



TOWN OF AMHERST

DESIGN REVIEW

APPLICATION & REVIEW PROCEDURE

MATERIALS MUST BE PROVIDED IN AN ELECTRONIC FORMAT THAT CONTAINS PDF FILES OF THE APPLICATION, SITE PLAN DRAWING SET, SURVEY, LANDSCAPE PLAN, PRELIMINARY BUILDING FLOOR PLANS, BUILDING ELEVATIONS & ANY OTHER SUPPORTING INFORMATION. THIS MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH YOUR APPLICATION. APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE TRANSMITTED WITHOUT THIS ELECTRONIC INFORMATION.

THIS ALSO APPLIES TO REVISED MATERIALS THAT ARE SUBMITTED.

This application package includes the following:

- Application Form
- Design Review Checklist

Design Review by the Town Design Advisory Board (DAB) is required for Major Site Plans located in the following zoning districts:

**Traditional Infill 2.5 (TI-2.5)
Traditional Infill 4 (TI-4)
Shallow Corridor 3 (SC-3)
Deep Corridor 3 (DC-3)**

**Deep Corridor 5 (DC-5)
Center 2.5 (CTR-2.5)
Center 5 (CTR-5)
Center 8 (CTR-8)**

- IMPORTANT -

1. A pre-submittal consultation with Planning Department staff is *strongly recommended* prior to submitting an application. The pre-submittal meeting gives the applicant an opportunity to discuss with staff such items as:
 - classifying the action as a major site plan, minor site plan, or minor site plan adjustment;
 - determining what specific information will be required to be submitted with the application.

An appointment is required for all meetings with Planning Department staff.

2. The application shall be executed or consented to in writing by the owner of the property.
3. Submittal of an application grants permission to Town staff and Design Advisory Board members to access the parcel(s) under consideration.
4. All site plan and architectural drawings must be prepared by a Registered Architect, Professional Engineer, Landscape Architect, or Land Surveyor (as applicable) licensed to practice in New York State.
5. If you wish to include a Coordinated Sign Plan application with the Design Advisory Board application, a separate application must be completed. Contact the Planning Department for a copy of a Coordinated Sign Plan application package.
6. All drawings should be no larger than 24 in. x 36 in. If site characteristics warrant larger plan sheets, they may be accepted subject to Planning Department concurrence. All drawings must also reserve a 4 in. x 6 in. area in the lower right hand corner for official Town use.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

1. Applicant secures application package from the Planning Department, 5583 Main Street, Williamsville, NY 14221, (716) 631-7051. Forms are also available online at: www.amherst.ny.us, (keyword: Planning)
2. Applicant prepares information as required on the Design Review Submittal Checklist, attached. NOTE: Some proposals may not require all items on the checklist; please verify with the Planning Department.
3. Applicant schedules an appointment with the Planning Department to review the following:
 - a complete set of site plan drawings, preliminary building elevations and floor plans (no larger than 24" x 36" in size)
 - any supporting materials
4. Applicant schedules an application submittal appointment with the Planning Department. NO DESIGN REVIEW APPLICATION WILL BE ACCEPTED WITHOUT A PRE-SET SUBMITTAL APPOINTMENT.
5. At the submittal appointment, applicant provides six (6) complete and collated sets of drawings and application information to the Planning Department (**materials will not be accepted unless folded into approximately 9" x 12" in size**), including:
 - application form
 - one (1) set of site plan drawings, preliminary building elevations and floor plans to scale and on sheets no larger than 24" x 36" bearing a raised or wet seal and signature of the design professional who prepared the plans
 - five (5) sets of site plan drawings, preliminary building elevations and floor plans printed on 11" x 17" sheets
 - Colored renderings of the proposed structures
 - supporting materials
 - digital files of all materials in pdf format
6. The Planning Department transmits five (5) copies of the 11" x 17" drawings and any supporting materials to the Design Advisory Board members.

DESIGN ADVISORY BOARD MEETING PROCEDURES

1. The applicant or representative presents the project at a public meeting before the Design Advisory Board and is available to answer any questions. The applicant or representative should be prepared to present material samples, color palettes or other pertinent information on the proposed building's exterior materials at this time. The Design Advisory Board may take the following actions:
 - Postpone discussion of the request to a future Design Advisory Board meeting to allow the applicant to make revisions or provide additional materials that would allow the Design Advisory Board to make its recommendation to the Planning Board.
 - Close the discussion and make recommendations to the Planning Board on the Design Review application.

2. The applicant may be required to submit revised site plans, building plans, elevations or materials to address the Design Advisory Board comments. The procedure for submittal of revised materials is as follows:
 - A cover letter addressing all comments received to date is required.
 - “Highlight” the area of change on the drawings and provide a notation describing the change.
 - Revised plans/materials are required. Six (6) sets of plans as stipulated in item 5 of the Application Procedures above will be required.
 - All revised plans and materials must also be provided in an electronic format that contains pdf files of the revised information.
3. A copy of the Design Advisory Board’s recommendations will be provided to the applicant, his / her representative, the Building Commissioner and the Town Clerk approximately one week following the Design Advisory Board meeting at which it was heard.
4. If the Design Advisory Board makes recommendations on an application, the Planning Department will work with the applicant to ensure that all conditions have been satisfactorily addressed prior to the Planning Board meeting at which the related site plan application will be heard.

NOTE: Please check with the Planning Department to determine the deadline date for filing applications. Due to the public meeting notice requirements and departmental processing, no Design Review application will be placed on the Design Advisory Board agenda after the deadline for filing has closed. Scheduling may be delayed if an application is incomplete.

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TOWN OF AMHERST PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Application for Design Review

For Official Use

File #: _____

Design Review

**Materials Received by
Planning Department**

RECEIVED BY DATE

**Scheduled Design Advisory Board
Meeting Date:**

DATE

To Be Completed By Applicant

Petitioner:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City State Zip Code

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

E Mail: _____

Representative (Architect, Engineer, Landscape Architect, Surveyor, or Attorney):

Name: _____

Address: _____

City State Zip Code

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

E Mail: _____

HOW TO USE THE CHECKLIST:

This checklist is meant to be used as a tool to aid in providing a thorough and complete application for Design Review. It is meant to be used by the applicant to track and explain which design guidelines apply to the project, and for those that do apply, what design technique is being employed to meet or exceed the proposed guidelines.

The format of the checklist is the following:

Guideline Topic: The corresponding category of topic, as represented in the Design Guidelines table of contents.

Intent: The intent of the set of guidelines for that guideline topic.

Page #: Corresponding page in the Design Guidelines

Recommendation #: The specific guideline reference in the Design Guidelines.

Recommendation Description: Description of the recommendation

Brief Description of how the guideline is achieved: The applicant is urged to include specific references in the submittal materials (i.e. references to plan page number, calculations, descriptions, etc.). Please provide additional pages as necessary.

Shaded Areas for Official use only

SITE DESIGN GUIDELINES:

A-1. PEDESTRIAN ACCESS AND CONNECTIVITY

Intent Statement: Pedestrian access and connectivity within a site should enhance walkability throughout the site and to adjacent sites, promote safety and provide clear connections to the public realm.

Page #	Guideline #	Recommendation Description	Brief Description of how the recommendation is met, if applicable	Recommendation
4	A-1a	Establish a continuous internal walkway system throughout the site.		
4	A-1b	Provide a physical pedestrian connection between the site and nearby public space.		
4	A-1c	Provide public pedestrian access through a block.		

A-2. OUTDOOR AMENITY SPACE

Intent Statement: Although opportunities will vary by site, projects should incorporate amenity spaces, where required, into the design. Courtyards, plazas, playgrounds, outdoor dining areas and other amenity spaces provide opportunities to gather and engage in activities for both the general public and residents of the development. When located adjacent to the public realm, these features activate and enhance the pedestrian experience.

Page #	Guideline #	Recommendation Description	Brief Description of how the recommendation is met, if applicable	Recommendation
5	A-2a	Locate and program an amenity space to receive regular use.		
5	A-2b	Place amenity space so that it is connected to the public realm.		
5	A-2c	Designs should not appear to privatize the space.		

A-3. BICYCLE AMENITIES

Intent Statement: Providing bicycle amenities such as parking facilities and repair stations promotes the use of active transportation methods which help improve the safety, health and experience of community residents.

Page #	Guideline #	Recommendation Description	Brief Description of how the recommendation is met, if applicable	Recommendation
6	A-3a	Provide connections to existing or planned bike paths.		
6	A-3b	Incorporate bicycle amenities into site designs.		

A-4. PUBLIC ART

Intent Statement: Public art includes decorative and functional features that are accessible or visible to the public. These may include sculptures, landscaping elements, or street furniture (benches, bike racks, or other functional features with an original design). Public art enhances the pedestrian experience and should be integrated into a project as a design amenity.

Page #	Guideline #	Recommendation Description	Brief Description of how the recommendation is met, if applicable	Recommendation
7	A-4a	Encourage the inclusion of public art in a project.		

A-5. SITE LANDSCAPING

Intent Statement: Landscaping can enhance a project by providing visual interest, tying together key site features, providing shade, screening areas from public view and providing buffers between properties. It can also help soften the urban environment and visually enhance the public realm. The guidelines in this section go beyond the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance and are in addition to the requirements of Chapter 203-7-2.

Page #	Guideline #	Recommendation Description	Brief Description of how the recommendation is met, if applicable	Recommendation
8	A-5a	Preserve existing viable, healthy and attractive trees.		
8	A-5b	Incorporate into the project's stormwater management system through the use of Low-Impact Development and other green infrastructure approaches.		
8	A-6c	Use a coordinated landscape plant and materials palette to establish a sense of continuity within the project.		
8	A-5d	Choose appropriate tree and plant species.		

A-6. SUSTAINABLE FEATURES

Intent Statement: Each site design should create opportunities to contribute to a sustainable future for Amherst. Incorporate sustainable features that help reduce energy and water consumption, improve stormwater management, and create an overall healthy environment.

Page #	Guideline #	Recommendation Description	Brief Description of how the recommendation is met, if applicable	Recommendation
9	A-6a	Integrate Low-Impact Development (LID) features throughout the site to minimize impacts to the municipal stormwater system and area watersheds.		
9	A-6b	Use landscaping to reduce heating and cooling needs.		

A-6. SUSTAINABLE FEATURES (cont.)

Page #	Guideline #	Recommendation Description	Brief Description of how the recommendation is met, if applicable	Recommendation
9	A-6c	Include materials and natural features that conserve and promote wildlife habitat and local biodiversity.		
9	A-6d	Reuse site or construction materials.		

A-7. RESIDENTIAL TRANSITIONS

Intent Statement: Residential transitions, where required in Section 5A-5, should focus on minimizing the impact of new development and site activity on adjacent protected districts.

Page #	Guideline #	Recommendation Description	Brief Description of how the recommendation is met, if applicable	Recommendation
10	A-7a	Take into consideration the project's building and site elements that are located near the residential transition.		
10	A-7b	Use wall and fence materials that can be maintained to last as long as the principal building.		
10	A-7c	Use colors that match or complement the principal building or are subdued and blend in with the natural environment.		

BUILDING DESIGN GUIDELINES:

B-1. FACADE

Intent Statement: The façade of a building should be appropriate to the style and character of surrounding buildings, the site, and the general character of the surrounding community.

Page #	Guideline #	Recommendation Description	Brief Description of how the recommendation is met, if applicable	Recommendation
11	B-1a	Design the building to incorporate a “base, middle and cap” to divide the façade into separate components, that produce well defined ground or lower floors and a distinctive “cap “ element framing the middle floors, especially on taller buildings.		
11	B-1b	On larger building frontages, implement a variety of façade treatments to provide visual distinction, variety, and the appearance of multiple structures to break up the facades.		
11	B-1c	Arrange elements on the façade (e.g. windows, doors, canopies, etc.) to create a generally consistent rhythm and overall visual interest.		

B-2. ENTRYWAYS

Intent Statement: Entryways should be well-identified and provide a welcoming experience for those utilizing them, while contributing to the overall style and character of the building.

Page #	Guideline #	Recommendation Description	Brief Description of how the recommendation is met, if applicable	Recommendation
12	B-2a	Doors and entryways should be of a style, scale, and coverage appropriate to the overall architectural style of the building.		

B-2. ENTRYWAYS (cont.)

Page #	Guideline #	Recommendation Description	Brief Description of how the recommendation is met, if applicable	Recommendation
12	B-2b	The primary entrance of a building should be clearly identifiable.		
12	B-2c	Incorporate accessibility into primary entrances without the need for switchbacks or railings.		
12	B-2d	Commercial buildings should have a transparent primary entrance.		

B-3. WINDOWS

Intent Statement: Window design and arrangement should express a human scale. Where compatibility with adjacent building character is important, use windows to create visual continuity with the existing character and provide visual interest.

Page #	Guideline #	Recommendation Description	Brief Description of how the recommendation is met, if applicable	Recommendation
13	B-3a	Windows should be of a scale and proportion appropriate to the overall architectural style of the building and in character with the window sizes of adjacent building and sites.		
13	B-3b	Locate windows to create visual continuity.		
13	B-3c	Window openings should be trimmed with an appropriate material.		

B-4. ROOFS AND ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS

Intent Statement: These crucial components of a building’s façade and massing should complement and enhance the overall building composition. The use of these details should be kept consistent with buildings of a similar architectural style, but should also help create a unique identity for the structure. An appropriate amount of architectural detail should be used.

Page #	Guideline #	Recommendation Description	Brief Description of how the recommendation is met, if applicable	Recommendation
14	B-4a	Architectural details such as overhangs, cornices, eaves and parapets, should complement the architectural style of the building and its surrounding context.		
14	B-4b	Rooflines should be in character with the overall style of the building.		
14	B-4c	Cornices should be used to differentiate and enhance the vertical composition of the façade.		
14	B-4d	Building stories, cornice lines and other horizontal elements should be generally consistent with adjacent buildings to help provide a rhythm to the streetscape.		
14	B-4e	Varying the building placement (setback from the street) on a large building helps break up the block and reduce the impact of long buildings on the streetscape.		
14	B-4f	Architectural lighting may be used to enhance specific elements of the building.		

B-5. STREET LEVEL INTEREST

Intent Statement: The character of a building's ground floor strongly impacts the pedestrian experience. The ground floor of a building should be designed to generate activity, animate the sidewalk and help establish a visual/physical connection between the inside of the building and the adjacent outdoor area.

Page #	Guideline #	Recommendation Description	Brief Description of how the recommendation is met, if applicable	Recommendation
15	B-5a	Design a building to provide interest at the street level adjacent to the public realm.		
15	B-5b	Incorporate landscaping along the ground floor of the building.		

B-6. SUSTAINABLE BUILDING FEATURES

Intent Statement: Buildings should incorporate sustainable features that help reduce energy consumption, reduce water use, and contribute to a more sustainable environment.

Page #	Guideline #	Recommendation Description	Brief Description of how the recommendation is met, if applicable	Recommendation
16	B-6a	Should seek to reduce water usage and reuse water with the building.		
16	B-6b	Should seek to reduce energy use and generate energy on-site.		

B-7. BUILDING MATERIALS

Intent Statement: Building materials should evoke the character, style and purpose of the structure. Each building façade should use high-quality, durable materials that contribute to the visual continuity of the building’s character. They should be consistent with those used traditionally in the surrounding area, however, materials with new and innovative materials may also be appropriate, especially in Retrofit Districts.

Page #	Guideline #	Recommendation Description	Brief Description of how the recommendation is met, if applicable	Recommendation
17	B-7a	Use high quality, durable building materials.		
17	B-7b	Use responsibly-sourced and long-lasting building materials.		
17	B-7c	Any side or rear wall facing a street, residential district or public area must consist of the same finish materials as the primary façade.		
17	B-7d	Decorative masonry materials (such as split face and textured finish blocks) are discouraged but may be considered an acceptable façade material at the discretion of the Planning Board.		
17	B-7e	Exterior finishing materials for renovation, additions and rehabilitations should be consistent with those being retained on the existing structure.		
17	B-7f	Exterior Insulation Finish System (EIFS) should not be utilized as a primary building material, but may be utilized, at the discretion of the Planning Board, as a decorative or complementary material on upper stories only.		

PUBLIC REALM GUIDELINES:

C-1. OPEN SPACE

Intent Statement: Open space is a public outdoor area provided for social and recreational use. Examples of open space include parks, parklets, greenways, trails, playgrounds, gardens and more. Open space is required in the Retrofit Districts.

Page #	Guideline #	Recommendation Description	Brief Description of how the recommendation is met, if applicable	Recommendation
18	C-1a	Open spaces should ideally be centrally located.		
18	C-1b	Open spaces should contribute to an existing or planned open space or greenway network when possible.		
18	C-1c	Open spaces should be easily accessible by everyone.		
18	C-1d	Open spaces should be designed to be proportionate in scale to their surrounding context.		
18	C-1e	Existing natural features and systems should be utilized or highlighted in the design of an open space.		
18	C-1f	Open spaces should be programmed in ways that allow for a variety of uses.		
18	C-1g	Incorporate pedestrian and bicycle amenities such as seating, trash receptacles, drinking fountains, bicycle parking, and pedestrian-scaled lighting.		

C-2. SIDEWALK

Intent Statement: Design sidewalks to enhance the pedestrian experience. A well-designed sidewalk increases walkability and safety, and helps to connect ground floor activities to the public realm.

Page #	Guideline #	Recommendation Description	Brief Description of how the recommendation is met, if applicable	Recommendation
19	C-2a	Coordinate building elements such as furnishings, overhangs, lighting and signs to create an engaging sidewalk space.		
19	C-2b	Sidewalk elements should be scaled according to their context, including the intensity of activity, building heights and noise levels.		
19	C-2c	Locate exterior uses and amenities to support and connect to interior activities.		
19	C-2d	Use surface materials that complement the architecture and character of the area.		

C-3. CURB ZONE

Intent Statement: The curb zone is the area between the back-of-curb and the sidewalk where landscaping and streetscape amenities should be placed so that they can contribute to the pedestrian experience.

Page #	Guideline #	Recommendation Description	Brief Description of how the recommendation is met, if applicable	Recommendation
	C-3a	Streetscape amenities may be placed in the curb zone with approval of the Town or other regulating agency with jurisdiction.		
	C-3b	Trees and other landscaping should be planted within the curb zone.		

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Design Review Submittal Requirements and Checklist

The following checklist outlines the information required by the Planning Department to accept a Design Review application. *It is strongly recommended that you make an appointment with Planning Staff to determine which items apply to your application.*

Item No.	Item	Submitted	Official use
I Basic Drawing Information			
1.0	Drawings / Plans		
1.1	One (1) set to scale and not to exceed 24" x 36" in size		
1.2	Five (5) sets reduced to fit on 11" x 17" sheets		
2.0	Title of Drawing		
3.0	Name and address of Applicant		
4.0	Name of person preparing drawing		
5.0	Wet seal/raised seal and signature of NYS licensed architect, engineer, landscape architect, or surveyor (as applicable)		
6.0	Project address		
7.0	Zoning of subject property and adjacent parcels		
8.0	North point, scale, date, and revision date(s)		
9.0	4" x 6" reserved area in lower right hand corner for official Town use		
II Architectural Plans			
1.0	Floor Plans (fully dimensioned and identifying individual rooms and spaces)		
1.1	Dimension building entrance spacing		
2.0	Exterior building elevations (fully dimensioned)		
2.1	Height dimensions from finished grade to the top plate		
2.2	Dimension all blank wall area lengths		
2.3	Indicate the exterior wall area materials		
2.4	Indicate the exterior wall area and trim colors		
2.5	Identify all building entrance location and materials		
2.6	Identify all building glazing and frame materials		
2.7	Provide calculations for ground story and upper story transparency		
2.8	Indicate type of roofing materials		
2.9	Identify conceptual future signage locations		
3.0	Building Sections		
III Architectural Renderings / Aerials / Photographs			
1.0	Architectural Renderings		
1.1	Renderings of all elevations having street frontages		
2.0	Aerial Views		
3.0	Photographs		
3.1	Adjacent site(s)		
3.2	Adjacent Building(s)		

IV Architectural Manufacturer Material Samples (to be available for meeting with design Advisory Board)

1.1	Exterior colors		
2.0	Exterior wall materials		
3.0	Exterior roof materials		
4.0	Exterior windows		
5.0	Exterior doors		

V Site Plans Drawings (see site plan submittal checklist for requirements)

1.0	Site Plan		
1.1	Site Details (fences, walls, site furniture, etc.)		
1.2	Indicate the existing zoning of both the subject property and adjacent parcels		
2.0	Grading Plan		
3.0	Utility Plan		
4.0	Storm Drainage Plan		
5.0	Exterior Lighting Plan		
5.1	Exterior Lighting Details (light fixtures, light poles, etc.)		
6.0	Landscape Plan		
6.1	Colored landscape plan.		
6.2	Landscape Details		

VI Other Required Information/General Requirements

1.0	Complete boundary survey that includes all existing structures, acreage, legal description with reference to a property line, street, or other known feature, and easements plotted to scale by a NYS licensed land surveyor		
2.0	Topographic Survey with a 30 ft. buffer outside all property lines by a NYS licensed land surveyor		
3.0	Documentation pertaining to any conditions of zoning, including copies of required deed restrictions (if applicable)		
4.0	Documentation related to any required variances granted by the ZBA (if applicable)		
5.0	A CD or other digital record containing a PDF of all site plan, architectural drawings or renderings (Must also be provided with revised drawings)		

For official use only:

Approved/Date