SECTION 16.5 PUBLIC AND PRIVATE OPEN SPACE TYPES

The goal for the combined size of all public and private open space types located in the Form-Based Districts (FBD) is at least 5% of the total acreage of the district.

16.50 Open Space Types – Specific public and private open space types are allowed within the FBD as identified by Table 16.5.0 and are intended for the gathering of people for passive or active recreation, entertainment, or organized and communal activities. The types of open spaces shall comply with the design standards in Figure 16.5.1 below and the Town of Amherst Landscaping Guidelines.

Table 16.5.0- Public and Private Open Space Types

Open Space Types	*Suggested Frontage On At Least:*	*Typical Lot Size*	*NAVC*	*AC*	*R-VF*	*ED-F*
Park	1 street	0.5 to no max.	X	X	X	NOT APPLICABLE
Green	2 streets	0.5 to 5 acres	X	X		
Square/Plaza	1 streets	0.5 to 2 acres	X	X		
Playground	0 streets	0.1 to 1 acres	X	X	X	
Community Garden	0 streets	0.1 to 1 acres	X	X	X	
Yards and Private Open Space	Variable	Variable	X	X	X	

16.51 Civic and Open Space Design – Public and private open spaces shall be designed, landscaped, and furnished to be consistent with the character of the district in which they are located. Street frontage arrangement of each type of civic space is illustrated in the Figure 16.5.1 Public and Private Open Space Types below.

16.510 Civic spaces and buildings shall be designed to physically express their prominence and community orientation.

16.511 Civic Building Lots are usually sited adjoining or surrounded by civic open spaces or they provide a visual landmark by being placed at the axial termination of a street (see Public and Private Open Space Type diagrams in Figure 16.5.1 below).

16.512 In order to provide greater flexibility in building types and to allow more distinctive architectural expression, Civic Building Lots do not have mandatory frontage percentages or street yard standards.

16.52 Squares and Plazas Standards – Squares and plazas shall be located so that building walls facing the open space shall have at least 25% of the overall façade in transparent windows, and at least 40% of the ground floor façade in transparent windows.

16.520 All landscape elements and plant selections shall be consistent with the Town of Amherst Landscaping Guidelines.

16.53 Open Space Requirements

16.530 Individual property owners shall be required to dedicate 5% of their lot to civic or open space in one of the types identified in Figure 16.5.1 Public and Private Open Space Types for residential lots, forecourts, courtyards, community/common gardens and private yards are eligible types of civic and open spaces. For commercial and mixed use lots, Outdoor Activity Zones located in the streetyard and sideyard setback areas are eligible types of civic and open spaces.

16.531 Two or more property owners within a FBD may create a joint civic or open space as long as the dedicated space is accessible to the public and amounts to a minimum of 5% of the land area of all the properties involved.

16.54 Mill River Corridor (MRC)

All land within 75 feet of the crest of the bank of the Mill River Corridor (MRC) falls within the Flood-Prone Conservancy (FPC) District, and the full extent of that district from the eastern boundary of the Route 116 right-of-way to the eastern boundary of the Mill River Recreation Area property shall for the purposes of this Bylaw be considered to be the River Corridor (MRC). Permitted primary uses allowed in the FPC are defined in Article 3 – Section 3.3 Use Classification and Standards, and permitted accessory uses are defined in Article 5 – Accessory Uses of this Bylaw. The Mill River Corridor bisects the North Amherst Village Center (NAVC) and serves as a buffer to adjacent development, stormwater management areas, natural conservation area, and partial recreation area.

The planning goal for the MRC in the North Amherst Village Center is to integrate the corridor with adjacent compatible uses while protecting its natural qualities and value in flood control and stormwater treatment.

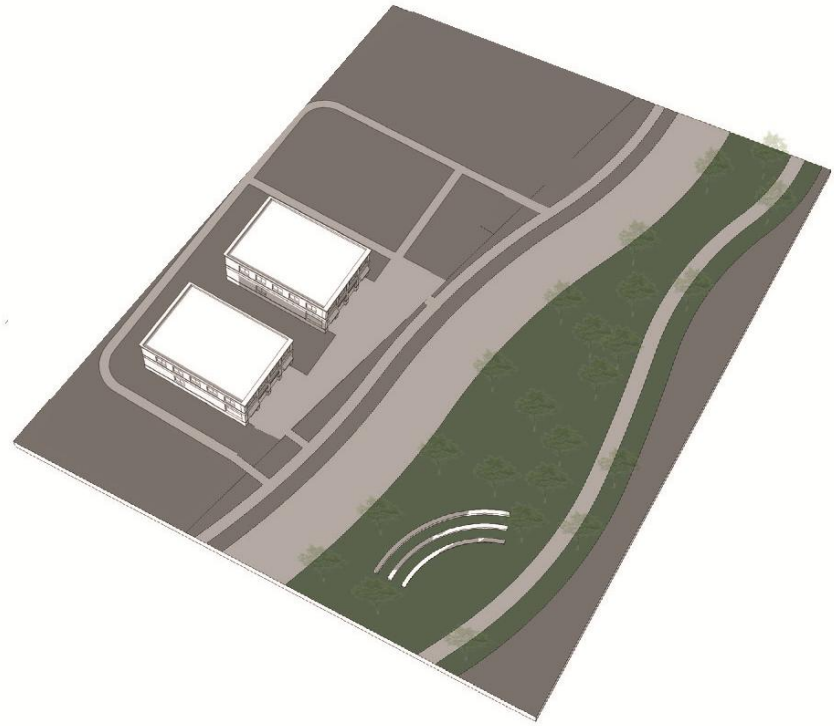
In lieu of the on-site private open space requirement in Section 16.53 above, property owners and development applicants that are contiguous to the MRC may seek approval under Section 16.9 Administration – Alternative Compliance from the Permit Granting Body by securing land within the MRC and providing appropriate public open space amenities in the form of civic facilities, trails or recreational equipment that are beneficial to the North Amherst Village Center as well as accessible to the general public.

FIGURE 16.5.1 - PUBLIC AND PRIVATE OPEN SPACE TYPES

Park

A natural preserve available for unstructured recreation. A park may be independent of surrounding building frontages. Its landscape shall consist of paths and trails, meadows, woodland and open shelters, all naturalistically disposed. Parks in the FBD are likely to be lineal, following the natural corridor along water courses. The linear park should connect to surrounding neighborhoods and civic centers.

Character Examples:

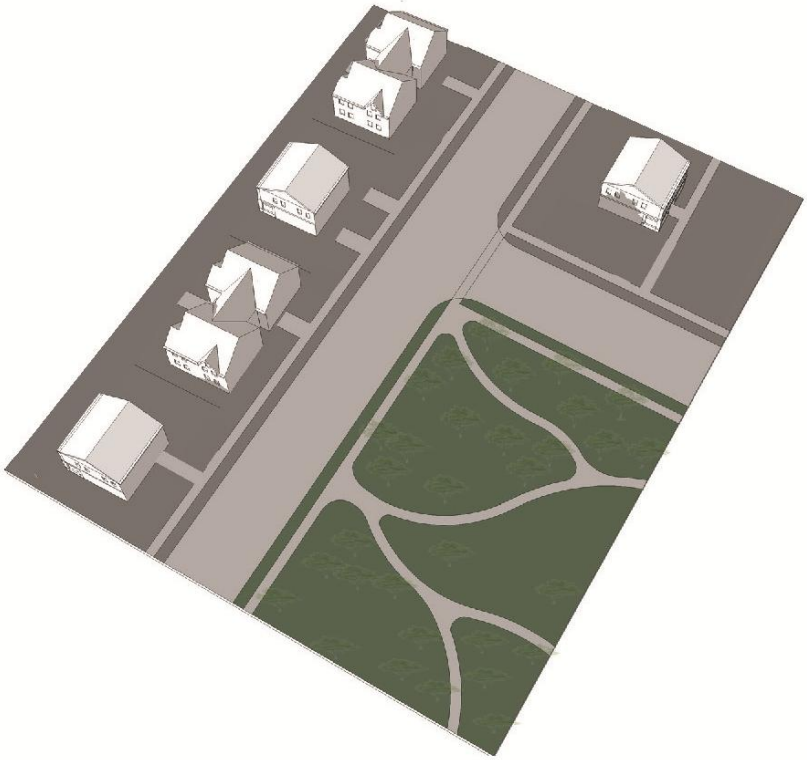


The illustrations of Figure 16.5.1 represent one possible solution, exact conditions may vary; proposals shall meet the intent shown.

Green

An open space, available for unstructured recreation. A green or common may be spatially defined by landscaping rather than building frontages. Its landscape shall consist of lawn and trees, naturalistically disposed.

Character Examples:



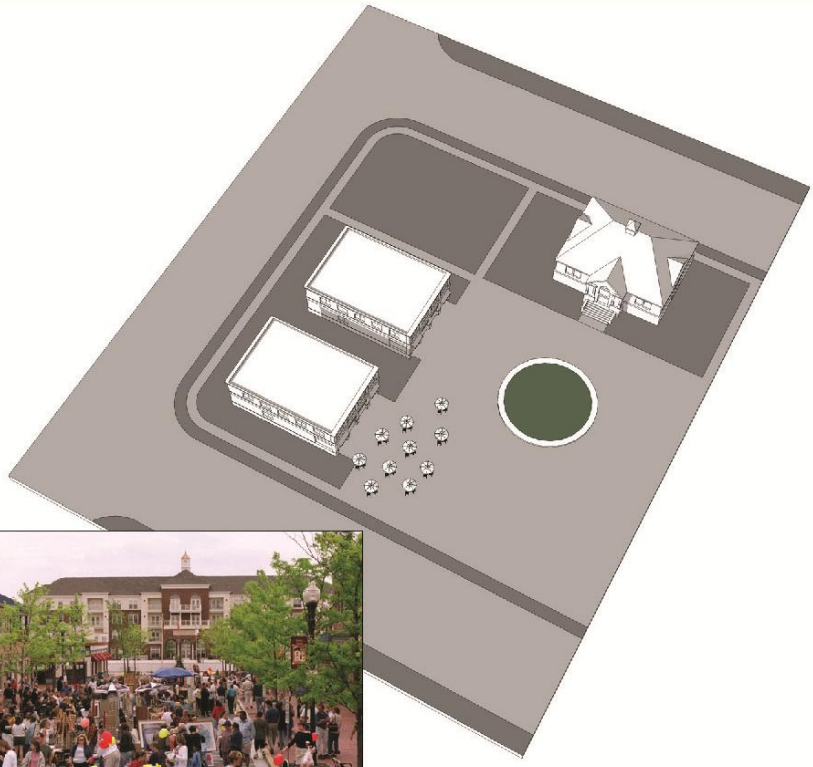
The illustrations of Figure 16.5.1 represent one possible solution, exact conditions may vary; proposals shall meet the intent shown.

FIGURE 16.5.1 - PUBLIC AND PRIVATE OPEN SPACE TYPES

Square/Plaza

An open space, available for civic purposes and commercial activities. A plaza should be spatially defined by building frontages. Its landscape should consist primarily of hard surfaces such as brick or concrete pavers. Its landscape may consist of paths, lawns and trees, formally disposed. Plazas should be located at the intersection of important streets.

Character Examples:



The illustrations of Figure 16.5.1 represent one possible solution, exact conditions may vary; proposals shall meet the intent shown.

Playground

An open space designed and equipped for the recreation of children. A playground should have a perimeter fence to enhance safety where necessary and may include an open shelter. Playgrounds should be interspersed within residential areas and may be placed within a block. Playgrounds may be included within parks and greens.

Character Examples:

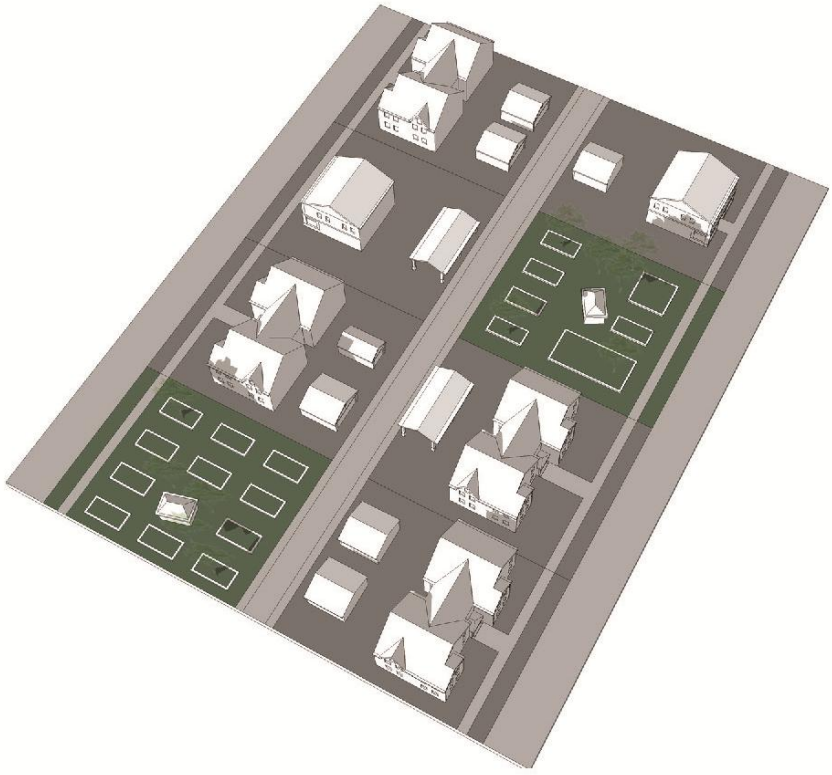
The illustrations of Figure 16.5.1 represent one possible solution, exact conditions may vary; proposals shall meet the intent shown.

FIGURE 16.5.1 - PUBLIC AND PRIVATE OPEN SPACE TYPES

Community Garden

A grouping of garden plots available to nearby residents for small-scale cultivation.

Character Examples:



The illustrations of Figure 16.5.1 represent one possible solution, exact conditions may vary; proposals shall meet the intent shown.

Yards and Private Open Space

Private open space and the configuration of other site features, such as parking, should be coordinated with adjacent properties to create shared access and larger open spaces whenever possible. For example, residential multi-family site plans should alternate open space and parking orientations to combine open space features and parking resources.

The illustrations of Figure 16.5.1 represent one possible solution, exact conditions may vary; proposals shall meet the intent shown.