



BOROUGH OF RAMSEY

33 NORTH CENTRAL AVENUE
RAMSEY, NEW JERSEY 07446

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PLEASE READ BEFORE ENTERING INFORMATION ON APPLICATION

The Ramsey Design Review Board strives to create an ambiance in our town that conveys good design, warmth, and hospitality while preserving the best of our historical past. We would like to promote attractive and inviting commercial/business districts that will enhance the appearance of our town and the value of both business and residential property.

The Design Review Board meets on the 4th Tuesday of the month at 6:30 PM. **To be on the agenda, applications must be received two weeks prior the meeting.** In order to process an application, the applicant must appear at the meeting. If a sign company has been engaged to prepare the sign, the applicant should provide the sign company with a copy of the attached Ordinance. **The Signed Acknowledgement must accompany application.**

The application should be filed with the Zoning Officer who will determine compliance with the Borough Ordinance. Photographs of your business site and the adjacent properties are required when reviewing your application. Photographs will be kept on file and cannot be returned. A conforming application will be forwarded to the Design Review Board. If the sign does not comply, the Zoning Officer will contact the applicant directly. Once the conforming application is sent to the Design Review Board, please contact Mary Ann Lupo (201-825-3400, x261) with any questions. Please do NOT contact the Zoning Officer after submission. **The applicant must submit seven (7) color renderings of the proposed sign/awning including letter style, size of sign, and proposed colors along with actual material color samples. A separate email must be submitted in pdf format.**

Compliance with the sign ordinance and the recommendations on this application will expedite the approval process.

Ramsey's origins are from the turn of the century (around the year 1900). The goal of the Design Review Board is to promote the best of that era in architecture and signage. "Turn-of-the Century" has become the theme of the ongoing downtown renewal.

Revised 08/2025

Borough of Ramsey, NJ
Tuesday, March 25, 2025

Chapter 34. Zoning

34-7. SIGNS.

34-7.1. Portable signs.

[Ord. 1159; Ord. No. 2-2005 § 1]

Portable signs are prohibited in all zone districts. Temporary signs are addressed specifically in Subsection 34-7.4.

34-7.2. Permit required.

[Ord. No. 1159; Ord. No. 2-2005 § 1]

No signs shall be erected, moved, replaced, altered or enlarged until a permit has been issued by the Building Inspector. If a sign is to be replaced or repainted using same colors, same lettering, same content and dimensions and is exact to what exists, there would be no permit required. Any and all renovations require a sign permit and are subject to review by the Design Review Board. Applications for sign permits shall be made on forms provided by the Building Inspector.

34-7.3. General regulations.

[Ord. No. 1159; Ord. No. 43-2002 § 1; Ord. No. 2-2005 § 1]

- a. No sign shall be erected except on the premises of the use or activity to which such sign refers or which it identifies. There shall be no off-premises signs.
- b. (Reserved)^[1]
[1] *Editor's Note: Former Paragraph b, which prohibited billboards, was repealed 1-25-2006 by Ord. No. 3-2006.*
- c. Strings or streamers of flags, pennants, spinners or other similar devices intended to attract attention are prohibited. Balloons, pennants, flags, banners and the like shall be permitted once a year or for grand openings, reopening or new ownership of a permitted use, provided that they shall not be displayed in excess of seven calendar days per year.
- d. Signs placed on or hung in side the window glass of any buildings shall be limited to 20% of the area of the glass, but not to exceed 10 square feet in total.
[Amended 3-9-2011 by Ord. No. 05-2011]
- e. All signs shall remain in a fixed position; revolving or moving signs are prohibited except for traditional symbols such as barberpoles. Flashing signs, accents, raceways or those lit by intermittent or varying intensity are prohibited. Signs painted or composed of fluorescent or phosphorescent or similar material are prohibited. Also prohibited are signs, accents and raceways made of exposed gas-filled tubing.
- f. Roof signs and signs on mansard surfaces are prohibited.

- g. Illumination of signs shall be arranged in a manner that no direct glare is visible outside the boundaries of the lot upon which the sign is erected and in a manner that does not create any impediments to pedestrian or vehicular traffic.
- h. Signs deemed necessary to the public welfare by the governing body shall be permitted.
- i. At the termination of a business, commercial or industrial enterprise, all sign boxes and sign frames pertaining thereto shall be removed within 30 days of the termination of a business, commercial or industrial enterprise. Responsibility for a violation hereof shall reside with the property owner according to the latest Official Tax Roll Listing.
- j. Any lettering on a canopy or awning is considered a sign and is subject in all respects to the regulations concerning signs.
- k. Reader board signs of any type including mechanical or electronic lettering are prohibited with the exception of churches, theaters, and gas stations. Gas station reader boards are permitted solely to post gas prices; in B-1, B-1A, and B-2 Zones these signs are limited to six square feet; in B-3 Zones the limit is eight square feet.
- l. A sign should have no more than two predominant colors. Black and white are not counted as colors.
- m. A sign is meant to identify an establishment. There shall be no advertising, no phone number and no E-mail address on the sign.
- n. Any sign that violates any of the provisions of this section or is in such state of disrepair as shall, in the opinion of the Planning Board, be considered esthetically objectionable, shall be removed by the owner, agent or person 15 days after written notification. Upon failure to comply with such notice, the Construction Official/Building Inspector or Police Officer is authorized to cause the removal of such sign, and any expense incident thereto shall be charged against the owner of the premises upon which the sign is located.
- o. Any existing sign not in compliance with these regulations shall be removed upon succession of the premises to a subsequent tenant.
- p. Permit fees and fines: (available at the Ramsey Borough Hall).
- q. Should any section or subsection of this chapter be found unconstitutional or invalid, such provision shall be deemed severable.

34-7.4. Temporary signs.

[Ord. No. 1159; Ord. No. 2-2005 § 1]

Temporary signs shall be permitted as follows:

- a. In a residential zone district one nonilluminated sign advertising the prospective sale or rental of the premises on which it is located, not exceeding four square feet in area, either attached to the wall of the building or a ground sign set back a minimum of 10 feet from the street, provided that it shall be maintained and removed within seven days after the completion of a sale or lease of the premises.
- b. In any nonresidential zone district a maximum of two nonilluminated signs advertising the prospective sale or rental of the premises on which they are located, not exceeding 10 square feet in area, six feet in height, either attached to the wall of the building or a ground sign, set back a minimum of 10 feet from the street, provided that they shall be maintained and removed within seven days after the completion of a sale or lease of the premises.
- c. A maximum of two nonilluminated signs on sites where construction is in progress pursuant to a Planning Board approved site plan or major subdivision, not exceeding 25 square feet in area, and provided that they shall be maintained and removed within seven days after completion of the construction work.

- d. Signs for public and charitable purposes not exceeding 25 square feet in area, provided the same do not otherwise violate the provisions of this chapter for a period not exceeding one month.
- e. Signs for political purposes provided the same are removed within seven days after the election date applicable to such sign.
- f. A temporary sign pending approval of a permanent sign shall be granted at the discretion of the Board. Permission to use a temporary sign in no way implies approval, and the temporary sign may be required to be removed if the permanent sign is not approved.

34-7.5. Residential zones.

[Ord. No. 1159; Ord. No. 2-2005 § 1]

Only the following signs shall be permitted in residential zones:

- a. One nameplate sign not exceeding one square foot in area identifying a professional office conducted in the building on which the sign is displayed; any illumination thereof shall be indirect and nonintermittent.
- b. One sign not exceeding 15 square feet in surface display area shall be permitted for a church, school, hospital or governmental agency, either attached to the wall of the building, or, if a ground sign, set back a minimum of 20 feet from the street line. Such signs may be illuminated by direct lighting, provided it is so screened that light is not directed or reflected toward any adjacent residence.
- c. Nothing in these provisions shall prohibit residential nameplates, symbols or window stickers from use on a residential property or structure.

34-7.6. Business zones.

[Ord. No. 1159; Ord. No. 1257 § 1; Ord. No. 1257A § 1; Ord. No. 2-2005 § 1]

Only the following signs shall be permitted in the business zones:

- a. In the B-1, B-1A, B-2, and B-3 Zones for office, retail, banking and service establishments, one sign, located on the facade and/or canopy/awning of the building, shall be permitted for each establishment that has its own exterior public entrance and shall refer only to that establishment. The sign on the facade and/or canopy/awning shall be limited in size to one square foot of surface display area for each foot of the building frontage of the retail or service establishment, with a maximum display area of 40 square feet, and a length of not more than 75% of the building frontage. In the B-1 and B-1A Zones, and in those portions of the B-2 and B-3 Zones that front on Main Street, Lake Street, and Franklin Turnpike, facade signs shall not be internally illuminated.

Any exterior lighting of a sign shall be installed so that there is no light spillover onto adjacent properties. Light fixtures shall be shielded so as to prevent light spillover and glare to the public.
- b. In the B-1 and B-1A Zones and in that portion of the B-2 Zone which fronts on East Main Street, office, retail, banking and service establishments which are located on a lot of more than 10,000 square feet in area shall be permitted to have one ground sign per lot, not internally illuminated, in addition to the facade signs. The ground sign shall be limited in area to 12 square feet and shall be limited in height to eight feet from ground level and shall be set back at least eight feet from the property line.
- c. Shopping centers in the B-1, B-1A, and B-2 Zones shall be permitted one ground sign, which may be a directory sign, limited in area to 25 square feet, limited in height to eight feet, and set back a minimum of eight feet from the property line.

- d. Businesses in the B-3 Zone may have a pylon sign, not exceeding 40 square feet in area and not exceeding 20 feet in height, set back a minimum of 10 feet from the property line, plus individual facade signs for individual office, retail, banking and service establishments within the building. Each individual facade sign shall be limited to one square foot of display area for each foot of building frontage occupied by the retail, service or banking establishment, and to a maximum of 40 square feet per establishment.

Shopping centers in the B-3 Zone shall also be permitted one ground sign, which may be a directory sign for the main customer entrance from the street, limited in area to 40 square feet, limited in height to eight feet from ground level and set back at least 10 feet from the property line. Shopping centers within the B-3 Zone providing a second major entrance for customers from a different street shall be permitted one additional ground sign, which may be a directory sign, limited in area to 25 square feet, to eight feet from ground level, and set back a minimum of 10 feet from the property line.

A shopping center for the purpose of this chapter is defined as the entirety of five or more distinct retail, banking, or service establishments on one lot within one contiguous structure plus any additional establishment within additional structures, all of which share an adjacent, paved, off-street parking area for in excess of 40 automobiles and available for use in common by their customers.

- e. A single office, business, commercial or professional building having more than one tenant may erect and maintain a directory of the tenants in the form of one wall or ground sign comprising a series of horizontal panels, uniform as to color and dimensions and as to the type of lettering. The number of panels shall not exceed the number of tenants. No tenant shall be listed more than once. No other signs shall be permitted on such a multi-use building except one sign displaying the name of the building and conforming to the sign requirements in that zone. The directory sign must be set back a minimum of 10 feet from the property line, limited in height to eight feet from ground level, limited in area to 12 square feet for lots less than 20,000 square feet and limited in area to 25 square feet for lots of 20,000 square feet or more.
- f. Canopies and awnings must have a minimum clearance of eight feet above the public right-of-way.
- g. Entrance and exit signs. One double-faced or single-faced or freestanding sign shall be permitted at each entrance or exit driveway for the purpose of directing motorists safely into and out of the property. Said signs shall not exceed four square feet in area nor extend more than three feet above ground level. Such signs must have reflective surface or low-voltage interior illumination; exterior illumination shall not be permitted. The content of each sign shall consist only of directional arrows and/or the word "In" or "Enter" or "Exit", with the sole addition of a one-word name or other identification. Said signs shall be located within the property line.
- h. Restaurants and food establishments located in the B1 Zone may be permitted one outside menu sign. This sign may be double-faced and shall be a chalkboard-type sign, maximum of three feet high and 1 1/2 feet wide. The following limitations apply:
[Added 8-24-2011 by Ord. No. 16-2011]
 1. The sign shall be removed each evening 1/2 hour before dusk.
 2. There shall be no illumination of any type within the sign or directed to the sign.
 3. The sign cannot impede sidewalk pedestrian traffic and must comply with ADA regulations.
 4. The sign cannot be displayed anywhere other than in front of the business.
 5. No pricing of menu items is permitted on the sign.
 6. The sign shall be for the express purpose of informing the public of menu items or food items for sale at businesses where food items are the main use and where food is prepared on site. No advertisement, political or social statements shall be permitted as a condition precedent for the placement of a sign as contemplated by this subsection.

7. A hold harmless agreement shall be executed by the sign owner, establishment placing the sign, and the establishment whose name is posted to the Borough of Ramsey in the event of any accidents, falls or injuries of any kind incurred by the placement of the sign.
8. A permit shall be obtained for each sign through the Zoning Department.

34-7.7. Industrial park and laboratory and office building zones.

[Ord. No. 1159; Ord. No. 2-2005 § 1]

Only the following signs shall be permitted in the Industrial Park and Laboratory and Office Building Zones (IPLO Zones):

- a. Industrial park and laboratory and office building uses shall be permitted one facade sign and/or one ground sign per building, limited to one square foot of sign area per one foot of frontage of the building on which the sign is displayed, with a maximum surface display area of 40 square feet; ground sign is limited to four feet in height with a maximum area of 12 square feet, and set back at least 15 feet from the property line.
- b. In addition, an industrial park and a laboratory and office building shall be permitted one ground sign for each major entrance on a different street, limited in area to 25 square feet each, limited in height to four feet from ground level and set back at least 15 feet from the property line.

**BOROUGH OF RAMSEY
ORDINANCE NO. 11-2024**

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 34 OF THE CODE OF THE
BOROUGH OF RAMSEY, BERGEN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY AND MORE
SPECIFICALLY SECTION 34-7 THEREOF ENTITLED SIGNS**

BE IT ORDAINED by the Governing Body of the Borough of Ramsey, Bergen County, New Jersey that Chapter 34 of the Code of the Borough and more specifically Section 34-7 thereof entitled Signs be amended and supplemented as follows:

SECTION 1. 34-7 SIGNS.

34-7.3 General regulations.

- d. Signs placed on or hung inside the window glass of any building shall be limited to 20% of the area of the glass, but not exceed 10 square feet in total, and shall not be illuminated internally without Design Review Board approval.
- e. All signs shall remain in a fixed position; revolving or moving signs are prohibited except for traditional symbols such as barberpoles. Flashing signs, accents, raceways or those lit by intermittent or varying intensity are prohibited. Signs painted or composed of fluorescent or phosphorescent or similar material are prohibited. Also prohibited are signs, accents and raceways made of exposed gas-filled tubing and/or LED type illumination.

34-7.8 Enforcement.

This chapter may be enforced by the Borough of Ramsey Police Department, Zoning Officer, Construction Code Official or such other employee or department of the Borough as designated in writing by the Borough Administrator.

34-7.9 Violations and penalties.

Any person, corporation, tenant, landlord and/or entity violating or neglecting to comply with any provision of this chapter shall be subject to, upon conviction thereof in the municipal court, a fine not exceeding \$1,000.00. Each and every week such violation or non-compliance exists shall constitute a separate offense, and additional fines shall be imposed.

SECTION 2. Repealer.

All Ordinances or parts of Ordinance inconsistent or in conflict with this Ordinance are hereby repealed as to said inconsistencies and conflicts.

SECTION 3. Severability.

If the provisions of any section, part of any section, or clause or phrase of this Ordinance is for any reason held to be invalid or unconstitutional, said decision shall not affect the remaining provisions of this Ordinance. The Governing Body of the Borough of Ramsey

declares that it would have passed the Ordinance and each section and subsection thereof, irrespective of the fact that any one or more of the subsections, sentences, clauses or phrases may be declared unconstitutional or invalid

SECTION 4. Effective Date.

This Ordinance shall take effect immediately upon passage and publication as required by law.

Introduced: July 24, 2024

Passed: August 28, 2024

Meredith Bendian, Clerk

Deirdre Dillon, Mayor



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APPLICANT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

By signing this form, I acknowledge that I have read **Ordinance 34-7. Signs** attached to the application. I understand that it is my responsibility to read and comply with the Ordinance.

Applicant Name (type or print)

Applicant Signature

Date

Revised 08/2025

*Email application and pdf of plans to Mary Ann Lupo mlupo@ramseynj.com

SIGN/FAÇADE SPECIFICATION

Date Filed _____

Applicant Name: _____ Zone _____ Block _____ Lot _____

Contact Name: _____ Business Name: _____

Home Address: _____ Business Address: _____

Home/Cell#: _____ Business Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____ Former Tenant: _____

Sign Company: _____ Contact Name: _____

Address: _____ Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

SIGN TYPE #1 (Circle one)

Pylon Ground Façade Awning

Store/Business Frontage: _____ Sq. Ft. _____

Size of sign: W _____ L _____ Sq.Ft. _____

Illumination: Yes _____ No _____

Type and Hours: _____

Construction

Material: _____

Colors: _____

Proposed changes to the building façade: _____

SIGN TYPE #2 (Circle one)

Pylon Ground Façade Awning

Store/Business Frontage: _____ Sq. Ft. _____

Size of sign: W _____ L _____ Sq.Ft. _____

Illumination: Yes _____ No _____

Type and Hours: _____

Construction

Material: _____

Colors: _____

For **EXTERIOR BUILDING/FAÇADE RENOVATION** attach drawing/rendering and explanation.

Applicant's Signature _____ Print Name _____

Zoning checked by: _____ Date: _____

Approve: _____ Referral for Variance: _____ Other: _____

Chairperson, Design Review Board

Revised 08/2025