

City of Port Townsend
Design Guidelines for Signs
in the
Special Overlay Design Review District
and
National Landmark Historic District

Purpose

These Design Guidelines are established for the following purposes:

1. To supplement land use regulations which encourage and promote public health, safety and welfare of the citizens of Port Townsend.
2. To provide guidance to urban design decisions that will promote development of high environmental and visual quality throughout the City.
3. To assist applicants in the preparation of development applications.
4. To provide for administrative review by the Building and Community Development Department (BCD) of routine sign permit applications that satisfy guidelines adopted by the Historic Preservation Committee.

Introduction

Sign guidelines are required to encourage appropriate graphic design that attracts business and contributes to the quality of the historic commercial environment. Signs have a legitimate function and place. They provide necessary information and directions. Smaller well-designed signs attract the eye; large, garish, obtrusive signs cause visual pollution. Well-designed signs complement each other and their buildings attract attention; poorly-designed signs compete with each other and cause visual confusion.

Review Process

1. All sign permit applications for signs not exceeding 20 square feet per sign face shall be reviewed by BCD for compliance with the provisions of these sign guidelines and the Port Townsend sign code (PTMC 17.76). Signs that are found to be consistent with these sign guidelines may be approved by BCD without review by the HPC.
2. Signs that exceed 20 square feet per sign face and smaller signs that are found to be not consistent with the sign guidelines shall be referred to the HPC for review.

Guidelines

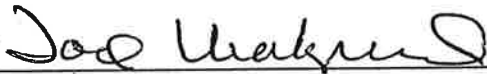
1. Signs in the Water Street Historic District shall be pedestrian-oriented in size and shape. Graphics should be simple and bold. Symbolic, three dimensional signs, such as a barber pole, are encouraged. Paper signs attached to the exterior or interior of store windows are not allowed except for presentation of a temporary public notice.

2. Wood is the preferred signing material, however, other durable materials that simulate wood and may be painted are acceptable. Lettering may be carved, routed, applied or painted.
3. Lettering used during the period in which a building was built is appropriate for its signage. Simple modern lettering is also appropriate. Appropriate lettering in black or gold may also be applied to glass. Encouraged letter fonts are attached as Exhibits "A - L". *The use of "encouraged" fonts may be administratively approved by BCD. The use of alternative fonts must be approved by the HPC.* The use of borders is also encouraged, sample borders are attached as Exhibit "M". The use of less ornate borders than those shown in Exhibit "M" is also encouraged.
4. Primary sign colors shall be chosen from the adopted HPC color palette (available at BCD, Waterman & Katz Building, 3rd floor). The number of colors used on a sign should be minimal to maximize their effect. Period colors included gray, dark brown, dark green, blue-gray, beige, brick red and terra cotta (see color palette for additional approved colors). Gold is an additional acceptable color for lettering. Black and bright colors are to be used sparingly.
5. Signs shall be designed, and positioned, to complement the architecture of the building on which they are located. Signs shall not interrupt or overlap architectural features such as cornices, columns, and trim; and shall not extend beyond the edges of the wall on which they are mounted. New signs shall not be permitted above the sills of the windows of the second floor on two-story buildings. Signs on one-story buildings shall not project above the cornice line.
6. The necessary signage for those buildings with metal boxed canopies shall be confined to any of the sides of the canopies subject to public view. Lettering on the glass of such buildings will also be permitted.
7. Graphics may be painted directly on the building surface when the wall surface already has been painted and is presently painted in a uniform manner (i.e. - no evidence of old murals). The historic mural signs presently painted on the sides of some buildings in the Water Street Historic District make an important visual contribution to the historic commercial atmosphere and shall be preserved. They shall not be defaced or obscured. See "Design Guidelines for Murals".
8. Sandwich board signs shall be designed and placed consistent with PTMC 17.76 and the "Design Guidelines for Sandwich Boards".
9. When lighting is necessary, it shall be subdued and indirect. Back-lighting of signs, internally lit and neon signs shall be discouraged; moving and flashing signs shall be prohibited. Limited spot lighting of signs will be permitted. The use of neon signs shall be

consistent with the "Neon Sign Guidelines".

10. Signs that display the symbol, slogan or trademark of national brands of soft drinks or other products that do not form the bulk of the business transacted on the premises shall be prohibited.
11. Businesses located in multiple-business buildings who share an entry or whose frontage is on an alley or a secondary street are encouraged to use some form of cooperative signage.

Adopted by the Historic Preservation Committee this 25 day of Aug, 1999.



Tod Wakefield, Chair
Historic Preservation Committee