

## ORDINANCE NO. 1192

### AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GIG HARBOR, WASHINGTON, RELATING TO SIGNS, ADDING REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO PORTAL SIGNS FOR MUNICIPAL DOCKS OR PIERS AND ADDING A NEW DEFINITION FOR PORTAL SIGN; AMENDING GHMC SECTIONS 17.80.030 AND 17.80.100 OF THE GIG HARBOR MUNICIPAL CODE.

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WHEREAS, the City owns and operates Jerisich Dock which is heavily used both by City residents and by visitors to the City; and

WHEREAS, the current signage for the dock from both the shore and water sides of the dock is insufficient to adequately inform the public of its location; and

WHEREAS, the City desires to allow reasonable signage for this municipal facility; and

WHEREAS, the Gig Harbor Historic Waterfront Association is proposing major improvements to Jerisich Park which is located immediately shoreward from the Jerisich Dock; and

WHEREAS, the installation of a Portal Sign which spans the entrance to the dock would serve to identify Jerisich Dock from both the shore and water sides of the dock; Now, Therefore,

THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GIG HARBOR, WASHINGTON,  
ORDAINS AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Section 17.80.030 of the Gig Harbor Municipal Code is hereby amended, to read as follows:

#### **17.80.030 Definitions.**

The following definitions shall apply for the purpose of this code:

1. "Abandoned sign" means a sign that no longer correctly identifies, exhorts or advertises any person, business, lessor, owner, product or activity conducted or available on the premises where such sign is located and which has not been changed or removed within 180 days of a tenancy change; or a sign which is damaged, in disrepair, or vandalized and not repaired within 60 days of the damaging event.

2. "Advertising copy" includes any sign graphics, background colors, logos or trademarks which identify or promote the sign user or any product or service; or

which provides information about the sign user, the building or the products or services available.

3. "Awning" means a shelter projecting from and supported by a structure or building wall and constructed of a rigid supporting framework and a flexible or nonrigid covering.

4. "Awning sign" means a sign applied to or incorporated into the covering of an awning.

5. "Building" means a roofed and walled structure built for permanent use.

6. "Bulletin board" means a board or small sign on which notices, community events or hours of operation are posted.

7. "Cabinet sign" means an internally illuminated sign in which a removable sign face (usually with translucent sign graphics) is enclosed on all edges by a metal cabinet. A cabinet sign may be multi-sided.

8. "Director" means the city's planning director, or the director's designee, who shall be authorized to administer and enforce all of the provisions of the sign code.

9. District, Sign.

a. "Area 1" includes those properties situated in PCD-C and PCD-BP districts and all B-2 districts except the B-2 district in the vicinity of the Burnham Drive/Harborview Drive junction; and all C-1 districts except C-1 districts in the height restriction area.

b. "Area 2" includes all properties not defined under Area 1.

10. "Double-faced sign" means a sign that has advertising copy on opposite sides of a single display surface or sign structure.

11. "Electric sign" means a sign or sign structure in which electrical wiring, connections and/or fixtures are used as part of the sign proper.

12. "Electronic sign" means a sign designed to allow changes in the sign graphics electronically.

13. "Event" means a current or planned activity or occurrence which involves a gathering of people or solicits their participation. In this context, an event does not include the commemoration of a holiday.

14. "Facade" means the entire building front or street wall face of a building extending from the grade of the building to the top of the parapet or eaves and the entire width of the building elevation.

15. "Festoon" means a strip or string of balloons which includes clusters or strings of balloons connected to a fixed object or vehicle on at least one end of the festoon.

16. "Flashing sign" means a sign or a portion thereof which changes light intensity or switches on and off in a constant, random or irregular pattern or contains motion or the optical illusion of motion by use of electrical energy. Changing message centers shall not be considered flashing signs.

17. "Freestanding sign" means a sign supported by a pole(s) or mounted on a sign base and is not connected to or supported by any other structure.

18. Freeway Interchange Area. The freeway interchange of State Route 16 (SR-16) is illustrated on Exhibit 1, attached to Ordinance No. 788 and available in

the city clerk's office, and defines the area where signage may be oriented to SR-16, subject to the provisions of GHMC 17.80.060(K).

19. "Frontage" means the linear distance of property along a street or highway.

20. "Gas station price sign" means a sign advertising the price of motor fuel and contains no other business advertising.

21. "Holiday" includes all state holidays as defined under RCW 1.16.050, except Sunday.

22. "Incidental sign" means a nonelectric informational warning or service sign (noncommercial in nature) four square feet or less in area that is intended primarily for the convenience and safety of the public while on the premises. Included are signs such as 'no parking', 'private property', 'customer parking' and other on-site warning signs.

23. "Internal illumination" means a source of lighting concealed entirely within a sign which makes sign graphics visible by transmitting light through a translucent or semi-translucent material.

24. "Institutional sign" means a sign to identify educational, civic and religious institutions.

25. "Landscaping" means the planned use of trees, shrubs and other living plant materials used in conjunction with a sign and other decorative features.

26. "Logo" means an identifying emblem or insignia containing sign graphics, symbols or colors typically used for identification and/or advertisement.

27. "Logo shield" means a logo contained within an area no greater than four square feet, incorporated into a larger sign face or designed as an individual sign or a component of a sign containing individually mounted sign graphics.

28. "Lot identification sign" means a sign to identify the occupants of the premises.

29. "Mansard roof" means a sloped roof or roof-like facade architecturally able to be treated as a building wall.

30. "Marquee" means a permanent structure attached to, supported by and projecting from a building and providing protection from the weather elements, but does not include a projecting roof. For purposes of this chapter, a freestanding permanent roof-like structure providing protection from the elements, such as a service station gas pump island, will also be considered a marquee. This also includes canopies.

31. "Neighborhood identification sign" means a sign to identify a particular residential area or development four acres or greater in size.

32. "Neon lighting" means illuminated tubing forming sign graphics or which is otherwise used as an exposed lighting source. For the purpose of this chapter the term "neon" will be considered a generic term for this type of lighting regardless of the type of fluorescing gas or material contained within the tubing.

33. "Neon sign" means neon lighting used to draw attention to a business or building in any manner, including (but not limited to) neon sign graphics, logos or outlining of a building's architectural features.

34. "Off-premises directional sign" means a permanently installed sign which provides directional information to a parcel located in the Gig Harbor area, but not located on the same parcel as the sign in question.

35. "Off-premises sign" means a sign relating through its message and content to a commercial or noncommercial activity, use, product or service not available or conducted on the premises on which the sign is erected.

36. "On-premises directional sign" means a permanent sign that directs the public to a specific place such as an entrance, exit, or parking or service area, or a particular aspect of a business establishment.

37. "On-premises sign" means a sign which carries only advertisements and messages strictly applicable to a lawful use of the premises on which it is located.

38. "Pan-channel" means a sign graphic that is constructed of a three-sided metal channel, usually having a light source contained within the channel. The open side may face inward, resulting in silhouette lighting, or it may face outward to allow full illumination. The open side of the channel may be enclosed with a translucent material.

39. "Portable sign" means a freestanding sign made of any material, which by its design is readily movable and is not permanently affixed to the ground.

39.5 "Portal sign" means a sign that spans the entrance onto a dock or pier owned and operated by the City of Gig Harbor.

40. "Projecting sign" means a sign which is attached to and projects more than one foot from a structure, building face or marquee.

41. "Public event" means an event held no more than once a year by an individual sponsor, business or agency, and which is on a site normally associated with activities or uses other than the event, and which does not represent or promote a use, product or service normally associated with the site of the event. Special sales or promotions of products or services commonly available on the site, or which are readily available at a permanent outlet or site within the city, do not represent public events.

42. "Readerboard" means a sign face designed to hold readily changeable sign graphics allowing frequent changes of copy.

43. "Returns" are the exposed sides of pan-channel sign graphics and cabinet signs.

44. "Revolving sign" means a sign which rotates or turns in a circular pattern.

45. "Roof sign" means a sign supported by and erected on and above a roof, parapet or fascia of a building or structure (shall not include a sign erected on the face of a mansard roof).

46. "Sandwich board/sidewalk sign" means a portable sign consisting of two sign faces hinged at the top and separated at the bottom to make it self-standing.

47. "Seasonal decorations" means temporary decorations for holidays which do not fall under the definition of a sign and which are installed no sooner than 30 days before a holiday and removed no later than five days after the holiday. Decorations which fall under the definition of a sign must conform to all provisions of the sign code.

48. "Sign" means:

a. Any visual communication device, structure, or fixture which is visible from any public right-of-way or waterway placed for the promotion of products,

goods, services, events or to identify a building, using sign graphics or trademarks; or

b. Steel, plastic or similar panels displaying corporate colors, logos or trademarks and as are common on corporate signature buildings to give identity to the business (corporate colors which conform to the city's design manual requirements for color shall be excluded from this definition of a sign); or

c. Inflatable figures, balloons (in a display of six or more), festoons, streamers, spinners, product representations and advertisements for services which are attached to a fixed object or stationary vehicle.

49. "Sign area" means the entire area of a sign on which advertising copy, logos, trademarks, and business or corporate colors are to be placed. Sign structures and associated architectural embellishments, framework and decorative features which contain no written or advertising copy, which are not illuminated and which contain no logos or trademarks shall not be included. Sign area shall be calculated by measuring the area of the smallest rectangle, circle, triangle or parallelogram that can be drawn around all parts of the sign from the viewpoint exposing the largest sign surface area, including the sign face background, and including all spaces and voids between or within letters or symbols which comprise a single word, statement, description, title, business name, graphic symbol or message. Sign supporting structures which are part of the sign display shall be included in the area of calculation.

50. "Sign graphics" include all lines, strokes, text, symbols and logo shields applied to a sign surface and does not include the background surface to which they are applied.

51. "Silhouette lighting", sometimes called "halo lighting", means lighting being emitted from the back side of pan-channel sign graphic which has the open side of the channel facing the wall or sign face it is mounted to, thereby silhouetting the sign graphics.

52. "Temporary construction sign" means a sign jointly erected and maintained on premises undergoing construction by an architect, contractor, subcontractor and/or materialman upon which property such person is furnishing labor or material.

53. "Temporary sign" means any sign or advertising display constructed of cloth, canvas, light fabric, paper, cardboard or other light materials, with or without frames, intended to be displayed for a limited time only and not permanently attached to a building or site.

54. "Trim caps" are the corner trim pieces holding the translucent materials or sign faces on pan-channel sign graphics and cabinet signs.

55. "Wall graphics" means a wall sign of which color and form are part of an overall design on the building.

56. "Wall plane" includes that portion of a facade which is contained on one general plane. If there is a shift in the facade, forward or back, a new plane is created. A single wall plane may contain windows and doors but it is generally a solid surface. The fascia of projecting porches or colonnades may be considered part of the wall plane the porch or colonnade projects from for calculating signage area.

57. "Wall sign" means a sign attached or erected parallel to and extending not more than one foot from the facade or face of any building to which it is attached and supported throughout its entire length, with the exposed face of the sign parallel to the plane of said wall or facade. Signs incorporated into mansard roofs, marquees or canopies shall be treated as a wall sign.

58. "Window sign" means a sign that is mounted on, painted on or attached to a window, or is placed within three feet of the inside of a window or opening, or is within an enclosed display window (i.e., the display area in the window is separated from the main floor area by a wall, curtain or screen).

**Section 2.** Section 17.80.100 of the Gig Harbor Municipal Code is hereby amended, to read as follows:

#### **17.80.100 Sign standards for Area 2.**

The following sign standards shall apply:

A. Illumination. When illumination is desired in Area 2, the city encourages use of external light sources subject to the provisions of GHMC 17.80.060(G)(1). Internal illumination is permitted on all signs except neighborhood identification signs, subject to the provisions of GHMC 17.80.060(G)(2). Internally illuminated sign graphics are limited to white or ivory colors if the proposed sign is visible from residential property within 200 feet of the parcel the sign is located on.

B. Freestanding Signs.

1. Height Measurement. Freestanding signs shall be measured from the highest point of the sign to the finished grade at the base of the sign support. Finished grade shall be the final grade approved through the site plan review process and shall not be increased for purposes of increasing overall sign height.

2. Height Standards. Freestanding ground signs shall not exceed six feet in height.

3. Clearance Standards. Freestanding signs which abut the edge of a sidewalk shall have a maximum clearance of 27 inches.

4. Maximum Sign Area. Twenty-four square feet for a single side or 48 square feet total on all sides. If a carved or sandblasted wooden sign is used, freestanding signs may be 30 square feet for a single side or 60 square feet total on all sides.

5. Location. Freestanding signs may not be located on public property. The placement of freestanding signs shall be in such a fashion and location as to not obstruct the view of signs of adjacent property owners.

6. Density. Freestanding signs shall be limited to the following number and locations:

a. Commercial. One freestanding sign shall be permitted on each street frontage of property on which the business is located. Sites on a corner of two public streets may have one sign on the corner instead of a sign for each frontage, subject to approval by the public works director. Commercial properties with more than 1,000 feet of continuous street frontage and with more than one entrance may install a freestanding sign at each entrance; provided, that no

single sign exceeds the maximum sign area described under subsection (B)(4) of this section. Where there is frontage on more than one street, each frontage is treated independently.

b. Residential. One freestanding neighborhood identification sign is permitted at each entrance to a residential neighborhood.

7. Landscaping. Freestanding signs must be landscaped around the base of the sign.

a. Each sign shall have a landscaped area twice the size of the sign area. If a carved or sandblasted wooden sign is used, landscaping may be reduced by 50 percent for all grade level landscaping, or by 75 percent if landscaping is contained in a raised planter around the base of the sign. Raised planters must be at least 18 inches high. Planter and organic materials shall be installed within 30 days of sign installation. The landscaping, sign base or planter shall be protected from vehicles by a six-inch high curb stop or sidewalk edge at least three feet from the planter base.

b. Landscaping shall be installed in the planting season closest to the date of the sign permit issuance. Signs installed after the planting season shall be landscaped by no later than the following planting season.

c. These requirements may be waived if the sign is located in an area that is part of an approved overall site landscape plan.

C. Wall Mounted Signs.

1. Total Sign Area.

a. Allowed Signage per Wall Plane. Total allowed signage in Area 2 shall not exceed three percent of the wall plane the sign is mounted to, except that signage covering up to eight percent of a wall plane is allowed if the wall plane conforms to all solid/void ratio requirements specified in the city's design manual, and if all on-premises yards on the side of the building the sign faces conform to all landscaping provisions of the city's design manual and of Chapter 17.78 GHMC.

b. Individual Sign Size. No single wall sign shall exceed 50 square feet.

c. Increased Size Option. If a carved or sandblasted wooden sign is used, the sign size may be increased by 20 percent of its underlying allowable sign area.

d. Size Restriction. Wall signs must meet the 70 percent space coverage allowances described under the surface coverage requirements in subsection (C)(2) of this section.

2. Architectural Details. Signs may not cover or obscure important architectural details of a building; they should appear to be a secondary and complementary feature of the building facade. Wall signs must be located within architectural signs bands or other blank spaces which visually frame the sign. Blank wall sections above or between windows and doors, for example, may provide an effective location for signage. However, to avoid a "maxed out" appearance, signs shall be no larger than 70 percent of the width or height of the blank wall space or fascia the sign is mounted to so as to leave reveal on all sides of the sign and to maintain an appropriate balance between the sign and

wall. For example, a pillar between a door and window which is 30 inches wide may have a sign which is 21 inches wide.

3. Height Restriction. Wall signs shall not project above roof lines or fascia boards.

D. Window Signs.

1. Illuminated Window Signs. Illuminated window signs shall conform to the total wall sign area standards in subsection (C)(1) of this section and shall conform with all master sign plan requirements in GHMC 17.80.070.

2. Nonilluminated Window Signs. Nonilluminated window signs are allowed in addition to the standards in subsection (C)(1) of this section; provided, that they do not exceed 50 percent of the nominal window size (i.e., the window size as specified by the manufacturer). Additionally, non-illuminated window signs are not required to conform to the design standards of master sign plans.

E. Projecting Signs.

1. Surface Area. Projecting signs in Area 2 are limited to 32 square feet total for both sides. Projecting sign area shall be deducted from the allowable wall signage determined under subsection (C)(1) of this section.

2. Clearance Requirements. All projecting signs must be at least eight feet above sidewalks and walkways and 15 feet above vehicular ways.

3. Maximum Projection. Projecting signs shall have a maximum width of three feet with a maximum clearance of six inches from the building wall.

4. Design Restriction. Projecting signs may not be cabinet-type signs and may not be internally illuminated.

F. Portable Sign. One portable sign per customer building entrance (not to exceed one sign per 30 feet of building frontage) may be permitted subject to the following:

1. Location. Signs shall be located on the premises or directly in front of the sponsoring business at a point not on the right-of-way which is closest to the building entrance. No sign shall obstruct or impair access to a public sidewalk, public or private street or driveway, traffic control sign, bus stop, fire hydrant, or any other type of street furniture, or otherwise create a hazard, including a tripping hazard.

2. Hours of Display. Signs may be displayed during business hours only.

3. Allowed Height. Maximum height of portable sidewalk signs shall be three feet. All other size requirements of portable signs described in GHMC 17.80.060(H) shall apply.

4. Right-of-Way Permit. In order to place a portable sign in the public right-of-way, the sign owner must comply with the requirements of this chapter as well as the requirements of Chapter 12.02 GHMC, Encroachment Permits.

G. Portal Sign. One portal sign shall be allowed for each City-owned dock or pier. Portal signs shall be limited in height to 12 feet and a sign face area of 32 square feet per side. Portal signs shall be allowed in addition to any other signs permitted on the property.

**Section 3. Severability.** If any section, sentence, clause or phrase of this Ordinance should be held to be unconstitutional by a court of competent jurisdiction, such invalidity or unconstitutionality shall not affect the validity or constitutionality of any other section, sentence, clause or phrase of this Ordinance.

**Section 4. Effective Date.** This Ordinance shall take effect and be in full force five (5) days after passage and publication of an approved summary consisting of the title.

PASSED by the Council and approved by the Mayor of the City of Gig Harbor, this 28th day of June, 2010.

CITY OF GIG HARBOR

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Mayor Charles L. Hunter

ATTEST/AUTHENTICATED:

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Molly Towslee, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:  
Office of the City Attorney

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Angela S. Belbeck, City Attorney

FILED WITH THE CITY CLERK: 06/09/10  
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ORDINANCE NO: 1192