

LIVINGSTON COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP DESIGN MANUAL

In 2003, the Township of Livingston adopted design standards for its Business Township. These standards apply to all commercial properties located in Livingston. If you are planning on making even small changes to your storefront or property, your project will need to be approved by the Architectural Review Committee (ARC) of the Livingston Community Partnership (BID), before you begin work.

Documents and Information

The term "design standards" for Livingston Business Township, includes the requirements of the township ordinance and existing codes as they pertain to any physical changes made to a property or structure including, but not limited to, the following: site work; new construction; additions; alterations; exterior restorations; lighting; new or replacement signage; painting; street furniture and landscaping.

The design standards are recorded in Township ordinance 23-2003 ("the Ordinance"). A copy of the ordinance that enacts the design standards is included at the back of this booklet. The ordinance consists of additions to and revisions of the existing zoning ordinance and property maintenance codes, which remain in effect where the standards are silent.

Information on permits, the existing zoning ordinance and township codes are available from the Township of Livingston Building Department at the Municipal Building. For additional information on the design standards and design review process, please contact the Livingston Community Partnership at 973-992-8080.

Philosophy and Purpose

One of the standards' primary goals is to improve the look of the Township by upgrading the designs; materials used and develop an attractive streetscape resulting in pride in the Township. To accomplish this goal, the design standards require a review process for all proposed, "work" (see Definitions section of the ordinance) in the Township.

The standards do not dictate any particular style for buildings in the Township. Rather, they are intended to create "architectural integrity" in each building and develop a coherent nature of the Township.

The standards affect only building exteriors and do not control interior spaces (except for window display areas which are on public view). The design standards are meant to be flexible enough to allow business owners to be creative and design storefronts that market their establishments effectively. At the same time, they will help to avoid poor quality design decisions that detract from the appearance of the Township. The design standards also provide an objective basis by which to evaluate projects that come up for review. Through compliance with the design standards, renovation, repair and new construction projects will enhance the economic success of the Township by making it a more inviting place for shoppers and new businesses.

When do the standards apply?

The design standards apply to all work done on a commercial or industrial building within the Township. This includes all renovations, new construction and repairs such as painting, replacing or installing a new sign or awning, putting up a banner, installing permanent window graphics, making changes to doors or windows, installing fencing, landscaping or street furniture.

All such work must be reviewed and approved by the Partnership before a building permit is issued or work is begun. WORK TO THE OUTSIDE OF A BUILDING WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP THAT DOES NOT REQUIRE A BUILDING PERMIT OR APPROVAL BY THE PLANNING BOARD OR ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT MUST STILL BE APPROVED BY THE ARC.

The Review Process

- The Partnership reviews proposed work for compliance with the design standards only. All work performed within the Township must receive the prior approval of the BID, even if it does not require a building permit.
- The review process is designed specifically to run concurrently with the existing review processes of the Building Department and Planning Board or Zoning Board of Adjustment, so as not to delay the project approvals process. The Partnership's review process requires an applicant submit an application for review at least one week prior to the meeting of the Architectural Review Committee.
- If your project requires a building permit, it can be reviewed by the Building Department for compliance with township codes and zoning requirements after the BID's review. Your project must be approved by the BID's Review Committee before a permit is reviewed.
- Some projects, such as those that involve a variance or require site plan approval, need review and approval by the Planning Board or Zoning Board of Adjustment in addition to review by the Building Department and the BID. If your project requires approval by the Planning Board or Zoning Board of Adjustment, the Building Department will refer your application to the appropriate board for consideration. Review by one of these boards can run concurrently with the Partnership's review. If Planning Board/Zoning Board of Adjustment review is required of your project, it must be approved by one of these boards and the Architectural Review Committee before a building permit is issued.

Steps for Exterior Work Projects:

- If you are planning to do work on your store-front or building, you should follow these steps:
- Contact the Township of Livingston Building Department. Find out if your project requires a building permit or review by the Planning Board or Zoning Board of Approval. If not, you need only have your proposed project reviewed and approved by the Partnership.
- Get your application for Design Review by the ARC from the Building Department or the Partnership (973-992-8080). (A sample application is shown for your reference.) Complete your application for design review and return it to the Partnership no later than one week before the regularly scheduled ARC meeting. The Design Review Board meets on the first Thursday of each month. In order to expedite the review process, applicants are encouraged to discuss their plans with the Partnership prior to submitting an application.
- Contact the Partnership to schedule yourself for a brief presentation of your project at that meeting. The ARC will approve your project, approve it with certain changes or decide not to approve.
- If your project is approved by the BID's Review Committee, the Building Department will be notified promptly. If your project is rejected you can re-apply for review or appeal the decision to the Planning Board.
- If your project does require a building permit, obtain your application for a building permit from the Building Department.
- If your project requires review by the Zoning Board of Adjustment or Planning Board, the Building Department will refer you to the appropriate board. Each board has its own application.
- Remember:

The Architectural Review Committee meets on the First Thursday of every month.

A. DEFINITIONS

Architectural Feature/Element: Those portions of a building or structure that account for its unique style and character, including roof line, entrances, fenestration and decorative details, such as cornices, brackets, balustrades, friezes, moldings, pilasters, sills, lintels, etc.

Architectural Integrity An appearance which retains the architectural features/elements of a building and conforms to the requirements for visual compatibility, massing, proportion and scale, proportion of facades, character of facades and proportion of openings.

Building Scale The relationship of a particular building, in terms of building mass, to other area buildings.

Building Mass The three-dimensional bulk of a structure: height; width and depth.

Building Proportion The width to height relationship of one building part to another building part or of one building to another.

Facade Any exterior building face or wall.

Permanent window graphic Any sign made of a material other than paper or cardboard that is visible from the window area, or that is applied or adhered directly to the window glazing or etched into that glazing.

Planning Board The Township of Livingston Planning Board.

Principal Facade The facade(s) of a building that front on a street or which are intended to contain the primary entrance to a building.

Public Nuisance In addition to the items set forth in 23-2003, public nuisance shall include any structure that is in a state of dilapidation, deterioration or decay; faulty construction; overcrowded; open, vacant, partially or completely deliberately not rented or unused, or abandoned; damaged by fire to the extent so as not to provide shelter; in danger of collapse or failure; and dangerous to anyone on or near the premises.

Sign Fascia The natural frame created by a building's architectural elements to accommodate a sign without obscuring any doors, windows, transoms, entrances or decorative detail.

Street Furniture Functional elements of the streetscape, including, but not limited to: curbs; benches; phone booths and other phone installations; lighting fixtures; trash receptacles and benches.

Streetscape The individual natural and man made elements that constitute the physical make-up of a street and that, as a group, define its character.

Temporary window graphic Any sign visible from the window display area or adhered to window or door glazing other than permanent window graphics, including: community flyers; signs advertising a sale or promotion; or any other non-professionally manufactured sign. All paper and cardboard signs are considered to be temporary window graphics. No temporary graphics may be adhered to the exterior of a building.

Visual Compatibility The design of buildings which is sufficiently consistent in scale or character and/or sitting with other buildings or man made or natural elements in the area, so as to avoid abrupt and/or severe differences. The repair, alteration or renovation of a building in a manner in which such work is consistent with the existing architectural features of a building, its scale, mass, proportions, materials and colors.

Livingston Community Partnership The Township of Livingston's Business Improvement District (BID).

Work Any physical change made to the exterior of a property or structure to increase its value and utility, or to enhance its appearance including, but not limited to, the following: site work; new construction; additions; alterations; exterior restorations; cleaning; lighting; new or replacement signage; painting; street furniture and landscaping.

B. DESIGN STANDARDS

• Style

There are no specific "style" requirements for buildings in the Township. All work performed within the Township must not compromise the architectural integrity of the building upon which the work is being performed.

• Colors

Colors shall be visually compatible and complimentary with that of the materials of the building and adjacent buildings. All "day-glow" colors are prohibited within the Township.

- Utility equipment: such as permanent (non window) air conditioning units, including roof top air conditioning units visible from the street, fire escapes and other equipment shall be painted so as to be unobtrusive (i.e., they should match the wall color of the building or be painted dark or gray)

New Construction and Additions: New construction within the Township shall be visually compatible with other structures in the Township.

Repairs and Restorations of Existing Buildings: All such work shall preserve the architectural integrity of the existing building. If an earlier improvement to the original structure was not done in a way that respects the architectural integrity of the building or does not maintain visual compatibility with adjacent structures, the incompatible improvement shall be reversed and corrected when alterations/repairs to that component are undertaken. Reflective materials are not permitted.

Signage & Graphics

Permitted Signs: Includes but not limited to:

- Back-Lit (Halo-Lit) letterforms
- Internally lit Channel letterforms
- Pin Mounted letterforms
- Carved Panel Signs
- Fully Recessed Cabinet signs with either:
 - Stencil-cut aluminum face(s) (preferred) or
 - Alternate – opaque background with illuminated letterforms and/or graphics
- Blade signs
- A-Frame/Sandwich Board Signs (see below for restrictions)
- Awning graphics – No Brand Names or Telephone numbers allowed
- Free Standing Monument signs
- Lettering on Glass

NOT Permitted:

- Roof mounted signs
- Surface mounted Cabinet/Box Signs are not permitted.
- Exposed Neon Wall signs or Exposed Neon Wall Graphics

Projecting Signs (Blade Signs):

Projecting signs are permitted below the second story, provided that:

1. Projecting signs must be securely attached to the building by an ornamental bracket.
2. No projecting sign may have more than two (2) faces.

3. No projecting sign, including brackets, may project more than 30 inches from the building to which it is attached.
4. A projecting sign shall not be larger than five (6) square feet in area. Ornamental brackets are not included in this calculation.
5. Not more than one projecting sign is permitted for each entrance door.

6. Free Standing menu boards, advertising signs and/or displays ?

(to be discussed further)

- **Temporary Window Graphics:**

- Temporary window graphics must be removed within two (2) days after the close of the sale or special event that they advertise and in no event may be displayed for more than thirty (30) days. Temporary window graphics may not occupy more than 25% of the total window area in which displayed (except for "For Rent" signs.
- Except for "For Rent" signs, any temporary sign or other advertising material "Grand Opening" signs may be displayed for no more than fourteen (14) days.
- Temporary window graphics are not debited against the allowable graphic area for wall and ground graphics.
- Boulevard Banners are permitted.

Buildings

Prohibited Graphics: The following graphics are prohibited:

1. Flashing, "chasing", intermittent or strobe lights, highway flashers.
2. **Permanent** pennants, permanent streamers, permanent advertising flags, permanent inflatable objects, permanent twirlers and like objects. Temporary banners are allowed, but must be removed within two (2) days after the close of the sale or special event that they advertise and in no event may be displayed for more than thirty (30) days.

Awnings

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- Awnings used without permanent wall graphics may have lettering or graphics applied to their sloped portions and or valances. Graphic areas on the sloped portion of the awning must meet Township codes for signage. Lettering on valances must conform to the standard set forth in the previous paragraph.
- If used in combination with a permanent wall graphic (Sign), lettering on awnings may be no more than four and one half (4.5) inches in height and contained on the awning valance. Lettering on valances must be contained on one line. Telephone numbers and product brand names are not permitted on awnings.
- **Style:** Extended awnings shall be in the shape of a sloped flat plane. "Bubble" or "waterfall" shaped awnings are prohibited.
- **Materials:** All awnings must be made of fabric.

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Additional Provisions

Mural Signs: Painted directly on structures, accessory buildings, bridges, retaining walls, etc. must be reviewed by the BID's review committee. Trompe l'oeil is encouraged.

Menu Boxes: Menu Boxes are encouraged.

Lighting:

- Lighting for signage must be contained on the property on which the building is located.
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- No flashing or "chasing" lighting is permitted.

Neon:

- Neon signage displayed in the window area is considered a per-manent window graphic. One neon window graphic is permitted on each frontage. Due to its special character neon graphics may not occupy more than 10% of the total area of the window in which it is displayed.
- Neon lighting is not permitted to outline windows or architectural features such as doors, cornices, friezes, etc.

Maintenance Standards and Miscellaneous

Windows and Doors:

Display windows and window display areas: All windows exposed to public view shall be kept free of storage materials; stock or inventory shall be permitted in window display areas ordinarily exposed to public view. All screening of interiors shall be maintained in a clean and attractive manner and in a good state of repair.

Electrical Wiring:

All electrical wiring shall be concealed rather than visible in exposed conduit wherever feasible.

Vacancy:

Signage and window display areas on vacant storefronts must be maintained in the same good condition required of occupied properties. **Existing signs from closed or moved businesses must be maintained by the landlord.**

Planters, benches and/or private waste containers or other street furniture items are subject to the approval of the BID.

Vending machines: The location at which all newspaper vending machines, express mail boxes, and/or other such dispensers must be located in areas designated for these items by the Township.

Security Gates and Devices: Exterior mounted security devices such as "roll up" doors and accordion type "scissors" gates are not permitted.

Graffiti: In addition to the provisions of Chapter ___ of the Code of the Township of Livingston, within the Livingston Business Improvement District, all graffiti is prohibited regardless of the consent of the property owner. Graffiti shall be removed by the property owner within one (1) week of its appearance.

D. DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS

Subject to the provisions of Ordinance. Within the Business Improvement District, all work, whether or not requiring a permit, including but not limited to painting, repairs, renovation, alteration and new construction shall be approved prior to the start of work by the Livingston Community Partnership BID Review Committee. Subsequent to approval from this committee, the applicant shall proceed to secure a building permit from the Construction Official of the

Township of Livingston.

In the event that the BID denies approval for pro-posed work, the BID shall provide the applicant with a written denial setting forth the specifics forming the basis of the denial.

Type of Work	Design Review Required	Permit Required
Replacing an existing a sign or awning	Yes	Yes
Installing a temporary banner	Yes	Yes
Installing a new sign or awning	Yes	Yes
Installing a permanent window graphic	Yes	No
Building a new building or addition	Yes	Yes
Installing street furniture	Yes	Yes
Installing temporary window covering on vacant storefronts	Yes	No
Making, closing or relocating door window openings	Yes	Yes

Appeals Any applicant denied approval for proposed work by the BID may appeal the decision to the Planning Board by serving a Notice of Appeal on the Secretary of the Planning Board at 357 S. Livingston Ave, Livingston, NJ 07039.

Design Review Application

(All information must be included)

Applicants Name: _____

Date: _____

Business Name: _____

Business Address: _____

Business Phone: _____

Cell Phone: _____

E-Mail: _____

Application for:

Outside Signs Awning Outside Paint Permanent Window Graphics Facade Improvements Other (please describe):

****Note:** Please refer to the checklist below in preparing your application.

Signage, Awnings, and Facade Improvements:

- Drawing of building and sign/awning placement (line drawing, sketch or rendering drawn to scale)
- Building facade length (in feet)
- Building facade height (in feet)
- Drawing of sign/awning, drawn to scale
- Lighting locations/plans
- Indication of material specifications (canvas, wood, aluminum, etc.)
- Indication of all proposed lettering and graphics, including typeface(s) and type size(s)
- Photograph showing your building
- Photograph showing adjacent buildings
- Material samples
- Swatch and/or paint color chips, awning material samples

Painting:

- Photograph showing your building and your painting plans (identify paint colors for trim, siding, etc.)
- Photograph showing adjacent buildings
- Material samples (Swatch and/or paint color chips)

Window Lettering or Signage:

- Drawing of building and window signage placement (line drawing, sketch or rendering drawn to scale)
- Indication of already existing signage
- Window dimensions (length and height)
- Placement of proposed sign or lettering on window, including proposed lettering and graphics

- Material Specifications (Vinyl, paint, etc.)
- Photograph showing your building
- Photograph showing the window area on which you propose new signage.
- Material Samples
- Swatch and/or paint color chips

Please return completed application and required materials to:
Livingston Community Partnership, 25 S. Livingston Ave. Second Fl. Suite E, Livingston, NJ 07039
Application must be received 7 days prior to the Design Review Board meeting.

For Design Review Board use only:

Date of Receipt: Due of Design Review: Date of Action:

Action: Application approved as presented. Application denied as presented.

Application approved, subject to modifications Signature;
