

Signs and Awnings

Signs are as important today as they were long ago. Signs have a dramatic impact on the overall image of our town. The affect signage has on those who pass by, whether they be current or potential customers, can leave a great impression.

Signs and awnings that are simple, suitably sized, attractively designed, constructed of appropriate materials and properly located will favorably enhance the image of your business and the overall downtown.

Sign Types

The following are recommended sign types with definitions.

- I. **Flush Signs** are generally meant to be viewed from a distance. These signs are visible when you are directly facing a structure's façade or from across the street. Ideally, flush signs should be placed on vacant panels above doors and display windows.
- II. **Projecting Signs** are primarily meant to attract the attention of pedestrians because they hang over the sidewalk. Projecting signs are most effective when used on buildings which abut a sidewalk.
- III. **Freestanding Signs** are appropriate when a structure is set back ten or more feet from the sidewalk. Freestanding signs alert people that a business exists when the structure may be partially hidden from pedestrian or vehicular traffic.
- IV. **Window Signs** are applied on the inside of display windows or doors. Generally, the viewer would need to be relatively close to the sign for legibility, but that depends on the window's overall size.
- V. **Mural Guidelines** are on file in the BBB office and are incorporated herein by reference.

Sign Basics

The BBB Main Street Design Committee encourages and recommends the following:

- Use display windows for creative signage.
- Locate signs and awnings in such a way that you avoid completely covering or overwhelming architectural details such as cornices, trim, windows, decorative brickwork, or other unique architectural features.
- The orientation of signs should be geared to sidewalk pedestrians and to vehicular traffic.
- Signs should not be so detailed as to be unreadable by vehicular traffic.
- Avoid extraneous information on signs and scale them to attract the attention of vehicular traffic.
- Limit the quantity of signs on storefront display windows and doors. Signs should be sized and scaled to balance, not hide or overwhelm the structure.
- Neon, internally lit plastic signs, or flashing lights are not recommended as they do not reflect the historic character of downtown Boyertown. (Unless the sign comes from the original period, as such, is original to the business.)
- The size of signs must conform to the Borough of Boyertown's building code. Call the borough's code enforcement officer for this information.

Sign Construction and Design

The BBB Main Street Design Committee encourages and recommends the following:

- Return to or re-create period signage.
- Utilize lettering fashionable to the period of the building. This type of sign should become the main source of identification in downtown Boyertown.
- Sign materials and design should reflect the period of the building and the original design of the store front. Additionally, the colors of signs and awnings should compliment the overall color scheme of the building's façade and the downtown streetscape.
- Use artisan-crafted signs and quality sign materials manufactured specifically by the sign industry.
- Use graphic elements and details of the building and architectural motifs as part of the sign design when feasible.
- Lettering should be kept to a minimum, and likewise, the message should be brief and to the point. A logo, shape and/or illustration can be submitted or included to communicate the nature of the business.

Avoid using multiple signs when one sign will be sufficient, thereby avoiding confusion and distraction. However, the following additional signs may be appropriate in a given situation:

- Small secondary signs are used for directional purposes are acceptable so long as they maintain the same design elements of the main identification sign.
- Freestanding sandwich signs that advertise daily specials or events are acceptable so long as they maintain the same design elements of the main identification sign.

Lighting Signs

The BBB Main Street Design Committee encourages and recommends the following:

- Use external lighting fixtures rather than internally lit plastic fixtures.
- Avoid using flashing lights of any kind.
- Sign lighting should be directed to the sign itself and not used to light the surrounding area. Separate fixtures should be used for area lighting.
- Lighting fixture designs, if visible, should be consistent across the façade and compliment the architectural period of the building.
- Neon signs are not a good substitute for well-lit, well-designed signs that reflect Boyertown's historical character.

Awnings

Awnings are both functional and decorative. They provide sun and climate (thus added energy savings) control for merchandise in display windows and shelter for pedestrian shoppers. An added feature of awnings is that they bring the tremendous appeal of color and pattern, not only to individual buildings, but to the entire downtown streetscape. Both fixed position and retractable awnings are acceptable.

The BBB Design Committee encourages and recommends the following:

- Utilize awning fashionable to the period of the building. Slope type awning are appropriate vs. a waterfall type awning.
- Awnings may display the name and nature of the business on the front face and/or side facings. Use simple letter designs and keep the message brief.
- Awnings may be used on street level and upper stories as long as they are appropriate to and maintain the architectural style of the façade.

- Select weather-treated canvas or natural looking material when shopping for awnings. Metal and plastic awnings are not recommended.
- Awnings should not be oversized—it should fit within the storefront area and not cover architectural elements.