

## ZONING

### *153 Attachment 3*

#### **Borough of Darby**

#### **Appendix C Sign Design Guidelines**

**Sign Design Guidelines:** The following design guidelines should be consulted prior to developing signs for any project.

1. Use a brief message — The fewer the words, the more effective the sign. A sign with a brief, succinct message is simpler and faster to read, looks cleaner, and is more attractive.
2. Avoid hard-to-read, overly intricate, faddish, and bizarre typefaces — These typefaces are difficult to read and reduce the sign's ability to communicate. Faddish and bizarre typefaces may look good today, but soon go out of style. The image conveyed may quickly become that of a dated and unfashionable business.
3. Use significant contrast between the background and letter or symbol colors — If there is little contrast between the brightness or hue of the message of a sign and its background, it will be difficult to read.
4. Avoid too many different colors on a sign — Too many colors overwhelm the basic function of communication. The colors compete with content for the viewer's attention. Limited use of the accent colors can increase legibility, while large areas of competing colors tend to confuse and disturb.
5. Scale — Place signs consistent with the proportions of scale of building elements within the facade. Within a building facade, the sign may be placed in different areas. A particular sign may fit well on a plain wall area but would overpower the finer scale and proportion of the lower storefront. A sign which is appropriate near the building entry may look tiny and out of place above the ground level.
6. Facades — Place wall signs to establish facade rhythm, scale, and proportion where such elements are weak. In many buildings that have a monolithic or plain facade, signs can establish or continue appropriate design rhythm, scale, and proportion.
7. Shape — Avoid signs with strange shapes. Signs that are unnecessarily narrow or oddly shaped can restrict the legibility of the message. If an unusual shape is not symbolic, it is probably confusing.
8. Carefully consider the proportion of letter area to overall sign background area — If letters take up too much sign, they may be harder to read. Large letters are not necessarily more legible than smaller ones. A general rule is that letters should not appear to occupy more than 75% of the sign face area.

## DARBY CODE

9. Consider interior neon signs — Neon signs lend themselves to creative and exciting artistic expression. The use of neon signs inside a storefront can be used to attract attention and create a special ambiance.
10. Make signs smaller if they are oriented to pedestrians — The pedestrian-oriented sign is usually read from a distance of 15 feet to 20 feet; the vehicle-oriented sign is viewed from a much greater distance. The closer a sign's viewing distance, the smaller that sign need be.