

# Chapter 1117: Architectural Standards<sup>115</sup>

## Chapter 1117 (Architectural Standards) Notes:

The City of Sharonville currently maintains some basic architectural standards for commercial developments that are reviewed as part of the site plan process. The updated chapter on architectural standards expands on these current standards (found in the site plan procedure of the existing code) including applying the standards to all commercial districts and to all multi-family dwellings. General notes on this draft chapter includes:



1. This chapter has been presented to the Review Committee but requires additional time for review.
2. We have tried to highlight where some of the language originated from in the existing planning and code. These references are made through parenthetical references in major headings (highlighted in orange/red text). For the most part, we tried to carry forward any language that had worked well for the City in the past but, in other cases, we have made substantial changes or created new text. These references will be removed once the planning and zoning code is prepared for final adoption.
3. There are a series of footnotes in this draft that will also ultimately be removed for adoption. These footnotes also help identify where there has been changes made and, in some cases, why the changes were made.
4. Additionally, because this is still only a portion of the code, there are still missing cross-references. You will note these by the <> symbol. We included this in the text as an easy way to identify future cross-references that will be added as the complete code is assembled.

If you have any questions or comments regarding this draft language, you can reach out to Jamie Kreindler (Sharonville City Planner) at [jkreindler@cityofsharonville.com](mailto:jkreindler@cityofsharonville.com) or at 513-563-0033 x4104.

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<sup>115</sup> This is a new chapter focused completely on architectural standards. This language has been consolidated from a number of sections of existing code included that from the Architectural Review Board, Mosteller Road Economic Development Overlay District, and site plan review.

### 1117.01 PURPOSE (EXISTING 1157.12)

The purpose of this section is to establish architectural and building design standards that encourage higher quality development and function in order to protect property values, and protect real estate from impairment or destruction of value. These architectural and building design criteria can encourage quality development through the use of a variety of design and site techniques while continuing to provide for a wide range of economic development.

### 1117.02 APPLICABILITY (NEW)

The following buildings shall be subject to the standards of this chapter, unless otherwise stated, which shall be reviewed as part of a site plan review process:

- (a) New multi-family dwellings and rowhouse dwellings in all RM, SM, NLO, and PUD Districts;
- (b) New principal buildings in the OB, LB, GB, CB, SM, CS,, and PF Districts;
- (c) New nonresidential, principal buildings in any PUD District, including mixed-use buildings that contain residential uses;
- (d) Expansion of any principal buildings that are subject to the provision of this chapter; and
- (e) Any accessory building that has more than 500 square feet in floor area located within the LB, GB, or OB zoning district.

### 1117.03 GENERAL GUIDELINES<sup>116</sup>

Any design of buildings subject to the requirements of this chapter shall be designed with the following guidelines in mind:

- (a) Materials should be appropriate for the use of building, for weathering and for relationship to other materials including those used on adjacent buildings.
- (b) Colors and textures should be appropriate for the size and scale of the building, for weathering and for relationship to the site and adjacent buildings.
- (c) Architectural details and ornaments should be meaningful to the overall design and appropriate for the size and scale of the building and for weathering.
- (d) Mechanical equipment should be considered as it effects rooftop appearance, sidewall openings, sound levels, smoke and other nuisance aspects. Also, mechanical equipment shall be considered as it relates to overhead wires, gas and electric meter stations, and any other visible appurtenances.

### 1117.04 ARCHITECTURAL STANDARDS FOR MULTI-FAMILY AND ROWHOUSE DWELLINGS (NEW)

The standards of this subsection shall apply to all multi-family dwellings and to rowhouse dwellings.

- (a) All siding shall be either horizontal or vertical in placement.
- (b) A minimum of 50 percent of all facades shall be constructed of brick, stone, wood, or other natural materials. The use of cultured stone, brick veneer, cementitious materials, or other fabricated materials that resemble natural materials is also permitted, excluding vinyl siding. The remaining 50 percent of facades may be constructed with any sturdy building material, including vinyl.<sup>117</sup>
- (c) Front facades shall incorporate variation in mass through one or more of the following methods every 50 feet of façade frontage:
  - (1) Wall offsets in the form of projections and/or recesses in the façade plane; Wall offsets shall have a minimum depth of two feet;
  - (2) Bay windows;
  - (3) Façade color changes;

<sup>116</sup> This is language that was originally found as guidelines for the architectural review board. They initially were mandates but we have softened the language to serve more as guidance.

<sup>117</sup> COMMITTEE DISCUSSION – How much does the City want to get into regulating building materials for multi-family dwellings?

- (4) Use of pilasters, columns, or other detailing to articulate the facades; or
  - (5) Roofline changes when coupled with correspondingly aligned façade material changes.
- (b)** In addition to wall offsets, front facades and side facades on buildings on corner lots shall provide a minimum of three of the following design features for each residential dwelling unit fronting onto the street:
- (1) One or more dormer windows or cupolas;
  - (2) A recessed entrance;
  - (3) A covered porch;
  - (4) Pillars, posts, or pilasters;
  - (5) One or more bay windows with a minimum of 12-inch projection from the façade plane;
  - (6) Eaves with a minimum of six-inch projection from the façade plane;
  - (7) A parapet wall with an articulated design, which entails design variation rather than a simple rectilinear form; or
  - (8) Multiple windows with a minimum of four-inch-wide trim.



Figure <>: Illustrative example of acceptable architectural design for multi-family dwellings



Figure <>: Illustrative example of unacceptable architectural design for multi-family dwellings

- (c)** To the maximum extent practicable, all roof vents, pipes, antennas, satellite dishes, and other roof penetrations and equipment (except chimneys) shall be located on the rear elevations or configured to have a minimal visual impact as seen from the street. See Section <> and Section <> (Landscaping).

**1117.05 ARCHITECTURAL STANDARDS FOR NONRESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS (REVISED 1148.05 & 1157.12,)**

**(a) Building Orientation**

- (1) Buildings should generally be parallel to the street they front, unless an alternate orientation is consistent with existing adjacent development and is approved by the Planning Commission during site plan review.
- (2) The primary entrances of buildings should be oriented:
  - A. Towards a street along the perimeter of the development or towards a public space, if located adjacent to the proposed project; or
  - B. Towards streets in the interior of the development if none of the building's facades has frontage on a public street; or
  - C. As approved by the Planning Commission during site plan review process.

**(b) Building Facades**

Blank building walls visible from public streets (including alleys adjacent to nonresidential or mixed-use buildings) are prohibited. These requirements shall not generally apply to those walls that are not visible from a street or are completely hidden due to topography or natural features preserved as open space.

**(c) Building Materials**

- (1) A combination of materials, textures, colors, and finishes should be utilized to create visual interest. Vinyl siding and corrugated metal or steel siding material shall be prohibited unless specially approved by the Planning Commission during site plan review.
- (2) Exposed metal panels (such as copper, bronze, or other decorative metal) may be permitted on building elevations in the as an accent or minor exterior material.

**(d) Building Design and Mass**

- (1) All architectural elevations of principal buildings shall consist of a base, a body, and a cap. See [Figure 1117-A](#).



*Figure 1117-A: Illustration of the cap, body, and base of a building.*

- (2) The base shall occupy the lowest portion of the elevation, and should have a height no less than eight percent of the average wall height. The base shall be composed of brick, tile, stone or cast or cultured stone, concrete or pre-fab concrete panels, split-face block, or other material if specially approved by the Planning Commission during site plan review.

- (3) The body shall occupy the middle portion of the elevation, and should have a height no less than 60 percent of the average wall height. The body may be composed of brick, stone, cast or cultured stone, stucco (EFIS), or other material if specially approved by the Planning Commission during site plan review.
- (4) The cap shall occupy the highest portion of the elevation, excluding the roof, and should have a height no less than eight percent eight percent of the average wall height, not to exceed the height of the base. The cap may be composed of brick, tile stone or cast or cultured stone, concrete or pre-fab concrete panels stucco (EFIS), or other material if specially approved by the Planning Commission during site plan review.
- (5) The cap shall consist of at least one of the following architectural features: (See [Figure 1117-B](#) and [Figure 1117-C](#))
  - A. A cornice;
  - B. A parapet;
  - C. An awning;
  - D. A canopy; or
  - E. Eaves.



Figure 1117-B: Example of a cornice (left image) and parapet (right image).



Figure 1117-C: Example of an awning (left image), canopy (center image), and eaves (right image).

- (6) The base and cap shall be clearly distinguishable from the body through changes in color, material, pattern, profile, or texture.
- (7) This section shall not be construed to prohibit metal roofs, flashing, aluminum storefront associated with windows, or high-quality metal siding applications such as copper, bronze, or other decorative metal.

- (8) Architectural elevations for all new buildings shall include design, massing, materials, shape, and scale that creates a unified design on the premises.

(e) **Façade Massing**

(1) **Offset Required**

Front façades 60 feet wide or wider shall incorporate wall offsets of at least two feet in depth (projections or recesses) a minimum of every 40 feet. Each required offset shall have a minimum width of 20 feet. See [Figure 1117-D](#).

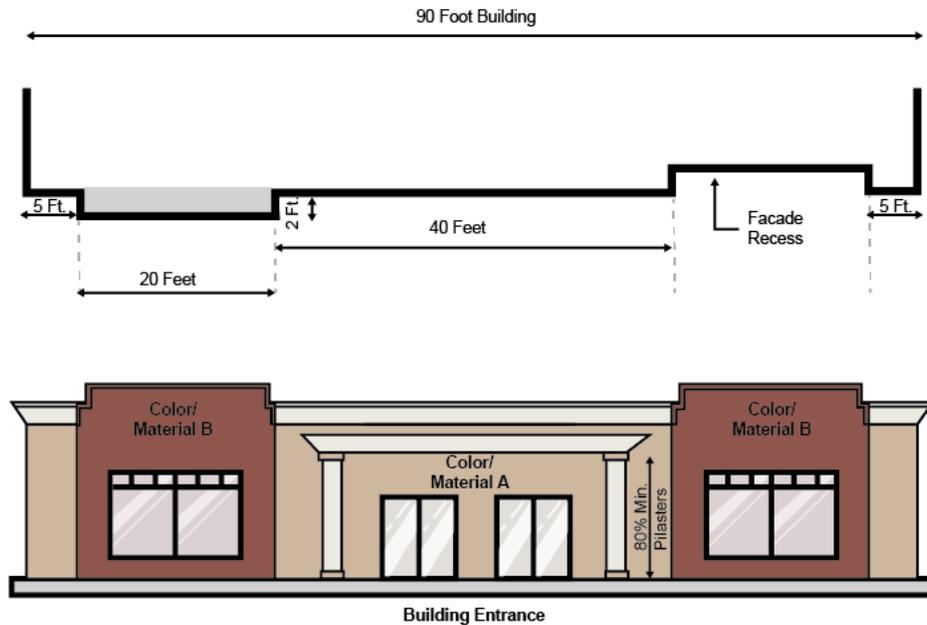


Figure 1117-D: Illustration of how the façade offset provisions may be applied.

(2) **Offset Alternative**

The following alternatives can be used in place of the required front façade offsets as shown in [Figure 1117-E](#):

- A. Façade color or material changes following the same dimensional standards as the offset requirements;
- B. Pilasters having a minimum depth of one foot, a minimum width of one foot, and a minimum height of 80 percent of the façade's height; and/or
- C. Roofline changes when coupled with correspondingly aligned façade material changes.



Figure 1117-E: The above image illustrates material changes that break up the appearance of a single façade.

**(f) Wall Openings (Doors and Windows)**

- (1) Blank walls, those devoid of openings such as windows and transparent doors, shall be prohibited on the front facade of any building. In no case shall a building have blank walls parallel to a public street or to its tangent, if the street is curved.
- (2) Building elevations that are visible from a public street should contain window and door openings that occupy at least 30 percent of the total wall surface area. The bottom edge of the windows shall not be higher than three feet above grade on the ground floor.
- (3) Doors and windows should be positioned to create a uniform pattern or visual rhythm along the building elevation.
- (4) All doors and windows shall be articulated through the use of lintels, sills, and thresholds.
- (5) Doors and windows shall be rectangular in shape and vertical in orientation.
- (6) The pattern of architectural features, such as windows and doors, shall be placed upon the facade of a building in a pattern that creates a building fenestration that has a constant rhythm, a harmonious appearance, and is proportional to one another and surrounding buildings.
- (7) These requirements shall apply to all street facing building facades and the first 20 percent of any non-street facing façade located perpendicular to any street.

**(g) Roof Styles**

- (1) The height of any pitched roof shall not exceed one-half of the overall building height.
- (2) **Roof Line Changes**
  - A. Roofline changes shall include changes in roof planes or changes in the top of a parapet wall, such as extending the top of pilasters above the top of the parapet wall.
  - B. When roofline changes are included on a façade that incorporates wall offsets or material or color changes, roof line changes shall be vertically aligned with the corresponding wall offset or material or color changes. See [Figure 1117-F](#).



Figure 1117-F: Roofline changes shall be aligned with corresponding wall offsets and/or material or color changes.

**(3) Flat Roofs**

- A. When flat roofs are used, parapet walls with three-dimensional cornice treatments shall conceal them. The cornice shall include a perpendicular projection a minimum of eight inches from the parapet façade plane.
- B. Thin parapets that extend more than two feet above the roof and have a depth of less than two feet from the façade surface, are prohibited.



Figure 1117-G: Parapet walls with cornice treatments are used to disguise flat roofs. The image on the right illustrates a tall, thin parapet wall that is prohibited.

**(4) Asymmetric or Dynamic Roofs (New)**

- A. Asymmetric or dynamic roof forms allude to motion, provide variety and flexibility in nonresidential building design, and allow for unique buildings.
- B. Asymmetric or dynamic roof forms shall be permitted on nonresidential buildings provided the criteria for flat roofs in Section <> above are met.



Figure 1117-H: Examples of dynamic or asymmetric roof lines

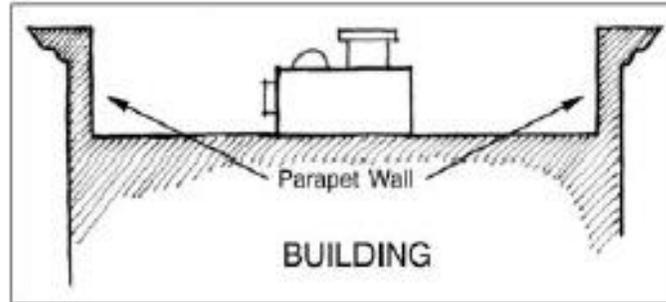
**(h) Refuse Facilities**

Refuse facilities shall be enclosed by fences or walls that are compatible with the architectural materials and patterns of the principal building or may be screened in a manner allowed in Section <> (Landscape Screening).

**(i) Mechanical Equipment**

- (1) Wall mounted mechanical, electrical, communication equipment, downspouts, gutters, service doors, and other building-mounted utility fixtures, shall be painted and maintained to match the building or be screened from view. All rooftop mechanical equipment, unless screened from view, should match the color of the structure or be visually compatible with the structure.
- (2) Mechanical equipment such as transformers and HVAC units should not be located in front yards, unless appropriately screened from view.
- (3) All mechanical equipment, including both ground-mounted and roof-mounted equipment, shall be screened from view from adjacent public rights-of-way, as well as from all property zoned or used for residential purposes.

- (4) Screening elements may include walls (same material and color as principal structure), landscaping, mounds, parapets or enclosures constructed of the same materials used on the majority of the principal structure or any combination or as otherwise approved or required during site plan review. See [Figure 1117-I](#).



*Figure 1117-I: Illustration of the use of walls for the screening of mechanical equipment.*

(j) **Modification or Waiver of this Section**<sup>118</sup>

The requirements of this Section may be modified or waived upon specific review and approval by the Planning Commission during the site plan review process.

<sup>118</sup> COMMITTEE DISCUSSION – Does the committee want to have review criteria for this type of waiver?