

PART 16

“NCS” NEIGHBORHOOD COMPATIBILITY STANDARDS OVERLAY DISTRICT

Section 1600. Intent

The purpose of the Neighborhood Compatibility Standards Overlay is to:

- A. Protect and enhance the development patterns and characteristics of well established neighborhoods in Highspire Borough by accommodating new uses, reuse, replacement, and infill development that is consistent and compatible with the character and scale of the established development patterns and distinctive features of the neighborhoods via the Neighborhood Development Compatibility Design Guidelines and Standards set forth herein this Part below.
- B. Address the purposes, objectives, and standards of Article VII-A, Traditional Neighborhood Development, of the MPC;
- C. Provide a manual of written and graphic design guidelines to assist applicants in the preparation of proposals for traditional neighborhood development in accordance with Section 708-A of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code

Section 1601. Designation of the Overlay District

- A. For the purposes of this Part the Neighborhood Compatibility Standards Overlay shall include those areas and properties identified on the Highspire Borough Zoning Map as the “Neighborhood Compatibility Standards Overlay” or subsequent “Neighborhood Compatibility Standards Overlay” district map adopted as part of this Chapter.

Section 1602. Conflict

- A. Except for the standards and regulations established in Part 15 Floodplain Overlay of this Chapter and as otherwise specifically noted elsewhere, wherever and whenever the requirements of this Part are at variance with the standards and requirements of any other Part of this Chapter, those standards and regulations set forth in this Part shall govern development

Section 1603. Permitted Uses

- A. In the Neighborhood Compatibility Standards Overlay new development shall be permitted in accordance with the regulations of the underlying zoning district, provided that all such uses, activities, and/or development shall be undertaken in compliance with the Neighborhood Development Compatibility Design Guidelines and Standards set forth herein this Part below.

Section 1604. Neighborhood Development Compatibility Design Guidelines and Standards

- A. The Neighborhood Development Compatibility Design Guidelines and Standards is enabled by Section 708-A of the MPC as the manual of written and graphic design guidelines
- B. These compatibility design guidelines and standards provide the Borough officials, residents, business owners, builders, and other interested parties with a written and visual set of compatibility design standards and characteristics prevalent in and important to the protecting and enhancing the established development patterns and features of neighborhoods in Highspire Borough.

- C. These design guidelines and standards provide the desired direction for new development within neighborhoods in Highspire Borough to ensure consistency and compatibility between established building and development types, styles, and patterns, and new development.
- D. In addition to the general building and land requirements set forth elsewhere in this Chapter, proposals for development shall be generally consistent with the compatibility design standards and guidelines set forth herein this Part. If a design guideline or standard is not specifically indicated in these compatibility design guidelines and standards, refer to the most recent version of the Highspire Borough Comprehensive Plan Comprehensive Plan, and/or other applicable plans adopted by Highspire Borough.
- E. These compatibility design guidelines and standards highlight important design characteristics relating to buildings and land development via written standards and visual images which are intended to provide guidance and inspiration for implementing the desired design concepts set forth in the most recent version of the Highspire Borough Comprehensive Plan, and/or other applicable plans adopted by Highspire Borough. The images and visual examples of these design guidelines and standards are provided for general illustrative purposes only, and shall not be construed to be operative language of the ordinance. The written standards of these design guidelines and standards shall take precedent and therefore govern.
- F. Applications for Zoning and/or Building Permits
 - 1. In addition to the information, required in Part 3 of this Chapter, applications for development, including construction of new principal buildings or additions/expansions to existing principal buildings in this Neighborhood Compatibility Standards Overlay shall be submitted with the following information:
 - a. A complete set of calculations (i.e. averages of setbacks, heights, lot access etc.) used to determine and demonstrate compliance with all applicable standards set forth herein this section below.
 - b. A schematic architectural drawing of the principal building's front façade(s).
- G. Specific building and development compatibly design guidelines and standards shall apply to the following features:
 - 1. Front Building Setback
 - 2. Side Building Setback
 - 3. Building Height
 - 4. Building Orientation
 - 5. Lot Access
 - 6. Parking
- H. Required Front Building Setback
 - 1. For a lot proposed for development, the distance the front of the principal building is set back from the street right-of-way shall be similar to those distances between existing principal buildings on the abutting lots and the abutting street right-of-way in accordance with the following standard:
 - a. Identify the existing principal buildings on the lots abutting the lot proposed for development.

- b. Using these results, calculate the average setback distance between the existing principal buildings on the abutting lots and the street rights-of-way line.
 - (1). If an abutting lot is vacant, the required setback of the abutting vacant lot shall be assumed to be the minimum front setback standard defined in the underlying zoning district in which it is situated.
 - (2). For corner lots, the standards set forth in this section above shall be calculated using each abutting lot, which includes those abutting lots having frontage on and the existing principal buildings oriented toward the intersecting street.
- c. The required front building setback for the building on the lot proposed for development shall be the average setback distance calculated in subsections a. and b. above, which may be adjusted by not more fifteen percent (15%), unless all buildings on the abutting lots have the same set back distance.
 - (1). Front building façades and/or covered front porches shall be permitted to fulfill this requirement.
- d. However, no building shall extend into any street right-of-way.
- e. Otherwise the building on the lot proposed for development shall comply with all front setback standards defined in the underlying zoning district in which it is situated.

2. Front Building Setback Graphic Examples



I. Minimum Side Building Setback

1. For a lot proposed for development, the distance the building is set back from its side lot lines, and other buildings on abutting lots to the side, shall be similar to those distances between existing principal buildings on abutting lots and the respective side lot lines in accordance with the following standard:
 - a. Identify the existing principal buildings on the lots abutting the lot proposed for development.
 - b. Using these results, calculate the average setback distance between the existing principal buildings on the abutting lots from their respective side lot lines.
 - (1). If an abutting lot is vacant, the minimum setback of the abutting vacant lot shall be assumed to be the minimum side setback standard defined in the underlying zoning district in which it is situated.
 - (2). For corner lots, the standards set forth in this section above shall be calculated using each abutting lot, which includes those abutting lots having frontage on and the existing principal buildings oriented toward the intersecting street.
 - c. The minimum side building setback for the principal building on the lot proposed for development shall be the average setback distance calculated in subsections a. and b. above.
 - (1.). This average distance may not be decreased unless the principal building is constructed with a shared common party wall and the written consent of the owner of the abutting lot and building.
 - d. However, no principal building shall extend closer than fifteen (15) feet from another principal building without the written consent of the owner of the abutting lot and building.
 - e. Otherwise the principal building on the lot proposed for development shall comply with all side setback standards defined in the underlying zoning district in which it is situated.

2. Side Building Setback Graphic Examples



J. Building Height

1. For a lot proposed for development, the height of the principal building shall be similar to those building heights (in stories and feet) for existing principal buildings on abutting lots in accordance with the following standard:
 - a. Roof heights, cornice lines, eaves, parapets and porches of the principal building on the lot proposed for development shall respect and maintain the architectural context of the principal buildings on the abutting lots and, when feasible, shall incorporate the scale and character of the majority of the existing principal buildings on the same shared block face (between two [2] intersecting streets) along the same side of the street.

- b. Identify the existing principal buildings on the lots abutting the lot proposed for development.
- c. Using these results, calculate the average number of stories and feet of the heights of the existing principal buildings on the abutting lots.
 - (1). If an abutting lot is vacant, unless the building height standards defined in the underlying zoning district in which it is situated have a different minimum building height, the number of stories for an abutting vacant lot shall be assumed to be one story.
 - (2). For corner lots, the standards set forth in this section above shall be calculated using each abutting lot, which includes those abutting lots having frontage on and the existing principal buildings oriented toward the intersecting street.
 - (3). No principal building shall have less than the average number of stories or feet of the heights of the existing principal buildings on abutting lots, and shall not have more stories or height in feet than the tallest of the existing principal buildings on the abutting lots.
- d. However, no principal building height shall be less than one story.
- e. Otherwise the principal building on the lot proposed for development shall comply with all building height standards defined in the underlying zoning district in which it is situated.

2. Building Height Graphic Examples



K. Building Orientation

1. Unless otherwise noted herein this subsection below, for a lot proposed for development, the orientation or location of the main or everyday entrance and windows for the principal building shall be similar to those building orientations for existing principal buildings on abutting lots in accordance with the following standard:

a. Interior Lots

Principal buildings shall have their primary front facades, provided with a main or everyday front entrance and windows, oriented toward and facing the public street (excluding alleys).

b. Corner Lots

Principal buildings on lots abutting more than one (1) public street shall have their primary front facades, provided with a main or everyday front entrance and windows, oriented towards and facing (in order of preference):

- (1). the corner; or
- (2). the street (excluding alleys) upon which the majority of the principal buildings on the adjacent lots are oriented towards.

c. Lots Abutting 2nd Street

Principal buildings on lots abutting 2nd Street shall have at their primary front facades, provided with a main or everyday front entrance and windows, oriented toward and facing 2nd Street in accordance with the following standard:

(1). Interior Lots

Principal buildings shall have their primary front facades, provided with a main or everyday front entrance and windows, oriented toward and facing 2nd Street.

(2). Corner Lots

Principal buildings on lots fronting on more than one (1) public street shall have their primary front facades, provided with a main or everyday front entrance and windows, oriented towards and facing (in order of preference):

- (a). both 2nd Street and the intersecting street (excluding alleys); or
- (b). the corner.

2. Building Orientation Graphic Examples



L. Lot Access and Parking

1. For a lot proposed for development and abutting an alley, access to the lot shall not be taken from the front of a property to a public street.
 - a. Lot access shall be provided at the rear of lots from the alley for those lots abutting alleys.
 - b. No new curb cut for a driveway or access drive shall be provided along a public street for lots abutting alleys, and required off-street parking (lots and areas) shall:
 - (1). be provided in the rear of the principal building; and

- (2). not be located between the principal building and the public street (excluding alleys).
2. For a lot proposed for development that does not abut an alley, or for a lot proposed for development that abuts an alley where the majority of the existing adjacent lots on the same shared block face (between two [2] intersecting streets) along the same side of the street have access to the public street from the front of the lot, new lot access may be taken from the front of the lot via curb cuts for access drives and driveways in accordance with Part 4 of this Chapter and the standards below:
- a. Where sidewalks are installed, access drive or driveway surfacing shall end at the backside or building-side of the sidewalk and on the front-side or street side of the sidewalk, and no access drive or driveway surfacing shall extend over the sidewalk area.
 - b. However, no non-residential off-street parking (lots and areas) shall be located between the principal building and the public street (excluding alleys).
3. Lot Access Graphic Examples



4. Off-Street Parking Graphic Examples

