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# **West Lake Avenue Improvement Area Architectural Design Guidelines**

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*prepared for:*

**The Township of Neptune  
Neptune, New Jersey**

*prepared by:*

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*in association with the*  
**Midtown Neighborhood Empowerment Council**

**June 2002**

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# West Lake Avenue Improvement Area - Design Guidelines

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**West Lake Avenue Improvement Area - Design Guidelines**

## **I. Statement of Purpose**

The purpose of this handbook is to serve as a guide to property owners, storefront merchants and builder/developers considering either rehabilitation of existing structures or new construction within the West Lake Avenue area in Neptune Township.

The various expressed guidelines, within the handbook, offer design criteria and design parameters, which are intended to be consistent with neighborhood scale and complementary to other new and future structures within the West Lake Avenue improvement area.

The rehabilitation design guidelines, that follow, suggest design criteria for replacement of architectural elements or the introduction of new building facade treatments. The new construction design guidelines suggest architectural style, form, material and height.

Proposed improvements would ultimately appear to be part of a “*neighborhood center*”. The center would serve the needs of the immediate and adjacent communities, but most importantly...provide a “*sense of place*” and architectural harmony.

## **West Lake Avenue Improvement Area - Design Guidelines**

## **II. Executive Brief and Design Guidelines Summary**

Design Guidelines, which follow, are intended for the West Lake Avenue Improvement Area in Neptune, New Jersey. The improvement area includes the immediate block north and south of West Lake Avenue with Route 35 at its west boundary and the municipality of Asbury Park at its east.

Approximately three and one half street block lengths of under utilized or vacant land are within the improvement area. The area encompasses four traffic intersections including three local north/south streets known as Drummond, Fisher and Myrtle Avenues. Nearly 65% of the area is currently open space. Another 20% of the area are occupied by marginal structures. More than half of the entire West Lake Improvement Area is either owned or under the control of the Township of Neptune.

Although several well-rooted businesses, community based service organizations and a local church remain active within the neighborhood, much of what remains is either vacant property. Much of what remains is non-contributing to the positive image of the residential surroundings or it simply does not satisfy the desired needs of the residents. Used car sales lots, auto repair garages, scrap metal, machinery storage and abandoned structures do not enhance the environment within a residential neighborhood. Mixed residential and neighborhood support services/shops are preferred.

Through community visioning workshops, resident opinion surveys and on-site walking tours, desirable and “favored” uses and services within the West Lake Avenue Area were identified. These expressed desires were enumerated in detail through a written survey, which were provided by residents. A summation of those findings is incorporated into the section, which follows.

As to the specific design guidelines, both rehabilitation and new construction have been addressed. Suggestions include building facade, signage, color and form. Recommendations regarding architectural design, as determined from the various meetings and workshops, focused on ten points. In brief, they include:

1. architecture to be classic in form; not contemporary aluminum and plastic;
2. storefront and sidewalk uses to be encouraged;
3. scale of construction to be at neighborhood services size, not regional;
4. awnings, banners, recessed/covered entries, information kiosks encouraged;
5. encourage pedestrian and other exterior lighting elements;
6. building heights not to exceed 2-stories except in townhouse type design;
7. commercial development shall not be strip mall in configuration;
8. architectural style to be seaside colonial, post-modern; not Victorian;
9. use of masonry, shingles, classic door and window forms encouraged;
10. brown, gray, tan, black and dark green colors on trim and roofs preferred;

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Recommendations regarding signage design, as determined from the various meetings and workshops, focused on five points. In brief, they include:

1. small and varied projecting signs encouraged;
2. back illuminated sign discouraged; avoid use of large white plastic panels;

3. strictly discourage all signage identified as unacceptable to area;
4. encourage use of sidewalk “sandwich” or “specials” signage boards;
5. limit number of signs per business establishment to any 3 approved types;

Recommendations regarding materials, as determined from the various meetings and workshops, focused on five points. In brief, they include:

1. brick masonry; cut marble or granite tiles or stone facing;
2. stucco or simulated stucco finishes;
3. painted wood shingles or simulated split vinyl shingles;
4. painted wood or vinyl horizontal siding not exceeding 6” in dimension;
5. standing seam metal or heavy weight asphalt shingle roof where visible:

In summary, all new or rehabilitated structures are to be between 2-3 stories in height, but 1 story structures are acceptable. Building uses are to be either commercial, residential or community services based in nature. Commercial activity may include professional offices, convenience stores, specialty shops, restaurants, banquet or rental halls, family dining, studio space, neighborhood healthcare, or other residential support services. Light industrial or manufacturing, auto related repairs or sales and warehousing are discouraged.

All proposed improvements shall be classic in form and traditional in the use of materials such as masonry, siding, shingles and window and door types. Hip roofs, parapet fronts with flat roofs and high sloped gable roofs with dormers are encouraged. Aluminum and glass only storefronts, vertical wood siding such as T-111, oversized and bright colored synthetic based or plastic panel assemblies, or other such applications inconsistent with the area or indigenous aspects of the region are not acceptable.

## **West Lake Avenue Improvement Area - Design Guidelines**

### **III. Community Visioning Workshops and Findings**

Community visioning workshops, resident opinion surveys and on-site walking

tours were conducted over the course of a year in 2001. Neptune Township Officials, Economic Development Corporation members and the professional services team.

## **A. Favored Uses Survey**

The results of the survey are listed below for reference purposes. Criteria for responses to the survey were limited to neighborhood and needs favored by the respondents.

### **Most Highly Desired**

- family dining
- small parks
- local historic and arts resources

### **Strongly Favored**

- Medical Office
- Bank/or ATM access
- Laundromat
- Ice Cream Parlor
- Community Hall/Community Theater
- Convenience Store

### **Needed Facilities, Businesses, and Services**

- Banquet Hall
- Local Art Displays and Galleries
- Video/Music Store
- Dance Studio
- Arts/Crafts Studio
- Karate Studio
- Meat/Fish Market/Vegetable Stand
- Dry Cleaners

### **Other Facilities, Businesses or Services**

- Coffee Shop
- Diner/Formal Dining/Ethnic Food
- Law Offices
- State Government Offices
- Hair Salon

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## **B. Preliminary Concept Plan**

The planning concept for the West Lake Improvement Area is that of a “neighborhood” or “village center” as selected by the neighborhood group. It was determined that any development would be limited to 35 feet in height with 2-story commercial or combined commercial/residential uses. Residential town homes or multi-family development could include up to full 3-stories.

The feeling of open pedestrian space with the integration of a number of small “park landscapes” coupled with the retention of on-street convenience parking and added parking lot opportunities in the rear was a fundamental premise.

The added rear lot parking necessitates the treatment of back of buildings as a secondary front. This mandates a re-thinking of front and back preconceptions and requires that back of building entries be provided where feasible. As a minimum, rear facades should be architecturally enhanced and appear inviting.

Access to the neighborhood center the proposed commercial enclave should be through pedestrian and vehicular portals. A portal may be a covered alley or passage or simply an open gap between the rear parking areas and the avenue. These portals should be secure, visible from the street, well illuminated and landscaped, but most of all “inviting”.

The preliminary illustrative concept plan indicates general locations for:

- the Neighborhood Center and Commercial Development Opportunities;
- the Neighborhood Services Core Area; and both
- the Mixed-use and Residential Development Opportunities.

The current inventory of buildings is limited thereby providing limited architectural definition...so it is not likely that any development will get its cue from the existing, Several wood frame homes currently exist and several businesses are in place, but much is simply an open space with several structures in need of removal.

The introduction of a series of new buildings, or services and businesses, should have a themed relationship such as music, food, arts, and social events. This would present a critical mass of activity. Such critical mass can be achieved at Drummond and Fisher Avenues... the two intersections east of Route 35 along West Lake Avenue...in addition to the concept of creating a neighborhood or village center on the first block.

In addition, the introduction of an office building which may include a health clinic, some government or municipal offices, and community meeting room would reinforce the avenue’s significance and would add to the overall critical mass or could be the needed catalyst for development.

### **C. Neighborhood Use Groups**

As previously stated, it was determined that any development should be limited to 35 feet in height with 2-story commercial or combined commercial/residential uses. Residential town-homes or multi-family development could include up to a full 3-stories.

The entry corners from Route 35 present special opportunities for key

commercial development at the northeast and southeast corners of the Route 35 roadway and the West Lake Avenue intersection. Other significant commercial and mixed-use development opportunities have been suggested on the Avenue.

Use groups are suggested on the Preliminary Concept Plan as follows:

- C Commercial (Retail Shops and Second Floor Offices)
- R Residential (2 to 3-stories in height)
- C/R Combined Commercial and Residential Mixed-use (Retail Shops on the First Floor with Residential Units above.)

This does not strictly limit the potential for development of the land available or introduction of other compatible uses such as elderly care, additional child daycare, religious structures or job/career training facilities. These uses are offered suggested configurations in response to the area's resident and business owner workshops.

Specialty uses such as a community center/banquet hall, a walk-in health clinic, or other such uses are specifically identified. Where no such facility currently exists, the suggested location is indicated for consideration only.

## **West Lake Avenue Improvement Area - Design Guidelines**

### **IV. Architectural Design Guidelines for Rehabilitation**

The goal in rehabilitation of any building is to preserve any significant architectural characteristics or attributes while addressing its problems. When undertaking any such project, the Owner should consider how it will affect any distinctive features of the building, improve the function and utility of the existing structure, and potential impact the

community.

Architectural Design Guidelines for Rehabilitation, as determined from the various meetings and workshops, focused on ten points. In brief, they include:

1. architecture to be classic in form; restore or emphasize original materials; and not add contemporary aluminum or textured vertical wood panels or bright sheet plastic treatments;
2. storefront and sidewalk uses to be encouraged;
3. scale of construction to be at neighborhood services size, not regional;
4. use of awnings, banners, and recessed or covered entries encouraged;
5. pedestrian and other exterior lighting elements should be added;
6. building heights should not to exceed 2-stories where second floor additions maybe proposed;
7. commercial use should be consistent with and reflect the scale of the building as proposed for renovation;
8. restored architectural style to be as per the original where appropriate, or seaside colonial; not a recreation of a Victorian or other landmark which did not exist;
9. use of masonry, shingles, classic or restored original door and window forms encouraged;
10. brown, gray, tan, black and dark green colors on trim preferred; roofs should be dark, not white or light gray shingle;

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The following guidelines are intended to assist the architectural rehabilitation and renovation design process through simple suggestions and language.

### **A. Form**

Commercial structures should not be combined on West Lake Avenue so as to create a suburban highway strip mall configuration. This approach is strongly discouraged.

The three-dimensional form of a building and its roof shapes should be

reconstructed where missing or enhanced to reflect the style originally intended.

Proposed renovations should not incorporate contemporary pre-fabricated aluminum and oversized exterior plastic wall panels.

The scale of any addition should be neighborhood services size, not regional in appearance.

Architectural style should attempt to be Mediterranean, Southwestern, Victorian or of other specific period, but reflect the seaside neighborhood village feeling or assume a straight forward post-modern treatment as a new building skin, where appropriate.

## **B. Height**

Existing building heights generally do not to exceed 2-stories. Variations to this, where additions may be proposed, will be subject to review by the MNEC and approval by the local Planning Board. The articulation and provision of varied roof heights and forms is encouraged.

## **C. Roofs**

New hip style roofs and flat roofs with arched or architecturally detailed parapet fronts are welcomed in any alteration. The use of gable roofs with an 8:12 pitch or better in combination with the use of dormers, eyelids or other roof elements are all recommended.

The addition of standing seam metal roofs or re-roofing with heavy weight asphalt shingles are preferred wherever renovation efforts include new roof design work.

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## **D. Storefronts , Doors and Windows**

The design or rehabilitation of storefronts includes a variety of components. In addition to doors and storefront windows, are the elements of security grilles, awnings and surface mounted or projecting exterior lighting.

### **1. Doors and Storefront Display Windows:**

Doors may be double or single in configuration; be constructed of wood or metal but preferably not brushed steel or unfinished aluminum; hardware is to be in keeping with the style of the door and the existing or proposed

architecture of the building.

Storefront display windows should be large tempered plate glass with frames, which match or complement the doors and other trim. The use of transoms, arched window configurations and conservatory type designs are encouraged. Refer to the Index section of this handbook for examples.

Existing structures in the West Lake Avenue area currently have double-hung window. Any replacement of such windows should be consistent with that window type so as to complement the overall architecture of the building and any storefront design within visual relationship.

2. Security Grilles:

Every effort should be made to conceal security grilles over storefront designs through architectural means or through the use of awnings. Location of the security storage grille boxes may be either interior or exterior mounted, but should be painted to match the exterior or trim colors of the building. Dark green, brick brown or black are preferred color choices.

3. Awnings:

Awnings shall be fabric type; manufactured of canvas or linen; vinyl and sheet plastic are not acceptable. Awnings may be designed so as to be placed over a single display window or door, or may be designed so to extend over the length of an entire storefront.

Colors should complement the proposed building design or improvement and be consistent with the preferred colors listed in the Index section of this handbook. Stripes are permitted; solids are preferred; the use of limited lettering reflecting the name of the establishment is acceptable, however, the placement of trade names, beverages, products, or other corporate logos is subject to review and is generally discouraged.

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All awnings should be at least 7'-6" clear from sidewalk grade and not extend beyond 6'-0" from the building face.

4. Exterior Lighting:

Exterior mounted lighting should be positioned so as not to impede passage or inflict harm to pedestrians, nor create a visual barrier along the street. Gooseneck, bracket lamps, and eyeball type surface mounted fixtures are acceptable. Finishes should complement the architectural color schemes selected. Dark green, brick brown or black are preferred color choices.

## E. Materials and Color

The appeal of older buildings is often in their use of quality materials and detailing. The selection of any materials along the West Lake Avenue will likely set standards for theme and quality. It is therefore critical to the overall aesthetic that quality materials be carefully considered and sensibly incorporated.

Recommendations regarding materials and their quality, as determined from the various meetings and workshops, focused on *five points*. In brief, they include use of preferred:

1. brick masonry; cut marble or granite tiles or stone facing;
2. stucco or simulated stucco/stone finishes;
3. painted wood shingles or simulated split vinyl shingles;
4. limited use of painted wood or vinyl horizontal siding not exceeding 5" in exposed profile dimension;
5. standing seam metal or heavy weight simulated slate asphalt shingle roof where roof facings are visible.

Proposed renovations should not be constructed of contemporary pre-fabricated aluminum and oversized exterior plastic wall panels.

Proposed renovations should not incorporate, ceramic tile facings, ribbed aluminum panels; corrugated metals;

Again, material choices should not be themed to be Mediterranean, Southwestern, Frontier, Victorian or other specific period or thematic design.

The choice of color is one of the most important decisions generated by a building owner or merchant. Color applies to logos, awnings, doors and windows, signage and exterior treatments. Although often a personal decision, the selection of

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color will definitely impact the general character of the street. Therefore, a good color choice scheme choice benefits the overall neighborhood climate and visual environment.

In accordance with the recommendations at the workshops and the professional team the use of colors *should be* generally brown, gray, tan, black, white, cream and dark green. These are all natural earth tone colors. Similar colors could be applied on trim and roofs. This does not preclude the use of blues, whites or reds but does suggest that these are a better choice within the neighborhood setting.

Colors which are *specifically discouraged* include, pink, turquoise, magenta, orange, lime, purple, bright red and any in the day-glow family.

Preferred and suggested color schemes for both buildings and signage are

provided in the Index section of this handbook.

## **F. Style, Rhythm and Proportions**

Main Street buildings have traditionally created a “rhythm” in the placement of doors, entries and windows. This is especially notable along a streetscape. Renovations should respect the rhythms of the existing buildings.

## **G. Ornamentation and Detail**

Ornamentation and detail should be limited. This is not to be a recreation of a Victorian Village, nor a reconstituted turn-of-the-century Main Street.

The use of classic forms such as hipped roofs, masonry tower elements, parapet walls with stone copings, over-sized entry doors, clerestory and transom windows and liberal application of window arches, strong architectural corners, masonry columns and repeating elements are all strongly encouraged in any renovation design proposed.

The use of brackets and other lost or traditional architectural elements should be considered and viewed as appropriate. Elaborate detailing of wood gingerbread and ornamental ironwork may be inappropriate.

Refer to the Index section of this handbook for examples of architectural treatments, which have been identified through the workshops with the community.

## **H. Signage**

To assist in the design of storefront and building graphics and signage, a listing of prohibited and generally acceptable signs has been provided for easy reference.

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Recommendations regarding signage design, as determined from the various meetings and workshops, focused on *five points*. In brief, they include:

1. small and varied projecting signs encouraged;
2. back illuminated sign discouraged; avoid use of large white plastic panels;
3. strictly discourage all signage identified as unacceptable to area;
4. encourage use of sidewalk “sandwich” or “specials” signage boards;
5. limit number of signs per business establishment to any 3 approved types;

Signs are one of the most prominent visual elements on the street and define the purpose of a building. If designed, signs add interest and variety to the streetscape and building facade while enlivening the street scene. Signs may also detract from the architecture and negatively impact even the best designed storefront.

Proposed signs should be simple and clear. They should present the business without being loud or garish. Graphic symbols and simple messages are most effective. Signs should harmonize with the building's proposed renovation.

Signs may be placed anywhere on a building but are best suited for designated areas as shown in the facade diagram provided in the Index section of this handbook. When determining where a sign should be placed or how size of a sign, first refer to the storefront and then to the building as a whole. A sign should never be so large as to overpower the shop or place of business nor should it obscure the building's architectural features.

The use of such words as "thrift", "bargain", or "used" should generally be discouraged on signage.

Signs should always relate to the premise on which they are positioned.

Preferred and suggested signage color schemes and suggested lettering styles are provided in the Index section of this handbook.

## **I. Other Related Concerns**

Items such as sidewalk merchandising displays, cafes, fencing, banners, covered walkways or entries, trash disposal and pick-up and even window air conditioning units are not usually considered as part of the original architectural design. These items may change what is actually seen by the public. Sometimes the overall building is even perceived as a negative contributor to the area or district. These "*other related concerns*" are simply reminders for further consideration during the planning and design process of any improvements. Each of these concerns are extensions of the building and storefront facade design process.

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### **1. Sidewalk Merchandising Displays:**

In general, most sidewalk uses should be encouraged.

Such displays add color and vitality to the street and pedestrian environment, but unless done well...could become contributors to sidewalk confusion and clutter. Sidewalk displays for vegetables, fruit, newspapers and other small items should be on either removable carts which are stored indoors overnight or are a permanent built-in display.

Displays should not hamper the access or egress to the place of business

Displays should not hamper the access or egress to the place of business and not extend beyond 3 feet from the building face. Exceptions may include flower and plant sales or bike rentals. In all cases, a 42" minimum passage must be provided along the sidewalk area.

Use of cardboard boxes and cartons is not acceptable.

2. Cafes/Sidewalk Dining:

Sidewalk dining usually consist of tables, chairs, umbrellas, serving carts and trash receptacles. Selection of chairs and tables should be a combination of small 24” to 36” tables with matching chairs. Tables and chairs should be of the same style and color for any given business. Color should be in keeping with the building trim and be consistent with the suggested colors in the Index section of this handbook. Picnic tables, lawn chairs, indoor dining furniture and mixtures of furnishings is strongly discouraged. Uniformity in design is preferred in furnishings.

Pedestrian passage must be maintained. A minimum of 42” is required and 84” is preferred, if possible. Placement of dining furniture should be placed directly in front of and adjacent to the place of business in sidewalk situations. Where larger plaza type spaces are available, minimal clearance should be accommodated.

In all cases, food service carts containing trash or dirty dishes should be draped and maintained clean.

Umbrellas should be matching canvas type or vinyl. Colors should complement the proposed building design or improvement and be consistent with the preferred awnings colors listed in the Index section of this handbook. Stripes are permitted; solids are preferred; the use of limited lettering reflecting the name of the establishment is acceptable; however, the placement of trade names, beverages or other corporate logos is subject to review and approval and is discouraged.

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Sidewalk umbrellas should not exceed 6 feet in diameter dimension. Umbrellas sized between a 4 to 5 foot dimension are preferred.

3. Fencing:

Chain link fencing is not recommended. Painted wrought iron or vinyl clad rail type fencing is preferred if fencing is required.

4. Banners:

Flags and banners may be attached to masonry or framed exterior surfaces; mechanical fastening is acceptable. Banners should not extend beyond 42” from the building face; banner heights may vary, there are no limits other than a minimal clearance of 8 feet from street grade.

5. Covered Entries or Walkways:

Covered entries may be fabric or canvas type with lightweight aluminum tubular frame with anchored tie downs, but permanent structural covered entries and recessed entries are preferred.

6. Trash Disposal and Pick-up:

Areas of designated trash disposal and pick-up should be centrally located and shared where possible. Such containers should be remote from outdoor dining and pedestrian walkways. Such containers should also be screen with masonry walls, gates and landscape to the extent practical.

## **West Lake Avenue Improvement Area - Design Guidelines**

### **V. Architectural Design Guidelines for New Construction**

As stated previously, the goal in rehabilitation of any building is to preserve any significant architectural characteristics or attributes while addressing its problems. However, for new construction, the developer/builder, in a working relationship with their architect, should evaluate the relationship to the street, proposed parking, and surrounding neighborhood as it stands today...and may evolve in the future. Any new construction along West Lake Avenue will introduce a major new element onto the streetscape.

Architectural Design Guidelines for New Construction, as determined from the various meetings and workshops, focused on *ten points*. In brief, they include:

1. architecture to be classic in form; not contemporary aluminum and plastic;
2. storefront and sidewalk uses to be encouraged;

3. scale of construction to be at neighborhood services size, not regional;
4. awnings, banners, recessed/covered entries, information kiosks encouraged;
5. introduce ample pedestrian and other exterior lighting elements;
6. building heights not to exceed 2-stories except in townhouse type design;
7. commercial development shall not be strip mall in configuration;
8. architectural style to be seaside colonial, post-modern; not Victorian;
9. Use of masonry, shingles, and classic door and window forms encouraged;
10. brown, gray, tan, black and dark green colors on trim preferred; roofs should be dark, not white or light gray shingle;

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The following guidelines are intended to assist the architectural design process through simple suggestions and language.

**A. Form**

Commercial structures should not be randomly situated on oversized and vacant lots, but be strategically sited to create relationships with neighbors, balance aesthetic visuals and create interesting architectural perspectives. Sporadic and unplanned commercial development placed on the Avenue in a suburban highway strip mall fashion is strongly discouraged.

The three-dimensional form of a building and its roof shapes should be similar to those other buildings to be built or proposed within the West Lake Avenue Area. In that much of the avenue's area is vacant, the suggested form should be:

1. inspired by and emulate classic and traditional forms and shapes; timeless architecture preferred;
2. proposed designs should not be constructed of contemporary pre-fabricated aluminum and oversized exterior plastic wall panels;

3. scale of new construction should be neighborhood services size, not regional;
4. commercial development should not be of the strip mall variety;
5. architectural style should be seaside colonial, post-modern; not themed to be Mediterranean, Southwestern, Victorian or of other specific period or thematic design;

## **B. Height**

Building heights should not to exceed 2-stories except in townhouse type or multi-family residential designs where a full 3-story height is acceptable. Variations to this guideline will be subject to review by the MNEC and approval by the local Planning Board. The articulation and provision of varied roof heights and forms is encouraged.

## **C. Roofs**

Hip roofs and flat roofs with arched or architecturally detailed parapet fronts are preferred. The use of gable roofs with an 8:12 pitch or better in combination with the use of dormers, eyelids or other roof elements is also recommended. Featured corner tower elements, tower time clocks and articulated parapet walls at the building facade are welcomed features.

The use of standing seam metal or heavy weight asphalt shingle roof construction is encouraged at pitched roofs.

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## **D. Storefronts , Doors and Windows**

The design of storefronts include a variety of components. In addition to doors and storefront windows, are the elements of security grilles, awnings and surface mounted or projecting exterior lighting.

### **1. Doors and Storefront Display Windows:**

Doors may be double or single in configuration; be constructed of wood or metal but preferably not brushed steel or unfinished aluminum; hardware is to be in keeping with the style of the door and the architecture of the building.

Storefront display windows should be large tempered plate glass with frames, which match or complement the doors and other trim. The use of transoms, arched window configurations and conservatory type designs are encouraged. Refer to the Index section of this handbook for examples.

As a point of clarification, residential, commercial office applications and other second floor uses may utilize either casement, awning or double-

hung window types which complement the overall architecture of the building and any storefront design within visual relationship.

2. Security Grilles:

Every effort should be made to conceal security grilles over storefront designs through architectural means or through the use of awnings. Location of the security storage grille boxes may be either interior or exterior mounted, but should be painted to match the exterior or trim colors of the building. Dark green, brick brown or black are preferred color choices.

3. Awnings:

Awnings shall be fabric type; manufactured of canvas or linen; vinyl and sheet plastic are not acceptable. Awnings may be designed so as to be placed over a single display window or door, or may be designed so to extend over the length of an entire storefront.

Colors should complement the proposed building design or improvement and be consistent with the preferred colors listed in the Index section of this handbook. Stripes are permitted; solids are preferred; the use of limited lettering reflecting the name of the establishment is acceptable, however, the placement of trade names, beverages, products, or other corporate logos is subject to review and is generally discouraged.

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All awnings should be at least 7'-6" clear from sidewalk grade and not extend beyond 6'-0" from the building face.

4. Exterior Lighting:

Exterior mounted lighting should be positioned so as not to impede passage by pedestrians, inflict harm to passers by, nor create a visual barrier along the street. Gooseneck, bracket lamps, and eyeball type surface mounted fixtures are acceptable. Finishes should complement the architectural color schemes selected. Dark green, brick brown or black are preferred color choices.

## **E. Materials and Color**

The appeal of older buildings is often in their use of quality materials and detailing. New construction should continue the use of established neighborhood materials where appropriate. The selection of materials in any new construction along the avenue will likely set new standards for theme and quality. It is therefore critical to the overall aesthetic that quality materials be incorporated.

Recommendations regarding materials and their quality, as determined from the various meetings and workshops, focused on *five points*. In brief, they include use of preferred:

1. brick masonry; cut marble or granite tiles or stone facing;
2. stucco or simulated stucco/stone finishes;
3. painted wood shingles or simulated split vinyl shingles;
4. limited use of painted wood or vinyl horizontal siding not exceeding 5" in exposed profile dimension;
5. standing seam metal or heavy weight simulated slate asphalt shingle roof where roof facings are visible.

Proposed designs should not be constructed of contemporary pre-fabricated aluminum and oversized exterior plastic wall panels.

Proposed designs should not incorporate, ceramic tile facings, ribbed aluminum panels; corrugated metals;

Again, material choices should not be themed to be Mediterranean, Southwestern, Frontier, Victorian or other specific period or thematic design.

The choice of color is one of the most important decisions generated by a building owner or merchant. Color applies to logos, awnings, doors and windows,

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signage and exterior treatments. Although often a personal decision, the selection of color will definitely impact the general character of the street. Therefore, a good color choice scheme choice benefits the overall neighborhood climate and visual environment.

In accordance with the recommendations at the workshops and the professional team the use of colors *should be* generally brown, gray, tan, black, white, cream and dark green. These are all natural earth tone colors. Similar colors could be applied on trim and roofs. This does not preclude the use of blues, whites or reds but does suggest that these are a better choice within the neighborhood setting.

Colors which are *specifically discouraged* include, pink, turquoise, magenta, orange, lime, purple, bright red and any in the day-glow family.

Preferred and suggested color schemes for both buildings and signage are provided in the Index section of this handbook.

## **F. Style, Rhythm and Proportions**

Main Street buildings have traditionally created a “rhythm” in the placement of doors, entries and windows. This is especially notable along a streetscape. Whereas renovations should respect the rhythms of the existing buildings, new construction should

either respect or repeat the rhythms of the existing or establish a new pattern from which future designs along the avenue may take a cue.

## **G. Ornamentation and Detail**

Ornamentation and detail should be limited in that this is not to be a faux Victorian Village, nor a reconstituted turn-of-the-century Main Street. The use of classic forms such as hipped roofs, masonry tower elements, parapet walls with stone copings, over-sized entry doors, clerestory and transom windows and liberal application of window arches, strong architectural corners, masonry columns and repeating elements are all strongly encouraged.

The use of brackets at roof lines and corners can be a visual asset by emulating traditional architectural treatments. Post-modern designs in conjunction with seaside colonial architecture focus on form and function rather than elaborate detailing of wood gingerbread and ornamental ironwork.

Refer to the Index section of this handbook for examples of architectural treatments, which have been identified through the workshops with the community.

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## **H. Signage**

To assist in the design of storefront and building graphics and signage, a listing of prohibited and generally acceptable signs has been provided for easy reference.

Recommendations regarding signage design, as determined from the various meetings and workshops, focused on *five points*. In brief, they include:

1. small and varied projecting signs encouraged;
2. back illuminated sign discouraged; avoid use of large white plastic panels;
3. strictly discourage all signage identified as unacceptable to area;
4. encourage use of sidewalk “sandwich” or “specials” signage boards;
5. limit number of signs per business establishment to any 3 approved types;

Signs are one of the most prominent visual elements on the street and define the purpose of a building. If designed, signs add interest and variety to the streetscape and building facade while enlivening the street scene. Signs may also detract from the architecture and negatively impact even the best designed storefront.

Proposed signs should be simple and clear. They should present the business without being loud or garish. Graphic symbols and simple messages are most effective. Signs should harmonize with the building’s design.

Signs may be placed anywhere on a building but are best suited for designated areas as shown in the facade diagram provided in the Index section of this handbook. When determining where a sign should be placed or how size of a sign, first refer to the storefront and then to the building as a whole. A sign should never be so large as to overpower the shop or place of business nor should it obscure the building's architectural features.

The use of such words as "thrift", "bargain", or "used" should generally be discouraged on signage.

Signs should always relate to the premise on which they are positioned.

Preferred and suggested signage color schemes and suggested lettering styles are provided in the Index section of this handbook.

## **I. Other Related Concerns**

Items such as sidewalk merchandising displays, cafes, fencing, banners, covered walkways or entries, trash disposal and pick-up and even window air conditioning units are not usually considered as part of the original architectural design.

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These items may change what is actually seen by the public. Sometimes the overall building is even perceived as a negative contributor to the area or district. These "*other related concerns*" are simply reminders for further consideration during the planning and design process of any improvements. Each of these concerns are extensions of the building and storefront facade design process.

#### 1. Sidewalk Merchandising Displays:

In general, most sidewalk uses should be encouraged.

Such displays add color and vitality to the street and pedestrian environment, but unless done well...could become contributors to sidewalk confusion and clutter. Sidewalk displays for vegetables, fruit, newspapers and other small items should be on either removable carts which are stored indoors overnight or are a permanent built-in display.

Displays should not hamper the access or egress to the place of business and not extend beyond 3 feet from the building face. Exceptions may include flower and plant sales or bike rentals. In all cases, a 42" minimum passage must be provided along the sidewalk area.

Use of cardboard boxes and cartons is not acceptable.

#### 2. Cafes/Sidewalk Dining:

Sidewalk dining usually consist of tables, chairs, umbrellas, serving carts and trash receptacles. Selection of chairs and tables should be a combination of small 24” to 36” tables with matching chairs. Tables and chairs should be of the same style and color for any given business. Color should be in keeping with the building trim and be consistent with the suggested colors in the Index section of this handbook. Picnic tables, lawn chairs, indoor dining furniture and mixtures of furnishings is strongly discouraged. Uniformity in design is preferred in furnishings.

Pedestrian passage must be maintained. A minimum of 42” is required and 84” is preferred, if possible. Placement of dining furniture should be placed directly in front of and adjacent to the place of business in sidewalk situations. Where larger plaza type spaces are available, minimal clearance should be accommodated.

In all cases, food service carts containing trash or dirty dishes should be draped and maintained clean.

Umbrellas should be matching canvas type or vinyl. Colors should complement the proposed building design or improvement and be

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consistent with the preferred awnings colors listed in the Index section of this handbook. Stripes are permitted; solids are preferred; the use of limited lettering reflecting the name of the establishment is acceptable, however, the placement of trade names, beverages or other corporate logos is subject to review and approval and is discouraged.

Sidewalk umbrellas should not exceed 6 feet in diameter dimension. Umbrellas sized between a 4 to 5 foot dimension are preferred.

3. Fencing:

Chain link fencing is not recommended. Painted wrought iron or vinyl clad rail type fencing is preferred if fencing is required.

4. Banners:

Flags and banners may be attached to masonry or framed exterior surfaces; mechanical fastening is acceptable. Banners should not extend beyond 42” from the building face; banner heights may vary, there are no limits other than a minimal clearance of 8 feet from street grade.

5. Covered Entries or Walkways:

Covered entries may be fabric or canvas type with lightweight aluminum

tubular frame with anchored tie downs, but permanent structural covered entries and recessed entries are preferred.

6. Trash Disposal and Pick-up:

Areas of designated trash disposal and pick-up should be centrally located and shared where possible. Such containers should be remote from outdoor dining and pedestrian walkways. Such containers should also be screen with masonry walls, gates and landscape to the extent practical.

## **West Lake Avenue Improvement Area - Design Guidelines**

### **VI. Index of Sample Architectural Images**

The purpose of this section is to provide a quick visual impression of the architectural treatments preferred and suggested within the body of this handbook.

## **West Lake Avenue Improvement Area - Design Guidelines**

### **VII. Index of Suggested Color Schemes**

The purpose of this section is to provide a quick reference for the use of color in the proposed architectural design and treatments as preferred and suggested within the body of this handbook.

**Index of Suggested Building Color Schemes**

**Index of Suggested Signage Color Schemes**

## **West Lake Avenue Improvement Area - Design Guidelines**

### **VIII. Index of Sample Storefront Treatments**

The purpose of this section is to provide a quick visual reference and starting point for the design the entries and storefronts as preferred and suggested within the body of this handbook.

**Sample Storefront Treatments**

## **Sample Storefront Treatments**

## **West Lake Avenue Improvement Area - Design Guidelines**

### **IX. Index of Sample Signage Treatments**

The purpose of this section is to provide a quick visual reference and guide as to the selection of typeface lettering and color selection as suggested within the body of this handbook. In addition, a listing of permitted and inappropriate signs and marketing elements is provided.

## **Sample Signage Locations**

## **Sample Signage Combinations**

**Sample Signage Lettering Styles**

## **Permitted Signage and Marketing Elements**

The following is a list of signage which is permitted within the improvement area:

1. Any commercial sign fitting within the parameters as set forth by the suggested storefront or business sign in compliance with the locations, lettering style, signage combination, color or other criteria established by local code or as described herein.
2. Historic tablets, cornerstones, memorial plaques, and emblems which do not exceed 6 square feet in area and that are placed by government agencies, civic or religious organizations.
3. Flags or emblems of religious, educational, civic or governmental organizations displayed on buildings or grounds occupied by the organization; and the National, State or Local flag where displayed in accordance with the laws and guidelines promulgated by the Federal Government or other jurisdictional authority.
4. Signs indicating public transportation stops when approved or installed by public transit or municipal authorities.
5. Temporary and permanent traffic signs and signals installed by township, county, or state agencies for the purpose of directing or regulating the flow of traffic.
6. Kiosk or community information bulletin boards designed as permanent streetscape installations as part of the improvement area concept plan.
7. Non-illuminated directional signs identifying parking areas, loading zones, entrances, exits and similar conditions. The signs may include a business name but not exceed 4 square feet in area.
8. Warning, no trespassing or other safety signs not exceeding 4 square feet in area.
9. Name and numerical plates identifying residential addresses where such signs or numerals are affixed to a house, apartment, second floor dwelling or town home, where signage does not exceed 12 inches in height and 1 square foot in area.
10. Signs which are an integral part of vending machines, gas pumps, or convenience store corporate logos.

11. Temporary posters promoting public functions, charitable events, or other fund raising events for a period of (45 days or less) when posted inside of commercial establishments but not exceeding a 25% total coverage of the total storefront glazed area.

12. Temporary political posters in accordance with local requirements.

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## **Inappropriate Signage and Marketing Elements**

The following is a list of signage or other marketing elements which are unacceptable within the improvement area:

1. Any new signs not in compliance with the design criteria as set forth in the design guidelines.

2. Any sign which in the judgment of the Neptune Township Police Department or in the opinion of the Zoning Officer constitute a traffic hazard.

3. Signs using red, green or amber lamping placed within 100 feet of any traffic control or signal device.

4. Signs which utilize mirrors or other reflective surfaces which may disorient or cause a safety concern or the use of aluminum foil wraps.

5. Signs revolving or signs using blinking, flashing, vibrating, flickering, tracer or sequential lighting techniques.

6. Signs or billboards erected on or positioned on roofs.

7. Signs using words such as “STOP”, “DANGER”, “LOOK”, or other similar terms which are placed in a manner or position which may misinform, misguide or potentially confuse the public in the judgment of the Neptune Township Police Department or in the opinion of the Zoning Officer.

8. Signs which attempt to imitate or otherwise cause confusion with existing signs erected by any government authority.

9. Signs advertising a product or service not sold or provided on the premises the sign is located or directing the public to other locations.

10. Inflatable figures or oversized balloon type ads or promotions.

11. Marking or painting of public sidewalks in an effort to create signs or marketing or directional information to attract business traffic.

12. Use of poorly hand lettered paper or cardboard signs taped onto windows or doors, other than grocer type posters which may be utilized where signs are professionally lettered

and displayed in an orderly manner but not exceeding a 60% total coverage of the total storefront glazed area.

**West Lake Avenue Improvement Area - Design Guidelines**

**X. Appendices**

## **View of Existing Conditions - North Side of West Lake Avenue**

## **View of Existing Open Space and Neighborhood Homes**

## **View of Existing Conditions - South Side of West Lake Avenue**