

Section 32

Design Standards

- 32.1 Purpose: The purpose of Design Review is to respect, preserve and enhance the significant streetscapes, historic areas, and, in general, the overall character of the community. It is also the intent of these Regulations to provide flexibility in the application process and to improve communication and participation between developers and the Town early in the design process.
- 32.2 Scope:
- 32.2.1 Applicability: This Section shall apply to any new construction, substantial reconstruction or rehabilitation of buildings for which a zoning permit is required. These Regulations shall not apply to the Village Zone, any Village District established under Connecticut General Statutes §8-2j, or any local Historic District established under Connecticut General Statutes §7-147.
- 32.2.2 Exceptions:
- (a) Single family residential buildings, including their fences and accessory structures related to their residential uses.
 - (b) Structures located on farms and used for farm purposes; or
 - (c) Repairs to buildings where such repairs involve the replacement of existing building elements with like materials, colors, etc. and such repairs do not expand or decrease the area, or the vertical or horizontal footprint of the building, or change the roof line or roof type, or add or remove building elements.
- 32.3 Design Review Standards:
- 32.3.1 Design Context: These Regulations seek to preserve and maintain the character of areas of commercial and industrial development within the Town of Clinton. Conformance with adjacent setbacks, façades, and height of buildings within 200 feet of new developments, redevelopments, and rehabilitations is required. All new construction, renovations, and additions shall conform with the principles of walkability and maintain a pedestrian scale. Consult Appendix B for illustrations of Standards defined herein.
- 32.3.2 Site Design: Locally significant features of the site such as distinctive buildings or sight lines of vistas from within the surrounding area shall be integrated onto the site design.
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- (a) Orientation and Location: Principal façades of new construction should face the same direction as the rest of the buildings on the street. The prevailing setback line at the street should be preserved. The new façade should be flush with its neighbors.
- (1) Setback: Buildings or structures will follow the required setbacks of their zone, subject to the following additional limitations:
- (i) To the extent possible, the main façade of any new construction should be located at a depth of no more than five (5) feet of the depth of the main façade of the average of principal structures.
 - (ii) Where existing adjacent buildings are nonconforming by violating the required setback, new buildings should be flush with the required minimum zoning setback.
 - (iii) Where buildings are staggered, a new construction may be set back inconsistent from neighboring principal structures if there is additional landscaping, or if the discrepancy of adjacent buildings is more than 10 feet, the building should be no more than 10 feet from the building setback line.
- (b) Shaping and Massing: New construction should incorporate massing, building shapes, and roof shapes that are present in surrounding buildings.
- (c) Height:
- (1) The height of new buildings should be within one (1) story of the height of adjacent buildings.
 - (2) Story heights should be maintained within the range of those in surrounding buildings.
 - (3) Multi-story mixed-use buildings are encouraged.
- (d) Landscaping: The landscape design shall complement the surrounding area's landscape patterns. For new construction, existing trees should be preserved to the maximum extent possible.
- (e) Open Space: Open spaces within the proposed development shall reinforce open space patterns of the surrounding area, in form and siting.
- (f) Sidewalks: Pedestrian accommodation must be provided within the site and connected to adjacent sites where there are existing sidewalks.
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- (g) Vistas: Consideration to significant features, distinctive buildings, or sight lines of vistas from within and around the surrounding area is encouraged.

32.3.3 Building Design:

- (a) Size, scale, & proportion: New construction should relate to the dominant proportions, size, and scale of nearby buildings. The average height and width of the surrounding buildings determines a general set of proportions for an infill structure or the bays of a larger structure. Long low buildings are inappropriate amid taller structures. New buildings should not visually overpower surrounding buildings.
- (b) Materials: Building materials should be compatible with those of surrounding buildings. Traditional common materials such as brick, stone, and wood are preferred. An infill façade should be comprised of materials similar to the adjacent façades.
- (1) Use wood as the time-honored tradition of shoreline structures whether as siding or trim materials (i.e. shiplap, shingle, clapboard, or board and batten).
 - (2) Construct institutional uses of brick in downtown; full-size brick veneer (not artificial veneer) is preferable to brick tile.
 - (3) Use mortar masonry veneer and bullnose pieces to give the appearance of structural masonry.
 - (4) Wrap masonry around corners; terminate only at an interior corner to transition materials.
 - (5) Tile, stucco, or metal wall surfaces should be avoided, as they are not typical building materials in Clinton.
 - (6) Detail any poured-in-place or pre-cast concrete as a basic building material or finished with special consideration in formwork, pigments, or aggregates that can create rich surfaces compatible with surrounding buildings.
- (c) Façade:
- (1) The rhythm of façades along the street and components thereof should be maintained. New construction should reflect the characteristics of nearby façades. If the site is large, the mass of the façades can be broken into a number of smaller bays to reflect rhythms of the surrounding buildings.
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- (2) A building façade with an uninterrupted length that is greater than 40 feet long and facing a street, publicly-owned land, or designated common area, such as a parking area, should be articulated into smaller elements or bays, the average length of which will be no greater than 30 feet nor exceed 40% of the façade's total length, whichever is less.
 - (3) Uninterrupted means without windows, doors, changes in wall plane, surface ornamentation, or other treatments that cause building façades to be treated as fronts that are related to the street frontage.
 - (4) Windows, wall panels, pilasters, building bays, and storefronts should be carried across otherwise windowless walls to relieve blank, uninteresting surfaces.
 - (5) Side and rear façades should be articulated in a manner compatible with the design of the front façade.
 - (6) Though literal symmetry is not necessary, a general balance between façade elements should be harmonious to the eye.
 - (7) Recesses should be a minimum of 2 feet deep.
 - (8) Arcades should not reduce the sidewalk width to less than 4 feet.
 - (9) Recessed entries, recessed or projecting bays, expression of architectural or structural modules and detail, or variations such as surface relief, expressed joints and details, color and texture should be incorporated across building frontage.
 - (10) Bay windows, porticos, porches, or historical façade projections should be maintained, where applicable, as subordinate in proportion to the size of the façade.
 - (11) Balconies and bay windows are encouraged.
 - (12) Whenever on-site paths run along the edge of a building, use an overhang, awning, canopy, etc. to shade or shelter pedestrians or use continuous arcades, pergolas, etc. to connect buildings to one another.
 - (13) Include windows, doors, or other signs of human occupancy on any side of a building that has frontage on a sidewalk or street.
 - (14) Where buildings adjoin in a commercial or mixed-use setting, consider creating or maintaining a visual distinction between the upper and lower floors of multi-story buildings.
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- (15) Façades in which the 2nd or 3rd story overhangs the 1st story should be avoided.
- (16) In order to modulate its scale, separate the base, middle, and top of a multi-story building by articulating with cornices, string cornices, step-back, or other features.

(d) Entry:

- (1) Where applicable, as in the Downtown areas, new construction should use window and door openings of design and size typical of those of buildings in the immediate neighborhood.
- (2) The main entrance of a building should be given a bold, visible shape that stands out at a point where it can be seen immediately from the main avenues of approach.
- (3) Secondary back entries or entrances from courtyards that face the street, rear alleys or parking lots are encouraged to supplement the principal entry.
- (4) Transition space along any path that connects street and entrance through a transition space should be marked with a gateway or a change in direction, surface, grade, or view.
- (5) Doorways to upper floors should be visually separated from street-level shop entries.

(e) Windows:

- (1) The expanse of main floor display windows should be broken up with mullians and muntins.
- (2) Windows should be common to the neighborhood and consistent across a majority of the entire exterior of a building.

(f) Roof: Predominant and encouraged roof types in Clinton are gable and hip.

- (1) Dormers, lanterns, turrets, eave breaks, or skylights should be added in proportion to the overall size of a roof.
 - (2) The roof pitch of a gable dormer should match the roof pitch of the primary roof.
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- (3) The face of a dormer should be minimal in height and made up of mostly window area.
- (4) The shape of the roof should be compatible with the prevalent roof type within the neighborhood.
- (5) Roof forms should complement the principal building in terms of style, detailing, and materials.
- (6) Flat roofs should be avoided. When flat roofs are necessary, they shall include cornice, balustrade, ornamentation, or other variation of silhouette.
- (7) Encouraged materials are: slate, wood shingles or shakes, standing seam metal, and asphalt roof shingles.
- (8) Roof colors should be neutral in tone.
- (g) Mechanical Equipment: Heating, ventilation, or air conditioning equipment shall be shielded so as not to be visible from the street.

32.3.4 Lighting:

- (a) Lighting standards: No lighting shall be of such intensity or direction as to create glare on adjacent properties or adjacent streets and highways, within the following limitations (measurement to be taken at property boundaries):

Dark	0.01 fc	Park/Rural
Low	0.1 fc	Residential
Medium	0.2 fc	Commercial, industrial, high-density residential

- (1) All exterior luminaries should be downcast with full cut-off shields/shrouds directed inward towards the site and away from oncoming motorists.

32.3.5 Signage: All signage shall be uniform and compatible with the surrounding areas. See Section 28 of the Town of Clinton Zoning Regulations.