

Canfield Historic and Redevelopment Analysis

Historic Preservation Analysis

Background Information:

The City of Canfield has several historic and easily recognizable properties within the downtown core and Village Green area. These buildings are anchors within the community, service as visual landmarks and reminders to the public and visitors that the community has a long and prosperous history. Understanding that these architectural assets are a symbol of the communities past, and are work preserving, historic preservation strategies should be undertaken to preserve the outstanding elements within the community. As a first step in this process, an inspection and analysis must be performed to identify and clearly outline the unique elements of attributes within the Village Green area of Canfield. Outlined in this chapter are results from a visual and categorical research inspection about the Village Green area of Canfield.

Historic Architectural Assets:

The City of Canfield has several architectural assets that are distinctive and prominent within the downtown and Village Green area. While much of the Village Green and downtown core area has witnessed growth in many decades or construction era's a similar construction method or external appearance appears to have been utilized; allowing the municipality to retain the small town character. The Unique architectural elements within the City of Canfield can be summarized as the following:

- Primarily brick construction
- Colonial or English influenced
- Simple cornice and adornment details
- Small form factor of development

While these are the common themes among most of the historic buildings within town, many buildings throughout the downtown core area have been recently constructed and purposely built to match the existing town character. This style of imitation and/or mimicry denotes support for the unique architectural assets currently present within the community.



Visual Log of Architectural Styles:

The below architectural assets are outstanding examples of unique built environment elements. Visual documentation of their unique assets are provided for each building.

- Canfield WPA Memorial Building – The Canfield WPA Building is a simple, yet elegant buildings. The unique brick color (darker red than normal) is common among colonial era buildings. Windows and cornices are simple in nature. Ceiling and overall floor heights are uncommonly high for the time period.



- Old County Courthouse – The County Courthouse is an outstanding example of the colonial architecture that has been rehabilitated and renovated to meet current needs. The building core appears to be remarkably intact, yet there have been several additions added. Additions have been constructed of a similar fashion, yet do not have the same architectural styles in the brickwork, cornices, roof slope/pitch or other elements.





- Canfield united Methodist Church – The church is constructed in an “English Influenced” style, integrating stone and brock. The overall building has been built with intricate stone corners, distinct brick cornices, higher pitched slopes and gracious arched at opening and windows. The church building has witnessed numerous additions over the years, yet each has made an attempt to closely match the unique architectural elements of the original building construction method.



- Mahoning Dispatch Building – This old newspaper headquarters is an outstanding example of wood construction from the colonial era. The architectural elements include balcony railing, display windows, detailed woodwork and a unique cellar entry.



Strengths of Architectural elements

The strength that all buildings, and specifically historically significant buildings, within the downtown core is that they share a similar style or appearance among the street building facewall. Many buildings within the downtown core area have attempted to recreate or mimic the colonial style of building attributes. This overall feel and atmosphere helps personify the uniqueness of the truly historic structures within the downtown.

Weaknesses of Architectural Elements

There is a lack of cohesive character between the majority of buildings within the downtown of Canfield. The common architectural elements among buildings support the overall look and feel of “colonial era” construction. While a common theme can be noted, each of the “replica” building lacks the detail of construction, sizing/massing, and overall quality of design to support the

Recommendations for Preservation & Personification of Canfield

In order for the City of Canfield to preserve their unique architectural elements and personify the overall character through the entirety of the Village Green, it is recommended to:

1. Create a unifying set of architectural elements for facades and new construction – Working with the citizens, business owners and landlords it is recommended to prepare a set of façade or buildings

guidelines for the Village Green area. These guidelines should be a collective vision for the downtown, preparing a common character based on existing buildings and allowing for new construction.

2. Prepare an inventory of unique elements for buildings on the national register – A detailed analysis and inventory should be completed of the buildings within the Village Green that are on the national register. This will allow the community to better understand what elements are unique, what period/era they are from and potentially how to incorporate them into new construction as a unifying element.
3. Prepare a “Historic Canfield” walking tour – Helping the public and visitors understand the unique architectural elements within Canfield should be a priority. To help with this it is recommended to create and implement a downtown walking tour to highlight the unique architectural elements and historic locations within the downtown and Village Green.
4. Implement building and design standards for new construction – Implementing the newly created guidelines can be challenging in a small town. It is recommended that a new zoning overlay district be created to support the potential implementation of the façade/design guidelines. This overlay district could also support potential use of form based code in the future.

Historic Signage

Signage within the downtown core and Main Street corridors of Canfield varies greatly in size, style and message. Much of the Village Green area has adopted similar styles of signage, focusing on simple, effective and building mounted signage. Much of the signage within the community does not meet what would be considered historic guidelines or historic signage styles, yet have been adapted to meet the desire to attract and promote to vehicular traffic.

With a lack of historic or similar styles of signage, the community does not have a strong sample of signage to emulate or replicate that represents the true community character.

Visual Log of Signage:

The below signage styles are examples of the signage currently present within the downtown and Village Green of Canfield. Visual documentation of these signage styles is broken down by style:

Ground Mounted Signage – Ground mounted signage is a common style of signage within the City of Canfield. These signs often have multiple tenants or space renters on the sign. The signs are in a variety of conditions from well-kept to poor and even empty.



Aerial signs – Aerial signage is the primary signage created in the mid 1900's with the expansion of vehicles and automobile centric main streets. These signs are prevalent within the Village green area. The signs present range in height from 3' above the ground to 20+ feet above the ground. Some are internally light and some are stationary or static signage. This specific style of signage should be discouraged wherever possible.

Ground mounted blade signage – Ground mounted blade signage is utilized in challenging locations such as multi-faceted frontage buildings. This is evident in only a few buildings within Canfield. While this style of signage is not negatively detracting from the overall community corridor or character, placement of the signage on a free standing post does lessen the impact.



Building mounted signage - Building mounted signage is the most common style of signage within a downtown corridor. While this style of signage is evident in several businesses/buildings within the downtown, the majority of these signs are properly sized, located and utilized.



Window Signage – Window signage is infrequently utilized. This is common in communities where retail or recessed windows are not common. Canfield has limited amounts of business signage in these locations due to limited amounts of businesses with windows located in appropriate retail locations. The majority of window

mounted signage within Canfield is for business identification or location and creates minimal intrusion into the user experience.



Internally illuminated signage – Internally illuminated signage within the Village Green is minimal, yet located at some of the most impactful locations. These signs are currently being utilized at retail locations and of dining establishments. Internally illuminated signage is currently used for building mounted signage as well as ground mounted signage. These signs should be discouraged wherever possible as they can become an annoyance to neighboring or adjacent properties and land uses.

Strengths of signage:

Signage within the Village Green area is very subdued and understated, keeping our much of what would be considered obnoxious or intrusive. Signage guidelines or regulations appear to allow for ample flexibility within the style, location and material make-up of the signage.

Weaknesses of signage

Currently the signage within the Village Green does not have a consistent method of message delivery. The signage is not currently being displayed for pedestrian or bicycle users, and is not appropriately sized or scaled for vehicular users. By having a singular vision or theme of simple signage, the community is currently not capitalizing on the marketing opportunities present within the corridors.

Recommendations for Signage of Canfield

In order for the City of Canfield to help unify signage and create advertising that is useful for all methods of transportation and all users, it is recommended to:

1. Prepare a comprehensive set of signage guidelines for all signage – Preparing a comprehensive set of guidelines would allow the community to agree upon the style, look, feel and construction of signage for the Village Green area. These guidelines should be stringent enough to create signage that is commonly similar, yet flexible enough to allow for personalization. Sample signage recommendations are provided in the façade guidelines.
2. Create a signage update mini-grant program – In an effort to help businesses or property owners comply with new business signage, it is important to financially incentivize them. Creating a 50/50 match mini-grant program for updating signage will help local businesses offset the cost of new sign installation.
3. Implement building mounted blade style signage – Blade mounted signage is one of the few styles of signage that is appropriate for both pedestrian and vehicular traffic. Contrary to popular belief large building mounted signage is not the easiest for view while driving road. A simple blade sign will provide more visibility, more uniformity while allowing for creativity and within the downtown.



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Infill and Adaptive

Background Information:

The City of Canfield currently has many underutilized parcels within the Village Green area that are not providing buildings or site improvements adjacent to the sidewalk or roadway. These spaces are prime for additional development and/or expansion of businesses. By creating buildings in these spaces the community will be able to provide a more congruent, uniform and attractive downtown corridor. Equally important in both the short and long term future is to promote adaptive re-use of the current building within the community. While not many buildings are currently of outstanding architectural character, it is more sustainable and responsible to further utilize existing facilities (potentially expanding) before tearing down buildings for new establishments. Through a process of adaptive re-use and infill development the community can witness a more vibrant and attractive downtown corridor.

Infill Analysis