



# Downtown Design Guidelines

November 15, 2005



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This document was prepared with the assistance of the Bradlee Group

## **1. Introduction & Guiding Principles**

The following design guidelines have been prepared for the Village of Pewaukee's downtown area. The downtown consists of several unique parts. The guidelines in this report provide general recommendations for the entire downtown, and more detailed guidelines that are specific to certain parts of the study area.

### **Organization of the Report**

1. Introduction and Guiding Principles
2. Design Guidelines for All Districts
3. Design Districts
4. Implementation

### **Relationship to Current Guidelines and Ordinances**

Although Pewaukee does not currently have specific design criteria, the Village does review site and architectural plans. Additionally, Pewaukee enforces a signage ordinance. The following guidelines are intended to supplement these existing standards. The new guidelines offered in this report will help provide consistency and a design framework for future development and redevelopment.

These guidelines represent the policies and recommendations of the Village and should be shared with property owners and the development community. The Village will have the opportunity to formalize the enforcement of these recommendations through the adoption of new zoning standards and regulations.

### **Design Principles for the Downtown**

The guiding principles developed for the downtown are not new. Based on the key elements of historic downtowns, these

principles underpin the design of some of the most popular and economically viable commercial business districts in the nation. "Walkable" streets, human-scaled architecture, public spaces, street furnishings, and landscaping are common design features that make these places attractive locations for shopping, working, visiting and living. The design principles are as follows:

1. Improve Visual and Physical Access to the Pewaukee River.
2. Design for "walkable" streets, while maintaining functionality for all traffic types.
3. Promote pedestrian interconnectivity.
4. Coordinate public streetscape with private improvements.
5. Improve the aesthetic qualities of gateways into the downtown.

## **2. Design Guidelines for All Districts**

The following guidelines apply to all buildings and sites in the study area. These guidelines provide general recommendations to help promote coordinated and sensitive design decisions throughout the study area. It is important to note that there is no "one-size-fits-all" design solution. These guidelines recognize the great variation that occurs throughout the area. Specific guidelines pertaining to individual areas of the downtown are found in the following sections.

### **2.1 General Building Design Guidelines**

The design of buildings is an important part of shaping the character of the entire downtown. New buildings and renovation of existing buildings should enliven the public streetscape, complement the character of adjacent buildings, and provide inviting

entrances to pedestrians. General building design guidelines are as follows:

1. Create buildings with details and proportions that are scaled to the pedestrian.
2. Building height adds character to the street. Generally, building heights should range from 1 ½ to 3 stories.
3. Complement the scale and character of adjacent and historic buildings.
4. Encourage mixed-use buildings.
5. Create inviting entrances to buildings.
6. Design all sides of the building that are visible from public streets and spaces.
7. Encourage franchises to provide building and site designs that match the Village's overall design character through the use of materials, rooflines, signage, and proportions.
8. Create architectural interest through the creative use of cornices, friezes, pilasters, arcades, piers, brick patterns, lintels, sills, special roof features, special door and window features, mullions, muntins, quoins, porticos, and medallions.



**General Building Composition.** Regardless of style, buildings should have a distinct base (how the building meets the ground), middle, and top (how the building meets the sky).

## **2.2 Architectural Style and Character**

No one architectural style is required for the downtown area. Architectural style and character should be based upon the suitability of a building for its purposes, legibility of the building's use, the building's proposed massing, proportion, scale, orientation to public spaces and other buildings, use of materials, and other attributes which may significantly represent the character of the proposed development.

However, buildings should be compatible with each other and share a common architectural language. This includes incorporating common design elements such as varied roof forms, minimized setbacks, scaling, massing, materials and architectural detailing as discussed in this report.

It is not the intent of this section, or of these guidelines, to encourage duplication and repetition of existing structures. Rather, these guidelines provide a framework to allow for inventive solutions and distinctive buildings that will not detract from existing buildings.

## **2.3 Building Materials**

Materials add variety and richness to a building. The following is a list of building materials that are acceptable for use in all areas and districts within the downtown area. These existing standards have been adapted to meet the varied needs of the downtown as well as to provide additional guidance and direction to meet the stated design principles. As noted in the adopted guidelines, some materials may have restrictions on uses which are described per

individual material. It is important that buildings are reviewed on a case by case basis to insure conformity with the guidelines and their stated intent.

### **Acceptable Primary Materials**

Primary materials are those that make up at least 70% of the solid (non-window) portion of any elevation. Acceptable primary materials include the following:

- **Common size brick** is acceptable for the construction of all building types. Special sizes and shapes are acceptable only as accents and decorations.
- **Native Stone** including limestone, fieldstone or lannon stone is acceptable on any building type.
- **Cedar Siding** or cement resin siding may be used in combination with brick or other accepted masonry.

### **Acceptable Accent and Secondary Materials**

The following materials are allowable secondary materials. Accents and secondary materials comprise less than 30% of the solid portion of any elevation.

- **Precast Concrete and Cast Stone** are acceptable when used as accents, lintels, sills or decorations. Other uses shall be considered on a case by case basis.
- **Terra Cotta** is an acceptable material as cladding or accent.
- **Stucco** is acceptable as a wall finish material on upper floors and gables.
- **Wood Shingle Siding** is acceptable on upper floors and gable ends or as roofing materials.

- **Ornamental Metals** are acceptable as accent materials such as grills, railing, panels, gutters, etc.
- **Decorative Concrete Block** is acceptable only when used as a secondary building material or accent. It is considered most appropriate as a material found in the base portion of building. The use of standard, plain gray block or glazed block is not acceptable. Other uses will be reviewed on a case by case basis.

### **Material Changes**

Building material changes should always occur at inside corners to give the materials a sense of permanence and thickness. A change at an exterior corner does not provide this sense and additionally, may create an unprotected seam vulnerable to damage and peeling. In most cases, it is recommended that primary facade materials turn corners at exterior corners.

Material changes may also occur horizontally. In these cases, heavier material should generally appear below the lighter.

### **2.4 Facade Composition**

As discussed in the general building guidelines (Section 2.1) buildings should be comprised of a distinct base, middle, and a top. Building on that, the following guidelines offer direction in the organization of materials to meet that objective.

#### **Front Elevations, Ground Level**

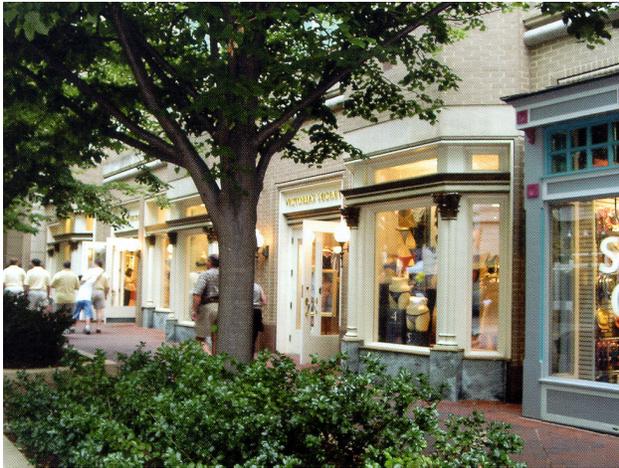
1. 100% of all materials used on street (front) elevations are to be *acceptable* materials.
2. Commercial uses shall have at least 60% of their ground floor front elevation with transparent windows. Window coverage

should not exceed 90% of the ground floor elevation.

3. In instances in which the main entrance or front façade does not face the street, the street facing elevation shall be designed as a front elevation.

3. Upper levels shall use 100% accepted materials as described in section 2.3.

4. Upper stories shall not exceed 60% window coverage.



**The front elevations of these buildings show a mixture of structure articulation, appropriate window proportion, and quality building materials.**

### **Side Elevations**

5. Side elevations that are visible from a public street or public space should be designed to complement the front facade.

6. Side elevations that are less than 5 feet from a neighboring building may use 40% acceptable materials if these elevations are not visible and do not abut a public street, walkway, or similar public or quasi public space.

7. Side elevations that are greater than 5 feet from a neighboring building may use 60% acceptable materials if these elevations are

not visible and do not abut a public street, walkway, or similar public or quasi public space.

### **Rear Elevations**

8. Rear elevations that are visible from a public street or public space should be designed to complement the front facade.

9. On buildings where the rear elevation faces the street or it is highly visible to the public, such as parking areas, bike trails, walkways or other public or quasi public space, the rear elevation should be given design treatment as if it were a visible front or side. This includes the use of 100% acceptable materials as discussed in section

10. Rears of buildings may include porches, decks, or patios or special design elements.

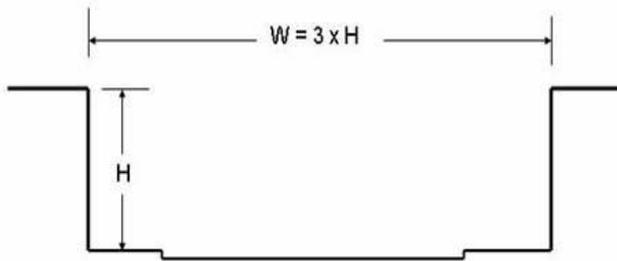
### **2.5 Building Height**

As stated in the general guidelines, building height adds character to the street. The following height guidelines shall be followed:

1. Building heights should range from 1 ½ to 3 stories, or 42 feet, whichever is less.

2. Building height bonuses up to 1 additional floor (4 total) may be considered if the development project exhibits exemplary design, excess public parking, or some other similar public benefit.

3. The minimum building height is 1 ½ stories. New one story buildings should contain extended parapets, gabled roof forms or similar treatments to give the appearance of a taller building.



**How Tall Should Buildings Be?** Generally, streets should be 2-3 times wider than buildings are tall. This provides a pleasing scale to the street. With a 66 foot right-of-way, buildings should be between 2 and 3 stories to meet this guideline.

## **2.6 Roof Forms and Materials**

The following roof forms are allowed in the Downtown area:

1. **Gabled Roofs.** These roofs should have a minimum 8 inches rise for 12 inches of run. The gable end should face the primary street.



2. **Flat roofs with extended parapets.** Parapets are extended walls that give height and shape to the roofline. These are an acceptable roof expression.



3. **Combination Flat and Gabled Roofs or Hip Roofs.** Flat roofs are acceptable on commercial and larger buildings when done in conjunction with gabled roofs, hip roofs dormers, or articulated parapet walls. If a long roof paralleling the street is unavoidable, large gables facing the street should be used to help maintain the rhythm of gables facing the street.



The following roof materials are acceptable in the Downtown area:

- Clay Tiles
- Wood Shingles
- Slate
- Asphalt Shingles

## **2.7 Corner Buildings**

Corner buildings should define intersections with distinctive architectural character, particularly at major crossroads. To provide for this character, designers should include features such as towers, rounded walls, recessed entries or other unique features as seen below.



Additionally, corner buildings should have minimized setbacks. Small setbacks, normally less than 10 feet, would be allowed to provide plaza, landscape, outdoor seating space, or similar feature to enliven the streetscape.

## **2.8 Large Development Projects**

1. New buildings occupying 100 feet or more of street frontage should be designed with recesses and projections, material changes, or other articulation every 30 to 60 feet, to break up large masses and create the appearance of smaller buildings and individual storefronts.
2. Scaling features such as horizontal banding, columns, sills, lintels and other feature should be used to emphasize window openings, changes in color, material, and texture.
3. Smaller retail stores that are part of a larger principal building should have display windows and separate outside entrances.
4. Flat roofs are acceptable on commercial and larger buildings when done in

conjunction with gabled roofs, dormer or articulated parapet walls. If a long roof paralleling the street is unavoidable, large gables or similar treatments facing the street will be required.

5. Include sidewalks along the full length of any façade featuring a customer entrance.

## **2.9 General Site Design Guidelines**

Site design refers to the physical arrangement of buildings, walkway, parking lots, lighting, landscaping and other elements on a property. The arrangement of these elements contributes to the functional and aesthetic character of the site and ultimately the entire downtown. Site design that places attractive buildings closer to the street strengthens the character of the street. In contrast, sites with large unscreened front parking areas or large setbacks generally contribute little to the aesthetic quality or the pedestrian environment. The following site design guidelines are proposed:

1. Bring new construction or additions close to the sidewalk.
2. Buildings should be situated parallel to the street.
3. Move parking to the sides and rears of buildings.
4. Shared parking areas area encouraged.
5. Trash and utility areas should be screened.
6. In cases where buildings are set back, dense landscaping or decorative fencing should be used to help define the street edge as seen below.



- Awning signs
- Decal or vinyl on glass
- Projecting and hanging signs mounted on brackets
- Transom lettering
- Raised or painted letters
- Wall mounted cast bronze plaques or tablets
- Small monument signs
- Freestanding bracket signs

Examples of acceptable freestanding signs:

5. All parking lots should be screened with ornamental fencing, dense hedges and other planting to soften the visual impact as seen below.



## **2.10 Signage**

Building Signage should fit with and enhance the character of a building and the overall Downtown area. As buildings in the corridor exhibit a broad period of architectural history, signage should be reviewed based on three major design components:

### **Style**

The sign style consists of the type, color, material, font, and background of the sign itself. Appropriate signage types include:





Examples of acceptable facade signs:



### 3. Design Districts

#### 3.1 Lakefront Area-Traditional Main Street (West Wisconsin Avenue)

The Lakefront area is intended to develop and redevelop in accordance with a traditional Main Street mixed use environment. The following visual examples illustrate acceptable forms of building design and placement.



**3.2 Transitional Areas (Oakton Avenue; Capitol Drive; Park Avenue, Lake Street; and East Wisconsin Avenue Area)**

The transitional areas beyond the immediate Lakefront area are intended to develop and redevelop in accordance with a historic residential form. Existing residences are encouraged to be used as retrofitted businesses, and redevelopment should be compatible with the ambient residential style. Extended strip center commercial and large scale/massing of residential development is discouraged. The following visual examples illustrate acceptable forms of building design and placement in these transitional areas.



## **4. Implementation**

These Design Guidelines are intended to serve as a visual and descriptive guide for both the Village and private property owner. Additionally, many of the standards and concepts articulated in this guide will be included in a newly created Downtown Zoning District as dimensional and architectural requirements.

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