

Effective September 1, 2021; Last Amended February 2025

CITY OF KEENE, NH LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE



21.14 ARCHITECTURE & VISUAL APPEARANCE

The following standards shall govern the visual and architectural character of development in the City to ensure that new and redeveloped buildings and structures blend aesthetically with the City's historic character, are consistent with the prevailing scale, orientation, and design of the City, and do not detract from viewsheds and view corridors.

21.14.1 Massing/Scale

- A. The height or placement of any proposed new structure, modifications to an existing structure, or site improvement shall not overwhelm the prevailing architectural scale of the City, detract from valued architectural resources, or impede upon any view corridor or viewshed identified in the Viewshed Overlay set forth in Figure 13-1 in Article 13 of this LDC.
- B. For buildings of 150-ft in length or more, facades shall be divided into multiple "modules," expressed through significant architectural changes such as a change in materials, a change in pattern elements (e.g. fenestration, columns, pilasters, etc.), or a change in building setback through recesses or projections. Such modules shall be no wider than 50-ft.



- C. Commercial storefronts shall include traditional pedestrian-oriented elements (e.g. display windows, bulkheads, transoms, pilasters, cornices, etc.).

- D. Additions to existing structures shall be compatible in size and scale with the principal building.

21.14.2 Visual Interest

- A. Front facades and exterior walls shall be articulated to express an architectural identity to avoid a uniform appearance, and architectural details shall give the impression of being integral to and compatible with the overall design.
- B. Structures shall have architectural features (e.g. dominant gable ends, cornices, granite sills, arched openings, large windows framed with architecturally consistent trim, etc.) and patterns that provide visual interest at the pedestrian scale, reduce massive aesthetic effects, and harmonize with the City's distinctive architectural identity, unique character, and prevailing scale.
- C. Architectural features shall not serve primarily as an advertisement, commercial display, or identifying characteristics corresponding to corporate identity.
- D. Architectural features shall conform to accepted architectural principles of design and construction.
- E. Facades shall express a traditional visual distinction between the ground floor and upper stories through architectural features or detailing, change in materials, or a change in pattern elements such as fenestration.



- F. Buildings shall be designed with consistent building materials and treatments that wrap around all facades visible from a public right-of-way. Where material or color treatments change, there shall be a significant change in surface plane of a minimum of 6-in in difference. Differing materials are encouraged to terminate at inside corners.
- G. Exterior materials, textures, and colors shall minimize visual aggressiveness and shall harmonize with the City's distinctive architectural identity and unique character. Surfaces with glossy finishes, reflective glass or dark tinted exteriors, or untreated aluminum, stainless steel, or metal exterior finishes shall be discouraged.
- H. Modifications and additions to existing structures shall be harmonious with the character of the existing structure.
- I. Where parapet walls are used, they shall feature three-dimensional cornice treatments or other shadow creating details along their tops.
- B. Orientation of structures on a site shall conform to a parallel or orthogonal pattern in relation to the City street pattern.
- C. Off-street parking and traffic flow shall not interfere with the flow of pedestrian travel or otherwise detract from the aesthetic character of a development or redevelopment.
- D. All required off-street parking shall be to the side or rear of buildings on the proposed site, and such parking shall be screened or aligned in accordance with Section 9.4.
- E. A cohesive visual character shall be maintained within a development through the use of coordinated hardscape (e.g. paving materials, lighting, outdoor furniture, etc.) and landscape treatments.
- F. The presence of any existing development in the surrounding area that does not conform to these standards for aesthetic character shall not exempt the applicant from complying with this Site Development Standard.

21.14.3 Site Design and Relationship to Surrounding Community

- A. All principal buildings located on lot shall be oriented toward a public right-of-way. If, due to site constraints, it is determined that the primary facade of new buildings cannot face the street, then the secondary elevation facing the street shall be designed with form, composition, and details consistent with and appropriate to the primary facade.

