



*Town of Oro Valley
Community Development and Public Works*

Date: July 22, 2016

Subject: Interpretation – “Pill Box” style wall signs (OV1601735)

REQUEST

A zoning interpretation request was submitted by Addisigns Inc. on behalf of a client who wishes to use a “Pill Box” sign. The aim is to discover how the use of a “Pill Box” sign is governed by the zoning code.

Attached is an illustration of a “Pill Box” which is a sign type that has been utilized in the region. Over the years, the regulation of Pill Box signs has been inconsistent in Oro Valley. The purpose of this interpretation is to ensure consistency until the zoning code is amended.

APPLICABLE ZONING REFERENCES

There are no specific zoning code references to a “Pill Box” sign.

Section 28.4 (Definitions and Sign Types) of the Zoning Code provides the following related definitions:

Cabinet Sign

“A three (3) dimensional structure which includes a frame, borders and sign panel face and may include internal illumination upon which the sign logos are placed or etched, and is architecturally integrated with the building.”

Pan-Channel Letter

“A dimensional character fabricated to form a pan (i.e., a back and sides). The pan is formed in the shape of a character. The sides are strips of the same material fastened to the back. The open end of the pan is usually capped by a character cut from translucent acrylic, and is known as the face. Neon or low-voltage lights are then installed inside the pan to illuminate the face.”

Wall Signs

“...A wall sign shall consist of individual character letters (pan channel or reverse pan channel). Only individual logos may utilize cabinet sign type with translucent face”.

INTERPRETATION

Currently, the Zoning Code limits wall signs to individual characters and restricts cabinet style wall signs to trademarked logos only. The intent is to accomplish the following:

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1. Favor the aesthetic look of pan channel construction
2. Disallow use of cabinet style signs due to the generally undesirable appearance
3. Limit the size and scale of all wall signs to not dominate the building façade

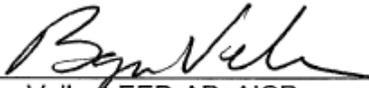
Though “Pill-box” style wall signs are not exclusively considered cabinet signs or pan channel letter signs, they are more closely related in design to the latter. They are constructed in a similar fashion, having both a back and sides (or pan) with a face covering the internal lighting. As such, “Pill-box” style are considered a permitted sign type as a pan channel wall-sign.

To meet the intent of the code, a size limit is necessary to ensure that “Pill-box” signs are appropriate in scale. In keeping with industry standard and existing “Pill Box” signs in Oro Valley, “Pill-box” signs shall not exceed thirty-five (35%) percent of the otherwise allowable area of the wall sign, as permitted in Section 28.5.B.14.c

Please note, Planning Staff will be pursuing a code amendment to the Zoning Code related to “Pill-box” style signs to formalize regulations.

APPEALS

Persons aggrieved by a Zoning Interpretation may file an appeal to the Board of Adjustment within twenty (20) days from the date it is published on the Town’s website, in accordance with Section 21.6.G of the Town of Oro Valley Zoning Code.



Bayer Vella, LEED-AP, AICP
Planning and Zoning Administrator

7/22/16

Date

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