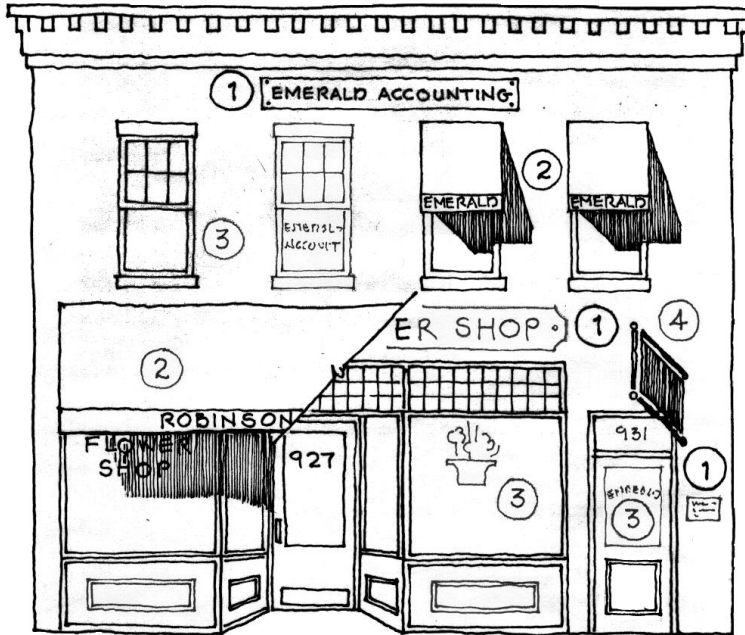
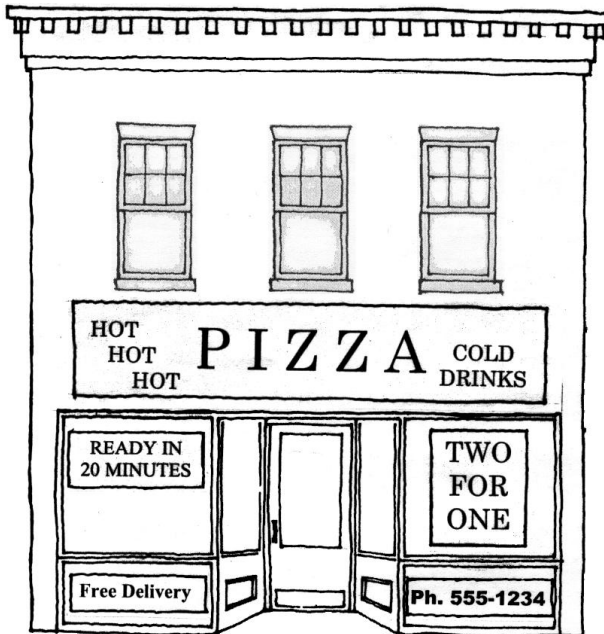


## G.1 Signs



Historic commercial buildings usually have appropriate places for signs:

1. Wall sign or individual letters attached to the wall
2. Awning sign (see guidelines for awnings)
3. Window sign painted on glass; can be text or symbol
4. Hanging sign perpendicular to wall



Signs should not overwhelm a façade, as these do here, and should not obscure significant features such as windows, doors and transoms. The signs on the windows block views to the interior, which would otherwise add life to the streetscape.

Signs in historic districts should be sized to the pedestrian, not to the automobile. The signs shown here are much too large for the needs of pedestrians. These signs contain advertising information, rather than just essential information such as the business name and product descriptor.

## G.2 Signs continued

Signs are governed by the city's zoning code, in addition to these guidelines. The Preservation Board may reduce the size and number of signs to below that permitted by the zoning code.

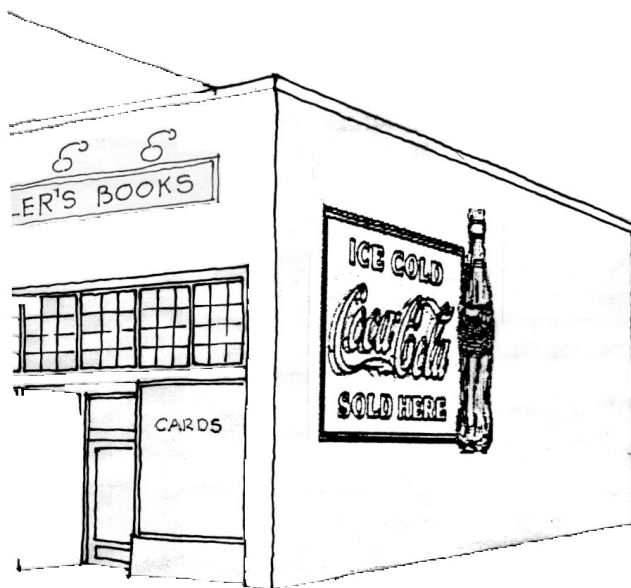
Signs at landmark properties should convey only the essential message, and not tend toward advertising. Essential messages include the name of a business, a brief descriptor such as "Realty", "Accountant", "Men's Clothing", and a street number without street name. Information such as hours of operation or types of merchandise is best displayed in less prominent locations, such as on a storefront window.

Appropriate sign materials include wood, metal, medium density fiberboard and heavy duty urethane foam. While plastic is not a traditional material, some plastic signs may be appropriate. Ground-based signs may be of stone or cast stone. Highly reflective material is not appropriate. Paper or cardboard signs set in windows are discouraged, as they block views inside and often appear disorderly.

Neon can be appropriate, and is most effective when used sparingly. However, neon signs have components besides the tubing that affect appearance. The composition includes a transformer, feeder tubes, power cord and a frame to hold the neon tubing, and it can look jumbled if everything is exposed. This is especially true of neon signs that hang in storefront windows. An application made to the Preservation Board for a neon sign should show the entire composition.

The method of attaching signs to walls should avoid damaging the building. If the sign is to be attached to a masonry building, the anchors should be installed into the mortar joints rather than into the brick or stone.

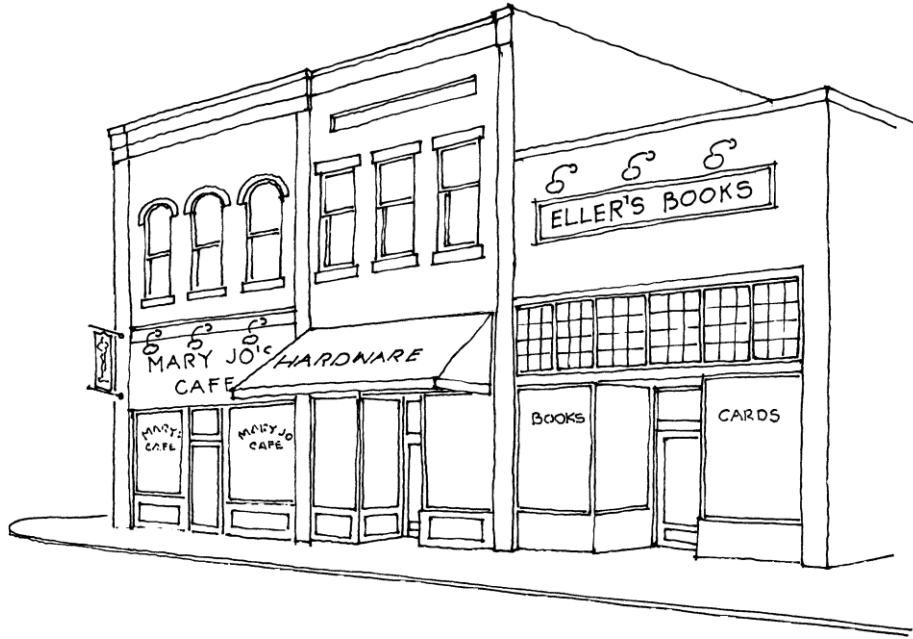
Likewise, attaching electrical conduit should be done carefully to avoid damaging the building, and the conduit should be concealed as best possible.



Historic signs, including "ghost" painted signs on building walls, should be retained if possible.

## G.3 Signs continued

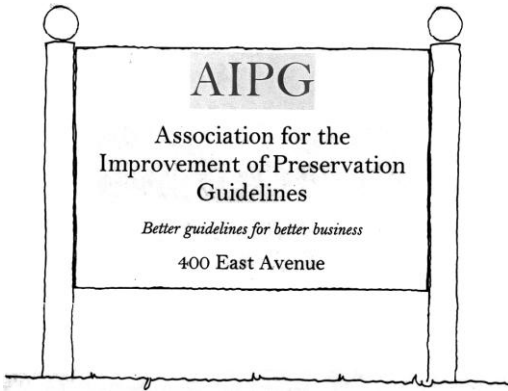
Signs on neighboring buildings should be similar in scale and design, like those in the upper drawing. The signs should not be the same; indeed, variety in signage adds to the flavor of the preservation districts. But signs should be coordinated in style, location, and material.



Signs should not cover architectural features, as they do here, nor should signs be painted on unpainted masonry walls.

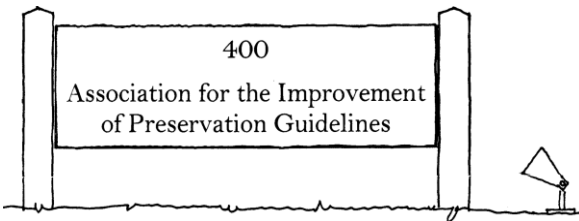
## G.4 Signs continued

Lawn or ground signs should be as simple and as small as possible, conveying only that information needed to guide a first-time visitor to the site. Essential information would include the name of a business and the street number, not the street name. The upper sign below has too much information, and tends toward advertising. An appropriate sign is shown below.



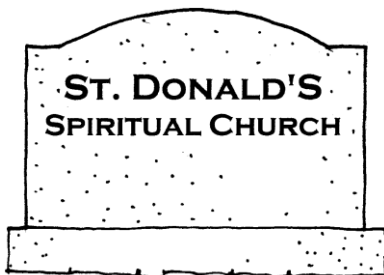
While logos and acronyms can be appropriate on a sign, they should be used only if they help guide a first-time visitor to a site. In a case where a business is known universally by its logo or acronym, the name of the business may not be needed on the sign.

As with all signs, a lawn sign should fit with the style of the building and the other signs on the street. For example, a sign in front of a building with arched windows might also have the arch motif, like that shown in the lower drawing. A wood sign is appropriate to a wood building, and a stone sign to a stone building.



The colors of the sign should relate to the colors of the building behind it.

Wood or wood-like lawn signs should be supported by posts with moderate decoration. Common posts are 4 inch square painted wood.



Plantings around signs are appropriate, provided the size of the plants do not cause the sign to become higher.

If a sign is to be illuminated externally, the lighting fixtures must be submitted as part of the Preservation Board application.

## G.5 Signs continued

East Avenue remains residential in character despite the number of businesses now occupying former homes and the number of apartment buildings that displaced grand mansions. The Board desires to retain that residential character, by limiting the number and size of signs and by retaining the broad lawns.

Like most signs in the preservation districts, signs along East Avenue should contain only essential information, and should be as small as possible. In most cases, signs should be oriented perpendicular to the street near the sidewalk. Signs should be coordinated with neighboring signs in style, location, and material, and with the buildings they front in style and material.



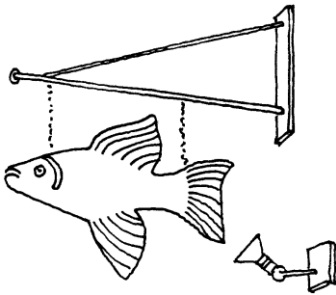
Like East Avenue, Park Avenue retains a residential feel although many houses now hold businesses. Signs here, like those for historic commercial buildings, should convey only the essential message, and should not obscure significant architectural features. In most cases, a ground sign near the sidewalk, perpendicular to the street, is most appropriate. An example is shown on the left below. Large signs, and multiple signs that tend toward advertising, such as those on the right below, are inappropriate.



## G.6 Signs continued

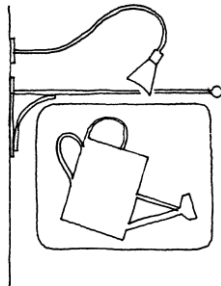


Hanging signs inform pedestrians on the sidewalk as well as occupants of vehicles on the street, and add character to a streetscape. The brackets can be highly decorative, and won't cover or damage architectural details.

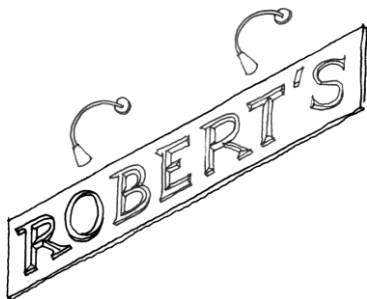
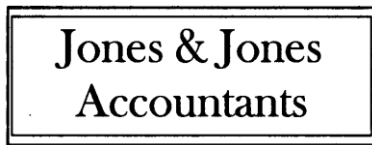


Signs that are simply symbols of a product, such as the fish and watering can shown here, can convey as much information as does a text sign.

Lighting for hanging signs should come from wall mounted gooseneck lamps or spotlights whose light is directed away from viewers' eyes as best possible. Any electrical conduit to these fixtures should be as hidden as possible. The fixtures need to be submitted to the Board for review along with the sign application.



Signs should be rather simple, conveying only the essential information.



Individual letters mounted directly on a building are appropriate provided the method of attachment does not cause lasting harm to the wall. It is typically not appropriate to drill holes in masonry walls for this purpose. Attaching the letters to a panel, as shown here, may be less destructive. As with all signs, the lighting fixtures should also be submitted to the Board for review.

## G.7 Signs continued



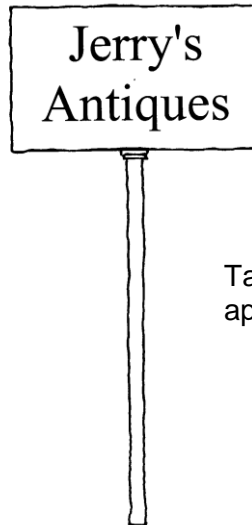
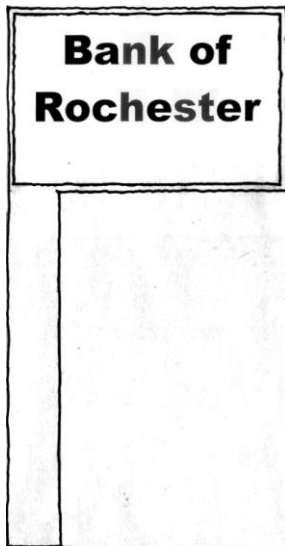
Individual back-lighted opaque letters and individual internally-lighted channel letters are inappropriate.



Panel box signs illuminated from inside are inappropriate in most cases.



"Phony Colonial" signs with New England Colonial motifs are not appropriate for our landmark districts and buildings.



Tall flag or pole signs are usually not appropriate in the preservation districts.



Signs advertising apartments or offices for rent should be as subtle as possible, and not tend toward advertising the building owner or real estate company. They should be removed once the apartment is rented.