

## 6. Traditional Neighborhood Design

### DETAILED TECHNICAL ANALYSIS

**CASE STUDY**  
Mashpee Commons,  
Cape Cod,  
Massachusetts  
see Section 6.8

**SAMPLE  
ORDINANCE**  
Traditional  
Neighborhood  
Development,  
Belmont, North  
Carolina  
see Section 6.9

Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND) is a planning and design concept that emerged in the late 1980s as a reaction to suburban sprawl. Whereas prototypical suburban development is characterized by an orientation to the automobile, separation of land uses, and very low-density development, TND calls for compact, pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods with a mix of commercial and residential uses and variety of housing types, from apartments, to townhouses, to single-family homes. Many TND projects have attempted to replicate the basic features of late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century neighborhoods — shingle-clad houses with front porches, narrow front and side yards, detached garages hidden in the backyard, and walkable “Main Street” commercial areas with shops and display windows along the sidewalk.

This chapter addresses some of the same issues discussed in Chapter 4 in the context of village development. TND incorporates the concepts of mixed-use and compact development that characterize village development, but goes one step further to focus on the design aspects of building and public spaces, that is, the orientation and architectural detailing of buildings and how buildings are designed in relationship to streets, plazas, parks, open space, parking, and transit. There have been many successful examples of TND throughout the country, and many examples are cited herein. This chapter also considers how TND is related to Connecticut’s *Village Districts* law.

### 6.1 SMART GROWTH REGULATIONS AND INCENTIVES

#### PEDESTRIAN-ORIENTED DESIGN

One of the main principles of TND is that residential and commercial areas should provide safe, convenient, and enticing areas for walking. A walkable environment provides an alternative to automobile circulation, drawing more people out of their cars and allowing people to avoid some car trips and congested roads. With more people walking, streets become safer and more attractive, and pedestrians — unlike motorists — have greater opportunities for interacting socially with neighbors, taking advantage of public parks and plazas, and getting daily exercise.

#### Setbacks, Garages, and Parking

There are many relatively simple regulations that can be used to promote a pedestrian-oriented walking environment, whether in a residential or a commercial area. The first and most important technique is to alter the traditional pattern of wide setbacks, with large parking lots or garages in the front yard. In most new subdivisions, front setbacks are often 40 feet or more, and the garage is located toward the front of the structure, with the front door set even farther back from the street. Along commercial strips, large shopping centers are setback several hundred feet from the roadway, with large parking lots in the front yard. Usually, commercial landscaping is minimized so as not to obstruct signs; signs are bold and emphasize logos for the benefit of cars speeding by; and curb cuts are frequent to allow last-

minute decisions to turn into the site. Such patterns of development are entirely oriented to automobile access.

Zoning provisions can be adjusted to bridge the gap between the street and the front door. In residential areas, narrower front setbacks (build-to-line of 10 to 20 feet from the street) and additional setbacks for the garage façade (10 feet or more behind the façade of the rest of the house) would end up placing the front door of the residence closer to the sidewalk, making residential streets far more pedestrian-friendly. To achieve a truly “traditional” style of development, the garage provision can be made even more stringent. Some municipalities prohibit attached garages or provide incentives for the use of detached garages, which must be placed in the backyard. This, again, is intended to mimic early 20<sup>th</sup> century patterns of development. Not only does this approach further reinforce the pedestrian-orientation of the street, but it also reduces the architectural bulkiness of the residence, since attached two-car garages often exceed 400 square feet in size.

In commercial areas, zoning provisions can similarly be adjusted to reduce the distance between the street and the sidewalk and to break up the large expanses of front-yard parking lots. Commercial buildings can be required to be closer to the street via required “built-to” lines or maximum setbacks. Parking lots would then be located to the side or the rear of commercial buildings, and ideally, the parking would be broken up into a series of connected small lots, interspersed with landscaping and buildings. The number of curb cuts can also be minimized, so as to reduce the potential for automobile/pedestrian conflicts along the sidewalk. With additional requirements that principal building entrances face the sidewalk, rather than the parking lot, the sidewalk frontage can become an attractive and lively pedestrian walking environment.

Although these regulatory techniques can be effective in creating a pedestrian-friendly environment, not every commercial area needs to be retrofitted into a “Main Street” format. There will always be a market for large-footprint, auto-oriented shopping centers, which attract major chain retailers and discount stores, like Home Depot, Loew’s, and most major grocery stores. Such shopping centers should have the convenient parking and auto access that motorists are seeking. This is not to say, however, that pedestrians and transit should be ignored. On the contrary, auto-oriented shopping centers should be made more pedestrian- and transit-friendly (through well-designed walkway connections and landscaping, use of awnings, benches, lighting, and other pedestrian amenities; placement of buildings closer to the street, with door and display windows creating visual interest; attention to architectural detailing), even though the automobile may be the primary mode of access.

Pedestrian-oriented design requirements are most appropriate in locations where there are smaller-scale stores (i.e., in an historic Main Street district) or where the market seems to support smaller-scale stores and offices. The exact proportion of auto-oriented to pedestrian-oriented retail would have to be determined on a case-by-case basis, depending upon market conditions, sales trends, demographic characteristics of the market area, and so on.

### **Lot Size**

In addition to narrower setbacks and better placement of garages and parking lots, smaller lot sizes can be utilized to promote TND. New residential subdivisions in many parts of Connecticut are designed with lots sizes of one to two acres or more. On such lots, houses are typically set back 50 feet or more, and the house is surrounded by lawns, trees, and forested

areas. In TND neighborhoods, an individual's private yard space is reduced, but additional space is set aside in the form of public parks, plazas, and open space.

Smaller lot sizes, when combined with narrower setbacks and better designed garages, can help create the ambiance of a neighborhood. To a sense of community, lot sizes should generally not be larger than a 1/4-acre (or approximately 10,000 square feet) in size.<sup>1</sup> Lots that are any larger start to result in walking distances that are so far apart that driving becomes the more preferable mode of circulation, and buildings are far enough apart that they have little architectural relationship to one another. Many neighborhoods in West Hartford and attractive suburbs like Scarsdale in Westchester County, NY, have neighborhoods at such compact densities. A lot of 10,000 square feet would have dimensions of about 80 feet wide and 125 feet deep, which can still accommodate a large house of 3,000 to 4,000 square feet.

This is not to say that low-density environments should be completely discouraged or eliminated, as some prospective residents will want a larger plot of land. The point is that by promoting and planning locations for more compact development patterns with a wide range of housing types (i.e., apartments, townhouses, small-lot single-family homes), the people who desire a traditional neighborhood environment are not forced to live in a large-lot setting. Having smaller lot sizes implies higher residential densities, which could be difficult if there is no sewer infrastructure available. The challenges and implications of higher-density residential development in non-sewer areas are discussed in Chapter 4.

### **Building Scale, Building Orientation, and Façade Treatment**

To achieve a truly pedestrian-friendly environment, it is also important to regulate the scale and orientation of buildings. Excessively out-of-scale or monolithic-looking buildings can seem imposing and unattractive to pedestrians. Generally, pedestrians gravitate toward realms where buildings are or appear to be smaller in scale with some architectural variety and detailing. This is not to say that large buildings cannot be built, but that building massing and facades should be designed in such a way they appear to be in-scale with their surroundings and inviting to pedestrian activity.

An excellent example of an “in-scale” commercial building is found in downtown Walnut Creek, California, a small city in the San Francisco Bay Area. An underutilized drive-through bank at one of the main intersections in downtown was the subject of a proposal for redevelopment. The developer came forward with a plan to demolish the existing building and erect a large, plain-looking commercial strip. The City worked with developer to come up with a design that better fit into the downtown context. Instead of the original design, the developer ended up building a very attractive structure that from the exterior appeared to be three different buildings, each with a distinct façade. Even though the resulting building was larger than the original design, the variety of the design and the creation of what appeared to be three small buildings actually made the larger building fit into the traditional character of the rest of the downtown area. Note that the additional density provided the incentive to utilize a more original and costly design approach.

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<sup>1</sup> For example, Mashpee Commons, a neo-traditional mixed-use development on Cape Cod, housing types range from small apartments above ground-floor shops, to townhouses, to single-family homes. The largest lot sizes provided for single-family homes (in the Whittings Road neighborhood of the development) are approximately 10,000 square feet. Mashpee Commons, <[www.mashpeecommons.com](http://www.mashpeecommons.com)>, visited March 13, 2002.

The orientation of buildings is also critical in creating a pedestrian-friendly environment. Pedestrians are generally attracted to commercial and residential streets where building facades, entrances, and openings face the street. Commercial streets with entrances off the sidewalk and display windows that allow views into the stores — as opposed to the large, blank exterior walls of some shopping centers — tend to be more popular with pedestrians. Residential streets where houses have front porches, prominent entrances, bay windows, smaller or less prominently placed garages, and architectural detailing are more attractive for walking. In commercial areas, principal entrances could be required to face the street, rather than the parking lot; a minimum proportion of the ground-floor façade could be required to have windows; and solid roll-down gates can be prohibited. In residential areas, porches and bay windows can be encouraged by not counting them toward building or lot coverage limitations.

## **STREETS AND STREETSCAPES**

Street patterns in new subdivisions can also impact opportunities for pedestrian circulation. Street grids and through-streets generally allow better pedestrian circulation than conventional street patterns in residential subdivisions. Dead-end cul-de-sacs and curvilinear streets, combined with low-density development patterns, make pedestrians undergo circuitous routes in order to reach their destinations, and as a result, people have a natural incentive to use their cars instead. With more intersections and more connecting streets, street grids (or variations thereof) are generally more conducive to pedestrian circulation, particularly when the grid is combined with compact densities.

Subdivision regulations could be revised to require a minimum number of connecting streets to existing roads and/or a limitation on the number of cul-de-sacs. Municipalities in Connecticut are also permitted under State law to adopt a roadway plan as part of the local plan of conservation and development and to require subdivision applicants to conform to the plan. The roadway plan can specify the location of proposed thoroughfares and the arrangement of future streets.

Streetscape design is a critical factor in pedestrian circulation. Streets in new subdivisions should be designed with sidewalks, pedestrian-scaled lighting, benches, and other amenities that are conducive to walking. On existing commercial streets, such streetscape improvements cannot be implemented through zoning or subdivision requirements, but must be done through a combined effort of the municipal government and local businesses and property owners.

## **PARKING LOT AND LANDSCAPING DESIGN**

Zoning provisions can also be used to regulate the design of parking lots and landscaping. As discussed, the location of parking lots behind or the side buildings can help make development more pedestrian-oriented. In addition to such basic site planning, parking lots themselves should be designed in close coordination with landscaping, pedestrian walkways, and pedestrian amenities, such that parking lots avoid the look of uniform auto-oriented asphalt. Parking lots can even be outfitted with electrical and water outlets, such that they can be easily converted into plazas for special events, performances, and farmers markets.

In addition, compact pedestrian-oriented development must be coupled and coordinated with park and landscape planning. In New England towns, there is a long history of coordinated

town and park development. “Town greens” — intended in early Colonial times for a number of uses, including animal grazing, public markets, and public meetings — were eventually converted into public parks and are still used for a variety of activities and events.

Such public green spaces are absolutely essential in compact residential areas, where houses have smaller private yards. In addition, such park spaces are attractive in the midst of the pedestrian-oriented shopping area, because they provide a place for resting, having a picnic lunch, or holding events that attract business to the nearby shops. They also provide visual “breaks” in the built environment.

## 6.2 COMPLEMENTARY ACTIONS

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### ROADWAY DESIGN

One essential complementary action is to re-examine roadway standards. Whereas TND principals call for narrower, walkable streets with a traditional design format, subdivision standards typically call for very wide streets, even in residential areas. It is not uncommon for new residential subdivisions to have street widths of 50 to 60 feet, even though most neighborhood streets do not provide through-connections and thus have little traffic. Wide streets are thought to be necessary in order to allow for emergency vehicle access or to provide a safe driving environment for motorists.

Narrower streets are generally more safe and comfortable for pedestrians and bicyclists, because cars tend to travel at slower speeds. Also, emergency vehicle access can be handled on narrower residential streets, provided that the streets are designed with adequate connections and intersections. Some studies have even shown that wider streets are actually *more* prone to traffic accidents, although further research may be required to confirm this conclusion.<sup>2</sup> Because traffic and emergency response can be adequately handled on narrower streets, wide streets may unnecessarily increase road maintenance costs, encourage speeding, and detract from a community's quality of life.

In addition to subdivisions, State roads in rural and suburban areas are subject to expansion as development and traffic levels increase. This is particularly problematic where State roads pass through older village and hamlet centers, where the traditional dimensions of the roadway contribute to the character of the historic area. In the past, the State DOT's emphasis on vehicular circulation and safety have left little room for design flexibility. Chapter 7 provides a detailed discussion of this very issue.

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN TRADITIONAL SHOPPING DISTRICTS

Along commercial streets, a TND design approach is not enough to attract customers. A traditional design approach must be coupled with a focused economic development strategy, as discussed in Chapter 7. Two notable revitalization efforts in downtown New Haven in the 1980s and 1990s demonstrate how economic development and traditional design strategies can be combined for optimal effect. The first project was the re-design of Chapel Street, between

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<sup>2</sup> Envision Utah, *Urban Planning Tools for Quality Growth, 2002 Supplement*, Chapter 9, Public Safety and Residential Street Design, <[www.envisionutah.org](http://www.envisionutah.org)>, visited May 2002.

College and York Streets, and the second project was the re-design of the York Square area, on Broadway, between York and Grove Streets. In both cases, there was a major property owner and investor steering not only the streetscape improvements but also the selection of shops and the overall marketing of the districts — Mr. Joel Schiavone on Chapel Street and Yale University on Broadway.

Along Chapel Street, the strategy was to attract a mix of new boutiques, middle- to up-scale retail chains (such as Anne Taylor and The Gap), and restaurants and cafes. Along Broadway, the strategy was to attract generally the same types of stores, although with a greater proportion of chain stores and with stores that required a larger floor plate (Barnes & Noble, Au Bon Pain, and Urban Outfitters). Both areas were primarily intended to appeal to Yale students, their parents, faculty members, and university visitors, as well as local residents and workers. Both have been extremely successful, because they have capitalized on the mixed-use, compact, pedestrian environment that is so distinct from suburban malls and strip centers. Each was designed with all of the classic pedestrian-friendly architectural details and amenities: decorative pavers, antique lighting, street trees, bulbed-out sidewalks, and façade improvements.

The location and market base of the commercial core are also key considerations. Laguna West — a residential development on the outskirts of Sacramento, California — was built in the late 1980s by the architect and TND advocate Peter Calthorpe and was billed a "neo-traditional" neighborhood. The development was compact, oriented to a future transit station, and had a mix of commercial and residential development. Despite these notable features, one of the criticisms of the project was that it was located far on the urban edge of the Sacramento region, leapfrogging over miles of open space. In this isolated part of the region, there was virtually no demand for the small-scale shops in the village center, which have remained vacant for years; and there was no room set aside in the village core for grocery stores or convenience shopping. Meanwhile, the expanding suburban-style commercial growth outside Laguna West lured customers away.

### 6.3 FISCAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS

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From a real estate point of view, traditional, pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods have been extremely popular and financially successful to date. In many cases, new residential neighborhoods designed in a TND format were so popular, that many households are willing to pay a premium for them. A 1999 study by the Urban Land Institute studied four new TND communities throughout the country and determined that homebuyers were willing to pay a premium of nearly \$20,000, compared to similar houses in surrounding neighborhoods.<sup>3</sup> One of the neighborhoods included in the study was the Kentlands neighborhood in Gaithersburg, Maryland, designed by the architectural firm of Duany Plater-Zyberk.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Eppli, Mark J. and Charles C. Tu. *Valuing the New Urbanism: The Impact of the New Urbanism on Prices of Single-Family Homes*. Washington, D.C.: Urban Land Institute, 1999, as cited in *The Economic Benefits of Walkable Communities*, by Center for Liveable Communities, Local Government Commission. Sacramento: Local Government Commission, 2000.

<sup>4</sup> DPZ is considered one the leading firms in TND design. It was responsible for the ground-breaking design of Seaside, Florida, a new TND community built in the late 1980's and early 1990's and featured in the motion picture *The Truman Show*. Notable, the firm prepared design regulations

Also, homes in TND neighborhoods seem to appreciate in value more quickly than that conventional homes in the real estate market. Morrison Homes, a national builder of TND-style neighborhoods, conducted a study of the resale values of homes in TND neighborhoods versus conventional neighborhoods. The specific subjects of the research initiative were non-vacation homes in the same region and in the same general price range. The study concluded that homes in the TND areas appreciated 16.7 percent during the study period, whereas homes in the conventional communities appreciated 14.2 percent over the same period.<sup>5</sup> There are several possible reasons for the success of TND residential communities:

- First, they provide an alternative to the cookie-cutter development patterns of many suburban subdivisions. Building design is often more varied and borrows from historic architectural styles.
- Second, TND communities provide a unique set of amenities often not found in conventional subdivisions. These include public plazas, pocket parks, small shops and offices, and transit connections.
- Third, TND neighborhoods provide a greater variety of lot sizes, building sizes, and housing types. In conventional subdivisions, homes are of a size and format that are well-suited for married couples with children, but they are less than ideal for singles, couples without children, and retirees, who often want smaller houses and yards. In the near future, as the baby boom generation enters retirement and as life expectancies continue to lengthen, there will be an increasing demand for housing types are well-suited to seniors. In addition, such smaller units can help the Hartford region retain more singles and young couples; there is evidence that Connecticut as a whole is losing this critical demographic group to other states.
- Fourth, pedestrian-oriented environments provide a more attractive quality of life in many respects. Pedestrian-oriented environments provide alternatives to driving — an attractive option for people living in auto-oriented and traffic-congested suburban areas. Also, because of the mix of uses, local public parks and community facilities, and the comfortable walking environment, people have more opportunities for social interaction and entertainment.
- Fifth, traffic calming techniques used in the pedestrian-friendly areas help reduce car-related noise, fumes, and safety hazards and can potentially reduce traffic levels as well. Studies have shown that such amenities can increase residential property values by as much as 20 percent.<sup>6</sup>

Along traditional Main Streets, the addition of pedestrian amenities and TND design will not always have the intended effect of turning around a declining downtown. In most cases, a design project alone will not have a dramatic impact unless it is coupled with a concerted market strategy that re-positions the commercial area vis-à-vis its competitors and builds a distinct retail niche. This point was discussed in more detail in Section 6.2.

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downtown Providence, Rhode Island, as part of that city's revitalization efforts to encourage pedestrian-oriented development that fit into the city's existing urban context.

<sup>5</sup> Morrison Homes, <[www.morrisonhomes.com](http://www.morrisonhomes.com)>.

<sup>6</sup> Litman, Todd. *Evaluating Traffic Calming Benefits, Costs, and Equity Impacts*. Vancouver: Victoria Transport Policy Institute, 1999, as cited in *The Economic Benefits of Walkable Communities*, by Center for Liveable Communities, Local Government Commission. Sacramento: Local Government Commission, 2000.

## 6.4 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

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### PUBLIC EDUCATION

The concept of TND development, while attractive to many people, still meets with resistance from some members of the public. There is often the fear that compact development could lower property values and resale prices, creating a downward spiral in the local real estate market. Oftentimes, this fear stems from an inaccurate association of high-density housing with crime and poverty. The evidence to date has proven these fears to be unfounded, and towns that encounter such resistance should consider undertaking a public education campaign that explains the benefits of mixed-use, higher-density living environments, as discussed in Chapter 4. TND neighborhoods have significant quality-of-life advantages, some of which are outlined in Section 6.3.

In many of the most attractive and popular cities around the country, there are extremely affluent neighborhoods with moderate- to high-densities. These include Nob Hill in San Francisco, Society Hill in Philadelphia, and Beacon Hill in Boston. These beautiful neighborhoods have served as models for promoting similar moderate- to high-density development elsewhere in the region. These neighborhoods prove that a traditional, compact, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented environment can be not only safe and clean, but livable and attractive. Moreover, the design features of these neighborhoods partly contribute to the high property values, sale prices, and resale prices.

### VILLAGE DISTRICT DESIGNATION

In historic villages or neighborhood centers, municipalities can consider adopting a “village district” designation, which provides a powerful tool for regulating architectural design. The State’s *Village Districts* law, adopted in 1998, is primarily intended to preserve the aesthetic quality of historic centers. With the creation of a village district, a town is able to “protect the distinctive character, landscape, and historic structures” within the district. New development or alterations within a village district are required to be “harmoniously related to their surroundings, and the terrain in the district, and to the use, scale, and architecture of existing buildings in the district.” Also, “all applications for new construction and substantial reconstruction ... shall be subject to review and recommendation by an architect or architectural firm, landscape architect, or planner.”<sup>7</sup>

The *Village Districts* law allows municipalities to develop their own design regulations that reflect the character of each district. Local regulations must provide that the “color, size, height, location, proportion of openings, roof treatments, building materials, and landscaping... and any proposed signs and lighting be evaluated for compatibility with the local architectural motif and the maintenance of views, historic buildings, monuments, and landscaping.” This suggests that the regulations adopted by a municipality can be quite specific in outlining what is permissible or prohibited in a designated village district.

The law does not take into account the fact that compact, mixed-use development also contributes to a village setting. With its requirement for architectural review, the emphasis of

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<sup>7</sup> Connecticut Gen. Stat. § 8-2.

the law is upon design. In Middletown, for example, the village district adopted in 1999 encompassed nine blocks of mixed-use buildings located between Wesleyan University and Main Street. Proposed development in the district is subject to review by a 7-member Design Review Board composed of architects, historians, and builders. Despite the existing mix of uses in the village district, the underlying zoning still permits only development of single-family and two-family housing.<sup>8</sup> This suggests that to achieve the full effect of village development, *Village District* designation is not enough. The base zoning must allow the appropriate mix of uses and densities.

## **STREET PATTERNS**

One question that often arises in TND is how to encourage developers to use traditional street patterns. Municipalities in the Hartford region should keep in mind that they have the authority to adopt a roadway plan and require subdivisions to comply with the plan. According to Conn. Gen. Stat. § 8-25, a municipality's subdivision regulations are supposed to ensure that "proposed streets are in harmony with existing or proposed principal thoroughfares shown in the plan of conservation and development" and that such proposed streets are "so arranged and of such width, as to provide an adequate and convenient system for present and prospective traffic needs."

This language suggests that municipalities are able to prepare a roadway plan as part of the *Plan of Conservation and Development* and to require adherence to the plan as subdivisions come forward. Based on the statutory language, if the plan called for a street grid or some other traditional street network, and a subdivision application came forward that did not comply with the plan, the Planning Commission would have the authority to deny the subdivision on those grounds. Without an adopted roadway plan, municipalities are only able to require a subdivision applicant to comply with engineering and traffic safety standards, pursuant to § 8-25(a).

Most Connecticut towns do not currently have a roadway plan. As a result, street patterns evolve incrementally with each new subdivision. In many cases, subdivisions do not provide for adequate connections to adjacent roadways, resulting in disconnected street patterns that hinder effective pedestrian and bicycle circulation. Moreover, such disconnected subdivisions dump all their traffic on a few major arterial roads, worsening congestion on those routes, while local residential streets go virtually unused.<sup>9</sup> By utilizing existing Planning Commission powers — as expressed in State law — municipalities can plan out a more efficient and effective street system.

## **6.5 IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

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Currently, a major impediment to TND in the Hartford region is that municipalities have only limited authority to impose design requirements outside of a village district. State statutes

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<sup>8</sup> Ryan Jockers, "Towns Call Village District Status a Success," *Greenwich Time Online*, May 28, 2000, [www.greenwichtime.com/Greenwich/release/05-28-2000/article1.html](http://www.greenwichtime.com/Greenwich/release/05-28-2000/article1.html), visited September 28, 2001.

<sup>9</sup> Phone conversation with Jim Gibbons, University of Connecticut Cooperative Extension System, May 2002.

specifically limit those aspects of development that a municipal “zoning commission” is allowed to regulate. These include:

- “The height, number of stories and size of buildings and other structures;
- “The percentage of the area of the lot that may be occupied;
- “The size of yards, courts, and other open spaces;
- “The density of population and the location and use of buildings, structures, and land for trade, industry, residence or other purposes, including water-dependent uses as defined in § 22a-93; and
- “The height, size, and location of advertising signs and billboards.”<sup>10</sup>

This list does allow municipalities to regulate density, thus making it possible to promote more compact development. In addition, municipalities currently have the power to regulate setbacks, landscaping, and signage, some of the key regulatory areas addressed by TND. However, these provisions also suggest that municipalities have no clear authority to regulate architectural design, façade treatments, placement of doorways or windows, and other design features.

CRCOG should address these limitations in State law by lobbying the legislature for broader municipal powers to regulate the design of buildings. Municipal powers cannot and should not be so broad as to mandate architectural style. TND does not need to adhere to any particular genre of building design, such as Colonial or Victorian. If a municipality wishes to ensure that new development is consistent with the character of an historic neighborhood or village center, then adopting a *Village District* designation is more appropriate.

## 6.6 RESOURCES FOR MORE INFORMATION

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### REPORTS

American Planning Association. *Planning Advisory Service Report Number 479: The Principles of Smart Development*. Chicago: American Planning Association, 1998.

Arendt, Randall; Elizabeth Brabec; Harry L. Dodson; Christine Reid; and Robert D. Yaro. *Rural by Design: Maintaining Small Town Character*. Chicago: American Planning Association, 1994.

National Association of Home Builders. *Smart Growth: Building Better Places to Live, Work, and Play*. Washington, D.C.: National Association of Home Builders, 1999.

Regional Plan Association. *Building Livable Communities: A Community Design Handbook for Connecticut Towns*. New York: Regional Plan Association, June 1997.

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<sup>10</sup> Connecticut General Statutes, Section 8-2.

## **LIBRARIES & BOOKSELLERS**

*See also, NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS, listed below.*

Planning Advisory Service  
American Planning Association  
122 S. Michigan Avenue, Suite 1600  
Chicago, IL 60603  
Phone: (312) 431-9100  
Fax: (312) 431-9985  
<[www.planning.org/pas/pas.html](http://www.planning.org/pas/pas.html)>

## **PERIODICALS**

New Urban News  
P.O. Box 6515  
Ithaca, NY 14851  
Phone: (607) 275-3087  
Fax: (607) 272-2685  
<[www.newurbannews.com](http://www.newurbannews.com)>

## **NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS**

American Planning Association  
122 S. Michigan Avenue, Suite 1600  
Chicago, IL 60603  
Phone: (312) 431-9100  
Fax: (312) 431-9985  
<[www.planning.org](http://www.planning.org)>

Center of Excellence for Sustainable Development  
Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Network  
U.S. Department of Energy  
Boston Regional Office  
JFK Federal Building, Suite 675  
Boston, MA 02203  
Phone: (617) 565-9700  
Fax: (617) 565-9723  
<[www.sustainable.doe.gov](http://www.sustainable.doe.gov)>

Congress for the New Urbanism  
The Hearst Building  
5 Third Street, Suite 725  
San Francisco, CA 94103  
Phone: (415) 495-2255  
Fax: (415) 495-1731  
<[www.cnu.org](http://www.cnu.org)>

Project for Public Spaces,  
153 Waverly Place, 4th floor  
New York, NY 10014  
Phone: (212) 620-5660  
Fax: (212) 620-3821  
<www.pps.org>

Local Government Commission  
(and the Center for Livable Communities)  
1414 K St, Ste 600  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
Phone: (916) 448-1198  
Fax: (916) 448-8246  
<www.lgc.org>

Smart Growth Network  
International City/County Management Association (ICMA)  
777 North Capitol St., NE, Suite 500  
Washington, DC 20002-4201  
Phone: (202) 289-4262  
Fax: (202) 962-3500  
<www.smartgrowth.org>

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Buck, Gordon H., AICP. "Traditional Neighborhood Development in Connecticut," *Connecticut Chapter of the American Planning Association, Online Guest Essay*. <www.ccapa.org>.

Center for Liveable Communities, Local Government Commission. *The Economic Benefits of Walkable Communities*. Sacramento: Local Government Commission, 2000.

Sierra Club. *Smart Choices or Sprawling Growth*. San Francisco: Sierra Club, 2000.

Vermont Forum on Sprawl. *Growing Smarter: Best Site Planning for Residential, Commercial & Industrial Development*. Burlington, VT: Vermont Forum on Sprawl, 2001.

Wagner, Karen. "Deep in the Neotrad of Texas," *Planning*, Volume 64, Number 8. August 1997.

## **6.8 CASE STUDY: MASHPEE COMMONS, MASHPEE, MASS.**

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Mashpee Commons is one of the most successful examples of TND in the United States, not only because of its attractive design and its popularity for both housing sales and shopping, but also because it involved the re-design of a defunct strip-style shopping center. Located a few miles from Mashpee's historic town center, the Commons is situated along a shopping strip that had served as the Town's primary commercial center for more than 30 years.

Mashpee Commons — at its core — is a festival marketplace, in the model of Quincy Market in downtown Boston. Located in western Cape Cod, about halfway between Hyannis and Woods Hole, at the intersection of Route 151 and Route 28, the Commons was partly intended to appeal to the droves of tourists to flock to Cape Cod in the summertime. At the same time, the Commons is no less a real neighborhood center where local residents live, work, shop, and socialize. In envisioning Mashpee Commons, the municipality wanted to create a traditional New England village with a mix of complementary commercial and residential uses, as an alternative to the malls that were being built on Cape Cod in the 1980's.

### **MASHPEE COMMONS & NORTH MARKET STREET**

The plan for Mashpee Commons and the adjacent North Market Street commercial area was approved in 1986, and the transformation of the original strip shopping center on the site was started at that time. The original plan called for a total of 100 housing units and about 265,000 square feet of commercial space. The original parking lot of the old shopping center was filled in with the number of small, clustered buildings, organized around a small grid of pedestrian walkways. The remaining parking lot was carved up with pedestrian walkways and landscaping, but in the end, it was still plenty large to accommodate the anticipated parking needs.

One very effective design strategy was that small, pedestrian shops actually line the automobile entryways into the complex. Thus, even though ample parking is available, the pedestrian orientation of the Commons is immediately announced to the visitor the moment he or she arrives. These street-lined stores give the impression of a traditional New England village and also allow motorists to glance into store windows on their way in.

The mix of stores in Mashpee Commons is quite eclectic, much more so than either a typical suburban shopping center or a suburban shopping mall. Included in the mix are:

- A few national chain stores that appeal to both tourists and mall-shoppers (Banana Republic, The Gap, Gap Kids, Talbots, Williams Sonoma);
- Two major grocery stores, a drug store, several banks, and many other personal services (Star Market, Stop 'N Shop, CVS Pharmacy, Fleet Bank, Cape Cod Bank & Trust, Capeway Dry Cleaners, Alberico Altering and Tailoring, Illusions Hair Salon);
- Small, locally owned, mom-and-pop stores (Baby Boutique, Hatfields Gifts, Homecomings);
- Jewelry, furniture, and antique and collectable stores (Elfstone Silver and Gold, Pine by Design, Vintage Furnishings, Funky Monkey);
- Artist supply stores and galleries (Thomas Kinkade Gallery, Woodruff Art Center, Cape Cod Photo and Art Supply);
- Movies and movie rentals (Blockbuster Video, Hoyts Mashpee Cinemas)
- Restaurants, cafes, and special food stores (Starbucks, Jade Chinese Restaurant, Zoe's Pizza, The Tea Shoppe, Ghelfi Candies);
- Professional offices (Bayview Optimetrics, Century 21, Banker's Life and Casualty Company, Thomas J. O'Neill Architects);

This represents a unique mix of commercial uses. It is extremely unusual for specialty stores like Williams Sonoma and grocery stores like Stop 'N Shop to coexist in the same shopping

center, because they serve different categories of shoppers. The TND format is partly what meshes together these seemingly incompatible retail uses. The design is charming enough to attract the mall-shoppers and tourists who want to shop in the specialty stores, but also familiar and evocative enough to Cape Cod residents to attract the locals who need to buy their groceries.

In addition to the commercial uses in Mashpee Commons, there were approximately 100 residential units, as well as several public and civic uses, including a post office, library, and public plaza. The commercial and public uses were built first, with the residential uses gradually phased in later on. Residential units in the village center are in the form of second-floor apartments, located above ground-floor shops. These units have been extremely popular. When Building No. 11 was completed in 1998, its ground floor accommodated about 14,000 square feet of commercial space, and the second floor had 13 apartments — 2 studios, 9 one-bedroom units, and 2 two-bedroom units. The apartments had a waiting list of more than 80 people, resulting in a bidding process that increased rental rates 20 percent above expectations. The apartments were extremely popular with young singles, Mashpee Commons workers, professionals working in nearby locations, and retirees.

## RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS

The original plan was so successful, that both its commercial and residential components were expanded. Several mixed-use neighborhoods are being planned around the Commons. The firm of Duany Plater-Zyberk (DPZ) prepared the master plan for the neighborhoods, and most of the site planning and building design was conducted by the architectural firm of Imai Keller. In the end, there will be five interconnected neighborhoods in addition to the Mashpee Commons and North Market Street areas. The entire area project will ultimately have a total of about 380 units and 460,000 square feet of commercial space, when completed. Each neighborhood is designed to have a strong design and pedestrian linkage to the central neighborhood. The following paragraphs provide descriptions of each neighborhood:

- *East Steeple Street.* Located east of Mashpee Commons off Route 28, this mixed use neighborhood will have 40 apartments, 35,000 square feet of office space, 135,000 square feet of retail space, 10,000 square feet of restaurants, and a 120-room hotel. The neighborhood has one- and two-story buildings, similar in style to Mashpee Commons, which line a central plaza and main street. A cross-cutting street provides pedestrian and vehicular connections to the Commons and the adjacent Boch Center for the Performing Arts.
- *Job's Fishing Road.* This neighborhood is located immediately south of Mashpee Commons and also provides a mix of land uses. The neighborhood will have 63,000 square feet of office space, 8,600 square feet of civic space, 30,500 square feet of retail space, and 20 bed-and-breakfast rooms. As for its residential component, the neighborhood's 142 dwelling units will come in a wide range of sizes, from one-bedroom apartments to three-bedroom townhouses. Numerous pocket parks are included in the neighborhood, and connections are provided not only to Mashpee Commons, but also to the Whitings Road and East Steeple Street neighborhoods.
- *Whitings Road.* The Whitings Road has a lower overall density and is entirely residential in use, providing a slightly less compact and slightly more quiet version of the other neighborhoods, while still retaining a traditional pattern of development. It

features a traditional street grid with identifiable blocks, backyard alleyways, pocket parks, and housing designs reminiscent of the Commons itself. The plan calls for 90 single-family detached houses, with 30 one-bedroom accessory units. Approximately 11.5 acres of land along the Quashnet River will be preserved as open space.

- *North Market Street West.* The narrow piece of land next to the retail uses along North Market Street will include mostly office and commercial use (more specifically, 50,000 square feet of retail, 5,000 square feet of restaurant space, and 30,000 square feet of office space). In addition, some apartments will be built in second-story spaces. The entire neighborhood will be focused around a small village green along Picabo Street.
- *Trout Pond.* This neighborhood, in addition to housing the Boch Center for the Performing Arts, will also provide 52 apartments, 26 townhouses, 45,000 square feet of retail and 40,000 square feet of office. Connections will be provided to the adjacent East Steeple Street neighborhood.

Notable, each neighborhood has a smattering of commercial and civic uses, and identifiable public spaces are provided in each neighborhood. Thus, while each neighborhood is part of the larger Commons development, each particular neighborhood has its own unique character and street life.

Residential and commercial development is built at slightly higher densities than are normally found in other suburban areas of Cape Cod and eastern Massachusetts. Higher densities, combined with a mix of land uses and pedestrian amenities, help to encourage walking and reduce auto-dependency. To provide balance for the compact development pattern, approximately 65 percent of the project's land area is dedicated to open space and parks.

## **USE OF TND CONCEPTS**

The design of both the Commons and the residential neighborhoods builds upon traditional New England architectural styles, materials, and scale. The common materials for building exteriors are brick and wood shingles; roofs are pitched and dotted with dormers; Doric columns, archways, grated windows, clock towers, classic proportions are all used, beautifully evoking the style of a colonial-era settlement. Detailed zoning and architectural codes were established for all development in the area, to ensure that any new structures are in keeping with the overall vision.

A pedestrian-oriented environment is promoted throughout. Many residences are outfitted with front porches. Sidewalks and neighborhood parks are provided, and a great deal of attention is given to the design of the pedestrian realm. Landscaping, stop signs for cars, crosswalks, benches, lighting, awning, and interesting design features create an exciting walking environment. Streets are designed with traffic-calming measures that favor pedestrian and bicycle circulation.

## **PHASING**

The retail core of the Commons was built first, transforming the former strip shopping center into a new village center, surrounded by parking. From the outset, the combination of a high-

quality design environment, combined with the abundant parking, the excellent location and access, and the good mix of stores and services made Mashpee Commons a retail success.

As the project grew in popularity, there was a growing demand for additional shops. New structures were built within the parking lot and clustered along the access roads into the Commons center. This street-lined development pattern served two purposes. First, as already mentioned, they helped to create a pedestrian-oriented realm that would be enticing to entering motorists. Second, these structures are actually helping to link the Commons to the surrounding neighborhoods as they are being built.

Moreover, by endowing Mashpee Commons with the scale and character of a New England village, the developer created a natural residential market for the surrounding area. Unlike many suburban shopping centers and shopping malls, the Mashpee Commons center is not an island of retail in a sea of parking, disconnected from its surroundings and unattractive around its edges. Instead, by building on TND design principals, Mashpee Commons itself and its surrounding become not just a shopping center, but a neighborhood center. The phasing of the housing after the initial commercial/character investment was critical to the project's success.

## **6.9 SAMPLE ORDINANCE**

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One of the most complete TND ordinances adopted to date is from the City of Belmont, North Carolina. The ordinance is successful, because it functions as a hybrid of subdivision and zoning regulations, addressing everything from the layout of streets and blocks to façade treatments. Although the primary intent of the regulations is to create residential neighborhoods, a mix of supportive commercial, institutional, and open space uses are permitted as well. While uses are flexible, design is strictly regulated through a number of standards, with different standards for each type of use.

The Belmont ordinance serves as an excellent model for implementing TND provisions for Connecticut towns. Some aspects of the ordinance would nonetheless have to be adjusted to fit into the Connecticut context. For instance, the architectural standards in the Belmont ordinance specify that all roofs must be flat and all stucco must have the same finish. Due to the New England winters, neither flat roofs nor stucco are common. Standards appropriate to local building characteristics, building off of traditional New England styles, should be substituted. Also, the Belmont ordinance establishes a minimum development size of 40 acres and a maximum size of 200 acres. Since Connecticut's land parcels tend to be smaller in size, these large dimensions should be reduced.

The issue of lot size raises the issue of how TND principles can be integrated into an existing town. In the Belmont ordinance, the TND provisions are applied to large tracts, suggesting that the City foresees the conversion of greenfields into entirely new "traditional" residential neighborhoods. In other towns, TND principles may be imposed upon existing neighborhoods with traditional or historical buildings, such that infill development would be encouraged to fit into the established pattern. In the case of infill development, some of the provisions in the Belmont ordinance may be inappropriate. For example, standards relating to street design would not be needed if street and block patterns have already been established through prior subdivision. TND provisions for infill development should reinforce the unique characteristics of the existing neighborhood by requiring new development to fit into the established pattern.

For example, if most of the townhouses on an existing turn-of-the-century neighborhood were built with bay windows facing the street, then the same could be required of new buildings.

## **CITY OF BELMONT, NORTH CAROLINA TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT (TND) DISTRICT**

### **4.11.1 INTENT**

The purpose of this district is to allow for the development of fully integrated, mixed-use pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods. The intent is to minimize traffic congestion, suburban sprawl, infrastructure costs, and environmental degradation. Its provisions adapt urban conventions which were normal in the United States from colonial times until the 1940's and historically were based on the following design principles:

- All neighborhoods have identifiable centers and edges.
- Edge lots are readily accessible to retail and recreation by non-vehicular means (a distance not greater than 1/4 mile).
- Uses and housing types are mixed and in close proximity to one another.
- Street networks are interconnected and blocks are small.
- Civic buildings are given prominent sites throughout the neighborhood.

### **4.11.2 DEVELOPMENT PROVISIONS**

- Minimum Development Size: 40 acres.
- Maximum Size: 200 acres (Tracts larger than 200 acres shall be developed as multiple Traditional Neighborhood Developments, each individually subject to all such provisions.
- Maximum permitted densities and total number of dwelling units shall be established during the site-plan review process. All TN development shall follow the preliminary and final plat procedures listed in the Belmont Subdivision Ordinance.

### **4.11.3 GENERAL DESIGN STANDARDS AND PROVISIONS**

#### **A. Use**

- The entire land area of the TND shall be divided into blocks, streets, and lots and optional natural or greenbelt areas.
- Similar land categories shall generally face one another across a street. Dissimilar categories shall abut at rear lot lines. Corner lots which front on streets of dissimilar use shall be set back the same as the adjacent use with the lesser setback.
- Large-scale, single use (conference spaces, theaters, athletic facilities, etc.) shall occur behind or above habitable street front space.
- Uses permitted with conditions are uses which generate Significant Impacts on City and/or State services and infrastructure; Essential Services class 1, 2, and 3; and Service Stations, Garages, and Fast Food Franchises. See Chapter 5 for provisions.

- Prohibited uses: Any commercial use which encourages patrons to remain in their automobiles while receiving goods or services, except service stations; chemical manufacturing, storage or distribution as a primary use; enameling, painting or plating, except artist's studios; outdoor advertising or billboard as a principle use; carting, moving, or hauling terminal or yard; prisons, detention centers, or half-way houses; manufacturing, storage, or disposal of hazardous waste materials; scrap yards; mobile homes; kennels; sand, gravel, or other mineral extraction; and any use which produces the following adverse impacts: noise at a level greater than typical street or traffic noise, offensive vibration, emission of noxious solids, liquids, or gases.
- Accessory structures may be used for rental housing on attached and detached home lots.
- All uses shall be conducted within complete enclosed buildings unless otherwise specified.
- Fences and Walls shall adhere to the provisions of Chapter 3 Section 3.4, unless otherwise specified in this Section.

## **B. Lots and Buildings**

- All lots shall share a frontage line with a street or square.
- All buildings, except accessory structures, shall have their main entrance opening onto a street or square.
- Stoops, open colonnades, and open porches may encroach up to 12 feet into front setbacks.

## **C. Streets and Alleys**

- Streets shall provide access to all tracts and lots.
- All streets and alleys shall terminate at other streets within the neighborhood and connect to existing and projected through streets outside the development.
- There shall generally be a continuous network of alleys to the rear of lots within the TND.
- The average perimeter of all blocks within the TND shall not exceed 1,350 feet. No block face shall have a length greater than 500 feet without a dedicated alley or pathway providing through access.
- Utilities shall run along alleys wherever possible.
- If provided, street lamps shall be installed on both sides of the street no less than 100 feet apart.
- Rights-of-way and streets are encouraged to differ in dimension and each street shall be separately detailed (See Section 4.6 in the Belmont Subdivision Ordinance).
- Steady and even build-to lines shall be established along all streets and public space frontages, determining the width desired for each street or public space. A minimum percentage build-out at the build-to line shall be established along all streets and public square frontages.
- The long axis of the street shall have appropriate termination with either a public monument, specifically designed building facade, or a gateway to the ensuing space.

#### **D. Parking**

- Parking lots shall generally be located at the rear or at the side of buildings and shall be screened from the sidewalk by low walls, fences or hedges.
- Parking lots and parking garages shall not abut street intersections or civic buildings, be adjacent to squares or parks, or occupy lots which terminate a vista.
- Primary street frontages shall have no vehicular entries, for properties with another street frontage. Properties with a single-frontage on a primary street shall be limited to a maximum of two single lane-width vehicular entries separated by a minimum of twenty feet.
- Adjacent parking lots shall have vehicular connections via an alley or internally.
- On-street parking directly enfronting shall count toward fulfilling the parking requirement of that lot. One parking space credit shall be given for every space in front of the lot that is over 50% of the length of the parking space.

#### **E. Landscaping**

- Trees shall be planted within right-of-ways parallel to the street along all streets. (Exception: alleys)
- Tree spacing shall be determined by species type. Large maturing trees shall be planted a minimum of 40 feet and a maximum of 50 feet on center. Small and medium maturing trees shall be planted a minimum of 10 feet and a maximum of 30 feet on center.
- Large maturing trees, such as Willow oaks, Tulip poplars, and American each shall generally be planted along residential streets and along the street frontages and perimeter areas of parks, squares, greenbelts, and civic structures.
- Small maturing trees such as flowering dogwoods, crepe myrtles and aristocrat pears shall generally be planted along non-residential streets, interior portions of parks, squares, greenbelts, and civic lots.
- Plantings in immediate proximity to buildings in front and side yards shall respect architectural lines (should be seen as extension of architectural walls).
- Plantings toward the street shall respect the integrity of the street by not obscuring important buildings and respecting views to and from streets, porches, walks, and public open spaces.
- Existing trees 18" in caliper or greater may count towards all tree requirements. All such trees not within a drive or building footprint after grading may not be cut without permission from the Zoning Officer.
- All plantings shall installed free from disease in a manner that ensures the availability of sufficient soil and water for healthy growth, and which is not intrusive to underground utilities.

#### **4.11.4 PUBLIC DESIGN STANDARDS AND PROVISIONS**

##### **A. Use**

- Land designated for public use shall consist of the following: parks, squares, greenbelts, streets and alleys.
- Public use tracts may contain civic use lots.
- Large scale recreational uses such as golf courses and multiple game fields shall be located on the perimeter of neighborhoods (i.e. within a greenbelt)
- A minimum of 5% of the gross area of the neighborhood, or two acres, whichever is greater, shall be permanently allocated to squares or parks.
- Each neighborhood shall contain as its central focus, at least one square or park no smaller than 1 acre, and no greater than 3 acres. This square shall be within 600 ft of the geographic center of the neighborhood.
- Neighborhoods along waterfronts shall provide park and square requirements along the waterfront.
- Squares, parks, and other natural amenities shall have at least 75 percent of their perimeter abutting street rights-of-way. Golf courses shall have at least 30 percent of their perimeter abutting street rights-of-way.
- The remaining public use area shall be divided at least into thirds and distributed such that no portion of the TND is further than 600 ft from a park or square.

##### **B. Lots and Buildings**

- Balconies shall be permitted to encroach up to 8 ft into a public use tract.
- All lots share a frontage line with a street or square. All buildings shall have their main entrance opening to a street or square (except accessory structures).
- Similar building massing and uses at ground level shall front a street, park, or square.

##### **C. Streets and Alleys**

- Alleys shall not form the boundary of a park, square, or greenbelt unless a wall a minimum of 6 feet in height is used for separation.

##### **D. Parking**

- The developer shall demonstrate the provision of adequate parking for public use tracts containing squares and parks. Shared parking shall be encouraged.
- Parking lots on public use tracts shall be graded, compacted, and landscaped, but may be left unpaved.

##### **E. Landscaping**

- Streets fronting parkways shall at a minimum have trees planted on the developed side of the street.
- Streets in developed areas shall not have a planted area forming a continuous band between the curb and the sidewalk.

- Streets in less developed areas (with frontage setbacks) shall have a continuous band of plantings between the curb and the sidewalk. Streets abutting open spaces shall conform to the surrounding sidewalk treatment.
- Greenbelts shall be left natural. Fronting rights-of-way shall require no plantings or landscaping.

#### **4.11.5 CIVIC DESIGN STANDARDS AND PROVISIONS**

##### **A. Use**

- Land designated for civic use shall contain but not be limited to the following: community buildings including meeting halls, libraries, post offices, schools, child care centers, clubhouses, religious buildings, recreational facilities, museums, performing art buildings, and municipal buildings.
- A minimum of 2 percent of the gross area of the neighborhood shall be designated for civic use lots.
- Civic lots shall be within or adjacent to a square or park or on a lot terminating a street vista.

##### **B. Lots and Buildings**

- Civic use buildings shall not be subject to setback limitations.

##### **C. Streets and Alleys**

- The long axis of the street shall have appropriate termination with either a public monument, specifically designed building facade, or a gateway to the ensuing space.

##### **D. Parking**

- The developer shall demonstrate the provision of adequate parking for the various types of civic uses. Shared parking shall be encouraged.
- Civic use lots within public use tract may count on-street parking fronting the public use tract toward its parking requirements.
- Off-street parking for civic uses shall occur at the rear or side of the building.

##### **E. Landscaping**

- Parking lots shall conform to Section 3.7.8 (B).
- Utility, storage, and loading areas shall conform to Section 3.7.8 (C)
- Interior plantings shall respect vistas and building lines.

#### **4.11.6 SHOPFRONT DESIGN STANDARDS AND PROVISIONS**

##### **A. Use**

- Land designated as shopfront use shall contain residential and commercial uses.
- At least 50 percent of the building area shall be designated for residential use.
- Residential uses are not permitted on the ground floors of shopfront buildings.

- A minimum of 2 percent and a maximum of 30 percent of the gross area of a neighborhood shall be designated for shopfronts.

## **B. Lots and Buildings**

- Buildings on shopfront lots shall have the facade built directly on the build-to line along at least 70 percent of its length. The unbuilt portion of the build-to line shall have a street wall directly upon it.
- Buildings on shopfront lots shall have no setback from at least one side lot line.
- Buildings on shopfront lots shall cover no more than 60 percent of the lot area.
- The maximum height shall be 35 feet.
- The minimum height shall be 26 feet.

## **C. Streets and Alleys**

- Shopfronts shall have their rear lot lines coinciding with an alley at least 24 feet containing a vehicular pavement width of at least 10 feet.
- Shopfront lots shall front on streets with a maximum right-of-way of 65 feet consisting of at least two 12 foot travel lanes, 8 foot parallel parking on both sides, and 12 foot sidewalks. Curb radius shall not exceed 10 feet.

## **D. Parking**

- No less than 75 percent of the parking places shall be to the rear of the building. Access may be through the frontage only if the alley entrance providing access is not within 200 feet of the lot.
- For shopfronts and workplaces, on-street parking directly fronting a lot shall count toward fulfilling the parking requirement.
- All shopfront and workplace streets shall have parallel or diagonal parking on street.
- The required number of parking spaces may be reduced by demonstrating the possibility of shared parking.
- The parking requirements may be suspended for select retail uses of 2,000 square feet or less, that portion of restaurant setting which is outdoors and adjacent to the street, for daycare, or for other uses which require encouragement.
- There shall one parking space per 300 square feet of building space for non-residential uses, and one per room of lodging, and per 2 bedrooms of residential use.

## **E. Landscaping**

- Parking shall conform to Section 3.7.8 (B)
- Loading, storage, and utility areas shall conform to Section 3.7.8 (C)
- Sidewalks for shopfront lots shall not have a continuous band of plantings separating the curb from the sidewalk.

#### **4.11.7 ATTACHED HOME DESIGN STANDARDS AND PROVISIONS**

##### **A. Use**

- Land designated for attached home use shall contain buildings for residential use and limited commercial use, such as a coffeehouse, home occupation, or bed and breakfast.
- An accessory building is permitted on each lot.
- 100 percent of the building area above the ground floor shall be residential.
- A minimum of 15 percent and a maximum of 30 percent of the gross area of the neighborhood shall be designated for attached houses (multi-family) and small lot (50 ft or less in width) detached houses.

##### **B. Lots and Buildings**

- Buildings on attached home lots shall be setback between 0 and 15 feet from the frontage line, and frontage lines (except for corner lots) shall be constant for a street. Buildings at street intersections set be setback 0 feet from both frontage lines.
- Buildings on attached home lots shall have no required setbacks from side lot lines.
- Buildings on attached home lots shall cover no more than 50 percent of the lot area.
- Building height shall not exceed 35 feet.
- Buildings on attached home lots shall have a masonry wall, wood fence, or hedge between 3 and 5 feet tall built along the unbuilt portion of the frontage line.

##### **C. Streets and Alleys**

- Attached homes and small-lot detached homes shall have their rear lot lines coinciding with an alley 24 feet wide containing a vehicular pavement width of at least 10 feet.
- Attached house lots shall front on streets with a maximum right-of-way of 50 feet consisting of at least two 10 foot travel lanes, 8 foot parallel parking on both sides, and 6 foot sidewalks. Curb radius shall not exceed 10 feet.

##### **D. Parking**

- All off-street parking places shall be to the rear of the building. Access shall be by an alley only.
- There shall one parking space per 300 square feet of building space for non-residential uses, and one per room of lodging, and per 2 bedrooms of residential use.

##### **E. Landscaping**

- No tree 18" in caliper or greater may be removed unless it is located in a grading area, building footprint, or drive.

#### **4.11.8 DETACHED HOME DESIGN STANDARDS AND PROVISIONS**

##### **A. Use**

- Land designated for detached home use shall contain buildings for residential uses, customary home occupational uses, and bed and breakfast inns.
- An accessory building is permitted on each lot.
- 100 percent of the building area above the ground floor shall be residential.
- A maximum of 30 percent of the gross area of the neighborhood shall be designated for large-lot (50 feet or more in width) detached homes.

##### **B. Lots and Buildings**

- Buildings on detached home lots shall be setback between 0 and 25 feet from the frontage line.
- Buildings on detached home lots shall be setback from the side lot lines equivalent to no less than 20 percent of the width of the lot. The entire setback may be allocated to one side.
- Buildings on detached home lots shall be setback no less than 30 feet from the rear lot line.
- Buildings on detached home lots shall cover no more than 50 percent of the lot area.
- Building height shall not exceed 35 feet.
- Buildings on detached home lots shall have a masonry wall, wood fence, or hedge between 3 and 5 feet tall built along the unbuilt portion of the frontage line.

##### **C. Streets and Alleys**

- Detached home lots may have their rear lot lines coinciding with an alley 24 feet wide containing a vehicular pavement width of at least 10 feet.
- Attached house lots shall enfront on streets with a maximum right-of-way of 40 feet consisting of at least two 10-foot wide travel lanes and 5-foot wide sidewalks. Curb radius shall not exceed 25 feet.

##### **D. Parking**

- All off-street parking places shall be to the side or the rear of the building. Where access is through the frontage, garages or carports shall be located a minimum of 20 feet behind the front facade
- There shall one parking space per 300 square feet of building space for non-residential uses, and one per room of lodging, and per 2 bedrooms of residential use.

##### **E. Landscaping**

- See the provisions of 3.11.7 (E) (1)

#### **4.11.9 BUSINESS DESIGN STANDARDS AND PROVISIONS**

##### **A. Use**

- Land designated for business use shall contain office, retail, light industry, warehousing, and gas stations.
- A minimum of 5 percent and a maximum of 15 percent of the gross area of the neighborhood shall be designated for business.
- Business uses shall be grouped together as follows: Office and retail may be grouped with shopfront buildings to form town centers. All other business uses shall be grouped together outside town and neighborhood centers.

##### **B. Lots and Buildings**

- Business buildings shall not require setbacks from front or side lot lines.
- Business buildings shall not cover more than 50 percent of the lot area.
- Business lots shall be separated from other use types at the side and rear lot lines by a continuous masonry wall no less than 8 feet in height.
- The maximum height shall be 35 feet.

##### **C. Streets and Alleys**

- Business lots may have their rear lot lines coinciding with an alley at least 24 feet wide containing a vehicular pavement width of at least 10 feet.
- Shopfront lots shall enfront on streets with a maximum right-of-way of 65 feet consisting of at least two 11-foot travel lanes, one 10-foot central turning lane, 8-foot parallel parking on both sides, and 9-foot sidewalks. Curb radius shall not exceed 15 feet.

##### **D. Parking**

- There shall be one parking space per 500 square feet of building space, except for office use which shall have one per 300 square feet
- Off-street parking places may to one side or to the rear of the building.

##### **E. Landscaping**

- Parking shall conform to Section 3.7.8 (B)
- Loading, storage, and utility areas shall conform to Section 3.7.8 (C)

#### **4.11.10 ARCHITECTURAL STANDARDS**

Due to the mixed-use nature of the development, architectural compatibility is necessary in order to visually integrate development and allow for proximity of varied uses. All residential uses shall conform to the standards detailed in section 3.3 (Neighborhood Center Residential)

## **Materials**

- All walls visible from public streets shall be clad in brick, cast concrete, stone, stucco, approved metal paneling (no more than 20 percent of a building wall), or material similar in appearance or texture.
- Screening walls shall be made of materials which match the principle structure (if a structure consists of more than one material, the heavier material shall be used).

## **Configurations**

- Two wall materials may be combined (horizontally) on one facade. The heavier material must be below.
- Maximum screening wall height shall be eight (8) feet. Barbed wire shall be allowed only in areas that are not visible from streets and public parking areas.
- Roofs shall be flat.

## **Techniques**

- Stucco shall be float finish.
- All rooftop equipment shall be enclosed in the building material that matches the structure or is visually compatible with the structure.

*Source: City of Belmont, North Carolina, <[www.ci.belmont.nc.us/rgordtnd.htm](http://www.ci.belmont.nc.us/rgordtnd.htm)>, visited April 18, 2002.*