

APPENDIX E

Commercial Design Standards

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STATEMENT OF INTENT

The purpose of these design standards is to establish a general set of principles and specific recommendations to serve as a guide for new development and renovations of commercial properties within the Town of Mount Pleasant. These standards are intended to help foster and maintain the integrity of a historic community and to help maintain a sense of identity and place for the Town by creating consistency in the architecture and an inviting streetscape. In creating this unified built environment, the Town may insure that its character will not be diminished as it experiences growth and development to meet the future needs of the citizens of the Town of Mount Pleasant.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Town of Mount Pleasant sits at the crossroads of North Carolina Highway 49 and North Carolina Highway 73 East. The majority of commercial development lies along NC Highway 49 from NC Highway 73 (known as Franklin Street within the Town’s limits) to North Drive and along Franklin Street through the Town. Additionally, there is a pocket of traditional commercial development in the historic center of Town that continues to experience a variety of uses. The Town recognizes that as Highway 49 and Highway 73 are improved and expanded, the desire for development along these routes will increase.

LONG AND SHORT TERM GOALS

Long-term goals are those that should be implemented in the next five to ten years and are specific projects that will achieve the overall goals of the Town. Short-term goals are those which should be implemented within the next five years and are projects which will help establish the vision of the Town. In order to achieve these goals, several long and short-term projects should be considered.

SHORT-TERM GOALS

- Creating a Design Review Board to oversee new development and follow the policies set forth by the commercial design standards; (Completed and Amended 11/16/2005, See Article 11.3.4.2)
- Raising public awareness about the new design standards and how they fit with the long-term goals of the Town.

LONG-TERM GOALS AND PROJECTS

- Burying all utility lines to create a more attractive streetscape;
- Creating pedestrian-friendly intersections using medians as resting points and changes in paving material;
- Writing a Sidewalk Plan to implement improvements and installations to create a safer walking environment;
- Creating a definable gateway into the Town so that people know they have entered a special place;
- Establishing a business improvement district (BID) in the commercial core for improvements that benefit those involved.

ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

The following architectural styles are already evident in the Town of Mount Pleasant. In keeping with the character of the Town, the following architectural styles are appropriate for new and/or expanding developments in the C-1, C-2, B-1, O/I, PUD, TND and TOD zoning districts as well as any office and/or retail developments located in the I-1 or I-2 zoning districts (See Table 4.7-1):

These standards shall not apply to new or expanding religious institutions or schools (public or private) as listed in Table 4.6-1. All other standards and regulations defined in the text of this Unified Development Ordinance however, shall be applicable. (*Amended 11/5/2007*)

- **Georgian:** The Georgian Style has typically rigid geometry, axial entrances, geometrical proportions, hipped or gabled roofs, and sash windows aligned vertically. Later variations of the Georgian Style include pilasters, offsets in the plane of the building at the corners and midpoints to help decrease the massiveness of the buildings. A five-part composition is often used with the main, middle portion of the building being flanked with minor building elements on the ends. Palladian windows are often used as well as accented window surrounds and water table delineation. Materials are typically brick, split shingles, or wood siding painted in white or pastel colors.

- **Colonial:** The Colonial Style is a traditional style of purity and simplicity, often leading to symmetrical structures. The style typically has steeply pitched hipped or gabled roofs, but the characteristics can be translated into flat roofed structures, if necessary. Flat walls with punched windows, shutters, cupolas, pilasters and dental work are Colonial Style features. Entrances can be a punched opening or more celebrated with a gabled and colonnaded porch. Gothic, pointed arches are acceptable for Colonial Style Architecture. This style typically uses stone, brick, clapboard siding or split shingles for building materials.
- **Classical:** A formal style, encompassing columns, pilasters, pediments over windows and doorways, arched windows and pronounced cornices. These elements may also be integrated with other styles or in site elements, porte-cocheres, screen walls, gazebos, etc. An articulated base to buildings is another classical characteristic. The Greek Revival Era falls underneath this genre of architecture.
- **Federal:** A less ornamental style of architecture used both for residential and in-line for continuous Main Street buildings. This style is typically two or three-story buildings, or brick or siding. The roofs are gabled or flat with simple eave lines always parallel to the street. Punched vertical windows usually have simple accentuated lintels and doors often show hints of classical trim. Gabled ends typically have parapets extended above the roof so buildings can be built close together.

See Appendix B for illustrations of Architectural Styles

GENERAL DESIGN STANDARDS

AMENITY AREA

Projects containing groups of buildings to be devoted primarily to office and/or retail activities shall incorporate amenity areas into the site design. Amenity areas include, but are not limited to, public plazas, courtyards, squares or small parks on the site. Design elements to be included in the amenity areas are seating walls, benches, outdoor dining/gathering areas, decorative fountains or water features, clock towers and/or garden areas. Since the purpose of these amenity areas is to serve as pocket recreational areas and to help foster a sense of community, additional elements shall be considered if the applicant shows that the design meets the intent of this section.

SETBACKS

The setbacks to be established are intended to form a consistent relationship of buildings to the street and sidewalk. This relationship shall form a visually continuous, pedestrian-oriented street front. The best way to maintain this relationship is to have minimal vehicle use between building faces and the street. Front building setbacks shall be a minimum of ten (10) feet and a maximum of thirty-five (35) feet to maintain a consistent and uniform streetscape. All other setbacks are established in Article 4 of the Mount Pleasant Unified Development Ordinance. Buildings should be arranged so that they help to frame and define fronting streets (as well as any internal or side streets). Buildings shall not be separated from fronting streets by large expanses of parking. If a vehicular drive is placed between a building and fronting street, a landscaped earthen berm no less than two (2) feet in height shall provide screening to the drive. Landscape plantings shall comply with requirements in section 7.4 Buffer Yards. (*Amended 6/25/2007*)

CONNECTIVITY AND SIDEWALKS

Sidewalks shall serve as the secondary mode of transportation to the use of roads and shall link residential and commercial developments, common areas, and parking areas. If a proposed development includes multiple buildings in the site design, then an overall connectivity plan shall be provided for the development. Sidewalks shall be a minimum of five feet wide and shall have a minimum six-foot landscaped buffer area between the road and the sidewalk itself. Sidewalks shall remain as unobstructed as possible by items such as plantings or trash receptacles.

PARKING REQUIREMENTS

Parking areas shall balance the needs of both the automobile and the pedestrian. Off street parking areas shall be designed to minimize breaks in the pedestrian environment and the visual continuity of the streetscape. Additionally, no more than two rows of parking may be permitted on the side of the structure. Off street parking shall be required and determined per Article 8, Table 8.1-6. Parking areas shall primarily be located to the rear of the proposed structures to minimize visibility. In the event that a



proposed development includes multiple structures, parking areas may be permitted in “front” of the internal buildings. In no case, however, shall large expanses of parking be permitted between any street and structure.

PARKING LOT DESIGN

Parking lots shall be designed to allow pedestrians to safely move from their vehicles to the buildings. This may be achieved in smaller lots by providing a sidewalk at the perimeter of the lot. On larger lots, corridors within the parking areas should channel pedestrians from the car to the perimeter of the lot. A paving material that is different in color and/or texture from that of vehicular areas shall delineate these pedestrian travel ways and shall be clearly marked. Small posts or bollards incorporating lights may also serve the same purpose. Parking lots shall be adequately screened from public view and shall include landscaping and buffering per Article 7 of the Unified Development Ordinance.

LANDSCAPING

A Landscaping plan shall be submitted in accordance with Article 7 of the Mount Pleasant Unified Development Ordinance. In the event that the strict interpretation of Article 7 would limit the use and/or design of a site (such as in the case of upgrades to existing facilities) the Administrator shall have the authority to approve a modified landscape plan if the plan is determined to be in keeping with the overall intent of Article 7 and these design guidelines.

LIGHTING

Lighting for all non-residential uses shall provide proper lighting for security purposes while not diminishing the quality of any surrounding residential uses.

- All light fixtures (freestanding, flood, wall pack, or any other form of light fixture) shall be provided with full cut-off fixtures, visors, or any other suitable directional control to direct light either downward or directly on the appropriate building.
- No light fixture shall create any glare or spillover lighting effects on any residential properties or streets.
- Freestanding light fixtures along all public street systems and internal street systems shall not exceed nineteen feet in total mounted height and shall consist of a decorative fixture that shields the source of light away from neighboring properties.
- Lighting located within parking lots may not exceed thirty-three feet in total mounted height. Parking lot lighting shall consist of a fixture that shields the source of light away from neighboring properties and direct the illumination to the ground’s surface.
- Lighting installations should include timers, dimmers, and /or sensors to reduce overall energy consumption and unnecessary lighting.
- Lighting levels for canopies and awnings of commercial facilities shall be adequate only to facilitate the activities taking place in such locations and shall not be used to attract attention to the businesses. Lighting fixtures mounted on canopies shall be recessed so that the light’s lens cover is recessed or flush with the bottom surface (ceiling) of the canopy and/or shielded by the fixture or the edge of the canopy so that light is restrained. Canopies shall be constructed of non-light-emitting material.

LOADING/UNLOADING AREAS AND LOADING DOCKS

Loading and unloading areas shall be installed per Article 8, Section 8.4. Loading/unloading areas shall be placed, to the greatest extent possible, to the rear of the structure and shall be screened from the view of any street and/or any residentially developed or residentially zoned property. Additionally, loading/unloading spaces shall be located such that interference with traffic on streets and or internal driveways is minimized. In the event that a loading dock is necessary to support the proposed use, the dock shall be located to the rear of the structure and shall not be visible from any street and/or residentially developed or residentially zoned property.

SOLID WASTE STORAGE AREAS

Solid waste containers shall be confined to an enclosed area that is screened on all sides. Solid waste storage areas shall be located to the rear or side of the structure. These areas shall be designed to compliment the structure and should be constructed from materials that match the building. Solid waste storage areas shall not be located in any applicable planting yard and shall be screened from any street and/or any residentially developed or residentially zoned property. See UDO Article 11, Section 11.1.2.2 for additional requirements related to solid waste storage areas.

MECHANICAL APPURTENANCES

All rooftop mechanical and electrical equipment shall be completely screened from view from all public streets and adjacent properties. All screening walls/parapets shall be constructed and designed of materials compatible to that of the primary structure and shall be incorporated into the design of the structure. Metal screening walls shall not be permitted. To the greatest extent possible, mechanical appurtenances shall be located within the structure. Appurtenances such as heating and air conditioning equipment, coolers, etc. shall be screened entirely from public view and shall be designed and finished to match adjacent building materials. In addition to design elements, landscape materials shall be incorporated to provide additional screening and/or softening of equipment areas.

OUTDOOR STORAGE/DISPLAY AREAS

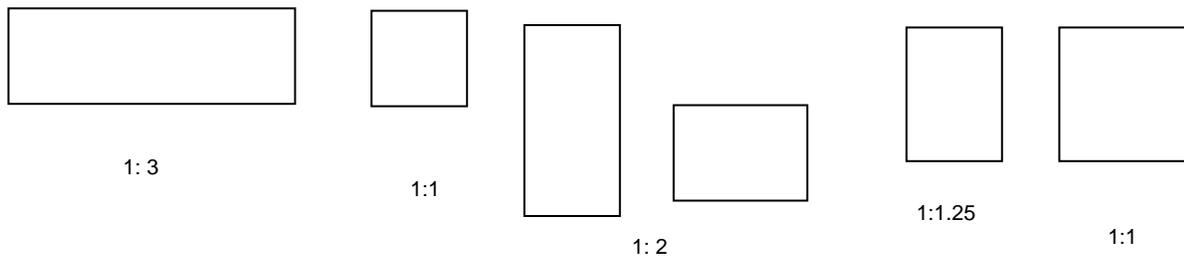
Outdoor storage/display areas shall be designed in accordance with Article 11.1 of the Unified Development Ordinance.

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN STANDARDS

MASSING AND RHYTHM

To insure a consistent scale and compatible character of each and every building, massing and rhythm shall be considered in the site design. A single large dominant building mass shall be avoided in new buildings and, to the extent reasonable feasible, in development projects involving changes to the mass of existing buildings. Horizontal masses shall not exceed a height-width ratio of 1:3 without substantial variation in massing that includes a change in height and projecting or recessed elements. Changes in mass shall be related to entrances, the integral structure, and/or the organization of interior spaces and not merely for cosmetic purposes. All buildings shall incorporate the aspects outlined in this document to insure that no single building, here forth, shall be constructed counteractive to the goals established for the commercial design standards.

Figure 4



Examples of appropriate width to height ratios.

HEIGHT

Building height shall be regulated in accordance with Article 4 Table 4.7-1, Dimensional and Density Requirements.

SCALE AND ROOFLINE

The goal for scale is to be reiterated in regard to height. The scale of buildings should be such that the street edges are defined and relate to the human proportions. This scale can be achieved through the use of architectural detailing on the first floor of buildings so that larger buildings are broken up into smaller units, by maintaining height limits, by using large picture windows along front facades and by using plantings around the buildings. A range of roof forms is acceptable as long as they are compatible with the architectural character, scale, and height of surrounding buildings. Mansard roofs are not permitted.

FENESTRATION

Fenestration includes the structural openings to buildings, including doors and windows. All buildings shall have their principle entrance opening to a street, square, plaza, or sidewalk to create an invitation to the pedestrian. Access from the public sidewalk, street right-of-way or driveway to the principle structure shall be provided through an improved surface. The first floor of all buildings shall be designed to encourage and to complement pedestrian-scale activity by the use of windows and doors. These openings should be arranged so that the uses are visible and/or accessible to the street. This accessibility should not be on less than fifty percent (50%) of the length of the first floor street frontage. Additionally, not less than fifty percent (50%) of the length and twenty-five percent (25%)

of the surface of the primary structure(s) shall be in public entrances or windows. No more than fifty (50) percent of the surface of the building shall be windows. Reflective glass is prohibited. Where tinted windows are used, they shall remain transparent.

ACCESS

Structures should be sited so that the primary access is from the street front sidewalk leading to the parking area. In the event that a structure is located on a State Numbered Highway, the Administrator may permit the primary access to be located facing the parking area. All street level retail uses with sidewalk frontage shall be furnished with an individual entrance and direct access to the sidewalk in addition to any other access which may be provided. Doors shall be recessed into the face of the building to provide a sense of entry and to add variety to the streetscape. An entryway shall not be less than one (1) square foot for each 1,000 square feet of floor area, and in all cases, shall not be less than fifteen (15) square feet.

ARTICULATION

In order to add architectural interest and variety and to avoid the effect of a single long or massive wall with no relation to human scale proportions, the following standards shall apply:

- No wall that faces a street or connecting walkway shall have a blank, uninterrupted length exceeding twenty (20) feet.
- All building walls must include at least two of the following:
 - change in plane,
 - change in texture or masonry pattern, or
 - windows.
- Include an equivalent aspect that subdivides the wall into human scale proportions such as an articulated base with a height no more than ten (10) feet.
- In the event that actual doors and windows are not feasible because of the nature of the use of the building, side or rear walls that face walkways may include false windows and door openings defined by the following:
 - frames,
 - sills,
 - lintels, or
 - proportioned modulations of the wall.
- All sides, including the rear, of the building shall include materials and design characteristics consistent with those on the front.
- Use of inferior or lesser quality materials on side or rear walls is prohibited.



In the event that canopies, awnings or other similar appurtenances are used, the following standards shall apply:

- Such appurtenances shall be constructed of materials designed to complement the streetscape and the structure.
- Any appurtenance may extend from the building up to eighty (80%) percent of the width of the sidewalk area or nine feet, which ever is less.
- In no case shall any such facility extend beyond the curb line of the street, nor shall it interfere with the growth or maintenance of street trees, or maintenance of street lights or street signs.
- A minimum overhead clearance of eight (8) feet from the sidewalk shall be maintained.

MATERIALS

All buildings shall be constructed of quality materials. These materials include brick, either plain or painted, horizontal siding, wood shingle, stone, or concrete-based stucco. All trim materials shall be stone, cast stone, cast concrete, or painted wood. It is recommended that the primary structure be neutral in color, i.e. light grays, browns, beiges, whites or earth tones. The trim may be of various contrasting colors to that of the primary structure.

Where any sloped roofs are utilized, they shall be covered with high profile asphalt shingles, natural clay tiles, slate, concrete tiles (with natural texture and color), ribbed metal, wood shakes or shingles. Forms and finish materials of buildings, signage, gasoline pump canopies and other accessory structures, shall be compatible with the architectural character of the adjacent area and structures through compliance with the following guidelines:

- all buildings, including gasoline pump canopies, shall utilize a consistent architectural style;
- differing buildings, businesses, or activities within the same development may be distinguished by variations within this architectural style;

- Sides and backs of buildings shall be as visually attractive as the front through the design of roof lines, architectural detailing, and landscaping features.

FLEXIBILITY IN ADMINISTRATION

Because these standards cannot cover every possible scenario that may arise, the Planning Administrator is authorized to make determinations on development applications that may vary from the written standards so long as the determination meets the purpose and intent of the Commercial Design Standards.

CONCLUSION

The Town of Mount Pleasant intends for these standards to guide new development in the direction that best suits the atmosphere of the Town. This atmosphere is one of a true community that is proud of its history and its future. Through the use of appropriate design standards, it is the hope that the community will meet the needs of the future while maintaining its historically rich past.

APPENDIX A

DEFINITIONS

Articulation The detailing of a structure or building, i.e. brick patterning or ornamental work.

Clapboard A long, narrow board that overlapped to cover the outer walls of frame buildings.

Colonnaded (Porch) A series of columns situated at regular intervals to uphold a roof structure and create a breezeway or porch.

Cornice A horizontal molded projection that crowns and complete the wall structure and visually connects the wall to the roof structure.

Facade The principle, vertical surface of a building which is set along the frontage line. The elevation of a facade is the vertical surface area and is subject to visual definition by building height, setbacks, and transition lines.

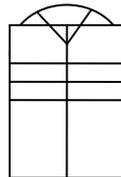
Fenestration The entryways and windows of a building.

Gable (Roof) A “gable” maybe any one of three things: a triangular wall section at the ends of a pitched roof bounded by the two roof slopes and the ridge pole; the ends of a pitched roof building with a gable in the roof section; or an ornamental triangular architectural section.

Lintel The horizontal beam forming the upper member of a door or window frame and supporting part of the structure above it.

Massing A unified composition of two-dimensional or three dimensional shapes or volumes, especially one that has or gives the impression of weight, density, or bulk.

Palladian Windows A window encompassing an arch above the primary window structure; or an arch window set above a primary window structure. See example below.



Parapet A low protective railing or wall along the edge of a roof or balcony.

Pediment An arch or triangle shape architectural feature, usually placed above windows or doors. These features may be seen further embellished with molding details or carvings of wood.

Pilaster A supporting column or pillar with a capital and base.

Porte-Cocheres A porch roof projecting over a driveway at the entrance to a building.

Rhythm Movement, characterized by a pattern repetition or alternation of formal elements or motifs in the same or modified form.

Setback A line prescribed for the full width of the facade above which the façade sets back. The location of a recess line is determined by the desired height to width ratio of the fronting space, or by a desired compatibility with existing buildings.

APPENDIX B

Classical: Residential



Classical: Commercial



Georgian: Residential



Georgian: Commercial



Federal: Residential



Federal: Commercial



Colonial: Residential

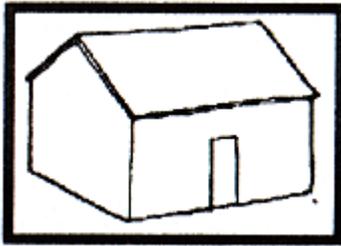


Colonial: Commercial

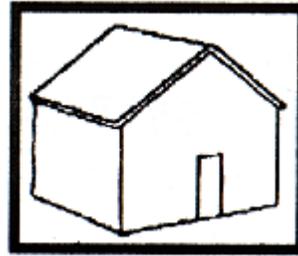


APPENDIX C

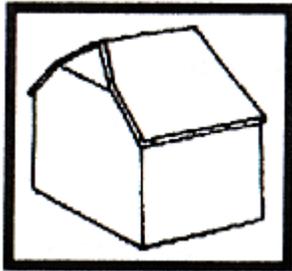
Side Gabled



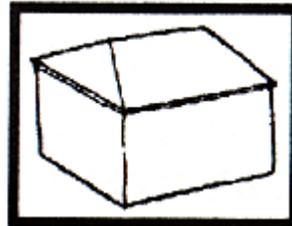
Front Gabled



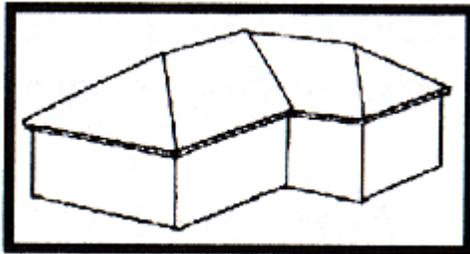
Hipped-Gabled



Simple Hipped



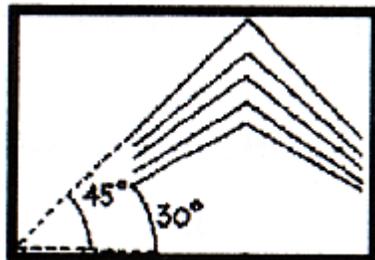
Cross-Hipped



Low Slope – Less than 30°



Moderate Slope – 30 to 45°



Steep Slope – More than 45°

