

ARTICLE 10

SIGNS

ARTICLE 10: SIGNS

10.1 Purpose

The purpose of this section:

- .1 To maintain public safety and traffic safety by ensuring that signs are properly designed, constructed, installed, and maintained;
- .2 To minimize the distractions and obstruction of view that contribute to traffic hazards and endanger public safety;
- .3 To protect existing development and promote high standards of quality in new development by encouraging appropriately designed, placed, and sized signage.
- .4 To provide an effective guide for communicating identification through signage while preventing signs from dominating the visual appearance of the areas in which they are located.

10.2 Applicability

Except as otherwise provided in this ordinance, it shall be unlawful to construct, enlarge, move or replace any sign or cause the same to be done, without first obtaining a sign permit for such sign from the Stanly County Building Standards Department or designated permit agency. In addition, a certificate of occupancy for a change in the use of a property shall require compliance with Article 10, Signs.

Notwithstanding the above, changing or replacing the permanent copy on an existing lawful sign shall not require a permit, provided the copy change does not change the nature of the sign so as to render it in violation of this ordinance.

10.3 General Provisions

The following provisions shall apply to all signs.

- .1 Construction Standards. All signs shall be constructed and installed in accordance with the applicable provisions of the North Carolina State Building Code.
- .2 Electrical Standards. All illuminated signs shall be installed in accordance with the applicable provisions of the North Carolina State Electrical Code and all detached signs shall be illuminated by an underground electrical source.
- .3 Maintenance of Signs. All signs shall be maintained in good structural and aesthetic condition. Deficiencies such as chipped paint, broken plastic, missing letters, and exposed light bulbs shall be evidence of a lack of maintenance.
- .4 Content. Content of message, commercial or non commercial, is not regulated by this ordinance.
- .5 No sign shall be placed so as to obstruct the clear sight triangle at a street intersection (Section 8:9)

10.4 District Classification

For purposes of this Article, zoning districts are classified as follows:

Open Space District (OPS)	Residential
General Residential (GR)	Residential
Neighborhood Residential (NR)	Residential
Mobile Home (MH)	Residential
City Center (CC)	Mixed Use

Traditional Neighborhood Development Overlay (TND-O)	Mixed Use
Campus & Business Institutional (CBI)	Mixed Use
Highway Commercial (HC)	Commercial

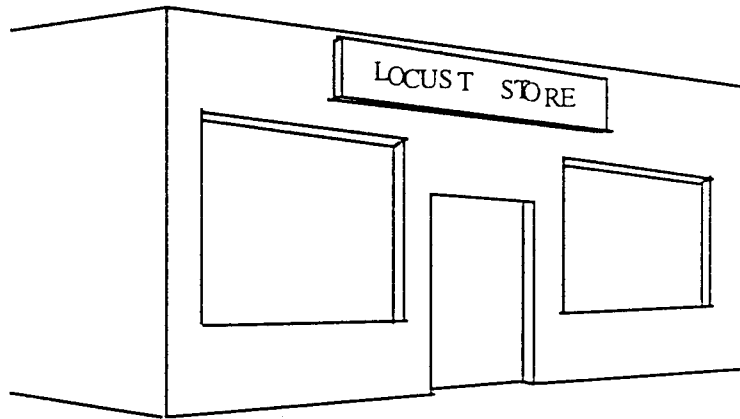
10.5 Sign Types

Sign types are defined as follows:

.1 Wall Mounted Signs

One or a combination of the wall sign types below may be used on a building. Wall sign area is the total of the square footage of all wall signs associated with a business or structure.

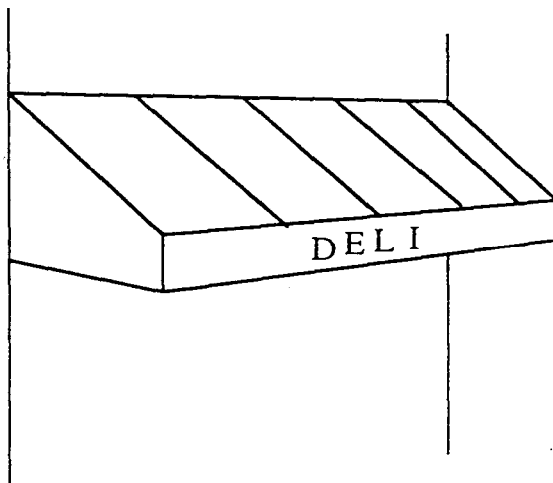
- a) A flush wall sign is mounted or applied directly to the building wall, generally on the fascia. It may in no instance extend above the parapet, or eaves line of any building.



- b) A hanging sign is also a wall sign. A hanging sign is suspended from a simple bracket attached to a building wall and requires 8 or more feet of vertical clearance from the ground. It is most appropriately used along pedestrian-oriented streets to identify attached or closely spaced shops, restaurants, and service businesses. Only one hanging sign is permitted per building or business bay (in a multi-tenant building such as a shopping center). The sign face area does not include the area of the bracket. A hanging sign may project no more than 4 feet from the building wall. It may project up to 3 feet over a sidewalk in a City maintained right-of-way upon approval by the Zoning Administrator.



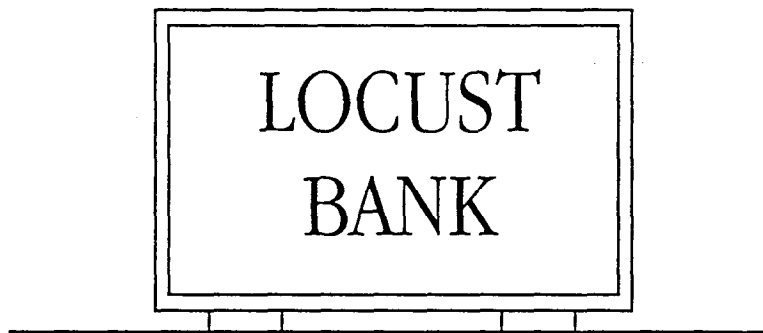
c) A canopy or awning sign is sign copy applied directly onto a canopy or awning.



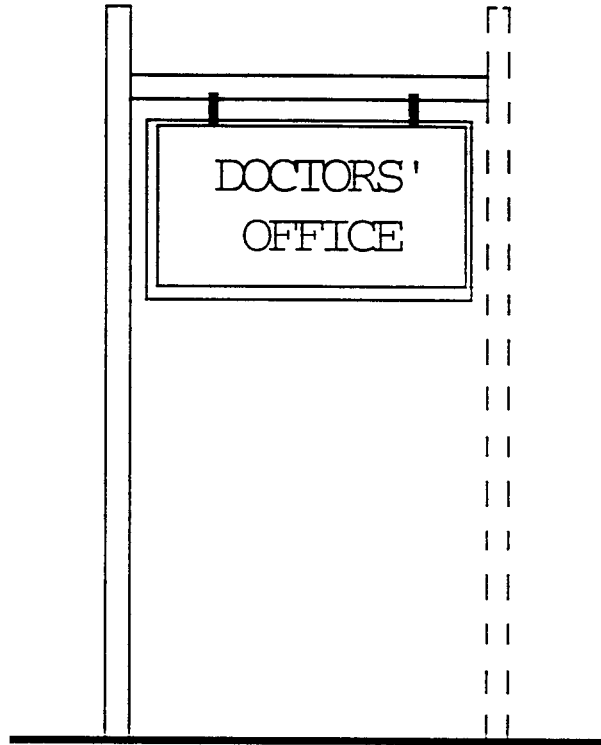
.2 Ground Mounted Signs

Ground mounted signs are defined as follows:

a) A monument sign is mounted generally flush with the ground plane. It may not be mounted on a pole or pylon, nor raised by placement on a berm, wall, or similar structure. Supporting elements may not exceed one foot in height and are included in measurement of sign height.



b) A raised sign may hang from a pole and beam frame as illustrated below, or be placed within a frame mounted on up to two supporting poles.



10.6 Sign Measurement

.1 Sign Face Area: the area within a single continuous perimeter enclosing the characters, lettering, logos, illustrations, and ornamentation, together with any material or color forming an integral part of the display or used to differentiate the sign from the background against which it is placed.

.2 **Sign Height:** the distance from the ground directly beneath the sign to the highest point of the sign's frame. Ornamentation atop signs, such as small caps and spires, are not included in the height measurement.

.3 Sign Frame Area: In the case of signs mounted back-to-back, only one side of the sign is to be used for computation of the area. Back-to-back signs shall be defined as double-faced signs. Otherwise, the surface area of each sign is to be separately computed. In the case of cylindrical signs, signs in the shape of cubes, or other signs which are substantially three-dimensional with respect to their display surfaces, the entire display surface or surfaces are included in computations of area. If a sign is attached to an entrance wall or fence, only that portion of that wall or fence onto which the sign face or letters are placed shall be calculated in the sign area.

10.7 Sign Illumination

.1 All lighted signs shall have their lighting directed in such a manner as to illuminate only the face of the sign. All lighted signs shall meet all applicable Electrical Codes.

.2 No commercial sign within 100 linear feet of a pre-existing residential structure may be illuminated between the hours of 12:00 midnight and 6:00 a.m. A residence shall be deemed "pre-existing" for purposes of this Section if it has a valid building permit in effect for construction of said structure or if construction of said structure was complete on or prior to the effective date of this provision.

10.8 Permanent Signs Requiring a Permit

<p>CIVIC BUILDINGS IN ANY DISTRICT</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Wall Mounted Sign</p> <p>10% of any wall faces area fronting a street, up to a Maximum of 128 square feet.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Ground Mounted Sign</p> <p>Maximum Number: 1 per street front Maximum Area: 32 square feet Maximum Height: 8 feet Not Permitted for zero setback buildings</p>	<p>ANY BUILDING TYPE IN A MIXED USE DISTRICT EXCEPT A DETACHED HOUSE (CC, TND-O, CBI)</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Wall Mounted Sign</p> <p>10% of any wall faces area fronting a street. Up to a maximum of 128 square feet.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Ground Mounted Sign</p> <p>Maximum Number: 1 per street front Maximum Area: 32 square feet Maximum Height: 8 feet Not Permitted for zero setback buildings</p>
<p>ANY BUILDING TYPE IN A COMMERCIAL DISTRICT EXCEPT DETACHED HOUSE (HC, CBI)</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Wall Mounted Sign</p> <p>10% of any wall faces area fronting a street, up to a Maximum of 128 square feet.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Ground Mounted sign</p> <p>Maximum Number: 1 per street front Maximum Area: 32 square feet Maximum Height: 8 feet Not Permitted for zero setback buildings</p> <p style="padding-left: 80px;">Type Permitted: pole and beam or framed only, as identified in 10.5.2b.</p>	<p>MIXED USE BUILDINGS WHERE PERMITTED IN RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS (NR)</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Wall Mounted Sign</p> <p>1 sign per business bay¹⁴, up to a maximum of 12 square feet per bay; the sign area for any mixed use structure shall not exceed 5% of any wall face area fronting a street.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Ground Mounted sign</p> <p>Maximum Number: 1 per building Maximum Area: 6 square feet Maximum Height: 8 feet Illumination permitted: picture lighting or indirect lighting (no internal Illumination).</p>
<p>DIRECTORY SIGN</p> <p>Maximum Number: 1 per street front; Maximum 3 signs; 1000 foot separation. Maximum Area: 96 square feet per sign Maximum Height of ground mounted signs: 12'</p> <p>(Includes shopping centers, office complexes, schools, Churches, institutional or business campuses, and similar large complexes which have a variety of tenants or uses)</p> <p>No individual tenant ground mounted signs are permitted.</p>	<p>PLANNED DEVELOPMENT ENTRANCE SIGN</p> <p>Maximum Number: 1 per street front; 2 sign faces may be used with a wall, fence or other architectural entrance feature. Maximum Area: 24 square feet Maximum Height: 8 feet</p> <p>(permitted for all-residential, mixed use, and non-residential projects of 10 acres or more.</p> <p>Limited to name and/or logo.</p>

14 A business bay in a mixed use building is the width of the first floor area which is used for any single business, extended from the front of the building to the back.

10.8.2 Permanent Off-Premise Signs Limited to Non-Commercial Public Service Directional Signs

For the purpose of directing the public-at-large to non-commercial community facilities of general interest, permanent off-premise directional signs may be erected in addition to signs otherwise permitted in this regulation.

.1 **Non-commercial Public Service Directional Signs** are permitted subject to the following standards:

- a) The community facility is open to the general public and operated by a non-commercial civic, charitable, and religious, community, or similar organization.
- b) No more than 2 directional signs shall be erected for each facility.
- c) Signs may not exceed 4 square feet in area or 5 feet in height.
- d) Signs may be placed no more than one mile from the subject property.
- e) Along state roads, such signs shall be located outside of the right-of-way or further than 11 feet from the edge of any public street, whichever distance from edge of pavement is greater: signs shall not violate the sight distance triangle requirements of this ordinance.
- f) Along City maintained roads, such signs shall be located at least 11 feet from the edge of pavement and respect the sight distance triangle.
- g) No sign shall be placed on private property without the written consent of the property owner on the permit application.
- h) Every Non-Commercial Public Service Directional Sign shall be separated by a distance of 400 feet from any other such sign on the same side of the street, and by a distance of 200 feet from any other such sign on the opposite side of a street.

10.9 Temporary Signs Requiring a Permit

The following temporary signs shall be allowed subject to the standards below, in lieu of on-site real estate or construction signs.

.1 **Temporary Planned Development Signs**, provided:

- a) Only one primary sign and two secondary signs shall be allowed per street front of development.
- b) The maximum sign face area of a primary sign shall not exceed 32 square feet; height of ground mounted signs shall not exceed 6 feet.
- c) The maximum sign face area of secondary signs shall not exceed 12 square feet; height of ground mounted signs shall not exceed 6 feet.
- d) Only one permit shall be required for all temporary planned development signs for each planned development. Permits shall be valid until a project is completed or two years, whichever comes first. Completion shall be evidenced by the issuance of all certificates of occupancy for a development by the Building Standards Department. If a project is not completed in two years, a new permit must be obtained. However, in no instance shall more than 5 permits be issued for a development. Additional permits shall not allow secondary signs. All secondary signs shall be removed when the first permit issued expires.
- e) Temporary directional signs within a planned development, but not visible from the road(s) fronting the overall development, shall be permitted so long as such signs do not exceed 12 square feet in sign area, 6 feet in height, and are removed upon completion of the portion of the project to which the signs are giving direction.

10.10 Temporary Off-Premise Signs Requiring Approval

The following temporary off-premise signs are permitted subject to the standards below.

.1 **Temporary off-premise signs or banners** for special community events open to the general public and sponsored by non-commercial civic, charitable, community, or similar organizations, provided:

- a) At least five business days before signs are to be posted, the designated representative of the sponsoring group shall provide a sign installation and removal plan for review by the Zoning Administrator, who shall grant written permission for signs to be posted if the standards below are met.
- b) Signs or banners shall be located outside of the public right-of-way or further than 11 feet from the edge of any public street, whichever distance from edge of pavement is greater: signs shall respect the sight distance triangle.
- c) Signs or banners may be posted up to 14 days before the event and must be removed within 7 days following the event.
- d) Every temporary off-premise sign or banner shall be separated by a distance of 400 feet from any other such temporary off-premise sign on the same side of a street, and by a distance of 200 feet from any other sign on the opposite side of a street.
- e) Nothing in this provision shall be construed to authorize the posting of such signs or banners upon trees, utility poles, traffic control signs, lights or devices in any place or manner prohibited by the provisions herein, nor on private property without written consent of the owner.

.2 **Temporary cross-street banners** for community events as may be approved by the City Clerk and installed by City personnel, according to policies established by the City Council.

10.11 Signs Not Requiring a Permit

The following types of signs are exempt from permit requirements and allowed in all zones, but shall be in conformance with all other requirements of this ordinance.

- .1 Memorial signs, plaques, or grave markers.
- .2 Public interest signs.
- .3 Public information kiosks on public or civic property, subject to design approval by the City Council and permission of the agency upon whose property the kiosk is to be placed.
- .4 On premises directional and instructional signs not exceeding 6 square feet in area, unless such sign is a monument sign, in which case it may not exceed 9 square feet. Maximum height: 4 feet.
- .5 Identification signs not exceeding 1 1/2 square feet in area that indicate the same and/or address of the occupant. Maximum height: 4 feet.
- .6 Window signs with a total copy area not exceed 50% of the window or glass door on which the sign(s) are located.
- .7 Incidental signs.
- .8 Flags on permanent poles.

.9 Campaign or Election signs provided that:

- a) Individual signs shall not exceed 16 square feet in area or 6 feet in height.
- b) All signs shall be removed within 7 days after the election for which they were made.
- c) No signs shall be permitted in the public right-of-way.

.10 Real estate signs, other than the temporary signs described in Section 10.8.

a) Signs advertising a single family home or lot, a duplex, triplex, or quadriplex, or an individual unit within an attached housing development shall not exceed 6 square feet. Rider signs not exceeding a total of 2 square feet in sign face area shall be permitted in addition to the 6 square feet. Maximum height: 4 feet.

b) Signs advertising all other uses shall not exceed one square foot for every 5 linear feet of frontage of the advertised property, up to a maximum sign face area of 32 square feet and maximum height of 6 feet.

c) Only one sign per street front of the advertised property shall be erected.

d) Properties having a continuous frontage in excess of 850 linear feet may be allowed an additional sign so long as such sign is no closer than 850 feet from another real estate sign on the property.

e) Signs shall not be illuminated.

f) Signs shall be removed within 7 days after the sale is closed or rent or lease transaction is finalized.

.11 Construction signs, other than Temporary Planned Development Signs. Section 10.8 provided:

a) Signs located on single family lots or duplex, triplex, or quadriplex lots shall not exceed 6 square feet in area. Rider signs not exceeding 2 square feet in area shall be permitted in addition to the 6 square feet. Maximum height: 4 feet.

b) Signs for all other uses shall not exceed one square foot for every 5 linear feet of frontage of property under construction, up to a maximum sign face area of 32 square feet and a maximum height of 6 feet.

c) Signs are confined to the site of construction.

d) Only one sign per street front of the property under construction shall be erected.

e) Signs shall not be illuminated.

f) Signs shall be removed within 7 days after the completion of a project.

.12 Temporary farm products signs provided:

a) Signs are located on the premises where the products are sold in conjunction with a bona fide farm use.

b) Signs shall not exceed 32 square feet in area nor 6 feet in height.

c) Only one sign shall be erected.

d) Signs shall be removed within 7 days of the termination of sale activities.

.13 Temporary special event signs or banners for religious, charitable, civic, fraternal, or similar organizations, provide:

- a) No more than one sign per street front shall be permitted per event.
- b) Signs shall be located on the property on which the event will occur.
- c) Signs shall not exceed 32 square feet in area or 6 feet in height.
- d) Signs shall be erected no sooner than 14 days before and removed 7 days after the event.

.14 Temporary banners in non-residential districts, provided:

- a) Only one banner per establishment shall be allowed at a time.
- b) All banners shall be attached in total to a building wall or permanent canopy extending from a building.
- c) No paper banners shall be allowed.
- d) Banners shall be erected for a period not to exceed 2 weeks.
- e) No more than 6 such signs per establishment shall be erected within a calendar year.
- f) No banner shall extend above the second occupiable floor level of a building.

.15 Public Service and advertising signs in association with athletic fields. Signs may be attached to the interior face of any fence which encloses or partially encloses an athletic playing field upon the property of a school or public park subject to the following Conditions:

- a) No sign face area shall be visible neither from any public street nor from any abutting property in a residential or mixed use district.
- b) No sign shall extend above the top of the enclosing fence.
- c) The property owner or an authorized representative shall provide the City with a signed statement granting permission for signs to be displayed. The statement shall also acknowledge responsibility for management of the signs and their content as well as the appropriate removal disposal of damaged or obsolete signs.

10.12 Master Signage Programs

Master signage programs provide latitude to develop appropriate signage designs for new or existing area with special unifying features. Master signage programs require approval by the City Council following review and recommendation by the Locust Planning Board.

10.12.1 Special Sign Districts

For the purpose of establishing, enhancing, preserving, and developing the character, quality, and property values of areas of unique character and special development potential, districts in which signs are regulated by special provisions may be established subject to the following conditions:

- .1 As a prerequisite to the establishment of such a special sign district, it must be determined that the modified rules established for said district shall:
 - a) Preserve and enhance the special character of the particular area; and
 - b) Not contravene the intent of this ordinance; and
 - c) Cause no disturbance to neighboring property lying outside the proposed district.

.2 Without changing the basic structure of this ordinance, the modified rules for a special sign district may impose sign regulations which provide greater latitude or are more stringent than those provided elsewhere in this ordinance.

.3 The special sign district constitutes an overlay district and shall conform to the procedures of Article 11 for purposes of adoption and administration. Districts for which special sign regulations may be imposed include, but shall not be limited to, the City Center District, the TND-O, and any future Historic District Overlay(s).

10.12.2 Planned Development Flexibility Option

For the purpose of providing flexibility and incentives for coordinated, well-designed sign systems for large scale development, special provisions varying the standards of this ordinance may be approved by the City Council. The Planned Development Flexibility Option is initiated by developer submission of a Master Sign Program to the City Administrator, who shall first place the request on the agenda of the Planning Board for a recommendation, and then on the agenda of the City Council for approval, subject to the following:

.1 The development is a planned residential, non-residential, or mixed used development. 10 acres or greater in size; a hospital or other large scale institutional complex; a large scale cultural civic or recreational facility; or a similar large scale development.

.2 A Master Sign Program that includes the following information in booklet form is submitted:

- a) Detailed designs of all proposed signs including the size, height, copy, materials, and colors of such signs.
- b) Proposed number and location of signs.
- c) Sign Illumination Plans.
- d) Plans for landscaping or architectural features to be used in conjunction with such plans.

.3 The proposed signs meet the following criteria:

- a) All signs are coordinated in terms of design features.
- b) The maximum size of detached signs is not varied by more than 25%.
- c) The number of detached signs along a street frontage does not exceed 3.
- d) The maximum height of a detached sign does not exceed 6 feet.
- e) Multi-information directional signs are no greater than 16 square feet and are located in the interior of a development.
- f) Changeable copy highlighting special events on signs for cultural, civic, or recreational facilities shall not exceed 25% of the sign face area of a sign.

10.13 Prohibited Signs

The following signs are prohibited in all zoning districts:

.1 Any sign which the Zoning Administrator determines obstructs the view of bicyclists or motorists using any street, approach to any street intersection, or which interferes with the effectiveness of or obscures any traffic sign, device, or signal shall be prohibited.

.2 Illuminated, highly reflective signs or spot lights which hamper the vision of motorists or bicyclists.

.3 Signs which contain lights, rotating disks, words and other devices not erected by a public authority which may be erroneously construed as government signs or emergency warning signs. An example of this is a sign which contains a picture of a traffic sign plus the word "Stop", "Yield", etc.

.4 Any sign located outdoors which interferes with free passage from or obstructs any fire escape, downspout, window, door, stairway, ladder, or opening intended as a means of ingress or egress or providing light or air.

.5 Any sign (other than a government sign), banner or display placed on any curb, sidewalk, post, pole, hydrant, bridge, tree, or other surface located on, over, or across any public street or right-of-way, or any banner, placed on stakes on a property, unless otherwise permitted. Banners shall be permitted on buildings and existing signs only.

.6 Any sign located in such a way as to intentionally deny an adjoining property owner visual access to an existing sign.

.7 Flashing signs, signs with flashing or reflective disks, signs with flashing lights or lights of changing degree of intensity or color or signs with electrically scrolled messages (except government signs and signs which give time and temperature information.) If a time and temperature sign alternates between a time message and a temperature message it shall continuously show one message a minimum of three (3) seconds in time before switching to the other message.

.8 Portable signs

.9 Vehicular signs

.10 Rotating signs, other than on-premise rotating identification names which contain a logo and/or business name on it.

.11 Roof signs.

.12 Off premise advertising signs (i.e. Billboards) except those sponsored by any government, non-profit or not-for-profit organization in accordance with Section 10.7.

.13 Signs placed on a piece of property without permission of its owners or agents.

.14 Inflatable signs [including inflated balloons having a diameter of greater than two (2) feet.]

.15 Any sign whose sign face was initially constructed and designed to be placed and/or transported on wheels, regardless if said sign face is removed from its base and placed on or in the ground so as to otherwise classify said sign as a "free-standing" sign as herein defined.

.16 Other signs not expressly allowed by this ordinance.

10.14 Application and Issuance of Sign Permits

10.14.1 Application.

Applications for permits shall contain or have attached the following information:

.1 The street name and street number of the building, structure or lot on which a sign is to be place.

.2 Names, addresses, and telephone numbers of the applicant, owner of the property on which the sign is to be erected or affixed, the owner of the sign, and the licensed contractor erecting or affixing the sign.

.3 If the applicant is not the owner or lessee of the lot on which the sign will be located, written permission from the property owner or a designated representative stating agreement that the sign may be erected on the parcel for which the permit has been applied shall be required.

.4 A site or plat plan of the property involved, showing accurate placement of the proposed sign and zoning district designation.

.5 Two (2) blueprints or inked, scaled drawings of the plans and specifications of the sign to be erected or affixed as deemed necessary by the Zoning Administrator. Such plans may include but shall not be limited to details of dimensions, materials, copy, and size of the proposed sign. For wall signs, dimensions of the building wall on which the sign is to be affixed and the location and size of existing wall signs shall also be included.

.6 Locations of addresses. No permit for a sign shall be issued unless a street address has been assigned according to the requirements of the City of Locust or the Stanly County Street Address Ordinance, whichever is applicable.

.7 Other information as the Zoning Administrator may require to determine full compliance with this and other applicable codes.

10.14.2 Issuance of Permit.

Upon the filing of an application for a sign permit, the Zoning Administrator shall examine the plans and specifications, and, as deemed necessary, may inspect the premises upon which the sign is proposed to be erected or affixed. If the proposed sign is in compliance with all the requirements of this ordinance and other applicable codes, a permit will be issued. Any permit issued in accordance with this section shall automatically become null and void unless the work for which it was issued has visibly commenced within 6 months of the date of issue or if the work authorized by it is suspended or abandoned for one year.

10.14.3 Fees.

To obtain a sign permit, all fees, in accordance with the requirements of the permitting agency, shall be paid.

10.14.4 Construction Inspection.

The permit holder shall notify the Building Standards Department upon completion of construction and installation of any sign for which a permit is required.

10.15 Enforcement

10.15.1 Inspections and Investigations

- .1 The Zoning Administrator or other agents of the City of Locust will periodically inspect signs in order to determine whether there are violations of this Ordinance.
- .2 The City of Locust or the Zoning Administrator, acting on behalf of the City, shall have the power to conduct such investigations as may reasonably be deemed necessary to carry out enforcement duties prescribed in this Ordinance, and for this purpose to enter at reasonable times upon any property, public or private, for the purpose of investigating and inspecting signs. No person shall refuse entry or access to any authorized representative of the City or of the Zoning Administrator who requests entry for purposes of inspection, and who presents appropriate credentials; nor shall any person obstruct, hamper, or interfere with any such representative while in the process of carrying out his official duties.
- .3 The Zoning Administrator or other authorized agent of the City may require written statements, or the filing of reports with respect to pertinent questions relating to signs.

10.15.2 Civil Penalties

If it is determined that a person has failed to comply with the provisions of this Ordinance, the Zoning Administrator or building inspector shall issue a warning citation to the violator. Violations shall be corrected within ten days of the issuance of such citation. If the violation is not corrected within the 10 day period, a citation subject to a \$25.00 civil penalty shall be issued.

If the offender does not correct the violation and pay the penalty within 72 hours after being cited, a second citation subject to a \$25.00 *civil* penalty for the same violation shall be issued. Failure to correct the violation and pay this civil penalty within 72 hours shall subject the offender to a third citation of \$50.00 for the same violation. Subsequent citations subject to a \$100.00 civil penalty for each day the penalty is not paid or the violation not corrected shall be issued.

These civil penalties are in addition to any other penalties or actions imposed by a court for violation of the provisions of this ordinance.

10.15.3 Other Enforcement Methods

In addition to the civil penalties, the provisions of this ordinance may be enforced by any method used to enforce the Zoning Ordinance.

10.16 Removal of Nonconforming Signs

.1 Amortization.

- a) For purposes of determining sign amortization date, signs which became non-conforming on or before April 3, 1997 shall be brought into compliance or removed on or before April 3, 2002; signs which become non-conforming on the effective date of these regulations shall be brought into compliance within 5 years of its effective date.
- b) Any existing sign that exceeds the maximum sign face size, maximum sign height, or fails to meet the spacing requirement, and for which the applicable standard(s) is violated by a factor of more than 25%, shall be brought into compliance with the requirements of this ordinance or removed entirely within 5 years of the effective date of the regulations to which the sign does not conform. Removal shall include the entire sign and any associated equipment.
- c) Premises that exceed the number of allowable signs shall be brought into compliance with this ordinance within 5 years of the effective date of the regulations to which the site does not conform.
- d) Any sign not permitted in a zoning district shall also be removed entirely within 5 years of the effective date of the regulations to which the sign does not conform.
- e) All roof signs shall be removed within 5 years of the effective date of the regulations to which the sign does not conform.
- f) If for any reason, such as a rezoning, a sign becomes nonconforming after the date of adoption of this ordinance, such sign shall be removed 5 years from the date the sign becomes nonconforming.

.2 **Exceptions to Amortization.** North Carolina General Statute 136-131.1 requires that "just compensation" to be paid upon removal of certain outdoor advertising signs adjacent to the highway on the national system of interstate and defense highways or a highway on the federal-aid primary highway system for which there is in effect a valid permit issued by the Department of Transportation. Should any such state or federal requirement become inoperative or otherwise fail to apply to a given sign, then such sign shall be removed within 5 years of such state or federal requirement becoming inoperative or otherwise failing to apply to such sign.

.3 **Maintenance of Nonconforming signs.** Normal maintenance of all nonconforming signs, including necessary nonstructural repairs, incidental alterations, or copy changes which do not extend or intensify the nonconforming features of the sign, shall be permitted during the amortization period for such sign. However, no structural alteration, enlargement, or extension shall be made to a nonconforming sign unless the alteration, enlargement, or extension will result in the elimination of the nonconforming features of the sign; or unless an order has been issued by the Zoning Administrator to ensure the safety of the structure.