

MUNICIPAL SIGN POLICY

(Replaces Signs General, Community Sign Board at Bond Square and Electronic Sign Policy)

Accepted: September 22, 2020

The purpose of this policy is to ensure compliance with a citizen's right of free speech; compliance with ethics law and regulations; to reduce sign blight in Charlton; and comply with the sign section of the Zoning Bylaw 200-5.6

Signs will be reviewed for compliance with the following guidelines:

Charlton Sign Bylaw § 200-5.6

Federal Law and regulations

State Law and regulations

Signs - General

The Town of Charlton recognizes the right of citizens to post signs supporting: charitable events, political candidates and positions, articles for sale, yard sales and the like on the residents' property. While in most cases the residents' property line are varying distances back from the road edge, temporary signs of the aforementioned types placed directly in front of a residence or business will not be considered on municipal property.

The Town of Charlton recognizes the Massachusetts Ethic's Regulations prohibit the use of municipal resources for political activities.

Signs of any type not erected by the municipality or given permission by the Board of Selectmen or in compliance with the sign bylaw, are prohibited in front of municipal buildings, parks, cemeteries, open space, and the town common.

Recognizing the need for the democratic process, political signs are allowed on the town property in front of 5 Main Street and Clara Barton Square (Stafford Street and Hammond Hill Road) or similar island or intersections. One political sign per candidate or point of view 24 x 24 inches with a maximum height of 36 inches will be allowed in each area.

Political signs that are in the town right of way or on town property may be erected not more than 45 days before and removed not more than 7 days after an event.

Signs that express the property owners views that are not off premise advertising signs prohibited by the sign bylaw § 200-5.6 E (4), located wholly on their property are not subject to this policy.

Signs posted on municipal shade trees and utility poles are prohibited and may be removed by the Building Inspectors. An attempt to notify the owner prior to removal will be made.

Signs that obscure safe movement of traffic or interfere with sightlines at an intersection will be removed by municipal employees in the performance of their duties. An attempt to notify the owner prior to removal will be made.

Signs removed will be stored in an unsecured area behind the Town Hall. The owner, if identifiable will be sent a letter, informing them of the location of the removed sign, the violation and that sign may be disposed of if not retrieved within 10 days. Notification need only be made once to any entity.

Community Sign (at Bond Square, 5 Main St.)

Use and Duration:

The following groups may make use of the Community sign;

Municipal
Non Profits
Civic Fraternal
Youth Activities
Scouts

The following are prohibited from the use of the Community sign;

Political Advertisement
Commercial Advertisements

All signs displayed after the enactment of this policy will comply with the requirements contained herein.

The Town of Charlton reserves the upper spaces of the community sign board and electronic sign for its use as needed. The need for official notification by the Town of Charlton has precedence over all other displays.

Duration of Posting will be a maximum of 45 days before the event and remain a maximum of 5 days after the event or sooner if the space is needed.

Sign Construction and format at Bond Square:

Sign panels are approximately 60" by 21" white in color. Blank aluminum panels are available from the Town of Charlton for purchase at \$25 each. Once purchased, the panel will be the property of the organization.

Alternately, signs fabricated from 4mm white corrugated plastic sheets no larger than 60" by 21" may be provided by the organization.

Lettering and graphics is the responsibility of the organization. The background of the panel will remain white. Lettering will be black in color. It is recommended that 3" or taller letters be used. The lettering, logos, and graphics shall maintain a neat and orderly appearance. Logos may be in colors consistent with the organizations normal logo color scheme.

Installation and removal of the sign panels will be the responsibility of the applicant. Applications will be made to the Inspectional Services office and will be approved on a first come, first serve basis except for

Town events which have priority.

Installation and removal of the sign panels will be the responsibility of the organization. Failure to remove the sign panel within the designated times may result in the inability to use the community sign board in the future.

The Town of Charlton will not be responsible for missing or damaged sign panels.

Any sign determined to be offensive may be removed at the direction of the Town Administrator. Appeal of the Town Administrator's decisions will be to the Board of Selectmen.

Electronic sign

The sign, given its proximity to the center of town, will generally consist of single color on black background lettering for informational messages.

Special town-sponsored, town-wide events including Old Home Day and Earth Day may display animate, moving or flashing characters or icons, but only for 7 days preceding the event; all animation will be turned off the day after the event.

The display may have not more than 2 messages visible at any time.

The display may not change more than once a minute.

The sign will be turned off each evening at 10:00 pm and resume at 6:30 am each morning.

Application

Application will be on forms provided which will include the organizations name, responsible party, contact information, date of the event, proposed wording or layout of the sign panel. The applicant will sign the application acknowledging that the Town of Charlton will be held harmless.

Applicant must submit the appropriate form to the Town Administrator's Office for approval at least one week before the posting request. Once approved, this form will be forwarded to the appropriate person for posting.

No message will be placed without a signed approval form from the Town Administrator.¹

¹ The Charlton Public Library shall maintain the independent authority to advertise programming on the Electronic Sign Board without prior Town Administrator approval.

Community/Municipal Sign Application

Organization Name: _____ Phone _____

Contact Person: _____ E-Mail _____

Date of event: _____

Location: _____ Community Sign board Bond Square _____ Library 40 Main Street

Affiliation:

_____ Municipal _____ Civic _____ Fraternal _____ Youth Activities

_____ Scouts _____ Non-Profit

Print your message here:

I, _____, upon this application, so do declare that it will be my responsibility to install and remove the sign and further, I fully release the Town from any responsibility including lost, damaged and stolen signs.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Community Sign Board Bond Square Inspectional Services Approval:

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Town Administrator Approval:

Approved _____ Date: _____

Sample Signs and Lettering:

