

The Hull Historic District Design Guidelines



Prepared by
Hull Historic District Commission
August 2015 Edition

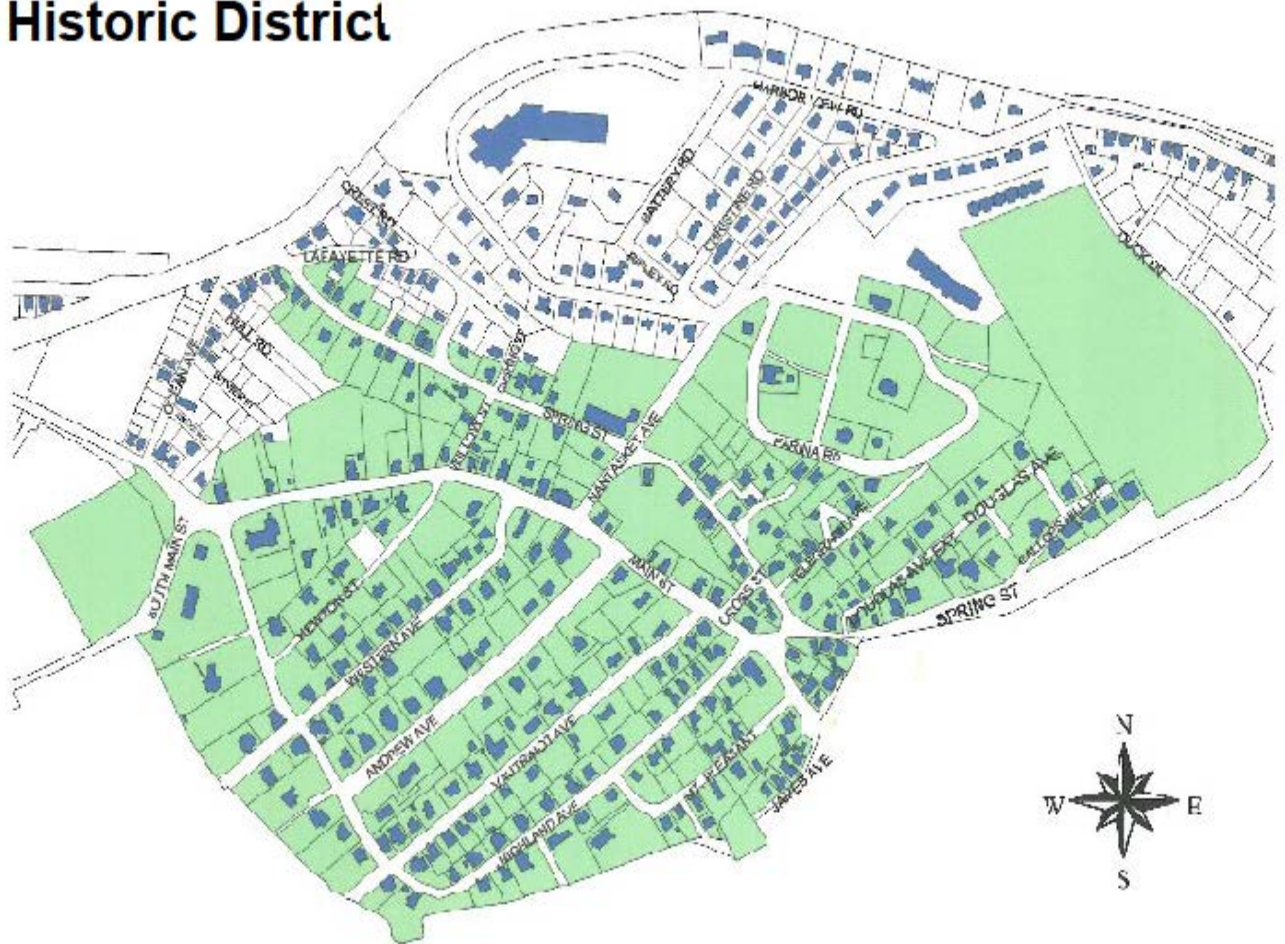
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Note

The Hull Historic District Design Guidelines is a working document. The Hull HDC anticipates occasional updates in the future

Hull Village Historic District



Summary of Jurisdiction of the Hull Historic District Commission

Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40C pertains to the establishment of Historic Districts, and lists projects over which Historic District Commissions have jurisdiction. The law allows a municipality to make exceptions to that list; for example, the Town of Hull bylaw creating the Hull Historic District Commission (HDC) specifically exempts exterior colors from the jurisdiction of the Hull HDC.

To summarize the effect the Historic District Commission has on buildings within the district:

- The commission has no jurisdiction over interiors or over exterior colors or roofing.
- The commission does have jurisdiction over all building exteriors, and any work proposed must be reviewed by the commission—this includes porches, railings, stairs, porch posts, windows, doors, dormers, decks, siding, moldings and trim, fences, retaining walls, etc., if visible from a public way or waterway.
- The commission has jurisdiction over demolition of buildings or parts of buildings.
- The commission has jurisdiction over any additions or new construction.
- All exterior construction within the commission's jurisdiction requires a review and possibly a public hearing before a building permit can be issued and work begun.

While any project within the Historic District requiring a building permit must first receive a Certificate from the Hull HDC in order to proceed with the work, note that a Certificate is required for some projects that do not require a building permit.

For more information, visit the Hull HDC web site at

www.town.hull.ma.us → Boards & Commissions → Historic District Commission



**Hull Historic District Commission
Town Hall
253 Atlantic Avenue
Hull, MA 02045
June, 2011**

To all property owners in the Hull Historic District:

The Hull Historic District Commission (HDC) takes great pleasure in announcing a new version of the HDC Guidelines.

Exterior construction and renovation projects within the Hull Historic District are subject to review by the Hull Historic District Commission. Guidelines for appropriate renovation and construction as well as a summary of the review process can be found in the Hull Historic District Commission Design Guidelines. The HDC Design Guidelines document is now available for viewing and downloading through a link in the HDC page of the Hull town website:

www.town.hull.ma.us --> Boards & Commissions --> Historic District Commission

This site also contains links to an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness, a schedule of Commission meetings, contact information, and other useful documents.

Hardcopies of the HDC Guidelines can be viewed and copied at the Hull Public Library and at the Hull Building Commissioner's office at Town Hall.

SUMMARY OF ADDRESSES WITHIN HULL HISTORIC DISTRICT:

All addresses on entire street:

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Andrew Avenue | Spring Street and Spring St. Extension |
| Telegraph Avenue | James Avenue |
| Highland Avenue | Gallops Hill Road |
| Mt. Pleasant Ave. | Douglas Ave. and Douglas Ave. Extension |
| Vautrinot Avenue | Farina Road |
| Western Avenue | Willow Street |
| Newton Street | |

Addresses: on part of street:

Main Street up to and including 94 Main St.
Nantasket Avenue: 1196, 1200, 1202
2 Cushing Street

Acknowledgement

Special thanks to David Porper, Chair of the Gloucester Historic District Commission, who graciously gave us permission to adapt much of their "Guidelines for the Gloucester Historic District: The Design Review Process." We hope that others may benefit from Hull's "Guidelines" as we have benefited from our colleagues' work in Gloucester.

Introduction

Everything old is not necessarily good, and everything new is not necessarily bad. However, adding modern elements to an old building requires great sensitivity and understanding if it is to improve an architecturally and historically significant neighborhood.

The purpose of design review is to encourage a sensitive approach to making changes within an historic district. Change and growth are inevitable—and even healthy—if the district is to remain a vital, interesting place. Certain reference points apply, however, when working under the special conditions of an historic district:

- *Buildings do not exist in a vacuum.* Rather, each element of a building relates to other individual elements and to the overall composition of the building; each building contributes to the larger context of the streetscape. Principles of harmony and neighborliness always apply.
- *Changes which by themselves seem small have a cumulative effect, both good and bad:*
“Good design by its example can be infectious; on the other hand it only requires a few pioneers in the nastier form of rehabilitation and ‘there goes the neighborhood’—and with it some of the value of each house, good or bad.”
(George Steven, *Remodeling Old Houses*, 1975)

The design guidelines which follow provide a frame of reference for applicants to use when planning changes, and a basis on which the Historic District Commission (HDC) can evaluate those changes. The review process is cooperative and flexible, and a range of alternatives is usually possible for any particular situation. The HDC welcomes discussion of design ideas at a preliminary stage, particularly on major projects.

The Hull Historic District Commission (HDC) was established by vote at Town Meeting in 1994 on the occasion of the 350th anniversary of the town’s founding in 1644. The Hull Village Historic District Bylaw conforms to the Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 40C, as amended.

According to the Bylaw, HDC has as its purpose “... to promote the educational, cultural, economic and general welfare of the public through the preservation and protection of the distinctive characteristics of buildings and places significant in the history of the Town Of Hull ...”

Although the village does have non-residential buildings, it is dominated by houses. The word “house” is used throughout this document, but all comments apply equally to non-residential buildings. The district also includes some town-owned property; note that projects funded by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts are subject to review by the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

Review Process Summary

Resources such as maps of the Hull Historic District, application forms for a Certificate of Appropriateness, contact information, and other documents relating to the HDC can be found at:

- The Hull Public Library
- The Hull Building Department, Town Hall
- www.town.hull.ma.us → Boards & Commissions → Historic District Commission

The first step in making an application should be to meet informally with the HDC, but this is not required. A completed application can be submitted to the Hull Building Department or directly to HDC (please contact the HDC before submitting the application).

After reviewing the application, HDC will schedule a public hearing and notify abutters. The applicant(s) should supply (in digital format if possible):

- Accurate drawings to scale
- Photos of existing house
- Photos of components of other houses that you intend to match
- Pages of catalogs showing choices for windows and doors, etc.
- Written descriptions

The more information you provide, the easier and faster it is for the Commission to review, make a decision, and issue the appropriate certificate.

The HDC Chairman may issue a Certificate of Non-Applicability if the proposed work is exempt. This decision is made by the Chairman, not the Building Department.

Exemptions include:

- Ordinary repairs to exactly the same appearance
- Paint colors
- Roofing (if of uniform color and texture)
- All interior work
- Components not visible from a public way (including from the ocean or bay)
- Storm windows
- Window air conditioning units

The Commission may add an Order of Conditions to a Certificate of Approval in order to substantially approve a project but where additional information is required to ensure appropriateness. Typically this may include design drawings or material samples and details. A building permit will not be issued until the Conditions have been met.

The Commission may have as an Order of Condition that a member or members of the Commission work with the applicant after a certificate is issued in order to clarify completely unresolved concerns. During actual construction the Commission as well as the Building Department may observe the construction for compliance with the certificate issued.

The HDC encourages residents to come to our meetings for informal advice and recommendations. The earlier you come to us, the sooner we can make suggestions in your planning process.

Too often applicants wait until the last minute and do not contact HDC until they are already committed to a certain approach and have just applied for a building permit that they need “as soon as possible” to meet a tight schedule. Such an approach is not the best way to take advantage of the assistance available from the HDC to receive a building permit in a timely manner.

Criteria for Guidelines

Under its enabling legislation, the Historic District Commission may consider the following general issues relative to each application:

- The historic and architectural value of the site, building or structure;
- The property's relationship with and contribution to the immediate setting, as well as the district as a whole;
- The general compatibility of the proposed design in terms of arrangement, texture, material, and color of the features involved; and
- The extent to which the proposal will preserve and enhance the historical, architectural, and cultural qualities and goals of the district.

Maintaining existing relationships and patterns is as important as the specific treatment or design of a detail. The major design issues to consider are:

- The spacing and setbacks between adjacent buildings and between buildings and the street;
- The size and shape of the building form; roof shape; the proportion of the façade, and the rhythm of windows, doors, porches, and other projections across the façade;
- The proportion and types of windows; and
- The texture of materials and layering of elements.

Generally speaking, new work should blend comfortably with the old, and it should enhance the quality of craftsmanship and materials which distinguish an historic district. It is not always necessary or desirable for new work to look like old construction, but a contrast between old and new can be valid only if it is based on a strong understanding of the character of the historic district.

Design Guidelines for Existing Buildings – Good Work and Things to Avoid

The following are guidelines; due to the diversity of architecture in the district, the commission reviews all applications on a case-by-case basis.

When rehabilitating an existing building, the building itself provides the best model. In general, the HDC expects the owner to preserve as much of the original character, details, and materials as possible. When original features cannot be repaired, replacement in kind is preferred. Alterations which reflect the building's original character and style will enhance its value.

There are no hard-and-fast rules, but keep in mind the following guidelines:

- Don't over-restore.
- Don't try to make a building look older (or newer) than it really is by using details from other styles.
- When in doubt, keep as much as possible of the original design and materials.
- Don't assume a detail can't be saved. If necessary, talk with a builder, designer, or architect experienced in preservation.
- Study similar buildings in the neighborhood for ideas.

New Construction

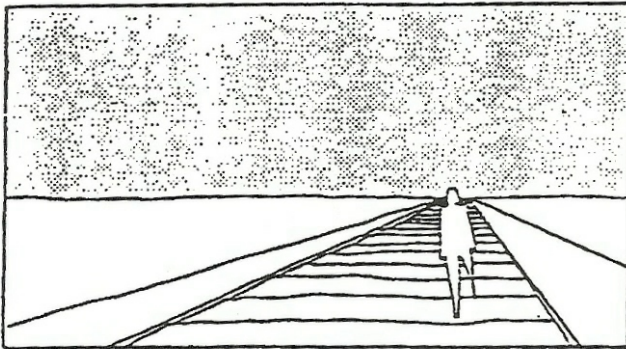
The HDC encourages applicants to design new buildings or additions which reflect present-day design ideas and techniques, while respecting the value and character of surrounding buildings from earlier periods. New construction should not imitate older styles, but it should reinforce existing patterns of siting, scale, proportions, and texture.

Understanding the Streetscape

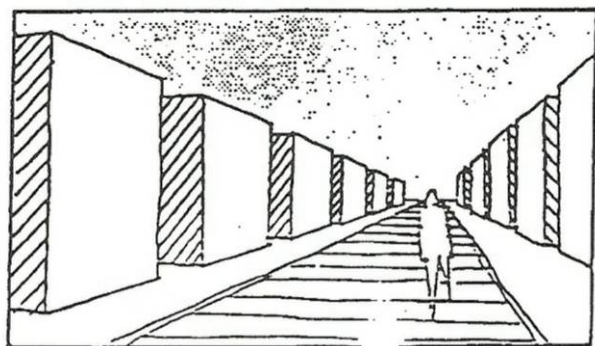
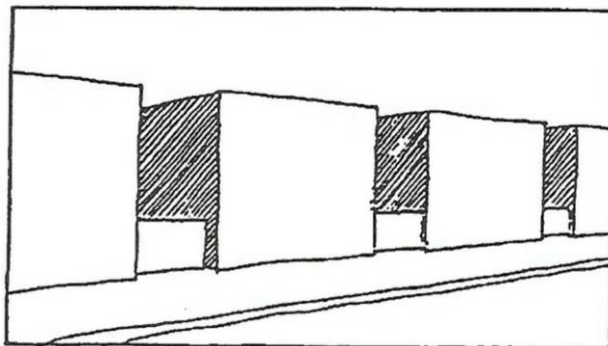
An historic district is formed when the sense of the whole is greater than any of its individual parts. On the streetscape—where buildings meet each other and where public/outdoor space meets private/indoor space—the observer can best experience a sense of place, time, and tradition all woven together. The relationships between elements, not just the elements themselves, are essential to understanding the character of the district.

The layering of many elements which forms a rich and cohesive district is illustrated in the following drawings:

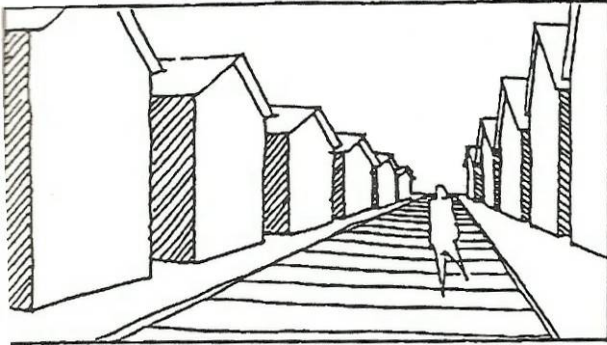
1. *The roadway is a reference line for the individual buildings*



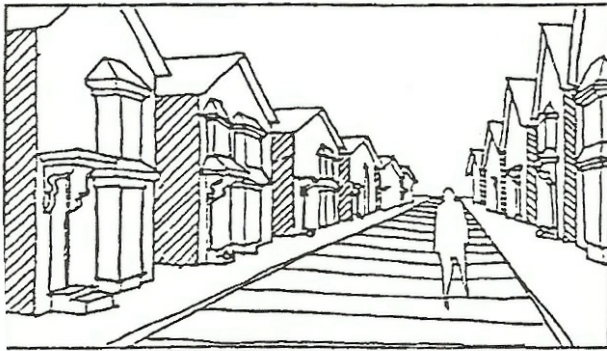
2. *Similar front setbacks and connecting walls, fences, and landscaping form a continuous edge along the street. Up above, similar building heights shape the enclosed space.*



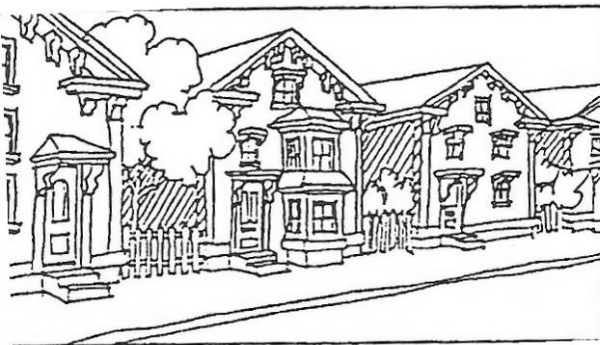
3. *Roofs and cornice lines make an interesting skyline.*



4. *Entrances, porches, and bay windows enliven flat façades, and provide a human-scaled rhythm along the street.*



5. *Layers of other details—corner boards, gable returns, brackets, decorative shingles, window sash and trim—add texture, light, and shadow, and individualize the buildings.*

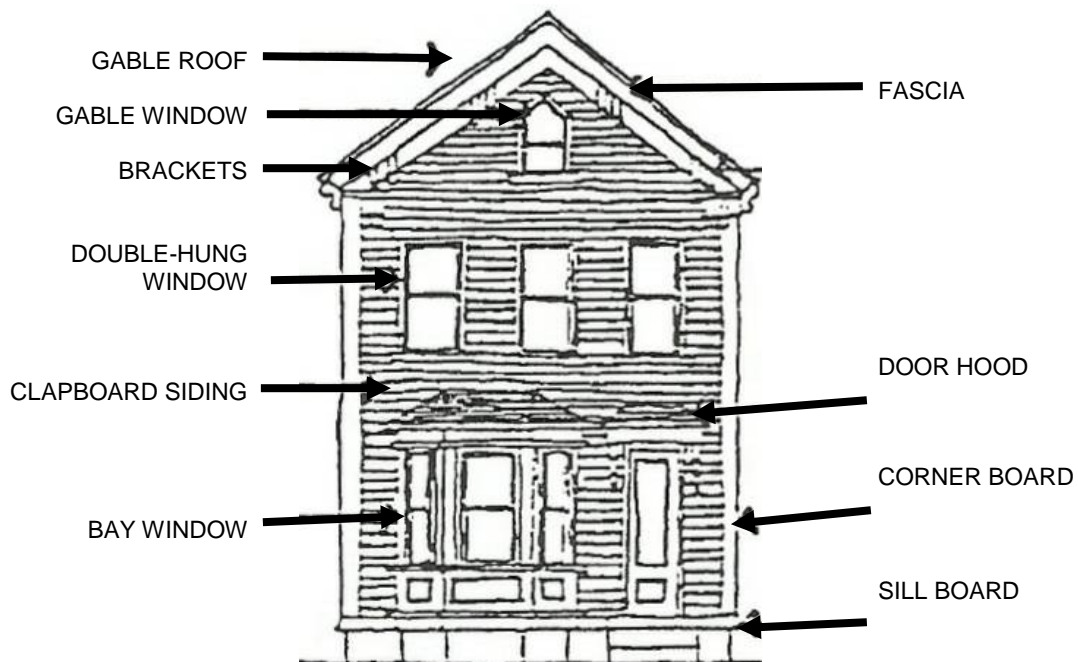


Residential Buildings

Residential buildings form the great majority of structures within the historic district. However, this discussion also applies generally to other buildings such as churches and civic buildings.

Anatomy of an Old House

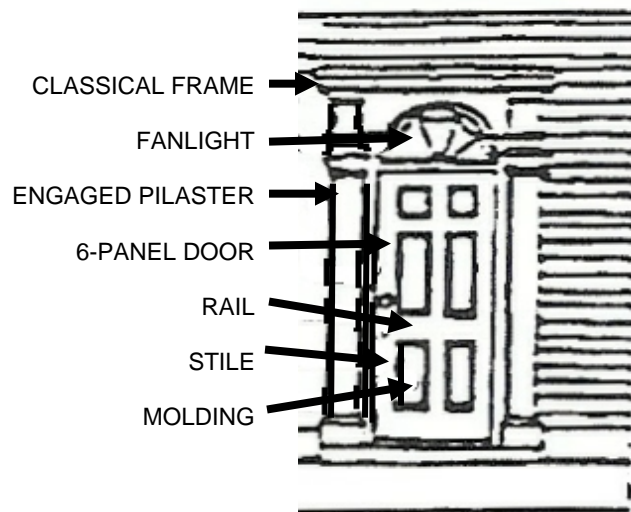
THE FACADE



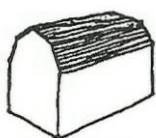
WINDOW PARTS



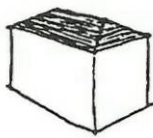
PARTS OF A DOOR



ROOF TYPES



GAMBREL



HIP



GABLE



MANSARD

Identifying Styles

This section is provided as an overview of details, materials, and composition appropriate to particular building styles. The features of any particular style are designed to relate to others within that style, but may not coordinate with those of other styles. Avoid the temptation to “Colonialize” a later building, or conversely, make a modern house out of a valuable antique.

GEORGIAN (circa 1725 – 1790)

Georgian houses were typically built with a shallow-pitched gable or gambrel roof, a symmetrical façade with evenly arranged windows and a central doorway, and a large central chimney (or sometimes two offset chimneys). Windows are tucked up close to the roof eaves.

The classical influence on detailing is evident in small molded cornices over windows and at the tops of walls, and in ornamental door frames, which usually have pilasters (flat, square columns) to either side underneath a molded entablature (horizontal beam) and sometimes a triangular pediment.

There is a Georgian style house on Spring Street.



GREEK REVIVAL (circa 1830 – 1870)

Greek Revival buildings were intended to imitate the simple, severe lines of ancient Greek temples in structural appearance and plan. The basic form of columns supporting a heavy triangular pediment was usually simplified in Hull to flat pilasters and a wide entablature with gable returns. Sometimes matched flatboards were used to imitate smooth stone walls.

The typical Greek Revival style building in Hull has its short gable end facing the street; a low-pitched roof; corner pilasters supporting a high entablature; and an offset doorway which is flanked by floor-length sidelights and often topped by a transom window. The most common door frame has classical pilasters supporting an entablature.

The First Town Hall on Spring Street from 1848 is a perfect example, although modified with the Fire Department hose drying /clock tower.



ITALIANATE (circa 1840 – 1895)

The Italianate style is most easily identified by bracketed eaves and door hoods. Asymmetrical compositions, porches, projecting wings, and bay windows are also typical of the style.

Some Italianate buildings have high-style towers, cupolas, and rusticated façades (smooth wood cut to look like stone blocks), but most local buildings in this style are much less elaborate. Commonly used features include hipped and gabled roofs, asymmetrically placed doorways with bracketed hoods, bay windows, round-headed windows, large trim moldings, and sometimes hoods over the windows, and heavily carved or turned surfaces such as brackets, porch posts, and spindles.

Examples of Italianate in Hull Village are more restrained than high style examples, reflecting Hull's modest status during the period, and mainly feature only some details of the style such as sawn fret-board porch rails, and other porch decorative elements found in columns and brackets as well as "flattened" or "segmented" arch features.

An example of such a style can be found on Main Street.



SECOND EMPIRE [MANSARD] (circa 1855-1885)

Mansard (dual-pitched hipped) roof with dormer windows on steep lower slope; molded cornices normally bound the lower roof slope both above and below; decorative brackets usually present beneath eaves. The Second Empire style was considered very modern, for it imitated the latest French building fashions. The distinctive roof was named for the 17th century French architect Francois Mansart. Exhibitions in Paris in 1855 and 1867 helped to popularize the style in England, from whence it spread to the U.S. The boxy roof line was considered particularly functional because it permitted a full upper story of usable attic space. For this reason the style became popular for the remodeling of earlier buildings as well as for new construction. [Source: Virginia & Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*]

There is a Mansard style house on Spring Street.



QUEEN ANNE (circa 1875 – 1900)

Queen Anne-style designers—the last of the Victorian period—looked for variety and novelty, and often borrowed from other architectural styles. Typical Queen Anne features include very complex silhouettes; richly textured surfaces of clapboards, decorative shingles, and carved panels; balconies, bay windows, porches and towers; and unusually shaped and placed windows, often with stained glass or abstract patterns of panes.

Simple Queen Anne and Italianate cottages in Hull often appear very similar in form. In detail, however, Italianate tends to be more formal; Queen Anne is much more asymmetrical, informal, and eclectic.

There is an example of Queen Anne style on Western Avenue.



SHINGLE STYLE (circa 1880-1900)

The Shingle style does not emphasize decorative detailing at doors, windows, cornices, porches, or on wall surfaces. Instead it aims for the effect of a complex shape enclosed within a smooth surface (the shingled exterior) which unifies the irregular outline of the house, only possible with shingle siding. There are no trim corner boards, shingles are woven or laced at the corners and a curved flare at the lower wall surfaces are common. Decorative detailing when present, is used sparingly. Common features are towers, “Eyebrow” dormers, curved wall shapes, stone lower stories. The style began and reached its highest expression in seaside resorts of the northeastern states, making the Hull examples particularly significant. Shingle houses are relatively uncommon except in coastal New England. [Source: Virginia & Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*]

The John Boyle O'Reilly House (now the Hull Public Library) is an ideal example.



STICK STYLE (circa 1860-1890)

The style is defined primarily by decorative detailing—the characteristic multi-textured wall surfaces and roof trusses whose stickwork faintly mimics the exposed structural members of Medieval half-timbered houses. Varied patterns of wood siding and shingles are applied in the square and triangular spaces created by the stickwork. The style appears to have peaked in the 1880s.

The Methodist Church on Spring Street is a prime example.



COLONIAL REVIVAL (circa 1890 – 1930)

Colonial Revival buildings returned to the simplicity and elegance of the original Georgian architecture, but are recognizable by their much larger scale and freer use of classical detail.

The Colonial Revival style in Hull is characterized by rectangular shapes (sometimes with graceful bow windows), hipped or gambrel roofs, symmetrical façades, and, on the larger buildings, elaborate doorways with columned porches, fanlights, and sidelights. Very simple vernacular buildings in this style may be recognized by their restrained details, symmetrical design, and spacious porches.

There is a Colonial Revival home on Andrew Avenue.



CRAFTSMAN (circa 1905-1930)

Craftsman houses were inspired primarily by the work of the Greene brothers, educated at MIT, who practiced in California. Influences include the English Arts and Crafts movement and interest in Asian wooden architecture. The style was also made popular by the Craftsman movement promoted by Gustav Stickley and many architectural magazines of the day. Many pattern books or completely pre-cut packages of lumber and detailing could be assembled by local labor. Identifying characteristics are only one or one-and-a-half stories with a prominent porch across the front, distinctive and variable detail porch piers, and exposed rafter tails. The style faded rapidly after the mid 1920's but gained a resurgence in the 1980s. [Source: Virginia & Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*]

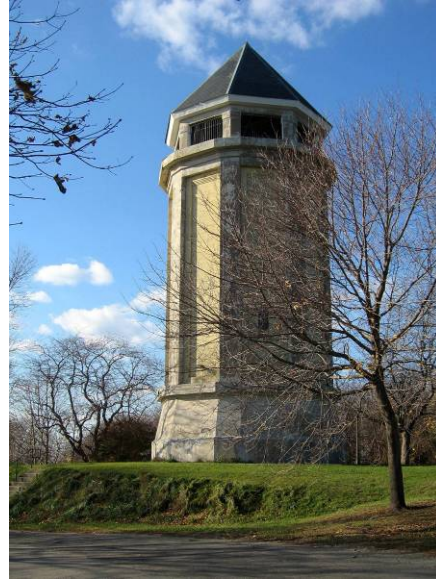
There is a Craftsman style house on Western Avenue:



MISCELLANEOUS & ECLECTIC STYLES TO THE CURRENT DAY



A Swiss Chalet style house on
Vautrinot Avenue



The Fort Revere water tower of 1903
and related military fortifications are a
subject in themselves



A ranch style house on
Mount Pleasant Avenue



A custom-designed
house on Spring Street

Many houses feature elements from different styles. An example would be a Georgian or Greek Revival house which has had a Victorian porch added, or a Mansard roof addition. This was seen as upgrading to a more popular or fashionable style current at the time.

Terms such as Eastlake and Gingerbread actually refer to spindle work or other decorative ornamental detailing rather than a cohesive style.

There are alternative names for some styles such as Bungalow (for Arts and Crafts), and more generic styles such as Folk Victorian.

Virginia and Lee McAlester's book *A Field Guide to American Houses* is the best source for further exploration of architectural styles in Hull Historic District.

Design Guidelines: Existing Buildings

Good Work and Things to Avoid

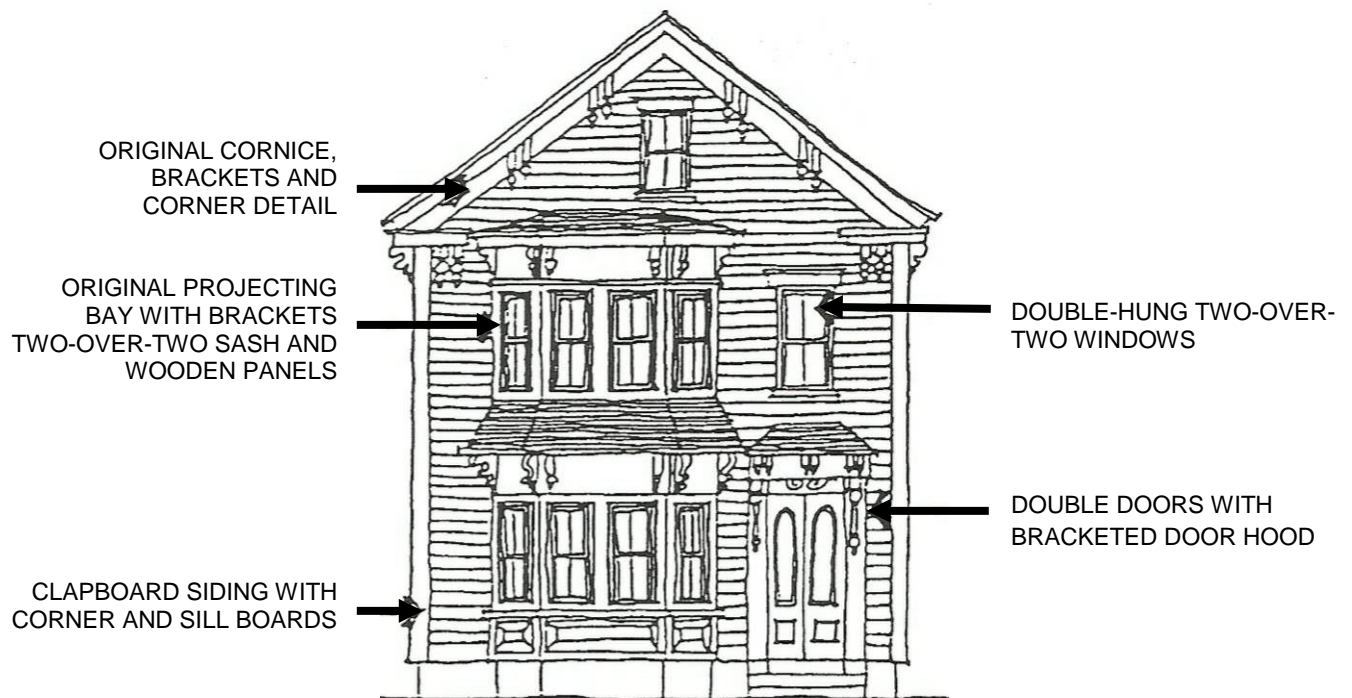
The Façade

Whereas new construction creates its own identity from scratch, renovation work begins with a building that already has a style and character of its own. By understanding the original design and making sympathetic additions or changes, you will improve the value of your home. To make a comfortable fit, the following guidelines should be considered:

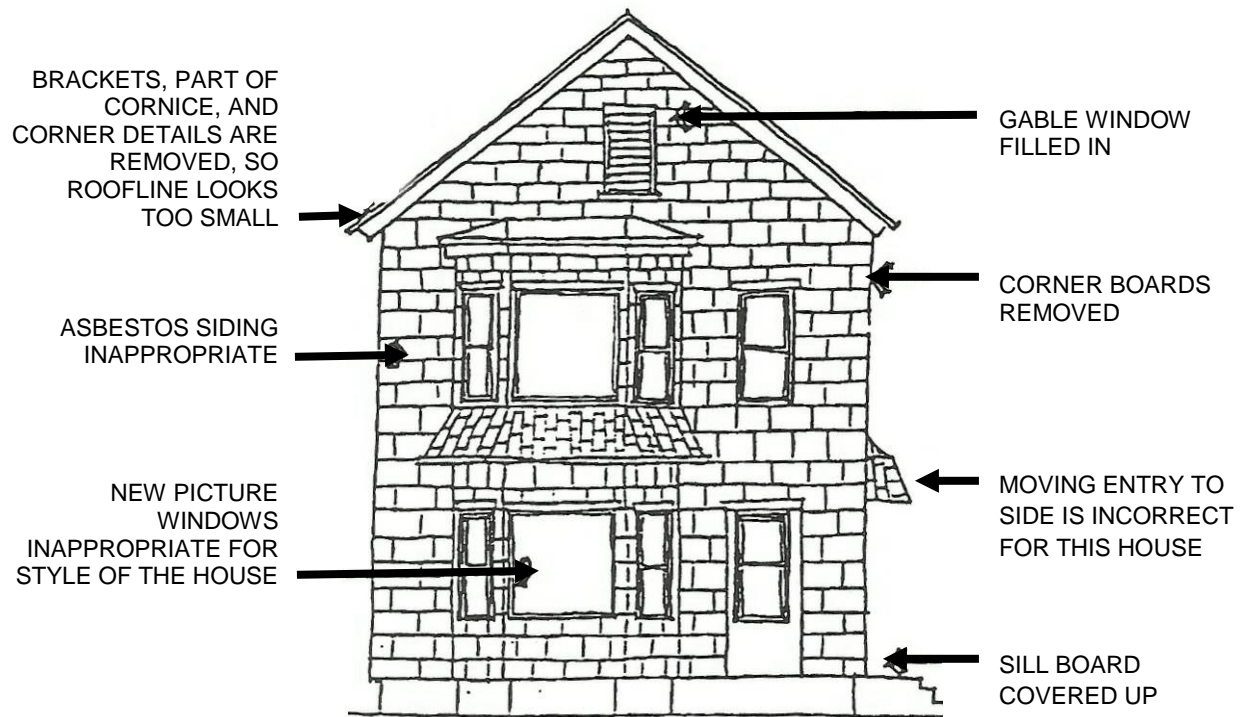
- Any change or addition should respect the original design of the building.
- Save original details and materials. New elements, when necessary, should harmonize with original features.
- Never try to make a building look older or newer than it really is. The result almost always looks artificial.

The following illustrations compare a well-preserved house with the same building inappropriately renovated.

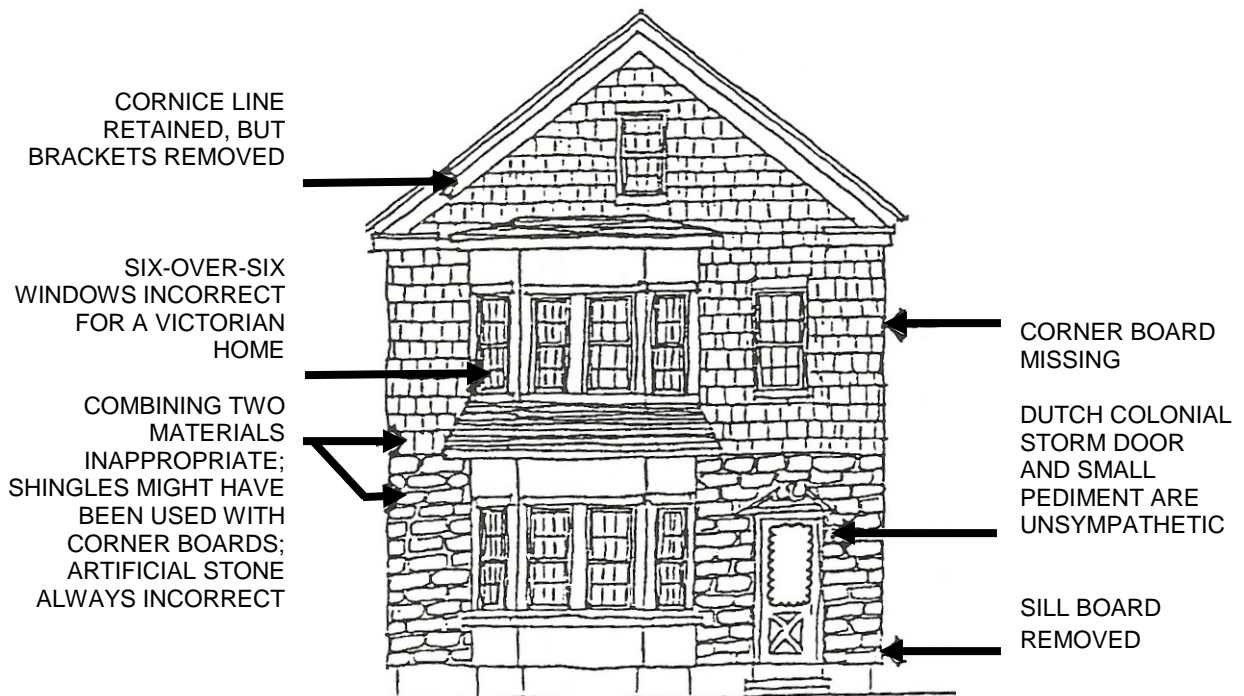
The Well-Preserved House



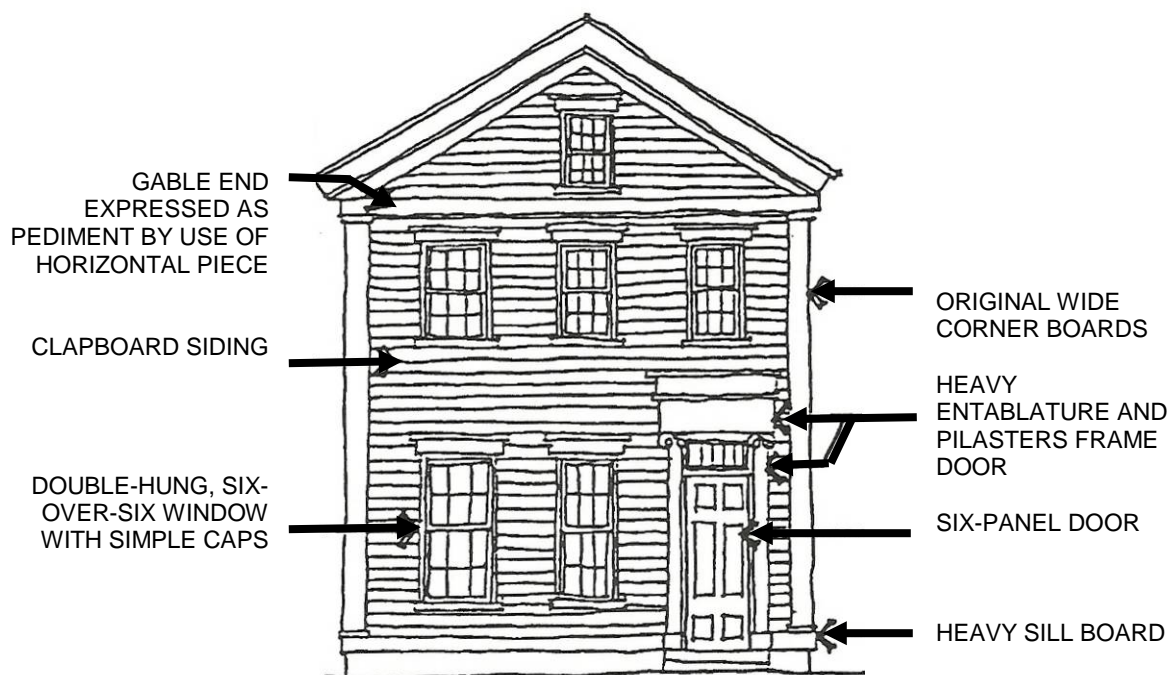
Inappropriate Renovation



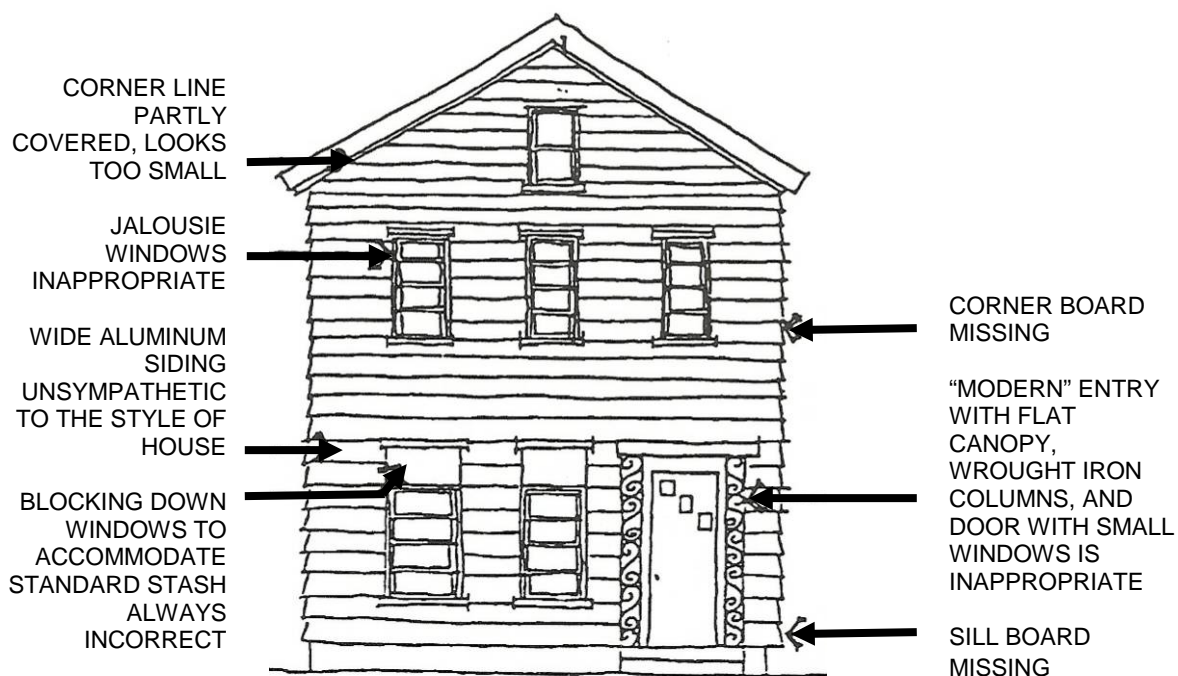
Inappropriate Renovation



The Well-Preserved House



Inappropriate Renovation



Individual Parts I: Siding and Roofing

Siding and roofing, by the sheer area they cover, often provide the dominant impression of a building. Changes to the design and materials of these components must be carefully considered.

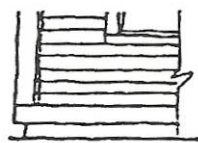
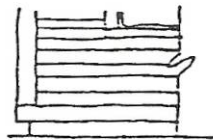
As a rule, nothing looks better than the original building material.

SIDING MATERIALS

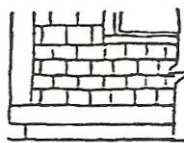
Siding materials that imitate wood, brick, or stone should be avoided, as well as a mixture of siding materials, unless the building was originally designed for them. Historically correct materials are preferred.

Appropriate Materials - ORIGINAL SIDING AND TRIM ARE ALWAYS THE BEST CHOICE

ORIGINAL CLAPBOARDS

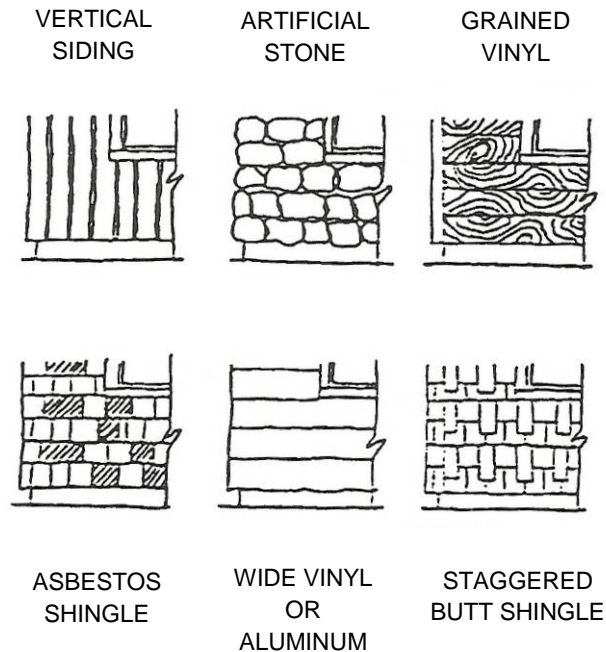


VINYL OR
ALUMINUM
(IN RARE CASES)



SHINGLE

Inappropriate Materials



NEW MASONRY

New masonry should match the existing in color, size, and pattern. Repointing should match the original mortar in color, texture, joint width, and profile. Original brick chimneys (and chimney caps and pots) should be retained.

ROOFING MATERIALS

The same principles apply to roofing materials. The texture and character of a slate roof, for example, cannot be matched by standard new fiberglass shingles.

WOOD GUTTERS

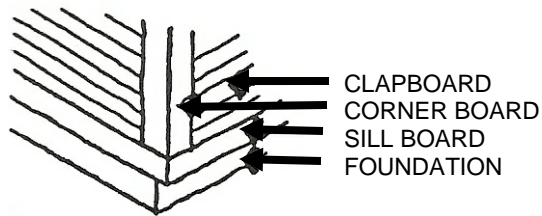
Wood gutters should be retained and repaired; replacements should approximate the size and design of the original.

LEADERS

Leaders (downspouts) should be carefully located and designed to be as unobtrusive as possible, unless they were originally designed as a prominent feature.

When replacing siding, preserve all wall trim—including cornice moldings and molded entablatures at the tops of walls, eave brackets, decoratively carved rake boards along the gable end of the roof, and corner and sill boards.

Appropriate Corner Treatment



Inappropriate Corner Treatment



CORNER BOARD
TOO SMALL, NO
SILL BOARD

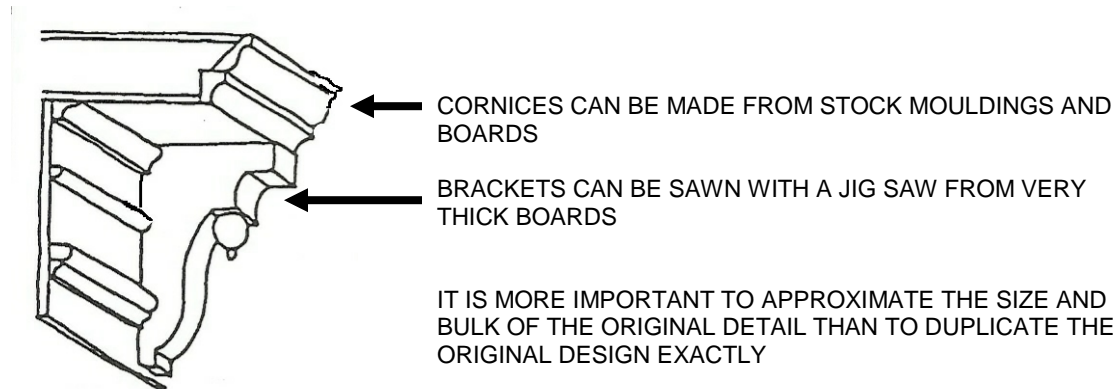


CORNER AND
SILL BOARDS
MISSING

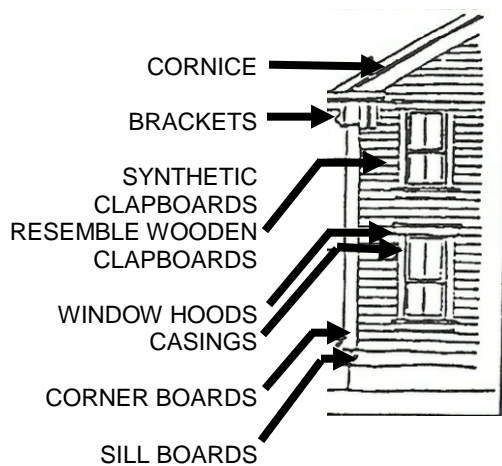
Do not remove fancy moldings and brackets from a building. If these features must be replaced, new pieces should match the existing in material, dimension, and design.

Study the proportions and design of the details in relation to the whole building. If original trim must be replaced, approximate the size and shape of the original detail, keeping it in proportion to the size of the building and other elements. Study the way the feature is made up of smaller parts—compatible replacements can often be built up from stock moldings and lumber.

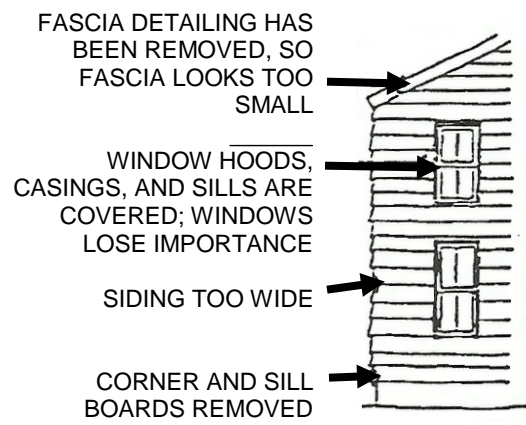
Fabricate a Replacement



Retain Original Details



Avoid Covering Trim



Individual Parts II: Entrances and Porches

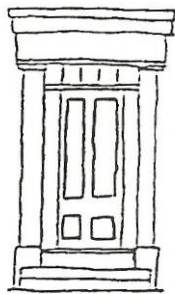
Entrances have a symbolic importance as the transition between inside and outside, and are often the focal point of a house.

DOOR SURROUNDS

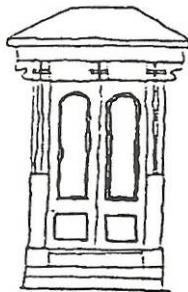
Keep as many of the original features as possible; removing original entryway features often throws the entire design out of balance. New details should be simple, and similar to the original features in proportion and dimension. Don't block down a door opening to lower the height of a door, eliminate a transom, or conceal sidelights.

Avoid stock lumberyard door frames—particularly replacement “Colonial” units, which are usually poor imitations of the original style and craftsmanship.

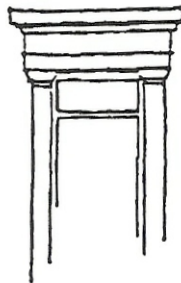
Historic Doorways



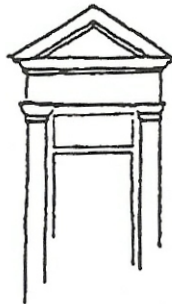
GREEK
REVIVAL



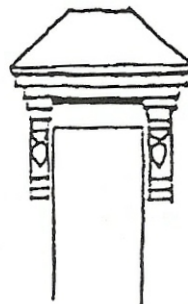
VICTORIAN



ENTABLATURE

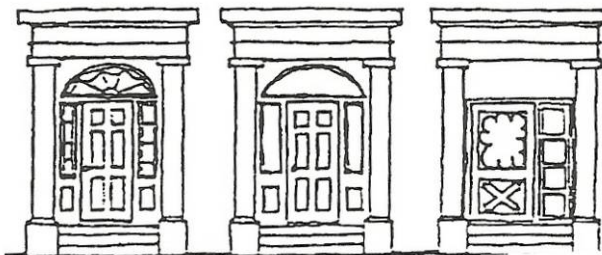


TRIANGULAR
PEDIMENT



BRACKETED
HOOD

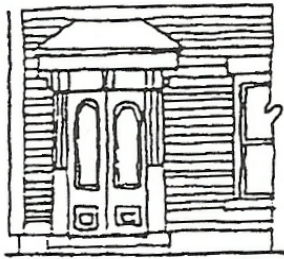
Entry Treatment



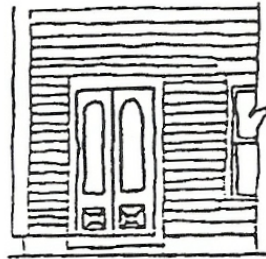
APPROPRIATE

PERHAPS

INAPPROPRIATE



ORIGINAL ENTRY;
WELL BALANCED



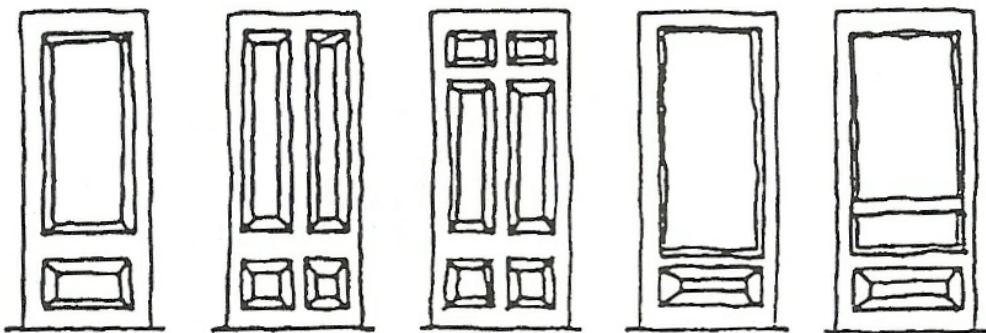
TRIM REMOVED, DOOR LOOKS
OUT OF PROPORTION

DOORS

Keep original doors when possible. If a replacement is necessary, a new or salvaged door in the same style and size as the original is preferable.

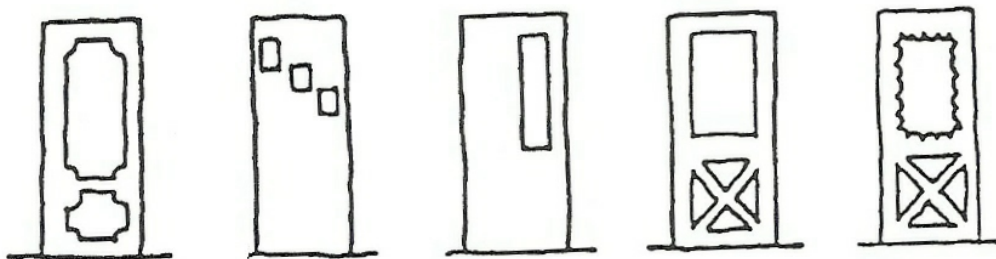
Although storm and screen doors are not subject to HDC review, the wrong choice can easily spoil an important entryway. Storm and screen doors should be as simple as possible and resemble the inner door in type, style, and location of solid panels. Paint storm and screen doors the same color as the main entry door.

Appropriate Doors



PANELED WOODEN DOORS OR WOODEN STORM DOORS ARE APPROPRIATE
DOORS SHOULD BE OF THE ORIGINAL SIZE AND SHOULD BE PAINTED

Inappropriate Doors

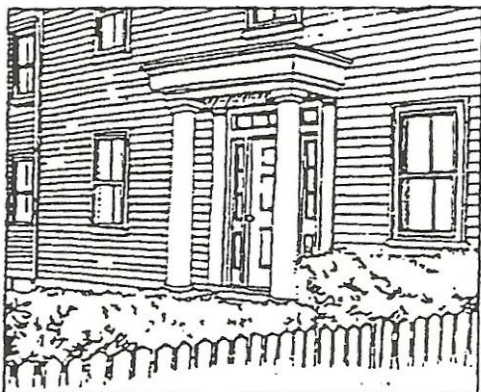


PORCHES

Keep the original posts, columns, brackets, and railings of entry porches. If these elements must be replaced, retain the original material and design.

Modern replacements such as feather “wrought iron” porch supports or stock lumber will do the job structurally, but are out of keeping on an older building.

Original Entry



Inappropriate Replacement



When existing porches are enclosed, don't obscure columns or other existing details.

Individual Parts III: Windows and Blinds

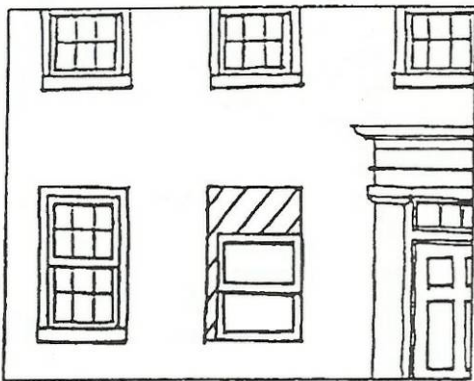
Windows are one of the most important design features of a house, and great care should be taken when repairing, replacing, or adding them.

WINDOWS

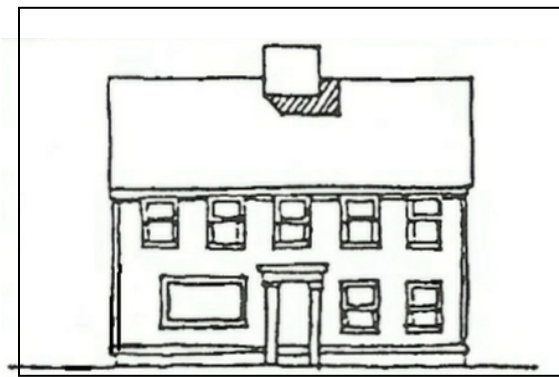
Details to consider include the size and proportion (vertical or horizontal) of the openings; their arrangement across the face of the building; original trim; whether the sash is recessed or flush with the walls; the size and number of lights or panes of glass in each sash; and the use of blinds or shutters.

WINDOW SASHES

New window sashes, when necessary, should keep the same size and proportion as the original opening; don't block down or enlarge original openings. New window sashes should not be divided into smaller or larger number of panes than the original. Resist the temptation to "Colonialize" a house with windows common before it was built, or to modernize with windows unrelated to the balance and proportions of an historic house. Wood is the preferred material for new sashes; snap-in window muntins should be avoided.

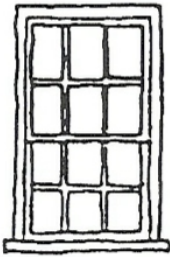


AVOID BLOCKING DOWN

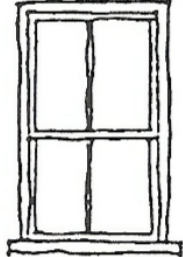


AVOID UPSETTING THE RHYTHM
OF WINDOW OPENINGS

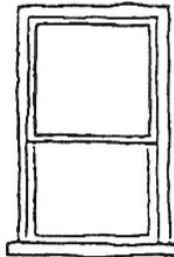
Appropriate Window Sashes



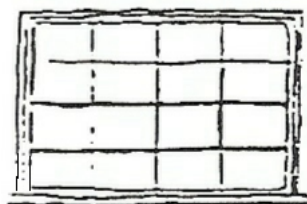
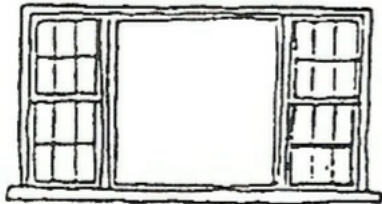
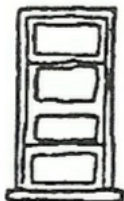
GREEK REVIVAL
BEFORE 1850



VICTORIAN
AFTER 1850

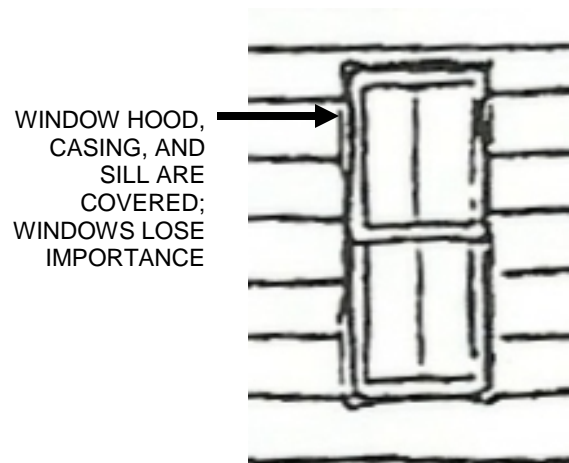
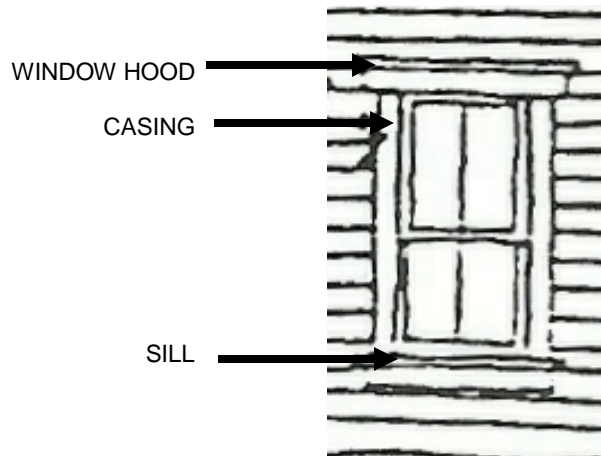


Inappropriate Window Sashes

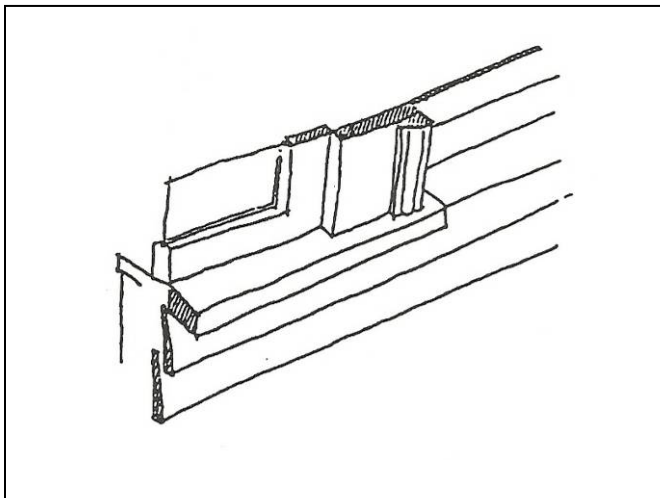


WINDOW TRIM

Original window trim should always be kept on existing windows, and matched on new window openings. Such detail gives a distinctive texture and character to an old building. This is almost always jamb (side) casing of about 5 inches, as well as head (top) casing, and a projecting sill that goes under the jamb casing.



Historic window sashes are typically set back from the plane of the wall, which creates a play of light and shadow typical of old buildings. Many new window units are designed to be more or less flush with the wall plane; if such sashes are necessary, consider using sill extenders, or build up the trim around these windows to give a three-dimensional break between the wall and window sash.



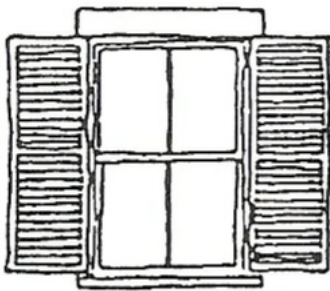
SKYLIGHTS

Skylights should be avoided on roofs visible from the street. New skylights should project less than 6" above the surface of the roof and should be placed at least two feet away from any edges of the roof. Framing elements should be dark and non-reflective.

BLINDS OR SHUTTERS

Blinds or shutters are always an optional feature (what we commonly call "shutters" today were historically referred to as "blinds"). If used, however, shutters should appear to be functional—they should be the same height as the window opening, wide enough to cover the entire window, and fastened to the window casing—not to the wall surface. Wood shutters with horizontal slats are usually the most appropriate design.

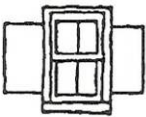
Appropriate Shutters



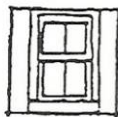
SHUTTERS SHOULD CLOSE
TO COVER THE FULL
WINDOW OPENING

Inappropriate Shutters

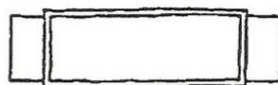
TOO SHORT
AND WIDE



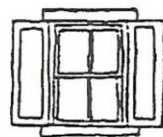
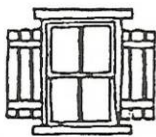
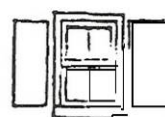
TOO THIN
AND LONG



BLINDS SHOULD COVER
WINDOW WHEN SHUT



MOUNT ON WINDOW
NOT ON WALL



RANCH OR ALUMINUM SHUTTERS
ARE NOT APPROPRIATE

Design Guidelines: New Construction

Good Work and Things to Avoid

New Buildings

Because new buildings contain so many variables, the HDC considers them on a case-by-case basis. A new building need not copy its older neighbors, but it should respect existing patterns of massing, placement relative to the street and to adjacent buildings, arrangement of doorways and windows, and the details that together provide a sense of richly layered design. For general reference, see the sections in these guidelines on Streetscapes and Existing Buildings.

Additions

WINGS, ELLS, and PORCHES

Due to historic lot sizes, buildings in the district typically have narrow front and side setbacks. New additions in the form of wings, ells, and porches therefore most often occur at the rear of the house, away from public view. Because the effect on the streetscape is less critical here, greater design flexibility is usually possible. Each case is unique, but the following general guidelines should be considered.

When an addition is visible from the street, a distinction between old and new should be made. Simple ways to signal the difference include jogging the wall between original and new building component, and making the new massing clearly subsidiary to the original building form.

Treatment of materials, entrances, windows, and details usually should relate to existing patterns. Occasionally, however, more creative interpretations may be approved when the underlying function, technology, and use have clearly changed.

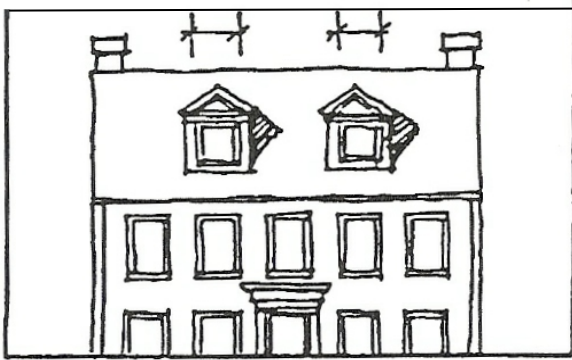
DORMERS

The roof shape is often a hallmark of the building's design, and any changes to this feature will therefore have a dramatic effect.

Raising or lowering the existing roofline is generally unacceptable, except when restoring an original roof profile.

New dormers should be placed in areas away from public view, where possible. Where they are visible, new dormers should be kept small so as not to obscure the original roof shape. Windows should relate to those on the wall below in position, style, and width (but not necessarily height). Look at other buildings in the neighborhood for appropriate historic models.

Well-Proportioned Dormers



Unsympathetic Addition



Design Guidelines: Sitework

Good Work and Things to Avoid

FENCES and WALLS

Fences have traditionally been a significant element in historic neighborhoods. They form the boundary line between public and private spaces, and provide a continuous edge between buildings. Colonial- and Victorian-era fences were often designed to complement the style of the house behind; new fences should also be chosen to harmonize with the style and materials of the house and the street.

Original and early fences should be retained and repaired or restored. New picket fences and iron fences may also be appropriate to an historic district, and can be creatively designed to enhance the streetscape. Modern concrete, concrete block, chain link, barbed wire, metal mesh, post and cable type fences and stockade fences are inappropriate to an older neighborhood.

Fences higher than three feet should be avoided as fences in historic neighborhoods were usually low in height.

PARKING

Accommodating cars is always a challenge in older urban neighborhoods, which were designed for different modes of transportation. Avoid surrounding an historic building with a sea of asphalt—it's unattractive, prevents proper drainage for roof run-off and plantings, and holds heat in summer.

Keep driveways and parking areas to a minimum, and consider using granite or brick pavers.

GRADE CHANGES

Excavation of front yards below the existing grade will generally not be approved, except for small areaways to accommodate existing windows, ventilation, or drainage. Likewise, raising the grade throughout the site or in berms is usually not appropriate.

UTILITIES

New electric panel boxes, air conditioning units, electrical transformers, solar panels and devices, ganged mailbox units, and other mechanical and electrical equipment should be located on sides of the property not visible from the street. If such concealment is impossible, however, these items should be placed to minimize visibility and designed to minimize mass and appearance.

Design Guidelines: Streetscapes

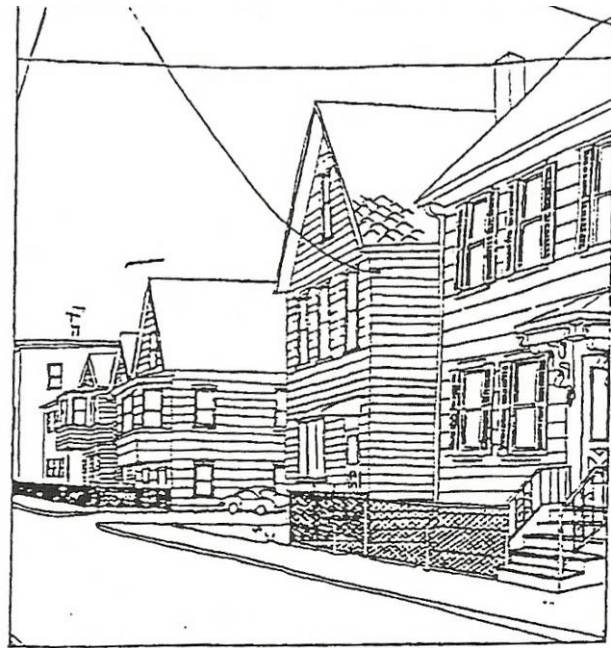
Good Work and Things to Avoid

Reinforcing historic patterns of design, materials, and textures recalls traditional values and craftsmanship and makes the district a much more attractive place for people to live, work, and visit.

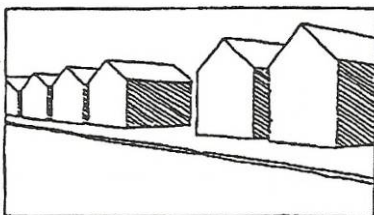
The Well-Preserved Streetscape



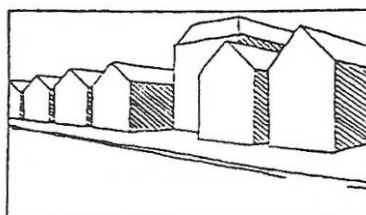
The Same Streetscape Stripped of Its Character



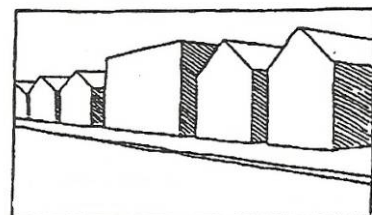
In a cohesive streetscape, usually the major elements—height, setback, massing, roofline—remain similar, while the smaller parts—such as trim details—will show more variety. Radical departures from existing patterns tend to disrupt the quality of the whole streetscape.



A GAP IN THE PATTERN



A CHANGE IN HEIGHT
OR SETBACK



AN UNSYMPATHETIC STRUCTURE

Design Guidelines: New Buildings

Good work and Things to Avoid

New buildings should always be designed to harmonize with the existing character of an area. The commercial district has a distinct urban flavor; individual structures form a continuous row of buildings which face and actually define the streets. When developing plans for a new building, it is always best to think of that structure as one element in a continuous series of similar structures.

Since the new building is actually being fit into a framework comprised of a variety of older buildings, the following considerations should influence its design:

SIZE

A new building should fill the space defined by the adjacent buildings. Vacant lots or small buildings that do not fit their lots disrupt the continuous flow of building façades.

HEIGHT

A new building should respect the continuous roofing formed by neighboring buildings. To do this, the height of the building should not exceed the taller of the two adjacent structures. Similarly, the minimum height should be that of the lower of the two adjacent structures.

FAÇADE RHYTHM

Along a street, the repetition from building to building of similarly positioned door and window openings creates a rhythm which should be repeated on the face of a new building. The floor-to-ceiling height of a new building should correspond to the dimensions on neighboring buildings. Also, on a new building, window and door openings should be positioned similar to those on neighboring structures.

FAÇADE OPENINGS

The combined area of openings on the new façade should be similar to those of the neighboring buildings. Likewise, the proportion of window and door openings should generally be similar to others on the streetscape.

These guidelines in no way preclude developing a contemporary design for new buildings. It is better to make a strong contemporary design than a shallow imitation of an historic style.