

## **SECTION 9: DESIGN (D) AREAS**

### **9.1 Designation Procedure**

A Design (D) Area may be established under Section 9.2, hereunder, provided the following requirements are met:

- 9.1.1** A petition, signed by at least 85% of the landowners within a proposed design district has been filed with the office of the Town Clerk, with copies furnished to the Planning Commission and the Selectboard, attesting as to the wishes of said landowners that the area designated by them be declared a design overlay area subject to the provisions of 24 VSA, § 4414(E).
- 9.1.2** The approval of such design overlay area has been duly warned and so voted by Australian ballot by a majority of those voting during a regular or special Town Meeting.

### **9.2 Purpose**

Subject to meeting the procedural requirements of Section 9.1, above, a design area is established as an overlay on the underlying zoning districts affected, to preserve the historical, architectural or cultural character of the district and to prevent developments which, by their incompatibility with the prevailing building and settlement patterns, will diminish the quality of the prevailing patterns, will diminish the quality of the environment, and consequently the quality of life therein.

### **9.3 Identification of Design (D) Areas**

#### **9.3.1 Dorset Village Historic District**

The Dorset Village Historic District is designated as a Design (D) Area subject to the provisions and procedures of this Bylaw. The boundary of this Area shall be the same as the boundary of the Dorset Village Historic District, officially recognized as a National Historic District by the U.S. Department of the Interior in May, 1985, and as shown on the map appended to these Bylaws.

### **9.4 Application of Regulations and Review Guidelines**

#### **9.4.1 INTRODUCTION**

##### **Design Review Board**

In accordance with Section 9.2 of the Dorset Zoning Bylaws, the Design Review Board is to apply criteria in evaluating proposals described in permit applications within the Design Areas based on the existing characteristics of the Areas described in the nominating document which resulted in establishment as of these Areas as National Historic Districts.

.....

A permit application must be obtained from the Zoning Administrator for any and all exterior changes, additions and deletions on any and all sites in the Design Areas.

.....

In considering applications, the Board will be guided by reference to the following principles and issues:

Are the Site Plan and Arrangement of Facilities in conflict with adjoining uses of land in the Design Area?

Is the Basic Design of the proposed structure compatible with the surroundings in the Design Area?

Is the Bulk of the structure consistent with the lot size and its neighbors, and is the structure designed and placed so as to not adversely affect the Design Area?

Is the Exterior of the structure appropriate and compatible with adjoining structures in the Design Area?

Are Accessory Structure and/or Out Buildings compatible with surroundings and located so they do not detract from the character in the Design Area?

**9.4.2 GOALS**

The Dorset Town Plan lists among its goals the following:

- Preserve the historic structures, historic architecture and materials details, the historic land use pattern, including streetscapes and other unique and individual historic characteristics of the Historic Districts.
- Maintain the small, rural, primarily residential appearance of the Historic Districts.
- Ensure that new buildings, alterations, and repairs to existing buildings enhance the historic appearance of the Historic Districts.
- Maintain design controls to ensure future development is consistent with above.

**9.4.3 DESIGN AREAS**

The intent of these Criteria is to ensure that new construction and renovations enhance the Design Areas. If any changes can be viewed from the street or neighboring properties, it must

ensure that new structures and landscaping on lots in this district are compatible with those on adjacent or neighboring lots.

The Design Area is: \* Dorset Village Historic District

In the Design Areas the following general guidelines apply:

- Site plans and arrangements of buildings should not be in conflict with adjoining streetscapes.
- Roads, streets and driveways should be designed to follow natural contours of the land. Large driveway aprons are discouraged and small aggregate stone is preferable.
- Design, size, location, lighting and other aspects of signs should be closely controlled.
- Landscaping and lighting should be appropriate for a historic district; that is, similar type of bushes, trees, walkways, etc.

#### **9.4.4 SPECIFIC GUIDELINES FOR ALL CONSTRUCTION IN THE DESIGN AREAS**

##### **9.4.4.1 Maintenance and Repairs**

Subject to the following guidelines, maintenance and repairs of a historic site or structure does not require a permit.

1. Repairs must replace in-kind deteriorated or damaged features to match the original in design, size, shape, material, dimension, pattern, texture, color and detail. This applies to all features of the site and structure, including but not limited to, walkways, driveways, parking areas, landscaping, masonry, architectural metals, exterior walls, trim, windows, doors, entrances, porches, and decks.
2. Where possible, replace only the deteriorated or damaged portion or detail of a feature rather than the entire feature.
3. The exterior color of the body and the trim of the primary structure is white. Outbuildings may be historical red, green, gray, or white. Previously painted surfaces may be repainted with paints that match the current colors without a permit. Sandblasting and/or excessive power washing are NOT permitted as they are detrimental to the historic materials.
4. Damaged, deteriorated, or missing exterior lighting fixtures may be replaced with new fixtures that are either similar to the existing in material, appearance, detail,

and scale or compatible with the historic structure and site in material, appearance, and scale.

#### 9.4.4.2 Alterations and Additions

Changes to a historic structure or site, including removal or demolition of the structure, or parts thereof that do not comply with the above guidelines for maintenance and repair are considered alterations or additions. Alterations or additions in a Design Area require design review and a Zoning permit.

The following guidelines apply to alterations and additions to historic structures in the Design Areas.

1. If necessary, new walkways, driveways, or parking areas may be constructed if they match the location, scale, materials, and configuration and overall historic character of the historic structure and site. Whenever possible new parking should be at the rear of the structures and existing mature vegetation and additional perimeter landscaping or screening should be used to lessen the impact of the new parking areas. To diminish or substantially alter the overall historic character of the historic site through the introduction of new walkways, driveways, or parking areas is not permitted.
2. If necessary for security or safety, or to highlight a public historic building, new exterior lighting that is the same as the old in terms of location, appearance, material, scale, color, finish, and lighting brightness, with the character and scale of the historic structure and site may be introduced with a maximum of 100 watts. The introduction of new lighting that diminishes the overall historic character of the historic structure or site is not permitted. For example, it is not appropriate to introduce period lighting fixtures predating the historic structure in an attempt to create a false historical appearance.
3. New, non-historic roof features, such as, skylights, vents, satellite dishes and antennae, may only be installed on non-character-defining roofs. A non-character defining roof is a secondary roof. Such features must not be visible from Design Area streets and must be located so that they do not diminish the original character of the historic structure or damage historic roofing materials.
4. New exterior wall features, including doors, windows, ventilators, and electrical and mechanical fixtures, may be introduced only on non-character-defining elevations. Such features must be located so that they do not diminish the original character of the historic structure or damage historic wall materials. It is not allowed to add, cover, or remove a window or door opening on a historic structure's character-defining elevations unless required for an accurate restoration, nor is it appropriate to replace or cover wooden features such as siding, trim, or window sash with contemporary substitute materials such as vinyl, Masonite, or aluminum. Additions to past non-conforming additions will be dealt

with on a case-by-case basis.

5. The exterior color of the body and trim of a structure is white, though other subtle colors may be approved if the applicant can demonstrate to the DRB that they are historic and/or appropriate for the structure and consistent with neighboring structures. Accent colors may be used on separate features such as shutters, doors, and sash with the Design Review Board's approval.
6. Narrow profile exterior storm windows and doors may be installed for energy efficiency. Full-light storm doors, constructed of wood or aluminum, should be painted or finished with the same color as the existing door and installed so that the original doors and frames are not obscured or damaged. Storm windows shall not damage or obscure existing sash and frame and shall be painted or finished with a color compatible with the existing sash color. If covering double-hung windows, operable storm windows with muntins (dividers) that align with existing sash division should be selected.
7. If desired and historically appropriate in color and style, fabric awnings over windows, entrances, or porch openings may be installed in a way that does not damage or obscure historic features.
8. New porches, decks or entrances may be introduced only on non-character-defining elevations and must be attached in ways that minimize the loss of historic fabric. These units must be located so that they do not diminish the original character of the historic structure or damage historic wall materials. It is not allowed to add a new porch or entrance to a historic structure's character-defining elevations unless required for an accurate restoration.
9. Transformers, meters, pipes, and mechanical-related items must be located as inconspicuously as possible, in rear yard locations or along non-character-defining elevations. Such features should be screened from view. Portable air-conditioning units and satellite dishes should be located on the rear or on non-character defining elevations of historic structures.
10. Existing additions that contribute to the overall historic character of a historic structure shall not be removed unless approved by the Design Review Board.
11. New additions may be added on non-character-defining elevations in such a manner as not to visually overpower the historic structure or diminish, conceal or detract from the character of the historic structure and the structure's historic setting. New additions must be consistent with the historic building and constructed where possible to be structurally self-supporting so that they may be removed in the future with minimal damage to the historic structure.
12. New additions must be compatible with the historic building in massing, height,

form, scale, proportions, roof shape, and relationship of solids to voids in exterior walls. New additions must also be compatible with the historic structure in terms of the placement, spacing, proportion, orientation, scale, and size of window and door openings. Windows and doors should be the same in configuration, material, and detail with the windows and doors of the historic building and the materials and finishes characteristic of the historic building with regard to scale, composition, module, texture, pattern, detail, color, and surface finish.

#### **9.4.4.3 New Construction**

New construction in the Design Areas may involve an entirely new structure or a structure intended to replace a severely damaged or deteriorated structure, and requires design review and zoning permits.

The following guidelines apply to both new construction on a lot in Design Areas that contain a historic structure and new construction on lots in the Design Areas that does not contain a historic structure (i.e., an empty lot, a lot where a historic structure was destroyed or demolished and is not being exactly reproduced, or a lot containing a non-contributing structure).

1. New structures on historic sites shall be constructed only in locations that do not diminish, conceal, or detract from the character of the historic structure. The new construction shall be sited on historic sites in ways that conform to the patterns of building setback, spacing, and orientation characteristic of the specific historic site and/or similar historic settings. The siting of new buildings should match setbacks of neighboring houses, if applicable. A variance will be required if that setback is less than zoning requirements.
2. New construction shall be designed to be compatible with the historic building in massing, height, form, scale, proportion, and roof shape as well as the visual and spatial character of the building's historic setting. To introduce new construction which visually overpowers the historic structure or otherwise detracts from the overall historic setting, or which requires the loss of a significant site feature, planting or building element is not allowed.
3. New construction will be consistent with the historic building in terms of the placement, spacing, proportion, orientation, scale and size of window and door openings. Windows and doors for new construction will be selected that are the same in configuration, materials, and proportion with the windows and doors of the historic building. Materials and finishes shall be characteristic of the historic building with regard to scale, composition, module, texture, pattern, detail, and color.

#### **9.4.5 SPECIFIC CONSTRUCTION GUIDELINES**

New structures should present an architecturally consistent appearance.

#### **9.4.5.1 Location on lot**

1. To provide a uniform streetscape, new principal structures in the Design Areas should be located with their fronts parallel to the street, roughly centered between the lot sides, and set back a distance comparable to adjacent structures. If the adjacent building is non-complying for setback regulations, the new structure shall conform to regulated setback requirements.
2. Free standing accessory buildings or attachments, such as garages, should be located at the rear of the main structure, so that they do not detract from the streetscape.
3. Where possible, garages, whether free standing, attached, or built into the dwelling, should be positioned so that their doors are not visible from the streets or sidewalks.

#### **9.4.5.2 Exteriors**

1. Painted or solid stained wooden clapboards or shingles, when used with appropriate corner and sill boards, cornices and crown moldings, are the preferred siding materials for structures.
2. The chosen siding material should normally be used exclusively over the entire structure. However if the applicant can demonstrate to the Design Review Board that it both contributes to the style and compliments the Design Area's appearance, different types of siding materials may be mixed.
3. Imitative materials, such as T-111 or other laminates, asphalt or asbestos shingles, or similar materials will not be approved as siding materials. Stucco may not be used for the main mass of the building.
4. The exterior color of the body and trim of the primary structure is white. Outbuildings may be historical red, green, gray or white. Accent colors may be used on separate features such as shutters, doors, and sash with Design Review Board approval. Approved paint color chips are available from the Design Review Board.

#### **9.4.5.3 Windows**

1. Windows should be chosen and located to provide an appearance of a solid wall surface pierced with a regular pattern of openings, especially on the front of the structure. Window openings should be regularly spaced or grouped, but random openings or windows unrelated in terms of pattern and scale should be avoided.
2. Double hung, multi-light, windows are strongly preferred in the Design Areas.

The proportions of both the windows and the individual lights within windows should be consistent.

3. Curved, arched or bay windows may be approved if consistent with the overall architecture style.
4. Mirrored glass or severely tinted glass will not be approved.
5. Storm windows are permitted. The frames of the storm windows should align within the frame of the windows they protect.
6. Wooden shutters are required. Replacement shutters should be in wood. All shutters must match in style and color. Louvered shutters are strongly preferred. All shutters should be attached to the window frames and extend from just below the top of the window to just above the sill. The width of the shutters should be such that, if closed, they would meet at the center line of the window.
7. Solar walls, picture windows, or other large expanses of glass will not be approved on exterior surfaces that are visible from the streets or sidewalks.

#### **9.4.5.4 Entrances**

1. Front entrances should convey a significant traditional design element. Appropriate entrances for new construction in the Design Areas are located on a prominent façade; the size and style should clearly identify the formal entrance to the structure.

#### **9.4.5.5 Porches**

1. As long as their design and architectural detail compliments the rest of the structure, porches may run across the house front, wrap around the sides and rear, and may be one story high.
2. Exposed brick or stone piers supporting porches as well as wood lattice screening are acceptable. Exposed cement blocks or concrete piers are not permitted.
3. Exposed pressure treated wood is not allowed on elevations visible from the street. Posts, columns, and trim should normally be made of wood and painted to match the house. Ill proportioned turned posts as well as unenclosed structural wood, steel or concrete posts not allowed. Properly proportioned cast aluminum or fiber glass posts may be used if appropriately painted.
4. Molded or shaped rails with turned, jigsawn, or square balusters are preferred. Industrial type railings, railings made from construction lumber such as 2x4's,



unduly thin balusters, or balusters placed in front of or behind the rails are not allowed.

#### **9.4.5.6 Decks and Terraces**

1. Generally decks and terraces should not be located on the front or public side of a house. If, because of the orientation of the house or to capitalize on a view, it is necessary to locate a deck or terrace on the front of a house, it must meet with the Design Review Board's approval.

#### **9.4.5.7 Roofs**

1. Gabled roofs are preferred and should be pitched at a minimum of 7/12 slope. Hip roofs may be permitted but shed and flat roofs, with the exception of porches, should be used only when they cannot be viewed from the street or sidewalk.
2. Multiple roof segments should present a hierarchy of the main structure and wings.
3. The roof shall not overhang any exterior wall by more than 2 feet. Soffits and fascia, must be finished so that no portion of the roof rafters is visible (unless the roof rafters are to present a decorative architectural detail).
4. Slate roofing is preferred, but mineral fiber roofing resembling slate, dark colored asphalt shingles, or seamed metal roofing may be used. Rolled roofing is not appropriate and can only be used on roofs out of sight from the street and sidewalks. Different roofing materials normally should not be mixed on a given structure, unless approved by the Design Review Board.
5. Dormers may be used to provide light and ventilation to the upper floors of a building. The size, number, and location of dormers should be carefully chosen to compliment the overall appearance and symmetry of the structure.
6. Skylights may be used on structures only when they are inconspicuous and cannot be viewed from the streets or sidewalks.
7. Solar panels, TV antennas, and satellite dishes shall not be visible from the streets or sidewalks. Satellite dishes shall not exceed two feet in diameter.

#### **9.4.5.8 Chimneys and Foundations**

1. All visible chimney surfaces should be stone or brick. Concrete blocks or formed concrete (whether or not covered with stucco), or metal flues may be used on structures only when they are inconspicuous and cannot be viewed from the street or sidewalk.

2. Foundations of natural stone are preferred. With appropriate foundation plantings for screening, poured concrete or concrete blocks with a thick mortar wash coat or stucco may be used. No concrete blocks or foundation insulation shall be visible above grade.

#### **9.4.5.9 Fences and Walls**

1. No fences, hedges, or walls will be allowed in the Dorset Village Historic District on Church Street from Route 30 to Cheney Road. Fences and walls will be allowed at the rear and side lots only with the Design Review Board's approval. Fences or walls at the side lots shall not extend beyond the front of the dwelling.

#### **9.5 Design Review Board**

A Design Review Board shall be appointed by the Selectboard to advise the Planning Commission in its deliberations concerning a proposed Design Plan. The Design Review Board shall have terms of office and procedure rules as determined by the Selectboard.

#### **9.6 Design Plan**

For major changes, the Design Plan shall include:

1. A site plan of the property, showing elevations, location of structures, driveways, fences, walls, and landscaping;
2. Building elevations visible from roads, highways, or existing structures, showing door and window types, shutters, and other architectural details;
3. Description of exterior building materials, colors, and textures.  
For minor changes in the exterior of a structure, a full Design Plan is not required as long as the application is in writing and is clear and complete relative to any such proposed change.

#### **9.7 Interior Alterations**

Any interior alterations that do not affect, change, or add to the exterior structure shall not be subject to these design regulations.

#### **9.8 Appeals**

An interested person may appeal any decision or act taken by the Zoning Administrator as provided in Section 12.9 of these Bylaws.