CHAPTER 4 – EXTERIOR ELEMENTS, MATERIALS AND COLORS

A. General

This section addresses exterior elements, materials and colors that form the historic vocabulary of the exterior appearance and character of an historic building. Preservation of these materials on historic buildings is a primary goal within the Suffolk Historic Conversation Overlay District for both residential and commercial properties.

B. Policy Statement on Use of Substitute Exterior Materials

B.1 Background

In general, the original materials should, to the maximum extent possible, be maintained and preserved in place. When alterations are required, the original materials should remain unaltered to the greatest extent possible. When exterior materials must be replaced, due to deterioration or alterations, the physical dimensions, styles, and other qualities of the original materials should, to the maximum extent possible, be replicated to match the original as closely as possible. The Historic Landmarks Commission will review each request on a case-by-case basis.

B.2 Synthetic Trim Materials

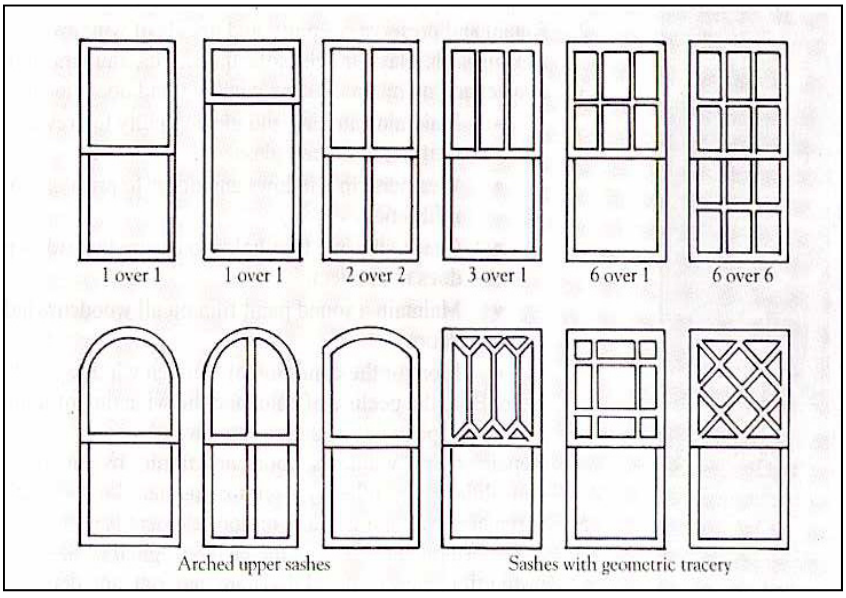
Synthetic trim materials for architectural embellishments, such as cornices, columns/ pilasters, balusters, or window/door trim, may be acceptable as replacements for the original trim materials if they match the dimensions and profiles of the original material. When used for other applications, synthetic materials other than historic materials which replicate the qualities of the original material may be acceptable as substitutes if the Historic Landmarks Commission determines that the substitute or synthetic material will produce the overall character, appearance, and performance of the original material.

B.3 Statement of Conditions

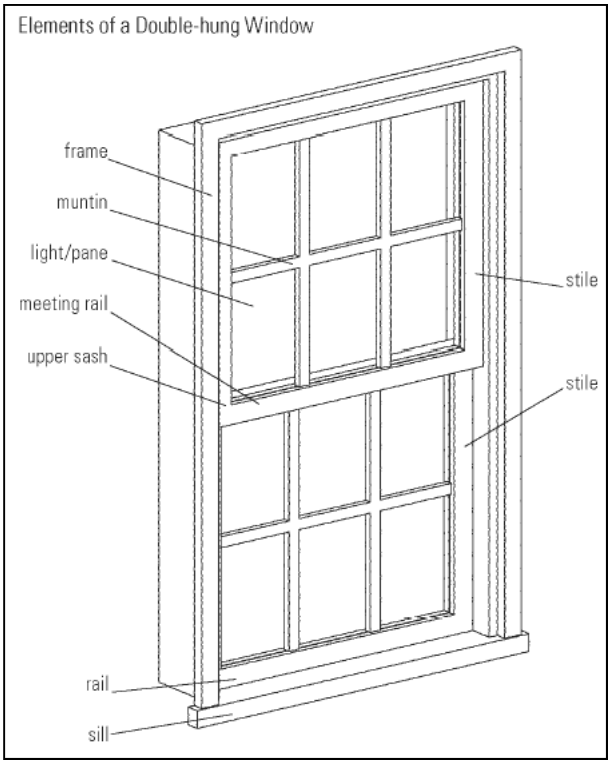
All actions involving the replacement of exterior materials cited in this Chapter shall require the submission of a signed statement, with exhibits, from the appropriate licensed contractor, engineer, or general contractor stating the condition of the existing exterior material, ability to be repaired, need for replacement, proposed corrective measures, and options to replacement is required as supporting documentation for any application for a Certificate of Appropriateness.

C. Window Openings

Windows and door openings are a major character and style-determining feature of an historic building. These elements usually act together visually to define the directional emphasis and proportions of the façade as well as the style. It is very important that the windows of an historic building be preserved where possible to maintain their size and details (e.g. muntin patterns, mullion spacing and width, transoms, trim details, etc.).



C.1. Background



Windows add light to the interior of a building, provide ventilation, and allow a visual link to the outside. At the same time, windows help to define a building's particular style since they are one of the most visual aspects of a building. Because of the wide variety of architectural styles and periods of construction within the Suffolk Historic Conservation Overlay District, there is a corresponding variation of styles, types, and sizes of windows as well.

Windows vary by different designs of sills, panes, sashes, lintels, decorative caps, and shutters. They may occur in regular intervals or in asymmetrical patterns. Their size may break up the facade of the building. All of the windows may be the same in a house or a variety of types may be used to emphasize certain parts of the building.

C.2. Typical Window Types

- *Double-Hung Sash* is the most common type of windows and is used on all styles of architecture. As noted in the following examples, their appearance can vary with the number of panes in each sash and building style:

  - Nine-over-six sash is common in Federal style buildings. They are also found in early-twentieth-century Colonial Revival style houses along with six-over-six and six-over-one.
  - Two-over-two sash is found on Victorian-era houses including Second Empire and Queen Anne styles.
  - One-over-one sash is found on early-twentieth-century houses and on many vernacular dwellings.

Brewer Avenue

  Along with these common window types there are a variety of less frequently found types in the district including four-over-four, six-over-nine, two-over-four, and thirty-two-over-one sash.

- *Dormer Windows* are frequently found on American Foursquare, Colonial Revival, and Bungalow houses. A dormer is a window which projects from the roof of the house, allowing light to enter and increasing floor and head space in a roof area. The dormers in Suffolk can be found in a variety of sizes and have different roof types including shed or gable forms.

- *Composite Windows* are groupings of different types of windows such as a double-hung sash flanked by fixed leaded windows and crowned with a transom. They are typical on Victorian Era, Colonial Revival, and Bungalow houses. In many cases, this style resembles classical architecturally-styled (Palladian) windows.

- *Bay Windows* project from the wall and are multi-sided, generally with windows on all sides.

Bay windows are typically located on the first or second floor, and are usually found on Queen Anne-style houses.

- *Decorative Windows* may be any number of shapes such as circles, diamonds, or arches and can have plain or patterned muntin bars. They often decorate a gable or light a stairwell.

- *Leaded Glass Windows* contain patterned designs and were popular during the Victorian era and the early twentieth century. They are more often found on more elaborately designed houses and are used frequently as sidelights or fanlights.

C.3. Guidelines for Window Preservation

- *Preserve Original Windows*: Insure that all hardware is in good operating condition, that caulk and glazing putty are intact and in good condition, and that water drains off the sills.

- *Maintain Original Windows*: Maintain original windows by patching, splicing, consolidating or otherwise reinforcing the wooden members. Wood that appears to be in bad condition because of peeling paint or separated joints often can be repaired. Uncover and repair covered-up windows and reinstall windows where they have been blocked in. If the window is no longer needed, the glass should be retained and the back side frosted, screened, covered with dark painted plywood on the inside, or shuttered so that it appears from the outside to be in use.

  If repair of an original window is necessary, repair only the deteriorated element to match the original in size, composition, material, dimension, and detail by patching, splicing, consolidating, or otherwise reinforcing the deteriorated section. The removal of historic materials shall be avoided.

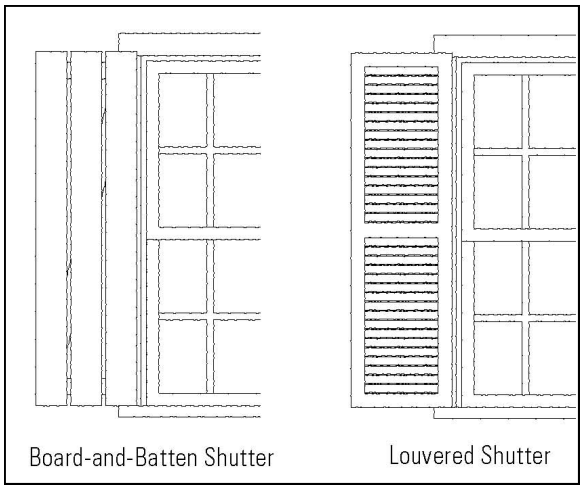
- *Avoid Replacing Original Windows*: Replace windows only when they are missing or beyond repair. Reconstruction should be based on physical evidence or old photographs, when available. Replacement windows should be designated to match the original in appearance, detail, material, profile, and overall size as closely as possible. Do not use inappropriate materials or finishes that radically change the sash, depth of reveal, muntin configuration, the reflective quality or color of the glazing, or the appearance of the frame.

- *Maintain the Original Window Patterns*: Do not change the number, location, size, or glazing pattern of windows by cutting new openings, blocking in windows, or installing replacement sash that do not fit the window opening.

- *Improve Thermal Qualities*: Improve thermal efficiency with weather stripping, storm windows (preferably interior), caulking, interior shades, and if appropriate for the building, shutters (blinds) and awnings. Install interior storm windows with airtight gaskets, ventilating holes, and/ or removable clips to insure proper maintenance and to avoid condensation damage to windows. Install exterior storm windows that do not damage or obscure the windows and frames. The

storm windows divisions should match those of the original window. Avoid unpainted aluminum storm sashes. This type of window can be painted an appropriate color if it is first primed with a zinc chromate primer. Avoid replacing a multi-paned sash with new thermal sash utilizing false snap-in muntins. Do not replace windows or transoms with fixed thermal glazing. Do not use tinted glass on major facades of the building.

- *Appropriate Use of Shutters*: Use shutters only on windows that show evidence of their use in the past. They should be wood rather than metal or vinyl and be mounted on hinges attached to the frame. A correctly sized shutter will only cover the glass. Shutters are generally inappropriate on composite or bay windows.



- *Maintain Consistency of Window Types*: Maintain window types that reflect those types found in the district.

- *Preserve and Maintain Historic Solid/Void Ratio*: Preserve the ratio of solids (walls) and voids (windows and doors) of new buildings as they relate to and are compatible with adjacent historic facades. Historic residential buildings have a higher ratio of wall to window than do commercial buildings.

- *Preserve Proportions and Rhythm of Windows*: Maintain the rhythm and placement of windows on the facades of new buildings as they relate to neighboring historic buildings. Maintain the proportion of window openings or the relationship between height and width to be similar to and compatible with those on surrounding historic facades. Most residential windows have a vertical proportion. However, these individual vertical windows may be grouped in such a way as to form a composite window that has a horizontal proportion.

- *Preserve Historic Articulation of Window Openings*: Preserve the articulation of openings as they relate to historic building types. Frames should be recessed in masonry openings and raised frames should be used on wood buildings. New windows should not be flush with the wall surface.


"First Lady"

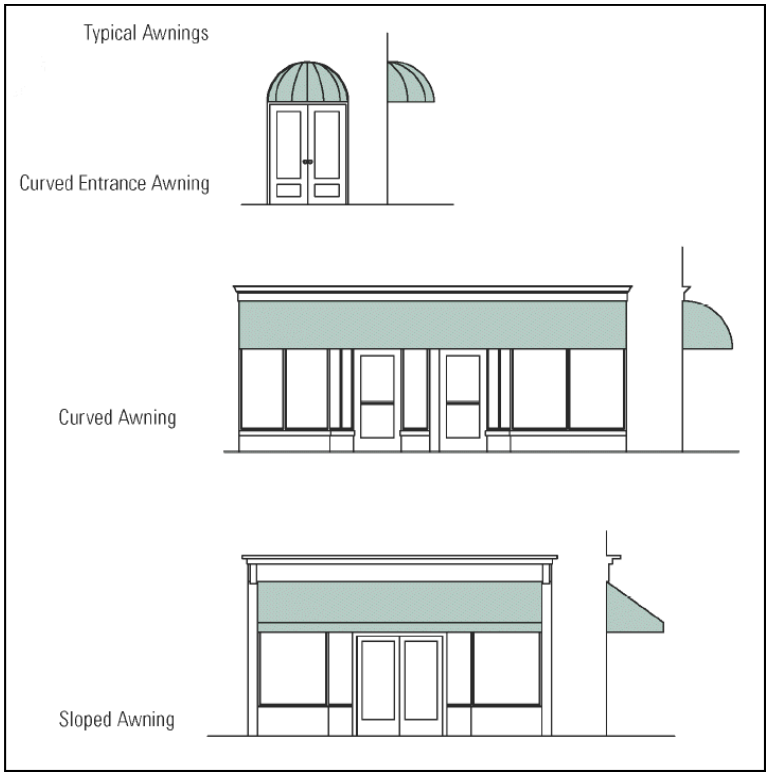
- *New Window Materials*: New windows may be constructed of painted wood, metal clad or vinyl clad. Unfinished or anodized aluminum is not permitted. When evaluating the acceptability of replacement windows, the following criteria shall be used:

  - Kind and texture of materials;
  - Architectural and historical compatibility;
  - Comparison to original window profile;
  - Level of significance of original windows to the architectural style of the building; and

- Material performance and durability.

- *Conditions Statement*: A signed statement, with exhibits, from a licensed general contractor stating the condition of the existing windows, ability to be repaired, need for replacement, proposed corrective measures, and options to replacement is required as supporting documentation for any application for a Certificate of Appropriateness.

C.4 Awnings



Awnings have been used for control of sun and rain over window and door openings historically. Awnings are a typical treatment for historic commercial storefronts and when designed properly can help communicate an attractive and historic appearance to pedestrians. They also protect pedestrians from the weather, shield window displays from sunlight, and conserve energy. When considering the installation of awnings, the following guidelines must be considered:

- Fabric awnings are appropriate on the first story of commercial buildings. Traditionally, these awnings are fixed or retractable, sloped awnings. Note: vinyl and plastic awnings are not allowed.

- As appropriate, awnings over a long storefront should be broken-up into several sections, each section relating to a part of the storefront window, in such a way as to produce a balanced arrangement which is appropriately proportioned for the building façade.

- Boxed or curved fabric awnings may be used on non-historic or new mercantile buildings.

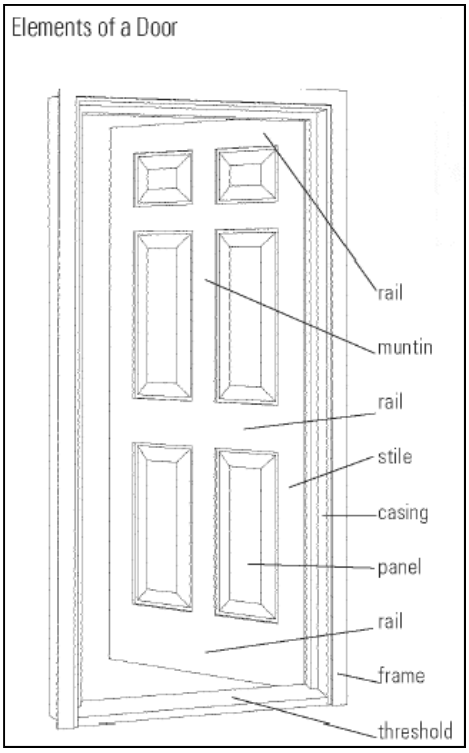
- Canopies and marquees are appropriate on some mercantile buildings. When used, they must fit the storefront design and not obscure important elements such as transoms or decorative glass.

- Backlit awnings or lighting systems designed to up light awnings are not allowed.

- Awnings are not recommended for residential buildings, although they are permitted if they are constructed of fabric in a subdued traditional color which compliments the house.

- With regard to metal awnings: It is not appropriate to install aluminum awnings over windows, doors, or porches on residential structures. Metal awnings may be appropriate for mercantile or institutional properties when historically combined with the character of the building.

D. Doors

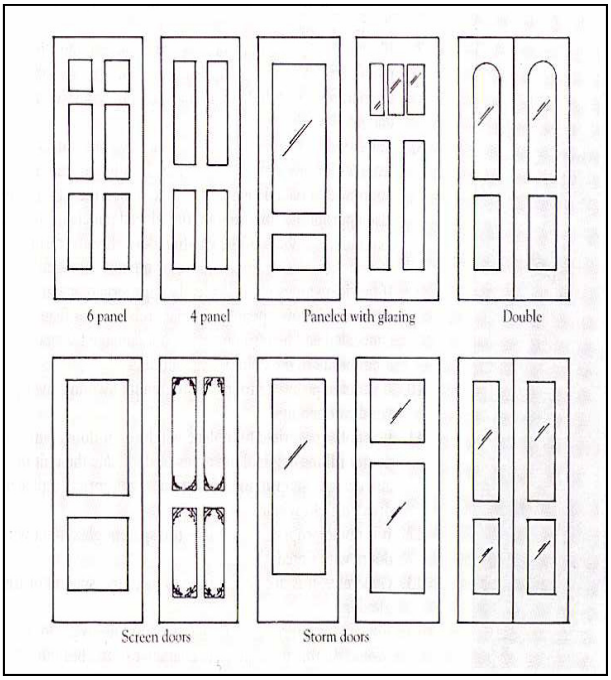


Like windows, door openings are a major character and style-determining feature of an historic building. Taken together, these elements usually act in unison to visually define the directional emphasis and proportions of the façade as well as the style. It is very important that the doors of an historic building be preserved, where possible, to maintain their size and details.

D.1. Background

Doors help to define a building's particular style and serve to allow access to the interior of a building. When in association with porches and entrances, they may be decorated and ceremonial. Doors on secondary facades tend to be simpler and more utilitarian. A variety of doors can be found in the Suffolk Historic Conservation Overlay District. Many of the doors are wood with different types of panels. While the six-panel door is common, other types include doors with tall, narrow, arched panels or recessed carved panels or doors with rectangular or oval glass panes. Flush doors are also found in the district. This design is more recent, and generally does not have an historic appearance. In addition to the style of door, decorated entrances also include features such as pilasters, pediments, leaded glass transoms, sidelights, and fanlights.

D.2. Guidelines for Doors



- *Maintenance and Repairs*: Maintain and repair doors by patching, splicing, consolidating or otherwise reinforcing the original material. Wood that appears to be rotted because of peeling paint and separated joints may in fact be sound enough to repair. Reuse serviceable door hardware and locks.

- *Restore Doors*: Uncover and repair covered-up doors. If the door is no longer needed it should be fixed in place. Where applicable, the back side of any glass in the door will be frosted, screened, painted black, or shuttered so that it appears from the outside to be used.

- *Maintain Historic Door Arrangements*: Avoid changing the number, location, or size of doors by enlarging or reducing the original door opening or installing replacement doors that do not fit the original openings.

- *Preserve Original Doors*: Only replace doors when they are missing or beyond repair. Base reconstruction on physical evidence from the original door or on old photographs if they are available and use appropriate materials, finishes, and details. Avoid substituting stock, mass-produced doors from building supply firms for original historic doors.

- *Storm Door Guideline*: If purchasing a storm door, look for one that is mostly glass so that it does not cover up the historic door. Paint aluminum storm doors to match other doors or trim.

- *Use Compatible Door Styles*: When replacing doors, use door styles that relate to those found in the district.

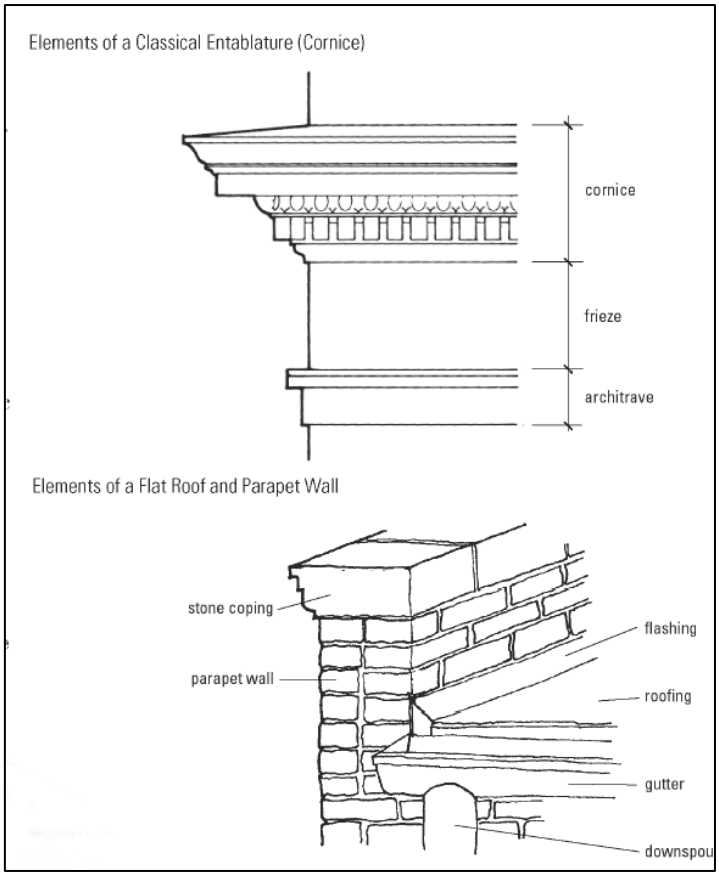
E. Decorative Features

Decorative features such as columns, cornices, window trim, and details provide much of the stylistic character of historic buildings. These elements usually work together to form a particular historic style. Preservation of decorative features is critical to preserving the character and appearance of an historic building. The following sections provide guidance for the preservation and design of decorative features for historic property.

E.1 Cornices

E.1.a. Background

The cornice occurs at the junction between the roof and the wall. Suffolk has a variety of cornice types including deteriorated cornices or cornices missing decorative detail.



E.1.b. Typical Cornice Types

- *Decorated Cornices* may have moldings and detailing such as brackets, dentils, modillions, acanthus and dart molding, and friezes. They can be made of wood, metal, or terra cotta.

- *Boxed Eaves* are simple cornice treatments on buildings with pitched roofs where the rafter ends and eaves are boxed in with wood. This kind of cornice appears on many styles, including American Foursquare.

- *Exposed Eaves* are often found on bungalows where the structure of the roof is expressed and the rafter ends are decorated and exposed.

- *Bracketed Eaves* have large scrolled brackets that decorate the cornice area and are found in Queen Anne, Italianate, and vernacular Victorian styles. There also are large, simple brackets on several Bungalow houses.

- *Cornice with Return* refers to the short part of a

boxed cornice that continues across a small section of the gable end of the house.

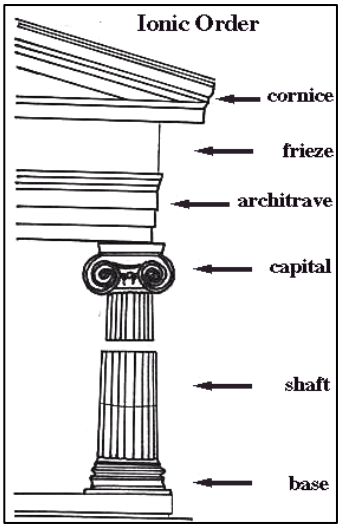
E.1.c. Guidelines for Cornices

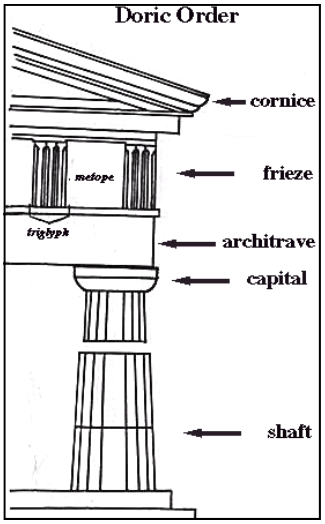
- Maintain the gutter system and flashing.
- Do not remove elements such as brackets or blocks, which are part of the original composition without replacing them with new ones of a like design.
- Match materials, decorative details and profiles of existing original cornice design when making repairs.
- Do not replace an original cornice with a new one that conveys a different period, style, or theme from that of the building. If the cornice is missing, base the replacement on physical evidence, or barring that, make the design compatible with the design of the original building.

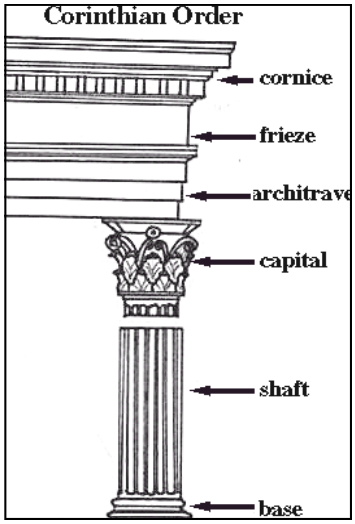
E.2 Columns/Pilasters

E.2.a. Background

Columns and pilasters are a common design element of historic buildings, usually appearing as free-standing elements on porches or as façade elements. Columns historically are based on classical orders and proportions based on original Greek or Roman designs.







E.2.b. Guidelines for Columns and Pilasters

- Where columns and pilasters exist as part of the exterior of an historic building they will be preserved and maintained.
- Care should be exercised to maintain the original details, as these are difficult and costly to correctly replace.
- Where details must be replaced due to deterioration, new capitals, bases, and shafts should be found which match the original details and are faithful replicas of traditional column designs.
- Columns/Pilasters that are part of an addition should relate to the style and character of the existing building. If columns already exist on the original building, the new columns shall match these in style

and detail. New columns on additions shall not be larger or taller than the existing columns.

E.3 Window and Door Trim

E.3.a. Background

Window and door trim is also a very important character-defining element of the exterior of historic buildings. Generally, trim materials on historic buildings have been wood on residential buildings while metal trim appears on a few historic commercial structures and churches.

E.3.b. Guidelines for Window and Door Trim

- In general, original trim should, to the maximum extent possible, be maintained and preserved on historic buildings.

- When deterioration of historic trim features necessitates replacement, the trim should be replaced with similar materials to match the size and finish and style of the original trim and profile. When elevating the acceptability of replacement materials, the following criteria shall be used:

    - Kind and texture of materials;
    - Architectural and historical compatibility;
    - Comparison to original profile;
    - Level of significance of original element to the architectural style of the building; and
    - Material performance and durability.

- Trim details, such as corner blocks at window surrounds, bead details, and other unique details should be replicated when replacing historic trim with new trim.

- Rot-resistant materials should be used to replace historic wood trim if the original materials need to be replaced.

- Flashing, caulking and drainage details should match the original details. Care should be taken when replacing trim to restore a watertight assembly.

- Do not cover original trim with vinyl or aluminum.

F. Materials

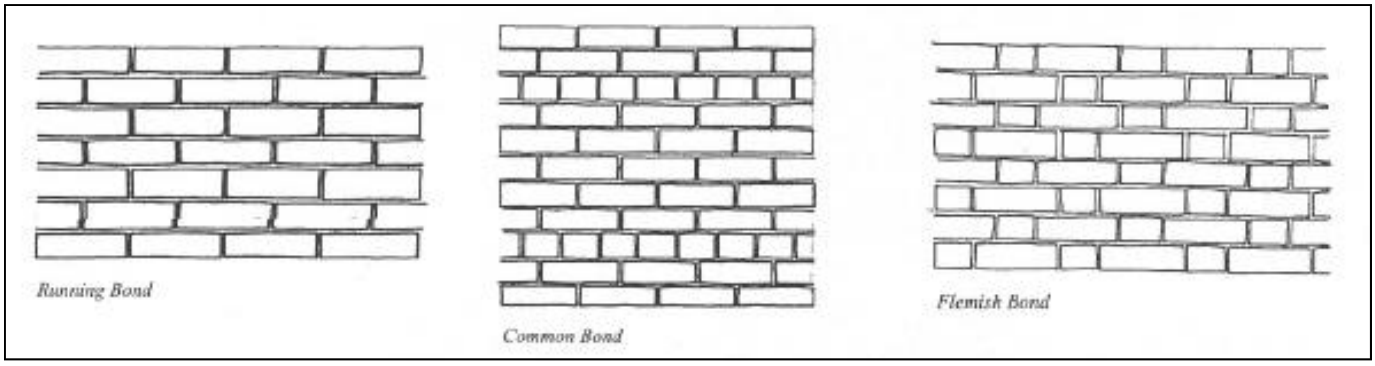
A variety of materials were used for the construction of buildings in the Suffolk Historic Conservation Overlay District. Masonry is found in building's walls, steps, and decorative details. Wood was commonly used in building frames, cladding, window and door frames, and decorative elements. Metal is not as common a material in the Suffolk Historic Conservation Overlay District except for use as roofs and gutters.

F.1 Masonry

F.1.a. Background

Masonry includes brick, terra cotta, concrete, stucco, tile, and mortar and is used in making cornices, pediments,

lintels, sills, and decorative features, as well as building walls, retaining walls, and chimneys. The color, texture, mortar joint type, and patterns of the masonry help define the overall character of a building. A number of residential buildings, all of the churches and school buildings in the Suffolk Historic Conversation Overlay



District used masonry as their primary material. Among the bonding patterns found on these buildings are Flemish, common, and on newer structures, running bond.

Within the Suffolk Historic Conservation Overlay District, several common masonry problems have been observed. These include cracked or broken bricks and concrete, poor repointing, and stained bricks. Repair and repointing of masonry can require the services of professionals or technical assistance from preservation experts or the Virginia Department of Historic Resources.

F.1.b. Guidelines for Masonry

- Retain masonry features such as walls, railings, cornices, window surrounds, pediments, steps, and columns that are important in defining the overall character of the building. The size, texture, color, and pattern of masonry units, as well as mortar joint size and tooling shall be respected.

- Monitor the condition of mortar and the masonry units. Prevent water from causing deterioration by insuring proper drainage, removing vegetation too close to the building, repairing leaking roofs, gutters, and downspouts, securing loose flashing, caulking joints between masonry and wood and repairing cracks and unsound mortar.

- Do not apply waterproof, water-repellent, or non-historic coatings in an effort to stop moisture problems; they often trap moisture inside the masonry and cause more problems in freeze/thaw cycles. Water-repellent coatings are to be used only if the bricks have been sandblasted.

- Clean masonry only when necessary to halt deterioration or to remove heavy soiling. Use knowledgeable contractors and check their references and methods. Look for damage caused by improper cleaning such as chipped or pitted bricks, washed out mortar, rounded edges of brick, or a residue or film.

- Clean unpainted masonry with the gentlest means possible. The best method is a low-pressure water wash with detergents. Test the cleaner on a small inconspicuous part of the building. Older brick may be too soft to clean and can be damaged by detergents and by the pressure of the water. Building owners applying for federal rehabilitation tax credits must conduct test patches before cleaning masonry.

- Do not use abrasive cleaning methods such as sandblasting or excessively high-pressure water

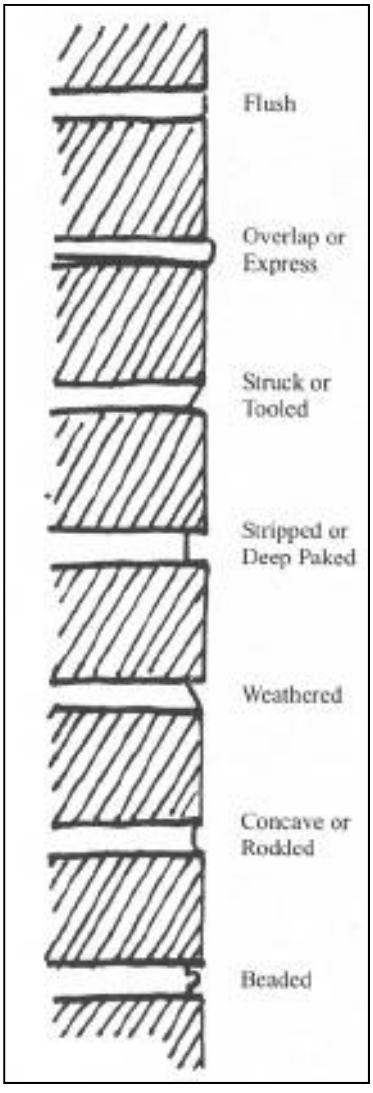
washes. These methods remove the hard outer shell of a brick and can cause rapid deterioration. Sand-blasted masonry buildings cannot receive federal tax credits.

Linden Avenue

- Use chemical cleaners cautiously. Do not clean with chemical methods that damage masonry and do not leave chemical cleaners on the masonry longer than recommended.

- Avoid using water or water-based chemicals when the temperature is below 32 degrees Fahrenheit.

- Disintegrating mortar, cracks in mortar joints, or loose bricks may signal the need for repointing masonry. Remove deteriorated mortar by carefully hand-raking the joints to avoid damaging the masonry.



- Do not remove mortar with electric saws or hammers that damage the surrounding masonry.

- Duplicate mortar in strength, composition, color, and texture.

    - Strength: Do not repoint with mortar that is stronger than the original mortar and the brick itself. Brick expands and contracts with freezing and heating conditions. When this change occurs, old mortar moves to relieve the stress. If Portland cement is used, the mortar does not flex as much and the brick can crack, break, or spall. Do not repoint with a synthetic caulking compound.

    - Composition: Mortar of older brick buildings has a high lime and sand content. Replacement mortar should be composed primarily of lime (one part) and sand (two parts) with some (no more than 20 percent of the lime and cement combined) Portland cement (ASTM C 150 Type 1) for workability. In newer buildings the lime content would be decreased and the Portland cement content increased.

    - Appearance: Duplicate old mortar joints in width and profile. Cut out old mortar to a depth of one inch. Repoint to match original joints and retain the original joint width. Scrub coating, a technique in which a thinned low-aggregate coat of mortar is brushed over the entire masonry surface and then scrubbed off the bricks after drying, shall not be used.

- Repair damaged masonry features by patching, piecing, or consolidating to match the original

instead of replacing an entire masonry feature, if possible.

- Repair stucco by removing loose material and patching with a new material that is similar in composition, color, and texture.

- Masonry such as brick should be used for new construction and additions where brick is the common wall material.

- Concrete block is not an historic material and, therefore, should be avoided.

- *Conditions Statement*: A signed statement, with exhibits, from a licensed mason or general contractor stating the condition of the existing masonry, ability to be repaired, need for replacement, proposed corrective measures, and options to replacement is required as supporting documentation for any application for a Certificate of Appropriateness.

F.2 Wood Materials

F.2.a. Background

The machine-ability of wood has made it the most common building material throughout much of America's building history. Because it can be easily shaped by sawing, planing, carving, and gouging, wood is used for a broad range of decorative elements such as cornices, brackets, shutters, columns, and trim on windows and doors. In addition, wood is used in major elements such as framing, siding, and shingles.

The wooden features of buildings in the Suffolk Historic Conservation Overlay District exhibit a number of problems. These include rotting cornices, column bases, and decorative details, porches with rotten, cracked, or missing boards, and houses in need of painting.

F.2.b. Guidelines for Wood Materials

- The main objective in wood maintenance is to keep it free from water infiltration and wood-boring pests.

- Keep all surfaces primed and painted.

- Use appropriate pest poisons with extreme caution and follow product instructions.

- Remove vegetation that grows too closely to wood.

- Repair leaking roofs, gutters, downspouts, and flashing and insure proper ventilation.

- Maintain proper drainage around the foundation to prevent standing water.

- Recaulk joints where moisture might penetrate a building. Do not caulk under individual siding boards or window sills. This action seals the building too tightly and can lead to moisture problems within the frame walls and to failure of paint.

- Repair rotten or missing sections rather than replace the entire element. Use epoxies to patch, piece, or consolidate parts. Match existing materials and details.

- To test for rotten wood, jab an ice pick into the wetted wood surface at an angle and pry up a small section. Sound wood will separate in long fibrous splinters while decayed wood will separate in short irregular pieces. Alternatively, insert the ice pick perpendicular to the wood. If it penetrates more than one-half inch the wood may have dry rot.

- Replace wood elements only when they are rotten beyond repair. Match the original in material and design or use substitute materials that convey the same visual appearance.

- Base the design of reconstructed elements on pictorial or physical evidence from the actual building rather than from similar buildings in the area.

- In areas where wood is the predominant siding material, wood siding should be considered for use.

- Wood is recommended for use on additions on elements such as windows, cornices, porch trim, and all other decorative features.

- Materials other than historic materials which may replicate the qualities of the original may be acceptable as substitutes if the Historic Landmarks Commission determines that the substitute or synthetic material will produce the overall character, appearance, and performance.

- *Conditions Statement*: A signed statement, with exhibits, from a licensed carpenter or general contractor stating the condition of the existing wood, ability to be repaired, need for replacement, proposed corrective measures, and options to replacement is required as supporting documentation for any application for a Certificate of Appropriateness.

G. Architectural Metals

G.1. Background

With the rise of the industrial revolution in the nineteenth century, a variety of new metals began to appear in building construction. Cast iron, steel, pressed tin, copper, aluminum, nickel, bronze, galvanized sheet iron, and zinc were used at various times for different architectural features. Many decorative elements on late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century buildings appear to be wood but are actually metal. In Suffolk, metal is a very common roof material and is also used for gutters, flashings, and flues. The maintenance of both of these elements is important for the protection of the rest of the building.

G.2. Guidelines for Architectural Metals

- Iron and steel are easily identified with a magnet. Other metals such as zinc, copper (ornamental features), tin and tern (roofs) should be identified by a knowledgeable professional.

- Inspect metal surfaces for signs of corrosion, mechanical breakdown, and connection failure. Eliminate excessive moisture problems by repairing leaking roofs, gutters, downspouts, and flashings. Maintain existing paint coatings or other protective finishes.

- Gently clean the painted surfaces of metals by hand scraping or brushing with a natural bristle

brush to remove loose and peeling paint in preparation for repainting. Removing paint down to the bare metal is not necessary, but removal of all corrosion is essential.

- Clean cast iron and iron alloys (hard metals) with a low-pressure, dry-grit blasting (80 to 100 pounds per square inch) if gentle means do not remove old paint properly. Protect adjacent wood or masonry surfaces from the grit. Do not sandblast copper, lead, and tin. These can be cleaned with chemicals or heat.

- Do not remove the patina of metal when it provides a protective coating and is also a significant finish such as on bronze or copper.

- When repairing metals use compatible materials. Do not place incompatible metals together without a separation material such as nonporous, neoprene gaskets or butyl rubber caulking that will prevent corrosion.

- Aluminum, fiberglass, or wood can be used to construct missing decorative metal elements if it is not technically or financially feasible to reconstruct the original material.

- Metal is the preferred material for roofs in areas where metal roofs are prevalent.

- Metal decoration such as cornices can still be manufactured and can be considered for use in rehabilitation. Duplication of historic details to the point where new construction is not distinguishable from old, however, is not recommended on additions.

H. Synthetic Siding

H.1. Background

A building's historic character is a combination of its design, age, setting, and materials. The exterior walls of a building, because they are so visible, play a very important role in defining its historic appearance. Wood clapboards, wood shingles, brick, or a combination of the above materials all have distinctive characteristics. Synthetic materials can never have the same patina, texture, or light-reflective qualities as traditional materials.

New siding materials have been introduced over time, including asbestos, asphalt, vinyl, concrete and aluminum. Some of these synthetic materials attempt to artificially create the appearance of brick, stone, shingle, and wood siding surfaces. Few of these synthetic materials can be retrofitted on historic homes without impacting their historic appearance and character. Aluminum and vinyl siding as well as asbestos and asphalt shingles have been inappropriately used on many historic buildings in the Suffolk Historic Conservation Overlay District with the result being a significant loss to the historic appearance of the building, as well as a weakening of the character of the Suffolk Historic Conservation Overlay District.

In general, original historic siding materials on an historic building should be maintained in-place. Only where original materials have deteriorated significantly beyond the point of restoration, should they be replaced. Replacement should be with a similar material whose properties will replicate the original appearance as closely as possible. This also includes details, such as corner boards, window trim, cornices, and decorative details. Replacement materials should not alter the appearance or cover these types of trim, as this will significantly alter the character of the building.

H.2. Guidelines for Synthetic Siding

- *General*: Synthetic siding can be acceptable as a substitute for the original materials where the original siding materials have been removed, where the original siding materials have deteriorated beyond repair as determined by the Historic Landmarks Commission, or to additions to the primary historic building.

- *Economic Hardship:* Economic hardship will not be a factor in the decision-making process; rather the decision will be based solely on the architectural considerations, including the historical and architectural significance of the building, the condition of the original siding, and the feasibility of replacement with in-kind materials.

- *Conditions Statement*: A signed statement , with exhibits, from a licensed siding contractor or general contractor stating the condition of the existing siding, ability to be repaired, need for replacement, proposed corrective measures, and options to replacement is required as supporting documentation for any application for a Certificate of Appropriateness.

- *Cement-Fiber Siding*: Cement-fiber siding is a relatively new product which is made of concrete and wood fibers. It can be cut and fit like wood siding and can be installed adjacent to existing historic wood trim. Although not much is known about its behavior over long periods of time, it appears to offer increased resistance to peeling paint problems, surface rigidity and a similar appearance to historic wood siding materials. This material is acceptable as a substitute for wood siding where the exposure and details of the original siding can be replicated and where the substitution involves an area no smaller than an entire face of the building. It is not appropriate for spot repairs where wood siding will be adjacent on the same face of the building. Substitute siding must align with the original siding and match the existing profile.

- *Vinyl Siding*: Vinyl siding is not acceptable as a substitute siding material.

- *Aluminum Siding*: Aluminum siding is not acceptable as a substitute siding material.

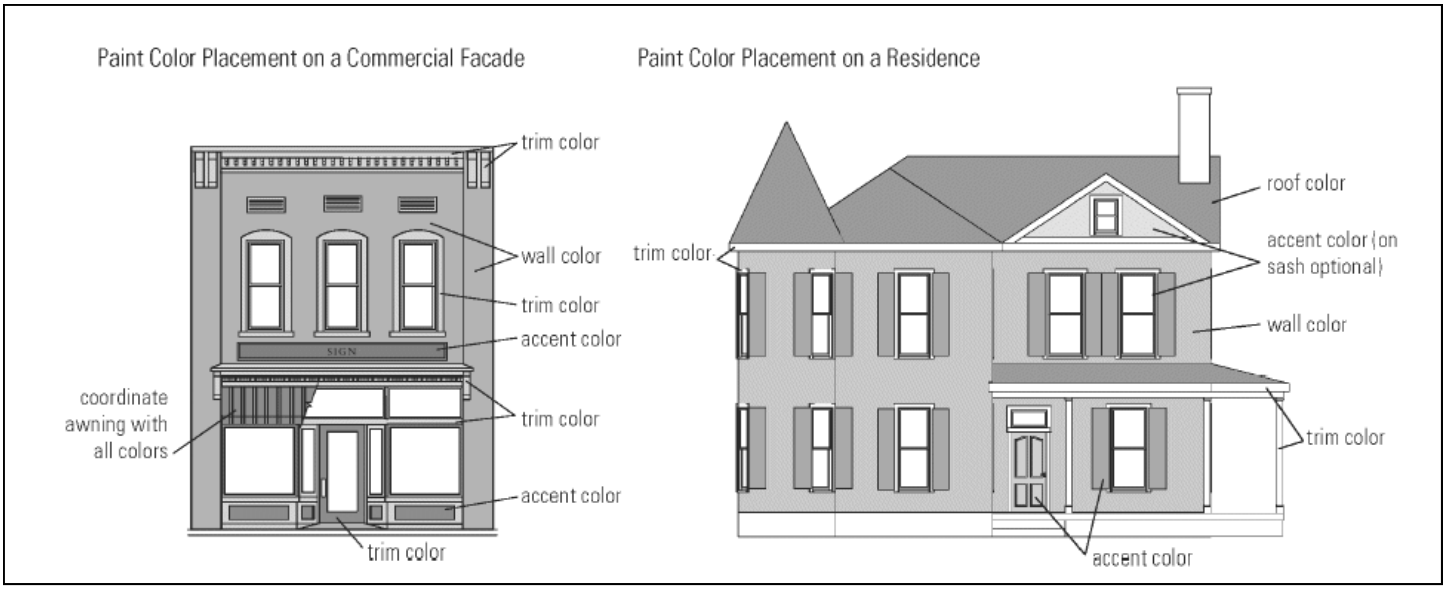
I. Painting

I.1. Background

Painting is the least expensive way to maintain the historic fabric and make a building an attractive addition to an historic district. Many times, however, buildings are painted inappropriate colors or colors are placed incorrectly. A monochromatic approach in which one color is used for the entire building is common in Suffolk, but not necessarily consistent with historic color schemes.

Paint and painting techniques have changed a great deal over the past 20 to 40 years. Many of the paint products which were originally used are no longer made due to changes in formulation and the removal of lead from these products. As a result, repainting of historic properties needs some special consideration to produce a successful painted finish on rehabilitated surfaces, as well as new woodwork.

One major consideration in planning a painting project is to test the existing paint to determine if it contains lead. These tests can be performed by the property owner or by a testing agency. Test kits are available at paint and hardware stores today. If your existing paint contains lead you should either have it safely removed by a qualified abatement professional or encapsulate it and paint over the encapsulant. Encapsulants are sold by several paint manufacturers. Encapsulants are basically a paint-like substance which is thick and flexible and



will hold the lead paint together under its protective coat. While encapsulation is an option, it is not necessarily the preferred way of dealing with lead paint and may not work in all conditions (e.g. double hung windows, doors, and other operable mechanisms).

Most historic buildings are eventually plagued with peeling paint. This is a result of paints becoming brittle over time and eventually breaking the bond with the substrate due to age, moisture and cracking from sun exposure. The best overall solution to peeling paint is to remove the paint down to bare substrate, sand or prepare the surface, and apply a paint system which will work together to minimize cracking and peeling. Most paint manufacturers have developed their own proprietary paint systems which involve a prime coat and two finish coats of paint which are designed to work over specific materials like wood, metal, galvanized metal, brick and stucco. An appropriate paint system should be selected based on the application. Paint systems for application to exterior wood work should be latex-based finishes that are applied over primed bare wood in order to achieve the longest service life. Latex-based finishes are recommended because they allow the paint to breathe (pass water vapor more readily) which greatly reduces the tendency of the paint to peel. A properly prepared and applied latex finish can last 10 or more years before repainting is necessary. If the existing paint is merely scraped and is not removed down to the wood then the service life will be much shorter, probably 3 to 4 years. The most economical long-range repainting solution is total removal of the paint and application of a well-formulated paint system.

I.2. Guidelines for Painting

- Remove loose and peeling paint to the next sound layer, using the gentlest means possible; hand scraping and hand sanding (wood and masonry) and wire brushes (metal). Never use an open flame. A heat gun can be used on wood for heavy build up of paint. Do not use sandblasting or high-pressure water wash to remove paint from masonry, soft metal, or wood. Take precautions when removing older paint layers since they may contain lead.

- Insure that all surfaces are free of dirt, grease, and grime before painting.

- Prime surfaces if bare wood is exposed or if changing types of paints, such as from oil-based to latex. Use primers formulated for the material to be painted, for instance metal primers for metal and appropriate primers for wood. Use a recommended paint system from a single manufacturer.

- Do not apply latex paint directly over oil-based paint without proper primers as it may not bond properly and can pull off the old oil-based paint. Use a high-quality paint and follow

manufacturer's specifications for preparation and application.

- Do not paint masonry that is unpainted.

- For the majority of buildings, the number of colors should be limited to three. On residential buildings, use one color for the walls, a contrasting color for the trim and an accent color for sash, doors and shutters. The accent color may also be used for the roof and an additional color for the foundation may be introduced. If the building is particularly ornate and has many different wall materials, an additional color can be used. It is best to treat similar elements and surfaces with the same color to achieve a unified, instead of an overly busy and disjointed appearance.

- Choose colors that blend with and complement the overall color schemes on the street. If the color scheme is predominantly white, other colors may be used. Do not use bright and obtrusive colors. The choice of colors can differ according to architectural style:

    - *Federal*: White or cream colors with black, red, green, or blue doors and shutters were popular in the early nineteenth century.

    - *Greek Revival*: Usually white with bright green trim or yellow walls with white trim and green shutters and doors.

    - *Italianate*: Use light gray, cream, or fawn with dark green shutters on Italianate houses.

    - *Victorian Houses*: Late-Victorian-era houses include Second Empire, Queen Anne, and the less ornate vernacular Victorian. Nationwide, deep, rich colors such as greens, rusts, reds, and browns were used on the exterior trim and walls of late-Victorian-era houses. In Suffolk many of these houses were painted with fewer colors and white was often the main color used on this type of dwelling. The important objective is to respect the many textures of these highly ornate structures. Shingles can be treated with a different color from the siding on the same building.

    - *Colonial Revival*: Softer colors should be used on these buildings and the trim is usually painted white or ivory since the style is a return to classical motifs.

    - *American Foursquare, Hipped, and Frame Vernacular*: These buildings are generally very simple designs with plain detailing. One color should be used for the trim and a contrasting color for the wall.

    - *Bungalows*: Natural earth tones and stains of tans, greens, and grays are most appropriate for this style. Use color to emphasize the many textures and surfaces of these buildings

Copies of the approved color pallet are available from the Planning Division.

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