

# DESIGN GUIDELINES



JULY 2002



for the **WEST CHESTER HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Historical and Architectural Review Board  
Borough of West Chester, Pennsylvania



**Cover Illustration**

*West Chester in 1842. High Street looking north from Market Street. Wood engraving in Sherman Day, Historical Collections of the State of Pennsylvania, 1843.*

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**NOTE:** The *Design Guidelines for the West Chester Historic District* are available on the Borough of West Chester web site ([www.west-chester.com/harb/guide.htm](http://www.west-chester.com/harb/guide.htm)).



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*Chester County Courthouse, 1847. (From the collection of the Chester County Historical Society.)*



## CHAPTER



## INTRODUCTION

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Visitors and residents alike sense that the West Chester Historic District is a unique place. Densely grouped three-story buildings laid out in a rectangular pattern of streets form the singular character of this 200 year-old settlement. The architectural character of buildings in the Historic District is remarkably consistent, built in a row-form building pattern with the front facade on the sidewalk line, predominantly constructed of brick, with a first-floor storefront and storefront cornice, topped by two residential or office floors, and capped by a building cornice (Figure 1). This consistent building formula and urban form repeats block after block within the Historic District, creating a cohesive and unified streetscape in which individual building design is secondary to the overall quality of the district (Figure 2). This cohesive environment is punctuated by a small group of monumental buildings along High Street – the 1846 Chester County Courthouse and the temple-form bank buildings which face the Courthouse across the street (Figures 3 and 4). Two large office buildings also lie within the Historic District, the six-story 1907 Farmers and Mechanics (F&M) Building, whose overall size is masked by its placement downhill from the Courthouse, and the 1966 Courthouse North Wing, a modern County office building which, aside from its intrusive height, is a recessive, background building.



To preserve and protect the borough’s historical and architectural resources, West Chester Borough Council created the West Chester Historic District through the 1988 enactment of a Historic District Zoning Ordinance, pursuant to state enabling legislation, the Historic District Act (1961). Consistent with the Historic District Act, the Ordinance contains provisions for regulating alterations, additions, new construction, and the demolition of buildings within the District. The Historic District is an overlay to various underlying districts shown on the zoning map (Figure 5). The Ordinance establishes a Historical and Architectural Review Board (“HARB”) which reviews applications for exterior alterations, new construction, demolition, and sign permits within the Historic District, and makes recommendations to Borough Council for the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness for each application.



**Figure 1.** The northeast corner of Market and Church Streets, 2002. The architectural character of the West Chester Historic District is remarkably consistent. Solid blocks of row-form buildings predominantly constructed of brick, with a first-floor storefront and storefront cornice, topped by two floors of residential or office use, and capped by a wood building cornice.



**Figure 2.** Looking east on Gay Street from Church Street, 1899. The Historic District retains the nineteenth-century scale depicted in this view. (From the collection of the Chester County Historical Society.)

### Intent of the Design Guidelines

The *Design Guidelines for the West Chester Historic District* are intended to be used as a community tool to assist property owners and HARB members in an informed cooperative effort to protect the historical character of downtown West Chester. The guidelines provide an analysis of what is special about the Historic District and offer specific direction toward enhancing and preserving those qualities. The *Design Guidelines* may also be used as a technical resource for property owners outside of the Historic District.

Understanding the historical development of West Chester is essential for the thoughtful application of *Design Guidelines* to the Historic District. The chapter on historical and architectural heritage is intended to provide the required background and insight into the town plan, the architecture, building sizes and uses, and the character of streetscapes. The chapter on qualities of historic architecture defines the principles and qualities of historic architecture that will be considered in the HARB’s evaluation of proposed alterations. Finally, the *Design Guidelines* provide specific direction for the treatment of existing buildings and guidelines for compatible new design in the Historic District.

This document is a set of guidelines and shall not exclude designs deemed appropriate by the HARB and/or Borough Council. This document is not meant to be used as a strict and rigid rule book. Article XI of the West Chester Zoning Code will continue to be the legal basis for design review within the Historic District (See Appendix C). Pursuant to Section 112-60.E of the Zoning Code, the HARB may issue design guidelines “for construction in the Historic District...to further the description of exterior architectural design criteria.” Pursuant to the Ordinance, the Borough



**Figure 3.** Chester County Courthouse, the architectural centerpiece of West Chester, was designed by Philadelphia architect Thomas U. Walter in the Greek Revival Style, and completed in 1847. (From the collection of the Chester County Historical Society.)





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*First West Chester Fire Company at 14 North High Street, 1887. (From the collection of the Chester County Historical Society.)*



CHAPTER



## HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE

### A. A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE BOROUGH OF WEST CHESTER

One of the world’s most perfect small towns” was how *The Philadelphia Inquirer* characterized West Chester in 2001. How did a crossroads tavern, “The Turks Head,” become the West Chester of today? Who were the people, what were the institutions, what were the streets and buildings of the community as it grew in size and beauty?

#### Early Development

West Chester is located on a ridge of land 450 feet above sea level between the Chester and Brandywine Creeks, about 24 miles west of Philadelphia. Native Americans had favored the region, as evidenced by nine campsites found within the present borough discovered by Alfred Sharples in the 1880s. The Great Minquas Trail used by Native Americans as an important trade route west to the Susquehanna passed through this area.

The Borough of West Chester was established on land that was originally part of three contiguous land grants from William Penn. Thomas Lloyd purchased 2,215

acres in Goshen Township, Chester County, in 1702. Richard Thomas purchased 1,065 acres in 1703. In 1704, Nathaniel Puckle, mariner, purchased 630 acres from William Penn. The southeastern corner of this tract was located in what would become the northwest corner of High and Gay Streets. In 1702, John Haines purchased that portion of the Thomas Lloyd estate adjoining the Puckle and Thomas tracts, and this consisted of 965 acres. The Puckle tract passed through several owners until 1728, when Daniel Hoopes purchased the tract. His family was the first to settle on this land.

Initially, there were no major roads through these tracts of land, but in 1735 the east-west Philadelphia road was laid out, followed by the north-south Wilmington road in 1745. All of the area around the crossing of the Wilmington and Philadelphia roads (present-day High and Gay Streets, respectively) remained farmland until 1760, when a log schoolhouse was erected at the northwest corner of the intersection. Two years later, Phineas Eachus erected the log Turk's Head Tavern on a plot to the south and east of the intersection. The tavern was moved in 1769 by John Hoopes to a brick structure built on a plot south of the original establishment. The location of the new tavern was the northeast corner of present-day High and Market Streets. These were the only improvements up until the American Revolution. But the tavern gave its name to the locality; farmers of the vicinity, when asked where they lived would answer, "Near the Turk's Head Tavern."



**Figure 6.** *The Joseph J. Lewis House (at right), built in 1829 in a simple side-gable Federal style form, was one of the first homes built on the tract of land developed by William Everhart.*

The crucial event in the evolution of the borough was the 1784 decision to remove the county seat of Chester County from Chester, on the Delaware, to Turk's Head—a more nearly central location for the growing county. Naturally, residents of Chester fought this change; indeed, a small army of them marched on the new county seat with the object of tearing down the still uncompleted courthouse (by one account, even lugging along a small cannon). Cooler heads prevailed, and by the fall of 1786 the new county facilities were completed in Turk's Head, prisoners were moved to the new jail, and court began in the new courthouse. In 1789 the eastern townships were separated off to form Delaware County so that Chester could remain a county seat.

No doubt it was felt that the dignity of a county seat was compromised by being named for a tavern, and the facts of geography and history dictated the new name. In 1789 "West Chester" was adopted as the name of the new county seat.

The establishment of the court in West Chester led to the erection of several new inns and taverns. Those erected before 1799 include: The Green Tree (1786), The White Hall (1786), The Washington Hotel (1787), and the Black Bear (1789). In addition, the community began to grow after John Hannum purchased the southern portion of the old Hoopes Tract in 1786 and began to sell lots on the north side of the present Gay Street. In 1793, Hannum provided a lot on West Gay Street for a Catholic Chapel, and Christ's Church was erected that year. This was the first church established within the present limits of West Chester.

The community continued to grow, and Gay Street became the commercial center of the town. In 1799 the citizens applied to the Commonwealth to establish a new borough, which was approved by the legislature on March 28, 1799. The boundaries of the borough, encompassing 1.8 square miles from Goshen Township, remain unchanged to this day.

### The Nineteenth Century

In 1800 the population of West Chester was 374. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the borough remained primarily agrarian, but a commercial district, bounded by Walnut Street, South or Market Street, Church Street, and Chestnut Street, was growing. The first area to be developed was the Wollerton Farm, located south of Market Street and west of High Street. This farm extended south to Union Street and west to the border of East Bradford Township.



William Everhart purchased the property and by 1829 had laid out streets including Miner, Barnard, and Union. He also extended Church and Darlington Streets south of Market. One of the first new homes on this plot was that of Joseph J. Lewis, built in 1829 on the southwest corner of Miner and Church Streets (Figure 6).

The land south of the Everhart tract was owned by the Sharples family and was slowly developed beginning in 1839 with the erection of the home of Philip Price Sharples at the southwest corner of Church and Dean Streets. Much of the Sharples land remained farmland until after the Civil War. In 1860, the built-up section of the borough ended at the northeast corner of Union and Darlington Streets. Southwest of that point was open countryside.

A noteworthy event occurred on July 26, 1825 when General Lafayette visited the borough. A record crowd gathered in West Chester to see Lafayette and to take part in the festivities, which included a banquet at the courthouse.

West Chester earned the reputation of the “Athens of Pennsylvania” during the first half of the nineteenth century because of her educational institutions, her Greek Revival architecture, and her many learned societies. The first of many private schools to be established here was the West Chester Academy, founded in 1813. Among the other early private schools were Price’s Boarding School for Girls (1830), Almira Lincoln Phelps Young Ladies Seminary (1837), and Bolmar’s Academy (1840).

The learned societies included the West Chester Library Company (1819), the Chester County Cabinet of Natural History (1826), the Chester County Athenaeum (1827), the Chester County Medical Society (1828), and the Chester County Horticultural Society (1846). All these groups flourished with the support of Dr. William Darlington, David Townsend, Dr. Wilmer Worthington, and other prominent residents.

By 1860, the population of West Chester had grown to 4,757. Of that population, the Directory of 1857 lists 443 African-American residents, ten percent of the total population of the borough at that time. The first African-American church in the borough was Bethel A.M.E. Church, established in 1816.

In 1860 West Chester supported many weekly newspapers including *The Jeffersonian*, *The Village Record*,

*The Chester County Times*, and *The American Republican* (Figure 7). These newspapers served the county as well as the borough residents.

The Civil War had its effect on the borough, with many men serving in the Union Army. Two regiments were raised in this section of Chester County. The 97<sup>th</sup> Regiment and the 124<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Pennsylvania Volunteers were made up mostly of local citizens. A monument to the 97<sup>th</sup> Regiment was erected in Marshall Square Park in 1887.



**Figure 8.** *Mosteller’s Department Store, 17-21 North Church Street, 1928 or after. By the 1930s, West Chester’s retail prominence in the region was established. Mosteller’s was the largest of the department stores in West Chester. (From the collection of the Chester County Historical Society.)*



**Figure 7.** *Office of the Village Record, 13-15 North Church Street, 1880. This building housed the Village Record from 1834-1900. The shop display windows of the building today correspond to the original first-floor window openings. Note the ashlar-scored stucco facade. (From the collection of the Chester County Historical Society.)*

The many tracts of land in the southeastern and north-western sections of the borough were developed after the Civil War. By the time the Normal School was founded in 1870, South Church and South High Streets had been built-up to the school's site.

While most of the new buildings were built of locally made brick, and the borough supported two brickyards during this period, some structures were erected using the locally quarried serpentine stone. The green stone is unique to Chester County, and a few buildings in the Historic District employed it, including Thomas U. Walter's Horticultural Hall (1848).

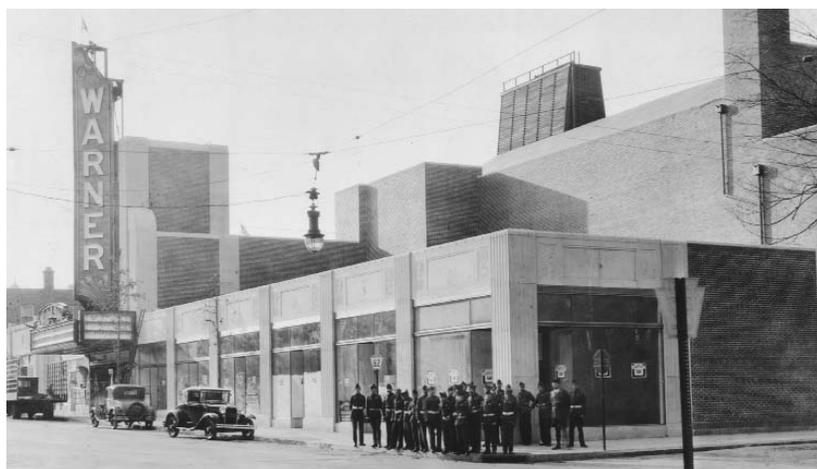
West Chester's economic base was dependent on county government and the court system, from 1870 onward on the Normal School (which eventually became the present West Chester University), and on

private commercial enterprises. While not known for heavy industry, West Chester did develop a flourishing nursery business during the second half of the nineteenth century. Morris Nursery was founded in 1849, and Hoopes Brothers and Thomas was established in 1855. Both thrived until after the turn of the twentieth century. Hoopes Brothers and Thomas alone sold nearly 900,000 seedlings of various fruit trees yearly in the 1890s. Two other locally operated businesses had a wide market. The Sharples Separator Works, established in 1881, manufacturer of centrifugal cream separators, and the Hoopes Brothers and Darlington Wheel Works, founded in 1866, were important to the local economy.

The railroad also has played its role in local development. When the citizens of West Chester were informed that the Pennsylvania Main Line Railroad would pass north of the borough in the Chester Valley, they financed a branch line that reached the main line in 1832 before that line had even been opened. The charter is believed to be the first granted by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and is dated July 18, 1831. A second line was needed for commuters to Philadelphia, and a direct line through Media, Delaware County, was completed in 1858. The two lines were joined shortly thereafter.

### The Twentieth Century

By the time the borough celebrated its one-hundredth



**Figure 9.** *The Warner Theater, before and after demolition of the theater portion of the building. Built in the 1920s and lavishly decorated with Art Deco plaster work, the theater was demolished in 1986 despite the efforts of preservationists to save it. Surviving are the lobby and one-story stores. (Historical photograph from the collection of the Chester County Historical Society.)*



**Figure 10.** *17 West Gay Street, the former Kaufman's Department Store. The original limestone and steel ribbon-window facade was demolished and the present precast concrete facade was built.*



birthday in 1899, the population had grown to nearly 9,500, the largest municipality in Chester County, with nearly ten percent of the county’s residents living in the borough. The twentieth century was a time of growth in the borough. The population increased to 15,168 by mid-century, with a changed industrial base. Among the new businesses established within the borough limits were United Dairy Equipment Company, Wind Turbine, Wyeth Laboratories, Denny Tag Company, Esco Cabinet Company, and the Keystone Tag Company. Of the older companies, only the Hoopes Brothers and Darlington Wheel Works survived well past the middle of the twentieth century. The Great Depression caused the demise of the Sharples Separator Company, The Chester County Trust Company, and the Farmers and Mechanics Bank.

By the middle of the century, the land within the borough limits had filled up with homes, commercial establishments, and some industries. Suburban development spread east, north, and south of the borough. West Chester was a regional shopping destination at mid-century. In 1949, as an example, there were five shoe stores, three department stores, two five-and-dime stores, and eight clothing stores (Figure 8). But only one town newspaper survived, *The Daily Local News*, founded in 1872.

The second half of the century saw many changes. By the close of the century, the retail trade in West Chester was hard pressed by the nearby shopping malls. Today there is one shoe store, no department stores, and no five-and-dime stores located in the borough. Several clothing stores remain. The number of banks has greatly increased in the past half century, and all have changed their names. The population of the borough reached 18,041 in 1990 but fell to 17,861 in 2000.



**Figure 11.** *Gay Street, looking west from High Street, 2002. The vitality of the downtown is manifest in the number of pedestrians on the street each evening.*

With all the changes, the borough has entered the twenty-first century with a new outlook based on the lessons of the past. Many significant historical buildings were lost in the second half of the century (Figures 9 and 10). However, with the healthy economic environment and the establishment of the Historic District during the late 1980s, the losses have declined. West Chester continues to rise as a desirable residential location, and many new specialty shops and restaurants have been attracted to the Historic District (Figure 11).

**B. WEST CHESTER ARCHITECTURE**

The historic character of West Chester is reflected in its historic buildings. West Chester’s political status and social character largely accounts for its buildings. As a county seat, and seat of a prosperous and increasingly populous region, modest wealth has been available for building. And proximity to Philadelphia, which until some decades into the nineteenth century was the largest and most cultivated city in America, meant that both architectural styles and architectural talent were available.

The town’s architectural heritage is noteworthy, and many high-style as well as vernacular examples of American architectural styles from various periods can be found in buildings that are still in use within the Historic District. A structure considered high-style will exhibit the distinctive and significant features of an architectural style and is typically a public or religious building. A vernacular example may exhibit only a few of a style’s characteristics and is more typically a domestic structure. As examples of vernacular



**Figure 12.** *15 North High Street, is an eighteenth-century Federal Style building that includes most of the elements of the style: Side-gable form, central front door with elongated sidelights, simple porch with classical elements, planar walls, simple exterior woodwork, and dormers.*

architecture, it is also important to note that the stylistic features found on a building in West Chester might reflect several stylistic periods rather than one specific period. Many of West Chester's buildings reflect the evolution vernacular buildings often experience over time. As space requirements and usage needs changed, buildings were adapted. Furthermore, older buildings were updated stylistically in order to stay in vogue and to project an image of prosperity. A small Federal building may gain an addition of two more

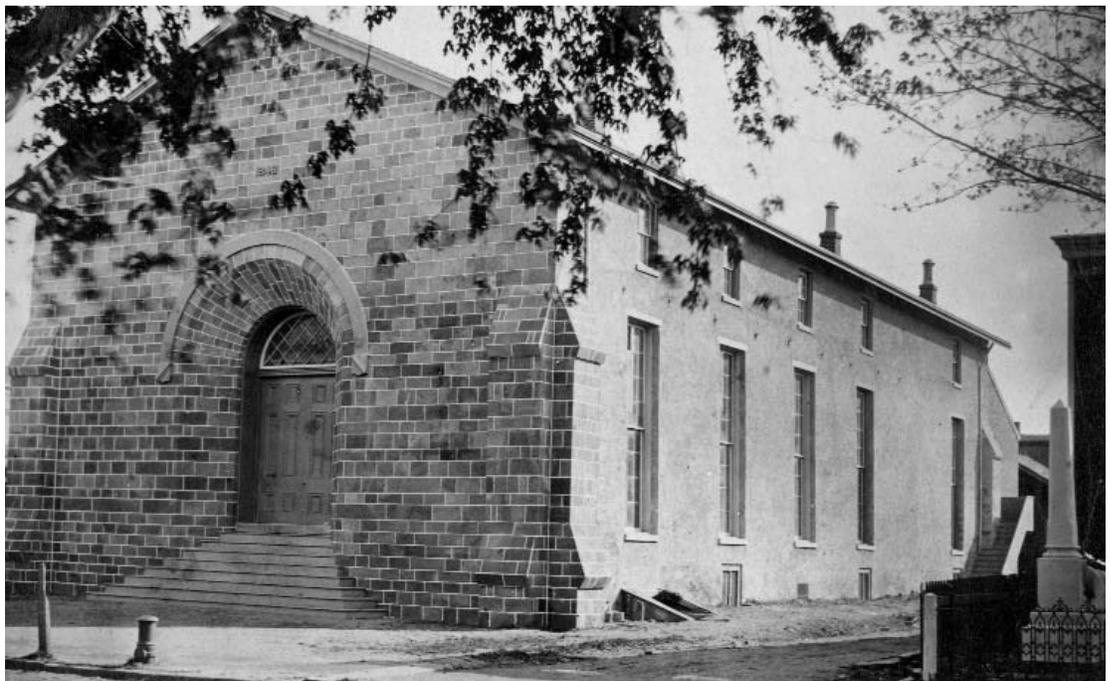
bays as more space was needed; then later, the same building might have been updated by the addition of Victorian Revival architectural elements such as a porch or a steeply pitched centered gable.

**The Federal Style (nationally 1780-1820, vernacular examples to mid-century)**

The Federal style became extremely popular after the American Revolution, and the style is found in abundance in West Chester. In West Chester, Federal style buildings are brick, frequently laid in Flemish bond—i.e., with alternate bricks laid lengthwise and endwise (“stretchers” and “headers”). Federal buildings are relatively plain, rectilinear and box-like. They are generally oriented laterally to the street, and there are apt to be dormers in the roof. Windows, aligned vertically and horizontally, are double-hung, and were originally glazed with six-over-six panes. Many windows are simply flush with the wall without any decorative lintel, or when present, lintels are simple, usually constructed with a keystone or a segmental arch. The windows were originally all shuttered with solid shutters on the first floor and louvers on upper stories. Cornices typically have a modest projection, and chimneys most commonly are found at gable ends. The principal ornamentation usually is lavished on the doorway. A high-style Federal doorway is flanked by slender columns or pilasters and may have a small porch supported by simple columns. Over the door is



**Figure 13.** *Judge Thomas Bell residence, 101 South Church Street, attributed to Thomas U. Walter, is a highly refined Federal Style residence, now the Boyd Funeral Home.*



**Figure 14.** *Horticultural Hall, 225 North High Street, designed by Thomas U. Walter, 1848. Constructed of serpentine stone, Horticultural Hall features a round-arched Romanesque Revival entrance. (From the collection of the Chester County Historical Society.)*

apt to be a transom light, either a semi-elliptical fan-light or, more often, a rectangle; and there may be a full entablature above.

One of the half-dozen eighteenth-century Federal style buildings in West Chester is 15 North High Street, located between the temple-form banks across from the Courthouse (Figure 12). The 5-bay building was constructed in two phases, 1789 and 1792. Downtown West Chester exhibits numerous Federal buildings. An example is the “Lincoln Biography Building” of 1833, 28 West Market Street, so called because in 1860 the first biography of Lincoln, campaign propaganda, was printed there. The Lincoln building has three and a half stories with dormers, and the usual Federal cornice and dentiled bed molding. Another example is 101 South High Street, the Judge Thomas Bell residence, built in 1829 (Figure 13).

### Romantic Revivals and the Victorian Era

Until after the Revolution, a single architectural style influenced the design of the majority of structures in the United States. With the formation of a new Republic, numerous styles became popular starting in the first quarter of the nineteenth century and continuing into the first quarter of the twentieth century. Represented in West Chester architecture, these styles, including the Greek Revival, Gothic and Romanesque Revivals, the Italianate, Queen Anne, Second Empire, and the Renaissance Revival, looked to historical European precedents for their design characteristics. With the exception of the Greek Revival, designers such as Andrew Jackson Downing in his 1842 book *Cottage Residences*, looked at medieval prototypes for the forms of the high-style romantic revival structures. Stylistic features tended to be mixed and matched, sometimes making a clear definition of a building style difficult. For example the impressive 1854 Samuel Sloan designed house at the northeast corner of Church and Miner Streets would be considered predominately Italianate because of its large, bracketed cornice, although less formal stylized sunflowers adorn the frieze. The marble entrance, however, is formal Greek. Its fine ironwork, similar to many others in West Chester, is generally considered Victorian in style.

### Greek Revival (nationally 1818 to 1860)

Beginning in 1818, with the Second Bank of the United States in Philadelphia, the Greek Revival style came into vogue. Modeled after the ancient Greek public buildings, the distinguishing features of a high-style, American, Greek Revival building include a pedimented gable front with a low pitched roof, large two-story columns creating a portico, decorative

pilasters, bold simple moldings, unadorned friezes, and horizontal transom windows above doors.

West Chester’s examples of high-style, Greek Revival structures are both numerous and notable, as many were designed by nationally recognized architects. Although now demolished, the Mansion House Hotel, located at the corner of Church and Market Streets, was designed by William Strickland, the architect of the famous Second Bank. Strickland was the first of a series of celebrated architects to work in West Chester. Thomas U. Walter, Strickland’s protege, was destined to become the most noted architect of his generation, designing the dome and wings of the Capitol in Washington. Here in West Chester, Walter created half-a-dozen buildings, four of which are today among the borough’s finest structures. The 1832 Greek Revival design for First Presbyterian Church (southwest corner of Darlington and Miner) was his first major commission here. The First Presbyterian Church is the earliest surviving specimen in the United States of an “in antis” facade (the deeply recessed entranceway supported by columns); two great unfluted Ionic columns rise between the “wings” of the portico. The whole design is remarkable for its elegant simplicity and lack of ornamentation, enhanced by the white stucco (cheaper than Grecian marble!) that contrasted with the red brick neighborhood around it. The doorway is conspicuously battered—i.e., with sides sloping in toward the top. That monumental feature is an Egyptian design element. There is no full-scale Egyptian Revival building in



Figure 15. 311 South Church Street, a serpentine house with the steep gables, pointed-arch windows, and decorative bargeboards typical of the Gothic Revival style.

West Chester, but this battered doorway anticipates the fully Egyptian style of Walter's 1835 Moyamensing Prison in Philadelphia.

In 1836, Walter designed the First Bank of Chester County, across from the courthouse on High Street (See Figure 4). Here he used the Doric order, and the building, despite an alteration to the steps so that they cut into the podium, is a supremely successful instance of Greek Revival architecture. (The handsome bronze doors are set into another battered doorway.) Ten years later Walter designed the county courthouse, this time using the more ornate Corinthian order for the six cast-iron columns of the portico. The courthouse features a church-like tower rising behind that Grecian portico, a



**Figure 16.** *The bracketed cornice is the most readily identified feature of the Italianate style, as seen on these brick commercial buildings at North Walnut Street and East Gay Street.*



**Figure 17.** *An example of the Queen Anne Revival, 120 South Church breaks down the rowhouse form by the use of the front gable, oriel windows, and intersecting cross gables.*

fusion of classical and medieval architecture invented early in the eighteenth century by James Gibbs for St. Martin in the Fields, London. Walter beautifully employed all three of the Greek orders—Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian—in porticos or facades in West Chester buildings.

It is, of course, in public edifices like churches and government buildings that the Greek Revival style is most impressive. The continuing appeal of this classicism is evidenced by the Neoclassical Revival structure at the First National Bank, also across from the courthouse, constructed in 1912 and employing the Roman form of the Ionic order.

Numerous domestic buildings in West Chester also feature Greek and Roman characteristics. In Greek Revival vernacular structures, the following might be present: a gable-front structure, a two-story pedimented portico, a one-story flat-roof porch supported by prominent columns, a doorway with a rectangular transom window, a heavy cornice with wide bands of trim, and applied pilasters.

### **Gothic and Romanesque Revival (nationally 1800-1880, locally to 1925)**

Competing with the classical Greek Revival were the medieval revivals, Romanesque and Gothic. Historically, of course, the round-arched Romanesque style preceded pointed-arch Gothic. But as revival styles in the United States, Gothic began about 1800, Romanesque about 1840. There is no thoroughly Romanesque building in West Chester, but the 1848 serpentine building designed by Thomas U. Walter for the Horticultural Society, now part of the Chester County Historical Society, has a fine round-arched entrance which is exemplary of the Romanesque Revival style (Figure 14).

The Gothic Revival appeared with especial vigor in religious structures. Consider these four Gothic churches in West Chester: the Episcopal (High and Union); the church at Church and Barnard; the Methodist (High and Union); and the Catholic (Gay and New). All exhibit the hallmark of the Gothic style—pointed arches—but they also have characteristics that can distinguish them within several of the subgroups of the Gothic style. The 1868 sanctuary of Holy Trinity, Episcopal, was constructed with serpentine to a design of its pastor. It is a fine example of Early English Gothic, with the typical narrow lancet windows, triple on the front, paired on the sides. In 1882, the parish house, designed by West Chester's own architect, T. Roney Williamson, was erected to the

north. While the sanctuary is a perfect example of the early phase of the Gothic Revival, the parish house is unabashedly High Gothic, with contrasting materials (red brick, green stone), an ogee arch over the door, and stepped gable, all quite picturesque and in contrast with the calm uniformity of the sanctuary.

The West Chester Community Fellowship Church (originally Westminster Presbyterian Church), on the southwest corner of Church and Barnard, dates from 1899 and is remarkable for its very picturesque adaptation of Early English Gothic with its rusticated stone, a tower with finials and angel waterspouts, and elaborate asymmetry. Twenty years later, the Methodist church was constructed on High Street, a simpler design with shallow transepts and a square tower at center front; the window tracery is of the Decorated style (the style of the English Gothic dating from 1280-1380).

Latest of these Gothic churches is St. Agnes Catholic Church. Completed in 1926, the building is again English Gothic. The nave and chancel are short, the shallow transepts long (and used, inside, as part of the nave). Their length allows very large windows that, like the “west” window (actually south-facing), have stained glass set in coarse tracery probably intended to be Perpendicular or Late English Gothic style (c.1377-1547) but more resembling the Decorated style. The massive wooden roof within is supported on impressive hammerbeam trusses.

Gothic Revival was also used in domestic buildings, though there are few examples, even of Gothic detail, in West Chester. But there is a good 1873 example of domestic Gothic architecture at 311 South Church Street, a serpentine house with the steep gables, pointed-arch windows, and decorative bargeboards typical of the style (Figure 15).

### The Italianate Style (nationally 1837-1875)

The “Italian villa” or Italianate style entered American architecture in about 1837. A high-style Italianate structure is typically composed of rectilinear blocks, usually symmetrical in themselves but clustered asymmetrically. The picturesque effect may be enhanced by a (usually square) tower placed off-center, or by a cupola. Some windows may be round-headed. Wide overhanging eaves are supported by conspicuous brackets; and in a fully developed Italianate there is a veranda or loggia on at least one side.

While there are no examples of high-style Italianate structures in West Chester’s Historic District, there are numerous examples of Italianate buildings. Although

the basic form—a gabled roof, rectilinear, brick structure with aligned rectangular windows—may share similarities with earlier Federal buildings, these vernacular structures have Italianate details such as broad eaves supported by brackets, decorative window lintels, or bracketed window crowns. Many have front porches, and, if situated on corners or with side-yards, have verandas as well. The Italianate style was frequently used for commercial buildings, often blended with Federal style elements (Figure 16).

### The Queen Anne Style

“Queen Anne” is actually a misnomer. The style was an eclectic “revival”, more accurately an invention, in England by Richard Norman Shaw in 1868; it was really inspired by the large country mansions of the sixteenth century, not the classicizing eighteenth century houses of Queen Anne’s reign. After the Philadelphia Centennial of 1876, Queen Anne became one of the dominant styles of American domestic architecture despite that classicists denounced it, deploring its “emancipation from all restraints,” and “disestablishment of all standards.” The Queen Anne structure aims at picturesque effects and contrasts. Typically, Queen Anne buildings feature an elaborately irregular plan, intricate elevation, tower, turrets, combinations of



**Figure 18.** One of West Chester’s most picturesque buildings, the First West Chester Fire Company at 14 North High Street was designed in the Queen Anne Revival style by architect T. Roney Williamson in 1887. (From the collection of the Chester County Historical Society.)

gable and hip roofs and decorative chimneys. They display a surprising variety of materials, with stone, brick, shingle, siding, tile, often all in one building, and can sometimes exhibit an equal variety of colors.

Examples in the Historic District include a residence at 120 South Church (Figure 17) and the First West Chester Fire Company at 14 North Church Street



**Figure 19.** *Second Empire style rowhouses on West Gay Street. While the steeply pitched Mansart roof identifies the style as Second Empire, most of the other exterior decorative elements relate to the Italianate style.*

(Figure 18). Splendid examples are to be found on North Church Street, beyond the Historic District.

### **Second Empire Style**

“Second Empire” is named after the French Empire of Napoleon III (1852-70); the concurrent Parisian style with its distinctive mansart roof arrived in America in 1859. Philadelphia’s City Hall, begun in 1874, is the largest Second-Empire building in the States. Even before that, however, the style arrived in West Chester. The style was utilized in both detached dwellings and row houses (Figure 19) on both the south and north sides of the borough; the finest examples are on West Virginia Avenue.

### **Renaissance Revival**

The last half of the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth centuries witnessed a plethora of architectural styles beyond those already discussed, but these styles are less abundantly represented in West Chester. The Renaissance Revival is manifested here in the fine Courthouse Annex of 1893, another work in still another style by West Chester architect T. Roney Williamson (Figure 20). For imposing effect, the second and third stories are integrated externally and set on the first as a base; a very large cornice crowns the facade with a Chateausque roof rising above it. Italian workmen dressed the limestone; Italian marble is used within; and the impressive second-floor courtroom is



**Figure 20.** *The Renaissance Revival style Courthouse Annex of 1893, designed by West Chester architect T. Roney Williamson.*

itself Renaissance Revival, with oak paneling and coffered ceiling.

There are a few Renaissance Revival houses, perhaps better called “French Academic,” since their antecedents are French rather than Italian. One such house can be seen at 106 South High Street. This 1874 house has windows with segmental tops and corniced hoods, an ample roof cornice (the brackets are missing), a marble basement story, and a very fine door. The double house next door (110-112) is similar and retains its shutters.

### Beaux Arts

Two examples of Beaux Arts buildings, a style named after the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris, are found in the West Chester Historic District. The first, the 1905 Chester County Trust Company on East Gay Street is a small example of Beaux-Arts (Figure 21). The boldness of the rusticated joints, and the use of arches in conjunction with the classical orders, are among the characteristics of the style. Arches distinguish this Beaux-Arts building from Greek Revival, which like original Grecian architecture never employed arches.

Two years later, the Farmers and Mechanics Building rose at the southwest corner of High and Market Streets. Its six stories on a steel skeleton make it in principle a true skyscraper. This, too, is a Beaux-Arts design, with a clear differentiation of the podium or base story, the upward sweep of the four central stories with their oriel bays, and the triforium top story with emphatic cornice.

### Art Deco

In the later 1920’s, the style known as “Art Deco” (after the 1925 Paris Exposition of Decorative Arts) reached the United States, appearing in everything from jewelry to skyscrapers. Art Deco is once again fashionable, and Art Deco buildings that have survived the wrecker’s ball are treasured. The half-block long complex on the west side of High north of Gay Street, comprising one-story shops and the former Warner Theater (now the office of *The Philadelphia Inquirer*) represents this style, with the geometric patterning and the long sleek lines of decorative moldings around the theater. There are some decorative touches of the style on the Greentree Building (1931) at the northeast corner of High and Gay Streets.

### Later Pre-Modern Buildings

The Colonial Revival style, perhaps the most ubiquitous American architectural style of the twentieth century, is represented in West Chester in the form of the bank

buildings at the southeast and northeast corners of Market and High Streets, and the Old YMCA Building, now the Chester County Historical Society. Another less clearly definable style is described as Twentieth Century Commercial, and is represented by the Woolworth’s Store at Gay and High Streets, now Iron Hill Brewery (Figure 22). The style features large metal-and-glass storefront windows and wide office windows above.

While the uniformity of building forms and materials contributes to the visual cohesiveness of the Historic District, the variety and richness of architectural styles creates a sense of the passage of time. The passage of time is reflected in the changing architectural styles from building to building, as well as modifications and additions to individual buildings over the generations.



**Figure 22.** *The former Woolworth Store, now Iron Hill Brewery, is an example of Twentieth Century Commercial style architecture.*



**Figure 21.** *The Chester County Trust Company, built on East Gay Street in 1905, is a small example of the Beaux-Arts style. (From the collection of the Chester County Historical Society.)*



*Mosteller's Department Store, 17-21 North Church Street, 1928 or after. (From the collection of the Chester County Historical Society.)*



CHAPTER



## QUALITIES OF HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE

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**W**hile architectural styles contribute to the richness and understanding of historic places, stylistic features were often applied to basic building forms rather than being integral to their original design. These basic building forms — the side-gabled rowhouse or flat-roofed rowhouse, for examples — are the fundamental elements that give historic architecture and historic districts their character. Therefore, when proposed changes to existing buildings or proposed new buildings in a historic setting are evaluated, the qualities of the basic building forms and materials are more significant than the applied stylistic features.

To preserve the individual buildings, the architectural character of each structure must be identified and either maintained or restored. To preserve a historic district, the architectural character of each proposed new structure must be compatible with neighboring historic buildings. The architectural character of a building refers to the qualities of massing, scale, proportion, order, rhythm, and materials. This chapter defines these qualities.

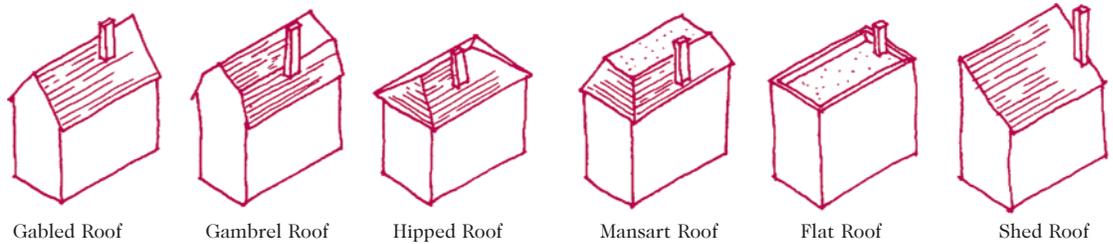
**A. MASSING**

Massing, also referred to as architectural form, is the overall volumetric shape of a building. The massing of a building may be described as large or small, simple or complex (Figure 23). It is defined by the exterior walls, roof shapes (Figure 24), and appendages such as porches, projecting bays, towers, and cupolas. In a historic district, massing is the single most important characteristic to consider in the evaluation of proposed additions and new construction. A large new building set in a context of uniform-size historic building blocks is visually disruptive because the continuity of the historical pattern is broken. Roof-form is important only where the roof is visible from the street. On Gay Street, for example, roofs are typical-

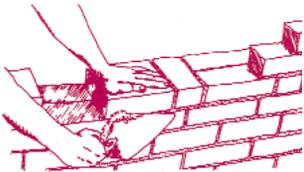
ly concealed by a front parapet wall and are not important, while on South Church Street, roof-forms are highly visible and contribute significantly to the shape of a building (Figure 23).

**B. SCALE**

Scale in architecture is a measure of the relative size of a building or building component in relation to a known unit of measure or customary size for such a component. A person evaluates how large a building or building component is in relation to the human body size and his or her memory of the expected size for such a component. For example, a sense of the size of a brick building can be established because of the size of a brick (Figure 25). Bricks typically can be



**Figure 24.** Building form refers to the overall volumetric shape of a building, including the form of the roof. On the typical, attached, three-story brick building in the Historic District, most roofs are either a shed form or a very shallow side gable form.



**Figure 25.** The common brick, the prevalent wall material in the Historic District, is scaled to the human hand.



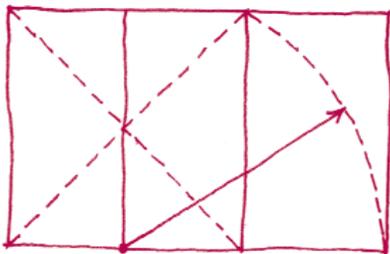
**Figure 23.** Architectural massing refers to the compilation of forms making up a structure. The complex massing of The Wentworth, located at 112 South Church Street, allows the institution to function behind two traditional row-house facades.

held in a person's hand and thus, when assembled, can be used to evaluate the overall height and width of a building. Doors and windows, like bricks, are scale-giving features. Doors are typically slightly higher than the height of a tall person, or roughly seven feet high. Double-hung sash windows in historic buildings are typically five or six feet tall, or just shorter than a tall person. If the size or shape of a familiar building component diverges from the expected, it may be said to be "out of scale."

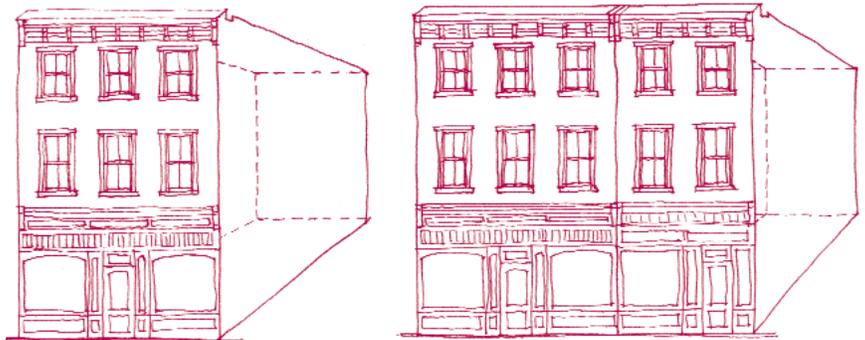
The principle of scale applies both to individual buildings and to streetscapes. In an urban setting, where each building forms a part of a larger streetscape, building scale is of paramount impor-

tance. In the West Chester Historic District, the typical "building block" that makes up street after street is a three-story high, three-bay wide brick box (Figure 26). Historic buildings may be larger or smaller than this unit, but this form predominates. In the hierarchy of social order in a community, prominent buildings such as courthouses, churches, and banks differentiate themselves by contrasting with the predominating building form.

The perceived scale of any proposed building or addition is a function of 1) the overall size of the proposed



**Figure 28.** *The Golden Section. The Golden Section, formed by arcing the diagonal of half a square, creates a ratio of about 5:8. This shape recurs in western art and architecture.*



**Figure 26.** *The typical "building block" of the West Chester streetscape is a three-story high, three-bay brick box. Larger buildings are made up of multiples of this unit.*



**Figure 27.** *High Street looking north from Market Street in 1842. The hierarchy of building significance is clear in this earliest depiction of a West Chester streetscape. Wood engraving in Sherman Day, *Historical Collections of the State of Pennsylvania*, 1843.*

new construction relative to existing building sizes, and 2) the visual relationship of building facade elements in the new construction relative to the visual relationship of building facade elements in existing buildings.

Outdoor spaces, formed by the buildings, fences, and vegetation that surround them, also have scale. The historic retail streetscape, with its uniform walls of building facades, awnings, street trees, brick sidewalks, lamp posts, and narrow street is of a human scale. The large parking lot, in contrast, lacks a human scale. When buildings are set back from the street, and are fronted with entrance drives and parking lots, they are scaled to the automobile, not the human.

The scale of buildings in a traditional town creates a clear hierarchy of building significance. In West Chester, the county seat of Chester County, the Courthouse should and does visually predominate. Next in terms of scale are the churches and bank buildings along High Street (Figure 27).

**C. PROPORTION**

Proportion in architecture is the relationship among

the dimensions of the various building elements and the individual features to each other. Architectural harmony is achieved in a building facade when facade elements are proportional to each other and to the overall facade:

*“The purpose of proportion is to establish harmony throughout the structure - a harmony which is made comprehensible either by the conspicuous use of one or more of the [classical] orders as dominant components or else simply by the use of dimensions involving the repetition of simple ratios.”* (John Summerson, *The Classical Language of Architecture*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1963, page 8.)

One of the oldest systems of proportion was the Golden Section, which was devised in ancient Greece (Figure 28). The Golden Section, which is a rectangle with a width to length ratio of about 5:8, is formed when the diagonal of a square is dropped as an arc. The resulting proportions are an ideal ratio in western art and architecture.

In architecture, the use of repeated proportions creates a harmony in a building facade (Figure 29). The overall shape of the facade is repeated in facade elements such as doors and windows.

**D. ORDER**

Order in architecture is the arrangement and relationships of parts of a building. A symmetrical building facade — one where a center door is flanked by an equal number of windows on each side of the door — is highly ordered. The east facade of the Courthouse is highly ordered - literally “of the orders”; that is, its

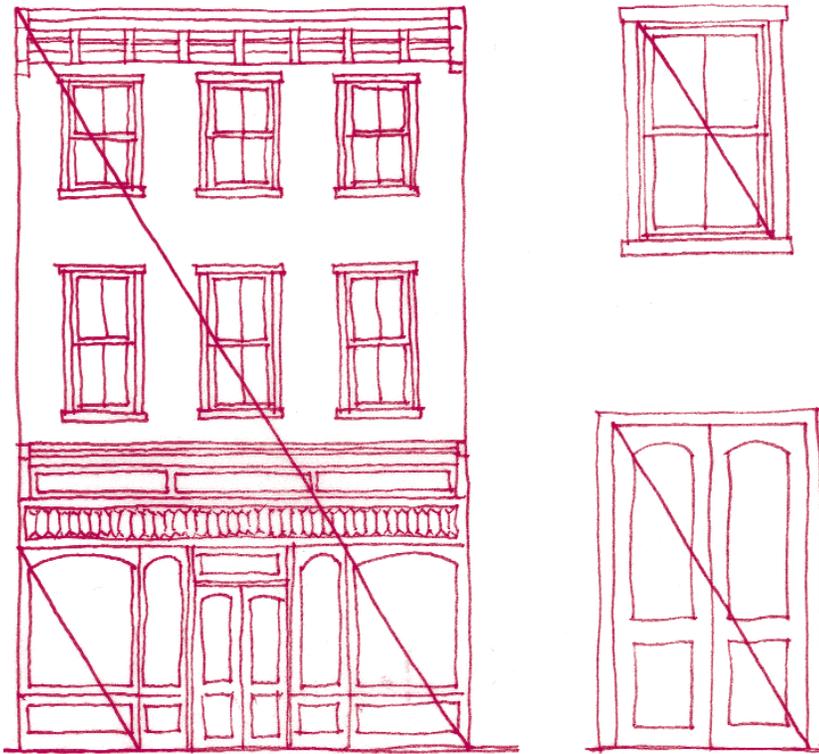


Figure 29. Analysis of a three-story facade showing the repeated proportions in facade elements, beginning with the overall facade and carried down to the proportions of individual glass panes.



Figure 31. The spacing of window and wall on a facade creates a rhythm that repeats itself from building to building. Buildings in a streetscape also create a rhythm.

order is derived from a strict application of the Corinthian Order taken from classical architecture. Windows that align vertically are ordered; their placement is based on a rational structural and visual order. An asymmetrical facade is less formal than a symmetrical facade, but may also be highly ordered. For example, the facade of a side-hall rowhouse has an arrangement of vertically aligning door and window openings that directly relate to the arrangement of hall and rooms inside (Figure 30).

### E. RHYTHM

Rhythm in architecture is the pattern and spacing of repeating elements such as windows, columns, arches, and other facade elements (Figure 31). Almost all buildings are made of elements that repeat themselves

— alternating vertical bands of brick wall and windows, alternating horizontal bands of brick wall and windows, for examples. The spacing of buildings in a historic streetscape creates a rhythm also.

### F. BUILDING MATERIALS

The historic buildings of the West Chester Historic District are constructed of traditional building materials — brick, occasionally stone, painted wood, and slate or metal roofing. The repeated use of these traditional materials along the streets of West Chester creates an architectural cohesiveness and harmony that gives the district much of its distinctive character.

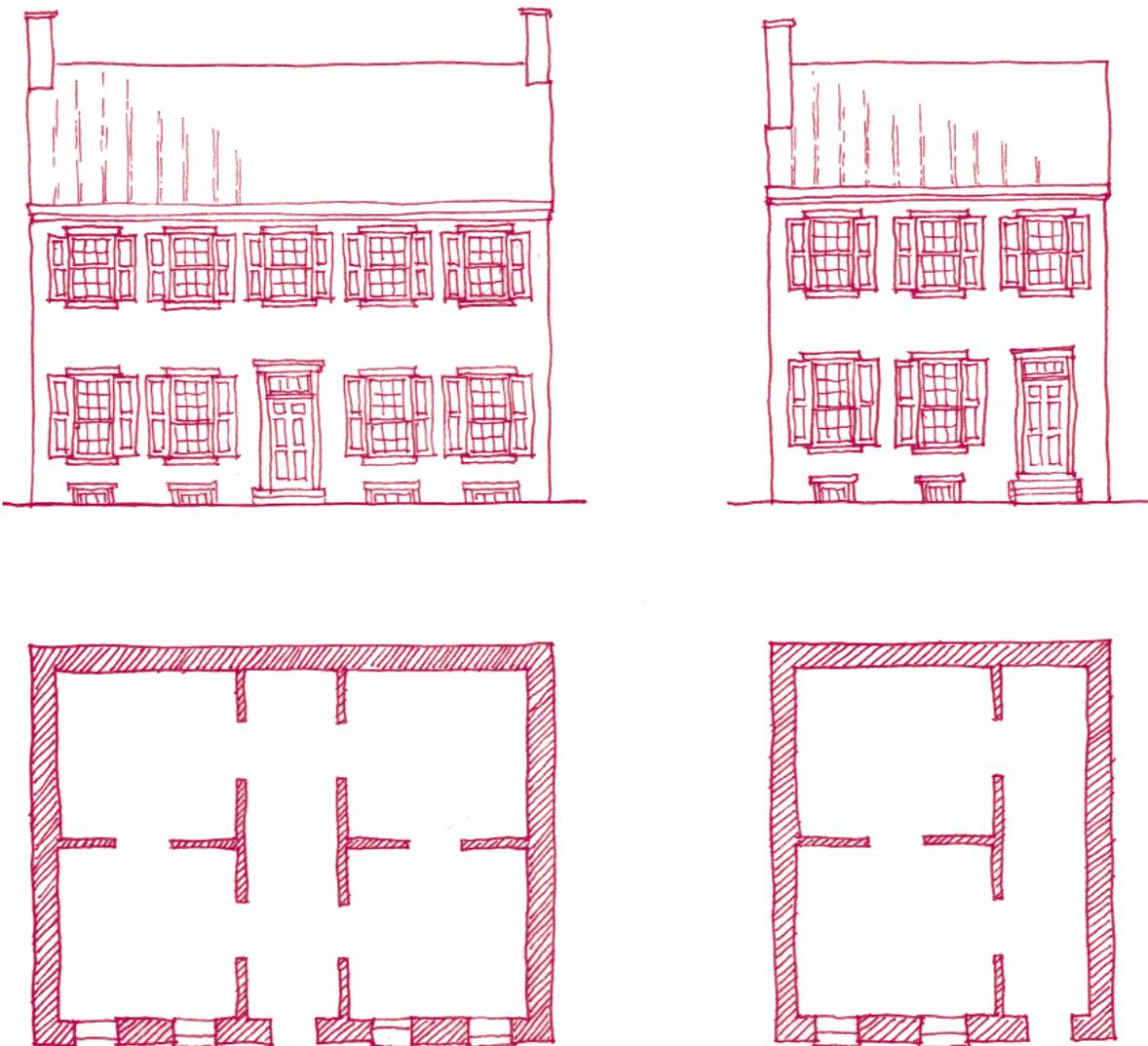


Figure 30. A highly ordered facade relates directly to the floor plan of the building.



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*The Chester County Trust Company, built on East Gay Street in 1905. (From the collection of the Chester County Historical Society.)*



CHAPTER



## DESIGN GUIDELINES

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**T**he Historic District Zoning Code, Section 112-53.A, states “The provisions of this Article shall be applied to all land, buildings and structures which are viewed or *may be viewed from a public way* within the boundaries of the West Chester Historic District” (italics added for emphasis). In practice, the HARB is less stringent in its review of proposed alterations or new construction that are visible only from an alley. For purposes of these guidelines and the HARB’s review of applications, facades that are only visible from an alley are considered *secondary facades*, and facades that are visible from streets and sidewalks are considered *primary facades* (Figure 32). The side walls of buildings are also considered *primary facades*, unless the distance between buildings on adjacent lots is less than eight feet.

**A. GENERAL GUIDELINES**

The following guidelines are applicable to all contributing historic buildings within the West Chester Historic District, including outbuildings such as carriage houses, stables, and garages.

**1. Preserving Architectural Character**

The historic architectural character of structures should be maintained or restored.

**2. Building Changes**

Significant changes to a historic building take place over time and are evidence of its history. Therefore, historically significant changes should be preserved (Figure 33).

**3. Primary Facades and Secondary Facades**

The *Design Guidelines* are intended predominantly to be applied to the primary facades. The guidelines will be less stringently applied to secondary facades (See Figure 32).

**4. Repair and Restoration versus Replacement**

It is preferable to retain existing original materials and significant components wherever possible, by stabilizing, repairing, or matching them with compatible new materials rather than by replacing them.

**5. Reversibility**

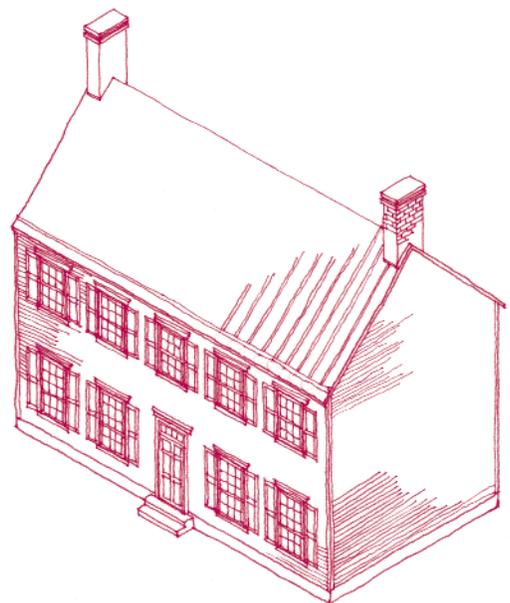
Proposed changes to historic buildings should be reversible whenever possible.

**6. Deteriorated and Missing Components**

Deteriorated or missing significant architectural components should be replaced or recreated with materials that replicate the historic design, color, texture, and other visual qualities of the components. Efforts should be made to substantiate the original design of the component through physical evidence or historic



**Figure 32.** *The Historic District Zoning Code applies only to “land, buildings and structures which are viewed or may be viewed from a public way.” In practice, the HARB is less stringent in its review of alterations that are visible only from an alley.*



pictorial evidence of the building. If the original design is unknown, a component that is appropriate to the type and style of the building's architecture should be used.

### 7. Precedent

Designs and changes approved or rejected elsewhere in the Historic District do not necessarily act as a precedent for a design or change under consideration. All proposals will be considered individually based on their own merit and unique situation within the district.

### 8. Anchoring Devices

When attaching new items such as signs, sign brackets, light fixtures, door bells, security equipment, building identification numerals, awnings, flagpole brackets, and other devices to existing historic building materials, care should be taken to minimize permanent damage to the historic building materials. Attachment to plain wood surfaces is preferable to attachment to masonry, because at a future date when the item is no longer required, the anchor or fastener can be removed and the resultant hole patched and repainted without harm. When attachment to brick or stone masonry walls is necessary, anchors should be embedded in mortar joints wherever the joint width accepts the anchor without damaging the edges of the brick or stone. When existing brick is laid up with less than 1/4 inch wide joints ("battered joints"), anchors should be placed in the brick at least 3/4 inch away from the mortar joint to prevent damaging two bricks at each anchor (Figure 34).

## B. GUIDELINES TO PRESERVE AND PROTECT HISTORIC BUILDINGS

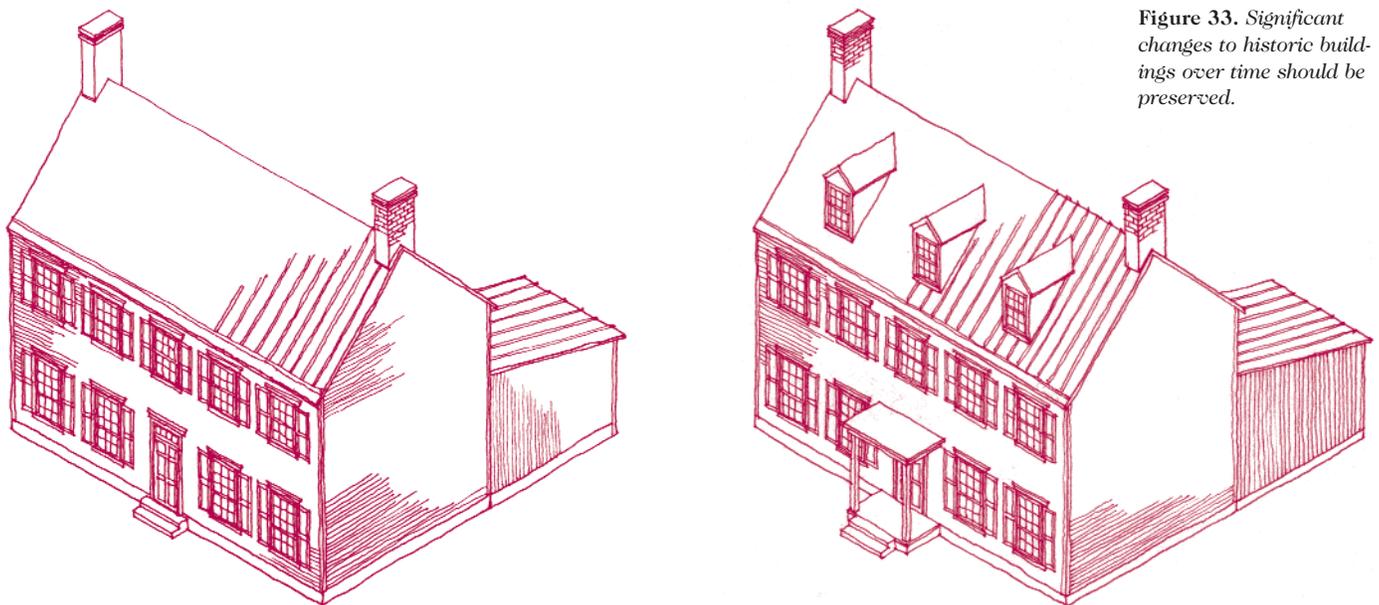
### 1. Cleaning Historic Structures

Exterior cleaning of historic structures should be done in the gentlest way possible. Destructive techniques such as sandblasting and harsh chemical cleaners are not recommended. High-pressure washing is not appropriate and can cause damage to structures (Figure 35).

#### *Recommended Cleaning Techniques*

**Exterior Woodwork (in preparation for repainting)**  
Apply 1:4 solution of household chlorine bleach in water to soiled woodwork, using a natural or plastic-fiber bristle brush or garden bug sprayer. Scrub using natural or plastic-fiber bristle brush, followed by a water rinse at a maximum of 1,200 pounds per square inch (psi) of pressure at 24 inches from the wall surface using a 15 degree spray tip.

**Brick, stone, and stucco**  
Water rinse using maximum 600 psi water pressure at 6 inches from masonry surface using a 15 degree spray tip (or 1,200 psi at 24 inches). For heavily soiled surfaces, apply a dilute mixture of a specially formulated masonry cleaner according to the manufacturer's instructions. After the specified contact time, scrub masonry using natural or plastic-bristle brush, followed by maximum 600 psi water rinse. Never use muriatic acid on historic brick masonry. Do not use acidic or caustic cleaners that will etch glass, damage paint finishes, or pose environmental risks.



**Figure 33.** *Significant changes to historic buildings over time should be preserved.*

## 2. Historic Masonry

**2.1 Repointing.** Historic masonry requires particular maintenance to be preserved. Although brick units themselves have a long life, mortar joints deteriorate over time and require periodic renewal. Where repointing is required, care should be taken to ensure that the brick is not damaged in the process of removing deteriorated pointing. The new mortar should match the color, texture, and tooling of the original mortar, not the appearance of the surface dirt on weathered pointing (Figure 36). Unless the existing joint profile is a scribed profile, the new pointing should be slightly recessed, struck flat. Deeply struck (recessed) and concave joint profiles are generally not appropriate. The slight recess is important, however, to prevent the mortar from smearing onto the face of the bricks, resulting in an enlarged joint width which is both unsightly and historically inappropriate. New pointing should not have a high Portland cement content. Mortars rich in Portland cement are harder and less permeable than historic masonry units, causing damage to the brick or stone. Recommended historic mortars for historic West Chester masonry include the following:

Historic Wall Brick:

*1 part by volume white Portland cement  
2 parts by volume hydrated lime  
6 parts by volume selected sand.*

Historic Chimney Brick:

*1 part by volume white Portland cement  
1 part by volume hydrated lime  
5 parts by volume selected sand*

**2.2 Paint Removal.** Generally, the complete removal of paint from historic masonry is not appropriate. If, during a restoration project, an owner desires to remove paint from brick walls, a spot test should be conducted to assess the condition of the original brickwork below. If the building has been painted for several decades, an owner may elect to repaint the structure. Prior to undertaking paint-stripping operations, a test panel must be conducted to make sure the brickwork is not damaged during the cleaning process. Dry-grit blast cleaning (sandblasting) is never recommended, because it causes irreversible damage to historic masonry surfaces.

## 3. Stucco (Cement/Lime Plaster)

Stucco should not be applied over historic materials. The removal of stucco to expose original historic masonry is acceptable. However, some stone struc-

tures were originally roughly laid and covered with a cement/lime plaster. In this case, the cement/lime plaster should not be removed, but rather preserved or restored. A test panel should be prepared to determine the feasibility and appropriateness of removing exterior stucco. Great care should be taken in removing stucco so as not to damage the historic fabric.

## 3.1 Simulated Brick and Stone Facings.

Simulated brick and stone facings have been applied to a small number of brick buildings in the Historic District. Typically these Portland cement plaster facings were applied when aggressive salesmen convinced building owners that the cost of the facing would be less than the cost of repointing and maintaining a brick facade over time. Existing facings should be maintained and painted brick red. Where the facing is deteriorated, a test panel should be prepared to determine the feasibility and appropriateness of removing it. Because of the strong adhesion of the Portland cement, removing the facing may not be economically feasible. Great care should be taken in removing the simulated brick facing so as not to damage the historic brick substrate.

## 4. Exterior Colors and Color Schemes

Exterior colors and color schemes should be appropriate to the architectural style and period of the building. Paint analysis and historic documentation are encouraged for the owner who desires specific color information about a historic structure, but it is not mandatory. Certain paint manufacturers offer historically accurate exterior paint colors, including specific palettes for different architectural styles. Refer to the bibliography

### Wood Siding

Use water and household bleach; scrub with sponges or natural fiber brushes followed by a water rinse at garden-hose pressure.

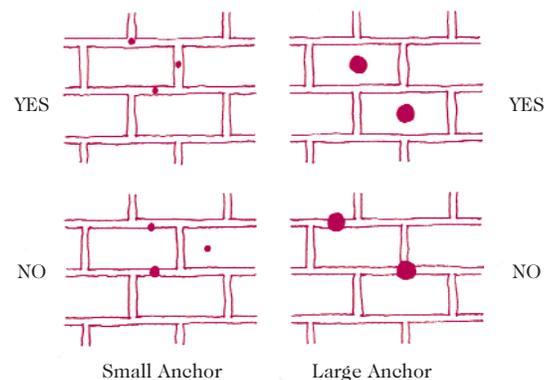
### Brick and Stone

Use a detergent cleaner and water. Special masonry cleaners diluted in water may also be used. Scrub with natural fiber brushes followed by a low-pressure water rinse.

### Stucco

Use water and household detergent, scrub with sponges or natural fiber brushes by a low-pressure water rinse.

**Figure 35.**  
*Recommended Cleaning Techniques for Exterior Building Materials*



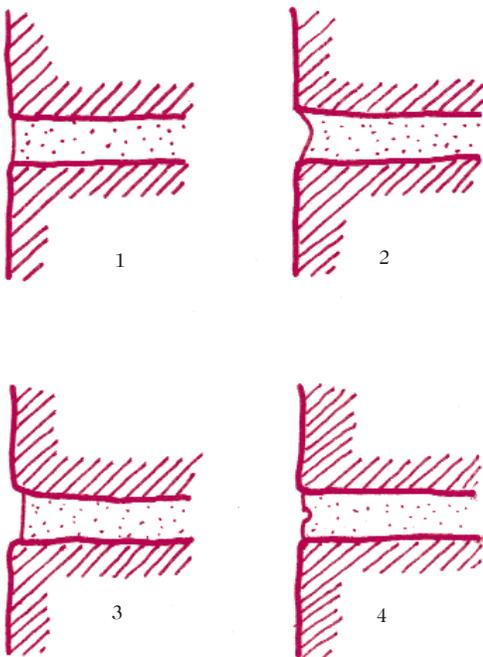
**Figure 34.** Anchoring devices for the support of signs and other wall-mounted items should be anchored with minimal damage to the historic brick masonry. Small anchors (diameter less than the mortar-joint width) should be attached to the mortar, not the brick. Large anchors (diameter greater than the mortar-joint width) should be set in the brick, not overlapping a mortar joint.



(Appendix E) for published references relating to appropriate historic colors and color schemes.

In most cases, color schemes can be organized according to the body, major trim, minor trim, and shutter colors (Figure 37). The body color covers wall surfaces, and on commercial buildings includes any storefront piers. In some cases, the body color will be natural brick or stone and will not require painting. Major trim includes the cornice, window frames, decorative window crowns, storefront cornices, storefront columns, and bulkheads. Minor trim consists of window sashes, doors, and storefront frames. Shutters are typically painted yet another color.

While early nineteenth-century buildings historically featured simple color schemes – brick walls, white exterior woodwork, and dark green shutters and front door, for example – later Victorian styles featured color schemes which might include several colors. However, overly elaborate color schemes, and all color schemes employing multiple pastel colors, are not appropriate. The so-called “painted ladies” are based on popular images of Victorian architecture, not on history.



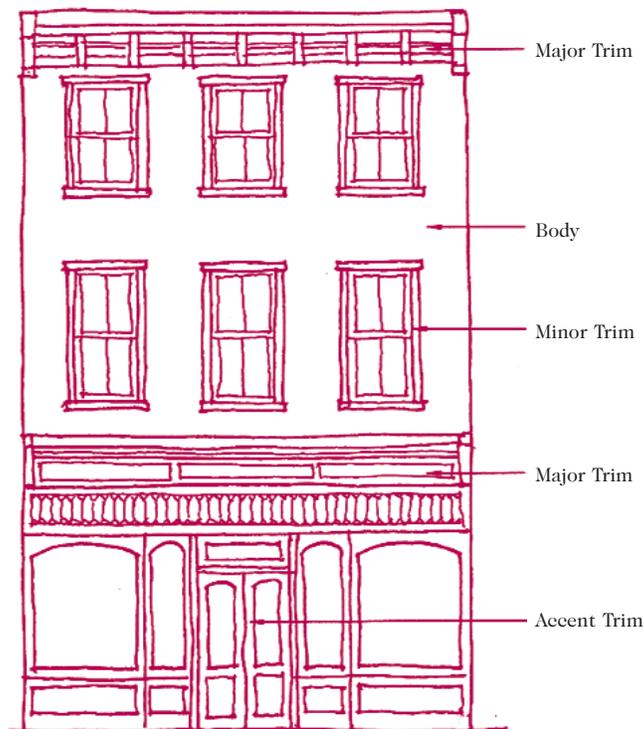
**Figure 36.** New mortar pointing profiles should match the pattern of original pointing. Patterns shown are 1) flush - struck flat, 2) concave, 3) slightly recessed - struck flat, and 4) scribed. The most appropriate joint profile for West Chester brick buildings is 3) slightly recessed - struck flat. By recessing the mortar approximately 1/16 to 1/8 inch, the edges of the bricks remain exposed, minimizing the width of the mortar joint.

When a historic building is repainted, the removal of all paint layers to bare wood is not recommended. Except for heavily weathered paint, scraping off loose material in preparation for new coats of paint is sufficient. Unpainted brick surfaces generally should not be painted. Painted brick surfaces should remain painted. In some instances, paint may be removed from brick, but typically it is not recommended (See B.2.2 - Paint Removal).

On commercial buildings, the paint scheme for the entire building should be coordinated, including building cornice, upper-floor windows and shutters, storefront, and doors. Storefronts should not be repainted without taking into account the color scheme and condition of paint on the entire facade. Finally, historically unpainted metals, such as brass storefront framing or hardware, should not be painted.

**5. Historic Roofing Systems**

Significant historic roofing materials and features that are visible from the street should be preserved. Efforts should be made to retain and repair original roofing that is visible from the street. Where the material is too deteriorated and replacement is necessary, new roofing materials should replicate the original roofing



**Figure 37.** Paint color schemes for historic buildings should be organized according to body color; major trim color; minor trim color; and where applicable, storefront color.

material used on the historic building. Building owners are encouraged to conduct an investigation to determine the original roofing materials, either by means of looking at historical photographs or by physical examination of the roof sheathing by a knowledgeable roofer. Typical historic roofing used on sloping roofs in the West Chester Historic District was standing-seam metal or slate shingles.

Flat roofs are not addressed in these *Design Guidelines*, and no Certificate of Appropriateness is required to obtain a building permit for the replacement of a flat roof.

**5.1 Slate Shingle Roofing.** Slate shingle roofing



*Figure 39. Patterned slates were often employed for Mansart roof applications, as on this elaborate roof on East Gay Street, now Vincent's Restaurant. Because of the visual prominence of a Mansart roof or steeply pitched tower roof, asphalt shingles are not recommended.*



**Figure 38.** Slate roofing shingles last from 75 to 200 years, depending on the source.

replaced wood shingle roofing in large cities because slate was fireproof. In rural areas, slate shingle roofing was also desired for its durability, and in the late nineteenth century for its decorative qualities (Figure 38).

The continued maintenance of existing slate roofing is highly encouraged and less expensive than replacement with a substitute material. The replacement of severely deteriorated historic slate roofing with new slate roofing is also highly encouraged. On buildings with Mansart roofs, the replacement of slate with standard asphalt shingles is not appropriate (Figure 39). On buildings with gable or hipped roofs, replacement of slate with asphalt shingles is discouraged but acceptable (See B.5.4 - Asphalt Shingles).

**5.2 Metal Roofing.** The continued maintenance of existing metal roofing is highly encouraged. The replacement of severely deteriorated metal roofing with new metal roofing is also highly encouraged. Traditional standing-seam metal roofing, painted, is encouraged for re-roofing projects and new roofs (Figure 40). However, pre-formed standing-seam roofing which utilizes low profile (1 inch height) seams may also be acceptable.

**5.3 Substitute Materials.** Substitute materials that closely replicate historic roofing are acceptable. For example, recycled rubber/polymer shingles or fiber-reinforced cement shingles that resemble slate cost less than a natural slate roof but visually simulate slate.

**5.4 Asphalt Shingles.** Asphalt shingle roofing is not recommended on roof slopes that are visible. If asphalt shingles are proposed for a visible roof, it is recommended that the shingles be heavyweight,



**Figure 40.** Replacement of deteriorated standing-seam metal roofing with new standing-seam metal roofing is highly encouraged.

dimensional shingles that resemble historic materials. A color similar to the historic roofing material is recommended. White and light green asphalt shingle roofing, for example, cannot be appropriate, because slate in these colors is not found in nature.

The prominence of the roof and the height and angle of the roof as seen by a pedestrian will be factors that the HARB will consider in its evaluation of each individual roof replacement proposal (Figure 41). The roofing material used on a sloping porch roof or storefront cornice is near to the viewer and, therefore, visually very important. In contrast, a shallow pitch, say 3-in-12 slope, gable roof on a three-story commercial building is simply not visible from the sidewalk and, therefore, not visually important. However, on a building with a Mansart roof, as much as one-third of the visible face of the building is the roofing material. To replace the slate shingles on a Mansart roof with asphalt shingles would be analogous to replacing a brick facade with vinyl siding.

**5.5 Gutters and Downspouts.** When hung gutters and downspouts are replaced, the use of half-round gutters and smooth round downspouts is historically appropriate and thus recommended for historic buildings (Figure 42). New copper, terne-coated stainless steel, and lead-coated copper gutters and downspouts may be allowed to weather naturally, but aluminum and galvanized steel gutters, downspouts, and leader boxes should be painted to blend in with the color of the building to reduce their visibility. Vinyl gutters and downspouts are not appropriate.

Built-in gutters and pole gutters (water diverters) are often found on historic buildings (Figure 43). These forms of gutters collect roof water without the visual intrusion of an exposed metal gutter at the cornice line. The continued maintenance of built-in gutters and pole gutters is highly encouraged. The in-kind replacement of severely deteriorated built-in gutters and pole gutters is also highly encouraged.

## 6. Preserving Historic Roof Features

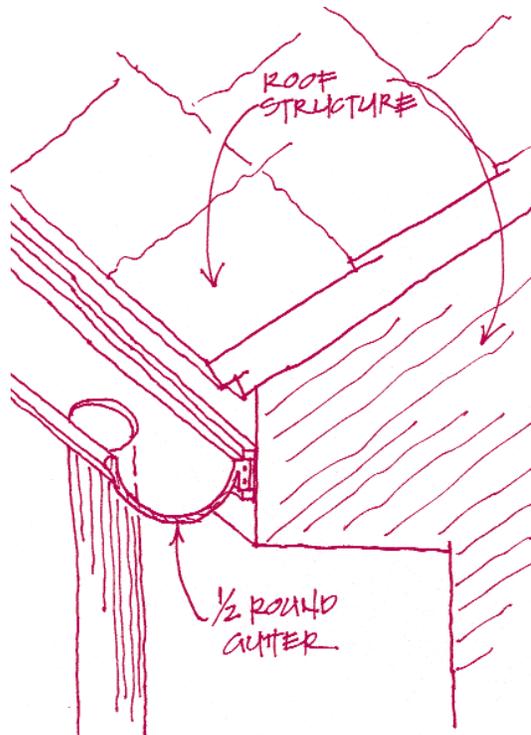
Significant historic roof features such as cornices, cupolas, and dormers should be preserved or restored (See Figure 39). Removing or obscuring any of these features is not appropriate.

**6.1 Chimneys.** Historic chimneys are significant features of a structure's architectural character. A replacement chimney should be an accurate reproduction of an original chimney and based on physical or pictorial evidence (Figure 44). Where an interior

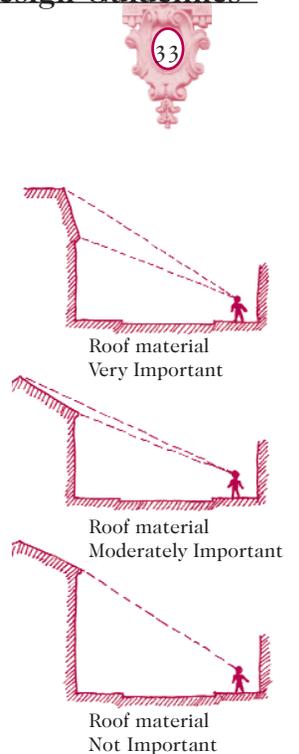
chimney is removed as part of a proposed alteration, the exterior portion of the chimney should be preserved or reconstructed to retain the historical appearance of the structure. (Caution: if the interior chimney has been removed, the chimney above the roof must be properly braced to support the imposed load!)

**6.2 Dormers and Cupolas.** Examples of significant historic gable, hipped, segmental arch-head, and shed dormers exist in the West Chester Historic District (Figure 45). The construction of new dormers or a cupola on any principal facade is not appropriate. If physical and pictorial evidence proves that either of these features originally existed, the reconstruction of the original feature is encouraged. New dormers are permissible only on secondary facades. New shed, gable, and segmental-arch dormers should be compatible in size, scale, and proportion with the original facade, and their placement should relate vertically to the building's fenestration (Figure 46). The overall width of dormers should be no wider than one-half the overall roof width (Figure 47).

**6.3 Skylights.** The installation of skylights on a principal facade is not appropriate. Skylights may be installed on secondary facades. Skylights should be low-profile, flat-glazed construction, and mounted close to the roof. Careful consideration should be given



**Figure 42.** Half-round gutters are recommended for historic buildings.



**Figure 41.** The prominence of a roof and the height and angle of the roof when seen by a pedestrian will be factors that the HARB will consider in its evaluation of each individual roof-replacement proposal.

en to the placement of skylights. Skylights should relate vertically to the overall fenestration of the facade (Figure 48).

**7. Mechanical, Electrical, and Communications Equipment**

The installation of television antennas, security cameras, satellite dishes, outdoor air-conditioning equipment, exhaust fans, and other mechanical, electrical, and communications equipments on principal facades is not appropriate. Equipment should be situated so it is not readily visible from a public way. Air-conditioning equipment may not be mounted on sloping roofs. On flat roofs, air-conditioning equipment should be screened from view by vertical board or other acceptable screening.

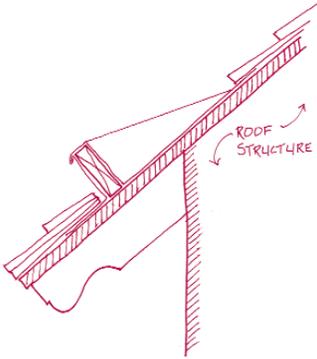
**8. Wall Siding and Trim**

While most buildings in the West Chester Historic District are brick masonry, some additions and out-buildings are wood-frame construction. Siding should be appropriate to the building. In West Chester, wood siding is typically horizontal clapboarding (Figure 49), either a beveled profile or a drop-siding profile (“German siding”). The visual character created by the texture and pattern of historic siding should not be altered by its replacement with different siding profiles or non-historic siding materials. In the Historic District, vinyl and aluminum siding are not appropriate substitute materials except on secondary facades. The removal of existing synthetic siding and its replacement with historically appropriate siding is encouraged. Wood trim elements such as corner boards, window and door surrounds, brackets, moldings, and other decorative features should also be repaired or replaced to match their historic appearance.

The cladding (wrapping) of exterior woodwork such as cornices, corner boards, fascias, projecting bays, brackets, window and door frames, porch framing and trim, and other exterior woodwork with aluminum or vinyl materials is not appropriate. Not only does the cladding cover historic wood moldings and architectural detail, but it also causes the covered woodwork to deteriorate because of moisture that becomes entrapped under the sheet metal.

**9. Historic Windows and Doors**

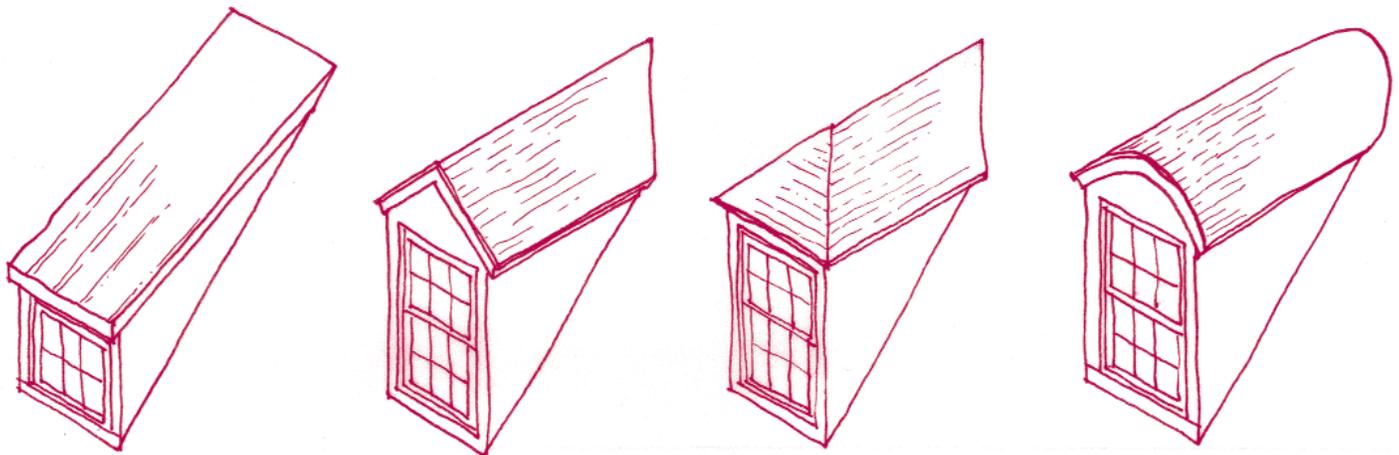
The number, location, size, and glazing patterns of historic windows and doors should be preserved by means of repair and restoration. Any unique features of historic windows or doors such as stained glass, leaded glass, fanlights, and sidelights should also be preserved or restored. Where the severity of door and window deterioration dictates replacement, any new units should match the historic units in design, dimensions, and pane configurations (Figure 50). Replacement windows and doors should have either true divided lights (muntins that penetrate the glass)



**Figure 43.** Water diverters, also called pole gutters, are often found on historic buildings. In addition to catching sliding ice on steeply-sloped roofs, water diverters free the cornice woodwork from rain-water collection hardware.



**Figure 44.** Chimneys are often visually more prominent on residential buildings than on commercial structures, and should be preserved.



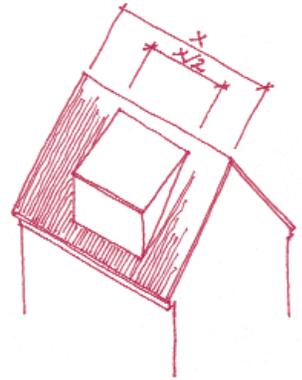
**Figure 45.** Types of dormer roof forms, from left to right: shed dormer, gabled dormer, hipped dormer and segmental-arched dormer.

or simulated divided lights (permanently affixed muntins applied to both the exterior and interior sealed insulating glass unit). Removable or snap-in muntins on glass panes and muntin grids that are sandwiched between layers of glass are not recommended. The restoration of missing, obscured, or modified original window or door openings is encouraged. Replacement of missing doors and windows shall be substantiated by physical, documentary, or pictorial evidence. Replacement vinyl and stock aluminum panning windows are not recommended on primary facades. Aluminum entrance doors are not recommended in shopfronts except where the existing shopfront framing is metal.

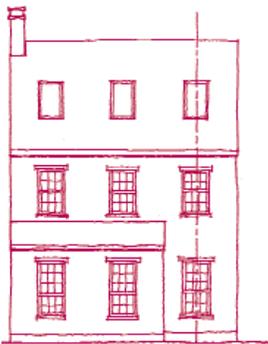
Glass used in new windows and doors should be clear glass. Tinted glass, reflective glass, opaque glass, and other non-traditional glass types are not appropriate in the Historic District.

**9.1 Replacement Windows.** Several window manufacturers offer one or more lines of “replacement windows,” which may be wood, clad wood, aluminum, or vinyl. “Replacement windows” usually refer to new windows that mount within the frame of the existing wood window. They are typically made without a structural frame; instead, they rely on the strength of the original window for support.

Wood replacement windows are offered in a range of qualities, design features, and costs. The best ones may be ordered custom-sized to the sash opening of the original window. The sashes may be ordered with genuine muntins or with muntin grids that are applied to the interior and exterior face of a single panel of



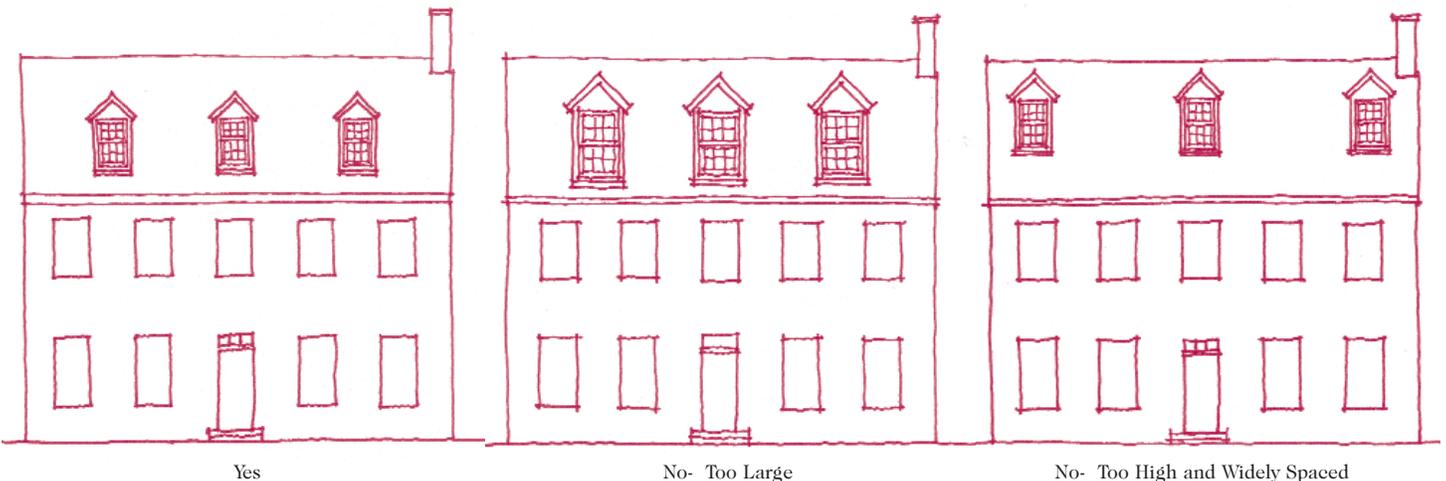
**Figure 47.** The overall width of a proposed shed dormer, recommended only for secondary facades, should not exceed one-half of the roof width.



**Figure 48.** While skylights are not recommended on primary facades, they may be added to secondary facades if they are incorporated into the overall pattern of doors and windows. Skylights should align vertically with windows in the wall below.



**Figure 49.** The traditional wood siding for primary buildings in West Chester is horizontal clapboarding, while outbuildings may have either vertical or horizontal siding.



**Figure 46.** Dormers should be carefully sized and placed to create a harmonious composition.

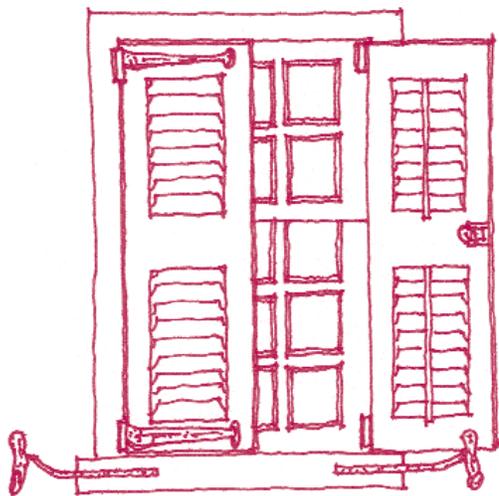
sealed insulating glass. This type is marketed as a “simulated divided light” window.

Aluminum replacement windows are available with “panning,” that is, extruded aluminum sections that cover the exposed face of the original wood window frame and window sill. Panning is used so that the entire window assembly requires no field painting. Several manufacturers offer a range of “historical profiles,” that is, aluminum extrusions that are similar in shape to the outside face and brick mold of a traditional wood window. The panning is also available in custom extrusions that replicate historic wood brick molds very closely, but are economically feasible only on larger projects (more than 50 windows).

Vinyl replacement windows are typically the least expensive of the three basic material types. Because of the low strength of vinyl, sash components such as stiles (the vertical members) and rails (the horizontal members) are thicker than they are in either wood or aluminum.

With such a range of options, the following guidelines apply to the West Chester Historic District:

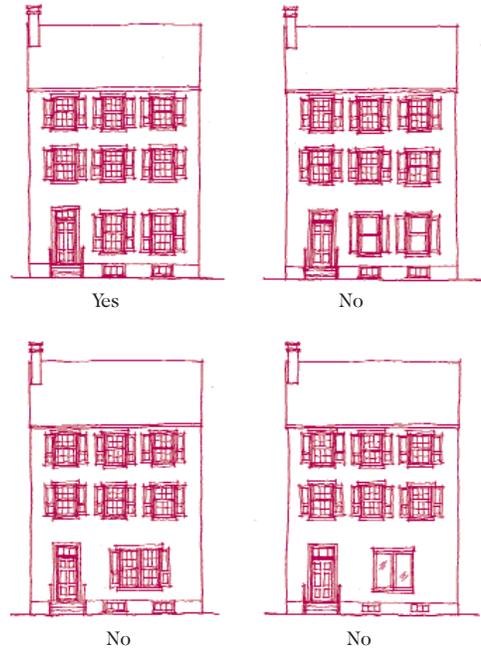
Replacement windows should be considered only as an option to replacing severely deteriorated historic wood sashes. Replacement windows are not a panacea to avoid future painting and maintenance of exterior woodwork.



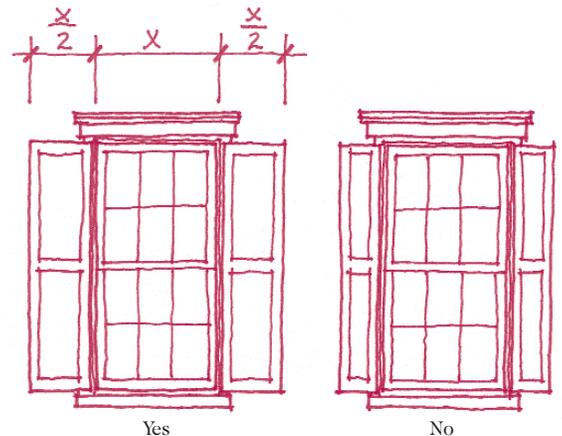
**Figure 51.** Wood blinds were traditionally used on the upper stories of buildings, where security was less of a concern. Historic shutters and blinds should be preserved. Traditional shutter hardware includes pintle hinges, a horizontal bolt, and hold-backs called shutter dogs.

Replacement windows are not justified in the Historic District as a method of improving the thermal performance of windows. Storm windows are the appropriate method of achieving that goal.

Vinyl replacement windows are not recommended in the Historic District.



**Figure 50.** Preservation of the pattern and rhythm of historic windows is important to the harmony and texture of the building facade and the streetscape. Replacement of six-over-six sashes with one-over-one sashes destroys the scale of the windows (top right). Combining two windows into a single “picture window” or band of windows destroys the rhythm of the facade (bottom left and right). Modifying the alignment of windows and doors in each bay weakens the order of the facade.



**Figure 52.** Replacement shutters and blinds should be painted wood, properly sized to the sash opening, and appear operable.

Aluminum replacement windows with “historical” or custom panning are appropriate only on large buildings.

Any proposed replacement window should be customized to the original sash opening. Applying filler strips around the perimeter of a replacement window reduces the size of the glass area, makes the frame members awkwardly wide, and is not appropriate in the Historic District.

For original sashes with multiple panes, the replacement window should match the existing pane configuration. True or simulated divided lights are recommended in the proposed replacement window. Snap-in grids, whether interior or exterior, are not appropriate. Muntin grids applied between layers of sealed insulating glass are also not appropriate.

**9.2 Window and Door Hardware.** Visible window and door hardware should be compatible with the architectural character of the building. Buzzers, intercoms, and mailboxes should be located to have minimum visual impact on the building or located within a recessed vestibule if possible. Modern devices should be painted to match the background material on which they are mounted.

## 10. Storm Windows and Doors

Improving the thermal performance of historic wood windows and doors is often desired by owners of his-

toric buildings. The specific solution to each thermal upgrade problem depends on numerous factors, and no single approach is applicable to all conditions. Traditionally, storm windows were constructed of wood and glass. Many house owners had two sets of removable panels: wood-and-glass storm windows for the winter season, and wood-and-screen panels for the summer season. Cleaning and changing the screen and storm panels were spring and fall rituals. Few houses retain their wood screens and storm windows, and fewer still are changed seasonally. Many residences are now equipped with triple-track storm windows that allow for a complete layer of glass over the entire original window or an insect-screen panel over half of the window.



**Figure 53.** The storefront of the Woman's Exchange at 10 North Church Street is a wonderfully preserved 1920s storefront, complete with “prism glass” transoms (small, square window panes above the display windows). The street numerals are also traditional.



**Figure 54.** The scale and lack of proportions of sliding glass doors is not appropriate in the Historic District.

**10.1 Triple-track Storm Windows.** For buildings with double-hung sash wood windows, aluminum triple-track windows with a factory color-coat matching the window trim are appropriate. While at first thought this may be surprising, the metal storm window preserves the original wood sashes as well as improves the window thermally, and at the same time is entirely reversible. Mill-finish aluminum is not an appropriate storm-window finish. The storm panels should be glazed with clear glass. The horizontal rails of the storm window should align with the meeting rails of the original window. Storm windows should be sized exactly to the historic wood window.

**10.2 Interior Storm Windows.** Interior storm windows, usually fabricated with a narrow white aluminum frame and clear plastic (acrylic) glazing and mounted on magnetic strips, are suitable for applications where the building is fully air conditioned and windows are not opened for ventilation. Interior storm windows are especially desirable for buildings with multi-pane sashes, because the pattern of broken light on multi-pane sashes is an important visual feature that is lost when covered with one-over-one triple-track storm windows.

**10.3 Storm and Screen Doors.** To avoid the

need for a storm door, most historic houses in the district have interior vestibules to buffer the winter cold. The paneled front door was a symbol of hospitality and security. Concealing the original front door by a storm door or screen door is not recommended. On secondary facades, however, storm and screen doors are appropriate. Storm or screen doors should be as simple as possible, with a plain glass or screen insert. While wood storm and screen doors are preferred, simple aluminum doors that are finished with a baked enamel finish matching the historic wood door paint color are also acceptable. Scalloped edges and cross-buck patterns on aluminum storm doors are not appropriate.

**11. Shutters and Blinds**

Historic shutters (solid panels) and blinds (louvered panels) should be preserved (Figure 51). Historically, shutters and blinds were employed to provide night security and shading from the sun. Paneled shutters were used on the ground floor and louvered blinds were used on upper floors. Where historic exterior shutters and blinds survive, they should be carefully preserved and repaired. If no shutters or blinds are present but there is evidence that they once existed (as evidenced in either historic photographs or surviving pintle hinges), their replacement as part of any pro-



Figure 55. Historic shop fronts are a prominent part of the character of the Historic District. Upper views: East Gay Street; lower views: West Gay Street.

posed rehabilitation project is encouraged. If no vestige of shutters or blinds exists, they should not be added to a building.

Replacement shutters and blinds should be painted wood, properly sized, and appear operable (Figure 52). Plastic and metal shutters are not recommended. Shutters should measure one half the width of the historic sash, and match the height of the opening. Shutters and blinds should be mounted on hinges or pintles and held open with shutter turns or shutter dogs (see Figure 51). Mounting shutters or blinds directly onto any historic wall material is not appropriate.

### 12. Street-Address Numerals

Street-address numerals should be simple in style, with characters not more than 4 inches high. Script styles and the spelling-out of the address should be avoided (Figure 53).

### 13. New Openings in Existing Walls

Creating new openings in a principal facade is generally not appropriate. New openings in secondary facades are discouraged but may be acceptable. The conversion of an existing window to a door opening or a door to a window opening will be considered only on secondary facades, except when the modification of the element reconstructs its historic form. On secondary facades, allowed proposed new openings in walls should be compatible with the historic character of the building. Large-paned, sliding glass patio doors are not appropriate (Figure 54). French doors with divided lights, bay windows, and oriel windows will be considered only on secondary facades.

### 14. Historic Storefronts

Storefronts are a prominent part of the character of the Historic District (Figure 55). On narrow streets, the first-floor character of buildings largely defines the visual experience of the pedestrian. Storefronts are vital to both the visual character of the streetscape and a successful retail shopping environment in West Chester's downtown. The scale and architectural detailing of historic storefronts create a richness and sense of visual satisfaction that is lacking in automobile-oriented retail settings (Figure 56).

Historic storefronts in West Chester date from 1870 to 1930. Earlier shop windows were essentially large house windows, with sashes fabricated from many small panes of glass. The development of plate glass in the 1850s coincided with changes in retailing brought about by the industrial revolution. As more manufactured goods became available, competition for

customers led merchants to increase their storefront display area. Existing buildings were altered to make the ground floor as transparent as possible, and new buildings were constructed with iron columns and beams that supported the upper-floor masonry walls without reducing the storefront.

#### 14.1 Preserving Historic Storefronts.

Existing historic storefront windows and doors should be retained and repaired. In addition to many historic late nineteenth century wood-and-glass storefronts,

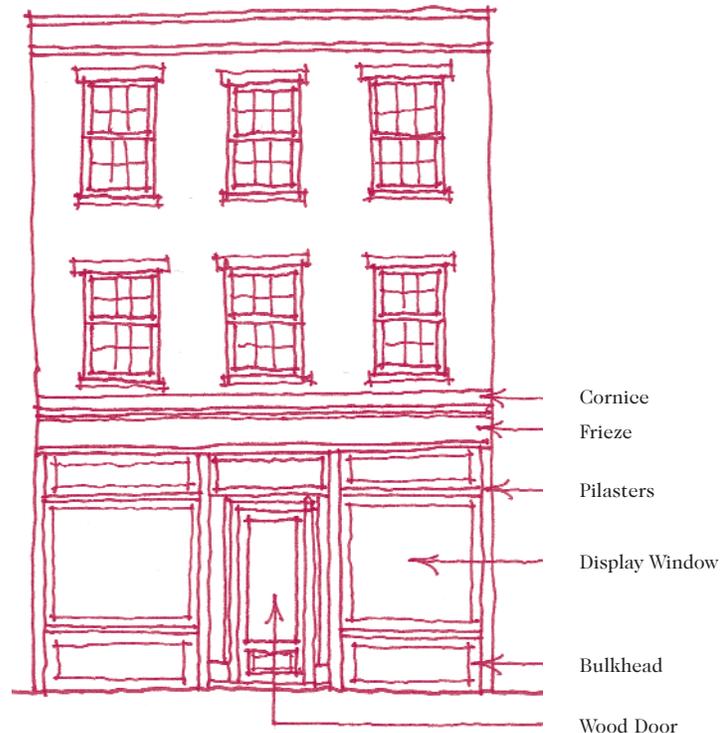


Figure 56. Glossary of storefront components.



Figure 57. Early twentieth-century storefront at 11 North Church Street, with deeply recessed entrance for maximum display window space.



the West Chester Historic District has numerous early twentieth-century metal-and-glass storefronts. These latter storefronts were built during West Chester's retail heyday — the second quarter of the twentieth century — and often featured complex plans with recessed entrances that maximized shop-window display space (Figure 57).



**Figure 58.** *The reconstruction of the storefront at 117 East Gay Street. 58a. Existing conditions in 1999; 58b. Early twentieth-century photograph of the storefront; 58c. Reconstruction of the wood and glass storefront by Homeworks based on the surviving storefront cornice, surviving masonry openings, and the historic photograph. (Historical photograph from the collection of the Chester County Historical Society.)*

**14.2 New Storefronts in Existing Buildings.** In existing buildings, new storefront design should be based on the historic storefront that formerly existed at that location, as evidenced by surviving physical evidence and historic photographic views (Figure 58). Where no evidence exists, the new storefront design should be appropriate to the construction date and style of the building. The detailing of new storefronts



**Figure 59.** *Storefronts consisting of a pent roof and large plate glass windows are not recommended in the Historic District. The pent roof, in fact, has no precedent in the Historic District.*

should be traditional architectural woodwork, with genuine stile-and-rail doors and bulkhead panels. Pent roofs and plywood panels with applied moldings are not appropriate (Figures 59 and 60).

### 15. Historic Porches and Stoops

Historic porches and stoops are important character-defining features of the streetscape and architecture of West Chester (Figure 61). Porches were often added to earlier structures, and are significant additions warranting preservation. The original materials, configurations, details, and dimensions of a historic porch or stoop should be preserved or restored. Where components are severely deteriorated and require replacement, new components should replicate the original in material and design. Replacement porches and stoops should be based on physical or pictorial evidence. If this evidence is not available, a simple design that avoids elaborate detail should be employed. Replacement vinyl railing systems, and railings fabricated from unpainted pressure-treated wood are not recommended.

### 16. Building Accessibility

Building accessibility for individuals with disabilities should be achieved without compromise to historic materials or to character-defining features of a historic building or site. A ramp or vertical access lift should not be placed on the front or prominent side facade of a historic building where it can be avoided (Figure 62). If the only feasible placement of a ramp or lift is on a front facade, efforts should be made to minimize its visual impact on the facade, and the building owner should work with the HARB and the Borough Zoning Officer to achieve accessibility without visual intrusion. Accessibility devices can sometimes be effectively concealed within a traditional building element. For example, a vertical platform lift could be built within what appears to be a traditional porch, or a ramp can be integrated into an entrance terrace.

### 17. Signage

Signs should be compatible with the scale, proportion, form, and architectural detailing of the building to which they are applied (Figure 63). Projecting signs (hung perpendicular to the wall on a decorative bracket) and wall-mounted signs that are rectangular, square, or oval are appropriate to the majority of historic buildings. Free-standing signs are appropriate for buildings that are set back from the front lot line and fronted by landscaping. A traditional sign type such as wood with either carved or painted lettering is highly encouraged. Signs should not obscure any architectural detail. Appropriate colors for signs were tradi-

tionally intense versions of building colors — high-gloss bottle green, olive, golds, and burgundies. Black lettering on a white background is not recommended, nor are metallic paints other than gold.

On commercial buildings with a storefront, signs should be placed in the signboard area located above the storefront windows and below the upper-story windows. Where historical photographs indicate that a building historically had a larger sign than is currently allowed by the Zoning Code, and the proposed building sign is based on the general size and design of the historical precedent, the HARB will consider the merits of the application without regard to its conformance with size limitations of the sign ordinance. If approved, the HARB will also support the application in the owner's appeal to the Zoning Hearing Board.

Corporate logos and standard corporate lettering styles that are non-traditional should be de-emphasized in the signage design for a historic building. While it is recognized by the HARB that corporate identity is important to the historic commercial building user, the visual dominance of corporate logos that are visible in automobile-oriented strip shopping malls is not appropriate to the Historic District. Creative graphic solutions, in which the corporate logo or corporate lettering style is a secondary element, are encouraged.

Where signage lighting is required, small gooseneck or hidden lights are recommended. Internally illuminated signs are not recommended, except for channel letters at appropriate locations.



**Figure 60.** Storefronts fabricated from plywood and applied moldings have a flat, two-dimensional character and are not recommended in the Historic District.

### 18. Awnings

Awnings should be appropriate to the design of the storefront or building facade. Awnings traditionally provided protection from the weather for shoppers and shaded the shop windows from direct sun (Figure 64). Nineteenth-century awnings in West Chester were often wood-and-metal canopies that extended from the top of the storefront to the street curb, where the front edge was supported by iron or wood posts.

New awnings should be designed to relate to the architecture of the storefront or building facade (Figure 65). Building features such as arched transom windows should not be obscured by the awning design. Awnings should be constructed of suitable fabrics supported by metal frames. Fabric design should be striped or solid color, using colors appropriate to the period of the storefront, and should avoid non-traditional effects. Awnings should not be internally illuminated.

### 19. Hardware, Electrical, and Mechanical Devices

The mounting of ventilation louvers, registers, exhaust fans, alarm devices, cable boxes, utility meters, satellite dishes, security cameras, and other mechanical, elec-

tronic, and/or electrical devices should be avoided on principal facades. To minimize their visual impact, devices mounted on secondary facades should either be painted to match the color of the material on which they are mounted or screened by landscaping features. Air-conditioning condenser units should be screened from public view.

### 20. Lighting

Where historic light fixtures survive, they should be preserved. Reproduction exterior lighting on historic structures should be simple in style, in scale with the building, and appropriate to the character of the building. Polished brass, “colonial style,” and other overly ornamental light fixtures are strongly discouraged. Simple period fixtures or unornamented modern fixtures such as wall sconces, pendants, and post-mounted lamps can be compatible in the Historic District. If exposed conduit cannot be avoided, it should be painted to match the background material on which it is mounted. Exterior floodlights and spotlights should be avoided on principal facades. Lighting for signage on historic buildings should be inconspicuous and should be restricted to reasonably low light levels. Yard lighting and parking lot lighting should be post-mounted on maximum 12-foot posts, or mounted on

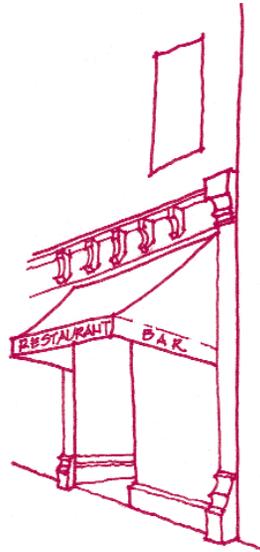


Figure 61. Historic stoops, railings, window-well covers, and splashblocks are important streetscape elements.

the building. Industrial light fixtures that produce yellowish or pinkish light are not appropriate. Low-wattage metal halide or mercury-vapor sources are acceptable, subject to the general requirements contained in this paragraph.

**C. GUIDELINES FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION**

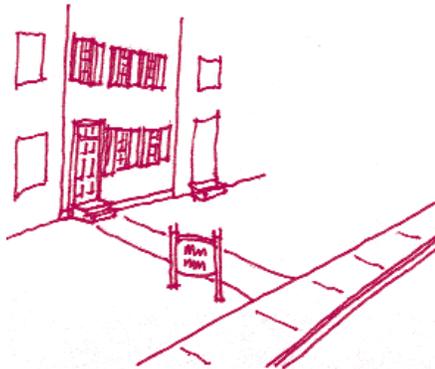
The following guidelines pertain to new construction in the West Chester Historic District. New construction includes additions to historic buildings, new structures along primary streets, and secondary structures such as garages, sheds, outbuildings, or workshops.



Awnings and Canopies



Projecting Signs



Freestanding Signs



Flush or Wall Signs



Shadow Letters

Figure 63. Diagram of sign types.



Figure 62. Providing accessibility for historic commercial buildings can be difficult. Here, at the corner of East Gay Street and North Matlack Street, a new accessible ramp is placed around the corner from Gay Street. Although this ramp would be intrusive along Gay Street, the landscaping and automobile orientation of the corner obscures the size of the ramp.

### 1. Visual Relationship Between the Old and New

A new building or addition should relate visually to neighboring contributing historic buildings. Proposals for new designs within the Historic District will be considered for their specific location and will be evaluated based on their compatibility with neighboring historic structures. For a typical building, neighboring historic structures include those to each side of the structure and those directly across the street from the structure. For a new building located at a corner, the neighboring historic structures include all buildings at the intersection in addition to those immediately adjacent. Where a building falls near the edge of the Historic District, historic buildings located near but outside of the district will also be taken into account during the review process.



**Figure 65.** Awnings should relate to the storefront to which they are applied. Here, on West Gay Street, awnings display the restaurant name and street address even when retracted.



**Figure 64.** Church Street looking north from Market Street, c.1890. Awnings were a vital part of both the storefront and the streetscape. Merchandise in shadow could more properly be displayed, and shoppers were protected from the weather. (From the collection of the Chester County Historical Society.)

The most successful new buildings in historic districts are ones that are clearly modern in design but compatible with and sensitive to the character of the Historic District. The experience of the Historic District is enriched by new buildings that have merit on their own and are sensitive to their setting.

### 2. Scale and Massing of Large Buildings

Large buildings should be designed as a series of masses or building elements compatible with the immediate streetscape. The massing or volumetric shape of a building greatly affects the scale of a building and underlies all other architectural features. The typical commercial building in downtown West Chester is a three-bay, three-story brick block with a flat (low slope) roof. Where a large building in the Historic District is unavoidable, the mass of the proposed structure can be broken down into traditional building blocks that relate to the scale of the streetscape, thereby blending into its context (Figure 66).



**Figure 66.** Large buildings should be designed as a series of masses or building elements compatible with the immediate streetscape. 66a. The Bicentennial Parking Garage on South High Street, above, is broken down into a row of four four-story commercial blocks relating to the immediate streetscape. 66b. The Borough's older parking facility on North Walnut Street, lacks all human scale and visual relationship to the Historic District.



### 3. Replicating Historic Buildings

The design of a new building should not be an exact replica of any existing historic building within the district. Copies of historic buildings among original ones look awkward and present a false historic context. However, a new structure's design may be inspired by historic building designs and features, and may be traditional in form and detailing.

### 4. Relationship of Additions to Historic Buildings

A proposed addition to a building in the Historic District should be subordinate to the principal facade and mass of the historic building. The subordinate appearance of an addition can be achieved through its setback (See C.5 - Building Placement and Setbacks) massing, width, and detail (Figure 67). The width of an addition should generally not exceed two-thirds the width of the principal historic structure.

### 5. Building Placement and Setbacks

#### 5.1 Setbacks for New Construction.

Historically, the building type dictated the structure's setback from the street. Commercial buildings such as taverns, inns, retail shops, and stores fronted directly onto the sidewalk. Structures constructed solely as residences were sometimes set back from the edge of the sidewalk to create a small area of landscaping, but often were built directly on the sidewalk. New construction in the district should follow the precedent of



**Figure 67.** Built before the establishment of the Historic District, the Walnut Street addition to the eighteenth-century building at the corner of North Walnut Street and East Gay Street is compatible because of the subordinate size of the addition, the repetition of the side-gable roof form, and the matching wall and roof materials. Although the doors and windows in the addition are modern, their recessed position makes them compatible.

adjacent lots (See C.1 - Visual Relationship Between the Old and New).

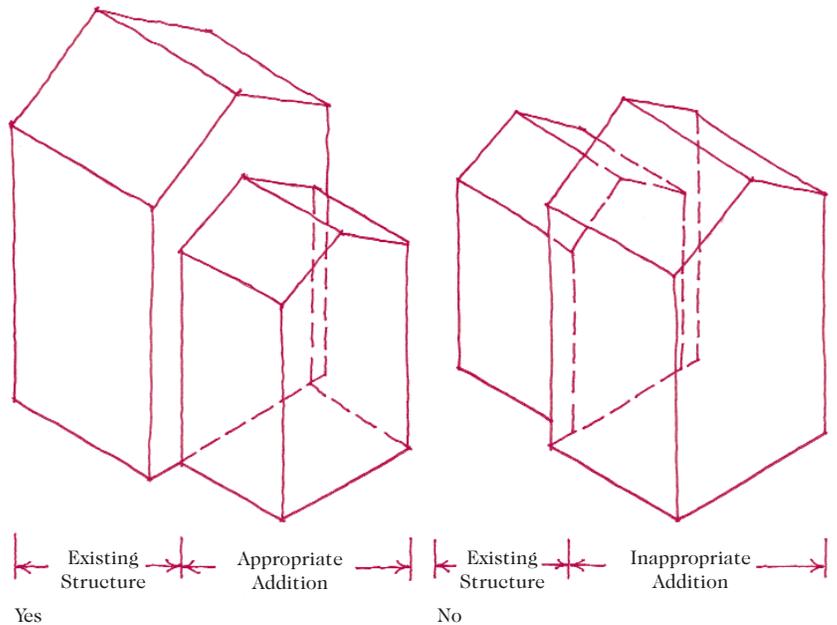
**5.2 Setbacks for Additions.** Historically, most additions to buildings in the Historic District were built at the building rear facade because there was no available building lot area on the street facade. These additions were often built up to the side yard lot lines, and had minimal visual impact on the appearance of the downtown. When an addition fronted a commercial street, it was typically set flush with the existing building to create the appearance of a larger, more substantial building. Proposed additions should follow the pattern of setbacks of adjacent buildings and building additions in order to blend into the development pattern of the immediate neighborhood.

#### 5.3 Setbacks for Secondary Structures.

Garages, sheds, outbuildings, or workshops should be placed behind and remain visually secondary to the principal building on the lot. Side and rear setbacks should follow the general pattern of the placement of outbuildings in the immediate neighborhood.

### 6. Building Height and Form

**6.1 Additions.** The cornice line on the principal facade of an addition should be equal to or lower than the cornice line on the principal facade of the historic structure. Likewise, the ridge line of an addition



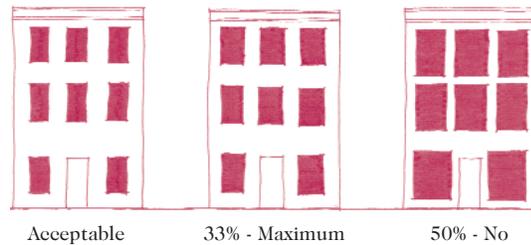
**Figure 68.** An addition to a historic building should be a secondary form that preserves the form of the historic building. A proposed addition should be no larger than two-thirds the street frontage of an existing building.

should be equal to or lower than the ridge line of the historic structure. The form of new buildings should be compatible with the form of adjacent historic structures (Figure 68).

**6.2 New Construction.** The eave line and ridge line of a proposed new principal structure should not exceed the height of the eave line and ridge line of flanking historic structures. The height and overall size of any proposed new secondary structure should not exceed the height and overall size of the principal historic structure on the lot where it is to be constructed.

**7. Building Width and Rhythm**

Historically, the principal structures of the district fill most if not all the total frontage width along the street. Additions and new buildings should repeat the pattern of filling most of the street frontage of a single lot.



**Figure 70.** The amount of window area in a traditional brick wall is less than one-third of the total facade area (above the storefront). When this ratio of window area increases beyond one-third, the traditional character of the wall is lost.



**Figure 71.** In the rehabilitation of the Chester County Historical Society, an accessible ramp was incorporated into the entrance terrace design, screened from view.

**8. Relationship of the Facade Parts to the Whole**

All parts of a new building facade should be visually integrated as a composition, which should relate to adjacent buildings (Figure 69). The size and proportions of facade elements such as doors, windows, cornices, and water tables emphasize the vertical and horizontal dimensions of a facade. Exaggeration of these elements and the use of ribbon windows, vertical stacks of windows, and brick courses of contrasting colors create a design that is not compatible and out of proportion with historic buildings.

**9. Roof Form, Materials, and Features**

**9.1 Form.** While most commercial buildings within the district have flat or shed roofs, many buildings feature other roof forms.

**Additions:** Historically, the roof form of an addition placed along side an existing structure facing a street followed the form of the principal building (see Figure 68). Continuing the historical precedent, additions to gable roof structures that face a street should also have a gable roof. Additions on a secondary facade can have a different roof form, such as a shed roof. Mansart roofs should be utilized in additions only when the existing building features a mansart roof.

**New Buildings:** On new buildings, the use of one of the historic roof forms found in the district is recommended. Contemporary Mansart roof forms and materials, which have been overused in fast-food restaurants and strip shopping centers, are not appropriate to the Historic District.



**Figure 69.** The scale of the Mansart roof of this one-story infill building on West Gay Street overwhelms the facade below. In contrast to the adjacent traditional storefronts, the placement of so much modern banking equipment and signage on a small facade creates visual clutter.

**9.2 Materials.** Additions: The roofing material on an addition should match the original structure or be visually similar to the existing roofing. For example, an addition to a building with a slate roof should have a roof that is slate, a synthetic slate, or a material that appears similar in color and dimension to slate. The roofing material of a one-story shed addition to a two-story slate-roof house, however, could be another historically appropriate material such as painted metal, especially if the slope of the proposed shed roof is less than that of the main roof.

**New construction:** The use of traditional roofing materials such as slate and standing-seam metal is encouraged on new buildings. Recycled rubber polymer shingles or fiber-reinforced cement shingles that closely resemble slate and modern historic-looking standing-seam roofing with interlocking pans and low-profile standing seams are available. (Note: Many pre-formed metal roofing systems, however, have clumsy seam and termination details which are not appropriate in the Historic District.) If asphalt shingles are to be used, heavyweight, dimensional shingles in a color similar to those of historic materials are strongly recommended. Membrane roofing is acceptable on flat roofs.

**9.3 Features.** Dormers: Dormer design, proportions, and placement on additions and new buildings should be compatible in size, scale, proportion, placement, and detail with the historic gable, hipped, segmental arch-head dormers, and shed dormers found in the Historic District (See Figures 45, 46, and 47). Shed dormers on principal facades are strongly discouraged, and are not appropriate on roof slopes which directly front a street. The overall width of the dormers should be no wider than one-half the overall roof width.

**Skylights:** Skylights with a low profile are acceptable on all secondary facades but not on principal facades. It is recommended that the placement of skylights relate to the overall fenestration of the building by relating vertically to other openings in the wall (See Figure 48). The use of dormers and skylights on the same roof plane (i.e., next to each other) is not recommended.

## 10. Exterior Wall Materials

**10.1 Additions.** An addition should either replicate the existing exterior wall material in type, color, and texture or be constructed of a historic exterior wall material found in the district. If wood siding is proposed for the addition, the width, type, and detail of the new siding should complement the proportions

and scale of the existing building. Cement/fiber synthetic clapboard siding that is manufactured with a smooth surface and field painted is also acceptable on primary facades. The wall materials of an addition should be compatible with the wall materials of the existing building. Except on secondary facades, vinyl and aluminum siding are not appropriate in the district. Except on secondary facades, stucco finishes are not appropriate to the district.

**10.2 New Construction.** The use of historic exterior wall materials such as brick, cut stone, or wood siding and their related details are strongly encouraged for new construction. Cement/fiber synthetic clapboard



**Figure 72.** At the Chester County Courthouse, air-conditioning equipment is screened from view by means of a patterned wood fence.



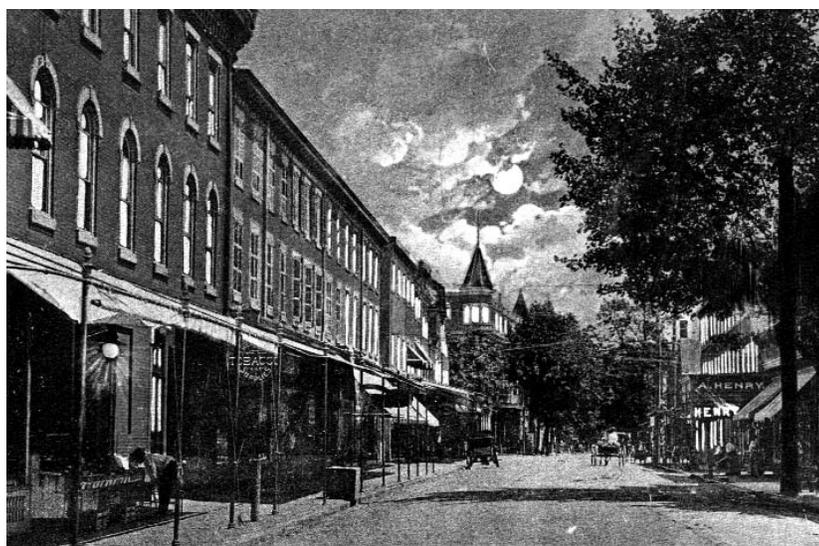
**Figure 73.** Although located just outside the Historic District on West Miner Street, this new garage is compatible with a historic setting through its use of traditional board-and-batten siding, gabled roof form, storage loft, and placement on the lot.

siding that is manufactured with a smooth surface and field painted is also acceptable on primary facades. The use of vinyl or aluminum siding is not recommended except on secondary facades. Likewise, vinyl and aluminum facings and fabricated plastic building components are not appropriate on primary facades.

The size and type of siding materials should be compatible with the building type of the proposed new building. For example, a garage or workshop on an alley may have vertical wood siding such as board-and-batten siding, or may be stucco-faced masonry. A



**Figure 75.** A traditional wood picket fence provides screening from the street between these two houses on South Church Street.



**Figure 74.** Postcard “Church St. from East Gay Street, West Chester, Pa.,” published by A. Henry, West Chester, PA, c.1910. The artist amplifies the impact of the changing natural light on the streetscape. (From the collection of the Chester County Historical Society.)

principal structure in the district historically would not have vertical wood siding nor stucco siding, but rather would have been sided with a horizontal wood siding such as clapboards, or would have been constructed of brick masonry.

## 11. Windows and Doors

**11.1 Additions.** It is recommended that the material of windows and doors in additions match the material of the window and doors in the historic structure. The proportion of windows and doors in an addition should be similar to the proportion of original openings in the existing building. Replicating the sash type and pane configuration of the historic windows is encouraged. If the sash type and configuration is not replicated, a sash type and configuration that is compatible in type to the historic sash pattern is recommended. For example, an addition to a three-bay townhouse should either replicate the historic one-over-one, double-hung sash configuration or at least receive a double-hung sash configuration with similar dimensions to the historic fenestration. Sliding glass doors with large uninterrupted sheets of glass are not appropriate on the principal facade of an addition.

**11.2 New Construction.** The placement and proportion of windows and doors should relate to the placement and proportion of openings on the historic buildings of the district. It is recommended that vertically proportioned windows placed in a three, four, or five-bay configuration be installed on principal facades. The percentage of window openings to total wall surface on a principal facade should not exceed 33 percent (one-third) of the total wall area (Figure 70). The use of double-hung sash windows is encouraged. On secondary structures, the size and type of windows and doors should relate to the type of structure proposed.

## 12. Shutters and Blinds

Shutters and blinds are generally discouraged on additions and on new buildings. If shutter or blinds are proposed, they should follow the historical precedent of original shutters and blinds. New shutters and blinds should be properly sized to fit the opening, and should appear operable by being mounted on proper shutter hardware. Plastic or metal shutters and blinds are not appropriate. New shutters and blinds should be fitted with traditional shutter hardware and should not be surface-mounted directly onto an exterior wall surface (See B.11 - Shutters and Blinds).

## 13. Porches and Stoops

New porches and stoops are encouraged on streets

where porches and stoops are common. On additions, porches or stoops should be simple in design and visually relate to the existing building. On new structures, porches or stoops should visually relate to the proposed building in a manner similar to the relationship of historic porches to existing historic buildings in the district.

#### 14. Building Accessibility

**14.1 Additions.** Where possible, a building addition should be designed to include features that make up for any accessibility deficiencies of the original building. This approach can eliminate the need for intrusive alterations to the original building (Figure 71).

**14.2 New Construction.** All new buildings except private homes and churches are required by law to be accessible to persons with disabilities. New buildings in the Historic District should be designed with integral accessibility features, so that changes in level are accommodated within the new building, not at the building exterior.

#### 15. Hardware, Mechanical, and Electrical Devices

The mounting of small louvers, registers, exhaust fans, alarm devices, cable boxes, utility meters, communications equipment, and other mechanical and/or electrical devices should be avoided on principal facades. To minimize their visual impact, devices mounted on secondary facades should either be painted to match the color of the material on which they are mounted or screened by landscaping features. Air conditioning condenser units should be screened from public view (Figure 72).

#### 16. Lighting

Exterior lighting of additions and new buildings should be simple and in scale with the building. New fixtures should be simple, unobtrusive, and mounted in a traditional manner. Exterior recessed downlights, if proposed, should be placed to avoid dramatic light patterns on the proposed building facade.

#### 17. Relationship of New

##### Outbuildings to Their Historic Context

New outbuildings should visually relate to their historic context (Figure 73). Outbuildings should be simple in design, and should relate to the period of construction of the principal building on the lot. The design of outbuildings should not be overly elaborate. Depending on the placement of the building lot on the street, a proposed outbuilding will be treated as either a primary or secondary facade.

#### D. GUIDELINES FOR PROTECTING HISTORIC STREETSCAPES

A primary purpose of the Historic District Ordinance and these *Design Guidelines* is to preserve the historical character of streetscapes within the Historic District. Streetscapes are the public spaces formed by buildings along streets in an urban setting. These outdoor, linear rooms have buildings as walls, street and sidewalk paving as flooring, the sky as a ceiling, lighting provided by the sun by day and street lights by night, and furnishings consisting of vegetation, planters, building stoops and steps, benches, trash receptors, automobile signage, and other accessory items (Figure 74). Streetscapes are dynamic and change with the weather, time of day, and season. The public perception of a neighborhood, city block, or historic district is formed by the quality of the streetscapes. The quality of a streetscape is formed by both the char-



Figure 76. Decorative iron fences appeared in West Chester during the second half of the nineteenth century.



Figure 77. Next to this former coach house, a solid stockade fence screens an alley from a side yard.



acter of the buildings that define the street space and the character of the outdoor ground surfaces, vegetation, walls, fences, and furnishings that enrich the space. In the West Chester Historic District, the historic streetscapes are rich with building-material textures, interesting paving, vegetation, and streets that relate to the pedestrian more than the automobile.

### 1. Fences

Wood picket, vertical board, stockade, and ornamental iron fences are found in the Historic District (Figures 75 and 76). Split-rail fences, chain-link fences, and plastic fences are not appropriate in the Historic District except on rear areas of lots. Fences along street fronts and near buildings should be refined or ornamental, and should allow views of the yard and building. Fences for rear and side yards may be more opaque. Gates should be designed to swing into the private walkway or driveway, not onto the public sidewalk. Fences along side and rear lot lines may be constructed of rough board, plank, or welded wire fabric (Figure 77).

### 2. Retaining Walls

Retaining walls visible from a public way should be built with traditional masonry materials (Figure 78). If retaining walls are not visible from the public way,



**Figure 78.** Detail of stone retaining wall and ornamental iron fence and gate on East Washington Street. Because of its lower cost and greater strength, stone was favored over brick as a retaining-wall material. Note that the rubble stonework is capped by cut-stone copings.

railroad ties, pressure-treated lumber, and decorative concrete block may be considered.

### 3. Sidewalk Paving

The preservation of historic brick paving along streets is encouraged (Figure 79). If the historic brick paving must be replaced, the installation of new brick paving in traditional brick patterns is highly recommended (Figure 80). New sidewalk paving materials and patterns should be consistent across the breadth of a lot along the street, unless the lot has a driveway.

### 4. Curb Cuts, Driveways, and Off-Street Parking

Curb cuts and off-street parking areas should be carefully planned to protect the historical character of the district. Curb cuts, driveways, and off-street parking should be located off side or rear alleys, not the street. The removal of mature landscaping and trees to provide parking areas is discouraged.

### 5. Plant Materials

Landscape plantings that are appropriate for the peri-



**Figure 79.** Well-maintained herringbone brick paving at 101 South Church Street. Note also the marble stoop and brass handrail.

od of the building are encouraged. New plant materials should not obscure the view of principal facades. Climbing plants that cause deterioration of exterior wall materials should be avoided.

Street trees should be carefully selected for their growth pattern, drought and pollution resistance, and historical character. Trees with very dense crowns, such as Bradford pear trees, are discouraged. In general, deciduous trees such as lindens, ginkgos, and sunburst locusts, that have upright growth habits, relatively open crowns, and long lives, are desirable. Oaks, maples, and other large hardwoods are desirable in non-commercial areas.

### 6. Decks and Patios

Decks and patios should be constructed only on secondary facades. The use of traditional materials such as wood and brick is recommended for the construction of a deck or patio. The use of unpainted/unstained pressure-treated wood or plastic is discouraged.

### 7. Landscape Planters and Window Boxes

The use of moveable landscape planters on porches and stoops is encouraged. Landscape planters made of red clay, wood, or tinted precast concrete are recommended, and should relate in size and scale to their location.

Window boxes should be anchored in a manner that does not damage historic brick masonry. Window boxes should be simple in design and of a color similar to the color of the building window trim. The size should match the width of the window opening.

### 8. Street Furniture

Street furniture such as benches, trash receptors, and tables should be simple in character, constructed of wood and/or painted metal, and be compatible with the style and scale of adjacent buildings and outdoor spaces.

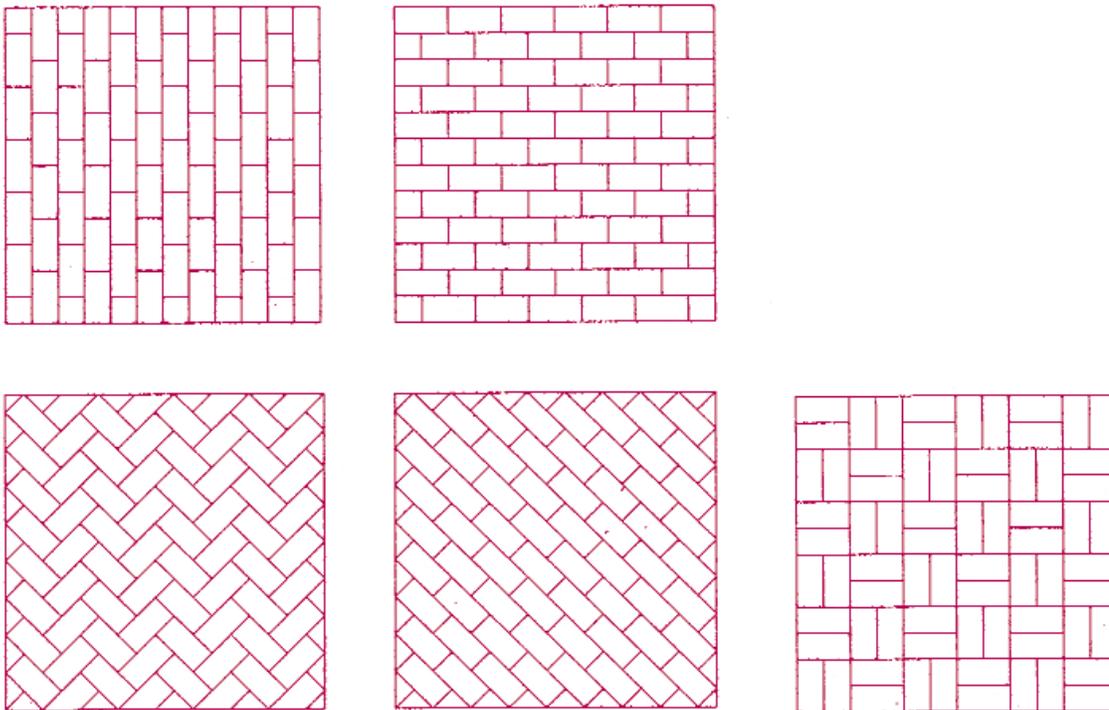
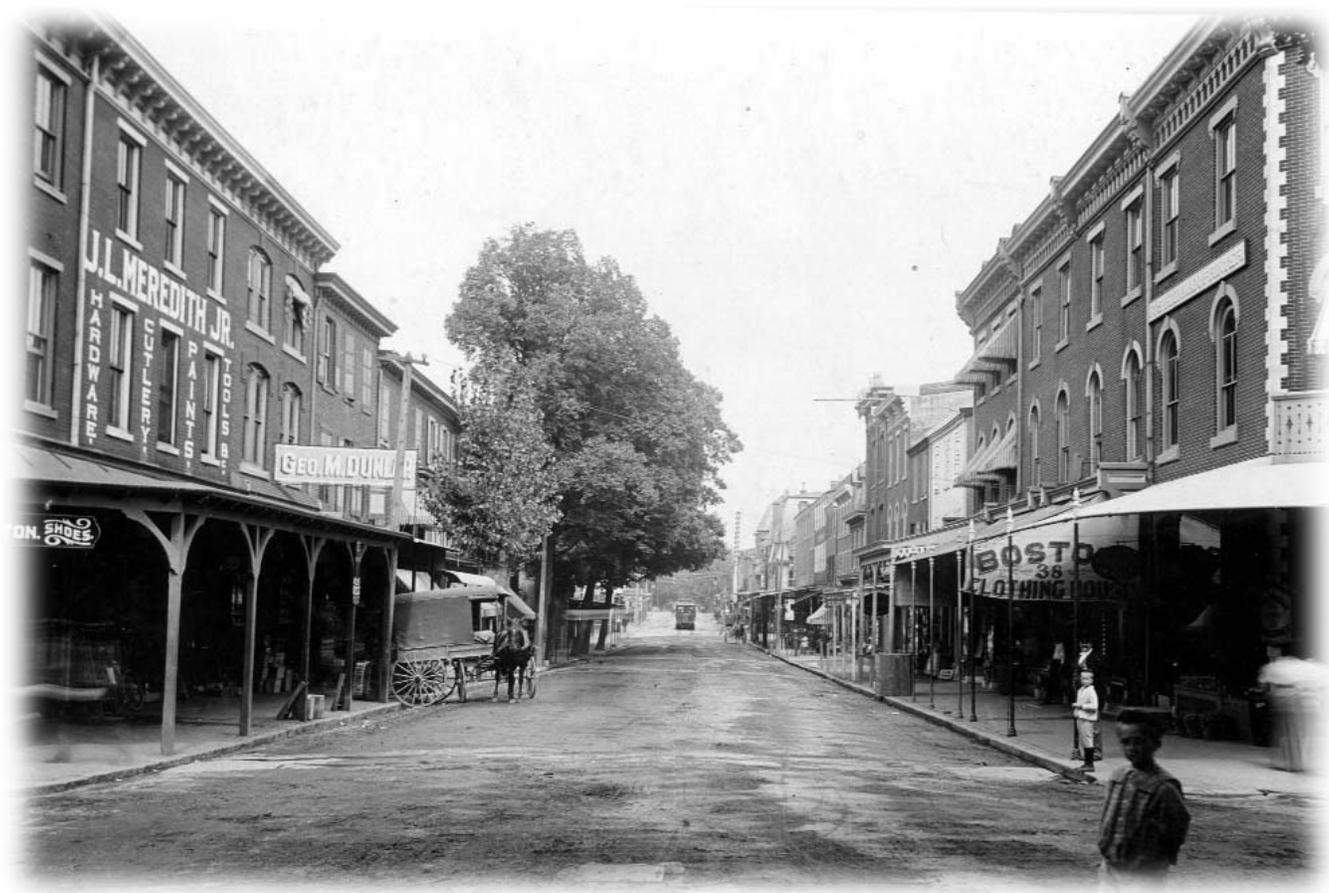


Figure 80. Traditional brick paving patterns create a texture and scale in the streetscape.



Looking east on Gay Street from Church Street, 1899. (From the collection of the Chester County Historical Society.)



## CHAPTER



# THE DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS

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**T**he *Design Guidelines* contained in this manual (Section IV) and the West Chester Historic District Zoning Code (Appendix C) form the basis for the review of applications that come before the HARB and Borough Council. The ordinance requires that “No permanent sign or other structure within the West Chester Historic District may be constructed, altered or otherwise changed, in whole or part, nor may the exterior architectural character of any structure be altered until after an application for a building permit has been fully reviewed by the Historical and Architectural Review Board (HARB), recommended for a certificate of appropriateness by the HARB and approved by the Borough Council.” Additionally, “No structure within the West Chester Historic District may be demolished or removed, in whole or in part, until after the application for a building and/or demolition permit has been reviewed by the HARB and approved by the Borough Council.” These provisions apply “to all land, buildings and structures which are viewed or may be viewed from a public way within the boundaries of the West Chester Historic District.” The HARB is an advisory board to Borough Council, and all HARB recommendations for a Certificate of Appropriateness require approval by Borough Council. Likewise, Borough Council may overturn the decisions of the HARB upon appeal by the applicant.

The design-review process consists of the following steps:

- Pre-application review (optional)
- Application submission
- HARB review
- Borough Council review

Generally, the design review process takes about one month to complete, and applicants must consider this timeframe when planning and scheduling their projects. For projects involving significant changes to structures within the Historic District, such as major facade alterations, construction of additions, new construction, and demolition, a pre-application review is highly recommended. Applicants should allow another month for this step. It is also recommended that applicants retain the services of a design professional for major projects within the Historic District.

#### **A. PRE-APPLICATION REVIEW**

For projects comprising major alterations or construction within the Historic District, a pre-application review is strongly encouraged. The purpose of the pre-application review is to acquaint the applicant with the standards of appropriateness of design that are relevant to the proposed project. A pre-application review is voluntary and does not require formal application submission. However, preliminary sketches must be submitted to the Borough at least seven (7) working days prior to the HARB's regularly scheduled monthly meeting to enable the HARB chairman to place the pre-application on the meeting agenda.

The pre-application process enables the applicant to present the basic concepts of the proposed project in sketch form for feedback and informal discussion with the HARB. During pre-application review, the applicant can provide a single design proposal or present several design options for discussion. The pre-application review process saves the applicant the time and expense of developing a complete submission for a final design that may not be approved, and a favorable preliminary design streamlines the formal review process.

#### **B. APPLICATION SUBMISSION**

An "Application for Certificate of Appropriateness" form must be completed by the applicant and submitted to the Borough's Building Inspector at least ten (10) working days prior to the HARB's monthly meeting. The required application package must include:

- The completed application form.
- Photographs of the structure showing the part or parts to be altered as well as photographs of the entire facade and the buildings in the immediate surrounding area.
- Architectural drawings, including exterior elevations and plans as applicable, of the proposed alterations, of sufficient detail to show architectural design elements, materials, and dimensions.
- Copies of manufacturers' literature showing products and items to be incorporated into the work.
- Material and paint samples as applicable.
- Historical photographs where supportive of the application.

An incomplete application may not be considered by the HARB.

A copy of the Application for Certificate of Appropriateness may be obtained from the Borough's Department of Building, Housing & Codes Enforcement.



### C. HARB REVIEW

The HARB considers each application for a Certificate of Appropriateness at its regular monthly public meeting, typically held the first week of the month. Applicants are encouraged to attend these meetings to present their projects and address questions from the HARB. An applicant not attending the HARB meeting risks the potential continuance of his or her application in the event that the HARB has unanswered questions concerning the project.

Following the review of an application, the HARB will take one of the following actions: 1) recommend a Certificate of Appropriateness for the application as presented, 2) recommend a Certificate of Appropriateness with specified conditions, 3) recommend that the application be denied, 4) continue the application because of the incompleteness of the application, or 5) continue the application at the request of the applicant. The HARB diligently strives to avoid the denial of an application by suggesting design alternatives, and by allowing the applicant to revise the design and present again at a future meeting. Every decision made by the HARB becomes part of the public record. For approved and denied applications, a written Certificate of Appropriateness is provided to Borough Council for approval.

### D. BOROUGH COUNCIL REVIEW

The Certificate of Appropriateness prepared by the HARB is initially reviewed by the Planning, Zoning, Business and Industrial Development (PZBID) Committee of Borough Council and then by the full Borough Council. Council uses the same criteria as the HARB in evaluating the applications. An applicant may attend both the Council's committee and the full meeting to comment on his or her application. For applications denied or approved with conditions by the HARB, the applicant may appeal to Borough Council to reverse the HARB's decision.

After reviewing the application and HARB's recommendation for a Certificate of Appropriateness, the PZBID Committee may recommend approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness to the full Council or send it to Council without recommendation. During Council's work session, the Chair of the PZBID Committee presents each application for discussion by Council. Borough Council then decides if the Certificate of Appropriateness should be placed on the consent agenda for approval at the voting session or if it should be held for further discussion at the voting session. Council officially votes to approve or disapprove each of HARB's recommendations for a Certificate of Appropriateness at its voting session. All of Borough Council's decisions are part of the public record.

Following Council's vote, the Borough's Department of Building, Housing & Codes Enforcement sends a letter to each applicant informing him or her of Council's decision. For an approved application, the letter authorizes the applicant to apply for a building permit to perform the proposed work as presented or with specified conditions. If Borough Council disapproves the application, the letter indicates the reasons for disapproval.





## APPENDIXES

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- A. Glossary of Architectural Terms
- B. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation
- C. West Chester Zoning Code: Historic District
- D. West Chester Zoning Code: Sign Regulations
- E. Bibliography

## A. GLOSSARY OF ARCHITECTURAL TERMS

*a*

**architrave.** 1) The lowest horizontal element of a classical entablature; 2) The ornamental moldings (trim) around windows, doors, and other wall openings.

**asymmetrical.** Not symmetrical

*b*

**baluster.** A shaped, short vertical member, often circular in section, supporting a railing or capping.

**balustrade.** An assembly consisting of a railing or capping supported by a series of balusters.

**bay.** A regularly repeated main division of a building design. A building whose facade is five windows wide may be described as a five-bay building.

**bay window.** A window structure projecting beyond the main wall plane; if attached to the building above ground level, properly called an oriel.

**blind.** A louvered shutter that excludes vision and direct sunlight, but not indirect light and air, from a house.

**bond.** The setting pattern of bricks or stones, such as common bond, Flemish bond, etc.

**bracket.** A projecting support placed under an architectural overhang such as a cornice; often ornate.

*C*

**capital.** The top member (cap) of a column.

**casement sash, casement window.** A window sash which is side-hinged; a window having casement sashes.

**casing.** The exposed architectural trim or lining around a wall opening.

**clapboards.** Narrow boards applied horizontally to an exterior wall, each of which overlaps the one below it to create a continuous skin over the wooden frame.

**classical.** 1) Decorative elements deriving directly or indirectly from the architectural vocabulary of ancient Greece and Rome; 2) architectural harmony based on the principles of ancient Greek and Roman architecture.

**column.** A long vertical structural member that supports a load; in classical terms, a cylindrical support having a base, shaft, and capital. (Note: In the Doric order the column has no base.)

**cornice.** Strictly, the upper projecting part of an entablature; in carpenter/builder terminology, any projected molding ("crown molding") which crowns or finishes a horizontal fascia; the exterior assembly which closes the joint between the wall and roof of a building.

*d*

**Doric.** One of the five classical orders, column usually without a base and with a simple capital.

**dormer.** A roofed structure with a vertical window that projects from a pitched roof.

**double-hung sash window.** A window with two vertical sliding sashes, each closing half of the window opening.

*e*

**eave.** The lower part of a roof that projects beyond the wall.

**elevation.** The perpendicular view of a side of a building; an accurate drawing of one side of a building that represents its true dimensions in the plane perpendicular to the line of sight.

**ell.** A wing or addition extended at a right angle from the principal dimension of building, resulting in an "L" shaped plan,

**entablature.** The horizontal member carried by columns, composed of architrave (bottom), frieze, and cornice (top).

*f*

**facade.** The exterior front face of a building; usually the most ornate or articulated elevation.

**fanlight.** A half-circular or half-elliptical window; often placed over a door.

**fascia.** Any long, flat horizontal band or member.

**fenestration.** The arrangement and design of window and door openings in a building.

**French door.** A door with a top and bottom rail, stiles (sides), and glass panes throughout most of its length.

**frontispiece.** An ornamental portal or entrance bay around a main door.

*g*

**gable.** The vertical triangular shape of a building wall above the cornice height, formed by two sloping roof planes.

*h*

**header.** In brick masonry, a brick laid so that its end is exposed in the finished wall surface.

**hip.** The external angle at the intersection of two roof planes; a hip roof has roof planes that slope toward the eaves on all sides of the building.

**hood.** A projecting cover placed over an opening to shelter it.

*i*

**in kind.** Replacement building component matching the original component in material, size, profile, texture, and color.

*l*

**light.** A pane of glass installed in a window sash.

**lintel.** A horizontal structural member that spans an opening, for example a window lintel.

*m*

**Mansart.** A roof that is double pitched, the lower being much steeper, designed to allow a full story height within the attic space.

**mass.** Bulk or three-dimensional size of an object.

**massing.** The combination of several masses to create a building volume; organization of the shape of a building, as differentiated from wall treatment, fenestration, etc.

**mullion.** A vertical member separating windows, doors, or panels set in series; often used for structural purposes.

**muntin.** A slender member separating and encasing panes of glass in a window sash.

*o*

**order.** In classical architecture, a column with base (usually) shaft, capital, and entablature, embellished and proportioned according to one of the accepted styles - Tuscan, Doric, Ionic, Corinthian, and Composite.

**oriel.** A window structure projecting beyond the main wall plane attached to the building above ground level.

*p*

**Palladian window.** A three-part window consisting of a prominent center window unit, often arched, flanked by smaller windows.

**pane.** A flat sheet of glass cut to size for glazing use in a window; also called a **light**.

**parapet.** A low guarding wall at the edge of a roof or balcony; the portion of a fire wall or party wall above the roof level.

**parge.** A coating of cement-based mortar (stucco) applied over rough masonry work.

**pediment.** In classical architecture, the triangular gable end of a roof above a horizontal cornice; a similar triangular form over a door or window.



**pergola.** A garden structure with an open wood-framed roof, often latticed.

**picket fence.** A fence formed by a series of vertical pales, posts, or stakes and joined together by horizontal rails.

**pilaster.** A flat vertical element applied to the wall surface that simulates a classical column.

**pitch, roof.** The slope of a roof; usually expressed as a ratio of vertical rise to horizontal run (inches vertical in 12 inches horizontal).

**plan.** A two-dimensional view of a building, or horizontal section of it, seen from above; hence, a precise drawing showing the arrangement of design, including wall openings and dimensions.

**porch.** A structure attached to a building to shelter an entrance or to serve as a semi-enclosed space, usually roofed and generally open-sided.

**proportion.** The relation of one dimension to another; usually described as a numerical ratio; in architecture, proportions determine the creation of visual order through coordination of shapes in a design.

*q*

**quoin.** A masonry (or simulated masonry) unit applied to the corner of a building; often slightly projecting.

*r*

**rhythm.** In architecture, the repeated pattern of building elements such as doors and windows.

**ridge, ridge line.** The horizontal line formed by the juncture of the upper edges of two sloping roof planes.

*S*

**sash.** The movable framework holding the glass in a window.

**segmental arch.** An arch in which the arched portion is less than a semi-circle.

**shed roof.** A single-pitched roof over a small room; often attached to a main structure.

**shutter.** An external movable screen or door used to cover a wall opening, especially a window; originally for security purposes; often confused with louvered blinds.

- Brick chimney with molded chimney cap
- Gable roof with cedar shingles
- Wood cornice
- Wood window head
- Six-over-six light double-hung wood window
- Muntin
- Wood clapboard siding
- Wood trim board
- Wood sill
- Nine-over-six light double-hung wood window
- Three-panel shutter
- Six-panel wood door with four-light transom
- Basement window



**sidelight.** A framed area of fixed glass alongside a door or window opening.

**sill.** The horizontal lower member of a window or other frame.

**single pile.** A floor plan that is one room deep.

**site plan.** An accurate scaled drawing of a site (lot) as if seen from above, describing the property boundary and orientation, the location of buildings, driveways, walks and other constructed site improvements, the retained vegetation, and new plantings and finished grade contours.

**skylight.** A glazed opening in a roof plane that admits light.

**stoop.** An uncovered platform and steps at an entrance.

**streetscape.** A setting or expanse consisting of the street, landscaping, and buildings along a street, as seen by the eye in one view.

**stretcher.** A brick laid with the long side visible in the finished work.

**string course.** A horizontal course of masonry or wood trim which projects from a wall.

**symmetrical.** A similarity of form or arrangement on either side of a dividing line.

*t*

**transom.** A horizontal bar of wood or stone separating a door from a transom window above it.

*V*

**vernacular.** A mode of building based on regional forms and materials.

*W*

**water table.** A horizontal course of masonry or wood trim separating the foundation walls from the exterior walls above.

*(Glossary definitions are in part based on Historic Architecture Sourcebook by Cyril M. Harris, Ed., New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1977.)*





**B. THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION**

The following Standards are to be applied to specific rehabilitation projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility.

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historical materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.

6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.

7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.

8. Significant archaeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.

9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

**C. WEST CHESTER ZONING CODE: HISTORIC DISTRICT**

**ARTICLE XI, Historic District**

§ 112-50. Legislative authority.

A. The West Chester Historic District is hereby established in accordance with the provisions of an Act entitled "An Act Authorizing Counties, Cities, Boroughs, Incorporated Towns and Townships To Create Historic Districts Within Their Geographic Boundaries; Providing for the Appointment of Boards of Historical Architectural Review; Empowering Governing Bodies of Political Subdivisions To Protect the Distinctive Historical Character of These Districts and To Regulate the Erection, Reconstruction, Alteration, Restoration, Demolition or Razing of Buildings Within the Historic Districts."

B. The Act was adopted by the General Assembly No. 167 of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and approved by the Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania on the 13th day of June 1961, and was amended by act of the General Assembly

No. 24 on the 23rd day of April 1963.EN [Note: This chapter shall take effect immediately upon receipt of notification of certification of historical significance of the West Chester Historic District by resolution of the Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission and satisfaction of the requirement for advertisement required by existing law.]

§ 112-51. Purpose.

The West Chester Historic District is created for the following purposes:

- A. To protect those portions of the Borough of West Chester which reflect the cultural, economic, social, political and architectural history of the borough, the state and the nation.
- B. To awaken or reinforce in our people an interest in our historic past.
- C. To promote the use and reuse of the West Chester Historic District for the culture, education, pleasure and general welfare of the people of the borough, the state and the nation.
- D. To advocate an interest in civic beauty through the encour-

agement of appropriate settings and continued construction of buildings in general harmony with respect to style, form, color, proportion, texture and material between buildings of historic design and those of more modern design.

E. To strengthen the economy of the borough by stabilizing and improving property values within the Historic District.

§ 112-52. Additional definitions.

The following terms, as in Article II, shall have the meanings indicated herein:

**ALTERATION** — Any change or rearrangement in the structural parts of a building or structure or in the means of egress; any change to or in a building which would alter its use classification; an enlargement, whether by extending on a side or by increasing in height; or the moving of a structure from one location or position to another. See also “structural alteration.”

**BOARD OF HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW** — The Board, referred to as the “HARB,” which conducts reviews of proposed building construction and/or alteration work within the Historic District and performs other duties as set forth in this chapter.

**CERTIFIED HISTORIC DISTRICT** — An historic district which has been delineated by the Borough of West Chester and certified for historical significance by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission in accordance with Pennsylvania Act No. 167.EN

**CERTIFIED HISTORIC STRUCTURE** — A building or structure identified by the Borough of West Chester and listed in the National Register of Historic Places or located within a registered historic district and certified by the Secretary of the Interior as being of historical significance to the district.

**CERTIFIED REHABILITATION** — Rehabilitation/construction plans and work which has been approved by the National Park Service in order to qualify for federal historic preservation tax incentives.

**CONTRIBUTING RESOURCE(S)** — A resource in an historic district or historic complex which, as filed with the National Register or the Bureau for Historic Preservation, supports the district’s or complex’s historical significance through location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

**DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY (DOE)** — The process wherein an historic resource is determined by the Secretary of the Interior as meeting National Register criteria, but not listed in the National Register.

**HISTORIC BUILDING, STRUCTURE OR SITE** — Any building, structure or site that is officially recognized for its historic and/or architectural significance by the United States Department of the Interior, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, the Chester County Historic Preservation Office or the West Chester Historical and Architectural Review Board or is designated as contributing to a National Register or Municipal Historic District.

**HISTORIC DISTRICT** — Any area or district within the Borough of West Chester designated by ordinance of the Borough of West Chester pursuant to Act No. 167 adopted by

the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and approved by the Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania on the 13th day of June 1961, as amended by Act of the General Assembly No. 24 on the 23rd day of April 1963.EN

**HISTORIC RESOURCE(S)** — All buildings, sites, structures, objects and districts shown on the Borough of West Chester Historic Resources Map and sites, areas, structures, trails and/or routes which are valued due to their significance as examples and/or locations of events, customs, skills and/or arts of the past.

**HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY** — An official list, appropriately documented, of historic resources in the Borough of West Chester and their classifications.

**HISTORIC RESOURCES MAP** — A map, adopted as part of this chapter, showing historic resources and their respective classifications.

**MINOR REPAIR** — The replacement of existing work with equivalent materials for the purpose of its routine maintenance and upkeep, but not including the cutting away of any wall, partition or portion thereof, the removal or cutting of any structural beam or bearing support or the removal or change of any required means of egress or rearrangement of parts of a structure affecting the exitway requirements; nor shall “minor repairs” include addition to, alteration of, replacement of or relocation of any stand pipe, water supply sewer, drainage, drain leader, gas, soil, waste, vent or similar piping, electric wiring or mechanical or other work affecting public health or general safety.

**NATIONAL REGISTER** — The National Register of Historic Places, a list maintained by the Secretary of the Interior composed of buildings, sites, structures, objects and districts of national, state or local significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering and culture.

**NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT** — Any area or district listed in the National Register of Historic Places as maintained by the National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, such as the West Chester Downtown Historic District.

**PUBLIC STREET OR WAY** — Any land dedicated to public use or passage, including but not limited to streets, alleys, parks and pedestrian rights-of-way, whether constructed, dedicated or proposed.

**REGISTERED HISTORIC DISTRICT** — An historic district listed in the National Register of Historic Places or a state or local historic district whose statute has been certified by the Secretary of the Interior and which is certified as meeting substantially all the requirements for National Register listing.

**REHABILITATION** — The process of returning a property to a state of utility through repair or alteration, which provides for a contemporary use while preserving those portions and features of the property which are significant to its historical, architectural and cultural values.

**REPAIR** — The replacement of existing construction with the same material for the purpose of maintenance only, but not

including any addition, removal or modification in construction.

**SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION** — Standards used by the Secretary of the Interior, as administered by the National Park Service, when determining if a rehabilitation project qualifies as a certified rehabilitation pursuant to the Tax Reform Act of 1986.

**STRUCTURAL ALTERATION** — Any change in or addition to the supporting or structural members of a building or other structure, such as the bearing walls, fire separation walls, partitions, columns, beams or girders; or any change which could convert an existing building or other structure into a different structure or adapt the structure to a different use or which, in the case of a nonconforming building or other structure, would prolong the life of such building or other structure.

**SUBSTANTIAL IMPROVEMENT** — Any repair, reconstruction or improvement of a structure, the cost of which equals or exceeds fifty percent (50%) of the market value of the structure either before the improvement or repair is started or, if the structure had been damaged and is being restored, before the damage occurred. A "substantial improvement" is considered to occur when the first alteration of any wall, ceiling, floor or other structural part of the building commences, whether or not the alteration affects the external dimensions of the structure. The term does not, however, include either any project for improvement of a structure to comply with existing state or municipal health, sanitary or safety codes which are solely necessary to assure safe living conditions or any alteration of a structure listed on the National Register of Historic Places or the Pennsylvania Inventory of Historic Places.

**WEST CHESTER DOWNTOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT** — An historic district listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

§ 112-53. General provisions.

A. The West Chester Historic District is shown on the West Chester Historic District Map, which is hereby adopted by reference and declared to be a part of this chapter. The provisions of this Article shall be applied to all land, buildings and structures which are viewed or may be viewed from a public way within the boundaries of the West Chester Historic District.

B. The West Chester Historic District shall be considered as an overlay to various districts as shown on the Zoning Map.

C. Interpretation of boundaries.

- (1) Boundaries indicated as approximately following the center lines of streets or alleys shall be construed to follow such center lines.
- (2) Boundaries indicated as approximately following lot lines shall be construed as following such lines.
- (3) Boundaries indicated as parallel to or extensions of features indicated above shall be so construed. Distances not specifically indicated on the map shall be determined by the scale of the map.
- (4) Where topographical or man-made features existing on the ground are at variance with those shown on the map or in other circumstances not covered by the above, the Borough Council

shall interpret the boundaries of the district.

D. Projects that the Secretary of the Interior, as administered by the National Park Service, has approved as certified rehabilitation are deemed approved and need not be reviewed according to the provisions of this Article, provided that:

- (1) Copies [one (1) each] of the Part 1, Evaluation of Significance, and Part 2, Description of Rehabilitation Work, applications, along with evidence of their approval from the National Park Service, are submitted to the Building Inspector; and
- (2) The project is proposed to be completed as stated in the Part 2 application.

E. No permanent sign or other structure within the West Chester Historic District may be constructed, altered or otherwise changed, in whole or part, nor may the exterior architectural character of any structure be altered until after an application for a building permit has been fully reviewed by the Historical and Architectural Review Board (HARB), recommended for a certificate of appropriateness by the HARB and approved by the Borough Council. [Amended 5-20-1992 by Ord. No. 7-1992]

F. If any proposal for construction, alteration or other change in the Historic District involves subdivision or land development approval by the Borough Council, all approvals therefor shall be obtained prior to application for building permits and HARB review.

G. No structure within the West Chester Historic District may be demolished or removed, in whole or in part, until after the application for a building and/or demolition permit has been reviewed by the HARB and approved by the Borough Council.

H. Uses of properties within the Historic District shall be in accordance with the zoning district in which the land and/or buildings are situated.

I. Evidence of the approval required above shall be a certificate of appropriateness issued by the Borough Council. The certificate shall be a statement signed by the President of the Council stating that the application for the proposed work is approved.

J. Any person requesting a permit under this Article shall be entitled to a hearing on such request before the HARB according to the provisions of § 112-56.

K. Nothing in this Article shall be construed to prevent the routine maintenance or repair of any exterior elements of any building or structure, nor shall anything in this Article be construed to prevent the construction, reconstruction, alteration or demolition of any such elements which the Borough Council shall certify as required for public safety.

L. The HARB may determine that minor changes to buildings need not undergo the same level of scrutiny as major changes to buildings. Examples of minor changes might include such items as repainting, repointing of stone and reconstruction of steps or a roof.

§ 112-54. Applicability.

It is the intent of this Article that the requirements contained herein shall only pertain to construction, reconstruction, restora-

tion, rehabilitation, alteration, razing or demolition on sites located within the West Chester Historic District (and other historic districts as may be established by amendment or ordinance of the Borough of West Chester). This includes but is not limited to cleaning methods, such as sandblasting or solvent washdown; the application of nonstructural surface textures or veneers, such as stucco or siding; replacement of similar types of windows, doors and other minor building elements; the alteration of decorative elements, such as cornices or trim; and other work affecting the visual appearance of a building within the district which can be seen from a public street or way.

§ 112-55. Powers and duties of Building Inspector.

A. The Building Inspector shall issue a permit for the construction, alteration, restoration, demolition or razing of a building in the Historic District only after the proposal is found to be in accordance with this chapter and the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance and the Borough Council has issued a certificate of appropriateness. Upon receipt of a written disapproval by the Borough Council, the Building Inspector shall disapprove the application for a permit and so advise the applicant.

B. The Building Inspector is authorized to issue a permit for the construction, alteration or restoration of a building in the Historic District if evidence is presented that the project is an approved certified rehabilitation according to the provisions of § 112-53C. Approved certified rehabilitation projects need not be reviewed by the HARB or the Borough Council.

C. Upon receipt of an application for a building permit for work to be done in the West Chester Historic District, the Building Inspector shall act in accordance with the documented procedures in acting upon an application for a building permit, except as those procedures are necessarily modified by the following requirements:

- (1) The Building Inspector shall inform the applicant of the specific requirements for the issuance of a building permit, including application procedures and materials to be submitted as set forth herein, within the West Chester Historic District and of the time and place of the meeting and/or hearing before the HARB at which he/she may appear to explain the application.
- (2) The Building Inspector shall forward to the Chairman of the HARB a copy of the application for a building permit, together with copies of the documents and materials filed by the applicant
- (3) The Building Inspector shall maintain a record of all such applications and final dispositions of the same, which shall be in addition to and appropriately cross-referenced to other records.

D. The Building Inspector shall have the power to institute any proceedings at law or in equity necessary for the enforcement of this Article in the same manner as in his/her enforcement of any other provision of the Zoning Ordinance.

§ 112-56. Historical and Architectural Review Board.

A. Establishment, composition, appointment and terms of members.

- (1) The Historical and Architectural Review Board, hereinafter also referred to as the "HARB," is hereby established, to be com-

posed of not fewer than seven (7) members, appointed by the Borough Council, one (1) of whom shall be a registered architect, one (1) a licensed real estate broker, one (1) a member of the Planning Commission and one (1) a Building Inspector, and the remaining members shall have a knowledge of and an interest in the preservation of the West Chester Historic District. A majority of the members must be residents of the Borough of West Chester.

(2) The position of any member of the HARB appointed in his/her capacity as a registered architect, a licensed real estate broker, a member of the Planning Commission or the Building Inspector who ceases to be so engaged shall be automatically considered vacant.

(3) The initial terms of the members of the HARB shall be as follows: one (1) member shall be appointed to serve until the first day of January following the effective date of this chapter, two (2) members shall be appointed to serve until the first day of the second January thereafter; two (2) members shall be appointed to serve until the first day of the third January thereafter; and two (2) members shall be appointed to serve until the first day of the fourth January thereafter. The Borough Council shall appoint their successors on the expiration of their respective terms to serve for periods of three (3) years. An appointment to fill a vacancy shall be only for the unexpired portion of the term.

(4) The HARB shall elect its own Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary and create and fill such other offices as it may determine. Officers shall serve annual terms and may succeed themselves. The HARB may make and alter bylaws and regulations to govern its procedures consistent with the ordinances of the Borough of West Chester and the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

(5) Any member may be removed from the HARB for cause, by a majority vote of the Borough Council.

B. Duties and powers of the HARB.

(1) The HARB shall give counsel to the Borough Council regarding the advisability of issuing a certificate of appropriateness, to be executed at a public meeting of the latter. The HARB'S recommendation to the Borough Council shall be in the form of a written report.

(2) The HARB shall keep on file up-to-date maps of the following:

- (a) The location of historic buildings, structures and sites as defined in Article II of this chapter.
- (b) Historic districts established by this chapter and amendments as may be adopted by the borough.

(3) A majority of the HARB shall constitute a quorum, and action taken at any meeting shall require the affirmative vote of a quorum.

(4) The members of the HARB shall serve without compensation but may be reimbursed for direct expenses.

(5) The HARB shall make an annual report to the Borough Council, which should include but not be limited to an accounting of expenditures, justification for the appropriation of funds for the upcoming year, a record of actions taken by the HARB in

the preceding year and any recommendations for changes to this Article.

(6) The HARB shall hold a regularly scheduled monthly public meeting, provided that there is business to conduct, and shall record minutes and transmit them to the Borough Council.

(7) The HARB shall hold any additional public meetings and hearings as necessary to execute its powers and duties as required by this Article or the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

C. In addition to the above, upon specific authorization by the Borough Council, the HARB may be empowered to engage in the following activities:

(1) To conduct a survey of buildings for the purpose of determining those of historic and/or architectural significance, pertinent facts about them and any action to be undertaken in coordination with the Planning Commission and/or other appropriate groups and to maintain and periodically revise the detailed listings of historic sites and buildings and data about them, appropriately classified with respect to national, state or local significance and to period or field of interest.

(2) To propose, from time to time as deemed appropriate, the establishment of additional historic districts and revisions to existing Historic District boundaries.

(3) To cooperate with and advise the Borough Council, the Planning Commission or other borough agencies in matters involving historically and/or architecturally significant sites and buildings, such as appropriate land usage, parking facilities and signs, as well as adherence to lot dimensional regulations and minimum structural standards.

(4) To cooperate with and enlist assistance, from time to time, from the National Park Service, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, the Chester County Historical Society, the Chester County Historic Preservation Office and other agencies, public and private, concerned with historic sites and buildings.

§ 112-57. Preapplication review procedure.

A. Prior to the preparation of working drawings and specifications or calling for proposals or bids from contractors and/or developers, owners or agents may prepare preliminary scale drawings and outline specifications, including color samples for outside work, for review and informal discussion with the HARB. The purpose of this review shall be to acquaint the developer, owner or agent with standards of appropriateness of design that are required of his/her proposed development.

B. The preapplication review shall not require formal application but does require notice to be given to the Building Inspector and subsequent notification of the Chairman of the HARB at least seven (7) working days before the date of the meeting at which the preliminary drawings are to be discussed. Ten (10) copies of all documents shall be submitted to the Building Inspector, who shall forward one (1) copy to the Chairman of the HARB. [Amended 8-28-1991 by Ord. No. 17-1991; 4-20-1994 by Ord. No. 2-1994]

C. In the case of very minor projects involving repairs or alterations to existing buildings, the HARB, if preliminary drawings

and other data are sufficiently clear and explicit, may recommend to the Zoning Officer that a building permit be issued after approval by a majority of members attending the review session at which the proposal is presented. The HARB will inform Borough Council of any action by memo directed to the appropriate subcommittee of Counsel. [Amended 4-20-1994 by Ord. No. 2-1994]

§ 112-58. Review by Historical and Architectural Review Board.

A. Upon determination by the Building Inspector and the HARB that a complete application for a building permit for the erection, reconstruction, alteration, restoration, rehabilitation, demolition or razing of a building or buildings or other structures in the Historic District has been filed, the HARB shall review the permit application at its regularly scheduled public meeting or at a special hearing, to take place within forty-five (45) days of the date of the filing of the complete application, to consider the counsel which it will give to the Borough Council. The applicant for the permit shall be advised of the time and place of said hearing and shall be invited to appear to explain his/her reasons therefor. Additional hearings, if necessary, shall be scheduled within thirty (30) days of each other, unless mutually agreed otherwise by the HARB and the applicant. [Amended 5-20-1992 by Ord. No. 7-1992]

B. [Amended 5-20-1992 by Ord. No. 7-1992] Within forty-five (45) days of the occurrence of the final hearing upon an application for a permit for the erection, reconstruction, alteration, restoration, rehabilitation, demolition or razing of a building or buildings or other structures in the Historic District, the HARB shall recommend to the Borough Council the approval or denial of the certificate of appropriateness.

(1) In cases where the issuance of a certificate of appropriateness is recommended, the HARB shall forthwith transmit a written report to the Borough Council stating the basis upon which such a recommendation for approval was made. If the HARB shall fail to transmit such report within forty-five (45) days after the occurrence of the final hearing concerning an application for a permit, the application shall be forwarded to Borough Council with no recommendation, except where mutual agreement has been made for an extension of the time limit.

(2) In the case where relatively minor changes in the applicant's plans and specifications will meet the HARB's conditions for recommendation for approval, the HARB may recommend conditional approval for the issuance of a certificate of appropriateness. A written report to the Borough Council (copied to the applicant) shall clearly state these conditions. If the applicant decides to make these changes, he/she shall so notify the HARB and the Borough Council, in writing, prior to the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Borough Council.

(3) In the case of a recommendation not to issue a certificate of appropriateness, the HARB shall transmit a written report to the Borough Council within forty-five (45) days after the occurrence of the final hearing, stating the reasons therefor. The report shall state the reasons for a recommendation for disapproval and the changes necessary to obtain approval. The applicant shall be

informed, in writing, of the HARB's decision and of the reasons for the recommendation for disapproval.

C. In any case involving the demolition or partial demolition of a structure, before granting or denying approval, the HARB may call upon the Borough Engineer, at the expense of the applicant, to provide it with a report on the state of repair and stability of the structure under consideration.

D. If the applicant intends to refile revised plans to remedy the defects which led to the recommendation for disapproval, the same review period and procedure set forth above shall apply.

E. Upon determination by the Building Inspector that a complete application for a permanent sign has been filed at least seven (7) working days prior to the regularly scheduled HARB meeting, the Building Inspector shall forward one (1) copy thereof to HARB and one (1) copy thereof to the Borough Council. The HARB shall review such permit application at its next regularly scheduled public meeting or at a hearing specially convened, which meeting or hearing, in any event, shall occur within forty (40) days of the date of the filing of the complete application. The applicant for the permit shall be advised of the time and place of the meeting or hearing and shall be invited to explain the reasons for the application. The HARB shall, as soon as reasonably practicable following the conclusion of the meeting or hearing and in any event prior to the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Borough Council, issue a written recommendation which shall state, at a minimum, "recommended for the issuance of a certificate of appropriateness," "not recommended for the issuance of a certificate of appropriateness" or "recommended for a certificate of appropriateness with modifications as set forth." The written report shall be forwarded to the applicant and the Borough Council. In the event that the HARB fails to meet to consider the application within forty (40) days of the completed application, or following the conclusion of a timely scheduled meeting or hearing the HARB fails to forward its written report to the Borough Council or to issue its recommendation prior to the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Borough Council, the application shall be forwarded to the Borough Council with no recommendation and considered by the Borough Council at the next regularly scheduled Borough Council meeting following the expiration of the forty-day period from the filing of the completed application. At such time, the Borough Council may determine to recommend a certificate of appropriateness, not recommend a certificate of appropriateness or recommend a certificate of appropriateness with modifications as set forth. The applicant shall be informed, in writing, of the decision of the Borough Council. [Added 5-20-1992 by Ord. No. 7-1992; amended 4-20-1994 by Ord. No. 2-1994]

§ 112-59. Application for building permit.

A. [Amended 8-28-1991 by Ord. No. 17-1991] Ten (10) copies of all drawings and plans for the proposed major alterations, additions or changes and for new construction of buildings or property use shall be submitted. The drawings and plans shall be prepared by a design professional and shall include:

(1) Plans and exterior elevations, drawn to scale, with sufficient

detail to show, as it relates to exterior appearances, the architectural design of the buildings, including proposed materials, textures and colors and dimensions.

(2) Plot or site plans, drawn to scale not smaller than one (1) inch equals fifty (50) feet, showing adjoining property lines and adjacent streets from which the proposed activity may be viewed and all improvements affecting appearances, such as walls, walks, terraces, landscaping, accessory buildings, parking, signs, lights and other elements.

(3) A location map, using the Borough Zoning Map, drawn at a scale not smaller than one (1) inch equals two hundred (200) feet, indicating the general location of the site in relation to nearby roads and properties.

B. Photographs required with an application for the demolition of an existing structure. Every application for a permit to demolish an existing structure shall be accompanied by a set of legible black-and-white or color photographs showing all sides of the building under consideration and any interiors which relate its state of disrepair or substantiate the need for demolition and photographs showing the contiguous properties and the relationship of the building to them.

C. Photographs required with an application for repair, alterations, and/or additions to existing structures. Every application for repair, alterations and/or additions to existing structures shall be accompanied by a set of legible black-and-white or color photographs showing all sides of the structure and photographs showing the adjacent properties and the relationship of the building to them.

D. Photographs required with an application for new construction. Every application for new construction shall be accompanied by a set of legible black-and-white or color photographs showing the construction site and its relationship to the properties contiguous to it. The direction of the photograph shall be noted for each view and shall be keyed into the plot plan or site plan.

E. All of the above-mentioned materials shall be filed at least ten (10) working days prior to the regularly scheduled HARB meeting with the Building Inspector, who shall forward them to the Chairman of the HARB. The Chairman of the HARB shall determine if the application is complete and shall notify the applicant of the date of the HARB review meeting or hearing. [Amended 4-20-1994 by Ord. No. 2-1994]

§ 112-60. Evaluation criteria.

A. The HARB may recommend against the issuance of a certificate of appropriateness for the erection, reconstruction, alteration, rehabilitation, demolition, partial demolition or removal of any structure within the Historic District which, in the HARB's opinion, would be detrimental to the district and against the public interests of the borough.

B. In determining the counsel to be presented to the Borough Council concerning the issuing of a certificate of appropriateness authorizing a permit for the erection, reconstruction, alteration, restoration, rehabilitation, demolition or razing of all or a part of any building within the Historic District, the HARB shall con-

sider the following relative to existing buildings:

- (1) The significance of the building to the historic and architectural integrity of the Historic District.
- (2) The development history of the building and its components and the historic period most represented in its existing condition.
- (3) The historic period or periods the applicant proposes to use as the exterior appearance objective.
- (4) The quality of the documentation used by the applicant to substantiate the proposed exterior appearance objective.

C. The Board shall also consider the degree to which the proposed work complies with the most-current version of the Standards for Rehabilitation of the United States Department of the Interior in making a decision relative to the appropriateness of the proposal whenever rehabilitation work is proposed. The following standards shall be used:

- (1) Every reasonable effort shall be made to provide a compatible use for a property which requires minimal alteration of the building, structure or site and its environment. (The use regulations of the principal zoning district shall apply.)
- (2) The distinguishing original qualities or character of a building, structure or site and its environment shall not be destroyed. The removal or alteration of any historic material or distinctive architectural features should be avoided when possible.
- (3) All buildings, structures and sites shall be recognized as products of their own time. Alterations that have no historical basis and which seek to create an earlier appearance shall be discouraged.
- (4) Changes which may have taken place in the course of time are evidence of the history and development of a building, structure or site and its environment. These changes may have acquired significance in their own right, and this significance shall be recognized and respected.
- (5) Distinctive stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship which characterize a building, structure or site shall be treated with sensitivity.
- (6) Deteriorated architectural features shall be repaired, rather than replaced, wherever possible. In the event that replacement is necessary, the new material should match the material being replaced in composition, design, color, texture and other visual qualities. Repair or replacement of missing architectural features should be based on accurate duplications of features, substantiated by historic, physical or pictorial evidence, rather than on conjectural designs or the availability of different architectural elements from other buildings or structures.
- (7) The surface cleaning of structures shall be undertaken with the gentlest means possible. Sandblasting and other cleaning methods that will damage the historic building materials shall not be undertaken.
- (8) Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties shall not be discouraged when such alterations and additions do not destroy significant historical, architectural or cultural material and such design is compatible with the size, scale, color, material and character of the property, neighborhood

or environment.

(9) Wherever possible, new additions or alterations to structures shall be done in such a manner that, if such additions or alterations were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the structure would be unimpaired.

D. The HARB shall also consider the most current version of the Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings of the United States Department of the Interior in making its decision relative to the appropriateness of the proposal.

E. Any architectural guidelines for construction in the Historic District which are published by the HARB to further the description of exterior architectural design criteria shall be approved by resolution of the Borough Council.

F. In addition to those criteria above for existing buildings which are considered applicable by the HARB, the following shall be evaluated for new construction:

- (1) The extent to which the proposed construction conforms to existing building setbacks and yard widths predominant within the block where the proposed construction is proposed.
- (2) The relationship to buildings in the immediate area with respect to height, width and materials.
- (3) The degree to which the proposed construction respects the established street/sidewalk level character of the Historic District and the immediate area.
- (4) The degree to which the proposed building's various floors are defined with window openings rather than an unbroken opaque facade.

G. Relative to demolition, the HARB shall evaluate:

- (1) The extent to which the building constitutes an immediate threat to the public health, safety and welfare.
- (2) The significance of the building to the historic and architectural integrity and the economic vitality of the Historic District.
- (3) The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that the building has no economic use.
- (4) The extent to which the building's deterioration and loss of economic use has been the result of the applicant's actions.
- (5) The efforts made by the applicant to successfully market the building.
- (6) The proposed construction after demolition and its impact on the integrity of the Historic District.

§ 112-61. Findings and report by Historical and Architectural Review Board.

A. The HARB, according to the provisions of § 112-58, shall submit to the Borough Council, within forty-five (45) days of the final hearing or before its next regularly scheduled meeting, a report containing its recommendations regarding the issuance of a certificate of appropriateness of the proposed construction, alteration or demolition within the Historic District

B. The report shall describe the following and reference any relevant application materials submitted in accordance with § 112-59:

- (1) The exact location of the property in question.
- (2) A list of adjacent/surrounding structures, stating their general exterior architectural characteristics.

- (3) Proposed landscape work, such as tree removal, additional plantings, grading and access roads.
- (4) Proposed construction, reconstruction, restoration, rehabilitation, alteration, razing or demolition work.
- (5) The finished height and width of any proposed construction or alterations.
- (6) The extent to which the proposed work meets the various evaluation criteria contained in § 112-60.
- (7) The opinion of the HARB, including any dissent, as to the appropriateness of the proposed work and the recommendation regarding the issuance of a certificate of appropriateness by the Borough Council.
- (8) If the recommendation of the HARB is for disapproval or conditional approval, the reasons for disapproval or conditional approval and changes in the applicant's plans which are necessary to meet the HARB approval.

§ 112-62. Procedures by Borough Council; approval.

A. Upon receipt of the report from the HARB, the Borough Council shall consider at its next regularly scheduled or special meeting the question of issuing to the Building Inspector a certificate of appropriateness authorizing a permit for work covered by the application. The applicant shall be advised by the Building Inspector of the time and place of the meeting at which his/her application shall be considered. The applicant shall have the right

to attend this meeting and comment on his/her application.

B. In determining whether or not to issue a certificate of appropriateness, the Borough Council shall consider the HARB report and the same criteria used by the HARB as set forth in § 112-60.

C. If the Borough Council approves the application, it shall issue a certificate of appropriateness authorizing the Building Inspector to issue a building permit for the work covered.

D. If the Borough Council disapproves the application, it shall do so in writing, and copies shall be given to the Building Inspector, the applicant and to the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. The disapproval shall set forth the reasons therefor and shall indicate the reasons for disapproval and changes in the applicant's plans which are necessary to meet the HARB approval.

E. In either case, the Borough Council shall notify the applicant within ten (10) days of its meeting at which the application was considered, unless mutually agreed otherwise.

F. When a certificate of appropriateness has been issued, a copy thereof shall be transmitted to the Building Inspector, who shall, from time to time, inspect the work approved by such certificate. All work not in accordance with such certificate shall constitute a basis for the issuance of a cease-and-desist order.

## D. WEST CHESTER ZONING CODE: SIGN REGULATIONS

### ARTICLE XIV, Sign Regulations

§ 112-80. Intent.

The intent of these sign regulations is to:

- A. Provide general standards for all signs within the borough and specific standards for signs in each zoning district.
- B. Establish procedures for the review and approval of sign permit applications.
- C. Regulate the location, size, construction, erection, alteration, use and maintenance of signs.
- D. Protect the safety and general welfare of the community through the proper use and design of structures for outdoor advertising and graphic communication purposes.
- E. Promote the use of well-crafted signs in harmony with the architectural and historical character of the borough.

§ 112-81. Scope and applicability; restrictions and standards.

A. Scope and applicability.

- (1) Any sign hereafter erected, altered, rebuilt, enlarged, extended, relocated or maintained in the Borough of West Chester shall conform to the provisions of this Article and any other regulations or code of West Chester relating to signs.
- (2) It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, corporation or individual to erect and maintain signs without first obtaining a permit from the Zoning Officer, except those listed specifically hereafter in § 112-82.
- (3) No display sign shall hereafter be erected or attached to, sus-

ended from or supported on a building or structure and no display sign shall hereafter be altered, rebuilt, enlarged, extended or relocated until a permit for the same has been obtained, except those listed specifically hereafter in § 112-82.

(4) Application for such permits shall be made in writing to the Borough Zoning Officer in accordance with the provisions of § 112-84.

(5) Nonconforming signs. Signs and their respective illumination existing at the time of the passage of this chapter and which do not conform to the requirements of this chapter shall be considered nonconforming signs and, once destroyed or removed for any reason, shall be replaced only with conforming signs and lighting. Nonconforming signs may be painted, repaired (including lighting) and altered in their wording, provided that such modifications do not exceed the dimensions of the existing signs.

(6) Abandoned signs. No person shall maintain or permit to be maintained on any premises owned or controlled by him a sign which has been abandoned. An "abandoned sign," for the purpose of this chapter, is a sign erected on and/or related to the use of a property which becomes vacant and unoccupied for a period of six (6) months or more or any sign which was erected for a prior occupant or business or any sign which relates to a time, event or purpose which is past. Any such abandoned sign shall be removed by the landowner or person controlling the property within ten (10) days of the abandonment as described above.

(7) The Zoning Officer is hereby authorized and empowered to

revoke any permit issued by him upon failure of the holder thereof to comply with any provision of this Article.

(1) Prohibited signs. It is unlawful to erect or maintain the following signs:

(a) Spinning, animated, twirling or any other moving objects used for advertising purposes, whether containing a message or not.

(b) Flashing, blinking, twinkling or lighted moving signs of any type, except those portions of signs which indicate time and temperature changes.

(c) (Reserved)

(d) Outdoor advertising billboards in all districts, except for the CS District.

(e) (Reserved)

(f) Curb or sidewalk signs or signs painted, attached or suspended from any outdoor bench, chair or other structure, except for inscriptions on benches at a church, park or other nonprofit institution or acknowledgments of a donor that are not commercial advertisements.

(g) Signs and advertisements which are tacked, pasted, tied or otherwise affixed to poles, posts, trees, buildings, fences or other structures located within public rights-of-way in the Borough of West Chester.

(h) Unsafe and lawful signs. If the Zoning Officer finds that any sign or other advertising structure regulated herein is unsafe, not secured, a menace to the public or has been constructed or erected or is being maintained in violation of the provisions of this Article, he shall give written notice to the permittee thereof. If the permittee fails to remove or alter the sign or other advertising structure so as to comply with the standards herein set forth within ten (10) days after such notice, such sign or other advertising structure may be removed or altered to comply by the Zoning Officer at the expense of the permittee or owner of the property upon which it is located. The Zoning Officer shall refuse to issue a permit to any permittee or owner who refuses to pay costs assessed. The Zoning Officer may cause any sign or other advertising structure which is an immediate peril to persons or property to be removed summarily and without notice.

(i) Signs placed, inscribed or supported upon the roofline or any structure which extends above the roofline of any building.

(j) (Reserved)

(k) Off-premises signs, except those provided for in § 112-83A(8).

(l) Signs or other advertising on a permanently parked vehicle which does not have a current license and inspection and is visible from the street.

(2) General restrictions and standards. The following restrictions shall apply to all permitted signs:

(a) No sign shall be located, arranged or placed in a position that it will cause danger to traffic or will interfere with traffic through glare; blocking of required sight lines for streets, sidewalks or driveways; confusion with a traffic control device by reason of color, location, shape or other characteristic; or through any other means.

(b) Every sign must be constructed of durable materials and shall be solidly and firmly attached, supported and/or anchored to the supports or framework.

(c) Every sign must be maintained in good condition and repair. Any sign which is allowed to become dilapidated (loose parts, broken or cracked materials, significantly altered by an accident, etc.) shall be removed by and at the expense of the landowner or lessee of the property on which it is located.

(d) No sign, other than a sign of a duly constituted governmental body, shall be erected within the right-of-way lines of any street, unless specifically authorized by other ordinances or regulations of the borough or specifically permitted hereinafter.

(e) All permanent signs affixed to any permitted building shall be integrated into the architectural design of the building on which they are placed by being harmonious with the facade of the building.

(f) Double-faced signs.

[1] Any sign may be double-faced, provided that it has two (2) parallel surfaces that are opposite and matching in size and shape and are not over twelve (12) inches apart.

[2] The sign shall be considered as one (1) sign, and only one (1) face shall be used to calculate the total size of the sign.

(g) Pole signs. Such signs shall be permitted on the premises of the use for which they are intended and may be erected, provided that:

[1] No pole shall be erected within the right-of-way of any street or alley.

[2] No portion of said sign shall be less than ten (10) feet above the mean ground level.

[3] No portion of said sign shall exceed twenty (20) feet above the average ground level.

(h) Ground signs.

[1] The top of any ground sign shall be no higher above the ground level than six (6) feet, subject to the provisions of § 112-81B(2)(a).

[2] All poles or columns that support ground signs shall be made of metal or steel, except for those used in residential districts, which may be made of pressure-treated timbers. All such poles or columns shall be embedded in the ground at least three (3) feet six (6) inches, unless otherwise so directed by the Zoning Officer.

[3] Ground signs will be permitted in residential areas only when set back a distance of ten (10) feet from the front property line.

(i) Wall signs. Such signs may be erected and maintained, provided that:

[1] No such sign shall project more than twelve (12) inches beyond the building line.

[2] All wall signs shall be rigidly affixed to the building and to all supporting and framing structures, attachments and hardware. [Amended 5-20-1992 by Ord. No. 7-1992]

[3] No part of the projecting sign shall be less than eight (8) feet or more than twenty (20) feet above the ground on walkway level, except as provided below for marquees, awnings and

canopies.

(j) Marquees, awnings and canopies.

[1] Marquees, awnings and canopies may be constructed of cloth or metal; provided, however, that all frames and supports shall be of metal.

[2] Every marquee, awning or canopy shall be securely attached to and supported by the building. Posts or columns beyond the building line shall not be permitted unless they are part of a restoration project in the Town Center District which is approved by the Borough Council.

[3] All marquees, awnings and canopies shall be constructed and erected so that the lowest portion thereof shall be not less than eight (8) feet above the level of the sidewalk or public street.

(k) Illuminated signs.

[1] Signs shall be illuminated so that the lighting does not shine directly on abutting properties or in the normal line of vision of the public when using the streets, alleys or sidewalks.

[2] The source of said lighting shall not be directly visible from the street, alley or sidewalk nor from any normal vantage point.

(l) Each sign shall be removed within ten (10) days of the time when the circumstances leading to its erection no longer apply or as provided for otherwise in § 112-81A(6).

(m) All signs on smokestacks, water towers, silos and other similar structures shall be governed by the provisions of this Article.

(n) Projecting signs. [Added 5-20-1992 by Ord. No. 7-1992]

[1] No such sign shall project more than five (5) feet beyond the building line nor shall such signs exceed twelve (12) square feet. [Amended 5-10-1995 by Ord. No. 6-1995]

[2] All projecting signs shall be rigidly affixed to the building and to all supporting and framing structures, attachments and hardware.

[3] No part of the projecting sign shall be less than eight (8) or more than twenty (20) feet above the ground on walkway level, except as provided for herein for marquees, awnings and canopies.

[4] Projecting signs based on historical precedent which are not otherwise in compliance with the established regulations may be erected following the grant of a special exception by the Zoning Hearing Board in accordance with § 112-119C, with the exception that no impact assessment report, as required by § 112-100, shall be required for this application.

§ 112-82. Signs not requiring permits.

The following signs, exactly as herein described, are exempt from the need to secure permits but shall still be subject to the above general restrictions and standards:

A. Decorations for a recognized officially designated holiday, provided that they do not create a traffic or fire hazard.

B. Official and governmental signs, which shall include safety signs, trespassing signs, signs indicating scenic or historical points of interest and traffic signs and public parking garages.

C. [Amended 12-14-1994 by Ord. No. 16-1994] Signs designating the name of the owner or occupant of a dwelling house, the address of such property or the private ownership of roadways or other property, provided that:

(1) Such sign is not in excess of two (2) square feet in area.

(2) Not more than one (1) such sign is erected for each use.

D. Temporary yard sale or garage sale signs, provided that such signs:

(1) Do not exceed two (2) square feet in area.

(2) Shall be removed within twenty-four (24) hours after said sale.

(3) Shall be located on the lot where the sale is being conducted.

E. [Amended 5-20-1992 by Ord. No. 7-1992] Temporary signs, except for banners across streets, alleys and public rights-of-way which are provided for hereafter in § 112-83, announcing a political, public, educational, charitable, civic, religious or similar campaign or event, provided that:

(1) Each such temporary sign shall not cover any window area, nor shall it exceed twenty-eight (28) square feet or twenty percent (20%) of the square footage of the first-floor building facade, whichever is smaller.

(2) Such sign may be erected for a period not to exceed sixty (60) days in any calendar year.

F. Window signs. Such signs shall be used to serve as an accessory sign to the sign associated with the principal use.

(1) Window signs shall be permitted in the TC, CS and ID Districts and where nonconforming commercial uses occur in other districts.

(2) The total area of temporary or permanent window signs shall not exceed twenty-five percent (25%) of the total glass area of the window in which they are placed, except for grocery stores, food markets or pharmacies, where the total area shall not exceed thirty-five percent (35%) of the total glass of the window.

G. Informational signs, such as "entrance," "exit," "no parking," "visitor's parking," "no trespassing," "keep off the grass" and the like on the same lot as the use to which the sign relates or the prohibition of the use to which the sign relates, provided that:

(1) The area of said sign shall not exceed two (2) square feet in area.

(2) Such sign shall not contain any advertising.

H. Signs advertising the sale or rental of individual lots on the premises upon which they are erected, or that said premises have been sold or rented, when erected by a broker or other person interested in the sale or rental of such premises, may be erected and maintained, provided that:

(1) The size of the sign is not in excess of six (6) square feet.

(2) Not more than one (1) sign shall be placed upon any property in single and separate ownership, such signs to be removed within thirty-one (31) days after an agreement of sale has been executed.

I. Signs advertising the pending sale or development or rental of a subdivision or land development on the premises upon which they are erected, when erected in connection with the subdivision and/or land development of the premises by a building, contractor, developer or other person interested in such sale or development, may be erected and maintained, provided that:

(1) The size of any such sign is not in excess of sixteen (16)

square feet.

(2) Not more than one (1) sign shall be placed upon any property in single and separate ownership, unless such property fronts upon more than one (1) street, in which event one (1) sign may be erected on each frontage.

(3) Such sign shall not be erected until the subdivision and/or land development has received final plan approval.

J. Signs of mechanics, painters and other artisans may be erected and maintained during the period such persons are performing work on the premises on which signs are erected, provided that:

(1) The size thereof is not in excess of six (6) square feet.

(2) Such signs may be placed during the conduct of the work but shall be removed within thirty-one (31) days of commencement of the work, unless approved otherwise by the Zoning Officer.

K. Sidewalk sign. A limit of one (1) sidewalk sign per business shall be permitted within the Town Center District and may be placed within the sidewalk, so long as each portable sign shall not exceed nine (9) square feet and a minimum clear walking width of four (4) feet shall be maintained. All such sidewalk signs shall be taken indoors at the close of each business day. [Added 5-20-1992 by Ord. No. 7-1992]

§ 112-83. Signs requiring permits.

The following signs, exactly as herein described under each specific district, are permitted, provided that a sign permit has been obtained for said sign:

A. Neighborhood Conservation District. The following signs may be erected and maintained in the Neighborhood Conservation Districts upon issuance of a sign permit:

(1) Signs for home occupations as permitted in this chapter, indicating the name and/or professional activity of the resident practitioner, provided that the size of any such sign shall not exceed two (2) square feet in area, with the name and profession of the resident practitioner. [Amended 12-14-1994 by Ord. No. 17-1994]

(2) Signs for uses in the Professional Office Overlay District. The size of such sign shall not exceed twelve (12) square feet.

(3) Signs naming an approved subdivision or land development, provided that:

(a) Such sign does not exceed sixteen (16) square feet in area for each exclusive entrance to a subdivision or other land development.

(b) Such sign is restricted to the subdivision or land development name.

(4) Signs for a bed-and-breakfast facility, provided that the size of any such sign shall not exceed two (2) square feet in area. [Amended 12-14-1994 by Ord. No. 17-1994]

(5) [Amended 12-14-1994 by Ord. No. 16-1994] Signs of schools, colleges, churches, hospitals, public libraries, public parks or playgrounds or multifamily buildings containing fifteen (15) or more dwelling units or other institutions and sites of a similar nature may be erected and maintained on the premises, provided that:

(a) The size of any such sign is not in excess of twenty (20) square feet.

(b) Not more than one (1) sign shall be placed on a property in single or separate ownership unless such property fronts upon more than one (1) street, in which event one (1) such sign may be erected on each frontage.

(6) [Added 12-14-1994 by Ord. No. 16-1994EN] Signs of fraternities and sororities may be erected and maintained, provided that:

(a) The permit application shall contain a letter from the Dean of Students evidencing university recognition, chartering or acceptance.

(b) Not more than one (1) sign shall be placed on a property.

(c) The sign must be rigidly affixed to the building and to all supporting and framing structures, attachments and hardware.

(d) The sign shall not exceed four (4) square feet in area.

(e) The sign shall not be illuminated.

(f) Each fraternity/sorority shall be limited to one (1) sign, irrespective of the number of properties occupied.

(7) Signs indicating the location of hospitals or other public service institutions may be erected and maintained, provided that:

(a) The number of any such signs to be erected by any one (1) institution or organization may be limited at the discretion of the Borough Council.

(b) Written permission is secured from the owner of the property on which the sign is to be erected.

(c) The size of any such sign is not in excess of three (3) square feet.

(8) [Added 12-14-1994 by Ord. No. 17-1994EN] Business signs for nonconforming uses which are located in a building sharing both a business and residential use and which indicate the name or activity of the occupant of the building, provided that:

(a) Such sign shall be considered as separate from the residential signs as provided for in § 112-82C.

(b) Not more than one (1) such sign shall be erected for each building, and (c) such sign shall not exceed two (2) square feet.

(9) Business signs for nonconforming uses which are located in a building other than a residence and which indicate the name or activity of the occupant of the building, provided that:

(a) Not more than one (1) such sign shall be erected for such use.

(b) Such sign shall not exceed four (4) square feet in area.

(10) Only the following signs shall be illuminated in the residential districts:

(a) An identification sign of a physician, dentist, District Justice, hospital and any such other person or establishment whose services in an emergency are considered essential to public health, safety and welfare.

(b) An identification sign of a school, church or other similar permitted use, provided that said sign is illuminated only between the hours of dusk and 12:00 midnight, prevailing time.

(11) Banners across streets, alleys and other public rights-of-way

shall be permitted to promote community events such as Sidewalk Sale Days, the Annual Restaurant Festival, Old Fashioned Christmas and events sponsored by the Chester County Hospital, Chester County Historical Society, veterans organizations or charitable, educational, fraternal, civic or service organizations. Banners promoting business and commercial enterprises are prohibited. Banners shall also be governed by the following:

- (a) At least thirty (30) days prior to the desired date of hanging a banner over a public street or way, an applicant must complete and submit a banner permit to the office of the Borough Manager for approval by the Borough Council. Upon approval of a permit by the Borough Council, a banner may be hung and displayed as set forth below.
- (b) The hanging of banners must be in complete conformance with the application as submitted and as finally approved by the Borough Council.
- (c) The hanging of banners is the sole responsibility of the applicant.
- (d) No banner may hang lower than fifteen (15) feet over the street or public way.
- (e) No more than two (2) banners may be displayed over any particular street or public way.
- (f) Banners may not be hung more than fourteen (14) days prior to the date of the event being advertised and must be removed no later than seven (7) days after the conclusion of the event being advertised.
- (g) Banners not removed within seven (7) days after the advertised event has concluded will be removed by the borough, and the applicant shall be liable for the actual cost of removal.
- (h) Banners hung across streets and other rights-of-way without proper approval will be removed within two (2) working days after the person(s) or organization(s) responsible have been notified by any means of communication. Failure to remove the banner(s) after notification shall result in the borough's doing so at a charge of the actual cost of removal and fines as related to zoning violations.

**B. Commercial Service and Industrial Districts.** The following signs may be erected and maintained in the CS and ID Districts upon issuance of a sign permit:

- (1) Any sign permitted in a Neighborhood Conservation District which relates to a use permitted in the CS and ID Districts or a condition of sale, rental, direction and the like as set forth in § 112-81.
- (2) No commercial service or industrial signs may be erected or maintained unless such signs shall advertise the permitted business activity conducted on the premises. No such sign shall be permitted on any lot or premises which is not a permitted principal business or industrial use at the time of enactment of this Article.
- (3) Signs advertising one (1) business or industrial use when located on the lot where such use is conducted, provided that:
  - (a) Not more than one (1) ground sign or pole sign shall be permitted upon each street on which the use has frontage. Such

sign shall not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in area and shall be set back a distance of not less than ten (10) feet from the street right-of-way line; or

- (b) Not more than three (3) wall signs, the total signage of which is not to exceed ten percent (10%) of the facade area on which the sign is located or thirty two (32) square feet, whichever is less. [Amended 12-14-1994 by Ord. No. 17-1994]
- (4) Signs advertising two (2) or more businesses or industries on a lot held in single and separate ownership on the lot where such uses are conducted, provided that:
  - (a) Not more than one (1) ground sign or pole sign as provided in § 112-81 shall be permitted. The total area of such sign shall not exceed twenty-four (24) square feet for one (1) business or industry; however, up to four (4) additional square feet may be added for every additional business or industry, but in no case shall such sign exceed forty (40) square feet. The structural backing for all such signs shall be uniform, and no sign may extend in any direction beyond the outside edge of the backing; and

(b) Not more than one (1) wall sign per business or industry shall be permitted. No such sign shall exceed eight (8) square feet. [Amended 12-14-1994 by Ord. No. 17-1994]

(5) In the case of an automobile service station, four (4) accessory signs may be erected and maintained, provided that each such sign does not exceed four (4) square feet in area.

(6) All signs in the CS and ID Districts may be illuminated, subject to § 112-81.

**C. Institutional District.** The following signs may be erected and maintained in the IS District upon issuance of a sign permit:

- (1) Any sign permitted in a Neighborhood Conservation District which relates to a use permitted in the IS District or a condition of sale, rental, direction and the like as set forth in § 112-81.
- (2) Signs advertising one (1) institutional use when located on the lot or tract where such use is conducted, provided that:
  - (a) Not more than a combination of two (2) ground signs or pole signs shall be permitted along each street on which the use has frontage. Such sign(s) shall not exceed twenty-four (24) square feet in area and shall be set back at least ten (10) feet from the street right-of-way line and shall be separated at least one hundred (100) feet from one another, measured along the street line.
  - (b) Not more than two (2) wall signs attached to a facade of a permitted principal building shall be permitted, neither of which shall exceed twenty-four (24) square feet in area.
- (3) Two (2) accessory signs may be erected and maintained for each individual institutional use, provided that any such sign does not exceed four (4) square feet in area.
- (4) All signs in the IS District may be illuminated, subject to § 112-81.

**D. Town Center District.** The following signs may be erected and maintained in the TC District upon issuance of a sign permit:

- (1) Any sign permitted in the Neighborhood Conservation

District which relates to a use permitted in the TC District.

(2) A wall sign advertising one (1) town center use, when located on the lot where such use is conducted, provided that:

(a) Not more than one (1) wall sign attached to the wall of a permitted principal building shall be permitted, which shall not exceed ten percent (10%) of the wall area devoted to the use or five percent (5%) of the wall area for illuminated signs, provided that in either case no wall sign shall exceed thirty-two (32) square feet.

(b) No such sign shall cover any windows or walls of any part of the building not devoted to the use to which the sign relates.

(3) If a ground sign is erected, such sign shall not exceed twenty (20) square feet and shall be set back a distance of not less than five (5) feet from the street right-of-way line. [Amended 12-14-1994 by Ord. No. 17-1994]

(4) If a pole sign is erected, such sign shall not exceed twenty (20) square feet and shall be set back a distance of not less than five (5) feet from the street right-of-way line. [Amended 12-14-1994 by Ord. No. 17-1994]

(5) All signs in the TC District may be illuminated, subject to § 112-81.

§ 112-84. Permit requirements.

The following requirements shall apply to signs for which a permit is required as set forth in § 112-83:

A. All sign approval permits shall be filed on application forms provided by the borough and administered by the Zoning Officer.

B. All sign approval permit applications shall disclose the following information in duplicate:

(1) A description of the size, shape, color, material, supports, anchoring, weight and height of the sign, as well as the intensity of illumination.

(2) An architectural elevation, drawn to scale, of the sign, indicating the proposed style of the letters, words, symbols or other graphics and the proposed size, dimensions, shape, color, material, supports, anchoring and height of the sign.

(3) A plot plan, drawn to scale, showing the proposed sign location with respect to the property lines and the building(s).

C. Written consent of the landowner, if different from the applicant, shall be provided.

D. All applications for sign approval permits shall be accompanied by a check to cover the required fee as set forth in the fee schedule for signs established by the Borough Council.

E. The Zoning Officer shall process applications for sign approval permits within thirty (30) days from the date of the filing of a complete application with the required fee, unless provided for otherwise herein.

F. The Zoning Officer shall inspect and approve the installation of the sign and shall make periodic inspections to determine conformity of signs to these regulations.

G. In determining the appropriateness of the proposed sign, the Zoning Officer shall determine the following:

(1) That the sign meets all the restrictions, standards and sign area requirements set forth in this Article.

(2) That the sign has a reasonable location, scale and proportion in relation to buildings, doors, windows and pedestrian and vehicular access.

§ 112-85. Fees.

All applications for permits shall be accompanied by a fee in accordance with the fee schedule for the same established by the Borough Council.

§ 112-86. Summary of sign area regulations.

The tables which follow provide a summary of sign area regulations.

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