



Minute Man National Historical Park

SIGN PLAN OVERVIEW

National Park Service | Harpers Ferry Center | **December 2025**

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Introduction

Minute Man National Historical Park is comprised of over 1,000 acres and straddles Route 2A, Lexington Road, Monument Street, Liberty Street, and Barretts Mill Road through the towns of Lexington, Lincoln, and Concord. The park has approximately one million visitors annually, with peak visitation during April commemorative events and Fall foliage season. The Visitor Center(s) are closed during the winter season, necessitating that clear and concise wayfinding is available to provide direction during these off times.

The purpose of this report is to evaluate the current signage system in and around the park, including vehicular and pedestrian circulation guidance. The goal set forth by the NPS is to develop a comprehensive signage replacement program that is easy to follow, reflects the NPS signage standards and allows for expansion and flexibility. The project will be installed in advance of the 250th anniversary of the start of the American Revolutionary War, in 2025.

The project team gathered field data over two days by a team of four from November 7-8, 2022. This report includes the on-site survey of existing conditions, inventory of the current signage, and voids and gaps in the sign program. The report also includes

recommendations for improvements to provide an appropriate sense of arrival, direction, and information designed to improve the comfort level of all Minute Man National Historical Park visitors.

The current sign program lacks clear wayfinding, which makes comprehending directional flow difficult. Signage is worn, has gaps in wayfinding, lacks labels for historic sites and buildings, and does not present a true sense of direction or arrival. Kiosks, trailheads, and trail directional signage is also minimal and requires updating. Additionally, park-specific regulatory signage like STOP, ONE WAY, DISABLED PARKING, etc., requires updating to meet the current Federal MUTCD standards for size, height, and visibility.

Route 2A (Mass Ave and Merritt Road in Lexington and North Great Road in Lincoln), plus Lexington Road, Monument Road, Liberty Street, and Barretts Mill Road in Concord are the primary roads to the park's historic destinations, such as the visitor centers, battle sites, trails, and parking areas at the park. Along the main roadway through the park (Route 2A) several other roads intersect, most notably Route 128/I-95 to the east and Route 2 to the south (Illustration 1).



Since Route 2A is a two-lane public roadway operational 24/7/365, traffic passes directly through the Battle Road Unit of the park on an east/west access at peak times, which can cause a safety risk.

Visitors are often subjected to locals commuting through the park at higher rates of speed. Just as locals are frustrated by visitors who require additional reaction time to determine where parking and other points of interest are located, resulting in slower traffic and congestion. In 2000 the traffic count for this road was 20,000 vehicles per day. Traffic rates of speed vary from 25-40 mph.

Within the Battle Road Unit, the Battle Road Trail (Illustration 2) is a 5.5-mile interpretive trail accommodating pedestrians, strollers, wheelchairs, and bicycles. Eight parking lots with designated accessible parking spaces facilitate trail access along the east/west route on the north side of Route 2A and Lexington Road. The Battle Road Trail links various historic sites and landmarks. These include Meriam's Corner, historic farming fields, Brooks Village, Hartwell Tavern, Captain William Smith

House, Paul Revere Capture Site, Minute Man Visitor Center, and Fiske Hill.

Lexington Road extends west from the Battle Road Unit to The Wayside Unit and into historic Monument Square in Concord Center. Monument and Liberty streets extend north to the North Bridge Unit. Within the North Bridge Unit, the North Bridge Trail provides access between parking lots, the North Bridge Visitor Center, Buttrick Gardens, and the historic North Bridge over the Concord River. Further west, Barretts Mill Road extends through the Barretts Mill Unit, which was added to the park in 2009, and remains without park identity signs.

East of the park is Route 128/I-95 with 100,000 vehicles passing each day with a posted rate of speed of 55 mph. South of the park is Route 2, a four-lane route with 50,000 vehicles passing through each day at a posted rate of speed of 55 mph. Arriving at the park from either Lexington or Concord ends of the linear park necessitates clear wayfinding to and from each site to aid those unfamiliar with the gaps in park ownership.

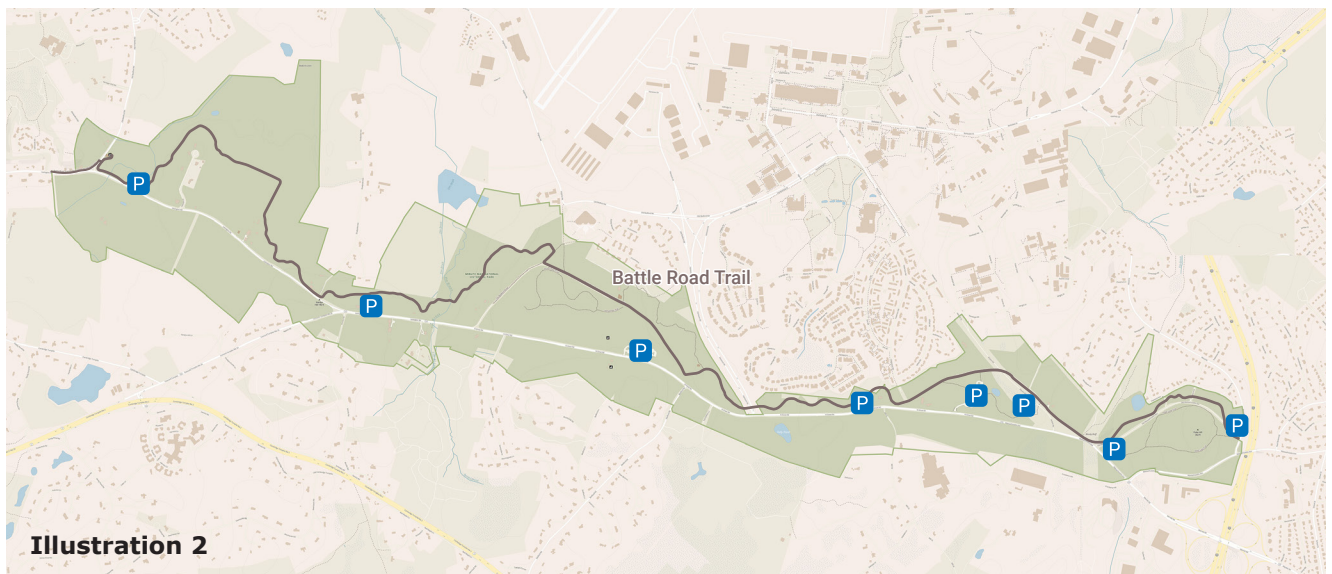


Illustration 2

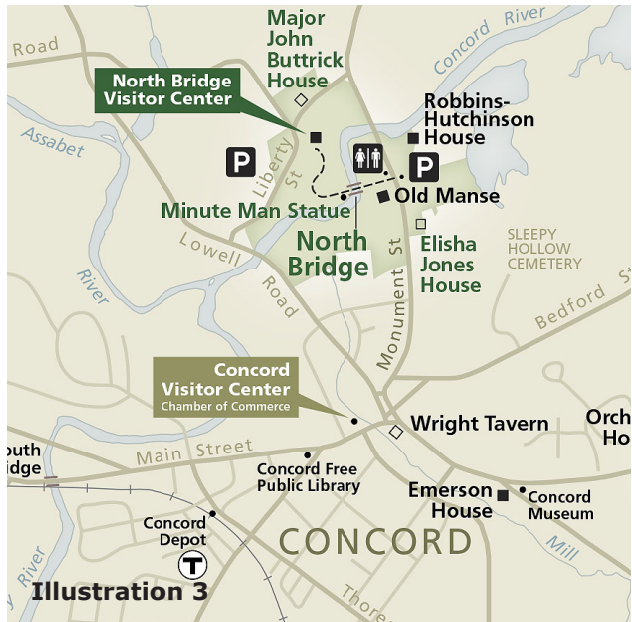


Illustration 3



In Concord Center, clear directional signage is needed along roads leading into the Center and to roads leading to the park units. Signs should also distinguish between the park’s visitor center and the town of Concord’s visitor center (Illustration 3).

At gateways into the park, entrance signage is required to present a sense of arrival. From entry points, signs provide further guidance for parking, accessible access, visitor centers, trailheads, restrooms, and other destinations.

The primary Minute Man Visitor Center façade should clearly be identified and welcoming to an unfamiliar visitor upon arrival. At this location, informational and regulations signage should be posted in a prominent location and convey hours of operation (sunrise to sunset) and other exemptions like no metal detecting or firearms, plus regulations on trash, pets, and bicycle use. The use of international symbols to complement the written messages will assist non-English-speaking visitors. Signage should be inclusive and consider all populations, including disabled and multi-generational.

To summarize, the current signage system is dated and often does not link destinations together as there is a lack of concise wayfinding and direction. Age, weather, and materials used for the construction of these signs have rendered many useless or no longer extant.

The Battle Road Trail signs within the Battle Road Unit were designed as part of the trail design in the late 1990s and are distinctive with wooden posts, black welded iron frames, fasteners, and post accent bands on wooden posts.

Sign placement, font, size, and materials should be considered, so signage does not detract from the historic battle scene and landscape setting. Signs should evoke a rustic character, similar to what is being asked of MassDOT in their use of timber versus steel guardrails.

Vehicular Wayfinding

Visitors will see three sign types as they approach the park Highway Guide Signs, Boundary Signs, and Pathfinder Signs.

The highway guide signs on Routes 2 and 128/I-95 currently do not feature the correct park name or, where utilized, arrowhead. It is recommended the signage should be updated to the current standards with correct messages.

A portion of the project that was planned by the Harpers Ferry Center provides the placement and layout for the park's boundary signage.

Pathfinder signs will be utilized within the boundary of the park along the main roadway to provide vehicular wayfinding. These signs should identify the locations of parking lots and directional flow to and from the Battle Road Trail, North Bridge Trail, as well as key destinations.

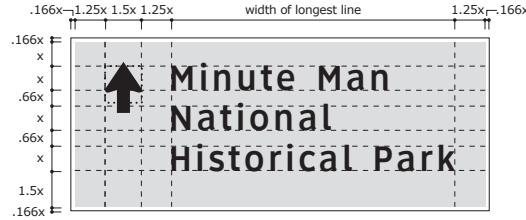


Highway Guide Signs

1/4"=1'-0"

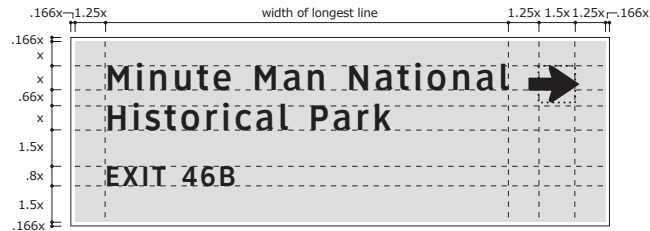
Sign Type

HG-1.0D
Highway Guide 3-line Legend
with Directional Arrow



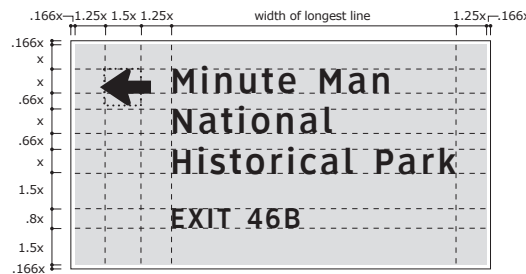
Sign Type

HG-1.0DL
Highway Guide 2-line Legend
with Secondary Direction
with Directional Arrow



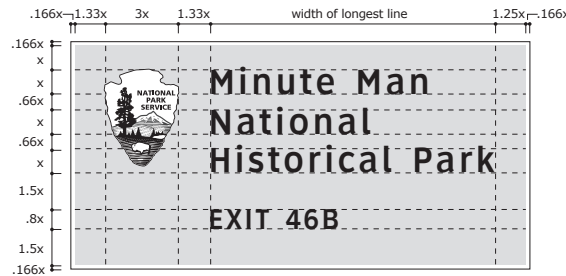
Sign Type

HG-1.0DL
Highway Guide 3-line Legend
with Secondary Direction
with Directional Arrow



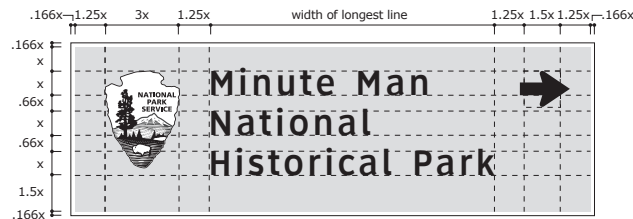
Sign Type

HG-2.0A
Highway Guide 3-line Legend
with Advanced Guidance
and NPS Arrowhead



Sign Type

HG-2.0D
Highway Guide 3-line Legend
with Directional Arrow



Interior alignment grid, 1.5x square
Overall size of arrow, 2x square

Highway Guide Signs are used on public highways and expressways to guide visitors to a park.

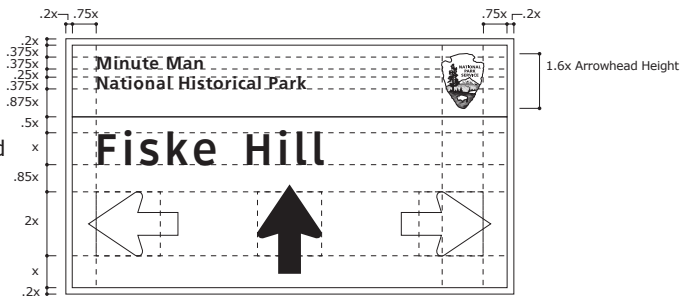
These signs are installed by MassDOT and will require coordination to modify layout and content.

Sign Type
 PB 1.0 - 8.0
 Motorist Guidance Park Boundary
 4" Cap Height
 70" x 38"

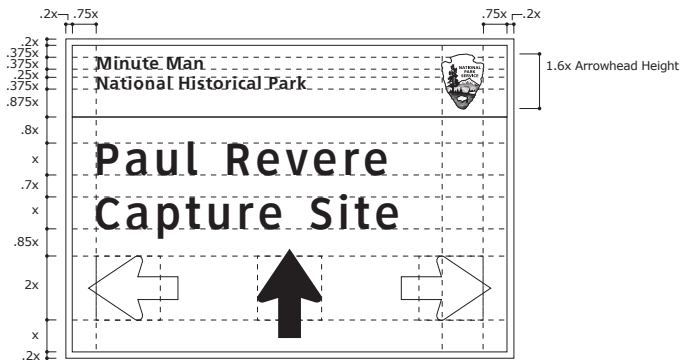


Pathfinder Signs

Sign Type
 PF-1.0D
 Pathfinder 1-line Primary Legend
 with Directional Arrow



Sign Type
 PF-2.0D
 Pathfinder 2-line Primary Legend
 with Directional Arrow



Pathfinders are utilized within the park and serve as an additional assistant in guiding visitors to specific park sites and features in urban and highly developed suburban environments.



Interior alignment grid, 1.5x square
 Overall size of arrow, 2x square

Parking Lot Signage

A pathfinder sign would be suggested at the entrance of each parking lot to identify the lot and hours of operation.

Many parking lots have faded painted graphics

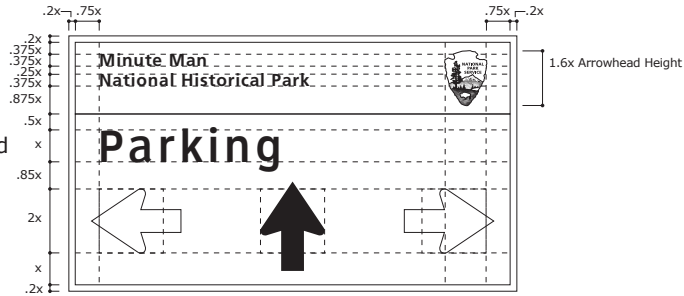
indicating directional flow, accessible parking, etc., on paved areas creating a hazard for traffic flow. It is recommended that these be repainted along with the necessary updates to the signage program to allow the entire system to flow together.



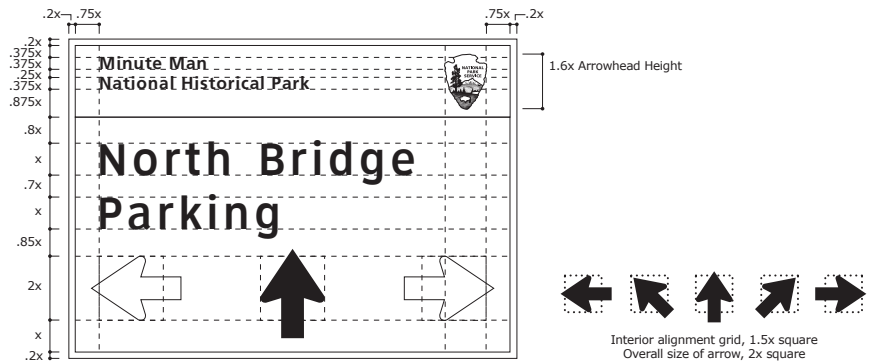
Pathfinder Signs

1/2"=1'-0"

Sign Type
PF-1.0D
Pathfinder 1-line Primary Legend
with Directional Arrow

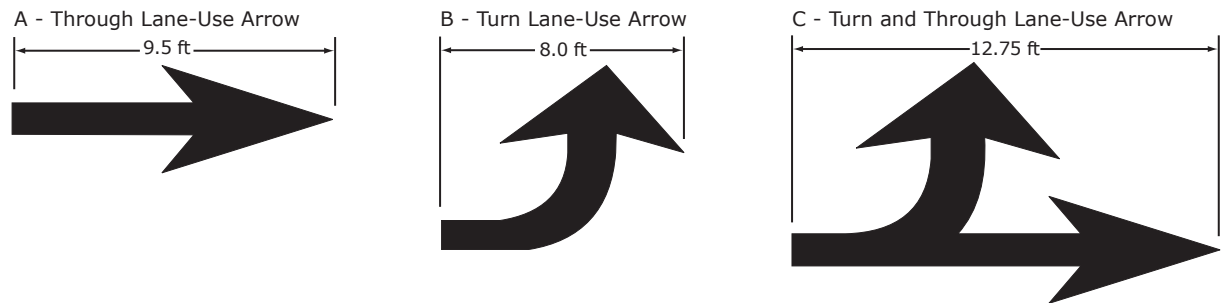


Sign Type
PF-2.0D
Pathfinder 2-line Primary Legend
with Directional Arrow



Except from the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)

Figure 3B-24. Examples of Standard Arrows for Pavement Markings



Notes:

1. Typical sizes for normal installation; sizes may be reduced approximately one-third for low-speed urban conditions; larger sizes may be needed for freeways, above average speeds, and other critical locations.
2. The narrow elongated arrow designs shown in Drawings A, B, and C are optional.
3. For proper proportion, see the Pavement Markings chapter of the "Standard Highway Signs and Markings" book (see Section 1A.11).

Informational Kiosks

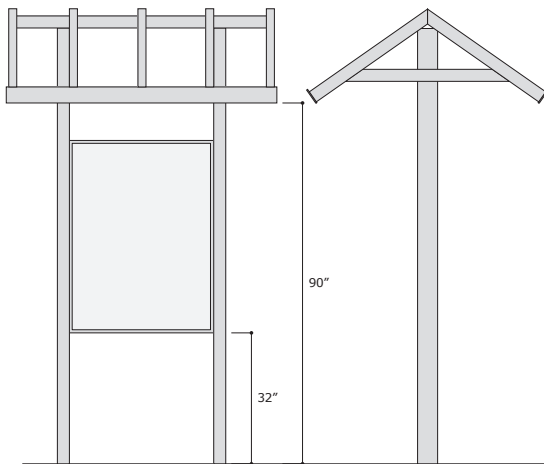
Once parked, a clear list of information as to what can be seen along the way and other posted flyers, maps, and interpretive information should be housed under

a covered kiosk sign that is readily visible from the parking area. A one panel or a two-panel kiosk would be recommended, based on content.

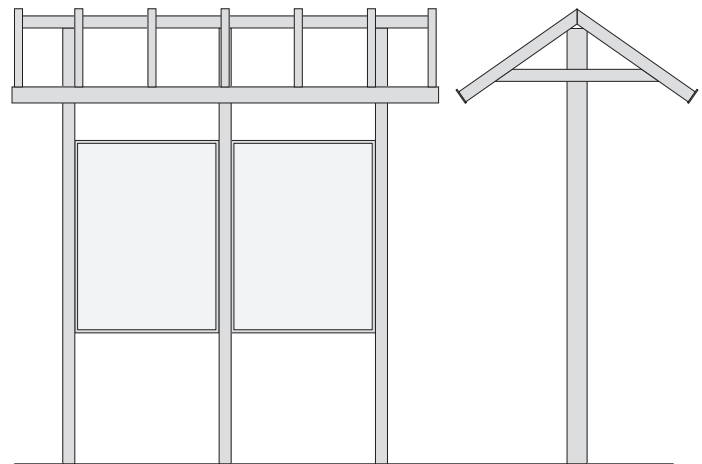


Upright Roof Signs - 36" Series

1/2"=1'-0"



UP-36x48 with Roof
3x5 Post
Typical for smaller parking lot areas at trailheads



UPN2-36x48 with Roof
3x5 Post
Used in heavier traffic areas like the Visitor Centers

Trailheads

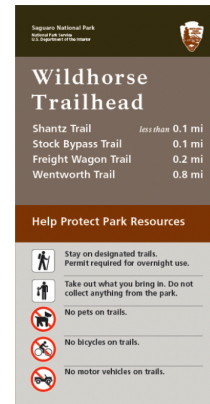
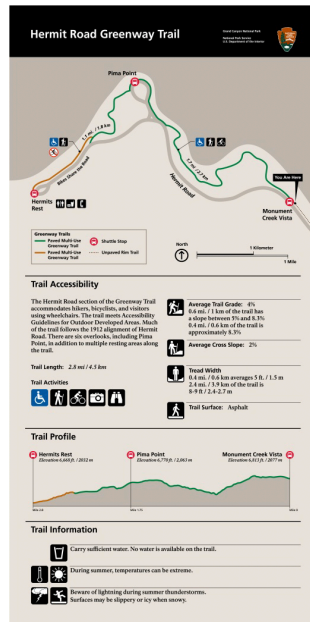
At the start of all trails, a trailhead sign is required to identify restrictions, level of difficulty, distance, and attractions along the way. This is a key component, especially for the disabled or physically limited population, as many of the trails are not accessible. Some of the trails have irregular surfaces, like gravel, yet currently they are identified with an accessible symbol. Verification as to the acceptable terrain

should be provided by an accessibility expert prior to the planning of these locations. This is beyond the scope of work for this phase but will be necessary during the planning stage of the project. When it is determined which trails are non-compliant or access is limited, the current signs should be removed and the non-accessible symbol added to the trailhead sign near other warning symbols.



Trailhead Panel

The sample trailhead panels are from other NPS sites and illustrate layouts only, colors and information displayed do not reflect final design suggestions for Minute Man National Historical Park.



Battle Road Trail Markers

Granite obelisks are located along the Battle Road Trail with messaging relating to the visitor’s proximity to either Boston Harbor or Meriam’s Corner. As these markers relate to the entirety of the Battle Road trail

rather than the length of the trail within the boundary of the park, it is not recommended that these be altered and that they remain in place.



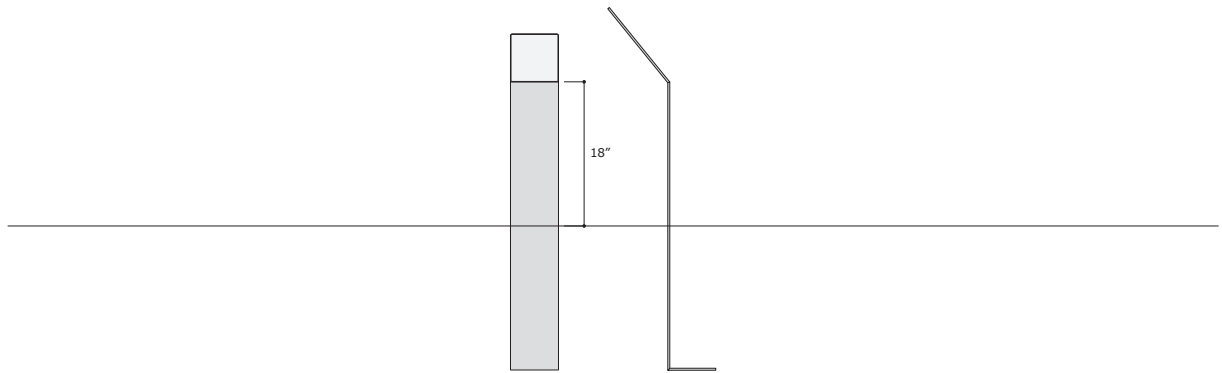
Trail Distance Markers

Sections of the trails, most notably the Vernal Pond Loop, Fiske Hill Loop, Parkers Revenge Loop, and the trail behind the Captain William Smith House that connects to the Hartwell Tavern, do not have distance

markers. It is recommended that the 6" x 6" trailside sign should be utilized at 1/10 mile increments along trails.

Trailside Signs - 6" Series

1/2"=1'-0"



TS-6x6
To be utilized when displaying distance only

Interpretive Trail Markers

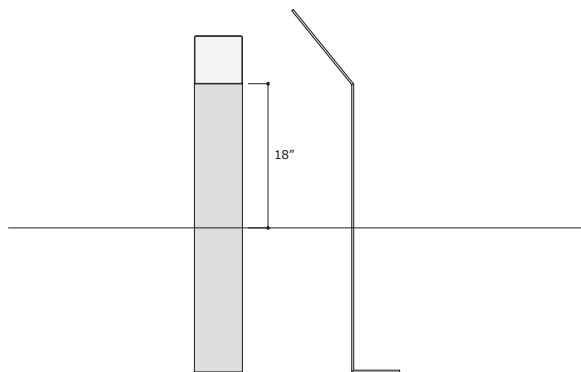
Along the trail are a series of markers that are tied into an interpretive brochure. As these markers are weathered it is recommended that the trailside signs be updated to display appropriate destination information.

The 6" x 6" sign should be utilized in areas that only require a number, while the 6" x 18" sign would be used in areas that require a number and small amount of information.

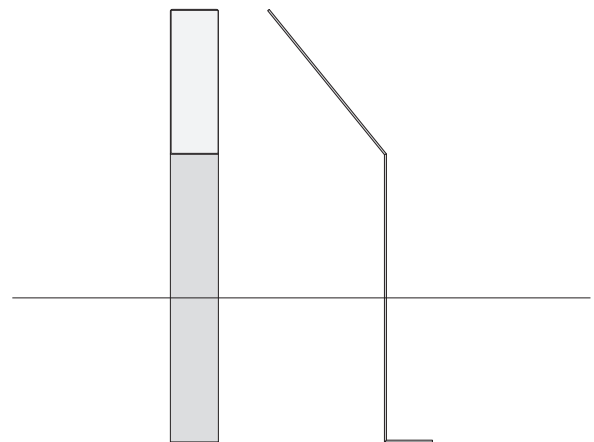


Trailside Signs - 6" Series

1/2" = 1'-0"



TS-6x6
To be utilized when displaying distance only



TS-6x18
To be utilized when displaying distance as well as additional information

Trail Directional Signage

Minimal directional signage can be found along the trails ... and what exists is old and difficult to read. Some of the directional signage leads to points of interest, like historic homes or battlefields. While other locations do not have any current directional signage to clarify one's location.

While the Battle Road Trail is a well maintained accessible trail, the other trails, such as the Vernal Pond Loop, the Fiske Hill Loop, the Parkers Revenge Loop, and the trail behind the Captain William Smith House that connects to the Hartwell Tavern, are

unpaved and not clearly defined and present a major concern. These trails are extremely confusing and offer little to no information as to how to exit them, as they meander through trees in heavily wooded areas. In these instances, a clear message/warning should be conveyed that identifies the conditions and accessibility level of the trail. (Photo 2)

There are some signs that indicate when a trail ends. These signs display a small map to orient a visitor as to how to return to their original point of entry. (Photo 3)



Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 3

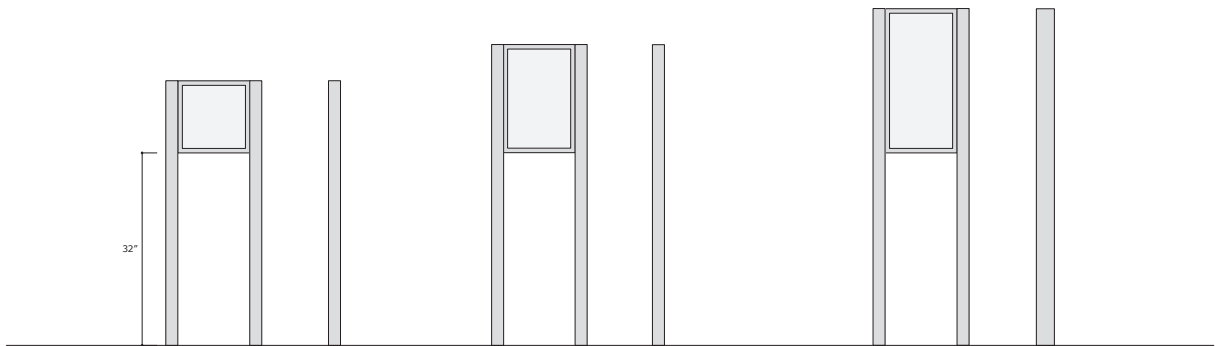
Trail Directional Signage



These panels are to be utilized on paths and trails to provide direction to pedestrians

Upright Signs 12" Series

3/8"=1'-0"



UP-12x12
Barstock Post
or 2x2 Post

UP-12x18
2x2 Post

UP-12x24
2x2 Post
2x3 Post

Size is dependent on content and placement

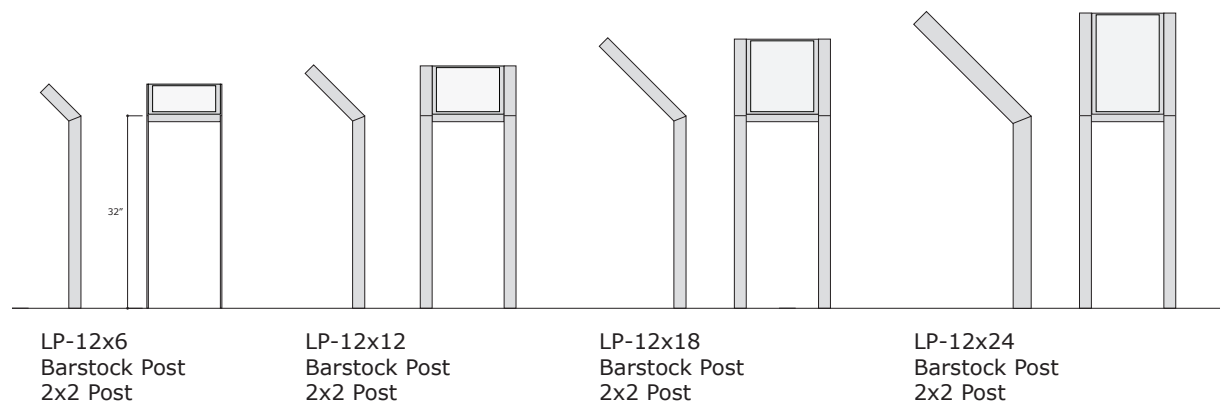
Interpretive Signage

Though not a part of this scope of work, many of the current interpretive signs were found to be faded and show wear making legibility difficult. Consideration

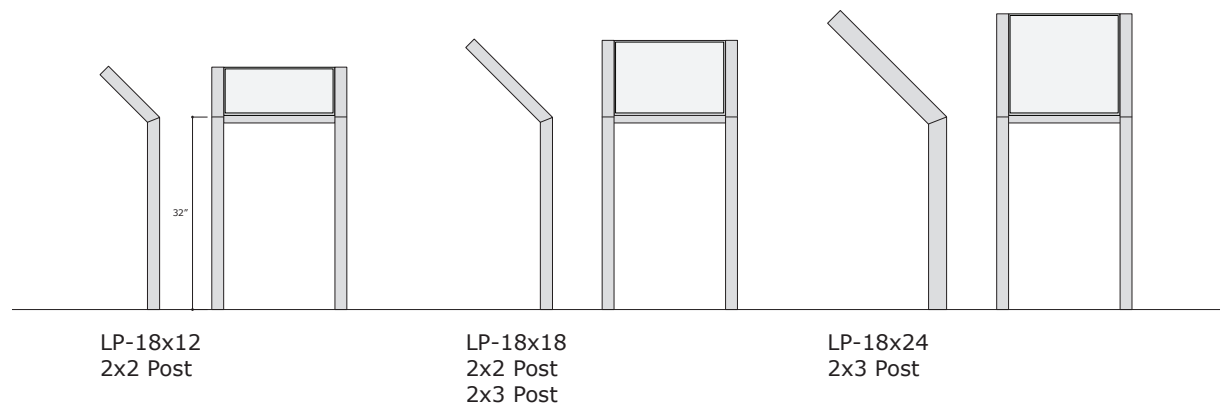
should be given to replacing these in the future to mirror the future sign program.



Low Profile Signs 12" Series



Upright Signs 18" Series



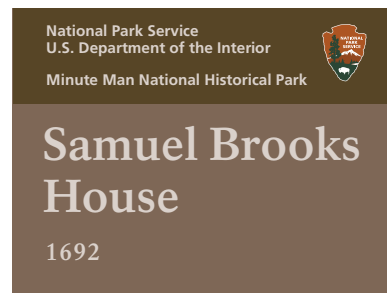
Private Residence Identification

Homes of historic significance may be privately owned, in some instances, and may be used as an occupied dwelling, prohibiting visitors from trespassing on

private property. It is suggested that a sign be consistently added to each of these locations reading: PRIVATE RESIDENCE to maintain owner privacy.

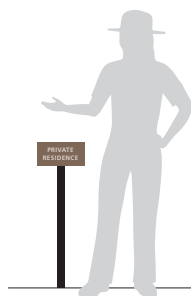


HFC - Phase 1



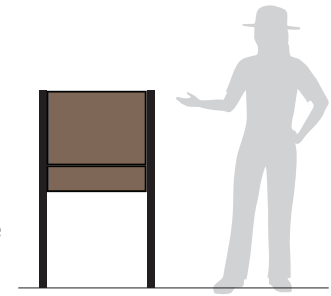
Sign Type

PR - Facility Identity
Private Residence
Direct print aluminum panel



Sign Type

ID - Facility Identity
Painted Aluminum VIS Frame
w/ double-sided direct
print aluminum pane

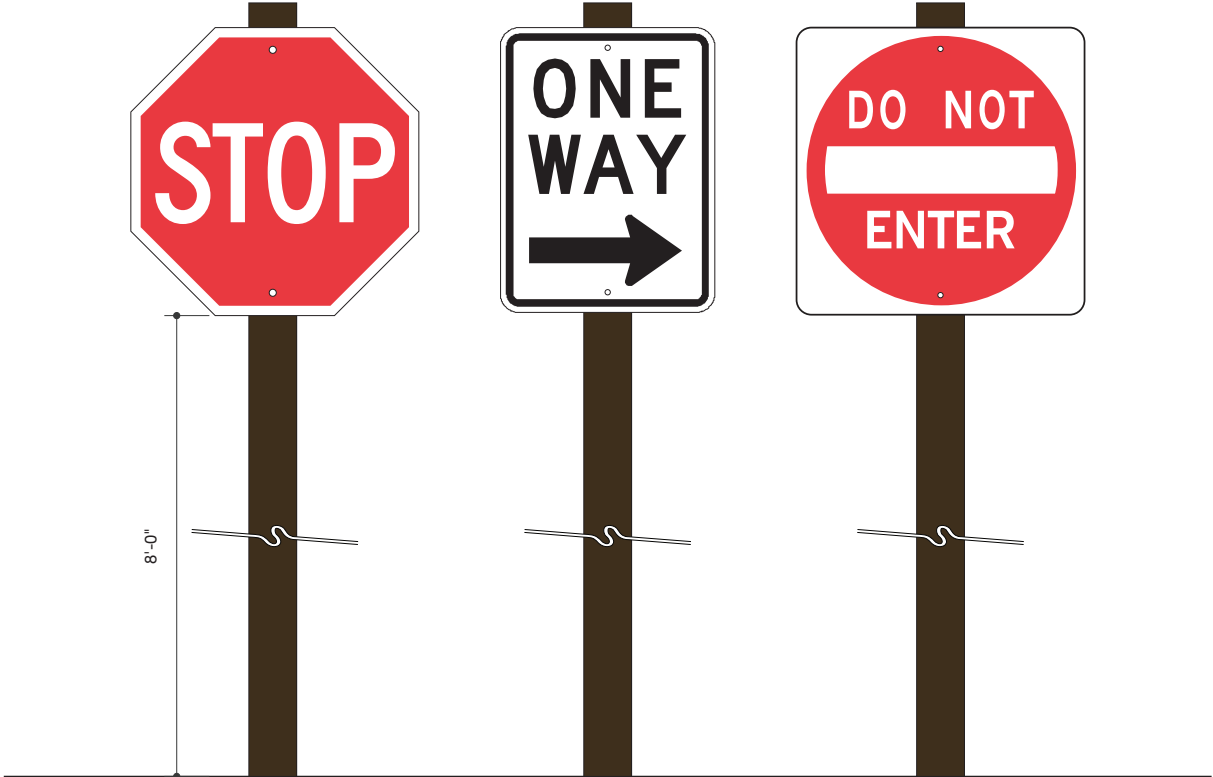


Regulatory Signage

Though not a part of this scope of work, the current regulatory signage located within the park was observed to be non-compliant with state and Federal codes (MUTCD). These include; STOP, ONE

WAY, YIELD, etc. It is recommended that all signs that fall into this category be replaced and updated to meet current MUTCD standards.





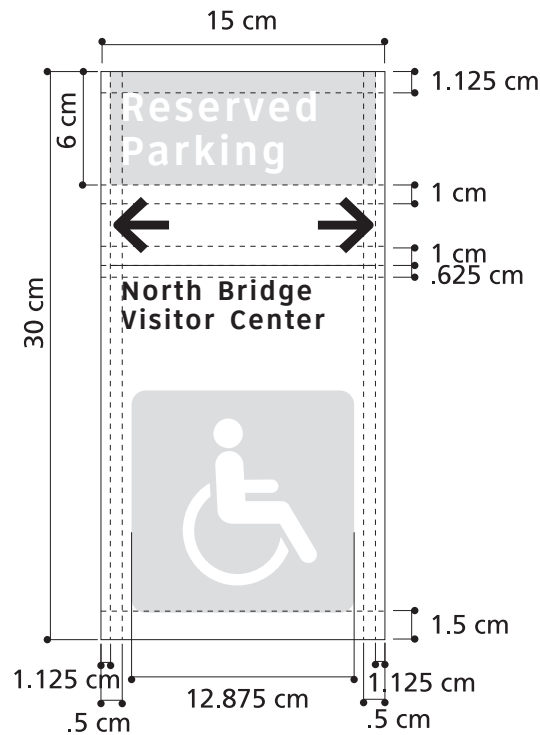
Accessible Signage: Parking Space Identification

Signage can be found at accessible parking spaces located within the park's parking lots. These signs are non-compliant with the current MUTCD or ADA standards. They are mounted too low to the ground and the graphics are brown and white, not in the required white and blue colors, with the appropriate

symbol. The layout of these signs do not present the text with standard symbol. It is recommended that these signs be updated to the appropriate heights and panels to clearly identify parking for the disabled population.



Accessible Parking Signage



3'=1'-0"



Accessible Signage: Parking Pavement Markers

Some parking spaces do not have pavement markers indicating the borders of the parking space and the symbol for accessibility. Many those that do have borders and symbols are faded. These pavement markers should be painted to match MUTCD and ADA requirements. Though not a part of this scope of work, it is suggested that the pavement graphics be updated to clearly define spaces that will be designated for accessible vehicles.

Van-accessible parking spaces should also be identified with the typical sign for accessibility as well as a secondary sign panel that sits below the accessible sign indicating "Van Accessible." These parking spaces also require painted lot graphics; however, they are wider and have a diagonal line pattern that sits to the side of the space to allow for access from a side door of a van.



Except from the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) Section 3B.19 Parking Space Markings

Support:

- 01 Marking of parking space boundaries encourages more orderly and efficient use of parking spaces where parking turnover is substantial. Parking space markings tend to prevent encroachment into fire hydrant zones, bus stops, loading zones, approaches to intersections, curb ramps, and clearance spaces for islands and other zones where parking is restricted.

Standard:

- 02 **Parking space markings shall be white.**

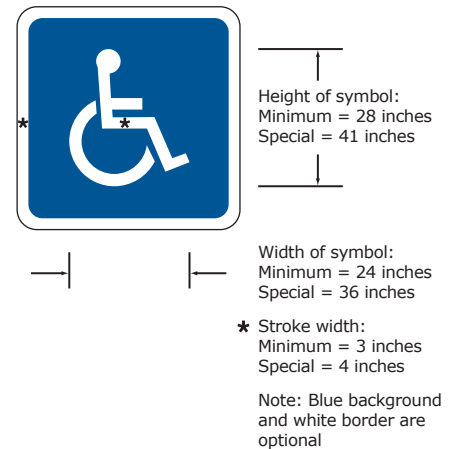
Option:

- 03 Blue lines may supplement white parking space markings of each parking space designated for use only by persons with disabilities.

Support:

- 04 Additional parking space markings for the purpose of designating spaces for use only by persons with disabilities are discussed in Section 3B.20 and illustrated in Figure 3B-22.

Figure 3B-22. International Symbol of Accessibility Parking Space Marking



Room Signage

Room signage, located within buildings and on exterior doors, should be ADA-compliant. Many of the currently located restroom signage does display Braille and raised letters with the appropriate symbols.

There are also instances where signs are posted on doors. Signs on doors are non-compliant and

should not be used. The location of these signs is very specific regarding height and placement from door swings. The ADA clearly mandates how signs should look; acceptable fonts, sizes, use of Braille, mounting and color contrast are identified. The following is an excerpt from the ADA related to how room signage should be executed.



Two Categories of Signs

- Signs for identifying a permanent room or space
- Signs giving directions or information about permanent rooms or spaces

Signs Exempt from SAD (Standards for Accessible Design) Requirements

- Building directories
- Menus
- Seat and row designations
- Occupant Names
- Building addresses
- Company names and logos
- Temporary signs (7 days or less)
- Signs in detention and correctional facilities not located in public-use areas.
- Signs in parking facilities (except egress signs)

Standard Location

Mounting Requirements

- 60" (1525 mm) from centerline of sign to the finished floor

Doors that open into a room or space

- Signs must be mounted on the wall next to the latch side
- The baselines of Raised Characters must be located between 48" (lowest Raised Character) and 60" (highest Raised Character) above the finished floor.
- When mounting space is not available on the strike side of the door, the sign can be placed on the nearest adjacent wall

Double Doors

- If only one door is operable, the sign must be mounted to the right of the inactive door
- If both doors are operable, the sign must be mounted to the right of the right-hand door
- If there is no space for the sign on the right side of the door, it can be placed on the nearest adjacent wall

Doors opening outward into the path of travel

- The sign must be outside of the arc of the door swing
- In these situations, the Raised Characters on an identification sign must be centered within an 18" square, clear floor space

Mounted on Door

The sign may be mounted onto the door itself only if all three of these conditions are met:

- The sign is mounted on the "push" side of the door that opens into the room
- The door has a power closer
- The door has no hold-open device

Braille Requirements

Braille dots must have a rounded or domed top .024 - .035" in height

- Contracted Grade 2 Braille
- Grade 2 Braille (Library of Congress or Contracted Braille) includes additional characters and character combinations that represent contractions of words and word components
- Located directly below corresponding Raised Characters
- Must be placed below entire text when Raised Character text is multi-lined
- Dots must be rounded or domed rather than sharp-edged cylinders
- Separated by a minimum of 3/8" from Raised Characters, borders and decorative elements
- Use lower-case letters, except for upper-case for the first word of sentences, proper nouns and names, individual letters of the alphabet, and acronyms
- Numerals 1-9 and 0 in Braille are identical to the letters A-J preceded by the Braille character #
- The octothorpe (#) need only be used once preceding a multiple-digit numbers
- Initial capital letters are indicated by preceding the character with a single dot in the number-6 position
- All caps are indicated by preceding the word by two "dot-6" characters

- “California Sign Braille” mandated individual dots be positioned slightly farther apart for easier tactile reading.
- A complete guide can be found in the English Braille American Edition

Raised Character Requirements

- Only sans serif styles with normal to thin strokes
- Only upper-case characters
- No serif, italic, oblique, script, or highly decorative typefaces permitted

Finish and Contrast

- Must have non-glare finish
- Characters must contrast with background
- A minimum of 70% contrast is recommended

Contrast Formula:

$$\text{Contrast} = [(B1 - B2) / B1] \times 100$$

B1 = Light Reflectance Value (LRV) of lighter area

B2 = Light Reflectance Value (LRV) of darker area

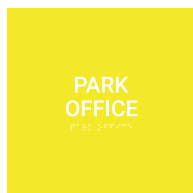


B1 = Verizon White - 92.0 (LRV)

B2 = Sailboat Blue - 9.8 (LRV)

$$\text{Contrast} = [(92.0 - 9.8) / 92.0] \times 100$$

Contrast = 89%



B1 = Verizon White - 92.0 (LRV)

B2 = Bright Sun Yellow - 67.2 (LRV)

$$\text{Contrast} = [(92.0 - 67.2) / 92.0] \times 100$$

Contrast = 27%



Character Size

- Minimum 5/8” and Maximum 2” height
- Raised a minimum of 1/32” above the background

Character Spacing

- The distance between characters must be minimum of 1/8” and maximum of 4 times the character stroke width
- Distances are measured between the closest points of adjacent characters

Line Spacing

- Space between lines of copy must be a minimum of 135% and a maximum of 170% of the corresponding uppercase “I” height (measured from baseline to baseline)
- Line spacing between multiple messages on one sign can be greater than 170%
- 3/8” minimum separation from Braille, raised borders, and decorative elements
- Line spacing requirements are the same for both Raised and Visual Characters

Visual Character Requirements

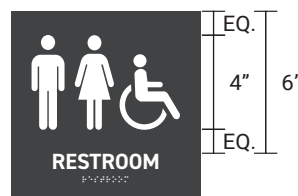
- Signs providing directions to, or information about permanent rooms or spaces are only required to display Visual Characters
- May be Serif or Sans Serif
- No italics, oblique, scripts, or highly decorative typefaces are permitted
- Follow the same Finish and Contrast Standards as Raised Characters

Exception: Requirements for Visual Characters also apply to Raised Characters, unless separate Raised and Visual Characters are provided.

Pictogram Requirements

Pictograms are not required for most uses, except for the International Symbol of Accessibility, if a pictogram is used it must meet specific requirements:

- Located on a minimum 6” high field, width may vary
- Pictogram should not exceed 4” and should be centered vertically in field
- No Raised or Visual Characters or Braille in field
- Raised Character descriptors must be located below the pictogram



Summary

In conclusion, this document highlights many of the issues found in the existing signage at Minute Man National Historical Park and voids within the overall program. It also makes recommendations for upgrades and changes. As a foundation for the future planning and implementation of permanent signage, considerations has been given to the “keys” of a comprehensive signage program.

Planning Considerations:

1. Who is utilizing the signage?
2. What is the message: Informative, warning, directional, identification?
3. Do signs reflect the NPS Sign Standards for brand and visibility?
4. Where are signs located and how and where do they fit in their environment?
5. Do the signs function?
6. Are signs durable with expanded longevity?

There are four types of signage that together comprise a comprehensive plan: informational, identification, directional and regulatory. Each independently has a separate purpose, together they serve as one unit connecting the overall site and its ease of use.

Signage should be legible, cohesive, inclusive and consistent with the NPS brand and the VIS Sign Standards. The signage program goals are to inform of the park’s rich historic purpose and destinations and the interconnectivity between roadways, parking, trails, visitor centers and other amenities.

Future emphasis on these key aspects for an overall signage plan will afford visitors a truly inspiring experience when exploring all that the Minute Man National Historical Park has to offer.