


TOWN CENTER MIXED USE DISTRICT DESIGN GUIDELINES

TOWN OF SPENCER, MASSACHUSETTS

Sponsored by the Massachusetts Department of Housing & Community Development
Massachusetts Downtown Initiative Program, Emmy Hahn, Coordinator

Prepared by Harriman

September 2019

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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THROUGH THIS PLACE PASSED
GENERAL HENRY KNOX
THE WINTER OF
1775 — 1776
TO DELIVER TO
GENERAL GEORGE WASHINGTON
AT CAMBRIDGE
THE TRAIN OF ARTILLERY
FROM FORT TICONDEROGA USED
TO DRIVE THE BRITISH ARMY
AND EVACUATE BOSTON
ERECTED BY THE COMMONWEALTH
OF MASSACHUSETTS 1927


The Massasoit Hotel
Built on the site of Jenk's Tavern in 1873,
it was destroyed by fire in 1982.
The tavern, where President George
Washington stayed overnight in 1789,
had burned down in 1870.

Introduction

This document contains design guidelines aimed at promoting design compatibility between new and existing buildings, and the use of construction materials and practices that are consistent with the traditional and historic urban design character of the Spencer Town Center area. The overall goal and purpose of these guidelines is to support ongoing revitalization efforts through the design of attractive buildings and public spaces that will bring people to the district, and contribute to generate an active and vibrant pedestrian environment.

These design guidelines are intended to supplement the current Town of Spencer Zoning Bylaw regulations for the Town Center area. One of the first steps in the process of obtaining a building permit is to submit a site plan to the Planning Board for Site Plan Review. No building permit or certificate of occupancy is approved without the written approval of the site plan by the Planning Board, unless the Board and the applicant have agreed to a time extension (*Section 7.4.3.D* of the Zoning Bylaw).

These guidelines will provide the Planning Board with criteria for the review and evaluation of proposed new development and redevelopment projects, taking into consideration their proposed massing, scale and proportions, façade design and materials, and the accessibility and transparency of ground floor public uses to the street and the sidewalk.

This document will offer additional guidance to current property owners and potential developers about the Town's expectations for the rehabilitation of existing buildings and the design of future infill buildings. The guidelines could also be used as criteria for grant funding or loans for programs that the Town may sponsor.

The preparation of these guidelines has been done by Harriman, with funding provided by the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Economic Development as part of its Massachusetts Downtown Initiative program.

Site Plan Review Process

Zoning review and approval processes are detailed in *Article 7. Administration* of the *Town of Spencer Zoning Bylaw*. *Sections 7.1* and *7.2* establish the powers and permit granting authorities of the Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Appeals. They also establish public hearing requirements and procedures, and time limitations on permits.

These guidelines are intended as supplementary provisions to the ones already established for Site Plan Review, contained in *Section 7.4* of the Bylaw. In particular, plan submission requirements are detailed in *Sections 7.4.3 Procedure, 7.4.4 Preparation of Plan*, and *7.4.5 Contents of Plan*.

Components of the Design Guidelines

The design guidelines are grouped in five sections corresponding to the main design categories addressed, and the elements that have a more visible influence in the urban design character, look and feel of the district. The guideline sections and categories are:

A. INFILL DEVELOPMENT

This section covers new development within the existing Town Center. It may include new buildings or significant additions to existing buildings.

B. REHABILITATION/RESTORATION

Rehabilitation guidelines address major repairs and restoration of existing buildings, particularly historic buildings.

C. STOREFRONT DESIGN

Provisions for ground floor storefronts include windows, door, signage, and storefront lighting guidance.

D. FRONT YARD AND LANDSCAPING

This section addresses design principles and guidelines for the area located between the front lot line and the building façade. It is aimed at promoting the development of an attractive and pedestrian-friendly townscape.

E. LIGHTING/SIGNAGE

Guidelines for lighting and signage for buildings and site are provided in this section.

Design Guidelines

A. INFILL DEVELOPMENT

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Infill development should be consistent with existing development patterns. Development patterns include the relationship of existing buildings to the principal street as well as the height, massing, fenestration, and architectural details of the existing buildings. New buildings in a historic neighborhood should relate harmoniously to their neighborhood context by establishing relationships of scale, dimensions, design patterns, and materials that are compatible with the historic design character of adjacent buildings. New buildings should not attempt to copy old buildings but should be complementary in the treatment of existing strong vertical and/or horizontal lines, roof styles, storefront styles, articulations of the façade, materials, colors, and other building components. Building scale is an architectural term that refers to the relative size of a building or any design element compared to other buildings or design elements. Human scale refers to the relative size of a building or architectural design element to the human body, and to other design elements that are specifically recognizable or familiar, such as a house, a door or a piece of furniture designed to fit the human body. People tend to feel more comfortable and react more favorably to buildings that exhibit design features and proportions that relate to the human scale. Site and building design concepts that are compatible with green building principles, materials, and methods are encouraged, as they promote energy conservation and reduce negative impacts on the environment.

GUIDELINES

1. SITE AND BLOCK PATTERNS

1.1 Building Placement and Orientation

- Building placement should respect existing patterns of building placement for the street in which it is located.
- Buildings should be placed close to the street to facilitate public pedestrian access and conceal parking at the interior or rear of the lot.
- Buildings should be oriented with the primary building façade facing the primary street frontage of the site.

Figure 1. Commercial façades in Falmouth, Mass.

- Entrances, storefronts and windows should be oriented to the primary street frontage, and address the street with an active and welcoming entry composition that is integrated into the overall massing and configuration of the building.

1.2 Setbacks

- If the adjacent buildings are set back at a distance that differs from the minimum setback requirements set by zoning, infill buildings should match the setback from the front lot line of the immediately adjacent buildings; if the setbacks do not match, the infill building may match one or the other, or may be an average of the two setbacks.

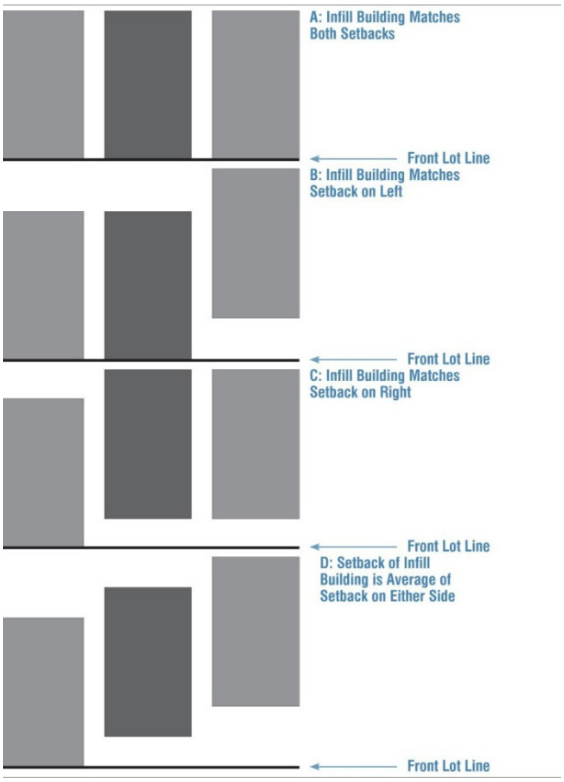

Figure 2. Front setback options.

- Multifamily residential buildings facing the street, with no commercial use on the ground floor, may be set back from the front property line.

- The front yard setback should be landscaped with a mix of shrubs and low plantings to support privacy of residential areas.
- Front setbacks, adjoining setbacks, side yard setbacks, and walkways between buildings should be maintained as attractive features of the streetscape and adjoining buildings.

1.3 Street Wall

- Building massing and façades should be designed to frame streets and public spaces to provide a sense of spatial enclosure and to define street edges.
- Building massing, scale, and proportions should be complementary to, and respectful of, the form patterns of existing buildings in the immediate vicinity.
- Building entries may add distinctive design components to the building façade such as porches, canopies, glazed areas, and stoops.

1.4 Landscape

- Landscape features should be used to define street edges and to buffer and screen edges that may have a negative visual impact, such as parking or loading areas.
- Site and landscape features should be integrated with the design of new construction and substantial rehabilitation to reflect a coordinated site and building design.
- Plantings should not obscure site entrances and exit drives, access ways, or road intersections.
- Tree species should be selected to maintain adequate height clearances for sidewalk circulation and visibility of commercial storefronts.

- New trees and shrubs should be selected from indigenous species native to the region and noninvasive species adapted to the area.
- Existing trees, and in particular healthy and mature trees that characterize portions of the neighborhood should be preserved to the extent possible, and they should be incorporated into the proposed site plan.

Figure 3. Mature trees and vegetation along Valley Street.

- Existing trees should be protected from damage during site construction and staging, according to best management practices.
- New development on sloping terrain should incorporate the design and construction of stone walls into the site plan and landscaping, in ways consistent with the traditional design patterns visible in the neighborhood.
- Steep site slopes should be preserved in a natural, vegetated state to the extent practically feasible to prevent erosion and protect the natural habitat.

- The design of rain gardens and bioswales as contributing landscape elements of the site drainage and stormwater management systems is encouraged.

2. BUILDING MASSING AND FORM

2.1 Building Massing and Articulation

- Articulation of massing and the ground level of a building along its primary street frontage should visually anchor the building and provide human-scaled elements that improve the pedestrian environment.
- Upper stories may be set back, treated with a different material, or incorporated into the roofline, to diminish building mass or to make a building more compatible with the design of adjacent buildings.
- The building façade should clearly define commercial ground-floor spaces, where they exist, and differentiate through articulation the ground floor from residential or office spaces on the stories above.

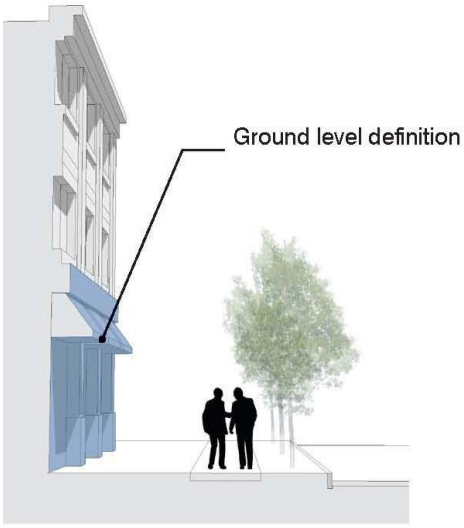

Figure 4. Definition of street edges and visibility.

- Residential buildings should incorporate massing and façade design elements such as front porches, front-gable roofs, cross-gables, or hipped roofs with dormers that help relate their building massing to that of adjacent buildings.

Figure 5. Traditional residential architecture in Spencer..

2.2 Scale and Proportion

- The scale of proposed new buildings should be compatible with the surrounding architectural and landscape context.
- Elements that may help to relate building massing proportionally should include: articulated building bases through a change in material or color; placement of windows in a regular pattern; articulation of building entries with canopies, porches or awnings, and façade and roof projections (such as bay windows or dormers).
- There should be a direct vertical correspondence between the design of the façade of the upper floors and the ground level retail façades in mixed-use buildings.

2.3 Building Height

- Infill buildings should continue the patterns of height of adjacent existing properties.
- Where the discrepancy between the proposed height and existing height patterns is greater than ten feet, the Planning Board should review design proposals with the applicant for context sensitivity based upon the following: articulation of façade; building mass, scale, bulk and proportion; or other building massing considerations.

Figure 6. Example of buildings with different heights but context sensitivity, Great Barrington, Mass.

2.4 Roof Forms

- Roof-mounted mechanical equipment such as air conditioning, heating units, exhaust fans and the like should be concealed from street-level public vantage points within architectural components consistent with the style of the associated building.
- Roofing materials visible from public sidewalks or streets should be of high quality and durable, including, but not limited to: slate, copper, ceramic slate tile, or architectural asphalt shingle.

3. FAÇADE COMPOSITION

3.1 Façade Design and Compatibility

- The façade, or primary building elevation, of new infill development should be compatible with the façade design of neighboring buildings so as to create continuity across projects and the street edge.
- Compatibility could be achieved through the coordination of significant design elements and proportions with the corresponding features of adjacent buildings, without necessarily replicating them.
- Ground-level façades in non-commercial buildings should be articulated in such a way that they are visually compatible with adjacent commercial storefronts and maintain an active and inviting street level façade
- Blank walls without any visual content or interest should be avoided along pedestrian sidewalks and parking areas, and on front façades in general.
- The length of any continuous façade wall along a street should not exceed 40% of the façade's total length or 60 horizontal feet, whichever is less, without incorporating at least two of the following: color change, material change, texture change, plane projections of recesses, storefronts, doors, or windows.

3.2 Façade Materials

- Building exterior materials, including architectural trim and cladding, should be of high quality and durable, including but not limited to: stone, brick, wood, metal, glass, sustainable cement masonry board products, and integrated or textured masonry.

Figure 7. Sugden Library masonry facade.

- Exterior material may not include vinyl siding or uninterrupted, multi-level glazing treatment.
- The palette of colors should draw from the existing buildings. Brick and brownstone red, greys, muted yellow and buff tones, and muted greens and blues are appropriate.
- No more than two or three colors should be used in a building's façade.
- Gold and silver are appropriate accent colors.
- Bright colors should be limited to accent areas such as trim, details, and small areas of lettering or logos.

3.3 Building Entrances

- The most prominent door should be the one leading to ground-level space.
- For buildings with multiple ground-floor occupants, entries should be integrated into a coordinated ground-floor façade composition, with similar materials, signage, and ornamentation.
- Doors to upper-story uses may have a simpler design than doors to ground-floor spaces.
- Fully-opaque doors, or doors with small lites, are appropriate for entries to upper-level residential spaces or basements and mechanical rooms; however, doors that lead to upper-story commercial spaces should be at least half transparent, to make it more inviting for clients or customers.

3.4 Window Spacing

- New construction should acknowledge and respond to existing adjacent window patterns in proportion, scale, rhythm and number of openings.
- Upper-floor windows are typically smaller and more frequent than ground-floor windows, and they should occupy at least twenty (25) percent of each upper-floor façade area.
- An individual, "punched" window expression rather than continuous horizontal or vertical "strip" windows is encouraged whenever possible and appropriate to the building style.

3.5 Transparency

- New construction adjacent to public open spaces should be oriented to define the edges of those open spaces and provide transparency at the ground floor to activate the public space.

Figure 8. Commercial building in Pine Hills, Plymouth, Mass.

- Commercial buildings facing Main Street and Mechanic Street should have 70% of the ground floor façade in transparent windows; commercial buildings facing other streets, such as Valley Street, Pearl Street, Elm Street, or Lloyd Dyer Drive, should have at least 30% of the ground floor façade in transparent windows.
- Along the secondary façades that face pedestrian alleys or connections, façades must achieve at least 15% transparency.
- In commercial buildings, windows on the ground floor of the primary façade should not be mirrored, use tinted glass, or be obstructed by curtains or shades.
- Perforated "solar shade" style blinds that reduce direct sunlight, glare and UV rays are appropriate provided that they are rated for at least 10 percent openness and are fully retractable.

B. REHABILITATION/RESTORATION

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Existing buildings should be maintained and repaired or rehabilitated in a manner that is consistent with the age and style of the building. Renovation, rehabilitation, and adaptive reuse are generally preferred to the demolition of old historic buildings. There are several clusters of historic buildings within the Town Center Area, including properties in the National Register Historic District along Main Street, Mechanic Street, Chestnut Street, Wall Street and Valley Street, which makes them eligible for Historic Tax Credits. For historic buildings, the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards.htm) are the best guide for appropriate repairs and renovations. In general, existing materials and architectural elements should be restored if possible; replacement materials should be consistent in quality and durability to the original materials and colors. Windows and doors, and other architectural details should be appropriate to the style and period of the original building. New additions should be distinguishable from the original structure through massing articulation and/or the use of materials.

GUIDELINES

1. REHABILITATION APPROACHES

1.1 Repair and Maintenance

- Deteriorated historic features should be repaired rather than replaced.
- Repairs and alterations must not damage or destroy materials, features or finishes that are important in defining the building's historic character.
- Original window patterns and openings should be preserved or restored, including conservation and repair to preserve historical details, in the redevelopment of existing structures.

Figure 9. Historic renovation preserving window patterns in Newburyport, Mass (source: Creative Commons).

1.2 Removal of Inappropriate Material

- Materials on the façade that are subject to deterioration (plywood or plastic) should be avoided or removed and replaced with high quality and durable materials, such as: stone, brick, wood, metal, glass, sustainable cement masonry board products, and integrated or textured masonry.

1.3 Restoration

- Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature should match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials.
- Replacement of missing features should be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
- The reference point for a building that has been heavily altered may be a similar building in downtown.
- The use of historic colors appropriate to New England in the renovation or replacement of historic elements is highly encouraged; lists of historic color suppliers are available at local historical organizations such as Historic New England.
- Downspouts and gutters should be of a color that is compatible with the building walls.
- If the building is historic, the style and color of downspouts and gutters should be appropriate to the original character of the façade.

1.4 Rehabilitation

- Changes to a building façade should be consistent with the original architectural style and the principles of composition that are typically associated with that style as evidenced in precedents and relevant examples.

Figure 10. Commercial façade restoration on Chestnut Street, Spencer

- Contemporary materials and components may be appropriate if they are visually compatible with the historic components.

1.5 Window and Door Patterns

- Windows that have been closed off or reduced in size from inappropriate prior renovations should be opened up to restore the original façade transparency.
- Common inappropriate changes that should be reversed are arched window openings that have been replaced with inappropriate rectangular windows, multi-paned windows where some of the glass panes have been replaced with solid metal or wood panels, and multi-paned windows where a single-paned or double-paned window is more appropriate.
- Divided lite doors or side lites should be employed only if appropriate for the style of the building façade.

1.6 Roof Parapet and Cornice Lines

- Building cornice lines should be maintained, preserved, or recreated to define building façades and create façade components consistent with historic parapet or cornice lines, as originally designed and built in the Town Center.

Figure 11. Building renovation maintaining cornice lines in Spencer.

- Historic roof forms should be retained or restored.
- Additions should have roof forms that are compatible with the forms of the building to which they are attached.
- New structures should employ simple roof forms compatible with the roof styles of existing neighboring buildings.

C. STOREFRONT DESIGN

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Storefronts should be transparent to allow potential buyers to see into the store or restaurant and employees to see out to the sidewalk. The display windows should be appropriately lit. Doors should allow easy entry and also be appropriately lit. Awnings, window boxes, and other elements that reinforce an active pedestrian environment are encouraged. Signage should be limited to a sign band above the storefront and/or a projecting sign at the level of the sign band. Signage in the window should not block the ability to see into the window at eye level for a wide range of heights.

GUIDELINES

1. FAÇADE ELEMENTS

1.1 Storefront Systems

- Materials should be selected to be compatible with or complementary to the Town Center. Storefronts should fit within the building frame as formed by columns, piers and cornices.
- A base panel and sill course are traditional for most, although not all, architectural styles.
- Where it is appropriate for the existing or proposed architectural style, a base panel and sill course should be provided; the base panels and sill course should continue across the entire width of the storefront bay and terminate at doors or the vertical elements framing the bay.

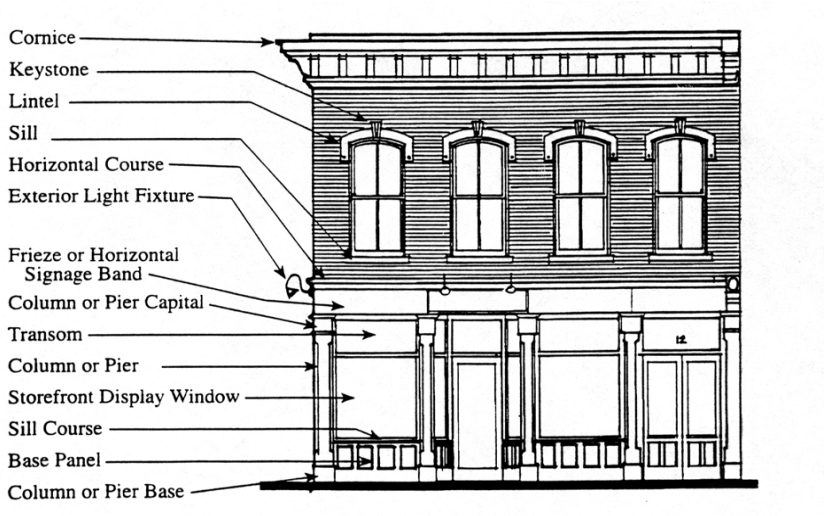

Figure 12. Commercial and mixed-use façade articulation.

- The base panel and sill course should be 24" or lower, measured above the sidewalk.
- Storefronts with recessed entryways to ground-floor commercial spaces should be preserved or restored to their original format; the recess should remain open for the full height of the ground floor story; signs, panels, or other features should not shorten the recess' height.
- Storefront doors should be transparent and inviting.
- Roll-down security grates of solid metal are discouraged on windows and doors.
- Any security grates used should be the lattice-type that allow full view into the window and façade behind.
- Non-retractable security grates – such as those bolted to a smaller window – are discouraged.

1.2 Awnings

- Awnings, canopies, and marquees may be used to provide a human-scaled element to the ground floor of building façades, shelter building entries from rain, and reduce glare and heat from summer sun to building interiors.
- Awnings, canopies and signs may not obscure important architectural details by crossing over pilasters or covering windows.

Figure 13. Placement of awnings maintaining architectural integrity.

- The rigid framework of awnings should be at least eight (8) feet above the sidewalk, and suspended fabric valances should be at least seven (7) feet above the sidewalk.
- Fluted, curving, bullnose, or rounded awnings are discouraged as they look dated and may obscure too much of the building architecture.
- On multi-tenant buildings, multiple awnings may vary in content (e.g., different lettering or logos), but should be of consistent color, design, material, fabrication type, size, and profile.

1.3 Signs

- Business signs provide the name and optionally, the role or function of the business; they may also include a logo graphic.
- Signs should not include name brands of products or services offered in the business unless it is the primary role of the business.
- Signs are typically placed in a sign band or designated area that extends in a consistent zone across the storefront above the windows and doors.
- Buildings having such signage areas should place the most prominent signage there. Additional sign guidelines are provided in the *Lighting/Signage* section below.

1.4 Window Displays

- Storefront windows should be consistent in style with the building architecture, provide clarity and interest to the façade, provide for a high level of transparency, and be harmonious with other adjacent storefront windows.

Figure 14. Storefront design consistent with the building architecture, Mashpee Commons, Mass.

- Storefront windows that display products or services or views to an activity in which people are involved frequently during hours of operation are encouraged.
- Items that block views to internal activity should not be placed in storefront windows, e.g. the backs of display cases, unless they are part of a display to the outside sidewalk or street.
- Advertising signs, calendars, sale signs, and other temporary-type signs that obscure the transparency are strongly discouraged, and are regulated in the *Lighting/Signage* section, below.

1.5 Storefront Lighting

- At night, display windows should be lit from within to make the merchandise display a form of store advertising and add light and interest to the sidewalk.
- Entrances may be lit with sconces on one or both sides of a door, or in the case of recessed entries, with overhead lights.
- Lighting should be from concealed lighting fixtures; luminaires should not be directly visible from the sidewalk or street. Additional guidance on lighting is provided in the *Lighting/Signage* section below.

D. FRONT YARD AND LANDSCAPING

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Many buildings in the Town Center are on the lot line with the sidewalk. For those that are not, the use of the front yard should be consistent with an active pedestrian environment and should contribute to public activity in the Town Center. Front yard setbacks may be landscaped or paved and contain outdoor seating and/or public art. All views that could be associated with a negative impact should be screened with strategically selected and located landscape features. This includes trash/recycling bins and dumpster areas and loading areas.

GUIDELINES

1. FRONT YARD SETBACKS

1.1 Landscaping

- The landscape design of front yards and side yards visible from the street should complement and be compatible with the landscape patterns of neighboring properties.
- Businesses are encouraged to improve the street frontage with planters located within the front setback or at the sidewalk curb; however, planters should not interfere with the ability of pedestrians to open doors and access the passenger side of cars.
- Front yard design may include outdoor sitting areas and café terraces.

1.2 Public Art

- Public art may be used to define and punctuate public spaces.
- Art installations should maintain clearances in public spaces, and be constructed of materials that are durable, easily maintained, and that do not present safety hazards.

1.3 Outdoor Seating and Displays

- Where sidewalk width is constrained at location of sidewalk use for outdoor cafés, the minimum clear width of the sidewalk may be reduced to 4' for a maximum length of 12'; after a 6' interval of a minimum width of 5', the minimum clearance of 4' may be allowed for another 12'; the goal is to maintain the balance for clear width of pedestrian activity and the extension of outdoor cafés into the public space.

Figure 15. Example of outdoor café terrace.

1.4 Street Furniture

- Permanent street furniture including light fixtures, benches, bike racks, trash and recycling receptacles, and newspaper stands should be integrated with street and sidewalk circulation to ensure adequate clearances, access and convenience of the location of these amenities.
- Street furniture should be clustered at convenient locations that are plainly visible and accessible and must be located such that the minimum 4-'0" sidewalk clearances are maintained.

1.5 Rain Gardens

- Rain gardens may be provided as a contributing element of the site drainage, and integrated into the overall site landscaping.
- Plantings in rain gardens should be well adapted to wetland edge environments, including grasses, sedges, shrubs, or trees that tolerate intermittent wet conditions and extended dry periods.

2. PARKING AND LANDSCAPE

2.1 Location of Parking Areas

- Parking should be located at the interior of blocks, behind buildings, or at the rear of sites, away from prominent site edges, public spaces, and streets.
- Passageways that connect the principal streets to parking should include displays relevant to adjacent businesses, public art, wayfinding signage related to the Town Center, and lighting that provides a safe environment for pedestrians.

Parking Buffers and Landscape

- Landscape buffers should be used to screen parking, loading, and service areas that may be visible from public streets or open spaces.

Figure 16. Example of parking lot landscaping.

- Screening may include architectural walls, fences or other visual barriers.
- Parking lots that adjoin public streets should have buffer plantings or structures to soften the views of cars.
- Low masonry walls or picket fences are ideal screening devices because they serve their purpose year-round.
- Fences erected between the building setback line and the sidewalk should not be more than four (4) feet in height and should not be more than one-half (1/2) solid; stone walls should not be more than three (3) feet in height.

- A minimum buffer of sixty (60) feet is required for all properties in the Commercial zone along the property line abutting any other district.
- Buffer plantings should include some evergreen plants and/or plantings that retain a woody structure throughout the winter.
- Parking lots should also include shade tree plantings around the perimeter and if possible scattered "orchard style" (regularly spaced) around the interior of the parking lot.

2.3 Paving Materials

- Brick or unit pavers may be used to enhance the character of sidewalks, pathways, and outdoor sitting areas.

Figure 17. Brick pavers enhancing a pedestrian alley, Lawrence, Mass.

- When employed, brick and unit pavers should be selected and set in a manner that limits uneven surfaces or joints that would become an impediment to accessibility.

2.4 Curb Cuts

- Curb cuts should be minimized and combined whenever possible into one main access point per property.
- Curb cuts and driveways of adjacent properties may be combined into one shared access point following provisions of the Zoning Bylaw.
- Sidewalks should be continuous and uninterrupted at driveways and curb cuts to strengthen priority for pedestrians.

E. LIGHTING/SIGNAGE

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Lighting and signage for both building and site are addressed in detail by Article 6 – Design Standards of the Town of Spencer Zoning Bylaw. The guidelines below are intended to supplement the Bylaw provisions with additional design considerations. In general, lighting should render building colors correctly and be in the white spectrum; sodium and florescent light sources should be avoided. Lighting should not cast glare onto streets, public ways, or onto adjacent properties.

GUIDELINES

1. LIGHTING

1.1 Building Exterior Lighting

- Façade lighting is encouraged as a method to subtly highlight and accentuate interesting features in a building's structural and architectural form as seen from principal vantage points.

Figure 18. Commercial façade lighting in Southbury Plaza (source: www.tectonarchitects).

- The source for façade lighting should have limited or no visual impact on the façade.
- Holiday lighting is encouraged within storefront window displays, on doorways, and on exterior façades.
- Holiday lighting should rely on electrical sockets and support brackets that are permanently installed in the façade; electrical extension cords and temporary, low-quality supports such as tape and wires should be avoided because they are a potential source of pedestrian trips and falls.

1.2 Site Lighting

- Site lighting should use shielded and full cut-off fixtures that avoid spilling light onto neighboring streets, properties, structures, and above into the night sky, with a total cutoff of all light at less than ninety (90) degrees from vertical, except as provided by zoning.
- Site lighting should use low height fixtures, not to exceed twelve (12) feet, which should reinforce the human scale.

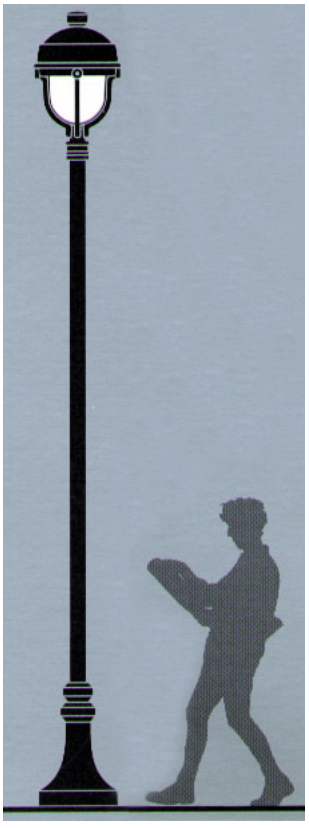

Figure 19. Commercial façade lighting in Southbury Plaza (source: www.tectonarchitects).

- Pedestrian-scaled lighting should be provided in pedestrian areas located to the side or rear of buildings, including the use of light poles, bollard lighting or recessed ground lighting.
- The use of LED fixtures and solar powered lights is encouraged.

2. SIGNAGE

2.1 Sign Contents

- Signs displaying business or product names and logos should be directly associated with the principal service or products of the establishment.
- Signs should present a clear message and be well designed to complement the architectural character of the building in style and placement.
- Typefaces used in signage should be compatible with the business identity or the building architectural style, either a period font that echoes the style of the building, or a modern font that provides a clean contrast.
- A series of individual letters placed on a building in such a way that, when seen from the distance, they form the name of a business or a brand name should be considered to be one sign, and as such, be subject to all the applicable guidelines and limitations.
- On multi-tenant buildings, signs should be coordinated and located at the same height on the building façade, preferably on a sign band or with awnings.
- A sign band should be a space clearly defined by architectural elements, trim or moldings, where signs may be placed above the storefront windows.

- Signs and awnings on a single building should be consistent in size, profile, location, material, color, and design; they may not obscure important architectural details by crossing over pilasters, or covering windows or trim elements.

2.2 Sign Materials and Colors

- Façade signs printed on durable wood, metal, or composite are preferred.
- Matte or flat backgrounds should be used for opaque sign backgrounds to reduce reflective glare and enhance legibility.

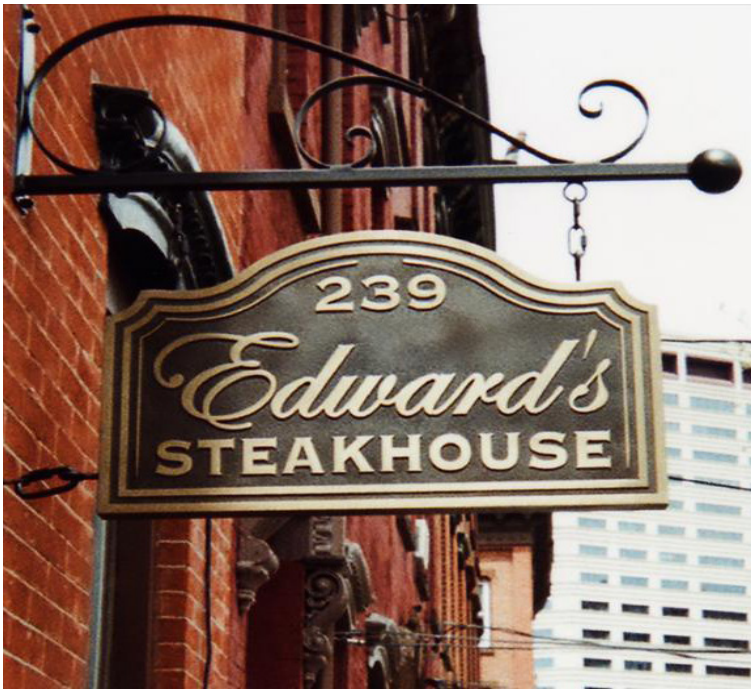

Figure 20. Example of projecting/blade sign employing light color letters on a dark background (source unknown).

- Colors for signage should be tasteful and muted, compatible with the traditional historic downtown character; not more than two or three colors should be used.

- Classic, historic, and muted colors are ideal – black, brown, white, gold and silver, dark blue, red. The use of bright colors – such as yellow or pink -- should be reserved for accent color only.
- Window signs, such as information signage (hours of operation, sales info, etc.) should be high quality vinyl die cut letters or painted directly onto the glass.
- Neon signs may be employed when tastefully done in a creative or artistic composition.
- Projecting signs should convey information in a unique and artistic way, using images that convey the goods or services provided at the premises.
- Projecting signs should hang below the sill height of the second floor or the roof cornice, whichever is lower.

Figure 21. Example of freestanding sign compatible in design and materials with design of the building.

- Freestanding signs should be compatible in design and materials with the design of the building, and not obscure views of the building's principal entry.
- Freestanding signs should be set within a landscaped area to facilitate views from a distance and keep them away from moving objects.
- Freestanding signs should be mounted on a base or pedestal made of strong and durable materials, such as stone, concrete, or masonry.
- Single pole signs and the use of exposed structural supports for freestanding signs should be avoided.
- Painted murals of artistic quality alluding to the use, goods, or services provided inside the building are encouraged on a side or rear façade; front façades should be used for storefronts, porches, or windows.

Figure 22. Artistic mural on a building side wall (source: waymarking.com).

2.3 Signage Lighting

- Signs with opaque backgrounds should be lit from the exterior by wall-mounted, focused, directional lights such as goose neck lights or sconces.
- The lighting source should be shielded, and the bulb exposure limited to that sufficient to illuminate the sign content.
- Backlit signs or internally-lit signs should have a dark and opaque background, with the lighted areas only used for the lettering and/or logos.

Figure 23. Example of a backlit sign employing light color letters on a dark background (source: www.truenorthsigns.net).

- The use of individual backlit plastic letters forming the name or logo of the business located in the premises should preferably employ one light color and be set on a dark, opaque background.
- Signage on doors and windows does not need additional lighting, because the interior business lighting will provide sufficient back lighting to render numbers legible.

Figure 24. Example of a backlit sign employing individual plastic letters (source unknown).

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