



GLADSTONE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS MEETING

City Hall Chambers – 1100 Delta Avenue
March 23, 2026
5:00 PM

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER

1. Roll Call

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

PUBLIC HEARINGS

PUBLIC COMMENT

CONSENT AGENDA

- [2.](#) Zoning Board of Appeals Minutes - August 14, 2023

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

- [3.](#) Dimensional Variance Request | 1920 Lake Shore Dr

ZBA COMMENTS

ADJOURNMENT

The City of Gladstone will provide all necessary, reasonable aids and services, such as signers for the hearing impaired and audiotapes of printed materials being considered at the meeting to individuals with disabilities at the meeting/hearing upon five days notice to the City of Gladstone. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the City of Gladstone by writing or calling City Hall at (906) 428-2311.

Posted: 03-19-2026

Patricia West, Zoning Administrator
906-428-2311
pwest@gladstonemi.gov

RULES FOR PUBLIC COMMENT/ PUBLIC HEARINGS

(Excerpt from City Commission Rules of Procedure Adopted: 11-25-2019)

A. Public Comment / Public Hearings

At regular and special meetings of the commission, individuals wishing to be heard may address the commission during the public comment/public hearing periods as set forth in the agenda under the following rules:

1. Each speaker shall state name and address for the record.

2. Each speaker is limited to three (3) minutes of comment unless the presiding officer decides more time is necessary
3. Each speaker shall try to be concise and refrain from repeating comments already addressed by the commission.
4. Speakers who do not cease speaking when asked to do so will be deemed out of order and will not be allowed to address the commission again for the remainder of the meeting; continued disruption will warrant removal from the meeting.
5. The commission shall not decide issues that arise during public comment.
6. Speakers should address the commission through the presiding officer.
7. Commissioners and staff will not debate with the public.
8. Speakers will not verbally attack City Commissioners, City Staff or members of the public attending the meeting. Any such behavior will not be tolerated and any person presenting in this manner will be warned by the Mayor and shall be removed by Public Safety for noncompliance.
9. No vulgar or obscene language will be used by the speakers.
10. Any information the speaker wants to distribute to the Commission must first ask the Chair (Mayor) if they may present the Commission written comments at the meeting.
11. Speakers may not ask questions of the board during this time as the Commission or Staff will not address them during this public comment period.



GLADSTONE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS REGULAR MEETING

Electric Department Conference Room - 10 North
11th Street
August 14, 2023
5:00 PM

Item 2.

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Thompson called the meeting to order, and Clerk Berry called the roll:

PRESENT

Mayor Joe Thompson
Commissioner Judy Akkala
Mayor Pro-Tem Brad Mantela (Arrived 5:18 pm)
Commissioner Robert Pontius

ABSENT - EXCUSED

Commissioner Greg Styczynski

PUBLIC COMMENT- None

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST -None

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Mayor Thompson; seconded by Commissioner Pontius to approve the ZBA minutes of October 10, 2022.

MOTION CARRIED

NEW BUSINESS

Mayor Thompson opened the hearing to Mr. Jeff Diebolt, property owner at 11 South 9th Street to present his appeal.

Mayor Thompson offered the floor to Ms. Renee Barron, City of Gladstone Community Development Director and Ms. Patricia West, City of Gladstone Code Enforcement Official who presented the staff report.

Motion by Commissioner Akkala; seconded by Mayor Thompson to sustain the decision by the City of Gladstone Code Enforcement Official by vote of the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Voting Yea: Mayor Thompson, Commissioner Akkala, Mayor Pro-Tem Mantela, Commissioner Pontius

MOTION CARRIED

There being no further business before the Zoning Board of Appeal, Mayor Thompson adjourned the meeting at 5:41 PM

Mayor Joe Thompson

City Clerk Kimberly Berry

Gladstone

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date:	Monday, March 23, 2026	Parcel Number:	052-628-003-30
Applicant/Owner:	Memorial United Methodist Church	Parcel Size:	3.3 Acres
Property Address:	1920 Lake Shore Dr Gladstone, MI 49837	Prepared By:	Patricia West Zoning Administrator

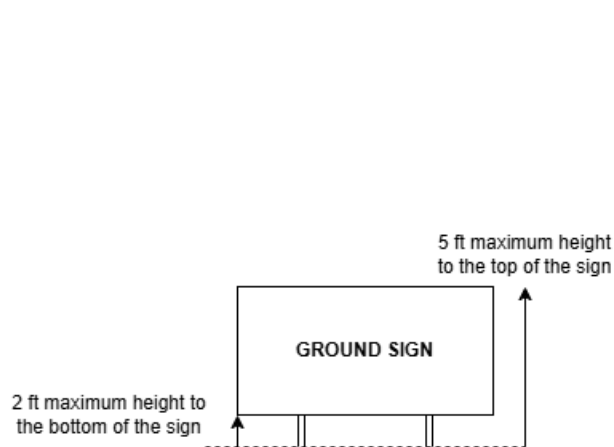


Variance Request

The applicant is requesting a variance to allow for a permanent L.E.D. digital message board sign to replace their existing sign. The height of the proposed sign is too tall to meet the definition of a ground sign, and too short to meet the definition of a freestanding sign. Their request requires relief from the four requirements of the Gladstone Zoning Ordinance, specifically within Division 5 – Signs.

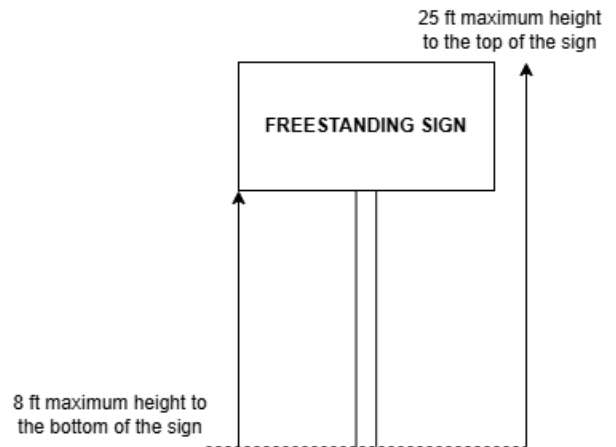
1. **Section 30-603(e):** No sign shall contain any moving or animated parts, nor have the appearance of having any moving or animated parts, except as provided within this division.
2. **Section 30-605(2):** Any sign, including window signs, which have flashing, moving or oscillating lights, excluding time and temperature signs.
3. **Section 30-608(2)a.4:** Height: Not more than five feet above grade for ground signs, or 25 feet for freestanding signs with a minimum of eight feet ground clearance to permit an unobstructed view for motorists and pedestrians.
4. **Section 30-608(2)a.5:** Illumination: No illumination shall be allowed if the property is adjacent to a residential district.

Dimension	Code Allowance	Application Request	Variance Request
Free Standing Sign Height Ground Clearance	Minimum of 8ft	5 ft	3 ft



Ground Sign

A sign, the bottom of which is no more than 24 inches from the ground and not more than five feet above grade, which rests directly on the ground or is supported by short poles or a base and is not attached to a building or a wall.



Freestanding Sign

A sign, not attached to a building or wall, supported on poles or supports, with a minimum ground clearance of eight feet to permit an unobstructed view for motorists and pedestrians.

Property Information

Current Land Use: Churches (Conditional Use)

Zoning District: B-2

Sec. 30-548. - B-2 district.

- (a) **Scope and intent.** This section applies to the B-2 district. The intent of the B-2 district is to establish and preserve general commercial areas within the city that are convenient and attractive for a wide range of retail uses and business, government and professional offices. The intent of this district is to encourage the concentration of commercial business to the mutual advantage of both the consumers and merchants and thereby promote the best use of land at certain strategic locations.
- (b) **Permitted principal uses.** Permitted principal uses within the B-2 district shall include retail establishments selling gifts, hardware, clothing, drugs, groceries, sporting goods, antiques, baked goods, arts and crafts, studios, beauty shops and barbershops, banks, restaurants, cocktail lounges, offices, clinics, personal service establishments, hotels, motels, funeral homes, theaters (except drive-in), and gas stations. Residential occupancy shall be permitted above the ground floor in the district.
- (c) **Conditional uses.** Conditional uses within the B-2 district shall include open-air business uses, such as sales and rental establishments for trailers, mobile homes, boats, farm equipment, automobile dealers for new or used cars, and the same conditional uses as permitted in the R-3 district.
- (d) **Prohibited uses.** Prohibited uses within the B-2 district shall include junkyards.

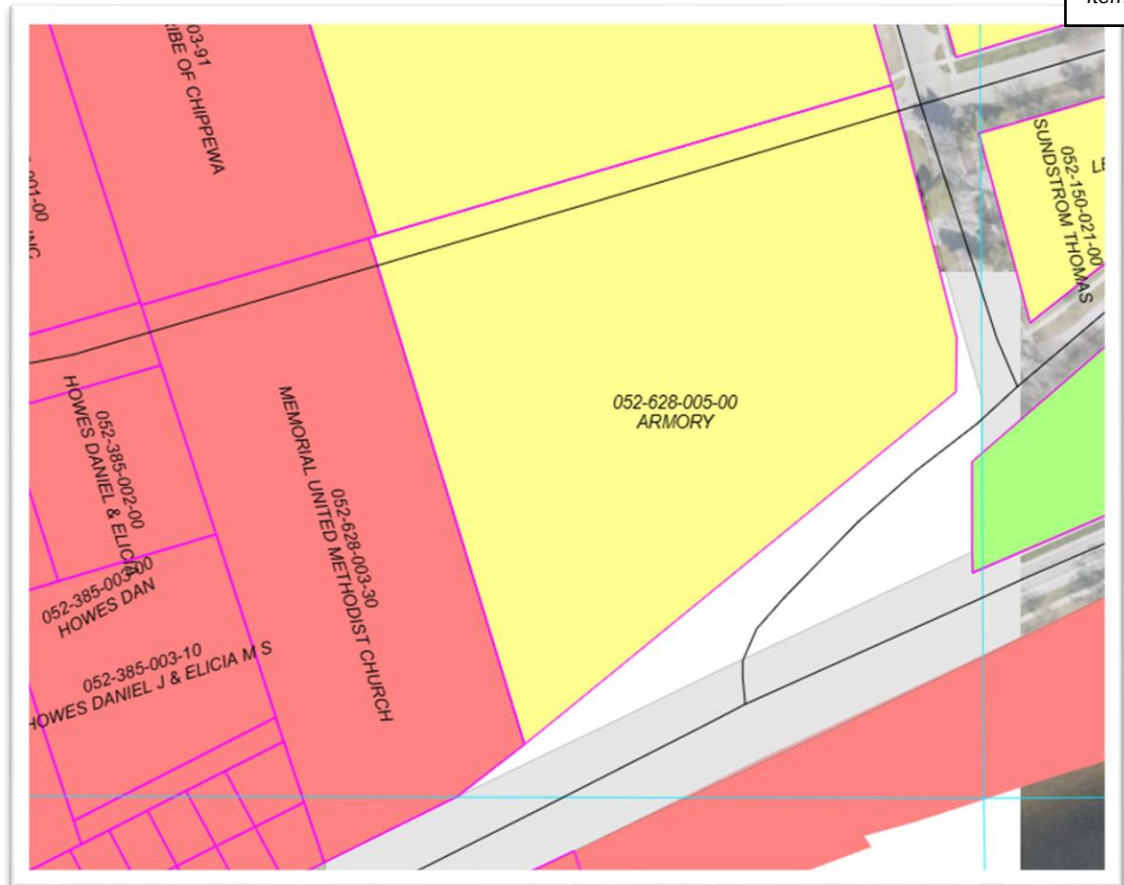
Adjacent Zoning District(s): The parcel is adjacent to an R-1 zoning district (see the yellow properties in the image below). The specific R-1 parcel adjacent to the 1920 Lake Shore Dr is the Armory.

Red Parcels:

B-2 Zoning District

Yellow Parcels:

R-1 Zoning District



Background

July 2025: The Memorial United Methodist Church approached the Zoning Administrator regarding a new sign installation with plans for an LED digital message board to replace their existing sign. Upon initial discussions, they were notified that their existing proposal did not meet the criteria of the current Sign Ordinances.

August 2025: The Planning Commission Meeting Minutes from August 5, 2025 reflect the following under “New Business”:

4. Sign Ordinance Review

West provided an overview of the limitations within the City of Gladstone’s current sign ordinance. She initiated a discussion on the possibility of revisiting the ordinance to better align with evolving trends in the sign industry, while still preserving the quaint character and visual appeal of the community. Although no formal motion was made, the Commission expressed collective support for West to pursue professional development opportunities aimed at gathering information and best practices for potential ordinance improvements. Chairperson Haulotte requested that the formation of a sign ordinance subcommittee be added to the agenda for the Planning Commission’s next meeting.

Furthermore, the following was recorded under public comment in the same meeting:

Denise Messina, representing the United Methodist Church of Gladstone, spoke in support of reviewing the City of Gladstone’s sign ordinance.

September 2025: The Planning Commission Meeting Minutes from September 2, 2025 reflect the following under “New Business”:

3. Establishment of Sign Ordinance Subcommittee

Commission Chair, Haulotte, appointed Commission Leonard, Commissioner Hewitt, and Commissioner Kennedy to the sign ordinance subcommittee, with the expectation to participate in training and discussions on best practices, review potential updates to the ordinance, and establish a timeline for pursuing possible amendments.

October 2025: The sign subcommittee met on October 16, 2025 to discuss existing challenges, nonconformities, and training opportunities.

January 2026:

- Denise Messina formally requested the variance form on January 15, 2026.
- The sign subcommittee met on January 27, 2026 to discuss the direction of focused amendments and identified the need for a community survey.

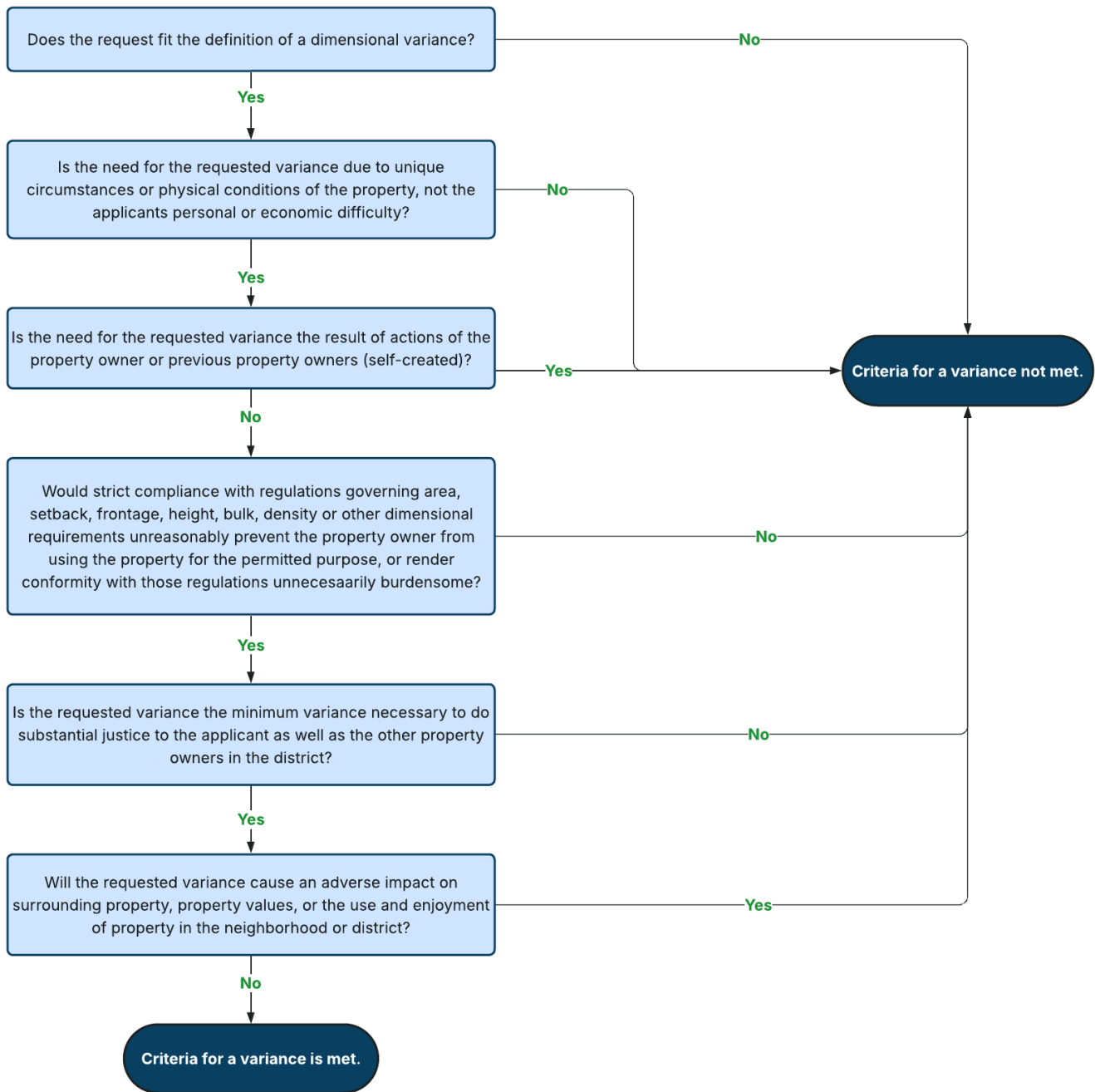
February 2026:

- Variance Request was received on February 11, 2026.
- The Planning Commission conducted an online feedback survey regarding LED signs and digital message boards to collect community input and inform the development of proposed ordinance amendments.

Applicable Ordinance Standards

This variance request should be broken into two separate reviews:

Allowance of an LED/Digital Message Board	Height Variance
Section 30-603(e): No sign shall contain any moving or animated parts, nor have the appearance of having any moving or animated parts, except as provided within this division. Section 30-605(2): Any sign, including window signs, which have flashing, moving or oscillating lights, excluding time and temperature signs. Section 30-608(2)a.5: Illumination: No illumination shall be allowed if the property is adjacent to a residential district.	Section 30-608(2)a.4: Height: Not more than five feet above grade for ground signs, or 25 feet for freestanding signs with a minimum of eight feet ground clearance to permit an unobstructed view for motorists and pedestrians.



Does the request fit the definition of a dimensional variance?

Dimensional Variance Definition	Use Variance Definition
These requests typically pertain to buildings and structures that cannot be constructed in the location required by the zoning ordinances or that other certain requirements of the ordinance cannot be met. To obtain a dimensional variance, the applicant must demonstrate that a practical difficulty exists on the property.	A use variance permits a use of land that is otherwise not allowed in that district either as a permitted use or as a special land use. Sec. 30-512(2) states, "Under no circumstances shall the appeals board grant a variance to allow a use not permissible under the terms of this Code in the district involved, or any use expressly or by implication prohibited by the terms of this Code in said district."
<u>Zoning Administrator Feedback:</u> LED/Digital Message Board: The applicant is requesting approval for a sign type that is not permitted in the B-2 district when the property is adjacent to a residential district. The request does not involve relief from dimensional standards such as sign area, placement, or setback. Because the request seeks permission for a prohibited sign type rather than a deviation from dimensional requirements, staff interpret the request as a use variance. Under Section 30-512 of the zoning ordinance, the Zoning Board of Appeals may only grant dimensional variances and is not authorized to grant variances that allow uses not permitted by the ordinance. Therefore, staff find that this request does not meet the criteria for a variance review. Sign Height: Height deviations are common dimensional variance requests.	

Is the need for the requested variance due to unique circumstances or physical conditions of the property, not the applicant's personal or economic difficulty?**Applicant Statement:**

Memorial United Methodist Church is located on a developed parcel in the B-2 district, with adjacent Residential and Commercial properties on either side. Dimensions of the replacement sign are not in question.

Priority is requesting the new replacement LED video sign for ordering and installation and before prices increase. While we are not formally requesting a variance for the ground-to-height adjustment, we would appreciate consideration for a lower height.

This modest adjustment does not increase sign area or intensity but instead compensates for the elevation differential while preserving a low-profile, monument-style appearance consistent with a welcoming community church rather than a commercial business structure.

Zoning Administrator Feedback:

The application materials do not describe any unique physical characteristics of the property that would necessitate the requested variances.

Is the need for the requested variance the result of actions of the property owner or previous property owners (self-created)?

Applicant Statement:

Memorial United Methodist Church has maintained a ground sign on this property for approximately 30 years. The existing sign was lawfully installed under prior regulations and is now considered legally non-conforming due to subsequent ordinance updates. The church did not create the non-conformity; it resulted from changes to the sign ordinance over time.

The current need for a variance arises from two primary factors: (1) the aging condition of the existing sign structure, and (2) the evolution of sign technology, specifically LED message centers, which were not contemplated when the ordinance language regulating "moving," "animated," or illuminated signs was adopted. The church is not seeking to intensify or expand a use, but rather to replace an older, internally illuminated ground sign with a smaller, modern freestanding LED sign located in substantially the same setback area.

The physical placement of the sign—set back approximately 25 feet from the top of the drainage ditch—has existed for decades and is dictated by the site's layout and roadway conditions.

Further, the ordinance's prohibition language regarding animated or flashing signs predates current LED technology. The requested variance is therefore the result of regulatory language that does not reflect modern sign systems, not the result of any deliberate action to circumvent zoning requirements.

In summary, the circumstances necessitating the variance stem from ordinance changes over time, and advancements in sign technology. They were not created by the church or any prior property owner and are not the result of personal, financial, or economic decisions. The request is solely to allow reasonable modernization of an existing sign serving a permitted institutional use.

Zoning Administrator Feedback:

The application materials do not indicate that the need for the variance is the result of circumstances beyond the control of the property owner. The request appears to be related to the desired installation of a digital message sign and height adjustment, rather than a condition created by the property itself.

Would strict compliance with regulations governing area, setback, frontage, height, bulk, density other dimensional requirements unreasonably prevent the property owner from using the property for the permitted purpose, or render conformity with those regulations unnecessarily burdensome?

Applicant Statement:

Memorial United Methodist Church is a permitted institutional use within the B-2 zoning district. As a place of worship and community gathering facility, the church relies on on-site signage to communicate service times, community outreach programs, seasonal events, and notices to the public. This function is directly tied to its permitted use and operational viability.

Strict compliance with the current zoning ordinance—specifically the provisions prohibiting moving or animated signs and illuminated signage adjacent to residential districts—would effectively prevent the church from installing a modern, legible replacement sign. While a static ground sign may technically be permitted, it would not provide reasonable functionality given current technology communication needs.

The existing sign is 30 years old, internally illuminated, and legally non-conforming. It is significantly larger in overall dimensions than the proposed replacement. The new LED sign is substantially smaller in sign-face area, maintains the same setback, and is designed to improve clarity and safety through controlled brightness and timed message transitions. However, because LED technology involves digital message changes, it falls within ordinance language that predates this technology and broadly categorizes such signs as "moving" or "animated."

Therefore, strict application of the ordinance would impose an unnecessary burden by preventing reasonable modernization of an existing sign serving a permitted institutional use. The requested variances represent the minimum relief necessary to allow continued, reasonable use of the property without expanding intensity, footprint, or non-conformity.

Zoning Administrator Feedback:

Strict compliance with the existing regulations would not prevent the property owner from using the property for the permitted conditional use of church services.

Is the requested variance the minimum variance necessary to do substantial justice to the applicant as well as the other property owners in the district?

Applicant Statement:

The variance requested represents the minimum relief necessary to allow the replacement of an aging, legally non-conforming sign while maintaining compatibility with the surrounding area and adhering as closely as possible to the ordinance standards.

First, the proposed sign is substantially smaller in sign-face area than the existing structure. The current sign measures 144 inches by 48 inches (48 square feet per face), while the proposed LED display measures 66 inches by 40 inches (approximately 18.3 square feet per face). This represents a significant reduction in visual mass. The setback from the top of the ditch remains the same at approximately 25 feet, and the sign is not being relocated closer to the roadway or residential properties. In this respect, the request does not intensify the use but instead reduces overall scale.

Second, the variance is limited specifically to allowing LED message display technology and illumination in a controlled manner. The church is not requesting additional height beyond district allowances, additional sign area beyond what is permitted for freestanding signs, or multiple additional signs beyond what is otherwise allowed. The relief sought is narrowly tailored to address ordinance language that predates modern digital sign technology.

Third, the proposed LED sign will incorporate controlled brightness settings and timed message transitions, not flashing or rapidly oscillating effects. This operational approach minimizes potential impacts on adjacent residential properties while allowing the church to communicate effectively. The replacement will result in a cleaner, more compact, and better-maintained structure than the existing 30-year-old internally lit sign.

By reducing sign size, maintaining the established setback, and limiting the request solely to the functional aspects necessary for digital messaging, the church balances fairness to itself as a permitted institutional user while protecting neighboring property owners from increased scale, intrusion, or intensity. The request does not expand the footprint, increase non-conformity, or alter traffic patterns. It simply allows reasonable modernization within the smallest scope of relief necessary to continue effective use of the property.

Zoning Administrator Feedback:

The subject property is located adjacent to a residential district, where the zoning ordinance places limitations on illuminated and digital signs to minimize potential impacts on nearby residential properties. The applicant states that the proposed LED sign will incorporate controlled brightness settings, timed message transitions, and will not include flashing or rapidly oscillating effects. These measures appear intended to reduce potential impacts associated with digital display signage. However, the property currently contains a sign that staff understand to be a legal nonconforming internally illuminated message board, and the zoning ordinance limits the alteration, expansion, enlargement, or extension of nonconforming signs. The ZBA may wish to consider whether the proposed modification to a digital display format could introduce new visual characteristics or impacts on adjacent residential properties.

Will the requested variance cause an adverse impact on surrounding property, property values, or the use and enjoyment of property in the neighborhood or district?

Applicant Statement:

The requested variance will not negatively impact surrounding properties, property values, or the use and enjoyment of nearby properties for several objective reasons related to scale, placement, operation, and overall site conditions.

The proposed LED sign is substantially smaller than the existing 30-year-old ground sign. The current sign measures 144 inches by 48 inches (48 square feet per face), while the proposed display measures 66 inches by 40 inches (approximately 18.3 square feet per face). This represents a significant reduction in overall sign mass and visual footprint. The new structure will be more compact, modern, and visually orderly compared to the aging, internally illuminated sign it replaces.

The sign will remain in substantially the same location, approximately 25 feet from the top of the roadside drainage ditch. It is not being moved closer to the roadway or toward residential properties. The established drainage patterns, right-of-way boundaries, and traffic sight lines will remain unchanged. No alterations to grading or drainage infrastructure are proposed.

Although the ordinance language predates LED technology, the proposed display will utilize controlled brightness settings and automatic dimming features to adjust light levels based on ambient conditions. The LED display will not use flashing, oscillating, or rapidly changing effects. The existing sign has been internally illuminated for decades without documented adverse impact.

The proposed sign produces no sound. There are no speakers, moving mechanical components, or audio features associated with the display. As such, the variance presents no risk of noise impacts to surrounding properties.

The sign remains in an established location that has served the property for 30 years. The reduced size and improved legibility may enhance driver comprehension without increasing distraction, particularly since the display will avoid flashing or rapid animation.

The sign will not introduce additional, bulk, or encroachment toward neighboring residential properties. Its orientation is toward the roadway for identification and informational purposes, consistent with its long-standing function. Controlled illumination and reduced face area further limit any potential spillover effect.

Replacing an aging, non-conforming sign with a smaller, modern, well-maintained structure is more likely to enhance visual appearance than diminish it. The improvement reduces visual clutter and updates the aesthetic character of the frontage without increasing commercial intensity.

In summary, the proposed variance does not expand the scale, intensity, or footprint of signage on the property. It replaces an existing illuminated sign with a significantly smaller, technologically updated structure in the same location, with controlled operation and no noise or drainage impacts. For these reasons, the requested variance will not adversely affect surrounding properties, property values, or the use and enjoyment of nearby properties within the district.

Zoning Administrator Feedback:

The subject property is located adjacent to a residential district, where the zoning ordinance places limitations on illuminated and digital signs to reduce potential impacts on nearby residential properties. The applicant indicates that the proposed LED sign will include controlled brightness settings, timed message transitions, and will not incorporate flashing or rapidly oscillating effects. These features appear intended to mitigate potential visual impacts associated with digital display signage. However, the ZBA may wish to consider the long-term compatibility of a digital display sign adjacent to residential uses, including whether operational

conditions such as brightness and message transitions could be reasonably monitored and maintained time to avoid adverse impacts on nearby properties.

With respect to the requested height variance, industry guidance from organizations such as the United States Sign Council (USSC) Foundation suggests that freestanding signs are often designed with a minimum clearance of approximately seven feet between the ground and the bottom of the sign panel to support visibility, safety, and aesthetics. Sign height and clearance can also influence visibility for motorists and the ability to maintain clear sightlines near roadways and driveways. The ZBA may wish to consider whether the proposed sign height could affect sightlines or visibility for drivers, pedestrians, or adjacent properties, and whether the requested modification remains consistent with the intent of the city's sign regulations.

Conclusion

Applicant Summary:

In evaluating this request, it is important to note that LED video signs are already located within and around the City of Gladstone, including at least one installation within or adjacent to a residentially zoned area. These signs appear to operate with digital message capabilities similar to what Memorial United Methodist Church is proposing. To our knowledge, those installations did not undergo the same variance process currently being required for this application and may have been approved through exception language or administrative interpretation.

We raise this point not to challenge prior approvals, but to demonstrate that LED technology has already been recognized within the community as compatible with surrounding land uses when appropriately regulated. The existence of comparable signs supports the conclusion that controlled LED displays can function without adverse impacts on neighboring properties. Granting this variance would therefore be consistent with precedent within the City and would promote equitable treatment of similarly situated properties, while still allowing the Zoning Board to apply reasonable operational conditions to ensure neighborhood compatibility.

Variance Approval – Summary

The requested variances meet all required standards:

- The ordinance does not address modern LED technology and applies outdated standards to current communication needs.
- The need arises from replacing a long-standing non-conforming sign.
- Strict compliance prevents effective use of signage for a permitted institutional purpose.
- The proposed sign is smaller, controlled, and visually appealing.
- Reduced sign area, controlled illumination, and unchanged setback protect does not adversely effect neighboring properties or character.

1. Variance from Sec. 30-603(e):

Prohibition on moving or animated parts

Request: Approval for an LED video sign that contains digital message changes.

The need for this variance is due to **unique and evolving communication standards** not addressed when the ordinance was written. The church relies on its sign for **community outreach, service times, event notices, and uplifting messaging**, which static signage no longer adequately supports.

The proposed LED sign does **not contain mechanical movement** and will utilize **slow message transitions**, not flashing or animated effects. This minimizes visual impact while allowing the church to use its property for a **permitted institutional purpose**.

Strict compliance with the ordinance would **unreasonably limit effective communication**, especially given the sign replaces an already illuminated, non-conforming structure.

2. Variance from Sec. 30-605(2):

Prohibition on flashing, moving, or oscillating lights

Request: Approval for LED illumination with controlled message changes.

The proposed LED sign will **not use flashing, oscillating, or rapidly changing lights**. Message changes will be **timed video or static displays**, consistent with modern best practices and comparable LED signs in institutional settings.

The variance is **not self-created**, as the church is replacing an aging sign that predates current standards and is already internally illuminated. The requested relief is the **minimum necessary** to allow safe, legible, and effective signage without introducing negative impacts.

3. Variance from Sec. 30-608(2)(a)(5):

Illumination prohibited when adjacent to a residential district

Request: Approval for illuminated signage adjacent to residential zoning.

The existing sign has been **internally illuminated for decades** without documented adverse impact on neighboring residential properties. The residential property in question in the Armory. The proposed LED sign will incorporate **brightness controls and automatic dimming**.

Additionally:

- The **sign face area is substantially reduced**
The **setback remains unchanged**
The sign footprint is **more compact and visually controlled**

Zoning Administrator Summary:

Based on the information provided in the application materials and staff's review of the variance standards outlined in Section 30-512 of the zoning ordinance, staff did not identify evidence demonstrating that the request is necessitated by unique physical conditions of the property or that strict compliance with the ordinance would prevent the property from being used for its permitted conditional use of church services. The request primarily relates to the installation of a digital sign type rather than relief from dimensional requirements. The Planning Commission has recently appointed a subcommittee to review the existing sign ordinance and evaluate whether updates may be appropriate to address evolving signage technologies and community standards. As such, the ZBA may wish to consider whether the requested relief is best addressed through the variance process or through potential future amendments to the sign ordinance.

Gladstone

MICHIGAN

Sign Permit Application

The sign regulations set forth are intended to protect and further the health, safety and welfare of the residents of the city; to maintain and improve the appearance of the city; to conserve community character; to prevent traffic hazards; to provide safer conditions for pedestrians; and to promote economic development by regulating the construction, alteration, repair, maintenance, size, location and number of signs.

The application fee payment is required prior to the Zoning Administrator's review and can be found in the current fiscal year fee schedule.

Applicant Information

Name of Applicant: Denise Messina
 Phone Number: 906-280-9046 Email: d4messina@hotmail.com

Property Information

Property Address: 1920 Lake Shore Drive
 Parcel Number: _____ Zoning District: B-2: Commercial
 Is this an application for a business? ☐ Yes ☒ No
 Church Business Name: Memorial UMC

Is the applicant the owner of the property? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Property Owner Information (If Different)

Property Owner's Name: Memorial UMC
 Phone Number: (906) 428-9311 Email: mumc@gladstonechurch.org
 Mailing Address: 1920 Lake Shore Drive, Gladstone, MI 49837

Proposed Sign Information

Is this a permanent or temporary/portable sign? ☒ Permanent ☐ Temporary/Portable

What type of sign work is being conducted?

☐ Modifying Existing Sign ☐ New Sign ☒ Replacing Existing Sign

Are there any other signs on this parcel/property? ☐ Yes ☒ No If yes, how many? _____

If yes, please describe the existing signs? _____

Are you working with a company or contractor on the sign? ☐ Yes ☒ No

If yes, please provide the name of the company or contractor. _____

Sign Type: Definitions of each sign can be found at the end of this application.

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Awning or Canopy | ☐ Marquee Sign |
| ☐ Billboard | ☐ Projecting Sign |
| ☐ Business Center Sign | ☐ Residential Subdivision Sign |
| ☒ Freestanding Sign | ☐ Wall Sign |
| ☐ Ground Sign | ☐ Other: _____ |

Please check all that apply regarding the lighting and illumination of the sign.

- ☐ Externally Lit ☒ Digital Message Board ☒ Internally Lit ☐ No Lighting or Illumination

Sign Measurements

Please report all measurements using feet and inches.

The height of a sign shall be measured as the vertical distance from the highest point of the sign to the finished grade of the ground immediately beneath the sign, excluding any artificially constructed earthen berms.

*Sign Height: 40" Top 100" Ground 2-Signs Each measuring 66" x 40" x 6.5"

Sign Length: 66" Sign Width: 6.5" x 2 + 5" = 18" total

Will the sign be affixed to a building? ☐ Yes ☒ No

If yes, what is the projected angle of the sign from the wall? _____

What is the area of the wall in square footage? _____

Freestanding & Ground Signs Information

If the proposed sign is considered a freestanding or ground sign, please complete the information below.

How far is the sign from the property lines (in feet)?

Front Setback: 25' Side Setback (1): 70'± Side Setback (2): 240'± Rear Setback: 300'
West East

Please attach a scaled drawing showing the position of the sign in relation to adjacent structures, signs, corners, driveways, street intersections, and lot lines. Please include each of the items in the checklist on the following page within your drawing.

By signing below, you are certifying that:

1. You have read and understand the requirements noted on this application.
2. The information you have provided is correct.

Submitted By (Please Print): _____

Signature: _____

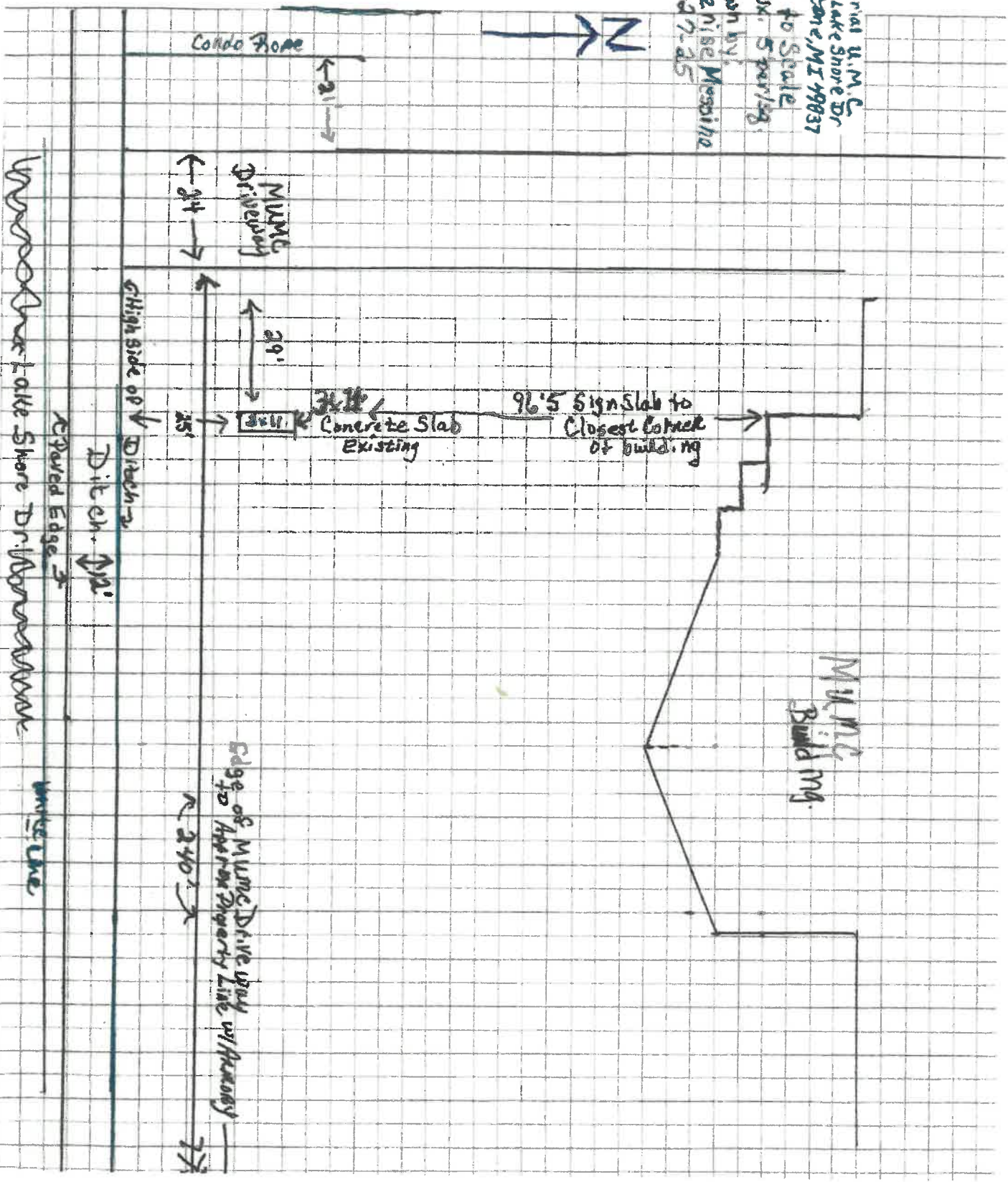
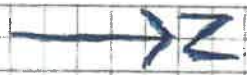
Property Owner's Signature (If Different) _____

Denise Messina Date: 1-18-2026

_____ Date: _____

Memorial U.M.C.
1920 Lake Shore Dr
Gladstone, MI 49837
Not to Scale
Approx. 5 per 1 sq.
Drawn by
Denise Messina
7-27-25

Condo



Memorial United Methodist Church

EXISTING SIGN >> NEW SIGN and CURRENT ZONING OBSTACLES

EXISTING SIGN - *considered non-conforming*

Ground sign

½ sign & ½ letter board - side x side internally lit

Sign measurement - 144" L x 48" H x 8" D

Ground to bottom of sign - 30"

Ground to Top of sign - 78"

Set back from top of ditch - 25'

No sidewalks

NEW SIGN - 2 signs back

* Freestanding - Pole w/ signs back to back

Video L.E.D.

Sign measurement - 66" L x 40" H x 6.5" D

* Ground to bottom of sign - 60"

* Ground to Top of sign - 100"

Set back from top of ditch - 25'

No sidewalks

We are looking to update, modernize, improve community outreach and impact, with a new and improved outdoor sign.

The current sign zoning regulations are extremely obsolete. The existing sign that we have would not meet today's regulations as it is lit and exceeds height.

We are requesting to put up a Video L.E.D sign** with an actual smaller footprint than our existing sign. (current zoning would prohibit this because we are considered adjacent to the Armory - Zoned residential.)

Due to adjacent land obstacles that obstruct the view of a ground sign, we are requesting for our sign to be raised for visual purposes only. As we are a church and do not want to look like a business, we would like to keep the sign as low as possible. A higher sign would also take away from the aesthetics of the cross on the front of our building. The placement of our sign 25' + back does not impose pedestrians hazards traffic flow or traffic visuals.

**** There already exists a video sign at First Lutheran Church, Minneapolis Ave**

- (a) No sign shall be placed in, upon or over any public right-of-way, alley or other public place within the city, except for permitted highway and government signs and signs permitted in the B-2 district, which may project from a building wall over a public way.
- (b) No light pole, utility pole or other supporting member shall be used for the placement of any sign unless it is specifically designed and approved for such use.
- (c) No sign shall be erected in any place where it may, by reason of its position, shape, color or other characteristic, interfere with, obstruct the view of or be confused with any authorized traffic sign, signal or device, or constitutes a nuisance.
- (d) No commercial vehicle which, in the opinion of the zoning administrator, has the intended function of acting as a sign, shall be parked in any area abutting a street unless no other parking area is available.
- (e) No sign shall contain any moving or animated parts, nor have the appearance of having any moving or animated parts, except as provided within this division.
- (f) All ground, freestanding and wall signs may contain reader boards within the maximum size limits permitted for the sign.
- (g) No wall sign shall extend beyond the edge of the wall to which it is affixed, nor extend above the roofline of the building to which it is attached.
- (h) Subject to constitutional limitations, all signs shall pertain only to the business or activity conducted on the premises, except political signs, special event signs and billboards.
- (i) Nonilluminated real estate signs shall be permitted in any zoning district within the city but shall be removed within 30 days after completion of the sale or lease of the property.
- (j) Construction signs shall be permitted within any zoning district within the city subject to the following regulations:
 - (1) Such signs shall not be larger than 32 square feet, shall be located no closer than ten feet from the street right-of-way line and shall not be higher than ten feet.
 - (2) In residential developments, any construction sign shall be removed when a permanent subdivision sign is erected, final plat approval is obtained or a certificate of occupancy is issued for any dwelling in the development, whichever comes first.
 - (3) In nonresidential developments, any construction sign shall be removed upon issuance of a certificate of occupancy for the building.
 - (4) Such signs shall be erected no more than 45 days prior to the issuance of a building permit. If the construction project does not commence by the forty-fifth day, the sign permit may be revoked by the city. It will then be the responsibility of the permit holder to promptly remove the construction sign.
- (k) Community special event signs are permitted in any zoning district within the city, subject to the following restrictions:
 - (1) Such signs may be located either on or off the lot on which the special events are held.

- (2) The display of community special event signs shall be limited to the ten days immediately preceding the special event which is being advertised.
- (3) Such signs shall have a maximum size of 32 square feet in area, and a maximum height above ground level of six feet and shall be set back a minimum of two feet from any property line.
- (4) Such signs shall be removed within 48 hours of the conclusion of the special event which is being advertised.
- (l) Directional signs are permitted in any zoning district within the city subject to the following restrictions:
 - (1) Such signs shall not exceed two square feet in area, or exceed three feet in height, and shall be set back at least two feet from any property line.
 - (2) Such signs may contain a commercial logo or trademark not exceeding one-third of the sign's size but shall not contain a business name or commercial message.
- (m) Temporary signs shall be permitted in any zoning district within the city subject to the following restrictions:
 - (1) Such signs shall only be displayed upon receipt of a permit issued by the zoning administrator, unless such sign is exempted from the permit requirement under section 30-604.
 - (2) Such signs shall not be displayed on any lot or parcel for more than 30 consecutive days for any one permit, and not more than two permits shall be issued for any lot or parcel during any calendar year.
 - (3) Upon expiration of a temporary sign permit, the permit holder shall remove such sign.
 - (4) Such signs shall not exceed 32 square feet in area.
 - (5) Only one temporary sign shall be permitted on a lot or parcel.
 - (6) Such signs shall not be closer than five feet from any property line fronting on a public street.
 - (7) All temporary signs shall be designed and constructed to withstand a wind pressure of not less than 30 pounds per square foot of area.
- (n) Lighted signs shall be inspected by the zoning administrator for proper and adequate electrical connections. If deemed necessary by the zoning administrator, an electrical code permit will be required for a lighted sign.

(Ord. No. 534 § III, 11-27-2000; Ord. No. 556, § 2, 5-14-2005; Ord. No. 570, § 1, 2-25-2008)

Sec. 30-605. - Prohibited signs.

All signs not specifically allowed under this division, unless exempted by this section, shall be prohibited in the city. The following types of signs shall be expressly prohibited:

- (1) Balloons, balloon signs, strings of light bulbs, pennants, streamers, banners or flags, except flags of a noncommercial nature not used for the purposes of commercial advertisement.
- (2) Any sign, including window signs, which have flashing, moving or oscillating lights, excluding time and temperature signs.
- (3) Roof signs.
- (4) Off-premises signs, except for noncommercial signs, community special event signs and billboard

Sec. 30-608. - Signs permitted by district.

The following signs are permitted in combination, unless otherwise noted, in each district, subject to the requirements set forth in the tables and other applicable regulations of this division:

(1) *R-1, R-2, R-3 and R-4 residential districts.*

a. *Residential subdivision signs (freestanding signs shall not be permitted).*

1. *Number:* One per entrance road to the development, not exceeding two such signs per development.
2. *Size:* Not greater than 24 square feet.
3. *Location:* Minimum of 15 feet from the street right-of-way line.
4. *Height:* Not more than four feet above grade.

b. *Institutional identification signs/bulletin boards.*

1. *Number:* One per lot or parcel.
2. *Size:* Not greater than 32 square feet.
3. *Location:* Minimum of 15 feet from the street right-of-way.
4. *Height:* Not more than five feet above grade.

c. *Wall signs for home occupations.*

1. *Number:* One per lot or parcel.
2. *Size:* Not greater than two square feet.
3. *Location:* Mounted flat against the wall and nonilluminated.

d. *Wall signs for nonresidential uses.*

1. *Number:* One per street frontage.
2. *Size:* For public and quasi-public facilities, such as schools, churches and similar institutional uses, no sign shall be greater than five percent of the wall area to which it is affixed, not to exceed 50 square feet. For private offices, no such sign shall be greater than six square feet.
3. *Location:* Mounted flat against the wall facing the street.

(2) *B-1, B-2 and O-S business districts.*

a. *Ground or freestanding signs.*

1. *Number:* One per street frontage, but not more than two signs, provided that lots with two street frontages shall have a minimum width at each right-of-way line of at least 50 feet in order to have a second sign.
2. *Size:* Not greater than 48 square feet for ground signs, or 60 square feet for freestanding signs.
3. *Location:* Minimum of two feet from the property line.

4. *Height:* Not more than five feet above grade for ground signs, or 25 feet for freestanding signs with a minimum of eight feet ground clearance to permit an unobstructed view for motorists and pedestrians. Item 3.

5. *Illumination:* No illumination shall be allowed if the property is adjacent to a residential district.

b. *Wall signs.*

1. *Number:* One per business, provided that any business which has frontage on more than one street shall be permitted to have one wall sign per street frontage, subject to the size restriction set forth in subsection (2)b.2 of this section.
2. *Size:* Not greater than ten percent of the wall area to which it is affixed and which is occupied by the respective business, not to exceed 60 square feet.
3. *Location:* Mounted flat against the wall facing the street.

c. *Projecting signs.*

1. *Number:* One per street frontage.
2. *Size:*
3. *Location:* The edge of the sign nearest the building wall shall not extend more than two feet from the wall and the outermost edge of the sign including the structure supporting the sign shall be set back at least two feet from the curb edge of the street or from the edge of the street where there is no curb.
4. *Height:* The bottom edge of the sign, including the structure supporting the sign shall be at least eight feet above the sidewalk or ground level where there is no sidewalk.
5. *Variances:* May be granted through the zoning board of appeals (city commission).

d. *Awning, canopy and marquee signs.*

1. *Number:* One per street frontage.
2. *Location:* Shall not be placed upon an awning or canopy or marquee unless such awning, canopy or marquee:
 - i. Is set back at least two feet from the curb edge of the street or from the edge of the street where there is no curb.
 - ii. The bottom edge of which is at least eight feet above the sidewalk or ground level where there is no sidewalk.
 - iii. The top edge of which does not extend above the roofline of the building to which it is attached.
3. *Variances:* Variances from the dimensional limitations of this section shall not be granted.

e. *Business center signs.*

1. *Number:* One per street frontage, but not more than two signs, provided that lots with two street frontages shall have a minimum width at each right-of-way of at least 50 feet in order to have a second sign. Freestanding signs shall not be permitted for individual businesses within any 24

2. *Size:* Not greater than 80 square feet.
 3. *Location:* Minimum of two feet from the property line.
 4. *Height:* Not more than 25 feet.
- f. *Billboards (if approved as a special exception use).*
1. *Size:* Not greater than 300 square feet.
 2. *Location:* Shall be set back a minimum of 75 feet from the road right-of-way line, no closer than 50 feet to any other property line, and no closer than 300 feet to any other billboard on the same or opposite side of the street.
 3. *Height:* Not more than 30 feet.
 4. *Lighting:* Illumination shall be permitted provided such illumination is concentrated on the surface of the sign and is located so as to avoid glare or reflection onto any portion of the adjacent street or highway, the path of oncoming vehicles or any adjacent premises. In no event shall any billboard have flashing of intermittent lights, or shall the light be permitted to rotate or oscillate.
- g. *Sidewalk signs.*
1. *Size:* Sidewalk signs shall be of A-frame construction with a minimum base spread of two feet. Each surface of A-frame construction shall not exceed six square feet.
 2. *Location:* Sidewalk signs shall be permitted during the hours a business is open to the public and must be removed at the end of business each day. A minimum of six feet of unobstructed sidewalk must remain between the sign and adjacent buildings.
 3. *Height:* The maximum height shall be five feet.
 4. *Lighting and copy:* The surfaces of sidewalk signs shall be durable and the copy may be painted or printed on the surface. Loose paper faces shall not be permitted. Sidewalk signs shall not be illuminated.

(3) *I-1 and I-2 industrial districts.*

a. *Ground signs.*

1. *Number:* One per street frontage but not more than two signs, provided that lots with two street frontages shall have a minimum width at each right-of-way line of at least 50 feet in order to have a second sign.
2. *Size:* Not greater than 48 square feet for one sign, and if there are two signs, the second sign shall be no greater than 24 square feet.
3. *Location:* Minimum of two feet from the property line.
4. *Height:* Not more than five feet above grade.

b. *Freestanding signs.*

- 1.

Number: One per street frontage, but not more than two signs, provided that lots with two street frontages shall have a minimum width at each right-of-way line of at least 50 feet in order to have a second sign.

Item 3.

2. *Size:* Not greater than 100 square feet for one sign, and if there are two signs, the second sign shall be no greater than 32 square feet.

3. *Location:* Minimum of two feet from the property line.

4. *Height:* Not more than 30 feet above grade.

c. *Wall signs.*

1. *Number:* One per street frontage.

2. *Size:* Not greater than five percent of the wall area to which the sign is affixed, not to exceed 100 square feet.

3. *Location:* Mounted flat on the wall facing the street.

d. *Billboards (if approved as a conditional use).*

1. *Number:* See business center as set forth in subsection (2)e. of this section.

2. *Size:* Not greater than 300 square feet.

3. *Location:* Shall be set back a minimum of 75 feet from the road right-of-way line, not closer than 50 feet to any other property line and not closer than 300 feet to any other billboard on the same or opposite side of the street.

4. *Height:* Not more than 30 feet.

5. *Lighting:* See business center as set forth in subsection (2)e. of this section.

(Ord. No. 453, § 402, 12-8-1986; Ord. No. 534, § IX, 11-27-2000; Ord. No. 535, § 1, 1-8-2001; Ord. No. 570, § 1, 2-25-2008)