



# City of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania Historical Architectural Review Board

## BETHLEHEM HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGN GUIDELINES



*The Central Bethlehem Historic District features a unique rich variety of historic buildings that includes commercial, residential and institutional properties.*

### CENTRAL BETHLEHEM HISTORIC DISTRICT

The Central Bethlehem Historic District is located on the north side of the city, roughly bound by New Street, First Avenue, the Lehigh River, Broad Street and Walnut Street. It encompasses many of the City's oldest remaining buildings associated with the Moravian settlement, the shops and businesses along Main Street, as well as the surrounding residential neighborhood. The District has a unique historic character making it a highly desirable area to live, work and visit.

These *Guidelines* were developed in conjunction with the Historical Architectural Review Board (HARB). The HARB reviews Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) applications for proposed exterior alterations to properties within the Central Bethlehem Historic District that are visible from a public way. The applicant is responsible for complying with the provisions of the Zoning and Building Codes at the time of application. The applicant must obtain a COA as well as all necessary permits prior to proceeding with any work. For more information, to clarify whether a proposed project requires HARB review, or to obtain applications, please call the **Bureau of Code Enforcement at City Hall at (610) 865-7091**.

Additional *Guidelines* addressing other historic building topics are available at City Hall and on the City's website at [www.bethlehem-pa.gov](http://www.bethlehem-pa.gov). Please review this information during the early stages of planning your project. Familiarity with this material can assist in moving a project quickly through the approval process, saving applicants both time and money.

### IMPORTANCE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

The City of Bethlehem recognizes that the character and quality of life enjoyed by its citizens depend in great measure upon the City's rich architectural heritage and the important landscapes in our community. The City and the Historical Architectural Review Board (HARB) work together to ensure our historical, cultural, archeological, social and economic heritage, entrusted to each generation, is enriched and passed on to future generations.

To assist that property owners within the Central Bethlehem Historic District who are considering repair, alteration, rehabilitation or demolition of an existing building or structure in the understanding of the HARB review process, the City has developed these *Design Guidelines*. These *Guidelines* are not intended to replace consultation with qualified architects, contractors, the HARB or City Staff.

### BENEFITS OF LOCAL HISTORIC DESIGNATION

The local designation of historic districts and individual properties has been found to:

- Increase neighborhood stability and property values
- Preserve the physical history of the area
- Promote an appreciation of the physical environment
- Foster community pride and self-image by creating a unique sense of place and local identity
- Increase the awareness and appreciation of local history
- Increase tourism
- Attract potential customers to businesses

## HISTORIC DISTRICTS

A historic district is an area, delineated by a boundary, which includes resources such as buildings, structures, objects or sites, whose distinctive character conveys a unique architectural and cultural heritage. Since the enactment of the State of Pennsylvania's Historic District Act 167 in 1961, many municipalities have passed local historic district ordinances. In 1961, the City of Bethlehem enacted Ordinance No. 1728 creating the Bethlehem Historic District and establishing the Historical Architectural Review Board (HARB) to preserve for future generations significant buildings and structures reflective of Bethlehem's historic development and architectural styles. The unique quality of the architectural heritage of the Central Bethlehem Historic District was further recognized in 1972 with its inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places, with the District boundaries being expanded in 1988.

## HISTORICAL ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD

The Bethlehem Historical Architectural Review Board (HARB) has the responsibility to implement the City's historic preservation regulations and activities as related to the Central Bethlehem Historic District.

The HARB includes nine volunteer members, appointed by the City Council, who are City residents and serve in five-year overlapping terms. HARB's members include a registered architect, a licensed real estate broker, the City Building Inspector, and six additional members with a knowledge of historical or architectural development and a deep concern regarding the preservation, development and enhancement of historic resources within the district. In addition, at least three HARB members reside within the Historic District.

## HARB'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The principal role of the HARB is to review and provide a recommendation to City Council regarding any erection, alteration, demolition, relocation, adaptive use or new construction project within the bounds of the Central Bethlehem Historic District that is visible from a public street or public right-of-way based on the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*.

The HARB also promotes and provides advice regarding historic preservation activities in the City by recommending the documentation of historic buildings and sites and providing recommendations regarding local and National Register nominations. In addition, the HARB assists groups and individuals interested in historic preservation, undertakes preservation education programs and provides recommendations for the preservation and rehabilitation of individual historic buildings.

HARB's responsibility includes the review of historic marker locations on buildings that indicate the date of construction. Details about the program can be found on the city website, [www.bethlehem-pa.gov](http://www.bethlehem-pa.gov).

## HARB REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

HARB review includes the general design, arrangement, texture, permanent color and materials of proposed work in relation to similar features at the exterior of properties within the Central Bethlehem Historic District's period of significance. The HARB considers the effect of the proposed change upon the general historic and architectural nature of the Historic District. Some items that are reviewed by the HARB include:

- **Exterior Building Envelope:** Including roofs, walls, foundations, windows, doors, cornices, trim, porches, decks, painting, sandblasting
- **Site Features:** Including walls, fences, arbors, paving
- **Secondary Buildings:** Including garages, sheds
- **Business Storefronts:** Including signs, awnings

HARB review is required for some work that does not otherwise require a building permit. Please contact the Bureau of Code Enforcement at (610) 865-7091 to determine if proposed work is subject to HARB review.

## CRITERIA FOR HARB DECISIONS

When reviewing a proposed project, the HARB's review is guided by principles contained in *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*, and more specifically, *The Standards for Rehabilitation*. *The Standards for Rehabilitation* provide property owners and tenants common-sense guidelines to allow sensitive contemporary uses for their sites while retaining their architectural and cultural heritage. In reviewing projects, the HARB encourages sensitive rehabilitation involving the least amount of intervention or change, as identified in the following guidelines:

- **Identify, retain and preserve** the overall form, materials and details that are important in defining the architectural and historical character of the building and site.
- **Protect and maintain** historic materials and features. This involves protection from other work that may occur in proximity to the historic materials, and also protection through regular maintenance. A regular program of protection and maintenance usually involves the least degree of intervention, and can prevent or postpone extensive and costly work.
- **Repair** rather than replace deteriorated historic materials and features. Repairs maintain the building in its current condition while making it weather-resistant and structurally sound. Repairs should involve the least intervention possible, concentrating specifically on areas of deterioration. When repair is not possible, replacement in-kind is encouraged, reproducing by new construction the original feature exactly, including the original material, finish, detailing and texture.

- **Replace** missing or deteriorated historic materials and features when the extent of deterioration precludes repair. Similar to repair, the preferred approach is to replace the entire feature in-kind to match the original material, finish, detailing, and texture. Since this is not always technically or financially feasible, substitute materials may be acceptable when they convey the original appearance and finish of the original feature.
- **Reconstruct** missing historical features if adequate historical, pictorial and physical documentation exists so that the feature may be accurately reproduced. The addition of features from other historic buildings or addition of historical elements for which there is no documentation is not appropriate.
- **Alterations and additions** are sometimes needed to ensure the continued use of a building. An alteration involves returning a building to a useful condition while saving those parts that represent its historical, architectural or cultural significance. It is important that alterations do not radically alter, obscure or destroy character-defining spaces, materials, features or finishes. An addition, however, is new construction at the exterior of an existing building and should be avoided. If considered, new additions should be clearly differentiated but compatible in size, mass, form, fenestration, detailing and style with the historic building, and constructed at a less visible side or rear elevation, so the character-defining features are not radically obscured, damaged or destroyed.

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

The following *Standards for Rehabilitation* were developed in 1995 by the National Park Service of the U.S. Department of the Interior. They are the national standard to guide rehabilitation work on historic resources and are used by the City of Bethlehem's Historical Architectural Review Board when rendering their recommendations.

*Rehabilitation is defined as the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural or architectural values.*

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

**Rehabilitation as a Treatment:** *When repair and replacement of deteriorated features are necessary; when alterations or additions to the property are planned for a new or continued use; and when its depiction at a particular period of time is not appropriate, Rehabilitation may be considered as a treatment. Prior to undertaking work, a documentation plan for Rehabilitation should be developed.*

## COA REVIEW PROCESS

To have a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) application reviewed by the HARB, it must be submitted with the appropriate attachments to the Bureau of Code Enforcement at City Hall at 10 East Church Street by 12:00 noon on the last Wednesday of the month. HARB meetings typically occur at 4:00 p.m. on the first Wednesday of each month in Town Hall. A property owner or representative is required to attend the HARB meeting. Please contact the Bureau of Code Enforcement at City Hall at (610) 865-7091 to confirm the next application submission deadline and meeting date.

Prior to the HARB meeting, the Bureau of Code Enforcement will review the application for completeness. Incomplete applications will be returned to the applicant and not forwarded for HARB review. At their meeting, the HARB can recommend:

- Approval as submitted or with conditions;
- Tabling for further consideration or pending additional information; or
- Denial, with recommended changes that will result in an approved application.

The HARB renders its recommendation within 60 days of the filing of the complete COA application. The HARB's recommendation becomes an agenda item for the next scheduled City Council Meeting, generally held on the first and third Tuesday of the month, at 7:00 p.m. at Town Hall. Attendance at this meeting is optional. Applicants do not typically attend the meetings if they find the HARB recommendation acceptable. Similar to the HARB, City Council can recommend approval as submitted; approval with conditions; tabling for further consideration or pending additional information; or denial, with recommended changes to result in an approved application.

If the COA is approved by City Council, or approved with conditions, the applicant can then obtain a building permit for the approved work from the Bureau of Code Enforcement, provided the application complies with all other City codes. The denial of a COA application will result in disapproval of the building permit application. The applicant can appeal City Council's decision to the County Court of Common Pleas within the time specified by law.

## WHEN A COA IS NOT REQUIRED

The HARB's jurisdiction is limited to areas of a property that are visible from a public-way including roadways and alleys. However, property owners are encouraged to seek HARB's guidance even when formal review is not required.

- The HARB does not review ordinary maintenance and repairs provided the exterior appearance and materials are not altered - The determination of whether proposed work is maintenance must be made the Bureau of Code Enforcement
- The HARB does not have jurisdiction over interior work, although building and other permits might be required for interior work



*HARB review is required for all proposed exterior alterations that are visible from a public. This includes the installation of storm windows and doors; changes to materials and paint colors; landscape elements such as retaining walls, stairs and railings; as well as signage.*

## APPROVALS REQUIRED FOR WORK

HARB review and approval is triggered by the application for a building permit. This includes the replacement of windows, doors and roofs, repainting as well as ground disturbance at potential archaeological sites. A COA is necessary but not sufficient for the granting of a building permit. Each property is subject to review for compliance with applicable zoning, building and safety codes. The property owner is responsible obtaining all necessary approvals prior to commencing with work.

## WORKING WITHOUT A COA

A HARB representative will review all completed work for compliance with the approved COA. If any changes are proposed after approval for a COA, please contact the Bureau of Code Enforcement at (610) 865-7091 to determine whether any additional reviews may be required. Completed work that is not in compliance with the approved COA is subject to fines and possible removal. If a property owner has demolished a building or structure or a portion thereof without obtaining the necessary COA, the Building Official can delay a permit for new construction on the site for two years.

Work completed that does not conform with approved COA is subject to removal, fines, imprisonment and all punishments and remedies identified in the City Ordinances.

## STOP WORK ORDER

The Bureau of Code Enforcement will issue a Stop Work Order for any project that is not in compliance with the approved COA or any project that did not receive the required COA. Stop Work Orders have the force of law and the violation of a Stop Work Order constitutes a separate offence. A Stop Work Order can be costly in terms of time and money since property owners will be required to go through the COA application process prior to restarting work.

## APPLICATION SUBMISSION MATERIALS

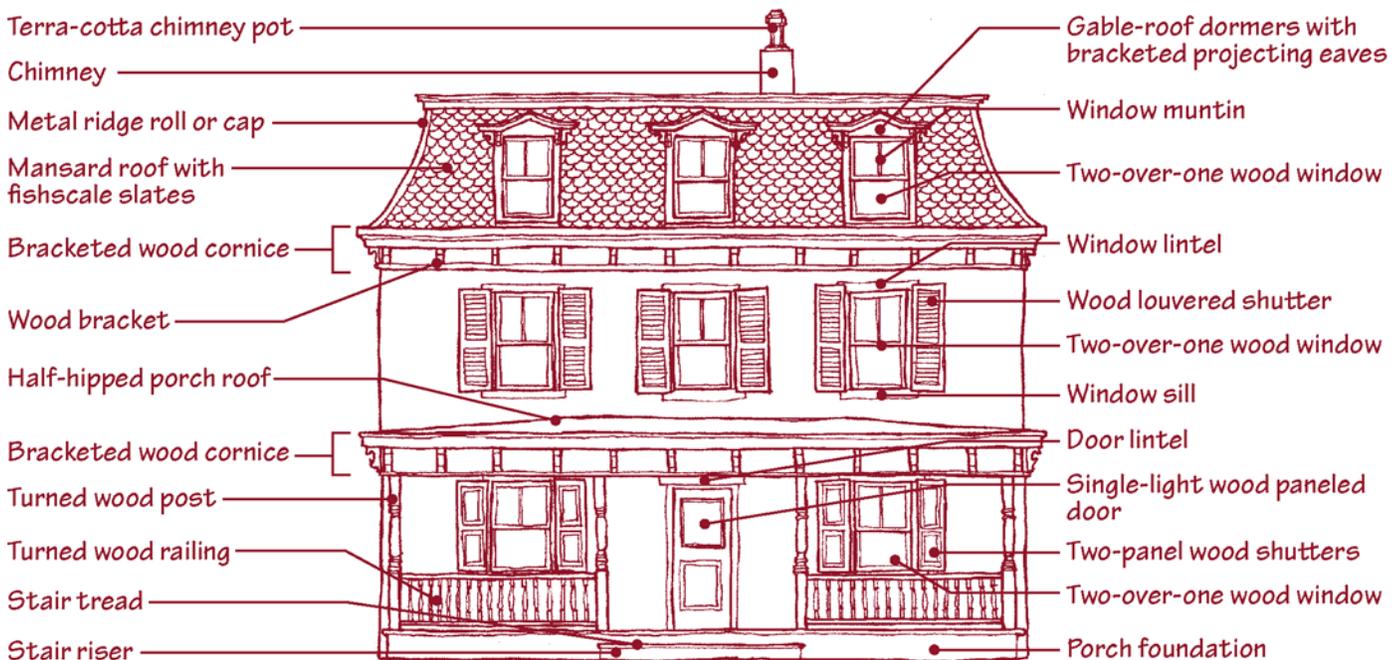
To have a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) application reviewed by the HARB, it must be submitted with all of the appropriate materials required to clearly describe the proposed work. Please contact the Bureau of Code Enforcement at City Hall at (610) 865-7091 to confirm the required submission materials for your project. The information generally needed for HARB review includes:

- **Application:** A completed, signed and dated Application for Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) available at [www.bethlehem-pa.gov](http://www.bethlehem-pa.gov) or the Bureau of Code Enforcement at City Hall
- **Photographs:** Clear overall photographs or the existing buildings on the property, flanking buildings and buildings on the opposite side of the street as well as detailed views of the area of proposed work
- **Project Description:** A description of the proposed work including any deviations from the *Design Guidelines*
- **Drawings:** Scaled and dimensioned drawings with notes to describe the proposed work and materials
- **Samples:** Color and materials samples
- **Product Information:** Manufacturer's descriptions and specifications of proposed products to be used in the proposed work

## HISTORIC BUILDING FEATURES

To better understand which alterations are or are not appropriate, it is helpful to identify those features that are character-defining elements. In many cases, these architectural features include the exterior historic materials and forms as well as the windows, shutters, porches, entrances, storefronts, trim and details, which cumulatively can define a building's style.

The development and architectural heritage of the City of Bethlehem includes both high-style and vernacular buildings. The term "vernacular" suggests that they were based upon traditional or regional forms without being designed by an architect or similarly trained individual, and are often relatively simple with embellishments that are reflective of the period or popular styles of the day.



## TIMING FOR REVIEW

The City of Bethlehem makes every effort to quickly conduct required reviews. If an application is incomplete, if the HARB requests a change, or if any City deadlines are not met, the issuance of permits and approvals could take several months.

Typically, a minimum of six to eight weeks is required from the submission date of the COA application to the issuing of a building permit. Incomplete submissions will extend the application review time period. Including all required materials with a complete application expedites the review process. Contact the Bureau of Code Enforcement at City Hall at (610) 865-7091 for assistance.

## BALANCING CHANGE

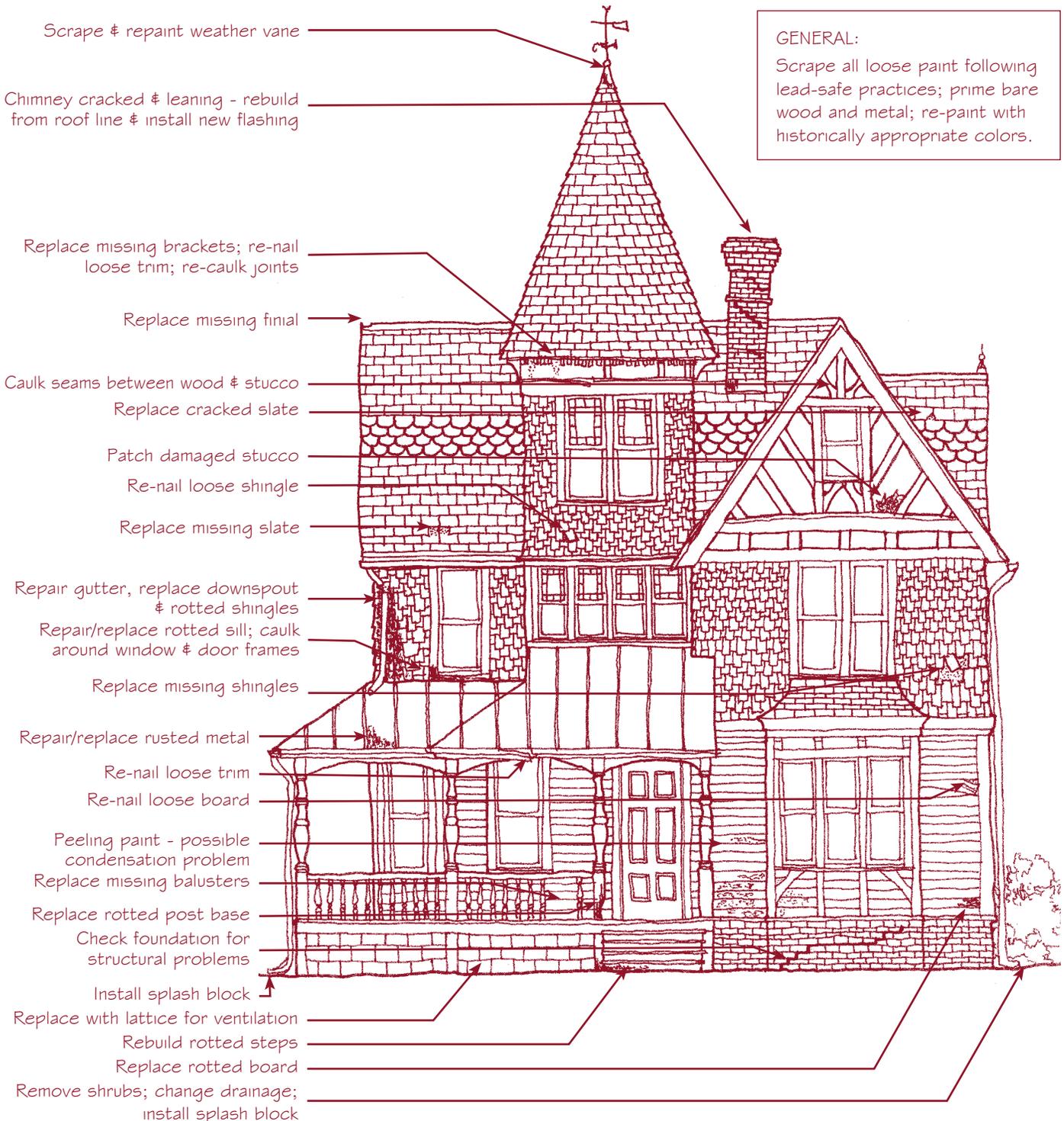
In balancing the desire for a change to a historic property with its historic integrity, the HARB encourages property owners to retain as much historic building fabric as possible. When considering alterations, the HARB recommends the following approach, listed in preferential order:

1. Maintenance
2. Repair and Replacement
3. Alterations
4. Adaptive Reuse
5. Additions and New Construction

## MAINTENANCE IS PRESERVATION

Regular maintenance helps to preserve buildings and property, and protect real estate values and investments. Lack of regular upkeep can result in accelerated deterioration of building elements and features. In the case of historic buildings, these features often represent character defining elements that are difficult to replace. Long-term lack of maintenance can impact a building's structure, resulting in expensive repairs.

It is prudent to regularly inspect properties to identify potential problems. If problems are detected early, minor maintenance may not only improve a property's overall appearance and value, but also can prevent or postpone extensive and costly future repairs. Regular maintenance items typically include cleaning gutters and downspouts, and painting of exterior woodwork.





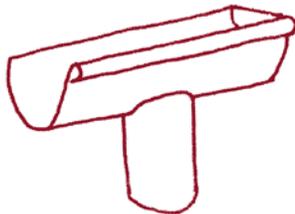
*Roofs and roof-related features often frame the silhouette of a building against the sky and can help to define a building's style. This Italianate house includes a distinctive central cupola with three half-round headed windows at each face and a projecting, bracketed cornice. The flanking brick chimneys include recessed "paneled" bases. The brackets at the projecting main cornice frame third floor window openings.*

## HISTORIC BUILDING MATERIALS

Although the HARB encourages regular maintenance and the retention of historic materials as long as possible, they do recognize that all materials, new or old, do wear and eventually will pass their useful life span and require replacement. The following information is presented as a guide to applicants regarding the general care of building systems and potential replacement materials. The HARB will be happy to speak with each applicant individually if there are specific questions regarding proposed materials at their property.

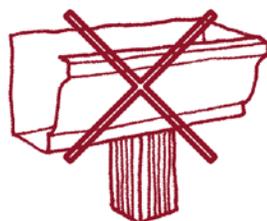
### Roofing

A building's roof provides the first line of defense against the elements and its design greatly affects the overall appearance of a building. Therefore, regular inspection, review and maintenance of roofs and drainage systems, such as cleaning of gutters and downspouts, are critically important to its longevity.



**Half-Round Gutter,  
Round Downspout**  
*Preferred*

**K-Style Gutter,  
Corrugated Downspout**

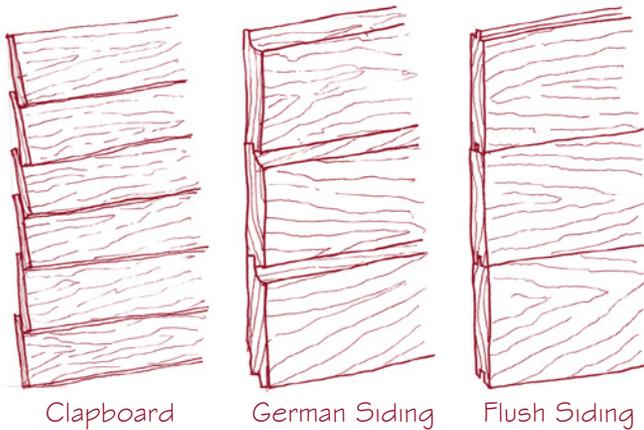


*The HARB encourages:*

- Regular roof inspections, maintenance and repair to add useful years of life to an existing roof
- Replacement of roofing materials when beyond repair, matching original color, pattern, material and texture
- Replacement roof materials or new materials for additions and new construction that are sympathetic in appearance to historic materials
- Retention of decorative roof elements such as chimneys, cupolas, cresting, finials, eaves and cornices
- Maintaining existing roof forms and heights for existing buildings or additions and using sympathetic roof forms and heights for new construction
- Retaining built-in gutters and open valley flashing
- Installing shingle caps along ridge or extending vents continuously to end of ridge
- Painting drip edges to match adjacent trim
- Installing half-round gutters and plain round downspouts
- Locating rain barrels to be visually unobtrusive from the public right-of-way
- Installing flashing on top of cornices to prolong their longevity, painted to match cornice color

*The HARB discourages:*

- Adding or altering rooftop features at areas visible from a public way that change a roof configuration such as skylights, television antennae or dishes, solar collectors, mechanical equipment, roof decks, chimney stacks and dormer windows
- Adding new features that are out of character, scale, materials or detailing to the historic building
- Altering, enclosing or removing historic eaves and cornices



### Exterior Woodwork & Siding

Exterior siding and trim acts as the skin of a building, shedding water and deflecting sunlight and wind. Aesthetically, the siding can be an important design feature helping to define a building's architectural style. With proper maintenance exterior woodwork can last for centuries; however, improper maintenance can result in problems and deterioration for water, fungus, mold and insects.

#### The HARB encourages:

- Regularly maintaining and repainting exterior woodwork including repainting, and addressing potential areas of moisture including clogged gutters and downspouts, groundwater, leaky pipes and interior condensation
- Retaining decorative woodwork should since it is a character defining element that can be difficult to replace
- Repairing smaller areas of deterioration by reinforcing or patching - Small cracks and checks can be repaired with an exterior wood filler, glue or epoxy - Loose elements can be refastened with nailing or drilling and screwing
- Selectively replacing deteriorated wood elements that are beyond repair with wood pieces that match the size, profile and character of the historic wood element - Wood filler in the joints between the new and old wood will help provide a smooth finish
- Large scale or significant replacement of exterior wood siding with paintable material that match the size, profile, exposure and pattern and character of the historic wood

#### The HARB discourages:

- Removing or encapsulating with vinyl or aluminum siding, trim, decorative features and trim elements such as brackets, spindles, cornices, columns, posts, etc.
- Vinyl or aluminum siding over wood, brick, stone or stucco – it alters the historic appearance and can promote trapped moisture and deterioration of underlying woodwork and structural framing
- Wood grained, wavy edged, vertical and textured plywood simulated siding
- Installing non-wood trim

**Paint:** Paint can protect exterior materials from the elements, particularly wood and metals that would otherwise rust. When the painted surface has been compromised, moisture and the elements can infiltrate the underlying material and potentially accelerate deterioration. Exterior surfaces should generally be repainted every 5 to 8 years, with intermediate touch-ups of high traffic, worn or deteriorated areas.

#### The HARB encourages:

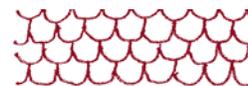
- Hand washing with mild detergent and bristle brush, hand scraping and hand sanding

#### The HARB discourages:

- Rotary tools - disks can leave circular marks and wires can tear into surface
- Heat guns and heat plate - can ignite paint or underlying surface if left in one location too long
- Chemical paint removers - can raise grains, be expensive and potentially volatile; runoff can be hazardous
- Flame tools, blowtorches to soften paint - smoldering sparks can potentially start a fire; lead components in paint can vaporize and create highly toxic fumes
- Sandblasting - can be abrasive to surface, wear away protective exterior coating and raise the wood grain
- High-pressure water wash - forces water into open joints affecting interior finishes and structural framing; can be abrasive to exterior surface and raise the grain



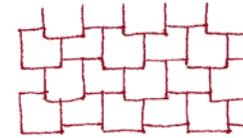
Chisel or Bevel



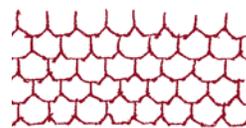
Fishscale



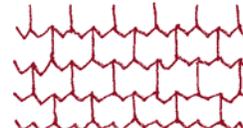
Diamond



Staggered



Octagonal



Sawtooth

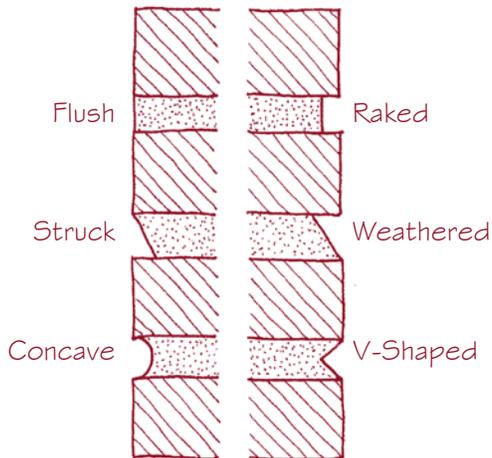
### LEAD PAINT

Caution should be used when removing paint since some paints include lead, requiring proper collection and disposal techniques. Follow all lead-safe procedures, manufacturers' recommendations and code requirements when disturbing or removing paint.

### PAINT COLORS

Paint colors and luster should be appropriate to the building style, highlighting its architectural features, and are subject to HARB review. Manufacturer's "historic" paint colors are not always appropriate in Bethlehem.

## Joint Profiles



There are numerous joint profile types, with each producing different shadow lines and highlights. When repointing an area of masonry, it is important to tool mortar to match the existing joint profile for a consistent appearance.

## Masonry & Stucco

Exterior masonry, including stone, brick, terra cotta and stucco, provides a strong, durable and attractive appearance with relatively low maintenance. Historic masonry walls tend to protect a building's interior from the weather and act as the principal load bearing system. Aesthetically it acts as an important design feature, helping to define a building's style and add visual interest to the streetscape.

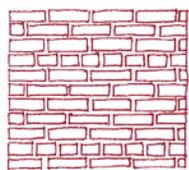
**Mortar:** Mortar, which bonds masonry units, was generally composed of a few ingredients: sand, lime and water, and possibly additives such as animal hair or oyster shells. Starting in the mid 19th century, a small amount of Portland cement was added into the mix to improve the workability and hasten the setting time. In the early 20th century, Portland cement in mortar was increased, corresponding with the manufacture of harder bricks.

*The HARB encourages:*

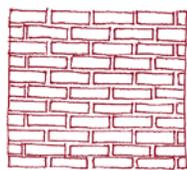
- Regular maintenance, repair and selectively repointing deteriorated areas with compatible mortar in material, hardness, composition, color and joint style – Incompatible mortar often too hard and can lead to spalling or chipping of the bricks or stones, it can also be visually mismatched
- Installing fasteners for signs and other devices into mortar joints rather than brick or stone faces
- Installing local stone and pointing with ribbon joints

*The HARB discourages:*

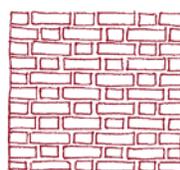
- Using Portland cement based mortar for repointing – it is typically too hard for most historic masonry and can result in damage including spalling



Common Bond



Running Bond



Flemish Bond

**Stucco:** Stucco is a relatively inexpensive material that can provide a more finished appearance to brick, stone or wood framed buildings. In some cases, the surface was scored to look like stone. It acts as a weather repellent coating, protecting the building from the elements including rain, sunlight and wind, and can moderately increase its fire resistance. Stucco can also provide an insulating layer to a wall, reducing the passage of air to the interior.

*The HARB encourages:*

- Matching the color and texture of historic stucco when repairing or applying stucco to new construction

*The HARB discourages:*

- Installing stucco over brick, stone or terra cotta walls
- Installing artificial stucco (EIFS or Exterior Insulation and Finish Systems) which can trap moisture within the thicknesses of a wall and cause long-term damage

**Masonry and Stucco Cleaning:** Appropriate masonry and stucco cleaning can enhance the character and overall appearance of a building. However, improper cleaning of historic masonry can cause damage to the historic surfaces and cause more harm than good both physically and aesthetically.

*The HARB encourages:*

- Cleaning masonry and stucco with the gentlest means possible, typically low pressure water, with the possible use of gentle detergent and brushing

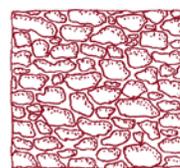
*The HARB discourages:*

- Masonry cleaning unless a building is heavily soiled
- Masonry and stucco cleaning with harsh chemicals, sand blasting, power washing over 400 psi, grinders or metal brushes

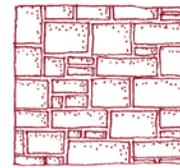
**Masonry Coatings and Paint:** Water repellent and waterproof coatings, which include paint, are generally applied to prevent water from entering a masonry and stucco wall, but tend to be unnecessary on weather-tight historic buildings. Water tends to enter masonry buildings through open mortar joints, surface cracks and areas of poor or deferred maintenance. In instances where the surface of the masonry has been severely compromised, such as at sandblasted brick, the use of water repellent coatings might be appropriate.

*The HARB discourages:*

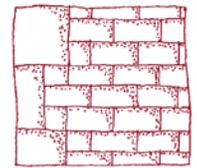
- Applying water repellent or waterproof coatings
- Painting of previously unpainted masonry or stucco



Uncoursed Fieldstone



Coursed Fieldstone



Coursed Cut Stone with Quoins

## Windows

Windows simultaneously act as interior and exterior building feature that regulate light and air. Historically windows comprised approximately one quarter of an exterior wall's surface area, and defined the building's architectural style.

*The HARB encourages:*

- Regular window maintenance, repair and repainting
- Installing interior or exterior storm windows
- If the applicant can demonstrate evidence of window deterioration requiring replacement, installing true divided light replacement windows with an exterior painted finish that match the material, historic size, shape, operation, muntin pattern, profiles and detailing to the greatest extent possible

*The HARB discourages:*

- Decreasing, increasing or altering window size, shape or operation to allow for installation of stock window sizes or picture windows
- Encasing or capping window surrounds with aluminum or vinyl
- New window openings at publicly visible elevations
- Installing tinted or colored glazing
- Installing vinyl or aluminum clad replacement windows at window openings that are visible from the public right-of-way



*The blinds are sized and shaped to fit this half-round headed window. The storm window is also appropriate for the opening with horizontal rails aligning with the window elements beyond.*

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Refer to the *Guidelines for Sustainability* for additional information related to windows and doors; shutters and blinds; and storm windows and doors.

## Shutters & Blinds

Historically, exterior shutters and blinds (louvered shutters) were used as shielding devices.

*The HARB encourages:*

- Maintaining historic shutters
- Installing new shutters where they existed historically
- Operable shutters with a smooth, paintable finish
- Shutters and operable shutter hardware, including hinges, hasps and dogs, of the appropriate style for the building and location
- Appropriately sized and shaped shutters for the window opening, fitted to cover the window when closed



*This entrance includes a wood paneled door and a wood storm door with matching finishes. The large glazed area of the storm door allows a view of the historic paneled door. Also note the bottom rail of the storm door is wider than the side and top rails.*

*The central door is flanked by sidelights, all of which is topped by a transom window within a decorative wood surround.*

## Storm Windows & Doors

Storm windows and doors should conceal as little of the historic window or door as possible and should be selected to complement each window or door type. This generally means selecting a screen or storm window that has rails that coincide with the rails and glazing pattern and overall configuration of the associated window or door.

*The HARB encourages:*

- Maintaining wood storm windows and doors
- Installing new wood or aluminum exterior storm windows or doors that fit the size and shape of the historic opening and are finished or painted to match associated window sash or door
- Aligning rails of storm windows with window rails
- Interior storm windows on primary elevations
- Large glazed openings at storm doors with wider bottom rails that do not conceal glazed or interrupt glazed openings

*The HARB discourages:*

- Storm doors with applied detailing such as gingerbread, and cross bucks, or jalousie windows

## Doors & Entrances

Similar to windows, doors help to regulate the passage of air and light into a building, but they also allow the passage of people, and help define a building's style or use. Entrances include not only the door, but also the surrounding elements such as trim and surrounds, transom windows, sidelights, steps and handrails.

Door styles tend to correspond to the architectural style of the building, with some examples being more "high-style" while others are simpler interpretations. As a result, later Victorian examples often included doors that were glazed, sometimes in a paired configuration, while colonial revival doors were often paneled. Similarly, a principal entrance door varies from a "back door" and a residential door varies from a commercial door.

*The HARB encourages:*

- Regular historic door and entrance maintenance, repair and repainting with historically appropriate paint colors (Refer to *Page 8*)
- Installing screen and storm doors, if needed, that are stylistically appropriate for the existing door (Refer to *Page 10*)
- When historic elements are beyond repair, installing replacement doors or entrance components, that match the historic size, shape, operation, glazing, muntins, paneling, profiles and detailing of the historic door to the greatest extent possible
- Using wood replacement doors for historic wood doors

*The HARB discourages:*

- Replacing original doors unless seriously deteriorated
- Plain modern flush doors or modern flush doors with historically inappropriate window configurations
- Enclosure or removal of entrance features including transom windows and sidelights
- New entrances at primary elevations
- Altering the historic appearance or style of an entrance
- Replacing wood steps with brick, stone or concrete steps
- Removing or encapsulating historic wood trim



## Garage Doors

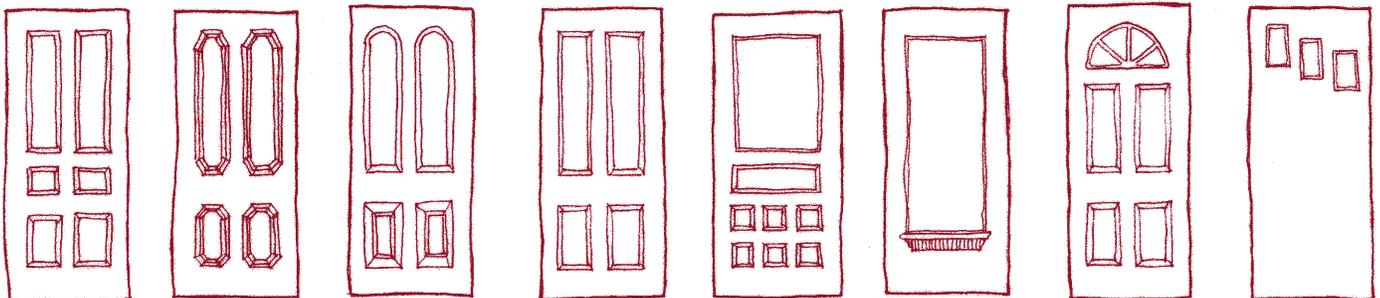
Occasionally, modern functions require openings not found in historic architecture such as garage doors. HARB endeavors to integrate these types of openings into buildings while maintaining the historic character of the building and the neighborhood, which generally means minimizing their visibility from the public way.

*The HARB encourages:*

- Retaining and maintaining historic wood garage doors
- Installing new garage doors that are visually unobtrusive, stylistically compatible with and appropriately scaled to the garage and/or principal building, with a smooth finish
- Garage door openings that do not require removal of decorative features

*The HARB discourages:*

- Garage doors that are visually prominent



Early Victorian 1860-1885

High Victorian 1885-1920

Inappropriate Replacement Doors

## Porches

Porches remain one of the most visible house elements and play a significant role in the appearance of the house and the streetscape. They can act as an extension of a home providing a welcoming feeling for visitors. Because of the importance porches play in the perception of historic buildings and streetscapes, original materials and details should be preserved. Typically, areas covered by a porch roof tend to require less maintenance; however, steps, railings and roofs are usually exposed to the weather and might require additional maintenance. One of the best ways to preserve wood porch features is regular re-painting.

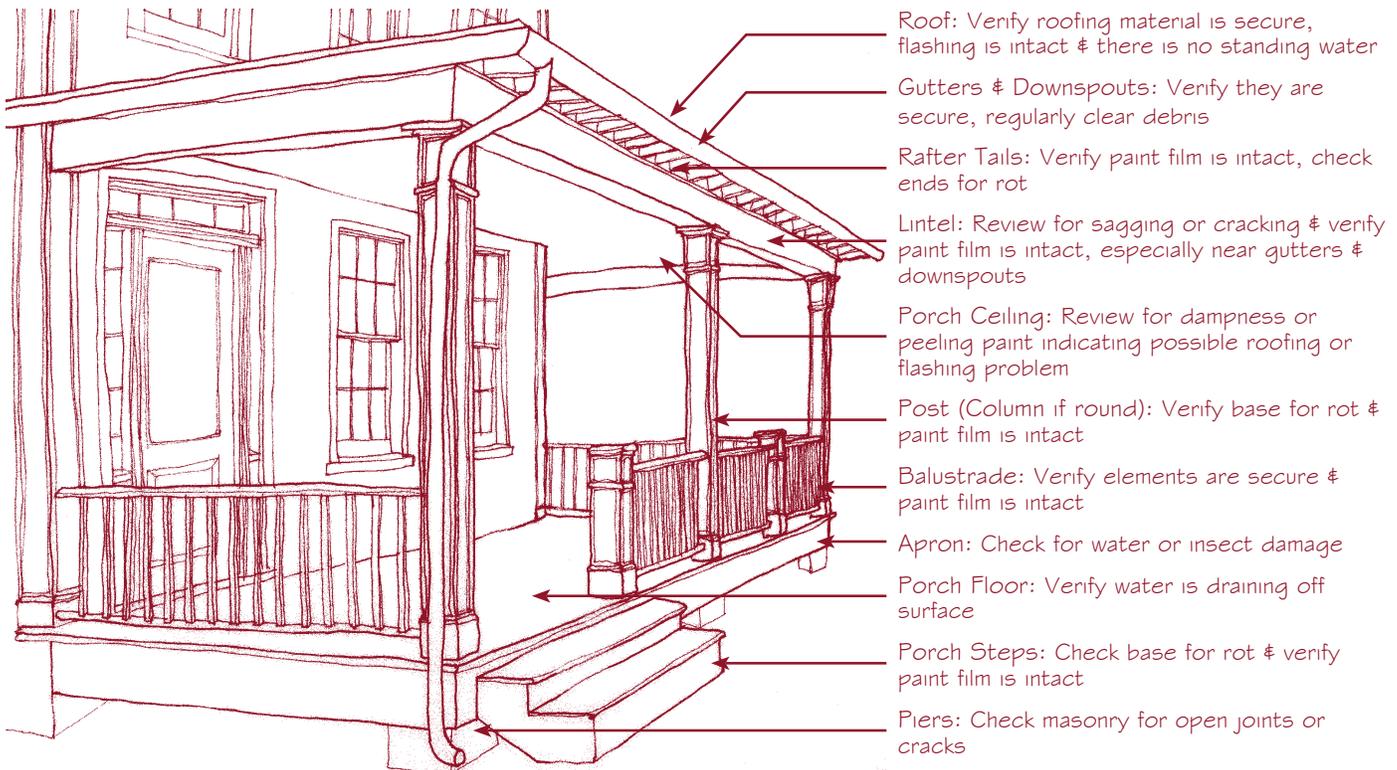
*The HARB encourages:*

- Identifying deteriorated elements, finding and correcting sources of deteriorated elements, such as deteriorated, cracked, blocked, inappropriately hung, broken or missing gutters or downspouts
- Replacing only those parts which cannot be repaired - in some instances, such as columns and posts, the base can be replaced at a fraction of the cost without replacing the entire column or post
- Repairing or replacing deteriorated or missing materials with similar new materials - avoid replacement of a wood railing with a metal or vinyl railing system
- Replacing only the original elements that cannot be repaired using elements of the same material, size, profile and other visual characteristics

- Rebuilding a porch with appropriate documentation
- If a substantial portion of the porch is deteriorated and cannot be repaired or replicated, or if a porch is missing, creating a simplified design using stock lumber and moldings that convey similar visual characteristics as the original porch, duplicating the dimensions and materials but not necessarily the detailing
- Painting porches regularly to preserve the wood with a finish that complements the architectural characteristics of the house - Refer to *Page 8* for addition information regarding painting
- Installing wood tongue and groove flooring at porches

*The HARB discourages:*

- Replacing wood porch posts and railings with metal
- Replacing wood steps with concrete or brick - wood steps are typically appropriate for wood porches
- Enclosing porches that are visually prominent from the streetscape
- Encasing historic porch elements in aluminum or vinyl
- Using "natural" or stained wood at a porch; this is generally not appropriate for a porch on a painted historic building
- Installing a deck that is visually prominent from the streetscape - railings are not always required for decks below a certain height



## Site Elements

The following items are encouraged or discouraged, as described, below even though some do not require formal review by HARB. Check with the Bureau of Code Enforcement (610) 865-7091 with any questions about your specific project. Items that do not require HARB review could go before HARB for guidance rather than formal review and approval.

**Site elements** frame the architecture along a streetscape. In some areas, established features such as sidewalks, street trees, walls, fences, walkways and driveways provide a consistent setting that is unique to a neighborhood. When considering alterations to a site, it is encouraged that property owners develop an understanding of the environmental characteristics of their immediate surroundings and allow that understanding to direct their design. This will allow a more compatible relationship between a property and its neighborhood.

**Fences:** Wood and cast or wrought iron are traditional materials for fences in the City of Bethlehem. Traditional fencing types not only marked the boundaries of a specific space, but also allowed visual access to and from the historic structures located on a property from the roadway. To retain visibilities of historic properties, fences in front yards should be limited to 36" in height, and should use picket-style that is at least 50% open.

**Walls:** Landscape walls are typically constructed of local stone or brick, and can include a stucco finish. Historically, the materials and style of walls were often related to a building's design. The construction of walls that visually block primary building façades from the public right of way, particularly at historically important buildings, is discouraged. It is recommended that new walls in front yards be limited to 36" in height. While new walls that are stylistically compatible with the property might be appropriate.

**Gates:** Pedestrian gates, traditionally along a walkway, are generally 3 to 3½ feet wide. Gates for residential vehicular access are generally 10 to 12 feet wide. When installed with a fence, gates tend to be of the same material and similar design as the fence, although often more elaborate. When installed with a wall, they are generally flanked by piers or gate posts that can be either wood or metal.

*The HARB encourages:*

- Maintaining historic fences, walls and gates, including regular repainting of wood and metal elements
- Installing fences and gates with a painted finish that complements the property, with posts facing towards the interior of a property
- Installing natural stone walls or piers with either a stone or cast stone cap that complements the property

*The HARB discourages:*

- Blocking views to principal elevations of historic buildings and settings with tall, solid fences; solid walls; or dense plantings and foliage
- Installing non-traditional fencing materials such as vinyl
- Installing stockade fencing
- Installing chain link fencing
- Cast stone walls in lieu of natural stone

**Modern Landscape Features, Equipment & Small Structures:** Modern site amenities can greatly increase the enjoyment of a property as well as serve functional needs. However, many of these amenities can be visually obtrusive and are not appropriate within a historic context or setting.

- **Landscape Features:** Including pergolas, arbors, gazebos, fountains, sculptures, pools and play equipment
- **Equipment:** Including air conditioner condensers, generator, ground-mounted solar collectors, electric and gas meters, cable hook-up, satellite dishes and trash collection bins
- **Small Structures:** Including garages, tool or garden sheds, play houses, dog houses and wall-mounted awnings

**Paving:** Paving, which includes sidewalks, walkways, patios and driveways, has changed significantly with the development of new materials. Historically, paving could be as simple as gravel or pavers such as brick or stone, laid in simple or ornamental patterns. Materials popularized in the 20th century include concrete and asphalt. In an effort to retain the quality of the City's historic properties and District, the retention and maintenance of existing historic paving materials is encouraged. Property owners are also encouraged to minimize new paving, and to use porous paving whenever possible to minimize runoff onto neighboring properties and into storm drains.

*The HARB encourages:*

- Keeping views of historic buildings open to street, rather than obscuring views with new structures
- Front yard development with traditional, simple arrangements, similar to neighboring properties
- Screening landscape features, play equipment, small structures and ground mounted equipment that might be visible from the public way with either dense planting, a wall or solid fencing
- Retaining, repairing and maintaining historic paving materials such as brick and slate sidewalks and walkways
- Minimizing the amount of paving on a site, including installing narrow parking strips instead of full-width driveways
- Installing brick or stone patios instead of raised decks
- Designing small structures, including garages and sheds, that are visible from the public right-of-way to be compatible with the design and historic materials (walls and roof) as the existing main building

*The HARB discourages:*

- Pre-manufactured sheds, particularly those with metal or vinyl wall cladding
- Placing parking areas in the front yards of residences
- Installing asphalt at walkways
- Installing colored or stamped concrete
- Installing cast stone pavers or walls

## Commercial

Storefronts are often the most character-defining feature of a commercial building and the business within. As a result, new businesses will often seek to make alterations to historic storefronts to reflect their own identity.

*The HARB encourages:*

- Preservation of historic storefronts and minimizing alterations or removal of historic materials
- Maintaining transparency of street-level windows, rather than covering them with displays or advertisements
- Maintaining the planes of the historic storefront relative to the building façade including flush, projecting or recessed areas such as alcoves
- Selecting paint colors that complement the style and features of a storefront and building

*The HARB discourages:*

- Enclosing or removal of historic architectural elements, such as building cornices, storefronts and angled storefront glazing
- Altering the size or shape of major building forms such as window, door and transom openings
- Installing stylistic elements from periods that are different from the storefront or building
- Altering the appearance of a residential building as part of a conversion to commercial use
- Installing tinted or colored window glazing
- Reducing or modifying original storefront window opening sizes and shapes

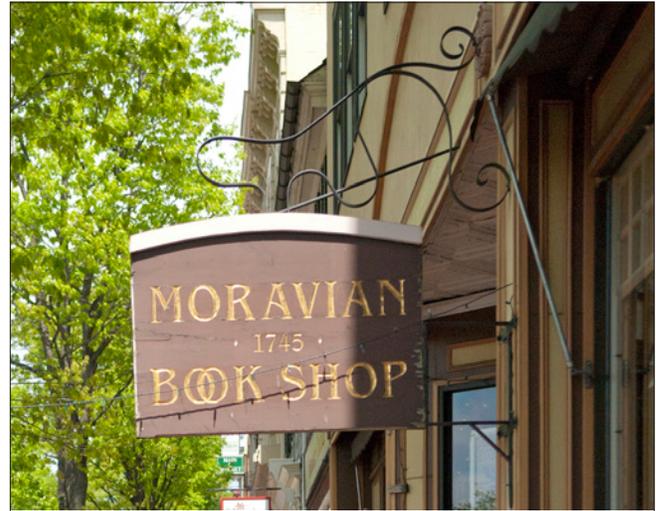
**Accessibility:** As existing buildings are renovated, they are often required to make accommodations for people with disabilities. One of the most visible exterior alterations required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is the installation of a wheelchair ramp or lift to provide building access.

*The HARB encourages:*

- Retaining the historic entrance stairs and doors
- If access to the front door is not possible, providing a respectful accessible entrance that is located close to the principal entrance, preferably at a secondary elevation, and designed in a manner that is visually unobtrusive and complements the building's style
- Complying with all aspects of the accessibility requirements, while minimizing alterations of the primary building façade and architectural features
- Modifying sidewalk or walkway elevation a few inches, where possible to provide an accessible entry and meet all code requirements
- Installing ramps and/or lifts within the building envelope where it is possible to modify an existing door sill to allow entry at grade
- Ramp or lift styles that are compatible with the building
- Railings that are as simple and visually unobtrusive

## Signs & Awnings

There are generally two types of signs, those that are attached to the building and those that are freestanding and placed near buildings. New signs can use similar features of traditional signs to both enhance the character of the building and convey the necessary information to the public. The choice between attached or freestanding signs may be based upon the property's specific location, needs of the occupant, and limitations of the City Ordinances.



*Projecting signs are typically beneficial in attracting pedestrians. This example includes a decorative metal bracket and incised lettering with contrasting gold lettering.*

**Size & Shape:** The City of Bethlehem Ordinances regulates the maximum number, size and type of signage; however, the HARB determines the appropriateness of the placement relative to the building's design. In general, the HARB utilizes the following guidelines when reviewing the appropriateness of proposed sign's size:

- Signage should be compatible to scale of the building, adjacent buildings, the streetscape and adjacent signage
- Small scale signs are appropriate to smaller scale buildings, pedestrian traffic and professional offices, while larger scaled signs are appropriate to vehicular traffic
- Multiple small scale signs at one building can be grouped in a single directory sign for a unified appearance
- A well-designed smaller sign can have more of an impact than a larger sign, particularly along historic commercial corridors, where the means of travel is by foot or slow moving vehicles

### SIGN & AWNING REVIEW

All signs and awnings that are visible from the public right-of-way, including interior window signs, are subject to HARB review. Please contact the Bureau of Code Enforcement at City Hall at (610) 865-7091 with questions or for an application.

**Sign Material:** Early signs were typically made of wood, either attached directly to the building or suspended from metal brackets. As technology advanced and building styles changed, a wider range of materials were used. These included bronze, cast iron, stainless steel, etched or painted glass, leaded glass, gold leaf, tile, terrazzo, concrete, stone and enamel and metal panels. Each material was popular during particular time periods, and might not be appropriate at all building locations.



Window signage can be a creative means of attracting customers. All signs, including those located at the interior face of windows, are subject to HARB review.

**Illumination:** In many instances, available ambient street or storefront lighting can illuminate signs, which is preferred to the installation of additional lighting. The use and placement of sign illumination is subject to approval. Gooseneck lighting or other unobtrusive light fixtures are often the most appropriate choice to illuminate wall signage.



This small-scale, professional services sign includes a clear message, serif-style lettering and a pin stripe border, providing a finished appearance. The screws are fastened into mortar joints.

**Lettering:** Similar to selecting a color, when considering letter style for signs and awnings, applicants must balance the need to make them legible, convey the business identity or logo, and complement the historic character of the building and environment. Excessive amounts of text or highly stylized type styles can overwhelm a viewer and make the message effectively illegible.

**A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z**  
*a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z*  
*Serif Alphabet*

**A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z**  
*a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z*  
*Sans-Serif Alphabet*

**Awnings:** Historically, awnings project at a continuous angle away from the face of the building on a metal frame, terminating at a skirt or valance. Awnings can be fixed or retractable in configuration. Retractable awnings tend to be open sided, while fixed awnings can be either open- or close-sided.



These closed-sided awnings are sized to fit between the masonry piers and provides shelter for pedestrians, advertisement for the businesses, and reduces the effect of the sun's rays at the interior.

The HARB encourages:

- Signage that does not obscure or damage architectural features, identifies the business, complements the style of the building and is appropriately scaled for its location
- Sign design and color that reflects the architectural characteristics with materials that are consistent with the historic character of the building - Colonial scrollwork is not appropriate at Victorian storefronts
- Serif-style lettering, subtle logos and borders at the perimeter of signs located at Victorian storefronts
- Incised lettering in lieu of raised lettering at signage
- Existing ambient street light or storefront lighting in lieu of lighting whenever possible
- Signage lighting styles that are consistent with the character of the historic building including location, orientation and brightness
- Canvas awnings, with straight valance, in shapes that correspond with the openings they protect
- Installing signage or awning designs that are sympathetic to the style of a building and in a manner that minimizes damage to historic features including installing fasteners at mortar joints and not stone faces

The HARB discourages:

- Signage that obstructs views into the store through storefront windows and glazing or architectural features
- Exposed conduit, boxes or raceways for signage or lighting
- New billboards, internally illuminated box signs, LED reader boards, flashing or changeable message signs, neon signs
- Contemporary or glossy awning materials such as vinyl, plastics or leatherette; internally illuminated awnings; and waterfall awnings

## COMPATIBLE DESIGN PRINCIPLES FOR ADDITIONS & NEW BUILDING CONSTRUCTION

The historic development of each of Bethlehem’s neighborhoods followed its own pattern and rhythm. The culture of the City’s early inhabitants is expressed through its architectural and built environment. To continue the evolution of the built environment, the implementation of creative solutions that reflect current design and are sensitive to the character of their historic surroundings is encouraged.

To carefully weigh and balance the needs of property owners for additions to existing buildings or new buildings within the context of the Central Bethlehem Historic District, HARB is guided by *The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation* (Refer to Page 3) and the Design Principals below. Together they establish a framework of encouraging that additions to existing buildings and new construction that is sensitive to neighboring spacial relationships, forms and materials, while differentiating new construction from historic building fabric.

### STAFF ASSISTANCE

The City encourages anyone considering an addition, new construction, relocation or demolition to meet with the appropriate City Staff member early in the design process. They can identify potential issues, offer guidance and clarify specific submission requirements and other required reviews, potentially streamlining the process.

### MULTIPLE HARB REVIEWS

Review of new construction often requires multiple HARB reviews. Early conceptual review is encouraged, as well as reviews as the design progresses. Contact the Bureau of Code Enforcement at (610) 865-7091 for recommended review schedule.

DESIGN PRINCIPLES	REVIEW CRITERIA FOR ADDITIONS & NEW CONSTRUCTION
<b>Scale: Height and Width</b>	Proportions and size of the addition/new building compared with existing building/ neighboring buildings
<b>Building Form and Massing</b>	Three-dimensional relationship and configuration of the addition/new building footprint, its walls and roof compared with existing building/ neighboring buildings
<b>Setback: Yards (Front, Side and Rear)</b>	Distance of the addition/new building to the street and property lines when compared with the existing building or other buildings on block
<b>Site Coverage</b>	Percentage of the site that is covered by addition/new building, compared to comparable nearby sites
<b>Orientation</b>	The location of the front of the addition/new building and its principal entrance relative to other buildings on the block
<b>Architectural Elements and Projections</b>	The size, shape, proportions and location of doors, porches, balconies, chimneys, dormers, parapets and elements that contribute to an overall building’s shape and silhouette relative to neighboring buildings
<b>Alignment, Rhythm and Spacing</b>	The effect the addition/new building will have on the existing street patterns
<b>Façade Proportions: Window and Door Patterns</b>	The relationship of the size, shape and location of the addition/new building façade and building elements to each other, as well as to other buildings on the existing building/block
<b>Trim and Detail</b>	The moldings, decorative elements and features of a building that are secondary to major surfaces such as walls and roofs and how they related to the existing and neighboring buildings
<b>Materials</b>	The products with which something is composed or constructed and how they related to the existing and neighboring buildings

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