



M E M O R A N D U M

P L A N N I N G D E P A R T M E N T
T O W N O F C U M B E R L A N D , M A I N E

Date: October 15, 2020
To: Cumberland Planning Board
From: Carla Nixon, Planning Director
Subject: Agenda Item # 3: Rt. 100 and Route 1 Design Standards Amendments

This agenda item proposes that the Planning Board amend two of the design standard handbooks currently used in reviewing projects along Route 1 and Route 100.

I am proposing that the Route 1 and Route 100 Design “Standards” become “Guidelines” so that the Planning Board (and Town Planner when Staff Review is permitted) has more discretion in reviewing small businesses such as the Caddy Shack Ice Cream stand on Route 100.

I have removed much of the overly-descriptive language and all of the photos that were in the original document. I have left the essence of each of the design elements such as lighting and landscaping.

As you know, these review areas are addressed in the Site Plan Ordinance as well. The intent of the Design Standards was to emphasize how good development should look and feel and were based on Design Standards that were developed for more stand-alone, planned developments such as the shopping areas in Falmouth where there were multiple buildings grouped together on one site. (Think of the Ricetta’s and Staples plaza for example.)

I am also proposing that the *Route 1 Design Standards* also become “Guidelines” for similar reasons. In addition to the document being overly lengthy and restrictive, the fact is that there are only two developable lots left that front on Route 1 (and a larger parcel in the rear that is not visible from Route 1. The change from Standards to Guidelines will not materially affect how these remaining projects are reviewed.

Please note that these “Design Standards” are not Ordinances. There is no need for Town Council action to be taken. If the Planning Board agrees to these changes, they will go into effect as of the date of Planning Board action.

Route 1 Design Guidelines

1.2 Site Planning and Design

1.1 Master Planning

On properties that are large enough to accommodate more than a single structure, developers should prepare a conceptual master plan to show the Planning Board the general location of future buildings, parking lots, circulation patterns, open space, utilities, provisions for stormwater management, and other components of site development.

On sites with multiple buildings, the outdoor space defined by the structures should be designed as a focal point for the development, with provisions for seating and other outdoor use. Landscaping, bollards and other site features should maintain a safe separation between vehicles and pedestrians.

FINDING:

1.2 Professional Design

Developers should have their site plans designed by licensed professionals (civil engineers, architects or landscape architects) as required by State of Maine professional licensing requirements to address the health, safety, welfare and visual pleasure of the general public, during all hours of operation and all seasons of the year.

FINDING:

1.3 Vehicular Access

1.3.1 Route 1 Curb Cuts

To promote vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian safety, the number of curb cuts on Route 1 should be kept to a minimum. Adjacent uses are encouraged to use shared driveways wherever possible, thereby reducing the number of turning motions onto and off of Route 1. This practice will increase motorist, bicycle and pedestrian safety, and has the added environmental benefit of helping to reduce impervious (paved) area.

Driveways and their associated turning movements should be carefully designed and spaced to reduce interruptions in Route 1's level of service and to promote safe and easily understandable vehicular movements. Where curb cuts will interrupt sidewalks, ADA requires that the cross slope not exceed 2% in order to maintain accessibility.

New driveways and existing driveways for which the use has changed or expanded require a Maine Department of Transportation "Driveway Entrance Permit." The Planning Board will not grant project approval until the Town has been provided a copy of the permit, or alternately, until the applicant provides the Town a letter from the DOT stating that such a permit is not required. The MDOT may also require a Traffic Movement Permit if the number of vehicle trips exceeds the threshold established by the MDOT.

FINDING:

1.3.2 Site Circulation

Internal vehicular movement on each site should be designed to achieve the following goals: to ensure the safety of motorists, delivery vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists by providing clear cues to the motorist as to where to drive or park, etc., once they enter the site. Landscaping, to reduce impervious areas, is encouraged as much possible.

Every effort should be made to restrict paved surfaces to a maximum of two sides of the building. The site should not feature a building surrounded by drive lanes and parking.

To ensure safe and easily understandable circulation, parking spaces, directional arrows, crosswalks and other markings on the ground should be painted on the pavement paint or shown by other suitable methods.

FINDING:

1.3.3 Driveways between Parcels

Driveways between adjacent parcels should be used where feasible in order to make deliveries easier and reduce unnecessary trips and turning movements on Route 1.

These driveways should provide safe, direct access between adjacent lots, but only where the paved areas of the two adjacent lots are reasonably close together. However, they are inappropriate where they would require excessive impervious (paved) area or impose undue financial burden on the owner.

All such driveways between parcels should have pedestrian walkways when possible.

FINDING:

1.4 Building Placement

1.4.1 Location of Building on the Site

In placing the building on the site, the designer or applicant should carefully consider the building's relationship to existing site features such as the size of the site, existing vegetation and topography, drainage, etc., as well as the abutting land uses.

The site design should make every effort to avoid creating a building surrounded by parking lot. In addition, buildings should generally be square to Route 1 and should avoid unusual geometry in building placement unless the site requires it.

FINDING:

1.4.2 Building Entrances

The building's main entrance should be a dominant architectural feature of the building, clearly demarcated by the site design and landscaping. Main entrances should front onto the most convenient parking area.

At building entrance areas and drop-off areas, site furnishings such as benches, sitting walls and, if appropriate, bicycle racks should be encouraged. Additional plantings may be desirable at these points to clearly identify the building entrance and to invite pedestrians into it.

Where building entrances do not face Route 1, the Route 1 façade should still be made interesting and attractive to drivers on Route 1.

FINDING:

1.4.3 Universal Accessibility

Development of all properties, buildings, parking lots, crosswalks, walkways and other site features must comply with the applicable standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

FINDING:

1.5 Parking

Objective: Development should provide safe, convenient and attractive parking. Parking lots should be designed to complement adjacent buildings, the site and the Route 1 corridor without becoming a dominant visual element. Every effort should be made to break up the scale of parking lots by reducing the amount of pavement visible from the road. Careful attention should be given to circulation, landscaping, lighting and walkways.

FINDING:

1.5.1 Location

Parking lots should be located to the side or rear of buildings. Parking should only be placed between the building and Route 1 if natural site constraints such as wetlands or topography, allow no other option. If parking must be built between the building and Route 1, it should be limited, if at all possible, to only one row of parking spaces and be adequately buffered.

FINDING:

1.5.2 Snow Storage

Provision should be made for snow storage in the design of all parking areas, and these areas should be indicated on the site plan. The area used for snow storage should not conflict with proposed landscaping or circulation patterns. These areas should be sited to avoid problems with visibility, drainage or icing during winter months.

FINDING:

1.5.4 Impervious Surfaces

The amount of paved surface required for parking, driveways and service areas should be limited as much as possible in order to provide green space, reduce run-off and preserve site character. This will have the added benefit of reducing construction and maintenance costs.

FINDING:

1.6 Service Areas

Objective: Service areas include exterior dumpsters, recycling facilities, mechanical units, loading docks and other similar uses. Service areas associated with uses along Route 1 should be designed to meet the needs of the facility with a minimum of visual, odor or noise problems. They should be the smallest size needed to fit the specific requirements of the building and its intended operation, and should be fully screened from view by either plantings or architectural elements such as attractive fences.

FINDING:

1.6.1 Service Area Location

Service areas should, if possible, be located so that they are not visible from Route 1 or from the building entrance. Locations that face abutting residential properties should also be avoided wherever possible, if not possible, then adequate buffering will be required

Dumpster, recycling facilities and other outdoor service facilities should be consolidated into a single site location, in accordance with appropriate life safety requirements.

FINDING:

1.6.2 Service Area Design

Service areas should be designed to accommodate the turning movements of anticipated vehicles, and should be separated from other vehicle movements, parking areas and pedestrian routes.

Wherever possible, service drives should be separated from areas where people will be walking by landscaped islands, grade changes, berms, or other devices to minimize conflicts.

Gates on enclosures should be designed to prevent sagging or binding. Wooden fencing is always preferred, but where chain link is necessary for safety considerations, it should be screened by landscaping and painted a dark color coated with dark vinyl.

FINDING:

1.6.3 Service Area Buffering/Screening

Service areas should be screened to minimize visibility from sensitive viewpoints such as Route 1, nearby residential dwellings, public open space, pedestrian pathways, and building entrances. Landscape screening may consist of evergreen trees, shrubs, and/or planted earth berms. Architectural screening may consist of walls, fences or shed structures, and should complement the design of the main structure through repetition of materials, detailing, scale and color.

Where plantings do not survive, or where they grow to a point where they no longer serve as effective screens, they shall be replaced or supplemented to meet the intent of the plan as approved by the Planning Board.

FINDING:

1.7 Open Space

Objective: In order to provide an attractive, hospitable and usable environment, future development along Route 1 should have generous amounts of open space and attractive site details for such

elements as pavement, curbing, sitting and other public areas, landscaping, planters, walls, signage, lighting, bollards, waste receptacles and other elements in the landscape.

FINDING:

1.7.1 Internal Walkways

Walkways extending the full length of a commercial building are encouraged along any façade that features a customer entrance and an abutting parking area. Such walkways should be located five to ten feet from the face of the building to allow for planting beds. Such walkways should be shown on the project's landscaping plan.

Driveway crosswalks should be marked by a change in pavement texture, pattern or color to maximize pedestrian safety in parking and other potentially hazardous areas.

FINDING:

1.8 Buffering of Adjacent Uses

Objective: Buffering or screening may be necessary to effectively separate quite different land uses such as housing and office or commercial buildings. Plantings, earth berms, stone walls, grade changes, fences, distance and other means can be used to create the necessary visual and psychological separation.

FINDING:

2.1 General Architectural Form

These guidelines encourage the use of materials and forms that are characteristic of the construction of ordinary houses and commercial buildings of 19th century in northern New England, and particularly in Maine. Typical features include clapboard or shingle siding, pitched roofs, vertical rectangular windows and detailing consistent with the style of the building.

FINDING:

2.2.1 Design and Massing

Large structures should be designed so that their large mass is broken up into smaller visual components through the use of clustered volumes, projections, recesses and varied façade treatment. The design should provide variation to add shadow and depth and a feeling of reduced scale.

FINDING:

2.2.2 Site Design

Wherever possible, large buildings should fit into the existing topography and vegetation, and should not require dramatic grade changes around their perimeter. Landscaping, site walls, pedestrian amenities and existing trees can be effective in reducing the apparent scale of large buildings.

FINDING:

2.2.3 Architectural Details

Large structures should have the same degree of detailing found in well-designed smaller and medium sized buildings along the Route 1 corridor. Architectural details can be used to reduce the scale and uniformity of large buildings. Elements such as colonnades, pilasters, gable ends, awnings, display windows and appropriately positioned light fixtures can be effective means of achieving a human scale.

FINDING:

2.2.4 Facades and Exterior Walls

Unbroken facades in excess of 80 feet are overwhelming whether they are visible from Route 1, other roadways or pedestrian areas, or when they abut residential areas. Breaking up the plane of the wall can reduce this sense of overwhelming scale. Where the plane of the wall is broken, the offset should be proportionate to the building's height and length. A general rule of thumb for such projections or recesses is that their depth should be at least 3% of the façade's length, and they should extend for at least 20% of the façade's length.

Other devices to add interest to long walls include strong shadow lines, changes in rooflines, pilasters and similar architectural details, as well as patterns in the surface material and wall openings. All façade elements should be coordinated with the landscape plan.

Facades of commercial buildings that face Route 1 or other roadways should have transparent openings (e.g. display windows or entry areas) along 30% or more of the length of the ground floor. Blank or unadorned walls facing public roads, residential neighborhoods, or abutting properties are boring and unattractive.

FINDING:

2.2.5 Building Entrances

Large structures should have clearly defined and highly visible entrances emphasized through such devices as significant variations in rooflines or cornice lines, changes in materials, porticos, landscape treatments, distinctive lighting or other architectural treatments.

FINDING:

2.3 Linear Commercial Buildings

Objective: Linear commercial structures, such as multi-tenant offices or commercial buildings may be appropriate along Route 1 provided that they are designed with façade and roofline elements that reduce their sense of large scale and add visual interest.

2.3.1 Design

Buildings with multiple storefronts should be visually unified through the use of complementary architectural forms, similar materials and colors, consistent details, and a uniform signage size and mounting system.

FINDING:

2.3.2 Façade Design

The use of covered walkways, arcades, or open colonnades is strongly encouraged along long facades to provide shelter, encourage people to walk from store to store, and to visually unite the

structure. Pedestrian entrances to each business or tenant should be clearly defined and easily accessible.

FINDING:

2.3.3 Focal Points

Linear commercial buildings can include a focal point – such as a raised entranceway or clock tower, or other architectural element – to add visual interest and help reduce the scale of the building.

FINDING:

2.3.4 Façade Offsets

Variations in the plane of the front façade add visual interest. They also create opportunities for common entries, and social or landscaped spaces.

FINDING:

2.3.5 Rooflines

Variations in rooflines, detailing, cornice lines and building heights should be incorporated into the design to break up the scale of linear commercial buildings.

FINDING:

2.4 Smaller Freestanding Commercial Buildings

Objective: Smaller freestanding commercial buildings can easily make use of traditional New England building forms and should be designed to be attractive pieces of architecture, expressive of their use and compatible with surrounding buildings.

2.4.1 Single Use Buildings

Buildings that are constructed for use by a single business are generally smaller in scale than multi-tenant buildings. Single use buildings should be designed to be attractive and architecturally cohesive. To the greatest extent possible, the same materials, window types and roof types should be used throughout.

FINDING:

2.4.2 Franchise Design

Franchise architecture with highly contrasting color schemes, non-traditional forms, reflective siding and roof materials are not related to any traditional New England style. They are buildings that are stylized to the point where the structure is a form of advertising. However, franchises have been willing to use existing “vernacular” buildings, and sometimes have designs that somewhat reflect local styles.

FINDING:

2.4.3 Mixed Use Buildings

Buildings containing mixed uses (e.g., health club on the first floor with professional offices on the second floor) are encouraged. The architecture of a mixed-use building can reflect the different uses

on the upper floors by a difference in façade treatment, as long as the building has a unified design theme.

FINDING:

2.5 Residential Structures

Objective: Cumberland's future housing stock in the Route 1 corridor should be well designed and constructed, and is encouraged to have some connection to the traditional styles of New England residential architecture. The large mass of multiplex dwellings, can be broken up by façade articulation and architectural detailing in order to reduce their apparent size.

New England design and building materials such as wooden shingles and clapboards are encouraged. Modern low-maintenance materials such as cementitious shingles and clapboards may be substituted.

FINDING:

2.6 Residential Care Facilities

Objective: Ensure that the future needs of Cumberland's aging population are met in healthy and well-designed facilities, and that the architecture and site design of such facilities fit into the Cumberland context.

The design of Residential Care Facilities can also draw on the local vernacular architecture of gable roofs, multiple building forms and traditional materials. Landscaping, site design and resident amenities will also be of concern to the Planning Board. The site should offer outdoor amenities such as decks, terraces, gardens, gazebos, lawns or similar features. Residential Care Facilities should be buffered from roadways and adjacent uses as much as possible.

FINDING:

2.7 Hotels

Objective: To ensure that any future hotels in the Town of Cumberland are in keeping with the character of the surrounding area, and that the scale and design respects the architectural context of the region.

FINDING:

3.1 Sign Design

Objective: Commercial uses along Route 1 in Cumberland should be identified by attractive, legible signs that serve the need of the individual business, while complementing the site and the architecture. All signage shall comply with the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance of the Town of Cumberland.

3.1.1 Signage Plan

For development proposals requiring one or more signs, the applicant shall provide a detailed signage plan as part of Site Plan or Subdivision review. The signage plan should show the location of all signs on a site plan drawing and on building elevations, as well as sign construction details, dimensions, elevations, etc., and accurate graphic representations of the proposed wording.

FINDING:

3.1.2 Sign Location

Signs should be placed in locations that do not interfere with the safe and logical usage of the site. They should not block motorists' lines of sight or create hazards for pedestrians or bicyclists. Roof mounted signs are not encouraged.

FINDING:

3.1.3 Sign Design

The shape and materials and finish of all proposed signage should complement the architectural features of the associated building. Simple geometric forms are preferable for all signs. All signage shall comply with the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance of the Town of Cumberland.

FINDING:

3.1.4 Sign Colors

Signs should be limited to two or three contrasting colors that are clearly complimentary to the colors of the associated building.

FINDING:

3.1.5 Sign Content

To ensure a clear and easily readable message, a single sign with a minimum of informational content should be used. As a general rule no more than about 30 letters should be used on any sign.

Lettering on any sign intended to be read by passing motorists needs to be legible at the posted speed limit. In general a minimum letter height of 6 inches is appropriate. Smaller letters can require motorists to slow down thereby creating traffic and safety hazards. Upper and lower case lettering is preferred to all upper case, as it is easier to read.

The use of variable message "reader boards", sponsor logos, slogans or other messages that promote products or services other than the tenants' are not permitted.

Signage for any proposed development should prominently feature its assigned street address to facilitate general way-finding and e-911 emergency response.

FINDING:

3.2 Sign Type

Objective: To ensure that any sign type complements the architecture of the associated building, and to ensure that they are attractively designed and functional while clearly delivering the intended information.

3.2.1 Building Mounted Signs

Building or façade mounted signs should be designed as an integral element of the architecture, and should not obscure any of the architectural details of the building. Signage should be mounted on vertical surfaces and should not project past or interfere with any fascia trim. Signs should be located

a minimum of 18" from the edge of a vertical wall, however the overall proportions of both the wall and sign should be taken into consideration in the placement of the sign.

Flush mounted (flat) signage should be mounted with concealed hardware. Perpendicularly mounted hanging signs should be mounted with hardware designed to complement the building's architecture. All metal hardware should be corrosion and rust resistant to prevent staining or discoloration of the building.

FINDING:

3.2.2 Freestanding Signs

An alternative to a façade-mounted sign is a freestanding "pylon" sign. These signs are typically located between the building and the roadway right-of-way, adjacent to the site's vehicular entry point.

As with façade-mounted signage, design and content standards shall apply. Because freestanding signs amount to architecture themselves, it is important that they be carefully designed to complement the associated building. This will entail similar forms, materials, colors and finishes. Landscaping surrounding the base of such signs shall be consistent with the landscaping of the entire site.

Where a freestanding sign lists multiple tenants, there should be an apparent hierarchy: i.e., Address, name of the building or development, primary tenant, other tenants.

FINDING:

3.3 Sign Illumination

Only externally lit signs are permitted in the Route 1 corridor because, compared with internally lit signs, the direction and intensity of the light can be more easily controlled. Externally illuminated signs are made of an opaque material and have a dedicated light fixture or fixtures mounted in close proximity, aimed directly at the sign face. The illumination level on the vertical surface of the sign should create a noticeable contrast with the surrounding building or landscape without causing undue reflection or glare.

Lighting fixtures should be located, aimed and shielded such that light is only directed onto the surface of the sign. Wherever possible, fixtures should be mounted above the sign and be aimed downward to prevent illumination of the sky.

FINDING: Lighting

The applicant should provide sufficient lighting without over-illuminating. Fixtures should be fully shielded, giving off no light above the horizontal plane. They should also direct the light onto the intended areas.

FINDING:

Route 100 Design Guidelines

1.2 Site Planning and Design

1.1 Master Planning

On properties that are large enough to accommodate more than a single structure, developers should prepare a conceptual master plan to show the Planning Board the general location of future buildings, parking lots, circulation patterns, open space, utilities, provisions for stormwater management, and other components of site development.

On sites with multiple buildings, the outdoor space defined by the structures should be designed as a focal point for the development, with provisions for seating and other outdoor use. Landscaping, bollards and other site features should maintain a safe separation between vehicles and pedestrians.

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1.2 Professional Design

Developers shall have their site plans designed by licensed professionals (civil engineers, architects or landscape architects) as required by State of Maine professional licensing requirements to address the health, safety, welfare and visual pleasure of the general public, during all hours of operation and all seasons of the year.

FINDING:

1.3 Vehicular Access

1.3.1 Route 100 Curb Cuts

To promote vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian safety, the number of curb cuts on Route 100 should be kept to a minimum. Adjacent uses are encouraged to use shared driveways wherever possible, thereby reducing the number of turning motions onto and off of Route 100. This practice will increase motorist, bicycle and pedestrian safety, and has the added environmental benefit of helping to reduce impervious (paved) area.

Driveways and their associated turning movements should be carefully designed and spaced to reduce interruptions in Route 100's level of service and to promote safe and easily understandable vehicular movements. Where curb cuts will interrupt sidewalks, ADA requires that the cross slope not exceed 2% in order to maintain accessibility.

New driveways and existing driveways for which the use has changed or expanded require a Maine Department of Transportation "Driveway Entrance Permit." The Planning Board will not grant project approval until the Town has been provided a copy of the permit, or alternately, until the applicant provides the Town a letter from the DOT stating that such a permit is not required. The MDOT may also require a Traffic Movement Permit if the number of vehicle trips exceeds the threshold established by the MDOT.

FINDING:

1.3.2 Site Circulation

Internal vehicular movement on each site should be designed to achieve the following goals: to ensure the safety of motorists, delivery vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists by providing clear cues to the motorist as to where to drive or park, etc., once they enter the site. Landscaping, to reduce impervious areas, is encouraged as much possible.

Every effort should be made to restrict paved surfaces to a maximum of two sides of the building. The site should not feature a building surrounded by drive lanes and parking.

To ensure safe and easily understandable circulation, parking spaces, directional arrows, crosswalks and other markings on the ground should be painted on the pavement paint or shown by other suitable methods.

FINDING:

1.3.3 Driveways between Parcels

Driveways between adjacent parcels should be used where feasible in order to make deliveries easier and reduce unnecessary trips and turning movements on Route 100.

These driveways should provide safe, direct access between adjacent lots, but only where the paved areas of the two adjacent lots are reasonably close together. However, they are inappropriate where they would require excessive impervious (paved) area or impose undue financial burden on the owner.

All such driveways between parcels should have pedestrian walkways when possible.

FINDING:

1.4 Building Placement

1.4.1 Location of Building on the Site

In placing the building on the site, the designer or applicant should carefully consider the building's relationship to existing site features such as the size of the site, existing vegetation and topography, drainage, etc., as well as the abutting land uses.

The site design should make every effort to avoid creating a building surrounded by parking lot. In addition, buildings should generally be square to Route 100 and should avoid unusual geometry in building placement unless the site requires it.

FINDING:

1.4.2 Building Entrances

The building's main entrance should be a dominant architectural feature of the building, clearly demarcated by the site design and landscaping. Main entrances should front onto the most convenient parking area.

At building entrance areas and drop-off areas, site furnishings such as benches, sitting walls and, if appropriate, bicycle racks should be encouraged. Additional plantings may be desirable at these points to clearly identify the building entrance and to invite pedestrians into it.

Where building entrances do not face Route 100, the Route 100 façade should still be made interesting and attractive to drivers on Route 100.

FINDING:

1.4.3 Universal Accessibility

Development of all properties, buildings, parking lots, crosswalks, walkways and other site features must comply with the applicable standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

FINDING:

1.5 Parking

Objective: Development should provide safe, convenient and attractive parking. Parking lots should be designed to complement adjacent buildings, the site and the Route 100 corridor without becoming a dominant visual element. Every effort should be made to break up the scale of parking lots by reducing the amount of pavement visible from the road. Careful attention should be given to circulation, landscaping, lighting and walkways.

FINDING:

1.5.1 Location

Parking lots should be located to the side or rear of buildings. Parking should only be placed between the building and Route 100 if natural site constraints such as wetlands or topography, allow no other option. If parking must be built between the building and Route 100, it should be limited, if at all possible, to only one row of parking spaces and be adequately buffered.

FINDING:

1.5.2 Landscaping

A 25' landscaping easement to the Town of Cumberland will be required of each new development that has frontage on Route 100. This easement will provide an area for the Town to install curbing, if needed, a sidewalk and the planting of trees. Beyond this easement, the developer should provide adequate landscaping to insure that views from Route 100 are attractive and to buffer the presence of the parking and buildings.

Parking should be separated from the building by a landscaped strip a minimum of five to ten feet wide.

Parking lots should be designed and landscaped to create an attractive and pedestrian-friendly environment. A landscaped border around parking lots is encouraged, and landscaping should screen the parking area from adjacent residential uses. Tree plantings between rows of parking are very desirable.

Where there are trees in the 25' landscaping easement between Route 100 and the building, existing healthy trees should be maintained in their natural state. Where there are few or no trees in the 25' buffer, the buffer area should be landscaped either with trees, or with flowering shrubs, fencing, or such architectural elements as stone walls.

Where plantings do not survive, or grow to a point where they no longer serve as effective buffers, they shall be replaced or enhanced to meet the intent of the approved plan.

FINDING:

1.5.3 Snow Storage

Provision should be made for snow storage in the design of all parking areas, and these areas should be indicated on the site plan. The area used for snow storage should not conflict with proposed landscaping or circulation patterns. These areas should be sited to avoid problems with visibility, drainage or icing during winter months.

FINDING:

1.5.4 Impervious Surfaces

The amount of paved surface required for parking, driveways and service areas should be limited as much as possible in order to provide green space, reduce run-off and preserve site character. This will have the added benefit of reducing construction and maintenance costs.

FINDING:

1.6 Service Areas

Objective: Service areas include exterior dumpsters, recycling facilities, mechanical units, loading docks and other similar uses. Service areas associated with uses along Route 100 should be designed to meet the needs of the facility with a minimum of visual, odor or noise problems. They should be the smallest size needed to fit the specific requirements of the building and its intended operation, and should be fully screened from view by either plantings or architectural elements such as attractive fences.

FINDING:

1.6.1 Service Area Location

Service areas should, if possible, be located so that they are not visible from Route 100 or from the building entrance. Locations that face abutting residential properties should also be avoided wherever possible, if not possible, then adequate buffering will be required

Dumpster, recycling facilities and other outdoor service facilities should be consolidated into a single site location, in accordance with appropriate life safety requirements.

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1.6.2 Service Area Design

Service areas should be designed to accommodate the turning movements of anticipated vehicles, and should be separated from other vehicle movements, parking areas and pedestrian routes.

Wherever possible, service drives should be separated from areas where people will be walking by landscaped islands, grade changes, berms, or other devices to minimize conflicts.

Gates on enclosures should be designed to prevent sagging or binding. Wooden fencing is always preferred, but where chain link is necessary for safety considerations, it should be screened by landscaping and painted a dark color coated with dark vinyl.

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1.6.3 Service Area Buffering/Screening

Service areas should be screened to minimize visibility from sensitive viewpoints such as Route 100, nearby residential dwellings, public open space, pedestrian pathways, and building entrances. Landscape screening may consist of evergreen trees, shrubs, and/or planted earth berms. Architectural screening may consist of walls, fences or shed structures, and should complement the design of the main structure through repetition of materials, detailing, scale and color.

Where plantings do not survive, or where they grow to a point where they no longer serve as effective screens, they shall be replaced or supplemented to meet the intent of the plan as approved by the Planning Board.

FINDING:

1.7 Open Space

Objective: In order to provide an attractive, hospitable and usable environment, future development along Route 100 should have generous amounts of open space and attractive site details for such elements as pavement, curbing, sitting and other public areas, landscaping, planters, walls, signage, lighting, bollards, waste receptacles and other elements in the landscape.

FINDING:

1.7.1 Internal Walkways

Walkways extending the full length of a commercial building are encouraged along any façade that features a customer entrance and an abutting parking area. Such walkways should be located five to ten feet from the face of the building to allow for planting beds. Such walkways should be shown on the project's landscaping plan.

Driveway crosswalks should be marked by a change in pavement texture, pattern or color to maximize pedestrian safety in parking and other potentially hazardous areas.

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1.8 Buffering of Adjacent Uses

Objective: Buffering or screening may be necessary to effectively separate different land uses such as housing and office or commercial buildings. Plantings, earth berms, stone walls, grade changes, fences, distance and other means can be used to create the necessary visual and psychological separation.

FINDING:

2.1 General Architectural Form

These guidelines encourage the use of materials and forms that are characteristic of the construction of ordinary houses and commercial buildings of 19th century in northern New England, and particularly in Maine. Typical features include clapboard or shingle siding, pitched roofs, vertical rectangular windows and detailing consistent with the style of the building.

FINDING:

2.2.1 Design and Massing

Large structures should be designed so that their large mass is broken up into smaller visual components through the use of clustered volumes, projections, recesses and varied façade treatment. The design should provide variation to add shadow and depth and a feeling of reduced scale.

FINDING:

2.2.2 Site Design

Wherever possible, large buildings should fit into the existing topography and vegetation, and should not require dramatic grade changes around their perimeter. Landscaping, site walls, pedestrian amenities and existing trees can be effective in reducing the apparent scale of large buildings.

FINDING:

2.2.3 Architectural Details

Large structures should have the same degree of detailing found in well-designed smaller and medium sized buildings along the Route 100 corridor. Architectural details can be used to reduce the scale and uniformity of large buildings. Elements such as colonnades, pilasters, gable ends, awnings, display windows and appropriately positioned light fixtures can be effective means of achieving a human scale.

FINDING:

2.2.4 Facades and Exterior Walls

Unbroken facades in excess of 80 feet are overwhelming whether they are visible from Route 100, other roadways or pedestrian areas, or when they abut residential areas. Breaking up the plane of the wall can reduce this sense of overwhelming scale. Where the plane of the wall is broken, the offset should be proportionate to the building's height and length. A general rule of thumb for such projections or recesses is that their depth shall be at least 3% of the façade's length, and they shall extend for at least 20% of the façade's length.

Other devices to add interest to long walls include strong shadow lines, changes in rooflines, pilasters and similar architectural details, as well as patterns in the surface material and wall openings. All façade elements should be coordinated with the landscape plan.

Facades of commercial buildings that face Route 100 or other roadways should have transparent openings (e.g. display windows or entry areas) along 30% or more of the length of the ground floor. Blank or unadorned walls facing public roads, residential neighborhoods, or abutting properties are boring and unattractive.

FINDING:

2.2.5 Building Entrances

Large structures should have clearly defined and highly visible entrances emphasized through such devices as significant variations in rooflines or cornice lines, changes in materials, porticos, landscape treatments, distinctive lighting or other architectural treatments.

FINDING:

2.3 Linear Commercial Buildings

Objective: Linear commercial structures, such as multi-tenant offices or commercial buildings may be appropriate along Route 100 provided that they are designed with façade and roofline elements that reduce their sense of large scale and add visual interest.

2.3.1 Design

Buildings with multiple storefronts should be visually unified through the use of complementary architectural forms, similar materials and colors, consistent details, and a uniform signage size and mounting system.

FINDING:

2.3.2 Façade Design

The use of covered walkways, arcades, or open colonnades is strongly encouraged along long facades to provide shelter, encourage people to walk from store to store, and to visually unite the structure. Pedestrian entrances to each business or tenant should be clearly defined and easily accessible.

FINDING:

2.3.3 Focal Points

Linear commercial buildings can include a focal point – such as a raised entranceway or clock tower, or other architectural element – to add visual interest and help reduce the scale of the building.

FINDING:

2.3.4 Façade Offsets

Variations in the plane of the front façade add visual interest. They also create opportunities for common entries, and social or landscaped spaces.

FINDING:

2.3.5 Rooflines

Variations in rooflines, detailing, cornice lines and building heights should be incorporated into the design to break up the scale of linear commercial buildings.

FINDING:

2.4 Smaller Freestanding Commercial Buildings

Objective: Smaller freestanding commercial buildings can easily make use of traditional New England building forms and should be designed to be attractive pieces of architecture, expressive of their use and compatible with surrounding buildings.

2.4.1 Single Use Buildings

Buildings that are constructed for use by a single business are generally smaller in scale than multi-tenant buildings. Single use buildings should be designed to be attractive and architecturally cohesive. To the greatest extent possible, the same materials, window types and roof types should be used throughout.

FINDING:

2.4.2 Franchise Design

Franchise architecture with highly contrasting color schemes, non-traditional forms, reflective siding and roof materials are not related to any traditional New England style. They are buildings that are stylized to the point where the structure is a form of advertising. However, franchises have been willing to use existing “vernacular” buildings, and sometimes have designs that somewhat reflect local styles.

FINDING:

2.4.3 Mixed Use Buildings

Buildings containing mixed uses (e.g., health club on the first floor with professional offices on the second floor) are encouraged. The architecture of a mixed-use building can reflect the different uses on the upper floors by a difference in façade treatment, as long as the building has a unified design theme.

FINDING:

2.5 Residential Structures

Objective: Cumberland’s future housing stock in the Route 100 corridor should be well designed and constructed, and is encouraged to have some connection to the traditional styles of New England residential architecture. The large mass of multiplex dwellings, can be broken up by façade articulation and architectural detailing in order to reduce their apparent size.

New England design and building materials such as wooden shingles and clapboards are encouraged. Modern low-maintenance materials such as cementitious shingles and clapboards may be substituted.

FINDING:

2.6 Residential Care Facilities

Objective: Ensure that the future needs of Cumberland’s aging population are met in healthy and well-designed facilities, and that the architecture and site design of such facilities fit into the Cumberland context.

The design of Residential Care Facilities can also draw on the local vernacular architecture of gable roofs, multiple building forms and traditional materials. Landscaping, site design and resident amenities will also be of concern to the Planning Board. The site should offer outdoor amenities such as decks, terraces, gardens, gazebos, lawns or similar features. Residential Care Facilities should be buffered from roadways and adjacent uses as much as possible.

FINDING:

2.7 Hotels

Objective: To ensure that any future hotels in the Town of Cumberland are in keeping with the character of the surrounding area, and that the scale and design respects the architectural context of the region.

FINDING:

3.1 Sign Design

Objective: Commercial uses along Route 100 in Cumberland should be identified by attractive, legible signs that serve the need of the individual business, while complementing the site and the architecture. All signage shall comply with the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance of the Town of Cumberland.

3.1.1 Signage Plan

For development proposals requiring one or more signs, the applicant shall provide a detailed signage plan as part of Site Plan or Subdivision review. The signage plan should show the location of all signs on a site plan drawing and on building elevations, as well as sign construction details, dimensions, elevations, etc., and accurate graphic representations of the proposed wording.

FINDING:

3.1.2 Sign Location

Signs should be placed in locations that do not interfere with the safe and logical usage of the site. They should not block motorists' lines of sight or create hazards for pedestrians or bicyclists. Roof mounted signs are not encouraged.

FINDING:

3.1.3 Sign Design

The shape and materials and finish of all proposed signage should complement the architectural features of the associated building. Simple geometric forms are preferable for all signs. All signage shall comply with the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance of the Town of Cumberland.

FINDING:

3.1.4 Sign Colors

Signs should be limited to two or three contrasting colors that are clearly complimentary to the colors of the associated building.

FINDING:

3.1.5 Sign Content

To ensure a clear and easily readable message, a single sign with a minimum of informational content should be used. As a general rule no more than about 30 letters should be used on any sign.

Lettering on any sign intended to be read by passing motorists needs to be legible at the posted speed limit. In general a minimum letter height of 6 inches is appropriate. Smaller letters can require motorists to slow down thereby creating traffic and safety hazards. Upper and lower case lettering is preferred to all upper case, as it is easier to read.

The use of variable message “reader boards”, sponsor logos, slogans or other messages that promote products or services other than the tenants’ are not permitted.

Signage for any proposed development should prominently feature its assigned street address to facilitate general way-finding and e-911 emergency response.

FINDING:

3.2 Sign Type

Objective: To ensure that any sign type complements the architecture of the associated building, and to ensure that they are attractively designed and functional while clearly delivering the intended information.

3.2.1 Building Mounted Signs

Building or façade mounted signs should be designed as an integral element of the architecture, and should not obscure any of the architectural details of the building. Signage should be mounted on vertical surfaces and should not project past or interfere with any fascia trim. Signs should be located a minimum of 18” from the edge of a vertical wall, however the overall proportions of both the wall and sign should be taken into consideration in the placement of the sign.

Flush mounted (flat) signage should be mounted with concealed hardware. Perpendicularly mounted hanging signs should be mounted with hardware designed to complement the building’s architecture. All metal hardware should be corrosion and rust resistant to prevent staining or discoloration of the building.

FINDING:

3.2.2 Freestanding Signs

An alternative to a façade-mounted sign is a freestanding “pylon” sign. These signs are typically located between the building and the roadway right-of-way, adjacent to the site’s vehicular entry point.

As with façade-mounted signage, design and content standards shall apply. Because freestanding signs amount to architecture themselves, it is important that they be carefully designed to complement the associated building. This will entail similar forms, materials, colors and finishes. Landscaping surrounding the base of such signs shall be consistent with the landscaping of the entire site.

Where a freestanding sign lists multiple tenants, there should be an apparent hierarchy: i.e., Address, name of the building or development, primary tenant, other tenants.

FINDING:

3.3 Sign Illumination

Only externally lit signs are permitted in the Route 100 corridor because, compared with internally lit signs, the direction and intensity of the light can be more easily controlled. Externally illuminated signs are made of an opaque material and have a dedicated light fixture or fixtures mounted in close proximity, aimed directly at the sign face. The illumination level on the vertical surface of the sign should create a noticeable contrast with the surrounding building or landscape without causing undue reflection or glare.

Lighting fixtures should be located, aimed and shielded such that light is only directed onto the surface of the sign. Wherever possible, fixtures should be mounted above the sign and be aimed downward to prevent illumination of the sky.

FINDING:

Lighting

The applicant should provide sufficient lighting without over-illuminating.

Fixtures should be fully shielded, giving off no light above the horizontal plane. They should also direct the light onto the intended areas.

FINDING: