

Ordinance No.: 19-09  
Zoning Text Amendment No.: 19-09  
Concerning: Prohibited Roof Signs –  
Exemptions  
Draft No. & Date: 4 – 1/30/2020  
Introduced: November 26, 2019  
Public Hearing: January 14, 2020  
Adopted: February 4, 2020  
Effective: February 4, 2020

**COUNTY COUNCIL FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND  
SITTING AS THE DISTRICT COUNCIL FOR THAT PORTION OF  
THE MARYLAND-WASHINGTON REGIONAL DISTRICT WITHIN  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND**

---

Lead Sponsor: Councilmember Friedson

---

**AN AMENDMENT** to the Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance to:

- Allow roof signs in red policy areas under certain circumstances; and
- Generally amend the provisions for roof signs.

By amending the following sections of the Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 59 of the Montgomery County Code:

Division 6.7.           “Signs”  
Section 6.7.4.        “Prohibited Signs”  
Section 6.7.10.      “Urban Renewal Areas”

**EXPLANATION:** ***Boldface** indicates a Heading or a defined term.*  
*Underlining indicates text that is added to existing law by the original text amendment.*  
*[Single boldface brackets] indicate text that is deleted from existing law by original text amendment.*  
*Double underlining indicates text that is added to the text amendment by amendment.*  
*[[Double boldface brackets]] indicate text that is deleted from the text amendment by amendment.*  
*\* \* \* indicates existing law unaffected by the text amendment.*

## OPINION

Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA) 19-09, Prohibited Roof Signs – Exemptions, lead sponsor Councilmember Friedson, was introduced on November 26, 2019. ZTA 19-09 would allow roof signs in Red Policy Areas as identified in the most recent Subdivision Staging Policy.

Currently, roof signs are prohibited, except in urban renewal areas (Silver Spring Triangle, Lyttonsville, Scotland, Emory Grove, and Rockville). Some buildings in high-density areas are constructed with glass walls. Signs that block windows are impractical. On buildings with all glass walls, the Zoning Ordinance effectively prohibits high wall signs and prohibits roof signs. For all practical purposes, the allowance for roof signs before ZTA 19-09 only affects part of the Silver Spring CBD. ZTA 19-09 would allow rooftop signs in White Flint, Wheaton, Twinbrook, Silver Spring CBD, Shady Grove, Grosvenor, Glenmont, Forest Glen, Friendship Heights, and the Bethesda CBD.

In its report to the Council, the Montgomery County Planning Board recommended approval as introduced. The Planning Board thought there were sufficient safeguards in the Sign Review Board approval process to prevent incompatible signs. That process requires a public hearing.

The Council's public hearing was conducted on January 14, 2020. All testimony supported the approval of ZTA 19-09.

The Council referred the text amendment to the Planning, Housing, and Economic Development Committee for review and recommendation.

The Planning, Housing, and Economic Development Committee held a worksession on January 23, 2020. The Committee recommended approving ZTA 19-09 as introduced, with a technical correction.

The Council agreed with the recommendation of the Committee.

For these reasons, and because to approve this amendment will assist in the coordinated, comprehensive, adjusted, and systematic development of the Maryland-Washington Regional District located in Montgomery County, Zoning Text Amendment No. 19-09 will be approved as introduced, with a technical correction.

## ORDINANCE

*The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland, sitting as the District Council for that portion of the Maryland-Washington Regional District in Montgomery County, Maryland, approves the following ordinance:*

1           **Sec. 1. Division 6.7. Signs**

2       \*   \*   \*

3       **Section 6.7.4. Prohibited Signs**

4       A sign not authorized in Division 6.7 is prohibited. Except for a sign that is not  
5       visible beyond the property lines of the property where the sign is located, the  
6       following signs are specifically prohibited and must not be erected or retained. The  
7       Sign Review Board must not grant a variance permitting their erection, installation,  
8       or maintenance. A prohibited sign must be removed within 24 hours after  
9       notification by DPS that the sign must be removed.

10      \*   \*   \*

11      B.    Roof Sign

12           Unless approved as part of a sign concept plan for an optional method  
13           development project located in an urban renewal area or in a red policy area  
14           as identified by the most recent Subdivision Staging Policy, a sign painted  
15           on the roof of a building[,] or supported by poles, uprights<sub>2</sub> or braces  
16           extending from or attached to the roof of a building, or projected above the  
17           roof of a building, is prohibited. A wall sign is not a roof sign, and for the  
18           purposes of Division 6.7 a roof surface constructed at an angle of within 15  
19           degrees of vertical is regarded as wall space. Screening that encloses  
20           equipment such as a heating, ventilating and air conditioning unit, an  
21           elevator shaft, and stairs located on a roof also are considered wall space.

22      \*   \*   \*

23      **Section 6.7.10. Urban Renewal or Red Policy Areas**

24      A.    A permanent sign located in an approved urban renewal or red policy area as  
25           part of an optional method development project need not satisfy the Design  
26           Elements and Limitations of Division 6.7 where the Sign Review Board

27 approves the sign as part of a sign concept plan; however, any roof sign in a  
28 red policy area must not exceed the height limits of the property's zone.

29 B. Before approving any sign concept plan under Section 6.7.10, the Sign  
30 Review Board must hold a public hearing on the sign concept plan in the  
31 urban renewal or red policy area[,] after giving 30 ~~[[days]]~~ days' notice and  
32 verifying that the applicant has satisfied all applicable variance notice  
33 requirements.

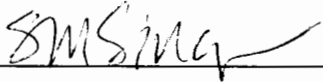
34 \* \* \*

35 **Sec. 2. Effective date.** This ordinance becomes effective immediately upon  
36 the Council's adoption.

37

38 This is a correct copy of Council action.

39

40  \_\_\_\_\_

41 Selena Mendy Singleton, Esq.  
42 Clerk of the Council