forms of permits herein required.*

f. *Permit application fees. See section 42-78. The fee for a sign permit is an application fee and no refunds are allowed.*

In addition the following items may be required.

1. Letter sample (exact typeface to be used).
2. All information shall be provided in a format that will fit into an 11x 17 manila folder.
3. Type intensity, location, and shielding of light.