
RIDGELINE DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

The Town of Canandaigua has an abundance of natural resources, including scenic ridgelines. The Comprehensive Plan recognizes the significance of these ridgelines and recommends the development of guidelines to describe methods to site buildings in a manner that minimizes visual impacts, while still allowing for scenic views.

In addition, the zoning law (as amended) provides for greater flexibility in the design of new subdivisions through the use of conservation subdivisions. This design flexibility can be used, among other purposes, to site new homes in a manner that limits their negative visual impact. The guidelines that follow address site design and architectural design.

Site Design

Proper site planning can dramatically reduce the visual impact of ridgeline development. The placement of a structure on the site or the use of native vegetation can effectively screen a building.

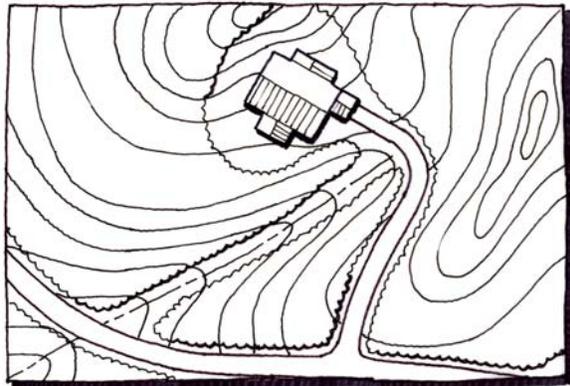
Grading

In order to preserve the natural environment, any disturbance to or alteration of existing contours, slopes, and natural drainage areas should be kept to a minimum. Grading, cut and fill, and retaining walls should be minimized for ridgeline development by using innovative building techniques, which reflect the natural topography of the site. When cut and fill is unavoidable, it should be stabilized by rounding and landscaping.

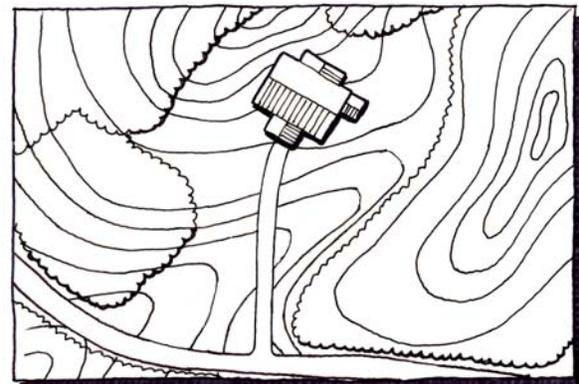
Building and Lot Design

Buildings and lots should be laid out to reduce the visual impact of the structures. This should include designing the buildings to conform to the contours of the site, and arranging driveways and patio areas to be compatible with the slopes and building design. The illustrations below show examples of possible driveway arrangements and what should be avoided.

This...

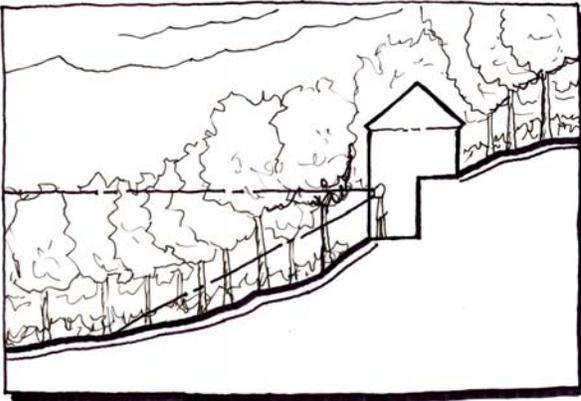


Not This...

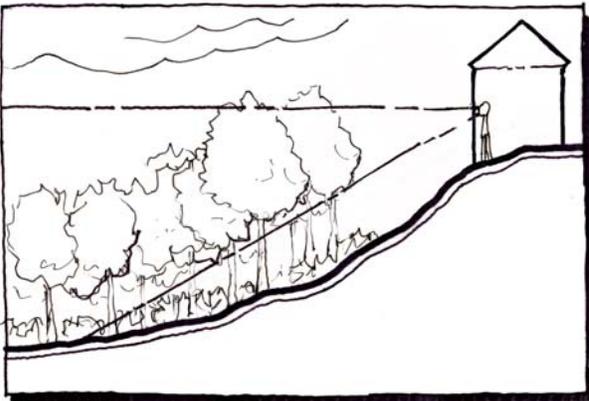


Buildings should be setback from a ridgetop at a distance that allows the natural topography and vegetation to screen the structures. Structures should be placed in small hollows or otherwise protected areas to reduce visual impacts. In addition, development should not occur on exposed ridges or rock outcroppings. The following illustration shows that building placement on top of a ridge is visually undesirable. In placing the building below the ridgetop, the homeowner will continue to have scenic views through selective pruning of trees.

This...



Not This...



Landscaping

Vegetation should be considered an important element used to preserve existing

vistas and screen new development on hillsides. Native shrubs and trees should be retained on hillside terrain to help maintain natural drainage swales, reduce erosion, and preserve the character of the hillside. Existing vegetation and trees should be protected from damage during construction and clear cutting should be kept to a minimum whenever possible. Minimizing the disturbance of existing vegetation would serve to screen the new development during construction. The use of vegetation to reduce visual impacts is illustrated on the following page.

When trees are added to a site, native species should be used and arranged in natural appearing clusters. This would serve to screen new development in such a way as to preserve existing views from neighboring residences. Selective pruning of vegetation is one technique to preserve views both from the structure and from neighboring residences.

Utilities

All utilities should be located underground whenever possible. In addition, utility housings should be safely screened by native plant species and located so as to minimize their visual impact. For areas with rocky terrain or for cost prohibitive reasons, placing of utilities near the road edge and offsetting the alignment can assist to screen a cleared utility corridor.

Architectural Design

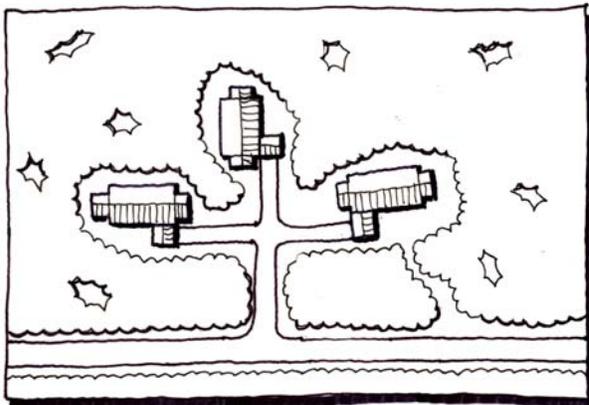
The design of a structure can also have a significant visual impact. The following guidelines suggest ways in which to blend into the existing natural environment

through placement of windows, roof pitch, materials and color.

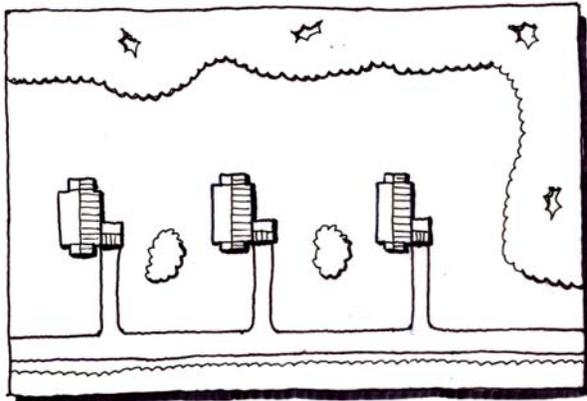
Color and Materials

Color and materials used for buildings should be compatible with the natural landscape. Earth tone colors and natural materials such as wood, natural brick, slump block walls, tile or earth tone concrete shingles are recommended.

This...



Not This...



Rooflines

Rooflines of buildings should not project above the natural ridgeline or disrupt the natural slope of the hillside. In order to preserve the natural outline of the hillside,

the slope of the roof should be oriented in the same direction of the natural terrain and mirror the angle of the natural hillside.

Windows

To the furthest extent possible, windows should be of low reflectivity, large windows should be screened by native trees, and upper floor windows should be smaller so as to reduce visual impact.

Lighting

In addition to existing Town lighting requirements, lighting for ridgeline and hillside development should consist of low level lighting directed downward. All bulbs should be shielded to reduce impacts of glare and light on adjacent properties. Recessed lighting fixtures are one manner in which to reduce glare.