

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD, NEW JERSEY
ORDINANCE 8- 2019**

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 215 OF THE CODE OF THE
CITY OF NORTHFIELD GOVERNING LAND USE AND
DEVELOPMENT**

WHEREAS, City of Northfield Code Section 215 governs land use and development in the City of Northfield; and

WHEREAS, the Council for the City of Northfield desires to amend various and assorted sections and sub-sections of Chapter 215 of the Northfield Code; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and City Council of the City of Northfield, County of Atlantic, and State of New Jersey that Chapter 215 of the Code of the City of Northfield is hereby amended as follows (added text underlined; deleted text ~~stricken~~):

Chapter 215. Land Use and Development

Article VIII. Design Standards and Improvement Specifications

§215-113. Signs.

A. General provisions.

(1) – (7) No Change.

(8) Wherever the name or advertising message on a sign is divided between a number of panels or parts, the total area of all of the panels or parts shall be considered as one sign; and where a sign consists of individual letters or numbers, the area of the sign shall be considered as the total area of the smallest rectangle or rectangles which can collectively enclose all of the letter or numbers. The total area of a neon, LED or electronic light sign shall be measured as provided in Subsection L(3).

(9) – (10) No Change.

(11) Whenever a parcel is bordered by more than one street, additional signage may be permitted by the municipal agency, in accordance with the standards of this section, for each major street upon which the parcel fronts. This standard shall also apply to the installation of neon, LED or electronic light signs in accordance with Subsection L(3).

(12) – (16) No Change.

(17) With the exception of any neon, LED or electronic light sign existing on the date of adoption of Ordinance No. 6-1993 which was and can be conclusively established by the owner of the premises to have been in existence prior to June 24, 1986, all other neon, LED or electronic light signs within the City of Northfield require a permit to be issued and must satisfy the requirements of this chapter as they pertain to the placement and operation of neon, LED or electronic light signs, and a permit must be obtained not later than 45 days from the effective date of Ordinance No. 6-1993; and any sign which requires such a permit which shall not have been obtained within 45 days shall be deemed to be in violation of this chapter. No permit shall be issued for any neon, LED or electronic light sign to be installed within any building or structure where there exists any signage in violation of this chapter.

B. No Change.

(1) – (3) No Change

(4) Nonconforming signs.

(a) Continuance. Except as otherwise provided in this section, the lawful use of any sign existing at the date of the adoption of this chapter may be continued, although such sign does not conform to the regulations specified by this section for said sign; provided, however, that no nonconforming signs shall be enlarged, extended or increased or changed in material, character, location or illumination, with the exception of any neon, LED or electronic light sign which was, and can be conclusively established by the owner thereof to have been, in existence prior to June 24, 1986; all neon, LED or electronic light signs within the City of Northfield must satisfy the requirements of this chapter pertaining to the placement and operation of neon, LED or electronic light signs; and all neon, LED or electronic light signs, whether preexisting the June 24, 1986, date, shall be subject to the permitting requirements of this chapter.

C. Construction.

(1) – (3) No Change.

(4) All neon, LED or electronic light signs shall satisfy the requirements of this Subsection C, shall be subject to review and inspection by the Electrical Inspector of the City of Northfield, shall be properly insulated and grounded, and shall meet or exceed the requirements of the National Electrical Safety Code and the New Jersey Uniform Construction Code.

D. No Change.

E. Illumination.

(1) No Change.

(2) Where illuminated signs are permitted, illumination may be provided by floodlights, spotlights, ordinary incandescent bulbs, fluorescent tubes, LED or mercury vapor lamps. Neon tube lights and LED strip lights are specifically prohibited except within the C-B Community Business, the O-PB Office Professional Business and the R-C Office Professional Business and the R-C Regional Commercial Zones. However, no neon, LED or electronic light sign shall be permitted to be placed within any window of any structure within any such zone if such window shall face or front upon an immediately adjacent residential zone (R-1, R-1A, R-2, R-3, R-SC, AH), even if separated from the residential district by a street, road or highway. Regardless of the type of illumination employed, all illuminated signs shall be properly shielded and so located as to prevent glare or blinding effects upon motor vehicle traffic and so as not to cause a nuisance to residents of the area.

(3) No Change.

F. Signs permitted without a permit. The following signs shall be permitted in any zone in the City without a permit:

(1) – (11) No Change.

(12) Temporary signs or other advertising materials attached to a window shall be removed at the expiration of the event sale for which it was erected or posted or 90 days whichever is less in duration. Not more than 25% of the square footage of any single window or single window display areas shall be devoted to signs or other advertising material attached thereto or otherwise exposed to public view. Wherever permanent neon, LED or electronic light signs have been installed, no temporary signs or other advertising materials may be attached to any window in which such neon, LED or electronic light sign has been placed. ~~Any lighted border around a window shall be part of the twenty five percent sign allowance for the window, either neon or other type of signage. In order to determine the area of the border, the length of the border shall be multiplied by the width of the border. The minimum width of the border shall be one inch minimum or the actual size, whichever is greater.~~

(13) Temporary signs for advertising public functions or fund-raising events for charitable or religious organizations shall be permitted for a period of 90 days prior to and during the event and shall be removed within five days after the event. The signs shall be nonilluminated, not larger than eight square feet in area, not exceeding eight feet in height and may be erected flat against the building or freestanding. No temporary sign shall be placed within the area of any window in which a neon, LED or electronic light sign has been installed.

(14) – (15) No Change.

(16) One sign advertising a permitted nonprofit or public nonresidential use, provided said sign is located on the same premises as the use, and provided that said sign shall not exceed eight square feet in area on any one side. No sign advertising a permitted nonprofit or public nonresidential use shall be placed within any window in which a neon, LED or electronic light sign has been installed.

(17) Political signs, including banners, which are political in nature and which promote the election of a particular candidate(s) or otherwise contain political speech may be placed upon property within the City, provided all such signs and the placement thereof meet the following criteria:

(a) – (f) No Change.

(g) There shall be no more than five signs per property (regardless of the number of lots owned).

(h) No Change.

~~(i) — Such political signs may be displayed for a maximum of six weeks prior to the date of the election, but no such sign shall be displayed prior to the final passage and adoption of this chapter.~~

~~(j) — All political signs shall be removed within five days following the date of the election. Failure to do so shall subject the owner of the property on which the sign is placed to a fine in the amount of \$50 for each day beyond three days that the sign remains in place.~~

(k) – (l) No Change.

(18) No Change.

(19) Logoed Umbrellas, as portable signs, at sidewalk cafes or restaurants when used for shading approved seating areas.

(20) Signs pertaining to First Amendment speech rights.

G. Prohibited signs. The following signs are prohibited in all zones in the City:

(1) No Change.

(2) Moving or revolving signs, strips, tubes or lamps, of any illumination source using any mode of blinking, flashing, vibrating, flickering, tracer, color changing or sequential lighting, used as sign or as an architectural accent, except

~~for the standard movement of clocks and temperature gauges. Moving or revolving signs and signs using blinking, flashing, vibrating, flickering, tracer or sequential lighting, except clocks and temperature gauges.~~

(3) – (18) No Change.

H. – K. No Change.

L. Signs permitted in the N-B Neighborhood Business, C-B Community Business, R-C Regional Commercial, and O-P Office Professional Zones.

(1) – (2) No Change.

(3) Interior neon, LED or electronic light signs.

(a) With the exception of any neon, LED or electronic light sign which was, and can be conclusively established by the owners thereof to have been, in existence prior to June 24, 1986, all neon, LED or electronic light signs within the City of Northfield must be in compliance with the requirements of this chapter. No neon, LED or electronic light sign shall be permitted to be placed in any zone within the City of Northfield other than the C-B Community Business, the O-P Office Professional, the O-PB Office Professional Business and the R-C Regional Commercial Zones.

(b) All neon, LED or electronic light signs shall be subject to the provisions of Subsections A through G of this section and shall be further subject to the following requirements:

[1] Every neon, LED or electronic light sign requires a sign permit.

[2] No neon, LED or electronic light sign may revolve, flash or display movement or the illusion of movement.

[3] No external neon, LED or electronic light signs shall be permitted, nor shall there be any freestanding neon, LED or electronic light signs. All neon, LED or electronic light signs must be installed within and attached to the area of the interior window of the business premises in which they are installed.

[4] No neon, LED or electronic light signs shall be installed within doorways nor attached to any glass within a door or door frame; nor shall any neon, LED or electronic light sign be permitted to be installed in any window area other than on the first floor of the business premises.

[5] The area of any neon, LED or electronic light sign shall not exceed 25% of the total window area in which such neon, LED or electronic light sign is to be installed. For purposes of this section, the limitation is imposed upon the aggregate window area of the specific window in which the neon, LED or electronic light sign is placed. The aggregate of all window area of a premises cannot be used to calculate the size of a neon, LED or electronic light sign permitted to be installed within a single window. A window shall be defined as the area of glass within a frame or panel.

[6] The area of the neon, LED or electronic light sign to be measured in calculating the twenty-five-percent limitation shall be calculated by measuring around the exterior edges of a framed or enclosed sign; or by measuring the area utilized by isolated words and/or symbols, which shall include the background area as if the sign had been enclosed or framed and had been squared off at the highest and widest points, regardless of whether the neon, LED or electronic light sign is open or enclosed; but excluding any bracing incidental to the display itself and which is not made of neon, LED or electronic light or otherwise self-illuminated.

[7] Whenever a parcel in the C-B, ~~O-PB~~, O-PB or R-C Zone is bordered by more than one street, road or highway, neon, LED or electronic light signage may be permitted to be installed in compliance with the requirements of this chapter within the first-floor window(s) facing each such street, road or highway upon which the subject business within said parcel fronts; unless prohibited by Subsection L(3)(b)[8] of this section.

[8] No window within any structure situated in a zone within which neon, LED or electronic light signs are permitted shall be eligible for the placement or installation of any neon, LED or electronic light sign if such window faces or fronts upon an adjacent residential district (R-1, R-1A, R-2, R-2, R-SC, AH) as shown on the Zoning Map of the City of Northfield, regardless of whether such residential district is separated by a street, road, or highway. This limitation shall not apply, however, unless the residential district is directly adjacent to the property upon which the structure is located or immediately adjacent to the street, road or highway between the residential district and such structure.

[9] When neon, LED or electronic light signs have been placed in compliance with this section, no other temporary or permanent signs shall be placed within any window in which such neon, LED or electronic light sign has been installed. This prohibition is intended to apply to all types of temporary or permanent signs, whether constructed of paper, cardboard, wood, or any other material whatsoever.

(4) Electronic message boards. Purpose and intent: More businesses desire to utilize advancements in sign technology which permit signs to change content electronically which are known as “electronic message boards”, e.g. LED type signs. These electronic message boards may adversely impact adjacent areas unless they are regulated in a reasonable fashion. The intent and purpose of this section is to establish standards and regulations for electronic message boards to minimize potential adverse impacts, preserve the character of adjacent areas to the extent practical and reasonable and minimize potential traffic safety concerns.

(a) Electronic message boards shall be ~~allowed only~~ permitted uses in the N-B Neighborhood Business; C-B Community Business; and R-C Regional Commercial Zones.

(b) An electronic message board may be placed on a freestanding sign.

(c) On an electronic message board:

[1] Text ~~and messages~~ shall be limited to no more than ~~three~~ four lines, ~~and~~ shall be nonmoving and shall not contain any animation.

[2] No ~~graphics~~ shall be permitted as part of an electronic message board. Text only is allowed. ~~Electronic message boards may display non-moving pictures, graphics or logos of businesses and/or products sold on premises.~~

[3] A maximum of one ~~text message~~ change every ~~three~~ minutes 60 seconds shall be permitted. All transitions between messages shall be by way of nonmoving fades or cuts.

[4] ~~A maximum of three colors, including the background shall be permitted.~~

(d) Electronic message boards must conform to all dimensional, location and placement standards as prescribed for non-electronic message boards in the applicable zoning districts. In no case shall an electronic message board sign face exceed 24 square feet in size.

(e) Electronic message boards are required to have an automated device to be able to dim the sign to the requirements of this Chapter. This may be a photocell or a schedule programmed into or by the electronic message board’s control system. From sunset to sunrise, an Electronic Message Board shall be controlled to restrict the brightness /luminance of the display to 50 nits or cd/m2, measured while a 100% plain white image is displayed on the electronic message board. Owners or tenants of properties with electronic message boards are required to display a 100% plain white image for measurement upon reasonable

written notice and demand from the appropriate enforcement agent for the City of Northfield. The measurement sensor will be positioned to integrate the emission of all colors on the electronic message board, or a diffuse media will be used, to mix the colors of the electronic message board emitters allowing an accurate measurement. If diffusion media is used to accomplish the measurement, a correction factor allowing for the transmission loss of the diffusion will be added to the measurement. This measurement is to be taken no more than 6 inches from the front of the electronic message board display, on the center axis of the electronic message board's brightest light emitting devices.

(f) If an appropriate representative of the City of Northfield finds that the electronic message board causes a glare, illuminates neighboring buildings or otherwise impairs the vision of drivers of motor vehicles, the property owner and/or owner of the electronic message board, within twenty four (24) hours of a notice by the City, will reduce the intensity of the electronic message board to a level acceptable to the City.

(g) Pre-existing nonconforming signs may not be converted to electronic message boards unless approved by the appropriate land-use board and the proposed electronic message board and structure completely conform to all sign regulations, as set forth in section (d) above.

(h) Only static images may be displayed on electronic message boards. No movement or animation are permitted in the message, whether same consists of text or images. Transitions between messages can only be by way of dissolutions were cuts only. There shall be no wipes or moves. Time and temperature may be displayed on the sign. A electronic message board would not be violation of this Chapter should the time or temperature change during the display of the information.

(i) The content of the electronic message board should reflect the character of the business and respect the environs of the community. The images should be clearly readable and understandable to prevent distraction to drivers. Darker backgrounds should be scheduled during evening hours to facilitate reading and help maintain night vision for drivers.

(j) The liability, content, control and ownership of the electronic message board is strictly limited to the owner/lessee of the property on which the electronic message board is constructed. All advertisement on the electronic message board shall strictly be for products or services offered by the business owner/lessee on the property on which the electronic message board is constructed.

(k) No electronic message board may be used on a portable vehicle or trailer.

(5) Barbershops are entitled to display one barber pole limited in size to 39 inches in height and eight inches in diameter. They shall be mounted to the building wall and shall not project higher than the highest part of the eaves. Low level, constant internal lighting may illuminate barber poles.

(6) Time and Temperature displays shall be allowed as long as the square footage of these displays is included in the calculations for the entire sign and remains within the total allowable size permitted.

M. Additional signage permitted in N-B Neighborhood Business, C-B Community Business, C-C Country Club, R-C Regional Commercial and O-PB Office Professional Business Zones and pre-existing non-conforming businesses in other zoning districts.

(1) SANDWICH BOARD OR “A” FRAME SIGNS: A sandwich board or “A” frame sign is a freestanding temporary sign, with no moving parts or lights, no larger than seven square feet total sign size, displayed outside a business during business hours to advertise the business, hours of operation, an event, a promotion or the like. A sandwich board or “A” frame sign is not intended to be permanent business signage. One sandwich board or “A” frame sign per business street frontage shall be permitted as follows:

(a) Location: Signage shall be placed within the subject property boundaries and in the area located between the main business entrance and the portion of sidewalk closest to the main business entrance. The sign shall not interfere with or obstruct pedestrian or vehicular traffic and shall be in compliance with the City Code. Signs shall not be located within or interfere with any sight triangle or driveway access, ingress or egress. Signs shall not be anchored to the ground nor attached or chained to poles, fences, newspaper vending boxes, or other structures or appurtenances.

(b) Size: Sandwich boards and “A” frame signs shall not exceed 24” in width and shall have a maximum height of 42 inches for a maximum total area of 7 square feet per side. Within these specified dimensions, creative shapes that reflect the theme of the business are encouraged (i.e. ice cream parlors may display a sign in the shape of an ice cream cone).

(c) Appearance: The sign must be constructed of materials that present a finished appearance. Rough-cut plywood is not acceptable. The sign frame shall be painted or stained wood, plastic or anodized aluminum or metal. A locking arm or device is required to keep the sign from collapsing while displayed. Stenciled or spray painted signs are prohibited. Windblown devices, including balloons, may not be attached

or otherwise made part of the sign. The sign lettering should be professionally painted or applied. A "yard sale" or "graffiti" look with hand painted or paint stenciled letters is not permitted. Artistic chalkboard signs shall be permitted. The written message of the sign should be kept to the minimum necessary to communicate the name of the business or a special message of the business. Lettering on the sign shall be small enough to not be legible from automobile traffic on the street.

(d) Lighting and Display Hours: Sandwich boards and "A" frame signs shall not be illuminated; shall be removed at the end of the business day and will only be displayed during regular business hours. Sandwich boards and "A" frame signs must be weighted down or removed if winds gust to 20 m.p.h.

(e) Prohibited Signs and Devices: Signs made wholly or partially of highly reflective material or high visibility colors (i.e. neon color on black background), so as to generate a contrast between the sign and adjacent surfaces or the surrounding area are prohibited.

(f) Any person intending to use a sandwich boards or "A" frame sign is required to obtain a yearly temporary sign permit from the Zoning Officer of the City of Northfield. The permit application form and process shall be in a form and manner acceptable to the Zoning Officer of the City of Northfield. The application fee shall be \$25. The application and permit shall confirm the sign location address, the business and property owner's name and address and contact information. A sign number will be assigned for tracking purposes. In the Application, the Applicant shall indemnify and hold the City of Northfield its officers, agents, and employees harmless from any claim arising out of the presence of the sign on the City of Northfield property or rights of-way. A copy of the permit must be attached to the back of the board.

(g) Any signs that do not meet the criteria outlined in this policy shall be subject to removal by the code enforcement office.

REPEALER - All ordinances or parts of ordinances inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed to the extent of such inconsistency.

SEVERABILITY - If any portion of this ordinance shall be determined to be invalid, such determination shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of said ordinance.

EFFECTIVE DATE - This ordinance shall take effect upon final passage and publication in accordance with law.

Mary Canesi, RMC
Municipal Clerk

Erland Chau
Mayor

The above Ordinance was passed on first reading at a regular meeting of the Common Council of the City of Northfield, New Jersey on the 7th day of May, 2019, and will be taken up for a second reading, public hearing and final passage at a meeting of said council held on the 18th day of June, 2019, in Council Chambers, City Hall, Northfield, New Jersey.

FIRST READING:	May 7, 2019
PUBLICATION:	May 11, 2019
SECOND READING:	June 18, 2019
PUBLICATION:	June 22, 2019