

**APPENDIX B**  
**DESIGN GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE**  
**AVON VILLAGE CENTER ZONE**

1) Façade Goals and Guidelines

a. Goals for Façade Design

- Buildings shall relate in scale and architecture to the existing historic structures within Avon Center. Special attention should be given to the brownstone buildings, which were formerly part of the Climax Fuse Company.
- In general, a unified architectural style should be determined for each project and used consistently for all elements of a building wall and roof. However, in the case of a use that is housed in multiple buildings, the underlying integrity of each building should be preserved, to the extent that historic qualities remain.
- Proportions of building elements should respect the architectural styles with which they are composed, in addition to details and materials. Building doors and windows should be designed to be consistent in proportion, size and configuration with the architectural styles that are determined to be appropriate for the building.
- A frequent aspect of building design within the AVC is buildings with peaked roof lines, flat roof lines with strong cornices, and multi-story buildings. It is recommended that these aspects of the building character be strongly considered in new developments.
- In addition to these upper story elements, the building must be ‘sitting on the street’ with a strong foundation element. However, the topography of the project site may have to make-up some differences in elevation across the foundations and base panels. This should be done in ways that eliminate large foundation walls on the street.

b. Guidelines for Facades

- Facade design should take into account the locations and proportions of the facade elements and signage bands of adjacent buildings, without mimicking them.
- Facade colors should be complementary to the natural materials used on a building and to the buildings adjacent to it.
- The palette of colors used on a building should be in accord with the materials of the building façade.

- The use of historic colors in the renovation or replacement of historic elements is highly encouraged. Lists of historic color suppliers are available at local historical organizations such as the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation.
- Blank walls without any visual content or interest should be avoided along pedestrian sidewalks and parking areas, and on front facades in general.
- Individual buildings and their storefronts should appear distinct, even when a single use spans multiple storefronts.
- New structures should employ simple roof forms compatible with the flat, mansard or gable roof styles typical of the village center commercial areas. Historic roof forms should be retained or restored. Additions should have roof forms that are compatible with the forms of the building to which they are attached.
- Downspouts and gutters should be of a color that is compatible with the building walls. If the building is existing, the style and color of downspouts and gutters should be appropriate to the original character of the facade.
- Flashing materials should not be conspicuous. Traditional flashing materials such as copper may be appropriate and are encouraged.
- Grouting and repointing of brick or other masonry facades should employ grout materials and tooling that are appropriate to the architectural style of the building.

## 2) Goals and Guidelines for Exterior Materials

### a. Goals for Exterior Materials

- In general, high quality materials should be used that convey substance and integrity. The use of materials that are traditional and historically typical to Avon is encouraged. This includes an emphasis on brick with stone accents, wood and clapboard finishes for renovations or reconstructions.
- Exterior materials should be consistent with the historic style that is used to compose the façade.
- Vinyl siding and other composite materials intended to represent natural materials are not recommended for the first floors if visible from the public right-of-way.

b. Guidelines for Exterior Materials

- The consistent use of a dominant building material for the facade is encouraged, rather than multiple materials, such as brick and clapboard combinations.
- The goal of these guidelines is to encourage the use of traditional quality materials for both appearance and durability. The use of real materials, rather than imitations such as a brick veneer, is strongly encouraged.
- The goal of this guideline is to avoid materials that are typical of low cost and low quality construction, or appear to be masking or patching an underlying facade material.
- Where possible, materials used to patch or repair existing facades should match original, desirable materials as closely as possible.
- Generally muted tones and colors are appropriate for most facade materials except for trim and special storefront elements.
- Vinyl siding, plastic roof tiles, or veneer brick are discouraged.
- If metal is used, it should be appropriate to the building, and convey a sense of quality to assure an attractive appearance over time.
- Materials used near sidewalks and adjacent to the entrance shall be durable and compatible with other building materials.
- Plywood or other wood panel sheathing materials should be avoided unless they are incorporated as a panel within a frame and are durable for exterior use.
- Minor decorative elements, such as facade ornaments, decorative fasteners, or small accents can be of any rigid, durable material that will be in harmony with the facade.

3) Goals and Guidelines for Doors and Windows

a. Goal for Doors and Windows

- Primary entrances are a principal element of orientation and welcome along the street edge, and should be designed appropriately; they should face the main street to concentrate visible activity and interest toward the street.

- Windows should respect spacing and size patterns appropriate to the architectural style that is chosen for either renovation or new construction. In general, numerous smaller window openings are preferred for upper stories of buildings. Lower story windows should be appropriate for the uses behind them, but transparency and indication of activity are important.

b. Guidelines for Doors and Windows

- Primary entrances should be largely transparent, as was traditionally the case with storefront design. This will promote a sense of welcome and safe access.
- Street numbers should be located near the front address and be of adequate size and distinctive color to be visible to the passing motorist. The street number should not be located so that it is obscured when the front door is open.
- Any special loading and service entrances should be screened from streets, other public ways, and adjacent properties. If it is not possible to screen such areas entirely, they should be visually minimized to the greatest extent possible.
- Unused entrances should be transformed into other architectural elements appropriate to the architectural style of the building, such as a store window.
- The addition of rear entrances, display windows, or other improvements are encouraged in order to increase the interest and access to uses, particularly where the building faces a rear parking area. The secondary entrances should convey the same welcoming and safety of the main entrances.
- Historic door material and hardware should be restored or repaired where possible. Repair should match existing size, species, profile and configuration.
- Screen and storm doors should be wood, when appropriate to the building, and kept as simple as possible. Horizontal and vertical rails of screen doors should align and coincide with those of the doors behind.
- Aluminum doors and aluminum screen doors are not recommended unless related to a modern style of building.
- Divided lite doors or side lites should be employed only if appropriate for the style of the building facade.

- Where ceilings need to be lowered below the window head, a ceiling soffit should be provided between the lower ceiling and the window head that allows the vision glass to be full height.
- Whenever possible, the original window patterns of a building should be restored or retained; avoid blocking, reducing, or changing any original and appropriate pattern of windows when renovating older buildings.
- An individual, "punched" window expression rather than continuous horizontal or vertical "strip" windows is encouraged whenever possible and appropriate to the building style.
- Larger scale windows should be used at the ground level.
- Reflective or dark tinted glass for glazing should be avoided.
- Opaque panels, such as painted metal or spandrel glass, should not be used to replace vision glazing in windows.
- Overall goal of transparency on the first-floor, frontage facades is 50% including all doors and glazing.
- Shutters should be employed only if they are consistent with the architectural style of the facade. Shutters should not be employed with casement-style windows, bay windows, or broad picture or display windows.

#### 4) Goals and Guidelines for Awnings, Canopies and Marquees

##### a. Goals for Awnings, Canopies and Marquees

- Awnings, canopies and marquees with a traditional design and appearance are encouraged as facade elements when they serve to protect pedestrians from the sun and rain, provide a secondary location for signage, add color and interest to building storefronts and facades, and add emphasis to display windows and doorways. Awnings should reflect the overall facade organization and storefront locations of a building.

##### b. Guidelines for Awnings, Canopies and Marquees

- Awnings on a multiple storefront building should be consistent in character, but need not be identical.
- Awnings of a round or bull nose shape should be avoided unless used for a single door or window opening that is not part of a framed storefront.

5) Lighting Goals and Guidelines

a. Lighting Goals

Building lighting should highlight the building rather than attract attention to the light fixture itself, and be appropriate to the building's architectural style, in order to maintain a positive nighttime image.

b. Lighting Guidelines

- Lighting should render building colors correctly.
- Appropriate lighting should be applied to match the building type and style. Lighting fixtures should not be used that are “historic” in theme, but diverge from the underlying character of the architecture.

6) Storefront Goals and Guidelines

a. Storefront Goals

- Storefronts refer to those portions of the facade that directly relate to the street and the commerce inside. Most facades consist of an architectural framework designed intentionally for one or more storefronts to occur. The expression of the storefronts should respect the framework and not expand beyond it.
- Storefronts should be consistent in style with the building architecture where possible, provide clarity and interest to the facade, provide for a high level of transparency (50%), and be harmonious with other adjacent storefronts. It is also important that the distinction between the storefront and the rest of the building facade should be maintained. Displays in both retail and non-retail storefront windows that add color, texture, information or visual activity to the pedestrian experience are encouraged.
- Storefront display windows that display products or services, signs with the name of the organization, local business logos, hours, public service messages or displays, or views to an activity in which people are involved frequently during hours of operation are encouraged.

b. Storefront Guidelines

- Where a storefront does not serve a retail use and transparency is not practical, window treatments should be employed to create an attractive appearance.
- A horizontal band or frieze that serves as a signage band should be incorporated at the top of storefronts.
- A base panel and sill course are traditional for most, although not all, architectural styles. Where it is appropriate for the existing or proposed architectural style, a base panel and sill course should be provided. The base panels and sill course should continue across the entire width of the storefront bay and terminate at doors or the vertical elements framing the bay. The base panel and sill course should be 24" or lower, measured above the sidewalk. Again, because of the topography of the area, this may need to be amended in certain circumstances, but in no case should a large base panel become an architectural feature of the street.
- Incorporating a glazed transom (with the building address) above the door is encouraged when storefront heights are sufficient to allow for it.
- Storefront window transoms should be consistent with door transoms.
- Transparent storefronts are not necessary for some businesses, such as professional offices. Nevertheless, it is preferable to maintain substantial storefront glazing and provide attractive window treatments to avoid blank facades along the sidewalk.
- Items should not be placed in storefront windows that block views to internal activity, such as the backs of display cases, unless they are part of a display to the outside sidewalk or street.

## 7) Signage Goals and Guidelines

### a. Signage Goals

- Signage should provide information that is simple and legible, of a size and location that avoids competing with or obscuring the architecture of the building.
- In general, the number of signs on a facade should be kept to the minimum necessary to effectively communicate the messages being conveyed. Too many signs not only compete with each other, they also detract from the appearance of the village center. Refer also to applicable town ordinances for more specific limitations regarding signage.

### b. Signage Guidelines

- Signage should employ colors and typefaces that complement the primary architectural style.
- All signs should be of durable materials compatible with the materials of the building served. Wood and metal signs are recommended. Plastic in general is not recommended.
- In a multiple storefront building, the signage should be of a size, location, material and color that relates harmoniously between bays.
- In new commercial buildings, a strong signage band above the level of the storefront should be considered if flat wall signs are employed.
- Signs on canopy fabrics advertising the name of the business or organization are encouraged.
- Indirect lighting is encouraged for signage rather than internally lit signs, preferably from a series of gooseneck or similar extended arm fixtures that direct light to the sign and are compatible with the design of the building.
- Signage above the sills of second story windows should be confined to painted letters on window glass, provided these signs advertise the organizations therein, and provided that the windows are not continuous horizontal "curtainwall" type windows.
- Projecting signs may be allowed only for retail uses, and should convey information in a unique way, utilizing images that convey the goods or services provided at the premises.
- Avoid signage that advertises brand names as its major message, unless the brand name is inherent in the name of the business.
- Avoid signage that covers or obscures significant architectural details of the building.

## 8) Goals and Guidelines for Building Systems

### a. Goals for Building Systems

- The components of building mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems should be concealed from view wherever possible. The visual impact of those building systems and equipment that cannot be concealed should be minimized on building facades. Exposed elements of building systems that cannot be hidden, recessed or screened should be blended sympathetically with the building facade.

### b. Guidelines for Building Systems

- Rooftop mechanical equipment should be completely screened by the building parapet wall so as not to be visible from the street and sidewalk.
- Air conditioning units should not be placed into windows or any other openings visible from the street. Units located in non-window openings are appropriate if they are screened with a grille within the storefront or facade or building wall.

9) Goals and Guidelines for Landscape and Site Design

a. Goals for Landscape and Site Design

- A successfully implemented set of landscape guidelines will create an exterior environment that promotes visual continuity between village center areas and from the village center itself to surrounding neighborhoods while fostering a unique sense of place that celebrates the distinct character of each location. Guidelines also establish an overall standard of design quality and protect property owners from sub-standard installations on adjacent properties or in the public realm that could have a negative impact on property values.
- At the heart of these landscape guidelines is a commitment to a sustainable environment. A sustainable landscape is more than an arrangement of plant materials designed to shape outdoor spaces for human use and enjoyment. Sustainability refers to principles of construction, operation and maintenance that meet the needs of present users without compromising the interests of adjacent or future users in regard to the use of natural resources. A sustainable landscape approach seeks to create a balance between the resources expended – in both construction and maintenance – and the landscape achieved. It is a landscape that makes the most efficient use of water, fertilizer, building materials and labor.

b. Guidelines for Site Landscaping

- Site landscaping in the village center areas is used primarily to soften hard edges, provide shade, and improve esthetics.
- Landscape buffers should be used to prevent impacts to adjacent residential properties, but should not limit connectivity between commercial properties.
- A landscaped buffer shall be provided along the rear and side property lines where abutting lands zoned or used for residential use on the ground floor. Buffer may not be less than 10-feet wide.
- Deciduous trees shall be a minimum of 3.5-inch caliper dbh and evergreen trees shall be a minimum of 8-foot in height at installation. Deciduous and

evergreen shrubbery shall be a minimum size of 7 gallon container or 36-inch balled and burlapped (B&B).

- Deciduous tree species may include:

<i>Acer rubrum</i>	<b>‘October Glory’ or ‘Red Sunset’ Red Maple</b>
<i>Platanus x acerifolia</i>	<b>‘Liberty’ or ‘Columbia’</b>
<i>Ginkgo biloba</i>	<b>‘Princeton Sentry’ Ginkgo (male form only)</b>
<i>Gleditsia triacanthos</i>	<b>‘Shademaster’ or ‘Skyline’ Honeylocust</b>
<i>Quercus rubra</i>	<b>Red Oak</b>
<i>Tilia cordata</i>	<b>‘Greenspire’ Littleleaf Linden</b>
<i>Prunus sargentii</i>	<b>Sargent’s Cherry</b>
<i>Pyrus calleryana</i>	<b>‘Aristocrat’ or ‘Chanticleer’ Callery Pear</b>
<i>Ulmus parvifolia</i>	<b>‘Allee’ Chinese Elm</b>

- For smaller and tighter spaces the following species may be used:

<i>Cornus kousa</i>	<b>Kousa Dogwood</b>
<i>Prunus x yedoensis</i>	<b>Yoshino Fl. Cherry</b>
<i>Stewartia pseudocamellia</i>	<b>Japanese Stewartia</b>

c. Guidelines for Street Landscaping

- Streetscapes should be inviting and pleasant for pedestrians to traverse and to provide visual queues to drivers.
- Streetscapes should not block access to commercial properties or unduly limit visibility to commercial and street signage.
- Street landscapes may be ‘adopted’ by adjacent merchants and property owners for street beautification.
- Trees and shrubs of several types should be planted along the length of the street. Continuity is not provided by the continuous repetition of single species, but by the occasional repetition of a dominant tree form. Single tree species may be planted on each street segment.
- Trees should be planted in a formal pattern on each side of the street. Trees on one side of the street should be set opposite to trees on the other side. Trees should be provided at a rate of large or medium shade tree for every forty linear feet of street right of way.
- The street trees should be deciduous to provide pedestrians and impervious surfaces with shading for the warmer months and to provide light in the colder months. Tree species may include:

<i>Acer rubrum</i>	<b>‘October Glory’ or ‘Red Sunset’ Red Maple</b>
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<i>Platanus x acerifolia</i>	<b>‘Liberty’ or ‘Columbia’ London Planetree</b>
<i>Ginkgo biloba</i>	<b>‘Princeton Sentry’ Ginkgo (male form only)</b>
<i>Gleditsia triacanthos</i>	<b>‘Shademaster’ or ‘Skyline’ Honeylocust</b>
<i>Quercus rubra</i>	<b>Red Oak</b>
<i>Tilia cordata</i>	<b>‘Greenspire’ Littleleaf Linden</b>
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<i>Prunus sargentii</i>	<b>‘Fastigiata’ Sargent’s Cherry</b>
<i>Syringa reticulata</i>	<b>‘Ivory silk’ Japanese Tree Lilac</b>

- Shade trees shall be a minimum of 3.5-inch caliper diameter at breast height.
- Tree pits should as large as practical to insure tree health and longevity. Multiple small trees and shrubs may be installed in a continuous planter to create an optimum growing environment for trees.
- Where installation of a continuous planter is not practical, trees may be planted in individual planting pits. After backfilling, the individual tree planting pit should be covered with a cast iron tree grate in accordance with the town standards.
- Lighting will be in accordance with the town standards.
- Street furniture should not obstruct free circulation on the sidewalk.

#### d. Guidelines for Parking Lots

- These parking lot guidelines apply to both public and private facilities.
- Lot design and landscaping should make orientation and circulation legible to both pedestrians and drivers.
- Circulation systems should be designed to reduce conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians. Traffic calming techniques should be employed to insure pedestrian safety.
- Parking lot design should provide safe and convenient through-routes for pedestrians. Walkways should be attractive and well-defined by pavement treatment, landscaping and lighting.

- Impervious areas directly connected to drainage structures are the greatest contributors to storm water pollution.
- A minimum area equal to 10% of the gross interior parking area should be landscaped.
- Landscaping within the parking areas should consist of a combination of end-row islands and linear or diamond islands between rows of parking stalls. Parking rows should not be longer than fifteen parking stalls without a planting area. End-of-aisle islands should be 6 feet by 7 feet and densely planted.
- Shade trees should be planted on the linear islands at a ratio of one 3-inch caliper tree per eight (8) parking bays (32 feet on center) and one 3-inch caliper trees per end-island. Shrubs shall be planted in a staggered row at no more than four (4) feet on center or at a ratio of one (1) shrub per 35 square feet of landscape area, whichever method yields the greater number of shrubs.
- Eighty-five percent (85%) of the available landscape island and perimeter zone shall be planted with trees shrubs, grasses and groundcovers. Large areas of bark mulch are not recommended.
- Perimeter trees should be provided at a ratio of one 3-inch caliper tree per 30 linear feet of perimeter length. Shrubs should be provided at a ratio of one (1) shrub per 35 square feet of the perimeter landscape area and should be a maximum of three feet tall when viewed from the interior of the parking lot.
- Landscape materials should emphasize simple, but substantial plantings of a limited number of species. Mature size of tree and shrub species should be large enough to match the scale of the installation.
- Parking lot bays, aisles and perimeter landscaping should be laid out with due consideration for snow plowing operations. Areas for snow storage should be sited at appropriate end-of-aisle locations. Plant species at these locations should be salt-tolerant and have a robust, horizontal branching structure that will not be damaged by snow load.
- All curbing should be composed of granite or concrete.
- Where possible, curbing design should allow passage of storm water into planted receiving areas and buffer strips (bio-swailes and rain gardens) before discharge to a drainage system. Landscaped islands and perimeter

plantings could be designed with bio-retention cells to manage storm water flows.

- Parking circulation aisles should be aligned in the direction of principal pedestrian travel and walkways shall be provided through landscaped areas at convenient locations.
- Utilities, connections, junction boxes and meters should be located in inconspicuous locations and shall be screened from public view. Screening material shall be at least half the height of the object to be screened at the time of installation.

#### 10) Glossary of Terms

There are many traditional terms that are used to describe portions of buildings and storefronts. Because some of these terms are used in the guidelines, the following glossary has been prepared.

a. Awning - An element projecting from and supported by the exterior wall of the building, constructed of fabric on a supporting framework, for the purpose of providing shelter or shading windows.

b. Canopy - A permanent roof-like shelter extending from and supported by the exterior wall of the building, constructed of some durable material such as metal or glass.

c. Canopy Sign - A sign painted on, printed on or attached flat against a canopy or marquee.

d. Cornice - An element at the top edge of a wall where it meets the roof, which usually is profiled to overhang the wall.

e. Facade - Any side of a building which faces a street or open space.

f. Gable - The vertical surface that connects two or more sloped roofs.

g. Landscaped Area - The part or parts of a lot developed and permanently maintained in grass and other plant materials, in which the space is open to the sky and is free of all vehicular traffic, parking, loading and outdoor storage.

h. Mansard - A roof with steeply sloping sides, rising to a relatively flat roof at the top.

i. Marquee - Similar to a canopy, but also serves as a location for signage.

j. Massing - The overall form of a building.

k. Pedestrian-oriented - Describes an attitude or accommodation in which the pedestrian is the primary consideration.

l. Signboard - An area of the storefront above the glazing that was often ornamented and became the traditional location for signage. The term "fascia" is sometimes used for the same element.

m. Soffit - The horizontal underside of any architectural element; usually used in reference to the bottom surface of a roof overhang or the edge of a ceiling. A soffit is often used to conceal structural elements, mechanical equipment, or to transition between different ceiling heights.

n. Symmetrical - Having a regular or balanced arrangement of elements on opposite sides of a center or axis.

o. Transom - The glazed or solid panel immediately above a door.