

SECTION 3: COMMERCIAL BUILDING DESIGN

A. GENERAL

Route 26 and Route 17 run through the Town of Millville and have a mix of residential and commercial uses along their corridors. Many of the commercial uses are located within residential structures that have been converted to commercial uses. The residential scale along Route 26/Route 17 has helped to establish a certain character and intensity to the Town's primary commercial district. The intent of the commercial design standards presented in this section is to maintain the residential scale and to encourage new commercial development and redevelopment to incorporate building elements that are typically used in residential design and reflect this unique small town character.

B. MASSING

Intent

To reduce the apparent bulk of multi story buildings and single story buildings 15 feet or more in height, and maintain the Town scale by providing a sense of "base," "middle" and "top."

Standards

Required:

- Buildings shall have a distinct "base" at the ground level using articulation and materials, such as stone, masonry or decorative concrete. Distinction may also occur through the following:
 - (a) windows
 - (b) architectural details
 - (c) canopies
 - (d) overhangs
 - (e) masonry strips and cornice lines
- The "top" of the building shall emphasize a distinct profile or outline with elements such as a projecting parapet, dormers, cornice, upper level step back, or varying roof heights and pitches.



*Left: Example of a cornice.
Middle: Example of a dormer window.
Right: Example of a parapet.*

Adopted April 12, 2011

Guidelines

Encouraged:

- The “middle” of the building may be made distinct by change in material, color, windows, balconies, step backs and signage.



Incorporating a variety of roof planes into a building's design can enhance its appearance.

C. SETBACKS

Intent

To ensure the visibility of retail businesses, and establish active uses within close proximity to the sidewalk.

Guidelines

Encouraged:

- Commercial buildings should be set as close as possible to all adjacent sidewalks and a minimum front yard setback of 30 feet.

Note: The minimum required front yard within a C-Commercial District adjacent to Route 26 shall be 40 feet unless or until the Delaware Department of Transportation shall widen Route 26 at which time the front yard shall be 30 feet from the edge of the right-of-way or the front of the property, whichever shall result in the greatest distance from the travel way of Route 26.

- Portions of buildings should be set as close as possible to the sidewalk or property line, which can be accomplished in various ways. For instance, major portions of single buildings should abut the sidewalk. In multi-building developments, one or more buildings should be set to the sidewalk.
- The requirement for common space may be waived in the instance where a development locates its parking area behind the building and locates the building as close as is practical to the sidewalk and street frontage.



Buildings set along brick sidewalks, creating visual interest along major street corridors.

D. ORIENTATION TO STREET

Intent

To ensure that buildings add to the liveliness of streets and the overall community character.

Standards

Required:

- Buildings, along with trees and landscaping shall be dominant rather than parking lots and freestanding signs.
- Pedestrian access to the building shall be visually and functionally clear and should offer a convenient alternative to walking through driveway entrances and exits.



A building with access to the entrance from the driveway as well as sidewalk.

Guidelines

Encouraged:

- People traveling along Route 26 or Route 17 should be able to see storefronts, windows, merchandise and other aspects of business activity.

E. GROUND LEVEL DETAILS

Intent

To reinforce the character of the streetscape by encouraging the greatest amount of visual interest along the ground level of buildings, especially sides facing pedestrian streets.

Standards

Required:

- Ground floor, street facing facades of commercial and mixed-use buildings shall incorporate at least five of the following elements:
 - (a) medallions
 - (b) belt courses
 - (c) plinths for columns
 - (d) kickplate for storefront windows
 - (e) projecting sills
 - (f) tile work
 - (g) pedestrian scale sign(s) or sign(s) professionally painted on windows
 - (h) planter box
 - (i) front porches or stoops
 - (j) an element not listed here that meets the intent, as approved by the Planning Commission



Example of pedestrian scale store fronts.

- Building facades not facing a street shall incorporate at least three of the above mentioned items.

Guidelines

Encouraged:

- Not only is it important for the buildings to be aesthetically pleasing, but for the sidewalks and pedestrian areas to also bring character to the Town. Creating lively pedestrian walkways gives residents more mobility and alternative options to only driving. There are several ways sidewalks can be designed to be appealing and make pedestrians feel safe:
 - Plant some kind of vegetation (street trees, planters, etc.) between the streets and the sidewalk. Walking between the vegetation and a building creates a tunnel like effect for the pedestrian making them feel safer as they walk down the sidewalk. This also creates traffic calming and slower traffic also makes pedestrians feel safer.

- Adding flowers, bushes and trees also help to beautify the walkway giving color and variety. This is a good way to bring native vegetation into the community.
- Adding street furniture (benches, trash can, bike racks, etc) also helps bring character to the street. Seating options are especially inviting to bring more people outside, and bike racks encourage people to use another form of transportation knowing they have a safe place to leave their bike.
- Using pervious paving can also be a good solution to creating attractive and safe walkways. Pervious paving is often used to help with water drainage, but can also include pattern variations and the use of different colors to bring character to pedestrian paths.

F. SCREENING BLANK WALLS

Intent

To ensure that buildings do not display blank, unattractive walls visible from the street, or public areas including parking lots.

Standards

Required:

- Walls 30 or more feet in length facing streets or visible from residential areas where windows are not provided shall have architectural treatment. At least four of the following elements shall be incorporated into any ground floor, street facing facade:

- (a) masonry (but not flat concrete block)
- (b) concrete or masonry plinth at the base of the wall
- (c) belt courses of a different texture and color
- (d) projecting cornice
- (e) projecting canopy
- (f) decorative woodwork or tile work
- (g) trellis containing planting
- (h) medallions
- (i) opaque or translucent glass
- (j) artwork
- (k) vertical articulation
- (l) lighting fixtures
- (m) recesses
- (n) an architectural element not listed above, as approved, that meets the intent.



This is a good example of what commercial buildings should look like in the C-1 District.



Variations in materials and massing can be used to break up large buildings and provide interest at street level. This is a good example for a commercial building in the C-2 District.

- Window walls are not permitted.

G. PROMINENT ENTRANCE

Intent

To ensure that building entrances are welcoming and easily identifiable from streets and sidewalks.

Standards

Required:

- With visual prominence, the principal entry to the building shall be marked by at least one element from each of the following groups:

Group A

- (a) recess
- (b) overhang
- (c) canopy
- (d) portico
- (e) porch

Group B

- (a) clerestory
- (b) ornamental lighting fixtures
- (c) large entry door(s)

Group C

- (a) stone, masonry or tile paving in entry
- (b) ornamental building name or address
- (c) pots or planters with flowers
- (d) seating

Or any other combination of elements as approved by the Planning Commission.



- No permanent or non-permanent element that is attached to the principle building shall project or extend over the C-1 or C-2 Commercial Districts walkways with the exception of standards for inclement weather protection.

H. EXPRESSION AT ENTRANCES TO LARGE DEVELOPMENTS

Intent

To provide a reference point at the end of a block of facades, or to mark intersections or entrances to developments larger than five



acres by providing visual interest at their entrances to the street.

Standards

Required:

- The expression at the entrance to a development is only required in the C-2 district.

Guidelines

Encouraged:

- For the C-1 district, entrances should help emphasize the architecture of the buildings and contribute to the overall character of the area. This can be accomplished by putting an expression at the primary entrance to the district and individual commercial sites or centers. To help create a sense of place, decorative items such as coordinating signage with the architecture of buildings, landscaping, plazas or courtyards, and decorative fencing can be put at the entrances to these developments.



I. ROOFLINE EXPRESSION

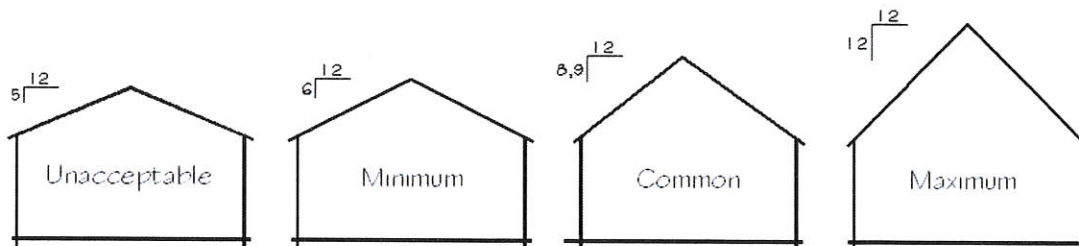
Intent

To ensure that rooflines present a distinct profile and appearance for the building and are expressive of the neighborhood character.

Standards

Required:

- Commercial buildings shall be designed to maintain the residential scale of commercial buildings presently located along Route 26 and Route 17. To attain the continuation of residential scale, the use of sloping rooflines shall be required. Any alternative roofline not utilizing sloping elements must be approved by the Planning Commission.
- In the C-1 Commercial District the minimum allowable roof pitch shall be a 6/12 pitch.



- In the C-2 Commercial District there will be no designated roof pitch. To make the structures in the C-2 district aesthetically pleasing, architectural detailing should be added to the front façade to give visual interest to the buildings. It is also required that the buildings conceal any rooftop equipment that might be visible.

J. CONCEALING ROOFTOP EQUIPMENT

Intent

To screen the view of rooftop mechanical and communications equipment that is visible from the street level.

Standards

Required:

- Mechanical equipment shall be screened from public areas by extended parapet walls or other roof forms that are integrated with the architecture of the building.
- Painting mechanical equipment and erecting fences are not acceptable methods of screening.
- Communication equipment shall be blended in with the design of the roofs, rather than being merely attached to the roof deck.
- Do to the nature and need for exposure of solar panels it may be difficult to conceal solar panel equipment. Should it not be possible to conceal the panel equipment, the location and placement of such equipment must be approved by the Planning Commission.

K. PLAZAS, COURTYARDS, AND SEATING AREAS

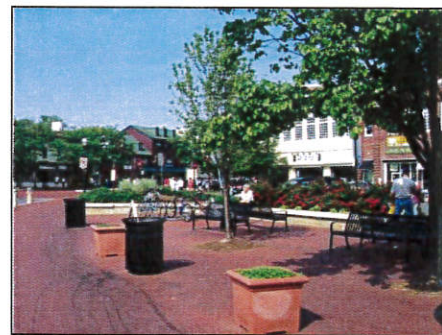
Intent

To reinforce and encourage the pedestrian nature of Millville, by providing usable space to walk or sit, and enjoy the surroundings.

Standards

Required:

- Where provided, pedestrian spaces shall be visible and accessible to the public.
- Plazas, courtyards and other pedestrian spaces shall include at least three of the following:



A plaza that offers seating with shade.

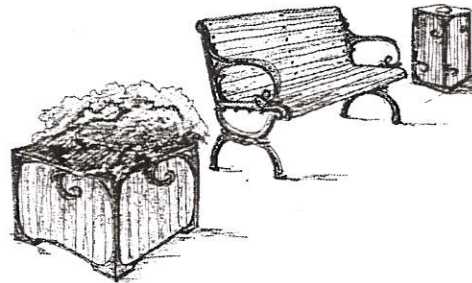
- Special interest planting with a wide range of plant materials including perennials and flowering shrubs. Approximately 65 percent plant material used shall provide seasonal flower and/or foliage color.
- Pedestrian scale, bollard or other accent lighting.
- Special paving, such as colored/stained concrete, brick or other unit paver. The use of low impact development materials, if appropriate to the site conditions, is encouraged.
- Seating, such as benches, tables or low seating walls.
- Water features, such as a fountain, etc.



L. SITE FURNISHINGS

Intent

To create a more pedestrian friendly street frontage through the use of site furnishings at main pedestrian walkways, building entrances and other pedestrian areas.



Standards

Required:

- Permanent site furnishings, such as benches, tables and other pedestrian amenities shall be made of durable, weather resistant and vandal resistant materials.
- Permanent site furnishings shall be consistent with the overall character and appearance of the development.

Prohibited:

- Site furnishings shall not block pedestrian access to main walkways, open space areas and/or building entrances, bus or pedestrian loading, or drop off areas.

Guidelines

Encouraged:

- Permanent site furnishings, such as benches, tables, bike racks, trash cans, planters and other pedestrian amenities are encouraged to be provided at main pedestrian walkways, building entrances, plazas, open spaces and other pedestrian areas.



M. WEATHER PROTECTION

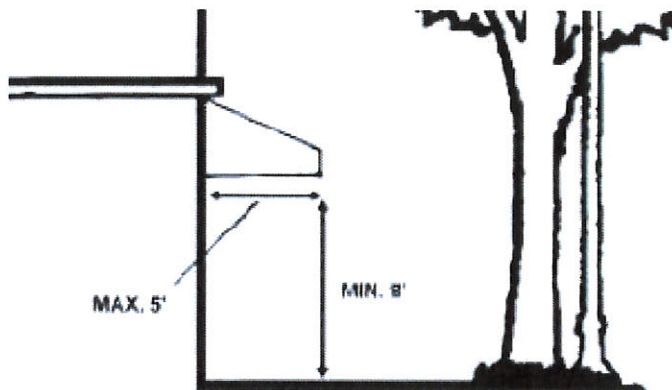
Intent

To provide weather protection for pedestrians.

Standards

Required:

- Overhead protection providing shelter from inclement weather at the main building entrance is required. Any method used to provide protection shall be combined with the method used to achieve visual prominence.
- Where buildings are adjacent to a sidewalk, canopies or awnings shall be provided. The minimum depth of any canopy or awning must be five feet unless limited by the building code. The vertical dimension between the underside of a canopy or awning and the sidewalk must be at least eight feet and no more than 12 feet.





**Town of Millville - Commercial Route 26 & Route 17
Commercial Building Design Standards Guidelines Checklist**

Section 3: Commercial Building Design

A. GENERAL

Standards Required	Provided	Description	Comments
Rt 26 & Rt 17 run thru Town of Millville. Mix of residential & commercial uses. Many residential structures converted to commercial use.			
Maintain the residential scale and encourage commercial development to use elements to reflect small-town character.			

B. MASSING

Standards Required (Distinct Base at Ground Level)	Provided	Description	Comments
Windows			
Architectural Details			
Canopies			
Overhangs			
Masonry Strips & Cornice Lines			

C. SETBACKS

Guidelines Encouraged	Provided	Description	Comments
40' setback along Rt 26			
Parking behind building			
Portions of building should be close to sidewalk			

D. ORIENTATION TO STREET

Standards Required/Guidelines Encouraged	Provided	Description	Comments
Standard Required:			
Dominant trees & landscape, rather than parking lots and signs			
Pedestrian access visual and clear			
Guidelines Encouraged:			
Be able to see storefronts, windows, merchandise & business activity			

E. GROUND LEVEL DETAILS

Standard Required	Provided	Description	Comments
Ground floor, street facing shall incorporate at least five of the following:			
(a) Medallions			
(b) Belt courses			
(c) Plinths for columns			
(d) Kickplate for storefront windows			
(e) Projecting sills			
(f) Tile work			
(g) Pedestria scale sign(s) or sign(s) professionally painted on windows			
(h) Planter box			
(i) Opaque or translucent glass			
(j) Artwork			

(k) Vertical articulation			
(l) Lighting fixtures			
(m) Recesses			
(n) An architectural element not listed above, as approved, that meets the intent			

F. SCREENING BLANK WALLS

Standards Required	Provided	Description	Comments
Architectural treatment where walls are 30' or more in length facing streets visible from residential areas, incorporate at least 4 of the following items:			
(a) Masonry (but not flat concrete block)			
(b) Concrete or masonry plinth at the base of the wall			
(c) Belt courses of a different texture or color			
(d) Projecting cornice			
(e) Projecting canopy			
(f) Decorative woodwork or tile work			
(g) Trellis containing planting			
(h) Medallions			
(i) Opaque or translucent glass			
(j) Artwork			
(k) Vertical articulation			
(l) Lighting fixtures			
(m) Recesses			
(n) An architectural element not listed above, as approved, that meets the intent			

G. PROMINENT ENTRANCE

Standards Required	Provided	Description	Comments
Principal entry, with visual prominence, to building shall be marked by at least one element from each group:			
Group A:			
(a) Recess			
(b) Overhang			
(c) Canopy			
(d) Portico			
(e) Porch			
Group B:			
(a) Ornamental light fixtures			
(b) Large entry door(s)			
Group C:			
(a) Ornamental building name or address			
(b) Pots or planters with flowers			
(c) Seating			

H. EXPRESSION TO ENTRANCES TO LARGE DEVELOPMENTS

Standards Required	Provided	Description	Comments
Expression at the entrance to a development is only required in the C-2 district.			

I. ROOFLINE EXPRESSION

Standards Required	Provided	Description	Comments
Maintain the residential scale of commercial buildings located along Rt 26 & Rt.17. Sloping rooflines shall be required.			
C-1 Commercial District, minimum roof pitch shall be 6/12. Where there is no designated roof pitch, architectural detailing added to the front facade. Rooftop equipment to be concealed.			

J. CONCEALING ROOFTOP EQUIPMENT

Standards Required	Provided	Description	Comments
Mechanical equipment shall be screened from public area by parapet walls.			
Painting mechanical equipment and/or fences are not acceptable screens.			
Communication equipment shall be blended in with design of roofs.			
Solar panels are difficult to conceal; requires Planning Commission approval.			

K. PLAZAS, COURTYARDS & SEATING AREAS

Standards Required	Provided	Description	Comments
Pedestrian spaces shall be visible and accessible to the public. Plazas, courtyards and other pedestrian spaces shall include at least three of the following:			
(a) Special interest planting with a wide range of plant material including perennials and flowering shrubs.			
(b) Pedestrian scale, bollard or other accent lighting.			
(c) Special paving, such as colored / stained concrete, brick or other use of impact development materials.			
(d) Seating, such as benches, tables			

L. SITE FURNISHINGS

Standards Required	Provided	Description	Comments
Permanent site furnishings, such as benches, tables and other pedestrian amenities shall be made of durable, weather-proof material.			
Permanent site furnishings shall be consistent with the overall character and appearance of the development.			
Encouraged are benches, tables, bike racks, trash cans, planters to be provided at the main pedestrian walkways; building entrances, plazas, open spaces, etc.			

M. WEATHER PROTECTION

Standards Required	Provided	Description	Comments
Overhead protection from inclement weather at main entrance. Any method shall be combined with visual prominence.			
Where buildings are adjacent to a sidewalk, canopies/awnings shall be provided. Minimum depth must be five (5) feet unless limited by code. Vertical dimension 8' and no more than 12'.			