

APPENDIX B

General Design Guidelines

Guntersville Historic Preservation Commission

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CITY OF GUNTERSVILLE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
GENERAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

Table of Contents

	Page
Article I. Introduction	1
Section 1. History of Guntersville	1
Section 2. Downtown Guntersville Façade and Architectural Style	1
Article II. General Guidelines	1
Article III. Authority of the Commission	2
Article IV. Application and Review Procedures	2
Section 1. Procedures for Filing Application for Certificate of Appropriateness	3
Section 2. Determination of the Commission	4
Section 3. Reconsideration of Applications	4
Section 4. Expedited Review Procedures	5
Section 5. Variances	5
Section 6. Appeals of Decisions of the Commission	6
Section 7. Certificate of Economic Hardship	6
Section 8. Enforcement of Decisions of the Commission	6
Article V. Failure to Provide Ordinary Maintenance and Repairs	6
Article VI. General Design Guidelines	6
Section 1. Building Orientation and Setback	7
Section 2. Directional Emphasis	8
Section 3. Shape	8
Section 4. Massing	10
Section 5. Proportion	10
Section 6. Rhythm	11
Section 7. Scale and Height	11
Section 8. Additions to Existing Buildings	12
Section 9. New Construction	13
Article VII. Design Review Standards	13
Section 1. Site Improvements	14
Section 2. Standards for Site Improvements	14
a. Overall Continuity	14

b. Building Orientation and Setbacks	14
c. Accessory Buildings, Structures and Appurtenances	14
d. Wheelchair Ramps	14
e. Signage	15
f. Landscape and Plant Materials	15
g. Fences and Walls	15
h. Sidewalks, Drives, Parking and Paving	16
i. Decks	16
j. Satellite Dishes, Antennae, Solar Panels, Electronic Devices, and Other Appurtenances	17
k. Exterior Lighting	17
Article VIII. Rehabilitation and Alteration	17
Section 1. General Guidelines	17
Section 2. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation	18
Section 3. Standards for Rehabilitation and Alteration	19
a. Design Character	19
b. Repairing Original Features	19
c. Replacing Original Features	19
d. Existing Alterations	19
e. Materials	19
f. Trim and Ornament	20
g. Roofs	20
h. Windows	20
i. Storm Windows	20
j. Exterior Blinds, Awnings and Shutters	20
k. Entrances and Doorways	21
l. Storm Doors	21
m. Porches	21
n. Signage	21
o. Mailboxes	21
p. Foundations	21
q. Surface Cleaning	22
Article IX. Additions	22
Section 1. General Guidelines	22
Section 2. Standards for Additions	22
a. Original Design Character	22
b. Location	22
c. Materials	22
Article X. New Construction	23
Section 1. General Guidelines	23
Section 2. Standards for New Construction	23
a. Massing and Orientation	23
b. Form and scale	23

c. Foundations	24
d. Signage	24
e. Materials	24
f. Doors and Windows	24
Article XI. Public and Common Areas and Facilities	24
Section 1. General Guidelines	24
Section 2. Standards for Public and Common Areas and Facilities	24
Article XII. Approval of Signs within a Designated Historic District	25
Section 1. General Guidelines	25
Section 2. See Appendix	26
Addendum (formerly, "Appendix") : Classification of Work – General Guidelines	27

CITY OF GUNTERSVILLE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

GENERAL DESIGN GUIDELINES
(Referred to as Exhibit B in the GHPC Bylaws)

Article I. Introduction

The Guntersville Historic Preservation Commission is intended to meet several essential needs. For the community, it assures that Guntersville's historic resources are maintained in a manner appropriate to the city's heritage. For property owners, residents and contractors, it provides primary guidance in the planning and design of projects that are sympathetic to the special character of the historic districts—and that will, in turn, assure that property values are maintained and enhanced.

These Guidelines are organized into several parts. On the next page there is a brief reference to and overview of the authority of the Guntersville Historic Preservation Commission as defined by local and state law. That is followed by an outline of the procedures of the Commission for issuance of Certificates of Appropriateness for work proposed in a historic district. There is also an application form for that certificate. The primary guidance is in the form of Design Guidelines the Commission uses to review proposed projects for their appropriateness to the historic district. Finally, there is included an appendix categorizing proposed projects by type and nature—and the appropriate level of review for each type of work. More information on this is provided below.

Article II. General Guidelines

Working in Historic Districts. For all properties located in a designated Historic District, any exterior work is subject to review by the Guntersville Historic Preservation Commission to ensure that Guntersville's historic properties and resources are preserved in accordance with these Design Guidelines. The review by the Commission and its staff is intended to be of assistance to the property owner to find reasonable and appropriate ways to ensure that the scale and character of the neighborhood is maintained by the new construction. This is done by means of issuance of Certificates of Appropriateness for work before it begins.

Routine Maintenance (see Addendum) does not require issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness. Routine maintenance includes repair or replacement where there is no change in the design, materials, or general appearance of the structure or grounds. Certificates of Appropriateness must be issued for all other projects, including demolition. Any repair or replacement where there is a change in the design, materials, or general appearance is defined as an alteration and requires a Certificate of Appropriateness before work may proceed.

Minor Work projects (see Addendum) are reviewed by the Commission staff, which will refer Minor Work projects to the Commission for review only if in staff's judgment the change involves alterations, additions, or removals that are substantial, do not meet the guidelines, or are of a precedent-setting nature.

Major Work projects (see Addendum) are reviewed by the Commission. In general, major work projects involve a change in the appearance of a structure or site, and are more substantial in nature than routine maintenance or minor work projects. Such projects typically include new construction, additions, and demolitions.

Process of Approval. For work in historic districts as defined above, a Certificate of Appropriateness application must be completed and returned with the appropriate attachments to

the Commission staff before applying for building permits, or before applying for commercial or residential site plan approval, if required. Applications requiring a review by the Commission must be received at least ten (10) business days prior to the next Commission meeting. Major Works must be considered at a public hearing. This is a quasi-judicial proceeding. Applicants should not contact Commissioners prior to the hearing to solicit advice or to try to influence the outcome of review process. Only factual evidence in favor or opposed to the request may be presented at the hearing, and the Commissioners must make their decision based solely on the evidence provided at the hearing. Property owners may present evidence or have a representative speak for them. Further information regarding the conduct of the hearing and the materials to be submitted with the application for a Certificate of appropriateness are available from the Commission staff.

Article III. Authority of the Commission

Guntersville Ordinance 982 and Section 11-68-1 through 11-68-15 of the Code of Alabama established the Guntersville Historic Preservation Commission and provided that, for private and public properties alike pursuant to the above referenced laws:

1. The Commission may recommend buildings, structures, sites and districts to the Guntersville City Council for designation as historic properties or districts.
2. No historic property may be demolished without first having received a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Commission.
3. No building or structure in a historic district may be erected, demolished or moved, and no material change in the exterior appearance of such historic property (including signs) shall be made or permitted to be made without first having received a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Commission. *Demolition by neglect and the failure to maintain an historic property or a structure in an historic district shall constitute a change for which a certificate of appropriateness is necessary.*

The Commission shall issue a Certificate of Appropriateness if it determines the proposed work as defined in the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness and as supported by the evidence presented at the public hearing is consistent with the Design Guidelines. In making this determination, the Commission shall consider, in addition to any other pertinent factors, the historical and architectural value and significance, architectural style, general design arrangement, texture and materials of the architectural features involved and their relationship to the exterior architectural style and pertinent features of the other structures in the immediate neighborhood.

The Commission shall deny a Certificate of Appropriateness if it finds that the proposed work is not consistent with the Design Guidelines.

The Commission shall not grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for demolition or relocation without reviewing at the same time specific post-demolition and/or post-relocation plans for the site.

Article IV. Application and Review Procedures

Applications for Certificates of Appropriateness shall be reviewed by the Commission and afforded a public hearing, with notice given as provided in the Commission's rules and procedures. The Commission shall approve or reject the application at the hearing and shall notify by mail the applicant, the chief building official of the City of Guntersville and all other persons having requested notice in writing. Such notification shall include any conditions agreed to by the

applicant or, in the case of denial, reasons for same. The application and all supporting information provided to the Commission shall be maintained in the files of the Commission as a public record.

Section 1. Procedures for Filing an Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness.

The following are the steps in the Certificate of Appropriateness application and review process:

1. Determine if the Project Requires Commission Approval

Other permitting agencies require a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Commission before they will act on any permit application in a designated local historic district. Therefore, an applicant should contact the Commission as early as possible in the planning of the project.

2. Meet with the Commission staff before Filing an Application

The Commission staff will arrange a pre-application meeting, to include staff representatives from other affected boards, agencies, departments and commissions. This should be accomplished prior to design of any proposed changes to the exterior of a property to assist the applicant to determine what coordination with other agencies may be necessary. The meeting also will help identify the appropriate level of detail for the attachments to the application form.

3. File an Application

If a Certificate of Appropriateness is required, the Commission staff will advise regarding completion of an application and in identifying what documentation will be needed for the project to be evaluated. Supporting documentation to be submitted will be in substantial conformance to application submission requirements established by the Commission and delegated to the staff for enforcement. All proposed projects require a completed application form. Most proposals will require some form of drawings, the detail determined by the scope and nature of the project. A checklist is attached to the application, which the applicant and Commission shall use to determine what will be required to adequately document and support the project application. For major work, as defined in the Addendum, involving new construction, additions, and significant exterior alterations, the application should include at least the following drawings:

- a. Dimensioned site plans—one with existing site conditions, one with proposed site conditions—at a scale not less than 1"=10' showing the location of all buildings, additions, drives, sidewalks, fences, exterior lighting, large trees, landscaping, and other site work in context with the same information (except lighting) on adjoining properties within fifty feet of the subject property.
- b. Dimensioned exterior elevations of all sides of new buildings. For additions and other significant alterations, elevations should be provided of all sides of the building from which new work is visible. Drawings for additions and alterations should include elevations of both existing and proposed construction ("before and after" elevations), with each condition labeled appropriately. All elevations should be at a scale not less than 1/4"=1'-0", and all should be of sufficient detail, both graphic and written, to describe all exterior design features and materials to the satisfaction of the Commission. Note that the Commission may require exterior elevations to include elevations of adjacent buildings if, for example, there is concern the scale or massing of a proposed new building or alteration might adversely affect other nearby properties or the street or district as a whole.

The Commission may establish other application submission requirements for work other than as described above when the Commission considers such additional information necessary to make informed decisions. For example, three-dimensional drawings (perspectives or isometrics), though not generally required, are recommended for additional clarity and may be required by the Commission as necessary on a case-by-case basis. Applicants shall submit electronic files of required exhibits when possible. If such submission is not possible, then the applicant must submit

seven (7) copies of such exhibits for distribution to the Commission and for the permanent file relating to the application.

4. Review by Commission

Complete applications will be placed on the agenda of the next available monthly Commission meeting. These meetings are held on the fourth Tuesday of each month, January through October, with no regular meeting in November and the December meeting being on the second Tuesday. Application deadlines for each monthly meeting are ten (10) business days prior to each meeting, however, the Commission will accept applications and consider them whenever possible even if submitted only one day before the regularly scheduled meeting. A report is prepared for each project, an outline of which is provided to Commission members and to the applicant prior to the meeting at which the application is to be reviewed. The staff is charged with documentation of the applications to be reviewed, reviewing the subject site and surroundings, obtaining opinions of the members of the Commission, notifying owners of property likely to be affected and consulting with relevant public officials.

5. Meet with the Commission

The Commission has prescribed the following typical project presentation format for public hearings to assure adequate information is available to the Commission and to the public:

- a. Introduction by staff of site and situation, to include an overview of:
 - i. Style of existing structure(s) and those adjacent;
 - ii. Nature and significant aspects of the surrounding neighborhood;
 - iii. Contribution of the property to the historic district.
- b. Presentation of proposed plans by applicant or their designated representative
- c. Comments by other interested parties.
- d. Consideration by the Commission:
 - i. Questions by the Commission to applicant and others
 - ii. Discussion by the Commission
 - iii. Commission review and discussion of the appropriateness of the proposed project.
- e. Commission determination (motion, second, vote) regarding the application.

Section 2. Determination of the Commission

Approval or Approval with Conditions Accepted by the Applicants. Once approval is granted by the Commission, a Certificate of Appropriateness will be issued by the Commission staff, and a building permitted shall be obtained by the applicant. It should be noted that approval with conditions may require submittal and Commission staff checking of a revised set of plans prior to issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness. It is important to remember also that any changes to the plans approved by the Commission must be reviewed by the Commission staff. Should the Commission staff determine that change to the plans constitutes a substantive difference from the approved plans; the project must go back before the Commission as a new application.

Denial. Should the Commission find that there is no way to accommodate a project proposal within the guidelines contained in state and local law or within the Design Guidelines, there may be no choice but to deny the application and to report the reasons for such denial on the application form. A denial by the Commission means that the proposed project cannot be undertaken.

Section 3. Reconsideration of Applications

The following is the order of business for reconsideration of applications that previously have been denied:

1. The Commission staff shall first have ascertained whether there has been a substantial change in the facts, evidence or conditions relating to the application in order for the application to be placed on the agenda for reconsideration.
2. The Commission shall deliberate whether there has been a substantial change in the facts, evidence or conditions relating to the application that would warrant reconsideration. If the Commission finds there has been a substantial change, it shall thereupon treat the request as a new application received at that time for consideration at the next meeting of the Commission. If the Commission finds there has not been a substantial change, then no application for the subject property shall be accepted by the Commission for a period of six (6) months from the date of such decision.

Section 4. Expedited Review Procedures

Routine Maintenance. The Commission staff may receive applications for expedited approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for routine maintenance and shall be entitled to grant such certificate upon ascertaining that the proposed work includes only ordinary maintenance or repair to exterior, architectural or environmental features to correct deterioration, decay or damage and does not involve a material change in design, material or outer appearance. Such expedited review shall not require an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness, a public hearing or notice to adjoining owners. (See addendum)

Minor Work. The Commission staff on a case-by-case basis may approve those projects listed in the Addendum in the Minor Work category, provided that a complete application for a Certificate of Appropriateness, including exhibits and fees, is submitted, and that the proposal also meets all relevant current policies and standards adopted by the Commission. Such review and approval shall not require a public hearing or notice to adjoining owners.

Matters Affecting Immediate Safety or Welfare. In instances where there is demonstrated a clear present and imminent danger to the public by the existence of any set of facts pertaining to a historic district, which shall be certified by the chief building official of the city, the Chairperson and the Secretary *ex officio* may, upon their joint concurrence, grant an expedited Certificate of Appropriateness only to the extent necessary to remove the imminent danger. Such expedited review shall not require an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness, a public hearing or notice to adjoining owners.

Section 5. Variances

The Commission may authorize, an application in specific cases, a variance from the design guidelines such as will not be contrary to the public interest, where owing to special conditions applying to the property in question and not applicable generally to other buildings, structures or properties, a literal enforcement of the standard would result in unnecessary hardship, but where the spirit of the policies, guidelines and standards of the Commission shall be observed and substantial justice done.

Such special conditions shall be limited to those which the Commission finds that the granting of the application for a variance is necessary, does not merely serve as a convenience to the applicant, and that the standard from which variance is sought would:

1. Result in peculiar, extraordinary or practical difficulties to the subject property (as opposed to the applicant); or
2. As applied to an existing building, structure or other condition on the property, serve to decrease the historic or aesthetic value or condition of the district in which the property is located.

Section 6. Appeals of Decisions of the Commission

Any person having a request for a Certificate of Appropriateness denied by the Commission may appeal such denial to the Circuit Court of Marshall County, Alabama.

Section 7. Certificate of Economic Hardship

The purpose of the Certificate of Economic Hardship is to provide relief where the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness could otherwise impose a substantial economic hardship. The burden of proof rests with the applicant to show that the denial of the Certificate of Appropriateness will result in a substantial economic hardship. The applicant shall provide such information as may be reasonably required by the Commission to establish the owner's claim of substantial economic hardship. For details of the standards for consideration for substantial hardship, contact City of Guntersville Building Official office.

Section 8. Enforcement of Decisions of the Commission

A Certificate of Appropriateness shall become void unless construction commences within six (6) months of date of issuance. Certificates of Appropriateness shall be issued for a period of eighteen (18) months and are renewable.

All work performed pursuant to an issued Certificate of Appropriateness shall conform to requirements of such certificate. In the event work is performed not in accordance with such certificate, the Director of Planning & Development Services shall investigate and take appropriate action.

The City Council or the Commission shall be authorized to institute any appropriate action or proceeding in a court of competent jurisdiction to prevent any material change in appearance of a designated historic property or historic district, except those changes made in compliance with the provisions of this ordinance or to prevent any illegal act or conduct with respect of such historic property.

Article V. Failure to Provide Ordinary Maintenance or Repair

The Commission shall monitor the condition of historic properties and existing buildings in historic districts. The Planning & Development Services Director or designated person shall investigate maintenance complaints. Property owners in violation will be notified in writing by the Director and will have thirty (30) days, in which to take the necessary measures required. In any event that the condition is not met in thirty (30) days, the owners shall be punished as provided in Ordinance 982 and, or either the Commission or the City of Guntersville may institute a legal action or proceeding in a court of competent jurisdiction to prevent deterioration and/or require maintenance. In the event the Director does not find any violation, any person logging the complaint may appeal this decision to the Historic Preservation Commission within fifteen (15) days from receiving written notice. The Commission decisions are final and no complaint will be revisited before six (6) months unless circumstances change in a drastic way. Immediate attention will be given to emergency cases.

Article VI. General Design Guidelines

The design of buildings is determined by the way in which various basic design concepts and elements are utilized: building orientation and setback, shape, proportion, scale/height, directional emphasis, massing, rhythm, architectural and site elements. These concepts form the basis for visual relationships among buildings, which in turn influence the ways in which the public perceives buildings.

When new work is added or a new structure is built among existing buildings, the level of success with which it relates to those existing buildings—and whether it contributes to or detracts from the area in which it is to be located—will be determined by the ways in which its design recognizes the prevailing design expression in the area of influence. The following identify and define several principal concepts of design and offer guidelines for referencing predominant design characteristics in evaluating the appropriateness of a proposed new building or addition.

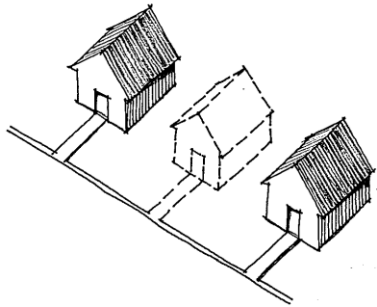
The *illustrations* are intended only to point out the types of relationships between new buildings and existing buildings of importance and are not meant to serve as specific design solutions. The Commission reserves the right to amend or append these guidelines at any time. Accompanying the illustrations are written *guidelines*:

Guideline: *Identify and respect the prevailing character of adjacent buildings and surrounding development.*

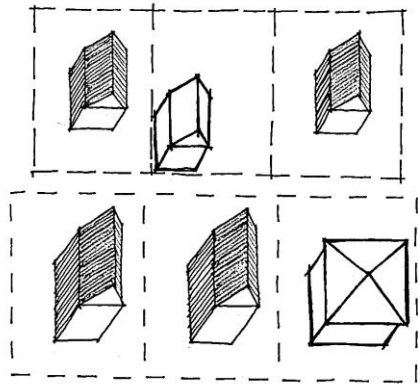
Section 1. Building Orientation and Setback

Building orientation refers to the directional placement of the building on the site; while setback refers to how far back the building is from the street and side lots lines.

Guideline: *The orientation of a new building and its site placement shall appear consistent with dominant patterns within the area of influence, if such patterns are apparent.*



Building Orientation/Setback—Appropriate: The proposed (center) building respects prevailing orientation and setback patterns.

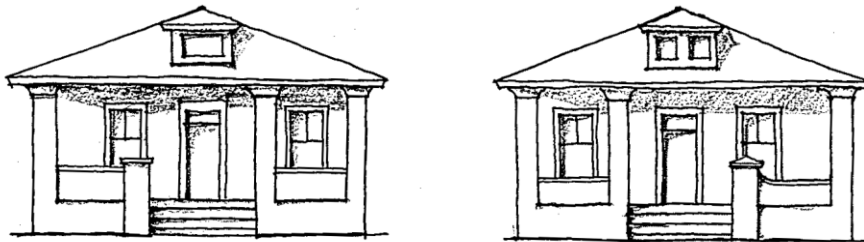


Building Orientation/Setback—Inappropriate: The middle building at the top violates the established setbacks from the street and property lines. The building on the right at the bottom, with its square plan, is inconsistent with the established front-to-back orientation pattern of the adjacent houses.

Section 2. Directional Emphasis

Most buildings are either vertical or horizontal in their directional emphasis, which is determined by the size and placement of elements and openings on a building's front façade as well as by the building's overall shape. Surface materials and architectural detailing may also influence directional emphasis.

Guideline: *A new building's directional emphasis should be consistent with dominant patterns of directional emphasis within the area of influence, if such patterns are present.*



Directional Emphasis—Consistent: The two nearly identical houses above both exhibit horizontal directional emphasis.

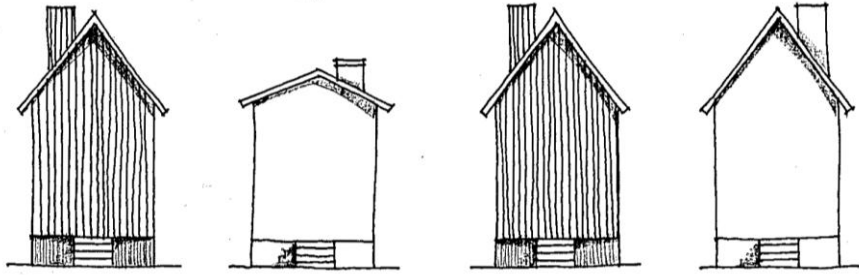


Directional Emphasis—Inappropriate: Shown above are two houses, typical for the neighborhood and each with a vertical directional emphasis, and a new house that is clearly horizontal in emphasis. This new building is neither sympathetic nor consistent with the established pattern of directional emphasis along this street.

Section 3. Shape

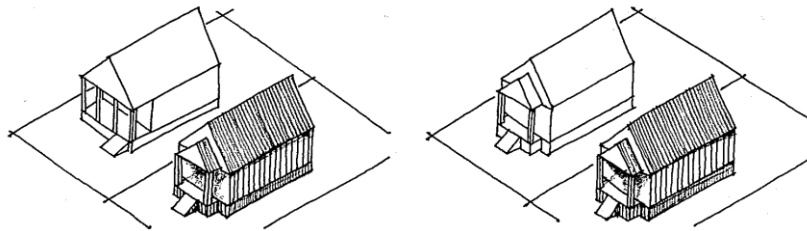
A building's surfaces and edges define its overall shape. This overall shape, in concert with the shapes of individual elements (such as roof pitch, porch form, and window and door openings), is important in establishing rhythms in a streetscape. Shape can also be an important element of style.

Guideline. Roof Pitch: *The roof pitch of a new building should be consistent with those of existing buildings within the area of influence, if dominant patterns are apparent.*



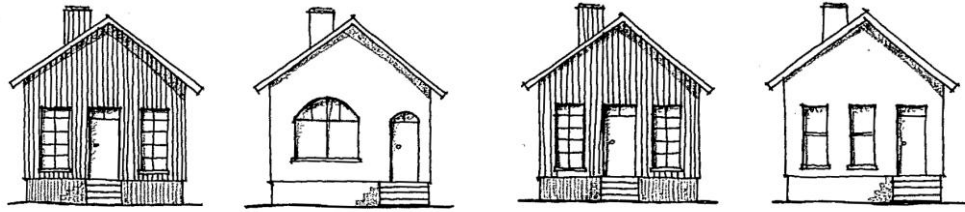
Shape—Roof Pitch—Inappropriate/Appropriate Examples: *These two comparisons depict relationships between historic and new buildings in terms of roof pitch. The example on the left is that of a historic house (shaded) with a steeply pitched roof standing next to a new building with an inappropriate shallow-pitched roof. The example on the right shows a more compatible roof pitch on the new building.*

Guideline. Porch Form: *The shape and size of a new porch should be consistent with those of existing buildings within the area of influence, if dominant patterns are apparent.*



Shape—Porch Form—Inappropriate/Appropriate Examples: *These two comparisons depict relationships between historic and new buildings in terms of porch form. The example on the left is that of a historic house (shaded) with an extending front gable porch standing next to a new building with an inappropriate integral porch. The example on the right shows a more compatible porch form on the new building.*

Guideline. Building Elements: *The principal elements and shapes used on the front facade of a new building should be compatible with those of existing buildings in the area of influence, if dominant patterns are apparent.*



Shape—Building Elements—Inappropriate/Appropriate Examples: These two comparisons depict relationships between historic and new buildings in terms of building elements. The example above left is that of a historic house (shaded) with flat-arched windows and door openings standing next to a new building with inappropriate round-arched window and door openings. The example above right shows more compatible window and door openings on the new building.

Section 4. Massing

Massing has to do with the way in which a building's volumetric components (i.e., main body, roof, bays, overhangs, and porches) are arranged and with the relationship between solid wall surfaces and openings.

Guideline: The massing of a new building should be consistent with dominant massing patterns of existing buildings in the area of influence, if such patterns are apparent.



Massing—Compatible New Development: The new building in the middle has used a massing scheme that is compatible with the patterns established by the historic buildings to either side.

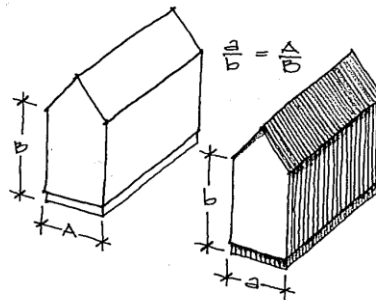
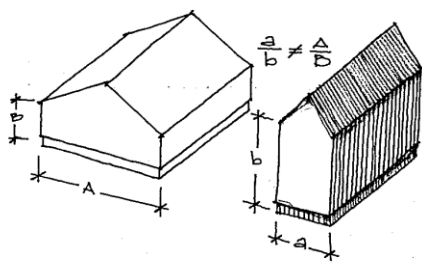


Massing—Incompatible New Development: The new building in the middle has used a massing scheme that is not compatible with the patterns established by the historic buildings to either side.

Section 5. Proportion

Proportion is the relationship of one dimension to another; for example, the relationship of the height to the width of a building, or the height and width of windows and doors. Individual elements of a building should be proportional to each other and the building.

Guideline. The proportions of a new building should be consistent with dominant patterns of proportion of existing buildings in the area of influence, if such patterns are apparent.

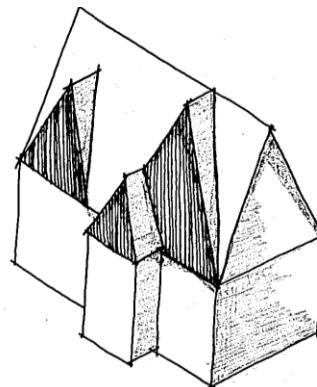
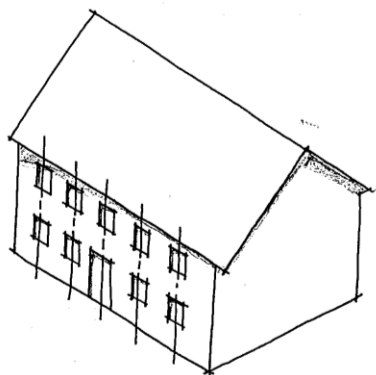


Proportion—Inappropriate/Appropriate Examples: These two comparisons depict relationships between historic and new buildings in terms of front-façade height-to-width ratio. The example on the left is that of a historic house (shaded) with a height-to-width ratio resulting in a very vertical expression standing next to a new building with a horizontal height-to-width ratio. The example on the right shows a more compatible height-to-width ratio on the new building.

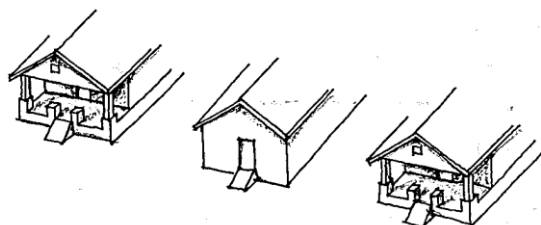
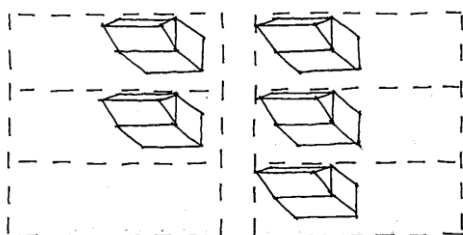
Section 6. Rhythm

Rhythm is the recurring patterns of lines, shapes, forms, or colors (materials) on a building or along a streetscape. For example, the rhythm of openings on a house refers to the number and placement of windows and doors on a façade. Rhythm also occurs on the larger scale of streetscapes as created by development patterns (orientation and setback) and details of individual buildings (directional emphasis, scale, height, massing, etc.)

Guideline. New construction should respect and not disrupt existing rhythmic patterns set in the area of influence, if such patterns are apparent.



Rhythm—Symmetrical/Asymmetrical: These two houses illustrate different types of rhythms created by individual building elements. On the left is a building with a regular placement of elements creating a symmetrical façade. The building on the right has an irregular placement of elements creating an asymmetrical façade.



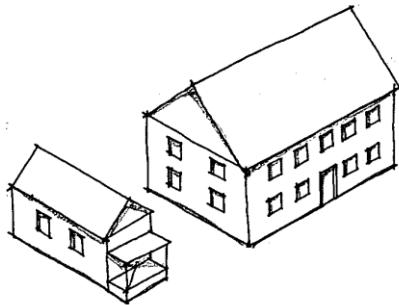
Rhythm—Established Setback Rhythm: These five houses have expressed a well-defined setback and placement rhythm along this street. A new building on the vacant parcel will either continue to or disrupt this pattern.

Rhythm—Inappropriate New Construction: Patterns of solid and voids help create rhythm along a street. The existing buildings in this illustration display a characteristic open porch space. The proposed building in the middle presents a solid front wall surface that disrupts the existing rhythm.

Section 7. Scale and Height

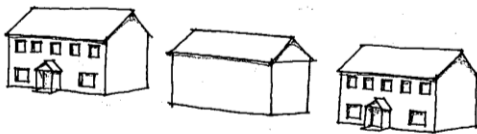
Scale refers to the apparent relationship between two entities, such as the relationship of a building's height to human height, the relationship between different buildings' heights and sizes, or the relationship between the size of an addition and the building to which it is attached. In the Historic Districts the two most important issues are (1) the relationship of new construction to structures in the area of influence, and (2) the relationship of additions to the building to which they are being added.

Guideline: *A proposed new building should appear to conform to the floor-to-floor heights of existing structures if there is a dominant pattern within the established area of influence.*

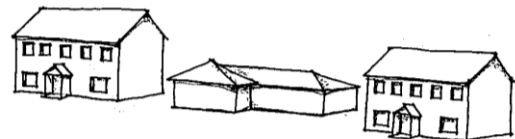


Scale/Height—Illustrations of Different Scales: The buildings to the left obviously express different scales.

Guideline: *New construction should be consistent with dominant patterns of scale within the area of influence, if such patterns are present. Additions should not appear to overwhelm the existing building.*



Scale/Height—Appropriate New Construction: The scale of the proposed building in the middle is compatible with that of the historic buildings to either side.



Scale/Height—Inappropriate New Construction: The scale of the proposed building in the middle is incompatible with that of the historic buildings to either side.



Scale/Height—Inappropriate Addition: This addition (dashed) is too large and overwhelms the original structure. It also juts forward, thus accenting its presence.

Section 8. Additions to Existing Buildings

New additions to existing buildings are common, but there are certain guidelines that should be followed in order to respect the architectural integrity of the individual building and the district as a whole. Property owners considering making an addition to an existing building should ask themselves three questions:

- Does the proposed addition preserve significant existing materials and features?
- Does the proposed addition preserve the character of the building and the surrounding context?
- Does the proposed addition protect the significance of the building by making a visual distinction between old and new?

Guideline: *In most cases, additions to existing buildings should not be placed on the main façade(s) of a building. Locate the proposed addition away from the principal public view, ideally to the rear or side of the building. Additions that are flush with the front façade of the building are highly discouraged. Respect the proportions of the building to which it is being added so the addition does not dominate its environment. Whenever possible, an addition should be made so that at a later date it could be removed without compromising the character of the building.*

Guideline: *Additions should respect the design characteristics and architectural integrity of original buildings. However, the design of the addition should be clearly differentiated so that the addition is not mistaken for part of the original building. While the addition should be compatible, it is acceptable and appropriate for the addition to be clearly discernible as an addition rather than appearing to be an original part of the building. Consider providing some differentiation in material, color, and/or detailing and setting additions back from the existing building's wall plane. The new addition should be designed so that a minimum of existing materials and character-defining elements are obscured, damaged, or destroyed.*

Guideline: *In most cases, an added structure should be located to the rear of the existing building, where it will have little or no impact on the streetscape. If the new building will be visible from the street, respect the established setbacks and orientations of the buildings in the area. Landscaping is also an important component. For example, a concrete or brick plaza adjacent to the sidewalk is incompatible with an area dominated by grassy lawns.*

Section 9. New Construction

After identifying the area of influence and assessing the prevailing character of the development within that area, the next step is to begin the design of the project. Each project is unique and needs to be taken on a case-by-case basis to meet the needs of the owner while at the same time protecting the character of the property and area. There are some general concepts, however, that can assist with the design of the new development.

Guideline: New construction should reference and not conflict with the predominant site and architectural elements of existing properties in the area of influence.

To be compatible with its context, new construction should respect established design patterns within the area of influence. Following are some additional guidelines for new construction.

Guideline: New construction should reference predominant design characteristics that make an area distinctive in order to achieve creative and compatible design solutions that are more than just mere imitations of existing buildings. While new construction is not limited to historical styles, imitation of earlier styles is certainly encouraged.

Article VII. Design Review Standards

To provide specific guidance regarding practical review and approval of applications for a Certificate of Appropriateness, the Commission has prepared and adopted design review standards. The Commission strives to apply these standards, tempered by their underlying philosophy, to each application for a Certificate of Appropriateness application, evaluating each application on a case by case basis, giving full consideration to the unique circumstances and characteristics presented.

The standards are organized into several sections, beginning with those pertaining to site design (which the Commission shall apply in its review of all applications). Sections following deal with rehabilitation and alterations, additions, new construction, and elements of public streets and common open spaces. If a contributing structure is relocated within the district, all design review standards for rehabilitation, alterations and additions shall apply. If a non-contributing structure is relocated within the district, all design review standards for new construction shall apply. It should be noted that the standards are necessarily general so they may be used by the Commission as a guide to decisions in a variety of circumstances. In this way, each application for a Certificate of Appropriateness may be considered on its own merits, fully aware of the individual nature of each property and its context within the historic district.

Section 1. Site Improvements

Site improvements are critical to the character of the district, regardless of the contributing or non-contributing nature of the structures in any particular part of the district. Much of the character of an historic district is attributable to the continuity of its open space, distinctive tall shade trees and richly textured lawns and landscape planting. Outbuildings, walks, driveways, and parking areas also play an important part in defining not only the setting for individual structures, but also the district as a whole.

Section 2. Standards for Site Improvements

The following standards for site improvements shall be applied to all construction in the district, including rehabilitation, alterations, additions, or new construction.

a. Overall Continuity

- Maintain the overall continuity of the district and its aspect and character, especially as viewed from public rights-of-way.

b. Building Orientation and Setbacks

- Maintain the pattern and orientation of building entrances in the district.

- Maintain the pattern and alignment of buildings established by setbacks of nearby contributing buildings.

c. Accessory Buildings, Structures and Appurtenances

- Locate garages and other accessory structures to the rear of the main building, and behind the side yard setback of any structure adjacent to a side street or common alleyway.
- Place site and building appurtenances to the side and rear of the main building, and screen service and mechanical and electrical equipment and trash containers and permanent dumpsters from public view with walls, fences, or plant materials.

d. Wheelchair Ramps

- Consider locations which will have the least visual impact on the historic building and setting. On some buildings, ramps can be integrated into existing stairs or porches with little visual impact.
- Materials for ramps and railings should be compatible with the building: wooden ramps are often appropriate for frame buildings and converted residences, while concrete or brick ramps may be best for masonry buildings. Ramp and railing designs should be coordinated with existing elements wherever possible.
- Wooden ramp surfaces can be punted with a sanded punt for slip resistance. In some cases, altering grade levels to accommodate a very shallow ramp slope can alleviate the requirement for railings. Ramps can be concealed with landscaping.

e. Signage

- Design and install all signs to a size and scale and of types that conform to the historic context of the district and its structures and in a manner to focus only on the intended audience. (See page 25 for additional information.)

f. Landscape and Plant Materials

- Design and install landscape plantings to maintain the overall continuity and aspect of the district. Look at patterns that exist and work with those patterns.
- Maintain and/or enhance the historic plant materials, mindful of the differences in scale and types of landscaping relative to the size, age and use of the buildings, insofar as practicable.
- Specify and locate trees to avoid conflict with or damage to buildings, sidewalks and driveways.
- When appropriate, retain and preserve the building and landscape features that contributes to the overall historic character of the district, including trees, gardens, yards, arbors, groundcovers, fences, accessory buildings, patios, terraces and fountains, fish ponds, and significant vistas or views.
- Retain and preserve the historic relationship between buildings and landscape features on the site. It is not recommended to alter the topography of substantially through grading, filling or excavation.
- Replace seriously diseased or severely damaged trees or hedges with new tree or hedge of equal or similar species.
- When old trees are removed, replant with the advice of the Tree Commission.

g. Fences and Walls

- Design fences and walls to maintain the overall continuity of the district as viewed from public rights-of-way.
- Complement the buildings and do not detract from their character and relation to their neighbors with the design, scale, placement, and materials of fences, walls, and gates.
- Locate fences and walls no closer to the street than the side yard setback of any structure adjacent to a side street.
- Do not exceed the average height of fences and walls of comparable type and location found on adjacent properties, generally not to exceed six feet.
- Present the finished side of all fences to the exterior of the property being fenced.
- Relate scale, height, materials and level of ornateness of the design of new fences and walls to that of the existing structure and/or its neighbors.

Examples of Appropriate Fence Materials and Styles:

- Wood picket
- Wood slat
- Wood lattice
- Iron
- Brick
- Stone
- Stucco over masonry
- Historically appropriate wire
- Aluminum that appears to be iron

Examples of Inappropriate Fence Materials and Styles:

- Chain link
- Stockade
- Post and rail
- Unstuccoed concrete block
- Masonite
- Plastic
- Plywood or asbestos panels

h. Sidewalks, Drives, Parking and Paving

- Use only materials that have historic precedent in the district, taking care to preserve historic paving materials by saw cutting when inserting new materials or repairing damaged areas.
- Situate, design and install paving materials of a color and texture and in a manner to be compatible with the historic character of the property and its neighbors.
- Screen new parking areas through use of low walls, iron fences or landscape plantings, mindful of the need to maintain the overall continuity of the district as viewed from public rights-of-way.
- Locate driveways to the side and rear of the main building.
- Extend all driveways at least to the rear of the main building.
- Install residential driveways in a manner and width compatible with those historically installed, and generally not wider than ten feet.
- Install no parking between the front face of the primary structure and the front right-of-way line of the property.
- Set back from the front property line all parking a distance that will maintain the pattern and alignment of primary building setbacks in the neighborhood.

- Minimize the presence and appearance of all parking areas visible from a public street through site planning and design.

i. Decks

- Locate and construct decks so that the historic fabric of the structure and its character-defining features and details are not damaged or obscured. Install decks so that they are structurally self-supporting and may be removed in the future without damage to the historic structure.
- Introduce decks in inconspicuous locations, usually on the building's rear elevation and inset from the rear corners, where they are not visible from the street.
- Design and detail decks and associated railings and steps to reflect the, scale and proportions of the building. Materials for decks should be compatible with the building. Deck and deck railing designs should be coordinated with existing elements wherever possible.
- In rare occasions where it is appropriate to site a deck in a location visible to the public right-of-way (i.e. the side of a building), it should be treated in a more formally architectural way. Careful attention should be paid to details and finishes, including painting or staining the deck's rails and structural support elements in colors compatible with the colors of the building.
- Align decks generally with the height of the building's first-floor level. Visually tie the deck to the building by screening with compatible foundation materials such as skirtboards, lattice, masonry panels, and dense evergreen foundation plantings.
- It is not appropriate to introduce a deck if doing so will require removal of a significant building element or site feature such as a porch or a mature tree.
- It is not appropriate to introduce a deck if the deck will detract from the overall historic character of the building or the site.
- It is not appropriate to construct a deck that significantly changes the proportion of built area to open space for a specific property.

j. Satellite Dishes, Antennae, Solar Panels, Electronic Devices, and Other Appurtenances

- Satellite dishes, antennae, solar panels, electronic devices, and other appurtenances should be located at the rear of the primary building or attached to rear of the primary building (either on the rear walls or the rear slopes of the roof) and not be visible from the public right of way.
- Any satellite dish, antennae, solar panels, electronic devices, and other appurtenances located on the front 1/3rd of the structure, in the front yard of a structure, on the side of a structure on a corner lot, or otherwise where it is clearly visible from the public right of way, will require an application and review by the Commission. These options are only available if there are no other alternative locations and would be considered as a hardship situation.
- Televisions may be placed on front porches or other locations visible from the public right of way on a temporary basis (less than 7 calendar days) only. Televisions may not be permanently mounted to the structure in a location visible from the public right of way. Mounting hardware for televisions to be temporarily located in a place

visible from the public right of way may be maintained on a permanent basis so long as it is hidden from public view to the maximum extent possible.

- Green technology equipment or devices such as wind collectors, geothermal equipment and the like shall be located at the rear of the structure and not visible from the public right of way.

k. Exterior Lighting

- Design, install, and maintain exterior lighting to focus only on intended areas within the property, and to avoid invading surrounding areas; no moving or flashing lights, no neon lights, and no solar sidewalk lights; downward lighting is encouraged.

Article VIII. Rehabilitation and Alteration

Section 1. General Guidelines

The primary objectives of rehabilitation in the district should be to preserve all important, character-defining architectural materials and features of the structure, designed and executed in a manner that provides for a safe and efficient contemporary use compatible with the particular location within the district. To assure these objectives are met, there should be prepared for any rehabilitation effort an *overall plan for rehabilitation* that contains strategies for:

- *Protection and maintenance of historic features that survive in generally good condition.*
- *Repair of historic materials and features that may be deteriorated.*
- *Replacement of historic materials and features with new materials where deterioration is so extensive that repair is not possible.*
- *Appropriate colors on file with the Commission Staff.*

To provide overall guidance to property owners, the Commission has adopted the following *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* as general guidelines for planning, design, and execution of all rehabilitation projects, taking into reasonable consideration economic and technical feasibility:

Section 2. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

1. *A property shall be used for its historical 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 property shall be preserved.*
6. *Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires the replacement of a distinctive feature, the new one shall match the*

- old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical or pictorial evidence.*
7. *Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historical materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.*
 8. *Significant archaeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such 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 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.*

Section 3. Standards for Rehabilitation and Alteration

The following standards shall be applied to all rehabilitation or alteration of buildings and structures in the district.

a. Design Character

- Respect the original design character of the structure.
- Express the character of the structure—do not attempt to make it appear older or younger than it is.
- Do not obscure or confuse the essential form and character of the original structure.
- Do not allow alterations to hinder the ability to interpret the design character of the historic period of the district.

b. Repairing Original Features

- Avoid removing or altering any historic material or significant architectural features.
- Preserve original materials and details that contribute to the historic significance of the structure.
- Do not harm the historic character of the property or district.
- Protect and maintain existing significant stylistic elements.
- Minimize intervention with historic elements.
- Repair, rather than replace, deteriorated architectural features.
- Use like-kind materials, and utilize a substitute material only if its form and design conveys the visual appearance of the original.

- Disassemble historic elements only as necessary for rehabilitation, using methods that minimize damage to original materials, and use only methods of reassembly that assure a return to the original configuration.

c. Replacing Original Features

- Base replacement of missing architectural elements on accurate duplications of original features, substantiated by physical or pictorial evidence.
- Use materials similar to those employed historically, taking care to match design, color, texture, and other visual qualities.
- Employ new design that relates in style, size, scale and material wherever reconstruction of an element is not possible due to lack of historical evidence.

d. Existing Alterations

- Preserve older alterations that have achieved historic significance in themselves in the same manner as if they were an integral part of the original structure.

e. Materials

- Maintain original materials and finishes.
- Retain and repair original siding, generally avoiding the use of synthetic siding. When replacement is required, use like-kind materials that conform to the original in profile and dimension, unless such materials are not available.

f. Trim and Ornament

- Maintain historic trim and ornament in place.
- Replace missing original trim and ornament with like-kind materials whose designs, proportions and finishes match those of the original.

g. Roofs

- Preserve the original roof form, pitch and overhang of all structures, and use roof materials appropriate to the form and pitch of the roof.
- Preserve the character of the original roofing materials and details.
- Retain elements such as chimneys, skylights, and light wells that contribute to the style and character of the structure.

Examples of Appropriate Roof Materials:

- Slate
- Tile
- Metal of appropriate gauge, color and fastening system
- Wood shingle
- Cement fiber shingle
- Asphalt or fiberglass shingle
- Built-up or membrane on slopes greater than 3-and-12 where hidden by parapets

Examples of Inappropriate Roof Materials:

- Corrugated fiberglass
- Asphalt roll roofing
- Built-up or membrane on slopes greater than 3-and-12

h. Windows

- Maintain the original number, location, size, and glazing pattern of windows on primary building elevations.
- Maintain historic window openings and proportions.

Appropriate:

- Wood sash windows in double-hung, single-hung and casement styles
- Steel, if original to structure
- Aluminum-clad wood
- Composite material with wood sash, frame, and glides

Inappropriate:

- Aluminum or vinyl
- Snap-in or artificial muntins
- Reflective or tinted glass

i. Storm Windows

- Permit storm windows and screens so long as they do not obscure windows with inappropriate materials, finishes, colors or other elements.

Appropriate:

- Wood
- Metal with baked enamel or anodized finish to match sash color

Inappropriate:

- Mill finish aluminum
- Vinyl

j. Exterior Blinds, Awnings and Shutters

- Use exterior blinds and shutters only as appropriate to the style, proportion and character of the structure, and sized to cover the window.

Appropriate:

- Wood: louvered or solid panel
- Fabric awnings

Inappropriate:

- Plastic or vinyl blinds, shutters, awnings
- Metal awnings (unless original)

k. Entrances and Doorways

- Maintain the historic character of the building entrance.
- Retain historic doors and openings, together with any moldings, transoms or sidelights.

Appropriate:

- Wood panel
- Wood panel with glass lights
- Leaded glass with lead cams

Inappropriate:

- Metal, except for security doors on rear or side of house or other appropriate situations

l. Storm Doors

- Permit storm doors and screens so long as they do not obscure doors with inappropriate materials, finishes, colors or other elements.

Appropriate:

- Wood
- Metal with baked enamel or anodized finish to match frame color

Inappropriate:

- Mill finish aluminum
- Vinyl

m. Porches

- Maintain and repair historic porches to reflect their historic period and the relationship to the structure.
- Use materials that blend with the style of the structure or other structures in the district. Balustrades of stairs should match the design and materials of the porch.
- Do not permit enclosure of front porches. Where rear or side porches are to be enclosed, the enclosure shall preserve the original configuration of columns, handrails and other important architectural elements.

n. Signage

- Design and install all signs to a size and scale and of types that conform to the historic context of the district and its structures. (See page 25 for additional information.)

o. Mailboxes

- Mailboxes should be placed in a location consistent with other structures in the district and be of similar design and material. For example mailboxes should not be placed on a post at the street when mailboxes on other structures in the district are attached to the structure at or about the structure's entrance, unless otherwise regulated by the US Postal Service.

p. Foundations

- Keep cellar and crawl space vents open so that air may flow freely, being sure to retain any vents that are original to the building.
- Ensure that land is graded so that water flows away from the foundation and, if necessary, install drains around the foundation.

Examples of Appropriate Foundations:

- Stucco piers or infill
- Brick piers or infill
- Wood lattice
- Vertical picket infill
- Stuccoed concrete block

Examples of Inappropriate Foundations:

- Metal infill
- Plywood panels
- Mineral board panels
- Plastic or vinyl sheeting
- Unfinished concrete block
- Imitation brick or stone
- Vinyl lattice

q. Surface Cleaning

- Use no abrasive cleaning methods on exterior surfaces, such as those involving grit, sand, high-pressure water blasting, or mechanical sanding.
- Use only those cleaning techniques that have proved effective while having little or no adverse impact on the underlying materials (these include low-pressure water cleaning and gentle chemical washes, scrubbing with a brush and detergent, and hand sanding and scraping to remove paint).

Article IX. Additions

Section 1. General Guidelines

An exterior addition to a historic building can significantly alter its appearance and thereby adversely affect both adjacent properties and the character of the entire district. Additions to existing structures in the district have a responsibility to complement and reflect the design, scale and architectural type of the original structure. Before an addition is planned, every effort should be made to accommodate the new use within the existing structure. When an addition is necessary, it should be designed and constructed so that it will complement the original and not confuse the viewer or detract from the character-defining features of the building.

It should be noted that all additions shall be designed and constructed in accord with the following standards *and* with the standards for new construction that follow.

Section 2. Standards for Additions

The following standards shall be applied to all construction in the district that involves additions to existing buildings and structures.

a. Original Design Character

- Maintain the size, scale, materials, and character of additions, including their foundations, in a manner compatible with the main building and its context.
- Design and construct additions in such a manner that, if the change were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the original structure would not be impaired.
- Limit the size of additions to those that do not visually overpower the existing structure.
- Do not allow additions to hinder the ability to interpret the historic character of the structure or district.

b. Location

- Maintain the pattern created by the repetition of building fronts, bays and sections in the particular area of the district.
- Locate additions so they will not obscure or damage significant architectural features, ornament or detail.
- Place additions to the side or rear, or set back slightly from the building front.

c. Materials

- Use materials that are inspired by and compatible with those of the general character of the original structure.
- Do not obscure window proportions with inappropriate storm windows.

Article X. New Construction

Section 1. General Guidelines

New construction has an obligation to harmonize with the historic character and scale of the district. Designs for infill and other new construction must be designed with the surroundings in mind. The setback, scale, mass, and size of a structure are as important as the style or decorative details. However, style, decoration, building materials and landscape treatment and planting shall be utilized in the design to provide the attributes necessary for new construction to be compatible with the district, while creating a distinctive character for the new structure.

Section 2. Standards for New Construction

The following standards shall be applied to all new construction, *including additions*, in the district.

a. Massing and Orientation

- Respect the site planning, massing and building orientation precedents set by nearby similar-size contributing buildings of the district.
- Align the facade of the new building with the predominant setbacks of nearby buildings within the district.

- Orient the main entrance of the building in a manner similar to established patterns in the particular part of the district.

b. Form and Scale

- Design new buildings to be compatible with contributing buildings in that particular part of the district, yet retain enough of the individuality in form, scale, or level of complexity to avoid confusing the viewer as regard to the age of the new structure.
- Design new buildings to respect the overall relationship of height to width of surrounding contributing structures.
- Proportion new construction to the size of the lot in a manner similar to typical examples of contributing structures within the particular part of the district.
- Provide features on new construction that reinforce the scale and character of the surrounding area by including elements such as porches, porticos, and decorative features, as appropriate.
- Use roof forms and pitches appropriate for and that harmonize with those used historically in the particular part of the district.
- Design all new garage(s) and outbuilding(s) to be compatible with the style of the major buildings on the property and scaled to be subordinate to the main building and the lot.

c. Foundations

- Use foundations that harmonize with those in the surrounding part of the district.

d. Signage

- Design and install all signs to a size and scale and of types that conform to the historic context of the district and its structures and in a manner to focus only on the intended audience. (See page 25 for additional information.)

e. Materials

- Use materials and finishes for all major building surfaces, including roofs, that are similar to those employed historically in the particular location in the district and appropriate to their form and location.

f. Doors and Windows

- Design new construction so that the rhythm, patterns, and ratio of solid to void (walls to windows and doors) on public facades are compatible with those of adjacent contributing buildings.
- Design new construction so that the size and proportion (ratio of width to height) of window and door openings of primary facades are similar to and compatible with those on facades of adjacent contributing buildings.
- Use doors and windows whose size, proportions and degree of setback from the exterior wall are similar to those of historic designs used in the district.

Article XI. Public and Common Areas and Facilities

Section 1. General Guidelines

The public rights-of-way and other parts of the public realm are critically important in helping to define the unique character of an historic district. The following standards are aimed at retaining important character-defining features, expanding their use as the opportunity arises, and making additional improvements to open space and streetscape trees and landscape planting that will complement the historic character of the district.

Section 2. Standards for Public and Common Areas and Facilities

The following standards shall be applied to all installation, maintenance or modification of streetscapes, street furnishings, signage, trees and landscape planting within the public rights-of-way and properties owned or maintained by the City of Guntersville.

- Maintain the overall continuity of the district and its character.
- Maintain and enhance over time the canopy effect of mature deciduous shade trees, and replace damaged or missing trees with appropriate species, especially indigenous, hardy species that require minimal maintenance.
- Retain and enhance historic plant materials, mindful of the differences in scale and types of landscaping relative to various parts of the district and to the size, age and use of the buildings, insofar as practicable.
- Design fences and walls to maintain the overall continuity of the district as viewed from public rights-of-way and properties owned or maintained by the City of Guntersville.
- Do not exceed the average height of fences and walls of comparable type and location found on adjacent properties.
- Use only materials that have historic precedent in the district, taking care to preserve historic paving materials by saw cutting when inserting new materials or repairing damaged areas.
- Situate and design paving in a manner and of material, color and texture to be compatible with the historic character of the property and its neighbors.
- Screen new parking areas through use of low walls, iron fences or landscape plantings, mindful of the need to maintain the overall continuity of the district, and especially as it may be viewed from public rights-of-way and properties owned or maintained by the City of Guntersville.
- Design, install, and maintain exterior lighting to maintain the character of the district and to direct light only on intended areas.
- Design and install all signs to a size and scale and of types that conform to the historic context of the district and its structures and in a manner to focus only on the intended audience.
- Screen service, mechanical, and electrical equipment and trash containers and permanent dumpsters from public view with walls, fences, or plant materials that conform to all pertinent provisions set forth elsewhere in these standards.

Article XII. Approval of Signs within a designated Historic District

Section 1. General Guidelines

- Retain and preserve original signs that contribute to the overall historic character of the building or district.
- Introduce new signage that is compatible in material, size, scale and character with the building or the district. Design signage to enhance the architectural character of a building.
- If desired install small identification signs and historic plaques for residential buildings so that no architectural features or details are obscured or damaged.
- Construct new signs of traditional sign materials.

Appropriate Materials:

- Stone
- Wrought Iron or Metal
- Canvas Awning
- Wood

Inappropriate Materials:

- Vinyl Sign or Awning
- Internally Illuminated Signs
- Plastic

- Install freestanding signs in appropriate locations on low standards or grown bases. Screening the base of ground signs with plantings to enhance its appearance is required.
- Mount flush signboards in appropriate locations on facades so that no architectural details or features are obscured or damaged. On masonry buildings, holes for fasteners should be placed in the mortar joints, not the masonry units.
- Light signs in a manner compatible within the historic character and the pedestrian scale of the historic district.
- For commercial and institutional buildings, design signs to be integral to the overall building façade. Avoid covering a large portion of the façade, or front yard or any significant architectural features with signage.
- Temporary signs, including sales advertising, and real estate signs should be located so as not to damage or obscure significant architectural features, and shall be removed upon completion of work, sale, campaign etc. The maximum number of allowable signs shall be one per street frontage.
- Signs directing users to an accessible entrance or parking space should be installed to avoid damaging or obscuring significant architectural features, while conforming to Accessibility Standards (ADAAG).

Section 2.

See Appendix C, which provides more detailed guidelines

**ADDENDUM (formerly, “Appendix”):
CLASSIFICATION OF WORK—GENERAL GUIDELINES**

	TYPE OF WORK	ROUTINE MAINTENANCE	MINOR WORK (STAFF)	MAJOR WORK (HPC)	INSPECTION REQUIRED
1	New Construction or Additions to primary building			X	X
2	Demolition of any structure			X	X
3	Demolition of any part of a structure			X	X
4	Relocation of buildings			X	X
5	Alteration/Removal of Archeologically Significant Features			X	X
6	Alteration/Removal of Contributing Historical Features			X	X
7	Repair/Replacement of existing Accessory Structures or Buildings when there is no change in design, materials, or general appearance	X			
8	Alteration of existing Accessory Structures or Buildings		X		
9	Additions to existing Accessory Structures or Buildings			X	X
10	New Accessory Structures or Buildings			X	X
11	Removal of existing Accessory Structures or Buildings which are not architecturally or historically significant		X		X
12	Removal of existing Accessory Structures or Buildings which are architecturally or historically significant			X	X
13	Repair or Replacement of Architectural Details when there is no change in design, materials, or general appearance	X			
14	Alteration/Addition/Removal of Architectural Details		X		
15	Repair/Replacement of Awnings, Canopies, or Shutters when there is no change in design, materials, or general appearance	X			
16	Alteration/Addition/Removal of existing Awnings, Canopies, or Shutters		X		
17	Installation of New Awnings, Canopies, or Shutters		X		
18	Alteration/Addition/Removal of Carports			X	X
19	Construction of New Carports			X	X
20	Construction/Alteration/Removal of Chimneys			X	X
21	Repair/Replacement of Decks when there is no change in design, materials, or general appearance	X			
23	Alteration/Addition/Removal of Doors		X		Case by case basis
24	Installation of new Doors		X		Case by case basis
25	Installation/Alteration/Removal of storm Doors		X		Case by case basis
26	Repair/Replacement of existing Driveways when there is no change in design, materials, or general appearance	X			Case by case basis

	TYPE OF WORK	ROUTINE MAINTENANCE	MINOR WORK (STAFF)	MAJOR WORK (HPC)	INSPECTION REQUIRED
26	Alteration/Addition/Removal of existing Driveways		X		X
27	Construction of new Driveways		X		X
28	Repair/Replacement of existing Fences, Walls, Hedges or other Screen Plantings when there is no change in design, materials, or general appearance	X			
29	Construction of new Fences, Walls, Hedges or other Screen Plantings		Side and rear yards	Front yards	X
30	Removal of existing Fences, Walls, Hedges or other Screen Plantings		Side and rear yards	Front yards	X
31	Repair/Replacement of exposed Foundations when there is no change in design, materials, or general appearance	X			
32	Alteration of exposed Foundations		X		Case by case basis
33	Repair/Replacement of Gutters and Downspouts when there is no change in design, materials, or general appearance	X			
34	Installation/Addition/Removal of Gutters and Downspouts		X		Case by case basis
35	Installation of House Numbers and Mailboxes		X		
36	Repair/Replacement of exterior Lighting Fixtures when there is no change in design, materials, or general appearance	X			
37	Installation/Alteration/Removal of exterior Lighting Fixtures		X		
38	Repairs/Replacement, including repainting, to existing Masonry when the color and composition of the mortar match the original, and new brick or stone matches the original	X			
39	Construction/Alteration/Removal of Masonry		X		X
40	Installation/removal of Mechanical Equipment, such as heating and air conditioning units		X		Case by case basis
41	Repair/Replacement of existing Parking Lots when there is no change in design, materials, or general appearance	X			
42	Alteration/Removal of existing Parking Lots		X		
43	New Construction of/Addition to Parking Lots			X	X
44	Repair/Replacement of existing Patios when there is no change in design, materials, or general appearance	X			
45	Alteration/Addition/Removal of existing Patios		X		Case by case basis
46	Construction of new Patios		X		X
47	Alteration of existing Porches			X	X
48	New Construction/Addition/ Removal of Porches			X	X
49	Repair/Replacement of sloped Roof coverings when there is no change in design, materials, or general appearance	X			
50	Alteration of sloped Roof coverings			X	X

	TYPE OF WORK	ROUTINE MAINTENANCE	MINOR WORK (STAFF)	MAJOR WORK (HPC)	INSPECTION REQUIRED
51	Repair/Replacement of flat Roof coverings when there is no change in design, materials, or general appearance	X			
52	Alteration of flat Roof coverings			X	
53	Alteration of Roof form to prevent damage to the resource			X	X
54	Installation of Satellite Dishes, Television Antennas, Televisions, Solar Panels and/or other Electronic Equipment, Decks, Ramps and Appurtenances not visible from the public right of way		X		Case by case basis
55	Repair/Replacement of Signs when there is no change in design, materials, or general appearance	X			
56	Installation/Alteration/Removal of Signs			X	X
57	Repair/Replacement of exterior Stairs and Steps when there is no change in design, materials, or general appearance	X			
58	Alteration/Addition/Removal of exterior Stairs and Steps			X	X
59	Construction of new exterior Stairs and Steps			X	X
60	Repair/Replacement of exterior Surfaces when there is no change in design, materials, or general appearance	X			
61	Alteration/Addition/Removal of exterior Surfaces			X	X
62	Repair to existing Swimming Pools when there is no change in design, materials, or general appearance	X			
63	New Construction/Alteration/ Addition to Swimming Pools			X	X
64	Removal of Swimming Pools		X		
65	Installation/Alteration/Removal of Temporary Features that are necessary to ease difficulties associated with a medical condition		X		Case by case basis
66	Repair/Replacement of existing Vents and Ventilators when there is no change in design, materials, or general appearance	X			
67	Installation/Alteration/Removal of Vents and Ventilators		X		Case by case basis
68	Installation of Satellite Dishes, Television Antennas, Televisions, Solar Panels and/or other Electronic Equipment, Decks, Ramps and Appurtenances visible from the public right of way			X	Case by case basis
69	Repair/Replacement of existing Walks when there is no change in design, materials, or general appearance	X			
70	Alteration/Addition/Removal of existing Walks		X		Case by case basis
71	Construction of new Walks		X		X
72	Walls (see Fences)				
73	Repair/Replacement of Windows when there is no change in design, materials, or general appearance	X			
74	Alteration/Removal of existing Windows			X	X

	TYPE OF WORK	ROUTINE MAINTENANCE	MINOR WORK (STAFF)	MAJOR WORK (HPC)	INSPECTION REQUIRED
75	Installation/Alteration/Removal of storm Windows		X		Case by case basis
76	Installation of new Windows			X	X
77	Caulking and weatherstripping Windows when there is no change in design, materials, or general appearance	X			
78	Repair/Replacement of other features not specifically listed when there is no change in design, materials, or general appearance	X			
79	Addition/Alteration/Removal of other features not specifically listed		X		
80	Changes to previous Certificates of Appropriateness		Most changes	Changes deemed by staff to be substantial in nature	
81	Renewal of expired Certificate of Appropriateness		X		
82	Emergency installation of Temporary Features to protect a historic resource (that do not permanently alter the resource); six month duration; replacement with in-kind reconstruction or an approved certificate of appropriateness		X		

APPENDIX C

Guntersville Historic District Sign Guidelines

**Adopted by the Guntersville Historic Preservation Commission on
May 19th, 2015**

Purpose

These guidelines have been prepared to help business owners and property owners, along with their sign makers, develop signs that meet the objectives of the Historic District Ordinance, and to facilitate the Historic District Commission's implementation of the ordinance. This document is intended to serve as a guide and is not regulatory. Note that all the signs depicted here are considered to be high quality signs that conform with the goals of these guidelines.

The City of Guntersville encourages signage within the Historic District that is handsome, distinctive, and creative. At the same time, it should also be pedestrian-oriented, restrained in character, and harmonious with the sensitive nature of the district. Large, bright, and conspicuous designs may be suitable on commercial corridors, such as 431 on top of the mountain, that are geared to motorists, but such signs are not appropriate within the Historic District.



Overview

The following aspects of a sign are subject to review by the HPC, Historic Preservation Commission:

- a) Overall design
- b) Location of the sign on a building

- c) Size and shape
- e) Colors
- f) Typefaces
- g) Illumination

The commission does not have the purview over the specific words or message of a sign.

All signs must comply with: a) the Sign Ordinance, a separate section within the Zoning Ordinance that controls the types of signs, dimensions, number of signs, and other elements and b) the Historic District Ordinance, also a separate section within the Zoning Ordinance, as administered and interpreted by the HPC. These guidelines are provided to help clarify the intent of the Historic District Ordinance. Pursuant to the Historic District Ordinance, the HPC may stipulate requirements that are stricter than the Sign Ordinance.

Because every building and every application is unique, the Historic District Ordinance and these guidelines do not specify precise expectations. Rather, the HPC uses its reasonable judgment in applying them.

Where terms such as “should,” “appropriate,” “encouraged,” “desirable,” and “preferred,” are used, the HPC may require conformance with the provision to the extent that it is applicable, practical, and reasonable in a given situation.

The signs depicted here illustrate “good signage”, though each individual sign does not necessarily exemplify all of the desirable features that are discussed in this document.

Design

- The overall design of all signage including the mounting framework shall relate to the design of the principal building on the property. This can be done with the use of similar decorative features such as columns or brackets.
- For buildings with a recognizable style, the sign shall adopt the decorative features of the building, utilizing the same materials and colors.

General Principles

Signage should be harmonious with the character of the building with which it is associated in terms of form, design, scale, and proportion. Where multiple signs are used on one site they should be compatible with one another regarding these four elements and part of an overall sign plan for the building. Signage should be designed and placed in order to avoid a sense of clutter or chaos on the building facade.

While imaginative signage is encouraged, simplicity and legibility is the key to good design. A sign with fewer words is more effective in conveying the message.

Signs should be mounted in such a way so as to minimize damage to historic materials. On masonry buildings, it is preferable that bolts extend through mortar joints rather than through

masonry units.

Building mounted signage is more pedestrian oriented than free standing signs. Free standing signs within a historic district should be carefully designed, located, and scaled in order that it not undermine the scale and character of the district. It is preferable that freestanding signage not be used but it is allowed if there is sufficient space and it is desired by the applicant.



Building Mounted Sign



Freestanding Sign

Sizes and Shape

Signs within the historic district should be significantly smaller than those situated in commercial corridors. They should be scaled and oriented to relate to pedestrians, as well as passing motorists.

Signs should be sized to the scale of the building, the storefront, and the street. Within the Historic District Fants is a large scaled, but generally the fronts are rather small scaled, with some medium scaled mixed in.

Generally, wall signs should not exceed one square foot in area for each linear foot of building frontage nor two feet in height. Generally, freestanding signs should not exceed ten square feet nor eight feet in height, though smaller signs are preferable.

Most signs are rectangular. Wall signs are typically horizontal and projecting signs are typically vertical. Freestanding signs are more pedestrian oriented when they are small and vertical. Non-rectangular shapes add variety and interest and can be appropriate, but use of strange or highly irregular shapes, where not rationalized by the nature of the business, should be avoided.

- The size of the sign shall be in proportion to the building and the neighboring structures and signs.
- The total maximum allowable square footage for the display area of a monument sign is 50 square feet, for pole signs 40 square feet, and for projecting signs 40 square feet.
- The total maximum allowable sign area is one and one half square feet per linear front foot of the principal building, not to exceed 64 square feet. A multi-tenant building is also limited to a maximum of 64 square feet.
- The size of the sign shall be determined by measuring the area within each face of the geometric shape enclosing all elements of informational or representational matter including blank masking. Structural supports not bearing information shall not be included in the computation of display area. For double faced signs, each side shall count toward the maximum allowable square footage.



Sign on Post

Colors

Use of the following colors is encouraged:

- nature blending colors
- earth tone colors
- neutral colors
- pastel colors

The following colors are best limited to accent areas:

- bright colors
- primary colors
- metallic colors

Use of the following color palettes is discouraged:

- high intensity colors
- fluorescent colors
- “day glow” colors

It is preferred that dark or medium colors be used for the main, background part of the sign and that light colors be used for the lettering. Use of white or light colors for the background is discouraged, especially for larger signs, reflective signs, and illuminated signs.

Suggested background colors are burgundy, forest green, chocolate brown, black, charcoal, and navy blue. Suggested letter colors are ivory, white, or gold.

Colors should be chosen to compliment the exterior color of the building.

In general, it is best to use no more than three colors on a sign: one for the background, one for the lettering, and a third color for accent (such as borders, motifs, logos, or shading). A fourth color might be used for illustrations.

Many signs use gold leaf for lettering. With a dark background, gold leaf can bring much beauty to a sign. One need not be concerned about the gold being scraped off as the amount that could be collected would be virtually worthless.



Illumination

Lighting is an important factor in a sign's character. Signs may be **externally illuminated** - lit by one or more shielded, stationary bulbs projecting onto the sign; **internal illumination** -where a translucent-plastic sign is lit from the inside; or made with **neon** – exposed tubes filled with gas that glows when electrified, are prohibited. Often street lights or other area lights provide sufficient lighting, such as that the sign need not be lit at all.

Use of **internal illumination is strongly discouraged and will generally not be approved.** The plastic feel of internally illuminated signs is inappropriate in a historic district. In rare cases, like the

Edward Jones sign, where the wattage is low and the sign is quite dark, internal illumination can be effective and may be acceptable.

Neon and LED rope lighting is generally inappropriate.

Use of changeable copy signs is strongly discouraged. Where there is a need for changing

advertising, portable signage may be a good solution. **Electronic message signs are highly inappropriate in a historic district and should not be approved.**

- Internally lit signs are prohibited.
- Lighted signs shall be focused, low intensity illumination. Such lighting shall not shine into or create glare at vehicular or pedestrian traffic, nor shall it shine into adjacent area. Light fixtures mounted on the ground shall be screened by landscaping.
- Flashing, blinking, revolving, or rotating lights are not permitted.



Neon Acceptable Only Inside

Materials

Traditionally, the most attractive outdoor signs have generally been made of wood, mainly cedar, redwood and mahogany (though teak, cypress and others are sometimes used). These woods are dimensionally stable and resistant to rot and decay. They also hold paint and varnish well.

Various newer synthetic products achieve the desired look of hand-crafted traditional signage. MDO and composite material is used increasingly. It is durable and easy to work, and, when painted, it resembles wood. Metal is also an appropriate material.

Materials should have a matte finish and not be reflective nor translucent.

The following materials are inappropriate:

- sheet plastic
- plastic substrates
- interior grade wood

- unfaced plywood

It is desirable that signs have a solid “feel” rather than a plastic feel.

- The structural material of the sign should match the historic materials of the building. Wood, metal, stucco, stone, or brick, is allowed. Plastic, vinyl or similar materials are prohibited. Neon, resin to give the appearance of wood, and fabric may be used as appropriate.



Dimensional Sign

Typefaces

A sign utilizing easily recognized symbols and clear, crisp lettering will identify a business or activity effectively and enhance and complement the general appearance of the street.

Every typeface has a particular style or “mood”. Typefaces should be carefully selected to be harmonious with the building and nature of the business.

The number of lettering styles should be limited to increase legibility, generally to two.



Letters Mounted on Building

Building-Mounted Signs

Building-mounted signs- including wall signs, projecting signs, awning signs, and canopy signs- should be located in the most appropriate location on the building. There is frequently a horizontal band or panel, or an open section on the wall which is clearly the most logical location for a sign.

Generally, the appropriate zone for signage, including the brackets for projecting signs, is above the storefront windows and below the sills under the second floor windows.

It may be appropriate to place an understated wall sign identifying a building on the band under the cornice (uppermost crown) at the top of a multistory building.

Window signage on upper stories, advertising businesses located on the upper stories, is appropriate provided it is not unduly prominent. Otherwise, signage placed above the second floor sills is discouraged, but may be approved if the design is suitably understated and is compatible with the building.

Signs should be placed where they respect an existing sign line established by the signs on adjacent establishments.

Signs should not obscure any architectural features, including the windows, of the building.

Wall signs should be affixed to the building, parallel to the building with one face showing.

Roof signs are highly inappropriate, except on one story buildings where there are few other good locations for signage and the rood sign is especially well crafted to integrate effectively into the design of the roof (such as on the ...building below)

- No sign shall extend above the cornice line at the top of the building. Roof top signs are prohibited.



Projecting Signs

Projecting signs should be placed perpendicular to the building and should have two faces. Generally, it is best that they be vertical rather than horizontal in form.

Sign brackets should be made of painted wood or pre-finished, pre-painted metal. Guy-wires, if needed, should be as inconspicuous as possible.



Awning and Canopy Signs

Lettering should be placed on the front valance only (or on a cross gable as on the sign below) and on the side panels. Awnings should be made of canvas material.



Window Signs

Window signs may be painted on, attached to, or suspended behind the window. There should be minimal area covered so that the signage does not block the view into the establishment nor appear to be cluttered or chaotic. It is best that lettering be placed either a) at the top and/or bottom of the window; or b) in the center of the window.

- Signs painted directly painted on the window glass or hung on the windows are permitted. Such signs will be counted toward the maximum size requirement, and are limited to 20% of the window area.



Freestanding Signs

- The height of free standing signs shall not exceed 8 feet.
- Signs shall not be located in the right-of-way except for sandwich board signs.
- Off premise signs are prohibited.



Electronic and Moving Signs

Electronic and moving signs are prohibited in the Historic District.

Special Purpose Signs

Special Purpose signs are not reviewed except as noted.

- On site construction signs are signs giving information about the construction or renovation of a building on the same site. They must be removed at the completion of the project.

- Directional signs or incidental signs are signs as “entrance” or “exit” that give information but do not contain advertisements. They require a COA but do not count toward size requirements of this document.
- Informational signs are signs that give information of a non-commercial or advertising nature such as historic markers, highway identification markers, or traffic signs within the parking area of a building.
- On site real estate signs are signs informing the public that the building or land is for sale or lease.
- Political signs are signs for a political candidate or issue. They are allowed for a time limited to three months prior to an election and must be removed within seven days following the election. These are not reviewed but must meet the requirements of the sign ordinance of the City of Guntersville.



Historical Plaque

Multi-Tenant Buildings

- Owner shall submit an overall sign plan addressing the placement, materials, and design. Signage for the building and for the tenants shall be consistent.
- The size requirements for multi-tenant buildings is laid out under the **SIZE** requirements above.
- Multiple free standing signs are prohibited.

Signs in Disrepair

Existing signs that are in disrepair are required to submit a COA for repairs or changes. All signs in the Historic District are required to be repaired if damaged by weather, sun, inappropriate use of materials, or vandalism.

Existing Signs in the Historic District

Not all signs currently in the review board areas meet these guidelines. Therefore do not use existing signs as a guide for design.