

**AGENDA**  
**BIRMINGHAM DESIGN REVIEW BOARD**  
**Wednesday - September 21, 2022**  
**BIRMINGHAM CITY HALL, 151 MARTIN ST, COMMISSION ROOM 205, BIRMINGHAM MI \***  
**\*\*\*\*\* 7:15 PM\*\*\*\*\***

The City continues to recommend the public wear masks while attending City meetings per CDC guidelines. The cases of COVID-19 are increasing in the area. All City employees, commissioners, and board members must wear a mask while indoors when 6-feet of social distancing cannot be maintained. This is to ensure the continuity of government is not affected by an exposure to COVID-19 that can be prevented by wearing a mask. The City continues to provide KN-95 respirators and triple-layered masks for all in-person meeting attendees.

- 1) **Roll Call**
- 2) **Approval of the DRB Minutes of August 17, 2022**
- 3) **Public Hearing**
- 4) **Design Review**
- 5) **Sign Review**
- 6) **Study Session**
  - A. **Projecting Signs (Wall Mounted) – Public Hearing**
- 7) **Miscellaneous Business and Communication**
  - A. **Pre-Application Discussions**
  - B. **Draft Agenda**
    1. **October 19, 2022**
  - C. **Staff Reports**
    1. **Administrative Sign Approvals**
    2. **Administrative Approvals**
    3. **Action List 2022**
- 8) **Adjournment**

\*Please note that board meetings will be conducted in person once again. Members of the public can attend in person at Birmingham City Hall, 151 Martin St., or may attend virtually at:

**Link to Access Virtual Meeting:** <https://zoom.us/j/91282479817>  
**Telephone Meeting Access:** 877 853 5247 US Toll-free  
**Meeting ID Code:** 912 8247 9817

*Notice:* Individuals requiring accommodations, such as interpreter services for effective participation in this meeting should contact the City Clerk's Office at [\(248\) 530-1880](tel:2485301880) at least on day in advance of the public meeting.

Las personas que requieren alojamiento, tales como servicios de interpretación, la participación efectiva en esta reunión deben ponerse en contacto con la Oficina del Secretario Municipal al [\(248\) 530-1880](tel:2485301880) por lo menos el día antes de la reunión pública. (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964).

**A PERSON DESIGNATED WITH THE AUTHORITY TO MAKE DECISIONS MUST BE PRESENT AT THE MEETING.**

**Design Review Board  
Minutes Of August 17, 2022**

151 Martin Street, City Commission Room 205, Birmingham, MI

Minutes of the regular meeting of the Design Review Board ("DRB") held Wednesday, August 17, 2022. PD Dupuis called the meeting to order at 7:49 p.m.

**1) Rollcall**

**Present:** Board Members Natalia Dukas, Dustin Kolo, Julie Rasawehr; Alternate Board Member Samantha Cappello; Student Representative Meghan Murray

**Absent:** Chair John Henke; Board Members Keith Deyer, Patricia Lang, Michael Willoughby; Alternate Board Member Kathleen Kriel; Student Representative Charlie Vercellone

**Administration:** Nicholas Dupuis, Planning Director  
Laura Eichenhorn, City Transcriptionist

Noting the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair, PD Dupuis asked the DRB to elect an acting chair to facilitate the meeting.

**08-27-22**

**Motion by Ms. Kolo**

**Seconded by Ms. Rasawehr to nominate Natalia Dukas to serve as acting chair for the duration of the meeting.**

**Motion carried, 4-0.**

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Dukas, Rasawehr, Kolo, Cappello

Nays: None

**2) Approval of the DRB Minutes of July 20, 2022**

**08-28-22**

**Motion by Ms. Rasawehr**

**Seconded by Ms. Cappello to approve the July 20, 2022 minutes as submitted.**

**Motion carried, 4-0.**

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Dukas, Rasawehr, Kolo, Cappello

Nays: None

**3) Public Hearing**

**4) Design Review**

**5) Sign Review**

**6) Study Session**

**A. Projecting Signs (Wall Mounted)**

PD Dupuis presented the item.

PD Dupuis confirmed that approval of this proposal would allow previously denied applicants that have projects aligned with the new standards to seek administrative approval for said projects.

The DRB recommended the language specify that all parts of the sign should be above eight feet.

After DRB comment, PD Dupuis said he would explore possible language to regulate signs' distances from the door of the business and the issue of vertically-staggered signs. He said he would provide with a recommendation.

Public Comment

Chris Kojanian, owner of 277 Pierce and 111 E. Merrell, provided feedback on the proposed language.

**08-29-22**

**Motion by Ms. Cappello**

**Seconded by Ms. Rasawehr to set a public hearing for September 21st, 2022 to consider amendments to Article 1, Table B: Permanent Business Sign Standards, of the Birmingham Sign Ordinance to change the maximum height for Projecting Signs (Wall-Mounted).**

**Motion carried, 4-0.**

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Dukas, Rasawehr, Kolo, Cappello

Nays: None

**7) Miscellaneous Business And Communications**

**A. Pre-Application Discussions**

**B. Draft Agenda**

**C. Staff Reports**

**1. Administrative Sign Approvals**

**2. Administrative Approvals**

**3. Action List 2022**

**Adjournment**

**08-30-22**

**Motion by Mr. Kol**

**Seconded by Ms. Cappello to adjourn the DRB meeting of August 17, 2022 at 8:19 p.m.**

**Motion carried, 4-0.**

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Dukas, Rasawehr, Kolo, Cappello

Nays: None



Nicholas Dupuis  
Planning Director



Laura Eichenhorn  
City Transcriptionist



# MEMORANDUM

Planning Division

**DATE:** September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022

**TO:** Design Review Board

**FROM:** Leah Blizinski, City Planner

**APPROVED:** Nick Dupuis, Planning Director

**SUBJECT:** Projecting Signs – Public Hearing

## INTRODUCTION:

As commercial signage has evolved and diversified in tandem with the varying needs of business owners, the City of Birmingham has taken special care to define and regulate signage for the purpose of reducing visual clutter that is unsightly, confusing and distracting, preserving architectural character of buildings and streetscapes, promoting the use of creative and appropriate signage which will enhance the economic viability of the City, and ensuring the health, safety and welfare of the residents of the City by prohibiting signage that creates a traffic hazard or otherwise adversely impacts public safety.

As a result, City Staff have fielded numerous requests for information and reviews surrounding Projecting (Wall-mounted) signs and how they are regulated in the Sign Ordinance. Projecting Sign is defined in the Sign Ordinance: "A sign which extends beyond the building wall, where the horizontal sign surface is not parallel to the building wall." Further, Post-mounted Projecting Sign is defined: "A projecting sign affixed to the side of a post or similar upright."

The location of Projecting Signs (Wall-Mounted) and Projecting Signs (Post-Mounted) are regulated through the Sign Ordinance Article 1, Table B: Permanent Business Sign Standards.

| TABLE B: PERMANENT BUSINESS SIGN STANDARDS |                 |                                                 |                                                                                                                       |                                      |                                                                                                                          |
|--------------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Type of Sign                               | Permit Required | Maximum Area                                    | Maximum Height                                                                                                        | Illumination (see also Section 1.03) | Maximum Number                                                                                                           |
| Projecting Signs (Post Mounted)            | Yes             | 15 square feet per side, 30 square feet total.  | No more than 8 feet above street level or above the adjoining ground, if such ground level is above the street level. | Permitted.                           | 1 sign.                                                                                                                  |
| Projecting Signs (Wall Mounted)            | Yes             | 7.5 square feet per side, 15 square feet total. | At the sign band and no less than 8 feet above grade.                                                                 | Permitted.                           | Not within 20 feet of any other projecting sign; this shall not deny any place of business at least one projecting sign. |

**ISSUE:**

Planning Staff has received several requests this year to place a Projecting (Wall-Mounted) sign below the sign band, at least 8ft above the public sidewalk. The buildings where these requests were made have first floor windows much greater than 8ft. in height.

Projecting signs are intended to be read from the sidewalk by pedestrians seeking to enter a business. Locating these signs 8ft. above grade and near an entrance, helps the pedestrian find the correct business and entrance. Locating projecting signs much higher than 8ft. above the public sidewalk makes the sign more difficult for the pedestrian to read and defeats the purpose of the Projecting sign.

It appears that there have been different interpretations of the ordinance over the years. As such there are numerous existing Projecting (Wall-Mounted) signs in the city that are located below the sign band, 8ft above the public sidewalk, which is part of the reason for seeking clarification. See examples provided at the end of this report.

**SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES:**

**Berkeley, MI:** A Projecting Sign is defined: *"Any sign affixed to a building or wall in such a manner that its leading edge extends more than 12 inches beyond the surface of such building or wall."*

| Districts Permitted                                                                                 | Maximum Sign Area                            | Vertical Clearance from Ground Level              | Maximum Projection into Right-of-Way | Other Regulations                                                                                                                                            |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Office, Downtown, Local Business, Gateway, Twelve Mile, Coolidge, Woodward, Industrial, Eleven Mile | 10% of adjoining wall; up to 100 square feet | Rigid Construction: 8 feet<br>Soft Canvas: 7 feet | 5 feet                               | For buildings with more than one business in occupancy, the permitted signage for each business shall be less than or equal to 50% of the permitted signage. |

**Ferndale, MI:** Projecting wall sign/blade sign is defined: *"a sign which projects perpendicularly or at an angle from a building. A projecting wall sign does not include canopy, awning, roof, or marquee signs."*

| Type of Sign        | Max. Height | Max. Size (per face) | Max. Number    | Permit Required | Additional Requirements   |
|---------------------|-------------|----------------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------------------|
| Projecting or Blade | 8 ft. 6 in. | 3 sq. ft.            | 1 per business | yes             | a. 24 in. max. projection |

\*For the purposes of sign area calculation, Ferndale uses only 1 sign face to compute sign area where a double-sided sign has 2 identical faces.

**Rochester Hills, MI:** A projecting sign is defined as a *"sign that is affixed to the face of a building or structure that projects in a perpendicular manner from the wall surface of the building."*

Projecting signs.

1. Projecting signs shall be mounted below the second-floor window sill in multi-story buildings.
2. Projecting signs shall be small in scale and provide a minimum vertical clearance of eight feet between the lowest point of the sign and the sidewalk.
3. The maximum sign area for projecting signs is five square feet.
4. Mounting hardware shall be attractive and an integral part of the sign design.
5. Projecting signs may be mounted on any building façade that has a customer entry.

**Royal Oak, MI:** Defines projecting sign: *"A sign which is supported by a building wall, and which has its copy area oriented perpendicular to the building wall supporting it; or secondly, a sign, any part of which extends more than 12 inches from the building wall."*

Projecting signs, in recognition of the pedestrian-oriented nature of the downtown, provided the following conditions are met:

1. Each projecting sign shall consist of a background area, which shall be affixed to a separate support arm(s), which shall be affixed to a building facade. The background area shall not be directly affixed to the building facade, but shall be affixed only to the support arm(s).
2. The maximum background area of a projecting sign shall be four square feet.
3. A projecting sign may have suspended therefrom a supplemental sign. The supplemental sign shall not exceed 1/2 square foot in area.
4. The bottom of the projecting sign, including any supplemental sign and support arm(s), shall be at least eight feet above the adjacent public right-of-way, and the top of the sign, including support arm, shall not be greater than 12 feet above the adjacent public right-of-way.
5. A projecting sign, including all support arms, may not extend from a building facade more than 30 inches.
6. A projecting sign may not be internally illuminated.
7. A projecting sign and a sidewalk sign may not be displayed at the same location.

On August 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022 ([Agenda – Minutes](#)), the Design Review Board discussed potential ordinance amendments affecting the permitted location of Projecting Sign (Wall-mounted) outlined in Sign Ordinance Article 1, Table B: Permanent Business Sign Standards. Board members discussed whether brackets and other portions of the sign structure may be allowed to project lower than 8ft. Staff clarified that the definition of sign is clear and include all parts of the sign structure, therefore all portions of the sign and attachments must remain above 8 ft. The Board also discussed the placement of projecting signs in relationship to the door. The Design Review Board moved to set a public hearing for the proposed ordinance amendment.







**SUGGESTED ACTION:**

Motion to recommend approval to the City Commission the amendments to Article 1, Table B: Permanent Business Sign Standards, of the Birmingham Sign Ordinance to change the maximum height for Projecting Signs (Wall-Mounted).

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM

ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_\_

THE CITY OF BIRMINGHAM ORDAINS:

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE SIGN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BIRMINGHAM:

TO AMEND ARTICLE 1, TABLE B: PERMANENT BUSINESS SIGN STANDARDS TO AMEND THE PROJECTING SIGNS (WALL MOUNTED) MAXIMUM HEIGHT STANDARD.

| <b>TABLE B: PERMANENT BUSINESS SIGN STANDARDS</b> |                        |                                                    |                                                                                                                                              |                                             |                                                                                                                         |
|---------------------------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Type of Sign</b>                               | <b>Permit Required</b> | <b>Maximum Area</b>                                | <b>Maximum Height</b>                                                                                                                        | <b>Illumination (see also Section 1.03)</b> | <b>Maximum Number</b>                                                                                                   |
| Projecting Signs (Wall Mounted)                   | Yes                    | 7.5 square feet per side.<br>15 square feet total. | <del>At the sign band and no less than 8 feet above grade.</del><br><b>No higher than the sign band and no less than 8 feet above grade.</b> | Permitted.                                  | Not within 20 ft. of any other projecting sign; this shall not deny any place of business at least one projecting sign. |

ORDAINED this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2022 to become effective 7 days after publication.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Therese Longe, Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Alex Bingham, City Clerk

**AGENDA**  
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- 7) **Miscellaneous Business and Communication**
  - A. **Pre-Application Discussions**
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    1. **November 2, 2022**
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    2. **Administrative Approvals**
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**Design Review Board Action List – 2022-2023**

| <b>Design Review Board</b>                          | <b>Quarter</b>                     | <b>In Progress</b>       | <b>Complete</b>          |
|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Signs vs. Designs                                   | 1 <sup>st</sup> (January-March)    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Update Sign Ordinance                               | 2 <sup>nd</sup> (April-June)       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Create New Informational Artwork for Sign Ordinance | 3 <sup>rd</sup> (July-September)   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sign Ordinance Enforcement                          | 4 <sup>th</sup> (October-December) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |