



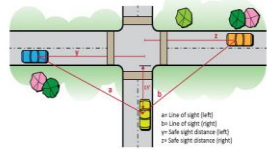
Charter Township of Chocolay









Zoning Ordinance


Sign Extract
Adopted April 14, 2008
With amendments through October 12, 2021

II. Definitions and Diagrams




Word or Phrase	Definition	
A		
Abandoned sign (#34-21-03)	A sign which for a period of at least ninety consecutive days no longer identifies or advertises a legal, ongoing business establishment, product, location, service, idea, or activity.	
Accessory sign (#34-21-03)	A sign which pertains to the principal use of the premises	
Art (#34-21-03)	Sculpture; original art murals; and painted, carved, and / or applied building accents and decorations (including those on awnings, canopies, or other extensions) that are not signs related by language or logo to the identification of any business.	
B		
Business center (#34-21-03)	Any group of two or more commercial establishments having not less than 100 feet of frontage on a major street and which are under one common ownership or management, have a common arrangement for the maintenance of the grounds and are connected by party walls, partitions, covered canopies, or other structural members to form one continuous structure; or share a common parking area.	
C		
Clear vision triangle (#34-21-03)	A triangular-shaped portion of land established at street intersections in which nothing is erected, placed, planted, or allowed to grow in such a manner as to limit or obstruct the sight distance of motorists entering or leaving the intersection.	

Word or Phrase	Definition	
Construction sign (#34-21-03)	A temporary ground or wall sign identifying a construction project and the persons, firms, or businesses that are directly involved in the project.	
D		
Directional sign (#34-21-03)	A sign giving directional information about goods, services and events of interest to the traveling public.	  
Dwelling, single-family (#34-18-02)	A building designed for use as one dwelling unit. A single-family dwelling unit must meet all requirements described in Section 6.3 of this ordinance.	
E		
Electronic message sign (#34-21-03)	An electrically activated, changeable, permanent sign whose variable message and / or graphic presentation capability can be electronically programmed from a remote location without physically or mechanically replacing the sign face.	
Exterior building entrance (#34-21-03)	Includes only those available for use by customers or patrons and does not include service or employee entrances.	









Word or Phrase	Definition	
F		
Flashing, animated, or moving sign (#34-21-03)	A sign that intermittently reflects lights from either an artificial source or from the sun or sign which has movement of any illumination such as intermittent, flashing, scintillating or varying intensity, or a sign that has any visible portion in motion, either constantly or at intervals, which motion may be caused by either artificial or natural sources.	
Freestanding sign (#34-21-03)	A permanently affixed sign not attached to any building and supported by uprights or braces or some object on the ground, using poles or other similar means to elevate the sign.	
G		
Governmental sign (#34-21-03)	A sign erected and maintained for governmental or utility functions, or as required by law, or other governmental regulation.	
Ground or monument sign (#34-21-03)	A low-profile ground sign incorporating the design and building material of the primary use of the property, where poles for the support of the sign face are not used.	
H		
Habitable space (#34-18-01)	Building space that involves human presence with direct view of the fronting streets or public or private open space. Habitable space does not include parking garages, storage facilities, warehouses, and display windows separated from retail activity.	






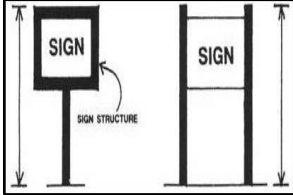


Word or Phrase	Definition	
I		
Inflatable sign (#34-21-03)	A sign that is either expanded to its full dimension or supported by gases contained within the sign or sign parts at a pressure greater than atmospheric pressure.	
M		
Maximum size of sign (#34-21-03)	The entire area within a single continuous perimeter enclosing the extreme limits of writing, representation, emblem, or any figure of similar character, together with any frame or other material or color forming an integral part of the display, excluding the necessary supports or uprights on which such sign is placed.	
N		
Nameplate (#34-21-03)	An accessory sign stating the name or street number of a person, firm, building, or institution of a certain permitted use.	
O		
Offsite sign (#34-21-03)	A sign which advertises a product, service, request (such as missing pet) or business that is not related to the property on which the sign is located. This does not include directional signs.	









Word or Phrase	Definition	
P		
Painted wall sign (#34-21-03)	A sign painted directly on any exterior non-glass building wall or door.	
Political sign (#34-21-03)	A sign relating to the election of a person to public office or relating to a political party or relating to a matter to be voted upon at an election called by a public body.	
Portable sign (#34-21-03)	A sign and sign structure which is designed to facilitate the movement of the sign from one zoning lot to another. The sign may or may not have wheels, changeable lettering and/or hitches for towing. A sign shall be portable only if such a sign is designed to facilitate its movement from one zoning lot to another.	
Projecting sign (#34-21-03)	A sign attached to a building or other structure and extending in whole or in part more than 12 inches beyond the surface of the portion of the building line or extending over public property (such as a sidewalk or trail).	
R		
Real estate development sign (#34-21-03)	A sign placed on the premises of a subdivision or other real estate development to indicate a proposed start or to inform relative to availability.	
Real estate sign (#34-21-03)	A sign placed upon a property advertising that particular property for sale, rent, or lease.	



Word or Phrase	Definition	
Rolling stock (#34-21-03)	Transit vehicles such as buses, vans, cars, railcars, locomotives, trolley cars and buses, and ferry boats, as well as vehicles used for support services.	
Roof sign (#34-21-03)	A sign mounted on, above, or over the main roof portion of a building or on the uppermost edge of a parapet wall of a building, and which is wholly or partially supported by such building and extends above the roof line.	
S		
Sandwich sign (#34-21-03)	A pair of connected boards designed to attract business or advertise a product or service.	
Sign (#34-21-03)	The use of any words, numerals, figures, devices, designs, or trademarks by which anything is made known such as to show an individual firm, profession, business, product, or message, and which are visible to the general public.	
Sign face	The area of a sign on which copy is to be placed and is intended to be visible to the public.	 
Sign height (#34-21-03)	The distance from the grade to the highest point of the sign, including the sign frame.	



Word or Phrase	Definition	
Suspended sign (#34-21-03)	A sign where incandescent light bulbs, banners or pennants, or other such features are hung or strung overhead and are not an integral physical part of the building or structure they are intended to serve.	
Swinging sign (#34-21-03)	A sign installed on an arm, mast, spar, or building overhang that is not rigidly attached to such arm, mast, spar, or building overhang.	
T		
Temporary sign (#34-21-03)	A sign with or without letters and numerals, such as window signs in business districts, of lightweight cardboard, cloth, plastic, or paper materials and intended to be displayed for public service announcements, special events, sales, and notices.	
V		
Vehicle business sign (#34-21-03)	A vehicle upon which a sign is painted or attached and is parked or placed upon the owner's premises primarily for advertising purposes.	 
W		
Wall sign (#34-21-03)	A sign erected or fastened to the wall of a building with the exposed face of the sign in a plane approximately parallel to the plane of such wall and not extending more than 12 inches beyond the surface of the portion of the building wall on which erected or fastened.	



VI. General Provisions

6.9 Home Occupations (#34-12-05 replaced #34-08-01)

(A) Regulations Applicable to All Home Occupations

4. Exterior Appearance
 - a. No outdoor storage or display of products, equipment, or merchandise is permitted other than of a type and quantity characteristically found at a single-family residence.
 - b. To protect the residential character of neighborhoods, there shall be no evidence of the conduct of a home occupation when viewed from the street right-of-way or from an adjacent lot, and no change in exterior appearance of the dwelling or accessory building that houses a home occupation. This prohibition does not include signs as defined in Section 18.2 (K). (#34-21-03)

XIV. Nonconforming Uses and Structures

14.2 Regulations Pertaining to Lawful Nonconforming Uses and Structures

All lawful nonconforming uses and structures shall be subject to the following regulations:

- (B) Without first securing the approval of the Zoning Board of Appeals, a lawful nonconforming sign: (#34-21-03)
 1. Shall not be changed to another type of sign which is not in compliance with this ordinance.
 2. Shall not have any changes made in the words or symbols used or the message displayed on the sign unless the sign is designed for periodic change of message.
 3. Shall not be structurally altered so as to prolong the life of the sign or to change the shape, size, type, or design of the sign.
 4. Shall not have its face or faces changed unless the sign is brought into conformity with the requirements of this ordinance.
 5. Shall not be reestablished after the activity, business, or usage to which it relates has been discontinued for a continuous period of 90 days or longer, and when it is apparent that it is the intent of the owner is to discontinue.
 6. Shall not be reestablished after damage or destruction if the estimated expense of repair exceeds 50 percent of the appraised replacement cost of a new conforming sign constructed with comparable materials.



XVIII. Signs and Fences

18.1 Applicability and Purpose (#34-21-03)

A) Applicability

- 1) These regulations apply to signs that are visible from the public right of way, public facilities, trails open to the public, and navigable waterways.
- 2) The sign regulations within Section XVIII shall govern and control the erection, placement, alteration, enlargement, movement, operation, and maintenance of all signs by permitted uses within all districts.
- 3) Nothing herein shall be deemed a waiver of the provisions of any other ordinance or regulation applicable to signs.
- 4) This Section shall be construed in such a manner consistent with, rather than in conflict with, any regulations or restrictions imposed by any federal, state, county or other governmental body to the fullest extent possible.
- 5) To the extent that any applicable regulations or restrictions imposed by this Ordinance conflicts with any applicable regulations or restrictions imposed by any other governmental body, those applicable regulations and restrictions imposed by another governmental body shall supersede any conflicting portions of this Ordinance.
- 6) No sign shall be erected or maintained in violation of any state or federal law or regulation.
- 7) Additional sign provisions apply for the US-41 / M-28 Access Management Overlay District as found in Section 5.3 of this Ordinance.

B) The purpose of these regulations is to:

- 1) Regulate and control the installation, location, alteration, size, type, and maintenance of signs visible to the public within Chocolay Township that enable the public to locate goods, services, and facilities with minimum difficulty and confusion.
- 2) Improve traffic safety by avoiding sign distractions and the canceling effect of excessive signage.
- 3) Establish a climate that is attractive to business.
- 4) Preserve the scenic and natural character of the Township.
- 5) Provide opportunities for expression of constitutionally protected free speech and dissemination of information.
- 6) Protect and promote the health, safety and general welfare of the Township, its businesses, and residents.



18.2 General Exceptions

The following signs do not require a permit:

- A) Governmental signs including notices, or markers placed by the Township, Marquette County, state, or federal agencies.
- B) Signs not exceeding one square foot in area that contain only the property address, post box numbers, names of occupants or premises, or other identification of premises.
- C) Signs that contain multiple property address information for properties located on a private driveway.
These signs cannot exceed 32 square feet in area and cannot be more than 10 feet in height.
- D) On-site real estate signs meeting the following criteria:
 - 1) The sign shall not exceed 32 square feet in area or 10 feet in height.
 - 2) Such signs shall be allowed on a temporary basis for a period not to exceed two years. However, the Zoning Administrator shall have the authority to grant authorizations to continue such a sign for a reasonable period beyond the two years, providing that a number of lots, buildings, or units remain vacant.
 - 3) The Zoning Administrator shall have the authority to require a sign be kept in good repair for any sign that exceeds the two year period.
- E) Seasonal and holiday decorations.
- F) Community event signs which advertise public entertainment or events of public interest that occur either in the Township or in surrounding communities.
 - 1) These signs cannot exceed 6 square feet in area or 6 feet in height.
 - 2) These signs must be removed within 10 days of the event.
- G) On-site directional signs visible from the road that do not exceed 6 square feet or exceed 6 feet in height.
- H) Art and signs not related by language or logo to the identification of any business.
- I) Political signs:
 - 1) These signs cannot exceed six square feet in area or exceed 6 feet in height.
 - 2) These signs must be removed within 10 days of the election for which they were placed.
 - 3) These signs cannot be placed on public properties under the zoning jurisdiction and authority of Chocolay Township.
- J) Signs advertising residential sales (such as garage and yard sales).



- K) Home occupation sign:
 - 1) One home occupation sign for a home occupation authorized by the Township.
 - 2) The sign shall not exceed six square feet in area or exceed six feet in height.
 - 3) A home occupation sign must not be lighted.
- L) Vehicle signs located on the rolling stock of licensed motor vehicles or trailers which are primarily and actively used for business purposes and / or transportation.

18.3 Nonconforming Signs

- A) Any existing sign on the effective date of the amendment to the ordinance from which this ordinance is derived, shall be in compliance with Section 14.2(B) of this ordinance.

18.4 Prohibited Signs

The following signs shall not be permitted in any zoning district:

- A) Any sign which simulates or imitates in size, color, lettering, or design any traffic sign or signal, or uses words, phrases, symbols, or character in such a manner as to interfere with, mislead, or confuse traffic.
- B) Any sign that obstructs or interferes with the effectiveness of any traffic light, sign, or signal authorized by Chocolay Township, Marquette County, State, or Federal agencies.
- C) Any sign which obstructs the clear-vision triangle as defined by the road authority at any road intersection.
- D) Any sign which prevents the driver of a motor vehicle from having a clear and unobstructed view of approaching, intersecting, merging traffic or pedestrians.
- E) Any sign which extends into or is placed in the public right-of-way or on public property without authorization from Chocolay Township, Marquette County, State, or Federal agencies.
- F) Signs which emit any odor, noise, smoke, or visible matter other than light.
- G) Projecting sign under eight feet from the bottom of the sign that interferes with pedestrian, non-motorized or motorized traffic.
- H) Signs that hinder entrance or exit in the event of an emergency from any door, window, or fire escape.
- I) Any suspended signs.
- J) Any sign containing phosphorescence, luminescence, mirrors, strobe lights, search lights, other high intensity light fixtures
- K) Flashing, animated, or moving signs.



- L) Signs visible from the public road which are affixed to trees or other natural vegetation, utility poles, fences, fence posts, benches, perimeter walls, outbuildings, or any other buildings or structures except as otherwise permitted in this Ordinance.

This does not include conventional “no trespassing”, “no hunting”, “beware of animal”, other signs warning of danger, or other legal postings in accordance with state law.

- M) Banners, portable signs, balloon signs, or other gas-filled figures except as provided elsewhere in this Ordinance.
- N) Off-site signs within the zoning jurisdiction and authority of Chocolay Township that do not advertise on-site construction, on-site home improvement, on-site landscaping, or temporary on-site events (such as a yard sale).

18.5 General Provisions

The following conditions shall apply to all signs erected or located in any use district:

- A) Except for signs erected by the Township or Marquette County, State, or Federal agencies, no sign shall be located in, project into, or overhang a public right-of-way or dedicated public easement without authorization from the appropriate agency.
- B) When possible, signs must be down-shielded to minimize light encroachment onto surrounding properties.
- C) Temporary signs are allowed in any district. Temporary signs that will be displayed longer than five calendar days will require an approved permit from the Zoning Administrator.

18.6 Agriculture / Forestry (AF) District

- A) One freestanding sign identifying a subdivision or multiple housing development, nursing home, convalescent center, or adult foster care congregate facility. Such signs shall not exceed 32 square feet, or exceed a height of six feet.
- B) One temporary sign for a new residential development, advertising the sale or lease of lots, buildings, or units within the development.
 - 1) The sign shall not exceed 32 square feet in area nor six feet in height.
 - 2) Such signs shall be allowed on a temporary basis for a period not to exceed two years. However, the Zoning Administrator shall have authority to grant authorizations to continue such a sign for a reasonable period beyond the two years, providing that a substantial number of lots, buildings, or units remain vacant.
 - 3) The Zoning Administrator shall have the authority to require a sign to be kept in good repair for any sign that exceeds the two year period.
- C) Nonresidential uses permitted in the district such as hospitals, churches, and schools:



- 1) Shall be allowed one sign, not exceeding 32 square feet in area nor six feet in height.
 - 2) In addition, such uses shall be allowed one nonilluminated sign not to exceed 50 square feet and mounted flat against the wall of the principal building.
- D) Signs complying with the Michigan Right to Farm Act (Act 93 of 1981 with revisions) are permitted.
- E) Roadside stand or a farm offering customer harvesting or sale of harvests signs shall be located within a one and one-half (1.5) mile radius of the advertised roadside stand or farm.

18.7 Residential (R-1), High-Density Residential (R-2), Multi-Family Residential (MFR), Planned Unit Development (PUD), and Waterfront Residential (WFR) Districts

- A) One freestanding sign identifying a subdivision or multiple housing development, nursing home, convalescent center, or adult foster care congregate facility that does not exceed 32 square feet or exceed a height of six feet.
- B) One temporary sign for a new residential development, advertising the sale or lease of lots, buildings, or units within the development.
- 1) The sign shall not exceed 32 square feet in area nor six feet in height.
 - 2) Such signs shall be allowed on a temporary basis for a period not to exceed two years. However, the Zoning Administrator shall have authority to grant authorizations to continue such a sign for a reasonable period beyond the two years, providing that a substantial number of lots, buildings, or units remain vacant.
 - 3) The Zoning Administrator shall have the authority to require a sign to be kept in good repair for any sign that exceeds the two year period.
- C) Nonresidential uses permitted in the district such as hospitals, churches, and schools:
- 1) Shall be allowed one sign, not exceeding 32 square feet in area nor six feet in height.
 - 2) In addition, such uses shall be allowed one nonilluminated sign not to exceed 50 square feet and mounted flat against the wall of the principal building.

18.8 Commercial (C), Industrial (I), and Mixed Use Overlay Districts

- A) Ground signs:
- 1) Ground signs shall not be more than eight feet in height. Such signs may be multifaced but shall not exceed 60 square feet in surface display area per face.



- B) Freestanding signs:**
- 1) A business center shall be permitted one on-premises freestanding sign, which may be directly or indirectly illuminated. Such sign shall not exceed 30 feet in height. A maximum of 20 square feet per business unit in the center is permitted up to a sign maximum of 100 square feet.
 - 2) One on-premises freestanding sign, directly or indirectly illuminated, shall be permitted for each zoning lot, and the sign shall have a maximum area of 20 square feet and a maximum height of 30 feet.
 - 3) The aggregate size of both signs cannot exceed the maximum area of 20 square feet per business unit.
- C) Two on-premises signs may be permitted on a corner lot that has at least 200 feet of frontage on each of two thoroughfares, provided that only one sign is oriented toward each thoroughfare.**
- D) For each lot having a frontage of 300 feet or more, one additional free-standing sign shall be permitted provided that such signs are at least 200 feet apart.**
- E) Wall signs:**
- 1) Each use shall be permitted one wall sign on each building facade with road frontage.
 - 2) The sign shall be limited to an area equal to not more than 25 percent of the area of the wall of the establishment upon which the sign is placed.
- F) Electronic message signs may be utilized on any permitted ground sign, freestanding sign, or wall sign subject to the following:**
- 1) All electronic message signs shall have automatic dimming controls, either by photocell (hardwired) or software settings adjustable to ambient light.
 - 2) Blinking or flashing of the electronic display area is prohibited.
 - 3) Electronic message signs shall be equipped with a default mechanism that displays a static message or shuts the display area off if a malfunction occurs.
- G) Temporary signs are permitted to be mounted on the insides of glass storefront windows.**
- H) One sandwich sign or portable sign per store front subject to the following restrictions:**
- 1) No sandwich sign or portable sign shall be placed in a manner that would impair sight distance for the safe operation of a vehicle.
 - 2) The sandwich sign or portable sign must be placed directly on the ground, and may not be placed on a bench, chair, platform, vehicle, trailer or other device to raise the height of the sign.



- 3) The sandwich sign or portable sign must be associated with and in front of the establishment using the sign.
 - 4) Total sign face area for the sandwich sign cannot exceed 16 square feet per side.
 - 5) Total sign face area for the portable sign cannot exceed 32 square feet per side.
 - 6) The sandwich sign must be removed from the front of the store front when the business is closed.
- I) Automobile service stations shall be permitted one additional accessory sign per gasoline pump, affixed to each pump and not more than two square feet in area.

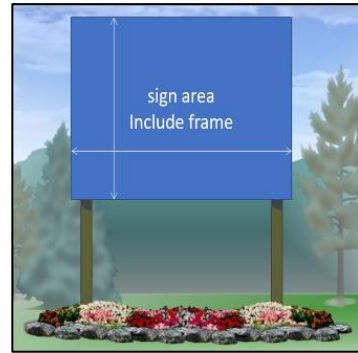
18.9 Sign Measurements

A) Sign Area

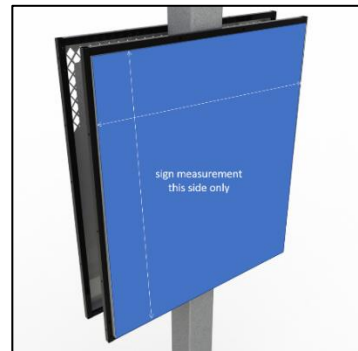
1. For a wall sign which is framed or outlined, the area shall include the entire portion within the frame or outline.
2. For a wall sign composed of individual letters, figures, or elements mounted on a wall or similar surface, the area shall be the area of the smallest geometric figure, or the sum of the combination of regular geometric figures, which form or approximate the perimeter of all sign elements in the display.



- For a ground or freestanding sign, the sign area shall include the frame, if any, but shall not include the pole or other structural support unless the pole or structural support is internally illuminated or otherwise designed to be a display device.

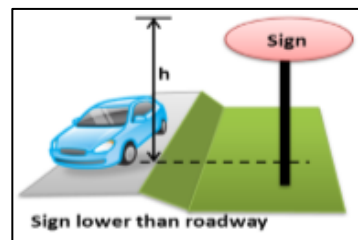
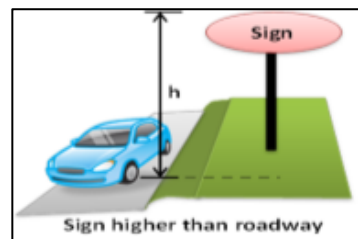
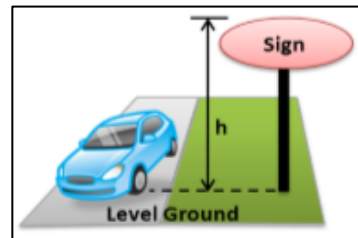


- When two identical sign faces are placed back to back so that both faces cannot be viewed from any point at the same time, and are part of the same sign structure, the sign area shall be computed as the measurement of one of the two faces. The area of all other multiple-sided signs shall be computed as fifty percent of the sum of the area of all faces of the sign.



B) Freestanding Sign Height

- Height is measured from the base of the sign or supportive structure at its point of attachment to the ground to the highest point of the sign.
- A freestanding sign on an earth mound or other base that has the effect of raising the grade shall be measured from the grade of the nearest paved road.
- Where a freestanding sign is mounted along a road that has a higher grade level as compared to the grade level directly below the freestanding sign, then height shall be measured from the road grade to the highest point of the sign.



C) Shapes

1. The area of a circle or sphere is calculated by multiplying the square of the radius (r) by 3.1416. Radius is the distance from the center to the outer edge.



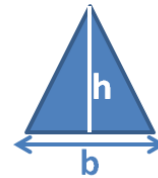
$$\text{Area} = 3.1416 * r^2$$

2. The area of a square, rectangle, or parallelogram (four-sided figures with two pair of parallel sides) is calculated by multiplying the length (L) by the width (W).



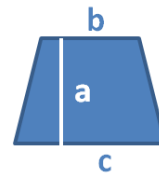
$$\text{Area} = L * W$$

3. The area of a triangle (three-sided figure) is calculated by multiplying one-half of the base (b) times the height (h).



$$\text{Area} = 1/2b * h$$

4. The area of a trapezoid (four-sided figure with only one pair of parallel sides) is calculated by multiplying the altitude (a) by the sum of its bases ($b+c$) and taking one-half of that product.



$$\text{Area} = 1/2 a(b+c)$$

18.10 Administration and Enforcement

- A) Except for exempted signs or other signs identified in Section 18 as not requiring a permit, it shall be unlawful for any person to erect, re-erect, alter, or relocate any sign unless a *Sign Permit* has been obtained from the Zoning Administrator. The Zoning Administrator will review the *Sign Permit* for conformance to zoning ordinance standards.
- B) All permitted signs and related supports shall be kept in compliance with the plans and specifications filed and approved for issuance of the *Sign Permit* and shall be kept and maintained in good repair, and in a functional, legible, and safe condition. Compliance review by the Zoning Administrator will be conducted.
- C) Should any sign be found improperly constructed, or not in accordance with the requirements of this ordinance, the owner shall be required to make the sign safe, secure, and otherwise in compliance with the requirements of this ordinance within 30 calendar days of notice from the Township.



- D) An abandoned and/or un-maintained sign shall be removed from a property within 15 calendar days of a notice given by the Zoning Administrator. In the case of non-compliance with the notice, the Township reserves the right to contract for the removal and cleanup of the sign and to assess the costs to the property.
- E) If the Township determines an existing sign is unsafe and an immediate hazard to health or safety, the sign shall be removed or repaired at the owner's expense within 48 hours of notification from the Township to the owner.
- F) These enforcement provisions are in addition to those authorized in Section 17.5 of this Ordinance

