

SMART GROWTH (M.G.L. 40R) OVERLAY DESIGN STANDARDS

1. Introduction

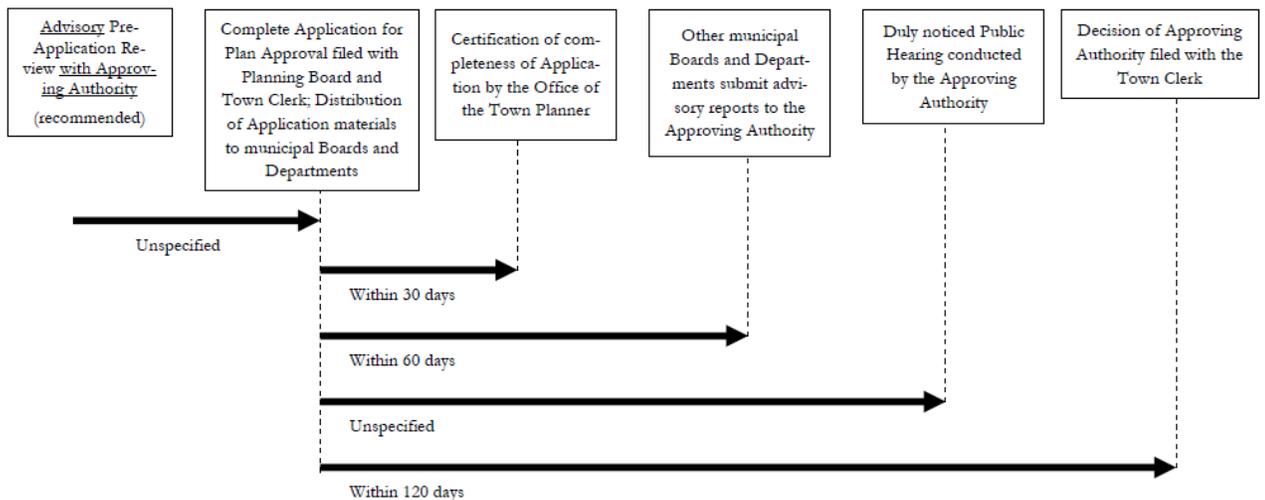
These Design Standards are adopted pursuant to the authority of Mass. Gen. Laws Ch. 40R “Smart Growth Zoning” and 760 CMR 59.00, and Section 2.1.2 of the Town of Swampscott Zoning Bylaws. They complement the Overlay District Bylaw, and provide the Town of Swampscott with a regulatory framework that will define the site and building design requirements for development within the Town’s Smart Growth Overlay District (“SG” or “District”).

2. Purpose and Applicability

To ensure that Development Projects shall be of high quality, and shall meet the standards envisioned by the Town of Swampscott in adopting Smart Growth Zoning, the physical character of the Development Project within the Smart Growth Overlay District (SG) shall comply with, and the Approving Authority shall enforce, the following Design Standards in the issuance of Plan Approval for a Development Project within the SG.

These Design Standards shall be used by the Approving Authority (the Planning Board of the Town of Swampscott) in their review and consideration of Development Projects proposed pursuant to the District Bylaw. A Development Project shall be approved by the Planning Board upon a finding of consistency with the Standards for Compliance contained herein, unless otherwise waived pursuant to the District Bylaw. Conditions may be added to a Plan Approval as may be necessary to ensure consistency with the District Bylaw and/or the Design Standards through project construction and occupancy. These Design Standards shall be in effect upon adoption by a majority of the Approving Authority and approval of the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (“Department”). The Design Standards as authorized by Mass. Gen. Laws Ch.40R may be amended from time to time with the approval of the Department. In the case of inconsistency between the District By-law and these Design Standards, the District By-law shall govern. In the case of inconsistency between applicable state or federal laws, including, without limitation, state building codes or life safety codes, and these Design Standards, the applicable state and federal laws, rules and regulations shall govern.

3. Schematic Illustration of Timeline for Plan Review Process



4. Guiding Principles for the Vinnin Square SG Overlay District



The roughly 4-acre site is partially located in three different municipalities, including 2.26 acres in Swampscott, 1.5 acres in Town of Marblehead and 0.3 acres in the City of Salem. These municipal boundaries create both permitting and site design challenges for redevelopment. It is bordered by Salem Street, Vinnin Street, and the Tedesco Country Club. It has no immediate residential abutters. Due to its proximity to existing commercial uses and services, the site was identified by the Marblehead Smart Growth (SG) Advisory Committee as an appropriate location for higher-density residential or mixed-use development. The Swampscott Planning Board agrees with the Advisory Committee's assertion regarding the mixed-use aspect of their contention. The SG zoning allows higher densities and taller buildings than typically allowed in Swampscott. By adopting these Design Standards, the Town of Swampscott intends to set out its design vision for the site, taking into account those portions of the site that are located in adjacent municipalities. It is the Town's goal to be congruent with Marblehead's zoning amendments and design guidelines applicable to the site, and efforts will eventually be made to ensure consistency with these Design Standards to allow for a coordinated project design for the entire site. However, coordinated design does not mean uniform design. These Design Standards include requirements to ensure that multiple buildings will incorporate varied architectural details. Buildings should be complementary to one another in scale, orientation and materials, but should differ in design detail to enhance overall visual interest for residents and passers-by. Overall site design will incorporate a landscaped park, to include a monument noting the historical significance of the site, which was part of a land grant to General John Glover in payment for his service as a Brigadier General in the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War.

5. General, Height, Massing, and Organizational Guidelines

5.1. General

- 5.1.1. Proposed Development Projects should be appropriately designed for the site, address human scale by including architectural detail at street level, and become a positive asset to the architectural character of the Town of Swampscott.
- 5.1.2. Protection of public safety. Site design shall include adequate water supply distribution and storage for fire protection. Vehicular circulation shall meet the access needs of emergency and public safety vehicles. The adequacy of the foregoing public safety measures will be based on the reasonable requirements of the Swampscott Chief of Police and Fire Chief, in their respective fields.
- 5.1.3. To the maximum extent feasible, new electrical utilities shall be located underground.
- 5.1.4. Building design shall be adequate to be eligible for Silver or better certification pursuant to the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) criteria, as promulgated by the U.S. Green Building Council.
- 5.1.5. A Development Project in the Vinnin Square District including more than one building shall include varied architectural styles among the buildings to avoid a uniform appearance. This may include but is not limited to variations in building height, rooflines, building materials and color, and variations in unit count per building.

5.2. Building Height, Massing and Organization

- 5.2.1. Wherever it abuts existing development, new Development Projects shall incorporate design transitions between new buildings and existing buildings, using comparable materials, roof design, fencing materials and landscaping.
- 5.2.2. Buildings in the Vinnin Square District that are closest to the adjacent streets shall be oriented roughly parallel to the streets in order to create and visually reinforce a street line.
- 5.2.3. A new building may have an inconsistent setback from neighboring buildings if the front setback is to be used for a well-landscaped open space. Where differing front setbacks are approved, design elements such as a wall, fencing or landscaping of a minimum height of three (3) feet shall be used to reinforce the street line.
- 5.2.4. Side and rear façades shall be articulated in a manner compatible with the design of the front façade. Blank side and rear wall surfaces greater than twenty (20) linear feet are prohibited on walls that are visible from streets or other public areas.
- 5.2.5. Windows, wall panels, pilasters, and building bays shall be carried across windowless walls to relieve blank, uninteresting surfaces. False commercial storefronts are not permitted.

5.3. Building Facades

- 5.3.1. Buildings more than forty (40) feet wide shall be broken down into a series of smaller elements or “bays” – to evoke the rhythm of historic shop fronts and mixed-use town centers, add visual character and maintain the pedestrian scale of the streetscape. No uninterrupted length of any façade shall be permitted to exceed thirty (30) horizontal feet without incorporating at least one of the following design elements: color change, material change, expressed joints and details, or texture change; and at least one of the following design elements: recessed or projecting bays, trellises, balconies, or windows.
- 5.3.2. Recesses and projections shall be a minimum of two (2) feet deep, and shall be incorporated into at least fifty percent (50%) of the façade width.
- 5.3.3. Any side of the building that has frontage on a sidewalk or street shall include windows, doors, or other signs of human occupancy, such as porches or balconies. A minimum of 70% of the width of a building façade facing a street shall be fenestrated.
- 5.3.4. Building design for multi-story buildings shall create or maintain a visual distinction between upper and lower floors.

5.4. Roofs

- 5.4.1. Roofs shall be simple and symmetrically pitched, deviating from symmetry only in the configuration of gables and hips. The pitch of the roof shall be at least 8:12.
- 5.4.2. Mansard roofs and gambrel roofs are prohibited. Shed roofs (roofs which pitch in one direction) are generally discouraged, but may be permitted on the rear of a building.
- 5.4.3. Roof forms should be varied within a block, and should be varied within a building, incorporating parapets, decorative cornice treatments, belt courses, and window bays.
- 5.4.4. Mechanical equipment, including metal chimneys, and elevator penthouses at grade, attached to, or on the roof of a building, shall be screened from view from streets and from structures on adjacent lots; or they shall be integrated into the overall design of the building by use of materials, placement, roof shape or form, or other means deemed acceptable to the Approving Authority upon their review of a screening plan within the public hearing. Skylights, vent stacks, and other roof profusions shall be designed so as not to be visibly obtrusive from streets and sidewalks.

5.5. Windows, Doorways, and Balconies

- 5.5.1. Windows shall be simulated true divided windows with permanent exterior muntins, and shall be inset or projecting from the exterior wall surface to add visual relief to the wall. Bay windows and shutters are encouraged for residential buildings.

- 5.5.2. In general, all windows should be taller than they are wide. A ratio of 1:1.6 is encouraged. This is true of windows on the first as well as upper floors. Street front windows that are horizontally oriented may be broken up with the use of muntins. Double hung windows are preferred over casement windows. If casement windows are used, they should be designed to look like double hung windows
 - 5.5.3. Windows on upper and lower floors typically align vertically, although offset alignments may be appropriate for some architectural styles.
 - 5.5.4. Full shed dormers extending the full width of a building are prohibited. Shed dormers must be at least 4' from the gable end of a building.
 - 5.5.5. Recessed doorways are preferred, in order to break up the building façade, provide a welcoming space, and provide protection from sun and rain. Where a recessed doorway is not used, an awning can have a similar effect. Adequate lighting for the doorway shall be provided at night.
 - 5.5.6. Balconies and porches are encouraged to generate connection between the buildings and the street provided they do not extend over a public right-of-way, and shall be designed to provide functional access to the resident of the dwelling unit, and should not be simply decorative. Juliet Balconies may be permitted at the discretion of the Approving Authority. Balconies shall meet or exceed minimum structural loading requirements of the Massachusetts State Building Code
- 5.6. Materials, Texture and Color
- 5.6.1. New building materials should be selected to convey a sense of quality, durability and permanence. The use of brick, brick veneer, stone, clapboard, shingle, hardy board shingles or planks, wood or similar materials as primary building materials is encouraged in the Vinnin Square District. A combination of materials shall be used in order to create visual interest.
 - 5.6.2. Where more than one material is used, traditionally heavier materials (stone, brick, concrete, etc.) should be located below lighter materials (wood, shingle, clapboards, etc). The change in material should occur along a horizontal line, preferably at the floor level.
 - 5.6.3. Prohibited materials. Simulated materials including but not limited to vinyl, aluminum siding, artificial brick, artificial stone or exterior insulation finishing system (EIFS) are prohibited. Reflective materials such as porcelain enamel, tinted glass or sheet metal are prohibited.

6. Placement, Alignment, Width, and Grade of Sidewalks

- 6.1. Each Development Project shall provide safe, well-lit pedestrian access to and through the site. Continuous sidewalks shall be provided along the frontage of a site adjacent to a public way. Where the proposed development abuts streets that lack sidewalks, or where sidewalks abutting the

proposed development do not meet applicable standards, Applicants are encouraged to propose improvements to sidewalks.

- 6.2. However, for Development Lots that front on streets without existing sidewalks, an alternate plan for pedestrian access to and through the site, such as providing one or more pathways internal to the Development Lot, may be proposed by the Applicant.
- 6.3. All new parking areas and sidewalks shall be designed and constructed to be accessible to the handicapped in accordance with applicable laws including the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Rules and Regulations of the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board.
- 6.4. Where existing sidewalks within rights-of-way abutting proposed Development Projects are cracked, broken or uneven, Applicants are encouraged to propose improvements to said sidewalks. Where developments are proposed adjacent to sidewalks that are not accessible to the handicapped in accordance with applicable laws including the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Rules and Regulations of the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board, improvements to sidewalks may be required as a condition of Plan Approval
- 6.5. Where provided, sidewalks shall connect proposed buildings with parking intended to serve the use.
- 6.6. Construction Standards
 - 6.6.1. Sidewalks shall be a minimum of five (5) feet.
 - 6.6.2. Sidewalk material shall include a mixture of masonry pavers and poured concrete.
 - 6.6.3. Sidewalks shall be designed such that they are not accessible for vehicle parking, such as through the use of vertical curbing and/or bollards, and curb cuts for vehicular access and parking shall be minimized.

7. Location of Buildings and Garages

- 7.1. Building and garage entrances shall be sited to minimize the impact of vehicular turning movements on safe and efficient movement of vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists within vehicular rights-of-way. New curb cuts should be avoided where access from existing streets or driveways is feasible.
- 7.2. Building entrances shall provide direct access to sidewalks or paths to emphasize pedestrian ingress and egress as opposed to accommodating vehicles.
- 7.3. Doorways to upper floors should be visually separated from street-level shop entries, and doorway location and design should seek to minimize confusion over which doorway belongs to which business.
- 7.4. If a Development Project includes more than one residential entrance, consideration should be given to placing entrances on two different sides of the building.

- 7.5. The maximum number of total curb cuts in the Vinnin Square SG District shall be three (3), two (2) on Salem Street, and one (1) on Vinnin Street.
- 7.6. Access drives shall maintain adequate sight lines for pedestrians and motor vehicles. Adequacy of vehicular sight distance shall be reviewed and determined in accordance with accepted AASHTO (American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials) methodology based on posted or observed speeds on adjacent roadways.
- 7.7. New or relocated curb cuts for driveways in the Vinnin Square District shall be located a minimum of two hundred (200) feet away from the point of tangency of street lines with radii at street intersections.
- 7.8. Any vehicular entrance to internal parking shall be a minimum distance of thirty (30) linear feet from the property line to allow queuing of at least one vehicle without cars backing up into the public sidewalk or the vehicular right-of-way.
- 7.9. The entrance to any internal parking shall be secured with a gate in order to limit access. The gate shall include a visual and audible notification to alert pedestrians of exiting vehicles.
- 7.10. In the Vinnin Square District, internal site driveways shall be designed to prohibit vehicular access from Vinnin Street to Salem Street in order to disallow vehicular cut-throughs.

8. Off-Street Parking

- 8.1. Residential parking lots shall be located to the side or the rear of new buildings and such that buildings or landscaping separate parking areas from the street. Wherever feasible, off-street parking lots shall be set back a minimum of 10 feet from property lines along public rights-of-way, excluding alleys. However, parking for nonresidential components of mixed-use buildings may be located adjacent to a street.
- 8.2. Surface parking lots shall be screened from view from public ways with a combination of plantings and fencing such as of cast-iron or brick. Screening shall be at least 3 feet high. Chain link fencing is not acceptable for screening purposes.
- 8.3. Where parking is proposed to be located interior to the building, either at grade or sub grade, it shall be screened from view from public ways, and the exterior building façade shall be required to comply with the performance standards herein including, without limitation, requirements for façade articulation and detail.
- 8.4. Parking layouts shall minimize nuisance from car headlights that beam into residential dwellings through the use of visual screening by use of plantings or fencing.

9. Exterior Lighting

- 9.1. Lighting. For reasons of safety and the reduction of light trespass, glare and light pollution, all outdoor lighting in the SG shall comply with the following provision: Direct light emitted by exterior

luminaire shall be shielded by a full cutoff, and shall not emit directly by a lamp, off a reflector, or through a refractor above a plane of 72 degrees measured from the fixture's lowest light-emitting part. Exterior lighting fixtures shall not exceed fourteen feet in height.

- 9.2. All pedestrian paths and entry areas shall be lighted and entry areas to buildings should provide protection from adverse weather through the use of porches, awnings or entryways.
- 9.3. Lighting shall be metal halide or similar. The use of mercury vapor, low pressure sodium, high pressure sodium and high wattage quartz lamps over 100 watts is prohibited.

10. On-Site Open Space

- 10.1. Design and location. The overall site design shall include common open space and facilities designed to be functional and well-integrated with the built environment. Open space should be accessible and visible from the building.
- 10.2. Plans. The plans and any necessary supporting documents submitted with an application for Plan Approval within the SG shall show the general location, size, character, and general area within which common open space or facilities will be located.
- 10.3. Ownership and maintenance. The Approving Authority may require as a condition of Plan Approval submittal of plans and documentation to include a description of proposed ownership and maintenance of all common open space or facilities.
- 10.4. A monument noting the historical significance of the site, including reference to General Glover, shall be included in the design of on-site open space in the Vinnin Square District. The Swampscott and Marblehead Historical Commission shall be invited to comment on the proposed content and design of the monument within project design and/or permitting.

11. Landscaping

- 11.1. Site design shall include a variety of landscape elements such as trees with irrigation grates, planters, and seasonal plantings. Landscaping improvements shall include amenities such as street furniture, landscaping, and trash receptacles.
- 11.2. Protection of Significant Natural Site Features in the Vinnin Square District
 - 11.2.1. Trees and other substantial vegetation in existence at the time an Application is filed shall be retained unless retention would Unduly Restrict opportunities for development. Location of buildings should not cause avoidable removal or damage to any tree exceeding eight (8) inches trunk diameter measured at a point four (4) feet above grade as of the date of adoption of the District Bylaw.
 - 11.2.2. Specific trees exceeding eight (8) inches trunk diameter shall be reviewed with the Approving Authority within the Plan Review process. Trees required to be preserved as a

condition of Plan Approval shall be tagged in the field within the Plan Review process and appropriately designated on Plans.

- 11.2.3. In the event that trees tagged for preservation are damaged during construction, the trees shall be replaced with vegetation of similar species and size prior to issuance of Certificate of Occupancy.
- 11.3. Plant materials shall be chosen to withstand seasonal weather cycles in New England and for compatibility with existing plantings in the surrounding neighborhood, with consideration for resistance to infestations, resilience to climate exposure, water availability and drainage conditions. Native species must be used. Plants located near streets, driveways or parking lots must be salt-tolerant.
- 11.4. To minimize water consumption, the use of low water vegetative ground cover other than turf is encouraged.
- 11.5. Trees shall be a minimum of 3" caliper measured at a point four (4) feet above grade at time of planting.

12. Buffering in Relation to Adjacent Properties

- 12.1. All dumpsters, utilities, mechanical equipment, storage and service areas shall be screened from view from adjacent streets and from structures on neighboring lots in existence at the time of Plan Approval through the provision of architectural screening, landscaping, and fencing. Chain link fencing is not acceptable for screening purposes. Screening may be required by the Approval Authority to include plantings and/or landscape structures.
- 12.2. Trash receptacles shall be located and designed for ease of trash service to the site. Trash receptacles shall be located in the garage of buildings or in freestanding trash houses. Trash houses shall be located and architecturally designed to minimize their aesthetic impacts.

13. Stormwater Management

- 13.1. Stormwater management systems shall not increase the volume or rate, or further degrade the quality of, existing discharges/runoff. Post-development peak runoff shall be maintained at or below pre-development peak runoff rates.
- 13.2. Stormwater management systems shall incorporate "Best Management Practices" (BMP) as prescribed by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, in addition to employing Low Impact Development (LID) strategies.
- 13.3. The use of LID strategies such as bioretention basins, landscaped swales, vegetated rain-gardens, infiltration trenches, dry-wells, and permeable paving surfaces is strongly encouraged in order to achieve BMP/LID goals. Retention and detention ponds are prohibited.

- 13.4. All systems which deliver, treat, infiltrate, and/or discharge stormwater runoff to ground or surface waters shall be sufficiently treated and monitored to achieve all applicable effluent standards of the Swampscott Board of Health, Department of Public Works, Conservation Commission and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, as applicable.
- 13.5. In the Vinnin Square District, coordination with the adjacent communities of Marblehead and Salem may be required to ensure compliance of stormwater management systems with applicable regulations.
- 13.6. At the discretion of the Approving Authority, an Operation and Maintenance Plan may be required prior to approval of the Development Project. The Operation and Maintenance plan shall be designed to ensure compliance with the Plan Approval and the District Bylaw, and to ensure that the Massachusetts Surface Water Quality Standards, 314, CMR 4.00 are met in all seasons and throughout the life of the system. Any approved Operation and Maintenance Plan shall remain on file with the Approving Authority and the Department of Public Works and shall be an ongoing requirement of Plan Approval.

14. Administrative Rules

- 14.1. Each application for Plan Approval shall be accompanied by the following information:
 - a. Five (5) copies of Plan at a minimum scale of one inch equals 40 feet and a maximum scale of one inch equals 20 feet. The Plan shall contain:
 - [1] Date of Plan with all revisions noted and dated. Title of development; North arrow; scale; map and lot number; name and address of record owner; name and address of person preparing the Plan.
 - [2] The names of all owners of record of adjacent properties, and the map and lot number of the properties and all buildings.
 - [3] Zoning district boundaries and flood zone boundaries shall be shown as they affect the property, including delineation of required setback lines.
 - [4] Boundaries of the property and lines of existing street, lots, easements and areas dedicated to public use, including rights-of-way.
 - [5] A locus map showing the location of the property with reference to surrounding area, including the building footprints of adjacent buildings, if any.
 - [6] A table indicating all calculations necessary to determine conformance to the District Bylaw and Design Standards.
 - [7] Square footage of property to the nearest 10 square feet.

- [8] Location of existing and proposed buildings, walls, fences, culverts, parking areas, loading areas, walkways and driveways.
- [9] Location and dimensions of utilities, gas, telephone, electrical, communications, water drainage, sewer and other waste disposal.
- [10] Location, type and dimensions of landscaping and screening.
- [11] Location of existing rock outcroppings, high points, vistas, ponds, depressions, wetlands, major trees (twelve-inch caliper and over) and any other significant existing features.
- [12] Two-foot contours where slopes are less than 15% and five-foot contours when 15% or more. Existing contours shall be indicated by dashed line. Proposed contours shall be indicated by solid line.
- [13] As part of an application for Plan Approval, the Applicant may be required to submit to the Approving Authority one or more of the technical analyses defined in the District Bylaw.
- [14] As part of an application for Plan Approval, the Applicant may be required to submit a completed LEED for New Construction v.2.2 (or as updated) Registered Project Checklist.

- b. Five (5) copies of dimensioned schematic drawings of all proposed buildings. Scale shall not exceed 1/4 inch equals one foot nor less than 1/8 inch equals one foot.
- c. A narrative describing the proposal and addressing the foregoing requirements.
- d. A completed application form and application fee.

14.2. The Town Planner at a pre-application meeting may waive certain submittal requirements if the Planner determines that the information will not aid the Approving Authority in its deliberations. The Town Planner shall provide notice of the pre-application meeting to, at least, the Swampscott Fire Department.