

ORDINANCE O:32-2024

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MONROE
TO AMEND CHAPTER 175 OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MONROE,
ENTITLED “LAND MANAGEMENT”**

WHEREAS, the Township Council of the Township of Monroe has recommended certain amendments to Chapter 280 of the Code of the Township of Monroe and has determined that it is in the best interest of the Township to amend this specific section.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Township Council of the Township of Monroe that the Code of the Township of Monroe is hereby amended to include the amendments herein.

SECTION I. Chapter 175, entitled “Land Management” is hereby amended as follows:

§ 175-135 Signs.

- A. Zone district prohibitions. No sign shall be permitted in any district except as specifically permitted herein, with the exception of billboards, which are regulated and defined by § 175-91.2. Changeable copy or electronic message center (EMC) signs are only permitted along 1) the Black Horse Pike corridor from Berlin-Cross Keys Road to the Township boundary with the Borough of Folsom and 2) State Highway Route 322 from the Township boundary with the Borough of Glassboro to its intersection with the Black Horse Pike. In the Pinelands Area, changeable copy or EMC signs along the Black Horse Pike corridor or State Highway Route 322 shall be permitted only in those zones within the Regional Growth Area. Changeable copy or EMC signs shall not be permitted in the RD-C, FD-10 or FD-40 Zones. **Public schools and all public buildings are exempt from the entirety of this section.**
- B. Signs in residential districts. The following signs are permitted when located on the immediate premises:
- (1) Home occupation and home professional signs not exceeding two square feet measured on one side; only one such sign is permissible.
 - (2) Signs necessary for the identification, operation and/or protection of a public utility installation or necessary to the public welfare.
 - (3) Real estate signs as more specifically set forth herein.
 - (4) Signs set forth herein as applicable to all districts.
- C. Signs in nonresidential districts. The following signs are permitted when located on the immediate premises:
- (1) Signs identifying or advertising a business, activity or product conducted or sold on the premises.

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- (2) One freestanding sign per street frontage is permitted, provided said sign does not exceed an area of 50 square feet on each side, and further provided that the maximum height above grade does not exceed 20 feet with the lowest portion of the sign being at least eight feet above grade. For gasoline service stations, the area of the freestanding sign may be increased by 1/3 for the listing of a product and pricing information and shall not exceed a height above grade of 25 feet.
 - (3) If more than one business or use is located on the lot where said businesses or uses use a common parking facility and/or a common driveway or roadway, the owner shall be permitted to have either one freestanding sign or one multiple occupancy and tenancy (MOT) sign on each street frontage, subject to the freestanding sign area and height restrictions, located at the entrance to the shopping center, industrial park, office complex or parking facility. If an MOT sign is required, the attached signs for the businesses or uses shall be uniform in size, scale and design.
 - (4) In lieu of a freestanding sign, one monument sign may be erected, provided that it is not situated within a sight triangle, and further provided that said monument sign does not exceed an area of 50 square feet nor exceed a height above grade of eight feet.
 - (5) Each principal use shall be entitled to one facade sign for every frontage of the lot on a public right-of-way. For the purpose of this subsection, each leased module of a larger development may be considered a separate use. The size of each sign shall not exceed 10% of the facade area.
 - (6) Directional signs not to exceed two square feet shall be provided as necessary for safety.
 - (7) All signs within a single development shall be compatible in terms of material, lettering style and means of illumination.
- D. Signs permitted in all districts. The following types of signs shall be permitted in all districts:
- (1) House numbers, real estate signs, nameplates (fraternity, sorority, apartments and professional) identifying the occupant or address of a parcel of land and signs identifying a building.
 - (2) Memorial signs or tablets, names of buildings and date of erection, when cut into any masonry surface or when constructed of bronze or other incombustible material.

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- (3) Flags bearing the official design of a nation, state, municipality, educational institution or organization.
 - (4) Traffic, street or other municipal signs.
 - (5) Community special event signs.
 - (6) Theater-hotel marquee, as well as canopy and awning advertising, provided that said advertising is wholly contained within the basic marquee, awning or canopy face.
 - (7) Institutional bulletin boards (for church and community centers, etc.), subject to the area, height and placement regulations for ground-pole or wall signs.
 - (8) Directional signs such as no parking, deliveries, and entrance and exit signs.
- E. General prohibitions.
- (1) No outdoor, off-site commercial advertising sign shall be permitted, except that:
 - (a) Existing lawful off-site commercial advertising signs, in existence as of January 14, 1981, shall be permitted in all Regional Growth Zoning Districts. Such signs shall also be permitted in the RD-C and RD-I Zones, provided that the signs are located on a United States highway within 1,000 feet of a Pinelands Regional Growth Area or Pinelands Town.
 - (b) Signs advertising agricultural commercial establishments shall be permitted, provided that:
 - [1] No more than two signs shall be placed in any one direction along each road directly approaching the establishment.
 - [2] No sign along a four-lane state or federal highway shall exceed 50 square feet in area, and no sign along any other road shall exceed 32 square feet in area.
 - (2) No sign shall be erected or posted on or upon buildings, fences, billboards or other structures unless otherwise permitted herein.
 - (3) No sign shall be erected which creates a nuisance because of its content or use of lewd or lascivious language, which is designed to create a dangerous condition and/or to incite endangering acts on the part of the observer, which is offensive to the observer, and which detracts from the area in which it is placed.

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- (4) Banners, pennants, spinners and streamers, except as a temporary use not to exceed ~~30~~ **90** calendar days **in a calendar year**, are prohibited.
- (5) Any sign which has any visible moving part, visible revolving parts or visible mechanical movement of any description or other apparent visible movement achieved by electrical, electronic or mechanical means, including intermittent electrical pulsations or by action of normal wind currents, is prohibited.
- (6) Any sign or sign structure which is structurally unsafe, or constitutes a hazard to safety or health by reason of inadequate maintenance, dilapidation or abandonment, or is not kept in good repair, or is capable of causing electrical shocks to persons likely to come in contact with it is prohibited.
- (7) Any sign which obstructs the vision of drivers, or obstructs or detracts from the visibility of any traffic signs or traffic control device on public streets and roads by reason of size, location, coloring or illumination of the sign is prohibited.
- (8) Any sign which obstructs free ingress to or egress from a required door, window, fire escape or other required ~~exitway~~ **exit way** is prohibited.
- (9) Signs which make use of words such as "stop," "look," "danger" or other similar words, phrases, symbols or characters in such a manner as to imply the need or requirement of stopping or the existence of danger are prohibited.
- (10) Any sign or other advertising structure containing any obscene, indecent or immoral matter is prohibited.
- (11) Any sign unlawfully installed, erected or maintained is prohibited.
- (12) Any sign now or hereafter existing which no longer advertises a bona fide business-conducted activity, campaign or service or a product sold is prohibited.
- (13) ~~Portable signs may be installed on a temporary basis of up to 30 calendar days within any ninety day period, provided that a permit is obtained, subject, however, that there shall be no permit required for any portable sign maintained on a temporary basis by any nonprofit organization. All portable signs shall be adequately anchored and shall comply with all other sign provisions of this section. No permit shall be reissued for the same location for a temporary sign within one year from the date of any temporary sign permit issued.~~ **Temporary sign permit for special event or promotional sign/banner - An applicant shall be required to obtain a temporary sign permit from the Zoning Officer in order to display not more than one special event sign or banner per use announcing or advertising an educational, civic or religious special event, or a special event or promotion for a business. A maximum of two special promotional permits may be issued within any one calendar year. Said**

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permits are limited to 90 days in a calendar year total, between the two permitted occurrences. The maximum sign size shall be 24 square feet. The application shall show the proposed location, the rendering of the banner, including size and height, the period of time it will be in place and the payment of a nonrefundable fee applicable to nonresidential applications. The location, design and all related aspects of the proposal that may be approved shall be shown as part of the application and be in sufficient detail to allow the Zoning Officer to understand the magnitude of the request. The details of any approval shall be a decision of the Zoning Officer.

(a) Except that any business issued a new Zoning Permit and Certificate of Occupancy for the reasons stated in 175-3A will be permitted one temporary banner for 30 following the issuance of their CO, before removing or the issuing of a permit.

- (14) Any interior or exterior light used in conjunction with commercial business purposes that constitutes a hazard or a nuisance is prohibited.
- (15) Any sign not in compliance with regulations dealing with interstate standards and specifications is prohibited.
- (16) Any on-premises projecting sign having over 30% of the total sign area devoted to purposes other than identification is prohibited.
- (17) No ground-pole sign may extend over the public sidewalk or the public street in any district.
- (18) No sign will be permitted to be erected unless the back of such structure is shielded from public view from a building or a street by a building, other structure, high planting or by another sign (where permitted) of similar dimensions or unless such back is painted a neutral color or is enclosed in a solid metal backing that is treated or painted for corrosion.
- (19) In the Pinelands Area, no sign, other than warning or safety signs, which is designed or intended to attract attention by sudden, intermittent or rhythmic movement, or physical or lighting change, shall be permitted, with the exception of changeable copy or EMC signs in the Regional Growth Area in accordance with § 175-135G(4).
- (20) In the Pinelands Area, no sign, other than warning or safety signs, which changes physical position by any movement or rotation or which gives the visual impression of such movement or rotation shall be permitted, with the exception of changeable copy or EMC signs in the Regional Growth Area in accordance with § 175-135G(4).

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- F. Sign permit. No sign for any non-profit organization, social club, church, or business, whether commercial or industrial, or for a home occupation or professional shall be erected without first receiving a permit from the Zoning office and paying a fee whether exempt or not to the Construction Code Office
- F1. Signs related to any nonprofit organization, social club and church shall state the maximum timeframe on the zoning permit in which the event will take place. All signs shall be removed within seven working days after the event and installed no sooner than 15 working days prior to an event. Council may waive the fee for said permit on a case-by-case basis.
- G. Sign criteria.
- (1) Attached signs. Attached signs shall be affixed parallel to the wall to which they are attached. The face of the sign shall project no more than 12 inches from the surface of the wall.
 - (2) Height. The uppermost part of an attached sign shall not exceed the base of the second-floor windowsill in a two- or more story structure, nor above the building facade or 35 feet, whichever is lower, on either a one-story structure or a structure without windows. The uppermost part of a freestanding sign shall not exceed 20 feet. The lowest portion of any sign which projects above an area traversed either by motor vehicles or pedestrians shall be at least 17 feet and eight feet, respectively.
 - (3) Illuminated signs. Illuminated signs shall be arranged to reflect the light and glare away from adjoining lots and streets. No sign shall be permitted with beam, beacon or flashing illumination. All signs with exterior lighting shall have the light source shielded from adjoining lots, streets and interior drives. All lights shall be either shielded or have translucent fixtures to reduce off-site effects.
 - (4) Changeable-copy signs.
 - (a) A changeable-copy sign, for the purpose of this article, is a sign with the capability of content change by means of manual or remote input and includes the following types:
 - [1] Manually activated: a changeable sign whose message copy or content can be changed manually on a display surface.
 - [2] Electronically activated: a changeable sign whose message copy or content can be changed by means of remote electrically energized on-off switching combinations of alphabetic or pictographic components arranged on a display surface. Illumination may be

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integral to the components, such as characterized by lamps or other light-emitting devices, or may be from an external light source designed to reflect off the changeable component display, such as an electronic message center (EMC) sign.

- (b) An EMC sign, for the purpose of this article, is an electronically activated changeable-copy sign whose variable message and/or graphic presentation capability can be electronically programmed by a computer from a remote location. EMC signs typically use light-emitting diodes (LEDs) as a lighting source.
- (c) Where permitted, changeable-copy or EMC sign areas shall be in accordance with the standards as noted in said district.
- (d) A changeable-copy EMC sign may be a portion of the total permitted sign area, not to exceed a maximum of 25 square feet.
- (e) A changeable-copy or EMC sign shall not be used for any off-site advertising or messages, other than public service information approved by the Township.
- (f) Changeable-copy or EMC signs, where permitted, shall not obstruct traffic visibility or become a distraction to drivers or a traffic hazard.
- (g) Specific standards for electronic message center (EMC) signs.
 - [1] All EMC signs shall have automatic dimming controls, via photo cell or software settings, that adjust the light emitted by the sign during ambient low-light conditions and at night so that they are compliant with the sign illumination standards allowed herein.
 - [2] In nonresidential districts, where permitted, EMC signs shall have a minimum display time of eight seconds. These transitions may use fade, dissolve and/or other transition effects, except those listed as prohibited in this article.
 - [3] All illuminated signs must comply with a maximum luminance level of 750 cd/m² or nits at least 1/2 hour before apparent sunset, as determined by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), United States Department of Commerce, for the Township's geographic location and date. All illuminated signs may resume luminance levels appropriate for daylight conditions at the apparent sunrise, as determined by the NOAA.

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- [4] Prior to the issuance of a permit for a changeable-copy or EMC sign, the applicant shall provide written certification from the sign manufacturer that the light intensity has been factory preset not to exceed the levels specified above.
 - [5] The following EMC display features and functions are prohibited: continuous scrolling and/or traveling, flashing, blinking, twinkling, spinning, rotating, and similar moving effects.
 - [6] All electrical equipment on a newly constructed EMC sign shall be UL listed and labeled.
 - [7] All power to an EMC sign shall be supplied via underground carrier, inside approved conduit, and shall be installed in accordance with the National Electric Code.
 - [8] EMC signs shall be properly maintained so that inoperative or improperly lighted bulbs do not impair the appearance and legibility of the sign. When malfunctioning, all EMC signs must then be turned off or display a blank screen.
- (5) Design.
- (a) Where possible, signs should be combined with light fixtures to reduce unnecessary posts and to illuminate the signs with or without additional lighting.
 - (b) There should be a consistent sign design theme throughout a particular project. This theme should include style of lettering, construction posts, size, lighting, etc.
- (6) Placement. Signs should not be placed where they may conflict with pedestrian traffic. They should be located so as to avoid conflict with door openings or vehicular operation. Signs should be placed to allow pedestrian clearance, vertically and laterally.
- (7) Location. Attached signs may be located anywhere that does not conflict with any height, obstruction to vision, and similar regulations of this chapter. Freestanding signs shall be located only in the front yard and shall not be located within the minimum side yard for the principal building; in no event shall a sign be closer than two feet to a street right-of-way. A sign shall not be located in any sight triangle unless it complies with all requirements of § 175-134. Where possible, signs should be gathered together into a unified location or system to avoid sign clutter in the landscape.

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- (8) Maintenance. Signs shall be constructed of durable materials, maintained in good condition and not be allowed to become or fall into disrepair.
 - (9) Real estate signs. Real estate signs temporarily advertising the sale, rental or lease of a premises or a portion thereof shall be, if not attached to the building, set back at least 1/2 the building setback, but need not exceed two feet from all street and property lines. Signs shall not exceed on one side of the sign 12 square feet for residential advertising, nor 35 square feet for commercial and industrial uses and for an area, residential or otherwise, in the process of development. Signs shall be removed at the expense of the advertiser within 15 days after the termination or completion of the matter being advertised. Real estate signs do not require a permit. No more than one sign shall be permitted along each street on which the building has frontage. Real estate signs shall be permitted only on the lot or development which the sign is advertising.
 - (10) Sign area and dimension. Sign area shall include all lettering, wording, coloring and accompanying designs and symbols, together with the background, whether open or enclosed, but not including any supporting framework and jacketing incidental to the display itself. A freestanding sign with two exposures shall have a total sign area consisting of the area of one side of the sign, but both sides may be used. Street number designations, postal boxes, family names on residences, on-site traffic directional and parking signs, signs posting property as private property, no hunting, or similar purposes, and danger signs around utility and other danger areas are permitted but are not to be considered in calculating the sign area.
- H. Temporary signs. Signs advertising the name of the building under construction, general contractor, subcontractor, financing institution, any public agencies or officials and/or the professional personnel who worked on the project are permitted on a construction site beginning with the issuance of a building permit and terminating with the issuance of a certificate of occupancy for the structure or the expiration of the building permit, whichever comes first. Such signs shall not exceed an area of 32 square feet.
- I. Sign registration and emergency notices.
- (1) Registration. All changeable-copy or electronic message center (EMC) signs, upon being approved after the date of this amendment,^[1] must be registered with the Township Clerk, who shall create a form for that purpose.
 - (a) The purpose of this registration is to provide the Township Office of Emergency Management with a contact person - telephone numbers and e-mails - who can be contacted by the Township if necessary to post notices for such events as amber alerts, cancellation or rescheduling or Township events or other similar purposes.

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- (b) The use of these signs by the Township for the purposes enumerated herein is required wherever it is possible for the sign owner to assist as a public service.
 - (c) Any sign owner who previously had an approval is not required to participate in providing notice under this section; however, it is encouraged that they voluntarily participate under the enumerated conditions.
- J. Pinelands areas. In the Pinelands area of the Township, any existing sign which does not conform to Subsection E(19) and (20) shall be removed immediately. Any existing sign which does not conform to Subsection E(1) shall be removed no later than December 5, 1996.
- K. Signs for automotive fueling stations, automotive service stations and automotive fueling station convenience stores.
 - (1) The following regulations shall apply to freestanding signs:
 - (a) One freestanding sign shall be permitted for each driveway entrances.
 - (b) The maximum area of any freestanding sign shall be 100 square feet.
 - (c) The maximum height of any freestanding signs shall be 20 feet.
 - (d) Freestanding signs shall be set back at least five feet from any property line.
 - (2) The following regulations shall apply to attached signs:
 - (a) One attached sign shall be permitted for each building entrance, provided that there shall be a maximum of two attached signs.
 - (b) The area of any single attached sign shall not exceed 5% of the area of the exterior wall to which it is attached, or one square foot for each linear foot of the wall to which it is attached, whichever results in the smaller sign.
 - (3) The following regulations shall apply to canopy signs:
 - (a) A maximum of two canopy signs shall be permitted.
 - (b) Canopy signs shall only be permitted on canopy sides facing a public street.

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- (c) The width and height of the canopy sign shall not exceed the width and height of the canopy to which it is attached.
- (4) Additional signage shall be permitted to be located on the fueling dispensers.
- L. Violations and penalties. Any person, firm, association, partnership, organization or corporation who or which violates or neglects to comply with any section of this chapter or notice issued pursuant thereto shall, upon conviction thereof, be liable to a penalty of not less than \$50 nor more than \$500 or imprisonment not to exceed 90 days, or both, for each violation. Each day that the violation exists and the above-named refuses or fails to comply with this chapter shall be considered a separate violation. Upon conviction for a violation of this chapter, each succeeding day thereafter shall be considered a new and separate violation.

SECTION II. All prior Ordinances or parts of Ordinances inconsistent with the provisions of this Ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent of such inconsistency.

SECTION III. If any word, phrase, clause, section or provision in this Ordinance shall be found by any Court of competent jurisdiction to be unenforceable, illegal, or unconstitutional, such word phrase, clause, section or provision shall be severable from the balance of the Ordinance and the remainder of the Ordinance shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION IV. This Ordinance shall take effect twenty (20) days after final passage and publication as required by law.

TOWNSHIP OF MONROE

CNCL. PRES., CHELSEA VALCOURT

ATTEST:

**Twp. Clerk, Aileen Chiselko, RMC
or Deputy Clerk, Jennifer Harbison, RMC**

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CERTIFICATION OF CLERK

The foregoing Ordinance was introduced at a meeting of the Township Council of the Township of Monroe held on the 26th day of June, 2024, and will be considered for final passage and adoption at a meeting of the Township Council of the Township of Monroe to be held on 24th day of July, 2024 at the Municipal Building, 125 Virginia Avenue, Williamstown, New Jersey 08094, at which time any person interested therein will be given an opportunity to be heard.

**Twp. Clerk, Aileen Chiselko, RMC
or Deputy Clerk, Jennifer Harbison, RMC**

ROLL CALL VOTE

1st Reading

	AYES	NAYS	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
Cncl. Adams				
Cncl. Fox				
Cncl. Garbowski				
Cncl. Heverly				
Cncl. McKinney				
Cncl. O'Reilly				
Cncl. Pres. Valcourt				
Tally:				

2nd Reading

	AYES	NAYS	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
Cncl. Adams				
Cncl. Fox				
Cncl. Garbowski				
Cncl. Heverly				
Cncl. McKinney				
Cncl. O'Reilly				
Cncl. Pres. Valcourt				
Tally:				

The foregoing ordinance was hereby approved by the Mayor of the Township of Monroe on this ____ day of _____, 2024.

MAYOR GREGORY A. WOLFE