

Site and Landscaping

Bennington's character comes not only from buildings, but from their surroundings as well. Features such as fencing, walkways, lighting, trees, lawns and other plantings are as much a part of the town as the buildings themselves. Marble walkways are especially important as characteristic local features, and they are becoming increasingly scarce. Lawns and plantings become more important as areas of pavement and parking lots increase. Protecting and adding to such site and landscape features is crucial to maintaining the sense of history and place in Bennington.

Basic Guideline

Maintain significant site and landscaping features such as fencing, walkways, trees, lawns and other plantings. Avoid parking lots or other paved areas which are highly visible or which destroy older site features. Avoid installing electrical lighting fixtures which are incompatible with the scale and style of existing buildings, or which produce a light which is too strong or harsh.



Fig. 5-57: 213 Main St. Small shrubs along the foundation of the building still allow sunlight, ventilation and access for maintenance.



Fig. 5-59: 207 Depot St. The chain link fence here does not match the character of the house. A wooden picket fence would be more appropriate.



Fig. 5-56: 217 Main St. The large bush to the right of this house has overgrown and may cause moisture damage to the exterior.



Fig. 5-58: 137 Benmont Ave. When larger trees cannot be saved, new ones should be planted to replace them.



Fig. 5-60: 204 Main St. These hedges have been trimmed to keep from overwhelming the porch, but could be trimmed more in the back to prevent water damage to the porch.

Preservation Guidelines: Site & Landscaping

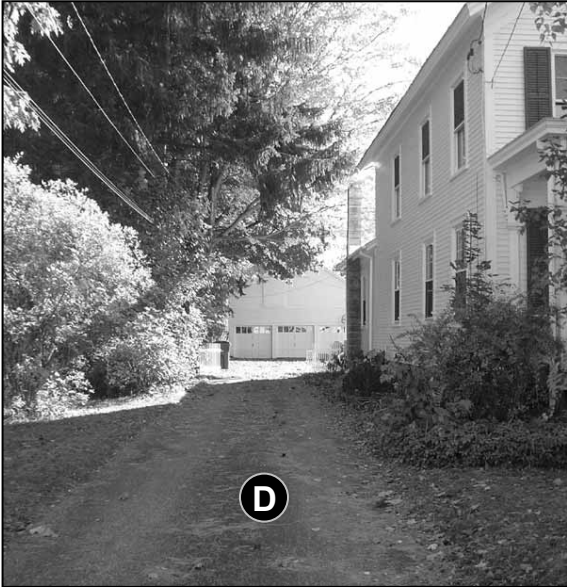


Fig. 5-61: 216 Elm St. This driveway leads around to the back of the house, where a parking area and garage are concealed in the rear.

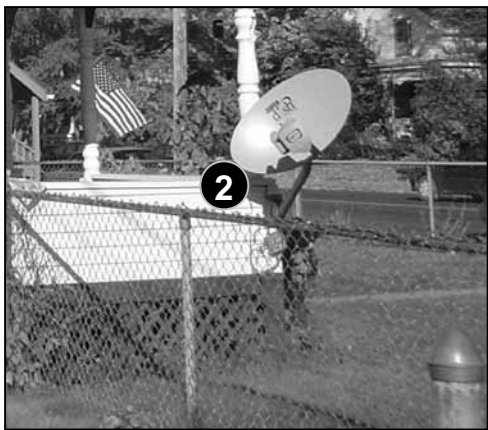


Fig. 5-62: 138 River St. Satellite dishes, chain link fences and similar modern devices should not be plainly visible from the front of the property.



Fig. 5-63: Corner of Weeks & Jefferson. Although the electric meter has to be accessible, it doesn't need to be so visible.

Appropriate

- A** Keeping existing trees and plantings in healthy condition, and replacing missing ones to fill in gaps.
- B** Removing inappropriate plantings which obscure buildings or endanger them by collecting water, growing into walls or preventing proper maintenance.
- C** Keeping existing historic features such as stone or brick walkways and wood or iron fencing.
- D** Locating driveways, parking lots and other paved areas unobtrusively to the side or rear of buildings, and screening them with trees and carefully designed plantings where possible.
- E** Replacing inappropriate features such as chain link or split rail fences with features more in keeping with historic precedent, such as painted board or picket fences.

Not Appropriate

- 1** Removing mature or healthy trees and other plantings which contribute to a site's character.
- 2** Installing utilitarian devices such as chain link fences, satellite dishes, electric meters clearly visible at the front of the building.
- 3** Allowing bushes or trees to grow such that they obscure buildings, collect water and cause damage to the foundation and wall surfaces of the building.
- 4** Adding new walks, driveways or parking lots which are in highly visible areas or out of scale with their surroundings.
- 5** Removing historic walkways or fences.



Fig. 5-64: North St. This large parking lot is clearly visible from the sidewalk, and should be screened more properly.