
TOWN OF STURBRIDGE SIGN BYLAW FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The purpose of this document is to cover some of the most frequently asked questions about the sign bylaw and the permitting process. No handout can possibly provide all the answers, but this is a good starting point. Staff in the Planning Department is always available to assist you with your questions.

Q. When do I need a permit to erect a sign?

A. Nearly every sign installation requires a permit from the Building Commissioner's Office and approval from the Design Review Committee. Simple maintenance such as the repainting of a sign with the same colors and design does not require approval. However, structural changes or the installation of any non-exempt signs requires approval and permits.

Q. What is the Design Review Committee and what is its role?

A. The Design Review Committee (DRC) is a five member appointed Committee that was established by Town Meeting in 1982. This Committee is advisory to both the Building Commissioner and the Planning Board.

The purpose of the DRC is to review applications with the goal of balancing commercial development interests with the preservation of community character and identity. Commercial and Industrial architectural changes and signage are subject to review by the DRC.

Q. Where do I apply for a sign permit?

A. You should start with the Planning Department to begin the Design Review Process. All of the applications can be found on-line at <https://www.town.sturbridge.ma.us/design-review-committee>. The application lists all of the items that are required – these items include a rendering of the sign that it to scale with all dimensions noted, a photograph or other graphic representation of where the sign will be located, if it is a freestanding sign a plot plan showing the proposed location of the sign with the dimensions to the property line is required. Color samples are also required. There is no fee for this application process.

Q. I have received Design Review Committee approval, now what?

A. The Planning Department will forward your approval to the Building Department. A permanent sign application will need to be completed and filed with that Department for the actual installation of your sign. This application can be found online at https://www.town.sturbridge.ma.us/sites/sturbridgema/files/uploads/permit_app_sign_pemit_after_drc_apvl.pdf

Q. What is the fee for the sign permit?

A. Signs less than thirty square feet are \$50.00, signs greater than 30 square feet are \$75.00.

Q. How long does it take to obtain my sign permit?

A. Turnaround time is very quick for signs with the typical approval process taking only two days.

Q. Where can I get further information?

A. The Sturbridge Zoning Bylaw – Chapter 22 contains all of the information on what signs may be permitted. That document can be accessed here

https://www.town.sturbridge.ma.us/sites/sturbridgema/files/uploads/zoning_bylaws_amended_atm_6-5_17_and_6_12_17_2.pdf

Q. I have read the bylaw and am still confused, what other help is available?

A. Staff in the Planning and Building Department are available to assist you. These offices can be reached at 508-347-2508 Planning and 508-347-2505 Building.