

ARTICLE XII
VC-2 Village Commercial District

§ 176-1200. Purpose.

The Village Commercial-2 District is intended to establish reasonable standards to permit traditional Main Street commercial uses and neighborhood services. Furthermore, it is the intent of this article to:

- A. Retain the village atmosphere through the preservation of the area's historic architecture and encourage the retention of existing buildings by permitting a variety of commercial, office, and residential uses which are compatible with the existing structural types, lot sizes, and visual and physical characteristics of traditional Main Street development.
- B. Allow conversions of existing buildings in a manner which maintains the visual character and architectural scale of existing development within the district.
- C. Encourage parking at a consistent grade in side or rear yard areas, and encourage adjoining properties to share parking.
- D. Prohibit strip-type and highway-oriented commercial appearance, incongruous architectural styles, excessive building or impervious coverage, and nonessential curb cuts.
- E. Minimize visual and functional conflicts between residential and nonresidential uses within the district, and protect abutting residential districts from adverse impacts.
- F. Encourage a coordinated pedestrian system to provide efficient, pleasant, and convenient pedestrian access from parking areas to the various permitted uses.
- G. Encourage consolidation of driveways, parking, and curb cuts to provide more efficient and economical access to parking.
- H. Ensure development along the Main Street Corridor is consistent with the goals, objectives and design guidelines of Main Street Schwenksville as defined in the Main Street Schwenksville Streetscape Plan and Design Guidelines, as adopted and amended from time to time by Borough Council.

§ 176-1201. Permitted uses.

In the Village Commercial-2 District, a building may be erected, altered, or used and a lot may be used or occupied for any of the following uses and no other, subject to the requirements herein:

- A. Uses Permitted By-Right:
 - 1. Use B-1. Art Studio
 - 2. Use B-3. Bank or financial institution.

3. Use B-4. Club.
4. Use B-10. Funeral Home.
5. Use B-13. Mixed-Use Building.
6. Use B-14. Personal Care Business.
7. Use B-15. Professional Service Business.
8. Use B-17. Restaurant.
9. Use B-18. Retail Shop.
10. Use B-19. Retail Take-Out Foods.
11. Use B-21. Tavern/Pub. [**Added 1-6-2022 by Ord. No. 407¹**]
12. Use B-22. Pet Grooming.
13. Use B-23. Veterinary Clinic.
14. Use B-24. Brewery/Brewpub. [**Added 1-6-2022 by Ord. No. 407**]
15. Use B-25. Artisanal Production/Retail Manufacturing. [**Added 1-6-2022 by Ord. No. 407**]
16. Use C-1. Adult/Child Day-Care Center.
17. Use C-7. Art Gallery.
18. Use C-8. Library/Museum.
19. Use C-10. Places of worship.
20. Use C-12. School - Public/Private.
21. Use D-1. Office Building.
22. Use D-2. Professional Office.
23. Use D-3. Medical Offices and Clinic.
24. Use E-1. Athletic Club.
25. Use E-2. Indoor Recreation.
26. Use E-3. Movie Theater.
27. Use E-5. Theater (Performing).
28. Use F-4. Commercial School.

1. Editor's Note: Pursuant to this ordinance, former Subsection A(11) through (30) were renumbered as Subsection A(12) through (33), respectively.

29. Use G-1a. Multifamily Unit, permitted only as a part of Use B-13: Mixed Use Building.
30. Use G-3. Single Family Detached Dwelling.
31. Use G-4. Single-Family Semi-Detached (Twin).
32. Use G-5. Two-Family Detached Dwelling (Duplex).
33. Accessory Uses. The following accessory uses on the same lot which are subordinate and customarily incidental to any of the above permitted uses and as provided for in Article III herein:
 - a. Use A-1. Accessory Dwelling Unit, when authorized as a Special Exception.
 - b. Use A-2. Residential Accessory Structure.
 - c. Use A-3. Non-Residential Accessory Structure.
 - d. Use A-4. Bed and Breakfast Inn.
 - e. Use A-5. Commercial Vehicles.
 - f. Use A-7. Fences and Walls.
 - g. Use A-8. Greenhouse, Agricultural.
 - h. Use A-9. Home Child Day Care Facilities.
 - i. Use A-10. Home Occupation.
 - j. Use A-11. Livestock.
 - k. Use A-12. No-Impact Home-Based Business.
 - l. Use A-13. Outdoor Storage and Waste Disposal.
 - m. Use A-15. Roadside Stand.
 - n. Use A-16. Swimming Pool.
 - o. Use A-17. Tennis/Sports Court.
 - p. Use A-18. Fowl/Poultry.
 - q. Use A-19. Recreational Sporting Vehicle.
- B. Conditional Uses. The following uses are permitted when authorized by Borough Council as a Conditional Use, provided that § 176-1204, all applicable use regulations of Article III, as well all other applicable requirements of this Article and Chapter, are satisfied:
 1. Use B-12. Laundry (Self-Service).

2. Use B-16. Repair Shop.
3. (Reserved)²
4. Accessory uses, as listed in § 176-1201.A.20, subordinate and customarily incidental to the above.
5. Any of the following, in accordance with the standards of § 176-1205:
 - a. An increase of the building footprint of an existing building.
 - b. The removal, demolition or partial demolition of any existing buildings and structures in accordance with § 176-1205.B.
 - c. The construction of new principal buildings for any uses permitted by-right or by conditional use in this zoning district.
6. A combination of two or more uses permitted under § 176-1201 of this chapter when proposed in more than one building on a single lot, provided the standards of § 176-1204.D of this chapter are satisfied.

§ 176-1202. Dimensional standards.

The following standards shall apply to all uses, subdivision and land development within the VC-2 District.

- A. Minimum lot area (measured from the ultimate right-of-way line): 7,500 square feet.
- B. Minimum lot width at the building line: 75 feet.
- C. Minimum front yard: The minimum depth of the front yard shall be equal to the lesser of the setbacks of the buildings on either side of the property. Primary facades must be oriented toward Main Street.
- D. Minimum side yards: The minimum side yard setback shall be five feet. There shall be no side yard setback for buildings that share a party wall. Only one side yard is required for Use G-4: Single-Family Semi-detached dwellings.
- E. Minimum rear yard: 20 feet.
- F. Maximum impervious coverage: 80%. Pedestrian pathways and sidewalks shall not be considered as part of the impervious coverage.
- G. Maximum Building Height: The height of any building shall not exceed that of the greater height of the buildings on either side of the property. In no case shall the maximum building height exceed 35 feet.
- H. Setback for accessory uses and buildings: No accessory use shall be permitted within the front yard. Setback from side and rear property lines shall be five feet.

2. Editor's Note: Former Subsection B(3), Use B-21, Tavern/Bar, was repealed 1-6-2022 by Ord. No. 407.

- I. No single use shall exceed 50,000 square feet. The total square footage of any site with more than one use shall not exceed 100,000 square feet.

§ 176-1203. Design standards and requirements.

The following requirements shall apply to all permitted uses and conditional uses within the VC-2 District:

- A. All proposed uses must have their primary facade oriented toward Main Street, with an everyday public entrance in this primary facade.
- B. All areas of a lot not covered by impervious coverage shall be maintained as landscaped areas containing trees, shrubs and groundcover material, which may include lawn areas.
- C. All utility lines shall be placed underground whenever feasible for development or expansion of existing development.
- D. Lighting.
 - 1. Lighting fixtures shall be directed away from residential properties and arranged in a manner that will protect the street and neighboring properties from direct glare or hazardous interference of any kind.
 - 2. Lighting fixtures shall be of a character consistent with the architecture of the structure and surrounding properties.
- E. All refuse areas shall be screened from the view of adjacent properties and streets by an opaque screening fence and buffer at least six feet high and not more than eight feet high. All refuse areas shall be in the rear or side yard.

§ 176-1204. Conditional use requirements.

In addition to the design standards established in § 176-1203 and all other applicable regulations of this Chapter herein, the following shall apply to any conditional uses in the VC-2 District:

- A. Conditional uses must preserve, utilize and/or maintain an existing building in a manner that is consistent with the character of this section of Main Street, the purpose of the VC-1 District (§ 176-1200), and the Main Street Schwenksville Streetscape Plan and Design Guidelines.
- B. Transportation Impact Study. The Borough may require a transportation impact study as a part of its evaluation of conditional uses applications. In the case that a transportation impact study is required, the requirements of § 176-2015 shall apply.
- C. All proposed uses shall provide shared access, access easements, consistent grading and driveway interconnections with adjoining lots when required by the Borough. Should the Borough require shared access between multiple users or multiple lots, or should an applicant voluntarily provide shared access between multiple users or multiple lots, the following requirements and conditions shall apply:

1. When two or more abutting lots share an access driveway, that driveway shall be designed as the main access to those lots, and one or more existing access driveways shall then be closed.
 2. Where development of three or more adjoining parcels consolidates vehicular access into one shared driveway, that driveway may be upgraded into a medium volume (between 1,500 and 3,000 vehicle trips per day) driveway according to PennDOT standards.
 3. Shared access may be located entirely on one lot or be split along a common lot line.
 4. Access easements and maintenance agreements or other suitable legal mechanisms shall be provided, acceptable to the Borough in consultation with the Borough Solicitor.
 5. Liability safeguards for all property owners and lessees served by the shared access shall be guaranteed to the satisfaction of the Borough in consultation with the Borough Solicitor.
- D. Standards for Multiple Uses of Lot. The following additional requirements must be met for Borough Council to permit, as a conditional use, more than one use in more than one building per lot:
1. All uses and buildings shall be designed according to a unified architectural scheme, including treatment of building facades, lighting, signage, landscaping and circulation.
 2. A maximum of two curb cuts for vehicular access shall be permitted for the entire development, unless traffic safety considerations require an alternate arrangement.

§ 176-1205. Conditional use requirements for increase of footprint of or removal of existing buildings; construction of new principal buildings.

The increase in building footprint of or removal of existing buildings and structures, or the construction of new principal buildings for all uses within the VC-2 District shall be permitted by conditional use subject to compliance with the standards set forth below. The following property alterations may be exempted from the Conditional Use review required by §§ 1204 and 1205 by the Zoning Officer/Building Inspector, provided such alterations conform to the Main Street Schwenksville Streetscape Plan and Design Guidelines: the routine repair, maintenance or replacement in kind of any exterior elements or features of any building or structure, in whole or in part. 'Replacement in kind' refers to equal in construction characteristics, including material, size, configuration, profile, appearance, texture, color and method of installation with conforming lines, levels and planes.

- A. Increase in footprint of principal buildings.
1. Building footprint expansions to existing buildings shall only be permitted to

the rear and sides of the principal building. Expansions to the front of the building are not permitted.

- a. Any expansions done to the rear of the building must conform in scale and architectural design to the existing building.
 - b. Expansions to the side of the building must conform in scale, building materials, and architectural design to the front facade of the existing building and be set back a minimum of 10 feet from the front facade of the existing building.
 - c. The rooflines of all additions shall be similar or complementary to those of the existing building.
2. An existing principal building that faces the street shall not be expanded toward the street except to permit an open front porch consistent with the architectural design of the front facade of the building.
 3. Applicants shall submit architectural drawings for the evaluation of the proposed principal building expansion. Borough Council may approve a building footprint expansion different from the existing building, provided that it complements the existing building and does not detract from the intent of this article to retain the village atmosphere of Main Street.
- B. Removal, demolition or partial demolition of existing buildings and structures.
1. An applicant and/or owner shall not remove, demolish or partially demolish an existing principal building within the VC-2 District unless Borough Council is satisfied that the principal building is not suitable for the proposed use according to the following criteria:
 - a. The applicant demonstrates to the Borough that the existing principal building is structurally unsound. Applicant shall submit a written report from a structural engineer who has evaluated said principal building.
 - b. The principal building cannot be reasonably modified to accommodate access for handicapped individuals. The applicant will submit a written report listing all restrictions and estimated costs to modify said principal building. The report shall be prepared by a structural engineer, signed, and sealed.
 - c. Interior spaces of the principal building are too small to be converted to be suitable for the proposed use.
 2. An applicant shall not remove an existing principal building until Borough Council has approved a land development plan for the subject property on which the building is located, subject to the following criteria:
 - a. The replacement principal building is located in approximately the same location as the building proposed to be removed.

- b. The area of the existing principal building shall not be utilized for parking; but shall be used for a replacement principal building, landscaping or open space.
 - c. Replacement principal buildings shall be similar in general appearance, size, scale, and bulk and building material to the removed principal building. Applicants shall submit architectural drawings for the evaluation of the proposed principal building. Borough Council may approve a new principal building different from the existing principal building, provided that it complements the adjacent buildings and does not detract from the intent of this article to retain the village atmosphere of Main Street.
3. Principal and accessory structures which have been identified by either the state or have been indicated in the 2011 Historic Resource Survey commissioned by the Borough of Schwenksville as having historic significance shall not be removed, demolished or partially demolished unless preservation or rehabilitation of the structure is determined to be infeasible for all permitted uses. In determining whether the preservation or rehabilitation of the building or buildings is feasible, the determination of § 176-1205.B.1 shall be followed, except that the determination shall also be applied to the removal, demolition or partial demolition of accessory structures, in addition to consideration of the following conditions:
- a. Whether the structure is representative of a specific period of significance that is integral to the Borough's history.
 - b. Whether the structure can be preserved by protecting its location from disturbance.
 - c. Whether measures, such as rehabilitation, reuse, or restoration, can result in preservation of the structure.
 - d. Whether the steps necessary to preserve the structure are feasible and do not create an economic hardship, defined as satisfying all of the following conditions:
 - I. The property is incapable of earning a reasonable return in its current or rehabilitated state, regardless of whether the return represents the most profitable return possible.
 - II. The property cannot be adapted for any other use, whether by the current owner or by a purchaser, which will result in a reasonable return.
 - III. Earnest and reasonable efforts to find a purchaser interested in acquiring the property and preserving have failed.
 - e. Whether the measures taken to preserve the structure are long-term in nature.

C. Construction of a new principal building.

1. New principal buildings may be constructed on any empty lot, provided that the lot and building conform in all respects to the requirements of this zoning district, provided the following conditions are met:
 - a. The new building shall be similar in size, scale, massing, fenestration, general appearance, and building materials to the general character of existing buildings within the Borough.
 - b. Applicants shall submit architectural drawings for the evaluation of the proposed building. Borough Council may approve a new building different from the existing buildings located on adjoining lots, provided that it complements the existing buildings and does not detract from the intent of this article to retain the village atmosphere of Main Street.
 - c. Any new buildings constructed on a lot containing an existing building may not be built on the portion of the lot between the front facade of the existing building and the lot line that abuts a street right-of-way.

§ 176-1206. Streetscaping and green standards.

- A. The following streetscape and green area standards are required along the street frontage for all proposed new buildings and all existing buildings in which an increase to the building footprint is proposed:
 1. The applicant shall demonstrate that these standards are satisfied through elevations and conceptual sketches.
 2. The applicant shall provide the required streetscaping improvements according to the type of development proposed, as described in Figure 1. Applicants shall choose streetscape and green area improvement projects, indicated in Figure 2, whose collective point values satisfy the category and point value requirements of the applicant's respective development type. By way of example only, not limitation, an applicant proposing a new 7,500-square-foot mixed use building could satisfy the category and point requirements by providing two window boxes and a hanging basket from Category A, and a bench and trash receptacle from Category B.
 3. All streetscape and green improvements required under this section shall only be provided, designed and maintained consistent with the Borough's Main Street Schwenksville Streetscape Plan and Design Guidelines (the Plan). The applicant shall utilize the particular product specification, if any, provided in the Plan for the particular type of streetscape or green improvements proposed. For those improvements in which no product specification is defined, the applicant shall otherwise demonstrate that the improvement proposed will be designed and maintained consistent with any other applicable guidelines within the Plan.

Figure 1: Streetscape and Green Area Categories

Building Additions and Alterations which Increase the building footprint	New Buildings of up to 4,999 sq. ft. in building area.	New Buildings of 5,000 — 9,999 sq. ft. in building area.	New Buildings of 10,000 sq. ft. and over in size and/or new buildings greater than two stories
4 points from Category A (no more than three of one item)	4 points from Category A (no more than three of one item) and 2 points from B	5 points from A, 4 points from B	7 points from A, 5 points from B, and 6 points from C

Figure 2: Streetscape and Green Area Items

Category	Item	Points
A	Hanging Basket (minimum size 12 inches in diameter)	1
A	Decorative Banners/Flags	1
A	Window Box (as wide as window sill and a minimum size 6 inches wide by 6 inches deep)	2
A	Additional planting area including shrubs, trees, groundcovers, or flowers	2
A	Street planter (minimum size 24 inches in diameter)	2
B	Building Decorative Lighting	1
B	Bench (at least 5 feet in length)	2
B	Trash Receptacle	2
B	Raised Planting Bed	2
B	Public Art/Mural	2
B	Trellis, Arbor or Pergola (planted with vines or shrubs)	2
B	Awning for Window or Door	2
B	Kiosk	3
C	Drinking Fountain	2
C	Decorative Paving	2
C	Water Feature (Fountain)	2
C	Balconies	3
C	Street Lighting	3

Figure 2: Streetscape and Green Area Items		
Category	Item	Points
C	Planting in Curb Extension (Planted Bulbouts/ Large Planters)	3
C	Urban Garden (See requirements in Section 3)	3
C	Roof Garden	3
C	Clock Tower	3
C	Decorative Architectural Treatments	4
C	Plaza/Square/Courtyard (See requirements in Section 4)	6
C	Facade Restoration	6
C	Other Amenity Approved by Borough Council	3-6

4. Urban Garden Standards.
 - a. Minimum size required is 300 sq. ft.
 - b. An urban garden shall be located where it is visible and accessible from either a public sidewalk or pedestrian connection.
 - c. A minimum of 60% of the garden area shall be of plant materials such as trees, vines, shrubs, and seasonal flowers with year-round interest. All trees shall be at least 3.5 inches in caliper.
 - d. A water feature is encouraged.
 - e. One seating space is required for each 30 sq. ft. of garden area.

5. Public Plaza/Square/Courtyard Standard:
 - a. The minimum size required is 500 square feet.
 - b. The plaza shall be located where it is visible and accessible from either a public sidewalk or pedestrian connection.
 - c. A minimum of 30% of the plaza area shall be landscaped with trees, shrubs, and mixed plantings with year-round interest.
 - d. The plaza shall use the following paving materials: unit pavers, paving stones, or concrete. No more than 20 percent of the plaza shall be concrete.
 - e. One seating space is required for each 30 square feet of plaza area.
 - f. The plaza shall not be used for parking, loading or vehicular access (excluding emergency vehicular access).

- g. Public area and fountains are encouraged.
- h. Trash containers shall be distributed throughout the plaza.
- i. The plaza shall provide shade by using the following elements: trees, canopies, trellises, umbrellas, or building walls.
- j. One tree is required for every 500 square feet of plaza area. Trees shall be of at least 3.5 inches caliper.
- k. Lighting shall be provided.
- l. Plazas shall connect to other activities such as outdoor cafes, restaurants, building entries and Perkiomen Trail access points, if any.
- m. Plazas shall be located if possible to have maximum direct sunlight with a south or west orientation.
- n. Plazas, if constructed by a private entity, shall have an access easement agreement with the Borough for public access.