SECTION 64

Signs

64.0 PURPOSE

It is the purpose and intent of this section to accommodate the establishment of signs necessary for identification, direction, information, or reasonable commercial promotion while avoiding signs of a character, as well as a proliferation or expansion of signs, that would be detrimental to the public health or safety, property values or the appearance or beauty of the community.

64.1 General

☐ Does site identification signage establish a lasting identity of the place?
☐ Does signage facilitate on-site wayfinding and emergency response?
☐ Is information on a permanent sign necessary, sufficient, simple and direct?
☐ Is business promotion balanced with maintaining the attractiveness of Old Saybrook?

Unless expressly permitted otherwise, all signs will conform to the provisions specified in this section or to any additional conditions or limitations that the Commission may impose concerning the approval of a Site Plan or Special Exception.

No person will establish, construct, reconstruct, enlarge, extend, move, or structurally alter any sign until the Enforcement Officer approves an application for Certificate of Zoning Compliance or unless expressly permitted by exemption.

No sign will be located in a manner so as to be a hazard to traffic or pedestrians, to obstruct any door, window, ventilation system, fire escape or exit, or to cause any other hazard to public health or safety.
64.3 Standards – All Districts

- Does lighting avoid light pollution or disturbance of surrounding residential areas?
- Does each sign attached to a building preserve the historic integrity of the building?
- Is landscaping around the sign sustainable?
- Are structural materials common to the local vernacular?
- Is the sign basic enough to ensure legibility, as well as reduce visual clutter along the roadway?
- Is each sign placed where it will best fulfill its function?

Any sign, except as provided, will advertise, identify, or give publicity or notice only with respect to a use of land, buildings, or other structures actually being on the lot where the sign is located unless expressly permitted otherwise.

64.3.1 Location.

All occupants of any building will consolidate all wall and window signs to no more than the number of walls allowed to display signs as permitted in the underlying district.

64.3.2 Duration. 6 mos. min.

Any sign pertaining to each use will be removed or otherwise eliminated when the use is discontinued for a continuous period of 6 mos. min.

64.3.3 Maximum Area. 100 s.f. max. ea.

64.3.4 Area Calculations.

Calculations to determine the percentage of wall area permitted in a District will be measured to a maximum height of twelve feet (12’) above ground level even if the wall is higher than twelve feet (12’).
When a sign is proposed on a wall that projects two feet (2’) or more feet from another wall of a building, the wall calculation will be based on the wall where the sign is being placed (not by using the overall length of the entire building).

The Commission excludes the area of any “Exempt Sign” (Section 64.4) in calculating the area of any other sign otherwise permitted on a lot in each district.

### 64.3.5 Height including decorative finial
10’ max.

### 64.3.6 Support structure height
8’ max.

### 64.3.7 Setback.

These regulations specify a minimum setback per district subject to review by the Commission to ensure public health and safety.

Faux windows, glazed windows, or windows otherwise appearing solid in nature are not eligible to be counted as that area permitted as a window sign.

Limit the height of the support structure to no higher than the face of the sign itself, and balance the height with decorative elements.

Avoid placing a freestanding sign where blocked by trees, brush or on-street parking; locate signage where on- or off-site snow plowing operations will not disturb it.

Similarly, maintain a line-of-sight so that an automobile driver leaving a site can safely see to enter oncoming road traffic.
64.3.8 **Horizontal projection.**

No *sign* will be located in a *setback*, right-of-way, driveway, roadway, access way, or over a *sidewalk*, with the exception of a *sign* with a horizontal projection or an off-site *sign* specifically permitted by these regulations.

**Vertical clearance.**

Any *sign* attached to and projecting horizontally from the wall or under the roof of a *building*, a *structure* or a post may project into or hang over a *sidewalk*, right-of-way, driveway, roadway, access way, or *setback* if the horizontal projection maintains a vertical clearance from the ground of 10’ min.

64.3.9 **Vertical projection** (pitched roof).

No *sign* will be located on any roof, and no *sign* attached to a *building* will extend above the top of the wall of the *building*, except if these regulations specify a maximum vertical projection above the wall of a *building* with a pitched roof in a specific *district*. 
64.3.10 **Illumination.** 1 hour max. after close of business

These regulations permit external illumination of *signs* in all districts; internal illumination, as indicated in each *district*.

Where permitted, illumination of any *sign* must be set on a timer to shut off no later than 1 hr. max. after close of business.

64.4 **Exempt Signs**

The *Commission* excludes any exempt *sign* in calculating the area of any other *sign* otherwise permitted on a *lot*.

The *Commission* allows exempt *signs* in all *districts* and *zones* without a Certificate of Zoning Compliance in addition to any other *sign* otherwise permitted on a *lot* providing the exempt *signs* comply with any requirement of the underlying *district* and the specifications below:

64.4.1 **Private directional sign or Warning sign.**

Per *lot*, four (4) private directional or warning signs.

64.4.2 **Development sign.**

32 s.f. max. total

Per *lot*, where a Subdivision, Affordable Housing Development, Incentive Housing Development, Planned Residential Development, or Special Exception *Use* is permitted, one (1) development *sign* not referring to any other premises. The *sign* will be removed no later than thirty (30) days after the completion of the project or sale or lease of the available space.

64.4.3 **Real Estate, Contractor or Designer Identification sign.**

12 s.f. max. total

Per *lot*, where the premises are for sale, for rent or under construction, one (1) *sign* not referring to any other premises. The property owner will remove the *sign* within thirty (30) days after completion of the project or sale or rental of property.

64.4.4 **Real Estate Open House sign.**

12 s.f. max. total

Off the *lot*, one (1) *directional sign* to an open house for the sale or rental of real estate during the day of each event only; the *sign* must not obstruct sight lines, vehicular traffic or create a hazard.
64.4.5 **State or Municipal use, Neighborhood association, Park or conservation area or Farm sign.**

On a lot, informational signs not visible from any road, public way or adjacent property.

A. **Freestanding sign** multiple per lot

1. **Area** 16 s.f. max.
2. **Height** 10’ max.
3. **Support structure** height 8’ max.
4. **Setback**
   - from street line not visible
   - from rear & other property line not visible
5. **Horizontal projection** 4’ max.

B. **Wall sign** 2 per bldg.

1. **Area**
   - for 1st sign 40 s.f. max.
   - for 2nd sign 16 s.f. max.
2. **Horizontal projection** 4’ max.
3. **Vertical projection** (pitched roofs) not permitted

64.4.6 **Informational flag or Decorative flag.**

On a lot, for each occupant of a building, one (1) flag on a pole anchored by a permanent bracket to the building and removed at the close of business each day. Flags attached to residential buildings for other than commercial purposes may remain attached twenty-four (24) hours a day.

64.4.7 **Window sign.**

In any window of a permitted business, the regulations permit the following area of any window to display signage, some of which may be internally illuminated where permitted in the underlying district:

A. **No internal illumination,** 25% max. total
   the lesser of:
   - or 50 s.f. max.
B. **Internal illumination,** 10% max. total
   the lesser of:
   - or 10 s.f. max.
C. **Combination,** 20% max. total
   the lesser of:
   - or 25 s.f. max.
   - no internal illumination 15% max. or 25 s.f. max.
   - internal illumination 5 % max. or 5 s.f.
64.4.8 **Landmark sign.** 6 s.f. max.

On any lot, one (1) sign identifying or explaining the name or significance of a location having historic, cultural, scenic, archaeological, or other significance as would be of interest to the public; expressly excluding any commercial message or use.

**Use native materials, such as wood or multiple per lot stone, in the base structure and frame.**

**Easy viewing at Ft. Saybrook Monument Park**

**Protective plantings on Route 1**

**Clear view for “walk-ins” on Main Street**

**Distinguishing window on Main Street**

**Evergreens on Elm Street**

**To make a seasonal impression, supplement year-round vegetation with low-maintenance perennials.**

64.5 **PERMITTED SIGNS**

64.5.1 **All Districts**

In addition to any sign allowed on any lot within each district, the Commission or its agent may permit the following signs on a lot pursuant to the following specifications and the standards for the district where not specified. The Commission excludes the area of the following signs in calculating the area of any other sign otherwise permitted on a lot in each district.

**A. Scoreboard sign** at each permitted recreational field on any lot

1. **Area** 48 s.f. max.
2. **Height** 14’ max.
B. **Community Event sign**  
1. **Duration**  
   days (consecutive) per event  
   15 days max.  
2. **Area**  
   1 max. stick-in-the-ground signs  
   4 s.f. max.  
   1 max. banners-on-posts on a wall of a building in a Business, Industrial District or in a Residence District on the premises of the event  
   24 s.f. max.  
3. **Setback**  
   from street line  
   5’ min.  
4. **Internal illumination**  
   not permitted

**64.5.2 Residence Districts, Saybrook Point SP-1 & SP-3 Districts**

A. **Identification sign.**  
   1 per lot  
   On any lot, a freestanding or wall sign giving only the name of the premises or of the occupant, or announcing a permitted business use on the premises:  
   1. **Area**  
      3 s.f. max.  
   2. **Height**  
      10’ max.  
   3. **Support structure height**  
      8’ max.  
   4. **Internal illumination**  
      not permitted

B. **State or Municipal use,**  
   1 per lot  
   Neighborhood association, Park or conservation area, Farm or Special Exception use sign.  
   On any lot, a freestanding sign:  
   1. **Area**  
      16 s.f. max.  
   2. **Height**  
      10’ max.  
   3. **Support structure height**  
      8’ max.  
   4. **Internal illumination**  
      not permitted
C. **Municipal Electronic Message sign.** 1 per lot
On any lot located in a Residence district (excluding MI, SP-1 & SP-3 Districts), a freestanding sign with electronic letters illuminated by a non-flashing, internal source of artificial light for a Special Exception Use that occupies a gross floor area of 25,000 s.f. or more:

1. **Area**        40 s.f. max.
2. **Height**      10’ max.
3. **Support structure height** 8’ max.
4. **Internal illumination** permitted

*Save fancy scripts and scrolled lettering for pedestrian settings, slow speeds, or at stops; reduce the size of the lettering and graphics for up-close viewing.*

*Make room on the identification sign for immediate notices about seasonal or temporary conditions (beach closed, seasonal use, sunrise to sunset, parking lot full, etc.).

*If visible, then use a shape, color palette, trim and details in which the support structure for a freestanding sign and the frame of the wall sign complements the architecture of the building without distracting from the message of the sign.*
64.5.3 Central Business B-1 District

A. Freestanding sign 1 per lot
   1. Area 12 s.f. max.
   2. Height 10’ max.
   3. Support structure height 8’ max.
   4. Setback
      from street line 0’ min.
      from rear & other property line 5’ min.
   5. Internal illumination permitted

B. Wall sign 2 per tenant
   1. Area
      for 1st sign, the lesser of: 20% max. of 1st wall or 100 s.f. max. ea.
      for 2nd sign, the lesser of: 5% max. of 2nd wall or 40 s.f. max.
   2. Horizontal projection
      for sign 12 s.f. or less 4’ max.
      for sign 12 s.f. or more 15’ max.
   3. Vertical projection not permitted
      (pitched roofs)
   4. Internal illumination permitted

64.5.4 Incentive Housing Mixed-use IH-MU Zone

A. Wall sign (non-residential uses) 2 per tenant
   1. Area
      for 1st sign, the lesser of: 20% max. of 1st wall or 100 s.f. max. ea.
      for 2nd sign, the lesser of: 5% max. of 2nd wall or 40 s.f. max.
   2. Horizontal projection
      for sign 12 s.f. or less 4’ max.
      for sign 12 s.f. or more 15’ max.
   3. Vertical projection not permitted
      (pitched roofs)
   4. Internal illumination permitted
64.5.5 **Shopping Center Business B-2 & Gateway Business B-4 Districts**

**A. Freestanding sign.**

1 per lot

1 add’l per lot

On any lot, a freestanding sign; plus a 2nd sign for any permitted special exception use on any lot with frontage on separate streets and with two (2) or more vehicular entrances located more than fifteen hundred feet (1,500’) apart measured along the street lines.

1. **Area**
   - for 1st sign
     - 50 s.f. max.
   - for 2nd sign
     - 25 s.f. max.

2. **Height**
   - 10’ max.

3. **Support structure height**
   - 8’ max.

4. **Setback**
   - from street line
     - 10’ min.
   - from rear & other property line
     - 5’ min.

5. **Internal illumination**
   - permitted

**B. Wall sign**

2 per tenant

1. **Area**
   - for 1st sign, the lesser of:
     - 20% max. of 1st wall or 100 s.f. max.
   - for 2nd sign, the lesser of:
     - 5% max. of 2nd wall or 40 s.f. max.

2. **Horizontal projection**
   - for sign 24 s.f. or less
     - 8” max. ea.
   - for sign 24 s.f. or more
     - 15” max. ea.

3. **Vertical projection**
   - (pitched roofs)
   - 3’ max. ea.

4. **Internal illumination**
   - permitted

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**Showcasing the marketplace of Saybrook Junction’ entrance on Route 1**

Make predictable the size and location of business names for individual tenants by limiting location to a coordinated free-standing directory sign or a sign band across all building façades on a site with capacity and flexibility now to accommodate multiple tenants in the future.

**The WINE CASK**

Consider internally-lit “channel” letters and logos rather than whole panels; avoid light creases that detract from the content of the sign when using a single solid panel of facing material for an internally-illuminated sign.

**Clear identification on Boston Post Road**

Clarify wayfinding with a hierarchy of minimal information (i.e., address most prominent, name of place / building / development, direction to primary tenant, other tenants, exits).
64.5.6 Restricted Business B-3 District

A. Freestanding sign 1 per lot
   1. Area 12 s.f. max.
   2. Height 10’ max.
   3. Support structure height 8’ max.
   4. Setback
      from street line 10’ min.
      from rear & other property line 5’ min.
   5. Internal illumination permitted

B. Wall sign 1 per tenant
   1. Area 5% max. of wall area or 100 s.f. max. ea.
   2. Horizontal projection
      for sign 12 s.f. or less 4’ max.
      for sign greater than 12 s.f. 15” max.
   3. Vertical projection (pitched roofs) not permitted
   4. Internal illumination not permitted

C. Municipal Electronic Message Signs 2 per lot max.
   1. Freestanding municipal electronic sign not visible from the street or adjacent property.
      A. Area 40 s.f. max.
      B. Height 10’ max.
      C. Support structure height 8’ max.
      D. Internal illumination permitted
      E. Street line setback 150’ min.
   2. Municipal electronic wall sign 1 per building when not visible from the street or any adjacent property.
      A. Area 40 s.f. max.
64.5.7 Marine Industrial MI & Saybrook Point SP-2 Districts

A. Freestanding sign 1 per lot
   1. Area 50 s.f. max.
   2. Height 10´ max.
   3. Support structure height 8´ max.
   4. Setback
      from street line 10´ min.
      from rear & other property line 5´ min.
   5. Internal illumination not permitted

B. Wall sign 2 per tenant
   1. Area
      for 1st sign, the lesser of: 10% max. of 1st wall or 100 s.f. max. ea.
      for 2nd sign, the lesser of: 5% max. of 2nd wall or 40 s.f. max. ea.
   2. Horizontal projection
      for sign 12 s.f. or less 4´ max.
   3. Vertical projection not permitted (pitched roofs)
   4. Internal illumination not permitted

64.5.8 Industrial I District

A. Freestanding sign 1 per lot
   1. Area 50 s.f. max.
   2. Height 10´ max.
   3. Support structure height 8´ max.
   4. Setback
      from street line 10´ min.
      from rear & other property line 5´ min.
   5. Internal illumination permitted

B. Wall sign 1 per tenant
   1. Area 10% max. of wall area or 100 s.f. max. ea.

Choose font-styles (e.g., san serif or block) to keep lettering readable at high speeds to prevent a safety hazard such as motorists slowing down to read them.

Direct downward all top-mounted lighting fixtures in a manner that hides the light source.

Conceal electrical connections, wiring, junction boxes and other similar devices, as well as hardware if not intended as a decorative element; use weather-resistant hardware, such as stainless steel or galvanized metal, to prevent failure from corrosion or rust that could stain or discolor the building.

Consider no more than two (2) colors on the graphic palette of a mult-tenant sign to minimize confusion and clutter.
2. **Horizontal projection**
   - for *sign* 12 s.f. or less 4’ max.
   - for *sign* greater than 12 s.f. 15’ max.

3. **Vertical projection**
   - (pitched roofs) 3’ max.

4. **Internal illumination** permitted

### 64.6 Prohibited Signs

**Section 11 Prohibitions.**

These regulations prohibit the following *signs* throughout the town of Old Saybrook: *A-frame* (sandwich board) *sign*, *billboard*, *flashing sign*, *moving sign*, *painted wall sign*, *vehicle sign*. These regulations prohibit any other *sign* unless expressly permitted or exempted.