Stoughton Center Design Review Guidelines

May 2006

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Special Thanks

Members of Stoughton Historical Society, Town Boards, Elected Officials, and residents who expressed their opinions in public meetings.

Prepared by Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)

The Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) is the officially designated regional planning agency for the 101 cities and towns in the Boston metropolitan area. MAPC offers technical assistance to its member communities in the areas of land use, housing, environmental quality, transportation, and economic development.

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INTRODUCTION & SCOPE

The Stoughton Center Mixed Use Overlay District zoning by-law enables residential development over, and in conjunction with retail and office uses within the Stoughton's downtown area. This by-law was developed in response to one of the key recommendations of the Executive Order 418 Community Development Plan for Stoughton that identifying the need for mixed use development in the downtown area.

Goals of the Stoughton Center Mixed Use Overlay District (Overlay District) by-law include creating a more compact, pedestrian-friendly living and working environment that encourages transit use and bicycling; enhancing vitality during both day- and night-time; and increasing the variety of housing stock available within the Town's Center.

In order to achieve the Overlay District goals, the by-law provides a more flexible set of standards that are different to the underlying zoning districts and that provide an alternative set of rules for development within the Center. However, well designed streetscapes and successful town centers are the result of a complex integration of many attributes. Good design cannot be completely mandated. The design guidelines in this document provide additional support to the zoning by-laws and help to steer developments in the right direction by making certain concepts and design strategies more explicit by providing examples of acceptable solutions, while leaving flexibility for design.

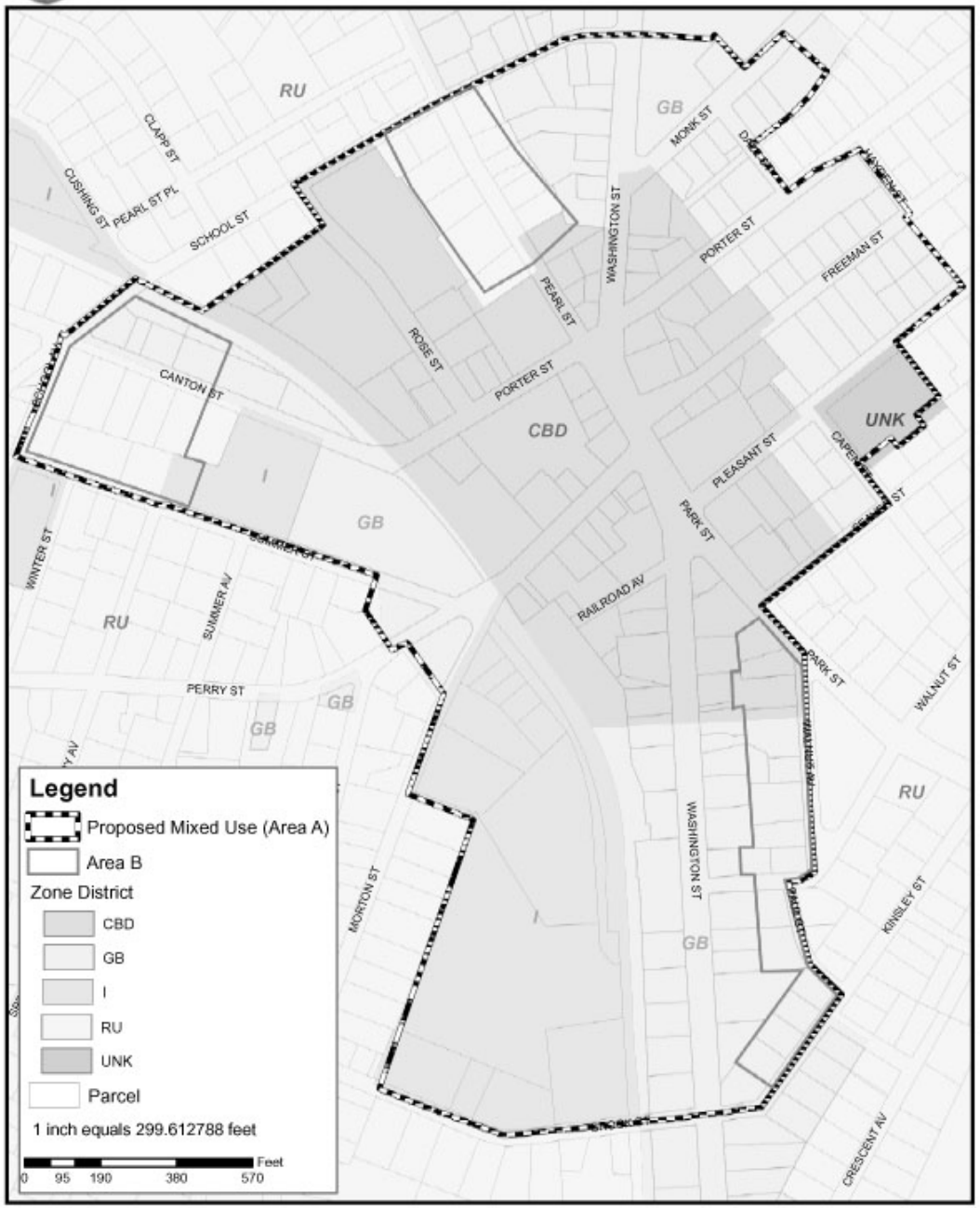
This document is intended to be used by business owners, architects and developers when designing new construction and/or redevelopment within the Overlay District as well as by the local Permit Granting Authority when reviewing such projects.

To reinforce the advisory nature of this document, the term "should" is used throughout the document, rather than "shall". These guidelines do not supersede any of the Stoughton zoning by-laws or any other municipal regulations. Recommendations contained in this document are in addition to all applicable rules and regulations.

Location and 'Special Character Areas'

The Overlay District covers an area roughly bounded in the north by School Street, the south by Brock Street, the east by Hayden Street, Seaver Street and Walnut Avenue, and the west by Canton Street, Summer Street, and Morton Street (see map on following page).

Proposed Stoughton Center Mixed Use Overlay District



The Overlay District includes three areas that display a more residential character than the remainder of the Center. These 'Special Character Areas' are: Faxon Park, Canton Street, and Pearl Street and are included within 'Area B' of the Overlay District by-law. Buildings in these three areas are located slightly further away from the street and often have landscaping along the street alignment. Pay attention to how your site and building fit into Stoughton Center.

A summary of the design guidelines that apply specifically to the Special Character Areas is provided in Appendix B.

DESIGN REVIEW INFORMATION

All projects using the Overlay District zoning by-law are required to undergo a Design Review process. Design Review involves assessment of the proposal against the relevant design guidelines in this document and the Site Plan Review criteria that is applied to all Special Permit applications under the Stoughton zoning by-laws. The Design Review process essentially provides a "one stop shop", replacing the need to undergo a separate Site Plan Review for development proposals in the Overlay District.

Submission Requirements for Design Review

The following list includes the items typically required for the Design Review process. This list is not exhaustive - the Special Permit Granting Authority (SPGA) may require more or less information depending on the nature of each application. If you are unsure as to whether you need to submit these items, consult with the SPGA early in the process. It should be noted that the burden remains on the applicant to demonstrate that the proposed design will enhance Stoughton Center.

Please submit the following items for Design Review:

1. Color photographs showing existing buildings and site conditions adjacent to the proposed project area.

2. All data required to enable the SPGA to determine the amount and frequency of traffic volumes generated and the extent of compliance with off-street parking and loading requirements.

3. Schematic design plans and elevations including:

- ✓ Context plan showing existing and proposed building footprints and relationships to structures on contiguous lots.

- ✓ Site Plan which accurately locates all existing and proposed buildings and structures with their proposed uses as well as gross floor areas, parking areas, driveways, service areas, usable open space, landscaped areas (including proposed fences, walls, planting areas, and walkways), all facilities for storm drainage, sewerage, refuse, other waste disposal and other utility systems.

- ✓ Ground Floor Plan indicating major dimensions, gross and net floor area, proposed uses of interior areas in appropriate scale, access points for pedestrian and service areas.
- ✓ Typical floor plan indicating major dimensions, gross and net floor area, proposed uses and vertical circulation for upper level floors.

- ✓ Context elevations as viewed from street frontage(s) indicating the proposed building(s) and adjacent building(s).

- ✓ Elevations defining heights, proposed entrances, fenestration, signage, all materials, finishes, colors and features of the entire project.

- ✓ Lot and building section, including relationship of building height and street width.

- ✓ Sign plan indicating location, size, illumination and design of all signs on the site.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

SUMMARY: FUNDAMENTAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

The following are excerpts from the Site Design Guidelines and Architectural Design Guidelines sections of this document that are considered to be the more "fundamental" or "critical" guidelines. The Fundamental Guidelines combined with the General Design Principles following this section should be considered in the design of all developments within the Stoughton Overlay District. It should be noted, however, that observance of the Fundamental Guidelines and General Design Principles will not necessarily result in a well designed project. Some, if not all, of the other design guidelines included in this document will be applicable to developments in Stoughton Center, depending on the nature of the proposal.

(Building Siting / Orientation):

- o Buildings should be sited to maximize the frontage along the street edge at the minimum setback distance allowed by zoning provided that this is consistent with the setbacks of adjoining buildings (see General Design Principles – Context section).
- o Walkways should be designed to both shorten walking distances and maximize accessibility.
- o Walkways should be clearly distinguished from vehicular paths by landscaping, paving materials, or architectural elements.
- o Walkways should provide for disabled access, through the use of ramps and curb cuts conforming to state and federal standards.

(Parking):

- o Parking areas should be treated as an accessory to the building and should be located behind the building, underground, in a parking structure (see Parking Structures section), or to the side of the building. If the parking is located to the side of the building, landscaping should be provided between the parking and the front property line to soften the visual impact (see Landscaping section).
- o Bicycle parking should be located adjacent to walkways that provide direct access to the building entrance.
- o Exterior trash and storage areas should be concealed from view from adjacent streets, walkways and properties in a manner that is compatible with the building and site design.
- o Parking structures should incorporate storefronts on the ground floor adjacent to a street, or otherwise, parking structures should be located behind a building that incorporates storefronts along the street façade(s) (see the Façade Design section).

o Parking areas should be landscaped beyond the requirements of the zoning by-laws. Think of your parking lot as an extension of your building's design.

o Parking areas should provide a minimum of 10 percent of the total parking area as landscaping.

(Landscaping):

o Provide trees, shrubs and groundcovers noted for longevity, low maintenance, attractive appearance, durability, lack of "messiness", and screening ability (if needed).

o Planting species should be chosen to ensure unobstructed visibility between 2 and 7 feet above the height of the paved surfaces (see the Pedestrian Safety and Security section).

(Roofs):

o Roof forms should be consistent with the design and structure of the building itself as well as with forms on adjacent buildings.

o When flat roofs are used, parapets should be provided along all roof lines that are adjacent to streets to articulate the roof line and hide roof mounted equipment.

(Façade Design):

o The same level of design consideration should be given to all sides of the building that will be viewed from streets and public spaces, with the exception of side facades that are located at zero lot line.

o Building facades should include surface variation and depth to add visual interest to the streetscape and reduce the building's apparent scale. Continuous lengths of flat, undifferentiated walls create an unfriendly void in the pedestrian environment and are not appropriate.

o Ground level facades should be articulated at a minimum every 20 feet. Articulation may include storefront bays with modulating building elements such as window and door recesses, projections, building columns, and other clearly expressed architectural details.

o The top of the façade should be clearly delineated by a detailed cornice that extends a minimum of 8 inches.

(Windows):

o Any side of the building that is visible from a street or public space should have windows to increase façade transparency. Increasing façade transparency creates more interesting, inviting and lively public spaces next to building facades

o As a general rule, a minimum of 50 percent of the street level façade should be clear glass and display cases should not be located to prevent pedestrians from seeing inside.

o Clear, un-tinted and non-reflective glass should be used at street level to allow maximum visual interaction between pedestrians and the interior of the building. Where sun light control is required, awnings should be used (see the Storefront Design section)

(Entrances):

- Entrances should be marked by architectural features and treatments that help signify their location and emphasize their importance (including tall vertical elements, special lighting, awnings, signage, and recessed doors (see the Design Details section). Recessed entrances help to break up the building façade and provide a welcoming space with protection from wind, sun and rain.
- Every building should have at least one entrance that does not require passage through a parking lot or garage to gain access.
- All windows should align and be consistent in proportion, shape, and style overall.

(Awnings and Canopies):

- Awnings and canopies should be integrated into the overall façade design. Awnings should not ignore building structure or use by spanning numerous bays, windows or store fronts.
- Awnings and canopies should be attractive, yet durable, and should be compatible with the design and color of the overall façade.

(Façade Materials and Color):

- Façade materials have a strong impact on the perception of quality. New construction in Stoughton Center should utilize high-quality materials and finishes on building facades to convey integrity, permanence and durability. Essentially, buildings should be constructed to last.
- Colors used on facades should complement (but not necessarily match) the colors used on adjacent buildings.

(Building Utilities):

- Building utilities should be concealed completely from view from adjacent streets and walkways in a manner that is compatible with the building and site design. Live screening (e.g. trees, shrubs) should be considered where applicable. If such equipment cannot be concealed, efforts should be taken to minimize their visual impact on building facades.

(Lighting):

- Cutoff fixtures and/or reflectors in the lamp should be used for all lighting to ensure that light is directed to where it is needed, and to shield the lamp (i.e. light bulb) from view. By focusing the light directly onto what you want illuminated, you're not wasting energy or money and contributing to light pollution.
- The mounting height of all light fixtures should be as low as possible.
- Lighting levels should be as uniform as possible to avoid very bright and very dark areas. Uniform lighting levels enhances pedestrian safety and comfort levels and the overall character of the area (see the Pedestrian Safety and Comfort section).

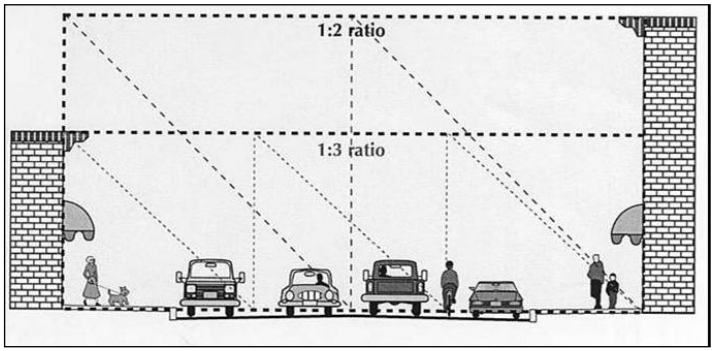
(Signs):

- Signs should be designed by a professional sign designer or environmental graphic artist, however, make sure that the designer has seen your building and it's context. Sign design

should take into consideration adjacent storefronts and flanking buildings, particularly if those structures are similar in style, are of comparable height, and of compatible type and scale.

- Signs should not obscure building mass lines or any architectural details such as cornices, window or door trim, or decorative façade patterns.
- Flashing signs, moving signs, and roof signs are not appropriate in Stoughton Center
- The number of signs per street frontage of an establishment should be limited to 1 primary sign and 1 secondary sign, however, an additional directional or address sign may be acceptable.
- Information on signs should be clear and concise. Signs are meant to be read quickly.
- Signs should be externally lit from above or behind ('back-lit' signs).
- Free-standing signs should not obscure critical sight lines for both pedestrians and motorists.
- Lettering and logos in window signs should not cover more than 15 percent of the glass area.
- Parking signage should be simple and understated. Such signage should be affixed to building edges or incorporated as part of pole signage along the street.

GENERAL DESIGN PRINCIPLES



Appropriate height-to-width ratios for a human scaled environment fall between 1:3 and 1:2, as measured from the building fronts or rows of large trees if present.
Source: 'Main Street, when a highway runs through it: A Handbook for Oregon Communities' (ODOT and DLCD, 1999).

Design considerations that enhance pedestrian comfort include amenities such as seating and planter boxes.

The following sections provide an overview of some general urban design principles that are incorporated into the guidelines in this document and that should be considered in the design of development projects within Stoughton Center. These principles can be applied in some extent to all levels of development within the Center: from the design of windows, doors and other specific architectural elements, up to the design and layout of the entire downtown area. Furthermore, these principles are applicable to both contemporary design and more traditional design styles.

Human Scale / Pedestrian Oriented Design

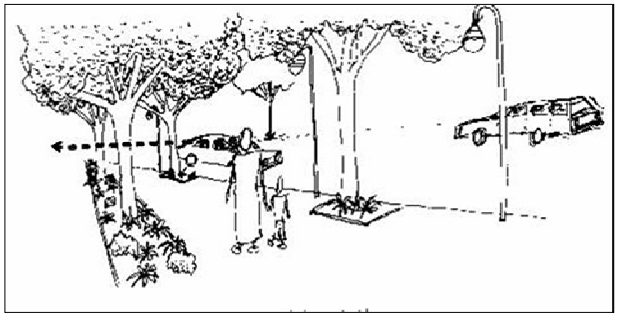
Human scaled or pedestrian oriented design emphasizes the sidewalks and pedestrian access to the site and building, rather than vehicle access and parking (see below for more details on scale). In a human scaled environment, building siting and mass should create a consistent street wall and building entrances should be oriented to the sidewalks. Typically buildings cover a large portion of the site and parking is treated as an secondary function that is not emphasized by the design site layout. There are generally large display windows along the ground floor of facades. Site and building design elements are dimensionally related to pedestrians and are typically smaller in scale than those which are primarily intended to accommodate vehicles.

Pedestrian Safety and Comfort

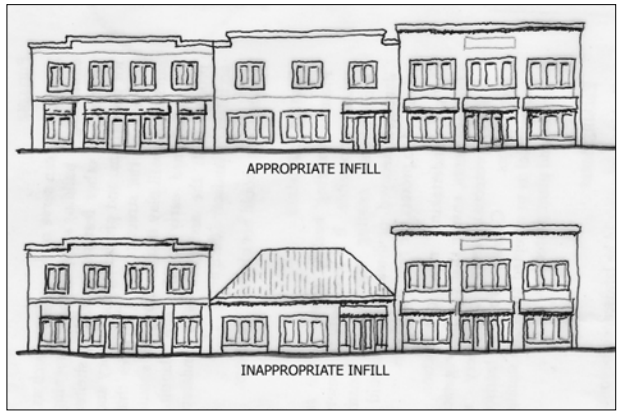
Pedestrian safety and comfort are crucial elements of any successful town center. Design considerations that enhance pedestrian safety and comfort include human scaled façade design; pedestrian connectivity within the site and between adjoining sites; building entrance design and location; 'observability' (see below); parking design and location; pedestrian amenities such as seating, trash receptacles, fountains, and public art; landscape design; façade treatments, including materials, color, and fenestration; sign design and location; and lighting design and location.

Observability

Pedestrian safety and comfort within public spaces is enhanced by increasing visibility or 'observability' within the public spaces and also between public spaces and the interior of adjacent buildings. Facades adjacent to parking areas and walkways should include windows so as to allow for observation of all parking areas and walkways located in a way which allows a person to hide from observation by other pedestrians on the site. Large coniferous plants should generally be avoided in public spaces as they can create the perception of an unsafe atmosphere. Landscaping should also be designed to minimize potential obstruction of critical sight lines such as vehicle access drives, at crosswalks, at street corners, or at intersections



Landscaping should enable open sight-lines between 2 and 7 feet above ground level.



Examples of a building design that is in character with the surrounding context (top), and a building design that does not maintain continuity in the massing, height, or architectural style.

in parking lots. Lighting levels should be consistent throughout public spaces.
It is the quality, not the quantity of light that improves a person's sense of security the most. Human eyes can only adjust to one light level at a time - typically the brightest. If one area is over-lit, the surround area appears very dark in comparison. Competing light levels detract from both the sense of safety and security, and the overall character of an area.

Context, Continuity and Character

Both the architectural design and site design within developments should be in character with the surrounding area (or context). Features of the properties in the vicinity of the site that should be considered include building siting; building forms, massing, and scale; rhythm of windows and doors; materials; colors; fenestration; signs; lighting; landscaping and open spaces; and parking. Site and streetscape elements such as pedestrian amenities and vegetation can a relatively inexpensive means of providing a sense of continuity throughout a site and enhancing the character of an entire town center.

It should be noted that, a building that is designed in context with the surrounding architectural character, does not need to be an exact replica of a surrounding building. The architectural character of an area can be broken down into the following qualities for each of the buildings: massing and bulk, scale, rhythm, proportion, and materials. Each of these qualities area described further below.

Massing and Bulk

Massing, also referred to as architectural form, is the overall shape of a building that is defined by exterior walls, roof shapes, and any significant architectural appendages such as porches, projecting bays, towers, and cupolas. Methods of describing a building's massing include large or small, simple or complex. A building that is large and simple is typically referred to as "bulky".

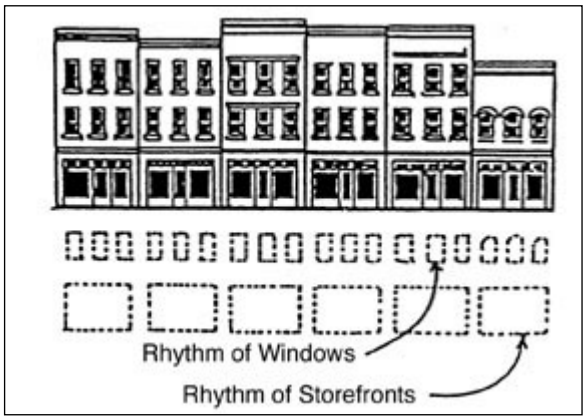
Buildings adjacent to streets and public spaces should reduce building mass and bulk through variation in planes and wall surfaces (articulation), fenestration, height variation, and differences in materials or colors in order to be more human scaled (see previous section).

Scale

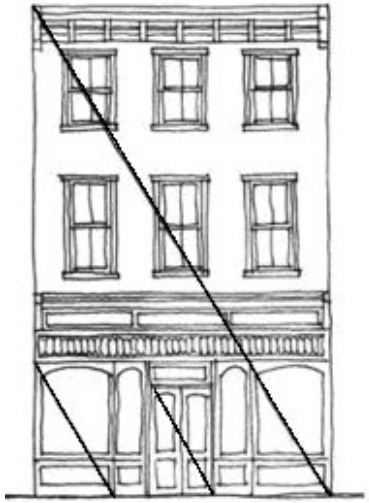
Scale in architecture is a measure of the relative size of a building or building component in relation to a known unit of measure or customary size for such a component. Familiar building materials and components such as bricks, doors and windows, provide points of reference to judge the scale of a building. However, if the size or shape of a familiar building component diverges from the expected, it may be said to be "out of scale".

The perceived scale of any proposed building is a function of:

1) the overall size of the proposed building relative to existing building sizes



Examples of façades that effectively maintain the rhythm of windows and storefronts.



Proportion in architecture relates to the dimensions of the various building elements as well as the overall building facades.

2) the visual relationship of building facade elements in the new development relative to the visual relationship of building facade elements in existing buildings.

The principle of scale applies both to individual buildings and to streetscapes. At the streetscape level, there is usually an identifiable building scale that is typical to that area, based on the overall building form and height.

Rhythm

Almost every building includes some elements that are repeated, such as windows, columns, or arches. Rhythm in architecture refers to the pattern and spacing of these repeating façade elements. The concept of rhythm can be applied to the facades of individual buildings, or to entire streetscapes. At the streetscape level, rhythm applies to the relationships of the façade elements, but also roofs, the overall form of the buildings, and to the building siting. The spaces between buildings and the set-back distances from the street boundary also creates a rhythm.

Proportion

Proportion is similar to scale in that it is a relative term. Proportion in architecture relates to the dimensions of the various building elements as well as the overall building facades. Architectural harmony is achieved in a building facade when the facade elements are proportional to each other and to the overall facade:

One of the oldest systems of determining "ideal" proportion is the Golden Section, which is a rectangle with a width to length ratio of about 5:8, is formed when the diagonal of a square is dropped as an arc. This proportion is frequently still used today in western art and architecture.

Materials

The materials and finished used for the exterior of buildings is often the first thing that people notice when looking at a building. Materials used on the building facades in an area directly impacts the image that people have of that area. For this reason, it is important to use materials that complement those used in the surrounding area, but more importantly, use materials that convey the principles of integrity, permanence and durability.

Sustainable Design

Developments should incorporate sustainable design principles to the maximum extent feasible. The following are a few of the many techniques / practices / measures that can help to make developments more sustainable (this list is not exhaustive):

Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy: highly efficient fixtures and HVAC equipment; maximize daylight; combined heat and power systems; and use of on-site renewable energy.

Site Design: use of Low Impact Development (LID) techniques; solar orientation of buildings; provision of open spaces; green roofs; techniques to reduce heat island effect from paved surfaces; maximized pedestrian and cyclist access; habitat conservation and/or restoration; and reduction of light pollution.

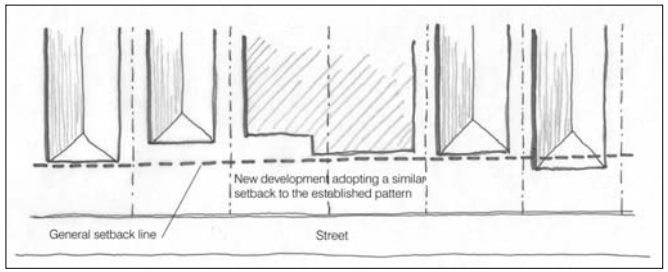
Open Space and Landscape Management: use of native plant species; and use of Inegrated Pest Management (IPM) and other measures to minimize use of pesticides, fertilizers and other chemical controls.

Water Efficiency: efficient irrigation systems; reduced irrigation needs through use of native plants (including minimization of lawns) and efficient site design; efficient fixtures such as sinks, toilets and showers; and reuse of storm water and wastewater.

Resource Conservation: enable recycling collection and storage; use of materials containing recycled content; using regionally harvested and produced materials; separation and recycling of construction and demolition debris; and use of renewable materials and certified wood.

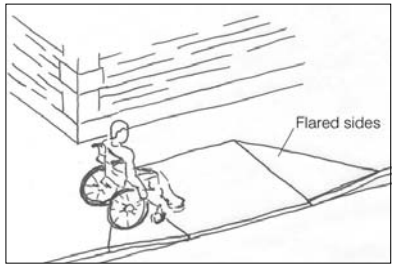
Indoor Environmental Quality: use of low VOC emitting products (such as adhesives, sealants, paints, coatings, carpet, composite wood); thermal and ventilation comfort; maximize daylight; and consider views.

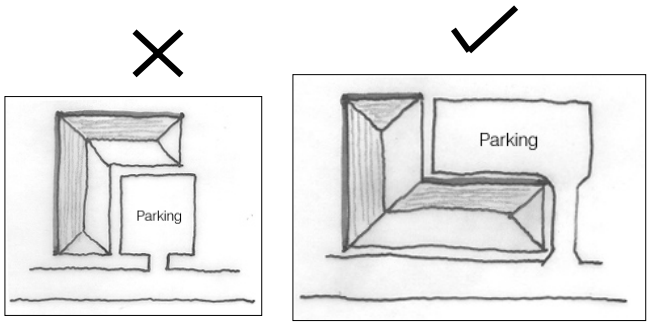
Air Quality and Transportation: provision of facilities to encourage cyclists and pedestrians; use of public transit; and car-pooling.



Building should be sited in accordance with adjoining setbacks to strengthen the street wall.

Walkways should enable access for persons with disabilities.





Parking should be treated as a secondary function of the building(s) with which it is associated. Parking should be located behind a building, underground, in a parking structure (see the Parking Structures section), or to the side.

Building Siting / Orientation

- Buildings should be sited to maximize the frontage along the street edge at the minimum setback distance allowed by zoning provided that this is consistent with the setbacks of adjoining buildings (see General Design Principles – Context section above).
- Where buildings are placed further back on lots, consideration should be made for seating and/or landscaping along the street edge to enhance the appearance and vitality of the property and the streetscape as a whole.
- Public open space areas within the site should be integrated with adjoining public open spaces so as to enhance pedestrian connectivity and coordination of public open spaces within the Town Center.
- Entrances to parking and service areas should also be coordinated with adjacent development to the maximum extent possible.

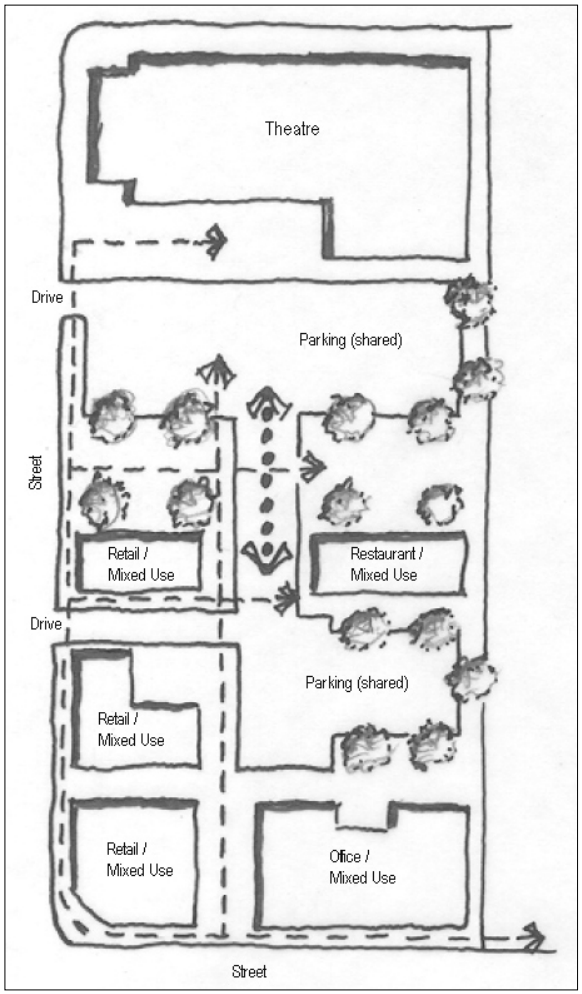
Connectivity / Walkways

- Walkways should be designed to shorten walking distances and maximize accessibility both within the site and to adjacent developments to maximize connectivity.
- Walkways should be located to account for most probable pedestrian routes: between building entrances, open spaces, parking areas (both motor vehicle and bicycle), and other uses within the site, sidewalks, and public spaces on adjoining properties.
- Walkways connecting to the sidewalk should coordinate with safe crossing locations on streets, drives, and through parking areas whenever possible.
- Walkways should complement your site's landscaping. Surfaces should be durable and attractive, such as brick, slate, stone, or textured concrete. Avoid asphalt.
- Surface colors on walkways should be light-colored to minimize heat island effect (dark surface colors will absorb more solar heat which then reduces pedestrian comfort levels and increases building cooling costs during summer).
- Walkways should be clearly distinguished from vehicular paths by landscaping, paving materials, or architectural elements.
- Walkways should provide for disabled access, through the use of ramps and curb cuts conforming to state and federal standards.

Parking

<u>Location & Access</u>

- Parking areas should be treated as an accessory to the building and should be located behind the building, underground, in a parking structure (see Parking



Example of a compact development with shared parking and good pedestrian connectivity.

Structures section), or to the side of the building. If the parking is located to the side of the building, landscaping should be provided between the parking and the front property line to soften the visual impact (see Landscaping section).

- Curb-cuts for vehicle driveways should be minimized. Shared driveways should be considered whenever possible.
- Vehicle driveways should be located away from building entrances to reduce potential conflict between vehicles and pedestrians.

Bicycle Parking

- Each bicycle parking space should be at least 2 feet by 6 feet with an overhead clearance of 7 feet.
- Access aisles for bicycle parking should be at least 5 feet in width.
- Direct access should be provided between the bicycle parking and the street without the need to navigate stairs. Ramps should be provided wherever necessary to provide this direct access for cyclists.
- Bicycle parking should be located adjacent to walkways that provide direct access to the building entrance.

Vehicle Entrances / Service Areas

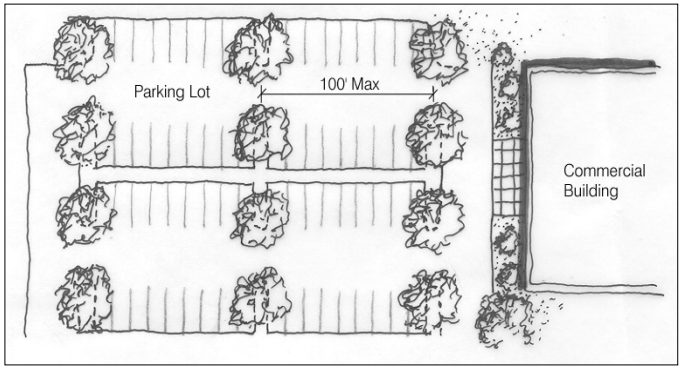
- Exterior trash and storage areas should be concealed from view from adjacent streets, walkways and properties in a manner that is compatible with the building and site design.
- Service and delivery areas should not be visible from the street and should be clearly separated from all pedestrian routes and usable open space areas.
- Garage doors can overwhelm a building façade and break up the streetscape. Garage doors should not be prominent features of the building's design. They should be located either on the rear or sides of buildings and should be compatible with the building's color and architectural style.

Snow Storage

- The site should be design to include a snow storage area, located within the property and adjacent to vehicle parking and access ways.
- The snow storage area should not be located in swales or other storm water drainage or detention areas.
- The snow storage area should not impede access along walkways or into buildings.

Parking Structures

- Parking structures should incorporate storefronts on the ground floor adjacent to a street, or otherwise, parking structures should be located behind a building that incorporates storefronts along the street façade(s) (see the Façade Design section).
- Parking garages should be compatible in color, mass, and quality of architectural details with adjacent buildings.
- Openings to parking areas other than garage doors should be limited to those required by the Building Code for ventilation. Openings



To minimize large expanses of parking, landscaped islands should be used. No parking space should be greater than 50 linear feet from a landscaped island.

Landscaping can be used along the base of facades to reduce and "soften" the visual impact of blank façade walls and accent entrances.

should be designed to prevent vehicle headlights within the structure illuminating or causing glare to adjacent properties.

- Signage and light sources internal to the parking structure should not be visible from outside the parking structure to minimize the visual impact on the streetscape.

Landscaping

Purposes

- Landscaping can serve many purposes such as, enhancing a building's appearance, screening utilities and other features, providing shelter for pedestrians, and providing consistency and cohesion to the streetscape. The roles that landscaping will play in a development should be determined early in the site planning process with the assistance of a landscape architect or landscape designer.
- Landscaping should not obstruct walkways.

Existing Vegetation

- Preserve existing healthy trees on the site whenever possible. It is less costly to preserve and enhance existing vegetation. Existing damaged, decayed, or diseased trees should be removed to protect the remaining trees.
- When undertaking new construction or improvements, ensure that existing vegetation is well-protected from machinery and disturbances. Consult with a landscape professional as to accepted arborcare standards for tree and plant protection.

Parking Areas

- Parking areas should be landscaped beyond the requirements of the zoning by-laws. Think of your parking lot as an extension of your building's design.
- Attractive landscaping can be used to dress up your parking area. Landscaped islands within parking areas should have a minimum width of 4 feet. Landscaped islands should be used for the purposes of:
    - defining parking lot entrances;
    - defining the ends of a portion of parking aisles;
    - defining the location and pattern of primary internal access drives.
- Parking areas should provide a minimum of 10 percent of the total parking area as landscaping.
- Canopy trees should be used throughout the parking area such that no parking space is more than 50 feet from a canopy tree.

Foundation Planting

- Landscaping along the base of building facades can help to soften large walls, accent building entrances and architectural features, and screen utilities adjacent to buildings.
- Foundation plantings should complement, not obscure a building's architecture.
- Landscaped strips adjacent to building walls should be at least 4 feet wide.

Landscaping should be used to accentuate entrances. Where there is not space available for vegetation planted in the ground, planter boxes provide an effective treatment at entrances that is easy to maintain.

Too many architectural styles on a single façade can result is an incoherent and unattractive façade.
The windows on the left-hand building are consistent in style and are arranged to create a sense of rhythm. The sizing of the windows is also appropriate as those on the upper floors are smaller than the ground floor windows.
The windows on the right-hand building do not form any apparent pattern on the façade and include too many styles.

Planting Species

- Provide trees, shrubs and groundcovers noted for longevity, low maintenance, attractive appearance, durability, lack of "messiness", and screening ability (if needed).
- Vegetation characteristics at maturity should be considered early in the landscape design phase, in particular height and spread to ensure that it the vegetation does not visually obscure display windows, facades, and signs or obstruct walkways.
- Native species should be used as much as possible. Vegetation should be well adapted to the climate and site conditions. Avoid invasive and exotic vegetation. Appendix A contains a list of species that are not appropriate as a starting point.
- The use of color in landscaping is encouraged, however, if flowering plants are to be used, maintenance requirements should always be considered before the blossom color and style.
- To minimize water consumption, the use of low water vegetative ground cover other than turf is encouraged.
- Planting species should be chosen to ensure unobstructed visibility between 2 and 7 feet above the height of the paved surfaces (see the Pedestrian Safety and Security section).
- Vegetation that shed seedpods, blossoms, or fruit should be located so that it does not overhang sidewalks and streets so as to minimize potential maintenance problems.
- Vegetation located near roadways, driveways, or parking lots should be salt-tolerant.

Landscaping in Special Character Areas

- If little or no setback from the sidewalk exists, window boxes and other residential-style treatments should be provided.

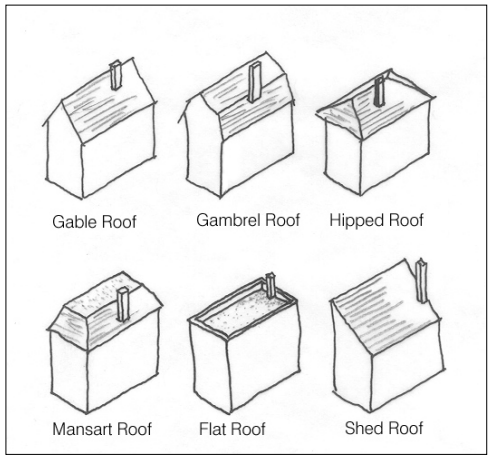
Fencing in Special Character Areas

- Wood picket fences, decorative iron fences and stonewalls are encouraged. Stockade fences, concrete walls, and chain link fences should not be used.
- Fencing should be constructed of traditional New England materials such as wood, brick, and stone. The least desirable fences include chain link, stucco, and concrete. Aluminum fences that are decorative may be acceptable. Existing stone walls should be preserved. Natural vegetation should be considered as an alternative buffer or to visually soften fencing.

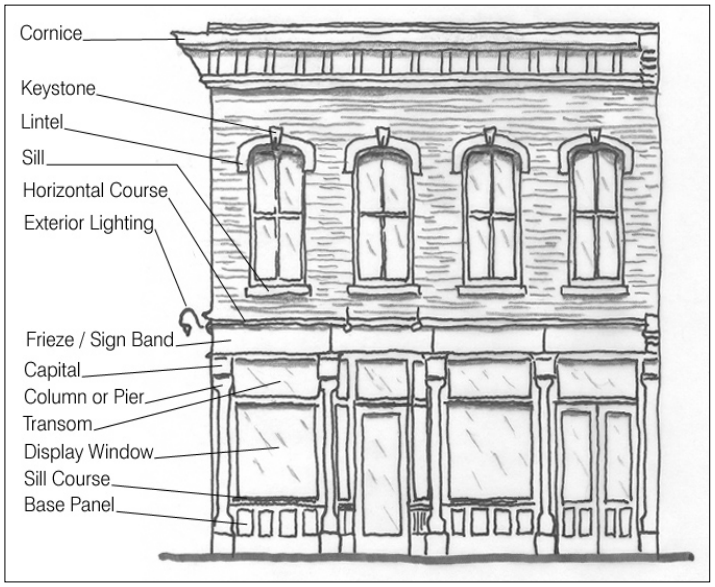
ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

Architectural Style

- Both new construction and renovation should aim to achieve architectural coherence. Avoid combining too many architectural styles. For example, too many window styles may create a sense of confusion.



Examples of roof styles typically found in New England towns.



The basic components of a façade.

- o New construction may incorporate any architectural style, provided that the mass and scale of the building and the façade elements relate to the context of the site, particularly where adjacent to buildings of historic merit (see the General Design Principles section).
- o Façade details and features should be architecturally valid, not just decorative. Features should be related to the building's structure, function, or be appropriate to the historic period of the building, rather than appear tacked-on or arbitrary.

Architectural Style in Special Character Areas

- o When renovating or reusing a residential building for commercial use in the Special Character Areas of the Stoughton Center Overlay District, maintain the building's residential characteristics. New buildings in the Special Character Areas should contain characteristics of residential design, such as wood siding, sloped roofs, and landscaping along the street frontage. These buildings provide a transition from the more commercial "core" of Stoughton Center, to the surrounding residential areas.

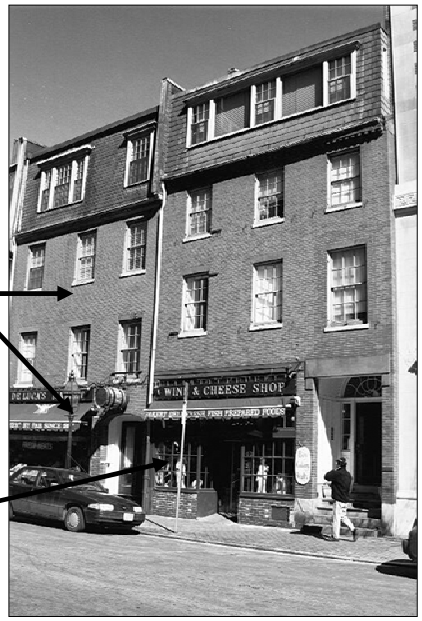
Historic Character / Values

- o New construction adjacent to historic buildings should be compatible with the historic architecture, however, the new building should not directly copy a historic style. It is possible to take the best aspects from older architecture and incorporate them into new construction without appearing contrived.
- o Use the photos available at the Stoughton Historical Society and Town Library to learn about original building design and details in Stoughton Center.
- o All renovations and additions to historic buildings should respect the scale, placement, materials, and proportion of the original building elements including roof shape and height, structural framework, cornice, sign band, window size and symmetry, and decorative elements.
- o In some instances, additions to historic buildings may have their own historic significance and may enhance the visual quality of the building and the district, however, added elements that are not integrated into the building's design should be removed.
- o Vinyl or aluminum siding that covers original historic building materials and details should be removed.

Roofs

Form and Style

- o Roof forms should be consistent with the design and structure of the building itself as well as with forms on adjacent buildings.
- o Roof style should be of the appropriate to the styles traditionally found in Stoughton. Appropriate roof styles include: gabled, hipped, gambrel roofs, and mansard. Applied mansard roofs are not appropriate.



Clear distinction between ground floor and upper floors.

Large windows, recessed entrance, and clear well placed signs.

An example of a mixed use building that demonstrates several elements of good façade design.

A blank, undifferentiated wall such as this should not be visible from the street.

- o Roof forms should reflect the facade articulation and building massing, as opposed to a single-mass roof over an articulated façade.
- o New construction may incorporate a flat roof, provided that it relates to adjacent building roof lines and strengthens the overall composition of the building and the street wall (see the General Design Principles section).
- o When flat roofs are used, parapets should be provided along all roof lines that are adjacent to streets to articulate the roof line and hide roof mounted equipment.
- o All roof lines should terminate in a strong detailing to provide scale and visual interest (see Façade Design section).
- o Sky or roof lights are not recommended openings in pitched roofs. Dormer windows are the recommended method of introducing light into roof space in Stoughton Center.
- o All roofs should have appropriate overhangs where needed, giving consideration to the effects of snow and ice. Overhangs should be a minimum of 2 feet beyond the supporting wall.

Roofs in Special Character Areas

- o Only pitched roof forms are appropriate in the Special Character Areas.

Materials & Color

- o Roofs should be constructed of materials commonly found in New England. Roll roofing, sheet, corrugated metal, plastic, and fiberglass are not appropriate.
- o Brightly colored roof materials are not appropriate and highly reflective materials are generally not appropriate on pitched roofs, however, if a flat roof is an appropriate to the location, reflective roof materials may be acceptable to increase the energy efficiency of the building's design (see the Sustainable Building Design section).
- o Downspouts should match gutters in material and finish.

Façade Design

Façade Components

- o All commercial building front facades, regardless of architectural style or the number of floors in the building, include the same basic components: the storefront, including the kickplate area; display windows; entrance (sometimes includes transoms); the storefront cornice; upper façade; and decorative cornice. A successful façade design will address all of these elements with consideration of the surrounding buildings (see Articulation and Depth section below).

Store Fronts

- o A well designed storefront façade will create a more welcoming appearance for passers-by and consequently help to improve business / sales in the establishment, while also

The top of all facades should be defined by a detailed cornice.

Corners of buildings adjacent to prominent street intersections should reinforce the street intersection.

enhancing the character and vitality of the broader Stoughton Center.

- Storefront design should be integrated with the upper floors to be compatible with the architectural style of the overall building.
- In addition to the design of the façade, an attractively arranged display window will also contribute to a more pleasing public realm and thus help attract customers (see Windows section).
- Storefront windows should be consistent in height and design with storefront doors to create a cohesive appearance.
- Facades of buildings that contain multiple establishments should be designed to enable individuality between storefronts, while maintaining a unified overall appearance.
- Even though a single tenant or owner occupies several buildings adjacent to one another, each building should remain visually distinct through the building mass or architectural elements.
- False storefronts that are clearly discernable are not appropriate in the Center.

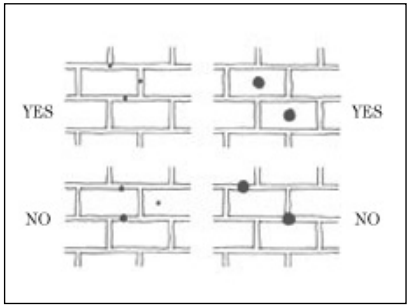
Façade Consistency

- The same level of design consideration should be given to all sides of the building that will be viewed from streets and public spaces, with the exception of side facades that are located at zero lot line.
- Rear entrances should be designed and maintained with the same sensitivity as front entrances, even if these entrances are for employees only, and particularly if these entrances are normally visible to public spaces, including streets and parking areas.
- Simple elements such as a small sign, display window, lighting, and planter boxes can significantly improve the appearance of the rear facade.

Articulation and Depth

- Building facades should include surface variation and depth to add visual interest to the streetscape and reduce the building's apparent scale. Continuous lengths of flat, undifferentiated walls create an unfriendly void in the pedestrian environment and are not appropriate.
- Ground level facades should be articulated at a minimum every 20 feet. Articulation may include storefront bays with modulating building elements such as window and door recesses, projections, building columns, and other clearly expressed architectural details.
- Windows on upper levels should be recessed or trimmed to provide additional depth and articulation on building facades.
- Building column lines and bays should be emphasized to help to distinguish tenants and storefronts. Emphasizing vertical architectural elements also helps to create a more human scaled façade (see the General Design Principles section).
- The top of the façade should be clearly delineated by a detailed cornice that extends a minimum of 8 inches.

Windows in brick or stone facades should include a header (or lintel) and a sill that are clearly expressed.



Small anchors (diameter less than the mortar-joint width) should be attached to the mortar, not the brick. Large anchors (diameter greater than the mortar-joint width) should be set in the brick, not overlapping a mortar joint.

- The division between the ground floor and the second floor should be delineated by a frieze or horizontal sign band, a façade cornice, and/or a change in the surface plane of the façade. Façade cornices should consist of molding that extends a minimum of 4 inches.
- The base of façade should be emphasized techniques such as kick-boards; using a different building material, pattern or texture; or landscaping, so as to give the building a solid, grounded appearance.

Corners

- Corners of buildings adjacent to prominent street intersections can serve to enliven and strengthen the space around the street intersection. Such building corners should be addressed with special features such as prominent entries, massing and architectural elements.
- Buildings located on prominent street intersections are also encouraged to use unique design elements such as special paving or surface treatments.

Transparency

- Any side of the building that is visible from a street or public space should have windows to increase façade transparency. Increasing façade transparency creates more interesting, inviting and lively public spaces next to building facades by giving passers-by a sense of what is behind the façade and passive surveillance of the public spaces (see the Pedestrian Safety and Comfort section).
- Maximizing the amount of windows along publicly-viewed walls also allows additional opportunities to market the business(es) inside.
- As a general rule, a minimum of 50 percent of the street level façade should be clear glass and display cases should not be located to prevent pedestrians from seeing inside.
- Awnings and deep overhangs are appropriate methods of solar control because they provide protection from the elements and enliven facades without obstructing views into and out of buildings or obscuring the pattern of openings.
- The use of reflective or dark-tinted glass is not appropriate at ground level, and strongly discouraged above ground level as it limits façade transparency.

Openings – Brick and Stone

- All façade openings in brick and stone construction should be spanned by a header. All headers should:
  - Be wider than the opening they span.
  - Use materials with regard to their traditional structural capacity. Recommended header materials include: brick, stone, cast stone, terra cotta, and metal.
- All window openings in brick construction should have a sill at their base. All sills should be wider than the opening they span.

For more information on disabled access requirements, contact the Department of Justice (DOJ) or the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board (MAAB).

MAAB requirements may be purchased from the State House Bookstore by calling 617- 727-2834. Ask for a copy of the Architectural Barriers Code, publication #521.

web site for DOJ: www.usdoj.gov
web site for MAAB: www.mass.gov/aab/

Entrances should be recessed behind the building façade to accentuate its location and provide shelter from adverse weather conditions.

Anchoring Devices – Historic Buildings

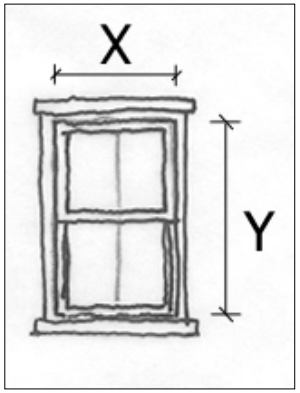
- When attaching devices such as signs, light fixtures, door bells, security equipment, building identification numerals, awnings, flagpoles to historic buildings, care should be taken to minimize permanent damage to the historic Attachment to wood surfaces is preferable to attachment to masonry, because if the item is no longer required in the future, the fastener can be removed and the resultant hole patched and repainted without harm.
- When attaching items to brick or stone masonry walls, anchors should be embedded in mortar joints provided that the joint width accepts the anchor without damaging the edges of the brick or stone. If the anchor is larger than the mortar joint, or the existing brick is laid up with less than 1/4 inch wide joints ("buttered joints"), anchors should be placed in the brick at least 3/4 inch away from the mortar joint to prevent damaging more than one brick.

Entrances

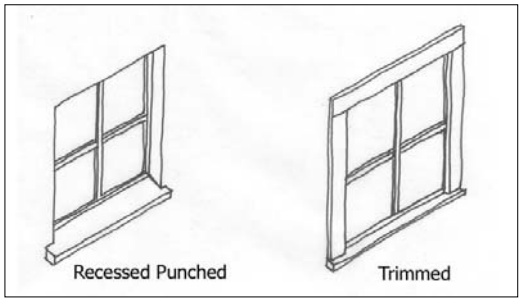
Disabled Access

- Disabled access should be seamlessly incorporated into the building design, rather than appear as an add-on afterthought. Buildings should be designed to provide inviting access that all users will want to use.
- Under the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 it is a civil rights violation to fail to provide barrier-free access to commercial facilities. Title III of the ADA sets standards for accessible building design that apply to new construction and alteration projects (including historic properties). The purpose is to ensure that all persons including those in wheelchairs have equal ease of passage to, from and inside establishments.
- Storefront renovations in Massachusetts must also comply with accessibility standards established by the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board (MAAB). The MAAB establishes guidelines for upgrading a building's entry and other elements (including public restrooms) based on total construction cost. These requirements generally mean that entryways must be widened, steps removed in front of doorways and replaced by gently sloping ramps, and that hardware must be changed or added to accommodate those in wheelchairs or otherwise disabled.
- General accessibility guidelines require the owner to:
  - Replace entryway step or steps with ramps or elevators where floor levels change by more than 1/2 inch. Ramps must have 5 foot long landings at either end, must be a minimum of 4 feet wide and have a maximum 1:12 slope (12 inches in horizontal run for every 1 inch in vertical rise.) Ramps may be shallower but require handrails on both sides if the slope exceeds 1:20.
  - Design 3-foot-wide doorways which have a 34-inch clearance with the door swung open.

Entrances to ground floor uses should take prominence over entrances to upper floors.



All windows should be proportioned such that the height (Y) of individual windows should be 1.5 to 1.9 times their width (X).



Windows should be trimmed or recessed to provide articulation on building facades.

- Design entry doorways with a flat floor at a minimum of 18 inches wide on the pull-side of the door hardware, so that a person in a wheelchair has room to move out of the way while the door is opening.

Functional Distinction

- Entrances should be marked by architectural features and treatments that help signify their location and emphasize their importance. Such architectural features and treatments include tall vertical elements, special lighting, awnings, signage, and recessed doors (see the Design Details section).
- A recessed entrance helps to break up the building façade and identify its location. Recessed entrances also provides a welcoming space that provides protection from wind, sun and rain. Where a recessed doorway is not possible, an awning or canopy can have a similar effect.
- Entrances to ground floor commercial uses should take visual prominence over entrances leading to upper floors. A well-designed store front minimizes confusion over which entrance belongs to which business.
- Separate entrances should be provided for residential and commercial uses.

Location

- Primary public entrances should be accessible directly from the street.
- All commercial doors facing streets should be operable and be unlocked during business hours.
- Operable doorways should occur at least at an average of every 30 feet for the whole length of the street frontage of a building.
- Every building should have at least one entrance that does not require passage through a parking lot or garage to gain access.

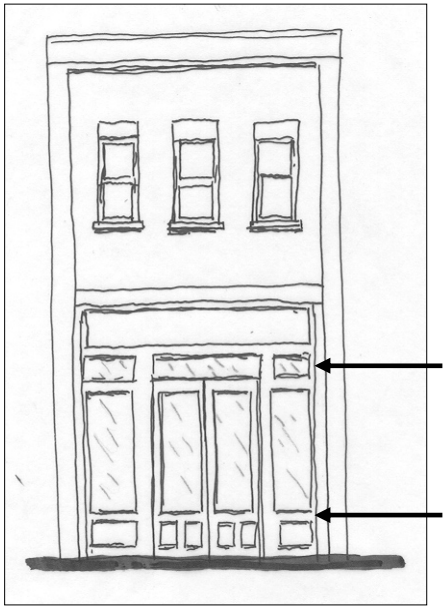
Design Details

- Transoms above entrances are encouraged (see the Façade Design section).
- Doorways should be encased with trim and the use of decorative trim is encouraged.
- The materials, proportions, style and color of entrances should complement the full building façade.

Windows

Size & Proportion

- All window proportions should have maximum and minimum height/ width ratios as follows:
  - Height Y = 1.5 to 1.9 times the Width X. Windows adhering to the ratio can be arranged in a series, still considering symmetry and rhythm, to allow a broader presentation as a shop front.
- A series of individual display windows contribute to the pattern of the façade



Bottoms of storefront windows should be between 1 and 3 feet above the sidewalk and the tops of storefront windows should be at least 8 feet above the sidewalk.

elements, creating visual interest and rhythm in the streetscape (see the General Design Principles section above), and a more inviting pedestrian environment than if continuous bands of glazing are used.

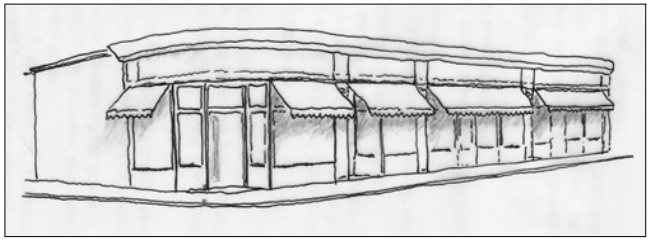
- Windows on upper floors should not be larger than windows on the ground floor (see the General Design Principles section above).
- Small-paned windows are not appropriate on the ground floor of buildings, except in transoms or unless they are historically appropriate to the building style and integrate well into the overall design.
- At least 50% of ground floor wall area should be glazed (see the Storefront Design section above). Structural elements of the glazing system (6 inches or less in width) shall be counted toward requirements.
-

Style & Materials

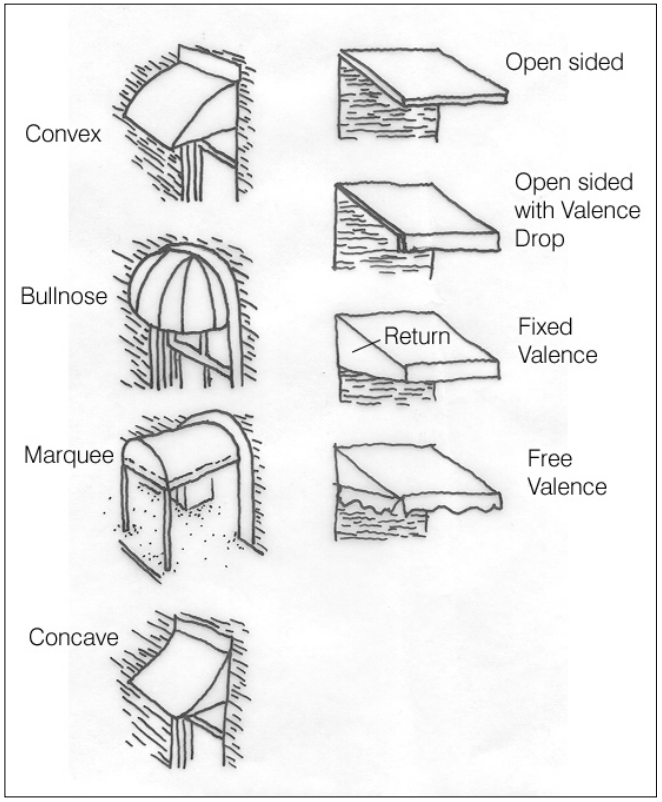
- Windows should be properly trimmed.
- Window types should consistent with the style of the structure.
- Plexiglas or other replacement materials for glass are not appropriate.
- False window mullions or snap in divider muntins are not appropriate.
- Clear, un-tinted and non-reflective glass should be used at street level to allow maximum visual interaction between pedestrians and the interior of the building. Where sun light control is required, awnings should be used (see the Storefront Design section above).
- Shutters on storefronts windows are not appropriate (see the Storefront Design section above).
- Shutters should be scaled to the window openings and other features of the facade.

Design Details

- All windows (except storefront windows) are encouraged to be operable.
- All windows should align and be consistent in proportion, shape, and style overall.
- Dormer windows should be smaller than the windows on the lower floors.
- Windows on gabled ends should be centered.
- Bottoms of the storefront windows should be between 1 and 3 feet above sidewalk grade, and tops of windows should be at least 8 feet above sidewalk grade.
- Display windows should not be recessed behind the façade, as this makes it more difficult to see what goods and services are on offer and makes the streetscape less interesting.
- Transom windows should not be covered. The additional height provided by the transom creates an open, inviting storefront.
- Security bars should not be located on the exterior of windows.
- Storm windows should not disguise or hide original windows.



Awnings should not obscure architectural details or ignore building structure by spanning several windows or storefronts.



Examples of the various awnings styles and shapes.

Awnings & Canopies

Size & Proportion

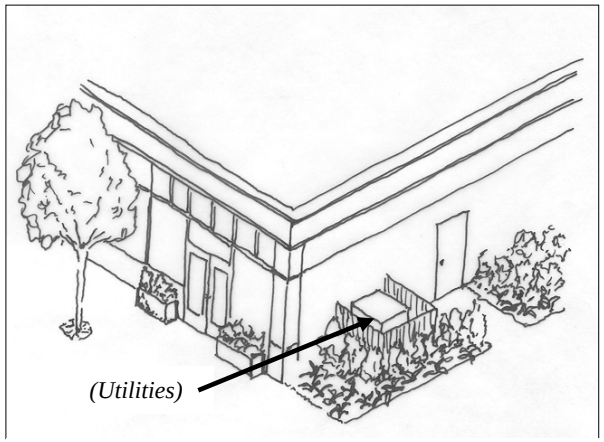
- Awnings and canopies should be integrated into the overall façade design. Awnings should not ignore building structure or use by spanning numerous bays, windows or store fronts.
- An awning or canopy should not obscure, detract from or hide architectural features. When determining where an awning or canopy should end, look for clues on the building. The awnings should delineate storefronts on a multi-tenant building and should not obscure the building's vertical structural elements.
- Awning hardware should be hidden or painted to blend with the facade.
- Canopies, when necessary, should be in scale and proportion to existing buildings. Pre-designed canopies are typically out of scale and incompatible with a building's style.

Style, Materials & Color

- Awnings and canopies should be attractive, yet durable, and should be compatible with the design and color of the overall façade. Awnings will become weathered over time by wind, rain, snow, and sun, and it is preferable to not install an awning rather than to install a durable, yet less attractive awning.
- Awnings should be made of fabric or metal. Plastic and vinyl awnings are not appropriate for the Center.
- The location and style of awnings should be compatible with those on adjacent structures.
- Canopies should be of the same style as the building's roof. For example: a gable canopy should intersect a gable roof in the scale and proportion of the existing building.
- Stripes or patterns on awnings can add extra texture to a building however, pay attention to the overall texture and colors on the façade (see the Façade Colors section).

Façade Materials

- Façade materials have a strong impact on the perception of quality. New construction in Stoughton Center should utilize high-quality materials and finishes on building facades to convey integrity, permanence and durability. Essentially, buildings should be constructed to last. The use of durable materials that are economically maintained, and high quality craftsmanship are the best investments.
- Materials made to either imitate exterior finish materials such as applied false-brick veneer, or used to cover original architectural features such as vinyl or aluminum siding are inappropriate in Stoughton Center.
- Materials used along the base of facades adjacent to building walkways and entrances should be highly durable and easily maintained while compatible with other exterior building materials.



Building utilities should be adequately screened from view from the street and walkways.

- Use of more than one finish material is encouraged on facades, provided that they complement one another and the design of the entire building. If more than one material is used, the traditionally "heavier" materials (stone, brick, concrete with stucco, etc.) should be located below "lighter" materials (wood, fiber cement board, etc). The change in material should occur along a horizontal line, preferably at the floor level.
- Where side façades utilize different materials than on the front façade, the front façade material should extend around the corner and along the side façade for a minimum of 18 inches.

Façade Color

- Colors used on facades should complement (but not necessarily match) the colors used on adjacent buildings.
- In general, bright primary colors should be used sparingly as accents or highlights only. Fluorescent or "day-glow" colors are not appropriate.
- The preferred colors for building facades are those selected from a traditional palette of Colonial and Victorian colors. For additional assistance in traditional color selection, refer to historical color paint palettes found in the inventory of your local paint distributors.
- In a multi-tenant building, a single color scheme should be used across the facades of all stores within the building. Stores should use signs, awnings and window displays to express individuality.

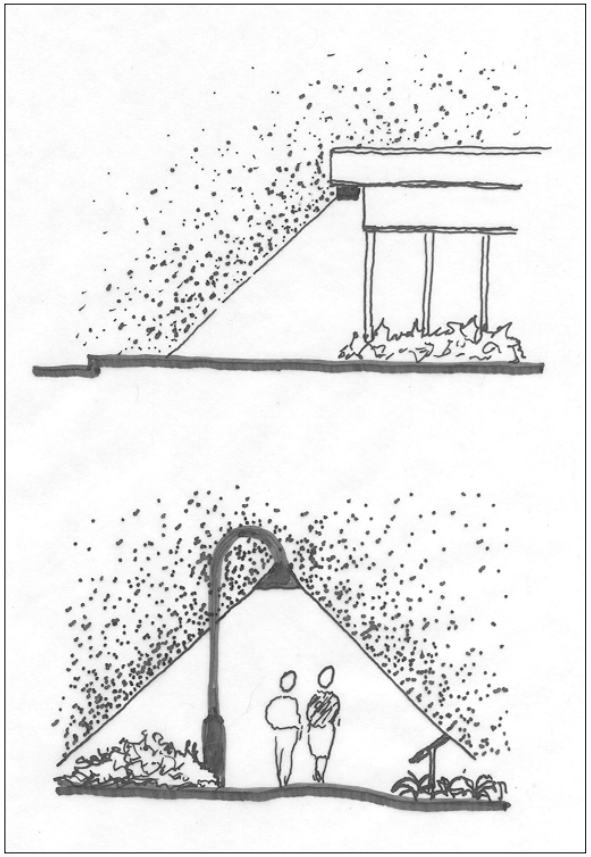
Façade and Site Maintenance

- An important part of the commercial success of a town center is the visual appearance of the individual buildings. It should be noted that, improving building appearance need not be costly. Often a fresh coat of paint or a new sign, awning or canopy may be all that is needed.
- Surface cleaning of facades should be done by the gentlest means possible. Sandblasting and other cleaning methods, such as chemical washes, that will damage exterior building materials and features should not be undertaken.
- Proper maintenance should be considered when choosing public furnishings. Public seating in heavily trafficked areas should be placed on impermeable surfaces to prevent unsightly areas of erosion.
- Where heavy pedestrian traffic is anticipated, walkway surfaces should have durable surfaces: bricks or pavers should be appropriate to Stoughton's climate and should be installed in a manner to prevent them from rising or settling unevenly, or textured concrete (patterned or giving the appearance of the other listed materials).
- In addition to the man-made features of a site, maintenance of vegetation is also an important aspect of the appearance of Stoughton's downtown. Design of landscaping and selection of species should

be considered carefully (see Landscaping section below).

Building Utilities

- Building utilities should be concealed completely from view from adjacent streets and walkways in a manner that is compatible with the building and site design. Live screening (e.g. trees, shrubs) should be considered where applicable. If such equipment cannot be concealed, efforts should be taken to minimize their visual impact on building facades.
- Building utilities include all of the essential systems necessary for the function of the businesses / residences inside, such as heating / ventilation / air conditioning (HVAC), transformers, utility meters, gas tanks, and plumbing systems.
- Avoid placing air-conditioning units in windows or any other openings facing onto the street. Units located in non-window openings are acceptable if they are flush with building walls. They should be screened with a decorative grill or any grill appropriate to the storefront design. Air-conditioning units should not drain onto pedestrians passing below.
- Place utility connections and meters toward the rear of the building and screen with landscaping, or in decorative enclosures that are compatible with the building and site design.
- All wiring should be concealed from view within building molding and lines.
- All rooftop mechanical equipment should be screened from view from adjacent properties and adjacent streets by use of parapet walls or screens designed to be compatible with building architecture and blend in with the roof color and style.



Cutoff lighting fixtures help to ensure that lighting is directed to where it is needed and not cause light pollution. The height of light fixtures should be appropriate to the circumstances. The general rule is: lower is better. Pedestrian area lighting should not exceed 12 feet above ground level. If light fixtures are too high, they will light the area directly around the light, not the area on the ground that needs it.

Lighting

- When considering lighting for an establishment or exterior space, the general rule is: less is more. Human eyes only need about 0.1 footcandles[1] to read the serial number on a dollar bill, however, the light level on a typical sunny day at the beach is 30,000 footcandles and 1,500 on a cloudy day. Only use as much light as you need.
- Light fixtures should minimize glare for motorists and pedestrians and minimize spill-over onto adjacent property or into the sky. Glare causes contrasts to be washed out and objects become much harder to see. Causes of glare include using too much light and improperly aimed fixtures.
- Cutoff fixtures and/or reflectors in the lamp should be used for all lighting to ensure that light is directed to where it is needed, and to shield the lamp (i.e. light bulb) from view. By focusing the light directly onto what you want illuminated, you're not wasting energy

1 Footcandle: A measure of light falling on a surface. One foot candle is equal to the amount of light generated by one candle shining on a square foot surface one foot away (measured by a light meter). The Illuminating Engineering Society of North America (IESNA) provides lighting standards for typical applications.

Signage should be simple and clear. This example includes appropriately designed lighting.

or money and contributing to light pollution.

- The security and comfort of pedestrians should be prioritized by increasing illumination in parking lots, at all building entrances, adjacent to stairs, adjacent to seating, in public plazas, and at transit stops.
- "Up-lighting" of signs, buildings, landscaping or any other feature is not appropriate it results in excessive spill-over onto adjacent properties and into the sky and often results in glare to pedestrians and motorists.
- The mounting height of all light fixtures should be as low as possible. Pedestrian area lighting should not exceed 12 feet above ground level. If light fixtures are too high, they will light the area directly around the light, not the area on the ground that needs it.
- Lighting levels should be as uniform as possible to avoid very bright and very dark areas. Uniform lighting levels enhances pedestrian safety and comfort levels and the overall character of the area (see the Pedestrian Safety and Comfort section).
- Illumination levels in commercial or mixed use properties should not exceed the average minimum IESNA[2] recommended values.
- Lighting should make objects appear as close to a natural color as possible and provide high energy efficiency. Metal halide lamps emit a cool white light which makes for more accurate object identification and adds to our sense of security. This white light creates a skyglow similar to moonlight rather than the orange glow of HPS, and are only slightly less efficient at commonly used wattages.
- The appearance of light fixtures during the day should be considered in addition to their appearance at night time.
- Historic light styles that are not cut-off fixtures may be acceptable, provided that the style complements the building design and is representative of a historic period style that is valid to Stoughton Center.
- Cobra head light fixtures are not appropriate in Stoughton Center.
- Sensor-controlled lights (typically heat or motion) should be considered for security lighting to reduce the potential for glare and for improve energy savings.

<u>Lighting in Special Character Areas</u>

- If your site is adjacent to a residential property, the illumination level at the property line should not exceed 0.5 footcandle, measured at a height of 5 feet above grade.

[2] IESNA (or IES) – Illuminating Engineering Society of North America is the professional society of lighting engineers, including those from manufacturing companies, and others professionally involved in lighting (web site: www.iesna.org)

Signs on awnings should only be located on the valence of the awnings.

Light colored lettering on a dark background is typically easier to read. Lettering that extends from the sign surface adds visual interest and "depth" to a sign.

Signs

Sign Types

- Traditionally, signage on commercial buildings includes a primary sign, and one or more secondary signs. Signs can typically be categorized into 6 broad sign types, based on their location and/or construction methods:

o

(Primary signs):

1. Wall-mounted signs
2. Free-standing signs (may also be secondary sign)

(Secondary signs):

3. Projecting signs
4. Awning or canopy signs
5. Window signs
6. Directional or address signs (such as parking or street address)

The guidelines in this section are grouped into several general design principles that apply to all signs, followed by guidelines for specific sign types.

Context / Coordination

- Signs should be designed by a professional sign designer or environmental graphic artist, however, make sure that the designer has seen your building and it's context. Sign design should take into consideration adjacent storefronts and flanking buildings, particularly if those structures are similar in style, are of comparable height, and of compatible type and scale.
- Multiple signs for a single enterprise are more effective visually when they are coordinated in terms of materials, color, lettering style and logo usage to present a unified image.
- In a multi-tenant building or development, maintaining some continuity in materials, size, shape, illumination, placement, alignment, and method of attachment will reinforce the facade composition while retaining each business's individual identity.

Sign Style

- A sign should complement the building on which it is placed and set the tone for what the customer can expect inside. A sign can be the most memorable part of a building, so give thought to the image you wish to project.
- Flashing signs, moving signs, and roof signs are not appropriate in Stoughton Center.

Sign Location / Placement

- The number of signs per street frontage of an establishment should be limited to 1 primary sign and 1 secondary sign, however, an additional directional or address sign may be acceptable.
- Signs should fit on a building as if they were one of its architectural elements.
- Signs should not obscure building mass lines or any architectural details such as cornices, window or door trim, or decorative façade patterns.

An example of a back-lit sign that is legible and that does not create glare.

Sign Sizes & Proportion

- The size of a sign should not overpower the building. It should be proportional to the to the wall space on which it is mounted.
- Wall-mounted sign length should not exceed 70 percent of the frontage of the establishment.
- Projecting sign face area should be limited to 6 square feet and should project no more than 3 feet from the side of the building.
- Secondary signs that indicate entrances to parking, service or delivery areas, should not exceed an area of 2 square feet.
- Retail / commercial building numbers should be a minimum of 6 inches in height, and a maximum of 10 inches in height.

Sign Legibility

- Information on signs should be clear and concise. Signs are meant to be read quickly. Studies have shown that the maximum number of information items (either words or images) that passers-by can effectively read is 7.
- In general light colored lettering that contrasts with a dark colors background is the easiest to read.
- Letters and graphics should not take up any more than 2/3 of the total sign area.
- No more than 2-3 colors should be used per sign.
- No more than 2 type styles should be used per sign.
- Avoid using all uppercase letters.

Message & Content

- Primary signage should be limited to advertising the name of a business and its main goods and services.
- Secondary information such as telephone numbers, business hours, sale information, listing of goods and services, brand names, credit card accepted should be located on windows or doors and NOT on primary signs.
- A distinctive yet simple illustration is often the best way to convey a product or service.
- The name of the business should be the largest lettering on the sign.

Materials and Color

- Signs should be constructed using high-quality, durable, and low maintenance materials. If wood is used, it should be properly sealed to keep moisture from soaking into the wood and causing the sign's lettering to deteriorate.
- Sign materials and color should complement with the design of the building and façade on which they are placed.
- Fluorescent or "day-glow" colors are not appropriate.

Sign Illumination

- Signs should be externally lit from above or behind ('back-lit' signs).

Logos on the side of awnings should not cover more than 50% of the side area.

- Exposed neon tube lighting on signs is not appropriate in Stoughton Center. Neon lighting may be appropriate only when used in back-lit sign.
- Internal lighting of signs is generally not appropriate in Stoughton Center.
- Light fixtures should not obscure the sign's message and graphics.
- Light sources should be shielded and such that light is directed against the sign and does not cause glare for motorists, pedestrians, or adjacent properties.
- All wiring should be concealed from view.

Special Character Area Signs

- Internally lit, back lit, or neon lit signs are not appropriate in the Special Character Areas.
- Only wall-mounted, window and projecting signs (see the Signs section) are appropriate in the Special Character Areas.
- Only 1 sign type should be provided per establishment on residential type structures.
- Wall signs should not exceed 6 square feet.
- Lettering and logos in window signs should not cover more than 15 percent of the glass area.
- Residential building numbers should be a minimum of 4 inches in height, and a maximum of 10 inches in height.

Freestanding Signs

- Free-standing signs should be architecturally designed and incorporate design details, materials and colors of the associated buildings.
- Free-standing signs should be located perpendicular to approaching vehicular traffic. Alternately, two sign faces at 90º to each other and 45º to the road may be appropriate.
- Free-standing signs should be located so as not to obscure critical sight lines to ensure both pedestrian and motorist safety.
- A free-standing sign should be placed within a landscaped area or raised planter which is of a shape, size and design to provide a compatible setting and ground definition to the sign.
- Sign text should be limited to the business name (or the name of the service provider, in the case of professional service establishments) and logo and the street number (but not street name) of the site.

Awning or Canopy Signs

- Signs and logos should only be placed on the valence of awnings or canopies, or on the side of awnings.
- Lettering or a logo on the awning or canopy valance should not cover more than 60 percent of the valance area.
- A logo on the side of an awning should not cover more than 50 percent of the side area.

Examples of projecting signs that use effective shapes or symbols to improve legibility and individuality.

Parking signage should be understated.

Projecting Signs

- Often the most effective projecting signs are those that employ shapes to reflect the business product/service with minimal or no text. Unusual shapes that are not symbolic of the goods and services provided in the establishment can be confusing and should be avoided.
- The base of projecting signs should be at least 10 feet above the ground.

Window Signs

- Window signs should be located at eye level, however, they should not block the principle views into or out-of the business.
- Window signs should be created from using high-quality materials such as gold-leaf and computer cut adhesive vinyl or by sand-blasting or etching.
- Hand-painted and paper window signs are generally not appropriate.
- Window signs should be applied directly to the interior face of the glazed area of the window or hung inside the window.
- Lettering and logos in window signs should not cover more than 15 percent of the glass area.

Other Secondary Signs

- Parking signage should be simple and understated. Such signage should be affixed to building edges or incorporated as part of pole signage along the street.
- Address numbers should be prominently displayed for both customer / visitor convenience and to assist emergency services personnel.

GLOSSARY

Articulation: Off-sets, projections, recessed walls, windows, doors, etc. that provide variation to a building façade.

Awning: A roof-like shelter which is attached to the exterior wall of a structure and which slopes and drains away from such building or structure.

Backlight: Lighting located behind a shape (such as lettering on a sign) that creates a silhouette of the shape.

Canopy: A rigid, roof-like structure with vertical supports that provides shelter but is not enclosed on its sides. Such a structure, may be either freestanding or attached to a principal building.

Context: The characteristics of the buildings, streetscape, and landscape that support or surrounds a given building, site, or areas such as predominance of period architecture or materials, wide sidewalks, overhead weather protection, or consistent street trees.

Cornice: A molded and projecting horizontal feature that crowns a facade or divides it horizontally for composition purposes.

Eave: The overhanging lower edge of a roof.

Expression Line: A horizontal linear element extending across a facade evidenced as a noticeable difference of projection or recess, change of color or material, or identified as a clear architectural feature of ornamentation such as a cornice. The expression of this element may vary significantly from building to building and in accordance with different architectural styles.

Facade: Any vertical, exterior face or wall of a building, usually the front, often distinguished from other faces by architectural details.

Fenestration: The arrangement and design of windows and other openings on a building's facade.

Foot candle: A measure of light falling on a surface. One foot candle is equal to the amount of light generated by one candle shining on a square foot surface one foot away (Lux is the metric equivalent of footcandles, and both can be measured by a light meter). The Illuminating Engineering Society of North America (IESNA) provides lighting standards for typical applications.

Glare: Direct light shining from a fixture (luminaire) that makes it difficult to see or causes discomfort—it is especially a problem for motorists.

Green Building or Green Design: Building design that yields environmental benefits, such as savings in energy, building materials, and water consumption, or reduced waste generation.

Human scaled (see also: pedestrian-friendly / pedestrian-oriented): Site and building design elements that are dimensionally related to pedestrians, such as: small building spaces with individual entrances; larger buildings which have articulation and detailing to break up large masses; narrower streets with tree canopies; smaller parking areas or parking areas broken up into small components with landscaping; and pedestrian amenities. These features are all generally smaller in scale than those that are primarily intended to accommodate automobile traffic.

IESNA (or IES): Illuminating Engineering Society of North America is the professional society of lighting engineers, including those from manufacturing companies, and others professionally involved in lighting

Light pollution: is the upward and outward distribution of light, either directly from fixtures or from reflection off the ground or other surfaces.

Light trespass: describes the shining of light onto neighboring properties when that light is intrusive or objectionable.

Lintel: A horizontal beam over an opening in a wall, either structural or decorative, such as often seen capping window openings.

Lumen: A measure of light energy emitted by a light source.

Luminaire: The complete lighting fixture including the lamp (i.e. bulb), lens (used to direct and distribute light) and the wiring. The luminaire is typically mounted on a pole or other fixed object.

Mansard: A roof having on each side a steeper pitched lower part and a shallower pitched upper part.

Massing: The aggregate bulk of a building: or the total height, width, and depth of all its parts.

Overlay Districts: Zoning districts in which additional regulatory standards are superimposed on existing zoning. Overlay districts provide a method of placing special requirements for development in addition to those in the basic zoning ordinances.

Parapet: A low, protective wall or railing along the edge of a roof, balcony, or similar structure.

Pedestrian amenities: Pedestrian amenities serve as informal gathering places for socializing, resting, and enjoyment of a particular area and contribute to a walkable district.

Pedestrian-friendly/pedestrian-oriented:
Development which is designed with an emphasis primarily on the street sidewalk and on pedestrian access to the site and building, rather than on auto access and parking areas. The building is generally placed close to the street and the main entrance is oriented to the street sidewalk. There are generally windows or display cases along building façades which face the street. Typically, buildings cover a large portion of the site. Parking areas are not emphasized by the design of the site.

Proportion: The balanced relationship of parts of a building, landscape, and structures to each other and to the whole.

Rhythm: Reference to the regular or harmonious recurrence of lines, shapes, forms or colors, incorporating the concept of repetition as a device to organize forms and spaces in architecture.

Scale: The spatial relationship among structures along a street or block front, including height, bulk and yard relationships. Proportional relationship of the size of parts to one another and to the human figure.

Sill: The horizontal member at the base of a window opening, particularly the ledge formed by such a member.

Streetscape: The space between the buildings on either side of a street. The elements of a streetscape include: building frontage/façade; landscaping (trees, yards, bushes, plantings, etc.); sidewalks; street paving; street furniture (benches, kiosks, trash receptacles, fountains, etc.); signs; awnings; and street lighting.

Structured parking: A covered structure or portion of a covered structure that provides parking areas for motor vehicles. It includes parking on top of a structure where there is gross building area below the parking, but nothing above it.

Stucco: A course plaster applied to form a hard covering for exterior walls.

Terra Cotta: A hard, fired clay, reddish brown in color when unglazed, used for architectural facings, ornaments and tile units.

APPENDIX A: INAPPROPRIATE PLANT SPECIES LIST

The following plants should not be used for landscaping due to their potential adverse impacts on the ecology of the North East.

Trees:
Russian olive
Autumn olive
Osage orange
White mulberry
White cottonwood
Shrubs & Small Trees:
Barberry
Winged euonymus
Amur honeysuckle
Tartarian honeysuckle
Blunt-leaved privet
Smooth buckthorn
Shiny buckthorn
Multiflora rose
Rugose rose

Vines:
Porcelain berry
Oriental bittersweet
Japanese honeysuckle
Silver fleece vine
Kudzu
Japanese Wisteria
Herbaceous plants:
Yellow flag iris
Purple loosestrife
Japanese knotweed

APPENDIX B: SPECIAL CHARACTER AREA GUIDELINES

The following is a summary of the guidelines that only apply in the Special Character Areas of the Stoughton Overlay District. These guidelines are not exclusive, and the SPGA may consider other guidelines in this document, depending on the nature of the proposed development.

Historic Character

All renovations and additions to historic buildings should respect the scale, placement, materials, and proportion of the original building elements including roof shape and height, structural framework, cornice, window size and symmetry, and decorative elements.

Roofs

Only pitched roofs forms are appropriate in the Special Character Areas (see the Roofs section of the Stoughton Center Design Review Guidelines).

Landscaping

If little or no setback from the sidewalk exists for landscaping, window boxes and other residential-style treatments should be provided to the maximum extent possible.

Fencing

Stockade fences, concrete walls, and chain link fences should not be used.

Fencing should be constructed of traditional New England materials such as wood, brick, decorative iron, and stone. The least desirable fences include chain link, stucco, and concrete. Aluminum fences that are decorative may be acceptable. Existing stone walls should be preserved. Natural vegetation should be considered as an alternative buffer or to visually soften fencing.

Lighting

If your site is adjacent to a residential property, the light level at the property line should not exceed 0.5 footcandle, measured at a height of 5 feet above grade.

Signs

Internally lit, back lit, or neon lit signs are not appropriate in the Special Character Areas.

Only wall-mounted, window and projecting signs (see the Signs section) are appropriate in the Special Character Areas.

Only 1 sign type should be provided per establishment on residential type structures.

Wall signs and projecting signs should not exceed 6 square feet in area.

Lettering and logos in window signs should not cover more than 15 percent of the glass area.

Residential building numbers should be a minimum of 4 inches in height, and a maximum of 10 inches in height.