

**ST. CROIX COUNTY  
CODE OF ORDINANCES  
LAND USE AND  
DEVELOPMENT**

**SECTION 17.65  
SIGN REGULATION**

**EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2007**

**AMENDED 10-1-14**

**AMENDED 8-15-17**

**ST. CROIX COUNTY PLANNING AND ZONING DEPARTMENT  
GOVERNMENT CENTER  
1101 CARMICHAEL ROAD  
HUDSON, WI 54016  
715-386-4680  
715-386-4686 FAX  
[WWW.CO.SAINT-CROIX.WI.US](http://WWW.CO.SAINT-CROIX.WI.US)**



## 17.65 TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>A.</b>	<b>Findings and Purpose</b>	<b>1</b>
	1. Findings of Fact _____	1
	2. Purpose _____	2
	3. Effective Date _____	2
<b>B.</b>	<b>General Provisions</b>	<b>3</b>
	1. Applicability _____	3
	2. Substitution Clause & Sign Content _____	3
	3. Signs In The Public Right-Of-Way _____	3
	4. Signs Exempt From Regulation _____	3
	5. Suspension of Certain Size, Shape, Placement and Content Restrictions During an Election Campaign Period _____	4
	6. Prohibited Signs _____	5
<b>C.</b>	<b>Standards</b>	<b>6</b>
	1. Placement Standards _____	6
	2. Dimensional Standards _____	6
	3. Illumination Standards _____	6
	4. Construction & Maintenance Standards _____	7
	5. Sign Maintenance & Repair _____	7
	6. Overlay Districts _____	7
<b>D.</b>	<b>Sign Types</b>	<b>9</b>
	1. Signs Permitted by Zoning District _____	9
	2. Permanent On-Premise Signs _____	12
	3. Temporary On-Premise Signs _____	15
	4. Temporary Off-Premise Signs _____	16
<b>E.</b>	<b>Administration</b>	<b>17</b>
	1. Nonconforming Signs _____	17
	2. Permit Required _____	17
	3. Land Use Permit For Signage _____	17
	4. Permit Decision & Appeal Process _____	18
	5. Expiration _____	19
	6. Permit Revocation _____	19



# ST. CROIX COUNTY CODE OF ORDINANCES

## LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

### SECTION 17.65

#### SIGN REGULATION

*The Board of Supervisors of St. Croix County, Wisconsin, does ordain as follows;*

Repeal Section 17.65 of the St. Croix County Zoning Ordinance and recreate as follows:

### 17.65 SIGN REGULATION

#### A. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE

##### 1. FINDINGS OF FACT

a. The Board of Supervisors hereby finds as follows:

- 1) Exterior signs have a substantial impact on the character and quality of the environment.
- 2) Signs provide an important medium through which individuals may convey a variety of messages.
- 3) Signs can create safety hazards that threaten the public health, safety or welfare. Such a safety threat is particularly great for signs that are structurally inadequate, or that may confuse or distract drivers or pedestrians, or that may interfere with official directional or warning signs.
- 4) Signs can also threaten the public welfare by creating aesthetic concerns and detriments to property values. Such aesthetic concerns and detriments to property values are particularly great when an accumulation of signs results in visual clutter, or when one or more signs spoil vistas or views, or when one or more signs add or increase commercialism in noncommercial areas.
- 5) The ability to erect signs serving certain functions, such as an address sign or a sign announcing that the property on which it sits is for sale or for lease or a sign used to indicate areas not available (or available) for public use, is an integral part of nearly every property owner's ability to realize the fundamental attributes of property ownership. The same cannot be said for signs serving other functions, such as billboards erected so as to be visible from public rights-of-way. Such signs are primarily designed to take advantage of an audience drawn to that location by the public's substantial investment in rights-of-way and other public property.
- 6) Signs serving certain other functions, such as small off-premise signs that are in place for fewer than four days, are necessary to enable visitors or residents to efficiently reach their intended destinations. Experience teaches that citizens often plan as if such signs will be present in those settings, so in the absence of such signs, frustration and disorientation will result, and time and fuel will be wasted.

- 7) No signs that exceed the size or spacing limitations of this section constitute a customary use of signage in the County.
- 8) The County's land-use regulations have included the regulation of signs in an effort to foster adequate information and means of expression and to promote the economic viability of the community, while protecting the County and its citizens from a proliferation of signs of a type, size, location and character that would adversely impact upon the aesthetics of the community or threaten health, safety or the welfare of the community. The appropriate regulation of the physical characteristics of signs in the County and other communities has had a positive impact on the safety and the appearance of the community.
- 9) The County in the establishment of an Adult Entertainment Overlay District §17.20 identified its intent to protect the health, safety, general welfare and morals of the residents of St. Croix County, to preserve the quality of family life, to preserve the rural and urban characteristics of its neighborhoods in St. Croix County and to prevent adverse and deleterious effects contributing to the blight and downgrading of neighborhoods. Being mindful of the effects of adult entertainment upon minors and the criminal activity and disruption of public peace associated with such establishments, while also giving due consideration to civil rights of persons partaking in such entertainment, it continues to be the intent of the Adult Entertainment Overlay District and this section to regulate the advertisement of such establishments of adult entertainment.

## **2. PURPOSE**

a. The purpose of this section is to:

- 1) Regulate signage in a manner that does not create an impermissible conflict with statutory, administrative, or constitutional standards, or impose an undue financial burden on the County.
- 2) Provide for fair and consistent enforcement of the sign regulations set forth herein under the zoning authority of the County.
- 3) Improve the visual appearance of the County while providing for effective means of communication and orientation, particularly in those settings in which the need for such communication or orientation is greater, consistent with constitutional guarantees and the County's Findings and other Purposes.
- 4) Maintain, enhance and improve the aesthetic environment of the County, including its scenic views and rural character consistent with the St. Croix County Comprehensive Plan and the purpose of each zoning district, by preventing visual clutter that is harmful to the appearance of the community, protecting vistas and other scenic views from spoliation, and preventing or reducing commercialism in noncommercial areas.
- 5) Regulate the number, location, size, type, illumination and other physical characteristics of signs within the County in order to promote the public health, safety and welfare.

## **3. EFFECTIVE DATE**

a. This subsection shall be effective on July 1, 2007. Ordinance No. 757/(2007).

---

**B. GENERAL PROVISIONS****1. APPLICABILITY**

- a. The following regulations and standards are applicable to all signs in all zoning districts, including permanent, temporary, on-premise and off-premise signs, unless otherwise provided by this section.

**2. SUBSTITUTION CLAUSE & SIGN CONTENT**

- a. Subject to the landowner's consent, noncommercial speech of any type may be substituted for any duly permitted or allowed commercial speech; provided, that the sign structure or mounting device is legal without consideration of message content. Such substitution of message may be made without any additional approval or permitting. This provision prevails over any provision to the contrary in this ordinance. The purpose of this provision is to prevent any inadvertent favoring of commercial speech over noncommercial speech, or favoring of any particular noncommercial message over any other noncommercial message. This provision does not create a right to increase the total amount of signage on a lot or parcel, nor does it affect the requirement that a sign structure or mounting device be properly permitted.
- b. All noncommercial speech is considered on-premise signage and is entitled to the privileges that on-premise signs receive under this section.
- c. No commercial speech is allowed on a sign, other than a message drawing attention to a business or service legally offered on the premises, except as allowed in §§ D4

**3. SIGNS IN THE PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY**

- a. No sign or its structural components shall be erected or temporarily placed within any road, highway, right-of-way, public easement or upon any public property, except for the following, which may be placed without a permit:
  - 1) Public signs erected by or on behalf of a government body for the purpose of carrying out an official duty or responsibility, including but not limited to posting legal notices, identifying property, or to direct or regulate pedestrian or vehicular movements or pertaining to traffic control or safety.
  - 2) Signs, red reflective with white lettering, maximum size 20 inches wide by 12 inches high, if they are located to the right of the driveway (to a person facing the driveway from the road) at the right-of-way line, and parallel to the road.
  - 3) Signs posted or placed by a public utility or communications franchise holder near one or more of its poles, lines, pipes or facilities.
  - 4) Signs erected by a governmental agency, a public utility company or a contractor doing authorized or permitted work within the public right-of-way, for the purpose of ensuring safety.
- b. Unauthorized signs erected or temporarily placed within any road, highway, right-of-way, public easement or upon any public property may be removed by the County or town in which the sign is located at the sign owner's expense.

**4. SIGNS EXEMPT FROM REGULATION**

- a. The following signs shall be exempt from regulation under this section:

- 1) Governmental signs erected by or on behalf of a government body for the purpose of carrying out an official duty or responsibility, including but not limited to posting legal notices, identifying public property and indicating a public use, except for such signs in the Lower St. Croix Riverway Overlay District, see §C.6.d. below.
  - 2) Signs that are traffic control devices and are permitted or allowed by the Wisconsin Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices published by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation.
  - 3) Up to three flags on a single lot or parcel containing only non-commercial speech the combined area of which is less than 100 square feet in size. Flags not within this definition are deemed freestanding signs subject to permit. For purposes of this paragraph, a “single lot” includes but is not limited to an area to which a member of a condominium association, cooperative association, or residential real estate management association has a separate ownership interest or a right to exclusive possession or use.
  - 4) Interior signs located completely within a building and not visible from outside the building.
  - 5) Incidental signs.
  - 6) Temporary freestanding signs, containing no commercial speech, two square feet or less in size in farm fields.
  - 7) Temporary freestanding signs, containing no commercial speech, 36 square inches or less in size in any lawn.
- 5. SUSPENSION OF CERTAIN SIZE, SHAPE, PLACEMENT AND CONTENT RESTRICTIONS DURING AN ELECTION CAMPAIGN PERIOD**
- a. Subject only to the exceptions in paragraph e. below, during an election campaign period, signs containing noncommercial speech may be placed upon residential property notwithstanding any other restriction in this section of the size, shape, placement or content of any sign.
  - b. For purposes of this subsection, “election campaign period” means:
    - 1) In the case of an election for office, the period beginning on the first day for circulation of nomination papers by candidates, or the first day on which candidates would circulate nomination papers were papers to be required, and ending on the day of the election.
    - 2) In the case of a referendum, the period beginning on the day on which the question to be voted upon is submitted to the electorate and ending on the day on which the referendum is held.
  - c. If the owner of the property has rented some or all of the property to another, the renter may exercise the right in any area of the property that he or she occupies exclusively, and the owner of residential property may exercise the right in any portion of the property not occupied exclusively by a renter. The terms of a lease or other agreement under which the residential property is occupied shall control in determining whether property is occupied exclusively by a renter.
  - d. If another part of this section, including the substitution clause provisions of §B.2., creates a right to erect or display a particular type of sign, this subsection does not in any way limit the exercise of that right, whether or not the sign is erected or displayed during an election campaign period.

e. Exceptions

- 1) No owner or renter may place a sign that is contrary to a size, shape, or placement regulation of this section if:
  - a) Such regulation is necessary to ensure traffic or pedestrian safety, or
  - b) The sign has an electrical, mechanical or audio auxiliary.
- 2) This section shall not affect the County's authority to enforce any regulation against a sign that is prohibited from being erected or displayed under Wisconsin Statutes §§13.02, 12.035, or 84.30

**6. PROHIBITED SIGNS**

- a. All signs, other than those permitted herein, shall be prohibited, including but not limited to:
  - 1) Signs that fail to satisfy one or more of the applicable regulations set forth in §§B. and C.
  - 2) Beacons, except those associated with emergencies and aircraft facilities.
  - 3) Bench signs.
  - 4) Bus shelter signs.
  - 5) Flying signs, such as blimps or kites, designed to be kept aloft by mechanical, wind, chemical or hot air means that are attached to the property, ground or other permanent structure.
  - 6) Inflatable signs that are attached to the property, ground or other permanent structure, including but not limited to balloons.
  - 7) Signs and components and elements of faces of signs that move, shimmer, or contain reflective devices.
  - 8) Signs which emit any odor, noise or visible matter other than light.
  - 9) Signs painted directly on a building, fence, tree, stone or similar object. Except those on windows or buildings as allowed in §§D.1.a. and D.2.e.
  - 10) Off-premise signs, except as allowed in §§B.5, D.4. and E.1.
  - 11) Pornographic signs.
  - 12) Portable signs.
  - 13) Protruding Building signs and Perpendicular Building signs except as allowed in D.2.e.6 (b) and (e)
  - 14) Roof signs.
  - 15) Signs on utility poles.
  - 16) No advertising message or sign shall be affixed to any transmission facility.
  - 17) A vehicle used as a sign or as the base for a sign where the primary purpose of the vehicle in that location is its use as a sign.

## C. STANDARDS

### 1. PLACEMENT STANDARDS

- a. Signs shall not be placed on any property without the property owner's written approval.
- b. Building signs shall be placed below the roof line.
- c. No person shall place a sign which will obstruct or interfere with a driver's or pedestrian's ability to see a road, highway, traffic sign, signal, railway crossing, crossroad or crosswalk. No sign or its structural components shall be erected or temporarily placed within the vision triangle of a road or highway.
- d. Double faced signs shall be placed back-to-back (parallel) with not more than 18 inches between facings.

### 2. DIMENSIONAL STANDARDS

- a. Every portion of any sign and its structural components and mounting devices must meet the specified setbacks.
- b. Signs shall be set back at least 10 feet from any right-of-way.
- c. Signs shall be set back at least 20 feet from all side and rear yard lot lines.
- d. Signs over 100 square feet shall be at least 500 feet from any preexisting residence or residential district.
- e. Freestanding sign(s) shall be separated from other structures by a minimum of 10 feet, measured from edge of roof overhang to sign.
- f. The maximum height of any freestanding sign shall be 20 feet above the average elevation at the site of the sign.
- g. Sign area or size will be measured by the smallest square, rectangle or combination thereof which will encompass the entire sign, including the writing, representation, emblem or other display, together with any material or color forming an integral part of the background of the display or used to differentiate the sign from the backdrop or structure against which it is placed. It will not include the base, apron, supports, structural members, framework, poles, roof, embellishments or decorative base when such area meets the other regulations of this ordinance.
- h. Multi-faced signs shall not exceed two times the allowed square footage of single-faced signs.

### 3. ILLUMINATION STANDARDS

- a. Externally illuminated signs shall have a shielded light source which is downward directed.
- b. Illuminated signs shall be designed so as not to direct any light or produce glare onto adjacent properties or toward navigable waters.
- c. The County may specify the hours a sign may be illuminated and limit its brightness while illuminated. The hours of illumination or brightness limitations may be established at any time, including during the life of the sign.
- d. The lighted portions of an auxiliary canopy shall be backlit and considered sign area, which will be limited by the wall sign regulations of the underlying zoning district.

- e. Signs and sign components and elements of faces of signs shall not flash, move, travel or use animation.
- f. Unless a sign's only illumination is external and uncolored, the following additional regulations shall also apply to that sign:
  - 1) No illuminated off-premises sign which changes in color or intensity of artificial light at any time while the sign is illuminated shall be permitted.
  - 2) No illuminated on-premises sign which changes in color or intensity of artificial light at any time while the sign is illuminated shall be permitted.
  - 3) A sign that regularly or automatically ceases illumination for the purpose of causing the color or intensity to have changed when illumination resumes shall fall within the scope of the prohibitions of par. 1) and 2) above.
  - 4) The scope of 3.f.'s prohibitions include, but are not limited to, any sign face that includes a video display, LED lights that change in color or intensity, 'digital ink,' and any other method or technology that causes the sign face to present a series of two or more images or displays.

#### **4. CONSTRUCTION & MAINTENANCE STANDARDS**

- a. All signs, supports and accessories and construction shall meet applicable State of Wisconsin building codes and the Uniform Sign Code and the Uniform Building Code as published by the International Conference of Building Officials, to ensure that the signs and their construction are structurally sound and safe.
- b. Sign display surfaces shall be properly coated or covered, attached and maintained.
- c. All signs using electric power shall have a cutoff switch on the outside of the sign and on the outside of the building or structure to which the sign is attached.
- d. All signs, supports and accessories shall be maintained in good repair.
- e. When any use is discontinued for a period of 180 consecutive days, all signs and sign supports relating to that use shall be removed.
- f. Signs that are in structural disrepair or damaged and are left without repair for 60 consecutive days shall be removed.

#### **5. SIGN MAINTENANCE & REPAIR**

- a. Signs and their structural components may be maintained or repaired with a land use permit for sign maintenance and repair, provided there is no enlargement or alteration to the sign, mounting device(s) or structural components of the sign.
- b. A permit is not required if the only change is to a sign's message or copy, provided there is no enlargement or alteration to the sign or structural components of the sign. This does not relieve the owner of the need to comply with every applicable legal requirement other than the duty to obtain a permit.

#### **6. OVERLAY DISTRICTS**

- a. Signs in the overlay districts are allowed subject to the standards and permitting requirements of the underlying zoning district.
- b. An On-Premise Sign in the Adult Entertainment Overlay District under §17.20 is allowed subject to the standards of the underlying zoning district and the following additional standard:
  - 1) A land use permit for signage is required for all permanent signs.

- c. An On-Premise Sign in the Shoreland Overlay Districts under §17.30 is allowed subject to the following additional standards:
  - 1) A land use permit for signage is required for all permanent signs.
  - 2) Any sign visible from the water shall be set back 75 feet from the Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM).
  - 3) Maximum area of any such sign shall be 32 square feet.
- d. An On-Premise Sign in the Lower St. Croix Riverway Overlay District §17.36 is allowed, subject to the following additional standards:
  - 1) A land use permit for signage is required for all permanent signs.
  - 2) Either:
    - a) The sign must be approved by State or local government and be necessary for public health or safety, or
    - b) The sign must be used only to indicate areas that are available or not available for public use; or
    - c) The sign must not be visible from the river and must be legally allowed or permitted in the underlying zoning district.
- e. An On-Premise Sign in the Floodplain Overlay District §17.40 is allowed subject to the following additional standards:
  - 1) A land use permit for signage is required for all permanent signs.
  - 2) Any sign in the Floodway District shall meet the standards of §§17.40 D., E., F. and I.
  - 3) Any sign in the Floodfringe District shall meet the standards of §§17.40 D., E., G. and I.

## D. SIGN TYPES

### 1. SIGNS PERMITTED BY ZONING DISTRICT

- a. The following tables identify the signs allowed in each zoning district, and the circumstances in which certain types of signs are permitted if those signs are not prohibited as set forth in §B.6. above, satisfy all other applicable regulations set forth in §§B. and C. and satisfy the specific requirements that are identified by sign type in §§D.2., 3. and 4. below.

PERMANENT SIGNS PERMITTED BY ZONING DISTRICT							
Zoning District	Sign Type	On-Premise Freestanding	On-Premise Building	On-Premise Area or Neighborhood	On-Premise Agricultural	On-Premise Home Occupation	Additional Standards May Apply
<b>Residence</b>		A/LUP	N	LUP	A	A	Yes
<b>AG-1</b>		A/LUP	LUP	N	A	A	Yes
<b>AG-2</b>		A/LUP	LUP	N	A	A	Yes
<b>Rural Res</b>		A/LUP	N	LUP	A	A	Yes
<b>Conservancy</b>		A/LUP	N	N	N	N	Yes
<b>Commercial &amp; Restricted Commercial</b>		LUP	LUP	LUP	N	N	Yes
<b>Industrial</b>		LUP	LUP	LUP	N	N	Yes

Key: A = Allowed without permit but subject to compliance with all other applicable regulations of this section.  
 LUP = Land use permit for signage required but subject to compliance with all other applicable regulations of this section.  
 A/LUP = Either allowed without a land use permit or allowed with a land use permit subject to compliance with all other applicable regulations of this section.  
 N = Not permitted

PERMANENT SIGN STANDARDS						
Sign Type	Number	Size	Height	Type	Permit	Additional Standards
<b>On-Premise Residential</b>	1/Lot or Parcel	6 s.f.	6'	Freestanding	A	Yes
<b>On-Premise Nonresidential</b>	1/Frontage	32 s.f./sign 64 s.f. total	6'-12'	Monument	LUP*	Yes
<b>On-Premise Commercial</b>	1/Frontage	80 s.f./sign 120 s.f. total	20'	Freestanding	LUP*	Yes
<b>On-Premise Industrial</b>	1/Frontage	80 s.f./sign 120 s.f. total	20'	Freestanding	LUP*	Yes
<b>On-Premise Building</b>	Unlimited on 3 Faces	80 s.f./face 240 s.f. total	N/A	Wall/Window	LUP	Yes
<b>On-Premise Area or Neighborhood</b>	1/Entrance	32 s.f./sign	20'	Freestanding	LUP	Yes
<b>On-Premise Agricultural</b>	1/Frontage	32 s.f./sign 64 s.f. total	20''	Freestanding	A	Yes
<b>On-Premise Home Occupation</b>	1/Lot or Parcel	2 s.f./ sign Minor 6 s.f./sign Major	6'	Freestanding	A LUP*	Yes

Key: A = Allowed without permit but subject to compliance with all other applicable regulations of this section.

LUP = Land use permit for signage required but subject to compliance with all other applicable regulations of this section.

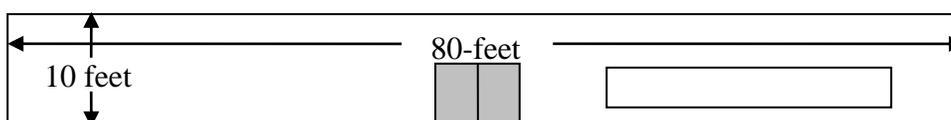
LUP\* = These uses may also require a Conditional Use Permit

<b>TEMPORARY SIGN STANDARDS</b>						
<b>Sign Type</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Size</b>	<b>Height</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Permit</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
<b>On-Premise Construction</b>	2/Site	80 s.f. total	12'	Freestanding	A	Yes
<b>On-Premise Development</b>	1/Frontage	64 s.f.	12'	Freestanding	A	Yes
<b>On-Premise Real Estate</b>	1/Frontage	6 s.f./sign residential 32 s.f./sign nonresidential	6' 12'	Freestanding	A	Yes
<b>On-Premise Employment</b>	1/Frontage	6 s.f.	6'	N/A	A	Yes

Key: A = Allowed without permit but subject to compliance with all other applicable regulations of this section.

## 2. PERMANENT ON-PREMISE SIGNS

- a. Permanent on-premise signs that are not prohibited as defined in §B.6. are permitted subject to the standards in this section, if those signs satisfy all other applicable regulations set forth in §C., and standards specific to the zoning district in which they are located as set forth in §D.1. and below.
- b. An On-Premise Sign is allowed on residential property in the Residence, AG-1 AG-2, Rural Residential and Conservancy zoning districts subject to the following additional standards:
  - 1) No permit is required.
  - 2) One sign per lot or parcel.
  - 3) Maximum area of any such sign shall be six square feet.
  - 4) Maximum height shall be six feet.
  - 5) Any such sign shall be a freestanding design.
  - 6) Any such sign shall not be illuminated.
- c. An On-Premise Sign is allowed on property used for nonresidential uses legally allowed or permitted in the Residence, AG-1, AG-2, Rural Residential and Conservancy zoning districts subject to the following additional standards:
  - 1) A land use permit for signage is required.
  - 2) One sign per road or highway frontage.
  - 3) Maximum area of any such sign shall be 32 square feet per sign.
  - 4) Any such sign area shall not exceed 64 square feet in aggregate.
  - 5) Maximum height shall be six feet in the Residence and Rural Residential zoning districts and 12 feet in the AG-1, AG-2 and Conservancy zoning districts.
  - 6) Any such sign shall be a monument design.
- d. An On-Premise Sign is allowed in the Commercial, Restricted Commercial and Industrial zoning districts subject to the following additional standards:
  - 1) A land use permit for signage is required.
  - 2) One sign per road or highway frontage.
  - 3) Maximum area of any such sign shall be 80 square feet per sign.
  - 4) Any such sign area shall not exceed 120 square feet in aggregate.
  - 5) Maximum height shall be 20 feet.
  - 6) Any such sign shall be a freestanding design.
- e. An On-Premise Building Sign on a building used for agricultural, commercial or industrial purposes is allowed subject to the following additional standards:
  - 1) A land use permit for signage is required.
  - 2) Any number of signs may be installed on a building wall or window.
  - 3) The total area of all building signs on any face shall not exceed 10 percent of the area of the façade, including wall and window, with a maximum allowable sign area of 80 square feet per face and 240 square feet in total.



$$\begin{array}{r}
 80\text{ft} \times 10\text{ft} = 800 \text{ sq ft} \\
 \quad \quad \quad \times 10 \% \\
 \hline
 80 \text{ sq ft} \\
 \text{of wall and/or window} \\
 \text{signage}
 \end{array}$$

- 4) The allowable area of building signs for multi-tenant buildings with individual entrances from the outside shall be calculated based on the exterior wall/window area of the space the tenant occupies. Each tenant frontage shall be considered a separate wall/window.
- 5) Auxiliary canopies are allowed building signs based on the surface area of the canopy (vertical surface below the roof line).
- 6) Location.
  - a) Building signs may be placed on not more than three walls/windows of rectangular shaped structures or not more than 75 percent of the major walls/windows on non-rectangular shaped structures.
  - b) Signs may be attached flat against or pinned away from a building wall/window, but the sign face shall not extend or protrude more than six (6) inches from the wall/window.
  - c) Signs may be attached to the facade of a building, but shall not extend above the roof line.
  - d) Signs may be on a building canopy, awning or marquee. Such sign will be considered a building sign on the wall, canopy, marquee or awning on which it is attached.
  - e) Signs may be perpendicular to a building wall but the sign face shall not project more than 18 inches from the wall.
- f. An Area or Neighborhood Sign on property used for residential, commercial or industrial uses is considered an On-Premise Sign under this section is allowed subject to the following additional standards:
  - 1) A land use permit for signage is required.
  - 2) No more than one sign is allowed for every road or highway entrance to a development.
  - 3) The maximum area of any such sign shall be 32 square feet per sign.
  - 4) Any such sign shall be set back at least 10 feet from the right-of-way but no further than 20 feet from the right-of-way, unless incorporated into a county-approved entrance design.
  - 5) Any such sign shall be a freestanding design.
  - 6) Any such sign shall not be internally lighted.
- g. A sign on property on which agricultural products are legally grown and legally offered for sale is considered an On-Premise Sign under this section if it does no more than draw attention to a product legally offered on the premises, and is allowed subject to the following additional standards:
  - 1) One sign per road or highway frontage.
  - 2) Maximum area of any such sign shall be 32 square feet per sign.
  - 3) Maximum cumulative sign area per sale location shall be 64 square feet.
  - 4) Maximum height shall be 20 feet.
  - 5) Any such sign shall be a freestanding design.
  - 6) Any such sign shall not be illuminated.
  - 7) Agricultural products shall be produced on the site.
  - 8) Sign(s) for Seasonal Roadside Stands shall be placed when products are available.

- 
- h. A sign on property on which a Minor or Major Home Occupation within the meaning of §17.155 is lawfully taking place is considered an on-premises sign under this section if it does no more than draw attention to a product or service lawfully offered on the premises, and is allowed subject to the following additional standards:
    - 1) One sign per home occupation, exterior or interior visible from the outside.
    - 2) Minor Home Occupation sign maximum area shall be two square feet.
    - 3) Major Home Occupation sign maximum area shall be six square feet.
    - 4) Maximum height shall be six feet.
    - 5) Any such sign shall be a freestanding design.
    - 6) Any such sign shall not be illuminated.
  - i. One additional On-Premise Sign shall be allowed in any zoning district subject to the following additional standards.
    - 1) Maximum area of any such sign shall be 36 inches.
    - 2) Only one such sign is allowed for every parcel.
    - 3) Any such sign must be placed in one of the following three locations:
      - a) On the front of the principal structure.
      - b) On the side of an authorized United States Postal Service mailbox.
      - c) On one post which measure no more than 48 inches in height and 4 inches in width.
  - j. Two additional Freestanding On-Premise Signs shall be allowed on a parcel that includes a drive-through window, subject to the following additional standards:
    - 1) One sign may only be located within six feet of a lot line and within six feet of a curb cut, with a maximum area of 8 square feet.
    - 2) Any second sign shall be facing the drive-through lane, with a maximum area of 30 square feet.
  - k. No on-premise sign may be placed without first obtaining the property owner's permission.

### 3. TEMPORARY ON-PREMISE SIGNS

- a. Any sign that is authorized under this subsection because of the status or activity occurring on the parcel, but that remains in place after the status or activity that permitted its use is completed, may not remain in place unless it constitutes or becomes a lawful Permanent On-Premise Sign under the previous subsection, and a land use permit for that sign is obtained for that use.
- b. The following temporary signs are permitted to be placed on the lot or parcel to which they refer without a land use permit for signage, subject to the applicable standards:
  - 1) A Temporary On-Premise Sign is allowed on residential property in the Residence, AG-1 AG-2, Rural Residential, and Conservancy zoning districts subject to the following additional standards:
    - a) No permit is required.
    - b) Maximum area shall be six square feet.
    - c) The maximum area of six feet may be used for one sign or divided among several otherwise compliant signs, so long as the total amount of area does not exceed six square feet.
    - d) Maximum height shall be six feet.
    - e) Any such sign shall be a freestanding design.
    - f) Any such sign shall not be illuminated.
  - 2) Any such sign shall not be illuminated. Up to two additional Temporary On-Premise Signs shall be allowed on a parcel where the principal structure is currently undergoing construction, subject to the following additional standards:
    - a) Any such sign area shall not exceed 80 square feet in aggregate.
    - b) Maximum height shall be 12 feet.
    - c) Any such sign shall be a freestanding design.
    - d) Any such sign shall be removed within seven days of when construction is completed.
  - 3) An additional Temporary On-Premise Sign erected on a non-residential development project, or erected on a residential development project at the time that the development includes 10 or more dwelling units for sale or lease, is allowed in any zoning district subject to the following additional standards:
    - a) One sign per road or highway frontage for each project.
    - b) Maximum area of any such sign shall be 64 square feet.
    - c) Maximum height shall be 12 feet.
    - d) Any such sign shall be a freestanding design.
    - e) A sign shall be at least 200 feet from any pre-existing residence.
    - f) A sign shall not be installed until construction has started or the project is approved by the County.
    - g) Sign shall be removed when the project is 80 percent completed, sold or leased.
  - 4) An additional Temporary On-Premise Real Estate sign on a parcel that is currently for sale or rent is allowed in any zoning district subject to the following additional standards:
    - a) One sign per road or highway frontage.
    - b) For residential property, the maximum sign area shall be six square feet and maximum sign height shall be six feet.

- c) For residential property, the maximum sign area for a parcel including a model home shall be 32 square feet and the maximum sign height shall be 12 feet.
  - d) For non-residential property, the maximum sign area shall be 32 square feet and maximum sign height shall be 12 feet.
  - e) Any such sign shall be a freestanding design.
  - f) Any such sign shall be removed within seven days following the sale or lease of the property.
- 5) An additional Temporary On-Premise Sign on non-residential property on a parcel occupied by a workplace for which one or more positions of employment are open is allowed subject to the following additional standards:
- a) One sign per road or highway frontage.
  - b) Maximum area of any such sign shall be six square feet.
  - c) Maximum height shall be six feet.
  - d) Any such sign shall be removed when all positions of employment on the property have been filled.
- c. No on-premise sign may be placed without first obtaining the property owner's permission.

#### **4. TEMPORARY OFF-PREMISE SIGNS**

- a. A Temporary Off-Premise Sign is allowed, without a permit, in any zoning district, subject to the following additional standards.
- 1) The Sign may remain in place for no more than four continuous days, and then must be removed.
  - 2) No off-premise sign may be placed without first obtaining the property owner's permission.
  - 3) Maximum area of any such sign shall be six square feet.
  - 4) Maximum height shall be six feet.
  - 5) Any such sign shall be a freestanding design.
  - 6) Signs shall be placed outside and may abut the right-of-way.
  - 7) If the sign was manufactured to suit the design directions of a purchaser in bulk, no more than five such signs may be posted in the County at any one time, and only in full compliance with the remainder of Section 17.65.
  - 8) A person who places one or more Signs pursuant to this subsection and fails to remove the Sign or Signs after more than four days have passed since it was posted, and a four-day grace period has passed, is subject to a civil fine under Chapter 1 Citation Ordinance of the St. Croix County Code of Ordinances.
- b. A Temporary Off-Premise Sign is allowed to remain in place for more than four continuous days only if a permit is obtained before the expiration of the four-day period, and subject to the following additional standards:
- 1) The Sign may remain in place for no more than four continuous weeks, and then must be removed.
  - 2) After the expiration of the four-week period, the sign may not be posted unless a new permit is sought and obtained.
  - 3) No off-premise sign may be placed without first obtaining the property owner's permission.
  - 4) Maximum area of any such sign shall be six square feet.

- 5) Maximum height shall be six feet.
- 6) Any such sign shall be a freestanding design.
- 7) Signs shall be placed outside and may abut the right-of-way.
- 8) If the sign was manufactured to suit the design directions of a purchaser in bulk, no more than five such signs may be posted in the County at any one time, and only in full compliance with the remainder of Section 17.65.
- 9) A person who places one or more Signs pursuant to this subsection and fails to remove the Sign or Signs after more than four continuous weeks have passed, and a four day grace period has also passed, is subject to a civil fine under Chapter 1 Citation Ordinance of the St. Croix County Code of Ordinances.

## **E. ADMINISTRATION**

### **1. NONCONFORMING SIGNS**

- a. Nonconforming permanent freestanding signs lawfully existing on July 1, 2007 shall be allowed to continue in use, but shall not be altered other than to change the message relocated, added to, or repaired in excess of 50 percent of the assessed value of the sign, without being brought into compliance with this section.
- b. Nonconforming permanent building signs lawfully existing on July 1, 2007 shall be allowed to continue in use, and may be repaired provided the repair does not increase the nonconforming aspect of the sign, but shall not otherwise be altered other than to change the message, relocated, or added to, without being brought into compliance with this section.
- c. After a nonconforming sign has been removed, it shall not be replaced by another nonconforming sign.
- d. Nonconforming temporary signs lawfully existing on July 1, 2007 shall be removed no later than three years after July 1, 2007 or by an earlier date if so required by a regulation in place when the sign was erected. Nonconforming temporary signs shall not be rebuilt, relocated or altered other than to change a message.
- e. If a nonconforming permanent sign's use is discontinued for a period of 12 months, the nonconforming sign shall be removed or brought into compliance with this section within 60 days of notification by the Zoning Administrator.
- f. If a nonconforming temporary sign's use is discontinued for 60 consecutive days, the nonconforming sign shall be removed or brought into compliance with this section within 60 days of notification by the Zoning Administrator.

### **2. PERMIT REQUIRED**

- a. A land use permit for signage is required prior to the improvement, erection, construction, reconstruction, enlargement or alteration of any sign, structural component or mounting device unless otherwise provided by this section.

### **3. LAND USE PERMIT FOR SIGNAGE**

- a. A properly completed application for a land use permit for signage shall be made to the Zoning Administrator upon forms furnished by the County. The following information shall be provided:
  - 1) Applicant contact information.
  - 2) Property owner contact information.

- 3) Property information, site address, legal description, tax identification number, zoning district.
- 4) Project information including a description of the sign plan for the site and total proposed signage, including all permanent and temporary signage.
- 5) A site plan, drawn to scale, to include:
  - a) Dimensions and area of the lot or parcel.
  - b) Location of all existing and proposed structures and signs with distances measured from the lot lines and right-of-way of all abutting roads or highways.
  - c) In the Riverway, Shoreland and Floodplain Overlay Districts, location of the bluffline, OHWM of any abutting navigable waterways, floodplain, floodway and floodfringe limits as determined from floodplain zoning maps used to delineate floodplain areas
  - d) Location of existing or future access driveways and roads or highways.
- 6) Conceptual drawings of all proposed signs with dimensions.
- 7) Information on all lighting and electrical components.
- 8) Method of construction and/or attachment to a building or in the ground shall be explained in the plans and specifications.
- 9) Contact information for whomever will be erecting the sign(s).
- 10) Attach all related permits or permit applications.
- 11) Calculations for compliance with the Uniform Building Code and the Uniform Sign Code for construction.
- 12) Additional relevant information deemed necessary by the Zoning Administrator to apply all applicable ordinance requirements and standards, such as photos, cross-section drawings, specialized engineering plans and landscaping.
- 13) If additional information is requested, the application shall not be considered a properly completed application and timeframes for processing shall not commence until the additional information is received.

#### **4. PERMIT DECISION & APPEAL PROCESS**

- a. A land use permit for signage applicant or permit holder may appeal a determination or an order. Appeal procedures are established in §17.70 (5)-(8) Board of Adjustment.
- b. When a permit of any kind is required for a sign, the Zoning Administrator shall deny, approve with conditions, or approve without conditions such permit in an expedited manner no more than 30 days from the receipt of a complete application for such a permit, including the applicable fee.
  - 1) If the permit is denied or approved with conditions, the County shall prepare a written decision within 10 days of its decision, stating a reason or reasons for the action and describing the applicant's appeal rights under §17.70 (5)-(8) Board of Adjustment and provide it to the applicant.
  - 2) When the Board of Adjustment receives an appeal from the denial or approval with conditions of a permit required for a sign, the Board shall arrive at a decision on such an appeal no more than 90 days from the receipt of a complete application for such an appeal, including the applicable fee.
  - 3) If the appeal is denied or approved with conditions, the County shall prepare a written decision within 10 days of its decision, stating a reason or reasons for the action and provide it to the applicant.

- c. When a permit of any kind is required for a sign, and the permit application or permit appeal demonstrates that the sign would comply with all applicable requirements of this section, the permit application or permit appeal shall not be denied.

**5. EXPIRATION**

- a. Sign maintenance or construction authorized by a land use permit for signage issued under this section shall commence within one year from the date of approval and be substantially completed or implemented within two years, after which time the permit expires.
- b. Prior to expiration of a permit, applicants can request extensions of up to six months from the Zoning Administrator.
- c. The total time granted for extensions shall not exceed one year.

**6. PERMIT REVOCATION**

- a. Where the terms or conditions on any land use permit for signage are violated, the permit may be revoked by the Zoning Administrator. The Board of Adjustment may revoke a conditional use permit.