

Northbrook Zoning Code

VGO Design Standards

11-605 A. Standards and Considerations for Design Review Permit. In passing upon applications for Design Review Permits, the Plan Commission, the Architectural Control Commission, and the Board of Trustees, as the case may be, shall consider and evaluate the propriety of issuing the Design Review Permit, all in as expeditious a manner as possible. In addition, the Plan Commission, the Architectural Control Commission, and the Board of Trustees, as the case may be, shall be guided by the following standards and considerations:

1. **General Building Design and Relation to Street and Pedestrians:** All building designs shall be evaluated under the following guidelines, as well as the way in which the design relates to the street on which the subject building is, or is proposed to be, located:
 - a) **Height, Bulk, Scale and Massing:** Overall height and massing of proposed buildings and structures shall be modulated to reduce the appearance of height and bulk.
 - b) **Roof-lines:** Roof-lines shall be designed to generate visual interest.
 - c) **Facade:** Architectural details in building facades shall provide visual interest and be generally compatible with surrounding buildings and properties.
 - d) **Proportion of openings:** The size and number of openings (windows, doors, etc.) shall be proportionate to the overall facade.
 - e) **Rhythm of entrance porch and other projections.** The scale of entrances and other projections shall be designed to relate proportionately to sidewalks and pedestrians.
 - f) **Open spaces.** The quality and location of the open spaces between buildings and in setback spaces between the street and façade shall be suitably located in relation to the street, other open spaces and pedestrian ways.
2. **Visual compatibility.** Visual compatibility shall be considered and reviewed in terms of the following guidelines.
 - a) **Height.** The height of proposed buildings and structures as it relates to adjacent buildings.
 - b) **Materials.** The quality of materials and their relationship to those in existing adjacent structures.
 - c) **Proportion of front facade.** The relationship of the width to the height of the front elevation shall be visually compatible with buildings, public ways, and places to which it is visually related.
 - d) **Proportion of openings.** The relationship of the width to the height of windows shall be visually compatible with buildings, public ways, and places to which the building is visually related.

- e) Rhythm of solids to voids in front facades. The relationship of solids to voids in the front facade of a building shall be visually compatible with buildings, public ways, and places to which it is visually related
 - f) Rhythm of spacing and buildings on streets. The relationship of a building or structure to the open space between it and adjoining buildings or structures shall be visually compatible with the buildings, public ways, and places to which it is visually related.
 - g) Relationship of materials and texture. The relationship of the materials and texture of the facade shall be visually compatible with the predominant materials used in the buildings and structures to which it is visually related.
 - h) Roof shapes. The roof shape of a building shall be visually compatible with the buildings to which it is visually related.
 - i) Walls of continuity. Building facades and appurtenances such as walls, fences, and landscape masses shall, when it is a characteristic of the area, form cohesive walls of enclosure along a street to ensure visual compatibility with the buildings, public ways, and places to which such elements are visually related.
 - j) Scale of building. The size and mass of buildings and structures in relation to open spaces, windows, door openings, porches, and balconies shall be visually compatible with the buildings, public ways, and places to which they are visually related.
3. Overall Site Design and Landscaping. The overall site design shall be reviewed in terms of the quality of the following elements:
- a) Landscaping and screening: Parking lots, unsightly equipment and service areas shall be screened from public view by means of landscaping, fencing, and/or other means of screening.
 - b) Lighting: Exterior lighting shall be architecturally integrated with building style, material and color, and shall not be directed off site.
 - c) Parking: Automobile access, servicing of the property, and impact on vehicular traffic patterns and conditions on-site and in the vicinity of the site, and the retention of trees and shrubs to the maximum extent possible shall also be reviewed.
4. Special considerations for existing buildings. For existing buildings, the Plan Commission, Architectural Control Commission, and the Board of Trustees shall consider the availability of materials, technology, and craftsmanship to duplicate existing styles, patterns, textures, and overall detailing.
5. Manuals and guidelines. The Plan Commission or Architectural Control Commission may, from time to time, provide for specific manuals or guidelines for architectural styles or common-occurring buildings or site features and elements to assist applicants for Design Review Permits. Such manuals or guidelines shall be advisory only and shall bind neither the applicant nor the Plan Commission, Architectural Control Commission, or the Board of Trustees with respect to any specific case.
6. Design criteria for signs.

- a) Visual compatibility. The proposed sign shall be visually compatible with the building on which the sign is proposed to be located, as well as with surrounding buildings and structures in terms of height, size, proportion, scale, materials, texture, colors, and shapes.
- b) Quality of design and construction. The proposed sign shall be constructed and maintained with a design and materials of high quality and good relationship with the design and character of the neighborhood.
- c) Appropriateness to activity. The proposed sign shall be appropriate to, and necessary for, the activity to which it pertains.
- d) Appropriateness to site. The proposed sign shall be appropriate to its location in terms of design, landscaping, and orientation on the site, and will not create a hazard to pedestrian or vehicular traffic, detract from the value or enjoyment of neighboring properties, or unduly increase the number of signs in the area.