Design Guidelines

The Historic Village of Dixboro

Superior Township
Washtenaw County, Michigan

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Superior Township
Washtenaw County, Michigan

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Introduction

The historic character of the Village of Dixboro is a quality that is cherished by residents and appreciated by those who drive through the community. The cornerstones of this character are the historic structures of the community - the village church, the old brick schoolhouse, and various residences. The purpose of this booklet is to provide information that can be used to recognize and appreciate the historic details of Dixboro's architecture and to ensure that this heritage is protected. Guidelines are offered to provide information for constructing buildings that will perpetuate and enhance the mood of the village. The intent is to promote new construction (and rehabilitation of old buildings) that will "fit in" with the existing historic architecture, to preserve the old and encourage new construction that is sensitive to the architectural heritage.

Reasons for Historic Preservation

Historic building and neighborhood preservation is a growing concern across the entire nation. In communities of all sizes people are rallying to preserve the remnants of the past that they appreciate and cherish. There are four main reasons for these kinds of activities:

- ***Cultural memories***

Buildings are the tangible reminders of the patterns of growth and development within a community. They shape and recall the unique character of a place, as well as reflecting the changing lifestyles that took place within them. Such structures chronicle the evolving character of craftmanship and building styles through time. As years pass by, the value of each house or public building increases and contributes more to the historic fabric of the community.

• Harmony of people and place

A relationship exists between people, the activities they engage in, and the places where the activities are performed. In Dixboro the church, village green, and the old school are visual landmarks. Yet, these are also important as sites for the social interaction of the members of the community, both past and present. Contact with the remnants of community history through daily living and business in historic buildings is another dimension of the linkage. Social exchange, within the context of space, establishes community bonds and identity.

• Environmental diversity

Our world is becoming increasingly homogenous in appearance and use. Most new construction in rural areas is characterized by a pervasive "modern" architectural style. Older buildings offer diversity and variety, both in visual impact and spatial use. Small offices and businesses intermixed with residences promotes both the economic health of the community and a beneficial mix of living and working arrangements.

• Economic gain

Adaptive reuse of old buildings can offer construction cost savings when compared to erecting a new building. Such improvements (and historically oriented new construction) augment the cultural character of a community. Market values increase, producing higher tax yields for the community. Local merchants benefit from tourists enticed to stop by an attractive historic district.

Goals of the Design Review Board

The board oversees two essential functions. In its capacity as an advisory board members make recommendations to the Superior Township Planning Commission regarding the suitability of proposed construction plans within the historic context of Dixboro. The board also wishes to serve as an information source for builders and developers, an agency that can make thoughtful suggestions and provide resources during the design phase of potential projects. There are several goals that guide the activities of the board:

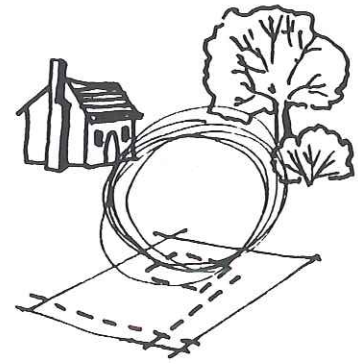
Planning

Building

- Preserve the history of Dixboro.
- Preserve architecturally and historically important buildings.
- Boost community interest and pride.
- Control change in the historic district.
- Restore homes and businesses to period authenticity.
- Influence restoration of public and private buildings in the village.

Idea Workbook

This manual is meant to be a workbook, a source of ideas and recommendations for historic building design and good site planning. Of course, there are many other requirements for the building process and these guidelines are not a substitute for Superior Township zoning and building codes. Specific requirements for architectural design, site planning, and landscaping can be found in the Dixboro Development Plan (available at township offices).

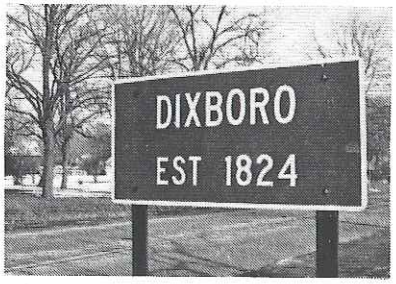


History of Dixboro

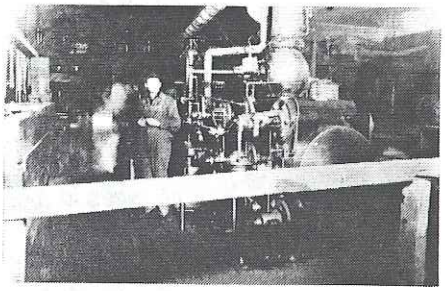
The character of a place - be it a neighborhood, town, or city - is shaped by the progression of people's lives and activities within space. In order to understand expectations for the future of a place the past must be investigated. This is especially true of a historic community (such as Dixboro) which has made a conscious effort to preserve and enhance its heritage. The following is a short description of the history of Dixboro, a brief look at its temporal context.

Settlement

Riding on a wave of western expansion, settlers first purchased lands in Superior Township from the Federal Government in the early 1820s. In 1824 John Allen and Elisha Walker established Ann Arbor. In the same year, John Dix (a "retired" sea captain) purchased 469 acres at a price of $1.25 per acre. Twenty-five of these were platted into 64 lots, a "public square" or village green, and a "reserve" in 1826. Dixboro was the name of this new settlement.

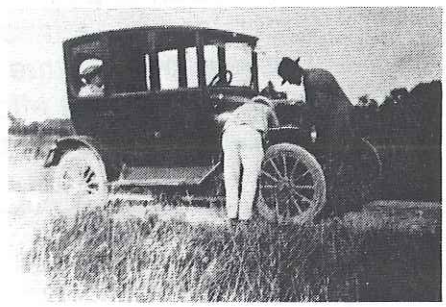


Dix soon constructed a saw mill and a grist mill on Fleming Creek. He also operated a general store which contained the local post office. Despite the commercial ventures that Dix launched, the village was and still is primarily a residential community. In 1833 Dix sold out to James P. Clements and moved to Texas to find more lucrative business opportunities.



Plymouth Road

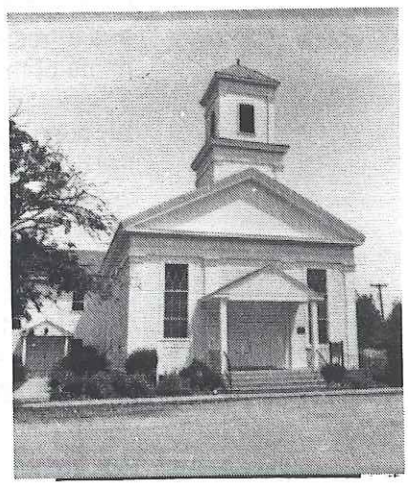
Plymouth Road has always been a key element in the character of the village. Records show that in addition to Dix's business activities the village also contained a stage stop and two taverns (offering food and lodging to travelers). During the 1820s and 1830s the road was in horrible shape. Anecdotes recall the depth of the mud in the winter and the hardness of the sun-baked ruts in the summer months. Crude paving with timbers and gravel smoothed the road a bit in the latter decades of the 1800s. The road was completely paved in the 1920s and immediately influenced the expansion of Dixboro.



Architectural Overview

The development of Dixboro has been a gradual process spanning nearly 170 years. First, there is a collection of structures that date back to the late 1830s and early 1840s, homes and businesses of early settlers. These front Plymouth Road and include the Dixboro General Store as well as several distinctive residences.

In the late 1800s major landmarks of the community were constructed. The Methodist Church was built in 1858 after the community grew tired of holding church services in a series of makeshift buildings. In 1888 the brick schoolhouse went up, a replacement for the well-used schoolhouse first constructed in the 1830s. Aside from these sites new building activity was sporadic; lot sales in the village were slow



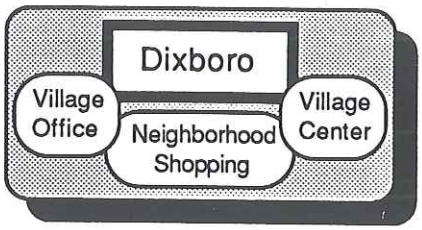
and new home construction was infrequent. Houses built from the late 1800s through the early 1900s display an architectural character which resembles the early settlement buildings.

Plymouth Road was paved in the 1920s, triggering a population expansion in Dixboro. Electrical service was extended to the village during the same decade. House construction increased and many of the homes of the bungalow style appeared. In 1951 a parcel was purchased on the corner of Church Street and Dixboro Road to be used for construction of forty-one homes for veterans. By the time Dixboro Heights was constructed and occupied in the early 1950s the number of Dixboro residents had more than doubled in number from the 1920 count.

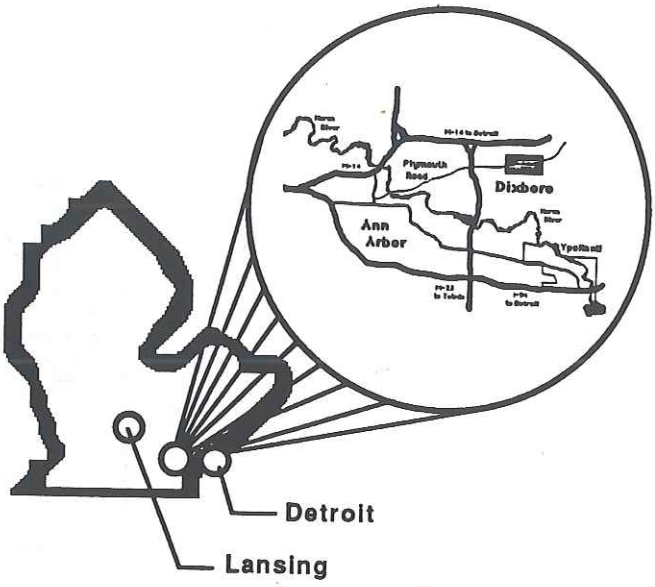
Dixboro Today

Recently, subdivisions have been platted on the northern edges of the central village area. It is predicted that this pattern will continue and that residential housing will extend to M-14. Integrity in architectural style and character in these neighborhoods is a definite goal. House design should not only exhibit a historic character but should reflect the specific types of architectural detailing which characterizes historic Dixboro's buildings. Visual linkage of all residential areas through architectural expression will help to preserve and extend the close-knit rural character of Dixboro into all of its adjoining neighborhoods.

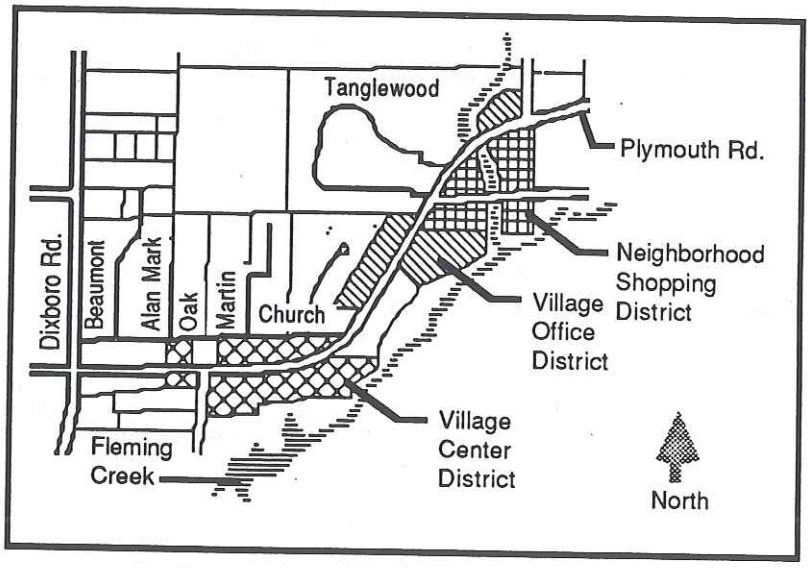
Development Districts



Dixboro is located in an area that is experiencing a rush of commercial growth. The expansion of Ann Arbor (to the west) combined with development in Ann Arbor, Canton, Plymouth and Ypsilanti Townships, surrounds Dixboro with economic activity and commerce. The residents of Dixboro appreciate the economic health of the surroundings (most commute to jobs in Ann Arbor or the Detroit metropolitan region). Nonetheless, the community wishes to retain the rural character of the village and offer a restful and visually pleasing environment for both residents and visitors.



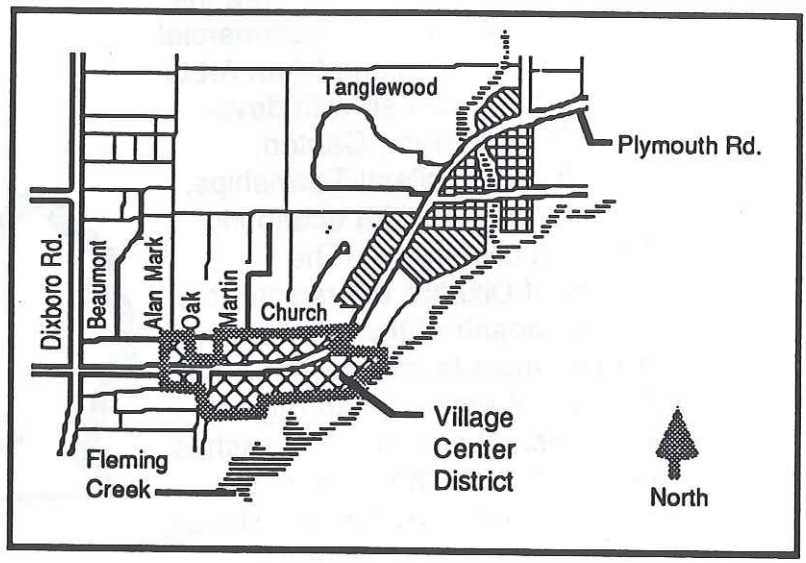
There are several distinct zones in Dixboro that are defined by political zoning boundaries and also by visual character. An understanding of the relationship of these separate regions is useful when planning new site construction. If such projects are planned, not only with the specific site in mind but also with the larger context of each zone then a more cohesive and attractive community will result.



Village Center District

Boundaries

This area begins just west of Alan Mark Drive and continues east to the Plymouth and Church Roads intersection. It includes only lots which front onto Plymouth Road and includes the Lord Fox property.

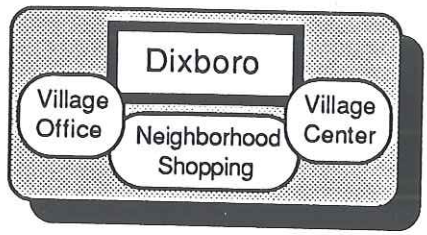


Description of Character

This area contains the largest grouping of historic homes and structures. Large homes situated on large lots convey a low density, park-like atmosphere. The region also contains the village green, the old schoolhouse and clear views of the village church.

Land Use Policy

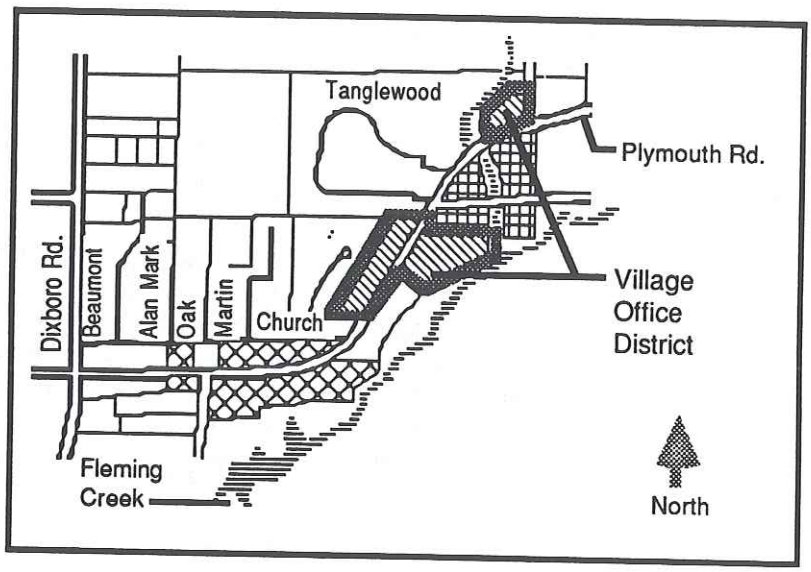
Emphasis is on preserving existing historic buildings and the existing character of the frontage area. Mixed uses are encouraged. Conversion of existing buildings to new uses is preferred to new construction providing that overall character and function of a buildings is consistent with the historic mood of the area. It is expected that remodeled and new structures will have a residential character. Possible businesses would be bed and breakfast inns, gift shops, craft studios and small professional offices. Provisions for pedestrian movement are encouraged.



Village Office District

Boundaries

This area is made up of two parts. The first is the Plymouth Road frontages between Church Street and Ford Road. The second is a parcel fronting Plymouth Road and north of Tanglewood.



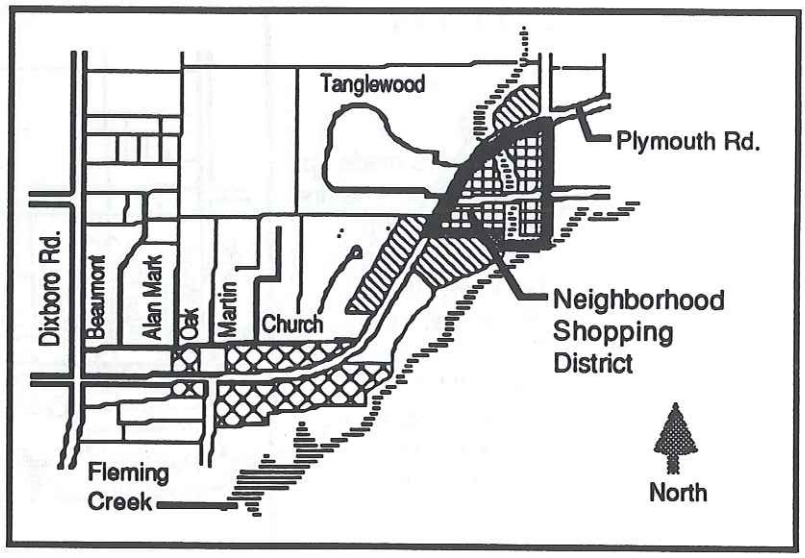
Description of Character

The area is now of medium density with few historic homes. Small scale offices and commercial with some converted structures are found here. The commercial buildings are scattered so that customers park on site; there is little provision for pedestrian movement.

Land Use Policy

The district is intended to provide small scale office buildings that serve a neighborhood market. Mixed residential and office uses are encouraged. It also will function as a transitional space between the neighborhood and historic centers. It is hoped that this zone will act as a distinct boundary for the neighborhood center to the north so that strip development will not occur. Both new and rehabilitated buildings will be required to meet the same design criteria that are intended for the village center.

Neighborhood Shopping Center District



Boundaries

The parcels making up this district are located at the Plymouth and Ford Roads intersection, east of Plymouth. The district spans the Fleming Creek.

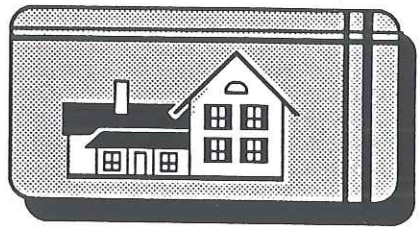
Description of Character

This property is presently being used for neighborhood shopping, a land use that is encouraged in new development proposals.

Land Use Policy

This district is intended to contain medium to high density commercial uses with common driveways and parking facilities so that customers can drive to a central site and walk between businesses. Commercial, retail, and office uses of a local character are encouraged. Permitted uses include convenience goods merchants such as food, drugs, sundries and personal services. Each building or cluster should comply with an overall design theme that reflects the rural village character of the nearby village center and unifies all site planning. Strip development is strongly discouraged. An attractive, comfortable, and convenient environment for users is desired that will not compromise the rural social community of Dixboro.

Design Guidelines

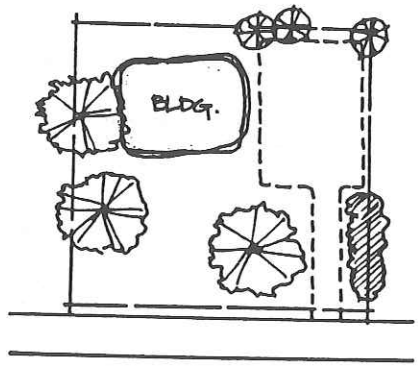


The purpose of this section is to offer a set of guidelines that can be used in evaluating the degree to which a rehabilitated or newly constructed building will "fit" into a specific site. Visual cohesiveness is a primary goal of the design review process. By providing for continuity of building types, setbacks and sideyards, landscaping features, and architectural detail, an area's character and identity can be maintained or enhanced. It is critical, then, that the design review board have some control over future development plans in order to ensure desirable relationships between existing structures and landscapes and those planned for the future.

These recommendations should be used in conjunction with the general or specific suggestions for any of the districts described in Superior Township zoning and development codes.

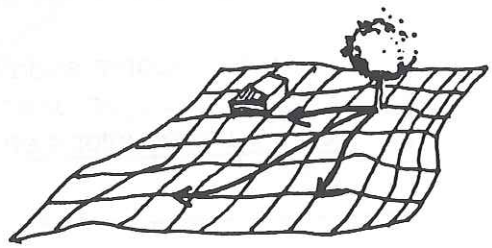
How to Use the Guidelines

The guidelines are divided into four general areas of concern: architectural elements, site planning, landscape planning, and site furnishings. Any building to be rehabilitated or built within any historic district should be openly discussed with regard to each of these criteria. Existing buildings that may be modified or expanded are of particular interest for they offer special opportunities to enhance the village character. It is necessary that a building exhibit features which relate to the character of nearby existing structures and that reflect the recommendations of these guidelines. Minor alterations of a building or possibly even a major redesign effort may be recommended to ensure a proper "fit." The four



general areas of concern are of equal importance in the review of the site proposal. In particular, attention to the combination of architectural details and site layout will produce a new structure that is visually compatible with the existing character of Dixboro Village.

Finally, the guidelines strive to recognize the patterns of the existing architecture and landscape and guide property owners, merchants and designers in coordinated effort to retain the rural village atmosphere of Dixboro. They can also be used for deciding the value of new suggestions not covered in the plan, and as a guide for implementing suggestions which do not conflict with the guidelines or with the general intent of the policies expressed here.

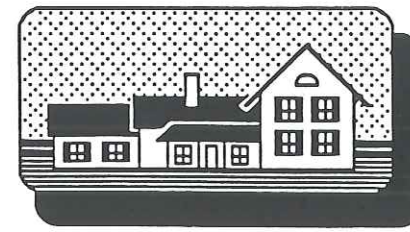


Guideline Summary

There are four guideline sections which follow this introduction. Though each describes a specific piece of the development of a project, they should be thought of as a whole. Integration of the ideas in each is essential for successful project planning and ultimately, the historic integrity of Dixboro.

- Architectural Elements
- Site Planning
- Landscape Planning
- Site Furnishings

Architectural Features



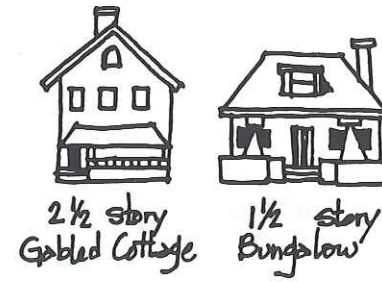
Future buildings planned for Dixboro should attempt to repeat and harmonize with the existing historic and architectural characteristics within the district.

As it is the residential buildings located along Plymouth Road that give this area it's rural town character, it is intended that similar design principles be applied when developing new structures. Of these, perhaps the most significant desired characteristics would be for new buildings to exhibit residential scale, volume, and massing. Additionally, the attention to detailing of architecture and materials will also serve to promote a residential appearance.

The restoration and renovation of existing contemporary structures in a manner that is consistent with these guidelines should also be considered.

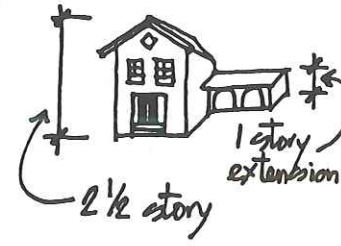
COMPOSITION of ARCHITECTURE

The guidelines which follow are intended to delineate the manner in which the features and forms of buildings are composed.



Building heights

In order to maintain a consistent building scale within the district, building heights should be kept to two stories. The upper floor may be integrated with the roof as an "attic" floor. Predominantly single story buildings should be avoided, however single story extensions may be acceptable as part of a larger structure. In relation to adjacent existing structures, new buildings should be constructed to a height within an average of the structures on either side.



Building elevations

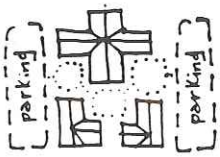
The perceived entrance or "front" of buildings should be oriented towards Plymouth Road. This front facade may also be articulated by use of porch and entry projections.

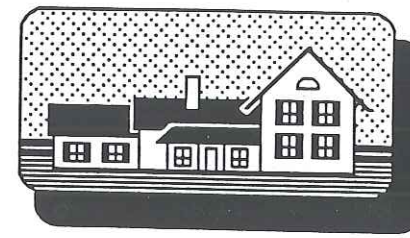
The use of design principles such as rhythm, and proportion should be considered and applied to determining location of windows, doors, building form and other architectural features. A predominantly symmetrical approach is most appropriate in relation to each individual elevation. The building form itself however need not be symmetrical with asymmetrical window and entry locations serving to accent the building's form.

Building elevations should be articulated with sufficient windows, doors, porches, projections and other architectural features to avoid a solid or flat appearance.

Building form

Large parcels intended for commercial uses should be planned in their entirety to ensure continuity of building form, site treatment and architectural style. A series of related or grouped smaller structures is preferable to larger strip type building. Larger structures if considered may be articulated by grouping of smaller forms to create the appearance of an interconnected series of smaller buildings. This is particularly appropriate when singular linear or L- shaped plans are used. Consideration may also be given to the use of U-shaped and clustered arrangementsof separate buildings.





Building color

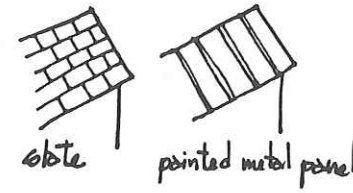
The use of color where appropriate should be applied to create a similar appearance to that of existing structures. The recommended approach is white or light tones with dark trim. Predominant colors should be light or subdued, not bright or pastel tones.

SPECIFIC DETAIL ELEMENTS

Roofs

The use of a pitched or gabled roof having slopes with proportions as indicated will serve to repeat an important residential characteristic. It is also desired that roof overhangs be accentuated by the use of detailed molding finishes and project 12" to 18" from the building walls, enhancing the visual distinction of the roof.

Roof materials should be complementary to other building materials in both color and texture. Solid colors are preferable to either conscious or random patterns and dark colors more acceptable than light or bright colors. A range of preferred colors would be in the black, dark gray, brown and natural green tones.

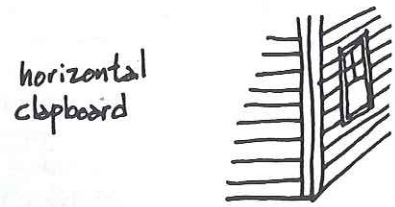


Chimneys

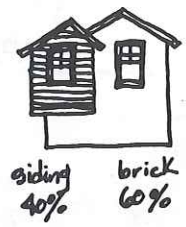
The use of chimneys, either singly or in multiples, is encouraged to accent roof lines and building elevations. This reinforces the residential character desired for the district.

Siding materials

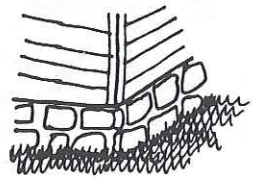
Siding materials used should be applied with a horizontal rather than vertical or diagonal orientations. Clapboard finishes of a narrow gauge are recommended. This may be in wood or narrow width "modern" materials such as aluminum or vinyl clad siding. Corners of buildings may be further articulated by use of vertical siding.



When brick is used, it should be in combination with clapboard materials. If brick siding dominates it should be accented with a proportion of approximately 40% clapboard finish to 60% brick. If brick is used as an accent it should be used in a proportion of no more than approximately 40% brick to 60% clapboard.

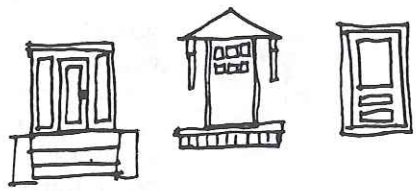


Other materials such as cut stone or field stone may also be appropriately used as siding materials, particularly in distinguishing building foundations from building walls.



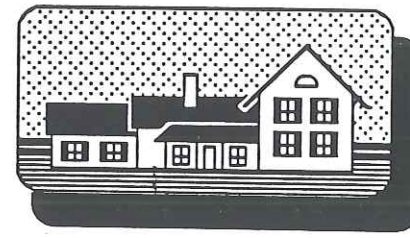
Doorways

Doorways may also be used as visual accents and may further be distinguished by providing covered entry features and porches. Use of historic detailing for doorways and entrances is also desired.

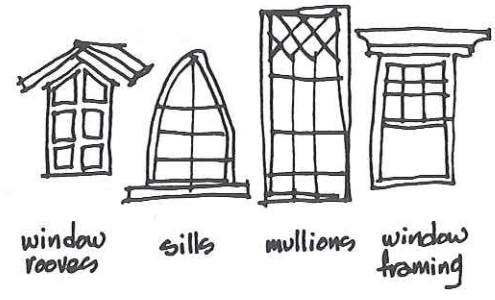


Windows

Windows should serve as visual accents and building ammenities and should not predominate as "window walls". The use of sliding glass doors is also discouraged except where they service private areas of the home and are not visible to public views of the building.

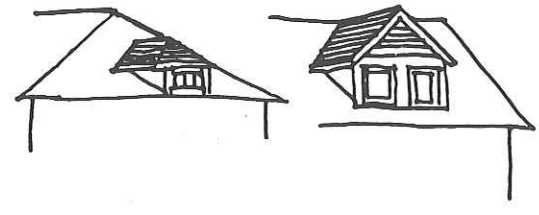


Windows should be rectangular and should be vertically oriented rather than horizontally. The use of segmented multi-paned (mullioned) windows is also encouraged. Such windows are suitable asdesign elements to be repeated on the elevations of buildings.



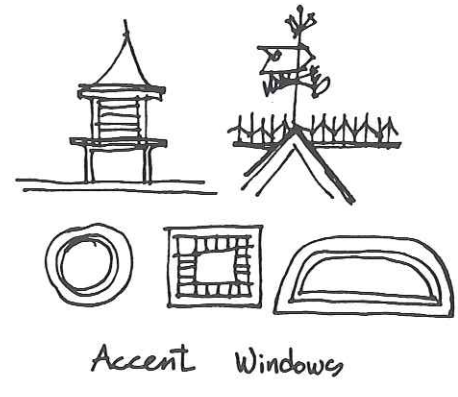
Where windows are used it is also appropriate to enhance their location by use of window dormers or projection of the window from the building surface as a feature.

Articulation of roof and framing features around windows to accent their appearance with wrought iron, moulding, and eave detailing is also encouraged. The use of shutters, painted in contrasting trim colors, will also serve to articulate windows in a consistent residential manner.



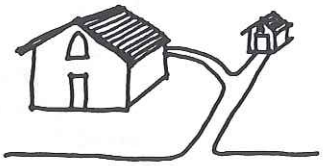
Personality features

Additional historically relevant features and quality materials which provide detailed accents to buildings, are also desirable. Such features may include cupolas, weathervanes, porchs, covered entryways, and accent windows in diamond or semi-circle forms at roof peaks, and like elements.



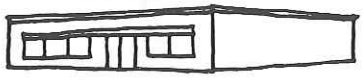
Accessory structures

Accessory structures, such as storage and service areas, storage buildings, dumpsters and other enclosures, should be treated with a similar architectural character to the main structures. The intention should be to create the appearance of related "out buildings" rather than appendages. Buildings should also be located at appropriate angles in relation to the major structure and not awkwardly skewed.



Remedial measures

The renovation and rehabilitation of structures by property owners, in a manner consistent with these guidelines is encouraged. The residential character and historic detailing should be particularly adapted when buildings are expanded or when deteriorating materials and structures are replaced.



this

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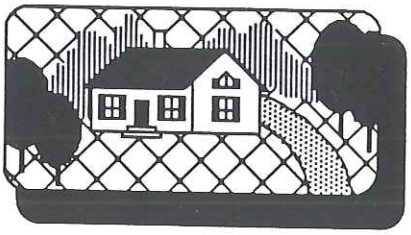
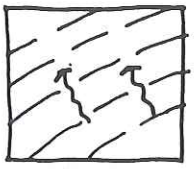
Site Planning

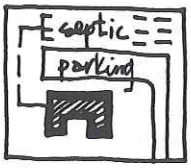


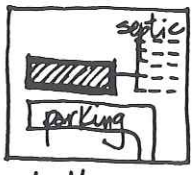
The location of buildings and site planning should be considered in a comprehensive and complementary manner to the existing residential character and scale of the district. Desirable qualities of specific design elements and how they relate to site considerations are outlined below.

Site planning

Site planning should take into consideration existing natural features to be maintained, including existing trees, topography and drainage ways. Care should also be taken to protect trees and other natural features during construction. Whenever possible, existing drainage patterns should be maintained when considering location of buildings, parking, and septic fields.







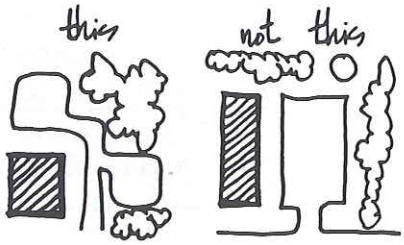
Topography

Topography, in particular, should be used to advantage by using slopes to screen parking areas rather than building up earth mounds. Earth mounding may be used where there is sufficient room available to create natural looking forms that relate to the overall character of the landscape. Gradual slopes of a 5:1 minimum are preferable to more abrupt and contrived forms. Modification of existing grades should strive to fit the character of the existing terrain.

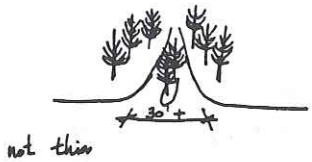
Parking & pavement

Parking and pavement areas should be unobtrusive and sensitively located in relation to neighboring properties. In general, pavement should not abut buildings, rather, landscaped and lawn areas should be placed in these locations.

In order to reduce the visual impact of parking areas, they should follow the natural grade and drainage patterns. One way this may be accomplished is by inserting paved areas into the land by "cut grading" a minimum of 1 to 2'. Large expanses of parking should be avoided and when possible treated as smaller "pods" connected by collector drives.

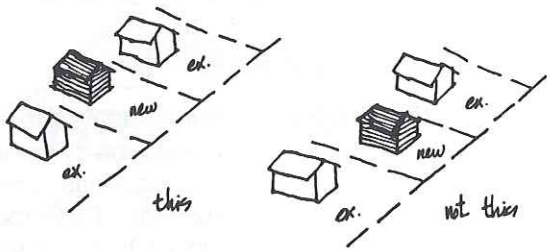


Entry drives should be narrow and avoid the "boulevard" style.

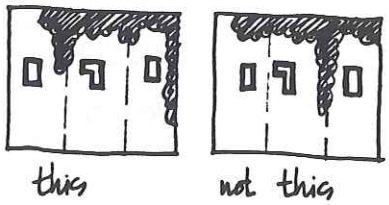


Building location

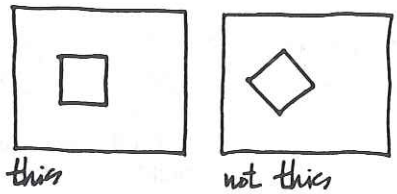
Building location should be considered with in the context of the site as well as adjacent properties. New structures should be setback from roads a similar distance, in order to maintain the visual continuity of lawn areas or front yards throughout the district. For sites with adjacent structures, the setbacks should be an average of the setbacks on either side of the site, and no less than the closest adjacent setback. The actual setback from the road should more than exceed the height of the building in order to provide sufficient landscape and drainage areas.

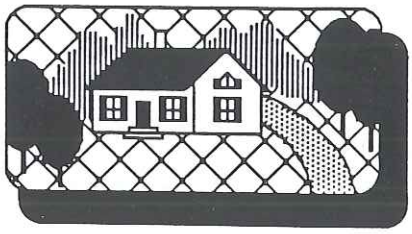


Perceptually, a feeling of openness and of spaciousness should be maintained. Desirable views, both on site and off site should be respected and not obstructed by the location of new structures. Sideyards should be maintained with the buildings being centrally located, to create a rhythm of buildings and landscapes, rather than a mass of buildings.



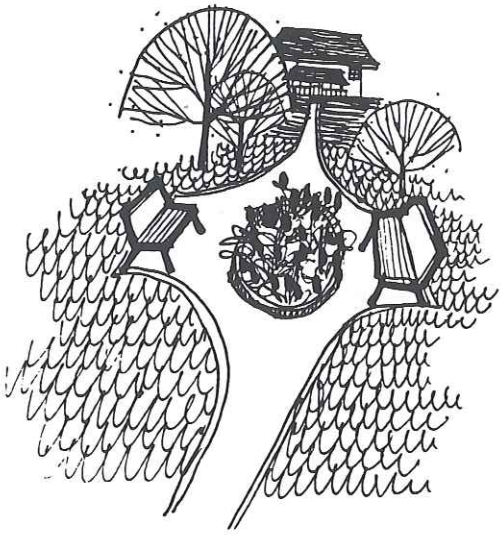
Building alignments at right angles to adjacent roads and property lines are preferable to oblique orientations.



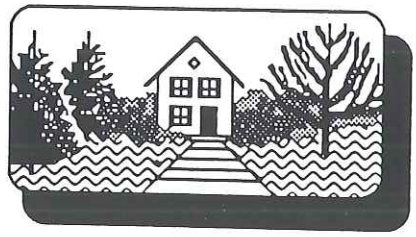


Pedestrian spaces

A committment to pedestrian amenities should be made by providing gathering spaces and resting places as integrally designed elements of site planning and architecture. Such facilities should promote casual use of space and be pedestrian in scale. Suitable pedestrian spaces and amenities could be located adjacent to building entrances, front doors, and along road edges.



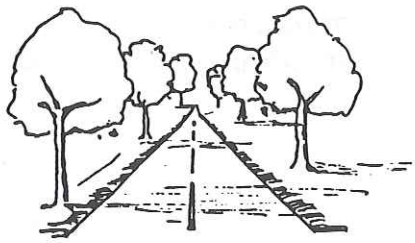
Landscape Planning



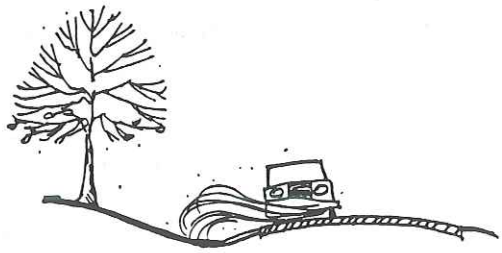
Landscape features are important to the village image in that they accent and highlight distinctive architectural elements. Historically, planting schemes in Dixboro have been subtle, if not actually understated. Plantings around homes and businesses have been a complement to the rural landscape backdrop of hedgerows, wood lots, and open fields. The same basic concept should be continued and used in combination with the use of indigenous or traditional plant materials. These guidelines suggest suitable plant species and design concepts for the arrangement of plant materials.

Street and shade tree planting

Deciduous shade trees are a singular character of the American rural experience. Roadside plantings are encouraged and a linear road edge planting along Plymouth Road (through all three districts) is desired. Roadside trees should be planted in a linear arrangement and should be a mix of sizes and ages when initially installed. Repetition and rhythm in planting can reinforce a feeling of continuity. A scattered or clustered arrangement is recommended for on site plantings. Single specie or monoculture plantings are discouraged.



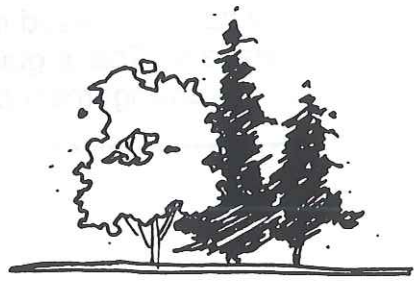
Indigenous species, such as oaks, hickories, or ash are recommended for planting because of their historic value and hardiness in the face of local growing conditions. Some, such as hickory, may require extra care when moving. Consider road de-icing practices and avoid planting salt vulnerable species too close to the road. Though the sugar maple is salt sensitive, its use is encouraged due to its spectacular fall showing. If the trees are planted an adequate distance away from the road they will not be salt damaged.



Tree character

Trees for roadside planting and yard or site landscaping should be selected with regard to seasonal appearance. Features like fall color, bark color, foliage texture, fruit color, and branch tracery patterns can be combined to produce an attractive planting scheme that spans the seasons.

Evergreens (such as white pine and spruce) are also to be used for accent and not as the dominant element of a site landscape scheme; when used they should be clustered tightly and not diffused through the site.

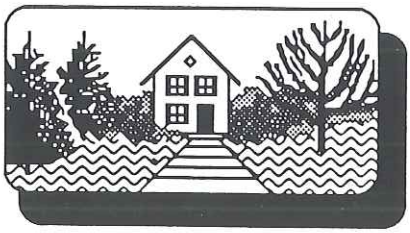


Small trees and shrubs

Small and mid-sized trees such as hawthorn, crab apples or dogwood can be used as visual punctuation in the village but should not be planted so frequently as to block the vistas that make up the park-like quality of Dixboro. Mass planting is suggested rather than scattered locations.

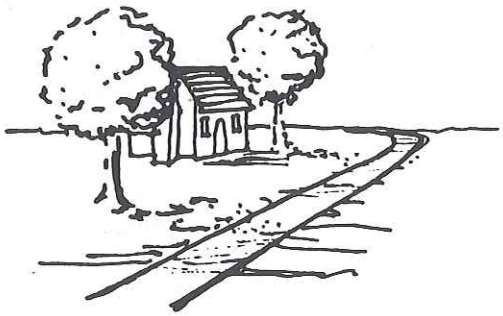
Shrub plantings should be simple and natural in appearance. Fussy plantings, such as sculpted hedges or brightly colored shrub varieties are discouraged.

Certain plant types such as dogwood, wild plum, hazelwood, and viburnum are important for birds and wildlife. They provide food, habitat and nesting spaces for animals. Plantings intended to attract wildlife should be clustered to offer optimal protective cover. Such plantings will also relate well visually to Dixboro since they simulate the historic borders between houses, fields, and along roads.



Lawns and open space

Clear, unobstructed views through neighborhoods and public spaces are a high priority in the landscape character of Dixboro. Tall shade trees combined with green lawns beneath create an attractive rural setting and a park-like flow through the entire community. In most situations turf can be extended to the road without any edge treatment such as curbs.

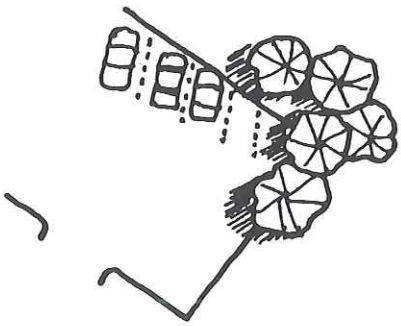


Dense shrub plantings or long hedges disrupt the connectedness of the common space. Hedges are particularly discouraged along the road frontage edge of properties; they are more suited to sideyard installation.

Parking lots

Parking areas, particularly for commercial or office situations, should be planned to avoid interrupting the open visual flow of the village as little as possible. Placement of a parking lot is an important site design consideration; suitable plantings can be used to screen these open areas that can be potentially unsightly.

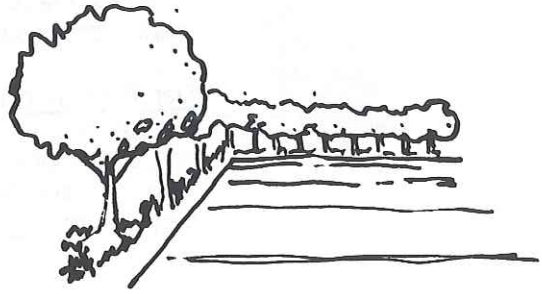
Visual screening can be done with hedges, fencerows, or shrub clusters but care should be taken to avoid highly symmetric and single specie plantings. Paved lots may even be cut into grade a foot or two to further reduce the visual impact of large number of cars. Berming for screening should be done with care so that the mounds assume suitable dimensions and appear to "fit into" the landscape.



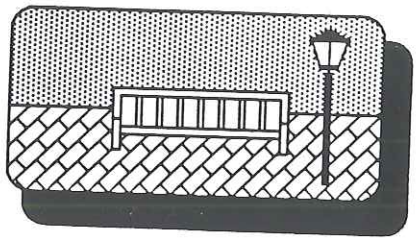
Rural Transition

An informal, rustic mood is the desired general character of plantings and site furnishings in the village. Lawns should extend to the edge of roads and not be given definite edges with curbs or sidewalks. Dramatic planting schemes that use extreme contrasts of color or texture (such as blanket plantings of variegated plants) are not recommended. Conspicuous plantings of "flashy" ornamental species is discouraged.

Where mature hedgerows are found in residential areas, they can be cultivated with replacement plantings of suitable tree species; the benefits from these efforts include shade, wildlife habitat and visual aesthetics.



Site Furnishings

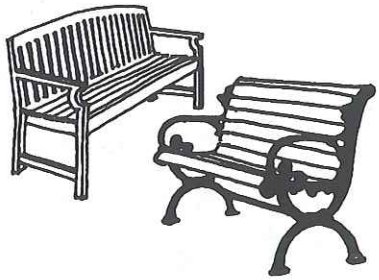


Amenties such as lighting, signage, and fencing should be considered within the context of the architectural treatment of a site. These elements should be incorporated into the scheme or concept of the structure and should make use of harmonious color, placement, and materials. Wherever possible, site furnishings should serve a purpose, not simply used as artifical ornaments.

Street furniture

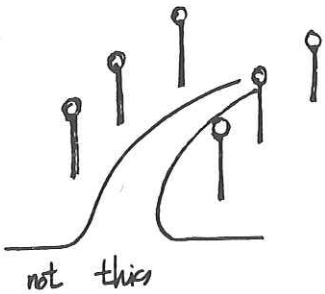
Attention should be given to providing pedestrian facilities such as seating and outdoor areas, for various functions such as sidewalk sales, outdoor dining, and civic activities. Benches, trash receptacles, kiosks and fountains are appropriate to use in such public areas as offices and shops. Benches placed in public areas should be clustered in groups to encourage conversation and when possible, be moveable to accomodate a variety of activities.

The design of street furniture should be historic in character and constructed of durable materials. Suitable materials include wood, wrought iron and cast iron. Street furniture should also be consistent with architectural and site treatments.

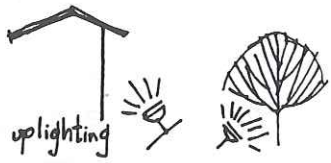


Lighting

Lighting should be designed to be functional and to accent or highlight prominent architectural features. Lighting should be used in as minimal manner as possible, intended to enhance night time aesthetics and activities, not to replicate daylight illumination levels nor to be used as a repeated design element.



To the extent possible light sources should not be visible by using such techniques as uplighting from the ground up, of buildings, signs, and landscaping or downcast lighting,where the source of the light is not visible. The use of bollard lights, landscape lights, and recessed wall or step lights should be considered as alternatives to pole lights and building mounted spot lights. Consideration should be given to spotlighting "showcase" historic features for appreciation and enhancement of village character during evening hours.

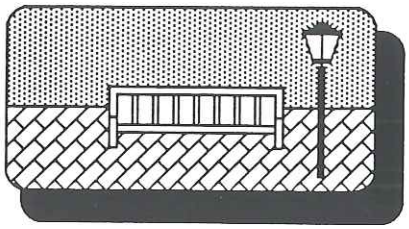


Light fixtures

Light fixtures should be proportionally scaled to adjacent structures, with the style being traditional or period replications, rather than contemporary or overly ornate. Fixture colors should be in keeping with building trim colors in the darker range: black, browns and grays. Painted finishes are preferable to metallic finishes.

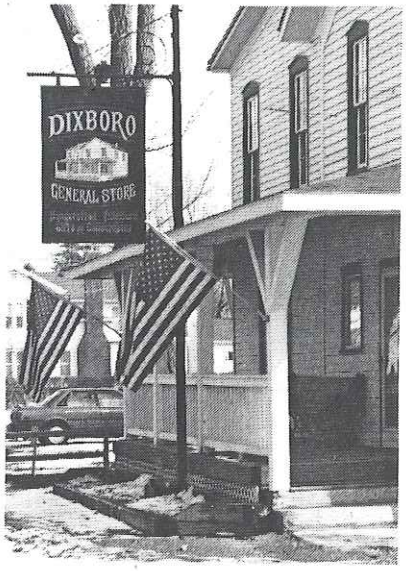
Light fixtures should illuminate in warmer colors of the orange-yellow-rose range rather than the blue-white-green range to avoid over illumination and un-natural appearance. The use of low pressure sodium fixtures should be avoided unless corrective filters are provided. The intent of lighting should be as an amenity, not in order to call attention to the site.

- *Street furniture*
- *Lighting*
- *Light fixtures*
- *Signage*
- *Fencing*



Signage

Signage should be secondary in scale to associated structures and should be of the minimum size necessary to provide information, visible but not prominent. In no instance should signage be obtrusive or overly conspicuous. Letter size should be of a minimum size with respect to readability from passing vehicles. Letter styles should be selected from the range of commonly available and traditional typefaces and should not be in "corny" or "gimmicky" styles. Color and materials should be in keeping with building finishes and complementary in style and construction. A maximum of two or three colors including background and trim is desirable.



Signage should be attached flush to buildings whenever possible, rather than accessory pole signs. Ground signs may be appropriate, particularly if they are located in conjunction with entry fences or features. Signs should be sized and located in accordance with code requirements.

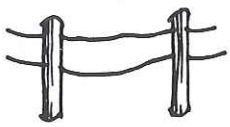
Lighting of signs should be subdued by use of uplighting or concealed source downlighting. The use of backlighted signs and flashing lights is discouraged.

Fencing

Fencing can be appropriately used to define property boundaries, special landscape areas and to denote entrances to site or building. They may be used in combination with shrubs, vines and other suitable plant materials.

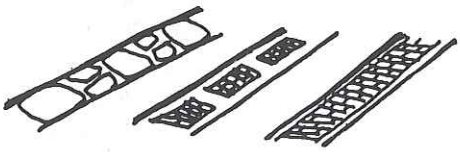
Fences should be no more than 3' high and should be of open design, not an opaque privacy screen. The exception would be where taller privacy fences are necessary to screen visually objectionable views such as trash or service areas.

The character of existing fences in the district is low profile, open, horizontally oriented, white board fences. Natural wood, stone and brick may also be used as materials to successfully design fencing of a similar character. Open design wrought iron fences and post-and-chain styles may also be appropriately used. Other acceptable colors would be in the neutral and natural tones, with the range including black, gray, white, brown, and green.



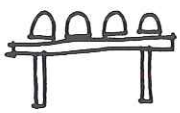
Walks & paths

Walks and paths should be located to provide convenient access to building and site areas and should be of a minimum serviceable width. They should be decorative in character. Appropriate materials include brick, crushed stone and cut stone. Concrete may also be used, however consideration should be made to using modular pavers in conjunction with concrete for a more decorative appearance. The use of asphalt is unacceptable.



Mailboxes

Mailboxes should be located and designed to be visually unobtrusive and should not block visability of turning vehicles. Common mailboxes or locations may be used on larger sites. Mailboxes when clustered should be consistent in color, size, and manner of attachment, with a maximum of 4 to 6 boxes per cluster.



References

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Photo credits

Photos on pages 1, 2, 5, and 6 were provided by Carol Willits Freeman, author of *Of Dixboro: Lest We Forget.*