

Design Preferences

Route 140 Corridor, East Windsor

DRAFT FOR REFERRAL TO
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East Windsor Planning and Zoning Commission
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Background

In 2011, the East Windsor Planning and Zoning Commission undertook a study to determine appropriate zoning and design considerations for that section of Route 140 where sewers are being extended. The intent is to encourage business development while maintaining the corridor's character and minimizing traffic and environmental impacts.

On September 15, 2011, the Planning and Zoning Commission and Economic Development Commission held a "Visual Preference" Workshop, where attendees rated over 50 buildings based on whether they would like to see similar styled buildings along Route 140. The results provided insight into what styles and design features are valued in the community. While there appears to be acceptance of a wide array of uses, building type, and size, common values emerged and are incorporated into this design guide.

For the detailed results, refer to the "Visual Preference Survey Results."

Purpose

This document includes building designs and styles to encourage and those that should be discouraged. It is intended that landowners and prospective developers will review this document prior to designing new buildings or additions and improvements to existing buildings. The document is also intended for use by the Commission as it reviews development applications in the corridor.

ENCOURAGE...



- Peaked roof
- A large building that does not look large:
 - gables break up roof massing
 - building massing is broken into smaller sections
- Details – round windows, cupolas, columns
- Building mounted sign can be clearly seen, but blends with architecture and does not overwhelm



- Variation:
 - mix of roof types, yet coherent style
 - different façade materials
 - varying window styles, yet consistent in size / scale
- Overall “New England” feel
- Appropriately placed and scaled signs



- Mixed-use look, with commercial feel to first floor and office / residential feel on upper floors
- First floor façade is mostly windows
- Upper story windows are residentially-scaled (and are smaller than first floor windows)
- Awnings create an inviting look and are appropriately placed (i.e., each window bay has its own awning)



- Covered walkway adds to appearance, breaks up an otherwise flat façade, and is practical to protect pedestrians from the elements
- Details – chimneys, window shutters, columns
- Building massing is broken up by recessing middle portion of building



- “Rural” feel
- Gables and chimneys break up the roof massing
- Consistency in windows and signs



- Covered walkway helps prevent a monotonous feel and diverts attention from the flat roof
- Details – windows above entryway, cupola, brick columns, make for an interesting building
- Unique – does not look “cookie cutter” or have typical “franchise” appearance

Additional design elements to encourage:

Overall Site Layout:

- Buildings generally should be oriented so that the facade faces Route 140. If the building cannot be oriented in this manner, then there should be no blank walls visible from Route 140.
- Loading areas, garages, trash containers, and other accessory functions should be behind or to the side of the building and screened from public view. Utilities and mechanical structures should be hidden appropriately.
- Landscaping between the façade and street can create a welcoming feel. Use front yard landscaping to enhance the overall appearance from Route 140.
- Use natural features to conceal parking areas, such as slopes, existing vegetation, etc.

Signs and Awnings:

- Signs should be of compatible style, materials and color of the building.
- Building mounted signs and awnings should not obstruct or cover architectural features.
- Sign colors should be muted with the background and lettering contrasting. Avoid using more than 4 colors.
- Coordinate size, placement, color and overall design of signs and awnings when there are multiple businesses in a building. But provide some variation to avoid monotony.
- Awnings should not span numerous window bays or store fronts.

Buildings:

- Any side of the building that can be viewed by the public should have windows.
- When a building width exceeds 50 feet, break up the massing using techniques illustrated on pages 2-3 (variable facades, staggered setbacks, etc.)
- Break up roof massing with dormer windows and gables.
- Avoid flat roofs on 1 to 3 story buildings.
- Generally, upper story windows should be smaller than first story windows and of residential scale. Larger, corporate style office buildings may be the exception.
- Conceal roof-mounted equipment such as HVAC, exhaust fans, etc.



Landscaped front yard with parking to side and rear.



Well screened utilities.



Smaller, residentially-scaled upper story windows.



Signs are similar in size and placement, but unique.

AVOID...



- Lack of architectural detail
- Boxy, plain
- Flat roof on a one story building



- Low pitched roof on a one story building
- Lack of symmetry in door and window placement
- Pavement goes right up to the building



- Lack of windows on sides visible to public
- Lack of landscaping
- Visible roof-top equipment



- Garage facing front of building
- Signs cover windows and hide front façade
- Lack of buffer between entrance and parking spaces



- Roof overwhelms building – too high pitched for a one story building.
- Lack of windows



- Mixing of styles that does not blend well