Design & Development Guidelines

(Effective 6-26-12)

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Purpose

Does it matter what a community looks like? Can a community retain its unique character while encouraging economic development? Is it possible to manage growth in such a way that vibrant commercial districts enhance the quality of life for a community's residents?

The Site Plan and Design Review process is intended to promote the thoughtful design/redesign of buildings within the Town of Randolph to support economic growth while ensuring the unique visual, cultural and natural character of the community is retained. It provides developers, property owners and business owners with recommendations and specifications with which to develop their lands and serves as a framework to guide the Planning Board's decisions relating to site design and form of new or renovated commercial and industrial developments.

Site Plan & Design Review has three principal objectives:

1. To encourage better design and site planning to enhance the character of the Town and ensure that new development sensitively fits into neighborhoods

2. To provide flexibility in the application of development standards

3. To improve communication and participation among developers, neighbors and the Town early in the design and siting of new development.

This Design & Development guide is a supplemental source of information to help the Town achieve a cohesive style of development consistent with the desired character and does not serve as a substitute for Building Code (s) or the Town of Randolph Zoning Bylaws.

Design Guidelines

The Town of Randolph Design & Development Guidelines are based on the principle that the built environment acknowledges and respects the surrounding existing patterns of development, open space and natural resources according to design principles including:

- Enhancing the open space between existing and proposed buildings.
- Promoting the visual and functional quality of the surrounding neighborhood.
- Promoting pedestrian friendly scales that link the development to the surrounding buildings, neighborhood and natural environment.
- Providing buildings in scale and in proportion to the adjacent existing structures, open space and natural and man-made environment.
- Visually relating proposed buildings to their surroundings with respect to:
    - Height
    - Street façade
    - Materials, texture and color
    - Human scale
    - Quality and quantity of open space
    - Natural environment
    - Spacing of buildings and signs
    - Building proportions
    - Quality of open space and land
    - Handicapped pedestrian access

Building Placement on Site

The siting of buildings/structures should consider specific site conditions and opportunities such as location on prominent intersections, unusual topography, significant vegetation, views or other natural features. New structures should present their main entrance/storefront to the public street and be located at the back of the sidewalk or along the appropriate setback requirement. An alignment of structures that promotes human interaction is desired.

- New development should respect adjacent properties by being located on their sites to minimize disruption of the privacy/activity of residents and/or visitors in adjacent buildings.
- Siting and design should encourage interaction and activity on the street.
- Entries should be clearly identifiable and visible from the street
- Entrances, porches, decks and other elements that promote use of the street front and provide places for interaction should be considered.
- Buildings on corner lots should be oriented to the corner and public street fronts with parking and automobile access located away from corners.

Lot Coverage & Setbacks

Building siting must meet the specifications in Zoning Bylaw Section VI Area Regulations which outline lot coverage, setbacks, buffer strips, etc. Note that there are requirements for open green space and maximum levels for building plus impervious lot coverage.

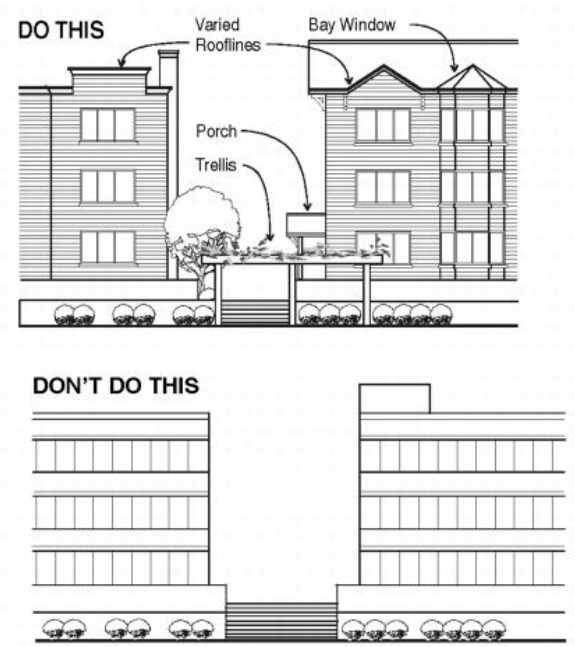
This buffer area uses an effective combination of fencing, trees and shrubs

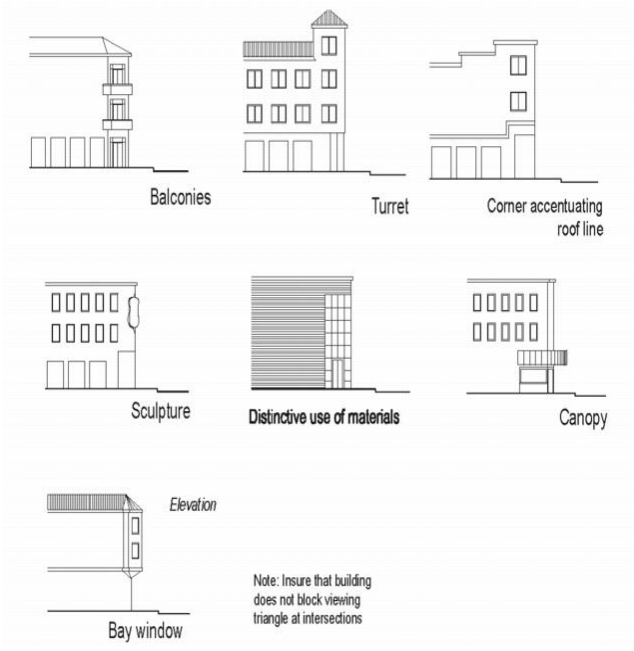
Existing Structures

Historic structures are valuable assets to the Town's character. Where possible, they should be retained and, if renovated and/or expanded, done so in a manner that retains and respects the original design and characteristics of the structure.

Building Massing/Scale/Compatibility

Projects should be compatible with the scale of development for the surrounding area. Careful siting and design treatment will help to mitigate any height, bulk and scale impacts. Projects on zone edges should be developed in a manner that creates a step in perceived height, bulk and scale between development in the adjacent zones.

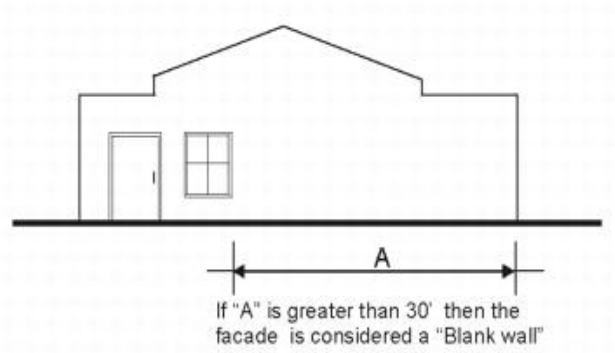




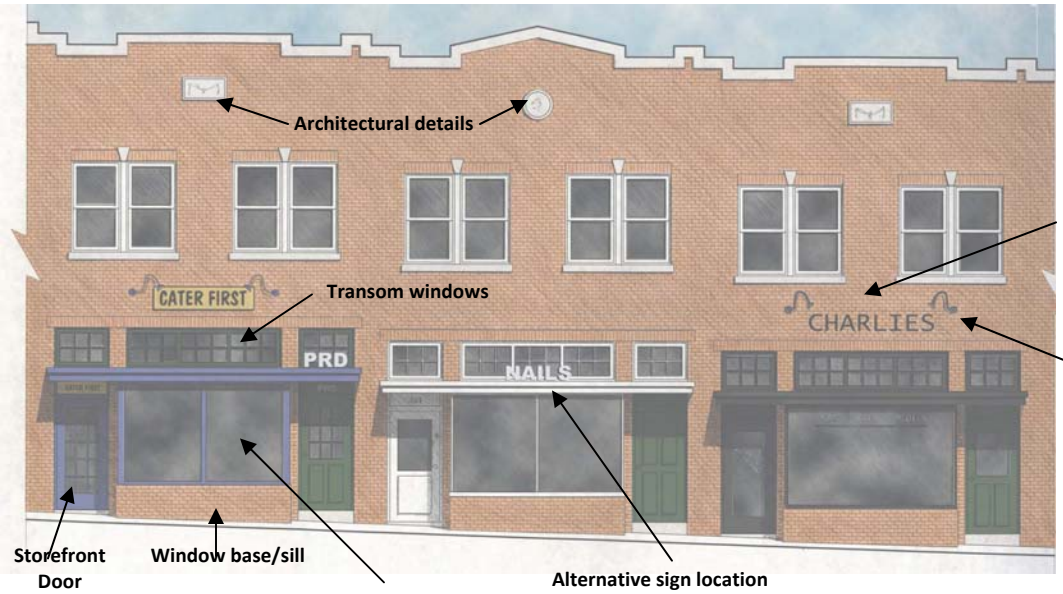
Effective use of windows and architectural detail reduces the perceived scale and boxiness of the structure

Façades

The use of pilasters, columns, arcades, parapets, windows, etc. should be incorporated into any building design to prevent uninterrupted or unadorned lengths of façade greater than 30 feet.



An unadorned façade does not meet design goals



Materials

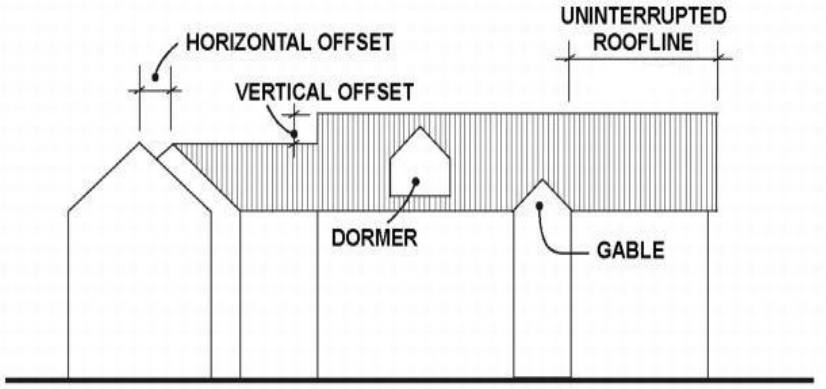
The selection and use of exterior materials is a key ingredient in determining how a building will look. Some materials, by their nature, can give a sense of permanence or can provide texture or scale that helps new buildings fit better in their surroundings. Building exteriors should be constructed of durable and maintainable materials that are attractive even when viewed up close.

- Select a muted color palette that is consistent with buildings in the surrounding area.
- Materials that have texture, pattern, or lend themselves to a high quality of detailing are encouraged.
- Finished construction with wood siding, shingles, brick and/or stone are preferred.

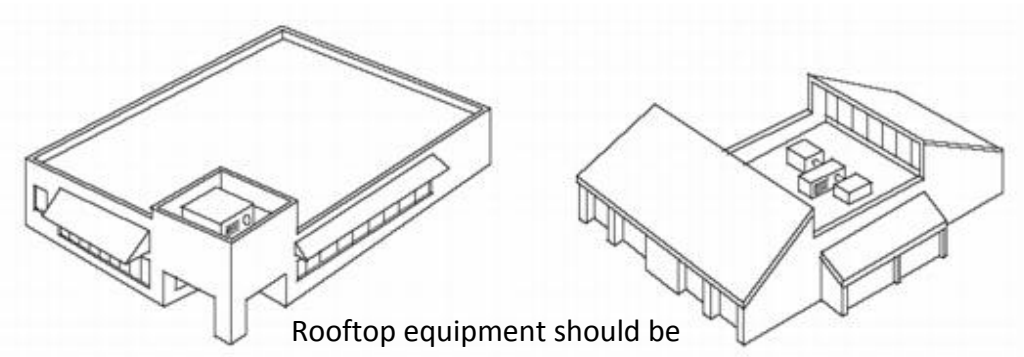
These recommendations shall not supersede those outlined in the current edition of the International Building Code or any decision of the Building Commissioner.

Roofs

Rooflines and architectural details shall complement the building's architectural style, and contribute to the character, image and appeal of Randolph. The roofs of commercial buildings should be consistent with the mass and scale of the structure and compatible with surrounding buildings.



Variations in rooflines are required



Rooftop equipment should be grouped and concealed from view

Colors

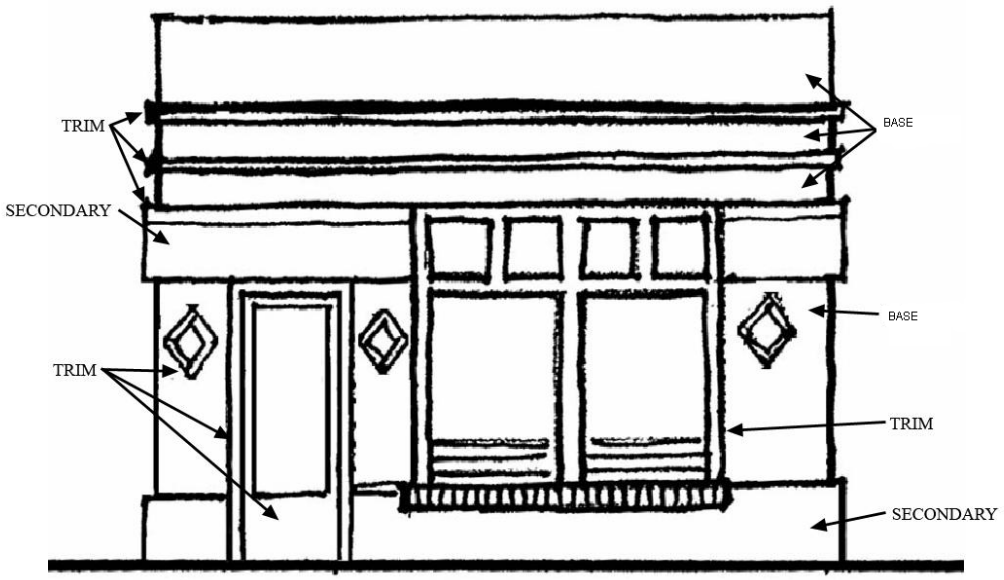
Colors are often overlooked but are an effective and inexpensive method to add to a building's historical value, mask building problems and draw attention to certain features of the building. Color should be used to unite the elements of a façade and to highlight architectural features, should complement and be compatible with the predominant hues of nearby buildings.

- Muted paint tones are encouraged.
- Highly reflective material and colors are discouraged.
- Brick and stone should not be painted.

Base Colors are the single most prevalent/most dominant color on a façade and used on the main body of the building such as wall surfaces and store fronts.

Secondary Colors are used for areas of the façade that area to be emphasized. These colors comprise less area than the Base Colors, approximately ten (10) to twenty (20) percent of the façade.

Trim Colors are typically more vivid than the others and represent less than five (5) percent of the façade.

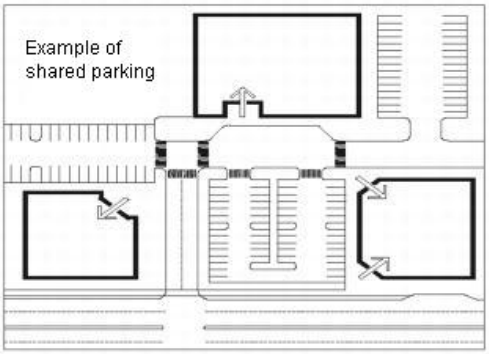


Parking

Building siting should minimize the impact of automobile parking and access/driveways on adjacent properties and the pedestrian environment. Where possible, parking should be located at the rear or sides of a structure to allow the building to be in closer proximity to the street. When required parking needs cannot be met on the same lot as the structure, shared parking arrangements with adjacent lots may be acceptable based on zone specific guidelines.

- Locate surface parking at the rear or side of the building(s)
- Parking lots should be broken into multiple smaller lots and include landscape islands, pedestrian walkways and/or additional design components.
- A landscaped area of 200 square feet is required for every 1000 square feet of parking area.
- Share driveways with adjacent property owners where feasible.
- Secondary rear entrances to stores and shops are encouraged in blocks where public parking or pedestrian walkways are located behind the buildings. The backs of existing commercial buildings should be well kept, with rear façades being "comparable" to front façades.

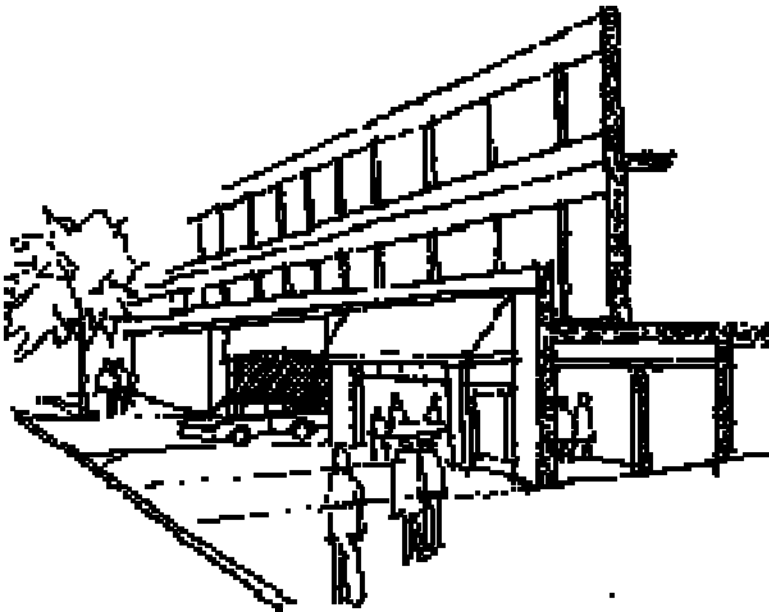
Internal pedestrian walkways and landscaping are elements of good design.



Parking Garages/Structures

The visibility of all at-grade parking structures or accessory parking garages should be minimized. The parking portion of a structure should be architecturally compatible with the rest of the structure and streetscape.

- Open parking spaces and carports should be screened from the street and adjacent properties.
- Incorporate pedestrian-oriented uses at street level where possible (newsstands, flower shops, ticket booths, other viable uses).
- The structure should be set back from the sidewalk and dense landscaping installed.
- Visually integrate the parking structure with adjacent buildings



Landscape

Where possible, and where there is not another overriding concern, landscaping should reinforce the character of neighboring properties and abutting streetscape. Landscaping, including living plant material, special pavements, trellises, screen walls, planters, site furniture and similar features should be appropriately incorporated into the design to enhance the project.

- A landscaped buffer is required with dimensions based on the zoning district. See the Table of Dimensional Requirements for specifications.

- Landscaping must include plants other than sod grasses

- Existing native species should be preserved and protected wherever possible

- Landscaping should be designed to conserve water through application of xeriscape landscaping principles:
  - Limit the use of high-irrigation turf and plantings
  - Use low-water demanding plants and turf where practicable

Plantings

The following trees, shrubs, perennials and grasses are known to tolerate conditions common to the urban landscape and are recommended species for meeting landscaping requirements. This list serves only as an aide to the property developer.

Urban Tolerant Trees

Small Trees (20'-30')

Botanical Name	Common Name
Acer campestre	Hedge maple
Acer ginnala	Amur maple
Crataegus paenopyrum	Washington Hawthorn
Crataegus punctata var.'Inermis'	Thornless Hawthorn 'Ohio Pioneer'
Crataegus x lavellei	Lavalle Hawthorn
Magnolia x soulangiana	Saucer Magnolia
Magnolia stellata	Star Magnolia
Prunus serrulata 'Kwanzan'	Kwanzan Cherry

Medium to Large Trees (30'+)

Botanical Name	Common Name
Acer rubrum 'Armstrong' '	Armstrong' Red Maple
Acer rubrum 'Autumn Flame'	'Autumn Flame' Red Maple
Acer rubrum 'Red Sunset'	'Red Sunset' Red Maple
Gleditsia triacanthos var. inermis 'Halka'	'Hakla' Honey Locust
Gleditsia triacanthos var. inermis 'Skyline'	'Skyline' Honey Locust
Gleditsia triacanthos var. inermis 'Shademaster'	'Shademaster' Honey Locust
Platanus x acerfolia 'Bloodgood'	'Bloodgood' London Plane
Quercus coccinea	Scarlet Oak
Quercus rubra Red Oak	Red Oak
Tilia cordata 'Greenspire'	'Greenspire' Littleleaf Linden
Tilia x euchlora	Crimean Linden
Tilia tomentosa	Silver Linden
Ulmus parvifolia	Chinese Elm

Urban Tolerant Shrubs

NEEDLE EVERGREENS

Botanical Name	Common Name
Juniperus Chinensis 'Pfitzeriana'	Pfitzeriana' juniper
Taxus cuspidata & cultivars	Japanese yews

BROADLEAF EVERGREENS

Botanical Name	Common Name
Euonymus fortunei cultivars	Wintercreeper euonymus cultivars
Ilex crenata & cultivars	Japanese Holly & cultivars
Ilex glabra & cultivars	Inkberry & cultivars
Myrica pensylvanica	Northern Bayberry
Pyracantha species & cultivars	Firethorn & cultivars

DECIDUOUS SHRUBS

Botanical Name	Common Name
Berberis thunbergii & cultivars	Barberry & cultivars
Euonymus alatus compacta & cultivars	Winged Euonymus & cultivars
Ligustrum species & cultivars	Privet & cultivars
Potentilla species & cultivars	Cinquefoil & cultivars
Rosa rugosa & cultivars	Beach rose & cultivars
Spiraea x bumalda & cultivars	Bumald spirea & cultivars
Spiraea nipponica & cultivars	Nippon spirea & cultivars
Spiraea x vanhouttei	Vanhoutte spirea
Viburnum x carlecephalum	Fragrant viburnum
Viburnum dentatum	Arrowwood viburnum
Viburnum x juddii	Judd viburnum
Viburnum lentago	Nannyberry viburnum
Viburnum opulus compactum & cultivars	European cranberrybush & cultivars
Viburnum plicatum & cultivars	Doublefile viburnum & cultivars

Urban Tolerant Perennials, Groundcovers, Grasses

PERENNIALS

Botanical Name	Common Name
Anemone hupehensis	Windflower
Astilbe	Astilbe
Coreopsis	Tickseed
Dianthus	Pinks
Echinachea pupurea	Coneflower
Hemerocallis	Daylilies
Hosta	Hosta
Liatris	Gayfeather
Rudbekia fulgida goldsturm	Black-eyed Susan
Salvia nemorosa	meadow Sage
Sedum ‘Autumn Joy’	Stonecrop
Veronica	Speedwells

GROUNDCOVERS

Botanical Name	Common Name
Geranium sanguineum	Cranesbill
Hedera Helix	English Ivy
Liriope muscari	Liriope
Pachysandra terminalis	Japanese spurge
Vinca minor	Periwinkle

GRASSES

Botanical Name	Common Name
Pennisetum alopecuroides ‘Hameln’	Dwarf fountain grass

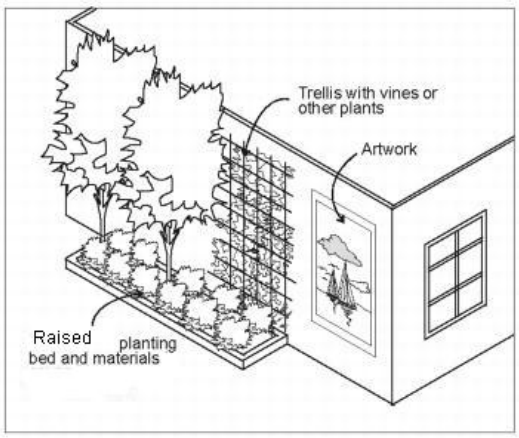
Entryway/Storefront

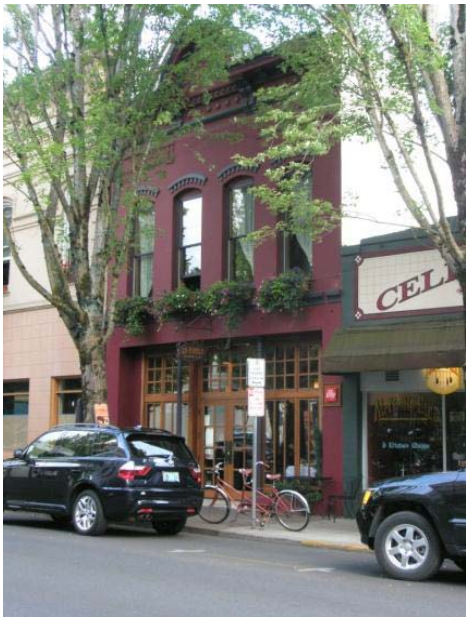
Storefronts are a critical component to a retail commercial corridor. They draw the customer into the store and provide focal points that create safe and pleasant areas for the community. The incorporation of architectural features, elements and details that achieve a good human scale should be employed to achieve interest and draw pedestrian activity.

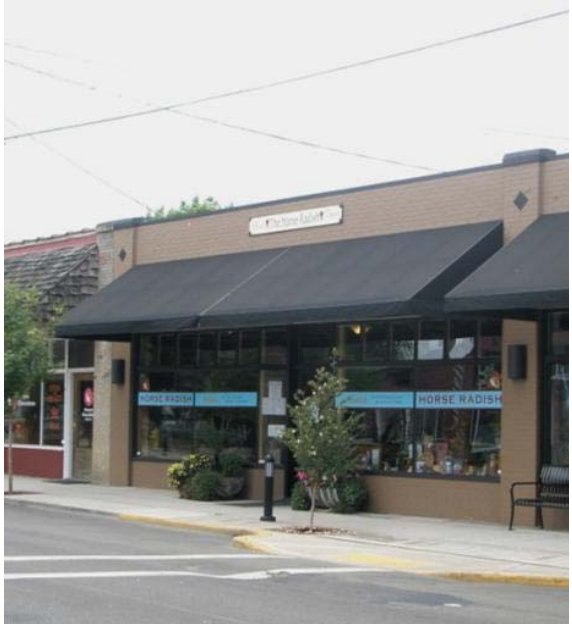
Commercial storefronts should be transparent and allow for a direct visual connection between pedestrians and the activities occurring on the interior of a building. Transparency at the street level enlivens the environment providing visual interest along the sidewalk and, at night, providing a secondary, more intimate, source of lighting.

Features which can be incorporated into the building/site design include:

- Projected or recessed doors and windows
- Display windows
- Integrated architectural details such as tile work, planters, etc.
- Covered entry such as canopies, porticos, awnings
- Decorative lighting
- Building address integrated into the facade
- Artwork integrated into the facade
- A change in paving material, texture, or color
- Ornamental glazing, railings, and balustrades







Windows

Window glazing shall be clear or slightly tinted; dark, mirrored, or reflective glass is not permitted. Ground floor windows can be used for displays; however business owners shall allow full and unobstructed views into their businesses. Completely obstructing windows from the interior of a building with shelving, display cases, signage or other objects is not permitted; instead low or pass through displays should be designed.

Examples of desirable design treatments that are encouraged include:

- Locate and size windows to allow the most visibility into the interior spaces
- Reduce clutter and excessive signs (see Zoning Bylaw 200-55 for regulations)
- Avoid tinted and/or mirrored windows choosing recessed windows or decorative awnings as an alternative solution.

Doors

Entry doors should be decorative and in keeping with the architectural style of the building while service entries (those not intended for use by the general public) should blend into the building façade.

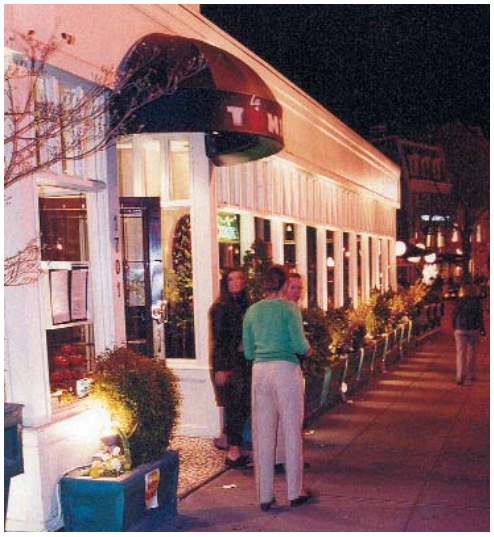
The following treatment of entrances can provide emphasis and interest:

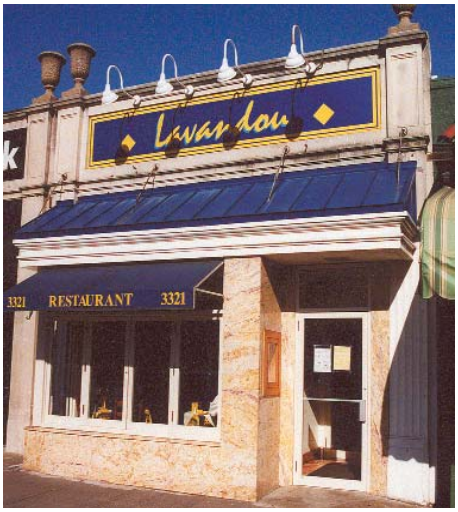
- special detailing or architectural features such as ornamental glazing, railings and balustrades, planter boxes, trellises, artwork, distinctive awnings, or canopies, etc.

Lighting

Appropriate levels of lighting should be provided in order to promote visual interest and provide a sense of security. It should be sufficient to facilitate safe and convenient circulation but not so bright as to produce glare. Lighting shall complement the overall design of the site and may be provided by incorporation into the building façade, undersides of overhead weather protection, on and around street furniture, in merchandising display windows, landscaped areas and/or on signage.

- All lighting should be shielded, hooded and directed internal to the property
- Fixtures in pedestrian areas should be 10-15 feet in height and 40-60 feet apart
- Sign illumination is permitted between the hours of 7:00am and 11:00pm except for retail establishments open to the public beyond those hours





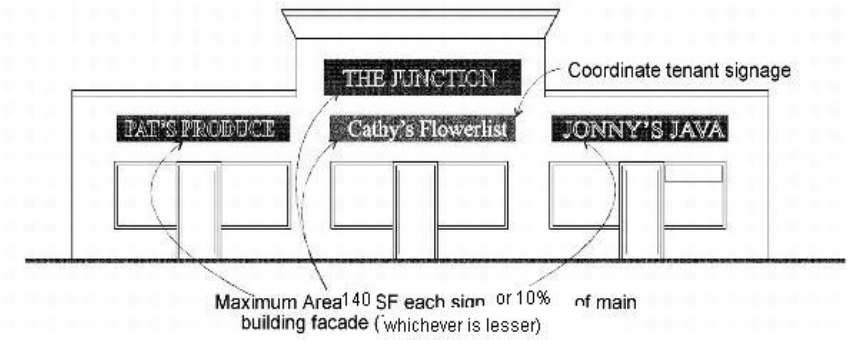
Signage

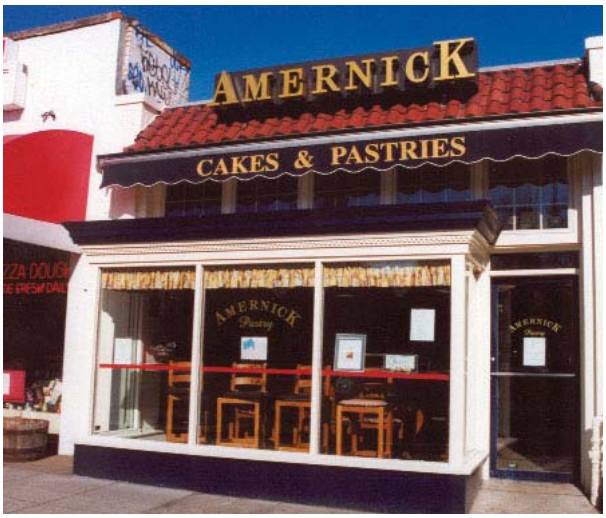
The location, number, size, height, shape, and color of signs can either enhance or detract from the visual appearance of a community or roadway. They reflect the economic vitality of an area and are essential for the advertising of business. However, haphazard design and placement of signs causes visual clutter detracting from the visual appeal and character of our community.

	District								
	CSBD	WCBD	NRBD	BRHD	GBHD	BD	BP	ID	GPCC
SIGN									
Ground	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Pole	√	√	√	√	√	√		√	√
Awning									
Nameplate	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Canopy	√	√	√	√	√	√		√	√
Projecting		√	√	√	√	√		√	√
Wall	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Roof				√	√			√	√
Portable									
Billboard									
Illumination	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√

Signage shall be of a design that is aesthetically pleasing and comply with Section IX Signs and Advertising Devices in the Zoning Bylaws.

- Awnings and/or canopies should be compatible with or complement building architecture
- The size, material, color, and shape of signs shall complement the architectural style and scale of the building
- When a building contains multiple storefronts, signage for all businesses shall be compatible in design and consistent in placement.
- Commercial signs require a permit issued by the Building Commissioner



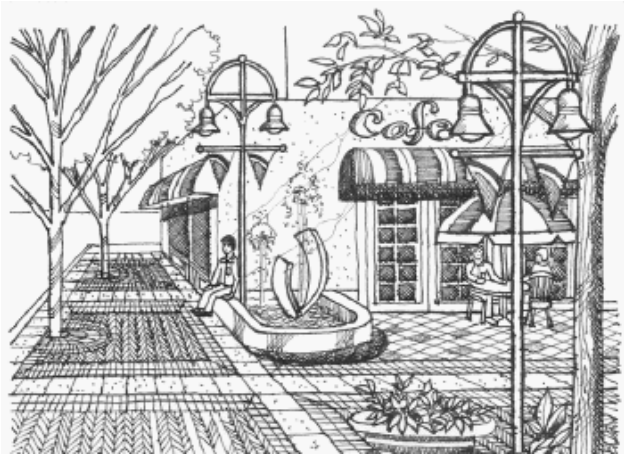


Public Space

In business districts where pedestrian activity is desired, the primary function of the open space between commercial buildings and the sidewalk is to provide visual and physical access into the building and perhaps also to provide a space for additional outdoor activities such as vending, resting, sitting or dining. If a building is set back from the sidewalk, the space between the building and public right-of-way may be conducive to pedestrian or resident activity such as featuring art work, street furniture and landscaping that invite customers or enhance the building's setting.

Articulate the street level facade to provide an engaging pedestrian experience via:

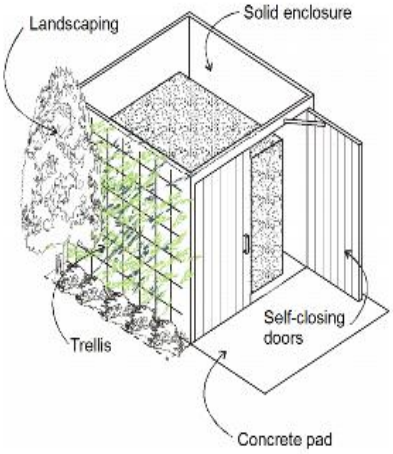
- open facades (i.e., arcades and shop fronts)
- visual and pedestrian access (including barrier-free access) into the site from the public sidewalk
- windows that encourage pedestrians to look into the building interior
- merchandising display windows
- street front open space that features art work, street furniture, and landscaping
- exterior finish materials having texture, pattern, lending themselves to high quality detailing
- landscaping that screens undesirable elements or that enhances the space and architecture

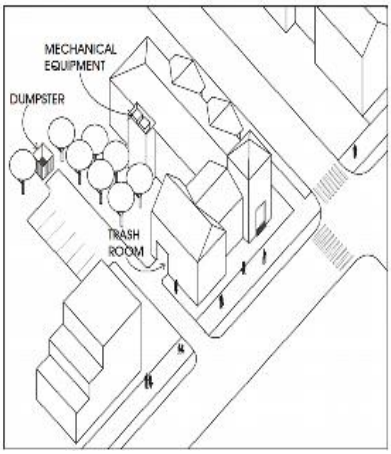


Service Areas

Service elements such as trash dumpsters, loading docks, mechanical equipment, etc. should be located away from the street front and screened from view. When they cannot reasonably be located away from the street front, they may not be located in the pedestrian right of way.

- Features should be located in a location that reduces visibility and noise intrusion on adjacent properties.
- Screening using landscape buffers and fencing shall be used to prevent viewing from adjacent properties and public rights-of-way
- Trash/waste/recycling container storage areas shall be designed so as not to allow leakage or wind induced littering.
- Where feasible, all utilities (cable, telephone, electric) for the proposed site shall be placed underground.



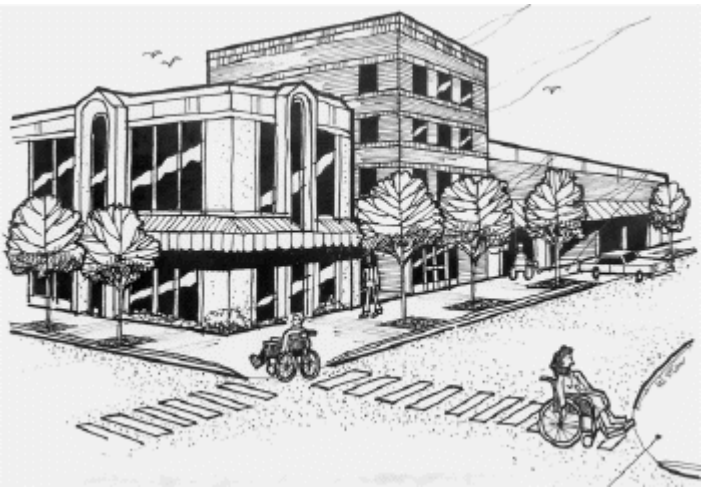


This service area provides effective screening and access to solid waste receptacles.

This service area, if visible from the public street, does not meet the intent of design guidelines

Sidewalks

All public and private sidewalks shall be accessible to the handicapped and should comply with appropriate ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) standards. The use of ramps and slopes shall be incorporated into the site design.



Natural Resource Protection

Often runoff from spring snowmelt or rainstorms is allowed to run over impervious surfaces on streets and parking lots and directly into water bodies. Runoff often carries with it contaminants from animal wastes, motor oil, road salt, lawn fertilizers and pesticides, and sediment. It is important to direct runoff into natural settling basins where it can slowly seep into the ground

- Create a vegetated or rock-lined drainage swale for stormwater runoff to slowly seep into the ground, rather than running off into streams, rivers, and ponds. These channels also provide a place for snow storage and allow for soil moisture and groundwater recharge.
- Design sediment basins for onsite retention of storm water runoff.
- Use a pervious type of asphalt that allows water to seep through

Process

The Master Plan, Zoning Bylaws and General Bylaws for the Town of Randolph together establish the policies and regulatory context for development sites and proposals evaluated by the Planning Board et al. The guidelines for review bridge the gap between these policies and regulations, making the intentions of each more explicit. They provide a framework for discussing how design solutions for a specific proposal on a specific site can best address the design goals for each district.

Projects Subject to Site Plan & Design Review

Development meeting the following thresholds is subject to design review:

COMMERCIAL LOTS/STRUCTURES	REVIEW
Commercial structure (NEW) ≤ 5,000 sq feet	Administrative
Commercial structure addition ≤ 5,000 sq feet*	Administrative
Commercial structure (NEW) 5,001 - 7,500 sq feet	Planning Board Meeting
Commercial structure addition 5,001 - 7,500 sq feet*	Planning Board Meeting
Commercial structure (NEW) > 7,501 sq feet	Planning Board Hearing
Commercial structure addition > 7,501 sq feet*	Planning Board Hearing

** For uses noted "Y" in the Table of Allowable Activity (Zoning Bylaws)*

RESIDENTIAL LOTS/STRUCTURES	REVIEW
New two-family dwelling	Planning Board Hearing
Conversion of single family dwelling to two family dwelling	Planning Board Hearing

Renovations/Alterations to Property

Administrative Site Plan and Design Review is required for modifications to the exterior of a non-residential building, mixed-use structure or multifamily dwelling including:

- Changes to color
- Removal of trees greater than two (2) inches in caliper
- Removal of living hedges and shrubs
- Any alterations, demolitions, construction and/or removal that affects the architectural appearance of the structure(s), signs or the site.
- Changes to existing sign types and faces

Pre-application Meeting

Property developers are encouraged to participate in a pre-application meeting with the Planning Director and Building Commissioner. At this meeting the project proponent can review the detailed submission requirements prior to formal application.

Administrative Review

Applicants should present project proposals in writing using any form(s) required by the Town. Applications must be supported by architectural drawings, construction specifications, paint samples, etc. in order to expedite the review process. Information will be reviewed by the Planning Director for decision.

Planning Board Meeting

Once the project design has been refined to respond best to the prioritized design guidelines, the Planning Board will review and consider the proposal at a regularly scheduled evening meeting open to the public. The applicant must place the specified notification placard that advertises the meeting on the project site.

After a presentation of the design by the proponents, summary recommendations from Town personnel and opportunity for public comment, the Board members will review the design in light of the concerns and recommendations expressed, as well as the previously prioritized design guidelines.

The Board and/or team members discuss and weigh the merits of projects and proposed design. They may recommend modifications, specific changes or departures from regulations as a trade-off for better design. The Board may recommend approval, approval with conditions or denial of the project.
Success occurs when:

- The project's site planning and massing respond to the larger context of the immediate neighborhood and the Town
- The building's architectural expression relates to the neighborhood context
- The building's street facade creates a safe and interactive pedestrian environment
- The project's public amenities enhance the streetscape and open space
- The project's vehicular access and parking impacts on the pedestrian environment are minimized

Planning Board Public Hearing

Once the project design has been refined to respond best to the prioritized design guidelines, the Planning Board will review and consider the proposal at a noticed and advertised public hearing. The project applicant is required to provide the hearing date and summary concept to:

- Property abutters via certified mail
- Adjacent communities
- The general public via advertisement in a local publication
- The general public via specified notification placard on the site location

After a presentation of the design by the proponents, summary recommendations from Town personnel and opportunity for public comment, the Board members will review the design in light of the concerns and recommendations expressed, as well as the previously prioritized design guidelines.

The Board and/or team members discuss and weigh the merits of projects and proposed design. They may recommend modifications, specific changes or departures from regulations as a trade-off for better design. The Board may recommend approval, approval with conditions or denial of the project.

Requirements for Submission

Administrative Review

- Site Plan & Design Review Application
- One copy of site plan and any applicable attachments
- Verification of paid property taxes (current year)

Planning Board Meeting

- Original Site Plan & Design Review Application - date/time stamped by Town Clerk
- Seven (7) copies of site plan and any applicable attachments
- Verification of paid property taxes (current year)

Planning Board Public Hearing

- Original Site Plan & Design Review Application - date/time stamped by Town Clerk
- Seven (7) copies of site plan and any applicable attachments
- Verification of paid property taxes (current year)
- Abutters list, notice to abutters, green cards and receipts

Appeals

Site Plan and Design Review decision(s) are appealable by any interested party. Appeals may be made during a 20-day appeal period by letter and any applicable filing fee to the appropriate body. The hearing officials must afford substantial weight to the decision, basing their decision on a finding of clear error or omission. The appeal hearing is not a new opportunity to solicit a different opinion on the project's siting or design issues.

Review Type	Appeal Period	To whom
Administrative	20 days	Planning Board
Planning Board Meeting	20 days	Zoning Board of Appeals
Planning Board Hearing	20 days	Superior Court