WEST FAIRBANKS AREA DESIGN STANDARDS
West Fairbanks Design Standards: Purpose and Intent

These West Fairbanks Avenue Design Standards were adopted by the City Commission, on __________________, 2012 to govern development within the area depicted on the map below. In accordance with the zoning regulations, these design standards are mandatory unless specifically waived via authority of the Planning Director or the Planning Board/City Commission. These design standards are to be supplementary to the zoning regulations and to be used in conjunction with the zoning regulations for each individual property. The overall purpose of these design standards is to facilitate the development and redevelopment of the West Fairbanks Avenue area as a coherent and cohesive urban corridor, rather than a series of visually disconnected buildings. These design standards are intended to encourage the development and redevelopment of commercial, office, restaurant and mixed use buildings to provide a visually pleasing environment along this important gateway corridor of the City.

There are several types of zoning within this West Fairbanks Avenue Area. The area is predominately the Commercial (C-3) District, but also contains Office (O-1) District zoning. Provisions of the Zoning Regulations for these districts and these design standards shall both apply to all development and redevelopment within the plan area shown in the map below. In cases where there are conflicts or where these supplementary design standards impose requirements not included in the zoning code, these design standards shall apply.
General Building Arrangement Standards

Building To Be Situated Near the Front of Property

It is required to have future buildings constructed toward the front of any property that has street frontage along Fairbanks Avenue in order to have the visually appealing architecture of the building dominate the visual reception of the property rather than to have the parking along the frontage as the dominate visual function. As the building is situated near the front of the property or lot the necessary parking is then located behind the building or on the side where it is not as readily visible. Existing building with parking in the front may be renovated and expanded but all new redevelopment shall conform to this requirement.

An ample setback is required between the building and the street to provide sufficient that emphasizes pedestrian safety providing for sidewalk, landscaping and the ability to underground utilities. As such, consistent with the zoning regulations, buildings shall have a minimum twenty (20’) foot setback from the front property line along Fairbanks Avenue on the south side of the road and fifteen (15’) feet on the north side of Fairbanks Avenue. This front setback shall be mandatory and buildings may not be constructed further back from the Fairbanks Avenue frontage than these specified setbacks unless specifically approved by the Planning Department or by the Planning Board and/or City Commission.

A “Transition Zone” of up to ten (10’) feet from the front building façade line is permitted to be used for an open colonnade, arcade, canopy or awning structure for all or a portion of the lower, first story in the development. However, any upper floors shall observe the applicable twenty (20) or fifteen (15) foot building setbacks. These structural features in the front setback area will require review and approval by the Planning Department for architectural compatibility with the overall building design, for determination of compliance with the ‘openness’ standard and conformance with the intent of these guidelines.

Building Mass – Articulation and Terracing

Terracing and articulation providing additional setback are required to create relief to the overall massing of the building facades for any building over one story in height. Such design features of building façade articulation are required at least every sixty (60’) feet, on average, along the primary building façades facing streets, or the building frontage where the building fronts primary parking lot area. Also, for any building over two stories, or more than thirty (30’) feet in height, a significant portion comprising at least seventy-five (75%) percent of the top floor shall be terraced and stepped back from the exterior face of the next lower floor by an average of at least five (5’) feet.

For any building over two (2) stories in height and over two hundred (200’) feet in length there shall be a thirty-five (35’) foot break on at least the first floor in order to add façade articulation and to break up building mass.
Corner Treatment

Properties fronting on a street corner shall recognize this special opportunity to provide architectural interest and special treatment at the corner location. These properties have two public facades, which gives the chance for special architectural treatment and detailing that will have the highest impact and visibility, at the corner location.

Parking Arrangement and Access

Parking access to properties along Fairbanks Avenue should be from side streets if frontage is available on a side street. If side street frontage is not available or if conditions warrant, a driveway will be allowed from Fairbanks Avenue, providing the driveway and open space surrounding it is minimized. The intent is to maintain the building street wall without large voids for access driveways. The goal in this parking arrangement is to decrease the visibility of parking from the street as much as possible, by having parking behind the building.

Any future parking garages should also be constructed away from Fairbanks Avenue and be accessed from side streets whenever possible. They should also be designed in an architectural style that is compatible with its building counterpart.

Development Standards for the North Side of Fairbanks Avenue

Building To Be Situated Near the Front of Lot

It is required to have future buildings on the north side of Fairbanks Avenue constructed toward the Fairbanks Avenue frontage in order to have the visually appealing architecture of the building dominate the visual reception of the property rather than to have the parking along the frontage as the dominate visual function. As the building is situated near the front of the property, the necessary parking is then located behind the building or on the side where it is not as readily visible. In addition, all building areas and footprints must be located on the front ninety (90) feet of the property that is zoned commercial and may not extend to any part or portion of a property zoned (PL) which is exclusively for parking.

Parking for the Buildings on the North Side of Fairbanks Avenue

In order to encourage and facilitate redevelopment along the north side of Fairbanks Avenue, the most critical element to foster such redevelopment is to provide the opportunity for the expansion of parking in order to provide the economic incentive for such redevelopment. To that end, it is a policy of the City to encourage land use and zoning changes along the south side of Karolina Avenue and in other similarly situated locations to the city’s Parking Lot (PL) zoning in order to accomplish these redevelopment goals.
Landscape and Wall Buffer Requirements for the Expanded Parking for Buildings on the North Side of Fairbanks Avenue

The use of properties fronting on Karolina Avenue or in similar situations abutting residential must be done in harmony with the existing adjacent residential properties or those located across and on the north side of Karolina Avenue. This is critical to the success of this redevelopment. To that end, the following mandatory design elements shall be adhered to as exists at the YMCA along Palmer Avenue and as shown in the accompanying picture:

1. There shall be a consistent fifteen (15’) foot setback from the north property line to such parking and all such parking shall be screened by an architecturally attractive stucco block wall of five (5’) feet in height with additional one foot columns placed every twenty to thirty (20 - 30’) feet.

2. On the exterior, north side of the stucco block screen wall there shall be an irrigated landscape buffer that shall consist of line of minimum of seven gallon podocarpus, viburnum or florida anise hedges spaced every thirty (30) inches apart that shall be interspersed with a minimum 65 gallon ligustrum, japanese bluberry or magnolia trees spaced every thirty (30) feet apart. In addition, the exterior landscape area shall have one gallon groundcover spaced 18 inches apart of either asian jasmine, ground mound lantana or yellow bulbine.

3. There shall be no driveways or vehicular access permitted onto Karolina Avenue under any circumstances. There shall be no dumpsters, trash or storage enclosures or any other structures constructed or placed in locations that are visible to the residential properties on the opposite side of Karolina Avenue.

4. The vehicular access from such parking shall only be from Fairbanks Avenue or to any intervening side street. In order to encourage this shared access arrangement to and from the side streets, the City shall as a condition of approval of such land use changes, require an access easement for each property that would permit interior properties to travel via traffic aisles or alley, to and from the intervening side streets.
CROSS SECTION OF THE LANDSCAPE AND WALL BUFFER
Façade Treatment

The exterior building façade should be constructed parallel to the street and shall be placed as close to the street as established setbacks permit. Buildings should contain the three traditional architectural elements: a base, a mid section and a top. On low rise buildings the different parts may be expressed through detailing at the building base and eave or cornice line. On taller structures different treatment of the first, middle and top stories should be used to define the three parts.

Commercial Façade Examples:
Other Notes on the Treatment of Façades:

Roof lines, parapets and building heights should be architecturally articulated, diverse in design form and varied in height with adequately scaled and proportioned architectural cornices and applied treatments which complement the building’s design.

The window, wall and roofing treatment should be of high quality materials and consistent on both the front and the back of the building. Glazing may be clear or gray tinted. Reflective, pebbled, or bronze glass will not be allowed. Detailing is encouraged to enhance the façade.

In summary, commercial structures should be sited so as to create visual relationships with sidewalks, street alignments and neighboring businesses; create visual anchors at entries, provide interesting architectural perspectives featuring appropriate facade treatments and maximize the pedestrian relationship to the sidewalk.

Lower Story

The lower story of the building has the most immediate impact on the passerby. Traditionally, buildings along urban streets have a high proportion of glazing to solid wall surface, with higher floor to floor heights, on the first floor. To maintain continuity with this treatment, buildings in the Fairbanks Avenue Plan area should have a higher percentage of glass (25% minimum, 70% maximum) in the lower story wall than in the upper story walls. Wall area used for calculation of glazing will be from floor to floor, exterior wall to exterior wall.

Expression Line/Belt Course

The expression line or belt course is the portion of the building facade which separates the lower story facade from the upper story facade. It is an opportunity to provide detail and architectural expression at a visible level. Some form of architectural treatment is required at the expression line, to provide a shadow line, pattern or texture effect. The treatment may be a molding, projection, material change or other architectural element that serves to separate the lower story from the upper stories of the building facade at that location. The location, depth, and height of this element may vary, depending on the type of architectural design being incorporated into the structure. This line may also be interrupted by vertical elements where appropriate to the architectural style.

Upper Stories

Upper story wall treatment should be coordinated and complement the design of the lower story facade. Materials should be of high quality and carefully detailed. Glazing (windows) on the upper stories should be a lower percentage of the wall area than the lower story. Continuous horizontal strip glazing (ribbon windows) will not be allowed.
Cornice Line

The cornice is the architectural element or treatment that occurs at the top of the building wall or parapet. A cornice may be a projecting element, texture or pattern of sufficient surface relief to create a substantial visible, readable shadow effect. The cornice should be integrated into the style and character of the building design. A cornice treatment is necessary for all building facades in the Fairbanks Avenue area.

Architectural Style, Ornamentation, and Detail

Architectural styles are to be classic in architectural geometry. Architecture should incorporate colonnades, gables, hip roofs, towers, dormers, archways, and covered entries, atriums, repetitive window openings, arched and corbelled parapets, cornices, transoms and other basic and timeless architectural shapes, elements, details and forms.

Architectural Style, Ornamentation and Detail should:

1. Incorporate repetitive window openings and patterns

2. Articulate classic and timeless architectural elements and ornament utilizing arched and corbelled parapets, masonry corner quoins, dormers and simple cornices and brackets

3. Visibly express structural elements including piers, posts, columns, changes in floor levels and changes in use where appropriate.

Ornamentation and detailing is recommended, however, should be limited.
Façade Treatment Examples

This building has a break in the façade to add articulation and to separate building mass.

Starbucks’ attractive façade is achieved by sharp, clean, vertical lines.

A shopping center should have variation in façade appearance (per store) and roof height, as well as awing compatibility with the entrance.

This Regions Bank is only one story, however uses architectural detail to distinguish the upper and lower portions of the building.
Buildings should be constructed near the front of the lot

Parking accessed from side street; Structure is both hidden from main Avenue and compatible with architecture of main building

These are desirable treatments for corner lots; rich in architectural details and exceptionally eye-catching
Buildings should contain classical architectural elements such as arches, colonnades, columns, pilasters, corbels, etc. as can be seen in these facades.
Signage

Building signage is one of the most prominent visual elements on the street and defines the purpose of a building. Building signage adds interest and variety to the streetscape and building façade enlivening the street scene and providing for business recognition by passerbys. Building signage may complement and add to the attractiveness of properties or signage may detract from the architecture image and negatively impact the perception of the property and the business even with the best intentions of the owner.

Building Signage should:

1. Contain simple and clear graphic symbols and text that contain the business name, logo but not “specials”, “sales” and other temporary information.
2. Harmonize with the building’s design.
3. Not overpower the architecture image or obscure the building’s architecture.
4. Be compatible with adjacent businesses.

Digital, electronic, and/or internally illuminated signs such as back-lit plastic, acrylic or glass, are discouraged. Manual or automatic front lighting of signs is encouraged. External illumination must be provided by a light source that is installed to prevent direct light from shining onto the street or adjacent residential properties. The source of light must be hidden or shielded from the direct view of motorists or pedestrians. Back lit halo type opaque sign lettering is permitted, however the light color must be white or subdued or muted such as a pastel shade. Changeable copy signage is discouraged and shall not be permitted unless related to a special event, product or activity not routinely available at the business.

Street level sandwich board type or other portable signage shall be decorative and attractive and shall relate to the business for which it is used in the design, color and image. Portable signage with only changeable copy lettering or hand written signage is prohibited. The display of merchandise outside a business, as permitted by the code, shall be limited in size to less than four square feet in area.
Appropriate Sign Examples

Examples of freestanding signs with monument bases that are externally illuminated

Landscaping can enhance a sign’s appearance

Simple, clear graphics are most effective
Lighting can enhance or detract from the appearance of a building and be distracting to pedestrians and motorists if used improperly. It should be used sparingly to accent signage, entrances, architectural details, and enhance the overall appearance of the property. Lights should be shielded and directed away from the view of pedestrians and motorists. It is preferable to use more, less intense light sources rather than one or two very bright sources. This will serve to even out the lighting treatment, avoid hot spots and glare, avoid spillover light into adjacent areas. If arcades, colonnades or courtyards are incorporated into the building design, lighting shall be provided in these areas. General area flood type fixtures are strongly discouraged, except at parking areas behind the building. In these instances, lighting should be controlled and the impact on surrounding areas considered.

Back lit halo with opaque lettering is acceptable
Awnings and Canopies

Awnings can have a positive or negative impact on the overall appearance and perception of a building depending on their design, material and use. General guidelines for use of awnings are included in this document as a way of providing for appropriate use of awnings and avoiding commercial strip type applications. Awnings and canopies are treated the same under these design standards.

Awnings should be designed as an integral part of the overall arrangement of architectural elements that compose the facade, and enhance the general appearance of the building. Height, size, shape, projection and materials should be carefully considered, and should be consistent across the facade, and compatible with the architectural design and style of the building. Awnings should not cover the expression line area of the facade, but work with the structural bays or opening arrangement of the building. Continuous linear or bubble type awnings are strongly discouraged.

Awning color should be coordinated with and complement the building facade colors. Internally lit awnings are also strongly discouraged.

Parking Screen Walls

To the extent that new parking lots are visible from the primary street frontage of Fairbanks Avenue or down the intervening side streets up to a distance of one hundred (100’) feet, these design standards shall in addition to the city’s landscape buffering regulations. These design standards shall require a parking screen wall to be built and used in combination with landscaping to effectively screen vehicles from view. These mandatory parking screen walls shall be architecturally attractive stucco block, split block or brick walls of five (5’) feet in height with additional one foot columns placed every twenty to thirty (20’ - 30’) feet. The screen walls shall be placed at the interior edge of the required street parking landscape buffer area so that the required landscaping planted on the street side of the screen wall together with the decorative wall shall act in unison to screen the view of the parking lot.
Miscellaneous Provisions

Mechanical equipment, such as air conditioning units or satellite dish antennas, placed on roof tops or at grade will be hidden or screened from view by architectural elements compatible with the building design as per the Winter Park Land Development Code. If placed on a roof top, the equipment should be positioned near the center of the roof to reduce as much visibility of it as possible. Solid waste containers or dumpsters shall also be screened from view of surrounding properties, and plans for new construction must show the location of containers for solid waste disposal per the Winter Park Land Development Code.

Color appreciation is subjective, however excessively bright, reflective or clashing color schemes shall be prohibited. The City recognizes that while building permits are not required for painting of building walls or other structures, these design standards shall require property owner and building tenants to require the prior approval of the City of the colors of paint used on the exterior of buildings and other structures. Furthermore, it shall be a violation of these design standards which are adopted as an overlay to the zoning code and enforceable by the Code Enforcement Board to paint buildings and structures without the prior approval of the Planning Department. To that end, their judgment as to the nature of excessively bright or clashing color schemes shall prevail and it otherwise shall be deemed to be a violation of these regulations and corrective action may be required by the City. Color of each individual building should be coordinated, that is, each individual bay or element of the building shall be in the same family of colors, composed to make a complimentary, coherent composition.