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# **Route 66 Improvement Corridor Architectural Design Guidelines**

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*prepared for:*  
**The Township of Neptune**  
**Neptune, New Jersey**

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**Route 66 Improvement Corridor - Design Guidelines**

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## **Route 66 Improvement Corridor - Design Guidelines**

## I. Statement of Purpose

Design Guidelines, as outlined within this handbook, are to serve as a guide to commercial building property owners, business operators and developers in the implementation of either facade improvements, renovations or new construction. The Design Guidelines offer a wide range of building facade treatment design options and parameters which may be interpreted and adapted in the design process. The Design Guidelines also identify treatments which are considered inappropriate or unacceptable by Township Authorities.

All proposed improvements within the **Route 66 Improvement Corridor** are to be consistent with a community-wide and regional commercial corridor. The commercial corridor concept stems from the proximity of a major high volume vehicular roadway which engages and provides direct access to business destinations generally requiring large acreage or structures as part of their operation.

Where feasible, the corridor is tree lined and features landscaped parking area islands, barriers and median strips. Pedestrian amenities and features and carefully delineated and regulated access and egress traffic patterns allow for a safe interface.

The architectural designs within the improvement corridor, often referred to as ... “Big Box” or simply highway commercial buildings, should provide a “*sense of clarity and order*”, while allowing for necessary “*corporate identity, signage and individuality*”.

The Use Groups within the **Route 66 Improvement Corridor** are generally roadway commercial, automotive sales, fast food, supermarket, discount retail, home improvement, storage facility and office space.

The Design Guidelines are to be applicable to any property which *either fronts, is determined to be within an arterial or adjacent impact area, or has direct access from the Route 66 in Neptune Township east of the Garden State Parkway and west of the Asbury Park Circle*. All such properties are to fully comply with the intent of these Design Guidelines and will be subject to review and compliance by the Township of Neptune and its assigned professional reviewing representatives.

In addition to the Design Guidelines, all proposed improvements must also be in compliance with the Township of Neptune - Land Development Ordinance.

Commercial structures must fully comply with these Design Guidelines, however, Single-family, Multi-family and Townhouse Residential Building Types are **exempt**.

## **Route 66 Improvement Corridor - Design Guidelines**

## II. Executive Brief and Design Guidelines Summary

The Design Guidelines, which follow, are intended for the **Route 66 Improvement Corridor** in Neptune, New Jersey. Detailed Design Guideline narrative and examples are included in this handbook as to the specific architectural treatments. In addition to the expressed architectural treatments and facade design criteria, specific suggestions have been provided pertaining to signage, color and exterior lighting.

In brief, the Design Guidelines *encourage* the following:

1. architectural treatment to relate to human scale and introduce various pedestrian oriented elements, architectural details, canopies, and awnings; designs with publicly visible loading docks and service or delivery access doors, and long, linear, architecturally uninteresting strip mall type storefronts should be avoided;
2. roof lines, parapets and building heights should be architecturally articulated, diverse in design form and varied in height with adequately scaled and proportioned architectural cornices and applied treatments which complement the building's design;
3. use of materials should be consistent with sustainable design objectives utilizing brick masonry, architecturally faced block, stucco, systemized cement finish wall panel or fascia construction, factory painted metal frame doors, windows and storefronts, standing seam sloped metal roofing or heavy weight fiberglass/asphalt composite shingle roofing assemblies; new designs featuring residential type horizontal vinyl siding, painted or stained T-111 vertical grooved plywood panels are not acceptable; fiberglass and other synthetic or composite materials will be considered;
4. building wall colors to be consistent with material selected; dominant colors to be in the earth tone range of brown, clay, gray, tan, black, green and sand; trim, roof and other facings are to be factory painted or finished; Selection of secondary and tertiary building colors may be based upon corporate logo or standards; generally, metal roof and trim colors are to be dark green, jaded copper, aqua-marine blue, brown/mocha or stone gray, but colors are not limited within this improvement corridor;
5. architectural style should incorporate classic architectural geometry; features may include colonnades, gables, hip roofs, towers, dormers, archways, and covered entries, atriums, repetitive window openings, arched and corbelled parapets, cornices, transoms and other architectural shapes, elements, details and forms similar to or as illustrated in the examples provided in this handbook.

## **Route 66 Improvement Corridor - Design Guidelines**

### **III. Architectural Design Guidelines**

All proposed improvements within the **Route 66 Improvement Corridor** are to be consistent with the Design Guidelines as described herein.

Again, the designs for both new construction and renovation projects within the district should provide a *“sense of clarity and order”*, while allowing for necessary *“corporate identity, signage and individuality”*.

The corridor is neither a turn-of-the century Main Street, nor an entertainment or historic district...but a fast developing commercial corridor which serves as the northern gateway to Neptune and several adjoining communities and is setting a new standard for commercial development quality.

The following Design Guidelines are intended to assist in the architectural rehabilitation, renovation and new construction design process through simple suggestions and language.

**A. Form, Configuration and Positioning on-site**

The three-dimensional form of a building and its roof shapes should:

1. be inspired and replicate classic and traditional forms and shapes;

timeless architecture preferred;

2. assume urban massing and configurations in keeping with the building size but incorporate elements respectful to human scale;
3. not be proposed in a simplistic linear commercial strip mall design or form unless architecturally articulated and embellished in a manner so as to enhance the pedestrian interface; and...

In summary, and in keeping with land development ordinances, commercial structures should be sited so as to create visual relationships with sidewalks, street alignments and neighboring businesses; create visual anchors at entries, provide interesting architectural perspectives featuring appropriate facade treatments and maximize the pedestrian relationship to the sidewalk. Provision for parking in the rear are not required but encouraged where possible.

## **B. Height**

Building heights should generally not exceed 2-stories except for office or medical facility structures, or where otherwise permitted by zoning regulation.

Variations to zoning or provisions to increased stories or height will be subject to review by the Township and approval by the local Planning Board.

Featured corner tower elements, tower time clocks and varied height parapet walls at the building facade are welcomed features and are exempt from restriction where such height does not exceed 50 feet from nearest top of curb height.

The articulation and provision of varied roof heights through the diversity of building volume and form is encouraged.

## **C. Roofs Types**

Hip roofs and flat roofs with arched or architecturally detailed parapets are preferred. The use of gable roofs, with an 8:12 pitch or better, in combination with the use of atriums, dormers, skylights or other similar roof or special feature elements is acceptable. .

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The use of standing seam metal or heavy weight asphalt shingle roof construction is preferred and encouraged at hip, gambrel, gabled and other pitched roofs.

The application of conventional strip mall mansard facade treatments utilizing residential type seal tab asphalt roof shingles is generally not acceptable. Mansard roof applications may be acceptable if designed proportionate to building scale rather than being

undersized or oversized, and designed so as to be an integral component to the structure rather than to appear as a pasted or attached canopy. The use of standing seam metal roofs in mansard or other pitched roof configurations is preferred.

## **D. Doors and Windows**

Doors and windows should reflect the purpose of the building or functions performed at the place of business and may be either double or single in configuration; be constructed of wood or anodized or brushed aluminum; hardware is to be in keeping with the style of the door and the architecture of the building.

Display windows should match or complement the doors and other trim. The use of transoms, arched window and creative window compositions are encouraged.

Second or other upper floor levels may utilize either fixed, casement, awning or other window types which complement the overall architecture of the building.

Use of double-hung windows, used in historic or residential applications, are generally not acceptable for commercial buildings and will be considered inappropriate within this business corridor.

The integration of pedestrian oriented entries or interior public spaces visible from the street or primary parking area provides both clarity of entry and an added sense of security for those outside of the building. Such visual interface is strongly encouraged.

## **E. Materials**

For purposes of consideration, a wide range of acceptable facade treatment materials has been identified as follows:

1. reinforced poured concrete, brick masonry or finished, split faced or glazed block masonry;
2. stucco, EFIS, or other simulated stucco/stone finishes or cultured or simulated stone panels or units, and fiber cement products which simulate brick masonry, stone and stucco;
3. cut marble, granite or natural stone veneer detailing or facing;
4. glazed curtain wall, composite aluminum panel, Alucobond or other similar pre-manufactured fascia construction materials;
5. factory painted or finished metal frame doors, windows and storefronts,

6. standing seam sloped metal roofing or heavy weight fiberglass/asphalt composite shingle roofing;
7. steel, concrete or masonry piers and pre-formed fiberglass or synthetically cast columns.

Proposed designs should not use oversized exterior plastic wall panels, long spans of residential type horizontal vinyl siding, painted or stained T-111 vertical grooved plywood panels, or unfinished aluminum storefront frame assemblies. However, the limited and select application of such materials may be reviewed on an individual basis for further consideration.

## **F. Color**

The choice of color is one of the most important decisions generated by a building or business owner. For purposes of this section, the selection of color applies to exterior facade finishes, awnings, doors, trim, architectural ornament, window and door frames,

Although sometimes either a personal or business decision, most color decisions are driven by corporate identity or logo.

Selection of secondary and tertiary building color may also be based upon corporate logo identity or corporate standards.

All such decisions are respected by these Design Guidelines, however, use of corporate colors are still subject to Township of Neptune review and approval.

As a general guide, and whenever possible, building color should be consistent with and reflect the nature of the material selected. Simply stated, natural materials, such as stone, should appear natural or stone-like. Stone should either be gray, brown, sandstone or limestone in color...not lime green, hot pink, lemon yellow nor electric purple.

Dominant standing seam metal roofing and trim colors are to be in the dark green, jaded copper, aqua-marine blue, brown/mocha or stone gray range, but various solid colors will be considered during the review process when use of such colors is determined to be necessary and appropriate.

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*Exterior siding, fascia, roofing, window and window trim* colors which are *specifically discouraged and viewed as unacceptable* include any combination of camouflage, dot, or multi-colored striped patterns, and any color in the day-glow or glitter or reflective paint range or group. Specifically, manufactured exterior facing materials such as metal roofs and composite fascia panels have numerous color choices, but wherever possible, should be in the earth tone range of brown, clay, gray, tan, black, sand and dark green. White is usually not a preferred color but will be reviewed and considered by the Township and approval by the local Planning Board.



*Exterior trim, roof and other facings* are to be factory painted or finished in standard architectural colors available from the manufacturer.

Building facades must have all window and door frames of matching color.

The replacement of any single window or door frame must match all those existing or require that all others are made to match the replacement unit.

## **G. Architectural Styles, Ornamentation and Detail**

Architectural styles are to be classic in architectural geometry. Architecture should incorporate colonnades, gables, hip roofs, towers, dormers, archways, and covered entries, atriums, repetitive window openings, arched and corbelled parapets, cornices, transoms and other basic and timeless architectural shapes, elements, details and forms.

Post-modern designs are contemporary in appearance but combine use of modern materials with classic or neo-classical architectural designs, often in an artistic and playful manner and in the mix of colors, scale and glazing.

In all cases, architectural style, ornamentation and detailing solutions should:

1. be based upon traditional or classic architectural forms and geometry which feature colonnades, gables, hip roofs, towers, arches and archways;
2. incorporate repetitive window openings and patterns;
3. consider integration of defined covered entries or glazed atriums which front onto the avenue;
4. replicate and articulate classic architectural elements and ornament utilizing arched and corbelled parapets, masonry corner quoins, dormers and simple cornices and brackets;
5. visibly express structural elements including piers, posts, columns, changes in floor levels and changes in use where appropriate.

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The use of traditionally classic and timeless forms such as tower elements, hipped roofs, articulated parapets, cornices and other identified elements should be the basis for the design of proposed improvements.

Ornamentation and detailing is recommended, however, should be limited. The improvement corridor is not an extension of the historic district of Ocean Grove.

Simulated Victorian architecture, Turn-of-the-century Main Street designs, southwestern frontier, Medieval English cottage and other specific period, regional or other

international styles without precedence to the site or immediate corridor area is to be discouraged. Exemptions, however, may be considered in the cases where the building use is either a take out food business or restaurant. In such cases, further consideration will be given to the architectural design but is again subject to final review and approval by the Township of Neptune and its reviewing professionals.

In summary, designs are not limited to style, but each proposed improvement should either reflect and attain a style or be of a hybrid which architecturally blends in a manner not to appear overly busy and aesthetically garbled.

Architects and builder/developers should also become familiar with both existing or proposed structures within the **Route 66 Improvement Corridor** in order to design improvements appropriately. Pre-design workshops with Township Professionals and Consulting Architects may be helpful in this effort.

Refer to section **IV. Examples of Acceptable Architectural Treatments**, which provides examples of possible architectural treatments.

## **H. Signage**

Signs are one of the most prominent visual elements on the street and define the purpose of a building. Signs add interest and variety to the streetscape and building facade while enlivening the street scene. Signs may also detract from the architecture and negatively impact even the best designed storefront or building facade.

Proposed signs should be simple and clear. Graphic symbols and simple messages are most effective. Signs should harmonize with the building's design.

In brief, recommendations regarding signage focuses on *four fundamental guidelines*:

1. signs to be professionally fabricated and installed; hand painted plywood and use of large white plastic panels are not acceptable;
2. individually cut raised lettering may be illuminated either internally or externally; back lit box signs are only acceptable when designed as a corporate graphic or logo;
3. signs carved in wood shall be professionally painted or gilded projecting or suspended carved wood signs are acceptable;

Signs must be compliant with the local sign ordinance but must be placed anywhere on a building in an orderly manner and consistent with adjacent businesses.

Signage is best positioned when placed within given boundaries and in designated areas consistent with adjacent attached businesses, or in such manner so as to clearly identify the place of business but not as to overpower the scale of the structure.

Signage should not obscure the building's architectural details or features.

Signs should adhere to brevity and always relate to the premise on which they are positioned.

The application of paper signs, hand painted or drawn lettering, use of shoe polish and display of excessive vendor sales decals, stickers and more than six (6) temporary posters with an aggregate area larger than 10 square feet in dimension on glass doors and window storefronts is not acceptable. Facade designs should not encourage or propose to utilize glass windows and doors for such marketing purposes.

Portable signs on wheeled wagons or carts are not acceptable. Changeable lettering systems, utilizing individual letters, must be located within designated marquee areas.

Preferred and suggested signage color schemes and suggested lettering styles are provided in this handbook. To assist in the design of storefront and building graphics and signage, a listing of prohibited and generally acceptable signs has been provided for easy reference.

Exceptions may include automotive sales and supermarket type business uses where such signage is professionally prepared and applied.

Architects, sign makers and builder/developers should also become familiar with both existing or proposed structures within the **Route 66 Improvement Corridor** in order to design appropriate signage. Pre-design workshops with Township Professionals and Consulting Architects may be helpful in this effort.

Refer to section **V. Examples of Acceptable Signage Treatments**, which provides examples of possible signage and graphics.

## **I. Exterior Lighting**

Exterior mounted lighting may be gooseneck, bracket mounted, baffled, back lit sign lettering, neon tube and eyeball type surface mounted fixtures.

Finishes should complement the architectural color schemes selected. Dark green, brown, red, blue and white or black are generally preferred color choices.

Where lighting is related to signage, any of the above referenced fixture types and lighting techniques are acceptable. Individually cut raised lettering may be illuminated either internally or externally. Back lit box signs are acceptable when designed as a corporate graphic or logo. All signs are subject to final review and approval by the

Township of Neptune and its reviewing professionals.

Architects, lighting designers and builder/developers should also become familiar with both existing or proposed structures within the **Route 66 Improvement Corridor** in order to design appropriate lighting.

Pre-design workshops with Township Professionals and Consulting Architects may be helpful in this effort.

## **J. Other Related Concerns**

Items such as awnings, exterior merchandising displays, sidewalk dining, security fencing, sales banners, covered entries, trash disposal and pick-up enclosures are not usually considered as part of the architectural design but are integral to the planning review and final visual design. These issues are usually addressed through the Planning Board review process, together with parking, landscaping, drainage, barrier-free site accessibility and driveway curb cut and traffic access.

The following “*related concerns*” can undo a good effort in facade design. These items, or “*related concerns*” may change what is actually seen by the public. The overall building could even be perceived as a negative contributor to the immediate area and corridor.

The following segment of these Guidelines is intended to serve as an added checklist to assist in that process.

1. Awnings:

Awnings may be fabric type; manufactured of canvas, linen; or heavy vinyl. Awnings may be designed so as to be placed over a single display window or door, or may be designed so to extend over the length of an entire facade.

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Colors should complement the proposed building design or improvement and be consistent with the preferred colors listed in this handbook.

Stripes and solids are permitted; the application of lettering reflecting the name of the establishment is acceptable. The placement of trade names, beverages, products, or other corporate logos is subject to review.

All awnings must be at least 10 feet clear from sidewalk grade and not extend beyond 18 feet from the building face or as otherwise mandated by Building Construction Code.

2. Exterior Merchandising Displays:

All exterior display intentions and shopping cart returns areas *must* be included in the architectural design drawings and subject to review and approval by Township authorities.

Displays should not hamper the access or egress to the place of business.

Random stacking and disorderly placement of displays and merchandise, and shopping carriage returns... is not acceptable. All facade designs should take exterior display needs into consideration and be prepared to describe means and methods of any such proposed use or display.

Exceptions and variations may apply to seasonal, flower and plant and auto sales.

3.. Cafes/Sidewalk Dining:

Sidewalk dining usually consist of tables, chairs, umbrellas, serving carts and trash receptacles. Selection of chairs and tables should be a combination of 36 to 48 inches diameter square/round tables with matching style chairs, benches, or integral benches and chairs. Tables and chairs must be of the same style and color for any given business.

Lawn chairs, indoor dining furniture and mixtures of furnishings is discouraged.

Picnic tables are acceptable when maintained in good condition and repair and placed within delineated areas in a set and organized pattern, and in immediate adjacency to the place of business.

Uniformity in design is preferred in furnishings.

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Pedestrian passage must be maintained. A minimum of 42" is required. Placement of all dining furniture should be placed directly in front of and adjacent to the place of business.

If used, umbrellas must be of the same style and design and match. Umbrellas may be of either canvas or vinyl. Umbrella colors should complement the proposed building design or improvement. Color of umbrellas may match awnings, be a solid color or be segmented in alternating colors. Use of limited lettering reflecting the name of the establishment is acceptable, as are the placement of trade names, beverages or other corporate logos. As in the case of all facade treatments and related exterior concerns, all final graphics are subject to approval by Neptune Township authorities.

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4. Security Fencing:

Painted wood picket and other slat wood fencing is generally not acceptable.

Painted wrought iron or vinyl clad tube and rail type fencing is preferred.

Vinyl clad chain link fencing is an acceptable alternative.

Heights must be in compliance with local zoning restrictions.

Colors should be either dark green, black, gray, brown or white. Multi-colored and patterned colors and the use of bright non-earth tone colors is not permitted.

5. Flags and Banners:

Permanent flags and banners may be attached to masonry or framed exterior surfaces by angled pole, extended bracket or flush draping. Free-standing poles and flags or banners are not considered integral to the architecture or within the guidelines of this document.

Banners should not extend beyond 8 feet from the building face; banner heights and sizes may vary, but in all cases must comply with local zoning.

Temporary sale or event banners are permitted but should not be displayed for more than a three (30) day duration and not more than three (4) times per year. Exceptions may include, gas service stations, seasonal sales, and auto sales or rentals.

6. Covered Entries or Walkways:

Covered entries may be fabric or canvas type with lightweight aluminum tubular frame with anchored tie downs, but permanent structural covered entries and recessed entries are preferred.

The installation of covered entries should not be placed or constructed so as to impede flow of pedestrian movement nor create a safety concern through the creation of tripping hazards, unsafe structural projections or headroom clearance limitations.

7. Trash Disposal and Storage Enclosures:

Areas of designated trash disposal and pick-up should be remote from outdoor dining and pedestrian walkways and must be adequately shielded by appropriate screening, masonry walls, fencing, gates and landscape as required and subject to review and approval by Township of Neptune.

8. Window Air Conditioning Units:

Window mounted AC units are not permitted in new construction. Existing structures utilizing window AC units should position units away from street view to the fullest extent possible.

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**IV. Examples of Acceptable Architectural Treatments**

The purpose of this section is to provide a quick visual impression of the architectural character and specific treatments preferred and as suggested by the Guidelines.

**Route 66 Improvement Corridor - Design Guidelines**

**A. Building Envelope and Exterior Facades**



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## **Route 66 Improvement Corridor - Design Guidelines**

### **V. Examples of Acceptable Signage Applications**

The purpose of this section is to provide a quick visual reference and guide as to the selection of typeface lettering as suggested within this handbook. In addition, a listing of permitted and inappropriate signs and marketing elements is provided.

## **Route 66 Improvement Corridor - Design Guidelines**

### **A. Permitted Signage and Marketing Elements**

The following is a list of signage which is permitted within the **Route 66 Improvement Corridor**:

1. Any commercial sign fitting within the parameters as set forth by the suggested storefront or business sign in compliance with the locations, lettering style, signage combination, color or other criteria established by local zoning or as described herein.
2. Historic tablets, cornerstones, memorial plaques, and emblems which do not exceed 6 square feet in area and that are placed by government agencies, civic or religious organizations.
3. Flags or emblems of religious, educational, civic or governmental organizations displayed on buildings or grounds occupied by the organization; and the National, State or Local flag where displayed in accordance with the laws and guidelines promulgated by the Federal Government or other jurisdictional authority.
4. Signs indicating public transportation stops when approved or installed by public transit or municipal authorities.

5. Temporary and permanent traffic signs and signals installed by township, county, or state agencies for the purpose of directing or regulating the flow of traffic.
6. Kiosk or community information bulletin boards designed as permanent streetscape installations as part of the improvement area concept plan.
7. Directional signs identifying parking areas, loading zones, entrances, exits and similar conditions. The signs may include a business name but not exceed 10 square feet in area.
8. Warning, no trespassing or other safety signs not exceeding 4 square feet in area.
9. Signs which are an integral part of vending machines, gas pumps, or convenience store corporate logos.
10. Temporary posters promoting public functions, charitable events, or other fund raising events for a period of (30 days or less) when posted inside of commercial establishments but not exceeding a 10% total coverage of the total storefront glazed area.
11. Temporary political posters in accordance with local requirements.

## **Route 66 Improvement Corridor - Design Guidelines**

### **B. Inappropriate Signage and Marketing Elements**

The following is a list of signage or other marketing elements which are unacceptable within the **Route 66 Improvement Corridor**:

1. Any new signs not in compliance with the design criteria as set forth in the design guidelines or local zoning regulations.
2. Any sign which in the judgment of the Neptune Township Police Department or in the opinion of the Zoning Officer constitute a traffic hazard.
3. Signs using red, green or amber lamping placed within 100 feet of any traffic control or signal device.
4. Signs which utilize mirrors or other reflective surfaces which may disorient or cause a safety concern or the use of aluminum foil wraps.
5. Signs revolving or signs using blinking, flashing, vibrating, flickering, tracer or sequential lighting techniques.
6. Signs or billboards erected on or positioned on roofs.
7. Signs using words such as “STOP”, “DANGER”, “LOOK”, or other similar

terms which are placed in a manner or position which may misinform, misguide or potentially confuse the public in the judgment of the Neptune Township Police Department or in the opinion of the Zoning Officer.

8. Signs which attempt to imitate or otherwise cause confusion with existing signs erected by any government authority

9. Signs advertising a product or service not sold or provided on the premises the sign is located or directing the public to other locations.

10. Permanent Inflatable figures or oversized balloon type ads or promotions. *Temporary sales events may permit such ads for periods not to exceed 30 days and not more than four (4) times a year.*

11. Marking or painting of public sidewalks in an effort to create signs or marketing or directional information to attract business traffic.

12. Shoe polish, window painting, use of hand lettered paper or cardboard signs taped onto windows or doors. *Supermarket type posters and auto dealer window lettering may be utilized where signs are professionally lettered and displayed in an orderly manner.*

13. Permanent portable type signs on wheeled wagons or carts. *Changeable lettering systems, utilizing individual letters, may be located within designated marquee areas, or as otherwise approved by Township during review of proposed application.*