

**VILLAGE OF HOLMEN  
LA CROSSE COUNTY, WISCONSIN**

**ORDINANCE 4-2012**

**AN ORDINANCE CREATING ARTICLE XVI OF THE CODE OF THE VILLAGE OF HOLMEN**

BE IT ORDAINED by the Village Board of Trustees, Village of Holmen, La Crosse County, Wisconsin as follows:

**Section 1.** Article XVI is hereby created to read as follows:

ARTICLE XVI  
Site Plan and Architectural Review

Sec. 195-65. Establishment.

There is hereby established a Site Plan and Architectural Review Board for the Village of Holmen, for the purpose of implementing the goals and purposes of the Comprehensive Plan, promoting compatible developments, aesthetics, stability of property values and to prevent impairment or depreciation of existing developments. The Site Plan and Architectural Review (SPAR) Board shall consist of the seven members of the Village of Holmen Planning Commission, as appointed by the Village President, subject to confirmation by the Village Board. The Planning Commission, when operating and acting as the SPAR Board, shall operate in accordance with the provisions of this Article. No commercial (business), industrial (manufacturing), multi-family (defined as three or more residential units), or institutional structure (public or private), shall be erected, moved, reconstructed, extended or have its exterior altered or changed without the SPAR Board's approval. Very small accessory structures (i.e. fences, very small signs, etc.) and very minor exterior alterations may be exempted by the Administrator or his designee from SPAR Board review; however the Administrator or his designee may at any time request a determination by the SPAR Board.

Sec. 195-66. Powers.

The Planning Commission, operating and acting as the SPAR Board, shall have the power to:

- A. Hear and decide development applications for building plans and site plans, for permission to erect, move, reconstruct, extend, alter or change: the exterior, landscape, location of HVAC and utilities, signage and lighting for all commercial, industrial, multi-family and institutional uses.
- B. Direct architectural design to conform to a particular form and style, as specified in applicable sections of the Comprehensive Plan and of the zoning code (such as overlay districts, or areas requiring design sensitivity, i.e. when in close proximity to highways, the central village core and residential development).
- C. Require more restrictive or stringent standards than those of the zoning district in which the development is located so as to meet the intent to this Article and the goals of the Comprehensive Plan.
- D. Approve, deny or conditionally approve the application and may request such modifications as it may deem necessary to carry out the purpose of this Article.

- E. Request assistance from other municipal officers, departments, boards and commissions.
- F. Request the applicant to furnish additional information.
- G. Hear and decide on applications for building and/or occupancy permits pertaining to significant historic structures, sites or features.

Sec. 195-67. Principles.

To implement and define criteria for implementing the goals and the purposes set forth in the Village's Comprehensive Plan, the following principles are established:

- A. No building or sign shall be permitted the design or exterior appearance of which is of such unorthodox or abnormal character in relation to its surroundings as to be unsightly or offensive to generally accepted taste and community standards.
- B. No building or sign shall be permitted the design or exterior appearance of which is so similar with those within reasonable proximity as to create excessive monotony or drabness.
- C. No building or sign shall be permitted where any exposed façade is constructed or faced with a finished material which is aesthetically incompatible with the other façades and which presents an unattractive appearance to the public and to surrounding properties.
- D. No building or sign shall be permitted to be sited on the property in a manner which would unnecessarily destroy or substantially damage the natural beauty of the area, particularly insofar as it would adversely affect values incident to ownership of land in that area; or which would unnecessarily have an adverse effect on the beauty and general enjoyment of existing structures on adjoining properties.
- E. Development and redevelopment shall be consistent with the public goals, objectives, principles, standards, policies and design guidelines set forth in the adopted Village Comprehensive Plan or components thereof to accomplish the creation of the Village's visual identity.
- F. The use or uses proposed in the development must be either permitted or conditional uses in the zoning district in which the development is located.
- G. Any accessory use or uses proposed in the development shall conform to the allowable accessory uses in the zoning district in which the development is located.
- H. All submitted plans shall at a minimum conform to all other applicable standards of the Village Municipal Code.

Sec. 195-68. Guidelines.

The following design guidelines are established for all development applications for commercial, industrial, multi-family and institutional uses:

A. Building design.

- (1) Architectural style is not restricted; however, structures shall be consistent or compatible with the surrounding area. Compatibility may be achieved through the use of various visual architectural elements such as similar rooflines, building orientations, forms/shapes, proportions (scale and mass), door and window patterns (fenestration), textures, materials, colors and other architectural detailing. Building lighting, signage and mechanical equipment also shall be presented as an integral part of the building design and shall not detract from the architectural style of the building.
- (2) The composition of major building elements such as massing, rooflines, colors and material shall complement and contribute to a desirable community identity.
- (3) Colors shall be harmonious and relate to the overall site and to the village as a whole. Bright complementary colors may be used for highlighting purposes (accenting) provided such colors do not overbear the integrity of the building façade.
- (4) Rooftop mechanical equipment, trash/dumpster areas, and other utility hardware located on the site shall be screened from public view with building and landscape material or be located in a manner that is unobtrusive.
- (5) No rows of garage doors for multifamily uses and no overhead service doors or loading docks shall face a public street. The SPAR Board may allow such features to face a public street when it finds that there is no feasible alternative orientation for such doors or docks and, insofar as is practicable, such doors and docks facing public streets are to be screened with landscaping and/or softened by architectural detailing.
- (6) Accessory buildings and structures shall be compatible with the principal building in terms of building façade character, roof shapes, materials, colors and architectural details.

B. Exterior building materials.

- (1) Materials shall be consistent or compatible with the architectural character of the village and shall be consistent with the surrounding area. Where the proposed materials are dissimilar to prevailing materials used on existing buildings in the area, other characteristics such as form, proportion, texture, color and detailing shall be utilized to ensure that adequate similarity exists for the building to be compatible, despite the use of different materials.
- (2) Materials shall be of durable quality.
- (3) The façades of buildings shall be finished with an aesthetically pleasing material(s) such as natural or cultured stone, brick, wood, glass panels, or ornate masonry materials, except where the building style requires a different material. No plain concrete-block or plain concrete-panel buildings or smooth or corrugated metal-faced buildings that are devoid of an architectural merit or character, except those with an attractive finished surface listed above, may be allowed.
- (4) Building façades clad with a single exterior surface material shall provide some additional architectural design elements to break up the plane of large faceless and/or nondescript walls. This may be achieved by architectural design treatments consistent with the principal building design.

C. Lighting standards.

- (1) All exterior parking areas must be illuminated.
- (2) Illuminating curb cuts and entrances to parking areas is encouraged.
- (3) All exterior lighting shall be energy efficient and shall be located, oriented and of an intensity to illuminate only the building site or lot, where located, without detrimentally affecting activity on adjacent sites or lots or traffic on streets and highways.

- (4) Lighting shall not be located on the roofs of buildings. Any lights affixed to a building shall be oriented downward at an angle from the vertical so as to light only areas of the site.
- (5) Lights may not flash, pulsate, be so bright as to impair or hinder vision on public streets or adjacent building sites, or otherwise constitute a nuisance.
- (6) Mixing of lighting types (i.e. sodium vapor, incandescent, mercury vapor and metal halide) shall be avoided.
- (7) Integration of similar lighting fixtures is encouraged.
- (8) Exterior lighting shall not shine on or adversely impact neighboring properties or streets.
- (9) Exterior lighting components such as fixtures, standards and exposed accessories should be consistent with the overall site design.
- (10) The height of exterior lighting fixtures shall be compatible with the scale of adjacent buildings.

D. Landscaping.

- (1) Landscape design shall be integrated with the overall site plan and not be considered merely as an afterthought. Interesting or creative landscape architectural designs that use a diverse variety of plants integrated with other landscaping materials or features should be provided to avoid uncreative and monotonous landscaping.
- (2) Landscape plans shall be well-planned and effective in the following areas: along street frontages, within and around paved parking areas and within buffer yards as screening for adjoining properties.
- (3) Terrace/street trees shall be planted to provide a street frontage buffer.
- (4) Paved parking areas shall be landscaped in order to minimize the impact of large expanses of pavement. Large paved areas shall include well-designed landscape islands. Planter islands shall contain trees and shrubs. Parking areas shall also be screened along the periphery to soften the impact for adjoining properties. Parking areas shall be curbed and control site storm water.
- (5) Landscaping shall be used to screen loading areas, dumpsters and mechanical equipment from public view; or they shall be located so as not to be visible from public ways. If landscaping materials are used, they shall form an immediate, solid and continuous screen. Solid fencing with landscaping as an accent may be necessary to totally screen loading areas, trash dumpster areas or mechanical equipment from view.
- (6) Trees and shrubs shall not create blind spots along traffic ways for pedestrians or vehicular traffic.
- (7) In addition to the minimum landscaping and greenspace required in the zoning district in which the development is located, the site plan and landscape plan shall provide suitable greenspace and landscaping to conform to the overall intent of this Article's site plan and architectural review standards.
- (8) Fences shall be constructed of material, and shall be sized and located in a manner, that shall complement the building and adjacent properties.

E. Signage.

- (1) Signs shall be consistent or compatible with the architectural character of the principal building and/or the surrounding area.
- (2) Every sign shall be considered within its setting and designed according to the scale and proportions in which it will be viewed.
- (3) The mass of an awning used as a sign shall not dominate the façade of the building to which it is attached.
- (4) Freestanding signs shall be appropriately landscaped, however and whenever possible.

Sec. 195-69. Applications for review.

Applications for review by the SPAR Board shall be made to the Administrator and shall be accompanied by the following required documents that shall include and identify: the exterior elevations of the existing and proposed structure, description of the proposed materials and color schemes, the overall site plan (also identifying loading areas, any outside storage and any accessory structures), the HVAC and utility locations, the parking plan, the landscaping plan, the storm water plan, the signage plan, the lighting plan, and when necessary, a floor plan.

A. Process.

- (1) Applicants shall be responsible for all required submittal information. Applications that are considered incomplete shall NOT proceed to the SPAR Board for consideration.
- (2) The Administrator or his designee, shall determine if the application requires review, as a very small accessory structure or very minor exterior alteration, may be exempted from this process.
- (3) Should an application require SPAR Board review, the applicant is encouraged to work with village staff to formalize a final application. Necessary village departments shall review preliminary proposals and submit comments and recommendations to the applicant. At the request of the applicant or village staff, and to expedite the process, a meeting or meetings may be held to discuss the review comments and recommendations toward creating a final application consistent with this Article.
- (4) Following preliminary discussions, and review of comments and recommendations, village staff or the applicant MAY request a preliminary concept or feedback review from the Planning Commission; to informally review a specific part of or the concept of the total application. The applicant shall submit twelve (12) plans or sets of plans (11"x17") to be reviewed, as requested by the Administrator, at least ten full days prior to the Planning Commission meeting. Such discussion with the Planning Commission shall only be informational and shall not be considered a final review of the acting SPAR Board.
- (5) Any resubmittal of plans submitted by the applicant in response to a preliminary review with staff or with the Planning Commission, shall be reviewed by village staff within two weeks of resubmittal.
- (6) Final review of application and appearance before the SPAR Board requires twelve (12) complete sets (11"x17") of all revised and final documents as identified in this section. Applicant shall submit a complete formal application at least ten full days prior to the regularly scheduled meeting of the Planning Commission (SPAR Board).
- (7) Village staff shall review the formal submittal for compliance with the results of the preliminary review process and may present a final recommendation to the SPAR Board.
- (8) The SPAR Board shall approve, approve with conditions or deny the formal review application within 60 days of submittal, or the process may be extended via written approval of the applicant.
- (9) Where a rezoning of property is required, and the rezoning occurs concurrently with the site plan and architectural review process, this process may be adjusted to conform with the requirement of a public hearing at the plan commission level and review and consideration of the rezoning by the Village Board.
- (10) The SPAR Board shall issue a decision, which shall be considered the final meeting for the application and the decision shall be binding upon the applicant.

Sec. 195-70. Findings and modifications.

The SPAR Board shall not approve any application unless it finds that the purposes and guidelines set forth in this Article have been reasonably met. In certain situations, the SPAR Board may allow modifications or grant exceptions to the guidelines set forth in this Article on the basis of compelling architectural merit, or where the

strict application or adherence to established guidelines may be impractical or impossible due to site conditions or other circumstances beyond the control of the applicant.

Sec. 195-71. Decision.

The SPAR Board shall hear and decide all applications during the regularly scheduled meeting of the Planning Commission, and action on such decision shall be considered the final meeting for the application. In approving, approving with conditions or denial of a Site Plan and Architectural Review application, the SPAR Board shall state their findings toward approval or denial based on the intent and review criteria of this Article. The findings of the SPAR Board shall be indicated in the minutes of its proceedings and shall be a public record. For those elements of an application that have been approved by the SPAR Board, building permits may be reasonably issued. After approval, it is the applicant's responsibility to apply for and submit required information for a building permit, separate from this site plan and architectural review process.

Sec. 195-72. Appeals.

Any person aggrieved by any decisions of the SPAR Board may appeal the decision to the Village's Zoning Board of Appeals. Such appeal shall be filed with the clerk within 30 days after filing of the decision with the clerk.

Sec. 195-73. Penalty.

Any person who violates any provision of this Article shall be required to forfeit not less than fifty dollars (\$50) nor more than five hundred dollars (\$500) plus costs, for each violation. Each consecutive day in which the violation has not been remedied, shall be considered as a new violation subject to further penalty, up to a maximum of five thousand dollars (\$5,000).

Sec. 195-74. Severability.

The provisions of this Article are severable. If any provision of this Article is held to be invalid or unconstitutional or if the application of any provision of this Article to any person or circumstance is held to be invalid or unconstitutional, such holding shall not affect the other provisions or applications of this Article which can be given effect without the valid or unconstitutional provisions or applications. It is hereby declared to be the intent of the Village Board that this Article would have been adopted had any invalid or unconstitutional provision or applications not been included herein.

**Section 2.** Effective Date. This ordinance shall become effective on the date of passage, following publication.

Date introduced, approved and adopted: May 10, 2012

VILLAGE OF HOLMEN

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Nancy Proctor, Village President

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Angela Hornberg, Clerk/Treasurer