



**MINUTES
TOWN OF AMHERST
DESIGN ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
May 28, 2026
6:00 PM**

DRAFT

The regular meeting of the Town of Amherst Design Advisory Board was called to order by Chair O'Rourke on Thursday, May 28, 2026 at 6:10 pm in the Council Chambers of the Town of Amherst Municipal Building, 5583 Main Street, Williamsville, New York.

ROLL CALL

Attendee Name	Organization	Title	Status	Arrived
Duncan M. Black	Town of Amherst	Vice Chairperson	Absent	
Jonathan O'Rourke	Town of Amherst	Chairperson	Present	
Marissa Colucci	Town of Amherst	Member	Present	
Peter Talty	Town of Amherst	Member	Present	
Tracy Conhiser-Uy	Town of Amherst	Member	Absent	
Anne Dafchik	Town of Amherst	Architect	Present	
Dan Howard	Town of Amherst	Planning Director	Present	
Gary Palumbo	Town of Amherst	Associate Planner	Present	
Rachel Boerschig	Town of Amherst	Clerk-Typist	Present	

MINUTES APPROVAL

March 26, 2026

Mr. O'Rourke moved to adjourn the minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Talty and carried. Ayes 3, Noes 0, Abstain 0, Absent 2 (Black, Conhiser-Uy).

DESIGN REVIEW APPLICATIONS

None.

MISCELLANEOUS

3.1. CONTINUE REVIEW OF DESIGN GUIDELINES

Gary Palumbo, Associate Planner, and Anne Dafchik, Town Architect, presented their proposed changes to the Design Guidelines for Mixed-Use Districts ("Design Guidelines"). They also presented comments from Mr. Black who submitted comments in advance of his absence.

B-5 – STREET LEVEL INTEREST

The Board discussed how to reword the intent statement to concisely state that petitioners should enhance the pedestrian experience to encourage more foot traffic.

B-5a – Interesting Building Design

Ms. Dafchik suggested several changes to this subsection with a focus on the materials, not methods. The Board felt the separate guidelines for residential and commercial projects could be combined. Zoning code would address important distinctions, such as dimensional standards and transparency. The applicability of the guidelines not determined by code to a residential or commercial project would be determined by the Board.

B-5b – Landscaping Along Ground Floor

The Board opted to keep underutilized guidelines. The caption of the image could be reworded to a broader reference.

B-6 – SUSTAINABLE BUILDING FEATURES

Mr. Palumbo noted that subsection A-6 is how the site's design should be sustainable whilst this subsection is how the design of the building(s) should be sustainable. No changes were made to this intent statement other than to add "green roofs."

B-6a – Reduce and Reuse Water

The Board decided to make minor changes to the subsection for clarification. Per Mr. Black's written comment, they agreed that the exemplar image should be replaced with a less industrial-styled example.

B-6b – Reduce and Generate Energy

The Board decided to make minor changes including the addition of reducing the effects of "heat islands."

B-7 – BUILDING MATERIALS

Although some projects have more surrounding context to be compatible with than others, all areas have some consistent building language. So, the intent statement should be applicable to all projects unless the Board determines otherwise for a specific case.

B-7a – Quality, Durable Materials

The Board agreed to add other materials, including composite panels. They discussed discouraging vinyl panels but agreed there are designs where vinyl elements are appropriate.

B-7b – Responsibly Sourced Building Materials

Ms. Dafchik suggested that the guideline should include some references, but not a hyperlink.

B-7c – Seeable Facades Should Match Front

The Board decided to reword this subsection to be more restrictive so that any side being viewed from a public location should have the same level of design details. This includes the front façade and any facades that front walkways but also facades that face streets without pedestrian access.

B-7d – Discourage Decorative Masonry Materials

The Board determined this was too restrictive and opted to remove the subsection.

B-7e – Exterior Materials Consistent with Existing

No changes to this subsection.

B-7f – Exterior Insulation Finish System (EIFS)

The Board decided to add vinyl siding and stone or brick stick-on panels due to their lack of durability. They also opted to remove the explicit reference to the Board's discretion.

C – PUBLIC REALM GUIDELINES

Mr. Palumbo clarified that this section refers to spaces in the right-of-way, generally for large-scale, multi-stage projects. None of the reviewed projects included the creation of new public streets so this section has been mostly irrelevant.

The Board asked to review the master plan of any such projects in their purview as they believed it would be necessary to determine the implementation of these guidelines.

C-1 – OPEN SPACE

Noted that this section is not applicable to Traditional Infill Districts.

C-1a – Centrally Located Open Spaces

Noted that this section is limited to large multi-block developments.

C-1b – Contribute to other Open Space

No changes to this subsection.

C-1c – Ease of Public Access

No changes to this subsection.

C-1d – Proportionate in Scale to Context

No changes to this subsection.

C-1e – Existing Features and Systems

No changes to this subsection.

C-1f – Design for a Variety of Uses

No changes to this subsection.

C-1g – Incorporate Pedestrian Amenities

No changes to this subsection.

C-2 – SIDEWALK

Mr. Palumbo noted this guideline refers to sidewalks within the right-of-way, not internal walkways.

C-2a – Coordinate Building Elements

No changes to this subsection.

C-2b – Sidewalk Scaled to Context

Opted to delete "elements."

C-2c – Exterior Amenities to Connect to Interior

No changes to this subsection.

C-2d – Surface Materials to Complement Architecture

No changes to this subsection.

C-3 – CURB ZONE

Clarified that the curb zone is in the right-of-way. The Board agreed to add subsection C-3c to encourage a distinction to the curb zone through features such as landscaping, decorative concrete, or the use of other textures and materials.

C-3a – Streetscape Amenities at Curb Zone

No changes to this subsection.

C-3b – Landscaping at Curb Zone

No changes to this subsection.

3.2. SEPTEMBER DESIGN ADVISORY BOARD MEETING RESCHEDULING

Gary Palumbo, Associate Planner, presented options to move the September Design Advisory Board meeting due the Planning Board meeting being delayed to the same date and time.

The present Board members considered options. They agreed to not take the Planning Board's original meeting date. For a final decision, they agreed the full Board should be involved.

OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

The Design Advisory Board meeting of May 28, 2026 was adjourned at 7:45 pm.