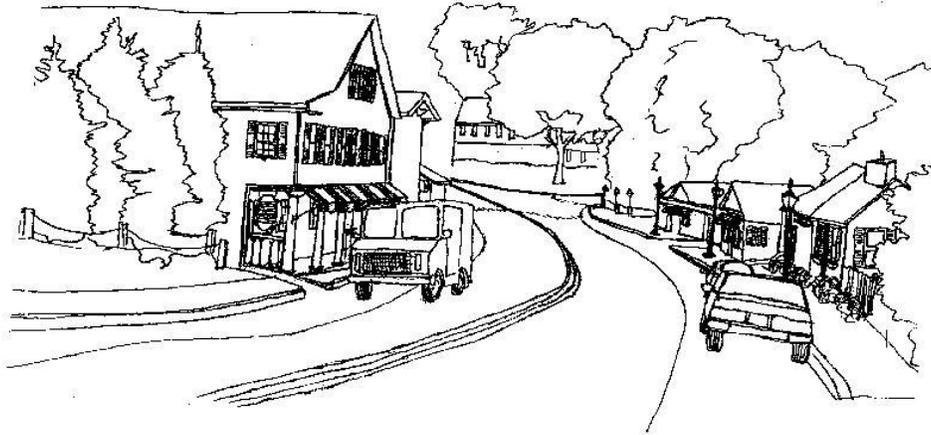


APPENDIX D

**SANDY HOOK
DESIGN DISTRICT
DESIGN GUIDELINES**



TOWN OF NEWTOWN

February 2007

**SANDY HOOK DESIGN DISTRICT
DESIGN GUIDELINES**

February 2007

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Sketch Courtesy of Annie Lux

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Sandy Hook Design Guidelines

1. GENERAL



1.1 Introduction

In 1705 three land speculators from Stratford and New York, acting without authority from the Colonial Court, purchased a tract of land about eight miles long and six miles wide from the Indians. They were prosecuted by the Court for their actions but Samuel Hawley, knowing the value of the land, convinced investors from Stratford to purchase an interest in the tract. By 1708 the General Court of the Colony, upon petition of thirty-six settlers, granted them a Charter to form a new township, which was decreed to be called the Town of Newtown. The town boundaries were set and by 1709 the Town proper was defined by two crossing highways, Main Street running North-South and The East-West highway now named Church Hill Road. The Town prospered and in 1723 a Pohtatuck Indian named Quiomph appeared before the Town Fathers and announced that he owned a tract of land in Sandy Hook that was not part of the 1705 sale. The area extended from an “elbow” in the Housatonic to Rocky Glen in the area where the Pohtatuck empties into the Housatonic. The fifty-one Proprietors of Newtown purchased the tract from Quiomph and incorporated the Sandy Hook area into the town limits. Evidence of this early history is still visible in Sandy Hook center where many homes and mills of the colonial period remain. It is this history which these guidelines are intended to protect.

1.2 The Establishment of the District



Sandy Hook was designated a Design District under General Statutes of Connecticut (Sec. 8-2) which provides for the creation of village districts for the purpose of regulating new construction, substantial reconstruction and rehabilitation of properties.

These Design Guidelines set forth the expectations of the Town of Newtown and are intended to be used as a tool to assist property owners and developers in planning their restoration and new construction projects.

Many links to Newtown's history may be found in antique buildings scattered throughout town. Sandy Hook is the only place in Newtown where it is possible to preserve what is left of a small town commercial center. And here we have the opportunity to encourage development that reinforces this unique sense of place for new retail, entertainment, recreational, residential, mixed-use and commercial uses.

1.3 Objectives

- a) Preserve and enhance the historic and architectural character of Sandy Hook as well as locally significant features, distinctive buildings or vistas from within the District.
- b) Preserve and enhance the streetscape consistent with the specifications developed by the Sandy Hook Streetscape Steering Committee (see Appendix B).
- c) Improve vehicular movement.
- d) Promote pedestrian circulation within the District.

1.4 District Boundaries – See District Map Appendix A

1.5. Process

1.5.1 Preliminary Meeting

Applicants are encouraged to meet with the Design Advisory Board (DAB) before submitting applications to the Planning and Zoning Commission. At the preliminary meeting the proposed project will be discussed and the Sandy Hook Design District Guidelines will be reviewed. The objective of the meeting is to give the applicant insight into applicable sections of the guidelines and to outline standards for subsequent submission. At the immediate conclusion of the preliminary meeting, the DAB shall provide the applicant with its written recommendations

relative to the development's design consistent with the provisions of these Guidelines. The applicant is encouraged to incorporate such design recommendations, if any, in its formal submittal to the DAB. The DAB shall also include in its recommendation what demonstrative materials should be provided by the applicant at the formal submittal stage.

1.5.2 Formal Submittal

Based on the preliminary meeting, the applicant will make a formal submittal for DAB review. Submitted materials should be completed to the extent necessary communicate the applicant's design intent to the DAB. Depending on the scope of the project, suggested submission materials may include:

- a) Site plan(s) including landscaping and site improvements.
- b) Floor plan(s) showing the overall arrangement of proposed spaces.
- c) Elevations illustrating the exterior materials and details of the building appearance.
- d) Color renderings of elevations or perspective drawings showing the project in relation to its neighbors.
- e) Scale model showing the project's context within the Design District.
- f) Materials Sample Board.
- g) Site photos that include neighboring land and buildings.

The goal of these Guidelines is to encourage development and restoration projects that are compatible with and enhance the character of Sandy Hook, all submissions should clearly show the context into which the proposed project will be constructed.

1.5.3 DAB Review

- a) Within thirty (30) days from the applicant's formal submission, the DAB will review the application and will communicate to the Planning and Zoning Commission a written advisory opinion which shall include and recommendations related to the development's design consistent with the provisions of these Guidelines.
- b) The DAB is an advisory board only. The Planning and Zoning Commission may disregard, in whole or in part, the recommendations of the DAB for any reason.

2. SITE

Applicants are encouraged to include in their developments design characteristics which enhance and further the key defining characteristics of Sandy Hook, including but not limited to the varied antique streetscape and views of the Pohtatuck River.



2.1 Site Planning

Developments adjoining, or within view of the river are encouraged to preserve and enhance these key defining characteristics using the following design techniques:

- a) Orient buildings to preserve or maximize views to the river.
- b) Harmonize building footprints, heights, setbacks and massing varied in context with surrounding buildings and structures consistent with the character of the District.
- c) Where voluntary public access is planned aspect of the proposed development, applicants are encouraged to:
 1. Create useable and inviting outdoor spaces adjoining the river; and



2. Link proposed pedestrian paths, outdoor gathering areas or recreation areas with existing trail systems

2.2 Setbacks

- a) Applicants are encouraged to preserve and reinforce the existing streetscape.
- b) Zero lot lines are encouraged along the street and side yards; however, long unbroken façade are discouraged.
- c) Applicants are encouraged align new buildings with existing setbacks to provide a strong edge to the street with entrances facing the Street. Secondary entrances from parking areas or pedestrian alleys are encouraged.

2.3 Pedestrian Access

Historically Sandy Hook evolved as a mixed-use village center that was accessible by foot. To maintain the historic quality of the District it is our objective to promote the development of a pedestrian friendly environment throughout the District. Such proposed projects will be analyzed in terms of the entire District and will be considered within the context of existing and proposed pedestrian circulation patterns. Nothing in this section, however, shall be interpreted to require pedestrian access to private property. Where applicable, development designs are encouraged to include pedestrian walkways which:



- a) Provide a pedestrian access linking parking areas behind stores to the street.
- b) Provide appropriate landscaping, paving, and lighting in a manner that will delineate the walkway as a component of the overall public pedestrian network within the District.
- c) Are consistent in terms of design, material finishes and lighting throughout the entire District.
- d) Are made of durable materials consistent with the character of the District. Concrete, brick or masonry pavers for walks are encouraged and should be installed to insure safety and easy maintenance. Applicants further are encouraged to match or coordinate the proposed hardscape continuous with or visible from the street with the improvements implemented by the Sandy Hook Streetscape Steering Committee (see Appendix B).



2.5 Public Spaces

- a) Developments which voluntarily include public spaces are encouraged to do so in a manner that incorporate outdoor gathering spaces at convenient, safe and visually engaging locations.
- b) Outdoor gathering spaces are encouraged to activate the rear of building or as a buffer between the rear of the store and the parking area.
- c) Outdoor gathering spaces are encouraged along the river, in setbacks along the street and in connection with a scenic trail system.

2.6 Landscaping

Applicants are encouraged to include in their development plans landscaping which:



- a) Defines and enhances outdoor gathering spaces.
- b) Forms an integral part of the overall design concept and adds character to the District.
- c) Serves to preserve and restore the scenic qualities of the natural landscape by retaining or re-vegetating areas with native plant species.
- d) Incorporates existing features such as mature trees, shrub masses, washes, existing site

amenities, and rock outcroppings into the design.

- e) Balances the quantity of on-site landscaping with the scale of the proposed development.
- f) Employs the placement of plant and natural materials for functional purposes such as: screening, buffers, shading parking lots and outdoor gathering spaces and for mitigating storm water run-off.



- g) Employs shade trees, shrubs and ground cover in parking areas.
- h) Employs the use of native plants and natural landscaping and avoids the use of invasive plant species.
- i) Employs the use of landscape divider strips in parking areas in a manner that balances off-street parking availability with the preservation of the area's scenic integrity.

2.7 Landscape Buffers

Landscape buffers between dissimilar land uses are encouraged as follows:

- a) Applicants are encouraged to use appropriate landscaping to screen unattractive views and features such as storage areas, trash enclosures, utility cabinets and other similar elements. When landscape materials are utilized in screening or buffering applications, they should be pruned to no less than 3-4 feet in height. Landscaping may be used to create boundaries between buildings, different developments, and incompatible uses.
- b) Applicants are encouraged to use plant materials suitable for the specific site conditions and the environmental and maintenance requirements of the project. The landscape and site amenity design should blend with the dominant existing or planned streetscape and character of the area, adding aesthetic charm, interest and character. The plant and site materials should be within the context of its environment including scale and density and improve the functional aspects of a site. Applicants are encouraged to utilize plantings to minimize soil erosion and storm water runoff.
- c) Applicants are encouraged to use landscaping plants that require low maintenance and /or are insect and disease resistant. Street trees should not immediately impact or be impacted by overhead utility wires.
- d) Raised planters are encouraged, to accentuate the architecture and/or enhance pedestrian areas.
- e) Local native rocks and boulders are encouraged in landscaped areas to add interest and

should be grouped in a manner that compliments the natural rock outcroppings in the area.

2.8 Site Amenities

Where public plazas, courtyards, pedestrian passages and /or gardens are included in the design of a proposed development, the applicant is encouraged to include site amenities and other design features that encourage pedestrian utilization. These may include benches, tables, fountains, natural rock or wood features, trash and recycling containers, public art, kiosks, decorative paving and lighting. Design of amenities should be consistent throughout the project and consistent with the existing character of the District. The locations of site amenities should not interfere with pedestrian movement.



2.8.1 Walls and Fences



- a) Where walls or fences are proposed, the applicant is encouraged to design the same to be compatible with the surrounding landscape and architectural features of the building.
- b) Applicants are encouraged to design walls and fences to follow the terrain on slopes and not impede or divert the flow of water in drainage ways.

- c) Walls and fences should be designed to increase the shadow pattern so as not to create a continuous blank wall and reduce mass.
- d) Landscaping should be used to soften the appearance of walls and fences.
- d) Materials in harmony with local vernacular architecture, as well as indigenous to the area are encouraged.

2.8.2 Lighting

Where proposed, new exterior lighting fixtures should be compatible with the specifications developed by the Sandy Hook Streetscape Steering Committee (see Appendix B). Applicants are encouraged to position proposed fixtures to provide adequate illumination for safety while limiting light spillover. Wall mounted high intensity discharge flood lamps are generally discouraged. Pole mounted fixtures are encouraged and should direct light downward rather than horizontally. Applicants are encouraged to incorporate the following considerations in development designs:



- a) Retail uses should consider timer-controlled window display lighting after store hours.
- b) Decorative incandescent lighting fixtures in outdoor spaces are encouraged.
- c) High or low pressure sodium lamps are discouraged; lighting with color temperatures close to incandescent lighting are encouraged.
- d) The use of subtle lighting to accent landscaping, signs or architectural features is encouraged.
- e) Flashing or revolving lights, strobes, neon and other such lighting are discouraged.
- f) Applicants are encouraged to limit parking lot lighting fixture height to fourteen (14) feet.
- g) Negative impacts due to lighting should be avoided in any development adjacent to or abutting a residential use.
- h) Back lit awnings and canopies are discouraged.

2.8.3 Street Lighting, Curbs, Sidewalks and Fixtures – see Appendix B

3. BUILDING

One of the key objectives of the Design Guidelines is to maintain the antique character of the District. Plans submitted for any proposed development should answer these questions: how does this development compliment its context and improve the character of the District? Applicants are encouraged to preserve existing turn of the century buildings. Existing antique barns of architectural interest should be considered for adaptive re-use or, if necessary, relocation.



3.1 Rooflines and Roof Materials

A variety of roof designs are encouraged and may include pitched, gable-end, mansard, gambrel, flat or hipped roofs. Applicants are encouraged to design roofs in harmony with neighboring structures to enhance the character of the streetscape, and should consider the following factors in their design:



- a) The eave line of pitched roofs should project beyond the exterior wall at least twelve inches and, if appropriate, detailed with moldings, brackets or other elements.
- b) Roof details such as real dormers, cupolas, lanterns, widows' walks, clocks and weather vanes are encouraged to contribute to the character of the building.
- c) Encouraged roof finishes include asphalt shingles, wood shingles, slate, and copper batten or standing seam. Concrete tiles, plastic shingles and painted steel or aluminum are discouraged.
- d) Gratuitous or false detailing such as fake mansards or gables are discouraged unless necessary or appropriate to screen the view of building utilities and mechanical systems.

- e) Where building designs include flat roofs, applicants are encouraged to use parapets detailed to provide a cap to the building appropriate to its design, scale and neighboring context.

3.2 Appearance

The overall design objective for the District is continual enhancement of the architectural character of the District.. Developments within the District should express its own individuality. Developments with the District should take their places in the evolution of this vibrant center.



3.3 Building Size and Scale

Developments within the District should be in harmony with, but not necessarily stylistically similar to, the size and scale of neighboring structures. Applicants are encouraged to design new buildings which:



- a) Create interesting and proportional outdoor spatial relationships between building, open space and setbacks on the street and adjacent sites.
- b) Establish building rhythms with adjacent building forms for visual continuity.
- c) Create variety through compatibility rather than conformity.
- d) Enhance proportions between building height, length and width consistent with

prevailing architectural context.

- e) Break larger volumes into smaller forms to lessen the total building mass and to provide continuity with nearby patterns.
- f) Consider window sizes and types, trim around windows, and grouping of windows as part of its overall design.



- g) Avoids large, unarticulated or monolithic areas on facades through the use of appropriate detailing to add relief and shadow patterns.

3.4 Building Entrances



- a) Applicants are encouraged to design building entrances to an appropriate scale for the overall building and the number of tenants served.
- b) Entrances serving multiple tenancies may use a variety of detailing to create unique identities for each tenant.
- c) Applicants are encouraged to use covered entries, structural canopies and porches, walls, fences, plazas and setbacks to create a transition space from the public pedestrian way to the building interior.

3.5 Exterior Building Materials

A variety of conventional materials exists in the District and gives the applicant the opportunity to tailor their pallet of materials that are appropriate for their use and within the spirit of the guidelines.

3.5.1 Wood



Use of traditional materials are encouraged such as wood clapboard with or without variations in exposure, wood board and batten , tongue and groove boards and cedar shingles or shakes. Artificial or faux materials may be acceptable alternatives to traditional materials provided the materials chosen are of good quality and are consistent with traditional materials in appearance, detail and finish.

3.5.2 Brick

- a) Brick finishes for buildings of a more monumental stature are encouraged. Applicants are encouraged to use standard brick sizes; oversize units are discouraged unless consistent with the development's overall design scheme. Applicants are encouraged to use standard red color bricks similar to the common brick used on existing buildings in the District although other sizes or colors may be considered.
- b) Window and door openings in brick walls offer opportunities to provide unique details in brick or through trim detail. The applicant is encouraged to use flat, curved, or arched lintels in brick or stone. Applicants are encouraged to design openings with moldings and detailing similar to existing structures.
- c) Brick buildings with extensive flat surfaces, cut-out openings without detail, and disproportionate openings are discouraged.



3.5.3 Stone

A stone exterior finish should be reserved to buildings of a monumental stature. Modest buildings may use stone accents such as chimneys or planters but the application of a stone veneer front to a wood building is discouraged. In all cases the masonry should be native stone similar to the stone structures in the District.



3.6 Paint or Stain Colors

- a) Applicants are encouraged to use color schemes that are visually appealing and, whenever possible, reflect the historic nature of the District.
- b) Building colors that are drab, garish or represent national or regional trademark colors are discouraged.

3.7 Doors and Windows



- a) Applicants are encouraged to use windows with divided lights that are generally compatible with neighboring structures. Shop display windows should be detailed to create a frame around the opening that will focus attention on the window displays.
- b) Applicants are encouraged to use wooden doors (or doors made of other similar materials provided the materials chosen are of good quality and are consistent with wood in appearance, detail and finish), which are in harmony with the type, size and shape of the doors of the neighboring structures.
- c) Paneled doors, doors with etched or stained glass inserts, and doors with glass lights are encouraged.
- d) Metal doors articulated with panels and window lights may be acceptable where there is sufficient detail around the door openings consistent with the spirit of the guidelines.
- e) Applicants are encouraged to design main entries to structures with sufficient detailing to identify the door as the primary access to the building. Multiple tenancies are encouraged to each have a distinctive entry to identify their location in the structure.

3.7.1 Storefront Windows



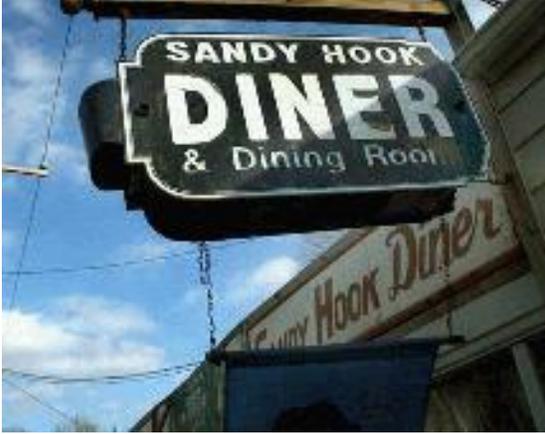
- a) Applicants are encouraged to use wood storefront windows with transom windows on the ground floor, where possible. Metal windows with mullions may be used if appropriate to the proposed use and neighboring context. Artificial or faux materials may be acceptable alternatives to traditional materials provided the materials chosen are of good quality and are consistent with traditional materials in appearance, detail and finish
- b) Applicants are encouraged to incorporate the use of large storefront windows in conjunction with development for ground floor retail uses.
- c) Storefront displays should be designed with consideration for the appearance presented to passerby.
- d) Applicants are encouraged to traditional materials and design details in the construction of storefront windows consistent with the spirit of the guidelines

3.7.2 Building Fixtures

- a) Applicants are encouraged to use canvas. Awnings may be colored to reflect national or regional retail identities if appropriate within the context.
- b) Address numbers should be legible from the street and designed to complement the architecture.
- c) Applicants are encouraged to incorporate in their design flower boxes, foundation planters, mail boxes, shutters and trellises, and in a manner that compliments the architecture of the project and its context.

3.8 Signs

- a) Within the District the signage for commercial uses requires special considerations. The size, height and location of such commercial signs should compliment the design of the building.
- b) Applicants are encouraged to design signs in a manner compatible with the overall materials and detailing of the building. Such should not cover building details or windows.



- c) Neon signs, internally illuminated letters, illuminated vinyl awnings, vinyl or painted letters on sheet metal and plastic faced box signs are discouraged. Preferred signs include carved wood panels or individual wood letters, carved stone or pin-mounted metal letters.
- d) Applicants are encouraged to design its signage for multiple tenants so as to be located adjacent to the entry doors of the business and be in harmony with the design of the entry. One sign indicating the building location, such as the “Smith Building” for example, is encouraged.
- e) Applicants are encouraged to use signs that are externally illuminated with incandescent lighting such as goose-neck fixtures. High intensity discharge lighting is discouraged. The light source should be designed to provide adequate illumination for the sign face and be sufficiently shielded to prevent spillover into the surrounding environment.
- f) Trademark signs may be permitted “as is;” however, applicants are encouraged to design such signs using traditional materials and design details compatible with the guidelines of the District.

- end -