



**MANCHESTER-BY-THE-SEA
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
HISTORIC COMMISSION
Town Hall, 10 Central Street
Manchester-by-the-Sea, Massachusetts 01944-1399**

**MANCHESTER-BY-THE-SEA
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
DESIGN GUIDELINES**

JUNE 2023

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. PURPOSE

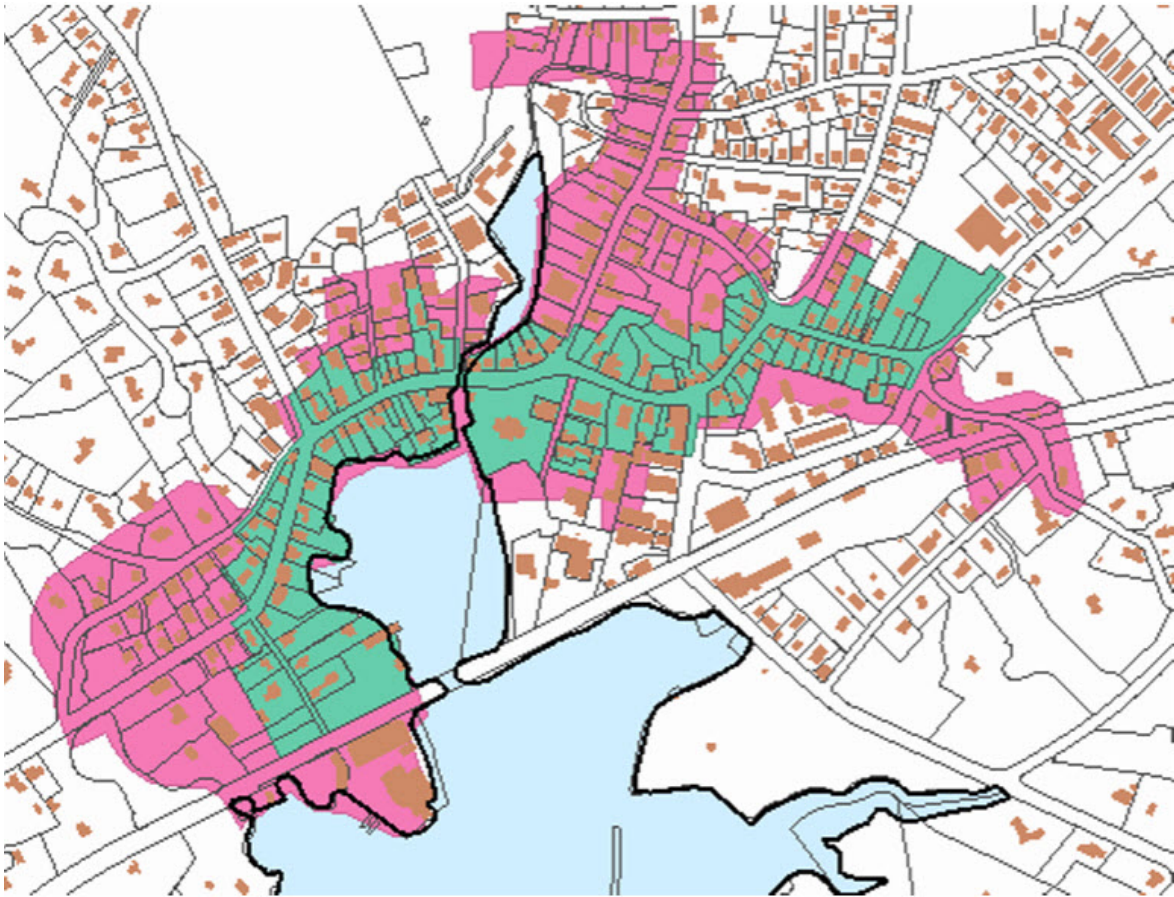
The Historic Districts Act, Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40C, was created to protect and preserve the historic resources of the Commonwealth through a local review system that encourages and ensures compatible improvement and development within local historic districts. The first local historic districts in Massachusetts were established on Nantucket and Beacon Hill in 1955. There are now over two hundred local historic districts throughout the state. Through historic district legislation, the preservation of an historic district can provide the community with a continuing and tangible sense of its past, and can protect the historical legacies of our ancestors, with the assurance that the best of these may be enjoyed by future generations. Local historic districts have three key purposes:

- To preserve and protect the distinctive characteristics of buildings and places significant to the history of the Commonwealth and its cities and towns;
- To maintain and improve the settings of those buildings and places; and
- To encourage historic compatibility with existing buildings when new buildings are planned.

Historic district commissions do not prevent changes from occurring, nor do they prevent new construction. Their purpose is to insure that changes and additions are harmonious and to prevent the introduction of incongruous elements that might distract from the aesthetic and historic character of the district. The purpose of a local historic district is not to halt growth, but to allow for thoughtful consideration of change. When properly established and administered, a local historic district is not unduly burdensome to property owners and, indeed, can enhance the value of their property.

In May, 1975, Manchester established, under the provision of Chapter 40C of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, an historic district to be known as the Manchester Historic District. The boundaries of the District are shown below:

B. MAP OF THE HISTORIC DISTRICT



II. THE PROCESS

A. USING THESE GUIDELINES

These Guidelines are intended to provide direction for Manchester Historic District (“Historic District” *see green-shaded area on map*), property owners and potential applicants before the Manchester Historic District Commission (“MHDC”) on the kinds of alterations that the MHDC deems appropriate. The Guidelines are also intended to help the MHDC make consistent and informed decisions about what is and is not appropriate. As the title suggests, the Guidelines are intended as guides, not hard and fast rules, and neither applicants nor the MHDC are bound to follow them in any given case. Each application before the MHDC will be considered on a case-by-case basis, and the Guidelines will be a starting point, but not necessarily an ending point, in this process.

One must receive a Certificate of Appropriateness, Certificate of Hardship, or Certificate of Non-Applicability for proposed changes to properties in the Historic District. In order to receive one of the certificates from the MHDC, a property owner or representative must file an application with the MHDC.

B. WORK THAT REQUIRES AN APPLICATION

The following types of work require an application:

- Any exterior changes visible from a public street, way, or place. For the purposes of determining visibility, existing and proposed wooden fences and landscaping are deemed not to block sight lines from public view. If there is a question regarding visibility, the final determination will be made by a vote of the MHDC.
- The erection or demolition of any building or structure visible from a public street, way, or place.
- Any signs in the Historic District.
- Changes to any landscaping feature referred to in a Certificate of Appropriateness as a condition of the granting of that certificate.

C. WORK THAT DOES NOT REQUIRE AN APPLICATION

The following types of work typically do not require an application:

- Ordinary maintenance, repair, or replacement (like-kind) of any exterior architectural feature of buildings and structures within the Historic District. Ordinary maintenance, repair, and replacement does not include changes of color, materials, design, size, or outward appearance of an existing feature.
- The addition or removal of landscaping plant material does not require a hearing unless it is referred to in a Certificate of Appropriateness as a condition of the granting of that certificate.
- Terraces, walks, driveways, sidewalks and similar structures, provided that any such structure is primarily at grade level.
- Storm doors and storm windows, screens, window air conditioners, lighting fixtures and non-dish antennae, although the MHDC recommends storm doors (preferably wooden) with full glass panels and the MHDC urges discrete placement of non-dish antennae.
- The color of paint, although the MHDC maintains recommendations regarding paint colors and color combinations (see Section V, page 15).
- The color of material used on roofs, although the MHDC maintains recommendations regarding roof colors and styles (see Section V, page 16).
- The reconstruction substantially similar in exterior design of a building, structure, or exterior architectural feature damaged or destroyed by fire, storm or other

disaster, provided that such reconstruction is begun within one year thereafter and carried forward with due diligence.

- Temporary signs or structures for official celebrations, charitable drives, or other purposes that the MHDC determines do not derogate from the purposes of the Historic Districts Act. Temporary signs and structures must be removed within three days following the event.

Failure to obtain a Certificate from the MHDC before commencing work may result in a stop work order issued by the Building Inspector, and may make a property owner and his or her agents liable for both fines and related legal expenses.

D. TYPES OF CERTIFICATES

- **Certificate of Non-Applicability.** If the MHDC determines that the proposed work is either (i) insubstantial in its effect on the Historic District, (ii) not subject to public view or (iii) is a like-kind replacement of existing conditions, then the MHDC will issue a Certificate of Non-Applicability and the applicant may apply for a building permit.
- **Certificate of Appropriateness.** If the MHDC determines that the proposed work is not entitled to a Certificate of Non-Applicability, it may (i) vote to give its tentative approval by issuing a “Ten Day Letter of Approval”. If there are no objections from either abutters or Commissioners of the MHDC to the Ten Day Letter of Approval, the MHDC will issue a Certificate of Appropriateness or (ii) the MHDC will hold a public hearing within a reasonable time giving public notice thereof, after which it will vote to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness subject to a “Ten Day Letter of Approval”.
- **Certificate of Hardship.** If the MHDC determines that the proposed work is not entitled to a Certificate of Non-Applicability and must, therefore, go to the MHDC for a hearing, then in certain rare cases the MHDC may, in its sole discretion, issue a Certificate of Hardship if failure to approve the application would involve a substantial hardship, financial or otherwise, to the applicant and the proposed work will not result in a significant detriment to the Historic District.

E. PREPARING AN APPLICATION

Before a building permit can be issued for properties within the Historic District, an application must be filed with the Town Clerk for consideration by the MHDC. Applications must be submitted by the owner of the property, or a contractor for the owner, at the owner’s request, may submit an application on the owner’s behalf.

The process of obtaining a certificate from the MHDC should begin well in advance of the scheduled work. A minimum of 30-45 days from filing to issuance of a certificate should be considered reasonable. In cases where it has been determined that a continuance or public hearing is required, additional delays can be expected.

The MHDC meets once a month, normally on the 4th Thursday. In order for the MHDC to consider an application it must be received no less than 15 days before the next scheduled meeting. Certificate applications are available at the Town Clerk's office.

All applications must be accompanied by supporting documentation describing the work to be done, the materials to be used, and drawings depicting the completed work. The following items should also be included when applicable:

- Photographs of the building or site
- Site plan showing location of improvements
- Elevation drawings of the specific improvements
- Details/profiles (i.e. moldings, fence caps, cornices, vents, etc.)
- Dimensions (i.e. size of addition)
- Product samples (doors, windows, etc.)

Completed applications should be returned to the Town Clerk's office with the filing fee and supporting paperwork.

F. HEARING PROCESS

On receiving the application, the MHDC will give notice of the application as required by law. The MHDC agenda, posted at Town Hall, will list the time, date, and place of the next public meeting.

At the public meeting, applicants will be asked to present their application. After review of the application, the MHDC will vote on whether a public hearing should be held. If a public hearing is to be waived, the MHDC may vote to (i) continue consideration of the application to a future meeting; (ii) approve the application with or without conditions; or (iii) deny the application.

If the MHDC votes to hold a public hearing, consideration of the application will be held over to the public hearing and no further determination will be made. Notice of the public hearing will be given as required by law.

G. GRIEVANCE PROCESS

Any applicant aggrieved by a determination of the MHDC may, within twenty days after the filing of notice of such determination with the Town Clerk, file a written request with the MHDC for a review by a person or persons of competence and experience in such matters designated by the Regional Planning Agency of which the town is a member. The finding of the person or persons making such review shall be filed with the Town Clerk within twenty days after the request, and shall be binding on the applicant and the MHDC, unless a further appeal is sought in the Superior Court, as set forth in Chapter 40C, Sec.

12A of the General Laws.

H. ADDRESSING VIOLATIONS AND ENFORCEMENT

All approved worked must be started within two (2) years from the issue date of the certificate.

Violations of the Manchester Historic District Guidelines are subject to penalties and court actions as provided under Chapter 40C Sec. 13 of the Massachusetts General Laws.

III. NEW STRUCTURES

A. NEW CONSTRUCTION

General Principles and Goals for New Construction

The New Construction guidelines are intended to ensure that new buildings in the Historic District will be compatible with their immediate surroundings in terms of siting, setbacks, scale, design, materials, and site improvements. The goal is to protect the integrity of the Historic District by ensuring that new construction respects Manchester's architectural heritage and sense of place. New construction should be in harmony with the old and at the same time be distinguishable from the old so that the evolution of the Historic District can be interpreted correctly. These guidelines are not meant to restrict creativity but to ensure the Historic District against unsympathetic designs. Diversity and creative use of design and materials are important to ensure that new construction is differentiated from the Historic District's historic architecture.

- **Siting.** The siting of a new building or structure, its setback from the street and side and rear yards, must be appropriate to and consistent with prevailing setbacks of its street. Particular attention should be paid to the setback of historic buildings with similar uses and forms to the proposed new building. Siting may also take into account historical precedent if there is adequate documentation of a historically significant building no longer extant on that site.
- **Scale.** Similar to the analysis for siting, the scale of the new building, including size, height and massing, must be appropriate to and compatible with the development patterns of its street. As with siting, the MHDC may take into account historical precedent for that lot if a historically significant building once stood on that site.

If the streetscape upon which the new building will be located has, or had, a strong historic context of buildings with similar heights and composition of parts, proposed new construction should reflect that historic context. Conversely, if a streetscape has a more heterogeneous context, with buildings of different forms, heights, setbacks and component parts, the MHDC should consider what is most appropriate for the proposed building based on form and use.

- **Design.** In reviewing a proposal for new construction in terms of design, the goal is not to require that a building represent a certain type, period or style. New construction should reflect the period when it is built and not be a replica of a prior design or period in time. Regardless of the style or design, all proposals for new construction must be of a high quality that contributes to the character of the Historic District. In reviewing proposed new construction, the MHDC shall take into account the following considerations in relation to its street and sub-area:
 - a. the location and pattern of windows and door openings,
 - b. the orientation of primary elevations to the street;
 - c. the shape, height and orientation of roof slopes; and
 - d. the use and scale of trim and ornamental details, including window and door surrounds, cornice details, ornament, and trim dimensions.
- **Materials.** The choice of appropriate materials is also an important consideration in reviewing new construction proposals. Materials should be compatible to the street and sub-area, and the type of building proposed. For example, if the location, massing, scale, and use of the new building reflect a historic commercial building, the material should be similarly compatible. If the location, massing, and scale of the new building reflect a historic house, the choice of materials should be compatible with the materials used on the historic house within its sub-area. In reviewing materials, all elements must be considered, including foundations, wall, trim, windows, doors, and roofing materials.

The use of a synthetic material may be permitted provided it adequately simulates the appearance of historic building materials.

B. NEW OUTBUILDINGS

The construction of a new outbuilding may be approved by the MHDC provided it is designed and located in a manner that respects the style of the other building(s) on its site, and respects the development pattern and siting of other historic outbuildings on its street and sub-area. The MHDC will consider the size, scale, design, and location of new outbuildings. A site plan should be provided to indicate the relationship to other buildings and structures on the lot and neighboring lots. In general, new outbuildings such as garages or sheds should be located at the rear of a lot.

Reconstruction of a missing historic building may be considered under the following conditions: reconstruction must be based upon adequate documentation of the existence and appearance of the building; the building or structure must be reconstructed in its original location and in its original orientation; and reconstruction must replicate all visual qualities and materials. A plaque may be mounted on the building visible from the street which designates the date of construction.

IV. EXISTING STRUCTURES

A. DEMOLITION

General Considerations

No demolition or partial demolition, regardless of the age of the building, will be approved until the plan for the reuse of the space has been reviewed and approved. An application for demolition must include a timetable and other guarantees and assurances that the MHDC may require to assure that the plans, including completion and replacement of the building or structure, will occur. In instances where the property to be demolished is 50 years or older, the MHDC may require documentation of the building or structure to be demolished using the standards of the Historic American Building Survey recording (administered by the National Park Service), or other professional standards of photography and drawing of plans.

Demolition of Buildings 50 years or older

A Certificate of Appropriateness for demolition or partial demolition of any building or structure 50 years or older and deemed by the MHDC to be valuable for the period of architecture which it represents and its importance to the Historic District may be issued only if retention of such building or structure constitutes a hazard to the public safety, as determined by the Building Inspector, which hazard cannot be eliminated by economic means available to the owner, including sale of the building or structure on its present site to any purchaser willing to preserve it.

Partial demolition shall include:

- Removal of one or more exterior walls or partitions of a building.
- Gutting of a building's interior to the point where exterior features (e.g., windows and doors) are impacted.
- Removal of more than 25% of a structure's overall gross square footage as determined by the Building Inspector.

Demolition of Buildings less than 50 years old

Demolition or partial demolition of buildings less than 50 years old may be permissible and are subject to review on a case-by-case basis. Demolition or partial demolition of later additions to a historic building that are less than 50 years old may be permissible and are subject to review on a case-by-case basis. Where demolition of later additions is permitted, the applicant should provide plans for restoration of the building as it appeared prior to the addition.

B. ADDITIONS

New Additions to Historic Buildings (as determined by the HDC)

The Historic District has continued to evolve over more than 350 years. The purpose of creating the Historic District was not to stop all future changes within the Historic District, but to manage those changes so that alterations and new construction will be in harmony with existing historic buildings and their settings. New additions shall conform to the following guidelines:

- **Siting.** Additions to the main façade, particularly to elevations that front on a public way, are generally prohibited. Additions should be located on secondary elevations that reduce visibility from a public way, and should be stepped back or otherwise separated from the façade of the main block.
- **Scale.** The scale of the addition, including size and massing, should be subordinate to the primary building. Existing or historic roof slopes shall not be extended to an addition. The roof slope of new additions must be stepped down or otherwise differentiated from the original roof slopes.
- **Design.** An addition to any elevation that significantly alters, obscures or destroys character defining features of the building is generally prohibited. The use of ornament, window and doors, siding, and other materials should be chosen to reflect the character defining features of the primary building, including rhythm, pattern and scale, while maintaining a clear delineation between the “old” and “new” portions of the building, and not copy historic architectural detail.
- **Materials.** Materials, including foundation, siding, roofing, windows, doors and trim, must be compatible with historic materials of the existing building.

New Additions to Non-Historic Buildings

Additions and alterations to non-historic buildings should maintain the same principles of design. Whether the building is historic or modern, the addition should remain subordinate to the existing structure in siting and scale. Materials, including foundation, siding, roofing, windows, doors and trim, must be compatible with materials of the existing structure and compatible to surrounding historic architecture. The size, scale and shape of the addition must be compatible to the original building and to the surrounding historic context.

C. EXISTING OUTBUILDINGS

Outbuildings which are architecturally or historically significant to the Historic District must be retained and restored, and are subject to the relevant Guidelines including Windows, Siding, Foundations, Roofing, Trim, and Ornamental Detail. If altered to accommodate a new use, historically significant outbuildings must retain their character defining elements, including roof slopes, siding, windows, doors and trim.

V. ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

Any structure or building in the Historic District of the Town, whether it is new construction or old, must conform and be compatible with the neighboring houses/dwellings or buildings. Renovations must be done being mindful of blending in with the existing historic structures.

A. DOORS

Whenever possible, doors should be made of wood and of a standard size, conforming to other doors in the neighborhood. They should be relatively simple in design; they can have bull's eye panes but nothing contemporary or elaborate.

B. DORMERS AND SKYLIGHTS

Single or double dormers (see WINDOWS) are appropriate if consistent with the neighborhood, but not large, extended shed dormers. If at all possible, they should be kept on the backside of the house, not visible from the street. Skylights are only appropriate if they are placed on the backside of the house/dwelling so that they are not visible from the street.

C. FIRE ESCAPES

Fire escapes should not be denied but they should be either wood, painted to match the trim of the house, or simple black iron, and placed in the most inconspicuous location. They can be hidden from view by shrubbery or evergreens.

D. FOUNDATIONS

In new construction, foundations should be of a height consistent with the typical foundation height consistent with the architectural style of the house. New foundations should also be in harmony with foundation heights of buildings in the surrounding area. The foundation height of an addition should match that of the existing structure. Foundations should be left unpainted (see GRADING AND SITE WORK).

E. GUTTERS AND DOWNSPOUTS

Gutters and downspouts should be of wood or seamless painted aluminum, copper or composite material that imitates wood or other metal, should be of scale, contour and detail found to be compatible with the style of the building and/or immediate neighboring buildings. Attachments should be concealed and visible hanging straps or brackets should not be used. Installation should not involve the removal of any historic detailing such as cornice moldings or brackets. Gutters are inappropriate if constructed in short sections, or with visible brackets, heavy connectors, and prominent endcaps. Downspouts should not obstruct the view of the structure's corner wall elements. Downspouts may be housed in wooden enclosures compatible with the building's outside walls. Natural stone splash beds near the foundation at the drip edge are appropriate and should be considered.

F. MAILBOXES

In areas where rural mailboxes are necessary, federal regulations govern their height and size. Most manufactured mailboxes follow these regulations. Postal regulations allow custom mailboxes which must be approved by the local postmaster. Placement of mailboxes should be discussed with the local postmaster. Mailboxes installed in the Historic District are not appropriate for curb line, rural mailboxes.

G. MASONRY AND CHIMNEYS

Original masonry and mortar should be retained, whenever possible, without the application of any surface treatment. Do not apply waterproof or water repellent coatings unless required to solve a specific technical problem that has been studied and identified.

Old mortar should be duplicated in composition, color, and texture. Do not repoint with mortar of a high Portland cement content. Mortar that is harder than the material it is binding will cause masonry to deteriorate.

Old mortar should be duplicated in joint size, method of application, and joint profile.

Masonry should be cleaned only when it is necessary to halt deterioration and always with the gentlest method possible, such as low pressure water and soft natural bristle brushes.

Deteriorated original materials should be repaired or replaced, where necessary, with new materials that duplicate the old as closely as possible. Replacement bricks should be carefully matched in size and color to the originals. New construction should follow traditional brick coursing and appearance.

Foundations should be repaired or extended with the material of the existing foundation.

The original or early color and texture of masonry surfaces should be retained whenever possible. Brick or stone surfaces may have been painted or whitewashed for practical and aesthetic reasons. Indiscriminate removal of paint from masonry surfaces may be historically incorrect and may also subject the building to harmful damage.

Chimneys are an important architectural feature and should be maintained as to height, width, shape and color when possible.

H. HVAC, SATELLITE DISHES, SOLAR COLLECTORS , ETC.

The MHDC has jurisdiction over vents, HVAC equipment and mechanical equipment that are installed on or protrude through roof surfaces or alter soffits, eaves or exterior walls. See also separate section on SKYLIGHTS. The location, dimensions and outward appearance of these items must be provided with the application. The MHDC is not obligated to approve roof units that the property owner may feel are necessary to accommodate a use other than that for which the building was originally built. If the venting of warm air from the attic is a necessity, the applicant should consider the various types of vents. These include ridge vents, soffit vents (round, rectangular and continuous), gable vents and turbine vents. Try to select a venting method, or combination of methods,

that will be the least obtrusive to the architecture but will meet the minimum air circulation or venting requirements for the square footage of the attic space. Vents should be painted to match the color of the surface on which they are installed. Air conditioners, roof vents and other mechanical equipment should be placed in the most inconspicuous location possible.

- **Satellite Dishes.** Satellite dishes shall not be visible from any public way. If a homeowner is able to locate the dish so as not to be visible from any public way, it will still require a Certificate of Non-Applicability.
- **Solar Energy Systems.** A solar energy system is a device or structural design feature, a substantial purpose of which is to provide daylight for interior lighting or provide for the collection, storage, and distribution of solar energy for space heating or cooling, electricity generating, or water heating (as defined in G.L. c. 40A, §1A).

In general, a solar energy system shall be placed in a location that minimizes visibility from any public way. If a solar energy system will not be visible from any public way, either the contractor or the homeowner must apply for and receive a Certificate of Non-Applicability before such installation. The application shall state the location of the installation, the dimensions and design of equipment to be placed on the exterior of the building, details of operation, and the route of exterior wiring, if any.

If a solar energy system cannot be installed so as not to be visible from the public way, the contractor or the homeowner must apply for a Certificate of Hardship. Once again, the application shall state the location of the installation, the dimensions and design of equipment to be placed on the exterior of the building, and the route of exterior wiring. Applicants are encouraged to include scaled drawings, manufacturer's specifications and photographs of similar installations. If the system is being proposed for the primary structure, the applicant shall be prepared to discuss why placements with less visibility or less impact are not proposed. When ruling on an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for a solar energy system, the MHDC shall consider the policy of the Commonwealth encouraging the use of such systems and shall protect solar access (G.L. c. 40C, § 7). Nevertheless, the MHDC shall consider and review each proposed installation on a case-by-case basis. Among the factors that the MHDC shall consider are the following:

Location: Installation shall consider the proportions, balance and scale of a property to determine the least intrusive location. Installation shall have negligible visual impact upon the site as a whole. Preferably, solar energy systems shall be installed on a rear elevation, subordinate wing, secondary massings, within an existing skylight, on accessory outbuildings or on the ground. If a solar energy system is placed on the ground, it shall be positioned in a limited or no-visibility location in a secondary area of the property. On buildings, it shall be set back on a flat surface or placed behind an existing architectural feature (parapet, dormer, chimney, etc.), whenever possible. Solar energy systems shall not be installed on the roof of

primary elevation of a building unless other options have been explored and eliminated.

Vegetation or a compatible screen may also be explored to further reduce the impact of these features on a historic property. Such screen should be situated at a sufficient distance from the system to create a visual barrier without casting shadows of a prolonged duration or at times of day that would inhibit energy production.

In all cases, the installation shall be as flat as possible against the surface where it is installed. The placement of panels, either with horizontal or vertical tilt, shall be done to keep a low profile extension. Pitch and elevation shall be in all cases, as flat as possible against the surface where it is installed. The placement of panels, either with horizontal or vertical tilt, shall be done to keep a low profile extension. Pitch and elevation shall be adjusted to reduce visibility from the public right-of-way.

The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. Therefore, installation shall not involve the removal, covering or altering of significant, character-defining features of a building. Roof slopes, dormers, chimneys, windows, shutters and other architectural features shall not be altered to accommodate solar energy systems.

I. PAINT

Paint colors should be chosen with consideration for the colors of surrounding buildings and with sensitivity to the architectural period of the house. The MHDC has materials explaining the types of colors used during various architectural periods.

The MHDC does not require the property owner to select paint colors from a specific set of colors.

If a two-color scheme is appropriate, clapboards should be painted the body color and all else should be painted the trim color.

For certain 19th century buildings, it may be appropriate to pick out some of the trim elements with the body color or to use a three-color scheme.

With proper preparation, opaque stains are good alternatives to paint.

J. PORCHES, BALCONIES, STOOPS, AND DECKS

Complete elevation drawings must be submitted for porch and deck additions clearly detailing all design elements (i.e. railings, balusters, materials, paint color, under porch treatment, the relation of the proposed porch or deck to the building).

Such additions must be contextual (i.e. reflect the historic character, architectural detail, and materials of the house). Location, materials, and design are critical components of porch and deck additions. Tacked on porches and decks will be looked on unfavorably.

Period porches should not be left unpainted.

K. ROOFS

The roof of a house is an important architectural feature and should be treated as such. Therefore, all efforts should be made to preserve the original roof shape and eave detail and to properly maintain or replace roofing materials as necessary.

Roof replacement materials should be sensitive to the original. Slate and wood shingles are preferable, but may not be feasible due to cost, longevity, or fire safety considerations. Acceptable alternatives are to install one of the limited group of products which successfully imitate slate or wood or to "render out" the roof by using a dark asphalt or fiberglass shingle which does not draw attention to this feature and the absence of original materials. Solid color asphalt or fiberglass roofs that are not meant to draw attention to themselves should be black or charcoal.

Where historically appropriate, a polychromatic color scheme may be appropriate. However, white was not a shingle color used on historic roofs.

If the current roof is a 3-tab asphalt roof, "architectural" asphalt shingles are NOT an "in-kind" replacement. To receive approval under Non-Applicability, the 3-tab roof must be replaced with a 3-tab roof.

All architectural features that give the roof its essential character, such as dormers, cupolas, cornices, brackets, chimneys, cresting, and weather vanes should be preserved or, if necessary, replaced.

Wooden or copper gutters can be an important architectural feature. In older houses they were often designed as part of the eave moldings. Therefore gutters should be properly maintained and only replaced in cases of extreme deterioration.

New gutters and downspouts should be placed in an architecturally sensitive manner. This includes color selection.

Proper ventilation can add as much as 10 years to the life of your roofing. Venting options are approved on a case by case basis.

L. SHUTTERS AND AWNINGS

All existing shutters and their hardware should be retained and preserved. Damaged shutters can often be repaired by selective replacement of deteriorated pieces. If replacement is necessary, shutters should match the originals in terms of size, scale, detail, thickness, and hardware. Aluminum and vinyl shutters are not appropriate.

Awnings and canopies are considered attachments to buildings and are subject to review. Approval of awnings will be made on a case-by-case basis.

M. SIDING

Original siding material should be retained whenever possible and deteriorated material repaired or replaced with new material that duplicates the original as closely as possible. Appropriate siding materials are clapboard, brick, and on certain historical styles, wood shingles or flushes or rusticated boarding (not pressed board siding).

The removal of non-original siding materials, trim, and imitation clapboards such as vinyl and aluminum is encouraged. Vinyl and aluminum siding are not appropriate in the Historic District and will not be approved. As new materials are developed that are indistinguishable from natural or traditional products, the MHDC will consider their use on a case-by-case basis.

N. TRIM

Decorative trim and ornamental details provide an important clue to building's style and age. The removal of any decorative trim or ornamental details on an historic building is prohibited. Such elements must be preserved and repaired if possible. New layers of decorative trim shall not be added to historic buildings in the Historic District without a photo or other documentation confirming its prior existence.

O. WINDOWS

Historically appropriate window openings including window sash, glass, lintels, sills, trim, hoods, and shutters should be retained. Windows are an important feature on any building. When an application for substantial window replacement is received, an inspection by a MHDC representative or a site visit may be performed to determine the condition of all windows. The feasibility of the following will be assessed:

- Restoration of entire existing windows through repairs to sash, sills, etc.
- Individual sash replacement;
- Full replacement of windows matching existing window layout.

The stylistic period or periods a building represents should be respected in the material and design of the windows.

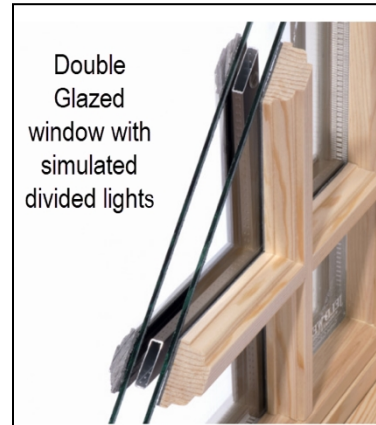
New window openings in the principal elevations are rarely appropriate or permitted. Window openings should not be enlarged or reduced to fit stock window sash sizes.

Deletion of windows, particularly on principal facades, are rarely, if ever, allowed.

Window replacement on a single facade should replicate the remaining windows on that facade. The MHDC may consider phasing when the property owner is substantially upgrading.

All parts of the replacement windows should match the original or existing historic windows, unless the windows being replaced are inappropriate to begin with, and should be replaced with proper windows fitting the structure. The mullion thickness and profile of replacement windows should closely match those of the original. Windows with removable mullion bars are unacceptable.

Reflective glass is not appropriate in historic districts. Double-glazed or simulated divided light (SDL) windows must be reviewed on a case by case basis. Muntin grids on SDL windows must be on the exterior and interior sides of the glass and in the case of double glazed windows a grid must also exist between the glass panes. An illustration of a double glazed window with fully simulated divided lights is shown at right.



. The MHDC will require manufacturer, model, and full specification for any replacement windows that are proposed. Windows that will be considered must have 7/8" muntins. The profile of exterior muntins must replicate the putty line on traditional single-glazed windows or the existing windows of the house. The double-glazed wood windows that the MHDC has approved to date include:

- Pella Architect Series (Wood Exterior) Double Hung Window with ILT's, 7/8" muntin;
- LePage 7/8" SDL (Wood Exterior);
- J. B. Sash Proper Bostonian (Wood Exterior);
- Marvin Ultimate Double Hung (Wood Exterior) windows with 7/8" muntins and bronze spacers.

Replacement windows made of wood are encouraged. The use of a synthetic material may be permitted provided it adequately simulates the appearance of historic building materials.

The frame and decorative window trim should be retained and repaired with materials that duplicate the originals. Salvage old glass lites when repairing sash.

Stained glass, beveled glass or other art glass and certain important glass items (diamond pane, leaded, bullseyes, etc.) can be important architectural elements and should be retained and repaired.

Exterior Blinds (Commonly Referred to as Shutters): . Wooden replacement shutters should reflect their original operable use: their size should be such that they would cover the entire window if closed (i.e. arched windows have arched shutters); they should be hinged to the window casing, not nailed. Shutters are hung so that in a closed position over the window they would shed water.

The slats should point up when the shutters are open, down when the shutters are closed. Shutters may not be appropriate or necessary to every architectural style. The MHDC should be consulted before action is taken to remove or install shutters.

Storm Windows: Although storm windows are not under the jurisdiction of the MHDC, wood storms are more in keeping with the architectural character of a historic house. The most common type of storm window is the aluminum triple track. These windows are permanently installed and have a track for the lower storm sash, another for the upper sash and a third for a screen. Aluminum storms should match the color of the house's trim or be painted to match. Aluminum mid-rails should match the meeting rails of the historic sash.

VI. SITE FEATURES

A. DRIVEWAYS, PAVING, AND PARKING

Consider the impact on the streetscape when designing parking, driveways, and paving in the Historic District. As the original structures were designed for period transportation, home owners should avoid paving and asphalt, whenever possible, in favor of brick or granite pavers that allow for adequate drainage and run off.

B. FENCES AND TRELLISES

Fences are significant architectural features. Therefore, architecturally important fences should be repaired or replaced, where necessary, with new materials that duplicate the old as closely as possible. Other fences may be architecturally unimportant, the result of fence replacement in more recent years. In these cases, property owners would be encouraged to make the design more appropriate rather than duplicate the existing fence.

Fences along the street facades of historic houses were meant to serve a decorative purpose. Such fences should not block a house's view, but complement it; they should be in scale to the property. Narrow pickets (approximately 2 " in width) are preferred to wide pickets. Back and side yard fences which serve a screening purpose may be higher.

The design of a fence should be sensitive to that of the house. Since Federal architecture stressed delicate proportions, the fence in front of such a house should also be delicate in scale, whereas the fence in front of a more massive Victorian house could be heavier. Also, elaborate fences are suitable for elaborate houses; simple houses should have simple fences.

If wood is to be used, picket, capped picket, or spindle fences are recommended for anywhere around the yard. Capped flat board fences are most appropriate for side and backyards. The flat board fence with a lattice top is an excellent privacy option. Plastic fences are NOT allowed when viewable from a public way.

The MHDC encourages the retention of suitable cast and wrought iron fences. Such fences should be repaired and painted as necessary. If sections are missing and it is financially feasible, replacement sections should be obtained.

Chain link, stockade, and wire-type fences are NOT appropriate in historic districts. Low brick walls and brick planters are also not acceptable.

C. GRADING

The existing natural contours and topography of the landscape and site should be preserved to the greatest possible extent. In new construction, proposed building heights are measured from the original grade prior to any site work. In cases where high groundwater is a factor and onsite septic is needed, the MHDC will take into account the need to raise the height of the grade. When designing the site, natural features such as large trees, boulders, aquifers, or other similar assets should also be preserved.

D. LANDSCAPING

The following changes to landscaping features require approval:

- The erection or removal of any landscaping structure visible from a public way or place, such as a fence, wall, permanent bench, deck, pole light, railing, walkway, or play structure.
- The removal or material alteration of any plantings which have been made a necessary condition to the granting of a certificate of appropriateness, (such as a vegetative screening required in approving an air conditioning unit).

Except as noted above, approval is not required for planting, pruning, trimming or re-moving trees, shrubs, flowers and other plants. However, before removing vegetation, careful consideration should be given to the role of such vegetation in screening. For example, if a proposed new structure or an addition is shielded from public view by existing vegetative screening, it may be easier to obtain approval. Thus, the removal of existing trees and other vegetative screening may affect the subsequent approval of such new structure or addition. The MHDC encourages the preservation of mature trees. The MHDC also suggests that native trees, plants and flowers be given preference over other varieties (exotics).

E. LIGHTING

Light fixtures, including those located on a building exterior, on a porch or deck, on pathways and paved areas and elsewhere around a property, will be subject to MHDC review. Fixtures should be appropriate in design and scale to the character of a building, its setting and location. Appropriate adaptations of period fixtures are readily available to home owners and contractors. In addition to the design of the fixture, the intensity and

distribution of light, the board will also consider the potential impact on the Historic District as a whole and neighboring properties.

F. POOLS, TENNIS COURTS, BASKETBALL HOOPS, ETC.

Modern recreational structures such as basketball hoops, soccer nets, pools, and tennis courts are inappropriate for the streetscape of the Historic District and should not be visible from the road. When appropriate, homeowners may propose the use of landscaping or fencing to conceal them.

G. SEPTIC SYSTEM—VENTS AND MOUNDS

The MHDC regards septic mounds as structures, not landscaping, so a certificate of appropriateness is required for septic mounds visible from a public way. It understands the need to find a suitable site for a septic system and has a policy of working with applicants to help formulate the best location. Screening may be required when appropriate.

H. SIGNAGE

The basic design, color, size and scale of a sign assist the board in determining whether it integrates with the architectural character of a building and the streetscape. An applicant should propose a sign that maintains the visual harmony and enhance the historical integrity of the area. Engraved wooden signs are appropriate in historic districts. Synthetic signs are generally not appropriate. Raised or carved letters are encouraged. Fonts should be Serif (that is, any font that includes the fine lines that finish the main strokes of a letter). Raised, cove, or beveled sign edges are strongly recommended.

I. STAIRS, STEPS, AND RAILINGS

Steps, stairways and railings are important features of entryways and porches. Where possible, original features and detailing should be retained or repaired in the same design and material. When existing features are not original, replacement design and materials should be appropriate to the style of the building. Deteriorated or missing elements and decorative ornamentation shall be replaced with materials and elements to match original, or be appropriate to the original. Stonework may be repaired, replaced or extended using the existing type of stone or brick. New work should be appropriate to the period and character of the building. Railings may be wood or wrought iron. A drawing of railing design must be provided.

J. UTILITIES

Electric, water, gas meters and other such utilities should also not be visible from the streetscape. Every effort should be made to conceal these in the rear of buildings or with appropriate landscaping. Utility wires should be underground wherever possible.

K. STREET FURNITURE

Street furniture includes seating, trash and recycling containers, planters, public telephone areas, enclosure walls, information signs, display cases, drinking fountains, clocks, bike-racks, and similar site furnishings (for Street Lighting guidelines see section of this document on Lighting.) Street furniture should complement the architectural period of the

area in which it is sited. Materials, design, and their placement should be consistent with the period and style of the structure, and reflect formal or informal character of the surroundings. Seating should be made of natural materials that can withstand weather, such as wood and stone. No advertising should appear on any exterior surface. Street furniture should be placed so as not to detract from its immediate environs or larger streetscape.

VII. COMMERCIAL STRUCTURES

A. EXISTING BUILDINGS

The same basic rules for house renovations also apply to commercial improvements:

- Any change or addition should respect the original design of the building;
- Save original detail and materials. New elements, when necessary, should harmonize with original features;
- Never try to make a building look older or newer than it really is. The result almost always looks artificial.

With any commercial renovation, a balance must be kept between emphasizing the individual storefronts and maintaining the unity of the overall composition.

B. STOREFRONTS

Within the Historic District, commercial storefronts have been built as original components of historic buildings as well as later alterations to historically significant residential buildings. Modern storefronts have also been added which could be redesigned to be more compatible with the historic context of the Historic District. Each storefront should be analyzed as a record of its time, style, and place. The following Guidelines shall be considered:

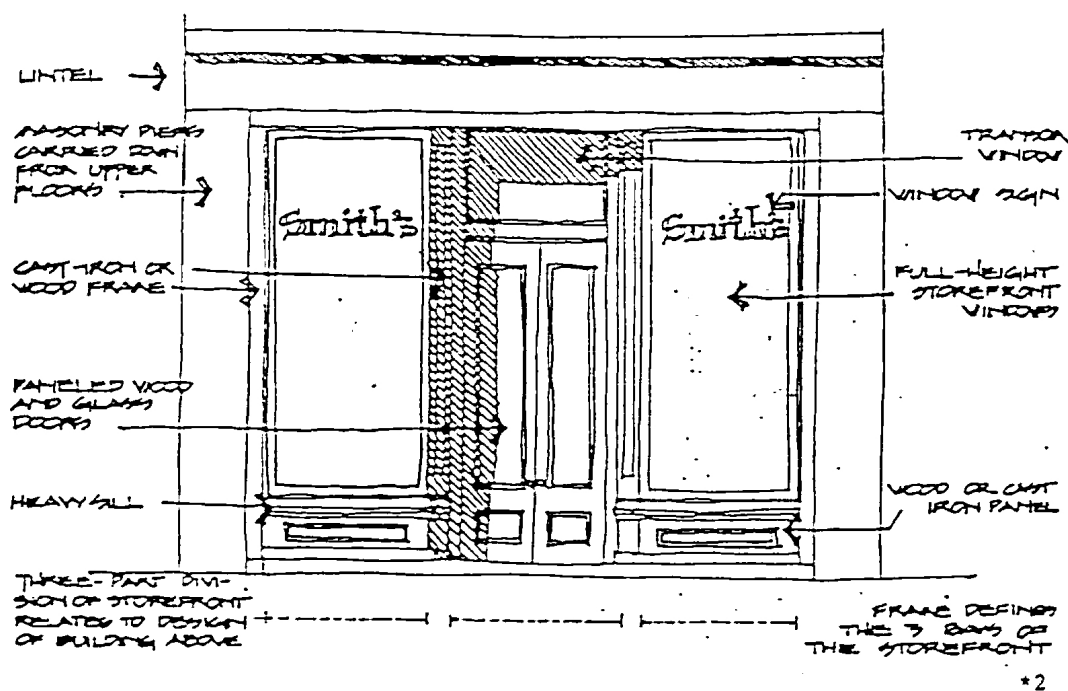
- Historic storefronts. Storefronts 50 years or older shall be preserved or restored to the greatest extent possible, including material and design of windows, doors, trim and ornament.
- Non-historic storefronts. Alterations to non-historic storefronts, storefronts less than 50 years old, must use design and materials that are compatible with the immediate historic commercial context of neighboring buildings on its street and the Historic District as a whole. If the storefront is part of a commercial style building, reference should be made to historic storefronts in historic commercial buildings. If the alteration is part of a residential style building, reference should be made to historic storefront alterations in historic residential buildings. In general, non-historic storefront elevations should have the traditional composition of sign frieze at the top, a band of storefront windows and entrance, and a base at the bottom. All components of the storefront elevation should be detailed in a manner which is consistent with the ornamentation and scale of other details on similar historic buildings. If there is evidence that an existing non-historic storefront had

replaced an earlier historic storefront, the MHDC encourages restoration of the earlier storefront or design that is compatible to the style or period of the building.

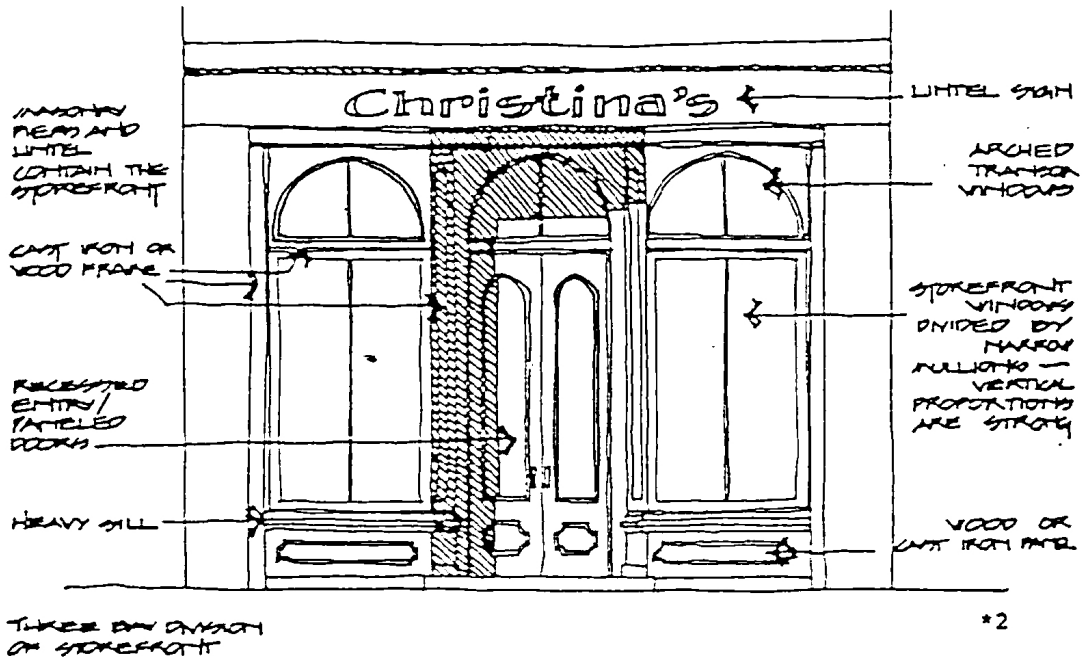
- New storefronts. The addition of new storefronts in historic façades is generally discouraged. If permitted, new storefronts shall be designed in a manner that retains the character defining features of the building as originally designed, or as altered if such alteration has gained architectural or historical significance. The new storefront shall also use design and materials that are compatible with the immediate historic context and the Historic District as a whole and should have the traditional composition of sign frieze at the top, a band of storefront windows, and a base at the bottom.

The following three examples show well-preserved storefronts where original details, materials, and scale have been kept. With any commercial renovation, a balance must be kept between emphasizing an individual storefront and maintaining the unity of the overall composition.

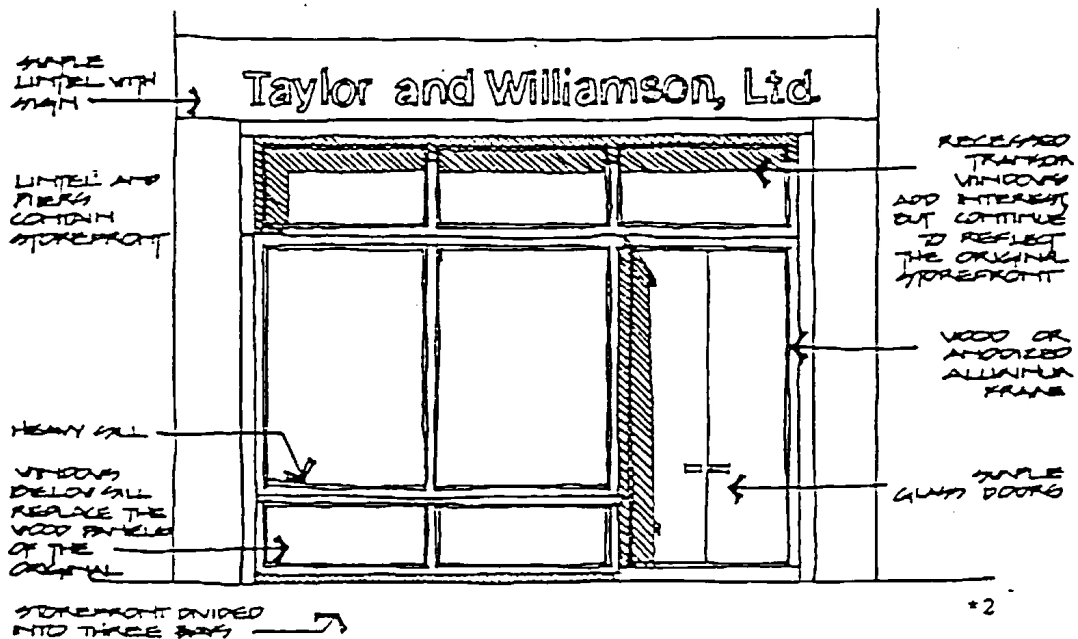
TRADITIONAL STOREFRONT



MORE ELABORATE INTERPRETATION



APPROPRIATE CONTEMPORARY STOREFRONT



C. NEW BUILDINGS

New buildings should always be designed to harmonize with the existing character of an area. The commercial Historic District has a distinct urban flavor; individual structures form a continuous row of buildings which face and actually define the streets. When developing plans for a new building, it is always best to think of that structure as one element in a continuous series of similar structures.

Since the new building is actually being fit into a framework comprised of a variety of older buildings, the following considerations should influence its design:

- **Size.** A new building should fill the space defined by the adjacent buildings. Vacant lots or small buildings that do not fit their lots disrupt the continuous flow of building facades.
- **Height.** A new building should respect the continuous roofline formed by neighboring buildings. To do this, the height of the building should not exceed the taller of the two adjacent structures. Similarly, the minimum height should be that of the lower of the two adjacent structures.
- **Façade Rhythm.** Along a street, the repetition from building to building of similarly positioned door and window openings creates a rhythm which should be repeated on the face of a new building and should correspond to the dimensions on neighboring buildings. Also, on a new building, window and door openings should be positioned similar to those on neighboring structures.
- **Façade Openings.** The combined area of openings on the new façade should be similar to those of neighboring buildings. Likewise, the proportion of window and door openings should generally be similar to others on the streetscape.

These guidelines in no way preclude developing a contemporary design for new buildings. It is better to make a strong contemporary design than a shallow imitation of an historic style.

D. SIGNAGE

General Considerations: The Historic District includes buildings that were constructed for commercial purposes and residential or other building types that have been converted to commercial use. All signage in the Town must first meet requirements of the Town of Manchester sign law. Within the Historic District, there is an additional requirement to create signage which complements the architecture without creating visual clutter, and which reflects the historic use of signage in the Historic District. Signage shall be placed so as not to interrupt character defining features of a building including but not limited to window openings, cornice line, decorative elements and roof line. Signage lettering on building facades should be no more than 12" high. Corporate logos did not exist at the time Manchester-by-the Sea's historic structures were built, and may disrupt its unique

character. Corporate logos also hasten the transition to a suburban or urban appearance, overpowering the more subtle historic features of a building, structure, or district. Franchised companies and organizations with registered set logos may be asked to modify their signage to comply with an appropriate appearance for the Historic District. Signage lighting should be in keeping with the style of the sign and appropriate to the business it represents. Lighting should illuminate the sign with as little spillage as possible. Up-lighting, internally lighted signs, and colored lights are not appropriate.

Signage may take the form of signs, flags, banners, markers or awnings.

REQUIREMENT FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

All signage, including any window sign intended for view from a public way, requires a Certificate of Appropriateness from the MHDC, with only the following exceptions::

- Certain Temporary signs erected for real estate sales, charitable events or official Celebrations. See section below titled TEMPORARY SIGNS for details on these exceptions.
- Certain window signs covering less than 1/10th of a window's area. See section below titled WINDOW SIGNS for details on this exemption.

SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION FOR SIGNAGE

These are the recommended materials to be submitted with a signage application:

- Scaled drawings for proposed signs ½" = 1 foot minimum, including thickness of sign, specifications for materials, colors, and typeface to be used
- An actual sample of signage material with actual samples of paint and finishes proposed or, for flags, awnings, or banners, a representation of the color and design of the banner.
- Photographs or elevations of building showing exact locations of the proposed signage
- Details and specifications for proposed brackets/hangers, colors, installation methods, light fixtures, etc., and lighting plan, if one exists (see lighting section for more detail).

Further comment is as follows:

- Design Standards for Signs. All signs (except window signs) within the Historic District shall be constructed of painted or natural finish wood, or material of equivalent appearance, and shall display painted, routed or raised lettering. The shape of the signs shall be simple geometric forms such as squares, rectangles or ovals. The graphic content of the sign should be limited to the name of the business and the business logo. A few additional descriptive words may be appropriate.

- **Projecting (Blade) Signs.** Multiple businesses are permitted to utilize a single projecting sign. The MHDC must review and approve the design of the bracket supporting the sign. The bracket should be constructed of iron or other dark metal and designed in a simple manner that complements but does not compete with the decorative elements of the building. The bracket and sign together should not project more than four feet.
- **Sign Boards.** In all cases, signs mounted on building elevations should be located so as not to obscure significant architectural detail. Commercial buildings often incorporate locations for signage within their design. These historic locations should be used. The size of the signboard should be appropriate to the storefront and the building overall.
- **Window Signs.** Signs placed inside or outside of a store window and intended for view from a public way fall within the jurisdiction of the MHDC. Such signs must not dominate the storefront window, and should be appropriate to the architecture and historic nature of the district. Window signs require a Certificate of Appropriateness with the following exception:
 - Window signage which is not illuminated and which occupies less than 10% of the window area is exempted from the requirement of a Certificate of Appropriateness.
- **Freestanding Signs.** Freestanding signs, including sandwich board signs, require a Certificate of Appropriateness. Freestanding signs must be no more than six square feet. The top of the sign must be a maximum of 15 feet above the ground. Sign posts must be reviewed by the MHDC, be compatible in material and design to its building and be located in a manner that is appropriate to surrounding buildings
- **Flags Banners, and Awnings.** Flags, banners, awnings, inflatable displays and their hardware are considered signage and they and their hardware require a certificate. Banners, awnings and flags must be of size, color, and design that is appropriate to the building and must be installed in a manner that does not obscure or damage significant architectural detail.
- **Historical Markers.** Historical markers are an effective way of educating the public about the Historic District and its historic buildings. It is encouraged that historical marker design and content be reviewed and approved by the MHDC to create uniformity and accuracy throughout the Historic District. The standard white oval historical markers issued by the Manchester Historical Museum are exempted from review, but the size, materials, design and location of other historical markers must be reviewed and approved by the MHDC.
- **Replacement or Transfer of Existing Signage.** Any replacement of an existing sign, flag, awning or banner must be reviewed and approved by the MHDC unless the replacement sign matches the existing in material, verbiage, design, and all other visual qualities. For purposes of these Guidelines, the meaning of replacement shall

mean if the content of a sign is altered, or if a sign is reconstructed or maintained in such a way as to replace fifty percent (50%) of its material. The MHDC must approve the transfer of an existing sign by one owner to another that results in any visual changes to the sign. The transfer of a sign from one business location to a new location within the Historic District must be reviewed and approved by the MHDC to ensure that the size, scale, and design of the sign is appropriate in the new location.

- **Temporary Signage.** Temporary signage is any signage that is posted once or periodically, but is removed for some interval of time. Temporary signage includes sandwich boards, signs, flags, inflatable displays and banners. All temporary signs must comply with Manchester's Sign law and must not obscure significant architectural detail. Inflatable displays are discouraged in the Historic District.

All temporary signage requires a Certificate of Appropriateness from the MHDC with only the following exceptions:

- **Signs for Real Estate Sales or Rental of Real Estate:** This signage does not require an application or Certificate of Appropriateness unless larger than six square feet.
- **Official Celebration or Charitable Event:** For a specific official celebration or for any charity drive, a single sign, flag, or banner does not generally require a Certificate of Appropriateness; however, if there is more than one and/or for an extended length of time (more than 30 days), the Commission requires a formal hearing. All signs, flags, or banners must be removed within three days following the event, unless a Certificate is issued which states differently. For a charity drive of short duration, the Commission expects a letter to be sent to the Commission a month before the event, and a letter of acknowledgement will be sent in return. If you are going to have the same charity event or celebration each year, and at the same time, the letter may state same, so that a new letter does not need to be sent yearly.

Temporary signage on which verbiage is altered from time to time does require a Certificate of Appropriateness and the application can be made in such a way that there is blanket coverage for successive signs, banners, etc. of the same design but altered wording.

E. LIGHTING

Original historic light fixtures- Original light fixtures, where they survive, can be important and rare architectural features, contributing significantly to the structure's historic resource value. For this reason, original or later appropriate light fixtures should be retained, and if possible, repaired using recognized preservation methods. Deteriorated or missing

elements should be replaced with like materials. Replacement should be based, if possible, on physical or documentary evidence. New light fixtures should be of a design and scale that is appropriate to the style and period of the building rather than imitate styles earlier than the building or structure. Historical style lighting fixtures may appear appropriate in the daylight, but many of these authentic-looking fixtures are among the worst in creating nighttime glare from their unshielded lamps or bulbs.

- **Fixtures.** Lamps (light bulbs), in general, should be fully shielded inside the fixture so that the lamp is not visible from adjacent buildings, pedestrians, and motorists. It may be appropriate in some cases to have a low lumen lamp (25 watts incandescent) as an alternative. Many historic-style (non-original) fixtures can be easily altered to shield the lamp. In the best case, light is ordinarily directed below the horizontal plane of the fixture (typically referred to as a “full cut-off” fixture). Light should be maintained on the property, not spilling beyond the bounds of the property line.
- **Up-lighting and façade lighting.** Up-lighting, such as for facades, signs, fountains, and landscaping, are generally not appropriate. Lighting of entire building facades is limited to special cases of buildings that are considered community landmarks. Lighting of the landscape or “wash” lighting of buildings or trees may be appropriate in some circumstances and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- **Pole lights.** Pole-mounted lights may be appropriate in some circumstances and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. If walkway lighting is necessary, a low-to-the ground, baffled fixture is preferred.
- **Low output.** The MHDC recommends a light quality equivalent to warm incandescent. In applications for significant additional lighting, the MHDC may consider a “lumen budget”, or “lumens per acres”, as described in the Outdoor Lighting Code Handbook published by the International Dark-Sky Association.
- **Farm lights, wall packs, and box floods** are not permitted. It is recommended that they be removed and replaced with shielded, low-glare fixtures aimed at the object intended for illumination, or retrofitted with a shield and aimed to keep the illumination below a 180 degree plane with the fixture. Incandescent lamps, or other lamps that produce similar quality light, should replace high-pressure sodium lamps. Mercury vapor lamps are not permitted.
- **Motion Detectors.** Wherever possible, exterior lights in the Historic District should be connected to motion detectors to ensure that lights are on only when they are needed. Planned “on-all night” lighting is not permitted.

Any lighting plan and its total effect on property should be carefully considered. Give thought to the task or activity that requires illumination and to the minimum amount of light needed. Public street lighting should be as neutral as possible so as to blend with the setting and should follow the guidelines in this section.

F. UNIVERSAL ACCESS

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is federal legislation that provides guidelines to states related to access to public buildings. In Massachusetts, the federal guidelines provide the framework for the accessibility code (521 CMR) implemented by the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board. “For registered historical buildings or districts, owned or protected by the government, the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board may allow alternate accessibility.” In general, solutions for improving universal access should meet current standards and ensure that the features, material, spaces and overall character of the historic building and site are preserved. The MHDC reviews alterations for universal access on a case by case basis. There is no single solution for achieving barrier free access into historic buildings and sites. Each solution must be tailored for the individual historic property and its landscape. The MHDC will work collaboratively with the property owner to find a solution that meets the combined goals of access and preservation.

VIII. FAQ

1. *What color may I paint my house?*

Property owners may retain an existing color, keeping in mind it may be inappropriate to the period of the building; or they may seek a new color. The MHDC recommends that a color be selected from the palette of historical colors developed by Historic New England (available on loan from the MHDC or for purchase from Historic New England’s website www.historicnewengland.org) or an acceptable, compatible alternative.

2. *What is the difference between a Local Historic District and being listed in the National Register of Historic Places?*

A local Historic District is established and maintained by a local community to preserve the unique characteristics of structures and their surroundings, operating under state enabling legislation, Chapter 40C. It provides for review of exterior changes by the local commission. The National Register of Historic Places lists individual buildings, structures and districts “important” in American history, culture, architecture, or archaeology. It is a federal designation and is administered by the Secretary of the Interior through the Massachusetts Historical Commission. National Register designation provides limited protection from adverse effects by federally or state funded, licensed, or assisted projects through the federal Section 106 process (36 CFR, Part 800) or Massachusetts Historical Commission’s review and compliance process (Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 9, sections 26-27C).

3. *How long will the approval process take?*

The approval process can take as little as two weeks and up to six weeks or more, depending on the timing of the application. Most applications require a 14 day advance notice to abutters before the monthly public hearing.

4. *What is required to complete the application?*

The application must include complete supporting materials such as photographs, drawings in plan and in elevation, a site map, sample materials and/or literature about any proprietary products proposed for use. The office staff is ready to assist in the application process.

5. *What are the fees?*

The fee to apply for a Certificate is \$100.00.

6. *What If My Application/Proposal is denied?*

The appeal procedure is through the Superior Court process.