

# Harvard Square Conservation District

## Sign Guidelines and Issues



Read Block, JFK Street  
ca. 1968



JFK Street in 1973



Mass. Ave. 1958



JFK Street ca. 1960

## Legacy Wall Signs

Nonconforming because oversized or too high  
Grandfathered until removed



HONG KONG RESTAURANT & LOUNGE 樓港香

HONG KONG CHINESE FOOD

樓港香

1238











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COOLERS

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OPEN

P  
PARKING

LOW ZONE  
NO STOPPING  
ANYTIME







# Sign Review in the Harvard Square Conservation District

Signs that conform to the requirements of the base zoning code (Article 7.0, Signs and Illumination) do not require approval at a hearing of the Historical Commission and can be approved administratively by CHC staff.

## Conforming Wall Signs

1 sq. ft. of sign area per linear foot of frontage

# Conforming Wall Signs



Permitted As-of-Right



# Conforming Wall Signs



Permitted As-of-Right



# Conforming Wall Signs



Permitted As-of-Right



# Conforming Wall Signs



Permitted As-of-Right

## Legacy Projecting Signs

Nonconforming because oversized or above second floor  
Grandfathered until removed





## Grandfathered Projecting Signs



# Grandfathered Projecting Signs





# Grandfathered Projecting Signs

Installed pre-2000, permitted by variance





# Conforming Projecting Signs



Permitted As-of-Right

## Signs Approved with A Certificate of Appropriateness

The Harvard Square Overlay District was amended when the Harvard Square Conservation District was established to transfer jurisdiction to the Historical Commission on the following attributes of sign proposals:

- Number of projecting or free-standing signs per building
- Size of individual wall, freestanding, or projecting signs
- Location of sign in relation to the second-floor window sill height
- Allocation of sign area on various sides of a building or per tenant
- Illumination of projecting signs



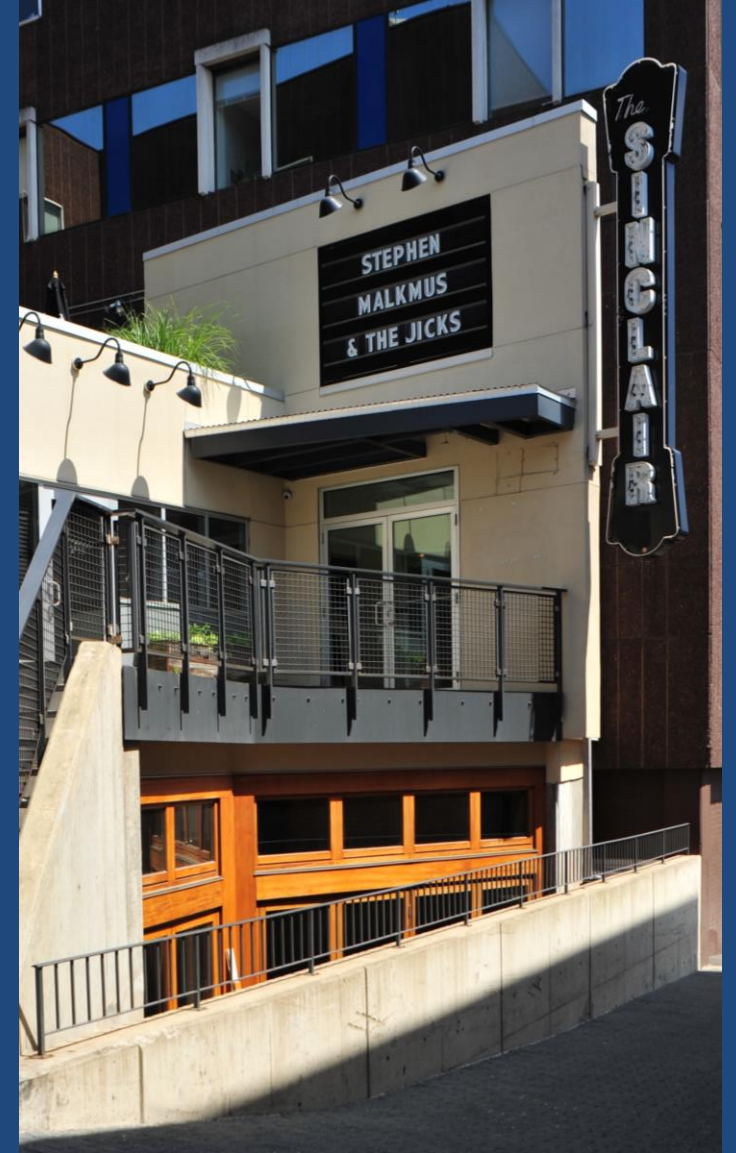
## The CHC cannot waive the following zoning regulations:

- total sign area (the formula in Harvard Square is 1 square foot per foot of frontage)
- 20-foot height limit above grade

Signs that exceed these limits require a variance from the Board of Zoning Appeal.

In reviewing signs for appropriateness, the Cambridge Historical Commission has binding jurisdiction over size, materials, dimensions, illumination, and appearance of signs. Content, color, and graphics – the commercial message – are not reviewed.

# Projecting Signs Permitted with a Certificate of Appropriateness





# Weird Signs Permitted by Certificate of Appropriateness



Steaming Bagel



Lizzie's Cow



Veggie Planet's Tomato



# Weird Signs Somehow Permitted As-of-Right







# Problem Signage

Interior signs



# Problem Signage



Interior signs





# Problem Signage

Interior signs





# Problem Signage

Appliqué



# Problem Signage

Appliqué





# Problem Signage

Appliqué



# Awnings





# Awnings as signage





# Banners





# Murals





# Street Art

