

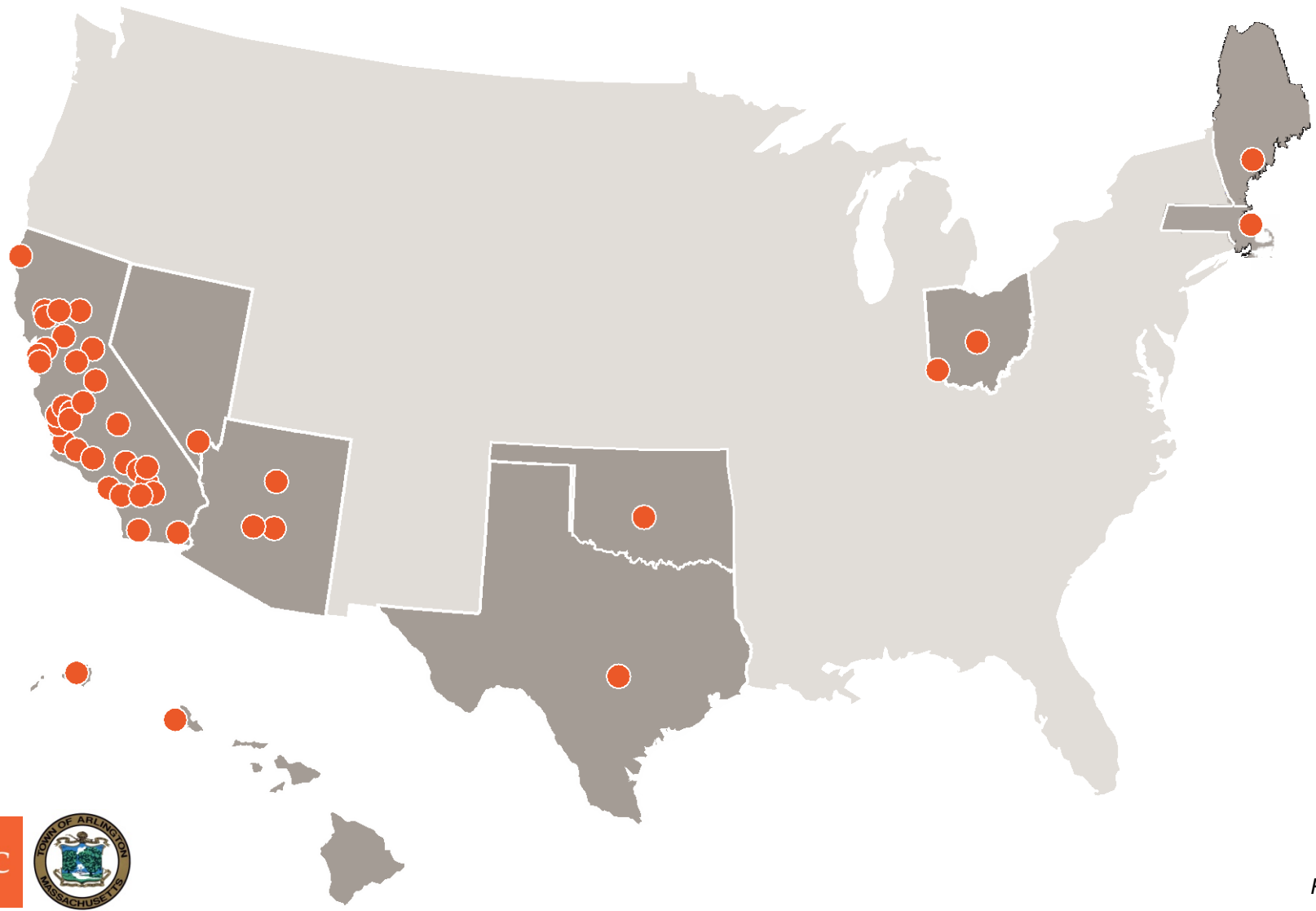
Sign Regulations Update Town of Arlington, MA

Zoning Bylaw Working Group Meeting | December 12, 2018

LWC



LWC, Lisa Wise Consulting Inc.



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LWC

PLANNING

- Zoning Ordinances
- Development Codes
- Form Based Codes
- Specific Plans
- Housing Elements
- Affordable Housing Policy
- Community Outreach
- Working Waterfronts

ECONOMICS

- Market Analysis
- Economic Analysis
- Development Entitlements
- Financial Feasibility Studies
- Data Collection
- Funding Mechanisms

Arlingto



Centered

Introduction and Background

LWC



Meeting Overview

- Introduce the sign update
- Purpose
 - Current progress
 - Next steps
- Explain *Reed v. Town of Gilbert*
- Present key findings
- Discussion/your thoughts

Sign Regulations Analysis & Recommendations Report

Town of Arlington, MA



Project Overview

- Re-codified Zoning Bylaw was adopted in February 2018
- Identified need for an update to the Town's sign regulations
- LWC, Inc. hired September 2018



TOWN OF ARLINGTON ZONING BYLAW

Adopted by Town Meeting on February 12, 2018
Amended by Special Town Meeting on May 2, 2018



Purpose of the Update

To develop new Sign Regulations that:

- Consistent with the law, and the Arlington Master Plan
- Clear and effective standards - responsive to Arlington's needs
- Well-organized, straightforward, and easy-to-use
- Clear, concise, and well-illustrated
- Incorporates best practices

16.04 General Requirements for All Signs

16.04.010 Sign Measurement (Area and Height)

A. Sign Area Measurement

Sign area for all sign types is measured as follows:

1. The entire face of a sign, including the surface of any framing, projections, or molding, but not including the support structure, as shown in Figure A (Sign Area for Signs on Background Panel).



Figure A. Sign Area for Signs on Background Panel

2. Sign copy consisting of individual channel letters mounted on a building wall, fascia, or parapet, or a freestanding structure, is determined by including the entire sign copy area within a single, continuous perimeter of not more than eight straight lines, a circle, or an ellipse that enclose the extreme limits of the sign copy, as shown in Figure B (Sign Area for Signs with Individual Letters).

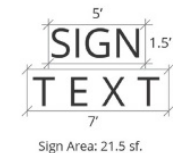


Figure B. Sign Area for Signs with Individual Letters



Legal Context and Key Issues

Reed v. Town of Gilbert

Reed v. Town of Gilbert, US Supreme Court No. 135 S.Ct. 2218, 2015



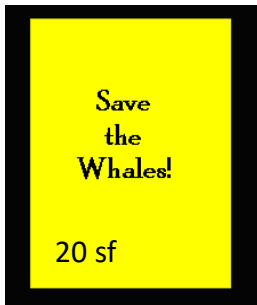
**"Temporary
Directional Signs
Relating to a
Qualifying Event"**

Source: <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/19/us/justices-side-with-arizona-church-in-dispute-over-sign-limits.html>

Reed v. Town of Gilbert

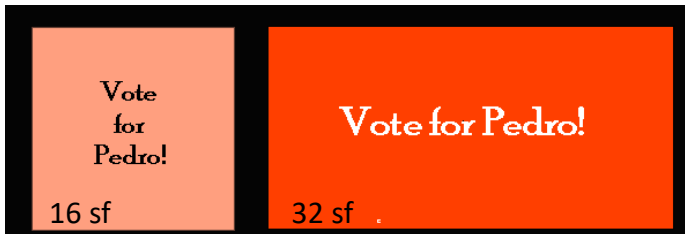
Reed v. Town of Gilbert, US Supreme Court No. 135 S.C.T. 2218, 2015

Ideological



Where?	How long?
Anywhere	As long as you want

Political



Where?	How long?
Residential (16 sf) NR / public / ROW (32)	60 before primary 15 after general

Temporary
Directional Sign
Relating to a
Qualifying Event



6 sf

Where?	How long?
Private or public land 4 at a time	12 hours before 1 hour after

Legal Considerations

Content-Based Regulations

- What does sign say?
- Message determines if it stays up or down, or applicable regulations



“Political Sign”

Content-Neutral Regulations

- Time
- Place
- Manner



“Freestanding Sign”

Speech v. Local Environment

Freedom of speech is an existential right - election cycles exist – a community's visual environment defines its special character



Legal Considerations

Some Sign Types to be Revised Consistent with *Reed v. Gilbert*

Existing Sign Type

Proposed Sign Type

Temporary Signs

For sale or for lease signs

Temporary yard sign

Construction project signs

Temporary yard or banner, sign

Permanent Signs

Identification signs for churches, synagogues, and other similar religious uses

Freestanding or building mounted sign

Identification signs for membership clubs, community facilities, etc.

Freestanding or building mounted sign

Home occupation or bed and breakfast signs

Freestanding or building mounted sign

Stakeholder Interviews

- Organizational issues
- Keep Arlington's character
- More creativity in sign design
- Flexibility is key
- Clear, consistent permitting process – who is responsible for review?
- Expedited temporary sign review
- Signs in historic districts
- Better enforcement is needed



Key Issues Identified

- **Content-based sign types and regulations**
 - Construction signs, for sale or for lease signs, etc.
- **Organizational issues**
 - Regulations in Zoning Bylaw and Town Bylaws
 - Historic Districts - sign regulations and guidelines
 - Lack of cross-references
- **Clarify administrative processes**
 - Building Inspector and Director
 - Review responsibility of Arlington Redevelopment Board

Key Issues Identified

- **Lack of graphics and illustrations**
 - No graphics or photographs to clarify standards
- **Complex, overlapping standards**
 - Standards are inconsistent between zones
- **Outdated sign types**
 - New technology in sign design and lighting
- **New sections**
 - Severability and Substitution clauses
- **Temporary signs**
 - A new approach

Draft Table of Contents

6.2.1 General Provisions

6.2.2 Administration and Procedures

6.2.3 General Restrictions for Signs

6.2.4 General Requirements for Signs

6.2.5 Standards for Permanent Signs

6.2.6 Sign Design Standards/Sign Performance Standards

6.2.7 Standards for Temporary and Portable Signs

6.2.8 Nonconforming Signs

6.2.9 Enforcement

Next Steps

Next Steps

Task	Timeline
Stakeholder Engagement	Ongoing
Sign Regulations Analysis & Recommendations Report	Early-December 2018
Administrative Draft Sign Regulations	Mid-January 2019
Public Review	Mid-February 2019
Public Hearings with ARB (and Select Board as necessary)	March 2019
Annual Town Meeting	Late-April 2019



★ LA VICTORIA ★
TAQUERIA

Discussion

Discussion Topics – ZBWG

- Electronic Message Centers – acceptable? If so, where?
- Human signs – acceptable?
- Cabinet signs – acceptable?
- Non-conforming signs – bring into compliance?
- A-frame (sandwich board) signs – where allowed?
- Consistency in sign design – important?
- Minuteman Bikeway – signs on/facing it?

Thank you!



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Electronic Message Center Signs (EMCs)



Human Signs (Sign Walkers)



Cabinet Signs



Consistency in sign design

