Saratoga Village
DESIGN GUIDELINES

ADOPTED BY SARATOGA CITY COUNCIL ON JANUARY 2, 1991

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Special thanks is given to former Councilmembers and Village Task Force and Beautification Committee members for assistance on this project.

Spacial thanks is also given to West Valley College Department of Architecture faculty and students.

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INTRODUCTION

The Saratoga Village Plan was adopted by the City Council in May of 1988. The Plan established land use, zoning, circulation, parking and design policies aimed at preserving and improving the small-scale pedestrian character of the Saratoga Village, which is the town's historic commercial core located along Big Basin.

To implement the design policies of the Village Plan, the City Council established the Village Design Task Force (VDTF) to assist with the preparation of the Saratoga Village Design Guidelines. The seven member Task Force had representatives from the Planning and Heritage Commissions, Village Association, property owners, architectural profession, and a member of the original Village Beautification Committee. During the course of a year, from September 1988 to September 1989, the VDTF met with planning staff to develop the specific design guidelines. The guidelines were then reviewed by the Planning Commission at meetings with the Village Association and property owners, and ultimately adopted by the City Council on January 2, 1991.

The four major sections of the Village Design Guidelines are: 1) Pedestrian Environment; 2) Architecture; 3) Landscaping; and 4) Signage. Each section uses both text and diagrams to provide specific design guidance to property owners, merchants, developers, and designers who wish to build new structures or make improvements to existing Village structures. The Design Guidelines also provide a framework for the Planning Commission, City Council and City staff in reviewing the various applications that involve Village properties. The Guidelines do not impose specific styles or narrow choices of forms and materials. Rather, they clarify the design intent and permissible framework for development and renovation in the Village core.

The Saratoga Village Design Guidelines alone will not ensure that future development is in context with the Village Plan. Proper and sensitive application of the guidelines will require the collective and concerted efforts of both the public and private sectors. These efforts will involve financial and decision-making commitments from the City, the Village Association and private property owners. Where appropriate, the assignment of responsibility for the implementation of individual design projects in the Village has been noted in the text.

GOALS

The goals of the Saratoga Village Design Guidelines are:

- To encourage new construction and renovation of existing buildings that is compatible with adjacent buildings, with the Village design context as a whole, and as examples of design excellence.

- To reserve street frontages for commercial buildings and uninterrupted pedestrian flow.

- To develop all parking facilities to the rear of buildings, with minimal visual exposure of parking facilities and vehicular ingress-egress from Big Basin Way.

- To preserve the existing buildings of historical significance.

- To create usable, attractive pedestrian open spaces wherever possible.

- To increase the use of landscaping, street furniture, ornamental paving, awnings and similar environmental elements that are designed to serve the convenience of pedestrians.

- To avoid large expanses of blank walls and extensive distances between doors, to emphasize display windows, plazas and similar focal points so that visual and functional interest for pedestrians will remain uninterrupted.

- To encourage the use of appropriate commercial and directional signage for the security and convenience of pedestrians and drivers.

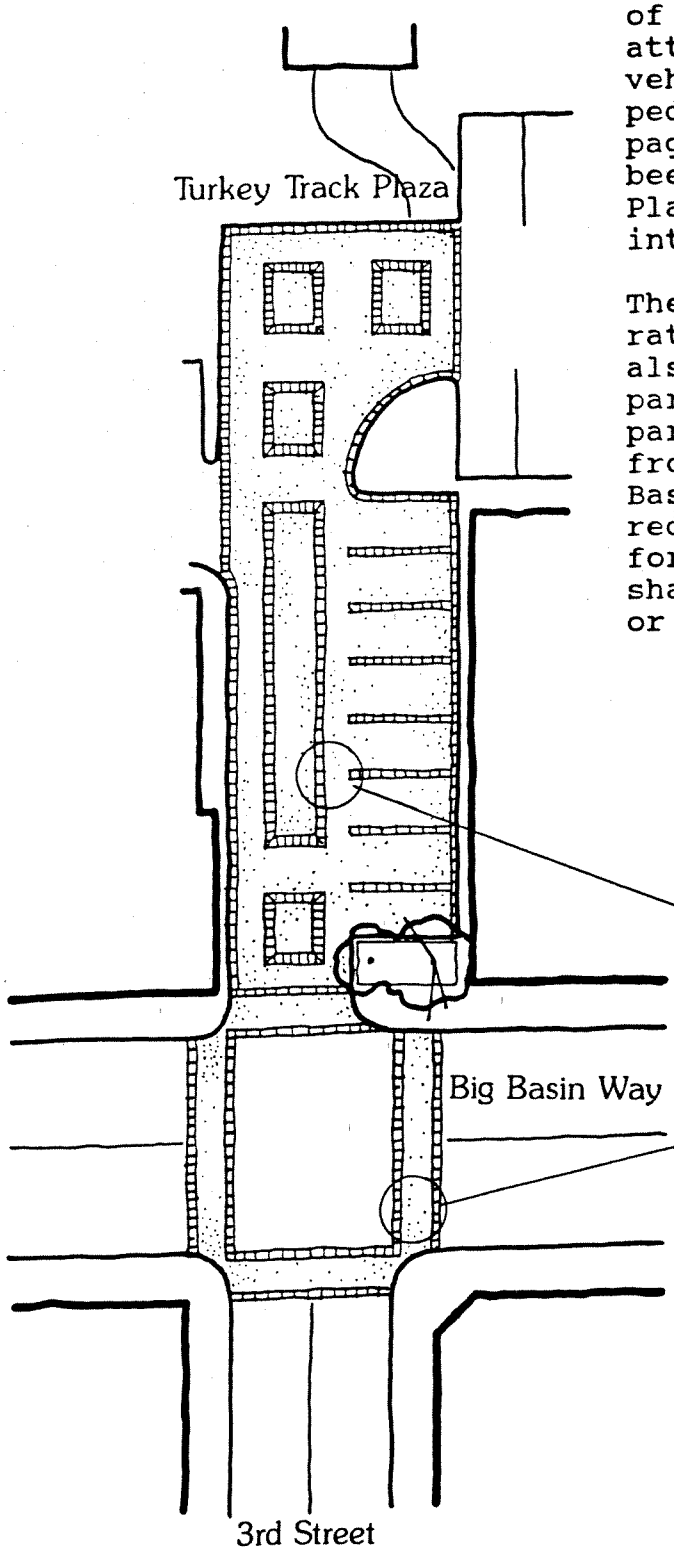
PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT

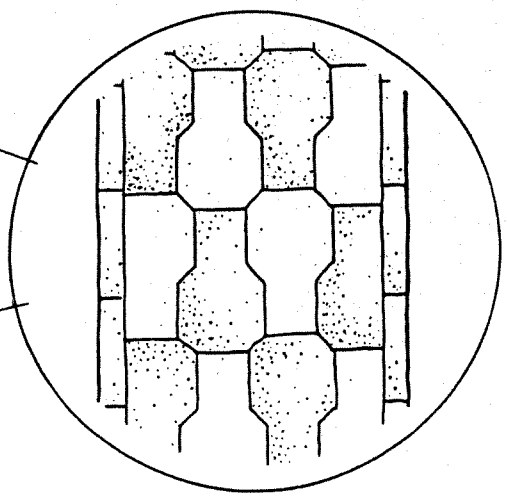
The Saratoga Village should be regarded as an environment in which the pedestrian comes first. This chapter of the guidelines focuses on environmental elements along Big Basin Way that will help to make the Village more pedestrian oriented, rather than automobile oriented. These elements include decorative crosswalks, sidewalks and tree wells, directories, public telephones, street furniture and street lights. Four-way stop intersections are also proposed for safer pedestrian access. The intent of these guidelines is to provide attractive and convenient pedestrian facilities, assure minimal maintenance costs, and achieve a visual simplicity and continuity within public rights-of-way and adjacent private pedestrian areas.

Crosswalks and Paving

The use of decorative brick paving stones in crosswalks and parking areas enhances the pedestrian nature of the Village. The surface is very attractive, sturdy enough for vehicular use and comfortable for pedestrians. The diagram on this page shows how the paving stones have been installed both in Turkey Track Plaza and in crosswalks at intersections on Big Basin Way.

The use of decorative paving stones rather than concrete or asphalt is also encouraged for privately-owned parking areas and driveways, particularly for properties which front on, and are visible from, Big Basin Way. The "cobble" shape in a reddish broth color should be used for the field with a rectangular shape in a tan color for the header or edge of a field.

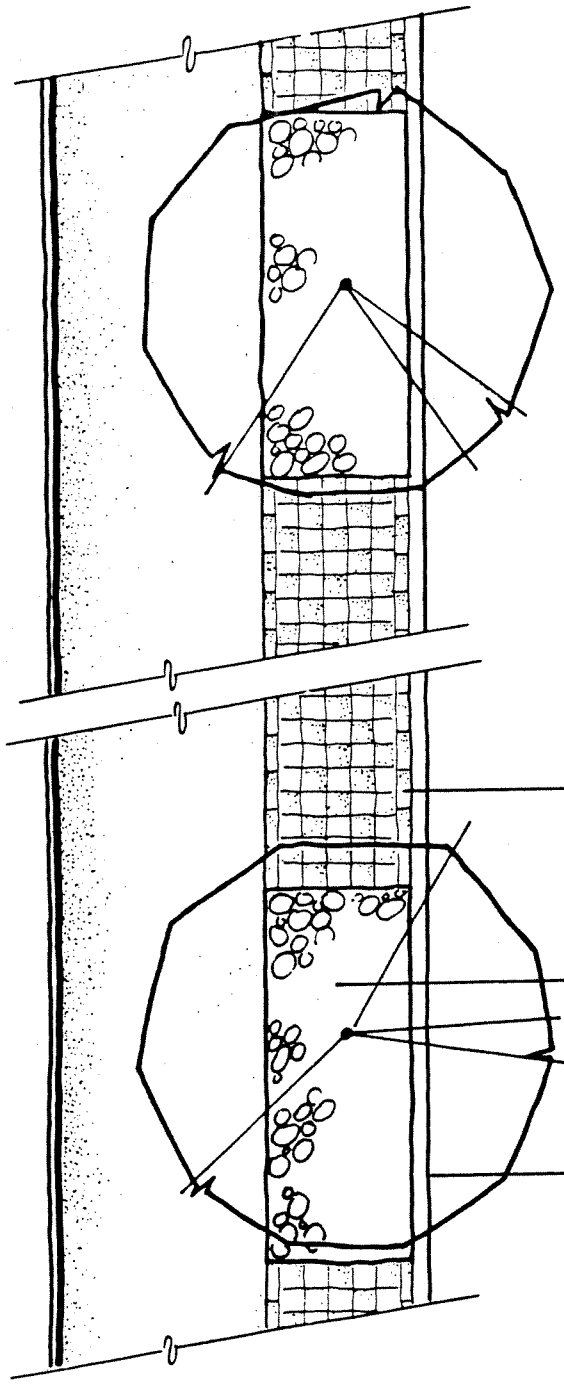




Interlocking Paving Stones

Sidewalks

The diagram on this page shows how the decorative brick paving theme is continued from the crosswalks to the sidewalks along Big Basin Way and its commercial feeder streets. The space between the decorative street tree wells is to be filled in with the same tan rectangular paving stones used in the crosswalks. The City will be responsible for installing the paving bricks as part of the City's Capital Improvement Program.

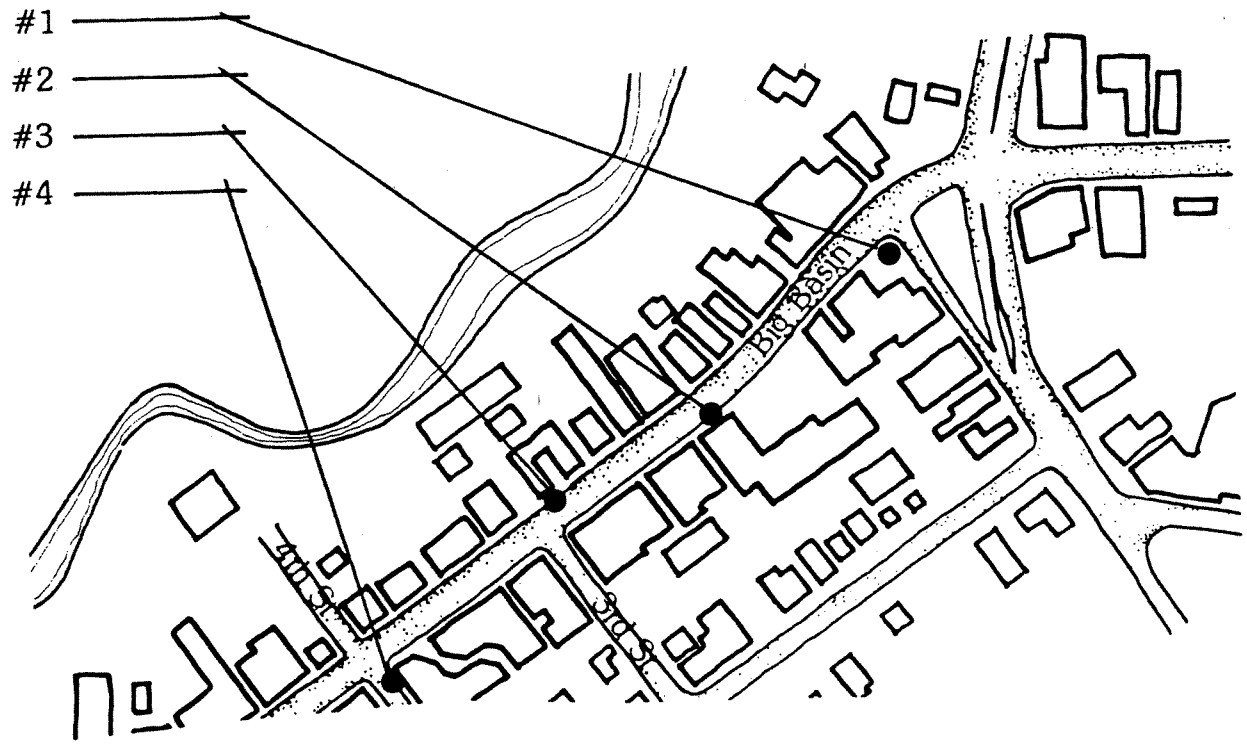


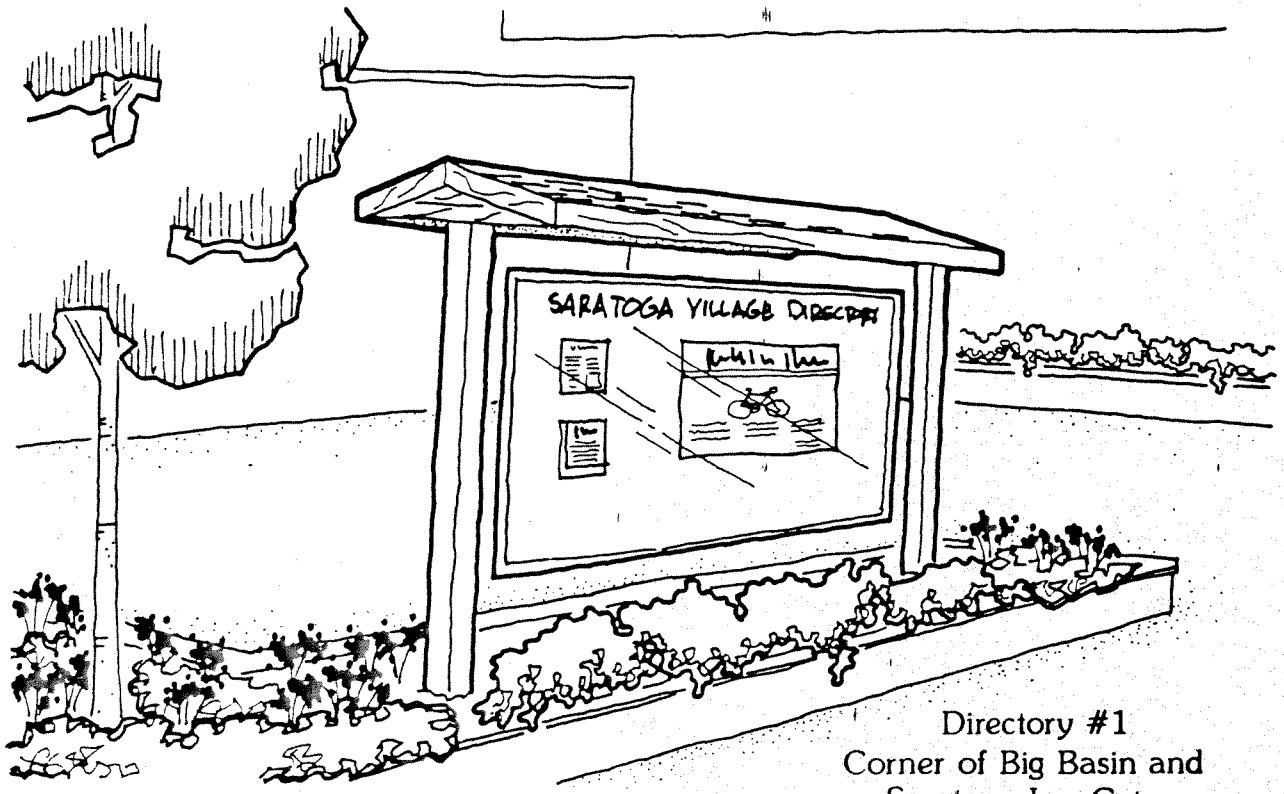
Directories

Four locations in the Village have been selected for the installation of informational directories. The directories are to be either individual small wooden structures which provide space for the display of Village maps and information, or posting areas for public and Village-related notices. The directories are designed to be easily recognizable and visible but to not obstruct pedestrian walkways or visibility of traffic from adjacent streets and driveways. Each directory is individually designed to be compatible with the adjacent architecture and its specific site, and all maintain a common theme which expresses the Village design concept.

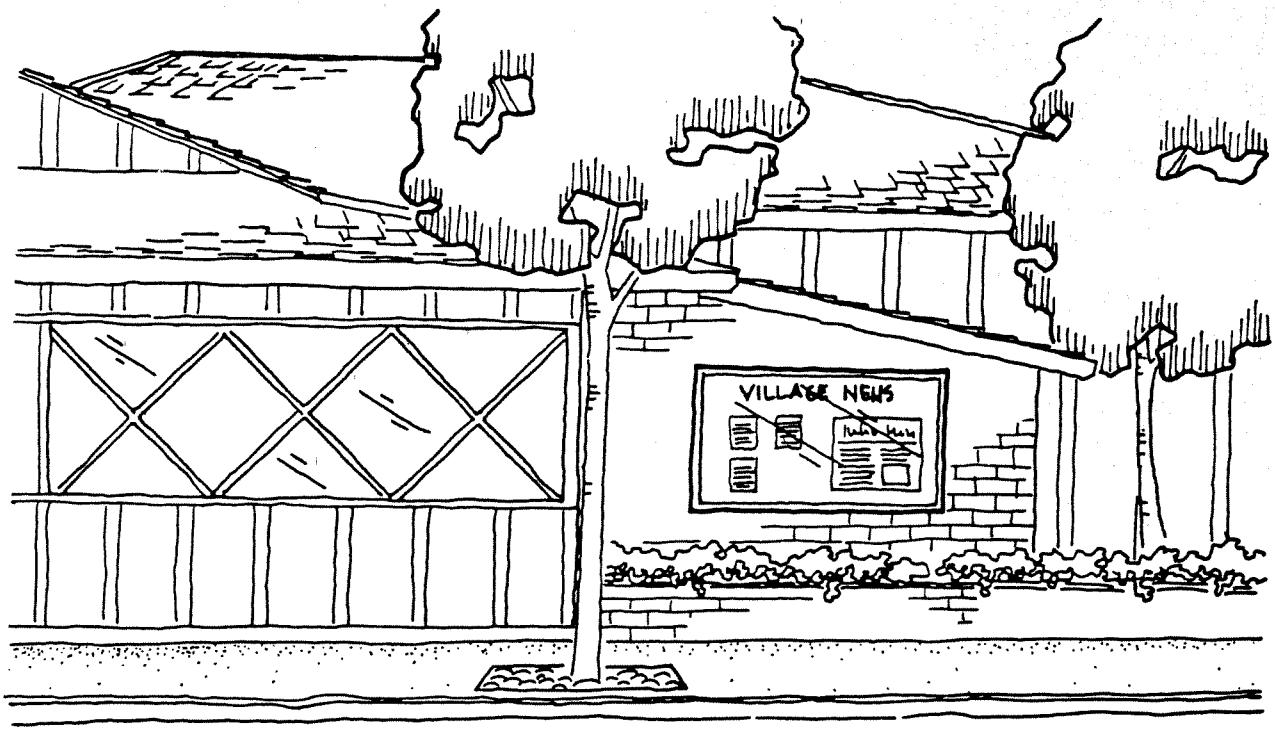
Students from West Valley College participated in the directory design process as part of their course work. The directories were originally envisioned as a component of kiosk areas where pedestrians could gather for a variety of uses. The participating students created two alternative design approaches to the four kiosk locations, and some of their concepts have been incorporated into the final directory designs.

All directory locations except for #3 are on privately-owned property. The City will install directory #3 at the entrance to Turkey Track Plaza and will initiate a cooperative effort between the City and property owners for the installation of directories #1, #2, and #4.

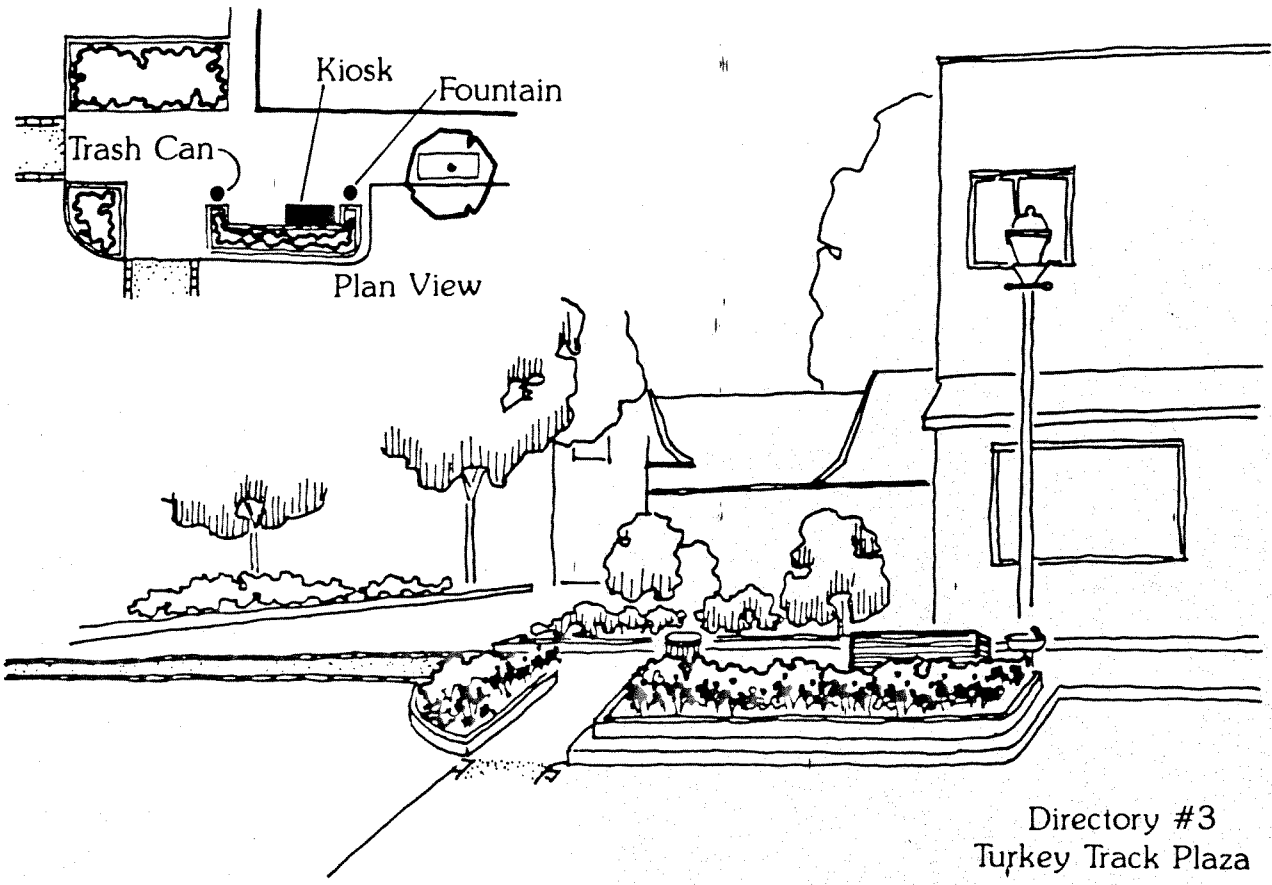




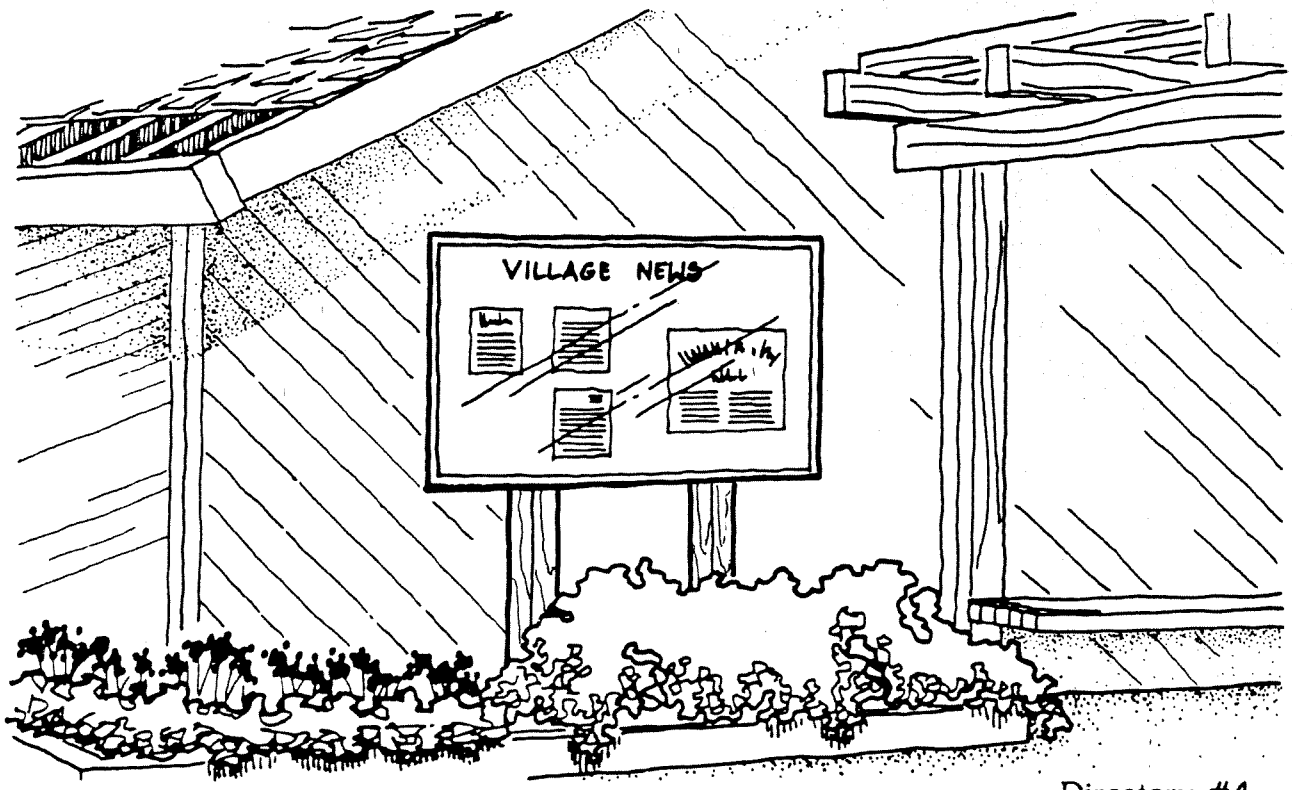
Directory #1
Corner of Big Basin and
Saratoga Los Gatos



Directory #2
Buy and Save Market



Directory #3
Turkey Track Plaza



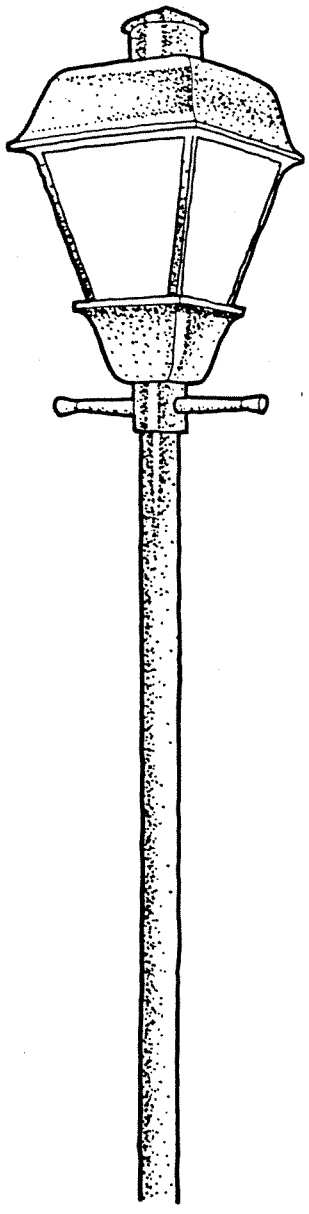
Directory #4
Village Square

Street Furniture

Street furniture is the term used to describe elements of the streetscape such as street lights, benches, trash receptacles, newspaper racks, and telephones. Since the Village has an eclectic mix of architectural styles and materials, the street furniture design that has been selected has a simple and functional appearance. The use of a wood and iron design has been selected because it reflects Saratoga's early lumbering history. There must be a commitment on the part of the City, Saratoga Village Association and individual property owners to the maintenance of the street furniture. The posting of public notices will be restricted to the directories provided specifically for this purpose.

STREET LIGHTS

The old-fashioned carriage-type street lights along Big Basin Way are maintained jointly by PG&E and the City. This type of light standard will continue to be used in the Village, and will continue to be painted black. The City has installed brackets near the top of the poles to accommodate decorative banners for special occasions (see the Murals and Banners section, page 47). Property owners are encouraged to use a similar style in exterior wall fixtures and low-level pole lights along pedestrian walkways.

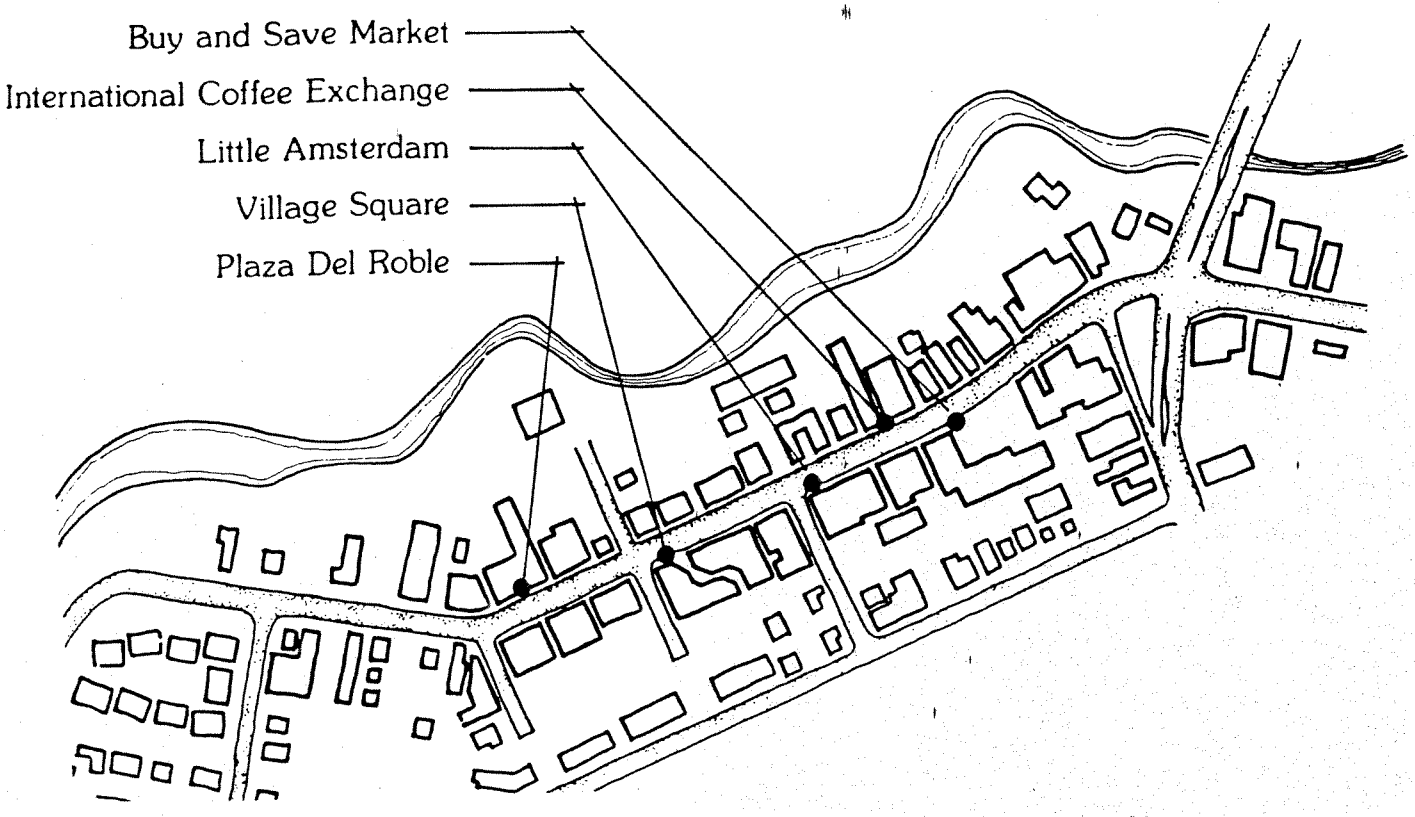


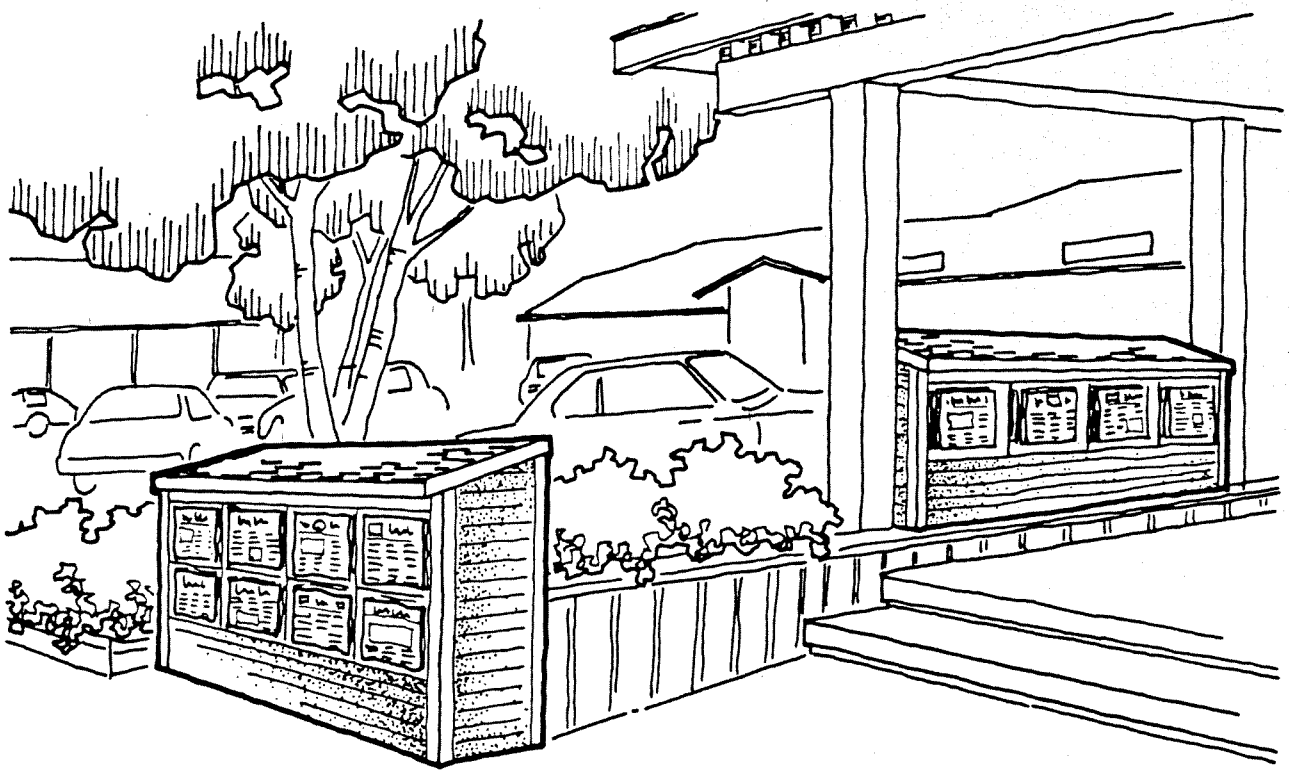
NEWSPAPER RACKS

There are currently 34 individual newspaper vending racks along Big Basin Way. These are clustered in six locations: Buy and Save Market, Village Rendezvous, Little Amsterdam, International Coffee Exchange, Village Square, and Plaza del Roble. The uncontrolled placement and maintenance of newsracks on public sidewalks can be a physical and visual nuisance to pedestrians. The clutter and congestion of the numerous disparate types of newsracks on the sidewalks is unsightly and not in keeping with the historic character of the Village. However, the use of the sidewalk is traditionally associated with the sale and distribution of newspapers and other publications, and access to this area for such purposes should not be prohibited. It is the intent of this section of the Village Design Guidelines to provide for newsrack facilities of uniform and coordinated construction and appearance, and to further provide adequate locations and accessibility for these facilities.

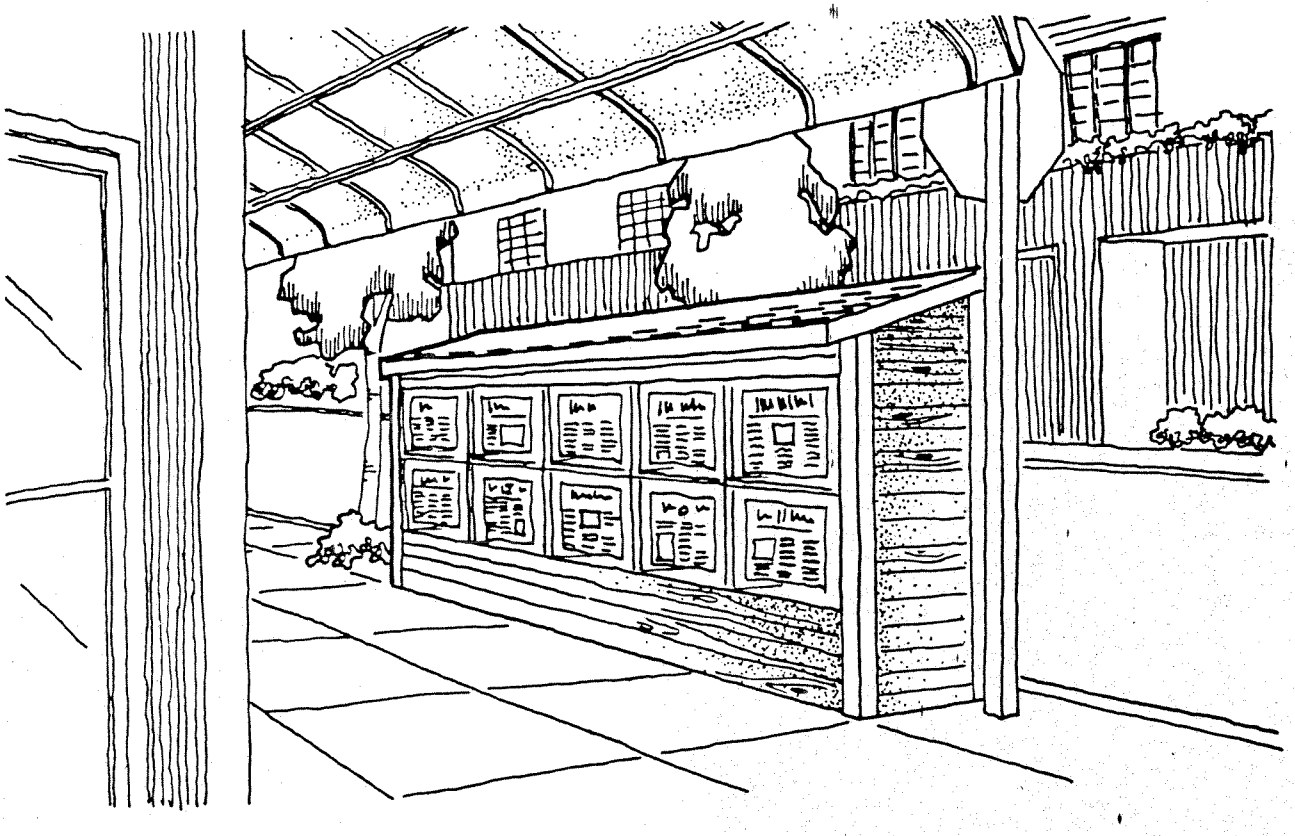
There are five proposed locations for newsrack enclosures, as shown in the map and the sketches on the following pages. Each of the locations will accommodate a newsrack structure designed and installed by the City. To as great an extent as possible, structures will have space to accommodate the same number of newsracks in the same locations that are currently existing along Big Basin Way. The only exception to this is the newsrack in front of the Village Rendezvous restaurant; the sidewalk is very narrow in this location and the racks interfere with pedestrian travel. These racks can be incorporated into the structure near the Buy and Save Market.

In addition to the newsrack structures themselves, the City is developing a newsrack ordinance which will require newspaper vendors to obtain licenses to sell their papers in the City-owned racks. This license will control only the location and manner in which the newspapers are sold, not the content or the viewpoint of the newspaper itself.

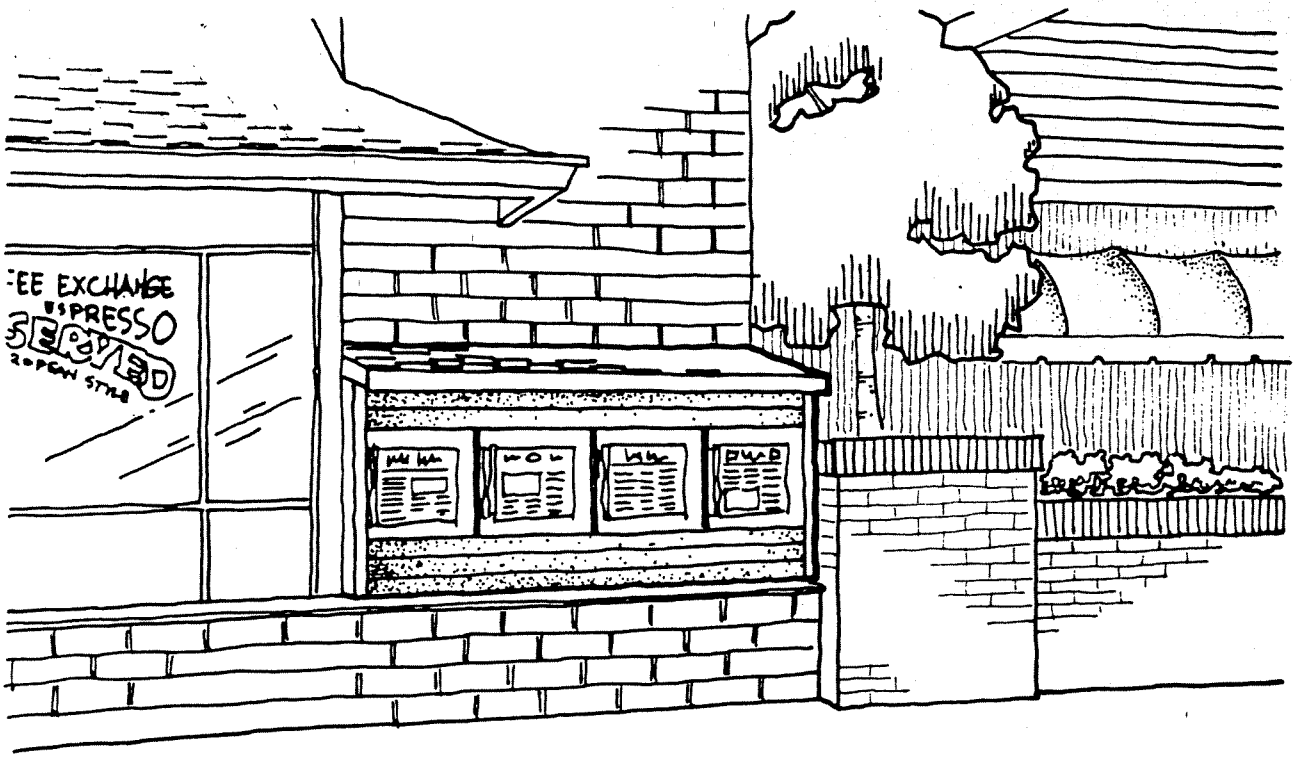




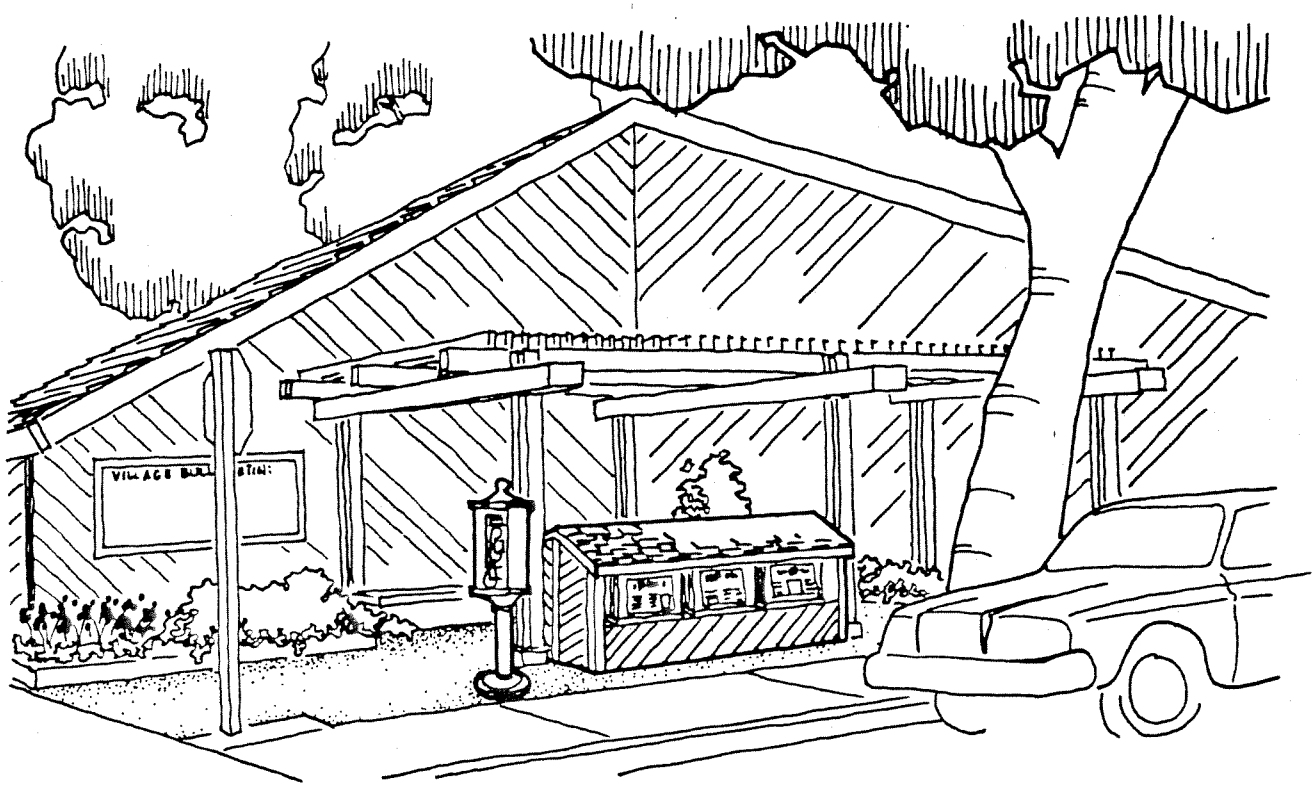
Buy and Save Market



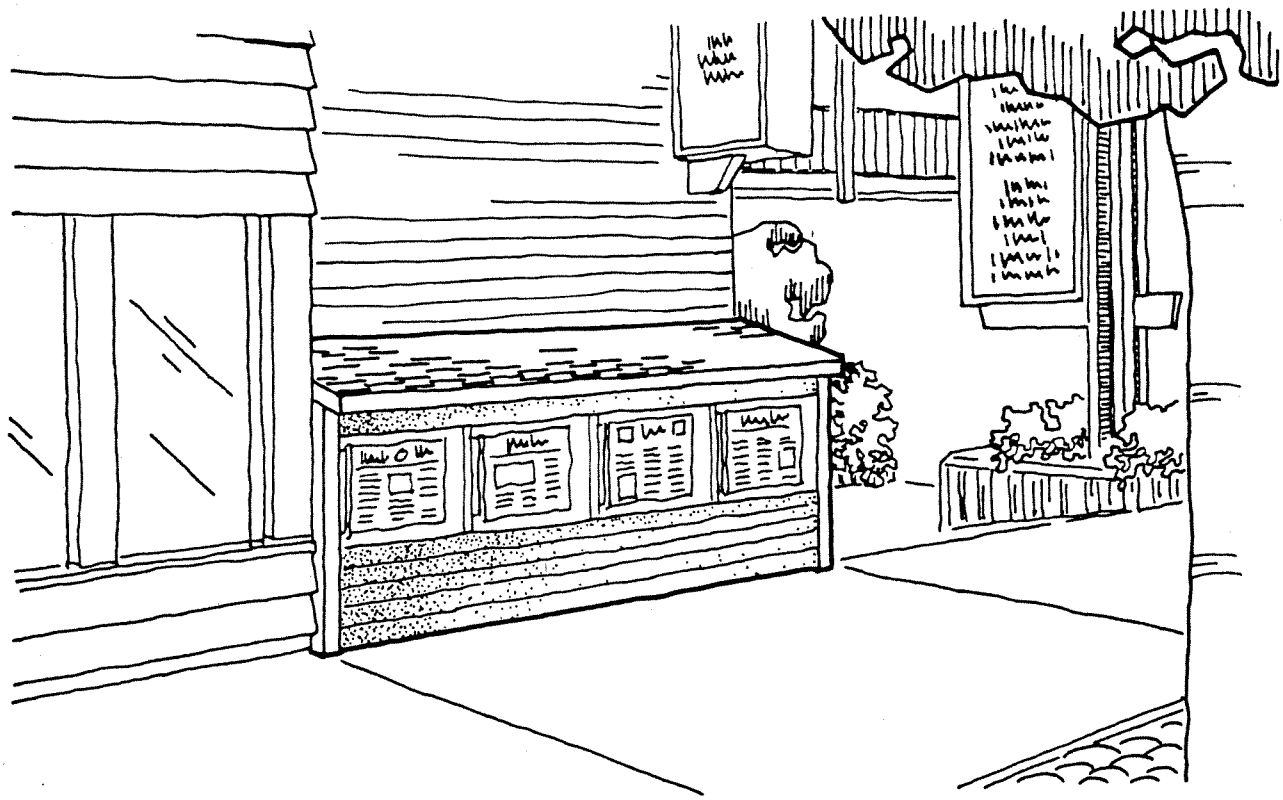
Little Amsterdam



International Coffee Exchange



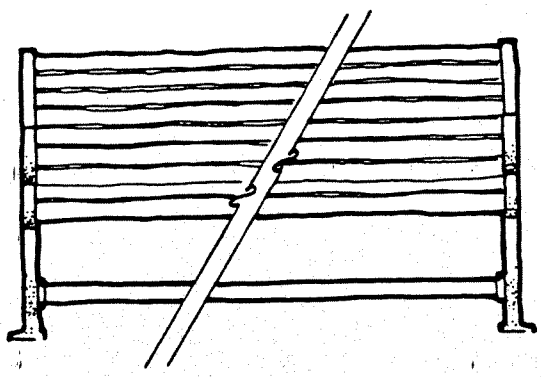
Village Square



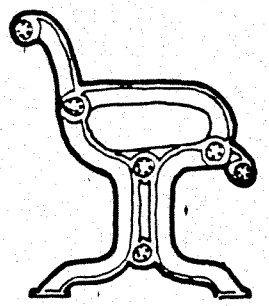
Plaza Del Roble

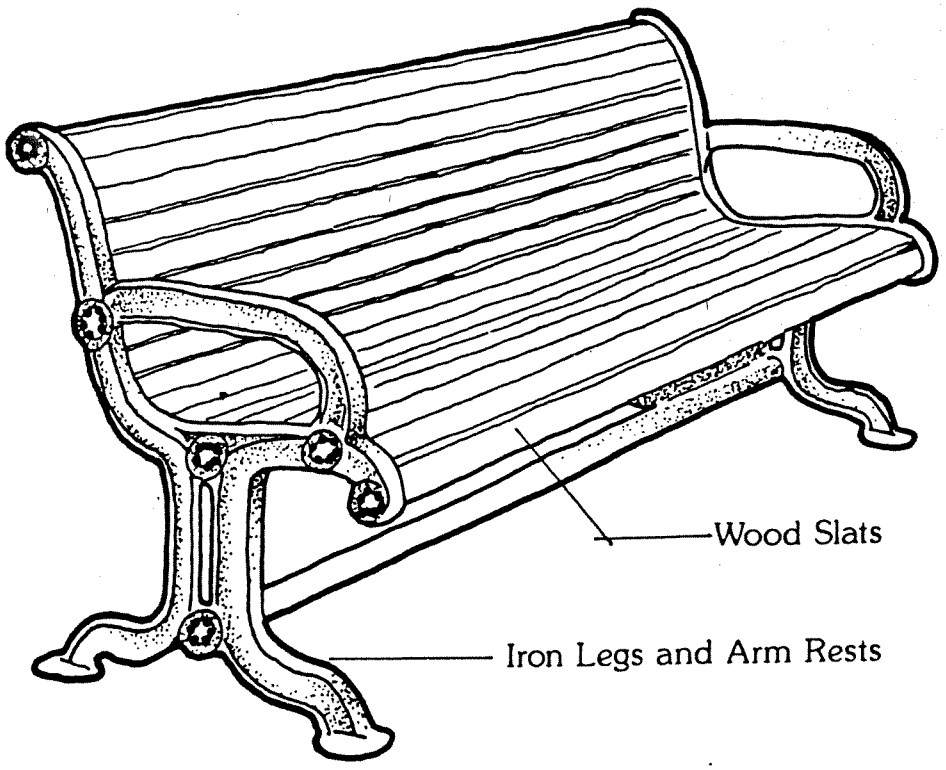
BENCHES

There are a variety of bench styles already in use throughout the Village. Many of these are structurally integrated into landscaping and wall features and should not be removed (see the following illustrations). However, there are many opportunities for the addition of free-standing benches to the pedestrian areas around buildings, which will encourage pedestrians to sit and enjoy the Village ambiance.

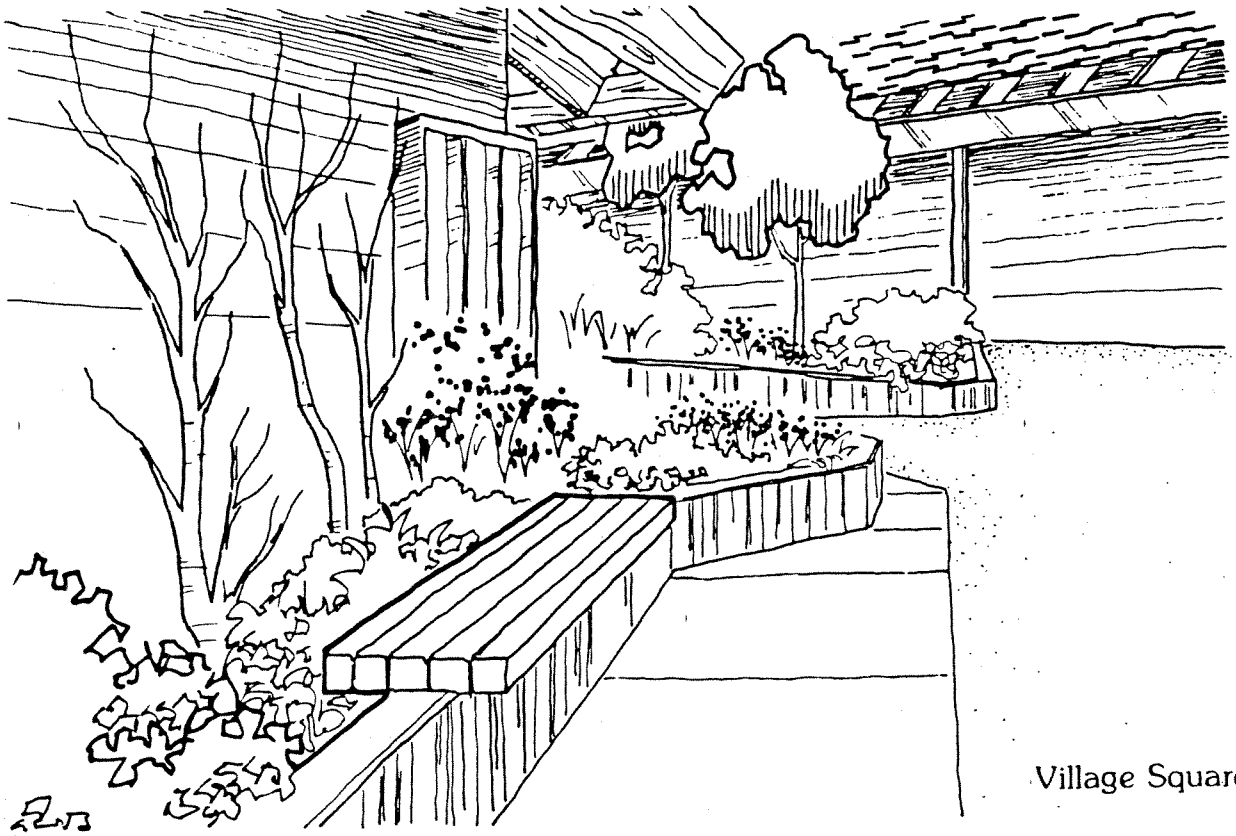


Individual property owners who wish to install new benches should use the design shown in this diagram. The bench is made of wood and features black cast iron legs and arms. The bench is available in 6' and 8' lengths, and comes either with or without a back. Each bench can be custom engraved or lettered to acknowledge the purchaser or donor.

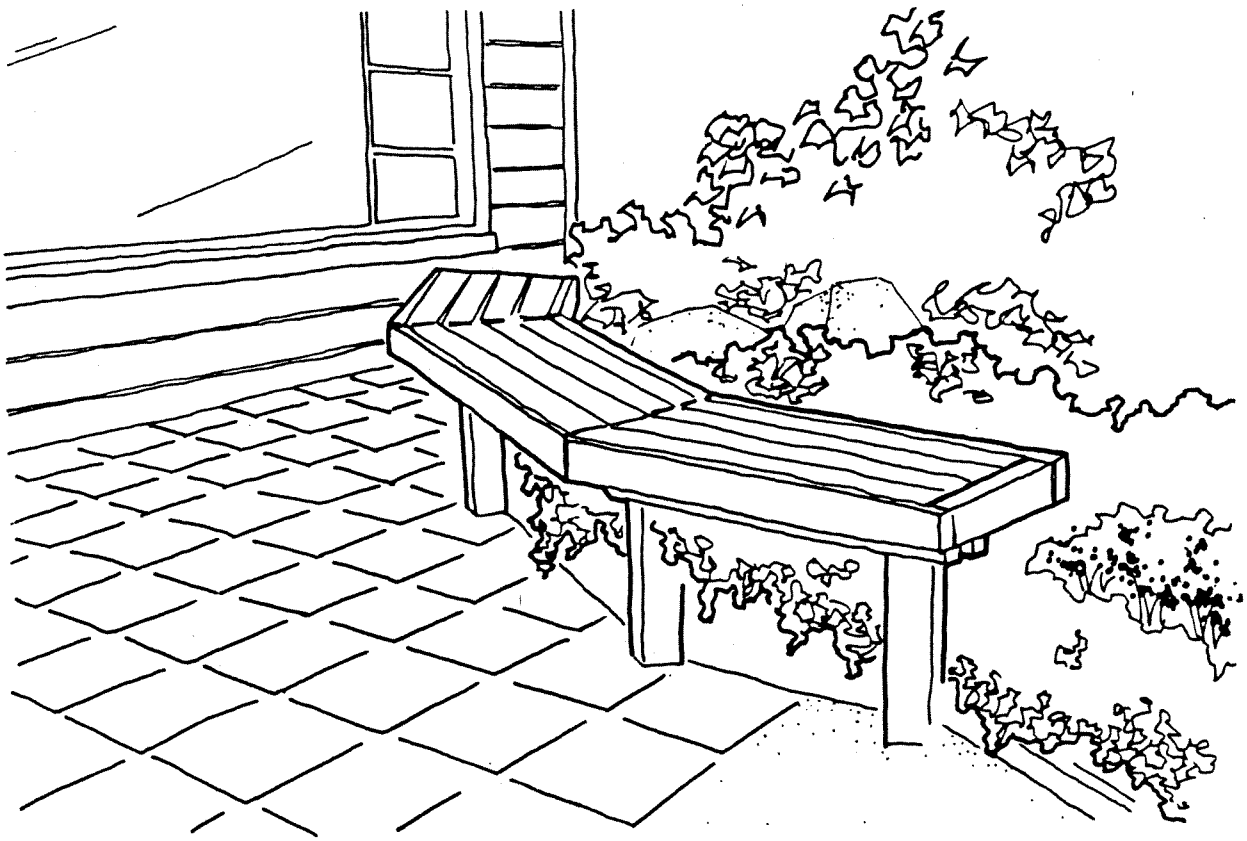




BENCH PERSPECTIVES



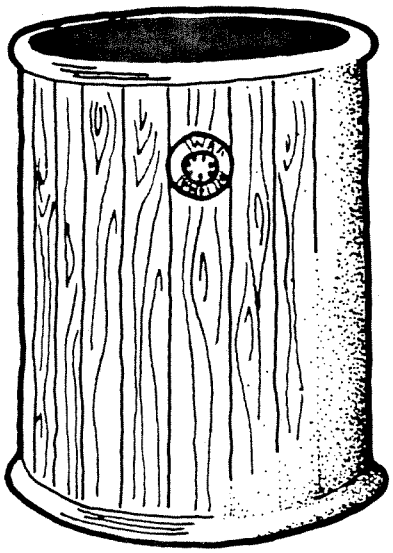
Village Square



Village Design Center

TRASH CANS

The trash can design uses the same materials and style as the benches. The cans are round with a flat top, and durably made of wood slats with a black metal frame.

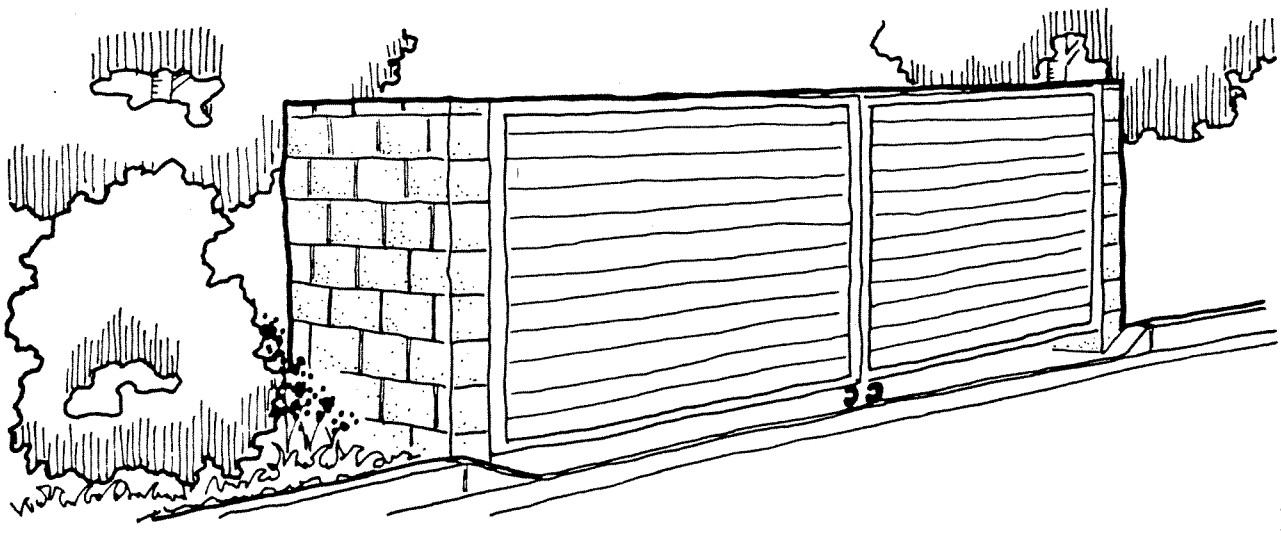


The existing City-owned cement trash cans in the Village are tentatively proposed to be replaced by the City with new wooden enclosures. There is also the possibility that a local community group may donate these. In addition, property owners who install a new can or replace an existing one will be required to use this wood design. Like the benches, each can may accommodate a custom-lettered medallion to acknowledge the purchaser or donor.

TRASH ENCLOSURES

All garbage dumpsters are required to be enclosed and screened from public view. This diagram shows the selected design of the trash enclosure, which can be seen at various locations in Village Parking District #3. The structure is made of split-face concrete block with a wood-slat gate. Appropriate landscaping should be installed along the perimeter of the enclosure to soften its appearance.

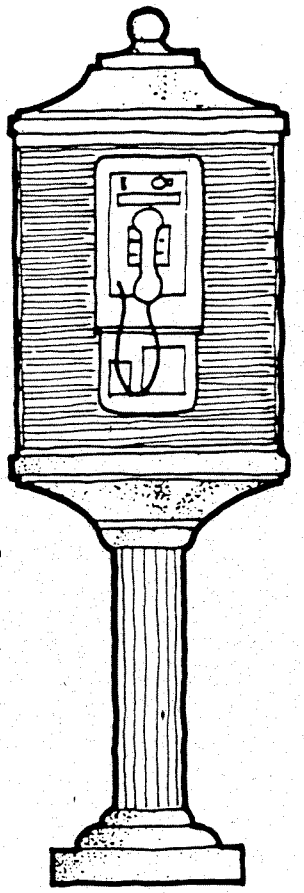
The City will be responsible for installing trash enclosures in the other Village parking districts through assessments to the districts. Individual property owners are responsible for installing them on their own property.



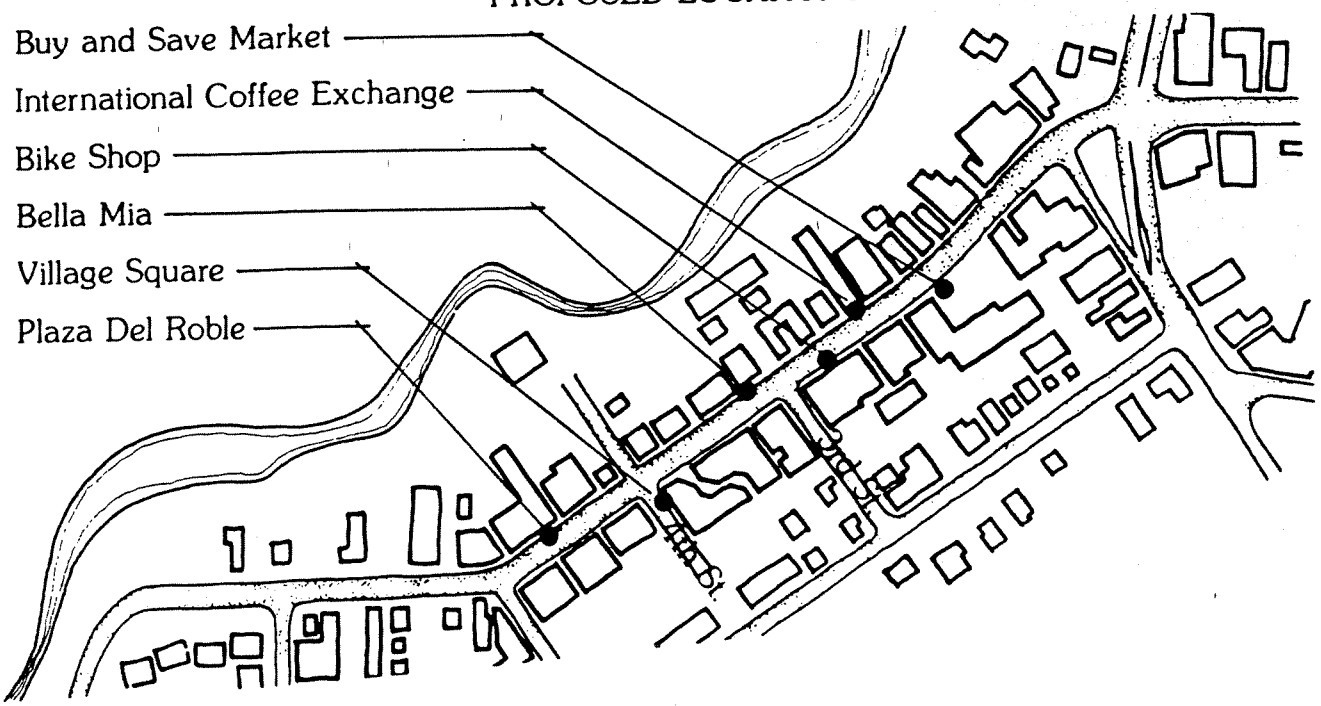
TELEPHONE ENCLOSURES

The City of Saratoga is developing a contract with a private telephone company for the installation and ongoing maintenance of specific public telephones in the Village. These phones are specially designed to provide public telephone service without being visually obtrusive. Their design promotes the historic Village context and is compatible with the design of the street lights and other street furniture.

There are four proposed sites for these new telephones, each with high visibility and accessibility to the public. The locations are: Plaza del Roble, Village Square, Buy & Save Market, and International Coffee Exchange. The existing pay phones at the Bike Shop and Bella Mia should be replaced with the new design as soon as practical because they are not in keeping with the Village design theme. Other telephones at service stations and the Post Office may remain.



PROPOSED LOCATIONS

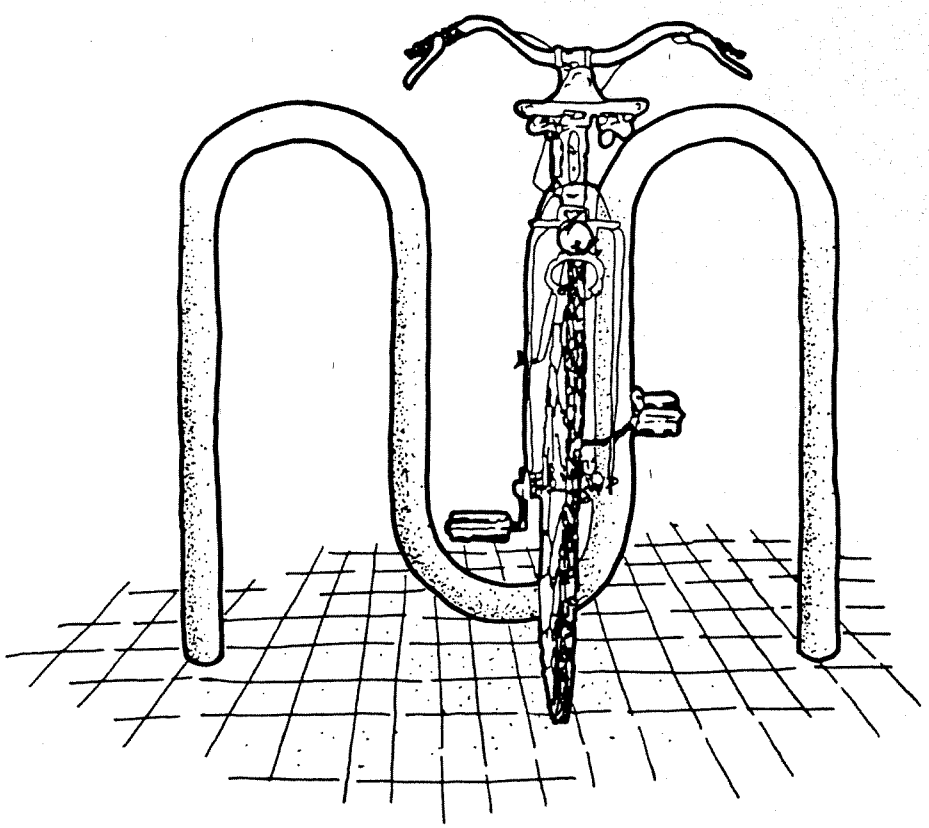


Bicycle Facilities

The Saratoga Village has become a regular gathering place for recreational bicyclists. Its setting at the base of the Santa Cruz Mountains makes it an ideal destination point for cyclists from all over. Currently, however, there are not adequate facilities for bicycle parking within the Village, particularly along Big Basin Way, between the Buy & Save Market and 4th Street, where there seems to be a concentration of parked bicycles.

An option to correct this lack of bicycle facilities would be to encourage new development to include a percentage of bicycle parking racks, just as you would for automobiles. The City should also take the initiative to provide bicycle parking facilities within Parking District #3, even though it would be preferable to have the parking facility visible from Big Basin Way.

Since space along Big Basin Way is limited, parking islands would provide highly visible parking and also serve as a "Choker" island to slow automobile traffic.



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 <u>not</u> 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

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.

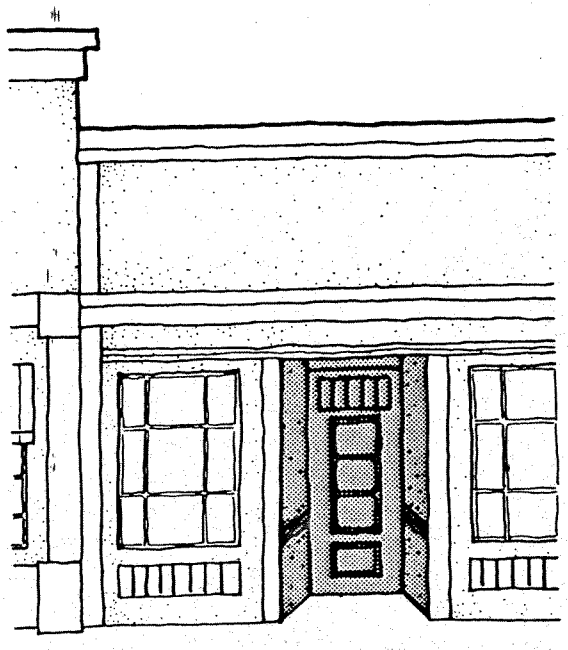
As a general approach, storefront treatments should respect the original period and style of the building, maintaining its historical integrity to as great an extent possible. However, buildings should not be made to look falsely "historical" or older than they really are. An owner should first determine 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.

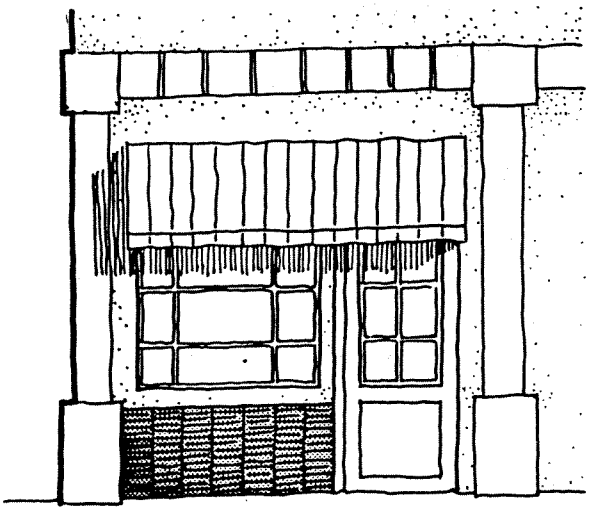


DISPLAY WINDOWS

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.

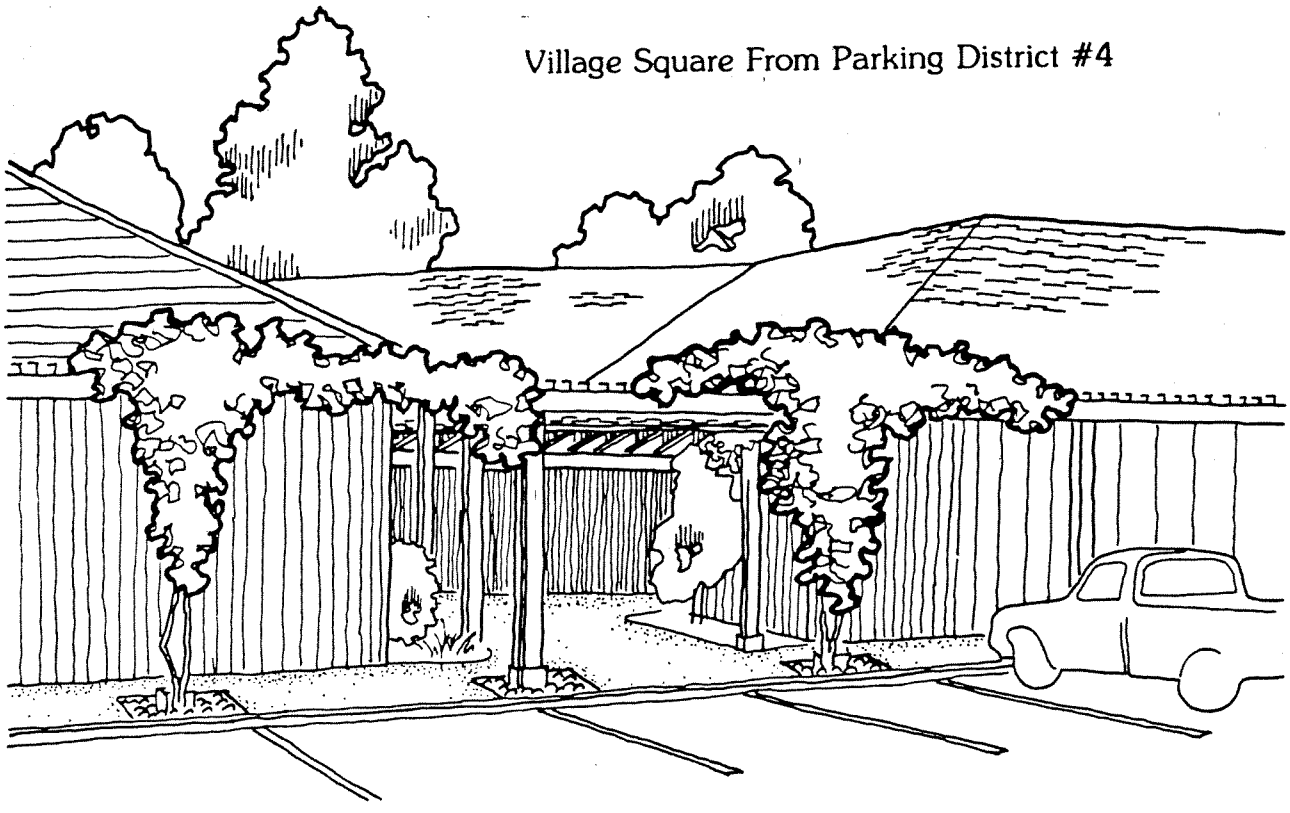
Draw attention to the entry door with signage, color and architectural elements.

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



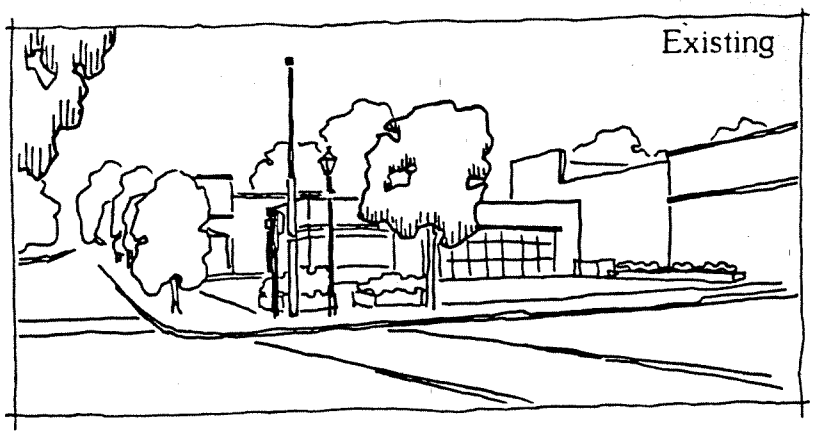
Opportunity Sites

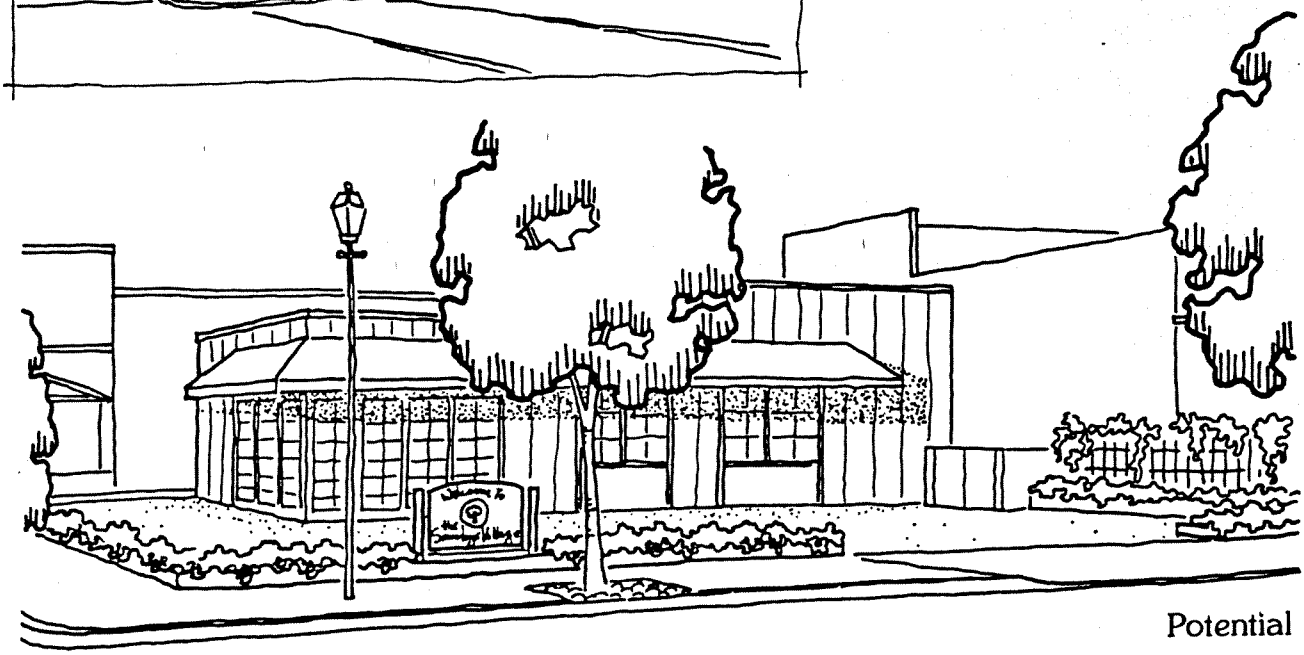
To a large degree, the Saratoga Village is already a completely built environment. There are few vacant parcels remaining and most of the development that will occur in the future will be the remodeling of existing structures. The use of these guidelines in those remodeling efforts will ensure appropriate 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.

SITE 1: GATEWAY CORNER AT BIG BASIN WAY AND BLANEY PLAZA

Known locally as the "Scooter House" site, this parcel signals the entrance into the Saratoga Village, especially from the north and west. The site contained a service station for some time, and now features a small one-story commercial structure at the rear corner with parking area adjacent to the corner streets. The two-story Corinthian Corners buildings abut the lot to either side, and the site is separated from Blaney Plaza by a spur extension of Saratoga-Los Gatos Road.

This parcel can be upgraded by the use of decorative brick pavers instead of asphalt for the parking area; the use of cloth awnings, a fresh coat of paint, and architectural detailing on the building to give it visual interest; and landscaping and planter boxes along all perimeters of the lot, including a heritage-size tree at the Big Basin Way driveway entrance to the lot. This parcel is also an appropriate location for a Village directional sign, with one arrow pointing to the Historical Museum and Chamber of Commerce site and another pointing up Big Basin Way for Village shops and parking.

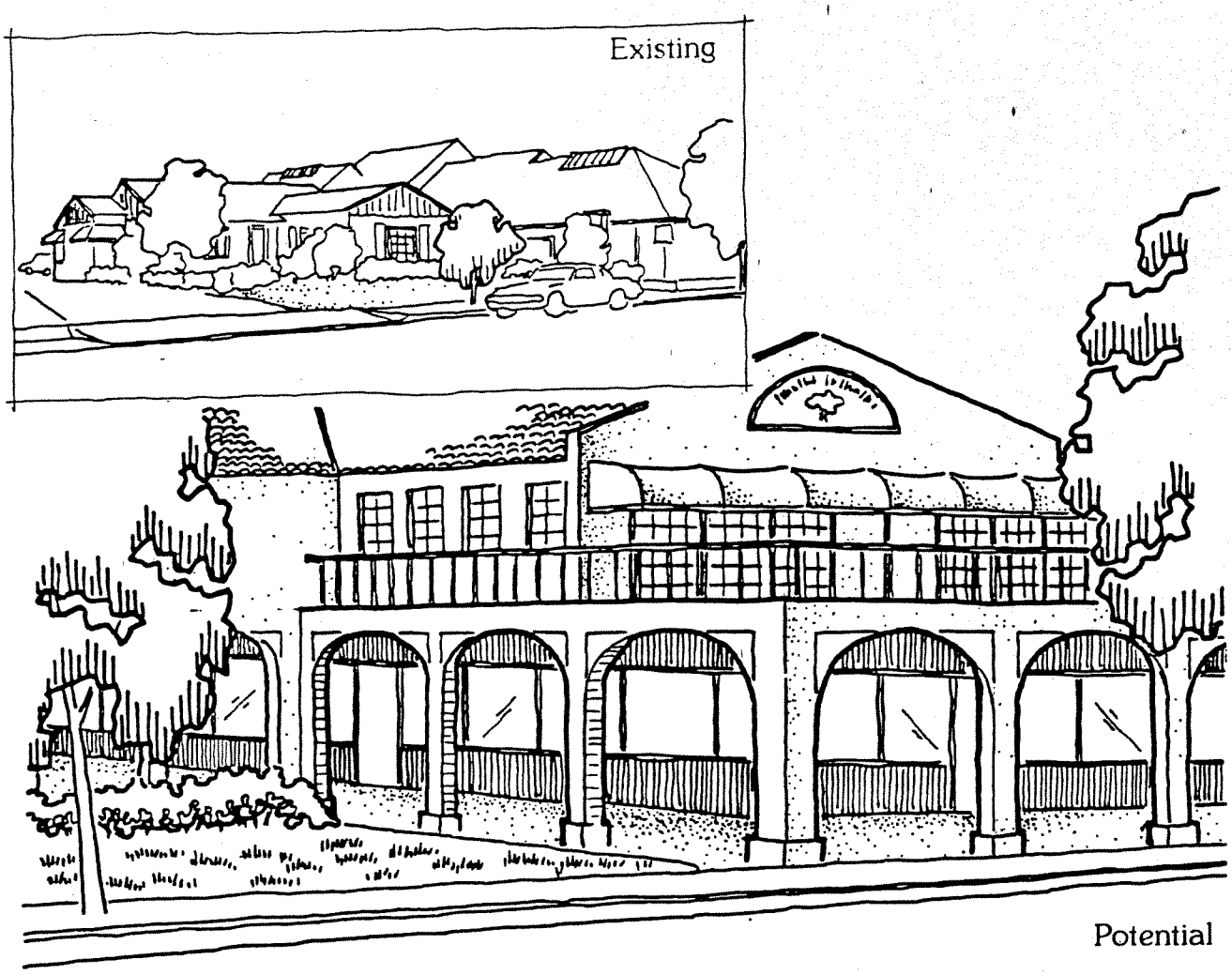




SITE 2: ECHO SHOP

This site contains the only residential-type structure in the more intense commercial portion of Big Basin Way between 5th Street and Saratoga-Los Gatos Road. The one-story structure is set back from the sidewalk and landscaped in front with lawn, giving it an appearance not fitting with the storefront commercial pattern along the street. There is also a driveway on the west side of the lot serving a private parking area not connected to Parking District #3.

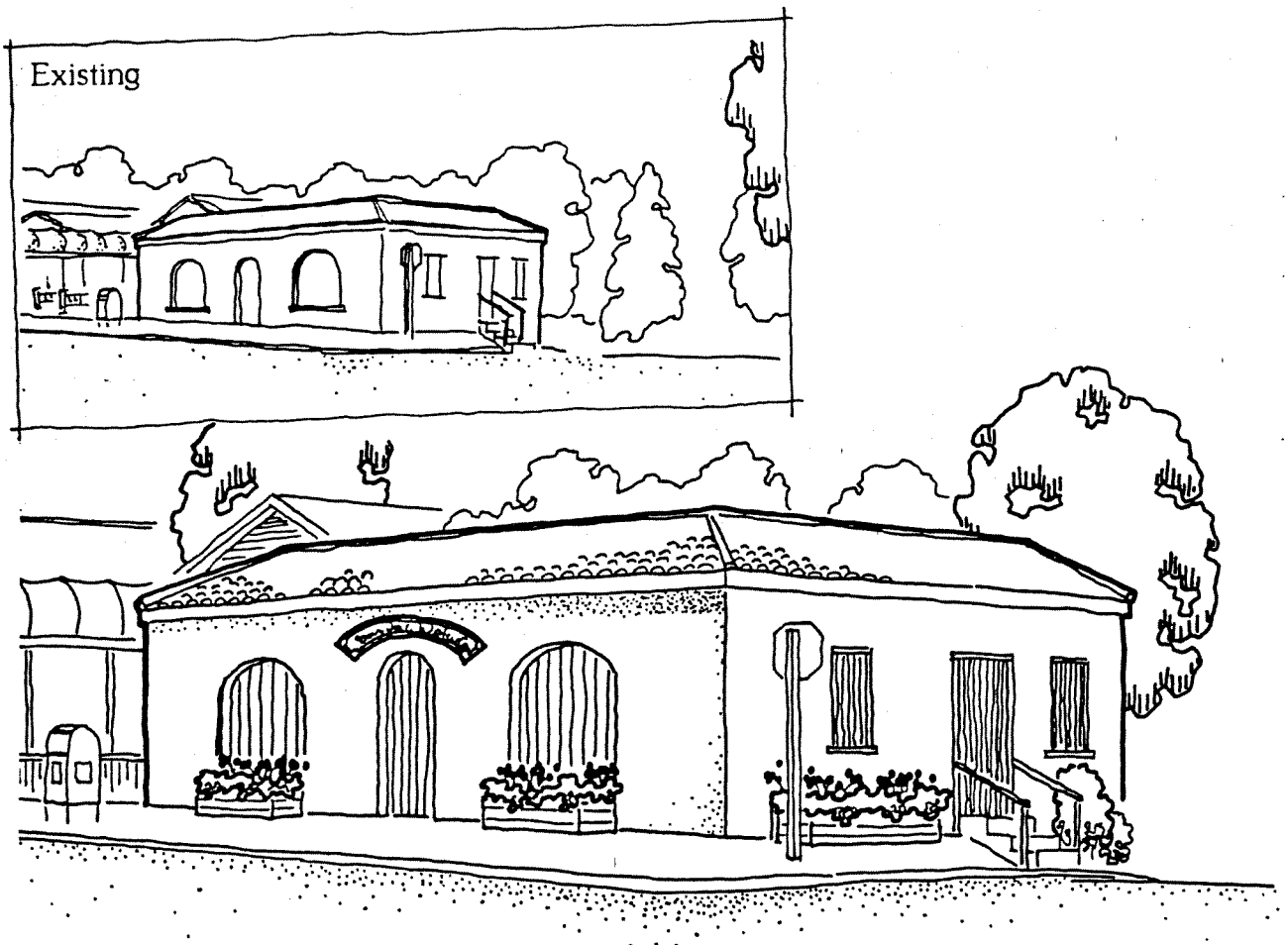
Development of this site should be treated as follows: 1)construct a new building that has no front yard setback and takes up the entire width of the lot; 2)the new structure may be one or two stories and should follow the architectural design guidelines discussed in this chapter; 3)close off driveway and create parking in the rear as part of Parking District #3; 4)incorporate an appropriate transition to the walkway adjacent to the east which provides access to the parking district and the Coffee Exchange/Gilley's building.



SITE 3: WATER PUMPING BUILDING AT CORNER OF 4TH AND BIG BASIN WAY

The one-story spanish style building at this location houses a San Jose Water Company pumping station. The simple architectural style, red tile roof and front arched windows make this structure an important visual feature of this busy Village intersection.

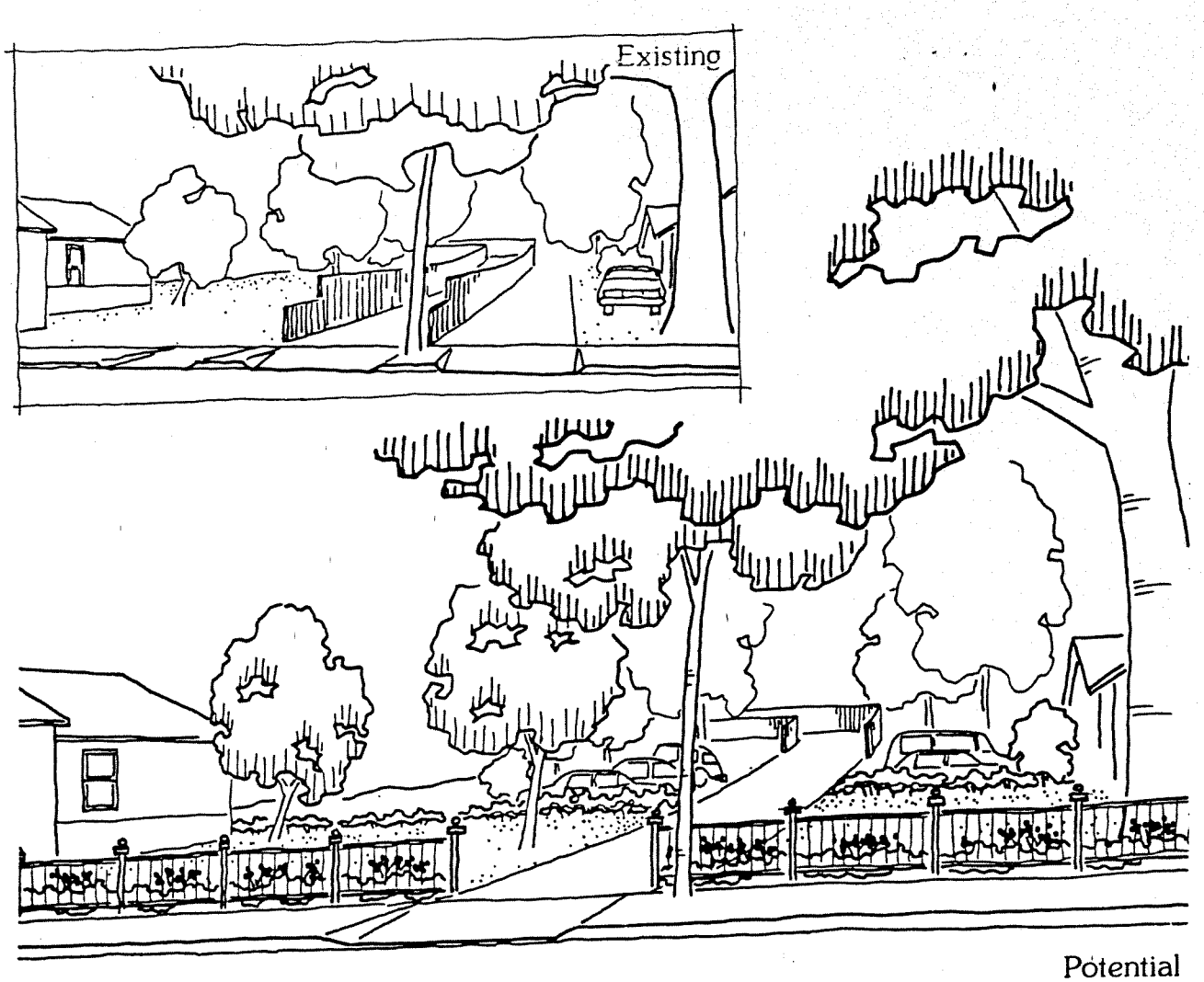
Some very simple treatments to the exterior of this building would enhance its appearance at this important corner property. These treatments include a simple wood identification sign and flower boxes on the front facade, and landscaping on the 4th Street side in the dirt area between the building and the curb. This location is also appropriate for a Village directional sign pointing down 4th Street, indicating the entrance to the Inn at Saratoga, Wildwood Park, and parking districts.



SITE 4: FAT ROBIN

This site consists of three parcels, two lots containing the two Fat Robin commercial establishments, and a 12-foot wide lot separating them; this narrow lot serves as an emergency access to a condominium project fronting on St. Charles Street and is lined with a 6-foot high wooden fence. Because the Fat Robin structures are located to the far sides of their lots, the parcel appears visually to be able to accomodate another structure between them; this is not the case because of the necessity for the emergency driveway which separates them.

There are three driveways in close succession off Big Basin Way serving these parcels. The appropriate treatment for this site is to consolidate the three driveways into one, closing off the remaining two, and create a parking area that is visually pleasing and removed from the sidewalk by a fence or low wall and adequate landscaping. This site may also be an appropriate location for a bench and enlarged pedestrian seating area.

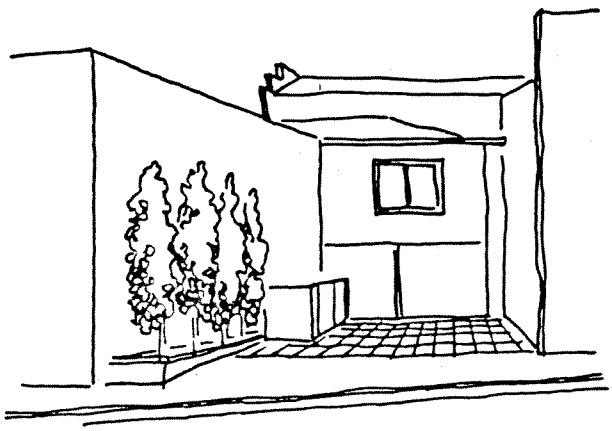


NOOKS AND CRANNIES

In addition to the four specific opportunity sites illustrated in this section, there are also a number of alleys, driveways, and underdeveloped portions of sites in the Village that can be visually and physically improved for use as aesthetic and pedestrian amenities. The following is a list of examples:

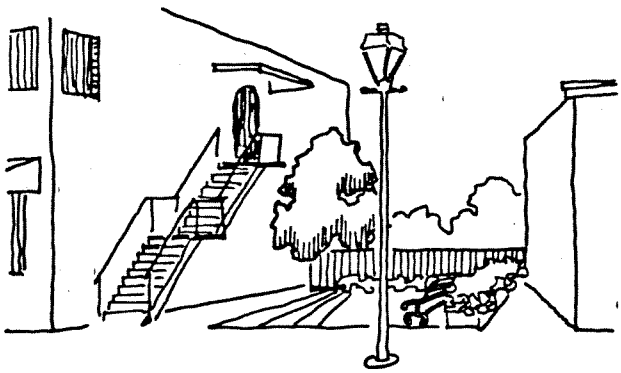
Wells Fargo bank/Village Rendezvous Alley

This alley, which currently provides access to second-story apartments, can be improved by screening the trash dumpster and providing landscaping.



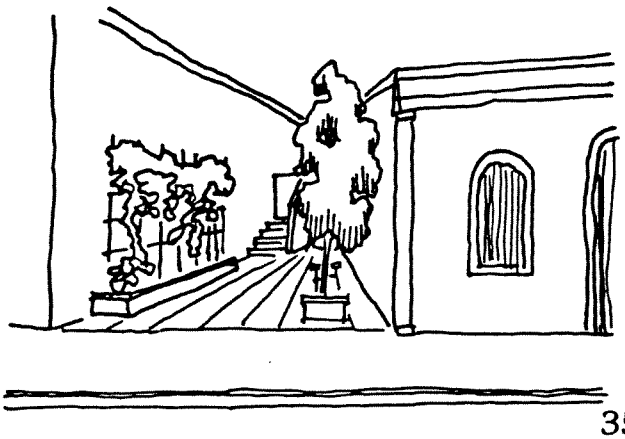
Melton Junipers

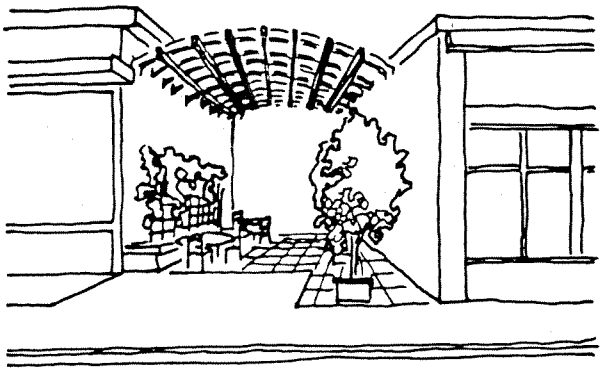
This space is currently home to a dense growth of junipers. Because of its central Village location, it could be better utilized and enhanced by articulated landscaping, bench seating and other pedestrian amenities.



County Store Cafe

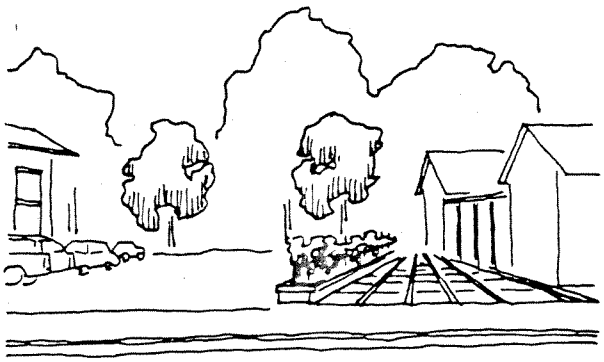
This alley is another instance where simple maintenance and landscaping treatment can create a more pleasing pedestrian environment. Outdoor dining would also be an appropriate use.





Marjolaine/Saratoga Hardware

This currently unused driveway is an ideal opportunity to create a small linear park that could provide a quiet, shaded resting place directly off Big Basin Way, with access to the parking district behind the buildings.



Hair Conception/Mere Michele

This is a space created by two parallel, abutting driveways, separated by a fence. Simple visual improvements include the addition of vines to the fence and planter boxes along the sides of the space, and resurfacing the asphalt with decorative paving stones.

LANDSCAPING

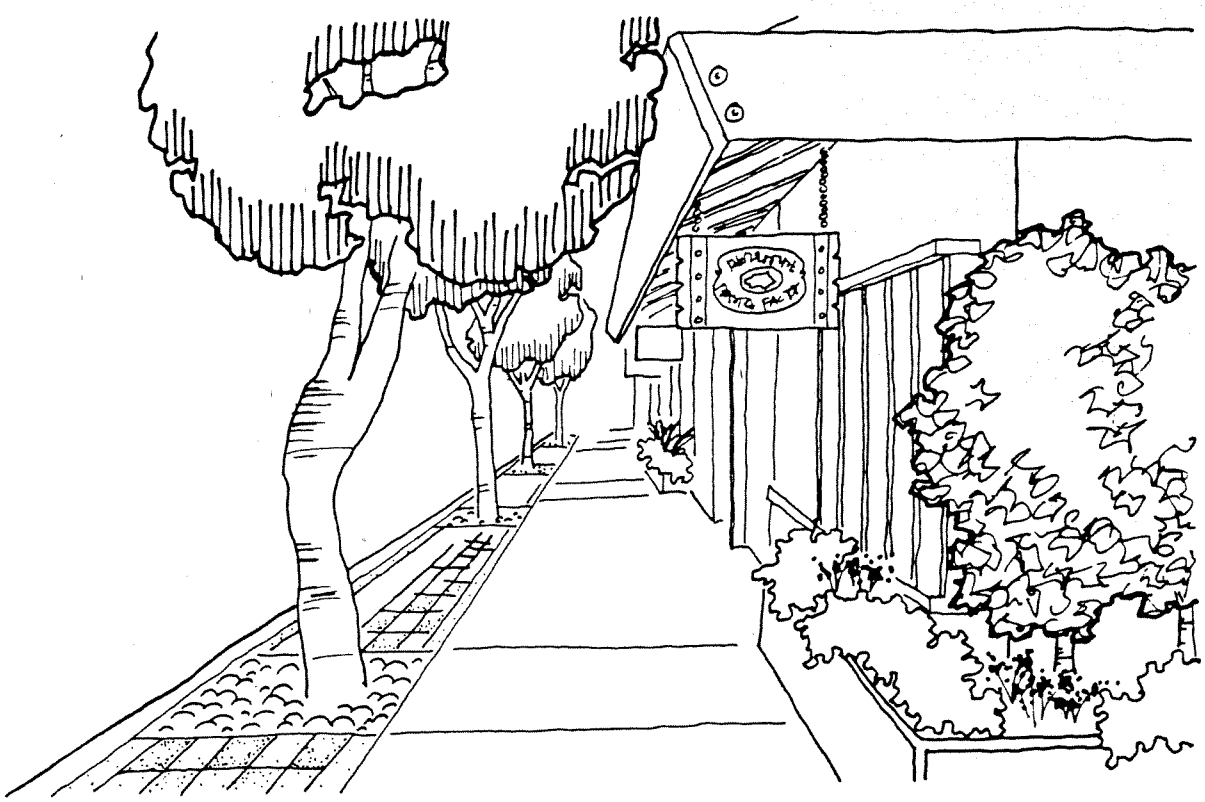
The landscaping plan for the Village consists primarily of the City's street tree program and the installation and maintenance of landscaping and flower boxes by private property owners. Landscaping in Village parking districts behind the buildings fronting on Big Basin Way is maintained on an ongoing basis by the City.

Street Tree Program

The Big Basin Way street tree program was adopted as part of the Village Plan in May, 1988. This program called for the removal of approximately 50 trees and shrubs, which were either diseased, inappropriate species, or causing sidewalk maintenance problems, and the planting of approximately 60 new replacement trees. The intent of the tree program is not to create a rigid, formal look with repetition of the same tree, but rather a casual appearance with a spontaneous mixture of a variety of trees appropriate to the small scale and architectural eclecticism of the Village. The trees have been planted between 25-40 feet apart, depending on the species and the spread.

The tree removal and replanting program occurred in summer/fall of 1989. Each tree is equipped with individual underground irrigation and electrical service and a decorative surface of natural rounded creeks stones. The electrical service enables each tree to be illuminated by the City on special occasions.

Maintenance of the Village street trees is the sole responsibility of the City. Merchants and property owners should not prune, water, post signs on or otherwise tamper with the street trees in any way.

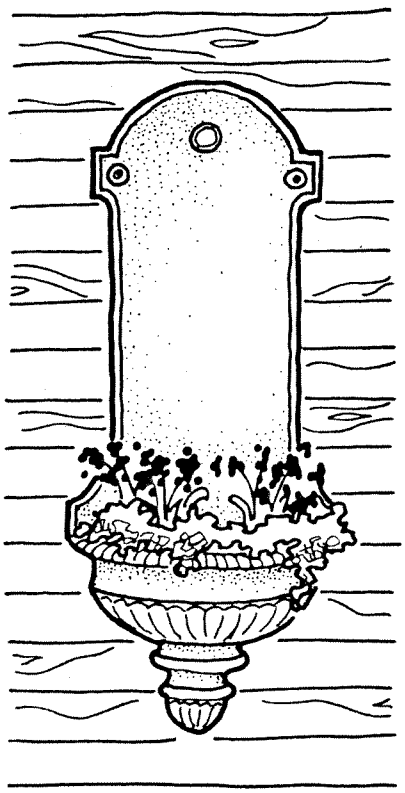


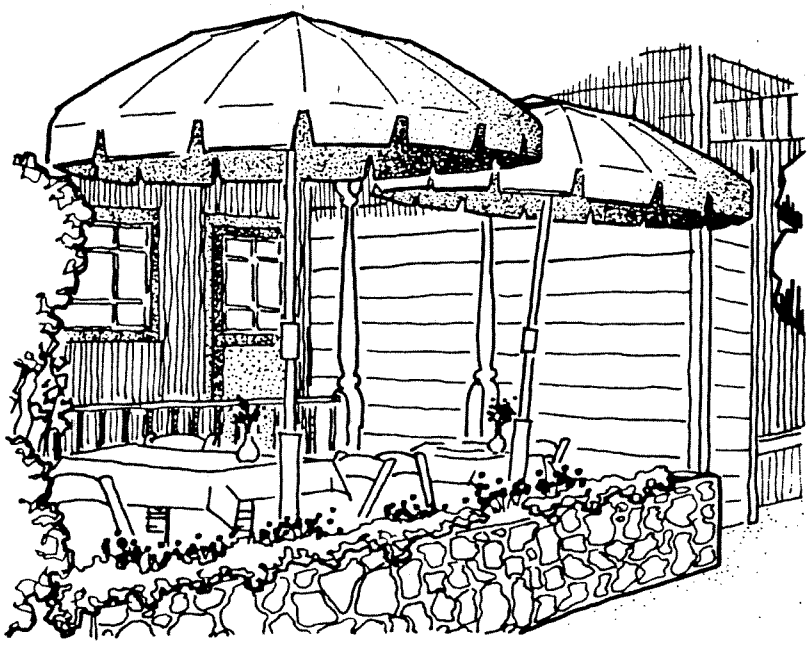
Flower Boxes

Freshly-planted flowers in bright colors give the sense that the Village is a special place, one that is alive and cared for. Just as there is an eclectic mix of architecture in the Village, so there exists a variety of flower boxes in front of many commercial buildings. This variety is encouraged and supported by the Village Plan. The only type of planter that is discouraged is one made of concrete, cement or block. These typically have a heavy, industrial appearance that is not appropriate to the Village ambience.

Planter boxes should be incorporated into the front and rear entrances of businesses wherever possible, and property owners should make a concerted effort to keep the planters filled with flowering plants year round. Property owners also have a duty to keep their planter boxes themselves in good repair. In addition to flower boxes, property owners may wish to install shrubs, small trees and vines. These types of plants should also be of the flowering variety, to add color and interest to the Village streetscape.

To assist the City and property owners in selecting appropriate landscaping, the Village Design Guidelines provide a list of acceptable flowers, shrubs, trees and vines. This list is found on the following pages.





Flowers for Hanging Baskets

Ivy geranium
Trailing begonias
Trailing campanula
Lobelia
Asparagus fern
Lotus berthelotii

Shrubs

Australian Brush Cherry: Sun or part shade, grows to 30 feet, new growth has reddish tinge, average water but drought tolerant once established.

Daylily: Lily plant that is bushy to 2'-3', sun or part shade, hardy perennial, yellow or orange flowers summer to fall.

Small Trees

Japanese maple: Needs part shade, frequent watering, grows to 20 feet, good fall foliage, deciduous.

Crape Myrtle: Takes sun, drought resistant, grows to 30 feet, deciduous, blossoms in spring, fall foliage.

Flowering Japanese Crabapple (Malus): Grows to 30 feet, blossoms in spring, fall foliage.

Japanese Flowering Cherry: Grows to 25 feet, blossoms in spring.

Flowering Plum: Grows to 20'-30', deciduous, blossoms in spring, buy fruitless kind.

Vines

Bougainvillea: Spectacular flowers, needs sun, use trellis

Clematis: Spectacular flowers, sun or shade, tendrils cling

Virginia Creeper: Deciduous with spectacular fall foliage, tendrils that cling, not suitable for wood or shingle siding because it can creep underneath

Trumpet Vine: Sun or shade, tendrils that cling

Cats Claw: Once established needs little water, tendrils

Boston Ivy: Beautiful red fall foliage

Passion Vine: Vigorous, pink and lavender flowers

Silver Lace Vine: Needs sun, average water, flowers from spring to fall.

SIGNAGE

Signs can go a long way toward enhancing or detracting from the attractiveness of the Village area. It is the intent of the sign guidelines to encourage signage that functions clearly to inform pedestrians and motorists of business names and services, but that does not detract from the architectural quality of individual buildings or from the streetscape as a whole.

The Saratoga City Code already has sign regulations (Article 15-30) which outline the allowable size, type and location of signs in commercial districts. Those regulations shall be followed for the Village area as well, except as noted in these guidelines. The guidelines address visual and design concerns that are not found in the ordinance, and encourage the use of pedestrian-oriented signs.

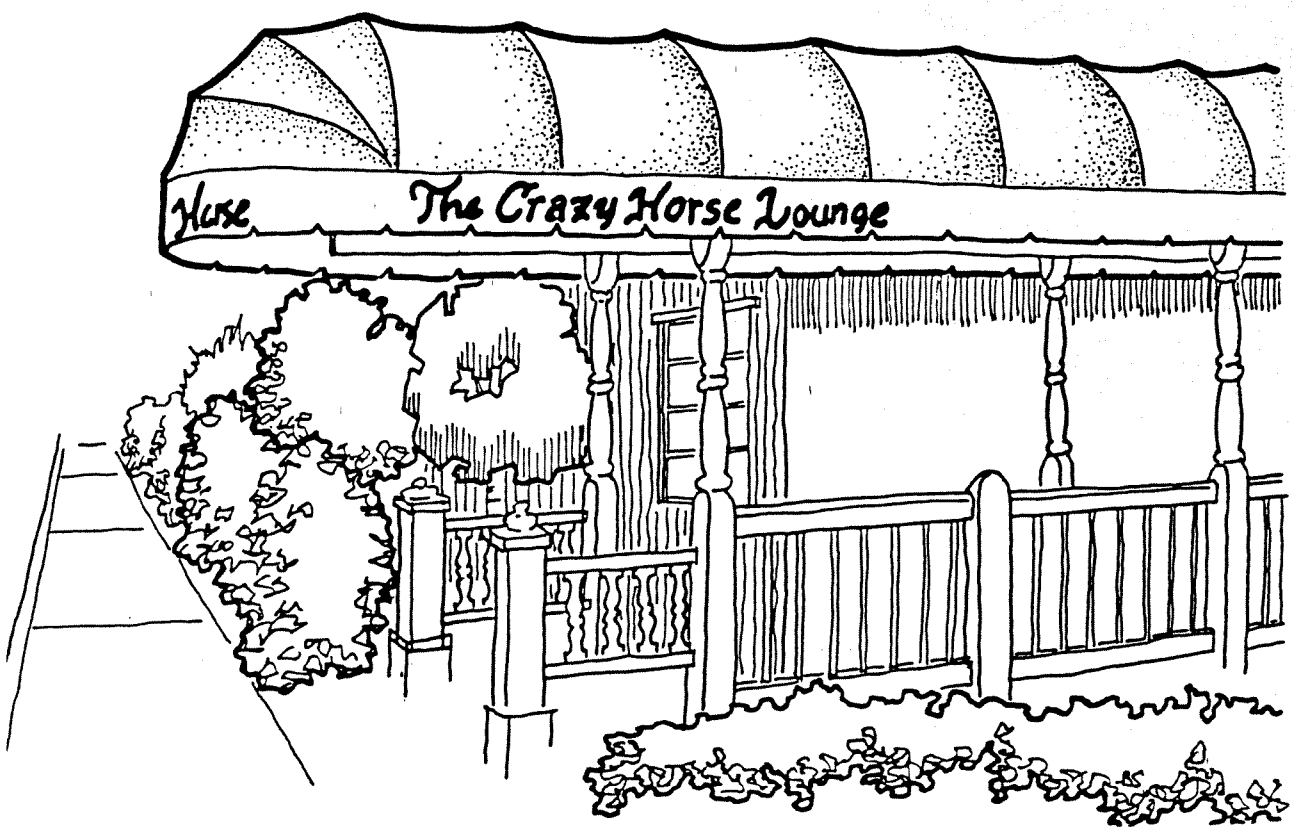
Sign Location and Area

The location of signs on any building should clearly bear a relationship to the architecture of the building itself. Signs should not obscure other building elements such as windows, cornices or decorative details.

Signs should be located directly above the entrance to the store, or directly to the sides of the entrance at eye level, so that they are visible below the foliage of street trees for the amenity and convenience of the pedestrian. Roof signs are not permitted, nor are signs allowed to extend above the eave line or above the top of a parapet wall.

The total allowable square footage for commercial signs in the Village is determined by Section 15-30.100 of the Sign Ordinance, with a maximum allowable area of 40 sq. ft.

An additional amount of sign area will be allowed for establishments which provide pedestrian access to their sales and service areas through the rear entrances of their buildings. The same guidelines which apply to the fronts of buildings apply to the rear facades.



Type of Signs

WALL OR FLUSH-MOUNTED SIGNS

Wall signs should have a basic rectangular shape and should be applied horizontally directly above or to the side of the entry. Variations which respect the basic rectangular shape are acceptable.

When a building contains two or more signs, the wall signs should complement one another in color and shape, and should be located in the same position over the storefront.

wall signs can be painted directly onto the facade of a building or can be made of various materials and applied with screws or other devices.

HANGING AND PROJECTING SIGNS

Hanging and projecting signs typically are hung from coverings over sidewalks or are mounted on the wall perpendicular to the building facade. They should be placed at a location to be effective for pedestrians, yet placed no lower than 8 feet off the ground for adequate vertical clearance.

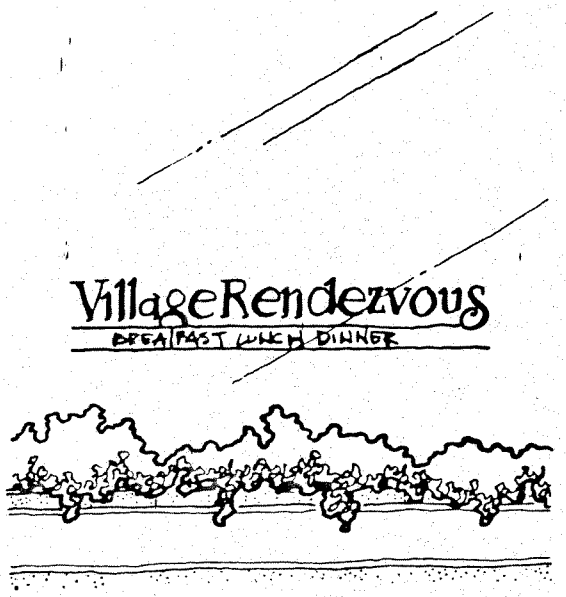
Hanging and projecting signs may have different lettering and image styles:

- icon or symbolic object, which depicts the goods or services being sold in the building
- corporate logo
- words only, or combination of words with icon or words with logo

Signs may also be painted directly on canvas awnings.

WINDOW SIGNS

Window signs are limited to not more than 25% of the window area and shall be placed near the building entrance so that they do not obscure visibility into the shop. Every effort should be made to integrate window signs with store window displays.

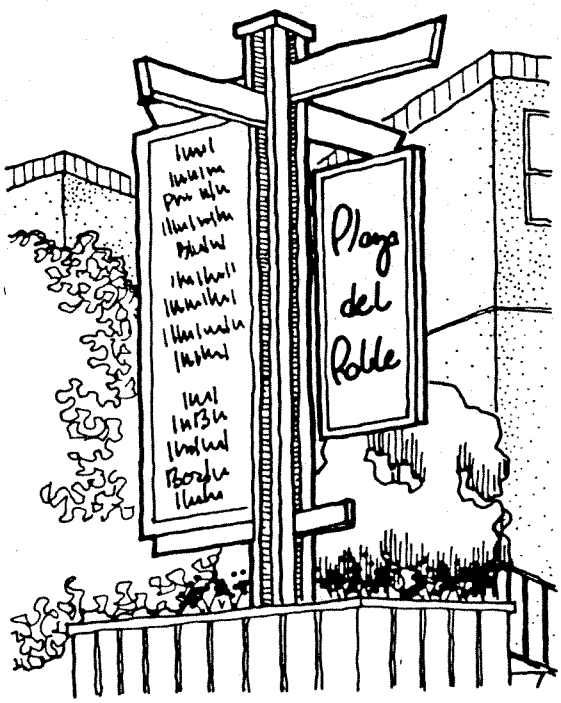


Sign lettering and graphics can be applied directly onto the glass, or applied to a clear acrylic panel behind the window. A simple, legible lettering style should be used, and the colors should be limited to white, black or gold leaf, which is very effective and reflects light back onto the streetscape, giving an elegant effect.

Temporary signs, such as hand painted "sale" signs on paper or cardboard and plastered in windows are highly inappropriate for the Village.

FREE STANDING MONUMENT OR POLE SIGNS

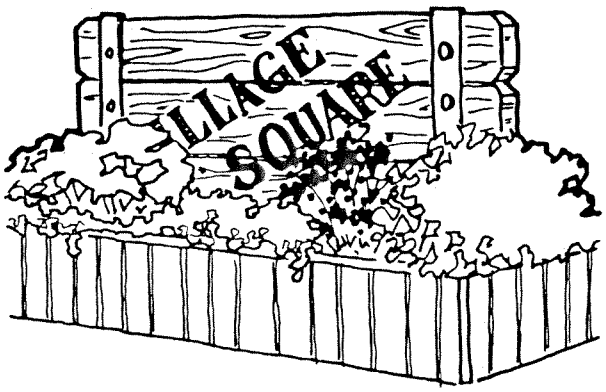
The monument sign is the preferred type of sign only where there is a building complex with a number of businesses within, that are not visible from the street. The sign should be located at the entrance to the complex so that it is visible to pedestrians and motorists alike. The sign may be designed to feature individual shingle signs for each of the businesses.



Materials, Colors and Illumination

MATERIALS

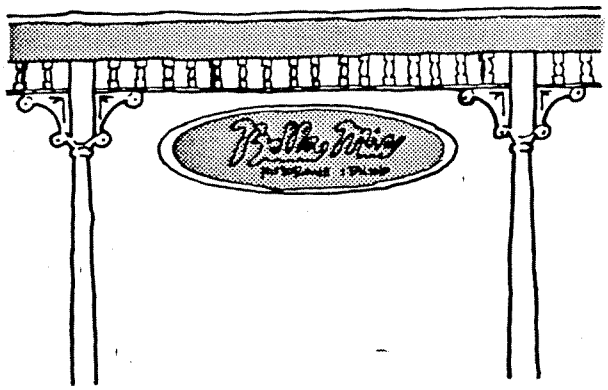
The desirable materials for signs are wood, glass, brick, metals with a matte finish, and paint applied directly to the building facade. Wooden signs can be painted or stained, or feature raised metal letters and numbers.



Inappropriate sign materials are plastic, metal and plastic can signs, chrome, and channel lettering.

COLORS

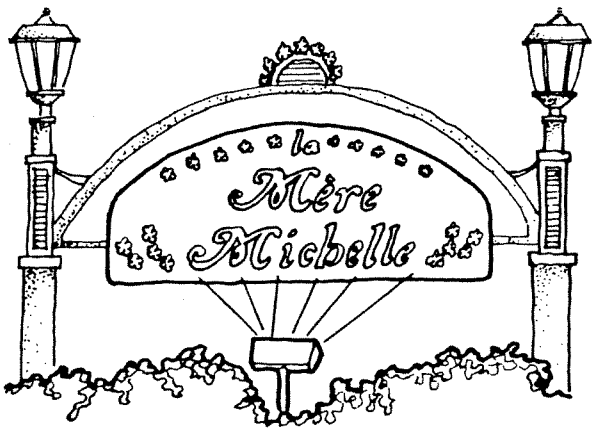
Sign colors should relate to and complement the material or paint scheme of the buildings, including accenting highlights and trim colors.



The numbers of colors on any sign should be limited to three: a dark hue, a medium hue, and a light accent color. These three combine to produce a highly legible and visible sign. Fluorescent colors are not recommended.

ILLUMINATION

Internally illuminated plastic signs are not permitted, nor are neon signs, flashing signs and sign with moving graphics.



Signs should have the capability of being lit for evening visibility, through the use of soffit lighting or screened floodlights of a low wattage.

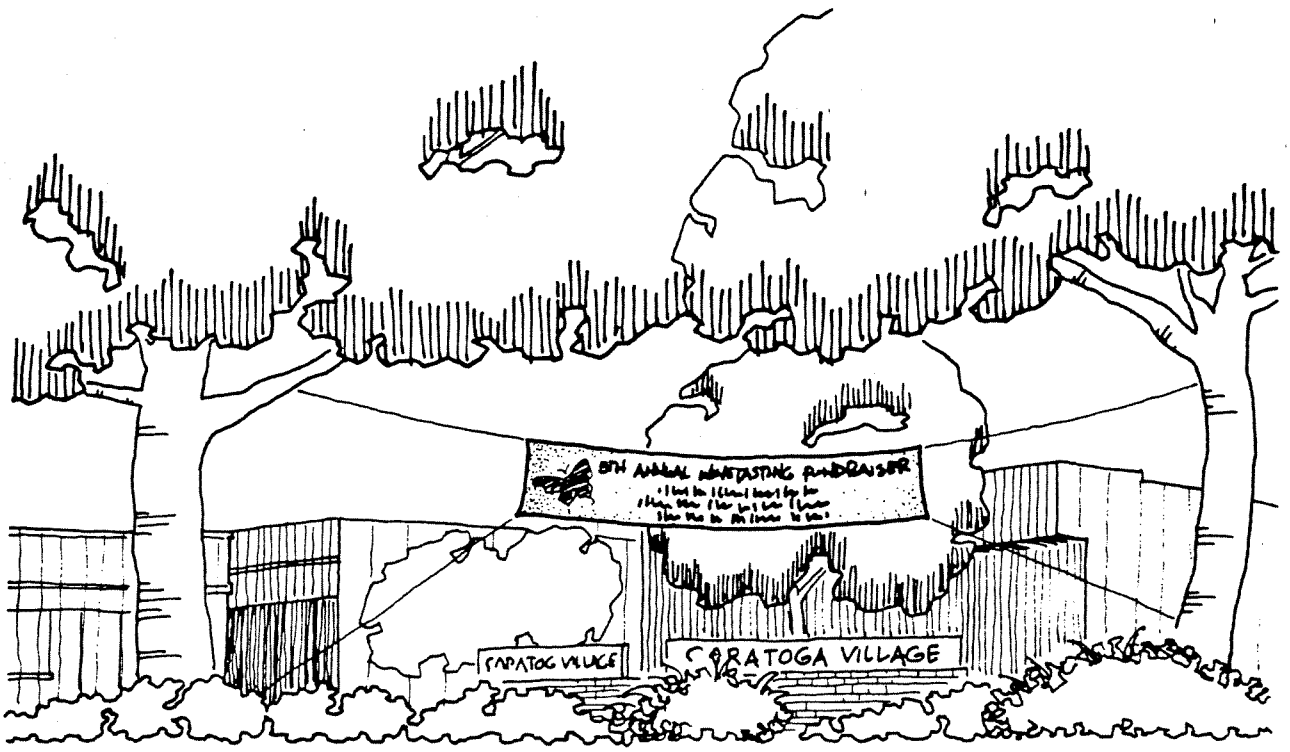
Banners and Murals

Banners and cloth signs can be an effective means of adding bright colors and a festive air. However, because these materials are vulnerable to the elements, they are permitted only for special, festive occasions, such as the Blossom Festival, and must be approved by the Planning Director.

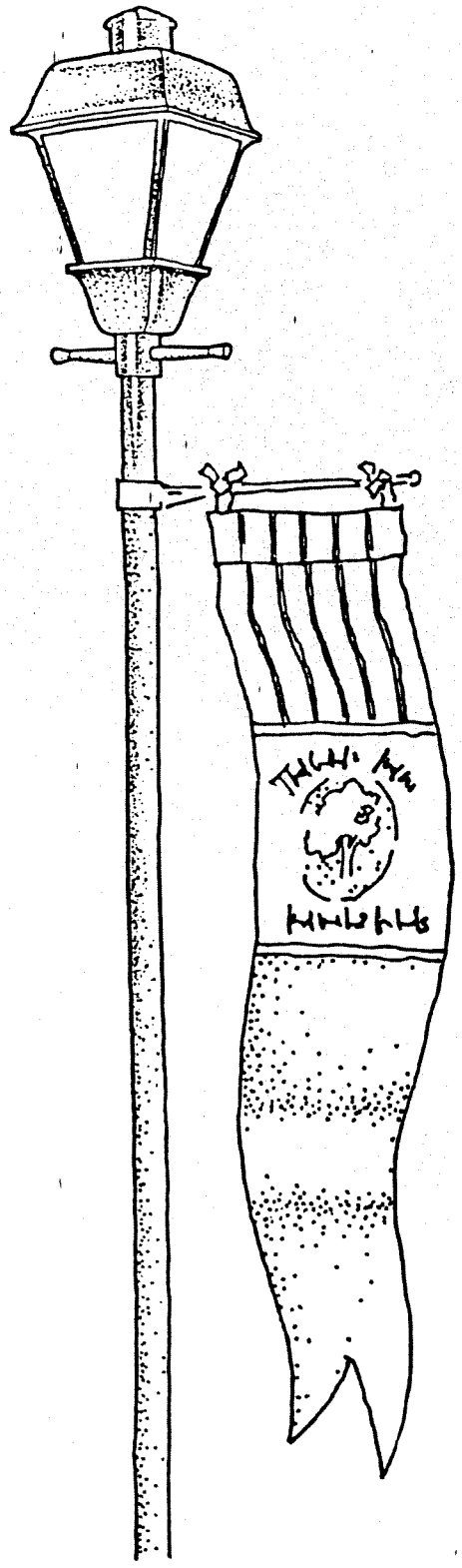
The banners at Blaney Plaza are regulated and installed by the City Recreation Department and the Saratoga Fire Department. Information about the banners is available from those agencies.

Murals and wall paintings as art work are appropriate only when they enhance the quality of the Village by depicting appropriate historic scenes or harmonize with existing architecture. Corporate or retail sales identities in murals are not permitted.

Murals should not be used to embellish stark walls where materials such as landscaping or trellises with climbing vines are more appropriate to achieve this result. All murals are subject to special review by the Planning Commission.



STREET LAMP BANNERS

The City has installed brackets near the top of the Village lamp poles to accommodate decorative banners. Street lamp banners may be used to advertise special events which are sponsored by the City.

The City sponsors events such as "Celebrate Saratoga" or Christmas greetings, which are for the benefit and enjoyment of the whole community. Advertizement of private events is not allowed on street lamp banners.