Highland Village
Special District Sign Plan

February 2013 draft amendments

Amended by the Saint Paul City Council Xxx XX, 2013

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CITY OF SAINT PAUL
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

HIGHLAND VILLAGE SPECIAL DISTRICT SIGN PLAN

January 2013 draft amendments

Intent and Purpose

The Highland Village Special District Sign Plan, as provided in Sections 64.601 and 64.750 of the Zoning Code, is intended to provide sign controls for the Highland Village commercial area with the following purpose:

- Strengthen and reinforce the image of the Highland Village commercial district as a unique quality shopping area by encouraging attractive, well-designed signs that complement the overall design of the district, do not clutter or detract from the appearance of the streetscape or the businesses, and do not overpower the design of buildings.
- Focus attention on the businesses at street level, with clear and concise business signs that support the pedestrian focus of the commercial district rather than being geared toward high-speed vehicular traffic.
- Keep window signs from blocking the view into businesses, allowing for passersby to see into the building in order to encourage sales and enhance the safety of employees and shoppers.

Area Description

The Highland Village Special District Sign Plan shall apply to the area along Ford Parkway between Mississippi River Boulevard and Snelling Avenue, and along Cleveland Avenue between Randolph Avenue and Villard Avenue, designated on the accompanying official zoning map of the "Highland Village Special Sign District."

Definitions and Interpretation

The provisions of this Special District Sign Plan are supplementary to those of Chapter 64, Signs, of the Zoning Code, and the most restrictive provision shall apply. All words and terms shall be defined as in Chapter 64 of the Zoning Code of the City of St. Paul.

Administration and Enforcement

The zoning administrator shall enforce the provisions of this Plan as a supplement to Chapter 64, Signs, of the Zoning Code. Whenever a permit for a sign in the Highland Village Special Sign District is required under the provisions of Chapter 64 of the Zoning Code, such permit shall not be issued unless the plans for the sign have been approved by the Zoning Administrator as in conformance with this Plan and Chapter 64, Signs.

The Zoning Administrator may order the removal of any sign that is not

constructed or maintained in accordance with the provisions of this Special District Sign Plan under the provisions of Zoning Code § 64.206(d). Violations of this Special District Sign Plan are subject to the enforcement provisions of Chapter 61, Article IX, 61.900, Enforcement, of the Zoning Code.

Procedures

Applications for sign permits in the Highland Village Special Sign District shall be submitted to the Zoning Administrator for review and approval according to the requirements of Zoning Code § 64.203(a) Application. The Zoning Administrator shall immediately notify the Highland District Council and the Highland Business Association.

Business Signs

Business signs, signs that identify and direct attention to the business on the premises, play an important role in informing customers about the types and location of businesses in Highland Village. Business signs are important for the quality of Highland Village as a commercial district and are the signs that should be the most visible.

Signs that advertise a product and include the name of the business on the premises upon which the sign is placed shall not be permitted. Such signs, which are often provided by product suppliers, fail to highlight the important information, the business name, and clutter the appearance of the street.

Business signs may take the form of freestanding signs, portable signs~~,~~ projecting signs, temporary signs, wall signs and window signs. The location of business signs oriented to vehicular traffic should be coordinated to make them easier to find and read. The sum of the gross surface display area in square feet of all permanent business signs (not including temporary, portable and interior window signs) on a lot shall not exceed one and one half (1.5) times the lineal feet of lot frontage or seventy-five (75) square feet, whichever is greater.

Sign materials shall be compatible with the original construction materials and architectural style of the building facade on or near which they are placed. Natural materials such as wood and metal are generally more appropriate than plastic. Externally lit signs are preferred.

Signs with dynamic display are prohibited except for that portion of automobile service station signs that display the price of gas.

Freestanding Signs

There shall be no more than one freestanding sign per lot, and a freestanding sign shall be a minimum distance of forty (40) feet from any other freestanding sign. Freestanding signs shall be set back at least five (5) feet from all property lines and have a maximum gross surface display area of twenty four (24) square feet per side. The highest point on a freestanding sign shall be no more than twenty (20) feet above grade; if located within a required yard, it shall be no more than eight (8) feet above grade. Freestanding signs shall be stationary (may not revolve). Freestanding signs on a single pole shall be used only for businesses where the building is set back more than 25 feet from the street right-of-way. Sign illumination should be done in such a way that light spillover on adjacent properties is minimized.

Portable Signs

Portable signs shall be no more than forty-two (42) inches in height, and shall be regulated according to the requirements for portable signs in the T1-T4 Traditional Neighborhood and OS-BC Business Districts in Section 64.503(c) of the Zoning Code, with the exception that the total gross surface display area of portable signs on a zoning lot shall not exceed thirty-six (36) square feet.

Projecting Signs

A projecting sign is a sign, other than a wall sign, that projects from and is supported by a wall or building. With placement and spacing requirements, small, well-designed projecting symbolic or business name signs can complement a quality commercial area. Projecting symbolic or business name signs are permitted.

There shall be a minimum of thirty (30) feet of lot frontage per projecting sign, and a projecting sign shall be a minimum distance of thirty (30) feet from any other projecting sign. Care should be exercised in mounting so that signs are generally in the same height zone for ease in spotting but do not block each other out. A projecting sign shall not be located below a wall sign if it would obstruct the view of the wall sign.

Projecting signs shall have a maximum gross surface display area of sixteen (16) square feet per side, except that signs on marquees shall be permitted as regulated in Section 64.418, Marquees, of the Zoning Code. The highest point on a projecting sign shall be no more than thirty (30) feet above grade.

Temporary Signs

Temporary signs shall be regulated according to the requirements for temporary signs in the T1-T4 Traditional Neighborhood and OS-BC Business Districts in Section 64.503(b) of the Zoning Code, with the exception that the total area of temporary freestanding and wall signs allowed under Section 64.503(b)(4) shall be a maximum of twenty-four (24) square feet. Pennants shall not be permitted in the district.

Wall Signs

Wall signs should be located on the sign bands of building facades over the entry or display windows of a business. Wall signs shall cover neither windows nor architectural trim and detail.

Letters on wall signs shall be no more than eighteen (18) inches in height. Because wall signs are almost always seen from an angle, extended typefaces should be used. Viewing from an angle diminishes the apparent width and spacing of the letters.

The highest point on a wall sign shall be no more than thirty (30) feet above grade. Signs more than thirty (30) feet above the ground are out of the viewer's normal vision range and are of little value.

Window Signs

Exterior window signs shall not exceed 10% of the store window glass area. Interior window signs shall not exceed 20% of the store window glass area.