



# WINCHESTER HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGN GUIDELINES OWNING PROPERTY IN THE HISTORIC DISTRICT & DESIGN REVIEW

**W**inchester has a wealth of distinctive dwellings and structures in its historic district of approximately forty-five blocks containing 1,242 properties. From the late eighteenth through the early twentieth centuries, Winchester residents created a rich variety of houses, commercial structures and institutional buildings throughout the city and, in particular, in the historic core area. The district follows a gridiron plan and remains a densely built and compact area with many blocks of contiguous rowhouses and commercial structures. A large number of early log and stone structures remain scattered throughout the district. While various structures have been demolished and replaced over the years, many historic structures have been carefully preserved.

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Winchester has long been a leader in historic preservation in the Shenandoah Valley. Preservation of Historic Winchester (PHW), Inc. was founded in 1964 as a local, private non-profit organization to encourage preservation in the district. Among its many programs, PHW has created a nationally acclaimed revolving fund from which monies are used to buy and sell threatened properties. Historic easements and covenants are placed on the properties that are then resold.

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The Greek Revival styled Frederick County Courthouse (above) and the Romanesque Winchester City Hall (below) are two of the most significant structures within the historic district as shown in these historic photographs.



In 1967 the city created its first local historic district, which was expanded in 1976. A handbook was created in 1985 for all property owners within the historic district. The commercial core of the historic district was designated a Virginia Main Street City in 1985, and the Old Town Development Board has played an important role in encouraging the reuse and rehabilitation of many of Winchester's historic commercial buildings.

These guidelines have been developed to provide detailed recommendations to further aid you, the property owner, and the Board of Architectural Review in the ongoing goal of historic preservation in Winchester. The intent of these guidelines is to guide design decisions within the district, not dictate them. These are a set of principles, not a set of strictly followed laws. The BAR and property owners should follow the intent of the guidelines as they continue to work together to preserve the unique and irreplaceable resources of the historic district.

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## UNDERSTANDING YOUR BUILDING: DISTRICT CHARACTER

The Historic Winchester District was created by the City of Winchester. It encompasses the historic core of the city in which each generation has left its mark. The resulting historic district, while architecturally diverse, retains a high degree of cohesion and visual integrity. This district is densely built up and many buildings within it share similar scale, forms, materials and setting. Within this common architectural vocabulary there are several sub-areas.

### CORE AREA: THE LOUDOUN STREET MALL AND SURROUNDING COMMERCIAL STREETS

This downtown area contains a majority of traditional commercial buildings. They are, for the most part, two or three stories in height and have a three-part facade with a cornice, upper floors and storefront. Many are of masonry construction and have a very limited or nonexistent setback, and are attached to the building next to them. Some have had the facade and the storefront remodeled through the years. Several early residences still remain in this sub-area.

### WESTERN EDGE: WASHINGTON STREET AND FAIRMONT AVENUE

Both of these tree-lined corridors contain some of the larger residences in the district and date from the late nineteenth to early twentieth century. Most domestic architectural styles are found in this sub-area where lots are ample and frequently contain large trees and a variety of plantings. Most dwellings have a deep setback from the sidewalk that is occasionally lined with a low stone wall or fence.

### WESTERN CORRIDOR: AMHERST STREET

This corridor extends all the way to the house museum and gardens of Glen Burnie, the property of Winchester's founder, James Wood. Several other large nineteenth-century residences line the street, which also has a large number of noncontributing commercial structures. Closer to downtown there are several blocks of medium-scaled, single-family dwellings on Amherst and neighboring side streets.

### SOUTHERN ENTRY: CAMERON, BRADDOCK AND SOUTH KENT STREETS

This residential neighborhood is characterized by a variety of mostly two-story smaller-scaled rowhouses dating from the late eighteenth through the early twentieth century. While most of the dwellings are frame, log, and stone, brick dwellings also are found in this sub-area. There is a high degree of cohesion in this area with similarly scaled houses containing minimal setbacks, raised basements, and stairs leading to a small entry porch.

### NORTHERN AREA: WEST PICCADILLY AND PEYTON STREETS

Medium-scale brick residences with shallow front yards dominate this sub-area. For the most part, they date from the mid-nineteenth to early twentieth century and many are executed in the American Foursquare style with square-like proportions, two-stories, a hipped roof with a large shed dormer, and a full-width front porch. A smaller number of Federal brick residences dating from early nineteenth century are also found in this area along with several twentieth-century bungalows.

### EASTERN EDGE: KENT STREET CORRIDOR

This border of the district contains a mixture of elements including the Town Run and the CSX railroad line along with several industrial properties. The Kent Street corridor and neighboring Sharp Street contain a variety of small-scale frame vernacular rowhouses interspersed with several newer commercial properties.

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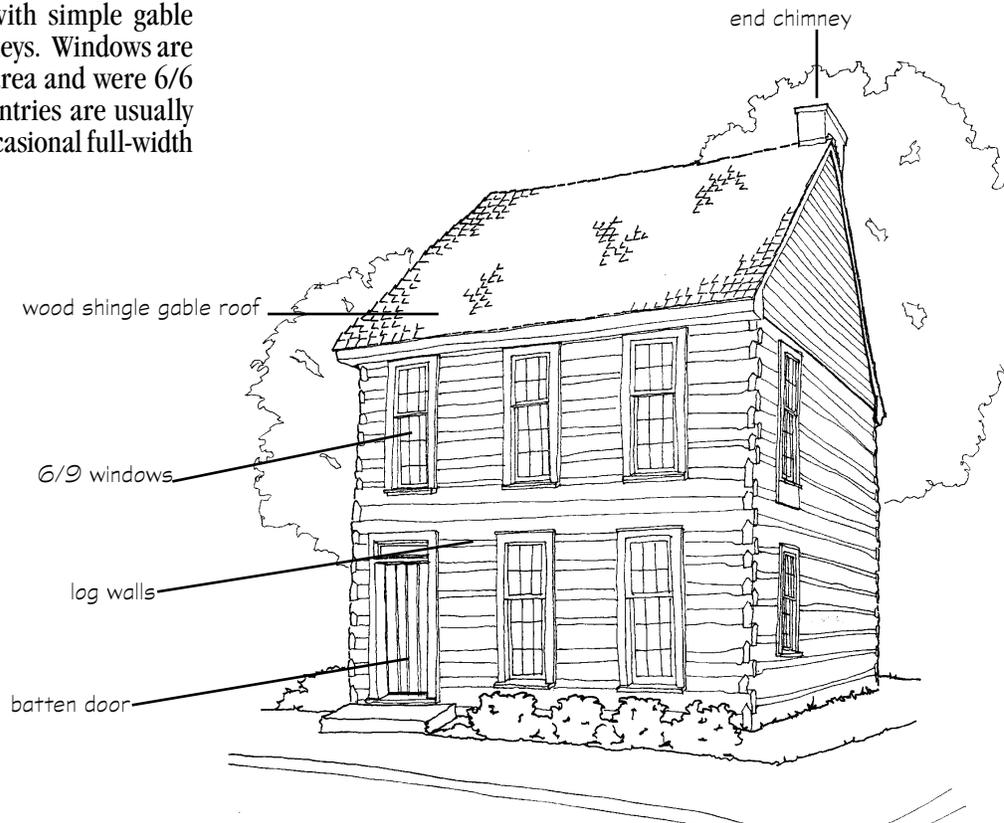
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## ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

The following drawings and photographs illustrate the most common architectural styles in Winchester's historic district. They show the prototype of the style. Many of the buildings are simplified, or vernacular, versions of these more ornate styles. Some buildings exhibit elements from several styles. In other instances the style may be present in individual residences, rowhouses or in commercial structures. The stylistic features identified in these drawings and photographs are examples of the kinds of distinctive elements that should be preserved when you rehabilitate your building. Additional examples of commercial building styles may be found on page 4 of *Brochure 5: Guidelines for Commercial Buildings*.

### LATE 18TH/EARLY 19TH CENTURY VERNACULAR (1790-1820)

Many of the earliest dwellings in Winchester reflect the simple building traditions of the area. Houses were constructed frequently of log and then were clad in wood clapboards. Forms are rectangular with simple gable roofs and tall brick chimneys. Windows are small compared to wall area and were 6/6 or 6/9 paned patterns. Entries are usually small porticos with the occasional full-width porch.



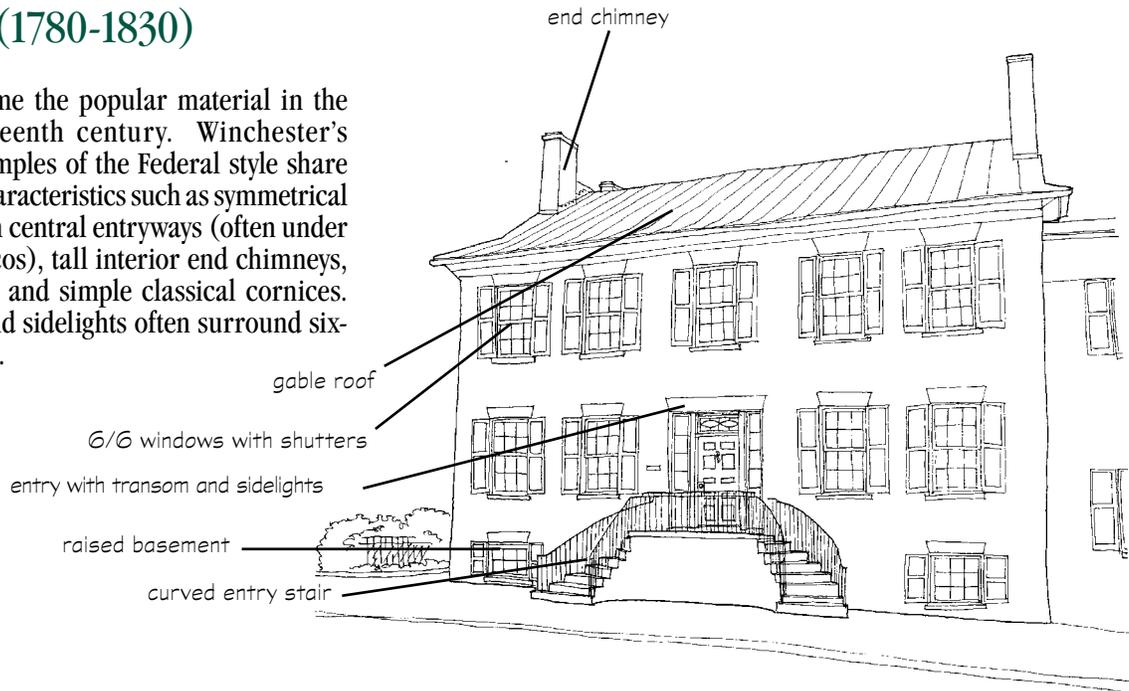
# OWNING PROPERTY IN THE HISTORIC DISTRICT & DESIGN REVIEW

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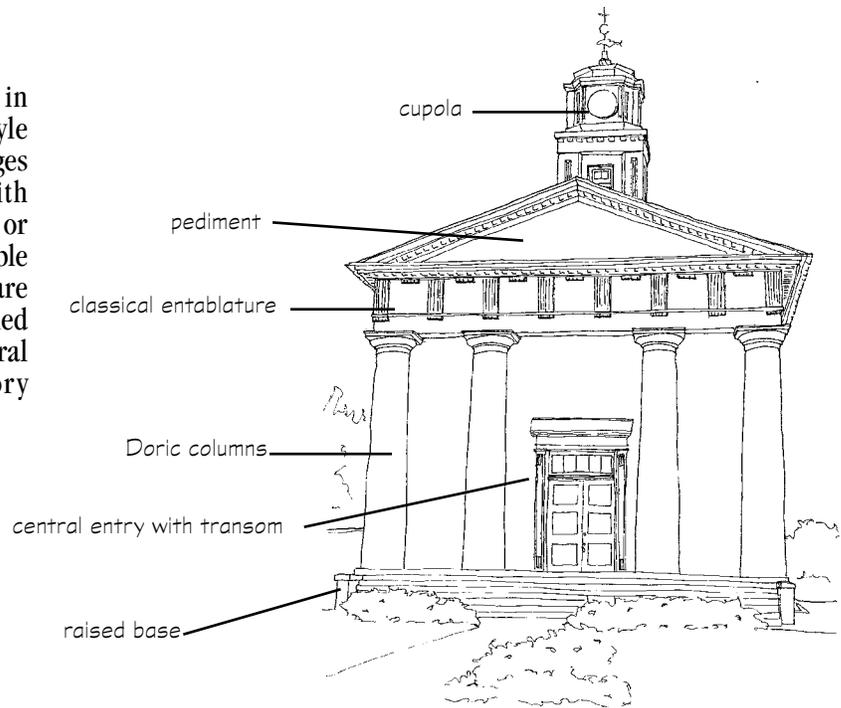
## FEDERAL (1780-1830)

Brick became the popular material in the early nineteenth century. Winchester's several examples of the Federal style share common characteristics such as symmetrical facades with central entryways (often under small porticos), tall interior end chimneys, gable roofs, and simple classical cornices. Fanlights and sidelights often surround six-panel doors. Fanlights and sidelights often surround six-panel doors.



## GREEK REVIVAL (1840-1860)

Although similar to the Federal style in overall appearance, Greek Revival-style structures introduced several new changes including paired windows, often with decorative surrounds. Roofs are hipped or gable and occasionally have a central gable or pediment in the entry bay. Porticos are usually one story and classically designed with pilasters and columns, although several examples have monumental two-story porticos gracing their facades.

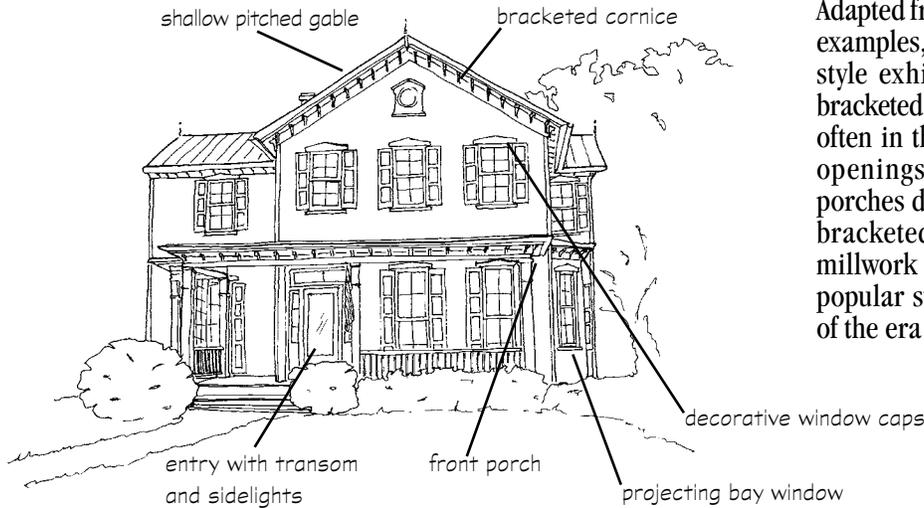


# OWNING PROPERTY IN THE HISTORIC DISTRICT & DESIGN REVIEW

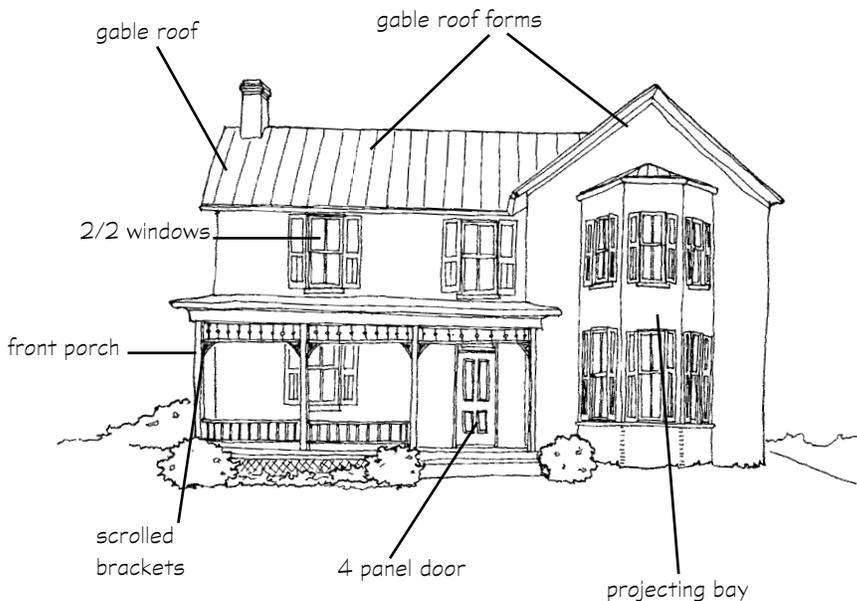
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## ITALIANATE (1860-1890)



Adapted from picturesque Italian residential examples, the Winchester derivation of this style exhibits gable roofs, the trademark bracketed cornice, and decorative brickwork, often in the form of segmental arches over openings. Partial- or full-length front porches dominate facades and usually have bracketed supports, cornices, and sawn millwork balusters. This is one of the most popular styles for commercial architecture of the era and for rowhouses in Winchester.



## FOLK VICTORIAN (1870-1910)

Another of Winchester's dwelling forms, the Folk Victorian, was popular because of its modest cost and simple construction using balloon framing. It had various plans, similar to the Italianate with a central-hall I-house form, an "L" or "T" shaped plan and a side-passage townhouse plan. Wood clapboards (often grooved German siding) sheathe these houses which are covered with metal gable roofs. Decoration is limited to sawn millwork on porches or occasionally in decorative gables or cornices.

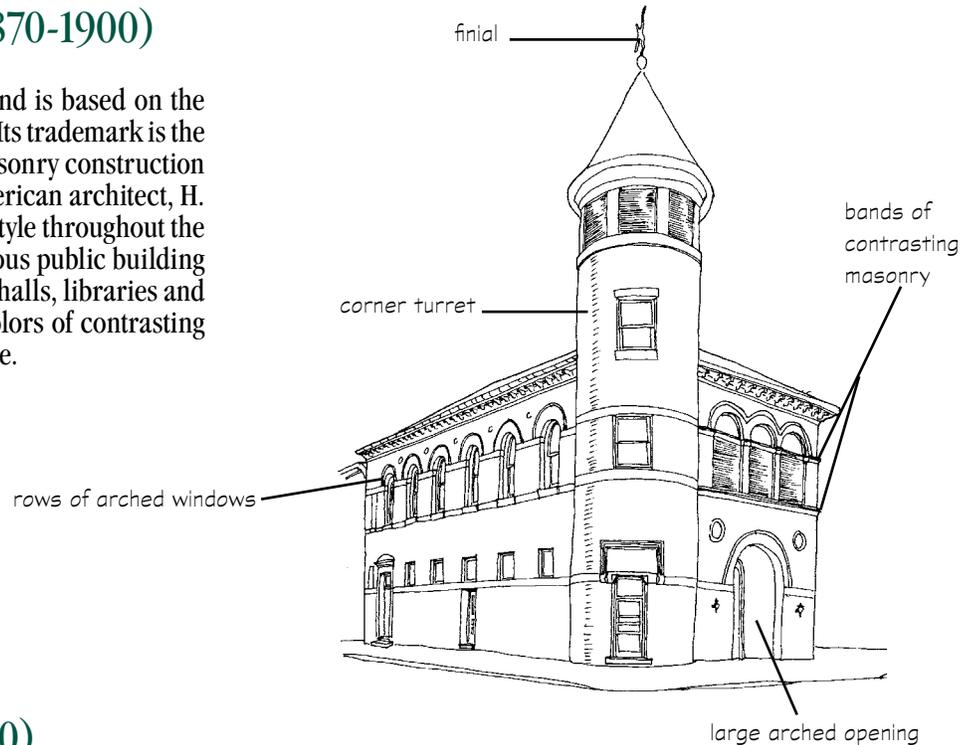
# OWNING PROPERTY IN THE HISTORIC DISTRICT & DESIGN REVIEW

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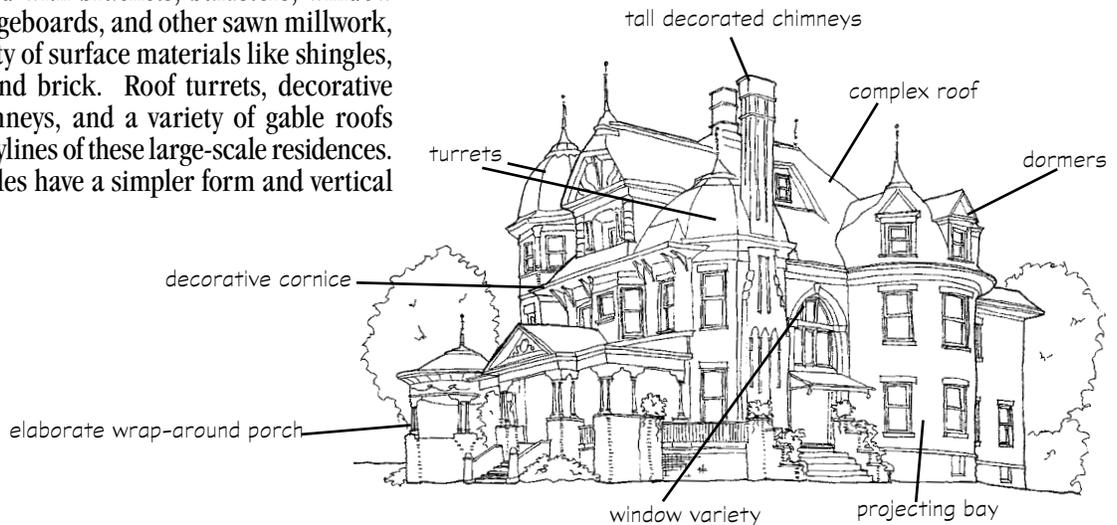
## ROMANESQUE REVIVAL (1870-1900)

This is another romantic style and is based on the architecture of the middle ages. Its trademark is the round arch along with heavy masonry construction similar to medieval castles. American architect, H. H. Richardson popularized the style throughout the country when he used it for various public building projects such as churches, town halls, libraries and post offices. Several types or colors of contrasting masonry help articulate this style.



## QUEEN ANNE (1880-1900)

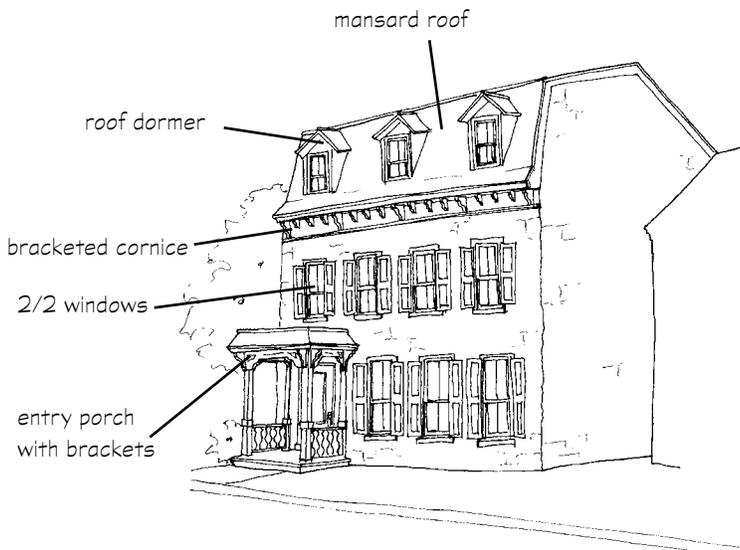
These dwellings, commonly known as “Victorian,” are characterized by a complex roof, vertical proportions, asymmetrical facades, and a wrap-around porch. More elaborate examples are richly decorated with brackets, balusters, window surrounds, bargeboards, and other sawn millwork, and use a variety of surface materials like shingles, wood siding, and brick. Roof turrets, decorative tall brick chimneys, and a variety of gable roofs highlight the skylines of these large-scale residences. Smaller examples have a simpler form and vertical proportions.



# OWNING PROPERTY IN THE HISTORIC DISTRICT & DESIGN REVIEW

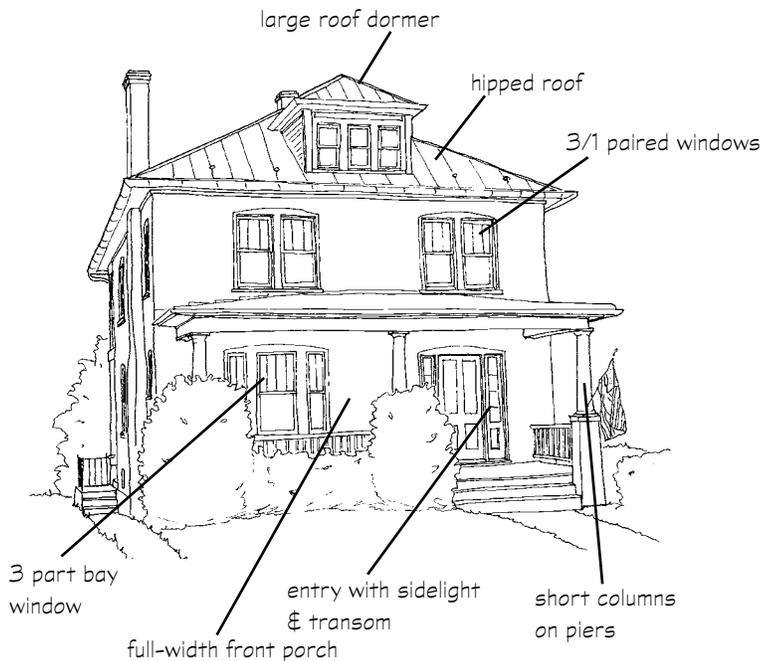
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## FRENCH SECOND EMPIRE OR MANSARD (1870-1900)

This Victorian era style is found in freestanding and rowhouse examples in the historic district. Its most distinguishing feature is its mansard roof, which usually creates another complete level in the dwelling. The roof is frequently covered in slate shingles and may have contrasting patterns and colors. Other typical details include a bracketed cornice and porch, two-over-two windows often crowned with a decorative cap, and a double-door entryway. More elaborate examples may contain a central pavilion tower in the facade.



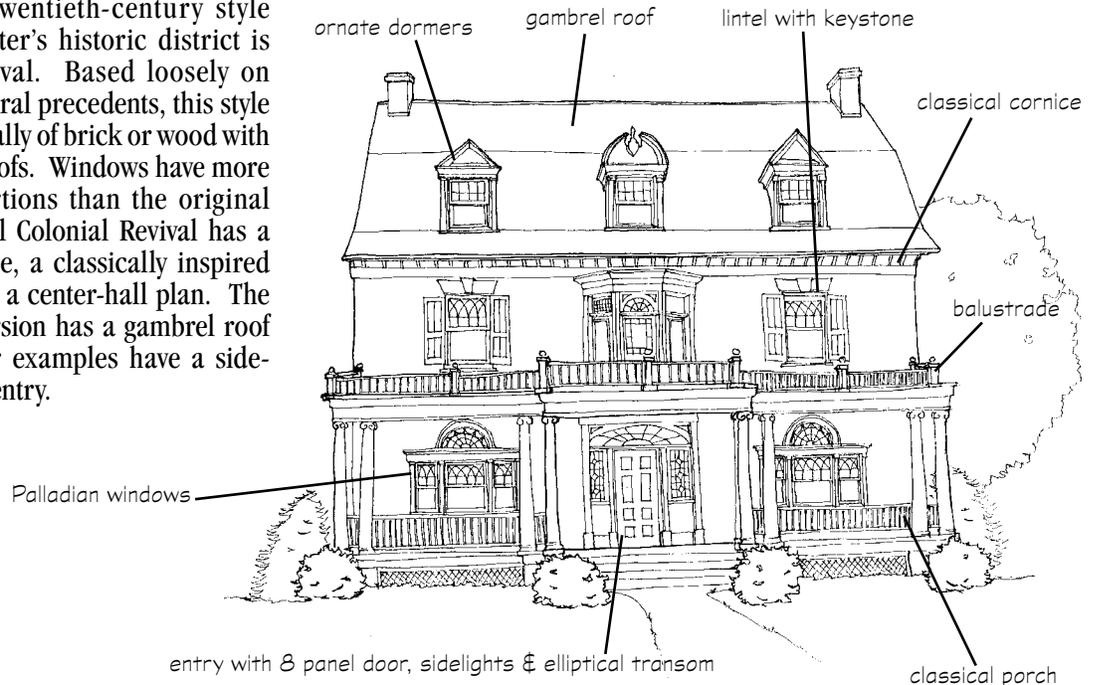
## AMERICAN FOURSQUARE (1900-1930)

Another common form found in Winchester in both large-scale and smaller, simpler versions is the American Foursquare. It has a trademark hipped roof with a deep overhang, a dominant central dormer, and a full-width front porch, often with classical details. Its name comes from its square shape and four-room plan. The exterior materials may be brick, wood or stucco. Some versions of this house were sold in prefabricated form from companies like Sears and Roebuck.

# OWNING PROPERTY IN THE HISTORIC DISTRICT & DESIGN REVIEW

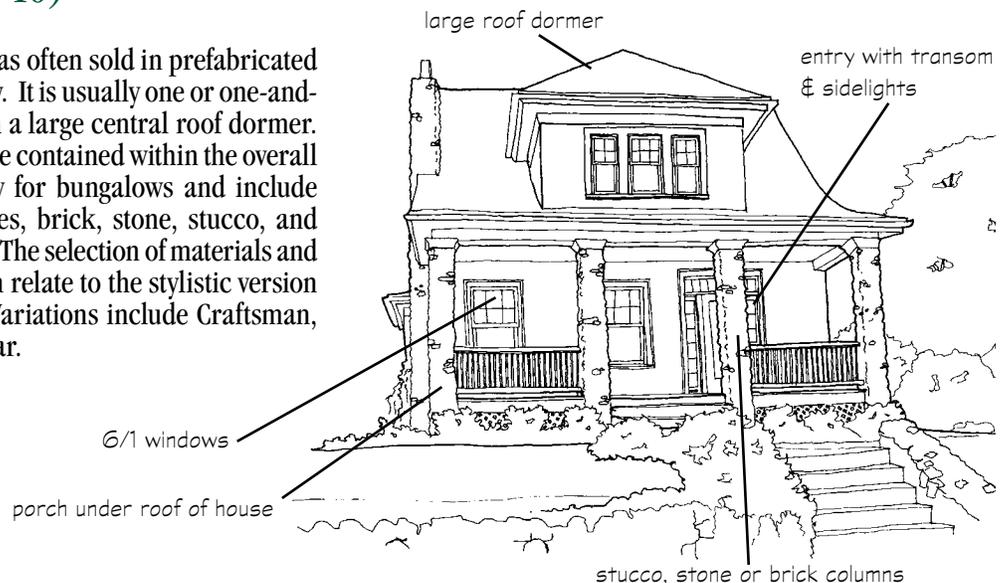
## COLONIAL REVIVAL (1900-1940)

A very popular twentieth-century style found in Winchester's historic district is the Colonial Revival. Based loosely on Georgian and Federal precedents, this style is constructed usually of brick or wood with gable or hipped roofs. Windows have more horizontal proportions than the original styles. The typical Colonial Revival has a symmetrical facade, a classically inspired small portico, and a center-hall plan. The Dutch Colonial version has a gambrel roof and some simpler examples have a side-passage plan and entry.



## BUNGALOW (1920-1940)

Another house form that was often sold in prefabricated packages was the bungalow. It is usually one or one-and-one-half stories, often with a large central roof dormer. Front porches frequently are contained within the overall roof form. Materials vary for bungalows and include wood siding, wood shingles, brick, stone, stucco, and combinations of the above. The selection of materials and the decorative details often relate to the stylistic version of the bungalow design. Variations include Craftsman, Tudor, or simple vernacular.



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## GOING BEFORE THE BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW (BAR)

Winchester has several historic district designations. The local Historic Winchester (HW) District was first created in 1967, and has been expanded over the years. Its boundaries are shown on the map on page 12. This designation by the City Council includes the design review process, which property owners must go through before undertaking work on the exterior of their property, as described below.

While many requests are still reviewed and acted upon the BAR, City Council adopted provisions for the City's Zoning Administrator or Planning Director/designee to approve Certificates of Appropriateness (COA) on an administrative basis.

The National Register of Historic Places Historic District ("The Winchester National Historic District") is different than the local Historic Winchester district. It was designated in 1980 by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources which at the same time put the district on the Virginia Landmarks Register. Both the state and federal listings allow property owners to use state and federal income tax credits for rehabilitation, subject to various regulations. For properties that are situated only within the National District, there is no review by the local BAR. For properties situated within both districts, if a property is making use of state and/or federal rehabilitation tax credits for exterior changes to their property, a certificate of appropriateness can be administratively approved by the Zoning Administrator or designee (no review by the local BAR required unless there are no Federal/State rehabilitation tax credits being used).

Your first step is to determine if you need to go through the design review process and what type of approvals, permits and certificates are needed for your project. Contact the Winchester Planning Department, which takes all applications for the Board of Architectural Review and for Administrative Review.

Minor actions such as routine exterior maintenance may not require a COA. These types of projects, however, may require a building permit, depending on the scope of work. Examples requiring a building permit include window, siding or roof material replacement.

In accordance with section 14-5 of the Winchester Zoning Ordinance, the Zoning Administrator (or designee) may review, and may approve or deny, applications for Certificates of Appropriateness.

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Definition of Principal Elevations - a side of a building or structure facing a public street (see diagram):

- Front elevation
- Corner Side (for structures on corner lots)

Definition Non-Principal Elevations - a side of a building or structure that does not face a public street (see diagram):

- Sides (except corner sides) - see diagram below
- Rear elevation - Rear of building or structure that does not face a public street (see diagram)

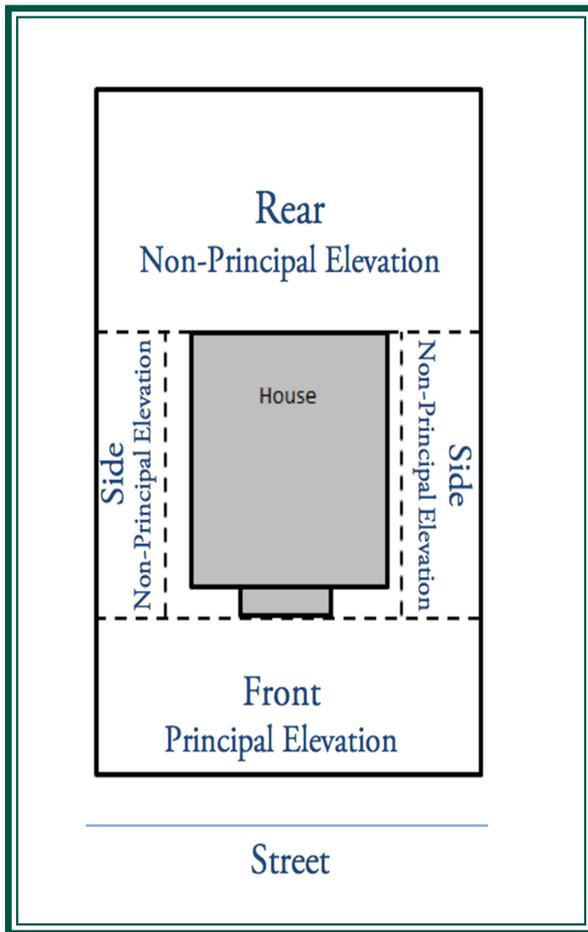


Diagram defining principal elevations (non-corner lot)

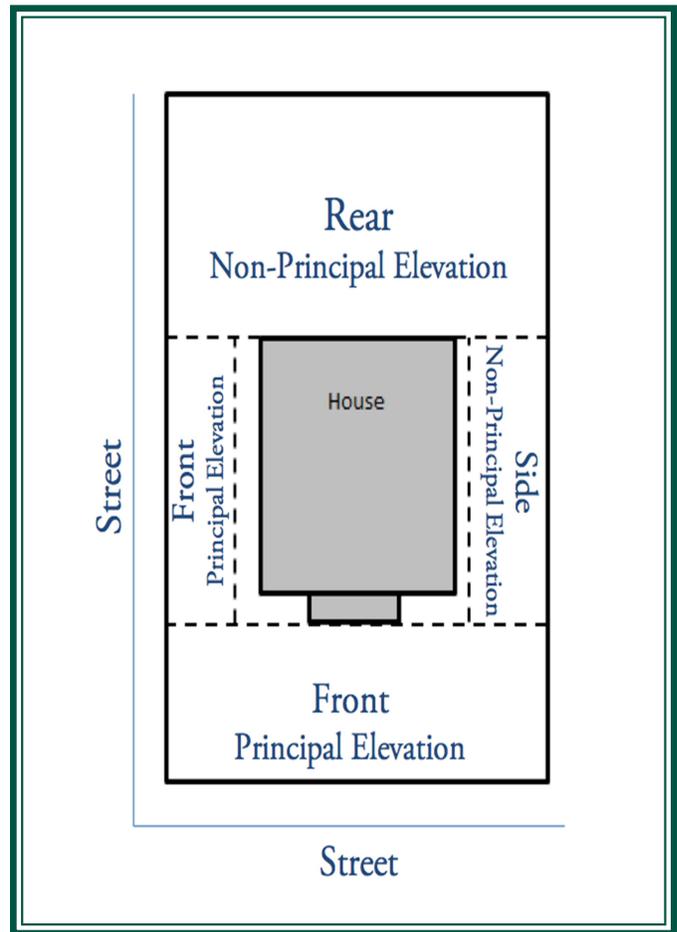


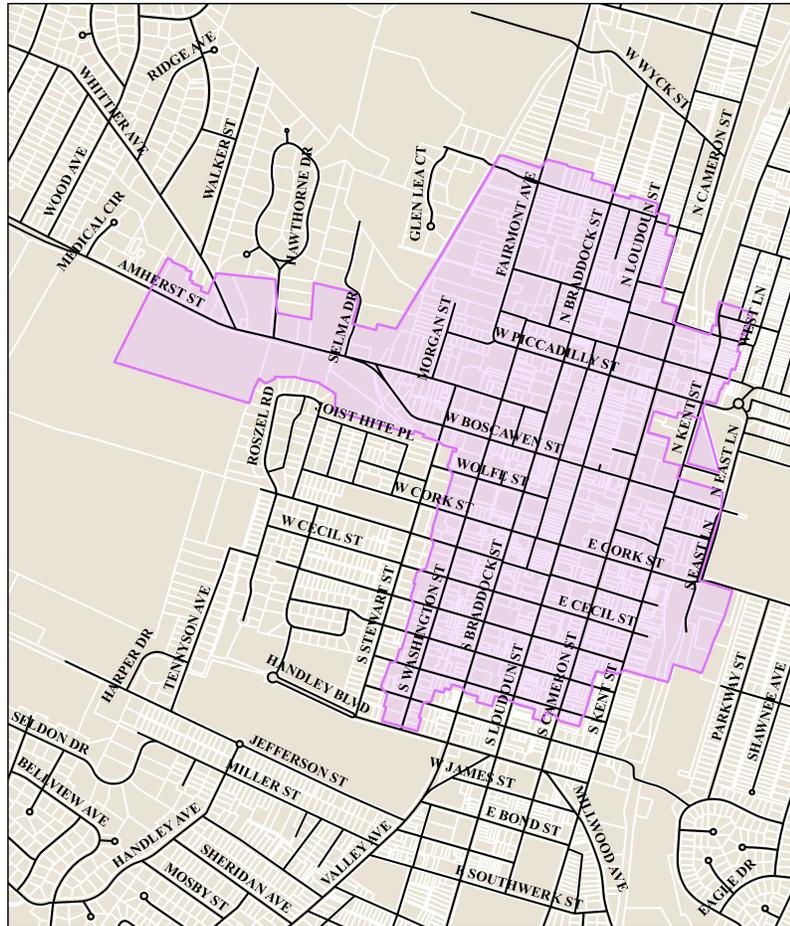
Diagram defining principal elevations (corner lots)

## MAINTENANCE

If a project consists of the repair or maintenance of an existing exterior element of any building or structure in the Historic Winchester District, so long as there is no change in the form or materials, no Certificate of Appropriateness is required.

# OWNING PROPERTY IN THE HISTORIC DISTRICT & DESIGN REVIEW

## Historic Winchester District (Local)



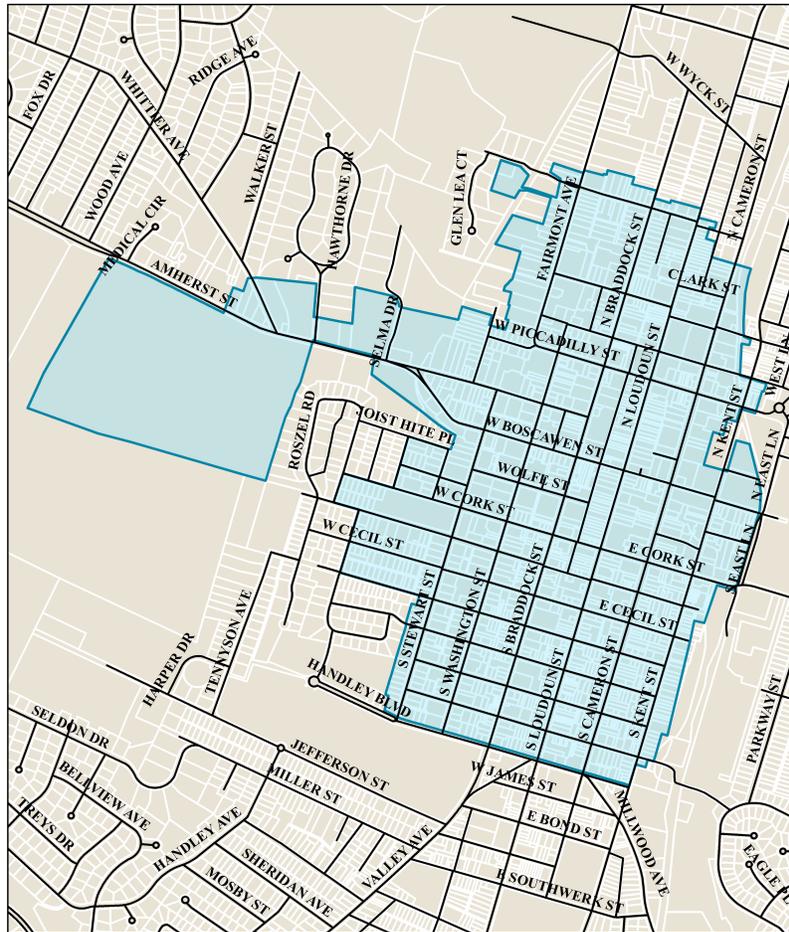
NOTE: See City Code Section 25-1 for the definition of the Primary and Secondary downtown assesment districts. Properties at exterior corners of terminal intersections are not within the secondary district per City Code definition.

Please reference this for specific guidelines for the properties located in these assesment districts. A map of the downtown assesment districts is available in the Planning Department.

# OWNING PROPERTY IN THE HISTORIC DISTRICT & DESIGN REVIEW

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## Winchester Historic District (National Register of Historic Places)



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## WINCHESTER HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGN GUIDELINES

# OWNING PROPERTY IN THE HISTORIC DISTRICT & DESIGN REVIEW

Three Levels of Historic District Designation Compared

The National Register Historic District and the Virginia Landmarks Register District are two of the three types of historic district designations. The third type of historic district is the *local* historic district. The City of Winchester has adopted regulations and established a local historic district. There are no additional local regulations associated with National or Virginia Landmarks Register districts. This chart contains comparative information on the three types of historic districts.

	<b>National Register of Historic Places</b>	<b>Virginia Landmarks Register</b>	<b>Local Historic District</b>
<b>Essential Character</b>	Honorific Educational	Honorific Educational	Regulatory Local Overlay Zoning
<b>Restrictions on Property Rights</b>	Some interior and exterior restrictions if Federal tax credits used.  Changes to the property may affect its eligibility as a contributing structure to the district.	Some interior and exterior restrictions if State rehab tax credits used.  Changes to the property may affect its eligibility as a contributing structure to the district.	Some restrictions pertaining to exterior alterations.  Requirements for exterior changes are defined by Article 14 of the Winchester Zoning Ordinance.
<b>Controlling Authority</b>	National Park Service (NPS)/Keeper of Register State Review Board	Virginia Department of Historic Resources (VDHR)/Historic Resources Board	Board of Architecture Review (BAR)  City Council (who appoints members to the BAR and decides appeals of BAR decisions)
<b>Criteria for Designation</b>	Established by federal law and NPS regulations.	Established by <i>Code of Virginia</i> and VDHR regulations.	Established by a local ordinance of local government.
<b>Benefits</b>	Encourages preservation of the district.  National recognition/prestige.  Eligible for plaque. Federal investment tax credits for rehabilitation may apply.  Federal agencies whose projects affect a listed property must give the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation an opportunity to comment on the project and its effects on the property.	Encourages preservation of the district.  Statewide recognition/prestige.  Eligible for plaque.  Opens door to state rehab tax credits.	Maintains character of district.  Protects investment.  Local recognition/prestige.  Plaques may be offered.  May be linked to 10-year local real estate tax abatements.

# OWNING PROPERTY IN THE HISTORIC DISTRICT & DESIGN REVIEW

Three Levels of Historic District Designation Compared

<b>Rights of Owners</b>	Designation requires consent of majority of property owners.	Designation requires consent of majority of property owners	Public hearings held before Designation by means of a local Zoning Map amendment.  Owner may appeal BAR decisions to City Council.
<b>Boundary Definition</b>	Drawn to include greatest number of resources that contribute to district.  Can include non-contributing resources.	Drawn to include greatest number of resources that contribute to district.  Can include non-contributing resources.	Local designation is independent of National Register or Virginia Landmarks Register designation.  Boundaries of a local district can differ from national and state historic district boundaries.
<b>Restrictions on Sale of Property</b>	No disclosure required.	No disclosure required.	No disclosure required. Purchasers are advised to exercise whatever due diligence a particular purchaser deems necessary with respect to any historic district designated by the locality pursuant to State Codes section 15.2-2306, including review of any local ordinance creating such district or any official map adopted by the locality depicting historic districts, in accordance with terms and conditions as may be contained in the real estate purchase contract, but in any event, prior to settlement on a parcel of residential real property.
<b>Effect of Designation on Property Values</b>	Some evidence that it serves to maintain property values.  No evidence that it serves to decrease property values.	Some evidence that it serves to maintain property values.  No evidence that it serves to decrease property values.	Some evidence that it serves to maintain property values.  No evidence that it serves to decrease property values.

(Information provided by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources)

# OWNING PROPERTY IN THE HISTORIC DISTRICT & DESIGN REVIEW

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## WHAT TO SUBMIT

The Board of Architectural Review must receive enough information on which to base its decision. You will need to fill out an application provided by the Winchester Planning Department. In addition, you will be requested to provide photographs, scaled drawings and plans or other documentation, as required by the board. These submissions do not have to be prepared by professionals, but must be prepared in such a way as to be easily understood by the board members. The application spells out the requirements for each type of submission. There may be other types of permits or approvals required, depending on the type of work involved. Examples could include zoning, sign permits, asbestos removal, etc. You are expected to be present at the BAR meeting to present your request and answer any questions that the board members may have.

### PROJECT CHECKLIST

1. Look at your building to determine its style, age, and the elements that help define its special character. The previous section, "Architectural Styles" should be helpful.
2. Rehabilitation projects within Winchester's National Historic District may qualify for federal and state tax credits as well as for local tax abatement and loan programs. Your property may also be located in the Winchester Enterprise Zone and could qualify you for local incentives and tools if your project involves real estate development, business expansion, and job growth in targeted areas of the City. All of these incentives have different requirements. Check with the Winchester Planning Department, the Old Town Winchester office, the office of the Commissioner of the Revenue, the office of the Development Services Director, or the Northern Regional Office of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources to see if your project qualifies for these special financial incentives.
3. Check the zoning ordinance to make sure that your planned use is allowed. If you are changing the use or working outside of the existing walls, you may need to rezone your property or secure a site plan approval or secure a variance from the zoning regulations.
4. Chances are you will need a building permit. Become familiar with the local building code as it applies to historic buildings and meet with your building inspector early on about your plans.
5. Seek advice on technical preservation issues from the City Planning Department, the Northern Regional Office of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources or Preservation of Historic Winchester, Inc.
6. Use contractors with prior successful experience in working with historic buildings and materials. Some tasks, such as re-pointing or cleaning historic masonry, require special knowledge, techniques, and methods. Check with Preservation of Historic Winchester, Inc. or the Northern Regional Office of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources for potential names of such contractors.
7. If your project is complicated or large scale, you should strongly consider employing an architect experienced in working with historic buildings.
8. Review the following Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. These ten standards **must** be followed if you are using federal and/or state tax credits. The BAR also follows these standards and the guidelines when reviewing applications for Certificates of Appropriateness involving rehabilitation.

## THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION

The guidelines in this publication are based on The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings. They express a basic rehabilitation credo of "retain, repair, and replace." In other words, do not remove a historic element, do not replace an element if it can be repaired, and replace an element that has been removed or cannot be repaired.

First developed in 1979 and most recently revised in 1995, these guidelines have been continually expanded and refined. They are used by the National Park Service to determine if the rehabilitation of a historic building has been undertaken in a manner that is sensitive to its historic integrity. The guidelines are very broad by nature since they apply to the rehabilitation of any contributing building in any historic district throughout the United States.

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 architectural features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature should match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing architectural features must 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 archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If these 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.

# OWNING PROPERTY IN THE HISTORIC DISTRICT & DESIGN REVIEW

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## LIST OF ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND ORGANIZATIONS

Winchester Planning Department  
15 North Cameron Street  
Winchester, VA 22601  
Phone: (540) 667-1815  
E-mail: [plngdept@winchesterva.gov](mailto:plngdept@winchesterva.gov)

Preservation of Historic Winchester  
530 Amherst Street  
Winchester, VA 22601  
Phone: (540) 667-3577  
E-mail: [phwinc.org@gmail.com](mailto:phwinc.org@gmail.com)

Northern Regional Office of DHR  
P.O. Box 519  
5357 Main Street  
Stephens City, VA 22655  
Phone: (540) 868-7029

Winchester-Frederick County Historical Society  
1340 S. Pleasant Valley Road  
Winchester, VA 22601  
Phone: (540) 662-6550

Handley Library Archives  
P.O. Box 58  
100 West Piccadilly St.  
Winchester, VA 22604  
Phone: (540) 662-9041  
Email: [archives@handleyregional.org](mailto:archives@handleyregional.org)

Technical Preservation Services Online Education:  
A number of interactive websites hosted by the Technical Preservation Services of the National Park Service cover topics including moisture, maintenance, rehabilitation and tax incentives.

Website: [www.nps.gov/tps/](http://www.nps.gov/tps/)

National Alliance of Preservation Commissions:  
The NAPC is a private, non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation that builds strong local preservation programs through education, training, and advocacy.

Website <https://napcommissions.org/>

National Trust for Historic Preservation:  
The National Trust for Historic Preservation, chartered by Congress in 1949, is a private, nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting historic resources. It works to save historic buildings, and the neighborhoods and landscapes they anchor through education and advocacy.

Website: [www.preservationnation.org/](http://www.preservationnation.org/)

National Trust Main Street Center  
Provides information and resources on the Main Street program of downtown revitalization through historic preservation and economic development.

Website: [www.mainstreet.org/](http://www.mainstreet.org/)

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## LIST OF ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND ORGANIZATIONS CONTINUED

### Old House Journal Online

The OHJ online offers practical advice publications, forums, historic house plans and a restoration directory.

Website: [www.oldhousejournal.com](http://www.oldhousejournal.com)

### Preservation Trades Network

It provides a much needed opportunity for both experienced and novice members of the preservation trades community to exchange experiences, skills, and ideas.

Website: [www.ptn.org/](http://www.ptn.org/)

### Traditional Building Magazine Online

This website is a gateway to leading suppliers of traditionally styled products and related services. These products are appropriate for restoration and renovation of older structures - as well as traditionally styled new buildings.

Website: [www.traditional-building.com/](http://www.traditional-building.com/)

### Historic Colors Guide

Compiled by PHW, this guide provides Historic District property owners a reference to what colors are recommended for certain ages and architectural styles of buildings. The BAR does not have a fixed color palette that owners must choose from.

This publication has been financed with Federal Funds from the National Park Service, U. S. Department of the Interior through the Certified Local Government Program administered by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources. However, the contents and opinions do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Department of the Interior, nor does the mention of any trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation by the Department of the Interior.

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Steps leading to Conrad House were demolished to construct a parking lot in front of Judicial Center.

## WINCHESTER HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGN GUIDELINES SITE DESIGN

**T**he character of Winchester's Historic District is made up, not only of architecture, but also of the site that surrounds the building. While many of the following site elements currently do not come under BAR review, much of the distinctive quality of the residential areas of the district comes from the landscaped borders, foundation plantings, tall shade trees, spacious lawns and colorful flower beds. Outbuildings, walks, lighting, driveways, and parking areas also all play an important part in defining the setting for individual properties.

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There are a variety of significant historic site elements still remaining within the historic district. The majority of such features include limestone and brick walls, wrought iron and wood picket fences and some historic paving materials.

For these reasons, site design guidelines are addressed in this brochure and apply to both new construction and rehabilitation. These guidelines also apply to commercial buildings and rowhouses; however, their designs often result in a lack of significant site elements since the building covers so much of the lot.

# SITE DESIGN

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## SETBACK

Setback is the distance between the building wall and the property line or right-of-way boundary at the front of the lot. Setbacks in Winchester's Historic District vary greatly according to the subareas and streets. In most instances, the length of the setback relates to the size of the lot and house and increases as they do. On some of the residential streets, such as Fairmont Avenue and Washington Street, the lots are quite large and the dwellings have a deep set back. In other cases, such as the residential areas of Cameron Street and the commercial buildings on the mall, the setback ranges from several feet to none at all.

- Locate new construction between 85 and 115 percent of the average front setback distance from the street established by the existing adjacent historic structures. If all of the buildings in the block have similar setbacks, respect that line.



*This row of American Foursquare styled houses all share the same setback*



*While the architectural styles, size and shapes of these houses vary, they all have the same setback.*

## SPACING

Spacing refers to the side yard distances between buildings. As with setback, spacing in Winchester's Historic District depends on the sub-area and there are three general sizes of spacing as already noted: large dwellings on large lots with ample spacing between structures; medium and smaller scaled houses which are relatively close together; and commercial buildings and rowhouses where there is minimal to no spacing between structures.

- Spacing for new construction should be within 15 percent of the average distance between existing structures on the block to respect the rhythm of the street. If all of the existing buildings have the same spacing, use that spacing for siting the new building.

Many blocks of the historic district have very limited spacing between residences.



# SITE DESIGN

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## DRIVEWAYS, OFF-STREET PARKING, AND WALKS

Providing circulation and parking for the automobile on private sites in Winchester's densely built up historic district can be a challenging task, particularly in the commercial and rowhouse areas where much of the parking is limited to on-street only. In the residential areas with larger lots, the use of appropriate paving materials for both driveways and private walks can help reinforce the character of the district or detract from it. Strategically placed landscaped screening can also help reduce the strong visual impact that on-site parking areas can create.

- 1 Driveways, in general, should be located only on large or medium size lots that can accommodate such a feature. Avoid placing driveways on small narrow lots if the drive will have a major visual impact on the site.
- 2 New parking should be located to the side and rear of existing buildings and should be screened with landscaping if the area is prominently visible from a public right-of-way.
- 3 Large paved areas for parking should not be placed in the front yard of any size property, except for on extremely large lots with deep setbacks.
- 4 Retain existing historic paving materials used in walks and driveways, such as brick, stone and examples of the early use of patterned concrete.
- 5 Replace damaged areas with materials that match the original paving.
- 6 Ensure that new paving materials are compatible with the character of the area. Brick pavers in traditional patterns and scored concrete are examples of appropriate applications. Color and texture of both surfaces should be carefully reviewed prior to installation. Avoid large expanses of bright white or gray concrete surfaces.
- 7 Consider using identical or similar materials or combination of materials in both walks and driveways.
- 8 Do not demolish historic structures to provide areas for parking.



In some neighborhood streets, houses with large lots have space for driveways.

NOTE: Consult Preservation Brief #32 for tips on making historic properties accessible. (Publication available at [www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/briefs/presbhom.htm](http://www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/briefs/presbhom.htm) or in the City Planning Office.)

## TREES AND PLANTINGS

Landscaping of private sites is a critical part of the historic appearance of many of the residential areas of the district. Like setback and spacing, the character of the landscaping treatments changes throughout the district. Many properties have extensive plantings in the form of trees, foundation plantings, shrub borders, and flower beds. On some streets such as Fairmont Avenue, the dominant condition is open front lawns with large trees, while other streets with shallower setbacks have smaller yards with limited plantings.

- 1 Retain existing trees and plants that help define the character of the district. Replace diseased or dead plants and trees with appropriate species.
- 2 Install new landscaping that is compatible with the existing neighborhood and indigenous to the area.
- 3 When constructing new buildings, identify and take care to protect significant existing trees and other plantings.
- 4 When planning new landscaping, repeat the dominant condition of the street in terms of landscaped borders and heights of screening.
- 5 Limit the amount of landscaping in the front yard of small lots in order to retain the neighborhood scale of landscaping to the size of the house.



There is ample opportunity to provide plantings even on sites that have limited setback.

# SITE DESIGN

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## FENCES AND WALLS

There are a great variety of fences and walls in the district, particularly in some of the residential areas. Fences and walls are rarely found in the commercial and rowhouse areas of the district. While most rear yards and many side yards have some combination of fencing, walls or landscaped screening, the use of such features in the front yard varies. The dominant condition on some streets is where front yards are partially enclosed with fences or low limestone or brick walls while other streets have open lawns leading to the street or sidewalk edge. Much of this variety in the residential areas relates to the difference in grade between the lot and sidewalk. Some walls and fences are very low while others are medium height. Materials may relate to materials used on the structures on the site and may include brick, limestone, wrought iron, or wood pickets.

- 1 Retain traditional fences, walls and hedges. When a portion of a fence needs replacing, salvage original parts for a prominent location from a less prominent location if possible. Match old fencing in material, height, and detail. If this is not possible, use a simplified design of similar materials and height.
- 2 Respect the existing condition of the majority of the lots on the street in planning new construction or a rehabilitation of an existing site.
- 3 The design of new fences and walls should blend with materials and designs found in the district. Commonly used materials are brick, limestone, iron, wood and plantings. Often the materials relate to the materials used elsewhere on the property and on the structures.
- 4 The scale and level of ornateness of the design of any new walls and fences should relate to the scale and ornateness of the existing house. Simpler and smaller designs are most appropriate on smaller sized lots.
- 5 The height of the fence or wall should not exceed the average height of other fences and walls of surrounding properties.
- 6 Avoid the use of solid masonry walls that visually enclose the property from surrounding more open neighboring sites.
- 7 Do not use materials such as chain-link fencing, and concrete block walls where they would be visible from the street.

- If the majority of buildings on the street have a fence or wall, incorporate one into new site improvements.
- If the majority of buildings on the street have an open yard leading to the street, do not add a fence or wall to the front of the lot.

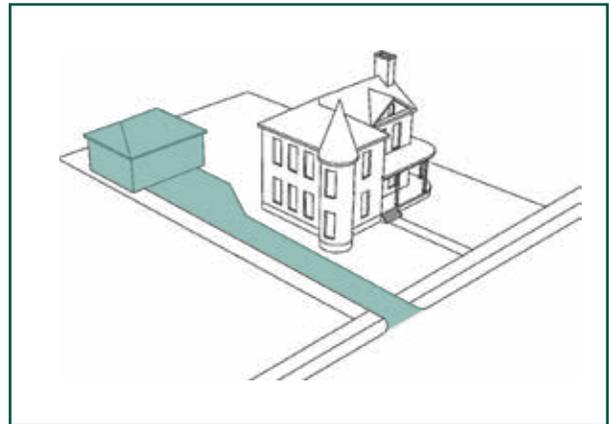


*A combination of limestone base and a wrought iron fence creates an attractive and historic edge to the property.*

## GARAGES, OUTBUILDINGS, AND SITE FEATURES

Many houses in Winchester's Historic District have garages, outbuildings, and distinctive site features, particularly properties that contain a large house on a large lot. Some typical outbuildings may include garages, carriage houses, or small residences built at the same time as the house. Site features vary considerably and may include fountains, ponds, pools, trellises and pergolas, as well as recreational features such as basketball courts and playset areas.

- 1 Retain existing historic garages, outbuildings and site features and follow the recommendations in *Brochure 3: "Guidelines for Rehabilitation"* if undertaking any work on such site elements.
- 2 Design new garages or outbuildings to be compatible with the style of the major buildings on the site, especially in materials and roof slope.
- 3 New garages or outbuildings should be located to the rear of the main house, or they should be placed to the side of the main house without extending in front of the centerline of the house.
- 4 The scale of new garages or outbuildings should not overpower the existing house or the size of the existing lot.
- 5 The design and location of any new site features should relate to the existing character of the property.



Garages and other outbuildings should be placed to the rear of lots that are large enough to accommodate them.



New garages can be designed with steep metal roofs and segmental arched openings to reinforce the historic character of the district.

# SITE DESIGN

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## OUTDOOR LIGHTING

Winchester's Historic District contains a rich variety of light fixtures located within individual properties. Most are electrified, although a few are illuminated using natural gas. Other properties have individual lamp poles, and most houses have attractive fixtures located on the house at various entry points.

- 1 Retain and refurbish historic light fixtures where possible.
- 2 New lighting fixtures that are understated and complement the historic style of the building, while providing subdued illumination, are recommended.
- 3 Avoid using bright floodlights, and avoid lighting a site with rows of closely spaced lights along driveways and walks.

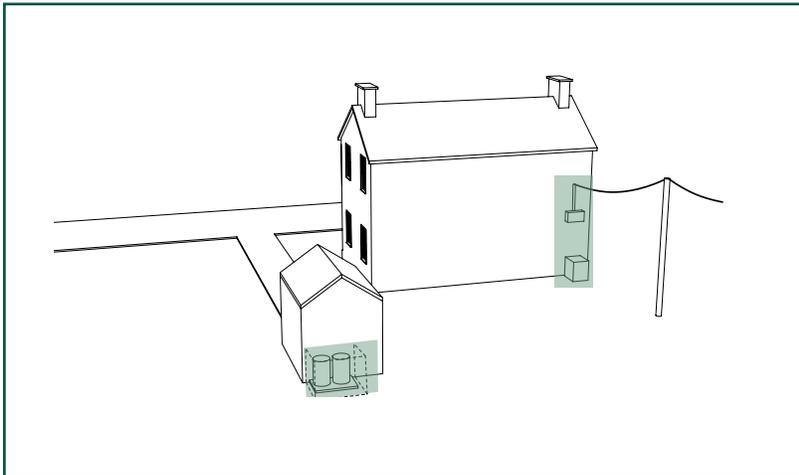


Historic light fixtures like this ornate example are an important site feature and should be preserved.

## APPURTENANCES

Site appurtenances, such as overhead wires, fuel tanks, utility poles and meters, antennae, exterior mechanical units, and trash containers, are a necessary part of contemporary life. However, their placement may detract from the character of the site and building.

- 1 Place site appurtenances at inconspicuous areas on the side and rear of the building.
- 2 Screen site appurtenances with compatible screening or plantings as needed.



Place appurtenances in inconspicuous locations like behind the dwelling and garage in this example.

If exterior mechanical units cannot be placed behind a structure consider screening them.



# SITE DESIGN

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## ADDITIONAL CITY OF WINCHESTER RESOURCES FOR SITE ISSUES:

- Planning Department (Zoning and Subdivision Standards)
- Building Department (Building Code)
- Public Works Department (Tree Commission, Curb Cuts, Sidewalk Repair)

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## WINCHESTER HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGN GUIDELINES

# RESIDENTIAL REHABILITATION

**T**here is a wide range of building styles and types in Winchester that give the historic district its distinctive character. In order to evaluate the appropriateness of a design change, it is necessary to understand the characteristics of the styles of the buildings as shown in *Brochure: Owning Property in Winchester*. For guidelines on site improvements see Brochure 2: Guidelines for Site Design.

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The following guidelines are designed to ensure that any rehabilitation project respects the overall appearance of the existing building, as well as the details that give it so much of its character. These guidelines are based on the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*. For more detailed information about many of the following rehabilitation issues, visit the Planning Office in City Hall and review more detailed publications entitled *Preservation Briefs*. These technical booklets, published by the National Park Service, cover over forty preservation topics and are geared for property owners.

# Residential Rehabilitation

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## FOUNDATION

The foundation forms the base of a building. On many buildings it is indistinguishable from the walls of the building, while on others it is a different material or texture or is raised well above ground level.

- 1 Keep crawl space vents open so that air flows freely.
- 2 Retain any decorative vents that are original to the building.
- 3 Ensure that land is graded so that water flows away from the foundation and, if necessary, install drains around the foundation.
- 4 Remove any vegetation that may cause structural disturbances at the foundation.
- 5 Where masonry has deteriorated, take steps as outlined in the masonry section of this guideline.

NOTE: Consult Preservation Brief #1, 2 and 39. (Publications available at <https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs.htm> or in the City Planning Office.)



Foundation vents play an important role in keeping moisture from building up within the foundation.

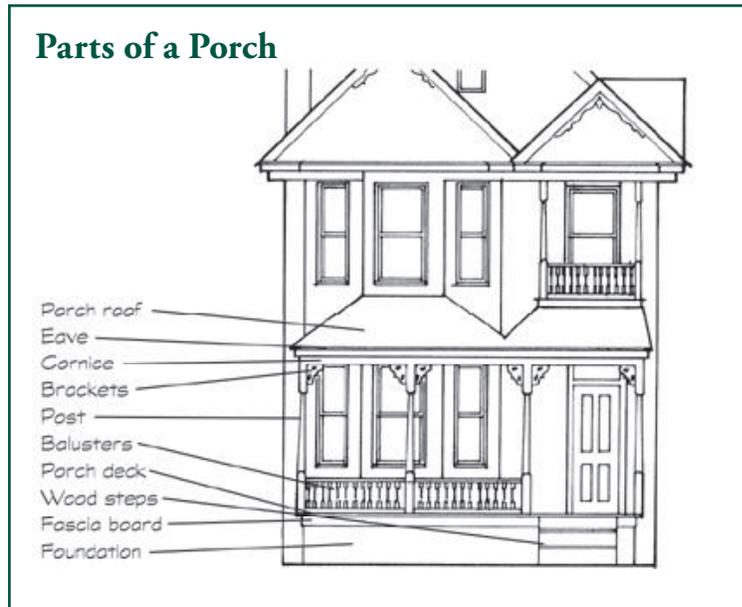
## ENTRANCES, PORCHES, AND DOORS

Entrances and porches are often the primary focal points of a historic building and, because of their decoration and articulation, help define the style of the building. Entrances are functional and ceremonial elements for all buildings. Porches have traditionally been a social gathering point, as well as a transition area between the exterior and interior of the residence. The important focal point of an entrance or porch is the door. Winchester's Historic District has a very rich variety of all of these elements. Porches are a critical character-defining element in most of the residential historic structures in the district and, in particular, on many of the rowhouses.

- 1 Inspect masonry, wood, and metal of porches and entrances for signs of rust, peeling paint, wood deterioration, open joints around frames, deteriorating putty, inadequate caulking, and improper drainage. Correct any of these conditions.
- 2 Repair damaged elements and match the detail of the existing original fabric. Reuse hardware and locks that are original or important to the historical evolution of the building.



Porches, such as this ornate example, are prominent and important historic elements that contribute to the historic district's distinctive character.



NOTE: Consult Preservation Brief #45. (Publication available at <https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs.htm> or in the City Planning Office.)

# Residential Rehabilitation

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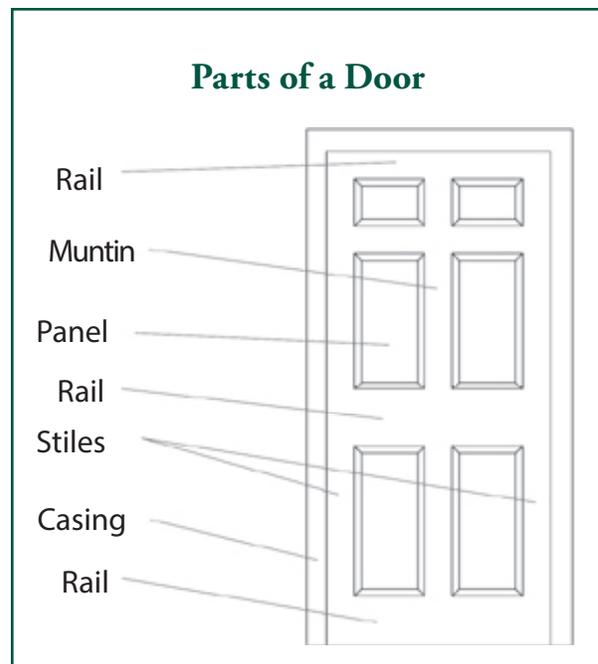
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There are many porticos and entry stoops in the rowhouse blocks of the historic district.

- 3 Do not enclose porches on primary elevations, and avoid enclosing porches on secondary elevations in a manner that radically changes its historic appearance.
- 4 When installing storm or screen doors, ensure that they relate to the character of the existing door. They should be a simple design where lock rails and styles are similar in placement and size. Avoid using aluminum colored storm doors. If the existing storm door is aluminum, consider painting it to match the existing door. Use a zinc chromate primer before painting to ensure adhesion.

- 5 Replace an entire porch only if it is too deteriorated to repair, or is completely missing. The new porch should match the original as closely as possible in materials, size, and detail.
- 6 Do not strip entrances and porches of historic material and details. Give more importance to front or side porches than to utilitarian back porches.
- 7 Avoid substituting the original doors with stock size doors that do not fit the opening properly or do not blend with the style of the house. Retain transom windows.
- 8 Avoid removing or radically changing entrances and porches important in defining the building's overall historic character. If altering the porch and/or entrance is unavoidable, ensure that the new treatment matches or blends with the original style or character of the house.

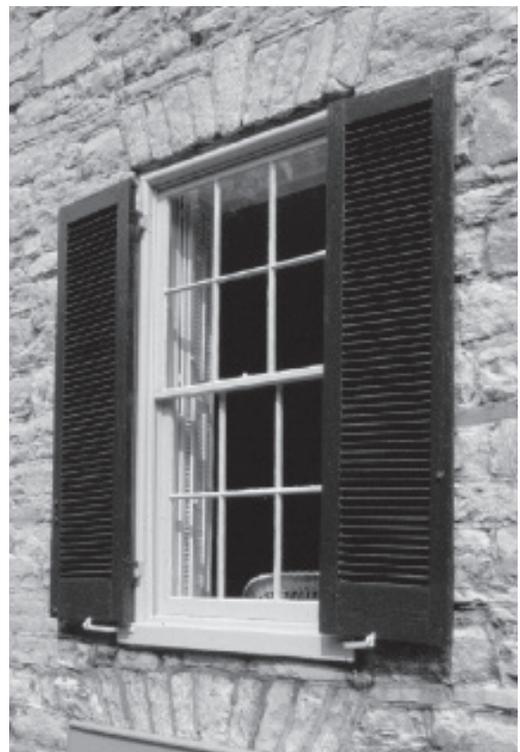


## WINDOWS

Windows add light to the interior of a building, provide ventilation, and allow a visual link to the outside. Because of the wide variety of architectural styles and periods of construction within the district, there is a corresponding variation of styles, types, and sizes of windows. They also play a major part in defining a building's particular style, and therefore, they should be retained instead of replaced. In that regard, the following website contains a wealth of details about historic windows and their replacement, as well as other valuable information on historic houses.

<http://www.oldhouseguy.com/windows/>

- 1 Retain original windows if possible. Ensure that all hardware is in good operating condition. Ensure that caulk and glazing putty are intact and that water drains off the sills.
- 2 Repair original windows by patching, splicing, consolidating or otherwise reinforcing. Wood that appears to be in bad condition because of peeling paint or separated joints can often be repaired.
- 3 Uncover and repair covered-up windows and reinstall windows with their original dimensions where they have been blocked in. If the window is no longer needed, the glass should be retained and the back side frosted, screened, or shuttered so that it appears from the outside to be in use.
- 4 Replace windows only when they are missing or beyond repair. Reconstruction should be based on physical evidence or old photographs.
- 5 Do not use materials or finishes that radically change the sash, depth of reveal, muntin configuration, the reflective quality or color of the glazing, or the appearance of the frame.
- 6 Use true divided lights to replace similar examples and do not use false muntins in the replacement.



Real shutters are hung on operable hinges (pintles) and are large enough to cover the window when closed.

NOTE: Consult Preservation Brief #9, 13 and 33. (Publications available at <https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs.htm> or in the City Planning Office.)

# Residential Rehabilitation

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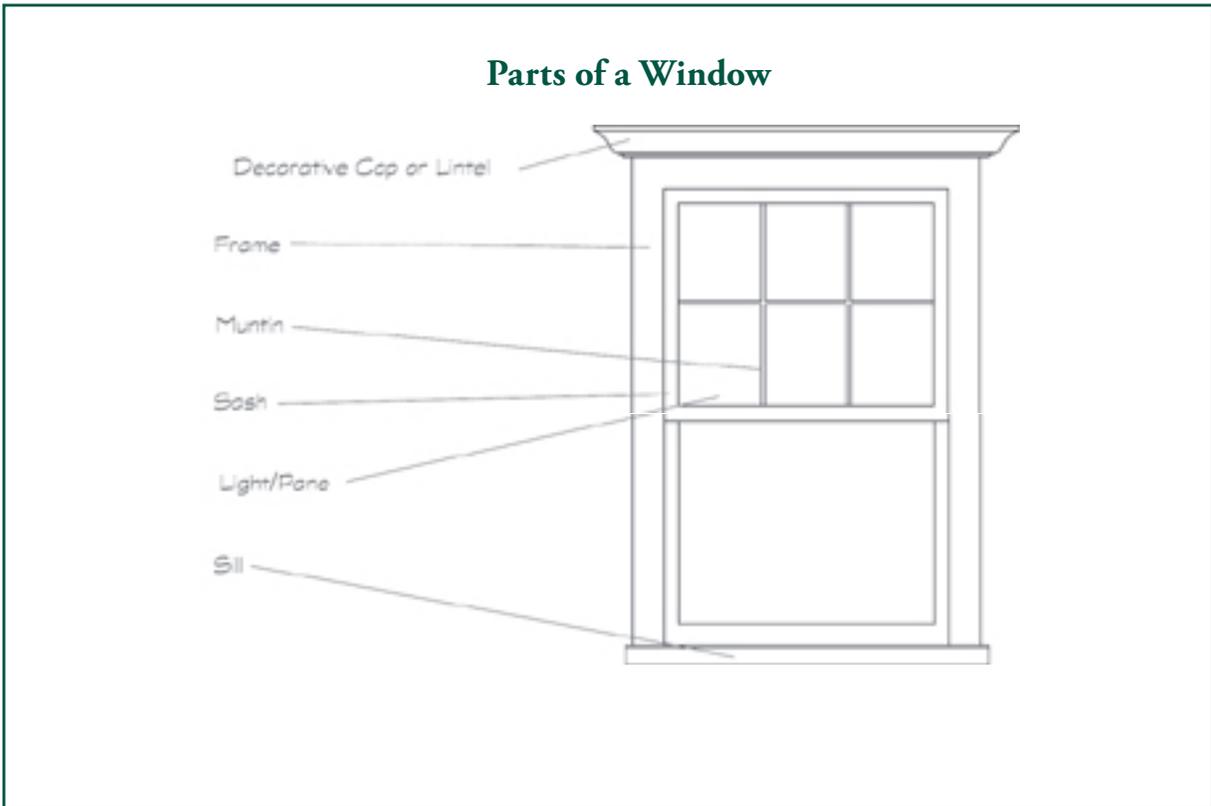
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- 7 Do not change the number, location, size, or glazing pattern of windows on primary elevations by cutting new openings, blocking in windows, or installing replacement sash that does not fit the window opening.
- 8 Improve thermal efficiency with weather stripping, storm windows (preferably interior), caulking, interior shades, and if appropriate for the building, blinds and awnings.
- 9 If using awnings, ensure that they align to cover the opening. Use colors that relate to the colors of the building.
- 10 Use shutters only on windows that show evidence of their use in the past. They should be wood (rather than metal or vinyl) and should be mounted on hinges. Shutters should be sized so that they cover the window opening when closed. Avoid shutters on composite or bay windows.
- 11 Vinyl, aluminum-clad, vinyl-clad, and wood composite windows, with or without removable muntins or muntins sandwiched between the glass, are generally not considered appropriate or compatible within the Primary and Secondary downtown assessment districts as defined in City Code. However, they may be considered appropriate on post-1947 buildings, on a case-by-case basis.
- 12 Aluminum-clad, and wood composite windows on non-primary, non-street-facing, or any limited visibility elevations may be considered appropriate outside of the Primary and Secondary downtown assessment districts, on a case-by-case basis.

# Residential Rehabilitation

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## CORNICES, PARAPETS, AND EAVES

The junction between the roof and the wall is sometimes decorated with brackets and moldings, depending on the architectural style. Sometimes, the wall extends above the roofline, forming a parapet wall that may be decorated to visually complete the design.

- 1 Repair rather than replace the cornice. Do not remove elements, such as brackets or blocks, that are part of the original composition without replacing them with new ones of a like design.
- 2 Match materials, decorative details, and profiles of the existing original cornice design when making repairs.
- 3 Do not wrap or cover the cornice or eaves with vinyl or aluminum; these substitute materials may cover up original architectural details and also may hide underlying moisture problems.
- 4 Do not replace an original cornice with a new one that conveys a different period, style, or theme from that of the building.
- 5 If the cornice is missing, the replacement should be based on physical evidence, or barring that, be compatible with the original building.
- 6 Some composite materials are available in custom-formed lengths such as urethane; while others, including cellular PVC, are dimensional mill-ready blanks. Flat board dimensional materials are available in wood-resin composites and cement board. New materials shall be considered on a case-by-case basis.



In this historic house the main cornice with brackets helps define the dwelling's Italianate style, while the classical cornice of the porch reveals that this element is a later change to the property.

# Residential Rehabilitation

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## ROOFS

One of the most important elements of a structure, the roof serves as the “cover” to protect the building from the elements. Because of its form, size, and materials, the roof is often one of the most visible parts of any building and helps define the building’s architectural style. Good roof maintenance is absolutely critical for the roof’s preservation and for the preservation of the rest of the structure.

- 1 Retain elements such as chimneys, skylights, and light wells that contribute to the style and character of the building.
- 2 When replacing a roof or components associated with roofs (i.e. down spouts, gutters, etc.) match or reuse the original materials as closely as possible. Evaluate roof replacement projects in light of the prominence and the visibility of the roof, the architectural distinctiveness of the roof, and the relative architectural and historic significance of the building.
- 3 Maintain critical flashing around joints and ensure proper functioning of the gutter system.
- 4 Ventilate the attic space to prevent condensation.
- 5 Place solar collectors and antennae on non-character-defining roofs or roofs of non-historic adjacent buildings.
- 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 The technology of solar panels continues to change rapidly. While appropriate use may be considered on a case-by-case basis, new products that mimic roof shingles, and solar panels that fit between standing-seam roof panels, are now available. It is important to minimize the visual impact by selecting types that blend in with an existing roof. Also solar panels should be installed on secondary roof elevations so that their visibility from a public right-of-way is minimized.



Roofs are a very visual element on many of the historic district’s buildings such as these gable examples.

NOTE: Consult Preservation Brief #4, 19, 29 and 30. (Publications available at <https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs.htm> or in the City Planning Office.)

## ROOF REPLACEMENT SUGGESTIONS

Avoid replacing a slate or standing-seam metal roof with asphalt shingles, as this would dramatically alter the building's appearance. Artificial slate may be used in place of the original. Slate and standing-seam metal are some of the historic roofing material found in the district. All of these materials are still available. Before replacing slate with new slate, or a substitute material, ensure that the slate is deteriorating and not the roof flashing. Buckingham slate, used on many local structures, should last approximately 175 years or longer and repairs may be possible instead of wholesale replacement. Pennsylvania slate lasts only approximately 75 years before it begins to delaminate; at that time it will need to be replaced. Since slate is expensive when replacing an entire roof, in cases of extreme financial hardship consider using substitute materials such as artificial slate, or possibly, standing-seam metal. When the exact material is not available, attempt to match pattern, color and size as closely as possible.

# Residential Rehabilitation

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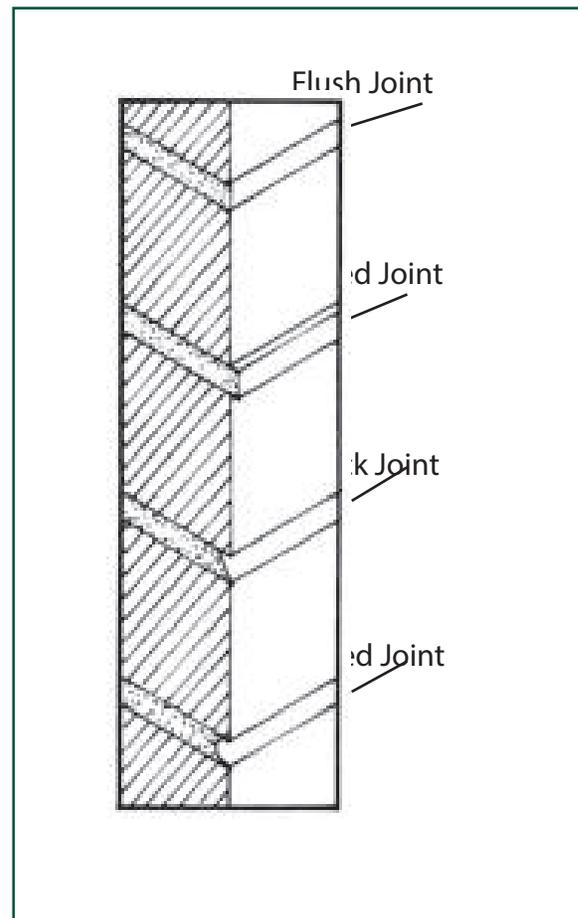
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## MASONRY

Masonry includes brick, stone, terra cotta, concrete, tile, mortar and stucco. Masonry is used on cornices, pediments, lintels, sills, and decorative features, as well as for building walls, retaining walls, and chimneys. Color, texture, mortar joint type, and patterns of the masonry help define the overall character of a building. Winchester's Historic District has a rich collection of masonry structures and walls, many dating from the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century.

Most of the major masonry problems can be avoided with monitoring and prevention. Prevent water from causing deterioration by insuring proper drainage, removing vegetation too close to the building, repairing leaking roof and gutter systems, securing loose flashing around chimneys, and caulking joints between masonry and wood. Repair cracks and unsound mortar with mortar and masonry that matches the historic material with respect to color and tooling.

- 1 Retain historic masonry features that are important in defining the overall character of the building.
- 2 Repair damaged masonry features by patching, piecing in, or consolidating to match original instead of replacing an entire masonry feature, if possible. The size, texture, color, and pattern of masonry units, as well as mortar joint size and tooling, should be respected.
- 3 Repair cracks in masonry as they allow moisture penetration and, consequently, deterioration. Ensure that they do not indicate structural settling or deterioration.
- 4 Carefully remove deteriorated mortar and masonry in a way that does not damage the masonry piece, such as brick, or the masonry surrounding the damaged area. Duplicate mortar in strength, composition, color and texture.
- 5 Repair stucco or plastering by removing loose material and patching with a new material that is similar in composition, color, and texture.



NOTE: Consult Preservation Brief #1, 2, 6, 7, 15, 22 and 38. (Publications available at <https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs.htm> or in the City Planning Office.)

# Residential Rehabilitation

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- 6 Patch stone in small areas with a cementitious material which, like mortar, should be weaker than the masonry being repaired and should be mixed accordingly. Skilled craftsmen should do this type of work.
- 7 Repair broken stone or carved details with epoxies. Skilled craftsmen should undertake application of such materials.
- 8 Discourage the use of waterproof, water-repellent, or non-historic coatings on masonry. They often aggravate rather than solve moisture problems.
- 9 Clean masonry only when necessary to remove heavy paint buildup, halt deterioration, or remove heavy soiling. Use chemical paint and dirt removers formulated for masonry. Use a low-pressure wash, equivalent to the pressure in a garden hose, to remove chemicals and clean building. Have test patches of cleaning performed on building and observe the effects on the masonry.

Masonry elements may be an important design feature, as seen on this ornate facade.



- 10 Do not sandblast masonry because once the hard outer shell of older brick is removed, the soft inner core is subject to accelerated deterioration due to moisture penetration combined with freeze/thaw cycles.
- 11 Generally leave unpainted masonry unpainted. See Paint section (page 16) for information on repainting masonry.
- 12 Use knowledgeable cleaning contractors and check their references and methods. Look for damage caused by the improper cleaning such as chipped or pitted brick, washed out mortar, rounded edges of brick, or a residue or film.

# Residential Rehabilitation

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## WOOD

The flexibility of wood has made it the most common building material throughout much of America's building history. Because it can be easily shaped by sawing, planing, carving, and gouging, wood is used for a broad range of decorative elements such as cornices, brackets, shutters, columns, storefronts, and trim on windows and doors. Additionally, wood is used in major elements such as framing, siding, and shingles. Many of the historic buildings in Winchester's historic district, particularly residential structures, are clad in wood siding.

- 1 Retain wood as the dominant framing, cladding, and decorative material for Winchester's historic buildings.
- 2 Retain wood features that define the overall character of the building. Repair rotted sections with new wood, epoxy consolidates, or fillers.
- 3 Replace wood elements only when they are rotted beyond repair. Match the original in material and design, or use substitute materials that convey the same visual appearance. Base the design of reconstructed elements on pictorial or physical evidence from the actual building rather than from similar buildings in the area.
- 4 Avoid using unpainted pressure-treated wood except for structural members that will be near the ground and outdoor floor decking. Pressure-treated lumber may be painted or stained after it has weathered for a season.
- 5 For cleaning and repainting wood, see the Paint Section of these guidelines (page 16).

The elaborate design of this wooden porch is created with decorative brackets, posts, cornice pieces, and the cutout balustrade.



# Residential Rehabilitation

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- 6 Wood requires constant maintenance. The main objective is to keep it free from water infiltration and wood-boring pests. Keep all surfaces primed and painted. As necessary, use appropriate pest poisons, following product instructions carefully. Re-caulk joints where moisture might penetrate a building. Do not caulk under individual siding boards or window sills. This action seals the building too tightly and can lead to moisture problems within the frame walls and to failure of paint.
- 7 To test for rotten wood, jab an ice pick into the wetted wood surface at an angle and pry up a small section. Sound wood will separate in long fibrous splinters, while decayed wood will separate in short irregular pieces. Alternatively, insert the ice pick perpendicular to the wood. If it penetrates less than 1/8 inch, the wood is solid; if it penetrates more than 1/2 inch, it may have dry rot. Even when wood looks deteriorated, it may be strong enough to repair with epoxy products.
- 8 Allow pressure-treated wood to season for a year before painting it. Otherwise, the chemicals might interfere with paint adherence.

NOTE: Consult Preservation Brief #8 and 9. (Publications available at <https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs.htm> or in the City Planning Office.)

# Residential Rehabilitation

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## METALS

Various architectural metals are used on historic structures in Winchester and, in particular, on many of the commercial buildings. Cast iron, steel, pressed tin, copper, aluminum, bronze, galvanized sheet metal, and zinc are some of the metals that occur mainly in cornices, light fixtures, and decorative elements such as balconies, grates, and fences.

### Tips for Metal Maintenance

- 1 When cleaning metals is necessary, use the gentlest means possible. Do not sandblast copper, lead, or tin. See the Paint section of these guidelines for additional information on cleaning and preparing surfaces for repainting (page 16).
- 2 Do not remove the patina of metals such as bronze or copper since it provides a protective coating and is a historically significant finish.
- 3 Repair or replace metals as necessary, using identical or compatible materials. Some metals are incompatible and should not be placed together without a separation material such as non-porous neoprene gaskets or butyl rubber caulking.



The historic district contains many examples of attractive wrought-iron metal fences.

NOTE: Consult Preservation Brief #13 and 27. (Publications available at <https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs.htm> or in the City Planning Office.)

## SUBSTITUTE MATERIALS

A building's historic character is a combination of its design, age, setting, and materials. The exterior walls of a building, because they are so visible, play a very important role in defining its historic appearance. Wood clapboards, wood shingles, wood board-and-batten, brick, stone, stucco, or a combination of the above materials all have distinctive characteristics. Synthetic materials can never have the same patina, texture, or light-reflective qualities.

These modern materials have changed over time, but have included asbestos, asphalt, vinyl, aluminum, and EIFS (exterior insulation and finish system), and have been used to artificially create the appearance of brick, stone, shingle, stucco and wood siding surfaces.

In addition to changing the appearance of a historic building, synthetic sidings may make maintenance more difficult because they may cover up potential moisture problems that can become more serious. Artificial siding, once it dents or fades, may need painting just as frequently as wood.

Some composite materials are available in custom-formed lengths such as urethane; while others, including cellular PVC, are dimensional mill-ready blanks. Flat board dimensional materials are available in wood-resin composites and cement board. Synthetic siding such as vinyl, aluminum, and synthetic stucco (EIFS products) are generally not considered appropriate in the historic district. Traditional materials remain preferred on principal elevations for residential rehabilitation; however, certain new materials, such as cementitious siding may be appropriate on non-principal elevations when they are compatible in scale and texture to the adjacent historic structures and complimentary to materials on adjacent historic structures.



Artificial siding does not have the appearance or patina of real wood siding.



Frequently, the installation of artificial siding results in the removal of historic elements like brackets and porches.

- 1 Remove synthetic siding and restore original building material, if possible.
- 2 If you are unsure about using a substitute material, please contact the BAR or the Northern Regional Office of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources.
- 3 While repairs utilizing traditional materials remain preferred, new materials associated with new architecture styles/forms and materials that are integral to that style shall be considered on a case-by-case basis.

NOTE: Consult Preservation Brief #8 and 16. (Publications available at <https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs.htm> or in the City Planning Office.)

# Residential Rehabilitation

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## PAINT

A properly painted building accentuates its character-defining details. Painting is one of the least expensive ways to maintain historic fabric and make a building an attractive addition to a historic district. Many times however, buildings are painted inappropriate colors or colors are placed incorrectly.

Some paint schemes use too many colors but more typical is a monochromatic approach in which one color is used for the entire building. On particularly significant historic buildings there is the possibility of conducting paint research to determine the original color and then recreating that appearance.

- 1 Remove loose and peeling paint down to the next sound layer, using the gentlest means possible: hand scraping and hand sanding (wood and masonry) and wire brushes (metal). A heat gun or plate can be used on wood for heavy build-up of paint. Take precautions when removing older paint layers since they may contain lead.
- 2 Do not use sandblasting, open flames, or high-pressure water wash to remove paint from masonry, soft metal, or wood. Take precautions when removing older paint layers since they may contain lead.
- 3 Choose colors that blend with and complement the overall color schemes on the street. Do not use bright and obtrusive colors. The numbers of colors should be limited and individual details such as brackets should not be painted with an additional accent color. Doors and shutters can be painted a different accent color than the walls and trim. Follow color recommendations of particular architectural styles on the following pages.

### PAINTING TIPS

- Ensure that all surfaces are free of dirt, grease, and grime before painting.
- Prime surfaces if bare wood is exposed or if changing types of paints, such as from oil-based to latex.
- Do not apply latex paint directly over oil-based paint, as it will not bond properly.
- Use a high-quality paint and follow manufacturer's specifications for preparation and application.
- Avoid painting masonry that is unpainted.

NOTE: Consult Preservation Brief #10, 28 and 37. (Publications available at <https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs.htm> or in the City Planning Office.)

## PAINT: A GUIDE TO COLOR PLACEMENT AND SELECTION

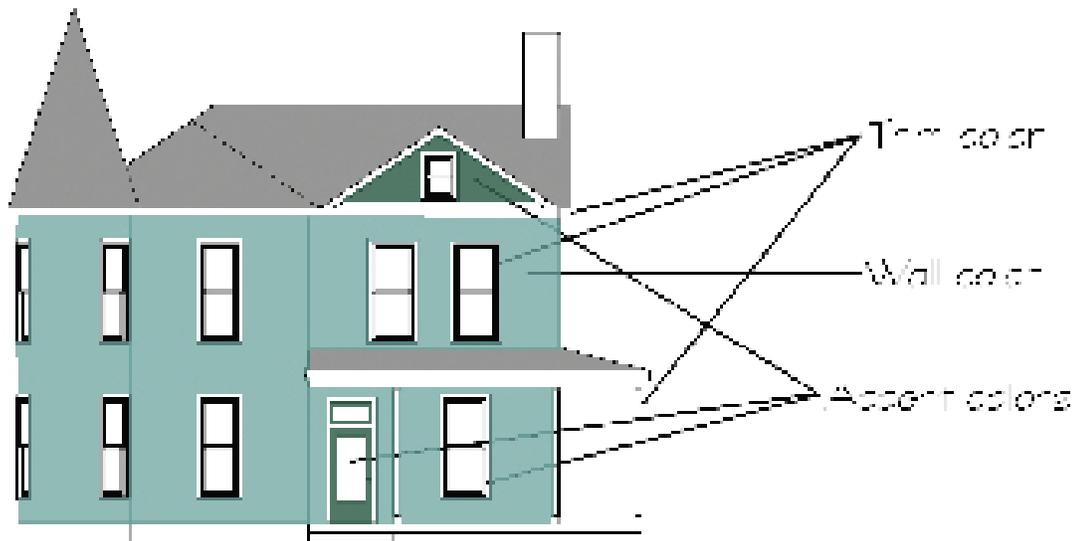
Placed correctly, color accentuates details of the building. Generally, for residential buildings, walls and trim can be painted contrasting colors, with doors and shutters a third, accent color. A fourth color may be appropriate for very elaborate Queen Anne houses but, even then, individual details generally should not be highlighted since this may give a disjointed appearance to a house.

**Federal or Greek Revival:** When the walls are red brick, the trim is frequently painted white. On a wood frame Greek Revival house, the walls and trim should be painted a light color such as white or off-white with a contrasting darker tone paint color on the shutters and doors.

**Gothic Revival:** The use of natural earth tones is most appropriate for this romantic style. Trim and doors and shutters may be highlighted with a complementary color.

**Italianate:** Pale pastel wall colors accented with an even lighter trim color characterize the Italianate style. Trim elements such as brackets, window and door surrounds and columns can be accentuated through the use of a light paint color. Shutters can be painted in a contrasting darker tone.

**Second Empire:** Deep, rich colors such as rusts, greens, browns, and reds can be used on the wall surfaces and trim of Second Empire-era houses. The trim and wall surfaces can be painted in contrasting colors such as rust for the walls and green for the trim such that the trim work and detailing is emphasized. If authentic color schemes like this are not desired then tinted wall color and light color trim would be appropriate.



# Residential Rehabilitation

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**Queen Anne:** Deep, rich colors such as greens, rusts, reds, and browns may be used on the exterior trim and walls of late-Victorian-era houses. Keep in mind that some darker colors may chalk and fade more quickly than lighter colors. The important objective is to emphasize the many textures of these highly ornate structures. Decorative wood shingles may be painted a different color from the siding on the same building. It is best to treat similar elements with the same color to achieve a unified appearance rather than one that is overly busy and disjointed appearance. On very ornate houses, more colors can be used.

**Victorian Vernacular:** These simpler designed dwellings are often painted with a light color on the walls and a darker trim and window sash color or colors. A third accent color may highlight doors and shutters.

**Romanesque Revival:** The masonry structures are frequently trimmed out in several rich colors similar to the Queen Anne style. An alternative is to select a natural color for trim that may relate to the color of the masonry walls.

**Colonial Revival:** Softer colors should be used on these buildings, with the trim painted white or ivory, since this style reflects a return to classical motifs.

**American Foursquare:** Use similar color schemes as the Colonial Revival.

**Neoclassical Revival/Beaux Arts:** Light colors such as yellows, grays, and whites can be used on the Neoclassical Revival house. For example, light yellow walls might have a complimentary white trim, which slightly accentuates the trim work, but make the entire composition read as a whole. Shutters may be painted in a contrasting, much darker, color such as a deep green or black.

**Tudor Revival:** The Tudor Revival style features half timbering members which are accentuated through the use of a dark brown paint color as is trim. The stuccoed walls in the background are also in the earth tone ranges, but much lighter.

**Bungalows:** Natural earth tones and stains of tans, greens, and grays are most appropriate for this style, using color to emphasize the many textures and surfaces.

**Note:** Historic Colors Guide

Compiled by PHW, this guide provides Historic District property owners a reference to what colors are recommended for certain ages and architectural styles of buildings. The BAR does not have a fixed color palette that owners must choose from.

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WINCHESTER  
 HISTORIC DISTRICT  
 DESIGN GUIDELINES  
 NEW  
 RESIDENTIAL  
 CONSTRUCTION

The following guidelines offer general recommendations for the design of new residential buildings in Winchester's Historic District. The intent of these guidelines is not to be overly specific or to dictate certain designs to owners and designers. The intent is also not to encourage copying or mimicking particular historic styles, although some property owners may desire a new building designed in a form that carefully respects the existing historic styles of the district.

These guidelines are intended to provide a general design framework for new construction. Good designers can take these clues and have the freedom to design appropriate, new architecture for the historic district. These criteria are all important when considering whether proposed new buildings are appropriate and compatible; however, the degree of importance of each criterion varies within each area as conditions vary. For instance, setback, scale and height may be more important than roof forms or materials since there is more variety of the latter criteria on most streets.

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PLEASE NOTE: The guidelines in this brochure apply only to the design of most new residential buildings, and *Brochure 2: Guidelines for Site Design* should be consulted for site issues. For guidelines for new commercial buildings, see *Brochure 6: New Commercial Construction*.

# New Residential Construction

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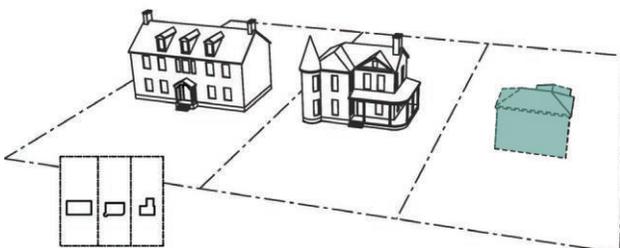
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## MASSING, SCALE AND BUILDING FOOTPRINT

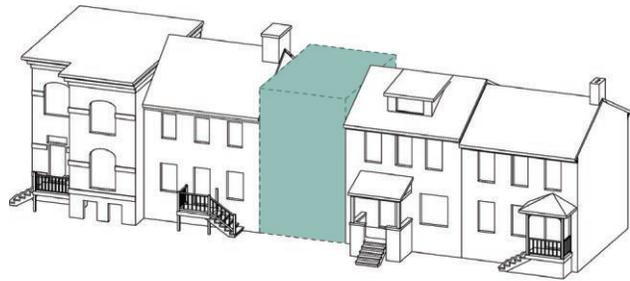
Mass is the overall bulk of a building and footprint is the land area it covers. In Winchester, there are large houses on large lots, medium-sized houses on medium sized lots and small houses on small lots. Many of the smaller structures are rowhouses and are attached to neighboring dwellings. The nature of the mass will be further defined by other criteria in this chapter such as height, width and directional expression.

- New construction in residential areas that is visible from the public right-of-way should relate in footprint and mass to the majority of surrounding historic dwellings.

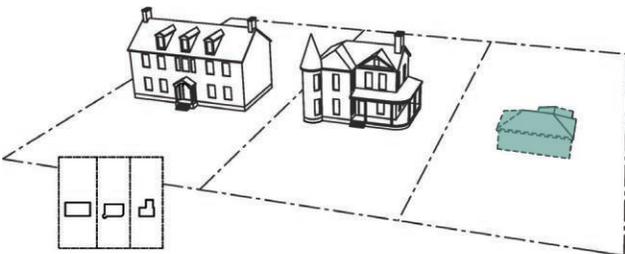
In both of these examples of detached dwellings and row houses, the proposed new house should have a similar mass as the existing residences.



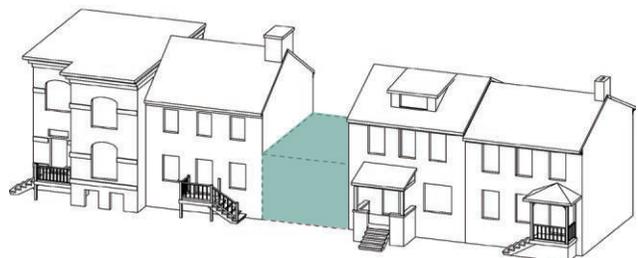
Recommended



Recommended



Not Recommended



Not Recommended

# New Residential Construction

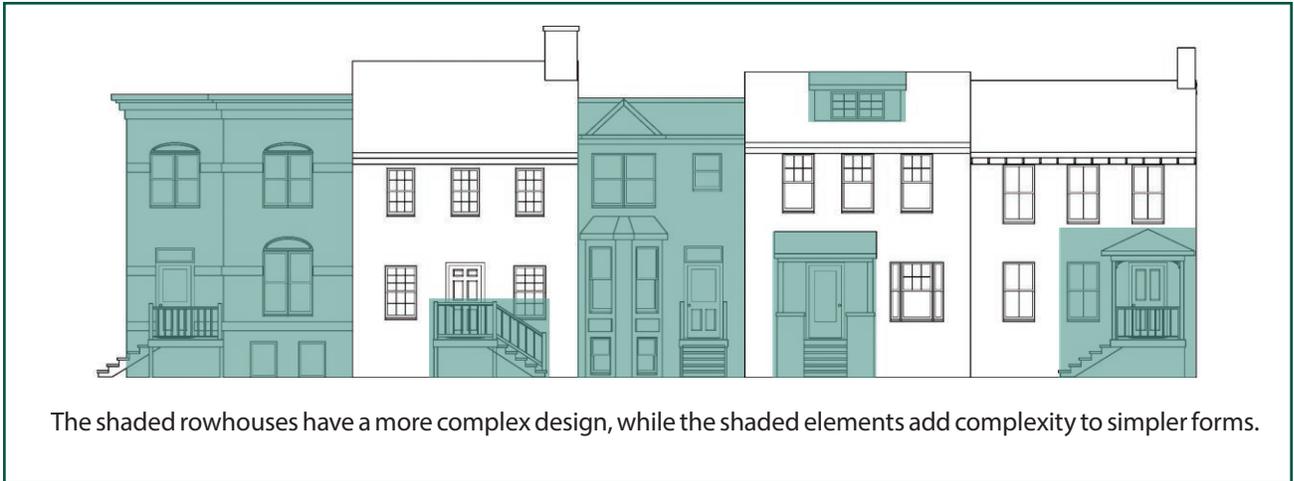
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## COMPLEXITY OF FORM

A building's form, or shape, can be simple (a box) or complex (a combination of many boxes or projections and indentations). The level of complexity usually relates directly to the style or type of building.

- In general, use forms for new construction that relate to the majority of surrounding residences. If a block has a mixture of complex and simple forms, either option is appropriate for new construction.



simple form



complex form

# New Residential Construction

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## DIRECTIONAL EXPRESSION AND ORIENTATION

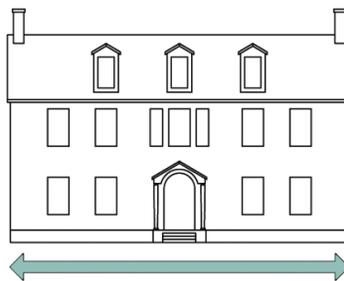
This guideline addresses the relationship of height and width of the front elevation of a building mass, as well as the facing direction of the front. A building is horizontal, vertical, or square in its proportions. A residential building's orientation often relates to the era and style in which it was built. Twentieth-century designs often have horizontal expression. From the Victorian era after the Civil War, through the turn-of-the-century, domestic architecture is usually 2 or 2-1/2 stories with a more vertical expression, as are rowhouses of all eras. Freestanding antebellum dwellings are often horizontal in proportions.

- 1 In new construction, respect the directional expression (or overall relationship of height to width) of surrounding historic buildings. The directional expression of many buildings in Winchester's Historic District is vertical.
- 2 New construction should orient its facade in the same direction as adjacent historic buildings.
- 3 Front elevations oriented to side streets or to the interior of lots should be discouraged.

Most rowhouse examples have a more vertical expression.



vertical



horizontal



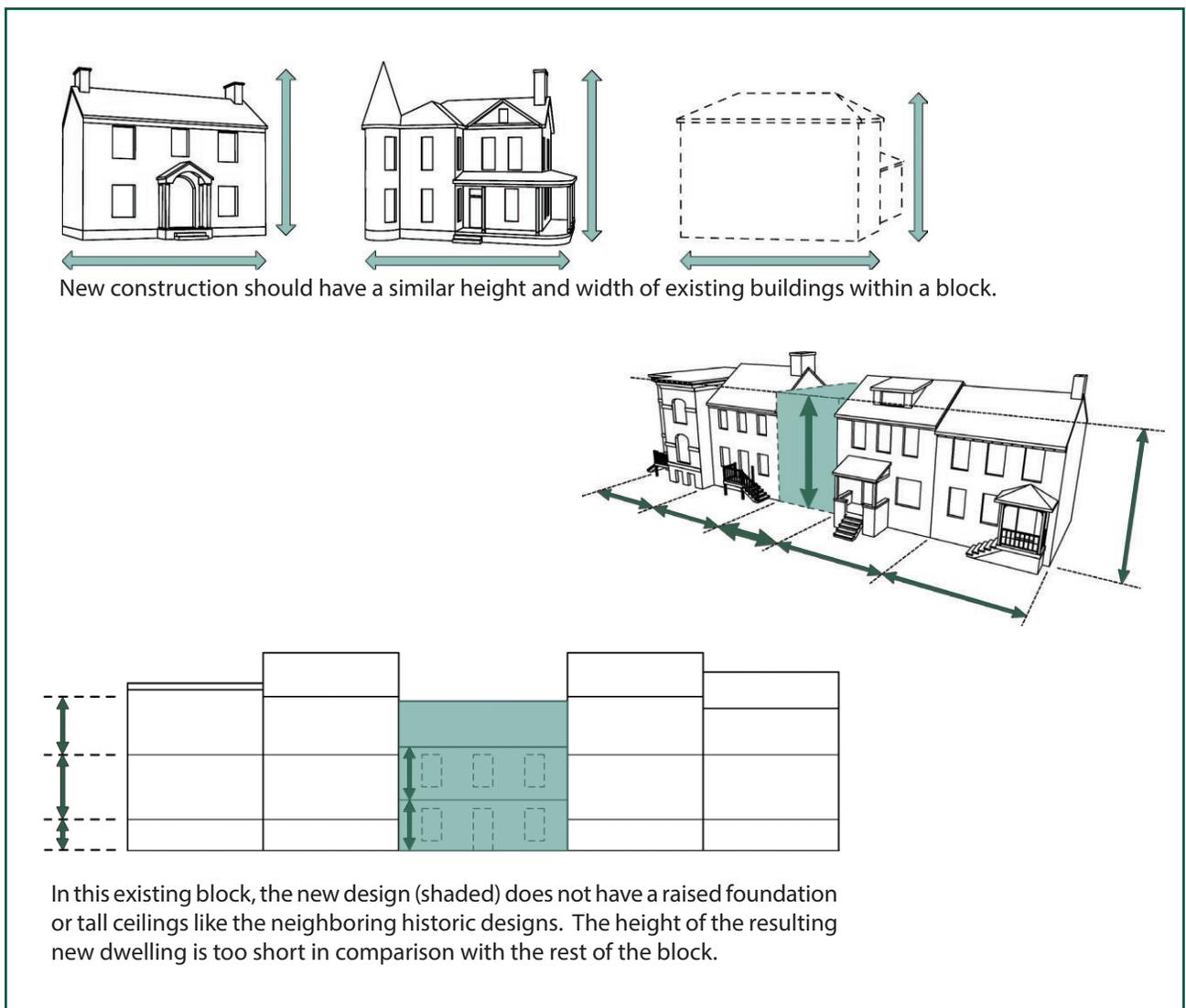
square

# New Residential Construction

## HEIGHT AND WIDTH

The actual size of a new building can either contribute to or be in conflict with a historic area. While zoning allows up to 75 feet in height in the B-1, Central Business District, houses in the historic district for the most part range from two to three stories.

- New construction proportions should respect the average height and width of the majority of existing neighboring buildings in the district.



# New Residential Construction

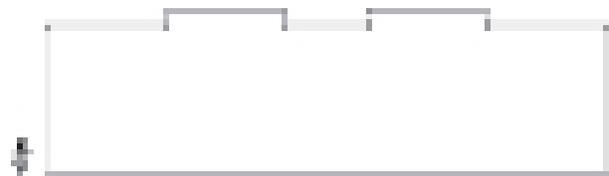
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## SCALE

Height and width also create scale, or the relationship between the size of a building and the size of a person. Scale also can be defined as the relationship of the size of a building to neighboring buildings, and of a building to its site. The design features of a building can reinforce a human scale or can create a monumental scale. In Winchester, there is a variety of examples of scale. For instance, a house with the same overall height and width may have monumental scale due to a two-story portico, while a more human scale may be created by a one-story porch.

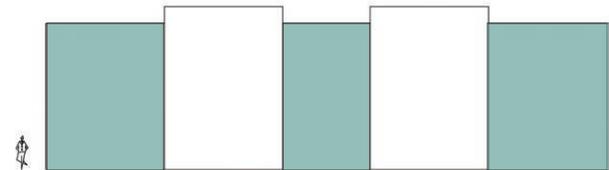
- Provide features on new construction that reinforce scale and character of the surrounding area, whether human or monumental, by including elements such as porches, porticos and decorative features.



A large building overwhelms the scale of a human.



Porches reduce the overall scale of a structure and relate it better to the size of a human being.



Dividing the facade into bays helps reduce the scale.



Adding detailed elements and separate facades creates a human scale for this entire block.

# New Residential Construction

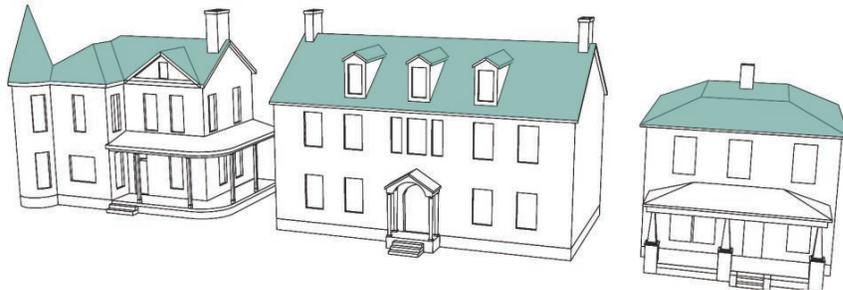
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## ROOF

The roof, including its design, form, materials and textures, is a prominent element in the historic district. Common residential roof forms include hipped, gable, and gambrel roofs, as well as combinations of the above. In general, the roof pitch is as important as roof type in defining district character. Common roof materials in the historic district include slate, metal, and composition shingles.

- 1 When designing new houses, respect the character of roof types and pitches in the immediate area around the new construction.
- 2 For new construction in the historic district, traditional roofing materials such as slate or metal remain preferred for additions or new construction; however, artificial slate may be appropriate on a case-by case-basis.
- 3 There are new metal roof materials available that are pre-coated steel in various colors. Some of these products can be installed to give a very similar appearance as a standing-seam metal roof, and may be considered as a replacement roof in the historic district on a case-by-case basis. Industrial metal roofs that have wide strips covering seams are not appropriate for use in the historic district.
- 4 The technology of solar panels continues to change rapidly. While appropriate use may be considered on a case-by-case basis, new products that mimic roof shingles, and solar panels that fit between standing-seam roof panels are now available. It is important to minimize the visual impact of proposed solar products by selecting types that blend in with an existing roof. Solar panels should be installed on secondary roof elevations so that their visibility from a public right-of-way is minimized.



The wide variety of roof forms throughout the district helps create the unique character of each block.



# New Residential Construction

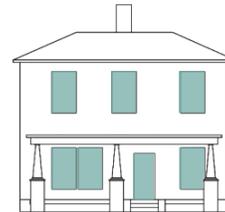
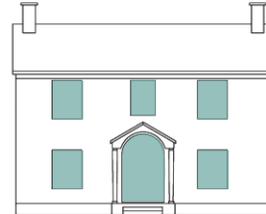
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## OPENINGS: DOORS & WINDOWS

Traditionally designed houses found in Winchester have distinctive window types and patterns, and doorway designs often relate to the architectural style of the historic dwelling.

- 1 The rhythm, patterns, and ratio of solids (walls) and voids (windows and doors) of new buildings should relate to and be compatible with adjacent facades. The majority of existing buildings in Winchester’s Historic District have a higher proportion of wall area to void. This factor suggests that new buildings should also share that general proportion of wall to openings.
- 2 The size and proportion, or the ratio of width to height of window and door openings of new buildings’ primary facades should be similar and compatible with those on facades of surrounding historic buildings.
- 3 Window types should be compatible with those found in the district, which are typically some form of double-hung or casement sash. Use windows with true divided lights or interior and exterior fixed muntins with internal spacers to reference traditional designs and match the style of the building. New materials associated with new architecture styles/forms and materials that are integral to that style shall be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- 4 Traditionally designed openings generally have a recessed jamb on masonry buildings and have a surface mounted frame on frame buildings. New construction should follow these methods in the historic district, as opposed to designing openings that are flush with the rest of the wall.
- 5 Many entrances of Winchester’s historic buildings have special features such as transoms, sidelights, and decorative elements framing the openings (e.g. functional shutters). Consideration should be given to incorporating such elements in new construction.



Most dwellings in the historic district have a higher proportion of wall to openings.



Rowhouses tend to have a higher proportion of openings to wall than do detached residences.

# New Residential Construction

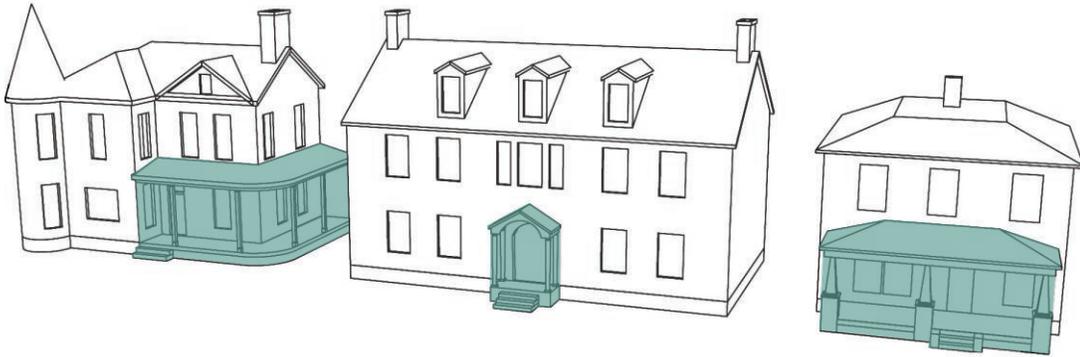
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## PORCHES AND PORTICOS

Many of Winchester's historic houses have some type of porch or portico. There is much variety in the size, location, and types of these features and this variety relates to the different residential architectural styles. Many of the rowhouses have steps leading to a small porch or portico raised off of the sidewalk.

- Since porches and porticos are such a prominent part of the residential areas of the district, strong consideration should be given to including a porch or similar form in the design of any new residence in the district. The majority of these elements are constructed of brick and/or wood in the historic district. Railings are often constructed of wood or metal in historic examples.



While porch designs vary considerably throughout the district, most houses have some type of articulated entry and these elements help give a human scale to each street.



# New Residential Construction

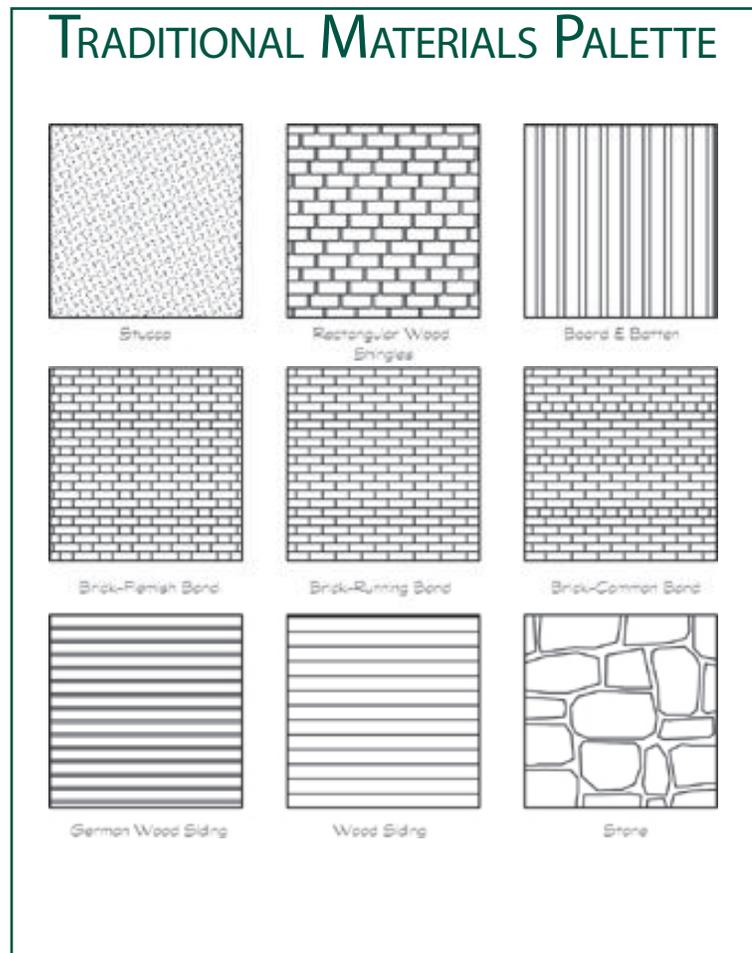
## MATERIALS AND TEXTURE

There is a rich variety of building materials and textures found throughout Winchester, including brick, limestone, logs, wood siding, stucco and wood shingles. Some residences have a combination of several materials depending on the architectural style of the house or building.

- 1 The selection of materials and textures for a new dwelling should be compatible with and complement neighboring historic buildings.
- 2 In order to strengthen the traditional image of the residential areas of the historic district, brick, limestone, and wood siding are the most appropriate materials for new buildings.
- 3 Synthetic materials such as aluminum, vinyl, and synthetic stucco (EIFS products) are generally not considered appropriate in the Historic District. Traditional materials remain preferred for additions or new construction; however, certain new materials such as cementitious siding, may be considered on a case-by-case basis. New materials associated with new architecture styles/forms and materials that are integral to that style shall be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- 4 The use of some substitute materials may be considered for trim details in new construction. Some composites are available in custom-formed lengths, such as urethane, while others, including cellular PVC, are dimensional mill-ready blanks. Flat board dimensional materials are available in wood-resin composites and cement board but are not able to be worked in the traditional manner of wood.

## COLOR

The selection and use of colors for a new building should be coordinated and compatible with adjacent buildings. For more information on colors traditionally used on historic structures and the placement of color on a building, see *Brochure 3: Guidelines for Rehabilitation* (pages 17 & 18).



# New Residential Construction

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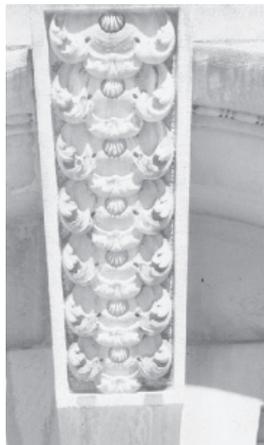
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## ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS

The details and decoration of Winchester's historic buildings vary tremendously with the different styles, periods, and types. Such details include cornices, roof overhang, chimneys, lintels, sills, brackets, masonry patterns, shutters, entrance decoration, and porch elements. The important factor to recognize is that many of the older buildings in the district have decoration and noticeable details.

It is a challenge to create new designs that use historic details successfully. One extreme is to simply copy the complete design of a historic building and the other is to "paste on" historic details on to a modern unadorned design. Neither solution is appropriate for designing architecture that relates to its historic context while maintaining the look of a contemporary building. More successful new buildings may take their clues from historic images and reintroduce and reinterpret designs of traditional decorative elements.

The illustrations and photographs found throughout these guidelines' brochures offer many examples of details from the historic district and may serve as a source for new designs.



There is a rich variety of details throughout the historic district that add visual interest to most structures within it.

# New Residential Construction

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## GUIDELINES FOR ADDITIONS

An exterior addition to a historic building may radically alter its appearance. Before an addition is planned, every effort should be made to accommodate the new use within the interior of the existing building. When an addition is necessary, it should be designed and constructed in a manner that will complement and not detract from the character defining features of the historic building.

These guidelines for additions apply to schools, churches, and other institutional buildings, as well as houses and commercial buildings in Winchester's Historic District.

The design of new additions should follow the guidelines for new construction on all elevations that are prominently visible (as described elsewhere in this section). There are several other considerations that are specific to new additions in the historic district and are listed below.

### 1 Function

Attempt to accommodate needed functions within existing structure without building an addition.

### 2 Design

New additions should not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work should be differentiated from the old, and should be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

### 3 Replication of Style

A new addition should not be an exact copy of the design of the existing historic building. If the new addition appears to be a part of the existing building, the integrity of the original historic design is compromised and the viewer is confused over what is historic and what is new. The design of new additions can be compatible with, and respectful of, existing buildings without being a mimicry of their original design.

### 4 Materials and Features

Use materials, windows, doors, architectural detailing, roofs, and colors which are compatible with the existing historic building.

### 5 Attachment to Existing Building

Wherever possible, new additions or alterations to existing buildings and structures shall be done in such a manner that, if such additions or alterations were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the building or structure would be unimpaired. Therefore, the new design should not use the same wall plane, roof line or cornice line of the existing structure.

# New Residential Construction

## 6 Size

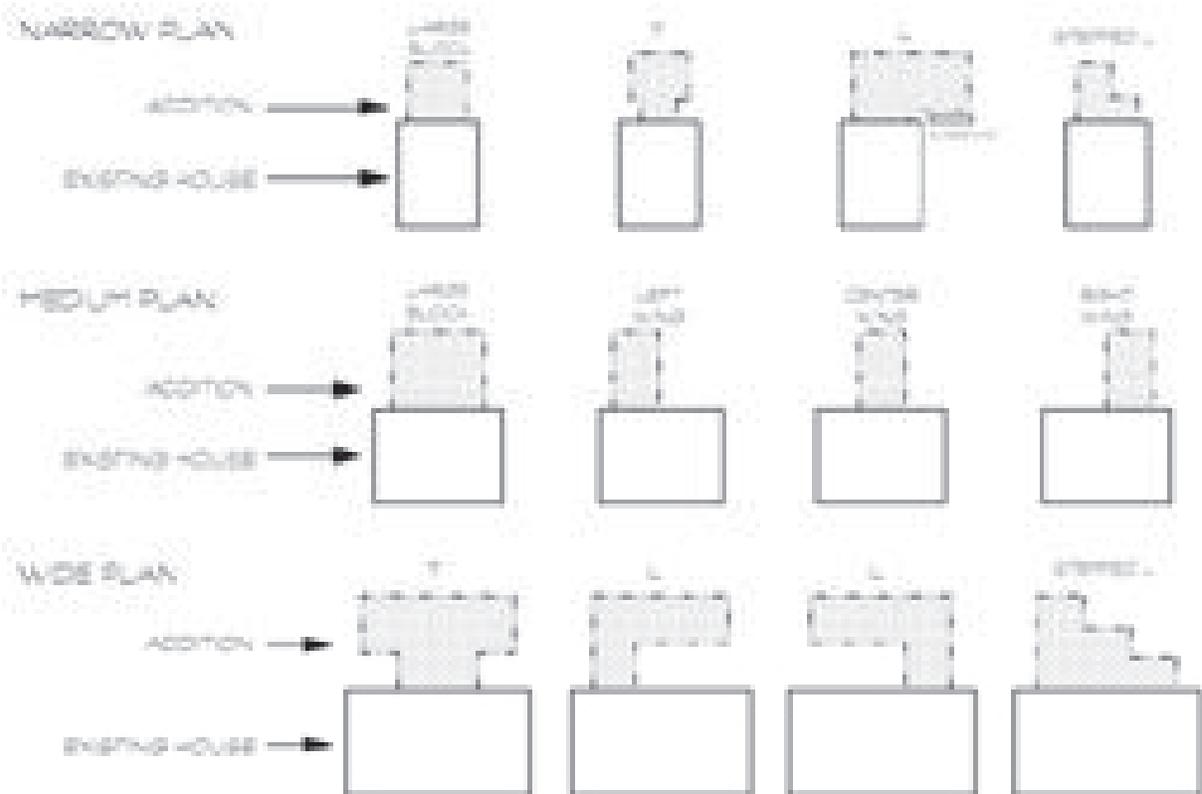
Limit the size of the addition so that it does not visually overpower the existing building.

## 7 Location

Attempt to locate the addition on rear or side elevations, or in a manner that makes them visually secondary to the primary elevation of the historic house. If the addition is located on a primary elevation facing the street, or if a rear or side addition faces a street, parking area, or an important pedestrian route, the visible elevation of the addition should be treated under the new construction guidelines.

### NOTE:

Decks also should be considered as additions under these guidelines. If they are visible from a public way, their design, materials and scale should relate to and respect the existing building.



# New Residential Construction

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The guidelines in this brochure do not pertain to certain types of institutional buildings such as schools, libraries, and churches. These buildings, due to their function and community symbolism, are usually of a distinctive design. Their scale is often more monumental, and massing and orientation relate to the particular use within the building. For this reason, the design of any new such institutional building in the district would not follow these residential guidelines, but should relate more to traditional designs of that particular building type. Nevertheless, the design of this type of project would still be reviewed by the BAR.

This publication has been financed with Federal Funds from the National Park Service, U. S. Department of the Interior through the Certified Local Government Program administered by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources. However, the contents and opinions do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Department of the Interior, nor does the mention of any trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation by the Department of the Interior.

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WINCHESTER  
 HISTORIC DISTRICT  
 DESIGN GUIDELINES  
**COMMERCIAL  
 BUILDINGS**

**H**istoric preservation has played a major part in the economic revitalization of many of Virginia's older downtowns, including Winchester. Appropriately rehabilitated facades located within the downtown historic district create a natural setting for commercial activities. Customers and visitors expect an attractive and well-maintained central business district. Each building improvement helps generate the next project.

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These guidelines reflect the pragmatic approach that historic downtowns continue to evolve and adapt with each new generation. Physical changes to historic assets are managed in a careful way, but no attempt is made to stop change. Over time the framework of historic preservation and economic development can work together to keep downtown viable and help it to continue to play its role as the historic heart of the community.

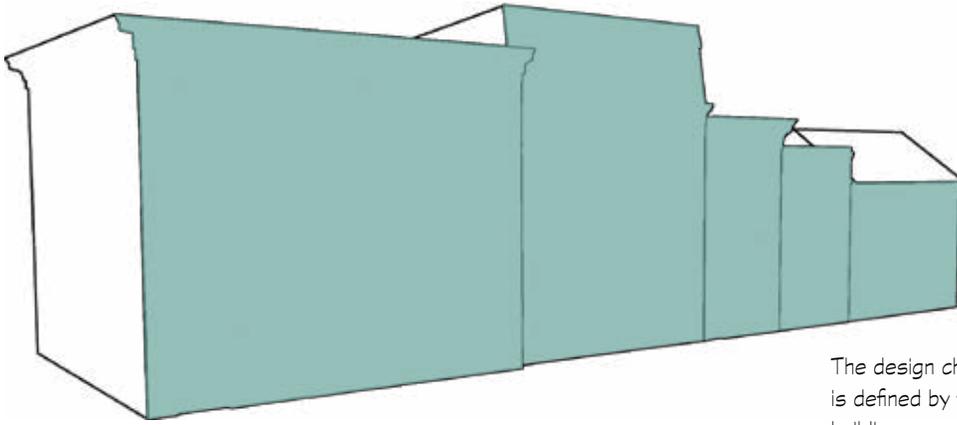
# Commercial Buildings

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## FACADES

Traditionally, most commercial buildings in downtown Winchester contain ground floor retail businesses that require display windows, and upper-story space for housing, storage, or offices. As a result, the primary elevations - or facades - of historic commercial buildings have a predictable appearance. Generally, commercial buildings average two to four stories and nearly all have flat or shed roofs. Traditional commercial buildings have three distinct parts that give the facade an overall unified appearance: storefront, upper floor(s) and cornice.



The design character of the downtown area is defined by the street wall created by the buildings.



The design character of the downtown area is defined by the cornice which is the decorative cap at the top of the building.

# Commercial Buildings

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The design character of the downtown area is defined by patterns of windows that create a rhythm of openings along the street wall.



The design character of the downtown area is defined by storefronts, windows, and entrances that create the transparent openings at the street level.

# Commercial Buildings

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## THREE AREAS OF A FACADE

### CORNICE

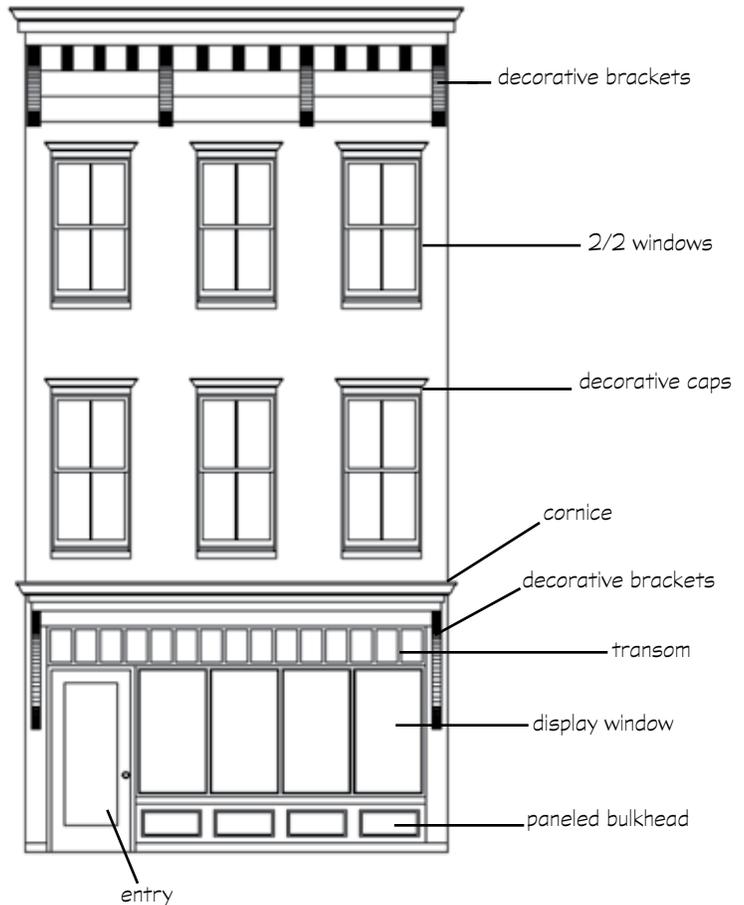
The cornice decorates the top of the building and may be made of metal, masonry, or wood. Some decorative cornices project from the building, while an ornamental band delineates others. The top of the wall may have a patterned brick band or may have a coping of brick, concrete, or metal.

### UPPER FLOOR

Upper floors are characterized by smaller window openings that repeat on each floor. These windows may vary in size, type, and decoration but usually are the same for each floor. Other facade details may be present on the upper level facades such as brick banding, corbelling, or decorative panels.

### STOREFRONT

The first-floor storefront is transparent and is framed by vertical structural piers and a horizontal supporting beam, leaving a void where the storefront elements fit. The storefront elements consist of an entrance (often recessed), display windows, a bulkhead under the display windows, transom windows over the storefront, and a cornice which covers the horizontal beam. The first floor also may contain an entrance to the upper floors. Later buildings may lack several elements of traditional storefronts such as transom windows, or decorative details.



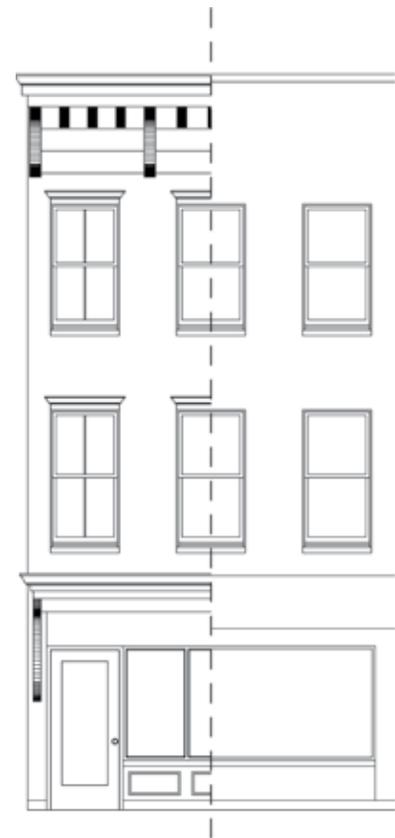
## COMMERCIAL ARCHITECTURAL STYLES



## PLANNING A FACADE IMPROVEMENT

Over time commercial buildings are altered or remodeled to reflect current fashions or to eliminate maintenance problems. Often these improvements are misguided and result in a disjointed and unappealing appearance. Other improvements that use good materials and sensitive design may be as attractive as the original building and these changes should be saved. The following guidelines will help to determine what is worth saving and what should be rebuilt.

- 1 Conduct pictorial research to determine the design of the original building or early changes.
- 2 Conduct exploratory demolition to determine what remains and its condition. (This work would require a certificate of appropriateness from the BAR.)
- 3 Remove any inappropriate materials, signs, or canopies covering the facade.
- 4 Retain all elements, materials, and features that are original to the building, or are sensitive remodelings, and repair as necessary.
- 5 Restore as many original elements as possible, particularly the materials, windows, decorative details, and cornice.
- 6 When designing new elements, conform to the configuration and materials of traditional storefront design. Reconstruct missing original elements (such as cornices, windows and storefronts) if documentation is available, or design new elements that respect the character, materials, and design of the building.
- 7 Avoid using materials that are incompatible with the building or district, including aluminum-frame windows and doors, aluminum panels or display framing, enameled panels, textured wood siding, unpainted wood, artificial siding, and wood shingles. False historical appearances such as “Colonial,” “Olde English,” or other theme designs should not be used.
- 8 Avoid using inappropriate elements such as mansard roofs, metal awnings, coach lanterns, small-paned windows, plastic shutters, inoperable shutters, or shutters on windows where they never previously existed.
- 9 Maintain paint on wood surfaces and use appropriate paint placement to enhance the inherent design of the building. See *Brochure 3: Guidelines for Rehabilitation* (page 16) for further information about painting.



The original character of a historic commercial building is often lost when features and elements are covered up or removed from a facade.

# Commercial Buildings

## ELEMENTS OF A STOREFRONT



## STOREFRONT EXISTING CONDITIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

*What happens when...*

...the cornice is missing but the transom window is intact?

Rebuild the cornice  
or  
Create a sign board that becomes the cornice line.



...the original transom is missing but the cornice is intact?

Restore the transom  
or  
Add an awning  
or...



Make the transom a sign board.

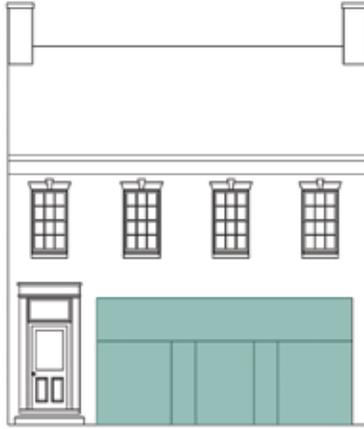
# Commercial Buildings

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...the historic storefront was replaced with a brushed aluminum

Rebuild the original storefront based on historic documentation or  
Install a new storefront that respects historic character or ...



Paint the aluminum storefront and add a new wood door with side stiles and rails.



...the piers have been covered with a newer material?

If the material is integral to the storefront and it is historically significant, retain the material or...



Remove the material and restore the brick if the material has no historic significance.

# Commercial Buildings

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## WOOD WINDOWS

Windows add light to the interior of a building, provide ventilation, and allow a visual link to the outside. Because of the wide variety of architectural styles and periods of construction within the district, there is a corresponding variation of styles, types, and sizes of windows. They also play a major part in defining a building's particular style, and therefore, they should be retained instead of replaced. In that regard, the following website contains a wealth of details about historic windows and their replacement, as well as other valuable information on historic houses.

<http://www.oldhouseguy.com/windows/>

- 1 Retain original windows if possible. Ensure that all hardware is in good operating condition. Ensure that caulk and glazing putty are intact and that water drains off the sills.
- 2 Repair original windows by patching, splicing, consolidating or otherwise reinforcing. Wood that appears to be in bad condition because of peeling paint or separated joints often can be repaired.
- 3 Uncover and repair covered-up windows and reinstall windows with their original dimensions where they have been blocked in. If the window is no longer needed, the glass should be retained and the back side frosted, screened, or shuttered so that it appears, from the outside, to be in use.
- 4 Replace windows only when they are missing or beyond repair. Reconstruction should be based on physical evidence or old photographs.
- 5 Do not use materials or finishes that radically change the sash, depth of reveal, muntin configuration, the reflective quality or color of the glazing, or the appearance of the frame.
- 6 Use true divided lights to replace similar examples and do not use false muntins in the replacement.
- 7 Do not change the number, location, size, or glazing pattern of windows on primary elevations by cutting new openings, blocking in windows, or installing replacement sash that does not fit the window opening.
- 8 Improve thermal efficiency with weather stripping, storm windows (preferably interior), caulking, interior shades, and if appropriate for the building, blinds and awnings.
- 9 If using awnings, ensure that they align with the opening being covered. Use colors that relate to the colors of the building.
- 10 Use shutters only on windows that show evidence of their use in the past. They should be wood (rather than metal or vinyl) and should be mounted on hinges. Shutter should be sized to cover the window opening when closed. Avoid shutters on composite or bay windows.
- 11 Vinyl, aluminum-clad, vinyl-clad, and wood composite windows, with or without removable muntins or muntins sandwiched between the glass, are generally not considered appropriate or compatible within the Primary and Secondary downtown assessment districts as defined in City Code. However, they may be considered appropriate on post-1947 buildings, on a case-by-case basis.

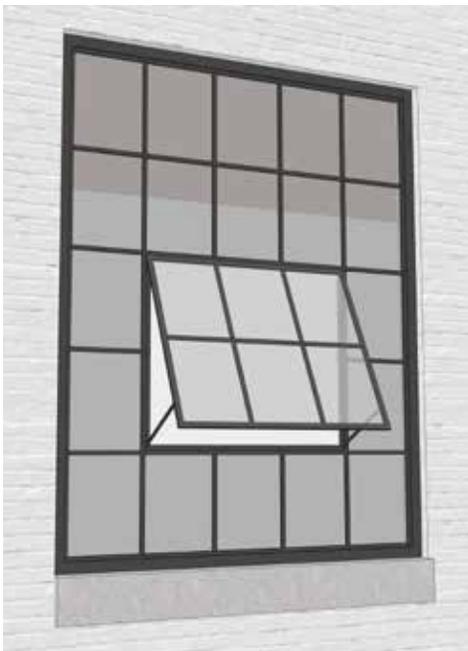
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NOTE: Consult Preservation Brief #9, 13 and 33. (Publications available at <https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs.htm> or in the City Planning Office.)

## METAL WINDOWS

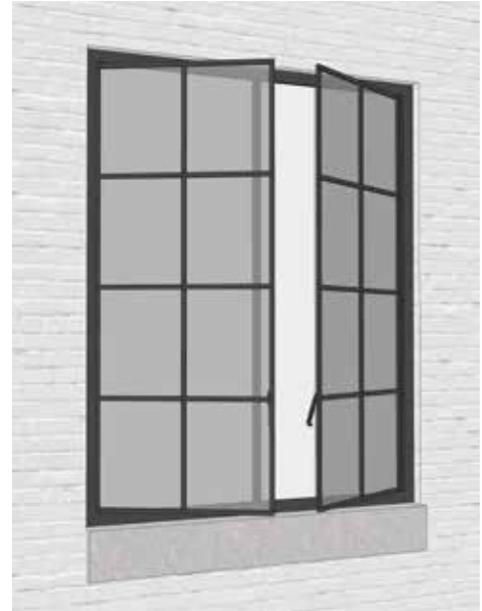
Early twentieth century commercial and industrial buildings frequently used a new type of window that used a metal frame. There were several types of metal frame windows, including casement, pivot, and hopper windows; all named for how they open. Often these windows were organized in larger banks of openings to create greater light and ventilation into a building. These windows are considered a character-defining feature of the historic building and should be restored as a part of a rehabilitation project.

- 1 Retain metal windows if they are a character-defining feature of the building.
- 2 Maintain by removing any surface rust, priming and painting.
- 3 Caulk the masonry surrounds with a high quality elastomeric caulk.
- 4 Repair metal windows in place or remove for more extensive work.
- 5 Replace metal windows with new examples that replicate the existing as close as possible in material, size, frame design, pane configuration, etc.



Metal  
Hopper/Awning  
Window

NOTE: For further information, see Preservation Brief 13: The Repair and Thermal Upgrading of Historic Steel Windows.



Metal Casement Window



Metal Pivot Window

# Commercial Buildings

## REARS OF BUILDINGS

The area behind commercial buildings is often forgotten and neglected. This area may be a utilitarian space for deliveries and storage of discarded goods. However, in some cases the rear of the building may provide the opportunity for a secondary entrance, particularly if oriented to a public alley such as Indian Alley. The appearance of the back area then becomes important to the commercial district and to the individual business. Customers may be provided with direct access from any parking area behind the building. In these cases the back entrance becomes a secondary entrance to the store, and is the first contact the customer makes with the business.



Some buildings have existing rear entries that could be utilized by customers.

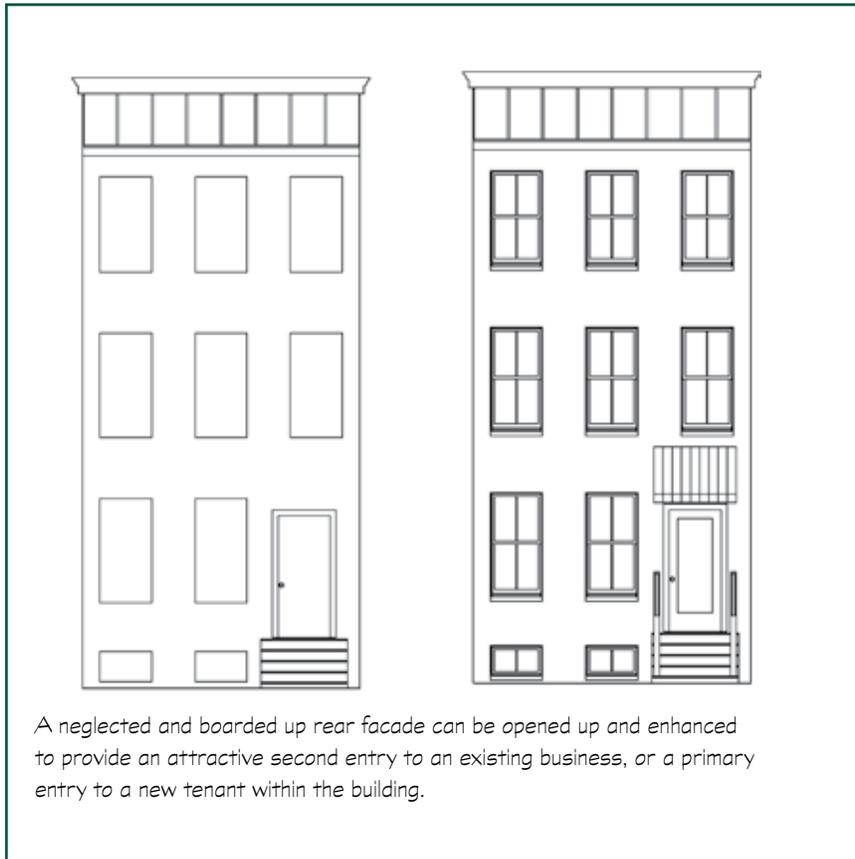
### SITE BEHIND BUILDING

Keep entrance uncluttered and free from unsightly items such as trash or recycling materials not in containers.

Leave enough space in front of the rear entry for pedestrians to comfortably enter the building and meet all handicap (ADA) requirements.

Consolidate and screen mechanical and utility equipment in one location as much as possible.

Consider adding planters or a small planting area to enhance and highlight the rear entrance and create an adequate maintenance schedule for them.



A neglected and boarded up rear facade can be opened up and enhanced to provide an attractive second entry to an existing business, or a primary entry to a new tenant within the building.

## REAR BUILDING FACADE GUIDELINES

- 1 Retain any historic door, or select a new door, that maintains the character of the building and creates an inviting entrance. Note building and ADA codes when, and if, changing dimensions or design of the entrance.
- 2 Maintain the original windows and window openings when possible. Windows define the character and scale of the original facade, and should not be altered
- 3 Repair existing windows when possible and avoid replacement. If they are replaced, ensure that the design of the new window matches the historic window and has true divided lights instead of the clip-in muntin bar type.
- 4 If installation of storm windows is necessary, see windows section of *Brochure 3: Guidelines for Rehabilitation* (page 5) regarding proper procedures.
- 5 Remove any blocked-in windows and restore windows and frames if missing.
- 6 If security bars need to be installed over windows, choose a type appropriate for the window size, building style and required level of security. Avoid using chain link fencing for a security cover over windows.
- 7 If the rear window openings need to be covered on the interior for merchandise display or other business requirements, consider building an interior screen and maintain the character of the original window's appearance from the exterior.
- 8 Install adequate lighting for customer and store security. Ensure that the design of the lighting relates to the historic character of the building.
- 9 Consider installing signs and awnings that are appropriate for the scale and style of the building.
- 10 Install adequate security, including alarm systems and hardware for doors and windows. Design and select systems and hardware to minimize impact on historic fabric of the building.
- 11 Ensure that any fire escapes meet safety regulations and that no site elements inhibit proper egress.
- 12 Ensure that any rear porches are well maintained and, if used as upper floor entrance(s), are well lit and meet building codes while retaining their historic character.

# Commercial Buildings

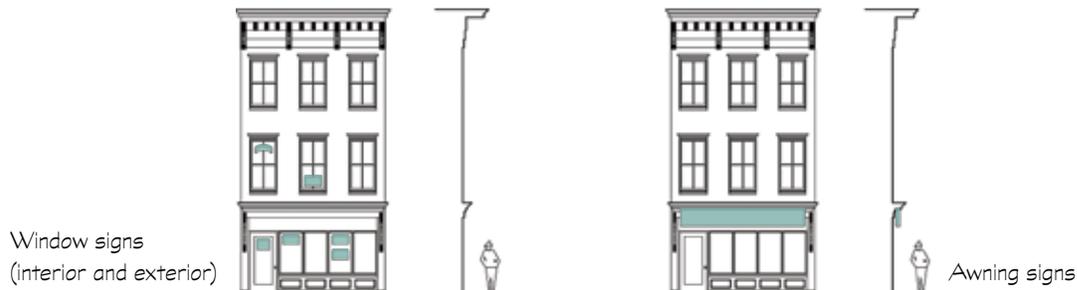
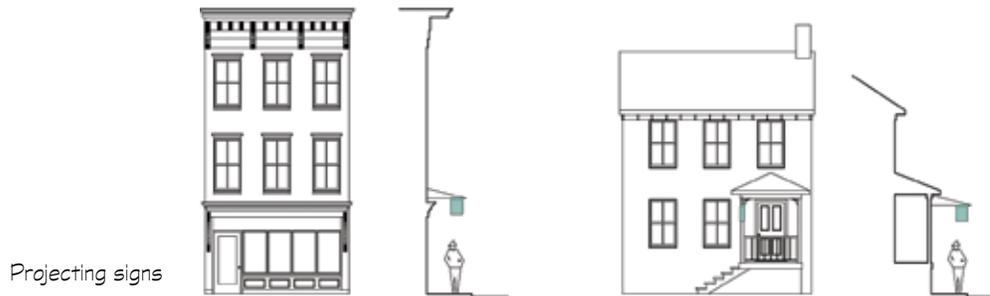
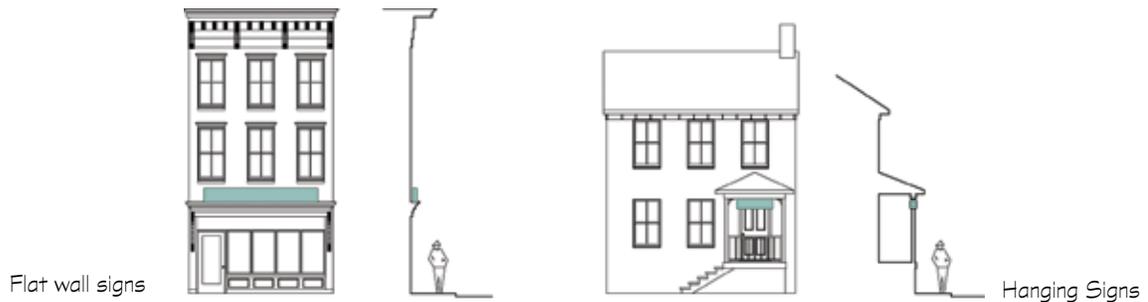
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## SIGNS

Signs are a vital part of the downtown scene. A balance should be struck between the need to call attention to individual businesses and the need for a positive image of the entire district. Signs can complement or detract from the character of a building, depending on their design, placement, quantity, size, shape, materials, color and condition. Historically significant signs should be retained, if possible, on buildings, even if the business is no longer in existence.

### SIGN TYPES



## SIGN PLACEMENT

- 1 Place signs so that they do not obstruct architectural elements and details that define the design of the building. Respect signs of adjacent businesses.
- 2 Flat wall signs for commercial buildings can be located above the storefront, within the frieze of the cornice, on covered transoms, on the pier that frames display windows, or generally on flat, unadorned surfaces of the facade, or in areas clearly suitable as sign locations.
- 3 For residential type buildings used for commercial purposes, a flat sign attached to the wall at the first floor, or between porch columns, is appropriate.
- 4 Projecting signs for commercial buildings should be at least 10 feet above the sidewalk, and project no more than 3 feet from the surface of the building. They should not be placed above the cornice line of the first floor level unless they have a clearance of less than ten feet.
- 5 For residential type buildings used for commercial purposes, small projecting signs attached to the wall at the first floor or porch column are appropriate, and should not be located higher than the top of the porch.
- 6 Freestanding signs, in general, are not an appropriate sign type in a traditional downtown except for use in the front yard of a residence that has been converted to commercial or office use. In this case, freestanding signs should be no higher than 15 feet.
- 7 Window signs (interior and exterior) should be approximately 5.5 feet above the sidewalk at the center point for good pedestrian visibility. Optional locations could include 18 inches from the top or bottom of the display window glass.
- 8 Window signs are also appropriate on the glazing of doors and on upper floor windows for separate building tenants.
- 9 Awning and canopy signs should be placed on the valance area only. The minimum space between the edge of the letter and the top and bottom of the valance should be 1.5 inches.
- 10 Vertically oriented signage may be appropriate, if architectural elements of the building are not obscured.

# Commercial Buildings

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Projecting signs help identify a business to approaching pedestrians.

## QUANTITY OF PERMANENT SIGNS

- 1 The number of signs used should be limited to encourage compatibility with the building and discourage visual clutter.
- 2 In commercial areas, signs should be limited to two total and a different type for each sign. A building should have only one wall sign per street frontage. Smaller directory signs may be used near the entryway or inside a common lobby area.
- 3 If customer access is provided at the rear of the building, property owners should consider reserving some of the building mounted sign allocation for identification of the business at that entry.

## Size

- 1 All signage on a commercial building should not exceed the allowable size specified by the underlying zoning district.
- 2 Horizontal or flat wall signs should not exceed 24 inches in height (or width for vertical signs), and should not extend more than 6 inches from the surface of the building.
- 3 Height of signage (or width, if vertically oriented) should not fill more than 75 percent of architecturally-defined area (frieze or cornice, transom, etc).
- 4 Flat wall signs must have a minimum depth of 0.75 inches, or have raised features (such as lettering or artwork) that are 0.75 inches in height or depth.
- 5 Projecting signs should be a maximum of 6 square feet per face, and have a minimum thickness of 3/8 inch.
- 6 Average height of letters and symbols (average width, if sign is vertically oriented) should be no more than 18 inches on wall-mounted and painted signs, and 9 inches on awning, canopy signs, and window signs.
- 7 Window signs should obscure no more than 20 percent of the window glass.

## Execution

Sign professionals who are skilled at lettering and surface preparation should execute signs.

## Design

It is important that signs be readable while conveying an image appropriate for the business or the building in a historic setting. Often, sign painters or graphic designers can assist with sign design.

## Shape

Shape of signs for commercial buildings should conform to the area where the sign is to be located unless a sign is to take on the shape of the product or service provided, such as a shoe for a shoe store. Such shapes should not obscure architectural elements of the building.

# Commercial Buildings

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## Materials

Traditional sign materials such as wood, glass, gold leaf, metal, raised individual metal, or painted individual wood letters, and painted lettering on wood, metal, or glass are appropriate in the historic district. Avoid the use of foam molded letters. High-density foam boards may be considered appropriate for wall-mounted or hanging signs, if surface is non-glossy, contain elements with depth, and otherwise adhere to the guidelines. Some plastic individual letters may be appropriate if they have a non-glossy finish.

## Color

Use colors that complement the materials and color scheme of the building, including accent and trim colors. Three colors are recommended, although more colors can be appropriate in exceptional and tastefully executed designs.

## Illumination

Generally, signs should be indirectly lit with a shielded light source. New internally illuminated signs are prohibited by Historic Winchester (HW) zoning district ordinance.

## Buildings with Multiple Tenants

A master sign plan should be submitted for the building. Upper-floor tenants should be represented at each primary entrance by a flat, wall-mounted directory sign.

## Other Signs

Banners are temporary as indicated by the city zoning ordinance. Wall murals should not be discouraged but should be carefully reviewed for compatibility with the district character.

Wall signs should not be painted directly on the surface of masonry walls if the wall has not been previously painted. Window signs should be painted or have decal flat letters and should not be three-dimensional.



The owner of this coffee shop uses shapes of a grinder and mug to create a clever and attractive projecting sign.

# Commercial Buildings

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## AWNINGS & CANOPIES

Awnings can contribute to the overall image of downtown by providing visual continuity for an entire block, helping to highlight specific buildings, and covering any unattractively remodeled transom areas above storefronts. They also protect pedestrians from the weather, shield window displays from sunlight and conserve energy.

### AWNING AND CANOPY TYPES

- **Standard Sloped Fabric Awnings:** Whether fixed or retractable, sloped awnings are the traditional awning type and are appropriate for most historic buildings, both residential and commercial.
- **Boxed or Curved Fabric Awnings:** A more current design treatment, this type of awning may be used on non-historic or new commercial buildings.
- **Canopies and Marquees:** Appropriate on some commercial buildings, canopies and marquees must fit the storefront design and not obscure important elements such as transoms or decorative glass.
- **Aluminum or Plastic Awnings:** These awnings are inappropriate for any buildings within the historic district.



This curved fabric awning is also used as a location for the primary sign of the business.



### AWNING DESIGN AND PLACEMENT

- 1 Place awnings carefully within the storefront, porch, door, or window openings so they do not obscure elements and do not damage materials.
- 2 Choose designs that do not interfere with existing signs, distinctive architectural features of the building, or with street trees or other elements along the street.

- 3 Choose an awning shape that fits the opening in which it is installed.
- 4 Make sure the bottom of the awning valance is at least 7 feet high.
- 5 Avoid using metal or plastic awnings.

## AWNING FABRIC AND COLOR

- 1 Coordinate colors with the overall building color scheme. Solid colors, wide stripes, and narrow stripes may be appropriate, but not overly bright or complex patterns.
- 2 Avoid using shiny plastic-like fabrics.

## SIGNS ON AWNINGS

- 1 As appropriate, use the front panel or valance of an awning for a sign. Letters can be sewn, screened, applied or painted on the awning fabric; avoid hand-painted or individually made fabric letters that are not professionally applied.
- 2 See the sign section for size and placement requirements for awning signs.

Reference: "Keeping Up Appearances: Storefront Guidelines," 1983,  
National Main Street Center publication by the National Trust for Historic  
Preservation.

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WINCHESTER  
HISTORIC DISTRICT  
DESIGN GUIDELINES  
**NEW COMMERCIAL  
CONSTRUCTION**

**H**istoric preservation has played a major part in the economic revitalization of many of Virginia's older downtowns, including Winchester. Appropriately rehabilitated facades located within the downtown historic district create a natural setting for commercial activities. Customers and visitors expect an attractive and well-

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These guidelines reflect the pragmatic approach that historic downtowns continue to evolve and adapt with each new generation. Physical changes to historic assets are managed in a careful way but no attempt is made to stop change. Over time, the framework of historic preservation and economic development can work together to keep downtown viable and help it to continue to play its role as the historic heart of the community.

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# New Commercial Construction

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The following guidelines offer general recommendations for the design of new commercial buildings in Winchester's Historic District. The intent of these guidelines is not to be overly specific, or to dictate certain designs to owners and designers. The intent is also not to encourage copying or mimicking particular historic styles, although some property owners may desire a new building designed in a form that respects the existing historic styles of the district.

These guidelines are intended to provide a general design framework for new construction. Good designers can take these clues and have the freedom to design appropriate, new commercial architecture for Winchester's Historic District. These criteria are all important when considering whether proposed new buildings are appropriate and compatible; however, the degree of importance of each criterion varies within each area as conditions vary. For instance, setback, scale and height may be more important than roof forms, since the sloping roofs of most buildings are not visible in the downtown area.

The guidelines in this brochure do not pertain to certain types of institutional buildings such as schools, libraries, and churches. These buildings, due to their function and community symbolism, usually are of a distinctive design. Their scale is often more monumental, and massing and orientation relate to the particular use within the building. For this reason, the design of any new such institutional building in the district would not follow these commercial guidelines, but should relate more to traditional designs of that particular building type. Nevertheless, the design of this type of project would still be reviewed by the BAR.

There is limited opportunity to build new structures in the downtown area since most of the land is already occupied by existing historic buildings. For this reason, buildings that contribute to the historic character of Winchester's historic district generally should not be demolished for new construction.

## SETBACK AND SPACING

Setback is the distance between the building wall and the property line or right-of-way at the front of the lot. Spacing refers to the distances between buildings. Most commercial buildings in Winchester's historic district have a very limited setback and spacing.

Set back and spacing for new construction in downtown should relate to the majority of surrounding historic commercial buildings.



# New Commercial Construction

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## MASSING AND BUILDING FOOTPRINT

Mass is the overall bulk of a building and footprint is the land area it covers. In Winchester's downtown, most buildings have a tall rectangular mass and are sited on lots with an average width of twenty to forty feet. The nature of the mass will be further defined by other criteria in this chapter such as height, width and directional expression.

New construction in downtown should relate in footprint and mass to the majority of surrounding historic dwellings.



The massing and footprint of a new structure (green box) may appear too large for this block unless its facade is divided into several smaller bays.

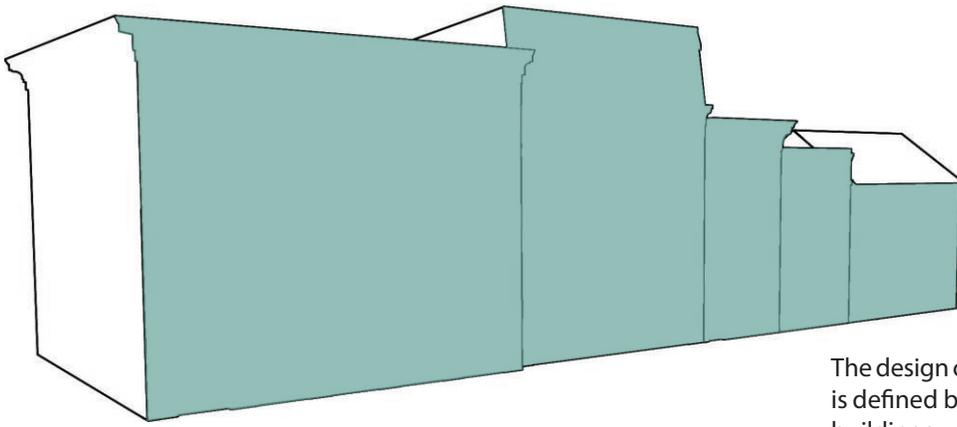
# New Commercial Construction

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Traditionally, most commercial buildings in downtown Winchester contain ground floor retail businesses that require display windows and upper-story space for housing, storage, or offices. As a result, the primary elevations - or facades - of historic commercial buildings have a predictable appearance. Generally, commercial buildings average two to four stories and nearly all have flat or shed roofs. Traditional commercial buildings have three distinct parts that give the facade an overall unified appearance: storefront, upper floor(s) and cornice.



The design character of the downtown area is defined by the street wall created by the buildings.



The design character of the downtown area is defined by the cornice, which is the decorative cap at the top of the building.

# New Commercial Construction

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The design character of the downtown area is defined by patterns of windows that create a rhythm of openings along the street wall.



The design character of the downtown area is defined by storefronts, windows, and entrances that create the transparent openings at the street level.

# New Commercial Construction

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## COMPLEXITY OF FORM

A building's form, or shape, can be simple (a box) or complex (a combination of many boxes or projections and indentations). The level of complexity usually relates directly to the style or type of building.

In general, use simple rectangular forms for new construction that relate to the majority of surrounding commercial buildings.



The rectangular forms of these commercial buildings are simple, as is their facade organization. Decoration, cornices, and openings add interest and complexity.

# New Commercial Construction

## DIRECTIONAL EXPRESSION

This guideline addresses the relationship of height and width of the front elevation of a building mass. A building is horizontal, vertical, or square in its proportions. The majority of commercial structures are vertical in their expression, although there are several types of exceptions in the district. Many of the larger buildings are more horizontal in proportions, as are late eighteenth and early nineteenth century residential structures that have been adapted for commercial purposes. Lastly, many of the twentieth century commercial buildings are more horizontal or square since they are built on larger lots or on several older lots that have been combined into a larger parcel.

In new construction, respect the directional expression (or overall relationship of height to width) of surrounding historic buildings. The directional expression of many commercial buildings in Winchester's Historic District is vertical.



While many of the commercial buildings have vertical proportions, larger historic structures and more recent buildings are more horizontal in appearance.

# New Commercial Construction

## HEIGHT AND WIDTH

The actual size of a new building can either contribute to, or be in conflict with, a historic area. While zoning allows up to 75 feet in height in the B-1, Central Business District, commercial buildings in the historic district, for the most part, range from two to four stories.

New construction proportions should respect the average height and width of the majority of existing neighboring commercial buildings in the district.



The new building (shaded box) reflects the average height of the block, and its three vertical bays relate better to the existing buildings than one large facade (See drawing below).



# New Commercial Construction

## SCALE AND ORIENTATION

Height and width also create scale, or the relationship between the size of a building and the size of a person. Scale also can be defined as the relationship of the size of a building to neighboring buildings and of a building to its site. The design features of a building can reinforce a human scale or can create a monumental scale. In Winchester, there is a variety of scale. For instance, an institutional building like a church or library may have monumental scale due to its steeple or entry portico, while a more human scale may be created by a storefront in a neighboring commercial building. Orientation refers to the direction in which the front of a building faces.

- 1 Provide features on new construction that reinforce scale and character of the surrounding area, whether human or monumental, by including elements such as storefronts, vertical and horizontal divisions, upper story windows and decorative features.
- 2 New commercial construction should orient its facade in the same direction as adjacent historic buildings, that is, to the street.
- 3 Front elevations oriented to side streets or to the interior of lots should be discouraged.



# New Commercial Construction

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## ROOF

The roof is not a prominent element in many of the commercial buildings found in the historic district, since most are hidden from public view. Exceptions include gable or mansard roof forms that are scattered throughout the downtown. Many of these are gable roofs of earlier dwellings that have been adapted to commercial use. Common roof materials in the historic district include slate, metal, and composition shingles.

- 1 When designing new commercial buildings, respect the character of roof types and pitches in the immediate area around the new construction.
- 2 For new construction in the historic district, traditional roofing materials such as slate or metal remain preferred for additions or new construction; however, artificial slate may be appropriate on a case-by-case basis. There are new metal roof materials available that are pre-coated steel in various colors. Some of these products can be installed to give a very similar appearance as a standing-seam metal roof, and may be considered for new construction. Industrial metal roofs that have wide strips covering seams are not appropriate for use in the historic district.



While many roofs are not visible in commercial buildings, this drawing shows that some blocks in Winchester's downtown have structures with mansard or gable roof forms.

# New Commercial Construction

## OPENINGS: WINDOWS & STOREFRONTS

Traditionally designed commercial buildings found in Winchester have distinctive rows of upper story windows and storefronts on the first level. The windows typically have vertical proportions and may have a decorative lintel or cap over them. Their light (pane) configuration varies with the style and age of the building.

- 1 The rhythm, patterns, and ratio of solids (walls) and voids (windows and doors) of new buildings should relate to, and be compatible with, adjacent facades. The majority of existing commercial buildings in Winchester's Historic District have a higher proportion of openings to wall area. This factor suggests that new buildings should also share that general proportion of openings to wall, particularly in regard to the storefront on the first level.
- 2 The size and proportion, or the ratio of width to height, of window openings of new buildings' primary facades, should be similar and compatible with those on facades of surrounding historic buildings.
- 3 Window types should be compatible with those found in the district, which are typically some form of double-hung or casement sash.
- 4 Traditionally designed openings generally have a recessed jamb on masonry buildings and have a surface-mounted frame on frame buildings. New construction should follow these methods in the historic district as opposed to designing openings that are flush with the rest of the wall.
- 5 Many storefronts of Winchester's historic buildings have typical elements such as transoms, cornices, bulkheads, and sign areas. Consideration should be given to incorporating such elements in the design of storefronts on new buildings.
- 6 If small paned windows are used in a new construction project, they should have true divided lights and not use clip-in fake muntin bars. Most major window manufacturers make a wide variety of windows that still have true divided lights.



The design of new buildings should reflect the large area of openings that Winchester's traditional commercial structures contain, particularly at the first level.

# New Commercial Construction

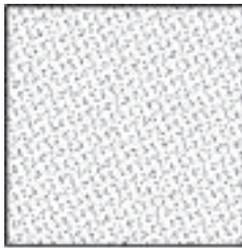
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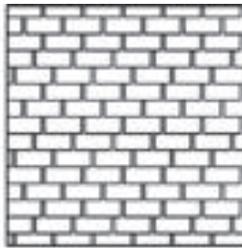
## MATERIALS AND TEXTURE

There is a rich variety of building materials and textures found throughout Winchester's downtown, including brick, limestone, wood siding and stucco.

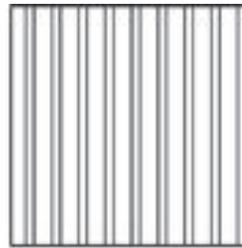
- 1 The selection of materials and textures for a new commercial building should be compatible with, and complement neighboring historic buildings.
- 2 In order to strengthen the traditional image of the commercial area of the historic district, brick or stone is the most appropriate material for new buildings.
- 3 Synthetic materials such as aluminum and synthetic stucco (EIFS products) are generally not considered appropriate in the Historic District. Traditional materials remain preferred for additions or new construction; however, certain new materials such as cementitious siding, may be considered on a case-by-case basis. New materials associated with new architecture styles/forms and materials that are integral to that style shall be considered on a case-by-case basis.



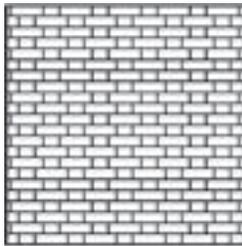
Stucco



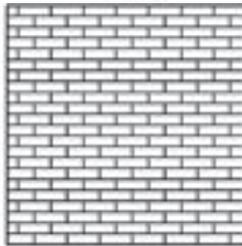
Rectangular Wood Shingles



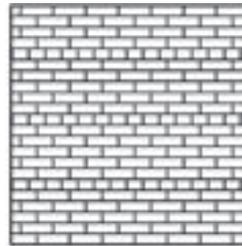
Beard & Batten



Brick-Flemish Bond



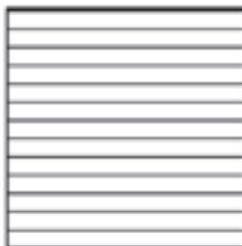
Brick-Running Bond



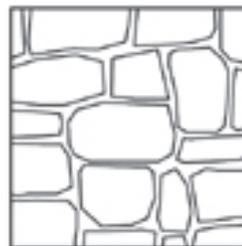
Brick-Common Bond



German Wood Siding



Wood Siding



Stone

# New Commercial Construction

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## ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS

The details and decoration of Winchester's commercial historic buildings vary tremendously with the different styles, periods, and types. Such details include cornices, roof overhang, chimneys, lintels, sills, brackets, masonry patterns, shutters, entrance decoration, and storefront elements. The important factor to recognize is that many of the older commercial buildings in the district have decoration and noticeable details.

It is a challenge to create new designs that use historic details successfully. One extreme is to simply copy the complete design of a historic building, and the other is to "paste on" historic details on a modern unadorned design. Neither solution is appropriate for designing architecture that relates to its historic context and yet still reads as a contemporary building. More successful new buildings may take their clues from historic images and reintroduce and reinterpret designs of traditional decorative elements.

The illustrations and photographs found throughout all of these guidelines' brochures offer many examples of details from the historic district, and may serve as a source for new designs.

## COLOR

The selection and use of colors for a new commercial building should be coordinated and compatible with adjacent buildings. For further information, see the general painting guidelines and illustration on page 16 of *Brochure 3: Residential Rehabilitation*.

## GUIDELINES FOR ADDITIONS

There are limited opportunities to make additions to many of Winchester's commercial buildings. An exterior addition to a historic building may radically alter its appearance. Before an addition is planned, every effort should be made to accommodate the new use within the interior of the existing building. When an addition is necessary, it should be designed and constructed in a manner that will complement and not detract from the character-defining features of the historic building.

These guidelines for additions apply to schools, churches, and other institutional buildings, as well as houses and commercial buildings in Winchester's Historic District.

The design of new additions should follow the guidelines for new construction on all elevations that are prominently visible (as described elsewhere in this section). There are several other considerations that are specific to new additions in the historic district and are listed below.

## FUNCTION

Attempt to accommodate needed functions within the existing commercial structure without building an addition.

## DESIGN

New additions should not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work should be differentiated from the old and should be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

# New Commercial Construction

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## REPLICATION OF STYLE

A new addition should not be an exact copy of the design of the existing historic building. If the new addition appears to be a part of the existing building, the integrity of the original historic design is compromised, and the viewer is confused over what is historic and what is new. The design of new additions can be compatible with and respectful of existing commercial buildings without being a mimicry of their original design.

## MATERIALS AND FEATURES

Use materials, windows, doors, architectural detailing, roofs, and colors which are compatible with the existing commercial historic building.

## ATTACHMENT TO EXISTING BUILDING

Wherever possible, new additions or alterations to existing commercial buildings and structures shall be done in such a manner that, if such additions or alterations were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the building or structure would be unimpaired. Therefore, the new design should not use the same wall plane, roof line or cornice line of the existing structure.

## SIZE

Limit the size of the addition so that it does not visually overpower the existing commercial building.

## LOCATION

Attempt to locate the addition on the rear elevations, or in a manner that makes them visually secondary to the primary elevation of the commercial structure. If the addition is located on a primary elevation facing the street, or if a rear or side addition faces a street, parking area, or an important pedestrian route, the visible elevation of the addition should be treated under the new construction guidelines.

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WINCHESTER  
HISTORIC DISTRICT  
DESIGN GUIDELINES  
**STREETSCAPE**

**T**he publicly owned parts of Winchester’s Historic District are as important as the private structures in helping to define the unique character of the area. Throughout the district, sidewalks, street trees, and the network of streets and alleys make for a pleasant and rich walking experience. The pedestrian oriented focal point of the district is the

Loudoun Street Mall with its outdoor cafes, small shops and distinctive street furniture, historically styled light fixtures, colorful banners and brick pavers.

Other features that reflect the special district character are limestone curbs, special focal points of fountains, outdoor art and historical plaques. The following streetscape guidelines encourage retaining such character-defining features, expanding their use when the opportunity arises, and making additional improvements to create a streetscape that complements the historic nature of the district.

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# Streetscape

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## TREES, PLANTINGS, AND OPEN SPACE

- 1 Maintain the canopy effect of mature deciduous shade trees throughout the residential streets of the district.
- 2 Maintain existing plantings in all public areas, especially indigenous species. Improve maintenance and expand use of seasonal color in plantings in public parking lots and auto-parks and along Indian Alley as well.
- 3 Replace damaged or missing street trees with appropriate species such as maple or ash. Use indigenous and hardy species that require minimal maintenance.
- 4 Expand the use of the existing portable planters. Site them so that they do not block narrow sidewalks and remove them in winter months when they are empty.
- 5 Pursue opportunities for passive and active recreation areas in the historic district to serve all segments of the population.



One of Winchester's most important civic spaces is created at the intersection of the Loudoun Street Mall with the forecourt of the historic Frederick County Courthouse.



Street trees help create a canopy effect on several blocks within the historic district.

## STREETS, PARKING, AND PAVING



Plantings help screen this parking lot.



Distinctive brick paver patterns add character to the surface of this asphalt parking area.

- 1 Maintain the existing rectangular grid of the street network.
- 2 Retain any remaining historic paving or curbing; and if any such material is uncovered in future public projects, consider reusing it, or parts of it, in the new project.
- 3 Make street paving consistent throughout the district. Avoid the cosmetic patching of surfaces when more substantial repair is needed.
- 4 Avoid widening existing streets without providing sidewalks, street trees, and other elements that maintain the street wall and emphasize the human scale.
- 5 Avoid paving over areas that could be used for plantings.
- 6 Screen parking lots from streets and sidewalks with trees and shrubs, and include interior planting islands to provide shade and visual relief from large expanses of asphalt.
- 7 Provide water in parking lots for landscape maintenance.
- 8 Install adequate lighting in parking areas to provide security in the evening hours. Select fixtures that are appropriate to a historic setting and avoid cobra head types.
- 9 Avoid demolishing historic buildings for any parking areas or facilities.
- 10 Ensure that the design of any new parking structure relates to the design guidelines in *Brochure 5: Guidelines for Commercial Buildings*.
- 11 Attempt in the street-level design of any such facility to relate to pedestrians through the use of storefronts, display windows, or other visual features.

# Streetscape

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## PEDESTRIAN WALKS AND CURBS

- 1 Retain historic paving materials such as brick sidewalks and limestone curbs. Private owners should preserve similar items on their site as well, including any brick or limestone walls.
- 2 When sidewalks must be repaired, match adjacent materials (except for modern concrete) in design, color, texture, and tooling. Avoid extensive variation in sidewalk and curb materials.
- 3 When sidewalks need replacement, use a paving unit such as brick or patterned concrete that relates to the scale of the district. Curbs likewise should be a material such as stone or exposed concrete aggregate. Avoid pouring concrete in continuous strips.
- 4 Avoid excessive curb cuts for vehicular access across pedestrian ways. Where curb cuts are necessary, mark them with a change in materials, color, texture, or grade.
- 5 Avoid blocking the sidewalk with too many street furniture elements and remove obsolete signs and poles.
- 6 Maintain a distinction between sidewalks and streets. Avoid paving sidewalks with asphalt and retain the curb strip.
- 7 When using limestone curbstones, seek alternatives to painting them to indicate no parking zones.
- 8 Consider using some type of distinctive crosswalks at key intersections or crossings to tie surrounding areas into the mall and relate to current levels of improvements there.
- 9 Continue to expand the installation of handicapped ramps as planned throughout the district.
- 10 Seek opportunities to link important pedestrian areas of activity. Maintain walkway connections from surrounding streets to the Old Town Mall, even where easements are required over private property.



Limestone curbs are a unique and valuable feature to the streets of the historic district.



This pedestrian connector is well designed with brick pavers, historically styled light fixtures, and landscaped borders.

## STREET FURNITURE AND LIGHTING

- 1 Expand the use of pedestrian-scaled, traditionally styled light fixtures like those on the mall. The design of these may vary in different parts of the district but do not expand the use of wooden poles and cobra-head light fixtures. A temporary alternative would be to install pedestrian-scaled arms on existing wooden poles.
- 2 Provide adequate lighting at critical areas of pedestrian/vehicular conflict such as parking lots, alleys, and crosswalks.
- 3 Provide outlets on light standards for seasonal lighting, and brackets for hanging banners and decorations for special events.
- 4 Continue to use traditional designs for trash containers in the district, possibly matching other street furniture.
- 5 Place benches at key locations in the district. Use traditional designs constructed of wood and/or cast iron.
- 6 Continue to make any existing or future street furniture such as newspaper boxes, telephone booths, bicycle racks, drinking fountains, planters, and bollards compatible in design, color, and materials with existing elements like those on the mall.
- 7 Avoid placing too many elements on narrow sidewalks.



The Loudoun Street Mall has a well coordinated and designed set of street furniture and lighting elements.

# Streetscape

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## SIGNALS AND UTILITIES

- 1 Consider installing traffic signals on poles that are placed beside the street and are compatible with pedestrian-scaled light fixtures.
- 2 Place utilities underground if at all possible, or locate behind buildings. Screen surface equipment.
- 3 Place necessary utilities such as transformers and overhead wires so that they are as visually unobtrusive as possible.
- 4 Encourage the siting of dumpsters and trash storage areas to be as unobtrusive as possible.



Traffic signals are a prominent visual element throughout the district. Pole-mounted designs that do not hang over intersections may be more appropriate to the scale of the district.

## PUBLIC SIGNS, PLAQUES, FOUNTAINS, AND ART

- 1 Continue to use the existing public directional and informational signs in the district. Use appropriate standards of design with skyline logo, color, and lettering styles for additional needed signs in the district.
- 2 Develop appropriate street identification signs, perhaps with a distinctive logo, and use these throughout the district to replace the current green street signs. Use round posts for these street signs.
- 3 Continue to promote the installation of local historical plaques commemorating significant events, buildings, and individuals in the district. These place-making elements play an important role in celebrating and communicating the history of the district.
- 4 Maintain carefully any existing place-making art features found in the historic district. Pursue the statuary park concept for part or all of the existing adjoining Judicial Center parking lot to build on the history-telling effort, which began with the placement of the Admiral Byrd statue. Incorporate fountains, plazas, benches, seasonal plantings, and a local history timeline along the existing brick retaining wall in the downtown park which connects to the Old Town Welcome Center.
- 5 Avoid placing signposts in locations where they can interfere with the opening of vehicle doors; use the minimum number of signs necessary.



Quality graphics on public banners reinforce good design within the historic district.



Plaques and fountains add interest to space for visitors and residents alike.



# Streetscape

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## SIDEWALK CAFES

*(Note: Sidewalk cafes require a permit from the Old Town Development Board)*

### 1 General Design

As much as possible, all elements including chains, bollards, tables, chairs, planters, and trash containers should be of the same color, materials, and design character. Black is the dominant color of mall elements and it or other dark colors are preferred.

### 2 Fences, Chains and Bollards

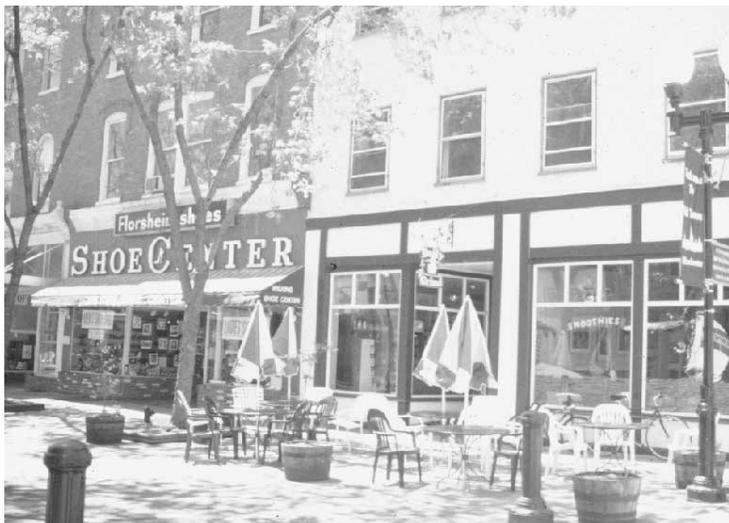
They should be wrought iron or painted metal. Chains should be the size G-7 or larger. Bollards should be at least 3 inches in diameter.

### 3 Tables and Chairs

They should be wrought iron, painted metal or other approved material.

### 4 Planters

They should be compatible in terms of design, scale, materials, and color with other elements of the cafe.



The design of sidewalk cafes can reinforce the existing design vocabulary of other street furniture elements on the mall.

### 5 Umbrellas

They should contain a maximum of two colors that are compatible with the furniture, and the size of the umbrella should be in scale with the table.

### 6 Trash Containers

They should be compatible in terms of design, materials, and color with other elements of the cafe, and should be located within the cafe enclosure.

### 7 Newspaper Boxes

Newspaper boxes should be grouped in designated locations and placed within uniform frames of black metal.

## PORTABLE SIGNS (SANDWICH BOARD TYPE)

*(Note: Portable signs require a permit from the Old Town Development Board)*

### 1 Height

They should be a maximum of four feet.

### 2 Size

They should be a maximum of twelve square feet (six sq. ft. per side).

### 3 Materials

They should be constructed of metal or wood. Wood signs should be constructed of MDO board or a similar quality material and not grained plywood. All edges should be covered with molding.



### 4 Color

They should have a maximum of four colors that relate to the colors of the associated building. Up to six colors may be appropriate for signs related to ornate Victorian era buildings.

### 5 Lettering

The letters should be scaled to the size of the sign. No advertising trademarks or logos should be a part of the sign other than that of the business. Signs should not be of a type that has interchangeable letters.

Menu board signs are allowed with an area for writing “specials of the day” with part of the sign area used for permanent lettering identifying the business. This lettering should be professionally painted or applied vinyl letters.

Sandwich boards reflect the commercial character of the downtown mall area and require a permit from the Old Town Development Board.

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WINCHESTER  
 HISTORIC DISTRICT  
 DESIGN GUIDELINES  
 MOVING &  
 DEMOLITION

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**H**istoric buildings are irreplaceable community assets and once they are gone, they are gone forever. With each succeeding demolition or removal, the integrity of Winchester's heritage is further eroded. The new building or parking lot that often replaces the removed historic building is seldom an attribute to the historic character of the district. Therefore, the moving or demolition of any significant building in the historic district should be considered very carefully before any approval is given.

# Moving & Demolition

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## CRITERIA FOR MOVING BUILDINGS

The following general standards should be applied in decisions made by the BAR in regard to moving buildings:

- 1 Whether or not the proposed relocation is the only practical means of saving the structure from demolition. Have other alternatives been studied which would not require the building to be moved?
- 2 The age and character of a historic structure. For example, is the subject building one of the older structures found in the district, or is its design that of a distinctive character not found frequently in the historic district?
- 3 The view of the structure or area from a public street or right-of-way. For example, is the site at a prominent location in the historic district that is very visible; and would the removal of the subject building create a detrimental view in the future? Or is the subject building part of a continuous row of similar structures, and its removal would result in a loss of the integrity of the view of the entire block?
- 4 The present character of the setting of the structure or area and its surroundings and the impact caused by the structure's removal. That is, how significant is the setting of the structure, and how much does the setting help define the character of the subject building? For example, is the existing lot a large area with significant landscaping, is it surrounded by similar properties, and would the removal of the building create a large gap along the street?
- 5 Whether or not the proposed relocation may have a detrimental or beneficial effect on the structural soundness of the building or structure. That is, will the move likely threaten the structural stability of the subject building, or improve its stability at a new location?
- 6 Whether or not the proposed relocation would have a negative or positive effect on other historic sites, buildings, or structures within the historic district. That is, would the moving of the subject building create an unsightly gap in a continuous row of existing historic structures? Or would the new location of the moved building within the historic district be an area where the subject building would not be of a type, style or scale that would relate to the surrounding historic buildings.
- 7 Whether or not the proposed relocation would provide new surroundings that would be compatible with the architectural aspects of the building or structure.
- 8 Whether or not the building or structure will be relocated to another site within the historic district that is appropriate in scale and size. For example, is the moved building scaled to its receiving site, or is it too large or too small for its new lot when compared with surrounding properties.

There are no criteria in the present ordinance for consideration of moving a building although many of the standards listed for demolition could apply to moving as well.

## GUIDELINES FOR MOVING BUILDINGS

If a building is to be moved, the following steps should be taken.

- |          |   |          |  |
|----------|---|----------|--|
| <b>1</b> | Move buildings only after all alternatives to retention have been examined, including a professional feasibility study. Seek guidance from Preservation of Historic Winchester, Inc. for information about moving buildings.  | <b>4</b> | Thoroughly assess the building's structural condition in order to minimize any damage that might occur during the move.                              |
| <b>2</b> | Contact the Winchester Office of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources for assistance prior to moving the building if there is a desire to remain listed on the National Register of Historic Places.   | <b>5</b> | Select a contractor who has experience in moving buildings and check references with other building owners who have used this contractor.            |
| <b>3</b> | Seek assistance from Preservation of Historic Winchester, Inc. on documenting the building on its original site before undertaking the move. Photograph the building and the site thoroughly and also measure the building if the move will require substantial reconstruction. | <b>6</b> | Secure the building from vandalism and potential weather damage before and after its move.   |
|          |   | <b>7</b> | If the site is to remain vacant for any length of time, improve the empty lot in a manner consistent with other open space in the historic district. |

## CRITERIA FOR DEMOLITION

The following demolition criteria are presently in Winchester's ordinance:

- 1** Is the building of such architectural or historic interest that its removal or disturbance would be to the detriment of the public interest?
- 2** Is the building of such interest or significance that it could be made into a national, state, or local historic shrine?
- 3** Is the building of such old, unusual or uncommon design, texture, and/or material that it could only be reproduced with great difficulty and/or expense?
- 4** Would retention of the building help preserve the historic character of the district?
- 5** Would retention of the building help preserve a historic interest in a place or an area of the City?
- 6** Would retention of the building promote the general welfare by maintaining the increasing real estate values; generating business; creating new positions; attracting tourists, students, historians, artists, and artisans; attracting new residents; encouraging study and interest in American history; stimulating interest and study in architecture and design; educating citizens in American culture and heritage; and making the City a more attractive and desirable place in which to live?

# Moving & Demolition

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## ADDITIONAL CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING DEMOLITION PROPOSALS NOT IN ORDINANCE

- 7 The reason for demolishing the building or structure and whether or not any alternatives to demolition exist.
- 8 The view of the structure or areas from a public street or right-of-way, and what the impact will be on that view if the building is demolished. For example, is the site at a prominent location in the historic district that is very visible and the removal of the subject building would create a detrimental view in the future?
- 9 The present character of the setting of the structure or area and its surroundings. Is the subject building located in a setting of surrounding buildings that contains examples of older, more rare, unique, or distinctive styles or types of buildings relative to the rest of the district?
- 10 Whether or not historic events significant in local, state or national history occurred in the building or structures.
- 11 Whether or not a relocation of the building or structure or a portion there of, would be to any extent practicable as a preferable alternative to demolition.
- 12 Whether or not the proposed demolition could potentially adversely affect other historic buildings located within the historic district, or adversely affect the character of the historic district.

## GUIDELINES FOR DEMOLITION

*State enabling legislation referred to in Winchester's current ordinance (sec 14-11) requires that if a property owner wishes to demolish a building, the owner first must offer the property for sale. The length of time the property is offered for sale relates to its asking price and is spelled out in the state legislation. Winchester's ordinance has an additional requirement that the asking price be verified through an appraisal process.*

If a building owner wishes to demolish his/her building after going through the above process, the following steps should be taken:

- 1** Document the building thoroughly through photographs and measured drawings according to Historic American Building Survey standards. The resulting information should be retained in the offices of Preservation of Historic Winchester, Inc. and with Winchester Office of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources.
- 2** Demolish a historic building only after all preferable alternatives have been previously exhausted.
- 3** If the site is to remain vacant for any length of time, improve the empty lot in a manner consistent with other open spaces in the historic district.

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