NEW ALBANY, OHIO

VILLAGE CENTER COMMERCIAL

Design Guidelines & Requirements

SECTION 3

Village Center Planning District

Continuous facades and uniform setback are typical of traditional commercial districts.

I. Overview

This section applies to all commercial development within the Village Center of New Albany. New Albany adopted an updated Village Center Strategic Plan in March 2006. This document guides future development in the heart of New Albany and is available on compact disk, in print and online. Anyone considering new construction of any kind in the Village Center should consult the plan to ensure that a proposed development is consistent with plan requirements. Contact the New Albany Community Development Department for information about obtaining a copy of the plan.

Certain design characteristics distinguish the Village Center from the rest of New Albany. These include higher-density development; multi-story buildings placed close to the street and with minimal setbacks; mixed-use development with commercial activities on the first floor and office and residential uses above; off-street parking located behind buildings; pedestrian orientation; organized community open space; and a concentration of public and civic uses.

A. Site Characteristics

Site issues for commercial buildings include access from the sidewalk, location of parking, and access from rear entrances. Other issues may include locations of trash containers and delivery doors, including street or alley access for these important services.

New Albany's zoning requirements have a significant impact on site design. Refer to the Zoning Ordinance when beginning project planning, and always confer as early as possible with staff about a planned project.

1. New buildings shall follow the traditional practice of commercial facades being constructed in a continuous plane at the inside edge of the sidewalk. This shall be the case for both individual buildings and those that share walls with adjacent buildings. No building facade shall project significantly forward of or back from the plane established by adjacent and nearby buildings. Corner buildings shall be built to the sidewalk along both street elevations.

2. Rear setbacks should provide for parking, delivery truck access, trash pickup, and similar commercial services, in cases where commercial buildings have public alleys running behind them.

3. Parking for commercial structures shall be primarily along public streets or at the rear behind the buildings.

4. Alleys shall be used as driving aisles to provide access to parking areas, rear entrances, and services such as delivery doors and trash containers. Alleys may be publicly dedicated and need to provide interconnectivity between properties. Private drives behind buildings must connect parking areas and provide shared/cross access agreements. Rear building entrances for use by the public are encouraged in such cases.

5. Parking on vacant land adjacent to or near commercial buildings shall be discouraged.

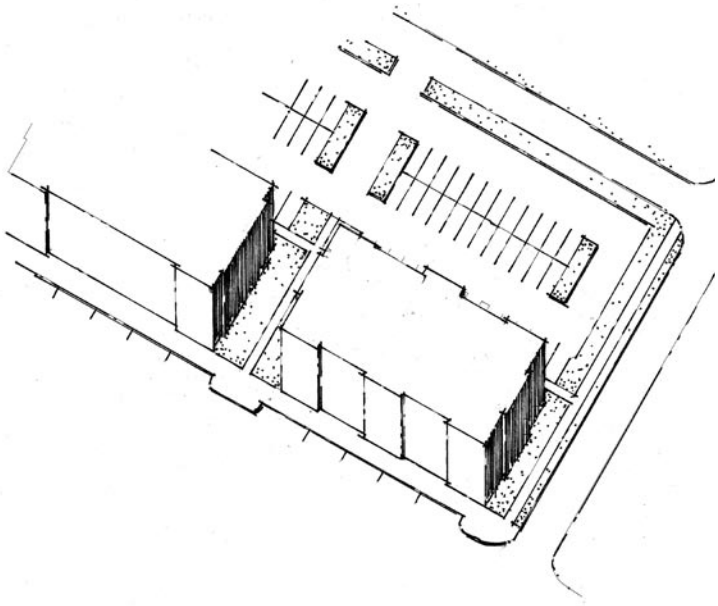
6. In addition to creating the common setback as required above, construction of a new building shall avoid creating excessive gaps and non-usable spaces between buildings. When spaces do occur, pedestrian connections should be established between any rear parking areas and the sidewalk in front of the building.

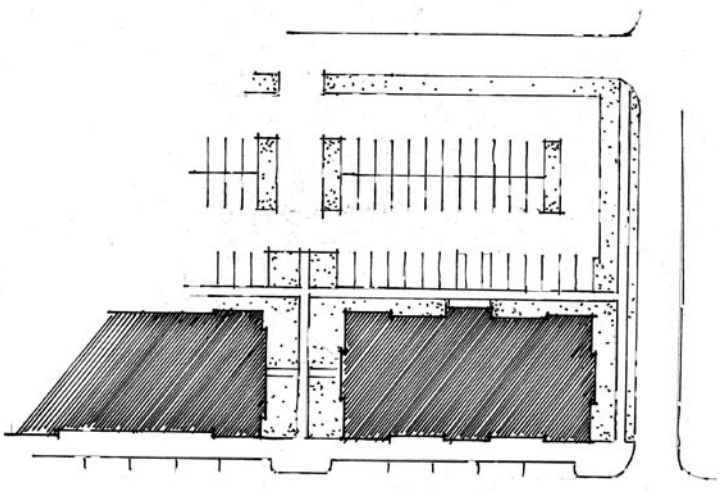
7. A continuity of the streetscape shall be created when a new building is built, by means of extension of the public sidewalk along the full width of the new building's primary facade. The sidewalk shall be of the same material, design, width, and elevation as adjacent existing sidewalk areas. Sidewalks should promote an active street and be appropriate in scale.

8. Plantings in movable pots or planters may be located at or near the entrances to commercial buildings. Such plantings shall not be located so as to constitute a tripping hazard or to interfere with pedestrian traffic.

9. Brick pavers are the most appropriate paving material in all commercial areas of the Village Center District.

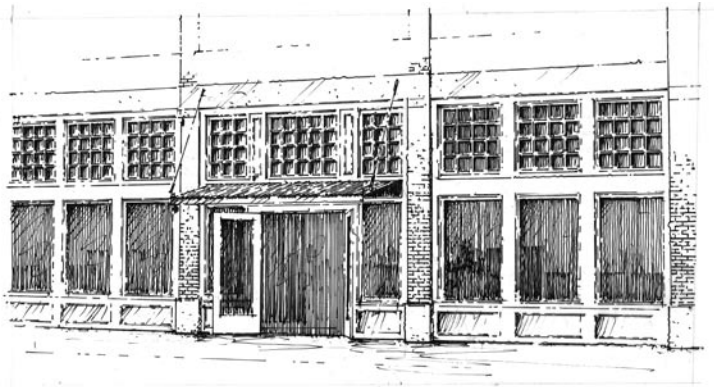
Buildings in corner locations must be built to the sidewalk's edge along both elevations.





These drawings show appropriate setback, parking and relationship to adjacent buildings, both as a bird's-eye view (above) and as a plan.

Traditional commercial frontage along the sidewalk maintains visual interest by avoiding blank walls and large gaps between buildings.



Traditional storefront design always includes a bulkhead, a display window, and a transom.

II. Building Characteristics

There are numerous commercial buildings along the streets of the Village Center, some of them older and located in the traditional downtown area, and others in the Market Square area. The Market Square buildings are much newer but have been designed and built in accordance with traditional commercial building practice. They combine uses, for example, with retail spaces on the first floor and other uses (typically residences or offices) on the second, a common traditional practice. They also have traditional storefronts that combine a bulkhead (base) at the sidewalk, a large display window, and light-gathering transom windows above the display window. These buildings use traditional forms of signage and often have hallmarks of traditional architectural styles such as cornices, brackets, and ornamental elements. Older commercial structures may be of brick or frame construction, while the newer ones generally have all-brick exteriors.

New Albany's policy is to encourage further commercial and mixed-use development in the Village Center District that follows traditional practice.

A. Design

1. Buildings shall follow the stylistic practice of traditional American commercial architecture as described in the introduction above and in the Design Principles and the "American Architectural Precedent" section.

2. Building designs shall not mix elements from different styles. The number, location, spacing, and shapes of window and door openings shall be the same as those used in traditional commercial building design.

3. Commercial storefront design shall follow traditional practice, including the use of a bulkhead, display window, and transom. The proportions and dimensions of such elements shall be developed with careful reference to the sources of design information included in the Design Principles and the "American Architectural Precedent" section of the Design Guidelines and Requirements. All visible elevations of a building shall receive similar treatment in style, materials, and design so that no visible side is of a lesser visual character than any other.

4. Buildings designed as offices are encouraged to incorporate storefronts into the design. If this is not possible or practical, the building must have windows on the first floor to avoid a blank wall along the street.

5. Roof elements such as cupolas, dormers, and balustrades shall be avoided unless a specific architectural precedent calls for such elements. When they are employed in a design, the scale, materials, and details of such elements shall be in strict conformance with historical practice.

6. When shutters are employed, they need not be used on all elevations. Shutters must be solid-paneled or louvered and, even if they are non-operable, they must be sized and mounted in a way that gives the appearance of operability and full coverage of the window.

7. Elements such as meter boxes, utility conduits, roof projections such as vent and exhaust pipes, basement window enclosures, and trash containers shall be designed and located so as to minimize their visibility and visual impact.

8. Buildings shall have operable and active front doors along all public and private roads.

B. Form

1. Massing of building forms (the way in which forms are fit together to create a complete composition) shall be consistent with traditional practice as depicted in the cited sources. In general, commercial structures in the Village Center District will occur in continuous rows, sharing party walls and with a continuous sequence of storefronts along the sidewalk. Large massed blocks shall be visually "broken up" into a series of smaller masses appropriate for the scale of the Village Center District.

2. Orientation of main building facades, those with the primary entrances, shall be toward the primary street on which the building is located. Use of corner entrances is allowed.

3. All building elevations shall be designed in a manner consistent with the selected architectural style. Refer to Guiding Principle #1 regarding design of all elevations of a building. Random mixing of exterior materials shall be avoided.

4. Particular attention shall be paid to correct proportions of building walls; gable and roof surface slopes; window and door openings; and window sash and glass panes.

Primary orientation along sidewalks encourages pedestrian activity and social interaction.

Continuous commercial frontage along the sidewalk maintains visual interest by avoiding blank walls and large gaps between buildings.

Brick and wood are the most appropriate materials for use in New Albany.

This historic commercial building features traditional elements such as distinct separation between first floor commercial area and upper floors; three-part storefront with bulkhead, display window and transom; and simple stone detailing..

C. Scale

1. New building designs shall exhibit the same sense of scale as was typical of the traditional commercial architecture selected as the inspiration for the new building. Significant variance from traditional scale shall be avoided.

2. Building scale shall be controlled by careful attention to width of facades and to floor-to-floor heights on exterior walls.

D. Building Height and Length

1. Maximum building length should not exceed 200 feet unless otherwise found appropriate to the building design, context, scale and massing by the Architectural Review Board.

2. Building height may vary between a minimum of two and a maximum of three stories. One or 1.5 story buildings may be considered with substantial justification approved by the Architectural Review Board. Buildings should be appropriate in design, context, scale and massing. The number of stories is measured above grade at the primary entrance to the building. Walk-out basements do not count toward building height.

3. In cases where commercial buildings have rear wings, those wings may be a minimum of 1.5 stories in height, provided that the depth of the wing is less than 50% of the depth of the main portion of the building.

E. Materials

1. The materials of which new buildings are constructed shall be appropriate for and typical of materials traditionally used in the commercial architecture which inspired the design of the new building. In general, wood and brick are the most appropriate exterior materials in the older areas of the Village Center District. Use of façade materials other than wood or brick must be approved by the Architectural Review Board.

2. True wood exterior materials are most appropriate. The use of alternate materials such as hardi-plank, vinyl and other modern materials may be appropriate when they are used in the same way as traditional materials would have been used. This means that the shape, size, profile, and surface texture of alternate materials must exactly match historical practice when these elements were made of wood. Especially close attention must be paid to details such as cornerboards, window and door trim, soffits and eaves, and trim to ensure a correct match to traditional wood elements.

3. Exposed concrete foundation walls are not permitted.

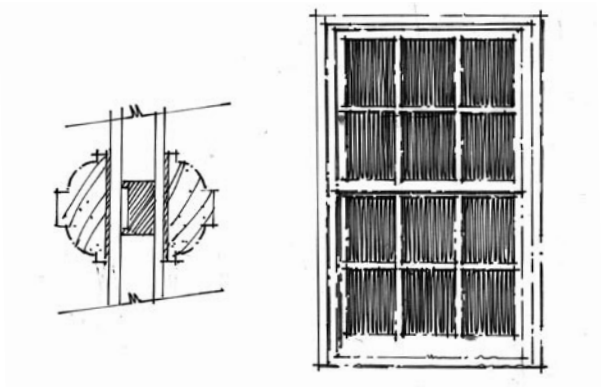
4. Storefront display windows typically had large panes of glass rather than smaller divided light glazing found in residential designs. In keeping with historical practice, new storefronts should have large single-glazed display windows. If multi-paned windows are proposed, they should be based on a specific historical precedent and should reflect the design, materials, appearance, and three-dimensional quality of the precedent. Storefront display windows should have wood or painted metal framing.

5. Historically, true divided-light wood window sash were the only ones available for multi-paned windows. Today most people prefer to simulate the divided-light look. However, great care must be taken to ensure that the divided-light look and the proportions of the window panes are correct. The only acceptable form of this window is one in which the glass panes have vertical proportions (height greater than width) and correctly-profiled muntins with an internal spacer that gives the appearance of a muntin extending through the glass. In addition, there must be an offset between the upper and lower sash to give the window a double-hung appearance. No snap-in or flat muntins will be approved. New windows must be made of wood and may have either vinyl or aluminum cladding on the exterior.

6. Another appropriate option is to use true wood or clad one-over-one windows. The window sash need not be operable if it correctly simulates a double-hung appearance.

7. When a window design has been selected for a building, the same design must be used on all elevations. Use of other window designs as "accent" windows must be appropriate for the architectural style of the building.

Storefront display windows typically had large panes of glass rather than smaller divided light glazing found in residential designs.



Double-hung windows like this are appropriate for the upper floor windows in village commercial buildings.

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