Port Jefferson

Long Island, New York
BUSINESS DISTRICTS

Design Guidelines

Port Jefferson Architectural Review Committee

December 2001

The Incorporated Village of Port Jefferson is a community, deeply rooted in its history, with a unique and fortunate architectural landscape.

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For further information about the Architectural Review process, contact:

THE INCORPORATED VILLAGE OF PORT JEFFERSON

- Village Hall (631-473-4724)
- Building Inspector (631-473-4744)
- Planning Board (631-473-4744)

Historical photographs courtesy of The Historical Society of Greater Port Jefferson. Appreciative recognition to Saratoga Springs Downtown Historic District, Northport Board of Architectural and Historic Review, and Garden City Board of Architectural Design Review. Their groundwork, insight, and documentation guided the product of this publication.

INTRODUCTION

WHAT ARE DESIGN GUIDELINES?

Design Guidelines are recommendations created to direct and lead a community in its endeavor to conserve and enhance its appearance, protect and encourage areas of existing or potential scenic value, preserve its historical and/or architectural assets, and assist its property owners. They encourage the community to effectively work together as new construction, renovation, and restoration is proposed.

WHY DO WE NEED DESIGN GUIDELINES?

Over the past several years, the Incorporated Village of Port Jefferson has seen an increased number of proposals for construction and renovation, most notably in its two Commercial Districts, (C-1 and C-2). These desirable locations reflect the Village's historic past through their architecture and design, expanding the prosperity of the Village as a whole. Anchored by a flourishing Main Street, a historic East Main Street, and an exceptional harborfront, Port Jefferson expects to undergo many changes in the coming years. These Guidelines have been developed to protect, enrich, and advance the appearance of the Village and to aide the Architectural Review Committee in working with new proposals.

WHAT IS THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMITTEE?

In 2000, the Port Jefferson Board of Trustees created an Architectural Review Committee (ARC) to offer recommendations and design direction to the Village and applications brought before the Planning Board or Building Inspector. The ARC meets twice monthly and consists of five volunteers who are interested, trained, or experienced in architecture, local history, land development, community planning, landscape architecture, engineering, building construction, conservation, the environment, or civic development and betterment.

WHAT DO THE DESIGN GUIDELINES COVER?

The Design Guidelines cover new construction, reconstruction, and alteration or remodeling of all structures and properties in the C-1, C-2, M-W, R-O, I-2 and P-O zoning districts of the Incorporated Village of Port Jefferson. The many ideas that are contained within the Guidelines are grouped into architectural categories that are of focus to the Architectural Review Committee in their function of providing aid to the Village, Planning Board, and Building Inspector. Photographs or illustrations accompany each architectural category to give applicants a better understanding of the concepts reviewed by the ARC. Historic replication is not, however, insisted upon.

WHERE AND WHAT ARE THE C-1, C-2, M-W, R-O, I-2 AND P-O ZONING DISTRICTS?

Zoning districts C-1, C-2, M-W, R-O, I-2 and P-O encompass the area surrounding Main Street from the Port Jefferson Train Station to the harbor *(refer to attached zoning map)*. The C-1, R-O, and C-2 Districts along Main Street and East Main Street are composed mainly of wood-framed and masonry structures, many of which date back to the 1800's and enjoy architectural styles ranging from Federal to Italianate. Information on many of the buildings within these areas is available from the Historical Society of Greater Port Jefferson, Inc.

HOW DOES THE DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS WORK?

Persons seeking to build or alter a structure in the involved Districts may obtain a copy of the Design Guidelines from the Village of Port Jefferson Building Department. These Guidelines are intended as an "ideas-book" to be used early in the design process. Unofficial inquiries, discussions, or work sessions can occur at any time in the application process and are encouraged at the earliest possible opportunity. Prior to the preparation of an official/formal submission to the Planning Board or Building Inspector, the applicant may be referred to the Architectural Review Committee, where the applicant will have the occasion to discuss their proposals. At that time, the ARC will review the applicant's basic design concept, offer advice as to any potential problems and concerns, and generally define the information to be requested on

INTRODUCTION
(continued)

the applicant's formal design submission. Applicants for larger projects may be asked to schedule a site visit with the ARC. Models for larger projects may also be requested. During the design review process, applicants will be expected to creatively work within the Design Guidelines that were derived from fundamental architectural principles and the rich existing context of the Village. Prior to site plan approval by the Planning Board, the Architectural Review Committee will evaluate the final proposal. The results of their evaluation will be forwarded to the Planning Board. Applicants will be notified. When applicable, future follow through opportunities with the Architectural Review Committee will be offered.

WHAT INFORMATION MIGHT THE ARC EXPECT ON A SUBMISSION?

Upon referral by the Building Inspector or Planning Board, the ARC may request, but are not limited to the following:

1. A plan or plans drawn to a scale adequate to indicate clearly the following:
    a. The dimensions, orientation and area of the building plot with setback dimensions clearly indicated.
    b. The size, shape, and location of existing and proposed construction and the relationship to adjacent properties, buildings, and structures.
    c. Locations of existing streets, points of entry and egress for motor vehicles, and locations and layout of all paved areas, including off-street parking and loading facilities.
    d. All existing and proposed topography.
    e. Locations of existing and proposed plantings, screening devices, walls, fences, railings, and dumpsters and their height and the materials of their construction.
    f. Indication of exterior lighting adequate to determine its character and to enable review of possible hazards and disturbances to the public and adjacent properties.
2. Photographs of the site, adjacent areas, and nearby structures sufficient to provide adequate representation thereof.
3. Samples of exterior building materials, finishes, and color palette for painting surfaces.
4. Location, size, and design of exterior signage *(must comply to Village Code)*.
5. Complete and accurate exterior elevations of all facades drawn to a scale adequate to show clearly the appearance of all proposed buildings, structures, and their decorative elements.

NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT

Neighborhood Context considers the existing architectural environments of the various districts, addresses favored practices, and guides new construction to be sympathetic to the past, while advancing future architectural opportunities.

1. New construction should maintain the common setback distance of its neighbors and should reinforce the strength of the "street edge". In the case of a discrepancy of setbacks, the new building should align with at least one of the neighboring buildings.

2. Proposals should complement preexisting building patterns found in the area. For example, if the neighboring buildings have a special corner condition, the proposed structure should attempt to work with it. Structures along Main Street in the R-O District are oriented with the primary entrance fronting the street *(see Figure A)* and most of the establishments in the Downtown C-1 District have recessed entries. Such patterns should be considered. *(see Figure B)*

Figure B - The Downtown C-1 District

Rooted in its history as a once prosperous 19th century shipbuilding village, this Commercial District is typically comprised of 2-story buildings on narrow lots. Their storefronts are located close to the street edge and have recessed entrances.

3. Buildings situated at corners should "wrap" the corner by continuing certain facade elements (such as the cornice or horizontal accent bands) on all street elevations. *(see Figure G, page 5)*

4. The line of sight down any street can have an important visual element that catches the viewer's eye, such as a small tower, steeple, archway, etc.. Such sight lines should not, however, end in a blank or seemingly random portion of a wall.

Figure A - The Residential-Office (R-O) District

The Residential-Office District is characterized by 2-story wood-frame homes set back from Main Street, with front porches and green lawns.

5. Parking that is required to accommodate a new building should be located in back or in a central courtyard and should be out of sight from the street.

6. Parking lots, service areas, and courtyards, which are located within sight of the street, should be screened with trees and a low wall or fence to help maintain the street edge. Such parking lots should incorporate a minimum of 10% green space in the parking area.

7. In the case of larger developments, pedestrian paths are encouraged to allow public circulation throughout the site.

8. Off-street access roads and driveways should conform to the existing grid of the village.

9. Service alleys that allow private off-street access should be incorporated into larger lots.

Figure C - The C-2 District of Upper Port

The General Commercial District, anchored by the Long Island Railroad Station, is a diverse collection of 1- and 2-story buildings. Its simply styled structures exist closely together, predominately along Main Street.

BUILDING HEIGHTS AND ROOF DESIGN

Figure D

The height of an early 1900 structure (seen at right) is sympathetic with the roof lines of two buildings original to Main Street.

This section addresses building heights, roof construction, and rooftop HVAC equipment screens, as they contribute to the overall composition of new or reconstructed structures.

1. The overall height of a building is not recommended to exceed, by more than one story, the height of the building adjacent to it, nor should it be lower than the average height of adjacent buildings. *(Maximum roof height not to exceed Code limited heights.) (see Figure D)*

2. When a structure is to be constructed on two or more "lots," the roof lines (heights) are encouraged to reflect the rhythm of the existing lot widths. The roof lines could vary in street-side projection and height to express the look and scale of typical one-lot structures. *(see Figure E)*

3. Mansard and one-sided, false roof elements that are purely decorative are not encouraged. Sloping roof structures can employ the use of dormers and gables to give the facade more detail and enhance the lot rhythm. However, flat roof and parapet construction is encouraged in C-1 and C-2. On these structures, parapets can be used to provide the appearance of varying roof heights.

Figure E

The traditional appearance of two individual and welcoming shops is captured on East Main Street by this structure built in the early 1800's.

4. All rooftop HVAC and other equipment should be located in such a way as not to be visible from the street or rear parking areas. Equipment screening and/or parapet walls may be required to hide the equipment. *(see Figure F)*

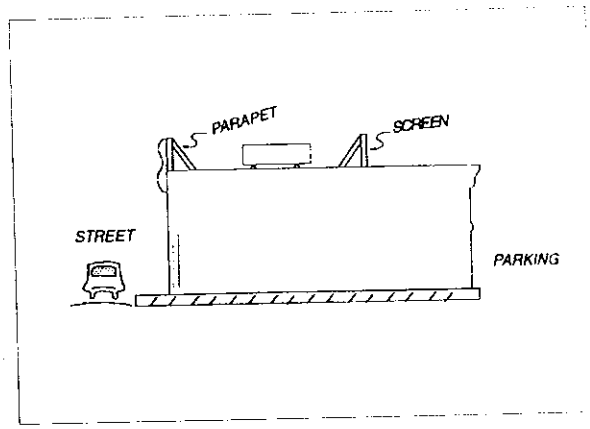


Figure F

A screen and parapet are designed to conceal HVAC equipment from pedestrian view both from the main street and the parking area behind.

5. Structures with sloping roofs should take measures to ensure that the fall of snow, ice, or rain does not create a hazard for pedestrians.

6. The "top" level of a facade should be substantial enough to provide a visual cap to the overall building.

Figure G

The Romanesque elements of the former First National Bank of Port Jefferson, built in 1900, offer rhythm and proportion to the building, while its horizontal accent bands allow it to "wrap" the corner.

Massing relates to the scale and proportion of the major building elements as influenced by roof pitch, bays, dormers, porches, ells, and other features, and the relationship of a building's forms or volumes. Scale addresses the size of a design element or group of elements in relation to the balance of the building, adjacent buildings, landscape, and streetscape.

1. Proposals should complement preexisting building patterns found in the area. For example, buildings in the C-1 and C-2 Districts work together to clearly define the street edge, whereas in the R-O, buildings have an individual presence.

2. In the case of large structures, the overall building mass should be made up of smaller components. Large, uninterrupted building masses should be avoided. The mass/volume of a building and its facade are not separable.

3. The volumetric components of a building should be ratio specific and reflect a relationship between the elements of the building's facade such as its rhythm, proportion, and fenestration. *(see Figure G)*

4. Main building entrances should face the street whenever possible, should be easily identifiable, and scaled to the size of the street on which they are located.

5. New construction situated on narrow side streets or courtyards are not recommended to be so tall as to create a dark, canyon-like feeling to the public space.

6. The overall composition should break the building down into smaller distinct portions that reflect the pedestrian scale of the Village and complement the scale of the surrounding structures. Elements such as windows and bays can be used to achieve this. *(see Figure H)*

Figure H

The composition of the bay windows and recessed entry are framed, through color and design, from the rest of the building to provide a pedestrian friendly environment.

FACADE COMPOSITION AND FENESTRATION

The facade of the Old Post Office Building, once located on Port Jefferson's Main Street, was a three story structure, yet it recognized the pedestrian scale in its storefront design. The fenestration of its upper stories provided an alternating rhythm along the street and the cornice offered a "top" to complete the composition.

Figure I - Main Street Post Office Building

Facade composition and fenestration concerns the arrangement of facade elements, such as windows and bays, in a recognizable and consistent composition. A consistent spacing, "facade rhythm," is one example.

1. The rhythm of a facade should be coherent with the rhythm of "recommended buildings". *(see Figure - I)*

2. The overall facade composition should be governed by a clear and simple pattern. Within this pattern, more subtle and interesting patterns may be utilized. Deviations in the controlling pattern may be used to highlight important locations, such as entry to the building.

3. The use of smaller patterns at the higher floor levels is encouraged to help reinforce a "base," "middle," and "top" of the composition.

4. Facade compositions should refer to the common historical street frontage of the Business Districts *(about 20-30 feet in C-1 and C-2)*. Within these limits, upper stories might be divided, through massing and/or fenestration into areas of narrower widths. *(see Figure I)*

5. The use of depth is encouraged to highlight facade openings such as windows, and create a relief that produces shadows. Windows should not be mounted flush on the exterior of the facade.

6. Openings in the facade should be framed by a lintel and a sill. Lintels in masonry buildings should appear strong enough to support the weight they are carrying. *(see Figure J)*

7. Pairs of window shutters, when used, should be applied consistently and are encouraged to appear wide enough to cover the window openings when closed.

8. Human scale should be addressed in buildings of any height. Facades that form Main Street should avoid monumental gesture *(e.g., making two stories read as one large space).*

Figure J

The arched brick of the upper window and lintel of the lower window offer two methods for visually carrying the weight of the structure above.

9. The lower levels of a facade should provide the highest amount of facade openings and articulation. The ground floor should be very open and inviting to the pedestrian, and employ the strongest use of depth in the facade *(C-1 and C-2)*.

10. The design of any storefront construction on the ground floor should be complementary to the facade layout above.

Figure K

The recessed doorway of this East Main Street shop provides safety as well as architectural interest for the pedestrian.

11. New structures, with street level store fronts, are encouraged to have recessed shop windows and entry doors rather than awnings. Doors should be adequately recessed at the point of entry to allow them to swing out without obstructing the sidewalk. *(see Figure K)*

12. All faces of a building that are visible to public view (walkways, alleys, parking areas) should be carefully designed. Rear facades, however, might be more loosely composed than those on the street. Service entrances should be in sympathy with the building and its immediate neighbors, and should be well maintained. *(see Figure L and also Site & Maintenance)*

13. Chosen colors for the facade should be in harmony with neighboring buildings and in context.

14. Signs on buildings must be in compliance with sign guidelines *(reference Village Code)* and should be conceived in conjunction with the facade composition. Elevation drawings submitted for review by the ARC should include all proposed signage.

15. Mechanical equipment, grills, vents, and window AC units should be avoided on visible facades in Commercial Districts.

16. Facade details and material samples will be requested of applicant by the ARC.

Figure L

A painted board fence and gate conceal a service entrance and outdoor storage area on East Broadway.

BUILDING MATERIALS

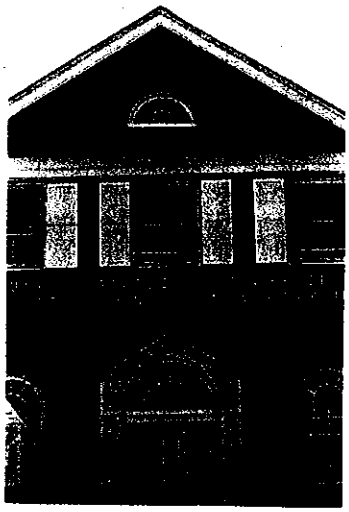


Figure M

On the facade, of the current day Port Jefferson Post Office located on East Main Street, the broad, white painted shutters, and window, door, and eaves trim nicely offset the overall use of natural red brick.

Appropriately selected building materials significantly enhance a building's architectural design and should complement the colors and materials of adjacent buildings, while advancing the overall appearance of the neighborhood.

1. A single material should be used as the dominant theme in the facade, with secondary materials used only to highlight and accent the design. *(see Figure M)*

2. When using multiple materials, a clear and definable boundary (such as a small ledge) should be used to terminate one material before making the transition to the next.

3. Humanly scaled, natural materials should be used around pedestrian areas. *(see Figure N)*

4. The use of contrast between the main color theme and an accent color is recommended. *(e.g., dark vs. light - see Figure O)*

Figure N

A brick paved pedestrian space features low retaining walls to accommodate tree plantings and provides a natural setting for off-street access to shops and outdoor dining.

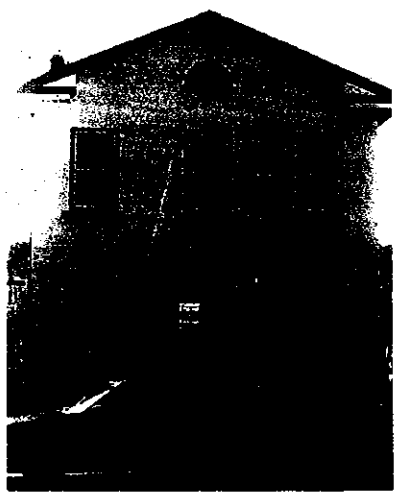


Figure O

The Good Times Book Shop, East Main Street, portrays the effective use of thick stone sills to make an architectural statement. Painted brick accented by a contrasting trim offers a simple, yet complete design.

RECOMMENDED BUILDING MATERIALS

	Recommended/Encouraged	Discouraged	Not Recommended
Facade	**Common red brick** · bare (consistent tone) · painted **Antique Brick** **Special masonry units** (except R-O, C-1, M-W) · textured · colored · painted **Natural stone** **Wood** · clapboard · shingles	**Beige brick** **Multi-tone brick** **Vinyl siding** **Metal siding** **Imitation stone**	**Imitation brick siding** **Plain (bare) masonry units** **Metal siding** **Asphalt siding** **E.I.F.S. (e.g. Dryvit)**
Trim	**Painted wood** **Stained wood**	**Bare wood**	**Plywood** **Extruded fiberglass or plastic (e.g. Fypon)**
Windows	**Anodized aluminum frame** · black or white · other approved color **Wood frame** · painted · stained · vinyl clad · approved color **Lintels** · brick · stone · colored concrete **Sills** · brick · limestone · colored concrete · wood **Glazing** · clear, etched, or frosted class · stained glass	· tinted glass	**Bare aluminum frame** · mirrored glass
Roof	**Natural slate** **Standing seam** · small seam width · approved color **Asphalt shingles** · black or gray · single tone		**Imitation slate** **Fiberglass**
Site Materials	**Paving materials** · brick · small colored paving stone · patterned concrete · natural stone **Retaining walls** · natural stone/rock · brick · pigmented concrete **Fences** · wood · natural, stained, painted · iron · brick or stone	· railroad ties · stacking masonry units · vinyl · black chain link	· asphalt · cinder block · galvanized chain link · other colored chain link
Awnings	**See "Signs, Lighting & Awnings"**		

SIGNS, LIGHTING, AND AWNINGS

(All signs and awnings must be in compliance with the Port Jefferson Village Code)

Signage, lighting, and awnings announce a business and enhance a business district, inviting their success. Attention to materials and design is integral to the building as a whole.

Figure P

Signage facing the parking area creates a balanced composition with the windows of the facade.

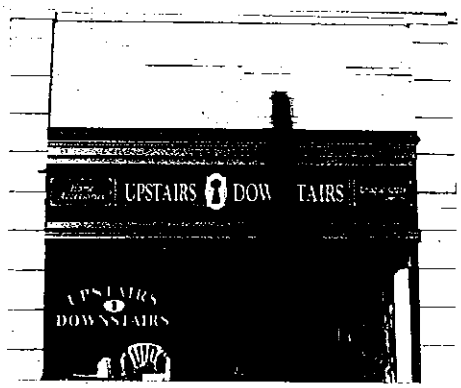


Figure Q

A Main Street sign is integrated into the components of the facade through the use of moldings and framing.

1. Primary signs are restricted to displaying the name of the business and some immediate, relevant information only. They should be simple, straightforward, and easy to read from a distance. Secondary information, such as details about the business, hours of operation, etc., should be reserved for a smaller, professionally designed, window sign, which may be read close-up at the pedestrian level.

2. Primary signs should be located directly above the front door, within a vertical band down one side near the door, or on an awning face. On buildings with dual exposures, signage displaying the business's name may also be mounted on a facade that does not contain a main entry. *(see Figure P)*

3. Building identification and signs should be incorporated into the design of the facade itself. On wider facades, a clear and distinguishable portion of the facade should be reserved solely for the purpose of framing the sign. *(see Figure Q)*

4. Professionally designed and applied lettering inside ground floor windows is encouraged, but should complement the facade and other signage. *(see Figure R)* The use of professionally applied, small lettering on the inside of upper floor windows, to identify the businesses within, is encouraged.

5. The number of colors used in any one sign should be kept to a minimum and should complement those found on the building as well as on adjacent buildings.

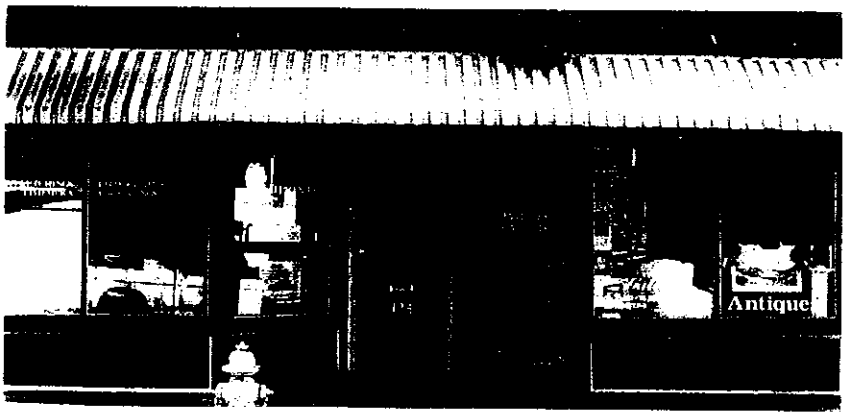


Figure R

Careful lettering on storefront windows enhances the building's appearance and is pedestrian friendly.

6. Recommended materials for signage are, or should give the appearance of, carved, stained, and/or gilded wood, enameled steel, or colored concrete. Basic plastic and vinyl are not recommended.

7. Exterior signs may be illuminated by direct lighting, provided that the lighting does not cast more light than is necessary to show the sign. Such lamps should be of a clean design, face the facade, and be of an approved color. Bare bulbs should not be visible from the street.

8. Exterior light fixtures should enhance the building's facade and complement the signage and awnings.

9. Exterior box-type backlit, moving, flashing, or neon signs and awnings are not recommended.

10. Long, continuous lengths of awnings are not recommended. Instead, a series of similarly sized smaller awnings is preferred. *(see Figure S)*

Figure S

The original facade of The Townsend House utilized awnings to breakup and add interest to its facade.

11. Waterfall awnings and barrel roll awnings are prohibited *(see Port Jefferson Code 250-32.D1)* in the Central Commercial C-1 and General Commercial C-2 Districts.

12. Awnings may only consist of canvas and/or canvaslike materials and should not be backlit.

13. Permanent and retractable awnings should be designed to prevent a drip line parallel to the building and at the center line of the sidewalk. Rainwater should not be allowed to collect on awnings.

Figure T

Figures T-X provide examples of recommended signage, lighting, and awnings.

Figure U

Figure V

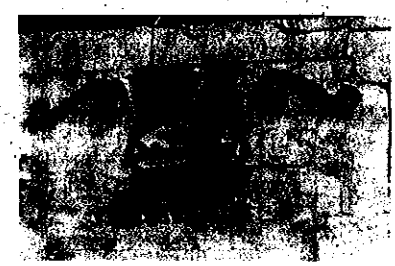


Figure W

Figure X

SITE AND MAINTENANCE ISSUES

1. Exposed facade material should be repaired or replaced when a sign, light, or awning is replaced or removed.

2. Dumpsters should be concealed (enclosed) from public view. Enclosures will be reviewed by the Architectural Review Committee and should be maintained in good repair.

3. Debris, to include articles of value, trash, construction materials, and/or weeds should not accumulate within public view and should be either removed and/or concealed behind an appropriate enclosure.

4. Plans for retaining walls and fences that are repaired or replaced, by choice or by necessity, should be reviewed by the Architectural Review Committee. Masonry work is favored and recommended for retaining walls. *(see Figure Y)* Vinyl fences are discouraged, particularly in areas of pedestrian traffic.

Figure Y

The brick wall of Infant Jesus Church, located on Main Street, is a fine interaction between structure and landscape. Concerns of deterioration are minimal and an attractive amenity is achieved.

Figure Z

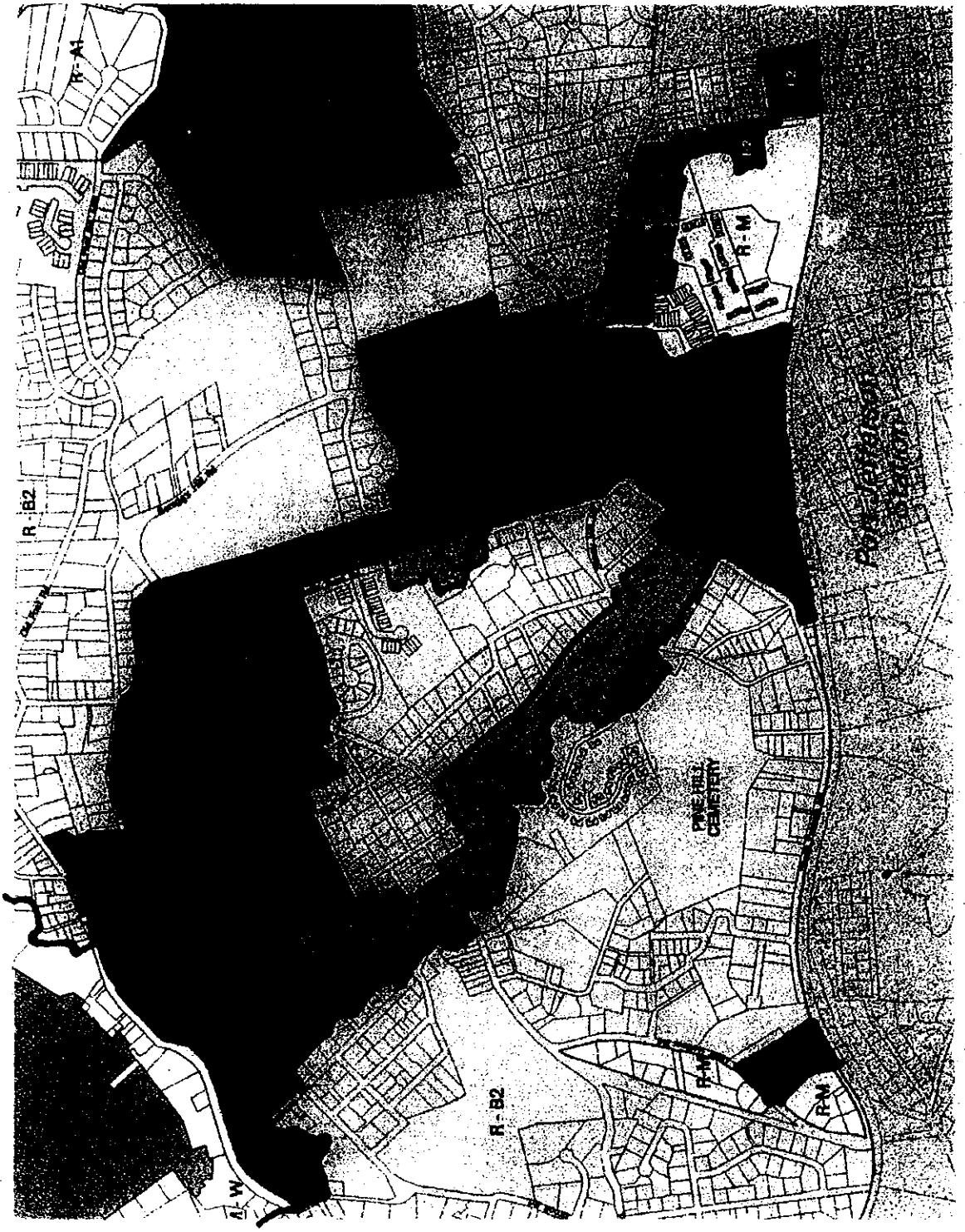
Shrubs, trees, and other planting soften and achieve a visual buffer and contrast to the hardness of paved areas. This example on East Main Street maintains the street edge while providing a courtyard of aesthetic benefit to the neighborhood.

5. Paved areas should not extend to the entire perimeter of the building (except for sidewalks on Commercial District streets). A "shrub zone" of at least 3 feet is encouraged wherever possible. *(see Figure Z and Neighborhood Context, Item 6)*

6. Trees that are removed or die should be replaced on the site in an approved location.

7. Seasonal lighting and decorations should be temporary and not left in place year-round.

8. Temporary flags and banners (e.g. "Grand Opening," "Special Sale," "New Store Hours") should meet the Village Code and be removed in a timely fashion, leaving no remnants of their presence (e.g. tape, exposed nails, broken string, damaged paint).



OUTLINE OF DISTRICTS FOR ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

C-1 Commercial District
C-2 General Commercial District
R-O Residential-Office District
P-O Professional-Office District
M-W Marine-Waterfront District
I-2 Industrial District