

NEWBURGH
HEIGHTS



**Village of Newburgh Heights
Architectural Standards**



August 2017



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The Cuyahoga County Planning Commission's mission is to inform and provide services in support of the short and long term comprehensive planning, quality of life, environment, and economic development of Cuyahoga County and its cities, villages and townships.

Date of Publication: June 2001
Re-Formatted: August 2017



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PURPOSE & INTENT

As one of the oldest communities in Cuyahoga County, the Village of Newburgh Heights possesses architectural features that are of both historic and aesthetic significance. It has been demonstrated in communities across the country that preservation of historic features and better coordination of architecture through tools such as architectural standards help to maintain property values, and can enhance community identity and pride. The guidelines set forth within these “Architectural Standards” are meant to ensure that the architectural integrity of existing structures is maintained and that the design elements of proposed alterations or construction projects are compatible with the existing building styles in the surrounding neighborhoods.

The Village of Newburgh Heights’ Architectural Standards will be used by elected, governing bodies and Village staff in their consideration of applications submitted from the public and developers to alter an existing structure or to construct a new residential or commercial building. The use of these standards will assist in the decision- making process on such applications and design choices to ensure that decisions are based on a clear set of guidelines, and not influenced by the preferences of staff, elected officials, or the general public.

RESIDENTIAL STANDARDS

The purpose of this section is to describe the existing housing styles, forms, materials, and requirements for preservation and alterations to residential structures.

Architectural Styles

Roughly 80% of Newburgh Heights’ existing housing stock was constructed prior to 1940, largely between the years 1910 and 1929. This is significant because the post-WWII era signifies the beginning of a new period in American architectural history. While the first half of the twentieth century is characterized, in large part, by revivals of traditional European and Colonial American architectural styles, the 1950’s and 1960’s witnessed the emergence of new styles such as the ranch and the split-level. In the 1970’s and 1980’s, another contemporary style emerged, where individual houses were characterized by the adaptation of a combination of historical details to more current construction methods and materials.

The following are descriptions of the most common residential architectural styles found within Newburgh Heights.

Vernacular Double (“duplex”)

The style of double home found in Newburgh Heights is similar to that found throughout Cleveland and its older, inner-ring suburbs. About ninety-seven percent of Newburgh Heights’ doubles were built prior to 1940. The original characteristics of the vernacular double in Newburgh Heights include:

- Vertical orientation of the housing units, with one above the other, as opposed to a side-by-side orientation.
- Identical floor plan in each unit.
- Identical window placement on first and second story.
- Front-facing gabled main roof.
- Front porches that span the full width of the front of the house on both the first and second floor.
- Closed, clapboard railings on porches or

baluster railings.

- Second floor porch covered by a low pitched, front-facing gabled roof.

The most common exterior alteration to duplex homes in Newburgh Heights is made to the front porch. Examples of typical alterations include: enclosure of front porch, removal of front porch, alteration of pillars or railings, or alteration of second-floor porch roof.



Bungalow

Bungalows were popularized in the U.S. during the first three decades of the twentieth century; although certain prominent elements of the bungalow style are also evident in many post-WWII homes. The most common characteristics of bungalows include:

- One and one-half story height
- Sweeping, low-pitched gabled roof with overhanging eaves; gable can be front-facing or side-facing.
- Full- or half-width front porch, commonly sheltered by extension of main roof structure if gable is side-facing.
- Square-shaped wooden or brick support columns on front porch.
- Second-floor dormer windows.



American Foursquare

Foursquare style houses were built primarily between 1900 and 1925. They are easily recognized by the following characteristics:

- Two full stories with almost square dimensions.
- Symmetrical placement of windows on front facade.
- Front entrance typically located in center of house, although sometimes can be off-center.
- Low-pitched, pyramidal roof.
- Front porch which can span either full- or partial-width of house (full-width is more common).
- Dormers with hipped roofs.



Romantic Revival

Although sometimes more difficult to distinguish, romantic revival homes, built predominantly during the first half of the twentieth century, are a common fixture in the architectural landscape of Newburgh Heights and other communities in the region. Distinguishing characteristics of romantic revival homes include:

- Cross-gabled roof.
- Exterior material usually consisting of brick, stone, or masonry veneer on a wood frame.
- Diversity in window type—for example the front facade of a house may have a casement window, a double-hung window, and a rounded-arch window.
- Stone or brick pattern detailing around windows and doors.



Homestead

Most homestead houses were built in the early 1900's. The typical style of the homestead house, built in the early twentieth century or later, is the result of an architectural evolution which traces its roots back to colonial homes of the 1700's. Characteristics of the typical twentieth century homestead house include:

- Two-and-a-half story height.
- Rectangular floor plan.
- Front-gabled roof.
- Minimal amount of exterior detailing.
- Front porch which is typically full-width.



Post-WWII

In Newburgh Heights, the most common post-WWII homes are the ranch, the "contemporary" style referred to earlier, which consists of a mixture of historical architectural elements, and a style modeled after traditional New England Cape Cod houses.



Ranch

Newburgh Heights ranch homes are easily identified by the following characteristics:

- One-story height.
- Almost square dimensions.
- Low-pitched, pyramidal roof.



Contemporary

Contemporary, post-WWII homes are more difficult to classify because they might display a mixture of architectural features. Some common possible attributes of the contemporary post-WWII style include:

- Two-story height.
- No front porch.
- Aluminum or vinyl siding exterior, which can span the entire house, or is commonly combined with brick covering the first story of the home.



Cape Cod, built after WWII

Based upon the traditional New England Cape Cod style, the contemporary “suburban” Cape Cod found throughout Newburgh Heights and other communities in the area is identified by the following characteristics:

- One-and-a-half story height.
- Cross-gabled roof, with gable flush to left or right side of house.
- First floor window configuration of picture window and double-hung window flanking front entrance.



Preservation & Alterations

The purpose of this section is to encourage the preservation of original materials, features, and overall architectural styles. The following guidelines are to help elected, governing bodies and staff in assisting the general public and developers on the Villages best practices for such proposed construction and/or alterations.

Siding

If possible, retain and preserve the home’s original siding. Deteriorated siding materials should be repaired or replaced with materials similar to those used in the original construction of the home. Covering traditional siding materials such as wood

and brick with synthetic siding materials such as aluminum or vinyl siding, asbestos or asphalt shingles, or artificial stone and brick veneer is strongly discouraged. Aesthetically, installation of artificial siding on older homes (pre-World War II) almost always results in a loss of architectural detail, a process which alters the style and historic character of the house. Additionally, artificial siding can promote the deterioration of the original material it covers, as the impermeability of synthetic materials traps moisture and does not allow for circulation of air beneath.

Artificial siding can be removed, and original wood siding restored. In the case of homes installed with vinyl or aluminum siding, the most common types of artificial siding found in Newburgh Heights, the condition of the original wood siding underneath is dependent upon many factors, including the quality of the new siding materials used and utilization of proper installation procedures.

Should it be determined that the installation of artificial siding is necessary, siding which most closely imitates the appearance of the original siding should be chosen. Vinyl siding with wood-grained pattern is not appropriate, as real wood siding has a smooth finish. Siding should not cover the wood frame bordering windows or doors, nor should it cover any other original architectural detailing of the exterior of the home as these are important architectural features.

Existing homes which have already been sided with artificial materials should be properly maintained. Siding should be washed, and any deteriorated or damaged portions should be replaced immediately. Artificial siding, particularly aluminum, will

eventually need to be painted and this process will increase the maintenance responsibilities associated with the material.



Exposed Window Frame

Masonry

Stone and brick are among the most durable of building materials, but they are also susceptible to certain wearing effects with age. The natural color of the stone or brick can fade slightly, and soot and dirt can accumulate on their surfaces. The fading process is viewed by many to be a beautification process which results in improved harmonization between the colors of the buildings and the surrounding natural environment.

If soot and dirt have accumulated on the surface of the stone or brick, wash with low-pressure water, mild detergents, and soft-bristled brushes. Never clean by blasting, as this process can seriously erode the protective, hard outer surface of the masonry material and accelerate its deterioration. Additionally, the blasting process leaves behind a roughened surface which accumulates dirt and pollutants much faster than the original surface.

Stone and brick should not be painted, as

the resulting surface is neither as attractive nor as durable as the original, unpainted version. Once masonry has been painted, it is very difficult to restore it to its original appearance. Painting masonry transforms a durable, attractive, low-maintenance surface into a less durable, less attractive, high-maintenance surface.

At some point, the mortar between bricks and other masonry material may require repair. Areas where the mortar has cracked or is missing should be repointed. In choosing the proper mortar to use for repointing, select mortar which matches the color of the original. Prepare samples of the mortar and allow them to dry to ensure that they match the original color. Additionally, choosing a mortar with the correct ingredient composition is crucial. Replacement mortar should be softer than the bricks, and no harder than the original mortar. Mortar is not an adhesive for bricks. It serves to absorb the expansion and contraction of masonry during freezing and thawing periods. The appropriate mortar for masonry in most Newburgh Heights homes, given the average age of the housing stock, is probably a mortar with low or no portland cement content. Mortars of high portland cement content is harder than brick, and in this situation the masonry will crack as it, rather than the mortar, yields to seasonal adjustments. The mortar in older Newburgh Heights homes is primarily composed of lime and sand.

Doors & Windows

The front door serves as a focal point of the facade of a home. Certain styles of homes have distinct types of doors which are appropriate to the original architecture of the house. Doors on older homes were intended to stylistically complement the surrounding exterior detailing. Therefore,

one should always try to retain the original door, frame, trim, surrounding fixtures and windows, and porch structure.

If a replacement door is necessary, the new door should match the original as closely as possible in material, size and style. This includes any panels or windows that were present in the original door.

Most contemporary door designs are not appropriate to homes built in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. If a storm door is desired, it should be of simple design with a large glass pane that reveals as much of the door behind it as possible.

Windows are one of the most important architectural elements of the facade of a house. They allow light and glimpses of activity from the interior of a home to spill forth onto the street, enhancing the sense of community and safety for passers-by. The decorative elements of windows, such as the sash, muntins, and sill, as well as the wood or masonry materials that surround them, are designed to complement the exterior detailing of the home.

A window's style (double-hung, casement, etc.), orientation, placement, and size in proportion to other windows and the entire frontage of the house are of equal architectural significance. Retain and repair, whenever possible, the original windows and their components. If replacement is necessary, replace with windows which duplicate the original window's material, style, orientation, placement, size, and decorative elements. Windows made of synthetic materials, such as vinyl or metal, or which have simulated features such as snap-in muntins, are strongly discouraged on homes built prior to World War II. Most homes of this era possess double-hung

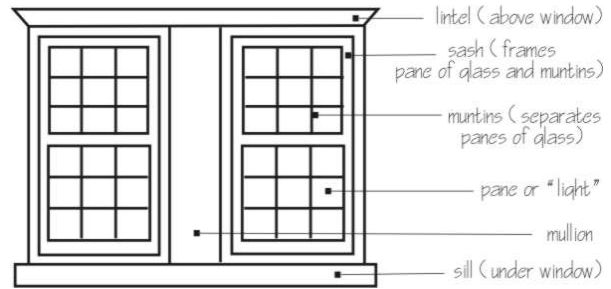
windows framed in wood with glass that is either a single pane, or “true-divided lights.” Windows with true-divided lights are made up of smaller individual panes of glass, separated by a muntins.

The standardized designs and synthetic materials found in most contemporary, manufactured windows lack the detailing and general aesthetic qualities imparted by traditional wood or metal materials which are stylistically appropriate to windows of homes built during the first part of the twentieth century.

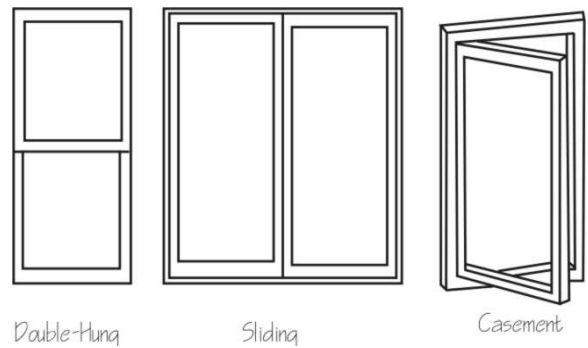
Shutters should not be added to windows unless they were an original feature of the house. Original shutters should be retained and repaired. If replacement shutters are necessary, they should be made of wood and the same style as the original. Shutters should be large enough so that if they were closed, they would cover the entire window area.

Enlarging or reducing the size of window openings, or changing their orientation, is strongly discouraged. The original size and orientation of window openings are specifically appropriate to the original architecture of the house.

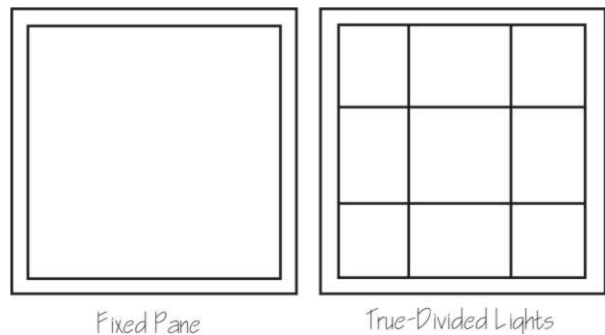
When the orientation and/or size of window openings is altered, the house’s appearance is compromised in that new openings now look out of proportion to both the remaining original windows and to the amount of wall space on the exterior of the home.



Components of Windows



Types of Window Styles



Window with True-Divided Lights



Inconsistent Window Sizes and Types



Well-Balanced Second Story Window

Porches

Front porches are an important feature of Newburgh Heights homes. As a transitional space between the private interior of a home and the public sidewalk and street, the porch has served as the traditional space from which people can interact with neighbors and people passing by, or as a comfortable vantage point from which to observe the activity of the neighborhood. The front porch is an architectural symbol of the word “community.”

The original features of the porch, including the foundation, steps, roof (shape and pitch), railing, lattice, trellises and columns should be retained and repaired. Permanently removing the front porch is strongly discouraged. For homes which were designed and built with porches, the porch is essential to the house’s architectural integrity, and its removal renders it visually incomplete.

Porch columns and railings are the elements which are most commonly repaired, altered or replaced. When replacing these items, it is important to choose columns which are of the same style, material and dimensions as the original. When replacing the railing, choose balusters and caprails of the same style, size and material as the original. If it is not possible to obtain replacement balusters that have the same detailing as the original, the most important characteristics to be observed in achieving consistency with original are diameter, height, and material. For example, replacing a wood railing with one made of material such as wrought iron is strongly discouraged. When installing a new railing, maintain the same spacing between balusters that was present in the porch’s original railing.

An original feature on many porches in Newburgh Heights, especially on duplex homes, is the presence of a wood-sided, completely closed railing area. These types of porch features should also be maintained as close to the original as possible in terms of repair and replacement. Replacement of this feature with a “rail and baluster” system is strongly discouraged, as this represents an alteration of one of the original architectural features of the home.

Enclosing the front porch is strongly discouraged. A front porch is designed as an open structure that serves as a link from the outdoors to the interior of the home. Permanently enclosing it with siding and windows transforms it into a room of the house, and such an addition is not compatible with home’s original architectural scheme.



Enclosure of second floor porch has disrupted the structural and visual balance of the structure. The second story looks out of proportion to the first story.



Non-original balustrade looks architecturally inconsistent with the rest of the structure.



Neighborhood Porch Examples



Porch Balustrade

Roofs

Although widely recognized for its structural function, a roof is a definitive architectural feature of a house. The composition, color, texture and shape of the roofing material, as well as the shape and pitch of the roof, play a dominant role in establishing the house’s character. Most homes in Newburgh Heights most likely had roofs originally made of wood shingles or slate, given the time period in which the majority of them were built. However, roughly 96% of Newburgh Heights homes have asphalt roofs.

If the home does possess its original roof, it is strongly recommended that it be retained and repaired as needed, rather than replaced. Although more contemporary materials such as asphalt might be cheaper to install, they are typically less durable than many of the traditional roofing materials used on homes. For example, a slate roof of top quality material and flashing is estimated to last forty to sixty years with minimal maintenance, while the average lifetime of an asphalt roof is typically ten to twenty years. The original roof may still exist under subsequent layers of new roofing.

When repairing isolated sections of a roof, whether it be the original roof or a replacement roof, make certain that the replacement tiles match the existing, surrounding tiles in material composition, style, size and color. If installing a new roof, it is important to choose materials that resemble traditional materials which were probably used on the home, such as substitutes for slate. Roof material color should be harmonious with siding and trim colors. The Cuyahoga County Archives have old appraisal cards for all houses in the County dating from the mid-1950's. Most of these appraisal cards have photos of the homes which could provide evidence of many of the home's original features.

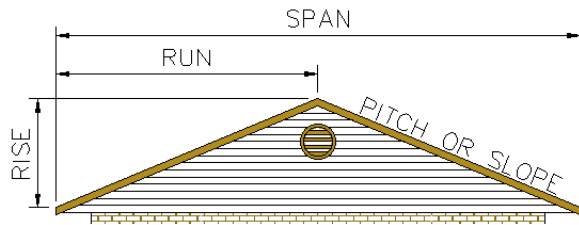
The roof's original shape and pitch should also be maintained. Construction of new dormers should be carefully considered so as to not compromise the original design of the house. If a dormer is added, its size should be in scale with the overall size of the roof, its siding and roofing materials should match those on the rest of the house, and its window should be consistent with the existing windows on the house in style, orientation and material. Other

alterations, such as roof decks, vents, skylights and mechanical and electrical equipment should be installed so that they are not visible from the street. Skylights should protrude no more than six inches above the surface of the roof.

When repairing or replacing a roof, make certain to preserve or replace any original roof-mounted architectural features such as dormers, cupolas, cornices, brackets, chimneys, and cresting.



Front Facing Gable Roof



Chimneys, Gutters and Downspouts

Existing brick chimneys should not be removed or covered with a cement coating. If portions of the original chimney exist, it is recommended that it be rebuilt in a manner consistent with the original design. Repairing or rebuilding portions of the chimney should follow the same recommendations outlined in the earlier section on repair of masonry.

Gutters and downspouts should be regularly cleaned and kept in good condition. Downspouts should be inconspicuously located on the exterior of the house and be compatible in color with that of the exterior of the home. Downspouts should also always run vertically; orienting downspouts diagonally across roof planes and walls is strongly discouraged. For a more traditional appearance, half-round gutters are available in a variety of materials, such as galvanized metal that can be repainted to match the house, or copper.

Additions & New Construction

The structural and architectural features of individual homes collectively create an architectural pattern on a street. New infill structures built within well-established areas should be designed to harmonize with existing structures in the neighborhood to maintain this pattern.

Additions

An addition should be constructed so that it maintains the architectural integrity of the home. The roof of the addition should have the same general shape and pitch as that of the main structure. The color and composition of the materials on the roof of the addition should also match those of the roof on the main structure.

The “massing” of a structure describes its three-dimensional shape. It takes into account a house’s width, height, depth, and roof shape. An addition should be smaller than the main structure in its massing. The material of the addition should match that of the existing structure. However, if the main structure is made of brick, siding the addition with wood or vinyl is acceptable.

The windows of the addition should be similar in style (i.e. orientation, type) and materials to those of the existing structure. For example: installing sliding windows on an addition where the existing structure has only double-hung windows is discouraged; similarly, installing double-hung windows with snap-in muntins on an addition where the main structure has windows with true-divided lights is also discouraged.

Elements of the addition, such as the window and foundation, should align in their height with those of the main structure. The material composition and color of the foundation should also match that of the main structure. Other architectural features of an addition, such as dormers, should be compatible in style and materials with those of the main structure.

New Construction: Dimensions & Site Placement

The height and width, along with the setback and amount of space between homes establishes the architectural “rhythm” of a street. Newburgh Heights’ zoning regulations have established minimum setbacks for every zoning district in the Village. The minimum setback is defined as the minimum required distance between the street right-of-way and the front edge of a building structure.

In Newburgh Heights, this distance is measured from the edge of the sidewalk to the front of the house. New construction should be placed in line with the setback established by existing homes on the street. Additionally, although it is not currently regulated by the Village, new construction should also observe an imaginary “maximum” setback, established by the average maximum distance that the front edges of existing homes on the street have been placed from the sidewalk.

The space between homes in Newburgh Heights, called the “side yard,” is also regulated by zoning code. The minimum width of one side yard is three feet, while the minimum width of both side yards together, located on either side of the house, must equal at least ten feet. For example, if a side yard on one side of a house is three feet, the side yard on the other side of the house must be at least seven feet wide. Therefore, as long as the two measurements together meet the minimum requirements, home builders have some flexibility in the planned widths of side yards. New construction should observe any pattern in side yard width that is present for existing homes on a street. If, for example, most homes on a street have five-foot side yards, the new home should also plan for side yards of five feet each.

The massing of new construction should be compatible with the massing of existing homes on the street. If the massing of a new home is much greater than that of other homes on the street, the scale of the structure can be reduced using sensitive design treatments such as overhangs, facade ornaments, dormers, slight changes in roof slope, and setback.

The height of the new home should

be similar to that of existing homes on the street. For example, constructing a one-story, ranch-style house on a street consisting of two-story homestead style homes disrupts the established pattern of height on the street. The foundation of a new home should be comparable in height to those of existing homes on the street, as well.



This home has been set back much further than the other homes on this street and disrupts the overall feel of the area and appears vacant upon first approach.



This one-story home in the center looks out of place on this street, as this street is predominantly comprised of two-story homes.

New Construction: Building Elements

If the existing houses on a street have been built with a particular type of exterior material, new construction should use the same type of material, or one that looks identical to it. The majority of homes

throughout Newburgh Heights have either vinyl or wood siding, with most of the brick homes concentrated in the neighborhoods located north of Beta Avenue and east of E. 42nd Street.

The shape and pitch of a new home's roof should harmonize with the roofline pattern created by other homes on the street. The roof of the new home should be compatible in both shape and pitch with the roofs of the existing homes in the neighborhood.

Prominent roof features such as dormers and chimneys should be similar in style to others on the street.

The orientation of windows on any new home should be similar to that of the windows of surrounding homes. For example, if most homes have vertically oriented windows, then the new structure should also have vertically oriented windows. Window openings should also be placed so that they are indicative of the position of the floor levels on a home.

The ratio of window to solid wall space on the facade of the home should be similar to that of other houses. If most houses on a street have porches, the newly constructed home should also have a porch.

The new home's porch should have comparable setback, height, width and depth dimensions, as well as roof shape and pitch, as the porches of surrounding homes. On a wooden porch, all exterior architectural porch elements should be painted. The use of transparent stain is discouraged for aesthetic reasons.

New construction should observe the location of the main entryway on the existing homes of a street. If most homes

have the main entrance parallel to the street on the front facade, new construction should place the entrance in the same location. The dimensions of the entryway should be similar to that of entryways on other homes on the street. More contemporary trends in housing design, such as taller entryways, are not compatible with the pre-WWII architectural styles that dominate Newburgh Heights' residential landscape.

Garages

Garages should be built in the same location as those of the existing homes on the street. For example, if existing homes on the street have been built with detached garages placed to the left side of the house in the rear, the construction of the garage for the new home should observe this layout as well. Attached, front-facing garages should always be slightly recessed from the front of the main structure.

The exterior wall and roof materials and roof pitch of the garage should be the same as that of the home.



Roofline Pattern

Landscaping

All new construction should be landscaped with lawn and shrubs planted along the foundation of the home. Landscaping should equal or exceed the quality and density of landscaping of existing homes

on the street. Careful consideration should be given to the selection of species and placement of shrubs. Plant materials should be selected and located in areas such that they will not encroach upon one another or the residential structure once they have matured.

Older neighborhoods, such as that of Washington Park Boulevard, often had trees planted on front lawns or tree lawns at the time the neighborhood was developed, or soon thereafter. Over the years, these trees have matured in size and have come to form an integral part of a street’s rhythm. In neighborhoods where there exists a clear pattern of mature trees planted on front lawns or tree lawns, a 2.5- to 3-inch caliper tree of the same or compatible species should be planted in a similar location on the property or tree lawn of the newly constructed home.

HARVARD AVENUE & COMMERCIAL DISTRICT STANDARDS

As an arterial road which runs through Newburgh Heights’ commercial district and is served by an I-77 interchange, Harvard Avenue is a frequent route for people who are traveling within and passing through the community. According to a year 2000 traffic count conducted by the Cuyahoga County Engineer’s office, in the course of a twenty-four-hour period, over 14,000 cars traveled on the portion of Harvard Road immediately west of E. 49th Street. In short, Harvard Avenue is probably the most heavily traveled and highly visible corridor within the Village of Newburgh Heights.

The “commercial district” referred to throughout these guidelines is that portion

of Harvard Avenue between E. 27th Street and E. 55th Street.

Currently, the property lining Harvard Avenue, particularly that on the north side of the street, is comprised of several different land use activities, including industrial, light industrial, commercial, and residential. Newburgh Heights’ most recent master plan recommends the redevelopment of the north side of Harvard Avenue into a more consistent commercial district. Future conversion of properties currently used for residential space into commercial space, along with revitalization and redevelopment of existing commercial buildings will increase the capacity of the Village’s local economy to serve the local demand for retail and services by residents and improve the tax base. As part of the commercial redevelopment of Harvard Avenue, the Master Plan recommends establishing commercial design guidelines in order to improve the image and appearance of commercial buildings along the street. In a fashion similar to the guidelines for Newburgh Heights’ residential areas, the commercial design guidelines establish a set of architectural standards toward achieving a more cohesive, visual identity for Harvard Avenue, and, alternatively, discouraging design which is architecturally incompatible with that of the surrounding district.

Just over half of the smaller (non-industrial) commercial properties along Harvard Avenue were built between 1910 and 1950, with construction of the remaining half occurring at various points in time throughout the last five decades. Additionally, many of the commercial buildings built prior to 1980 have experienced some type of exterior renovation. These renovations have been

undertaken using a variety of construction methods, materials, and elements of architectural style. The construction and renovation of commercial buildings along Harvard Avenue throughout the course of almost an entire century, with very little attention to coordination of architectural design has resulted in a lack of visual cohesion within the district.

As applied to an older, inner-ring suburb developed largely during the first half of the twentieth century, these guidelines recommend re-establishing the appearance of the Harvard Avenue commercial district according to design principles frequently used in commercial districts of older communities within Cuyahoga County during that time period. Some examples of such buildings still exist in Newburgh Heights along Harvard Avenue and E. 42nd Street, and in nearby communities such as Cleveland (the Little Italy neighborhood), Lakewood and Cleveland Heights. These were typically two-story buildings that originally had retail on the first floor and apartments on the second, with a brick exterior accented by stone, tile or patterned-brick detailing. The site placement of the structures within these older commercial districts made efficient use of shorter street blocks and shallow lots, such as those found along Harvard Avenue, by setting the buildings close to one another and to the right-of-way.

The first part of the commercial design guidelines for Harvard Avenue briefly discusses recommendations for rehabilitation and preservation of some of the existing buildings within the district which were built during the early part of the twentieth century, and are considered representative of the general design standards that should be incorporated into

new construction. Such buildings can serve as local landmarks in establishing a visual identity for the district.

The second part of the guidelines will cover recommendations for existing and new commercial and industrial buildings along Harvard Avenue on the following topics: building elements, signage, site layout, landscaping, and storage areas and equipment.

Preservation of Existing Structures

Several buildings along Harvard Avenue are exemplary of the type of commercial building design recommended within these guidelines. The Brown's Food Market Building at 5301 Harvard Avenue and the Halfway Building at 4601 Harvard Avenue display some of the typical architectural characteristics which will be recommended for new construction. Built in 1920 and 1922, respectively, the Village should consider rehabilitation and restoration of such buildings to set the tone for commercial construction proposed in the future.

Restoration can be accomplished through careful removal of artificial veneers or other exterior materials installed after the buildings were constructed, thoroughly cleaning the brick exteriors through power washing, and cleaning and repairing any other original exterior architectural features. On some buildings, the original storefront display windows have either been filled in, altered in size, or replaced with inappropriate styles. The display windows should either be reinstalled or expanded to their original dimensions and placement. If wood or synthetic siding has been installed as framing to windows, it should be removed and replaced with masonry materials. These

buildings can then be linked in appearance to new construction along Harvard Avenue through the addition of signage, landscaping, awnings, and lighting which is similar in style to that of new commercial construction.

All commercial buildings in Newburgh Heights are eligible for low interest loans to finance exterior and interior renovations through the Cuyahoga County Department of Development's Storefront Renovation Program.



The Halfway Building, 4601 Harvard Avenue

DESIGN ELEMENTS FOR NEW COMMERCIAL STRUCTURES

The purpose of this section is to describe the existing commercial structures, forms, materials, and requirements for constructing new structures within the Village of Newburgh Heights.

Exterior & Materials

Small-scale commercial buildings constructed just after the turn of the twentieth century typically had exterior walls composed of brick or, quite often, brick accented by patterns of stone or tile. It is recommended that new commercial construction along Harvard Avenue also use traditional-sized brick as the facade's

predominant exterior material. Use of tiles, stone, or pre-cast concrete to create decorative patterns throughout the building's facade is strongly encouraged. Decorative patterns can also be achieved through installing patterns of brick which is a different color from that of the rest of the building's exterior, by alternating the orientation of the bricks, or by creating texture through bricks which are set slightly raised above or recessed below the exterior wall surfaces.

Industrial buildings should also preferably use brick for the building's exterior. Industrial buildings with brick exteriors also exist along Harvard Avenue, such as the Cleveland Railway Company Building at 5400 Harvard Avenue.



The Cleveland Railway Company Building, 5400 Harvard Avenue

Use of "jumbo"-sized bricks, split-faced concrete, or excessive amounts of glass as exterior material is strongly discouraged.

Roof & Cornice

It is recommended that the rooflines of new commercial construction be predominantly horizontal. Incorporating raised parapets which are squared or rounded into the roofline can also add character to the building. The parapet is that portion of an exterior wall built above the roof's surface. Exterior walls should be capped by coping made of stone or pre-cast concrete. The

use of a cornice installed below and parallel to the roofline can also add decorative emphasis to the building's roofline. No portion of the roof, or mechanical equipment installed on the roof, should be visible from the street.

Windows

Ample window space along small commercial storefronts is essential to the creation of a lively and interesting visual environment within any commercial district. It is recommended that street-side walls devote twenty to forty percent of the wall area per story to window space. At street-level, the maximum amount of glass is preferred in order to provide an interesting commercial vista for both pedestrians and motorists. Commercial proprietors, particularly of retail establishments, are strongly encouraged to provide as unobstructed a view into the interior of their store as possible. It is recommended that street-level windows have a base height (the distance between the finished grade and the bottom member of the window frame) of no more than two feet, and a header height of at least eight feet above the finished grade. The head is the uppermost member of the window frame.

Where two or more storefronts or commercial establishments occupy a single building, the base and the header heights, and style of the street-level windows should match. For buildings greater than one story in height, the style, orientation, materials, height, and placement pattern of upper-story windows should also match.

Bordering the bases of windows with a stone or concrete sill is strongly encouraged as it adds architectural character to the building's facade. Correspondingly, the headers of windows should also be

bordered by a stone, concrete, or patterned brick lintel to enhance the architectural detail of the commercial structure.

In cases where display windows are not feasible due to building function or safety, a simulated transparent window which imitates the appearance of a display window is an acceptable substitute. A simulated window can be created by constructing a wood frame within the window opening, which is covered on both the interior and exterior side with plywood or drywall. The frame can be filled with insulation. The exterior window face is painted a dark gray or black and fitted with plate glass or a similar transparent material.

Awnings

Installation of awnings is strongly encouraged, as they are both functional and add architectural character to small commercial and industrial buildings. They provide protection from the sun, thus reducing cooling costs, and give temporary shelter to customers entering or leaving the building.

Throughout the district, awnings made of fabric are preferred. Aluminum awnings are strongly discouraged. Awnings should be installed to fit the existing framing of windows and entrances, and should be hung no higher than the top of the display window. At street-level, the awning should be no lower than seven feet above the finished grade. It should also be placed no higher than one foot below the building cap (on a one-story building) or the sill of the upper-story windows (on buildings of two or more stories). Backlit awnings are strongly discouraged.

Entrances

Entrances to commercial buildings should face the street, and preferably be located on the front facade of the building. They should be clearly identifiable to customers through the use of signage, awnings, and/or planters; a pleasant and accessible approach from public sidewalks and parking areas is an important design feature. In short, customers should be able to quickly and clearly see the path they should take to walk to the entry door.

Recessed entryways, a common design feature of small commercial buildings built in the early part of the twentieth century, are strongly encouraged. In commercial storefronts which incorporate recessed entryways, a recess of at least two feet is recommended. Doors made of solid material are strongly discouraged; entryways should be made of the maximum amount of glass possible. If a glass entryway is not possible, a glass substitute mounted on a dark security panel is an acceptable alternative.

Entryways and the area immediately surrounding should be designed to comply with the standards established in the Americans with Disability Act Accessibility Guidelines.

Lighting

In general, signs, entryways, addresses and parking lots should be lit and clearly visible at night. The scale of light fixtures should fit the scale and style of the building, and the function to which the particular fixtures are applied. For example, a small residential style fixture is not suitable for attachment to a commercial building. Likewise, a series of large fixtures suitable for parking lot lighting is also not appropriate for commercial buildings. The amount of

light produced by the fixtures is critical. Inadequate lighting fails to identify the building at night while a blaze of glaring light is unattractive and makes signs hard to read at night.

Lighting for parking areas should be designed so that it does not glare into adjacent properties or into the right-of-way. It should be related to the parking lot's design and circulation, and should also be compatible with the scale of adjacent buildings.

Signage

Signs are one of the most noticeable features of the streetscape. Well designed signs can add color and character to the street and identity to businesses. However, uncoordinated signage in commercial districts can cause visual confusion of the streetscape due to excessive or inadequate size and lack of compatibility with architecture and neighboring signs. Although complete uniformity can be uninteresting, coordination of certain elements of signage is necessary for a unified commercial district.

On commercial and retail properties, Newburgh Heights Zoning Code prohibits the use of certain types of signs, including: animated signs, balloons used as advertising devices, banners (except as temporary signs with a permit), billboards, flashing signs, mansard signs, pennants/streamers/spinners, portable signs, roof signs, searchlights and spotlights, three dimensional objects, paper posters, and pole signs (except at freeway-oriented automotive services stations).

Wall, window, awning, canopy, and monument signs are permitted, while neon tubing signs and projecting signs may be

permitted upon review by the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Signs should be compatible with the architectural style and the proportions of the building to which they are attached. Sign color should complement the building and, if present, awning colors. By regulation, the total number of colors on a sign shall be limited to four.

All types of signs should respect the visibility requirements and design of signage of the neighboring storefronts. The competition that can occur between businesses located near one another for visibility is distracting. A signage design that allows for visibility of all signs is paramount. Signs for commercial tenants in multi-storefront building should be placed in similar locations and have similar dimensions.

By ordinance, the style of a sign shall be generally consistent throughout the particular building or block involved, and, if seen in a series, the signs should have a continuity of design. Continuity of design can be achieved through coordination of characteristics such as style or type, dimension, size and type of lettering, and use of complementary colors.

Lettering and symbols on all signage must be large and clear enough to be visible to both pedestrian and automobile traffic. However, lettering should not exceed the size necessary for effective advertising. Excessive size can visually overpower the streetscape. Simple and easy to read lettering and symbols have the dual benefit of fitting in with other signage on the street and presenting a clear message to customers.

Toward the goal of building a more visually cohesive identity for the Harvard Avenue commercial district, these guidelines recommend the use of wall signs on commercial buildings, or signs comprised of individual lettering placed directly on the storefront's facade. The wall signs can be lit by an external source, or silhouetted by backlighting. "Light box" signs are discouraged.

Although the Village's sign ordinances limit the protrusion of wall or panel signs to a maximum of 12 inches, it is strongly encouraged that the sign protrude as little as possible from the storefront facade. By ordinance, the maximum size of all permanent signs is limited to the lesser of 120 square feet, or 1.5 times the width of the building. Although specific dimensions for wall signs are not regulated by ordinance, these design guidelines recommend a height of two feet. A sign of this height accommodates lettering which is 18 inches high. According to The Sign User's Guide published by the Institute of Signage Research, 18-inch lettering is readable at distances of up to 450 feet.

The recommended placement for a wall sign is within the transom area immediately above the entryway and display windows, or on the lintel area which, on a one-story building is below the building cap, or on a two-story building, separates the first from the second story. The sign should be centered relative to the display windows in multi-tenant buildings, or relative to the entryway in single storefront buildings. Businesses on the second or third floor can be identified by signs attached to or painted on the windows. Signs should also be placed no higher than one foot below the building cap (on a one-story building) or sill of second-story windows. They should

also not extend beyond the width of the existing display windows.

If used, monument signs made of stone, concrete or brick are preferred. The text and graphic elements on the sign can be externally lit or internally illuminated. If internally illuminated, it is recommended that only the text and graphic elements should be lit, and the background should be opaque. The area around the base of the sign should be landscaped with plant material that is low enough in height so as not to obstruct the view of the sign.

For awning signs, letters are typically placed on the valance. Light colored lettering on a solid, dark-color background is most visible. The size and style of lettering should be in scale with the storefront, and similar to that of adjacent storefronts. Information printed on awnings should include the business name and address.

Although only permitted by review, if used, it is recommended that projecting signs protrude no more than four feet from the storefront facade. The projecting sign should not extend above the building cap or below the top of the display window.

As with commercial/retail buildings, wall and window, awning, and monument signs are permitted for use on industrial buildings. The regulations governing the characteristics of industrial property signs are similar to those of commercial buildings with the exception of the allowed maximum area of the sign. For industrial buildings, the maximum allowed area is the lesser of 2.5 times the width of the building, or 175 square feet.

Since industrial buildings are typically set back further from the road, visibility is of

critical importance. Lettering should be in clear contrast to its background. The style and color of the sign and its lettering should complement that of all other businesses in the Harvard Avenue District.

Site Layout

The purpose of this section is to discuss the overall site layout and plan for any proposed, commercial development within the Village of Newburgh Heights.

Height

By ordinance, commercial buildings along Harvard Avenue are limited to three stories, which shall not exceed a total maximum building height of forty-five feet from the finished grade line to the highest part of a wall or the main roof.

Setback

The recommended minimum setback for commercial/retail buildings along Harvard Avenue is zero (0) or five (5) feet. It is also strongly encouraged that commercial/retail buildings observe a maximum setback of no more than twenty feet in order to maintain a more consistent setback line across all buildings along the street. For industrial properties, the recommended minimum setback is 20 feet, with a recommended maximum setback of forty feet. Frequent variation in building setback creates disruptive gaps in the line of building placement. Where setback differences do occur due to variations in building design, size, and parking requirements, a consistent setback line can be simulated along Harvard through the use of landscaping and/or fencing placed along the front edge of the property.

Fencing made of decorative metal, or low walls made of brick or brick accented by concrete or tile is recommended. Chain link

fence placed along any public right-of-way is strongly discouraged. The recommended maximum height for fencing or walls along public rights-of-way is 3 feet for commercial establishments and six to eight feet for industrial buildings.

The fundamental purpose of the setback area is to provide a safety buffer between the buildings and right-of-way, and to preserve the necessary lines of site for pedestrians and motorists entering and leaving parking lots. However, because of the lack of opportunity along Harvard Avenue for streetscape enhancement within the public right-of-way, the setback area of commercial buildings and parking lots also provides a valuable opportunity for landscaping, and therefore should be considered an element of beautification in the overall streetscape of the district.

Parking

The recommended location of off-street parking for Harvard Avenue commercial and industrial properties is at the side or the rear of the building. By ordinance, side lots must be set at least five feet from an adjacent building. With parking placed to the side or in the rear, storefronts can be brought closer to the right-of-way, contributing to a more active and interesting streetscape.

Convenience-type businesses tend to prefer to locate off-street parking in the front of the building. Although not preferred, off-street parking located in front of the building is permitted. By ordinance, front parking lots of commercial buildings must be set back at least six feet from the right-of-way, to allow sufficient area for required landscaping. Additionally, front setback areas for side and front parking lots must be landscaped in order to partially screen

parking areas from pedestrians and motorists.

Any parking lot containing more than 6,000 square feet of area or twenty or more vehicular parking spaces shall also provide interior landscaping. Along Harvard Avenue, this standard would apply mostly to industrial properties. Trees are particularly effective at breaking up large parking areas, helping to screen poles and wires, and in providing shade to keep buildings and cars cooler.

Landscaping

Simple landscaping of individual commercial and industrial properties is essential to creating a visually pleasant commercial district. Landscaping helps to soften and beautify the paved environment of urban commercial areas such as that of Harvard Avenue. Additionally, when employed effectively, strategically designed landscaping can also clearly define where to drive, park, and walk.

As previously mentioned, new commercial construction along Harvard Avenue should make efficient use of the required building and parking setback areas for landscaping. Given the limited size of most lots along Harvard Avenue, it is important to choose plant materials which are in scale to the amount of available area, and to the building to which they correspond. Shrubs, ground cover, and flowers are smaller-scale plants appropriate for planting in areas of limited size. The size of chosen plant materials when fully mature should also be considered, so that they do not eventually overcrowd their space.

By regulation, landscaping of commercial and industrial parking lots should provide a “visual screen” of at least fifty percent

opacity, up to a height of two and a half feet throughout the year. Opacity is defined as a degree of obscuration of light. The higher the percentage, the greater the density of the landscaping. Except where it serves as a buffer between residential and commercial properties, landscaping should be designed and planted in such a way that it does not create a dense “wall” which obstructs the view of businesses and activity along Harvard Avenue.

Landscaping should partially screen and beautify—not completely block out and visually isolate commercial properties. The recommended effect can be achieved by choosing a variety of plant materials which are different in texture and height. For example, using a combination of deciduous and evergreen trees or shrubs diversifies the look of the landscape and prevents the creation of a completely opaque and monotonous wall in front of a building or parking lot. Plants should be spaced apart and can be staggered, as opposed to placing them in horizontal rows, in order to give the landscaping a more natural and interesting look.

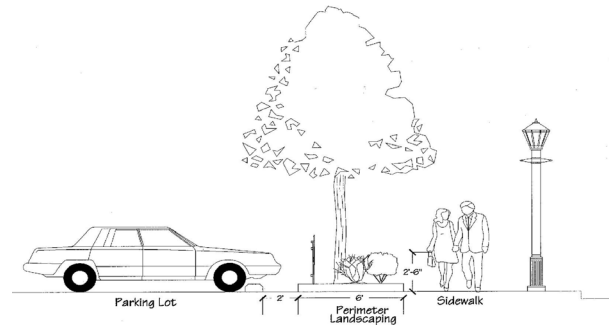


Parking Lot Landscaping Example

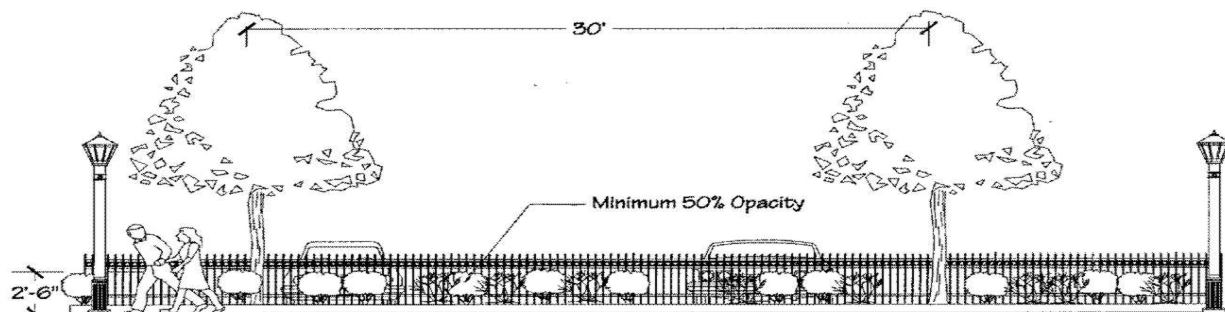
Many existing buildings along Harvard Avenue have been constructed at the building line, with no setback and limited or no off-street parking. In these situations, opportunity for landscaping is limited. Plant material placed in containers or window boxes is an option for landscaping storefronts with limited or no planting area. The containers should complement or match the commercial building’s exterior material.

The selection of plant materials should also be coordinated across businesses within the district in order to achieve greater visual consistency along the streetscape.

Finally, maintenance of landscaping is of critical importance. Unkempt plants, trees and landscape areas can become a hazard to pedestrians, obstruct motorists’ views, and become receptacles for trash.



Perimeter Parking Lot Landscaping Cross-Section



Perimeter Parking Lot Landscaping Street View

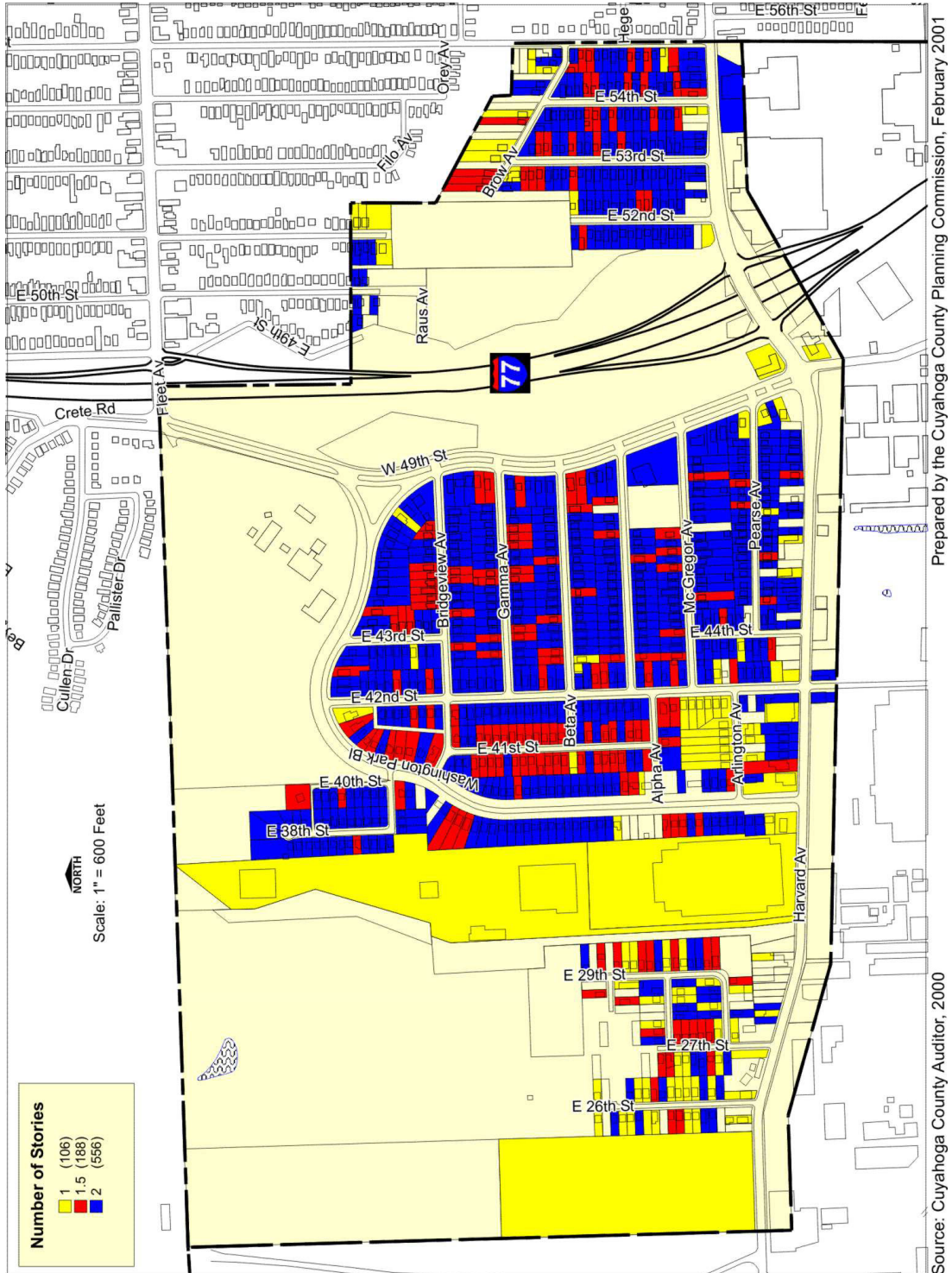
Storage Areas & Equipment

Trash containers, storage areas, mechanical units, and other equipment located on the exterior of the building should not be exposed to public view. Such areas should always be located in the rear of the building, and should be screened by walls or dense fencing, preferably accompanied by landscaping.

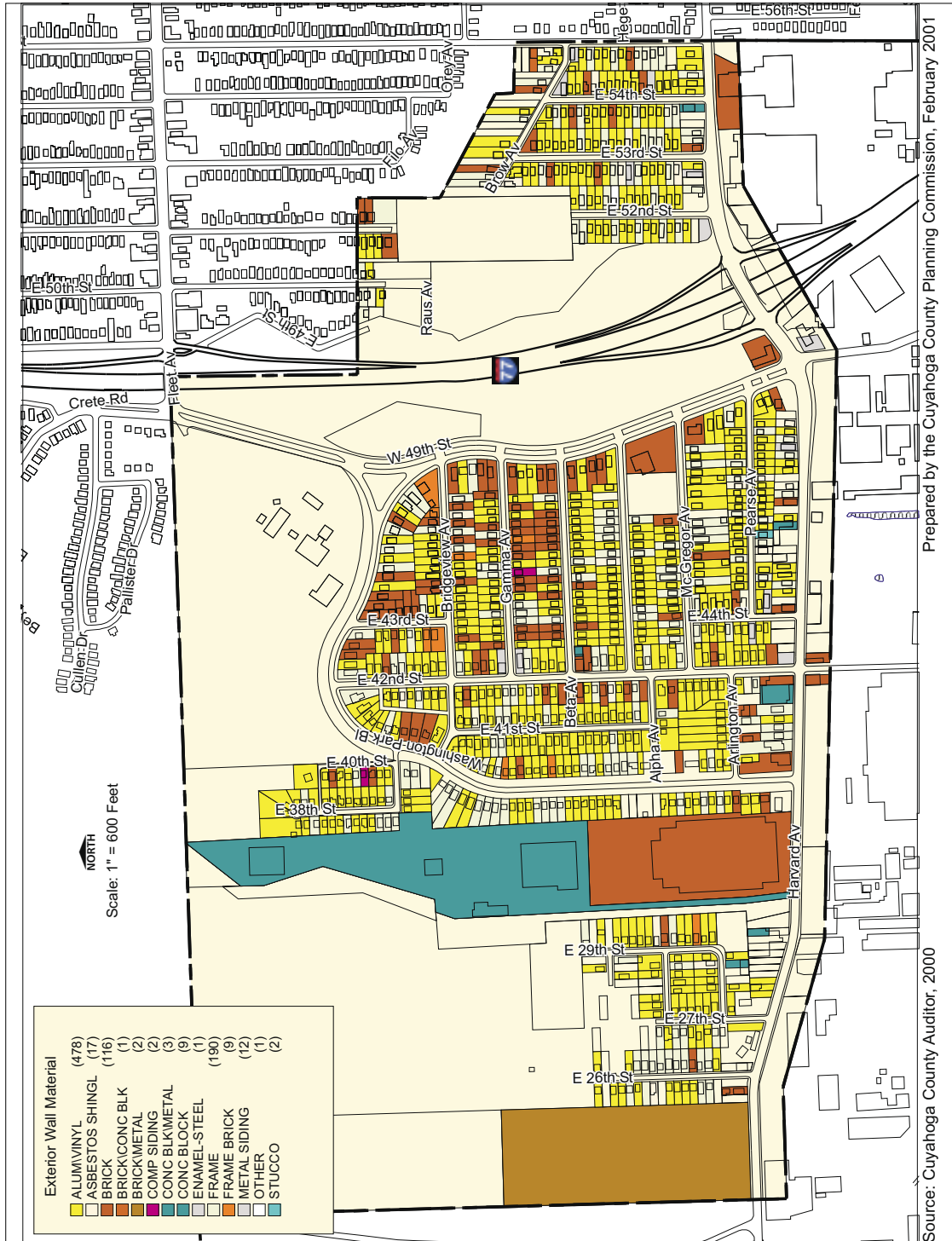
Dense landscaping, alone, may provide sufficient screening for smaller storage areas and pieces of equipment. If the design and size of the building permits, mechanical and other equipment can be situated on the building's roof, located far enough from any edge so that it is completely hidden from public view. Alternatively, new construction can incorporate into the design a recessed area in the rear of the building for trash containers, storage areas, mechanical units, and other equipment.

Walls or fencing which screen dumpsters, storage areas, and equipment that are located in the rear of the building should be compatible with the exterior material of the main building. If walls are selected to provide the screening, three of the four walls should be of the same material as that of the main building. Fencing should preferably be made of wood. Use of chain link fence woven with material is strongly discouraged.

APPENDIX



APPENDIX



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