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NOTICE OF WORKSHOP MEETING

The City of Lake Elmo
Planning Commission will conduct a workshop meeting on
Monday, November 5, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.

AGENDA

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Approve Agenda
3. Approve Minutes - *None*
4. Business Items
 - a. VILLAGE PLANNING UPDATE. The Planning Commission will receive an update regarding the ongoing work to draft the Comprehensive Plan Amendment of the Village Land Use Plan. Materials will be brought to the meeting.
 - b. DESIGN STANDARDS MANUAL UPDATE. The Planning Commission will receive an update regarding further progress related to the Lake Elmo Design Standards Manual. In addition, Staff will present an update regarding the Design Standards Stakeholder Workshop that was held on 10/29/12.
5. Updates
 - a. City Council Updates - *None*
 - b. Staff Updates
 - i. Upcoming Meetings:
 1. Planning Commission
 - a. November 14, 2012
 - b. November 26, 2012
 2. Theming Workshop, November 8, 2012
 - c. Commission Concerns
6. Adjourn



Planning Commission
Date: 11/5/12
Item: 4b
Business

ITEM: Design Standards Manual Update

SUBMITTED BY: Nick Johnson, City Planner

REVIEWED BY: Kyle Klatt, Planning Director

SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUESTED:

After Staff completed the baseline draft of the Lake Elmo Design Standards Manual, the City hosted a stakeholder workshop to invite members of the development community to comment on the baseline draft. Overall, the majority of the feedback received from the development community was positive. In addition to editorial improvements made to the documents, Staff will present some areas of concern that were raised at the stakeholder workshop regarding some of the standards within the manual.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The baseline draft of the Design Standards Manual was completed for the previous Planning Commission meeting on 10/22/12. Since the baseline draft was presented at that time, Staff has conducted additional editorial review with the assistance of members of the Planning Commission. This assistance has been extremely helpful for ensuring that the intent of the design standards is followed to achieve the desired outcome. In addition to editorial review, Staff also added language to the compliance section of the Introduction that allows applicants to apply for relief of specific standards based upon certain findings.

To encourage additional review and feedback, Staff also hosted a stakeholder workshop on 10/29/12. The purpose of this workshop is to gain knowledge and input from members of the development community regarding the City's ongoing work on design standards. The tone from the development community overall was positive. However, there were three main areas of concern regarding the standards:

1. Maximum setbacks contained within the High Density Residential and Commercial districts.
2. The standard defining maximum percentages of allowed surface parking along primary frontages.

3. The use of Exterior Insulation Finishing Systems (EFIS) as an allowed building material in multiple districts.

In order to address these concerns, Staff would like to present specific proposals to the Planning Commission to mitigate any potential problems caused by the standards. These proposals may include tweaking standards, allowing for mitigation techniques, or fully removing standards that may not be necessary or meet the intent of the manual. Staff is seeking direction from the Planning Commission regarding these proposals to address the concerns of the development community regarding the standards. Notes from the meeting, as well as a letter from Bruce Miller, are attached for Planning Commission review.

Finally, Staff presented a schedule for upcoming work related to design standards. The future scope of work includes the following:

- Update the content of the document to reflect the comments from the stakeholder workshop and Planning Commission meeting (near-term).
- Proceed with layout of the manual, including pictures and figures demonstrating the standards visually (near-term).
- Clarify the design review process (Winter 2012-13).
- Link the design standards manual with the theming work being completed by Damon Farber and Associates (March 2013).
- Proceed with the adoption of the document (Spring 2013).
 - Public Hearing at Planning Commission
 - City Council adoption

This timeline should be compatible with the timing of the future Comprehensive Plan Amendments, preparing the community for a new phase of growth.

Staff is confident that the Lake Elmo Design Standards Manual will be an effective document in ensuring quality development outcomes. In addition, the incorporation of the theming work completed by Damon Farber and Associates will be important in terms of developing an identity unique to this community.

RECCOMENDATION:

Staff is looking for input regarding the Design Standards Manual. No action is required at this time.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. DRAFT Lake Elmo Design Guidelines Manual (10-31-12)
2. Design Standards Stakeholder Workshop Meeting Notes
3. Letter from Bruce Miller (I-94 Work Group Member and stakeholder workshop attendee)

ORDER OF BUSINESS:

- Introduction.....Planning Staff
- Report by Staff.....Planning Staff
- Questions from the Commission..... Chair & Commission Members
- Discussion by the Commission..... Chair & Commission Members



DRAFT – Lake Elmo Design Standards Manual

I. Introduction

Intent and Purpose

The City of Lake Elmo is currently preparing for a significant amount of growth and development in two areas of the city: the I-94 Corridor and Old Village. To ensure that growth is carried out in a manner reflective of the goals and principles of Lake Elmo, measures are being taken to ensure development outcomes of a high quality. Included in these measures is the creation of design standards, establishing requirements and guidelines related to site design and building form. The purpose of these standards is to incorporate the following principles in residential and commercial development outcomes in the I-94 Corridor and Old Village:

- 1. To ensure high quality site design and building materials, supporting both function and form;*
- 2. To provide open space in future areas of growth, building off of Lake Elmo's existing character and environment;*
- 3. To accommodate automobile traffic in a manner that respects the pedestrian environment;*
- 4. To utilize natural and ecological systems into public and private development, particularly in the realm of storm water management;*
- 5. To encourage site design that is mindful and conscientious of the existing landscape and topography; and*
- 6. To foster connections between the new and existing areas of Lake Elmo through consistent standards and theming, resulting in an identity that is unique to this community.*

Areas of Growth

The two areas guided for sewered residential and commercial development in Lake Elmo are the I-94 Corridor and Old Village. While both of these areas are guided for future growth and have ample greenfield development opportunity, it is important to recognize the differences between these districts as they pertain to geography and character. These differences will play a major role in the types of development that are realized in each area.

I-94 Corridor. The I-94 Corridor is geographically bounded by CR-10 (10th St.) and I-94 from north to south and CR-15 (Manning Ave.) to CR-13 (Inwood Ave.) from east to west. The City has guided this corridor for residential development of various densities, as well as commercial and business park development. Given its location and high level of access, the vision for this corridor is more highway-oriented by nature, offering good opportunities for higher density and commercial development. In addition, the City has envisioned this area to provide increased employment opportunities in Lake Elmo.

Old Village. The Old Village is located in the heart of Lake Elmo, centered along State Highway 5 and bordered to the east by CR-15 (Manning Ave.) and to the south by 30th St. As the historic center of Lake Elmo, the Old Village is guided for residential and mixed-use development types, which are consistent with historic downtown areas. In order to reinforce the identity of the Old Village as a destination, it is the City's goal to emphasize a positive pedestrian environment, consistent with main street character. Given this vision and the historic context, the Old Village will most likely attract different development types than the I-94 Corridor.

Considering the character, geography, and visions for these two growth areas, it is unreasonable to expect that the development types will be the same. However, in order to establish standards for high quality sites and buildings in Lake Elmo, the design standards laid out in this manual will be applicable to development within both the I-94 Corridor and Old Village.

Structure of the Standards

The standards contained within this manual are structured in a manner that establishes desired outcomes for private development sites within four land use types guided for the I-94 Corridor and Old Village. The four land use types, or development types, addressed in this manual are as follows:

1. **High Density Residential;**
2. **Commercial;**
3. **Business Park; and**
4. **Mixed-Use.**

In addition to land use types, the standards are organized into two primary categories: **Site Design and Building Design**. The standards contained within these categories are organized using the following sub-categories:

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|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Site Design <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Placement • Streetscape • Landscaping • Parking • Delivery, Service, Storage and Utility Areas | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Building Design <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form and Facade • Building Materials • Scale and Mass • Roof Design • Entries • Signage • Lighting |
|---|--|

These categories and respective sub-categories are intended to organize the specific standards within each land use or development type.

Compliance

As part of the City's development review process, any new development or redevelopment within the I-94 Corridor and Old Village will be reviewed for compliance to the standards contained within this manual. Exceptions to the standards contained within the manual may be granted by the Board of Review under but not limited to the following circumstances:

- The proposed project is found to be of an architectural value above and beyond the accepted standard and therefore a community asset;
- The proposed project demonstrates a commitment to theming elements and open-space character, thereby supporting Lake Elmo's unique identity;
- The proposed project is found to prioritize pedestrian circulation and safety, including streetscape treatments above the minimum standards that contribute to a positive pedestrian environment;
- The proposed project demonstrates a significant commitment to natural storm water management practices; or
- The proposed project includes a significant commitment to sustainable building practices, similar to the standards required for LEED certification.

In order to receive relief or exception to the standards within the manual, it is the responsibility of the applicant to demonstrate why a specific standard presents an unreasonable burden in the context of the proposed site or project.

II. High Density Residential Development

Applicable Zoning Districts:

- *Urban Medium Density Residential (MDR)*
- *Urban High Density Residential (HDR)*

Purpose

Both the I-94 Corridor and Old Village are expected to experience growth in the form of high density residential development. This growth will be comprised of single-family attached (townhome) development and multi-family residential development, including apartments and condominiums. For residential development, the intent of the design standards is to provide housing of a high aesthetic quality with open or recreational spaces integrated directly into the site.

A. Site Design

1. Building Placement

Goal: Structures should be located and oriented in a manner that allows for pedestrian accessibility and provides visual interest from the public right of way.

- a. Buildings must be setback at least 20 but no more than 60 feet from the public right of way.
- b. The setbacks of adjacent residential buildings should be varied to contribute to an interesting streetscape, avoiding monotonous facade or wall depth.
- c. Buildings should be easily accessed from the street, particularly near commercial or mixed-use development.
- d. The area fronting the main public street, or front-yard setback area, should be utilized for entryways, landscaping, porches, patios and other amenities that may be utilized by residents and provide visual interest or a sense of place.
- e. Recreational and common spaces should be located at the interior or rear of the site to promote access and safety for residents. Keeping these spaces out of the front of the site also helps maintain visual interest and attractive sight lines.
- f. Some provision of open or common space on the site is required to maintain Lake Elmo's open space character. This provision can be found in §154.454 of the Lake Elmo City Code.

2. Streetscape

Goal: Residential streetscapes should provide for pedestrian accessibility and safety while offering aesthetically pleasing environments.

- a. Sidewalks shall be provided in order to ensure pedestrian accessibility and circulation.
- b. Sidewalk materials should be attractive and low-maintenance, such as concrete or decorative pavers.
- c. Boulevard areas should be planted with turf grass and/or other attractive, low-maintenance ground cover. In addition, boulevard trees should be provided in regular intervals.
- d. Site furnishings such as benches, pedestrian-scaled lighting, trash receptacles and other amenities are encouraged.
- e. Paths and access points/entryways should be clearly visible and well lit at night.

3. Landscaping

Goal: To enhance the visual aesthetic of the built environment and reduce impervious surface, thereby aiding storm water management practice.

- a. Shade and ornamental trees and other plant material should be installed within the front setback area.
- b. Bare soils should be planted or mulched with bark, stone or other suitable material to avoid unnecessary runoff.
- c. Plant species are encouraged to be native, low-maintenance and suitable to the Lake Elmo climate.
- d. Making use of similar plant materials as adjacent properties and public spaces is encouraged to create continuity.

- e. Mature trees located on building sites should be retained whenever possible.
- f. Service, storage, utility and parking areas should be buffered by plantings to reduce visual impact.
- g. Parking areas should include landscaped islands or plant beds to reduce the visual impact, break up monotonous hardscape and retain storm water.
- h. The installation of rain gardens is encouraged to improve on-site storm water infiltration.

4. Parking

Goal: To accommodate automobile parking in a manner that reduces visual impact, supports pedestrian circulation and maintains good sight lines along the public right of way.

- a. Parking areas should be located to the rear, side or within primary buildings whenever possible.
- b. Structured or underground parking is encouraged.
- c. The linear measurement of surface parking areas parallel to the public street may not exceed more than 30% of the primary street frontage. Sites or projects that are unable to meet this requirement will be required to install berms and/or additional landscaping to buffer areas of surface parking adjacent to the primary street frontage.
- d. Access to parking areas should be designed in a way that does not impede pedestrian traffic.
- e. Parking should be screened from adjacent structures with landscaping strips not exceeding 4 feet in height in order to ensure pedestrian safety.
- f. Lighting must be provided in parking areas at night for safety purposes. However, direct glare, spillover or other forms of light pollution directed at adjacent properties are prohibited.
- g. The installation of rain gardens within parking areas is encouraged for storm water infiltration purposes.
- h. Parking facilities must be ADA compliant when deemed necessary.

5. Delivery, Service, Storage and Utility Areas

Goal: To minimize the visual impact of storage and utility areas within residential developments.

- a. Exterior storage and utility areas should be located in low trafficked areas and screened from adjacent properties.
- b. Trash enclosures should be located so that noise and odor do not affect nearby residents or adjacent properties.
- c. Screening of storage and utility areas may include landscaping and architectural features that match the primary structure.
- d. Storage areas should match the architectural design of the primary structure.
- e. Utilize directional signage for storage and trash areas when appropriate.

B. Building Design

1. Form and Facade

Goal: Standards are intended to ensure high quality design, encourage creativity and promote visually appealing development, thereby cultivating a sense of place and identity.

- a. No blank facades without windows and doors are allowed. All sides of the structures shall have architectural treatments.
- b. Window and door styles should reflect the prevailing architectural style of the structure.
- c. Window sills and trim are required for all exterior windows.
- d. Flat panel exterior and garage doors are discouraged.
- e. Garages should be recessed from the facade of the principal structure whenever possible to draw visual attention away from parking areas.
- f. If there are multiple garages within a structure, they should be varied in their location to minimize the visual impact of a row of garage doors.
- g. Detached garages shall be architecturally consistent with the principal structure.
- h. Finished exterior materials shall be applied to all wall facades above 18 inches from the finished grade line, where unfinished exterior foundation may be visible.
- i. Ground level of multi-family structures should be distinguished architecturally from upper levels to provide human-scale elements for pedestrians.
- j. Living space below the main building level, such as a walkout structure, may not be visible from the front side of the structure facing the main public street.
- k. Split entry type structures are discouraged.
- l. Where individual units face a public street, each unit should be designed with a walkway from the sidewalk to the front entry feature.
- m. Entryways to individual units should contain an entryway feature, such as a porch or portico.

2. Building Materials

Goal: To offer a variety of attractive and quality building materials that will shape the identity and visual interest of residential development in Lake Elmo.

- a. All structure facades should utilize multiple building materials, including translucent glass. Changes in facade building materials should occur at clean horizontal and vertical separations, such as at building levels or architectural features.
- b. Multiple facade colors are encouraged as long as they are complementary.
- c. Siding materials should emphasize horizontal lines to reduce the appearance of height and mass.

- d. Exposed exterior building materials such as brick, stone, wood, or stucco should be authentic. Simulated materials may also be used if demonstrated to be of high quality and approved by the City.
- e. Materials which are prohibited as the primary facade material include the following:
 - Vinyl siding
 - Unpainted galvanized metal
 - Plain, unpainted, or painted concrete block
 - Corrugated metal, plastic, or fiberglass
 - Prefabricated concrete panels
- f. Roofing materials should consist of composition shingles, wood shakes, or clay or stone tiles. Metal used as a roofing material must incorporate ribs or standing seams to be acceptable.
- g. Samples of facade and roof materials must be submitted to the City prior to the approval of the building permit.

3. Scale and Mass

Goal: To establish parameters for building horizontally and vertically with a human scale in mind.

- a. Building volume should be broken up with recesses and projections such as balconies, bay windows, dormers, porches, and other features that provide variation and identity.
- b. Mass should be reduced through facade articulation, breaking up the wall area into smaller sections.
- c. Architectural elements, such as dormers, decorative windows and trim, porch details, decorative shutters, and wainscoting, can reduce the appearance of bulk and mass by providing visual interest.
- d. Building mass should be broken up with multiple roof and ridgelines perpendicular with one another.
- e. Structures of two-stories or higher should have articulated facades to minimize the appearance of mass, as well as multiple roof lines with corresponding gables.
- f. Scale should be reduced by utilizing “step-down” methods towards the public street. Porches, entries, window-bays or bump-out are effective in this regard.

4. Roof Design

Goal: To break up monotonous roof lines, add architectural detail and screen rooftop equipment.

- a. All rooftop equipment and must be screened using materials consistent with the overall architecture, particularly on roofs that are visible from adjacent buildings.
- b. Multiple peaks and ridgelines are encouraged to promote greater visual interest.
- c. Dormers are encouraged to break up continuous rooftop.
- d. Providing architectural detail on soffits and fascias are encouraged.

5. Entries

Goal: To encourage entryways of high architectural quality that emphasize access, safety, and a human scale.

- a. Primary building entries shall be visible and connected to the street sidewalk by the most direct route practical. However, some curvature in design for aesthetic purposes is allowed.
- b. Each building should have one or more clearly identifiable “front doors” that address the street and include signage denoting property address.
- c. Building entries should incorporate design elements or architectural treatments, such as awnings, columns or cornices to emphasize the primary entryway.
- d. Primary communal entryways are encouraged to be recessed to offer shelter from inclement weather. Units with individual exterior entries are encouraged to include porches, covered recesses or covered stoops.
- e. Ground floor residences that adjoin a public street or open space shall have direct access to the public street or open space.
- f. For units with individual exterior entries, small, landscaped private entry yards afford an attractive appearance on the street side and allow residents to take pride in these areas.

6. Lighting

Goal: To provide for safety and visual interest, while respecting the City’s dark sky ordinance.

- a. Lighting should be provided in all common areas, including parking, vehicular and pedestrian entries, walkways and common facilities (mailboxes, pools, etc.).
- b. The maximum height of lighting is the following:
 - Ornamental pedestrian lighting: 12 feet
 - Parking area lighting: 14 feet
 - Bollard or ground-level lighting: 4 feet
- c. Service area lighting shall be confined within the service yard boundaries and enclosure walls.
- d. Spill-over light from storage or service areas is not allowed. Lights at service or exit doors shall be limited to low wattage, downcast or low cut-off fixtures that remain on throughout the night.
- e. Accent lighting should be used to draw interest to architectural features or entryways and not to exhibit or advertise buildings. Architectural lighting must be downcast and shielded to prevent light pollution.
- f. Bare bulb or exposed neon lighting is not allowed for accentuating building form.

7. Signage

Goal: Residential signage should be subtle in nature and utilized to promote building identity and to properly direct automobile and pedestrian traffic.

- a. Signs shall be consistent with the architectural style of the building on which they are placed, including scale, lighting levels, color and material.

- b. Signs shall be constructed of quality materials.
- c. All signage should be illuminated and clearly visible after dark.
- d. Signs are encouraged to be creative in the use of two and three-dimensional forms, lighting and graphic design, and use of color, patterns, typography, and materials.
- e. Interior vehicle and pedestrian routes should be clearly marked.
- f. All buildings are encouraged to incorporate elements of community theming in appropriate signage, supporting district and city identity.

III. Commercial Development

Applicable Zoning Districts:

- *Commercial (C)*
- *Convenience Commercial (CC)*

Purpose:

The future commercial areas within the I-94 Corridor and Old Village will include a variety of service, office, retail and other uses that will serve existing and future Lake Elmo residents and beyond. While the differences in character and geography of these two growth areas may attract different types of commercial uses, it is important to establish standards that will ensure quality development outcomes regardless of location and use classification. In the commercial districts, quality development outcomes consist of buildings of high architectural quality and sites that function well for all users, both drivers and pedestrians.

A. Site Design

1. Building Placement

Goal: To ensure access and circulation for all users in a manner that minimizes traffic disruption and safety concerns, as well as maintains good sightlines from the public street.

- a. Buildings must be setback at least 30 but no more than 100 feet from the public right of way.
- b. The orientation of multiple buildings on one site must be clearly coordinated.
- c. Buildings should be oriented parallel or perpendicular to the street they front, promoting continuity of design.
- d. Buildings should be arranged to provide convenient access to entrances and efficient on-site circulation for vehicles and pedestrians.
- e. Shared access points from the public ROW are encouraged. Vehicular access points should be limited to minimize traffic disruption.
- f. For master planned development, the provision of landscaped open or gathering spaces is encouraged within commercial developments.

2. Streetscape

Goal: To create safe, pleasant and functional pedestrian spaces within commercial development, improving access and district identity.

- a. Street trees shall be installed at regular intervals along the public right of way.
- b. Pedestrian access from the public street shall be provided through the installation of sidewalks.
- c. Ornamental or bollard lighting is encouraged to increase safety, as well as add visual interest.
- d. Fencing shall be installed around outdoor dining areas that are adjacent to pedestrian areas or streets.
- e. Site furnishings such as decorative trash receptacles and benches are encouraged.

3. Landscaping

Goal: To ensure development of a high aesthetic quality, and to reduce the amount of impervious surface at commercial sites.

- a. Parking, public and streetscape areas should utilize trees, plant beds, and potted plants to add visual interest and break up continuous hardscape.
- b. Parking, service, storage and utility areas should be buffered by plantings. Near areas of pedestrian circulation, these plantings shall not exceed 4 feet in height for safety purposes.
- c. Hardy and native plant materials that are resistant to the climate, disease and salt are encouraged.
- d. Making use of similar plant materials as adjacent properties and public spaces is encouraged to create continuity.
- e. Mature trees located on building sites should be retained whenever possible.
- f. Bare soils should be planted or mulched with bark, stone or other suitable material to avoid unnecessary runoff.
- g. The installation of rain gardens is encouraged to increase on-site storm water infiltration, particularly in parking areas.

4. Parking

Goal: To provide parking facilities that adequately serve the needs of commercial properties, while ensuring pedestrian safety and maintaining a positive visual aesthetic from the public right of way.

- a. Parking areas must meet the following setbacks:
 - Front Yard: 15 feet
 - Side Yard (Interior): 10 feet
 - Side Yard (Corner): 15 feet
 - Rear Yard: 10 feet
 - Residential Zones: 35 feet
- b. The lineal measurement of surface parking areas parallel to the public street may not exceed more than 40% of the primary street frontage. Sites or projects that are unable

to meet this requirement will be required to install berms and/or additional landscaping along areas of surface parking adjacent to the primary street frontage.

- c. The entrance to parking facilities should be located on secondary streets when possible.
- d. Shared parking facilities between adjacent uses or businesses are strongly encouraged when possible to avoid excessive amounts of parking.
- e. Structure parking is encouraged, and should be located behind or beneath primary buildings when possible.
- f. Structure parking or parking areas located beneath the primary structure should be screened with architectural elements that match the primary building.
- g. Parking areas should be screened from view of public streets by means of grading and/or landscaping.
- h. Parking areas should be screened from adjacent structures with landscaping strips not exceeding 4 feet in height in order to ensure pedestrian safety.
- i. Landscaped islands should be installed within surface parking areas to break up continuous hardscape and reduce concentration of impervious surface.
- j. The installation of rain gardens within parking areas is encouraged for storm water infiltration purposes.
- k. Lighting must be provided in parking areas at night for safety purposes. However, direct glare, spillover or other forms of light pollution directed at adjacent properties are prohibited.
- l. Parking facilities must be ADA compliant when deemed necessary.

5. Delivery, Service, Storage and Utility Areas

Goal: To provide physical and visual separation between delivery, service and storage areas and areas of pedestrian and automobile circulation.

- a. Service, storage, maintenance or trash collection areas should be located out of the view from the public right of way, or significantly screened through landscaping or architectural features.
- b. Service, storage and trash collection areas are not allowed in the setback areas.
- c. The location of delivery, storage and service areas should be clearly marked with signage and should not interfere with other automobile or pedestrian circulation.
- d. Storage and delivery areas should be hard surface, minimizing the dispersal of dust.

B. Building Design

1. Form and Facade

Goal: To ensure structures of high architectural quality that promote visual interest, thereby supporting district identity.

- a. Variety and creativity in building facade is encouraged through changes in building materials, fenestration height, and roof lines. Primary facades should not present a continuous wall without architectural details that add visual interest.

- b. Window and door styles shall reflect the prevailing architectural style of the structure.
- c. Ground level retail and commercial uses should employ a significant amount of transparent glass in the form of windows and doors, particularly near pedestrian entrances.
- d. Minimizing continuous expanses of wall through facade articulation, recession and projection is encouraged.
- e. Structures that are oriented towards the public street are encouraged to provide multiple access points or entrances if the parking area is located to the rear of the structure.
- f. Architects and builders are encouraged to incorporate topographical features into the form of the structure when possible, utilizing natural grades to create unique design.

2. Building Materials

Goal: To promote quality development through durability and visual aesthetics, thereby supporting district identity.

- a. High-quality and durable materials should be used in street facing facades.
- b. Primary building materials for commercial structures should include brick, finished wood, stone, cast stone, or pre-cast concrete panels with exposed aggregate, banding, texturing, or other similar decorative finish treatment.
- c. High quality synthetic materials that adequately duplicate natural materials may be acceptable if approved by the City.
- d. The following building materials are not allowed to be used as the primary facade for commercial development:
 - Unpainted galvanized metal
 - Unfinished wood
 - Cast-in-place concrete
 - "Tilt-up" concrete panels
 - Unfinished "green-treated" lumber
 - Plain or unpainted concrete
 - Painted concrete block may be used on the rear of the building or sides not visible from the public right of way.
- e. Facade colors should reflect subtle earth tones. However, other primary facade colors will be considered by the Board of Review. Accent materials should complement the colors of the primary facade.
- f. Samples of facade and roof materials should be submitted to the City prior to the approval of the building permit.

3. Scale and Mass

Goal: To establish standards for building with a human scale in mind.

- a. Buildings should be broken down into smaller parts to avoid monotonous or continuous design and the appearance of mass.

- b. Exterior design that provides the appearance of multiple structures is encouraged to reduce scale and minimize mass.
- c. Building mass should be broken up with multiple roof and ridgelines perpendicular with one another.
- d. Structures of two-stories or higher should have articulated facades to minimize the appearance of mass, as well as multiple roof lines with corresponding gables.
- e. Scale should be reduced by utilizing “step-down” methods towards the public street. Entries and other bump out features are effective in this regard.

4. Roof Design

Goal: To ensure architectural consideration and consistency in roof design in relation to the structure, and to reduce the visual impact of rooftop equipment.

- a. The design of the roof must be consistent with the overall architecture or design of the structure.
- b. Parapets of varying heights are required for large commercial buildings with flat roofs.
- c. Rooftop equipment, particularly on flat roofs, must be screened by the parapet or other architectural features.

5. Entries

Goal: To provide identifiable entryways that emphasize access, pedestrian safety, architectural quality and a human scale.

- a. Entryways to commercial structures should be accessible for pedestrians from the public right of way. Large retail sites in particular should consider installing a dedicated pedestrian way.
- b. Architectural features should be incorporated into entryways, such as facade detailing or prominent windows.
- c. The use of canopies, awnings and other sheltering features are encouraged.
- d. Pedestrian amenities such as trash receptacles, benches, or lighted bollards are encouraged near entryways to commercial buildings.

6. Lighting

Goal: To ensure safety of patrons, employees, pedestrians and automobiles, in addition to providing visual interest and aesthetic value to a site.

- a. Lighting must be provided in entryways, parking areas, pedestrian ways, storage and service areas, and other locations that require additional safety lighting.
- b. Lighting styles should be complementary to the architectural style of the building.
- c. Lighting of architectural features should be used to provide accent and interest, as well as identify the building entryway. Architectural lighting must be downcast and shielded to prevent light pollution.
- d. Bollard lighting is encouraged for pedestrian areas.

- e. Overhead lighting must be shielded to prevent light trespass and spill-over onto adjacent properties.
- f. Commercial uses near residential zones must utilize lighting that minimizes light trespass.
- g. Bare bulb and exposed neon lighting are not allowed.

7. Signage

Goal: To provide signage that clearly identifies businesses within the Commercial district, while promoting quality and consistency in terms of design and materials.

- a. Building signage should be complementary to the architecture of the structure, as well as consistent with the style of the surrounding buildings or district.
- b. Sign elements that will be evaluated for consistency include scale, color, lighting and materials.
- c. Signs must be constructed of high-quality, durable materials.
- d. Directional signage to delivery, service and storage areas is required.
- e. Two and three-dimensional signs are encouraged to promote creativity and district identity.
- f. All buildings are encouraged to incorporate elements of community theming in appropriate signage, supporting district and city identity.

IV. **Business Park Development**

Applicable Zoning Districts:

- *Business Park/Light Manufacturing (BP)*

Purpose:

The intent of this zoning district is to provide opportunities for high quality business park development for office, light manufacturing, and other non-retail uses. In terms of design, this manual establishes consistent architectural standards between various users in the BP district. These architectural standards are intended to promote a coordinated identity and avoid mismatched design. In addition, the manual ensures the installation of open-space character within business park development through effective site design and landscaping.

A. Site Design

1. Building Placement

Goal: To establish standards for building location that ensure effective automobile and pedestrian circulation and promote coordination of buildings between adjacent sites and structures.

- a. Buildings must be setback at least 50 feet from the public right of way.

- b. Buildings should be located in a manner that allows for effective automobile and pedestrian circulation.
- c. Shared access points from the public ROW are encouraged. Vehicular access points should be limited to minimize traffic disruption.
- d. The orientation of buildings should be compatible with adjacent structures and sites.
- e. Utilizing the natural topography or features of the site is encouraged to create unique landscapes and add visual interest and value to the design.
- f. The provision of common and open spaces to the rear of the site is encouraged for the use of employees and visitors, reinforcing Lake Elmo's open-space character.

2. Streetscape

Goal: To provide high quality landscaping in areas visible from the public view, as well as promote pedestrian connections in the BP district.

- a. Street trees shall be installed at regular intervals along the public right of way.
- b. Additional landscaping along public streets is encouraged. Landscape materials should be low-maintenance and native to ensure heartiness.
- c. Sidewalks along the public right of way are encouraged to extend pedestrian connections throughout the BP district.

3. Landscaping

Goal: To reduce continuous hardscape and impervious surface, as well as ensure development of a high visual quality.

- a. Trees, plant beds, and potted plants should be installed in parking, sidewalk, and other hard surfaced areas to add visual interest and break up continuous impervious surface.
- b. Parking, service, storage and utility areas should be buffered by plantings, particularly when in view of public streets. Near areas of pedestrian circulation, these plantings shall not exceed 4 feet in height for safety purposes.
- c. Hardy and native plant materials that are resistant to the climate, disease and salt are encouraged.
- d. Making use of similar plant materials as adjacent properties and public spaces is encouraged to create continuity.
- e. Mature trees located on building sites should be retained whenever possible.
- f. Bare soils should be planted or mulched with bark, stone or other suitable material to avoid unnecessary runoff.
- g. The installation of rain gardens is encouraged to increase on-site storm water infiltration, particularly in parking areas.

4. Parking

Goal: To adequately serve the parking needs of businesses in the BP district, while ensuring pedestrian safety, reduced impervious surface, and a high quality visual aesthetic and appearance.

- a. Parking areas must meet the following setbacks:
 - Front Yard: 30 feet
 - Side Yard (Corner): 30 feet
 - Residential Zones: 100 feet
 - Side Yard (Interior): 15 feet
 - Rear Yard: 15 feet
- b. Surface parking may not exceed more than 60% of the primary street frontage. Sites or projects that are unable to meet this requirement will be required to install berms and/or additional landscaping to buffer areas of surface parking adjacent to the primary street frontage.
- c. The entrance to parking facilities should be located on secondary streets when possible.
- d. Shared parking facilities between adjacent uses or businesses are strongly encouraged when possible to avoid excessive amounts of parking.
- e. Structure parking is encouraged, and should be located behind or beneath primary buildings when possible.
- f. Structure parking or parking areas located beneath the primary structure should be screened with architectural elements that match the primary building.
- g. Parking areas should be screened from view of public streets by means of grading and/or landscaping.
- h. Parking areas should be screened from adjacent structures with landscaping strips not exceeding 4 feet in height in order to ensure pedestrian safety.
- i. Landscaped islands should be installed within surface parking areas to break up continuous hardscape and reduce concentration of impervious surface.
- j. The installation of rain gardens within parking areas is encouraged for storm water infiltration purposes.
- k. Lighting must be provided in parking areas at night for safety purposes. However, direct glare, spillover or other forms of light pollution directed at adjacent properties are prohibited.
- l. Parking facilities must be ADA compliant when deemed necessary.

5. Delivery, Service, Storage and Utility Areas

Goal: To provide physical and visual separation of delivery, service, storage and utility areas from the public right of way and areas of automobile and pedestrian circulation.

- a. Delivery, service, storage, maintenance or trash collection areas should be located out of the view from the public right of way, or significantly screened through landscaping or architectural features that match the primary structure.
- b. Service, storage and trash collection areas are not allowed in the setback areas.
- c. The location of delivery, storage and service areas should be clearly marked with signage and should not interfere with other automobile or pedestrian circulation.
- d. Storage and delivery areas should be hard surface, minimizing the dispersal of dust.

B. Building Design

1. Form and Facade

Goal: To promote buildings of high architectural quality and creativity in design.

- a. No blank facades without windows and doors are allowed. All sides of the structures should have architectural treatments.
- b. Window and door styles should reflect the prevailing architectural style of the structure.
- c. Variety and creativity in building facade is encouraged through changes in building materials, fenestration height, and roof lines. Primary facades should not present a continuous wall without architectural details that add visual interest.
- d. Minimizing continuous expanses of wall through facade articulation, recession or projection is encouraged.
- e. Architects and builders are encouraged to incorporate topographical features into the form of the structure when possible, utilizing natural grades to create unique design.

2. Building Materials

Goal: To promote quality development through durability and visual aesthetics, thereby supporting district identity.

- a. High-quality and durable materials should be used in street facing facades.
- b. Primary building materials for structures in the BP district should include brick, stone, cast stone, glass, Exterior Insulation Finish Systems (EFIS), or pre-cast concrete panels with exposed aggregate, banding, texturing or other similar decorative finish treatment.
- c. Synthetic materials that adequately duplicate natural materials may be acceptable.
- d. The following building materials are not allowed to be used as primary finished façade material for business park development:
 - Unpainted galvanized metal
 - Unfinished wood
 - Cast-in-place concrete
 - "Tilt-up" concrete panels
 - Unfinished "green-treated" lumber
 - Plain or unpainted concrete
 - Painted concrete block may be used on the rear of the building or sides not visible from the public right of way.
- g. Facade colors should reflect subtle earth tones. However, other primary facade colors will be considered by the Board of Review. Accent materials should complement the colors of the primary facade.
- h. Samples of facade and roof materials should be submitted to the City prior to the approval of the building permit.

3. Scale and Mass

Goal: To reduce the appearance of mass in the BP district.

- a. Scale should be reduced by utilizing “step-down” methods, particularly near areas of pedestrian circulation. Entries and other bump out features are effective in this regard.
- b. Structures of two-stories or higher should utilize facade treatments, such as multiple building materials or additional windows, to minimize the appearance of mass.

4. Roof Design

Goal: To ensure architectural consideration and consistency in roof design in relation to the architecture of the building, and to reduce the visual impact of rooftop equipment.

- a. The design of the roof must be consistent with the overall architecture or design of the structure.
- b. Parapets of varying heights are required for buildings in the BP district with flat roofs.
- c. Rooftop equipment, particularly on flat roofs, must be screened by the parapet or other architectural features.

5. Entries

Goal: To provide identifiable entryways that emphasize access, pedestrian safety, architectural quality and a human scale.

- a. Entryways to buildings in the BP district should be accessible for pedestrians from the public right of way.
- b. Architectural features should be incorporated into entryways, such as facade detailing or prominent windows.
- c. The use of canopies, awnings and other sheltering features are encouraged.
- d. Pedestrian amenities such as ornamental trash receptacles, benches or lighted bollards are encouraged near entryways to buildings in the BP district.

6. Lighting

Goal: To ensure safety of patrons, employees, pedestrians and automobiles, in addition to providing visual interest and aesthetic value to a site.

- a. Lighting must be provided in entryways, parking areas, pedestrian ways, storage and service areas, and other locations that require additional safety lighting.
- b. Lighting styles should be complementary to the architectural style of the building.
- c. Lighting of architectural features should be used to provide accent and interest, as well as identify the building entryway. Architectural lighting must be downcast and shielded to prevent light pollution.
- d. Bollard lighting is encouraged for pedestrian areas.
- e. Overhead lighting must be shielded to prevent light trespass and spill-over onto adjacent properties.
- f. Buildings near residential zones must utilize lighting that minimizes light trespass.
- g. Bare bulb and exposed neon lighting are not allowed.

7. Signage

Goal: To provide signage that clearly identifies businesses within the BP district, while promoting quality and consistency in terms of design and materials.

- a. Building signage should be complementary to the architecture of the structure, as well as consistent with the style of the surrounding buildings or district as a whole.
- b. Sign elements that will be evaluated for consistency include scale, color, lighting and materials.
- c. Signs must be constructed of high quality, durable materials.
- d. Directional signage to delivery, service and storage areas is required.
- e. Two and three-dimensional signs are encouraged to promote creativity and district identity.
- f. All buildings are encouraged to incorporate elements of community theming in appropriate signage, supporting district and city identity.

V. **Mixed-Use Development**

Applicable Zoning Districts:

- *Village Mixed-Use (VMX)*

Purpose:

The Village Mixed-Use district is expected to develop as an extension of Lake Elmo's historic downtown area on Lake Elmo Ave. south of State Highway 5. In order to build off of the existing character and charm of the Village, the standards of the Mixed-Use district place a high emphasis on walkability, streetscapes, and the overall pedestrian environment. For this district to be successful, site design must be conducive to pedestrian circulation and safety. In addition, the development that occurs in the Mixed-Use district will serve an important function as a unique gathering place in the community. For that reason, it is critical to establish consistent and high quality architectural standards that ensure creativity and an attractive aesthetic.

A. **Site Design**

1. Building Placement

Goal: To promote compact development that is consistent with Lake Elmo's vision for a pedestrian-oriented downtown.

- a. Buildings in the Mixed-Use district may meet a zero lot line setback, but may not be setback further than 20 feet from the public right of way.
- b. If buildings do not meet a zero lot line orientation, plazas, patios, outdoor dining areas and landscaped entries are encouraged in the setback area.
- c. Buildings must be oriented either perpendicular or parallel to the street they front, with the primary facade being parallel to the sidewalk.
- d. Gaps and openings between buildings should be minimized in order to preserve a compact pedestrian environment.

- e. Off-street parking areas should be located to the rear of buildings in the Mixed-Use district and accessed from secondary streets or parking alleys. On-street parking may be available on public streets in the front of buildings.
- f. Ground floor uses of structures in the Mixed-Use district should encourage pedestrian activity.

2. Streetscape

Goal: To provide a pleasing pedestrian environment that promotes a vibrant and walkable downtown area.

- a. Larger sidewalks are encouraged to support the amount of pedestrian activity that is conducive to downtown areas. The minimum sidewalk width in the Mixed-Use district is 6 feet.
- b. Sidewalk materials should be attractive, durable and low-maintenance, such as concrete and pavers. Special paving materials are encouraged to add visual interest and promote a unique identity.
- c. Pedestrian space may be maximized through the use of permeable pavers or tree grates at the base of street trees.
- d. Street or boulevard trees should be planted at regular intervals.
- e. Planting beds and other type of street landscaping are encouraged as long as they do not conflict with pedestrian circulation.
- f. Benches, bicycle racks, ornamental trash receptacles and other site furnishings are encouraged.
- g. Pedestrian scaled lighting in the form of bollard or ornamental lighting promotes district identity and pedestrian safety.
- h. Ornamental fencing shall be installed around outdoor dining areas to provide separation from pedestrian routes.

3. Landscaping

Goal: To promote an aesthetically pleasing pedestrian environment through landscaping, as well as reduce the amount of impervious surface in the Mixed-Use district.

- a. Parking, public and streetscape areas should utilize trees, plant beds, and potted plants to add visual interest and break up continuous hardscape.
- b. Parking, service, storage and utility areas should be buffered by plantings. Near areas of pedestrian circulation, these plantings shall not exceed 4 feet in height for safety purposes.
- c. Hardy and native plant materials that are resistant to the climate, disease and salt are encouraged.
- d. Making use of similar plant materials as adjacent properties and public spaces is encouraged to create continuity.
- e. Mature trees should be retained when possible.

- f. Bare soils should be planted or mulched with bark, stone or other suitable material to avoid unnecessary runoff.
- g. The installation of rain gardens is encouraged to increase on-site storm water infiltration, particularly in parking areas.

4. Parking

- a. Off-street surface parking is not allowed in front of the building along the primary street frontage. However, opportunities for on-street parking on the public street should be available.
- b. Structured parking located to the side, rear or beneath the building is encouraged in the Mixed-Use district.
- c. Structure parking should be screened with architectural elements that match the primary building.
- d. The entrance to parking facilities should be located on secondary streets when possible.
- e. Shared parking facilities between adjacent uses or businesses are strongly encouraged when possible to avoid excessive amounts of parking.
- f. Surface parking areas should be screened from view of public streets by means of grading and/or landscaping.
- g. Landscaped islands should be installed within surface parking areas to break up continuous hardscape and reduce concentration of impervious surface.
- h. The installation of rain gardens within parking areas is encouraged for storm water infiltration purposes.
- i. Lighting must be provided in parking areas at night for safety purposes. However, direct glare, spillover or other forms of light pollution directed at adjacent properties are prohibited.
- j. Parking facilities must be ADA compliant when deemed necessary.

5. Delivery, Service, Storage and Utility Areas.

Goal: To provide physical and visual separation between delivery, service and storage areas and areas of pedestrian circulation.

- a. Service, storage, maintenance or trash collection areas should be located out of the view from the public right of way, or significantly screened through landscaping or architectural features.
- b. Delivery areas should be located in the rear of the building whenever possible.
- c. Service, storage and trash collection areas are not allowed in the setback areas.
- d. Delivery, service, storage, maintenance and utilities should be located in a way that does not interfere with pedestrian circulation.
- e. These areas should be marked with directional signage when appropriate.
- f. Delivery, storage and trash collection areas should be hard surface, minimizing the dispersal of dust.

B. Building Design

1. Form and Facade

Goal: To promote buildings of high architectural quality and creativity that are oriented towards the primary street frontage and pedestrian environment.

- a. No blank facades without windows and doors are allowed. All sides of the structures should have architectural treatments.
- b. Variety and creativity in building facade is encouraged through changes in building materials, fenestration height, and roof lines.
- c. Minimizing continuous expanses of wall through facade articulation, recession or projection is encouraged.
- d. Window and door styles should reflect the prevailing architectural style of the structure.
- e. Architecture should be conscious of the design of surrounding structures and overall district identity, including facade treatments, windows, building materials and entries.
- f. Buildings should be designed to provide human scale.
- g. The highest level of architectural detail should occur adjacent to areas of pedestrian activity.
- h. Auto-oriented uses, such as garages, delivery areas or bay should be oriented away from the primary street frontage.

2. Building Materials

Goal: To promote quality development through durability and visual aesthetics, thereby supporting district identity.

- a. High quality and durable materials should be used on all facades.
- b. Primary building materials for commercial structures should include brick, finished wood, glass, stone, cast stone, or pre-cast concrete panels with exposed aggregate, banding, texturing, or other similar decorative finish treatment.
- c. Synthetic materials that adequately duplicate natural materials may be acceptable pending approval of the City of Lake Elmo.
- d. The following building materials are not allowed to be used as the finished facade for development in the Mixed-Use district:
 - Unpainted galvanized metal
 - Unfinished wood
 - Cast-in-place concrete
 - Unfinished “green-treated” lumber
 - Concrete block (painted or unpainted)
 - “Tilt-up” concrete panels
- e. Facade colors should reflect muted earth tones. However, other primary facade colors will be considered by the Board of Review. Accent materials should complement the colors of the primary facade.

- f. Samples of facade and roof materials should be submitted to the City prior to building permit approval.

3. Mass and Scale

Goal: To establish standards for building with a human scale in mind.

- a. Buildings should be broken down into smaller parts to avoid monotonous or continuous design and the appearance of mass.
- b. Exterior design that provides the appearance of multiple structures is encouraged to reduce scale and minimize mass.
- c. Scale should be reduced by utilizing “step-down” methods towards the public street. Entries and other bump out features are effective in this regard.
- d. Structures of two-stories or higher should have articulated facades to minimize the appearance of mass.
- e. Building mass should be broken up by multiple roof and ridgelines perpendicular with one another.

4. Roof Design

Goal: To encourage creativity and architectural treatments in roof design, and to reduce the visual impact of rooftop equipment.

- a. The design of the roof must be consistent with the overall architecture or design of the structure.
- b. Creativity and variety in roof design is encouraged in the Mixed-Use district to support district identity.
- c. Flat roofs should include variation in parapet height, materials, and architectural detailing to avoid monotonous roof lines.
- d. Rooftop equipment, particularly on flat roofs, must be screened by the parapet or other architectural features.
- e. Rooftops that are visible from adjacent buildings should minimize the visual impact of rooftop equipment and give consideration to rooftop aesthetics.

5. Entries

Goal: To provide identifiable entryways that emphasize access, pedestrian safety, architectural quality and a human scale.

- a. Entryways must be provided on the side of the building fronting the primary street.
- b. Entryways should receive the highest level of architectural treatments. This may include facade treatments, prominent windows or other features.
- c. The use of canopies, awnings and other sheltering features are encouraged.
- d. Pedestrian amenities such as ornamental trash receptacles, benches, bicycle racks or lighted bollards are encouraged near entryways of buildings in the Mixed-Use district.

6. Lighting

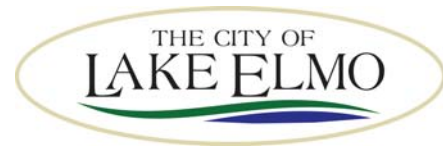
Goal: To ensure safety of patrons, employees, pedestrians and automobiles, in addition to providing visual interest and aesthetic value to a site, contributing to district identity.

- a. Lighting must be provided in entryways, parking areas, pedestrian ways, storage and service areas, and other locations that require additional safety lighting.
- b. Lighting styles should be complementary to the architectural style of the building and surrounding district.
- c. Lighting of architectural features should be used to provide accent and interest, as well as identify the building entryway. Architectural lighting must be downcast and shielded to prevent light pollution.
- d. Bollard lighting is encouraged for pedestrian areas.
- e. Overhead lighting must be shielded to prevent light trespass and spill-over onto adjacent properties.
- f. Bare bulb and exposed neon lighting are not allowed.

7. Signage

Goal: To provide durable, quality signage that identifies businesses and supports district identity.

- a. Building signage must be complementary to the architecture of the structure, as well as consistent with the style of the surrounding buildings or district.
- b. Sign elements that will be evaluated for consistency include scale, color, lighting and materials.
- c. Signs must be constructed of high-quality, durable materials.
- d. Directional signage to delivery, service and storage areas is required.
- e. Two and three-dimensional signs are encouraged to promote creativity and district identity.
- f. All buildings are encouraged to incorporate elements of community theming in appropriate signage, supporting district and city identity.



Meeting Notes
Design Standards Stakeholder Meeting, 10/29/12

Nick Johnson presented the proposed design standards, including major highlights and key principles.

Tim Freeman – There is concern with applying suburban codes to the village, especially concerning setbacks and site design standards.

Bruce Miller – He does not find it likely that on-street parking within highway oriented commercial areas will occur. He noted concern in regards to percentages of allowable parking along primary frontage and bigger users not being able to comply, i.e. in cases where there will be frontage along Hudson Blvd and 5th Street. He believes it will be difficult in most cases, but is willing to work towards design objectives. Need to push back buildings when there are 3 or more users. Would like to see real world examples. How do you build flexibility into the code?

Nick Johnson– We are looking at alternatives, including additional landscaping or increased setbacks.

Bruce Miller – Adding more green space might not be the best use of commercial property. Need to generate revenue from land.

Tim Freeman – It is problematic when standards become part of the zoning ordinance. There is concern that it might discourage development.

Todd Williams – Could a different alignment of parking still meet the 40% of linear frontage standard?

Bruce Miller – If they cannot make standards work, business will look elsewhere. In addition, retail users want to see the front of the building from the primary street, not the sides of a building. 100' max setback makes it difficult to line up several businesses in a row.

Tim Freeman – If the intent of the standards is only to preserve open space, landscaping, etc... it could drive potential users away. Staff and policy makers should an exercise to layout a building to see how the standards would work.

David Deebach – Noted ambiguity within the standards for the VMX district. Page 18/Section 4ae – on-street parking may be available... Page 20 (top item) on-street parking is not available.

Nick Johnson – Presented a review of building materials that are noted within the manual.

Bruce Miller – EFIS is a very common materials, allows for a lot of variation on building design. As a primary material should be fine.

Todd Williams – Why should EFIS not be allowed in the mixed use district?

Nick Johnson - Some cities didn't allow it in historic districts because they were seeking higher standards or more consistency to older existing buildings in downtown areas.

Dan Regan – Noted that the color and materials can be broken up within concrete panels or cast-in-place concrete. The City need to be careful in applying standards across various zoning districts. Businesses in industrial zones will not be attracted here where a lot of articulation is required.

Dean Zuleger – Noted that the last business park he did (Weston, WI) required 60% masonry with wrap (i.e. architectural panels). Right now, there is not a lot of space for incubators. Standards that are out there today have limited building flexibility. Need to establish character and types of users before design standards can be set.

Bruce Miller – Outlined his overall concerns: maximum building setback of 100 feet; 40% max area for parking in front of buildings – might be able to accomplish with landscaping and berming. Otherwise, only option might be to plan out pads, with less viable locations in the rear of properties.

Nick Johnson – Asked Bruce and the others if additional landscaping and berming (limited) might be a better option than maximum setbacks?

Bruce Miller – Yes, berming and/or additional landscaping would be preferential than the primary frontage standard.

Tim Freeman – Noted concern with adding layer to the development process, especially when standards are too restrictive.

Woodbury Lakes example – there is a grade separation that helps hide the parking areas. Has gone into foreclosure, may not be the best example.

Tim Freeman – Noted concern of adding cost verses functionality.

Todd Williams - is it possible to break up parking more with additional islands?

Bruce Miller – Tenants are open to additional landscape islands, but are also concerned about adding distance from the father parking areas to walk to the building.

Tim Freeman – Noted that you can't put functional rain garden in commercial areas. They fill up with sediment and create problems.

Dave Deebach – Shared his focus on VMX district building materials. He believes the list of materials that are not allowed is too extensive. With proper installation and in right environment, builders could use any one of the materials on the list in an attractive way.

Dale Allen – The general outline of the manual is good. He also supports Bruce Miller's statement about the parking and setback standards. Flexibility is important, especially due to expected length of time for build out.

Nick Johnson – Presented the review timeline and future work related to completing the Lake Elmo Design Standards Manual, leading to eventually City Council adoption.

Bruce Miller – Asked about the timing of the design standards in relation to the Met Council's review of the Comprehensive Plan Amendment for the I-94 Corridor.

Kyle Klatt – Noted that the design standards are being done independently of Comp Plan adoption.

Todd Williams – Planning Commission goals: to keep Lake Elmo looking unique; can we have something different? Any specific comments would be helpful for Planning Commission, especially to hear from developers.

Nadine Obermueller – Asked how to achieve turn of the century charm with EFIS or other types of architecture.

From: [Bruce Miller](#)
To: [Nick Johnson;](#)
Subject: Design Standards comments
Date: Tuesday, October 30, 2012 3:17:43 PM
Attachments: [stock-photo-white-horse-fence-on-a-small-farm-in-the-country-922446.jpg](#)

Hi Nick – Thanks again to you, Kyle and the rest of the City Staff for all your efforts in preparing the design standards. Great progress has been made on the comp plan update and the design standards are one more step in the right direction to getting the I-94 corridor ready for development. Our company has owned land in Lake Elmo for 42 years and for the first time I believe we are finally going to be in a position to do something which will bring new businesses, jobs, tax base, and REC units to Lake Elmo. If we can hammer through these design standards hopefully we have everything in place to welcome new development.

I am comfortable with the almost all of the design standards, however, as discussed in the workshop, I have 3 areas of major concern regarding i) maximum building setbacks, ii) maximum allowable percentage of street frontage for parking and iii) the use of EFIS. Although I understand what staff is trying to accomplish by incorporating these requirements, I am very concerned they will be problematic to the businesses we are approaching to locate here and will have the unintended consequence of chasing business away.

To me what you really want to accomplish can be summed up with the question Planning Commission Chair, Todd Williams, ended the meeting with last night. He asked how can Lake Elmo's commercial area be different from every other commercial area across the country? I have thought about this further and my answer is it can be different through theming. With proper theming the curb appeal of the area can look and feel different than every other commercial development across the country including our neighboring communities. My vision for theming is similar to the attached photo labeled "white horse fence on a small farm in the country". I would envision this white rail horse fence along the primary streets of the new commercial and high density residential developments. This is exactly what you see on the Schiltgen Farm when coming from the west into the Old Village area so in some sense it is already a theme in the Old Village. This could be carried into the I-94 area as well. On the land that we own I would envision this along Keats Avenue and on the north side of the Hudson Boulevard and accented at the driveway entrances and included in the landscape areas as well. In my mind the white horse fence theme would

give the area a look and feel of a country farm theme which would distinguish it from every other commercial area across the country. As one would drive along I-94 and see a white horse fence all along the frontage road, the north side certainly would stand out.

To try and accomplish a differently look by mandating a maximum building setback requirement and/or maximum allowable percentage of parking along primary streets not only is problematic and unacceptable to the potential businesses, I don't believe it would look that nice either. Building placement and parking placement on the site are stringent requirements of the end users of the buildings. They need maximum visibility and convenient, easy access parking. If they can't get the building position and parking layout they need they just won't locate there. It's that simple. Therefore from a birds eye perspective, the reality is it will look very similar to what is all around the country and in your neighboring communities. The reason they all look the same is this model has been tested, is successful, and it works. That being said however, I sincerely believe we can achieve a different look and a different feel from the curb by theming the area and still allow for the site to function the way the end user wants. This should be a win-win where both the City and the businesses get what they want.

Therefore, my request is simply to eliminate the i) maximum building setback of 100' in the commercial district and the 60' maximum building setback in the high density residential district and ii) eliminate the surface parking may not exceed 40% of the street frontage in commercial and 30% in high density residential and iii) allow EFIS so long as it does not exceed 66% of the any building façade. In lieu of those 3 changes I suggest adding language to provide for a theming throughout the commercial and high density residential districts. I suggest a white horse fence but certainly am open to other theming suggestions as recommended by staff or Damon Farber.

Thanks again Nick.

Bruce

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