VILLAGE OF NEW PALTZ

DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

FOR THE GATEWAY DISTRICT

Prepared for:
Village of New Paltz
Gateway District Committee

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Revised by the Village of New Paltz Planning Board
and the Village of New Paltz Gateway Committee

ADOPTED BY THE VILLAGE OF NEW PALTZ
ON
FEBRUARY 10, 1999

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

Purpose and Intent

The standards contained in this manual are intended to provide a basis for developers and planning board members to address various site development issues in the Village Gateway District*. The standards provide design criteria and suggest development approaches which will help both the Village and developers consider issues of site organization, architecture, parking, site design, pedestrian circulation, and signs. The purpose of these design standards is to:

- clarify and define design objectives pursuant to the Village's zoning laws;
- reduce delays and confusion that developers may encounter during the design phase of proposed projects;
- maintain or improve the visual attractiveness of the Gateway District;
- encourage innovation and quality in architectural and site design;
- minimize land use conflicts;
- establish a clear and consistent method for analyzing new projects; and,
- stimulate dialogue among the planning board, the development community, and Village residents, focusing on the issues involved in achieving quality design.

The development standards are adopted by the Village Board and serve as the basis for legally binding requirements within the Village's zoning ordinance.

These design standards provide basic information, but do not attempt to address all the design issues relevant to proposed site plan. The standards should, however, present a clear enough delineation of critical issues for both developer and review boards. When circumstances require, additional assistance or review by a specialized consultant, to be paid for by the applicant, will ensure proper decision-making.

The application of the development standards is the responsibility of the Village Planning Board as part of the site plan approval process.

*The Gateway District extends along both sides of Main Street from Wurts Avenue to the Wallkill River. Legislation establishing the district was adopted by the Village Board in December, 1997. See Local Law #26 of 1997.

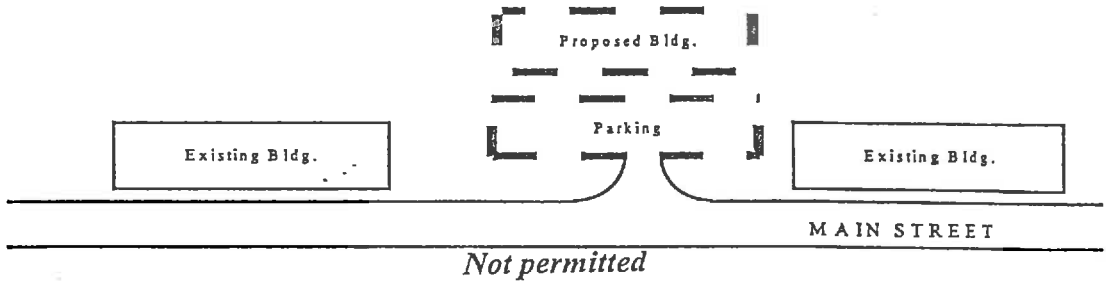
I. SITE ORGANIZATION

Proposed land development should address the opportunities and limitations present on a site and its adjacent surroundings. Site opportunities should be maximized to enhance the quality of the development, and conscientious steps should be taken to lessen potential negative impacts on the site and the surrounding community. A comprehensive site analysis should be undertaken and a land use plan prepared prior to any land clearing and subsequent development. The impacts of the proposed development on adjacent properties should be taken into consideration during the design phase of the site planning process.

A. BUILDING SETBACKS AND RELATIONSHIP WITH ADJACENT ENVELOPMENT

New buildings in the Gateway should conform to the dominant setback while preserving views of the Shawangunk Mountains and the Wallkill River valley. The following graphic depicts the build-to lines within the Gateway. Any exception to the build-to line must be reviewed by the Planning Board and serve a public function. For example, a building may be set back from the line if an outdoor cafe, dining deck, or landscaped seating is located in front. The intent is to create an active space that is inviting to the pedestrian.

In the more dense areas of the Gateway, such as those areas closer to the downtown, new infill development should match the existing Village character and be built to the back side of the sidewalk. This is accomplished by establishing a maximum front setback of zero (0) feet.



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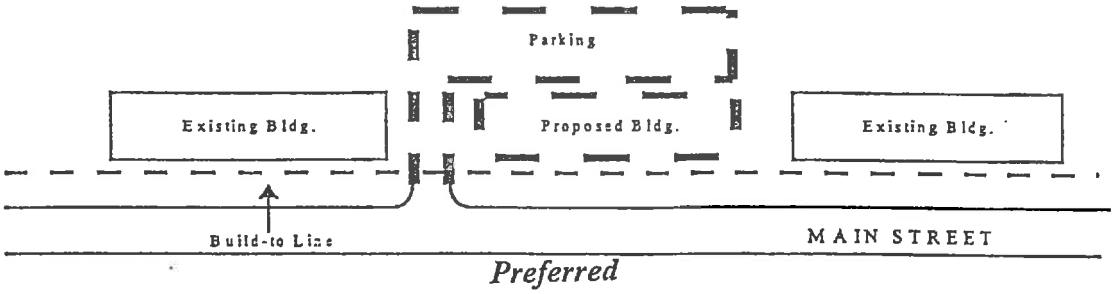


Preferred

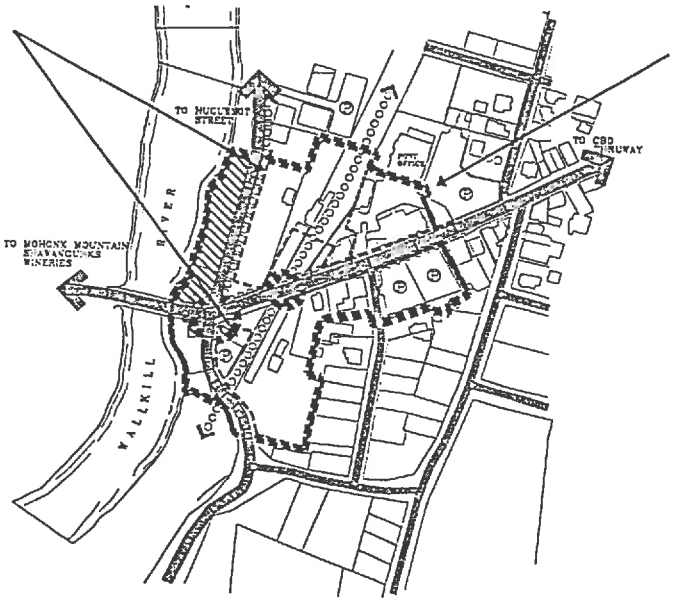
Where buildings are located in this manner, the line creates a defined edge to the public space which contributes to the Village's traditional character. Parallel or perpendicular relationships with the street are typical within the Village and, when combined with the sidewalks and street trees (see later discussion) create an aesthetically pleasing environment. Also, buildings with display windows and porches at the sidewalk provide added activity and interest to attract pedestrians.

Where nonresidential uses are adjacent to residential uses such as the area along Wurts Avenue, the specific siting of the nonresidential use should be responsive to the character and use of surrounding residential properties. A minimum side yard setback of 15 feet should be observed for buildings, parking or storage. Buffer plantings should be established to lessen the impacts of adjacent land uses and to create a transition between buildings of contrasting scales.

B. RELATIONSHIP TO SPECIAL CONDITIONS

The Gateway District is located in an area of the Village where any amount of development can have both positive and negative implications. As it currently exist, there are a few large undeveloped properties leaving unobstructed views of the Shawangunks and clear lines of sight for traffic circulation. New development should be located in such a manner that major viewsheds and traffic sight lines are preserved. Examples of significant view- sheds include the view looking west toward the Shawangunks and the view as one crosses the Wallkill River from the west to the east. Traffic concerns include the intersection of Huguenot, Water and Main Streets. This intersection is currently difficult because of limited sight lines and fast moving vehicles, and any new development should ensure that the condition is not worsened.

Build-to Line



II. ARCHITECTURE

New architecture should relate to the surrounding environment in regard to texture, scale, mass, proportion, and color. A strong visual relationship between the building, the site, and adjacent development is vital for overall design compatibility. The exterior appearance of a building should complement the historic character of New Paltz. High standards of construction and materials such as those described in a later section should be incorporated into each new development.

A. ARCHITECTURAL FORM

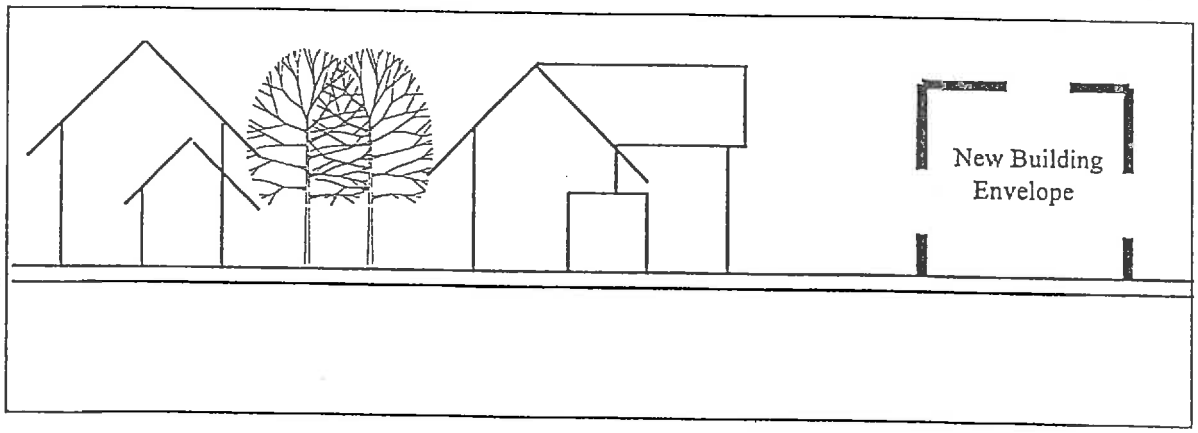
Architectural standards should be applied consistently throughout the development. Emphasis should be placed on creating an interesting visual impression, particularly from public rights-of-way and adjacent lands. The use of different textures, complementary colors, shadow lines, detailing, and contrasting shapes to create an appealing facade is strongly encouraged. The use of single colors and/or blank walls is discouraged. All proposed buildings or structures should be sensitive to the existing community character. This includes:

- Maintaining the existing proportional relationship between buildings, open space, and building setbacks.
- Avoiding contrast of color, height, materials, and facade of new development with the predominant style of adjacent buildings.
- Retaining architectural form and strengthening the character of historic districts.
- Constructing buildings to achieve a human scale and interest.
- Limiting individual retail uses to 3,000 square feet.

B. BUILDING HEIGHT AND ROOF DESIGN

The scale of the development should not overpower neighboring buildings. Through the use of variations in building height, roof line and grade definition, the perceived height of the building or project can be effectively reduced.

Maximum height for new construction is two stories. The first floor level of a 3-story building should not exceed a height of 4 feet above the grade at the street face of the building. Story heights should remain within the range of those in surrounding buildings and not exceed 35 feet. Two story mixed-use buildings are encouraged.



New infill buildings should fill space defined by adjacent buildings, harmonize with surrounding character, and maintain facade rhythms and street lines

The two roof types that are generally encouraged in the Gateway are Gable and Hip. However, roof types closer to the center of downtown should match the roof lines of the commercial buildings in the immediate area. The Gambrel or Mansard roof types are generally not encouraged. However, limited use of these roof types will lend variety. Structures with sloping roofs should take measures to ensure that the fall of snow, ice, or rain does not recreate a hazard for pedestrians. Sloping roof structures can employ the use of dormers and gables to give the facade a more visual prominence. Flat roofs are allowed only if there is a cornice detail added. Roofs should reflect the historic character of what currently exists in the Village.

C. FACADE COMPOSITION (i.e., RHYTHM)

Facade pattern, or rhythm, concerns the arrangement of facade elements, such as windows and bays, in a recognizable and consistent pattern. A consistent spacing of windows along a building wall is one example. Where there are adjacent structures, the facade should be in keeping with the rhythm of the adjacent structures.

Facade patterns should be simple, with detail added to enrich the design. For example, detail can be added to highlight the main entrance to a building that is within important sight lines. Facade composition is an important factor to consider when reviewing architectural details.

The use of rough textured materials or decoration (such as brickwork patterns) to accent portions of the facade is encouraged, but careful review should be afforded before it is used as the primary theme.

D. FACADE FENESTRATION

Building fenestration measures the amount of depth (such as recessed entry) and openings (such as window area) on a facade. As with facade composition, fenestration should be similar to adjacent buildings or to other buildings within the downtown area. Window placement should encourage interaction between the interior of the building and the passer-by.

E. BUILDING MATERIALS

Exterior materials must be sufficiently durable to guarantee low maintenance, stability, and reasonable life span. Acceptable facade materials include common red brick, special masonry units, natural stone (such as that found on Huguenot Street) and wood. Beige brick, plain (bare) masonry units, vinyl siding, and metal siding are not permitted.

Trim should consist of finished grade painted or stained wood rather than bare, lumber grade, wood. Windows should have anodized aluminum or wood frame and not bare aluminum frames. Awnings should be canvas or similar material. Rigid plastic awnings are now allowed. Sidewalk and walkway paving should consist of brick, stone, or patterned concrete. Asphalt paving is permitted for parking areas only.

F. MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT

Rooftop mechanical equipment must be screened from public view by the use of architecturally compatible materials.
Ground level mechanical and service equipment (such as air-conditioning equipment, and utility boxes and meters) must be screened from public view by the use of landscaping, walls, fencing or other design treatments compatible with the finishes of the principal structure.

G. HAZARDOUS GLARES/REFLECTIONS

Highly reflective surfaces, such as a large amount of glass that create hazardous glares, are not allowed.

III. PARKING

A. OFF STREET PARKING

Parking within the Village is limited to a few municipal lots. Most of the year, parking is difficult to find. As the Gateway is developed, the design and location of parking lots should be such that conflicts between the motorist and the pedestrian are avoided while at the same time creating an attractive visual environment within and around the site.

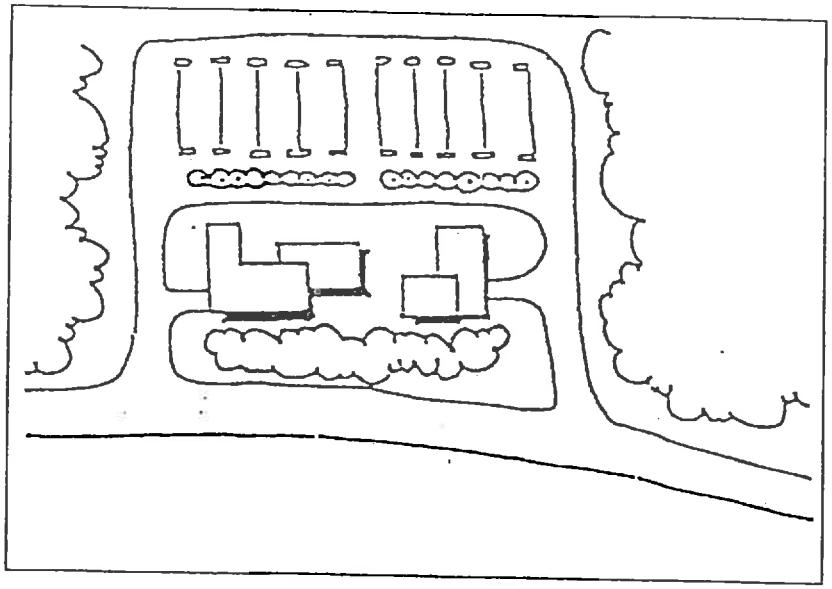
Parking areas should be located in close proximity to the proposed land use. All parking areas must be sited behind the structure. Where parking is visible from a side street a planting buffer must be established adjacent to the street.

B. ON STREET PARKING

Parallel parking at the street should be provided within the Gateway where possible. Parked cars on the street help to slow traffic, reduce the need for parking lots, offer convenient parking, and encourage pedestrian use of the Gateway and Village by dispersing parking and creating a safety buffer between the sidewalk and the street.

C. JOINT AND CROSS-ACCESS

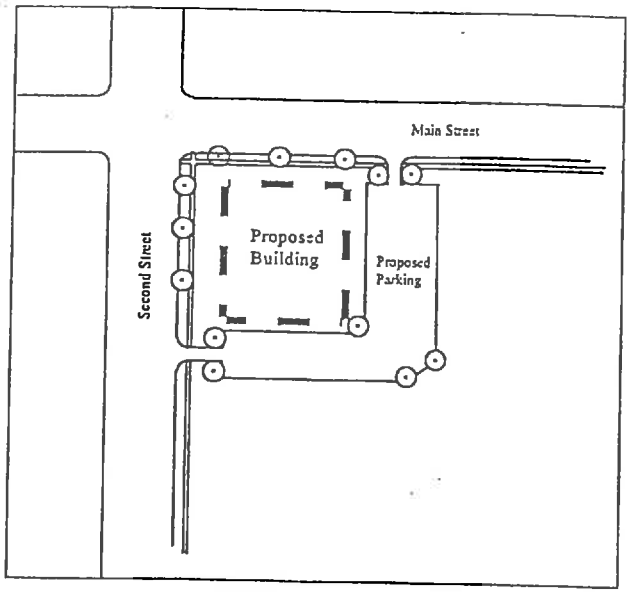
Cross-lot access between properties and parking lots shall be required where feasible. While individual driveways may be necessary, shared access minimizes disruption of traffic flow, reduces potential points of conflict between through and turning traffic, and facilitates the control and separation of vehicles and pedestrian movement. The Village may also require individual developers to construct a site layout which facilitates future joint access in anticipation of future adjacent development.



Shared access with parking located behind buildings permits landscape plantings along the highway to maintain visual quality.

D. CURB CUTS AND CURBS

Curb cuts should be carefully placed to assure vehicular safety and to maintain vehicular flow. Adequate sight distances, determined by traffic speed, must be established at all curb cuts. One or two access points should serve clusters of commercial establishments where feasible. Within a development, commercial establishments should be connected by shared parking areas.



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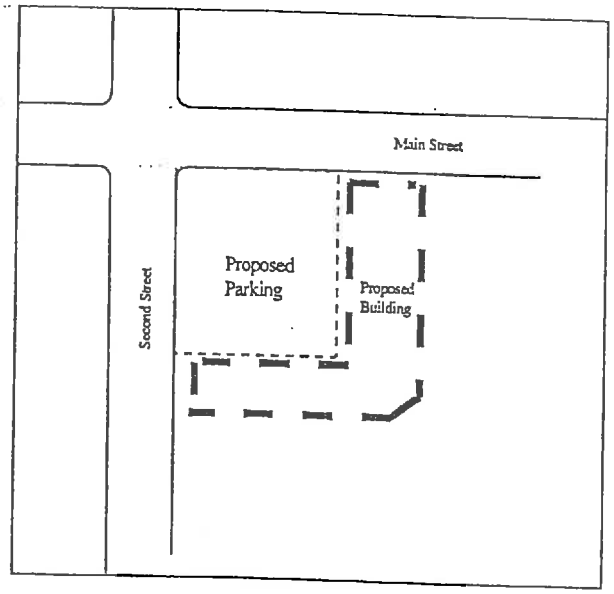

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E BICYCLE PARKING

The provision of bicycle parking is encouraged since the Wallkill Valley Rail Trail passes through the Gateway District. Bicycle parking should be located within a convenient distance of, and should be clearly visible from, the primary entrance to the building. If bicycle parking is not visible from the street, a sign should be posted indicating the location of bike racks.

F. PARKING AREA LIGHTING

Parking areas must have adequate lighting, with particular emphasis on entrances, exits and barriers. Glare and illumination beyond the development should be minimized.

IV. SITE DESIGN

Landscaping is an integral element of the comprehensive site development plan. It should complement the building architecture and may provide the following:

- o air movement
- o air purification
- o shading
- o noise and dust abatement
- o wind buffering
- o oxygen regeneration
- o groundwater recharge
- o glare reduction
- o visual screening
- o definition of spaces
- o highlight architectural features
- o accentuate major entrances
- o regulate circulation
- o enhance property values
- o site beautification

A. LANDSCAPE PLAN

A comprehensive landscape plan is required with all development proposals. The plans should locate all existing vegetation to be retained and the location, species, and size of all new stock.

B. PRESERVATION OF EXISTING FEATURES

Mature tree stock takes years to reestablish once removed from a site and replacement is a difficult and expensive process. Existing vegetation can provide a sense of permanence and continuity to a new development. For that reason, the Village has established a Shade Tree Commission.*

o Existing Vegetation. Recognize existing vegetation in the design development process for all new development. Encourage and include the preservation of mature plan species, hedge rows, and woodlots as a design element in the comprehensive site landscape plan.

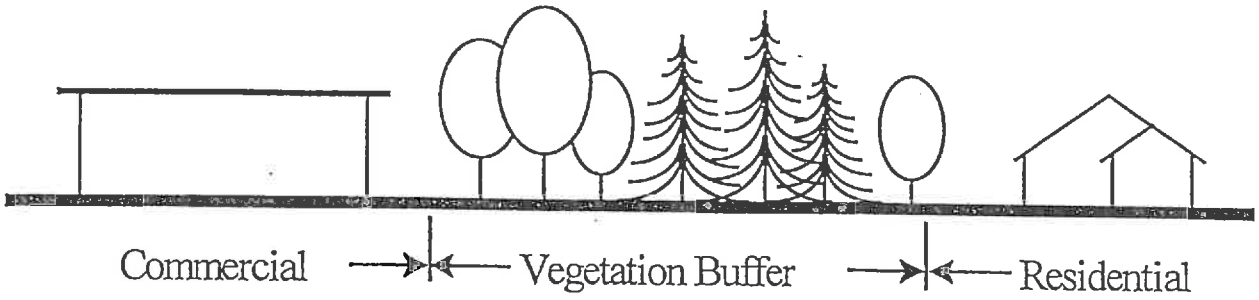
o Tree Protection. When developing a site, make every effort to protect existing tree stock over 8" in diameter. Uncontrolled removal of trees and vegetation may speed up the process of erosion, sedimentation and stormwater runoff. Note trees to be saved on the site plans and outline appropriate measure to protect the tree stock from damage during construction. The Shade Tree Commission must be consulted before removal of any trees within its jurisdiction.

*See Chapter 7 of Village Code.

C. BUFFERS

Landscape buffers between dissimilar or conflicting land uses are required. Well designed landscape treatments lessen adverse visual impacts between different types of land uses, reduce noise levels, mitigate effects from fumes, and increase privacy levels. Landscape buffers can take a variety of forms including open space separation, buffer plantings of various heights and widths, berms and fences. When residential uses are adjacent to commercial uses, they should be separated by a buffer which protects residential activities while providing pleasant visual experiences when viewed from the public right-of-way.

Buffer plantings should include a variety of local species and have low maintenance requirements. Their appearance should be natural, and clustering is preferred over planting in rows.



D. SITE BALANCE

The amount and scale of on-site landscaping should effectively correspond with the proposed land use. Specific development may require more landscaping if the proposed use is not compatible with adjacent land uses or is within a viewshed.

E. PUBLIC SPACES

Public open spaces, such as pedestrian plazas and landscaped areas, provide additional points of interest within a pedestrian scaled environment. When equipped with street furniture, they also offer an opportunity to rest and relax. Examples of public spaces can include parks, plaza, arcades, and porches. Pedestrian amenities such as lighting, special paving, planting, flower gardens, artwork and special recreational features can al so enhance public spaces.

F. STREET TREES

Where setback requirements allow, street trees should be used to enhance the Gateway District. New trees should consist of species with broad canopies and 4" minimum caliper trunks. Existing trees should be preserved and dead trees replaced within 15 feet of the pavement, in accordance with the Village's shade tree ordinance.

G. MAINTENANCE

Design all landscaping within the site to facilitate ongoing maintenance. Where appropriate, low maintenance plants are encouraged. To ensure survival and usefulness of new plant materials in the near future, the following minimum sizes are recommended for this region:

Plant Type	**Size**
Large deciduous trees	2" to 3"> caliper (diameter)
Conifers	6' to 8' height
Small flowering trees	1"> caliper (diameter)
Large shrubs	30" to 36" height
Small shrubs	18" to 24" height

The selection of landscaping materials should be compatible to the Hudson Valley climate, soil types, and water availability.

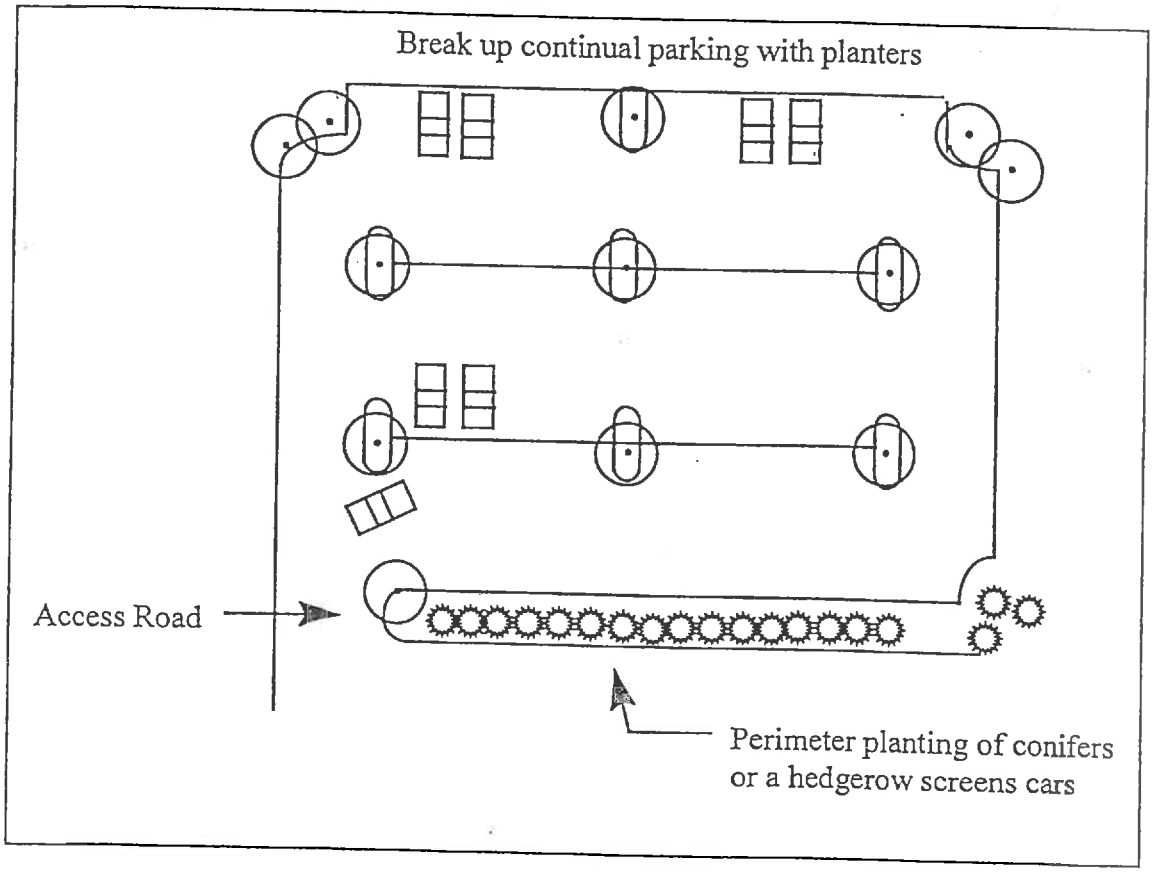
H. LANDSCAPING OF PARKING AREAS

Intersperse the paved areas of large parking lots with landscaped views containing trees and/or other natural growing materials. Parking lot landscaping can break up large expanses of parking area and soften the appearance of paved surfaces. In addition, it can provide shade for pedestrians and vehicles.

The amount of interior landscaping for at-grade parking lots is dependent upon the number of spaces. For parking lots with:

- less than eight spaces, no landscaping requirement must be met;
- between 8 and 20 spaces, landscape at least 5 percent of surface area;
- over 20 spaces landscape at least 10 percent.

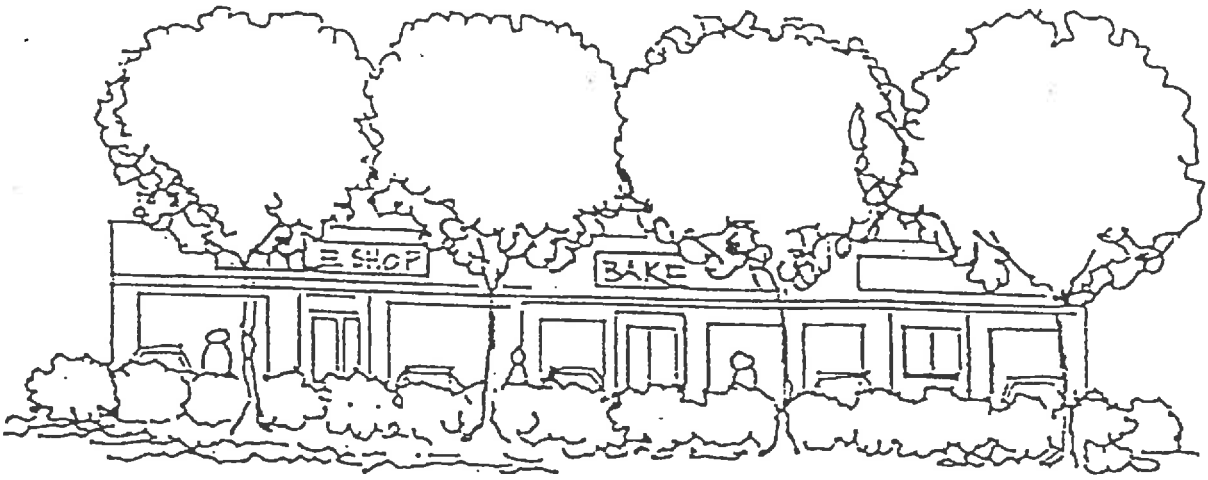
Do not include perimeter planting provided for beautification and/or screening requirements in the calculations (see below).



Planters and curbed planting beds help control traffic movement and parking and contribute to the attractiveness of developments.

Screen parking lots when they must front a public right-of-way. Landscaping can be an effective way to screen parking and paved surfaces from view and to soften the appearance of parking areas. Additionally, landscaping provides protection from moving cars for the pedestrian.

To be effective, landscaping provisions should be specific about the results to be achieved (e.g., "a continuous, unbroken, year-round visual screen within three years of planting"). Alternatives to landscaping, such as walls or opaque fences, are also allowed. To ensure that such walls are attractive, combine them with landscaping or other design provisions.



Planting buffers around parking lots improve views onto the site.

I. LIGHTING

The lighting of a site should provide security and visual interest while not projecting adverse glares onto adjacent properties. On-site lighting should be located to avoid harsh glares which distract the motorists line of sight and should reflect the historic character of the Village.

Historic and invisible light fixtures should be used to provide security and functional lighting. Excessive lighting for promotional/visibility purposes is not permitted. Historic light fixtures are appropriate as architectural or site landscape accent features.

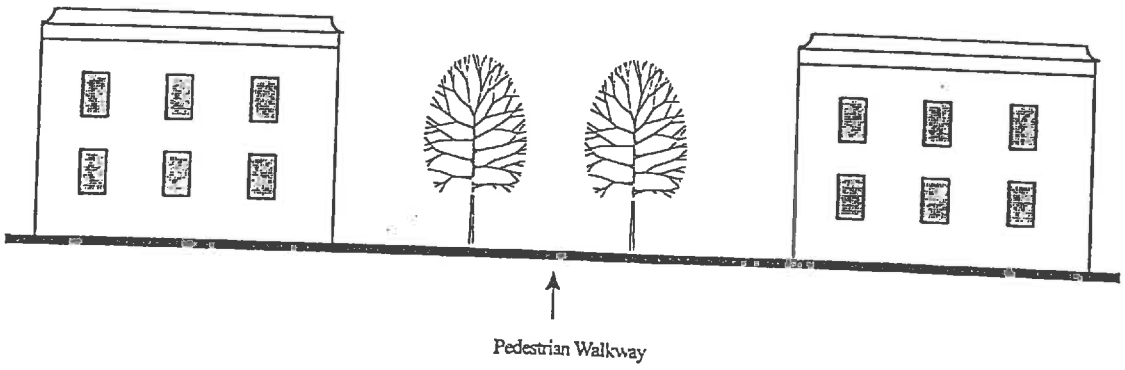
V. PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

Convenient and safe pedestrian access to and from commercial and residential development is essential. Increased pedestrian access should be encouraged in order to connect area neighborhoods with downtown New Paltz and the Gateway District. Safe and attractive walkways which encourage pedestrian use also serve to reduce vehicular traffic within commercial districts.

A. PEDESTRIAN WALKWAYS

Encourage and maintain secure and efficient pedestrian walkway. Provide pedestrian connections from residences to commercial businesses, downtown, parking areas, recreation areas such as the Rail Trail, and other facilities as they are developed.

The width and types of walkway paving is dependent upon the use volumes and the walkway locations. Where possible, provide landscape plantings along walkways to provide a pedestrian scale, enclosure, and shade. Incorporate barrier-free circulation into residential walkway systems for use by the handicapped. Locate sidewalks at least on one side of both public and private rights-of-way. For higher density projects, sidewalks along both sides of the street are strongly encouraged.



Landscape plantings, benches, and lighting create pleasant areas for community members to walk and visit.

B. SIDEWALKS

Sidewalks should be encouraged within the Gateway. They must be wide enough to accommodate the existing and projected volume of pedestrian and bicycle activity if they are to offer a quick and convenient means of travel. A uniform sidewalk width is desirable. Sidewalks should be as wide as practical. Sidewalks should also accommodate the needs of disabled persons.

C. UTILITY ACCESS

All new projects are encouraged to install underground utility service systems. When economically feasible, existing aboveground utility service systems should be placed underground.

D. ART FEATURES

The use of art features such as sculptures, fountains, distinctive landscaping and murals add a unique identification and style to a development. Art features should be appropriate to the historic, architectural, and visual character of the site.

VI. SIGNS

Signs play a significant role in forming the character of a street corridor. Signs can either contribute significantly to or detract from the visual quality of the streetscape. Commercial signs are regulated by the Village sign ordinance.*

Street and highway signs must be clean, simple, and easy to read if they are to be legible for drivers who always have other demanding visual tasks to perform simultaneously. The relevant governmental agencies should strive to locate all sign poles at a consistent dimension from the curb. The cumulative effects of signs within the public right-of-way should not create confusion for motorists or adverse visual impacts on the surrounding community. Signage which is redundant or excessive should be removed. Following are guidelines for public sign control:

- To minimize information overload at intersections, decision points for the driver, limit signs located at street corners to those whose message is critical at that place, as, for example, directional signs and street name signs.

- To keep the number of poles along streets to a minimum, mount signs on light fixture poles wherever possible. If required, supplementary poles should be sturdy and deeply set.

- Paint all mounting hardware and the backs of all signs to match the poles. Consider traffic signs within the context of the total streetscape and design them accordingly.

*See Section 30.53 of the Village Code.