

DESIGN GUIDELINES

A. Purpose

The purpose of this Section is to establish procedures to serve as a guide for the design, location and relationship of new development with respect to adjacent properties and the already existing development within the Township. The appearance of space and the appearance and congestion of buildings and other structures has a significant relationship to the public health, safety, welfare and property values within the community.

Additionally, the Township wishes to retain any remaining examples of physical design and construction that reflects its heritage, history, and culture. The guiding principles contained within this Section are not intended to restrict innovation, variety or to dictate a particular style. The guidelines are intended to encourage the revitalization of the buildings and structures, and the advancement of more harmoniously designed developments within the Township in relationship to surrounding properties, while mitigating the effects of incompatible development on the character of the community.

Therefore, these guidelines encourage design principles that will result in the creation of suitable developments by eliminating the destruction of the natural environment; preventing drainage and erosion problems on adjacent properties; and ensuring that the construction and alteration of buildings and structures is not out of scale and harmony with the local neighborhood.

B. Design Guidelines and Standards

The following guidelines are intended to give general and specific guidance to the shape and appearance of development within the Township. These guidelines and standards are to serve as the guidelines for appropriate community design.

Relationship to adopted Plans and Policies:

1. The site plan shall conform to and reflect all Township plans and policies; all community master plans or comprehensive plans; and other adopted plans or policies related to the development of the Township.
2. The site plan shall conform to all Federal, State, Regional, and County adopted rules, regulations, plans and/or policies that relate to the development and redevelopment of the Township.
3. The site plan shall conform to the statement of intent for the zoning district in which it is located.

C. Objectives of the Design Criteria

The allure of a community is sustained by preserving its historic buildings and structures, building profiles and significant features, both natural and manmade, and by ensuring compatible development, which correspondingly enhances the community's heritage, history, and culture. The

preservation of historic buildings and significant features are of primary importance. Preservation and conservation of historic buildings and structures as well as other significant features associated with the site need to be an integral part of any project's design. The removal or alteration of historic buildings or structures or significant features should only take place after all other alternatives have been considered.

The objectives of the design guidelines and standards are to evaluate the relationship of the proposed development's features in order to minimize the possibility of adverse impacts upon surrounding properties and the community. The overall design of the project should show the following:

1. That a proper relationship exists between thoroughfares, driveways and parking areas to ensure pedestrian and vehicular safety.
2. That the design of the buildings are developed with consideration to the adjacent properties in terms of building height, material and overall character.
3. That the building location and placement should be developed with consideration given to minimize the removal of trees and change of topography.
4. That the on-site vehicle circulation is designed to ensure adequate access for fire and police protection.
5. That the project's design provides for adequate screening of the site, parking lots and service areas from surrounding properties by landscaping.

D. Design Elements

1. Building Design Standards

Building design should be appealing and compatible with surrounding building in terms of massing, roof shapes, heights, and window proportions. The exterior form of the building should be emphasized through variations in horizontal and vertical orientation, colors, textures and materials.

a. Scale, Height and Mass

The scale, height and mass of structures should be related to and compatible with its site and with the use, scale and architectural of the buildings that have a functional or visual relationship to the proposed structure. For instance, taller buildings should be stepped down to lower buildings along the property periphery. Where structures out of scale with surrounding land uses are unavoidable, it is preferable that landscaping techniques be utilized to give the appearance of a reduction in building height to a scale more compatible with neighboring buildings.

It is generally desirable for the building to be composed of either one primary form that is carved into or added upon to give the building some distinction.

Another approach is to create a composition of distinct forms and connect them through common elements such as bands of material, window rhythm, etc. This is especially important when you have large buildings such as industrial structures.

Using office spaces, loading areas, entrances, etc. to break up large facades is quite effective. Small areas can receive distinctive treatments in color, canopies, awnings, columns and the like to break down the over bearing nature of the building.

Roof shapes and pitches for additions should be compatible with those of the main building and should match neighboring structures as pitch and general proportion.

b. Colors and Materials

The exterior colors and materials used on a building should compliment with surrounding buildings and blend with the natural setting. The use of natural materials and earth tones is highly desirable, however, bright colors may be appropriate for some structures.

c. Lighting of building and Signs

External lighting should enhance building design and landscaping, as well as provide for safety and security. External lighting shall be designed to function without creating glare on adjoining properties and/or streets.

External lighting of signs is preferred

d. Compatibility with Neighboring Buildings and Structures

Structures should relate in size and general appearance to adjacent buildings and to the local neighborhood and be aesthetically compatible. A building's design, architecture features and landscaping are ways by which a proposed building can be made compatible with neighboring properties.

e. Public Spaces

Formal and informal outdoor places for the public to congregate should include access to and protection from the sun as well as protection from the wind and rain. The area should be landscaped utilizing shade trees to whatever extent possible and designed in a manner to provide a strong connection to the surrounding neighborhood and the street if located in close proximity to the roadway.

f. Intrusive Impacts

The design of any proposed development should include techniques to minimize visual and auditory intrusion impacts. The development should be designed in such a manner as to contain any potential nuisances. The development should also be designed to protect individual occupants from any potential nuisances originating from adjoining sites. Design should incorporate mitigation of any potential noise impact on sleeping quarters through building layout and/or orientation on the site, landscaping arrangements as well as the use of sound insulation materials.

g. Additions and Accessory Structures

Any proposed building additions and accessory structures should be compatible with the original structure(s) so that the result appears to be an integrated whole. Moreover, design specifications should ensure that the proposal blends with the natural terrain and vegetation of the site.

h. Residential Conversions to Other Uses

Any residential dwelling converted to another use should retain its residential appearance in order to be compatible with the surrounding residential neighborhood. Conversions should be done in manner so that the exterior only appears as a commercial use by means of screening walls, awnings, new windows and doors, landscaping, walkways and permissible signage.

2. Energy

Buildings should be designed to minimize reliance on mechanical heating and cooling through insulation and design. All proposed buildings should be designed and oriented to make use of sunlight for direct heating, solar water heating and illumination whenever possible. Also, natural ventilation and shading should be used to help keep buildings cool. Site layout, building design and positioning, and landscaping should all be coordinated to maximize energy conservation.

3. Existing Structures

All existing structures on property proposed for development should be examined regarding their potential value for continued use. Any structure, which provides potential housing, architectural or historic value that exists on the property in good condition, then the following options should be considered in the order given. The structure should be:

1. Integrated into the plans for the proposed development,
2. Moved to another site where it might be utilized,
3. Materially recycled, or
4. Demolished.

Reduction of parking, setback or other requirements may be considered if it would facilitate preservation of a structure. Projects using existing structures of historic or architectural value should respect the traditional exterior style of the building.

4. Landscaping

Landscaping must be included on all development plans in accordance with Chapter 8 of this Resolution. The landscaping must relate to the whole development, be integrated with building design, enhance the appearance and enjoyment of the project, and soften any adverse impacts of buildings and pavement. In addition, landscaping is important in controlling ground erosion,

managing storm water runoff and enhancing energy conservation strategies. The landscaping should consist of a combination of trees, shrubs and ground cover. The landscaping of any development should blend with the existing vegetation on nearby properties if the neighboring vegetation is healthy and in compliance with these requirements. Moreover, innovation in landscape designs and choice of plants is encouraged to serve both aesthetic and functional purposes.

5. Pedestrian and Bicycle Enhancements

The advancement of pedestrian and bicycle facilities to enhance non-motorized transportation opportunities should be incorporated in all development plans when it is determined that the design of such is both desirable and feasible in accordance with Section 560.00 of this Resolution. The community's primary objective is to link residential areas, commercial and employment centers, parks and open space areas with improvements that can be safely used by residents and tourists for non-motorized transportation and recreational purposes.