

Section 15

East Main Street Village District (EMS-VD)

- 15.1 **Statement of Purpose:** The East Main Street corridor, from the Indian River east to the intersection with Route 145 on the north side of East Main Street and to the intersection with Beach Park Road on the south, maintains the character and scale of a small New England village. It is an area of mixed civic, commercial and residential uses, characterized by a development pattern of larger governmental and religious structures set on generous open lots, combined with older buildings, which are primarily residential in scale, located close to the road with parking located to the side or rear of the building. Pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §8-2j, the purpose of this East Main Street Village District (“the District”) is to ensure that new development or redevelopment of land within the District protects the distinctive and traditional character of the East Main Street streetscape and is consistent and compatible with the following objectives:
- 15.1.1 Keep intact the concentration of municipal buildings and existing open lawns as the central focal point of the town’s civic activities;
 - 15.1.2 Maintain the existing village scale by encouraging similarly sized buildings that keep with the village character of the neighborhood, thereby preventing new buildings which are noticeably larger than the current scale that predominate the streetscape;
 - 15.1.3 Preserve the historic and significant structures within the District;
 - 15.1.4 Promote and maintain a mix of residential, commercial, and public and municipal uses;
 - 15.1.5 Reduce visual clutter and establish architectural, landscaping and signage standards which foster area identity, reflecting the maritime nature and history of Clinton; and
 - 15.1.6 Promote the East Main Street corridor as an extension of the central business district, encouraging pedestrian activity between the two districts.
- 15.2 **Permitted Uses:** The Commission encourages mixed uses within a single structure or within a complex of structures. Commercial uses may be located on the ground floor with offices or apartments on the upper floors, in accordance with these Regulations. Refer to Section 27 for the uses and type of permit required. For administration and review of applications regulated by this Section, the Clinton Design Review Board shall function as the architectural review board as described in Section 8-2j of the Connecticut General Statutes.
- 15.3 **Design Standards:** Site design, architectural design, and scale and massing of buildings shall be of such character as to harmonize and be compatible within the District. The intent of these standards is to protect the distinctive character, landscape, and historic structures, and pedestrian scale of the District.
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- 15.3.1 Site Development: Building setback from the street, side setbacks from adjacent buildings and orientation of the axis of buildings shall be consistent with and recognize the rhythm, spacing and orientation of other adjacent buildings. The primary visual focus of the site shall be the front yard area and the front building façade.
- (a) Maintenance of views, historic buildings, monuments, and landscaping is required, to the greatest extent practicable.
 - (b) The removal or disruption of historic, traditional, or significant structures or architectural elements shall require authorization of Planning & Zoning Commission as part of an overall proposal to develop or redevelop a site, and not as a simple structural demolition.
 - (c) The conversion, conservation, and preservation of existing buildings and sites in a manner that maintains the historic or distinctive character of the District is encouraged.
 - (d) Off-street parking shall be located in side and rear yards only, and shared parking areas may be established for adjacent lots. Each site shall be designed to encourage pedestrian use along East Main Street, and non-residential uses shall be designed to facilitate pedestrian movement within each site.
- 15.3.2 Building Form and Materials: New construction and rehabilitation of existing buildings should be harmoniously related to their surroundings, the terrain in the district, and to the use, scale, and architecture of existing buildings in the District that have a functional or visual relationship.
- (a) The exterior of structures or sites shall be consistent with:
 - (1) The “Connecticut Historical Commission – The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings,” as amended; or
 - (2) Distinctive characteristics of the District identified in the Town of Clinton Plan of Conservation and Development.
 - (3) Interior changes or exterior changes not visible from the public way are not subject to review by this Regulation. Routine maintenance, rehabilitation, or in-kind replacement of building materials or elements are not subject to review by this Regulation.
 - (b) Lengthy unbroken façades parallel or visible to East Main Street shall not be permitted. The maximum horizontal length of an unbroken façade visible to East Main Street shall not exceed thirty feet (30’). Façade offsets shall be sufficient to create a strong shadow line.
 - (c) On lots where street frontage limits building width and on other lots where appropriate, the buildings shall be oriented so that the narrow end (short axis) is facing the street side.
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- (1) The building width facing the street shall not exceed forty-five feet (45’).
 - (2) For corner lots or lots fronting two roads both visible from the East Main Street public way, orientation and building design should appropriately reflect the shape and proportions of the parcel.
- (d) Roof structures shall be in accordance with the existing architectural character of the area as seen from any public way. Roofs shall project enough beyond the façade to create an overhang and cast a shadow.
 - (e) Mechanical equipment shall be concealed by or placed under the roof eaves or enclosed within a structure on top of the roof. Where this is not possible, mechanical elements shall be located so that they are not visible from public streets or adjacent residential uses. Mechanical equipment located at ground level shall be screened and landscaped.
 - (1) Solar energy systems, while allowed in this District, should be located in such a way to neither diminish the efficacy of the system nor detract from the District character.
 - (f) Accessory structures shall be located in the rear or side yards only. There shall be no accessory structures located in the front yard.
 - (g) Particular attention shall be given to architectural detail and landscaping of the side of the building facing East Main Street, so that there appears to be an entrance at the front of the structure.
 - (h) Open porches are encouraged and may be used as display areas for commercial and service uses located within the building.
 - (i) Materials used in construction or reconstruction shall be consistent and compatible with materials found in similar structures throughout the District.
- 15.3.3 Parking Requirements: Off-street parking and loading spaces shall be provided in accordance with Section 33 of these Regulations, and with the following additional provisions:
- (a) No off-street parking for structures built after the implementation of the District regulations shall be located in the front yard facing East Main Street.
 - (1) If a change of use requires that the number of parking spaces be increased for a structure built before the implementation of these Regulations, the added parking spaces must be located to the rear of a line drawn parallel to the street line at a distance of not less than the closest distance to any part of the building to the street line.
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- (b) For all structures built after the implementation of these Regulations, all parking on the lot shall be located to the rear of a line drawn parallel to the front lot line at a distance not less than the closest part of the building to the front lot line.
- (c) All off-street parking areas, whether serving a single lot or multiple lots, shall be landscaped in accordance with Section 33.
- (d) Parking in side and rear yards shall be buffered from neighboring property by a five foot (5') wide landscaped buffer area unless joint parking is approved by the Commission. Each lot shall have its own buffer, and the presence of a buffer on the adjacent lot shall not suffice.
 - (1) The Commission may also approve common access driveways to joint parking areas. All proposals for joint parking and common access shall be accompanied by an easement. The easement shall include a written agreement providing for maintenance of the access and parking area and associated landscaping. The easement shall be filed on the Clinton Land Records in the Town Clerk's Office at the expiration of the appeal period.
- (e) In addition, any parking spaces which are visible from East Main Street shall be screened by landscape elements to the greatest extent practicable.
- (f) Parking areas shall be designed to provide safe pedestrian passage from parking to building.

15.3.4 Sidewalks:

- (a) All new development or enlargement of existing development shall include the installation of a sidewalk meeting the requirements of this Section, unless a conforming sidewalk exists. The Commission shall determine when enlargement of existing development requires the installation of a sidewalk.
- (b) Sidewalks shall be provided along the entire street frontage on East Main Street and along connecting side streets within the District. Sidewalks shall be provided from the frontage sidewalk to the primary building entrance.
- (c) All sidewalks parallel to East Main Street and connecting side streets shall be constructed of brick, slate, concrete, or suitable paving blocks, and shall have a minimum width of five feet (5').

15.3.5 Landscaping:

- (a) The area between the front of the building and the sidewalk shall be landscaped in a manner complementary to the scale and style of the building.
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- (1) There shall be no structure, fence, wall or planting in excess of three feet (3') located within the front yard, with the exception of any buffer areas required by these Regulations.
 - (2) Low hedges, board, picket or wrought iron fences and stone walls are appropriate for the District. Window boxes, planters and flowerbeds are encouraged.
 - (3) Commercial establishments may provide benches or other outdoor seating for customers and other pedestrians as part of the front landscape design.
- (b) All building foundations shall be planted with native shrubs or otherwise appropriately landscaped.
 - (c) All freestanding signs shall have appropriate landscaping at their base.
 - (d) All service areas, storage areas and trash receptacles shall be screened by fencing and planting.
 - (e) Street trees shall be planted at a minimum distance of one (1) tree for every fifty feet (50') of frontage. Every lot shall have a least one street tree. Suitable existing trees may be used to meet this requirement. All street trees shall be of a type, size and location approved by the Commission.
 - (f) Any disturbed portion of lot which is not used for buildings, structures, accessory uses, parking, loading or sidewalks shall be landscaped and maintained in such a manner as to minimize sediment and erosion, dust and stormwater runoff.
 - (g) Any screening, landscaping and/or paving required by these Regulations or as part of a Site Plan approval shall be maintained by the property owner or primary lessee in good condition through the period of use of the property.
- 15.3.6 Lighting: Exterior lighting shall be of a style and character that is harmonious with the character of the District. Lighting shall be properly scaled for pedestrians.
- (a) Lighting structures in parking areas shall not exceed twelve feet (12') in height.
 - (b) Luminaries shall have shielded light sources to prevent glare and the casting of light outside of the property limits.
 - (c) Pedestrian walkways may be illuminated by light bollards or other low level lighting standards with shielded light sources.
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- (d) Building mounted flood lighting is prohibited, with the exception of motion-activated security lighting.
- (e) Indirect lighting, which is not directed at property boundaries, is encouraged.