

TOWN OF SMITHFIELD, VIRGINIA

HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGN GUIDELINES

February 2025

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Smithfield, VA 23430

https://www.smithfieldva.gov

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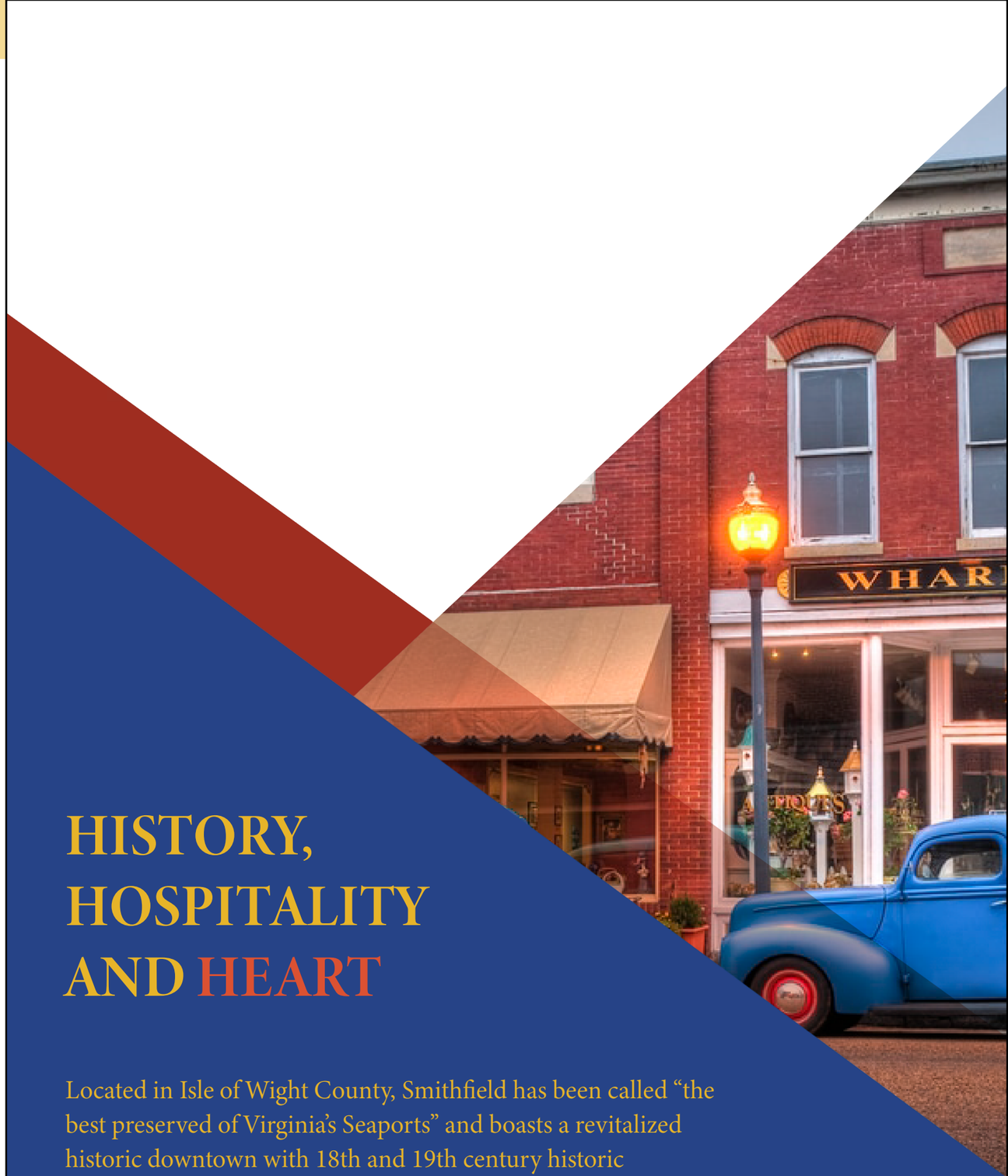

HISTORY, HOSPITALITY AND HEART

Located in Isle of Wight County, Smithfield has been called "the best preserved of Virginia's Seaports" and boasts a revitalized historic downtown with 18th and 19th century historic architecture.

Interactive PDF



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Chapter 1

Introduction



Left & Above: The Isle of Wight County Courthouse was built in 1750-1751, a year before Smithfield was incorporated in 1752. The rear of the building (pictured left) features an iconic semi-circular apse. The courthouse has undergone several renovations before being restored to its current state in 2015.

A) Purpose of Design Guidelines

The Town of Smithfield, VA Historic District Design Guidelines were first published in 1990 with the purpose of providing residents, property owners, architects, contractors, and other professionals working with historic properties a manual of user-friendly guidelines for modifying and altering historic properties. Design guidelines such as these provide a set of best practices for modifying historic properties based on the nature of the project and the element of the site or building that is being altered. Design guidelines also cover the design and construction of new buildings and additions within the district that are compatible with and sensative to the surrounding context.

The Smithfield Historic District is located within Smithfield, Virginia in Isle of Wight County. The district is included in the National Register of Historic Places (reference number: 73002022), the Virginia Landmarks Register (reference number: 300-0087), and as a local historic district within the Town of Smithfield (reference: Article 3.M of the Smithfield Zoning Ordinance). The district was first included in the Virginia Landmarks Register in February of 1973, followed shortly thereafter in July of 1973 within the National Register of Historic Places. Six years later in 1979 the Town of Smithfield enacted a Historic Preservation District Ordinance that established the local historic district with boundaries that roughly mirrored those found within the state and national registries. The 1979 ordinance also established the Board of Historic and Architectural Review (BHAR) with the purpose of reviewing proposed external changes to properties within the district. The 1979 ordinance provided general guidelines that provided some direction to the Review Board, residents, and working professionals. It would not be until 1990 that a more comprehensive design guidelines document was created to facilitate the careful renovation, rehabilitation, and alteration of historic properties in the district.

Preservation Briefs

These design guidelines reference the National Park Service's "Preservation Briefs." These are articles and reports created by the National Park Service for the purpose of providing useful information on the preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration of historic buildings. All preservation briefs can be accessed through the NPS website at NPS.org.

Preservation Brief #17
Architectural Character: Identifying the Visual Aspects of Historic Buildings as an Aid to Preserving Their Character

B) Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

These guidelines are based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation as published by the National Park Service. The Standards for Rehabilitation are codified in 36 CFR Part 67. The Standards are commonly used nationwide as the foundation for historic district design guidelines such as these.

The Standards are a set of criteria used to provide direction to historic building owners in the planning of repairs, alterations, and additions to historic buildings. The intent of the Standards is to assist property owners, commissions, and local municipalities with the long-term preservation of a historic properties historical significance through the preservation of historic materials, elements, and features. The Standards can be used for both interior and exterior alterations, though in the case of these design guidelines they are most pertinent to exterior alterations.

In addition to serving as the foundation for these design guidelines, the Standards are used to determine if a rehabilitation project qualifies as a Certified Rehabilitation for Federal tax purposes. The federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentive program encourages private sector investment in the rehabilitation and reuse of qualified historic properties. A 20% federal income tax credit is available for rehabilitation projects that qualify. Properties that qualify must be depreciable under the Internal Revenue Code, this includes businesses and other income-producing uses. Property owners looking to take advantage of historic tax credits should contact the Virginia Department of Historic Resources.



Left: The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation is managed and administered by the National Park Service and serves as the foundation for historic district design guidelines around the U.S.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.
8. Significant archaeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Guiding Principles for Preservation, Alteration, and Maintenance

- **Routine maintenance is essential:** Routine and timely maintenance of historic buildings and their constituent parts enables their longevity. Deferred maintenance can increase costs down the line and lead to irreversible damage to historic buildings and can help prevent major issues before they happen.
- **Preservation of materials rather than replacement:** In many cases historic building materials can be repaired rather than replaced. A good rule of thumb is that historic building features should be replaced only if more than 50% of the material has deteriorated beyond repair. In-kind replacement of building features should be taken when repair is not feasible, and replacement parts should match the historic in terms of material composition, finish, form, and function.
- **New features shall not detract from the historic character of the building, surrounding properties, or district as a whole:** When new features are to be added to historic buildings, or existing features are to be replaced, they should be sensitive to the historic character of the building, its neighbors, and the Smithfield Historic District as a whole. When a historic building material or architectural feature needs to be replaced, but a historic replacement is not available, the new material or feature should be comparable in composition to the historic original. The introduction of more elaborate materials or features can create a false sense of history and should be avoided.
- **The greatest scrutiny shall be given to visible building facades and features:** Many historic buildings feature their most character-defining elements on their street facing elevations. Care should be taken so that the most visible elements of a building are preserved when a building is being altered. See the diagram on page 22 for an overview of which building elevations are typically visible from the right-of-way.

Preservation Brief #35
Understanding Old Buildings: The Process of Architectural Investigation

Preservation Brief #47
Maintaining the Exteriors of Small and Medium Size Historic Buildings

Important Definitions to Know

Rehabilitation - The process of making a building usable through repair or alteration while preserving the historic character of a building.

Reconstruction - The process through new construction of replicating a historic building that no longer exists.

Preservation - The process of applying measures to sustain the existing form, integrity, and material composition of a historic building without significant alterations.

Restoration - The process of restoring a building to its historic appearance at a period in time.



Above: The Courthouse pictured here in the 1930s, was significantly remodeled before being restored to its original colonial appearance beginning with renovations in 1961.

C) Smithfield's Preservation Program

1) Smithfield National Register Historic District

The Smithfield National Register Historic District was nominated to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in 1973 (NR ID: 73002022) and is roughly bounded by the Pagan River to the north, Cypress Creek to the east, the marshlands and Windsor Castle tree line to the south, and Route 10 to the west. Inclusion within the NRHP does not restrict property owners in most cases, though it can provide benefits such as state and federal tax credits. Additionally, any federally funded project within the historic district must make a reasonable and good faith effort to minimize impacts to historic properties. The district contains both commercial and residential structures, with a distinct downtown core intermingled and surrounded by residential structures. The district boundaries were revised from their original 1973 designation in 1990.



2) Smithfield Local Historic District and the Historic Preservation Overlay

The Smithfield Historic District is also registered as a local historic district within the Town of Smithfield. The boundaries of the local district are reflective of those found in the NRHP nomination. The regulations for the local historic district are codified within Article 3.M of the Smithfield Zoning Ordinance (SZO) as the Historic Preservation Overlay (HPO). Approximately 650 properties are included within the boundaries of the Smithfield Local Historic District. Unlike NRHP districts, local historic districts are regulated under state and local ordinances and laws. In the state of Virginia, S15.2-2306 of the Code of Virginia allows local municipalities, such as Smithfield, to adopt ordinances establishing the creation of historic landmarks and districts and the regulation of exterior alterations made to those properties.

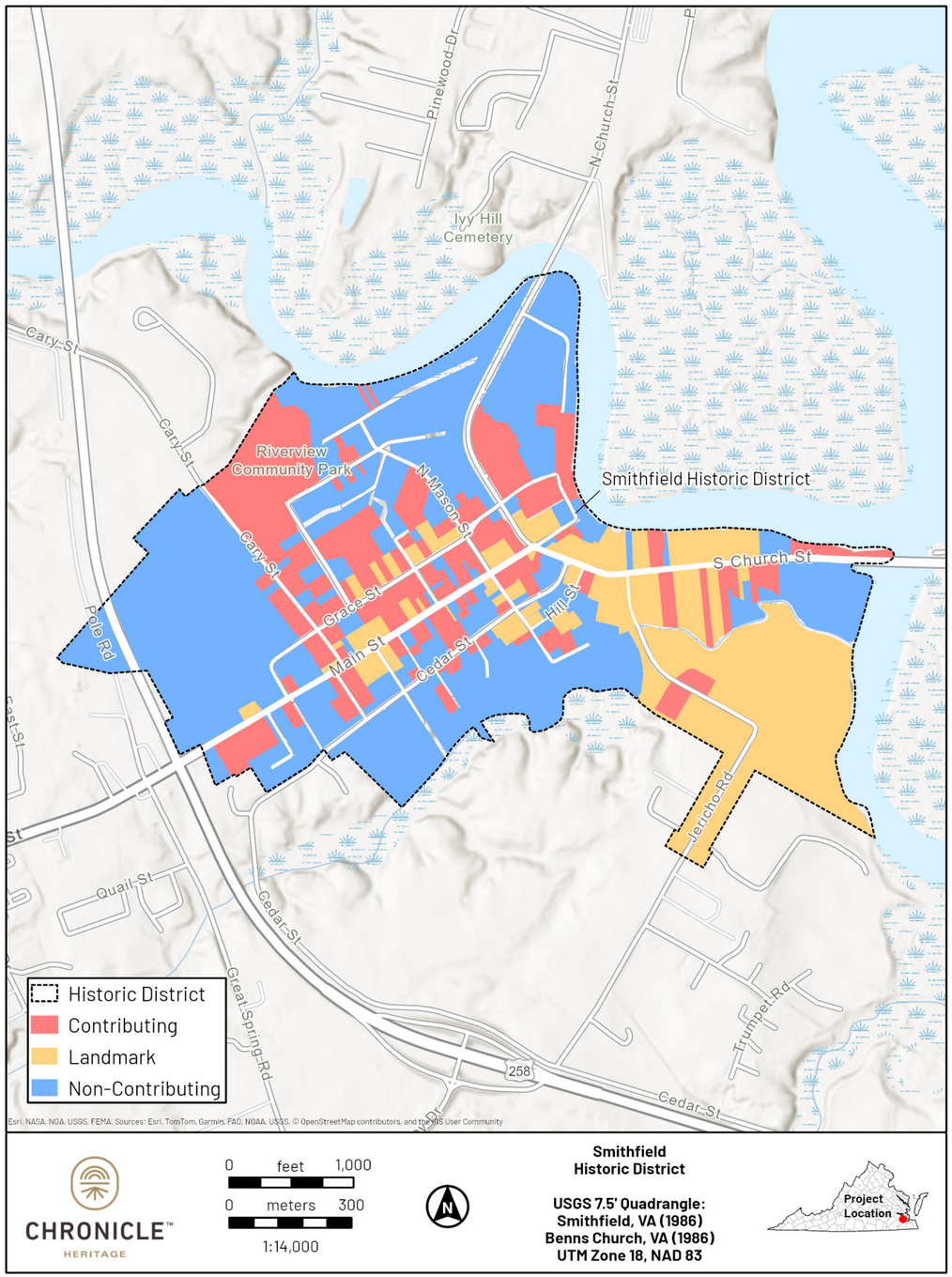
The HPO does not affect the underlying use or zoning permitted under the adopted zoning ordinance and building codes. Properties within the local historic district are still subject to the underlying zoning designations that govern setbacks, minimum lot size, maximum height, and use.

Article 3.M of the SZO also allows for the creation of these design guidelines and establishes a series of general rules for new construction, alterations, and the rehabilitation of structures in the historic district. The regulations of Article 3.M shall be followed in addition to those established within these guidelines.



Left: "View of the Grove" photo recording the building's of Smithfield for the 1972 National Register of Historic Places nomination.

Smithfield Historic District



3) Landmarks, Contributing, and Noncontributing Buildings

In addition to establishing the Smithfield local historic district, Article 3.M of the SZO establishes an inventory of Landmark, Contributing, and Non-Contributing structures. The inventory of these properties is maintained and updated regularly by the Community Development & Planning Department within the Town of Smithfield. Definitions of Landmark, Contributing, and Non-Contributing structures are included within the HPO ordinance:

- **Landmark or Landmarked Structures:** All structures from the 18th century to pre-Civil War or structures with architectural significance from the period after the Civil War are considered as Landmark or Landmarked structures.
- **Contributing:** Properties which contribute to the historic character of the Town and district but which do not contain Landmarked structures are considered Contributing properties.
- **Non-Contributing:** Properties are considered Non-Contributing if they are
  1. Less than 50 years of age
  2. Altered to an extent that they are no longer representative of the period in which they were built
  3. Degraded to a poor condition that makes preservation difficult
  4. Are unexemplary of any particular architectural style, or
  5. Have no architectural merit.

These guidelines are established to provide a manual to property owners, Town Staff and the Board of Historic and Architectural Review so that historic buildings and sites within the Smithfield Historic District might be preserved and enjoyed by future generations. Alterations to Landmark and Contributing buildings should be given the most consideration, to ensure that their character defining elements are maintained and preserved. Alterations to these properties have the greatest impact on the overall character and integrity of the district. While Non-Contributing structures do not add to the integrity of the district, insensitive alterations or the deterioration of these properties may effect neighboring properties and the district overall and; therefore, alterations to non-contributing buildings should also follow these established guidelines.



Landmark Buildings such as 345 South Church Street can often be identified by their stately and grand appearance. These buildings were often designed by professional architects and conform to the architectural styles of their day.



Contributing Buildings often contain identifiable features associated with defined architectural styles but are often smaller in scale and less ornate than landmarked buildings.



Noncontributing Buildings may either lack a defined style, be in disrepair, or be so altered that their original appearance is no longer evident. Buildings constructed within the last 50 years are also considered noncontributing to the district.

D) The Board of Historic and Architectural Review

1) Introduction

The Board of Historic and Architectural Review (BHAR) was established as part of Article 3.M of the SZO to act as the regulating body for the Smithfield local historic district. The BHAR is the primary board responsible for reviewing alterations to existing buildings, the construction of new buildings, and the demolition or moving of any structures within the historic district. The BHAR is comprised of seven Smithfield residents, and meets on the third Tuesday of each month (unless otherwise noted).

2) Certificates of Appropriateness

The BHAR carries out its duties through the issuance of Certificates of Appropriateness (COAs), which must be obtained for all exterior alterations, demolitions, building moves, and accessory structures, including fences within the historic district. A COA is required in addition to any other permits needed for a project, such as a building and/or zoning permit.

Right: Wentworth-Barrett House at 117 South Church Street from the 1933 Historic American Buildings Survey.



3) Application Requirements for Certificates of Appropriateness

Before a COA can be granted, an applicant must submit an application to the Zoning Administrator and the BHAR for review. It is recommended that you contact the Community Development and Planning staff prior to submitting an application to ensure that your application is complete. An incomplete application will be returned within fourteen (14) days and may delay the review process or be grounds for the tabling or denial of a COA. As a general rule, the more information you can provide in an application the better.

At a minimum, most applications for a COA should include the following information:

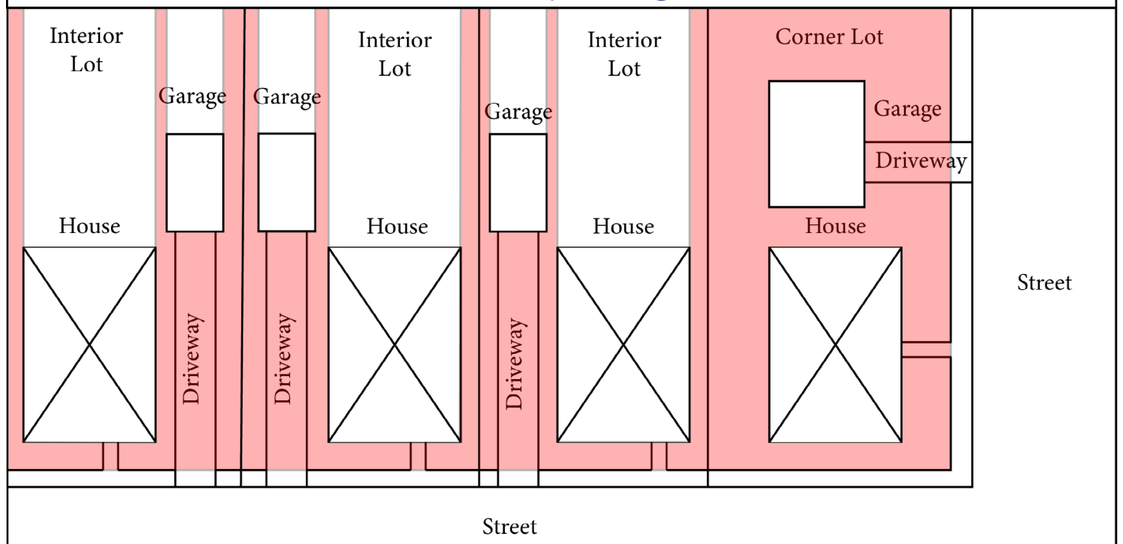
- Statement of the proposed project.
- Photographs and maps relating to the proposed project and its use. These should include photographs of the surrounding area to provide a context of how the proposal will fit into the surrounding context.
- Site plan drawings, showing the location of existing buildings and any improvements being made to the site.
- Elevation drawings showing the proposed alterations.
- Paint colors and samples.
- Materials and samples.

Depending on the type of project, you may be required to submit additional materials and documents.



Left: Wentworth-Barrett House at 117 South Church Street as it appears in 2024.

Visibility Diagram



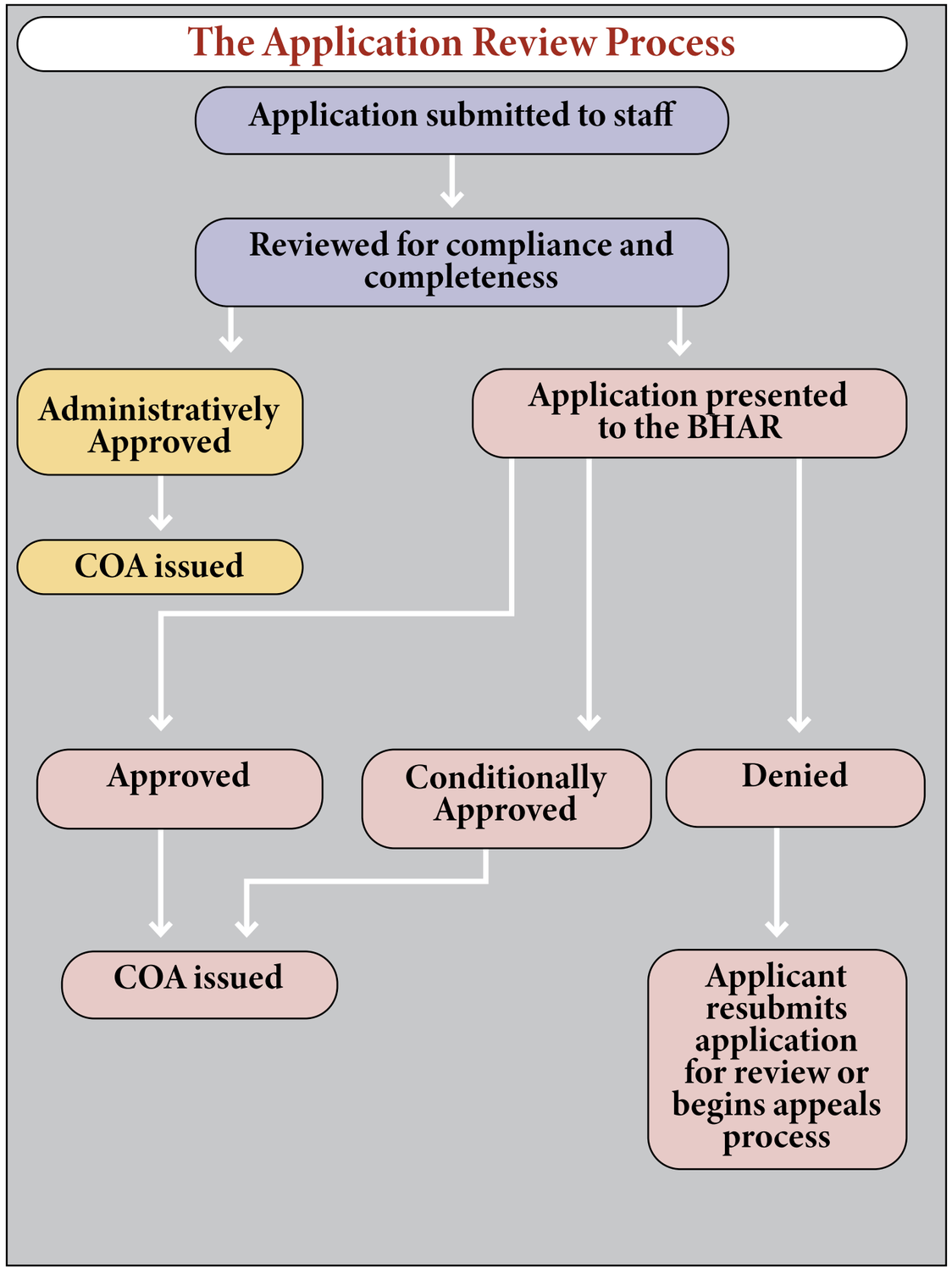
Alterations which are visible from the right-of-way require careful consideration and will be subject to the COA process; this includes alterations which may be visible across lot lines.

The diagram above provides a general reference for determining facades of building's that are generally visible from the right-of-way, though fences, vegetation, and other obstructions might impact visibility. The shaded area of the diagram shows those areas where alterations to building's are visible from the street. For interior lots, the front and side facades are most visible, while corner lots may have street visibility from multiple angles. Applicants should consult with Community Development and Planning Department staff prior to submittal as COAs are reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

4) The Review Process

As an applicant, you are responsible for ensuring that your proposal meets the criteria set out within these design guidelines. Attendance at the meetings is highly encouraged and you may be required to make a case that your project meets these design guidelines. Proposals which do not adhere to the criteria set out within these guidelines are grounds for a denial of a COA. After a COA has been issued, other permits have been obtained, and the project has been completed, the applicant shall provide records of the completed project including receipts, photographs, drawings, and specifications to Town staff in order to demonstrate compliance with what was approved in the COA.

The Application Review Process



5) Administrative Approval

Certain minor projects may be approved administratively by Community Development and Planning Department staff without needing to go for review before the BHAR. In these cases, a COA application must still be submitted to staff for review. Applicants should consult with Town staff to see if their project meets the requirements for administrative review. Ultimately, it is at the discretion of Town staff if a project meets the requirements to be administratively approved.

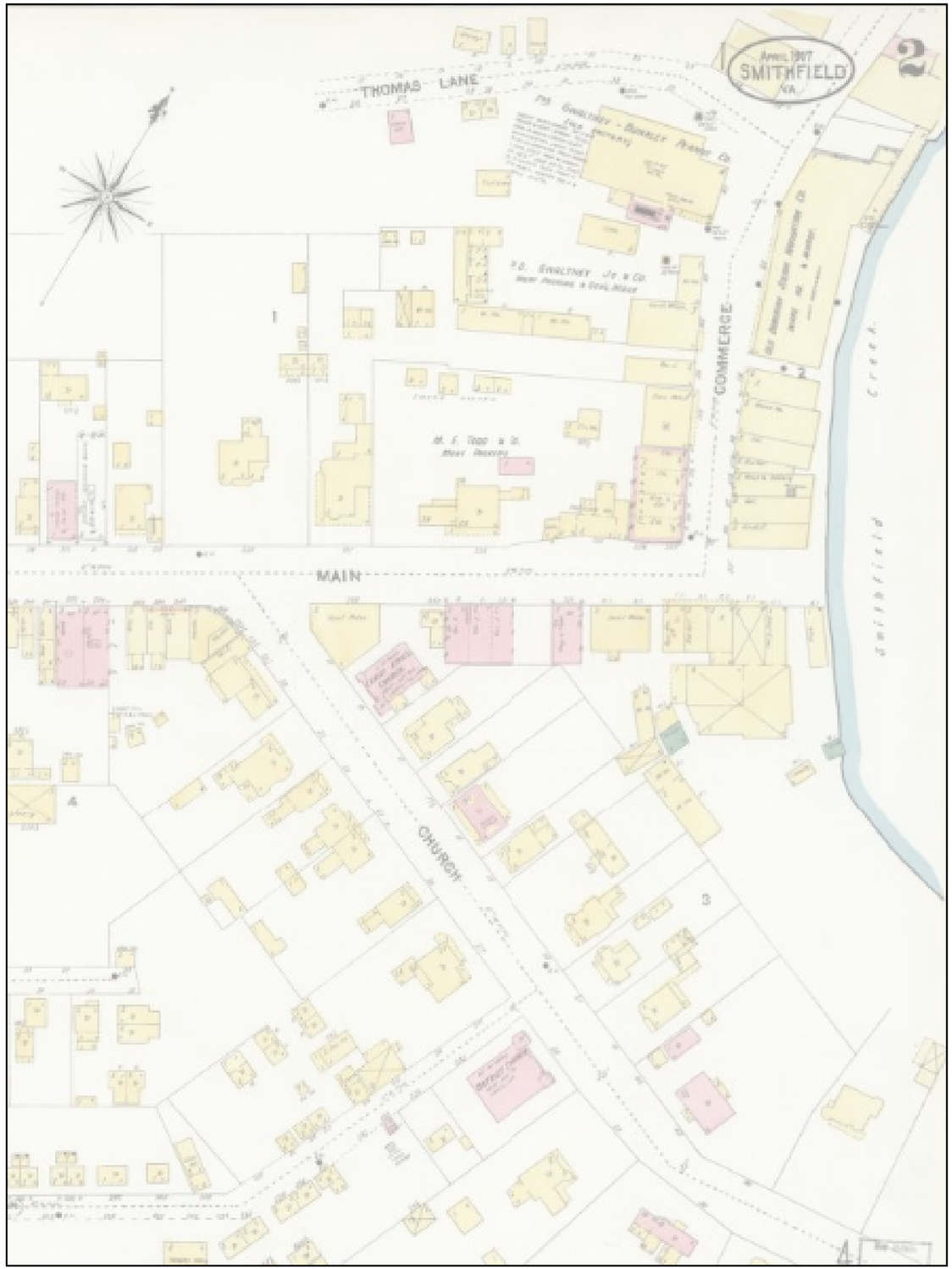
Examples of projects which may be approved administratively:

- The application or use of exterior materials of a similar kind, type, color, or texture of those already in use which will not result in the destruction or replacement of original exterior materials.
- Minor additions or deletions to the structure which will not substantially change the architectural character of the structure and are completely hidden from public view.
- Construction of piers, docks, and bulkheads.
- Landscaping involving minor grading, walks, low retaining walls, temporary fencing, small fountains, ponds and the like, which will not substantially affect the character of the property and its surroundings.

6) The Appeal Process

As an applicant, you may appeal the BHAR's decision to Town Council within fourteen (14) calendar days from notification if you are aggrieved by the decision of the board. The BHAR's decision is final and unappealable if an appeal has not been submitted within fourteen (14) days of the decision. The Town Council may consult with the BHAR in relation to any appeal. The Town Council may affirm, reverse, or modify the decision of the BHAR and shall notify the Zoning Administrator of its decision.

If an applicant is aggrieved of the decision of the Town Council, they may appeal to the local circuit court within thirty (30) calendar days of the final decision of the Town Council. The Town Council's decision is final if an appeal has not been submitted within thirty (30) days of the decision. The court may reverse or modify the decision of the Town Council if it finds that upon review the decision of the governing body is contrary to law or that its decision is arbitrary and constitutes an abuse of discretion. It may also affirm the decision of the Town Council.



Chapter 2

District Character



Left: The turret of the P. D. Gwaltney Jr. House contains many elements that are characteristic of Queen Anne style architecture including a variety of surface textures, shingles, double-hung windows, and elaborate motifs.

Above: Historic postcard depicting Church Street between 1930 and 1945.

Quick Reference: Styles

Page

30 **Georgian** (Ca. 1700 - 1780)

32 **Federal** (Ca. 1780 - 1840)

34 **Gothic Revival** (Ca. 1840 - 1880)

36 **Italianate** (Ca. 1840 - 1885)

38 **Folk Victorian** (1870 - 1910)

40 **Queen Anne** (1880 - 1910)

42 **Colonial Revival** (Ca. 1880 - 1955)

44 **American Craftsman** (Ca. 1905 - 1930)

46 **Minimal Traditional** (Ca. 1935 - 1950)

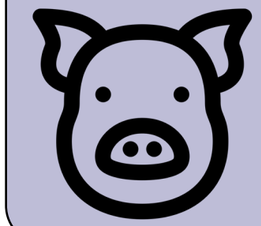
48 **Ranch** (Ca. 1935 - 1975)

Hamtown Hints: Know Your Building's Style



Know the architectural style of your home to facilitate a better understanding of appropriate materials, character defining elements, and appropriate design alterations.

Hamtown Hints: Multiple Styles



While many buildings were designed with one particular style in mind, others may contain elements from multiple styles. For example, a building may have elements of both the Italianate and Queen Anne architecture styles.

A) Understanding Architectural Style and Character-Defining Elements

A number of historic building styles are found in the Smithfield Historic District. Understanding the character-defining elements of the different architectural styles is a critical part of maintaining the identity of individual buildings and the district as a whole. Character-defining elements should be preserved whenever possible, and the regular maintenance and repair of these elements helps to maintain the integrity of the district. When elements need to be repaired or replaced, the materials should be replaced with in-kind or historically appropriate materials to the greatest extent possible. The overall character of a building or district can be irreversibly altered when elements are removed or damaged. Therefore an understanding of the different architectural styles and their character-defining elements is paramount to the continued preservation of the Smithfield Historic District.

B) Smithfield's Architectural Styles

Residential buildings are the most commonly found type within the Smithfield Historic District. The district includes a wide range of styles, from the colonial Georgian (ca. 1700 - 1780) to the more modern Minimal Traditional (ca. 1930 - 1950). Some buildings might be said to have no particular style or a mixture of styles. This section will include a description of the prominent styles, their character-defining elements, examples from the historic district, and a visual rendering to aid in identification. Alterations to existing buildings should be sensitive to its architectural style, and any new addition to existing buildings should be compatible with the overall design and style of a building.

Preservation Brief #17
Architectural Character: Identifying the Visual Aspects of Historic Buildings as an Aid to Preserving Their Character

Preservation Brief #18
Rehabilitating Interiors in Historic Buildings - Identifying Character Defining Elements

Interior Alterations

While interior alterations are not subject to COAs or review by the BHAR, they may be contributing to a building's eligibility status on the Virginia Landmarks Register and/or National Register of Historic Places. Certain interior alterations are also qualified expenses under State and Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit programs. Applicants should contact the Department of Historic Resources for more information.

1) Georgian (ca. 1700 - 1780)

The Georgian style was one of the earliest architect-inspired styles to emerge in the United States and is commonly found in the former colonies. The style was brought over by the British in the form of manuals called pattern books in the early 1700s. Unlike earlier American styles which followed folk traditions, the Georgian style was inspired by the works of master English architects who drew inspiration from the Italian Renaissance. The style is highly variable in form, with regional variations emerging in the northern, mid, and southern colonies. Georgian buildings are often identified by their symmetrical composition and the use of formal, classical elements.

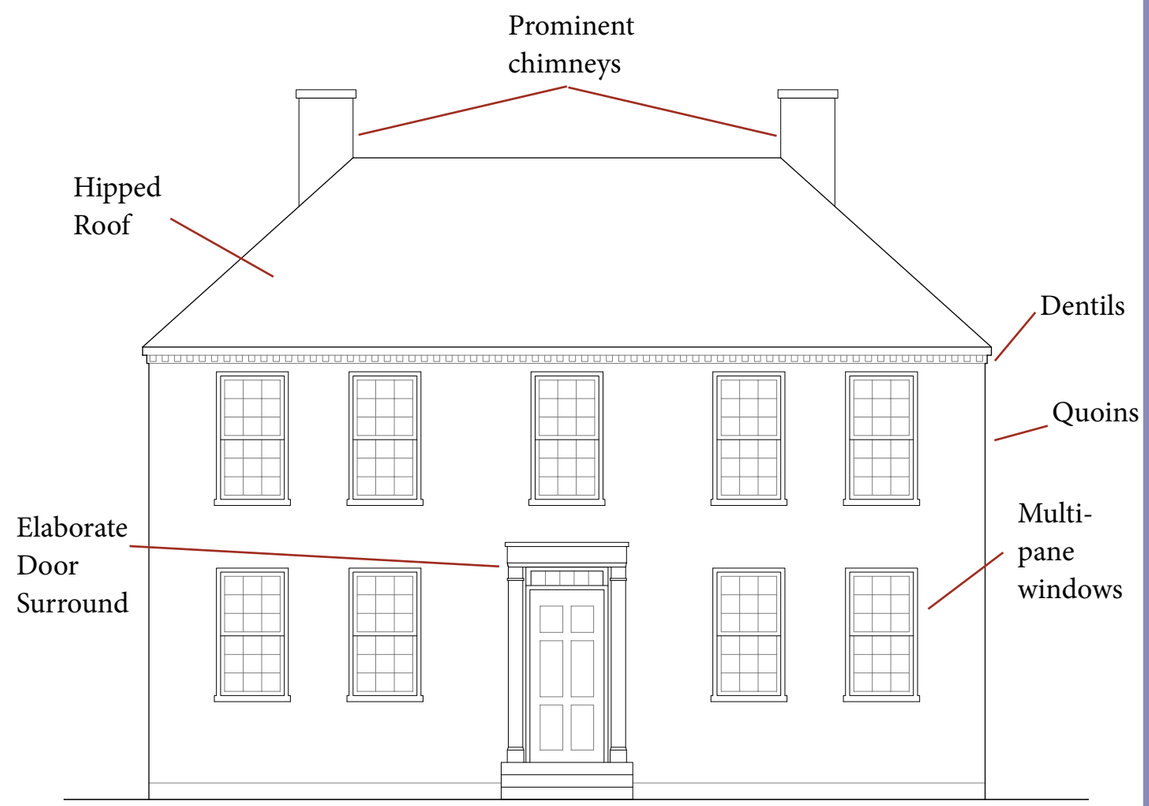
Character-Defining Elements

- Symmetrical form and use of architectural elements
- Side-gabled or hipped roof
- Centered paneled door with decorative crown and pilasters
- Dentils and other decorative elements in the cornice
- Water table or belt course
- Quoins
- Multi-paned windows, typically single or double hung
- Prominent chimneys at sides
- Brick construction









Symmetrical form, elements, brick construction and center paneled door

2) Federal (ca. 1780 - 1840)

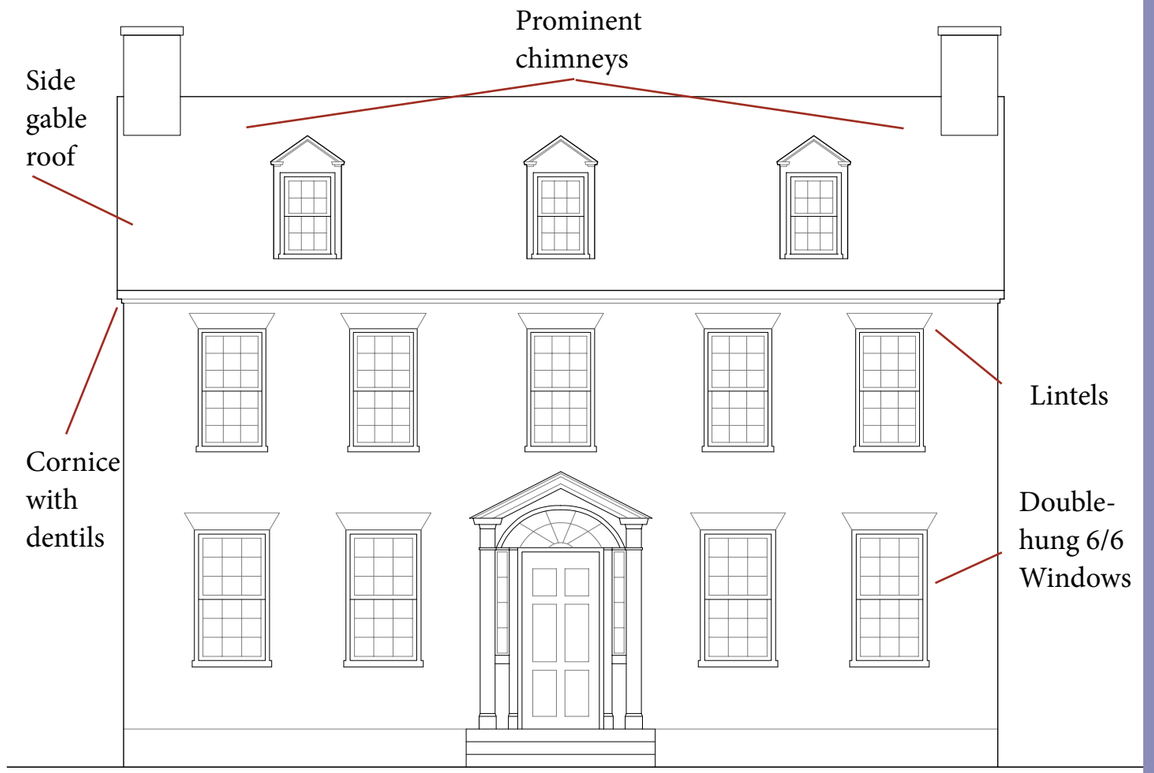
The Federal style is similar in appearance to the earlier Georgian style that was popular throughout the 18th century in the United States. Federal buildings share many of the characteristics of Georgian style buildings such as a symmetrical facade, classical details, and the same use of exterior materials. Federal style buildings are often described as having finer or more delicate details than their Georgian counterparts. Entryways on Federal style buildings are often the most elaborate and may contain an accentuated front door with a fanlight and sidelights. Palladian style windows are also found on the Federal style, usually on the second story above the front door.

Character-Defining Elements

- Symmetrical form and use of architectural elements
- Side-gabled or hipped roof
- Elliptical fanlight and sidelights at front door
- Classical architectural elements that are finer and at a smaller scale than those found on Georgian buildings
- Double hung windows, with 6 over 6 being the most common configuration
- Lintels over windows
- Palladian windows
- Cornice with dentils
- Prominent chimneys at sides







Symmetrical form, elements, smaller scale, and center door with fanlight and sidelights

3) Gothic Revival (ca. 1840 - 1880)

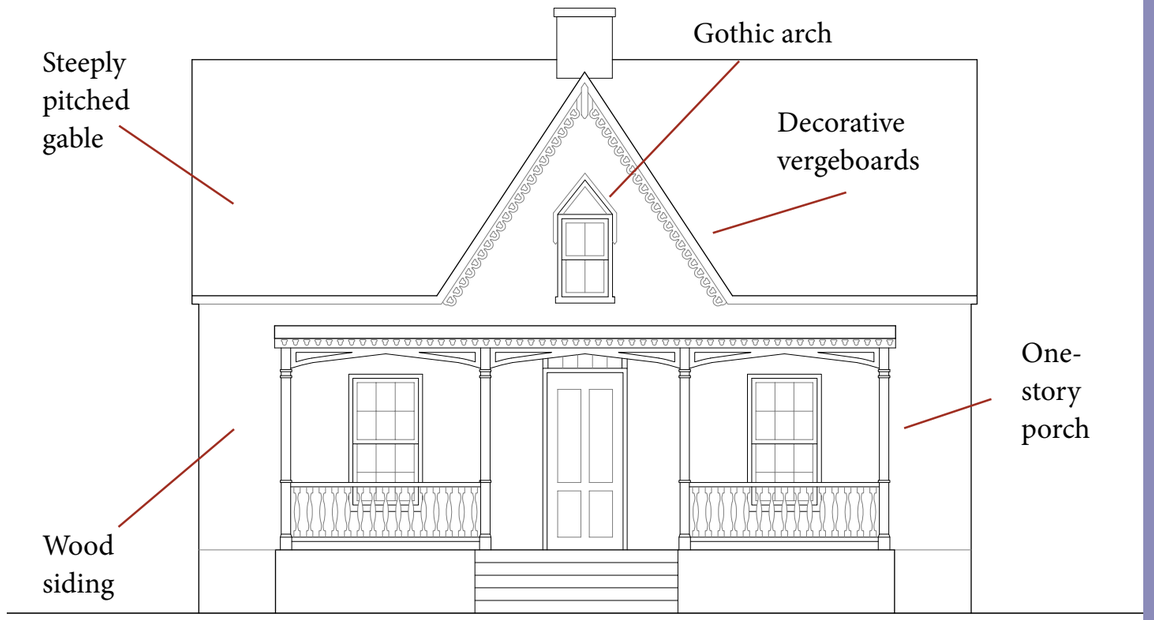
The Gothic Revival style was influenced by the Medieval architecture of England. The style was popularized around 1840 through the publication of house plan books. The style was commonly found in more rural settings and small towns across the northeastern states. The Gothic Revival style was also popular for church buildings. High-style examples of Gothic Revival often include brick or stone exteriors, though vernacular examples with wood exteriors and fewer architectural details are more common. Gothic Revival buildings often contain decorative steeply pitched gable roofs, front porches, and windows with pointed arches.

Character-Defining Elements

- Steeply pitched gable roofs with decorative vergeboards
- One-story porches, often full width or wraparound
- Wooden siding, typically vertical board and batten
- Decorative drip molds over windows and doors
- Use of pointed arches, most often in window shapes through the use of the pointed, Gothic arch
- Used in institutional, religious, and residential architecture







4) Italianate (ca. 1840 - 1885)

The Italianate style was influenced by the architecture of medieval Europe, specifically that of Italy and Rome. Italianate buildings are often two or three stories, though single story examples do rarely occur. Low-pitched hipped roofs are most common, with some examples including an accented gable. Floorplans are often elaborate, and can be identified by their irregular massing. Residential examples often include a one-story porch. The Italianate style is also commonly found in commercial and institutional buildings. Other identifying features of the Italianate style include decorative window crowns, overhanging eaves with decorative brackets, and tall narrow windows.

Character-Defining Elements

- Low-pitched roof, most often hipped
- Overhanging eaves supported by decorative brackets
- Use of cupolas or towers on the roof
- Tall, narrow windows with decorative crowns
- Windows may be in groupings of two or three
- Two to three stories in height
- Single story porches









5) Folk Victorian (ca. 1870 - 1910)

Folk Victorian buildings can be identified by the use of Victorian details on simple house forms. Italianate, Gothic Revival, and Queen Anne architectural details were often used to embellish the simple form that defines the Folk Victorian style. Both single story and two-story examples are commonly found across the country. Folk Victorian houses often contain porches and gabled roofs. The style spread throughout the country with the development of the railroad. As people moved out west, the railroad allowed the shipment of building materials and precut architectural details that made the Folk Victorian style possible.

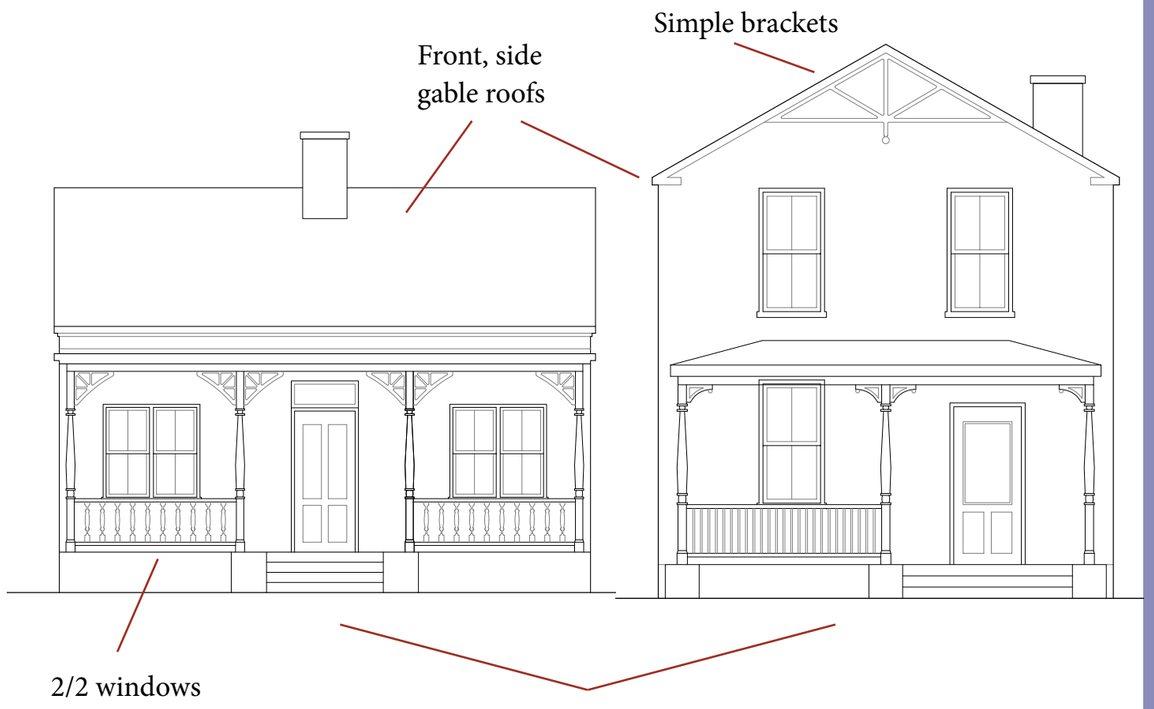
Character-Defining Elements

- Simple house plan, often rectangular with an attached wing
- One or two stories
- Single story porches
- 1/1 or 2/2 windows most common
- Most decorative details are often found on the porch, including spindlework details
- May contain decorative elements from different Victorian-era architectural styles
- Front and side gabled roofs with simple brackets under eaves









6) Queen Anne (ca. 1880 - 1910)

The Queen Anne style was the most popular style for houses in America between 1880 and 1900. The style is characterized by its elaborate form, rich details, and use of multiple surface materials such as brick and wood. Like the Folk Victorian style, the Queen Anne was proliferated across the country by the railroad and mass production. Queen Anne's often feature steeply pitched cross gabled roofs, partial or full width porches, masonry chimneys, and corner towers. Though the style was most popular for residences, it is also found in churches, institutional buildings, and offices.

Character-Defining Elements

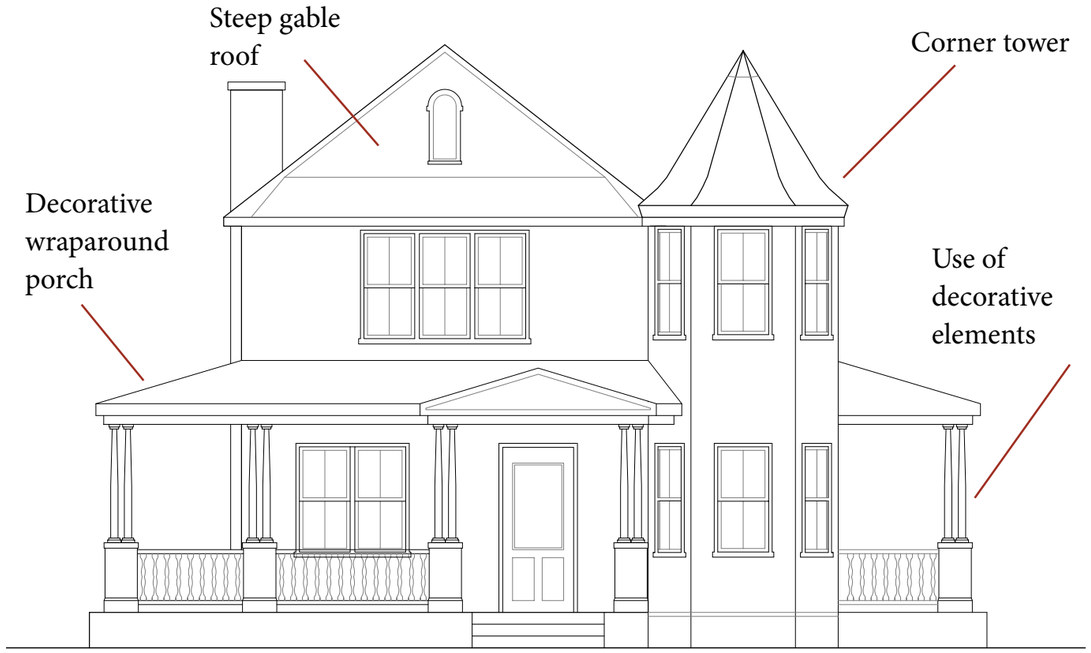
- Steeply pitched gable roofs
- Expansive use of decorative elements
- Asymmetrical facade
- Decorative porches, either partial, full-width, or wraparound
- Corner towers in circular or polygon shape
- Variety of wall surfaces, including patterned brick and a range of wood siding types and patterns
- Decorative shingles
- Single pane glass windows, often accented by stained glass or other decorative elements







Steep gable roof



Asymmetrical facade

7) Colonial Revival (ca. 1880 - 1955)

The Colonial Revival style was most influenced by the Georgian and Federal styles discussed earlier in this chapter. While not a true copy of these earlier styles, the Colonial Revival style included elements from these styles and applied them to contemporary buildings. Colonial Revival was popular for a variety of building types including residences, churches, institutional buildings, schools, and commercial buildings. The Colonial Revival style continues to influence architecture into the modern day, though it is often far simpler and less detailed than it was during the peak of its popularity.

Character-Defining Elements

- Symmetrical facades
- Double hung windows with multiple panes
- Side gable, gambrel, and hipped roofs
- Decorative front entry with porch and door featuring a fanlight and sidelights
- Use of pedimented doors, windows, and dormers









Symmetrical facade, decorative entry, and overall style influenced by colonial architecture

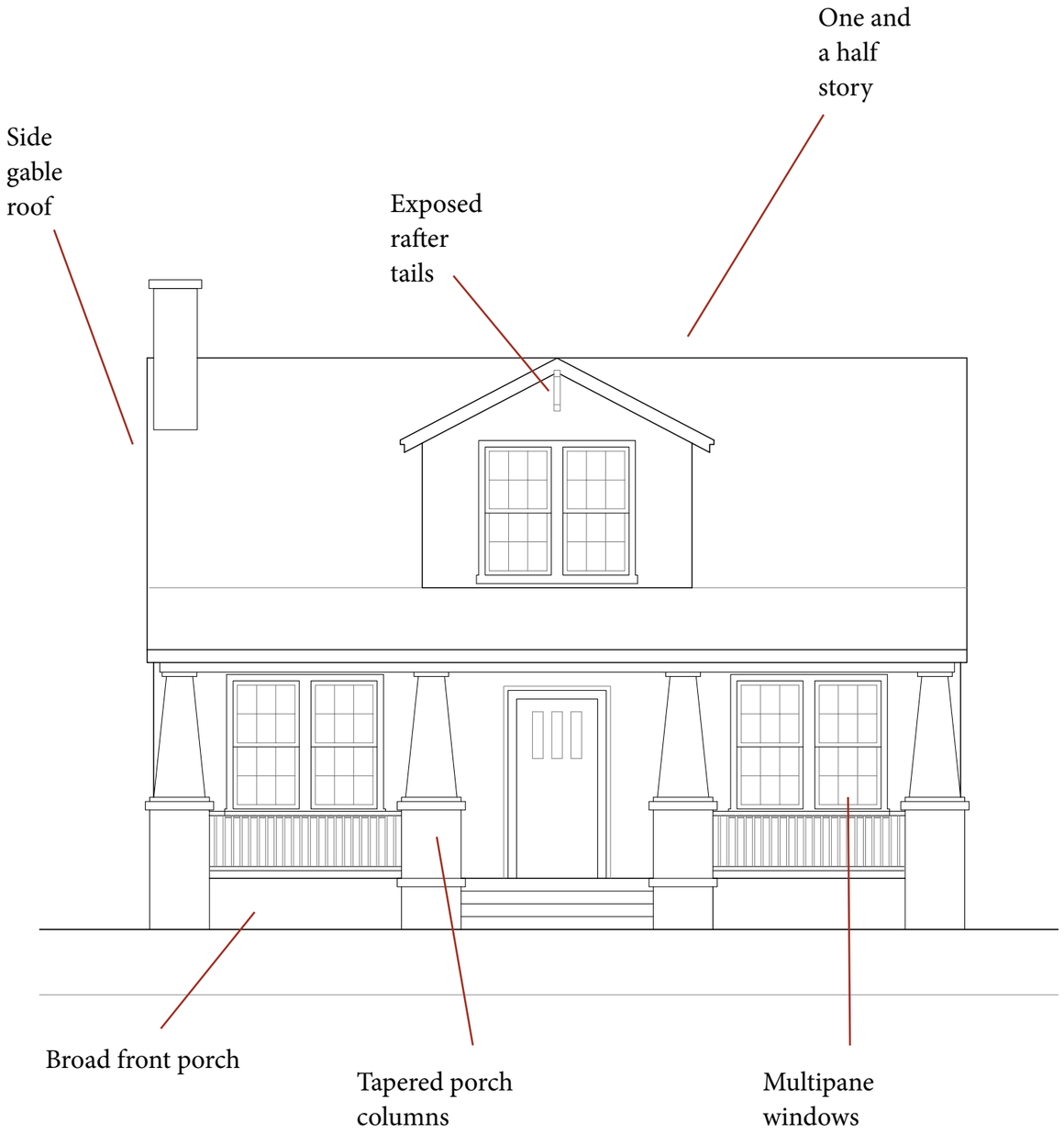
8) American Craftsman (ca. 1905- 1930)

The American Craftsman was the dominant style for smaller homes built throughout the country during the early 1900s. The style originated in southern California and quickly spread throughout the nation. Landmarked and more grand examples of the style are commonly found in California, while the more modest bungalow form can be found in America's early suburbs. The style was popularized by pattern books and magazines which provided craftsmen and contractors with schematics that could be easily replicated without the expertise of a professional architect.

Character-Defining Elements

- Typically one or one-and-a-half stories
- Broad front porches
- Low pitched gabled roofs with overhanging eaves
- Exposed rafter tails under eaves
- Tapered or square columns
- Multiple materials on exterior
- Multipane windows, typically double-hung or single-hung





9) Minimal Traditional (ca. 1935 - 1950)

The Minimal Traditional style emerged in the wake of the Great Depression around 1935. In 1934 the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) was created with the purpose of regulating interest rates on home mortgages. The Minimal Traditional home was created in response to this crisis and the formation of the FHA. Minimal Traditional homes could be financed with FHA loans and could be constructed quickly. The proliferation of the Minimal Traditional home continued into the 1940s as American soldiers returned home and the United States experienced a post-war development boom. The style would eventually evolve into the Ranch style into the 1950s and 1960s.

Character-Defining Elements

- Small scale, simple form
- Hipped or gable roofs with little to no overhang in the eaves
- Lack of ornamentation and other architectural details
- Single story most common, with half story or two-story less common
- Windows are typically single or double hung with multiple panes
- No porch, or simple single story porch









Simple form, single story, lack of ornamentation

10) Ranch (ca. 1935 - 1975)

The Ranch home emerged around the same time as the Minimal Traditional during the wake of the Great Depression. In the post-war development boom, the Minimal Traditional fell out of style and was overtaken by the Ranch as restrictions on home loans were lifted. Ranch style homes can be found across the country and are characterized by their horizontal form, use of built-in garages, and low pitched hipped and gabled roofs.

Character-Defining Elements

- Asymmetrical facade
- Broad, rambling, and horizontal emphasis in form
- Attached garage, typically on the main facade though may be off to the side
- Variety of window types, typically features a prominent picture window on the facade
- Low sloped hipped or gabled roof
- Sheltered or recessed front porches









C) Commercial Building Types

Commercial buildings are often defined by their type rather than their style. Building type is characterized by the arrangement of a building's layout and the massing of its separate components. Many commercial buildings, especially those found in Smithfield, are designed in styles that are also found in residential buildings. An understanding of building type is important to making sensitive alterations to commercial buildings that preserve the architectural character of the historic district.



Above: One-Part Commercial Block



Above: Two-part commercial block



Above: Temple front commercial type

1) One-Part Commercial Block

Both the one and two-part commercial block types are commonly found on historic main streets across the United States. The one-part commercial block is a commercial building that usually centers around a storefront or entrance and is usually only a single story. In many cases the sides of a one-part commercial block may be directly adjacent to another building. Due to their use as retail spaces, one part commercial block buildings tend to have a lot of detail on the primary street facade. The area above the storefront may be used for advertising purposes and signage, though in more contemporary commercial structures the storefront might encompass the entire height of the facade.

2) Two-Part Commercial Block

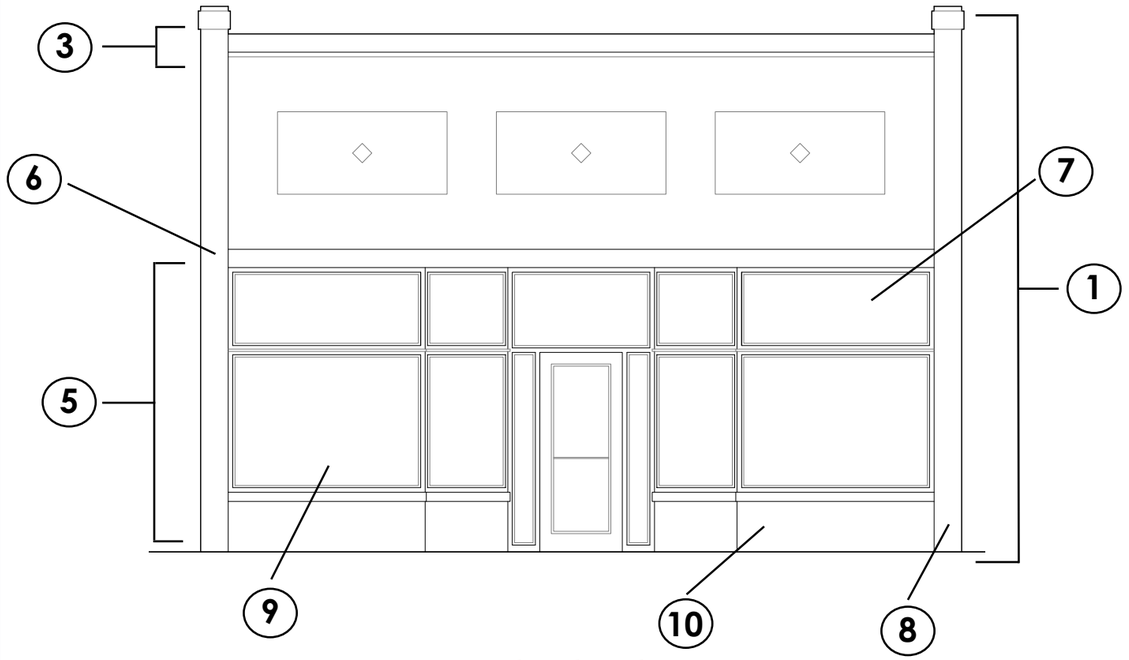
Like the one-part commercial block, the two-part usually centers around a highly visible storefront. Two-part commercial block structures are typically limited to structures between two and four stories. With two-part commercial block buildings there is a clear horizontal division between the ground level and upper stories, reflecting the division of uses. Upper stories are rarely dedicated to commercial space and are most often used for offices and residential dwellings.

3) Other Commercial Types

Several other subsets of the one and two-part commercial block type are found in the Smithfield historic district:

- The one-part vertical block, includes more than one story, yet there is not a clear division of space between the ground floor and upper stories. This is more common for office spaces without a dedicated ground floor retail space.
- The two-part vertical block is similar to the two-part commercial block type, yet there is more of a vertical emphasis to the upper stories.
- The temple front may be one or more stories and is derived from classical architecture, often featuring columns and pilasters around an entrance that dominates the facade. The style was common for banks and movie theaters.

One-Part Commercial Block



Two-Part Commercial Block



Common Elements of a Commercial Storefront

1. **Facade** - The main elevation of a building
2. **Parapet** - Upper extension of wall at the roof
3. **Cornice** - Decorative moulding at roof line
4. **Upper Story Windows** - Usually relate to a non-retail use
5. **Storefront** - Front, first floor exterior of commercial building
6. **Lintel** - Structural member above storefront
7. **Transom** - Upper windows of a storefront, may be operational
8. **Column** - Structural vertical support
9. **Display Window** - Main windows of a storefront, typically fixed
10. **Bulkhead** - Area between display windows and sidewalk



Chapter 3

Smithfield's BHAR Guidelines for Preservation and Alteration





Left & Above: Both the Nelms House (left) and Thomas House (above) contain many character-defining architectural elements.

A) Common Causes of Material Deterioration

1) Moisture

Poorly maintained or functioning gutters, downspouts, and standing water at foundations can all gradually wear away at the condition of a building. Impermeable layers, sealants, and paints might also lead to moisture infiltration in historic materials.

2) Vegetation

Vegetation near the foundations of buildings or attached to building surfaces can gradually wear away at a building's exterior and lead to moisture problems. Wood siding and masonry are especially susceptible to damage by vegetation.

3) Deferred Maintenance

Deferred maintenance of historic buildings can gradually build up over time causing major issues. The regular cleaning of gutters, downspouts, and clearing away of moisture prone vegetation can prevent issues down the line. Regular inspections of a building can identify maintenance issues before they become detrimental.

4) Insects

Insects such as termites and carpenter ants can damage building materials over time as they find their way into buildings. Often the damage they cause only becomes apparent after it is extensive. Regular inspections both inside and out along with proper sealing can prevent insects and other pests from damaging historic buildings.

Maintenance Inspection Schedule

- **Entryways and Storefronts:** Annually (Spring)
- **Foundations:** Annually (Spring)
- **Windows:** Annually (Spring)
- **Porches:** Annually (Spring)
- **Exterior Walls:** Annually (Spring)
- **Building Perimeter:** Annually (Winter)
- **Roof Drainage:** Bi-Annually
- **Doors:** Bi-Annually
- **Attic:** Quarterly
- **Basement/Crawlspace:** Quarterly
- **Roof:** Every 5 years by professional roofer
- **Chimney:** Every 5 years by professional mason

Examples of Material Deterioration



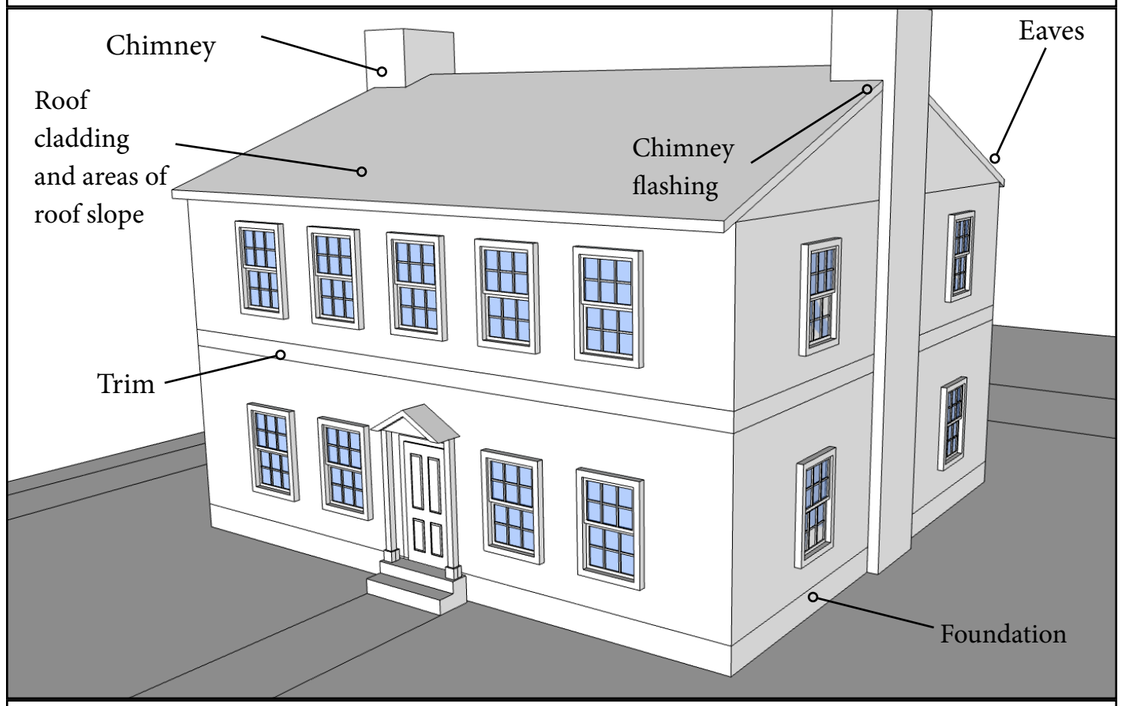
Preservation Brief #16
The Use of Substitute Materials on Historic Building Exteriors

Preservation Brief #39
Holding the Line: Controlling Unwanted Moisture in Historic Buildings





Common Maintenance Areas



B) Treatment for Historic Materials

1) Wood

Wood is especially susceptible to environmental factors such as humidity, moisture, and sunlight. Termites, mold, and vegetation can also cause irrevocable damage to wooden materials.

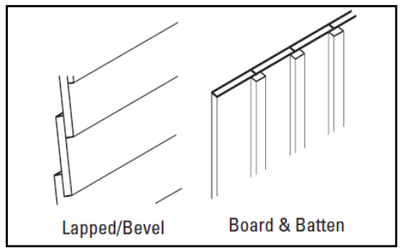
Best Practices

- Regularly inspect exterior wooden surfaces for decay. Wood is especially vulnerable to moisture.
- Clean wood surfaces with mild household cleaners and water.
- Maintain paint on wood surfaces. Paint often protects wood from external forces.
- If paint needs to be removed, use the gentlest means possible. Sand blasting and water blasting should never be used. Avoid removing paint all the way down to the wood if possible.
- Avoid covering wood with stucco, masonry, and other materials.
- Provide ventilation and proper drainage to wood surfaces.
- Repair deteriorated features with wood filler, glues, or epoxy. Test these substances on a small, inconspicuous spot before proceeding with the entire surface or material.
- Avoid removing wood features when they can be repaired in place.
- It is generally appropriate to remove non-historic materials such as vinyl siding to reveal historic wood siding.
- When replacing wood features, use in-kind materials when possible.
- When in-kind materials and features can not be found, the replacement material should be of a similar composition to the historic material with a similar size, scale, profile, and external appearance.
- If wood siding or other wood elements need to be replaced, only replace the damaged portions of the siding or element.
- Replacement wood siding should match the historic material and profile of the wood siding as close as possible.
- Vinyl, hardiboard, and other composite siding materials are not recommended replacements for historic wood siding.
- Allow pressure-treated wood to season for a year before painting.

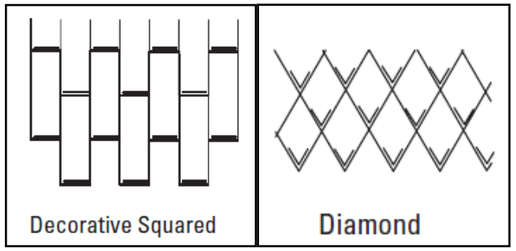
Avoid

- Removing historic wood features that are in good condition or could be repaired.
- Adding new wood features where none were historically found.
- Cleaning wood surfaces with harsh cleaners or abrasive methods.
- Covering or obscuring historic wood surfaces and features.

Wood Siding Types:



Wood Shingle Types:





Left: Wood shingles such as these should be repainted regularly to help maintain their appearance and overall condition. The damaged shingles should be replaced in-kind, while preserving the existing shingles in good condition.

2) Masonry, Brick, and Stucco

Masonry, especially brick, is a common feature within the Smithfield Historic District and is an important character-defining element of its buildings and landscapes. As evidenced by important brick landmarks such as the 1750 Courthouse, proper maintenance of brick can last for centuries. When improperly maintained, masonry can lead to structural issues and the deterioration of important buildings and their features.

Best Practices

- Regularly inspect exterior masonry, joints, and mortar for decay.
- Clean masonry surfaces by the gentlest means possible. Use water and non-ionic detergents when cleaning masonry surfaces.
- Soaking, low-pressure washing (between 100 and 300 psi), and steam cleaning masonry surfaces is also appropriate, though these methods should be tested on an inconspicuous surface before proceeding.
- Unpainted masonry surfaces should remain unpainted. In rare cases, painting masonry surfaces may be necessary for its longevity, in such cases use a water permeable paint.
- Care should be taken when removing paint from masonry. Use alkaline poultice cleaners and strippers to remove paint from masonry when it is necessary.
- Remove vegetation and other organic materials such as dead leaves from the foundation, walls, and other external facets of masonry buildings and structures. Vegetation may damage mortar, joints, and cause moisture to seep into surfaces.
- Replacement masonry should be done in-kind or with materials that are similar in composition, texture, color, and size.
- Repoint deteriorated masonry joints with a material of similar strength, composition, texture, and color.
- When replacing or repointing brick mortar, maintain the profile, texture, and size of mortar that was replaced on the building or structure.
- When replacing bricks, maintain the brickwork pattern or bond found on the building or structure.
- When replacing stucco, use natural and porous stucco products.
- It is generally appropriate to remove non-historic materials such as vinyl siding to reveal historic masonry beneath.

Avoid

- Painting unpainted masonry surfaces.
- Removing non-damaged masonry when replacement is necessary.
- Using silicone sealants, mortar with a high amount of Portland cement, and caulks on deteriorated masonry joints.
- Using EIFS when replacing or patching stucco.
- Installing masonry where none was previously found.
- Covering or obscuring historic masonry surfaces and features.



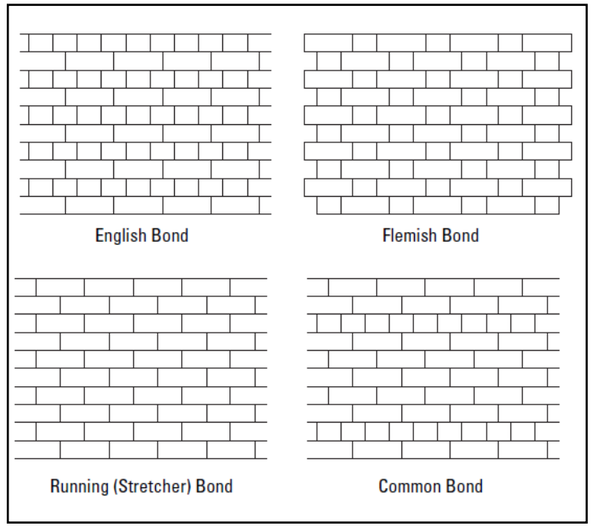
Left & Below: Avoid covering or concealing historic brick surfaces such as these low retaining walls which have been clad with concrete.



Cleaning and Maintaining Masonry

- Historic and modern bricks are different in material composition, including the mortar or binding that holds bricks together. Improper mixture of mortar can damage historic bricks. Applicants should consult with professional contractors when repointing historic masonry.
- Low-pressure water with soft detergents is the best method for cleaning historic masonry. Cleaners should be tested on a small, inconspicuous part of the building before proceeding. Historic brick is especially susceptible to damage from high-pressure washing.
  1. Use chemical cleaners cautiously. Do not use cleaners which damage masonry and do not leave chemicals on masonry longer than is necessary

Brick Bond Types:





Left: Brick patterns such as the Flemish Bond (shown here) should be maintained when replacement of bricks is necessary.

Preservation Brief #1
Assessing Cleaning and Water-Repellent Treatments for Historic Masonry Buildings

Preservation Brief #2
Re-pointing Mortar Joints in Historic Masonry Buildings

Preservation Brief #22
The Preservation and Repair of Historic Stucco

Preservation Brief #38
Removing Graffiti from Historic Masonry



Left: Brick, when properly maintained, can last hundreds of years as evidenced by the high number of 18th century brick buildings in Smithfield.

3) Metal

Metal is a common material used for architectural features, fences, balconies, fences, and commercial storefronts. Like masonry, metal can last for centuries when properly maintained, though improper or deferred maintenance can result in its deterioration and result in structural damage.

Best Practices

- Regularly inspect exterior metal features for signs of decay, deterioration, or rusting.
- Regularly inspect and clean historic metal gutters.
- Use the gentlest means possible when cleaning metal surfaces, such as a biodegradable dishwashing detergent and hot water. A nylon wire brush can be used to remove paint and corrosion.
- If handscraping and wirebrushing are ineffective for removing paint, low-pressure grit blasting may be used as long as it does not damage the metal surface.
- Cleaned metal surfaces should be dried quickly to avoid the buildup of water and moisture.
- Provide proper drainage to metal surfaces that might come in contact with water and moisture.
- Repair metal features and surfaces using a method that is appropriate for the type of metal surface.
- Replacement metal should be done in-kind or with materials that are similar in material composition, appearance, and size to the historic replacement.
- Photographs or other evidence may be used to allow for the introduction of metal features which were historically found but are not longer present.
- Where metal features are attached to other surfaces such as wood or masonry, use stainless steel anchors to limit rusting and expansion. Anchors should be installed into mortar joints on masonry buildings, and should not cover up or damage the character-defining elements of historic buildings.

Avoid

- Using paint strippers and other harsh chemicals which may contain methylene chloride, as it can create pits in metal surfaces.
- Altering the finish or removing the patina from historic metal.
- Using abrasive cleaning methods, such as grit blasting to clean or alter metal surfaces.
- Introducing new metal features to historic buildings where none were previously found.

Preservation Brief #27
The Maintenance and Repair of Architectural Cast Iron

Preservation Brief #49
Historic Decorative Metal Ceilings and Walls: Use, Repair, and Replacement



Left: The metal finial of this Queen Anne is an important architectural detail that is not easily replaced if deteriorated.

4) Alternative and Synthetic Materials

Some architectural styles such as the Minimal Traditional and Ranch styles made ample use of vinyl and other synthetic materials such as hardi-plank. Ultimately care should be taken when considering the use of synthetic, composite, and cementitious materials in the historic district. The BHAR acknowledges that there is the continuing development of new, innovative materials that may be appropriate for use in the historic district. The use of synthetic materials shall be considered by the BHAR on a case-by-case basis. Synthetic materials are generally not worth preserving from a historic integrity standpoint. These guidelines are applicable to all elements of a building which may be constructed of synthetic materials such as siding, doors, windows, roofs, and fences.

Best Practices

- Synthetic materials are generally appropriate for non-contributing buildings in the historic district, though their use should be compatible with surrounding buildings and not detract from the character of adjacent landmarked and contributing buildings.
- Synthetic materials may be appropriate for primary facades of contributing buildings that are not easily visible from the street, for building additions or outbuildings, or for architectural elements that cannot be reproduced easily.
- When synthetic materials are used they should be of a compatible texture, profile, and appearance with their historic counterparts in the district.
- When synthetic siding is to be used, it should be of a similar texture, overlap, thickness, depth, and physical appearance as the historic siding of the building.
- It is generally appropriate to remove synthetic materials and restore original building materials when feasible.
- When synthetic siding is added to a building, the siding should not remove or obscure any architectural elements and other historic materials of the building.
- At times, it may be appropriate to replace historic materials with synthetic replacements when the historic material may no longer be reproduced.
- Applicants should contact staff prior to submitting a COA if they expect to use alternative or synthetic materials in their project. Due to the evolving nature of synthetic materials their use will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Avoid

- Using synthetic materials on Landmarked buildings.
- Replacing historic features with synthetic materials when the historic feature can be repaired or replaced in-kind.
- Covering historic materials with synthetic materials.
- Using vinyl for windows, doors, and siding.

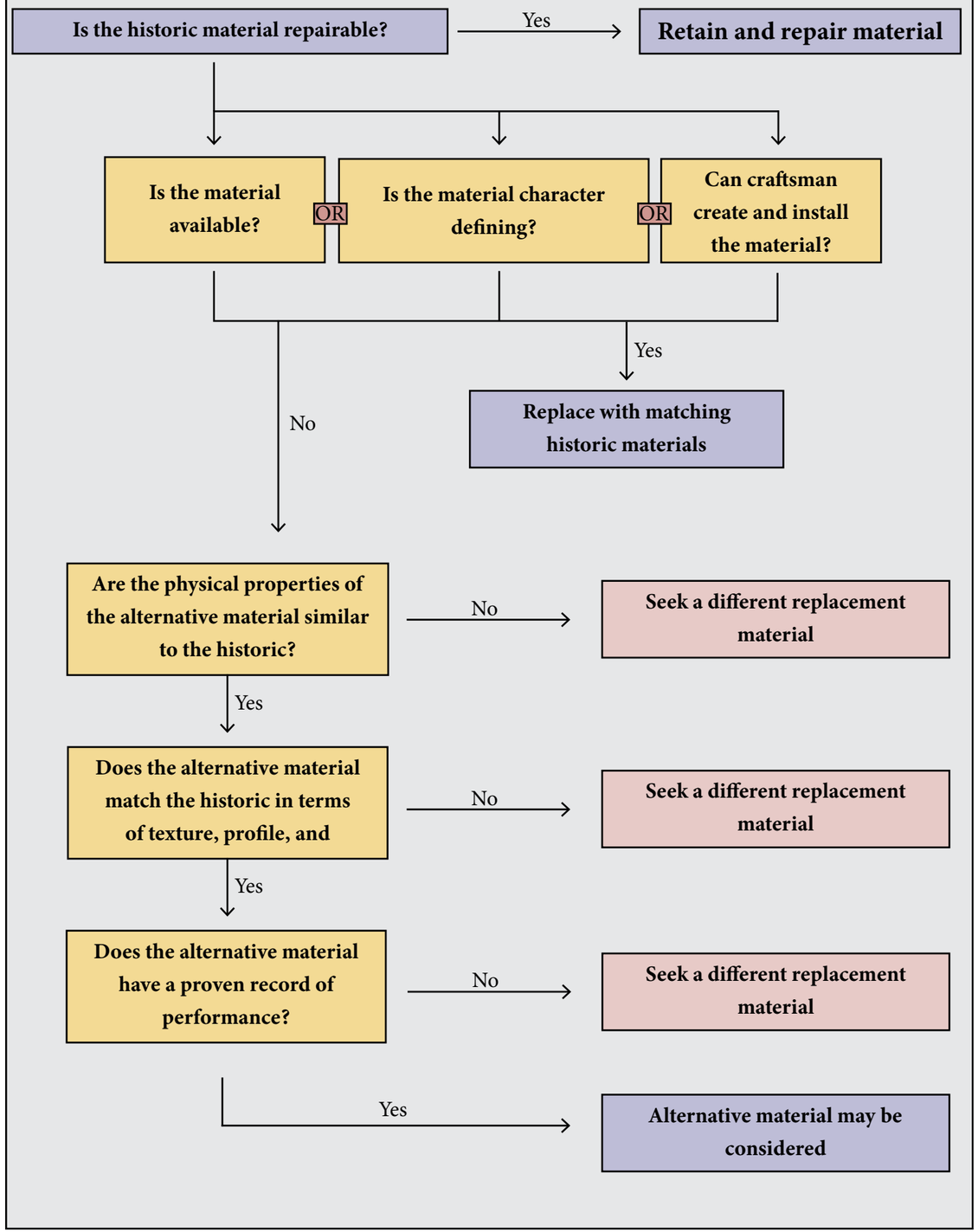
Preservation Brief #16: The Use of Substitute Materials on Historic Building Exteriors

Released in 2023, Preservation Brief #16 provides the most up-to-date information on the appropriate use of substitute and synthetic materials for historic structures and buildings. Special care should be taken in any instance when a historic material is to be replaced with a nonhistoric counterpart. Even small changes to a historic building will gradually result in the loss of integrity over time. As such, historic materials should only be replaced when damage or deterioration to the material is too severe to be repaired. Applicants should refer to Preservation Brief #16 when the substitution of historic materials is necessary. Work should only be conducted by a qualified contractor and architect who has experience working with historic buildings.



Left: Historic wood siding (left) and contemporary fiber cement siding (right) demonstrates the difference in overlap and thickness between the two types of siding.

Alternative Materials Flow Chart



Historic Features and Substitute Materials

Historic Building Features

Potential Substitute Materials	**Masonry** Stone, terra cotta	**Architectural Metals** Cast & wrought iron, steel, pressed metal	**Siding** Wood, asbestos	**Roofing** Wood shingle, slate, tile	**Decking** Tongue and groove & square edge wood	**Molding / Trim** Wood
Aluminum	●	●	●			●
Cast Stone & Precast Concrete	●			●		
Fiber Reinforced Concretes	●					
Glass Fiber Reinforced Polymers	●	●				
Fiber Cement			●	●		●
Mineral / Polymer Composite			●	●	●	●
Cellulose Fiber / Polymer Composite			●	●	●	●
Non-composite Polymers		●			●	●
Cellular PVC			●		●	●

The above chart lists materials that are sometimes used as substitutes for replacement of historic building features. Even within a given category, all materials may not be equally suitable as a substitute replacement material for the actual historic material or feature. Any substitute material should be selected based on its specific physical and visual characteristics, conditions, and intended application consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. (NPS, 2023)



Many of the substitute materials produced for siding and trim have an embossed wood grain, making them incompatible for replacing historic wood that was typically planed to a smoothed surface. (NPS, 2023)

C) Guidelines Applicable to All Building Types

1) Architectural Features

Many historic buildings are embellished with architectural features that help to convey their historical significance and architectural character. Maintaining architectural features is an important aspect of preserving the character-defining elements of a historic building and should be taken with care.

Best Practices

- Architectural features should be maintained regularly and preserved on historic buildings.
- Regularly inspect architectural features for damage or decay. Use preventative maintenance measures such as repainting, caulking, and the removal of rust.
- Use the gentlest cleaning methods possible to clean architectural features.
- Repair only the damaged portion of the architectural element when possible.
- Refer back to the beginning of this chapter for the best practices in treating architectural features based on their material composition.
- Photographs or other evidence may be used to allow for the introduction of architectural features which were historically found but are not longer present.
- When replacement is necessary, replace only the portion that is damaged. Use in-kind materials or alternative materials of a similar size, shape, color, finish, and texture of the historic material.
- When a specific feature cannot be replicated in-kind, use a simplified version of the architectural feature that is comparable.

Avoid

- Adding architectural features where none were historically found.
- Adding architectural features that are incompatible with the architectural style of the building.
- Removing architectural features that are in good condition or can be repaired.





Above & Left: An array of intricate architectural details define the facades of many historic buildings.





Above: Many historic buildings contain important architectural elements on the porch.

2) Paint

Many historic buildings are painted in a wide variety of colors depending on the architectural style and time period. Paint can often be useful in maintaining the exterior appearance and condition of a building depending on the surface it is applied to.

Best Practices

- Keep existing painted surfaces well painted, as it can help to preserve the materials underneath.
- Be cautious when removing older paint layers as they may contain harmful lead contaminants.
- Refer to the beginning of this chapter for the best practices of removing old paint from wood, masonry, and metal surfaces.
- Use only high quality paints and follow the manufacturer's specifications for preparation and application.
- Prime surfaces using the appropriate primer depending on the type of material surface.
- Choose colors that fit the architectural style of a building and complement other buildings along the street.
- When painting an entire building, use a coordinated color scheme that incorporates the various facade element to create a unified appearance.
- Bolder or more vivid colors are generally appropriate for accents and architectural details. A muted color is more appropriate for the base of a building.

Avoid

- Painting unpainted masonry as it can irrevocably damage the material.
- Using bright and obtrusive colors, too many colors, or only a single color as many historic buildings featured at least several different colors.

Hamtown Hints: Historic Paint Samples



Hardware stores often carry historic paint samples and palettes. Several major paint suppliers also have palettes that are specially curated for historic buildings.

Choosing a Paint Color for your Historic Building

As a general rule - unpainted masonry should remain unpainted, avoid bright and garish colors, avoid painting a single color, and avoid using too many colors. Below is a list of appropriate color schemes for the architectural styles and building types in Smithfield.

- **Non-Residential Buildings:** It is appropriate to paint features such as building trim, accent elements, signs, cornices, storefronts, architectural elements, window sashes, and doors. If external walls are painted they should be of a contrasting color to the painted building accents.
- **Residential Buildings:** Walls and trim should be painted a contrasting color. A third accent color can be used for doors, windows, and window shutters. Shutters were typically painted a darker color, such as forest green or black on many historic homes. A fourth accent color is not appropriate in most cases, except for more elaborate examples of Queen Anne and Italianate homes.

1. **Georgian and Federal:** Exterior walls are often white, ivory, beige, muted green or blue, or a soft yellow. Shutters and doors might be more colorful - in shades or red, blue, or green to contrast with exterior walls. Trim is often painted white or beige.
2. **Gothic Revival:** Exterior walls are often painted in warm, earth tones such as a warmer red, brown, and yellow. Trim and other features are then painted in a complimentary color, though white was rarely used for on Gothic Revival homes.
3. **Italianate:** Italianate homes were painted in similar colors to Gothic Revival homes, though towards the end of their popularity brighter colors became favored. Olive, browns, other earth tones, and pastel colors became popular for exterior walls. Trim was often a lighter tone of the main body.
4. **Folk Victorian and Queen Anne:** Deep and rich earth tones were popular for both styles. It was not uncommon for Queen Anne's to have four or five different colors on the exterior. Trim was often a compatible accent color. Windows and doors were often darker than the primary body colors.
5. **American Craftsman:** Earth tones are prominantly used on the exterior of American Craftsman homes for surfaces and trim.
6. **Colonial Revival:** Colonial Revival homes were painted in similar color schemes to the Georgian and Federal styles that influenced them.
7. **Minimal Traditional and Ranch:** White was often popular, though so were earth tones, shades of blue, and pastel colors. Window trim was often white, though shutters and other accents might be of brighter earth tones.



Above: Pamphlets from c. 1886 (top) and c. 1920 (bottom) show a range of paint colors that would have been common at the time for residential homes.









Above: Paint not only adds to the visual variety and aesthetic of the historic district, but is an important part of maintaining the exterior for many historic buildings and their material parts.

3) Roofs

Roofs in the Smithfield Historic District are comprised of a variety of different material types. With proper maintenance, many roofs may last upwards of fifty years depending on their material composition. A period appropriate roof is important to maintaining the integrity and character of individual historic buildings and the overall district.

Best Practices

- Regularly inspect roofs, gutters, and downspouts for accumulated dirt, vegetation, and collecting moisture.
- Check roof surface, seams, flashing, and ridges for breaks, holes, or other signs of damage.
- Maintain historic roof details and other decorative elements where they are found.
- Replace individual tiles, shingles, and panels before full replacement when possible.
- Replace roof elements in-kind when possible. When in-kind replacement is not possible, use compatible parts that match the historic in material, texture, size, and profile.
- As a general rule, when more than thirty percent of a roof is damaged, it is appropriate to replace the entire roof.
- When a roof must be entirely replaced, the new roof shall be consistent with the architectural style of the building and include similar roof form, pitch, angle, shape, material composition and appearance, and overhang of eaves.
- Existing architectural features including but not limited to chimneys, dormers, gutters, cornices, parapets, rafters, brackets, and vergeboards shall be preserved when roof replacement is necessary or when alterations are made to an existing roof.
- New gutters and downspouts should be compatible with the style of the building and should not damage, obscure, or result in the removal of historic roof elements. See the table on page 79 for more info.
- While some historic roof materials may be cost-prohibitive, the replacement materials should be compatible with the historic style of the building. See the table on the next page for more info.
- New roof features such as mounted utilities, satellite dishes, HVAC units, and solar panels should be located on the side or rear of a building where they are less visible from the right of way.

Period Appropriate Roof Materials

- **Non-Residential Buildings:** Many non-residential historic buildings have flat roofs. It is generally appropriate to use contemporary roof materials on flat or gently sloping roof types as long as they are not visible from the right of way or detract from the character and integrity of the building.
- **Georgian and Federal:** Slate, clay, stone, and wood shingles were all used along with copper, although copper is more expensive.
- **Gothic Revival:** Wood shingles, slate, and metal roofs were all used.
- **Italianate:** Standing seam metal, clay tile, slate, and other types of shingles were commonly used.
- **Folk Victorian and Queen Anne:** Both wood shingle and slate were historically used. Metal roofs were rare for Queen Anne, though they were found more commonly on Folk Victorian homes.
- **American Craftsman:** Wood shingle, slate, and clay were common roof materials used for Craftsman style homes.
- **Colonial Revival:** Colonial Revival homes featured similar roof materials to the Georgian and Federal houses that inspired them.
- **Minimal Traditional and Ranch:** These styles often used composition shingle types that mimicked more traditional shingles. Metal roofing was also appropriate used Minimal Traditional and Ranch homes.

Common Roof Material Types



Hamtown Hints: Shingle Longevity

When replacement of roof shingles is necessary, consider replacing them with 30-year architectural shingles which are long-lasting and durable.

Avoid

- Altering the shape and form of a historic roof.
- Introducing roof elements such as spires, turrets, and parapets to buildings where they were not historically found.
- Removing historic roof elements from buildings.

Preservation Brief #4
Roofing for Historic Buildings

Preservation Brief #19
The Repair and Replacement of Historic Wooden Shingle Roofs

Preservation Brief #29
The Repair, Replacement, and Maintenance of Slate Roofs

Preservation Brief #30
The Preservation and Repair of Historic Clay Tile Roofs



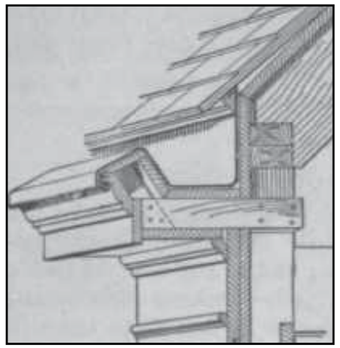


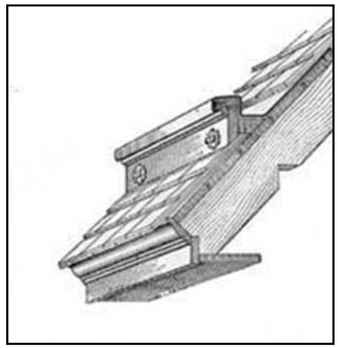
Above: While neither of these roofs feature original materials, they have been replaced with period appropriate roof materials that maintain historic integrity and character. Replacement roofs should match the original in material composition, texture, size, and profile.

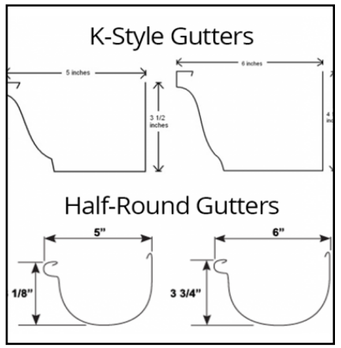
Gutters

Rain gutters play an important role in preventing water damage to a building's exterior. Like other architectural elements, gutters can be visually appealing and add to a historic building's character. Many historic roofs included built in gutters, called Yankee Gutters, on the slope or plane of the roof above the eaves. Historic gutters should follow the best practices for Architectural Features found within this section. The type of gutter that's appropriate for historic building's is largely dependent on the age of the building. The following list provides an overview of the types of gutters that are appropriate for building's based on their age.

- **1700s - 1910s:** Wood gutters were commonly used. Often called Yankee Gutters or Box Gutters these types of rain gutters were later lined with lead or copper to prevent wood rot and extend their life. Common designs were either U-shaped or V-shaped.
- **1900s - 1960s:** Half round gutters that resemble a half-circle were commonly used during this period. Common materials for these types of gutters include aluminum, galvanized steel, galvalume, zinc, and copper.
- **1950s - Present Day:** K-style gutters are the predominant style used for buildings constructed from the mid-century to today. Aluminum and vinyl are both common materials, though copper is also used.





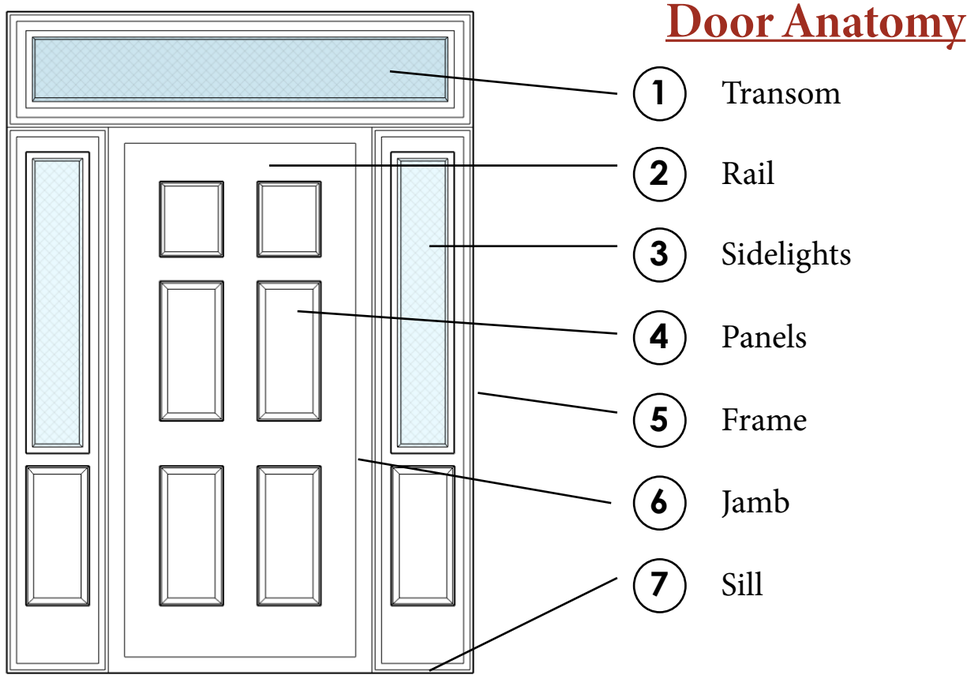


Above: Diagrams depicting the various types of rain gutters including box gutters (left), Yankee Gutters (central), and K-style and half-round gutters (right).

4) Doors

A wide variety of doors are found on historic buildings and they contribute significantly to a building's character. Many historic architectural styles feature door types that are period specific, therefore it is important to preserve historic doors and use compatible styles when replacement is necessary.

Door Anatomy







Above: A variety of doors are found throughout the historic district.

Best Practices

- Maintain the existing pattern, placement, and proportion of historic doors and their openings.
- Maintain existing doors and their associated parts including door frames, heads, jambs, moldings, hardware, and sills.
- Maintain glass and other window features that are often associated with doors such as fanlights, sidelights, inset lights, stained glass, and transoms.
- Replacement of parts should be taken before the full replacement of a door when possible.
- Historic doors and their associated parts and features shall be replaced in-kind when possible. When in-kind replacement is not possible, use compatible parts with similar materials, size, scale, shape, operation, and massing with the replacement.
- Weatherproofing of doors is appropriate as long as it does not involve the removal or damage of historic doors and their associated parts.
- Photographs and diagrams should be provided to illustrate compatibility between the historic door and new door.
- New, replacement doors shall be similar to the historic door that they replaced.
- New doors should be of a similar size, profile, dimension, configuration, and material construction of what is historically found on the building's style.
- Where there is evidence of a historic door, it may be appropriate to reintroduce a new door that is compatible with the overall building and does not detract from the character or integrity of the site.
- Wood or materials that mimic the appearance of wood are the most appropriate materials for primary doors and attached storm and weather doors. Alternative materials may be appropriate on a case-by-case basis, though they should be compatible with existing historic doors.
- Vinyl or synthetic materials may be appropriate for non-contributing buildings or the facades of contributing buildings that are not visible from the street.

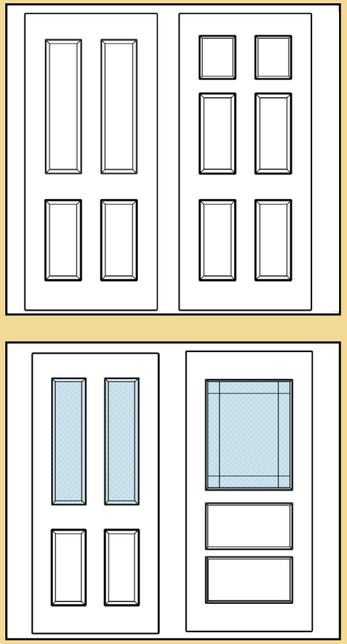
Avoid

- Destroying, diminishing, altering, damaging, or removing historic doors, door frames, exterior walls, or other openings found on the exterior of buildings.
- Using door types or configurations that were not historically found on the building or its style.
- Using synthetic materials on Landmarked buildings or the visible facades of Contributing buildings.
- Adding door openings where none were historically found.
- Using metallic or glossy finishes for new doors.

Period Appropriate Door Types

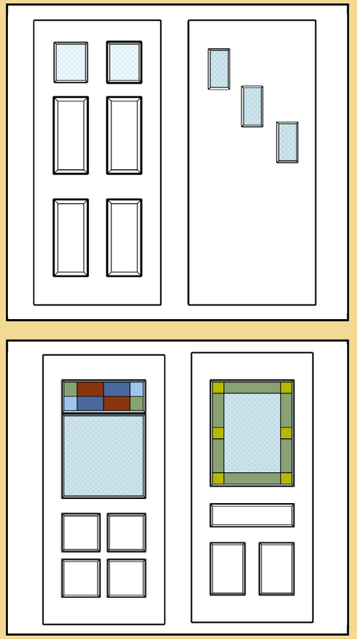
The following section provides a series of diagrams with common door configurations, styles, and types for the architectural styles found in Smithfield. Authentic historic doors can often be found at architectural salvage dealers and other reuse outlets. The diagrams are meant to provide guidance to applicants when choosing appropriate replacement doors.

Panel Doors With or Without Glazing



Wood panel doors are appropriate for a wide variety of architectural styles. 2, 4, and 6-panel are the most common configurations. Wood panel doors without glazing are appropriate for all of the historic styles found within the Smithfield Historic District. Wood panel doors with glazing are most appropriate for the **Italianate**, **Folk Victorian**, **Queen Anne**, **Colonial Revival**, **American Craftsman**, **Minimal Traditional**, **Ranch**, and **Commercial** styles. Rectangular or square panels and glass is most common, though in the **Italianate** or **Gothic Revival** styles the panels and glass might be curved or arched to reflect other features found on the exterior. **Colonial Revival** homes also often feature panel doors with a series of 4 glazed panes in the upper door near the top rail.

Custom Doors



Custom designed and built doors may be appropriate on a case-by-case basis. Several historic styles such as **Folk Victorian**, **Queen Anne**, and **American Craftsman** featured elaborate doors with motifs, stained glass, or other decorative features that are not easily replicated. More contemporary styles such as **Minimal Traditional** and **Ranch** might also feature custom doors that reflect mid-century design trends. Effort should be taken to preserve historic custom doors regardless of the building's style. Architectural salvage stores often have historic doors that may be appropriate to use should replacement of historic doors be necessary. When a historic replacement cannot be found, a simple panel door may be appropriate.

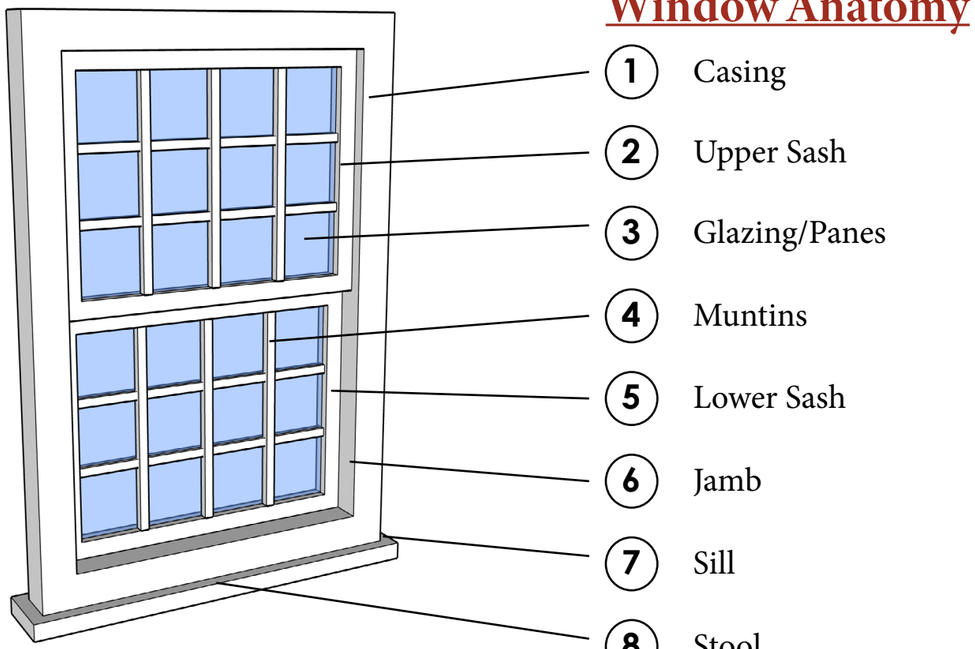


Left: The double doors of Trinity United Methodist Church feature an arched top rail that reflect the surrounding decorative stone archway.

5) Windows

A variety of window types are found in the Smithfield Historic District. Like doors, historic windows are character-defining elements of historic buildings. They reflect the building's architectural style through their configuration, material, shape, and size. The following section provides an overview of the best practices for preserving historic windows and the types of windows that are appropriate should replacement be necessary.

Window Anatomy



Preservation Brief #9
The Repair of Historic Wooden Windows

Preservation Brief #13
The Repair and Thermal Upgrading of Historic Steel Windows

Preservation Brief #33
The Preservation and Repair of Stained and Leaded Glass

Best Practices

- Maintain the existing pattern, placement, and proportion of historic windows and their openings.
- Maintain existing windows and their associated parts including window frames, shutters, muntins, mullions, sashes, glazing, sills, stools, casings, jambs, and moldings. Maintain stained glass where it is found.
- Replacement of parts should be taken before the full replacement of a window when possible.
- Replace missing or damaged features in-kind. When in-kind replacement is not possible, use compatible parts with similar materials, size, scale, shape, operation, and massing with the replacement.
- Weatherproofing of windows is appropriate as long as it does not involve the removal or damage of historic windows and their associated parts. Historic windows may be insulated from the interior to avoid altering exterior appearance.
- Photographs and diagrams should be provided to illustrate compatibility between historic windows and new windows.
- New windows should be of a similar size, profile, dimension, configuration, and material construction of what is historically found on the building's style.
- Where there is evidence of a historic window, it may be appropriate to reintroduce a new window that is compatible with the overall building and does not detract from the character or integrity of the site.
- Wood is the most appropriate materials for windows on Landmarked and Contributing buildings. Alternative materials may be appropriate on a case-by-case basis, though they should be compatible with existing historic windows and be of a similar size, profile, dimension, and configuration.
- Synthetic materials may be appropriate for Non-Contributing buildings or the facades of Contributing buildings that are not visible from the street.
- New window screens and shutters should be wood or of a similar material and match the window frame to which they are attached.

Avoid

- Destroying, diminishing, altering, damaging, or removing historic windows, window frames, or other openings found on the exterior of buildings.
- Using window types or configurations that were not historically found on the building or its style.
- Using synthetic materials such as vinyl on landmarked or contributing buildings.
- Adding window openings where none were historically found.
- Introducing window shutters where none were historically found.
- Using metallic or glossy finishes for new windows.



Above: Stained glass and other decorative window features are often the products of skilled craftspeople and difficult to replace, should they be lost. Window features such as these are character defining and should be preserved on historic buildings.



Above: The upper stories of commercial buildings often feature simple rectangular windows, though more elaborate designs are sometimes used as shown on the left.

Window Terminology

Panes: Windows are often divided into panes of glass, or the rectangular glass elements that comprise a window and are seperated by wooden strips known as muntins. Single and double-hung windows are often described by the number of panes in each of the window sashes, such as 4/4 (four panes on top, four panes on bottom).

Single & Double-Hung: Single and double-hung refers to the operation of windows. Single-hung windows have a single operable window sash, usually the bottom, and a fixed upper sash. Double-hung windows have both an upper and lower sash that is operable and able to slide up and down in the window frame.

Casement: Casement windows feature hinges on one side and swing outward, similar to a door.

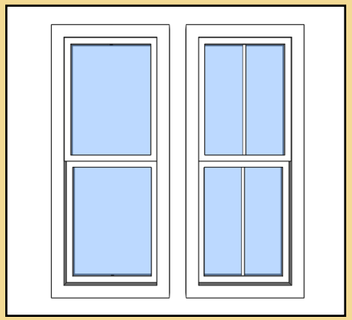
Fixed: Fixed windows are those which are not operational and do no feature a moving sash.

Horizontal Sliding: Horizontal sliding windows feature sashes which move within the frame horizontally.

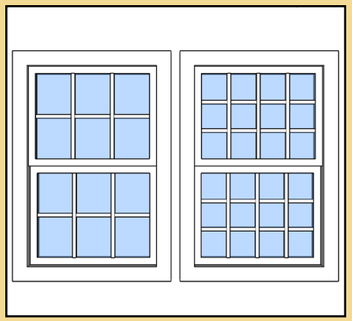
Period Appropriate Window Types

The following section provides a series of diagrams with common window configurations, styles, and types for the architectural styles found in Smithfield. Authentic historic windows can often be found at architectural salvage dealers and other reuse outlets. The diagrams are meant to provide guidance to applicants when choosing appropriate replacement windows.

Common Window Types

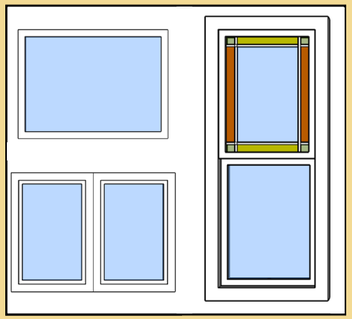


Double and single-hung windows are the most common type found within the historic district. Older styles such as the **Georgian** and **Federal** feature a greater number of panes, often in the 6/6, 6/9, 8/12, or 12/12 configuration. **Colonial Revivals** also feature a greater number of panes on the upper sash, though the lower sash might only include 1 pane of glass.



The 1/1, 2/2, and 4/4 configuration is common for most historic styles including **Gothic Revival, Italianate, Folk Victorian, Queen Anne, American Craftsman, Minimal Traditional**, and **Ranch** styles. **Commercial** building's typically feature fixed display windows on the first floor and 1/1 or 2/2 on the upper floors.

Folk Victorians, Queen Anne, and **American Craftsman** homes might also include custom windows with stained glass or decorative muntins.



More modern styles such as the **Minimal Traditional** and **Ranch** styles began to incorporate different window types including large picture windows with functional sidelights, casement windows, or horizontal slider windows.









Above: A variety of window types are found throughout the district. Historic windows in Smithfield are often constructed of wood, multi-paned, and either single or double-hung in operation.

6) Foundations

Maintaining historic foundations is an important aspect of maintaining the overall structural integrity of a building. Proper maintenance of foundations avoids the costly and labor-intensive process of repairing and replacing them.

Best Practices

- Foundations should be regularly inspected to ensure that moisture and vegetation do not collect and damage their structural integrity.
- Historic features of foundations such as vents and grills should be maintained.
- Many foundations are constructed of masonry, refer to the beginning of this chapter for additional information based on the material composition of your foundation.
- Replacement foundations should match the historic material when possible. When historic material is not available, use materials that are compatible with the building and its architectural style.
- Replacement foundations should not increase or decrease the overall height of a structure.
- For pier and beam foundations it may be appropriate to use more durable materials such as concrete piers, though they should be shielded from view and compatible with the structure.

Avoid

- Introducing architectural features such as vents or grilles to historic foundations where they were not historically found.
- Applying concrete, stucco, or other contemporary materials over existing foundations to alter or obscure their appearance.
- Enclosing or obscuring foundation features such as vents or grilles.
- Directing downspouts and gutters towards foundations where moisture can collect.





Above: Historic grills and vents are a character-defining feature of many historic foundations in Smithfield (left). Avoid covering openings in foundations as they also help to facilitate the circulation of air and avoid the buildup of moisture (right).



Above: Brick and stone are a common material for the foundations of building's in the Smithfield Historic District.

7) Accessory Structures

Historic accessory structures and garages contribute significantly to the character of the Smithfield Historic District. This section primarily covers the rehabilitation and alteration of existing accessory structures. Guidelines for new accessory structures can be found in Chapter 4.

Best Practices

- Historic accessory structures should be treated in much the same way as the historic building with which they are associated and maintained and kept in good condition. See the relevant sections throughout these guidelines for specific information related to rehabilitation and alteration.
- As a general rule, accessory structures which have been built within the last 50 years should not be considered historic, unless they contribute to the character and integrity of the main building.
- It may be appropriate to remove non-historic accessory structures on a case-by-case basis as long as their removal does not damage the primary building or the surrounding landscape.
- Alterations to historic accessory structures should follow the guidelines for the element of the building that is being altered.
- It may be appropriate to expand historic accessory structures, in which case the guidelines for additions should be adhered to.
- Alterations to non-historic accessory structures can be more flexible, though any alterations should not detract from the character and integrity of the primary building or historic district as a whole.

Avoid

- Demolishing or razing historic accessory structures which can be repaired.
- Moving historic accessory structures from their original location, unless it is necessary for the preservation of the structure.



Above: This historic garage adds to the character of the primary building and the site as a whole. Historic sliding garage doors such as these are not easily replaceable and help to convey the history of the site. Historic garages such as these should be treated as contributing elements to the historic district.





Above: Contemporary accessory structures which are appropriately scaled and designed to the primary building with which they are associated.

8) Landscaping

Landscape elements and plantings compliment the character of the district and provide an appealing environment to residents and visitors. Street trees and other landscaped areas help to enhance the surrounding historic architecture, provide a sense of place, and are often an integral part of the streetscape itself.

Best Practices

- Retain and preserve historic trees, plantings, and green spaces that contribute to the character of the historic district.
- Replace diseased and dead vegetation with suitable replacements.
- Install new landscaping that is compatible with the existing neighborhood and native to Virginia's climate.

Avoid

- Removing mature trees and other vegetation that are healthy and in good condition.
- Altering the topography of the site where a project is taking place.





Above: Curated vegetation and planting areas help to create a sense of place and enhance the pedestrian experience.

9) Streetscape Elements and Paving

Streetscape elements includes anything from historic sidewalks, streets, fences, driveways, curbs, retaining walls and any other elements of the environment that add to the visual character of the historic district from the public view. See Chapter 4 for additional guidance for the construction of new fences, sidewalks, and driveways.

Best Practices

- Historic streetscape elements should be repaired and maintained in good condition.
- Effort should first be made to repair or replace the damaged parts before removing the entire element when repair or replacement is necessary.
- Masonry walls, sidewalks, and driveways are especially prevalent in the historic district and should take special care to be preserved.
- Refer to the section on Treatment for Historic Materials at the beginning of this chapter for additional information on how to best preserve historic material types for streetscape elements.
- New streetscape elements should be of a compatible design and appearance with other streetscape elements found along the street and in the nearby vicinity.
- New streetscape elements should not obscure existing historic elements of the streetscape or buildings within the historic district.
- Where a new sidewalk or driveway is introduced, effort should be made to use existing curbcuts. Brick or a combination of brick and concrete is the most appropriate material for new sidewalks and driveways.
- New sidewalks and driveways should be compatible with the associated building or site in which they are located.
- New fences and walls should be compatible with those existing in the historic district and be of a compatible height, size, transparency, and material composition. Wood picket, cast iron, brick, or a combination of brick and cast iron are the most appropriate materials for new fences.
- New street furnishings, planters, wayfinding elements, and other features which add to the pedestrian experience should be designed in a way to be compatible with the overall character of the historic district.
- The installation of ADA ramps to existing buildings should minimize damage to historic elements and be compatible with the size and scale of the site and building. The preferred location of ADA ramps is to the side or rear of the main building. Applicants should review Preservation Brief #32 when making properties ADA compliant.

Avoid

- Removing or modifying historic streetscape elements unless they present a hazard or are in ruinous condition.
- Covering or obscuring historic streetscape elements.
- Constructing new fences and walls of vinyl, cement, concrete blocks, and chain link materials.
- Constructing new sidewalks, driveways, and other pavement areas with white concrete.







Left & Above: Various streetscape elements, both historic (mailbox and horse pitch) and contemporary (interpretive signage) help to tell the story of Smithfield's history.



Left: This ADA ramp in a prominent location is shielded from view by decorative vegetation.

Preservation Brief #32: Making Historic Properties Accessible

Many historic buildings were not constructed with accessibility in mind. With the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990, access to public properties is required by law. Preservation Brief #32 provides guidance on making historic properties more accessible to the public while preserving their historic character and integrity. Applicants and their contractors should review Preservation Brief #32 before submitting a COA for a series of best practices in creating accessible spaces within the interior and exterior of historic properties.





Above Left: Decorative brick walls are found throughout the district and add to the character of Smithfield. Effort should be made to maintain and preserve them.

Above Right: This AC compressor at the 1750 Courthouse is concealed from view and not attached to any building. When installing new equipment, ensure that no historic buildings are damaged or obscured.

10) Mechanical and Utility Equipment

While mechanical and utility equipment is not often considered historic, it should be maintained in such a way that it does not damage or alter the historic elements of existing buildings. New mechanical and utility equipment also needs to be sensitive to the overall character and integrity of the building and the historic district.

Best Practices

- Existing mechanical and utility equipment should be maintained so that it does not damage or harm existing historic buildings.
- Defunct or non-operable mechanical equipment should be removed in a manner as to not damage the materials of historic buildings.
- The side or rear of a building where visual impact is minimized is the most appropriate setting for new mechanical and utility equipment.
- New mechanical and utility equipment should be installed in an inconspicuous space so that its visual impact from the right of way is minimized.
- When mechanical and utility equipment needs to be installed on a building, use spaces on the building that require minimal alteration to historic materials.
- For standalone mechanical equipment such as AC compressors, shielding such as fencing or vegetation is an appropriate method to minimize its visual impact.
- Solar panels should be installed in such a manner that their visual impact is minimized from the right of way. The side and rear of a building's roof is often the most appropriate setting for solar panels.

Avoid

- Installing mechanical or utility equipment on the primary facades of buildings unless absolutely necessary.
- Damaging or removing historic materials when installing mechanical or utility equipment.

11) Light Fixtures

Historic light fixtures can be found attached to the exterior of many historic buildings. Streetlamps and other contemporary pedestrian lighting fixtures add to the character of the historic district if they are done in a sensitive manner.

Best Practices

- Historic light fixtures should be repaired and maintained in place.
- It is generally appropriate to improve historic light fixtures with better illumination as long as the improvements do not damage historic light fixtures.
- Historic light fixtures should be cleaned regularly and maintained in operational status.
- Many historic light fixtures are constructed of metal, refer to the section on Treatment for Historic Materials at the beginning of this chapter for additional information.
- Historic light fixtures and their associated parts and features shall be replaced in-kind when possible.
- When in-kind replacement of historic light fixtures is not possible, the replacement shall be compatible with the surrounding historic district and the design of the building.
- New light fixtures shall be scaled appropriately with the building and the surrounding landscape. Use a durable material for new light fixture construction.
- New and replacement light features should take advantage of existing mounting locations when possible, and should be installed in such a way that they can be easily removed in the future.
- Warm lighting (3400k to 5000k illumination) and lighting which does not spill into the street is the most appropriate for the historic district.
- Street lighting should be designed in a way to be compatible with the overall character of the historic district.

Avoid

- Installing lights so that their illumination spills into the street.
- Removing historic light fixtures which can be minimally modified or reused.
- Placing electrical conduits or junction boxes in highly visible areas.







Above: Lighting may be integrated into the landscape to add visual variety and character to the historic district (top). A cast-iron 'goose-neck' light fixture that is compatible with the design of a historic commercial building (bottom).

12) Solar Panels

While solar panels are a relatively modern invention, they may be installed on historic buildings under certain circumstances. As a general rule, solar panels should be installed in a location not visible from the ground or the public right of way. All solar panel instillations within the historic district shall be reviewed by the BHAR prior to receiving a COA.

Best Practices

- Solar panels should have a low profile and be mounted less than or equal to six inches above the surface of the roof.
- Solar panels should be set at angles consistent with the slope of the supporting roof.
- When possible, solar panels should be hidden behind existing architectural elements such as dormers and cross gables.
- Solar panels should be arranged in an organized configuration and blend in with the surrounding features of the historic building with respect to the color of the panels, support structures, and conduits.
- Any support structures, conduits, inverters, storage units, or other hardware should be installed on the rear of the building or areas with limited visibility from the street and the public right of way.
- Solar panels should be installed in a way that allows them to be easily removed without causing permanent damage or alteration to the building or site.

Avoid

- Installing solar panels in locations that are visible from the street or public right of way such as the primary facade of a building.
- Removing historic features of a building or site when installing solar panels.
- Installing solar panels in a manner that obstructs the view of historic architectural features of a building or site.
- Erecting ground-mounted arrays.
- Installing solar panels on primary Landmark buildings. Installing on accessory structures for Landmark properties may be considered.

D) Residential Type Specific Features

1) Porches, Balconies, and Decks

Porches are character-defining elements of many historic residential type buildings and should be preserved. Porches are featured predominantly on many styles including the Folk Victorian, Queen Anne, Gothic Revival, and Italianate styles. Balconies, while not as common, are also important features to preserve. Historic decks, which are open attached structures located in the rear of a building, are less common than porches and balconies, though they may be found on more contemporary historic styles such as the Minimal Traditional and Ranch styles.

Best Practices

- Historic porches, balconies, decks and their constituent elements should be maintained regularly and preserved on historic buildings.
- Regularly inspect the elements of a porch, balcony, and deck for damage or decay. Refer back to the relevant sections of this chapter on treating historic materials and for specific porch and balcony elements such as Architectural Features, Doors, Windows, and Foundations for additional guidance.
- Alterations to porches, balconies, and decks should not damage or detract from the architectural character of the building.
- Elements of porches, balconies, and decks should be replaced in-kind. When in-kind replacement is not possible, the replacement shall be compatible in terms of material composition, size, scale, shape, and massing.
- If elements of porches, balconies, and decks cannot be reconstructed when they are to be replaced, the replacement element should be of a simple and compatible design.
- Photographs or other evidence may be used to allow for the introduction of architectural features which were historically found but are not longer present.
- It may be appropriate to reconstruct or add porches, balconies, and decks if there is evidence of one being present historically. New porches, balconies, and decks should be of a compatible design with the architectural style of the building and should not damage or obscure any existing elements of the historic building.
- New porches, balconies, and decks should be constructed in a manner so that they can be easily removed in the future, and so their instillation does not result in the damage or obscuring of any historic elements.
- New decks should not be visible from the right of way.

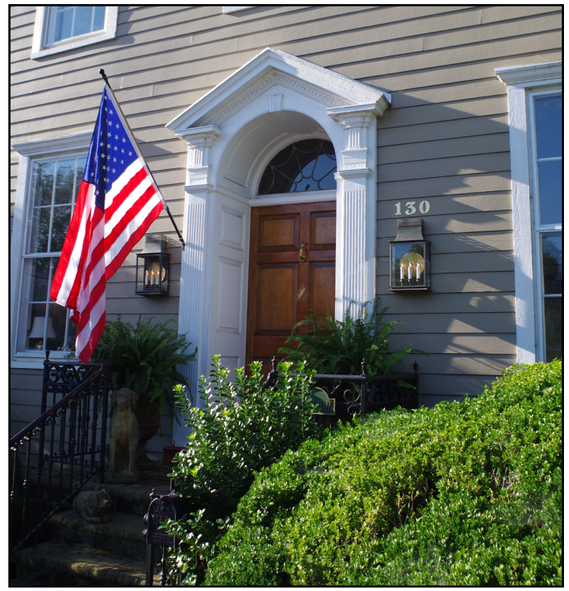
Avoid

- Adding features to porches, balconies, and decks that were not historically present.
- Enclosing porches, balconies, or decks that are visible from the right of way.
- Installing decks in locations highly visible from the street.

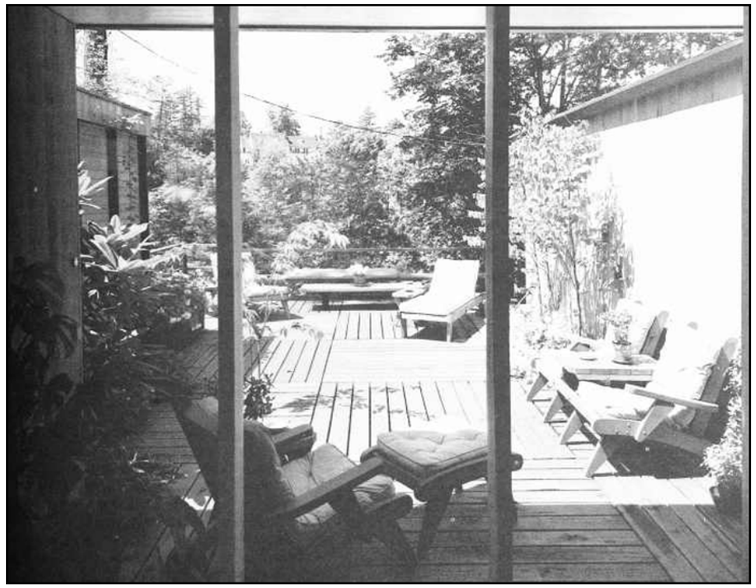








Above: The historic district contains a variety of porches and balconies. Many historic buildings feature elaborate porches with many character-defining elements which are important historic features that should be preserved.



Left: Outdoor decks became popular with modern architecture styles such as the Ranch style and were considered outdoor extensions of the living room.

Preservation Brief #45
Preserving Historic Wooden Porches



Above: Avoid installing decks in areas that are highly visible from the street.

E) Non-Residential Type Features

1) Storefronts and Facades

Storefronts are character-defining elements of many historic commercial structures along Main Street. This section applies to all historic storefronts in the Smithfield Historic District, readers should also refer to earlier sections of this chapter for more information on specific elements that may be found on historic storefronts. See the diagram in Chapter 2 for an overview of basic elements of a historic storefront.

Best Practices

- Historic storefronts, facades, and their constituent elements should be preserved and maintained.
- Historic storefront elements shall be repaired before they are replaced and regularly inspected for damage or decay. Refer back to the section on Treatment for Historic Materials and the sections for specific storefront and facade elements such as Architectural Features, Doors, Windows, and Foundations earlier in this chapter for additional guidance.
- Alterations to storefronts and facades should not damage or detract from the architectural character of the building.
- When alterations are made to historic storefronts, maintain the original size, shape, and massing of storefront elements such as entryways, display windows, transoms, and bulkheads.
- Elements of historic storefronts and facades should be replaced in-kind. When in-kind replacement is not possible, the replacement shall be compatible in terms of material composition, size, scale, shape, and massing.
- If elements of storefronts and facades cannot be reconstructed with matching elements, the replacement element should be of a simple and compatible design.
- Use clear glass when storefront windows are to be replaced.
- It may be appropriate to restore or reconstruct a historic storefront or facade if it has been altered or obscured from view over time.
- If a historic storefront or facade is to be reconstructed, it should be returned to its original design based on available historic photos. When photographs are not available, the new storefront and facade should respect the design, composition, proportions, scale, rhythm, and massing of other non-residential buildings along the block and in close proximity.

Avoid

- Adding features to storefronts that were not historically found on the building.
- Altering the setback of historic storefronts when alterations are required.
- Altering the arrangement and composition of storefront elements such as entryways, display windows, transoms, and bulkheads when alterations are made to historic storefronts.







Above: Historic storefronts contain a variety of elements that help to draw people in including large fixed glass windows, decorative patterns and paint schemes, and attractive signage. The recessed entry is a common element of many storefronts that allows for additional display space.

2) Awnings and Canopies

Awnings and canopies are an important aspect of many historic commercial storefronts and protect pedestrians from the elements. They also add to the character of the building and the overall historic district.

Best Practices

- Awnings and canopies should be repaired, maintained, and kept in good conditional order.
- Awnings and canopies should be cleaned regularly.
- Historic awnings and canopies should be replaced in-kind when possible.
- New awnings and canopies should be compatible with the architectural style of the building and shaped to the opening in which they are attached.
- Fire resistant canvas is the most appropriate material for new awnings and canopies.
- New awnings and canopies should make use of existing mounts and fixtures if possible. New mounts and fixtures should minimize the damage to historic materials through instillation.
- New awnings and canopies should not damage or obscure the architectural elements of a building's storefront or facade.

Avoid

- Using plastic, vinyl, or metal for awnings on historic commercial buildings.
- Using incompatible awning frames. Rectangular openings should use rectangular-shaped awnings, while arched openings should use rounded-shape awnings.

Preservation Brief #44
The Use of Awnings on Historic Buildings: Repair, Replacement and New Design









Left & Above: Downtown Smithfield contains a variety of awning types and patterns. Awnings help to draw customers in and provide shade from the elements for both pedestrians and patio spaces.

3) Signs

Signs for non-residential building types should complement the style of the building they are associated with and the surrounding context. Signs associated with residential type buildings should minimize their impact to the primary building and surrounding residential buildings. Well designed signage can add to the attractiveness of the district and enhance the experience for pedestrians while also promoting business in the Smithfield Historic District. For the specific size requirements for new signs, the applicant should refer to Article 10 of the Smithfield Zoning Ordinance.

Best Practices

- Historic signage should be retained and maintained (signage that is older than 50 years), if it displays evidence of craftsmanship, provides evidence of the historical use of a building or site, or is integral to the design of the building.
- When signage is removed, remove old fixtures and patch any damage to the building.
- Historic painted signs (often called 'ghost signs') on the external walls of buildings should be preserved and not be painted over or removed. It may be appropriate to restore historic ghost signs if the restoration results in their preservation.
- New signs should be compatible with the design of the building or site, and should not damage or obscure any character-defining elements of a building or site.
- When possible, use existing sign mounting fixtures. When no existing fixtures are available, minimize the damage to historic building materials with sign instillation.
- Use traditional sign materials such as wood, glass, gold leaf, raised individual metal or painted wood letters, and painted letters on wood, metal, or glass.
- Use colors that complement the materials and color scheme of the building or site in which they are associated.
- Use ambient or indirect lighting with a shielded warm light source for signs.

Avoid

- Using too many signs, or signs which are inappropriately sized for the building or site.
- Using plastic, vinyl, reflective materials, and other synthetic materials for new signage in the historic district.
- Using too many colors or a single color when designing new signs.





Preservation Brief #25
The Preservation of Historic Signs

Left & Below: A variety of different signs are found in the Smithfield Historic District



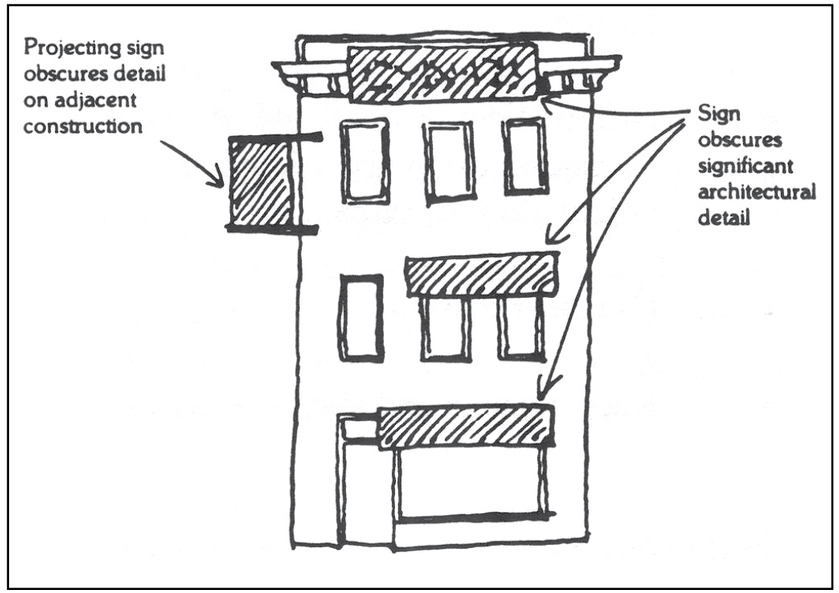








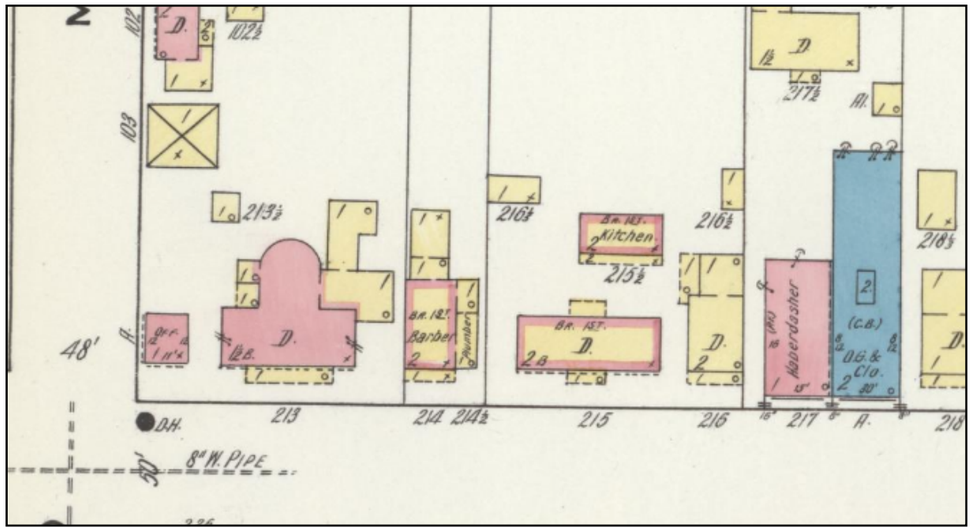
Above: The Smithfield Station sign has a coordinated design for multiple, unrelated tenants. New signs within the historic district that contain multiple tenants should adhere to a master sign plan with a cohesive, coordinated design.



Left: Avoid installing signs in locations that obscure architectural details of the primary building and adjacent buildings.

Chapter 4

Guidelines for New Construction



Above: The Sanborn Fire Insurance maps of Smithfield show the layout and division of lots and buildings within downtown in the year 1913.

Guiding Principles for New Construction

- **New buildings should be compatible with surrounding historic buildings:** By designing buildings to be compatible with surrounding historic buildings, the character of the historic district can be preserved while allowing for new construction and development. Over time new construction ages and becomes part of the story of the development of the Smithfield Historic District.
- **New buildings should be a product of their own time:** The design of new buildings should be compatible with the surrounding historic district. However, new buildings should be designed in such a manner as to not directly copy historic styles. New designs may take influence from historic styles, but should be different enough so that they cannot be mistaken for historic buildings. This can often be accomplished through the simplification of architectural details and other decorative elements.
- **New buildings should not overshadow historic buildings:** The main focus of the historic district should be those landmarked and contributing buildings which convey the history of Smithfield to the public. By designing compatible new buildings, the character and integrity of the historic district can be maintained over time as the district evolves. Design helps to distinguish the historic building stock from new construction.



Above: The Smithfield Station is a contemporary non-residential building designed in a compatible style that is in character with the historic architecture of Smithfield.

A) Guidelines for New Construction

1) Materials and Paint

New buildings should be constructed of materials that are similar to and compliment nearby historic buildings in the historic district. A variety of materials are used throughout the district; the immediate vicinity of new construction should be used as reference for what materials are appropriate. When painting new buildings, earth tones are most appropriate for new construction. Many paint manufactures include collections of appropriate historic paint colors as part of their catalogue.

Guidelines for Materials and Paint in New Construction

- Use materials which are similar to and compliment nearby landmark and contributing buildings in the vicinity.
- Materials should be of a similar type, texture, and composition as historic materials found in the district.
- Brick and wood siding are the most appropriate materials for new construction.
- Brick and wood siding should be installed in a manner that compliments historic styles. Horizontal clapboard and wood shake are most appropriate. Bricks of standard width, size, and depth are most appropriate.
- Fiber-cement and manufactured wood siding may be used, but should be avoided in areas of the historic district with a concentration of landmarked or contributing buildings.
- When fiber-cement siding is used, it should have a similar appearance, size, shape, profile, and overlap as historic materials that are commonly found in the historic district.
- Metal should be used sparingly and have a matte finish.
- Use roof materials that are of a similar texture, scale, and finish with nearby landmark and contributing buildings.
- New buildings should be painted in a color that compliments nearby historic buildings. A coordinated color scheme that includes body, trim, and accent color is most appropriate for new construction.
- Paint with a matte finish should be used for new buildings.

Avoid

- Brick veneer and other forms of false facades.
- Materials not found in the district such as stucco, EIFS, vinyl, plastic, corrugated metal, and cement block.
- Using materials that are incompatible with the surrounding context; for instance, vertical siding and board and batten siding are rare in the historic district and should only be used if they are historically found nearby.
- Glossy metal surfaces.
- Using too many materials.
- Painting brick.
- Using only one paint color, too many paint colors, or glossy paint colors.



Left: 303 Main Street constructed Ca. 1965 in the Colonial Revival style uses compatible materials such as brick, wood accents, and a slate shingle roof that is compatible with historic buildings in the district (left).

Below: Two 2010 houses which make use of horizontal board siding and wood shake shingles in a manner that is similar to historic buildings found in the historic district.









Above: The residence built in 2000 on the left uses contemporary materials that are similar to what is found on this early 1900s building on the right. Both buildings demonstrate a compatible paint scheme with a base color, trim, and accent.

2) Site Design

Site design refers to the where a new building is placed on a lot in relation to its neighbors, taking into account lot setbacks and historic development patterns. Both residential and non-residential buildings are covered in this section.

Site Design Guidelines for All Buildings

- New buildings should fit within the established pattern of front and side yard setbacks along the block and in conformance with the underlying zoning district.
- When there are uniform setbacks along a block, the new building should be aligned with the established setback.
- When setbacks vary, the new building should be placed with the range of established setbacks as dictated by the underlying zoning district.
- Respect the pattern and arrangement of open space found throughout the historic district. In many cases this means and open front yard with driveways located on the side for residential buildings. For non-residential buildings there is typically little to no open space at the front of the lot.

Sidewalks and Driveways

- Driveways should be located at the side and rear of the primary building.
- New driveways and sidewalks should be compatible with the character of the surrounding historic district.
- In areas where brick sidewalks and driveways are common, brick should be used.
- Scored or exposed aggregate concrete may be used in areas where concrete driveways and sidewalks are common.
- In transition areas where both brick and concrete are used, consider using a combination of the two materials for new sidewalks and driveways.

Site Design for New Buildings

The following section provides a series of renderings to assist applicants with the site design and layout of new buildings in the historic district. The renderings are intended to provide guidance to both applicants and their contractors and include examples of both appropriate and innapropriate examples of site design.

Site Design Terminology

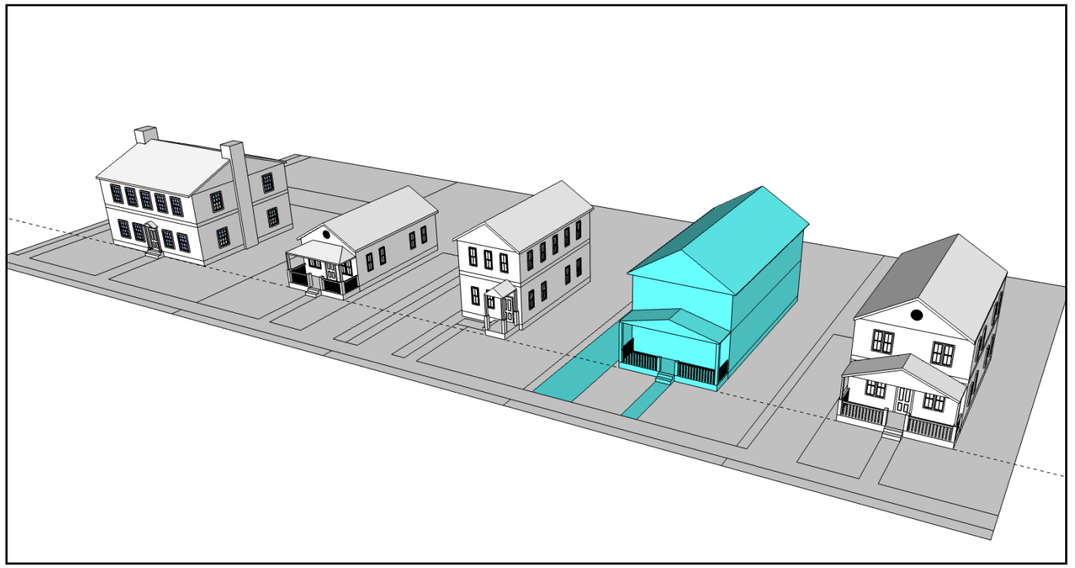
Block: An area of land bounded on its sides by city streets. A block is comprised of **block faces**, or the portions of a block which face a single street.

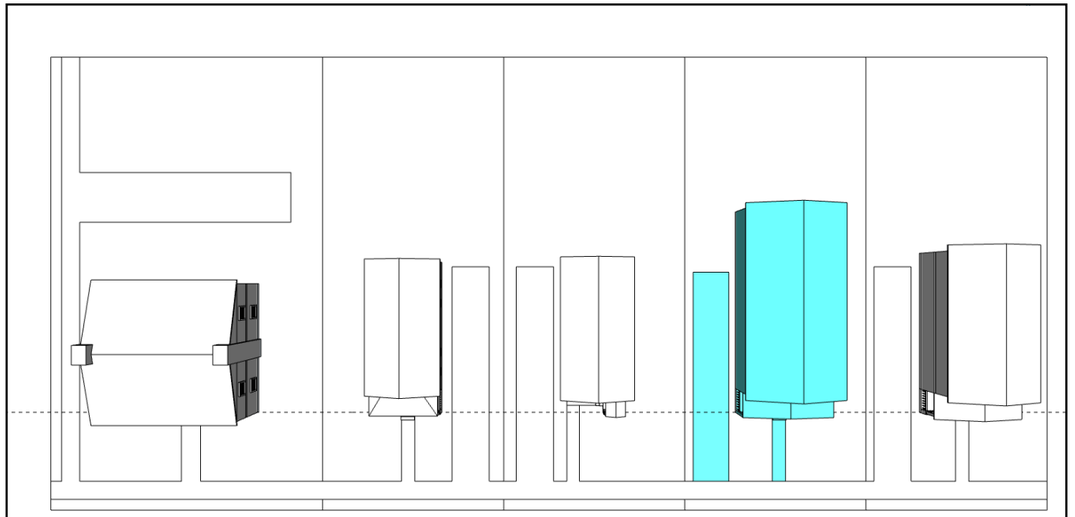
Infill: The use of vacant or underutilized land for new development and new construction.

Open Space: The outdoor space directly adjoining a dwelling unit or other building that is bounded by the properties lot lines.

Setback: The distance a structure or building is from the street, sidewalk, or property line. Within this document it also refers to the distance between structures or buildings on separate lots.

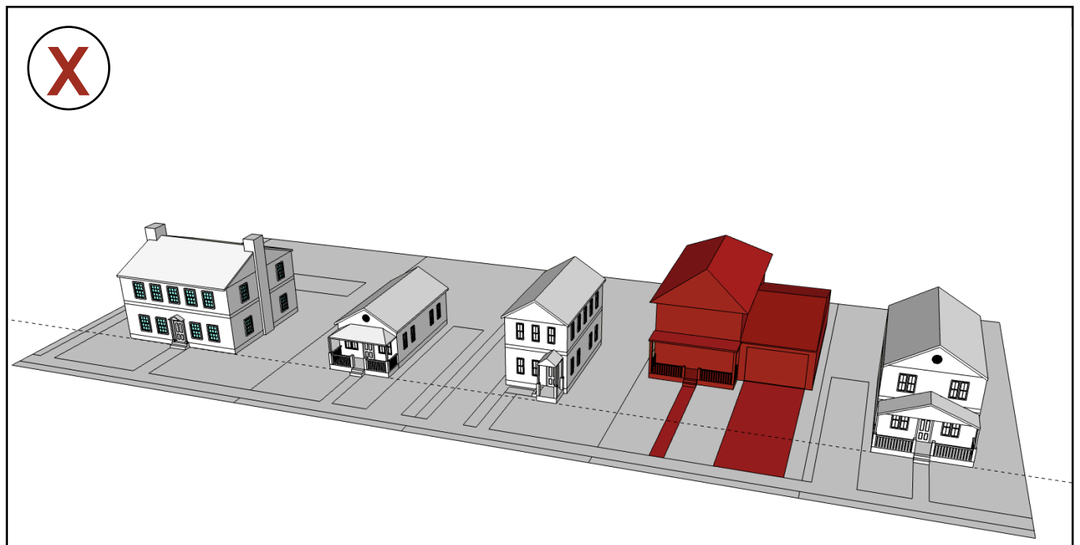
Appropriate Residential Site Design

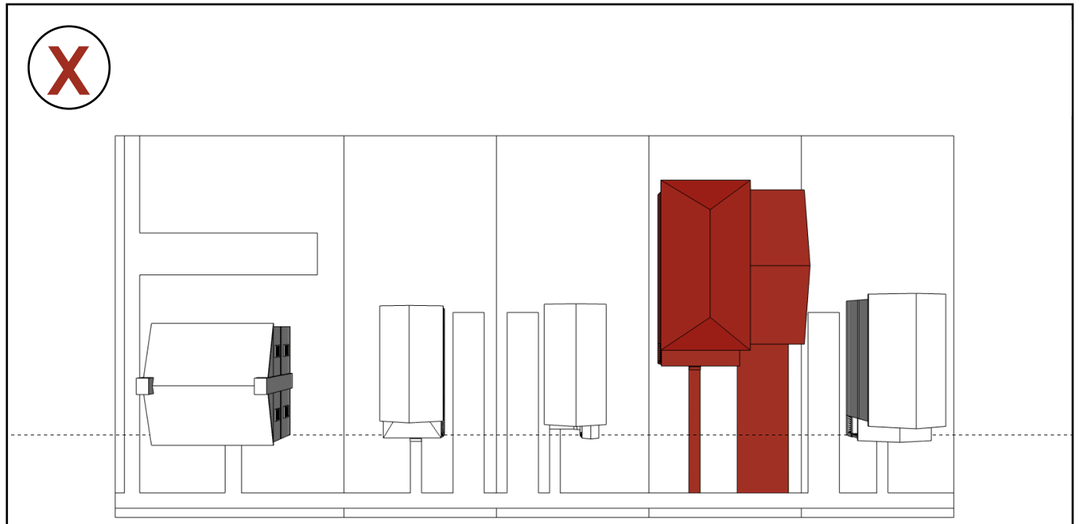




The new residential building is set along the historic setback line with adjacent historic buildings along the block. The driveway is appropriately located to the side of the primary building and there is a similar amount of open space. Overall the infill development is compatible with the historic character of its neighbors, the street block, and the historic district as a whole.

Inappropriate Residential Site Design

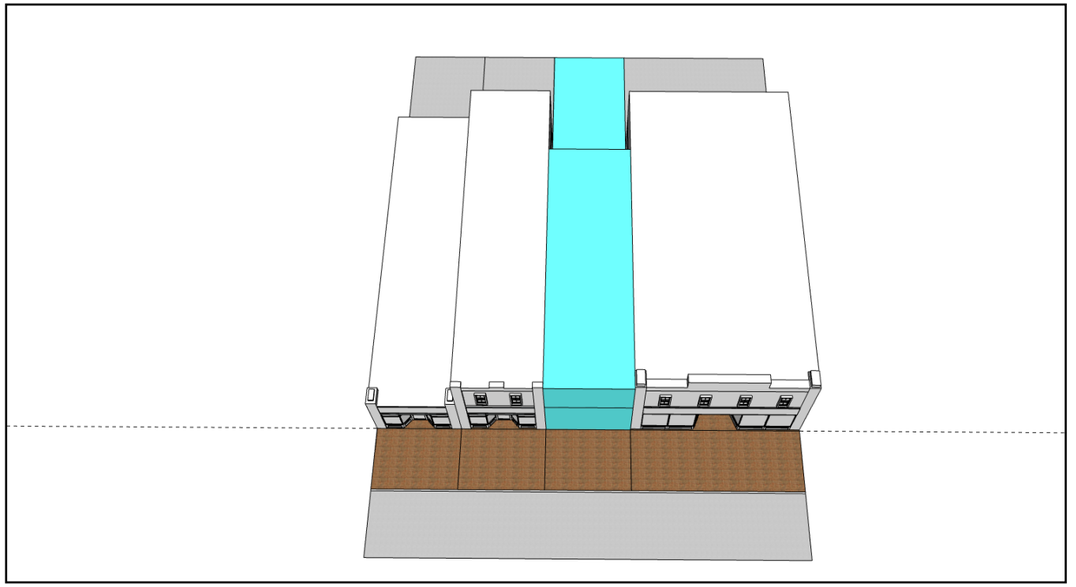




Avoid site designs which are not sensitive to the surrounding context. The new building (blue) is positioned further towards the rear than the historic setback along the block and has a front yard dominated by a large driveway that leaves little open space.

Appropriate Non-Residential Site Design

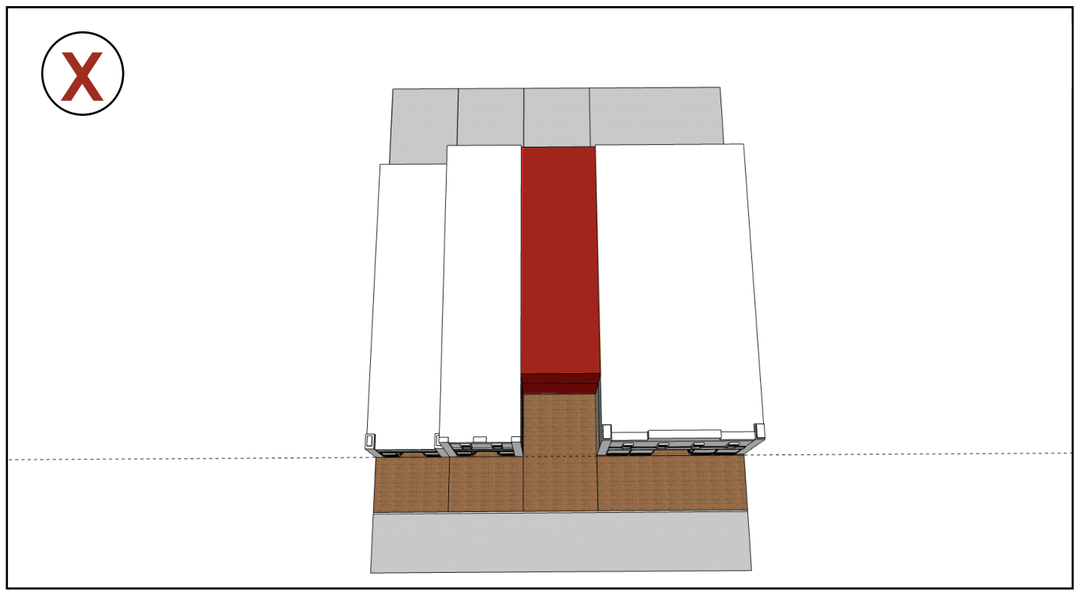




New non-residential infill should respect the historic setback line of other buildings in proximity and along the blockface. This creates a feeling of continuity and harmony along and provides an appealing facade for pedestrians. Parking should be located at the rear of the building or along the street.

Inappropriate Non-Residential Site Design





For many historic non-residential buildings, the setback line is located directly adjacent to the front of the lot near the sidewalk. Avoid infill construction which disrupts the historic development pattern of nearby non-residential historic buildings.

3) Building Design

Building design refers to the physical appearance of new buildings. While new buildings should be compatible with historic buildings in the district, they should not be direct replicas of historic styles. Design is an important aspect in maintaining the character of the historic district and creating a harmonious relationship between the new and old.

General Principles in Building Design for All Buildings

- New buildings should be recognizable as new construction while respecting existing historic buildings.
- Using historic styles as an influence is encouraged, though buildings should be designed in a simplified interpretation of such styles.
- Incorporate simplified elements such as architectural details, window mouldings, door surrounds, front porches, building cornices, and other architectural elements which enhance the visual character of new buildings while separating them from the more ornate styles on which they are based.
- Buildings should respect the alignment and orientation of facades and building entrances in the surrounding context. In most cases this means orienting the entrance towards the street.
- Buildings should be designed with a roof form and pitch that is found in the surrounding context.
- Light fixtures should be scaled appropriately to the building and surrounding landscape, only use warm lighting (3400k to 5000k illumination), and be shielded so that light does not spill into the street or adjacent lots.
- Solar panels, utility boxes, and other electrical equipment should be installed at the rear or sides of the building where they are not easily visible from the street.

Hamtown Hints: Architectural Style

Refer back to Chapter 2 for an overview of the different historic architectural styles. New buildings should be designed in a way that is compatible with both the surrounding context and the historic architecture of the Historic District.

Building Design Terminology

Form: The overall shape of a building as defined by its different parts.

Height: The distance between two points; can be used for separate elements or the building as a whole.

Mass: The apparent bulkiness of a building to include its height, width, and depth.

Proportion: The relationship between the size and shape of building elements to other building elements on a building.

Rhythm: Where elements of a building typically occur. Can include things like the spacing between windows and doors, to the location of porches.

Building Mass, Form, and Height

- New buildings should be of a similar form, height, and massing to other historic buildings found in the vicinity and within the historic district.
- For multi-story buildings, floor to floor heights should be similar to what is found with historic buildings in the vicinity.
- Foundation heights should be similar to what is found with other historic buildings.
- The separate elements of a building should be of a similar height to what is found with the same elements of other historic buildings in the vicinity.
- Building mass can be reduced by incorporating articulation in vertical and horizontal planes on the building's surface.

Building Rhythm and Proportions

- New buildings should include elements that respect the established rhythm and proportion of historic buildings in the vicinity.
- Include similar foundation, floor to floor, and building heights to historic buildings in the vicinity.
- Include windows, doors, and porches in similar locations and of similar proportions to historic buildings in the vicinity.

Windows, Doors, and Other Architectural Features

- Windows and doors should be of a similar width, height, and type to those found on nearby historic buildings.
- Windows and doors should be arranged in a pattern that is compatible with nearby historic buildings.
- Architectural details are encouraged but should be simpler than their historic counterparts.
- True divided light windows should be used on new construction, avoid simulated divided light windows with false muntins.
- Avoid overly stylistic doors and windows in favor of simpler designs and configurations.

Mass, Form, Height, Rhythm, and Proportion

The following section provides renderings that demonstrate building form, height, mass, proportion, and rhythm for new construction, followed by additional renderings that demonstrate the general design principles for new construction. The renderings are intended to provide guidance to both applicants and their contractors and include examples of both appropriate (teal) and innapropriate (maroon) examples of building design.

Mass, Form, and Height (Residential)

The rectangular body and triangle shaped gable reinforce the form of building's along the block.

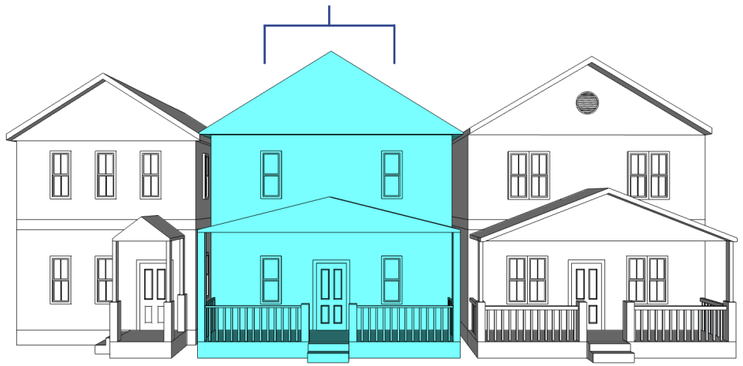
The overall height of the building is compatible with adjacent historic buildings.



The apparent mass of the building - its combination of height, width, and depth - is comparable to its neighbors and does not overwhelm the block.

Rhythm and Proportion (Residential)

Windows, doors, and other facade elements are similar size, located in similar locations, and are aligned with other windows along the first and second stories.



Similar overall height, floor to floor height, porch height, and foundation height creates rhythm along the block.

Mass, Form, and Height (Non-Residential)

The overall height of the building is compatible with adjacent historic buildings.



The rectangular form is the most common for non-residential building and is reinforced by both the constituent parts of the building and its overall shape.

The apparent mass of the building - its combination of height, width, and depth - is comparable to its neighbors and does not overwhelm the block face.

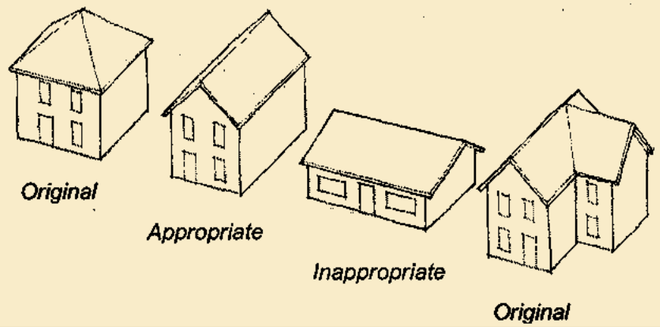
Rhythm and Proportion (Non-Residential)

Windows, doors, and other facade elements are similar size, located in similar locations, and are aligned with other windows along the first and second stories.



Similar overall height, floor to floor height, and foundation height with a defined base, middle, and cap create rhythm along the block.

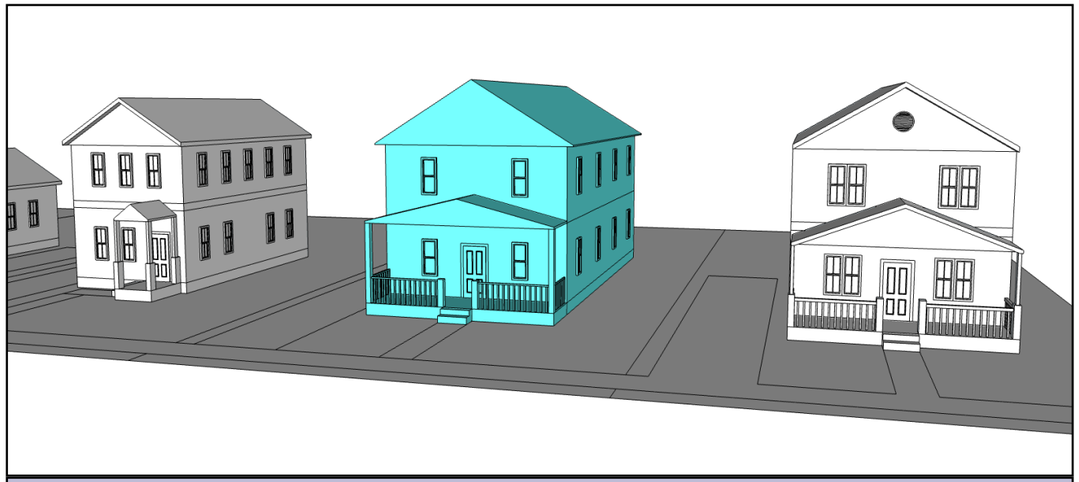
INFILL CONSTRUCTION SHOULD BE CONSISTENT WITH SURROUNDING BUILDINGS



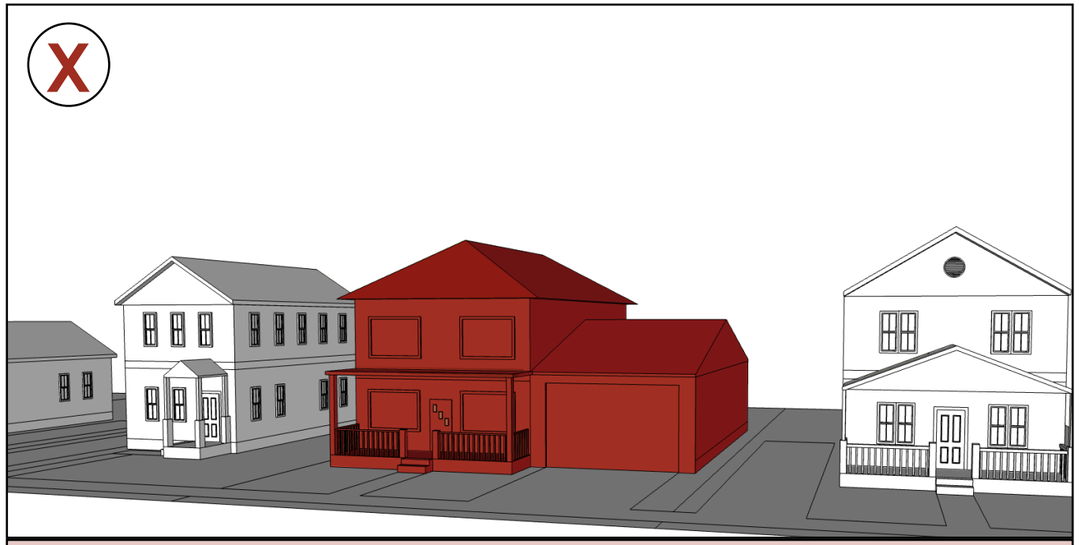
New development should have the same overall scale as the existing neighborhood and should take into consideration building characteristics such as height, window orientation, and roof configuration.

Above: Both residential and non-residential infill construction should pay special attention to adjacent buildings and the block face when it comes to designing the site of the property and the building itself.

Residential Building Design



The new building has been designed with a rectangular form and elements that mirror what is found in the historic district including a similar roof pitch and type, front porch with gabled roof, similar floor to floor and foundation heights, and an orientation towards the street.



Avoid design elements that are not compatible with the surrounding historic district. The new building includes a hipped roof, flat roof porch, large picture windows, contemporary door, and large attached garage on the facade that stand in contrast to its neighbors.

Non-Residential Building Design



New non-residential and commercial buildings should be designed in a compatible and simple manner that does not detract from nearby historic buildings. New buildings should incorporate simple, rectangular massing with simplified architectural elements appropriately proportioned to their facade.



Avoid overly complicated designs with elements not found in typical historic commercial architecture. Though the building is adjacent to the sidewalk, its vertical massing and non-compatible architectural elements stand in stark contrast to adjacent historic buildings.

4) Fences, Walls, and Accessory Structures

New fences, walls, and accessory structures should be designed in a compatible manner with landmarked and contributing buildings in the historic district. For alterations to existing fences, walls, and accessory structures see Chapter 3.

Fences and Walls

- New fences and walls should be compatible with those existing in the historic district and be of a compatible height, size, transparency, and material composition. Wood picket, cast iron, and brick are the most appropriate materials for new fences and walls.
- Front yard fences should be under 42 inches in height.
- Privacy fences in the rear of the building are acceptable up to 72 inches in height.
- New fences should have the finished side facing out and stained or painted white.

Avoid

- Constructing new fences and walls of vinyl, cement, concrete blocks, PVC, and chain link materials.



Left & Below: A variety of fence and wall types are appropriate for the historic district including wood picket, brick, aluminum clad, wrought iron, or a combination of these materials.





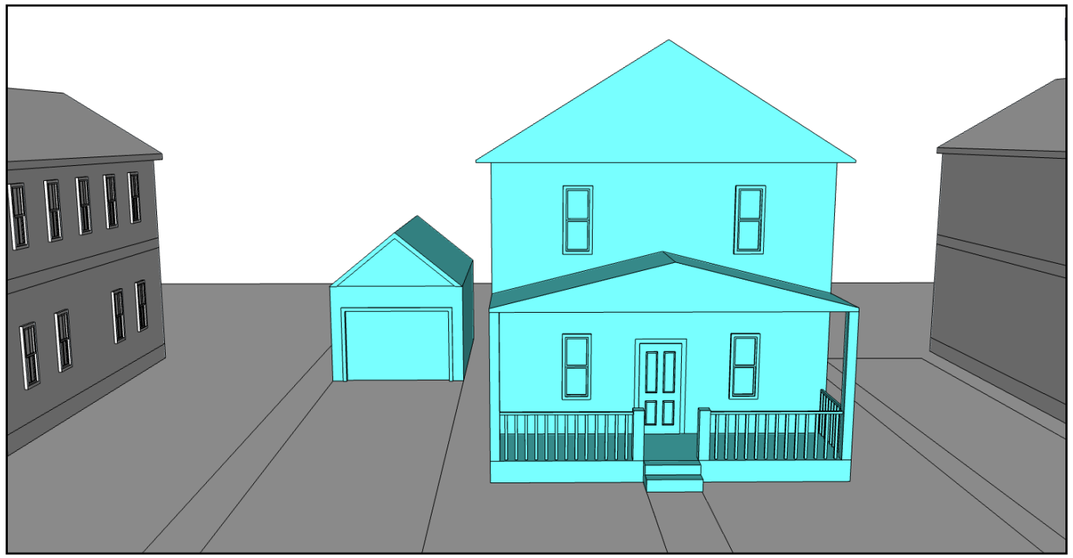
Accessory Structures and Garages

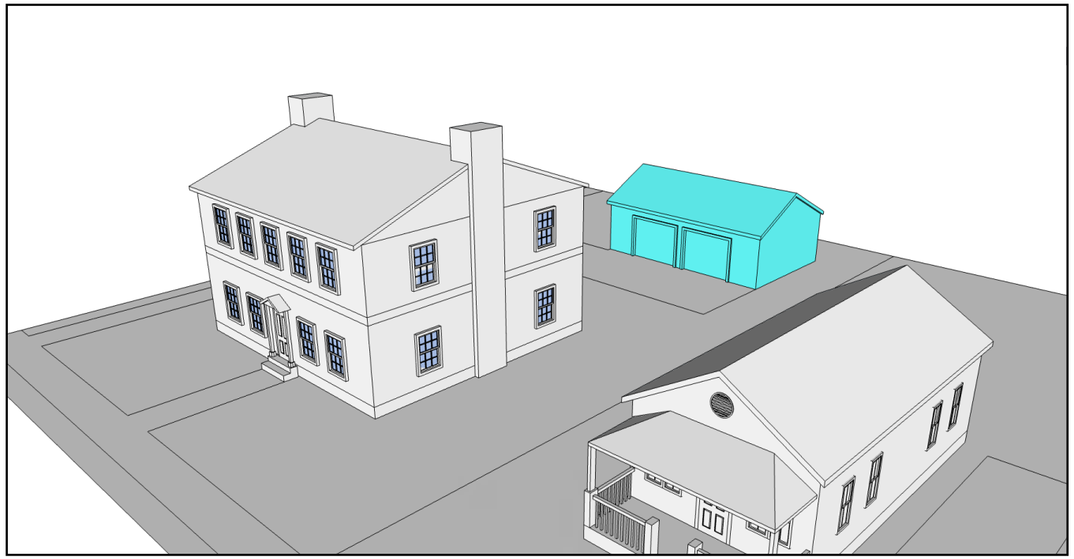
- Accessory structures should be located to the side or rear of the primary building.
- On corner lots accessory structures should also be located at the side or rear, though on side streets they should be setback from the street to minimize their impact.
- Use existing curbcuts for accessory structures such as garages when possible. Brick or a combination of brick and concrete is the most appropriate material for new driveways and sidewalks linking accessory structures to the street.
- New accessory structures should be of a similar and compatible design to the primary building. Use materials that match what is found on the primary building.
- New accessory structures should include elements that relate it to the primary building, such as similar siding and a similar roof form.
- New accessory structures should be subordinate to the primary building.
- Attached garages are rarely if ever appropriate on the facade. Locate new garages at the side or rear of the building where they are setback from the primary facade.
- Multi-bay garages should avoid having a continuous garage door, instead design new garages to have separate garage doors for each bay.



Left: The garage at 337 Grace Street has a roof type, pitch, and color scheme that matches the primary building.

Accessory Structure Design





Accessory structures for both new buildings and historic buildings should be compatible with the primary building. Use similar materials and a similar roof shape to help tie the accessory structure to the primary building. For multi-car garages, separate the bays instead of having one continuous garage door that dominates the facade. The rear or side is the most appropriate place for accessory structures and they should be setback from the facade of the primary building.

5) Additions

Additions are a common feature of many historic buildings. In some cases historic additions may actually add to the character and integrity of a building. This subsection covers both existing additions and new additions to historic buildings. When making alterations to historic additions, applicants should consult the relevant sections of these guidelines for the element of the building that is being modified or altered.

General Guidelines for Additions

- Historic additions should be treated in much the same way as the historic building with which they are attached, and maintained and kept in good condition. See the relevant sections in Chapter 3 for specific information related to preservation and alteration.
- As a general rule, additions which have been added within the last 50 years should not be considered historic, unless they contribute to the character and integrity of the main building.
- It is generally appropriate to remove non-historic additions from buildings as long as the historic building and its character-defining elements are not damaged in the process.
- Alterations to historic additions should follow the guidelines for the element of the building that is being altered. See the relevant sections throughout these guidelines in Chapter 3.

Preservation Brief #14
Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings: Preservation Concerns



Right: The facade addition completely obscures the historic commercial building of this main street building.

Avoid

- Placing additions on the street facing elevation of a building.
- Obscuring or damaging the character defining elements of historic buildings when adding new additions.
- Removing compatible historic additions.
- Significantly altering the amount of open space on the lot with the construction of new additions.
- Significantly altering the character of the block with new additions.






Above: Appropriately located, designed, and scaled additions to historic buildings in the historic district.

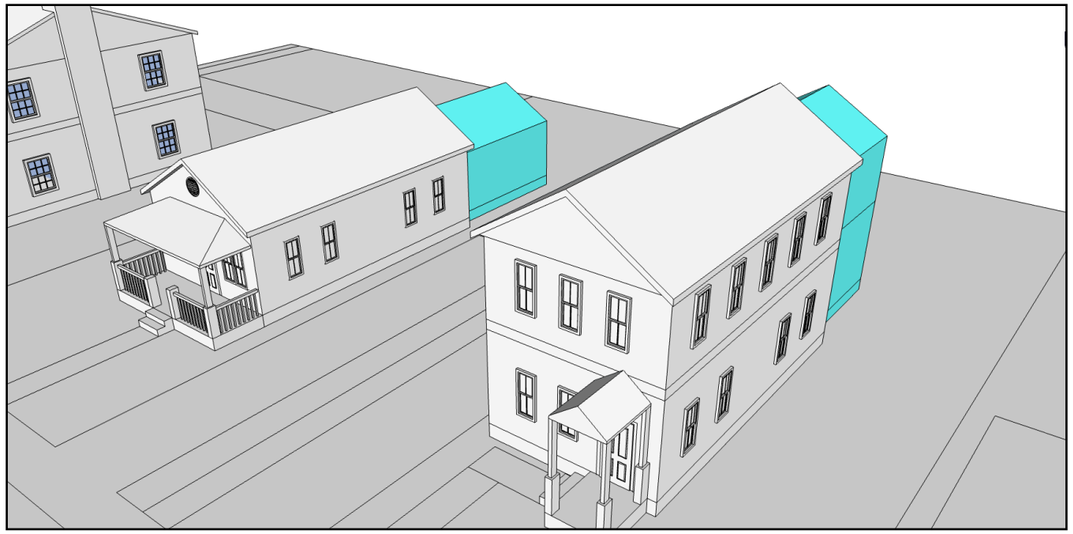
Guidelines for New Additions:

- New additions should be subordinate to the primary building and its street facing elevations with a smaller size, scale, and mass.
- New additions should be compatible with the overall design and style of the primary building and feature compatible materials and features. Materials used on new additions should match what is found on the primary building.
- Architectural details which are compatible with those found on the primary building are encouraged on additions, though they should be simpler and less ornate than their historic counterparts.
- Utilize a similar roof type, pitch, orientation, and material construction for the roof of the addition.
- Dormer additions may be appropriate for residential buildings, though they should utilize a similar design, roof form, and similar architectural details that are compatible with the primary building.
- Additions should be of a similar height to the primary building.
- Utilize a similar foundation height and floor to floor heights with new additions.
- Additions should be located on the side or rear of the building. For non-residential and commercial building types additions may be placed at the top of the building but should be setback from the facade to minimize its visual impact from the street.
- New additions should be differentiated from the primary building, so as to not create a false sense of history. Simpler details, subordinate size, setting the addition back from the primary facade, and creating a transitory space between the primary building and the new addition are all acceptable methods of distinguishing the addition from the primary building.
- If historic features or materials are removed from the primary building as a result of the addition, consider reusing them in the addition.

Location and Design for New Additions

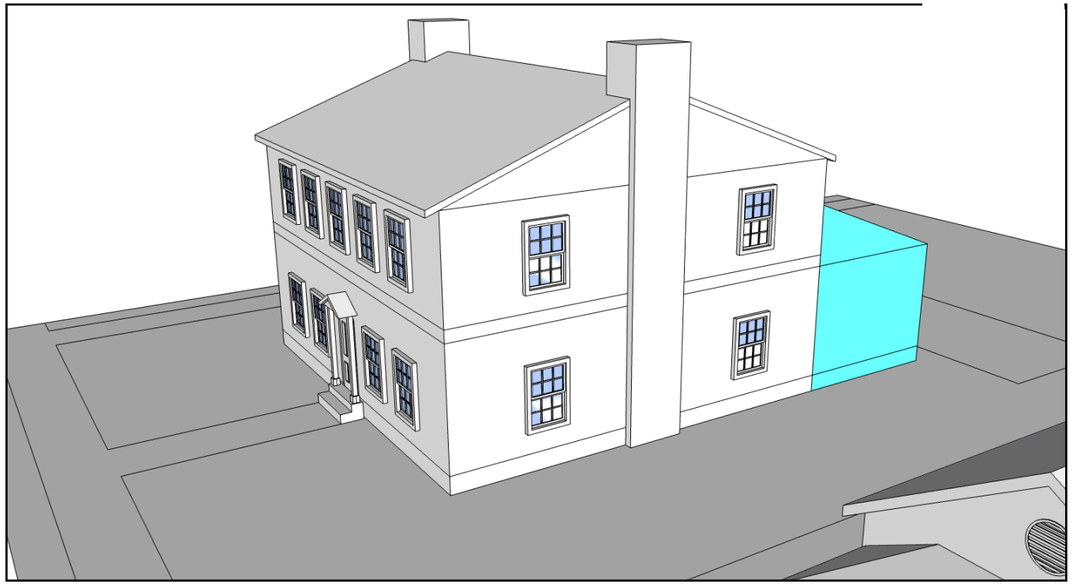
The following section provides a series of renderings to assist applicants with designing appropriate additions for both residential and non-residential buildings. The renderings are intended to provide guidance to both applicants and their contractors and include examples of both appropriate (teal) and innapropriate (maroon) additions to buildings.

Appropriate Residential Type Additions:



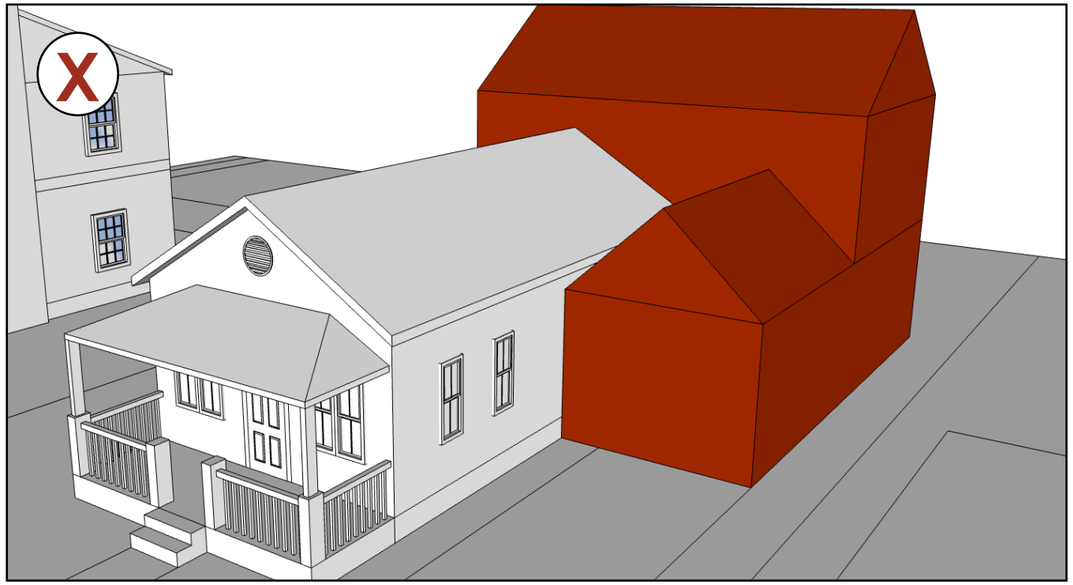
Where space is available, additions should be located at the rear of the building, feature a similar or smaller footprint, and a similar roof type and pitch. 2-story additions may be appropriate for 1-story buildings; they should be located at the rear of the building and separated by a transitory space that helps to differentiate the addition from the primary building while minimizing its larger massing and size.

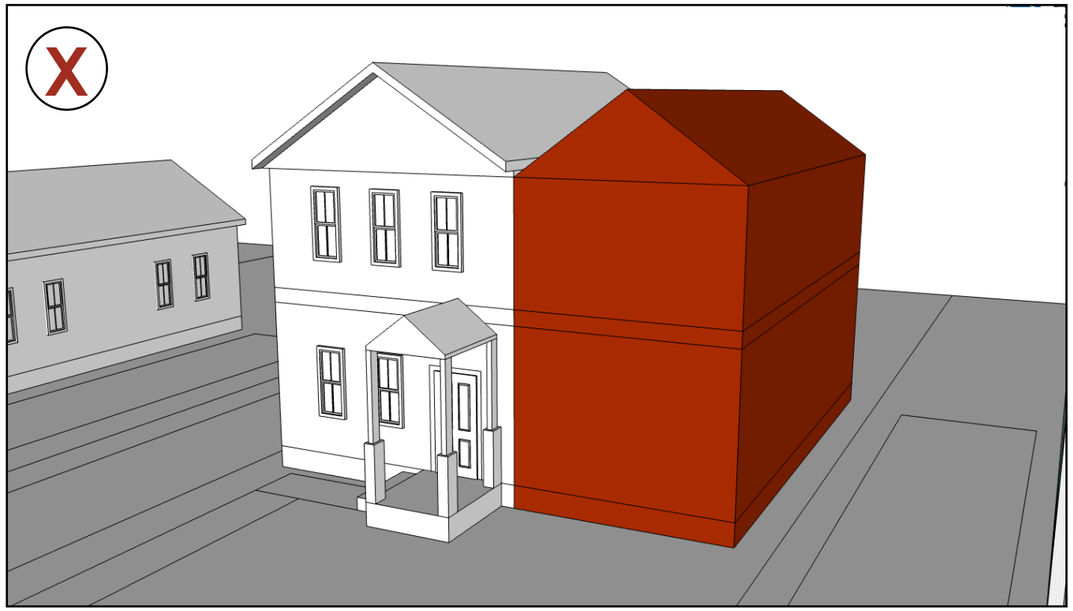
Appropriate Residential Type Additions:



The side or rear of the building is the most appropriate location for new additions. Avoid removing historic elements and materials, and if possible, reuse features such as windows, doors, or siding from the primary building that was removed for the addition.

Inappropriate Residential Type Additions:

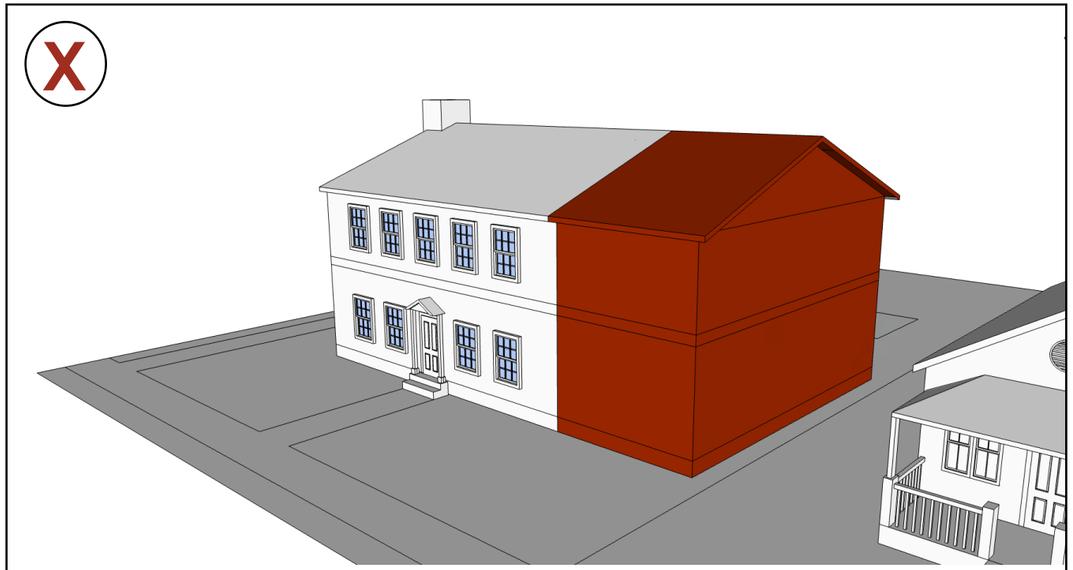




Avoid additions which are larger than the primary building and which might overwhelm the primary building by drastically increasing the overall footprint.

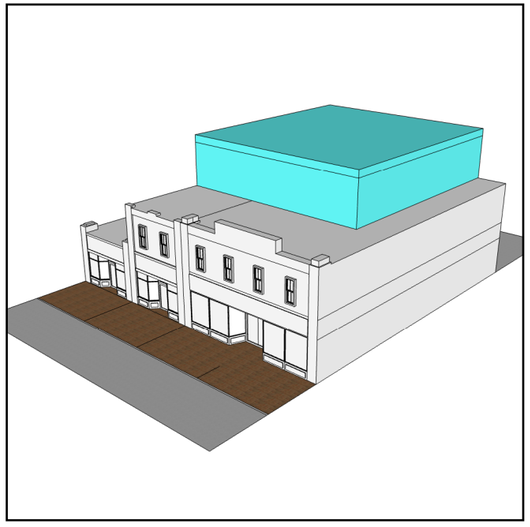
Inappropriate Residential Type Additions:

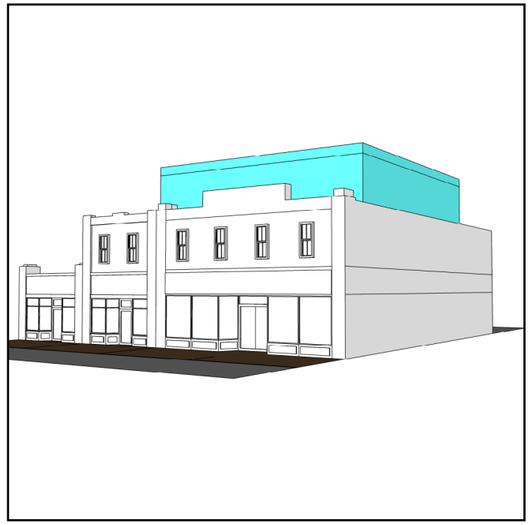




2-story or 'pop-top' additions are rarely, if ever appropriate. Avoid removing significant architectural elements such as windows, chimneys, and other fenestration when adding an addition.

Non-Residential Type Additions:





Additions to non-residential and commercial building types should be setback from street elevations towards the rear of the building to avoid overwhelming the facade and damaging historic elements.



Avoid additions which overwhelm the facade and destroy character defining elements.

6) Residential Building Design

In addition to the guidelines found earlier in this chapter the following guidelines are specific to new residential construction in the Smithfield Historic District.

Porches, Balconies, and Decks

- New residential construction should include open front porches.
- Porches should be oriented towards the street, though wraparound porches are also allowed as long as the primary orientation is facing the street.
- Porches should be designed and scaled appropriately to the subject building and historic buildings in the vicinity.
- Porches should include elements that are commonly found throughout the historic district, such as wood posts, railings, and balustrades.
- Decks should only be installed at the rear of the building and should be minimally visible from the street.
- Balconies may be appropriate on multi-story residential dwellings, though they should be appropriately scaled and not overwhelm the facade.



Left & Below: The simplified porch details from this C. 2000 Folk Victorian inspired building (left) in the historic district demonstrates how new porches should be inspired by historic designs without directly copying the more intricate details like those found on this C. 1900 Folk Victorian nearby (below).











Left & Below: Front porches are commonly found on residential building's in the historic district. New residential buildings should incorporate an open front porch with simplified elements that add visual appeal to new buildings. Avoid using elaborate details in favor of simple ones that help to distinguish new buildings from the historic.

7) Non-Residential Building Design

In addition to the guidelines found earlier in this chapter the following guidelines provide additional guidance for new non-residential construction in the Smithfield Historic District.

General Principles for Building Design in Non-Residential Buildings

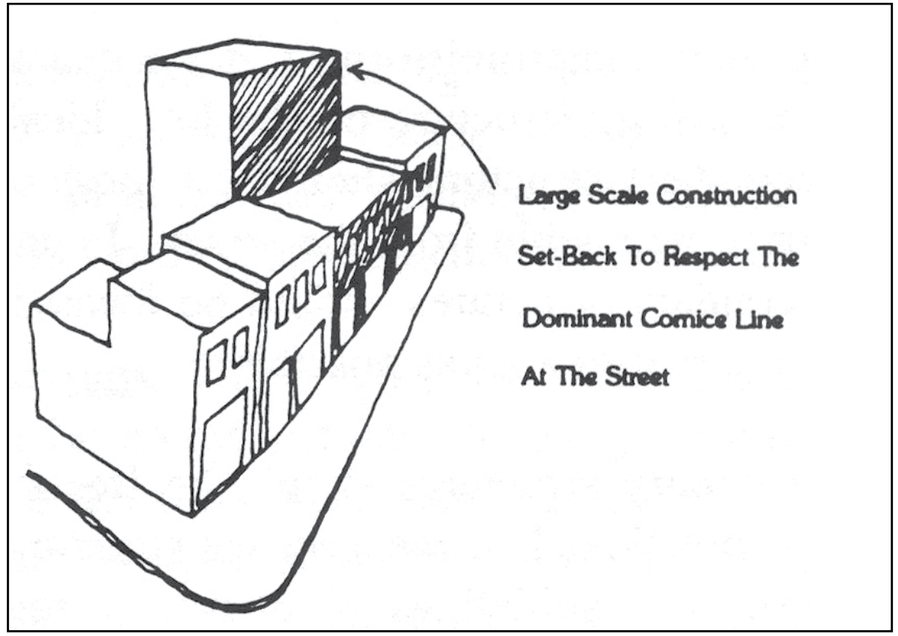
- New non-residential buildings should be designed in such a way to be appealing to pedestrians. This can be achieved through design elements, such as storefront windows, appealing entry doors, awnings, and other elements that are catered to pedestrians rather than automobiles.
- Ground floors should be distinguished from upper floors. This can be achieved through changes in building materials, belt courses, and other decorative design elements.
- Multi-story non-residential buildings should have a clearly defined base, middle, and cap that reflects historic non-residential architecture.
- Non-residential buildings should be oriented towards the street. When they are located on corner lots the building should be oriented towards both streets along which it has frontage.
- Two to three stories is most appropriate for non-residential buildings in the historic district. For building's larger than three stories, the upper floors should be setback from street-facing facades to avoid overwhelming nearby buildings.
- Accessory structures and other ancillary uses for new non-residential buildings should be located at the rear of the primary building where they are shielded from view.

Storefronts and Facades

- For new non-residential buildings, storefronts and facades should be designed to enhance the pedestrian experience. Avoid large, blank voids of space on building facades that face streets or sidewalks.
- Entryways, storefront windows, and other elements of a storefront or facade should be scaled and proportioned to enhance the pedestrian experience.
- Storefronts and facades should be proportioned to reflect the typical width of non-residential buildings in the historic district. For larger buildings with more frontage, consider breaking up the facade through changes in materials, windows, entryways and other decorative features that separate the facade into different bays or parts.
- In many cases storefronts and facades should be as close to the front of the lot as possible to reflect historic building setbacks and enhance the building's relationship with the pedestrian realm.
- The rectangular building form is the most appropriate for new non-residential buildings.
- Upper story windows on non-residential buildings should reflect the spacing, size, and proportion of nearby upper story historic windows.
- Awnings or canopies are encouraged on non-residential storefronts and facades. See the guidelines in Chapter 3 for additional guidance on awnings and canopies.



Above: Avoid large blank spaces or voids on building faces adjacent to streets and sidewalks. Design building facades adjacent to sidewalks and streets in a way that is appealing to pedestrians.



Left: For infill development that is larger than adjacent buildings, the upper stories should be setback from the facade to avoid disrupting the visual continuity along the block.



When designing a new non-residential or commercial space, pay special attention to adjacent buildings. The overall form and massing of the building should be compatible with its neighbors, and elements of the facade should be proportioned and spaced in such a way to not disrupt the visual harmony of the block face. By designing compatible infill development, the integrity of the historic district can be maintained and enhanced over time.

Patios and Outdoor Areas

- Patios and outdoor areas are encouraged for non-residential buildings to enhance the building's relationship with the pedestrian realm.
- New patios and outdoor areas should be designed in a way that is appealing to pedestrians and does not prevent a hazard, or restrict access to other public activities.
- Patios and outdoor areas should be located as close to the front lot as possible. Avoid setting back a new non-residential building too far from the front lot line to allow for more patio space.
- Planters, low and open fences, and other decorative features may be used to enhance patio and outdoor spaces.





Left: Patio spaces and other outdoor areas are encouraged for infill development. The side or front of a building is the most appropriate place for new patios as a way of enhancing the building's relationship with the street and providing an enticing space for pedestrians.

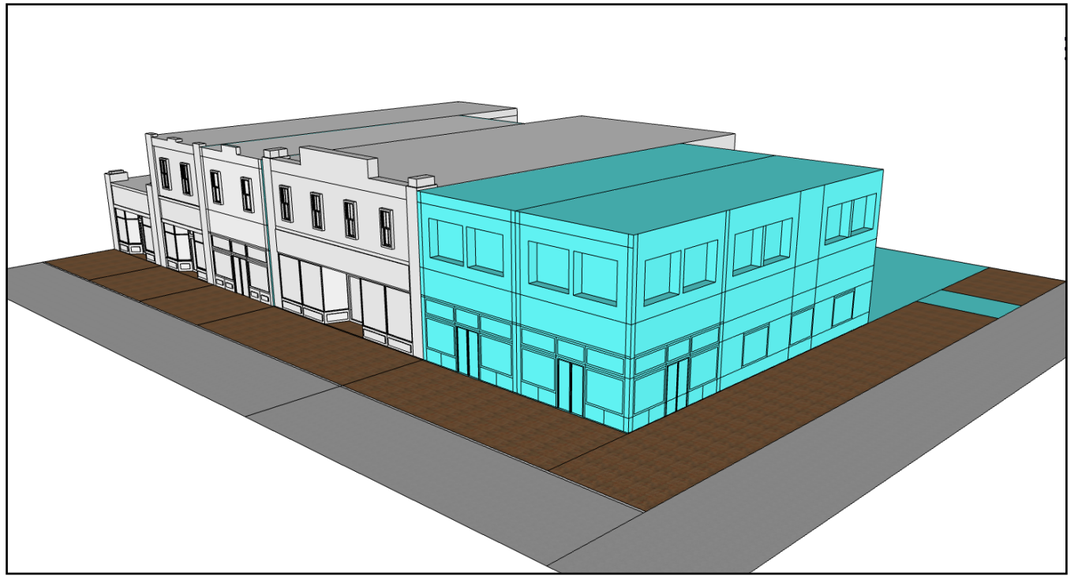
Parking Lots and Structures

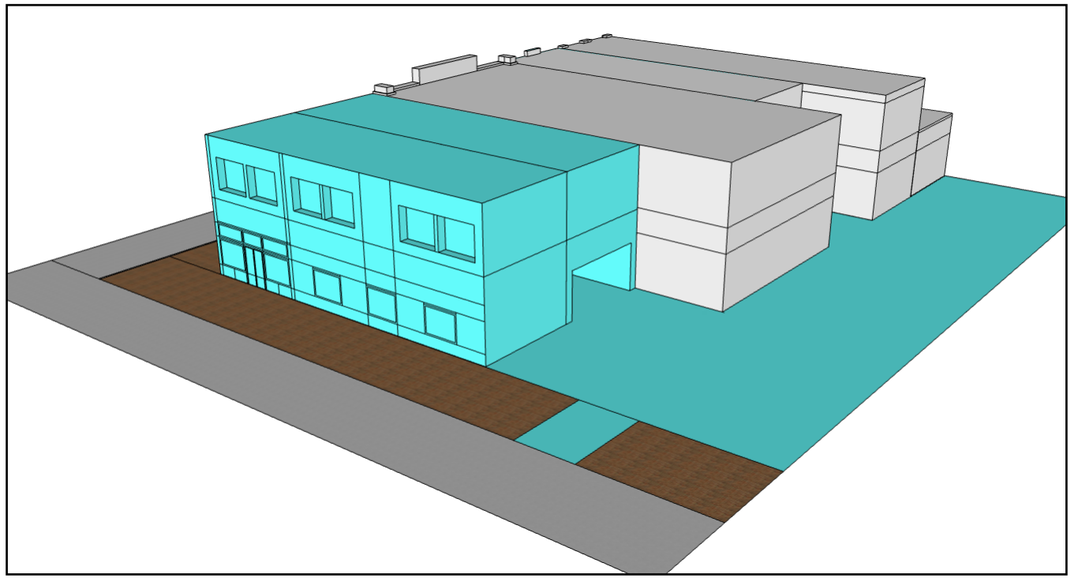
- Parking lots should be located behind non-residential buildings.
- Parking lots visible from the street should be screened with landscaping and other features which minimize visual impact.
- Parking structures should be built to reinforce the pattern and placement of other non-residential buildings along the block.
- Parking structures visible from the street should incorporate elements such as screening, architectural details, horizontal and vertical articulation, and landscape buffers to minimize the impact of the structure and create a cohesive design with other non-residential uses along the block.
- Consider incorporating retail and other non-residential, multi-use functions into new parking structures to ensure that the historic district remains friendly to pedestrians.



Left: Parking should not be located at the front of the building adjacent to the street. Not only does this disrupt the historic development pattern of the district, but it creates a less appealing facade for pedestrians.

Parking Structures and Lots





Design parking structures to reinforce the continuity of storefronts and facades along the block. Incorporate horizontal and vertical articulations in street facing wall faces to shield parking uses. A retail or other mixed use is encouraged along the first floor. Parking lots and entrances to parking structures should be located off a side street or in another inconspicuous location.





Chapter 5

Guidelines for Demolitions and Moves



Above: The 1932 Schoolhouse Museum was moved from its previous location in the City of Suffolk to its current home at 517 Main Street in Downtown Smithfield.

More on the Schoolhouse Museum can be found on their website (http://www.theschoolhousemuseum.org/)

A) Introduction and General Considerations

Demolitions in the historic district are strongly discouraged for both landmarked and contributing buildings. Demolition is an irreversible process that should only be taken as a last resort. Over time, the demolition of historic buildings leads to the loss of integrity and character for the district as a whole. Building moves are also discouraged, especially if the building is either landmarked or contributing and when the proposed move is outside of the historic district. The loss of Smithfield's historic housing stock results in a loss to the community and Smithfield's cultural identity.

General Considerations for Demolitions and Moves

- The public necessity of the proposed demolition.
- The public purpose or interest in the land or building to be protected.
- The historic or architectural value and significance of a particular building and its relationship to the historic value of the surrounding area.
- The age and character of the building, its condition, and its probably life expectancy.
- The view of the building or area from a public street or road, in the present and future.
- The present character of the setting of the building or area and its surroundings.

Additional Criteria When Demolishing Historic Buildings

- Whether the proposed demolition is a landmarked or contributing building that contributes to the historic district.
- Whether the building posses uncommon design or elements of craftsmanship that could not be reproduced or only reproduced with great difficulty.
- Whether historic events or people of importance within the community have resided in the building in the past.
- Whether relocation or moving of the building is a preferred alternative to demolition.
- Whether the demolition of the building could have a detrimental effect on the overall character of the historic district and nearby historic buildings.
- Whether all alternatives have been considered before demolition.
- Whether or not there has been a professional economic and structural feasibility study for the rehabilitation or reuse of the building and whether or not its findings support the proposed demolition.

Guidelines for Demolishing Historic Buildings

- Demolition for landmarked and contributing buildings may only proceed after all alternatives have been exhausted.
- The VHDR should be contacted prior to the demolition of a landmarked or contributing building to assess alternatives and to confirm that the building is not a listed Virginia Landmark or listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
- When a building is demolished in the historic district, consider saving valuable historic materials and reusing them in the new construction.
- Avoid demolishing buildings without a plan to reuse the site for new construction or a new use.

Additional Criteria When Moving Historic Buildings

- Whether the proposed move would have a detrimental effect on the structural soundness of the building.
- Whether the proposed move would have a positive or negative effect on other landmarked or contributing buildings within the historic district.
- Whether the proposed move would provide new surroundings that would be compatible with the architectural character of the building.
- Whether the proposed move is the only practical means of saving the building from demolition.
- Whether the proposed building is being moved within or outside of the historic district.

Guidelines for Moving Historic Buildings

- Only move buildings after all other alternatives have been examined.
- Contact the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (VDHR) prior to moving the building for assistance and to determine if the building is a registered Virginia Landmark or on the National Register of Historic Places.
- Document the building on its original site before undertaking the move. Photographs and site measurements of the building in relation to the site should be taken before a move proceeds.
- Assess the building's structural condition in order to minimize damage that might occur during the move.
- Only use a contractor who has prior experience in moving historic buildings. The VDHR can provide additional assistance.
- Secure the building from vandalism and weather damage prior to the move.





Appendix

Bibliography

(pg 7: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Smithfield, VA 1907, pg 1. Source: Library of Congress Geography and Maps Division, 2024, digital map. Available from: LOC, https://www.loc.gov/item/sanborn09074_003/ (accessed October 28, 2024).

(Pg 8-9: Old Isle of Wight Courthouse. Source: Billy Wilson, 2022, digital image. Available from: Flickr, https://www.flickr.com/photos/billy_wilson/52535670472 (accessed October 28, 2024). License at https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/2.0/)

(pg 12: Source: Virginia SP Smithfield Historic District NRHP Nomination, National Archives, Record Group 79, NAID: 41681342)

(pg 16: Library of Congress, 1933 Historic American Buildings Survey of Smithfield, VA, photograph by Thomas T. Waterman)

(Pg 23: Church Street, Smithfield, Virginia. Source: Boston Public Library, 2013, digital image. Available from: Flickr, https://www.flickr.com/photos/boston_public_library/9254928157 (accessed October 28, 2024). License at https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/2.0/)

(Pg 51: Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, photograph by Carol M. Highsmith)

(pg 55: Library of Congress, 1933 Historic American Buildings Survey of Smithfield, VA, photograph by Thomas T. Waterman)

(Pg 67: National Park Service, Preservation Brief 27, photograph by John Sandor)

(pg 72: https://www.oldhouseguy.com/historic-gutters/)

(pg 76: The Athenaeum of Philadelphia, Color in a Can: Early Marketing of Paint in America)

(pg 69: National Park Service, Preservation Brief 27, photograph by John Sandor)

(Pg 102: U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Library, Construction Guides for Exposed Wood Decks by L.O. Anderson, T.B. Heebink, and A.E. Oviatt)

(pg 111: Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division, Sanborn Maps Collection)

Glossary of Terms

Addition – An attached portion of the building that was added after it was originally built. Additions may be contributing or non-contributing depending on their build date and integrity.

Accessory Structure – A detached structure that is associated with the primary building. Typically a shed, outbuilding, or garage.

Administrative Approval – Minor projects which do not permanently affect the character of the historic district may be approved administratively by Town staff without going before the BHAR for review.

Alteration – Any exterior change in the architectural features of a structure and its surrounding site including, but not limited to, additions and removals, change in use, substantial landscaping and any subdivision. Modifications classified as ordinary repair are excluded from this definition.

Appropriate – see compatible.

Arch – A curved construction element, usually over an opening such as a window or door.

Articulation – the arrangement and manner of features on a building elevation.

Awning – A covering attached to the exterior of a building that provides protection from the elements. Typically fond around doors, windows, and other openings.

Awning Sign - A sign painted, printed, cut, or sewn onto a valance or awning.

Balcony – A raised platform that is attached to a building elevation.

Bay – The space between architectural elements on a building.

Belt Course – A horizontal band of trim on the exterior of a building, typically used to demarcate separate floors.

Block – That land abutting on one side of a street extending to the rear lot lines, or for parcels of land extending through to another street, to a line midway between the two (2) streets and lying between the two (2) nearest intersecting and intercepting streets or between the nearest intersecting or intercepting street and the boundary of any railroad right-of-way, park, school ground or non-subdivided acreage or center line of any drainage channel twenty (20) feet or more in width.

Block Face - The portion of a block facing the same side of a single street.

Board of Historic and Architectural Review – The primary body responsible for reviewing alterations to existing buildings, the construction of new buildings, and the demolition or moving of buildings within the historic district.

Bracket – A projecting architectural element that supports roofs, cornices, or eaves.

Brick – A construction material typically made from clay that is used in construction.

Building – A house, barn, church, hotel, or similar construction which is created principally to shelter forms of human activity. See structure.

Bulkhead – The area just below the display windows on a storefront. Often decorative.

Canopy – A permanent, roof-like structure of rigid materials either supported by and extending from a building or freestanding (ie., marquees or porte-cocheres)

Casement Window – A type of window that is attached to the frame by hinges at the side. Usually come in pairs.

Casing – The frame of which a window or door sits.

Cast Iron – A hard alloy of iron and carbon that is used for both structural and decorative elements in architecture.

Cement – A binding material made of mineral aggregate such as gravel that is combined with a cementing agent like lime and water.

Character – The qualities that make an element, building, or site unique.

Character Defining – Typically used to describe elements of a building which are

important to its character and historic integrity.

Clapboard – Horizontal boards used in siding. Typically thin at the top and overlapping.

Column – A vertical support member, may be decorative or utilitarian.

Compatible – Refers to the ability of new construction or alterations to existing properties to be sensitive to the historic character of the building, site, neighborhood, or district. Compatible alterations or new construction do not detract from the object's character.

Concrete – A building material created through the mixture of water, aggregate, and cement.

Configuration – The arrangement of elements on a building or location.

Construction – The act of building.

Contemporary – Refers to the present time period in which changes are made.

Contributing – Properties which contribute to the historic character of the Town and district but which do not contain Landmarked buildings or structures.

Context – Refers to the setting of architectural elements, a building, site, streetscape, neighborhood, or historic district.

Copper – Metal often used in historic roofs and their elements.

Cornice – The projecting element atop a wall, typically found on flat roofs.

Cupola – Dome or hipped roof element that sits atop a building's roof.

Deck – A flat surface on the exterior of a building.

Demolition – The complete or substantial removal of any structure or external element of a structure.

Dentils – Small rectangular blocks typically used as decoration on a building's cornice.

Display Window – Large windows typically found on the first floor of storefronts that allow pedestrians to see inside the building.

Dormer – Roof element that typically contains windows and projects out from the main roof.

Double Hung Window – A type of window with two sashes that slide vertically over each other.
Eave – Edge of a roof that projects out from the building.

Element – A material part that exists on a building, site, street, neighborhood, or within the historic district.

Elevation – The external face of a building.

Façade – Typically refers to the primary elevation of a building or those elevations that face prominent streets.

Fanlight – A semi-circular window above a door or window that resembles a hand fan.

Fence – A barrier constructed of wood, brick, metal, or other material that encloses exterior areas.

Fenestration – The arrangement of elements on a building.

Fixed - Fixed windows are those which are not operational and do no feature a moving sash.

Flashing – Metal sheets found on roofs that prevent moisture from collecting.

Form – The overall shape of a building as defined by its different parts.

Foundation – The portion of the building on the ground that supports the structure above.

Frame – Trim around a window or door. See casing.

Gable – A triangle shape that encloses the end of a pitched roof.

Gambrel Roof – A two-sided roof with slopes on each side. The upper slope is shallow, while the lower slope is much steeper.

Glazing – The parts of a window or door that are made of glass, also called lights.

Harmony – The pleasing arrangement of elements.

Height – The vertical distance to the highest point of the roof for flat roofs; to the deck line of mansard roofs; and to the average height between eaves and the ridge of gable, hip and gambrel roofs measured from the curb level if the building is not more than ten (10) feet distance from the front lot line, or from the Grade in all other cases.

Horizontal Sliding - Horizontal sliding windows feature sashes which move within the frame horizontally.

Hipped Roof – A type of roof where all four sides of the roof slope down from a peak.
Horizontal Slider Windows – Horizontally mounted windows which slide past each other. Common on more contemporary building styles.

Infill – The use of vacant or underutilized land for new development and new construction.

Integrity – The ability of a building, site, neighborhood, of historic district to convey its historic significance. Having historic integrity is what separates Landmarked and Contributing buildings from non-contributing buildings.

In-kind – Refers to the replacement of a building element with a new element that is the same material, texture, shape, color, and overall appearance as the element being replaced.

Jamb – Refers to the side portion of a window frame or casing.

Landmark – All structures from the 18th century to pre-Civil War or structures with architectural significance from the period after the Civil War.

Landscape – The entirety of the built environment at a given place.

Lattice – Typically an interlocking pattern of wood strips that is used for screening purposes.

Light – refers to the glass element of windows.

Lintel – The horizontal member at the top of a window, door, or other opening on a building.

Maintain – to keep in a usable state of preservation.

Mansard Roof – A double sloped roof with a vertical steep pitch on the sides and flat or low sloped roof at the peak.
Masonry – Construction materials made up of brick or stone.

Mass – The apparent bulkiness of a building to include its height, width, and depth.

Molding or Moulding – A continuous decorative band of trim that covers the joint where two surfaces or materials meet.

Mortar – Typically a mixture of lime, cement, water, and aggregate that is used as a bonding agent in masonry construction.

Mullion – The vertical parts of a window frame that divides it into separate sections.

Multi-light Window – Windows with multiple panes of glass separated by muntins.

Muntin – The vertical and horizontal elements of a window that divide the glazing.
New Construction – Refers to the introduction of new elements, sites, buildings, or structures either to an existing building or a site.

Non-Contributing – Properties which are 1) less than 50 years of age, 2) altered to an extent they are no longer representative of the period in which they were built, 3) degraded to a poor condition that makes preservation difficult, 4) unexemplary of any particular architectural style, and 5) have no architectural merit.

Obscured – covered or concealed from view.

Orientation – The relationship of a building or site to the cardinal directions. Can also reference building elevations to specific cardinal directions, ie; north-facing elevation.

Open-Space - That area intended to provide light and air, and is designed for either scenic or recreational purposes. Open space shall, in general, be available for entry and use by the residents or occupants of the development, but may include a limited proportion of space so located and treated as to enhance the amenity of the development by providing landscaping features, screening for the benefit of the occupants or those in neighboring areas, or a general appearance of openness. Open space shall not include driveways, parking lots, or other vehicular surfaces, any area occupied by a building, or areas so located or so small as to have no substantial value for the purpose stated in this definition.

Panes - Windows are often divided into panes of glass, or the rectangular glass elements that comprise a window and are seperated by wooden strips known as muntins. Single and double-hung windows are often described by the number of panes in each of the window sashes, such as 4/4 (four panes on top, four panes on bottom).

Parapet – Low wall at the edge of a roof, typically seen on flat roofs.

Pediment – A triangle shaped element, typically found above doors and windows.

Pilaster – A projecting pillar attached to a wall surface.

Pitch – Typically refers to the degree of slope on a roof.

Point – Surface of mortar joints.

Porch – A structure, typically open that is attached to a building that houses an entrance.

Primary Façade – The primary or main building elevation.

Primary Building – The primary or main building on a property as opposed to an accessory structure.

Preservation – The act or process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of a historic building, property, site, neighborhood, or historic district.

Proportion – The relationship between the size and shape of building elements to other building elements on a building.

Quoins – Squared stones or bricks found decorating the corner of a building.

Rail – The horizontal member of a window or door frame.

Reconstruction – The act or process of depicting, by means of new construction, the form, features, and detailing of a non-surviving site, landscape, building, structure, or object for the purpose of replicating its appearance at a specific period of time and in its historic location.

Rehabilitation – The act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which

convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.

Repointing – Repairing the mortar joint in masonry construction.

Resource – Typically refers to an individual or series of buildings, objects, sites, landscapes, neighborhoods, or areas within the historic district.

Restoration – The act or process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of features from other periods in its history and reconstruction of missing features from the restoration period.

Rhythm – Where elements of a building typically occur. Can include things like the spacing between windows and doors to the location of porches and other building elements.

Right of Way – Public land such as a sidewalk or streetway.

Sash – The movable part within a window frame that holds the glass.

Scale – The proportion of a building or element that relates to size, materials, style, and appearance. Scale can refer to how different elements interact with each other, the building as a whole, or how those elements or building relates to other buildings and elements along the street.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties – The Secretary of the Interior's Standards address the four treatments: preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction. They provide guidance to historic building owners and professionals for how to best address issues affecting historic properties.

Setback – The distance a structure or building is from the street, sidewalk, or property line. Within this document it also refers to the distance between structures or buildings on separate lots.

Setting – The combination of elements that make up a site, neighborhood, or property that helps to define its historic character.

Shake – A roofing and siding material that is typically made from split logs.

Shingles – A roofing material that is characterized by flat panels of different shapes and sizes.

Sidelight – An area of vertical glass at the side of windows or doors.

Siding – The exterior cladding of a structure or building.

Sign – A name, display or illustration which is affixed to, or represented, directly or indirectly, upon a building, structure, parcel or lot which directs attention to an object, place, activity, institution, organization, or business located on the premises. The term "sign" shall not be deemed to include official court or governmental notices nor the flag, emblem or insignia of a nation, political unit, school or religion, or directional aids for traffic flow and other public safety purposes.

Significance – Denotes the importance of a building, site, neighborhood, area, or historic district in relation to the broader city, state, or nation.

Sill – A horizontal element found at the base of a window or opening.

Single-Hung Windows - A type of window with one sash that slides vertically over a separate sash which is held in place.

Spindlework – Decorative wood dowels or rods used on historic buildings, typically found on porches or decorating the eaves of roofs.

Stained Glass – Decorative glass which has color.

Steel – Alloy made of iron and carbon that is used as a structural element.

Stool – See sill.

Storefront – The primary elevation or façade of a commercial building, typically refers to the first floor where pedestrians enter.

Streetscape – The relationship of the street to other elements.

Structure – That which is built or constructed, the use of which requires permanent location on the ground or attachment to something having a permanent location on the ground.

Stucco – A type of plaster that is applied in several coats over masonry or wood.

Style – The special characteristics of a structure, building, or decorative element.

Transom – A horizontal window opening that is found above windows, doors, and other openings.

Trim – Decorative bands of material on a building or structure.

Upper-story Windows – Typically used to denote the windows above a storefront on a commercial building.

Vergeboard – Exterior decorative trim that is found along the roofline or eave of a building.

Vernacular – A regional form of architecture that is usually simpler in details but inspired by high style architecture.

Water Table – see belt course.

Wood shake – see shake.

Preservation Briefs

Preservation Brief #1 – https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/upload/preservation-brief-01-cleaning-masonry.pdf

Preservation Brief #2 – https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/upload/preservation-brief-02-repointing.pdf

Preservation Brief #4 – https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/upload/preservation-brief-04-roofing.pdf

Preservation Brief #9 – https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/upload/preservation-brief-09-wood-windows.pdf

Preservation Brief #13 – https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/upload/preservation-brief-13-steel-windows.pdf

Preservation Brief #14 – https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/upload/preservation-brief-14-exterior-additions.pdf

Preservation Brief #16 – https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/upload/preservation-brief-16-substitute-materials-2023.pdf

Preservation Brief #17 – https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/upload/preservation-brief-17-architectural-character.pdf

Preservation Brief #18 – https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/upload/preservation-brief-18-interiors.pdf

Preservation Brief #19 – https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/upload/preservation-brief-19-wood-shingle-roofs.pdf

Preservation Brief #22 – https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/upload/preservation-brief-22-stucco.pdf

Preservation Brief #25 – https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/upload/preservation-brief-25-signs.pdf

Preservation Brief #27 – https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/upload/preservation-brief-27-cast-iron.pdf

Preservation Brief #29 – https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/upload/preservation-brief-30-clay-tile-roofs.pdf

Preservation Brief #30 – https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/upload/preservation-brief-30-clay-tile-roofs.pdf

Preservation Brief #32 – https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/upload/preservation-brief-32-accessibility.pdf

Preservation Brief #35 – https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/upload/preservation-brief-35-architectural-investigation.pdf

Preservation Brief #38 – https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/upload/preservation-brief-38-graffiti.pdf

Preservation Brief #39 – https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/upload/preservation-brief-39-controlling-moisture.pdf

Preservation Brief #44 – https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/upload/preservation-brief-44-awnings.pdf

Preservation Brief #45 – https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/upload/preservation-brief-45-wood-porches.pdf

Preservation Brief #47 – https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/upload/preservation-brief-47-exteriors-small-medium-buildings.pdf

Preservation Brief #49 – https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/upload/preservation-brief-49-metal-ceilings-walls.pdf

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