

JMZO ORDINANCE No. 2022-03

NEWTOWN TOWNSHIP ORDINANCE NO.

WRIGHTSTOWN TOWNSHIP ORDINANCE NO. 353

UPPER MAKEFIELD ORDINANCE NO.

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF NEWTOWN, THE TOWNSHIP OF UPPER MAKEFIELD AND THE TOWNSHIP OF WRIGHTSTOWN, BUCKS COUNTY, COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, TO AMEND PROVISIONS OF THE JOINT MUNICIPAL ZONING ORDINANCE RELATED TO SIGNS TO ADD DEFINITION OF OFF PREMISES ADVERTISING SIGN AND REGULATE THOSE SIGNS; REPEALING ALL INCONSISTENT ORDINANCES OR PARTS THEREOF; PROVIDING A SEVERABILITY CLAUSE; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the Townships of Newtown, Upper Makefield and Wrightstown have enacted the Newtown Area Municipal Zoning Ordinance, as amended (“JMZO”); and

WHEREAS, the Townships seek to regulate signs within the Jointure to ensure their appropriateness for their respective uses, in keeping with the appearance of the affected property and surrounding environment;

WHEREAS, the Townships seek to enact sign provisions that are protective of and promote the public health, safety and general welfare; and

WHEREAS, the Townships seek to encourage sign design that upholds the visual environment and aesthetic quality that the Jointure seeks to promote and conform to the architectural context of the surrounding buildings, thus preserving the right of citizens to enjoy the Townships’ scenic features and viewsheds; and

WHEREAS, the Townships seek to ensure that signs are adequate, but not excessive, for their intended purpose; and

WHEREAS, the Townships seek to prohibit signs in such numbers, sizes, designs, illumination, and locations as may create a hazard to pedestrians and motorists; and

WHEREAS, the Townships seek to regulate the time, place and manner of signs by placing reasonable limits on size, total number, separation from other signs, height, safety and other similar aspects of signs in order to minimize possible adverse impacts on nearby public and private property, including roadways.

NOW THEREFORE, it is **ORDAINED** by the Boards of Supervisors of Newtown, Upper Makefield and Wrightstown Townships, and it is **ENACTED** and **ORDAINED** by authority of same as follows:

Section 1: The Newtown Area Municipal Zoning Ordinance Article XI, “Signs” is deleted and replaced with the following:

§ 1101 Types of Signs – Definitions.

- A. Agricultural Off-Premises Sign.** An outdoor sign whose message directs attention to a farm or other agricultural use, product or event that is not sold, produced, manufactured, furnished or conducted on the premises upon which the sign is located.
- B. Electronic Message Center (EMC).** A sign, or portion thereof, that displays animated images, moving video images, graphics, or scrolling messages, electronic images, static images, static graphics or static pictures with or without textual information. EMCs are capable of change or alteration by electronic means on a fixed display screen composed of a series of lights including

light emitting diodes (LED's), OLEDs LCDs, DLPs, plasma, fiber optics, light bulbs or other illumination devices within the area where the message is displayed. EMCs include computer programmable, microprocessor controlled electronic or digital displays EMCs include signs that utilize technology not listed in this definition and shall include similar technology which may be developed in the future, or the use of which may become widespread in the future.

- C. Facia Sign. A sign attached to, placed upon, or hung from any covered structure projecting from and supported by a building and which extends beyond the façade of the building, such as a canopy, an awning, etc.
- D. Freestanding Sign. A sign permanently supported by upright or uprights which are permanently anchored into the ground whose message directs attention to a specific business, product, service, event or activity, or other commercial or noncommercial activity, or contains a non-commercial message about something that is sold, produced, manufactured, furnished, or conducted on the premises upon which the sign is located. A freestanding sign may have no more than two display sides.
- E. Off Premises Sign. An outdoor sign whose message directs attention to a specific business, product, service, event or activity, or other commercial or noncommercial activity, or contains a non-commercial message about something that is not sold, produced, manufactured, furnished, or conducted on the premises upon which the sign is located. Also referred to as a third-party sign, billboard, or outdoor advertising sign.
- F. Official Traffic and Highway Sign. Official highway route number signs, street name signs, directional signs, and other traffic signs erected and maintained on public highways and roads in the interest of public safety or for the regulation of traffic.
- G. Portable Sign. Any sign, including vehicular signs, not permanently attached to the ground or a building.
- H. Roof sign. A sign on or above the roof or the eaves of a building.
- I. Tourist Oriented Directional Signing ("TODS") Sign. A sign meeting the requirements of §1.7 of the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation ("PennDOT") Traffic Engineering & Operations Manual – Tourist Oriented Directional Signing (TODS) Policy and approved there under by PennDOT. A TODS Sign shall be located within the right-of-way of a street and provide the name and directional guidance to an attraction that the traveling public would have a reasonable interest in.
- J. Wall Sign. A sign mounted parallel to the face of a structure and no projecting above the eaves of the structure nor more than 12 inches from the plane or façade of the structure.
- K. Window Sign. A sign mounted or painted on a window or inside a structure such that it can be seen through the window.

§1104 Applicability

Section 1104 A shall be amended by adding a subsection 15 as follows:

- 15. Governmental signs and directory signs for service organizations and churches that are located on a lot or property other than the lot or property owned by the governmental entity, organization or church.

Section 1104.B shall be amended by deleting subsection 14.

Section 1104.C(1)(e)(2) shall be deleted and replaced with the following:

(2) Agricultural Off-Premises Temporary Sign

- (a) No more than four Agricultural Off-Premises Signs (permanent or temporary) may be permitted at any one time to identify a farm or agricultural use and/or any products for sale at said farm or use.
- (b) The total area of any such sign shall not exceed 4 ½ square feet, and the maximum height shall not exceed five feet.
- (c) Such sign shall be placed not more than two miles from the farm or other agricultural use identified by the sign.
- (d) No such sign shall be painted or placed on a utility pole or any natural feature such as a tree or rock. All such signs must be individually and independently supported and shall not be artificially illuminated.
- (e) All applications for any such temporary sign permit shall be accompanied by a document signed by each owner of property on which such sign would be placed, stating that the property owner has given permission to the applicant to place the sign on the property and stating the place of the sign for which such permission is granted.
- (f) All such signs shall be removed within 10 days after the sales of the product advertised by the sign ceases for the season.

§1106 Permanent Sign Requirements.

Section 1106 shall be amended by deleting and replacing subsection A.7 as follows:

- 7. Agricultural Off-Premises Signs may be permitted if the following conditions are met:
 - (a) No more than 4 Agricultural Off-Premises Signs (permanent or temporary) may be permitted at any one time to identify a farm or agricultural use and/or any products for sale at said farm or use.
 - (b) The total area of any such sign shall not exceed 4 ½ square feet, and the maximum height shall not exceed five feet.
 - (c) Such sign shall not be placed more than two miles from the farm or agricultural use identified by the sign.
 - (d) No such sign shall be painted or placed on a utility pole or any natural feature such as a tree or rock. All such signs must be individually and independently supported and shall not be artificially illuminated.
 - (e) All such signs shall require sign permits. All applications for an Agricultural Off-Premises permanent sign permit shall be accompanied by a document signed by each owner of property on which such sign would be placed, stating that the property owner has given permission to the applicant to place the sign on the property and stating that the place of the sign for which such permission is granted.

(f) All Agricultural Off-Premises signs which identify only the name of the farm or other agricultural use and directional information shall be permitted to remain in place until the farm/use ceased to be used for agricultural purposes. All Agricultural Off-Premises signs which identify specific products shall be removed within 10 days of the date on which sales of the advertised product cease.

Section 1106 shall be amended by deleting and replacing subsection M as follows:

M. Off Premises Signs.

1. Locations Permitted.
 - A. Off Premises signs are permitted in the following locations:

Convenience Commercial and in Wrightstown Township on Parcel 53-015-005-002 by conditional use. The minimum lot size shall be 1 acre.
2. Sign Size: An Off Premises sign shall not exceed 100 square feet in size.
3. Height and Location of Sign.
 - A. The lowest edge of an Off Premises sign shall be no more than four (4) feet above the finished grade.
 - B. Off premises signs shall have a maximum height of 16 feet.
4. Spacing: Off-premises signs within the Convenience Commercial District shall be:
 - A. Set back from the ultimate right of way a distance equal to the height of the Off Premises sign or 15 feet, whichever is greater.
 - B. Located no closer than 25 feet from any property line
 - C. Located no closer than 50 feet from any building, structure, or Freestanding Sign located on the same property.
 - D. Located no closer than 1,500 ft. from another Off Premises sign on either side of the road measured linearly.
 - E. Located no closer than 500 feet from any intersection, or interchange (on/off-ramp).
 - F. Located no closer than 1,000 feet from any property line abutting a public park, playground, religious institution, cemetery, school, or residential district.
 - G. Not attached to the external wall or otherwise affixed to any part of any building and shall not extend over any public property or right-of-way.
 - H. Not located on sewer rights-of-way, or water, electric, or petroleum pipelines.
 - I. Not located on a bridge.
5. Spacing: Off Premises signs in Wrightstown Township on parcel 53-015-005-002 shall be:
 - A. Located no closer than 25 feet from any property line.
 - B. Located no closer than 50 feet from any building, structure, or freestanding sign locate on the same property.
 - C. Not attached to the external wall or otherwise affixed to any part of any building.
 - D. Not located on sewer rights of way, or water, electric, or petroleum pipelines.

- E. Not located on a bridge.
- 6. Number of Signs per Lot: There shall be no more than one Off Premises sign per three (3) acres. Vertically or horizontally stacked signs shall not be permitted.
- 7. Content: Off Premises signs shall not display any message or graphic of an obscene or pornographic nature as determined by the municipality. Off Premises signs may only display a non-sequenced message.
- 8. Double-Sided Off-Premises Signs are not permitted.
- 9. Message Sequencing: Message sequencing is prohibited.
- 10. Construction and Maintenance.
 - A. All plans for Off Premises signs shall be certified by a licensed engineer registered in Pennsylvania.
 - B. All Off Premises signs shall be constructed in accordance with industry-wide standards established by the Outdoor Advertising Association of America and the Institute of Outdoor Advertising, or their successor organizations. All Off Premises signs shall be structurally sound and maintained in good condition and in compliance with the Pennsylvania Uniform Construction Code.
 - C. The rear face of a single-face, Off Premises sign shall be painted and maintained with a single neutral color as approved by municipality
 - D. Every three years, the owner of the Off Premises sign shall have a structural inspection made of the Off Premises sign by a licensed engineer registered in Pennsylvania and shall provide to the municipality a certificate certifying that the Off Premises sign is structurally sound.
- 11. Identification of Sign Owner: All Off Premises signs shall be identified on the structure with the name, address, and phone number of the owner of such sign.
- 12. Landscaping.
 - A. Landscaping shall be provided at the base of all Off Premises signs. Trees and shrubbery, including evergreen and flowering trees, of sufficient size and quantity shall be used to achieve the purpose of this Section.
 - B. Trees greater than four (4) inches in diameter removed for construction of the sign shall be replaced on-site at a ratio of one (1) replacement tree for each removed tree using native species no less than three (3) inches in diameter.
- 13. Additional Regulations. All Off Premises signs shall comply with the applicable municipality's Lighting Ordinance and with any and all applicable zoning regulations of the Joint Municipal Zoning Ordinance for Newtown Township, Upper Makefield Township and Wrightstown Township, and any and all municipal, state and/or federal regulations. In the event any other applicable regulation is in conflict with the provisions of this Section, the stricter regulation shall apply.
- 14. Application/Plan Requirements. Plans submitted for Off Premises advertising signs shall show the following:
 - A. The location of the proposed sign on the lot with the required sign setbacks from the property line and ultimate right-of-way.
 - B. The location and species of existing trees.

- C. The distance to the nearest existing Off Premises advertising sign.
 - D. The distance to the nearest right-of-way, property line, building, structure, on-premises sign, Off Premises sign, intersection, interchange, safety rest area, bridge, residential district, or institutional use, sewer rights-of-way, and water, electric or petroleum pipelines.
 - E. Site plan containing all of the applicable requirements set forth in the Joint Municipal Zoning Ordinance for Newtown Township, Upper Makefield Township and Wrightstown Township, as amended.
 - F. Certification under the seal by a licensed engineer that the Off Premises sign, as proposed, is designed in accordance with all federal, state, and local laws, codes, and professional standards.
15. Safety. In applying for conditional use relief, the applicant bears the burden of proof to establish that the proposed Off Premises sign will not create a public health or safety hazard in the proposed location.

Section 2. Severability.

If any provision of this Ordinance is declared by a Court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid or unconstitutional, such determination shall have no effect on the remaining provisions of this Ordinance.

Section 3. Effective Date.

This Ordinance shall go into effect immediately upon all three municipalities enacting it.

JMZO ORDINANCE No. 2026-

NEWTOWN TOWNSHIP ORDINANCE NO.

WRIGHTSTOWN TOWNSHIP ORDINANCE NO.

UPPER MAKEFIELD ORDINANCE NO.

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF NEWTOWN, THE TOWNSHIP OF UPPER MAKEFIELD AND THE TOWNSHIP OF WRIGHTSTOWN, BUCKS COUNTY, COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, TO AMEND PROVISIONS OF THE JOINT MUNICIPAL ZONING ORDINANCE RELATED TO SIGNS TO ADD DEFINITION OF OFF PREMISES ADVERTISING SIGN AND REGULATE THOSE SIGNS; REPEALING ALL INCONSISTENT ORDINANCES OR PARTS THEREOF; PROVIDING A SEVERABILITY CLAUSE; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

SIGNATURE PAGE

ENACTED AND ORDAINED this 19th day of May, 2026.

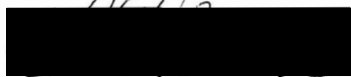
Attest:



Township Manager Micah Lewis

Date: 5/13/26

NEWTOWN TOWNSHIP

By: 
Chair Edward Merriman

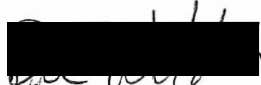
Attest:



Township Manager Gregg Schuster

Date: 5/20/26

UPPER MAKEFIELD TOWNSHIP

By: 
Chair Ben Weldon

Attest:

Township Manager

Date: _____

WRIGHTSTOWN TOWNSHIP

By: _____
Chair

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ENACTED AND ORDAINED this 19th day of May, 2026.

Attest:

NEWTOWN TOWNSHIP

Township Manager

By: _____
Chair

Date: _____

Attest:

UPPER MAKEFIELD TOWNSHIP

Township Manager

By: _____
Chair

Date: _____

Attest:

WRIGHTSTOWN TOWNSHIP

Township Manager Stacy Crandell

By: _____
Chair Chester S. Pogonowski

Date: 5/11/26