

OLD GREENWICH VILLAGE DISTRICT OVERLAY ZONE (OGVDO)

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of the overlay zone is to implement a design review process which can preserve and enhance the traditional land use patterns, scale and architectural styles of the Old Greenwich commercial center. The Village District also seeks to strengthen walkability and pedestrian engagement with local businesses.

AUTHORITY

The Old Greenwich Village District Overlay Zone (OGVDO) is created pursuant to Section 8-2j of Chapter 123 of the CT General Statutes which enables the protection of distinctive municipal areas.

The statute provides that

“The zoning commission of each municipality may establish village districts as part of the zoning regulations adopted under section 8-2 or under any special act.

Such districts shall be located in areas of distinctive character, landscape or historic value that are specifically identified in the plan of conservation and development of the municipality.”

Development reviews shall include, but not be limited to, "(1) the design and placement of buildings, (2) the maintenance of public views, (3) the design, paving materials and placement of public roadways, and (4) other elements that the commission deems appropriate to maintain and protect the character of the village district.”

The OGVDO is also a furtherance of objectives contained in the 2019 Town of Greenwich Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) Objective 1.5

BOUNDARIES

The Old Greenwich Village District Overlay Zone OGVDO is defined per the recorded overlay zone map as shown on the Town of Greenwich Building Zone Regulation Map and contained in the Appendix B attached.

APPLICABILITY

Planning & Zoning Commission (PZC) approval is required for any new construction, substantial reconstruction or rehabilitation of properties, and alterations to building façades visible from public vantage points within the OGVDO.

REVIEW PROCESS

- a. Design Review and recommendation by the Town of Greenwich Architectural Review Committee (ARC) is mandatory for all projects to which these guidelines are applicable.
- b. During the review process, both the PZC and ARC shall encourage participation from and communication with all affected stakeholders, especially property owners and neighbors.
- c. The ARC will report its recommendations to the PZC within thirty-five (35) days of receipt of application. Any delay in the submission of the report will not alter any other time limit imposed by the Design Guidelines.
- d. The ARC will issue a written recommendation for approval if the project meets the Village District Review Guidelines and any other applicable design principles, standards and requirements as it deems appropriate.
- e. Such report and recommendation shall be entered into the public hearing record and considered by the PZC in rendering its decision.
- f. The ARC's design review and recommendation will be based on the design review guidelines herein contained. The OGVDO design review by both the ARC and PZC shall include the following:
 1. Design and placement of buildings.
 2. Maintenance of streetscape.
 3. Design, paving materials, and placement of public roadways, sidewalks, bike lanes, and other associated infrastructure.
 4. Site and landscape treatments and features.
 5. Other elements deemed appropriate to maintain and protect the Character of the Village District (design standards and guidelines).
- g. In addition to the report of the ARC, the PZC may seek recommendations from relevant agencies or outside specialists, including, but not limited to:
 1. Greenwich Historical District Commission
 2. Western Connecticut Council of Governments (WestCoG)
 3. Greenwich Preservation Trust
 4. State of CT Historic Preservation Office
 5. Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation
 6. Old Greenwich Resident and Merchants Associations
 7. Greenwich Arts Council

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- a. the following items shall accompany a Design Review Application:
 1. GIS map showing the property location.
 2. Landscape plan, consistent with Division 17 of these regulations and with the Design Guidelines herein contained.
 3. Site plan prepared to scale
 4. Color photos of the existing building and site conditions
 5. Color photos of adjacent properties, including properties across the street.
 6. Scaled Building plans and elevations, etc. for both new and existing buildings to be retained.
 7. Specifications for any proposed fixtures, and swatches and color chips for all proposed fabric, materials, and colors.
 8. Any additional appropriate material per Section 6-14 of the Greenwich Building Regulations.
- b. Additional Materials for Applications Related to Existing Historic Buildings:
 1. For the purposes of this overlay regulation and guidelines, historic buildings are herein defined as those constructed on or before 1940, consistent with the designation of the Greenwich Historical Society.
 2. Documentation of the original style of the building
 3. Narrative describing how;
 - i. improvements are consistent with or vary relative to original.
 - ii. proposed building changes or additions are consistent with the context and treatments of façades facing public streets or public areas.
 4. Photographs of the original building(s) (if applicable), the buildings to either side of the proposed project and the view from across the street.

OGVDO DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES.

Site Planning

- a. The design of new development should aim to strengthen the village's mixed-use character street view experience
- b. All spaces, structures and related site improvements visible from public roadways shall be designed to be compatible with relevant examples and elements of the area of the Village District in and around the proposed building or modification.
- c. The placement of new buildings shall conform to the bulk and height standards contained in Section 6-205 of these regulations as applicable to the LBR-2 zone and shall define the edges of streets and public spaces.
- d. New development shall be contextually appropriate to the OGVDO. Site planning, architectural scale and design should inform and enhance the

characteristics of the Zone. (See Appendix A below)

- e. Buildings that are not physically adjoined to abutters shall treat side yards and the spaces between buildings in a manner consistent with existing, permitted patterns of use and Section 6-205.
- f. The placement of buildings and site improvements shall assure there is no adverse impact on the district
 - 1. Locally significant features of the site such as distinctive buildings, sight lines or vistas from within the district shall be integrated into the site design
 - 2. Removal or disruption of historic traditional or significant structures or architectural elements shall be minimized.
- g. New buildings shall be placed so as to conceal parking at the interior or rear of building lots.
- h. Curb cuts shall be reduced or combined whenever possible into a single access point per property, subject to the requirements of the Department of Public Works.
- i. Designs should encourage pedestrian activity and visual enjoyment of the village. Where possible;
 - 1. include street trees, benches, planters, and plantings.
 - 2. provide small seating areas or other areas for community interaction.
 - 3. insert pocket parks where appropriate.
 - 4. street furniture, such as benches, bike racks, public trash and public recycling receptacles shall be clustered at convenient locations that are plainly visible and accessible.
- j. Proposals shall prioritize the protection and enhancement of streetscape including but not limited to;
 - 1. endeavor to bury utility lines and eliminate service poles, consistent with 2019 POCD Guiding Principal 1 objective 1.1 (f)
 - 2. treat parking areas as part of the pedestrian environment; screen dumpsters, utilities, and other service features.
 - 3. discourage permanent external art on buildings.

Landscaping

- a. The landscape design shall comply with Division 17 Landscaping regulations and complement the district's landscape patterns.
- b. Landscaping shall be used to define street edges and to buffer and screen edges that may have a negative visual impact.
- c. Plantings shall not obscure site entrances and exit drives, access ways, or road intersections
- d. Existing trees, and in particular, healthy and mature trees that characterize portions of the neighborhood shall be preserved to the greatest extent possible, and they shall be incorporated into the proposed site plan. Trees that must be removed because of health or location shall be inspected by a certified arborist and replaced on-site with a species and caliper recommended by the arborist.
- e. Fences and landscaping in the buffer along the street must allow transparency above 3.5 feet. For example, a hedge shall not be greater than 3.5 feet in height; trees spaced evenly along the border may be taller. A solid fence shall not be more than 3.5 feet high.

Building Design

- a. Building design, form, and scale shall be complementary to and respectful of the patterns of the OGVD architecture as shown in the visual Inventory contained herein (APPENDIX A).
- b. The design of new structures shall be in keeping with the overall continuity of the streets and public spaces.
- c. The design and layout of buildings and included site improvements shall reinforce architectural elements of existing buildings, when appropriate.
- d. New construction shall acknowledge and respond to existing window patterns of examples in the Appendix Visual Inventory in proportion, scale, rhythm and number of openings.
- e. Building mechanical equipment located on building roofs, sites, or other locations shall not be visible and screened as required in Section 6-127 and Division 17 of these regulations.

Building Massing

- a. New development and infill buildings shall comply with the requirements of the Bulk and Height Standards of Section 6-205 of these regulations. However, the scale and massing of any proposed building shall also be in proportion to the scale, massing, and detailing in the district.
- b. Where there is a discrepancy greater than ten (10) feet between the proposed building height and the height profiles of adjacent existing buildings, the ARC shall review design proposals with the applicant for contextual sensitivity based upon the following: articulation of façade; building mass, scale, bulk and proportion; or other building massing considerations
- c. Proposed buildings or modifications to existing buildings shall be consistent with the small village scale of the zone.
- d. The shape and massing of new and renovated buildings shall provide a balance among building height, story-height, building width, and bay width that is compatible with the examples in the Visual Inventory.
- e. The shape and massing of the building shall complement the abutting structures and define the edges of streets and open spaces.
- f. Building shall be designed to frame streets and public spaces, to provide a sense of spatial enclosure and to define street edges.

Building Façades and Orientation

- a. The façade or primary building elevation of new construction or substantial rehabilitation shall be compatible with the façade design of a traditional rural New England village architecture as shown in the Visual Inventory, so as to create continuity across projects and the street frontage. (APPENDIX A)
- b. For historic buildings,
 - 1. Historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the

- new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials.
2. Original window patterns and openings shall be preserved or restored in the redevelopment of existing structures, including conservation and repair to preserve historical trim and details.
 3. Building cornice lines shall be maintained, preserved, or recreated to define building façades and create façade components consistent with historic parapet or cornice lines as originally designed and built.
- c. Buildings shall be oriented with the main building façade(s) facing the primary street frontage(s) of the site.
 - d. Entrances shall be oriented to the primary street frontage and address the street with an active and welcoming entry composition that is integrated into the overall massing and configuration of the building.
 - e. Storefronts in commercial and mixed-use buildings shall be oriented to the primary street(s) with transparency to streets and public spaces.
 - f. Windows on the ground floor of the primary façade of commercial buildings shall not be mirrored or use tinted glass or be obstructed by curtains, shades, or blinds.

Lighting

All lighting shall be compliant with Division 14 of these regulations.

Signage and Awnings

- a. Signage shall be in conformance with Division 16 of these regulations. Signage goals are to inform pedestrians and drivers. Signs also have a direct effect on the overall appearance of the village.
- b. Signage shall be appropriate for the scale and character of the building and the area.
- c. New signs should strive for visual compatibility with existing signs.
- d. Exterior signs shall support a consistent architectural theme, if such theme exists, and be compatible with their surroundings.
- e. Awnings shall not obscure important architectural details by crossing over pilasters or covering the view of windows.
- f. Multiple awnings and signs on a single building shall be consistent in size, profile, location, material, color and design.
- g. Only the business name and address number may appear on an awning.

Architectural Materials

- a. Color, size, height, location, proportion of openings, roof treatments, building materials and landscaping of commercial or residential property, and any proposed signs and lighting shall be evaluated for compatibility with the local architectural design and the maintenance of streetscape, historic buildings, monuments and landscaping.
- b. Repairs and alterations shall not damage or destroy materials, features or finishes that are important in defining the building's historic character.
- c. Building façade exterior materials, including architectural trim and cladding, shall be of high quality and durable, including but not limited to, the following:

stone, brick, wood shingles or clapboard, wood, composite wood or PVC trim, metal, glass, sustainable cement masonry board products, and integrated or textured masonry.

- d. Any proposed use of manufactured materials shall be permitted only to the extent that the ARC is satisfied that it is an appropriate substitute for available natural alternatives.
- e. Roofing materials visible from public sidewalks or streets shall be of high quality and durable materials, including, but not limited to, the following: slate, copper, ceramic slate tile or architectural asphalt shingle.
- f. Roofing materials shall not call undue attention to the roof itself with bright or contrasting colors, unless historically documented.
- g. Uninterrupted, multi-level glazing shall not be used as a façade design treatment.

APPENDIX A: EXAMPLES OF POSITIVE VISUAL INVENTORY



- New development shall be consistent with Section 6-205 of these regulations and with the massing, use, and scale of the other structures in the Village District (to reinforce the architectural style of the village).



- Maintain the LBR2 building height limit Per Sec.6-205 as this will allow retailers high ceilings on the ground floor and allow for pitched roofs. Third floor half stories should be either a pitched roof or set back from the street front by a minimum of 12 feet.

- Encourage two story buildings to have facade articulation and architectural embellishment mirroring similar sized or smaller buildings. Attention to design detail gives a building human scale and visual interest.



- Promote the use of fenestration, moldings, doorway patterns, recessed entries, and equally spaced windows on large two-story buildings to provide vibrant texture to the façade.



- Storefront windows should not exceed 8 feet without sub-division and should include mullions and trim. Clear windows are required for retail spaces.



- Street frontages shall have at least 50% of the ground floor façade in transparent windows and storefronts.
- Traditional high quality building materials such as wood, brick, and stone are encouraged. Contemporary man-made materials that have the same visual characteristics are acceptable upon review by the ARC.



APPENDIX B: OLD GREENWICH VILLAGE DISTRICT BOUNDARY



Old Greenwich Village District Boundary

Proposed

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