

Town of Milton Land Use Regulations

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Chapter 800. Site Plan Review

Section 8004. Special Provisions Applicable to the DB1 Zoning District

8004.A **Purpose.** Applicants must locate and design development within this district to:

- (1) Enhance the visual appearance of the street and neighborhood in which they are located.
- (2) Enhance the streetscape and pedestrian connections.
- (3) Improve access management, accommodate multi-modal transportation options, and foster development of a secondary road network.
- (4) Exhibit consistent design integrity in all components including, but not limited to, roof forms, windows and entrances (proportion and placement), building materials, facade details, signage, lighting, fencing and landscaping.
- (5) Not contribute to a pattern of linear strip development along the Route 7 corridor.

8004.B **Building Design.** Applicants must design new principal buildings to:

- (1) **Placement**
 - (a) Be located with shallow setbacks to enclose the public realm of the street and sidewalk except that deeper setbacks may be appropriate in some areas to allow for wider sidewalks, building entrances and facade articulation, outdoor dining areas, plazas or other high activity public areas.
 - (b) Be arranged in related groups and organized around common spaces if there will be multiple buildings on a site.
 - (c) Have pedestrian walkways from public sidewalks to public building entrances if buildings are set back from the edge of the public sidewalk.
 - (d) Be located to facilitate pedestrian and vehicular movement between buildings and adjoining properties.
- (2) **Form and Massing**
 - (a) Avoid large box-like forms with continuous unrelieved surfaces by incorporating articulation to reduce buildings' perceived bulk.
 - (b) Limit overall building size or designing buildings with features to break up building bulk such as changes in wall plane (instead of a long flat wall), changes in roof form and height, or major full-height recesses (typically at least 8 feet deep) along the length of the building that successfully break the building into smaller discrete masses.
 - (c) Have facades that provide horizontal emphasis through recesses, ornamentation and other types of decorative detail.
 - (d) Have window recesses, window trim, doorways, columns, overhangs and other architectural elements with adequate depth to create shadow and architectural relief.
 - (e) Ensure that any blank walls visible from the street or public view provide visual interest by making use of elements such as recesses, bays, covered walkways,

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highly textured materials, murals, shallow display windows, perimeter landscaping, etc.

- (f) Have facades that provide a pedestrian scale and orientation through overhangs, eaves, awnings, display windows and architectural ornamentation.

(3) Building Materials

- (a) Use high quality building materials that convey a sense of durability and permanence, and that will last for the life of the building.
- (b) Use the highest quality and most durable materials at the ground floor of buildings such as brick, glass, stone, concrete, etc.
- (c) Have a harmonious facade composition through use of complementary combinations of materials.
- (d) Use a complimentary palette of materials on all sides of buildings.
- (e) Have material changes located at interior corners or other logical terminations and not at external corners.

(4) Windows and Entries

- (a) Consider the overall composition of the building facade when locating and sizing window openings.
- (b) Use window patterns and proportions to add architectural interest and to differentiate the residential and nonresidential components of the building.
- (c) Use the ground floor adjacent to the street and sidewalk for commercial uses, preferably for active uses like shops, restaurants and personal services that will contribute to an active pedestrian realm.
- (d) Have continuous storefront windows, open air frontages and frequent, highly visible public entrances for commercial uses on the ground floor adjacent to the street and sidewalk.
- (e) Emphasize public building entrances with special architectural and landscape treatment.
- (f) Include architectural elements providing shade and weather protection for pedestrians such as recessed entryways, overhangs, awnings and arcades.
- (g) Have windows, entryways, porches, or balconies comprise at least 30% of the width of the front elevation on each upper floor.
- (h) Provide access to all dwelling units from private entrances that are separated from public entrances to non-residential portions of the building.

(5) Energy Conservation

- (a) Meet the applicable stretch code for residential or commercial buildings, if the proposed development will be subject to the Vermont Residential Building Energy Standards or Commercial Building Energy Standards.

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8004.C **Residential Storage.** Applicants must provide all new dwelling units with secured, bulk storage areas in garages or in residential buildings so residents do not store bulk goods on outdoor balconies, patios or other places that are visible from public areas or other dwelling units.

8004.D **Open Space Areas.** Applicants creating additional dwelling units must:

(1) **General**

- (a) Provide all new dwelling units with usable outdoor living areas, including both common open space and private open space for residents' recreation and relaxation.
- (b) Provide usable open space that may have a dual function for stormwater treatment and incorporates green stormwater infrastructure practices such as grassy swales, vegetated swales, flow through planters, rain gardens, etc.
- (c) Separate and screen residential open space areas from public outdoor use areas associated with nonresidential uses.
- (d) Locate and configure open space so that it will be usable for recreation and/or serve functions such as screening or stormwater management. Open space must be contiguous with no dimension less than 30 feet unless the applicant can demonstrate that fragmenting the open space and/or incorporating narrow strips is necessary to protect natural resources and/or provide usable open space given site-specific conditions.

(2) **Common Open Space**

- (a) Design common open space(s) to be shared by all residents as a place where people can interact, host guests, and also enjoy some time alone in the fresh air.
- (b) Provide at least 400 square feet of common open space per dwelling unit. The Development Review Board may waive or modify the amount of common open space required for dwelling units located within a ½ mile of a public recreation area, provided that residents will be able to access the area via sidewalks and/or multi-use paths.
- (c) Locate common open space(s) in a central location that serves all the units, not at an extreme edge of the site.
- (d) Design common open space(s) with seating areas and other passive recreation facilities.
- (e) Landscape common open space(s) with trees, shrubs, and groundcover. If the space is not located on the ground, include planters that accommodate trees, shrubs, ornamental plants and groundcovers.
- (f) Include at least one children's play area in a common open space unless the proposed development will be senior housing.

(3) **Private or Semi-Private Open Space**

- (a) Design private open space for the exclusive use household members to eat outside, garden, enjoy the fresh air, grill outdoors, etc.
- (b) Design each dwelling unit with a private or semi-private open space at least 60 square feet in area and not less than 6 feet in any dimension to be used exclusively by residents of that dwelling.

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- (c) Locate private open space in yards, patios, balconies, decks, or other outdoor spaces attached to individual units.
- (d) Design private open space so there is room for a table and chairs where residents can sit outside.

8004.E **Service Areas.** Applicants must locate and design service areas to:

(1) **General**

- (a) Ensure that service areas do not detract from the overall quality of public, common and residential outdoor use areas.
- (b) Ensure that pedestrian connections are not disrupted by service or loading areas.
- (c) Minimize the impact (noise, light, odors, etc.) of service areas on building residents.

(2) **Ancillary Facilities.** Locate ancillary facilities (such as trash receptacles and utility meters) within buildings, not along the street facing facade, to the maximum extent feasible. If ancillary facilities cannot be incorporated into a building, locate them at the rear of the site in freestanding, enclosed structures designed to be compatible with the architecture of the principal building.

(3) **Refuse.** Provide on-site facilities for collection and storage of trash, recyclable materials and compostable materials within buildings or enclosed, centralized dumpsters or containers as follows:

- (a) Locate refuse collection and storage areas to prevent odors, noise and other adverse impacts from residential and public areas.
- (b) Provide sealed containers for storing all refuse
- (c) Secure refuse collection and storage areas within a gated enclosure at least 6 feet high placed on an adequately drained, paved surface.
- (d) Build refuse enclosures with durable materials that will be compatible with the design and materials of the principal building such as stone, concrete block, steel, and heavy timber.
- (e) Keep the enclosure's gate closed and latched except when someone is depositing or collecting refuse.

(4) **Utilities**

- (a) Locate utilities underground to the maximum extent feasible given site-specific conditions.
- (b) Locate electrical panels to minimize their visibility from the street, in locations such as side yard walls, and/or behind landscaped areas, and integrate them into the design of the buildings to the maximum extent feasible.
- (c) Minimize the visibility of utility connections from public and residential areas.

(5) **Loading Areas.** Minimize the visibility of loading areas from public and residential areas by screening them with screen walls, landscaping, and other devices.

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8004.F **Landscaping and Screening.** Applicants must:

(1) **General**

- (a) Submit a landscape plan prepared by a licensed landscape architect or certified horticulturalist for major projects.
- (b) Provide a coordinated landscape design with a consistent design integrity throughout the site.
- (c) Provide landscaping to manage stormwater, support passive heating and cooling, improve air quality, provide an attractive view from public and residential areas, provide privacy for dwelling units, promote quality of life, enhance streetscapes, and beautify neighborhoods.
- (d) Provide landscaping along streets, within front yards, between commercial and residential buildings, in areas that will be visible from the primary living areas of dwelling units, within common open space areas, along the edge of driveways, along the perimeter of the site, between buildings and driveways, and between buildings and parking.

(2) **Plant Materials**

- (a) Select non-invasive plant materials that meet the planting specifications in Table * (Refer to the Vermont Agency of Agriculture Noxious Weed List and the Vermont Invasive Exotic Plant Committee's watch list for more information about invasive plants.).
- (b) Retain existing mature vegetation on development sites to the maximum extent feasible, which applicants may use to meet landscaping and screening requirements.
- (c) Use native plant materials to the maximum extent feasible.

(3) **Maintenance**

- (a) Maintain required landscaping in a healthy condition.
- (b) Replace any dead or dying plants with a comparable plant (in terms of type, form, size at maturity, etc.) of at least the minimum size requirements specified in Table * no later than the end of the next growing season.

(4) **Stormwater**

- (a) Design landscaped areas to serve as stormwater management areas as well as visual amenities.
- (b) Integrate stormwater management facilities into the site landscaping. Green stormwater infrastructure practices are encouraged (Refer to the Vermont League of Cities and Towns' Green Stormwater Infrastructure Toolbox for guidance on selecting and sizing GSI practices for small projects).

(5) **Parking**

- (a) Landscape parking areas, driveways, and other vehicle use areas in order to improve their visual appearance from dwelling units, common areas and adjacent properties.
- (b) Incorporate trees, landscape islands, shrubs, ornamental plants and groundcover throughout parking areas.

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- (c) Shade paved surfaces to the maximum extent feasible in order to reduce heat gain and other environmental effects.
 - (d) Design parking areas so that the area occupied by planting islands and strips is not less than 10% of the area occupied by parking spaces and access aisles (this will not include the area of any access drive as shown in Figure *).
 - (e) Provide at least two shrubs and one tree for every 10 parking spaces within parking areas.
 - (f) Design planting islands and strips to measure at least 160 square feet in area and not less than 8 feet in any dimension, excluding any area subject to vehicle overhang.
- (6) **Fences and Walls.** Applicants must:
- (a) Design fences and walls to be an attractive site element, with materials and designs that are compatible with the exterior materials of the principal building.
 - (b) Locate fences or walls on the site to define private open space and common open space areas, protect privacy, and buffer residents from noise.

8004.G **Vehicular Circulation.** Applicants must:

- (1) Ensure a safe and convenient pedestrian environment and an attractive street frontage to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle activities.
- (2) Minimize the number of curb cuts, in order to minimize conflicts with pedestrians and reduce congestion.
- (3) Design vehicular circulation to allow through movement between adjacent properties to the maximum extent feasible and place covenants on deeds to ensure continued shared use.
- (4) Provide access from side and rear streets, rather than from major arterials to the maximum extent feasible.

8004.H **Pedestrian, Bicycle and Transit Facilities.** Applicants must:

- (1) **General**
 - (a) Ensure the provision of adequate facilities for pedestrians, bicycles and transit to promote and facilitate alternative modes of transportation and improve circulation.
- (2) **Public Right-of-Way Improvements**
 - (a) Provide new or repaired improvements in the public right-of-way along the lot frontage, including sidewalks, street trees, curbs and gutters.
 - (b) Provide street trees along the street frontage that enhance the visual appearance of the street and provide shade for pedestrians by planting one tree for each 50 feet of lot frontage. The Development Review Board may allow applicants to count existing trees located within 10 feet of the road right-of-way towards the street tree requirement. The Development Review Board may waive or modify the street tree requirement if the applicant can demonstrate that providing an adequate planting area at least 5 feet wide within or adjacent to the street right-of-way is not feasible due to site-specific conditions.

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- (c) Locate street trees within 5 feet of the sidewalk (refer to the * tree plan). Street trees should be located in a tree belt between the sidewalk and street when there is adequate space and there will not be conflicts with signs, utilities or similar elements.
 - (d) Plant a diversity of tree species and avoid planting more than 3 street trees of the same species in a row.
 - (e) Refer to the *Vermont Tree Selection Guide* and online tree selection tool available from the Vermont Urban and Community Forestry Program for guidance on choosing appropriate street tree species.
- (3) **Pedestrian Sidewalks and Walkways**
- (a) Locate buildings to be contiguous wherever possible, and make accommodations for pedestrian circulation between adjacent businesses and sites.
 - (b) Where new parking areas are to be located adjacent to existing parking areas on an adjoining site or sites, provide pedestrian walkways that connect the two areas.
 - (c) Provide sidewalks within residential projects that connect the street or driveway to unit entrances.
- (4) **Bicycle Parking and Storage**
- (a) Provide short-term bike parking in parking areas and other locations near commercial building entrances. Locating bicycle parking where it will be covered and protected from the elements is strongly encouraged.
 - (b) Provide at least one bicycle rack on each site and additional racks as necessary to provide 1 bicycle parking space for each 20 nonresidential vehicle parking spaces.
 - (c) Provide at least one accessible and secure on-site bicycle parking/storage space for each dwelling unit.
- (5) **Transit Shelters**
- (a) Provide a transit and/or school bus shelter that enhances the streetscape and that offers adequate protection from the elements when appropriate for high-traffic uses or sites as required by the Development Review Board and in coordination with CCTA or the school district as applicable.

8004.1 **Parking.** Applicants must:

- (1) Locate parking to the side or rear of buildings, or within or below buildings.
- (2) Not locate parking between buildings and the street.
- (3) Disperse paved areas throughout the project in smaller segmented parking areas of not more than 40 spaces rather than creating large, uninterrupted land intensive surface parking lots.
- (4) Locate garage entrances and driveways to the side of the site instead of at the center.
- (5) Screen parking areas from view from the street and sidewalk, and from public and residential areas with a combination of landscaping fencing, walls, and/or grade change.
- (6) Separate parking areas from buildings by at least a walkway or a landscaped area, preferably both, so that parking spaces will not directly abut buildings.

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8004.J **Previously Developed Sites.** Applicants must retrofit previously developed sites that do not conform to the standards of this section when applying for a major site plan approval. The Development Review Board must find that the applicant is proposing a “best fix” that conforms with the provisions of this section to the maximum extent feasible given the physical characteristics of the lot and the existing development on it. If the applicant is not proposing to come into full conformance with streetscaping (including sidewalks and connecting pedestrian walkways) and landscaping requirements, he/she must demonstrate to the DRB why it is not physically feasible to make the necessary improvements.