



V. SIGNAGE

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BACKGROUND

Signs play a central role in providing information, wayfinding, and setting the tone for Kittery's visual environment. They inform motorists and pedestrians, while having a direct effect on the overall appearance of the roadway.

LUDC Reference. These Guidelines are intended to supplement, illustrate and amplify the provisions of Article XII. Signs of the Kittery LUDC.

Signage Goals

- Provide basic, legible information with attractive, highly legible signage.
- Create distinctive signage that is compatible with quality architecture and site design.
- Reduce visual clutter along Kittery's major roadways.
- Protect the investment of commercial interests throughout Kittery by establishing a quality benchmark for future signage.



Well-designed signage conveys necessary information and makes a positive contribution to the appearance of the community.

OBJECTIVES

Commercial establishments can be identified by attractive, legible signs that serve the needs of the individual business, complement the site and the architecture, and are legible to both the motorist and pedestrian. All signs should be designed to meet these guidelines.

LUDC Reference. Ch. 16.32.58: sign locations.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

Signage Plan. Information on the location and design of signs should be submitted as part of the Development Review application. It should be developed by design professionals experienced in commercial signage or environmental graphics. The applicant should resubmit the plan to the planning staff for a development review if the building's tenant is unknown at the time of application. The plan should show the design, location, color, materials, contents, and type of lighting for each proposed sign.

Compatibility. Signs should be designed to achieve a high level of visual compatibility with the building(s) and its surroundings through the use of similar detailing, form, color, lighting, and materials.

Design. The shape of the sign should complement the architectural features on the building. Simple geometric shapes are preferred for all

signage. Signs should be trimmed and detailed to complement the building.

Lettering Size. In general, the minimum lettering size for identification signs should be six inches in height. Smaller letters are generally unreadable at high speeds and may require motorists to slow down to read them, which could potentially be a safety hazard.

Street Numbers. The principal site identification sign should contain the street address shown in a prominent location at the top of the sign to facilitate wayfinding and 911 emergency response. The street number should be at least 11" in height.

Advertising Features. Objects other than signs designed primarily to attract public attention are discouraged because they distract motorists and contribute to visual clutter. Advertising features that are discouraged include greater-than-life size models of food or other products, replicas of spokes-people associated with commercial products, rows of flags or banners, and internally-lit bands of color.



The signage for this new branch bank complements the architecture through repetition of forms, colors, and detailing.



Highly legible signs near roadways characterized by simplicity in materials, forms, and letting.



Internally-lit letters and logos are preferred over whole panels. Signage is scaled to the architectural elements that surrounds it.



This site directory clearly identifies destinations with a minimum of wording, allowing motorists to make decisions without having to stop.



An attractive pedestrian-oriented sign. The street address is prominently displayed on the larger sign. The lower panels contain extraneous information and do not contribute to the sign's wayfinding function.



A carved entrance sign with a minimal amount of information.



An internally-lit sign that fits into the facade of the building without crowding.



These three signs are found in a large shopping center. They achieve compatibility with the architecture through the repetition of form, detailing, and materials.

OBJECTIVES

Signs used to identify a business should be kept simple and direct in message and content. They should convey only the most essential information about the business. Motorists should not be distracted by signs containing excessive information.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

Content. Identification signs should contain a maximum of either 30 letters or 7 bits of information. A bit can be a syllable or a symbol. Repetitious information between signs and buildings should be avoided, regardless of the sign area allowed.

Advertising. The use of 'sponsor' logos, slogans, or other messages on a sign, where the 'sponsor' is not the occupant of the property or a franchiser of a business located on the property, is strongly discouraged. If a sign is sponsored, the name of the sponsor and/or its logo should not occupy more than 25% of the total face of the sign.

Readerboards. Where readerboards are part of a permanent sign, they should contain no more than three lines of text. Lettering height should be a maximum of 6". The readerboard should be fully integrated into the overall sign design by virtue of its form, scale, color, and detailing.



A typical sign treatment for a large retailer, containing more information than is needed to identify the premises.



An attractive identification sign for a similar use that contains just the basic information.



The readerboard in this sign contributes to a cluttered appearance.



The readerboard at the bottom of the panel has been designed as an integral part of the sign.



A simple, direct sign with four 'bits' of information.

OBJECTIVES

Facade mounted signs used to identify commercial properties should provide the necessary information without overwhelming the building.

LUDC Reference: Chapter 16.32. 38: requirements for sign locations.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

Design. Facade mounted signs should be designed as an integral element of the architecture. The shape and materials of the sign should complement the architectural features on the building.

Location. Signs should not be mounted in locations that obscure architectural details on the building. Signage should be mounted on vertical surfaces without projecting above the fascia trim. In general, signs should be located a minimum of 18" from the corner of the building.

Hardware. Signage should be mounted with concealed hardware, or with decorative hardware to complement the design of the sign. Metal hardware should be stainless steel or galvanized to prevent rust and corrosion that could stain or discolor the building. Where hardware will be painted to blend with the sign, rust inhibiting paint should be used to prevent rust streaks.



These signs are well integrated with the architecture, using only essential information about the tenant.



Mounting hardware can emphasize a sign and greatly enhance the building appearance.



This facade-mounted sign is out of scale with the signboard that supports it.



These coordinated facade-mounted signs are in scale with the building design.

OBJECTIVES

Multi-tenant commercial properties should provide legible, attractive signs that help people identify the property without contributing to sign clutter. Entrance signage should stress the identity of the place and de-emphasize individual tenants that occupy it.

LUDC Reference: Chapter 16.32. Requirements for multiple tenant buildings.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

Hierarchy of Signs. A hierarchy of signage should be established to facilitate wayfinding and minimize site clutter. Multi-tenant properties on major roadways should be identified by a simple identification sign in a highly visible location.

Identification Signs. Multi-tenant buildings or multi-building sites should have one identification sign conveying an overall identity for the property. This sign should be located near the main entrance to reinforce circulation patterns and minimize visual clutter.

Identification signs that also list multiple tenants should exhibit a logical hierarchy in the display of information (i.e., address, name of building/development, primary tenant, other tenants). Only essential information (the name of the tenant) should be displayed on the main sign. Phone numbers, hours of operation, advertising slogans, etc. should not be listed.

Street Numbers. The main identification sign for multi-tenant properties should incorporate the street address into the sign to facilitate wayfinding and 911 emergency response.



This outlet mall is identified by a single sign at the entrance; names of the tenants are only found on the building facades. The result is less clutter along the highway.

Compatibility. The design of multi-tenant signs should be coordinated with the design of the principle building(s) in terms of color, materials, detailing, and style.

Color Consistency. Multi-tenant signs should conform to a simple color and graphic palette in order to minimize the confusion and clutter of the sign. In general, multi-tenant signs should have no more than three colors.



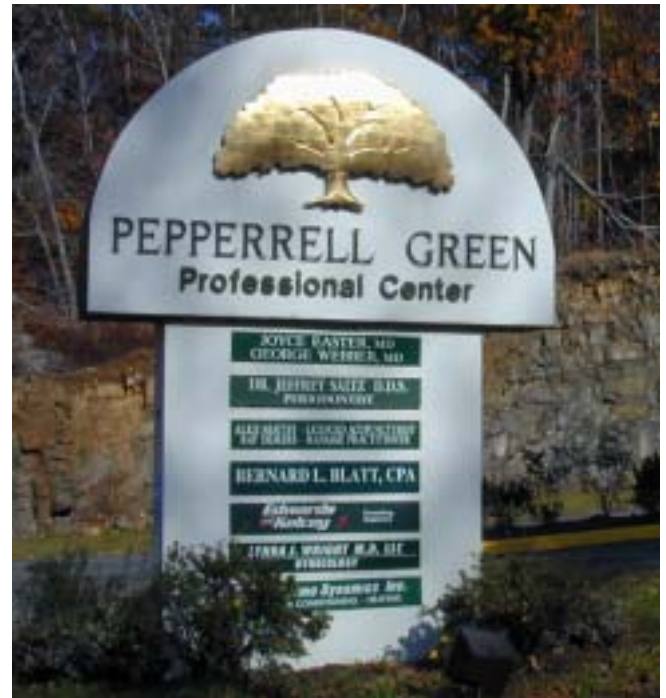
The name of the center is very difficult to read and conflicts with the street number.



A simple, effective multi-tenant sign with a color-based hierarchy. The name of the property is more pronounced making it easier for wayfinding.



The shopping center's logo (at top) is overpowered by the individual signs below. There is too much information for a motorist to absorb while driving.



A very well-designed sign for an office center. However, at 35 mph motorist will not be able to read the directory without slowing down. Shrubs also block visibility. The tenant names should be mounted on a separate sign within the center.



The names of individual tenants compete for attention, making it very difficult to read while driving by.



A multi-tenant sign with a clear hierarchy of information. The name of the plaza is at the top in bolder lettering. Individual tenants are listed on contrasting backgrounds for legibility.

OBJECTIVES

Lighting for externally-lit signs should be designed as an integral part of the sign design. Lighting must not create glare that would distract motorists or pedestrians, nor should the degree of illumination disturb the surrounding residential areas or contribute to light pollution.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

Light Level. The illumination level on the vertical surface of the sign should be bright enough to provide a noticeable contrast with the surrounding building or landscape without causing undue glare or reflection.

Lighting. Lighting fixtures should be carefully located, aimed, and shielded so that light is directed only onto the sign facade. Lights should

not be aimed toward adjacent streets, sidewalks, or abutting properties. Ground-mounted lighting should be screened or partially buried to minimize the view of the light source.

Light Sources. Top-mounted lighting fixtures should be directed downward in a manner that hides the light source. Uplighting may be used if the fixture will be aimed to prevent light spillage beyond the sign.

Design. Light fixtures and mounting devices should be selected to complement the color and design of the sign and the architecture. Concealed light sources are strongly encouraged.



The lawn-mounted light fixture has been aimed to avoid spillover onto abutting property.



These top-mounted light fixtures are not well shielded or integrated into the design of the sign.



In both example the top-mounted light fixtures are well-located, aimed, and shielded so that only the sign is lit. The lighting fixtures compliment the signs and the buildings.

OBJECTIVES

Internally-lit signs should not create glare that would distract motorists or pedestrians, nor should the degree of illumination disturb the surrounding residential areas or contribute to light pollution.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

Design. Internally-lit signs should consist of light lettering and/or symbols set against a dark background to minimize the amount of light emanating from the sign. Internally-lit letters and symbols are preferred over whole panels that are internally lit. Letters and/or symbols on panels should constitute no more than 40% of the sign's surface area.

Mounting Systems. Signs should be mounted in a manner that provides adequate support for the weight of the sign. Mounting systems should be designed to be compatible with the architecture in terms of color, forms, and style. Electrical connections, wiring, junction boxes, and other similar devices should not be visible from pedestrian pathways or roadways.

Intensity. Internally-lit signs should not act as light fixtures or cause glare on nearby pathways or roadways.

Maintenance. Signs should be located where they can be easily maintained. Non-functioning bulbs should be replaced immediately.



An effective use of individual internally-lit letters to create a simple identity for a commercial building.



The sign's dark background and light lettering emphasize the bank's name while minimizing glare.



The white background of this sign will cause it to act as a light fixture.



This small directional sign has been damaged by snow plowing operations.

OBJECTIVES

Most land uses in Kittery rely upon temporary signs on occasion to convey specific information, alert the public to special events, or announce new businesses. The design and placement of temporary signs should be closely related to existing sign systems, landscape improvements, and the building design to avoid visual clutter.

LUDC Reference. Ch. 16.32.61. Temporary Signs.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

Content and Design. The same guidelines established for the content and design of permanent signs should be applied to temporary signage.

Location. Temporary signs should be installed in locations that do not create a hazard for pedestrians or vehicles.



A simple message on a temporary sign.



A temporary sign to announce a new name for an existing business.



Moveable signs such as these are prohibited as temporary signs.