

Draft for 9/15/25 Planning Commission meeting

3.26 Signs

D. General Sign Standards

26(a). Electronic message display signs. Electronic message display (EMD) signs are permitted on municipal and school properties in the Village Mixed Use District for community/public service content only, subject to conditional use review by the Development Review Board, and shall meet the following standards:

1. An EMD sign shall not have any distracting appearance of motion, including, but not limited to, flashing, blinking, shimmering, pulsating as well as animation, streaming, or video displays.
2. An EMD sign shall have characters of sufficient size to be easily discerned and must not constitute a safety hazard by being a distraction to drivers. All characters will be a minimum of 6”.
3. An EMD sign display shall consist only of alphabetic and numeric characters and related symbols on a plain background, and shall not include any graphic, pictorial, video or photographic images.
4. The message display area may have a maximum of three lines of characters, including all letters, numbers, spaces, or other symbols.
5. The area occupied by the message on an electronic message display may comprise no more than 50 percent of the maximum total allowable sign area.
6. A maximum of two colors shall be used for an electronic message or at the discretion of the Development Review Board.
7. Messages must have a display time of no less than two (2) minutes unless modified by the Development Review Board.
8. When the display of an electronic message changes, it must change as rapidly as is technologically practicable with no phasing, rolling, scrolling, flashing, or blending.
9. An EMD sign shall include ambient light sensors that automatically adjust the brightness level of its display to natural ambient conditions and shall not exceed 250 nits during nighttime or 5,000 nits at any time unless modified by the Development Review Board.
10. An EMD sign shall automatically shut off between the hours of 11 p.m. – 6 a.m.
11. An EMD sign shall contain a default mechanism that freezes the sign in one position, or shuts off the device entirely, if a malfunction occurs.

§ 3.26 (D)(26)(b) – Design & Mounting Standards for Electronic Message Display (EMD) Signs

1. Monument mounting required

All EMDs **shall be incorporated only into a ground-mounted monument sign**. Pole-mounted, roof-mounted, or box-cabinet-only EMDs are prohibited.

2. Architectural integration

The EMD display **must be designed as an integral element of the monument sign face** and shall be fully enclosed by a permanent frame or cabinet constructed of materials that match or

complement the principal building or adjacent historic structures (e.g., painted or stained wood, natural stone, brick, or architectural metal).

3. **Minimum border width**

The decorative frame or cabinet **shall extend not less than six (6) inches beyond the EMD display area on all sides** to ensure a finished, recessed appearance.

4. **Digital-to-static area ratio**

The illuminated EMD panel **shall comprise no more than fifty percent (50 %)** of the total sign face area permitted for the monument sign.

5. **Height and base treatment**

Monument signs containing an EMD **shall not exceed ten (10) feet in overall height** and must include a solid base at least twelve (12) inches in height constructed of the same material as the frame. The base may incorporate low-height landscaping for additional screening.

6. **Color & finish**

Frames and bases **shall use non-reflective, low gloss finishes** in colors drawn from the approved village palette (earth tones and traditional New England hues). Bright or metallic finishes are prohibited.

7. **Compatibility review**

During Conditional Use Review the Development Review Board shall determine that the proposed monument sign, including the EMD panel, frame, base, and any landscaping, **is compatible with the scale, materials, and architectural character of surrounding properties and streetscape**. The Board may require material samples or renderings to make this determination.