APPENDIX IV: COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR DESIGN GUIDELINES

In this Appendix we will present design guidelines for the Commercial Corridor Districts (outlined in red in the plan at right). Guidelines for the Downtown District (outlined in green) are in Appendix III. Site standards are included with each district.

This plan shows the Downtown District (in green) and the Commercial District in red. There are other areas to the east and west along Third Street in Pembroke that could also have the Commercial District designation is desired.

1.0 Allowed Uses

As is typical of this type of street, there is a wide range of existing and possible future building types, including large office/commercial buildings such as banks, fast food restaurants, service businesses, gas stations, strip commercial centers, churches, city buildings, and the occasional single family houses.

Since there is typically a very wide range of buildings types and uses along commercial corridors, the purpose of these guidelines is to unify the street with an attractive streetscape and create site and buildings design guidelines that reinforce an attractive, ordered image for the Town.

These corridors are primarily vehicular, so sidewalks need not be elaborate or wide; however, ***along Third a continuous sidewalk should be required, and elsewhere it should be a goal***, so that pedestrians and bicycles can use these corridors safely.

2.0 Site Design Guidelines

1. **Building setbacks** for most uses should be from 5-15' minimum and may be more depending on the size and use of the proposed building, and also depending on the space available on the site. If the use is a commercial center or single large building, a landscaped setback of 10-20' is required. If one bay of parking is permitted by exception in the front of the building, an appropriate setback for parking and screening would be about 80'.

2. **Off-street parking.** Parking shall be located to the sides and rear of buildings if possible. For large buildings, a single bay of parking and drop-off area may be permitted by exception and with adequate landscaping and screening. In no case will parking without screening be allowed when parking occurs in the front of buildings. Access to parking may be from the front,

This view looking west on Third Street near Pine Street is unfortunately typical of many sections of the commercial corridors near downtown.

This before photo and after sketch of Pikesville, MD illustrate how public improvements and design guidelines can improve a commercial area. The sketch demonstrates how the removal of utility poles and the addition of trees, screen walls and appropriate signage could improve the appearance, and the prospects, of this or any struggling commercial area.

side streets, or from the rear (see below for information on driveways). If practical, parking should be shared. Parking for small properties should be screened from public streets and sidewalks on all sides with a 30-36" hedge or masonry wall, with approved landscaping, or a combination of the two. Larger properties can use the 30-36" wall or hedge, a taller fence of masonry and metal pickets, or a combination of walls and landscaping. In no cases should parking be screened from the street with solid materials taller than 36" (except deciduous trees) because of the need for security and surveillance. Existing parking in front of buildings should be removed if possible. If this is not possible, a hedge or wall as defined above should be installed. Existing parking to the side of buildings should be appropriately screened and landscaped. If two properties share parking, there is no need for setbacks at the adjoining property lines. Parking should be set back a minimum of 5' from all property lines, and 10' if the property abuts a residential use. Lighting must be approved by the reviewing agency. Parking areas must be well lit for nighttime pedestrian and vehicular security. Parking areas must be paved with asphalt or concrete or other materials by exception. Gravel, grass or packed soil are prohibited.

3. ***Service areas.*** Service areas must be screened from public view, including loading areas, trash receptacles, mechanical equipment and dumpsters. In high-density areas, dumpsters should be consolidated to serve several businesses. Enclosures near buildings should be of similar materials, and must be high enough to completely block views from street level. Enclosures further from buildings should be of approved masonry or wood fencing. Service areas must be paved with concrete or asphalt or other materials by exception.

4. ***Storage areas.*** Areas used to store vehicles, equipment, or materials must be screened with a masonry wall, hedge or fence with landscaping of sufficient height and density to block views from street level. Screening with chain link in any form is unacceptable.

5. ***Pedestrian access.*** There must be direct pedestrian access from public sidewalks to buildings. In large parking areas, design consideration should be given to the provision of crosswalks, sidewalks, and other elements to ensure pedestrian safety.

6. ***Rear entries.*** Attractive rear entries to businesses are encouraged. For large buildings with parking in the rear, the rear entrance may be the main entrance, but a floor-through lobby to the front is recommended.

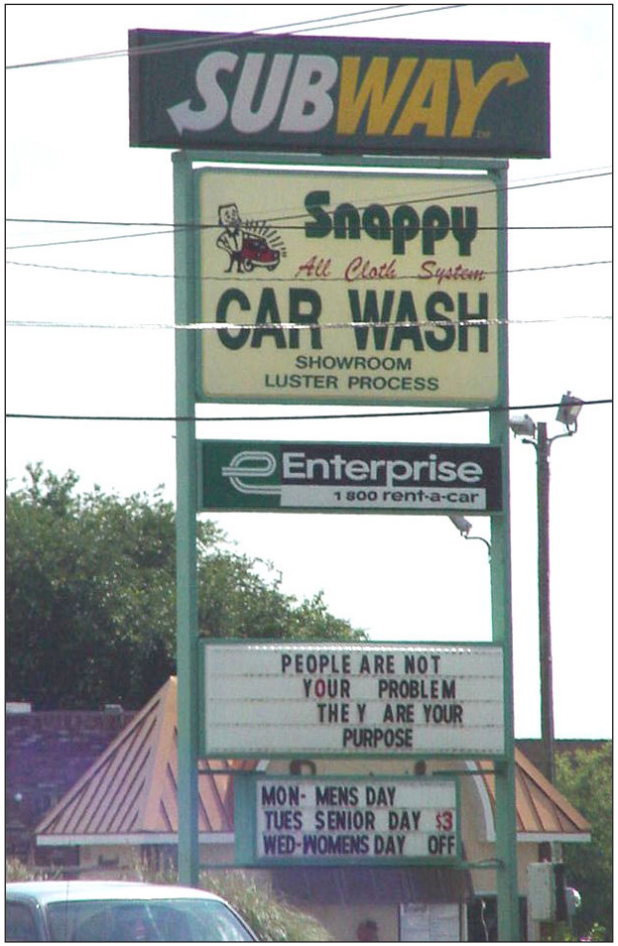
7. ***Driveways.*** Wherever possible, driveways should be consolidated within a property or combined to provide access to two or more adjacent properties. Driveways from the main thoroughfares are limited to one if the frontage is less than 100', or two if more than 100'; three will be permitted only by exception. Driveway width should not exceed 30' for two-way traffic, 20' for one way traffic. Driveways should not exceed one per 100' of frontage on any side except where there is frontage on one side only, when two driveways will be permitted. Driveways must be paved with concrete, or other materials by exception.

8. ***"Drive-Through" businesses*** should be designed with drive-in structures on the side or rear of the building. Businesses that provide drive-through service as part of their services (e.g. restaurants, banks and pharmacies) are allowed, but drive-through windows for all businesses should be located to the rear of the buildings or to the side with screening. Drive-through windows are not allowed between the building and the street. Access and egress should be configured to minimize disruption of pedestrian movement.

9. ***Adjacent residential uses.*** Where commercial uses abut residential areas, a 10' setback from parking or structures to property lines is required, and a 6' masonry or approved wooden fence must be installed. Where the parking area to be screened is two bays or more in size, the planting of trees along the setback is also required to provide more effective screening of residential properties.

10. **Signage.** Signage in this area will depend on use. For existing commercial uses, consolidation and sharing of signage as well as parking is recommended for multi-tenant properties. "System" signs with a double support system and a place for individually mounted signs of similar size and materials are preferred to individual signs. For existing buildings set back behind parking and for new and existing larger commercial uses, a ground mounted monument-type sign or a pylon-mounted sign is recommended. The scale of such signs will vary depending on the size of the use. Because of the recommendations for street trees on commercial corridors, monument-type signs will be more visible than pole-mounted signs in the future.

Owners of existing signs in this district are encouraged to replace nonconforming signs with new signs. Existing signs that do not conform must be removed when any change in ownership or use of the property takes place.



Although this sign is a "system" sign, it still presents an unattractive image because of differing styles, poor spacing of signs, and the two different-size areas for movable lettering right next to each other. The monument-type sign shown at right projects a much better image.

11. **Fencing and screening materials.**

Recommended fencing and screening materials:

- *Brick*
- *Split face block finished with stone or masonry caps and/or bands*
- *Double staggered row of approved hedge material*
- *Landscaped beds acting as screens with approval and appropriate ongoing maintenance*
- *Metal pickets in dark colors with or without masonry piers or foundation walls (for perimeter and parking areas only, not storage areas). If used to screen parking, landscaping materials 30-36" high should*

be planted in front of or behind the fence to screen the lower portion of parked vehicles
- *Approved wooden privacy fencing (in the rear of properties only)*
- *Poured concrete or light stucco finish block*
- *Prefabricated wooden fencing may be used only with review and approval on the side and rear of properties to screen parking from adjacent uses.*

Prohibited fencing and screening materials:
- *Chain link (except temporary installations at construction sites or where not visible from the street)*
- *Split rail, stockade, wood picket or other suburban/rural styles of fencing*
- *Unfinished concrete block*

12. **Equipment and Technology.** Mechanical equipment should be located on the roof or at the rear of buildings if ground-mounted equipment is used. Careful selection of rooftop equipment locations will allow the roof parapet, roof, or roof forms to serve as an effective screen.

    Many companies utilize satellite dishes for business purposes. Television antennae, satellite dishes and similar equipment shall be as small as feasible and located so as not to be visible from the street.

3.0 Corridor Architectural Guidelines

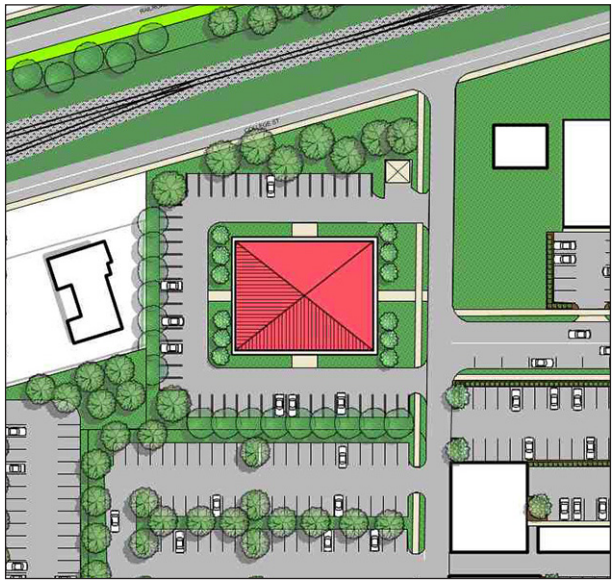
This district, to succeed, must accommodate both large and small buildings, larger developments and single owners. Because of the range of types of uses, some similarity in materials and site guidelines can help to unify these corridors. Two sets of guidelines are presented, one for large uses, and one for "infill" smaller uses.

There are already quite a few existing larger-scale buildings to the east the Downtown District. Examples include the Church on the north side of Third near the park and Breece Street, a strip center to the west of the church, and the Southern States building. There are also smaller-scale commercial uses along Third Street including a drive-through restaurants and small office and service uses. Examples of ways that some of the underutilized sites along this corridor could be redeveloped are discussed in Chapter 4.0 of this report.

3.1 Guidelines for Large Buildings

1. **Placement of Structures.** New structures should be located in compliance with the Site Design Guidelines in this section 2.0. Additionally, the principal façade(s) of such buildings should be oriented to face the adjacent street(s). Building entrances should be prominent elements on these facades.

   Although it is not likely that much medium-density housing will be built along Third, it could be built along College, similar to the housing complex north of Railroad Street close to this district (one example at top right). Such buildings in groups may have private open space in interior courtyards, which may be but is not required to be visible from the street. Whether it is visible may depend on use (e.g. if the area had a pool, this would be screened from view). If the open space includes a setback with landscaping, this should be visible from the street but may be fenced with a metal picket fence (see photo of this type of landscaping on next page).



This plan detail shows\appropriate site planning for a residential development, including building setback, parking on the sides and rear, parking screening from adjacent properties, and access to the building from the front and sides.

2. **Massing and Height.** Heights allowed are specified in the zoning ordinance. When designing taller buildings that will be sited near buildings of any height that will remain because of their architectural significance or use, care should be taken to ensure that the taller buildings do not overwhelm the shorter buildings. This can be accomplished by such architectural design elements as setbacks of the taller portion of the building and articulation and massing that allows light to reach surrounding buildings and the street. This guideline is not meant to apply to new buildings constructed next to existing buildings that are unlikely to remain in the long term.

This apartment complex on Railroad Street near the UNC-P campus is a good example of attractive larger buildings with good site planning and landscaping.

3. **Materials.** Recommended materials include:

Construction Materials:
- Brick in approved range of colors (for the predominant exterior material). Brick used in new construction shall not be painted
- Stone, cast stone or architectural concrete
- Wood on upper stories of residential structures

Trim or accent materials:
- Split-face concrete masonry
- Ceramic tile in appropriate colors
- Metal framing (aluminum glass framing systems or curtain wall systems)
- Cast or wrought iron
- Smooth textured stucco
- Sheet metal (parapet wall copings, etc.)
- Fabricated millwork (Fiberglass or structural foam)
- Stone veneer

Glazing Materials:
- Clear glass, glass block
- Textured, faceted, or stained glass as an accent

Roofing Materials:
- Standing-seam metal roofs
- Slate or synthetic slate
- Composition shingles (Standard 3-tab shingles and shingles that are imitations of wood shingles or shakes are inappropriate. Heavy weight shingles are preferred
- Membrane roofing at low-slope areas (built-up roofing, single-ply roofing, etc.)

Prohibited materials include:
- "Mirrored" or opaque glass
- Colored glass
- Wood shakes or shingles
- Heavily textured stucco
- Imitation stone texturing (formstone)
- Clapboard sidings, whether wood or alternative materials, except in the upper stories of medium-density housing
- Sheet metal awnings or canopies
- Backlit canopies or awnings
- Plastic awnings

4. **Building Scale and Proportion.** In order to better relate to the pedestrian, the ground floor of buildings two stories or more should be articulated differently from the stories above. This can be accomplished by the use of a different material, by the addition of more detail in the ground floor wall surface, by varying the color or pattern of the material, or by combinations of these techniques. The best example include historic commercial buildings where ground floor windows and articulation provide interest at the sidewalk level.

When a significant commercial or office building is being planned, the design can be less constrained than one that occurs in an historic commercial setting. Modern structures can be appropriate, but quality traditional materials are required to create a transition from the downtown to outlying areas, and to form a gateway from outlying areas to the downtown. Transparency at the entrance or lobby area is also very important in order to welcome the public.

5. **Building Elements.** The various components used in the composition of a building design greatly affect the success of a design and its compatibility with its context. The following descriptions provide guidance for various components that may be used in larger buildings:

Wall Surfaces:
Walls shall be predominately constructed of masonry materials. Scale and interest can be introduced through the use of contrasting materials or the introduction of features such as horizontal bands. Openings (such as windows) can be emphasized through the use of lintels and sills of contrasting materials or of different masonry coursing. Upper stories of medium-density residential buildings can utilize wood and siding to introduce a more "domestic" quality to the architecture.

Windows:
Windows may be constructed of wood, wood clad in prefinished metal, or from aluminum or other materials appropriate to the use.

Shutters:
Shutters should not be used on commercial or other large scale buildings, except medium density residential with review and approval.

Roofs/Cornices:
Because large-scale commercial buildings will be among the larger buildings in the downtown area, they will naturally be more visually prominent. The roofs or roof forms of such prominent structures should act as a means of transitioning the building against the sky. Sloping roofs, either gabled or hipped, are encouraged. The cornice, where the building wall meets the roof, presents an opportunity for introducing detail and a material or color contrast that can enliven the building composition. Flat roofs are not encouraged but may be allowed with review and approval.

Equipment and Technology:
Modern building systems and technological conveniences make everyday life and work easier and more pleasant. However, the equipment that makes these conveniences possible can create substantial visual clutter. Mechanical equipment should be located at the rear of buildings in well-screened enclosures.

Many companies utilize satellite dishes for business purposes. Television antennae, satellite dishes and similar equipment should be as small as feasible and located so as not to be visible from the street.

3.2 Guidelines for Small Buildings

The architecture of new smaller structures within the Commercial Corridor District should form a graceful transition from the historic downtown to the outlying areas. New construction should be "traditional" in character, while reflecting the time period of its creation. Consistency in the use of materials and details can help define a sense of place.

1. **Placement of Structures.** New or replacement smaller structures should be set back from the right of way about 5-20', with the intermediate space used for wider sidewalks or landscaping with walks to the door, depending on the use. The goal in this district should still be to continue the pattern of building facades enclosing the pedestrian space, but the space will be a little more generous and green in this zone. Buildings should be constructed to fill at least one third to one half the property frontage, with parking to the side and rear. There should always be direct access to the building from the sidewalk.

2. **Massing and Height.** New smaller-scale buildings would normally be one or two stories. If the buildings are to be used for retail or restaurants, the guidelines in the Downtown District regarding percentage of transparency will apply (at least 60% on the first level, at least 26% on the upper levels). If the buildings are to be used for office or residential, only 26% on each level is required, but welcoming entries and lobbies with a larger percentage of transparency are encouraged.

3. **Materials.** Recommended materials include:

Construction Materials:
- *Brick in approved range of colors (for the predominant exterior material). Brick used in new construction shall not be painted.*
- *Stone, cast stone or architectural concrete*
- *Split-face block used in conjunction with brick*
- Light stucco finish
- Wood for smaller-scale townhouses and condos if zoning allows.

Trim or accent materials:
- *Ceramic tile in appropriate colors*
- *Wood (e.g. accent material such as panelled storefronts and entries)*
- *Metal framing (Note: aluminum storefront framing systems must be designed with careful consideration of proper proportions of the framing members in order to be successful)*
- *Cast or wrought iron*
- *Sheet metal (parapet wall copings, etc.)*
- *Fabricated millwork (Fiberglass or structural foam)*

Glazing Materials:
- *Clear glass, block*
- *Textured, faceted or stained glass as an accent.*

Roofing Materials:
- Standing-seam metal roofs
- Slate or synthetic slate
- Composition shingles (Standard 3-tab shingles and shingles that are imitations of wood shingles or shakes are inappropriate. Heavy weight shingles such as "Slateline" by GAF, "Grand Manor" or "Carriage House" by Certainteed are appropriate.)
- Membrane roofing at low-slope areas (built-up roofing, single-ply roofing, etc.)

Awnings:
- Fabric awnings

Prohibited materials include:
- "Mirrored" or opaque glass
- Colored glass
- Wood shakes or shingles
- Heavily textured stucco
- Imitation stone texturing (formstone)
- Clapboard sidings, whether wood or alternative materials at the ground level or except with review and approval
- Metal Awnings or canopies
- Backlit canopies or awnings
- Plastic awnings

4. **Building Scale and Proportion.** In general, building facades should have windows that have a vertical emphasis, that is, windows that are taller than they are wide (except storefronts, see below). Windows should be organized into regularly spaced patterns within the wall surface.

5. **Building Elements**. The various components used in the composition of a building design greatly affect the success of a design and its compatibility with its context. The following descriptions provide guidance for various components used in retail/commercial structures.

Windows:
Acceptable windows for this district would be single-hung or double-hung (except storefronts, see next section). Windows should be taller than they are wide. A wide variety of contemporary window types constructed from a range of materials can be used to successfully interpret this tradition. Additional configurations such as casement sash or fixed windows may be acceptable with review. Windows may have further dividing members, but such divisions shall be either "true divided light" construction or permanent exterior grilles. Interior grilles alone or grilles set between the panes of double glazing are not acceptable. Windows may be constructed of wood, clad in vinyl or prefinished metal, or from aluminum or other appropriate metals.

Storefronts/Building Fronts on Retail Buildings Only:
On commercial/retail buildings, the first floor storefront should be composed of large expanses of glazed openings (60% or more). These allow for the display of merchandise in retail uses, but are also appropriate for other uses such as restaurants or offices. Features such as transoms allow for natural light to penetrate deeply into the building. The use of awnings can shade these large glass areas and allow for the introduction of appropriate colors to enliven the pedestrian experience. Metal framing for storefront glazing should be a minimum of 2" wide.

These "before" and "after views of the same building illustrate that it is possible for even a plain single-story building to be attractive and to be articulated to break up a long facade. This might apply to "facelifts" for existing strip commercial uses.

Doors:
A major factor in the creation of a compatible building design is consistency. It is imperative that the doors used on commercial structures follow the traditional format for "commercial" doors. The use of door configurations more typically found on residential structures such as paneled doors or "crossbuck" doors is not appropriate. If aluminum storefront doors are used, only the "wide stile" type of door is appropriate. "Narrow" or "medium " stile aluminum doors should not be used. Townhouses will follow guidelines for residential buildings, and apartments or condos will follow either large or small building guidelines depending on their size and scale.

Shutters:
Shutters can provide emphasis to the upper stories of a building and can introduce elements of color to a building facade. However, there are some basic requirements for shutters to be appropriately installed. The size and shape of shutters should correspond to the size and shape of the window opening. Shutters can be mounted to operate, or if mounted in a fixed position, should be placed immediately adjacent to the window jamb. Wood and synthetic millwork are acceptable materials for shutters.

Awnings:
Awnings are an excellent way to introduce color and texture into the commercial street/ building environment. Fabric awnings are recommended, and a range of acceptable colors should be agreed upon. Backlit or plastic awnings are not permitted.

6. **Equipment and Technology**

Mechanical equipment should be located on the roof or at the rear of buildings if ground-mounted equipment is used. Careful selection of rooftop equipment locations will allow the roof parapet, roof, or roof forms to serve as an effective screen

Many buildings require satellite dishes for business or entertainment purposes. Television antennae, satellite dishes and similar equipment should be as small as feasible and located so as not to be visible from the street.

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