TOWN OF BROOKHAVEN
HISTORIC DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Guidelines Handbook

LESTER DAVIS HOUSE
SITE OF TOWN GOVERNMENT 1790-1884

TOWN OF BROOKHAVEN HISTORIC LANDMARK

Town of
Brookhaven
New York

HISTORIC DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Guidelines Handbook

- for project review in Historic Districts
- for project review on Historic Landmarks
- for renovation projects on historic structures

1990

Guidelines Handbook Project
directed by Mary Ann Spencer
written by Nicholas Langhart
illustrated by Barbara L. Ludwig
layout by Faye Lourenso
publishing and distribution coordinated by Brookhaven Town Public Information Office

Requests for copies of this publication should be mailed to:
Brookhaven Town Clerk
205 South Ocean Avenue
Patchogue, New York 11772

© Copyright 1990, Town of Brookhaven

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWARD AND DEDICATION iv

INTRODUCTION 1

PERTINENT QUESTIONS ABOUT HISTORIC DISTRICTS 5

CHARACTERISTICS OF BROOKHAVEN'S ARCHITECTURAL DEVELOPMENT 9

GUIDELINES FOR NEW BUILDINGS AND ADDITIONS 24

GUIDELINES FOR RESPECTING THE LANDSCAPE 35

GUIDELINES FOR RENOVATION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS 39

APPENDIX: Eight Most Common Mistakes and How to Avoid Them 67

The work of the Historic District Advisory Committee through the first decade of the Town of Brookhaven's Historic District Ordinance has been gratifying. We have encouraged and supported historic preservation on a Townwide basis and our presence has significantly helped to preserve the flavor of historic neighborhoods during the recent upsurge in building activity.

Nonetheless, we remain aware that we owe much of our success to the citizens of Brookhaven. The ordinance and the districts were a result of resident petition. Citizens serve without compensation on the Historic District Advisory Committee. The individual and collective contributions of time, effort, money and concern hold together our Town's rich heritage. Without this basis, the legal ordinance and the committee it empowers would be reduced to empty rhetoric. We take this opportunity to acknowledge that the primary contribution and the guiding force has been the people of the Town of Brookhaven.

It should also be noted that Brookhaven's Town Board has unfailingly supported us and our agenda. They have provided the means for projects such as this book to assist the community in achieving preservation goals. For this we are deeply appreciative. We want to pay a special debt to one individual whose consistent efforts on behalf of historic preservation speak to his profound caring for our Town. It is with respect and gratitude that we dedicate this handbook to the Founding President of the Yaphank Historical Society and former member of the Town Board, Eugene Dooley.

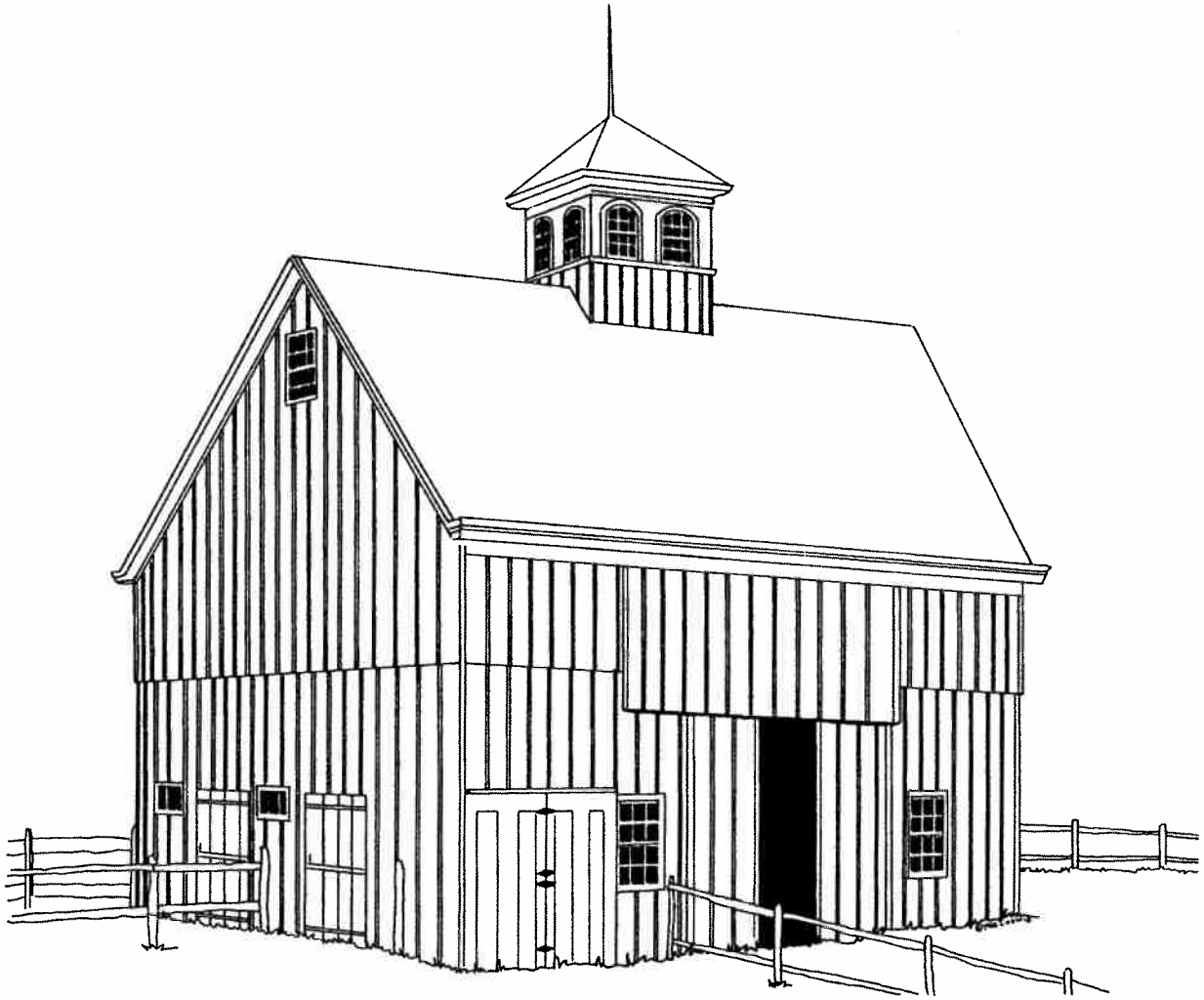
Mary Ann Spencer, Chairman
Historic District Advisory Committee
17 October 1988

INTRODUCTION

The Town of Brookhaven is one of the oldest settled areas of the United States. In recent decades it has also been one of the fastest growing, causing the historic character of many parts of the Town to be threatened.

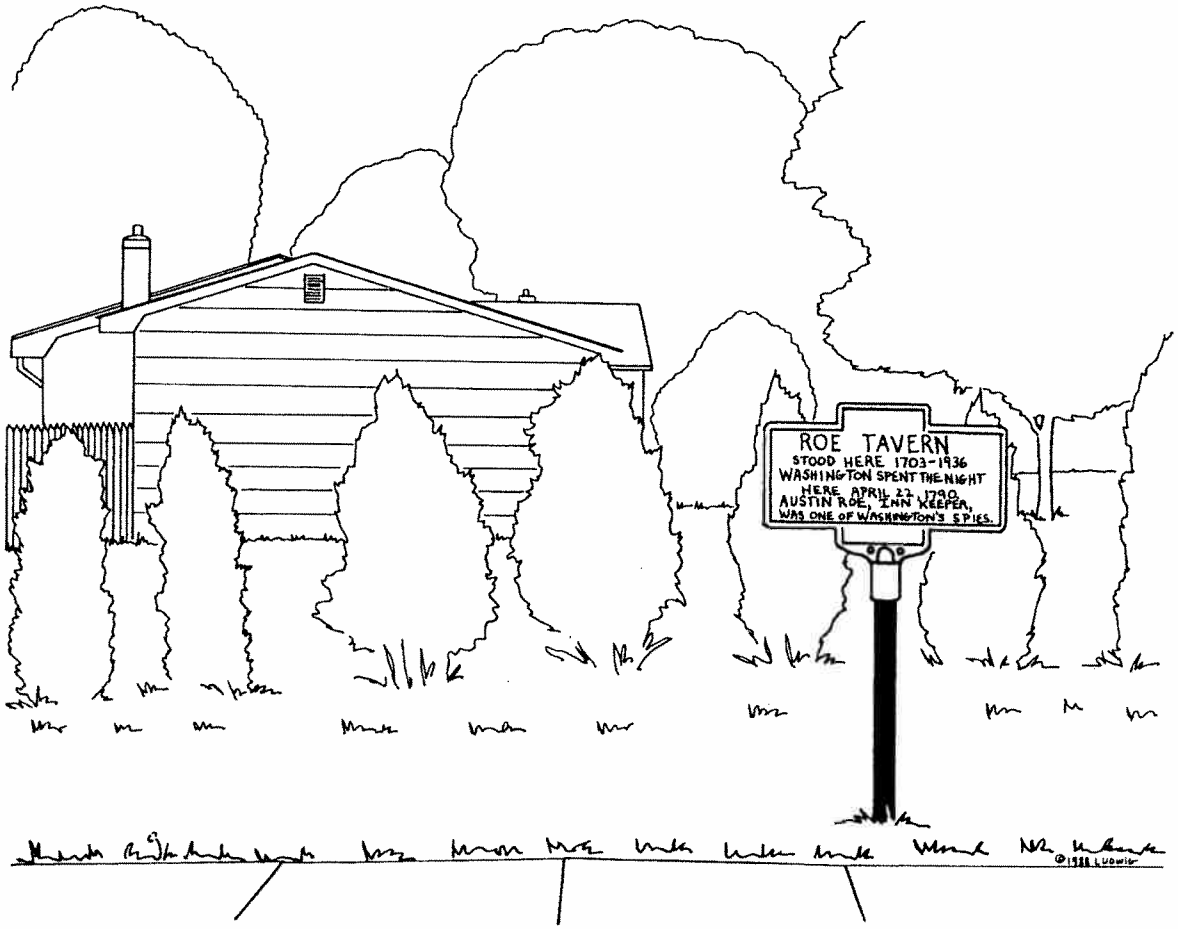
Recognizing the need to safeguard areas rich in historic buildings, the Town Board enacted an historic district classification within the zoning code in 1976. The Historic District classification designated specific areas in which changes in the outward appearance of any building would be reviewed by a Historic District Advisory Committee. This group of citizens is appointed by the Town Board to advise the Planning Board on proposed changes in the districts. Brookhaven joins over 1200 other communities across the country with preservation ordinances.

Over many generations, villages grew up along the major thoroughfares of the Town. While their buildings reflected changing tastes and needs, the changes were subtle and a consistency of scale and building



EAST SETAUKET HISTORIC DISTRICT

The historic character of many parts of the Town is threatened. Out buildings, which lend tangible ties to our past, are particularly fragile.



The automobile and population growth has shown that our traditional landscape is fragile and much good building has been lost already.

materials was maintained. But the automobile and recent population growth has shown that the character of our traditional landscape is fragile and much of the original quality has been lost already. The purpose of the special zoning within historic districts is not to restrict change or thwart growth, but to insure that change in these sensitive areas will be harmonious with what already exists. Further, we encourage the preservation and reuse of older buildings and the maintenance of natural vegetation and land forms as the needs of landowners change.

For these reasons, the Town has instituted a review process for proposed exterior modification of any building within district boundaries. Specifically, any contemplated change in design, material, or outward appearance must be brought before the Historic District Advisory Committee. In addition, new construction, moving, demolition of a structure, or any variance from the provisions of the zoning code must also be reviewed. The erection of signs is also covered. Ordinary maintenance and repair which does not involve a change

in design or material does not require review.

To assist the property owner within a historic district or the owner of a designated historic landmark, the Committee has formulated these guidelines. The guidelines strive to clarify the principles of harmonious design, to identify appropriate construction materials *based upon traditional practice on Long Island*, and to adhere to the best contemporary preservation techniques.

There is, however, no one "right way." Every building is different in age, uniqueness, location and condition. The owner's needs and desires also require individual decisions in every case. This booklet does not give answers, but suggests appropriate solutions designed to help owners, architects and builders when presenting building and site proposals to the Committee.

Architectural features of older structures, such as this Greek Revival door, impart character and are worthy of preservation efforts.

YAPHANK HISTORIC DISTRICT

The booklet is divided into three parts. The first describes settlement patterns in Brookhaven which have influenced the location and style of early buildings. The second section deals with new construction within the districts, and includes suggestions for insuring compatibility with the historic flavor of the area. The third part treats the most important architectural features of older structures, identifying elements that impart character and merit careful preservation.

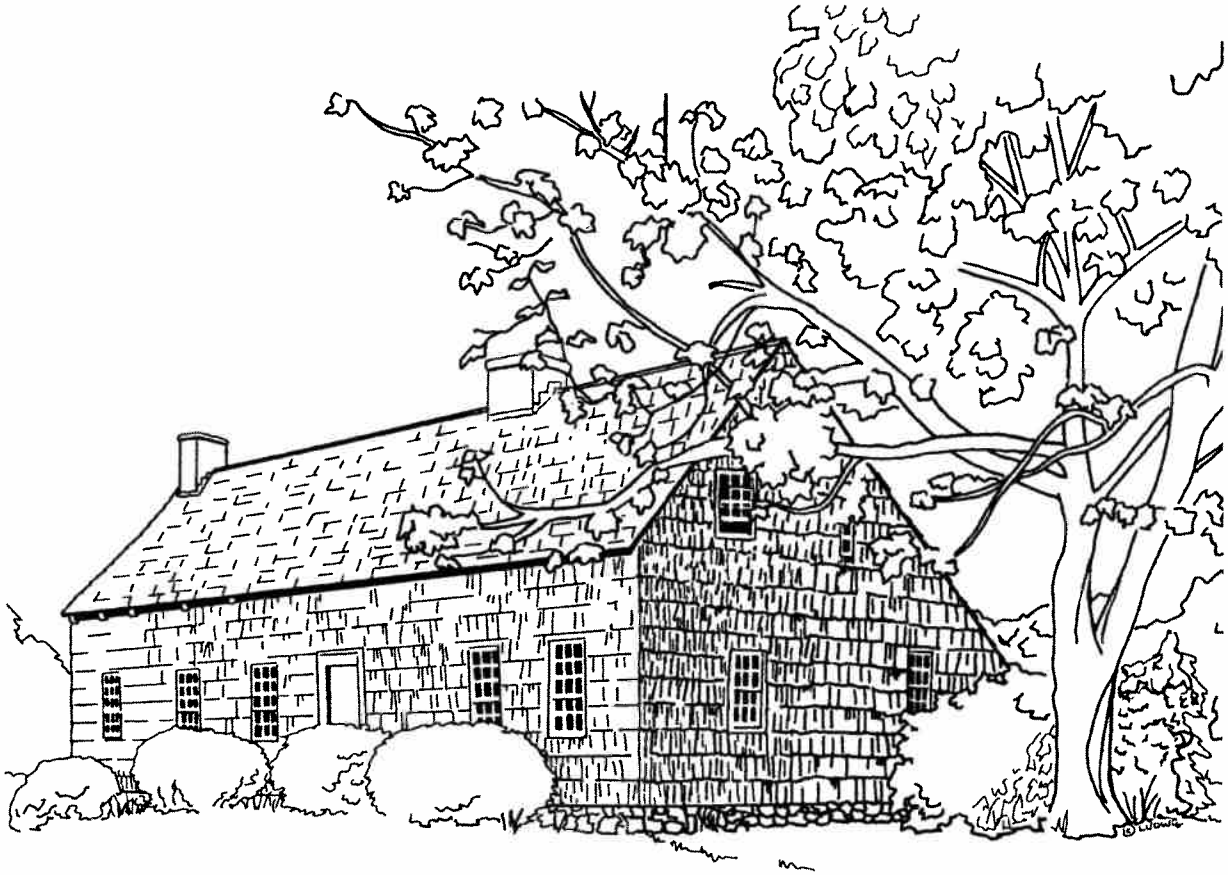
These guidelines have been specifically written for and about Brookhaven's unique history, architectural characteristics and settlement patterns. We strive to preserve what is good and encourage new work that respects but does not copy the past.

This is neither a history text nor a restoration manual. It is simply a guide to assist residents with the basic concepts of neighborhood preservation.

PERTINENT QUESTIONS ABOUT HISTORIC DISTRICTS

When the history of a place is valued, its exterior appearance should be preserved in order to maintain a continuity with the past. Our understanding of our heritage is enhanced when tangible reminders of the past remain undisturbed. In addition, much of what was built (or laid out as landscape) is not only appealing – it is irreplaceable. Unsympathetic alteration or demolition permanently removes something of value from the entire community.

The historic district serves to protect areas of historic character from unsympathetic change. It does not prohibit all change. Every area has undergone alteration since it began and it is intended that those areas which are designated as historic districts should continue to evolve while the presence of the past is retained.



BREWSTER HOUSE

OLD SETAUKET DISTRICT

Our understanding of our heritage is enhanced when tangible reminders of the past remain undisturbed. Much of what has been built is not only appealing–it is irreplaceable.

The Committee is not pre-disposed to any particular architectural style. New construction should contribute to the district, respecting elements of scale, mass and design. It must also relate to the setting and the visual texture of the surrounding environment.

A district is not an enclave of one accepted style. Repetition of white houses with green shutters is conformity, not the result of historic change, and it is not good design.

A district does not prohibit modern design. Sympathetic additions to older homes and well conceived new construction in historic areas are encouraged. New construction, discussed in the next chapter, should reinforce the continuity of the district by maintaining the scale, mass, design elements and texture of the surrounding. Often new work can contribute more to a district than a standardized "colonial" imitation.

A district is not a prestige neighborhood. An area qualifies as historic by virtue of its age, the quality of the historic structures that it contains, and the extent to which these structures retain their integrity, unaltered by inappropriate changes in exterior form and materials. An area also qualifies if its character is unique and important in the telling of the history of Brookhaven. Historic districts include business communities, towns, suburbs, estates, and rural and environmentally important areas.

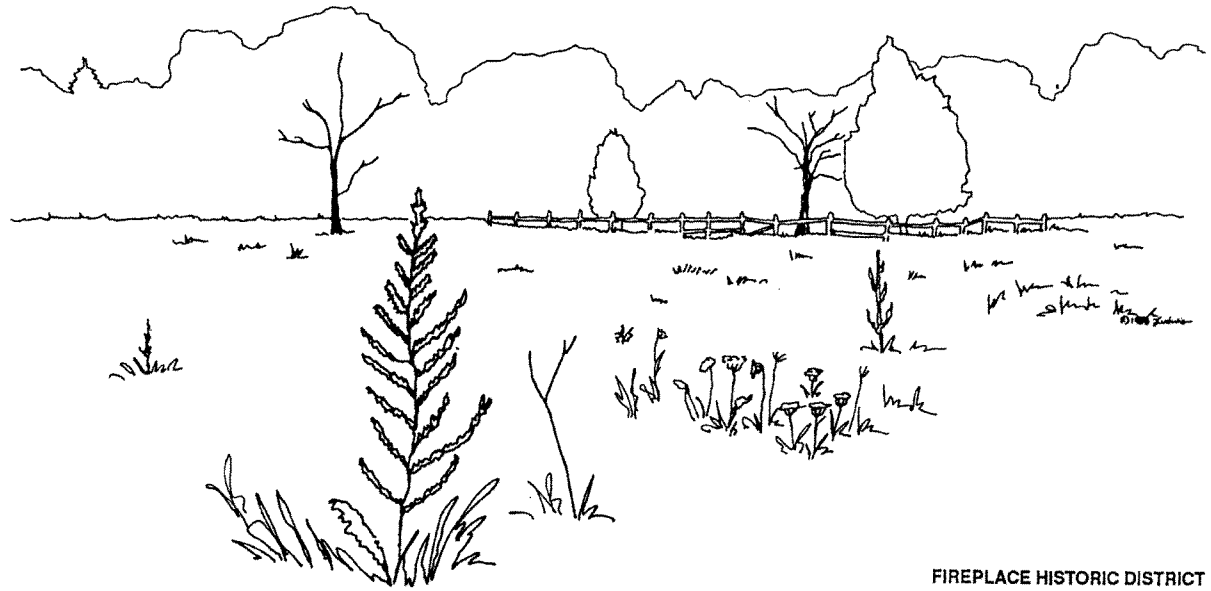
A district is not a museum. District designation does not arrest change in a community or fix it at a point in time. Historic districts contain residences with contemporary needs, businesses of all types and non-profit activities. The aim of the ordinance is to see that change is accommodated in a manner that is compatible with what has been built in the district. Compatible new work need not "look old", but ought to fit with its older neighbors in size, mass and placement on the site.

EAST SETAUKET HISTORIC DISTRICT

An area qualifies as historic by virtue of the age of its buildings and their integrity (remaining substantially as built). This row of worker housing in Setauket is an important part of Brookhaven's history. It is the last vestage of Setauket's rubber manufacturing days.

A district is not a land bank. In Brookhaven's districts the open space surrounding older buildings is an important part of the overall character and density of the areas. When it is lost, some part of the district's integrity is undeniably sacrificed. Be that as it may, the ordinance cannot prohibit the sale and development of private land. The intent is the protection of the local architectural heritage and to that end the ordinance stipulates that all buildings within the district and the transition zones pass through the Historic District Advisory Committee for review. This is not to say that a land bank wouldn't be useful in order to preserve historic areas. It would. But that is a separate issue not addressed by this ordinance.

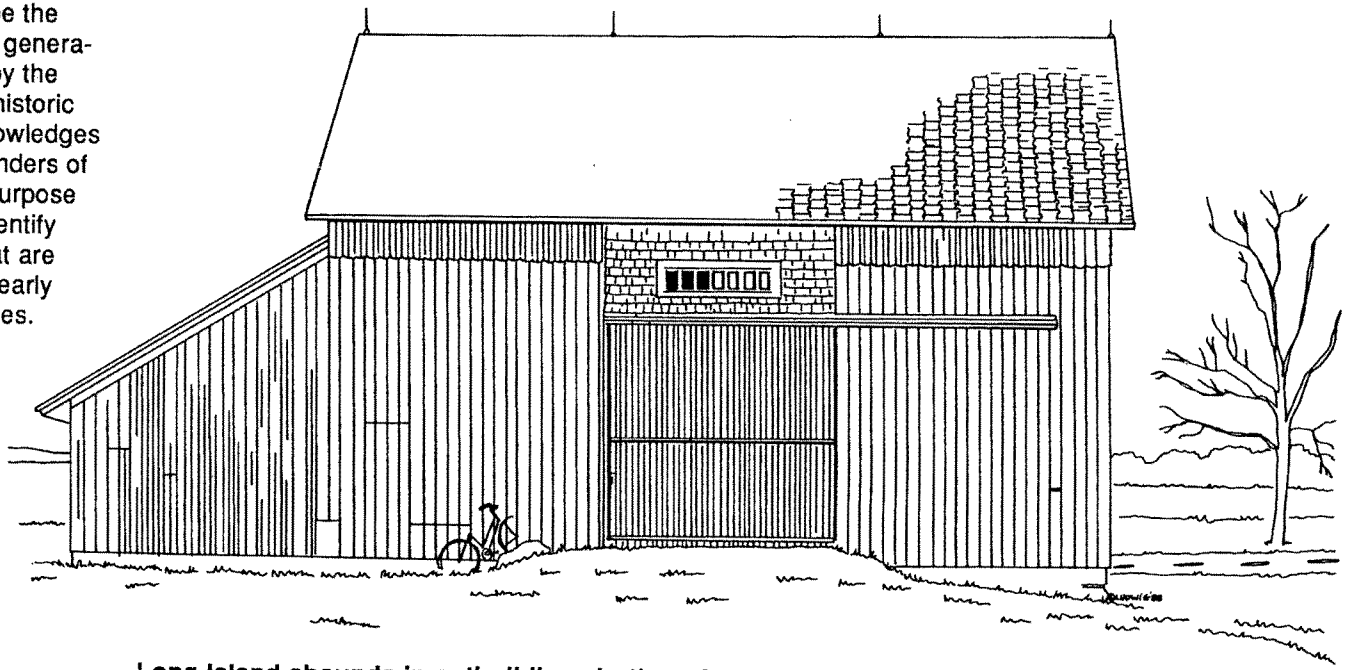
In Brookhaven's districts, open space is an important part of the character of the area. When green space is lost, something of value is sacrificed.



FIREPLACE HISTORIC DISTRICT

CHARACTERISTICS OF BROOKHAVEN'S ARCHITECTURAL DEVELOPMENT

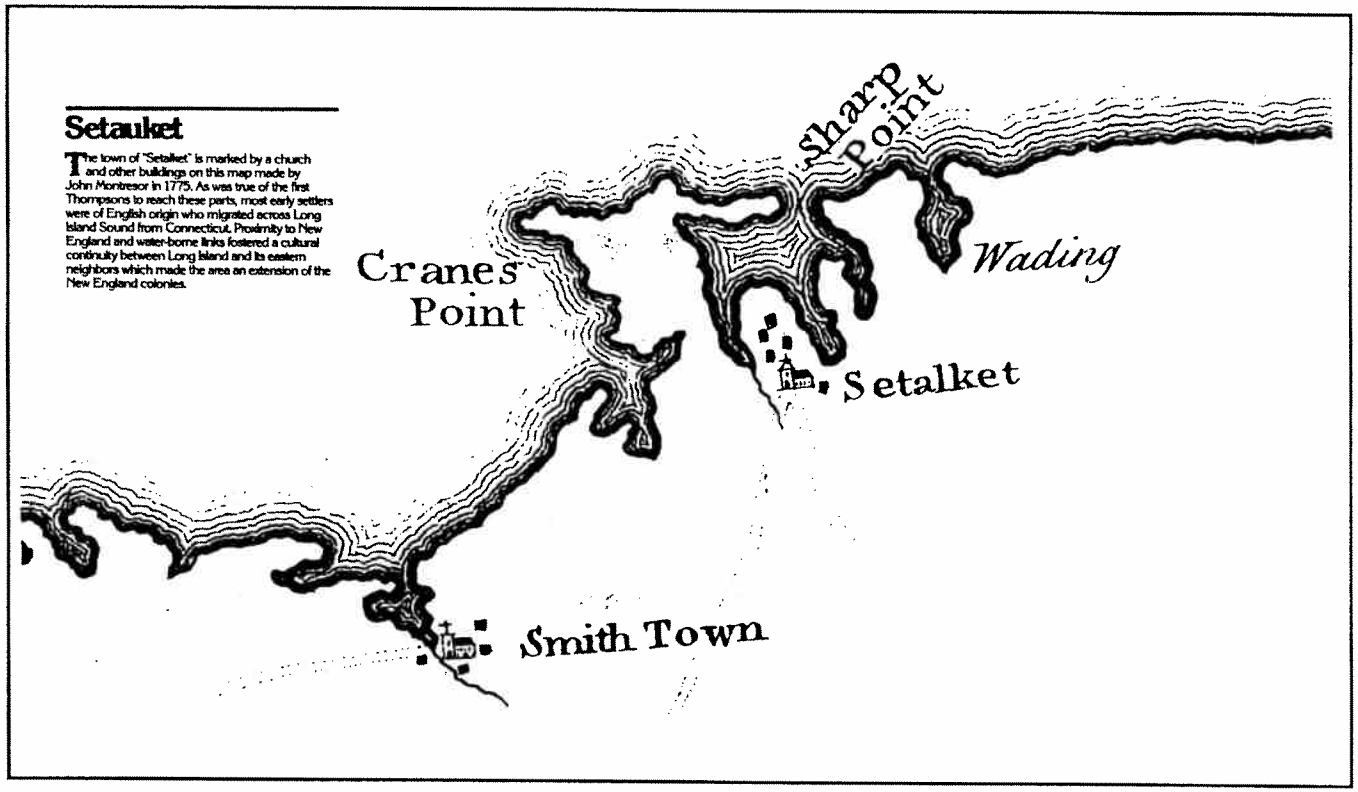
The central purpose of historic district legislation is to preserve and enhance the architectural settings that have evolved throughout our history. Boundaries are drawn carefully to include sites, buildings, objects and environments that are recognized as important historically, either because they are associated with events in the past or because they preserve in architecture or landscape the accurate appearance of generations ago. Designation by the Town Board, under the historic district legislation, acknowledges and protects these reminders of our heritage. With this purpose in mind, it is useful to identify those characteristics that are typical of Brookhaven's early settlements and structures.



Long Island abounds in outbuildings both on farms and in residential areas. These important structures are found in every size and use.

Settlement Patterns. Because eastern Long Island was initially settled by New Englanders in the mid-seventeenth century the Town's earliest hamlets were small concentrations of houses located near a river at a mill—Yaphank and Setauket are examples of this development pattern—or situated at important crossroads, as in Coram.

The earliest homes were usually built in a row on the north side of the road to maximize sunlight and warmth in the principal rooms. The Miller Place Historic District provides good examples of this placement. Later in the eighteenth century, the cluster of houses might be augmented by a meetinghouse. After the Revolutionary War the first one-room schoolhouse appeared.



MAP COURTESY OF SOCIETY FOR THE PRESERVATION OF LONG ISLAND ANTIQUITIES

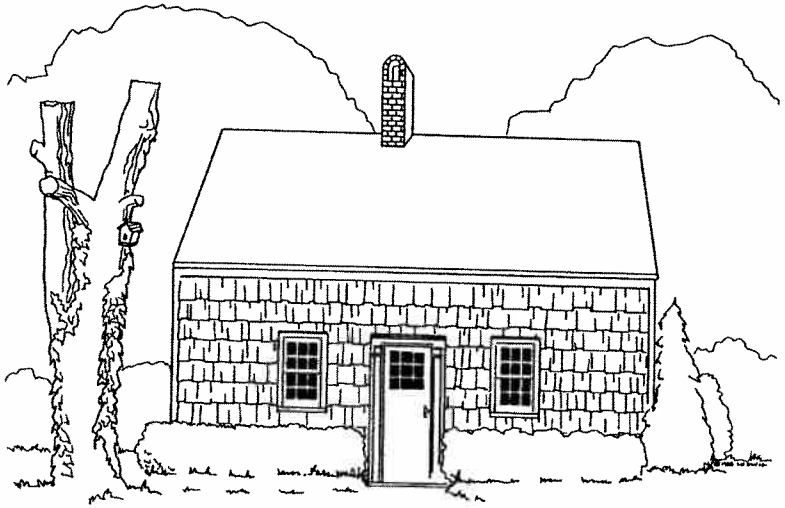
Areas where concentrations of eighteenth and nineteenth century buildings remain should be recognized as districts and preserved.

Individual sites of architectural or historical importance also warrant designation as landmarks and should be preserved either because they survive in significantly changed circumstances (the Lester Davis House in Coram or the Congregational Church at New Village in Centereach) or because they were built as self-sufficient properties (Longwood near Yaphank or the William Floyd Estate in Mastic).

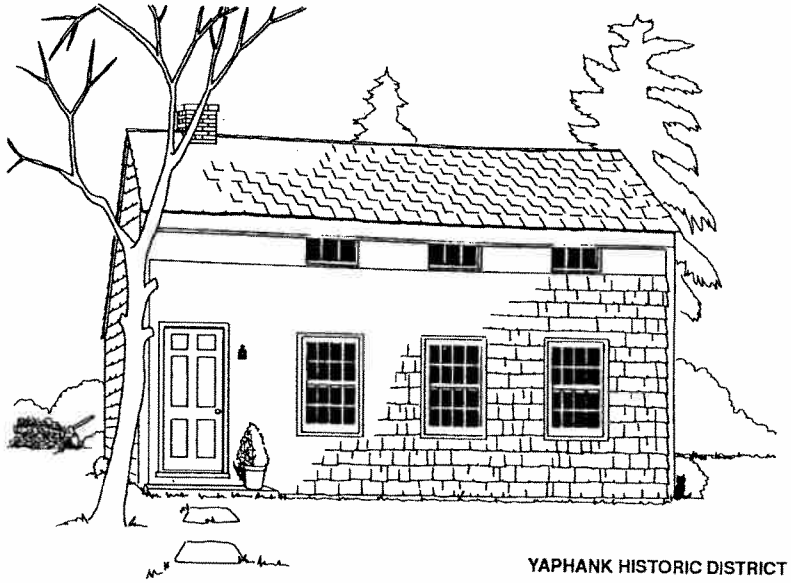
STRONG FAMILY CEMETERY, STRONG'S NECK

TOWN OF BROOKHAVEN HISTORIC LANDMARK

Individual sites of architectural or historical importance warrant protection under historic district legislation and may be designated 'Landmarks.'



Until the mid-nineteenth century, Long Islanders built with what was at hand: local hand-cut wood, a small amount of stone, brick, glass and lime for plaster.



Long Island's rural character perpetuated a small and simple form of domestic design for many generations. This house was built c. 1840, but it could be 100 years earlier.

YAPHANK HISTORIC DISTRICT

Characteristics of Early Buildings. To generalize about 250 years of building in Brookhaven is to risk oversimplification. However, there are several important points to be made. Until the mid-nineteenth century, when the railroad enabled the importation of nearly any desired building material, Long Islanders built with what was at hand: local hand cut wood; a small amount of stone and brick; and for those of means, glass for windows and lime for plaster. Economic circumstances did not permit carved decoration, formal design or extensive landscaping.

Exterior paint was apparently used sparingly and was made on the farm. The resultant dark red house color was not supplanted by white until after the Revolution.

Lack of variety in building materials, the functional nature of what was built and the relatively unso-

phisticated simplicity of the small rural settlements established an early pattern of building style that continued for many generations in central Long Island. It was unaffected by the cultural influences of the growing cities such as New York, Brooklyn and even Sag Harbor, which was stimulated by the whaling industry.

One hundred years ago, Stanford White (1853-1906), the best known architect of his day, lived in nearby St. James. Noting the small, plain and utilitarian shingled houses easily found in every village of Long Island, he praised their simplicity. His local designs reflect his reverence for this heritage, as is evident in his design of All Souls Church.

ALL SOULS CHURCH, 1888

STONY BROOK DISTRICT

One hundred years ago, Stanford White (1853-1906), the best known architect of his day, lived in nearby St. James. Noting the small, plain and utilitarian shingled houses easily found in every village of Long Island, he praised their simplicity. His local designs reflect his reverence for this heritage, as is evident in his design of All Souls Church.

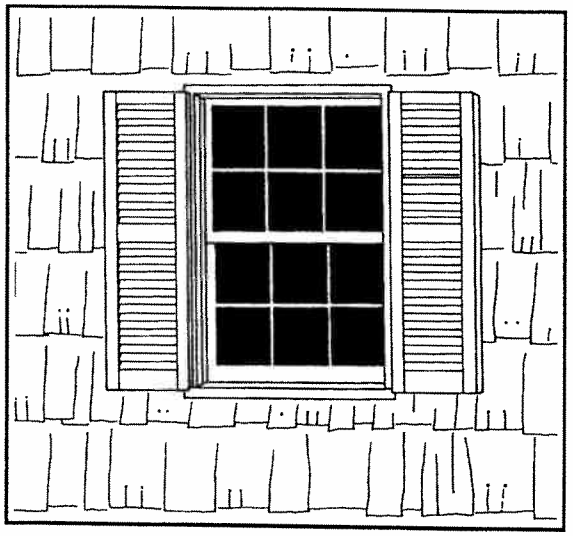
An exception to the rule regarding Brookhaven's nearly universal use of wood for buildings before this century is this fine brick house c. 1845.

MT. SINAI HISTORIC DISTRICT

The repetition of well established building patterns and styles that survived for many years lends a certain identifiable character to a region such as Brookhaven. Elements of local building patterns include:

WOOD FRAME CONSTRUCTION. Houses and other structures were universally built of wood because stone was so scarce and the clay necessary for brick-making was found only in small areas. Wood frame construction was also well known to those who settled here from New England.

THE SHINGLED WALL. Exterior wall shingling was a common way to protect the walls in seventeenth century New England and it was brought at an early date to Long Island. Shingles (not to be confused with cedar shakes) have been a favorite wall covering in Brookhaven and are still very popular.



Exterior wall shingles have been a favorite wall covering in Brookhaven from the earliest times, and are still very popular.

SMALL SCALE OF BUILDINGS. By and large, eastern Long Island homes have always been relatively small. Brookhaven did have some great estates, principally on the south shore, but the villages and hamlets are characterized by small scale houses that blend well with the landscape.

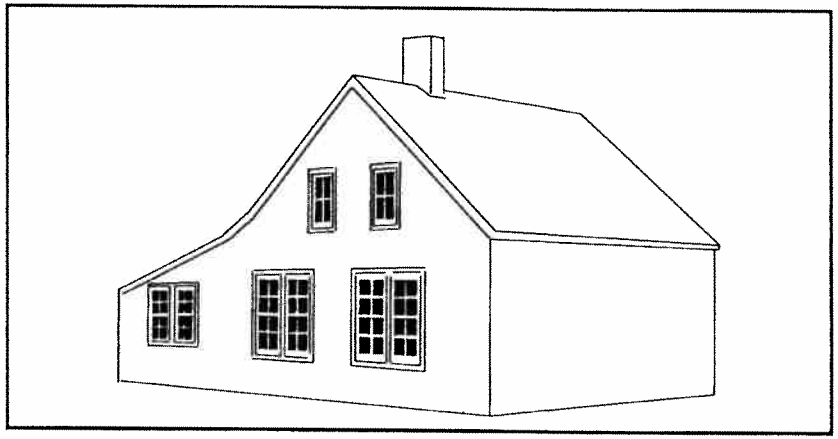
YAPHANK HISTORIC DISTRICT

The villages and hamlets of eastern Long Island are characterized by small scale houses that blend well with the landscape.

Victorian designs are similar to those seen elsewhere in the country, but the houses are often smaller.

INFORMAL DESIGN. Aside from some well-known exceptions, Brookhaven's buildings were not designed by architects until the twentieth century. Even our master builders seem not to have consulted the carpenter guides very often. The result is a pleasing informality of design, irregular fenestration (design and placement of windows and doors), picturesque rooflines, off-center entrances and individual floorplans. In more urban areas such as New York and New England, (where builder's guides were followed), the Georgian formality of the eighteenth century preceded Federal and Greek Revival designs of the early part of the nineteenth century. High style examples of this type of architecture are all but absent in Brookhaven. In their stead we have modified Cape Cod houses, two story, three bay houses, and variations on generally Georgian themes.

Victorian forms are much more similar to those which were being built elsewhere, but still the houses are seldom large. Port Jefferson Village is a fine example of a late nineteenth century community in Suffolk County.

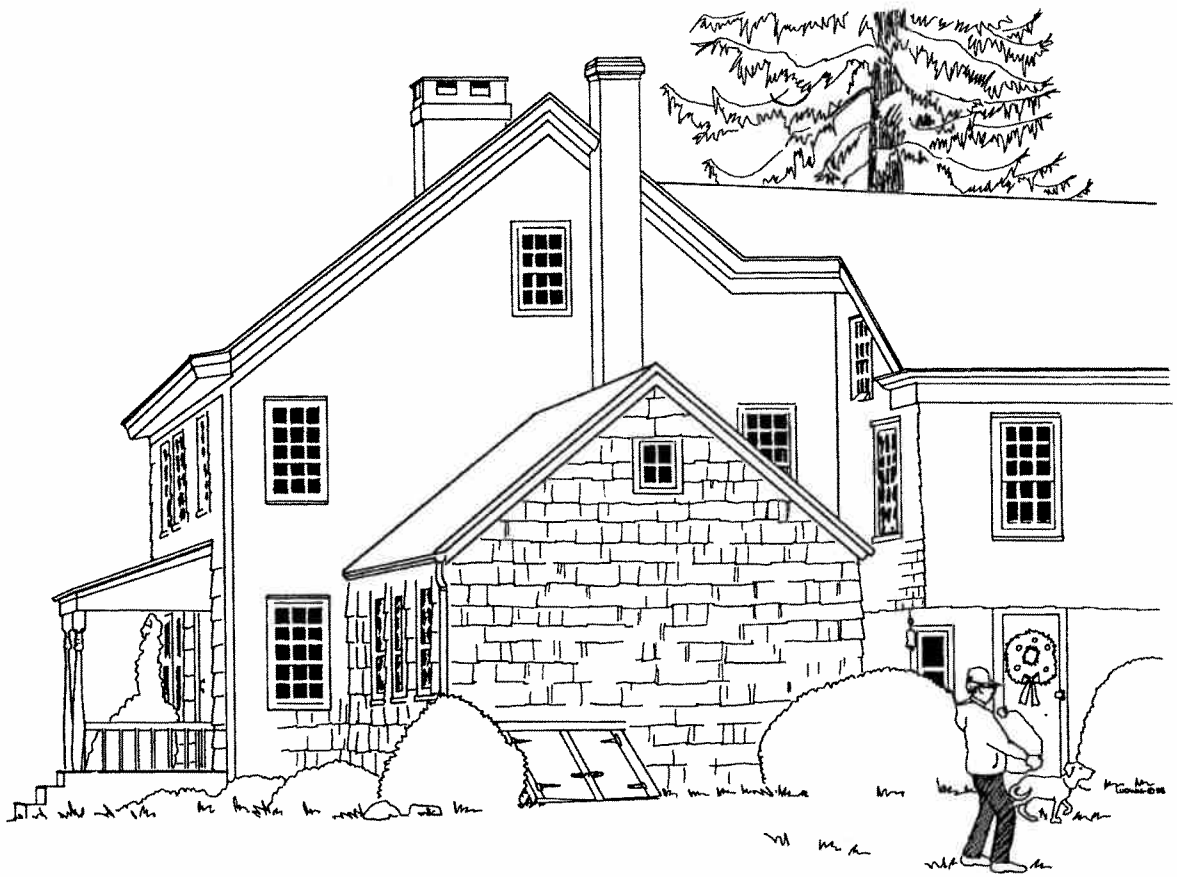


Many of Brookhaven's buildings are pleasingly irregular with picturesque rooflines, off-center entrances and individual floorplans.

BUILDING GROWTH BY ADDITION. Long Islanders have a long tradition of adding on. Frequently the old farmhouse is expanded by addition even when it is over one hundred years old. Often, a substantial house will have smaller wings at the ends (more frequently than at the rear) which reflect, but do not copy, the earlier portion. It is not rare to find that the major portion of a house is the newer part, added harmoniously to an older, smaller wing.

A consequence of addition is that buildings here in Brookhaven have an irregular roofline. Often there is a pattern to this irregularity: large house (two story, three or five bays), smaller wing (one story, three bays with a chimney at the end), and a shed beyond (a one story lean-to against the smaller wing, sharing the chimney).

Roof ridges run parallel to the road. If needs demand, other additions are added to the rear of the structure.



MILLER HOUSE, WADING RIVER

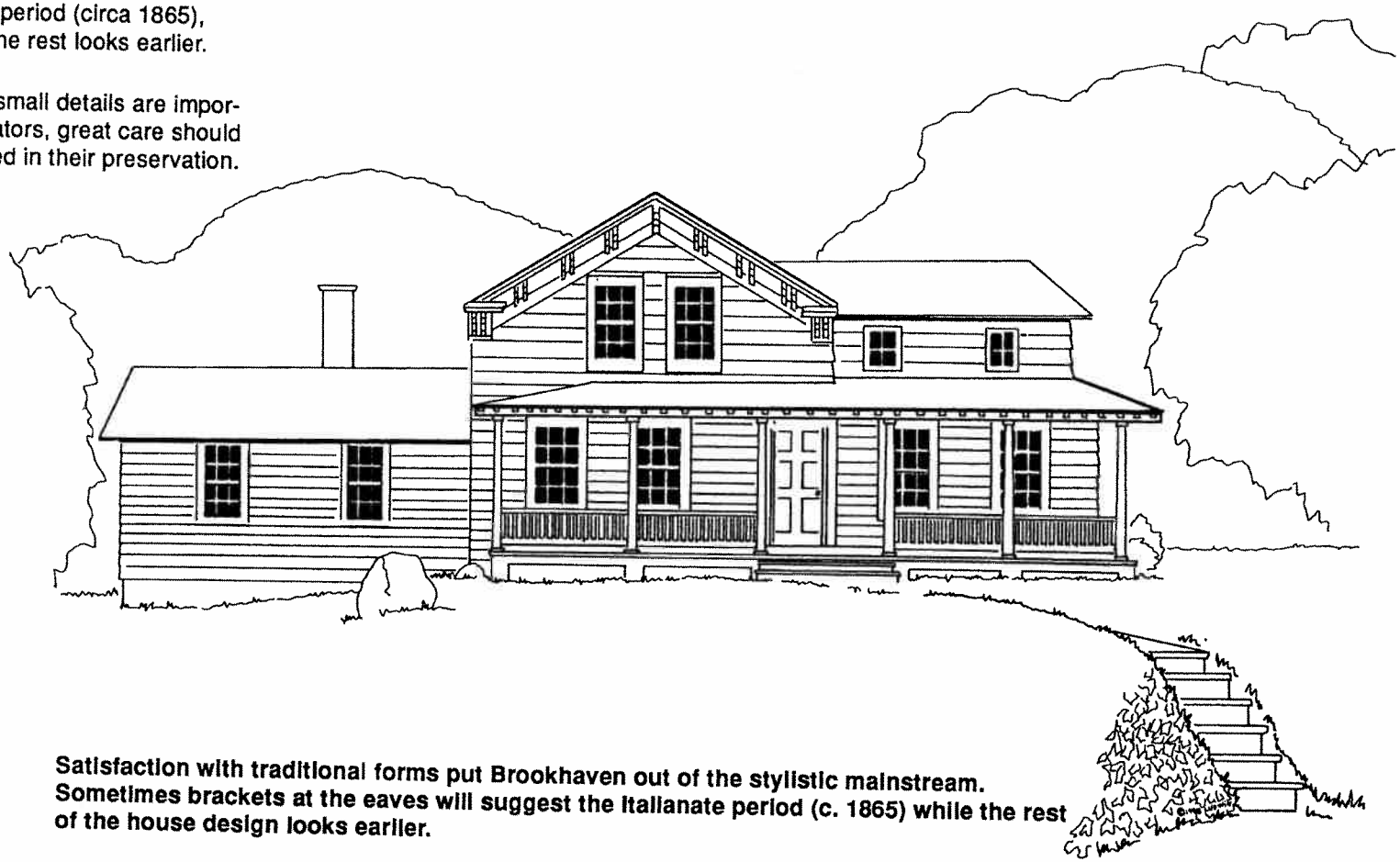
Long Islanders have a long tradition of adding on. It is not rare to find the major portion of a house is the newer part, added harmoniously to an older structure.

In Brookhaven, often the only clue a house gives to its Greek Revival (circa 1830) origins will be found in sidelights at the front door and a wide cornice at the eaves.

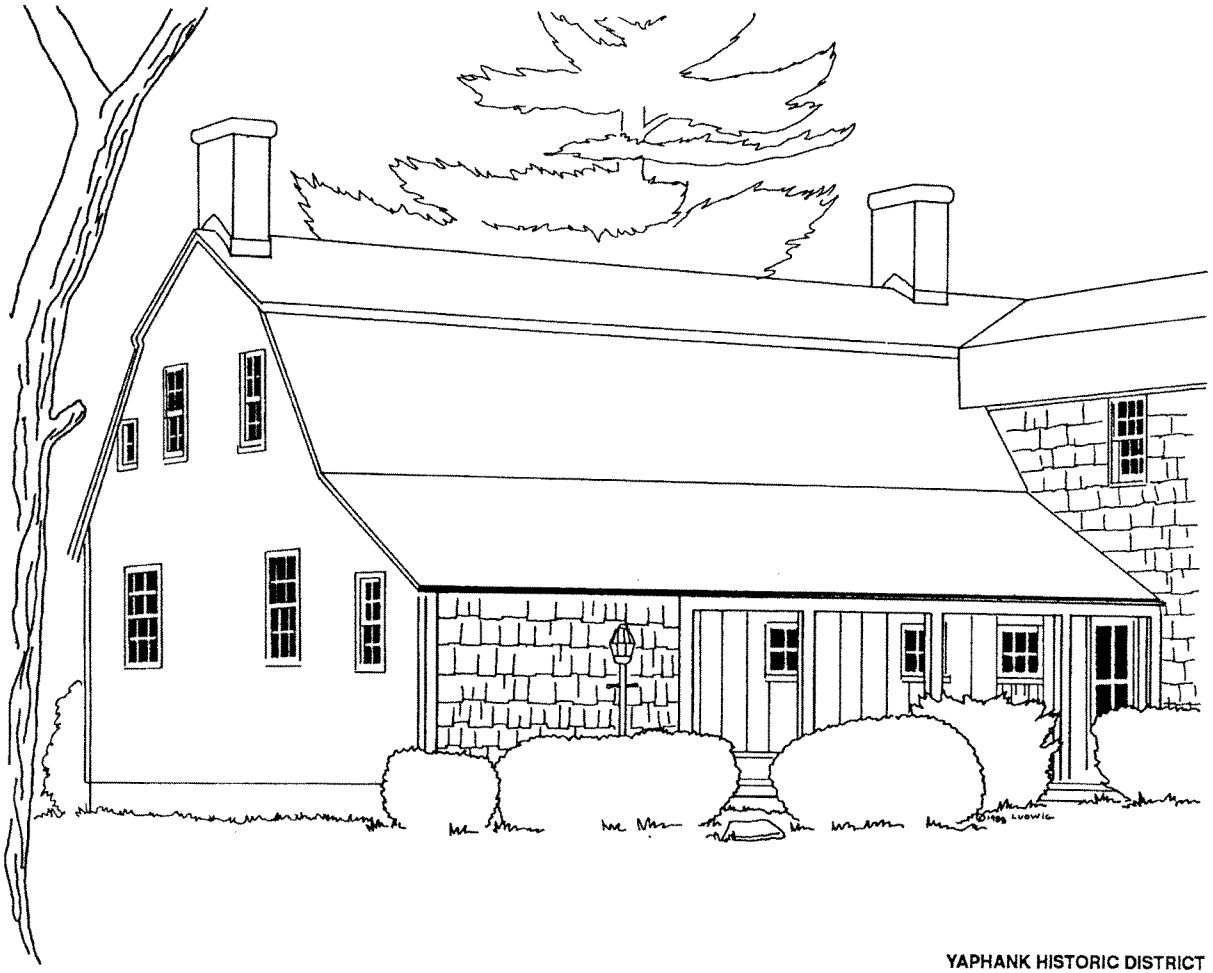
ABSENCE OF NINETEENTH CENTURY STYLES. The major nineteenth century styles are not often seen in Brookhaven, especially in rural areas away from the north and south shorelines. Lack of population growth, viability of the farming lifestyle, economic constriction and a satisfaction with traditional forms put Brookhaven out of the stylistic mainstream. Often the only

clue a house gives to its Greek Revival (circa 1830) origins will be found in sidelights at the front door and a wide cornice at the eaves. Sometimes brackets at the eaves will suggest the Italianate period (circa 1865), while all the rest looks earlier.

Because small details are important indicators, great care should be invested in their preservation.



Satisfaction with traditional forms put Brookhaven out of the stylistic mainstream. Sometimes brackets at the eaves will suggest the Italianate period (c. 1865) while the rest of the house design looks earlier.



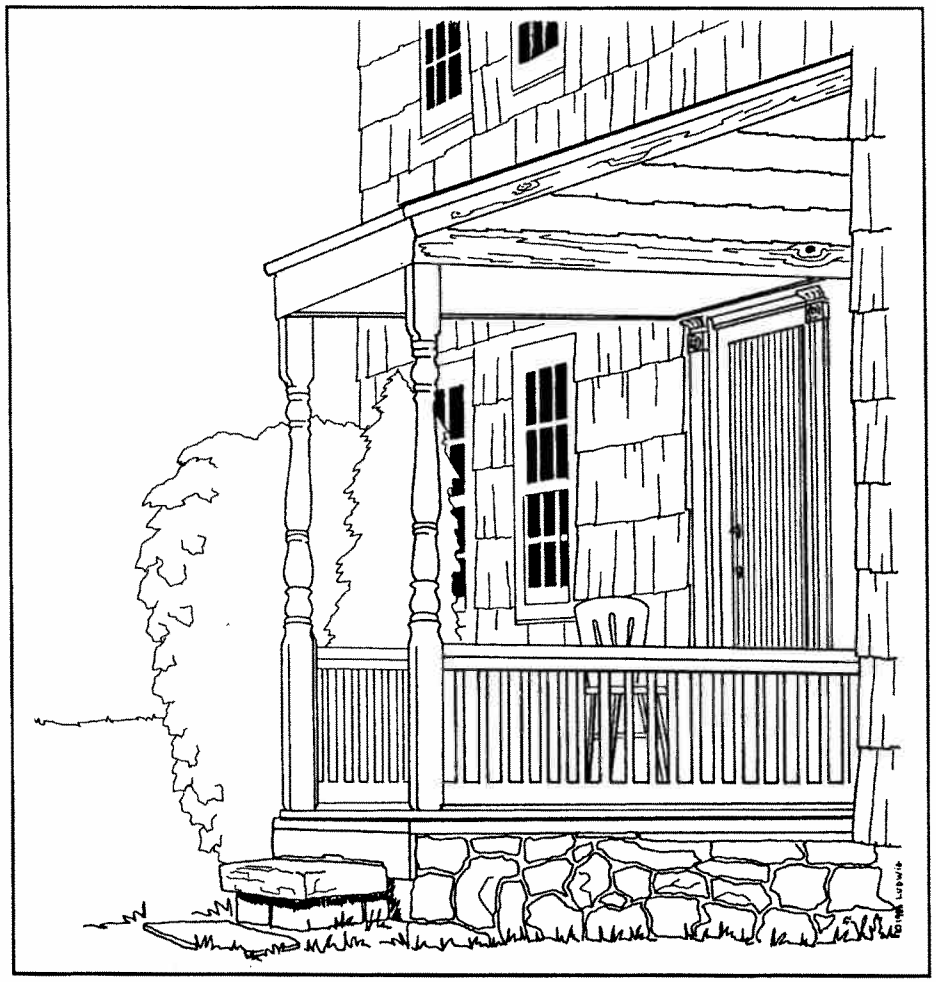
YAPHANK HISTORIC DISTRICT

Chimneys were always built inside the walls to conserve heat. Early Long Island houses often had center chimneys, but the end chimney was widely used as well.

CHIMNEYS INSIDE THE WALLS. Chimneys in the northern states stand inside the walls in order to conserve heat and they should be restored in that manner. On Long Island, cultural and stylistic preferences favored a central chimney in some cases and in others, end chimneys. Sometimes both are seen in the same house.

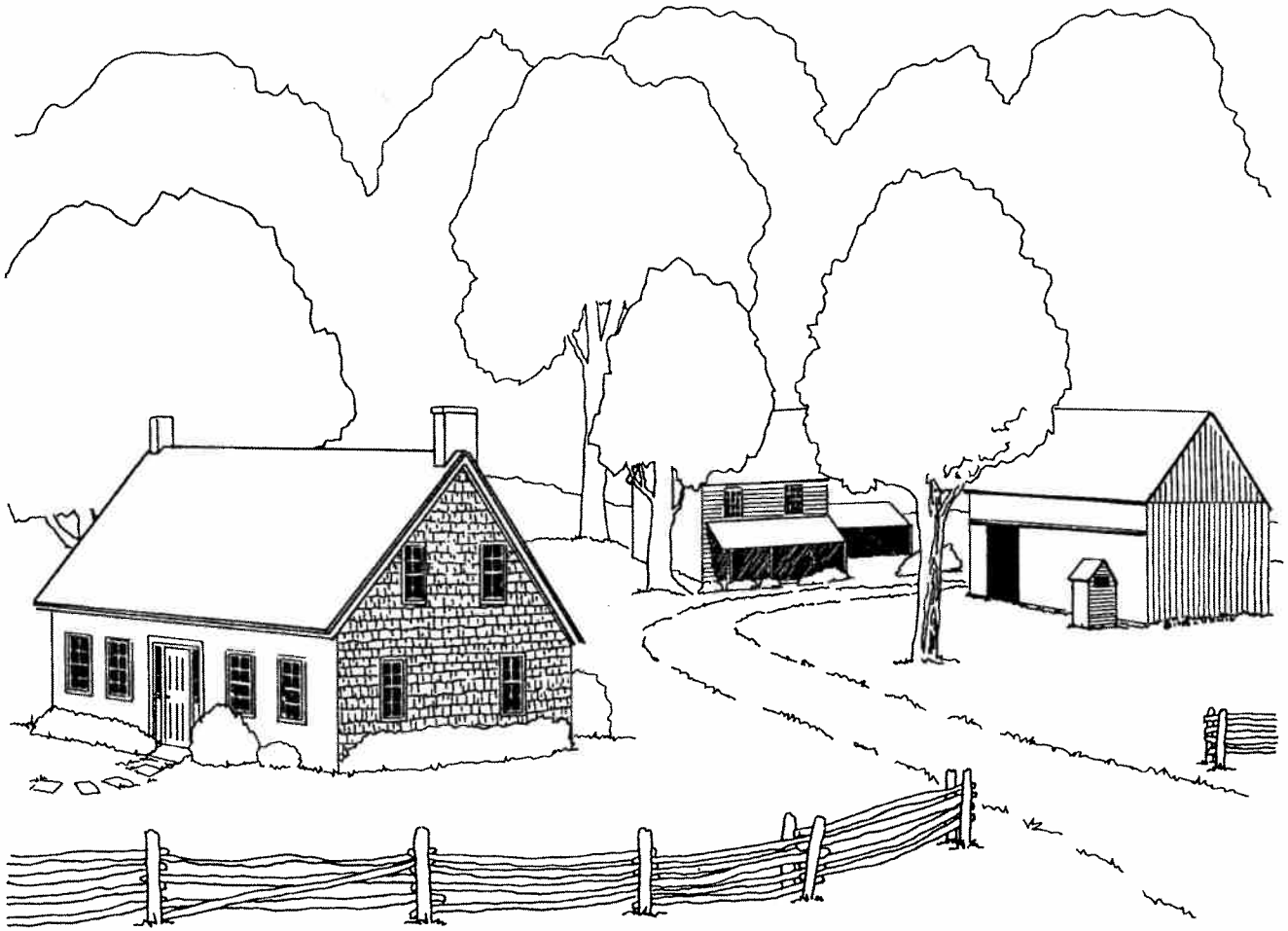
TYPICAL LONG ISLAND ENTRY. The terminology for 'entry,' 'porch,' 'stoop,' etc., is as endless as the object described. For houses built before circa 1860 there was a favored local front entry consisting of a small roof over the front door supported by two or four porch posts. Usually these are slender, octagonal posts set upon a wood stoop or porch floor, finished with a handrail at each side and a bench or two. One or two steps lead to the entry.

This porch type was noted by local architects in the early twentieth century and revived on many Colonial Revival homes built on Long Island.



The typical Long Island entry, consisting of a small roof over the front door supported by slender posts set upon a wood porch floor, finished with a handrail at each side,...

... first seen in the mid-1700s, is still popular on new houses.



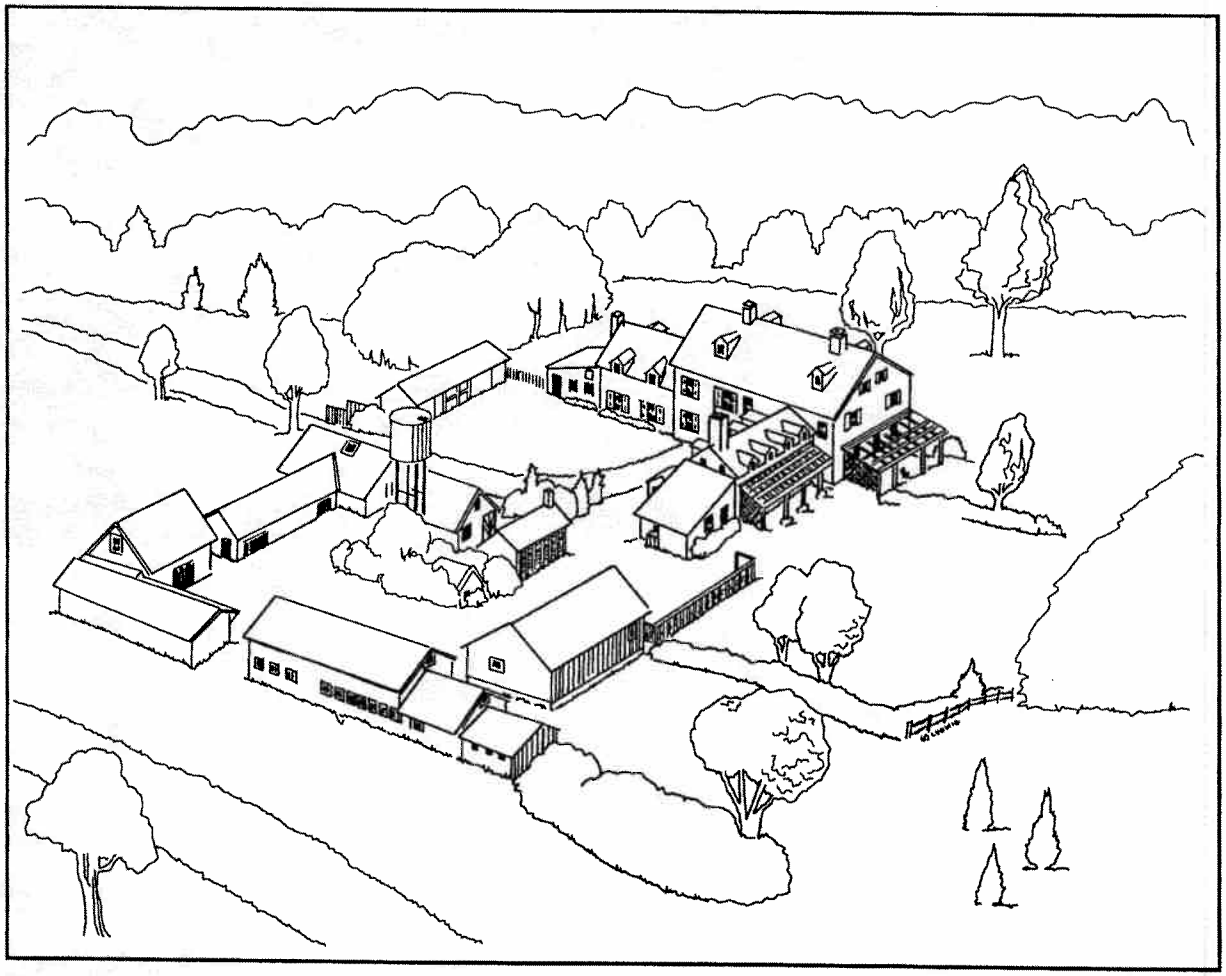
EAST SETAUKET HISTORIC DISTRICT

Long Island abounds in outbuildings. Many survive on what are now residential parcels. These structures are an important historical element that also lends visual interest to the districts.

OUTBUILDINGS ARE AN IMPORTANT FEATURE. Long Island abounds in small outbuildings on farms and in residential areas. Unfortunately they are now hard to find in developed areas.

These important structures are found in every size and use. Most frequently they are one story, gable-roofed buildings with a door and a window or two in the side wall. They may have begun as a shop, carriage shed, outside kitchen, ice house or laundry, but their uses have evolved.

A typical farm had up to a dozen outbuildings ranging from small sheds to barns and including a wellhouse, stable, corncrib, smokehouse, and washhouse. The preservation of these small buildings is often not seen as important in the preservation of a site, but the loss of these small buildings diminishes the integrity of the historic area. They reveal a great deal about how a property was used in the past.



OLD MASTIC HISTORIC DISTRICT

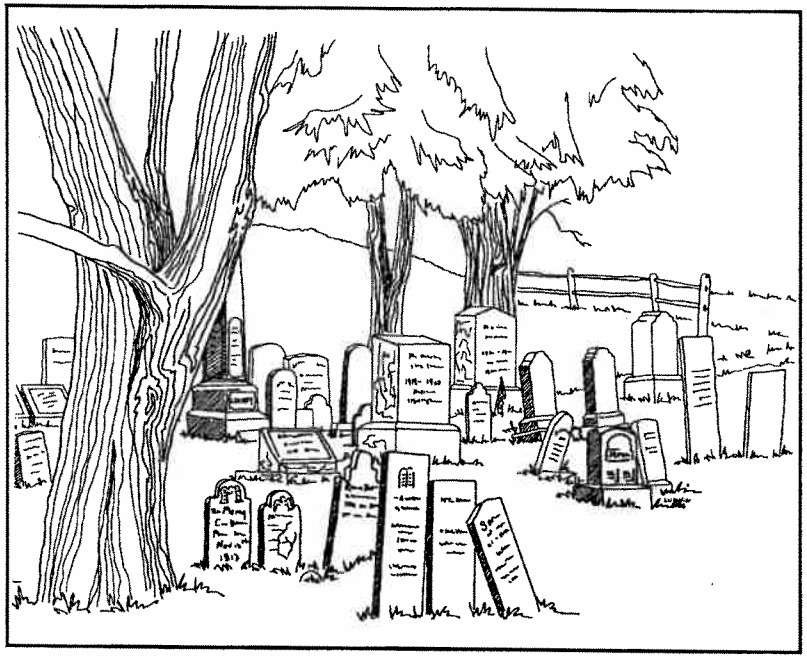
The survival of small outbuildings is important to the preservation of historic landscapes. A typical farm had up to a dozen small sheds and barns.

GUIDELINES FOR NEW BUILDINGS AND ADDITIONS

This section delineates three types of new construction:

- the addition to an existing structure within a historic district
- new construction on a site which is surrounded by pre-existing structures
- self-contained subdivision plans for open land within a district.

The guidelines for renovation listed elsewhere in this handbook (see "Guidelines for Renovation of Existing Buildings") can, in large measure, be applied here. The following general guidelines also apply to all three circumstances.



MOUNT SINAI HISTORIC DISTRICT

Burial grounds, on open sites within a district, need to be preserved and buffered with natural vegetation.

Review of an Historic Landmark or Project Within a District. The goal of the ordinance and of the review committee it established is to facilitate a harmony between what is proposed and that which exists, without stifling the architectural evolution of the community. The HDAC has consistently encouraged compatible modern design within the historic district. Reproduction of previous designs needs no encouragement. In fact, the Committee strongly advises against grossly incompatible plans, colonial cliches, or standardized designs that bear no relation to the site in question. In other words, there is no design or style of building that is automatically acceptable or unacceptable. Each district is distinct, each setting individual. And it is out of respect for this that the Committee avoids hard and fast rules, preferring to consider each case in its unique context.

Therefore, these guidelines serve as a groundwork for direction and discussion. It is advisable to bring projects in for preliminary review as early in the building process as possible.

Construction On Open Sites. The visual unity of the district after the site plan or subdivision has been completed is of utmost importance and it can be maintained by the retention of natural features and architectural continuity. Particular attention will be paid to spatial relationships–that is: size, siting, scale, and mass in relation to usually adjacent elements, details and construction materials. Efforts to preserve existing features such as slopes, tree canopy, and natural drainage patterns, as well as existing road treatment, will be important.

Particular attention should be given to the existence of old family burying grounds on open sites within the districts. These should be avoided as building sites. Most were used between about 1780 and 1850 and are perhaps now overgrown and forgotten, but they should be protected by some planting buffer when construction is contemplated in the area.

If a project is separate and not visible from the existing buildings or the public right of way,

then this separation should be maintained by means of vegetation as a buffer. Landscaping plans may be required. Large scale projects (subdivisions, shopping malls) may take on a character of their own and in such cases it is important that the new development achieve a coherence or consistency of scale, materials, mass and design treatment in relation to the visually adjacent area. Large scale projects need not, however, be bound by standards as specific as may be required for new work that is proposed within an existing historic streetscape.

New Construction or Building Additions Within Historic Areas. A new house or building has its own internal integrity, but in an historic district its exterior must also be integrated into the setting and the history that surrounds it. The HDAC, while committed to maintaining the character of the districts, recognizes that time and architectural design continue. New buildings (and additions to existing structures) need not copy the details of the old style. They may be of modern design as long as they harmonize–that is, fit in by conforming to the spacing, massing

DYER'S NECK HISTORIC DISTRICT

A district does not prohibit modern design. New construction should maintain the scale, mass, design elements and texture of the surroundings. Here a new house (on the left) reinforces the form and mass, though not the details, of the house on the right.

OLD SETAUKET HISTORIC DISTRICT

New construction in older neighborhoods should be relatively similar in size. Here, the effect of a higher new house (on the right) is mitigated by a deeper front yard.

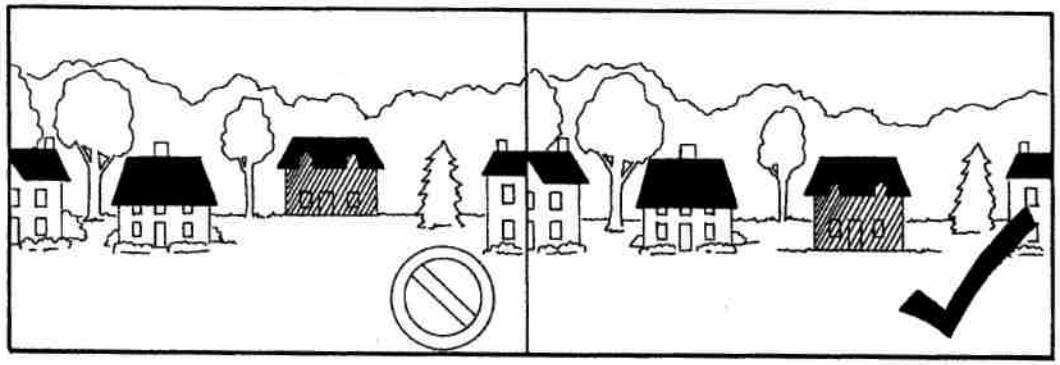
and proportions of that which precedes them. What follows are suggestions for planning a harmonious addition to an older building or designing a new building so that it blends with its neighbors.

SPACING. The siting of buildings along the street should not be disrupted by new construction. The rhythm that has been established by previous structures needs to be maintained.

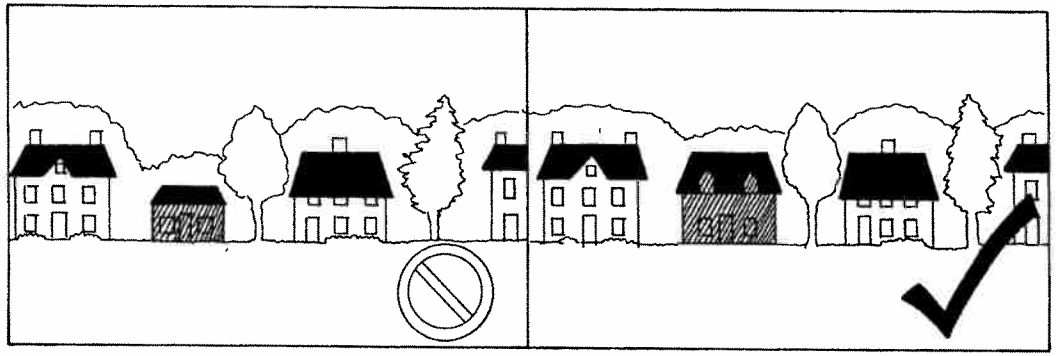
MASSING. The relative size of a proposed building should conform to that of its older neighbors. Height similarity is especially critical, as is width. These factors interrelate and can mitigate one another. For example, if proposed height is too great, a deeper front yard setback may solve the problem, providing it does not seriously disrupt the siting rhythm on the street.

SPACING

The siting of buildings along the street should not be disrupted by new construction.

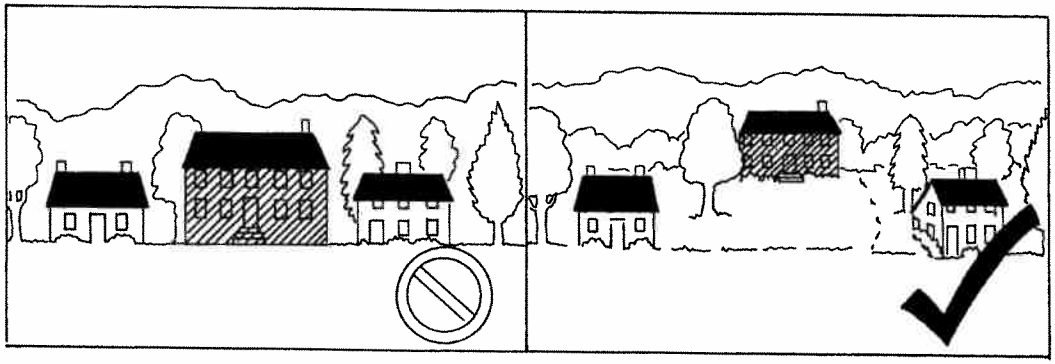


The rhythm that has been established by previous structures needs to be maintained.



MASSING

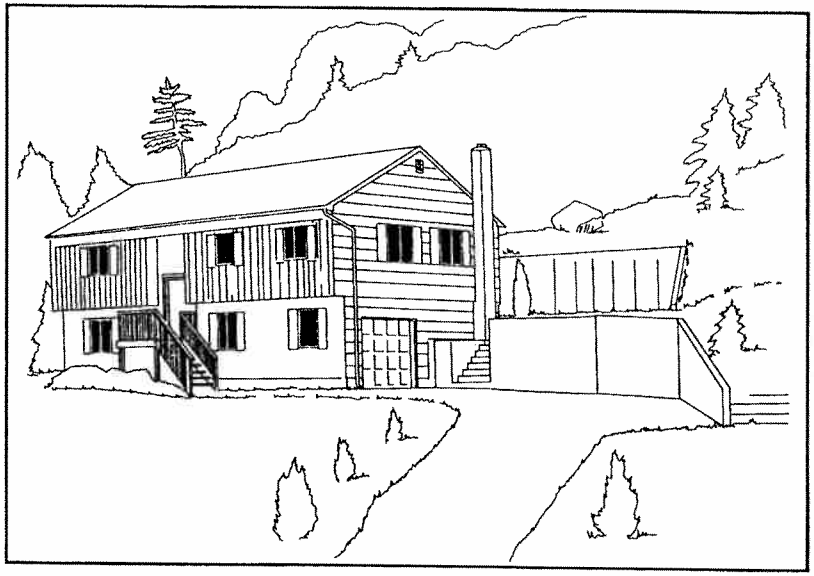
The relative size of a proposed building should conform to its older neighbors.



If proposed height is too great, a deeper front yard setback may solve the problem providing it does not seriously disrupt street siting rhythm.

Most older buildings have complex shapes resulting from the initial small scale of the design and the series of modest additions over the years which lend a complex and picturesque appearance .

SETBACKS. Consideration should be given to the location of a new building on its site relative to the position of the usually adjacent dwellings. Its position on the lot should be similar to that of its older neighbors. A variance may be needed to insure proper siting. In all cases, the placement of the building should respect existing topography and vegetation. This often requires the preparation of specific building plans. Generic building designs cannot usually be made to accommodate the requirements of a specific historic district site, especially with regard to topography, vegetation, and surrounding buildings.



Standardized building designs cannot usually be made to accomodate a specific historic district site.

PROPORTION AND FORM.
Most older buildings have complex shapes resulting from the initial small scale of the design and the series of modest additions over the years which lend a complex and picturesque appearance to traditional Long Island buildings. But the organizing guideline is good proportion: the regular repetition of certain units of measure on a building's facade. (For example the pitch of the roof of a well-designed Greek Revival building is less than 30°, and the height of the gable is related to the height of the whole building.)

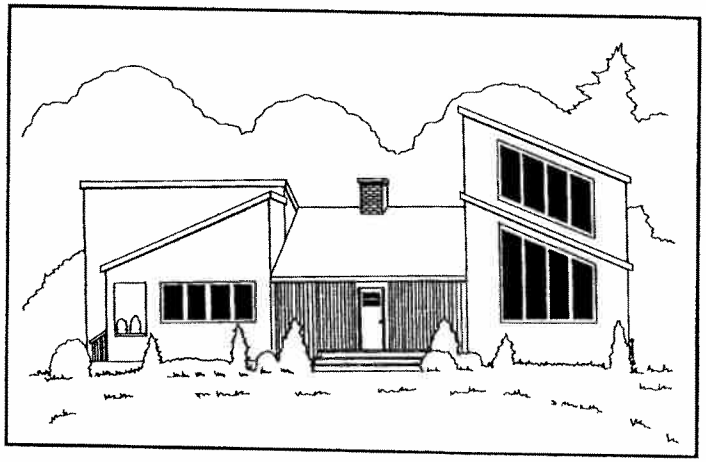
FIREPLACE HISTORIC DISTRICT

Repetition of geometric shapes in larger and smaller sizes creates a composition that is visually satisfying.

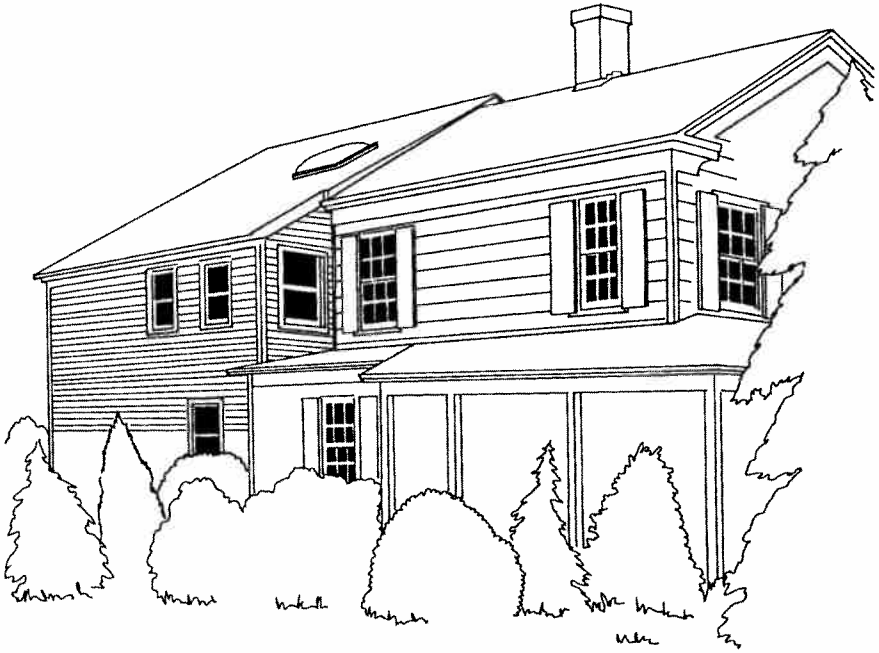
FIREPLACE HISTORIC DISTRICT

A large new [contemporary addition] wing (on left) is distinctly modern. It does not distract from the older house because it is not visible from the primary facade, and it does not alter the original work. Similar siding gives continuity.

Proportion also includes repetition of geometric shapes, usually rectangular, in larger and smaller sizes. (For example, the width and height of one window pane is proportionally similar to the width and height of the whole window.) Many buildings repeat certain measures and shapes many times over, and these interrelationships create a composition that is visually satisfying. New construction should avoid large, flat expanses of wall or roof surface.

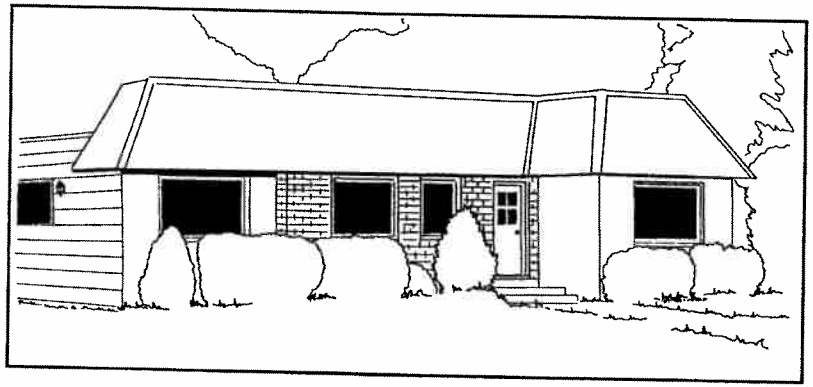


New construction should avoid large, flat expanses of wall or roof surface.



This addition (on left side of the illustration) is not successfully integrated with the older building. Window shapes, roof angle, siding width and building materials are all at variance with the original, and the result is not pleasing to the eye.

This contemporary addition (on right side of the illustration) blends harmoniously with the earlier structure. Note the continuation of the unusual siding, replication of the wide cornice, and similar windows. By setting the roofline at right angles to the main house, its lower pitch is unnoticed.



New work should avoid flat rooflines, false mansards (as here) and other exotic shapes.

ROOFS. While roofs in Brookhaven are usually gabled (two roof surfaces meeting at a ridge), pitch (steepness) varies greatly depending upon the size and age of the building. New work should avoid flat rooflines, false mansards (steep roofs applied to building walls; they are non-functional), domes, etc. The amount of roof visible on the elevation generally should not exceed half the height.

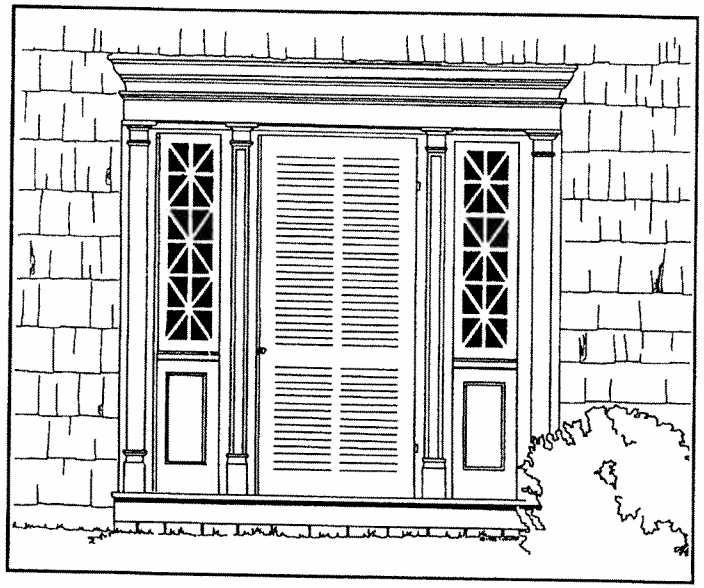
Roofing materials should be consistent over an entire surface and texture should be subtle. Skylights and solar collector panels can detract from the appearance and should be handled with care, particularly on front elevations.

This mid-nineteenth century Cape Cod style house has been given a subordinate wing. The mass and set back location are satisfactory, but the large deck, over-scale windows and doors, and incompatible roof treatment with skylight make the addition inharmonious and awkward.

WINDOWS AND DOORS. A preponderance of a particular window style, such as the early double hung sash, six light (panes of glass) over six, one width to one-and-a-half in height, can give visual continuity to a district. However, window design has evolved and different examples of this evolution appear throughout each district. The number of panes per window decreased through time as technology allowed for the creation of larger panes. A recent desire to imitate early styles has created a proliferation of even smaller-paned, modern windows. All of this gives each district character. But within a given building, there is an identifiable sense of proportion and this is what is most important.

Doors have a way of becoming the primary feature and as such deserve attention and emphasis, which often takes the form of side lights, overhang or porch, or attractive panelling. Flat surfaced doors do not add to an older home. It is helpful if the storm and screen doors do not obscure the main door.

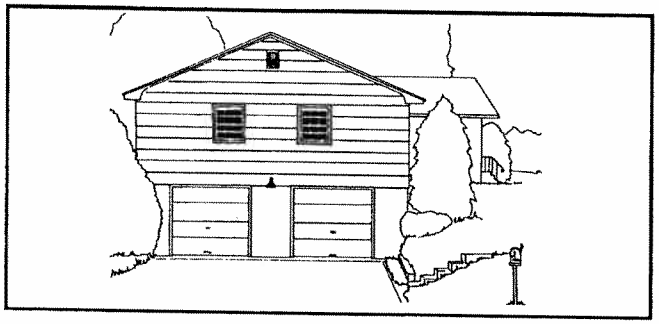
Some houses have unusual window patterns, but because balance and proportion are achieved, symmetry is not necessary.



Doors are often the primary feature of attention and are emphasized by sidelights, overhang, porch, or attractive panelling.

In older homes, garages are usually separate structures, either converted outbuildings or built detached in a similar style.

GARAGE DOORS. Because of the size of garage doors in relation to the overall design of the house, they are worthy of separate note. In older homes in the districts, garages are usually separate structures – either converted outbuildings or garages built separately on the lot. But in new construction the trend is for attached garages facing the street, which cause the scale of elements on the front facade to be significantly altered and results in a jarring visual impact. Therefore, it is recommended that garage doors be set on the side or rear of the structure or mitigated in some way.



In new construction, the trend is for attached garages facing the street. When they are the dominant element, the result is a jarring visual impact.

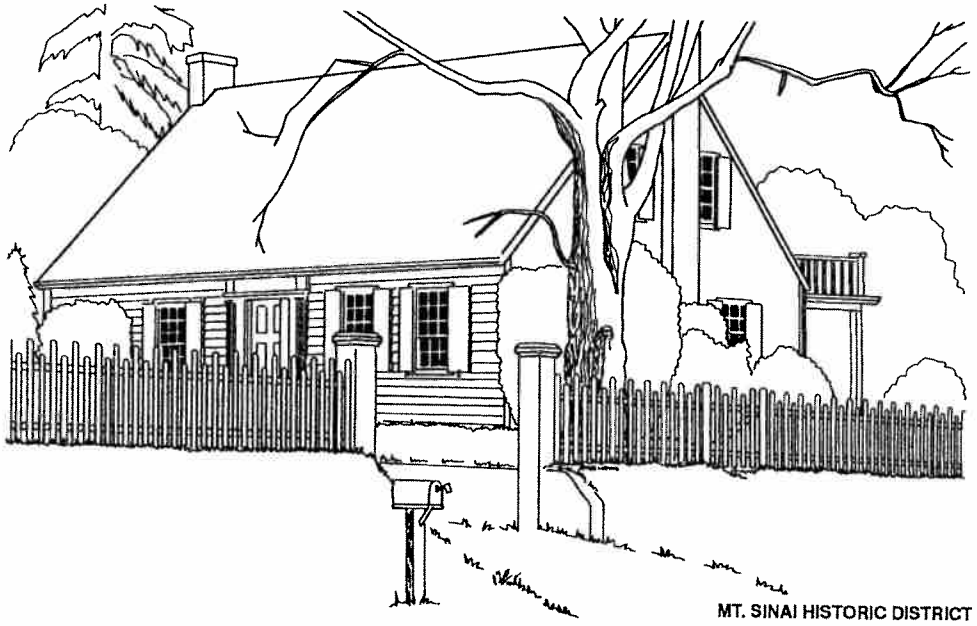
It is recommended that garage doors be set on the side or rear of the house.

GUIDELINES FOR RESPECTING THE LANDSCAPE

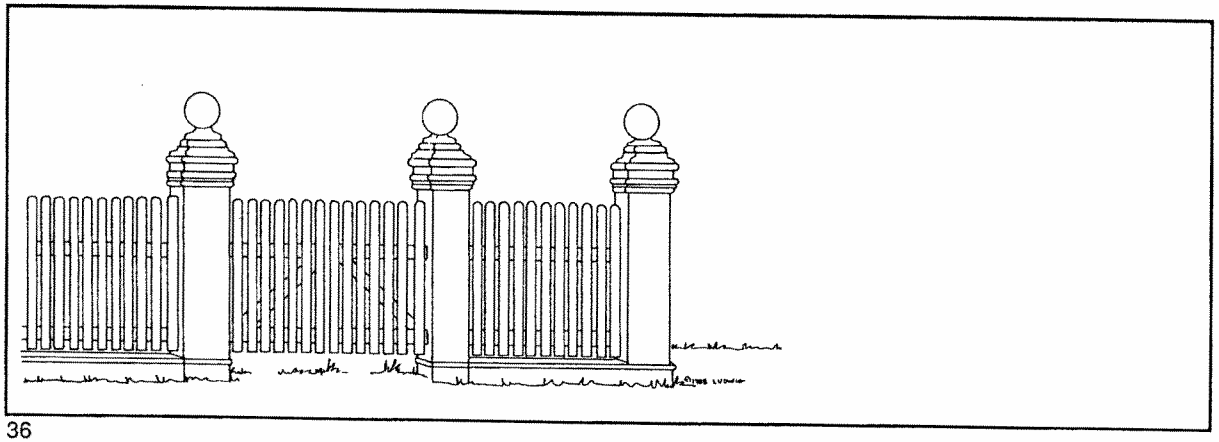
Older residential areas are characterized by an abundance of shade trees, and this element lends coherence and reflects a pride of place. Because new development necessarily disturbs natural planting patterns, special care must be taken when siting an addition or new construction. When the new construction appears to have always been a part of the environment, the landscaping plan is successful.

OLD SETAUKET HISTORIC DISTRICT

Older residential areas are characterized by an abundance of shade trees, which lends coherence and reflects a pride of place.



Long settled properties frequently have well-defined borders. The preferred fencing in 19th century landscaping was the picket fence. Gates and posts reflected the style of the house and the taste of the owners.



TREE CANOPY. The cover provided by trees planted years ago warrants preservation and can do more than any other landscape element to help new work fit into an established environment.

BORDERS. Fences, curbs, and sidewalks are elements that create visual borders. Long settled properties frequently have well defined borders and in Brookhaven's districts these are mostly seen in fencing. The preferred fencing in 19th century landscaping, especially along the front border, was the picket fence with a horizontal rail along the bottom. Gates and posts reflected the style of the house and the taste of the owners.

Where early fences survive, we encourage their preservation. The restoration of fencing improves an older streetscape. In areas of low building density, curbs and concrete sidewalks do not contribute in a positive way to the traditional appearance of an area.

Front entrance walks of crushed oyster shells or bricks set without mortar are preferred to the usual concrete walk.

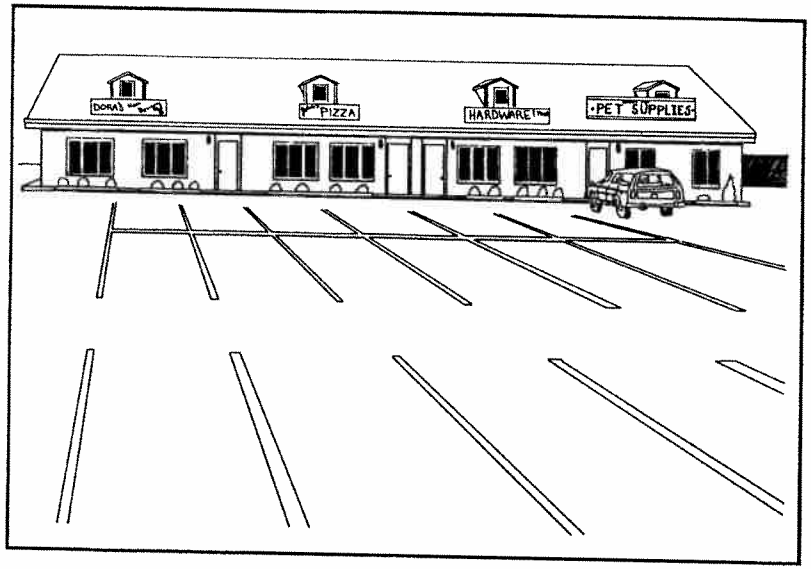
PARKING AREAS. Off-street parking spaces can be arranged in such a way as to reduce the impact of automobiles on the appearance of historic areas.

In order to accomplish this, private parking areas need to be blocked from view by plantings or set in the rear yard. Small, separate garages located behind the main structure are not only the best visual solution, they are in keeping with the pattern of outbuildings in the districts.

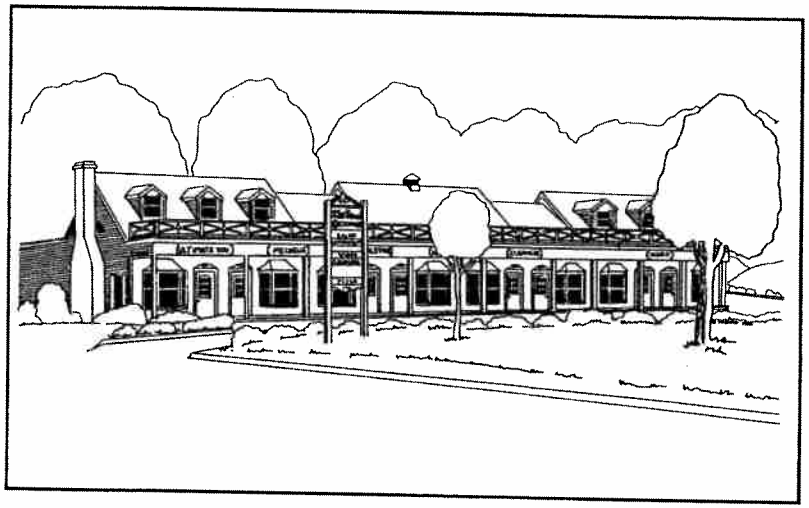
Public parking areas for business use can be composed of several smaller units as opposed to one large, open area. Plantings between areas preserve the tree canopy and minimize the large scale interruptions that parking fields pose. Further attention to plantings, low walls or other visual buffers mitigate the disruption of parking lots.

Pedestrian walkways can be of brick, stone, gravel, crushed shell, or asphalt but must blend in a way that they do not become the visual focus. Appropriate landscaping can further ease the impact.

SIGNAGE. Signs need to be unobtrusive, simple and easily read. They are best when constructed from natural materials such as wood. Internal illumination is strongly discouraged. Signs must conform to the Town sign ordinance and require a permit. Placement, design, proportion and scale will be considered in making recommendations on signs in the districts.



Parking areas for business should not be one large open space.

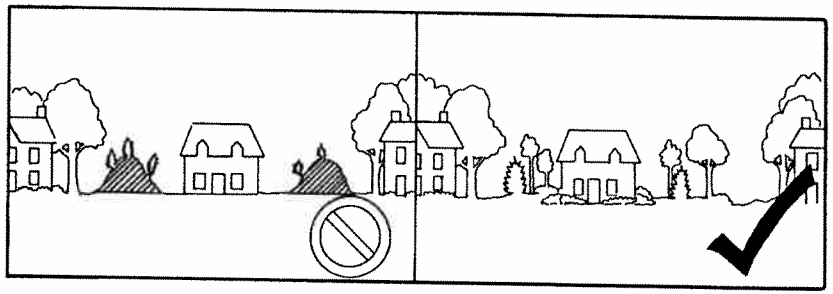


Parking areas should be blocked from view by plantings, low walls, or other visual buffers. Good design, characterized by a sense of proportion and reflection of design elements common to the district, adds dimension. Finally, the use of natural materials and less intrusive signs completes the setting.

LANDSCAPE

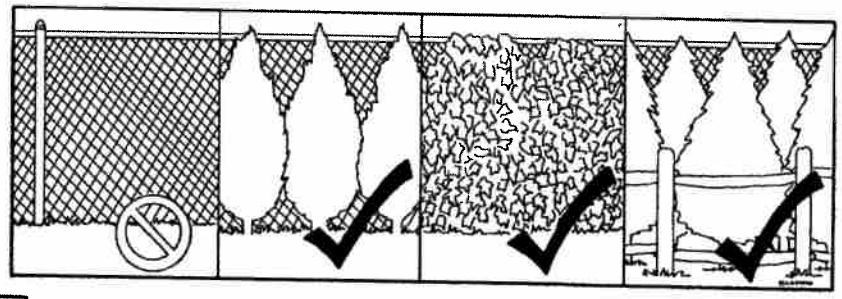
Berms are unnatural and lend an artificial visual appearance to an area.

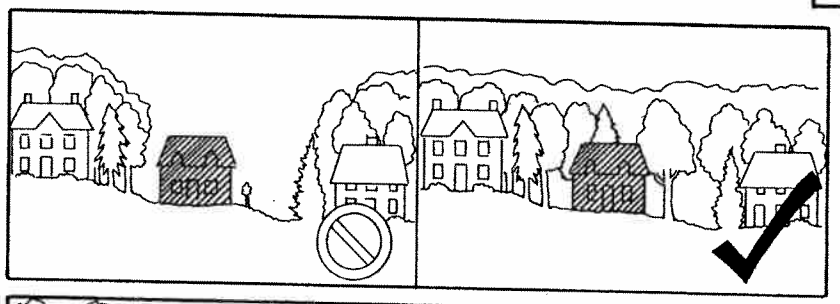
When the new construction appears to have always been a part of the environment, the landscaping plan is successful.



BORDERS

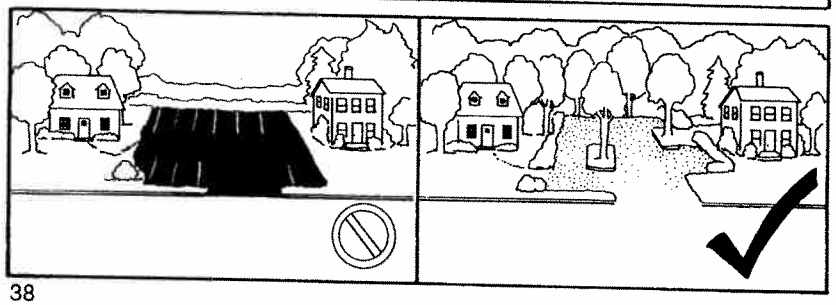
Fencing, required by Town code around pools, is greatly enhanced in appearance with the addition of vegetation.





TREE CANOPY

The cover provided by trees planted years ago warrants preservation and can do more than any other landscape element in helping new work fit into an established environment.



PARKING AREAS

Plantings between areas preserve the tree canopy and minimize the large scale interruptions that parking fields pose.