

**CITY OF CHERRYVILLE  
DOWNTOWN CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT  
ARCHITECTURAL GUIDELINES**

STOREFRONTS LINE  
THE "PEDESTRIAN  
STREET"

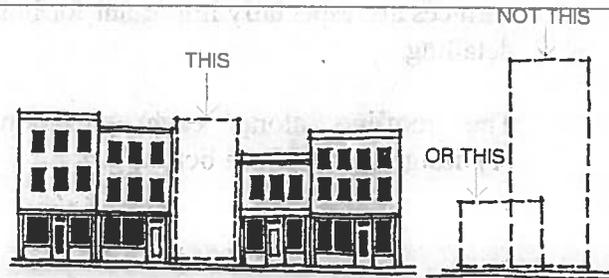


**INTRODUCTION:**

What makes a downtown successful? There is no single formula. Product, price, display, service, location and market all play a part. So does the outward appearance of the business. Many store and shop owners regard appearance as secondary to the more immediate concerns of price, product and service. Too often, the building itself is neglected or mishandled. Yet experience shows, time and again, that appearance is important to a healthy downtown district. As merchants work together to create an attractive image, the downtown as a whole can benefit.

Most architecture in Downtown Cherryville consists of sound structures. These buildings are stylistically "utilitarian" with few architectural appointments. The downtowns have some older structures dating back as far as the pre 1900's. Many of these older buildings are two or three stories and fortunately, have kept much of their original architectural character and detailing.

Three renovation strategies are needed for downtown buildings. The older, taller buildings serve as local landmarks and give the downtown areas a greater sense of history and stability. These older buildings should keep or regain as much of their original architectural features and details as possible. Secondly, some structures have less personality. But this can be an asset, for it provides the opportunity to consider more innovative renovation that can give each building a stronger individual identity yet help unify the overall downtown image. And thirdly, the construction of new buildings on vacant lots should be encouraged, as it fills a void in the building environment. This is called in-fill construction. A good in-fill design will vary according to its setting. New buildings should look modern in design, yet be sensitive to the character of its surroundings.



Before focusing on detailed renovation plans, make an assessment of the whole community. Look at the street and the city block you are part of. The block façade is an important element of the business image. You and your neighbors must strive for visual compatibility. Look at successful efforts and bad examples to understand how to best renovate your building.

Inappropriate materials and gaudy colors may mask the original design details and materials. Signs placed haphazardly throughout the block-face and tasteless advertising destroys any visual unity within the block-face. The repair of walls and the renovation of windows, fascia and trim strengthens architectural image. Visual excitement and diversity should be created within the storefront area. Signs act as a boundary between storefront and upper floor architecture. Signs and awnings should be coordinated to draw attention to the storefront areas.



## NEW STRUCTURES

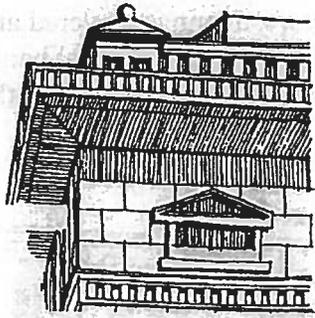
Design Elements. The following guidelines shall apply to commercial buildings.

- (1) General. An overall unified architectural character and image should be created by the use of common elements such as consistent forms, colors, materials, and details. Similar architectural treatment between structures within a multi-unit project may be permitted to allow diversity within the project.

The building orientation shall be towards a public right-of-way. Similar architectural composition and treatment shall be provided on all sides of the building that are visible from a public right-of-way, thus referred to as "visible elevations". For corner lots, this may require all four sides to meet the requirements.

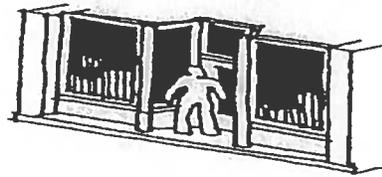
- (2) Roofline. A strong roofline adds a more finished touch to the structure. Roofline and cornices are especially important for buildings lacking window openings or upper façade detailing.

The roofline along each elevation should incorporate a minimum of one (1) design feature from below.



- Decorative roof details, such as dormers, cupolas, rafter tails, balconies, terraces, or small beams;
- Cornices with decorative detail; or
- Pediment, porticos, architectural features at entryways, or decorative towers.

- (3) Façade. Exterior building materials contribute significantly to the visual impact of the building. The “visible elevations” of every building should incorporate recesses and projections, and architectural elements such as columns, arches, etc.



Exterior finishes shall be used on all building materials to provide an aesthetic look. Unfinished concrete block shall have a stucco or other decorative finish on all “visible elevations”.

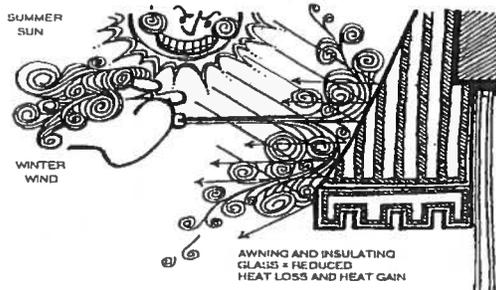
Corrugated metal panels, used as a finish material, shall be prohibited on “visible elevations”. Exceptions for architectural metal panels that change the visual appearance of a building may be considered.

- (4) Exterior Building Lighting. Exterior building lighting shall be required for new buildings. Ornamental or decorative lights mounted with brackets and emblem sign lights shall be used.

- (5) Storefronts. Individual ground-level retail uses with exterior public access that are part of a larger freestanding building shall have display windows along a minimum of 50% of the façade length. Windows shall be defined with details such as frames, sills, shutters, planters, relief trims, or lintels. Storefront design, relief features and decorative treatments shall complement contiguous storefronts.



Exterior Details. Architectural features or details such as windows, awnings, covered arcades, sills, shutters, reliefs, trims, columns, pilasters, quoins, reveals, cornices, horizontal banding arches, decorative vents, and/or accent tile, shall be integrated into the façade to avoid the appearance of a blank wall.



## RENOVATIONS

The typical multi-story commercial building has two distinct architectural areas:

- a) The upper and ground floors;
- b) The storefront entry, window and display areas.



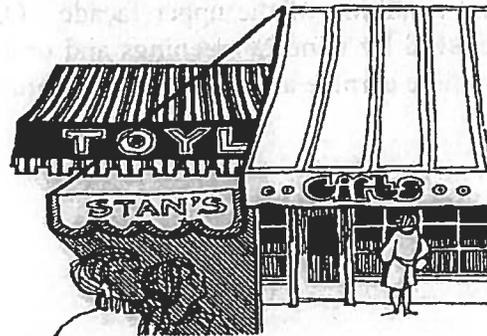
The upper façade gives the building its basic mass and displays the structures essential style. The storefront area is one of visual and physical access and establishes the image of the business or service offered within. The two principal areas of a commercial building can be analyzed separately, but the visual impact they have on each other must be taken into account. The upper story and ground floor frame the storefront and buffer it from the storefronts of adjacent buildings. If storefront details or signs encroach on the upper story façade, the architectural integrity of the building suffers.

**BAD DESIGN**



Signs and awnings can usually be treated as part of the storefront, but signs and awnings can have a great impact on the image of the building as a whole. Careful design, location and color coordination are needed to make certain that signs and awnings complement other architectural renovations.

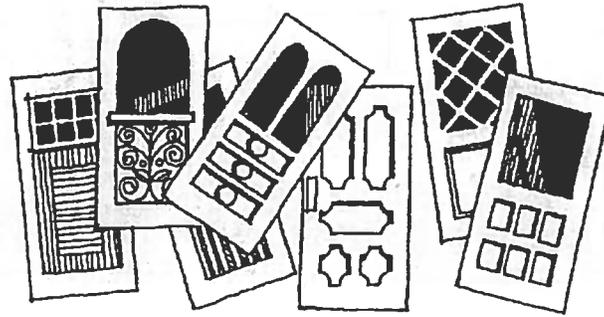
The architectural quality of the traditional commercial building stems largely from the treatment and condition of the upper façade. On traditional buildings, the upper façade is a solid mass relieved by window openings and ornamentation. The façade often terminates in a significant roofline cornice and frieze that accentuate the finished architectural quality of the building.



Often, the original aesthetic integrity of the upper façade suffers from neglect or abuse. Poor maintenance, dirt, decay and poorly executed repairs are perhaps the most common source of visual blight. Boarded up windows and poorly placed or badly designed signs are other frequent detractors.

Newer downtown buildings generally lack significant architectural ornamentation. An inherent weakness is the inadequate appearance of the area surrounding the storefront. A storefront without an architectural frame lacks substance and looks temporary.

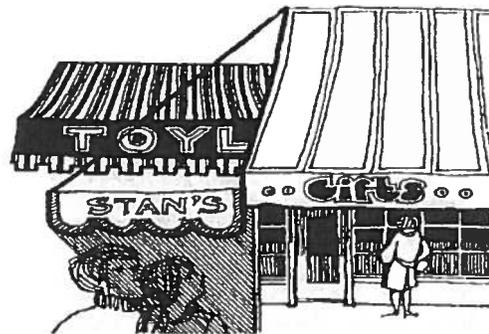
Where the original design intent, architectural style of building materials are inadequate or uninteresting, more innovative treatment will give the building a stronger architectural character and are encouraged during renovations.



Residential buildings in a downtown are often converted to retail or office uses. The renovation guidelines for such converted buildings follow principles similar to those for commercial architecture.

Avoid design and material combinations that give an “off the shelf—one solution fits all” appearance. “Antiquing” of non-vintage structures is another common but inappropriate renovation tactic.

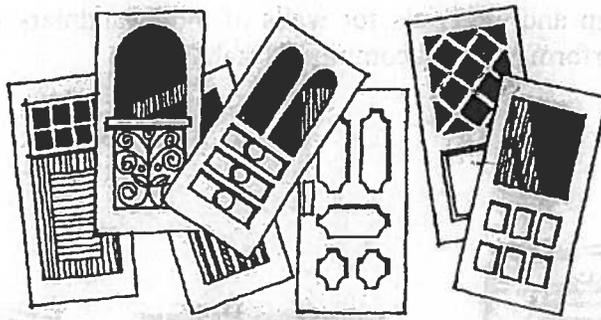
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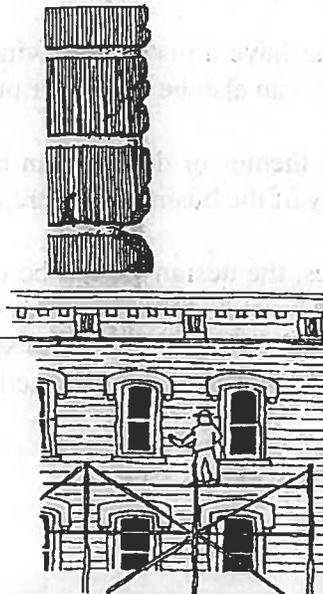
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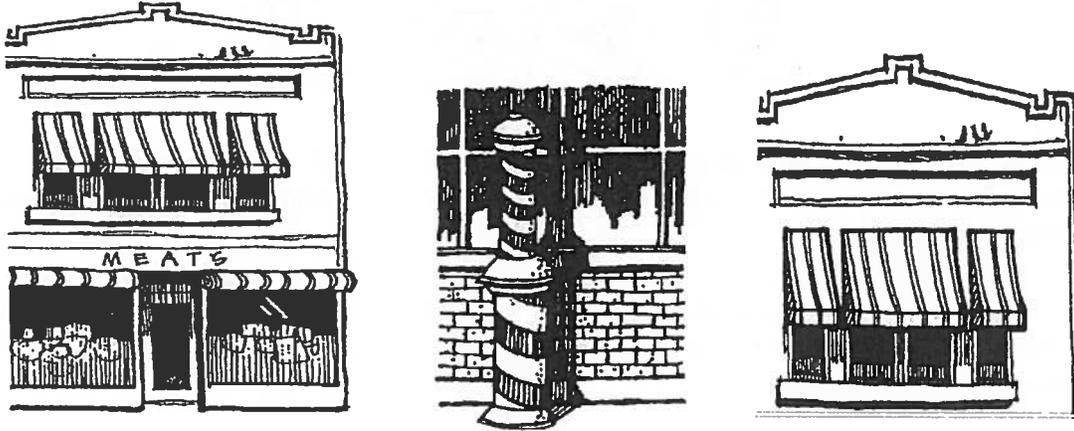
### Walls

Walls shall have the surfaces cleaned and repaired. In addition, restoring unique original detail and removal of exposed mechanical equipment, electrical apparatus, sign supports, and inappropriate architectural additions shall be done where appropriate.



Renovation of the design and materials for walls of older landmark buildings is important to promote the image of performance and community stability.

## The Storefront



Storefronts shall be individualistic and strive to attract attention to themselves. This visual diversity of individual businesses is necessary to create desirability. The storefront should be an architectural contrast to the mass and solidity of the upper façade. The most important functions of the storefront are identification and visual and physical access to the goods and services inside.

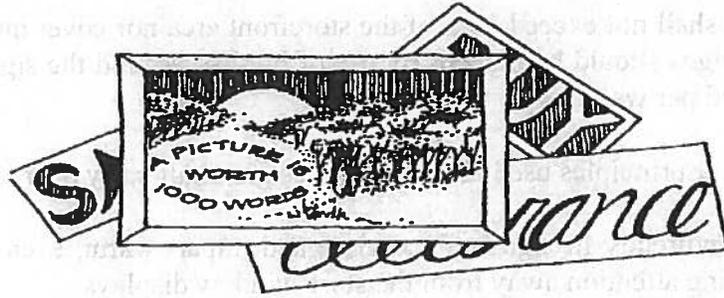
No filling in or covering up storefront windows because it negates the inviting, pedestrian-oriented quality a storefront needs.

Offices can have a permanent window design of curtains, plants and elegant window lettering. Such space can also be "lent" for public service displays, artwork, etc.

Storefront themes or designs can be of infinite variety, but should always strongly indicate the personality of the business it represents.

In all cases, the design should be of professional quality. Whether contemporary or traditional, storefronts must be absolutely free of a hastily applied "off the shelf" or contrived look. Because the storefront is highly visible to shoppers and pedestrians, attention must be paid to the quality of materials used and the construction detailing.

## Signs



Signs should be a combination of identification information, and image making. They must be eye-catching without being exotic or offensive. Graphic simplicity and compatibility with building architecture are the main objectives of a well-designed commercial sign.

There are several ways to treat wall signs. First, they can be part of the storefront design. A second more traditional approach is to have the sign frieze act as a transition element between storefront and upper façade. The third alternative is to apply individual letters directly to windows. Finally, signs may be part of an awning.

*Location:* In most cases, a sign shall locate and identify a storefront and not be placed on the upper façade of the building. Signs shall not cover any important architectural feature. Signs for traditional commercial buildings shall be located between the storefront and upper stories.

*Materials:* Sign materials shall be compatible with the building's overall design. Consider all the possibilities for using different materials. Each has unique qualities, which can be exploited for the type of sign most appropriate to your needs.



*Lettering/Symbols:* Simplicity is the key to legibility and elegance. Use of recognized symbols such as the druggist's mortar and pestle can reduce the total message needed. A bold and simple style will make the sign easier to read at a distance, yet avoid over sized units or contrived gimmicks to attract attention.

Signs shall be a complementary architectural element and impart an important, horizontal element to the block face. Quality of workmanship is important. Do not scrimp on design and materials. Such stinginess will become part of the business's general public image.

*Size:* The sign shall not exceed 10% of the storefront area nor cover more than 10% of a window. All signs should be defined by use of borders around the sign area. Only one sign is permitted per wall.

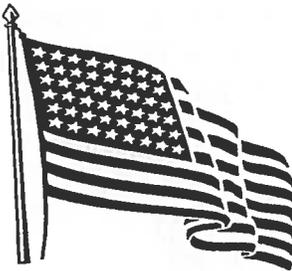
*Color:* The color principles used in storefront designs shall carry over to signs.

*Illumination:* Indirectly lit signs reduce glare and impart warm, even tones to the sign while not drawing attention away from the store window displays.

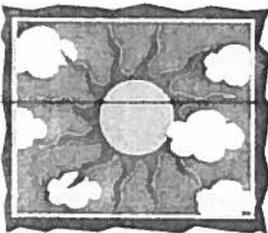
*Side Street Directional Signs:* These are city owned signs located at major street/side street intersections and intended as pedestrian oriented directional signage. A business may advertise in one double-sided space on the sign. Lettering and color of the sign should reflect the theme of the building.



*Grand Openings:* When your business is ready, a “Grand Opening” may be held for a period not to exceed seven (7) days. This is the only time that banners, banner signs, pennants, searchlights, twirling signs, “A” frame signs, sandwich board signs, sidewalk or curb signs, outdoor advertising displays, tethered balloons, and gas filled figures will be permitted without a Special Activity Permit.



*Flags:* On a single building site, up to four (4) flags may be displayed without a permit. A flag is defined as a piece of cloth or other material of individual size, color, and design, used as a symbol, signal, or emblem, or to convey a message. Flags are secured on one side, usually on a flagpole, and usually at two points leaving the remainder of the cloth hanging limply or drooping. A flag that is displayed so that it does not droop shall be considered a banner and shall not be permitted.

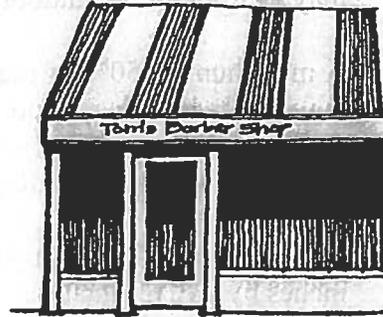


*Murals:* One mural shall be allowed in addition to permitted signs in the downtown areas. The mural shall be limited to 10% of the wall area. ~~This mural may be in addition to an existing sign on a wall as long as the existing sign meets city code.~~

The permitted wall sign and a mural may be combined on the same wall as long as it does not exceed 20% of the wall area and the wording on the mural does not exceed 25%.

Larger murals of a public nature shall require approval from the City Council.

## Awnings



Awnings are a simple yet highly effective means to improve the retail façade. Awnings add interest to the downtown street. Awnings serve as an architectural detail and as an element of color. They help draw attention to storefront display areas and also improve the comfort of shoppers. Awnings also protect the merchandise in the show window and reduce show window glare.

*Design:* Rigid or retractable architectural canopies or flexible, fabric awnings shall be used. Awnings shall be attached directly to the building. Professional design advice is the best way to guarantee that an awning or canopy will complement and not distract from the architectural character of a building. Simple, traditional designs that fit in well with the building's overall image will look good years later.

*Color:* Choose colors that complement storefront, signage, and building colors. Bright colors add a casual, festive air to the streetscape while subdued colors present a more formal appearance. A variety of patterns are also available – delicate stripes, bold stripes or solid colors.

## Outdoor Displays

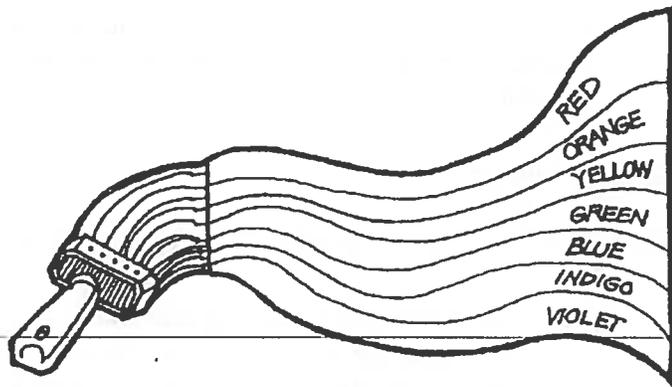
Outdoor displays are permitted in B-1 zoning with the following conditions:

- (a) Merchandise or seating areas shall not be displayed within the public right-of-way without the approval of a City of Cherryville use permit. A minimum five (5) foot wide sidewalk must remain accessible within the right-of-way.
- (b) Merchandise and seating areas are not permitted to be located in any parking or landscape areas on private or public property.
- (c) Merchandise and seating areas shall not be located in a manner that will obstruct pedestrians or the vision of motor vehicle operators.

- (d) Outdoor display and seating areas are only permitted as accessory uses to a licensed business on the same site and the merchandise displayed must be vended by said business.
- (e) A maximum of 25% of the lineal footage abutting a right-of-way of a storefront may be used for an outdoor display area.
- (f) A maximum of 50% of the lineal frontage abutting a right-of-way of a restaurant may be used for an outdoor seating area.
- (g) No stacking of merchandise within an outdoor display area will be permitted.
- (h) Price advertisement of any merchandise displayed must be no larger than three (3) inches by five (5) inches.
- (i) Caricature/logo displays are permitted to be displayed in an outdoor display area and shall be limited to one (1) per store/restaurant.
- (j) A caricature/logo display is defined as an individual display that is a characteristic of the business/restaurant which presents some type of information about the products or services of the business/restaurant. The display shall be no larger than eight (8) square feet with no more than four (4) feet of copy area. Mirror images of any copy area on two sides of a display will only count once in the calculation of copy area.

In addition, all other applicable design guidelines shall be followed when determining an appropriate outdoor seating or display.

## BUILDING COLOR



The use of color on architectural exteriors is subjective. The range of colors is almost infinite; their application is largely a matter of taste and fashion. All multi-story buildings shall have two accent trim colors and single story buildings shall have up to two accent trim colors. The following are some guidelines for the use of color for downtown architecture.

A retail building may be divided into two areas of color:

- a) The upper story which should be of a natural subdued color; and
- b) The storefront which can be a stronger focal point.

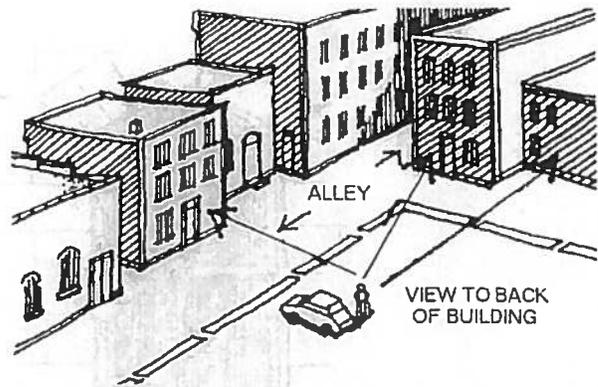
The upper story architecture should give continuity to the streetscape. The storefront should attract the shopper and provide interest to the stores. The storefront color scheme should also reflect the merchandise and or services offered.

Whites, pastels and earth tones shall be used as the main building color. Bright colors could be used in limited amounts for the display area, trim details, and architectural design elements to focus attention.

Bright colors could be used in limited amounts to the display area and trim devices to focus attention.

Brick surfaces should be exposed and restored. When the hues are warm reds and oranges, the original natural color should be preserved.

Side/rear elevations may be divided into two categories,



- a) Corner lot buildings whose elevation face onto a perpendicular street; and/or
- b) Buildings with walls facing onto alleys, parking areas, and vacant lots.

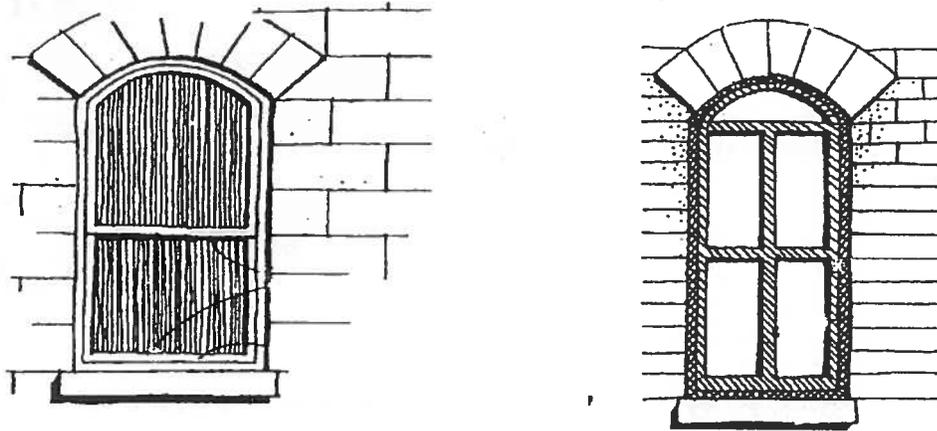
Treatment for the elevations of street corner units shall follow the front façade guidelines. Because corner buildings can set the tone for an entire downtown block, it is important that the design treatment started on the front façade “turn the corner” to maintain the continuity of the streetscape.

Elevations located next to alleys, vacant lots, parking areas, or above shorter buildings are also highly visible from the main street and can have a strong impact. Elevations shall be upgraded to complement the quality of the front facades. Where possible, introduce windows and extend the front façade detail.



Windows

Repairing, replacing or reopening all original windows shall be done. Besides providing light and ventilation, these windows lend a human scale to the building's appearance. Proper reintroduction of windows imbues the entire building with a sense of activity and liveliness. Boarded up windows shall only be permitted during repair.



Fences

Fence design shall take into consideration the unique qualities and character of the building. Color should be harmonious with the building's color(s). Fences should not interfere with the general public's visual access to architecturally/historically significant structures or to properties with scenic views.

Chain link fence is not permitted past the front building line along a front or side corner yard, and is discouraged in the rear and side yard. Additionally, similar fence composition shall be provided on all sides of the building that are visible from a public right-of-way.