

Design Review Guidelines

ARTICLE 1 – *Building Design*

It is the intent of this article to encourage buildings that are rich in authenticity, design interest and quality. These guidelines are for use by the applicant and for consideration in site plan review.

SECTION 1 – Building Materials: The use of textured materials such as split face block, sandblasted concrete, wood, and the like is encouraged. Wood or dark anodized window framing is encouraged to add depth and richness to the appearance of a building. Brighter colors should be limited to accent points rather than large masses.

SECTION 2 – Compatibility With Nearby Development: In areas with an established or developing design character, new buildings should be designed to complement the prevailing design character. This concept would apply to everything from additions to shopping centers to the construction of small apartments and commercial Buildings.

SECTION 3 – Building Additions: An addition to an existing building should be designed to reflect and blend with the existing design of the structure.

SECTION 4 – Rehabilitation of Older Buildings: The rehabilitation of an older building should generally be done with an eye toward restoring the original architecture of the building, rather than covering it over with a new style.

SECTION 5 – Design Consistency: Coordinate exterior building design features on all elevations open to view from both public areas and adjacent properties.

SECTION 6 – Breaking Up Wall Masses: Large wall masses that are otherwise devoid of architectural treatment should be visually enhanced with such architectural features as reveals, bands of contrasting textures, pilasters or the like.

SECTION 7– Colors should be generally limited to the softer and more subtle hues. If bright colors are to be used, they should be limited to well integrated accent points. Usually no more than two or three colors should be used.

SECTION 8 – Utilities and Mechanical Equipment should be screened. Screening should be designed so as to complement the building. For durability reasons, wooden screens are not acceptable.

SECTION 9 – Sign Integration: Commercial building elevations should be designed with space for the logical and integrated placement of signs.

ARTICLE 2 – *Site Design*

It is the intent of this section to encourage site design that is functional, attractive and serves the needs of all users.

SECTION 1 – Parking: Whenever possible, locate parking areas at the rear or side of the site with buildings and landscaping emphasized at the front of the site.

SECTION 2 – Natural Settings: Construction in environmentally sensitive areas such as hillsides should be designed to blend with the natural vegetation and land forms. Rock outcroppings, plants, ridgelines and slopes should be preserved to the maximum extent possible.

SECTION 3 – Existing Trees can add measurably to the appearance of a development. Projects should be designed so as to preserve existing trees.

SECTION 4 – Parking should be screened from adjacent streets with low shrubbery, mounding and/or low decorative walls.

SECTION 5 – Pedestrian Network: Link building pads with pedestrian walkways that are defined by separate paving textures and accented with planters.

SECTION 6 – Textures: Use varied paving textures and or elevation changes to define entrances, pedestrian areas, crosswalks etc., especially where such can be viewed from multi-story buildings.

SECTION 7 – Traffic Flow: Design entrances and exits so that parking spaces and internal access aisles do not conflict with entering and exiting traffic.

SECTION 8 – Landscaping: Greenery and trees can do much to make a site inviting. Provide for a complete distribution of landscaping throughout the project site, especially:

- Throughout the interior parking areas, in the form of parking row end planters and 6' x 9' center planters every 5-6 parking spaces;
- At the base of building walls and dumpster enclosures; and
- Around the perimeter of the site to allow for mounding, shrubbery and trees sufficient to soften and enhance the view to the site.

SECTION 9 – Dumpsters: Incorporate one or more trash enclosures into the site design in areas accessible to trash trucks, but not prominently open to view.

ARTICLE 3 - *Sign Design*

It is the intent of the following sign policies to encourage sign work that is low key and well integrated with the site and buildings where the sign or signs are to be placed.

SECTION 1 – Relationship to Building Architecture: A sign should be designed so as to complement the architecture of the building on or near which it is placed with respect to design, colors, materials and placement.

SECTION 2 – Relationship to Site: A freestanding sign should be of a design and placement that complements the design of the site.

SECTION 3 – Sign Coordination: Signs that are placed on multiple tenant buildings look best when they follow a coordinated theme.

SECTION 4 – Simplicity of Design: Signs should be designed so as to be composed of a simple, uncomplicated shape.

SECTION 5 – Monument Signs are preferred over pole signs. Monument signs are more attractive and more readable along city streets where the attention of most drivers is focused at eye level. If a pole sign must be used, design an attractive, yet simple, pole cover to reduce the starkness of a bare pole.

SECTION 6 – Sign Copy: Signs are most readable and attractive when the copy is limited to the name of the business. Slogans or the advertising of products and services are discouraged. If they must be present, no more than 5 to 10% of the sign copy area may be devoted to such copy and made an integral part of the sign design.

SECTION 7 – Poles & Cabinets: Structural aspects of signs, such as poles, supports and cabinets, should be painted a dark earth-tone color so as to deemphasize the presence of these "mechanical" elements. Sign poles are best enclosed in a simple pole cover.

SECTION 8 – Illumination: Lighting on interior lighted signs should be limited to a soft level sufficient to illuminate the sign, but not so bright as to produce glare. This can either be accomplished by using an opaque background, or by limiting illumination.

ARTICLE 4 – *Landscape Design*

It is the intent of the following guidelines to encourage landscape work that provides shade and comfort for parking and open space areas and enhances the appearance of a project site with a balanced mix of trees, shrubs and groundcovers, commensurate with reasonable maintenance requirements.

SECTION 1 – Plant Variety: Make use of an abundant variety of plant materials including trees, shrubs and groundcovers that are suited to Newington’s harsh climate. Mixtures should include both evergreens and deciduous plants. Use plants offering leaf texture and color variety to add interest to the site.

SECTION 2 – Project Enhancement: Use plant materials creatively to keynote entries, soften or reinforce building lines, and to draw attention to important features.

SECTION 3 – Softening Hard Lines: Use plant materials at the base of building walls and property line walls to soften the hard edge between paving surfaces and wall surfaces.

SECTION 4 – Buffering Undesirable Views: Use trees, shrubs and mounded groundcover areas to soften the view to such unattractive areas as parking lots, loading areas, trash enclosures, storage areas, transformers and the like.

SECTION 5 – Non-Plant Materials or simulated plant materials such as plastic plants or turf is not generally acceptable.

SECTION 6 – Street Trees: Coordinate street tree plantings with on-site landscaping.

SECTION 7 – Plant Protection Devices: Planter beds in parking areas must be protected by 6" wide curbing that extends at least 6" above the paving surface. All trees should be securely staked with double staking and/or guy-wires.