# VILLAGE OF PITTSFORD

## Historic and Architectural Design District

# Building Design Standards

**Prepared by Paul Zachman and Bob Corby**

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*Cover photos:*

Hicks & McCarthy
South Main Street
*Façade alterations*

Pittsford Farms Dairy
North Main Street
*New construction – retail store and production plant*

Hicks-Lanahan house
Locust Street
*Addition*

Newcomb Building
Schoen Place
*Remodel/addition*

Lathrop-Daniele House
Monroe Avenue
*Addition*

Saint Paul's Lutheran Church
Lincoln Avenue
*Addition*

Kenton residence
South Main Street
*New construction*

Pittsford Flour Mill
Schoen Place
*Remodel/additions*

Schoen Brothers Coal Sheds
Schoen Place
*Remodel/additions*

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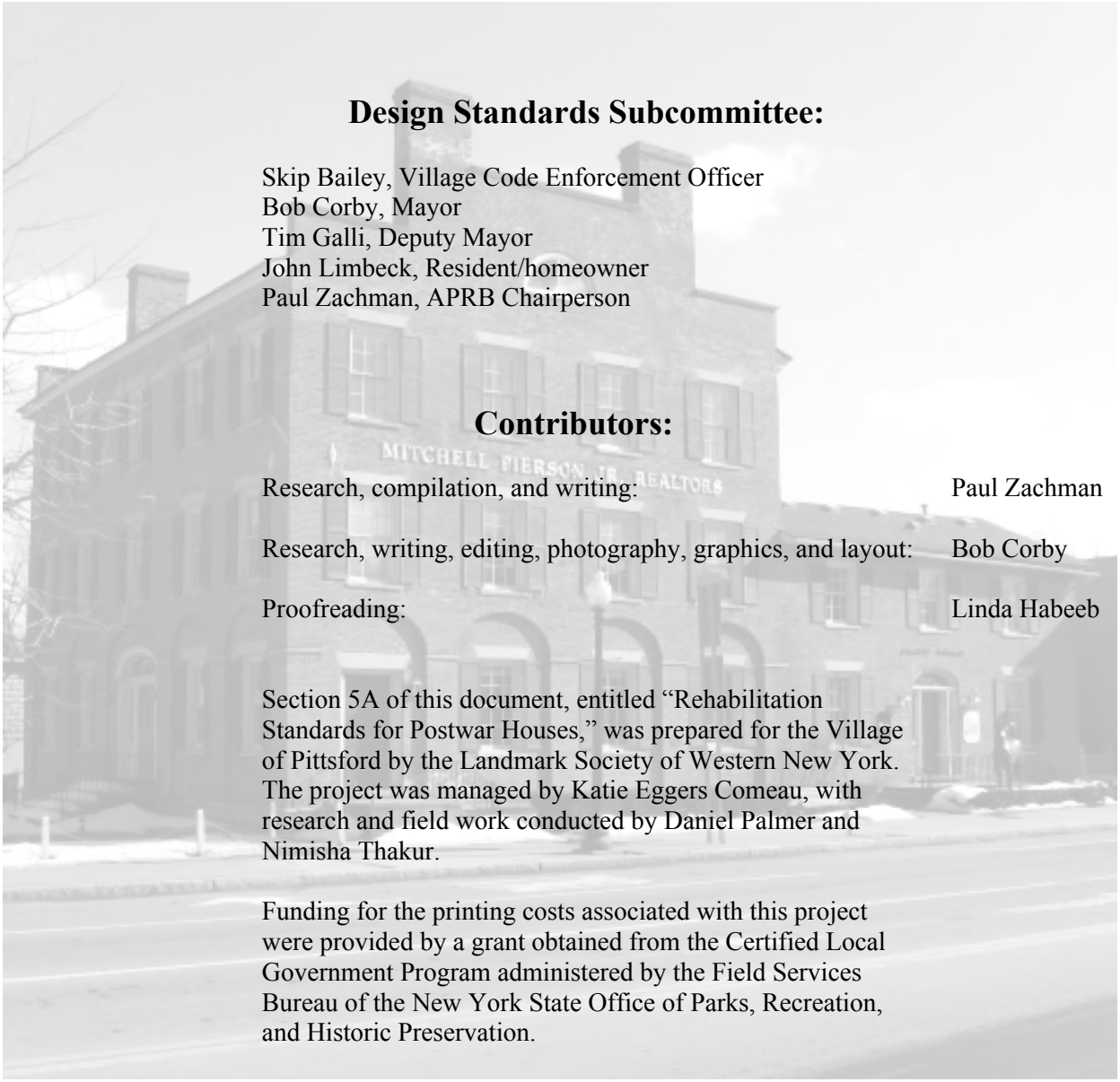


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SECTION 1

# Purpose of Design Standards

## Introduction

The historic village that residents enjoy and visitors admire today is not an accident, but rather the product of decades of continuous community stewardship. This effort is a partnership of residents, property owners, business people, and the Village's Architectural and Preservation Review Board (APRB).

The Village of Pittsford was one of the first communities in upstate New York to adopt an historic preservation ordinance. The village contains an unusually well-preserved collection of historic homes, stores, public buildings, churches, mills, and barns. Pittsford is unique in New York State in that its entire corporate limits are designated as an historic district

Most of the village's approximately 800 buildings are vernacular interpretations of popular nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century architectural styles. Unique resources include a concentration of Federal-era buildings, a mid nineteenth-century farm (still a working farm), a cobblestone school, and an Erie Canal warehouse district. The central section of the village and several individual properties are listed in the National and State Registers of Historic Places.

**Today, the Phoenix Building is one of the village's most visible and most important historic landmarks.**

During the 1960s, a number of the village's important historic buildings were threatened, and several were demolished. To prevent further erosion of the village's character, citizens lobbied Village officials to enact a

historic preservation ordinance. Adoption of the ordinance in 1971 halted demolitions.

The purpose of the APRB is to educate the community on the value of its historic architecture, to guide the course of further development to preserve our history, and improve the village's aesthetic character. The five appointed members of the APRB review applications once a month to consider the appropriateness of proposed changes to village properties. The Board also serves as a resource to find both practical and architecturally appropriate options for additions and alterations.

Preservation regulation has had many positive effects. Residents are proud of our community. The charm of the village's residential neighborhoods has attracted a tremendous amount of investment. Village homes have increased significantly in value over the last two decades. The charm of the Main Street business district has attracted specialty retail stores and has kept storefronts full in a challenging era of big-box chain stores located a short drive away. As well-tended villages have become rare, Pittsford has emerged as a regional destination for shopping, eating, and recreation. The village's historic port area is one of the busiest on the entire length of the Erie Canal. The Village of Pittsford is now recognized around the state for the success of its preservation program. The success of the village's preservation efforts has encouraged Village officials to tackle other issues such as traffic calming, streetscape improvements, and progressive planning policies. None of this would have occurred without the protection afforded by a preservation ordinance.

Today, preservation is an integral part of life in our village. Despite the village's past success, we cannot afford to become complacent as new threats emerge each year. Continued vigilance and balanced design review are the best ways we can preserve the village and its outstanding historic legacy for future generations.

**In 1957, before the Village's preservation ordinance was adopted, a gas station was constructed disfiguring the main facade of the Phoenix Building.**

**In 1965, Pittsford citizens organized to save the Little House, ca. 1819 Federal style Building, from demolition. The group founded Historic Pittsford, a community preservation advocacy organization that remains active today.**

**The Hotel Stephany was one of the last historic buildings to be demolished before the enactment of the village's preservation ordinance.**

## Why Design Standards?

The mission of the APRB is to manage change rather than prevent it. The APRB seeks to identify ways to adapt old buildings to changing needs while preserving their historic character. In recent years, significant change occurred along the Erie Canal, one of the village's outstanding treasures. Despite the construction of additions, new buildings, and even parking lots, the charm and character of the village's neighborhoods and commercial districts have been preserved.

**This house in a neighboring village has lost its historic character due to poorly designed additions and alterations.**

Each application submitted to the APRB is evaluated based on the property's unique set of design characteristics. APRB determinations of compatibility are based on what is appropriate to the style and period of the building, rather than what is subjectively viewed to be "ugly" or "pretty." When reviewing proposed changes to village buildings, the APRB refers to the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.* These philosophical principles define best practices for the treatment of historic buildings adapted for modern use. The *Standards* were developed by the National Park Service and are used by professionals and municipalities throughout the nation.

**Changing historic features such as the windows can harm the character of the building and neighborhood.**

Through its history, the APRB has evolved following the development of the field of historic preservation. The Board has faced a number of challenges, including the introduction of new building materials that can damage older buildings, and a decreasing understanding of traditional construction and building maintenance practices among contractors and architects.

The *Village of Pittsford Design Standards* is an easy-to-use reference intended to help applicants, APRB members, and the Village staff navigate the design review process and the administration of the village's Preservation Code.

**Carefully designed changes to this Village of Pittsford house do not compromise the character of the building or neighborhood.**

## Using the Standards

The *Village of Pittsford Design Standards* incorporates information and established design review principles found in the preservation guidelines of other communities across the state. Pittsford's standards precisely target the nuances of history, materials, architectural traditions, and local building practices. This document contains a chapter addressing the unique challenges of preservation and architectural review of the postwar homes and neighborhoods within the village. The *Design Standards* are meant to help identify acceptable solutions to some of the common changes proposed to historic properties.

**The *Standards* were prepared to help property owners in three ways:**

1. Provide owners with information about the historic style of their building/home and the architectural elements that comprise the style. The Standards contain a primer describing the village's most common architectural styles, including a list of typical characteristics and elements. Each style and each building has its own appropriate elements, and not every element is correct for every style or building.

2. Illustrate how a property can be altered while maintaining its historic character. The Village of Pittsford's Preservation Code is not intended to prevent alterations. The *Code* acknowledges that buildings often must change to remain usable. Alterations, including additions, are expected and allowed. The *Standards* address some of the more common changes and give guidance on how new work can be done without harming historic character.

3. Describe the information and detail that the APRB requires, so that owners will be prepared to describe their proposed changes to the Board. Each historic property is comprised of many small details. The village is comprised of many historic properties. The incremental loss of details on a building will eventually destroy the building's character. The spread of inappropriate details throughout a district eventually degrades the entire area. So, while it may seem that the Board can be overly particular about small issues, its attention to detail over many years is the primary reason that the Village's overall historic character remains intact.

**Most of the earliest homes constructed in the village were small, 1-1/2-story, simple structures like the South Street house pictured here. Although many of these homes have survived, most have been expanded. In many village homes, the original building is the rear wing.**

SECTION 2

# Village History & Architecture

**Pittsford on the Erie Canal by George Harvey (1837)**

## A Brief Village History

Before the arrival of Europeans, Pittsford was crossed by a primary regional trail of the Seneca People. In 1687, the Marquis de Denonville, leading a French army on a punitive expedition against the Seneca, camped in what is now the vicinity of State Street and South Street, at what then was known as the "Big Spring."

After the American Revolutionary War, President George Washington ordered a brutal military campaign against the Seneca, who had sided with the British in the War. After a series of treaties and land deals resolved conflicting claims to western New York, the Buffalo Creek Indian Treaty of 1788 opened western New York for settlement. The next summer, Simon and Israel Stone, from Washington County in eastern New York, built homes in Pittsford. Israel Stone's home still stands at 38 State Street (Duncan Studio) and is believed to be the oldest home in the village.

Pittsford is the oldest of Monroe County's ten incorporated villages. Israel Stone, the village's first settler, built the village's first structure, a log house, in 1789. Early Pittsford served as the governmental seat for the Town of Northfield, comprising most of what is now eastern Monroe County. The settlement contained the county's first school (1794), first library (1803), first permanent church (1807), first post office (1811), and the first newspaper (1815), and was also home to the first lawyer and doctor to practice in Monroe County.

**Israel Stone's house was remodeled in the Greek Revival style about 1840.**

In 1813, after the surrounding towns were organized, reducing Northfield's territory, the name Pittsford was adopted to honor the Vermont birthplace of Colonel Caleb Hopkins, a farmer, community leader, and hero from the War of 1812.

Pittsford prospered as a local trading center due to its location on the primary road between the mills at the Genesee Falls in Rochesterville and Canandaigua, the region's oldest and largest town. In 1816, Samuel Hildreth established the area's first stagecoach line, eventually putting Pittsford at the center of a large stage network covering much of western New York.

Pittsford grew rapidly after the opening of the Erie Canal in 1822 and was incorporated as a village on July 4, 1827. Local entrepreneurs made fortunes from both canal construction and other businesses that benefited from the canal trade and the inexpensive access it provided to eastern markets. Pittsford's fine collection of Federal period buildings are remaining evidence of the prosperity the community enjoyed during this period.

**The ca. 1826 Parker Block was constructed shortly after the opening of the Erie Canal.**

Because of its waterpower, Rochester soon eclipsed Pittsford as Monroe County's dominant economic and population center. Pittsford grew slowly through the rest of the nineteenth century. Boosted by the arrival of the Rochester & Auburn Railroad in 1834, Pittsford remained an important shipping center for local grains and produce until the mid twentieth century. Village industries included a flour mill, lumberyards, produce warehouses, a malt house, and several fruit dry houses. The present charm of the village's waterfront is due to the survival of historic canal warehouses, mills and silos, many of which have been renovated for boutiques and restaurants.

**Throughout much of its history agricultural processing and wholesaling businesses were an important part of Pittsford's economy.**

In the second half of the nineteenth century, wealthy Rochesterians began to establish country estates in and around the village. These estates were the first step in Pittsford's evolution from a farming community into a suburb.

Three of these large homes remain within the village. Pittsford Farms, the oldest of the three village estates, was established in the 1860's by Jarvis Lord, a canal contractor. The property has retained its historic appearance and remains today a 200-acre working farm. The farm's dairy continues to bottle milk in returnable glass containers. The Town of Pittsford has purchased the development rights to this farm and seven others to ensure their open space remains for generations to come.

**Arrival of the interurban trolley in 1902 put the village within easy commuting distance to Rochester.**

During the first quarter of the twentieth century, the construction of the Rochester & Eastern Trolley line and growing automobile ownership placed Pittsford within easy commuting distance of Rochester. The completion of a water system and sanitary sewers made the village attractive for residential development. After several decades of little growth, the village began to experience the development of new neighborhoods.

In the 1950s, the Town of Pittsford began to experience significant population growth from suburban residential development. By 1957, the town's population had climbed to 13,476 persons. In the early 1960s, the construction of Pittsford Plaza signaled the development of a major suburban commercial strip one mile west of the village.

As the area surrounding the village continued to grow, residents became increasingly concerned about the effects of this growth on the village. Observing increasing traffic, demolition of historic buildings, and commercial encroachment into historic neighborhoods, Pittsford residents launched a local, grass-roots preservation movement. Over the last fifty years, residents, business people, and government officials have worked cooperatively to preserve, enhance, and revitalize Pittsford Village. Among the community's accomplishments are the rehabilitation of numerous village buildings, the establishment of a village historic preservation district, the redevelopment of the village's Erie Canal waterfront for commercial and recreational use, and the preservation of farmland through the town's purchase of development rights.

Today, the Village of Pittsford is located at the center of a town of 28,000 people. The presence of four churches, three schools, the library, town and village offices, and businesses has kept the village functioning as the "downtown" for the surrounding community. Pittsford's business district remains vibrant despite competition from nearby suburban shopping centers and big box retailers. Despite its small size, the village contains over 250 individual services and businesses. Adjusting to the current retail environment has created some problems, including the conversion of retail space to offices, and the proliferation of gift boutiques and apparel stores at the expense of essential services. The village has revised the Main Street business district zoning to require retail or restaurant use of first floor storefronts and to encourage coffee shops and restaurants.

Pittsford Village contains a variety of housing types and a mix of age groups. Over eighty percent of the village's housing stock is over fifty years old. Despite its age, real estate in the village is sought after because of the architectural appeal of the houses, the presence of sidewalks and street trees, and the appeal of village living.

## Neighborhoods

Village neighborhoods vary in age and character. Understanding the elements that define neighborhood character is the first step in preserving it and ensuring that new construction harmonizes with the context. The historic character of neighborhoods is defined by buildings, as well as trees, fences, sidewalks, and landscaping.

**North Main Street looking south**

The village's first buildings were built along the **arterial streets**: North and South Main Streets, Monroe Avenue, State Street, South Street, Washington Road, and West Jefferson Road. New buildings, including many of the village's grandest homes, were constructed throughout the village's history. Today, the village's main streets are lined by an eclectic mix of homes of varied age, style and scale. Although lot size, setbacks, and house scales vary, most houses share the following common characteristics: they are two stories in height; they are located parallel to the street; they have balanced front facades incorporating a prominent front door facing the street; they have porches; they have a sidewalk connecting the front door to the public sidewalk; and they have free-standing garages located behind the house. Usually, lots are long and narrow, with the short façade of the house facing the street. Mature street trees located between the sidewalk and the curb define the character of most village streets.

**Washington Avenue looking south**

Village **side streets** include Church Street, Locust Street, Lincoln Avenue, Washington Avenue, Boughton Avenue, Wood Street, Jackson Park, Austin Park, Sutherland Street, Rand Place, Elm Street, Line Street, Grove Street, Elmbrook Drive, and Eastview Terrace. Beginning with Church Street, side streets were developed from the beginning of the nineteenth century until Eastview Terrace in the 1930s. In general, the side streets have the same characteristics as the main streets, but with smaller lots and more modest homes. Beginning around 1900, the north part of the village was home to many Italian families, while Boughton Avenue was known as an Irish neighborhood.

**Lincoln Avenue looking west**

**Stonegate Lane** was originally the entrance drive to Hyllgarth, a large ca. 1900 country estate. The property was subdivided in the 1930s, and home construction began. The large main house remains today facing Sutherland Street opposite the high school. The carriage house has been converted into a separate residence. Three homes built for the estate staff are located along Jefferson Road opposite Sutherland Street. Narrow Stonegate Lane is notable for its picturesque wooded setting, fine stone gates, and high quality, mid twentieth-century, Colonial Revival and Tudor Revival homes.

**West side of South Main Street business district**

The village's **Postwar streets** include Rand Place (south of Jefferson Road), East Jefferson Road (east of Eastview Terrace) Green Hill Lane, Heatherhurst Lane, Courtenay Circle, Village Grove, and Durham Way. After 1945, the suburban home building boom dramatically changed neighborhood design. Larger, wider lots, smaller homes, and attached garages became the norm. Homes were built with the long side of the house facing the street rather than the short side, as was common in older neighborhoods. Postwar neighborhoods often exhibit less variety in design, because the homes in a neighborhood were often built by a single builder and designer. To save money, curbs, sidewalks, and street trees were not installed. ***For more information on Postwar neighborhoods, refer to Section 5B.***

**Locust Street**

Centered on the Four Corners, Pittsford's **Central Business District** extends 1-1/2 blocks down South Main Street and State Street. The oldest buildings date from the second decade of the nineteenth century. Buildings are set close to the sidewalk and close together. Storefronts and ample glass at the street façade connect interior activity with the street and create a pedestrian oriented atmosphere. This pattern of construction continued until the 1950s, when demolition and parking lots created holes in the fabric of the business area. At the time, everything was designed around the movement and storage of cars. After residents realized that their neighborhoods were at risk due to commercial creep from the business district, the Village Planning Board adopted a policy to prevent further expansion of the central business

**Entrance to Stonegate Lane**

district into adjacent neighborhoods. The policy has continued until the present day. As a result, the village's walkable, compact business district exists in harmony adjacent to residential neighborhoods.

Current village zoning prohibits drive-through windows, vacant lots, and parking lots abutting the sidewalk. Filling in the business district's few remaining vacant lots and gaps is part of the Village's Comprehensive Plan.

**Schoen Place** (pronounced "shane") began in the mid nineteenth century as a private dirt lane serving a lumberyard and the flour mill. The street was originally called "Schoen's Alley" for the family that operated a produce and coal business at the west end of the street. In 1911, the widening of the Erie Canal forced the relocation of Sam Hutchinson's produce business and the Wadhams and Whitlock Lumberyard to the north side of the canal, forming the building arrangements that exist today. The skewed angles of some buildings were generated by rail sidings that no longer remain. Businesses in the area continued to expand through most of the twentieth century, wholesaling produce, flour, oats, wheat, beans, coal, and oil. In the early 1970s, Schoen Place began its transformation into the specialty retail district that exists today.

**Schoen Place looking east**

**Monroe Avenue looking west**

**Courtenay Circle looking west**

**Elm Street**

## Architectural Styles

Historic American architectural styles vary greatly by region. The brief style discussion below addresses only the characteristics of vernacular examples of each that exist within the village. More sophisticated, architect-designed houses and other buildings will vary from the typical elements described below. An excellent reference, containing a comprehensive description of each style referred, is *A Field Guide to American Houses* by Virginia and Lee McAlester.

**The cobblestone Reynolds-Rand house was constructed in 1835 in the Greek Revival style. The second floor, added about 1915, reflects the Craftsman style.**

Many buildings incorporate elements of different periods and different styles. These changes occurred as buildings were adapted and enlarged, and reflect the history of the building, its inhabitants, and the village. In most cases, changes that are over fifty years old have historic significance and should be preserved.

In the village, most early Federal buildings have rear wings that were added about 1840, when woodstoves became available and kitchens were moved from the cellar up to the first floor. In the mid nineteenth century, many early buildings were updated with the addition of Italianate broad overhanging eaves and bracketed porches. After 1900, nineteenth-century buildings were updated with Colonial Revival details and the application of stucco.

**This Federal house has a ca. 1845 Greek Revival side wing and an Italianate porch and extended eaves dating from about 1870.**

Many historic village buildings contain a mix of several styles or no discernable style at all. These buildings are often referred to as "vernacular" structures or are identified by their shape and form. These buildings reflect the period in which they were built through their design, materials, and details. Vernacular buildings make up much of the village and are an important component of its character. In fact, one of the key characteristics that distinguishes Pittsford from other villages today is the fact that most of the village's modest vernacular buildings have survived with their charm and character intact.

**The porch on this ca. 1860 gable-and-wing vernacular house was added in 1887 when the entire house was moved.**

## Federal
1800-1835

Post Revolutionary War Federal architecture was inspired by the British Adam style that incorporated delicate decorative motifs from ancient Roman architecture. Thin cornices and moldings, slender columns, and the use of swags and elliptical shapes were common. In the Village of Pittsford, a brickyard south of the village provided the clay for a number of Federal-style buildings. After the supply of clay was exhausted, brick construction remained rare until the end of the nineteenth century. Most remaining Federal-style buildings in Pittsford have been altered by later additions and alterations. Many of the changes possess historic and architectural significance and contribute to the value of these buildings.

**Ca. 1826 Sylvanus Lathrop House**

**Ca. 1812 Augustus Elliot House**

- **Form**: One and one half or two-story front or side-gable block, usually symmetrical. Three-bay façade with side entrance is most common, although more elaborate buildings had a five-bay center entrance format. Federal buildings are generally symmetrical; the most common version of the form is a three-bay, two-story, side-entrance house. Most buildings have newer rear wings, often added when the kitchen was moved from the cellar to the ground floor.

- **Cladding**: Wood clapboard or brick.

- **Roof**: Moderate pitch, cornice returns, full pediment gable, or stepped gable. On most buildings, original eaves were extended in the mid nineteenth century.

- **Porch**: Usually a single bay porch at the entrance, supported by slender Tuscan columns.

**Figure 1Ca.1815 Potter-Steele House with ca. 1835 ballroom wing and porches**

- **Windows**: Double-hung with 12-over-12 sash. In most cases, the original sash has been replaced with 6-over-6 sash. Windows are uniform size and regularly spaced.

- **Door**: Six-panel doors, often with leaded sidelights and transom lights. Simpler homes may have a projecting transom cornice over the door.

- **Details**: Elliptical and semi-elliptical fanlights and windows are distinctive features of the style. Many homes have four chimneys or one central chimney. The recessed elliptical-arch arcade found on the Phoenix Building is another distinctive element of the style.

**Ca. 1830 Gillam House**

## Greek Revival

1835-1855

The Greek Revival style was promoted as an architectural style that better represented the democratic ideals of the new American Republic. The early nineteenth-century struggle of Greece against the domination of the Ottoman Empire and contemporary archaeological discoveries helped popularize the style. American Greek Revival was inspired by ancient Greek temples. Heavy, massive cornices and stout columns distinguish Greek Revival details from their similar Federal siblings. In the Village of Pittsford, most Greek Revival buildings are wood and were painted white or a light stone color.

- **Form:** One-and one half or two-story front gable block, usually symmetrical. In Pittsford, a three-bay façade with side entrance is most common, although more elaborate buildings had a five-bay center entrance format. Greek Revival buildings are generally symmetrical; the most common version of the form is a three-bay, two-story, side-entrance house.

**Ca 1845 Hopson/Parker House**

**Ca.1840 cobblestone District No. 1 School**

- **Cladding:** Wood clapboard, flush board, or cobblestone.
- **Roof:** Moderate pitch, cornice returns, or full pediment gable.
- **Porch:** Usually a single-bay porch at the entrance, supported by slender Tuscan columns.
- **Windows:** Double-hung with 6-over-6 sash. Windows are of uniform size and regularly spaced.
- **Door:** One or two-panel doors, often with leaded sidelights and transom lights. Doors are often framed by pilasters and wide cornices.
- **Details:** Porches are more common than on Federal houses. Square columns and piers with abstracted Doric capitals. Some buildings have wide corner pilasters.

**Ca. 1840 Parker House**

**1-1/2-story Greek Revival house**

## Gothic Revival

1845-1865

In the mid nineteenth century, architectural theorists, such as Andrew Jackson Downing, promoted a new design philosophy in America. Rejecting the older, formal, classically inspired styles, they introduced a series of exotic, romantic styles thought to be more compatible with the American rural landscape. Gothic Revival was inspired by European stone Gothic buildings and was the first popular American Romantic Period style. In the United States, Gothic elements, such as pointed arches, steep gables, and label moldings, were translated into American wood-frame construction. The

**Ca. 1854 Dr. Hartwell Carver House**

style was aided by the invention of the scroll saw and mass-produced wood moldings. In most cases, American "Carpenter Gothic" buildings were relatively unadorned, retaining only the basic elements of pointed-arch windows and steep gables.

- **Form:** One-and-one half or two-story front gable or side gable block with a prominent cross gable. Gothic Revival buildings are usually symmetrical.

- **Cladding:** Wood clapboard, or board-and-batten.
- **Roof:** Steep pitch, large overhangs often embellished with raking bargeboards and finials.

- **Porch:** Chamfered or turned posts with brackets.

- **Windows:** Elongated, double-hung, with 6-over-6 sash. Windows are of uniform size and regularly spaced, with tall, narrow proportions. Pointed-arch, circular, and trefoil windows may occur at gables. Shutters are common.

**Ca. 1860 Reeves House exhibits later form of style with machine-produced ornament**

**Gothic Revival cast iron fence at Pittsford Farms**

**Ca. 1867 Christ Church designed by A. J. Warner**

## Italianate

1855-1880

The Italianate style was based on the farmhouses found in the Tuscan countryside of northern Italy. The style was very popular in western New York. In the village, Italianate porches and brackets were often added to older houses.

- **Form:** Two-story, early examples incorporate two-story, front-gable, three-bay façade with side entrance. Later examples incorporate a cross-plan with gables projecting in four directions and a porch found on the side.
- **Cladding:** Wood clapboard, flush board sometimes found below a porch.
- **Roof:** Moderate pitch, broad, overhanging eaves, often embellished with brackets.
- **Porch:** Single-bay entrance porches, full façade, and wraparound porches are common. Square, chamfered columns, with capitals and brackets.
- **Windows:** Double-hung, with six-over-six, two-over-two, or one-over-one sash. Windows are tall and narrow and regularly spaced. First-floor, floor-to-ceiling windows, opening to a porch are a common feature. The tops of windows often have elaborate molded hoods.
- **Door:** Often tall, narrow, double-entrance doors with 3/4-height glass lights.
- **Details:** Paired, half-round windows at the gable, bay windows, circular windows, and prominent chimneys.

**The Hildreth-Lord-Hawley-Zornow house was built in 1814 but remodeled to its present appearance in 1868.**

**Ca. 1858 Bonhurst house**

**Ca 1870 modest gable-and-wing Italianate**

**Ca 1883 Gomph-Utz House**

**Ca. 1870 Wadhams Carriage Barn**

**Italianate bracketed canopy**

**Ca. 1863 First Presbyterian Church**

**Ca. 1875 cross-plan Italianate house**

**Ca. 1870 Schoen House**

## Queen Anne

1880-1905

Inspired by the medieval manor houses of England, the American version of the style encompassed a great variety of features, including complex asymmetrical forms, bay windows, and porches featuring turned posts and spindles.

- **Form**: Two-story, cross-plan with projecting gables or varied asymmetrical form, sometimes incorporating a combination of gables and hips.
- **Cladding:** Wood clapboard, wood shingles, brick, and slate.
- **Roof:** Steep pitch, broad overhanging eaves, complex form.
- **Porch:** Wraparound porches with turned posts and spindles and sometimes brackets. Spindle frieze common.
- **Windows:** Double-hung, with six-over-one, or one-over-one sash. Windows are tall and narrow or wide and varied in their spacing and size. Molded window hoods are common.
- **Door:** Double or single doors, usually with glass lights.
- **Details:** Special surface detailing in the gable, belt courses, use of stained shingles in combination with clapboard. Two-story bays filling the entire area below a gable are another common feature.
- **Gomph Houses:** The village has a group of similar wood-frame Queen Anne houses that are probably derived from the same pattern book and executed by a single builder. These homes share distinctive gable detailing in which clapboard has been cut in a variety of patterns.

**Ca. 1887 Agate-Zornow house designed by Rochester architect Charles Crandall**

**The ca. 1887 Vought-Allen House is the most elaborate of Pittsford's "Gomph" Queen Anne style houses.**

**Ca. 1890 Sutherland-Richbein house, a cross-plan Queen Anne**

**Detail of Sutherland-Richbein house showing denticulate moldings, spindle frieze, brackets and pedimented porch entrance.**

**Ca. 1890 Town Hall features slate cladding in the gable and on the turrets, Medina sandstone trim, and highly ornamental brick work.**

**Ca. 1900 Killip/Davis House features shingle cladding and a recessed half-round barrel vault at the gable**

**The ca. 1885 Geare/Schoen/Richardson House is another example of Pittsford's "Gomph" houses**

**This ca. 1905 Queen Anne house illustrates the simpler taste in domestic design which prevailed after 1900.**

## Colonial Revival

1895-1945

The Colonial Revival style was introduced in the 1890s as an architectural style that recalled the nation's architectural beginnings. Early examples freely applied Colonial Revival details to rambling, asymmetrical Queen Anne homes. In the twentieth century, the style became more academically correct, so later homes are more box like and symmetrical Colonial Revival remained popular for a long period, and its elements were often used on Foursquare, Craftsman, and Tudor Revival homes.

- **Form:** Two-story, front-gable or side-gable block, usually symmetrical. A three-bay façade with center entrance is the most common design, although more elaborate buildings had a five-bay center entrance format.
- **Cladding:** Wood clapboard, wood shingles, stucco, and brick.
- **Roof:** Moderate pitch, usually with cornice returns; variations of the style incorporate gambrel and hip roofs. Dormers are common.
- **Porch:** Usually a single-bay porch at the entrance, supported by slender Tuscan columns. Wide room-like side porches are common.
- **Windows:** Double-hung, with six-over-six sash or six-over-one sash are most common. Windows are of uniform size and regularly spaced. Operating hinged shutters are common.
- **Door:** Six panel doors, sometimes with sidelights.
- **Details:** Often incorporates Georgian-inspired details, such as a Palladian and Bull's-eye windows. Three-sided bay windows are common.

**1905 Hawley house, with its formal symmetrical design, is an early example of the Georgian Revival variation of the Colonial Revival style.**

**The ca 1820 Vought house was remodeled in the Colonial Revival style in 1925.**

**The Federal style Isaac Sutherland House was remodeled in the Colonial Revival style about 1920.**

**The present appearance of Village Hall is the result of a 1937 remodeling of an older structure.**

**This ca. 1905 Colonial Revival home is one of a group of village buildings constructed of rock-face, site manufactured concrete block.**

**Ca. 1940 Garrison Colonial**

**Ca. 1901 gambrel roof Colonial Revival**

**Ca. 1925 Dutch Colonial**

**Ca. 1935 center-entrance Colonial Revival**

## Foursquare

1905-1920

After 1900, the pendulum of American taste favored simpler forms with less ornamentation. Architectural theorists of the time promoted improvements in home efficiency and construction. The Foursquare grew out of this moment. Simple in design and detail, the Foursquare house was intended to provide a comfortable, functional, moderately priced home for the typical family. The name is derived from the square plan incorporating four rooms on each floor.

**Ca. 1915 hip-roof Foursquare**

- **Form:** Two-story square block.
- **Cladding:** Wood clapboard, wood shingles, stucco, brick, or rock-face concrete block.
- **Roof:** Forty-five degree slope front gable or hip roof usually with dormers on each side.
- **Porch**: Usually a two-bay porch across the front façade. Three-quarter-height Tuscan columns set on brick or concrete block piers or square battered posts are common.
- **Windows:** Double-hung, with one-over-one sash. Windows are wide, of uniform size, and regularly spaced. Bays are common.
- **Door:** Usually has glass light
- **Details:** Often a belt course occurs at the second floor and attic levels. Contrasting cladding materials may distinguish second and first-floor levels.

**Ca. 1905 Foursquare with cornice return and projecting side wing**

**Ca.1910 Four-square with Craftsman porch**

## Craftsman

1900-1925

The Craftsman style rejected machine made ornament and decorative excess. The style was closely associated with Gustav Stickley, Ron Hubbard, Frank Lloyd Wright, and the Greene brothers, and combined Colonial Revival, European, and Japanese influences to produce a simple rustic look. Craftsman homes often incorporate stucco, heavy supporting piers, and broad overhangs with exposed rafter tails.

- **Form:** One-and-one-half or two-story front gable or side gable block. Hip roofs and jerkin head gables are also common. Porches are often covered by an extension of the main roof.
- **Cladding:** Wood clapboard, wood shingles, stucco, and brick.
- **Roof:** Moderate pitch, wide overhangs with exposed rafter tails. Knee braces often beneath raking eaves. Use of gabled and shed dormers.
- **Porch:** Gabled entrance canopies and porches are common. Usually supported by stout round, square, or battered posts set on masonry piers. Side sun porches are common.
- **Windows:** Double-hung, with six-over-six or six-over-one sash or casements. Windows vary in size and spacing. Paired, grouped windows and bays are typical.
- **Door:** Heavy, naturally finished doors are common.
- **Bungalow:** A common 1-1/2-story variation of the Craftsman style, often incorporating a low-slung roof extending over a full façade porch.

**Ca 1915 Craftsman house with main gable roof extended to cover porch. Note massive Tuscan porch columns.**

**Ca. 1920 Craftsman house featuring exposed rafter tails, stained wood shingle cladding, and knee brace supports**

**The ca. 1910 Adolph Lomb House is the largest and most sophisticated example of the Craftsman style.**

**Ca. 1910 brick Bungalow with massive brick piers supporting the porch**

**Ca. 1925 stucco front-gable Bungalow**

**Ca. 1915 jerkin head Craftsman house**

**This ca. 1920 side-gable stucco Craftsman House is the result of a remodeling of a mid nineteenth-century cobblestone structure.**

**Ca. 1927 Foursquare with Craftsman detailing**

**Ca. 1925 side-gable Bungalow**

## Tudor Revival

1900-1945

One of a wave of eclectic revival styles that remained popular through the first part of the twentieth century. Tudor Revival homes were inspired by both English cottages and manor houses.

- **Form:** One-and-one-half or two-story and usually asymmetrical.
- **Cladding:** Stucco, stone, brick, or wood shingles. A mixture of cladding materials is common.
- **Roof:** Steep pitch, minimal overhangs, sometimes clad with slate. Complex roof forms, often with multiple gables and shed dormers.
- **Porch:** Small entrance porch and usually a side porch supported by simple square posts with timber brackets.
- **Windows:** Usually multi-pane casement windows. Paired, grouped windows and bays are typical.
- **Door:** Heavy, naturally finished plank doors are common.

**Ca. 1935 stone/stucco Tudor Revival house**

**Ca. 1927 Tudor revival similar to house above but with wood shingle cladding**

**Ca. 1935 "cottage"**

**Ca. 1940 "manor house"**

SECTION 3

# Historic Design Principles

## General Principles of Historic Design

Architectural design guidelines were not needed 100 years ago. Nineteenth and early twentieth-century builders and architects were trained in a wide variety of styles and materials. They understood basic proportions and design rules that fostered harmony with their surroundings and a sense of historic continuity. During the twentieth century, the rise of Modern architecture encouraged architects to express individuality and reject past traditions. A changing economy, speculative building, and manufactured building components led to a decline in craftsmanship and less emphasis on aesthetics.

**The Village of Pittsford is a dense cluster of buildings constructed during the last 200 years. Historic village buildings were constructed with a high level of craftsmanship and durable materials. A balance between architectural variety, consistency in proportion and other basic design principles has produced the village's pleasant historic character and visual harmony.**

Buildings constructed before 1945 in Pittsford share design principles that give the village its pleasing and harmonious appearance. The *Design Standards* are intended to promote the understanding of these general design principles.

**Scale** is the relative or apparent size of a building or architectural element in relationship to the nearby buildings and its surroundings. The dimensions of a building define its scale. Individual elements, including doors, windows, porches, wings, and roof elements, all influence a building's apparent scale. Scale is one of the most important features determining whether a building is compatible with its setting. A stark contrast of scale between new and existing buildings disrupts the visual harmony of the street and neighborhood.

**Proportion** is the relationship of one element of a building to a connected architectural feature. Usually, proportion refers to a width-to-height ratio of wall planes or smaller elements. Careful attention to proportion is a uniform and harmonious arrangement of architectural elements. Proportion is also an essential element of a pleasing streetscape.

**Rhythm** is the regular recurrence of elements, sometimes alternating with opposite or different elements. On a building facade, windows and door openings are the most obvious indicators of rhythm. Buildings spaced equally apart along a street also establish a rhythm and are complemented by fencing, landscape elements, and the sidewalk. Rhythm is not synonymous with monotony; there is often great visual interest in a rhythmic streetscape.

**Location and Orientation:** Village buildings face the street and visually relate to each other. They do not stand at an arbitrary angle to obtain a better view or to be invisible from the street. The village's residential and commercial neighborhoods are characterized by regular setbacks and spacing that creates a sense of visual unity. There are a few deviations that add to the eclectic nature and may define a certain period of development.

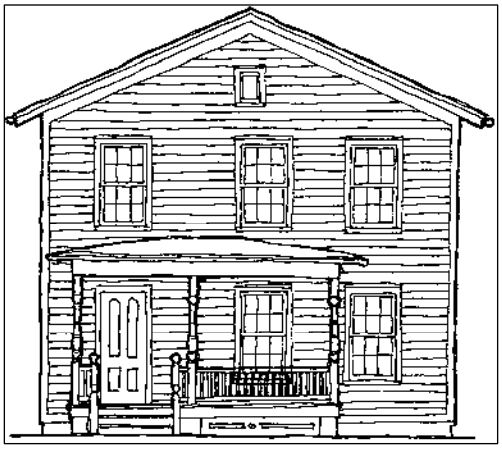
**As this aerial view shows, buildings in the village are oriented with their main facade facing the street.**

**Balance:** Some periods and styles of architecture, such as the Federal style, have balance and symmetry as defining characteristics. Even an asymmetrical house or building may obtain balance through the disposition of wings, porches, and landscape elements.

**Massing** defines the shape of a structure, which, in turn, suggests the volume of the building's interior. Historic architecture in the village varies in massing from the simple, rectangular forms of early eighteenth century houses to the complex and varied massing of Queen Anne style residences. Alterations or additions to historic houses historically followed the principle of additive massing: adding smaller ells and wings at the rear or sides, so as not to overwhelm the original part of the house. Additive massing retains the basic scale of the building and its relationship to other buildings on the street.

**Materials:** Historic buildings in the Village of Pittsford were constructed of stone, brick, and wood. Painted wood, particularly for siding and trim, is the most common building material in the village. Instead of creating a monotonous, uniform appearance, however, the use of painted and stained wood siding and trim creates great visual variety. Glass and brick elements play a supporting role in the design of many historic buildings. The character of the commercial sections of the village is enhanced by the use of both brick and frame construction.

## Compatible Versus Incompatible Treatment of Historic Buildings



**Compatible:**
**Maintain and preserve existing façade elements, including trim, window rhythm, details, and architectural features.**

**Incompatible:**
**Altering window size, location, or style**
**Enclosing an open porch**
**Removing architectural details**

## New Construction

New buildings (including outbuildings) in an historic district should complement the existing historic buildings and the established character of the surrounding neighborhood. Poorly designed buildings or additions can result in the loss of visual integrity of the Historic and Architectural Design District. The Village's Preservation Ordinance, and the associated design review process, is intended to preserve the architectural integrity and visual harmony of the village's historic district. Hundreds of cities, towns, and villages across the nation have a similar design review process.

Architectural review in an historic district can be challenging. Boards are criticized for stifling modern architectural design, or, conversely, of allowing "anything goes" and being too lenient. Experience has shown that the most effective architectural design standards are those that guide the design process, rather than regulate it. The National Trust for Historic Preservation, in its booklet, *Reviewing New Construction Projects in Historic Districts*, states that:

> Design guidelines for an historic area should not dictate certain styles for new buildings ... Most districts exhibit an evolution of architectural styles and cultural trends, including the 20th Century. Therefore, guidelines that emphasize context and design elements, rather than styles, allow the broadest and most flexible interpretation for new construction.

Pittsford Village contains a variety of architectural styles representing many different historic periods. (Refer to Section 2 for a discussion of these styles). Rather than mandating the copying of one or two "preferred" styles, the Architectural and Preservation Review Board's design review process encourages construction that is identifiable as contemporary, but does not disrupt the continuity and aesthetic value of the historic district.

**Steps to Consider Before You Begin:** Property owners, builders, and architects need to consider a number of design factors before they initiate plans for new construction or make substantial additions to an historic building in the Village of Pittsford:

1. The most important phase of designing new construction or additions in the village begins long before the architect starts to draw the plan. The property owner and architect should take a long, objective look at both the subject property and its surroundings, and consider the following:
    - What is the history of the neighborhood and what physical features define its character?
    - Are different periods of development represented on the property or in the neighborhood?
    - Was the neighborhood historically commercial or residential?
    - Is it located along the canal, or in a downtown setting?
    - What are the periods and styles represented?

- Is the area architecturally homogenous or diverse?

2. Define the characteristic elements of both the general neighborhood and the immediate environs. Look for such identifying features as building height, scale, setback, site coverage, orientation, spacing between buildings, building rhythm along the street, and such site elements as walls, walks, trees, and fences.

**Design Considerations for New Construction -** Architects and builders should be aware of a few basic principles and design features when designing new construction in the Village. The APRB considers the following criteria when reviewing new construction:

**Height:** New construction should not tower over nearby existing buildings. An exception may be granted for a small architectural feature, such as a turret, tower, or weathervane. The mass and design of such feature should not alter the historic scale of the area. Likewise, a horizontal, ground-hugging building is not appropriate in an area characterized by two- and three-story buildings.

**Scale:** Buildings throughout the village have a "human scale," where door and window openings, story heights, and the dimensions of details are all in proportion to the human body. The scale of new buildings and their features should be in harmony with the scale of the surrounding historic buildings and the neighborhood.

**Width:** Building width, and the width between buildings, are important elements of neighborhood character. Where there is a variety of building widths and spaces between buildings, new construction should stay within this range, rather than establish new limits.

**Orientation:** Most buildings in the village are oriented with the front door and main façade facing the public street. This is also true of houses along the canal. New buildings should incorporate a main door facing the street and connected with a walk to the public sidewalk.

**Setback:** Buildings in the older sections of the village have smaller front and side setbacks than the Postwar village neighborhoods. Most historic commercial buildings have little or no side and front setbacks. Setbacks for new construction should match the character of the surrounding neighborhood.

**Proportion and Rhythm of Openings:** Door and window openings in the village's distinct neighborhoods often share similar size, proportions, spacing, shapes, and solid-to-void ratio. Openings in new construction should be compatible with those of nearby existing buildings. Glass ribbon windows, picture windows, or prominent pseudo-Palladian windows are incompatible with most areas of the village. Commercial storefronts often are characterized by large display windows.

**Neighborhood Rhythms:** Repeated elements on neighboring buildings are common throughout the village. These include distinct roof eaves detailing, facades crowned with prominent cornices in the South Main business district, porches, or the use of shingle or clapboard siding. New construction should reflect strong neighborhood design characteristics.

**Roof Form:** Roof form, roof pitch, and eave detailing of new construction should relate to what is common in the surrounding neighborhood.

**Massing:** Building mass may vary from the simple, gable-roofed, rectangular forms of Federal style architecture, to the complex massing of Queen Anne and Gothic Revival style houses. New construction should follow the general massing of surrounding buildings. In an area where buildings of varying mass are present, a new variant should not be introduced.

**Horizontal Versus Vertical:** A block consisting of narrow, two- and three-story buildings is primarily vertical, and the architectural elements of a new building should follow the vertical emphasis. Postwar neighborhoods, containing modest Ranch and Cape homes with attached garages, have a more horizontal appearance. New construction should respect the predominant vertical, horizontal, or balanced appearance of its surroundings.

**Materials:** Not all buildings in the village are covered with wood clapboard. Public and commercial buildings, as well as many large residences in the village, have been constructed of brick, stucco, or, more rarely, stone. Typically, vinyl, aluminum, concrete, metal, and stucco applied over foam (EIFS) are not appropriate building materials for new construction in the historic areas of the village. There are a few exceptions. A few historic buildings are built of concrete and a few of the Schoen Place barns were historically sided with metal.

**Landscape Treatment –** Grass lawn is the predominant groundcover in the village. Plantings, whether formal or naturalistic, should complement those of surrounding residences. The construction of extensive paved areas, such as patios, terraces, parking, and multi-car driveways, in place of front lawns, is prohibited by zoning in most districts and should be avoided. Paved areas in front yards should be limited to walks and well-scaled driveways. Paving materials should be in character with surrounding residential properties in the neighborhood.

**Outbuildings -** The construction of outbuildings, such as pool houses, garages, sheds, barns, or other structures, should be compatible with existing buildings on the property. In addition to the design features listed above, new outbuildings generally should adhere to the principle that they are secondary structures and should never overwhelm the main building, or call overt attention to themselves. New outbuildings should be located behind the main building or in a location that does not disrupt historic views or the setting of existing historic buildings.

# Compatible New Construction

**A former non-historic gas station was redesigned and enlarged in a simple style compatible with the neighboring utilitarian mills and barns in the Schoen Place waterfront district.**

**This dairy store and plant was designed to harmonize with the National Register listed farm on which it is located. The building's form. massing, roof slope, window style, and cupola relate to other structures on the property. The dairy's massing visually conceals the size of the modern plant and ensures the dairy does not visually compete with the historic main house. The building location was carefully selected to preserve historic views and landscape features and to conceal loading docks and other service elements.**

**This large house employs setbacks, materials, and window proportions similar to neighboring older homes. The garage is discreetly tucked behind the house.**

**This bank shows how contemporary design can be blended with thoughtful consideration of scale, orientation, proportions and materials to produce a compatible building.**

## Additions

Before designing an addition to an existing historic building, it is necessary to identify and understand the characteristic elements of the building and the neighborhood.

- How old is the building? What changes have already occurred and when?
- What are the building materials, roof forms, textures, type of ornament, and facade elements?
- What is the style of windows, doors, and porches?

The exact replication of historic styles and architectural elements is not required, but additions should relate to the general scale, proportion, rhythm, balance, massing, and materials of the building to which it is attached and the property's surroundings. An addition should not be obtrusive or visually disruptive.

**Design Considerations for Additions**

- Large visible additions to existing historic buildings should be compatible with the character of the existing building, and should reflect the era in which it was built; it should not re-create the past, or give a mistaken impression of false antiquity. Additions should not be so large that they change the orientation, general massing, or scale of the original building.
- Locate additions to historic buildings as inconspicuously as possible, usually to the rear or least public side of a building.
- Do not obscure or destroy characteristic features of historic structures when making additions; the loss of any historic material should be minimal.
- Whenever possible, design and construct additions so that basic form and character of the historic building can remain intact if the addition is removed in the future.
- Construct the addition in a manner that is compatible with surrounding historic buildings in size, scale, materials, mass, and roof forms.
- Do not introduce a new architectural style, or too closely mimic the style of the existing building. Additions should be simply and cleanly designed in a compatible, but not imitative, style.
- Adhere to the principle of additive massing, where an addition is secondary to the main mass of the building, rather than a predominant element. Historic buildings often have smaller additions at the rear of buildings, or at the sides. Several small additions can provide as much livable space as one large addition.

# Compatible Additions

**The new fellowship hall of Saint Paul's Lutheran Church matches materials and reinterprets architectural motifs found on the existing building.**

**The Saint Paul's addition is set back from the two historic buildings it connects so it does not interrupt the rhythm of the street.**

**The small addition at the east end of the Pittsford Flour Mill houses mechanical equipment and a new entrance. The addition does not obscure any significant architectural features and is consistent with design of the historic building. It is small in relation to the original building. The entrance canopy is the reconstruction of a historic canopy whose appearance was documented by historic photographs.**

**The wing was added to this Gothic Revival church over 100 years after the original building was built. By matching the exterior material (Medina sandstone) and architectural features, the wing harmonizes with the historic church. An articulated connection with lowered roof distinguishes the addition from the original building.**

## Compatible Additions

**This Foursquare home has been enlarged with a compatible rear wing. A trim board identifies the limit of the original house.**

**This mid nineteenth-century home has a new side wing. The wing matches the window size and other details of the original house. The main block with side wing massing is typical of mid nineteenth-century vernacular homes.**

**The wing added to this early nineteenth-century home matches the window design and spacing, porch details, and roof form of the original house.**

**This ca. 1910 Four-square house was enlarged with a side wing. The wing respects the simple design, roof slope, window style, void-to-solid-ration and proportions of the original house.**

## Alterations

Alterations to existing buildings shall either be made consistent with the spirit of their architectural style, or shall alter the structure to an appearance consistent with the architectural styles of historic value existing in the district. Alternatively, contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties may be permitted when such alterations and additions do not destroy significant historical, architectural, or cultural material, and such design is compatible with the size, scale, material, and character of the property, neighborhood, or environment. In applying the principles of consistency and compatibility with the architectural styles existing in the district, the APRB shall consider the following factors: composition, design, texture, and other visual qualities. Alteration of an historic structure should be consistent with the design of the original structure and of any later additions that are architecturally significant in their own right. Whenever possible, retention and maintenance of original features are encouraged over restoration and/or removal.

## Compatible Alterations

**This ca. 1915 former garage was altered to accommodate a retail use. The original materials, including site-formed rock-face concrete block, were preserved. New elements, including the sign cornice and new windows, are visually compatible with the scale and period of the building.**

**This ca. 1960 former post office was altered to provide a storefront for the current retail occupant. The design of the new entrance is in scale with the original building and uses elements that relate to the Postwar Colonial Revival style of the original building.**

## Compatible Alterations

**This handicapped accessible entrance provides access to the Guetersloh House (now church offices) and the Fellowship Hall of First Presbyterian Church. The entrance matches the scale of the house and is located at the rear of the building where it is not a visually prominent feature**

**Blown-in insulation installed in this house caused catastrophic paint failure and deterioration of the exterior clapboard. After the owner investigated remedies with a preservation architect and failed to solve the problem, the owner applied to replace the original wood clapboard with cement fiber clapboard. The application was approved because the owner provided ample documentation investigating other unsuitable solutions and because the proposed material looked visually very similar to the material being replaced.**

**In remodeling this small home, the owner added a new porch and requested to install casement, rather than double-hung, second-floor windows to meet current NYS Building Code egress requirements. Because the new windows carefully match the proportions and muntin pattern of the windows in the rest of the house, the application was approved.**

**To address liturgical changes and provide more seating, Saint Louis Church remodeled the Main Street facade of the building. The church worked with the APRB to develop a solution that would not encroach into the viewshed of adjacent historic buildings and that respected the distinguished modern period design of the church.**

# Incompatible Alterations

**Additions have changed the scale and massing of this early nineteenth-century house. Replacement cladding and windows have made the exterior look flat and have eliminated historic trim details.**

**The new window added to this house is inappropriate in size, shape, proportion, and materials. Replacement porch components do not match the appearance of the original materials or design.**

**Everyone wants to "improve" their building. Today, very few contractors, and few architects, understand traditional materials or traditional design principles. The results can be disastrous as in the case above, where a large Colonial Revival home was hidden behind a grand "contemporary" façade. The scale, materials, form, massing and design of this addition are incompatible with the building and the neighborhood.**

**This early nineteenth-century Federal house has been stripped of its visual character by the installation vinyl siding, removal of the cornice returns, replacement of the original entrance and improperly mounted shutters. Compare the appearance of this house to the similar village of Pittsford house shown at the top of page 13.**

## Demolition

Demolishing an historic building is an irreversible extreme measure. While a few good, well-designed buildings have replaced demolished buildings in the village in the past, other historic buildings were replaced by buildings lacking the character and craftsmanship of the original. For this reason, the APRB usually does not approve applications to demolish contributing historic buildings in the village. The APRB requires the owner to prove *hardship,* or that demolition is the only way for the owner to receive a reasonable return on the property. This standard applies to both the main building on a property, as well as any contributing historic outbuildings, such as garages, carriage houses, and barns, and contributing features, such as walls, gates, and historic fences.

In rare cases, demolition of a building in an historic district may be appropriate. Demolishing a noncontributing building or addition that negatively impacts its property and neighborhood is one such example. Under certain circumstances, non-historic or non-significant components of a building or building complex may be removed. Approval of demolition is determined on a case-by-case basis, but normally, the applicant must provide proof that the building or building component is noncontributing.

In rare situations, demolition may be the only practical remedy because of damage by fire or weather, or economic hardship. In these cases, the APRB must weigh the historic and architectural significance of the building against the argument supporting the proposed demolition. If the request for demolition is based on structural instability, damage, or deterioration, the APRB may require a technical report prepared by an architect or engineer. The report should detail the specific problems and provide cost estimates for their correction. These cost estimates may enter into a decision by the APRB that any rehabilitation would exact an economic hardship on the owner. It should be noted that the Village of Pittsford Preservation Code specifically prohibits "demolition by neglect." Disregarding proper exterior building maintenance is a self-created hardship, and will not be considered as a justification for demolition.

Demolition usually results in the construction of a new building, and the APRB and the public have the right to know what will be built in its place. Before the APRB will grant approval for demolition, it must first grant approval for plans for a replacement building. If another building is to be moved to this property, the APRB will have to assess its effect on surrounding properties. If new construction is proposed, the APRB will apply the *Standards for New Construction in an Historic District*. If new construction is planned, the property owner should be prepared to provide not only plans and specifications for the new building(s), but a clear indication as to how the building will relate to its surroundings.

## Relocation

Relocating buildings, particularly houses and barns, has been a common practice through much of the village's history. Today, however, relocating a building either inside or outside of the village should be considered only as a last resort to avoid demolition. Moving a building to a different location on the same property in order to take advantage of a better view or to make room for additional buildings is strongly discouraged.

From a preservation perspective, relocation destroys the context of the building and alters its relationship with the surrounding natural and built environment. Often, relocation destroys character-defining features, such as chimneys, foundations, and porches. Finally, the removal of an historic building may negatively impact its new surroundings. If the building is not compatible in scale, style, and setback with its new surroundings, a whole new set of historic preservation design problems has been introduced.

Before permitting a building to be moved, the APRB will consider the historic and architectural significance of the building, the contribution the building makes to the Historic and Architectural Design District on its existing site, and the impact of its removal on the character of the district. Generally, removal of a building should be considered only under exceptional circumstances. The owner of the subject building should be prepared to justify the necessity for the move, outline what steps he has taken to avoid moving the building, explain the proposed moving process, and provide detailed plans showing the relationship of the moved building to its new site.

The APRB may refuse an owner's request for a move, if, in their opinion, the building is of such architectural or historical significance that its removal would negatively impact either the building or its present site; if the building could be rehabilitated on site without removal; if the relocated building will be out of character architecturally or stylistically, or out of scale with the new location; if the relocated building may negatively impact known archeological resources at the new site; or if significant architectural features will be left behind in the move.

**This home is one of the few village buildings the APRB has approved to relocate. The house was located on the village's smallest lot and severely deteriorated. The building had been previously moved and was set on an inadequate foundation that was accelerating the building's decay. By moving the building forward slightly on the same property, the owner was able to build a new foundation, add a garage at the rear, and expand the house with a small addition. The changes improved the house and the neighborhood.**

SECTION 4

# Process and Procedures

## Introduction

The Village of Pittsford has a distinctive architectural character and unique identity. The dense cluster of commercial and residential buildings attracts visitors and residents. The village remains the vibrant heart of the Town of Pittsford. In 1971, the Trustees of the village, recognizing the value of preserving the village's historic character, established the Historic and Architectural Design District, which includes the entire village, and enacted local ordinances to protect and preserve this District. The main objectives of our local Preservation Code are:

- To safeguard the heritage of the Village of Pittsford by preserving the Historic and Architectural Design District in the village, which represents and reflects elements of its cultural, social, economic, political, and architectural history.
- To protect and enhance the attractiveness of the District to homebuyers, visitors, shoppers, and residents, and thereby provide economic benefits to the village and its citizens.
- To conserve and improve the value of property within the District.
- To foster, encourage, and advise the preservation, restoration, and rehabilitation of structures, areas, and neighborhoods.
- To promote the use of the District for the education, enjoyment, and welfare of the citizens of the village.
- To foster civic pride in the beauty and history of the past as represented in the District.

## What is the Architectural and Preservation Review Board?

The mission of the Architectural and Preservation Review Board (APRB) is to preserve the village's historic resources and historic character. In addition to administering the Historic and Architectural Design District, the APRB also educates the community on the value and care of historic buildings. The five appointed members of the APRB review applications once a month to consider the appropriateness of proposed changes to buildings within the District. Board members are also available as a resource to help property owners develop both practical and architecturally appropriate additions and alterations.

The Village Code grants the APRB the following powers and duties:

1. **Review of plans.** It shall be the duty of the APRB to review, and approve or disapprove, all plans and building permit applications for the construction, reconstruction, removal, restoration, alteration, or demolition of any exterior architectural feature within the District. The APRB shall have the power to pass upon such activity before a Certificate of Appropriateness is granted, provided that the APRB shall pass only on the exterior features of a building or structure as are visible from the public street or waterway, and shall not consider interior arrangements. In deciding upon all such plans, the APRB shall be guided by the standards for review enumerated in § 210-61, and shall give consideration to any factors it may deem pertinent, including:
    - The historic, cultural, or architectural value and significance of any building or structure.
    - The appropriateness and authenticity of the proposed exterior design, arrangement, texture, or material and fenestration proposed.
    - The relationship of the proposed exterior design and design features to the historic value and architectural style and character of buildings and structures in the surrounding area and in the District.
    - The extent to which the action proposed in the permit application will promote the purposes of this article.
    - The relationship of the building or structure to open spaces, public ways, signs, landscaping, and accessory uses located at and nearby the premises being considered.

2. **Investigate and report.** The APRB may investigate, report, testify, and recommend to the Planning Board, the Zoning Board of Appeals, the Village Board of Trustees, and any Village Department or official on matters, permits, authorizations, and other actions that affect buildings, structures, and places within the District.

3. **Surveys and studies**. The APRB may undertake the survey and study of neighborhoods, areas, sites, places, buildings, and structures that have historic, architectural, cultural, or aesthetic value. Pursuant to such survey and study, the APRB may propose regulations, special conditions, and restrictions, as may be appropriate to serve the purposes of the Preservation Code.

4. **Retain specialists.** The APRB may retain such specialists, consultants, or experts to aid in its duties, and to pay for their services, not exceeding, in all, the appropriation made by the Board of Trustees. The APRB may call upon available Village staff members, as well as other individuals, for technical advice.

5. **Assist property owners.** The APRB may advise owners of property or structures within the Historic District on the physical and financial aspects of preservation, renovation, rehabilitation, and reuse.

6. **Other powers.** The APRB may undertake any other action or activity necessary or appropriate to the implementation of its powers and duties or to the advancement of the purposes set forth in the preservation code.

## Before you begin

Any new construction or any change in the appearance of the exterior of an existing building that can be seen from a public street or from the Erie Canal requires APRB approval prior to the commencement of the project. Such changes require a permit. APRB approval must be obtained before the permit can be issued. Since applications for permits and APRB approval are made through the Village Office, you are urged to contact the Village Code Enforcement Officer early in your planning process for assistance.

Plans for many prospective changes must be presented in advance to the Architectural and Preservation Review Board (APRB). The Board meets once a month to determine whether proposed changes are compatible with the building under consideration and with its neighbors. The Board's decision to approve, approve with conditions, deny, or table is given in writing, within 25 working days of the application. You can pick up a copy of the Village of Pittsford Zoning and Preservation Code at the Village Hall, 21 North Main Street, or view it on the village website at www.villageofpittsford.org.

This publication has been developed to assist village residents and property owners in navigating the APRB review process. Accurate plans, photographs, material specifications, and your own research information are all important components that should be included with your application to the APRB. You can also schedule and attend an APRB meeting for “information only” prior to submitting a formal application. This approach is particularly useful if you are planning significant or sizable additions and/or alterations and would like to get an idea on what direction to pursue with your plans, as this may save you time and expense later on.

## Application Procedures and Requirements

**Certificate of Appropriateness -** The most important day-to-day duty of the APRB is the approval or disapproval of applications for a Certificate of Appropriateness. A Certificate of Appropriateness is required for any exterior alteration, restoration, new construction, reconstruction, demolition, or moving of a structure, land, trees, or plantings upon property designated a landmark or property within the architectural preservation district. No property owner may make any material changes to the appearance of a property that is visible from a public street, other right-of-way, or park, and which may affect the appearance of the historic district, without first obtaining a Certificate of Appropriateness from the APRB. The Village Code Enforcement Officer determines what is visible from the public way. Because landscaping is usually seasonal and temporary, a building hidden by foliage is considered visible.

**Application Process**

1. All exterior changes visible from a public way require APRB review. Early in the project planning process, the property owner should review preliminary plans with the Village Code Enforcement Officer. The Code Enforcement Officer will determine if the proposed project requires APRB review and a Certificate of Appropriateness prior to issuance of a building permit. The Code Enforcement Officer may determine that the change involved does not require a Certificate of Appropriateness (for example, if the project involves only interior work). If a Certificate of Appropriateness is not required, a building permit may be issued. In these situations, construction drawings and specifications may still be required by the Building Inspector for a building permit. Early consultation with the Code Enforcement Officer may also provide an opportunity to identify design issues that will be closely scrutinized during the APRB's review.

2. Consult with the Village Code Enforcement Officer or village staff at the earliest opportunity. Repairs and renovations requiring demolition, or major repairs in-kind, may require review, even if you are replacing in-kind, to insure that significant architectural or historic resources/features will not be irreparably lost.

3. If the Code Enforcement Officer determines that a Certificate of Appropriateness is required or may be required, complete the form entitled; "Application to the APRB for a Certificate of Appropriateness," which can be obtained at the Village Office or downloaded from the village website. Submit this application by the deadline that is indicated on the meeting schedule.

4. In some instances, the Code Enforcement Officer may determine that your project is subject to other approvals, such as zoning. The Code Enforcement Officer will work with you early in the process to determine which approvals may be required, and in what order. In the case of large and/or complex actions, where multiple board approvals will be required, the applicant, or the Code Enforcement Officer, may request a Development

Review Committee (DRC) meeting to sort out overlapping and interrelated issues concerning multiple board approvals. The DRC is comprised of one representative from each of the three Village Boards, the Village Board of Trustees, the Planning and Zoning Board of Appeals (PZBA), and the APRB, as well as the Code Enforcement Officer, and, if needed, the Village Attorney. The DRC meeting is designed to help the applicant seek preliminary information and coordinate the multiple approvals required in an effort to expedite the process.

5. Monthly APRB meetings are held at 7:00 PM at the Village Hall on the first Monday of each month, unless otherwise noted in the meeting schedule. You may request to be on the agenda for "information only," to discuss a project concept before submitting a fully detailed application. This often saves time and expense by answering questions and addressing issues at an early stage. An "information only" discussion is recommended for large-scale projects. The more information the APRB has on the existing conditions of the buildings (usually photographs showing all exterior areas where work is proposed) and the proposed work item(s), the easier the process will be. A formal application must include the name, address, and telephone number of the applicant, as well as a tax map designation of the property. The application should include photographs of both the existing building and its setting, and photographs of the surrounding neighborhood, to establish the project's context. The application should also include a site plan showing location of improvements, and plans and elevations illustrating the design of the proposed improvements. The drawings should show the relationship of the proposed work to the existing building. Samples of materials and colors to be used are useful supporting materials. For new construction or extensive additions, the drawings and site plans should show the relationship to the surroundings. If the proposal includes signs or lettering, a scale drawing showing the type of lettering to be used, dimensions and colors, a description of materials to be used, and a plan showing the sign's location on the property/building should be submitted. Typically, each APRB member will make an individual site visit to view the property prior to the meeting.

6. The hearing order of the applications will be outlined on a meeting agenda that will be mailed to each applicant. At the discretion of the Board chairperson, the public may comment at the hearing, as can any design and historic preservation professionals retained by the applicant. This is an opportunity for any neighbors or other interested parties to register their comments on the application. The APRB may deny an application, or require changes in plans as a condition of its approval. It may also direct that the execution of landscape screening be a part of the approved plan. The APRB must approve, deny, or approve the application with modifications within 60 days of receipt of a completed application, unless the applicant agrees to an extension. In some instances, the APRB may table a decision until the next meeting, or schedule a special on-site meeting, if more research or other information is needed to make an informed decision. The APRB's decision is conveyed verbally to the applicant at the meeting. An approval, approval with conditions, or denial letter will be mailed to the applicant.

7. Consult with the Village Code Enforcement Officer for regulations concerning the follow-up and enforcement of APRB decisions, penalties for noncompliance, and appeal procedures. Any subsequent changes to the application approved by the APRB must be resubmitted to the APRB for further discussion and approval by the APRB.

## Homeowners' Responsibilities

There are examples in the village of inappropriate alterations, unscreened utilities, inappropriate siding and window treatments that have reduced the architectural integrity and historic value of a few buildings. Many of these "mistakes" occurred before the adoption of the Village's Preservation Code, and do not discount the responsibility we all have to respect and participate in the process to be good stewards of our village.

**When considering an alteration to your home, please keep these factors in mind:**

- If you are unsure if the alteration you are planning requires review by the APRB, contact the Village Office before you begin and consult with the Code Enforcement Officer. There is nothing else that the Code Enforcement Officer dislikes more than stopping a project once underway. Don't let that happen to you.

- Do not rely exclusively on the knowledge or awareness of your contractor for fulfilling the submission requirements for a Certificate of Appropriateness or the need for a building permit for improvements and repairs made on a property within the village.

- Placement and screening of any utility equipment, such as an air-conditioning compressor or an emergency power generator, requires approval by the APRB before installation, even if it is not in view from a public way.

- Contact the APRB in advance for information and assistance. Often, homeowners are not aware of potential solutions for repair, replacement, and maintenance issues, and the APRB can help.

- The APRB is not motivated by the ability to control or dictate taste. Board members are volunteer residents who appreciate historic architecture and the quality of life the Village of Pittsford affords. Board members put in the time and effort to assist residents and property owners in developing appropriate improvements as required by our Code.

SECTION 5

# Rehabilitation Standards for Historic Buildings

## Introduction

Rehabilitation is a practical approach to historic preservation. It is the process of repairing or altering an historic building for an efficient, contemporary use, while retaining its historic features. Rehabilitation includes structural repairs, repairing roofs and exterior finishes, painting, and upgrading mechanical systems. It may result from a change in use, or from a desire to continue its original or intended use. It should not be confused with restoration, which is the accurate (and often costly) return of a building to its original appearance, but which often renders it ill-suited to contemporary use.

Even minor rehabilitation projects should not proceed without first identifying the character-defining features of the historic building. The retention of these features should be an important consideration throughout the rehabilitation project. The identification phase should include research of historic photographs and documents; consultation with members of the APRB and/or recognized architectural historians and architects; and a detailed observation of other houses similar to the owner's elsewhere in the village. Section 2 on architectural styles in the village and the glossary at the end of these Standards also should be consulted in the identification phase of the project.

All residents of the Village of Pittsford are eligible for a two-hour, free consultation with Bero Architecture, P.C., architects specializing in the care of older buildings. The cost of this service is underwritten by Historic Pittsford Inc., a community not-for-profit preservation advocacy group. The consultation includes a meeting with a preservation architect and brief written report.

Residents are encouraged to seek out a consultation when contemplating major repairs, additions, or changes to their homes.

The following standards are designed to help property owners conduct successful rehabilitation and restoration projects. The rehabilitation of residential buildings is the primary focus in this chapter. Both residential and commercial rehabilitations follow the same general principles.

The following rehabilitation standards for buildings in the village are organized according to the principal architectural and structural features of a typical house. These include the building's foundations, walls, chimneys, roof, porches, entrances and doors, windows, and exterior decorative elements, such as cornices, as well as features of the property's setting, such as fences and walls.

These rehabilitation standards are not intended to serve as a "how to" manual, but rather a set of principles illustrating the appropriate approach to common issues. Most problems occurring during a rehabilitation project arise from a property owner's decision to alter, obscure, or remove a feature(s), rather than to leave the feature(s) in place and repair it. For this reason, these Standards list common rehabilitation and remodeling mistakes that generally should be avoided. When in doubt about whether or how a particular feature or architectural element should be retained and repaired, the homeowner is urged to consult with a builder or architect, such as Bero Architecture, which is fully versed in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. In fact, the Secretary of the Interior's Standards can be consulted often during the research, planning, and execution phases of any rehabilitation project.

## Windows & Shutters

Along with doors and entrances, windows are among the most important character-defining elements of an historic house. They add depth to the facade and provide visual interest by reflecting light. Poor maintenance will result in unattractive windows that do not operate smoothly. Accumulated layers of paint and broken sash cords and chains will cause the sash to bind. These conditions can be easily corrected by either a carpenter or a handy homeowner. Peeling paint, broken glass, and failing putty are unsightly, but also easily fixed. Beware of the tradesman who tells you that your windows can't be repaired; usually they can, and the Village of Pittsford APRB can be of assistance in directing you toward resources pertaining to window repair.

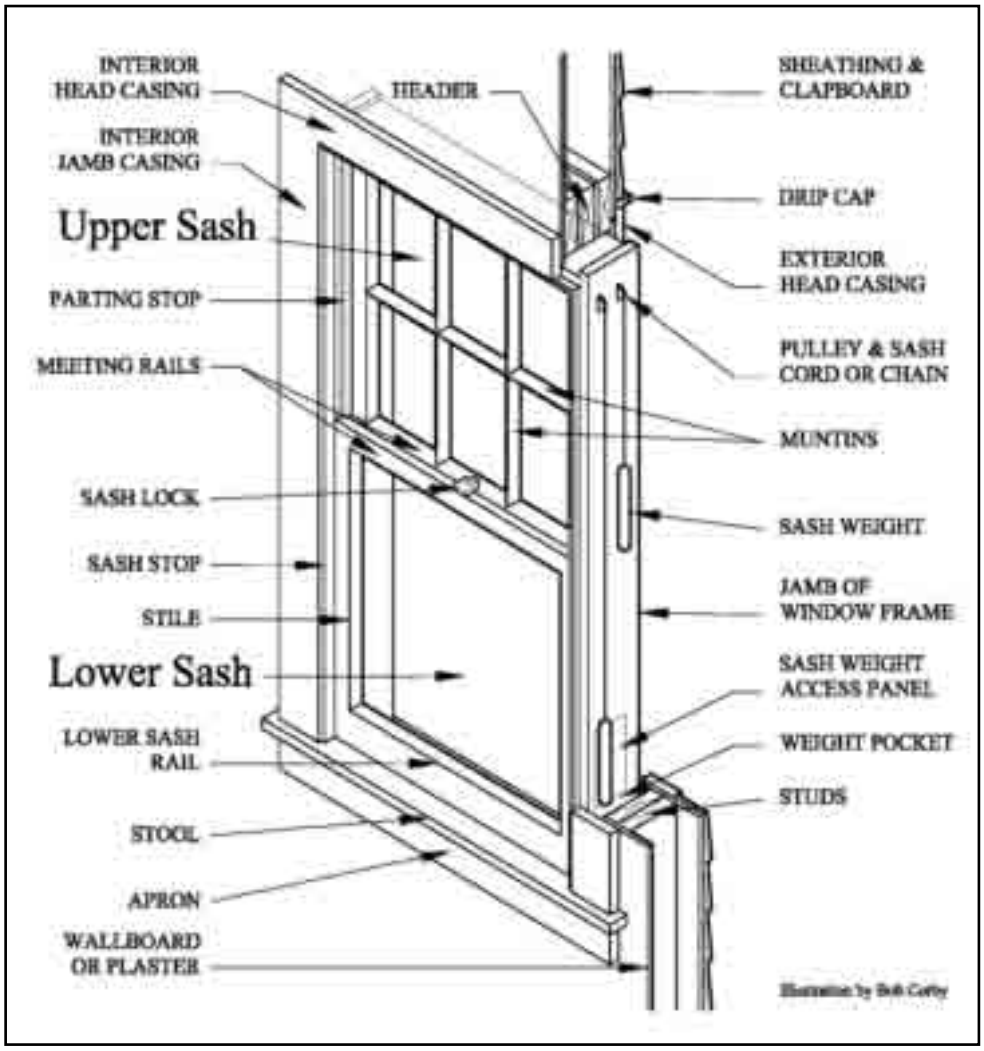
Homeowners may be concerned that their historic windows are not as energy efficient as replacement windows. Caulking window openings and installing weather-stripping will help stop air infiltration and energy loss. Repairing and installing sash locks will help the meeting rails meet tightly, and therefore stop drafts. Interior or exterior storm windows will further reduce energy loss. Exterior storm windows should be in the same color as the sash. Many factory color options are available today. Despite false marketing claims, historic windows with properly fitted storms

have virtually the same thermal efficiency as a new window, and will last much longer because of the superior quality of the wood.

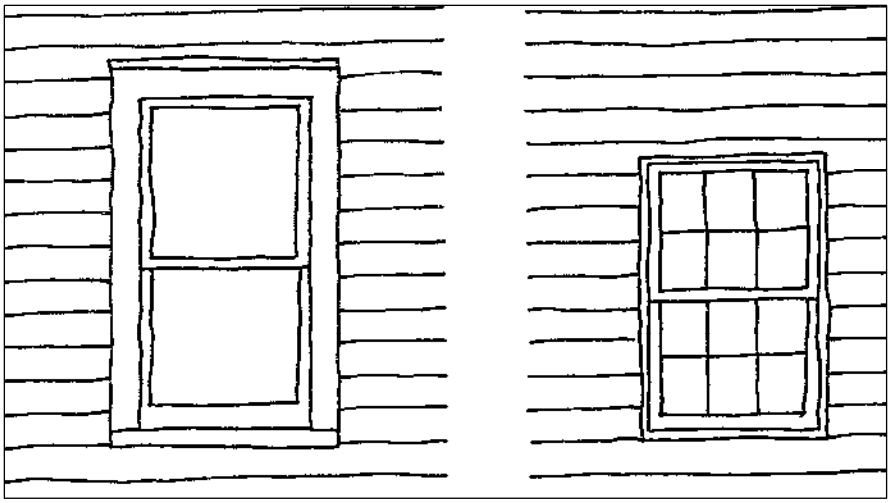
If your house already has replacement windows and you want to install something more appropriate, study your house carefully to see if any original sashes have survived. Other homes in the area and historic photographs may also provide more information. The new windows should fit the style of your home, not repeat the earlier mistake.

If your windows are beyond repair and must be replaced (a rare condition), carefully examine your existing windows, and select a replacement unit which matches the exterior of the original in every detail, including size, material, and number of lights. Note the number of lights, the dimensions of rails and stiles, and the profiles of muntins. All trim must also match exactly.

## Double Hung Window Components



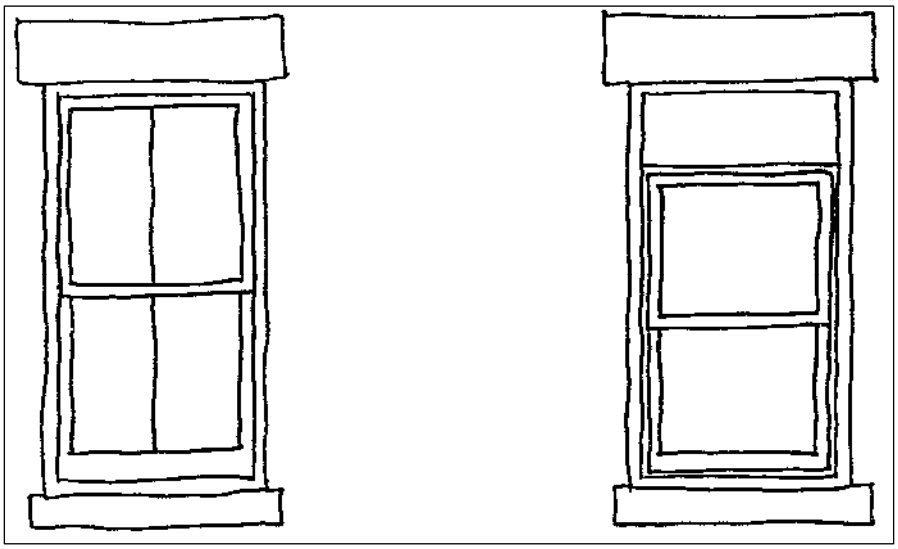
## Window openings in wood frame buildings



**Windows in historic wood frame buildings are usually twice as tall as they are wide. Traditional exterior trim includes the sill, a four-inch wide casing at the sides (jamb) and at the top (head), and a wood drip mold to shed water.**

**Stock modern windows lack traditional trim and therefore they are not visually compatible with older buildings. Contractors and architects usually will not select appropriate window sizes and shapes unless they are directed to do so.**

## Window openings in masonry buildings



**Windows in masonry buildings have a stone or concrete sill and a lintel spanning the top of the opening. The junction between the wood window frame and masonry is covered by a narrow molding called a brick mold.**

**Replacement windows should be the same size as the original windows and should fill the whole height and width of the masonry opening.**

**Replacement Window Options -** If a window cannot be repaired, there are several options available to homeowners. Wood window, sash-only replacement is the least intrusive option, where the existing window frame, sill, and interior and exterior casement trim are preserved. Wood sash replacement kits are available and are a good option if the existing window frame is still square. If the existing window frame is too out of square or in a condition that cannot be repaired, full window unit replacement, including the sash and window frame, allows for replacement of the window unit without reducing the original size of the window glass exposure. Care should be taken to ensure that the exterior trim and siding around the new window unit match the existing opening exactly. The method of installing an entirely new window frame and sash within the existing window frame is not appropriate for historic window replacement, as this method of window replacement reduces the size of the original window opening.

**Appropriate replacement window with simulated divided lights and profile matching the window it replaced.**

**Vinyl and clad windows -** Vinyl windows are made solely of vinyl, which is extruded from a mold, and the inside is hollow. A complex cross section makes the sash rigid and, in most cases, strong. The amount of vinyl in the cross section affects the outward appearance and the cost of the windows. Minimal vinyl can translate into sashes that are too thin in profile for historic buildings, and/or that have a wavy surface from overly pliable vinyl, which appears to be of poor quality. Some manufacturers counter this with "heavy duty" models that can go too far in the opposite direction, having sash profiles that are too thick for historic buildings. In addition, the depth of some heavier windows is noticeably greater than historic windows, reducing the amount that the windows are recessed into their openings. In a double-hung window, this difference can be as much as two inches. Vinyl windows have a coefficient of expansion forty times greater than wood. They are highly vulnerable to thermal expansion and contraction. Often, after a few years, the seams split and condensation appears on the glass.

Despite improvements, vinyl windows remain a short-lived material and rarely look appropriate in historic buildings.

Vinyl and aluminum-clad window sashes have a solid wood or wood/plastic composite core, which is wrapped--or clad--in vinyl or aluminum. The vinyl/metal cladding can cover just the exterior

**Inappropriate replacement window: Window profiles are too wide. Grids are located on inside of glass and do not resemble muntins. Shutters do not fit opening and lack hinges.**

face or the interior face also. The exterior appearance is similar for both the vinyl and vinyl-clad sashes, but the interior finish can differ, depending on whether the interior of the latter is wood or vinyl. Costs of windows with wood interiors depend upon whether the wood is paint grade or stain grade. Because of their solid, rigid composition, clad window sashes can be stronger than vinyl sashes of the same dimensions. For historic buildings, this means that the sash profile and depth can more closely match the dimensions of historic windows. These sashes are also heavier than hollow vinyl sashes and, when operated, can feel more like historic windows.

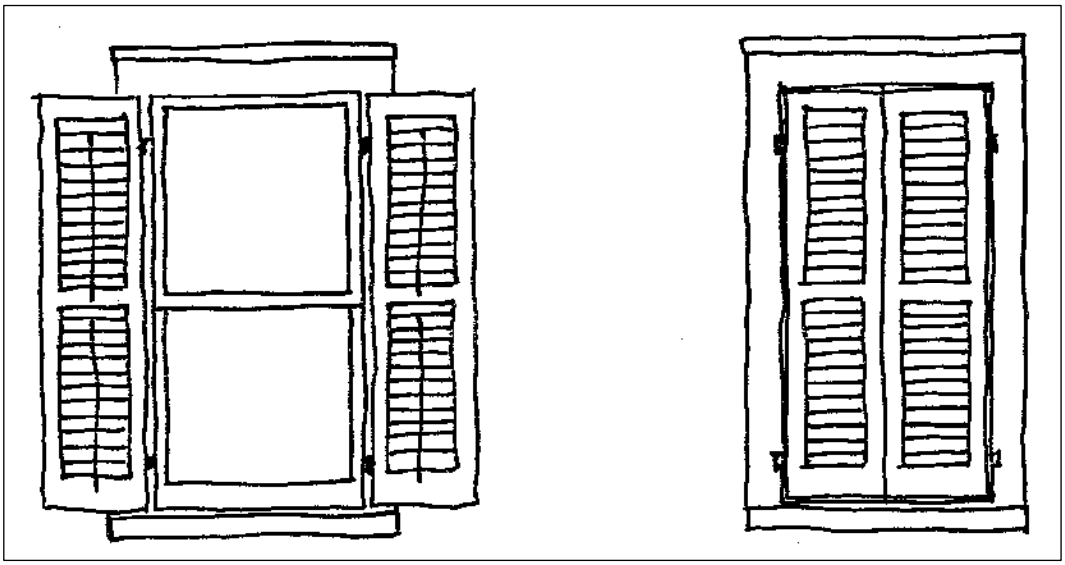
**Glass Block Windows -** The use of glass block to fill window openings generally is not appropriate in historic buildings. Glass block windows are normally installed in basement windows where ventilation is needed. The small vent windows set into the glass blocks are inadequate to provide adequate ventilation and are visually obtrusive and inappropriate in historic buildings.

Glass block in basements may be acceptable if one or more openings can be left with original windows or like replacements to allow for adequate ventilation. This allows the use of glass block in other windows without obtrusive vents. It also allows the applicant to leave any windows visible from the street with original or like replacement windows.

Where glass block is approved, the APRB may require additional measures to lessen the impact of the change from the original windows. Among such measures are the following:

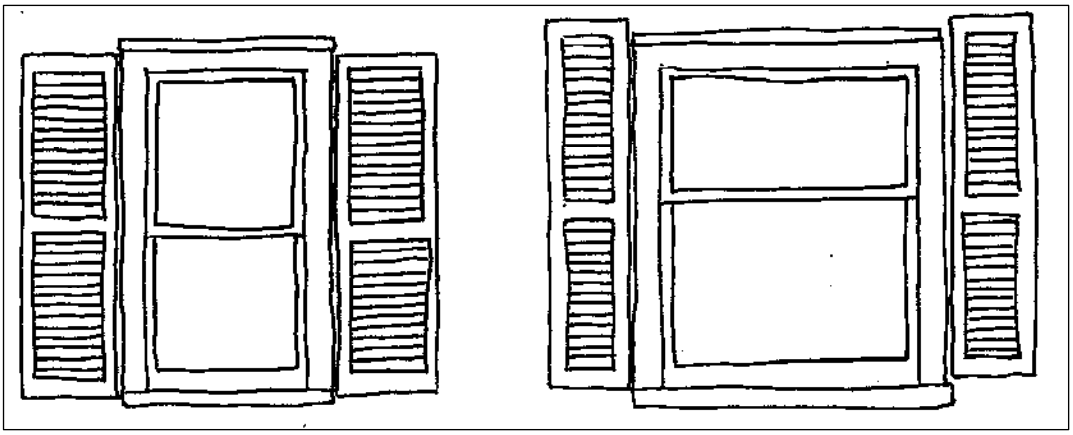
- Recessing the glass block as deeply as possible in the foundation wall.
- Using block sizes and glazing patterns to follow as closely as possible other window styles in the structure.
- Placing a window screen or obscuring storm window over the basement window opening to obscure the glass block.
- Arranging landscaping to lessen the visibility of the glass block.
- Using textured, obscuring glass block, rather than clear, reflective glass block.
- Not using glass block on windows visible from public rights-of way.

## Shutters



**Shutters should fit the window opening and be mounted with locking hinges over the window casing. The hinges lock the shutter in either the open or closed positions. Most historic shutters had operable louvers that were anchored to a vertical wood rod. When in the closed position, shutters swing into the window opening like a door.**

## Common Mistakes with Shutters



**Shutters mounted flat against the siding outside of the window frame, and shutters that do not fit the size of the window opening detract from the appearance of historic buildings**

**Window Shutters -** Window shutters were a common feature on nineteenth and early twentieth-century houses. Shutters add character to a house and an opportunity to add an accent color to your facade. If you have historic shutters, it is preferable that you do not remove them. If your house does not have shutters, you may be able to determine if shutters were present in the past by looking for hardware "ghosts," holes, or putty patches where the screws that held hinges were installed. Historic photographs may provide information on the appearance of missing shutters and hardware.

If you decide to replace missing shutters, it is important to choose shutters of an appropriate style that are the right size and shape. Shutters should be made of wood; they are constructed in the same way as doors, either rail and stile or board and batten. Rail and stile shutters may have solid panels, recessed or flush, with or without decorative cutouts in the top panel. One or more panels may have louvers – angled slats that admit the flow of air.

Each window opening typically has two shutters. Some may have a single shutter, if a chimney or other feature is in the way, or if the designer wanted a rustic appearance. When closed, the shutters should sit flush in the window opening. When mounted in the open position, shutters sit over the casing or window trim. Each leaf is half the width of the overall window opening. The shutter is as tall as the window opening is high. If the window has a curved top, the top of the shutters should be curved to meet the opening.

Shutters should be operable and hung on hinges. Shutters should never be fixed directly to the siding outside of the window casement trim. When shutters are mounted directly to the face of a house, there is no ventilation between the shutter and the house. The lack of air movement holds moisture against the building and accelerates deterioration of paint and siding. You can study historic photographs or pattern books or other homes in your neighborhood for ideas on shutter and hardware styles.

***Recommended:***

- Retaining historic windows whenever possible. Repairing damaged components (rather than replacing entire window unit), including frames, sash, pulleys, and glazing window.
- Preserving historic window size.
- Maintaining trim and original decorative elements.
- Selecting shutters that fit the size of the window sash opening (they should cover the window if closed).
- Mounting shutters over the window frame (casing).
- Maintaining the full size of the existing window opening.

- Maintaining the existing sash configuration (e.g., two-over-two, etc.).
- Reopening historic window openings that have been covered or filled in.

- When replacement is required, matching original window design and muntin configuration.

- Using muntin patterns appropriate to the age and style of the building or representative of the village's vernacular building tradition.

***Avoid:***

- Covering or closing in window openings on a primary façade.

- Altering size, shape, or proportion of window.

- Concealing or removing casings and/or decorative trim.

- Adding non-historic, decorative elements, such as a new muntin pattern or a half-round transom light.

- Mounting shutters outside the window frame (flat against the siding).

- Selecting shutters that are too wide, narrow, tall, or short for the window opening to which they are attached.

- Installing new window units that do not fit the opening.

- Using opaque or reflective glass.

- Replacing durable wood or steel windows with shorter-lived vinyl products.

- Installing windows with plastic grids located between the glass or on the interior face of the glass without exterior muntin glass dividers.

- Adding bay windows where none existed.

- Installing window glazing flush with wall surface.

## Doors

Doors and entrances are key architectural features contributing to the character of most buildings' facades. Doors are often one of the most reliable indicators of a home's age and architectural style.

Historic doors should be retained. If the APRB determines that a door is un-repairable and must be replaced, the new door should match the style of the building. Wood doors are preferred, rather than doors made of metal, vinyl, or composite material. In some cases, non-wood doors may be acceptable for rear or side doors.

The decorative elements around doors are as important as the door itself. Every effort should be made to retain these elements, or to replace them if missing or irreparably damaged.

### *Avoid:*

- Introducing, removing, or changing the location of doors and entrances that alter the architectural character of the building;
- Replacing existing doors with retail stock doors, or doors of inappropriate design, or of a different size or width. The arrangement of door panels and window lights is a significant architectural feature and varies from period to period. Replacement doors should have an appropriate panel and light arrangement for that period;
- Blocking up or removing transoms or sidelights;
- Replacing, resizing, or rearranging such architectural features as pilasters, corner blocks, panels, transom muntins, or sidelights;
- Replacing traditional screen doors with stamped aluminum panel, stock colonial style, or otherwise inappropriate screen doors that are not compatible with the style of the front door or entry.

## Garage Doors

Traditional wood garage doors or barn doors contribute to an historic property's character and should be preserved. If the APRB determines that a garage door is beyond repair, or if the original door has already been replaced with one of an improper style, the new door should fit the style of the garage and/or residence.

Most garages associated with older homes in the village are newer structures than the principal residential structure on the property and are modest in style and design. Appropriate materials are

wood and certain wood-like composites. Raised panel design and stamped metal doors are typically inappropriate for use with barns that have been converted to garage use.

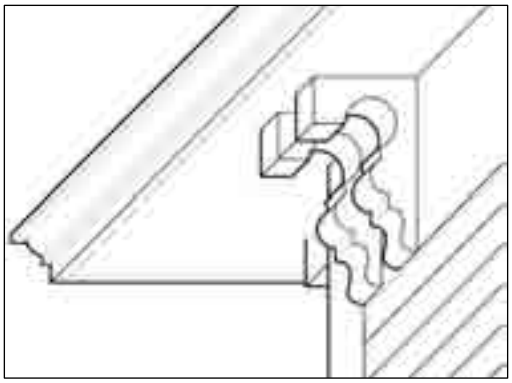
***Avoid:***

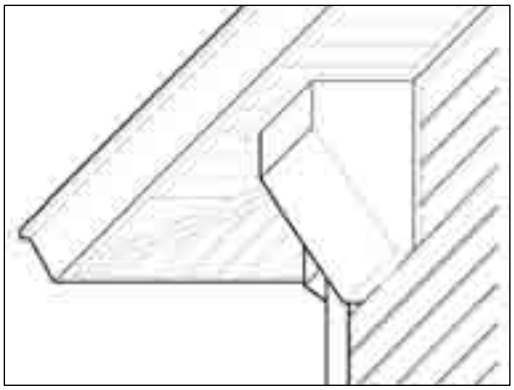
- Replacing garage doors on simple, functional garages with highly designed "carriage house" doors that do not fit the style of the garage or home;
- Using replacement doors with inappropriate stamped faux surface textures or raised panel effects;
- Changing the style of garage doors and carriage house doors that are a significant architectural element to the garage and/or house.

## Siding and Exterior Walls

Most of the older vernacular homes in the village are wood frame construction with wood clapboard siding. Some of the larger homes and many commercial structures in the village are traditional brick masonry construction. There are some examples of other styles of exterior wall finishes (siding), such as cobblestone, board-and-batten wood siding, cedar shingle, natural stone, stucco, and rusticated cement block. Original exterior wall finishes are another very important indicator of a home's age and architectural style. Property owners should protect, repair, and maintain original siding and exterior wall surfaces.

**Wood Siding -** Installing vinyl or metal siding over wood siding can cause damage or prevent the visual detection of damage to the underlying structure. Often, the new siding is used to cover damage caused by moisture within the walls revealed by peeling paint. Without eliminating the source of water, the trapped moisture will rot the wood, and may attract mold growth and insects. Vinyl and metal are not water-tight. Manufacturers punch weep holes into the bottom edge of the faux clap board siding panels to allow water to escape, but if the water goes into the walls, it can cause irreparable harm.





**Substitute cladding materials often destroy or conceal architectural details. The illustrations above show how the appearance of an eave and brackets is changed by the application of the aluminum panning that is a standard component of a vinyl siding installation.**

The loss of trim around windows is one of the most visible impacts of a typical vinyl siding application. New siding rarely matches the look of older siding, with noticeable differences in board exposures, profiles, textures, and joints. Even when the differences between old and new siding are minimized, certain components of vinyl and metal siding systems lack historic precedent, and are therefore inappropriate to historic buildings. Receiving channels, especially, are visually prominent enough to alter the overall appearance of a building. They are used where siding panels meet window or door trim or architectural details, like porch brackets, or where the siding panels meet at inside or outside corners. While some manufacturers are trying to make components that appear more like traditional ones, they have struggled to overcome the need for receiving channels.

Replacing original siding can be acceptable if the original material is deteriorated beyond reasonable repair, or catastrophic exterior paint failure can be traced to a house envelope moisture vapor problem. While in-kind replacement is preferred, alternative materials can be appropriate if the APRB determines that they look like the original. An alternative material that has been accepted as a replacement for wood clapboard siding is fiber cement board, which is available in the same configurations as wood siding.

### *Avoid:*

- Applying non-historic surface coverings over wood siding. The most popular of these are aluminum and vinyl siding, although either stucco or asbestos siding was at one time considered an attractive covering. Vinyl and metal siding are not energy efficient or maintenance free. Matching repairs and additions to vinyl siding can be problematic over time, due to color fading and style changes. They can seal in moisture and speed the disintegration of original wood siding. The removal of artificial siding is almost always considered a positive step in a building's restoration or rehabilitation.

- Replacing clapboard siding with shingle siding (or visa versa), or replacing siding of a different reveal, unless these measures can be historically justified.

- Altering or removing distinctive shingle patterns or altering the width or reveal of historic shingle siding without historical evidence for doing such.

- Replacing wood elements unless they are beyond repair.

- Installing rigid foam insulation under siding. When this is done, the face of the siding extends beyond the original trim boards and erases important shadow line details.

**Masonry and Stone Exterior Walls -** Brick, original stucco, and stone exterior wall finishes typically represent examples of superior craftsmanship and unique or hard-to-find materials. Often, the careful repair and maintenance of these character-defining elements of historic buildings require professional expertise so as not to harm or cause future deterioration. Stone or brick wall surfaces should never be covered over, unless no other repair alternative can be found.

Pointing, the term used for repair of deteriorated mortar joints, is done by removing any old, deteriorated mortar and replacing it with new. Pointing can be important to the continued sound physical condition of a building and has the potential to affect the appearance of historic masonry. The removal of deteriorated mortar should be undertaken only when absolutely necessary, usually where mortar is eroded or crumbling. Most structures built until the early twentieth century used lime mortar with little or no cement binder. Removal of these low-strength mortars should be performed using hand-held, non-power tools, since power tools, such as masonry saws, have the potential to damage masonry units. Mortar made of hard Portland cement is much more difficult to remove from joints, and the use of hand-held chisels is likely to damage the masonry units. Here, carefully controlled pneumatic chisels or small grinders may be appropriate, but these require extensive experience and quality control to assure that the masonry units are not damaged.

Complete re-pointing is usually not necessary, nor is it a sound preservation treatment. New mortar should match the historic in strength, composition, color, texture, aggregate distribution, and all other qualities as determined by a laboratory analysis. Prepackaged "masonry cements" generally contain large amounts of Portland cement, and therefore produce a very strong mortar that can be damaging to softer historic bricks and terra cotta. If mortar analysis is not undertaken to determine the composition of the original mortar, the following soft, lime-rich mortar mix is appropriate for use on most historic masonry: 1 part white Portland cement; 3 parts Type S hydrated lime; 6 parts sand with no admixtures, because color additives can weaken masonry if used in large quantities; a color match is best achieved using only appropriate colored aggregates (sand, brick dust, etc.). Equally important to mortar content is the appearance of new mortar joints. New joints should match the historic in width, tooling, texture, and profile. Special character-defining joints, such as "ruled" or "grapevine," should be repaired or reproduced carefully.

Masonry materials may require repair, as well as pointing, and appropriate techniques will vary according to the specific material. Because damaged brick units are difficult to repair, replacement may be most appropriate and may involve using new or salvaged brick. If repair is not possible and replacement is necessary, new units should match the existing in size, color, texture, and all other qualities. Historic stone materials that are damaged should be treated carefully. In keeping with the preservation Standards, the best approach is repair. Replacement should only be considered if the material is deteriorated beyond repair. Where cracked, spalled, or exfoliated, limestone, sandstone, marble, terra cotta, cast stone, or concrete materials should be repaired to prevent further damage. The type of stone, and type and extent of damage should be determined before the repair method is chosen. The repair should be carefully executed to match the damaged material.

***Avoid:***

- Painting a brick or masonry wall where there is no historical basis for such a measure. Likewise, a painted brick or masonry surface should not be stripped in order to return it to its presumed historical appearance. Such stripping can damage the brick or masonry and leave it susceptible to water damage and deterioration.

- Using abrasive chemicals or high-pressure cleaners on brick or masonry walls or features.

- Pointing brick with synthetic compounds or using mortar with a high Portland cement content. Mortar that is too hard will damage the surrounding bricks, stone, or other materials.

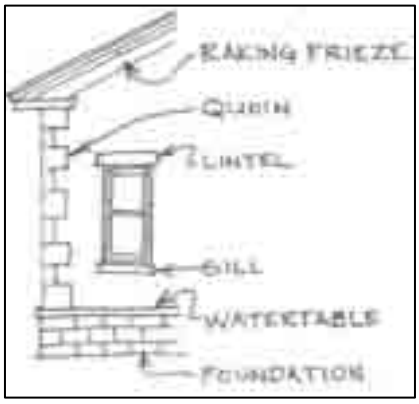
- Applying a waterproof, water resistant, or non-historic stucco treatment as a substitute for pointing or masonry repair.

- Replacing chipped or damaged stone or brickwork, unless it is damaged beyond repair.

## Architectural Trim

Architectural trim, defined as the decorative moldings, brackets, cornices, pediments, watertable, corner boards, frieze trim, quoins, and other features applied to a building's exterior, serve as the "finish" for most historic houses. Before the advent of modern, undecorated styles of mid and late twentieth century architecture, builders and architects used architectural trim to accentuate certain styles and guide the eye toward different planes and projections of a building's surface. Historic trim is an important and readily identifiable feature of most historical styles and eras and always should be retained, if possible.

**Typical wood-frame building trim**




**Typical masonry building trim**

**Wood-Frame Construction -** In wood-frame buildings, decorative trim is provided at most junctions between different materials and between different surfaces. These include the top of the foundation (watertable), corners (corner boards), roof (frieze trim), and openings (casings). Door and window casings are typically four inches wide, while trim at the frieze, watertable, and corners is often wider.

**This historic porch was carefully designed and proportioned to coordinate with classical detailing and other design elements on this historic house.**

**Masonry Construction -** In traditional masonry buildings, the same junctions are highlighted, but in different ways. At the division between the foundation and the exterior wall above, the watertable is indicated by a change in materials and is occasionally accentuated by a slight horizontal projection. Corners can be emphasized by quoins or pilasters. The frieze can be either wood trim or a differentiated treatment of the unit masonry wall material. Openings are emphasized by sills, lintels, arches, and/or rowlock header courses. Masonry construction usually respects gravity, which means that there is a transition from heavier, rougher materials located near the ground to progressively lighter materials at the top of the building.

**Ornamentation -** Ornamentation was traditionally used to reinforce the organization of a facade or other architectural elements. Modern manufactured stock ornaments can give buildings a "cartoon" appearance when they are not properly scaled to the features they are applied to. Common examples include fiberglass shutters that don't fit or work, aluminum columns that lack the proper taper (entasis), and oversized moldings.

If a traditional ornamental system is used, a basic understanding of classical proportions and relationships will help avoid an awkward visual appearance. For example, a column normally supports a thick beam or architrave and a projecting cornice. Information on the basic components and proportions of the classical column system is available in *Architectural Graphic Standards*, a general architectural reference book.

**This modern porch combines classical elements without an understanding of their proportions or inter-relationship. As a result, this porch has an awkward and inappropriate top-heavy appearance.**

An understanding of proportion does not require a precise recreation of past historic styles. Abstracted features may be used to identify new buildings as a product of our time.

**Repair and Replacement -** Contemporary metal and vinyl door and window trim differ in shape, dimension, and texture from historic wood trim. They also lack the detail and precise fit possible with crafted wood components. While metal can be bent, and vinyl can be molded, into many shapes, few shapes are actually available on the market.

The joints in metal or vinyl siding and trim visually contrast from the appearance of those on traditional buildings. Because these materials cannot be sanded, puttied, or glued, the joints are often quite visible. This is especially bothersome at the butt joints between siding boards and at the corners of window and door trim. Often inappropriate, purposeful gaps, must be maintained for thermal expansion and contraction.

Trim pieces that mimic elaborate wood moldings, but are made of materials like solid Cellular PVC and fiberglass, are being used in instances where moisture exposure creates decay problems. Some of these appear enough like traditional trim that they can be appropriate on historic buildings, if the profiles match and they are installed, painted, and finished like wood.

### *Avoid:*

- Removing or replacing trim, cornices, brackets, pilasters, door and window moldings, pediment, medallions, dentil and modillion molding, corner quoins, and other character-defining architectural trim, particularly from the principal facade;

- Obscuring or covering architectural details with aluminum or vinyl siding.

- Adding trim salvaged from another building or buildings to create a false historical appearance.

- Moving or rearranging existing trim to another part of the building, without historical evidence to back this up.

- Using stock trim when original trim could be replicated.

- Improperly sized shutters that are mounted in the wrong position.

- Ornamentation that is not scaled to fit openings.

- Proportions that are inconsistent with traditional decorative elements.

## Porches and Decks

Porches extend the usable living space of a house, and can provide either an informal or ceremonial entrance. A classical portico is often the distinguishing feature of a Greek Revival style dwelling, while a wraparound porch contributes to the characteristically rambling, asymmetrical appearance of the Queen Anne style. Even on simple, vernacular homes, the porch often receives architectural embellishment.

Because they are fully exposed to the elements, porches often require more than routine maintenance, and are often subject to inappropriate remodeling in the name of cost or changing tastes.

The decision on how and to what extent to rehabilitate a porch can test the mettle of even the most devoted preservationist. In the end, decisions on the rehabilitation, removal, or addition of a porch should be based on careful historic research, a determination of the house's dominant architectural style and how the porch contributes or detracts from this style, an examination of what is common in the surrounding neighborhood, and the porch's structural condition.

**Historic Porches -** Most historic porches incorporate refined proportions, craftsmanship and precise carpentry work. Porches enhance the visual character of the house and the neighborhood. The porch is often the most distinctively detailed part of a house.

Original porch railings should be preserved, and should be repaired, rather than replaced. Where replacement is the only option, the new work should match the style, scale, and material of the original railings. Railings on historic buildings were often very elaborate and unique. Railings span between posts, and incorporate caps that shed water. Most porches built before 1880 did not have railings. Queen Anne style homes often had decoratively turned spindles and posts. Later styles usually have square balusters. Top and bottom rails are designed with a section strong enough to resist sagging and are canted to shed water. Balusters usually have a minimum dimension of 1- 1/4” by 1-1/4” and are spaced with gaps only about 1-1/2 to 2 times the baluster width. Balusters are attached to the bottom of the handrail and to the top of the lower rail, not the sides. Most hardwood spindles sold in home improvement stores are appropriate for interior stairs, but are not durable enough to be used on porches.

Other porch details:

- Piers (supporting the floor structure) of brick, stone, or block raise the porch deck above the ground, allowing air to circulate beneath the floor.

- Framed wood lattice panels fill the spaces between the piers. Because the wood rots from close proximity to wet ground and mulch, certain pressure-treated and composite material can be appropriate here.

- Painted wood skirt trim covers the rim joints, giving the porch edge a finished look.

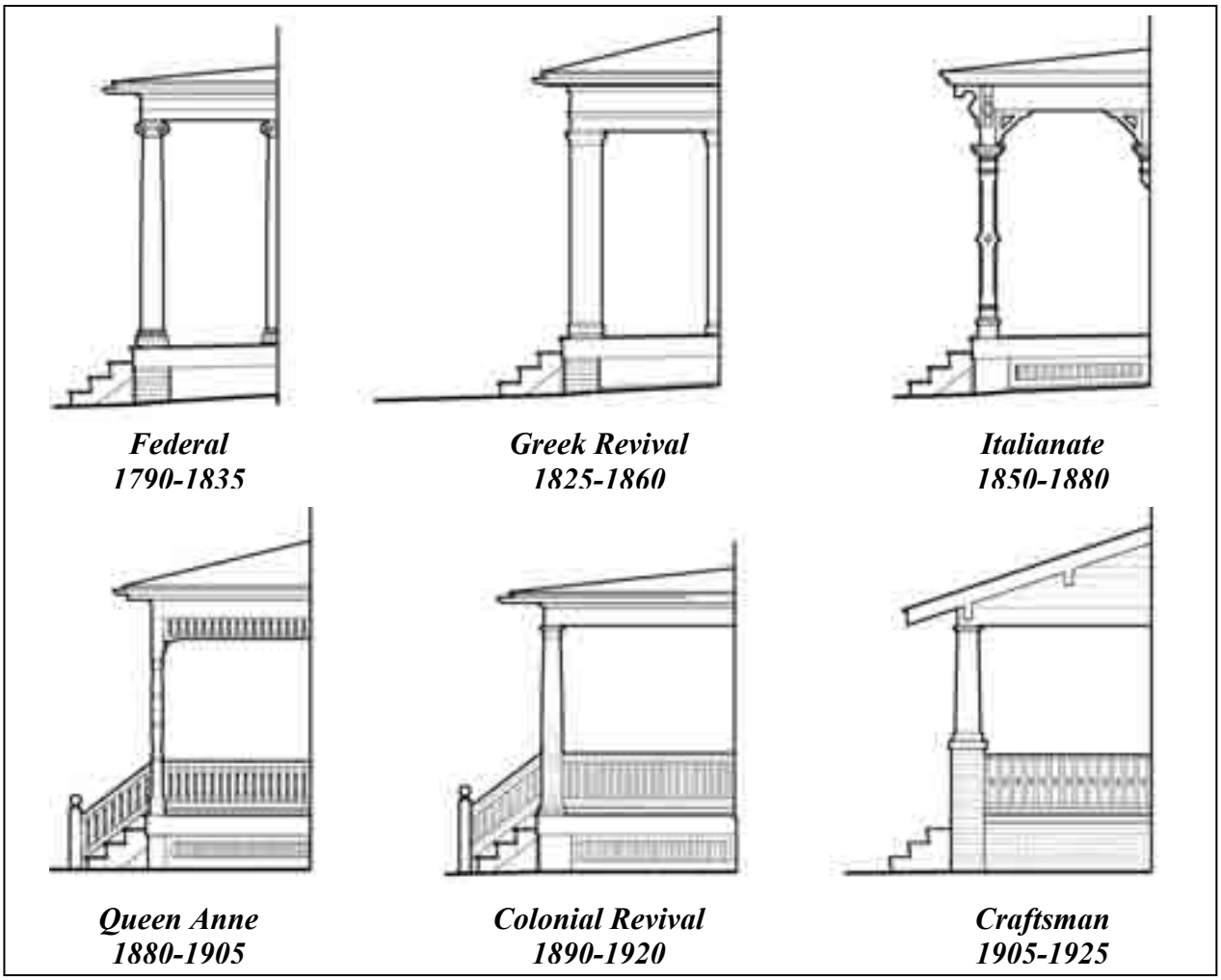
- Flooring is commonly 5/4" thick, 3" to 4" wide, and tongue-and-groove fir, painted or stained. The floor boards typically run perpendicular to the house, and the floor is sloped to shed water. Steps commonly consist of Fir 5/4x12 treads, often slotted for drainage.

- Posts are often carved, turned, or tapered, and are often the most uniquely detailed part of a porch. Each architectural style has a matching set of appropriate style columns.

- A visible header beam, spanning between posts, is usually visible below the roof eave.

- Roof slope and eve trim characteristics can be very specific to certain architectural styles. Most historic porches have a low-slope roof. Craftsman, Tudor, and some gable front porches found on Colonial Revival houses have a moderate slope.

## Porch Styles



# Compatible (New) Porches

**The square posts of this new porch complement the simple mid nineteenth-century lines of this gable-and-wing house.**

**Gabled entry porch, with cornice returns and barrel-vault ceiling, suits the style of this 1940s Colonial Revival style home.**

**Like many village homes, this ca. 1902 Dutch Colonial had its porch removed in 1950s. Reviewing historic photographs provided design information to allow construction of a new porch that matches the design language and scale of the original.**

**The rear entrance of First Presbyterian Church was redesigned to provide cover from the weather and accommodate handicapped persons. The style of the new entrance and porch matches the Colonial revival style of the churches ca. 1968 Fellowship Hall. The Tuscan porch columns, with proper entasis, are fiberglass. The columns were approved by the APRB because their appearance is very similar to wood**

**Decks –** Pressure-treated wood decks became popular in the 1970s. They are not common features of historic buildings, and are rarely appropriate in a preservation district. Traditional buildings had porches, with a roof, railing, columns, and materials that visually tied it to the building. Conversely, a typical deck lacks these features and usually appears incongruous on an older building. Because a deck is uncovered and unprotected from the weather, it is usually built of pressure-treated lumber, a material that is usually thicker, wider and of poorer quality than traditional wood components, and is usually left unpainted. The few available stock railings and spindles are almost always inappropriate to a traditional building.

Certain types of decks are appropriate for some situations. A stoop, a small deck with railings, steps, and flooring, whose details and materials are consistent with historic porches, may be an appropriate entrance treatment on certain buildings. Decks of this sort should be considered roofless porches, should be of similar size and configuration as historic porches, and should be connected to the building, rather than floating in the yard. Homeowners should be aware, though, that uncovered, non-pressure treated wood may deteriorate.

A deck without railings can be appropriate in a preservation district on less visible sides of the house. The New York State Building Code does not require railings when the deck floor is elevated 30 inches or less above grade. To minimize its visibility, the floor surface of the deck should be as low as possible, and rim joists should be trimmed with painted wood to match details of the building. Pressure-treated deck floorboards can be appropriate, but should be 4" or 6" wide and colored to minimize visual conflict with the building. A deck that fits into a corner of a building can be more congruous with the building than a deck projecting into the yard. Note also that a handrail at steps adjacent to the building can be attached to the building, rather than standing free at the opposite side of the steps.

***Avoid:***

- Introducing a new porch or porch elements that are incompatible in size, scale, material, and color; examples include new metal columns or wrought-iron posts, over-scaled columns with elaborate capitals, and metal or plastic balustrades.
- Enclosing (partially or wholly) porches, porte cocheres, and balconies.
- Enlarging a one-story porch to make it two or more stories or separating a two-story porch to make it smaller.
- Removing a porch that is not repairable and not replacing it, or replacing it with a new porch that does not convey the same visual appearance.
- Covering a porch with a non-historic material, such as metal or vinyl siding, or "winterizing" a screened porch by temporarily attaching plastic sheeting.
- Creating a false historical appearance by not basing changes on historical research, including photographic evidence.

- Stripping porches of all or some of their character-defining elements, including balusters, posts, columns, steps, brackets, and roof decorations.
- Replacing an entire porch, unless it is too deteriorated to repair, or building a new porch if it is not architecturally appropriate. The new porch should match the original as closely as possible in materials, size, and detail.
- Using indoor-outdoor carpeting or rugs to weatherproof a porch floor. This keeps the underlying wood wet and promotes rot.
- Replacing simpler turned or chamfered posts with more elaborate columns, when not based on historical research.

## Roofing

Roofs are a highly visible component of historic buildings in the village. They are among the most recognizable and prominent identifying features of American architectural styles, including Federal, Greek and Gothic Revival, Italianate, Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, Bungalow, and American Foursquare styles. The roof adds to the architectural character of a house through its scale, color, and texture and the way it is installed. The decision to replace, reconfigure, or just repair a roof takes on added importance in the Village of Pittsford. Roof materials, such as slate, wood shingles, and metal, also help to determine the unique character of an historic house. Original roof materials with distinctive character should be retained and repaired, if possible. Many original roof materials provide a building with significant character, and many can last a surprisingly long time if maintained. If original roofing must be replaced, the replacement material should be similar to the original in scale, color, and texture.

Most nineteenth-century village buildings originally had wood shingle roofs. Asphalt shingle roofs became common in the twentieth century and remain a popular roofing material today.

**Alternative Roofing Materials for Historic Roofs** - APRB approval is not required when an existing material is to be replaced with a matching material. If the material is not an exact match, a certificate of appropriateness will be required. The question of what constitutes a "match" is raised often with roofing. Several roofing products on the market today appear to match historic materials, but appearance may not be enough to qualify for a match. Before replacing a roof with a different material, it is best to check with the APRB.

The National Park Service recommends against the use of substitute materials when the original is available. In Preservation Brief #16*, The Use of Substitute Materials on Historic Building Exteriors*, NPS states:

In general, four circumstances warrant the consideration of substitute materials:

1) The unavailability of historic materials.
2) The unavailability of skilled craftsmen.
3) Inherent flaws in the original materials.
4) (building) Code required changes.

**Architectural Asphalt Shingles in Place of Shakes, Slate, or Tile -** Architectural shingles are thicker versions of the standard asphalt shingles seen on roofs everywhere. Where standard shingles typically carry a twenty or twenty-five year warranty, the thicker "architectural" shingles are warranted up to 50 years. New types of architectural shingles are meant to look like wood shingles, slate, or clay tile, and some get relatively close. Thicker profiles yield shadow lines much like those of traditional roofing, and some provide the random patterns of shakes or slates. Shapes that match those of flat clay tiles are also available. Colors approximate those of the traditional materials, and some brands even mimic the randomness of natural materials.

There are, however, noticeable differences between the surface finishes of the shingles and of the shakes, slates, or tiles. The shingles have the granular surface common to standard asphalt shingles, but not to the others. The differences are apparent from the typical distance from the ground to a house roof. As a result, these materials may not be acceptable for use on historic buildings with original historic roofing.

**Synthetic slate shingles** - This is a new family of materials intended to look like stone slate, but at a lower cost and weight. Each brand is made in its own unique shapes, colors, and textures, and from ingredients ranging from recycled tires and plastic to stone dust and fiberglass.

While some products approximate the originals, many others are noticeably artificial. Most lack the distinct randomness in thickness, width, color, and patina of natural slate, which gives character to a roof. Some brands try to suggest randomness by limiting a pattern repeat to every four to six courses vertically and four feet or so laterally. Diligent roofers optimize the randomness by laying out the slates on the ground, as is done with natural slates. Still, most roofs have a general blandness, especially on large expanses.

Most brands of synthetic slate don't come in graduated sizes, as does natural slate. In many traditional roofs, slates become gradually larger moving down from the ridge to the eaves. This was done for practical reasons, but the aesthetic results are quite striking.

Finally, the color and finish of most brands are very uniform, which just doesn't happen in nature. Some brands have accent slates every so often with a different hue than the others, but they are typically too few and far between to make much difference.

**Metal Roofing -** Metal roofing can be a tempting substitute roofing material for asphalt shingles on a residential building. Replacing an asphalt shingle roof with a metal roof can significantly alter

the character of a building. Great care should be taken to determine if a metal roof is appropriate for the age and style of the home.

Typically, standing seam historic metal roofing is the most appropriate style metal roof installation for a residential building. The use of standing seam metal roofing was first popularized in western New York in the mid nineteenth century, and has been in use since that time. As a material, standing seam roofing never became as popular locally as in other regions of the nation. The Village of Pittsford retains a few historic examples of standing seam metal roofs from the early twentieth century, including the Village Hall, the blacksmith shop, hog shed, bull barn, and wagon shed at Pittsford Farms, and the kidney bean warehouses at the T. J. Zornow complex on Schoen Place.

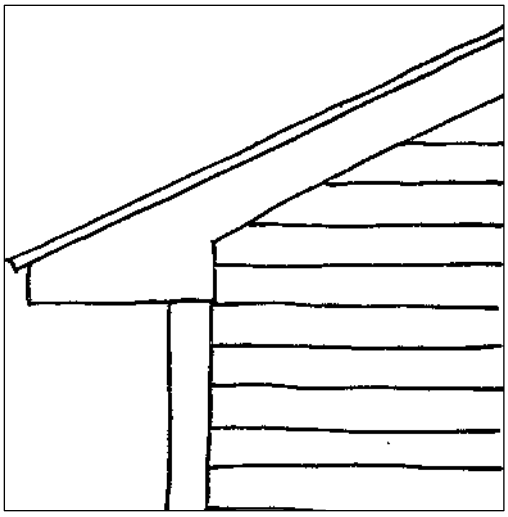
Other styles of metal roofing, such as corrugated metal panels with visible surface fasteners, nontraditional rake and drip edge cladding, and bulky hip capping and flashing methods, would not be appropriate for a residential neighborhood. That style of metal roofing is more common and appropriate for an agricultural/industrial setting, as is seen in the Schoen Place district.

**Roof Shapes -** The shape of a roof is one of a building's most significant character-defining elements. Efforts should be made to retain a roof shape in an uncluttered form, free of satellite dishes, skylights, solar panels, and mechanical equipment.

The APRB does determine the appropriateness of all appurtenances. While these objects may be seen as necessities of modern life, they may not be acceptable everywhere. If they are proposed, all efforts should be made to conceal them from public view.

## Eave Details

**Traditional eave detail, often called the "plumb-cut eave"; the soffit is parallel to the roof slope and the fascia is vertical.**



**The modern boxed soffit is not appropriate for many pre-1950 buildings.**

## Roof Types

**Front-gable roof**

**Side-gable roof**

**Cross-gable roof**

**Mansard roof**

**Gambrel roof**

**Hip roof**

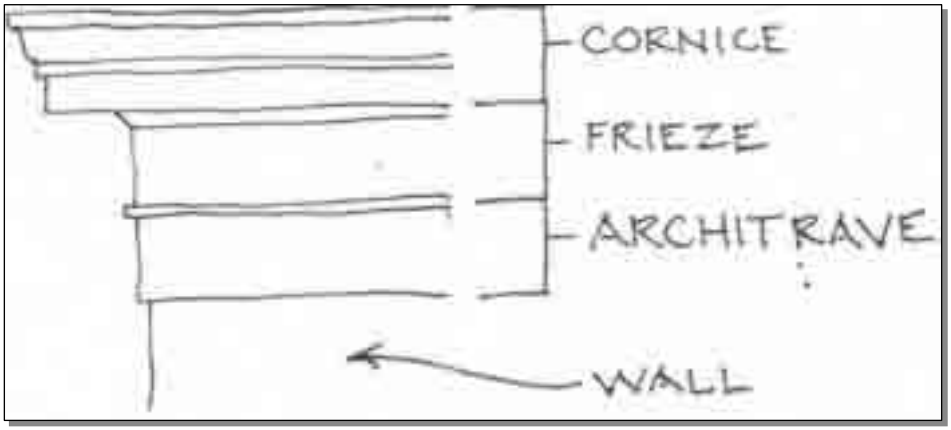
# Classical Revival Eave Details

**Typical of Federal, Greek Revival, and Colonial Revival buildings**

**Pediment—Gable treatment where a triangle is formed by the two raking cornices and a continuous horizontal cornice across the base of the gable**

**Cornice return—Similar to pediment except horizontal cornice is not continuous**

# Elements of a Cornice



**Dormers -** A dormer is an important architectural roof feature, defined as a windowed structure with its own roof that projects from the sloping main roof of a building or is a continuation of the upper part of a wall, so that the eve line of the main roof is interrupted. There are several types of dormers, and they reflect the style of certain roof shapes, such as gable, hip, and shed style. In general, dormers were not common until the introduction of the Colonial Revival style in the 1890s. Other, less common dormer styles include the arched top, eyebrow, pediment gable, and wall/flush dormer. The style of a dormer will match the style of the roof or the architectural style of the house. Adding a dormer where none was present or removing an existing dormer can negatively impact the character of the roof on a house, if not designed properly.

### *Avoid:*

- Radically changing, damaging, or destroying roofs that are important in defining the overall historic character of the building, so that, as a result, the character of the building is diminished. Consult the architectural style section in these design standards, and observe the roofs of other similar historic houses in the village to determine if your roof is characteristic of its period and style and is a truly contributing element in its design.
- Removing a major portion of the roof or roofing material that is repairable, and reconstructing it with new material in order to create a uniform or "improved" appearance.
- Changing the essential character of a roof by adding inappropriate features (dormers, vents, skylights, air conditioners, solar panels), which are visible from the public right-of-way.
- Stripping the roof of sound historic materials (i.e., clay, shingle, metal, or slate) and substituting a cheaper material, such as asphalt shingle. Asphalt shingles may be an acceptable substitute for wood shingles only if they are of a rectangular design and have a uniform tone of black, dark green, or dark gray.
- Replacing an entire roof feature, such as a dormer, cupola, or belvedere, when repair and limited replacement would be feasible.
- Constructing additional stories so that the historic appearance of the building is radically altered.
- Using a substitute material for the replacement part that does not convey the visual appearance of the surviving parts of the roof.
- Altering the existing roof pitch or introducing a new roof pitch that is not appropriate.

## Chimneys

Four chimneys, two on each gable end, are a hallmark feature of a Federal Period style of architecture found in several prominent village buildings. The Phoenix Hotel building on the southeast corner of South Main Street and State Street is perhaps the most visible example. Other examples are 24 and 31 Monroe Avenue, 21 Church Street, 25 South Main Street, and the grand Augustus Elliot House, now owned by Saint Louis Church. A modern interpretation of these gable-end chimneys was worked into the design of the new village library. In fact, chimneys are an integral, although often overlooked, design feature of many historical styles.

In the past, the placement of chimneys often depended on the period or style. Although utilitarian in design, chimneys sometimes received their own decorative adornment. Through most of the nineteenth century, chimneys typically were located at the ridge of a gable roof. Tudor Revival style homes could have a decorative chimney situated in the front of the house or exposed and prominent on a side gable end.

### *Avoid:*

- Removing all or part of an historic chimney without ascertaining its structural condition. The fact that a chimney or fireplace is not functioning does not warrant its removal.
- Adding chimneys where they are not historically appropriate or in locations that require the removal of gable-end windows.
- Adding chimneys of an inappropriate building material, such as cinder block, or constructing an exposed chimney sided with wood.
- Removing distinctive design elements, such as a corbelled cap or chimney pots.

## Foundations

Most historic buildings in the village rest on raised masonry foundations, whether stone, brick, or concrete. Many houses in the Bungalow, American Foursquare, and Tudor Revival styles feature such foundation elements as rusticated concrete block, and coursed stone, as an important part of the overall design of the facade. In undertaking foundation repairs, the tendency is to overstate the seriousness of foundation deterioration, and thus undertake drastic measures, such as total removal of the foundation. Instead, the historic materials should be retained, repaired as needed, or replaced with similar materials, following the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, particularly Standards #2 and #6.

***Avoid:***

- Removing or moving foundation enclosures unless they are deteriorated and irreparable.
- Enclosing a pier foundation with continuous infill that prevents ventilation and destroys the openness of the feature.
- Blocking up such ventilation devices as louvers, screens, or holes.
- Using a replacement infill material inappropriate to the style of the building.
- Using historically inappropriate material, such as concrete block, cinder block, stucco, or plywood as infill. Lattice infill may be historically accurate, but this should be proven through photographic research.

## Garages and Barns

The older homes in the Village of Pittsford were constructed before the introduction of the automobile. Most of these modest vernacular style homes did not have a secondary structure, such as a carriage house, although there are several surviving barns within the village, reflective of the village's agricultural heritage, and some have been adapted for automobile garage use. Detached garages were added to many of these homes where there was sufficient room on the property. These garages were typically set back at a rear corner, usually very close to the property lines. Some of these garages were moved in place or were constructed with salvaged materials, and most are very simple and plain in design.

**One of the village's many surviving nineteenth-century horse barns.**

After World War II, new neighborhoods were developed in the southwest and southeast portions of the village. These homes, often constructed on infill lots, particularly in the southeast quadrant, were designed with attached, one- or two-car garages, ushering in an era of the car, and it influenced the design and layout of these newer homes. As mentioned earlier, there are still more than a few surviving barns present on residential properties, and several have been adapted for modern re-use. Any surviving barn within the village is a unique historical asset, and every effort should be made to save these barns from demolition or inappropriate remodeling.

**An early twentieth-century garage retaining its original sliding doors**

***Avoid:***

- Adding an attached garage or an addition that extends to a detached garage to a home that pre-dates the advent of the attached garage concept, unless there is a compelling design or circumstance that would permit it.
- Adding an additional detached garage or similarly sized storage structure to a property that already has an attached garage.
- Changing the siding style or material on original barn exteriors.
- Adding ornate dormers or otherwise modifying the simple roof lines of a barn.
- Adding additions to a barn that are not stylistically compatible with the character and appearance of the barn.

## Compatible Garages

**This garage incorporates a roof slope and unique gable detailing matching the adjacent Queen Anne style "Gomph" house.**

**The garage of this house faces the side street. The rounded corners of the garage door openings mimic the porch column profile found on the house.**

# Compatible Garages

**The garage next to this Italianate house was designed to recall a mid nineteenth-century carriage barn. Note the board-and batten siding, cross gable, cupola, and half-round windows.**

**When an existing severely deteriorated single-car garage was replaced with a larger two-car structure, the form, roof slope, and trim details of the original were incorporated into the new design.**

## Modern Amenities

Living in an historic district does not mean living in a time capsule. The APRB understands that although people live in historic houses, they usually prefer modern standards of living and security.

Technology continues to change. In the 1970s, televisions required large aerial antennas to get reception, in the 1980s and 1990s, cable television became standard, and today, some may prefer a satellite dish. What seems "essential" today will be obsolete tomorrow. Thus, all systems should be treated as temporary and installed on the historic house in the least visually obtrusive location, in a reversible manner, and with no damage to historic fabric.

**Lighting -** Common contemporary site lighting practices do not consider the quality of lighting and usually prescribe far more lighting than is actually needed. Most exterior lighting needs are met with high-intensity light sources, including high-pressure sodium, and metal halide lamps. These fixtures are efficient and long-lived, but can create glare, harsh industrial lighting conditions, and light pollution when not used carefully.

In general, **the Village of Pittsford APRB and Planning Board do not recommend the use of high pressure sodium light fixtures because of the poor color rendition**. The use of high-intensity lights should be limited to commercial areas. High-intensity lights must be housed in a cut-off or shielded fixture to prevent light trespass and glare.

Exterior light fixtures should be individual point lights. Fixtures should be compatible in style with that of the building on which they are mounted or installed. Strip fluorescent light fixtures are not acceptable. Flood and spotlights should be "full cutoff" types directed at the ground of the structure. Light levels should be kept below the minimum acceptable. Consider using incandescent or warm florescent fixtures at entrances, pedestrian paths, decorative lighting, and other areas where glare and intensity will pose a nuisance.

Rewiring and refurbishment of historic original fixtures are encouraged. Quality reproductions appropriate to the building style are acceptable. If no documentation regarding the original fixtures is available, inconspicuous fixtures are preferred to inappropriately ornate or nostalgic reproductions not original to the site.

**Air Conditioners and Emergency Power Generators - The installation location and screening of compressor units for central air-conditioning and emergency power generators are subject to review by the APRB.** Exterior piping for central air-conditioning systems and emergency power generators should be concealed inside the building envelope, minimally visible on the exterior of the building. Piping should be concealed behind leaders. Paint piping to match surrounding materials. Screen exterior air-conditioning and emergency power generator equipment with full shrubbery or fencing consistent with the character of the house. Window air-conditioning units should be installed so that the elements of the historic windows are not damaged or removed. "Split System" or central air-conditioning removes the need for unsightly, style-marring window units.

**Technology** - Radio aerials and antennas and satellite dishes (and technologies not even dreamed of yet!) should not be visible from the street. Paint antennas, dishes, and cabling with colors that blend into the building. Conceal cable and security wiring behind leaders.

## *Avoid:*

- Blocking or obscuring character-defining features.
- Removing, altering, or otherwise damaging significant architectural details when installing equipment.
- Placing equipment in plain view from the public right-of-way. Install air-conditioners and/or generators in hidden locations, such as the rear yard.

## Fencing

In the nineteenth century, fenced front yards were common, in part to keep wandering livestock out of residential yards. Over the last century, front yard fences have become much less common in the village, and only a few exist today.

The installation of a fence requires a permit from the Village Code Enforcement Officer, the style and location are subject to review by the APRB, and the Village Code requires that the "good" or finished side of a fence face outward, toward adjacent property. Rails and braces should be on the inside. The Village Code regulates the permissible height of fences, depending on location. Refer to § 98 of the Village Code: Fences, Hedges, and Structures. The Code is available online at http://www.villageofpittsford.org/.

Fences in rear and side yards are usually appropriate, and are most often closed or solid, to provide privacy and/or to hide parking. Closed or solid front-yard fences are historically inappropriate in front yards. The Village Code limits front-yard fences to a maximum height of three feet. If a front-yard fence is proposed, it should be open in design and lower in height, so as not to block views. Please check with the Code Enforcement Officer to determine the maximum allowable fence height for any proposed installation.

**Materials** - Appropriate fencing materials include wood, wrought iron, cast iron, and, in some cases, aluminum, if it simulates the appearance of wrought iron. Chain-link fencing is not appropriate in front yards or other visible locations. In some instances, chain-link fencing is permitted if it is largely out of view from the public way and is coated black or green.

Vinyl fencing materials are not permitted because their appearance is not compatible with the village's historic district. Typically, vinyl fence components are hollow with steel bar reinforcement inside the rails. Durability and panel sagging can be long-term issues with vinyl fences.

Fence construction with substitute materials, such as wood/plastic composite, fiberglass, and cellular PVC, that are solid, are assembled in the same manner as wood, and can be painted, may be appropriate if the style of fence is appropriate and/or does not exceed the structural limitations of the material. Good examples would include wood composite and solid cellular PVC.

Pressure-treated lumber is a common and inexpensive material that can work well for fence construction, provided that it is painted or stained after installation. Cedar is another common fence material. Cedar is more costly, but it is more stable and tends to warp and crack less than pressure-treated lumber.

**Style** - Prefabricated fencing is much less costly than custom constructed fencing. However, stock lumberyard styles are limited, and the quality and lightweight materials are usually not very durable.

Ornamental or period-style fencing that is low and features boxed and capped posts, close spaced pickets or balusters, and fence sections that mount between the posts, leaving the appearance of the fence identical from both sides, is appropriate for front-yard and side-yard settings in the village. Higher fencing designed for privacy, where rails and braces are mounted outside the posts and the panels are essentially solid, is more appropriate in a rear-yard setting, and perhaps a side-yard setting, if the height is reduced.

The style and age of the house, the character of the surrounding neighborhood, and other landscape and garden features are all important factors to look at when picking a style of fence. Some settings may suggest a formal, painted fence, one that ties in with the style of the house. In other instances, a less formal, natural wood color fence, one that is short in length or is incorporated into an overall landscape concept in a back yard, may be appropriate.

Split rail or ranch-style fencing may be appropriate in a rural or Postwar neighborhood setting, but is seldom functional or appropriate in the older, higher density neighborhoods in the village.

## Paint and Color

**Maintenance** - No other single maintenance issue so drives homeowners to seek out inappropriate alterations and improvements to their historic property than does that of peeling paint. Nearly all historic structures require some sort of painting maintenance, even masonry structures have window and some trim components that require painting.

There are many reasons why paint fails on historic structures, enough so that entire books have been written about it. A few of the most common causes and their remedies are described below. Painting is a fact of life when owning an historic building.

- Minimize moisture in your house by venting bathrooms, kitchens, and appliances.
- Keep your basement dry by installing a sump pump, venting it during summer months (wet season) and ensuring that the grade around your house drains away from your house.
- Clean and inspect your gutters and downspouts in the spring and fall. Make sure your downspout extensions are either tied into a storm drain or carry the water away from your house.
- Invest in proper surface preparation before painting especially when oil paint exists below more recent latex paints.

**Color** - The APRB does not regulate paint because it is a temporary material. A building must be repainted every seven to ten years. The APRB does recommend considering the age and style of

your building or house before selecting colors. Information on appropriate colors for each period and style is available at the Village Hall.

Permanent colors do require approval by the APRB. Stone, brick, slate, exposed concrete block, stucco, pre-finished metals, and other similar materials are all considered permanent colors that require a Certificate of Appropriateness from the APRB.

SECTION 5A

# Rehabilitation Standards for Postwar Houses

## Introduction

The Village of Pittsford is known for its well-preserved nineteenth and early twentieth-century buildings, including Federal, Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, Queen Anne, Italianate, and Craftsman style houses, as well as a number of excellent examples of vernacular buildings. These buildings define the unique physical character of the center of the village. In 1971, the entire village was designated as a local preservation district. The designation of the entire village was justified because:

1. Most village buildings are over 50 years old and represent historic vernacular architectural styles.
2. Changes to newer areas affect the setting of older buildings, neighborhoods, and districts.
3. The whole village as an entity is more significant and valuable as a resource than the sum of its individual buildings.

Because the preservation district boundaries coincide with the village limits, all buildings within the village, regardless of age, are included in the district, with no regulatory distinction between "contributing" and "noncontributing" buildings. All building owners must receive a Certificate of Appropriateness (C of A) from the Architectural and Preservation Review Board before making exterior alterations to their building.

The purpose of this section is to:

1. Identify and define the key architectural features that define Post-World War II residential architecture in the village.
2. Assist owners with the preservation of the character of their houses.
3. Provide the Architectural and Preservation Review Board with reasonable criteria to evaluate Certificate of Appropriateness applications for Post-WWII houses.

Now more than 50 years old, houses built in the 1940s and 1950s have passed the first threshold established by the National Park Service to determine if a property is potentially eligible for National Register listing. Properties under 50 years old may qualify if they are "exceptionally significant" at the local, state, or national level. Although few communities have designated large numbers of Post-WWII buildings, and few examples of design standards for these buildings exist, there is a growing trend to recognize the importance of historic resources from this period.

During the twentieth century, home construction in Pittsford was influenced by national trends. Due to the Great Depression and World War II, residential construction in Pittsford nearly ceased between the late 1920s and 1945. After the war, housing construction boomed. Several neighborhoods and scattered houses were constructed during this period within the village. Of the approximately 800 buildings located within the village, approximately 185 houses – nearly one-quarter of the total housing stock – were built after World War II, most of these between 1948 and 1966. By the late 1960s, the village was largely built out, and residential construction slowed once again. The handful of houses built in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s were built individually or in small groups, either on infill lots along the existing streets, on "flag lots," or on new streets carved into the interior of blocks.

Houses built during the Post-WWII period differ sharply from those built a few decades earlier. Postwar residential construction relied on improved mass production of building components and of houses themselves. Mass production, cost efficiency, and national stylistic trends during the period favored simpler architectural forms and fewer decorative details. As the automobile became the predominant form of transportation, neighborhoods were designed with wider lots, without sidewalks, and incorporating attached two-car garages on every house.

Most Post-WWII village houses fall into two categories: custom-built houses and mass-produced builder houses.

Custom-built houses were often architect designed for individual owners. These houses often have a unique character and may possess distinctive architectural features that respond to the home's orientation and site. These houses were often built on single lots or in very small subdivisions. Examples can be found on Sutherland Street, Stonegate Lane, Jackson Park, and Eastview Terrace, among others. Custom-built houses were usually built with high-quality construction materials similar to materials used in older homes. Many of these houses employ historically derived details that represent a continuation of motifs common in the village in the Pre-War period. Floor plans vary tremendously, reflecting the owner's preferences. Although some of the village's custom-built Post-WWII houses are sited in traditional relationships to the street, many are tucked back on large lots with lush landscaping. Some Post-WWII custom-built homes incorporate traditional materials and styling, and therefore do not stand out from earlier homes; others are more intentionally Modern in design and clearly represent their own period in history.

Mass-produced builder houses were built speculatively by developers subdividing larger plots of land into numerous residential lots. Most houses located in these neighborhoods represent popular Postwar styles, such as Minimal Traditional, Cape Cod, Ranch, and Post-WWII Colonial Revival. These houses and neighborhoods are similar to Post-WWII housing subdivisions in the Town of Pittsford and elsewhere in the suburban Rochester region. The village contains two sizable Post-WWII subdivisions: East Jefferson Circle was developed by W. Brown, and the Courtenay Circle/Heatherhurst Drive/Green Hill Lane neighborhood was developed by Robert Wilmot, Neil Hirsch, and Sam Morrell. Houses in both areas were designed by the architects Stevens and Burton. Houses in the two neighborhoods exhibit uniformity in style, layout, and materials. In some cases, mass-produced builder houses were built on individual infill lots or in small groups of two or three similar houses. Examples include the north side of East Jefferson Road, South Street, Rand Place extension, Austin Park, and Maple Street.

In the Village of Pittsford, most mass-produced builder houses fall into five general categories:

1. Minimal Traditional
2. Ranch
3. Cape Cod
4. Split-Level Ranch
5. Post-WWII Colonial Revival

These styles overlap, and many houses fall into more than one category. The Post-WWII Colonial Revival style is a broad category that may be further refined as time passes and historians gain a better perspective on the architecture of this period.

Compared with houses constructed before the 1940s, the five Post-WWII styles exhibit less decorative detail, so it is usually easiest to classify them using overall mass, height, and orientation, rather than specific decorative details. In early twentieth-century architecture, the mass and floor plan of a Tudor Revival house could be virtually identical to that of a Colonial Revival house, with superficial details establishing distinct style languages. By contrast, in Post-WWII housing, it is the mass, floor plan, orientation, and roofline that distinguish a Cape Cod from a Ranch-style house, while siding, window surrounds, doors, porch posts, and other details are virtually interchangeable.

## Methodology

This section of this document was prepared by The Landmark Society of Western New York for the Village of Pittsford. The project was managed by Katie Eggers Comeau, with research and field work conducted by interns Daniel Palmer and Nimisha Thakur. The first step was a literature review, involving the analysis and collection of documents from other regions where similar studies have been conducted. These models were used to create a working draft of the style guide.

Following the literature review, the project team visited the site for an overview of village architecture. The two interns then conducted historical research, which involved going through the 1976 architectural inventory books to produce a list of properties built between 1945 and 1976. The interns assigned each of the properties a stylistic category based on the working draft of the style guide, and conducted field work to photograph the questionable properties whose styles could not be identified. The team then extended the inventory beyond the initial 1976 cut-off date, by using building permit records to identify houses built after 1976 and visiting each of those properties to determine its character-defining features. The project manager incorporated the field survey information into a revised version of the draft style guide, verified the property inventory, and wrote the supporting text.

## Minimal Traditional

1935 - 1955

The Minimal Traditional style first appeared during the 1930s and continued through the early years of the Post-WWII period, representing the first wave in the housing boom. These houses are characterized by a traditional form, with minimal decorative detail. Typically small and asymmetrical, they have few ornamental features, but display a relatively high level of workmanship and some high-quality interior features. Examples can be seen on Maple Street, Rand Place, Green Hill Lane, and East Jefferson Circle. Later, in the 1950s, this house type increasingly overlapped with the Cape Cod and Ranch house forms as those grew in popularity, and some houses do not fall neatly into one category or the other. Generally, however, Minimal Traditional houses can be identified by their compact size, simple, but generally traditional, features, and early construction date.

Character-defining features:

- **Orientation and setting:** Traditional relationship to the street; typically, the primary gable roof form is oriented parallel to the street with a street-facing front gable. Houses were often sited individually or in small groups along existing village streets, although some were built on newly developed streets.

- **Form:** Usually 1 or 1½ stories; compact floor plan; generally asymmetrical.
- **Interior space:** Relatively traditional floor plan.
- **Exterior materials:** Typically wood siding, but can be almost any material.
- **Roof:** Usually cross-gable with low or intermediate pitch; prominent front-facing gable is common; lack of eaves or overhangs.

- **Porch:** Sometimes a small front porch, portico, or stoop, which may be recessed.
- **Windows**: Typically double hung, multiple panes.
- **Door:** Typically wood with solid panels.

- **Details:** Very little architectural detail or ornament. Details, usually related to the Colonial Revival style, may be present in a very simplified form around the entrance; for example, porch supports are usually simple posts. Shutters are common.

- **Garage:** Early examples were typically built without garages, or with detached garages. Later examples may have attached garages; where attached garage exists, it is a subordinate element.

- **Color:** White or light colors with dark accents were typical.

## Ranch

1955-1980

Ranch houses became very popular in the Post-WWII period, particularly in the 1960s and 1970s. Nationwide, this house type had its roots in the west, where long, low rooflines were reminiscent of the Prairie Style of the early twentieth century. One-story houses with deep roof overhangs, a strong horizontal emphasis, and horizontal ribbons of windows reflect this emphasis. The decorative details may vary, with many of the houses in Pittsford displaying historically inspired details, such as diamond-paned windows and shutters, while a few are distinctly contemporary in their styling. Exotic variations of the style that are common in some regions of the country are not found here. The popularity of the style reflects a desire for an informal lifestyle, one-story living space, and the increased reliance on the automobile.

- **Form:** One story, horizontal orientation with wide street frontage. Some examples have a shallow L-shaped plan, but retain their overall orientation parallel to the street. Overall design is asymmetrical.

- **Interior space:** Open floor plan.

- **Materials:** Shingle or wood lap siding; 13" reveal is common (and nearly universal in the Courtenay Circle/Heatherhurst Drive/Green Hill Lane subdivision); there are a few examples where brick is the original exterior material and a few examples of narrow stone veneer.

- **Roof:** Low- to moderate-pitched hipped or gable roof; may have moderate or deep overhang; may have cross gable.

- **Porch:** Porches are not typical of the Ranch form. Often the entry or a portion of the façade is recessed beneath the primary roof to create a shallow enclosure at ground level that is similar to a small porch; where this exists, porch posts are simplified in form.

- **Windows:** Picture, bay, and casement windows are common; may be wood, steel, or aluminum frame. There may be decorative shutters. Diamond-paned windows are fairly common.

- **Door:** May be single or paired; paneled or plain.

- **Details:** Decorative details are minimal.

- **Garage:** Attached, usually with a roofline continuous with the rest of the house.

## Cape Cod
**1920s-present**

The Cape Cod house form was derived from a form typical of colonial New England. The hallmarks of this type of house are its massing (1½ stories, often three bays) and steep gabled roof. Houses of this style in Pittsford are traditional in appearance; there were Cape Cod-style houses built before World War II, as well as after. Although this was a common house type nationwide, it is not as common as the other Post-WWII house types in the Village of Pittsford; this can be attributed to the fact that the builders of the Courtenay Circle/Heatherhurst Drive/Green Hill Lane neighborhood, the largest concentration of Post-WWII housing, did not build any Cape Cod-style houses. Cape Cod-style houses appear singly or in small groups on streets like East/West Jefferson Roads, Stonegate Lane, and Rand Place.

- **Form:** Usually 1½ story, horizontal orientation; somewhat symmetrical with central entrance common.

- **Interior space:** Relatively formal arrangement with traditionally delineated rooms; center entrance common.

- **Materials:** Wood siding (wide clapboard or shingle), may be brick.

- **Roof:** Steep gabled roof, ridgeline parallel to street, with a small overhang and dormers.

- **Porch:** Usually no front porch.

- **Windows:** Relatively tall with small panes, usually double-hung.

- **Door:** Paneled wood door with simple Colonial-inspired detail surrounding it.

- **Details:** Usually simplified Colonial Revival details are present; shutters are common.

- **Garage:** Detached, or attached with a breezeway and clearly subordinate to the main house form; early examples were built without garages.

## Split-Level

1957-1970

The Split-Level house was a novel form that developed at the end of the 1950s and remained popular through the 1970s. Split-Level houses are innovative for their use of space, with the interior divided according to use: typically the kitchen, dining, and living rooms were on the main level, with a family room a half-level down and bedrooms a half-level up. Like the other house types of this era, Split-Level houses characteristically display little decorative detail; where ornamentation exists, it is minimal and may reflect Colonial, Modern, or Prairie influences in a very simplified manner. Thus, the Split Level house shares many characteristics with the Post-WWII Colonial or the Ranch-style house. As with the Ranch style, the garage is fully integrated into the house, reflecting the predominance of the automobile in this era.

- **Form:** Asymmetrical; one section of the house is a half-story taller than the other, and often has a front-facing gable (side-facing gable on the lower portion is common). Hipped roofs are common as well. May be three levels.
- **Interior space:** Innovative organization of interior space with functions separated by half-levels.
- **Materials:** Wood siding, wide reveal; some brick or stone veneer is possible.
- **Roof:** Low to moderate pitch, multiple levels, with cross-gable; hip or gable is possible.
- **Windows:** Picture and bay windows are common. Early examples typically had double-hung windows; later examples had sliding windows.
- **Door:** Modern door, often a solid wood door with small windows.
- **Details:** Little decorative ornamentation. Where present, details may reflect some Colonial Revival influence, but other stylistic references are possible.
- **Garage:** Fully integrated.

## Postwar Colonial Revival

1940s-present

The Postwar Colonial Revival is the continuation of a trend in which architects and builders recycled motifs from the eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries. While early twentieth -century Colonial Revival-style houses were fairly faithful to historical precedent, in the Postwar period, Colonial motifs were usually suggested rather than overtly imitated. The floor plan and massing of the houses are traditional and generally symmetrical; the most common version of the form is a three-bay, two-story center entrance house. Some have a slightly overhanging second story, evocative of Colonial-era New England house forms. A less common variation seen in a few houses in the village is an L-shaped or other floor plan. The village also has several examples of houses with more overt Colonial Revival details, such as two-story columns; usually, these are simplified and abstracted, rather than exactly mimicking historical precedents.

- **Form:** Two stories; usually symmetrical. Second story may slightly overhang the first. The most common variation of this house form is three bays wide with a center entrance. A rectilinear floor plan is the most common, although a variation has an L-shaped floor plan.

- **Interior space:** Relatively formal with center entrance.

- **Materials:** Wood siding, typically wide clapboard or shingle; some have partial brick facades. Starting in the 1970s, a wider variety of original siding materials was possible, including masonite, asbestos, aluminum, and (particularly starting in the 1980s) vinyl, but these do not appear to have been used as the original material on any houses in the Village of Pittsford. Wood siding with a wide reveal was the near-universal exterior material in the Courtenay Circle/Heatherhurst Drive/Green Hill Lane neighborhood.

- **Roof:** Moderate pitch, gabled, with little overhang and no returns.

- **Porch:** Shallow front porch at ground level (not raised); porch may be two stories. Columns are narrow and unornamented, and there is no railing. Alternatively, there may be a small portico or stoop.

- **Windows:** Most are double-hung with multiple panes; picture and bay windows are also common. Second-story windows are just below the eaves.

- **Door:** Traditionally, the door is styled plain or paneled.

- **Details:** The details vary; some are very simple with little or no decorative ornament, while others have details such as simplified columns that demonstrate specific Colonial influence.

- **Garage:** Attached.

## Design Standards for Postwar Mass-Produced Builder Houses

Postwar subdivision homes were constructed with manufactured, and generally interchangeable, elements; the goal of design review should be to maintain the general design character of homes and the neighborhood. Compared with older houses, exterior materials used during the Postwar Period tend to have a shorter lifespan and may require replacement. In some cases, certain materials are not practical to replace in-kind, because they are not durable or are no longer readily available. Certain types of aluminum windows, steel casement windows, and asbestos shingles are a few examples of building components that were once common, but are no longer readily available. Alterations should respect the scale and design vocabulary of the neighborhood and should maintain a consistent streetscape. Character-defining features, as described above, should be respected and retained wherever possible.

- Exterior materials:
  - Original exterior materials should be retained and repaired, rather than replaced. Vinyl, aluminum, and other synthetic siding materials were not commonly used as original materials when these houses were built and are not appropriate to the style.
  - Newer materials, such as fiber-cement siding, may be appropriate if properly installed with dimensions and texture matching the original, and if their appearance is indistinguishable from the original material from arm's length view (or from the public right-of-way, depending on how strict the commission wants to be).

- Ornamentation:
  - Restrained, simplified ornamentation is typical of all Post-WWII styles. Original ornamentation should be preserved where it exists; new decorative ornamentation that was not on the building historically, or is not appropriate to the era, should not

be added. This includes features intended to give the building a more traditional, pre-war appearance.
  - Specific subdivisions (East Jefferson Circle, Courtenay Circle/Heatherhurst Drive/Green Hill Lane) used a consistent design vocabulary with mass-produced, and generally interchangeable, details, even among different house types. Because the design vocabulary was so consistent, it may be appropriate to draw inspiration from other houses in the same subdivision in the case of additions or alterations.

- Windows:
  - Original windows should be retained, unless they are beyond repair. Wood windows, in particular, are often relatively easy and inexpensive to repair, and homeowners can save considerable money by keeping their windows in good repair or hiring someone to repair them, rather than replacing them.
  - Unobtrusive exterior or interior storm windows are appropriate and (along with appropriate repair) is the preferred method of increasing the energy performance of windows.
  - With that said, the quality of windows from 1945 on is not as high as the quality of windows built of old-growth wood before 1945. The expected lifespan of these windows is not as long as for earlier buildings, and replacement may be needed sooner.
  - If replacement is necessary, the configuration, type, and overall appearance of windows should match the original. For example, a double-hung window should not be replaced by a casement window.
  - The use of newer materials, such as vinyl-clad or aluminum-clad windows, may be an appropriate substitution for wood windows if the appearance is indistinguishable from wood from the public right-of-way (or arm's-length). Substitute material should be similar in form, configuration, color, texture, and profile to the windows they replace. Decision of appropriateness will be determined on a case-by-case basis.
  - The original muntin configuration and dimensions should be replicated as closely as possible. Interior muntins or muntins sandwiched between panes of glass do not sufficiently resemble the appearance of a true divided-light window; windows with exterior and interior-applied dividers, plus spacers within the panes of glass (for double-glazed windows), are preferable.
  - If windows are replaced, replacement of the sash only is preferred. The new sash should fit the opening; window openings should not be reduced or increased in size to accommodate ill-fitting windows.

- Additions:
  - Rear additions are appropriate and should be subordinate in scale, height, and roofline to the main body of the house.
  - In order to maintain a consistent streetscape, front additions are generally not appropriate.

- Streetscape Considerations:
    - Additions and new construction should be consistent with the neighborhood, including uniformly deep setbacks, consistent side yards, one- to two-story height, and consistent scale. Front additions are generally not appropriate, as they alter these characteristics. New buildings that are much larger or smaller than the typical scale of houses in the neighborhood are also not appropriate.

## Custom-Built Houses

While most post-WWII houses in the village are located in the large subdivisions, some are located in scattered locations, and were designed in a more customized manner. This became increasingly the case as the village became nearly fully developed and few building lots remained. Future study will continue to refine and add detail to these descriptions, and develop better names and descriptions for the categories, as there is not yet a consistent terminology used by architectural historians to describe architecture of this era.

Generally, the houses fall into two categories: "Small-Tract" houses that appear to be somewhat customized, but that display characteristics indicating a common design vocabulary; and "Individual Custom" houses that are one-of-a-kind, designed for individual owners.

**Small-Tract Development, 1980s-1990s**

In a few locations, one to eight houses were built either on traditional street-fronting lots or on small new streets carved into mid-block locations off of the traditional streets. While, due to their small numbers and evidence of customization in their design, these could all be identified as "custom" houses and treated as such in the design standards, there are certain design characteristics common to these houses that can be called out individually.

## Late Twentieth Century Ranch

- Massing and layout: Similar to the ranch-style builder houses described previously: primary gable roof; may have secondary cross-gables, particularly at entrance. Broad side usually faces the street, although sideways orientation is possible.

- Footprint: Fairly simple, L-shaped or rectangular.
- Windows: Single-paned casement windows (no mullions) common.
- Exterior materials: Wood siding (either vertical or horizontal) is the primary cladding material.
- Details: No historically-derived decorative detail.
- Garage: Fully integrated with the house.

## Late Modern Snout House (contemporary)

- Footprint: may be complex, asymmetrical, and not traditional; may have an L shape or other complex footprint. Garage projects forward of front facade.
- Interior space: often an open floor plan.

- Massing: complex, and may be composed of different sections having different heights and roof pitches. Hip or gabled roofs are common. Some examples have very complex rooflines with multiple intersecting forms.
- Windows: Single-paned casement windows (no mullions) common; nontraditional shapes (e.g., triangles, trapezoids) and proportions common. Various window types and shapes on the same house. Windows are often very large.

- Exterior materials: Wood siding (either vertical or horizontal) is the primary cladding material, sometimes in combination with light-colored brick.
- Relationship to the street: Nontraditional; built in small clusters on newly created dead-end/cul-de-

sac streets, set back from the historic roads (e.g., Durham Lane, Village Grove). Primary entrance may not be obvious from the street; house may be oriented in a direction other than toward the street (e.g., toward the Erie Canal).

- Garage: Oriented to the street, fully oriented with the house, and may be the most prominent feature of the façade.

- Details: No historically-derived decorative detail.

## Neo-Traditional

- Layout and massing: Traditional; most are two stories in height with traditional roof pitch; usually a gabled roof with one or more cross-gables.

- Details: Clearly imitative of traditional design, especially Queen Anne; windows, porches, shutters, and other details mimic historical precedent, but proportions are not accurate to historical models. Some details that have functional origins (e.g., shutters) are used in a decorative fashion, and are not functional. Details may be used in combination or relationship to one another that would not be seen on traditional examples. Simulated divided-light windows are common.

- Garage: Fully integrated with the house.

- Relationship to the street: May be traditional, in an infill setting, with primary façade parallel to the street; or the house may be located on a new cul-de-sac set back from the older street.

- Materials: Clapboard siding is the most common exterior material; may be used in combination with brick.

## Individual Custom Houses

The village has a fine tradition of distinctive, custom-built houses. These houses were individually designed for specific owners on specific sites, and each is unique in terms of its materials, form, and/or design. Some of these could be categorized as reflecting the Minimal Traditional, Ranch, Split-Level, or Post-WWII Colonial Revival design approach, but others cannot be labeled according to any of these categories. While detailed research into each custom-designed house was beyond the scope of this study, the project team did research a few examples to determine what type of information was available.

The survey team used the houses at 44 Sutherland Street, 43 Monroe Avenue, and 44 Rand Place to test the availability of more detailed records. In all three cases, the survey and/or the computerized records contained valuable information about the appearance of the house in the 1970s, original architect/builder, and alterations to the original design. This information is undoubtedly very helpful to the APRB in reviewing applications, and the village is fortunate to have retained such well-organized and accessible records.

## Design Standards for Small-Tract and Custom Houses

Because so few small-tract and custom houses exist in the village, and because they exhibit a high degree of individuality, it would be impossible to create a specific set of design standards for individual "styles." Each house will have to be considered on a case-by-case basis, much as a one-of-a-kind house of an earlier era would be considered. A useful summary of this approach appears in the *Training Manual for Historic Preservation Commissions,* produced by the State Historic Preservation Office:

1. Gauge the importance and location of affected historic features through site visits, research and discussion;
2. Consider the minimal acceptable treatment possible to accomplish an applicant's request, and
3. In cases where discordant design elements cannot be avoided, learn how to ameliorate the effect through innovative solutions.

Some factors to be taken into consideration include the context (surrounding neighborhood), whether the house was designed by a notable architect, and the distinctiveness and quality of the original design. These houses typically used elements of higher quality than the mass-produced windows, doors, etc., seen in the large Post-WWII tracts, and care should be taken to retain those elements that contribute to the character of the design.

SECTION 6

# Business District Standards

## Introduction

Located seven miles from downtown Rochester in a suburban area, the Village of Pittsford remains a working example of a traditional village downtown. The historic center of the village comprises one of the earliest and best-preserved collections of nineteenth-century architecture in the region. The community library, parks, schools, banks, churches, lodgings, coffee shops, a dairy, a working farm, village and town offices, and restaurants are all within easy walking distance of the Four Corners. Schoen Place, a shopping area along the banks of the Erie Canal, is an outstanding example of adaptive reuse. Buildings originally designed as canal and railroad warehouses have been adapted for retail uses, including a coal tower that has been reincarnated as a restaurant.

Pittsford Village is a community that has refused to forsake its nineteenth-century charm, grace, and individuality. Pittsford is a unique place that has prospered in the twentieth century because, while planning for the future, it has remained committed to retaining its heritage.

The following standards in this section were developed to assist property owners and village merchants located in the village business district with common changes, such as display signs, as well as more significant changes that may arise during repairs and alterations. Most problems occurring during a rehabilitation project arise from a property owner's decision to alter, obscure, or remove a feature(s), rather than to leave the feature(s) in place and repair it (them). These Design Standards identify common rehabilitation and remodeling mistakes that should be avoided to preserve the appearance of the historic building and reduce maintenance costs.

## Signs

Signs in the village's business district should be sized to the pedestrian, not to the automobile, and should convey only the essential message, and not display excessive advertising. Essential messages include the name of a business and a brief descriptor, such as "Realty," "Accountant," "Men's Clothing." Information such as hours of operation or types of merchandise is best displayed in less prominent locations, such as on a storefront window.

The following types of signs are not permitted in the Village of Pittsford:

- Internally illuminated signs.
- Signs projecting above eaves, cornice, or rooflines.
- Flashing, intermittently lighted, or moving signs.
- Sign lighting which creates glare for pedestrians or drivers.
- Neon signs.
- Back-lighted opaque letter signs.
- Projecting or freestanding signs (in most locations).

In addition:

- Painted or applied signs on glass shall occupy no more than 20 percent of any storefront window.
- One square foot of sign is allowed for each lineal foot of frontage, up to a maximum of 30 square feet.

For complete information on village sign regulations, refer to Chapter 168 "Signs" of the Village Code. The APRB may reduce the size and number of signs to below that permitted by the Zoning Code. Please check with the Code Enforcement Officer on the applicable code requirements before planning your sign size and location.

## Appropriate

## Inappropriate

**Sign Design Considerations**

- Appropriate sign materials include wood, metal, medium density fiberboard, and heavy-duty urethane foam. While plastic is not a traditional material, some plastic signs may be appropriate.

- The thickness of the sign material should be enough that the appearance of depth is created, and the sign does not look like a temporary poster; otherwise, a frame might be suggested.

- Highly reflective material is not appropriate. Paper or cardboard signs set in windows are discouraged, as they block views inside and often appear disorderly.

- Lighting for hanging and wall signs should come from wall-mounted gooseneck lamps or spotlights, with light directed away from viewers' eyes as much as possible. Any electrical conduit to these fixtures should be as hidden as possible. The fixtures need to be submitted to the APRB for review along with the sign application.

- The method of attaching signs to walls should avoid damaging the building. If the sign is to be attached to a masonry building, the anchors should be installed into the mortar joints, rather than into the brick or stone. Likewise, attaching an electrical conduit should be done carefully to avoid damaging the building, and the conduit should be concealed as much as possible.

- Signs should not overwhelm the facade or cover any significant architectural features of the building, such as windows, transom windows above doors, and trim.

- Signs on neighboring buildings should be similar in scale and design. The signs should not be the same; indeed, variety in signage adds to the flavor of the commercial districts. But signs should be coordinated in style, location, and material.

- Hanging signs inform pedestrians on the sidewalk, as well as occupants of vehicles on the street, and add character to a streetscape. The brackets can be highly decorative, and won't cover or damage architectural details.

**Recommended for Lawn or Ground Signs**

- Lawn or ground signs should be as simple and as small as possible, conveying only that information needed to guide a first-time visitor to the site. Essential information would include the name of a business and the street number, not the street name. Tall flag or pole signs are usually not appropriate.

- As with all signs, a lawn sign should fit with the style of the building and the other signs on the street. For example, a sign in front of a building with arched windows might also have the arch motif. A wood sign is appropriate to a wood building, and a stone sign to a stone building.

- The colors of the sign should relate to the colors of the building behind it.

- Wood or wood-like lawn signs should be supported by posts with moderate decoration. Common posts are 4-inch square, painted wood.

- Plantings around signs are appropriate, provided the size of the plants does not cause the sign to appear higher.

- If a sign is to be illuminated externally, the lighting fixtures must be submitted as part of the APRB application.

## Storefronts

Historic storefronts should be retained. An important feature of storefronts is transparency, which encourages window-shopping, and which adds life to a streetscape. Transparency is encouraged. Any new storefronts, or any modifications to existing storefronts, should permit maximum visibility into the space. Window transoms above doorways and storefronts, also prominent features of traditional storefronts, should be retained and not concealed. Windowless, blank walls are prohibited. Changes that reduce transparency and mask the building's architectural features are not permitted.

The front facade of a commercial building consists of two parts: the lower facade, which serves as

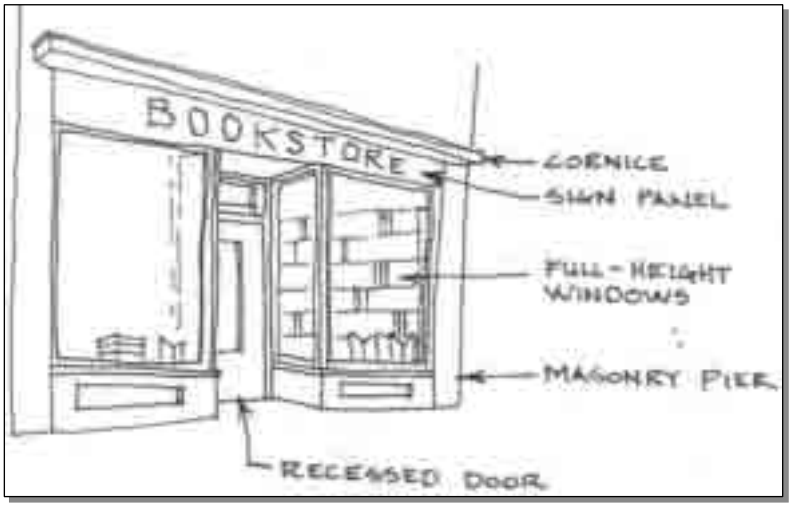
the building's mercantile expression, and the upper facade, which expresses the upper-floor activities of the building. It is important to realize that successful rehabilitation of a commercial building involves the entire facade or storefront. Too many insensitive remodels have resulted in a lower facade denuded of its historic character, while the upper facade has a new paint job and a restored cornice.

Pedestrian entrances animate the public realm of the street. Village zoning requires that main entrances must face the public street and connect by sidewalk to the public sidewalk. Closing the existing front entrance to a building or moving the main entrance to the side or rear is prohibited.

**Storefronts connect interior activity with the street.**

**Storefront displays animate the South Main Street Business District.**

## Storefront Elements



**Repairs and Rehabilitation for Storefronts**

- Retain and repair existing storefronts, including windows, sash, doors, transoms, signage, and decorative features around windows, doors, and along the cornice, where such features contribute to the architectural and historic character of the building.
- Repair storefronts by reinforcing the historic materials. Repairs should be limited to replacement in-kind (or with compatible substitute materials) of deteriorated or missing parts of storefronts where there are surviving prototypes.
- Where original or early storefronts no longer exist or are too deteriorated to save, retain the commercial character of the building through contemporary design that is compatible with the scale, design, materials, color, and texture of the historic buildings. Although more costly, owners may also consider an accurate restoration of the original storefront design based on historical research and physical evidence.
- Avoid removing or radically changing storefronts and those features that are important in defining the overall character of the building, resulting in a watered-down version of the original.
- Base the rehabilitation work on sound historical evidence, and avoid creating a false historical appearance. Avoid such hackneyed "colonial" features as carriage lamps, eagles, bay windows, broken-arched pediments, and dentiled cornices, where none are known to have existed.
- Do not remove a storefront that is not repairable without replacing it, and do not replace it with a storefront that does not convey the same visual appearance as the original.
- Always try to repair or replace on a limited basis, rather than embark on wholesale replacement. Do not introduce a new design that is incompatible in size, scale, material, and/or color with its surroundings.
- Pay attention to the materials used on the storefront, their age and architectural integrity, and their relationship to other storefronts. Stripping storefronts of historic materials, such as wood, cast iron, terra cotta, glass, and brick, to create a smooth "modern" appearance is not encouraged. Even worse is using substitute material as replacement parts when these replacement materials fail to convey the same visual appearance as the surviving parts.
- In traditional storefronts, the large glass panes are usually held in narrow frames. These are made of wood, iron, or steel, and have some degree of detail. Modern aluminum window frames are usually much broader and deeper than traditional frames, and lack detail. The look of the traditional frames is highly preferred.
- Traditional storefront doors, like the storefronts themselves, are typically as transparent as possible. Commonly, traditional doors have wood panels on the lower half and large glass panes in the upper half, or are all glass. They typically have 6-inch rails and stiles,

and a 10-12 inch bottom rail. Modern aluminum storefront doors should be avoided in historic storefronts.

- False or simulated windows, which commonly use tinted, frosted, reflective, smoked, or opaque (spandrel) glass, are inappropriate. Windows on upper floors should be of historic design, and should fill the original openings. The openings should not be filled in or blocked in any manner.

## Awnings

Installation of awning(s) requires a permit. The color, size, and type of fabric are subject to approval be the APRB. The exclusive use of roll-type, sloped awnings was typical from the mid nineteenth-century until 1970. Fixed, rounded awnings did not become popular until the late 1970s. Because they are historically inappropriate, the use of fixed, rounded awnings on historic buildings is prohibited. The use of rigid-frame, rounded entrance canopies is permitted only where it is deemed architecturally compatible with the building to which it is attached.

**Recommendations and Requirements for Awning Installation**

- Awnings are appropriate over entrances, storefronts, large first-floor windows, and upper-floor windows.
- Awnings should be made of low-sheen fabrics with a traditional appearance, such as canvas or acrylic. Common traditional colors include black, dark green, navy, and maroon. Vertical stripes are an appropriate option. The use of rigid, reflective, and translucent materials is prohibited.
- Wood, metal, and internally illuminated translucent awnings are prohibited.
- Awnings may be retractable or fixed. Fixed awnings must be structurally capable of withstanding both high winds and winter snow loads. Any awning situated over a public walkway or drive in the village must be a retractable, roll-type fabric awning.
- Placement should be in a traditional position, and should not conceal significant architectural features.
- When an appropriate location on the building is not available, sign lettering is permitted on the lower front flap of the awning. All lettering and graphics count toward a building's allowed signage under the Zoning Code. Lettering on other surfaces of an awning is prohibited.
- The shape of the awning should fit the opening behind it. The flap or valence is typically no wider than 12".

- On both fully extended roll-up awnings and fixed awnings, the lower flap of the awning shall be at least 7'-6" above the sidewalk.
- Awnings on a house should be placed in a logical pattern, such as on all windows on a facade, or on just the windows on the first floor; they should usually not span across multiple openings. Be aware that awnings can conflict with shutters.

## Appropriate

**Appropriate roll-type awning installation with sign lettering located on the lower flap. Awning is in the rolled-up position.**

## Inappropriate

**Awnings that are too large, too colorful, and/or too complicated in shape diminish the appearance of the building.**

## Refuse and Mechanical Equipment Enclosures

**Dumpsters -** Dumpsters are not permitted in residential areas of the village. All dumpsters require a building permit and require a screening enclosure that is subject to approval by the Code Enforcement Officer.

### Code Requirements

- No dumpster may be placed, and no existing dumpster shall remain, in any location, unless the dumpster is screened by an enclosure consisting of a solid fence or other approved screening material. The enclosure shall exceed the height of the dumpster so that the dumpster is entirely screened from view. The enclosure shall at all times be kept closed and in good repair, so as not to create an unsightly condition.
- Dumpsters and their enclosures shall be set back a minimum of 20 feet from a public

right-of-way or a residential property line, and a minimum of 50 feet from a residential structure. The location of dumpsters on sites with constraints or conditions that do not allow the minimum setbacks shall be subject to the approval of the Village of Pittsford Planning Board.

- All dumpsters shall be kept in good repair and shall be structurally sound and leak proof. All dumpsters shall have watertight doors or covers that securely close all openings and that are easily opened and closed. Dumpsters shall be painted as required to prevent the show of rust and deterioration and be so constructed to stand firmly and safely upright.
- All dumpsters shall be clearly identified with the name of the owner of the dumpster.
- The dumpster lessee shall be responsible for removing any litter, debris, or other matter related to the use of the dumpster, including in the immediate vicinity of the dumpster and the surrounding area. The ground or pavement in the area of the dumpster shall be kept clean and sanitary. Foul odors emanating from the dumpster or the surrounding area shall be eliminated. Vermin shall be exterminated.
- All dumpster doors and covers shall remain securely closed, except when being filled or emptied. Overflowing conditions are prohibited.
- Food waste that is placed in a dumpster shall be in securely sealed plastic bags. Loose refuse other than food waste that may become windblown shall be bagged.
- No dumpster may exceed seven feet in height above grade.
- No dumpster may be placed in any location without a permit and the approval of the Code Enforcement Officer. Unauthorized dumpsters shall be removed by the owner of the dumpster upon the order of the Code Enforcement Officer.
- The design, materials, and location of a required dumpster enclosure shall be subject to the approval of the Code Enforcement Officer. No enclosure may be constructed without such approval.
- On properties with multiple commercial uses, the sharing of dumpsters shall be encouraged and preferred when practical.
- The provisions of this article shall apply to the owner of the dumpster, as well as to the user or lessee of the container. The Code Enforcement Officer may revoke the permit for any dumpster that is in violation of this article, and any such dumpster shall be removed by the owner upon the order of the Code Enforcement Officer.

**Recommendations for Dumpster Enclosure Design**

- Enclosures must be constructed with quality materials of sufficient strength and assembly to withstand environmental elements and normal daily use.

- Plan a buffer zone of a minimum of 12" around all dumpster dimensions, including the inside gate post dimensions to accommodate manufacturing variations between dumpster sizes and to facilitate movement of the dumpsters in and out of the enclosure.

- The height of the enclosure wall should be at least 6” taller than the refuse container but no less than 6’ in height for adequate screening.

- Anchor posts with concrete.

- Any masonry components should not be unfinished block; however, stucco in certain locations of the enclosure may not hold up to daily wear and abuse.

- Vertical wood slats should be tightly spaced to provide maximum screening and should be painted or stained. Slats woven through chain link fencing is not a permitted screening.

- There should be two entrances--one (non-gated) for tenants, and one (gated) for the hauler to remove the dumpsters.

- Enclosure gates must be opaque and of metal frame construction. Gates should be attached to metal posts, each a minimum diameter of 3” and set in concrete with a minimum of 3 hinge attachments per post; under no circumstances should the gates be attached to the enclosure walls.

- Allow room for multiple dumpsters (if any) to sit side-by-side rather than one in front of the other.

- Allow access for refuse trucks, even if all adjacent parking spaces are occupied.

- Locate the dumpster for clear, straight service truck access with no curbs or overhead wires.

- Include devices that lock into the pavement to hold service gates open in windy conditions.

- Pave the enclosure with concrete or asphalt at least 24” larger than the dumpster.

- Slope the floor slightly outward so that water from melting ice drains properly.

- Line your enclosure with a wooden "chair rail" or bumper at dumpster height to minimize wear.

- Use curb stops or angle iron bolted to the pavement to keep the dumpster from slamming

into the enclosure.

- Use signs to discourage midnight dumping and contamination of recyclables.
- Verify that the pavement outside the enclosure is sturdy enough to support a 27-ton truck.
- Leave doors 6-8" off pavement to allow opening in snow and snow removal from inside the enclosure.
- Designate a place to plow snow away from the enclosure entrance.

## Mechanical Equipment

The Village Code requires all mechanical equipment to be concealed from view. The placement, location, and size of any mechanical equipment located outside of any building in any district is subject to review and approval by the APRB, whether or not the equipment can be seen from a public way. Any screening enclosures designed to minimize or hide mechanical equipment are also subject to review and approval by the APRB.

**On this building, an architecturally compatible screen was used to conceal roof top mechanical equipment.**

**Recommendations for Screening**

- To the maximum extent practical, all roof-mounted and ground-mounted mechanical equipment shall be screened from view or isolated, so as not to be visible from any public right-of-way or residential district.
- If possible, it is preferable to locate roof-mounted equipment in such a manner as to minimize the need for roof screens.
- Roof screens, when used, shall be coordinated with the building to maintain a unified appearance.
- Mechanical equipment and open storage areas shall be screened from public streets, alleys, paths, private streets, and abutting lots to a minimum height of six feet. When solid screening is used, the materials shall be compatible with the building.

## Lighting

Common contemporary site lighting practices do not consider the quality of lighting, and usually prescribe far more lighting than is actually needed. Most exterior lighting needs are met with high-intensity light sources, including high-pressure sodium, and metal halide lamps. These fixtures are efficient and long-lived, but can create glare, harsh industrial lighting conditions, and light pollution when not used carefully.

Building-mounted light fixtures require APRB approval. Site lighting fixtures require both Planning Board and APRB approval.

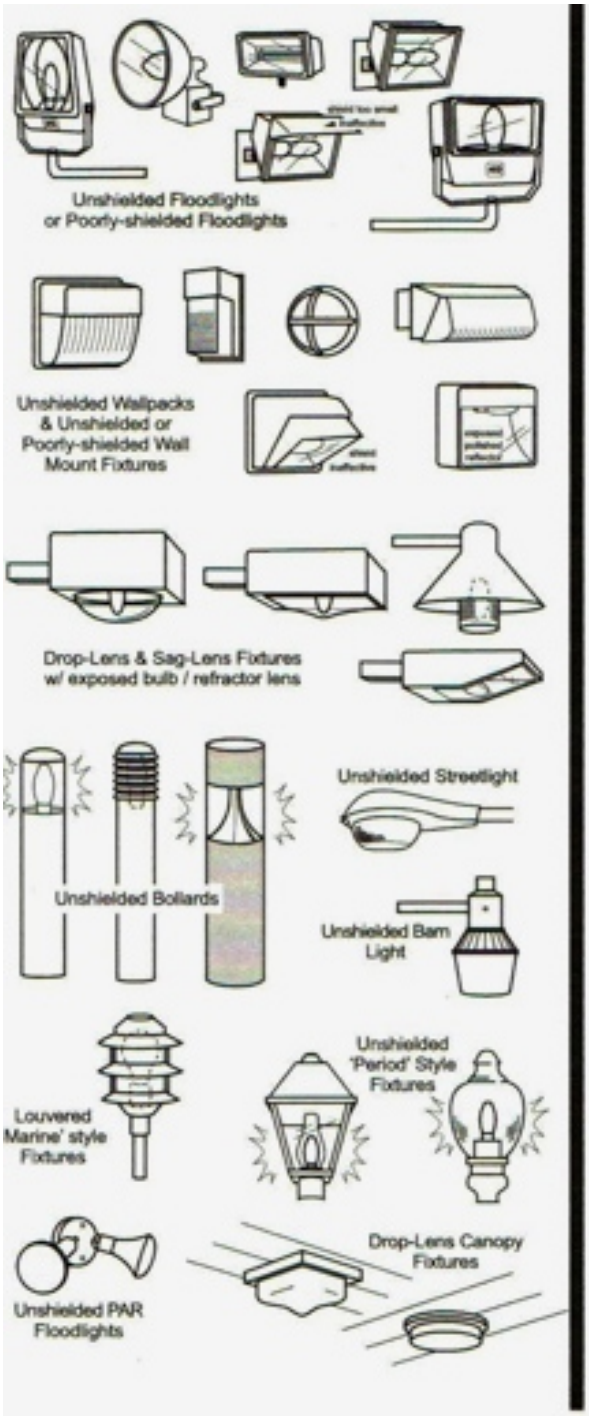
In general, **the Village of Pittsford APRB and Planning Board do not recommend the use of high-pressure sodium light fixtures because of the poor color rendition**. The use of other high-intensity lights should be limited to commercial areas. All high-intensity fixtures must be cut-off style shields or shades to prevent light trespass and eliminate glare. For more information on the village's lighting regulations, refer to Chapter 117 Exterior Lighting of the Village Code.

Exterior light fixtures should be individual point lights. Fixtures should be compatible in style with that of the building on which they are mounted or installed. Strip fluorescent light fixtures are not acceptable. Flood and spotlights should be "full cutoff" types directed at the ground of the structure. Light levels should be kept below the minimum acceptable. Consider using incandescent or warm fluorescent fixtures at entrances, pedestrian paths, decorative lighting, and other areas where glare and intensity will pose a nuisance.

**"Wallpacks" and other common types of unshielded security lighting create intense glare and are prohibited within the Village of Pittsford.**

# Light Fixtures

## Unshielded




## "Cut off"

## Handicap Accessibility

Providing handicap accessibility and barrier-free access, while at the same time preserving the historic character of a building, are not incompatible goals. Because there is no one way for incorporating barrier-free access in historic buildings, the APRB will work with a property owner to find a solution to achieve both goals of access and preservation. Note that the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) does not apply to single-family homes, churches, or private clubs. The ADA does not require the destruction or alteration of character-defining features of an historic building.

**Recommendations for Handicapped Accessibility**

- Handicap ramps and lifts need not be relegated to the rear of the building. However, if they are placed at the front of a building, it is essential that the ramp or access design include materials that match the building. A location on the side of a building is usually preferred.
- Respect the scale, height, material, and character-defining features of the historic building in designing the handicap ramp or lift.
- Use materials that are compatible with the existing building.
- The use of unpainted, pressure-treated wood is prohibited, because it appears unfinished and temporary, and is not visually compatible with most existing buildings.
- Railings should be simple in design. Using balusters and posts with a slender profile diminishes the visibility of railings.
- Investigate different options to identify a plan that minimizes changes to architecturally significant features.
- Ramps must be designed in accordance with the provisions of the Building Code of New York State and other applicable codes.

**New handicap ramp addition on the side of village hall**

APPENDIX A:

# Glossary of Architectural Terms

ARCHITRAVE – The lowest member of an entablature.

AWNING –A roof-like covering placed over a door or window to provide shelter from the elements. An awning usually consists of a metal frame covered with fabric.

BELT COURSE - Horizontal band of masonry or trim, extending across the facade of a structure; may be flush or projecting, and flat-surfaced, molded, or richly carved.

BLOCKING IN – The process by which one of a variety of materials is added to a window or door opening to decrease the size of the opening, or close the opening completely.

BRACKET – A general term for an architectural feature, typically treated with scroll or ornament, projecting from a wall, and intended to support a weight, such as a cornice, etc.

CHARACTER DEFINING FEATURE – Any distinguishable architectural element that has prominence in a composition, or that contributes to the ability to identify the style, period, or distinction of a building.

CLAPBOARD – An exterior horizontal wood siding applied so that the thicker edge of each board overlaps the board below.

COLUMN – A vertical architectural element intended to support a load. Classically inspired columns incorporate a base shaft and capital.

CORNER BOARD – A vertical board at the corner of a wood frame structure, against which the siding abuts.

CORNICE – The uppermost division of an entablature; a projecting horizontal at the top of a wall, at the intersection of wall and roof, or at the top of a prominent architectural element such as a window or door.

CORNICE RETURN – A pediment where the bottom molding is not continuous.

CUTOFF – A light fixture that directs the light downward to minimize glare and light trespass. A luminaire light distribution wherein the candlepower per 100 lamp lumens does not numerically exceed 2.5 percent at an angle of 90° above horizontal, and 10 percent at a vertical angle of 80° above horizontal. This applies to any lateral angle around the luminaire.

DOUBLE-HUNG WINDOW - A window having two (usually counterbalanced) sash which slide vertically past one another.

DOWNSPOUT - Vertical portion of a rainwater drainage pipe. Also called leader or conductor.

EAVE – The lower edge of a sloping roof that projects beyond the wall.

ENTABLATURE – The horizontal member carried by columns or pilasters and composed of an architrave frieze and a cornice.

EXTERIOR LIGHT – Any light using an artificial light source, whether mounted on a pole, bollard, sign, post, tree, building, or any other type of structure, intended to illuminate an exterior area of a property, parking area, walkway, water, landscaping, sign, or building face.

FACADE – The front face of a building with architectural distinction.

FASCIA – Any flat, relatively narrow horizontal member applied to the vertical face of the cave.

FEATURE – A single distinguishable part of a greater whole.

FENESTRATION - Arrangement pattern of windows in a facade.

FINISH – The texture, color, smoothness, reflectivity, and other visual properties of a surface.

FLASHING - Protective material, usually sheet metal, used to cover the joint between two parts of a building to prevent water from entering. Also, a general term for similar material used for other purposes, such as ledge covers and water diversions within walls.

FOOTCANDLE – The amount of light from one candle at one foot from the source of light.

FOUNDATION – The masonry substructure of a building that supports the structure, a portion of which is usually visible at grade level.

GABLE – The triangular-shaped end of a building that has a double sloping roof.

GLARE – Any artificial light that shines with a strong, steady, or dazzling light.

GLAZING – The glass surface of a window or door.

GRADE – The top surface of the ground around a building: to bring to a desired height or contour the elevation of the ground about a building or the surface of a road or path.

GRIDS - Prefabricated simulated muntins, usually made out of plastic, that are applied to the interior side, or within the insulation cavity of, modem insulated window sash.

HISTORIC BUILDING - Any building deemed eligible for listing in the State or National Register of Historic Places or any building located within the Village of Pittsford's Architectural Preservation Design District.

JAMB – The vertical side of any window or door opening.

LUMINAIRE – A complete lighting unit.

MDO PLYWOOD - Medium Density Overlay plywood has faces impregnated with resin. It is intended for exposed exterior uses.

MULLION – The vertical member that divides multiple windows or doors in a single opening, or the panes of a window, or the panels of a door.

MUNTIN – a small, slender framing member that divides panes of glass in a window or door.

PARAPET – An extension of the wall above the roofline typically found on buildings with low-pitched roofs.

PEDIMENT – The gable end of a roof or portico, triangular in shape, and located above the cornice in classically inspired buildings.

PILASTER – A flat, architectural member resembling a column that projects slightly from the surface of a wall.

PORCH – A covered entryway with open sides that is attached to the exterior wall of a building.

PORTE COCHERE – A roof structure over a driveway at the door to a building, protecting from the weather those entering or leaving a vehicle: carriage porch.

PORTICO – An entrance shelter supported by columns and often incorporating classically inspired elements.

PRESERVATION – The stabilization of a building or material to protect it from deterioration. It includes initial stabilization work, as well as ongoing maintenance of the historic building materials.

REHABILITATION - The act or process of making possible a compatible modem use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions, while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.

RESTORATION - The act or process of accurately recovering the form and details of a property and its setting as it appeared at a particular period of time by removal of later work and/or reconstruction of missing earlier work.

SASH – The unit that holds the window glass; especially the sliding frames used in double-hung windows.

SASH GRIDS - Prefabricated simulated muntins usually made out of plastic that are applied to the interior side or insulation cavity of modern insulated glazing. Because grids do not interrupt the exterior reflective surface of the glazing, they do not simulate the visual appearance of

muntins.

SEASONAL LIGHTING – Any temporary exterior incandescent lighting erected for the purpose of holiday, festival, or other special event celebrations.

SCALE – An important proportioning system used in architectural design to regulate the size and shape of related architectural elements and to ensure their visual compatibility in an overall design.

SHUTTER – One of a pair of hinged doors that cover a window opening.

SILL – The horizontal bottom member of a window frame or other frame; the portion of a structural frame that rests on a foundation.

SIGNIFICANT FEATURE/ELEMENT/DETAIL – A detail, element, or feature essential to the understanding of the value and character of an historic building or property.

SIMULATED DIVIDED LIGHTS - Window sash with moldings applied to the exterior and interior faces and in between modern double-pane insulated glazing to simulate the appearance of traditional muntins.

SOFFIT – The exposed undersurface of any overhead component of a building, such as a balcony, beam, cornice, or eave.

SPANDREL – The wall area between the top of an opening and the bottom of one above it.

STOREFRONT – The street level of a store or business, including windows, entrance, cornice, and signs.

STREETSCAPE – The overall view of a street and its component elements, including the street, sidewalk, buildings, signs, street furniture, lampposts, etc., and also including less tangible factors, such as rhythm, solid-to-void ratio, changes, or consistency in building height, and changes or consistency in building setback.

TRANSOM - Opening over a door or window, often for ventilation, and containing a glazed or solid sash, usually hinged or pivoted.

TRUE DIVIDED LIGHTS - Window sash employing traditional muntins installed between multiple pieces of glass.

TYMPANUM - Triangular, recessed wall of a Classical pediment, between the raking roof cornice above and the horizontal cornice below; by extension, the wall enclosed by pediments of other shapes.

WATERTABLE - Band or belt course at the junction between the foundation and the wall above. This band usually protrudes and is sloped to shed water.

APPENDIX B:

# The Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation

## Introduction

The Secretary of the Interior is responsible for establishing standards for all national preservation programs under Departmental authority and for advising Federal agencies on the preservation of historic properties listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.
The Standards for Rehabilitation, a section of the Secretary's Standards for Historic Preservation Projects, address the most prevalent preservation treatment today: rehabilitation. Rehabilitation is defined as the process of returning a property to a state of utility, through repair or alteration, which makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions and features of the property which are significant to its historic, architectural, and cultural values.

The Standards that follow were originally published in 1977 and revised in 1990 as part of Department of the Interior regulations (36 CFR Part 67, Historic Preservation Certifications). They pertain to historic buildings of all materials, construction types, sizes, and occupancy and encompass the exterior and the interior of historic buildings. The Standards also encompass related landscape features and the building's site and environment as well as attached adjacent or related new construction.

The Standards are to be applied to specific rehabilitation projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility.

## The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.

2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.

3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.

4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.

5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.

6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.

7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.

8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.

9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

APPENDIX C:

# Bibliography and References

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APPENDIX D:

# Window Repair versus Replacement

## Introduction

The recent emphasis on cutting fuel costs and increasing energy efficiency in buildings has increased the threats to wood windows in historic buildings across the Northeast. Replacement window manufacturers advertise new units that claim to be "Energy Star" rated and the answer to the heat loss in "drafty" old buildings. When combined with concern over lead paint issues, the perceived energy costs savings are prompting more applications from property owners who claim that replacing historic windows is the only way to comply with modern energy conservation codes. As a result, preservation commissions are often placed in a difficult position.

Without having practical arguments for retention or restoration of these important character-defining elements and fearful of appearing capricious, commissions can feel pressured to rule to allow the removal of historic fabric. Fortunately, there is a strong case for preserving wood windows aside from the aesthetic argument -- window restoration has proven favorable over window replacement, in terms of architectural integrity and aesthetics, energy efficiency, sustainability, durability, and long-term, material life span economics, despite the information conveyed by replacement window manufacturers.

Given the right tools, commissions across the state can do their part to preserve the character and craftsmanship of architecturally significant districts and educate the public about genuinely green approaches to energy efficiency.

## Architectural Integrity

Preservationists have long used the "aesthetic and integrity" argument when addressing the question of the appropriateness of replacing original windows. It can be very jarring to see an otherwise perfectly restored Greek Revival building with new, white vinyl windows with "snap-in" muntins or no muntins at all, where once existed elegant and finely proportioned six-over-six wood sash with mortise and tenon joinery. In this case, the glass-to-frame ratio has been altered, the faceted nature of the individual panes has been replaced with a single, reflective surface, and the proportions of the framing and joinery indicative of period building technology have been erased.
The valuable role that windows play in the architectural character of a building should not be underestimated. Windows are one of the few parts of a building that are integral to both the interior and exterior, and serve both a functional and decorative role. What other architectural feature has this much "responsibility"?

Structures built prior to 1930 incorporated architectural elements, including windows that celebrated a particular style and craft in a variety of wood species, shapes, cuts, and finishes. The insertion of a plastic or aluminum window into a building 80 years or older, therefore, can look out

of place and can negatively impact the architectural integrity of the building. Windows offer some of the most reliable clues to understanding the history and evolution of a building and, by extension, a street block or whole community.

## Energy Efficiency

The most common reason people replace old windows is the "promise" of improved energy efficiency. How could a preservation commission deny an owner this opportunity? Unfortunately for the property owner, the "facts" about energy savings from replacement window companies are sometimes skewed, misinformed, or outright false. Window manufacturers universally boast about their windows' low U-values (the measure of the rate of heat loss through a material). The quoted U-values are misleading because they are usually given not for the entire window unit, but only for the value through the center of the glass (the location of the greatest heat loss). Not mentioned is the dramatic heat loss of their own windows, because where an imperfectly squared historic window opening does not allow a new replacement unit to be installed tight within the wall, U-values will be significantly higher (less efficient), owing to infiltration around and between the unit frame and the original window opening. What is most critical when evaluating the energy loss at a window or door opening in any building is the infiltration of outside air, rather than the insulating factor or heat lost through the glass. Air infiltration can account for as much as 50% of the total heat loss of a building.

**The replacement window industry insists that windows are the principal source of heat loss in a building, and frequently mislead the general public in claiming that installing energy-efficient or "Energy Star" windows is more important, and will generate the greatest energy cost savings, than insulating the attic, foundation, or walls. Rarely is the energy loss tested before and after windows are replaced, so that property owners can see the extent of change or benefit in efficiency. In fact, actual energy conservation research and test data indicate that on average, only 20%- 25% of heat loss occurs through doors and windows, while the remaining 75-80% is lost through the roof, floors, walls and chimneys. Studies have shown that a double-glazed window may save $3.00 a year per window in energy cost (this is $30 per year for ten windows at 10 cent per KWH). When weighed against the cost of replacement windows and installation costs in this scenario, recovering the investment through energy savings can take 50-70 years. Since it is extremely rare to find a replacement window that is made to last 50-70 years, recouping that savings is nearly impossible in an owner's lifetime.**

Unfortunately, there is a major lack of tangible energy conservation information for existing products, such as existing historic wood window assemblies or those that have been restored or upgraded. Today, consumers can find national ratings for U-factors of building materials and products containing Energy Star labels, but it is important to note that these types of ratings have not been performed for older windows or upgrade products. Therefore, consumers have very little,

if any, real data to help make comparisons for energy loss or savings between retaining existing windows and replacing them.
Historically, the best solution for better energy efficiency has been in stopping air infiltration by the installation of effective weather stripping. Weather stripping has been used on windows and doors for more than 80 years and is still the easiest and most economical way to keep old wood windows energy efficient and draft-proof. Storm windows are another traditional method for decreasing energy loss. Whether interior or exterior, storm windows create an insulating air space between the primary window and the storm. Storm windows can dramatically improve the U-values of old windows by reducing the heat lost through the surface of the glass.

Another idea to consider is retrofitting historic wood windows by substituting low-e glazing into existing single-pane storm windows. When used in combination with a storm sash, single-pane low-e glass can provide a level of combined energy savings equal to a standard new double-glazed unit. Using low-e coatings and reducing air infiltration is a very simple and cost-effective way to achieve the desired U-value of an entire window unit and avoids modifying visible glass/light, mullions, or sash weights. Therefore, the energy efficiency of restored windows incorporating upgraded components, such as weather stripping and tight-fitting storm windows with low-e coatings, can meet and even exceed the efficiency of replacement units.

## Sustainability

Today, the architecture profession is more focused on “green” sustainable design. For many, the road to “green” is by using technology and materials that place the least amount of burden or waste on the environment and reduce one’s “carbon footprint.” However, since at least 1966 (the year the National Historic Preservation Act was passed), preservationists have been practicing “green design.” Long before the trendy term was coined, historic preservation promoted the philosophy of reduce, reuse, and recycle. By repairing rather than replacing elements, historic preservation conserves existing materials and the associated “embodied energy” used to create the original structure and architectural features. A preservation-minded project can use more materials produced locally or regionally. Common replacement practice requires the installation of mass-produced materials, usually transported over long distances. The “retain and repair first” approach can also reduce the need for landfills. Thousands of old wood windows are removed and sent to landfills each year, owing to misconceptions of the value of replacement windows. The wood sash that are most often removed are 75-100 years old with normal signs of deterioration. Constructed of old-growth hardwoods, many can be repaired and upgraded to meet modern requirements and give many more years of service.

Compare these windows to modern windows, which their manufacturers typically warranty for an average of 12-15 years. Now that may not mean that they will only last that long, but it is interesting that they do not warranty their products for anywhere near the lifespan of the older windows found in historic buildings. Key in this is that many replacement windows are constructed of lower-quality materials in a way that makes it impossible to simply repair individual

elements, leading to the need to purchase entire new window units if the replacement unit fails or breaks. Given their limited lifespan and the lack of potential for repair, even with limited energy savings, the evidence seems to contradict the claim that replacement windows satisfy the "green" or "sustainable" criteria over the long term. Instead, choosing to repair existing original materials recycles them in place, avoids needlessly filling our landfills with repairable building elements, and results in an effective approach to sustainability that also supports the local economy. Preservation holds the principles of sustainable design at the very center of its philosophy and practice.

## Durability

As mentioned above, wood windows that are 75-100 years old are most often removed and discarded when they begin to exhibit normal signs of age such as broken sash cords, paint failure or build up, broken panes of glass, deteriorated glazing putty, loose joinery or minor deterioration of wood members. While each of these ailments can negatively impact a window's operation, appearance, safety, and energy efficiency, the fact that the window is nearly a century old is actually a strong testament to the quality of its materials and craftsmanship. The windows of the nineteenth and early twentieth century were designed and constructed to endure many decades and even centuries with a certain level of care and maintenance. In contrast, since the late 1940s, the business of fabricating windows has evolved from being craft-oriented to focusing on providing in-stock, pre-fabricated, low-priced products. At the same time, the labor force that once offered maintenance and repair services are now geared toward installing whole-window products. The imbalance often tips the scale toward the replacement option.

Windows pre-dating the 1940s are typically constructed of dense, old-growth woods, which grew naturally over the decades, whereas, the majority of new wood replacement windows are constructed of light, porous, fast-grown (i.e., farmed), soft woods that are most often the pine species. Because they are porous, they are more susceptible to moisture migration and often do not hold paint well. The manufacturer's solution to this problem is to offer an exterior cladding material characterized as "maintenance-free." Unfortunately, the cladding materials can trap any migrating moisture inside the wood, and in moist environments can lead to substantial rot beneath the cladding--this is the primary reason for limited and short warranty terms.

Many people consider the introduction of the insulated glazing unit (IGU) or thermal pane to be a major advancement in the window industry. Most replacement windows offer a thermal or insulated glass unit, wherein a vacuumed space is created by double-paned glass filled with argon gas and sealed with gaskets to maintain the vacuum and keep moisture out. Most insulated glass units also have a small amount of desiccant inside the glass space intended to absorb moisture for a limited time. However, as with most synthetic materials, the gaskets that seal these assemblies have a limited life and will deteriorate, allowing the argon gas to escape and air vapor to enter. Studies have found that most sealed gasket systems deteriorate within 25 years, which is why few

replacement windows have warranty terms of more than 20 years, and why it is not uncommon to find 15-20 year old double-paned windows with a fogged air space.

Old wood windows, on the other hand, are glazed with a system of glass, glazing clips, and glazing putty. Glass is actually a fluid and, like the wood which holds it in place, will expand and contract according to climate conditions. Historically, glazing putty was linseed oil-based, and cured slowly over the years. The slow-curing glazing putty was intended to have some level of flexibility and was an excellent counterpart to the glass. Quality glazing putty has a lifespan of more than 50 years; however, after 50 years, it may begin to crack, become brittle and separate from the glass or it may become extremely hard with very little flexibility. As with most components of a wood window, glazing putty is intended to be renewable; replacement with new putty required little expense, effort, and impact to the original window. If a pane of glass in an old window breaks, it, too, is designed to be easily and inexpensively replaced. If a pane of glass in a replacement window breaks, a whole new window sash is necessary, requiring the costly services of a contractor.

Typical replacement windows involve a spring balance mechanism, which relies on friction and the strength of the user to operate them. In contrast, most windows constructed before 1930 use a weight and pulley system with either cotton sash cords or chains. The pulley system is based on equilibrium, with cords or chains balanced on either side with a counterweight in the pocket matching the weight of the sash. If weighted correctly, even a large window requires very minimal strength to lift or lower. Replacement windows typically experience failure when a spring balance wears out. A counterweighted window fails when the sash cord or chain breaks or the pulley jams. Spring balances cannot be fixed, and must be entirely replaced, whereas, broken sash cords can be fixed for the cost of the cotton sash cord and, usually, less than a half hour of labor time for most do-it-yourselfers or a handyman. Once a historic wood window is repaired or fully restored, it will not need major work for many years, aside from typical maintenance, such as an occasional cleaning of the glass, a quick spray of lubricant in the pulleys to keep them turning smoothly, and a touch up to keep the painted surfaces intact.

## Economics

The discussion of durability naturally leads to the topic of how economics or cost plays a large role in planning any window project. Typically, projects are evaluated for their upfront and immediate costs. However, when an historic building is involved, it is important to consider long term impacts and a look at comparative life-cycle costs.

The cost of a typical replacement window can range from $200-$1500 per window, depending on the size and material (vinyl, aluminum or wood frame), and always involves the removal of the existing wood sash and the installation of a new sash unit into the existing wood frame. The old weight and pulley system is discarded or abandoned in place (behind the new unit frame), and replaced with an operation system that relies on friction and the user's strength. It is not

uncommon for any rotted wood to be simply covered over with new vinyl or aluminum cladding, rather than repaired, since this would be an additional cost. In general, the installation crew prefers to be in and out in the shortest amount of time. Most of the cost of replacement windows is the price of the new product itself, and not the minimal labor for installation. It can naturally be assumed that the lower the product cost, the lower the quality of the replacement unit, because the labor is typically the same. In comparing replacement costs to repair and/or restoration of an existing old wood window, it is important to understand that there is no straightforward formula for the repair approach, because the conditions and the extent of deterioration will vary from window to window.

If there is only minor deterioration or a malfunction that requires select repairs, such as strengthening loose joinery, minor re-glazing, replacing broken glass or sash cords, the cost can range from $50-$500 per window (based on 1-10 hours of labor). If the window requires complete restoration, the cost can range from $500-$1000 per window for residential double-hung windows, or $1000-$5000 per window for large institutional windows or complex and highly decorative windows. The difference here is that the repair and restoration costs include direct labor at standard craftsman rates, in addition to materials, overhead, and profits. Rehabilitation or restoration and repair costs are for skilled craftsman labor, rather than for the actual product since all of the materials involved are relatively inexpensive. Every dollar that is spent on a repair or restoration job is invested in the local economy, compared to dollars paid to a manufacturer of the replacement window products, which is not necessarily a local business.

The above example relates to the initial outlay of funds, however, this is not the only aspect of cost that is important to consider in the planning of a project. Life-cycle costs are equally, if not more, important, especially if one is concerned about sustainability and being environmentally responsible. Life-cycle cost comparisons usually come out in favor of preservation, even when values such as the architectural character of the original window and the inherent quality of material and craftsmanship are not accounted for. Moreover, maintenance versus replacement costs further support preservation when fit into the equation. When figuring life-cycle costs, the lifespan of older wood windows is an important consideration. Typically, these windows have proven to have endured between five decades and more than a century. The lifespan of vinyl, aluminum, or modern clad/wood replacement windows, on the other hand, is, in some cases, still unknown, but given manufacturer's warranties does not seem to be in the same time frame. With replacement windows, it is generally the lifting and lowering mechanisms that wear out in about 15-20 years, followed shortly thereafter with the deterioration of the insulated glass unit and the cladding material. All or one of these failures can require replacement of the "replacement" unit.

Another aspect in which the economic argument often favors the restoration approach is with respect to the whole building view. Often, when a property owner embarks on a window replacement project, it is because a handful of original windows require some level of repair. It is rare that all windows will need full restoration or extensive repairs. It is typically the elevation most exposed to weather that has the most window deterioration; other, more sheltered elevations can be surprising in how well they have preserved original building materials such as windows.

The first step for any property owner should be an assessment evaluating the condition of each window and prioritizing the order in which repairs are undertaken. Certainly, such an approach will result in a more lengthy process of overall window repair, compared to wholesale replacement; however, it is a more economical approach. For example, let's say there are 20 windows in a particular house, five per elevation. If the south elevation is exhibiting the most deterioration likely due to the exposure, it is rare that a replacement window contractor would replace only those windows in disrepair, but rather, would make a case for replacing all the building's windows, so they all look alike. If each window costs $500, that is a $10,000 project, whereas if only the deteriorated windows were restored, at $500 each, or even at $1,000 each, the restoration approach would cost a quarter to a half that of the full replacement, and would last 3-5 times longer.

Lastly, if the reason driving the need for replacement windows is to eliminate lead paint hazards, it should be acknowledged that whether the windows are replaced or restored, the most hazardous work involves the removal of the old wood sash. Therefore, removal for replacement is no safer than removal for restoration. The difference in approach occurs after the sash is removed. In the replacement approach, the old sash is disposed of in a landfill, and the original painted frames and jambs are covered over with vinyl or aluminum. The lead paint remains in place underneath. In the restoration approach, the old sash are fully stripped of the paint and glazing and then re-primed, re-glazed and repainted to meet modern standards. On the window frame itself, the areas most affected by friction are the jambs. These are usually tested for the presence of lead and either stripped and repainted or repainted encasing any traces of lead-based paint. In the latter approach, the lead paint on the windows has been abated in the approved method, making the area safe from that point on.

## Guiding the Desired Outcome

Perhaps the most difficult part of a commission's work will be education about this issue. Overall, there needs to be a shift on the general public's appreciation for durable, sustainable materials and quality craftsmanship. Such an outlook does not need to be a thing of the past, but rather it can be the direction in which we move in the future. Preservation of old wood windows can be a difficult case to make when most owners of historic property are continuously barraged by relentless marketing campaigns and higher energy bills. Armed with basic window facts and with a little counter marketing, local preservation commissions can help property owners weigh their options more thoroughly and make the right decision for the integrity of their historic home, for the environment, and for their wallet.

# Project Review Guide

These questions can help commission and board members lead property owners to the right window project.

ARCHITECTURAL INTEGRITY & AESTHETICS

What role do your windows play in the architectural significance of your historic building?

How do the replacement windows match the original construction method and appearance? (i.e. mortised & tenon joinery), wood species, quality and cut, wood member proportions (stiles, rails, muntins), overall dimensions and profiles and, most importantly, the frame to glass ratio?

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

What are the U-values for the entire window unit, not just the value through the center of the glass? In addition to the window manufacturer's stated U-values for the window units, what is the air infiltration rating, if any?

Has the extent of air infiltration been tested for the existing windows (use of a blower door test)?

Has energy loss been investigated and corrected at the roof, chimneys, foundations, and walls first?

Do existing windows have appropriately installed or repaired caulking, weather stripping and/or storm windows?

What is the projected annual energy cost savings for the new windows?

How many years of this savings will it take to recover the cost of the replacement windows and installation?

SUSTAINABILITY

What are the property owner's plans for the removed original sash? (Rather than being sent to a landfill, should they remain in the attic or basement so they can be reinstalled in the future if desired?)

Have the property owners explored the option of repair by a local craftsman?

How long does the property owner expect these new windows to last? What is the warranty term? (many do not read the fine print.)

DURABILITY:

What is the overall extent of deterioration or need for the replacement? Do all windows need repair or only some windows?

ECONOMICS:

Encourage property owners to solicit repair/restoration quotes with estimated years of service (based on age of original windows)

Encourage property owners to calculate the life-cycle cost comparisons of restoration of those windows that need attention only versus the cost of replacing all windows.

## When Is Window Replacement Okay?

There may actually be a time when the case for the replacement of existing windows can be made. Buildings that have been abandoned for many years can suffer severe deterioration of materials, including window units. Windows can be heavily damaged by impact from trees, or partly damaged in a time-honored way, by baseballs or rocks. Also, not all older windows are created equal, so some materials can honestly have a shorter life span than others from the same time period. Additionally, in some buildings, particularly in tightly-spaced, urban lots, windows on side or rear elevations may not significantly add to the architectural character of a building, or may originally have been inexpensive units (also, many local laws do not allow the commission to review work not in the public right of way, making these units outside the purview of a commission). Also, on rear and side elevations in urban lots, a major rehabilitation may trigger modern codes that prevent the use of combustible (wooden) window materials at lot lines. In these cases, it is important to ask the following questions:

> Are a majority of the window units truly at the end of their life?
>
> Does the building still have integrity of window design? (Do a majority of character-defining windows remain in place and repairable?
>
> Were the windows being proposed for replacement originally good quality units that can actually be repaired?
>
> What significance do the window units have to the building's overall architectural style or history? (They need not be "fancy" or stained glass units to do this – more simple divided light sash can be important as well)
>
> What modern constraints are being placed on the project?

Asking these questions, you then move forward carefully, as you may be impacting a building's appearance and performance for decades to come. If replacement is determined to be the appropriate approach, then the materials and appearance of the new units will be crucial to the success of the project. Overall, it is important to understand that the choice of material can dictate the appearance as well.

Vinyl windows, for the most part, should never be considered for replacement units at designated structures. Their construction in no way meets the appearance of historic windows. Typically, vinyl units have rails and stiles the same width, whereas most historic windows have wider bottom rails (the horizontal member at the bottom of the sash), and narrower stiles (the members at the sides of the window). These proportions are important to the character of a window, and should be kept. Also, vinyl is a material that can flex during movement, potentially breaking seals that are supposed to make them energy efficient, and have been known to sag or rack, also lessening their effectiveness.

When codes dictate that wooden windows cannot be used, one approach has been to use metal windows matching the original in as many details as possible in regard to proportion and configuration. However, this is an approach to be used only in these inflexible situations, and in non-character defining locations.

When windows are truly deteriorated beyond repair, new windows should be approved that match the historic units in proportion, configuration (number of panes in each sash), operation (double hung or casement), and other character-defining details. The highest and best replacement would be a new, true divided light, painted wooden unit. However, as can be inferred from the previous article, newer wooden units may not be a good option given the potentially short life of modern plantation grown wood. While there are some units on the market that use sustainably grown mahogany or Spanish cedar as their materials, their costs can sometimes be out of reach for homeowners if they choose to replace all windows. It may be appropriate to encourage phasing of the high quality wood replacements or as an alternative; approve aluminum-clad wooden replacement windows that fill the window opening without the use of fillers or spacers; that the new window be placed in the same plane as the original window (neither deeper or shallower in relation to the wall); and that it match the original in operation and division of panes.

It is in the detail of window panes that a replacement window project can utterly fail. Historic multi-pane windows typically have true divided lights, meaning that each pane is a separate piece of glass separated by a muntin (the muntin is the bar of wood or other material that creates the space for the panes and which the putty, or "glazing" compound, is placed against). Many modern windows use a single sheet of glass, and for muntins, use a variety of tricks. The cheapest and least appropriate muntin is a "snap-in" one, literally "snapped" into place from the interior of the window. This type of muntin does nothing to break up the reflection of the single sheet of glass from the exterior, provides no relief on the exterior of the building, and has been known to fall out, be taken out, or be broken, thus resulting in an inappropriate 1/1 appearance. Another approach is the use of a fake muntin sandwiched between the double panes of an insulating glass unit. As with the "snap-in" muntin, this type does nothing to break up the reflection of the single sheet of glass from the exterior, provides no relief on the exterior of the building, and when seen from certain angles, completely disappears. Other muntins are applied only on the exterior. This type of window attempts to have the appropriate exterior relief desired in a replacement project, but does not go far enough in providing the full character that a historic true divided light window had in the same opening.

In the case of an appropriate replacement window, the highest and best window is one that has true divided lights, with each pane being a separate piece of glass. However, given that new units will likely have insulating glass, an acceptable treatment can be achieved by using a replacement window that has exterior and interior muntins, and interior "spacers" between the glasses, in line with the muntins. Manufacturers are beginning to make these units with spacers matching the color of the sash and muntins, providing for a look that is not an exact match, but is closer to the appearance of the original window.

There are countless replacement window manufacturers claiming to have products appropriate for use in historic buildings. In addition to the highest and best options listed above, a replacement window inserted into an historic building should offer a warranty or performance and durability guarantee of at least 25 years. This will insure that the commission will not be faced with a repeat request in a matter of years, and will help the property owner weed out the lower-quality products.

It is best not to wait until a window replacement project is before you to do your homework. It is advisable to take the following steps BEFORE you have to learn on the job.

Maintain a list of experienced contractors who can do window repair.

Maintain a list of historic house part "salvager businesses" that can accept donations of historic windows, or open your own!

Work with municipal officials, staff, and or local banks to develop grant programs for window repair and restoration and/or replacement in kind.

Knowing when it is time to allow an appropriate replacement window is an important part of being on a commission. It can also show a homeowner that you do understand the realities of existing and new materials, and can help you serve as a resource to help a property owner do the right thing to maintain the integrity, architectural worth, and economic value of their building.

For further information

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Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. www.cr.nps.gov/local-law/arch_stnds_0.htm

National Trust for Historic Preservation www.preservationnation.org/issues/sustainability/ "Window Know-How: A Guide to Going Green" at www.preservationnation.org/magazine/2009/march-april/ma09window.html "Historic Wood Windows Tip Sheet" www.preservationnation.org/issues/sustainability/additional-resources/July2008WindowsTipSheet.pdf

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# APPENDIX D – Window Repair versus Replacement

See these websites:

www.historichomeworks.com

Old House Journal website: www.oldhousejournal.com/index.shtml

www.oldhousejournal.com/strips_and_storms_windows/magazine/1099
www.oldhousejournal.com/Sash_Window_Clinic/magazine/1078
www.oldhousejournal.com/embracing_energy/magazine/1453

Rehab Rochester section of the Landmark Society of Western New York's website:
www.landmarksociety.org
www.windowrepair.com