

CHAPTER I

COMPONENTS OF THE CODE

The New Urban Code has five sections: the REGULATING PLANS, the BUILDING PLACEMENT STANDARDS, the ARCHITECTURAL STANDARDS, the STREETScape STANDARDS, and the APPROVAL PROCESS. These five sections work together as guidance for future development of the County, its cities and communities.

A. REGULATING PLANS

REGULATING PLANS are the "master plans" for cities, neighborhoods and villages in the County that provide specific information for the disposition of each property or lot.

The REGULATING PLANS show how each building contributes to the larger neighborhood and town and show the arrangement of the PUBLIC SPACE (STREETS, GREENS, parks, greenbelts, etc.) in relation to private space. For lots in special locations, there may be additional design guidelines. The *Neighborhood* and the *Street* are the key aspects that make small town life such a desirable and extraordinary place to live. Such a plan is devised for the Lexington Street corridor (including downtown Versailles) and the Versailles Center in Versailles discussed during the citizen workshops, and for the SMALL COMMUNITY of Mortonsville as a rural community prototype.

B. BUILDING PLACEMENT STANDARDS

The goal of the BUILDING PLACEMENT STANDARDS is to shape good PUBLIC SPACE (STREETS, CIVIC GREENS, parks, etc.) and healthy outdoor *private space* (yards and gardens). These STANDARDS control the aspects of private buildings that pertain to the PUBLIC SPACE and aim for the minimum level of control necessary to meet that goal.

The BUILDING PLACEMENT STANDARDS set the basic parameters governing building form, including the envelope for building placement (in three dimensions) and certain required/permitted building elements, such as porches, balconies, and fences. They establish both the boundaries within which things *may* be done and specific things that *must* be done. Variances to the BUILDING PLACEMENT STANDARDS can be granted only where the unique physical circumstance of a lot makes compliance impossible (while satisfying the intent of the Standard).

C. ARCHITECTURAL STANDARDS

The goal of the ARCHITECTURAL STANDARDS is a coherent and pleasing architectural character that is appropriate for the region's culture and climate. The ARCHITECTURAL STANDARDS govern a building's architectural elements and set the parameters for materials, configurations, and construction techniques. *Equivalent or better* products than those specified are always encouraged.

D. STREETScape STANDARDS

These Standards set the parameters for the planting and maintenance of STREET TREES on or near each lot. An innovative technique called the GARDEN EASEMENT is also recommended for use as a voluntary agreement in neighborhoods with small lots.

E. APPROVAL PROCESS

The adoption of this Code entails changes to the Zoning Ordinance and the permitting process for individual buildings and multi-lot developments. The Code is intended to be prescriptive rather than proscriptive – it states what is desired instead of what is not wanted – and advocates that development should occur by-right rather than under special conditional approval.

F. HOW TO USE THIS CODE

A “walk” through the Code illustrates its applicability for building a single structure or for designing a development. For both processes, the REGULATING PLAN is the first document to be consulted. From this plan, the pertinent BUILDING PLACEMENT STANDARD is derived and then followed during project design. The ARCHITECTURAL STANDARDS are followed regardless of location or building type, and the STREETScape STANDARDS will differ for changes to existing structures versus new development. Each of these components is examined in tandem as the property owner designs his or her house or development, with the outcome of a design that is mindful of its surroundings.