

Article 10: Architectural Standards⁴²

10.01 PURPOSE

The purpose of architectural standards is to ensure the exterior of new construction and additions to existing buildings are well designed, detailed, and crafted to embody high standards of architectural design and to ensure the long-term viability of commercial structures in the township.

10.02 AUTHORITY TO REVIEW

- (A) For the purposes of this section, the Zoning Inspector and the Zoning Commission shall be authorized to review and make decisions on architectural standards as provided for in Section 519.171 of the Ohio Revised Code.
- (B) The Zoning Inspector shall be responsible for the review of architectural standards when any applicable development is only subject to a zoning certificate review where there are no PUD regulations.
- (C) The Zoning Commission shall be responsible for the review of architectural standards for all applicable development when reviewed as part of a PUD.
- (D) The review of the standards shall take place during the applicable application review procedure.

10.03 ARCHITECTURAL STANDARDS FOR MULTI-FAMILY DWELLINGS

(A) Applicability

The standards of this section shall apply to all multi-family dwellings, including those in any planned unit development district.

(B) Standards

- (1) Front facades shall incorporate variation in mass through one or more of the following methods every thirty feet of façade frontage:
 - (a) Wall offsets in the form of projections and/or recesses in the façade plane. Wall offsets shall have a minimum depth of two feet;
 - (b) Bay windows;
 - (c) Façade color changes;
 - (d) Use of pilasters, columns or other detailing to articulate the façades; or
 - (e) Roofline changes when coupled with correspondingly aligned façade material changes.
- (2) In addition to wall offsets, front facades and side façades on buildings on corner lots, shall provide a minimum of three of the following design features for each residential unit fronting onto the street:
 - (a) One or more dormer windows or cupolas;
 - (b) A recessed entrance;
 - (c) A covered porch;
 - (d) Pillars, posts, or pilasters;
 - (e) One or more bay windows with a minimum twelve-inch projection from the façade plane;
 - (f) Eaves with a minimum 6- inch projection from the façade plane;

⁴² The Butler County Zoning Resolution does not have any architectural standards, so these are new for Ross Township.

- (g) A parapet wall with an articulated design, which entails design variation rather than a simple rectilinear form; or
- (h) Multiple windows with a minimum four inch wide trim.



Figure 10-A: This image illustrates how multiple design features are incorporated into the design to de-emphasize the fact that this is a single structure.



Figure 10-B: This multi-family development lacks sufficient façade variation yielding a monotonous appearance

- (3) Individual multi-family dwelling structures served by common entryways and containing six or fewer units shall be constructed to give the appearance of a large single-family detached home (See [Figure 10-C](#)).



Figure 10-C: These images demonstrate how an attached residential structure of six or fewer units can be constructed to appear as a large detached residential structure.

- (4) To the degree practicable, all roof vents, pipes, antennas, satellite dishes, and other roof penetrations and equipment (except chimneys) shall be located on the rear elevations or configured to have a minimal visual impact as seen from the street.

10.04 ARCHITECTURAL STANDARDS FOR NONRESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

(A) Applicability

The standards in this section shall apply to all nonresidential development in B-1, B-2, B-3, and B-4 Districts as well as all nonresidential development in a planned unit development district. The standards shall also apply to all mixed-use buildings.

(B) Standards

(1) General Requirements for all Nonresidential and Mixed-Use Buildings

- (a) Buildings shall be parallel to the street they front unless an alternate orientation is consistent with existing, adjacent development.
- (b) The primary entrances of buildings shall be oriented:
 - (i) Towards a street along the perimeter of the development;
 - (ii) Towards streets in the interior of the development if none of the building's facades has frontage on a public street; or
 - (iii) In another direction as approved by the Zoning Commission.

(2) Unified Theme

Where there are multiple buildings within a single development, the architectural design of buildings, including freestanding outparcel structures, should be organized around a consistent architectural theme in terms of the character, materials, texture, color, and scale of buildings. Themed restaurants, retail chains, and other franchise-style structures should adjust some aspects of their standard architectural model to be consistent with a development's architectural character.

(3) Building Facades

Building facades shall comply with the following standards:

- (a) Blank building walls facing streets are prohibited.

- (b) These requirements shall not apply to those walls that are not visible from a street and only visible from an alley, the rear yard of another nonresidential or mixed-use site, or completely hidden due to topography or natural features preserved as open space.



Figure 10-D: This figure shows two methods of using architectural features to create wall surface relief on wall elevations that are not the primary elevation.

(4) Multi-Sided Architecture for Nonresidential Uses

Although the front façade of a building is expected to be the focal point in terms of the level of architectural character and features, all sides of buildings that are visible from a public roadway, an adjacent building, or other private way not subject to buffering requirements in [Article 11: Landscaping Standards](#), shall incorporate architectural detailing on all facades that is consistent with the front façade.

(5) Building Design and Mass

All elevations of principal buildings that are visible from a public right-of-way shall consist of a base, a body, and a cap (See [Figure 10-E](#)).



Figure 10-E: Image of a building with a clear, base, body, and cap

- (a) The cap shall consist of at least one of the following architectural features: a cornice, parapet, awning, canopy, or eaves.
- (b) The base and cap shall be clearly distinguishable from the body through changes in color, material, pattern, profile, or texture. A cap and base shall incorporate at least two of these design elements.
- (c) Elevations for all new or modified buildings shall include design, massing, materials, shape, and scale that create a unified design on the premises that is visually compatible with the surrounding buildings.

(6) Ornamentation

All visible elevations shall include decorative features such as cornices, pilasters, and friezes. Building recesses and protrusions are strongly encouraged on larger buildings to break long uninterrupted building walls. See [Figure 10-F](#).



Figure 10-F: The above image illustrates a building that contains pilasters, cornices, and a series of façade setbacks (recesses) to visually break up the appearance of the large facade.

(a) Façade Offset Required

Front façades 60 feet wide or wider shall incorporate wall offsets of at least two feet in depth (projections or recesses) a minimum of every 40 feet. Each required offset shall have a minimum width of 20 feet. See [Figure 10-G](#).

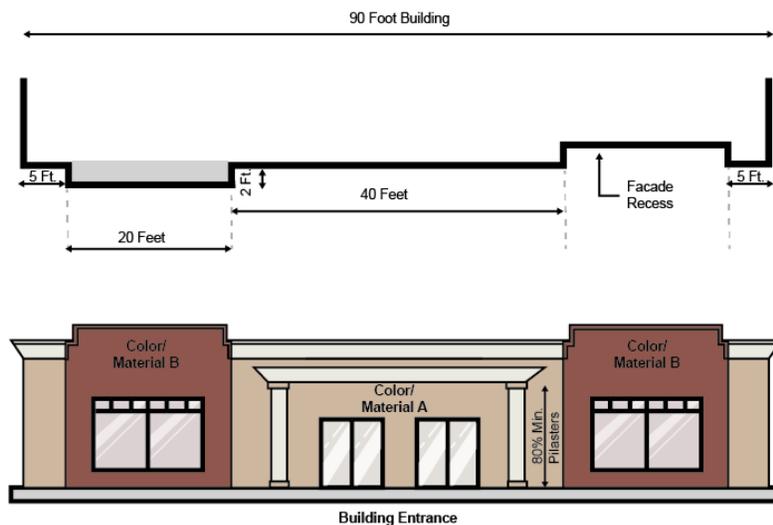


Figure 10-G: Illustration of how the façade offset provisions may be applied.

(b) Offset Alternatives

The following alternatives can be used in place of the required front façade offsets as shown in [Figure 10-G](#):

- (i) Façade color changes following the same dimensional standards as the offset requirements;
- (ii) Pilasters having a minimum depth of one foot, a minimum width of one foot, and a minimum height of 80 percent of the façade's height; and/or
- (iii) Roofline changes when coupled with correspondingly aligned façade material changes.

(7) Roofs

(a) Roof Styles

The height of any pitched roof shall not exceed one-half of the overall building height.

(b) Roof Line Changes

- (i) Roofline changes shall include changes in roof planes or changes in the top of a parapet wall, such as extending the top of pilasters above the top of the parapet wall.
- (ii) When roofline changes are included on a façade that incorporates wall offsets or material or color changes, roof line changes shall be vertically aligned with the corresponding wall offset or material or color changes. See [Figure 10-H](#).



Figure 10-H: Illustration of roofline changes along a long façade wall

(c) Flat Roofs

- (i) When flat roofs are used, parapet walls with three-dimensional cornice treatments shall conceal them.
- (ii) The cornice shall include a perpendicular projection a minimum of eight inches from the parapet façade plane.
- (iii) Thin parapets that are less than four feet in depth shall not extend more than two feet above the roof unless necessary to conceal mechanical equipment.

(d) Asymmetric or Dynamic Roofs

Asymmetric or dynamic roof forms allude to motion, provide variety and flexibility in nonresidential building design, and allow for unique buildings. Asymmetric or dynamic roof forms shall be permitted on nonresidential buildings as an alternative to flat roofs. See [Figure 10-I](#), for an example of buildings with a dynamic roof form.



Figure 10-I: An example of dynamic roof lines

(e) Roof Mounted Mechanical Equipment

Building walls, parapets, and/or roof systems shall be designed to conceal all roof-mounted mechanical equipment from view from adjacent properties and public rights-of-way. Such equipment shall also be screened from view from any properties that may see the building from above (e.g., if adjacent properties are along higher elevations). See [Figure 10-J](#).

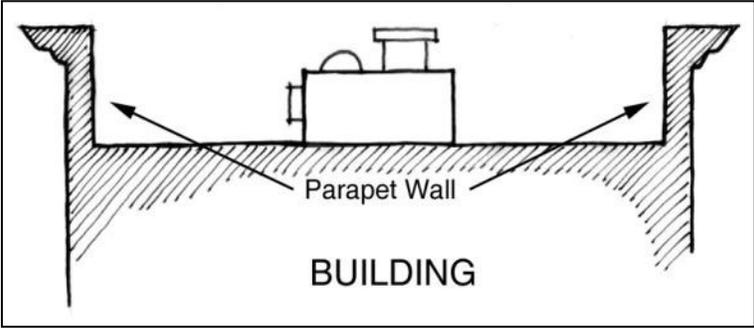


Figure 10-J: Example of how parapet walls are utilized to screen roof mounted mechanical equipment.