

PORT WASHINGTON DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

PREAMBLE: Port Washington's City Plan Commission is concerned with the function, appearance, and development of public and private lands. The following development guidelines have been established to manage future growth and change in the community. These guidelines will be a major factor in ensuring that Port Washington's community image remains distinct from those of other communities. The Plan Commission recognizes that good community design improves the overall quality of life, makes the community more desirable for business development, enhances property values, and can set Port Washington apart from other communities.

- DEVELOP WALKABLE NEIGHBORHOODS THROUGH THE USE OF CONNECTING SIDEWALKS, TRAILS, OR PATHWAYS, DESIGNED TO BE CONNECTED TO OTHER DEVELOPMENT, WITHIN THE CITY.
- PRESERVE AND PROTECT EXISTING NATURAL AREAS AND TOPOGRAPHY BY INCORPORATING EXISTING HISTORIC OR CULTURAL FEATURES INTO THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN.
- ENCOURAGE LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT. STORMWATER DETENTION AREAS SHOULD BE INTEGRATED WITH OTHER FEATURES OF THE SITE.
- ENHANCE COMMUNITY GATEWAYS OR ENTRANCES TO THE COMMUNITY WITH PLANTINGS AND GREENERY, AND HIGHER ARCHITECTURAL AND BUILDING DESIGN STANDARDS.
- INTEGRATE OPEN SPACE AND NATURAL FEATURES INTO THE DEVELOPMENT PATTERN, ENCOURAGE DIVERSITY OF ARCHITECTURAL BUILDING STYLES AND LOT CONFIGURATION, AND DISCOURAGE THE CONSTRUCTION OF HOMES WHERE THE GARAGE DOMINATES THE FRONT STREET FACADE.
- ENCOURAGE DECORATIVE OR ORNAMENTAL STREET LIGHTING; WHERE CUL-DE-SACS ARE PRESENT, THEY MAY INCORPORATE PLANTED ISLANDS THAT CAN BE USED FOR STORMWATER COLLECTION (BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES); LONG, UNCONNECTED STREET SEGMENTS SHOULD BE AVOIDED; AND MORE THAN ONE ACCESS SHOULD BE PROVIDED TO CONNECT WITH EXISTING STREET OR DEVELOPMENT.
- PROMOTE A GRADUAL TRANSITION WHERE NEW DEVELOPMENT BORDERS A TOWN BOUNDARY. LARGER OR DEEPER-SIZE LOTS, ENHANCED LANDSCAPING/ BERMS SHOULD BE USED TO BUFFER HIGHER DENSITY CITY DEVELOPMENT WITH LOWER DENSITY TOWN DEVELOPMENT.
- FOR LARGE PROJECTS, CONSIDER THE USE OF "SELF-SUSTAINING DEVELOPMENT" THAT INCORPORATES A MIX OF LAND USES IN THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN.

Ideally through this process, the developer will demonstrate knowledge of, and respect for, Port Washington's charm and unique sense of community.

Adopted: July 17, 2003

The following design guidelines shall apply to all new or modified development projects in the City of Port Washington.

Site Plans

- Proposed structures should be designed and situated so as to retain and blend with the natural vegetation and landforms of the site.
- The site shall be planned to accomplish a desirable transition with the streetscape, and to provide for required planting, pedestrian movement, and parking areas.
- Where grading is necessary for the construction of structures and paved areas, the grading should blend with adjacent landforms through the use of contour grading rather than harsh cutting or terracing of the site. Grading should not create problems of drainage or erosion on its site or adjacent property.
- Natural drainage systems should not be altered so as to affect their character and thereby causing problems of drainage, erosion, or flooding.
- Structures should be set back from the edge of bluffs to protect views from scenic areas below.
- Public views to and along stream or lake shorelines from public roads and other public lands are to be protected.
- Development should be located on a parcel so that commercial uses either abut the front property line or be located close to, and directly face the street. That allows pedestrians to have direct access to retail uses from the street and allows storage areas to be located towards the rear of the parcel.
- Existing patterns of small-scale commercial development should continue by encouraging narrower building or storefronts within larger buildings that face the street.
- On corner parcels, development should be located on both property lines; however, it should be encouraged that corners be recessed from the front and side property lines in order to create pedestrian areas; prominent building entrances; and more architecturally interesting buildings.
- In relating buildings to a site or parcel, the provisions of the Port Washington Unified Development Ordinance in regard to floor area and open space regulations, landscaping, and off-street parking shall be part of these standards.
- Where the City and Town boundaries adjoin, there should be a gradual transition in terms of density, scale, and open space.

Architectural Styles

- New buildings should be designed to that they are architecturally compatible with existing buildings by requiring them to reflect and emulate, as much as possible, the predominant architectural styles and the natural surroundings of the immediate area.
- Rhythm/re-occurring patterns in windows and storefronts should be included and encouraged.

- Building components, such as windows, doors, eaves, and parapet, shall be in proportionate scale in relationship to one another.
- Variations in floor levels, roof patterns, architectural details, and façade finishes of large buildings should be encouraged to create the appearance of several smaller buildings.
- The architectural character of historic structures should be maintained or enhanced if remodeled.

Building Scale, Bulk, and Form

- Buildings should be designed with shapes that respect and conform to the natural topography of the site by requiring them to step up or down hillsides in the same direction as the natural grade.
- The bulk of buildings on hillsides should be controlled by requiring them to be terraced up or down the hill at a uniform height.
- The building scale and height of commercial buildings should harmonize with any adjacent residential buildings.

Facades

- Building facades should be designed with doors, windows, walls, and/or other elements that proportionately fit together and are humanly scaled in order to create a harmonious composition where no one element dominates or overwhelms another.
- The use of door and window canopies and awnings should be encouraged.
- Recessed entryways should be encouraged where appropriate.
- Transparent windows that are seen by pedestrians should be at least sixty (60) percent of the length of the building facade facing the street.
- Opaque or reflective window tints and glazes should be discouraged.
- The use of special architectural features on corner buildings, including corner entries at ground level and projecting windows, towers, turrets, and cupolas on the corners of upper levels should be encouraged.
- Exterior stairs to upper levels on street facing facades and the front-half of side facades should be discouraged.
- The construction of “snout homes” or ones where front-loading garages dominate the front façade should be discouraged.

Roofs

- Mechanical equipment should to be screened with parapets or the roof form.

- Roofs should be integral to the structure of the building and the design of the facade, rather than ornamental.
- The use of gable roofs should be used where appropriate.
- Mansard roofs and buildings covered entirely by a flat roof should be discouraged.

Materials and Colors

- Materials shall be of durable quality (e.g. the use of narrow gauge vinyl siding applied over foam or insulated sheathing should be discouraged).
- The use of identical building materials on all sides of a building should be encouraged.
- All multiple family buildings shall have a minimum exterior finish of 50% masonry. This requirement may be relaxed on an individual basis to allow for greater flexibility in design.
- All industrial/business/commercial buildings shall be composed of a minimum of 60% brick, architectural panels, pre-cast concrete, exterior plaster, or decorative masonry block.
- The use of light tints and bright accents is encouraged in lieu of just earthtones.
- Establish a palette of options for exterior building colors for use throughout the site. The range should be wide enough to allow for variety, yet narrow enough to unify all the buildings on a site.
- Sheer glass curtain walls, reflective glass, and corrugated metal siding should be discouraged.

Utilities

- Overhead utility lines should be placed underground where appropriate to reduce the visual impact on open and scenic areas. Utility pedestals should be screened.

Signs

- The number, location, size, design, materials, and colors of signs should be limited to that are compatible with building styles.
- The content and design of signs, illustrations, and murals painted on exterior building walls should be compatible with the building and the surrounding environment.
- Where at all possible, freestanding signs should not be located in the required offsets adjacent to a residential area.
- The location and design of freestanding signs within a setback area should be coordinated with the landscape treatment.

Parking and Paved Areas

- Where possible, off-street parking should be located at the rear of a parcel and buildings to avoid blocking the view of the buildings to the street.
- Off-street parking should be screened wherever possible from a public street or residential uses.
- Common driveways providing access to more than one parcel should be encouraged.
- The amount of visual paved areas (driveways and walkways) should be kept to minimum as much as possible.
- Parking areas and traffic ways shall be enhanced with landscaped spaces containing trees or tree groupings. Shrubs shall be used only where they will not obscure vision and will not require excessive maintenance.

Lighting

- Exterior lighting, when used, shall enhance the building design and the adjoining landscape. Lighting standards and fixtures shall be of a design and size compatible with the building and adjacent areas. Lighting shall be restrained in design, and excessive brightness and brilliant colors shall be avoided.
- Exterior lighting should be subdued and indirect, and glaring fixtures should be avoided when adjacent to residential uses.

Landscaping

- To reduce erosion and maintain surface runoff at acceptable levels, trees and other vegetative land cover should be removed only where necessary for the construction of structures or paved areas.
- A smooth transition should be maintained between the development and adjacent open areas through the use of natural landscaping and plant materials that are native or appropriate to the area.
- The appearance of blank walls where visible from a public street may be enhanced by the use of planter boxes.

Fences and Retaining Walls

- Fences and retaining walls should be surfaced, painted, landscaped or otherwise treated to blend with their surroundings.
- Service yards and other places that tend to be unsightly may be screened by the use of walls, fencing, planting, or combinations of these. The screening shall be equally effective in winter and summer.

