

417 Commercial/Industrial Site Design Guidelines

The Township Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors, in reviewing the site plan for any proposed commercial or industrial conditional use application, shall consider its conformity to the Milford Township Comprehensive Plan and the various other plans, regulations and ordinances of the Township. Conservation features, aesthetics, landscaping and impact on surrounding development as well as on the entire Township shall be part of the review. Traffic flow, circulation and parking shall be reviewed to ensure the safety of the public and of the users of the facility and to ensure that there is no unreasonable interference with traffic on surrounding streets. The Board of Supervisors shall further consider the following specific factors:

417.1 Building design and location. Building design and location should be suitable for the use intended and compatible with natural and man-made surroundings. New buildings, for example, should generally be placed along the edges and not in the middle of open fields. They should also be sited so as to not protrude above treetops or the crestlines of hills seen from public places and busy highways. Building color, materials and design should be adapted to surroundings as opposed to adaptation of the site to the building or the building to an arbitrary national franchise concept.

417.2 [Repealed]

417.3 Large commercial buildings. Commercial facades of more than one-hundred (100) feet in length should incorporate recesses and projections, such as windows, awnings and arcades, along 20% of the facade length. Variations in roof lines should be added to reduce the massive scale of these structures and add interest. All facades of such a building that are visible from adjoining streets or properties should exhibit features comparable in character to the front so as to better integrate with the community. Where such facades face adjacent residential uses, earthen berms planted with evergreen trees should be provided. Loading docks and accessory facilities should be incorporated in the building design and screened with materials comparable in quality to the principal structure. Sidewalks should be provided along the full length of any facade with a customer entrance and integrated into a system of internal landscape defined pedestrian walkways breaking up all parking areas.

417.4 Lighting and signage. Improvements made to the property should not detract from the character of the neighborhood by producing excessive lighting or unnecessary sign proliferation. Recessed lighting and landscaped ground signs are preferred.

417.5 Parking and accessory buildings. Parking areas should be placed in the rear whenever possible and provide for connections with adjoining lots. Accessory buildings should also be located in the rear with access from rear alleys. If placement in the rear is not possible, parking lots should be located to the side with screening from the street.

417.6 Drainage systems. Storm drainage, flooding and erosion and sedimentation controls should be employed to prevent injury to persons, water damage to property and siltation to streams and other water bodies.

417.7 Landscape preservation. Trees, shrubs and other landscaping should be used to buffer or soften a use in terms of visual or other impacts on adjoining property owners. Impacts on other Township residents and visitors, on whom the local economy often depends, should also be considered. Existing landscape features such as stone walls, hedgerows, tree borders and individual large trees should be retained for this purpose and removal should be limited to the area of building or driveway construction unless additional sight-distance is required.

417.8 Driveway and road construction. Whenever feasible, existing roads onto or across properties should be retained and reused instead of building new, so as to maximize the use of present features such as stone walls and tree borders and avoid unnecessary destruction of landscape and tree canopy. Developers building new driveways or roads through wooded areas should reduce removal of tree canopy by restricting clearing and pavement width to the minimum required for safely accommodating anticipated traffic flows.

417.9 Construction on slopes. The crossing of steep slopes with roads and driveways should be minimized and building which does take place on slopes should be multi-storied with entrances at different levels as opposed to regrading the site flat.

417.10 Tree borders. New driveways onto principal thoroughfares should be minimized for both traffic safety and aesthetic purposes and interior access drives that preserve tree borders along highways should be used as an alternative. Developers who preserve tree borders should be permitted to recover density on the interior of their property through use of clustering.

417.11 Development at intersections. Building sites at prominent intersections of new developments should be reserved for equally prominent buildings or features which will appropriately terminate the street vistas. All street corners should be defined with buildings, trees or sidewalks.

417.12 Streets and sidewalks. Roads and drives that connect to existing streets on both ends are generally preferable to cul-de-sac and dead-end streets and shall ordinarily be used unless traffic safety issues will be mitigated by the use of a cul-de-sac or dead-end street. Streets within more densely developed residential areas (two or more units per acre) should be accompanied by on-street parking and a sidewalk on at least one side of the street. Sidewalks should also be provided in connection with new commercial development adjacent to residential areas and pedestrian access should be encouraged.

417.13 Setbacks. New buildings on a street should conform to the dominant setback line and be aligned parallel to the street so as to create a defined edge to the public space. Where commercial or industrial uses of substantial size (not a Minor Impact Use) adjoin residential properties or districts, the Township may require greater setbacks and landscaped buffered areas than otherwise required herein for purposes of transitioning from one use to the other and protecting the integrity of residential uses.

417.14 Utilities. The impact of the proposed use on the capacities of existing sewer and water utilities shall be thoroughly evaluated in terms of both quality and quantity. Where the impact of the proposed new use would substantially consume existing capacities and leave inadequate reserve capacity to deal with seasonal or other needs or pose a threat to the health and safety of any existing water supply, the Township may require the applicant to mitigate the impacts by providing supplementary capacities or taking alternative measures to provide for these needs. The Township may also require the applicant to post performance guarantees in the manner provided in the Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance to ensure that the proper protection mechanisms are in place and will be maintained in the future. Where mitigation is not possible the use shall be denied.