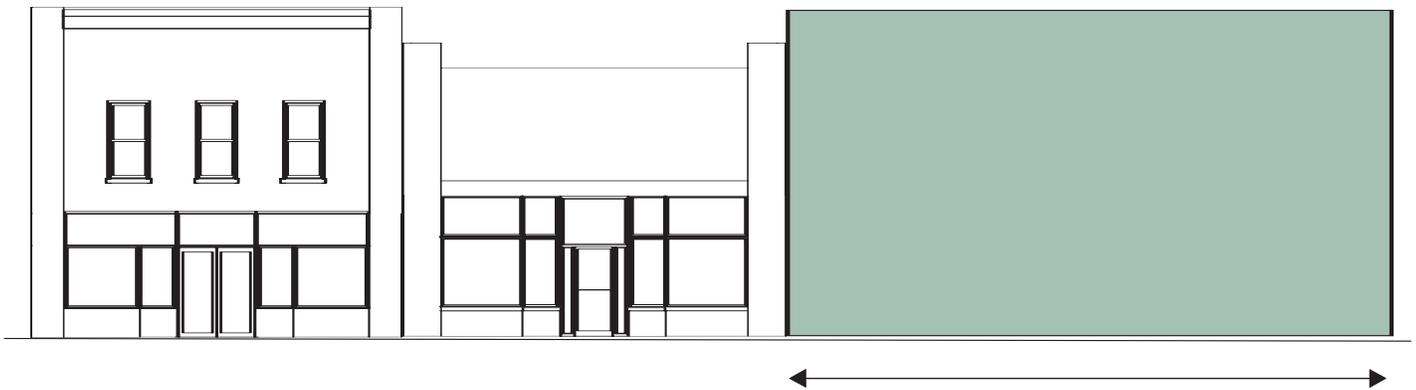


### A. Form

1. In new construction, use forms similar to those in the immediate vicinity. In most cases, this will be a simple form. Most of the houses in Smithfield, with the notable exception of Queen Anne residences, are simple in form.
2. Commercial buildings in the traditional core of downtown should have a simple form.

**i** Complexity of form refers to whether a building is simple in shape (typically a rectangle or square) or complex (a combination of shapes).



**Commercial Form**



**Residential Form**

Simple



Complex

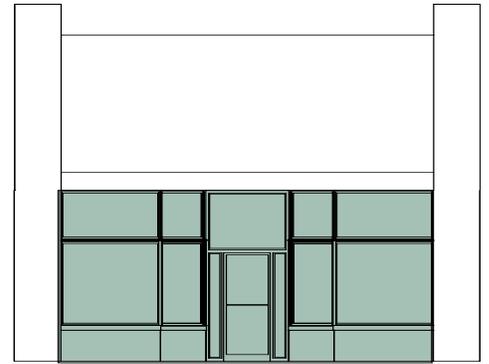
## VI Building Mass

### B. Scale

1. When designing new buildings, respect the scale of the town, which is generally at a human, as opposed to a monumental, scale. The buildings are not very tall or wide or large; their size does not overwhelm pedestrians on the street level.
2. Include human-scale elements such as storefronts on commercial buildings and porches on houses.
3. Use a scale for churches or public buildings that conveys their importance. For these buildings only, monumental scale may be appropriate.



**i** Scale refers to the relationship of buildings to one another and to the human size.



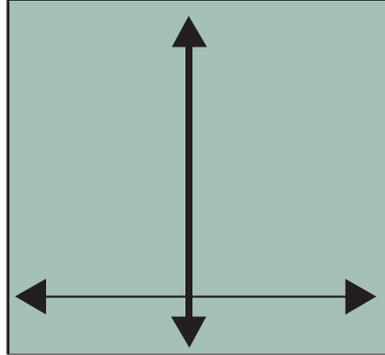
**Human-Scale Elements**



**Residential Scale**



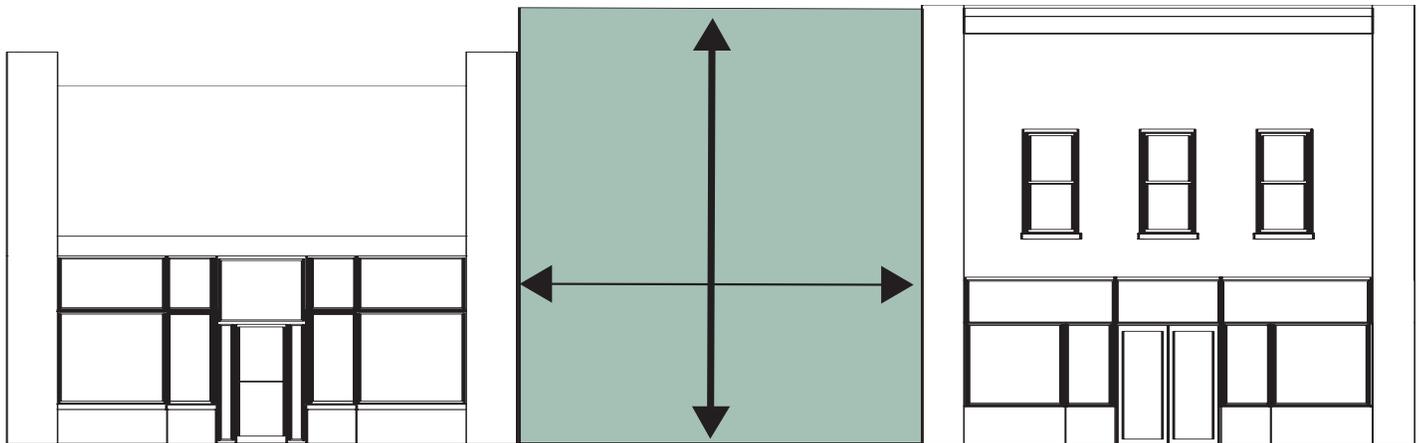
**Commercial Scale**



#### Residential Height and Width

1. Make new buildings within 30 percent of the height of surrounding historic buildings, or in general two stories tall. In many areas of the district there is a consistent height or width of buildings, which should be respected. In commercial areas where it is desirable to reinforce the street wall, make new buildings two stories tall, the height of most of the turn-of-the-century stores.

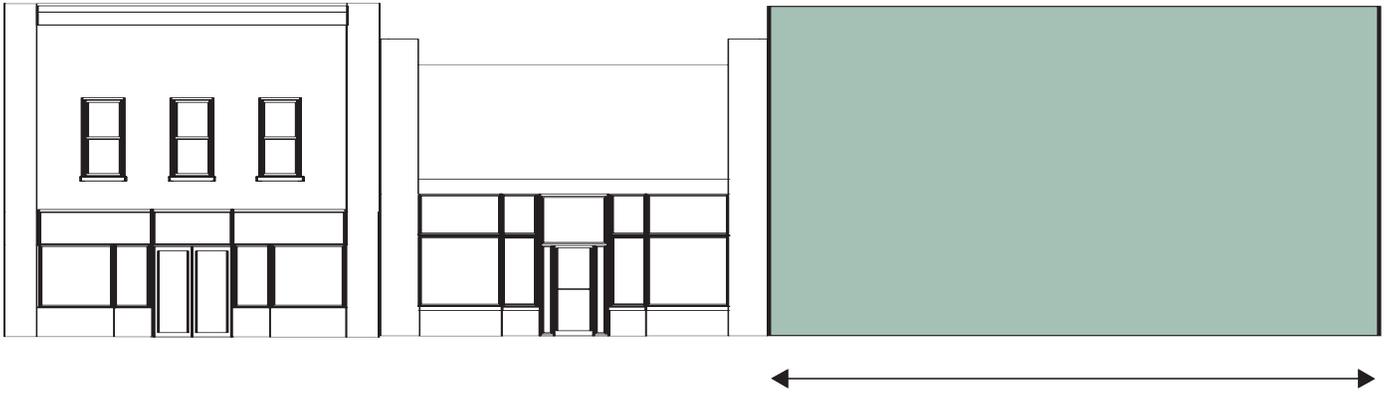
**i** Sixty percent of the district buildings are two stories tall. Only 7 percent of the contributing buildings are just one story tall. One-and-one-half-story houses are common in the early twentieth century neighborhoods, while the older areas contain a number of two-and-one-half-story Georgian/Federal houses.



#### Commercial Height and Width

## VI Building Mass

### C. Height and Width



**Wide Facade Not Modulated with Bays**

2. Respect the width of surrounding historic buildings. Widths in the district are often consistent, especially in the commercial core where every foot of frontage was used to maximum advantage and most lots are the same size. When the primary facade of a new commercial building is wider than 30 feet, modulate the facade with bays.



**Wide Facade Modulated with Bays**

### C. Height and Width

3. Maintain, in new construction, the overall proportion of height to width of surrounding historic buildings. This proportion is often called directional expression.

#### **i** Proportion of Height and Width

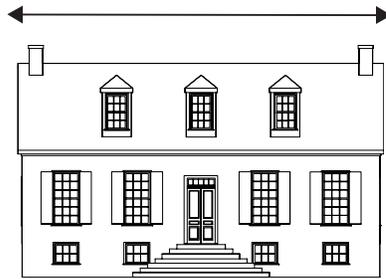
Buildings that are taller than they are wide have a vertical expression, while wider buildings have a horizontal expression.

- Residences in the Smithfield district are fairly evenly split between vertical and horizontal expression. Fifty-three percent have a vertical expression, as compared to 47 percent horizontal.
- Of the commercial buildings, 64 percent are vertical and 36 percent are horizontal. Often, the proportions on a block will be consistent.

#### **i** Typical Heights and Width



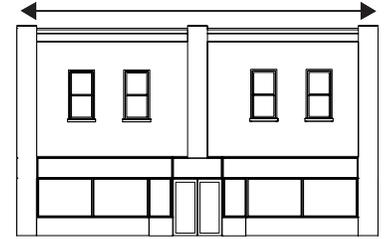
**Vertical residential.**  
Smithfield has many vernacular Victorian houses that are vertical in expression.



**Horizontal residential.**  
Many Georgian and Federal buildings are horizontal in expression.



**Vertical commercial.**  
The typical turn-of-the-century downtown building is a vertical expression.



**Horizontal commercial.**  
Large traditional commercial buildings tend to be horizontal in expression because their added size results from greater street frontage rather than an increase in height.

## VI Building Mass

### D. Foundation

1. Repair deteriorated foundations, matching existing historic materials as closely as possible. Avoid filling in between piers, either with concrete block or solid masonry.
2. Ensure that water flows away from the foundation and remove any vegetation that may damage the structure or foundation.

#### Preservation Brief #39

Holding the Line:  
Controlling Unwanted Moisture  
in Historic Buildings

available from:  
[www2.nps.gov/tps/briefs/presbhom.htm](http://www2.nps.gov/tps/briefs/presbhom.htm)



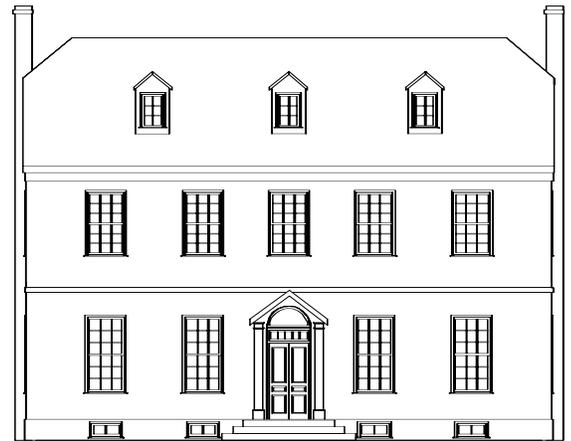
Ensure proper drainage.



**i** Most foundations in Smithfield are of masonry. Brick piers are the most common and distinctive foundation type, especially for vernacular frame houses; many have been filled in with solid brick or concrete block; a few houses have stone foundations.



Above-grade foundations.



3. In new construction, distinguish the foundation from the rest of the building. Respect the height above grade of foundations on surrounding historic buildings. Some houses with no basements rest on piers or on a simple brick foundation, but some Georgian and Federal buildings have raised basements.



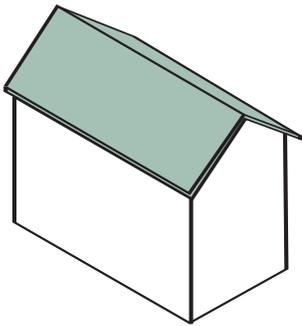
The raised basement is delineated from the first level by a projecting water table.

## VI Building Mass

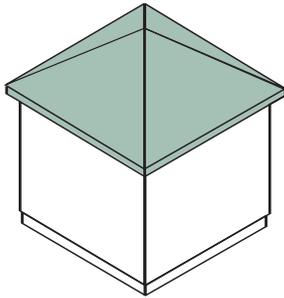
### E. Roof

1. Retain the roof types of historic buildings, including elements such as chimneys and light wells, and materials, as these help to indicate the style and construction of the building.

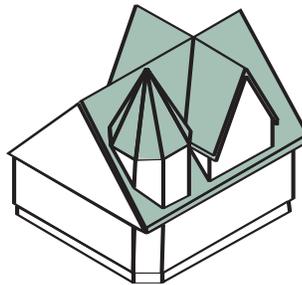
#### i Roof Form



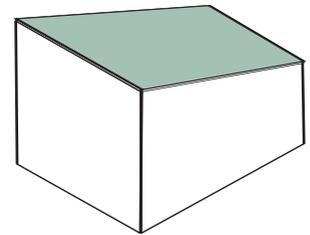
A **gable roof** is pitched in the shape of a triangle. In a front-gable structure, the narrower, triangular portion of the roof faces the street. In a cross-gable, two gables perpendicular to each other, cover ell-shaped buildings. Typical cladding materials were metal or, in very early buildings, wood shingles. A typical form for Federal, Georgian, Colonial Revival, and many Victorian-era styles, gable roofs cover seventy-three percent of the houses in the district.



A **hipped roof** has slopes on all four sides. Original cladding materials include metal or slate. Thirteen percent of the houses in Smithfield have hipped roofs, which was a variant roof form for Georgian and Federal styles and for some vernacular Victorian styles.



A **complex roof** combines hipped and gable forms and also can contain turrets or towers. It is best exemplified by the Queen Anne style. Complex roofs originally were clad with metal, metal shingles, or slate and often had ornamentation such as turrets, crestings, and towers. Complex roofs are found on ten percent of the houses in the district.



A **shed roof** is a gently sloping roof common on commercial buildings. It may be hidden by parapet walls. Metal, membrane, or built up layers of tar and gravel are common materials used. Shed or flat roofs are rare for houses (one percent) but make up fifty percent of the commercial roofs, since this was a common roof construction for the two-story, turn-of-the-century structure.

- When a roof must be replaced, attempt to match the original materials since these materials are important to the visual integrity of the building. Many houses in the district originally had metal roofs, but many have been replaced with composition shingles.
- For new construction, respect the roof type, materials, form, and slope of roofs of nearby historic buildings. Older roofs generally have a steeper pitch than most modern construction.

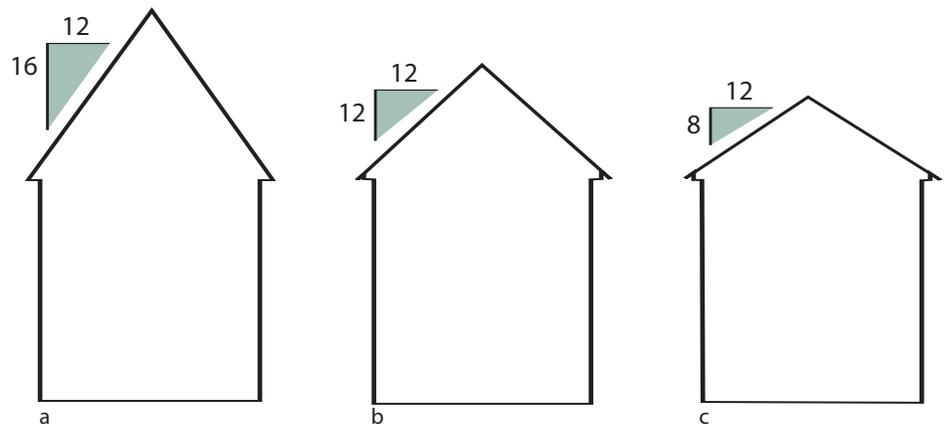


Replacement shingles

**i** Today, 54 percent of the roofs in the district are composition shingles and only 40 percent are metal. Slate covers only 1 percent of the houses. Eighteen percent are composition shingles and 27 percent are metal. On commercial buildings, more than half of the roofs are not visible and are probably shed or flat roofs. *Update?*



The steep pitch of the gable roof on this new house on South Church Street is appropriate for new construction in the historic district.



Steep roof pitches (a & b) are appropriate for gable roofs, whereas shallow pitches (c) are appropriate for hipped roofs. Gable roofs in the district should not have shallow pitches.

#### Preservation Brief #04

#### Roofing for Historic Buildings

#### Preservation Brief #29

#### The Repair, Replacement, and Maintenance of Historic Slate Roofs

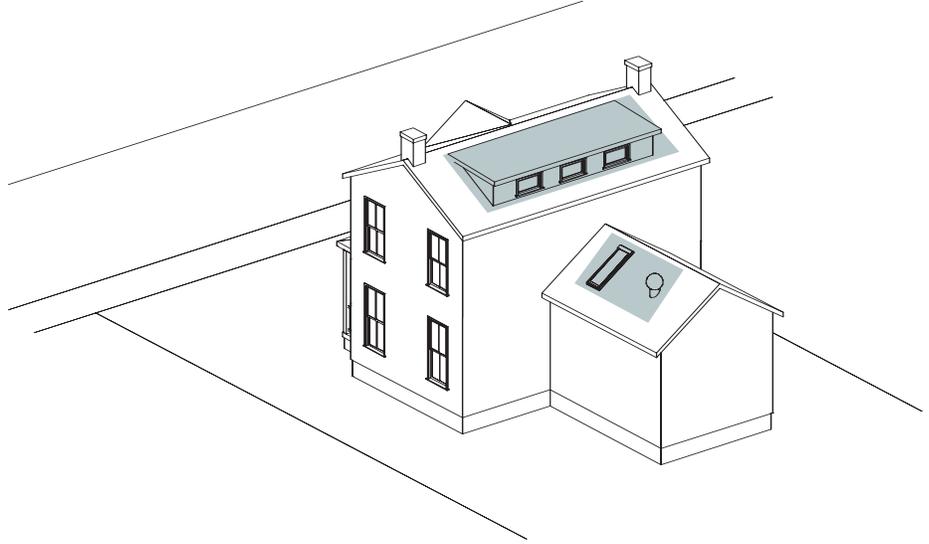
available from:

[www2.nps.gov/tps/briefs/presbhom.htm](http://www2.nps.gov/tps/briefs/presbhom.htm)

## VI Building Massing

### E. Roof

4. Ensure that gutters and downspouts are firmly attached and function properly.
5. Maintain flashing around roof joints and edges.
6. Do not add new elements such as vents, skylights, or additional stories that would be visible on the primary elevations of the building.
7. Place solar collectors and antennae on non-character-defining roofs or roofs of non-historic adjacent buildings.



New roof elements should be placed on secondary elevations.