

**WARRENTON HISTORIC DISTRICT
CRITERIA & STANDARDS FOR
ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVAL OF SIGNS**

The following signs may be approved administratively pursuant to Sections 3-5.3.4.2.6 (a) and (b) of the Zoning Ordinance.

Section I – CRITERIA FOR GENERAL SIGN TYPES

A. Administrative Approval of **one** sign

Wall Sign

- Wall signs are either painted directly onto the building surface or are on a panel or signboard mounted on the face of the building.
- Wall signs should be attached in the least damaging means to the building’s materials using the mortar joints instead of compromising the strength of a brick.
- A cornice sign is one placed on the frieze or broad flat under panel of the storefront cornice. Applied raised letters of wood or metal are effective for such signs.

Staff may administratively approve a wall sign for a building that meets the following criteria:

- A wall sign of up to **20** square feet may be administratively approved.
- Wall sign boards must be round, oval, square, or rectangular. May have rounded or notched corners.
- Wood and MDO are acceptable materials for administrative approval provided that they are painted.
- A sign approved administratively may contain no more than **3** colors, background included. Colors deemed by staff to be potentially too bold, bright, or fluorescent will require review and approval by the Architectural Review Board.
- Lettering may be applied by painting or applying vinyl lettering.
- Lettering style must be consistent with the Historic District Guidelines. Lettering is limited to 50 characters or less. Lettering size must meet requirements of the Zoning Ordinance.

H H

SERIF lettering has a traditional appearance well suited to historic buildings. *Serifs are small lines at the ends of the characters.*

H H

SANS SERIF has no serifs. This typeface has strong straight lines and appears more contemporary.

Script is a flowing personal style.

DECORATIVE lettering is usually more elaborate and may create a strong visual image.

- Graphics, company/organization logos, etc. may be approved administratively. Graphics and logos must consist of **solid, uniform** colors. Colors utilized by the graphic/logo count towards the total number of colors (3) allowed for administrative approval. Graphics and logos will be limited to two (2) square feet, measured horizontally and vertically at its widest points.
- The use of trim and borders are acceptable and should adhere to above color requirements. Trim and borders must consist of a solid color for administrative approval. Simple lines for the purpose of delineating and separation of information are to be considered “trim and borders”, and may be administratively approved. For the purposes of administrative approval, a line is considered the shortest distance between two points.

Projecting Sign

- Projecting signs hang from an iron or steel bracket, which is affixed to a building in the least harmful manner.
- Signs must hang from an approved bracket (minor addition – can be Administratively Approved)
- The bottom edge of the projecting sign should be eight (8) feet above the sidewalk. Projecting signs should not be larger than six (6) square feet. The sign panel should have a minimum six-inch (6") clearance from the face of the building, and extend to its outermost part less than four (4) feet. Projecting signs will be reviewed according to their scale and size and to the scale and size of the building to which they are proposed.

Staff may administratively approve a projecting sign for a building that meets the following criteria:

- A projecting sign of up to six (6) square feet may be administratively approved.
- Projecting signs must be square, rectangular, round, or oval. The sign may have rounded or notched corners.
- Wood and MDO are acceptable materials for use if they are painted.
- A sign approved administratively may contain no more than **3** colors, background included. Colors deemed by staff to be potentially too bold, bright, or fluorescent will require review and approval by the Architectural Review Board.
- Lettering may be applied by painting or applying vinyl letters.
- Lettering style must be consistent with the Historic District Guidelines. Lettering is limited to 50 characters or less. Lettering size must meet requirements of the Zoning Ordinance.
- Graphics, company/organization logos, etc. may be approved administratively. Graphics and logos must consist of **solid, uniform** colors. Colors utilized by the graphic/logo count towards the total number of colors (3) allowed for administrative approval. Graphics and logos will be limited to two (2) square feet, measured horizontally and vertically at its widest points.
- The use of trim and borders are acceptable and should adhere to above color requirements. Trim and borders must consist of a solid, uniform color for administrative approval. Simple lines for the purpose of delineating and separation of information are to be considered “trim and borders”, and may be administratively approved. For the

purposes of administrative approval, a line is considered the shortest distance between two points.

Size

- Allowable area for signs is per the specific regulations in Article 6 of the Zoning Ordinance for each sign type within each District, with the exception of projecting signs that are limited to six (6) square feet in area. The administrative approval of one wall sign is limited to twenty (20) square feet in area.

Material

- The following sign materials are permitted:
 - Wood and MDO (Medium Density Overlay or engineered wood) are acceptable for flat wall signs and hanging signs.
 - Aluminum is acceptable for individual pin-mounted letter signs.

Section II – GENERAL REQUIREMENTS APPLYING TO ALL SIGNS

- Applicant must obtain a sign permit (and/or building permit) through Planning & Community Development.
- Signs must be professionally made.
- All administratively approved sign(s) must be consistent with the *Warrenton Design Guidelines* recommendation that, “Sign requests will be considered relative to the individual characteristics, size and scale of the building, existing signage and site conditions.”
- Prior to receiving an administrative approval for signage, Staff will conduct research and visit the site to evaluate the subject property, as well as its context, to determine if the proposed signage is appropriate. Signs that are out of proportion or scale with contiguous signs on the block will be referred to the ARB for their review and approval.
- Signs installed without ARB or Staff approval (after-the-fact signs) must be reviewed and approved by the ARB.
- Regardless of whether the sign meets the above Criteria, Staff may determine that the sign(s) must be approved by the ARB.