



# City of Florence Historic Preservation Commission

## Design Review Guidelines

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## DEVELOPMENT of FLORENCE

The development of the City of Florence is visible through its built history—its structures, homes, buildings, and streetscapes. Florence’s unique sense of place is captured in these landscapes and structures. While people have been living in and around Florence for over 10,000 years, the only remnant of its earliest inhabitants is the Florence Mound, built nearly 1,700 years ago and used as a ceremonial platform. Native Americans were removed from the area starting in 1816, and large tracts of land were purchased by speculators and land companies. The Cypress Land Company, a speculative venture composed of politicians, lawyers, and planters, purchased the land that would become the city of Florence, Alabama in 1818, in hopes of selling fertile land to cotton planters. The company purchased 5,515.77 acres of land in what is now Lauderdale County for \$15 an acre from the federal government. As cotton became the largest cash crop in the nation, Florence capitalized on both the fertile soil of the Tennessee River Valley and its position on two important trade routes.

Ferdinand Sannoner, along with John Coffee, laid out the city of Florence for the Cypress Land Company in 1818. They plotted the city at the top of a plateau overlooking the Tennessee River, about one hundred feet above the river and at the lower end of the Muscle Shoals. The location of Florence was chosen because of its position at the foot of the Muscle Shoals on the Tennessee River and along the Military Road that connected Nashville to New Orleans. The four main streets of the city (Pine, Court, Seminary and Market, now Wood) were one hundred and fifty feet wide, and all other streets were ninety-nine feet wide and followed a checkerboard plan. From the center of the city, the streets vary by twenty-six degrees, running north to south and east to west. These streets were named for stately trees and scenic

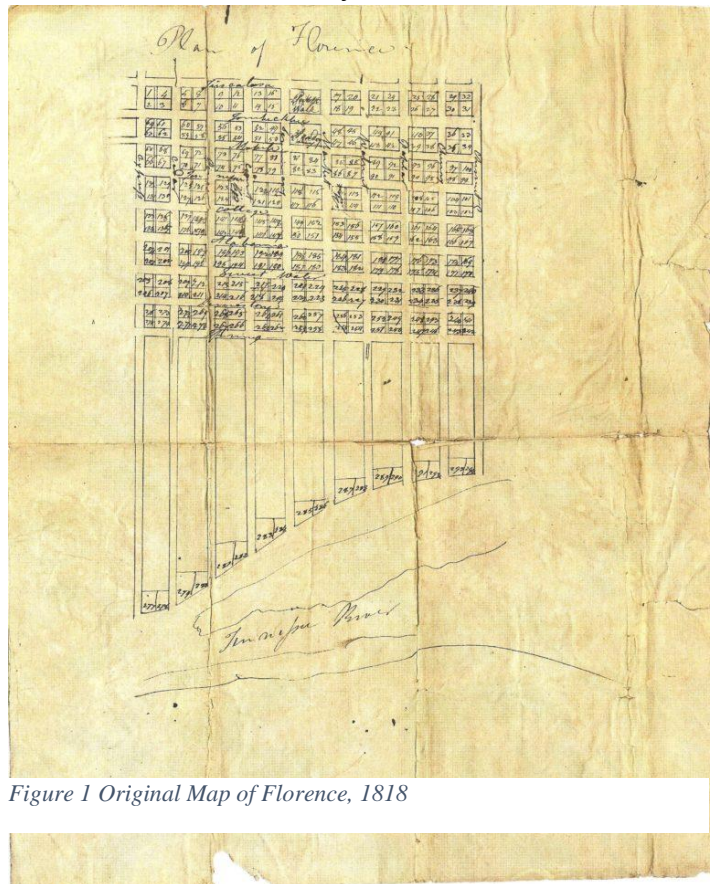


Figure 1 Original Map of Florence, 1818

ivers. Coffee and Sannoner laid out plots to be reserved for schools, churches, a courthouse, inns or taverns, a whole city square for a public park, and two acres for a city cemetery. These reserved areas of land were from blocks of roughly two acres in size that were divided into four equal half-acre lots. The Company officials were so pleased with Sannoner’s work they allowed him to name the city. Sannoner, a native of Livorno, Italy, chose the name of his favorite Italian city: Florence. A four-day sale in 1818 netted the Cypress Land Company \$225,000, with many of the purchases made on credit.

Florence quickly established itself as an early center for textile manufacturing and shipping. The port of Florence served as a major distribution center for the area. Products were sent up the Tennessee River to Florence by boat via the Mississippi and Ohio River systems, where they were unloaded and shipped by wagon to surrounding towns. Products were likewise shipped to Florence from surrounding towns and transported down the Tennessee River, to markets like Louisville, Kentucky and Cincinnati, Ohio, on the Ohio River, and New Orleans, Louisiana, on the Mississippi

Figure 2 1844 Map of Florence, Ferdinand Sannoner



River. The Military Road, which connected Nashville, Tennessee to New Orleans, Louisiana crossed the Tennessee River at the mouth of Cypress Creek just west of Florence and brought travelers straight through the city, passing James Sample's store on the corner of what is now Court Street and Hermitage Drive in the Sannoner Historic District. The Muscle Shoals, located on the Tennessee River just above Florence, proved an impassable barrier for river traffic to the east but combined with the Military Road to make Florence an early center of commerce in the northwest Alabama. Just north of where the Military Road intersected Court Street, wealthy settlers built homes in what is now the Sannoner Historic District.

Antebellum planters prospered early in the Tennessee Valley. Cotton shipping was paramount in early Florence industrial history, and warehouses established along the Tennessee River in the 1820s provided storage for outgoing products. The productivity of the cotton economy led to the establishment of textile mills, where cotton was turned into cloth. Globe Cotton Company, owned by James Martin, became the largest in the state by 1860, earning more than \$250,000 annually. Florence also boasted a wool factory, gun factories, brick factories, sawmills, gristmills, and tanneries by 1860. In 1855, LaGrange college relocated to Florence and changed its name to Florence Wesleyan University. The combination of a cotton producing economy, a blossoming industrial economy, and educational institutions in Florence gave rise to a middle-class of merchants, lawyers, and doctors.

During the Civil War, house construction in Florence and much of Alabama ceased. The conflict brought troops from both the Union and Confederate armies to Florence, as possession of the Tennessee River Valley was prized by both sides. Much of the industry was destroyed during the war, and the city was faced with rebuilding its infrastructure and restructuring its economy during Reconstruction.



*Figure 3 Circa 1900, looking West on Tennessee Street*

During the 1880s and 1890s, Florence's economy recovered, thanks in part to the completion of the Muscle Shoals Canal. The population swelled to nearly six thousand by 1890, up from two thousand in 1880. The canal improved river traffic and allowed boats to bypass the rocky Muscle Shoals, opening upriver commerce between Huntsville and Florence. Many industries relocated to the Florence area, including the North Alabama Furnace, the Philadelphia Furnace, the Ashcraft Cotton Mill, the Cherry Cotton Mill, the Tennessee Valley Fertilizer Company and the Florence Wagon Works. The Wagon Works was the manufacturer of the "Light Running Florence Wagon," which became a household name in many states and foreign countries, was one of the more prominent companies in Florence. The Florence Stove and Manufacturing Company relocated from Indiana to Florence in 1888. The Philadelphia Furnace, the Ashcraft Cotton Mill, the Cherry Cotton Mill, and the Tennessee Valley Fertilizer Company were other companies that were formed or relocated to Florence during this period. Many of the men associated with these companies, including the Ashcraft family, Florence Land, Mining, and Manufacturing Company executive Robert Martin, and merchant Frank Perry. The Wood Avenue, Walnut Street, Wilson Park, and Locust Street Historic Districts were partly developed during this time of economic expansion.



Figure 4 Postcard of Walnut Street

The economy of Florence grew slowly in the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. City leaders discussed plans for an improved Tennessee River and a hydroelectric facility at Muscle Shoals, but no progress was made until 1916. In 1916, the Muscle Shoals area was selected as the site of a nitrate-producing facility to help

alleviate the United States' dependence on foreign nitrate sources to produce explosives. By 1917, plans were underway to build an additional nitrate-producing facility, using a different production process than the first. The Cyanamid process required large amounts of hydroelectric power, and a dam on the Tennessee River was planned to provide the power. In 1918, construction began on Wilson Dam, which was originally intended to provide hydroelectric power for the nitrate production facilities. The war ended before the dam was completed, but the construction alone brought more than eighteen thousand workers to the area. Real estate speculation increased during this period, as developers sought to purchase land in what was sure to become a major manufacturing center. The Cherry Street Historic District, as well as parts of the Sannoner District, developed during this period.

After the war, plans for the dam were halted as the nation no longer had an urgent need for nitrate production. In 1921, Henry Ford's proposal to purchase the dam and build a seventy-five-mile-long city on the banks of the Tennessee River once again increased excitement in Florence speculation, as developers and realtors from around the country came to the area and developed subdivisions. McFarland Heights and Weeden Heights were two of the subdivisions that were planned during this second housing boom. College Place developed during this period as a home for upper middle-



*Figure 5 Court Street looking north, 1920's*

class professionals.

Post -World War II prosperity brought more jobs and higher wages to many Florentines, as the Tennessee Valley Authority's river improvements allowed factories to locate along the river. Federal Housing Administration mortgage loans encouraged home building. Modern housing developments compose much of the neighborhoods radiating out from the downtown core of Florence,

and they have increased steadily since the 1950's and 60's. Much of the architecture found in these newer subdivisions borrows from earlier concepts of Colonial and Classical Revival. Many ranch houses developed during this time period as well and reflect changes in the homebuilding industry.

The Florence Housing Authority helped to shape much of the post-World War II landscape in the city. Using federal funding, the FHA created racially segregated public housing along with a subdivision, Handy Heights, for African American residents. Later, urban renewal projects reshaped the residential neighborhood south of College Street, clearing homes and businesses of many African American residents. This area now makes up part the Central Business District.

The downtown core, made up of the Downtown Florence Historic District and the Central Business District, has experienced periods of growth, decline, and renewal. While many of the earliest structures in this area were built of wood and no longer standing, many structures from the late 1800's remain and are reflected in buildings with Queen Anne, Italianate, and revival style influences. There are also buildings that reflect later periods of post-World War II growth, such as the Art Moderne Shoals Theater, the Art Deco Rogers Department Building and Stricklin Building, and International style found at 113 North Court, the Florence Municipal Building, and the First Federal Savings and Loan Building. While the downtown core retains a mixture of businesses that reflect different periods of the city's past, its historic qualities have been maintained through the work of the Florence Main Street program and the Florence Historic Preservation Commission.

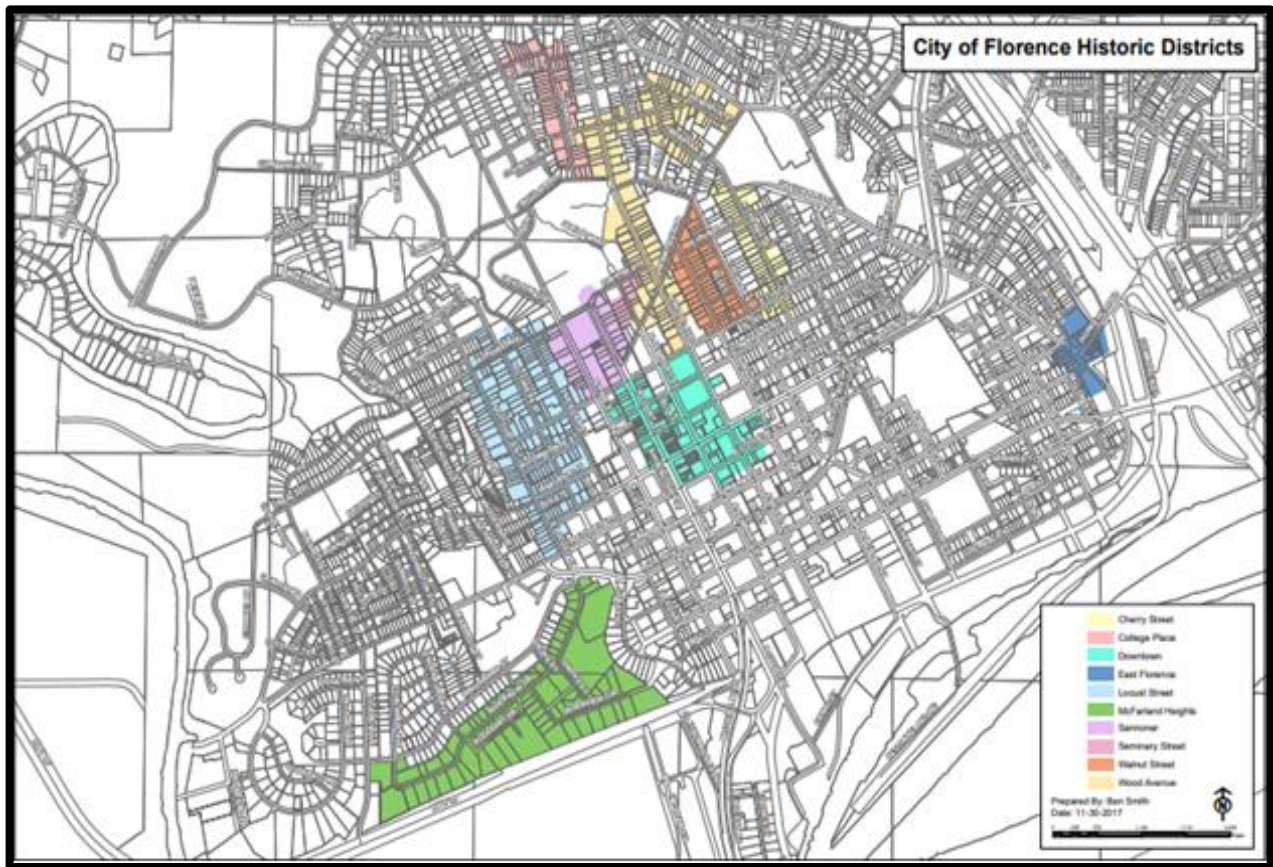




*Figure 6 Aerial view of Court Square, 1950's*

The story of Florence can be found in the architecture of its buildings. The city's buildings elicit the cultural practices, beliefs, and symbols of its residents. Preserving these structures allows current residents to better understand the formation of our city. From indigenous structures to modern buildings, Florence maintains a unique sense of place.

MAP of HISTORIC DISTRICTS

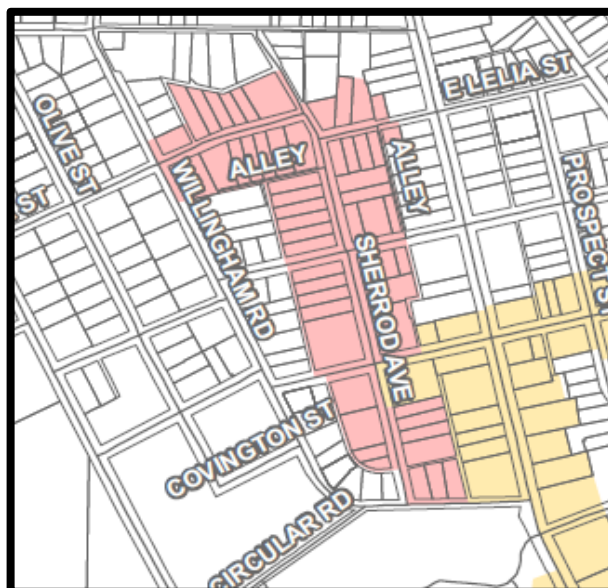


## DESCRIPTIONS of HISTORIC DISTRICTS

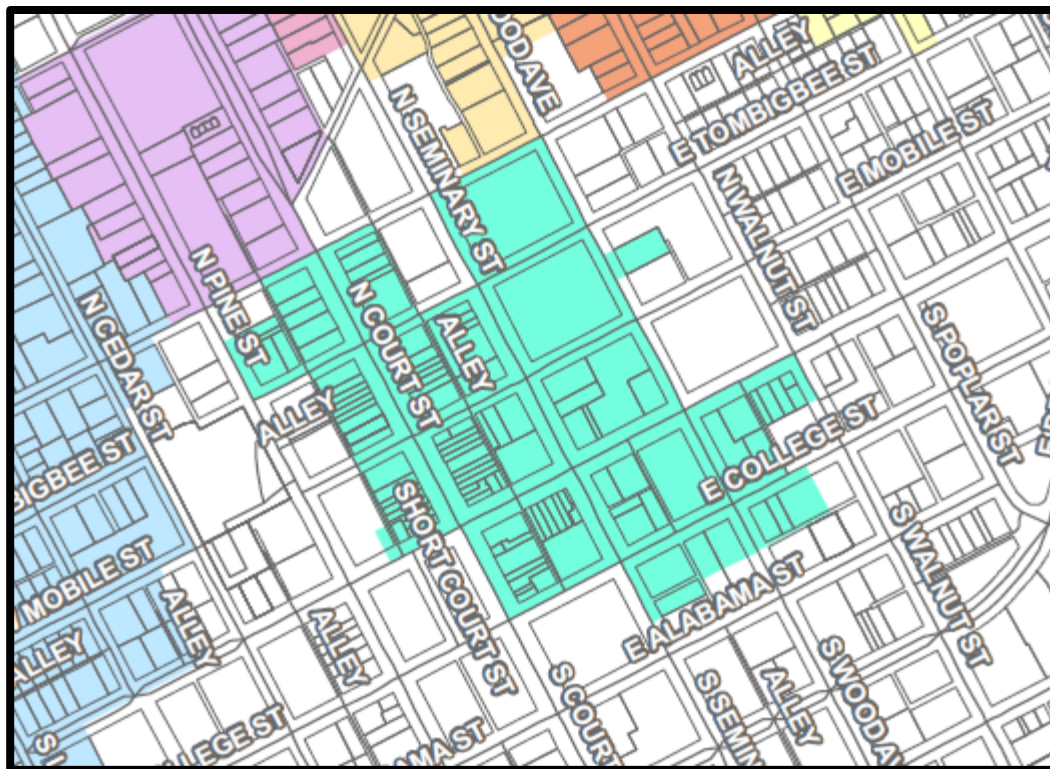
**Cherry Street.** The Cherry Street Historic District encompasses Cherry Street between Hermitage Drive and East Tombigbee Street. The styles of the houses in this district represent its major period of development, between 1910 and 1930. Developed as a middle-class neighborhood for workers at Wilson Dam and the nitrate facilities, there are many Craftsman style homes.



**College Place.** The College Place Historic District developed as a neighborhood for professionals during the 1920's. It encompasses parts of Sherrod Ave between Lelia Street and Circular Road, and along West Lelia and West Mattie Lou Streets. There are many Craftsman style homes in the district.

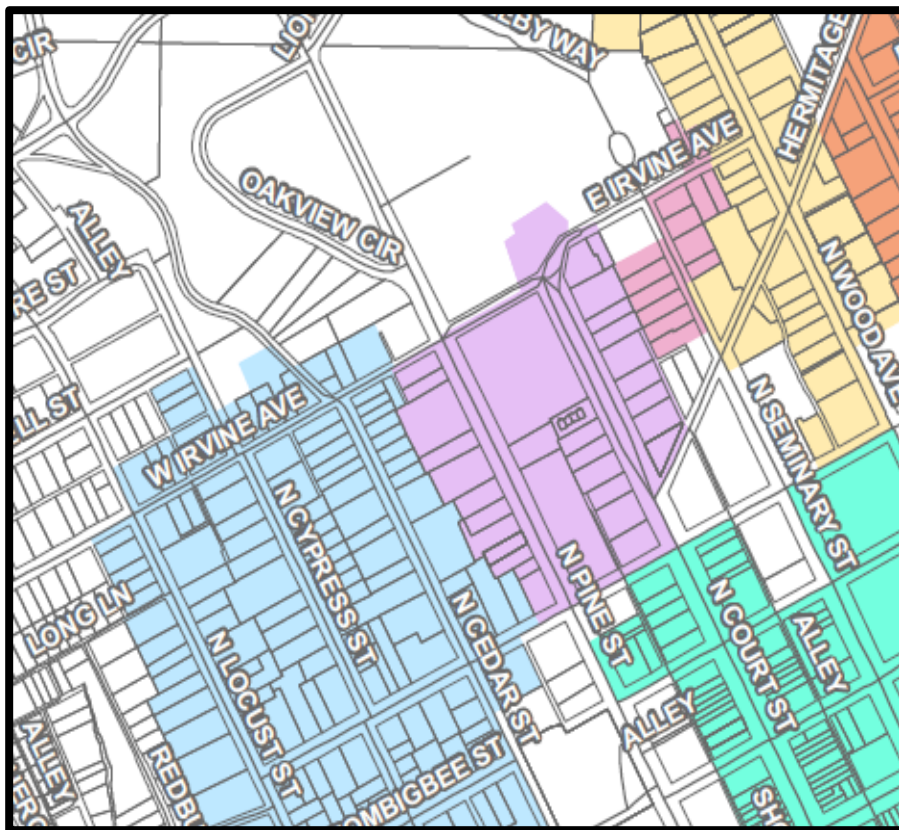


**Downtown Florence.** The Downtown Florence Historic District encompasses the downtown commercial corridor of the city of Florence. It is bounded roughly by Pine Street on the west and Wood Avenue on the east; Tuscaloosa Street to the north and Alabama Street to the south. While the street layouts follow the original plan of the city from 1818, the structures in this district span from the late 1800's to the present. Many of the buildings are in revival or Victorian styles, with some examples of early and mid-20<sup>th</sup> century architectural styles.





**Sannoner.** The Sannoner Historic District features some of the oldest houses in Florence; the earliest was built in 1825. The district encompasses North Pine and Court Streets between Tuscaloosa and Irvine, and features a wide range of structures—from Federal Style and Greek Revival, to Victorian and Spanish Revival. This small district was a very early residential neighborhood for wealthy residents of the city.



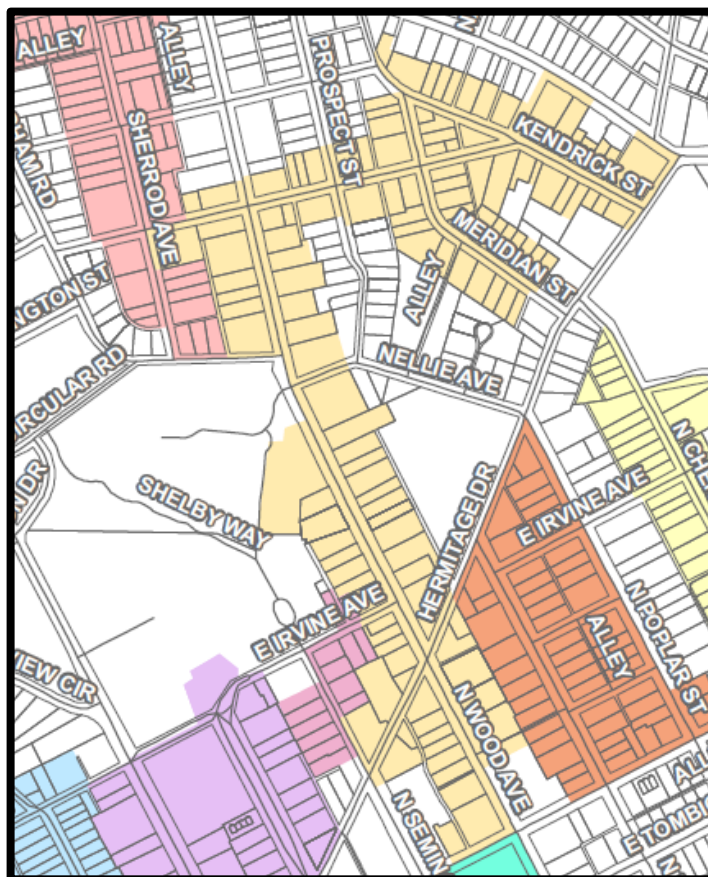
**Seminary-O'Neal.** The Seminary-O'Neal Historic District encompasses just 12 properties along North Seminary Street between Hermitage Drive and Irvine Avenue, and Irvine Avenue between Seminary and Wood. The neighborhood was developed between 1908 and 1943 and features two Sears and Roebuck catalog houses, as well as vernacular styles and forms.

**Walnut Street.** The Walnut Street Historic District includes homes along North Walnut and North Poplar Streets between Hermitage Drive and Tuscaloosa Street. The neighborhood developed in the 1890's and features Victorian and Colonial Revival style homes.

**Wilson Park Houses.** This district encompasses three houses along East Tuscaloosa Street between Seminary Street and Wood Avenue, across from Wilson Park. One Colonial Revival and two Queen Anne Style houses make up this district, which develop as an upper-middle class neighborhood in the last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.



**Wood Avenue.** The Wood Avenue Historic District developed in several periods following the Civil War, although several buildings date to the antebellum period. There have been two increases to the original district, so the area includes a mixture of late 1800's Victorian houses along with early 20<sup>th</sup> century Craftsman and revival styles.



## GUIDING PRINCIPLES for HISTORIC PRESERVATION

**Sense of place.** Florence feels like a historic place. It's one of the most used words to describe the city. That feeling comes from a variety of features: building design, authenticity, and an understanding of the past. The FHPC works to preserve Florence's unique sense of place.

**Adaptability.** The FHPC understands that preservation often needs to be balanced with adaptation and innovation, as new ideas and patterns of living bring new life to cities.

**Partnership.** We work with the community to maintain the special sense of place of our city. We are a resource, a partner, and an advocate for historic preservation. We realize that community support is critical to the success of the city's historic preservation program.

## WHY IS IT IMPORTANT

Historic Preservation is about creating a sense of community around a concept that culture and knowledge resides in places.

**Strength.** Preservation strengthens neighborhoods and business districts by protecting the historic fabric and sense of place which help to foster community pride and cultural and economic vibrancy of our city.

**Development.** Preservation improves property values. Preservation encourages people to reinvest in the core of our community, supporting job creation, small business growth, and economic expansion. People want to live in historic homes. Businesses want to locate where a sense of place exists.

**Environment.** Preservation supports the reuse of materials and places, conserving energy and resources for future generations. In place of tearing down and hauling old materials to sit in a landfill, historic preservation recycles and reuses what already exists to create an enduring sense of place.

**Community.** Historic preservation is for everyone. It encourages everyone to learn, explore, and share our city's sense of a complex past. From the protection of a 1,700-year-old indigenous ceremonial mound to the restoration of the Frank Lloyd Wright designed Rosenbaum House and W.C. Handy's log home, historic preservation speaks to our collective past as a city.

## WHAT DO WE DO?

The Florence Historic Preservation Commission exists to promote and preserve the historical and cultural heritage of the city of Florence. The FHPC helps property owners to ensure that their buildings, homes, and structures fit into the well-designed sense of place of our city. We used the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation, which inspired these guidelines, to help guide our city's historic preservation program. Upon application for a building permit to alter some aspects of your building, the City of Florence Building Department will direct you to the FHPC. We will help guide you in your project.



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

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will 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 elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive material, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated architectural features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that can cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archaeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resource must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will 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.

## Our Process

1. Find out if the property you wish to alter, build on, add to, or demolish is within the boundaries of one of Florence's Historic Districts.
2. Determine if a Certificate of Appropriateness is required. COA's are required for the following:
  - The exterior architectural features of any existing building or structure are in any way reconstructed, restored, renovated or altered as to material, color, or structural appearance;
  - An addition to an existing building or structure is constructed;
  - A new building, structure or appurtenance (including walls, fences, terraces, drives, patios, pools, antennas, solar collectors and similar items) is constructed;
  - The removal or demolition of any building, structure or appurtenance, excluding non-contributing detached outbuildings. Including demolition by neglect and the failure to maintain a historic property or a structure;
  - The painting of originally unpainted surfaces;
  - The erection or demolition or changes of any sign.

The following **do not** require a COA:

  - Interior work, unless it causes a change in the exterior appearance;
  - Repainting the exterior using prior colors;
  - Replacing window glass when not otherwise changing the window in any way;
  - Reroofing with the identical materials and color of materials; and
  - Landscaping with plant materials that requires no significant change in the terrain of the property, creates no new off-site drainage, and does not remove or demolish any existing landscape features such as terraces, fences, drives, etc.).
3. If a COA is required, refer to the Guidelines below to learn the FHPC regulations.
4. Fill out an application for review at the City of Florence Building Department and submit to the Building Department by the first Friday of the month for review during that month. Be sure to include drawings, photographs, and color samples.
5. The Design Review Committee of the FHPC will review your application before the monthly Commission meeting. This meeting is open to the public and is an opportunity for you to explain your application.
6. The Design Review Committee will recommend to approve or deny your COA to the FHPC at the FHPC's monthly Commission meeting.
7. If your COA is denied, the FHPC will make recommendations on how to correct the application for resubmittal.

## **RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES**

### **Roofs**

#### **1. Configuration.**

- a. The original form, pitch, and overhangs of the roof shall be retained. Altering the shape or pitch of the roof to accommodate replacement materials or features is prohibited (see NPS Technical Brief #4).

#### **2. Materials**

- a. When repairing or replacing historic roofs, similar materials shall be used.
- b. Replacement roof materials must be compatible with the age and style of the building. Color and texture should match original material as well. Replacing specialty roofing such as clay or terracotta tile, slate, and standing seam metal with similar materials is strongly encouraged.

#### **3. Features**

- a. Functional and decorative features such as trim, cornices, dormers, brackets, exposed rafter tails, cupulas, and weathervanes shall be retained. The addition of dormers on the façade or prominent secondary elevations when none existed historically shall be prohibited.
- b. Repair roofing features using similar materials that match the original in scale, design, shape, profile, and details as closely as possible. Installing new roof features such as cornices or trim that are inconsistent with the age or style of the building is prohibited.
- c. Place rooftop equipment such as skylights, vents, satellite dishes, and air-conditioning units toward the rear elevation or in locations not visible from the right-of-way. Installation on façade roof slopes and prominent secondary slopes, including at corner properties, is prohibited.
- d. Rainwater collection systems shall be designed to complement the scale and character of the building. Systems shall be installed so that they are as inobtrusive as possible and shall be finished in a color similar to the roofing materials to minimize their appearance.
- e. Solar tiles need to maintain compatibility with the traditional scale, profile, configuration, and pattern of roofing shingles in the district, and shall be placed outside of the view from the right-of-way.
- f. Base replacement designs on physical or documentary evidence. If none exist, use a simplified design consistent with the style of the building.

#### **4. Historic Chimneys**

- a. Original and non-functional historic chimneys shall be retained. Repairs shall match the original masonry in color, texture,

composition, and profile as closely as possible (See NPS Technical Brief #2).

- b. Shortening or removing original but non-functional chimneys is prohibited unless necessitated by imminent structural failure.
- c. When reconstructing a collapsed or removed chimney, traditional materials such as brick or stone shall be used.

#### **5. Gutters**

- a. Historical gutters shall be preserved where they exist.
- b. If the building requires a new gutter system, half-round gutters and round downspouts are encouraged as a historically compatible design. K-style are acceptable. PVC gutters are prohibited. Paint new gutters and downspouts, except for those made of copper, to match the house trim.

### **Exterior Walls and Exposed Foundations**

#### **1. Exterior Walls**

- a. Historic wall surfaces and exposed foundations shall be retained. Functional and decorative features shall be retained. The character of wall surfaces shall be maintained by retaining and preserving claddings, corner boards, corbelling, quoins, cornices, and other distinguishing features.
- b. To the extent possible, historic wall surfaces shall remain visible. Obscuring or replacing historic surfaces with different materials where they did not historically exist is not appropriate. Do not alter the texture of historic materials. Uncovering and repairing historic wall surfaces that have been concealed is encouraged.
- c. Exterior wall claddings shall be replaced only when original materials are deteriorated beyond repair. New claddings shall match the original in scale, profile, and finish as closely as possible.
- d. Trimwork such as corbels, brackets, spindlework, and vergeboard and specialty siding and accent finishes shall be replaced only when deteriorated beyond repair. Replace in-kind or, where appropriate, select alternative materials that match the original in scale, profile, detail, and finish. The addition of features such as balconies, vents, decorative features, and specialty siding shall not compromise the integrity of the building or create a false sense of history or style.

#### **2. Exposed Foundations**

- a. If structural deterioration requires repair or replacement of exposed foundations, use similar materials or compatible alternatives that replicate the original color, profile, configuration, and finish. Obscuring historically exposed foundation materials is not an appropriate alternative for repair. Retain historic foundation features like piers, latticework, windows, and decorative vents.

## Windows

### 1. Historic Windows

- a. The original number, size, location, pattern, and shape of window openings shall be retained on primary building elevations. Restoring previously altered window openings to their original configuration is encouraged if supporting documentation exists. The installation of windows where they are incompatible with the age and style of the building is prohibited.

### 2. Window Features

- a. Historic decorative glass shall be retained. Removing intact historic art, leaded, stained, or prismatic glass, or tracery details is prohibited.
- b. Original shutters shall be retained and repaired. Where existing shutters are deteriorated beyond repair, new shutters shall match the originals in size, shape, composition and, when possible, material. Vinyl and aluminum shutters are prohibited. Where new shutters are installed, designs and materials compatible with the style of the building shall be used. Shutters shall appear functional and fit the window opening.

### 3. Storm Windows

- a. Historic storm windows and window screens shall be retained.
- b. New storm windows shall be wood or anodized aluminum and shall have a painted or baked-on enamel finish that matches the trim of the building.
- c. Interior storm windows are encouraged. Interior storm windows shall have no mullions or muntins that are visible from the exterior. Use storm windows with features such as air-tight gaskets, ventilating holes, and removal clips to minimize the potential for condensation.

### 4. Repair and Replacement

- a. Deteriorated but serviceable window components shall be repaired in accordance with the material guidelines before considering total replacement. When replacement is necessary, only the window component that is deteriorated beyond repair (e.g., sash) shall be replaced. Complete replacement of an entire window assembly (i.e., sash and frame) shall be avoided when only one component is substantially deteriorated. (See NPS Technical Brief #9)
- b. Only clear glass shall be used when repairing or replacing glazing in an existing sash. Tinted, reflective, and opaque glass are prohibited unless they historically existed. Double-pane glass may be used as a repair or replacement material in an existing sash if it is compatible with the reflective quality and tinting of historic glazing on the building.
- c. Replacement windows shall match the original unit in size, shape, profile, configuration (i.e., number and arrangement of panes), operation (e.g., double -hung), and glass surface area. Altering the

- size or shape of a window opening to accommodate a new unit is prohibited. Replacement units on the façade and prominent secondary elevations shall have true divided lights or simulated divided lights with dimensional muntins permanently affixed to the exterior of the glass in order to maintain traditional profiles.
- d. Wood windows on the façade shall be replaced with wood or aluminum-clad wood windows with an enamel or baked-on finish. Vinyl, vinyl-clad wood, fiberglass, and bare metal units are prohibited. Metal is appropriate if documentation supports its historic use.

## 5. New Window Openings

- a. New openings shall be limited to the rear of secondary elevations or rear elevation. Cutting new openings into the façade or highly-visible secondary elevations is prohibited.
- b. New openings shall be designed to be compatible with the scale and proportions of the building as well as established patterns of fenestration. The placement of new openings shall harmonize with the rhythm of existing openings.
- c. Simple designs shall be used for new openings. Elaborate treatment of new openings creates a false sense of history and is prohibited.

## Doors

### 1. Historic Doors

- a. The location, size, and shape of historic door openings on the façade and highly-visible secondary elevations shall be retained and shall not be reduced, enlarged, or infilled.
- b. If a historic door opening on a secondary or rear elevation of a masonry building is to be enclosed, the infill material shall be recessed to maintain the outline of the original opening.
- c. Altering or adding features not historically present to entries to make them appear more elaborate is prohibited. Painting unpainted original doors is prohibited.

### 2. Repairing Historic Doors

- a. Historic doors, trim, and features such as transoms, sidelights, and decorative details shall be retained. Only the deteriorated section of a component shall be repaired or selectively replaced. If removal of intact features is required for repair, document their location prior to disassembly.
- b. Clear glass shall be used when repairing or replacing damaged glazing. Frosted, tinted, reflective, opaque, and other decorative glass are prohibited unless they were historically present. Removing historic leaded, art, or stained glass is prohibited.
- c. Historic storm and screen doors shall be retained and repaired.

- d. Where appropriate, install new storm doors that do not obscure the view of the actual door. Storm door finishes shall match the primary door.

### **3. Replacing Historic Doors**

- a. Historic doors shall only be replaced when they are deteriorated beyond repair. If deterioration is confined to a specific element, only the damaged component shall be replaced.
- b. New doors shall replicate the size and proportions of the original door as closely as possible. Enlarging or reducing an opening to accommodate a replacement door is prohibited.
- c. When a new door on the façade or prominent secondary elevation is needed, select a door that is consistent in character with the original or characteristic of the building's age and style, including in its configuration and glazing.

### **4. New Door Openings**

- a. New door openings shall be limited to minimally visible secondary elevations or the rear elevation. Cutting new openings into the façade or highly visible secondary elevations is prohibited.
- b. New openings shall be designed to be compatible with the scale and proportion of the building and existing door openings. New openings shall generally be at the same height as existing openings to maintain visual consistency.

## **Porches and Decks**

### **1. Historic Porches**

- a. Original and character-defining porches that are on the façade or on secondary elevations and visible from the right-of-way shall be retained unless historic documentation supports removal or alteration. This includes historic porches added later that reflect the stylistic evolution of a building.
- b. The overall form, roof height and pitch, and scale of visible porches shall be retained.
- c. Individual components such as balusters, steps, posts, columns, piers, cornices, flooring, and railings shall be maintained and repaired. Removing or altering elements that define the visual character of a porch is prohibited.

### **2. Repairing**

- a. Only the deteriorated or missing section of a porch element shall be repaired or replaced. Replacement of otherwise intact features shall be avoided.
- b. Where a porch feature is missing or deteriorated beyond repair, replacements shall be based on historical and physical evidence. In the absence of sufficient evidence, simplified designs compatible with the

building's age and style shall be used.

- c. Replacement materials shall match existing components or closely approximate the original size, scale, proportion, color, finish, and texture. Original materials are encouraged but alternative materials are permitted if they match the visual qualities of the original.

### **3. Screening In and Enclosing**

- a. Open porches on the façade and highly-visible secondary elevations shall be retained. Visible porches at the rear of secondary elevations may be screened. Non-visible porches on secondary elevations and porches on rear elevations may be screened or enclosed.
- b. When screening or enclosing a visible porch, elements such as columns, railings, and ornamentation shall be retained to maintain spatial relationships. Removal of character-defining features to screen or enclose a porch is prohibited.
- c. Maximize transparency in the enclosure. Porches shall be screened or enclosed using the minimum number of vertical and horizontal framing members necessary. Vertical and horizontal members shall be aligned with existing porch elements to minimize their visual impact. Reopening previously enclosed porches on the façade is encouraged.

### **4. New Porches**

- a. Front porches shall only be added when there is documentary or physical evidence that one historically existed or when there is precedent for porches on buildings of similar style and age in the district.
- b. Front porch designs shall be based on historical or photographic evidence. In the absence of sufficient evidence for a particular component, a simplified design that is compatible with the building and site in height, width, scale, and detailing shall be used.
- c. When a new porch is added on a side or rear elevation, the porch shall be compatible with the scale, character, and materials of the building. Simplified designs shall be used so as not to create a false sense of history. The shape and materials of the porch roof shall be compatible with the overall building form.

### **5. Decks**

- a. Decks shall be located in inconspicuous areas such as the rear elevation and portions of secondary elevations with minimal visibility from the right-of-way. Decks on the façade or highly-visible secondary elevations are prohibited.
- b. Decks shall be in scale with the site so that they do not significantly alter proportions of occupied space on a property.
- c. Decks shall be installed so that they are structurally self-supporting and can be removed in the future without causing damage to the building. Decks should align with the height of the building's first floor. Decks above the first floor are strongly discouraged.
- d. Decks shall be simple in character and in scale with the building so



that they do not compete visually with historic features. Screening decks from view along the right-of-way through plantings is strongly encouraged.

## **Garages and Outbuildings**

### **1. Historic Garage Buildings**

- a. Historic accessory buildings that contribute to the character of the property and district shall be maintained. Removing or relocating contributing accessory buildings shall be avoided. Altering the design of historic accessory buildings to make them more elaborate or otherwise inconsistent with their original character is prohibited.
- b. To the extent feasible and practical, historic windows and doors on accessory buildings shall be retained and repaired. Components that are deteriorated beyond repair shall be replaced with new units that are compatible with the character of the building. The configuration and character-defining features of historic accessory buildings shall be retained.

## **Site and Setting**

### **1. Historic Walls and Fences**

- a. Historic fences, gates, and walls shall be retained in their original location as character defining features of individual sites and the setting. The height of historic fences, gates, and walls shall be maintained. Increasing the height of such features to create a privacy screen is not appropriate. Distinctive details of fences, gates, and walls shall be retained.
- b. Painting historic masonry walls or covering them with a cementitious coating is not appropriate and shall be prohibited.
- c. The introduction of retaining walls in front yards where none existed historically is generally discouraged. In cases where new retaining walls are approved, they shall be constructed of stone, brick, or textured block. Poured concrete (unless precedent exist in the area) and wood timbers shall be prohibited.
- d. Only those portions of historic features that are deteriorated beyond repair shall be replaced. Total replacement of an entire element when only a localized section is deteriorated is not appropriate and shall be avoided. When replacement materials are used, they shall be in-kind or visually and structurally compatible with the original.

### **2. New Walls and Fences**

- a. New fences and walls shall be compatible in scale and materials to those historically present in the area and to the building with which they are associated.
- b. Traditional materials such as brick, stone, cast iron, and wood shall be

- used for new fences, gates, and walls visible along the street wall in front and side yards to maintain the continuity of the area.
- c. Front yard fences shall promote a sense of transparency, allowing view between vertical members. Opaque fences and walls, including privacy fences, shall be used only at the rear yard.
  - d. Fences shall not exceed 4 feet in height along street-facing yards and 6 feet in height in all other yards. On corner lots, a fence may exceed 4 feet in height at the side yard if it is placed at or behind the midpoint of the house but shall not be higher than 6 feet at any point. Plastic and vinyl fences are strongly discouraged. Employing screening such as hedges or plantings to minimize the appearance of such fences from the right-of-way is encouraged.
  - e. Existing chain link and woven fences in the front and side yard can be retained and maintained. If a chain link or woven fence is to be replaced, a new fence complying with the guidelines must be installed. New chain link and woven fences are prohibited in these areas.
  - f. While new fences may take visual cues from historic counterparts, replicating historic designs is not appropriate as it conveys a false sense of history. Simplified contemporary interpretations of traditional fence designs are encouraged.

### **3. Lighting and Utilities**

- a. Where present, retain historic lighting fixtures. Replace missing or deteriorated historic exterior lighting with fixtures that are compatible to the original scale, design, and materials and consistent with the style and age of the building.

### **4. New Lighting**

- a. Select fixtures that are compatible with the setting and individual properties in scale, placement, color, and profile. The use of colored lamps in light fixtures is not appropriate and is discouraged.
- b. Low-level light fixtures that direct light downward and away from other properties are encouraged to minimize light spill onto adjacent properties. Excessive use of lighting is not appropriate. Limiting post-mounted lights to 10 feet in height and using fixtures made of brass, copper, or painted metal is encouraged.

## Residential Guidelines for Additions and New Construction

### Additions

#### 1. Location

- a. Additions shall be located on the rear elevation or at the rear of secondary elevations to minimize their appearance from the right-of-way. They shall be located so that they do not damage, obscure, or require removal of character-defining features of the original building. Additions shall be located to maintain a setback consistent with the character of the district.

#### 2. Compatibility

- a. Original buildings shall be maintained as the primary dwelling. Additions shall be compatible with the size, scale, setback, and massing of the original building.
- b. Additions shall be visually compatible with and subordinate to the original building. Additions shall be scaled so that they do not visually diminish the original building. Additions that exceed 1/3 of a building's existing square footage shall be avoided.
- c. Additions shall have a roof shape, pitch, and complexity compatible with that of the original building. Door and window openings shall conform to the proportions, size, and rhythm of openings on the original building.
- d. Simplified designs that take visual cues from the character of the original building are most appropriate. Excessive ornamentation and duplicating original details shall be avoided.
- e. Traditional materials or alternative materials that are compatible with the original building in scale, profile, finish, and texture shall be used when visible from the right-of-way.
- f. Additions that require substantial alterations to the structural system of the original building are prohibited. Additions shall be constructed in such a way that they can be removed in the future with damage to or destruction of the original building.

#### 3. Differentiation

- a. Simplified details that reference the character of the original building are appropriate.
- b. Subtle changes in setback, material, and details are an appropriate means for distinguishing additions from the original building.
- c. Designing additions with walls that are recessed from the original

- building and separating large additions from the original building by a linking corridor are encouraged as an appropriate means of maintaining the original building and addition as separate, distinguishable features.
- d. Additions shall be identifiable as a product of their own time. It should be clear what is historic and what is new.

## **New Construction**

### **1. Location**

- a. Historic spatial relationships shall be maintained by locating new construction within the range of established front and side yard setbacks of properties on the same block.
- b. Landscape elements, features such as walls and fences, and building components such as porches shall be at compatible setbacks similar to those of properties on the same block.
- c. Precedents of open to occupied space in the district shall be maintained.
- d. Configuring the massing of a new building to maintain visual compatibility with historical precedents in lot coverage is encouraged.
- e. The façade of a new building shall generally be compatible with the alignment of adjacent buildings unless there is historical precedent for substantial variation in the district.
- f. The placement of a new building on a lot shall maintain historical precedents of spacing between primary buildings on adjacent lots.
- g. Primary entrances shall be oriented toward the street.
- h. Sidewalks, steps, porches, and other such features shall be compatible with the rhythm of existing features in the district.

### **2. Form, Massing, and Scale**

- a. New buildings shall employ forms, massing, and scales consistent with those traditionally found in the district.
- b. Buildings shall have a footprint and roof form with a similar complexity to buildings within the same block. Hip and gable roofs are typically appropriate. Roof pitch shall be compatible with those historically found in the district.
- c. New buildings shall be designed to be within the established range of building heights within the same block and adjacent streets, not varying more than 10% from the average height.
- d. The proportions of the façade shall be compatible with historical

- precedents in the district. Large masses shall be broken up through vertical and horizontal articulation in order to reduce visual dominance along the street.
- e. Designs shall be of a human scale, incorporating pedestrian -oriented features such as façade porches where appropriate for the area. Façade features shall be scaled to be compatible with those historically found in the area.

### **3. Design and Features**

- a. Employing contemporary interpretations of historic designs and using simple contemporary forms that conform to established precedents of massing, scale, and character are encouraged. Replicating historic styles conveys a false sense of history and is prohibited.
- b. Referencing traditional scales for features such as porches, windows, and doors that help define the rhythm of the streetscape is encouraged.
- c. New buildings shall incorporate architectural details that provide articulation and visual distinction. Details shall complement the architectural fabric of the district, not compete visually with existing buildings.
- d. Floor -to -ceiling heights shall fall within the range of those found on historic buildings in the district.
- e. Roof features such as chimneys shall be appropriately scaled to the building.
- f. Maintain compatibility with traditional precedents of solid to transparent space on the façade.
- g. Windows and doors shall be compatible in proportion, shape, locations, and size as those traditionally found in the district.
- h. Windows and doors shall be stylistically compatible with the building and district. Duplicating historical designs is not appropriate.

### **4. Materials**

- a. New construction shall reflect traditional materials and textures compatible with the district. Using no more than two primary materials for exterior walls is encouraged.
- b. Materials and features shall have traditional dimensions, promote a human scale, and have proven durability. Exaggerated and oversized materials are not appropriate and shall be avoided.
- c. Materials shall be visually compatible in scale, profile, proportions, and finish to those historically found in the district. Alternative

- materials such as fiber cement board and cast concrete are appropriate for maintaining material compatibility with traditional materials. Faux masonry and vinyl and aluminum sidings are prohibited.
- d. Using wood or aluminum -clad wood windows with a baked -on or enamel finish is strongly encouraged. Other materials will be considered by the HZC on a case -by -case basis. Vinyl and vinyl -clad windows and doors are not appropriate and shall be prohibited.

## 5. Garages

- a. Historic relationships among the primary building, open lawn, and landscape features shall be retained when locating a new accessory building.
- b. New secondary buildings shall be located in rear yards or at the terminus of a driveway. Secondary buildings shall not be placed in front or side yards.
- c. Locating garages so that they do not require new curb cuts is recommended.
- d. New secondary buildings shall be compatible with the site and original building in scale, massing, and design.
- e. Simplified designs shall be used. Secondary buildings that visually compete with the primary building are prohibited.
- f. Designs shall utilize a roof shape and pitch consistent with those on secondary buildings historically found in the district.
- g. One-story designs shall be used unless there is historical precedent for a taller building in the district.
- h. Designs shall use traditional or alternative materials compatible with the visual qualities of the district.
- i. Windows and doors shall be proportionally consistent with the size of the building.

## COMMERCIAL GUIDELINES

### STYLE - #1

**Respect the original design of the building.**

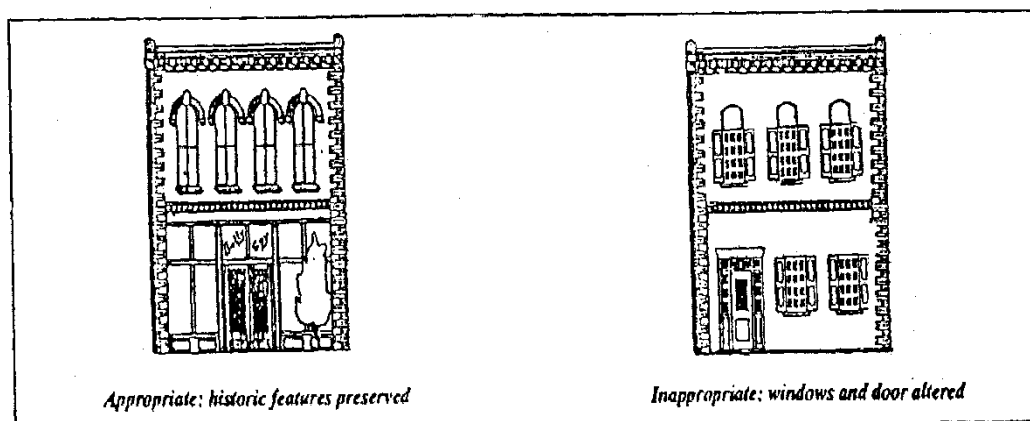
**PRESERVATION:** Preserve and retain architectural details and character-defining features of a building. (See Preservation Brief #17) Repair, rather than replace, the existing historic details and ornamentation.

**ALTERATIONS:** Preserve older alterations that have achieved historic significance based on their age (older than 50 years) or design character. More recent alterations that are not historically significant may be removed.

**REPLACEMENT FEATURES:** Replacement of missing architectural elements should be based on accurate duplication of original features. Avoid adding details which make the building appear older, younger, more ornate, or plainer than it originally was.

**REPLACEMENT MATERIALS:** When repairing or replacing lost or deteriorated features, it is always best to use the same material as the original feature. If a substitute material is employed, it should visually duplicate historic materials, with particular attention to color and texture. Choose a substitute material that has physical properties similar to historic material and take into consideration factors such as durability, thermal expansion, and moisture penetration. (See Preservation Brief #16)

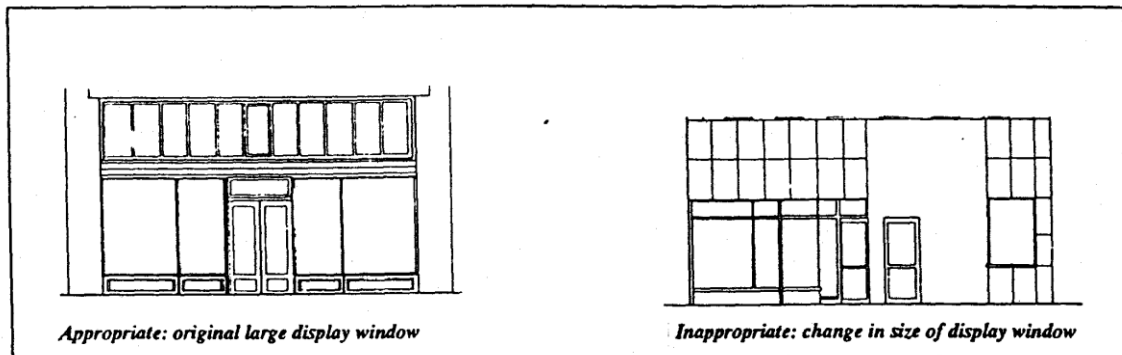
**REPLACEMENT DESIGNS:** Where reconstruction of an element is impossible because of a lack of historical evidence, then a new design that relates to the building in general size, scale, and material may be considered. Do not add fake historic designs or theme images such as the "wild west" or the "ye olde Colonial" look.



## STOREFRONT - #2

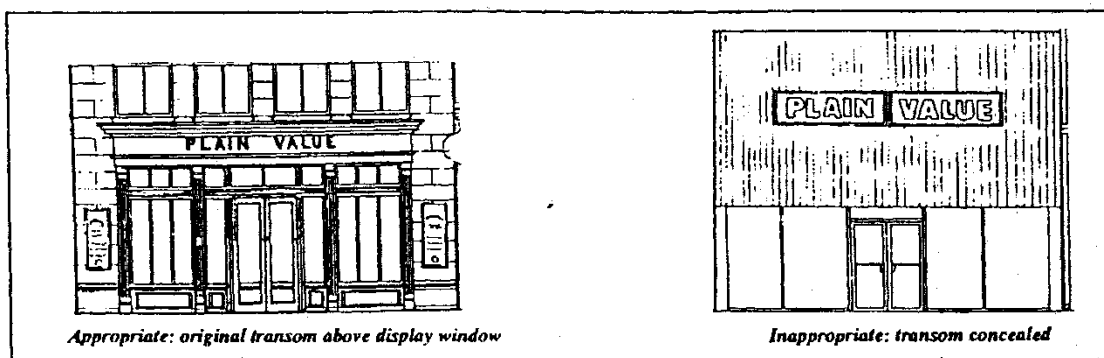
Preserve existing historic storefronts. Retain characteristic storefront features.

**DISPLAY WINDOW:** maintain the original dimensions and transparent nature of the display window. Do not add small paned windows or reflective glass.



**COLUMNS:** Maintain cast iron columns and brick and stone piers which frame the storefront.

**TRANSOM:** Retain original shape and transparency of the transom. Do not place a sign over the transom. If an interior ceiling has been lowered below the transom, it should be recessed from the storefront. Do not place air conditioning units in the transom.

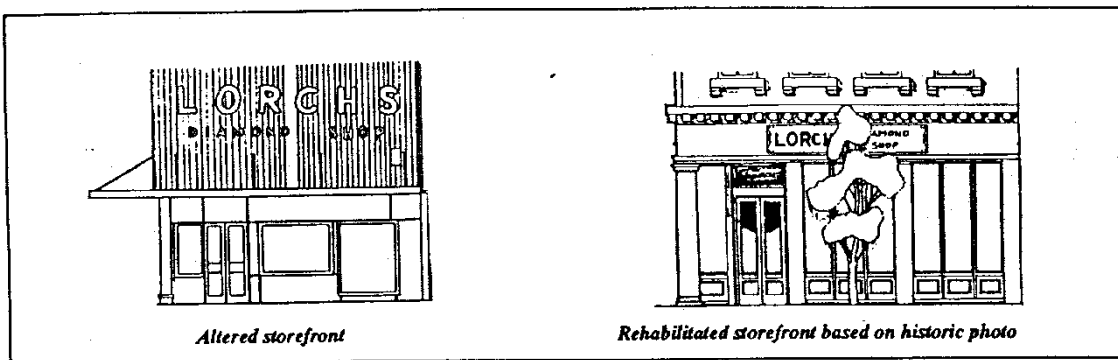




### RECONSTRUCTED STOREFRONT - #3

Reconstruction of a historic storefront should be based on physical evidence and historical documentation such as photographs.

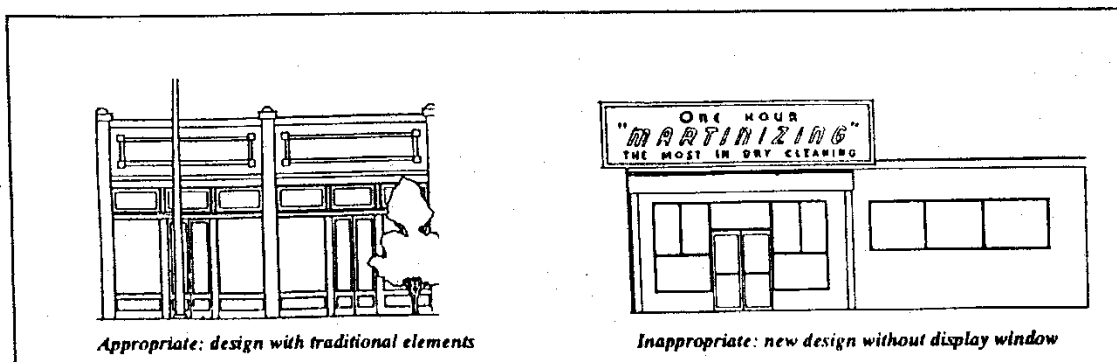
**RECONSTRUCTION:** Obtain historic photographs, postcards of downtown, and historical background about the building by contacting the historical society, library, and/or state archives.



### NEW STOREFRONT - #4

If documentation of the original storefront does not exist, design a new storefront that is compatible with the materials, size, scale, and character-defining features of nearby buildings.

**NEW DESIGN:** Respect the original design of the building and visual character of the district. Do not add early colonial features, attempt to create a theme, or make a building more ornamental than it originally was. The new design should incorporate characteristic elements of a traditional storefront, including the display window, transom, recessed entrance, and bulkhead using compatible materials. (See Preservation Brief # 11)



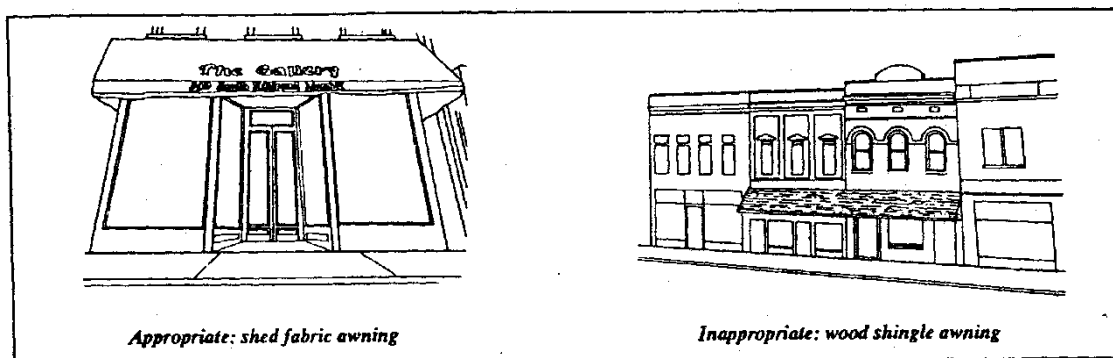
## AWNINGS - #5

Awnings should be compatible with the design of the building and the streetscape.

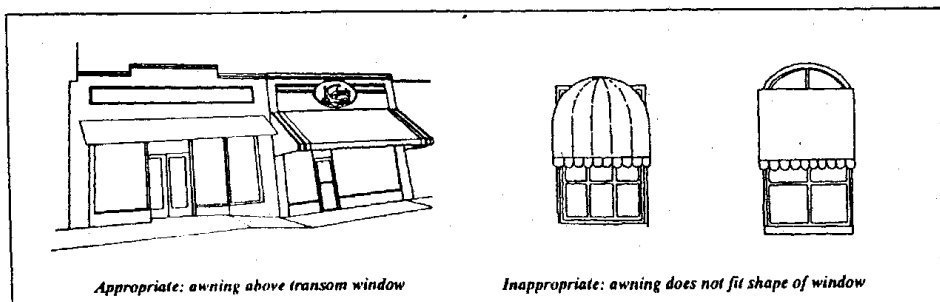
**PRESERVATION:** preserve original canopies and awning hardware where feasible.

**MATERIALS:** Fabric awnings are appropriate. Vinyl coated canvas and acrylic awnings may be acceptable. Metal awnings may be appropriate in a few instances, but rough sawn wood, plastic, or asphalt shingle awnings give an immobile, hard, mansard-like appearance and are not appropriate.

**DESIGN:** Retractable or fixed standard shed-type canvas awnings are appropriate. Fake mansard roofs and rustic wood shingle awnings are inappropriate. Carefully coordinate the awning color with other building design features.



**LOCATION:** The awning should fit the dimensions of the storefront within the masonry opening and should not obscure architectural details. Mount the awning just above or just below the transom. Where feasible, align the awning so that it is the same height as others on the block. Upper story awnings should fit inside the window surround. Arched windows should have awnings shaped like the curvature of the arch, and rectangular windows should have rectangular awnings.



## SIGNS - #6

**Signs should complement, rather than compete with, the character of the building and downtown. CITY OF FLORENCE MUNICIPAL CODE, APPENDIX C, SECTION IV**

### SIGNS SUBJECT TO DESIGN REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL.

No sign, as defined by these Guidelines, may be erected, placed, established, painted, created, replaced or maintained except in accordance with these standards. A Certificate of Appropriateness shall be required for the placement of any new sign or the modification or replacement of any existing sign, except for the following signs, which are **exempt** from approval by the Design Review Board:

- (a) Official sign without advertisement, such as a legal notice, warning sign, no trespassing sign, historical marker, informational or directional sign, traffic sign, and the like erected by any governmental agency or public utility.
- (b) Temporary real estate sign.
- (c) Temporary construction site identification sign.
- (d) Temporary political sign.
- (e) Temporary special event banner of 16 or less square feet per building face, indicating a special event, sale, grand opening, or similar event, provided such sign is removed within 7 days after the conclusion of the event.
- (f) Other temporary sign of two or less square feet per building face.

### SIGNAGE DEFINITIONS:

**Sign.** Any temporary or permanent display device (including all of its structural components), partially or fully exposed to public view that is designed to inform or attract the attention of persons not on the premises on which the device is located.

**Permanent sign.** Any sign, other than a temporary sign (see below definition), designed with a permanent display area and not fabricated of paper, fabric, window whitewash, or other light impermanent materials. If a sign display area is permanent but the message displayed is subject to periodic changes, that sign

shall still be regarded as permanent. A canopy permanently affixed to a building shall be regarded as permanent, even if fabricated of canvas, plastic or equivalent fabric-like materials.

**Temporary sign.** Any sign fabricated of paper, plywood, fabric, window whitewash, impermanent paint, or other light, impermanent materials and intended to be displayed for a limited duration. The area of a temporary sign is included in the maximum sign area calculations. Temporary signs totaling more than two square feet per building face are subject to Design Review Board approval and the additional design criteria of these guidelines. **Temporary signs must be removed within 7 days of the conclusion of the event.**

**Freestanding sign.** Any permanent on-premises sign supported by some structure or the ground and independent of support from any building. Freestanding signs are distinguishable by the following types:

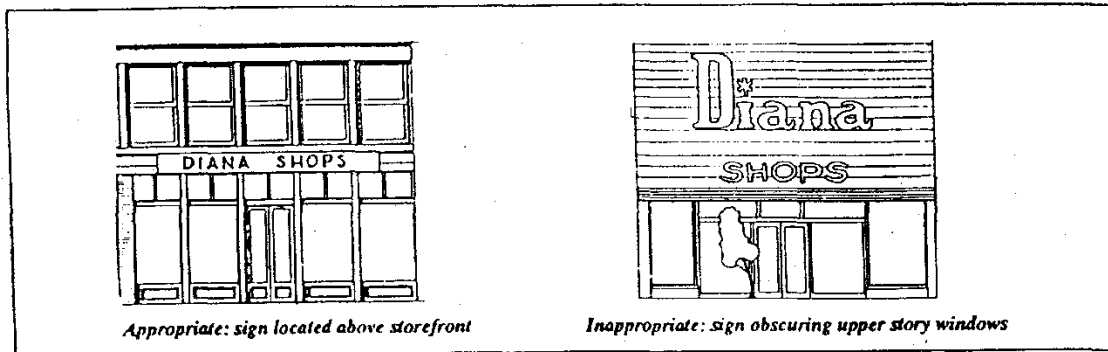
**Monument sign.** A monument-style freestanding sign, with a low profile. The sign is attached directly to the ground or to decorative pillars, braces, or posts with not more than an average of four feet between the bottom of the sign face and the normal grade at the base of the sign. This does not include historical markers. For more information, see the FHPC's guidelines on historical markers.

**Ground sign.** A freestanding sign not meeting all of the characteristics of a monument sign. The sign display area is generally set high above the sign base and is supported by one or more poles, braces, or other structures, which may or may not be decorative. **Ground signs are expressly prohibited.**

**On-premise sign.** A permanent sign which directs attention to or conveys information about a business, profession, institution, service, merchandise, accommodation, attraction, or other activity that exists or is conducted, sold, offered, maintained, or provided on the premises where the sign is located.

**Off-premise sign.** Any permanent sign which directs the attention of the general public to a business, service, product or activity not conducted, offered or sold as a major portion of business upon the premises where such sign is located. A billboard is an off-premise sign, but none of the following signs shall be deemed an off-premise sign: (a) directional and other official signs authorized by law; (b) signs advertising the sale or lease of property upon which they are located; and (c) on-premise signs. **Off-premise signs are expressly prohibited.**

**LOCATION:** Signs should not cover or obscure architectural features of a building or neighboring buildings. Locate signs on flat unadorned parts of the façade or paint directly onto the glass storefront. Hanging signs should not obscure the view of the streetscape. Signs should be aligned with others in the area in order to create a more uniform appearance. If a historical structure contains a signboard, signs are to be placed in these areas if wall area is used at all for signage.



**TYPES:** A variety of signs may adorn a building, but, as a general rule, a business should not have more than three signs per entrance side. This excludes sidewalk or outer vestibule signs on floor. Awning signs and small façade sign panels can attract the attention of passing motorists or pedestrians across the street. Signs painted on storefront windows and doors attract the attention of pedestrians. Hanging signs should be attached so that they do not damage the wall surface. Attach signs through joints in the masonry rather than to the brick itself. Moveable or portable signs are not appropriate.

#### **Point of Business:**

- (1) Point of Business (Entrance) Painted Signs – Painted wall signs will not be allowed on unpainted masonry.

#### **Flat Signs:**

- (1) Flat signs shall be mounted parallel to the building face and shall not project more than twelve inches from the wall.

- (2) No flat signs shall be installed above the base of the second story windows or, if no second story windows exist, no higher than sixteen feet above grade, unless there is an upper story sign panel and/or historic precedence indicates otherwise.

**Point of Business (Entrance) Hanging Signs:**

- (1) Point of Business Hanging Signs – Point of Business signs shall be mounted perpendicular to the building entrance. Maximum allowable projecting length shall be five (5) feet, and the minimum clearance from the bottom of the sign shall be eight (8) feet above grade. Maximum total sign area shall be limited to 4 square feet per sign per business establishment or to the size appropriate to the scale of the building or condition. Only one (1) sign per entrance shall be permitted. No hanging sign shall be installed above the base of the second story windows, or if no second story windows exist, no higher than sixteen feet above grade unless historic precedence indicates otherwise. The size and location of a hanging sign should be carefully considered so that it does not interfere with neighboring signs.

**Window and Door Lettering:**

- (1) Window and door lettering is permitted for identification, (business information as required by City code) but not for advertising. Letters and/or logos should not cover more than 25% of the glass area. All window and door signage will be reviewed for appropriateness to its space.
- (2) Signs identifying tenants in upper stories can be lettered on the windows according to the above computations, i.e., not to exceed 25% of the window area.
- (3) No exterior face applied lettering will be allowed unless there exists a structural impracticability.
- (4) Either a telephone number or website address will be allowed as part of a window sign provided that the font size does not exceed four (4) inches. The telephone number or website address may not exceed 1% of the allowable sign area. The telephone number or

website address is only allowed on the glass area and may not be included on awnings or other sign area.

**Canopies, Awnings and Awning Signs:**

- (1) If compatible with the scale and character of the building, retractable or fixed frame awnings are permitted over doors and windows.
- (2) Awnings shall be mounted so as not to project more than seven feet from the building, not to be attached to the building any higher than the base of the second story windows or fourteen feet above grade (whichever is lower) and not to be any lower than eight feet above grade at the front.
- (3) The proportions of a structure provide clues for the proper dimensions of awnings or canopies. In general, awnings should cover about a third of the opening in which they are placed.
- (4) Awnings should match the shape of the opening. Canopies should be designed to obscure as little of the building and storefront as possible.
- (5) Awnings or canopies should complement the scale of the structure and should never overwhelm or dominate the façade.
- (6) Awning and canopy colors should complement those of the building's other materials. In all cases, avoid harsh or gaudy colors that compete for attention and detract from the building façade's overall image.
- (7) Care must be taken to avoid overpowering subtle building details with too bold a pattern. Simplicity and restraint in the selection of patterns will yield the best results.
- (8) Ornaments, like all other aspects of awning and canopy design, should suit the character of the building.

- (9) For most downtown buildings, awnings that are fully illuminated internally should be avoided. To illuminate a sign area of an awning or canopy, use spotlights mounted on the building above the awning and aimed directly at the sign area. This illuminates the light lettering on the awning exterior. If entire awning is illuminated entirely, the whole awning shall be considered a sign.

**Free Standing Signs:**

- (1) Individual freestanding signs which identify an on site business shall not be permitted except with prior approval of the Design Review Board. Freestanding signs shall be limited to monument signs.
- (2) Product advertising will not be permitted on the sign face.
- (3) Freestanding signs shall be limited to one per building or attached group of buildings and be located outside of the public right-of-way at the front of the principal entrance to the building.
- (4) The height of the sign shall not exceed four feet above grade.
- (5) The area of the sign face shall not exceed 24 square feet.

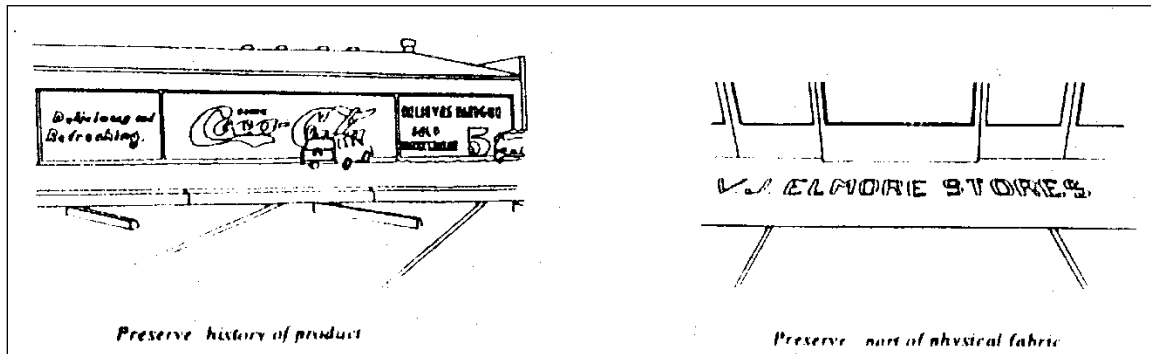
**Political Campaign Signs:** Signs announcing candidates seeking public office or relating to any election of public referendum shall be permitted subject to the following provisions:

- (1) Such signs are confined wholly to placement on private property.
- (2) Such signs are removed within seven (7) days after the election of referendum, for which they were prepared, has been decided.
- (3) Such signs do not exceed 32 square feet per face.

**HISTORIC SIGNS:** Retain historic signs whenever possible. Preserve signs that: reflect the history of a building or a district; are characteristic of a particular historic period or style; are associated with events, people or place; are evidence of the history of a product or business; display excellent craftsmanship, use of

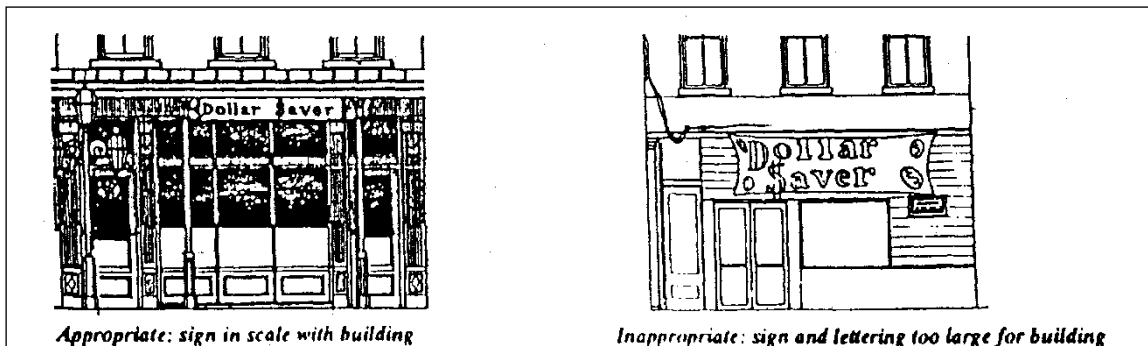


materials, or designs; are incorporated into the building design or physical fabric.



**LIGHTING:** Signs may be illuminated subject to the following restrictions:

- (1) No revolving or rotating beam or beacon of light that simulates any emergency light device shall be permitted as part of any private or commercial sign. Flashing or blinking devices shall not be permitted upon a sign; however, illuminated signs which indicate customary public information only such as time, date, temperature or other similar information shall be permitted.
- (2) External lighting such as floodlights, and lights on projecting arms with reflectors are permitted, provided the light source is directed on the face of the sign and is effectively shielded so as to prevent beams or rays of light from being directed onto any portion of the traveled way so as to cause glare or limit vision.
- (3) The illumination of any sign within (50) feet of a residential boundary line shall be diffused or indirect in design to prevent direct rays of light from shining into adjoining residential districts, including but not limited to single-family or multi-family zoning districts or uses.



**SIZE:** Size should be determined by the scale of the building, not whether the sign is meant to be viewed by a passing motorist or pedestrian.

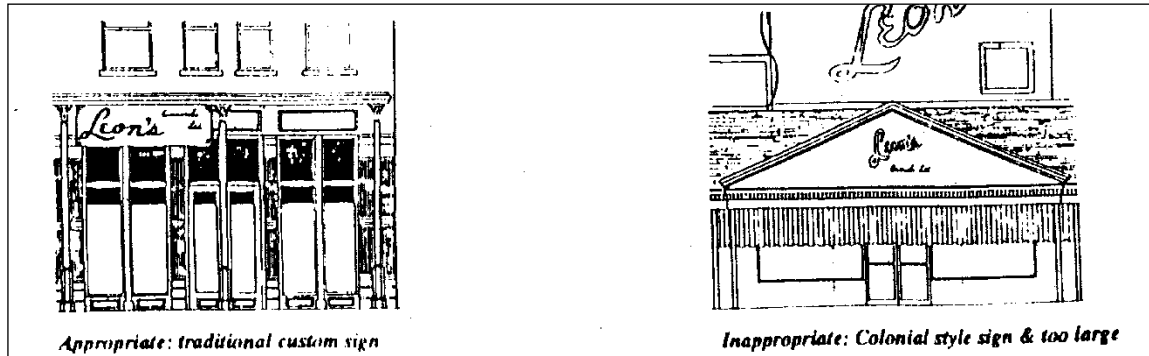
- (1) Wall, Awning or Canopy shall not exceed in an area more than two (2) square feet per front foot of the principal building, not above roofline.
- (2) Monument - 24 square feet and a maximum height of four feet.
- (3) Marquee – 30% usable wall area, 200 sq. ft. maximum; not above roofline.
- (4) Window – The total area of all permanent and temporary window signs shall not exceed 25 per cent of the transparent surfaces of the building face at the ground floor. **The number of illuminated window signs shall be limited to two per building face, and the number of temporary window signs shall be limited to two per building face.**
- (5) Menu Board – One (1) drive-up window board per each drive-up window with a maximum of 25 sq. ft.

**SIGNAGE CALCULATION:** Computation of area of individual signs – The area of a sign face (which is also the sign area of a wall sign or other sign with only one face) shall be computed by means of the smallest square, circle, rectangle, or combination thereof that will encompass the extreme limits of the writing, representation, emblem, or other display together with any material or color forming an integral part of the background of the display or used to differentiate the sign from the backdrop or structure against which it is placed, but not including any supporting framework, bracing, or decorative fence or wall when such fence or wall otherwise meets zoning ordinance regulations and is clearly incidental to the display itself.

**MATERIALS:** Sign materials should be compatible with those of the historic building. Traditional signs were often painted on finished wood or metal panels. Signs painted onto fabric awnings are effective.

**DESIGN:** New signs should not attempt to look older than the building. Colonial designs are not appropriate on Victorian buildings. Custom signs are

preferable to mass-produced, standardized signs. Simple designs which are subordinate to the building are appropriate. Where several businesses occupy a building, it is best to coordinate the signs.



**PROHIBITED SIGNS:** The following signs are prohibited in the B-4 Design Review District:

- (1) Signs Employing Strobe Type Lights: No sign shall be permitted which Utilizes intense flashing lights, spot lights, flood lights, flashing or blinking lights, or any type of pulsating or moving light which may impair the vision, cause glare, or otherwise interfere with any driver's operation of a motor vehicle. Computerized message signs shall be allowed as long as said signs comply with all requirements of this ordinance.
- (2) Roof mounted signs: Such signs are prohibited to the extent that any portion of the sign extends above the façade of the building, which the exception of where photographic evidence exists to support a rooftop sign.
- (3) Signs which are not clean and in good repair.
- (4) Signs that are not securely fixed on a substantial structure.
- (5) Signs which are erected or maintained upon a tree or painted or drawn upon rocks or other natural features.
- (6) Signs that prevent free ingress or egress from any door, window, or fire escape, or that are attached to a standpipe or escape.
- (7) Billboards are not permitted.
- (8) All signs which do not comply with these standards are prohibited within the Central Business District.

**SIGN PRINCIPLES:**

- (1) Signs should be subordinate to the architecture and overall character throughout the district.
- (2) Signage needs should be determined primarily by criteria established by the building architecture, the relative size and the message.
- (3) The design of the façade usually presents obvious clues for the best location of a sign. Flat, continuous, unadorned surfaces are logical places to install a flat wall sign. Flat wall signs should not extend beyond the outer edges of the building front.
- (4) Limit the length of messages so that a passing motorist can quickly read the sign.
- (5) Illuminate with neon or indirect lighting.
- (6) Internally lit signs are subject to approval of the Florence Building Department.
- (7) Signage should be considered within its setting and designed according to the scale, texture and proportion in which it will ultimately be viewed.
- (8) Window signs should not obscure the display area. Light colored letters with dark borders or metallic leafed letters with dark borders are effective.
- (9) Sign materials should be compatible with the building materials.
- (10) A building front should not have more than 3 signs: one primary and two secondary (excludes floor signs).
- (11) Signs will be carefully reviewed for quality and size. In general, use of lesser-grade plastic signs will not be approved. This applies to both projecting and flat-mounted, lit and unlit signs.
- (12) A business establishment may have flat, hanging or free-standing signs (excludes floor signature).

**SIGN MAINTENANCE:** Any signs not meeting the following provisions shall be repaired or removed within 30 days after receipt of notification of noncompliance from the Building Official:

- (1) The area around a free-standing sign shall be properly landscaped and maintained, clear of brush, trees, and other obstacles so as to make signs readily visible.
- (2) All burned-out bulbs or damaged panels must be replaced.

- (3) All sign copy shall be maintained securely to the face and all missing copy must be replaced.

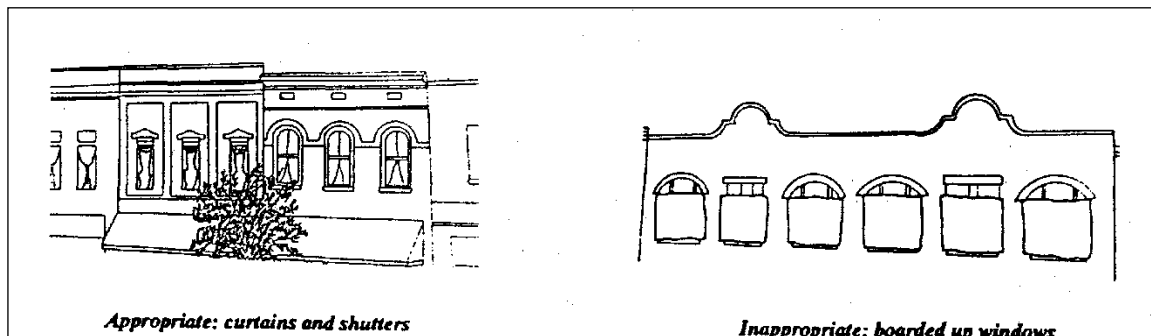
**OWNER RESPONSIBILITY:** It shall be the responsibility of the sign owner and the property owner to maintain and insure conformance to the provisions of these Guidelines. Design drawings of any proposed signs must be submitted to the Florence Building Department for approval prior to fabrication and installation; these drawings shall include sign location and size, as it relates to the building façade, and shall indicate materials, color(s), lettering, hanging or mounting device and any illumination scheme.

### UPPER STORY WINDOWS - #7

**Preserve the size, shape, details, and transparency of upper story windows.**

**PRESERVATION:** The glass, sash, hardware, and window surrounds, including the lintel or decorative window hoods, should be preserved and maintained. Add shutters to the exterior only if they originally existed. Shutters should be operable or should at least appear operable; when closed over an opening, they should fit the size of the opening. (see Preservation Brief #9, 10)

**RE-ESTABLISHMENT:** Consider reopening closed or blocked windows. In some cases, closed exterior shutters may be used to define original window dimensions. Instead of boarding up windows when the second story is not in use, hang curtains or interior shutters to give the building an occupied appearance. **Reflective and dark, tinted glass is not appropriate.**



**REPLACEMENT:** Replacement windows are only recommended when historic windows cannot be rehabilitated. When replacement windows are installed, they should match the historic window size, style, and materials and have the

same number of panes. Interior storm windows are preferable to exterior ones. Wood windows are recommended, but painted metal windows may be acceptable. (see Preservation Brief #3)

### **UPPER FLOOR ACCESS - #8**

**Improve access to the upper floors where feasible.**

**LOCATION:** New stairs, elevator shafts, and balconies should be located on the rear or side façade. Consider opportunities to combine exit stairs with adjacent buildings. New stairs should be of a simple design and should not attempt to create a historical appearance.

### **DOORS - #9**

**Preserve the original front doors and opening.**

**PRESERVATION:** The original size and shape of door openings should be maintained, not infilled. Original doors and door hardware should be repaired and maintained. Replacement doors, when necessary, should be compatible with the original doors in term of style, size, material, and glass panel configuration.

**NEW OPENINGS:** When the creation of new openings is necessary in order to meet fire codes, they should be located on sides or to the rear of buildings, rather than on the front. New openings, when permitted, should be compatible in scale, size, proportion, and placement to historic openings.

**CLOSING AN OPENING:** If the blocking of an opening is allowed, infill materials should be compatible with the building and should be placed 2" to 6" back from the building face. Use of fixed reflective glass is not recommended.

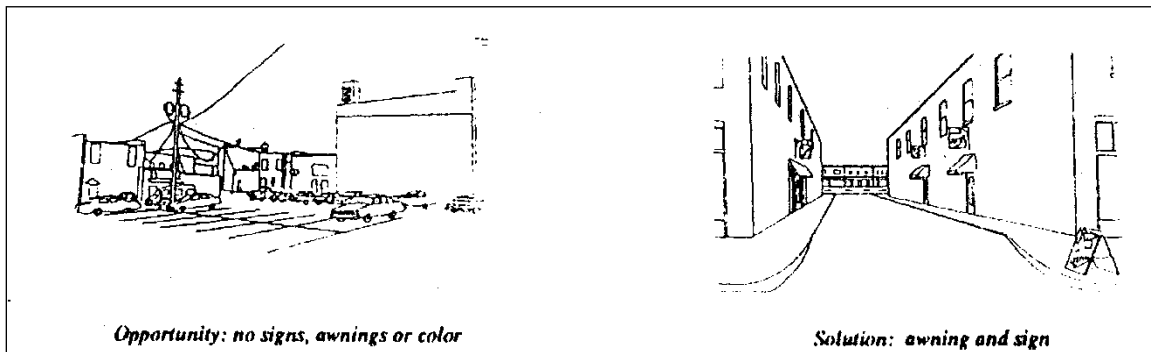
## **REAR ENTRANCES - #10**

**Develop rear and alley entrances for public and service use where feasible.**

**SIGNAGE:** On rear and alley entrances use a smaller version of the main sign to identify the entrance. Improvements to rear facades and entrances can be important. When the rear façade of a building is visible from a parking lot, the addition of an awning or signage that designates the point of access and identifies a building is important.

**LIGHTING:** Provide lighting at the rear entrance.

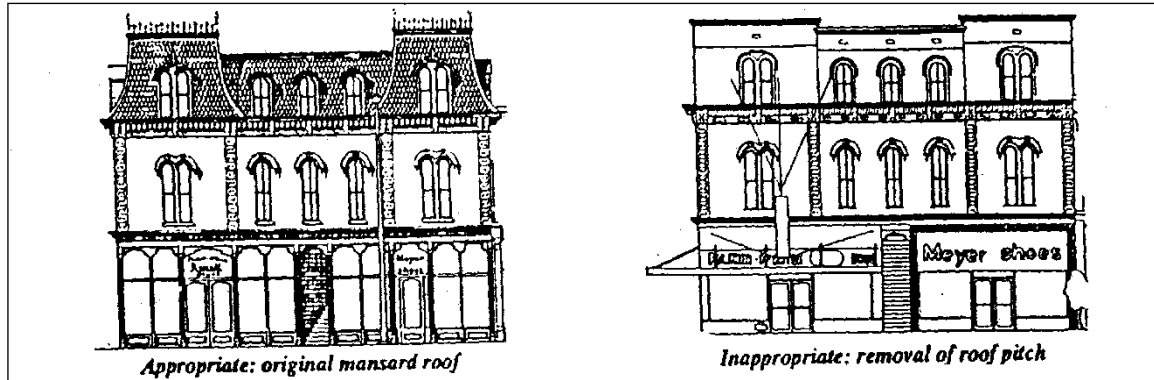
**MATERIALS & COLORS:** Employ materials and colors that coordinate with the main façade so that customers will learn to recognize both entrances as related to the same business.



## ROOFS - #11

### Preserve the original roof form.

**SLOPE:** Preserve the pitch of the original roof. Roofs of most commercial buildings have a parapet wall in front of a flat roof; however in some cases historic commercial buildings have gable, hip, or Mansard roofs. Adding a new fake mansard roof is not appropriate. Skylights and roof decks not visible from street may be acceptable.

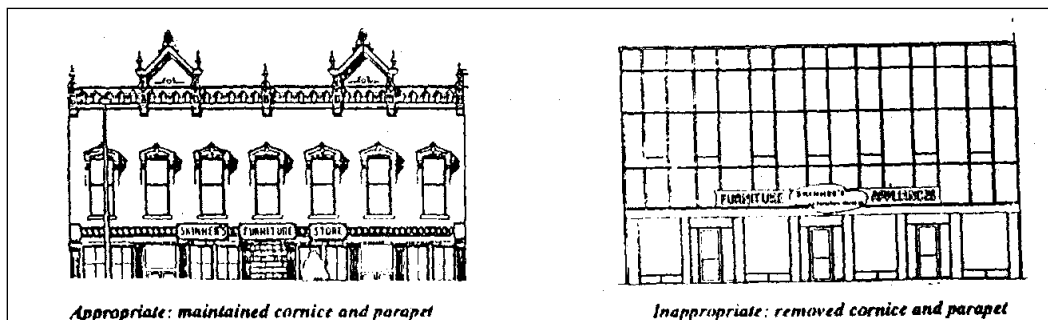


**MAINTENANCE:** Retain and preserve original roofing materials where feasible. Regularly maintain your roof as a shelter against water protection. Clean and maintain the roof drainage system.

## CORNICES - #12

### Preserve the ornamental cornice and parapet.

**MAINTENANCE:** Brick, stone, or metal cornices and parapets should not be altered or removed.



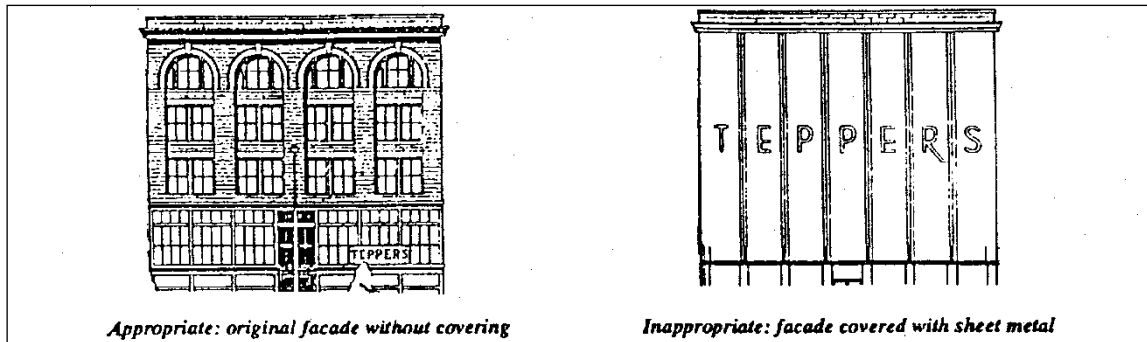
**RECONSTRUCTION:** Reconstruction of a cornice should be based on documentation. When exact reconstruction of details is not feasible, consider developing a simplified interpretation of the original. Missing sections or parts should match the profile of the original. The cornice should be positioned so that it is aligned with the others on the block. Where feasible, replacement cornices should employ the original materials. Fiberglass and other synthetic materials may be acceptable substitutes. (see Preservation Brief #16)



### MATERIALS - #13

**Uncover original exterior materials where feasible.**

**UNCOVERING:** Exterior walls and details should not be obscured, covered, or removed. Rustic wood, synthetic and metal siding, and stucco should not be used to cover masonry walls or details. When possible, material covering original wall surfaces should be removed in such a way that the original structure is not damaged.



### WOOD - #14

**Exterior wood details and original siding should be preserved.**

**PAINTING and CLEANING:** Keep a protective coating of paint on wood. Only remove paint down to the bare wood when absolutely necessary. Paint should be removed from wood using the gentlest means possible. Do not sandblast or use high pressure water to remove paint. Do a test patch prior to undertaking any cleaning method. (see Preservation Brief #10)

**SIDING:** Deteriorated wood should be repaired or replaced with material that duplicates it in terms of size, shape, and texture. Never cover original wood siding with aluminum, vinyl siding, or other veneers.

### MASONRY - #15

**Original masonry including brick, stone, terra cotta, and stucco walls and details should be preserved and maintained.**

**CLEANING:** Cleaning of masonry should be done by the gentlest means possible. Never sandblast a masonry building. Do a test patch prior to undertaking any cleaning method. Do not paint unpainted masonry. Once painted, it is often better to repaint rather than remove paint. Carefully investigate the condition of masonry before removing stucco (see Preservation Brief #1,6,7)

**REPAIRING:** Waterproofing sealants should not be used on masonry, unless they are vapor permeable. Repairs should match the historic masonry in size, shape, texture, and color. Repointing of existing masonry should incorporate the same mortar mix, tooling, and color as the historic masonry pointing. (see Preservation Brief #2)

### METALS - #16

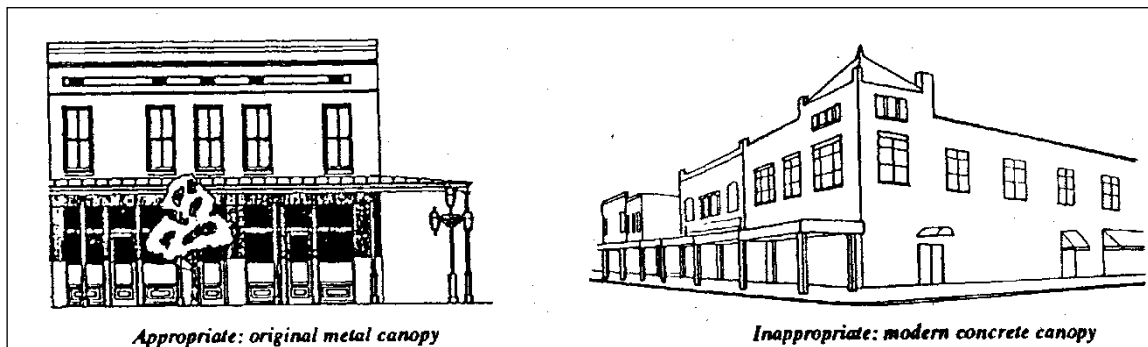
**Architectural metals such as cast iron columns, steel, and decorative stamped metal should be retained and preserved.**

**CLEANING:** Remove rust from metal. While abrasive techniques may be appropriate for the removal of paint and rust from iron, soft metals such as zinc, lead, tin, and copper should be cleaned with chemicals. Do a test patch prior to undertaking any cleaning method. After cleaning, metals should be primed and painted. Do not expose unprotected metal.

### CANOPIES - #17

**Maintain original canopies and balconies.**

**PRESERVATION:** Although canopies, porches, and balconies are not commonly found on commercial buildings, when they exist, they are distinctive features. Original materials, details, shape, outline, and roof height should be retained. Enclosing canopies and balconies is not appropriate if it destroys the visual openness of the porch appearance. Concrete canopies or covered walkways are not appropriate.



### COLOR - #18

**Employ color schemes that will complement neighboring buildings and coordinate façade elements in an overall composition.**

**COMPATIBILITY:** Use colors that are historically appropriate or compatible. Study the colors on nearby buildings and incorporate, not copy, them into your schemes so that your building is compatible and complementary with neighboring buildings.

**NATURAL TONES:** The natural colors of brick and stone are more appropriate than bright hues. Start with the natural color of the building itself as the base.

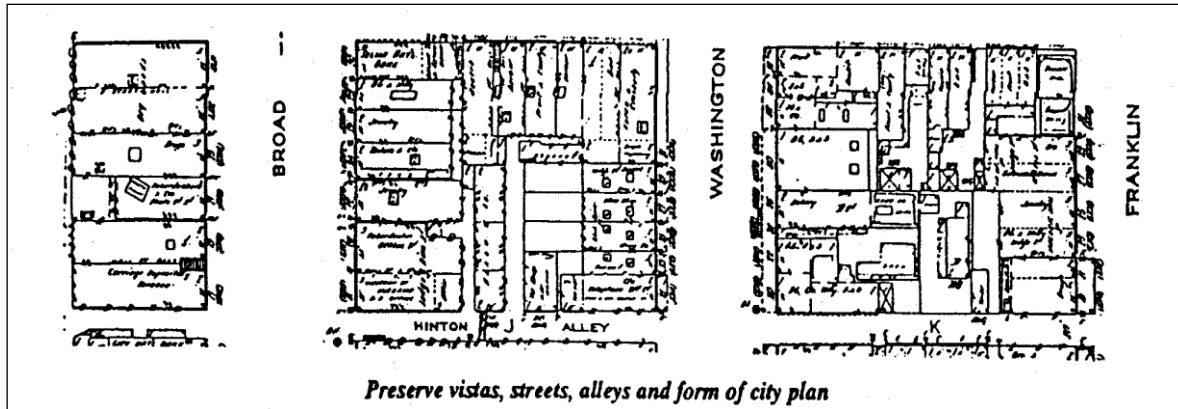
**TRIM:** Built-in features of the façade such as doors, window frames, molding, and cornices can be contrasted with an accent color a shade lighter or darker than the base.

**Contact the Alabama Main Street Program for specific color advice.**

### CITY PLAN - #19

Maintain characteristic features of the city plan including layout, streets, alleys, pattern of blocks, and lots.

**PRESERVATION:** Streets within the historic district should not be widened. The network of side and rear alleys should be maintained. Planned open spaces and important views and vistas should be maintained.

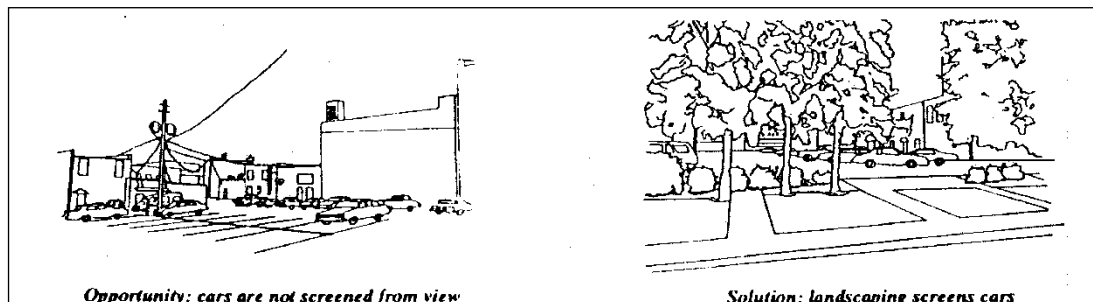


### PARKING - #20

Parking lots should be screened from public view.

**LOCATION:** Off-street parking should be located behind, or to the side of, commercial structures, not in front of the building. If a parking lot fronts the street, it should maintain that block's established setback through the alignment of landscape elements with the façades of buildings.

**DESIGN:** Parking lot should be screened from public view either by a wall or by landscaping that is only high enough to screen cars. Parking lots with a large capacity should consider landscaped islands with trees to divide the lot into small areas so that the visual impact of a large paved area is reduced. The front of a multi-story parking deck should be compatible with building facades in the block and have street level retail or office space.

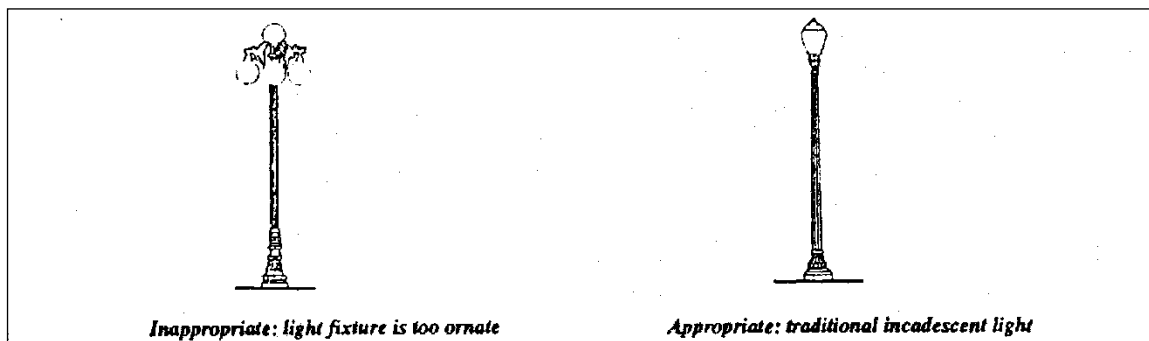


## LIGHTING - #21

**Use light fixtures to unify the streetscape and accent the buildings at night.**

**STYLE:** Period street lighting, such as free-standing lamp post, is presently available in several styles and forms. Traditional or modern designs are appropriate and ornate designs may be appropriate if they are based on documentation. Fake-looking “colonial” lamp posts are not appropriate for most historic commercial areas.

**TYPE:** Incandescent, gas lighting, and vapor lighting are appropriate. Harsh cold florescent lighting should be avoided.



## WALLS AND FENCES - #22

**Walls and fences should be compatible with the buildings and the streetscape.**

**WALLS AND FENCES ARE SUBJECT TO DESIGN REVIEW APPROVAL.**

No wall or fence may be erected, placed, established, painted, created or maintained except in accordance with these standards. A Certificate of Appropriateness shall be required for the placement of any new wall or fence or the modification or replacement of any existing wall or fence.

**LOCATION:** Ideally, walls or fences should be located to the rear of a property. The height, location on the site, visibility, and materials are key factors in determining the appropriateness of fencing. No fence or wall shall obstruct traffic visibility.

**MATERIALS:** Walls and fences shall be finished with decorative materials that are compatible in texture, color and materials to surrounding buildings. Materials such as painted wood pickets, wrought iron, brick, stucco or stone may be appropriate, whereas, chain link, bamboo, wood stockade, plywood, and concrete block, are not appropriate. Where security mandates chain link, either a minimum four feet wide buffer strip shall be densely planted, or a second outer fence of appropriate materials shall be maintained to effectively screen the chain link security fence. In exceptional cases, solid wood fencing may be used to the rear or side of a building to screen unsightly views, such as

trash receptacle areas or unsecured outdoor storage. As in residential areas, squared log or “railroad tie” retaining walls would not be considered appropriate; appropriate materials shall likewise be used for retaining walls. Decorative bollards may be used to demarcate parking and outdoor gathering areas.

**HEIGHT LIMITATIONS:** The maximum height of a fence or wall shall be determined according to its principal purpose, as follows:

- (1) Decorative fences and walls shall be limited to four feet in height.
- (2) Security fences and walls shall be limited to eight feet in height.
- (3) Screening fences and walls shall be limited to six feet in height, except where a security fence is screened, in which case the height limitation is eight feet.

### **PAVING - #23**

**Paving materials should be compatible with the district.**

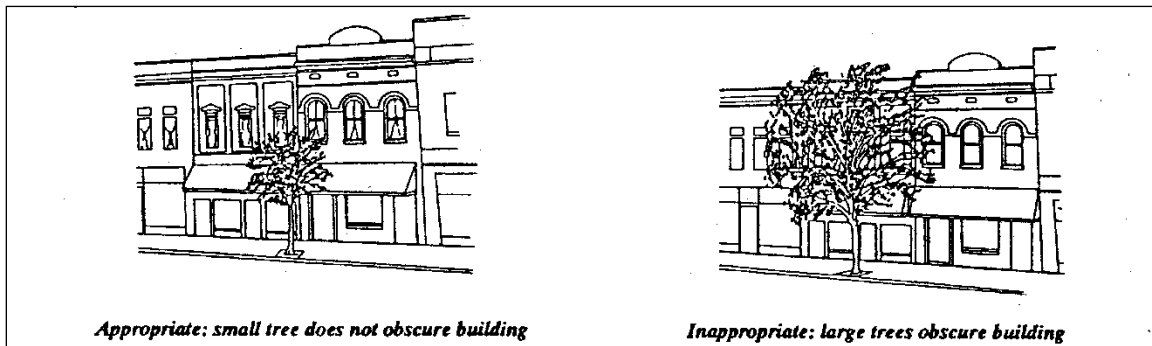
**MATERIALS:** Concrete, brick, and hexagonal pavers are typical historic materials, whereas loose gravel may not be appropriate. Newly paved surfaces should not be visually dominant, intrusive, or suggest a false sense of history. Consider breaking up large expanses of paving with changes in texture or decorative features such as stamped hexagonal imprints on concrete. Try to preserve historic paving materials where they exist, or consider using similar materials for new paving.

### **LANDSCAPE - #24**

**Use traditional trees and plants which unify the district and do not obscure the buildings.**

**PLANTING MATERIALS:** New trees should be similar to varieties already planted. Trees with limited height and dimensions which do not completely mask signs and buildings are recommended. Low maintenance, drought resistant native varieties are more appropriate than ubiquitous Bradford Pear trees. Where overhead power lines are present, plant materials should “crown out” beneath the power lines. Shrubs and small trees which do not obscure the buildings as they grow are preferred. Potted trees, plants, and flowers are acceptable but should not impede pedestrian traffic and should be maintained.

**MAINTENANCE:** Maintenance of street plantings is very important. Replace and remove dead, dying or poorly maintained plants. Prune mature trees which obscure signs. Water and mulch plants regularly.



### ARCHAEOLOGY - #25

**Known and potential archaeological sites of importance should be protected.**

**UTILITIES:** Installation of underground utilities or any grading or excavation work should not take place in areas that may be of archaeological importance. Contact the Alabama Historical Commission.

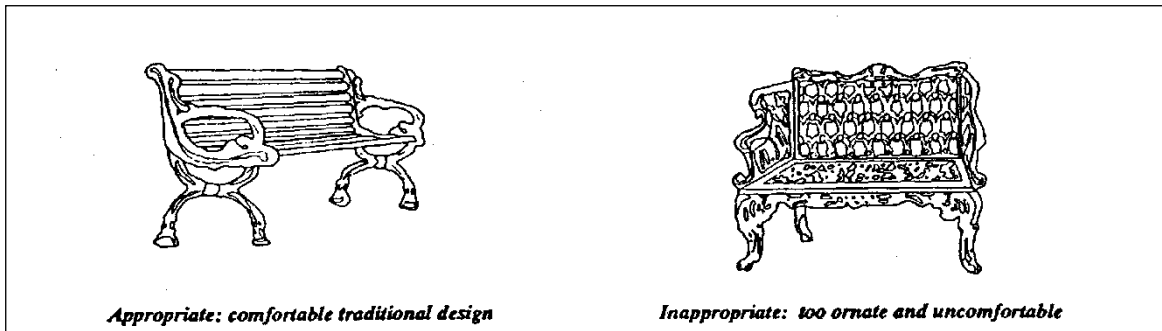
**LANDSCAPE:** Altering the contours of archaeological sites or earthworks should not be permitted. The areas should not be paved or landscaped and the use of heavy equipment should not be permitted.

**CONSTRUCTION:** If an archaeological site is discovered during construction, cease work and immediately notify the archaeologist at the Alabama Historical Commission. It is against Alabama Law for non-approved professionals to excavate archaeological sites, and a permit from the Alabama Historical Commission is required for excavation in Alabama.

### STREET FURNITURE - #26

**Street furniture should be chosen for its comfort, durability, and compatibility with the district.**

**LOCATION:** Street furniture, such as trash receptacles and benches, should be added where they will be most used, as at corner areas and parks, and where they do not clutter sidewalks.



**STYLE:** The design of street furniture should be compatible with the downtown and not overly ornate, unless based on documentation. Designs should be consistent throughout the district.

**MATERIALS:** Street furniture made of materials such as iron and wood is more compatible to a downtown area than plastic or concrete furniture.

### **EQUIPMENT - #27**

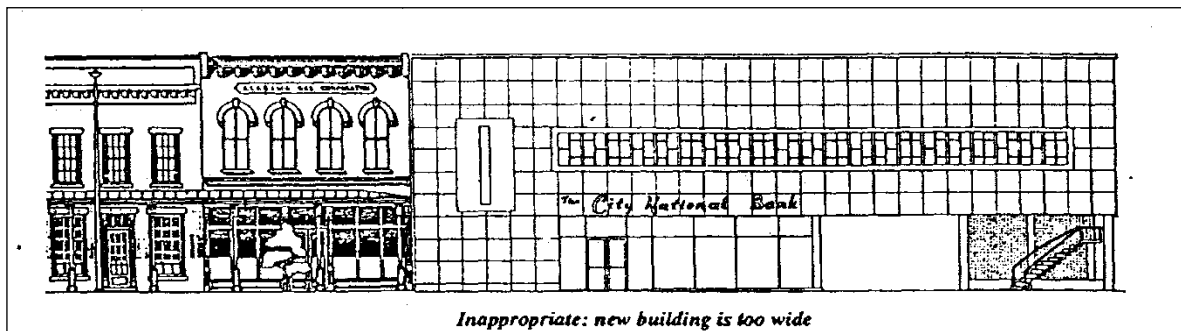
**Mechanical equipment, utilities, and public works should be concealed from view.**  
**GARBAGE CONTAINERS:** Dumpsters and trash receptacles should be located to the rear of a building and neatly shielded from public view. Attempt to screen garbage from public view as unobtrusively as possible. Keep a fresh coat of paint on the dumpster, and keep area clean.

**UTILITIES:** Equipment should not be visibly dominant or intrusive. Utilities should be placed where least visible and least intrusive on the site. It is recommended that utility wires be placed underground. New utility equipment or alterations to existing utility equipment should be compatible with adjacent and surrounding historic properties and principal and/or secondary structures on the property. Utilities may also be placed on rooftops if not visible from the street or taller buildings.

**SECURITY DEVICES:** Security alarms, doors, windows, and gates should be unobtrusive.

**HEATING, VENTILATION, AND AIR CONDITIONING EQUIPMENT:** Air conditioning units should be placed so that they are not visible from the street. Do not place units in windows on the front façade of the building.

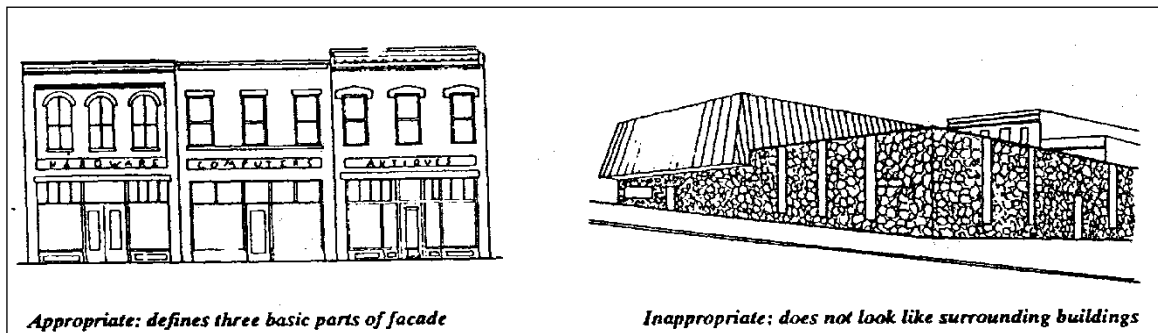




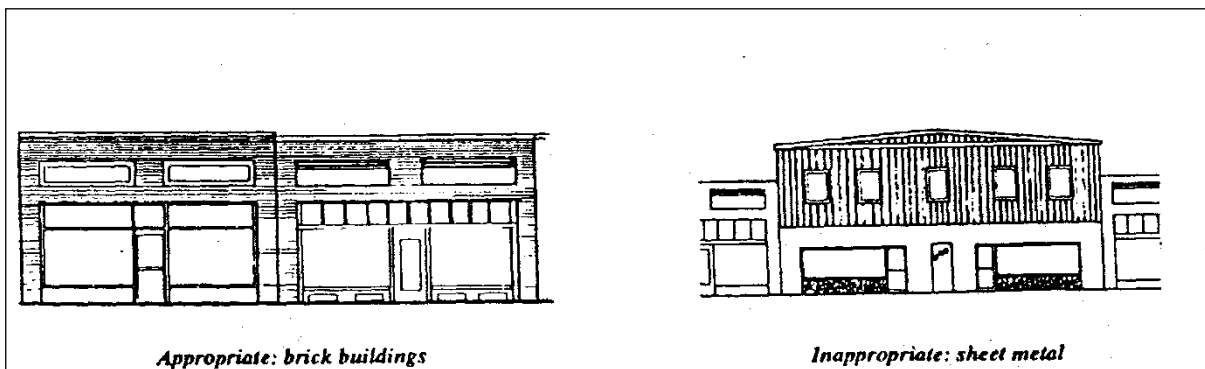
### NEW CONSTRUCTION - #28

**New construction should be compatible with neighboring buildings.**

**COMPOSITION:** New buildings should define the three basic divisions of a commercial façade: a top which is typically a flat roof with a parapet and decorative cornice; a middle area defined by the upper story windows which are vertical and regularly placed; and a bottom which is transparent and has the elements of a storefront, including a bulkhead, a display window, and a transom.

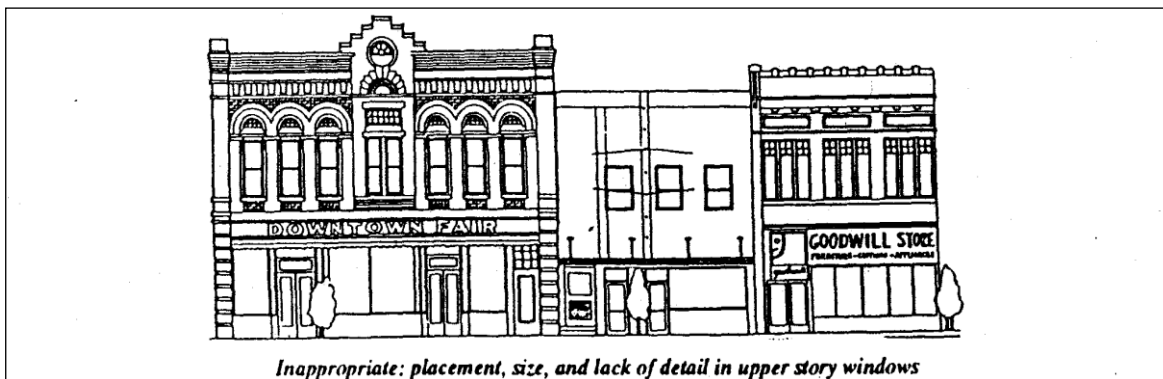


**MATERIALS:** New materials should relate to the historic materials in term of texture, scale, color, and composition. New buildings should utilize the same materials as those on existing historic structures. Masonry, particularly brick, is an appropriate material. Inappropriate materials are plywood, composition panel, plastic, imitation brick or stone, vinyl or synthetic siding, sheet metal, and stone veneer. Neither stucco nor concrete block impart the same scale or texture as brick.



**SIZE / SCALE:** New buildings should be in scale with existing buildings. This means that they should not be appreciably taller, shorter, wider, or narrower than the buildings adjacent to them. Multi-story buildings should have a vertical emphasis, meaning that they should be taller than they are wide. The scale of key elements and details should refer to nearby buildings.

**RHYTHM OF OPENINGS:** The design, scale, and placement of openings in buildings, which provide a rhythm along the street, should be continued. Walls should be divided into bays by windows. New construction should avoid creating long unrelieved expanses of wall along the street. Window openings should be vertically proportioned and placed symmetrically on the façade. They should be slightly recessed back from the surface. Windows should be defined by sills, lintels, or decorative surrounds.



**ORIENTATION / ALIGNMENT:** Orientation of new construction should match that of existing adjacent buildings. Facades should face the same direction as those of neighboring buildings. The similar heights of buildings are emphasized by the alignment of cornices and/or horizontal bands of second story windows. New construction should continue the visual continuity of horizontal elements.

**SETBACK / SPACING:** New buildings should conform to adjacent or surrounding buildings in terms of their setback and the spacing between buildings. Historically, blocks of commercial buildings directly fronting the sidewalk are attached to each other, sharing a party wall. New buildings should create a continuously walled complex that holds the line of the street. Generally, avoid buildings designed as free-standing objects.

**STYLE:** The design of new buildings should complement existing historical architecture rather than attempt to imitate it. The new construction should be distinguished from the old so that the evolution of the Main Street district can be visually read. New designs should creatively draw on the important characteristics of existing buildings.

**LANDSCAPE:** Site planning should respect the precedents set by other buildings in the block. In areas where many trees form a bower across the streets, new plantings should be planned to achieve a similar effect. For walls, fences, and paving, use materials consistently found in the district. (refer to Design Guideline #22)

### **RELOCATION - #29**

**Buildings should be retained on their original sites.**

**REMOVAL:** Moving a contributing building out of the district or to another site within the district is discouraged. Relocation should be considered only as an alternative to demolition.

**RE-SITING:** To decide the appropriateness of moving a building into the district or to another site within the district, the guidelines defining new construction should be applied. A building should be moved into a setting similar to its original site.

### **ADDITIONS - #30**

**Additions to commercial buildings should be secondary and should not overpower the original building.**

**LOCATION:** Additions should be located so that the original building commands the most attention. Additions should be added to the rear or side of the building. Additions should not be visible from the curb of the sidewalk in front of the primary façade. If visible from a distance further than the sidewalk curb, the addition should not overpower the height or scale of the historic building, and should remain subtle in appearance. Rooftop additions are not recommended but may be appropriate if they are subordinate in size and scale to the historic rooftop, are located so as to not be readily visible from principal street vantages, are compatible in design with the historic building and meet all other requirements of this section.

**MATERIALS:** Materials should either match or compliment those of historic buildings.

**STYLE:** An addition should not be an identical copy of the historic structure. It should refer to the original design but not duplicate it.

**REVERSIBILITY:** Additions should be built so that, if removed at a later date, there would be as little damage to the original structure as possible.

**SIZE / SCALE:** Additions should be distinguishable from the historic building; they should be smaller and simpler in design.

**ELEMENTS:** Rooftop elements such as decks and guardrails/safety rails should be located in such a way as to have minimal visual impact on the historic district, and generally, should not be visible at the pedestrian level.

### **DEMOLITION - #31**

#### **Historic buildings should not be demolished.**

**NEGLECT:** Property owners should not allow their buildings to deteriorate by failing to provide ordinary maintenance. This is considered demolition by neglect. When failure to maintain a property creates a public safety hazard, the city may condemn the property.

**ECONOMIC HARDSHIP:** If a request for demolition based on economic hardship is documented in a financial report detailing the costs of rehabilitation and evidencing that the existing building is incapable of producing a reasonable economic return on the investment, then the demolition may be approved.

**STRUCTURAL INSTABILITY:** If a request for demolition is based on structural instability or deterioration, a technical report, prepared by an architect or professional engineer, should be submitted. This should detail the nature and extent of the specific problems and provide cost estimates for their correction.

**CONSTRUCTION PLANS:** An application for demolition should be accompanied by a complete plan for the new development proposed for the site, a timetable, a budget for both the demolition and new construction, and evidence that adequate financing is available.

**DOCUMENTATION:** Prior to demolition, the building should be documented by measured drawings and photographs of the building's elevation and architectural features. Parts and materials should be salvaged and recycled if possible.

**PUBLIC SAFETY:** When in the interest of public safety, the removal of part of a building or complex may be required.

**NON-CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS:** Demolition may be appropriate when a building has lost its integrity of design or is not a contributing building within the historic district, and its removal would result in a more positive effect on the district. In such cases, new construction should relate better to the historic district than the existing building. The requirements listed above should be satisfied, if applicable.

