

Chapter 16  
**SITE PLAN REVIEW REQUIREMENTS**

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**16.01 PURPOSE AND APPLICABILITY**

A. Purpose: The purpose of this Chapter 16 is to promote the public health, safety, comfort, enjoyment and general welfare of the public, and conserve or enhance the taxable value of land and buildings throughout the Village. The provisions of this Chapter 16 shall be administered to ensure orderly growth and development and shall supplement and facilitate the provisions of the Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Code and Subdivision Code of the Village.

B. Intent: Site Plan Review is a procedure for review of proposed non-residential and attached-residential developments to ensure that they are compatible with adjacent developments and achieve the planning and design principles of convenient, safe, attractive and efficient use of land. Site Plan Review ensures that the proposed development meets the standards that the Village has set forth in this Chapter 16. Site Plan Review therefore, goes beyond the basic zoning and subdivision requirements of the Village in order to address site and building details. Site Plan Review is not a substitute for required State and Village building permit reviews.

C. Applicability: Site Plan Review is imposed on all new non-residential and attached-residential construction; erection of buildings and structures for all private non-residential land uses; on the modification or improvement of land for non-residential purposes; on substantial changes in non-residential uses which require changes to the exterior of buildings or to the sites; and to changes which make existing non-residential uses, structures or lots nonconforming or more nonconforming. Detached residential uses and structures are not subject to Site Plan Review, but are instead governed by the provisions of Section 19.04 of this Code.

D. Minimum Requirements: In their interpretation and application, these provisions shall be held to be minimum requirements under the power as enacted in this Chapter 16, and conformance without further legislative review shall not create any entitlement to the proposed use of the property. The Village Board may further exercise its discretion in a legislative review of an application for Site Plan Review in a reasonable manner for the promotion of public health, safety, comfort and general welfare.

E. Other Conditions: Where the conditions imposed by any provision in this Chapter 16 upon the use of land or buildings are either more restrictive or less restrictive than comparable conditions imposed by any other provision of this Chapter 16, or by any other chapter of this Code, law,

ordinance, resolution, rule or regulation of any kind, regulations which are more restrictive (or which impose higher standards or requirements) shall govern. This Chapter 16 is not intended to abrogate any easement, covenant or any other private agreement, provided, however, that where the regulations of this Chapter 16 are more restrictive or impose higher standards than such easements, covenants or any private agreements, the requirements of this Chapter 16 shall govern.

**16.02 DEFINITIONS** *Amended, Ord. 2017-24, 2014-24, Ord. 2004-13*

In addition to the definitions found in Appendix A of this Code, the terms used in this Chapter 16, whether capitalized or not, are defined as follows:

**Site Plan:** A depiction of activities and/or construction of buildings, other above-ground structures, parking lots, landscaping, walks and drives, general appearance of a site, and related issues of visual impact, which are accompanied by related drawings relating to grading, drainage, detention/retention, engineering, utilities and the like, as well as other in-ground or on-ground structures and fixtures.

**Site Plan Review:** A procedure for review of proposed non-residential and attached-residential developments to ensure that they are compatible with adjacent developments, and fulfill within the site, the planning and design principles of convenient, safe, attractive and efficient use of land.

**16.03 SITE PLAN APPROVAL** *Amended, Ord. 2017-24*

A. Approval Required: No activity for which Site Plan Review is required, as provided by Section 16.01-C herein, shall commence until a letter has been secured from the Manager indicating Village approval of the Site Plan, including recommendations from the Planning and Zoning Commission and conditions imposed by the Village Board.

B. Other Permits: Nothing herein shall relieve the applicant of the additional responsibility of seeking a building permit or any other permit required by any applicable statute, ordinance, regulation, or compliance with all of the terms of the Zoning Code, Subdivision Code and this Code.

C. Exceptions: Site Plan Review shall not be required for any of the following:

1. Agricultural use of land, including the construction of related agricultural structures or the implementation of conservation measures included in a conservation plan approved by the McHenry County Soil and Water Conservation District.
2. Any construction or alteration of single-family detached residences, or other use of land for single-family detached residences.
3. Additions to existing non-residential or attached-residential buildings where the addition constitutes no more than 10 percent of the square footage of the existing building.

D. Fees: Each application for Site Plan Review shall be accompanied by payment of the applicable fee which shall be established by the Village Board from time to time. Payment of this fee shall not relieve the obligation of the applicant to pay any other permit fees required by this Code.

#### 16.04 **SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS** *Amended, Ord. 2017-24*

Each application for Site Plan Review shall be accompanied by the following information:

1. A vicinity map in sufficient detail to enable easy location in the field of the site for which the review is sought.
2. Site plans, building plans and engineering plans showing proposed use of the site, including location of all structures, building elevations, impervious areas, underground utilities, detention/retention basins and off-site improvements as may be required.
3. Landscaping plans showing all landscaping proposed in accordance with the requirements of Chapter 21 of this Code.
4. A typical floor plan if a uniform multi-story structure is proposed; otherwise all non-uniform floor plans.
5. Other plans, drawings, documents and information as deemed necessary by the Planning and Zoning Commission in order to conduct a proper review of the application.

#### 16.05 **REVIEW AND APPROVAL PROCEDURES** *Amended, Ord. 2017-24*

A. Procedure: Each application for Site Plan Review shall be reviewed and acted upon according to the following procedure:

1. The developer shall make initial contact with the Manager to establish required submissions and review the application process.
2. A complete application and required submissions shall be submitted to the Manager, who shall distribute the submissions to the Planning and Zoning Commission for review. Copies of the plans will also be distributed to the Village Engineer, Architect, Village Planner other staff or Village consultants, and/or any of their designees as may be appropriate.
3. The Planning and Zoning Commission shall review the entire application for Site Plan Review and architectural elevations to determine the conformance of the application with the provisions of this Chapter.
4. Upon conclusion of the review of the application, the Planning and Zoning Commission shall, in writing:

- a. Recommend approval of the application if it is found to be in conformance with the objectives and provisions of this Chapter;
  - b. Recommend approval of the application subject to such reasonable conditions as may be necessary to secure substantially the objectives and provisions of this Chapter; and
  - c. Recommend denial of the application, indicating the reasons for such recommendation.
5. The Planning and Zoning Commission shall act on an original or revised application within a reasonable period of time after receipt of all required documents.
  6. The Village Board shall consider the recommendations of the Planning and Zoning Commission and shall approve, approve with conditions, remand the application back to the committee for further consideration, or deny the Site Plan Review application.
  7. The Village may create forms, submission requirements and other administrative procedures, and require the applicant to follow them as are necessary in order to properly effectuate the provisions of this Chapter 16.

B. Expiration of Site Plan Approval: Every approved Site Plan shall expire and become null and void if the work authorized by such approval has not commenced within six months of the date of the issuance of such approval, or is not completed by a date which shall be specified in the approval. The Village may extend the expiration date of the approval if the applicant presents satisfactory evidence that unusual difficulties have prevented work being commenced or completed within the specified time limits. The applicant must request such extension no later than 30 days prior to the expiration date of the approval.

C. Amendment of Plans: Major amendments shall be submitted to the Planning and Zoning Commission for review recommendations, followed by approval or disapproval in the same manner as the original plans. Minor amendments or field modifications of a minor nature may be authorized by the Manager by written instructions to the applicant.

D. Application of Approval: An approved Site Plan applies to the property and/or plan applicable to the property for which it was issued. Any development to be conducted by a person, firm or corporation who was not the original applicant shall comply with all terms and conditions that were originally imposed upon the original approval.

**16.06 SITE DESIGN STANDARDS**

A. Development and Design Principles: The purpose of good site design is to create a functional and attractive development, to minimize adverse impacts and to ensure a project will be an asset to the Village. To promote this purpose, the site plan shall conform to standards which are designed to create a well-planned community. These design standards are minimum standards, and additional standards or conditions may be required for developments depending on the surroundings and circumstances. The Village may establish and adopt additional standards and conditions for land uses through the regular zoning and subdivision process, which shall be incorporated into the site plan.

B. Pedestrian and Auto Circulation:

1. **Pedestrian Circulation**: As part of a coordinated circulation system, an accessible pedestrian network with attractive views should be provided on individual lots. Circulation patterns should be easy for the user to interpret, with primary linkages between buildings and parking areas, and among the individual lots. Access points from building areas and parking areas should be easily identifiable. Connection to existing or proposed Village-wide trails should be provided.
  
2. **Auto Circulation**: The vehicular circulation system provides for the coordinated development and access of individual parcels in a safe and efficient manner. The following circulation and access measures are encouraged:
  - a. Wherever practical, primary access to individual lots should be from minor roads to ensure that major or collector roads are retained as safe and efficient thoroughfares. Site designs should minimize the number of entrances and exits, and align entrances on adjacent properties.
  
  - b. Entry courts are encouraged, to provide a transition from the entrance drive to the building entry and parking and loading areas.
  
  - c. Landscaped medians in the entry drive are recommended for office developments greater than 10 acres, and are encouraged for smaller office developments. The length of the median should equal the depth of the required setback yard. Special paving within the entry drive is encouraged to differentiate entrances.
  
  - d. Landscaped islands should be provided in parking areas in accordance with Section 21.18 of this Code, to define circulation routes, screen parking and provide relief from large vistas of pavement.

- e. Loading areas must be located to the rear or side of the building. Parking areas are encouraged to the rear or side of the building.
- f. Parking lot interconnections shall be provided to allow vehicles to travel among adjacent non-residential uses. Cross-access easements or other recordable mechanisms must be employed.

C. Landscape and Screening: A consistent standard of landscaping maintained throughout the Village will establish an attractive visual identity for all non-residential or attached residential development. Well landscaped areas on each lot will create an aesthetically pleasing environment for visitors, consumers and employees. Landscaping shall conform to the provisions of Chapter 21 of this Code as well as the following standards:

- 1. Planting is required for all landscape areas within lots, including utility and drainage easements and setbacks. Landscape displays to highlight entrances and pedestrian areas are encouraged.
- 2. Wherever possible, existing vegetation such as hedge rows and wetland plantings should be preserved and incorporated into the landscape design.
- 3. Parking lots should be planted to minimize their presence and enhance their appearance. Parking lot screening from public rights-of-way and pedestrian walkways is required when existing site characteristics do not adequately screen parking areas. Parking areas in the rear and side of lots require less screening and are therefore encouraged. As noted above, landscaped islands within parking lots improve both appearance and circulation patterns.
- 4. Refuse/recycling enclosures, utility boxes, meters, pedestals and loading/service areas must also be screened from adjacent properties, public rights-of-way, parking areas and pedestrian walkways. Screening shall consist of a solid wall or fence, or landscape material, equal in height or taller than the material being screened.

D. Architectural Criteria: Common architectural standards applied to non-residential or attached-residential development in the Village will establish an attractive, unified visual image. While the following guidelines apply to all non-residential or attached-residential buildings, architectural innovation is encouraged within the given framework.

- 1. All structures must be of masonry or glass construction, or such other building materials or combinations of materials that the Village deems appropriate or necessary for the surroundings or circumstances. The term “masonry” does not include concrete or split-face blocks.
- 2. Buildings shall be in scale with adjacent developments and with the character of other non-residential or attached-residential developments in the Village.

Building components, such as windows, doors, eaves, roof spans, etc., should be appropriately proportioned to one another.

3. Large, blank wall faces are discouraged. Facade articulation and visual interest may be increased by the introduction of windows, doors and vertical or horizontal elements. At a minimum, large blank walls can be concealed using landscape plantings.
4. Complete or partial pitched roofs are encouraged to enhance building appearance. Decorative roof elements and variations in roof height are encouraged to add visual interest and variety to facades.
5. When possible, building and building components should be of varied height to add variety and interest. Two-story mixed use developments are encouraged where permitted by zoning.
6. Landscape treatment around the base of non-residential or attached residential buildings should be used to enhance the appearance of structures and soften views of paved parking areas.
7. All rooftop structures, including cooling towers, mechanical equipment or appurtenances, vents, intakes or stacks, shall be screened from view on all sides of the building by a parapet wall, penthouse or other means. Screens shall be constructed of materials that are compatible with the primary facades.
8. All accessory structures on a lot shall share a common architectural theme with the primary structure. Architectural expression shall be consistent in color, materials and design.

E. Parking: Safe, well-designed and landscaped parking areas on individual lots will maintain the functionality and appearance of the non-residential or attached residential areas of the Village.

1. The number, design and landscaping of parking spaces, access aisles and loading areas shall be provided in accordance with the provisions of Section 8 of the Zoning Code and Chapter 21 of this Code.
2. Parking areas are encouraged to be located to the side or rear of buildings on each lot. Limited visitor, accessible or short term parking may be located in front of the building if necessary, provided such parking is well screened from the right-of-way.
3. The design of parking areas shall minimize conflicts between pedestrian and vehicular circulation.

4. A 25-foot wide fire lane should be provided within parking lots to provide adequate access for emergency vehicles.
5. A reduction of up to 10 percent of required parking, based on substantiated projection of reduction in parking demand, may be taken for any building or use exceeding 50,000 square feet gross floor area that institutes and maintains a locally approved carpooling/vanpooling program. Such reduction may be terminated upon failure of the owner, operator, tenant or others responsible for such program to maintain the program in an ongoing and acceptable manner.
6. Cumulative parking requirements for mixed-use occupancies may be reduced where it can be determined that the peak requirement of the several occupancies occurs at different time (either daily or seasonally). The *Shared Parking Report* published by the Urban Land Institute shall be used as a guideline in the estimation of parking demand. Shared use agreements must be formalized via appropriate documents including letters of agreement between shared parking facility owners. A copy of such shared use agreements shall, upon execution, be filed with the Village.

F. Lighting: Lighting has a significant influence on the appearance, sense of safety and image of a development. The following guidelines will enhance the sense of site continuity and contribute to a pleasant, orderly environment in the non-residential or attached-residential areas of the Village.

1. Low profile lighting shall be used to maintain a proper sense of scale. Maximum height of light standards are the following:

<b>Location/Purpose of Lighting</b>	<b>Maximum Height Above Grade (feet)</b>
Roadway and parking areas	30
Pedestrian walkways	15
Sign and landscape lighting	2

2. Metal halide lighting is recommended.
3. Finishes of fixtures shall be durable and easily maintained, in neutral colors.
4. Excessive glare contributes to difficult and uncomfortable visual conditions and light spillage. All lighting shall be designed to minimize glare.
5. Off-site light spillage is bothersome to adjacent users. All building or pole mounted lights shall be aimed directly downward only, and floodlights intended to light signage, landscape features and facades shall be aimed only at



those features. Any light spillage shall be limited to within a 100- foot band extending beyond the property line and shall not exceed the following:

- a. one-tenth (0.1) footcandle horizontal maintained on grade at the 60-foot mark; and
  - b. one-one hundredth (0.01) footcandle horizontal maintained on grade at the 100-foot mark.
6. The Village shall have the right to approve all fixtures and poles, and to establish lighting specifications for certain street, parking area, driveway or other uses, including the use of decorative lighting.

G. Signs: Guidelines for sign treatments ensure visual compatibility throughout the non-residential or attached residential areas of the Village, while allowing for creative expression on individual lots.

1. All signs are subject to the regulations of Section 9 of the Zoning Code.
2. All freestanding signs must have a base and frame of masonry or natural material complementary to the materials on the primary building with which the sign is associated.
3. Signs should be in scale with the building and with the speed of passing vehicles or pedestrians.
4. Signs should incorporate a minimum number of harmonious colors.
5. Landscaping around the base of freestanding signs is encouraged.