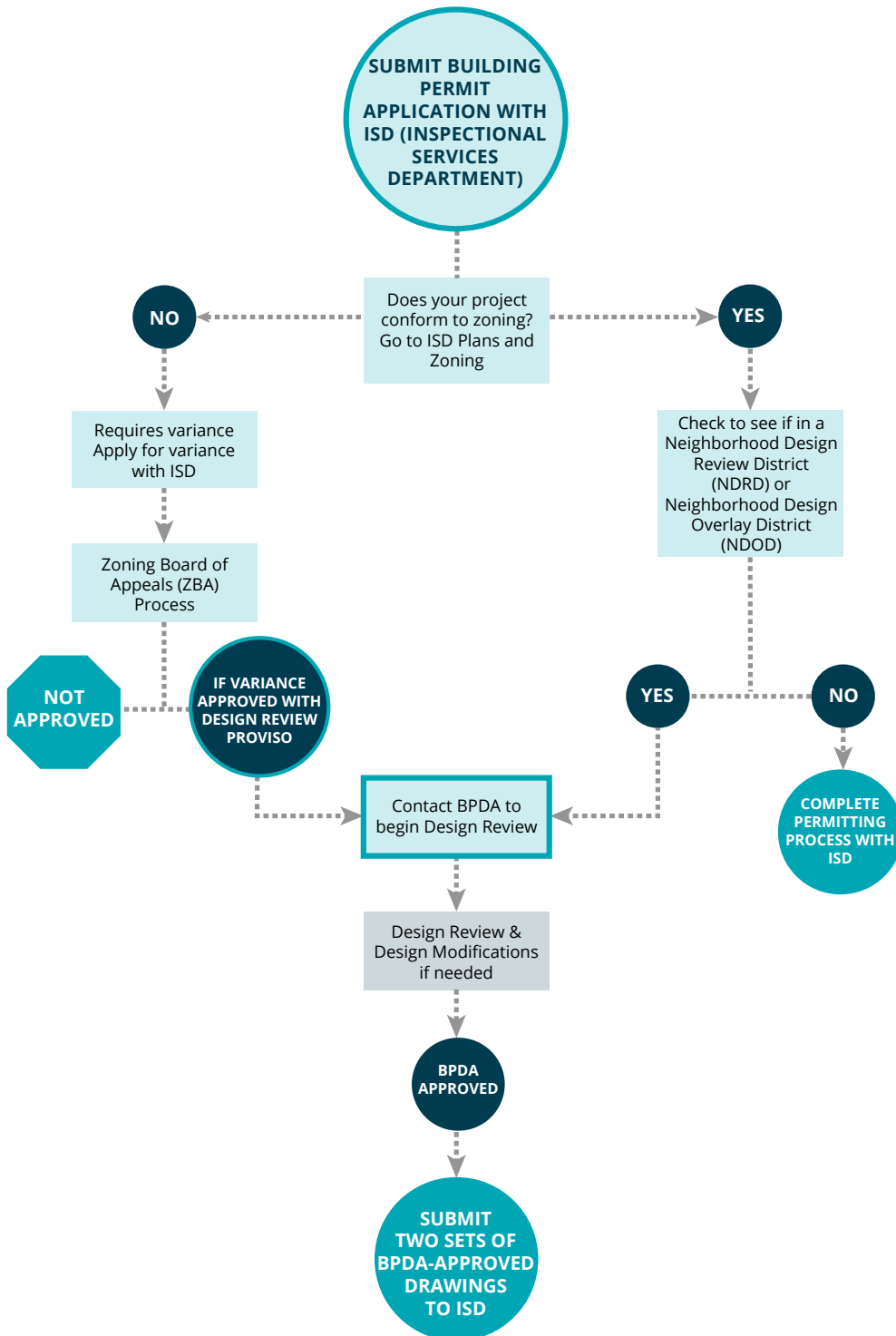


# ZBA-BPDA Design Review

## ► PURPOSE OF DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS + NEXT STEPS

The purpose of Zoning Board of Appeal (ZBA) - Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA) design review is to ensure that the design of the proposed exterior alterations, additions or new construction is compatible with, and enhances the existing character of the immediate neighborhood. Please follow this guide to help expedite BPDA design review approval.



- 1 SET UP DESIGN REVIEW MEETING WITH BPDA
- 2 Contact the BPDA design review staff assigned to review the project (see below).
- 3 Identify your size/type of project from the descriptions on the back of this page.
- 4 Come prepared with the required documentation. You may also submit your plans and photos over email.
- 5 If the project also requires approval from another City Commission/ Dept., please bring the appropriate approvals along.
- 6 At each stage of review, the BPDA staff assigned to the case will respond within 5 business days of your correspondence/submission to determine next steps in approval process. Phone calls will be returned within 1 business day.

### YOUR BPDA DESIGN REVIEW CONTACT IS:

- Michael Cannizzo  
617-918-4386  
michael.cannizzo@boston.gov
- Matthew Martin  
617-918-4235  
matthew.martin@boston.gov
- Alexa Pinard  
617-918-4273  
alexa.pinard@boston.gov
- Meera Deean  
617-918-4356  
meera.deean@boston.gov
- Meghan Richard  
617-918-4258  
meghan.richard@boston.gov
- Marcus Mello  
617-918-4496  
marcus.mello@boston.gov
- Natalie Punzak  
617-918-4471  
natalie.punzak@boston.gov

# Submission requirements by Project Size and Type

## BPDA DESIGN REVIEW IS INTENDED TO ADDRESS THE FOLLOWING:

1. What is the existing context of the site, building and adjoining neighborhood?
2. What specifically is being proposed and how can it be best laid out on the site?
3. What will the proposed exterior changes look like when the work is completed?
4. What will be the impact of these changes on the abutting properties and neighborhood?
5. Is the proposed addition or new construction compatible with the character of the neighborhood?
6. How well does the proposed design maintain and improve the existing neighborhood context and character?

## SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

1. The visual documentation listed below is required to expedite BPDA design review for projects approved by the Zoning Board of Appeals with a BPDA Design Review Proviso.
2. Submissions sent via email must be in a PDF format. The preferred formats for photos is jpeg. All photos and drawings must be labeled with property address, date, and appropriate description (e.g., "view from street", "site plan" etc.). Photographs must depict the property in question along with abutting properties to clearly indicate the surrounding context.

### › NEW CONSTRUCTION OR MAJOR REHABILITATION

(COMMERCIAL OR RESIDENTIAL)

- Current photographs of existing site conditions and adjoining properties.
- A certified Plot Plan (Existing Conditions).
- Site Plan to scale indicating proposed building layout, adjacent buildings, relationship to street(s), site access and egress locations, and on-site parking.
- Building Floor Plans indicating interior layout.
- Building Elevations of all sides of the building.
- A Landscape Plan indicating appropriate screening, street edge treatment; specify plant species, sizes, number, spacing, and locations.
- Indicate all proposed signage location and details.
- All plans must be drawn to scale.

### › CHANGE OF OCCUPANCY ONLY

(WITH NO EXTERIOR ALTERATIONS)

- Current photographs of the existing site conditions and adjoining properties.
- Drawings showing proposed interior layout.

### › MINOR MODIFICATIONS

(eg. roof decks, dormers, storefronts, etc)

- Current photographs of existing building, site condition, and surrounding properties.
- Drawing(s) indicating design, exterior materials, and colors of proposed alterations in context with the existing building or site. Drawing(s) must indicate all visible exterior changes in floor plans and elevation (exterior façade) views. The drawing must indicate all dimensions accurately.
- All plans must be drawn to scale.

### › PARKING LOTS AND GAS STATIONS

- Current photographs of existing site conditions, relationship to adjoining streets, and adjoining properties.
- A certified Plot Plan (Existing Conditions).
- Site Plan to scale, indicating proposed site layout including all parking spaces, buildings, circulation and all entry and egress points, curb cuts, drainage, lighting, and signage.
- Plan should identify locations to screen automobiles from the street(s) and adjoining properties, as well as visually break-up the expanse of the parking lot.
- All plans must be drawn to scale.

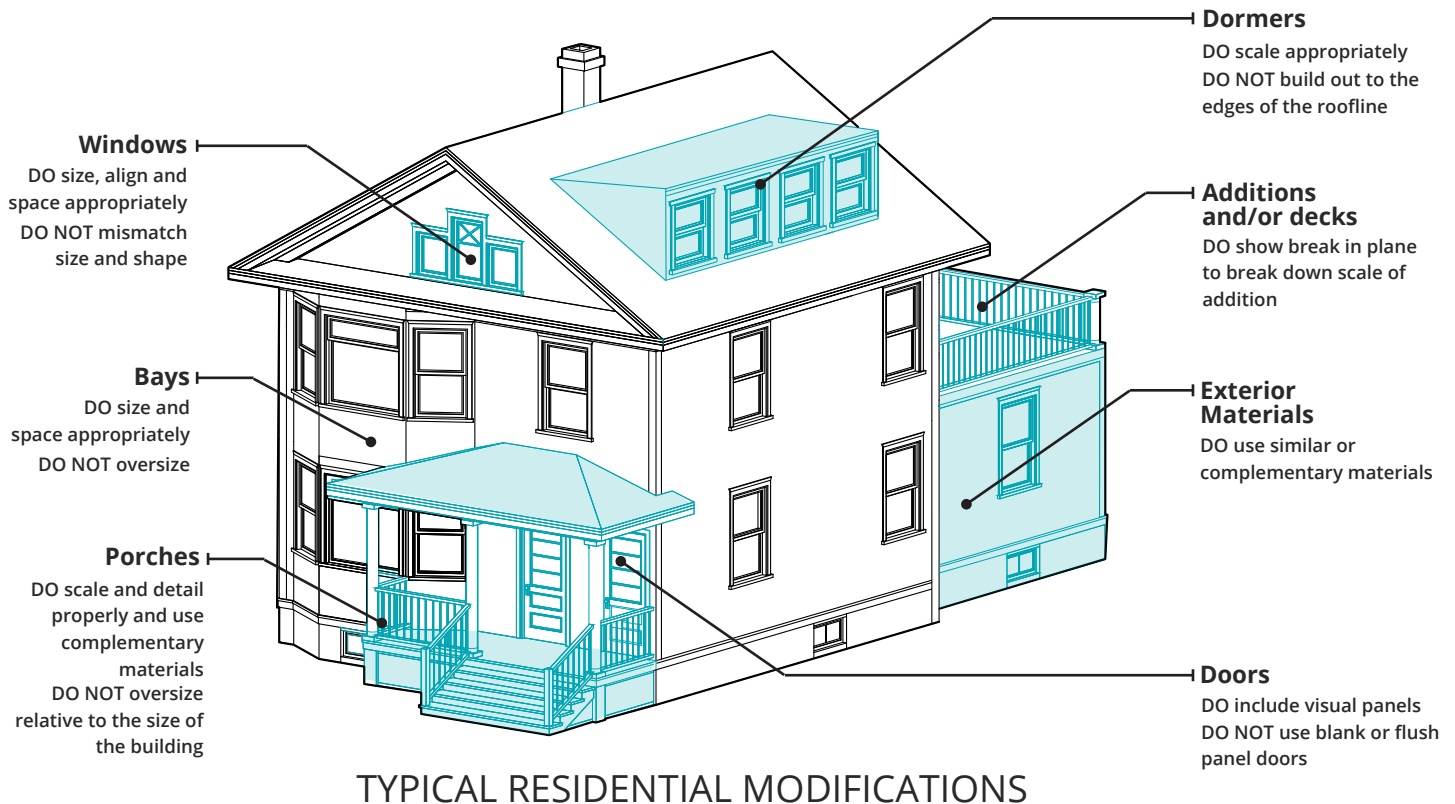
If you have any questions about the process, or would like to give us your feedback about the design review process, please contact Michael Cannizzo at [michael.cannizzo@boston.gov](mailto:michael.cannizzo@boston.gov) (617-918-4386).

# BPDA Design Review

## Residential: Facade Considerations

### › PURPOSE OF DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS

The purpose of BPDA design review is to ensure that the design of the proposed exterior alterations, additions or new construction is compatible with, and enhances the existing character of the immediate neighborhood. In general, modifications to an existing residential structure should be appropriate in scale and complementary in material so as not to overwhelm the original structure. Site considerations are very important. When proposing modifications, take care to consider impacts on abutting properties and how the property will look within the context of a particular neighborhood or street.



### › RESIDENTIAL DESIGN REVIEW TOPICS FOR CONSIDERATION:

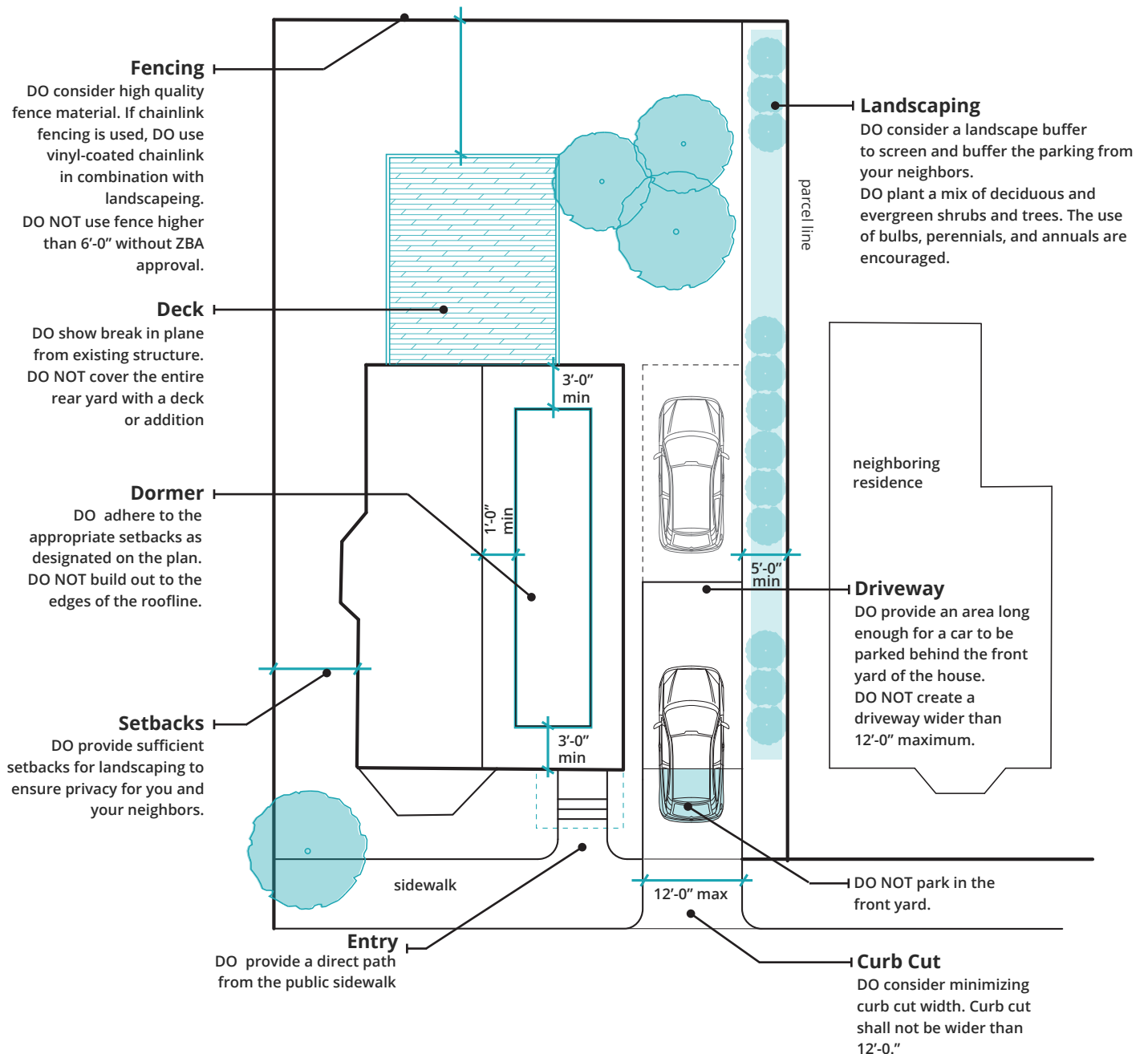
- ① **Dormers**  
As a general rule, dormers should be set back at least 3'-0" feet to the edge of the roofline and at least 1'-0" feet below the ridgeline. They should be scaled relative to the overall shape and size of the residence.
- ② **Porches + Decks**  
Material and scale are the most important aspects of porch design. Porches should be constructed out of materials that can be painted. Pressure-treated lumber is not to be used as an externally visible building material. Design and details for replacing missing porches should reflect similar style porches found on residential buildings nearby on the street or in the neighborhood.
- ③ **Windows + Doors**  
The composition of windows and doors should create a harmonious facade. The size, shape, and type of new window(s) selected should complement the existing building. Clad windows are the standard. Entry doors with glass panels are the standard. Windows should generally be vertically proportioned.
- ④ **Additions**  
Additions should not overwhelm the existing structure. They should be carefully designed to be unobtrusive and complementary to the existing house and homes on the street or neighborhood. Window pattern and spacing in the addition should be considered in relation to alignment of the existing windows. The materials and detailing should be of high quality.

# BPDA Design Review

## Residential: Site Considerations

### ▶ PRIMARY CONSIDERATIONS FOR SITE DESIGN

1. What is the existing context of the site, residence, and adjoining neighborhood?
2. What specifically is being proposed and how can it be best laid out on the site? What will the proposed exterior changes look like when the work is completed?
3. How well do the site improvements improve or blend in with the character of the neighborhood and abutting properties? Does the landscaping, fencing, parking, etc. improve the quality of the property, but are also sensitive to neighbors?



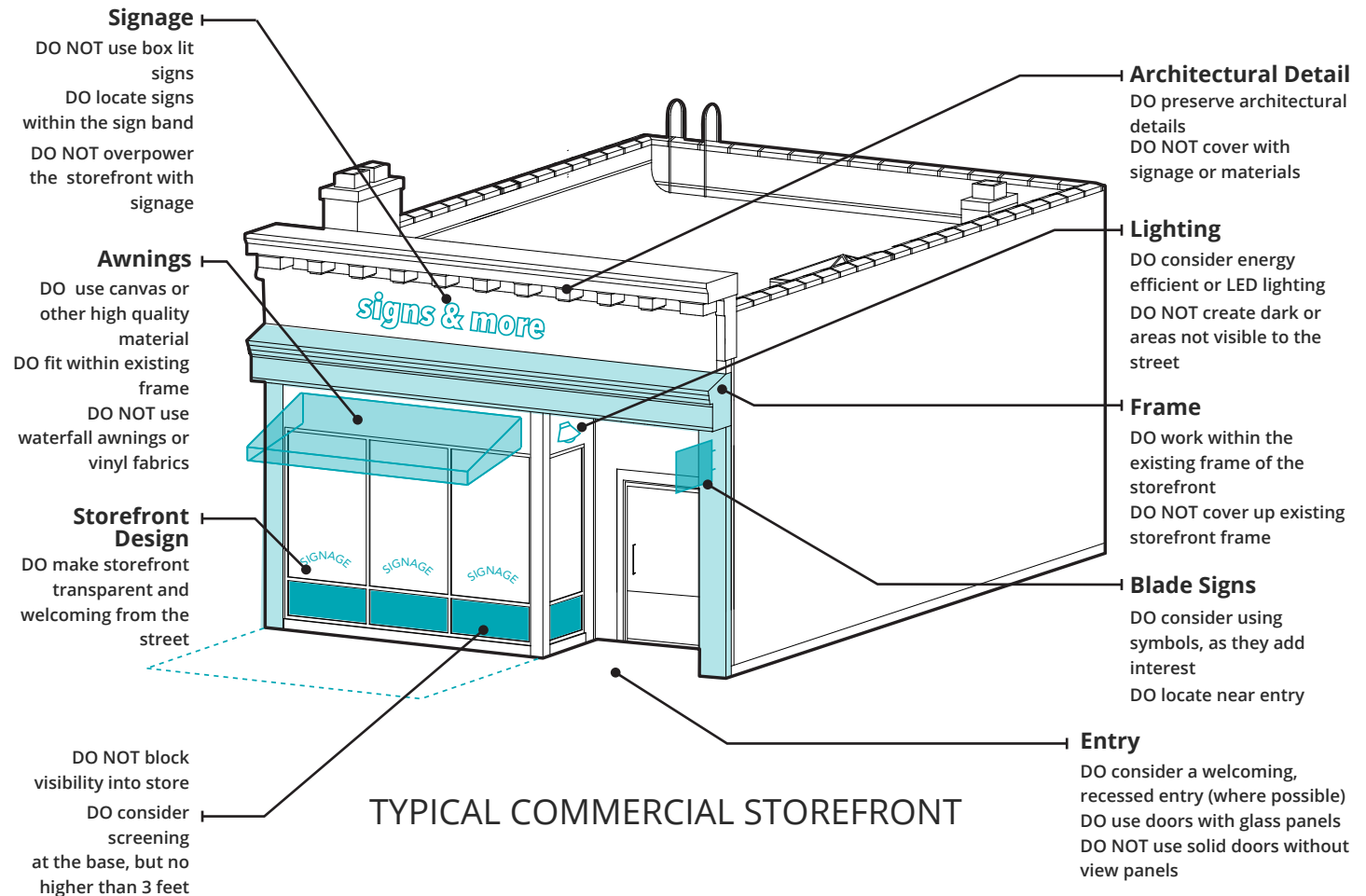
TYPICAL RESIDENTIAL SITE PLAN

# BPDA Design Review

## Commercial: Facade Considerations

### › PURPOSE OF DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS

The purpose of BRA design review is to ensure that the design of the proposed exterior alterations, additions or new construction is compatible with, and enhances the existing character of the immediate neighborhood. Sensitivity to different types of retail within neighborhoods is also important. Storefronts along main streets may differ from smaller retail areas or neighborhood shopping centers, but the overriding objective is the same: storefront design should add to the vitality of neighborhoods, while being inviting and compatible with the adjoining retail.



### › COMMERCIAL STOREFRONT DESIGN REVIEW TOPICS FOR CONSIDERATION:

#### 1 Storefront Design

Care should be taken to create a transparent storefront design that is inviting from the street, uses high quality materials, and preserves any existing architectural details. Do consider glass, decorative panels, or sign bands within the transom. Grills are permitted on the inside of the storefront. Exterior grills and grates are not permitted.

#### 2 Signage

Consideration of signage is important, as it is the first impression of the business within. Signs should be simple, visible, and respectful of the architecture of the storefront. Content should include only logos and names, and should be applied in appropriate amounts relative to the storefront size and orientation. Use individual letters or a sign board. Fully illuminated box lit signs are not permitted.

### › ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

#### Neighborhood Main Streets

<http://www.cityofboston.gov/dnd/obd/mainstreets.asp>

#### Accessibility (ADA) compliance

<http://www.mass.gov/eopss/consumer-prot-and-bus-lic/license-type/aab/aab-rules-and-regulations-pdf.html>

#### Public Improvement Commission (PIC)

<http://www.cityofboston.gov/publicworks/engineering/pic.asp>

#### Landmarks Commission + Historic Districts

<http://www.cityofboston.gov/landmarks/>

#### Storefront and Signage Guidelines + Info

<http://www.bostondevelopmentauthority.org/business-dev/storefront-signage>

# BPDA Design Review

## Commercial: Site Considerations

### ▶ PRIMARY CONSIDERATIONS FOR SITE DESIGN

1. What is the existing context of the site, building and adjoining neighborhood?
2. Are parking needs being balanced with need to provide landscaping along the street edge and adjacent properties?
3. What specifically is being proposed and how can it be best laid out on the site? What is the appearance of proposed exterior changes look like from the street?
4. How well does the proposed addition or new construction maintain and improve with the character of the district and abutting properties?
5. Will the proposed landscaping and amenities be easy to maintain over time?

