Model Design Guidelines for Main Streets & Commercial Corridors

Prepared by January 2018

BCPC
Bucks County Planning Commission
## Table of Contents

Introduction .............................................................................................................................................. 1

1. Purpose of Design Guidelines ............................................................................................................. 5

2. Applicability ........................................................................................................................................ 5

3. Procedures.......................................................................................................................................... 6

4. Design Overview ............................................................................................................................... 7

5. Architectural Overview ..................................................................................................................... 7

6. Building Guidelines ......................................................................................................................... 15

7. Site Development Guidelines .......................................................................................................... 43

Appendix A - References ..................................................................................................................... 71

Appendix B - Design Guidelines Plan Review Checklist .................................................................. 75
Introduction

Every community possesses qualities and assets that contribute to its unique character. Without guidance and a clear vision, a community’s strengths in its buildings and environs can fade, or even worse, become overshadowed by undesirable development. The purpose of the Model Design Guidelines for Main Streets and Commercial Corridors is to define the qualities of architecture, building layout, site design, and public realm spaces that make for successful development. Design guidelines serve as a tool for guiding development that preserves, reflects, or takes inspiration from the existing architecture and physical environment that comprise each community. Although the design guidelines by themselves cannot guarantee good design, they are a powerful resource in shaping development that contributes to an attractive, vibrant, and livable community.

The application of design guidelines is one of many planning tools that a municipality can implement to help influence the type, nature, appearance and character of development to meet a desired vision. Experience has shown that developers are often willing to work with a community, but they need clear input upfront from the municipality. Municipal officials, however, are often unclear about what they want their community to look like. Design guidelines serve as a visual preference model to clearly illustrate a desired aesthetic within a specific community context. Design guidelines promote the idea that buildings and properties are assets that should stand the test of time and serve as sources of community pride.

Design guidelines help elected officials and administrators by reducing subjectivity and providing objectivity regarding the desired fit and finish for a particular development. Guidelines that are based on existing community character are defensible and help to manage public expectations of completed project aesthetics. They are intended to provide greater clarity and guidance for developers, landowners, and reviewing entities for a variety of design issues, including:

- Architectural style and elements
- Building massing, scale and façade
- Sustainable design
- Site development and streetscape design
- Public spaces and amenities
- Signage and lighting
- Walls, fencing, and landscaping
- Outdoor dining and sidewalk cafes
In order to be user-friendly and effective, design guidelines must contain concise provisions along with photos, illustrations, and diagrams that are clear, understandable, and implementable.

**How to Use the Design Guidelines**
The following model design guidelines are provided in ordinance format and are intended to be used as a template that should be tailored to satisfy a community’s unique character and vision. These model design guidelines could be incorporated into a municipality’s subdivision and land development ordinance. Another option is to apply the design guidelines as part of an overlay district that can be placed in the appendix of a municipal ordinance. The topic of design recommendations versus design requirements is a subject of various case law. Ultimately, the municipality’s solicitor should review the final ordinance language and applicability to ensure there are no legal implications that may be subject to challenge.

Where there are inconsistencies between the model ordinance provisions and existing ordinance requirements, the provisions or requirements should be revised to eliminate any discrepancies or conflict. Sample photos from various locations are included in these guidelines, but municipal officials may wish to replace certain photos to provide local examples. Municipal officials looking for further information on design guidelines can consult Appendix A, which lists numerous sources that were used in the compilation of the guidelines. A “Plan Review Checklist“ can be found in Appendix B and serves as a tool for a reviewing entity to identify adequacies and deficiencies for each subsection of the design guidelines.

**Other Tools for Improving a Community’s Appearance**
There are other ways to influence a community’s desired aesthetics and visual appearance. Design review is the evaluation of the appearance of proposed buildings and structures as part of the subdivision and land development approval process. The goal being the improvement of the aesthetic quality of the built environment. Additionally, a municipal zoning ordinance may be amended to add or remove certain permitted uses, so that that the uses permitted are in character with the context or area of interest. Area and dimensional requirements may be modified to ensure that building scale and mass are consistent with the desired appearance. For instance, to ensure that buildings are located close to adjacent roadways and parking is located to the side or rear of buildings, build-to lines (minimum and maximum building setback lines) could be established. Off-
site signs or billboards could be prohibited within certain contexts such as within village settings or traditional neighborhood areas.

Municipalities interested in improving community character and encouraging compliance with design guidelines may wish to utilize incentive approaches, such as providing density bonuses, parking reductions, or other incentives that are consistent with the municipality’s development goals.

The ultimate goal is to provide a framework that encourages dialogue and reasonable guidance on the community’s visual character.
Section ___. Design Guidelines.
(Municipality should determine which section of the subdivision and land development ordinance shall be referenced for the purpose of these guidelines).

1. Purpose of Design Guidelines.

   A. Provide guidance for existing and new development to reflect the traditional historic character of (insert municipality or location).

   B. Build awareness of the community’s historical, natural, and physical environment.

   C. Encourage design creativity to enhance the appearance of the (e.g., Town Center, Village Commercial, Traditional Neighborhood Commercial) District. (Municipal officials shall determine what area of the municipality the guidelines shall apply.)

   D. Encourage coordinated, area-wide development at (e.g., town center, village commercial, traditional neighborhood commercial) -scale.

   E. Provide an impetus for attracting and retaining businesses within the district.

2. Applicability.

   A. These guidelines incorporate clear graphic illustrations that convey the (insert municipality or location) design goals. The goals promote the ideal that buildings and properties are community assets—assets that shall stand the test of time. The (insert municipality or location) wants new development to contribute to the sense that (insert appropriate term such as town center, village commercial, traditional neighborhood commercial) areas are cared for, and for new buildings to be a source of local pride. These guidelines do not “mimic” history, but instead, ensure that new development or redevelopment projects complement the community’s heritage.

   B. Certain architectural themes, styles, and construction materials are common to the design heritage, whether past or present, of (insert municipality or location). This set of design guidelines for (insert municipality or location) draws on architectural history and tradition in crafting design solutions that incorporate old
and new buildings into a visually pleasing and cohesive place and further the (e.g., town center, village commercial, traditional neighborhood commercial) planning goals and enhance its character.

C. The guidelines identify basic design principles that enhance the appearance of the (e.g., town center, village commercial, traditional neighborhood commercial) areas. They can be applied to rehabilitation or repair of existing buildings as well as to construction of new buildings, which in (e.g., town center, village commercial, traditional neighborhood commercial) areas, often occurs as infill development on parcels of land interspersed among existing structures.

D. The guidelines serve as a template for future development within the (e.g., Town Center, Village Commercial, Traditional Neighborhood Commercial) District (Municipal officials shall determine what area of the municipality the guidelines shall apply.), helping potential developers understand the community’s design intentions. They also highlight the importance of patterns of symmetry, form, and other important design details, while addressing elements such as sign placement, lighting, parking, and pedestrian orientation. Implementation of the guidelines shall produce a cohesive, aesthetically pleasing development theme that provides an attractive business environment which exemplifies the traditional character of the community for both customers and residents.

3. Procedures.

A. Developers are encouraged to meet with (insert municipality) officials to evaluate the Building Guidelines Section __.6 and Site Development Guidelines Section __.7. Prior to developing detailed architectural elevations and site plans, applicants shall present photographs of all structures on lots adjacent to the subject site, photographic examples of architectural styles similar to the proposed buildings, and architectural drawings detailing the architectural elements such as doors, windows, eaves, porches, trim, gables, dormers, cornices, and molding to municipal officials.

B. Based upon the existing site conditions, (insert municipality or location) may consider optional design and site development alternatives if the requirements contained within herein are deemed to be unwarranted or inappropriate. If approved, the optional design and site requirements shall be considered as part of the subdivision and/or land development plan.
4. **Design Overview.**

   A. Public policies and reviews of proposed changes and infill construction in *(insert municipality or location)* shall take into account the great diversity of building location, parking forms, and architectural styles that have resulted from preceding eras of development.

   B. New buildings and additions shall reinforce the continuity along road corridors following the historic development pattern.

   C. The scale of the existing built environment shall be maintained and shall influence the scale of proposed changes.

   D. Design shall not consist of simply filling out the bulk allowed by the underlying zoning regulations.

   E. *(Insert municipality or location)* strongly encourages applicants to submit a sketch plan to allow for adequate consideration of design elements.

   F. The Design Guidelines Plan Review Checklist (see Appendix A) is intended to assist municipal officials with plan review. *(Note: This checklist is optional, but if utilized, it should be modified based upon the content and format of the design guidelines ultimately adopted by the municipality).*

5. **Architectural Overview.**

   A. **Architectural Heritage.**

      (1) *(Note: The municipality should insert a summary of the existing local architectural heritage and architectural styles).*

      (2) Below are the preferred architectural styles for *(insert municipality or location).* *(Note: The following is an example but this list should be refined based upon predominate and preferred architectural styles within the subject municipality or community).*

      | Preferred Local Architectural Styles |
      |-------------------------------------|
      | Federal (Adams) | Georgian | Neoclassical |
      | Second Empire   | Greek Revival | Gothic Revival |
      | Queen Anne      | Italianate |  |
B. **Architectural Styles—Illustrated.** The following illustrations from the publication *A Field Guide to American Houses*, by Virginia and Lee McAlester (1984), highlight the primary features of the principal architectural styles in *(insert municipality or location)*. Developers are encouraged to use this reference when planning and designing their project.

**Greek Revival**

- Gabled or hipped roof of low pitch
- Entry porch or full-width porch supported by square or round, prominent columns
- Narrow line of transoms and sidelights around door, usually incorporated into elaborate door surround
- Cornice lines emphasized with width, divided band of trim
Georgian

- Windows with double-hung sash, typically with nine or twelve small panes per sash; windows never in adjacent pairs
- Paned door, normally with decorative crown supported by decorative pilasters
- Row of small rectangular panes beneath crown
- Cornice usually emphasized with tooth-like dentils or other decorative molding

Gothic Revival

- Steeply pitched roof, usually with steep cross gables
- Wall surface extending into gable without break
- One-story entry or full-width porch, commonly with fluted, pointed (Gothic) arches
- Gables commonly with decorated vergeboards
- Windows extending into gables, with Gothic shape
Italiante

Federal (or Adam)
Second Empire

Neoclassical
C. **Architectural Elements.**

(1) Collectively, the local architectural styles provide a palette of architectural elements that shall be used as a basis for new construction, redevelopment projects, and building façades improvements. These architectural elements shall be used creatively, while retaining overall architectural integrity. Building design and construction shall strive to achieve aesthetic appeal and creativity in line with the historic attributes of (insert municipality or location).

(2) Architectural elements such as dormers, cupolas, chimneys, porches, decks, awnings, bays, colonnades, canopies, and other such design elements shall be specific to the architectural styles and consistent with the design theme.

(3) A common mistake when trying to recreate traditional styles is a forced or contrived appearance. This may be the result of building design that incorporates improper proportion, form, scale, or materials. Achieving historical integrity is even more challenging for certain types of
nonresidential uses that typically consist of larger footprints and a continuous façade, but there are techniques, discussed in Sections __.6.D and __.7.C, that can soften or break up building mass.

Not Acceptable
As shown above, developers often intend to design buildings to look historically accurate with varying degrees of success.
Building Guidelines.

A. The building guidelines for new buildings and additions/alterations are intended to reinforce the traditional historic character of (insert municipality or location). Careful control of building and site planning elements must be taken to be considerate of sensitive site conditions. (insert municipality or location) will utilize the following guidelines to evaluate proposals for new and existing buildings and site development.

B. General Guidelines for Additions to Existing Buildings.

(1) Property owners are encouraged to restore, preserve, and maintain the original architectural features such as cornices, lintels, windows, and doors on existing structures. The façade is the most important part of the building to conserve in its original form.

Acceptable

Destroyed by fire, the reconstruction of the restaurant (above left) and the expansion of the restaurant (above right), include architectural elements that are complimentary to the local historic character.

Acceptable

Not Acceptable

The funeral home (above left) is an excellent example of matching the historic integrity of original building and its addition. The office building (above right) incorporates faux stone & stucco exterior with less effective results.
(2) If architectural features cannot be repaired, they shall be replaced with reproductions of the original, where economically and functionally possible. If this is not possible, they shall be replaced with features similar in size and scale to the original.

C. General Guidelines for New Buildings.

(1) New buildings in the (e.g., Town Center, Village Commercial, Traditional Neighborhood Commercial) District shall be compatible with the traditional architectural styles that characterized (insert municipality or location) in its early days. They shall be consistent with the scale and composition of existing historic structures within the (e.g., town center, village commercial, traditional neighborhood commercial) area, particularly those in nearest proximity.

D. Massing, Scale, and Façades. Within (insert municipality or location), context-appropriate building design and composition is one of the (municipality) most important considerations. Factors such as massing, scale, and façades are important to a building’s overall appearance. Creating human-scale, pedestrian-friendly buildings can be achieved by breaking up their mass and creating façades that are compatible with the local architectural styles. Buildings shall not consist of long, monotonous, uninterrupted wall or roof planes. Changes in scale and massing shall be accomplished through graduated increments such as a wall offset, roof line variation, or shift in the height of a wall or cap line. There are various ways to accomplish this effect, as detailed in Sections __.6.D.(1), __.6.D.(2) and __.6.D.(3).

The design of these national chain restaurants vary dramatically in appearance. The building on the left conflicts with, and the building on the right compliments, a historic village setting.
(1) **Horizontal & Vertical Articulation.** Adding vertical elements is sometimes called “adding rhythm” to a building. As cars or pedestrians move past the building, there shall be defined storefronts and aesthetically pleasing architectural details. Appropriate articulation of building façades and roofs helps reduce the monotony of flat façades and rooflines by reducing the perception of bulk.

(a) Horizontal courses can divide the stories of a building and contribute to the architectural building style. They can also be added at the base and roofline of a building.

(b) In retail or mixed-use buildings with street frontages that exceed 20 to 30 feet in length, vertical articulation must be used to break up the mundane look and feel of a continuous façade.
The following design standards shall be provided to enhance horizontal and vertical articulation for visual appeal:

1) Periodically vary the heights of roofs and building setbacks of attached buildings to break up perceived building mass. (Also see Section __.6 .I.)

2) Include architectural details such as pilasters and changes in plane to break up the façades.

3) Provide structural features such as porches, dormers, gables, and bay windows to break up the monotonous expanses of roofs or building frontage.
4) Incorporate horizontal elements such as pent eaves, pediments, sills, and lintels above and below the windows and door.

5) Provide roof line offsets, cross gables, and dormers may help vary the massing and relieve the visual monotony of a single, long roof.

(2) **Modulation and Blank Façades.** Some buildings have long façades without windows or entryways due to floor plan constraints. Using vertical and horizontal articulation as well as modulation can help.

(a) Every effort shall be made to minimize blank façades.

(b) The massing of any non-retail or mixed-use building façade shall generally not exceed 50 feet maximum (horizontal dimension).

(c) If the blank façade is longer than 20 feet, windows and paneling shall be incorporated to decorate the façade. Landscaping can also be used in combination with these architectural elements to minimize the impacts of a blank façade.
(3) **Proportion of Walls to Openings.** The number and size of openings (i.e., windows and doors) in a building strongly affect its appearance. The amount of wall area to openings can be expressed as a ratio or percentage. For example, a building with twice as much wall area as openings would have a 2-to-1 ratio. Typically, historic buildings have a wall to openings ratio between 2 to 1 (or 30 percent openings) and 1 to 1 (or 50 percent openings).

(a) For the front façade of existing buildings, if the front façade window and doors are replaced, the new ones shall use the same space as the windows and doors they are replacing. They shall not create a larger or smaller opening in the wall. If the property owner can demonstrate that the current doors and windows are not original, the façade may be restored to its original proportion of wall to opening.

(b) The following design standards shall be provided to enhance the proportion of wall and windows openings in new buildings:
1) Decorative windows shall be provided along the street-side façades of buildings, which is consistent with the design theme and architectural style.

2) For new buildings, the proportion of wall area to opening area (i.e., windows, doors) shall range from 2-to-1 to 1-to-1 shall be provided. For large retail store and convenience store uses that generally require a greater display window area, consider increasing the front façade wall-to-opening ratio to a maximum of 1-to-2 (or 67 percent openings).

3) For retail and mixed-use buildings, at least 60 percent but not more than 75 percent of the first floor façade is to be windows/storefront or entrances. At least 25 percent but no more than 40 percent of the upper floors are to be windows or doors.

4) Walls or portions of walls where windows are not provided shall have various architectural treatments that are similar to the front façade, including materials, colors, and details. Examples of architectural treatments include: masonry (but not flat concrete block), vertical/horizontal articulation, lighting fixtures, projecting cornice, projecting canopy or awning, and trellis containing planting.

5) Smoked, reflective, or black tinted glass in windows is prohibited.

Acceptable
The buildings above left and above right have a wall to opening ratio of about 1 to 1, which is consistent with historic building patterns.
E. Roof Styles.

(1) Roofs shall be in keeping with the character of the historical buildings in (insert municipality or location). Roof form and pitch shall be appropriate to a building’s design and context. The type of roof and its pitch (slope) determine the overall shape of the roof. Examples of roof styles include saddleback (often called ridge or gable), gambrel, hipped, mansard, and flat. The type of roof and its pitch (slope) determine the shape of the roof. Architectural embellishments such as cross-gables, dormers, belvederes, masonry chimneys, cupolas and other similar elements are encouraged where appropriate to complete the architectural style of the building.
(2) Both gable and hipped roofs shall have overhanging eaves on all sides that extend a minimum of 1-foot beyond the building wall.

(3) Where hipped roofs are used, the recommended minimum pitch shall be 6 to 12 (25 degrees). All other roof styles with a pitch shall have a minimum slope of 8 to 12 (35 degrees) and a maximum of 12 to 12 (45 degrees) and shall be appropriate to the building’s architecture.

(4) Mansard roofs may only be used on buildings of 3 stories or more in height.

(5) Where dormers are proposed, gable roofs shall provide a minimum pitch of 8 to 12.

(6) Flat roof buildings shall include appropriate architectural elements to provide architectural interest. For instance, all visibly exposed walls shall have an articulated cornice that projects horizontally from the vertical building wall plane.

(7) All air conditioning units, HVAC systems, exhaust pipes or stacks, satellite dishes, and other telecommunications receiving devices shall be thoroughly screened from view from both the public right-of-way and adjacent properties by using parapets, walls, roof elements, and/or landscaping. Architectural screening elements shall be compatible with the proposed building materials.

These buildings have a roof pitch of approximately 8 to 12, creating an aesthetically pleasing architectural balance.

In contrast, these buildings have a flatter roof pitch (approximately 6 to 12), which makes the dormer look out of scale.
F. **Dormers and Bays.**

Dormer and bays are often common elements found in historic and village-style developments.

(1) **Dormers.**

Dormers, windows with their own roofs set vertically on a sloping roof, are especially appropriate for residential units situated above ground-floor commercial uses. For added architectural interest, a variety of dormer configurations are encouraged to complement existing dormers on nearby buildings.

(a) Dormer design shall be consistent with the context of the overall appearance of the building.

(b) Dormers are encouraged to be incorporated with purposeful space within the roof structure of a building, and not just applied decorative elements. Where decorative dormers are proposed, they shall be proportioned and detailed as though they are functional.

(c) Dormers shall be limited to gabled, segmental, and eyebrow style which best match the historic local architecture. Other dormer styles (e.g., shed and hipped) may be evaluated for appropriateness by (insert municipality) officials.

(d) The quality of materials used for dormer construction shall be equal to the quality of the balance of the building.

(e) Dormers are intended to be used as accent elements in façade design. Dormers shall not extend for more than 50 percent of the façade length, and shall not be placed closer to the end of a roof than the width of face of the dormer.
Bay Windows. Bay windows, which project outward from a building wall, are a means of adding architectural interest and a little more interior volume without affecting the building footprint. They also increase the amount of daylight and fresh air available to a building.

(a) Bays windows shall preferably provide useful space within the building façade, rather than serve merely as decorations.

(b) Their design shall be consistent with the context of the overall appearance of the building, and they shall be constructed of materials of the same quality used in the rest of the building.

(c) Bay windows shall be consistent in design throughout any single façade.

G. Porches and Colonnades. Porches and colonnades are features that are common to various architectural styles.

(1) If reconstruction of a porch on a historic structure is needed, it shall replicate the original feature and use materials identical to the originals, or as close as possible.

(2) Porches and colonnades shall be consistent in architectural style, scale, and materials with the building of which they are a part.

(3) Enclosing or screening an existing porch is generally inappropriate.

(4) Colonnades shall only be constructed in setbacks where the front or side yard depth can be obtained. The following dimensional guidelines are applicable:

(a) Depth: 6-foot minimum from the building face to the inside column face; 18 inches minimum to 36 inches maximum minimum from the outside of the column face to the curb;
(b) Height: 10-foot minimum clear; and length, 75 percent to 100 percent of the building frontage.

H. *Awnings and Canopies.* An awning is a fixed or retractable projection over the door, window, or storefront of a building, generally supported by a frame attached to the building. A canopy is a permanent architectural feature that projects from a building façade; it is generally cantilevered out from a building that may be supported by cables from the building wall above. Awnings and canopies can be used to reinforce the design characteristics of the building’s architecture, provide an opportunity for a design accent, and also serve practical functions.

(1) Awnings and canopies shall be designed with pedestrian comfort and merchandise protection from sun and rain protection, as well as good building aesthetics in mind. They shall not be the primary design element of the building.

(2) The choice of awning and canopy design, proportion, color and materials shall be coordinated as part of an overall building design scheme.

(3) Awnings and canopies shall also be placed within and in relation to the structural frame of the storefront, window or doorway; generally, this means within a window frame or within the frame formed by the storefront cornice or sign panel above and by vertical piers or columns on either side. Alternatively, they may be mounted between a transom and display windows to allow light into a business.

(4) Generally, canopies shall have thin visual profiles so as to obscure as little of the building and storefront as possible. Color and style of any awnings for upper story windows shall coordinate with any street level awnings.

(5) Awnings and canopies shall be located directly over windows or doors to provide protection from the elements. Awnings shall be placed within building lines, not attached to the trim.
(6) In buildings with multiple storefronts, or on adjacent buildings, awnings shall be aligned with others, and used to unify the structure or block.

(7) The projection length shall be a minimum of 24 and a maximum of 48 inches or shall be modified based on established site and building configuration. The minimum height shall be 8 feet above the sidewalk and consistent with building code requirements.

(8) Fixed or retractable awnings are permitted at ground-floor level and on upper levels where appropriate, if they complement a building’s architectural features, such as cornices, columns, pilasters, or decorative details, do not impair façade composition, and are designed or added as an integral part of the façade.

(9) Fixed awnings shall not span numerous bays, windows, or storefronts and their sides shall be open. The awning shall delineate storefronts on a multi-tenant building.

(10) Canvas is the preferred material, although other waterproof fabrics may be used. Metal, vinyl, or plastic awnings are discouraged.
I. Building Façades and Mixed-Use Building Composition. The exterior walls of a building comprise its façades. The basic composition of most building façades includes three primary components:

Base—A portion of a building foundation, or in the case of stores, the first floor of a building that is distinct from the upper floors.

Body—One or more architecturally similar stories that are distinct from the base.

Cap—The roof of a building, including a cornice or parapet where the body of the building ends.

Soft retractable awnings can be opened or rolled up depending on the weather conditions.
For the purpose of these design guidelines, the building façade is broken into ‘primary’ and ‘secondary.’ A ‘primary façade’ is the building wall(s) facing a public right-of-way, pedestrian route, or a parking lot serving the building. A ‘secondary façade’ is the building wall(s) that is not the ‘primary façade’ and which typically front on an alley or service area. Primary façades shall be differentiated with setbacks in the wall plane, and positive open space shall be created in these setbacks in order to enhance the streetscape. Variations in façade treatment shall be continued through the structure, including its roof line and primary and secondary façades

(1) New building and building additions shall provide distinct façade elements of base, body, and cap.

(2) For new construction, each new building shall have a distinct base at the street level, but at a minimum, a body with a consistent character for the main and upper stories, and a cap. The base, body, and cap shall roughly line up with the base, body, and cap of adjoining buildings.

(3) For building renovations and alterations, a distinct base, body, and cap shall be retained in the primary façade of existing buildings.

(4) For building façade improvements, the appearance of the resulting façade shall be representative of one of the ‘preferred local architectural styles’ as described in Section__5.A(2).
(5) The primary façade of the building shall be oriented toward the street with the highest functional classification in terms of vehicular and pedestrian traffic volumes.

(6) Buildings on a corner lot or fronting on two streets shall treat each side of the building located on the street as a primary façade.

(7) A 2- to 4-foot staggered setback in the wall plane of a building façade shall be provided at a minimum of every 50 feet of façade for non-retail and non-mixed use buildings and 20- to 30- feet for retail or mixed-use buildings, when staggering is considered for providing visual interest.

(8) Secondary façades shall be architecturally consistent with the primary façade, but without the same level of detail regarding horizontal and vertical articulation and modulation as detailed in Sections __.6.D(1) and __.6.D(2).

(9) Mixed-use buildings are preferred to have retail and/or office on the first floor and office and/or residential on the subsequent floors or shall be modified based upon established site and building configuration. (Note: Municipal officials should determine their preferred building composition and modify this provision accordingly.)

(10) Mixed-use buildings with retail and office on the first floor shall provide a floor heights as follows: 12 to 14 feet for the first floor and 10 to 11 feet for all other floors.¹

¹ Floor dimensions accommodate floor width, mechanicals, gas and sprinkler lines, etc.
J. Mechanical, Service, and Utility Areas.

(1) The location, appearance, and function of mechanicals, other services, and utilities shall be considered as an integral part of the design and development process. In general, they shall be designed to be as inconspicuous as possible and shielded from public view in order to minimize “visual clutter” that distracts from the visual appearance of the streetscape and the architectural integrity of buildings.

(2) Screening, fences, and parapets shall be installed so as to not detract from the appearance of the building, or to cover or damage architectural features. Their masking shall be an integral part of overall architectural design with regard to form, materials, and color.
(3) Loading docks, service areas, and trash disposal facilities shall not face open space or a public street. They shall not be located next to residences and open space.

(4) Dumpsters shall be screened on all sides by a gated enclosure made of materials and colors compatible with the proposed building materials of the main building(s).

(5) Loading docks and truck parking shall be screened by building mass, walls, and/or landscaping.

(6) HVAC equipment and building-mounted meters shall be located to the side or rear of the building, and not on the street side or next to open space. Roof-mounted installations shall be screened and not visible from the ground.

(7) Air conditioners shall not project beyond the building face. For permanently installed units, openings shall be trimmed to provide a finished opening around unit. Satellite dishes and cable wiring shall not be visible from across the street of the principal building façade.

(8) Utilities and wiring shall be installed underground, where possible.

K. **Building Materials, Trim, and Color.** From the colonial era until recently, most of the buildings in (insert municipality or location) were constructed of brick, stone, stucco, or wood. Recently product advancements have resulted in various synthetic siding, trim, and roofing materials. The materials and colors proposed for buildings in the (e.g., Town Center, Village Commercial, Traditional Neighborhood Commercial) District shall reflect the architectural influences and materials found in (insert municipality or location) and the region. Long-term maintenance and aesthetics shall be a factor in the selection of building materials, accents, and colors.
(1) **Preferred Exterior/Facing Building Materials.** Natural building materials are preferred but contemporary materials with the same visual characteristics as traditional material are acceptable, if similar in appearance, texture, and overall aesthetics.

(a) brick

(b) stone native to the region

(c) wood and wood clapboard, trim and detailing

(d) simulated wood clapboard (cement or vinyl), provided it is not used on the front façade

(e) stucco

(f) split-faced cement block (highly textured)

(g) mill-finish or machine-finish metals (aluminum, copper, galvanized steel, etc.)

(h) clear, non-reflective, or non-tinted glass

(i) hardy plank

(j) simulated brick

(k) simulated stone/manufactured stone veneer (thin stone for adhered installation)

(l) EIFS (Exterior Insulation and Finish Systems)/Dryvit

(m) glass block
Wood trim complements brickwork for an attractive, high-quality appearance.

Successful use of stone and simulated wood.

Combining various materials with complimentary colors can provide a visual appeal as shown in the examples above.

(2) Trim. The following design guidelines apply to building trim:

(a) Trim materials or embellishments shall be in keeping with the rest of the building.

(b) Trim shall be painted or stained to complement the building’s primary color.

(3) Color.

(a) A consistent and appropriate color palette contributes to the appearance and identity of (insert municipality or location). The use of consistent base colors maintains coherence among buildings, while highlights or accent colors create interest. For late 19th and early 20th century buildings in particular, manufacturers’ “historic
colors” paints are recommended. A number of commercial paint manufacturers offer special product lines that are widely available and intended for historic buildings in exterior and interior finishes.

(b) In addition to providing protection to wood surfaces, paint provides an opportunity to reinforce the architectural style of (insert municipality or location).

(c) The following guidelines are the recommended color palette for buildings and façades:

1) Paint colors shall be appropriate to the style, period, and type of building.

2) The color scheme of a building and its exterior materials, signs, awnings, canopies, façades, trim, and other building features, shall be coordinated and harmonize with one another.

3) Colors harmonious to context colors chosen for an entire façade or building shall relate to the color of adjacent buildings as well as the character of the streetscape.

4) Colors shall be limited to a base color and no more than three accent colors, and all colors shall be non-reflective and compatible with traditional local historic hues and materials. Base colors consisting of earthtones (i.e., colors derived from materials naturally found in the earth) are recommended. Accent colors shall highlight architectural details, but colors shall not contrast greatly from building to building.

5) Colors that appear bright, other than white, shall not be used, either for architectural features or building façades. Where color contrast is desired, the use of accent colors shall be limited to doorways, window trim, and awnings.
6) The use of authentic materials in a natural state, such as red brick and wood stained to bring out its natural color and grain, is also generally appropriate.

7) The use of high-intensity chrome, metallic, or fluorescent colors is prohibited.

8) Painting over brick, stucco, and original stone or masonry is not recommended.

9) Paint shall not be applied to metals that require protection from the elements or to metals such as brass, copper, or stainless steel that were historically meant to be exposed.

Earthtones can unify a commercial village, making it a more appealing and aesthetically pleasing.
L. Building Examples with Key Architectural Elements.

(1) Appropriate Building Examples with Key Architectural Elements.

**Goodnoe’s Corner, Newtown Township**

- Mansard roof with dormers
- Molded cornice with dentils
- Double-hung sash windows and shutters
- Period light fixtures and banners
- Enclosed dining area with large openings for visibility
- Foundation planting anchors the building to site
- Local architectural styles are tastefully incorporated into this building façade

(Front of Building)

**Goodnoe’s Corner, Newtown Township**

- Federal-style brick chimneys
- Vertical and horizontal articulation breaks up building façade
- Window crowns and lintels
- Sash windows and shutters
- Pediments
- Large display windows on ground story
- Parking island and foundation planting

(Rear of Building)
The Promenade, Newtown Township

Double-hung sash windows and shingles
Molded Cornice with dentils
Vertical and horizontal articulation breaks up building facade
Large display windows on ground story
Street trees and foundation planting
Stone veneer bulkhead
Decorative brick pedestrian

The Promenade, Newtown Township

Decorative cornice
Brick and siding complement the rear façade
Refined façade signage and wall-mounted
Fixed awnings

The Promenade, Newtown Township

(Rear of Building)
Hyde Park, Buckingham Township

Variations in gable roof heights
Double windows w/jack arch
Covered common entry porch
Shielded light fixture
Granite curbs
Refined signage

Hyde Park, Buckingham Township

Multiple dormers
Lintels
Double-hung sash windows with shutters
Stucco exterior in earthen color
Porch enclosure with lean-to roof
Mullions (windows)

Structure contains varied setback from parking lot
**Fountainville Center, New Britain Township**

(Front of Building)

- Cupola
- Gable roof
- Complementary building materials/color scheme
- Ornamental period lighting
- Good vertical and horizontal articulation of building façade

(Front of Building)

- Refined signage on front building façade
- Sash windows and shutters
- Landscaping around buildings softens parking lots and adds aesthetic appeal
- Granite curbing
Starbucks, Chestnut Hill

Various national franchises such as Starbucks, Walgreens, and McDonalds may be willing to work with a community to satisfy their unique development vision.

First National Bank, Solebury Township

Staggered exterior walls provides architectural interest
Kentlands, Maryland

The use of cornices and parapets provide visual interest to the flat roof structure.

Effective vertical articulation and varied building materials and color to break up building mass.

Lintels and shutters complement sash windows.

Street trees soften the hardscape and provide aesthetic appeal.

Period light fixtures.

Mullion display windows.

Palmer Square, New Jersey

Greek Revival style brick chimney.

Multiple dormers.

Sash windows with elaborated window crown.

Period light fixtures.

Stone-arch pedestrian tunnel.

Decorative awning over mullion display windows.
7. Site Development Guidelines.

A. Sustainable Design. (insert municipality or location) contains structures that have stood for centuries, as well as those of recent construction. These guidelines are intended to help preserve historic features and integrate the mix of old and new development for future generations of residents. Conserving energy, recycling and redeveloping, creating attractive green space and opportunities for walking and bicycling, will help ensure the continuing vitality of the community.

(1) New buildings and the reuse of older buildings are encouraged to use green building technologies for mechanical systems, energy needs and construction materials. The development of larger sites shall use technologies that conserve resources and reduce environmental impacts.

(2) Developers are encouraged to make use of third-party rating systems (e.g., LEED, Energy Star) and other ways of incorporating quality materials, innovative technology, and energy conservation.

(3) Buildings and their surroundings shall support alternative transportation modes that include walking and bicycling as well as public and private vehicular transit.
(4) Landscaping shall be incorporated into development and redevelopment to the greatest extent possible. In addition to beautifying our surroundings, plantings and lawn provide natural habitat and reduce stormwater runoff.

(5) Reuse of structures is encouraged to cut down on infrastructure costs.

(6) Durable, modern materials consistent with historical character or architectural design may be used in place of the originals, subject to (insert municipality) approval.

(7) Green roofs that recover heat island effect and create water efficiency as well as solar panels and other elements to promote sustainability and energy efficiency are encouraged for new flat roof designs.

(8) Stormwater BMPs such as rain gardens and vegetative swales are encouraged along parking lots and sidewalks within (insert municipality or location) settings and porous paving for proposed off-street parking and loading spaces.

Example of rain gardens and vegetative swales along parking lots and sidewalks.
B. Site Planning. In the context of a (e.g., town center, village commercial, traditional neighborhood commercial) setting, the site planning process must be compatible to the historic nature of its architectural styles and land use fabric. Site planning shall lead to an attractive, safe, and economically viable relationship among buildings, parking, signage, lighting, landscaping and the surrounding environment. It shall minimize the visual effects of parking, feature high-quality landscaping accommodating pedestrian movement, and encourage connections to nearby properties. Since each site is unique, plans for development and redevelopment shall be based on understanding of the site and its surrounding—the context—in order to meet the needs of the end user, as well as (insert municipality) goals for functionality, safety and visual appearance.

C. Building Placement and Orientation. Building orientation and layout can have a profound impact on the aesthetics and function of a development. The building placement and orientation creates a recognizable pattern that is important for providing human scale. This involves the organization of building elements or spaces between them, in a logical, sequential manner. Breaks in a predominant rhythm can be used to emphasize major circulation points or changes of use. In order to break up the perceived mass of structure, divide it into modules that are similar in size to buildings seen traditionally.

(1) Buildings shall be oriented toward the adjacent street(s), not toward parking lots.
(2) The front building façade shall be oriented toward the street. Where appropriate, the building may be oriented around a courtyard or respond in design to another prominent feature. The main entrance of the building shall also face the street and be clearly articulated through the use of architectural detailing such as a roof overhang, a sloped roof, a porch, or a hooded front door.

(3) Large lots shall be developed with several buildings, rather than a single structure, to help reduce the perceived size of the project. Leaving space between buildings also contributes to the positive open space and human scale of the site.

(4) In order to minimize the perceived size of a building, step down its height toward the street, neighboring structures and the rear of the lot.

D. Public Spaces and Amenities. Public spaces within (insert municipality or location) will foster a lively and vibrant atmosphere for people to gather and relax. Public spaces shall be strategically integrated within a development as deemed appropriate by (insert municipality).

(1) Public spaces shall be a minimum of 5 percent of the lot area but no less than 500 square feet. (Note: Standards should be modified as deemed appropriate.)

(2) Public spaces include village greens, pocket parks, plazas, courtyards, seating areas, and outdoor eating areas. Sidewalk areas that accommodate public gathering and connect to other facilities, which are at least 4 feet wider than the minimum ordinance requirements, may be included as public spaces if approved by (insert municipality).

(3) Amenities within public spaces shall include landscaped areas, benches, art or cultural features, or focus features (e.g., fountain, clock).

(4) Public spaces must be visible and accessible from adjacent roadways.
E. Circulation, Parking, and Service Areas. Vehicular and pedestrian circulation within and between sites shall be characterized by integrated, convenient, multi-modal traffic flow. Careful management of parking and vehicular access, service areas, and mechanical and utility arrangements is essential to preserve function and avoid potential nuisances and safety hazards.

(1) Pedestrian Circulation. Public sidewalks create an alternative to vehicle traffic by ensuring safe and systematic routes for pedestrians to, from, and within places in (insert municipality or location).

(a) Curbs and sidewalks shall be designated and installed as an integrated network along public and private roads within the (e.g., Town Center, Village Commercial, Traditional Neighborhood Commercial) District in order to accommodate pedestrian movement.

(b) All proposed sidewalks shall be in accordance with the standards within this Chapter, and coordinated with landscaped islands, curb cuts, and accessible parking spaces/entrances, in order to facilitate mobility for all users.
(c) A minimum 5-foot-wide ‘unobstructed pedestrian clear zone’ shall be provided between the edge of curb and edge of the adjacent building or edge of an outdoor eating area in those locations deemed appropriate by (insert municipality).

(d) Decorative brick, concrete pavers or pavement treatments shall be integrated into the main entrance of the building, pedestrian access areas, and public roads.

(e) Pedestrian crosswalks shall be at least 6 feet in width. Pedestrian crosswalks shall consist of a decorative brick herringbone pattern unless an alternative design is approved by (insert municipality). (Note: Revise as deemed appropriate.)

(f) Internal sidewalks within new development or retrofitted within existing development shall connect parking lots with main entrances, and with any public sidewalk system nearby. They shall be designed to give pedestrians a good view on oncoming traffic, and shall be located far enough from traffic signs, trees, light fixtures or other obstacles to prevent interference with pedestrian movement.
(g) Areas adjacent to walkways shall be landscaped for visual interest, shade, and scale.

Pedestrian crosswalks composed of brick with herringbone pattern.

An unobstructed pedestrian clear zone must be maintained between the street and adjacent buildings.

(2) Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance. Federal and state regulations require all public buildings and spaces to be accessible.

(a) New construction or accessibility alterations shall allow first-floor access from either the primary or the secondary façade; additions of elevators or ramps shall be designed as an integral element of the building.
(b) Where possible, elevators shall be incorporated into the existing building envelope. If physically impossible, the elevator and stair core can be located on the exterior of the building but shall be located so as not visible from the main public way.

(c) Where a ramp is required, its slope shall be as gradual as possible to eliminate the need for handrails. The need for handrails should be based upon compliance with ADA requirements. A ramp shall be an integral design element, reflecting the design of the building it serves and surrounding site. This can be accomplished by concealing the ramp behind a low screen wall.

(3) Vehicular Circulation.

(a) The number of curb cuts on major roadways shall be minimized and shared or common access drives shall be maximized to increase vehicular and pedestrian safety.

(b) Internal traffic patterns for both vehicles and pedestrians shall be delineated within the site. Pedestrian and vehicular connections between parking lots and driveways on adjoining commercial parcels shall be provided wherever possible to minimize turning movements onto major roadways and promote foot traffic.

(c) Site planning shall anticipate future vehicular connections to any abutting undeveloped properties.

(4) Traffic Calming. Traffic calming is an effective measure to help reduce speeding traffic and helps ensure a pedestrian-friendly (e.g., town center, village commercial, traditional neighborhood commercial) setting.

(a) Traffic calming measures shall be installed where appropriate on roadways and within and between commercial properties.

(b) Traffic calming measures, including speed control, volume control, and road alignments and traffic management techniques, shall be considered as part of the land development
application. Traffic calming measures may include speed tables, speed humps, on-street parking, raised or textured crosswalks, planted medians, curb extensions, and signage and shall be designed in accordance with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, Traffic Calming Handbook (2012).

(5) Off-Street Parking and Loading. The design and layout of parking lots and loading areas can have significant impact on the function and aesthetics of a site. Buildings shall be the dominate feature, not parking lots or loading areas.

(a) Parking shall be in accordance with the applicable requirements contained within this Chapter (insert appropriate section of existing ordinance).

(b) Off-street parking spaces and loading shall be located at the side or rear of the building.

(c) Shared parking spaces and shared driveways between properties is encouraged.

(d) The total number of off-street parking and loading spaces for each use shall not exceed 110 percent of the minimum requirements. (Determine percentage if deemed appropriate.)

(e) The use of curbing, bollards, segmental concrete wall blocks, landscaping blocks, concrete retaining walls and other durable materials shall be considered along the perimeter of the off-street parking and loading areas to protect trees, open space, surface water or other natural areas. P.

(f) Parking lots and loading areas shall be screened and landscaped (See Section _.7.F.).
(6) Drive-Throughs.

(a) When a commercial drive-through is permitted as a feature or accessory to a principal use, the drive-through windows and menu boards shall be located at the rear of businesses.

(b) Vehicular access routes leading to and from takeout windows or other drive-throughs shall minimize conflicts with pedestrian circulation and vehicular traffic flow.

(c) Pedestrian and vehicular safety shall be enhanced through signage, lighting, raised crosswalks, and changes in paving or other devices.

(d) The site plan shall be designed to prevent stacking of motor vehicles in the drive-through lanes into adjacent access aisles or parking lot (e.g., 6 minimum and 8 maximum vehicles per lane), unless an alternative is approved by the municipal traffic engineer.

(e) An escape lane next to the drive-through lane(s) shall be provided in the event of an emergency or a customer needing to exit the drive-through lane.
(7) Gas Stations and Convenience Stores. Gas stations and convenience stores with pumping stations are typically laid out with the gas pumps located near the adjacent roadway and the building oriented to the center or rear of the site in order to provide maximum exposure. This layout results in an emphasis on the gas pumps instead of the building.

(a) Gas stations and convenience stores with pumping stations shall be constructed close to the front of the lots. The associated pumps, canopies and parking shall be placed on the side and rear to be screened from view as much as possible.

F. Landscape Design. Landscape planting design is an integral component for enhancing village character. A close relationship between the built environment and naturalized landscaping enhances the historic charm and character of (e.g., town center, village commercial, traditional neighborhood commercial) areas. The designated (e.g., town center, village commercial, traditional neighborhood commercial) areas require special planting and treatment as compared to more conventional development portions of the municipality. Within a (e.g., town center, village commercial, traditional neighborhood commercial) setting, landscaped areas can serve several purposes: to replicate and enhance the visual, historic, and cultural character of the (e.g., town center, village commercial, traditional neighborhood commercial) setting; to provide a formal planting or framework between or adjacent to buildings and streets; and to soften the impacts between certain land uses through the provision of appropriate buffer planting schemes.
(1) **General Landscape Provisions.**

(a) All developments shall include trees, buffer yards, and landscaping features that shall be integrated as part of overall site improvements in order to mitigate noise, light, odor, and the visual appearance of paved surfaces. The use of existing mature trees (6 inches in caliper, as measured at breast height), segmental concrete wall blocks, landscaping blocks, retaining walls and other durable materials may be considered and utilized as part of the landscaping improvements.

(b) Use native plant materials unless non-native species are more appropriate for a specific context, such as street trees or parking lot plantings.

(c) A registered landscape architect shall be consulted to ensure the proper use and arrangements of plant materials to achieve the appropriate (e.g., town center, village commercial, traditional neighborhood commercial)-style landscape appearance.

(d) Landscape design shall be in accordance with the standards contained within Chapter __ (insert appropriate section of existing ordinance).

(2) **Street Trees.** Street trees shall comply with the minimum requirements contained in Chapter __ (insert appropriate section of existing ordinance).

(3) **Foundation Planting.** Foundation planting helps to frame a building and anchor it to the site. These plantings shall enhance the overall development, make it more welcoming, and tie it to the surrounding landscape.

(a) As a minimum, a combination of trees, shrubs, groundcovers, or native grasses shall be provided in accordance
with the applicable requirements contained in Chapter __ (insert appropriate section of existing ordinance).

Examples of Foundation Plantings

Goodnoe's Corner, Newtown Township

Hartsville Professional Village, Warminster Township

Hyde Park, Buckingham Township

(4) Parking Area Planting and Screening. Parking area planting softens the extent of impervious surface, reduces heat buildup by providing shade, and enhances the aesthetic appearance. Parking area planting shall be provided along the perimeter of parking lots as well as internal areas of the parking lot. Perimeter parking lot planting provides a partial screen of a parking lot while providing a formal edge along the sidewalk or between individual parking areas. When properly located and landscaped, internal planted islands, bulb outs, and peninsulas, can break-up paved expanses. Flowering shrubs and perennials are an attractive way to edge a parking lot and soften the views.
Examples of Perimeter Parking Area Planting and Screening

Court and Hamilton streets, Doylestown Borough

Radcliffe and Taylor streets, Bristol Borough

School House Center, Richboro
Examples of Internal Parking Area Planting

(a) Perimeter parking lot planting beds can include a combination of trees, hedges, shrubs, groundcovers, and walls/fences comprised of stone, wood, wrought iron (or an acceptable substitute). Breaks in the continuous parking lot planting shall only be provided for vehicular access drives or sidewalks/pedestrian paths.

(b) Perimeter parking lot planting beds shall be provided in a continuous line, with a maximum height of 30 inches for hedges, shrubs, and walls.

(c) Planted parking lot islands and peninsulas can include street trees, low growing ground cover, shrubs, native grasses, flowering shrubs, and perennials.

G. Design Elements and Accessory Features. While context and architecture, and the relationship between them, are primary elements of any development, numerous other functional and visual components are integral to establishing (e.g., town center, village commercial, traditional neighborhood commercial) character. Streetscape design featuring elements such as street furniture, walls and
fencing, landscaping, walkways, signage, lighting, and outdoor cafes create (e.g., town center, village commercial, traditional neighborhood commercial) settings with charm, aesthetic appeal, and retail potential.

(1) Streetscape Design. Streetscapes encompass the natural and built fabric of the street, its design quality and its visual effect. Streetscapes have multiple functions. They serve a social purpose in enabling people to meet and engage in various activities; they foster business activity; enable pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular mobility; and introduce trees and greenery into the built environment. Streets shall be pedestrian-friendly, well lit, active, human-scaled, and feel safe day and night. Streetscape design, and its component parts, shall be carefully chosen and arranged.

Street furniture, such as benches, tables, clocks, bicycle racks, and waste receptacles provide public amenities that improve the appearance and identify of (e.g., town center, village commercial, traditional neighborhood commercial) area. Benches are intended to provide a needed street furnishing for rest and relaxation and can help to create a more pedestrian-friendly streetscape. Bicycle racks encourage an alternative to vehicular trips.
(a) Special attention shall be given to the gateways and main entrance(s) to the (e.g., Town Center, Village Commercial, Traditional Neighborhood Commercial) District. The use of streetscape improvements, low-impact lighting, banners, welcome signs, water features and landscaping enhancements shall be provided and considered as a prominent feature for all uses and developments within the (e.g., Town Center, Village Commercial, Traditional Neighborhood Commercial) District.

(b) Placement of street furniture must not interfere with crosswalks, curb ramps, access to buildings, driveways or any fire escape.

(c) Provisions for street furniture (e.g., benches, tables, clocks, bicycle racks, waste receptacles) shall be considered as part of the land development plan. The type and location of the proposed street furniture shall be consistent in style and material throughout each village and subject to approval by the municipality.

(d) Bicycle racks and stands shall match other street furniture and be located in a designated area along the sides or rear of the principal building and shall not interfere with pedestrian or vehicular movements.

(e) Waste receptacles shall be sturdy, easy to use, and strategically located where they are likely to be seen and used (e.g., near busy intersections, food take-out establishments, or places of high foot traffic). Visual observation and consultation with sanitation service providers and business owners aid in siting waste bins.
(f) Provisions for public transportation facilities, including bus stops, bus shelters, taxi stands, park and ride facilities, and other similar features shall be considered as part of the land development plan.

(2) *Fencing and Walls.* Fences and walls often act as barriers to conceal an unattractive space or to keep people out. Low stone and brick walls, and wood and decorative metal fencing can also add character and interest to an area if properly chosen and installed.

(a) Fencing or screening walls shall be treated as an architectural element, matching or compatible with the form, style, color, and/or detailing of the adjacent building(s).

(b) Low wood and metal fences shall be used in new residential front and side yards, and low brick or native stone walls in commercial areas. Taller privacy fences shall only be used at the rear of buildings.

(c) Decorative amenities and landscaping may be permitted in the front yard, such as fences and decorative walls, not exceeding 36 inches in height. (*Fence height may be subject to change based upon the current requirements in the zoning ordinance.*)

(d) Walls or fences 50 feet in length or longer, and 4 feet in height or taller, shall be designed to minimize visual monotony by using significant landscape massing.

(e) Tall privacy fences shall only be used in the rear of buildings.

(f) Chain link and barbed wire fencing is prohibited.
(3) Lighting.

(a) Lighting shall adequately, but not excessively, illuminate not only public areas, but also the elements within those spaces such as stairs, walls, benches, curbs, and landscaping.

(b) Lighting shall be compatible in design throughout the (e.g., town center, village commercial, traditional neighborhood commercial) area, with coordinating fixtures for street lighting and building lighting. Banners attached to light posts shall be provided at locations as deemed appropriate by the municipality.

(c) Select lighting and posts compatible with the architectural style of the building, development, and surrounding area. Light poles shall be in scale with their surroundings, mounted at the lowest level in compliance with (insert municipality) regulations.

(d) Bollard fixtures, up to 4 feet in height, are encouraged as pedestrian area lighting. Bollard fixtures shall be sturdy and affixed to a permanent base.

(e) When practicable, use timers, photo sensors, light-emitting diode (LED) lighting and other energy saving lighting devices.

(f) Neon or intermittent lighting shall not be used on the exterior of village buildings, except for small neon window signs. (See Section __G(4)(i)).
(g) Canopy lighting shall be installed as an integral or recessed part of the canopy, so that the light source is not visible to drivers.

(h) Lighting for signage shall be placed evenly at the face of the storefront and along the sign. If a commercial use occupies the second story of a building, lighting for the signage is allowed. It is not allowed above street level with residential use.

(i) Gateways, entrances, architectural features, statues, specimen trees, or other significant or unique features of the site or building shall be accented with ornamental landscape lighting, such as uplighting, silhouette, façade, or spot lighting.

(4) **Signage.** Signs play a central role in wayfinding, providing information, and creating a visually harmonious environment. They shall be designed to achieve visual compatibility with buildings and other surroundings through the use of similar detailing, form, color, texture, lighting and materials. Sign types include projecting, wall, window, monument, and awning/canopy.

(a) The design, material, color, size, and location and illumination of the sign shall be selected considering the architecture of the building and streetscape characteristics.

(b) Building signs shall be placed either flush or perpendicular to the building wall. Façade mounted signs shall be designed as an integral architectural element and mounted with concealed or appropriately decorative hardware or mounting brackets.
Signage shall be simple and uncluttered with architectural elements and colors that mirror or complement the adjacent buildings.

A wood-carved entrance sign framed with brick looks clean and elegant.

Mounting hardware can emphasize a sign and greatly enhance the building appearance.

Acceptable

Not Acceptable
(c) Freestanding monument (ground) signs are most appropriate along a roadway and shall be placed at eye level.

(d) Consideration shall be given to providing stone veneer at the base of freestanding signs.

(e) A combination of shrubs and flowering trees and/or evergreen trees shall be provided along the base of freestanding signs as a backdrop to visually soften and anchor the sign to other related site improvements.

(f) All permitted signs shall be professionally made and constructed out of durable materials. The following materials are preferred: wood (painted or natural); stone; copper; brass; painted canvas; or painted or engraved on façade surface.

(g) Newer materials that replicate the appearance of the preferred materials listed above (e.g., urethane cut and painted to look like wood) may be considered.

(h) Backlighting, flashing signs, moving signs, and roof signs are discouraged.

(i) Neon-lit signs shall be permitted only if size and location is controlled to prevent excessive light (e.g., small ‘Open’ window signs).

(j) Signs shall not cover or obscure architectural elements. Legible building numbers shall be located on all buildings to assist in emergency response.

(k) Signs for national firms and products shall adhere to the same guidelines regarding scale, placement, material, lighting and content as those for local businesses.

(l) Promotional advertisements, signs, and/or messages contained on the windows shall be limited to an area of 10 percent of the cumulative area of the first floor windows along the street-side façade.
5. **Multi-Tenant Building Signage.** Multi-tenant buildings or sites can result in sign clutter unless properly regulated.

(a) Buildings occupied by two or more uses or tenants shall utilize a single sign or compatible signs in terms of design, material, color, height, location, and illumination.
(b) Identification sign(s) shall be located near the main entrance conveying an overall identity for the property.

(6) Outdoor Dining Areas and Sidewalk Cafes. Dining establishments, coffeehouses, or cafes are encouraged to provide adequately spaced outdoor tables and seating. These small outdoor spaces help enliven the streetscape and provide dining options for patrons.

(a) Outdoor dining areas and other outdoor uses shall not interfere with vehicular or pedestrian traffic patterns.

(b) Sidewalk cafes must provide an unobstructed pedestrian clear zone of at least 5 feet in width. (See Section __ 7.E.(1)(c)). Tables, chairs, umbrellas, service equipment, and planters shall be kept out of the unobstructed pedestrian clear zone.

(c) A temporary or seasonal designed barrier element is encouraged to ensure a clear demarcation of these spaces. The height of such a barrier shall be no greater than 36 inches and constructed of a solid durable material easily anchored and removed in the paved space.

When adequate area exists, a temporary or seasonal barrier is encouraged to provide a clear demarcation of the the outdoor dining area (above left). Portable planters are used to define the dining area (above right).
(7) *Sandwich Boards.* Sandwich boards are a semi-permanent means of advertising often used to advertise special events, sales, or daily menus at eating places. Sandwich board advertising shall be aesthetically pleasing.

(a) Sandwich boards shall be no larger than 2 feet by 3 feet in area, and stand no higher than 4 feet off the ground. They shall be placed no farther than 1 foot from the building wall, and limited to one per business.

(b) They shall not be made of reflective materials, illuminated, or in colors or lettering that resemble traffic or construction signs.

(c) They shall remain in place only during the hours of business operations.

(d) For safety reasons, sandwich boards shall not project into walkways or other pedestrian paths.

(e) The boards shall be weighted by hidden weights, but not permanently affixed to the ground, the building, or other fixed features, (e.g., light poles, parking meters).

(8) *Sidewalk Sales and Vending Machines.* Attention shall be given to specialized retail sales and customer cart corrals.

(a) The storage and sale of all materials or merchandise shall be within the principal building of the property.

(b) Sidewalk sales shall be limited to a total of four events per calendar year, with no more than 5 days per event.

(c) Vending or self-service vending machines shall not be located along the front façade of the building or street to which the principal building has frontage. All proposed vending or self-service
machines shall be located inside the building or outside the rear of the building in close proximity to the off-street parking area.

(d) Shopping cart corrals shall be required for commercial or retail uses that may provide shopping carts as part of their normal operations. The proposed shopping cart corrals shall be located within the designated off-street parking area and shall be designed not to interfere with vehicular or pedestrian traffic.

H. Sample Implementation of Design Guidelines. The commercial strip center on the following page (Before) is typical of many older developments. There are no sidewalks, planting strip, or landscaping along the roadway frontage. The building has no vertical or horizontal articulation, making it appear long and linear and lacking character. The multiple signs and posts near the entrance of the strip center create clutter that is unappealing to passing motorists and patrons. The onsite lighting and concrete pier is an eyesore and safety hazard for onsite motor vehicle circulation.

The photosimulation (After) depicts how these issues could be addressed through the implementation of these design guidelines and includes the corresponding ordinance sections.
Street trees
Section __.7.F(2)

Pedestrian crossing with brick pavers
Section __.7.E(1)(e)

Brick-edged sidewalk
Section __.7.E(1)(b)

Façade improvements with cross gable roof & dormers
Sections __.6.E & 6.F

Façade-mounted lighting
Section __.7.G(3)(j)

Perimeter parking planting
Sections __.7.F(4)(a), (b), & (c)

Period light fixtures & banner
Sections __.7.F(3)(b) & (c)

Multi-Tenant Building Signage
Sections __.7.G(5)(a) & (b)
Appendix A
References
References


Cape Cod Commission and Community Vision, Inc. in cooperation with The University of Massachusetts at Amherst, Center for Rural Massachusetts, Designing the Future to Honor the Past - Design Guidelines for Cape Cod, Second edition, March 2008.


Development Review Services, November 9, 1993. City of Hayward Design Guidelines, Hayward, CA


Matthew V. Piotrowski, October, 2015. Addisville Commons (architectural elevation, right side, Page 21).


NAC Construction, Jim Worthington. The Promenade (Page 12, 28).

Northampton Township, Chapter 22 Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance, Section 22-619 Village Overlay District Design Requirements, as added by Ordinance 536, 12/17/2008.


Stampfl Associates, Goodnoe's Corner (Pages 23, 27, 36, 37, 38, 45, 46, 51, 54).


Weymouth Department of Planning and Community Development and Vanasse hangen Brustin, Inc. January 2013. *Design Guidelines for the Village Center, Retail and Office District of the Town of Weymouth, MA*. Weymouth Board of Zoning Appeals.

Appendix B
Design Guidelines
Plan Review Checklist
# Design Guidelines
## Plan Review Checklist

**Project Name:** ___________________________  **Date:** ____________

### Building Guidelines

- [ ] **Architectural Style & Elements** (Pages 7-15)
  - Comments:_______________________________________________________________

- [ ] **General Guidelines for Additions to Existing Buildings** (Page 15)
  - Comments:_______________________________________________________________

- [ ] **General Guidelines for New Buildings** (Page 16)
  - Comments:_______________________________________________________________

### Massing, Scale, and Façades

- [ ] **Horizontal & Vertical Articulation** (Pages 17-19)
  - Comments:_______________________________________________________________

- [ ] **Modulation and Blank Façades** (Pages 19-20)
  - Comments:_______________________________________________________________

- [ ] **Proportion of Walls to Openings** (Pages 20-22)
  - Comments:_______________________________________________________________

- [ ] **Roof Styles** (Page 22-23)
  - Comments:_______________________________________________________________

- [ ] **Dormers and Bays** (Page 24-25)
  - Comments:_______________________________________________________________

- [ ] **Porches and Colonnades** (Page 25-26)
  - Comments:_______________________________________________________________

- [ ] **Awnings and Canopies** (Pages 26-28)
  - Comments:_______________________________________________________________

- [ ] **Building Façades and Mixed-Use Building Composition** (Pages 28-31)
  - Comments:_______________________________________________________________

- [ ] **Mechanical, Service, and Utility Areas** (Pages 31-32)
  - Comments:_______________________________________________________________

- [ ] **Building Materials, Trim, and Color** (Pages 32-36)
  - Comments:_______________________________________________________________
Site Development Guidelines

☐ Sustainable Design (Page 43-44)
Comments:

☐ Site Planning (Page 45)
Comments:

☐ Building Placement and Orientation (Page 45-46)
Comments:

☐ Public Spaces and Amenities (Page 46-47)
Comments:

Circulation, Parking, and Service Areas

☐ Pedestrian Circulation (Pages 47-49)
Comments:

☐ Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance (Pages 49-50)
Comments:

☐ Vehicular Circulation (Page 50)
Comments:

☐ Traffic Calming (Page 50)
Comments:

☐ Off-Street Parking and Loading (Pages 51)
Comments:

☐ Drive-Throughs (§22-619.7.E(6), Page 52)
Comments:

☐ Gas Stations and Convenience Stores (Page 53)
Comments:

Landscape Design

☐ General Landscape Provisions (Pages 54)
Comments:

☐ Street Trees (Page 54)
Comments:

☐ Foundation Planting (Page 54-55)
Comments:

☐ Parking Area Planting and Screening (Pages 55-57)
Comments:
Design Elements and Accessory Features

☐ Streetscape Design (Pages 58-60)
Comments:__________________________________________________________________________

☐ Fencing and Walls (Page 60)
Comments:__________________________________________________________________________

☐ Lighting (Pages 61-62)
Comments:__________________________________________________________________________

☐ Signage (Pages 62-65)
Comments:__________________________________________________________________________

☐ Multi-Tenant Building Signage (Pages 65-66)
Comments:__________________________________________________________________________

☐ Outdoor Dining Areas and Sidewalk Cafes (Page 66)
Comments:__________________________________________________________________________

☐ Sandwich Boards (Pages 67)
Comments:__________________________________________________________________________

☐ Sidewalk Sales, Vending Machines, and Shopping Corrals (Page 67)
Comments:__________________________________________________________________________

Key: √ Acceptable, X Unacceptable, — Not Applicable