

Architectural Board Principles and Standards of Review

Principles and standards for architectural review shall be established and utilized by the Board in its review, approval, or denial of an application. The standards established by the Board are also intended to be a design aid for builders and owners to use in the preparation of architectural plans. The Board shall review and make modifications to the standards to keep them current.

A Building Scale and Mass

The relative proportion of a building to its neighboring existing buildings, to pedestrians or observers, or to other existing buildings shall be maintained or enhanced when new buildings are built or when existing buildings are remodeled or altered.

B Building Rooflines and Roof Shapes

The visual continuity of roofs and their contributing elements (parapet walls, coping, cornices, etc.) shall be maintained in building development or redevelopment.

C Materials

Material selection for architectural design shall be based upon the prevailing materials already used on existing buildings in the area.

- Buildings shall not be permitted where any exposed facade is constructed or faced with a finished material which is aesthetically incompatible with other building facades in the area or which presents an unattractive appearance to the public and surrounding properties.
- The Board does not require that material samples be submitted for One and Two Family Dwellings. Developments that have a limited number of designs will be asked to submit material samples
- The Board does require material samples for all other buildings that are required to be submitted for review and approval.

D Colors

The selection of building colors has a significant aesthetic and visual impact upon the public and neighboring properties. Color shall be selected in general harmony with the existing area or neighborhood buildings.

- The Board does not review and approve the choice of finish materials used on One and Two Family Dwellings. Developments that have a limited number of designs will be asked to submit color samples
- The Board does require color material color samples for all other buildings that are required to be submitted for review and approval.

E Publicly Exposed Elevations

Publicly exposed elevations shall incorporate adequate massing, proportions and wall openings (i.e. windows, doors, porches, etc.) to avoid large blank facades. As explained below, publicly exposed elevations can include any elevation exposed to sufficient public view.

1. Dwellings on Corner Lots

Dwellings on corner lots shall address both street frontages in a consistent manner. Special attention to the massing, height, articulation, fenestration, material finish and detailing are required for all exposed elevations of a corner lot dwelling.

- Finish materials or design treatments shall be consistent on both street elevations or frontages, such as, sufficient elements of the materials used on the front elevation being used on the other street frontage(s) to provide a compatible appearance to the buildings front and corner side elevations.

- Consistent treatments on both street frontages or elevations is not intended to mean that all of the finish materials used on the front elevation need to be applied to the corner side.
- The arrangement of doors and windows on front and side elevations shall be done in a manner to provide a balanced appearance in proportion to the size of the building.
- Side elevations shall avoid flat, blank, uninteresting facades.

2. Upgraded Rear and Side Architecture

- a. Upgraded rear and side architecture may be required in situations other than on corner lots, such as where these elevations are exposed to public view. This occurs in the following situations:
 - Lots which back or flank onto highly visible public uses such as roads, parks, schools, storm water management ponds, public walkways, and the like; and
 - Where stepping of units on curved streets causes exposure to a sufficient proportion of a side elevation.
- b. The exposed side and/or rear elevations of these dwellings shall have a level of quality and detail consistent with the front elevation of the dwelling. This should include, but not be limited to, features such as:
 - Enhanced window style, mutton bars, shutters, frieze board, quoining/pilasters, decorative panels/louvers and brick detailing consistent with the front elevation;
 - Introduction of gables, dormers and/or bay windows; and
 - Additional fenestration on publicly exposed elevation.

F Repetition of Substantially Identical Designs

A substantially identical design of at least one publicly exposed elevation of a building cannot be repeated within a series of three buildings, on either side of a street. A publicly exposed elevation does not need to have every detail of another building's elevation within four lots, to be considered substantially identical.

- A publicly exposed elevation is substantially identical when (1) an ordinary observer would find the differences between the two elevations to be imperceptible when viewing the elevations as a whole or (2) unless instructed to detect the differences, an ordinary observer would conclude that the two elevations are the same. A design that is not substantially identical based upon the above-mentioned standard will be considered an acceptable variation for the purpose of this rule.
- Three buildings with differing designs or acceptable variations must be positioned on the intervening adjacent and facing lots before a substantially identical design can be repeated.
- A street shall not be counted as a lot. Thus, three lots must still separate buildings constructed across the street from another.
- This requirement shall apply to all buildings having a substantially similar design regardless of builder, designer or architect.
- Imperceptible changes in roof pitch, window size, trim style, and the like will generally not be sufficient to avoid a having proposed plans rejected as being substantially identical.

G Design Saturation

A number of buildings having a similar architectural design, style or silhouette within a limited area negates the effect of changes made to individual designs that would be considered acceptable variations under the "substantially identical design" standard. Repetition of a design, style or silhouette, even with perceptible changes to certain features, can result in a saturation of that design style or silhouette within an area.

- A design that may be sufficiently different to be considered an acceptable variation under the "substantially identical design" standard, may be denied when more than 30% of the area in which the proposed building is to be located is developed with buildings having a similar design, style or silhouette.
- An area for the purposes of this standard can include any portion of a development or subdivision including, but not limited to a block, a street, an intersection, or portions thereof.
- In determining the appropriate area for the purposes of calculating the percentage of saturation, the board shall consider whether the area selected serves the ultimate goal of the Board, which is to preserve property values.

H Blank or Windowless Facades

Building facades that are blank or windowless shall be required to provide additional architectural design element(s) to break up the blank plane of the wall.

- The Board recommends that no elevation should be totally windowless.
- This may be accomplished by the addition of window(s), gable end wall treatments, siding design and accent panels, or other architectural design treatments consistent with the building design.
- The addition of more than one design element(s) may be necessary depending on the mass of the elevation.
- A change in color is not considered an acceptable design method to break up the blank, flat or uninteresting plane of the wall.

I Buildings in Multi-Family Developments

Buildings constructed in multi-family developments having a single or very limited number of building designs, will be subject to appropriate or other standards as determined by the Board.

- The intent of this section is to provide standards for developments or projects where due to the numbers, proximity, size, or massing of the buildings the Board determines that the normal review standards are not appropriate.
- Condominium and apartments developments commonly use this concept of design for projects. The use of compatible building materials, material colors and finishes shall be considered when submitting plans for review.
- Color schemes for the building shall blend with each other as opposed to contrast. The intent is to unify the look of the project without resorting to a "rubber stamp" type of approach.
- Material samples and color samples for the buildings will be required to be submitted to the Board for review at the time of application .
- The provisions of E Publicly Exposed Elevations shall apply to these types of developments.

J Past Standards and Decisions

Past decisions shall not limit the ability of the Board to change, update, revise or modify their standards for review.

- Community standards, as well as, building design practices and construction materials change over time. The Board reserves the right to review, update and revise the standards it applies to the use of new building materials and building design practices.
- Past practices shall not obligate the Board to enforce out of date or historic standards.

K Review of Plans on a Case-by-Case Basis

The Board reviews building designs and plans on a case-by-case basis. The building design and plans that are reviewed are specific to a building on a specific site.

- Generalization that the Board's approval or required changes for a building and or site shall not be interpreted as meaning that that approval or the changes required apply to every similar building, design or site within the City.
- Conditions may exist on building sites, or in a development, which may allow for approval of a building design that may not be generally applicable to another site or development in the City.

L Foundations Below Overhanging Bays and Projections

Buildings shall be designed with foundations below bays which overhang the building foundation.

- Exception: The Board may allow the construction of bays or projections of floors above the first floor and projections of floors on sloping lots provided the projections are a minimum of twenty-four (24) inches above grade, at the closest point of the bay or projection to grade.

M Enclosure of Metal Furnace Vents

Chimney and fireplace vents exceeding thirty-six (36) inches in height shall be enclosed in a chase constructed of materials similar to those used on the building elevations; metal housings designed by the vent manufacturer to enclose the chimney vents may be acceptable.

- Vents that are less than thirty-six (36) inches in height may be left exposed.
- The Board recommends vents be located on the rear side of the roof, wherever possible.

N Buildings with Exposed Foundation

Buildings constructed on lots requiring exposed foundation walls shall be required to provide an exterior finish material that conceals the masonry or concrete foundation. Acceptable practices include:

- Extending the first floor siding material to cover the foundation walls to within eight (8) inches of grade.
- Use of brick veneer or decorative split-faced CMU to within eight (8) inches of grade.
- Other decorative finish materials that the Board deems are consistent with the design of the building.

O Signs

Effective 10/1/21, Signs are reviewed by the City Development & Planning Department and no longer require review by the Architectural Review Board.

P Applications for Architectural Board Review of Plans

Plans submitted for Architectural Board review, may not be placed on the Board's agenda until the Franklin Engineering Department has accepted the subdivision's or development's improvements and authorized issuance of building permits.

- Exception: Model homes where allowed by the Development Agreement and when approved by the Common Council may apply for review by the Board prior to the subdivision or development being approved.
- It is the intent of the Board to be able to review plans, issue approvals or denials and allow the Inspection Department to issue permits. Until a development is approved building permits cannot be issued.
- If the development is not approved for the issuance of permits, the Board's approval can or will lapse before a permit application can be accepted, requiring an additional submission of the plans to the Board.

Q Expiration of Approval

The approval of the Board shall expire within ten (10) business days of the meeting date, unless a building permit application has been made to and subsequently accepted by the Inspection Department.

- It is not possible or reasonable for the Board or City of Franklin staff to keep track of open-ended approvals.

R Corrections and Revisions to Plans

Whenever the Board has reviewed plans and requires changes, corrections or modifications to be made to the plans, the owner or contractor shall be required to redraw the building plans.

- Marking changes on the drawings or "red-lining" of the plans will not be accepted.
- When an owner or contractor need to make a revision to plans or a building that was previously approved by the Board, the plans shall be resubmitted for a new approval.