

Courthouse Hill Historic District

Design Guidelines

2006



Courthouse Hill Historic District Commission



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Design Guidelines

**Contact the City of Cadillac for
Historic District construction review
procedures and permit requirements.**



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Courthouse Hill Historic District Commission



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Design Guidelines Overview

On April 18, 2005, the City of Cadillac adopted an ordinance that established the Courthouse Hill Historic District. Located in the heart of Cadillac, its boundaries mainly follow the original 1871 plat of the “Mitchell Revised Plat of the Village of Clam Lake.” Historic preservation serves as a tangible link with our past, and the purpose of the historic district is to recognize, protect and preserve a part of Cadillac’s heritage for future generations. In many communities, preservation has been found to stabilize property values, stimulate new investment in older residential homes, and even increase tourism and commercial activity.

In an effort to preserve the architectural styles, construction materials and craftsmanship of these structures, the Historic District Commission has established design guidelines. Exterior changes, including rehabilitation, new construction, and demolition, shall be subject to review under these design guidelines. Property owners, design professionals and contractors should use the guidelines when developing their rehabilitation plans for structures in the historic district. Excluded will be routine maintenance such as calking, patching, painting, or any other minor intervention intended to preserve deteriorating building materials.

Guideline Categories

The guidelines address the following items:

- Additions
- Architectural Details
- Demolition/Relocation
- Fences
- Garages/Carports
- Porches/Decks
- Roofs
- Siding/Masonry/Brick
- Windows and Doors

Guideline Terminology

The following terms and phrases shall be applied as follows:

Shall means compliance is required for design action approval.

Shall not means the design action is not in compliance and will not be approved.

Appropriate means the design action is in compliance and is approved.

Not appropriate means the design action is not in compliance and will not be approved.

Encouraged means the design action is not required for compliance, but welcomed.

Not encouraged means the design action will be in compliance, but is not welcomed.

Consider means the HDC must review the details of the design action for approval.

Maintaining Historic Integrity

Rehabilitation of a property assumes that at least some repair or alteration of the historic building will be needed in order to provide for an efficient contemporary use; however, these repairs and alterations must not damage or destroy materials, features or finishes that are important in defining the building's historic character.



Before rehabilitation, this deteriorated house still retained much of its historical significance including a ghost of the original front porch.



During rehabilitation, deteriorated features were repaired and replaced, and the character-defining elements were enhanced. The historic integrity of the entire house was preserved.



Original design intact



Design partially altered



Historical integrity lost

Additions

An attached exterior addition to a historic building expands its outer limits to create a new profile. Because such expansion has the capability to radically alter the historic appearance, an exterior addition should be considered only after it has been determined that the new use cannot be successfully met by altering non-character defining interior spaces.

New additions shall be designed and constructed so that the character defining features of the historic building are not significantly altered, obscured, damaged, or destroyed. The following standards shall apply to new additions:

1. **Retain and preserve original historic elements.** Additions shall be designed and constructed so that there is the least possible loss of historic materials and so that character defining features of the historic structure are not obscured, damaged, or destroyed.
2. **Compatibility with the historic building.** The addition shall be compatible to the historic building in terms of mass, materials, color, and other such design features.
3. **Location and size.** If possible, additions should be located to the rear of the building or on an inconspicuous side of the building. Additions shall be limited in size and scale in relationship to the historic building.
4. **Contemporary features such as decks, four-season rooms, and greenhouses.** The addition of features possessing a contemporary design shall be restricted to the rear of the dwelling unless it can be demonstrated that such features must be located in a side yard due to site constraints and/or the physical layout or design of the principal structure to which the feature will be attached. If located in a side yard the feature shall be designed and constructed compatible to the historic building in terms of mass, materials, color, and other such design features. The addition shall be designed as a simplified version of the architectural style of the residence on the property and shall visually complement it.
5. **Balconies and other elevation features.** The attachment of balconies or other such features shall not obscure nor significantly alter the building's historic character when viewed from the street.

Additions



Place an addition at the rear of the building or set it back from the front to minimize the visual impacts.



This rear addition is compatible to the historic building in terms of mass, materials, and other design features.

Architectural Details

Architectural details help define a building's style and relate the architecture to a particular historical time frame. Examples of architectural details include columns, capitals, brackets, pediments, cornices, trims, fish-scale shingles, roof crests and pinnacles.

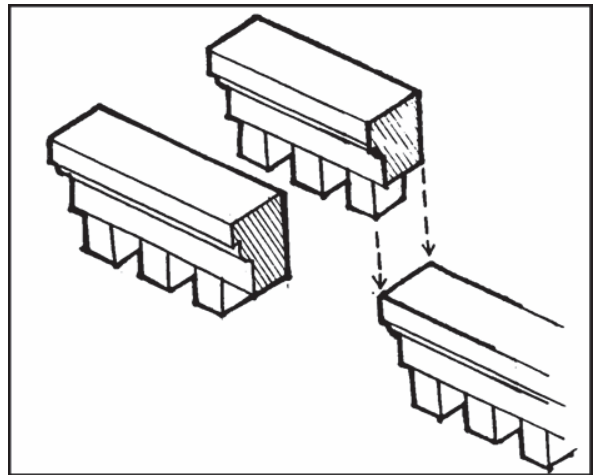
The historic accuracy of these details, as well as the period they represent, has a crucial effect on the overall character of a structure. Mixing historic styles and adding details that were never a part of the building may create a false sense of history.

1. **Retain and preserve existing details.** Original architectural details provide special visual character to the structure and are part of its unique history. They shall be retained and preserved with regular maintenance.
2. **Maintain and repair details.** It is not appropriate to remove these details solely because they have deteriorated, particularly when repair of materials is possible. Basic maintenance such as general repair work, painting, calking or patching shall be done when necessary. Repair of the elements shall take precedence over replacement.
3. **Replacement of architectural details.** When details have deteriorated beyond repair, the new replacements shall match as closely as possible the old in design, material, scale, texture and placement.
4. **Design for missing or new historic details.** Designing and installing missing historic details shall represent an accurate restoration using historical, pictorial and physical documentation. New design detail may be added provided it is compatible with the size, scale, material, color, and period of the historic building. New design detail shall be subject to review and approval of the Historic District Commission.

Architectural Details



When feasible, repair deteriorated details by patching, re-securing, calking and painting.



When replacement of details is necessary, replacements shall match the original as closely as possible in design, scale, material and placement.

Demolition/Relocation of Structures

Demolition

The demolition of a historic structure constitutes an irreplaceable loss to the historic fabric of the community. Demolition is defined in the Historic District Ordinance as the razing or destruction, whether entirely or in part, of a resource. It includes, but is not limited to demolition by neglect. This section addresses the demolition of an entire structure, as each part is addressed in its respective category.

The proposal for a complete removal of a structure, (with or without the removal of the building foundation) shall be reviewed by the Historic District Commission (HDC). Applications for the demolition of any structure in the Historic District shall include:

1. Fully completed and signed Historic District Construction Application.
2. A site plan, drawn to scale, of the proposed appearance of the site after demolition of the structure. The plan shall include property lines and all other pertinent remaining features and structures on the site.
3. A site plan and illustration of any new structure to be erected on the site, including a description of its design, size and use.

The application shall be reviewed at a designated HDC meeting. The review shall also include consideration of alternatives to demolition. The HDC will hear reports, if necessary, concerning the safety or condition of the structure, and the historic or architectural merits of the structure. Action on the demolition shall require a simple majority of a quorum of commission members present to vote. This action shall occur within sixty (60) calendar days after the date a complete application has been filed with the Commission.



The D.F. Diggins home, on the corner of East Harris and North Shelby, was built in the early 1900s and represents one of the major irreplaceable losses in the community. It was demolished in 1947. A contemporary commercial building was subsequently erected.

Relocation

When a historic structure is moved from its original site, it loses its integrity of setting and its sense of time and place, which are important aspects of the historic building and its environment.

1. **Moving a building into the Historic District.** It may be appropriate to move a building into the Historic District if that building is compatible with the historical character of other structures in the district in terms of architectural style, period, height, scale, materials, setting, and placement on the lot.
2. **New foundation walls.** New foundation walls shall be compatible with the architectural style of the building.
3. **Moving a building from the Historic District.** Moving existing buildings out of the district that contribute to the historic and architectural character of the district shall be avoided unless demolition is the only alternative.

Fences

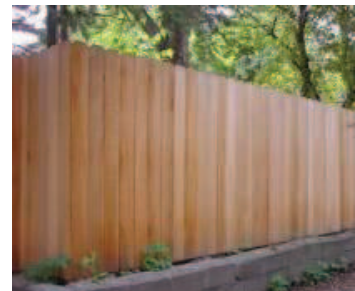
Existing Historic Fences

1. **Repair** - Repair is preferred over replacement. Repair deteriorated sections of historic fencing and walls with materials of a matching design, texture, and color whenever possible.
2. **Replacement** - Replace only portions of fencing exhibiting significant deterioration, leaving all sound portions intact. Substitute materials, such as aluminum for wrought iron, should be visually and physically compatible with the remaining historic fencing or wall material.
3. **Materials** - Use materials that match existing sections of historic fencing or walls in material, detail, color, texture and height when carrying out limited replacement or repair projects. If an exact color or texture match cannot be made, a simplified design is appropriate.
4. **Masonry Walls** - Match historic wall materials in color, texture, joint size and tooling when repairing.
5. **Use of Documentation When Repairing** - Use historic, pictorial or physical evidence to reconstruct severely deteriorated or missing fencing, walls, or fencing elements.
6. **Inappropriate Fencing** - Fencing that uses new or salvaged material to create a conjectural or false historical appearance are inappropriate and should not be undertaken.
7. **Documenting The Reconstruction or Replacement Of Fencing** - Natural or architectural fence elements that are slated for reconstruction or replacement should be photographically documented prior to removal of any historic fabric.



New Fences

1. **New Construction** - New construction of fences or walls should be designed to minimize impact to the historic character of the principal structure and site and should be compatible with the principal structure and site in design, setback, size and scale to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
2. **Design Character** - New fences or walls should be designed to compliment the style, design, color and material of the historic building(s) and its features.
3. **Slats** - No plastic or vinyl slats or other material shall be inserted or attached to chain link or other open fencing.
4. **Fence Types:** Fence and wall materials and design should be compatible with the principal structure of the lot upon which the fence is to be erected. Fence types include:
 - a) Wood – picket. Wood privacy fencing in rear yard only.
 - b) Cyclone or chain-link fencing in rear yard only.
 - c) Wrought iron, cast iron and aluminum replicating wrought iron
 - d) Vinyl – replicating allowable wood and iron fence types
 - e) Brick and stone – masonry foundations, piers and fence walls. The material and design of any masonry wall should be compatible with that of the building it abuts or is associated with.
5. **Privacy Fences** – At the discretion of City staff, privacy fences shall be subject to Commission review and approval. In all cases, privacy fences:
 - a) Are limited to the rear yard.
 - b) Shall be compatible with the dwelling of the subject parcel and abutting parcels.



Chain Link And Privacy Fences Are Restricted To The Rear Yard

Garages, Garage Doors and Accessory Structures

Cars and garages have become a fact of modern life. Homeowners desire permanent enclosure to protect their cars and provide storage space. In the case of a historic garage or accessory structure, every effort shall be made to preserve and use original elements.

1. **Retain and preserve original historic garage elements.** For garage and accessory structures that were constructed at or near the same time as the residence on the property, every effort shall be made to preserve and use the original doors, windows, siding, ornamentation, and historic roof shape and materials. Proper maintenance and repair shall take precedence over replacement of these elements.
2. **Replacement of materials and elements.** When doors, windows, siding, ornamentation and roofing material have deteriorated beyond repair, new replacements shall match the old as closely as possible in design, material, scale, texture and placement. When viewed from the street, siding material on garages and accessory structures shall match or compliment the material of the residence on the property.
3. **Replacement of overhead garage door.** The appearance of the overhead door shall replicate the original door whenever possible. For garages originally constructed with wood overhead doors, the use of wood is encouraged. The use of other materials, such as steel, is appropriate, and shall be compatible in finish, texture and design with the main residential structure on the lot.
4. **New construction of garages and permanent accessory structures.** These structures shall be compatible in terms of size, scale, mass, design and materials to the main residential structure on the lot. The new structure should be designed as a simplified version of the architectural style of the residence on the property, and shall visually compliment it. Where feasible, new construction of a garage or accessory structure shall be located behind the line of sight from the residence on the property, or where such a structure would have historically been located.
5. **New construction of attached garages is inappropriate.** Constructing an attached garage is not appropriate except where such a garage is a common feature of the architectural style of the dwelling (i.e. ranch or modern).
6. **Semi-attached carports (i.e. with breezeways or canopies) may be considered.** Where site restrictions do not permit garages in the rear yard, semi-attached carports may be considered. The location and attachment method shall minimize damage to historic materials.

Garages, Garage Doors and Accessory Structures



A newly constructed single bay garage displays doors and details that are compatible with the residential structure on the lot.



This original garage structure was constructed near the same time as the main residence and has been retained and preserved.



This newly constructed three-car garage is a simplified version of the architectural style of the main residence.

Porches and Decks

Porches

In general, porches help define the style of the house and serve to frame and protect the entrance of the house. In its original design, the front porch was intended to be a focal point for the entrance to the house and should not be removed if original. The primary porch and its components are significant elements of the architecture of the home and should be retained and maintained. There should be no removal or changes to them except for proper maintenance.

1. **Retain and preserve the original elements.** Porches on the front and side facades shall be maintained in their original configuration and with original materials and detailing. Porch elements such as columns, posts, railings, balusters, decorative molding, trim work and underpinning, shall be retained intact. These elements provide special visual character to the structure and are part of its unique history.
2. **Maintain and repair the original elements.** These elements shall be properly maintained to prevent deterioration. This maintenance includes calking, patching, and painting. General repair of the elements shall be done when necessary and shall take precedence over replacement.
3. **Replacement of original elements.** When it is necessary to replace the original elements, the new replacements shall match the old as closely as possible in design, material, scale, texture, color and placement.
4. **Replacement of porch materials.** When replacement of materials is necessary, the new replacements shall match the old as closely as possible in design, material, scale, texture, color and placement. Porch material replacement of the following elements shall apply:
 - Wrought iron shall not be a replacement for wood columns or railings
 - Floor decking of a tongue and groove variety is strongly encouraged
 - Floor decking of treated lumber is acceptable, but shall be painted or stained within one year of installation to match or compliment the house
5. **Enclosures are strongly discouraged.** The enclosure of a porch changes the overall historic character of a house and is strongly discouraged. If a porch must be enclosed, the manner of the enclosure should not destroy the original openness and intended focal point of the front entry. The use of materials and details shall be compatible with the original character of the house.
6. **Sensitive placement of porch screens is strongly encouraged.** When screening-in the existing porch, the screens shall be sensitively placed behind the porch columns and balustrades, and the screen sizes minimized. The visual character of the porch shall be preserved including the solid/void relationships, handrails, ornamentation and moldings.

7. **Design for historic details.** Designing and installing historic details shall represent an accurate restoration using historical, pictorial and physical documentation. New detail may be added provided it is compatible with the size, scale, material, color, and period of the historic building. New design detail shall be subject to review and approval of the Historic District Commission.

Decks

1. **New deck construction placement.** Decks shall be constructed on the rear or side of the house in an unobtrusive location and be minimally visible from the street view. Decks on the front of the house are inappropriate.
2. **New deck size and scale.** Decks shall be kept to a minimum and subordinate to the house and yard in size and scale.
3. **New deck style and materials.** If visible from the street, the style of the deck, railing and balusters shall match the architectural style and design of the house. Decks of treated lumber are acceptable, but shall be painted or stained to match or blend with the house within one year of installation.



This twin porch is the most distinctive feature of the house, contributing both historically and architecturally to its character.



After rehabilitation, the twin porches have been unified into one continuous horizontal design with the original historic character is lost.

Porches and Decks



When replacement of a column is necessary, it is important to match the original as closely as possible. Note the mismatched columns.



Historic details should represent an accurate restoration using historical, pictorial and physical documentation; or be a new design that is compatible with the size, scale, material, color, and period of the historic building.



The glass enclosure of this porch does not obscure the historic character of the house.



A deck constructed on the rear of the house, subordinate to the house and yard is appropriate.

Roofs

The roof is a dominant, defining feature of a building. Preserving the shape, pitch and size of the roof is an integral part of maintaining the architectural integrity of the home.

1. **Retain the original roof shape, size and pitch.** It is not appropriate to alter the roofline, as it will significantly affect the architectural character of the house. These alterations include removing a major portion of the roof, such as a tower or dormer, or changing the configuration of a roofline by adding a dormer or skylight. The original size and shape of the dormers shall be maintained on any part of the roof that is visible from the street.
2. **Retain and preserve the existing historic roofing material.** Whenever possible, retention of the historic roofing material such as metal, slate or wood shingle is encouraged. Proper maintenance and repair will preserve this material from deterioration.
3. **Replacement of roofing material.** If the original roofing materials are non-existent, the selection and use of a historically appropriate material, pattern and shape for the house is encouraged.
4. **Retain and preserve original roof elements.** It is not appropriate to remove historic roof features such as cupolas, cornices, brackets, chimneystacks, weathervanes or gutters and downspouts. These features provide special visual character to the structure and are part of its unique history. Proper maintenance and repair of these elements shall take precedence over replacement.
5. **Replacement of original roof elements.** When historic roof features have severely deteriorated, the new replacements shall match as closely as possible the old in design, material, scale, texture and placement.
6. **Maintain and repair existing historic built-in gutters and downspouts.** It is not appropriate to remove these original elements. Unless deteriorated beyond repair, they shall be repaired and maintained instead.
7. **Adding new gutters and downspouts that are stylistically compatible with the house is appropriate.** When original gutters and downspouts are nonexistent, select a design that is stylistically compatible with the house, and does not detract from its architectural integrity.
8. **Skylights shall only be added on the rear roof surface.** Adding skylights significantly alters the historic integrity of the roof. They shall only be added on the rear roof surface, and not be visible from the street.
9. **Historic roof elements.** The design and installation of roof elements shall represent an accurate restoration using historical, pictorial and physical documentation; or be a new design that is compatible with the size, scale, material, color, and period of the historic

building. New design detail shall be subject to review and approval of the Historic District Commission.



The roof on this house is a dominant, defining feature. The preservation of its shape, size and pitch has successfully maintained the structure's architectural character.



Circa 1910



2005

The removal of the tower on this home significantly altered the roofline, compromising the structure's historic character.

Siding, Masonry, Stucco and Brick

Siding

Wood siding, including lap and decorative shingles, provide important architectural details that help define the style of a building. The use of original or comparable building materials is strongly encouraged.

1. **Retain and preserve original siding.** Exterior siding shall be maintained in its original configuration with original materials and detailing. Existing substitute siding, (i.e. aluminum or vinyl) may be removed and the historic siding retained and preserved.
2. **Retain and preserve original elements.** Original decorative features and details shall not be covered or removed. These elements such as cornices, brackets, doorway pediments, and window architraves, provide special visual character to the structure and are part of its unique history.
3. **Maintain and repair siding.** Original wood siding shall be properly maintained to prevent deterioration. This maintenance includes calking, patching and painting. Repair of original siding shall take precedence over replacement. If replacement is necessary, the new materials shall match as closely as possible the existing materials in design, scale, texture, color and placement.
4. **Total replacement of substitute siding.** When replacing the structure's substitute siding, the use of replacement materials that closely match the original historic siding is encouraged.
5. **Installing aluminum or vinyl siding over historic wood siding is not appropriate.** These substitute siding materials jeopardize the historic integrity of the building and are not appropriate, provided, however, homes with existing aluminum or vinyl siding may retain and replace such siding.

Masonry/Stucco/Brick

Masonry products such as brick, stone or cast stone are important architectural details that help define the style of a building.

1. **Retain and preserve original material.** All historic masonry, stucco and brick elements shall be retained and preserved, as they provide special visual character to the structure, and are part of its unique history.
2. **Maintain and repair the material.** Due to the soft and delicate nature of masonry materials, gentle cleaning methods such as the use of soft bristle brushes and low water pressure, are strongly encouraged. Repair and re-pointing of brick work shall be done in a manner to match the original surface in texture, application method, color and joint size.

3. **Replacement of masonry materials.** When materials have severely deteriorated and replacement is necessary, the new materials shall match the old in design, scale, texture, color and placement.
4. **The addition of artificial brick and/or stone is not encouraged.**



By removing the substitute siding (i.e. aluminum or vinyl) and preserving the original wood siding, the historic integrity of the structure is retained.



During rehabilitation, siding to match the original was carefully incorporated prior to repainting.



Preserve and maintain the original decorative features that provide special visual character to the structure.

Windows and Doors

Windows

As one of the few parts of a building serving as an interior and exterior feature, windows are an important part of the historic character of a building. They add variety and texture to exterior walls and are deserving of special consideration in a rehabilitation project. Maintaining the appropriate window size, spacing, shape and trim details are essential so that the configuration of the façade is not changed and the visual character of the building retained.

1. **Retain and preserve the original windows.** The original windows shall be preserved in their original number, location, and size. The historic window material shall not be stripped or obscured by other substitute material. It is not appropriate to remove or alter decorative windows such as Palladian, stained or leaded glass, oriels, bays, gothic arches, or transoms.
2. **Cutting new openings or blocking-in existing windows are not appropriate.** Unless pictorial or visual documentation provides evidence of historic window openings, it is not appropriate to alter the existing window configuration.
3. **Retain and preserve original window decorative elements.** It is not appropriate to remove, alter or obscure historic decorative window elements such as the frames, sashes, muntins, sills, moldings, hoods or shutters. Such elements provide visual character and are part of its unique history.
4. **Maintain and repair the original windows and decorative elements.** Protecting and maintaining the material that comprises the windows and its decorative elements shall be done by regular calking, patching, splicing, painting, glazing and otherwise reinforcing the windows. Epoxy consolidation of the material may be appropriate to keep original materials intact. Repair of these features shall take precedence over replacement.
5. **Replacement of windows and decorative elements.** Replacement windows and decorative elements shall represent an accurate restoration using historical, pictorial, and physical documentation; or be a new design that is compatible with the window openings and the historic character of the building.
6. **Storm windows shall be compatible with the building.** Improving the thermal performance of windows must be balanced with the historic character of the façade. The use of weather stripping and storm windows is encouraged. Storm windows may be constructed of aluminum, wood or vinyl and shall match the width and height of the existing windows. It is encouraged that the storm windows be aligned with the same center sash frame as the existing windows. Since the appearance of the finished window shall be compatible with the building character, building owners are encouraged to paint storm window frames and sashes the same color as the existing windows.

Doors

The historic character of a building is significantly affected by the authenticity of the exterior doors. Doors and the decorative detail surrounding them define the building's architectural style. The front entry is the focal point of the façade and shall retain the essence of this defining style.

1. **Retain and preserve the original doors and surrounding details.** Original doors and their surrounding decorative detail shall be retained unless deteriorated beyond reasonable repair as they provide special visual character to the building and are part of its unique history. This retention includes the original door and its frame, sidelight, fanlight, transom, hardware, surrounding trim, jamb and moldings.
2. **Cutting new door openings and removing existing doors.** Adding extra entry doors that are visible from the street detracts from the original entry focal point and is not appropriate. Extra doors may be added to the rear or secondary facades where they are inconspicuous and not generally visible from the street. The new door and its surrounding detail shall match the original doors and surrounding detail in style and historic period. Removing doors on the rear or secondary facades to restore the original use and look of the building is appropriate. This may include the removal of a door from a building that was once used as a commercial or multi-family building, and is currently being restored to a single family dwelling. When a new visible entry is required by local Building Codes for the new use the design and construction of the entry and door shall be accomplished in a manner that preserves the historic character of the building.
3. **Maintain and repair original doors and surrounding details.** Protecting and maintaining the material that comprises the doors and its surrounding details shall be done by regular calking, patching, splicing, painting or re-application of protective coating systems, glazing and otherwise reinforcing. Replacement of deteriorated or missing pieces shall be duplicated to match the original in design, material, scale, texture, placement and color.
4. **Replacement of doors.** If the original door is missing or has deteriorated beyond repair, replacement of a new door shall match as closely as possible the original in design, material, scale, texture, placement and color. If the original door is nonexistent, the replacement door shall match the existing opening, and be consistent with other doors and their existing trim and design details. It is not appropriate to mix and match historic styles. New replacements shall match the style of the building.
5. **Storm doors shall be compatible with the building.** When adding a storm door it is strongly encouraged that the door not obscure or damage the original door and frame. Full light designs are encouraged and half light designs are suggested when the existing entry doors have a half-light. Whether wood or aluminum, it is encouraged that the door be painted, stained or have a finished color to match the existing door and trim.

Windows and Doors



When the lower window was replaced, a one-over-one double hung window was used rather than the historic multi-pane style. This inconsistency is a radical change in the building's appearance.

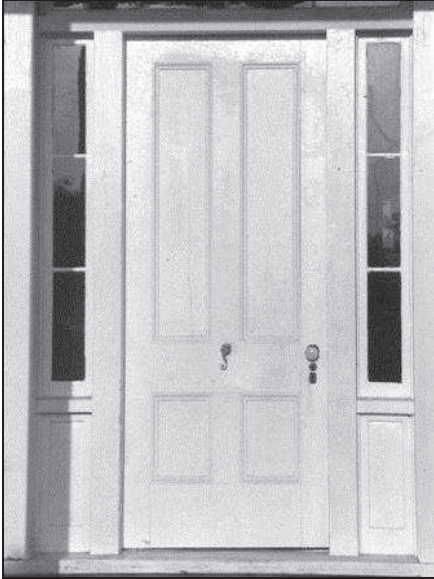


Altered over time, these horizontal replacement windows do not match the original vertical windows in dimension or configuration.

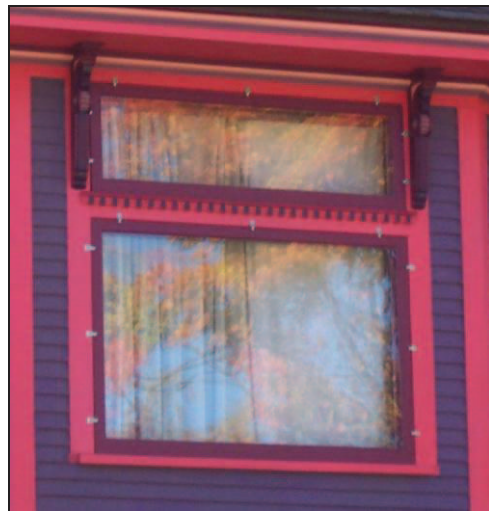
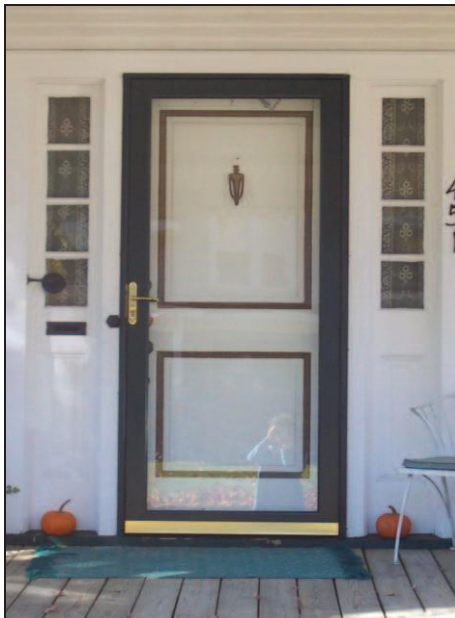


During rehabilitation, new vertical windows replaced the horizontal ones and now match the historic windows in dimension and configuration. The original rear window was also restored.

Windows and Doors



Retain and preserve the original doors and surrounding details as they provide special visual character to the building and are part of its unique history.



Storm doors and windows that do not obscure or damage the original doors and windows are encouraged.