

VILLAGE OF BURTON

Design Guidelines for the Historic District Construction Permit

Introduction and Purpose:

It is a difficult task to identify periods of history and to place these periods into distinct categories. Separating historic buildings into distinct stylistic categories is equally difficult because the features and details of one style may be common to several periods. Any building may be a combination of several styles and, therefore, be especially hard to categorize. The important point is to identify the time period in which an individual building was constructed and relate it to the features and details that the building owners of that era would have considered appropriate. It must be the responsibility of the owners to investigate and examine the historical origin and style of their property.

Determining the Style of a Structure:

There are several basic styles of architecture which are prevalent in Ohio's towns that are the same general age and size of the Village of Burton. The following is a list which is intended to be a preliminary guide only. Further research with the aid of the books listed in the Bibliography is recommended.

Complying with the Standards for Review to obtain a Historic District Construction Permit:

The major points which will be examined by the Review Board will follow the basic list as outlined in the Ordinance. These are expanded upon in the following paragraphs to cover the most important aspects of each. Other items of a more specific nature may be examined that are not necessarily denoted by the list.

1. Height

The height of an addition to an existing structure should not exceed that of the existing structure. The height of an addition also must not raise that addition to such a prominence so as to distract from, detract from, or overpower the existing building or buildings on adjacent properties. It is best to match existing heights wherever possible as in the heights of roofs or gables adjacent to the addition so that the new portion of the building will blend into the lines of the original building.

2. **Building Massing**

The mass of the building has much to do with its visual impact. An addition should not be so large or massive as to overwhelm the importance of the existing building or buildings on adjacent properties. Setting an addition on a back property may not be nearly as imposing as the same addition connected to the side of a building and directly visible from the street.

The proportions of the width, height and depth (as well as many other design elements including color) can influence the visual mass of the appearance of the original building as well as the addition. By maintaining similar colors, heights, depths and setbacks, an addition should not be obtrusive to the original.

3. **Window Treatment**

Windows should be an area of careful consideration because it is easy to cut costs by buying less expensive windows or to opt for a "picture window" which might not compliment the original structure. It is important to try to simulate the material, size, proportions and heights of original or existing windows when new windows are being installed. New windows which contrast with originals must be sensitively used so as not to break down a cohesive overall design. Replacement of original wood windows with windows of contrasting sash configurations, materials or operating style should be discouraged. In some cases, windows of new manufacture can closely represent the old windows so as to be acceptable. Otherwise, the preservation and maintenance of original is strongly encouraged. Storm windows of the interior type may be a better solution than attempting to blend a modern storm sash to the exterior. However, a certain leniency may be expected in this regard especially when original windows are preserved well. In some cases, a custom milled duplicate may be the best replacement for an historical original. It is also important to examine carefully the pattern and spacing of windows both horizontally and vertically.

4. **Exterior Detail and Relationships**

In many cases, it may be prohibitively expensive to recreate existing ornamental details which were prevalent on most historic buildings. However, it is strongly recommended that any and all original detailing on an historic structure be maintained and preserved. For example, decorative window trim, brackets or bargeboards should, under no circumstances, be removed to facilitate repairs or alterations to a building.

New additions should attempt to emulate existing details (such as eave heights and overhang widths, corner and window trim widths, molding cuts and sizes, etc.) to as great of an extent as possible. An attempt should be made to respond to the quality of the original details.

5. **Roof Shape**

The important aspects to consider here are the peak and eave heights, the roof pitch, gable or hip configurations and color. All of these should be emulated or preserved. It is recommended to use the repetition of original forms to good advantage in designing a new addition to be a cohesive part of the original building. Slate roofs are expensive to repair, maintain and salvage, but are an important visual element in many historic buildings. Most historic buildings will not qualify for Federal Tax Incentives if slate roofs are removed or covered on primary facades. A slate roof may sometimes be salvaged on a building's back side to patch and repair a street side. Asphalt shingles used in conjunction with slate should closely match the color and pattern of the slate.

6. **Materials – Texture and Color**

As with other elements of the exterior, it is recommended that all original materials of the exterior be preserved especially on the prominent building faces. All the exterior materials should be carefully maintained and cleaned as necessary to avoid damage and promote longevity. Brick, for example, must never be sandblasted. Very effective stone and brick cleaning compounds can be obtained for those purposes. Replacement of wood or shingle siding with aluminum siding can damage the materials inside the wall by trapping moisture and can detract from the authenticity and character of a historic building.

In new work, it is recommended that the new materials match the original materials as closely as possible. Brick should be a close match. The use of "used" appearance brick is discouraged. New siding should match the width of the original. Other materials should follow suit in creating a complimentary and unified design for the entire structure.

Colors for historic buildings should be carefully selected from combinations of colors formulated for historic buildings. Most paint suppliers have historic color lists available. Subtlety and discretion are recommended.

7. **Landscape Design and Plant Materials**

Landscape design materials include much more than just plants. It includes exterior lighting, paving materials, fences, trellises and many other features. These features may or may not have historical precedence in their selection and as historical features, must be judged on an individual basis. Other features which are more contemporary in origin must be judged as part of the overall whole. The use of plant and fence materials to screen unattractive views may be encouraged or required. The accenting of attractive features is encouraged.

8. Lighting

Lighting fixtures should be compatible with the scale and character of the structure, if placed in an exposed location. Large, obtrusive and high brightness contemporary fixtures will be discouraged.

9. Pedestrian Environment

The provision of sidewalks is a major consideration and it is expected that they be provided as required and be properly maintained. The provision of items such as lamp posts, seating and the like are encouraged.

10. Signage

As mentioned in the Historic District Ordinance, the existing articles of the Village Zoning Ordinance apply to the historic district in regard to signage. In addition, good taste must prevail where any signage is proposed. New signs attached to the buildings should be placed so as not to cover, damage, or otherwise detract from the detail or overall appearance of the building. Signs must be detailed and depicted so that a determination of their appropriateness may be ascertained.

Bibliography

Books available at Burton Public Library:

American Houses: a Field Guide to the Architecture of the Home
by Gerald Foster; Houghton Mifflin Company 2004

American Shelter: an Illustrated Encyclopedia of the American Home
by Les Walker; Overlook Press 1981

A Field guide to American Houses
by Virginia McAlester; Knopf 1984

How to Create Your Own Painted Lady: A Comprehensive Guide to Beautifying Your Victorian Home
by Elizabeth Pomada & Michael Larsen; E.P. Dutton 1989

A Pictorial History of Architecture in America (2 vols. in 1)
by G. E. Kidder Smith; Bonanza Books 1981 reprint of 1976 ed.

Respectful Rehabilitation: Answers to Your Questions About Old Buildings
by Technical Preservation Services, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior 1982

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation & Illustrated Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings
by U. S. Department of the Interior 1997 reprint of 1991 ed.
(The chapters on Energy Efficiency, Health and Safety, and Accessibility were updated in 1995 to reflect new technological developments. This is available of the Internet at www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/tax/rhb)

Books available from other Clevnet libraries:

American Architecture Since 1780: a Guide to the Styles
by Marcus Whiffen; M.I.T. Press 1992

Architecture of America: a Social and Cultural History
by John Ely Burchard & Albert Bush-Brown; Little, Brown & Co. 1961

The Victorian Home in America
by John Maass; Dover Publications 2000

What Style is It?: A Guide to American Architecture
by John Poppelier, et.al.; John Wiley 2003