

EMERALD ISLAND SPECIAL DISTRICT DESIGN GUIDELINES
Adopted by the Planning Board on 8/17/16

It has been determined by the River Road Study Committee (RRSC) that additional guidance may be needed to ensure that all future buildings constructed in the Emerald Island Special District (I-EISD) are designed in a manner that reflects the vision and guiding principles established by the Committee. Both the Planning Board and Design Advisory Team should utilize this document to inform their discussions and decisions surrounding their design review of all buildings.

The I-(EISD) is a unique urban edge that serves as a gateway to the town and a dynamic transition point between neighborhoods, modes of transit and surrounding amenities. New buildings should be designed and built in a manner that reinforces an active and inviting public realm. Building design should strengthen the relationship between the built environment and the Emerald Necklace. Sustainability, synergy and porosity between existing and newly planned buildings should be emphasized.

1. Building Façade Zones

a. First Floor Façade Zone:

The first floor should be designed and treated as a seamless extension of the adjacent public sidewalk, providing for pedestrian circulation and/or other activities typically expected on a public sidewalk. The use of columns should be limited and should provide for ample space for accessible pedestrian passage on all sides.

b. Mid- Building Façade Zone Setbacks:

The portion of the building façade located approximately between 15’ and 65’ above the public way may be designated as a “build-to” zone, where the building facade may be located on or near the designated property line with the intent of establishing an articulated and visually interesting facade adjacent to the street.

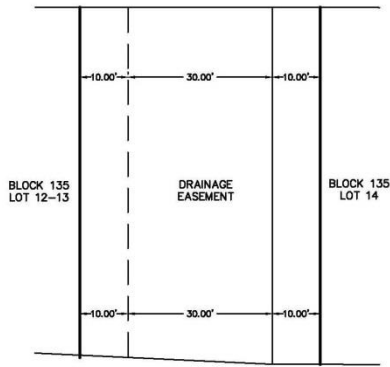
c. Upper Floor Façade Zone Setbacks:

In order to reduce any sense of unrelieved vertical rise, the upper floors above 65’ should taper or step back from the public way.

2. Mid-District Drainage Easement:

To provide additional visual interest and active use in the public realm, the mid-block area covering the Town’s drainage easement as shown in the Graphic 2.1 below should be preserved as space open to the general public. Amenities including, but not limited to, seating, trees, landscaping, planters, hardscape, and public art should be incorporated into the design. Where possible, the building façade should be setback from the easement to accommodate additional space open to the public.

BROOKLINE AVE



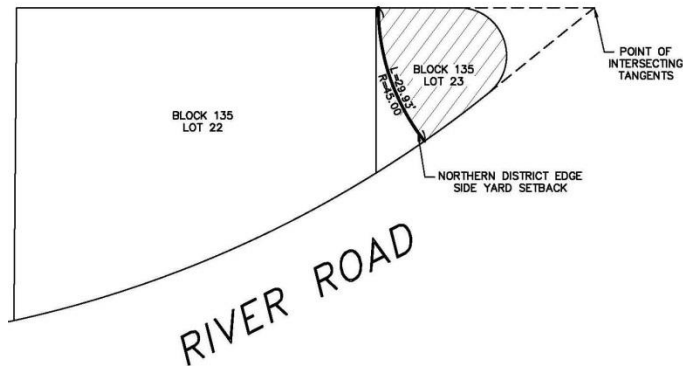
RIVER ROAD

Graphic 2.1 Mid-District Drainage Easement

3. Northern District Edge 100 Year Flood Plane Zone:

To provide additional visual interest and active use in the public realm, the currently undeveloped portion of the district located at the northern most end of the EISD as shown in graphic 3.1 below should be preserved as space open to the general public. Amenities including, but not limited to, seating, trees, landscaping, planters, hardscape, and public art should be incorporated into the design.

BROOKLINE AVE



Graphic 3.1 Northern District Edge

4. Building Design Elements:

- a) **Canopies.** In order to establish an appropriate and inviting relationship to the pedestrian realm at street level and create visual and varied interest for pedestrians, all new structures in the I-(EISD) may incorporate architectural features, awnings, marquees, or canopies, that project from the building face, subject to the provisions of section 7.00 of the Zoning By-law.

5. Vehicular Circulation, Access, and Parking:

To minimize vehicular access (curb cuts) on primary building frontages, to reinforce a clear hierarchy and organization of circulation, to maximize uninterrupted public sidewalks and minimize conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians, to minimize the visual presence of automobile circulation as well as service functions such as deliveries and refuse pick up by locating parking and service access away from primary building frontages, new buildings are encouraged to meet the following requirements:

- a. Curb cuts for driveways may be limited to a maximum of 15' in width for one-way access and 20' in width for two-way access;
- b. A maximum of one (1) curb cut per building should be allowed on the Brookline Avenue, and River Road frontages, respectively;
- c. Service and delivery activities should be separated whenever possible from the primary public access and screened from public view by means such as: locating underground, or locating internal to structures;
- d. Wherever possible, curb cuts and driveways should be shared between multiple projects;
- e. Parking structures should be designed to conceal the view of all parked cars and internal light sources from the adjacent public right of way or public open space for the full height of the structure;
- f. Facade openings which face any public right of way or open space should be vertically and horizontally aligned and the floors fronting on such facades should be level;
- g. Parking structures should utilize materials and architectural detailing found in the primary development being served;
- h. Where appropriate, shared walls between buildings should be connected and designed to accommodate shared parking and ramp access.

6. Architectural Scaling Elements:

To create a human-scaled and well detailed urban environment through the establishment of an organized composition of building massing, coherent architectural form, and detail; to provide for a pedestrian friendly environment through the provision of architectural character; to avoid thoughtless areas of undifferentiated building facades; to create building facades that

may feature changes in plane, material texture, and detail through the interplay of light and shadow; and to establish architectural scale patterns or features that relate to the context, all new buildings constructed in the I-(ESID) are encouraged to incorporate the following elements:

- a. Architectural elements should be used to provide scale to large building facades into architectural patterns and component building forms that may correspond to architectural or structural bay dimensions;
- b. Variation in building massing may include changes in wall plane or height and may relate to primary building entries, window openings, important corners, or other significant architectural features;
- c. Variation in building massing and detail should relate to the scale and function of the context of surrounding buildings and to pedestrian-oriented uses along the street.

7. Fenestration:

To provide a high degree of transparency at the lower levels of building facades; to insure the visibility of pedestrian active uses; to provide an active, human scaled architectural experience along the street; to establish a pattern of individual windows at upper floors that provide a greater variety of scale through fenestration patterns, material variation, detail, and surface relief, fenestration in the I-(EISD) should meet the following guidelines.

- a. A majority of the ground floor facade should be constructed of transparent materials, or otherwise designed to allow pedestrians to view activities inside the building or displays related to those activities;
- b. Transparent glazing on upper floors is encouraged;
- c. The location and patterns of glazing should enhance building function and scale;
- d. Recessed glazing, glass framing, and mullion patterns should be used to provide depth and substance to the building facade and should consider the play of sunlight across the façade where appropriate.

8. Building Materials:

To encourage human-scale buildings through the use of material modules and to ensure the consistent use of high quality materials appropriate to the urban environment, buildings in the I-(EISD) may incorporate the following materials and detailing as appropriate:

- a. Masonry, including stone, brick, terra cotta, architectural precast concrete, cast stone and prefabricated brick panels;
- b. Architectural metals, including metal panel systems, metal sheets with expressed seams, metal framing systems, or cut, stamped or cast, ornamental metal panels;
- c. Glass and glass block;
- d. Glazing systems may utilize framing and mullion systems that provide scale and surface relief;

- e. Building materials used at the lower floors adjacent to street frontage should respond to the character of the pedestrian environment through such qualities as scale, texture, color and detail;
- f. Building materials should be selected with the objectives of quality and durability appropriate within an urban context;
- g. Carefully detailed selections of materials should reinforce architectural scaling requirements.

9. Building Entries:

Building entries should enhance the identity, scale, activity, transparency and function of the public streets and should be designed in accordance with the following criteria:

- a. All buildings should provide at least one primary building entry orientated directly to a public street;
- b. All pedestrian active uses with street level, exterior exposure should provide at least one direct pedestrian entry from the street;
- c. Primary building entries should be emphasized through changes in wall plane or building massing, differentiation in material and/or color, greater level of detail, and enhanced lighting as well as permanent signage;
- d. Entries to ground floor uses should be direct and as numerous as possible to encourage active pedestrian use.

10. Roofs:

- a. All rooftop building systems should be incorporated into the building form in a manner integral to the building architecture in terms of form and material;
- b. All mechanical, electrical and telecommunications systems should be screened from view and should minimize audible sound impacts from the surrounding streets and structures;
- c. The architecture of the building's upper floors and termination should complete the building form within an overall design concept for the base, middle, and top that works in concert with architectural scaling requirements, use and functionality of the building;
- d. Roof form should consider and respect the context in which it is viewed (in terms of height, proportions, use, form, and materials);
- e. Roofs tops should be designed to accommodate useable open space;
- f. Design should emphasize sustainability and resiliency in the form of green roofs, reflective white covering and rainwater harvesting.