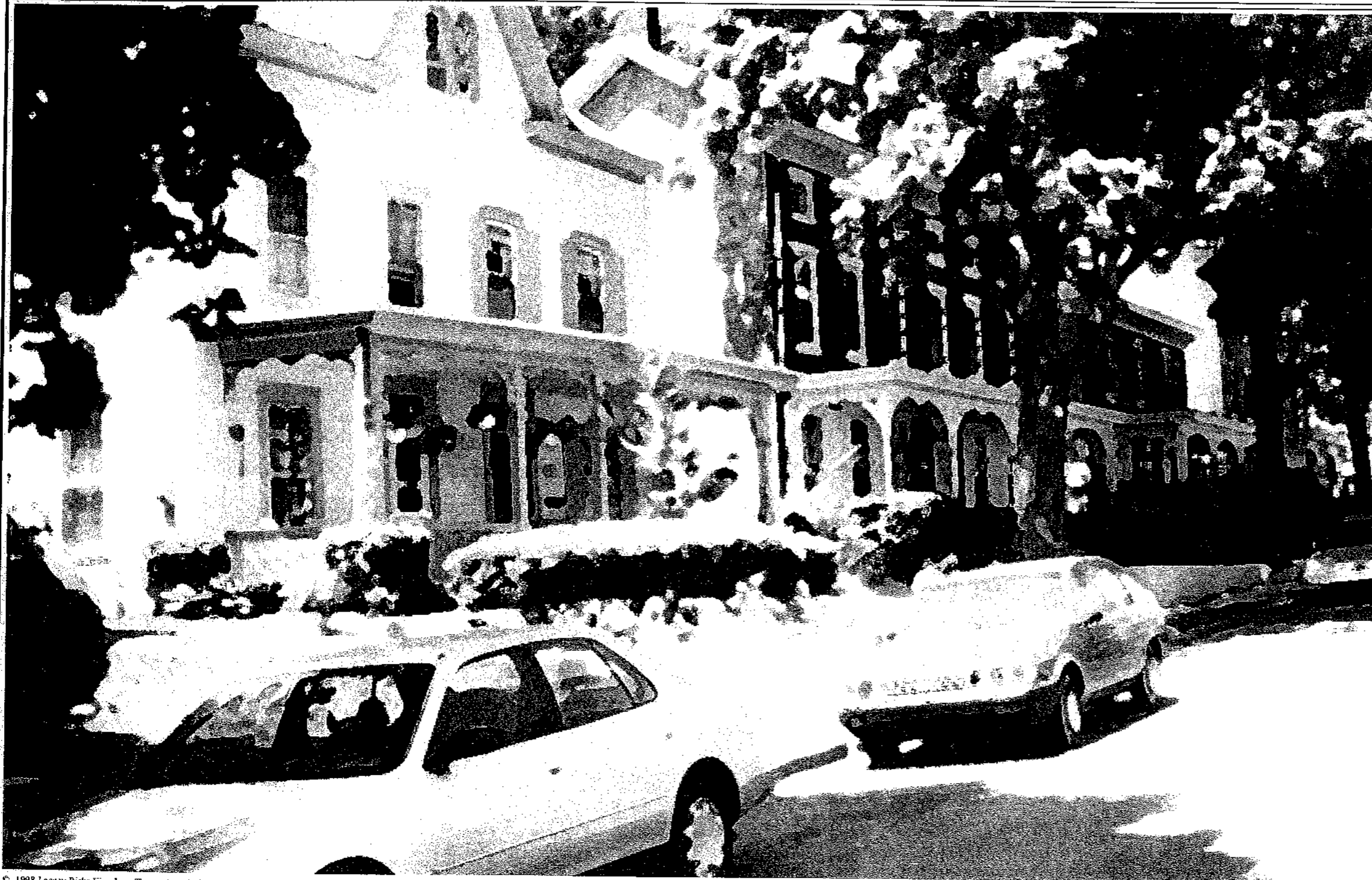


COMMUNITY DESIGN GUIDELINES



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BOROUGH OF DOYLESTOWN

BUCKS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

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Community Design Guidelines

Borough of Doylestown, PA

L O O N E Y

8.31.98

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R I C K S

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K I S S

What is Design Review?

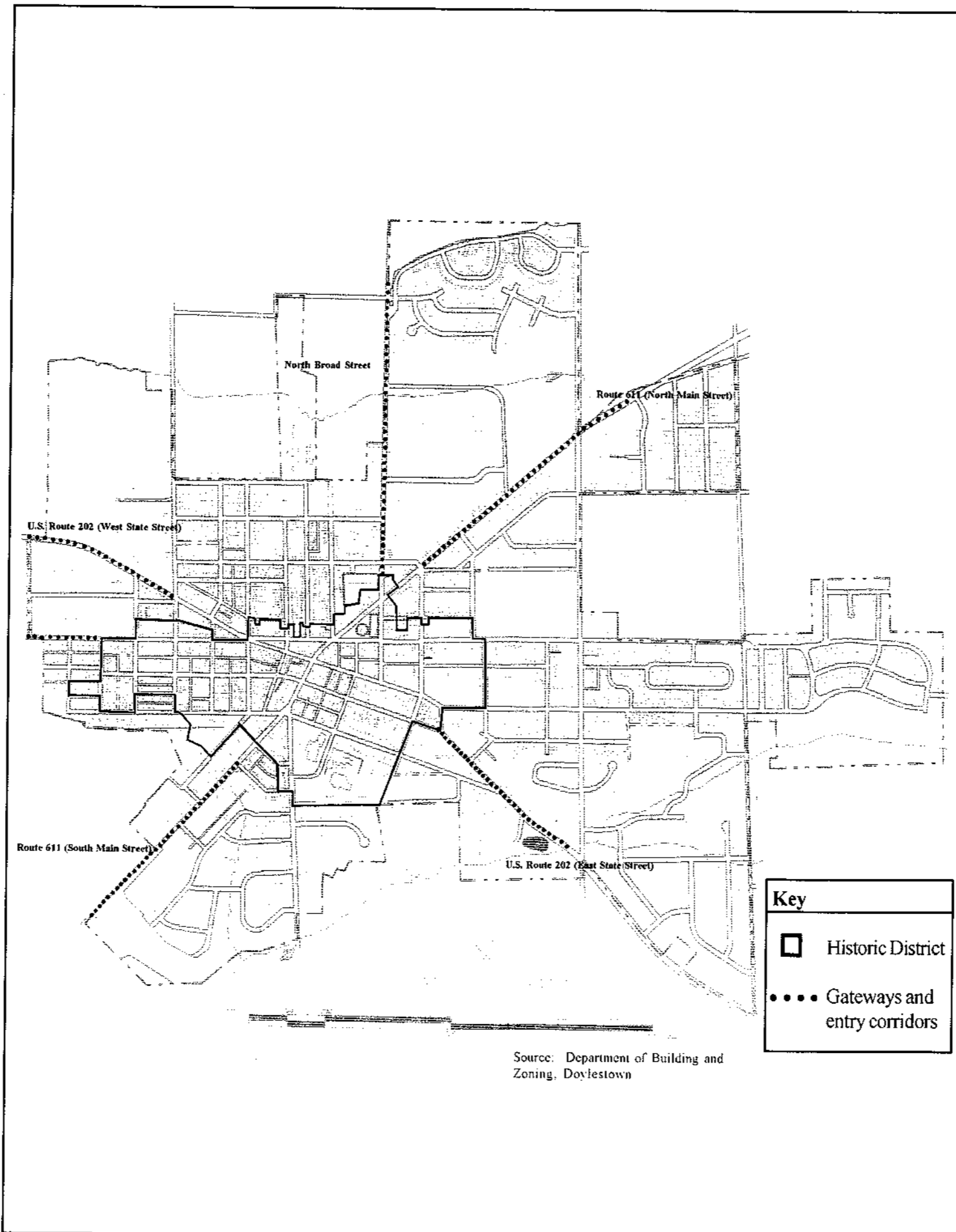
Design review is an evaluation of the appearance of proposed buildings and structures as part of the subdivision and land development approval process, with its goal being the improvement of the aesthetic quality of the built environment. The use of design review in Pennsylvania is limited, as state courts have held that aesthetic concerns alone are not a legitimate purpose of government regulation—they do not protect the health, safety, or welfare of the general public. Appearance may be a factor in a decision, but it may not be the only consideration.

Although Pennsylvania municipalities cannot base denial of a subdivision or land development approval on architectural design issues, there are other methods by which municipalities can influence design. Voluntary, non-binding design review meetings may be held between the applicant and municipal staff or design review committee. It is important that these meetings occur early in the application process, preferably at the sketch plan stage, before too many design decisions have been made by the developer.

The formulation of a design review process should begin with a determination of how the municipality defines good design. Community input, possibly through a survey, may be used to determine what features of design are important in a municipality or neighborhood. From this information and with the assistance of architects or other design professionals, a set of guiding principles of good design can be formulated and adopted by the governing body. The preparation of design guidelines, which describe and illustrate preferred design approaches provides developers a better sense of what the community is looking for.

Any design review process must walk a fine line between compatibility of development and excessive conformity. For most municipalities, design review should not limit architectural styles and expressions. Quality design can take many forms. Even within the Historic District, new buildings should not necessarily be designed in an older style.

Source: "Tools and Techniques: Bucks County Land Use Plan", Bucks County Planning Commission, May 1996.



INTRODUCTION

The Doylestown Community Design Guidelines implement the 1997 Comprehensive Plan Revision. The Comprehensive Plan lays the foundation for trying to improve the design quality of physical improvements between the historic district and the remainder of the community.

Applicability

These design guidelines are mandatory within the Historic District as reviewed by the Historical and Architectural Review Board (HARB). In addition, these guidelines are intended to provide voluntary guidance along highly visible gateways and entry corridors outside the Historic District. It is hoped that applicants will attempt to comply with many provisions of the design guidelines to ensure design consistency throughout the community. The guidelines are also intended to provide direction for further streetscape improvements throughout the Borough. The map of Doylestown at left delineates the Historic District and identifies the gateway and corridor areas.

Methodology

The design guideline process involved synthesizing the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan, including public input through a Community Vision Survey, along with other issues identified by the Borough. An outline was reviewed by HARB members who took dozens of photographs both within Doylestown and outside the community. The photographs represent both appropriate and inappropriate examples for the guidelines. Looney Ricks Kiss conducted a work session with HARB, reviewing their photos as well as others, and refining the issues list which resulted in the basic structure for the design guidelines.

Community Design Guidelines

Borough of Doylestown, PA

L O O N E Y

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Sheet 1

R I C K S

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K I S S

Ø Inappropriate



Ø This building inappropriately fronts onto parking.



Ø An addition should not disrupt prevailing front yard setbacks.



Ø This parking area is located where it visually impacts the streetscape.

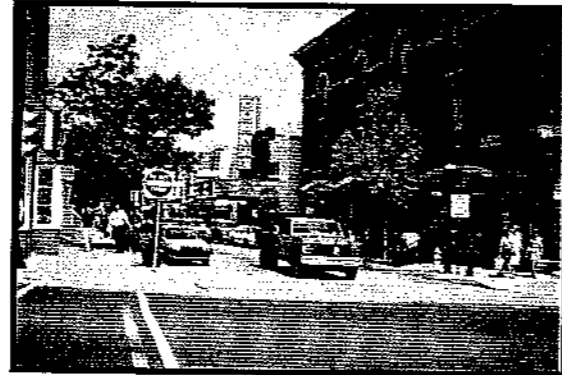


Ø This building is not designed to respond to its location on the corner.

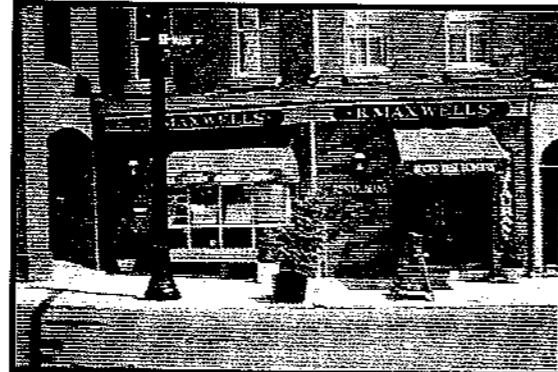
☑ Appropriate for Doylestown



☑ Buildings fronting onto sidewalks provide pedestrians window shopping opportunities.



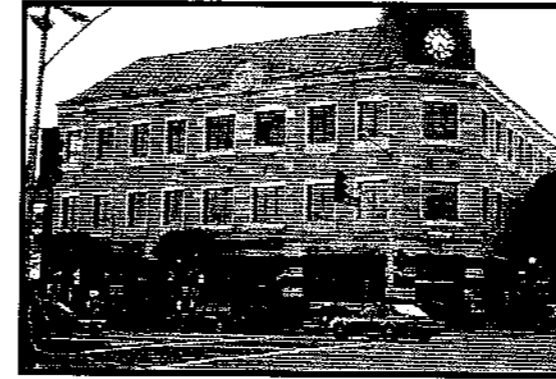
☑ These buildings respect the front yard setbacks of surrounding buildings.



☑ This building fronts toward a street.



☑ This corner building has its entrance fronting the main street and a projecting porch which responds to the side street.



☑ Corner buildings shall be designed to respond to their highly visible location.



☑ Building footprints that vary from one another and contribute to Doylestown's unique character.

☑ Buildings should maintain front yard setbacks or subtly graduate changes. Building footprints should vary from adjacent buildings and front toward streets or alleys.



☑ This parking area is sensitively located to the rear of the building.

BUILDING ORIENTATION AND SITING

Building Orientation

Buildings shall front toward a street or other public space. Buildings shall not front directly onto parking lots.

Corner Buildings

Corner buildings have at least two front facades visibly exposed to the street and shall be designed to respond to these more prominent locations.

Front Setbacks

Generally maintain front yard setbacks or achieve changes through subtle increments.

Building Footprints

Building footprints shall generally vary from adjacent buildings.

Location of Parking

Off-street parking areas shall be sensitively located to the side or rear of buildings to reduce the visual impact to the streetscape.

Community Design Guidelines

Borough of Doylestown, PA

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Sheet 2

R I C K S

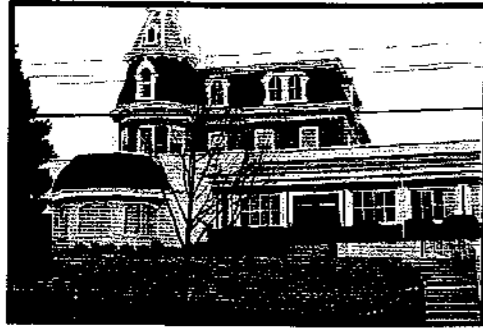
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K I S S

Ø Inappropriate



Ø Side and rear elevations are not compatible with the design of the front facade.



Ø The horizontal scale and massing, window patterns and roof forms of this addition do not relate to the main building.

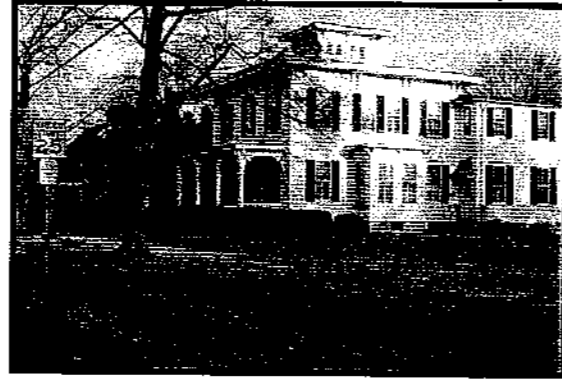


Ø This front addition disregards the scale, massing, details and materials of the main building.

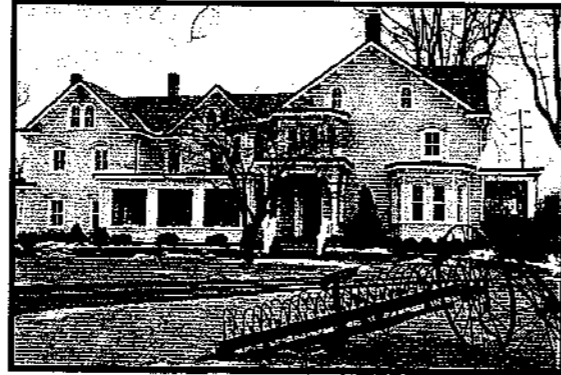


Ø The mass of this roof line is too heavy for the building, which also lacks a defined base.

☑ Appropriate for Doylestown



☑ A drop in height and a wall offset are used to graduate a change in massing for this rear addition while maintaining overall scale with the original building.



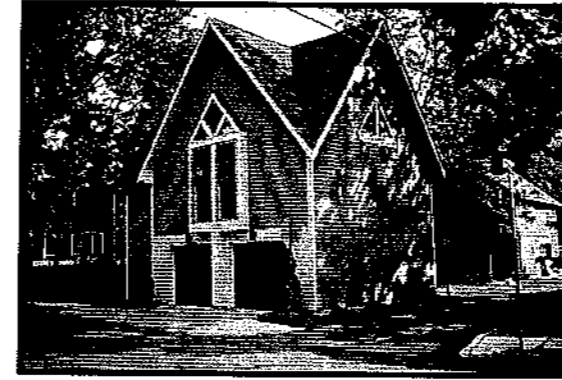
☑ This extensive addition steps down in massing while reflecting the character, roof form and window proportion of the main structure.



☑ The form of this addition subtly echoes and steps down the massing of the main building. However, window patterns of the storefront are incompatible.



☑ Projecting gables and porches break up the mass while window/door patterns, eave lines and a base course relate to the scale of the surrounding buildings.



☑ The massing of this carriage house maintains compatibility with the main building on this lot while the detailing is clearly contemporary.



☑ Incremental wall and roof offsets can graduate a change in scale between buildings.



☑ This mixed-use building successfully blends a commercial scale at the ground level with an overall residential massing on upper floors.



☑ These infill homes reflect elements of scale from the surrounding neighborhood (height, proportion, door/window patterns, base and cap).

SCALE & MASSING BASE & CAP

Scale & Massing

The overall scale, massing and basic proportions of new buildings or additions should relate to and be compatible with those of adjacent and surrounding buildings. Changes in scale and massing should be accomplished through graduated increments such as a wall offset, roof line variation or shift in the height of a wall or cap line. In general, additions should be architecturally compatible with the original structure, but clearly differentiated by some elements of scale or massing.

Buildings shall avoid long, monotonous, uninterrupted wall or roof planes. Building wall offsets, including both projections and recesses, and changes in floor level shall be used to add interest and variety, reducing the visual effect of a single, long wall. Similarly, roof line offsets, cross gables and dormers may help vary the massing of a building and relieve the effect of a single, long roof.

Base & Cap

All visibly exposed sides of a building should have a defined base and cap. The base and cap should be conveyed through clearly defined horizontal elements along the bottom and top of the building. The base may align with the finished floor height, kickplate or sill level of the first story and/or consist of foundation plantings. The cap shall consist of a cornice, frieze or eave at the top of a building wall and shall project out horizontally from the vertical wall plane.

Residential
Massing Above

Commercial
Scale at Base

Community Design Guidelines

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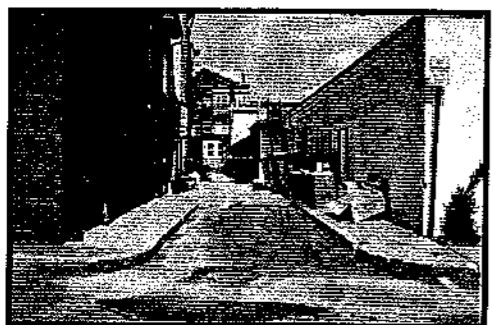
Ø Inappropriate



Ø While this building has a defined base, the roof form and window pattern are inappropriate for Doylestown.



Ø Covering windows and removing details have stripped this front facade of its original character.

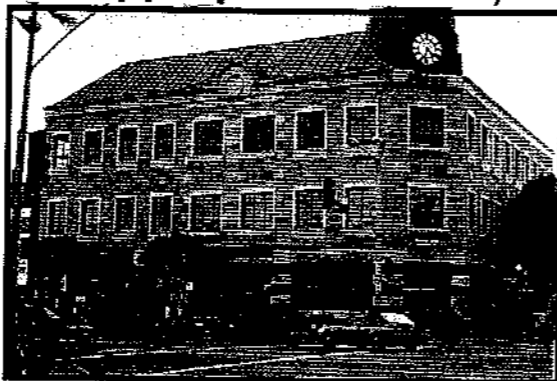


Ø If exposed to view, side and rear elevations should not exhibit blank walls or service areas.

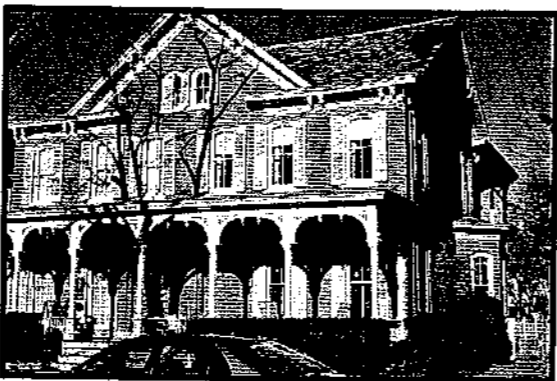


Ø Blank windowless walls should be articulated in order to reduce the negative appearance of such walls.

☑ Appropriate for Doylestown



☑ Roof forms and any architectural embellishments should be appropriate to the design of a building.



☑ This front facade is emphasized by its window pattern, roof form and details.



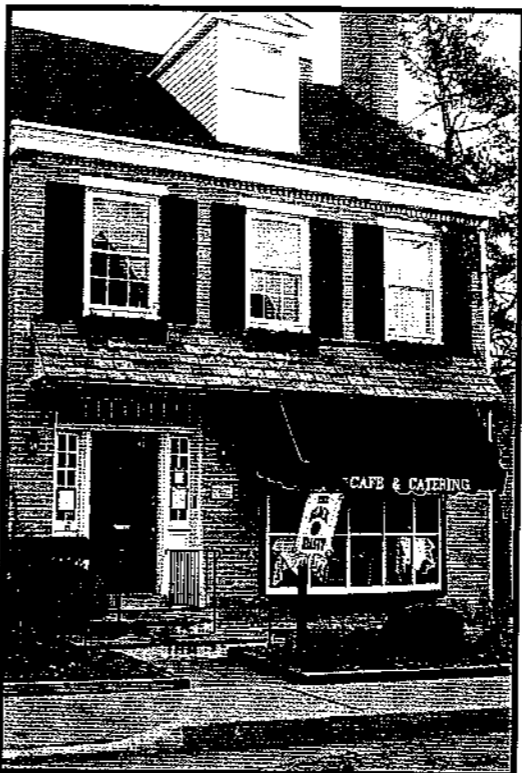
☑ Projecting windows, articulated entrances and landscaping can enhance side and rear elevations.



☑ Framed window recesses and landscaping are used to reduce the negative effect of this blank wall.



☑ Properly executed gable roofs have overhanging eaves and can be embellished with dormers.



☑ Rich detailing of the windows, entry and roof articulate this facade on the street.



☑ Visibly exposed side and rear elevations should be compatible with the front facade.

ROOFS & WALLS

Roofs

Roof form shall be appropriate to a building's design and neighborhood. Architectural embellishments such as cross-gables, dormers, belvederes, masonry chimneys, cupolas and other similar elements are encouraged where appropriate to the architectural design of a building. It is encouraged that gable roofs be used to the greatest extent possible. Where appropriate, both gable and hipped roofs should have overhanging eaves on all sides that extend a minimum of one (1) foot beyond the building wall. Flat roofs or gambrel roofs shall be avoided on one (1) story and one-and-a-half (1 1/2) story buildings. Mansard roofs may be used only on buildings of three (3) stories or more in height.

Emphasis on Front Facade

The front facade of a building shall face a street and be emphasized through window pattern and proportions, entrance treatment and details.

Side and Rear Elevations

The design of visibly exposed side and rear elevations shall be compatible with the design of the front facade.

Blank Walls

Blank, windowless walls are discouraged. Where a blank wall is necessary, it should be articulated by the provision of blank window recesses trimmed with frames, sills and lintels, or by using recessed or projecting display window cases if the building is occupied by a commercial use. Intensive evergreen landscaping may also be appropriate in certain cases.

Community Design Guidelines

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Sheet 4

R I C K S

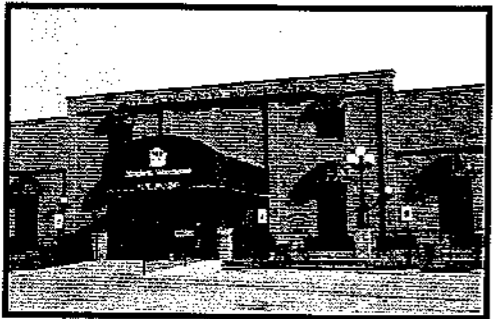
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K I S S

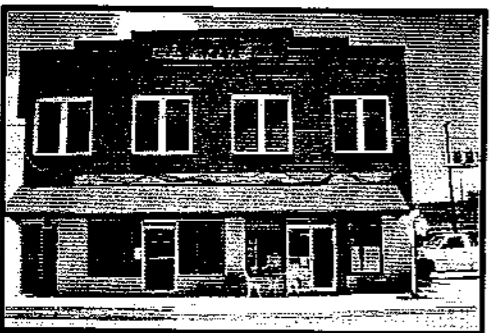
Ø Inappropriate



Ø This storefront addition disregards the design details and materials of the main building.



Ø This mix of awnings is not complimentary to each other or the building.



Ø Alterations to doors, windows and canopies should not alter the original character of a building.

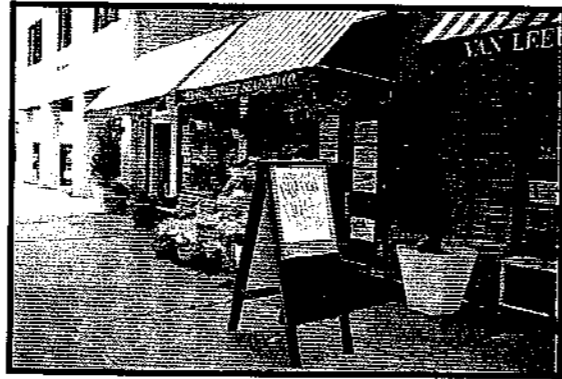


Ø Shutters shall be proportioned to cover one-half the width of the window.

☑ Appropriate for Doylestown



☑ Storefronts should be compatible with the overall character of the facade.



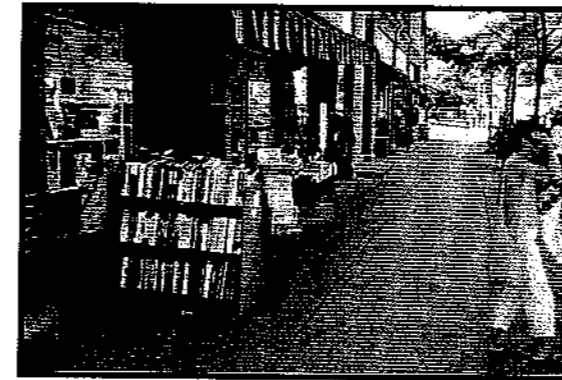
☑ Storefronts and awnings should be integrally designed as part of the entire facade.



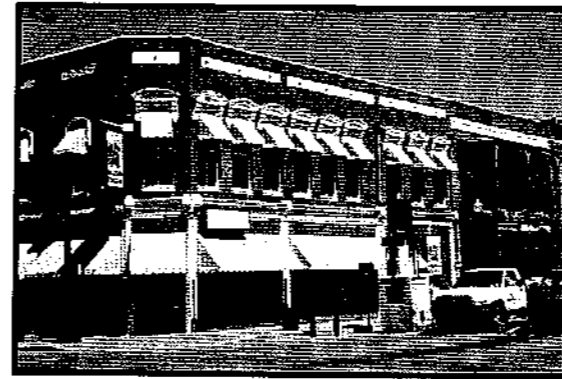
☑ The ground level should be integrally designed with upper floors of the building.



☑ Windows shall be vertically proportioned and vertically aligned between floors.



☑ Ground floor retail uses should have large pane display windows.



☑ Awnings can be used on multiple storefronts and upper stories to unify the entire structure.



☑ Entrances to buildings should be architecturally defined and articulated.



☑ Entrance, window and shutter details should be appropriate to each building's design.

STOREFRONTS, AWNINGS, ENTRANCES, WINDOWS & SHUTTERS

Storefronts

Storefronts shall be integrally designed with the upper floors of a building to be compatible with the overall character of the facade. Retail, service and restaurant uses should have large pane display windows on the ground level. Buildings with multiple storefronts may be unified through the use of architecturally compatible materials, colors, details, awnings, signage, and lighting fixtures.

Awnings

Fixed or retractable awnings are permitted at the ground floor level and on upper levels where appropriate, provided they complement a building's architectural style, materials, colors and details, and do not conceal significant architectural features, such as cornices, columns or pilasters. Canvas is the preferred material for awnings, although other water-proofed fabrics may be used; plastic, metal or aluminum awnings are prohibited. In buildings with multiple storefronts, compatible awnings may be used as a means of unifying the structure.

Entrances

All entrances to a building shall be defined and articulated by architectural elements such as lintels, pediments, pilasters, columns, porticos, porches, overhangs, railings, balustrades, signs, lighting and others.

Windows

Windows shall be architecturally compatible with the style, materials, colors and details of a building. Windows shall be vertically proportioned. The location of windows on the upper stories of a building shall be vertically aligned with the location of windows and doors on the ground level, including storefronts or display windows.

Shutters

Where appropriate to the design of a building, shutters shall be provided on all windows fronting a street or visible from the public right-of-way. If shutters are used appropriate hardware (hinges, pulls etc.) shall be used. Shutters shall be proportioned to cover one-half (1/2) the width of the window.

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Sheet 5

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K I S S

Ø Inappropriate



Ø The conglomeration of signs, poor quality materials, and disassociation from the building is inappropriate for Doylestown.



Ø Exposed dumpsters, loading and HVAC systems are incompatible along the street.



Ø Unscreened dumpsters are visually obtrusive.

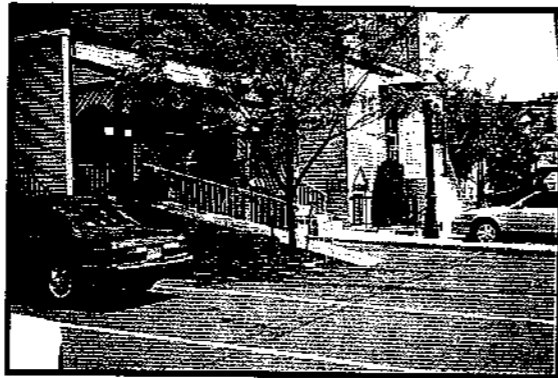


Ø Exposed mechanical systems create visual clutter and disrupt landscape continuity.

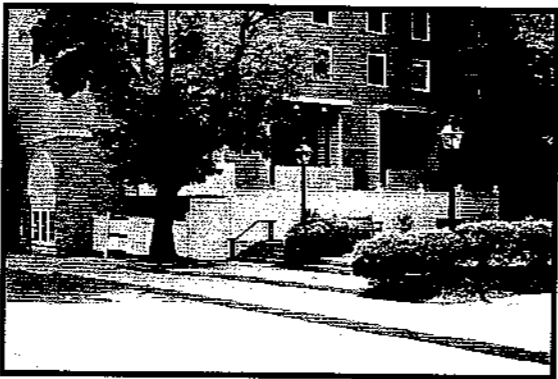
☑ Appropriate for Doylestown



☑ Creative signage includes icons which help make businesses unique in the eyes of the consumer. Signage may be incorporated into the building's architecture or become part of the streetscape environment.



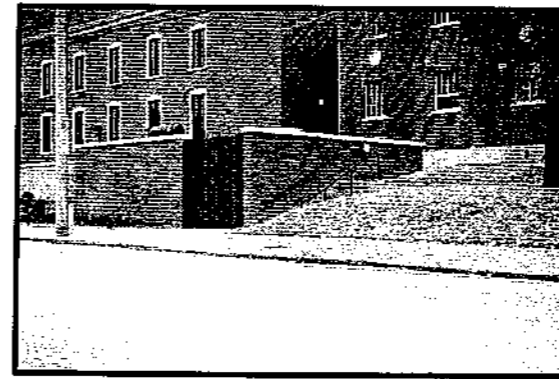
☑ This restaurant service area is incorporated into the body of the building.



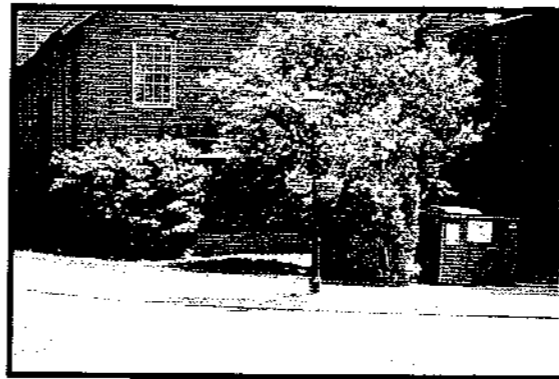
☑ A detailed fence and landscaping screens this restaurant dumpster and service area from the street.



☑ Mechanical systems may be sheltered to screen it from the public's view.



☑ This service area screen is architecturally integrated with its associated building.



☑ Landscaping can soften the appearance of service areas and enhance property values.



☑ Dumpsters should be located unobtrusively at the rear of parking areas and screened.

SIGNAGE, MATERIALS, COLORS, DETAILS, SERVICE & MECHANICAL

Signage

The design of signage is encouraged to be creative in its approach to advertising a business. Artisan-crafted signs and high-quality materials are highly encouraged. The location of signage should not cover or obscure architectural elements or details, or otherwise detract from the overall design of a building. Illumination of signage with indirect incandescent spotlighting is highly encouraged. Internally illuminated white plastic signboards and internally illuminated vinyl awnings are prohibited.

Materials, Colors and Details

All materials, colors and details used on a building should be compatible with the overall design, as well as with each other. A building designed of an architectural style that normally includes certain integral materials, colors and/or details should incorporate such into its design.

On existing buildings, the retention and/or replacement of original materials shall depend on the visual prominence of the building or the particular feature on the building, or how integral the material is to the architecture. If the building is attached to other buildings, or is integral to a streetscape, the pattern or prominence of materials in adjacent buildings shall be taken into account. Artificial siding material shall not be used on buildings in the Historic District.

Service Areas

Where required, loading docks, solid waste facilities (dumpsters), recycling facilities and other service areas shall be placed to the rear or side of buildings in visually unobtrusive locations. Screening should prevent direct views of such areas from adjacent properties or the public right-of-way by using walls, fences and landscaping in order to minimize glare, noise and odors.

Mechanical and Other Building Features

All air conditioning units, HVAC systems, exhaust pipes or stacks, elevator housing and satellite dishes and other telecommunications receiving devices shall be screened from view from the ground level of the public right-of-way and from adjacent properties, by using walls, fencing, roof elements, parapet walls, penthouse-type screening devices or landscaping. Fire escapes shall not be permitted on a front facade.

Community Design Guidelines

Borough of Doylestown, PA

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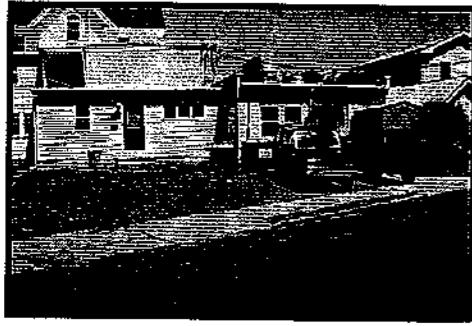
Sheet 6

R I C K S

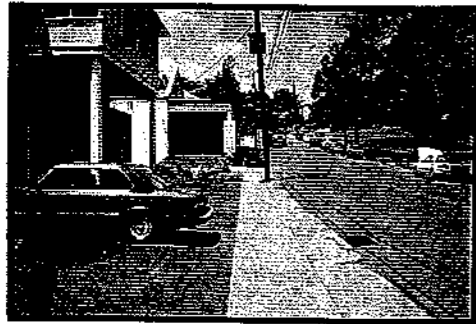
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K I S S

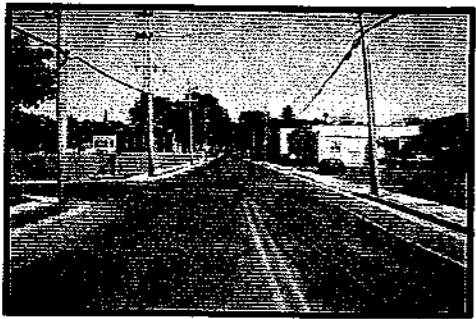
Ø Inappropriate



Ø This site is inappropriate without any landscaping.



Ø Landscaping and streetscape improvements are badly needed in this situation.

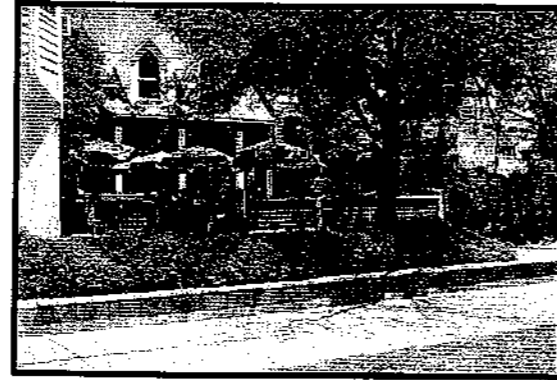


Ø Streetscapes devoid of landscaping and other improvements detract from Doylestown's special character.



Ø This site lacks adequate landscaping.

☑ Appropriate for Doylestown



☑ All areas of a site not occupied by buildings, parking lots or other improvements shall be intensively landscaped.



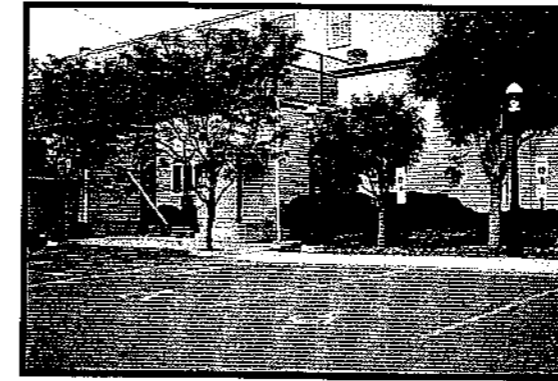
☑ Fencing should be architecturally compatible with the building.



☑ Doylestown's standards for lighting, street furniture and sidewalk paving shall be utilized.



☑ Doylestown's residential streetscapes are intensively landscaped with a rich mix of trees, shrubs and ground cover.



☑ Repetition of trees can create a rhythm which complements buildings.



☑ Landscaping and fencing can be used to screen spaces between buildings.



☑ Plantings, paving materials and landscape details can help integrate more contemporary architecture.

☑ Fencing, landscaping and streetscape elements can be combined nicely.



LANDSCAPING & STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS

Landscaping

All areas of a site not occupied by buildings, parking or other improvements shall be intensively planted with trees, shrubs, hedges, ground cover and/or lawn, unless such area consists of attractive existing vegetation to be retained. Plantings should be designed in a manner that is complimentary to surrounding buildings and the context of the block street and district in which the site is located. The use of repetition, structured patterns, informal arrangements, complimentary textures and colors, and other design approaches should reinforce the overall character of the area.

Walls and Fences

Walls and fences shall be architecturally compatible with the style, materials and colors of the principal building on the same lot. Highway-style guard rail, stockade or contemporary security fencing such as chain link barbed wire or razor wire are prohibited. Garden walls and appropriately styled fences are encouraged to continue the building line along the sidewalk.

Lighting

Use of minimum wattage metal halide or high pressure sodium light sources is encouraged. Low pressure sodium and mercury vapor light sources are prohibited. Decorative lamp posts conforming to the Doylestown light standard shall be provided at regular intervals within the Historic district and along frontage of gateways and entry corridors. Parking area lights should not exceed 12 ft. in height.

Street Furniture

Elements of street furniture, such as benches, waste containers, planters, phone booths, kiosks, bicycle racks and bollards should be carefully selected to ensure compatibility with the existing Doylestown standards, as well as the character of the area.

Paving Materials

The qualities of paving materials on sidewalks, pedestrian walkways and pathways, plazas, and courtyards shall be appropriate to the proposed pedestrian circulation function. Asphalt should be avoided.

Community Design Guidelines

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Sheet 7

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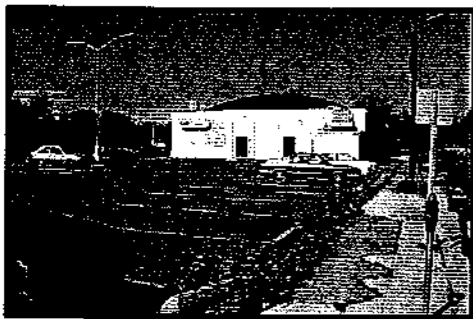
Ø Inappropriate



Ø Unscreened parking lots are inappropriate.



Ø Parking in front of a building should be discouraged. Parking in the front yard setback is not permitted.

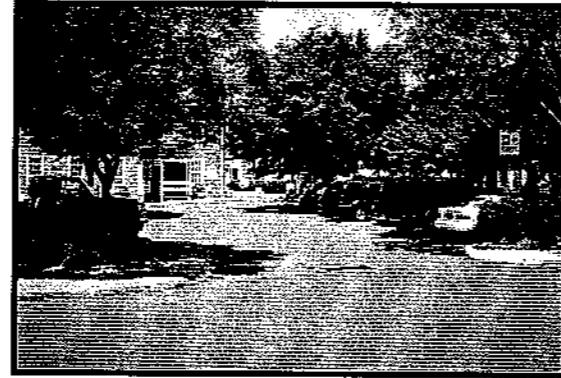


Ø Large open parking lots adjacent to the street are unattractive and unsafe to pedestrians.

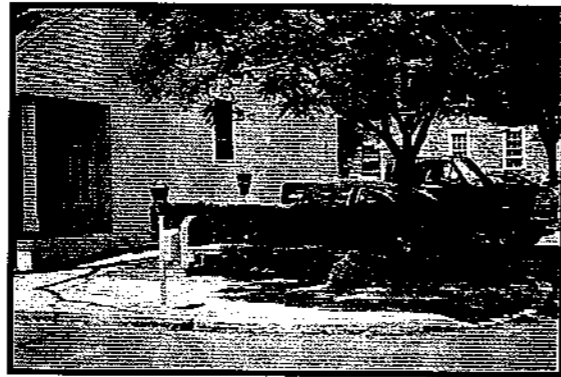


Ø This parking area is located where it visually impacts the streetscape.

☑ Appropriate for Doylestown



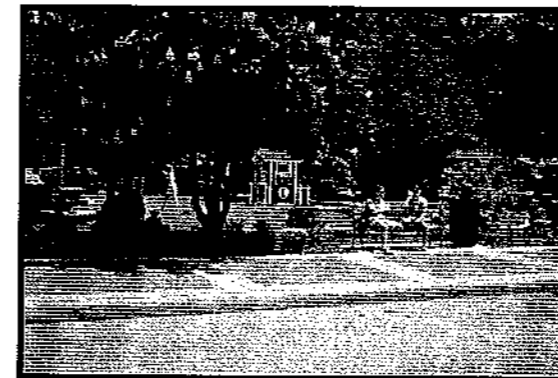
☑ A combination of hedges, trees and screens and spatially encloses this parking lot.



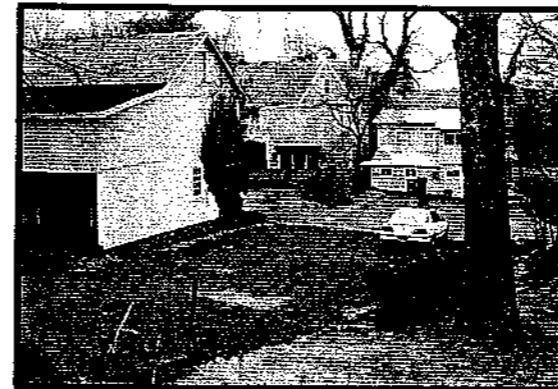
☑ Parking should be located to the side of a building and screened to prevent direct views of parked vehicles from streets and sidewalks.



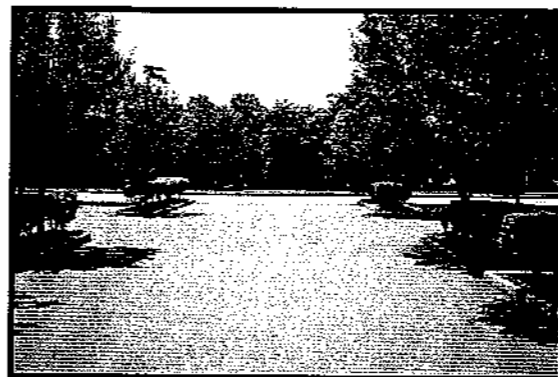
☑ Protected planting islands provide opportunities to integrate landscaping in parking lots.



☑ Combination of plant materials and other landscape elements help screen this parking lot from view.



☑ This parking area is sensitively located to the rear of the building.



☑ The interior of larger parking lots shall be landscaped by protected planting islands or peninsulas.



☑ Parking lot landscaping should provide shade and visual relief.

PARKING LOTS

Location of Parking Lots

Off-street parking lots shall be located to the side and rear of buildings and are not permitted to be located in front of buildings. Parking lots shall be accessed from alleys or narrow driveways that do not disrupt the streetscape. Parking lots shall be small-sized where possible and are encouraged to be interconnected with parking lots on adjacent properties by cross-access easements. Common, shared parking facilities are encouraged, where possible.

Parking Lot Screening

The perimeter of all parking lots shall be visually screened through the use of walls, fences and/or landscaping, with an emphasis on any portions fronting a street. The screening of parking lots shall prevent direct views of parked vehicles from streets and sidewalks, avoid spill-over light, glare, noise or exhaust fumes onto adjacent properties, in particular residential uses. Parking lots exposed to view shall be surrounded by a minimum four (4) foot high year-round screen, such as an evergreen hedge or wall. The height of the screen shall decrease where appropriate to meet clear sight triangle requirements.

Parking Lot Landscaping

Parking lots shall be landscaped to provide shade and visual relief. This is best achieved by protected planting islands or peninsulas within the parking lot. Parking lots with ten (10) spaces or less may not require interior landscaping if the Borough determines there is adequate perimeter landscaping. If this perimeter landscaping is found to be inadequate, and in parking lots with eleven (11) or more spaces, a minimum of one (1) deciduous shade tree shall be planted for every five (5) parking spaces.

Community Design Guidelines

Borough of Doylestown, PA

L O O N E Y

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