

# Appendix D

## RESIDENTIAL INFILL AND REDEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Chester and Stevensville's residential neighborhoods, business districts, and downtown all contribute significantly to the communities' character, identity, and high quality of life. The following design and development guidelines are intended to encourage preservation and enhancement of these areas and to promote development that is consistent with adopted goals and objectives from the Chester and Stevensville Community Plan.

The following design and development guidelines are advisory for permitted uses, but may also be used for those uses requiring discretionary review to encourage the highest level of design quality while at the same time providing the flexibility necessary to encourage creativity and innovation on the part of developers and designers.

These guidelines do not constitute regulation. They apply to infill and redevelopment of residential sites, and like the commercial guidelines, they emphasize appropriate design linkages and context sensitivity in site planning and building design. They supplement the design standards found in Chapter 18 of the County Code (excerpts from the Code appear in *italics*). Persons proposing residential development in Chester and Stevensville are advised to consult these guidelines and incorporate them in development plans.

## **PURPOSE**

The design guidelines presented below are primarily intended to ensure quality infill development and quality redevelopment of existing residential and commercial structures. Both Chester and Stevensville contain a number of mature neighborhoods, including residential neighborhoods with limited opportunity for new single-family construction. Compatibility with nearby residences in these areas is of considerable importance, therefore the purpose of these guidelines are:

1. To establish design guidelines for residential in-fill and redevelopment.
2. To establish design principles that result in new single family detached in-fill housing and rebuilds that are more sensitive to existing housing and neighborhoods.
3. To suggest a range of possible solutions with the goal of achieving a high standard of design.

The proposed development should not be restricted to the confines of traditional architecture. Opportunities for contemporary design should not be precluded. The guidelines are intended to stimulate the imagination of designers rather than to limit development flexibility or to dictate actual design solutions.

## **STREETSCAPE/NEIGHBORHOOD**

Infill and redevelopment in existing neighborhoods should incorporate distinctive architectural characteristics of surrounding development. For example, complementary window and door detailing, decoration, architectural styles, materials, roof style and pitch, finished-floor height, porches and bay windows. New development should also continue the relationships of the surrounding neighborhood. Examples of common patterns that should be continued include entries facing the street, roof pitches, balconies, and front porches.

In assessing the fit of an infill dwelling, the neighborhood must be considered at two levels:

The immediate context, i.e., how the building relates to and impacts upon adjacent buildings or buildings in the immediate vicinity.

The broader context, i.e., how the building relates to the visual character and scale of the neighborhood created by the collection of structures on both sides of the street in which the building is situated.

The former refers to how the design of the new building is influenced by the adjacent structures. The latter refers to what effects the new building may have on the adjacent structures.

In some neighborhoods visual character is clearly defined and there is little flexibility to do something different and contrary to existing patterns. However, in Chester and Stevensville there is wide variety and richness in visual character of the various neighborhoods, often from one street to another. Thus, in many circumstances, the building designer will be presented with unique and unusual design opportunities. There will be some neighborhoods where major changes are taking place and/or where the existing streetscape has little visual cohesiveness. In these circumstances it may be appropriate for the designer not to harmonize with the existing structures but to set new standards.

Building patterns and rhythms, which define the visual character, should be respected. A street will develop a certain pattern or rhythm giving cohesiveness to the whole streetscape. A sudden change in this pattern can appear disruptive and visually upsetting. These patterns and rhythms are established by various design elements, which include:

Building height

Building form (bungalow, 2 story, split level, etc.)

Roof shape

Architectural massing

Finish materials and details

Landscaping

Generally new dwellings on infill lots should reinforce existing patterns, rhythms, and massing, respecting proportions and details and, if appropriate, incorporating some of these into the new design.

## ELEMENTS OF DESIGN

Designing in context means providing enough visual linkages between existing buildings and a proposed project so as to create a cohesive overall effect ( *Fundamentals of Urban Design*, Richard Hedman with Andrew Jaszewski, American Planning Association, 1984). These residential infill design guidelines examine five fundamental and related elements of design. They are intended to be used in an advisory capacity and as a supplement to the standards contained in the Zoning Ordinance. The five primary areas that the guidelines address are:

Siting, Location and Topography

Architectural Envelope

Openings

Texture and Details

Landscaping

The applicant should identify repeated forms, patterns and rhythms block face which can be repeated or complimented with new design elements. Side-by-side placement of very similar designs is discouraged. Photographs of the site and the surrounding houses, including the existing streetscape elements, e.g., sidewalks, street trees and landscaping, signage, etc, should accompany any application for infill residential projects.

## SITING, LOCATION AND TOPOGRAPHY

The topography and location of the proposed development site and the position of the building on that site guide the most basic principles about design. Building form should reflect the site topography. For instance, a split level or stepped house would fit a slope site. Placement of the structure should not require significant alteration of the existing topography and should avoid major reworking of existing grades.

When the proposed structure is to be located on a corner it must respond to and enhance the streetscape of the front and flanking street without adversely affecting the adjoining properties. The design should respond to the dual frontage of corner lots by incorporating the same level of interesting architectural treatment (windows, projections, ornamentation, etc.) in the flanking street design as in the frontage design.

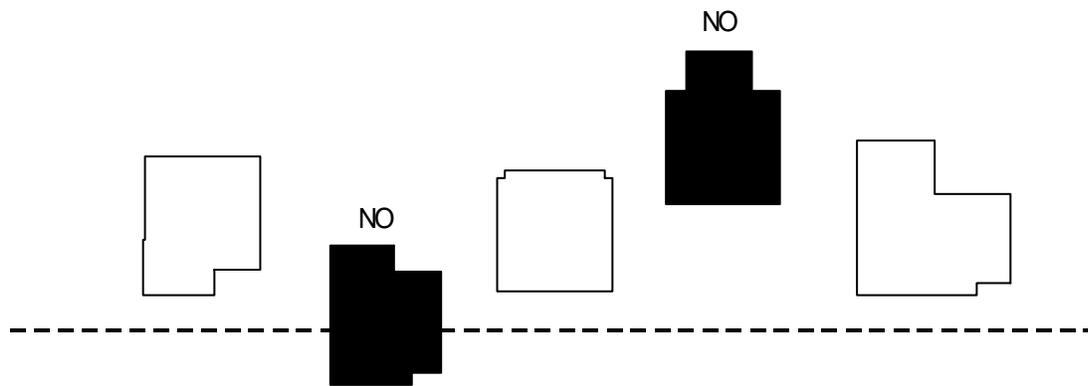


Dwellings on corner lots should take advantage of the dual frontage, make an architectural statement, and create interest in architecture and human activity on each street. Such a statement can be accomplished by providing wrap around porches, bay windows, turrets, varied exterior materials, roof features, hues, and articulation. Varied materials should be consistent with one another.

## Setbacks

Building setbacks are the distance between a structure's edges and the property lines. They create yard spaces for outdoor activity and landscaping. The pattern of street setbacks helps establish a rhythm to the streetscape and provides a transition between the public realm and the privacy of the house.

Single-family development in existing neighborhoods must be well integrated with existing dwelling units in the surrounding area. Site setbacks for infill or rebuilt units should generally equal the average of setbacks on both sides of the street. In cases where averaging is applied, the new building may be averaged in a stepping pattern between the front yards of the adjacent structures, or the new building's entire frontage may be built on the average setback line.



### Front

Front setbacks vary from neighborhood to neighborhood, and established streetscape patterns may differ from setback requirements of the zoning district. Unless handled carefully, a setback that varies significantly from the established pattern may be disruptive to the streetscape.

The extension of architectural elements (such as bay windows, chimneys, and fireplaces) into the front yard may add welcome variety to street facades.

### Side

Relaxation of side yard requirements may be appropriate in some instances to facilitate interesting and innovative design solutions, provided that the encroachment into the setback does not adversely affect the privacy, sunlight or views of the adjacent property, nor restrain the potential of the adjacent property for future development.

These architectural elements and treatments (such as bay windows, chimney elements, indentations, and fireplaces) which project into the side yard should be setback from the front facade to lessen the impact on streetscape.

Where a neighboring structure is very close to the property line a larger minimum setback may be warranted.

## Rear

Neighboring properties may have much greater rear yard setbacks than those of a proposed new dwelling unit. Where such a house projects into the rear yard beyond the established pattern of existing structures, privacy, access to sunlight and views are important design considerations.

To reduce overshadowing of neighboring properties, the proposed dwelling unit can be stepped back in design, with single story portions closer to the property line and two story portions confined to the central part of the plan.

Above grade balconies, decks and windows should be carefully placed and may be oriented to face away from neighboring yards to respect the neighbors' wish for privacy. The use of landscaping and fencing may increase the visual separation between the residences and enhance the streetscape, however, care should be taken to consult with immediate neighbors as some may welcome a degree of "social encroachment" if it contributes to neighborhood security. As well, inappropriate landscaping may disrupt views and sunlight.

## **Parking**

Parking should be not sited in the front yard, reserving this area primarily as open space. Front drives can function as visitor parking. Parking should be placed to the rear of buildings where feasible with access from alleys, if they are provided. Alternatively, parking may be accessible from the front and located in the rear of the site, to the side, or in front, provided it is adequately setback from the principal entry.

### Front Loaded Parking

Front loaded garages should conform to the following development guidelines:

Upper level dormers should be used to de-emphasize the garage.

Porches or façades should protrude at least five (5) feet in front of garage doors.

Garage openings, trims, and color should de-emphasize the role of the visual impact of the garage in relation to the building as a whole.

### Rear Loaded Parking

Rear loaded garages should conform to the following development guideline:

Detached garages located behind the principal structure but accessible from the street should be considered accessory structures and should be consistent with the architecture and design of the principal structure.

Consistency of design includes use of the same or compatible siding, roofing, trim, and colors.

## Side Loaded Parking

Side loaded garages with parking on the side should conform to the following development guidelines:

Shared driveways are encouraged when two lots with parking located on the side are adjacent to one another.

Windows, doors, and roof treatments of the garage-facing street should incorporate architectural detail expressive of a residence.



Traditional linear driveways are encouraged. To preserve the pedestrian friendliness that exists in many of the existing single-family neighborhoods and to minimize the amount of land devoted to parking, access and impervious surfaces, U-shaped driveways should be prohibited.

Driveways on corner lots should be placed as far as possible from the intersection.

When a front drive or parking in the front setback is provided additional landscaping and screening should be provided to soften the visual impact. For instance, a low hedge or shrub bed might be located between the neighboring property and the parking pad or a vine-covered trellis may define the boundary between the pad and side yard access to the rear. The intent is to make the pad an integral part of the landscaping - not an afterthought poured on the front yard. The house may be shaped to provide partial screening of the parking pad (such as an öLö).

To reduce surface runoff and increase green space, property owners should consider a permeable alternative to pavement, e.g., ögrasscreteö, tire strips or other permeable paving materials and solutions.

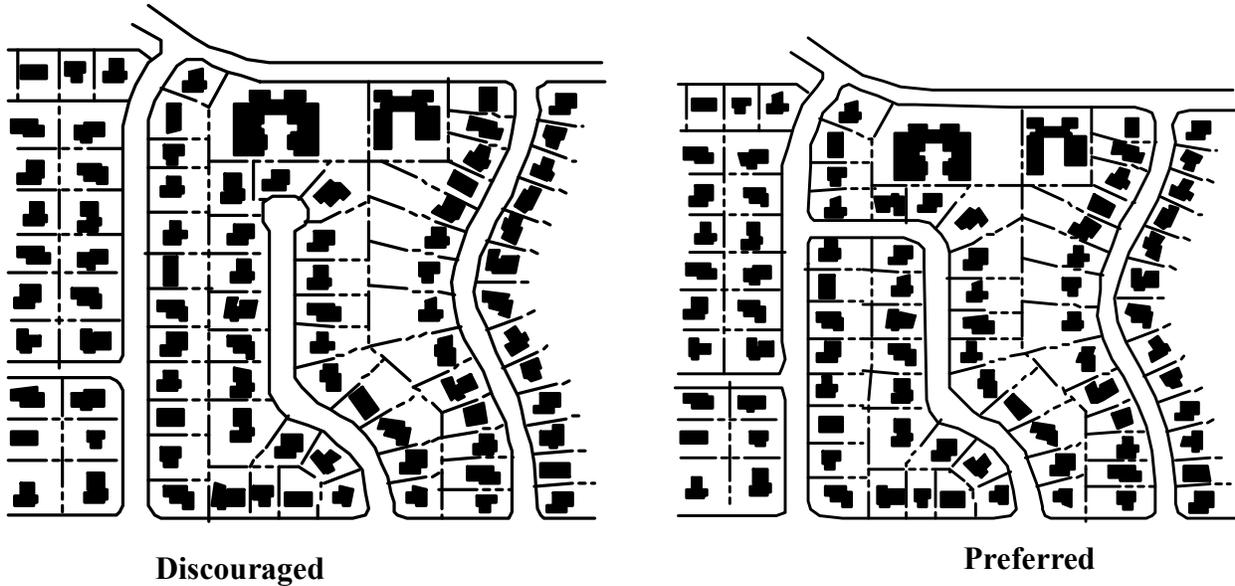
## **Street Connections**

The design of infill development should ensure that new streets provided for infill developments that are compatible with the established street pattern and support the expansion of the overall grid street system. This may be accomplished by evaluating future street connections prior to submitting a preliminary plat.

To the maximum extent practicable, infill projects should provide a complete connection through the site to tie into existing streets. Future expansions of existing cul-de-sacs and other street extensions should be examined to avoid placing limitations on redevelopment options.

## Cul-de-sacs

The use of cul-de-sacs in place of complete through-street connections is strongly discouraged.



## Future Street Connections

Except as in cul-de-sacs above, dead end streets should not be permitted except in cases when the street is designed to connect with future streets on adjacent land.

## **Pedestrian Pathways**

Pedestrian connections from the front door of a dwelling to the sidewalk are encouraged and should have a minimum width of three feet. Residents are required to maintain the sidewalks in front of their property.

New public sidewalk surface material in the residential areas should reinforce the context of each neighborhood.

## **Lot Coverage**

In general, the lot coverage for residential rebuilds should not exceed 30 percent of the lot. However, established lot coverage patterns in the adjacent area should dictate appropriate coverage ratios for new single-family development.

## **Impervious Surfaces**

All land not covered by structures, driveways, walkways, porches, and patios should be appropriately landscaped with trees, grasses, shrubs, and other plants to minimize the amount of impervious surfaces that create runoff.

## ARCHITECTURAL ENVELOPE

### Orientation

Building orientation should reflect that of the neighboring properties. For example, where the predominant pattern in the block is gable ends of dwellings oriented perpendicular to the street, new infill development should be so oriented.

### Roofs

Infill development and rebuilds should have roof pitches that are complementary to existing ones along the block where redevelopment is proposed. Respect roofline patterns if there is a dominant attractive form. The roof should relate in style and slope to the existing streetscape. Details that characterize the roof should reflect the slope, existing materials, soffit, overhang depth and decorative elements common to the character of the neighboring buildings. In general, a strong repetition of rooflines consistent with a streetscape requires similar construction. A consistent pattern may not be apparent unless the entire block is considered.

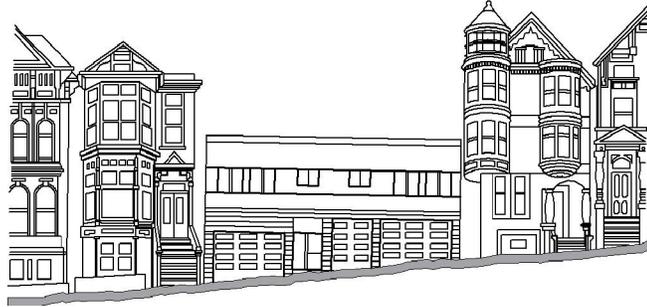
If there is not apparent pattern to the roof forms, the design may respond more specifically to one pattern over another. Picking up on several themes may help tie the visual impact of the streetscape together. If a new building is taller than its neighbors, setting the taller element back from the lower level at the street facade may be appropriate. Corner buildings may benefit from this type of setback on both frontages. One principal roof form should be chosen for the main body of the house. This will set the roof slope and material for all other roof elements. Roof forms on corner lots should acknowledge frontage on both streets.



The configuration of each roof varies, yet they are united by pitch and scale.  
Source: Fundamentals of Urban Design, Richard Hedman, American Planning Association, 1984

## **Massing and Proportions**

Massing and build proportion of established housing should be reflected in new development. Massing has to do with the overall bulk of a building and how it is distributed in space. Several examples are given. Proportion has to do with how the parts or elements of the building relate to each other in terms of dimensions. Massing and proportion can have a significant impact on how a building fits into a neighborhood. A building with strong horizontal elements in a streetscape with vertical elements can be disruptive.



**This strong horizontal element is disruptive in a streetscape that is dominated by vertical elements.**

When similar massing is not possible to achieve, the building facade of a dwelling can be broken into smaller elements creating an illusion of a smaller building in scale with its neighbors.

New infill development and rebuilds of existing structures should maintain the scale of the surrounding block face with respect to height, bulk, and structure size. In areas where existing dwelling units are predominantly one story in height, new infill development and rebuilds should be limited to no more than two stories, even if existing zoning regulations allow two and a half.

In areas with predominantly smaller dwelling units, new infill development and rebuilds are encouraged to respect the existing scale of development and prevent becoming dominant features.

Where there is not consistent streetscape in a block the proposed dwelling unit should relate to its immediate neighbors possibly incorporating some of the more appealing features found along the street.

## **Building and Lot Orientation**

The orientation of infill development should be consistent with the established pattern of the neighborhood.

**Building Entrance.** The front entrance to a single-family or duplex dwelling should be located on the front façade, and oriented towards the front yard and primary access street.

**Attached Garages.** The front wall plane of all attached garages should be recessed behind the front wall plane of the dwelling's ground floor living area or a covered porch by a minimum of four feet.

**Lot Orientation.** To the maximum extent practicable, the orientation of new lots created by subdivision or splitting of existing lots should repeat the predominant relationship of buildings to buildings and buildings to street along the same and facing block faces.



## Openings

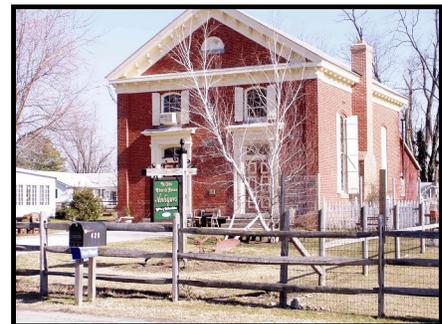
Entryways, windows and garage doors make up the most distinctive elements of a house facade.

### Entryways

Character buildings in existing neighborhoods emphasize the principal entry. The entryway is most often placed on the front facade; it may have a wide set of stairs with an intermediate landing leading to it; the door itself may be elaborately paneled and have a glaze transom or sidelights.

The entryway of new dwellings should be apparent and clearly visible. The entryway should be emphasized by echoing character elements from neighboring houses or by introducing equivalent focal detail. Entry porches are encouraged where existing streetscape have such features.

Where possible, the height of the entry from the street should reflect that of its neighbors. Ground level entry in a street of raised entries could disrupt visual continuity.



Stairs to the principal entry should be wide and interesting from the street. They may include planters, intermediate landings, sidewalks, banisters, and walkway lighting.

## **Windows**

The proportion, size and detailing of windows should relate to that of neighboring houses. The number, size and composition of windows should approximate ratios of its neighbors. From the street, excessive use of glazing should be exercised carefully and should be tempered by the need to retain a certain amount of solid wall surface. At the same time, the excessive use of solid wall should be tempered with the need to provide light and fresh air within the house, and to provide views and security to the front yard and street. Careful arrangement, placement, proportioning and detailing of windows and trim can add interest, balance and order to the facade.

Windows in older homes are often framed by a variety of elements such as sash, stained glass, lintels, sills and pediments. New houses should have windows that are similarly differentiated from the wall surface utilizing details such as wide wood trim.

Infill dwellings should as much as possible reflect the window style predominant to the neighbors. Generally, vertical window proportions should be used, however, they may be assembled into large horizontal openings.

In general, window placement should respect the privacy of adjacent properties. Windows should be oriented away from neighboring yards and windows. If this is not possible, they should be positioned to maximize privacy for the new house and its neighbors, although some neighbors may welcome some loss of privacy if there are positive aspects such as increased security. Neighbors should be consulted regarding the effect of window placement.

## **Garage Doors**

Garage doors can dominate the streetscape, as they are the largest opening in the front facade. The garage door and its immediate surround should be visually interesting. Detailing such as recessing the doorway to create deep shadows, providing plant shelf recesses flanking the door or setting the garage facade back from the rest of the house will lessen its visual impact.

Under the appropriate set of circumstances, a detached garage could be used as an element of design in resolving issues of privacy and site planning. The garage could be located in the rear yard to help define social space. In rare cases a front yard siting may be sought through the variance process.

## **TEXTURE AND MATERIALS**

### **Finishes and Materials**

Chapter 18:1-37, B. (8) *Predominant exterior building materials should be of high quality. These include brick, wood or vinyl siding, stone and tinted/textured concrete masonry units. Smooth faced concrete block, tilt-up concrete panels or prefabricated steel panels may not exceed 50% of the entire structure.*

The choice and mix of materials on the facades of structures and garage doors is important in providing an attractive living environment. Materials should be consistently applied and should be chosen to work harmoniously with adjacent materials.

Exterior finishes and materials should be consistent with those used in the neighborhood. The repetition of similar finishes and material along the street contributes to the visual continuity of the neighborhood. Exterior finishes vary from street to street and include narrow horizontal siding, brick, asbestos shingles and cedar shingles. New dwelling should use materials and finishes that are visually compatible and could harmonizing the new houses with the existing homes. The building need not duplicate or replicate the neighbors but could reference the traditional style.

The choice of materials can help express the buildings proportions and massing. Different materials may be used to define different levels of the house such as the base and the top. Material should be chosen for their textural appearance (rugged, smooth) or for some symbolic meaning (massive base, foundation stone).

Materials, finishes and ornamentation should appear as integral parts of the structure rather than stuck on. Front facade treatments should wrap around the sides of the house visible from the street. Corner lots should have both exposed facades treated equally as well as any other side walls exposed to the streets.

## **Ornamentation**

Chapter 18:1-37, B. (2) *Structures should have finished architectural facade treatment and detail on all elevations that are visible from public ways or adjoining properties. Facades greater than 100 feet in length should incorporate recesses and projections along at least 20% of the length of the facade. For larger buildings, windows, awnings and arcades should total at least 60% of the facade length visible from a public street. Greater architectural interest should be encouraged for larger structures by directing the use of a repeating pattern of change in color, texture and material modules at intervals of no more than 30 feet.*

The level of richness in ornamentation of the neighboring houses should be uses as a guide without literal mimicking. Ornamentation should be uses with restraint and in the context of the existing neighborhood. When incorporated into the design, the use of brackets, eaves, cornices, columns and capitals should come from an understanding of their original structural use.

Ornamentation varies with periods of architectural style. The infill house designer should understand the predominant style of a particular streetscape and may design the infill dwelling unit to echo those themes. This does not mean copying or repeating details, but rather using the existing details as a basis for incorporating contemporary but visually related detail into the new house.

## Roof Detail

Chapter 18:1-37, B. (1) *Pitched roofs and gables are encouraged. Where pitched roofs are not practical from an engineering basis or are not cost effective, false gables and mansards can achieve a similar appearance. Flat roofs with exposed mechanical fixtures should be avoided. For larger structures, variations in rooflines should be required to reduce scale and add visual interest. Roofs for larger structures should have at least two of the following features: overhanging eaves, sloped roofs and three or more roof planes.*

Incorporation of character elements such as dormers, eaves and secondary roof elements over bay windows, porches, etc., are encouraged to reduce the impact of large roof areas and to provide a sense of scale to the house.

## Color

Chapter 18:1-37, B. (9) *Facade colors should be of low reflectance, subtle or neutral earth tone colors. The use of high-intensity colors, metallic colors, black or fluorescent colors should be prohibited. Building trim may feature brighter colors, but neon tubing should not be permitted.*

Color schemes, which are compatible with the neighborhood are encouraged. Older character homes often have painted wood surfaces - siding or shingles. Often color schemes are muted with one or two strong accent colors on trim elements. While there are some successful exceptions, particularly recalling historical color schemes, vibrant colors should be used with extreme discretion and in small amounts.

## ADDITIONS

In planning an addition it is important to pay careful attention to the architectural style of the existing residence. In many cases, additions can dramatically change the appearance of the residence and, therefore, the character of the neighborhood. Examples of ways to guide the quality of additions include the following:

Ensure that the scale and mass of the addition is in keeping with that of the original structure, and that when completed the redeveloped residence does not visually overwhelm neighboring structures.

Limit the location of additions to the side and rear sides of the structure, so as not to disrupt established setback of the building. In particular, the construction of garages should never project beyond the plane of the original facade.

Ensure that the additions roof matches or complements the design of the original structure.

Architectural elements such as windows should respect the prevailing geometry of the original structure. For instance, windows with a vertical orientation can compete with those of a horizontal orientation.

Ensure the materials used for the addition are consistent with those of the original structure.

## LANDSCAPING

Chapter 18:1-37, B. (3) *Foundation landscaping and shade trees should be used to soften the appearance of buildings and add visual appeal to pedestrian plazas and sidewalks.*

Chapter 18:1-37, B. (4) *Adequate landscape buffering and screening along site perimeters should be used to protect adjacent residential neighborhoods and residential and mixed-use zoned properties. Landscape buffers between incompatible uses should be wide and dense enough to completely screen proposed development from adjoining properties. Landscape buffers should also be planted along the frontage of the U.S. 50/301 corridor.*

Front yards are prominent features of the streetscape. The area is often treated as a grassed semi-public zone with detailed planting beds particularly at the base of the house. In general front yard landscaping should reflect that of the neighborhood, understanding that plant size and maturity may be somewhat less than the neighbors.

As much as possible, infill projects should retain healthy mature trees on the lot. Any mature tree that is removed to accommodate the new house should be replaced with one or more other specimens. Placement of the new tree should respect neighbor concerns, e.g., loss of views, overshadowing and so on.

In front yards, infill projects should provide for soft landscaping to define the line between the public domain and private property.

Mature trees and natural drainageways are a few of the elements that contribute to the distinct character of residential neighborhoods. To protect these features and resources, infill projects should work with the context and integrity of this environment by preserving natural features to the maximum extent practicable.

Existing significant trees and natural features, such as drainage corridors, should be preserved to the maximum extent practicable. To the maximum extent practicable, significant trees should be preserved and integrated into the site or lot layout. Significant trees include the following:

Deciduous trees with twelve (12) inch minimum caliper;

Evergreen trees twelve (12) feet or more in height; or

Groups or stands of ten (10) or more trees with a minimum caliper of six (6) inches.

If a significant tree designated to be preserved is removed or substantially damaged during clearing, grading, or construction, the applicant or developer should replace the removed or damaged tree with new trees. Replacement trees should be the same or similar species to the trees removed or damaged, or alternately a species native to Caroline County.

## **TRADITIONAL/HISTORIC RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS**

### **Porches**

Porches are highly encouraged in older, historic areas of Chester and Stevensville, in areas where there is a significant amount of single-family prototypes that traditionally include porches. Porches, where provided, should be at least sixty (60) square feet, with a minimum dimension of six feet (depth).



### **Entryways**

Housing prototypes that do not traditionally include porches should provide an articulated but not overly pronounced entryway. Examples of pronounced entryways are rounded doors, articulated entrances, columns, and/or other similar features.

### **Roof treatments**

Generally, roof treatments should meet the following development criteria:

Roof pitches should complement the building style of the principal structure and have design and scale that are complementary to the surrounding dwellings.

Generally, roofs should have a pitch that is consistent with and supportive of local architectural styles.

Roofs may have dormers, gables, or similar variations in roof planes in order to break up the roof mass.

Individual roofs may include a variety of colors and materials.



## **Corner Lots**

Generally, corner lots should meet the following development criteria:

Structures on corner lots should take advantage of the dual frontage, make an architectural statement, and create interest in architecture and human activity on each street. Such a statement can be accomplished by providing the following amenities:

Wrap around porches

Bay windows, porches, and turrets

Varied exterior materials, roof features, hues, and articulation. Varied materials should be consistent with one another.

## **Architectural Details**

Houses and sites shall contain at least one architectural detail of interest from the following or a similar amenity:

Stained glass or leaded windows

Brick or wood architectural columns

Decorative lights

Brick sidewalks

Window boxes

## **EXISTING GENERAL RESIDENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS**

### **Age of Structure**

When a dwelling unit was built may be a indicator of the prevailing architectural style and provide the designer with a basis for considering an infill and redevelopment project.

### **Number of Stories**

Massing and scale along a street front are determined (in part) by the height of existing buildings. In those areas where the street front consists of primarily two story structures infill development should respect this pattern by proposing new structures greater than one story.

### **Other Features**

Modern materials, such as aluminum and vinyl siding, are in broad use in the exterior features of Chester and Stevensville's residential neighborhoods. Colors, for the most part, are subdued and traditional.