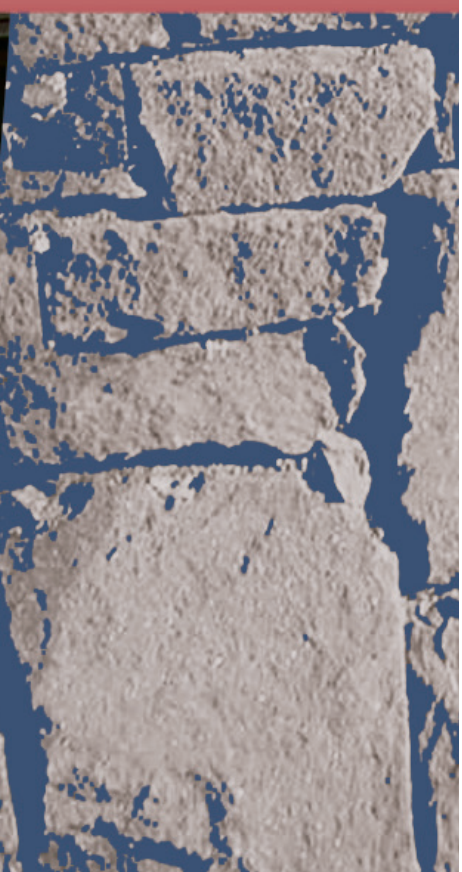




# Village District Design Guidelines

## Portland, Connecticut

August 4, 2008



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## INTRODUCTION

These guidelines are intended to provide flexibility for development and change while following planning and zoning regulations. The guidelines encourage site planning and architectural design that capitalize on the history and culture of Portland while improving the Village District for the future. The standards in these guidelines are flexible enough to promote creativity and allow for quality design. Use of these guidelines promotes early communication and cooperation among developers, Village District neighbors, and the town as a whole during the design and planning process.

- **Ordinary maintenance does not require approval.**
- **Approval is necessary if changes will be made to the outside of the building or to various site elements.** The Planning and Zoning Commission (P&Z Commission) reviews any changes to existing structures, site work and signage, and all new construction.

Before beginning any work, owners should check with the Land Use Office for requirements and permits. The guidelines are not intended to dictate solutions. Instead, the guidelines provide a range of appropriate alternatives to a variety of specific design issues.

Property owners, real estate agents, developers, tenants and architects should use these guidelines when considering a project. If a project is subject to review, consulting these guidelines earlier rather than later could save a good deal of time.

The guidelines are used in two formal ways. First, the Town's Land Use Officer uses the guidelines when advising property owners during administrative reviews and when developing recommendations for the P&Z Commission. Second, the P&Z Commission uses the guidelines when reviewing the appropriateness of a proposal for the site.

The design review process is reactive in that it only applies to proposals made by the property owner. While the guidelines suggest an approach to certain design problems by offering administrative solutions, the guidelines do not dictate a specific outcome and do not require a property owner to make changes that he or she would not have otherwise made. For example, if an owner plans to restore a porch, the guidelines indicate appropriate strategies to complete the work.

## REVIEW PROCESS

### Step 1: Contact Town of Portland Staff

Applicant should contact the Land Use Office regarding their proposal and the level of improvement, based on the type of work proposed. Three classifications are:

**Minor Improvements:** These may include a single, or minor improvement to existing signage, site, or architecture.

**Moderate Improvements:** these may include changes to site circulation or parking, and minor additions.

**Significant Improvements:** These include significant changes, construction, or reconstruction of site and/or structures.

### Step 2: Informal Review

The applicant will submit the appropriate materials to the Land Use Office for review. While all applications will go through an Informal Review, this is the only review given to Minor and Moderate Improvements and does not require a meeting in person with the Design Review Consultant. Additional information may be requested by the Design Review Consultant for clarification.

Applicants are required to submit the following materials:

- Site photographs showing the existing buildings, natural features, and vegetation of the site as well as context photos of the adjacent properties

- Schematic site/floor plans, elevations, and perspectives of the proposed elements. Drawing shall be drawn to scale.
- Material samples and product literature

### Step 3: Formal Review (for Significant Improvements ONLY)

The applicant submits a written project description with necessary supporting materials, for review by the Town and the Design Review Consultant. A few weeks after the submission, the applicant will meet with the Design Review Consultant and Town Officer to review the application.

Applicants are required to submit the following materials:

- Written proposal description
- Site photographs
- Detailed plans and elevations of the proposed elements along with those for the site, lighting, parking and circulation (pedestrian and vehicle), landscaping, and site structures as applicable
- Material specifications

### Step 4: Review Outcome

All applicants will receive notification of approval or denial. Some applications may be accepted with modifications as outlined by the Design Review Consultant or may be asked to resubmit their application with changes. The Applicant may request amendments or changes to Design Recommendations directly to the Planning and Zoning Commission.

## DESIGN OBJECTIVES

Key objectives of the guideline program is described below. The Planning and Zoning Commission has established these Design Guidelines for the purpose of enhancing the Village District. Objectives seek that

new construction should be compatible or harmonious with existing structures in the immediate neighborhood. Creative, innovative, and original designs for new construction are encouraged.

Additions to an existing structure should be compatible or harmonious with the rest of the structure, both in terms of architectural design and relative size.

Alterations of an existing structure should be consistent with the design of the original building and any additions. Restoration of original architectural features is encouraged, and alterations to or removal of characteristic architectural features should be avoided.

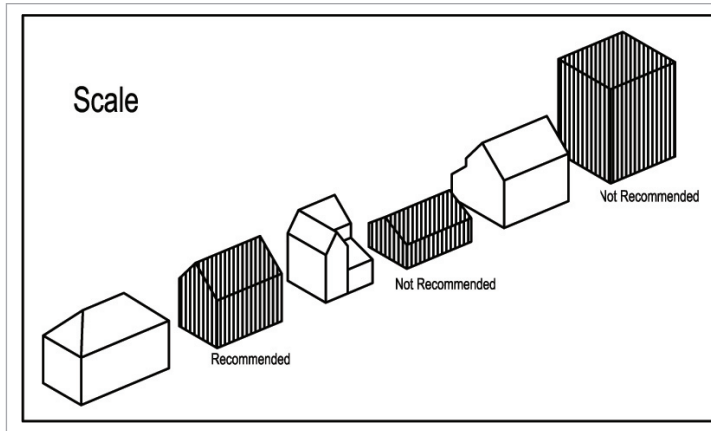
If an existing structure is not architecturally significant and detracts from the character of the neighborhood, a new design is acceptable as long as it is compatible with the rest of the neighborhood.

Existing structures that contribute to the overall scale of the Village District should be preserved. Moving an historic structure will only be considered if preservation in the current location is not possible. Demolition of existing structures should only be considered when there is no safe or reasonable alternative.

Proposed site structures and fixtures, including, but not limited to, outbuildings, fences, street lighting, utilities and paved surfaces, should be harmonious and compatible with the rest of the neighborhood. Fixtures located in the public domain are given the same consideration. Placement of utilities underground is encouraged.

Parking and related traffic areas should be screened or buffered. Parking area designs should include landscaping and traditional paving materials.

Significant archaeological resources should be preserved. A professional archaeological survey is encouraged when such resources are encountered.



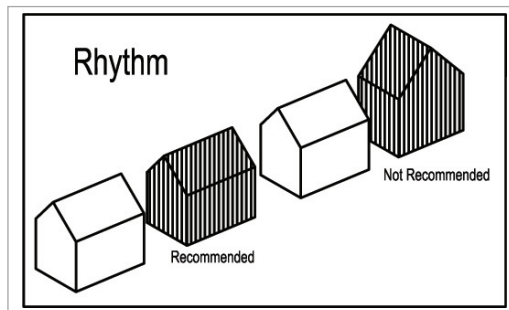
## DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Appropriate design must begin with consideration of design principles, as defined and discussed below.

### Scale

Scale refers to the relationship of a structure as a whole to its neighboring structures, street, and topography.

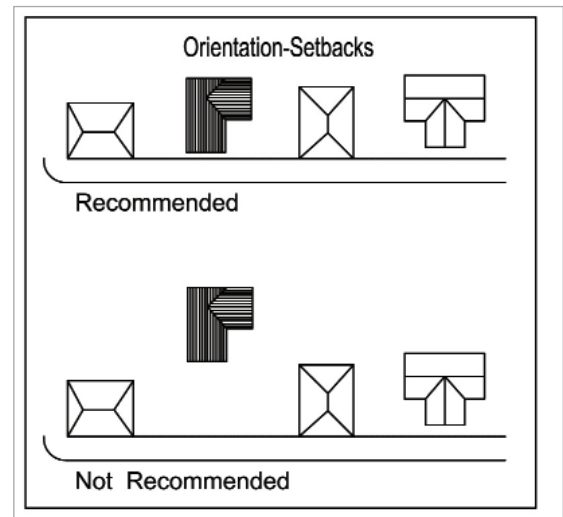
- A building's context on its lot and certain architectural features may change the apparent scale of a building.
  - A small building with monumentally scaled detail may appear larger than it actually is.
  - The apparent size of a large, simple mass can be reduced by breaking it into smaller components.
  - Incorporating a habitable attic story, such as with a gambrel or mansard roof and dormers, effectively adds a story without adding to the façade height.



### Rhythm

Rhythm refers to the pattern of relationships of structures that line a street.

- Rhythm is determined by the relative repetition of buildings in terms of their apparent scale.
- The rhythm of a street is an abstraction of the relative scales of the buildings which line it, accounting for both consistency and change in scale.
  - Where buildings are diverse in individual scale or style, the rhythm that they establish is the fundamental order that gives character to their setting.
- Appropriate design should address and contribute to the characteristic rhythm of the street.



### Orientation

Orientation refers to a structure's position on its site in terms of angle to the street and setbacks from both street and property lines.

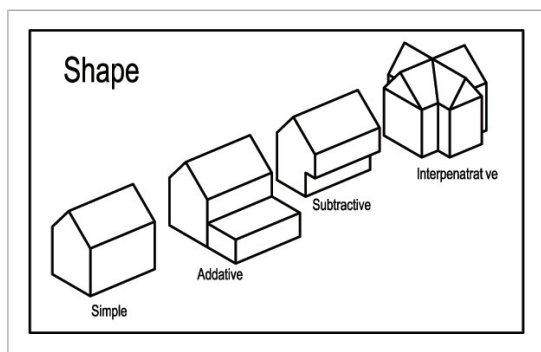
- Buildings in Portland's Village District are generally set square to the street with entranceways set in the street façade and new designs should follow this pattern.

- Neighboring structures usually have similar setbacks from the street line, though there is no absolute consistency in this regard.
- Where setbacks are similar, such a setback is generally appropriate for new construction.
- Where setbacks differ significantly, the rhythm of the overall street should be considered in the development of designs.
- Effective design will facilitate the transition from commercial uses to residential uses.

## Size

Size refers to the width and height of a building, and if appropriate, to the depth of the building. An appropriate design should be similar in size to its immediately adjacent buildings.

- If adjacent buildings are dissimilar in size, appropriate size is dictated by the size of buildings in the greater neighborhood, considering the rhythm of building sizes along the street.



- The apparent size of a building may be altered by its architectural elements and context – that is by changing its scale. A large building set far back may appear smaller and vice versa.
- The apparent scale of the structure, and not its actual size, is critical in determining appropriate architecture in the Village District.

## Massing

Massing refers to the characteristic form of a building, and is dictated by its shape and proportions. In discussing scale in context, and particularly the rhythm of a street line, relative massing of neighboring buildings is an important consideration.

- Shape refers to the basic plan of a building. A building may have a simple rectangular plan made up of a single structural form, while complex building forms generally can be characterized as being additive, subtractive, or interpenetrating in nature.
- Proportion refers primarily to the relative height and width of a building -- is it tall or short, wide or narrow? Generally, appropriate design will reflect the overall proportion of abutting properties and the rhythm of the street at large.
- Appropriate massing achieves balance in context.

## Characteristic Style

It is the objective of the Village District Guidelines to maintain continuity with the past, not its isolation. Portland's Village District displays an historic progression of architectural styles from the early Colonial to the Modernist, and this evolution is basic to the integrity of the district's fabric.

- Contemporary architecture can contribute to the ongoing evolution of the Village District, as long as it reflects the characteristic scale, rhythm, and building traditions of its setting.
- Reproduction architecture is discouraged if there is no historic precedence.
- Compatible contemporary architecture is generally more appropriate for new construction in the more heterogeneous parts of the district. Excellence of design without pretense of antiquity is encouraged for new construction.

- The appropriateness of any particular style will vary according to the nature of the proposed work and to its setting within the district.
  - Where styles vary in immediate context, the resultant rhythm of scale and styles must be taken into consideration in determining a style of new construction appropriate to the setting.
- Additions to existing structures are encouraged to continue the style of the existing structure, so as not to upstage the main portion of the building itself or disrupt the district's overall architectural ambiance.
- Reproduction architecture may be appropriate in restoring an historic façade where no early photographs exist or for infill construction where one style dominates.
- Most existing buildings are considered to be worthy of preservation in their own right. However, the P&Z Commission reserves the right to allow the "re-styling" of any building, no matter its age, if deemed in the best interest of the district as a whole.

Designs will be reviewed as to whether or not they are harmonious with the rhythm of characteristic styles in their immediate environment and the Village District as a whole.

## SITE PLANNING

The site refers to the area around and between buildings.

Site plan designs should consider the pedestrian first and the vehicle second.

- To create a safe pedestrian environment, areas for pedestrian and vehicle traffic should be well defined.
  - Pedestrian spaces should connect parking areas to establishments and connect establishments to each other.



*Shade trees help provide canopy, cool areas, and define pedestrian spaces.*

- Pedestrian spaces include: walkways, open green space, crossings, and patio and plaza spaces.
- Pedestrian spaces should be visible from the street.
- Architecturally compatible lighting should be used to increase nighttime security.
- Pedestrian spaces should be designed with universal accessibility in mind.
- An attractive pedestrian environment can make Portland's Village District a destination for residents and visitors alike.
  - Mixed use development is encouraged as it generally increases pedestrian activity.



*Overgrown plant material covers architecture and requires unnecessary maintenance.*



*Unless utilized for plaza or seating open paved areas detract from the streetscape and are discouraged.*

- Pedestrian facilities, including benches, trash receptacles, mailboxes, etc. and appropriate landscaping, promote pedestrian activity and interaction.
- Site facilities should aid in the transition between the pedestrian scale and the scale of nearby structures.
- Focal elements such as sculpture, fountains, and civic art should be included where appropriate.
- Site facilities should aim to achieve functional and visual integration across the district.
  - Site planning designs should facilitate the transition between public and private spaces and intimate and large spaces.
- Appropriate landscaping can be used to define areas for different activities.
- Landscaped buffers can be used to create transitions between both connecting and conflicting uses.



*Seating provides opportunities for street life.*

Landscaping designs should aim to be compatible with the surrounding area and sustainable in the New England environment.

- The seasons should be considered when choosing landscaping materials and locations.
  - Solar orientation and snow removal should both be considered.
  - For new construction projects, the orientation of structures and placement of landscaping should consider strategies that capitalize on solar influences.
- The use of materials that require permanent irrigation systems are discouraged.
- Low Impact Development strategies for storm drainage, such as rain gardens, are encouraged.

## SIGNAGE

Appropriately designed signs contribute to the visual vitality of the Village District.

- Signs should reflect the stylistic traditions of the building and the district as a whole.
- Signs should be integrated into the site plan and architecture for a unified appearance.
- Signs should not unduly obstruct building façades.
- Sign brackets should also be consistent with both the style of the sign and any historic trim on the building.
- Signage proposals should consider the rhythm and scale of other signs in the area to avoid conflict and visual clutter.
- Specific size standards are not maintained by the Village District, but scale is an important consideration.
  - Multiple sign types and locations are often preferable to a single larger sign.
  - Signs should be scaled to the immediate audience. Different signs for vehicular and pedestrian traffic are encouraged.
- Signs should not project above the façade line of any building.



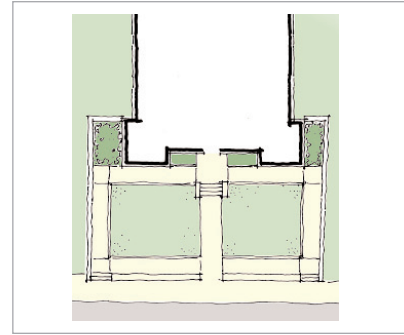


- Awning signs
  - Perpendicular wall-mounted signs (vertical and horizontal)
  - Free-standing signs
  - Band signs
- Sign Material, Color, Texture**
- High quality craftsmanship and traditional materials are encouraged.
  - Signage materials should relate to the building whenever possible.
  - Signage should be made of materials that are sturdy enough to withstand constant exposure to the elements.
  - Bright background colors, including large white areas, should be avoided.
  - Semi-gloss finishes are preferred.
  - Carved signs are preferred but not required.
  - Painted lettering is permitted.
  - Lettering should be applied directly to band sign entablatures, wainscoting, and windows without additional paneling or backgrounds.
  - Window signs should be painted on the inside of clear glass windows.
  - Neon signs are prohibited by the Zoning Regulations.
- Sign Content and Graphics**
- Messages should be kept clear and simple to represent the company's business.
  - Simple graphics and company logos are appropriate.
  - Slogans are not permitted.
  - Telephone numbers should be avoided.
  - Signage should present permanent messages.
    - Signs with slots for movable letters and signs with running text are not appropriate.
- Directional traffic signs should be avoided unless absolutely necessary to guide vehicular circulation.
  - Landscaping should be used to complement signs and blend them into the surrounding area.
  - Pendant light fixtures are encouraged for lighting signs. Light fixtures should avoid glare.
  - Internally lit translucent plastic signs and flashing signs are prohibited by the Zoning Regulations.
  - The following sign types are recommended for buildings adjacent to the street:
    - Awning signs
    - Perpendicular wall-mounted signs (vertical and horizontal)
    - Window signs
    - Temporary display signs
  - The following sign types are recommended for buildings set back from the street:

- Simple, legible text is encouraged.
  - Fonts such as "script" should be avoided as they are difficult for motorists to read.
  - Serif lettering is preferred, but not required.
- Lettering on signs oriented toward motorists should be at least 6" high (this is readable for 30 mph).
- The color of lettering and borders should contrast with the sign's background for greater clarity.
- Messages should be centered both vertically and horizontally on signs.

### Sign Locations

- For buildings located adjacent to the street:
  - Perpendicular wall mounted signs should be located within the motorist's "cone of vision" (0-10° horizontally and 0-7° vertically). Signs oriented perpendicularly to the street allow drivers the most time to read them.
  - Window signs and temporary display signs may be used along sidewalks to attract pedestrian traffic.



- For buildings set back from the street:
  - The motorist's "cone of vision" should also be used to determine appropriate sign locations. Because of the added distance from the street, there is a greater viewing angle and signs do not need to be oriented perpendicularly to the street.
  - A free-standing sign located closer to the road may be necessary in order to draw attention to the products or services sold or individual businesses within a multiple storefront building.
- For pedestrian safety, allow a minimum of 7' clearance between the bottom of any sign or awning and the ground level beneath it, or restrict pedestrians from walking in the area beneath the sign with the use of a permanent fixture.
- Allow at least 2' clearance between any sign or awning and the curb (or street trees, if present).
- For buildings with multiple storefronts, signage should be centered on structural elements that define individual businesses.
- Signs should never be located in the roadway right-of-way.
- Signs should never obscure significant architectural features of the building.
- New signs should never block existing signage or views of entering and exiting traffic.

### Awning Signs

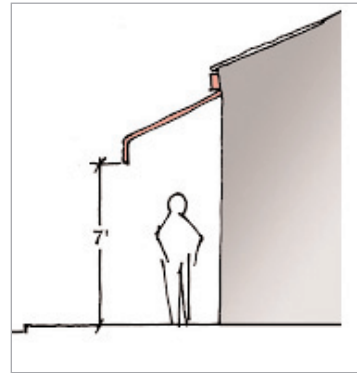
- Graphics and messages should be located on the valence and not the upper side of the awning.
- Where awning signs are used in conjunction with a band sign, the text on the awning should be smaller than the band sign.
- Modern 'curved' type canopy awnings are not appropriate.



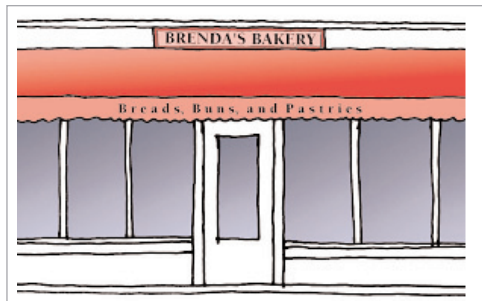
*Awning sign with text on valence.*



*Awning in conjunction with band sign, shown with goosneck lamps.*



*Cross section through awning showing safe pedestrian clearance.*

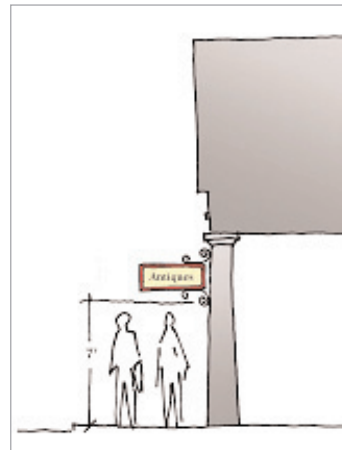


*Awning sign in conjunction with band sign. The dominant message of the Band sign can be supported by additional information by the awning sign*

### Perpendicular Wall-Mounted Signs

- Perpendicular wall-mounted signs should be securely anchored to the building façade with ornamental brackets.
- When lighting is necessary, wall-mounted signage should be lit by decorative sign lighting fixtures.
- Perpendicular wall-mounted signs are not permitted above the sills of second story windows.

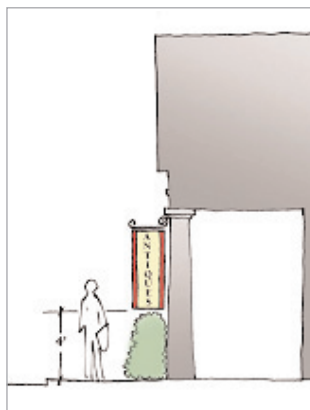
*Perpendicular Wall –Mounted Sign –Horizontal*



*Perpendicular Wall –Mounted Sign –Vertical*



*Shown with ornamental brackets*



### Free-Standing Signs

- Free-standing signs should be placed in "front yard" areas between the building façade and sidewalk, and in accordance with the location requirements of the Zoning Regulations.
- Where space permits, signs should be oriented perpendicularly to the street, within the motorist's 'cone of vision.' This allows the sign to be viewed while approaching from either direction. Signs may be oriented parallel to the street if the sign is sufficiently set back from the road.
- Free-standing signs may be illuminated from the ground up if the fixture is shielded and designed specifically for illuminating signage.
- Top-heavy, pole-mounted, free-standing signs should be avoided.





*Band sign should not overwhelm architecture.*

### Band Signs

- Band signs can be used in conjunction with free-standing signs to identify businesses in a multiple-storefront building. In such buildings, band signs should be centered on structural elements that define the individual storefronts.
- Band signs should be centered above storefront windows or other significant architectural features of the building.



### Window Signs

- Window signs should be used only when no alternative type is feasible, as they block views into and out of storefronts and can conflict with architectural window treatments.
- Signs should cover 20% or less of the total window area.
- Signs should consist of painted letters or graphics located on the inside of clear glass windows.



## SITE ELEMENTS

### Parking Areas

As parking areas and their associated driveways are without historic precedence in Portland's Village District, their impact on the neighborhood should be minimized. Convenient shared parking facilities that are accessible for multiple buildings in the Village District are encouraged.

- Defining separate pedestrian and vehicle routes within parking lots is encouraged.
- It is preferable that parking be located at the rear of the building
- Parking in a front yard is inappropriate.
- Where possible, parking should be consolidated into an area that serves multiple establishments. Property owners should consider how pedestrian routes might connect their establishment to parking facilities.
- Wide curb cuts are not appropriate and driveways should be as narrow as practical.
- The use of shared driveways is encouraged, to reduce the number of curb cuts.
- Apron paving materials which contrast with the adjoining roadway are preferred, so as to provide a visual break in both texture and color.
- The use of landscaping to reduce the apparent size of parking areas is encouraged.

- Wherever practical, off-street parking should be concealed from the road.
  - Parking that remains visible from the public right-of-way should be suitably screened with landscaping or fencing.
- Plant materials, such as shade trees, should be incorporated to reduce the heat island effect of the pavement, and to help minimize the impact of the parking lot.
- Concrete or stone curbing is recommended. Bituminous curbing is discouraged.
- Sufficient lighting should be provided for safety and security.



*Fencing and vegetation should be used to screen parking areas and driveways, though driveways and parking areas adjacent to walkways are discouraged.*



*Parking areas should be screened and buffered from the street.*

## Sidewalks & Roadways

A well developed pedestrian infrastructure promotes connections to open spaces and links various businesses.

- Pedestrian paths should provide clear lines of access to businesses, without passing through driveways or parking areas.
- Access to entrances should be free flowing.
- All open pedestrian spaces should be communicated as public space accessible to all.
- Appropriate street furniture and design elements should contribute to the physical safety and comfort of the pedestrian.
- Asphalt is not appropriate for either sidewalks or curbing.

## Fences & Walls

New fences should follow local traditions.

- New fences generally should not exceed 4' in height in any front yard.
- Stone walls, simple picket fences, and other finished timber styles are appropriate.
- Brick walls, barricade fences, split rail fences, chain link, and metal mesh fences are not appropriate.
- Where stone walls are built new, they should follow the traditional drywall techniques.
- Modern highway guardrails are not appropriate.
- Existing walls and fences should be preserved wherever possible. Restoration is preferred to replacement.
- Rural stone walls should be maintained free of overgrowth, particularly in the right-of-way along the road sides.
- Where fences have been removed, the reconstruction of historically appropriate fences is encouraged.



*Fence example.*



## Lighting

There is little historic precedence for formal street lighting in Portland. It is recognized that lighting fixtures were not original to the Village District and therefore these guidelines do not intend to require falsely antique fixtures.

- There should be enough light to encourage pedestrian activity but not so much as to detract from the character of the neighborhood.
- Lighting should provide for pedestrian safety. To encourage pedestrian activity, inset alleyways and recessed areas should be well lit.
- Light fixtures that eliminate wasted light, unwanted glare, and nighttime light pollution are encouraged.
  - Cut-off styles and shielding devices should be used.
  - Bare light-bulbs are not permitted.



*Historic light fixtures do not have precedence in Portland, but fixtures should be utilized to add character to site design while illuminating appropriated areas.*



*Floodlights result in unwanted glare and energy inefficiencies.*

Lighting should complement the architecture with which it is associated.

- Contemporary styles are acceptable if suitably scaled to the structure and environment.
- The color rendition of outdoor light fixtures should be as close to natural sunlight as possible, deviating only to the warm side of the spectrum.
  - Incandescent lamps, as well as color corrected fluorescent, color corrected high-pressure sodium, and metal halide lamps are all generally appropriate.
  - Mixing different types of light sources is also an effective way of regulating light quality.
- In general, mixed lighting sources such as display window lighting, sign lighting, entranceway lanterns, and street lights used in combination are preferable to formal and frequent placement of streetlights, as there is little historic precedence in Portland for ornamental streetlights.
- Lighting should complement the intended use of a building by highlighting signage and entrances.
- Lighting should communicate signage without overwhelming the user.
- Consistent light levels are encouraged. Flashing and color changing lights are not appropriate.

## Landscaping

Green spaces create a more attractive environment for visitors and residents. The function of landscaped spaces is to create opportunities for tree canopy development, enhance and contribute to the character of the community, and develop buffers between dissimilar uses.



- Sustainability within the district is an important concept for green spaces.
- Planting designs should limit the level of maintenance required.
- Irrigation systems should be avoided through the use of sustainable plant material that can tolerate the variety of environments.
- Invasive plants and weak-wooded trees should be avoided.
- Planting design should be accomplished with size and scale-appropriate materials.
  - Plantings should not conflict with retail entrances and window displays.
- To blend the nature of varied land uses, the landscape character of a site should be extended to the parking areas.



*Appropriate landscape in front can contribute to the streetscape environment.*

- Shade trees are required in parking areas to minimize the heat island effect.
- Two shade trees should be planted for every 1,500 square feet of parking space.
- Designs should aim to create pleasant microclimates that provide shade for summer months, and access to winter sunlight.
- Street trees should be planted to develop sufficient canopies for space definition.
- Landscaping should be utilized to buffer harsh edges of buildings and minimize unnecessary paved areas.

## Utility Structures

- Conventional television antennae are not regulated, but other large and unusual antennae, such as satellite dishes and ham radio antennae, are regulated by the P&Z Commission, and should be concealed from public view.
- Solar panels are allowed, but their type and location is regulated under the Village District.
  - Solar panels should be placed so as to minimize their effect on the architectural integrity of the structure.
  - Where practical, solar panels should be placed on a non-street facing roof.
  - Piping that is not integral to a panel should be concealed within the attic.



- Wind generators are permitted but must be located to minimize their visibility, without overly compromising the effectiveness of the generator.
  - Wind generators should be located away from the main portion of any building wherever possible.
- Permanently installed air conditioner equipment should be placed out of public view wherever possible.
  - Where no practical alternative exists to temporary window-installed air conditioning units, these should only be installed during the "cooling" season.
- Above-ground propane and similar tanks must be placed out of public view.
  - When tanks cannot be relocated to the rear of a building, they should be placed underground.
  - Fueling inlets and related vents should be placed as discretely as possible.
- Electric and utility gear should be placed as discretely as possible.
- Plumbing and mechanical roof vents should be located out of public view wherever practical.
- Prefabricated structures such as coolers are regulated as additions under these regulations, and must comply with design guidelines for any addition.



*Benches and trash receptacles do not sufficiently screen utilities. Utility should be out of sight, or view.*



*Utility structures detract from the streetscape and should be screened, moved out of site from the street, or their visual impact minimized.*

### Accessory Structures

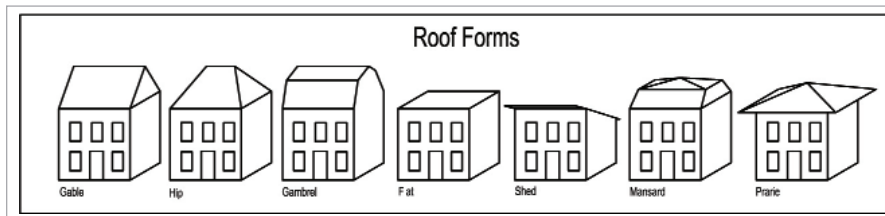
Accessory structures include those on private lots and those in the public domain.

- The construction of new large-scale accessory structures, such as garages, sheds, and gazebos, are given the same consideration as other new architectural construction.
- Accessory Structures should be appropriately scaled.
- Incorporating traditional building materials is encouraged.
- Accessory structures should avoid overt pretense to antiquity.
- Wherever possible, incidental pedestrian right-of-way amenities should be incorporated into structures which are characteristic of the district.
  - For instance, a storefront awning can also provide shelter for waiting transit riders.

## Plazas

A plaza is an open area adjacent to a civic or commercial building, intended as a gathering place for a variety of activities including intermittent displays, stands, and vendors. Plazas place people in the streetscape environment, contributing to the life of the community.

- Spaces can be for individual use or shared to accommodate multiple restaurant and other service establishment functions.
- Natural elements should contribute to the character of the plaza space, along with built elements.
- The scale of the outdoor room should balance with the architecture.



## Site Furniture

Reasonable leeway is permitted in selection of street furniture and related fixtures.

- Site improvements should include amenities for comfortable social interaction.
- Public seating and planters should be used to define outdoor public gathering spaces.
- Planters may also be used to highlight entrances to commercial establishments.
- News-boxes and public advertisement stands should be enclosed to unify the appearance along the public right-of-way.
- It is an objective of the Village District to avoid unnecessary clutter related to trash receptacles, news boxes, and the like. Such facilities should be consolidated in designated areas

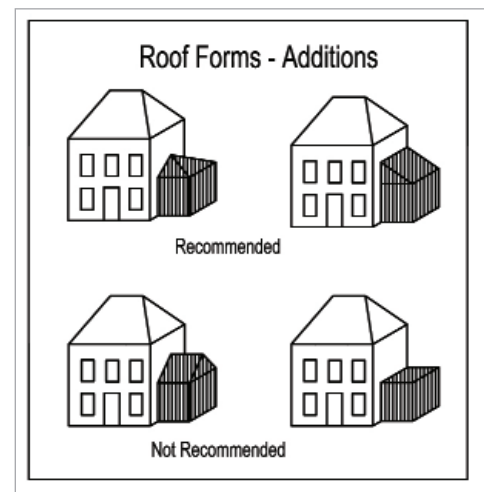
## ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS

This section of the handbook provides a more detailed look at specific architectural elements and the guidelines for relating them to the building traditions and characteristic styles of Portland's Village District.

### Roof Form

Roof types for new construction should reflect characteristic local types, and be compatible with the general rhythm of roof forms along the street. Roof form and pitch for additions normally should be similar but clearly secondary to the main existing roof form.

- The Village District has many gable roofs.
  - Gables may be set either parallel or perpendicular to the street.
  - Gable roofs vary from the simple single gable to a complex arrangements of interlocking or additive forms of different heights and both parallel and perpendicular to the street.



- Gable roof pitches are generally steep with the exception of the Greek Revival style.
- Other roof forms typical in the Village District include the shallow hip and flat roofs.
  - Any new use of the shallow pitched roof should be done in conjunction with a pedimented façade or substantial eave returns, and other appropriately large scale classical trim.
  - Except where flat roofs are appropriate, a roof pitch of less than 6" in 12" will usually be considered inappropriate for new construction.
- Mansard roofs are not generally consistent with the prevailing roof forms of the district.
  - However, their "lowering" of the eave line can be a useful device in relating larger buildings to smaller ones nearby.
  - The mansard roof relies on elaborate detailing and ornament not readily achieved today -- mansards which overhang exterior walls without proper cornice entablature detail are inappropriate.
  - The mansard roof should be used only with careful discretion for additions and new construction.
- The broad overhangs of the Prairie School and subsequent suburban architecture will generally be considered inappropriate in the district, unless associated with the flat or nearly flat roofs of the Italianate style.
- The construction of new glazed cupola forms on shallow roofed structures may be considered by the P&Z Commission. "Widow's walks" may also be considered for more steeply pitched roofs.

- However, small venting cupolas are not characteristic of any historic era in Portland, and their use is discouraged.
- Appropriately sized venting cupolas may be considered for outbuildings.

## Dormers

Dormers provide a useful way to reduce the apparent scale of new construction, by incorporating usable floor area into a roof form instead of an extra full story.

- Gable and hip dormers may be an appropriate way to utilize existing attic space.
- The addition of new dormers on existing architecturally significant roof surfaces is discouraged.
- False dormers will be discouraged.
- Dormers should be predominately fenestrated and should incorporate minimal wall surfaces other than architectural trim or ornament.

## Roofing Materials

Most of Portland's historic houses would originally have had cedar shingle roofs. Some of the nearly flat roofs and shallow pitched porches of the mid-nineteenth century had metal roofing. A few elaborate buildings of the late nineteenth century had slate roofs.

- Restoration of historic roofing materials is always encouraged where practical.
- New construction is encouraged to utilize traditional materials characteristic of the neighborhood.
- Cedar shingle roofing with an exposure of generally no more than 5" is appropriate for most pitched roofs, and its use is encouraged.
- Asphalt shingle may be acceptable as a practical alternative to wood shingle.

- Slate roofs were generally limited to public buildings and more elaborate Victorian houses, and thus are generally appropriate only for similar structures.
  - The preservation of existing slate roofs is encouraged
  - The replacement of slate roofs by other materials is highly discouraged.
- If slate cannot be used, synthetic slate shingles that match the original color and texture as nearly as possible is encouraged.
- Metal roofing may be appropriate for porches and other shallow pitch and flat roofs depending on the circumstances.

### Chimneys

Chimney form was an important characteristic of all structures prior to the Greek Revival era, and gained symbolic importance during the late nineteenth century. Portland's earliest houses had a large central chimney of fieldstone with at least three flues to separate fireplaces. This chimney would be at least 3' square and could be more than 5' square.

- New chimneys should be appropriately located and massed in proportion to the massing of the building itself, and particularly to the massing of the roof
  - Appropriate chimneys include: simple but substantial chimneys for traditional Colonial massing, discrete chimneys for Greek Revival massing, and more elaborate chimneys for later and more picturesque styles.
- Visible prefabricated metal chimneys are generally inappropriate for residences, but may be appropriate for non-residential vernacular structures.

### Masonry

Masonry should consider the utilization of locally quarried stone. The use of traditional brownstone helps preserve the vernacular style of the area and reinforces the role Portland had in the development of the Northeast.

The use of high foundation walls and/or raised basement stories is traditional and thus appropriate to many of Portland's buildings.

- Local building tradition dictates the use of cut brownstone building bases.
- Imitation brownstone will not be permitted.
- Brick basement stories also occur but are less common, and thus brownstone is preferred to brick.
- Large exposed areas of concrete foundation are not considered appropriate in the district.

### Siding

- New construction should incorporate building materials traditional to its neighborhood.
  - The use of natural materials in their traditional applications e.g. wood, stone, brick, glass, metal is encouraged.
  - The use of aluminum and vinyl siding is discouraged on any new construction which may have a prominent setting within the district.
- Additions and alterations to existing structures normally should utilize the type of building materials original to that structure.
  - Clapboard and wood shingle are both normally acceptable.
  - Board and batten is most appropriately limited to accessory outbuildings.
- Only in unusual circumstances will aluminum or vinyl siding be permitted on existing structures and then only where such structure is deemed to be of relative insignificance to the district.

- When aluminum or vinyl siding must be used, it should be similar in width to the original siding and be without raised false grain texture.
  - There are several narrow exposure type vinyl "clapboard" products on the market, which are usually preferable to the more common wide board aluminum type.
- Generally, aluminum and vinyl siding is inappropriate as a cover for existing trim, unless the building or trim are considered to be of little significance to the district.

## Windows

Windows are a major factor in characteristic style and building traditions of the street. The proportion, rhythm, and relative symmetry of entrances and fenestration are the basic design elements of Portland's Colonial and Federal era architecture.

- New buildings typically should locate fenestration so as to reflect the characteristic proportions and rhythms of neighboring facades.
- Windows in new additions should be spaced to reflect the characteristic proportions and rhythm of the existing proportions, though they may be diminished in scale to reflect the secondary importance of the addition to the main mass of the building.
- Restoration of original windows is encouraged.
- Windows without historic precedence should not be added to existing primary architectural facades.
- Double hung windows are characteristic of Portland's Village District, with the exception of certain industrial type structures.
- Modernist architecture, though not characteristic of the Village District, includes window walls, picture windows, awning, and casement windows.
  - Such windows are not necessarily prohibited and with sensitive rhythmic and proportional spacing may be deemed appropriate for new construction in the village context.

## Shutters

- Where shutters are to be installed, they should appear to be operable.
  - For instances, the installation of shutters to either side of a picture window, or to either side of a pair of windows is improper because in a closed position these shutters would not cover the windows. Paired shutters should flank a single window and should be sized so that they each are just wider than one half the width of the window frame.

## Entranceways & Porches

- For new structures, porches are an appropriate way to relate to the scale of a mid- to late-nineteenth century neighborhood.
- The preservation and/or restoration of porch detail is encouraged.
- The reconstruction of a lost porch is encouraged, and if early photographic evidence is not available, should be based on historic precedence for style of the building.
- All porch additions should be compatible with the style and detail of the building.
  - Depending on the style, a new porch roof pitch may reflect the main roof form of the building or may appear flat.
- New and replacement doors should be consistent with the characteristic style of the building.
  - There are many good sources for energy efficient doors of traditional design, and used historic doors are often available.
- The addition of storm doors with historically inappropriate ornament is discouraged.

- Proper entranceway design may also consider front steps, walkway and even fencing. Walkways, fencing, and plazas are discussed under Site Elements.

### Fire Exits & Handicapped Access

Exterior stairs to upper level entrances (exits) are generally inappropriate to the historic context, and thus should be concealed from public view.

- Visible exterior stairs generally will be permitted only where no other option is available for a building to meet the life safety code.
- If unavoidable, such exit stairs should reflect the detail and finish of the main structure; consideration should be given to providing exit via a new interior stair in a new and appropriately styled building addition.
- Where disabled access fixtures must be added to visible sides of an historic structure, they should be made as discrete as possible by reflecting characteristic details of the main building.
  - Often such ramps can be constructed as landscape terraces to further mitigate the visual impact on the architectural massing of the main structure.

### Trim & Ornament

An understanding of stylistically appropriate ornament is basic to appropriate design in the village context. In addition to purely decorative applied trim, functional elements such as windows, doors, porch columns, eaves, and the like are often embellished in ornamental fashion characteristic of a particular style. A building's physical structure itself might be articulated as the sole ornament of the building.

- New buildings' ornamentation should not be incongruous with the neighborhood.
  - Often ornament can be used to alter the apparent scale of a new building so that it might better fit into its context.

- Highly elaborate ornament is usually inappropriate for new construction in the district.

- Additions to existing structures are generally encouraged to continue the characteristic trim and ornament of the main structure.
- Existing trim and ornament which is original to a structure should be preserved or repaired.
- Replacement of lost trim and ornament is encouraged.
  - If no photographic evidence exists, reconstruction of trim and ornament must be based on sound historic precedence for the particular building type and style.

### Color

Paint color is not regulated by the P&Z Commission. Color that is integral to any proposed unpainted construction material is regulated by the Village District. Such materials may include brick, aluminum and vinyl siding, clad windows, asphalt roof shingles, as well as natural materials that are customarily left to weather without paint, such as white and red cedar shingle.



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