



# THE MILL MOTIF

## WHERE SHOULD THE MILL MOTIF BE USED?

The Mill Motif is only required for temporary sidewalk/a-frame signs in the Central Business District and the Cochecho Waterfront District.

For permanent signs (i.e. wall/awning signs and projecting signs), the Mill Motif design criteria are optional. This option allows business and property owners to add an additional one (1) square foot of sign area per one (1) foot of business frontage to permanent signs that meet the Mill Motif criteria.

So, for example, a building in the Central Business District that has thirty (30) feet of frontage on Central Avenue may have up to two (2) permanent signs having a total area of no more than thirty (30) square feet.

However, by employing the Mill Motif criteria, the business is afforded double the sign area, e.g. two (2) thirty (30) square foot signs, or one twenty (20) square foot and one (1) forty (40) square foot sign, or one (1) sixty (60) square foot sign, or some other combination.

### For More Information:

Department of Planning and Community Development  
288 Central Ave.  
Dover, NH 03820  
(603) 516-6008

## Motif Explained

### Introduction

A recurring architectural theme exists within the Central Business District, where the use of brick, granite and slate dominates much of the existing commercial building stock.

Influenced by the early 19th century mill development, signage was closely integrated with the style and composition of the building, often consisting of handsomely carved and painted wooden signboards. The use of dark background tones, highlighted with bright lettering was dominant. Projecting signs were typically constructed from dark hued metal, cast iron in particular, and internal lighting or use of plastics, aluminum and vinyl was nonexistent. The use of a Mill Motif signage theme is an attempt to promote a style or architectural continuity within Dover's urban center that is reflective of our historical character.

### What is the Design Criteria?

- Color.
  - ◇ No more than three (3) colors are preferred, including black and white. Lettering shall preferably be one (1) color.
- Materials.
  - ◇ Traditional materials, such as wood, glass, brass, bronze or iron, are preferred. The use of plastic, aluminum and vinyl will only be permitted if styled and composed to imitate wood or iron.
  - ◇ Wooden signs shall be constructed of dense, clear wood that adapts to engraving/carving and paint or stain. Ordinary plywood will not withstand exposure; therefore, only overlay, exterior or marine plywood shall be permitted.
- Lettering.
  - ◇ No more than one (1) lettering style shall be permitted per sign.
  - ◇ (Light-colored letters on a dark background are preferred. Dark letters on a light background shall only be permitted if it complements the building's color composition.
  - ◇ Product trademarks are discouraged; however, trade signs (e.g., a shoe for a cobbler, a mortar and pestle for a druggist) are preferred.
  - ◇ Letter styles shall be limited to the classic genre, i.e., Copper plate Gothic, Times, Franklin Gothic, Benton, Clarendon, Haas Helvetica, Folio Caravelle Medium, Windsor, and Times Roman.

Additional criteria apply to permanent signs located directly on a building façade per Section 170-32.P of the City of Dover Code.

### Examples of downtown business signs which demonstrate the Mill Motif:



A temporary sign



A wall sign



A projecting sign