

Talbot County, MD
Friday, February 14, 2025

Chapter 190. Zoning, Subdivision and Land Development

Article II. Zoning Districts

§ 190-10. Village Districts.

10.1 Purpose.

- A. Village districts generally. The village districts provide for limited development in scale with the existing character of the village. The village districts' growth shall be consistent with historic patterns, and shall be of modest scale. Areas intended for more significant growth are located near Easton and the County's other municipalities.

The villages have a sense of identity and continuity formed by the existing buildings, mature trees and landscaping, natural features and historic street patterns. Buildings in the villages display characteristics of varying styles and time periods. These regulations are intended to provide for continued use of and improvements to existing buildings and to promote design for new development that respects the traditional village patterns of development.

It is intended that all development in the Village zoning districts shall:

1. Maintain and, whenever possible, improve the quality of runoff and groundwater entering the Chesapeake Bay and its tributary streams;
 2. Maintain, to the extent practical, existing areas of natural habitat;
 3. Accommodate additional low- or moderate-intensity development, if development conforms to this chapter's water quality and habitat protection criteria;
 4. Be compatible with and complement the character of the existing community in terms of land use, density, scale, setbacks, site layout, mix of use, and general design to maintain the villages' unique "sense of place";
 5. Maintain densities that reflect village lot sizes existing after zoning boundary modifications. Existing dwelling units per acre and other factors will be considered through the rezoning process, keeping in mind the unique character of each village or portion thereof; and
 6. Where needed, be granted sewer connection consistent with allocation policies in Water Quality Strategy Areas Tier III-B to resolve failing, inadequate and substandard septic systems within villages and allow for infill, redevelopment and new development on existing lots of record.
- B. Village Mixed (VM). The Village Mixed District provides for low- or moderate-intensity residential and commercial uses. This district may contain a mixture of residential, commercial, and maritime/agricultural service uses. The commercial and service uses serve residents of the village and nearby areas, and may include heritage tourism uses to attract visitors. Limited new development is directed to this district so that the environment

and natural resources of nearby rural areas are protected and preserved. These districts may have public water and/or sewer service with relatively smaller lots and higher densities than surrounding rural areas.

- C. Village Hamlet (VH). The Village Hamlet District is characterized by low- or moderate-intensity residential and limited commercial uses. This district is intended for principally residential use, with limited compatible commercial uses that serve residents of the village and nearby areas. The scale and intensity of commercial uses shall comport with the existing development pattern. Limited new residential and suitable commercial development is directed to this district, so that the environment and natural resources of nearby rural areas are protected and preserved. These districts may have public water and/or sewer service with relatively smaller lots and higher densities than surrounding rural areas.
- D. Village Residential (VR). The Village Residential District provides for low- or moderate-density residential use. Limited new infill residential development is directed to this district, so that the environment and natural resources of nearby rural areas are protected and preserved. These districts may have public water and/or sewer service; however, these services should not be the basis for new development inconsistent with the established scale or character of the Village.

10.2 Bulk requirements and median lot size.

- A. Bulk requirements. Table II-10 establishes density, lot dimension, setback and lot coverage requirements for the village districts.

Table II-10. Village District Bulk Requirements					
Type of Requirement	VM		VH		VR
	Without Public Sewer	With Public Sewer	Without Public Sewer	With Public Sewer	With or Without Public Sewer
1. Maximum Density					
Basic Density	1 dwelling per acre	1 dwelling per acre	1 dwelling per acre	1 dwelling per acre	1 dwelling per acre
2. Minimum Lot Dimensions					
a. Lot size	1 acre	30,000 square feet	1 acre	30,000 square feet	1 acre
b. Lot width	100 feet		100 feet		100 feet

Table II-10. Village District Bulk Requirements					
Type of Requirement	VM		VH		VR
	Without Public Sewer	With Public Sewer	Without Public Sewer	With Public Sewer	With or Without Public Sewer
3. Minimum Setbacks	See supplemental setback requirements in § 190-12.2.				
a. Front	25 feet		25 feet		25 feet
b. Side					
i. From VM, VH and VR Districts	10 feet		10 feet		20 feet
ii. From all other zoning districts	25 feet		25 feet		25 feet
c. Rear	25 feet		25 feet		25 feet
4. Maximum site coverage for all buildings and uses, not including parking areas and access drives:					
a. Outside Critical Area	25%		25%		25%
b. Within Critical Area	Use Critical Area lot coverage limits. (See § 190-15.6C.)				
5. Height	See § 190-12.1.				

B. Median lot size.

1. New subdivisions using public sewer service shall maintain a median lot size of one acre or less, not including the remaining land.
2. Median lot size may be increased through a waiver petition if approved by the approving authority for the subdivision. The approving authority must find that a larger average lot size will result in a better site design or is necessary due to the site's physical constraints.

10.3 Use standards.

A. Commercial/industrial uses are to be limited in size. Individual commercial/industrial establishments or businesses that are permitted by right (Article IV, Table IV-1) are limited to:

1. Five thousand square feet of gross floor area, with 1,000 square feet of outdoor display area, in the VM District; and
2. Two thousand square feet of gross floor area, with no outdoor display area, in the VR and VH Districts.

B. Larger commercial/industrial uses shall be permitted by special exception.

10.4 Design standards.

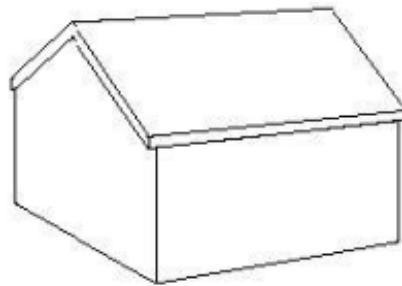
A. Application of standards.

1. The design standards below are to be applied in a manner that achieves the purposes of the district. The Planning Commission or Planning Director, as applicable, shall apply these standards in review of development applications.

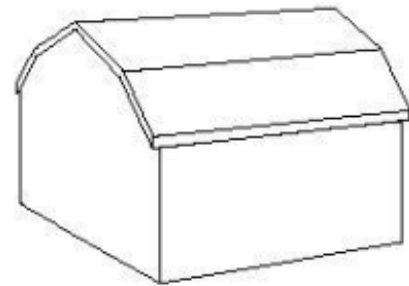
2. Expansion or alteration of existing buildings or site improvements shall comply with the standards of this § **190-10.4** to the extent feasible for the portion of the building or site impacted by the new improvements.
 3. The Planning Director may request a recommendation from the Planning Commission on these standards for any application.
- B. Master plans for Village Planning Areas.
1. Village Planning Areas consist of Village Mixed and Village Hamlet Zoning Districts as defined in § **190-10**. Village master plans guide the evaluation of development proposals in Village Planning Areas by describing the village's character, and the compatibility and suitability of existing and proposed land uses, infrastructure, facilities and services associated with development and redevelopment.
 2. Village Master Plans include policies and elements addressing the following: (i) village character; (ii) land use; and, (iii) infrastructure, facilities, and services. small-scale subdivisions, major subdivisions, and major site plans in Village Planning Areas shall be consistent with the policies and elements of the village's Village Master Plan.
 3. The Planning Commission shall be responsible for reviewing consistency with Village Master Plans. This review shall consider the following:
 - a. Proposed design and layout of development, including features such as the siting and scale of buildings and the placement and design of landscaping, parking, pedestrian pathways, lighting, signs, and other features; and
 - b. Compatibility with existing character in terms of land use, density, scale, setbacks, site layout, mix of use, and general design to maintain their unique "sense of place".
 4. If no Village Master Plan has been adopted for a village, the applicant for a small-scale subdivision, major subdivision, or major site plan in a Village Planning Area shall submit with the application a comprehensive study addressing compatibility and suitability of the proposed development with existing and proposed land uses, infrastructure, facilities, and services associated with the new development or redevelopment, along with consideration of the elements of Subsection B.3 a. and b. above, which the Planning Commission shall review in lieu of consistency with the Village Master Plan.
- C. Site design and architectural standards. The approving authority shall be guided by the following site design requirements and guidelines.
1. Landscaping.
 - a. Mature trees shall be protected during development, especially along roadways.
 - b. New and replacement trees along roadways should be chosen to diversify the tree species and prevent loss due to disease.
 - c. For new nonresidential development, street trees shall be provided and the front yard areas between the building facade and the street shall be landscaped using a variety of native plantings. This area may be used for seating, canopies or awnings and other amenities.
 2. Parking.
 - a. Off-street parking for nonresidential development shall, wherever possible, be located to the rear or side of the building.

- b. When off-street parking is provided to the front or side of nonresidential buildings, the parking area shall be separated from the street by a landscaped edge incorporating trees as well as a hedge, fence, wall or shrubs at least two feet in height.
 - c. When possible, residential garages and parking should be located to the side or rear of the lot.
 3. Fences, display and storage areas.
 - a. Walls and fences shall be uniform and compatible with the architectural style and building material of the building.
 - b. If needed, off-street loading areas shall be provided to the rear of new, nonresidential structures.
 - c. Outdoor sales or display areas shall be screened from adjacent residentially zoned land by a solid fence or landscape screen and shall not be located within a setback area or a required landscaped area.
 - d. Commercial outdoor storage areas, exposed machinery, and outdoor areas used for storage and collection of trash shall be located in a side or rear yard, shall not be located within a setback area or required landscaped area, and shall be visually screened from roads and public areas. This does not include the personal property or equipment of watermen, farmers, or other residents who are not regulated as cottage industries.
 - e. Storage yard requirements for cottage industries are specified in § **190-33.5**.
 4. Sidewalks and pathways.
 - a. Sidewalks and pedestrian paths or easements for future improvements shall be provided where specified in the Village Master Plan.
 - b. Pedestrian access connecting buildings and parking areas for nonresidential uses, or dedicated easements for future improvements, shall be provided as feasible based on site characteristics, lot coverage limitations, and stormwater management goals.
 - c. Sidewalks should be separated from the roadway by a planting strip at least four feet wide where feasible based on right-of-way width.
 5. Lighting.
 - a. Streetlights and other freestanding lights:
 - i. Shall have a maximum height of 20 feet to the top of the pole and light fixture combined.
 - ii. Shall meet the "full cut-off" or "fully shielded" criteria of the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America.
 - b. All lighting fixtures shall be directed and shielded so that the illumination is directed downward and shielded so that it does not produce glare.
 6. Signs. In addition to the sign standards of § **190-42**, the following standards apply within the village zones.
 - a. Sign size, materials, color, lettering, placement, and illumination shall respect the character of existing buildings and be designed as an integral architectural element.

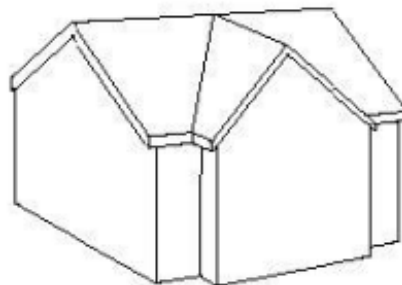
- b. Signs located above or projecting from the roofline or parapet wall are not permitted.
 - c. The maximum height of freestanding signs shall be eight feet.
 - d. Pole-mounted commercial signs are not permitted.
 - e. A nonresidential use may have one double-sided monument sign per street frontage, not to exceed 60 square feet per side.
7. Architectural standards. The following standards apply to new buildings for commercial or institutional use.
- a. Buildings shall be designed with architectural details that provide visual interest and contribute to a pedestrian orientation on facades facing a street.
 - b. Buildings shall have a principal facade with windows and an entry (with operable doors) facing a street. Buildings may have more than one principal facade and/or entry.
 - c. All sides of a proposed building visible from a roadway or public area shall be of finished quality and consistent in material and style with the front facade.
 - d. Canopies or awnings may extend into the front setback area a maximum of two feet and shall have a clearance height of at least eight feet.
 - e. Generally, sloped roofs are consistent with traditional architecture of the villages. (See Figure II-1.) To the greatest extent possible, a sloped roof representative of the traditional architectural forms in the area shall be used for a new primary structure.
 - f. Flat roofs may be allowed on multistory, nonresidential buildings as long as the roofline projects outward from the building surface as a cornice or parapet.



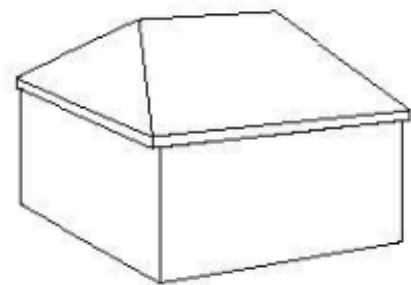
Gable



Mansard



Cross Gable



Hipped

Figure II-1. Sloped Roof Styles