

TOWN OF BROOKFIELD  
ZONING REGULATIONS

Technical Standards  
Architecture - §242-602I

I. Architecture *[approved 9/20/01]*

(1) Purpose:

It is the purpose of this section to provide general guidelines concerning the architectural treatment of the facades of all commercial and office structures. It is not the intent to specify one particular type of architecture, but rather to provide for diversity in design while simultaneously fostering the continuation of the spirit of our historic New England traditional architecture in all zoning districts.

It is the goal of the Commission to foster economic development by encouraging a harmonization of the commercial district in a traditional New England character, which has been found to provide a pleasing shopping environment.

It is also the goal of the Commission to minimize the impact of the commercial and office district on the adjoining residential areas which have a more traditional New England character. It is felt that such transition of character between different zones can be best accomplished through an increased utilization of the New England style of architecture. It is believed that the maximization of the utilization of the New England style of architecture will protect the property values, not only within the district, but within the adjoining residential zones.

(2) Background:

During the preparation of the Plan of Conservation and Development in 2000, surveys and considerable public comment indicated a high degree of dissatisfaction with the physical appearance of many structures within our Commercial and Industrial zoning districts. The public consensus was that building design should follow traditional New England architectural design and style concepts, and that modern, monolithic structures were not compatible with the desire for more historic architectural themes. This consensus is consistent with the stated zoning purposed of protecting and conserving the character of the town.

(3) Design Standard:

- (a) Facades shall be designed using traditional New England architecture themes and concepts;
- (b) Facades need not be exact replication of historical Colonial, Georgian, Federal, Classical Revival, Victorian, etc., architectural styles. However, they shall exhibit the "spirit" of such designs;

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- (c) Types of materials and colors shall be compatible with and compliment the design;
  - (d) Façade designs employing large, continuous, solid planes of glass, metal or wood facing, masonry and similar materials are to be especially discouraged;
  - (e) Facades employing pediments, columns, arches, gables, dormers, plinths, architraves, protruding bays, and similar architectural features in order to “break up” vast, singular façade planes are to be encouraged.
  - (f) Facades may be dissimilar, but shall be compatible with other neighboring buildings.
  - (g) Facades shall be designed to suggest other than flat roof designs.
- (4) Architectural Guidelines: *[added eff. 6.9.04]*
- (a) Relationship to the Site:

The architecture shall establish a balanced relationship between prominent natural land features, prevailing vegetation patterns, and adjacent land use development with regard to organization, visibility and character.

    - [1] Use prominent site features (e.g. topography, rock, mature vegetation, water, etc.) to organize the architectural composition.
    - [2] Establish a balanced proportional relationship between the building (mass & scale) and the site (terrain, landscape, views).
    - [3] Design primary building orientation (horizontal or vertical) to flow from related landforms.
    - [4] Design the main building entrance to be clearly visible and identifiable from the primary vantage points or public right of way.
    - [5] Provide a logical and visually appealing approach to the entrance.
    - [6] Orient the building consistent with energy conservation principles.
    - [7] Respect prevailing established building setbacks at both front and side yards.

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**(b) Historic Resources:**

Special design consideration shall be given to the impact on historical resources.

- [1] Treat resources in a manner consistent with the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.
- [2] Preserve and/or enhance natural views and features of historical importance.
- [3] Incorporate historic cultural landmarks (e.g. houses, commercial buildings, old stone walls, barns or sheds, fences, tree stands on open space edges, etc., ) into new development
- [4] Preserve and reinforce historic scale, massing and proportion where applicable.

**(c) Form & Space:**

The building forms and surrounding spaces shall reflect continuity of density, streetscape rhythm, yard setbacks and community character.

- (1) Design to create interesting and proportional outdoor spatial relationships between buildings, open space, and setbacks on adjacent sites.
  1. Establish building rhythms with adjacent building forms for visual continuity.
  2. Create variety using building clustering, surface recesses, projections and open space brew.
  3. Honor local historic detailing with simple roof forms and shapes.
  4. Avoid long, large, unarticulated structures which are uninviting and do not contribute to the streetscape.
  5. Use large open spaces to provide strong, clear boundaries between different land uses or different neighborhood densities.
  6. Establish visual and functional focal points (e.g. "town green", landmark structure, public park, etc.) for all large developments

**(d) Scale, Massing and Proportion:**

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The design statement shall be simple, and the design elements, materials, and details shall be consistent with its contextual setting.

- (1) Balance the visual relationships of building bulk and size with its site, especially when viewed from a distant vantage point.
  - (2) Break larger building volumes into smaller forms to lessen the total building mass and to provide continuity with nearby patterns. Smaller forms could include projections (e.g. overhangs, awnings, etc.) or recesses (e.g. windows) on smaller buildings, or stepping back upper levels on larger buildings.
  - (3) Maintain proportions between building height, length and width consistent with prevailing architectural standards. Avoid distortion or exaggeration.
  - (4) Create variety through compatibility rather than conformity.
  - (5) Strive for visual simplicity rather than complexity.
- (e) **Rooflines, Facades and Entrances:**

The rooflines shall be simple, functional and reflective of the broader community building stock. The public face of the building shall present a clear, well-defined and balanced façade.

- (1) Consider rooflines of adjacent properties in the design to avoid clashes in style and materials.
- (2) Form a consistent composition between the roof mass and building façade.
- (3) Reference adjacent building roof details (e.g. dormers, fascias, roof pitches, etc.) when applicable.
- (4) Establish horizontal continuity by referencing adjacent prominent façade detail elevations and rhythms (e.g. brick coursing, mouldings, fenestration, etc).
- (5) Include architectural detailing and apply it consistently throughout the design. Ensure such detailing is compatible with the historical context.
- (6) Build elements (e.g. protective canopies, stairs, columns, wall or roof projections and recesses, etc.) to human scale at sidewalk level to encourage pedestrian use.

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- (7) Avoid false detailing (e.g. mansard roofs, partial HVAC screens, truncated roof structures, etc.) which detracts from a building's integrity.
- (8) Accentuate entrances with strong definition and individual legibility for individual tenants.
- (9) Create an agreeable pedestrian environment, including weather protection, convenience and safety features.
- (10) Arrange window patterns with a balanced spacing and conscious rhythm.
- (11) Observe historic precedents wherever possible.

**(f) Materials, Color and Surface Texture:**

The building materials shall be durable and functional and the use of color and texture shall be reflective of local style and community character.

- (1) Limit the number of different materials on the exterior building elevation to avoid visual overload.
- (2) Avoid large, unarticulated or monolithic areas on street facades. Use detailing to add relief and shadow patterns to otherwise flat facades.
- (3) Create visual variety, aid in climate control, and establish character by creating shadow patterns using architectural elements (e.g. overhangs, trellises, projections, reveals and awnings).
- (4) Use natural materials in their traditional applications (e.g; wood, stone, brick, glass, metal, etc.) and avoid wherever possible the use of vinyl or aluminum siding, exterior insulation and finish systems, etc.
- (5) Coordinate all exterior elevations of the building (color, materials, architectural form, and detailing) to achieve continuity.
- (6) Coordinate color scheme and materials with neighboring buildings, and the town as a whole to reinforce harmony.

**(g) Equipment and Service Areas:**

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Building equipment, storage and service areas shall be integrated into the site plans and architectural composition in ways that minimize adverse impacts.

- (1) Install new utility service systems underground, and bury all existing above ground service when renovating.
- (2) Conceal views of all roof-mounted equipment (e.g. HVAC, plumbing, exhaust fans, etc). from the public right-of-way using detailing incorporated into the architectural design as opposed to an applied barrier.
- (3) Screen all ground or concrete pad-mounted equipment (e.g. HVAC electrical, gas, metering devices, etc.) using evergreen plants of different species and size, or architectural detailing complimentary to the building.
- (4) Locate and screen accessory buildings and functions (e.g. trash containers, storage sheds, and emergency generators) away from parking areas, walks, and adjacent land use. Use either a variety of evergreen plant materials, or and architectural enclosure in character with the primary building.
- (5) Conceal garage doors and loading areas from view from surrounding streets.
- (6) Protect adjacent residential neighborhoods from noise, traffic, risk of hazards, etc.