

## **CHAPTER 3 DISTRICTS AND REGULATIONS**

### **ARTICLE 1341 ARCHITECTURAL REQUIREMENTS**

#### **SECTION 1341.1 APPLICABILITY**

This chapter is intended to serve as a visual definition of the architectural building requirements noted throughout Chapter 3. The key architectural elements of building type and frontage serve as the essential elements of all district provisions. Setbacks, height, and use are all components of a building's frontage and type.

#### **SECTION 1341.2 BUILDING TYPE SPECIFICATIONS**

There are four categories of buildings. Most accommodate the common residential, retail, and workplaces in urban life. Some buildings, however, cannot be subjected to typological categorization. Buildings dedicated to manufacturing and transportation may be distorted by large-scale mechanical trajectories such as power plants and train stations. Civic buildings, which must express the aspirations of the institutions they embody, are exempt from the discipline of type.

##### **Allyard Building**

This type of building occupies the center of the lot with setbacks on all sides. It is the least urban of the types so it is usually assigned to residential areas away from the community and town centers. This building type is usually residential, but when parking is contained within the rear yard it lends itself to limited office and boarding uses. The front yard is intended to be semi-public and visually continuous with the yards of neighbors. The rear yard can be secured for privacy by fences and well-placed outbuildings.

##### **Sideyard Building**

This type of building occupies one side of the lot with the primary open space to the other side. The visual manifestation of the side yard on the street front causes this building type to appear freestanding, so that it may be interspersed with allyard-type buildings in less urban locations. If the adjacent building is also a sideyard type with blank wall, the open space can be quite private. This type permits systematic climatic orientation with the long sideyard elevation facing the sun or the breeze.

##### **Rearyard Building**

This type of building occupies the front of its lot, full width, eliminating most side yards and leaving the rear portion as a private space. This is a relatively urban type appropriate for community and town centers. The building facade steadily defines the edge of the public space while the rear elevation may be articulated for functional purposes. In its residential form, this type is represented by the row or town house with a rear garden and outbuilding creating privacy. In its commercial form, the depth of the rear yard can contain substantial parking for retail and office uses.

### **Courtyard Building**

This type of building occupies all or most of the edges of its lot while internally defining one or more private spaces. This is the most urban of types as it is able to completely shield the private realm from a public realm of great intensity. Because of its ability to accommodate incompatible activities in close proximity, it is recommended for large workplaces, hotels, and schools.

## **SECTION 1341.3 FRONTAGE DEFINITION AND SPECIFICATIONS**

The frontage of a building defines how the building interacts with the public space of the street, plaza, or other public right-of-way. The frontage of a building is a function of its urbanity. Arcades and shop fronts are very urban frontages and are appropriate in neighborhood, community and town center settings. Their relationship to the public realm encourages a vertical mix of uses within a building. In contrast, front lawn frontages are generally appropriate for less urban residential buildings. There are 7 ways in which a building addresses the street:

### **Arcade**

The facade overlaps the sidewalk while the shop front remains set back. This type is excellent for retail use, but only when the sidewalk is fully absorbed so that the pedestrian cannot bypass the colonnade. An easement for public use of private property is required.

### **Shop front**

The facade of a shop front is aligned directly on the frontage line with the entrance at grade. This is typical for sidewalk retail. Shop fronts often have awnings or a colonnade.

### **Stoop**

The facade is aligned directly on the frontage line with the first floor elevated to secure privacy for the windows. This type is suitable for residential uses such as row houses, townhouses and apartment buildings. An easement may be necessary to accommodate the encroaching stoop.

### **Forecourt**

The facade sets back and is replaced by a low wall at the frontage line. The forecourt is suitable for gardens, and car drop-offs. It should be used sparingly and in conjunction with shop fronts and stoops. Trees within the forecourt should be placed to have their canopies overhanging the sidewalks.

### **Dooryard**

The facade is set back from the frontage line with an elevated garden or terrace in between. This type effectively removes the front yard from the sidewalk and keeps it private. Roofed terraces are suitable for restaurants and cafes.

### **Porch and Fence**

The facade is set back substantially from the frontage line with an encroaching porch. The porch should be within conversational distance of the sidewalk. The fence at the frontage line establishes the demarcation of private from public use.

### **Front Lawn**

The facade is set back substantially from the frontage line. The front lawn should be visually continuous with adjacent yards and should be unfenced. The large setback provides a good buffer from traffic and is an appropriate design for boulevard settings.

## **SECTION 1341.4 SPATIAL DEFINITIONS**

Buildings serve to spatially define streets. Proper spatial definition is achieved with buildings or other architectural elements (including certain tree plantings) that make up the street edges aligned in a disciplined manner with an appropriate ratio of height to width. The condition of alignment occurs when the facades of buildings cooperate to delineate the public space, as walls form a room. Building articulation must take place primarily in the vertical plane or facade. Appendages such as porches, balconies, and bay windows are encouraged to promote the visual transition. The condition of enclosure generated by the height-width ratio of the space is related to the physiology of the human eye. If the width of a public space is such that the cone of vision encompasses less street walls than the opening to the sky, then the degree of spatial enclosure is slight. A 1:6 height-to-width ratio is the absolute minimum required for appropriate urban spatial definition. An appropriate average ratio is 1:3. As a general rule, the tighter the ratio, the stronger the sense of place. Spatial enclosure is particularly important for shopping streets, which must compete with malls, which provide very effective spatial definition. In the absence of spatial definition by facades, disciplined tree planting is an alternative. Trees aligned for spatial enclosure are necessary along thoroughfares with substantial front yards.

### **Proportions Techniques**

## **SECTION 1341.5 ELEMENTS OF ARCHITECTURAL COMPATIBILITY**

There are 11 architectural design elements, which create urban space. Building compatibility is attained through the incorporation of a combination of these elements within neighboring buildings. A specific project may not need to incorporate all 11 elements to maintain architectural compatibility provided those elements not addressed do not create incompatibility.

- Building silhouette: similar pitch and scale to a roofline.
- Spacing between building facades: setbacks or notches between primary facades, which frame the structure.
- Setback from property line: building setback and/or primary façade setback from the property line.

- Proportion of windows, bays, and doorways: vertical or horizontal elements tied together in bands across façade lengths.
- Proportion of primary façade: size of facades similar in area and height to width ratios.
- Location and treatment of entryway: important visual commonality between structures.
- Exterior materials used: similar materials and treatment add to detail and monumentality of a building.
- Building Scale: similarity of building height and configuration.
- Landscaping: ordered street plantings tie buildings together and define space.
- Shadow patterns from massing and decorative features: the light and dark surfaces from materials used and projections from window bays and setbacks create visual breaks.
- Style of architecture: similar architectural styles create building harmony along a block face. The following architectural styles exist and are common to the City of Fairmont: American Four Square, Colonial, Neo-Classical, Federal, American Victorian, and Arts & Crafts, among others.

## **SECTION 1341.6 ARCHITECTURAL STANDARDS**

Any and all construction requiring a building permit shall conform to the architectural requirements of this Section. The Planning Director may approve minor variations to this section provided similar materials, configurations, and/or techniques are used that fulfill the intent of this Section. Major variation to building façade requirements due to unique building use requirements may be approved by the Planning Commission, provided the overall pedestrianism of the street is maintained in accordance with all other standards. All variations shall be noted on the final approved plan or building permit. All structures shall adhere to the following general principles:

### **1341.6.1 General Principles**

A. To perpetuate the unique building character of the City of Fairmont, development shall employ dwelling types that are sympathetic to the historic architectural vocabulary of the area in their massing and external materials.

B. The front elevations facing the street and the overall massing shall be pedestrian in scale.

C. Buildings adjacent to each other shall be architecturally compatible through similar silhouettes, spacing between facades, setbacks, proportions, treatments, exterior materials, scale, massing, and/or architectural style. See Section 5 Elements of Architectural Compatibility.

D. The Primary Entrance shall be both architecturally and functionally designed on the front façade of the building facing the primary public street. Such entrances shall be designed to convey their prominence on the fronting façade. The use of fire-escape or exit-only doors as Primary Entrances is explicitly prohibited.

E. All new construction shall conform in street orientation, massing, lot width and setbacks to adjacent existing and proposed structures.

F. Ground mounted mechanical equipment shall be located to the rear or side yard and screened from off-site view. Roof-mounted mechanical equipment shall be screened from off-site view by a parapet wall.

G. Loading and service delivery areas shall be located to the rear or side yard away from the primary street frontage.

H. Canopies and awnings shall be canvas or similar material and shall be permitted to encroach over a sidewalk to within two feet of a public street curb and may be illuminated by external lighting only.

I. Open decks, patios, and steps are permitted with rear and side yards and may encroach into required setback to within 5 feet of all property lines.

J. Fences shall be constructed such that the finished (sheathed) side is oriented towards adjoining lots, streets, or the public right-of-way.

K. Fences for non-residential uses that are adjacent to a residential use shall conform to the residential fence specifications.

L. The front façade of all buildings shall extend parallel to the frontage line of the lot.

### **1341.6.2 Residential Buildings (All Districts)**

#### **A. General Requirements\***

1. Useable porches and stoops should form a predominate motif of the building design and be located on the front and/or side of the home. Useable front porches are at least 6 feet deep and extend more than 50% of the facade.

2. Garages with front loading bays (if permitted) shall be recessed from the front facade of the house and visually designed to form a secondary building volume. If a

porch covers 60% or more of the front façade, the garage shall be recessed a minimum of 6' from the plane of the main building façade. If a porch covers less than 60% of the front façade, the garage shall be recessed a minimum of 10' from the plane of the main building façade. At all times, the garage must be set back a minimum of 20' from the sidewalk to allow unobstructed pedestrian access.

3. Two car garages visible from the street shall be designed with two single doors for consistency of visual proportion. All garages with more than two bays shall be turned such that the bays are not visible from the street. Exception: Corner lots may have garage access (side loaded) from the non-fronting street.

4. Side Loaded Garages may be permitted on corner lots from the non-fronting street.

5. Garage doors are not permitted on the front elevation of any multi-family dwelling.

6. All front entrances shall be raised from the finished grade (at the building line) a minimum of 1 ½ feet.

7. All residential structures shall have a width of not less than 24 feet and a length of not less than 40 feet and shall contain a minimum of 960 square feet of living space, excluding garages, attics and basements;

**\* Not applicable for residential buildings in the General Residential Districts.**

## **B. Materials**

1. Residential exterior building walls shall be wood clapboard, wood shingle, wood drop siding, cement plank board, wood board and batten, brick, stone, stucco, approved vinyl, or similar material. Accessory buildings with a floor area greater than 150 square feet (including carports) shall be clad in materials similar in appearance to the principal structure.

2. Garden walls may be of brick, stone or stucco matching the principal building. Front yard fences shall be split rail, wood picket, cast aluminum, or wrought iron only. Front yard fences of chain link, with appropriate screening, or vinyl may be allowed upon approval of the Planning Director. Side and rear yard fences may be chain link, wood, wrought iron, vinyl, or similar material. All side and rear yard fences over 4 ft in height shall be wood or similar material. Fences shall be constructed such that the finished (sheathed) side is oriented towards adjoining lots, streets, or the public right-of-way.

3. Residential roofs shall be clad in wood shingles, standing seam metal, terne, rubber, slate, diamond tab asphalt shingles, tile, or similar material. Built up flat roofing material may be allowed upon approval by the Planning Director.

### **C. Configurations**

1. Main roofs on residential buildings shall be symmetrical gable, mansard, gambrel, or hip with a minimum pitch of 4:12. Monopitch (shed) roofs are allowed only if they are attached to the wall of the main building. No monopitch roof shall be less than 4:12. Flat roofs may be allowed upon approval by the Planning Director.

2. Two wall materials may be combined horizontally on one facade. The heavier material should be below.

3. Exterior chimneys shall be finished in brick or other material approved by the Planning Department.

4. The undercroft of buildings shall be enclosed.

### **D. Techniques**

1. Overhanging eaves may expose rafters.

2. Flush eaves shall be finished by profiled molding or gutters.

## **1341.6.3 Factory Built Homes**

### **A. General Requirements**

If a factory built home is located in any district other than a Factory Built Home Neighborhood (FBHN), it shall comply with the architectural and landscaping requirements of the district in which it is located.

In no instance may a factory built home be used for a nonresidential purpose.

A factory built home must bear a seal certifying that it was built to the standards and meets or exceeds the construction standards promulgated by the federal Housing and Urban Development, as provided West Virginia Code §8A-11-1, in effect at the time of construction and must satisfy each of the following additional criteria:

1) The structure shall be installed on a permanent masonry perimeter foundation that complies with the requirement of the City's duly adopted building code;

2. No horizontal dimension of the main body shall have a width of less than 24 feet and a length of 40 feet; and

3. The structure shall contain a minimum of 960 square feet of living space, excluding garages, attics and basements;

No factory built home shall be placed in a designated historic district or an area that is eligible for historic designation.

If a factory built home is located in any district other than a Factory Built Home Neighborhood (FBHN), all applicable yard, height and lot size requirements of the district in which it is located shall be satisfied.

## **B Factory Built Homes in Factory Built Home Neighborhoods**

In addition to satisfying all of the general requirements of Factory Built homes, a Factory Built Home in a FBHN must comply with the following requirements:

### **1. Materials**

a. The exterior siding shall consist of wood, masonry finish, brick or horizontally grooved or lap sided or its appearance and shall be comparable in composition, appearance, and durability to the exterior siding commonly used in standard residential construction. Unfinished plywood, oriented strand board, or other sheathing materials shall not be installed as finished siding. The use of flat, vertical or corrugated metal for the exterior walls or roof shall be strictly prohibited.

b. The roof shall be finished with a type of shingle that is commonly used in standard residential construction.

### **2. Configurations**

a. Stairs, porches, entrance platforms and other means of entrance and exit to the factory built homes shall be installed and constructed in accordance with the City of Fairmont's duly adopted Building Code

b. The pitch of the roof of the manufactured home shall have a minimum vertical rise of four (4) feet for each twelve (12) feet of horizontal run, or the standard of each individual manufacturer's equivalent to a 4' x 12' roof pitch.

c. The roof of the manufactured home shall have an overhang (eave) extending at least ten (10) inches from each vertical exterior wall, A site installed gutter may be counted in the width of the eave.

d. The front facade of the building shall extend parallel to the frontage line.

### **3. Techniques**

a. The manufactured home is set up on the site in accordance with established industry standards.

b. The tongue, axels, transporting lights, and removable towing apparatus are removed after placement on the lot but before occupancy.

### **1341.6.4 Commercial And Mixed Use Buildings**

#### **A. Materials**

1. Commercial building walls shall be brick, cast concrete, stucco, stone, marble, or other materials similar in appearance and durability. Regular or decorative concrete block may be used on building walls not visible from a public street or as an accent material only. All accessory buildings shall be clad in materials similar in appearance to the principal structure.
2. Pitched roofs shall be clad in wood shingles, standing seam metal, corrugated metal, slate, diamond tab asphalt shingles or similar material.
3. Flat roofs shall incorporate parapet walls to conceal the flat portions of the roof that are visible on the front and side elevations from any public street. When used on the side elevation, parapets shall be terraced.
4. Fences shall be constructed such that the finished (sheathed) side is oriented towards adjoining lots, streets, or the public right-of-way.

#### **B. Configurations**

1. Two wall materials may be combined horizontally on one facade. The heavier material should be below.
2. Sky-lights shall be flat (non-bubble).
3. At least 70% of the street level frontages shall be in windows or doorways. Street level windows shall be visually permeable. Mirrorized glass is not permitted in any location. Faux or display casements are not permitted in lieu of exterior window treatments for the frontage elevation.
4. No frontage wall shall remain unpierced by a window or functional general access doorway for more than 16 feet.

#### **C. Techniques**

1. Stucco shall be float finish.
2. Windows shall be set to the inside of the building face wall.

### **1341.6.5 Light and Heavy Industrial Buildings**

## **A. Materials**

1. All building walls visible from a public street shall be brick, cast concrete, stucco, stone, marble, decorative concrete masonry unit or other materials similar in appearance and durability. All accessory buildings shall be clad in materials similar in appearance to the principal structure.
2. Pitched roofs shall be clad in wood shingles, standing seam metal, corrugated metal, slate, diamond tab asphalt shingles or similar material.
3. Flat roofs shall incorporate parapet walls to conceal the flat portions of the roof on the front and side elevations that are visible from any public street. When used on the side elevation, parapets shall be terraced.

## **B. Configurations**

1. Two wall materials may be combined horizontally on one facade. The heavier material should be below.
2. Skylights shall be flat (non-bubble).

## **C. Techniques**

1. Stucco shall be float finish.
2. Windows shall be set to the inside of the building face wall.

### **1341.6.6 Civic Buildings (Churches, Schools, Government Offices, and other Civic Facilities)**

Schools, churches, and government buildings should be built so that they terminate a street vista whenever possible, and shall be of sufficient design to create visual anchors for the community. Civic buildings shall adhere to the provisions as marked below.

## **A. Materials**

1. Civic building walls shall be clad in stone, stucco, brick, marble. Decorative cast concrete and wood or similar siding may be used as a minority element on facades facing public streets.
2. Civic roofs shall be clad in slate, sheet metal, corrugated metal, or diamond tab asphalt shingles, or other material similar in appearance and durability.
3. Gutters and down spouts shall be made of copper, galvanized or aluminum painted metal.

4. Columns, if provided, shall be made of wood, cast concrete, or fiberglass.
5. Stained glass or other decorative window treatments are encouraged.
6. Fences shall be constructed such that the finished (sheathed) side is oriented towards adjoining lots, streets, or the public right-of-way.

## **B. Configurations**

1. Two wall materials may be combined horizontally on one facade. The heavier material should be below.
2. Flat roofs are permitted, but civic buildings adjacent to residential structures shall have pitched roofs or architectural features similar to the adjacent residential structures to ensure compatibility. This requirement may be waived when it is deemed to serve no meaningful purpose or public benefit.

## **C. Techniques**

1. Windows shall be set to the inside of the building face wall.