

# Downtown District Design Standards

City of West Haven, Connecticut

Submitted To:

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**Commissioner of Planning & Development**

**City of West Haven**

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Submitted By:

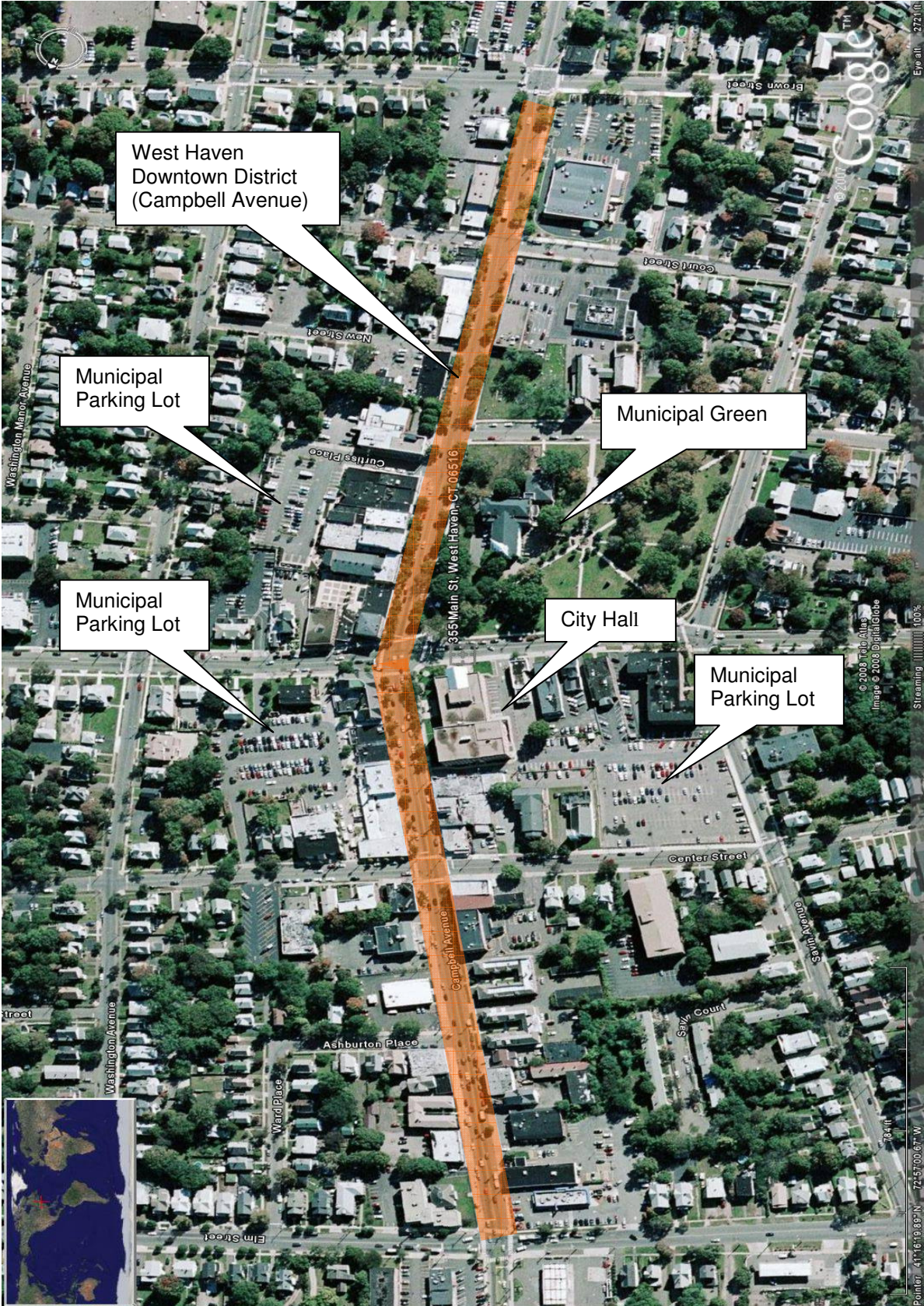
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## ***Introduction***

### **The Downtown District**

A downtown district exists in West Haven which extends six blocks along Campbell Avenue between Elm and Brown Streets.

The purpose of this study is to develop design standards for the downtown district which will support economic development and the provision of public amenities which will enhance the quality of life for West Haven residents. Convenient, small scale shopping and services in an attractive setting convenient to I-95 and Long Island Sound already make the town desirable as a residential location. Neighborhood schools and two family homes line the Campbell Avenue corridor two blocks deep on either side.

### **The Concept of Urban Fabric**

A town center has traditionally provided rural and suburban residents with a readily accessible urban, i.e., community experience: social and cultural activities, access to shops and services, participation in civic events. The fabric of a town consists of a tapestry of mixed social and economic uses which collectively describes the urban experience. This tapestry has a texture and a context which tells the story of the community, both past and present.

## ***Streetscape***

### **The Concept of Streetscape (The Edge)**

The fabric of West Haven's downtown district is most readily visible in the composition of its thoroughfares or streetscape. The streetscape is the valley of commerce through which people and vehicles flow between the corridor of buildings. An urban street is not a rural lane. It is compressed, highly defined and articulated, with a higher octane level of existence than its rural counterpart. The essence of the street is the edge which defines it. Destroy the edge and the street loses its wholeness and the downtown its vitality. Removing individual buildings interrupts the continuity of the street and breaks down the face which it presents to the community and world at large.

### **Streetscape Design Principles**

Streetscape maintenance and design requires adherence to a number of logical principles. The streetscape should conceptually be furnished like a stage set - a backdrop for community activity. It should be a space with a strong inherent character which can be embellished with seasonal decorations. Its overall character should ideally be derived from the place, its purpose, and its unique history. Principles of streetscape design are synonymous with principles of good stage set design and can be articulated as follows:

- There should be an identifiable theme or themes.
- The theme should be articulated through an artful coordination of simple design elements.
- The elements should create an atmosphere of uniqueness and vitality.
- The inherent design quality should not be forced or artificial but should derive from the overall simplicity of the concept.

### **Streetscape Elements**

Typical examples of town-scale streetscape components include communal civic greens, historic churches, civic buildings such as town halls and libraries, commercial service establishments such as banks and medical offices, retail establishments, on street and off street parking, gateway elements and pedestrian walkways.

Streetscape elements which can be orchestrated to achieve the desired stage set are as follows:

- Sidewalks and walkways can be clean, textured, clearly delineated, safe and suitably located.
- Building facades can be well-maintained, harmonious, and evocative of the unique spirit of the town.
- Lighting can be artistic, logical, evoke a historical period, avoid glare, and enhance the overall design concept rather than conflict with it.
- Paving surfaces can be varied, colorful, clear of holes, crevices, or ridges.
- Signage can be coordinated, appropriately sized, tasteful, clear, interesting and fun.
- Street furnishings can be consistent, convenient, decorative, appropriately located, and durable.
- Planting should be well maintained, frequent, and integrated into the streetscape in the manner of a good stage prop.

Blank spaces or holes in the street edge should be filled. Programs should be initiated which promote infill construction and encourage wood or masonry walls, street trees and landscape screens, in place of chain link fences or parking lots where appropriate to maintain the street edge. In addition, programs can be started to promote community ownership and participation in streetscape programs. Examples include memorial paver, tree, flower, and bench programs.

These design elements should be linked to and enhance the overall concept or theme. They serve to embellish the building facades which comprise the street edge and constitute the face of the town.

## **The Public Domain**

Streetscape design elements, such as street lighting, sidewalk paving, benches, informational kiosks, street trees and planters, are primarily located on public property. By improving sidewalks, green spaces, and vacant city-owned land, a municipality can jump-start its revitalization effort. Enhancement of public spaces demonstrates the city's commitment to revitalization and provides incentive for private investment in the urban building stock.

The restoration or creation of symbolic public spaces, such as town greens, can also provide a suitable setting for community activities, festivals, concerts, and civic events. Publicly sponsored downtown activities can act as catalysts to create a community sense of commitment to downtown revitalization and to promote economic development of downtown businesses.

The city can also use improvements in the public domain to set the aesthetic and historic standards for improvements that will be made to private property. Building owners can actually see what type of lighting, signage, building materials, and decorative details are appropriate in the downtown district. Landlords and merchants generally know good marketing when they see it, and are happy to enhance the value of their property or business by following a strong municipal design lead.

## ***Building Facades***

### **Building Facades: The Face of the City**

Building facades within the streetscape consist of blocks of buildings, individual buildings, or individual storefronts. Each facade is in essence a face of the city. Some are historical while others are hysterical. Diversity and contrast are healthy as long as excesses typical of the automobile-scaled commercial strip are not allowed. For example, the sign should not overwhelm the building. Materials should not be incompatible with the overall quality of the street space. The streetscape image should be characterized by consistency, liveliness and good taste.

#### **Blocks of Buildings**

Blocks of buildings in a downtown streetscape are typically a collage of commercial symbols. Buy here! Go there! Get this! Do it now! Often the message is so strident that the overall meaning of the message and the downtown environment is destroyed. The collective design elements which compose the street face of a block of buildings need to be understated, precise, elegant, and thematic. They need to say "Stroll here and we will entertain you, please you, and provide for your needs." In other words, it needs to describe a 'place' to which people will gravitate just for the pleasure of being there, whether or not they need to shop. Blocks of buildings have the advantage over single structures in that they already constitute a strong street edge and hence place. They have a potentially greater impact upon the street and have the potential to be more economically upgraded due to shared costs.

#### **Individual Buildings**

Individual buildings are like faces in a crowd. They are all human but all have unique distinguishing characteristics. There are defined proportions which define the normal human face. A nose in the middle of a forehead would be considered a deformity. One ear ten times larger than the other would be grotesque. In the course of the twentieth century, our society has lost what used to be common knowledge of architectural proportion and the grammar of traditional architecture. We look at a particular building and don't know precisely why it makes us uncomfortable. Many of the relatively new or older, "modernized" buildings in West Haven's downtown defy time-honored architectural proportions and design logic and can be accurately characterized

as deformities. The buildings constructed or modified since the 1950's lean toward the style of strip commercial centers, and fail to understand the underlying design principles which make Main Street more a desirable pedestrian and civic experience than a mall.

### **Storefronts**

The handshake to the pedestrian and seductive glance to the passing motorists on any street is the array of storefront window displays which draw the eye of passersby. The overall design composition of the street level storefront talks at a very pedestrian level to the street. Come here! See me! Stop and look! Enter and enjoy! Again, the overall composition is like a face. The doorway invites in while the display windows look out. The storefronts maintain an important dialogue with the street. Removing the display windows, bricking them up for apartments or security destroys the street. Streetscapes are made lively and vital through the interaction of pedestrians, merchants, and merchandise. The ground level must allow for interaction. Blank walls at street level are deadly and create holes in the urban fabric which adversely affect the vitality of the downtown.

## **Categories of Revitalization and Infill**

There are four categories of downtown revitalization and infill: repair and maintenance; renovation and reconstruction; substantial renovation; and building removal and new construction.

### **Repair & Maintenance**

A relative cost effective approach to revitalization is 'repair and maintenance' of the existing building stock. This consists of cleaning and painting and resealing exterior facade components to present a well maintained look. A new sign or awning might be added. Where historic 'period' facades have been modernized in the past by the application of aluminum store windows, siding and false fronts, repair and maintenance is not an appropriate option and 'renovation and reconstruction' must be considered.

**Renovation and Reconstruction**

Renovation and reconstruction consist of identifying the basic and most predominant architectural style of a building and doing what is necessary to restore it. Facade cover ups such as vinyl or metal siding, massive fascias or false fronts, are removed to expose the original building. Repairs are then effected to replace rotten wood, refurbish deteriorated masonry, and reinstall blocked up windows, storefronts, and doorways consistent with the building's original design. A number of the existing buildings in West Haven's downtown fall into this category, where "modernization" has created visual confusion and spoiled the communal spirit of a true town center.

**Substantial Renovation**

Substantial renovation may be used to salvage a building that has been altered beyond reclamation or to transform a building that was badly designed in the first place. This approach may be used for buildings which were cast in the suburban commercial strip mold, which may never have had windows on the street, or which were built in a style wildly incompatible with the desired downtown image.

**Building Removal and New Construction**

Urban renewal advocates indiscriminately demolished older buildings regardless of historical significance or physical condition. The guiding principle was to clear the land in order to implement a large-scale plan. The problem was that the suburban plans most often promoted had little sympathy or understanding of the unique form which constitutes a downtown. The result was to create holes in the urban fabric which, because the urban renewal money ran out and because zoning regulations were biased towards suburban land use patterns, were never filled in. Generally, unless the physical condition of an existing building mandates that it be removed in the interest of public safety, this option should be the choice of last resort.

New construction is most appropriate where vacant building lots along Campbell Avenue are infilled in order to maintain and define the street's edge. New buildings should be sensitive to the overall character and 'theme' of the downtown district. Modern suburban building types have no place in the downtown and should not be allowed. Where feasible, suburban buildings in the downtown should be removed and replaced with more context-sensitive structures.

## ***Design Guidelines***

### **West Haven Downtown District Design Issues**

#### **The Downtown District**

Campbell Avenue extends from the Veterans Hospital and I-95, a distance of approximately two miles, to Long Island Sound. For the purpose of this study, the downtown district is defined as six blocks on Campbell Avenue between Elm and Brown Streets with City Hall and three municipal parking lots located in the middle. Campbell Avenue is the major retail/commercial linear strip in the City.

#### **Town Center Green and Municipal Parking**

The Town has been pursuing the creation of a municipal parking zone on both sides of Campbell Avenue. One lot is located behind City Hall and is bounded by Center Street, Campbell Avenue, Main Street, and Savin Avenue. The second municipal lot is located across the street from City Hall in the center of the block bounded by Campbell Avenue, Center Street, Washington Avenue, and Main Street. A third parking area is across the street from the Green, in the center of the block bounded by Campbell Avenue, Curtis Place, Washington Avenue, and Main Street.

This is an enlightened policy which has positioned the downtown for success as a commercial and civic center. Provided that the buildings do not exceed the recommended density, business and property owners are assured of ample, convenient parking for tenants and customers. In terms of design, this allows the street edge to be built up with pedestrian-friendly, retail based structures, without stretches of asphalt in front of or between the buildings. This generates the low-rise to mid-rise, compact Main Street paradigm mentioned in the preceding section.

#### **Proposed Multi-Modal Transportation Facility**

A new Metro North Mainline train station and commuter parking facility is planned for a site five blocks west from City on Saw Mill Road. The siting of this regional transportation facility in West Haven will have a major impact on land use and density in the downtown. It is anticipated that the kiss/ride facility will have a beneficial affect on property values in the downtown and will create pressures for greater density land use.

**Residential Neighborhoods Surrounding the Downtown Retail District**

On the east side Campbell Avenue lies a low rise multi-family residential and schools district. On the west side lies the Municipal Green and churches, behind which lies a mixture of multi-family housing and convenience retail.

**Savin Rock and Long Island Sound**

Approximately one mile south of the Downtown Retail District, Campbell Avenue ends at Long Island Sound. Historically, the area was known as Savin Rock and up until the 1960's was the location of a large amusement park on the water. It drew patrons from throughout the area. Today, the site of the former amusement park is a boardwalk lined with a park, restaurants and multi-family housing. Long Island Sound and the sea play an important role in the history and identity of the West Haven Community.

**Landscaping and Street Furniture**

American cities of all sizes were once widely characterized by commercial and residential streets canopied by the perfectly arched branches of mature American elms. This defining design feature humanized urban space, improved the microclimate, and provided a beautiful and unified visual image. During the 1960's, with devastating abruptness, all of the American elm street trees were lost to Dutch Elm Disease. Most cities have yet to regain the beauty and dignity of their lost trees.

One of the most striking aspects of downtown West Haven is the beautiful canopy of trees lining Campbell Avenue. This is a feature that should be preserved and enhanced. Where trees have died or been removed, leaving gaps in the canopy, they should be replaced with large-caliper specimens of the same species as adjacent trees. Sidewalks within the study area with few or no trees should have trees planted approximately 24' apart. Imagine a tree-lined Campbell Avenue, white with pear blossoms in spring or shady and green in summer, stretching from the heart of downtown to Long Island Sound. Fairfield has its Dogwood Festival and Meriden its Daffodil Festival – why not a Pear Blossom Festival in West Haven?

In addition to street trees, West Haven has already installed historical street lighting, banner poles, trash receptacles, bus stations, and decorative paving in selected areas. This attractive streetscaping should be maintained and

extended throughout the study area to help cultivate a unified image of the downtown business district as a distinct and readily identifiable place.

A further measure that can be taken is to widen the sidewalks at the street corners in the heart of the downtown district. This can be done with little or no loss of on-street parking spaces, as parking is not generally recommended close to corners. With very little square footage, it creates the impression of mini-plazas, with additional landscaping, decorative paving, district maps and directories, and perhaps a bench. The widened sidewalk has the practical benefit of providing space for curb ramps without impinging on the main walking surface. In terms of contributing to the downtown's sense of place, the mini-plazas serve as gateway elements marking your arrival in this special part of the city and contributing to its unique image.

### **Design Theme**

The operative analogy regarding building facade restoration is that buildings have faces much like people. Identify the personality of the person and his or her facial expressions and wardrobe become highly predictable.

The desired image or theme for West Haven's Downtown District is the New England commercial center. This theme is associated with certain visual elements, organizing principles, and even building materials. For example, a key organizing principle for any New England town or city is the clustering of buildings around a green. Another equally valid paradigm is the low-rise to mid-rise, compact Main Street, which presents a continuous wall of storefronts along the sidewalk, with offices and apartments on the upper floors. The existence of a central green and civic facilities in the central municipal zone, along with many viable businesses, allows the town to reference both of these paradigms.

A New England commercial center is characterized by traditional architecture, giving a sense of history and community memory. Associated architectural styles include Victorian mercantile buildings with tall, narrow windows and decorative cornices, imposing Greek or Roman revival temple-fronted banks, neo-classical commercial blocks with pilasters and beautiful moldings, and Art Deco office buildings with wide windows and inventive ornament. All of these styles can be found on Campbell Avenue, along with a unique half-timbered, four-story, Tudor style commercial block and a number of modern structures. All contribute to a strong sense of history and tradition. Building materials include clapboard, brick, stone, and stucco. Roofs are flat or steeply pitched, with the occasional French mansard (not to be confused with the inelegant adaptation of this historically graceful roof treatment by fast food outlets and other standardized commercial entities).

Traditional buildings are scaled to the human figure rather than the automobile. This is accomplished by keeping the building façade right on the sidewalk, making the street-level façade transparent to pedestrians, and by incorporating building details and features that reflect the size of the human body. A nearby Connecticut town recently allowed a big-box retailer to build a new store in their Victorian downtown, with no design controls applied. They now have a solid concrete block wall 200 feet long, directly abutting a narrow sidewalk, with a vast parking lot adjacent to that along the street. Contrast this image to an urbane building with glass storefronts giving a tempting view of merchandise or café tables, beautifully detailed doorways and cornice, and upper floors with person-height windows offering views of the tree-lined avenue, West Haven Green, and Long Island Sound. If you want people in your downtown, you need to provide a human-scaled setting.

The geometric proportioning of the overall façade and fenestration varies with the architectural style. Emphatically vertical window proportions characterize Victorian buildings, of which there are very few examples in downtown West Haven. Neo-classical buildings feature more balance between vertical and horizontal, frequently approaching the Golden Rectangle, a proportion of roughly 1:1.6. Art Deco and early Modern styles are characterized by larger glass areas and horizontally proportioned fenestration, although the overall building form may be strongly vertical. They can range in height from a single story to a skyscraper.

Downtown West Haven boasts a number of attractive Neo-classical and Art-Deco era buildings. These styles support a downtown image that is human-scaled and pedestrian-friendly, dignified and urbane, and appropriate to dense development and a continuous street wall. The image is traditional but more aesthetically flexible than downtowns which are predominantly colonial or Victorian. It allows taller, denser development and calls for non-combustible masonry construction. New buildings can make explicit use of traditional detailing and ornament or be clearly modern structures made compatible with their historic neighbors through material choice, color, proportions, and maintenance of the street wall.

Historical buildings require special treatment, conforming to the Secretary of the Interior standards for historic preservation. If a building has been drastically altered over time, and there are no drawings or photographs available to assist restoration, it is still possible to execute a sensitive restoration. Historical analysis of the architecture of that period will reveal certain types of window, door and awning treatments which were common at the time and historically appropriate today.

Modern buildings undergoing renovation would not be expected to conform to the design requirements for historic buildings, but they should be renovated with compatible materials, colors, and signage, consistent with the standards set throughout the district. New structures should be urban building types scaled to the pedestrian, not suburban building types designed for the automobile.

## **Signage**

At a pedestrian level within a streetscape, signs serve to give names to places and things. They identify and locate what is where and they invite the passerby to read them sequentially as they browse the street. Pedestrian scaled signs can be tasteful, smaller scaled and appropriately sized for the storefront which they announce. Larger and more garish signs are usually associated with the commercial strip and the automobile. It is significantly easier to view and appreciate a sign at two miles per hour while walking than at thirty or forty miles per hour through a windshield.

In order to accommodate both pedestrian and vehicular signage needs, a hierarchical signage system for the downtown district needs to be established. Larger sign kiosks can be located to announce the district, extend welcome, indicate merchants located within, and give directions to public parking. This may occur, for example, at strategically located 'gateway' elements to the downtown. These 'district scale' signs would be provided by the city in conjunction with improvements to sidewalks, parks and other public spaces.

Once a visitor is inside the district, individual store signs can tastefully and appropriately identify the merchandise available within. Store signs need to be individualized to the specific business without engaging in size or loudness competitions with their neighbors. Signs are like speech. Some whisper, some talk, and others shout and scream for attention. Whispering and talking are acceptable. Shouting is undesirable and should not be allowed except when necessary for an effect which would benefit the entire streetscape.

Signs can be painted on a building component such as a glass display window, mounted on the building as in a placard attached to the facade, or cantilevered off a building to be perpendicular to the street. Backlit translucent canopies, neon, flashing digital signs or other garish 'shouts' should be discouraged and not allowed.

The design criteria for signs applied to historic buildings include: materials, colors, typefaces, sizes, locations, and illumination. Materials may include wood, glass, canvas, and painted steel or iron. Allowable typefaces may be pre-selected and approved by the design review committee, or they may be

reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Appropriate sizes will vary with the architectural design of each historic structure, but should never be so large that they obscure windows or ornamental features. Signs mounted perpendicular to the building must allow a minimum 7'-6" headroom below the sign and must not project farther than 3'-0" from the facade. Signs must be located so that they do not obscure architectural features of historic buildings. Depending on the design of the individual structures, signs may be mounted on the facade over doors and/or windows, flat on the facade or perpendicular to it. Lettering may also be painted on windows or awnings. Backlit signs are not permitted, but signs may be spot lit.

In order to create some sense of harmony throughout the district, the same design criteria should be applied to historic and modern buildings. Signs for all buildings are subject to design review.

## Downtown District Design Guidelines

### General

#### GROUND FLOOR USES, STREET FAÇADE

- Retail sales
- Restaurants, cafes, ice cream parlors, etc.
- Personal and household repair and services, such as dry cleaning, tailor, shoe repair, appliance repair
- Office-based services with window displays, such as travel agency, photography
- Banks
- Entrances to upper level offices and residential

#### GROUND FLOOR USES, REAR FAÇADE FACING MID-BLOCK MUNICIPAL PARKING

- professional offices
- office-based services without window displays, such as insurance, financial, real estate
- any use allowable for street façade location
- entrances to upper level offices and residential

#### UPPER FLOOR USES

- Professional offices
- Office-based services without window displays, such as insurance, financial, real estate
- Residential

#### BUILDING HEIGHT

- Minimum of four stories and 45 feet for new construction
- Maximum of 6 stories and 75 feet

*Note: Re-evaluate maximum when this level of density begins to be consistent. Avoid creating a few tall buildings with voids between*

**SETBACKS**

- Front: Match adjacent storefronts
- Side: Zero lot line
- Rear: Conform to municipal zoning/parking plan

**PUBLIC ENTRANCES**

Required from both street and rear facades for all buildings adjoining center-of-block municipal parking areas

**ROOF TYPES**

- Gable
- Hip
- Flat with parapet
- Flat without parapet

**ROOF PITCH**

1:2 minimum (not applicable to flat roofs)

**MATERIALS FOR PITCHED ROOFS**

- fiberglass shingles
- natural slate
- standing seam metal in approved colors

**AWNING TYPES**

- Profile: Shed profile only
- Valance: Straight, scalloped, or none
- Colors: Approved colors only
- Fabric: Flame retardant, solution dyed modacrylic
- Options: Retractable (manual or motorized), lettering on valance

*Note: Back-lighting not permitted*

**WALL-MOUNTED LIGHTING**

- Approval: All exterior lighting subject to design review
- Lamps: Sodium vapor or other color distorting lamps not permitted
- Types: Small spotlights on signs; stylistically/historically appropriate decorative fixtures

**SIGN TYPES**

- Flat, engraved, or raised letter wood panels (or acceptable wood substitutes); painted
- Wall mounted metal or painted wood dimensional letters
- Flat, painted custom metal signs
- Painted characters or decals on window or door glass
- Lettering applied to awning valance

**SIGN MOUNTING**

- Flat on building façade in approved locations
- Perpendicular to building façade, hung from brackets

*Note: All signs subject to design review. Illumination not permitted, except spotlights.*

**ITEMS AND MATERIALS NOT PERMITTED**

- Rough hewn wood shingles or barn boards
- Textured plywood
- Vinyl siding
- Non-historic mansard roofs
- Tinted or mirrored ground floor glass
- Windowless ground floor facades
- Narrow-stile mill finish aluminum storefronts
- Back-lit signs
- Back-lit awnings
- Plastic awnings
- Curved awnings

**Historic (or just plain old) Building Facades / New Traditional Buildings**

A building does not have to be an architectural gem to contribute to the overall image of a traditional New England commercial center, but it does need to be treated with respect and an understanding of historical architecture. An old building that was no more than a mediocre work of architecture when it was new can be unique and delightful when tastefully and imaginatively restored. Real history is always better than fake history; people can tell the difference. A community's history is the foundation for creating a true and unique sense of place. New buildings may be designed in an accurate recreation of an historical style.

**EXTERIOR WALL MATERIALS**

- Red or yellow brick: walls, sills, arches, water shelves
- Stucco in approved colors
- Granite, limestone, sandstone: walls, lintels, decorative courses, cornices
- Precast concrete: lintels, sills, water shelves, decorative inserts, cornices only
- Painted wood or cement-fiber clapboards, 4" - 6" to the weather
- Painted wood or plastic wood trim

**STOREFRONT SPANDRELS**

- Proportion: horizontal, with the ratio of a/b = 1.5 minimum
- Raised wood spandrel panels, painted, below storefront windows
- Masonry spandrel panels below storefront windows where pre-existing or historically appropriate

**STOREFRONT WINDOWS**

- Area: 30 sq. ft. minimum
- Head height: 6'-8" minimum head height, exclusive of transom
- Sill height: 16" - 24" height from grade to sill
- Materials: Painted wood, painted plastic wood, aluminum-clad wood, color-coated aluminum
- Glass: Clear
- Options: Transoms, true divided lites, low-e coating

**DOORS**

- Material: Painted wood, painted metal
- Dimensions: 36" wide leaves, 16" - 24" bottom rail, 5"-6" top rail and stiles
- Glazing: Full lite of clear glass
- Options: Transoms, sidelights, true divided lites

**UPPER FLOOR WINDOWS**

- Types: Double hung, casement
- Materials: Painted wood, vinyl clad wood, aluminum clad wood, vinyl, steel
- Proportion: Vertical, with the ratio of a/b = .4 minimum, .6 maximum
- Glass: Clear
- Options: Transoms, true divided lites, low-e coating

**ROOF EDGE**

Decorative cornice or parapet

**Buildings Constructed 1960-1990**

This period is, especially from an urban design viewpoint, the nadir of architectural history. Most of the buildings constructed in downtown West Haven during this period are not likely to be torn down due to obsolescence. Some building exteriors can be harsh and unwelcoming, derived, however distantly, from a style called New Brutalism. Unless major renovation work is planned, these buildings can be softened with landscaping and awnings and made more accessible with larger storefront windows. Wall-mounted dimensional letters generally work well as signage for buildings of this era.

**New Buildings in a Modern Idiom****EXTERIOR WALL MATERIALS**

- Red or yellow brick
- Stucco in approved colors

- Granite, limestone
- Precast or poured-in-place concrete
- Metal wall cladding: zinc, titanium, stainless steel, coated copper, color-coated aluminum or steel
- Photovoltaic panels

*Note: Prefabricated engineered metal buildings are not permitted.*

**STOREFRONT SPANDRELS**

- Proportion: horizontal, with the ratio of a/b = 1.5 minimum
- Any materials listed above

**STOREFRONT WINDOWS**

- Area: 30 sq. ft. minimum
- Head height: 6'-8" minimum head height, exclusive of transom
- Sill height: 16" - 24" height from grade to sill
- Materials: Painted wood, aluminum-clad wood, color-coated aluminum, metal used elsewhere in facade
- Glass: Clear
- Options: Transoms, low-e coating

**DOORS**

- Material: Painted wood, painted metal, color-coated aluminum, metal used elsewhere in façade, frameless glass
- Dimensions: 36" wide leaves
- Glazing: Full lite of clear glass
- Options: Transoms, sidelights

**UPPER FLOOR WINDOWS**

- Types: Double hung, casement, sliding, awning, fixed
- Materials: Vinyl clad wood, aluminum clad wood, vinyl, aluminum, steel
- Proportion: No restrictions
- Glass: Clear, tinted blue or green
- Options: Transoms, low-e coating

**Approved Colors**

**AWNINGS**

- Forest green
- Forest green/natural stripe
- Blue
- Blue/natural stripe

**METAL ROOFING**

- Patina green
- Weathering copper
- Slate gray

**ASPHALT SHINGLE ROOFING**

- Slate tones
- Gray tones

**STUCCO**

- Ivory
- Cream / light yellow-gold
- Light terracotta

**PAINT / FACTORY FINISHED MATERIALS**

*Note: Color designations are Benjamin Moore colors.*

- White
- Cool Gray                    HC-170 Stonington Gray
- Cool Gray                    HC-169 Coventry Gray
- Warm Gray                    HC-172 Revere Pewter
- Tan                              HC-92 Wheeling Neutral
- Cream                         303 Old World Romance
- Gold                            HC-10 Stuart Gold
- Terracotta                    HC-49 Mayflower Red
- Light Terracotta            1200 Mesa Peach

- Deep Blue            1679 Bedford Blue
- Medium Blue        1677 Colonial Blue
- Dark Green         651 Brazilian Rainforest
- Patina Green        628 Winchester Sage
- Light Sage Green    HC-123 Kennebunkport Green
- Pastel Green        HC-117 Hancock Green

**ADDITIONAL COLORS ONLY FOR TRIM, DOORS, SIGNS, DECORATIVE METAL**

- Crimson            1323 Currant Red
- Black
- Metallic            Gold, brass, chrome

## Facade Improvement Implementation Strategies

An overall strategy for promoting downtown revitalization is to implement a myriad of complementary programs which promote improving downtown. Community cleaning days, public festivals, greening programs, and public improvement programs collectively enhance and leverage the image and perception of the downtown.

Principles for implementation of a facade improvement program should consist of the following:

- If an Owner opts to renovate the entire street facade to accurately portray its original design or to bring a non-historic building into full compliance with the design guidelines, a higher rate of reimbursement will be granted.
- The Owner must agree by covenant to maintain changes for a period of five years.
- To obtain funding, the Owner must comply with established design standards and receive design review committee approval.
- The Owner may provide his/her own design for committee review and approval, or demonstrate his/her intent to execute improvements according to the design standards and receive design services from the design review committee at no cost.
- Adjacent facades may be grouped to realize savings.
- Sweat equity can be attributed to the Owner's share of the cost.

## Conclusion

Downtown revitalization will require a public/private partnership to support a myriad of complementary programs designed to promote economic development, physical improvements, and ultimately the quality of life in the City of West Haven. Public sector efforts should emanate from the Mayor's Office, City Council, and the City Planning and Community Development Offices. Private sector efforts should originate from the a downtown merchant's association, the Chamber of Commerce, and from for-profit developers.

Community support of the overall goals and process is crucial. Community ownership of individual projects is essential. Each proposed project needs a 'champion' who adopts the project and provides oversight and continuity to carry the project through to completion. Leadership is crucial and it must be coordinated between both the private and public sectors.

General strategies for downtown revitalization are:

- Maintain and clean up what we have.
- Develop programs which promote community activities and physical improvement.
- Establish mechanisms to pursue major long range objectives and projects.

Next steps which are required for successful revitalization of West Haven Downtown District to occur are:

- Prioritize projects and actions.
- Categorize projects into long, medium, and short range.
- Assign task forces for each project.
- Empower the task forces. Decentralize decision making. Charge the task forces to do and not to study the projects. Fund the projects through grants, donated services, or incentives such as tax abatements and/or technical assistance.
- Adopt a credo of 'just getting it done'.

The key to success for the Downtown District is continuity of support and effort from both the public and private sectors, and the leadership and vision required to allow things happen.