

## SFI Guideline Model Sign Code Project

The Signage Foundation, Inc. is currently coordinating an extensive project to develop a Guideline Model Sign Code. The scope of work is being performed by Alan Weinstein, Associate Professor & Director Law & Public Policy at Cleveland State University and David Hartt of DB Hartt Inc. A review panel of industry professionals has also been appointed and is working to provide peer analysis and input throughout the process.

The purpose of this Model Code Project is to convey to communities guidelines for formulating sign regulations that fully respect business as well as community interests. This is particularly important since there is a prevailing community tendency to:

- Limit sizes of signs to the extent that they cannot be comprehended by the motorist on the adjacent highway and
- Compose limitations based on alleged traffic safety considerations which cannot be factually supported.

It is also the purpose of the Model Code project to reduce the tensions between the community and the business community so the industry can conduct its business in a fair and lawful way that recognizes the importance of the sign investment to the community and its businesses.

Specifically, the additional purposes of this project are to:

- Reduce the level of administrative and design review, and time periods for review, prior to a sign application being approved.
- Provide a reasonable solution for non-conforming signs to remain before they must be brought into compliance
- Recognize the importance of electronic message signs to the industry and businesses and that they can be accommodated without compromising the public's interests
- Convey to communities that to be effective, the bottom of the free-standing sign (pole signs) must be above parked or moving vehicles. Conversely, ground type signs are often blocked by vehicles and landscaping
- Convince communities to realistically look at the existing code – particularly enforcement rather than a “knee jerk” conclusion that poor enforcement of the existing regulations should NOT trigger a new code with more restrictive regulations.

For additional information on this project, please feel free to contact Duane Laska, Review Team Chairman at 847.816.7020 or Joe Rickman, Chairman of the Signage Foundation, Inc. at 202.251.0624.