

Town of Little Black, Taylor County, Wisconsin
CHAPTER 70 OTHER

Section 70.01 SIGNS ORDINANCE

1. **AUTHORITY AND PURPOSE.** This Ordinance is adopted under the general authority granted pursuant to §§ 60.10, 60.22(3), 61.34, and 84.30 of the Wisconsin Statutes, to promote the public safety, health and general welfare of the community, and to further the safe and orderly layout of signage within the Town.
2. **DEFINITIONS:** The term “sign” as used in this Ordinance encompasses all of the following:
 - A. **SIGN, ADVERTISING:** Any non-point-of-sale sign, usually of changeable character, such as a billboard, which portrays advertisements for establishments, services, articles or products not necessarily associated with the premises upon which the sign is located.
 - B. **SIGN, BANNER.** Any sign in which the characters, letters, illustrations, or ornamentations are applied to cloth, paper, fabric or other similar material, with or without frame.
 - C. **SIGN, BILLBOARD:** Signs which direct potential patrons or visitors to a specific place of business interest or community and which may indicate either goods or services offered or both.
 - D. **SIGN, DIRECTIONAL.** A sign erected for the purpose of directing persons to a place of business, recreation or public building, school or church.
 - E. **SIGN, FLASHING:** Any illuminated sign on which the artificial light is not maintained stationary or constant in intensity and color at all times when such sign is in use.
 - F. **SIGN, GROUND SIGN:** A sign supported by one or more uprights, poles or braces placed in or upon the ground surface and not attached to any building and with the bottom of the sign surface more than three feet but less than eight feet above grade. Ground signs include the following:
 1. **ILLUMINATED SIGN.** A sign designed to give forth any artificial light or reflect such light from an artificial source.
 2. **POLE SIGN.** A sign with an elevated surface supported by one or more vertical poles or columns placed in the ground with the sign surface a minimum of eight feet above ground.
 3. **PORTABLE SIGN.** A free-standing sign not permanently anchored or secured to either a structure or the ground such as, but not limited to, "A" frame, "T" shaped or inverted "V" shaped signs.
 - G. **PROJECTING SIGN.** A sign which projects from and is supported by a wall or a building and extends out from the wall more than twelve (12) inches.
 - H. **ROOF SIGN.** A sign which is erected, constructed or maintained upon, and projects above or beyond the roof or parapet.
 - I. **STRING SIGN.** Any sign in which lights, ribbons, pennants or other similar small, attention-drawing devices are attached to a rope, string, wire, pole or similar support.
 - J. **WALL SIGN.** A sign which is attached directly to a building wall and which does not extend out more than twelve (12) inches therefrom, with the exposed face of the sign in a plane parallel to the building wall.
3. **APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURES**

- A. Permit Required. Except as provided herein, no sign larger than thirty-two (32) square feet shall be located, erected, moved, reconstructed or enlarged, including walls and roofs of buildings or structures, until a sign permit has been issued that confirms compliance with this Ordinance. The permit number shall appear in the lower right hand corner of such signs. Area measurements of signs shall include any border or trim but not the standard or supporting structure.
1. Signs placed by or on behalf of individuals or businesses who contribute to the development or maintenance of a community park, recreation area or similar project may be allowed by the Town Board with no permit(s) required. These signs shall not conflict with state or federal sign regulations, shall not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in area and shall meet all setbacks or be part of an existing legal fence.
- B. Application Form. Applications for sign permits shall be made on a form approved by the Town Board and available from the Town Clerk. A completed "Sign Permit Application" form shall be filed with the Town Clerk. The application shall be accompanied by the following attachments:
1. Sketch Map. A rough sketch showing the conceptual idea of the project and approximate location and dimensions of the project.
2. Other Documents as the town board may require..
- C. Application Review. The Town clerk shall forward the completed application to the Town Chair for review at the next regularly-scheduled Town Board meeting that is at least seven (7) days after the date of the Town Clerk's receipt of the application. The Town Chair shall make a recommendation to the Town Board for approval or denial, stating all reasons for recommending denial. The Town Board shall approve or deny every Town Sign Permit Application and may, as a condition of issuance, place specific restrictions or conditions on the permit, which shall require compliance by the permittee.
1. Reasons for denying a Town Sign Permit Application shall be stated in writing and may include, but are not limited to:
- a. The inconsistency or nonconformance of the proposed sign with his ordinance; any existing town comprehensive plan, master plan, or land use plan; town ordinances, rules, regulations, or plans; and any applicable county, state, or federal laws, ordinances, rules, regulations, or plans.
- b. The sign when constructed, reconstructed, or altered as proposed would be dangerous or unsafe for persons in the town.
- c. The application as filed and submitted is incomplete or contains false material as determined by the Town Board.
- d. Alternative sign locations are available which will be safer for persons ingressing or egressing on local roads and for motor vehicle or for persons traveling on the adjacent highway by motor vehicle.
- e. Alternative sign locations are available which will preserve or better protect more prime or productive agricultural or forestry land in the town.
- f. Alternative sign locations are available which will have less negative land use impact on historically, archaeologically, community, public, or culturally significant or environmentally sensitive parcels of land or facilities in the town, including land adjacent to or near the proposed sign.
2. Permit Period. A Sign Construction Permit is effective for twelve (12) months from the date of approval by the Town Board. If the sign has not been completed within that

period, the permit is deemed expired and a new application must be submitted and approved. Within 60 days after the expiration of a permit without completion of construction, the applicant shall cause the property to be restored to the condition it was in immediately prior to commencement of the work authorized by the expired permit, unless a new permit is obtained during the 60 day period.

3. **Sign Inspection.** The applicant shall notify the Town Clerk within five (5) working days after completion of construction or improvement of the sign. The Town shall conduct an inspection of the sign to ensure full compliance with all provisions of this Ordinance and any permit issued hereunder, and shall require the applicant to make such modifications as are necessary for full compliance. A date for completion of modifications shall be specified.
4. **Fee Requirements.** The fees required in connection with each sign permit application shall be determined as follows:
 - A. **Application Fee.** The standard fee for sign permit applications shall be set by the Town Board and may be amended from time to time by resolution. The Town Board may, at its discretion, set an individual application fee higher than the standard fee amount if extraordinary circumstances so dictate, such as the need for expert engineering or legal review due to site- or use-specific features. The fee shall be non-refundable unless the application is withdrawn prior to the commencement of processing of the application.
5. **Town Authority Preserved.** The Town of Little Black, notwithstanding the issuance of any permit under this Ordinance or construction of any sign pursuant to such permit, reserves all of its rights and authority to cause any changes, additions, repairs, reconstruction or relocation of any sign located within a dedicated right-of-way at any time. The sign owner will remain responsible for costs associated with any such changes.
6. Receipt of a permit under this ordinance does not relieve the permit holder from obtaining any other permit that may be required by any state law or other local ordinance.
7. **GENERAL STANDARDS:**
 - A. No signs or billboards shall be allowed in the Town except as permitted under the requirements herein, except signs lawfully existing at the time of the adoption or amendments of this Ordinance may be continued although the use, size or location does not conform with the provisions of this Ordinance. Except for necessary and routine maintenance, any modification, enlargement, or alteration to such lawfully existing signs will trigger the requirements of this Ordinance.
 - B. At no time shall signs, banners or flags be permitted within a vision clearance triangle in such a manner as to restrict vision or impair safety, or otherwise placed in locations that would threaten public health or safety.
 - C. No sign, banner or flag shall be illuminated by any source of light that is not shielded to prevent glare or illumination of residential property other than that of the sign owner; nor shall the glare of any light source be so directed as to impair the safety of moving vehicles. Lighting should provide good visibility, minimum glare and minimum spillage onto other properties or into the sky.
 - D. No signs, except of a public nature normal to public right-of-ways, shall be permitted within any public right-of-way without approval in writing from the Town Board.
8. **SIGNS IN RESIDENTIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ZONING DISTRICTS:**
 - A. Signs used exclusively to advertise sale of agricultural products produced on the premises, or signs giving the name of the farm owner and rural directory signs when all such signs are

established in accordance with this ordinance, may be permitted if they do not to exceed fifty (50) square feet.

B. Other signs are permitted in the residential and agricultural zoning district if they are located more than fifteen (15) feet from the public right-of-way line, including but not limited to the following:

1. Customary professional and home occupation signs and "For Rent" or "For Sale" signs, not exceeding sixteen (16) square feet in area.
2. Signs necessary to the public safety and welfare or for the identification, operation or protection of a public utility installation.
3. One announcement sign or bulletin board of an appropriate nature, identifying a hospital, school, church or other similar facility or institution, not exceeding thirty-two (32) square feet in area.
4. Temporary signs of not more than twenty (20) square feet in area for the purpose of advertising an auction, bazaar, festival, political or other special event. Signs shall be promptly removed at the conclusion of the event.
5. Off premises signs, provided they are directional only, the outside dimensions of which do not exceed twenty (20) square feet, and are not in conflict with Ch. Wisconsin Administrative Code Regulations, or State Statutes.
6. Signs necessary to the public safety and welfare or for the identification, operation or protection of a public utility installation, which are no larger than three (3) square feet; such signs may be located any distance outside of the public right-of-way.
7. In all agricultural districts, signs which advertise agricultural products that are produced on the property where the sign is located shall be permitted provided the following conditions are met:
 - a. Signs shall not conflict with state or federal sign regulations.
 - b. For signs larger than thirty-two (32) square feet, all conditions described in Paragraph 3 shall be met.
 - c. Signs shall be located on an operating farm and adjacent to the principal building or buildings used in the production of the agricultural product being advertised.
 - d. Signs shall contain only one (1) message per face, and no more than one (1) double faced or two single faced signs larger than thirty-two (32) square feet per face shall be permitted.
 - e. Signs which are thirty-two (32) square feet in area or less shall be permitted as farm identification signs. These signs shall include the farm name and/or surname of the farm operator.
 - f. No sign other than a farm identification sign shall contain a brand name, trade name, organization, coop, union or bureau name.

9. SIGNS IN THE COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL ZONING DISTRICT:

A. The following signs are permitted:

1. All signs permitted in Section 8.
2. Identifying sign(s) for the principal building of the commercial or industrial enterprise advertising a business or activity conducted on the premises in accordance with the following provisions:
 - a. Wall signs placed against the exterior walls of buildings shall not extend more than one (1) foot from the wall surface and shall not exceed three hundred (300) square feet in area.

- b. Projecting signs fastened to, suspended from, or supported by attached structures shall not exceed forty (40) square feet in area on a side.
- c. Ground signs shall meet all yard requirements for the district in which it is located, shall not exceed two hundred (200) square feet on a side and shall not exceed twenty-five (25) feet in height above the main road grade.
- d. Roof signs shall not exceed ten (10) feet in height above the roof or parapet nor may such a sign extend beyond the building upon which it is located and shall not exceed two hundred (200) square feet on a side.

10. OFF-PREMISES SIGNS AND BILLBOARDS:

- A. Signs and billboards shall meet the requirements of Ch. TRANS 201, Wisconsin Administrative Code and Section 84.30, Wis. Stats. Signs and billboards shall meet all yard requirements for the zoning district in which they are located, have a minimum separation of 1,320 feet from all other billboards which exceed 300 square feet in area, and be directional.
- B. Signs and billboards which are not within the jurisdiction of the Wisconsin Administrative Code or state statutes, shall meet the same size requirements as on-premises signs for the appropriate zoning district.

11. PENALTY PROVISION Any person, partnership, corporation, or other legal entity that fails to comply with the provisions of this ordinance shall, upon conviction, pay a forfeiture of \$50, plus the applicable surcharges, assessments, and costs for each violation. Each day a violation exists or continues constitutes a separate offense under this ordinance. In addition, the town board may seek injunctive relief from a court of record to enjoin further violations.

12. SEVERABILITY CLAUSE If any provision of this ordinance or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the invalidity does not affect other provisions or applications of this ordinance that can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions of this ordinance are severable.

13. EFFECTIVE DATE

This ordinance is effective on publication or posting.

The town clerk shall properly post or publish this ordinance as required under s. 60.80, Wis. stats.

Adopted this 12 day of February, 2017 by the Town Board of Supervisors of
The Town of Little Black, Taylor County

Town Chairman Daniel Hoffma

Town Supervisor Bryan Jochemsen

Town Supervisor Paul H. R.

Filed this 12th day of February, 2017

Attest: Joanne Smith Town Clerk