

Village of Parish
DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Introduction

Parish, like many small villages in New York State, has suffered from the gradual decline of its commercial core, including the loss of retail businesses, the disappearance of buildings and the general deterioration of the streetscape. The construction of a new municipal building is an opportunity to provide a physical and institutional anchor at the village’s main intersection.

Before 1950, the streetscape in most cities and villages was shaped by general design standards which were unofficially accepted and widely applied. At its best, the pre-automobile street consisted of a walkable comfortable civic space lined with a regular arrangement of building facades designed to express each building’s function and the owner’s pride. After 1950, the emphasis in both planning and architectural design increasingly emphasized efficiency and the accommodation of vehicular transportation. As the pre-auto planning principles were abandoned, the quality of the civic and pedestrian environment found in most communities declined. Although the needs of a car-based society can not be ignored, the reintroduction of traditional planning and design principles can improve the attractiveness of modern streets. We recommend considering these issues during the design of the new Parish Municipal Building.

Understanding traditional compositional tools can help create a building which fits in with the village of Parish and complements its existing streetscape. Although we recommend considering the following principles, not all of the elements described can or should be incorporated into a new municipal building design.

Form, Massing, and Orientation

Most buildings in the village have a simple block-like massing with a primary facade, containing the main entrance, parallel to the street. Parish’s central business district or downtown has historically been defined by buildings with minimal or no setback.



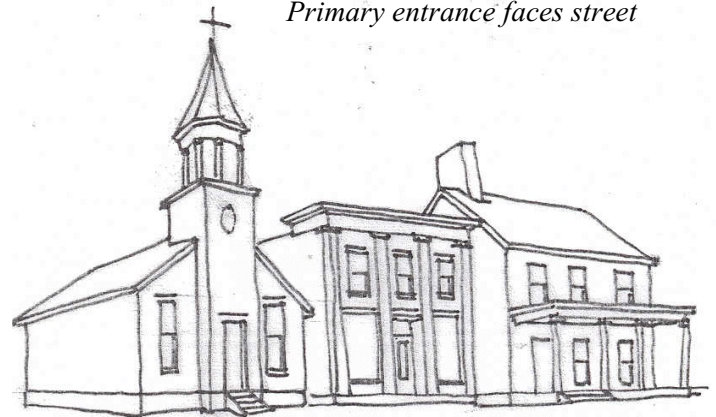
*Block-like massing
Consistent setbacks
Primary entrance faces street*

Designing the new municipal building in accordance with these general characteristics will enhance the definition and visual quality of Parish’s commercial district.

Facade

The development of a principal facade is an opportunity to give a physical expression to the building’s function. Facades are particularly important for public buildings.

A carefully considered, dignified facade, expressing the civic values of the community, will enrich the character of Parish’s downtown.



Physical expression of function

STREETSCAPE STUDIES, East Main Street, Parish, New York
Bero Architecture P.C. prepared a set of Design Principles to guide alterations, new construction, and the integration of a new municipal building into the village’s historic downtown district.