



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.

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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.

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 5: Guidelines for Commercial Buildings*.

NEW RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION

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.



Recommended

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



Not Recommended

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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



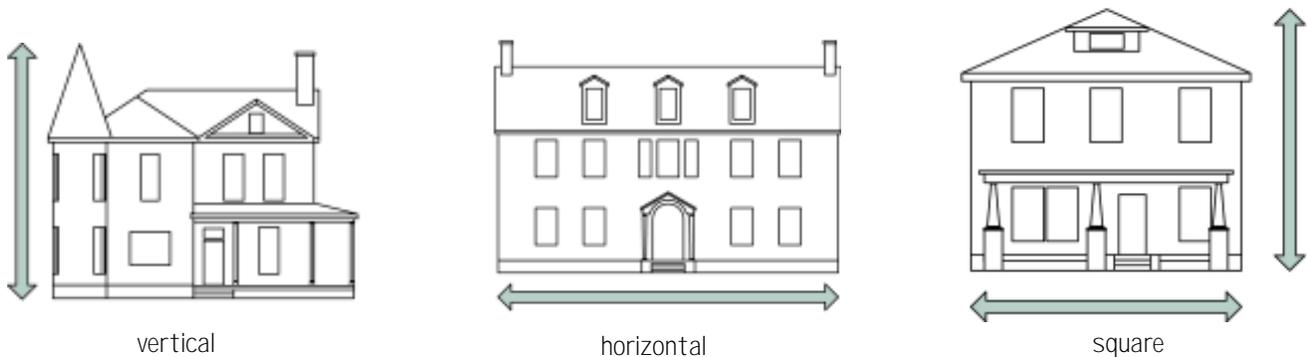
complex form

NEW RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION

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.

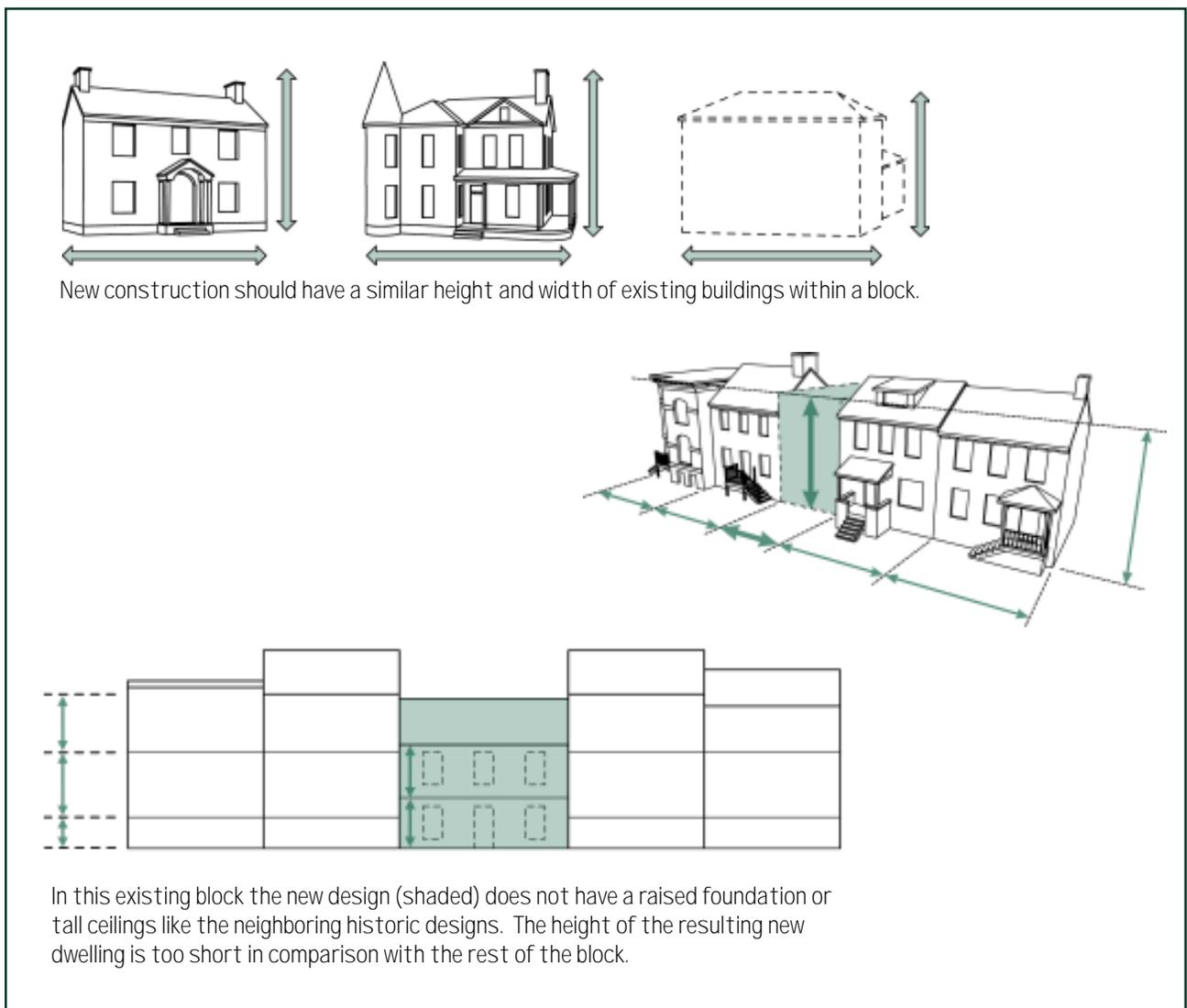


NEW RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION

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

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

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, use traditional roofing materials such as slate or metal. This design relates better to the visual image of historic shingle patterns than thin asphalt types.



There is a wide variety of roof forms throughout the district and they help create the unique character of each block.

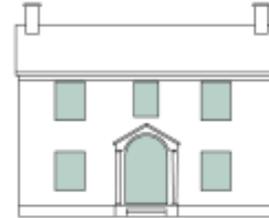


NEW RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION

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.
- 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.
- 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.



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

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.



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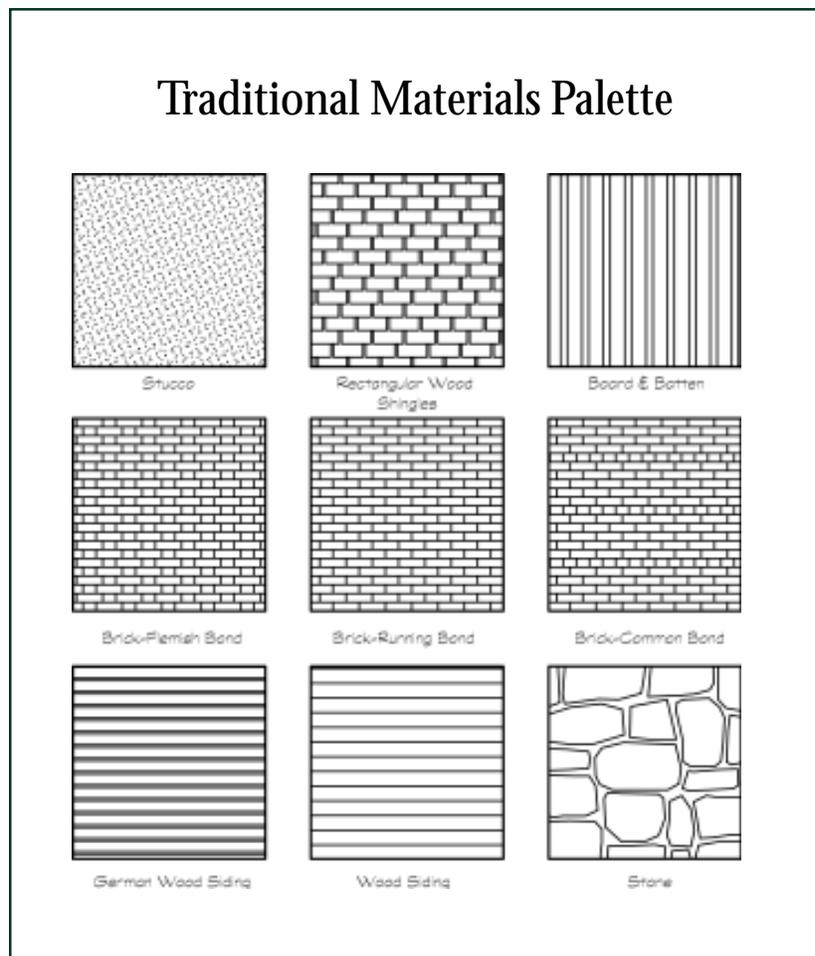
MATERIALS AND TEXTURE

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 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 sidings such as vinyl, aluminum and synthetic stucco (EIFS products) are not historic district cladding materials in the historic district and their use is prohibited.

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).



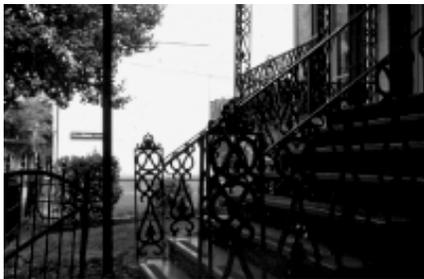
NEW RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION

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 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 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

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 the 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

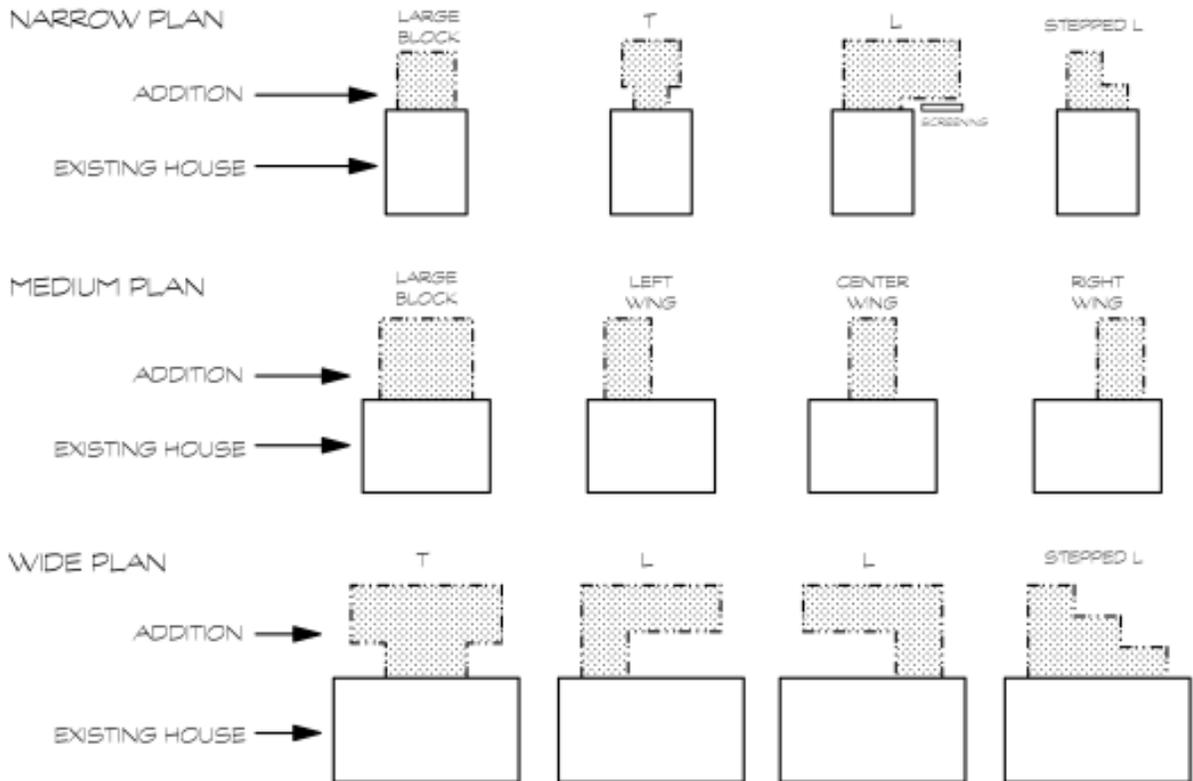
Limit the size of the addition so that it does not visually overpower the existing building.

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

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 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.

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