Draft 4

# Brown Street, Wickford Village

## Design Standards and Guidelines

Not approved as yet by the Town of North Kingstown Planning Board and Town Council

**Town of North Kingstown, Rhode Island**
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# Brown Street Design Standards and Guidelines

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March 2018

Dear Brown Street Property Owner:

Tourists and residents alike are attracted to Wickford's peaceful and pedestrian-friendly shopping district, small harbor, and the historic homes in the surrounding neighborhoods. Visitors are enticed to stroll, shop, sightsee, and dine. This "small town" atmosphere gives local businesses the unique competitive advantage of a personal shopping experience.

The design principals in these Standards and Guidelines are intended to encourage creative solutions that will preserve the unique qualities of Wickford's village center, while helping businesses meet the challenging economy of the 21st century. We believe thoughtfully designed changes, additions, and new construction will encourage economic growth in the commercial district without negative impact to the adjoining historically-zoned residential neighborhoods.

Wickford Village has developed for over 200 years, and one can readily see the history and stories reflected in the community. Such authentic patina is extremely rare in America. We value the historic significance of Wickford's village center, and our goal is for the commercial district to grow and evolve while retaining the character, charm, and identity of the entire village.

The Wickford Design Guidelines Steering Committee

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## INTRODUCTION

Brown Street in Wickford Village, North Kingstown, Rhode Island, is listed in the National Register of Historic Places for its significance as a well-preserved 19th and early 20th century New England coastal village commercial and residential area. Brown Street is an integral part of the Wickford Historic District. The historic district contains an important collection of dwellings, as well as several commercial and institutional buildings, that together convey the social and cultural conventions of a formative period in the region's coastal history.

Today, Wickford Village and Brown Street continue to provide residents with a wonderful neighborhood close to local cultural amenities, commercial venues and a scenic harbor. Visitors are drawn to the authentic ambiance of this historic place, including its well-preserved small-scaled vernacular architecture and waterfront setting. The buildings, predominantly of 1-2 stories with gable ends to the street, often contain a single storefront. Residential uses exist above some of these commercial buildings and on the western side of the street. These defining qualities provide a quintessential coastal New England village character and highly prized sense of place.

In addition to being listed in the National Register, Brown Street is within a design review overlay district. Changes to buildings and certain landscape features are subject to review by the Town of North Kingstown's planning staff and a review committee. Design review is intended to encourage the preservation of Brown Street's unique mixed commercial and residential character and encourage appropriate new construction that fits into the area's small-scale historical context.

Wickford and North Kingstown residents, property owners, and businesses welcome future growth and investment in their community. They anticipate enhanced community character and award-winning design.

The following sections of this manual will explain the review process, including what types of projects are subject to review; provide an overview of the architectural styles on Brown Street and their character-defining features; and define the design standards and guidelines that guide the Town's review process.

## Brown Street Historical Development

In the 18th century Wickford Village took form north of the Brown Street bridge along Main Street to the harbor and on West Main Street leading west to Post Road.

Brown Street, extending south from the bridge, began to develop in the 19th century. Large residences were built on the west side of the street, while the east side related to a working harbor front. In the mid-19th century the Gregory Mill was built at the south end of the street as a bobbin factory. By the late 19th century, small scale wood-framed gable end-to- street, single and 1-1/2 story family-owned shops were built close to the bridge on both sides of Brown Street to augment the Wickford Village Square at the intersection of Brown, West Main, and Main Streets. The Square was framed by larger scale brick and masonry buildings including the Avis Block and the 3-story Gregory Building.

Today, while two larger commercial buildings have been built on the east side of Brown Street in the mid-late 20th century, remarkably little change has occurred to its architectural character. Densely situated houses and small retail shops exist on the west side and on portions of the east side of the street, Very small lots are interspersed with larger lots. Tall street trees, which framed the southern portion of the street, have succumbed to disease, but some remain to provide shade and scale. The fine mid-19th century Greek Revival Jabez Bullock House is intact, gracing the street with an ornate wooden fence. The nearby High Victorian William Gregory House, with its porches and turret, is a fine example of Stick style architecture.

Realizing that Wickford Village was an architecturally significant and nearly intact 18th and 19th century Rhode Island coastal community, the Town of North Kingstown enacted historical district zoning to protect the northern portion along Main and West Main Streets in the late 1950s. Brown Street was not included within the local historical zoning district.

**In 1970 Wickford Village, including Brown Street, was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.**

Brown Street has survived and retains its character through the wise stewardship of its property owners and lack of development pressure. More recently, with the advent of sewers as a development catalyst and coastal flooding due to rising sea levels, Brown Street will be undergoing change. However, such change can be guided as an opportunity for preservation, creativity, and business revitalization.

In 2018 the Town of North Kingstown updated its zoning to include design review to protect Brown Street's character-defining assets and allow for constructive growth and enhancement in keeping with its historical designation. Moving forward, the community expects property stewardship and high quality design that echoes and respects the shapes, proportions, materials, massing, and decorative motifs of Brown Street and Wickford village.

Historic views of Brown Street such as the bird's eye view above from the late 1880s and the photo below from the early 20th century help illustrate the architectural character of Brown Street.

## Important Character-Defining Features

In reviewing projects within the Brown Street area, the review board considers the potential impact on the character-defining features of the property and its setting, i.e., those elements that are essential to the building or landscape feature's design and their ability to convey historic significance.

### *Character-defining features*

Character-defining features of Brown Street's buildings include foundations and walls, wood cladding materials, entrances and storefronts, porches, windows, roof shapes, and decoration. Brown Street urban design includes small lots, 1-2 story buildings, and landscape features that form an intimate and charming village context related to its residential and small-scale commercial uses and its coastal location. These features include pocket parks, fences, terraces, curbs, walkways, steps, and stoops of the "hardscape," as well as mature trees, lawns, and planting beds of the "greenscape."

**Masonry work in foundations, walls, buildings, chimneys**

At least one of Brown Street's important buildings, the Gregory Mill is built of brick masonry. Other buildings have brick storefront walls. Some have stone masonry foundations. Chimneys on historic residential buildings in the area are generally brick.

**Wood framing and cladding**

Some of Brown Street's buildings from the early 19th century are of heavy timber post and beam construction, and clad in either wooden clapboards or wooden shingles. Many of the commercial buildings built in the late 19th and early 20th century have lighter balloon or stud frames.

**Residences**

The west side of Brown Street contains several fine 19th century residential structures, some of which have commercial first floor uses. Several of these dwellings survive with considerable architectural integrity and they collectively provide the street with a distinctive residential feel. (See pg.10 for descriptions.). Every effort should be made to retain the character of these buildings.

## Storefronts and pedestrian scale

Storefronts and entrances are consistently small in scale within the Brown Street area. There are no solid unglazed building walls along the street. Every commercial building, even the old mill, is punctuated by glazing with many buildings having full glazing across their first floor fronts. Many were updated in the early 20th century, their design influenced by the Colonial Revival style popular at the time. Others have large glass replacement display windows. The storefronts are generally composed of a recessed central doorway up one or two steps from the sidewalk and flanked by display windows, some of which may have originally had larger paned glass divided by wooden muntins. Many of the street's storefronts are individual compositions due to the detached nature of the commercial buildings along the street. Some are in clusters of closely built small-scale detached buildings forming a block. Some single story storefronts have false flat arched western-style pediments which give height to the single story facade.

The commercial buildings have a residential scale which connects with the residences on the west side of the street. There are half a dozen very small detached single story commercial buildings on small lots which give the area an intimate flavor, particularly on the west side of Brown Street near the intersection with West Main. These buildings and their scale are character-defining.

Several long shed- and hip-roofed porches are located on the sides of the houses and commercial buildings. Some are screened for summer enjoyment. A few are enclosed with glass.

## Roofs and gable orientation

Roofs are generally end-gable to the street. Early 19th century buildings have flank gable roofs. One of the block-like Federal style houses within the area, which dates to the early 19th century, has a hipped roof. One has a decorative monitor. Several mid- to late-19th century houses are gable end-to-the street, including a fine Greek Revival house. The historic Old North Kingstown Library is an example of a larger scale Colonial Revival with its grand temple front portico gable pediment and raised foundation. It was built in the late 19th century.

Generally, the roofs within the Brown Street area are pitched with 6/12 slopes. A number are at 8/12, while some are at a shallow 4/12 slope. The iconic old Town Library building (below right) is one of the tallest buildings with a ridge at 32 feet. Roofs were originally sheathed with wood shingles, but many are now clad in asphalt shingles.

## Landscape Features

Many unique character-defining landscape features are found along Brown Street within side yards, parking lots, pocket parks, and greensward areas, which comprise the overall historical setting of Wickford Village. These include both “hardscape” elements and softer “greenscape” elements.

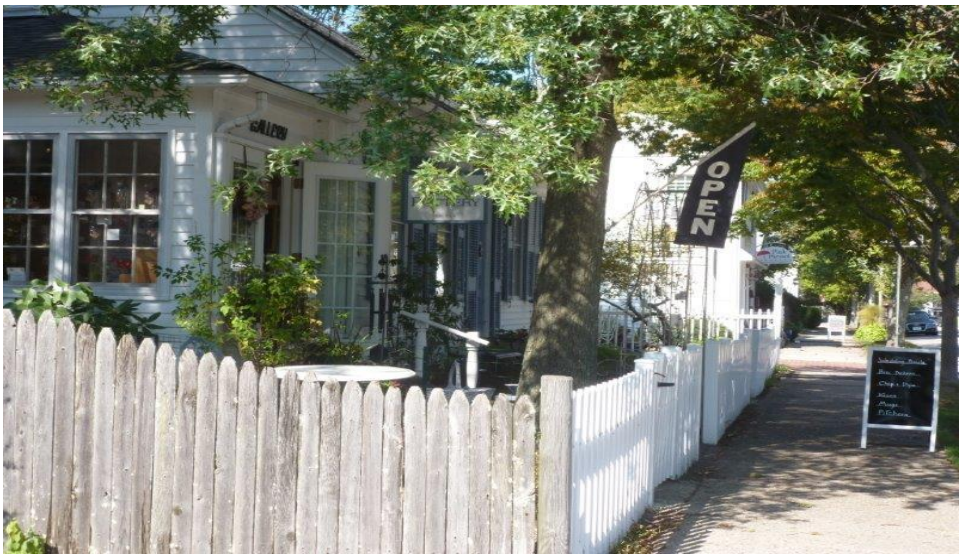
*Hardscape* refers to the man-made elements used in landscape architecture that include surfaces and structures. Hardscape elements provide the framework for the landscape. Hardscape elements include paved surfaces, curbing, walkways, walls, stairs, stone landings, terraces and berms, shoreline features, and antique landscape ornaments such as monuments and hitching posts, as well as other site features and structures. Hardscape elements generally remain constant. *Greenscape* refers to living plant material, such as annuals, perennials, trees, grass, and small shrubs. As greenscape elements are living features, they will change over time as they mature or are affected by severe storms.

### Surfaces

Included in this category are terraces, stairs, driveways, parking areas, sidewalks and walks, laneways, cart paths, and many other hardscape surfaces. Surface materials include a variety of treatments including stone, brick, concrete, gravel, crushed stone, pea-stone, chip-seal and asphalt. Permeable treatments such as sandy gravel and crushed stone lend themselves to the waterfront environment.

### Fences and Walls

For some properties along Brown Street, fences define property edges and boundaries, particularly along the west side of the street where there are residences with spacious side yards and garden areas. The fencing is generally wooden and either open picket or solid board in appearance, but not high enough to block out views. There is at least one stone hitching post within the Brown Street sidewalk.



**Specimen Trees and Mature Hedging**
Mature specimen trees are character-defining elements on Brown Street and within the historic district. Many trees are well over 50 years old. Trees provide scale, texture, temperature ambiance (shade and cooling in summer) and a livable neighborhood quality. Greenscape elements such as evergreen hedging or a line of shade trees also provide definition for some front and side yards in the Brown Street area.

**Side Yards (Pocket Parks)**
There are a number of small side yards that separate the buildings along Brown Street. Some of these small side yards or "pocket parks" have been landscaped by property owners with seating areas, potted plants, an array of eclectic landscape elements, and paving.

**Landscape Features on the Public Thoroughfare**
There are many landscape features along Brown Street that help to define the character of the village. Both hardscape and greenscape elements combine to create unique character along the public way. These add to the pedestrian scale.

Many commercial establishments have placed a variety of landscape features such as tables, benches and planters in front of their properties to define and brand their establishments while enticing visitors into their store or restaurant. These features encourage pedestrians to take a break and sit.

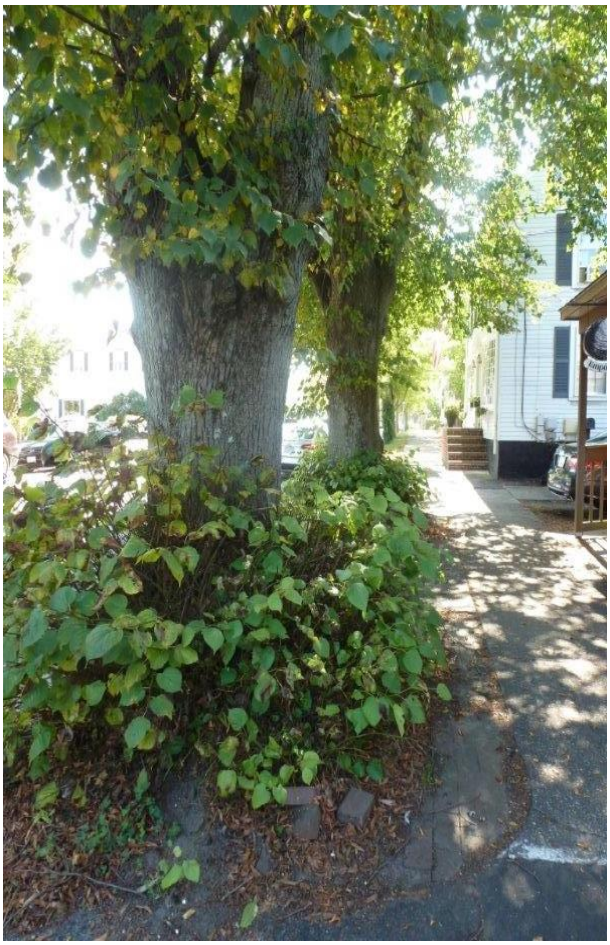
Street trees along Brown Street are of varying species and levels of maturity. Trees along the west side of the street are larger and are not impeded by overhanging utility wires. A street tree inventory was completed for Wickford in 2004, which provides detailed information for each of the trees along Brown Street. Unfortunately, overhead utilities on the east side of the street have a negative impact on tree growth. Burying the lines would improve the visual character of the area.

Planters, benches, urns, flags, and unique statuary provide a varied assembly of landscape features along Brown Street in front of commercial establishments. These small scale additions provide a uniqueness to each store and collectively define village commercial character.

Important considerations for landscape features along the front of any building and the public thoroughfare include:

- Scale and size of the elements for compatibility with the streetscape
- Mature size of new plantings should be considered to ensure they will fit the space as they grow
- Setback requirements for zoning compliance
- Requirements for pedestrian safety, including safe side walks and benches
- Placement of features so as not to compromise pedestrian access
- Placement of bicycle racks and the provision for safe bicycle travel through the area.

The streetscape is composed of design elements that are visually attractive and pedestrian-friendly, including appropriate scale, soft and hard materials and surfaces, places to rest, and shade.



Ancient street trees with roots that have spread into the sidewalk are character-defining but a potential hazard.

The established public space at the north end of Brown Street is a welcome greenspace that can host events.

Careful selection of pavement and plant material fit the character and scale of the village and provide an attractive and safe public way.

Site furniture with appropriate scale and placement benefits the front of a restaurant.

Street trees along the east side of Brown Street are in conflict with, but partially conceal, the overhead utilities.

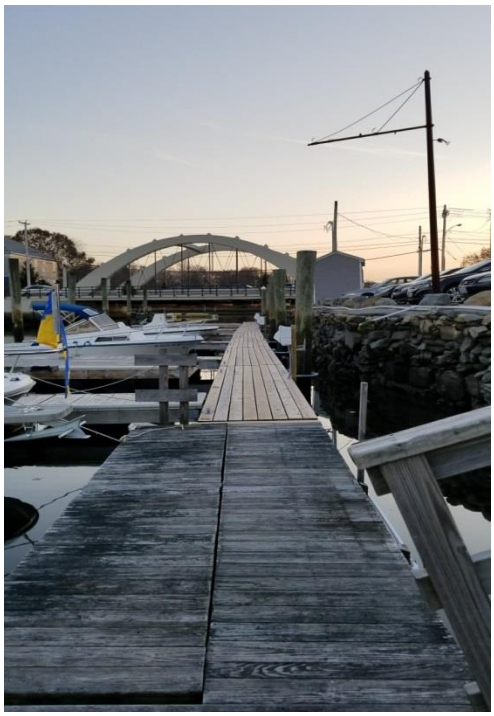
## Wickford Village Shoreline

Wickford Village has a variety of "shoreline" types along the shoreline zones in Wickford Harbor and in Academy Cove, which provide shoreline diversity and character. These zones are part of the greater Brown Street area and hence a subject for design consideration.

The North Kingstown Harbor Management Plan notes that the Wickford Harbor Complex is used largely for recreational boating purposes, although there are some commercial boats at the Town Wharf at the end of Main Street. Wickford Harbor contains a number of small estuaries, coves, and inlets that lack sufficient tidal flushing action, creating cause for concern regarding water quality. Water quality is also affected by shoreline edge types and use.

According to the North Kingstown Harbor Management Plan, Wickford Harbor is considered a Type 5 Commercial and Recreational Harbor since its waters support a variety of tourist, recreational and commercial activities. The following is noted in the Harbor Management plan:

> *"The highest priority uses of Type 5 waters and adjoining land areas within CRMC jurisdiction are (a) berthing, mooring, and servicing of recreational craft, commercial fishing vessels, and ferries; (b) water-dependent and water-enhanced commerce, including businesses catering to tourists; (c) maintenance of navigational channels and berths, removal of obstructions to navigation; and (d) activities that maintain or enhance water quality and scenic qualities, including the preservation of historic features. CRMC shall suitably modify or prohibit activities that significantly detract from or interfere with these priority uses."*



The stone rip-rap bulkheads shown in these photos are character-defining for the Wickford waterfront. Stone edges such as this should be retained whenever possible.

## Shoreline Typologies

The various "Shoreline Typologies" that occur include the following conditions or features:

- Rip-rap bulkhead - commercial and possibly residential.
- Concrete bulkhead – commercial and residential.
- Buffer plantings of native shrubs and grasses - residential and commercial areas.

Both floating and permanent docks are located along Wickford Cove adjacent to concrete and rip-rap bulkheads. .

## Rip-Rap Bulkhead

Rip-rap bulkhead treatments can be found along portions of Wickford Cove. They also exist along the northerly bank of the inlet leading out from the Kayak Center into Academy Cove. This type of treatment protects the shoreline from erosion and provides stability for any nearby structures such as docks.

**Concrete Bulkhead**

Concrete bulkhead treatments are located along the southern side of Wickford Cove from the Hussey Bridge traveling north towards the municipal parking lot. They are also on either side of the inlet between the municipal parking lot and the building block of the Beach Rose Cafe. These concrete walls also protect the shoreline from erosion and provide stability for nearby structures, docks and buildings.

**Vegetative Buffer of Native Shrubs and Grasses**

The more natural treatments of vegetative plantings occur along the Academy Cove side of Brown Street, with some of these treatments also in private rear yards along Wickford Cove towards the Main Street-Brown Street juncture. The landscape plantings include a variety of shrubs, some native and some non-native as well as native ornamental grasses such as Switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum*). Buffer plantings provide habitat cover for small mammals and birds that frequent coastal areas. Plantings that produce berries also provide a food source. The shrub planting typologies will also deter erosion. Should property owners wish to maintain a vegetated buffer planting along the shoreline edge of their property, it is recommended that they utilize the CELS - Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC) plant guide. (http://cels.uri.edu/testsite/coastalPlants/CoastalPlantGuide.htm)

Ornamental grasses could be used on Brown Street, where appropriate, in containers or other plantings to convey a coastal harbor feel and connection.

**Docks**

Docks comprise a large portion of the shoreline treatments along Wickford Cove. Dock space is largely private with some public dock space available for visitors needing temporary docking. Section 3.4.2 of the North Kingstown Harbor Management Plan provides specific recommendations under Item B.4 for dock permitting.

The October 2007 Harbor Management Plan lists 6 private marina/boatyards in the Wickford Harbor Complex with approximately 510 slip spaces. The Town provides 30 slips at the Town wharf primarily serving commercial fishing vessels.

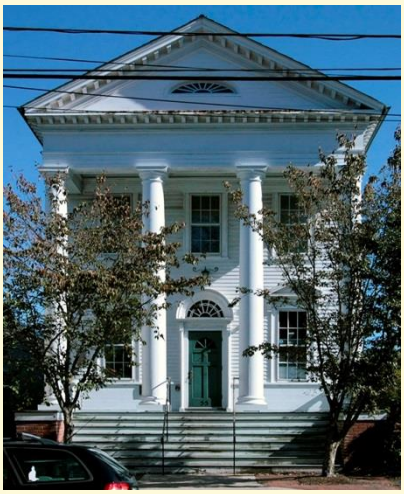
Although a variety of shoreline edge types and treatments exists, stone treatments are more authentic and should be retained.

# Brown Street's Architectural Styles

Federal: 1790-1820, gable and hip roofs,
6/6 wooden windows,
central brick or gable end chimneys

Greek Revival: 1830-1850, gable roofs, pediments, corner pilasters

Victorian Stick Style: 1870-1885



Colonial Revival: 1890-1940,
a return to Colonial forms,
porches, columns,
multi-paned windows, enlarged doorway trim

Italianate/Mansard: 1850-1880, roof brackets, round-arched window hoods, 2/2 wooden windows, flat or mansard roofs

Vernacular: small scale store fronts 1880 - 1950

## PRESERVATION in Wickford

In 1959 the Town of North Kingstown enacted a form of overlay zoning known as historical district zoning to protect and preserve the architectural character and physical context of Wickford Village within a defined geographic boundary. *Brown Street is not included within this historic district zone.* However, the Wickford and North Kingstown community is very protective of its historic and cultural resources, which add so much to their quality of life, the property values of the town, their economic well-being, and their sense of place. For these reasons and others, the Town of North Kingstown has included the Brown Street area within a design review overlay zone to protect its unique character. The Brown Street area is shown on the map on the following page.

Under the Town of North Kingstown Zoning Ordinance, Section 21-191, all repairs, alterations, and new construction affecting the exterior appearance of both historic and non-historic structures within the Brown Street design review overlay district, including their appurtenances and settings, are subject to review, *whether or not a building permit is required.* New buildings proposed for the area are also subject to review. Such review is under the jurisdiction of the Town of North Kingstown Brown Street design review board appointed by the Town Council.

Any alterations and repairs should accurately represent and protect the historic qualities and character-defining features of the buildings, structures, and landscape elements of Brown Street.

A property owner must receive a ***Project Approval*** from the design review board before beginning construction of their project.

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Property owners in the review area contemplating an exterior change should consult these design standards and guidelines and the Town planning staff regarding the review process.

**Routine maintenance such as painting and minor repair or replacement with in-kind materials is normally exempt from review, but to be sure consult the Town planning office before beginning a project.**

**Interior alterations are not reviewable, unless they have an impact upon the exterior appearance of a building, structure, or appurtenance.**

**Paint colors for building and structure exteriors are also not reviewable, nor are storefront seasonal decorations.**

**A small project that retains, repairs, or replaces in-kind severely deteriorated or storm-damaged building materials and architectural features, and meets the design standards and guidelines printed in this guidebook may receive an expedited staff review.**

See page 13 for guidance when undertaking a project. On the following pages are the design standards and guidelines for Project Approval. These standards and guidelines are formulated from those published by the federal government (the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for the Treatment of Historic Properties, 36 CFR 68).*

# Brown Street Design Review District Map

## YOUR PROJECT: ESTABLISHING AN ARTFUL PRESERVATION APPROACH

The primary objective of any rehabilitation plan for contributing structures within the Brown Street area should be the preservation of important or "character-defining" architectural features and materials of the building, and provision for a safe and sustainable contemporary use. The area is mixed use residential and commercial. While residential uses should be preserved, commercial uses may be enhanced, including storefronts, many of which retain their form, but have lost original windows and doors. There are also some opportunities for new buildings within the Brown Street area.

The standards and guidelines presented here describe best design and preservation practices, which the Town of North Kingstown promotes in its review capacity when deliberating whether or not to grant Project Approval for proposed work. The standards and guidelines should be consulted by property owners as they contemplate work to be done on their buildings and structures. They provide common-sense guidance for the rehabilitation of historic buildings and their settings to ensure building longevity and sustainability. They also provide guidance for additions, whole new building construction, and other enhancements.

North Kingstown's design standards and guidelines for Brown Street are based on the following core principles:

- **Respect** the original historical design character of the building and its architectural setting. Don't try to make the building appear older (or younger) in architectural style than it really is. Above all, the genuine (authentic) heritage of Brown Street should be expressed, not an imagined history. Honor and respect surrounding historical architecture when building new.
- **Research** the building to determine which elements are essential to its character. Preserve features in your work plan.
- **Retain** and provide protection and maintenance of historic architectural features that survive in generally good condition.
- **Repair, Restore, Reconstruct** historic materials and features that have deteriorated or have been lost.
- **Replace In-Kind** historic materials and features with new materials of the same type, when deterioration is so extensive that repair is not possible.
- **Follow** the design standards and guidelines beginning on page 14 of this booklet, which are based upon the *Secretary of Interior's Standards and Guidelines for the Treatment of Historic Properties,* 36 CFR 68 as amended.

A project may also include strategies for:

- **Reuse** of buildings and associated alterations to the exterior of the historic building for new uses with sensitive adaptation.
- **Reversibility:** Additions (for new rooms or spaces) to the exterior of the historic building may be appropriate, provided character-defining features are not lost or compromised and the alteration can be removed later without damage to character-defining features of the building.
- **New Building Construction:** Excellence in new building design will be judged upon how well the design fits into and honors Brown Street's historical architectural context. Architectural design and construction quality should convey a sense of timelessness and durability.

Original documentation, such as old photographs and plans, should be used as guidance for restoration work whenever possible. Where these are not available, interpretations of similar design elements that were built or designed for buildings in the area may be considered. New uses, additions, and new construction should fit in, rather than stand out and appear incongruous.

**Schedule a pre-application meeting** with the Town Planning staff to review your ideas.

***Then complete and submit an application*** *with the Town Planning Department.*

### Project Approval

Please post this form on the property so that it is visible from the street.

Town of North Kingstown, RI 02852
401-284-3331 (ext.313)

Property Owner:_____

Property Address_____

Plat/Lot:_____

Application Number:_____
Scope of Work:

The Town of North Kingstown hereby certifies, pursuant to RIGL Ch. 45 (as amended), and Section xxx of the Zoning Code of the Town of North Kingstown, Rhode Island, as amended, that the work described herein has been Approved. Any conditions of Approval are noted below: *Signature of Review Board Chair or Staff* *Date of Issue*

*Note: All work shall be carried out as shown on the approved plans and specifications on file with the Town of North Kingstown. This form along with any drawings, plans, and specifications stamped approved by the Design Review Board must be presented to the Building and Zoning Official to obtain a building permit. Any changes to the approved project and any additional work not specifically approved herein must be reviewed and approved by the Design Review Board prior to construction. This Project Approval is valid from one year from the date of issue.*

# Section 1:

## GENERAL STANDARDS FOR THE PRESERVATION AND REHABILITATION OF CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURES AND APPURTENANCES IN THE BROWN STREET AREA

*The following standards (#1-22) are broad principles for the design of projects within the Brown Street area, which must be followed.*

## APPROPRIATE

### BE MINDFUL OF CHANGE IN USE:

**1** New uses that require the least change to existing structures are encouraged.

**2** Every reasonable effort should be made to provide a compatible use for the building that will require minimal alteration to the building and its site.

### PRESERVE CHARACTER-DEFINING FEATURES:

**3**
- a. Avoid removing or altering any historic material or significant and authentic architectural features.
- b. Original character-defining materials and details that contribute to the historic significance of the building or structure should be preserved whenever feasible.
- c. Rehabilitation work, additions, and new buildings should not destroy the distinguishing character of the contributing building and the setting.
- d. Examples of historically significant architectural features are building cladding materials (decorative wood shingles, wooden clapboards); wooden doors, doorways and porches; wooden window frames, sash, and window trim; masonry walls and features; eave brackets, gable barge boards, and decorative railings and trim; as well as brick chimneys. Other significant elements may be the overall building form, roof shape and materials, and finish. The overall setting is also character-defining.
- e. New additions and buildings should incorporate design elements, scale, massing, and building materials that are sympathetic to existing contributing buildings. Applied design elements should be avoided, while window and door openings should be well-organized, balanced throughout the building, and carried though on all sides of the building.. Simplicity in design is preferred over complexity. Rhyming with and blending-in with the historical context is preferred over incompatibility and contrast.

### PROTECT AND MAINTAIN EXISTING HISTORIC STYLISTIC ELEMENTS:

**4** Protection includes the maintenance of historic material through treatments such as weather-proofing, caulking, and repainting.

**5** Non-abrasive or "soft" procedures for cleaning, refinishing, and repairing historic materials should be used.

## NOT APPROPRIATE

UNSUITABLE CHANGE IN USE:

**1** Planning a new use for a historic building and its setting which will require significant changes to the existing structure (s) and setting to accommodate the new use and thereby requiring extensive modifications to historic character-defining elements.

**2** Failing to provide a compatible use for the building that will require only minimal alteration to the building and its site.

CHARACTER-DEFINING FEATURES:

**3**
- a. Removing or altering historic materials and/or significant
- b. Removing original materials and details that contribute to the historic significance of the structure
- c. Rehabilitation work that destroys the distinguishing character-defining features of the property or its setting is not appropriate.

New additions and buildings that have a negative impact upon the existing contributing buildings and setting by being out of scale, incongruent in massing, and built of clashing materials are not appropriate.

Projects that are not designed to contribute to and honor Wickford's uniqueness or authentic sense of place are not appropriate.

HISTORIC STYLISTIC ELEMENTS:

**4** Failing to protect and maintain historic material through treatments such as weather-proofing, caulking, and repainting

**5** Using abrasive procedures such as sand blasting or water blasting for cleaning, refinishing, and repairing historic materials, which erode and destroy protective surface layers

## APPROPRIATE

**MINIMIZE INTERVENTION, REPAIR RATHER THAN REPLACE:**

**6** Repair deteriorated historic architectural features rather than replace them wherever possible.

**7** Patch, piece-in, splice, consolidate, or otherwise repair the existing historic exterior material, using recognized preservation methods whenever possible.

**INCLUDE THE REPLACEMENT OF MISSING PORTIONS OF A HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL FEATURE IN REPAIR ACTIVITIES:**

**8** Match the original construction material. A missing wooden feature should be replaced with wood. A missing stone feature should be replaced with stone, A substitute (in-kind) material may be acceptable on a case by case basis if the form and design of the substitute conveys the same visual appearance of the original and the feature is hard to access and prone to water damage, weathering, and rot.

**9** Use methods that minimize damage to the original materials when disassembly of a historic element is necessary for its rehabilitation, or when a historical feature needs to be moved to be saved, repaired, or rebuilt.

**10** Always devise methods of replacing the disassembled historic materials in their original configuration. It is very easy to lose materials during a project.

**11** Replacement of missing architectural features should be based upon historical documentation to produce accurate duplications of the original style and character.

**12** In the event replacement is necessary, the new material should match the historical material being replaced in design, texture, and other visual qualities.

## NOT APPROPRIATE

INTERVENTION TO CHANGE INHERENT CHARACTER

**6** Removing and replacing slightly deteriorated historic architectural features rather than repairing them

**7** Failing to patch, piece-in, splice, consolidate, or otherwise repair the existing historic exterior material, using recognized preservation methods, whenever possible, and removing and replacing with new materials that are incongruous

REPAIR ACTIVITIES, REPLACEMENT OF MISSING PORTIONS OR FEATURES

**8** In replacing missing portions, failing to match, on close inspection, the look and feel of the original material. A substitute material is not appropriate if the form and design of the substitute does not convey the visual appearance of the original. Vinyl and aluminum siding are not appropriate because they do not convey the same surface texture and dimensional character as the stone and brick masonry, wooden shingle, and clapboard materials found in 18th, 19th, and early 20th century buildings.

**9** When disassembly of an historic element is necessary for its rehabilitation, failing to use methods that minimize damage to the original materials, and failing to keep track of materials so that they are lost.

**10** Failing to plan carefully for the placement of disassembled materials back into their original configuration

**11** Failing to use historical documentation to create accurate duplications of missing original features and thereby creating a false historical appearance

**12** Failing to match historical material being replaced with new materials that match in design, texture, and other visual qualities

## APPROPRIATE

**13** In replacing newer, non-historical materials, or elements that have been substituted for original material, the design of the replacement work and materials should be substantiated by physical and/or pictorial evidence of original materials whenever feasible. If documentation of original design does not exist, a new compatible design may be used.

**14** Use building materials similar to those employed historically, although hard-to-maintain architectural features, such as roof brackets and trim moldings on upper floors may be reproduced in approved durable composite materials as in #15 below.

**15** If alternate composite materials are allowed to be used, the materials should be applied as individual components in the traditional method and they should match the original in appearance including texture, profile, pattern, and weather surface.

**16** Where reconstruction of an element or feature is impossible because of a lack of historical evidence, a new design that relates to the building in general size, scale, and material may be considered. Use design elements that reflect the building's style for replacement of features where insufficient documentation exists to reconstruct more accurately original design details.

### EXISTING ALTERATIONS MAY BE IMPORTANT TO RETAIN:

**17** a. Preserve older alterations that have achieved historical significance.

b. Many changes to buildings that have occurred in the course of time are themselves evidence of the evolutionary history of the building and its surrounding neighborhood. These changes may have developed significance in their own right. An example of such an alteration may be a porch, a kitchen ell, or bay window, or a storefront that was added to the original building during in its history.

c. More recent alterations (less than 50 years old) that are not historically significant may be removed.

### SERVICE AREAS, MECHANICALS, GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE:

**18** Screen service equipment and large trash containers from public view.

**19** a. The **visual impact** of mechanical and electrical equipment including, but *not* limited to telecommunications devices, satellite dishes, solar panels, exhaust fans, and air handling units should be minimized. Some of these devices may be better located on the ground in screened locations.

b. Satellite dish use is strongly discouraged in visible areas. If a dish must be placed in view, it should be screened with fencing and or plantings. If roof replacement is needed, the dish must be small and located on a rear or side section of roof. Solar panels on roofs may be appropriate if they are not noticeable from Brown Street at ground level.

## NOT APPROPRIATE

**13** Failing to substantiate replacement materials with physical and/or pictorial evidence of the original materials

**14**. Failing to use materials similar to those employed historically whenever possible

**15** If alternate composite materials are allowed to be used, it is not appropriate to apply the materials in precast assemblies (strips or sheets) rather than as individual components in the traditional manner, thereby failing to convey (on close inspection) the same visual appearance as the replaced historical materials.

**16** Where insufficient documentation exists to reconstruct accurately original design details, creating a new design for a missing feature that does not relate to the building in general size, scale, and material; and not using design elements that reflect the building's style for the replacement of features.

EXISTING ALTERATIONS:

**17** Failing to respect and preserve older alterations that have achieved historical significance in their own right. Many changes to buildings that have occurred in the course of time are themselves evidence of the history of the building and its neighborhood

SERVICE AREAS AND EQUIPMENT:

**18** Failing to screen service areas, infrastructural equipment, and large trash containers from public view. Utility wires should not be clustered on building exteriors. Meters should be screened and not located on primary facades.

**19** Roof locations for mechanical and electrical equipment including wind generators and solar panels are generally not appropriate unless they are visually unnoticeable from ground level on Brown Street or the waterfront, or can be screened from view.

**To the left, inappropriate un-screened roof-mounted mechanicals, which could be seen from Brown Street or the harborfront.**

## APPROPRIATE

**19** c. Mechanicals may need elevating above the base flood elevation and should be screened from public view in flood hazard areas.

d. Roof-mounted mechanicals on new buildings may be screened by a secondary roof-screening system.

e. Outdoor generators, coolers, and temporary and permanent storage sheds should be located to minimize their visibility or effectively screened from public view. This includes trash and recycling bins, dumpsters, service docks, service entries, and loading docks.

## NOT APPROPRIATE

**19** a. Failing to recognize ventilation of historic buildings as an integral component of an energy efficiency project

e. Failing to locate service docks, service entries, loading docks, and trash collections sites away from pedestrian areas where they become safety concerns and visual blight.

## RETAIN HISTORIC ACCESSORY OR AUXILIARY BUILDINGS:

**20** Historic accessory buildings can contribute to the overall character of the principal building. Their orientation, design, materials, and architectural details should be preserved. If repairs are needed, they should be made in-kind, using the same materials, or materials that are very similar to the originals.

**21** An accessory building that has deteriorated beyond repair should be replaced with a design and materials that are compatible with the principal structure in siting, scale, and fenestration.

**22** Proposed changes to non-significant accessory structures should likewise be compatible with the character of the property and the Historic District. Accessory buildings can add to the character and charm of the Brown Street area due their scale.

ACCESSORY OR AUXILIARY BUILDINGS:

**20** Failing to recognize that historic accessory buildings can contribute to the character of the principal structure and the surrounding area.

Accessory buildings in the Brown Street area have been successfully converted to commercial use in the past.

# Section 2:

## GUIDELINES FOR SPECIFIC REHABILITATION WORK

The following guidelines apply to the rehabilitation of structures and appurtenances in the Brown Street area in addition to the general standards (#1-22 preceding). *These guidelines (#23-78) are more specific than the general standards. They are actionable. They amplify, clarify, and provide greater meaning. Together with the general standards, they must be followed for all projects in the Brown Street area.*

## APPROPRIATE

### WOOD SIDING:

**23** Use materials similar to those employed historically in terms of size, shape, and texture- whenever feasible.

**24** Choose wood siding that most closely matches the shape, size, profile, and texture of the historic wood siding when seeking to repair or replace wood siding. Often historic wood siding is underneath synthetic siding (such as aluminum, asbestos, or vinyl) and it can be used as a guide.

On close inspection, vinyl siding applied on the building at right does not convey the same visual appearance as the wood clapboards above.

## NOT APPROPRIATE

**23** Using materials that are dissimilar to those used historically

**24** Using modern synthetic wood siding replacement treatments and materials when in-kind wood siding replacement is available and more appropriate. Using new siding, which does not match the original dimensions and reveal is not appropriate. Cement board products such as HardiPlank, HardiShingle, and vinyl and aluminum siding are not appropriate due to either their untested durability, inability to convey an appropriate appearance, or installation impact.

## APPROPRIATE

**MASONRY:**

**25** Clean masonry only when necessary to halt deterioration or remove heavy soiling.

**26** Remove damaged or deteriorated paint or surface treatments only to the next sound layer using the gentlest method possible (such as hand scraping) prior to applying a new surface treatment. Retaining painted brick surfaces may be the best approach, rather than complete removal through harsh treatments.

**27** Repair masonry walls and other masonry features by repointing the mortar joints where there is evidence of deterioration such as disintegrating mortar, cracks in mortar joints, loose bricks, damp or damaged walls, or loose stucco veneer work.

**28** Remove deteriorated mortar between "soft" masonry (brick, etc.) by carefully hand-raking the joints to avoid damaging the surrounding masonry.

**29** Duplicate old mortar in strength, composition, color, texture, and reveal. Often 18th and 19th century mortar is much softer than modern mixes, with matching softer brick composition and strength.

**30** Apply new, non-historic, surface treatments to repel water or moisture intrusion only after repointing and only if other masonry repairs have failed to arrest the problem.

## NOT APPROPRIATE

MASONRY:

**25** Cleaning masonry surfaces when they are not heavily soiled, thus subjecting surfaces unnecessarily to moisture or chemicals which can damage such surfaces

**26** Using methods of removing surface treatments (paint) such as sand-blasting, the application of chemical strippers and the like, which are destructive to masonry surfaces and mortar joints. Sandblasting brick or stone surfaces using dry or wet grit or other abrasives is generally not appropriate.

**27** Removing non-deteriorated mortar from sound joints, then repointing the ***entire*** building to achieve a uniform appearance. Using an all-over "scrub" coating technique to repoint rather than traditional repointing methods is not appropriate.

**28** Using mechanical saws and hammers (that can damage surrounding soft masonry work) to remove deteriorated mortar, rather than hand tools

**29** Changing the width, profile, and composition of historic mortar joints when repointing

**30** Applying water-proofing or water-repellent coatings such as stucco to masonry as a substitute for repointing and masonry repairs. Such coatings may actually accelerate deterioration if the underlying problems are not corrected and such coatings may change the historical appearance of the building.

## APPROPRIATE

### WOOD TRIM AND ORNAMENT:

**31** Maintain historic trim and ornament. Provide proper moisture control and drainage so that water is not allowed to stand in flat, horizontal surfaces, or accumulate on or in decorative features.

**32** Preserve existing trim and wooden architectural features such as (but not limited to) porch columns, balustrades, roof brackets, parapets, cornices, doorway enframements, window brackets and hoods, cupolas, and roof finials in places where they survive. Replace only if severely deteriorated and only with in-kind materials in the same design. Composite materials may be appropriate for duplication and replacement on a case by case basis if the feature is on an upper floor or roof, difficult to maintain, and severely deteriorated.

**33** Where original trim or ornament is missing, replace missing elements if possible with designs to match the original based upon historical documentation. Use original proportions for trim designs as templates for replacement work. Duplication of missing trim and ornament in composite materials may be considered, on a case by case basis, as in #32 above, if the element is on an upper floor or roof, or subject to repeated water splash and moisture intrusion.

### ROOFS:

**34** Preserve roofs at their original pitch and configuration, including their historic structural and decorative components, e.g., roof boards, rafters, venting, ridge cresting, lightning arrestors, balustrades, raking cornices, cornice moldings, soffit treatments and brackets, drip edges, etc.

**35** Preserve the character of original roofing materials whenever possible. Asphalt shingles are appropriate as replacement in-kind for existing asphalt-shingled roofs now commonly found in the Brown Street area.

## NOT APPROPRIATE

### WOOD TRIM AND ORNAMENT:

**31** Failing to maintain and repair original trim and ornament. Failing to identify, evaluate, and treat the cause of wood deterioration such as (but not limited to) faulty flashing, leaking gutters, cracks and holes in siding, deteriorated caulking in joints and seams, overgrown plantings too close to the building trapping moisture, or insect or fungus infestation

**32** Failing to preserve existing trim and other features in places where they survive

**33** Where original trim is missing, replacing missing elements with designs that do not match the original or are based upon inappropriate design motives for the building's architectural style, giving a false historical appearance

### ROOFS:

**34** Changing the pitch of historic roofs. Removing a major portion of the roof or roofing material that is repairable, then reconstructing the roof with new materials in order to create a more uniform, or 'improved" appearance

**35** a. Adding new features such as dormer windows, vents, set-in balconies, skylights, widows walks, and cupolas *is possible on a case-by-case basis,* but not in such a way that historic character-defining qualities are lost and historic character is diminished. (See Section 4.)

b. Reconstructing the roof or re-roofing without providing for adequate ventilation

## APPROPRIATE

### WINDOWS AND STOREFRONTS:

**36** Retain, **REPAIR**, and maintain historic windows and storefronts, if at all possible. These are usually built of far better materials (including wood) than today's replacement windows, and actually provide a better pay back (when repaired, weather-stripped, and provided with storm windows) than replacement windows. This is largely due to the fact that with storm windows, historic wooden windows provide nearly the same insulating value, and replacement windows, regardless of product manufacturer, are very expensive to purchase and install.

**37** If storm windows are used, they should not obscure original window proportions. Triple-track wood or aluminum storm windows are usually acceptable because they provide adequate insulation, help owners retain original window sash and casings, and are easily reversible. New replacement storm windows may be added to the interior or the exterior to provide weather-proofing and insulation matching that obtained by double glazing or insulated window units, provided they are sufficiently ventilated to prevent moisture build on the inside. Fabric storm panels may be approved provided they are hung rather than roll-up for wind code compliance.

**38** Where replacement of severely deteriorated historic window sash is warranted, replacement sash matching the original single-glazed sash is the preferred treatment. This will not require costly removal of the original window casings or storm windows. Replacement in-kind of the window sash with new sash and rehabbed jambs is preferred over replacement of the entire window unit. This alternative retains the original window opening, casing, and exterior trim.

Replacing historic window sash may be appropriate provided the condition of the existing historic window sash is beyond repair and the replacements meet, as closely as possible, the historic window sash dimensions. A detailed evaluation of the state of deterioration of the historic windows along with detailed product information and a window sash sample must be provided for an evaluation of the appropriateness of such a request.

**39** Where entire replacement of window casing and window sash is proven by the applicant to be warranted due to extreme weathering and subsequent severe deterioration of the historic window sash, jambs, sills, and casings, ***or if replacement of non-historic windows and casings in place on the building (including non-historic storefront windows) is desired,*** such replacement window units may be appropriate if the historic dimensional character is replicated, including the window trim, sash dimensions, glass size, muntin bar width and reveal, exterior putty bevel, and rail and style dimensions. The replacement windows (units) may have simulated divided lights (if appropriate) and have thermal glazing. Also of importance is duplicating the appropriate reveal of the window unit from the exterior wall plane, including the dimension and rake of the window sill. This guideline is also to be followed for the addition of any new windows on a historic building or its additions. The placement of any new windows must be documented by historical evidence and be in scale, dimension, and rhythm with the existing historical window placement on the building.

## NOT APPROPRIATE

WINDOWS:

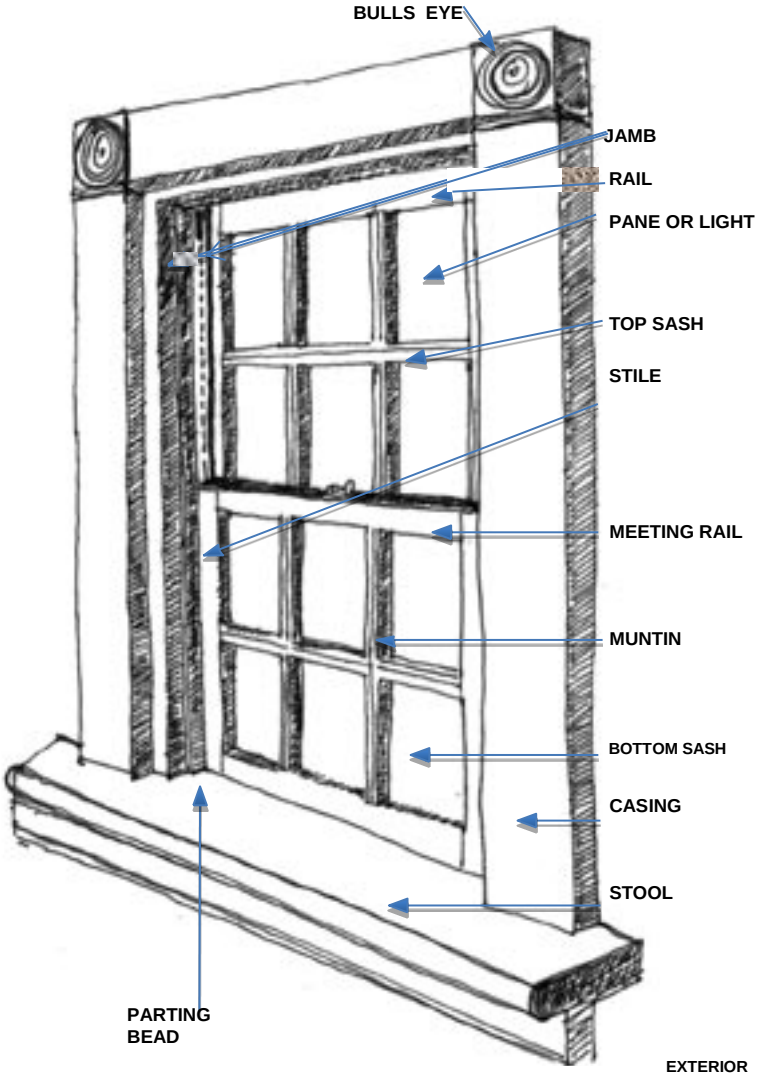
**36** Changing the dimension of historic window openings, muntin bar, and window glazing configurations and proportions. It is not appropriate to replace historic windows with manufactured windows of vinyl, aluminum, or composite materials when repair of the historic windows is feasible.

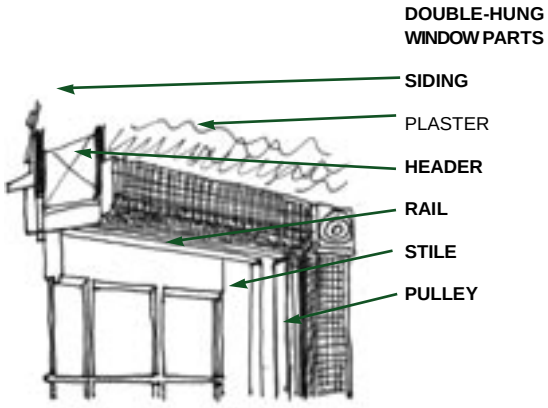
**37** Installing new storm windows which obscure historic window glazing proportions, including roll-up metal storm shutters

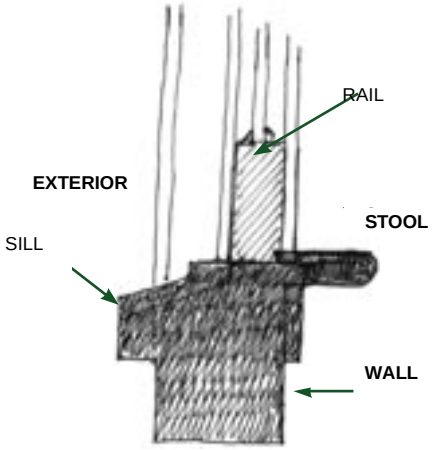
**38-39** Installing new manufactured replacement windows which do not match the dimensional qualities of the historic windows they replace.

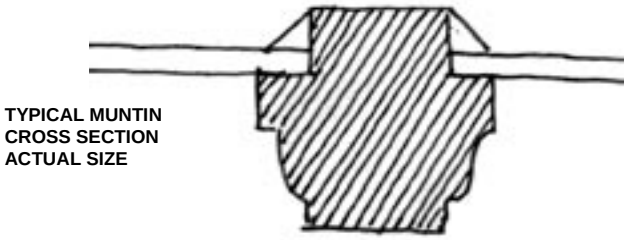
The qualities to match include the window trim, glass size, muntin bar width and reveal, rail, meeting rail, and style dimensions. Also of importance is duplicating the appropriate reveal of the window unit from the exterior wall plane, including the dimension and character of the window sill. New manufactured windows that have fake snap-in muntin grills, or have flat metal or vinyl muntin grills laminated between glazing are not appropriate because they do not convey the authentic appearance of historic true divided light, muntin bar, and glazing configurations.(See Pg. 22)

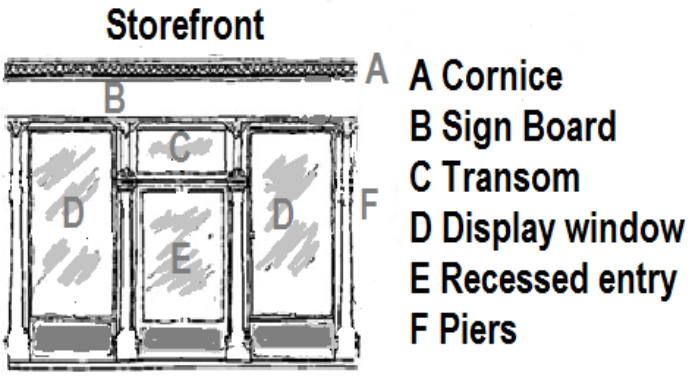
# WINDOWS AND STOREFRONTS

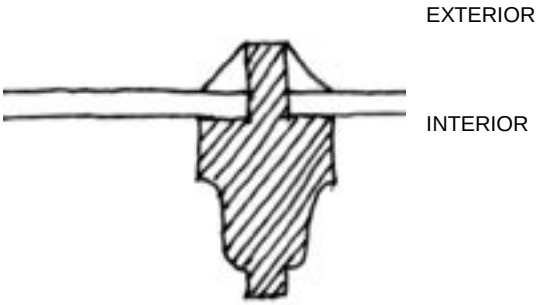


## APPROPRIATE

SIGNS:

**40** All signs should be designed in conformance with the Town of North Kingstown sign ordinance in Zoning Section 21-250. Included are size and location limitations as well as construction materials and illumination.

Traditional wall-mounted and perpendicular (hanging) wooden signs are encouraged by the zoning regulations for Brown Street.

In terms of preferred locations, for commercial buildings wall-mounted horizontal signs should be located above the store front windows and entrance on the sign board frieze, which is a wide horizontal board found on traditional storefronts above entrance and display windows.

Perpendicular or hanging signs should be located at one side of the storefront at a height that poses no threat to pedestrians.

Whether a horizontal or perpendicular sign, character-defining architectural building details should not be obscured by the size and placement of the sign.

All wall-mounted and hanging signs should be constructed of wood or a wood-substitute material that conveys the look and feel of wood to the satisfaction of the review board.

Signs painted or applied to the glass storefront windows are also encouraged, provided they meet zoning requirements.

Building signs should be illuminated with external indirect lighting rather than internal lighting through translucent panels. External lighting should be of low lumens and appropriately shielded so as to illuminate the sign, and building façade and adjacent pedestrian areas (if appropriate). All lighting shall be dark sky compliant.

Temporary, seasonal, special occasion, and holiday sales and displays and decorations may be allowed provided they meet the requirements of the Town's zoning and building life safety codes. These do not require review board approval, but ideas should be reviewed by Town staff to ensure code compliance.

Awnings and sidewalk furniture are encouraged for pedestrian use. These should meet the Town's zoning, building, life safety codes, and do not require review board approval, provided that awnings are fabric, of the traditional retractable design and are not used as fixed illuminated signage. Awning signs will need a Town permit approval.

## NOT APPROPRIATE

**40** Signs that do not comply with the Town of North Kingstown Zoning Code

Signs that are out of proportion to the building upon which they are located and which obscure or damage character-defining architectural details on historic buildings

Signs that are not made of wood or an approved substitute material are not appropriate.

Signs that are internally illuminated are not appropriate.

Storefronts can be "dressed" with seasonal displays and artful signage, some of which may be temporary, such as the chalk board menus below.

**Animated and successful traditional storefronts are encouraged. Temporary and removable decorations and color treatments do not need review or approval from the Design Review Board.**

## APPROPRIATE

### ENTRANCES:

**41** Maintain the historical character and orientation of the building entrance(s).

**42** Preserve historic storefront entrances where they exist. Use them as a primary entrance to the store. Lighting, if provided, should be dark sky appropriate.

**43** Preserve original doors and doorway enframements, which contribute to the historical character. Where historic doors are deteriorated beyond repair, they may be replaced in-kind, or constructed of new materials matching the design character of the original. ADA compliance can be met with creative solutions that retain the character of the entrance. (See pg 38.)

### PORCHES AND DECKS:

**44** Historic porches are character-defining on Brown Street and every effort should be made to preserve them. They should not be enclosed unless the applicant has a compelling justification. Otherwise deteriorated porches should be retained, repaired, or restored to their historical appearance whenever possible, including porch steps, decking, posts, balustrades, brackets and roofs. Building code-required balustrade alterations should be accomplished with the least change possible. Rail height may be increased with a simple horizontal pole.

**45** Where enclosure of a historic porch is warranted, porch floors, balustrades, post or column supports, brackets, and other features should be retained with the enclosure constructed largely of glass or screen panels mounted behind these features in the traditional method of constructing a porch enclosure. The new enclosure walls of wood and glass, and/or screens should be removable and should be reversible, allowing the original porch details to be preserved, including the original exterior wall and fenestration of the building within the porch.

To the left are appropriate porch enclosures behind porch supports

## NOT APPROPRIATE

ENTRANCES:

**41** Failing to maintain the historical character of the building entrance

**42** Removing or in-filling historic entry porches

**43** Removing and replacing original historic entry doors and door enframements that are in good condition and contribute to the historic character. Replacement doors, if required, should visually match the historic doors in configuration (if the design is known) but may be of new synthetic or metal materials.

PORCHES AND DECKS:

**44** Enclosing porches unless the applicant has a compelling justification. Replacement of a porch with an open deck would not be appropriate, although ground floor decks may be appropriate on back or side-of- building locations not visible from a public way. In the Brown Street area such decks would be appropriate on the side of commercial buildings covered with a porch roof or awning for outdoor seating. Projecting open upper floor decks supported on posts or brackets may have an incongruous appearance and are not appropriate on the street elevations.

**45** Removing or concealing decorative porch features in a porch enclosure such as historic porch decking, balustrades, post or column supports, brackets, and other features. Enclosing a porch with solid walls and louvered windows, picture windows, or sliders is not appropriate.

# Section 3:

## GUIDELINES FOR APPROPRIATE SITE DESIGN

## APPROPRIATE

### SETBACKS:

**46** Maintain the pattern, placement, orientation, rhythm, and alignment of existing historic buildings established by the traditional setbacks from the street wherever possible.

### ENTRANCE ORIENTATION:

**47** Maintain the traditional placement or location of site entrances and exits, including driveway alignments and historic pavements.

### FENCES:

**48** a. Maintain traditional fence lines and traditional fencing where existing, wherever possible.

b. Preserve historic and traditional fences and their character in their original location, including hedges, masonry walls and their features, picket fences, and gates.

### PAVING:

**49** a. Where character-defining paving materials exist in the area, including Brown Street's sidewalks and curbing, consider using similar materials for new paving.

b. Preserve historic paving materials in their original location. Where repair or replacement is warranted due to safety concerns or to advanced deterioration or wear, repair or replace with in-kind materials to retain the historical appearance. Permeable surfaces are desired wherever possible.

### PARKING AREAS, DRIVEWAYS, STREET TREES, and LIGHTING:

**50** a. Larger parking areas may be divided into small components so that the visual impact of large paved areas is reduced. Use public parking and consider new areas under elevated buildings in the flood plain.

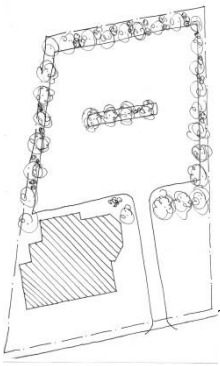
b. Plant buffers and rain gardens at the edges of the parking areas to absorb storm runoff.

c. Include islands of planting and/or trees in the interior of parking areas.

d. Side or rear locations are preferred for additional parking areas.

e. Lighting should be dark sky compliant and pedestrian in orientation, scale, height and brightness.

APPROPRIATE:



Landscaped parking areas behind buildings are appropraite.

APPROPRIATE: Maintaining the front setback (or facade line) and orientation to the street

## NOT APPROPRIATE

SETBACKS:

**46** Staggering the pattern, placement, orientation, and alignment of new in- fill construction so that the traditional setback established by the existing historic buildings is significantly interrupted or broken.

ENTRANCE ORIENTATION:

**47** Altering or erasing the traditional placement or location of site entrances and exits, including driveway alignments, so that the traditional visual character of the streetscape is diminished, and removing historic pavement surfaces or replacing such materials with new materials which do not convey the same historical appearance

FENCES:

**48** b. Not retaining historic fences in their original location, including, picket fences, hedges, masonry walls and their features, and gate posts and gates

c. On close inspection, vinyl fences do not convey the same visual appearance as wooden fences and are not appropriate.

PAVING:

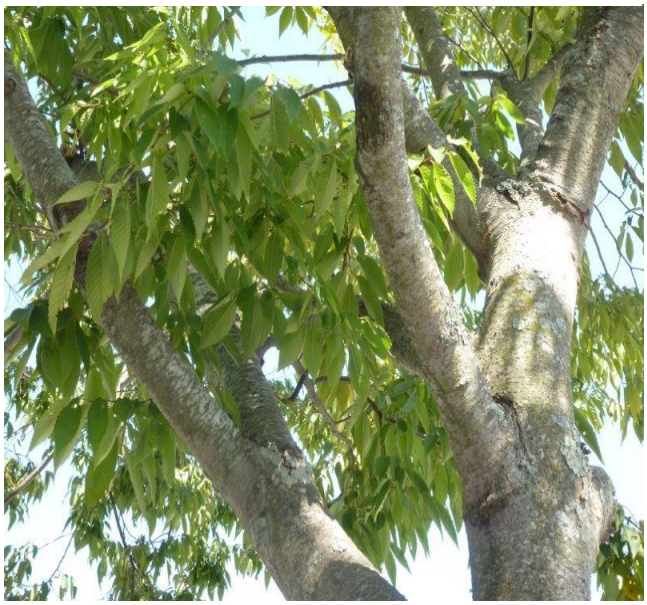
**49** a. Introducing new materials to replace historic paving materials that do not convey the same or similar visual characteristics as the historical materials

b. Removing historic paving materials, even if due to advanced deterioration or safety concerns, without replacement in-kind or with new materials that convey the same visual character

PARKING AREAS:

**50** Creating large open parking areas for needed parking, rather than adding broken-up and smaller component parking areas and landscaping to reduce the visual impact. Demolition of historic structures to create parking is not appropriate.

Rain gardens for a small scale urban places can aid runoff control.



## STREET TREES:

Street trees on Brown Street offer pedestrians shade and protection from traffic and parked cars. They should not be planted as a mono-culture. Diverse plantings of trees hardy in coastal New England are preferred. Those that are vase-shaped will be more suitable than others. Trees that drop messy fruit or large leaves should be avoided. Tree lawn borders along the street should be retained.

## APPROPRIATE

### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE FEATURES:

**51** Historic landscape features such as, but not limited to, fences, gates and posts, paving, terraces, arbors, pavilions, specimen trees, street trees, hedges, and other appurtenances should be retained, repaired, and preserved whenever possible.

**52** Variations in new landscape treatments and pocket parks should be encouraged as long as they contribute to the area.

a. Respect the variety of pavements in the area including sand and gravel, concrete aggregate, brick, blue stone, Belgian block, and sea shell.

b. Retain and Introduce treatments that have a New England harbor front and coastal character.

c. The diversity of shoreline treatments as identified on pgs. 8-9 should be continued. Historical rip-rap is preferred rather than concrete for new hard edges as it conveys a traditional appearance. It should be retained whenever possible.

d. The addition of traditional wood piers and docks to the waterfront should be encouraged where appropriate.

## NOT APPROPRIATE

HISTORIC LANDSCAPE FEATURES

**51** a. Removing and not retaining, repairing, or replanting historic landscape features, such as but not limited to, stone walls, gates and posts, paving, terraces, arbors, pergolas, specimen trees, street trees, hedges and other appurtenances so that the historic landscape is destroyed and lost, and the setting for the historic architecture compromised.

b. Adding landscape features that do not relate to the historic setting and thereby compete with historic landscape features and the character of Brown Street

c. Disturbing or destroying archaeological sites or areas (and their appurtenances) which may yield archaeological materials.

d. Removal and replacement of historic shoreline stone rip-rap should be avoided.

Remnants such as this old stone hitching post should be retained.

# Section 4:

## GUIDELINES FOR APPROPRIATE ADDITIONS TO "CONTRIBUTING" STRUCTURES (as defined by the Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission (RIHPHC):The following guidelines apply for additions to contributing structures in the Brown Street area in addition to guidelines #46-52 (preceding).

## APPROPRIATE

### RELATIONSHIP TO MAIN BUILDING:

**53** a. Additions to existing buildings should be compatible with the size, scale, fenestration (size and rhythm), material finish, and character of the main building and its setting of adjacent historical buildings.

b. Additions can include porches and bay windows, as well as entire wings, rooms, or upper floors.

c. Additions of new wings or sections of buildings (upper floors included) should be smaller and secondary to the main sections of the building.

They may have a stepped-down roof, lower ridge line, and/or be separated from the main section by a building hyphen.

They can be built in a contemporary style, but must be respectful of the architectural quality (whether vernacular, plain, or high style) of the original historic building and nearby historic buildings.

d. Additions shall rhyme with and compliment the main (historic) section of the building, but be differentiated from it by means of simplified building design, plainer trim, simpler roof lines, and possibly a subtle change in cladding such as a change from clapboard to shingle.

e. Additions shall not give a *false* historical appearance unless they are designed as replacements **for lost** historical features based upon adequate historical documentation and are therefore considered as reconstructions or restorations.

## NOT APPROPRIATE

### RELATIONSHIP TO MAIN BUILDING:

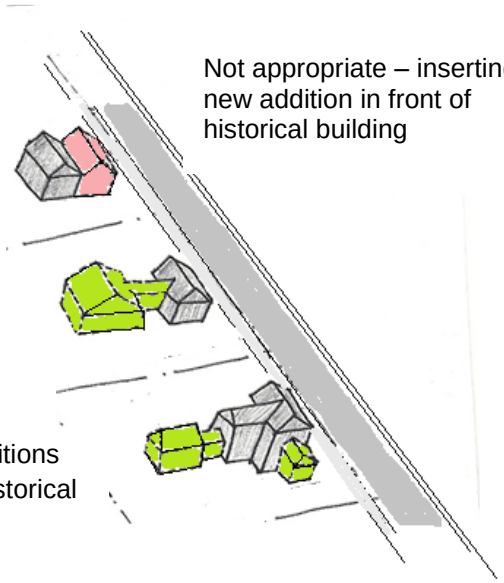
**53** a. Additions to existing buildings which are not compatible with the size, scale, material finish, and character of the historical (main) building and its setting are not appropriate.

b. Additions which do not convey a similar architectural appearance to the main section of the building, or are not differentiated from it by means of simplified building design, plainer trim, simpler roof lines, and possibly a subtle change in cladding such as from clap board to shingle

c. Additions that give a false historical appearance are not appropriate, unless they are designed as replacements for lost historical features based upon historical documentation guiding the design.

Appropriate – putting addition behind historical building with connecting hyphen

Appropriate – adding additions to the side or rear of a lhistorical building



Not appropriate – inserting new addition in front of historical building

## APPROPRIATE

**ARTFUL DESIGN CHARACTER:**

**54** Wherever possible, new additions or alterations to buildings should not obscure or confuse the essential form and character of the original building. The rhythm of door and window openings and proportions shall be retained.

**55** a. Avoid new additions or alterations that would hinder the ability of the building or its setting to represent the authentic design character of Brown Street.

b. Addtions should honor and celebrate the main historic building form and its architecture. They should be inspired by the original building and not appear to be out of scale with it or nearby historic buildings.

c. High quality design is expected in new additions, where the design will be judged upon how the character-defining aspects of the historic building are retained and given respect through the choice of appropriate proportion, materials, massing, and decorative trim, all of which should be subservient to the visual appearance of the original building from the public way.

**LOCATION:**

**56** a. When locating additions to historic buildings, maintain the pattern created by the repetition of building fronts along Brown Street.

b. Set back additions from the main building facade so they will not alter the historic rhythm, height and scale of building fronts in the area.

Additions should always appear as secondary elements. This can be achieved by using building hyphens, step backs, and roof step downs.

On Brown Street opportunities exist to place additions to the rear of buildings facing the street, especially on deep lots.

Additions to commercial buildings may also be placed at upper floor levels by stepping up the roof on a back portion, provided the addition is stepped back from the front gable sufficiently so that the front gable or western false front remains the dominant feature.

**57** a. Locate additions so they will not obscure or damage significant ornament or detail. Place additions to the side or rear portions of the building which are not readily visible from a public way.

b. Ramp or regrade for ADA access. Side or rear locations in addition to front entryways are worth exploring. (See illustrate on pgse32,33,and 40.)

c. Plan new dormers on the rear or side portions of a roof rather than on the front, where possible.

d. Avoid impacts to special moldings, decorative windows or dormers.

**MATERIALS:**

58 Use building materials that are compatible in style and dimension with the original building, including cladding, windows, doors, and roofing materials. Green building materials will be approved on a case by case basis, provided the architectural character of the building and its context is not jeopardized.

## NOT APPROPRIATE

CHARACTER

**54** New additions or alterations to buildings that confuse the essential form and character of the original building

**55** a. New additions or alterations that radically change the authentic small scale design character of Brown Street are not appropriate.

b. The addition that visually appears more important than the original main build- ing form is not appropriate.

c. Alterations that seek to imply an earlier period than that of the building are inap- propriate.

d. Alterations that seek to imply an inac- curate or out-of-proportion variation on the historic style are also inappropriate.

LOCATION:

**56** Failing to maintain the pattern created by the repetition of building facades in the area by building an addition that con- flicts with the established pattern

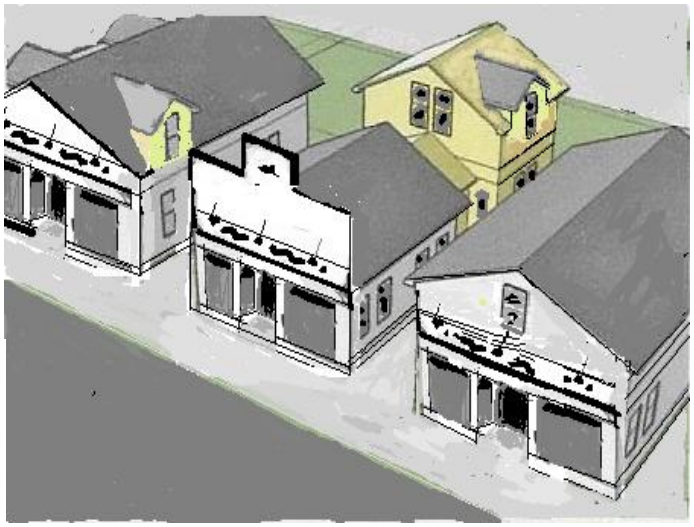
**57** Additions which, through their placement or attachment to historic materials and forms, obscure or damage ornament, architectural detail, and the historical form and character of the building or its setting are not appropriate.

MATERIALS:

**58** Failing to use building materials that are compatible with the original building.

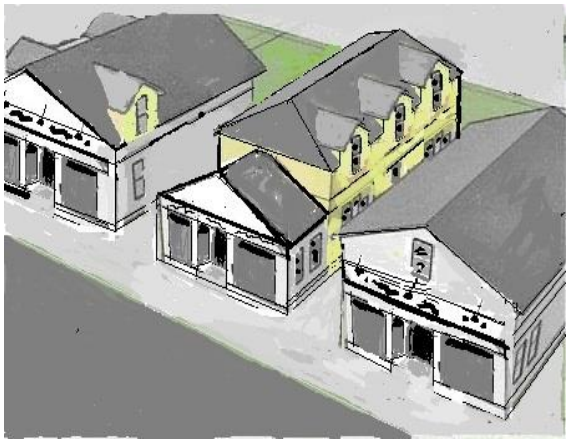
# APPROPRIATE ADDITIONS
## to small single story historic buildings

Highlighted in yellow are appropriate second story additions. The center one is set back from the front façade parapet. Appropriate dormers have been added to the adjoining buildings to provide second story space. These additions are in scale with the original building and do not intrude upon the streetscape.



At right in yellow an appropriate new rear 2 story addition has been added to the original building with a small single story hyphen connector. The addition is set back and differentiated from the original store and store front.

To the left the addition in the above illustration is shown from street level. The new portion of the building does not change the Brown Street façade and its small scale character, yet considerable space is added to the building.



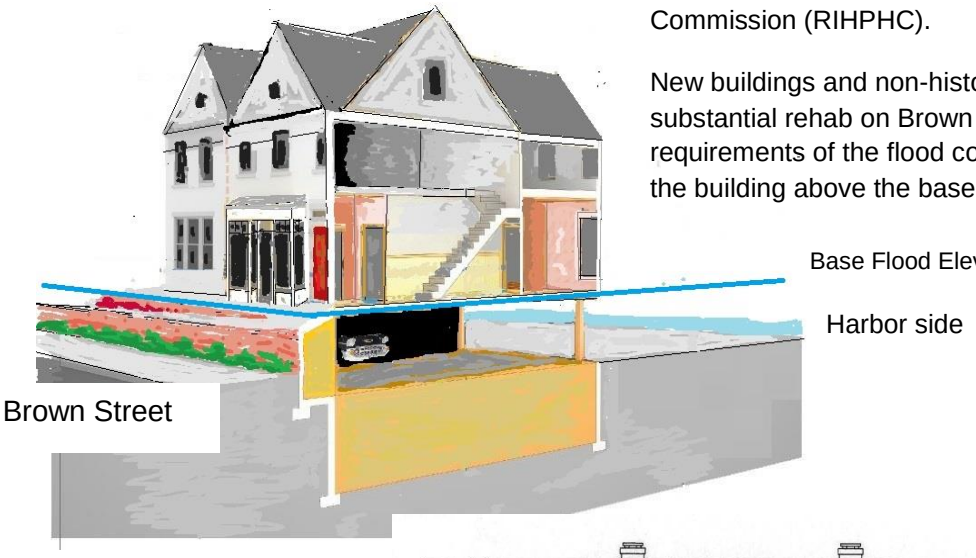
To the right in yellow is a two story addition to a small single-story gable-roofed building. The addition is large, but the impact is diminished by setting back the second story from the single story façade and providing a hipped roof. As in the illustration above, the character-defining small scaled commercial street front remains intact when viewed from the street.

# Section 5:

## GAINING FLOOD RESILIENCY

Most of Brown Street lies within a flood hazard zone due to its coastal location. The listed contributing historic buildings of Brown Street are eligible for waivers from strict flood code requirements, but every effort should be made for resiliency in a rehab project to reduce future insurance costs. Projects must be approved by the RI Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission (RIHPHC).

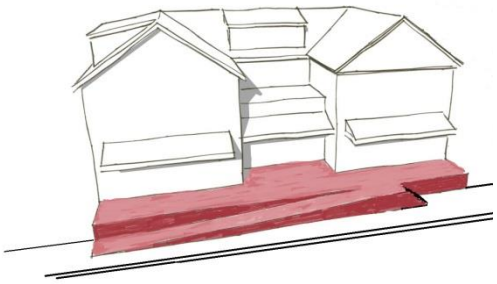
New buildings and non-historic buildings involving a substantial rehab on Brown Street must meet the full requirements of the flood code. This requires **elevating** the building above the base flood elevation.




The drawings above, to the left, and below show how historic and non- historic buildings may be elevated on Brown Street to meet flood code requirements and obtain storm resiliency.

The new building design to the right demonstrates that flood code requirements and two stories of mixed use space can be accommodated within the height limit, including access ramping and dry flood proofing of the commercial first floor.

Ramping on Brown Street can accommodate accessibility needs, provided there is enough street frontage and the building façade is set back.



This new building is elevated over three feet from the ground level at the street. Dry flood-proofing of the first floor commercial space to the window sills accommodates the base flood elevation and required freeboard. A flight of stairs and a ramp provide access from the sidewalk in front of the building.

Parking underneath the building with access from the rear is shown below in a side view. The ramp in front of the building is circled in red.

Parking beneath a new building accessible from the harborside (as shown above and below) is possible for locations on the east side of Brown Street due to elevation changes. New Brown street commercial fronts, although elevated to meet flood code requirements can also be accessible to pedestrians as shown on the preceding page and on page 40 (at end of page).

Rear (harbor) elevation showing parking entrance under building.

Smart vents can be installed in building walls to allow water to flow through the building. This is known as wet flood-proofing, appropriate for historic buildings. All utilities should be elevated above the base flood elevation. Commercial use of ground floors may only be allowed in non-historic or new buildings if the area is dry flood-proofed with concrete walls as a barrier to flood waters. **This may not be appropriate in historic buildings where historic materials and integrity will be lost.**

# Section 6:

## GUIDELINES FOR CREATIVE NEW BUILDING CONSTRUCTION IN THE BROWN STREET AREA

## APPROPRIATE

**59** New buildings and structures should be harmonious in form, material, siting, and scale with the established Brown Street character and should not present a false historical appearance. A reconstruction of a historical building once located on the site, based upon accurate documentation, may be appropriate. In addition to the general site design guidelines in Section 3, the following guidelines apply to all new buildings on and off Brown Street. The design for new construction should be broken into façades that emulate the average façade width of nearby historical buildings. The facades may be connected by set-back building hyphens. The facades should also emulate the average building height of Brown Street. All sides of new buildings shall be designed in be congruent with their setting and adjoining historic buildings in terms of window/door rhythm, massing, scale, and height. Green buildings are encouraged, provided they are compatible with the context of the area and meet these guidelines.

New buildings that blend-in with the historical vernacular architectural context of Brown Street are encouraged along with creativity that compliments and rhymes the existing architecture. Simplicity is preferred over complexity. Diversity and interpretation is preferred over plagiarism.

### BUILDING ORIENTATION:

***60*** Align the façade of the new building with the established setbacks and building rhythm for the area. Whenever possible, the facades should have gable ends facing the street with pitched roofs. New and larger buildings should be set back no more than 10 feet from the street to allow for flood code elevations and ADA access.

### BUILDING FORM AND SCALE:

**61** a. New buildings and structures should appear similar in height, mass, scale, form, proportion, and fenestration with historic structures in the area. Brown Street carries a 19th century traditional residential feel in its commercial buildings which should be maintained in new building design. Many of the 2 story buildings have residential spaces on the second floor. This use adds to the vitality of the street. First floors on commercial buildings shall be differentiated from second floors with a cornice line in the traditional manner. New buildings on the whart should honor and reflect New England barn-like harbor types with shingled or vertical board cladding,

b. Where new building facades will be wider than those found traditionally, subdivide the surface into portions similar in scale to the nearby historic facades by varying set-backs, roof forms, and materials. Larger buildings may have hyphens set back and linking front facades which are traditional widths.

**62** Use vertical building forms that match those historically used on Brown Street. These are generally no more than 2 stories in height. Many buildings are single story and small in character. Many have full glazing across their first floor fronts divided into traditional storefronts. Traditional floor to ceiling heights should be used to retain appropriate vertical scale.

**63** Roof forms should reflect a similar orientation, pitch, and massing to other contributing structures found in the vicinity. Eaves and ridge lines along the first and second stories should maintain the same roof pitch. Gable roof forms are preferred. They should be at a pitch range from 6/12 to 8/12.

### MATERIALS:

**64** a. Use building materials that are similar to those employed historically in the area for all major surfaces. Masonry stone and brick as well as wood clapboards and shingles are preferred for new construction because they are known to be lasting and of long life. Composite and fiber cement-based alternative materials are discouraged because they are untested in Wickford's marine environment and may not be as resilient.

b. Materials for roofs should be similar in appearance to those used historically, although asphalt shingles are appropriate.

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## NOT APPROPRIATE

BUILDING ORIENTATION:

**60** Failing to align the façade of the new building with the established setbacks and building rhythm for the area

BUILDING FORM AND SCALE:

**61** a. New buildings that do not appear similar in height, mass, and scale with historic structures in the area or are otherwise incongruous and out of proportion with the historical context are not appropriate.

b. Creating new building facades that are visually wider than those found traditionally and failing to subdivide the surface into portions similar in scale to the historic facades by varying setbacks, roof forms, and materials to diminish the impact

**62** Using building forms that do not match those used historically

**63** Using roof forms that visually conflict with and do not match those used historically, including massing and pitch

MATERIALS:

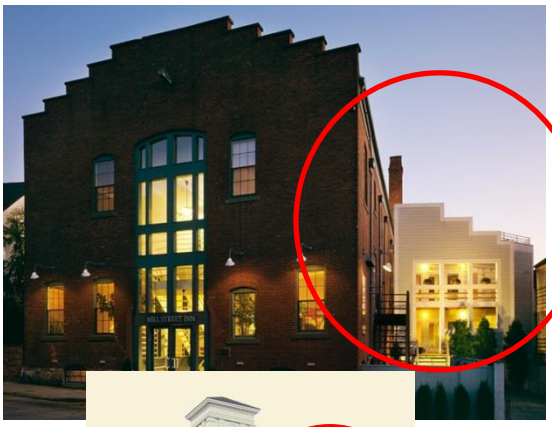
**64** a. Using building materials that are dissimilar to those employed historically for all major surfaces

b. Vinyl and aluminum siding and trim materials do not convey the same historic appearance as the surrounding buildings and the wood and brick context of Wickford and therefore are not appropriate.

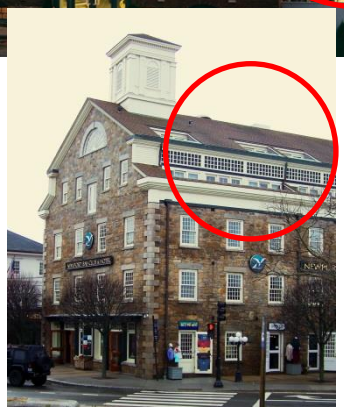
## ADDITIONS AND NEW BUILDING CONSTRUCTION:

**Appropriate in scale and orientation**

To the right the rooftop addition is concealed by a parapet.



To the left, the addition is set back with a roofline that compliments the original.



To the left, roof space is reused for housing with set-in balconies that continue the roof form and allow reuse.

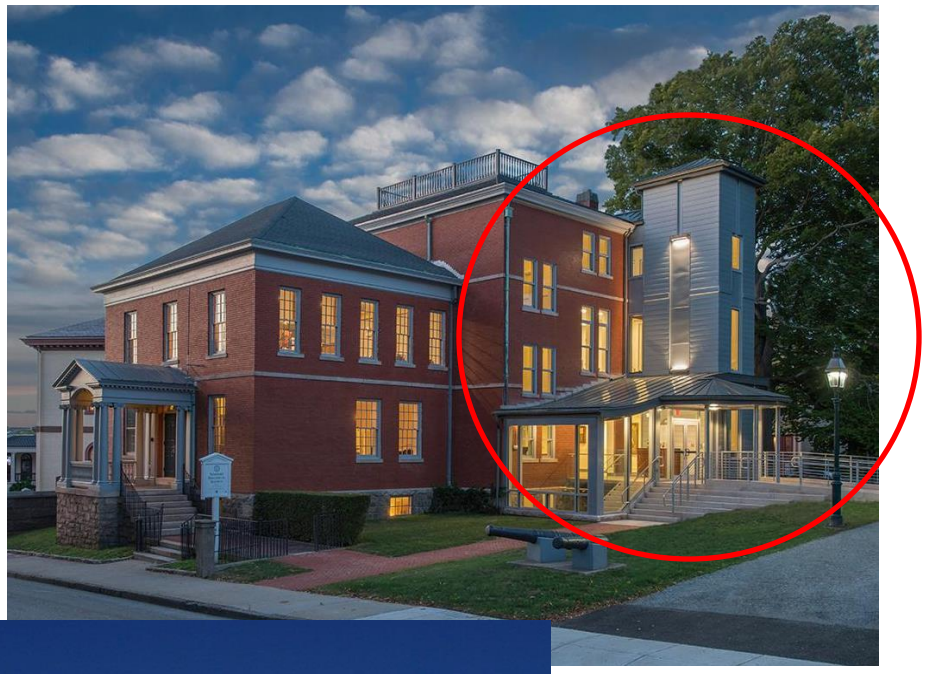
To the left, new living space is creatively added to roof and tower.

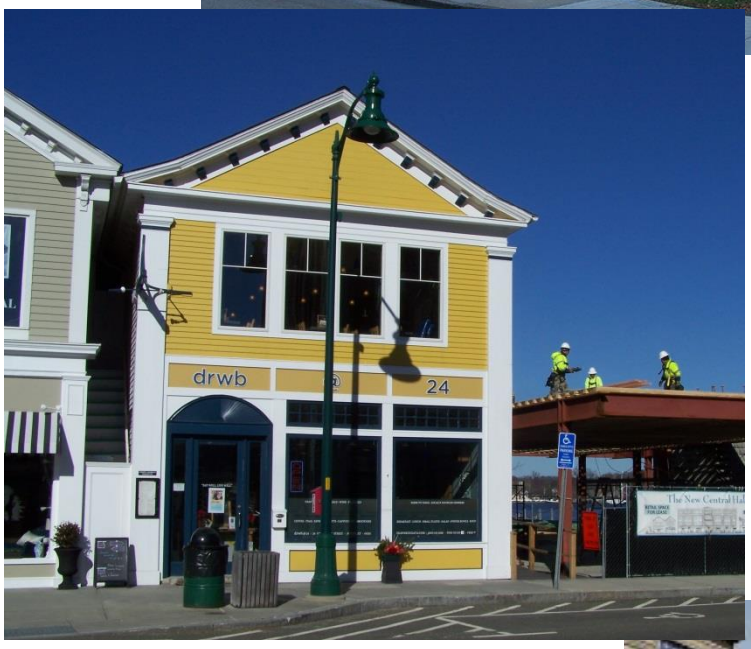
**Additions and New Buildings that are Not Appropriate due to design and scale**

The additions and alterations above and to the left are not in scale with the original architecture. They overwhelm the building in both cases and appear as incongruous.

## ADDITIONS AND NEW BUILDING CONSTRUCTION:

**Appropriate in scale and orientation**






The addition above was made to create a new ADA entry and elevator.

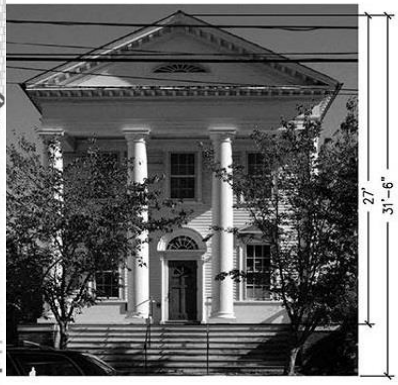
To the left, a new building blends with a historic New England Main Street. Simple details identify the building as new infill.

To the right, new mixed use residential/commercial buildings grace a New England coastal village.

Above are new buildings located in a coastal flood hazard zone with parking possibilities on the ground level.

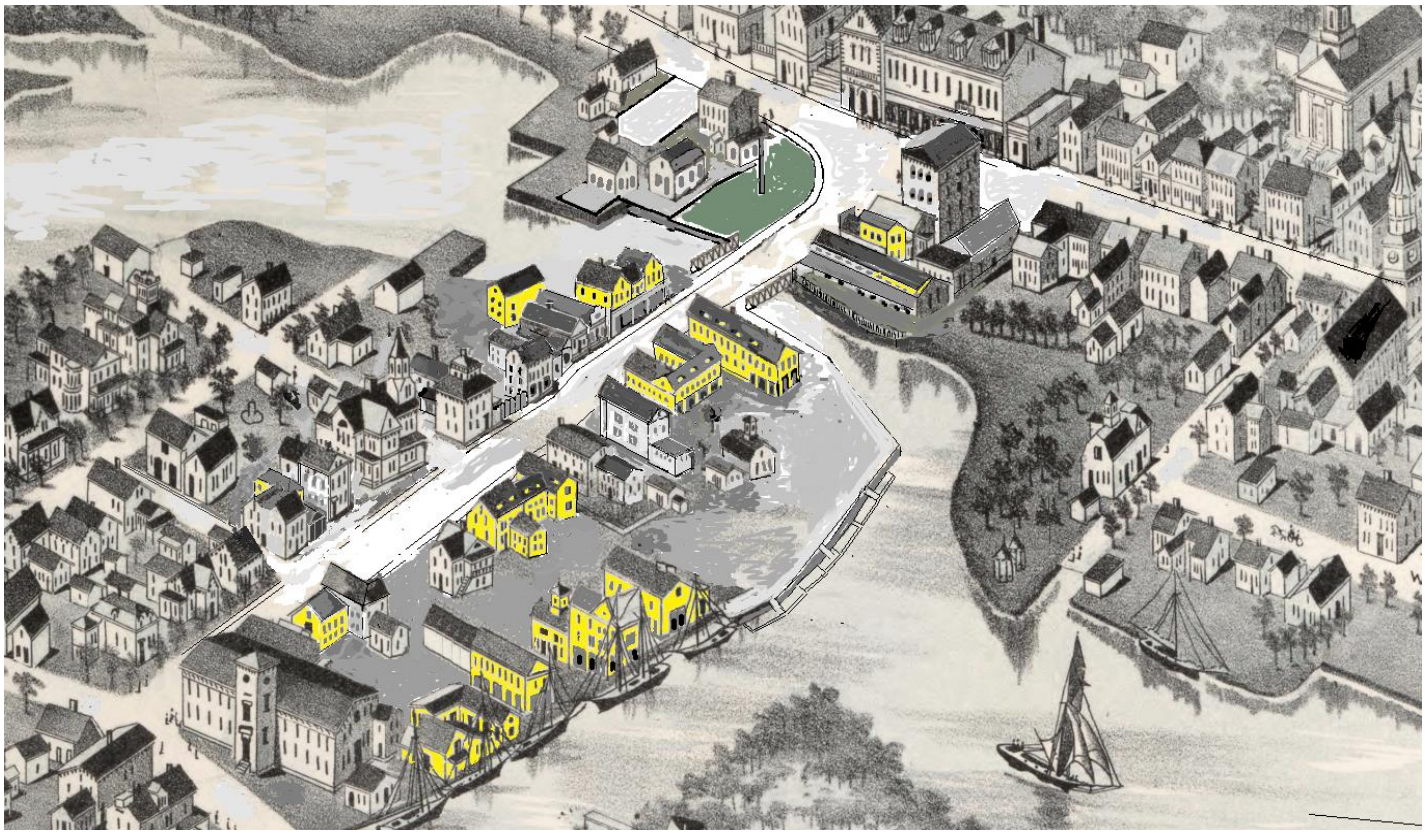
To the left (center) is a new mixed-use building that blends with the adjacent Main Street in a coastal New England village.

To the right, new residential wharf buildings with dry flood-proofed ground level retail and office uses. Residential uses are above.

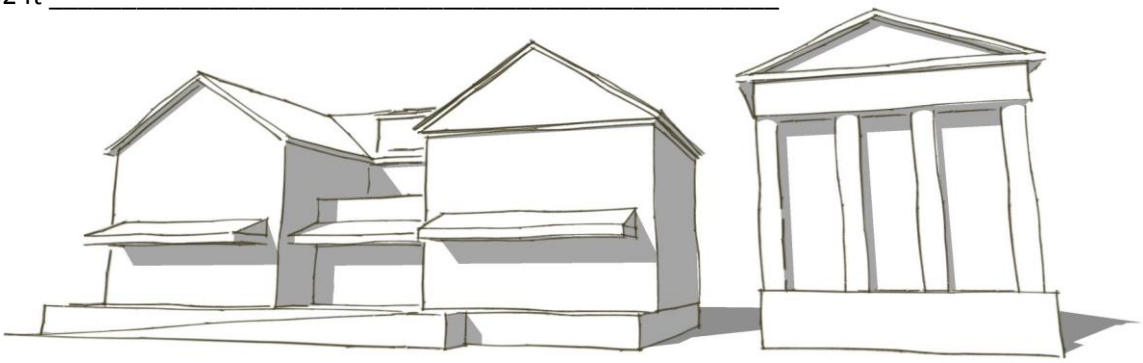



The proposed new building above is completely out of scale with its existing iconic Brown Street neighbor to the right. New buildings with large footprints should be broken into smaller facades which are similar in width to the existing historic facades on the street. (See Guideline #61-63.) Although too tall and massive, the new project above attempts to mimic the façade width of other buildings on Brown Street. The rhythm of windows and storefronts also matches and projecting gables are also employed. The overall scale of the building, however, is not appropriate. The building would stand out and be out of scale with the Brown Street area.

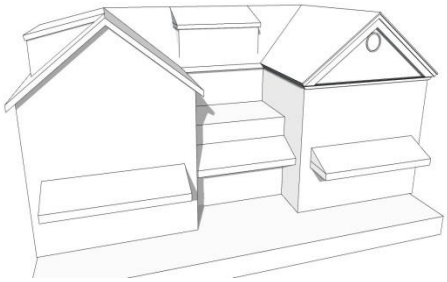
Below, a revised 21st century Bird's Eye View of Wickford's Brown Street highlights artful additions and creative new buildings that blend (highlighted) with existing historical structures and streetscapes. With these new assets, design-assisted by the Brown Street design standards and guidelines in this guidebook, Brown Street and Wickford Village retains its vibe, charm, and sense of place into the future.



32 ft _____



Above is an appropriately scaled and elevated new building designed to accommodate the flood code and be no taller than the historic building on the right. Per Guideline #61, the iconic historic North Kingstown Library building (on the right) remains prominent in the streetscape.



Above is a 3-D view of the proposed building with a recessed central bay, breaking the mass of the building into three components and creating appropriate rhythm on the street.

The waterfront offers additional areas for renovations and new buildings. The 1880s bird's eye view offers some design direction (see Sections 4,5,6).

A public walkway along the entire area from the Hussey Bridge to the Brown Street bridge is desirable. It should have a wharf-like appearance.

## APPROPRIATE

### ENTRANCES:

**65** a. Orient the main and secondary entrances of the building in a manner similar to established patterns in the Brown Street area.

b. Recessed entries are typical of Brown Street's commercial buildings and similar elements may be used to define entrances to new buildings.

c. Conceal garage doors and parking areas in front of garage doors from view from the street if at all possible. New garages for residential buildings in the Brown Street area should be set back from the street for safety and located to the rear or back of the main building. Flood code requirements to elevate buildings allow for parking under the structure. This is a design advantage for new buildings on the harbor side of Brown Street.

d. If ADA access is required by means of a ramp, consider evaluating the street entrance area and adjoining sidewalk to raise the surface level naturally, reduce ramp length, and minimize railings. Ramp systems should be as unobtrusive as possible given site constraints.

### WINDOWS:

**66** Use of window types, sizes, proportions, and placement rhythm similar to the historic window designs in the district is encouraged. Aluminum clad, vinyl clad or PVC (resin) windows (sash, casing, trim) may be appropriate on a case by case basis for detached new buildings, provided they mimic historical window types and details in terms of size, window pane configurations, and muntin profile. These windows may have simulated divided lights instead of true divided lights.

Facades on Brown Street should not be blank or solid; windows are an important element in the pedestrian streetscape and shall be an important part of a new building's Brown Street façade design expressing the storefront character of the street if commercial use is desired.

NOTE: If the new construction includes an addition to an existing building, see Guidelines Section 4 and Section 7.

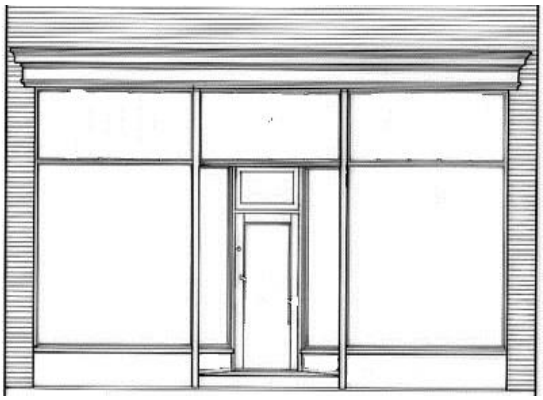
## NOT APPROPRIATE

ENTRANCES:

**65** Failing to orient the main and secondary entrances of the building in a manner similar to established patterns in the area, including the use of recessed entries as character-defining elements

WINDOWS:

**66** Using window types, sizes and proportions that are dissimilar to the historic window designs in the district. Creating blank street level walls. Using tinted or opaque glass instead of clear for windows.



Typical Brown Street storefront with central entrance flanked by display windows

APPROPRIATE: ADA ramp on the side elevation to the right and on the front elevation below is shown facing full on Brown Street, the railing blends with the building, regrading minimizes overall length. Often regrading to bring the ground level up to meet the door threshold level is a simple solution to providing access, although on portions of Brown Street, new buildings should be elevated a few feet as in this example to help mitigate flooding and meet code.

# Section 7:

## GUIDELINES FOR DEMOLITION

**67** Any demolition of a historic building, or portions thereof (as defined by the Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission (RIHPHC)), within the Brown Street area diminishes the built environment and creates unnecessary waste. Demolition of historic buildings is usually *not an appropriate* option for a project and should be avoided whenever possible.

**68** Alternative options to whole building demolition, which the review board and owner should explore, include partial dismantling of rotten and structurally deficient components and reconstruction in-kind, locating a buyer who might have an alternative use for the building or relocating the building to another site, through dismantling or moving. If all efforts have failed and demolition and removal of the building is unavoidable due to years of neglect and complete structural failure, every effort should be made to mitigate the loss. Buildings of particular significance falling into this category should be carefully photographed and documented prior to demolition. Special architectural features and ornamentation may also be saved and incorporated into the design of the replacement structure.

**DEMOLITION OF A NON-CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURE**:

**69** Demolition or relocation of a non-contributing building or structure (as defined by the RIHPHC), or a portion of a non-contributing building or structure, may not have a substantial adverse effect on the historical or architectural significance of the historic district. In the case of such structures proposed for demolition, a development plan for the property must be presented to the review board for approval prior to demolition. The development plan should include schematic plans for the new replacement building and a landscape plan for the site. No structure, regardless of age, will be approved for demolition without having a plan for proposed site improvements and a timetable for completion. Site improvements will fall under the guidelines for new building construction (see Section 6).

**DEMOLITION OF A CONTRIBUTING BUILDING OR STRUCTURE** :

**70** **A review period of 90 days for any proposed demolition of a contributing building or structure (as defined by the RIHPHC) may be required by the review board to allow for the following**:

a. working together, the owner and the review board develop an economically feasible plan to preserve the building;

b. working together, the owner and the review board try to sell the building or structure to a buyer willing to preserve it, after an exhaustive search for such a buyer is undertaken.

**71** All demolition applications for buildings and structures must present approvable plans for the use of the site after demolition, including plans for any new building or structure on the site. The review board will review the plans using the guidelines for new construction (see Sections 5 and 6).

**72** All demolition applications should provide a comparison between the cost of rehabilitating the current historic resource and the cost of demolition and the proposed subsequent improvements to the site. The review board may grant approval in the case of an undue and unreasonable hardship to the owner, provided such hardship is quantifiable.

**73** An application to demolish a structure that poses an imminent threat to public health and/or safety must be accompanied by a report from the Town Building Official and photographs depicting the current condition of the building. A structural engineer's report may also be required as well as a comprehensive onsite building inspection by the review board.

**74** The demolition or relocation of a **non-contributing addition** to a portion of a main contributing building or structure, or of a non-contributing building or structure secondary to the main contributing building or structure (or standing alone), might not have a substantial effect on the historical, architectural, or archaeological significance of the historic district in which it is located and therefore may be approved.

**DEMOLITION FOR A REPLACEMENT PROJECT OF SPECIAL PUBLIC MERIT:**

**75** Demolition or relocation of a contributing building or structure which would have a substantial adverse effect on the aesthetic, historic, architectural, or archaeological significance of the area may be appropriate if a replacement project is of a special public purpose. For a replacement project to be of special public merit, it must meet the following criteria:

a. It must have significant public benefits to the Town of North Kingstown and/or the Wickford community by virtue of social or other benefits having a high priority for the community; and

b. It must clearly serve the public interest to a greater extent than the retention of the present building(s).

## DEMOLITION BY NEGLECT:

Neglect of buildings and structures is hazardous and detrimental to the individual property, property values in Wickford Village, and the general health and safety of the area. Because property owners are legally responsible for providing ordinary maintenance and repair, demolition by neglect should be avoided.

The term "Demolition by Neglect" refers to the gradual deterioration of a building when routine or major maintenance is not performed. The types of deficiencies identified as "Demolition by Neglect" include any structural deficiency or a deficiency in a building part which, if left unrepaired, could lead to deterioration of the building's structural frame and potential failure or collapse. A building is also identified as "Demolition by Neglect" if it is open to entry by vandals or vagrants.

**76** The owner of a building or structure within the Brown Street area should comply with all applicable codes, laws, and regulations governing the maintenance of property. It is the intent of this section to preserve from deliberate or inadvertent neglect the exterior features of buildings and structures designated as contributing or significant and the interior portions thereof when such maintenance is necessary to prevent deterioration and decay of the exterior. All such buildings or structures should be preserved against such decay and deterioration and free from structural defects through prompt corrections of any of the following:

a. Building features which may fall and injure persons or property;

b. Deteriorated or inadequate foundations, defective or deteriorating supports, deteriorated walls or other vertical structural supports;

c. Members of roofs, roof supports or other horizontal members which sag, split, or buckle due to defective material or deterioration;

d. Deteriorated or ineffective waterproofing of exterior walls, roofs, foundations, or floors, including broken windows or doors;

e. Defective or insufficient weather protection for exterior wall covering, including of paint or other protective covering; or

f. Deterioration of the building which renders it not properly watertight or structurally unsafe.

**77** The process by which a building or structure is officially cited for "Demolition by Neglect" involves three steps. They are as follows:

a. Initial identification of such properties may be made by a review board member, Town Planning or Building Department staff inspection, or by referral from someone in the area.

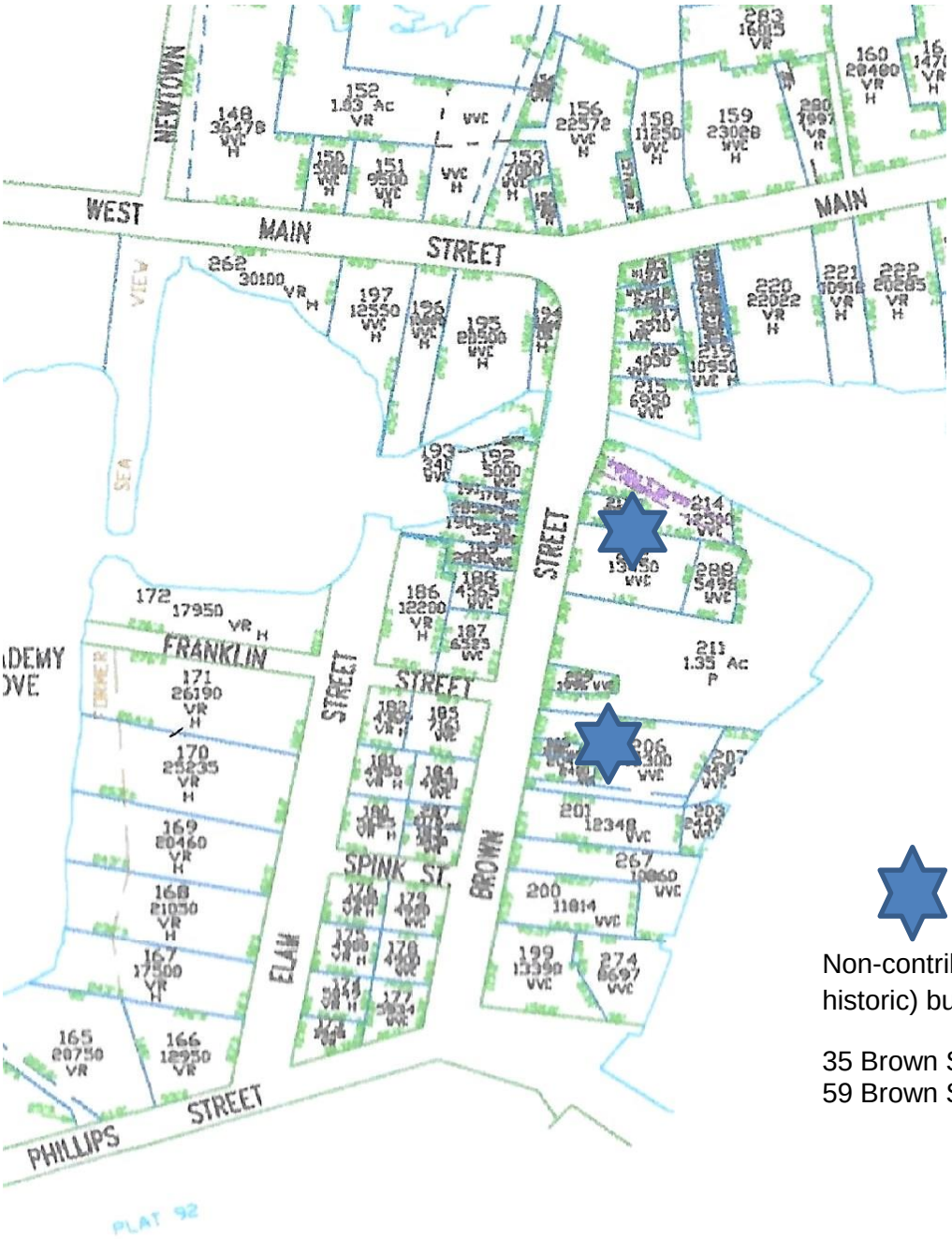
b. The report of the building(s) with photos documenting the deteriorated conditions is presented at a public meeting to the review board.

c. If the board determines the building(s) qualifies for Demolition by Neglect, it may petition the North Kingstown Town Council to follow through with notification to the property owner and with code enforcement procedures to protect the building.

# Section 8:

## GUIDELINES FOR THE ALTERATION OF NON-CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS OR STRUCTURES

**78** Non-contributing buildings and structures (or appurtenances) (as defined by the RIHPHC) within the Brown Street area should not be altered in any manner that renders them less compatible or congruent with any aspects of such buildings, structures, or appurtenances, and the surrounding historic district which the Town and the National Park Service has determined to be of historical and architectural significance. **Projects should follow standards and guidelines #46-66 for site design, additions, and new building construction.**




Non-contributing (non-historic) buildings

35 Brown Street
59 Brown Street

GREEN