CRITERIA and GUIDELINES

of the

Old Saybrook Historic District Commission

ADOPTED: October 15, 1985
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Table of Contents

Sec. 1 Introduction

The Old Saybrook Historic District Commission, in accordance with Town Ordinance No. 60 enacted March 12, 1985 pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes 7-147a through 7-147m, regulates any changes (other than routine maintenance) made to the exterior of existing buildings and structures, and the exterior of any new building or structure, which is located within the boundaries of historic district(s) within the Town of Old Saybrook, which buildings or structures are affixed to the land and are visible from a public street, way or place, including the waters which abut such district(s). Specific guidelines/recommendations contained herein (if any) which fall outside the scope of the Commission's regulatory purview are included for education/advisory purposes only.

The aim of guidelines should be to nurture the development of what Elizabeth Mills Brown has called "architecture of the whole," a feeling for streetscape and setting which in the past produced the harmonious blend of architectural styles that mark so many Historic Districts. Common construction techniques and materials helped foster this harmony, in part. Historic District Commission review should institutionalize this once automatic process of blending new with old.

There are some common issues for which any guidelines for exterior architectural features will have to address. Among the most important is the question of changes that are easily removed and those that are irreversible.

Removal of exterior architectural features is perhaps the most serious case of an irreversible change. In the case of severe deterioration, there may be no choice but to remove a rotting cornice, porch or doorway. But should it be replaced? And if so, how? The guidelines should establish the importance of specific details in defining the character of the District.

They should give some idea of what would be an appropriate replacement for a missing feature in a particular style of house, based on architectural history and local practice.

A related question arises when an applicant wishes to make a house more "historic" by adding details or features of a period older than the house. In Connecticut, this usually involves "Colonial" or early American features, although some Victorianizing is beginning to occur.

"Earlying up" a house destroys its own intrinsic design qualities, falsifies the historical record and is usually inappropriate.

Use of synthetic siding is another difficult issue. The Secretary of Interior's Standards discourage use of any synthetic siding, including aluminum, vinyl, asbestos, asphalt or brick veneer, over existing historic materials. Some commissions, however, allow use of aluminum or vinyl siding in cases of hardship with stipulations on its installation, while others will not allow its use on structures built prior to when it became available as a building material. Application of synthetic siding to a house can sometimes involve covering or removal of architectural detail, and can have long term, maintenance consequences.

Some practices, like sandblasting of masonry or wood, are irreversible and can also have long-term consequences on the preservation of a building. Guidelines should discourage practices that are destructive of historic materials. The Department of Interior's "Preservation Briefs" are an excellent (and free) source of information about many of the above-mentioned issues.

The guidelines may also address such special cases as roof-mounted solar energy apparatus, satellite TV dishes and wheelchair ramps.

Rehabilitation guidelines are most effective when organized to cover all aspects of a building: roofs, foundations, windows, entries, etc. so that the user can go directly to the section that concerns him.

Sec. 2 Criteria (Guidelines)

The following pages contain the Old Saybrook Historic District Commission Criteria (Guidelines).

It is the Commission's intent that the Criteria be consistent with the U.S. Secretary of Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitation, which are incorporated herein by reference.

2.1 Foundations

TRY TO:

Maintain the original appearance of the foundation material.

With brick or stone, use mortar of the same color and strength as the original.

Limit any new excavations adjacent to historic foundations to avoid undermining the structural stability of the building or adjacent historic buildings.

AVOID:

For stone foundations, patching with stones that are not generally the same shape and size as the original.

Over-mortaring joints or tooling to a profile inconsistent with the original.

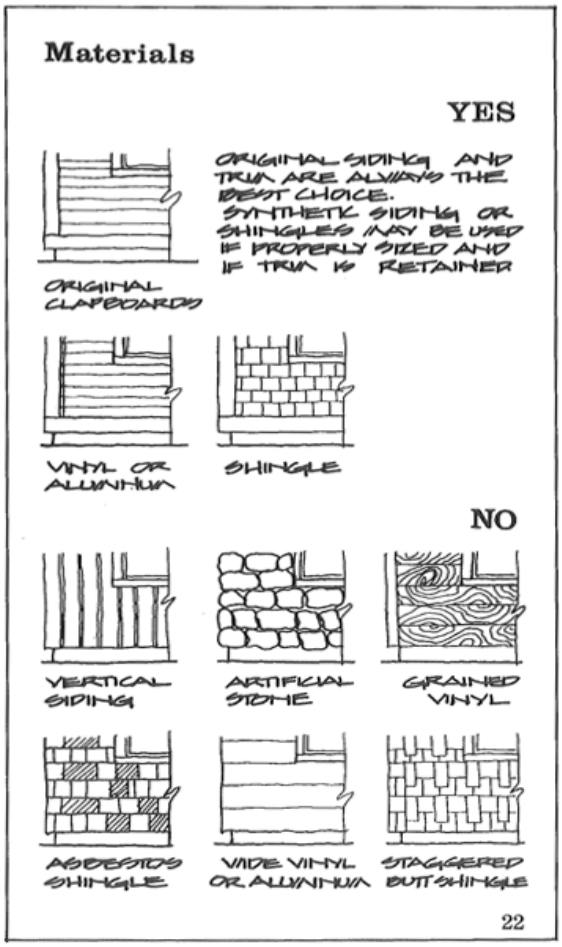
Carrying out excavations or regrading adjacent to or within a historic building, which could cause the historic foundation to settle, shift, or fail; or could have a similar effect on adjacent historic buildings.

2.2 Wall Surface

2.2.1 WOOD FRAME BUILDINGS

TRY TO:

Retain and restore original materials whenever possible. When deteriorated material must be replaced or repaired, use material that duplicates the old as nearly as possible. Be aware of the use of different materials on a single building, such as a shingle gable over a clapboard first story, and replace or repair with similar materials.



AVOID:

Removal of existing materials, such as clapboards or shingles, since these form a major part of the building's texture.

Resurfacing frame buildings with material that changes the textural appearance of the original building or that was not available at the time of construction, such as artificial stone, brick veneer, asbestos or asphalt shingles, plastic or aluminum siding. Such material also can contribute to the deterioration of the structure from moisture and insect attack. If the property owner still wishes to utilize aluminum or vinyl siding, then he should use siding that duplicates the width of existing clapboards.

Using artificial material to clad trim pieces such as balusters, brackets, cornices, moldings, post corner boards and columns, even though the major wall areas may be covered.

Cladding all wall surfaces with the same type of siding irrespective of their original appearance. For example, a shingled gable should be clad in the same way as the clapboard body of the house.

Using artificial decorations, such as shutters, scrolls, grilles, etc. since these rarely have the appearance of original materials if, in fact, the building originally had such decorations at all.

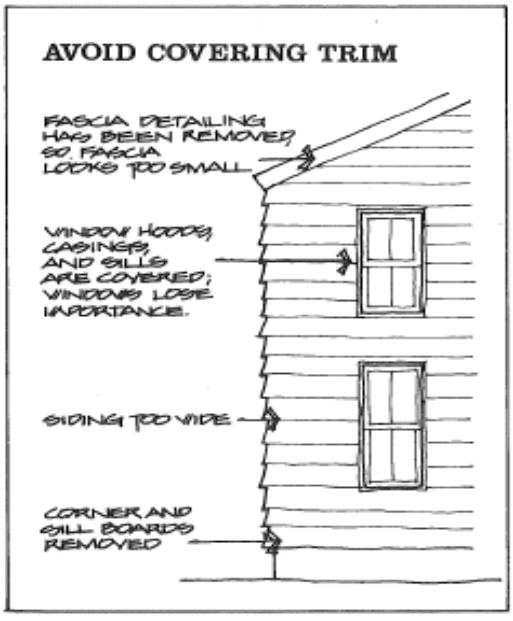
TRY TO:

Use corner boards and other flat trim pieces of the same width and appearance as the original.

Apply chemical preservatives to wood features, such as beam-ends or outriggers that are exposed to decay hazards and are traditionally unpainted.

Retain coatings such as paint that help protect the wood from moisture and ultraviolet light. Paint removal should considered only where there is paint surface deterioration and as part of an overall maintenance program which involves repainting or applying other appropriate protective coatings.

Protect and maintain wood and masonry features by providing proper drainage so that water is not allowed to stand on flat, horizontal surfaces or accumulate in decorative features.



AVOID:

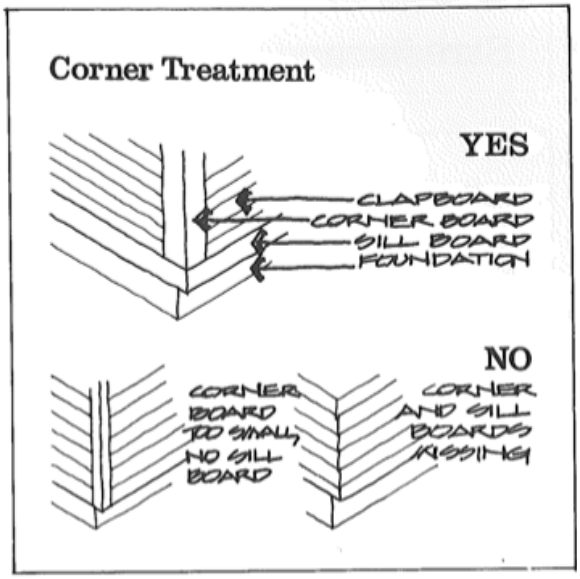
Using chemical preservatives such as creosote, which can change the appearance of wood features unless used historically.

Stripping paint or other coatings reveal bare wood, thus exposing historically coated surfaces to the effects of accelerated weathering.

Radically changing the type of finish or its color or accent scheme so that the historic character of the exterior is diminished.

Stripping historically painted surfaces to bare wood, then applying clear finishes or stains in order to create a "natural look."

Stripping paint or varnish to bare wood rather than repairing or reapplying a special finish, i.e. a grained finish to an exterior wood feature such as a front door.



2.2.2 ALUMINUM AND VINYL SIDING

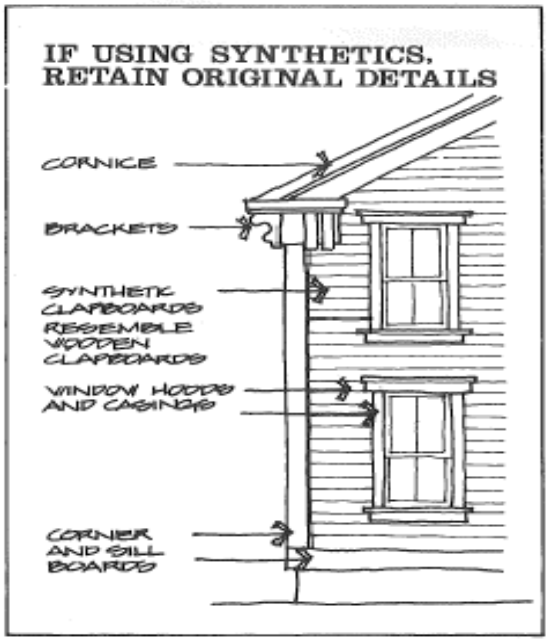
The use of aluminum and vinyl siding often appears to homeowners to be an expedient way of easing the burden of painting clapboard structures. From a distance, aluminum or vinyl siding can be indistinguishable from clapboard. However, there are problems generated by their use, which Commissioners should understand.

1. Installation of siding often results in the covering or removal of ornamental details that may be significant to the building's character.

2. Aluminum and vinyl siding usually does change the appearance of a building. Boards will not always match the clapboard it covers. It can be dented.

3. Use of siding increases danger from fire by creating a "chimney effect" that spreads fire up the house and creates difficulties for firefighters.

4. Siding can trap moisture that will lead to rot of the clapboards underneath. It can also mask insect damage.



2.3 Masonry

TRY TO:

Retain, wherever possible the original masonry and mortar without the application of surface treatment.

If repointing is necessary, duplicate the original mortar joint in color, texture, size and profile.

Clean masonry, when necessary, using the gentlest method available, such as soft brushes and low-pressure water.

Repair or replace deteriorated masonry with materials that match the original.

Repair stucco by removing the damaged material and patch with new stucco that duplicates the old in strength, composition, color and texture.

Install passive solar devices such as a glazed "trombe" wall on a rear or inconspicuous side of the historic building.

AVOID:

Indiscriminate removal of paint from masonry surfaces since it originally may have been applied for aesthetic or practical reasons.

Sandblasting or using harsh chemicals that may react with masonry. These methods destroy the material's natural ability to repel water.

Repointing with mortar of high Portland cement content, which can create a bond stronger than the original material. This can result in differing coefficients of expansion and causes cracking of existing joints.

Applying water repellent coatings unless their use has been carefully studied and recommended for a specific problem. These materials are often unnecessary and can, in fact, hasten deterioration by trapping moisture in the masonry.

The use of artificial materials such as simulated brick or stone siding since these may not have been available at the time of construction and will give the structure an artificial appearance.

Removing sound stucco; or repairing with new stucco that is stronger than the historic material or does not convey the same visual appearance.

Installing passive solar devices such as an attached glazed "trombe" wall on primary or other highly visible elevations; or where historic material must be removed or obscured.

2.3.1 ABRASIVE CLEANING OF MASONRY SURFACES

Like a *loaf* of bread, a brick is a baked product. And, like the crust of a loaf of bread, the hardest part of a brick is the outer surface that was exposed longest to the heat of the kiln.

Use of high-pressure hoses and abrasive sand to clean or remove paint from brick permanently changes its appearance and leaves it vulnerable to penetration by moisture by wearing away this tough outer layer of the brick and leaving it pitted and exposed. The change in appearance is immediately recognizable and is irreversible. The damage caused by sandblasting in leaving brick walls open to penetration by water can compromise the long-term life of the building. The only way to partially prevent this from happening is to paint or re-paint the brick. Many water repellent coatings and sealants can also change the appearance of brick and do not allow brick to "breathe." Keep in mind that many brick buildings were originally painted.

2.4 Entries

TRY TO:

Identify, retain, and preserve entrances and their functional and decorative features that are important in defining the overall historic character of the building such as doors, fanlights, sidelights, pilasters, entablatures, columns, balustrades, and stairs.

Respect the "main entrance" to the building in its relationship to the site and the building form.

Retain original door design including panels, lights, and hardware, and, if replacement is required, try to duplicate the original design in form, material, and color.

Retain porches and steps that are appropriate to the building and its development. Porches or additions reflecting later architectural styles are often important to the building's historical integrity.

Repair or replace, where necessary, deteriorated architectural features of wood, iron, cast iron, terra-cotta, tile, and brick with new material that duplicates the old as closely as possible.

AVOID:

Removing or radically changing entrances and porches which are important in defining the overall historic character of the building so that, as a result, the character is diminished.

Stripping entrances and porches of historic material such as wood, iron, cast iron, terra cotta, tile and brick.

Removing an entrance or porch because the building has been oriented to accommodate a new use.

Cutting new entrances on a primary elevation.

Altering utilitarian or service entrances so they appear to be formal entrances by adding paneled doors, fanlights, and sidelights.

Discarding original doors and door hardware when they can be repaired and reused in place.

Installing secondary service entrances and porches that are incompatible in size and scale with the historic building or obscure, damage, or destroy character-defining features.

TRY TO:

Protect and maintain the masonry, wood, and architectural metal that comprise entrances and porches through appropriate surface treatments such as cleaning, rust removal, limited paint removal, and re-application of protective coating systems.

Design and install additional entrances Enclosing porches in a manner that or porches when required in a manner results in a diminution or loss of that preserves the historic character of historic character such as using solid the building, i.e., limit such alteration materials such as wood, stucco, or to non-character-defining elevations.

Design enclosures for historic porches when required in a manner that preserve the historic character of the building. This can include using large sheets of glass and recessing the enclosure wall behind existing scrollwork, posts and balustrades.

Replace in kind an entire entrance or porch that is too deteriorated to repair–if the form and detailing are still evident–using the physical evidence to guide the new work. If using the same kind of material is not technically or economically feasible, then a compatible substitute material may be considered.

AVOID:

Creating a false historical appearance because a replaced entrance or porch is based on insufficient historical, pictorial, and physical documentation.

Introducing a new entrance or porch that is incompatible in size, scale, material and color.

Enclosing porches in a manner that results in a diminution or loss of historic character such as wood, stucco, or masonry.

Applying new material that is inappropriate or was unavailable when the building was constructed, such as artificial cast stone, brick veneer, asbestos or asphalt shingles, or plastic or aluminum siding.

Replacing an entire entrance or porch when the repair of materials and limited replacement of parts are appropriate.

Using a substitute material for the replacement parts that does not convey the visual appearance of the surviving parts of the entrance and porch or that is physically or chemically incompatible.

Removing an entrance or porch that is unrepairable and not replacing; or replacing it with a new entrance or porch that does not convey the same visual appearance.

2.4.1 STORM DOORS

TRY TO:

When used, storm doors should be selected to compete as little as possible with the design of the main door. Use wood frame storm or screen doors, painted to match existing door trim. If metal storm doors must be used, select a frame color which is the same as the door trim. Select a design and arrangement of lights that complements rather than detracts from the design of the door.

AVOID:

Using bright aluminum colored frames.

Decorative grilles or scrolls that may be inappropriate to the design or character of the building.

2.4.2 HANDICAPPED ACCESS

TRY TO:

Install wheelchair ramps, where necessary, in a way that does not obscure or compete with architectural features of the building.

Use materials that are compatible with those of the building.

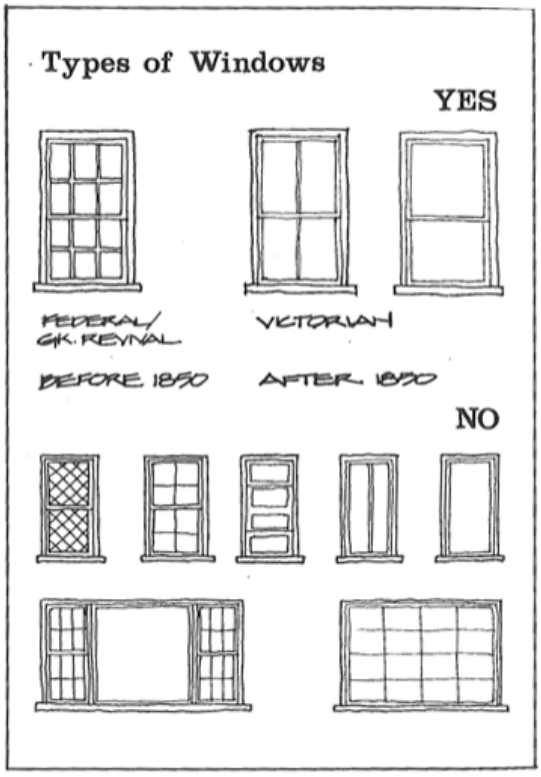
Face any street-facing surfaces with a material compatible with the building.

2.5 Windows

TRY TO:

Retain existing window openings including window sash, glass, lintels, sills, architraves, shutters and doors, pediments, hoods, steps, and all hardware of the building. Such features include frames, sash, muntins, glazing, sills, heads, hoodmolds, paneled or decorated jambs and moldings, and interior and exterior shutters and blinds.

Respect the stylistic period or periods a building represents. If replacement of window sash or doors is necessary, the replacement should duplicate the material, design, and the hardware of the older window sash or door.



AVOID:

Introducing new window and door openings into the principal elevations, or enlarging or reducing window or door openings to fit new stock door sizes.

Altering the number, location, size or glazing pattern of windows through cutting new openings, blocking-in windows, and installing replacement sash which does not fit the historic window opening.

Changing the historic appearance of windows through the use of inappropriate designs, materials, finishes, or colors which radically change the sash, depth of reveal, and muntin configuration; the reflectivity and color of the glazing; or the appearance of the frame.

Obscuring historic window trim with metal or other material.

Stripping windows of historic material such as wood, iron, cast iron, and bronze.

Retrofitting or replacing windows rather than maintaining the sash, frame and glazing.

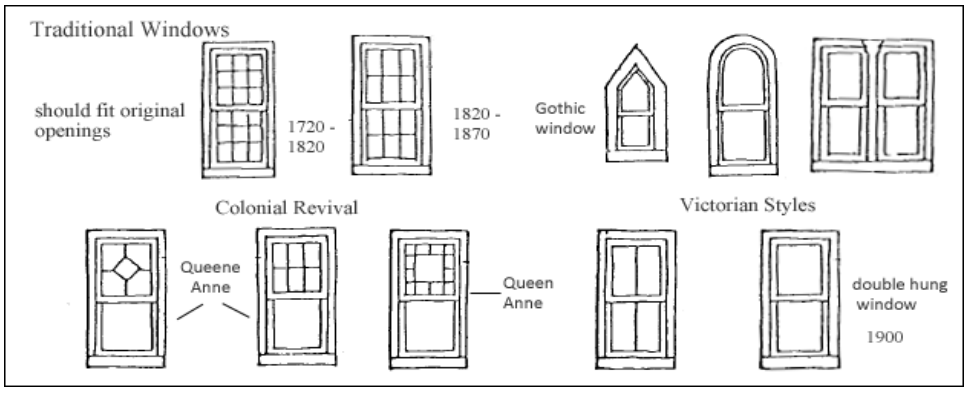
Replacing an entire window when repair of materials and limited replacement of deteriorated or missing parts are appropriate.

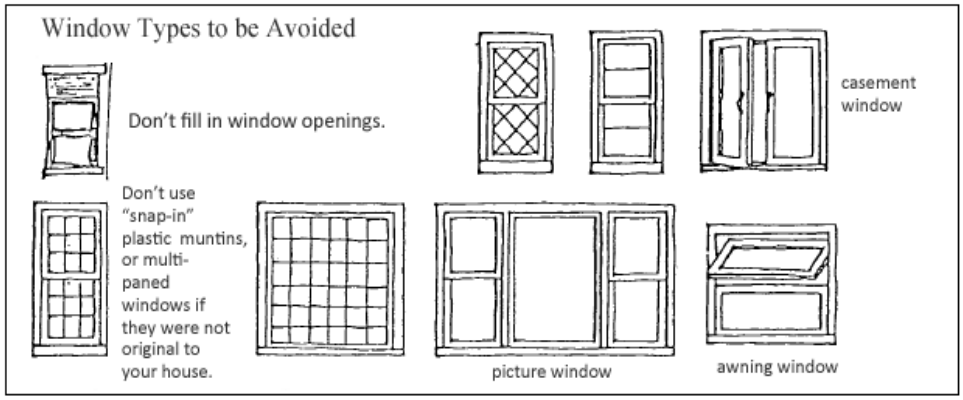
AVOID:

Using a substitute material for the replacement part that does not convey the visual appearance of the surviving parts of the window or that is physically or chemically incompatible.

Removing a character-defining window that is unrepairable and blocking it in; or replacing it with a new window that does not convey the same visual appearance

Inappropriate new window or door features such as aluminum storm and screen window combinations that require the removal of original windows and doors, or the installation of plastic or metal strip awnings or fake shutters that disturb the character and appearance of the building.





2.5.1 SHUTTERS

TRY TO:

Research the original design of the structure to determine if shutters were actually used. If so, restore the originals or replace them with shutters which match the originals or replace them with shutters which match the originals in form, material and color. Shutters should at least look functional and fit the window opening.

AVOID:

Installing pre-fabricated or mass produced shutter or artificial materials, such as aluminum or vinyl.

2.5.2 STORM WINDOWS

TRY TO:

The early storm windows were wood framed single units that covered the entire window opening. They were used in place of the window screens in winter, and, like the screens, hooked onto slip at the top piece of the window trim. When installing storm windows on buildings of the early 20th century style or older, use this type of wood frame window painted to match the existing window trim.

Select a color that is close to that of the existing trim or sand aluminum frame to roughen surface and it may be painted to match trim.

Utilize the inherent energy conserving features of a building by maintaining windows and louvered blinds in good operable condition for natural ventilation.

Improve thermal efficiency with weather-stripping, storm windows, caulking, interior shades, and, if historically appropriate, blinds and awnings.

AVOID:

Using bright aluminum colored frames where the color would be inappropriate to the character of the house.

Removing historic shading devices rather than keeping them in an operable condition.

Replacing historic multi-paned sash with new thermal sash utilizing false muntins.

2.6 Roofs

TRY TO:

Preserve the original roof shape.

Retain the original roofing material, whenever possible.

Replace deteriorated roof coverings with new material that matches the old in composition, size, shape, color, and texture.

Preserve or replace, where necessary, all architectural features that give the roof its essential character, such as dormer windows, cupolas, cornices, brackets, chimneys, cresting, and weather vanes.

AVOID:

Applying new roofing material that is inappropriate to the style and period of the building and neighborhood.

Replacing deteriorated roof covering with new materials that differ to such an extent from the old that the appearance of the building is altered.

2.6.1 GUTTERS AND DOWNSPOUTS

TRY TO:

Retain original gutters and downspouts. If replacement is necessary, use materials which are similar in form and color to the original.

AVOID:

Remember that gutters and down-spouts can be strong, visual elements, an avoid introducing new ones in locations where they will detract from the original composition or symmetry of the building, or damage or obscure character-defining features; or are conspicuous from the public right-of-way.

2.6.2 DORMERS

TRY TO:

Retain all dormer windows in their original style including the arrangement of lights and the sash detail.

AVOID:

Creating dormers in roofs where their form would be inappropriate to the historical integrity of the building.

2.6.3 ROOF-TOP EQUIPMENT

TRY TO:

Place roof-top equipment such as T.V. antennae, air conditioners, exhaust fans, vents, and solar collectors in a location where they cannot be seen from the collectors must face the street for efficiency, mount them in a way which minimizes their profile and makes them as inconspicuous as possible.

Place solar collectors on non-character-defining roof or roofs of non-historic adjacent buildings.

AVOID:

Placing solar collectors on roofs when such collectors change the historic roofline or obscure the relationship of the roof to character-defining roof street, where possible. Where solar features such as dormers, skylights, and chimneys.

2.6.4 CHIMNEYS

TRY TO:

Retain the original height and form, number and location of the chimney(s), which give the building critical links with historical development of the structure

Reproduce chimney caps as accurately as possible.

AVOID:

Adding new chimneys, especially false ones, which give the building an appearance it never had.

Attaching equipment such as T.V. antennae to chimneys in a way that detracts from the form or proportion of the chimney.

Sec. 3.0 Guidelines for Additions & New Construction

3.1 Additions

Additions and new construction both involve relating new design to existing historic construction. The **GUIDELINES** here are necessarily broad.

TRY TO:

Keep new additions to a minimum and make them compatible in scale, building materials, and texture.

Construct a new addition so that there is the least possible loss of historic materials and so that character-defining features are not obscured, damaged, or destroyed.

Locate the attached exterior addition at the rear or on an inconspicuous side of a historic building; and limit its size and scale in relationship to the historic building.

Consider the attached exterior addition both in terms of the new use and the appearance of other buildings in the historic district or neighborhood. Design for new work may be contemporary or may reference design motifs from the historic building. It should be compatible in terms of mass, materials, relationship of solids to voids, and color.

Place new additions such as balconies and green houses on non-character-defining elevations and limit the size and scale in relationship to the

AVOID:

Making unnecessary new additions.

Designing new additions that are incompatible with the earlier building and the neighborhood in materials, size, scale, and texture.

Designing a new addition so that its size and scale in relation to the historic building are out of proportion, thus diminishing the historic character.

Imitating a historic style or period of architecture in new additions, especially for contemporary uses such as drive-in banks or garages.

Designing and constructing new additions that result in the diminution or loss of the historic character of the resource, including its design, materials, workmanship, location, or setting.

Designing new additions that obscure, damage, or destroy character-defining features of the historic building.

historic building.

Constructing additional stories so that the historic appearance of the building is radically changed.

3.2 New Construction

TRY TO:

Design new construction adjacent to historic buildings, and which is compatible with the historic character of the site and which preserves the historic relationship between a building or buildings, landscape features, and open space.

AVOID:

Introducing new construction into the district that is visually incompatible in terms of size, scale, design, materials, color and texture or which destroys historic relationships on the site.

Removing a historic building in a complex, a building feature, or a site feature which is important in defining the historic character of the site.

3.2.1 SCALE AND FORM

TRY TO:

Keep all new construction consistent with the scale of the surrounding structures. Scale includes such factors as building height, width, and the proportion of height to width; proportion of solid to void elements, i.e. wall area to area of window and door openings; the size of the dominant elements of the building; and the massing of the building, i.e. the arrangement of the building's dominant elements that affect setbacks and overhangs.

AVOID:

New construction that by its form, texture, color, etc. is not with the mood and character of the neighborhood, even though all requirements for appropriate scale may be met.

New construction that inauthentically reproduces older architectural styles. Utilize contemporary design and construction for new buildings, if desired, provided the qualities of scale, mood and character are met.

3.2.2 MOOD AND CHARACTER

TRY TO:

Assess carefully the mood and character of the neighborhood where new construction is to take place. Respect particular associations with the site's history of geographic location.

Sec. 4.0 Guidelines for Landscape & Site Features

4.1 Outbuildings

GARAGES, CARRIAGES HOUSES, BARNS

TRY TO:

These often contribute significantly to the historical or architectural value of the property, and they should be treated with no less respect than the major structure it-self. Follow the procedures for this particular features and types of construction covered elsewhere in these guidelines. Wherever possible, retain and repair as needed those buildings and their features which are important to the historical integrity of the property. When modification or rehabilitation is required, such as installing new "garage" type doors on a garage or carriage house, select materials of the same design and character as the original.

When constructing new out buildings, keep the design compatible with that of the major structure and its site. Major areas of concern here are location, scale, architec-tural style, mood and character.

AVOID:

Hasty demolition of deteriorated outbuildings before studying them for rehabilitation.

New garages or other parking structures which compete in scale or mass with the main house. These are traditionally subordinate to the main structure, although they may be of a different style if separated by a reasonable distance from the house.

Garage door designs and patterns which are "busy" or otherwise draw attention.

4.1.2 TOOL HOUSES, PUMP HOUSES, ETC.

TRY TO:

These outbuildings are of lesser significance, but should not be disregarded as visual elements on the property.

TRY TO:

For existing structures of historic significance, retain and repair according to the guidelines for garages, carriage houses, and barns. For new structures, construct using compatible materials.

Retain plants, trees, fencing, walkways, and street furniture that reflect the property's history and development.

Base all decisions for new work on actual knowledge of the past appearance of the property found in photographs, drawings, newspapers, and tax records. If changes are made, they should be carefully evaluated in light of the past appearance of the site.

Identify, retain, and preserve buildings and their features as well as features of the site that are important in defining its overall historic character. Site features can include driveways, walkways, lighting, fencing, signs, benches, fountains, walls, terraces, canal systems, plants and trees, berms, and drainage of irrigation ditches; and archeological features that are important in defining the history of the site.

Retain the historic relationship between building, landscape features, and open space.

AVOID:

Locating in an area prominently visible from the street.

AVOID:

Making hasty changes to the appearance of the site by removing old plants, trees, etc., before evaluating their importance in the property's history and development.

Over-restoring the site to an appearance it never had. Removing or relocating historic buildings or landscape features, thus destroying the historic relationship between buildings, landscape features, and open space.

Replacing an entire feature of the building or site such as a fence, walkway, or driveway when repair of materials and limited replacement of deteriorated or missing parts are appropriate.

Removing a feature of the site that is unrepairable and not replacing it; or replacing it with a new feature that does not convey the same visual appearance.

Creating a false historical appearance because the replaced feature is based on insufficient historical, pictorial and physical documentation.

Introducing a new landscape feature that is visually incompatible with the site or that destroys site patterns or vistas. Introducing a new site feature that is out of scale or

Design and construct a new feature of a site when the historic feature is completely missing, such as an outbuilding, terrace, or driveway. It may be based on historical, pictorial, and physical documentation; or be a new design that is compatible with the historic character of the building and site.

otherwise inappropriate.

4.2 Archaeological Sites

TRY TO:

Minimize disturbance of terrain around buildings or elsewhere on the site, thus reducing the possibility of destroying unknown archeological materials.

Survey areas where major terrain alteration is likely to impact important archeological sites.

Protect, e.g. preserve in place known archeological material whenever possible.

Plan and carry out any necessary investigation using professional archeologists and modern archeological methods when preservation in place is not feasible.

AVOID:

Introducing heavy machinery or equipment into areas where their presence may disturb archeological materials

Failing to survey the building site prior to the beginning of rehabilitation project work so that, as a result, important archeological material is destroyed.

Leaving known archeological material unprotected and subject to vandalism, looting, and destruction by natural elements such as erosion.

Permitting unqualified personnel to perform data recovery so that improper methodology results in the loss of important archeological material.

4.3 Solar Energy

TRY TO:

Retain plant materials, trees, and landscape features, especially those which perform passive solar energy functions such as sun shading and wind breaks.

Install freestanding solar collectors in a manner that preserves the historic property's character-defining features.

AVOID:

Removing plant materials, trees, and landscape features, so that they no longer perform passive solar energy functions.

Installing freestanding solar collectors that obscure, damage, or destroy historic landscape of archeological features.

4.4 Parking

TRY TO:

Design new onsite parking, docks, or ramps when required so that they are as unobtrusive as possible and assure the preservation of character-defining features of the site.

Consider driveway treatments that allow percolation of runoff into the soil, such as gravel or grass; rather than solid paving which contributes to runoff and may have long term effects on the drainage in the area as a whole.

AVOID:

Placing parking facilities directly adjacent to historic buildings where automobiles may cause damage to the buildings or landscape features or be intrusive to the building site.

"Over-paving" or the use of hard surface or strongly colored paving material such as concrete or macadam where materials such as flagstones, brick payers or gravel would be more appropriate.

Placing parking facilities directly adjacent to historic buildings which cause the removal of historic plantings, relocation of paths and walkways, or blocking of alleys.

4.5 Structures

TRY TO:

Retain and restore walls, hitching posts, fences and other fixtures which form part of the property's historical interest.

Research styles of fencing and lighting fixtures appropriate to the district context through old photographs and other sources.

AVOID:

Introducing signs, light fixtures, fences, flagpoles, etc., which are inappropriate in style or out of scale or character with the property or with the neighborhood. This includes chain link and hurricane fencing, facing principal streets. Confine these types of fencing, if used, to side and rear property lines.

APPENDIX I:
New Construction and Additions

Applications for structures, either as additions or as new buildings, can be the most difficult and challenging that a Commission has to face.

Developing guidelines for newly designed structures can be equally challenging. Do all new buildings in an Historic District have to look "historic?" Or should new construction always be contemporary in style, to be faithful to the continuum of styles and periods that comprise many Historic Districts? What about additions that "improve" a modest structure by overpowering it or additions incorporating solar energy features, such as greenhouses and trombe walls?

In acting on an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness, the statute limits the Commission to act solely "to control the erection or alteration of building structures, which are incongruous with the historical aspects of the District." (The charge to an Historic Properties Commission is the same.) A Commission cannot mandate particular designs.

A Commission, then, should only encourage compatibility based on the general considerations of scale, massing, rhythm, texture and setback relating to the particular visual characteristics of the District. The "historical aspects" of the District must be understood to recognize what will be appropriate.

The goal of guidelines for new construction should be to encourage design sensitive to the District's existing historic buildings and streetscapes. Whether this will be more appropriately contemporary or traditional will depend largely on the local context, the character of the District. See the Case Studies in Section 3, particularly Woodbury and Chaplin, for examples.

Many preservationists today feel that the value and strength of Historic Districts lies in their being a collection of buildings, which are products of their own time, a visual record of a community's development. New construction, then, should not turn to the past but represent ideas and technologies of our own time, while respecting the character and the fabric of the surrounding historic buildings. (This is the position taken in the Secretary of Interior's Standards.) Such an approach allows an architect the creative freedom necessary to develop new ways of relating modern forms and materials to an historic context. There are a number of striking examples in the state of the successful integration of contemporary design into an historic context.

However, there are some potential problems with contemporary design. The International style rejected many of the concepts of form, ornament, and emphasis of common structural elements, which contributed to a feeling of architectural unity in the past. Although post-Modernists have brought back some traditional forms and detail in their work, contemporary design originates with a concept of creativity which seeks to stand cut strikingly from the styles of the past and from its surroundings. (This is discussed superbly in Tom Wolfe's From Bauhaus to Our House and Architecture in Context by Brent C. Brolin.)

Some designers may not have the skills to relate contemporary forms to old. It is always a difficult process. Encouraging traditional design, on the other hand, is administratively easier and certainly safer. There seems to be widespread public perception that only "historic" styles can be built in an Historic District, anyway.

Acceptance of traditional styles, however, can easily be taken by architects and builders as an approval of generic reproductions, generally in a "Colonial" style. While the Colonial Revival was a legitimate architectural movement at the turn of the century and continues to influence American taste today, its more recent permutations, e.g. the "Williamsburg" look, does represent a falsification of the historical record. Far from being a panacea, encouragement of reproductions can lead to unimaginative buildings which have little or no connection to true local building traditions and styles. It will also limit the freedom of an architect to build something contemporary that may be even more responsive and appropriate to the particular setting. In some places, architects have reproduced features of historic buildings and even historic forms in clearly modern construction. The results are mixed. In such cases, the Commission should be aware of the effect of materials and the effect on the streetscape as a whole.

There is no recipe for integrating new construction into an Historic District. The guidelines should be written to allow the Commission the flexibility to approve sensitive design, whether traditional or contemporary, and the Commission should not disapprove either kind of design if it is successful. Contemporary design may be appropriate in some contexts. However, in the event that an architect or a builder (who may be unlikely to employ the services of an architect in any case) is unable to produce an acceptable contemporary design, the Commission may find it useful to be open to an acceptable traditional design as a "fallback." Moreover, in some places certain traditional forms have endured in popularity and represent true expressions of local taste.

APPENDIX II:
Landscape and Site Features

Included in this class of guidelines are all those pertaining to structures or features detached from buildings. Used here, it also includes outbuildings, which deserve the same respect as residences and other buildings and to which many of the earlier guidelines will apply. Included here are fences and walls, freestanding lighting fixtures, outbuildings, bridges, berms and culverts, swimming pools, tennis courts and riding stables, driveways and parking, street furniture and public spaces. Most of these items have been under Commission jurisdiction only since 1980, but they account for a significant proportion of applications in many areas.

These features can contribute significantly to the character of a district, and it is important that they reflect the local setting.

Old photographs and illustrated wall maps of the mid-l9th century are frequently good sources for researching historic fence, wall and lighting types used in a particular district. Commissions may wish to discourage some universally inappropriate types of fencing, such as chain-link, stockade or post and rail, facing principal streets.

Guidelines addressing parking and driveways may have to be general, and be sensitive to local zoning regulations. Driveway materials are sometimes issues at Commission meetings, and some Commissions attempt to limit the total amount of paved surface because of its tendency to increase runoff.

Outbuildings are often vital pieces of the historical record of a district, and should be respected and re-used, where possible. There are many different types of outbuildings with a variety of uses: barns, carriage houses, tool sheds, garages, shops.

Many, if not most, Connecticut Historic Districts include some type of public space, whether it be village green or urban park. The "furniture"—street lighting, fencing, monuments and benches—associated with these spaces can be as vital a visual characteristic of the District as the surrounding architecture. The Commission is in a position to influence design decisions in these public areas, as well as street furniture used elsewhere in the District, sidewalk construction, roads and tree planting. A generally good guide to use of public spaces is On Common Ground by Ronald Lee Fleming and Lauri Haldeman.

APPENDIX III:
Storefronts

TRY TO:

Identify, retain, and preserve storefronts—and their functional and decorative features—that are important in defining the overall historic character of the building such as display windows, signs, doors, transoms, kick plates, corner posts, and entablatures.

Repair storefronts by reinforcing the historic materials. Repairs will also generally include the limited replacement in kind—or with compatible substitute material—of those extensively deteriorated or missing parts of storefronts where there are surviving prototypes such as transoms, kick plates, pilasters or signs.

Replace in kind an entire storefront that is too deteriorated to repair—if the overall form and detailing are still evident—using the physical evidence to guide the new work. If using the same material is not technically or economically feasible then compatible substitute materials may be considered.

Preserve the storefront's character even though there is a new use on the interior.

If less exposed window area is desirable, consider the use of interior blinds and insulating curtains rather than altering the existing historic fabric.

AVOID:

Removing or radically changing storefronts—and their features—that are important in defining the overall historic character of the building so that, as a result, the character is diminished.

Changing the storefront so that it appears residential rather than commercial in character.

Introducing "lumberyard Colonial" details such as coach lanterns, mansard overhangs, wood shakes, non-operable shutters and small-paned windows, except where they can be documented historically.

Changing the location of a storefront's main entrance.

Replacing an entire storefront when repair of materials and limited replacement of its parts are appropriate.

Using substitute material for the replacement parts that does not convey the same visual appearance as the surviving parts of the storefront or that is physically or chemically incompatible.

APPENDIX IV:
Public Spaces

TRY TO:

Use new plant materials, fencing, walkways, and street furniture street furniture, new plant materials, which are compatible with the character of the neighborhood materials that are out of scale or in size, scale, material and color.

Respect past landscaping treatments to public parks or greens as products of a particular period or philosophy.

Create an effective, dominant focal point or respect those that exist, such as a monument.

Enclose greens with a fence, row of trees or both, setting it off from its surroundings and providing focus.

Maintain characteristic planting of public space, and plant sparingly except on perimeters, except for special design purposes

Restrict flowers to planters or other suitable containers, and cluster near benches or other furniture.

Provide narrow footpaths of attractive, durable materials to for major points of destination and embellishments. Arrange paths in a simple and functional pattern.

AVOID:

Introducing signs, street lighting, street furniture, new plant materials, fencing, walkways and paving materials that are out of scale or inappropriate to the neighborhood.

Destroying the relationship of buildings and their environment by widening existing streets, changing paving material, or by introducing poorly designed and poorly located new streets and parking lots or introducing new construction incompatible with the character of the neighborhood.

Stripping all past landscaping treatments to "clean up" a park or green.

Installing extremely bright street lighting.

Installing ornamental street lighting inappropriate to the surrounding area.

Too many monuments and markers, which compete and distract. If several embellishments compete for dominance, then relocate or reorganize them.

Overuse of exotic or not-native plantings in a public space.

Over-planting a green, with trees, shrubs and flowers, since most greens are historically austere in character.

TRY TO:

Restrict the number of furnishings, so that they do not overwhelm the green. Choose them to coordinate with the existing style, or create a new system. Furnishings should be in keeping with the character of the green.

Defend the green against state highway encroachment.

Integrate interpretive markers with other green furnishings.

Define the edge of a green by curbing.

Assure adequate crosswalk access to the green.

Defend solar access to the green.

Encourage regular, passive use of a green and community events, particularly holidays.

AVOID:

Parking meters along a green's perimeter.

Excessively tall buildings surrounding the green that prevent solar access.

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