

Portable Signs – Background, Suggestions, Code

Issues:

1. Downtown merchants want the sign code changed to allow A-frame signs/portable signs. Several merchants claim the portable signs are necessary to draw customers (e.g. *Curds Cheese, McKinner's, The Chocolate Therapist, Pho Real. EVOO, Altitude Paddleboards, etc.*)
2. Council approved a merchandise display (includes benches and planters) allowed in areas with zero lot line.
3. Portable signs were allowed in the right-of-way under the code in the past (see *previous sign code*)
4. Most properties on Main and some of the side streets have zero lot lines where all property from the front of the building to the street is public right-of-way.
5. Portable signs in the right-of-way can block and possibly create a hazard for pedestrians.
6. Non-compliant A-frame/portable signs are different in size and location.
7. Downtown walkability is hindered and the sight line cluttered with signs. Some sidewalk clearance doesn't meet the outdoor display code six foot requirement.
8. City council approved the downtown wayfinding project with the caveat that once installed enforcement to remove the portable signs would begin January 1, 2017.
9. Complaints about portable signs are being made and code enforcement is responding.

Suggestions:

1. Consider sign code changes allowing commercial properties with zero lot line to have A-frame/portable signs. These signs are permitted in commercial areas where they are placed on private property.
2. Require no-cost annual permitting for those using A-frame/portable signs. This would be similar to the Outdoor Display permit.
 - o Set a standard for sign type and size
 - o Allow placement only during business hours
 - o Require liability insurance coverage
 - o Restrict placement to against the building
 - Perpendicular to the building with six feet of right-of-way clearance
 - Flush against the building with less than six feet of right-of-way

City of Littleton Sign Code - Current

4-3-2-5 (C) **SIGNS PERMITTED IN BUSINESS, TRANSITIONAL AND CA ZONES AND INDUSTRIAL ZONES:**

(C) Permitted Maximum Number: The following table shall be used to determine the maximum number of signs allowed for a use by right. In the following table, the center column indicates the total number of allowed permanent signs, while the far right column indicates how many of the signs listed in the center column may be ground signs. For example, in the first row, the total number of permanent signs is three (3), and of those three (3), not more than one may be a ground sign.

In addition, not more than one portable sign shall be allowed for each street front line on the lot for which the use by right is located. Such portable signs shall be constructed of wood or metal and shall contain no more than twelve (12) square feet per display face. **No permitted portable sign, tool or vending device shall be located in any public right of way.**

4-3-2-5 (K) Portable Signs On Adjacent Right Of Way: In addition to any signage allowable pursuant to Chapter 3 of Title 4 of this Code, and notwithstanding any prohibitions contained therein to the contrary, the following signage shall be allowed on public sidewalks in the C. A. Zone District for all businesses located on zero lot line lots:

1. One portable sign per commercial establishment shall be allowed on the adjacent public sidewalk so long as the following conditions are met:

(a) The sign may not be more than two feet (2') wide nor more than four feet (4') high;

(b) The sign shall only be located within three feet (3') of the curb;

(c) Any business which places a portable sign pursuant to this subsection shall keep written record of the dates and times said sign is present and shall forward said report to the City Manager no later than September 30, 1988;

(d) The sign may only be present on the public sidewalk during those hours that the business is open to the public;

(e) The sign shall be placed, weighted down, constructed, or designed in such a manner so as not to be disturbed by natural forces such as wind; and

(f) The signs placement shall not interfere with ingress to or egress from legally parked vehicles.

2. The intent of this subsection is not to create any vested property rights for the future placement of signs in the City's rights of way. The Council, by adopting this subsection by means of an emergency ordinance, hereby declares that the rights created herein are in the nature of a temporary license and that all rights to continue to use the City's rights of way as herein specified shall terminate after September 19, 1988, unless the provisions hereof are readopted by ordinance passed in conformance with section 40 of the City Charter.

3. Violations of any of the provisions specified in subsection (K)1 of this Section shall be punishable as specified in Section 1-4-1 of this Code. In addition, any person whose sign is placed in public right of way shall be civilly liable for damages to any other person who suffers injuries or damages as a result thereof provided, however, that nothing contained herein shall preclude the assertions of defenses or be deemed a waiver of limitations on liability which may apply pursuant to the laws of this State. (Ord. 23, Series of 1988)