

**CITY OF PORT WASHINGTON, WISCONSIN  
ORDINANCE NO. 2021-21**

**AMENDING OR CREATING ZONING ORDINANCES REGULATING  
CHANGEABLE MESSAGE SIGNS, ELECTRONIC MESSAGE CENTER SIGNS  
AND MONUMENT SIGNS**

The Common Council of the City of Port Washington, Wisconsin, do ordain as follows:

**Section 1.** Subsections 20.29.030 8, 16 and 30 of the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Port Washington, defining certain words used in the City's sign ordinance, are hereby amended to read as follows:

8. Changeable Message Sign - A reader board on which copy changes manually.
16. Electronic Message Center (EMC) - A sign that utilizes computer-generated messages or other electronic means of changing copy which may include symbols, figures, or other images displayed on a signboard. These signs include displays using incandescent lamps; light-emitting diodes (LEDs) which glow when a voltage is applied; liquid crystal displays (LCDs) comprised of liquids contained between filtering layers of glass or plastic and affected by electric current to reflect or transmit light from an external source; or a flipper matrix using an electromechanical dot matrix display technology.
30. Monument Sign - A sign that rests on, is supported by, or is attached to a base, which base is at least eighteen (18) inches above the immediate grade.

**Section 2.** Subsection 20.29.080 C. 3. of the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Port Washington, relating to types of signs permitted in certain zoning districts subject to certain restrictions, is amended to read as follows:

3. Changeable copy signs (manual only). Changeable copy signs are permitted in any business, central city mixed, or public and utility zoning district as follows:

**Section 3.** Subsection 20.29.080 E. of the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Port Washington, entitled "**Special Criteria Applicable to Signs in CCM Central City Mixed and B-4 Central Business Zoning Districts**" is hereby re-lettered as Subsection 20.29.080 F. and, as re-lettered, subsections 20.29.080 F. 2. a. and b. thereof are amended to read as follows:

2. B-4 Central Business Zoning District:
  - a. A monument sign may not exceed five (5) feet in height.
  - b. A monument sign may not exceed forty (40) square feet in area.

**Section 4.** A new Subsection 20.29.080 E. of the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Port Washington, entitled "**Electronic Message Centers**" is hereby created to read as follows:

E. **Electronic Message Centers.** Electronic Message Centers (EMCs) are permitted in the B-1 Office, B-2 Local Service Center Business, B-3 General Business, PUL Public and Utility Lands, and RS-4 Single Family Detached Residence zoning districts, provided that any such zoning district is not adjacent to the B-4 Central Business District, and subject to the following restrictions. As used in this subsection, "adjacent" shall mean lying near or close to or not widely separated, though the zoning districts may not touch:

1. Electronic Message Centers shall be part of a permanent monument sign only, and the size and area of the EMC shall be included in the calculation of the maximum allowable monument sign size and area. The maximum height of a monument sign which includes an EMC shall be six (6) feet, and the maximum area of a monument sign which includes an EMC shall be 48 square feet. No more than one (1) EMC shall be allowed per parcel of land.
2. The maximum area of an Electronic Message Center signboard in a permitted zoning district shall be twelve (12) square feet per face, except in the RS-4 Single Family Detached Residence zoning district, in which the maximum area of an EMC signboard shall be ten (10) square feet per face. No EMC sign in any permitted zoning district shall have more than two (2) faces.
3. Electronic Message Centers shall only display static messages or images. Messages or images displayed shall not contain moving, or the appearance of moving, text, images, transitions, animation, flashing or other distracting features.
4. Electronic Message Center frames or images shall not contain or display a white or predominantly white background.
5. No image or message shall change more than once every ten (10) seconds.
6. Electronic Message Centers shall be equipped with a sensor or similar device that is programmed to automatically determine the ambient light level and adjust or dim the EMC signboard light level to not exceed a maximum brightness of 0.3 foot-candles above ambient light conditions during both daylight and night-time hours when measured from a distance of 150 or more feet from the EMC sign.
7. For outdoor Electronic Message Centers in districts zoned for any type of residential use, a light trespass limit of 0.1 foot-candles above ambient light conditions shall be enforced when measured at the boundaries of the parcel on which the EMC sign is located.
8. The Electronic Message Center shall be programmed in such a manner that the display face(s) will turn dark and emit no light in case of a malfunction.

9. Any Electronic Message Center signboard integrated in a monument sign with a non-EMC-style sign face shall be positioned below such sign face.

**Section 5.** This Ordinance shall become effective upon passage and publication.

Passed and approved this 21st day of December, 2021.

ATTEST:

  
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Susan L. Westerbeke, City Clerk

  
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Theodore Neitzke IV, Mayor