

## **6.07.0 WEST ELM STREET GATEWAY DISTRICT**

### **6.07.1 AUTHORITY**

- A. Title: This Ordinance shall be known as the West Elm Street Gateway District.
- B. Authority: The Planning Board is hereby authorized to administer this Ordinance under the provisions set forth in NH RSA 674:21, Innovative Land Use Controls.

### **6.07.2 PURPOSE**

The intent of this District is to encourage economic development in the West Elm Street Gateway District by enhancing, preserving and protecting the natural, historic and cultural resources of the Town. The purpose of this Ordinance is to implement the Town of Milford's vision for the future as set forth in the Community Character Chapter of the Master Plan 2007 Update:

*Goal No. 2: Foster the traditional character of Milford's neighborhoods by encouraging a human scale of development that is similar in setbacks, size and height, and that is comfortable and safe for pedestrians and non-motorized vehicles while allowing for an efficient and safe roadway network.*

The Ordinance implements the Master Plan vision for Milford's gateway corridors and is designed to accomplish the following:

- A. Encourage and promote commercial, industrial and mixed use development sensitive to Milford's agricultural, architectural and historic heritage by preserving and enhancing the streetscape, the unique scenic vistas, views of the Souhegan River, and visual character of the corridor.
- B. Encourage development to reflect the historic pattern of development in Town and enhance Milford's sense of community and place.
- C. Encourage attractive pedestrian scale development.
- D. Improve transportation efficiency, landscaping, stormwater management, traffic management, and parking.
- E. Promote alternative modes of transportation, particularly pedestrian and biking.
- F. Promote development that reflects the intended character of Milford's residential, commercial, and industrial neighborhoods relative to height, lot coverage, and setbacks.

The following standards are tools that create a flexible framework to guide the appearance of future development that is compatible with the historic nature of Milford, while allowing for innovation and architectural creativity in order to enhance a special place.

### **6.07.3 FINDINGS**

- A. Milford's West Elm Gateway District is a unique area with distinctive natural features, scenic vistas and a streetscape that reflects Milford's agricultural and commercial history.

- B. Non-residential development that is indifferent to Milford's history and economic needs constitutes a significant threat to the character and future of the community.
- C. Future development can be guided to encourage building design that is functional, aesthetically pleasing and harmonious with the agricultural and architectural heritage of the community as well as provide positive economic return to the Town and property owners.
- D. The architecture of the community is varied and necessarily will evolve as the community grows. The regulation of architectural design must allow for flexibility, creativity and innovation within the context of an articulated framework.
- E. Access management will increase the efficiency, safety and mobility of the corridor, and inter-site connections are needed to reduce the potential conflict points along the corridors.
- F. Future development should incorporate bicycle, pedestrian, and public transportation amenities as important features that add to Milford's character, sense of place and public health.

#### **6.07.4 APPLICABILITY**

The provisions as set forth in this Ordinance shall apply to the following activities within the Corridor Overlay District:

- A. Applications for site plan and subdivision review.
- B. New building construction for non-residential or multi-family purposes greater than 600 SF.
- C. Additions or alterations to buildings for non-residential or multi-family purposes greater than 600 SF.
- D. Additions or alterations to a site plan or buildings used for non-residential or multi-family purposes which significantly alter the visual appearance of the site or a façade visible from a public way.
- E. The West Elm Street Gateway District is an overlay district which imposes additional requirements and restrictions to those of the underlying base district established under the powers granted under NH RSA 674:21. In case of a conflict between the requirements of 6.07.0 and the requirements presented elsewhere in the Milford Zoning Ordinance, the provisions of 6.07.0 shall apply.

#### **6.07.5 DISTRICT BOUNDARIES**

The West Elm Street Gateway District consists of a significant portion of Elm St and Route 101, from the Granite Town Plaza to the Wilton Town Line. It is bounded to the north by the Souhegan River until the fork at Wilton Road and Elm Street, where it is then bounded by North River Road and Wilton Road. The study area is bounded to the south by Elm Street and both sides of Old Wilton Road. The southern boundary also includes Meadowbrook Drive, Scarborough Lane and 2 large parcels just south of 101 and west of Savage Road. The area is fully depicted on the map entitled "West Elm Street Gateway District Boundaries".

## 6.07.6 PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

### A. General

The West Elm Street Gateway District is a major economic driver in Town and contributes to the overall character of the community because of its location, landscape and scenic qualities. This District provides a first impression and should reinforce Milford's sense of place. Consideration shall be given towards complementing these resources through the careful siting of new buildings, appropriate landscaping and the application of the Site Design Standards.

1. Pre-Application Review. The Community Development Director, or designee, shall review all proposals to determine applicability as stated in Section 6.07.4 above.
2. Development Review. Upon determination by the Community Development Director, or designee, that an application meets the Section 6.07.4 applicability requirements, the applicant shall submit an application to the Planning Board in accordance with the Development Review Procedure set forth in the Town of Milford Development Regulations.
3. Consistency with Plans. In addition to providing the required development review information, the applicant shall demonstrate how the proposed plan will address the specific site recommendations as well as the general principles set forth in the following studies and documents:
  - a. *The Milford Master Plan and subsequent updates*
  - b. *Town of Milford West Elm Street Gateway District Design Guidelines (2011); Prepared by Nashua Regional Planning Commission.*

### B. General Provisions

1. **General.**
2. **Viewshed.** Development must take into account the varied and natural beauty of the corridor. Building scale and siting must foster and enhance the unique natural amenities and landscape.
  - a. Wooded and agricultural areas shall be maintained and preserved to the maximum extent possible.
  - b. Development along the Souhegan River shall be situated to provide views from adjacent buildings as well as pedestrian amenities and lookouts near the River's edge. Natural drainage areas shall be preserved to the maximum extent. The development shall include appropriate measures for protecting these resources, including but not limited to, modification of the proposed design of the site, timing of construction, and limiting the extent of excavation.
  - c. Development should be situated in such a way as to not impede views of Dram Cup Hill and Pack Monadnock. Where possible buildings and pedestrian areas should be located to maximize views of these natural features.

3. **Underground Utility Lines.** Utility lines shall be located underground whenever possible in all new developments and during significant upgrades and renovations to existing sites.
  4. **Streetscaping.** Amenities such as public art, lighting, street furniture, special sidewalk treatments and banners should be incorporated into site design proposals.
  5. **Gateways.** Some locations contribute to the landscape character of the community because of their location and scenic qualities. Many such properties and approaches act as gateways, providing first impressions and reinforcing Milford's sense of place. Consideration should be given towards complementing these resources through the careful siting of new buildings, and the application of the Site Design Standards. The locations of proposed gateways are identified on the West Milford Gateway District Design Guidelines, *Corridor Overlay District and Potential Gateways Map*. In these areas, appropriate landscaping or other improvements may be required.
    - a. Near the Wilton Town Line on Route 101
    - b. North River Road just north of the Elm Street / Route 101 intersection
    - c. Near Map 7, Lot 12 on Elm Street
    - d. Just west of the Route 13 / Route 101 intersection
  6. **Screened Loading Docks and Storage Areas**
    - a. All loading docks shall be well screened to conceal delivery trucks and bays from public right-of-way and viewsheds.
    - b. Supplies should be stored inside of buildings.
    - c. Outside storage of supplies shall be heavily screened with attractive landscaping or fencing.
  7. **Natural Features.** Buildings, lots, impervious surfaces and accessory structures shall be sited in those portions of the site that have the most suitable conditions for development.
    - a. Environmentally sensitive areas, including but not limited to, wetlands, steep slopes in excess of 15%, floodplains, significant wildlife habitats and corridors, wooded areas, fisheries, scenic areas, habitat for rare and endangered plants and animals, unique natural communities and natural areas, and sand and gravel aquifers, shall be maintained and preserved to the maximum extent.
    - b. Natural drainage areas shall be preserved to the maximum extent. The development shall include appropriate measures for protecting these resources, including but not limited to, modification of the proposed design of the site, timing of construction, and limiting the extent of excavation.
- C. **Mixed Use Development.** Mixed use development as permitted under the Zoning Ordinance can include a combination of residential, commercial or industrial development in either the same building or on the same site.
1. On mixed use development sites, the design shall complement the multiple uses with care placed on creating visual integration of features such as building setbacks, driveways, building entrances, windows, landscaping and pedestrian amenities.

2. In general, any residential uses should be in upper stories of multi-storied buildings with the commercial or industrial use below.

**D. Commercial Development.** Commercial development should be scaled appropriately to provide for a mix of building styles and traditional architectural features and materials, that foster Milford's sense of place.

1. Buildings and building entrances shall be human scale and close to the street when practical.
2. Building siting shall be such that the mass is scaled smaller in appearance.
3. Parking should be situated to the side and rear of the building whenever possible.

**E. Mixed Use and Commercial – Design**

1. **Building Orientation** - New structures shall orient their main entrance or storefront to a public street.
  - a. New structures shall maintain an appropriate street edge in relationship to adjacent structures.
  - b. Buildings shall be sited so that entrances are clearly identifiable and directly accessible from a sidewalk and shall be accessible for pedestrians, bicyclists and future public transit users.

2. **Building Massing, Form and Height**

The mass, form and height of new structures must relate to the appropriate scale of neighboring buildings as well as the context of the corridor. The following architectural features and treatments should be used to enhance the character of new development and the corridor:

- a. Reduce the apparent scale of the building by introducing small-scaled architectural features, creating an irregular footprint and variations in roof forms and height of roof elements.
- b. Enhance definition of each floor of the building through terracing, material changes, articulated structural elements, changes in materials and horizontal trim bands.

3. **Architectural Features and Materials**

Architectural features and details shall be considered in every building design.

- a. Traditional features and details such as columns, pilasters, porticos, awnings or arches associated with Milford's architectural heritage are strongly encouraged.
- b. Long expanses of repetitive architectural elements and flat unarticulated wall surfaces shall be avoided.
- c. Traditional materials or materials that have the same visual effect shall be used, including but not limited to, wood, brick, tile, or stone.

4. **Pedestrian Scale**

Building design should take into consideration pedestrians at the ground level.

- a. Avoid blank walls at ground-floor levels through the use of windows, trellises, material changes, arcades, or other features to increase visual interest.

- b. Pedestrian scale lighting shall be used wherever possible and be consistent with the existing building and location.
- c. Floodlights and tall light posts are not encouraged.

**5. Parking Areas**

- a. Parking lots should be located to the rear or side of a building whenever possible.
- b. Side yard parking shall be well buffered from the street.
- c. Shared parking provisions for any combination of uses on site and adjacent sites are encouraged.
- d. Offsite parking shall be protected with a shared parking easement agreement which shall be approved by the Zoning Administrator and recorded with the approved plans.

**6. Existing Structures**

Existing buildings and structures of historic value should be preserved and if renovated or expanded done so in a manner that is respectful of the character, features and details of the existing structure.

**7. Roof Form and Materials**

Rooflines shall be characteristically sloped and articulated with architectural features such as dormers, chimneys, gables, cupolas, etc.

- a. Rooflines shall not run in continuous planes, and shall be broken into appropriately scaled masses.
- b. Flat roofs are generally discouraged.
- c. Where appropriate roofs shall provide adequate overhangs for pedestrian activity.
- d. Roof materials shall be composed of high quality, durable and architecturally consistent materials, including but not limited to concrete tile, asphalt shingles and standing seam metal.

**8. Windows**

Modestly scaled vertically proportioned windows are the most appropriate to the local building vernacular.

- a. Building facades should have an abundance of windows that use clear non-reflective glass.
- b. Windows on higher floors should align vertically with windows below, if possible.
- c. Walls facing streets and pedestrian approaches shall have display windows, recessed windows, detailed entry areas, awnings or prominent sills and a pedestrian scaled lighting element. Storefronts should use windows to reveal indoor amenities, activities and displays.

**9. Building Entrances**

All building entrances shall be clearly defined and highly visible using a variety of the following details (*Please refer to the West Milford Gateway District Design Guidelines for examples*):

- a. Porticos
- b. Canopies
- c. Overhangs
- d. Arcades
- e. Recesses or projections
- f. Raised cornice parapets over doors
- g. Arches with detail (tile work or moldings) integrated with the building
- h. Outdoor patios
- i. Display windows
- j. Integral planters
- k. Wing walls with planters or seating

**10. Signage**

Signs shall comply with the Town of Milford Sign Ordinance and should complement the building site and surroundings.

- a. Wall signs shall be appropriately scaled to the building or surface on which it is placed and should not obscure important architectural features.
- b. Signs shall be readable for both pedestrians and drivers approaching a site.
- c. Consideration should be given to form, color, lighting and materials that are compatible with the building and its surroundings.

**11. Screening**

All rooftop air conditioning, heating and large mechanical equipment, building accessories, and refuse shall have noise reduction screening and be screened from public view and have noise reduction screening.

**F. Mixed Use and Commercial – Traffic Standards**

**1. Access Management**

- a. All projects shall construct wherever feasible interconnecting driveways to adjacent properties or provide secure future connections through easements to adjacent property boundaries. This includes bicycle-pedestrian access to adjacent residential developments, where practical.
- b. New access points onto Elm Street shall only be created when it is not feasible to combine or share existing access points.
- c. Interior parking lots shall provide for shared use and interconnected drives.
- d. Interconnecting driveways shall promote vehicular and pedestrian access between adjacent lots without accessing the roadway.

**2. Driveway Throat Length**

Interior driveways should provide adequate throat length for vehicle stacking (queuing) and unobstructed views for exiting safely.

**3. Bicycle Facilities**

Separate bicycle facilities may be required by the Planning Board where recommended by the studies listed in section 6.07.6 A.3. or where otherwise appropriate.

- a. Bicycle routes may be provided in the form of a separate off-street path or on-street marked bicycle lanes.
- b. Bicycle racks and other amenities may be required for all developments and shall be located in a convenient and secure location.

**4. Pedestrian Facilities**

Sidewalks shall be constructed as recommended by the studies listed in section 6.07.6 A.3 or where otherwise appropriate.

- a. Sidewalk corridors shall be easily accessible to all users, and comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards.
- b. The sidewalk shall provide for a landscaped buffer (esplanade) between the roadway pavement and the sidewalk where adequate right of way exists.
- c. The walking route along a sidewalk corridor shall connect destinations and shall not require pedestrians to travel out of their way unnecessarily.
- d. Buildings should be sited so as to create pedestrian-scale plazas and gathering places.
- e. Sidewalk construction shall be in accordance with Department of Public Works specifications.

**5. Transit Facilities**

The development of future transit facilities shall be incorporated within all major site plan developments that could generate high volumes of transit use.

- a. Potential transit routes, access points, bus pull-outs, bus stops, signage and shelter locations may be designated along major roadways and within the perimeter of such projects, and easements reserved for such facilities.
- b. Transit facilities shall be provided in a manner to encourage transit as an alternative mode of travel.

**G. Industrial Development.** All industrial sites should be visually appealing and well integrated with adjacent sites, the natural landscape and viewsheds.

**1. Building Orientation and Siting**

- a. Buildings should orient their main entrances toward the street when practical.
- b. Buildings with main entrances not oriented toward the street shall be oriented toward internal roadways and sidewalks within the site.
- c. Main entrances shall have human scale features, architectural details, landscaping and adequate signage.

**2. Building Massing, Form, and Height.**

- a. New industrial buildings should have massing, form and height that is compatible with adjacent properties.
- b. Buildings should be designed so as to minimize the appearance in mass and scale.

- c. Architectural features, windows, entrances and building materials may be utilized to reduce the appearance of building size.
3. **Architectural Features and Materials.**
- a. Buildings and adjacent walkways shall use a variety of architectural materials, colors and features to create attractive and visually appealing structures.
  - b. Corrugated metal buildings and large flat wall surfaces should not be located within view of both internal and external street networks, or shall be screened, or given architectural treatments to break up large surface areas, and situated in less visible areas of the site.
4. **Access Management**
- a. Industrial sites should be limited to two main entrances.
  - b. If the site is large enough a tree lined roadway through the campus will provide access to smaller connector roads and parking areas.
  - c. Where feasible interconnecting driveways should be constructed to provide access to adjacent properties or easements should be provided for interconnecting driveways for future development.
5. **Parking.**
- a. Parking should be located to the rear and side of buildings when practical to avoid large parking lots in front of buildings adjacent to the public right-of-way.
  - b. Landscaping and small street trees shall be densely planted on medians.
  - c. Special crosswalk and sidewalk treatments shall be used to create safe internal pedestrian access between parking lots and buildings.
6. **Bicycle and Pedestrian Design.**
- a. Connections to adjacent trails and networks shall be made where applicable.
  - b. Separate bicycle facilities may be required by the Planning Board where recommended by the studies listed in section 6.07.6 A.3. or where otherwise appropriate.
    - 1) Bicycle routes may be provided in the form of a separate off-street path or on-street marked bicycle lanes.
    - 2) Bicycle racks and other amenities may be required for all developments and shall be located in a convenient and secure location.
7. **Transit.**
- a. All sites over 2 acres will be evaluated to determine if the site is a feasible location for future public transit service. An easement to accommodate future bus turnouts and shelters may be required.
  - b. Internal sidewalks should be planned to provide access to this easement area.

H. **Campus Style Development.** Campus style development refers to business and industrial parks that are interconnected by internal roadway and sidewalk networks and accommodate multiple buildings, parking areas and uses. All campus developments should be visually appealing and well integrated with other internal buildings, the natural landscape and viewsheds.

1. **Building Orientation and Siting.**

- a. Buildings should be oriented toward internal streets and sidewalks.
- b. Front entrances shall have human scale features, architectural details, landscaping, and adequate signage indicating the main entrance.
- c. All entrances shall have direct access to sidewalks.

2. **Building Massing, Form and Height.**

- a. Campus buildings on the same site should have similar massing, form and height.
- b. Buildings should be designed to minimize the appearance of mass and must conform to the height requirements of the zoning ordinance. Architectural features, windows, entrances, and building materials should be consistent among buildings and should also help to reduce the appearance of building size.

3. **Architectural Features and Materials.**

- a. Buildings and adjacent walkways shall use a variety of architectural standards, colors and features to create attractive and visually appealing structures.
- b. Similar materials should be incorporated on buildings and walkways throughout the campus to create a cohesive look.
- c. Interesting features such as brick, patterns, detailed entrances and varied setbacks should be incorporated.

4. **Lighting.**

- a. Attractive downcast lighting shall be incorporated in a uniform manner throughout the campus.

5. **Green Space**

- a. Campus style developments must set aside a green space that can accommodate bicycle and pedestrian use.
- b. This space should include landscaping, benches, tables, fountains or public artwork.
- c. This space shall connect to the internal sidewalk network.
- d. This space can be counted towards total open space requirements.

6. **Directional Signs.**

- a. Uniform directional signs shall be located at main entrances and throughout the campus. Directional signs should provide clear directional information for deliveries and visitors.

**7. Access Management.**

- a. Access to campus styles developments should be limited to two main driveways.
- b. In the case of large sites, a main tree-lined access drive through the campus should provide access to smaller connector drives and parking areas.

**8. Parking.**

- a. Parking should be located to the rear and side of buildings to avoid large parking lots in front of buildings.
- b. Landscaping and small street trees shall be densely planted on medians.
- c. Special crosswalk and sidewalk treatments shall be used to create safe internal pedestrian access between parking lots and buildings.

**9. Bicycle and Pedestrian Design.**

- a. Connections to adjacent trails and networks shall be made where applicable.
- b. Separate bicycle facilities may be required by the Planning Board where recommended by the studies listed in section 6.07.6 A.3. or where otherwise appropriate.
  - 1) Bicycle routes may be provided in the form of a separate off-street path or on-street marked bicycle lanes.
  - 2) Bicycle racks and other amenities may be required for all developments and shall be located in a convenient and secure location.

**10. Transit.**

- a. All sites over 2 acres will be evaluated to determine if the site is a feasible location for future public transit service. An easement to accommodate future bus turnouts and shelters may be required.
- b. Internal sidewalks should be planned to provide access to this easement area.

**6.07.7 WAIVER PROVISION**

There may be unusual or exceptional circumstances that exist where the application of one or more of the Performance Standards of Section 6.07.6 would entail practical difficulty or unreasonable hardship when balanced against the public purposes sought to be achieved by this Ordinance. In such circumstances, the Planning Board may waive the applicability of some or all of the Performance Standards in accordance with the Development Regulations waiver process (Section 5.020).

**6.07.8 APPEALS**

A decision of the Planning Board made pursuant to the West Elm Street Gateway District shall not be appealed to the Zoning Board of Adjustment, but rather shall be appealed to the Superior Court as provided by NH RSA 677:15 and NH RSA 676:5, III.

**6.07.9 SAVING CLAUSE**

Where any provision of this Ordinance is found to be invalid, such determination shall not affect the validity of the remainder of this Ordinance.

**6.07.10 EFFECTIVE DATE**

The West Elm Street Gateway District Ordinance was adopted by the Town of Milford on Tuesday, March xx, 2012 and is effective the same date.

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