

ARCHITECTURE

This chapter of the guidelines is devoted to architectural design concepts which, when applied, will result in renovation and new construction that enhances the small-scale pedestrian ambiance of the Village. It is not the intent of these guidelines to impose strict architectural styles or specific design solutions, but rather to encourage visual harmony and compatibility in terms of the historical context and existing design fabric of the Village.

The first six sections of this chapter address architectural and structural elements that apply equally to new construction and renovations of existing buildings:

- architectural style and building form
- height, width, setback
- roof forms
- colors, materials and textures
- storefronts
- back entrances

The remaining section addresses specific infill situations relating to opportunity sites that are vacant or underdeveloped, or that could benefit from special treatment.

Architectural Style and Building Form

The existing architectural context of the Village area is an eclectic mix of old and new styles. Within this eclecticism, however, there are definite characteristics that provide a design context for future development and the renovation of existing structures. These characteristics are:

- horizontal, rectilinear building forms
- one or two stories in height
- visual simplicity
- basic architectural elements rather than arbitrary stylistic elements
- frequency of open spaces, windows and doors
- small-scale pedestrian orientation

Building forms and architectural treatments that are not appropriate include the following:

- overly stylistic designs that are not compatible with the existing Village
- vertical forms and unnatural materials
- architectural elements that are not functionally integral with the building, such as false mansard roofs, false cornices, etc.
- large blank walls

Height, Width and Setback

The commercial area of the Village is divided into two commercial districts. As shown in the map on the facing page, the CH-1 district is the more intense commercial area along Big Basin Way between 5th Street and Saratoga-Los Gatos Road. The CH-2 district is the less intense, more residential area between 5th Street and the curve where Big Basin Way becomes Congress Springs Road. The detailed zoning regulations governing uses and development standards for these districts are found in Article 15-19 of the City Code. Discussed on this page are the general height, width, and setback requirements.

The maximum height of any new structure or addition in the CH-1 district is 35 feet, with no more than two stories for structures facing Big Basin Way. Three stories may be permitted for the rear of structures facing Saratoga Creek. In the CH-2 district, the height limit is 26 feet, with a two-story limit, reflecting the more residential character of this area of the Village.

These height limits are intended to promote the compatibility of scale between buildings and a sense of visual continuity. Where building heights differ between adjacent properties, care should be taken to relate the heights of major facade elements such as storefronts, ground floors, upper floors, and strong horizontal features such as cornices and belt courses.

Buildings should be designed to take up the entire width of the lot, so that no "dead spaces" between buildings are created. For this reason, there are no side yard setback requirements for Village commercial structures. Storefront spaces should be small, inviting, accessible and intimate. Infill construction should maintain the street front rhythm by building from side lot line to side lot line.

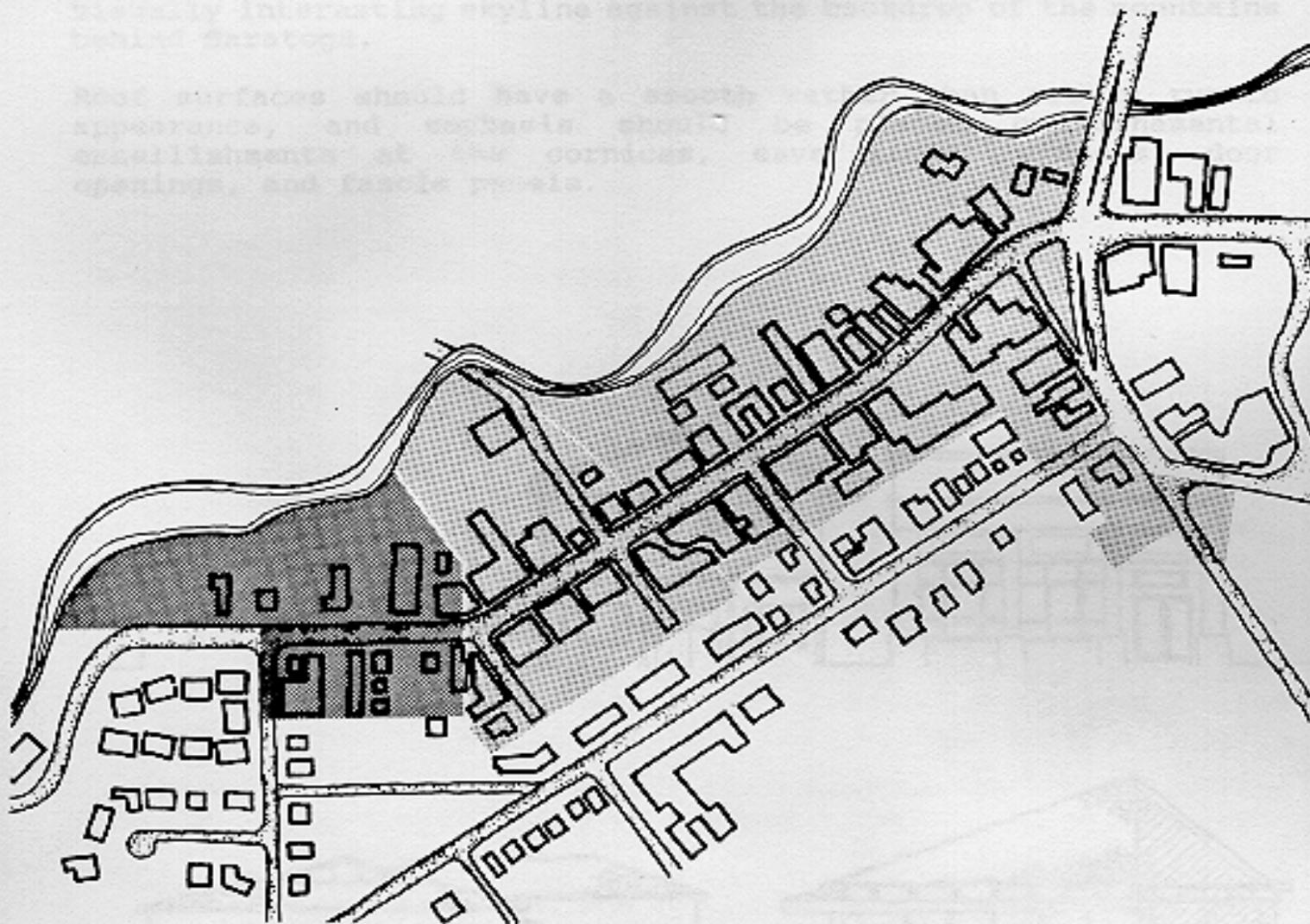
There are also no front yard setback requirements in the CH-1 district. Commercial buildings should be set directly on the front lot line, creating a solid line of structures along the street frontage. The sidewalk edge of the building can be delineated with planter boxes, columns, benches, or other pedestrian-oriented elements. Structures in the CH-2 district must maintain a front yard setback of 15 feet, again reflecting the more residential character of this area of the Village.

Village Commercial Zoning

Roof Forms

There are a variety of roof forms occurring in the Village. Some of these, like flat roofs concealed behind a parapet wall and modern low-pitched roofs, are important to the Village and help create the overall Village design. Other forms, such as false mansards, are not true roof forms and should be avoided altogether. In general, roof forms should show some natural complexity, but variety is essential in order to create a visually interesting skyline against the background of the terrain.

Roof surfaces should have a variety of textures, and setbacks, gables, overhangs, and fascias should be used to create a variety of openings, and facade reveals.

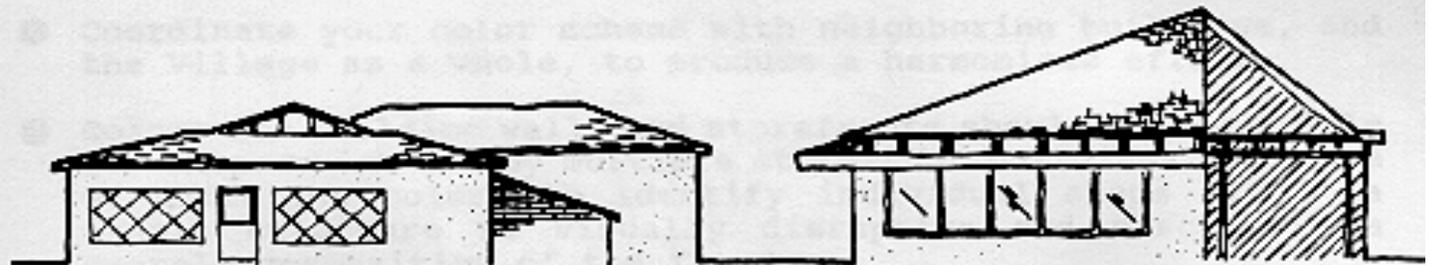
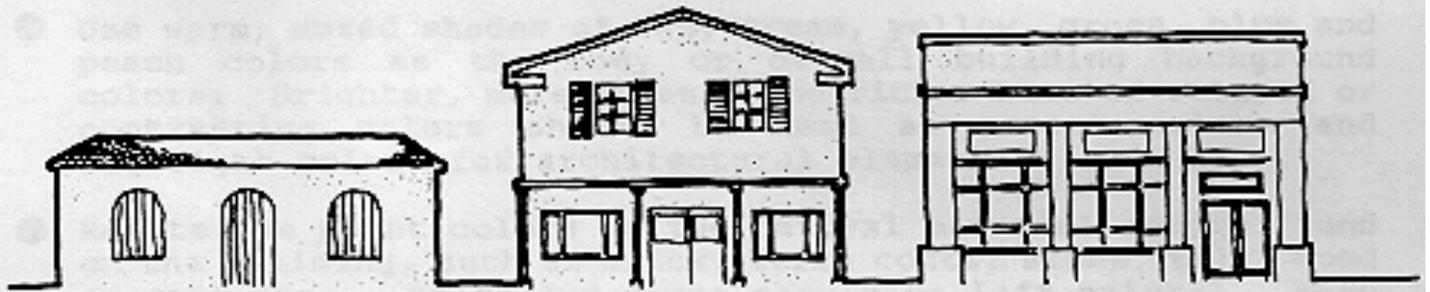


-  CH-1
-  CH-2

Roof Forms

There are a variety of roof forms existing in the Village. Some of these, like flat roofs concealed behind a decorative parapet wall and modern low-pitched roofs, are appropriate to the Village and help create the overall Village design context. Others, such as false mansards, are not true roof forms and should be avoided altogether. In general, roof forms should exhibit architectural simplicity, but variety is encouraged in order to create a visually interesting skyline against the backdrop of the mountains behind Saratoga.

Roof surfaces should have a smooth rather than overly rustic appearance, and emphasis should be placed on ornamental embellishments at the cornices, eave lines, windows, door openings, and fascia panels.



Colors, Materials and Texture

COLORS

Color is one of the primary means of unifying and beautifying a commercial area. One building or storefront color can spark a trend toward a fresh coat of paint on neighboring buildings. Likewise, the use of an inappropriate color scheme can affect the image and character of the Village. Colors should fit the Village setting and the natural environment and should be selected with the entire Village ambience in mind.

The Saratoga climate is generally characterized by bright, sunny days. Bright whites and very light colors should be used sparingly as they tend to cause disturbing glare and reflection of heat.

The following guidelines should be followed when choosing a color or color scheme for a commercial building:

- The larger and plainer the building, the more subtle should be the use of color. Small buildings or those with elaborate detailing can often use more color and more intense hues.
- Use warm, muted shades of tan, cream, yellow, green, blue and peach colors as the body or overall building background colors. Brighter, more intense and richer hues of related or contrasting colors should be used as accent colors and highlight colors for architectural elements.
- Relate the paint colors to the natural material colors found on the building, such as brick, terra cotta, stone, tile, wood or cast iron. Brick and stone should be left natural. When several materials are combined on a facade, color can be used to coordinate and highlight the varying components.
- Coordinate your color scheme with neighboring buildings, and the Village as a whole, to produce a harmonious effect.
- Colors for building walls and storefronts should be compatible for shops which occupy multiple storefront buildings. The use of different colors to identify individual shops within a single structure is visually disruptive and obscures the overall composition of the facade.
- Signage, window designs and awnings are most effective when color-coordinated with the building facade. Use darker, deeper and brighter colors on these elements to create interest on the facade and call attention to windows and doorways.

MATERIALS AND TEXTURES

There are a variety of building materials and textures in the Village, mirroring the eclectic mix of architectural styles. Following is a list of acceptable and not acceptable materials and textures to use as a guide in new construction and renovation:

ACCEPTABLE:

- horizontal wood siding, smooth finish, painted or treated
- unpainted and untreated brick
- stucco with lightly textured, painted surface
- transparent glass
- natural river rock or stone
- anodized metal, treated with attractive finish
- tile with a matte finish
- concrete, textured or incised or painted to reduce the massive appearance
- for architectural details, use wood or cast plaster
- for window frames, use wood framing and molding, painted steel sash or anodized metal

NOT ACCEPTABLE:

- smooth glazed tile
- plastic
- unfinished metal
- deliberately rustic appearing materials such as rough-sawn wood, permastone, lavastone, shingles, antiqued brick
- heavily textured or rough stucco
- mirrored glass
- marble

Storefronts

Physical change is part of the continuing evolution of the Village. The storefront is considered the changeable area of the commercial building facade. Storefronts bear the pressure to modernize and create a new image as businesses move in and out; they have commonly experienced more changes in their lifetime than any other part of the building.

As a general approach, storefront treatments should respect the original period and style of the building, maintaining its historical integrity to as great an extent possible. However, buildings should not be made to look falsely "historical" or older than they really are. An owner should first determine if the existing storefront is the original or a later addition. If it is original, the materials or details and the shape of the openings should be preserved, or the proportions of the facade will be lost. Original elements that are missing should be replaced.

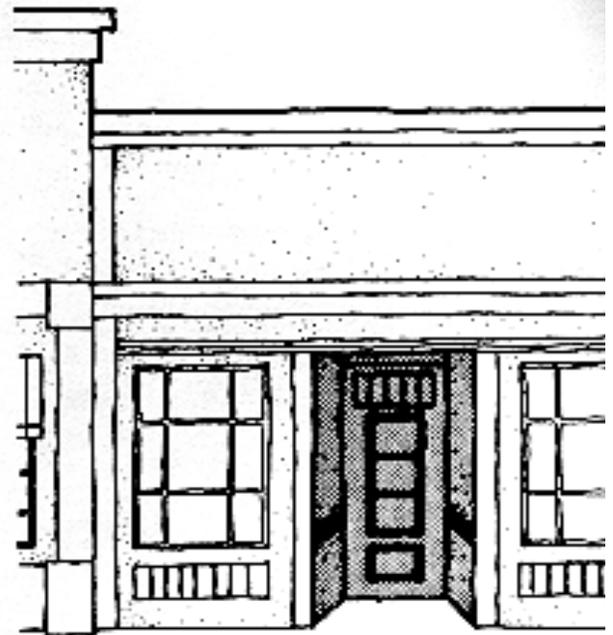
If the storefront is a later addition, it is wise to retain the alterations if they are well-designed and constructed, even if they are of a style different from the upper part of the facade. Occasionally, a remodeled storefront may be of equal value architecturally as the original. If an owner wishes to restore the storefront to its original facade, the restoration should be based on solid historical documentation such as photos or drawings. The integrity and authenticity of materials should be observed first when making improvements to a facade.

Storefronts generally have five common elements: entry, display windows, kickplate, horizontal band, and sidewalk coverings. These are illustrated and discussed on the following pages.



ENTRY

Commercial storefront entries were typically recessed. This provides for more area for display space, a sheltered transition area to the interior of the store, and an emphasis for the entrance. Recessed entries should be retained and are encouraged in new storefront construction. The recessed area should be around the door only, not along the entire facade. Doors should use large, glass panels with vertical proportions to provide a sense of invitation and openness. Solid or residential-type doors should be used only on residential structures that have been converted to a commercial use. Double entry-doors should be retained.



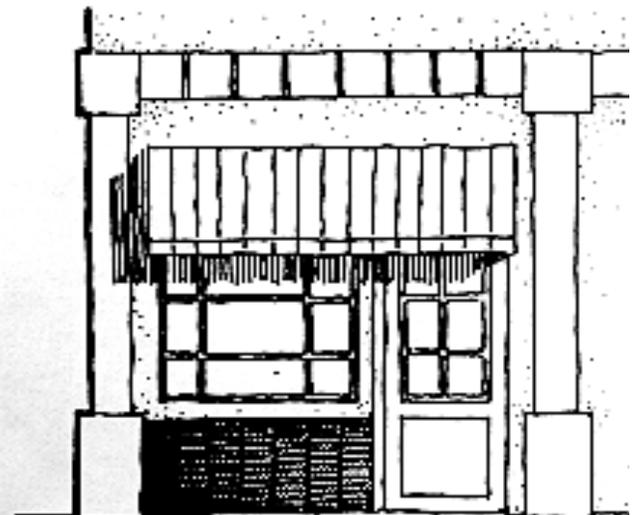
DISPLAY WINDOWS

The display window is the link between the pedestrian environment outside and the business inside. The original size, division and shape of the display windows within the overall storefront should be preserved. Transparent glass should be used to provide open pedestrian viewing. Colorful blinds, cafe curtains, or flower boxes can be used for commercial uses that require some privacy. Store window frames and mullions should be made of traditional wood framing and molding, either finished or painted, painted steel sash, or anodized aluminum. Window signs should be minimally used.



KICKPLATE

The kickplate functions to protect the display window by raising the glass area to a safer and more easily viewed height. The original kickplate material should always be retained, maintained, or uncovered when possible. Wherever possible, the kickplate and the facade area above the display window should be



the same base material as the rest of the building, in order not to detract from the overall composition of the building.

HORIZONTAL BAND

Most storefronts feature a horizontal band area that either separates the first from the second floor in the case of a two-story building, or the first floor from the roof structure in the case of a one-story building. This area can have a variety of treatments, including a decorative frieze, or horizontal panel, sign band, sidewalk covering, or it may be left plain. Second story facades should retain original window openings or be decoratively treated to provide visual interest above the storefront area.



SIDEWALK COVERINGS

Sidewalk overhangs provide shelter for pedestrians from rain, protect display window merchandise from damage, regulate the amount of heat by directing sunlight entering a store, and serve as a sign or identity for a business. Awnings were traditionally made of cloth and were mounted in the horizontal band area above the display windows or within the window frame itself. Existing metal awnings in the Village should be replaced with heavy canvas cloth, and awning shapes should relate to the shape of the top of the opening. Property owners should consider the cumulative effect of all awnings along the street and multiple awnings of neighboring buildings when selecting awning treatment. Awning colors should complement building colors. Plastic awnings should be avoided.



Rear Entrances

The rear entrances to buildings should receive the same attention to detail as the street facade, and the same design guidelines used for the front apply to the rear. This is particularly important for structures with service or sales entries off the Village parking districts, because these districts provide the majority of parking spaces for Village merchants and customers and are very visible to the public.

The following guidelines should be followed when making improvements to the rear areas of buildings:

Use awnings, planter boxes, landscaping, and decorative elements to improve the visual quality of the rear of buildings.

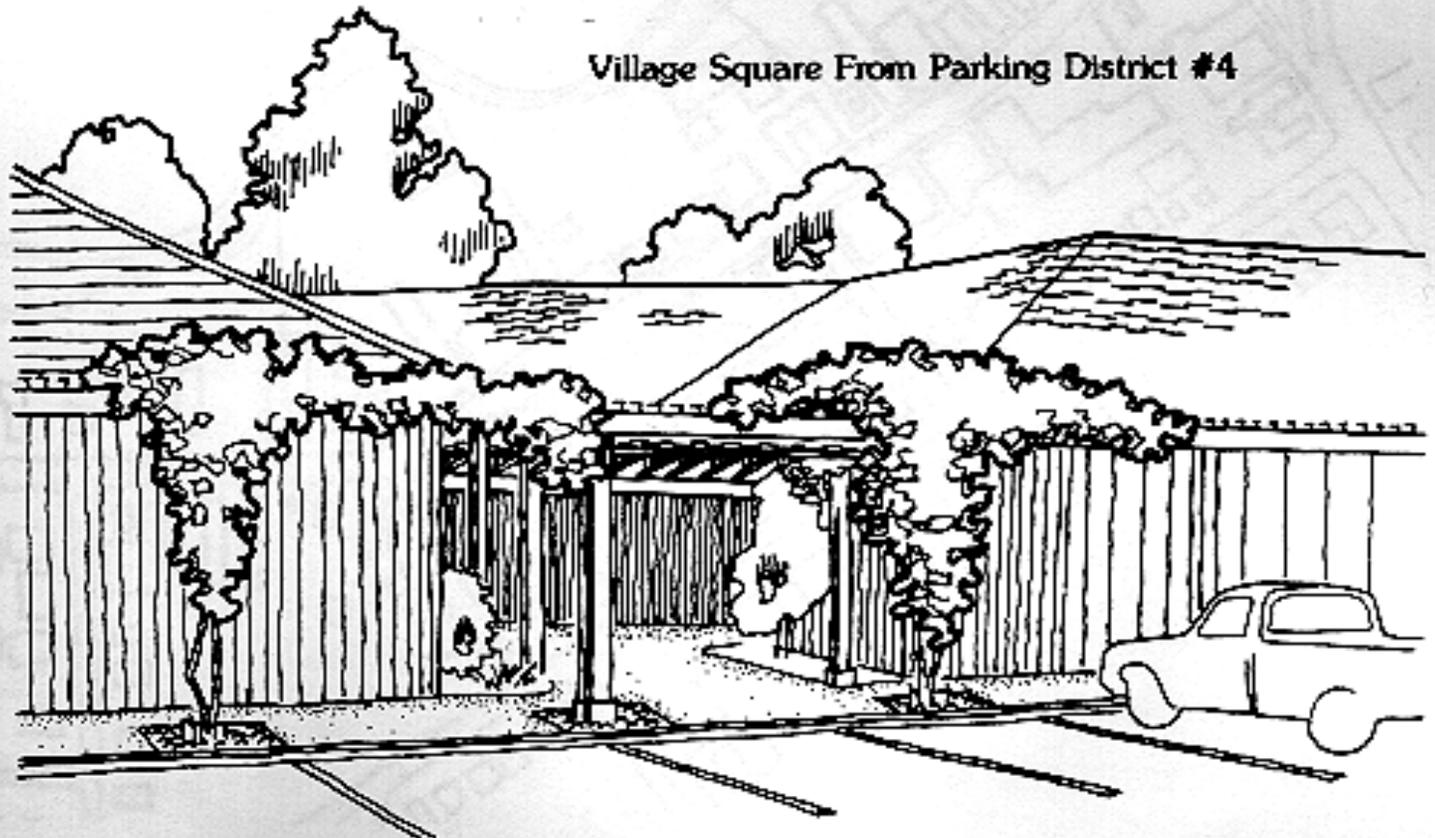
Draw attention to the entry door with signage, color and architectural elements.

Remove unsightly metal sheds or other outbuildings that detract from the rear view.

Lighting at the rear should be low-level and low intensity because these areas often face onto residential districts.

Screen utilities and mechanical equipment from public view.

Village Square From Parking District #4



Opportunity Sites

To a large degree, the Saratoga Village is already a completely built environment. There are few vacant parcels remaining and most of the development that will occur in the future will be the remodeling of existing structures. The use of these guidelines in those remodeling efforts will ensure appropriate upgrading of buildings. The sites that are identified on these pages offer special opportunities to achieve distinctive design solutions and further contribute to the unique character of the Village.

