AN ORDINANCE (O-2025-003)

To Adopt Amendments to Article VIII – Signs, of the Town of Stanardsville Zoning Ordinance (OR#25-003)

WHEREAS, Sections 15.2-1427 and 15.2-1433 of the Code of Virginia (1950), as amended, authorize local governing bodies to adopt, amend, and codify ordinances or portions thereof; and

WHEREAS, Sections 15.2-2280, 15.2-2285, and 15.2-2286 of the Code of Virginia (1950), as amended, authorize local governing bodies to adopt and amend zoning ordinances; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Stanardsville desires to amend Article VIII – Signs of the Zoning Ordinance to clarify the types and sizes of signs permitted within the Town; and

WHEREAS, such amendment is necessary to promote public necessity, convenience, general welfare, and good zoning practice pursuant to Section 15.2-2286(A)(7) of the Code of Virginia, as amended; and

WHEREAS, the Stanardsville Town Council initiated this amendment by resolution on April 14, 2025; and

WHEREAS, on March 18, 2026, the Stanardsville Planning Commission voted 4-0 to recommend approval of the amendment to the Town Council; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council caused notice of a public hearing to be published in the Piedmont Journal Recorder on April 1 and April 8, 2026; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council held a public hearing on April 13, 2026, at which all persons desiring to be heard were given an opportunity to speak; and

WHEREAS, the full text of the proposed amendment was made available for public inspection at the Greene County Administration Building, Room 226, 40 Celt Road, Stanardsville, Virginia 22973.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Stanardsville Town Council that the amendments to Article VIII – Signs, of the Town of Stanardsville Zoning Ordinance (OR#25-003) are hereby adopted as presented below:

ARTICLE VIII

SIGNS (Revised 4/13/26)

800.00 Purpose and Intent

The purpose of this article is to establish reasonable and effective regulations pertaining to the time, place and manner in which signs may be erected and maintained in order to:

- Foster business growth and vitality and to provide flexibility to respond to market and

economic trends;

- Stimulate the economic vitality of the Town, encourage a business atmosphere that

continues to attract new enterprises to the Town, encourage trade within the Town,

and to appropriately inform customers so that businesses can thrive and thereby

help provide revenue necessary for a well-balanced tax base;

- Provide a responsive and efficient administrative sign permit approval process for

business owners;

- Provide clear and effective standards that permit reasonable signage for businesses

and institutions;

- Provide for signage that is constructed and maintained in a structurally sound and

attractive manner;

- Provide signage compatible with the landscape/streetscape and architecture of

surrounding buildings, including historic sites and structures;

- Ensure the effectiveness of public traffic signs and signals;
- Create legible and appropriate signs related to the activity to which they pertain; and
- Improve the public health, safety, and general welfare of the community.

801.00 Applicability

These sign regulations shall apply to all signs erected within the Town of Stanardsville.

802.00 **Permit Requirements**

No sign shall be erected, installed, used, altered, relocated, replaced or reconstructed until a Sign Permit has been issued by the Zoning Administrator or his agent except for signs expressly allowed by right without a permit under the provisions of this Article. For the purpose of this Zoning Ordinance, all signs are considered accessory

uses and shall be located on the same lot with the principal use to which they pertain.

803.00 General Regulations

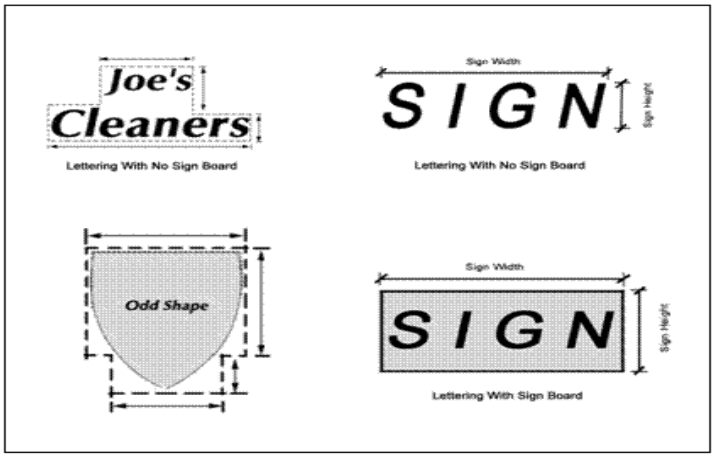
The following regulations shall apply to all signs, regardless of the zoning district in which they are located, unless otherwise specified.

Maintenance of an existing sign for which a permit has been issued such as repainting or making minor non-structural repairs shall not require a permit.

803.2 Where a sign consists of two faces, the total area of the sign shall be determined by the interior angle of the signs. Where the two sign faces are either parallel, or the interior angle is less than or equal to 45 degrees, then only one sign face shall be included in the total sign area. If the two sign faces are separated by an interior angle of more than 45 degrees, then both sign faces combined shall be included in the total sign area.

803.03. The height of free-standing signs (post, pole or monument) shall be the vertical distance measured from the finished grade ground elevation where the sign is located to the highest point of the sign or sign structure. The maximum allowable height of signs shall be as specified by the regulations established herein.

803.04. Sign area shall be measured as the area of a sign face within the smallest square, circle, rectangle, triangle with a continuous perimeter enclosing the entire display face of the sign, including background, framing, trim, molding and other borders. Supports and uprights used for freestanding pole signs shall not be included in the calculation of sign area unless the combined width of such supports or uprights exceeds 25% of the width of the sign face being supported or unless such supports of any width are designed as an integral part of the display for the purpose of illustration or attraction.



803.05. Where individual letters, characters or figures are mounted to use a building facade as a background, or for irregularly shaped signs, the area of such sign shall be measured by up to eight intersecting lines comprising the total message, symbol or advertisement. (See Figure 1 below)

Figure 1

803.06. Home Occupations shall not have advertising other than a non-illuminated identification sign of not more than two square feet in area.

803.07. No projecting sign shall extend more than 4 feet from the side of a building.

803.08. No sign, whether permanent or temporary, shall be attached to trees, utility poles or other similar supporting structures.

803.09. All signs must meet the sight distance triangle requirements, except for traffic control signs. A sight distance triangle area must contain no signs between 42 inches and eight feet above the existing street grade. The site distance applies to all intersections and site access points.

803.10. No sign, other than a sign approved or installed by the Town of Stanardsville or the Virginia Department of Transportation, shall be located within or over any public right-of-way without an express written license agreement approved by Town Council.

803.11. Murals within the Town boundaries that are to be located on buildings or structures shall require a special use permit that is approved by Town Council.

803.12. Illuminated Signs. Lighting of signs is limited to external lighting, internally lit "light-box" (or cabinet) signs with opaque backgrounds only, or reverse lit (or halo-lit) channel letter signs.

Face lit channel letter signs are not permitted. Externally lit

signs are to be directly lit with a shielded point source or linear source light (as opposed to floodlights) which does not produce glare, does not permit light trespass onto adjacent properties, and does not have any other effects which may be injurious to public health, safety and welfare. Signs which are internally lit light box style shall use lighted lettering or designs and an opaque background only.

804.00 Exemptions

A sign permit is not required for the following signs which may be erected, altered or maintained in any zoning district subject to all general regulations and other provisions established in this ordinance.

804.01. Flags, governmental: A flag representing the official symbol of a national, state or local government is not a sign for the purposes of this article (for federal law pertaining to flying the flag of the United States of America, see 4 U.S.C. § 5 et seq.) not exceeding 15 square feet and mounted on a pole not exceeding 35 feet in height.

804.02. Flags, noncommercial: a flag that contains no commercial speech. Not more than one (1) noncommercial flag may be flown on any lot and the flag shall not exceed 15 square feet in size and mounted on a pole not exceeding 35 feet in height.

804.03. Temporary construction signs, non-illuminated, that do not exceed the maximum sign area or height allowed for the physical type of the sign (e.g., freestanding, wall) within the applicable zoning district and limited to one

sign for each street frontage for each principal use being constructed on the premises to which such sign refers. No such signs shall be permitted unless a building permit has been issued or unless a site plan for the proposed development has been submitted to the Town for official review. Such signs shall be removed promptly upon completion of construction.

804.04. Temporary realty signs, non-illuminated, that do not exceed six square feet in area.

804.05. Official state automobile inspection station wall-mounted posters, non-illuminated, identifying the state and the inspection number which is then due, provided that such signs shall not exceed sixteen (16) square feet in area and shall be limited to one sign per business.

804.06. Temporary political Campaign signs and posters, non-illuminted that do not exceed the maximum sign area or height allowed for the physical type of the sign (e.g., freestanding, wall) within the applicable zoning district provided that all such signs shall be removed within seven (7) days following the election, canvass, or primary.

804.07. Signs affixed to machinery or equipment which are necessary or customary to a business including, but not limited to, devices such as gasoline pumps, vending machines, ice machines, etc., provided that such signs are directly related to the machinery or equipment and its use.

804.08. Directional signs, on-premises, non-illuminated, not exceeding three (3) square feet in area and three feet (3') in height and not containing any advertising material or discernible business or commercial logo or imagery.

804.09. Scoreboards or signs within a ball park or other similar public or private recreational use which are located and designed to be read from within the park boundaries provided a site plan is approved for such park or recreation use.

804.10. No trespassing signs, non-illuminated warning trespassers or announcing property as posted, not to exceed four (4) square feet per sign.

804.11. Temporary special event sign, non-illuminated, maximum 12 square feet, for an event customary and incidental to a residential or institutional use.

804.12. Residence Signs, non-illuminated, not exceeding four (4) square feet.

804.13. A-Board sign, non-illuminated, which is located on the premises of the business or use that it advertises and does not exceed 6 square feet in area for each sign face. A-Board signs shall not impede pedestrian or automobile traffic and may only be placed during the period of time which the business or use advertised is open or in operation.

804.14. Plaques, tablets, historical markers or inscriptions indicating the name of a building, date of erection, or other commemorative information, if they meet the following criteria:

- They are an integral part of the building structure or are attached flat to the facade of the building.
- They are non-illuminated.
- They do not exceed four square feet in surface area.

805.00 Prohibited signs

Unless specifically stated otherwise, the following signs shall not be permitted in the Town:

- Any signs which flashes, rotates, scrolls, moves or gives the visual impression of movement including pennants and

feather signs, with the exception that traditional barber shop poles not exceeding 28 inches in height are allowed with a sign permit.

- Moored balloons or other floating signs that are tethered to a structure or the ground.
- Offsite advertising signs.
- Roof Signs
- Electronic Message signs
- Portable changeable letter board
- Advertising Vehicles parked or displayed for the primary purpose of displaying a sign, advertisement or message
- Outdoor Advertisement signs including Billboards or wallscapes

- Any sign which by reason of position, shape or color may interfere with, be confused with, or obstruct the view of any traffic sign, signal or device.

806.00 Temporary Signs

The Zoning Administrator, upon application, may issue permits for the temporary signs in accordance with the provisions of this section.

Temporary signs such as banners or posters when used to announce special temporary events such as new home shows, grand openings, sales, etc. Such signs shall not be erected more than thirty (30) days prior to the event and shall be removed within seven (7) days following the closing of the event; provided, however, that no banner shall be permitted to remain in place for any event for more than forty (40) days between the first appearance and removal of the banner. Temporary signs shall not be permitted for more than four events within a one-year period.

Placement of temporary signs is subject to permission by the owner of the site on which the temporary sign is placed and shall comply with all state and federal regulations.

Such temporary signs shall not count against the normal sign area allowances for the property on which located.

A temporary sign shall not exceed 16 square feet in area. The aggregate area of all temporary signs on one property or site shall not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet.

Temporary signs shall not be illuminated.

807.00 Amnesty/Nonconforming Determination for an Existing Sign

A sign permit is required for all commercial signs. Any commercial signs which were in existence prior to the zoning ordinance and sign regulations adopted December 9, 2013, may be qualified for a determination of non-conforming status if sufficient evidence is provided to the Zoning Administrator regarding the size and construction of the sign as of that date.

Any commercial signs which were erected subsequent to December 9, 2013, but prior to the adoption date of these amended sign regulations may be qualified for a determination of non-conforming status regarding the size and construction of the sign if an approved sign permit was issued for the sign.

808.00 Non-Conforming Sign Regulations

A nonconforming sign may continue, subject to the provisions, conditions and prohibitions set forth herein:

808.01. Alteration of copy: A nonconforming sign may be altered by refacing the sign by or for the current owner of the establishment to which the sign pertains.

808.02. Alteration of sign structure: A nonconforming sign shall not be structurally altered; provided that the Zoning Administrator may authorize a nonconforming sign to be structurally altered so that it becomes less nonconforming and further provided that each time the nonconforming sign is structurally altered, the sign area and sign height shall be reduced by at least twenty-five (25) percent of its current area and height until the sign area and the sign height are conforming.

808.03. Replacement or restoration:

A nonconforming sign may be replaced or restored only as provided below:

1. A nonconforming sign that is destroyed or damaged by the owner of the sign or the owner of the lot on which the sign is located shall not be replaced or restored unless it complies with this ordinance.
2. A nonconforming sign that is destroyed or damaged as a result of factors beyond the control of the owner of the sign and the owner of the lot on which the sign is located, to an extent the destruction or damage exceeds fifty (50) percent of its appraised value, shall not be replaced or restored unless it complies with this ordinance.
3. A nonconforming sign that is destroyed or damaged as a result of factors beyond the control of the owner of the sign and the owner of the lot on which the sign is located, to an extent the destruction or damage is fifty (50) percent or less of the appraised value, may be replaced or restored provided that the replacement or restoration is completed within two (2) years after the date of the destruction or damage, and the sign is not enlarged or extended.

809.00 **Maintenance and removal of signs**

All signs shall be maintained in good condition and appearance at all times and shall be removed from the premises when they can no longer be repaired.

810.00 **Abandoned signs**

A sign, including its supporting structure or brackets, shall be removed by the owner or lessee of the premises upon which the sign is located when the business which it advertises is no longer on the premises. In the event a nonconforming sign refers to a business that has not been in operation for a period of at least two (2) years, such sign shall be considered abandoned and shall be considered to be in violation of this ordinance. After reasonable efforts to provide notice to the property owner of the need to remove the violation, and failure of the property owner to do so, the Zoning Administrator may cause the abandoned sign to be removed at the owner's expense.

811.00. Signs Requiring a Permit Allowed By District:

Table 1: **Residential Zoning districts R-1, R2 and R-3**	Number Allowed	Max Area Allowed (sf)	Max Height Allowed (ft)	Setback from ROW
Freestanding per parcel	1	4 sf	6 ft	5 ft from back of sidewalk; 9 feet from edge of pavement if no sidewalk present
Subdivision or Multifamily Complex Sign	Max. 2 per entrance per subdivision or complex	24 square feet per entrance	6 ft	5 ft from back of sidewalk; 9 feet from edge of pavement if no sidewalk present
Temporary Signs	4 per calendar year	16 square feet	N/A	5 ft from back of sidewalk or edge of ROW

Table 2: **Residential-Commercial Zoning District RC**	Number Allowed	Max Area Allowed (ft2)	Max Height Allowed (ft)	Setback from edge of ROW (ft)
Freestanding Post Sign	1	24 sf	6 ft	3 ft
Freestanding Pole Sign	1	12 sf	12 ft	3 ft
Freestanding Monument Sign	1	24 sf	6 ft	3 ft
Wall Sign	1 per business within premises	24 sf	20 ft	Same as structure
Canopy, awning, and projecting signs mounted to building	1 per building bay	10 sf	16 ft	3 ft from ROW (may project over right of way with written license agreement approved by Town Council)
Window Sign	1 per window	Not to exceed 50% of the window surface area	20 ft	Same as building
Temporary Signs	4 per calendar year	16 square feet	N/A	5 ft from back of sidewalk or edge of ROW

811.01. Aggregate Sign Area Permitted by Use

For residential uses, the aggregate sign area for all signs requiring a permit on a single lot or parcel, excluding temporary signs, shall be 12 square feet maximum.

For commercial uses, the aggregate sign area for all signs requiring a permit on a single lot or parcel, excluding temporary signs, shall be 60 square feet maximum.

811.02. Standards for increases in sign area and height

The Stanardsville Town Council may authorize, by special exception and in accordance with all applicable procedural requirements, modifications or increases up to 10% in area or height permitted.

812.00 Notice of Violation

Property owners, permit applicants, and/or establishment owners/managers, as applicable, shall be notified in writing of violations of the provisions of this article. The Zoning Administrator or his designee shall, in the notice of violation, state the nature of the violation, the date that it was observed, and the remedy or remedies necessary to correct the violation. The Zoning Administrator or his designee may establish a reasonable deadline for the correction of the violation.

813.00 Civil Enforcement Procedures

The Zoning Administrator or his designee is authorized to bring legal action, including injunction, abatement, or other appropriate action or proceedings for any violation of any provision of this Article. This remedy is in addition to, and not in lieu of, any other remedy available to the Zoning Administrator.

814.00 Civil Penalties

The penalty for any one violation of any provision of this Article shall be a civil penalty of not more than $200.00 for the initial summons and not more than $500.00 for each additional summons. Each day during which the violation is found to have existed shall constitute a separate offense. However, specified violations arising from the same operative set of facts shall not be charged more frequently than once in any ten-day period, and a series of specified violations arising from the same operative set of facts shall not result in civil penalties which exceed a total of $5,000.00. The Zoning Administrator or his deputy may issue a civil summons as provided by law for a violation of this article. Any person summoned or issued a ticket for a scheduled violation may make an appearance in person or in writing by mail to the department of finance or the treasurer of the county prior to the date fixed for trial in court. Any person so appearing may enter a waiver of trial, admit liability, and pay the civil penalty established for the offense charged. Such persons shall be informed of their right to stand trial and that a signature to an admission of liability will have the same force and effect as a judgment of court.

If a person charged with a scheduled violation does not elect to enter a waiver of trial and admit liability, the violation shall be tried in the general district court in the same manner and with the same right of appeal as provided for by law. In any trial for a scheduled violation authorized by this section, it shall be the burden of the locality to show the liability of the violator by a preponderance of the evidence. An admission of liability or finding of liability shall not be a criminal conviction for any purpose. Such violations shall be a class 3 misdemeanor in the event three civil penalties have previously been imposed on the same defendant for the same or similar violation, not arising from the same set of operative facts, within a 24-month period.

815.00 **Definitions**

Signs, as defined, shall be classified according to one or more of the following definitions:

A-Board Sign - A portable outdoor sign which is self- supporting using an "A" shaped frame typically with two sign faces hinged at the top

Abandoned Sign-A sign and support structure for a business, commercial use or other activity which has ceased operation and the property owner intends no longer to use or has failed to maintain in good condition and appearance.

Advertising vehicle-The term “advertising vehicle” means a motor vehicle, trailer or semi-trailer (collectively, “vehicle”) having a permanent or temporary sign affixed, painted on or placed upon it, and its primary purpose is advertising, including a sign that alters the vehicle’s manufacturer’s profile; provided that a temporary sign affixed to an employee’s private vehicle during his or her working hours is not an advertising vehicle.

Aggregate Sign Area-The combined sign area of all signs requiring a permit on a single lot or parcel, temporary signs.

Awning Sign-A sign that is mounted, painted or attached to a vertical face of an awning.

Banner-A piece of cloth, plastic or other flexible material on which words, letters, figures, colors, designs or symbols are inscribed or affixed for the purposes of advertisement, identification, display or direction and which is suspended for display, typically from buildings or poles.

Billboard-A sign displaying advertisements for businesses, products, services or activities not located on the same property as the sign.

Canopy Sign-A sign affixed to a vertical face of a canopy that projects from a building and is totally or partially structurally supported by the building. A canopy sign may project above the canopy no more than 12 inches.

Construction sign-A temporary sign which identifies facilities being actively constructed or altered, or the identity of the persons or firms engaged in the promotion, financing, design, construction or alteration of such facilities.

Directional Sign-Any sign that is designed and erected for the purpose of providing direction and/or orientation for pedestrian or vehicular traffic.

Electronic Message Center-A message center or reader board composed of a series of lights that is electronically or electrically controlled which displays on a single sign cabinet, a wide variety of messages in words, digits, or symbols.

Face-lit channel letter sign - A sign consisting of 3-D letters containing internal light sources - typically LEDs - with clear or

translucent faces that allow the light to shine through the letters.

Flag: The term "flag" means a sign consisting of a piece of fabric or other flexible material attached to a pole or hung from a structure,

A "governmental flag" is one representing the official symbol of a national, state or local government is not a sign for the purposes of this article (for federal law pertaining to flying the flag of the United States of America, see 4 U.S.C. § 5 et seq.).

A "commercial flag" is a flag that contains commercial speech or any imagery or colors intended to draw attention to a commercial business, use or activity. Not more than one (1) commercial flag may be flown on a lot and the flag shall not exceed 15 square feet in size.

A "noncommercial flag" is a flag used for decorative purposes and containing no advertising, words or logos related to a specific commercial business, use, activity, or service, and does not represent the official symbol of a national, state or local government. Not more than one (1) noncommercial flag may be flown on a lot and the flag shall not exceed 15 square feet in size or be mounted on a pole exceeding 35 feet in height.

Free-standing pole sign - A sign mounted on a single pole.

Free-standing post sign - A sign, similar to a monument sign without a base, but supported by two or more posts, set in or upon the ground, and not attached to any building.

Free-standing monument sign. - A sign which is mounted upon a substantive solid base such that there is no space between the sign and its base. The base shall be a minimum of 12 inches in height and its length shall be at least 75% of that of the sign mounted upon it. If the sign has two faces, they shall be approximately parallel and not more than 12 inches apart.

"Light-box" style (or cabinet) sign - A light-box style internally lit sign (or cabinet sign) is a box containing internal light sources—typically LEDs—that illuminate a translucent front panel.

Mural- A illustrative or decorative painting or pictorial representation primarily for a civic purpose applied to or incorporated into a structure or wall, which can be viewed from public places, alleys, rights-of-way that does not contain any discernible commercial speech such as a logo business name or imagery or colors specifically intended to draw attention to a commercial business, use or activity.

Nonconforming Sign-A sign lawfully erected and maintained prior to the adoption of the current ordinance that does not conform with the requirements of the current ordinance.

On-Premises directional sign-A sign which is intended to provide directional information for the premises on which it is located. Such sign may pertain to traffic movement, pedestrian movement, parking or loading space, or similar types of information, but shall not consist of advertising matter.

Pennants-Pieces of cloth, plastic or flexible material, generally triangular or rectangular in shape, and which typically are strung together in a series on lines which are hung from

poles, between buildings or in other arrangements for the purpose of decoration or attracting attention.

Political campaign sign-A temporary sign, which pertains to an issue of public concern or to an issue or candidate in a pending election, that does not exceed the maximum sign area or height allowed for the physical type of the sign (e.g., freestanding, wall) within the applicable zoning district.

Portable changeable letter board-A portable sign on which message copy is changed manually through the utilization of attachable letters, numbers, symbols and other similar character of changeable pictorial panes.

Portable sign-Any sign not permanently attached to a structure or permanently mounted in the ground which can be transported to other locations, including portable changeable letter boards.

Portable signs shall include, but not be limited to, signs which are trailer-mounted or otherwise designed to be relocated or are constructed on a chassis or carriage with permanent or removable wheels whose primary purpose is to advertise.

Projecting sign-A sign, which is attached perpendicularly, or nearly perpendicularly, to a building wall and which extends from such wall not more than forty-eight inches (48").

Realty sign-A temporary sign which advertises the sale, lease, rental or display of the lot or building upon which such sign is displayed.

Residence sign-A sign erected on a lot containing a private dwelling that identifies the name of the occupant, name of the property or the street address of the residence. The sign shall not exceed four square feet.

Reverse-lit (or halo-lit) channel letter sign - A sign consisting of 3-D letters containing internal light sources - typically LEDs - with opaque, usually metal, faces that block the light, but open backs that allow the light to reflect off the mounting surface to create a halo-like effect around the letters.

Roof sign-A sign which is attached to, painted on, or supported by the roof of a building.

Sign-A display, object, device or structure used to identify a location or advertise a use, place of business or a product, using words, letters, figures, designs, symbols, fixtures, or projected images.

Subdivision Sign-Sign for the purpose of identifying a housing development or subdivision.

Temporary sign-A sign, banner, poster, or advertising display constructed of cloth, plastic, sheet, cardboard, wallboard, or other like materials, intended to be displayed for a limited period of time, and not intended to be permanently attached to a building or the ground. A temporary sign shall not be permitted for offsite advertising signage.

Wall sign-A sign which is painted on or attached parallel to a wall of a building, and which extends not more than twelve inches (12") from such wall.

Window Sign-A sign that is painted on, affixed to or mounted on a window of a building, or is hung or mounted directly inside a window for the purpose of identifying a business or any products, services, activities or events held on the premises. A window sign may not cover more than 50% of the window surface area.

O-2025-003

ADOPTED BY STANARDSVILLE TOWN COUNCIL ON APRIL 13, 2026

Motion:
Second:

Votes:

Early: _____

Kelly: _____

Kime: _____

Swenson: _____

Payne _____ tie vote ONLY

_____ ATTEST: _____

Gary Lowe, Mayor Michael Wolkowicz, Clerk

Town Council of the Town of Stanardsville Town Council of the Town of Stanardsville