

# Town of Chestertown Historic District Design Guidelines



© 2012 Town of Chestertown

Mayor and Town Council

Margo G. Bailey, Mayor  
James Gatto  
Mabel R. Mumford-Pautz  
Linda Kuiper  
Marty Stetson

Historic District Commission

Michael Lane, Chairman  
Robert H. Busler  
M. Douglas Gates  
Meghan Habas Siudzinski  
Arthur Hock  
Nancy McDonald McGuire  
H. Robert Yeager



The Town of Chestertown Historic District Design Guidelines were written by John L. Seidel and Kees de Mooy. Photographs by Kees de Mooy unless otherwise noted.

This publication has been financed in part with federal funds from the National Park Service, U.S. Department of Interior, made available through the Maryland Historical Trust, an agency of the Department of Planning, State of Maryland. However, the contents and opinions contained herein do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of these agencies.

Additional funding provided by the Town of Chestertown.

Adopted by Mayor and Council of Chestertown in 2002.  
Revised 2012.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## I. Introduction

<b>I.1 PURPOSE OF THE GUIDELINES</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>I.2 HOW TO USE THE GUIDELINES</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>I.3 WHY SHOULD I PRESERVE MY HISTORIC BUILDING?</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>I.4 CHESTERTOWN'S ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE</b>	<b>10</b>
I.4.1 Introduction	10
I.4.2 Early Houses	10
I.4.3 Georgian Style	11
I.4.4 The Late 18 <sup>th</sup> Century – Georgian and Federal	13
I.4.5 The Early 19 <sup>th</sup> Century Doldrums	13
I.4.6 Victorian Styles	14
I.4.7 Civic Beautification & the Coming of the 20 <sup>th</sup> Century	15
I.4.8 Vernacular & Commercial Buildings	16

## II. The Historic District & Commission Procedures

<b>II.1 THE CHESTERTOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT &amp; THE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>II.2 PROJECTS REQUIRING HDC REVIEW</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>II.3 PROJECTS NOT REVIEWED BY THE HDC</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>II.4 PROCEDURES FOR REVIEWING PROJECTS</b>	
II.4.1 Applications and Deadlines	19
II.4.2 Hearings and Resulting Actions	20
<b>II.5 DEMOLITION BY NEGLECT</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>II.6 SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>II.7 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS</b>	<b>22</b>

## III. Rehabilitation & Maintenance of Existing Structures

<b>III.1. INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>III.2. MASONRY</b>	<b>26</b>
III.2.1 Materials & Characteristics	26
<i>Brick and Stone</i>	26
<i>Mortar</i>	27
<i>Bonds</i>	27
<i>Mortar Joints</i>	28
III.2.2 Cleaning	28
III.2.3 Paint	29
III.2.4 Masonry Repairs	29
III.2.5 Repointing	29
III.2.6 Sealants	30
III.2.7 Prevention	30

<b>III.3 WOOD</b>	<b>31</b>
III.3.1 Character-defining Elements	31
III.3.2 Repair or Replacement	31
III.3.3 Painting	32
III.3.4 Wood Siding	32
III.3.5 Pressure-treated Lumber	32
<b>III.4 METAL</b>	<b>33</b>
III.4.1 Character-defining Elements	33
III.3.2 Repair or Replacement	33
III.3.3 Painting	33
<b>III.5 SIDING</b>	<b>33</b>
III.5.1 Types of Wood Siding	34
III.5.2 Repair or Replacement	34
III.5.3 Resurfacing	34
III.5.4 Aluminum and Vinyl Siding	35
III.5.5 Composite Siding	35
<b>III.6 DOORS AND WINDOWS</b>	<b>36</b>
III.6.1 Doors	36
III.6.2 Screen and Storm Doors	36
III.6.3 Windows	37
III.6.4 Lead Paint	38
III.6.5 Shutters	39
III.6.6 Storm Windows	39
<b>III.7 ROOFS</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>III.8 PORCHES</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>III.9 COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS</b>	<b>41</b>
III.9.1 Bulkheads	41
III.9.2 Piers	41
III.9.3 Display Windows	42
III.9.4 Transoms	42
III.9.5 Entrances	42
III.9.6 Doors	43
III.9.7 Friezes and Parapets	43
<b>III.10 ACCESSORY OR AUXILIARY BUILDINGS</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>III.11 LIGHTING</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>III.12 MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT &amp; ACCESSORIES</b>	<b>44</b>
III.12.1 Heating and Cooling Equipment	44
III.12.2 Satellite Dishes and Antennas	45
III.12.3 Utilities	45
III.12.4 Vending Machines	45
III.12.5 Automated Teller Machines (ATMs)	45
III.12.6 Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Systems	46
<b>III.13 SIGNS</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>III.14 ACCESS TO THE DISABLED</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>III.15 ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACTS</b>	<b>48</b>

<b>IV. New Construction &amp; Additions</b>	
<b>IV.1 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>IV.2 PROCESS &amp; PROCEDURES</b>	<b>49</b>
IV.2.1 Required Information	50
IV.2.2 Hearings	50
<b>IV.3 DESIGN ELEMENTS</b>	<b>51</b>
IV.3.1 Style	51
IV.3.2 Rhythm	51
IV.3.3 Height	51
IV.3.4 Scale	52
IV.3.5 Mass	52
IV.3.6 Materials, Texture, and Color	52
IV.3.7 Roof Shapes & Materials	53
IV.3.8 Windows and Doors	53
IV.3.9 Spacing, Setback, and Location	54
IV.3.10 Site Features and Landscape	54
<b>IV.4 ACCESSORY BUILDINGS</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>IV.5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACTS</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>IV.6 NEW ADDITIONS</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>IV.7 SIGNS</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>V. Public Spaces and Landscape Areas</b>	
<b>V.1 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>V.2 STREETS, SIDEWALKS, DRIVEWAYS &amp; PARKING LOTS</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>V.3 STREET FURNITURE</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>V.4 TREES, SHRUBS &amp; OTHER PLANTINGS</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>V.5 WALLS AND FENCES</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>V.6 DECKS, PATIOS, &amp; POOLS</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>VI. Demolition and Moving Buildings</b>	
<b>VI.1 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>VI.2 DEMOLITION APPLICATION PROCESS</b>	<b>61</b>
VI.2.1 The Process	61
VI.2.2 Hearing I	62
<i>Criteria for Determining Significance</i>	62
<i>Application Requirements</i>	63
VI.2.3 Hearing II	64
<i>Economic Hardship</i>	64
<i>Application Requirements</i>	65
VI.2.4 Replacement or New Construction	65
VI.2.5 Partial Demolitions	65
<b>VI.3 ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS</b>	<b>66</b>

## VII. Appendices

1. Checklist for Applications to the Historic District Commission
2. Map of the Historic District (2010)

68  
69



# I INTRODUCTION

## I.1 Purpose of the Guidelines

More than two thousand towns and cities in the United States have adopted historic preservation ordinances and design guidelines for protecting and rehabilitating historic structures. They have done so out of a concern for the public appearance of their communities, and in order to preserve their heritage, protect property values, and encourage civic pride. In these jurisdictions, historic preservation commissions or similar governmental entities are charged with reviewing construction applications. They strive to protect the unique qualities of their historic district and to ensure that buildings do not fall into decay. In Chestertown, this review entity is the Chestertown Historic District Commission.

These guidelines provide the Historic District Commission (HDC) and property owners with guidance on appropriate methods for the upkeep and rehabilitation of the town's historic buildings. They also assist in the design of new construction in the historic district, whether these are additions to existing structures or entirely new buildings. The guidelines do not seek to prevent change. Change is inevitable in any living town, and these guidelines are aimed at ensuring that change is appropriate to Chestertown's unique character. The HDC uses the Historic District Design Guidelines and applies the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* to evaluate the appropriateness of changes to a building and to the Historic District as a whole. Property owners can use these guidelines to identify what kinds of treatments are effective and appropriate, and to better understand what will be approved by the HDC.

## I.2 How to Use the Guidelines

This publication is intended to serve as a comprehensive guide to the wide range of construction projects that take place within Chestertown's Historic District. Navigating the text can be somewhat difficult due to the length of the Guidelines, but the easiest way to start is to look through the Table of Contents for a topic that matches your project.

Chapter I explains the **purpose of the Guidelines** and reviews the **architectural history** of Chestertown. Understanding how a building fits into the context of Chestertown's history is important in executing a sympathetic and appropriate project.

Chapter II describes the **Historic District** and the **Historic District Commission** that reviews permit applications in the District. It further describes **what kinds of projects do or do not require review**. Chapter II also summarizes the **procedures** followed by the Historic District Commission, as well as the **standards** used. Section II.6 contains the **Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation**, which provide the basis for these and all other Guidelines used by Historic Districts across the nation. Chapter II concludes with a list of **frequently asked questions**.

If your project involves **repairs or rehabilitation of an existing structure**, Chapter III

will be most useful. It starts by reviewing the characteristics and problems with different types of building materials (masonry, wood and metal), and then discusses issues with various building elements such as doors, windows, and siding. Chapter III also reviews the special considerations for commercial buildings, as well as topics such as outbuildings, signs, and mechanical equipment.

**New construction and new additions** to existing buildings are reviewed in Chapter IV, while **public spaces and landscaping** are treated in Chapter V. The final section, Chapter VI, deals with proposals for **demolition or moving existing buildings**.

The appendices contain a variety of additional information that applicants may find of use, including a checklist for applications, a copy of the Town ordinance that governs the Historic District, and helpful addresses and contact information.

***NOTE: If you are viewing this document online, clicking on web addresses outlined with an orange box will automatically take you to that site.***

### **I. 3 Why Should I Preserve My Historic Building?**

Aside from the necessary compliance with Town ordinances, there are many practical reasons for preserving historic buildings and adhering to these Design Guidelines. One good reason is that the guidelines generally recommend the best – and in some cases the most cost-effective – methods of maintaining or improving a historic structure. This is not to say that doing work according to the guidelines is always the easiest route. But following these recommended procedures will be better for the building and save money over time, while preserving a vital part of the community.

Older buildings were constructed differently than modern structures, and indiscriminate mixing of old and new materials or construction methods can have detrimental results. Old brick, for example, is generally softer than modern brick. The use of hard modern Portland cement or mortar on such brick can hasten its deterioration and result in serious structural damage. Sandblasting paint from brick can lead to equally serious problems, while painting of previously unpainted surfaces may trap moisture and lead to decay. Application of vinyl or aluminum siding often seems attractive, as it can hide a multitude of sins and need not be painted for several years. But such siding also can hide deterioration inside the walls, resulting in much more expensive repairs down the road. And even vinyl siding eventually will have to be painted, and with the same regularity as wood siding, so the temporary cost-savings may be illusory. Using more appropriate materials can prevent a variety of long-term problems, while at the same time providing aesthetic benefits and preserving the historic character of the community.

Studies in numerous states across the country have shown that properties inside historic districts enjoy real financial advantages because of their adherence to design guidelines. A 1999 study of six historic districts in Maryland revealed a number of significant findings:

- **Businesses in the historic districts flourish when they capitalize on the district's unique character.**

- **Historic districts are a powerful economic investment tool for use in attracting new business to the entire community.**
- **The 6 districts annually generate over \$40.3 million in wages and over 1,600 jobs in the state, based on tourism and construction figures alone.**
- **Residential and commercial property values in the 6 districts appreciated on average 28.9% faster than properties located just outside the district in the same community.**

In addition to these long-term financial benefits, state and federal tax incentives can provide some substantial and more immediate financial rewards. The **Sustainable Community Tax Credit** (SCTC) program, formerly called the Maryland Rehabilitation Tax Credit program, is administered by the Maryland Historical Trust. It provides Maryland income tax credits equal to 20 percent of the qualified capital costs for rehabilitating a “certified heritage structure.” All contributing structures in Chestertown’s Historic District may apply for certification, and the credit is available for both owner-occupied residential property and income-producing property. High performance commercial certified historic structures are eligible for a 25 percent tax credit, and non-historic qualified historic structures may be eligible for a 10 percent tax credit. The rehabilitation expenditures on the property must exceed \$5,000 over a two-year period for owner-occupied properties (different criteria apply to commercial properties), conform to the *Secretary of Interior’s Standards*, and be certified by the Maryland Historical Trust. Information and forms can be downloaded from the MHT’s website by looking under “Tax Credits” at <http://mht.maryland.gov/taxcredits.html>. Please note that local approval for a project does not serve as a substitute for State requirements and review.

The **Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit** is similar to the state program, but applies only to income-producing properties. This 20% credit is available for structures that are listed on the National Register of historic Places, which is administered by the National Park Service, or that contribute to the significance of a National Register Historic District. A map showing the boundaries of Chestertown’s National Register Historic District, as well as individually listed or contributing structures, is available at Town Hall. Almost all of the buildings within the current local Historic District boundaries also lie within the National Register District.\* Additional information on this tax credit is available on the National Park Service web site, at <http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/tax/incentives/index.htm> or at [http://mht.maryland.gov/taxcredits\\_homeowner.html](http://mht.maryland.gov/taxcredits_homeowner.html) under “Tax Credits-Federal.”

\* The existence of two distinct historic districts within Chestertown is sometimes a source of confusion. The local “Chestertown Historic District” was established by the Town’s ordinance and its boundaries are shown in Appendix 2. This local district is subject to these guidelines and oversight by the Chestertown Historic District Commission. The “National Register Historic District” overlaps with the Chestertown Historic District, and since the local Historic District was expanded in 2007, the two districts are almost identical. Structures outside of the boundaries of the local Historic District but in the National Register Historic District are not subject to review by the Chestertown Historic District Commission. If you own property on the boundary, it is advisable to consult with the Town Manager or staff as to whether you are located within the Chestertown Historic District.



Chestertown waterfront from the Chester River Bridge

## I.4 Chestertown's Architectural Heritage

### I.4.1 Introduction

Chestertown was established as the county seat of Kent County in 1706. It became one of the most important towns in the Chesapeake during the 18<sup>th</sup> century and was an official port of entry for the Province of Maryland. Although its importance as a port town declined after the American Revolution, the town regained prosperity as a county seat and the hub of a vibrant agricultural region from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> through the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Because of its prosperity, Chestertown's residents built and maintained a variety of substantial domestic, commercial and government buildings. The town's housing stock now includes examples of most of the building styles popular in the country from the 18<sup>th</sup> through the 20<sup>th</sup> century, from folk buildings to superb examples of popular architecture. An understanding of these styles can help property owners to better understand their own property. It can also develop a better feel for how to carry out effective rehabilitation or design new structures that fit with the rhythm and style of Chestertown's existing architecture.

Residents of Chestertown are fortunate to have a number of good publications on the town's architecture and history. *Chestertown, Maryland: An Inventory of Historic Sites* was first published by the Town of Chestertown in 1981. Based on the survey work of a large number of researchers, it provides a detailed listing of many of the Town's important structures. The Town also published a highly useful walking tour, *Chestertown: An Architectural Guide*, by Robert J. H. Janson-La Palme. Placing the town's early structures into the larger context of Kent County is a third book, *Historic Houses of Kent County: An Architectural History, 1642-1860*, by Michael Bourne (edited by Eugene Johnstone and published by the Kent County Historical Society). The following description of Chestertown's architecture owes much to these earlier works.

### I. 4.2 Early Houses

Following the norm elsewhere in the Chesapeake, the earliest houses in Chestertown probably were built relatively quickly, with wood-frames resting on posts set in the ground, and they were vulnerable to rot and insect damage. As a result, no structures dating from Chestertown's founding have survived. Although tradition holds that the Esau Watkins House at 109 North Water Street is the oldest house in town, it was built around 1739 and was preceded by the earlier Buck-Bacchus Store at 116 High Street, constructed ca. 1735. Both buildings illustrate a style

that was to become popular in the growing port. Constructed of brick laid in Flemish bond, these two-story houses have the symmetrical facades and hipped roofs that characterize what is known as the Georgian style. Perhaps the earliest structures in town are two plainer versions of the brick Georgian house that can be found farther away from the river. The Rebecca Lloyd Anderson House at 411 High Street and the James Anderson House at 401 Cannon Street are believed to have been constructed around 1733, and both have been sensitively restored.

### I.4.3 Georgian Style

Brick houses were better able to survive the passage of time, and consequently they comprise the vast bulk of the surviving mid-18<sup>th</sup> century buildings in Chestertown. A large group of these buildings cluster around Water and Queen Streets, and they range from relatively small houses (109 N. Water Street) to the much larger Custom House (101 S. Water Street, ca. 1745) and grander structures such as the Barroll House (110 High Street, ca. 1743) and Hynson-Ringgold House (106 S. Water Street, ca. 1743). These buildings share a number of common characteristics. All are built of brick. In the absence of native sources of stone, brick made of local clay became the most durable building material. All share a two-story configuration (usually two rooms deep). They also share the door and window placement, window forms, and roof styles common to Georgian exteriors. This Georgian style was rigidly symmetrical, with exterior openings that were balanced horizontally and vertically. Most have beautiful cornices beneath the eaves, belt courses between the first and second floors, and watertables beneath the first floor windows.



Custom House



White Swan Tavern

Not all of Chestertown's early buildings conformed to the Georgian ideal however, and the smaller White Swan Tavern (231 High Street, ca. 1733) owes its symmetrically placed door and windows to a later renovation in 1793. Others mixed Georgian ideas with vernacular traditions. At 520 High Street there is a small brick house with a symmetrical exterior. Next door at 518 High Street is a town house of a type sometimes called a "two-thirds Georgian" house. Reflecting a common approach to building on narrow city lots, the builders simply omitted one side of the house. What would normally be the center hallway is located along one side of the structure, while a set of rooms occupies the other side. In this fashion, builders could build to the latest fashion, while staying within the confines of a narrow lot (and perhaps the confines of a smaller budget). These structures are typical of the variations in scale, layout, and taste that can be seen in Chestertown's 18<sup>th</sup> century housing.

Whether Georgian or not, all buildings from the period share a certain feel or character.

Part of this has to do with shared materials such as brick walls and wood trim, as well as similar roof pitches and roofing materials. But the shared character also comes from common elements such as windows and doors. Windows of the period were almost always sash windows made of wood, with a bottom sash that could be raised for ventilation. These sash windows replaced the casement windows of the 1600s. Upper sashes were sometimes fixed (single hung) and sometimes moveable (double hung). Unlike today's windows, those of the 18<sup>th</sup> century were comprised of many small panes of glass set into wood muntins. Architectural historians describe such windows by noting the number of panes making up the upper sash and the number in the lower sash. A “nine-over-six” window, for example, has nine panes in the upper sash (arranged in rows of three panes each), while the lower sash has two rows of three panes each, for a total of six panes. Six-over-six and nine-over-six windows are common for the period, and a four-over-four or one-over-one window would look quite out of place in such a structure.



Nine-over-nine sash window

Doors of the period typically were paneled. Although windows (“lights”) might have been set in the frame above the door, they would not have been found in the door itself. Modern hollow core steel doors, or doors with windows, bear little resemblance to the originals, and the original doors would not have been obscured by screen doors, which were non-existent at the time. Another defining characteristic of both doors and windows of different periods is the use of wood framing, trim, and muntins, including the width and depth of the frame and its profile.

Other shared elements of Georgian structures include brick color, similarity in mortar joints, similar techniques for laying bricks, and the presence of brick features such as a water table and belt course. Even the arrangement of such features and elements such as doors, windows and chimneys followed rules for the period. Builders used geometric principles to determine the relationships between features and their relative size. There was, for example, a mathematical relationship between height and width of the primary façade, the height of the roof above it, and the height of the chimneys above that. A rebuilt element – or an addition or new replica of a Georgian building – that departs from these formulae will inevitably look awkward and out of place.

The common attributes of these early buildings, which have generally been faithfully retained or restored in the Historic District, help give them their “colonial” feel and character. Each of architectural periods or styles discussed in these guidelines had its own rules or “grammar” for using and combining its distinctive architectural elements. Adherence to these rules is an essential quality of successful rehabilitation.

#### **I.4.4 The Late 18<sup>th</sup> Century – Georgian and Federal**

By the mid-1700s, grain was replacing the unpredictably-priced staple crop of tobacco in Kent County. Grain profits, coupled with Chestertown’s role as a port of entry and its strategic position on the north-south route from Philadelphia to Virginia, brought a growing prosperity to the county seat. A number of even grander Georgian houses were erected during the years just

before and after the Revolutionary War, including Wide Hall (101 N. Water Street, ca. 1769). In addition, a new style emerged during the post-war period. The Federal style can be seen in structures such as River House (ca. 1784). The contrasts between Georgian and Federal can readily be seen in a comparison of Wide Hall and River House. Federal buildings could be brick or frame and were usually square or rectangular, often three stories high, with less steep (lower-pitched) roofs. Doors and windows were nicely scaled and elongated, often with fan-lights at the top. The elongated exterior openings and third story emphasized the vertical dimension of these buildings, while the narrow and delicate columns and moldings gave them a lighter feel than the solid bulk of the Georgian style. On nearby River House, the brick pilasters at the corners are typical of the Federal period. They are topped by a limestone capital, and limestone was used to highlight the watertable and belt course below and above the first floor windows. A beautiful hand-carved cornice runs beneath the eave.



Wide Hall

The buildings of the 18<sup>th</sup> century were not, of course, restricted to dwellings. A variety of taverns and other commercial structures populated the bustling town, and these were joined by civic buildings, such as the court house and jail (neither of which survive), and churches. Emmanuel Episcopal Church was built in 1772, and its current form is an example of how later changes can mask the earlier style of an old building.

#### **I.4.5 The Early 19<sup>th</sup> Century Doldrums**

The absence of certain architectural styles often says as much about a town as the prevalence of other styles. By the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a style known as Greek Revival swept through the country, with an emphasis upon classical Greek temple forms. Public buildings were designed in this style by architects such as Benjamin Henry Latrobe and William Strickland, and the style spread to residential architecture through widely-used architectural handbooks or “carpenter’s instructions.” Buildings of this style are conspicuously absent in Chestertown, with the exception of isolated examples such as Middle Hall at Washington College. This gap reflects the declining fortunes of Chestertown during the early 1800s, a decline brought on by the rise of Western Shore cities such as Baltimore and the spread of railroads to other areas, bypassing Chestertown. With declining incomes, less capital was available for the construction of public or private buildings during those years.

#### **I.4.6 Victorian Styles**

The decline in fortunes was reversed by growing steamboat traffic on the Chester River, a boom in the fruit-growing and canning industries, and the 1872 arrival of the railroad in Chestertown. The mid-century upswing in the economy is visible in the appearance of houses built in the popular new styles of the period, a group of styles collectively referred to as “Victorian.” They are interspersed among other houses throughout town and spread out along Maple and Washington Avenues, reflecting the direction of Chestertown’s new growth. Many people have an instant image of the “typical” Victorian house, usually characterized by elaborate trim and “gingerbread.”

In reality, however, the term “Victorian” encompasses a number of distinctive and very different styles, not all of which conform to the stereotype.

One such mid-century style is Italianate, modeled on the villas of Tuscany. The Kent County Court House (1860) and the Collins House (201 S. Water Street, 1857) are wonderful examples of the style. Italianate buildings typically have low-pitched roofs, overhanging eaves with brackets beneath them, and tall, narrow windows. The roof often is surmounted by a cupola or “lantern.” The appearance of the tall windows benefited greatly from improved glass production techniques, which made much larger panes possible. One-over-one or two-over-two windows enhanced the vertical aspect of these buildings and dramatically changed their character.



Boyd House

Another mid-century style was the Gothic Revival. Inspired by the romantic novels of Sir Walter Scott and growing dissatisfaction with the restraints of classical architecture, Gothic Revival structures combined traditional aspects of medieval architecture, such as pointed arches, with more fanciful elements. The pointed arch was used in windows and was mirrored on gable trim, and such buildings typically had steep gable roofs with towers and intricate bargeboards or trim. The elaborate trim was made possible by the invention of the scroll saw, and elements could easily be ordered from cities such as

Baltimore. Good examples of the Gothic Revival are the Boyd House at 200 North Mill Street (ca. 1888) and Christ Methodist Church at 410 High Street (1887-88). Such full expressions of the Gothic Revival are rare in the Historic District, although Gothic elements such as the front gables and lancet windows can be seen on many other houses.

Other popular styles from the 1870-90s included the elaborate Queen Anne and Second Empire styles. Queen Anne buildings often are characterized by gabled or hipped roofs (often with turrets or towers), second-story projections, large medieval-style chimneys, and the use of contrasting building materials such as brick, stucco, clapboard, and decorative wood shingles. A striking example is the Pearce House at 103 Maple Avenue (ca. 1890s), while others can be seen along Washington Avenue.



Stam Hall

Perhaps the best example of the Second Empire style in Chestertown is Stam Hall at 206 High Street (1886). It combines many of the hallmarks of Second Empire, a style inspired by the rebuilding of Paris during the reign of Napoleon III. Foremost among these is the mansard roof, which is double-pitched, with a steep lower slope. Mansard roofs were almost always pierced by dormer windows, and the combination of the roof pitch and dormers provided enough head-space and light to transform the attic into usable living space. The style also utilized high, narrow windows, often with an oval top and flanked by pilasters or columns. Second Empire buildings typically have sections of the façade that either project or recede from the main block. All of these elements, often combined with intricate brickwork and classical pediments, give these tall buildings

an ornate and monumental feel.

As prosperity spread and the new Victorian styles took root, many Chestertonians decided to remodel their older houses. Sometimes this took the form of new additions or appendages such as porches built in the more modern style. With the passage of time, these additions have taken on an importance of their own, showing how tastes and fortunes evolved. Other times the changes were more drastic. The classic Georgian Wide Hall, for example, had its original hipped roof cut off and replaced with a mansard roof - all in an attempt to update its appearance. This was unfortunate, not simply because of the radical change it produced in such an important building. The architects of the remodeling failed to understand the original structural design of the framing; they severely compromised the building's structural integrity and it eventually began to come apart. The hipped roof was replaced in a later renovation, and the lingering structural problems were recently repaired at great cost. The episode provides a graphic illustration of the care needed in the renovation or rehabilitation of older structures.

#### **I.4.7 Civic Beautification and the Coming of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century**



Town Fountain

Chestertown also paid great attention to civic beautification during the late 1800s, a trend that continues today. The park in the center of town was laid out during this period, and its wonderful central fountain was installed in 1899. In addition, trees were systematically planted along many of the streets, a foresighted move that has contributed greatly to Chestertown's present charm. The town has continued the tradition and works hard to maintain its trees and landscaping.

The exuberance and eclecticism of 19<sup>th</sup> century Victorian architecture gave way to two new trends at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. One of these was Neo-Classicism, a reversion to the earlier classical styles of architectures such as Georgian and Greek Revival. The Chestertown Bank at 211-213 High Street (1929) and the old Public School (now county offices) at 400 High Street (1901) are obvious examples of this trend.

The other movement was an increasingly restrained approach to building. This trend was part of a larger shift that can be seen in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century Arts and Crafts movement, the spread of simpler mail-order bungalows, and the growing popularity of restrained furniture such as that produced by Stickley. The detailed exteriors and cluttered interiors of Victorian era homes were being simplified. Four-square houses are a good example of this simplification, illustrated at 102 N. Water Street and 111 Spring Street. These houses share a square floor plan with two stories, capped by a pyramidal roof. The roof often is pierced by dormers on four sides and may be flat on the top, surmounted by a "widow's walk." A two-story bay projection is typically found on one or two corners of the house, and a roofed ground floor porch commonly extends across the front of the house and may wrap around to the side. Windows typically are one-over-one and quite wide, particularly when compared with the narrow windows of the Italianate and Second Empire buildings. Although the eaves of these houses usually project out from the walls, brackets are rarely seen beneath them, and porch columns, rails, and other details are usually simple and restrained.

Well-intended renovation efforts sometimes result in the installation of “ginger-bread” and other Victorian trim on these houses, elements that are completely out of character with the style.

Bungalows may be seen scattered throughout Chestertown. The prefabricated Sears and Roebuck catalog house at 223 S. Kent Street is a nice example of the type, and another may be seen across from Washington College at 311 Washington Avenue. With design roots in India, the Bungalow style became hugely popular in the United States at the turn of the twentieth century because they were both affordable and attractive. Architecturally, they are defined by low-pitched roof lines on a gabled or hipped roof; deep, overhanging eaves; exposed rafters or decorative brackets under the eaves; and a front porch beneath an extension of the main roof.

Ranch houses were first built locally in the 1950s and feature low-slung, asymmetrical facades. These homes are constructed typically with wood and brick, and owe their origins to Frank Lloyd Wright’s Usonian designs, which blurred the distinction between interior and exterior spaces. Ranch houses use large windows and lack detailing characteristic of other architectural styles.



Sears and Roebuck Bungalow, Kent Street

#### **I.4.8 Vernacular & Commercial Buildings**

Although examples of popular architectural styles may be seen all over Chestertown, not all houses fully expressed these ideals. Many were more vernacular, folk versions of the popular styles. Good examples of these may be seen up High and Cannon Streets, as well as elsewhere in town. Some structures depart radically from the norm. For example, the Palmer House, or “Rock of Ages” at 532 High Street, is the only early structure in town made of stone. In addition, many houses were small and modest when compared with the grander

homes found along the Chester River and Washington Avenue. These houses are an important part of Chestertown’s architectural heritage, reflecting the way the larger part of the populace lived. They help to define the town’s character in equally important ways. One also should not overlook the many outbuildings that were once common on most residential lots. Surviving outbuildings range from a small storage building behind 359 High Street to stables, barns and garages that are scattered around town.

The commercial section of Chestertown suffered a disastrous fire in 1910, which helped depress the local economy and resulted in the loss of a variety of buildings. The new construction that filled in the burned lots can readily be identified across from the park. Other non-residential portions of the town have their own unique charm. Across from the court house, along Court Row, is a line of small, one-story offices known as Lawyers Row. These 19<sup>th</sup> century fronts show a delightful variety of ornamentation and have been well maintained. They are typical of a pattern seen in other small county seats, and nearby Centreville has a similar concentration of lawyers’ offices near its courthouse.



Converted Barn on Queen Street

Around the corner on High Street (just below the monumental Stam Building) are two more commercial buildings that represent the opposite end of the spectrum. The Prince Theater has a detailed façade of yellow brick. Constructed in 1928 as the “New Lyceum,” the theater has now been restored and much of the facade and roof detail is original. Next to it is the Imperial Hotel, constructed in 1903 for multiple uses as a hotel, office and store. The two-story front verandah is a defining characteristic of the building. These three tall commercial structures – Stam Hall, Prince Theater, and the Imperial Hotel – work quite well together and lend an air of prosperity to the street. When viewed together, they provide a good example of how buildings can work with one another to create a rhythm and a distinctive streetscape.

## II

# The Historic District & Commission Procedures

### II.1 The Chestertown Historic District & the Historic District Commission

Recognizing the importance of the state's architectural heritage, in 1963 the Maryland legislature passed a law that allowed local governments to protect and preserve their historic buildings (Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 66B). Chestertown took advantage of this enabling legislation in the following year, becoming one of the first towns in Maryland to adopt a historic preservation ordinance (see Code of the Town of Chestertown, Chapter 93). This ordinance defined the boundaries of the Chestertown Historic District, required review and approval of exterior changes to any building in the district, and established a seven-member Historic District Commission. **The volunteer commission conducts meetings on the first Wednesday of each month at 4:00 pm in Town Hall. All meetings are advertised and open to the public.**

### II.2 Projects Requiring HDC Review

Before exterior work on a structure in the Historic District begins, the Historic District Commission must approve any exterior alterations, new construction, demolition, or changes to important landscape features. Examples of work requiring the approval of the Commission include, but are not limited to, the following:

- |                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| * new buildings     | * landscaping   |
| * additions         | * HVAC equipment  |
| * garages           | * satellite dishes  |
| * new windows       | * electrical boxes and power lines                        |
| * porches           | * exterior door or window replacement                     |
| * roofing           | * siding or other changes to wall materials               |
| * fences            | * demolition of entire or parts of buildings              |
| * sidewalks         | * signs and sign posts                                    |
| * driveways         | * garages and outbuildings                                |
| * swimming pools    | * trenching, grading, or other ground disturbance         |
| * awnings, canopies | * removal of trees six inches or more in diameter         |
| * exterior lighting | * chimneys  |
| * paint removal     | * masonry repairs   |
| * storm windows     | * storm and screen doors                                  |
| * patios, decks     | * arbors, gazebos   |
| * skylights         | * solar panels  |
| * wind turbines     | * alternative or new materials (e.g. cementitious siding) |

The listings above are not meant to be all-inclusive, but they provide examples of the kinds of activities that require approval. Repairs to contributing historic structures caused by disasters or other unusual events are subject to review. If you have any questions about whether or not a permit is required, it is advisable to contact the Town Manager or staff.

## II.3 Projects Not Reviewed by the Historic District Commission

Projects that involve “routine maintenance” do not require approval of the Commission. Routine maintenance refers to work that does not destroy, alter, or cover up historic building materials or finishes. Any exterior work that involves replacing or changing the elements of a building must be approved by the HDC. Examples of work that falls under the heading of routine maintenance include repainting previously painted surfaces, small repairs, and minor gardening projects. Paint color is not reviewed, nor is replacement with in-kind materials, provided that the element being replaced complies with the Guidelines. If you have questions about whether your project must be reviewed by the HDC, contact the Town Manager or staff.

## II.4 Procedures for Reviewing Projects

The Historic District Commission has a standard set of procedures that are applied to every application. The procedures are designed to ensure compliance with the ordinance and to afford every applicant the same consideration. In the interest of fairness and due process, no deviation from these procedures is permitted. The full procedures of the HDC are contained in Chapter 19 of the Code of the Town of Chestertown.

*Applicants intending to claim the Sustainable Community Tax Credit for their project are strongly encouraged to have their project reviewed by the Maryland Historical Trust prior to submitting their application to the Chestertown HDC.* Changes to a proposal are more likely to be required at the State level. Approval by the Chestertown HDC in no way implies or ensures approval by the Maryland Historical Trust. Details on tax credit programs are available elsewhere in these Guidelines (Section I.3) and on line at <http://mht.maryland.gov/taxcredits.html>.

### II.4.1 Applications and Deadlines

Before exterior changes are made that are not considered routine maintenance, property owners must file an application with the Historic District Commission and obtain approval. To be considered for approval, a complete application and supporting documents must be submitted to the Town office no later than 4:00 p.m. on the deadline date so that Commissioners will have adequate time for review. Deadlines for specific types of projects are:

- applications for new construction or demolition permits must be received **no later than 25 days prior to the regularly scheduled hearing;**
- all other applications must be received **no later than one week before the scheduled hearing;**

Applications must contain sufficient information for the Commission to render an informed decision. The applicant should have read the appropriate sections of these Guidelines, designed the project to reflect these standards, and anticipated potential questions or concerns. Photographs of existing conditions and drawings of proposed changes are required in most

cases. For complex projects, scaled or measured drawings are required. Samples or brochures for proposed materials should be presented, along with detailed specifications. These might include window, shingle, or brick samples, or specifications for materials such as mortar. In general, the more information the better. Staff will advise the applicant if the application materials are insufficient or if more detail is required. **Applications that are considered incomplete will be denied.**

These Guidelines note the additional requirements for some specific types of projects, such as new construction (Chapter IV) or demolition (Chapter VI). A careful reading of the Guidelines should indicate the types of information that will allow the Commission to quickly and fairly reach decisions.

#### **II.4.2 Hearings and Resulting Actions**

At Commission meetings, the HDC usually hears applications in the order in which they were received. In order for the Commission to take action, the applicant or an appointed representative with written permission from the owner must be present when the proposal is reviewed. During the hearing, the property owner or representative will be asked to summarize the project, present any samples or other materials relevant to the request, and answer questions. Any representative of the property owner should be qualified to answer questions or the application may be delayed. In some complicated cases, the Commission may decide that a site visit is required to fully consider the proposal. Site visits are made outside of the normal meeting time, at a time determined during the public meeting.

Once the application has been reviewed and questions have been answered, a vote will be taken. All motions and business of the Commission are carried by majority vote and require a quorum of four members. The following actions may be taken on a proposal:

- Approved as presented
- Approved with modifications and/or conditions
- Continuation or tabling of an application (in cases where insufficient information is provided or the applicant and the Commission agree to continue the case – if both parties do not agree to the continuance, then the Commission must act by approving or denying the proposal)
- Denial of the application, which can be:
  - Denied with an invitation to reapply using a different concept;
  - Denied in part;
  - Denied altogether.

The Commission is required to act on a proposal, resulting in one of the above outcomes, within forty-five (45) days from the date that a completed application is filed. For this reason, it is important that all applications be complete, with information submitted in a timely manner. **Failure to provide sufficient information could result in the denial of your application.**

When a proposal is approved, a certificate of approval will be provided by the HDC and the Town's Zoning Administrator will issue a building permit to the applicant. **Permits are valid for six months after issuance. If the work is not started before the expiration date, the applicant may have to resubmit the proposal to the HDC for review.** Permits can be extended at the discretion of the Town Manager.

If a proposal is denied, the applicant has three options: (1) wait one year before submitting the same proposal; (2) submit a different proposal; or (3) appeal the Commission's decision to the Circuit Court of Kent County.

## **II.5 Demolition by Neglect**

Occasionally a property owner who has been denied approval for a change or demolition will simply decide to do nothing to the structure. This is only acceptable if it does not result in the deterioration of the structure or the potential loss of important elements. Some conditions, however, may pose a threat to the structure. An unsound roof or rotted siding, for example, can result in water damage to the interior and degradation of the building's frame, a process that may threaten the entire structure if left unchecked. This kind of situation is referred to as "demolition by neglect" and is prohibited by Chestertown's Historic Area Zoning ordinance. The HDC is authorized to prevent such situations and has done so in the past.

## **II.6 Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation**

The Chestertown Historic District Commission has adopted the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* as the basis for evaluating proposed changes within the Historic District. Originally created in 1976, and revised in 1983 and 1992, the current *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* are important for every property owner to understand, as they underlie all decisions of the HDC. "Rehabilitation" is defined as "the process of returning a property to a state of utility, through repair or alteration, which makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions and features of the property which are significant to its historic, architectural, and cultural values." The ten *Standards* are:

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 historic 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 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 archeological 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.

The *Standards* are applied to specific rehabilitation projects in a reasonable manner. Along with these Guidelines, they are the basis for all decisions made by the Chestertown Historic District Commission. For more information on the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards* and other helpful information, visit NPS Technical Preservation Services online at <http://www.nps.gov/tps/>, or Illustrated Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings at <http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation/rehab/index.htm>.

## II.7 Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. **Is my property located within the Historic District and subject to these Guidelines?**

A map delineating the boundaries of the district is included in the Appendix. If you have difficulty using this map to determine whether your property is in the district, or if you are located on the boundary, please contact the Town Manager. All properties within the boundary are subject to review under these Guidelines.

### 2. **My project is on the exterior of a structure, but it can't be seen from the road or the public way. Do I need HDC approval?**

Yes. All exterior changes other than those that qualify as routine maintenance require approval from the HDC.

### 3. **My project concerns only the interior of my house. Do I need approval from the**

## HDC?

No. Chestertown's Historic Zoning ordinance only concerns building exteriors. However, if you wish to claim the Historic Preservation Tax Credit from the state of Maryland, the Maryland Historical Trust must review interior changes. Since the tax credit currently is 20% of project costs, a tax credit application can pay real dividends. More information on tax credits is available elsewhere in these Guidelines (Section I.3) and in brochures available in the Town Hall.

**4. If the Chestertown HDC approves my application, does this mean that I qualify for the state's Historic Preservation Tax Credit?**

No. Tax credit applications are subject to an entirely separate application and review by the Maryland Historical Trust. The Trust will review both interior and exterior changes, and may use slightly different standards than the Chestertown HDC. For this reason, applicants are encouraged to apply first for tax credit approval, before requesting a permit from the Chestertown HDC.

**5. Does "routine maintenance" require HDC approval?**

No. However, please be sure that the work you are planning falls within the definition of routine maintenance. Procedures such as repainting previously painted surfaces or replacing a damaged exterior element of the house with an exact replica (same material and finish) would qualify as routine maintenance. *Any work done to the exterior of a structure (including landscaping) that alters that structure in any way is not considered routine maintenance and must be approved by the HDC.*

**6. If my application is refused, what recourse do I have?**

The majority of applications that come before the HDC are approved. However, if your application is denied, there are three options open to you. First, you may revise your plans and submit a new proposal that conforms to these Guidelines and meets the concerns of the HDC. Secondly, you may submit the same or a substantially similar application to the Commission for review after one year has elapsed from the date of the first application. Your final recourse is to appeal the HDC decision to the Circuit Court.

**7. My building isn't that old; doesn't this mean that exterior changes need not be reviewed by the HDC?**

No. All structures within the Historic District are subject to the review process, and a building need not be "old" to be significant or to have an impact upon the character of the area in which it is located, and the Historic District as a whole.

**8. I want to build a new structure on my lot – does a new building require approval?**

Yes. The ordinance requires new construction to fit in with the existing streetscape and

neighboring buildings. In addition, new construction involves ground disturbance, which may require archeological investigation.

**9. I own a building that looks beyond repair; can I demolish it without approval?**

No. Any demolition of part of or an entire structure, addition, or outbuilding requires HDC review and approval. Requests to move a structure are handled in the same fashion.

**10. This permit process sounds complicated. Do I need to hire an architect or consultant in order to get approval?**

The vast majority of applications to the HDC are handled without representation by a professional architect or consultant. Using these guidelines and asking questions at the Town Office will, in most cases, provide the property owner with sufficient information to proceed with an application. Small-scale projects can be designed by a homeowner, and most applications are quickly approved. Larger projects such as new buildings or additions are more complicated and may require professional assistance.

**11. If a proposal is denied or approved with modifications, can the property owner simply do nothing?**

Yes, but *only if lack of action does not threaten the integrity of the structure*. Neglect or a lack of action which allows the deterioration of the building or specific elements of the building may be considered “demolition by neglect,” which is prohibited under the ordinance.

**12. What are the penalties for violations of the Historic Area Zoning ordinance?**

The Town Administrator is required to take appropriate action to end violations and may halt any work that is not in accordance with the HDC’s approval. Violations may subject the property owner and any agent, architect, builder, person or corporation connected with the violation to a fine of up to \$500 per offense, and each day that the violation continues may be considered a separate offense.

**13. What is the difference between a “contributing” and “non-contributing” structure?**

When the Chestertown Historic District was nominated to the National Register of Historic Places in 1970, a “Period of Significance” was established. This Period of Significance was determined through a survey of the existing architecture to be from 1706, the date Chestertown’s founding, to 1939, the date by which most of the town was built out. All buildings in the Chestertown Historic District that were built prior to 1940 are therefore, according to National Register criteria, *contributing* resources, which is to say that these buildings contribute to the significance of the Historic District. A *non-contributing* building is (1) a building built later than 1939, or (2) a building that may have been built prior to 1940, but due to substantial alterations, has lost its significance and contributing status. Whether a structure is contributing or not is related to an important passage in Chestertown’s Historic

Area Zoning ordinance, which requires that the Historic District Commission “shall be lenient in its judgment of plans for sites and structures of little historic, archaeological, or architectural significance or for plans involving new construction, unless the plans would seriously impair the historic, archaeological, or architectural significance of the surrounding site or structure.” In general therefore, a non-contributing site or structure will be reviewed less strictly than a contributing site or structure, but there are other factors - such as context within a neighborhood - that may result in a non-contributing property being judged more strictly. It is important to note that *only contributing buildings within the Historic District are eligible for federal and state historic preservation tax credits.*



Built as a Methodist church, this Cross St. building was recently renovated into offices

# III REHABILITATION AND MAINTENANCE OF EXISTING STRUCTURES

## III.1 INTRODUCTION

This section deals with the individual components of historic structures and offers guidelines on how these components can be restored and maintained.

First these guidelines will examine the *types of materials* used in the historic buildings of Chestertown: **masonry, wood, and metal**. *Individual building elements* will then be addressed, including **siding, doors, windows, shutters, porches, roofs, and cornices and trim**. If you believe that repair or replacement of an element on your building is required, please read relevant sections on both material and building element.

Whatever the concern, three basic rules should be remembered when working on older structures:

- Retain as much of the original materials, detail, and design as possible.
- Make sure that any modern elements introduced are appropriate and will not spoil the features that give the structure its character.
- Do not attempt to make a structure look older than it is by using details belonging to an earlier style.

Rehabilitation techniques that will assist the owner in making sound preservation decisions are listed in this section. Hopefully these decisions will be based on a better understanding of the variables that affect the task of revitalizing and maintaining any historic property.

## III.2 MASONRY

### III.2.1 Typical Materials

#### *Brick and Stone*

Brick is the most common masonry material used in Chestertown, although stone was sometimes used in foundations of both brick and wood buildings. Early brick was hand-formed and fired from local clays. Later brick, especially that from the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, was commercially made, more regularly formed and harder. When replacing brick, try to match it as closely as possible.

Some stone is reputed to have been carried to Chestertown in ship ballast, and the use of English ballast stone has been documented in parts of the Custom House. Other stone came from regional sources, as local stone was scarce. Quarries north of Baltimore provided much of this stone, and some types can be traced to specific locales such as Port Deposit. When replacing old stone in a foundation or wall, it is important to try and match the original materials as closely as possible. For more information, see Preservation Brief 2 - Repointing Mortar Joints in Historic Masonry Buildings, published by the National Park Service and available online at <http://www.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/brief02.htm>.

### *Mortar*

Buildings constructed prior to about 1910 did not use Portland cement, but instead used a softer, lime-based mortar. When repointing a building that has lime mortar, it is important to avoid high proportions of Portland cement and to use mortar that matches the old material in texture, strength and hardness. If harder mortars are applied to softer brick or stone (and next to softer mortar), this non-resilient material will not respond to atmospheric changes such as temperature and humidity. All moisture will be held in the softer materials, and expansion and contraction due to freezing and thawing cycles will result in disintegration of the masonry. It is also important to try to match the color of the original mortar as closely as possible, so that repairs will be less visible. Color is affected by the various elements in the mortar mix such as sand and lime. Sometimes early builders used additives such as ground oyster shells, or ground coal like is found in the mortar at Wide Hall. An understanding of these constituents is essential if the rehabilitation is to be successful. Additional information on repointing will be found below in section III.2.5.



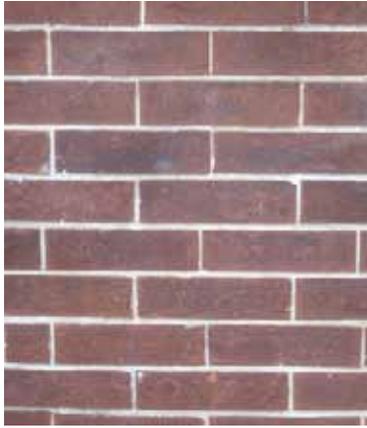
Stone foundation

### *Bonds*



Flemish Bond with glazed headers

Other important characteristics of masonry are the method of *bonding* (the orientation of bricks or stones in the wall) and the size and shape of mortar joints. A successful rehabilitation project must match these characteristics. Bricks can be laid lengthwise in a wall or positioned so that only the end shows. If the long side of a brick is visible, it is called a *stretcher*. If only the end shows, it is referred to as a *header*. A single row of bricks is called a *course*. A common method of laying bricks in the 18<sup>th</sup> century was *English bond*, in which courses were alternately comprised of all headers and all stretchers. A fancier and more expensive approach was *Flemish bond*, in which a single course alternated headers and stretchers. In the next course up,



Common Bond

headers were positioned so that they were directly above the center of a stretcher in the lower course, forming cruciform pattern of bricks. In early kilns, some bricks could be produced that had a beautiful bluish glaze on them. If only glazed headers were used, a diamond pattern could be formed on a wall; other geometric patterns also could be produced. Yet another expensive 18<sup>th</sup> century bond was *header bond*, in which all bricks were laid as headers. The greater expense of Flemish and header bonds meant that they often were used only on the public facades of buildings; English bond was used elsewhere. By the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Flemish and header bonds became less common (although Flemish bond saw a resurgence in the Neo-Classical style and may be used on public buildings today). Instead, masons shifted to *common* or *American bond*. Here a single course of headers was laid, fol-

lowed by several courses of stretchers. Every sixth course, for example, may be comprised of headers. Although usage was highly variable, the number of stretcher courses to headers seems to have increased as time passed.

### *Mortar Joints*

Mortar joints on brick and stone walls can take a variety of forms. In general, mortar joints were thicker on older walls, simply because of the irregularities in hand-formed brick. As bricks became more uniform, thinner joints could be used. To disguise the thickness of early joints and make them appear more regular, masons sometimes scribed or tooled a groove through the center of the joint. Other types of joint treatments are shown at right, and rehabilitation projects should strive to match the original treatment. With older brick buildings, great care should be taken not to damage the brick, especially the outer surfaces, as this will expose the softer core to decay.

The golden rule with masonry, as with other materials in a building, is to identify and preserve the character-defining elements. When features are too damaged to be retained, replacement should be done in kind, matching the original as closely as possible.

### **III.2.2 Cleaning**

The cleaning of historic masonry is discouraged unless it is undertaken to halt deterioration or to remove graffiti and stains. The stripping of painted masonry surfaces may not be appropriate if these surfaces were previously painted for aesthetic or practical reasons.

When performed, cleaning must be accomplished using the gentlest means possible, without damaging the surface of the masonry. High-pressure washing is not appropriate since it can force water into a wall and cause deterioration both to the masonry and the mortar joints. It will not be approved. The use of low-pressure water (garden hose pressure or under 600 p.s.i.), mild detergent (liquid dishwashing detergent), and soft natural bristle brush is the recommended starting point. This method will remove surface dirt and general street grime, but may not remove stains or graffiti. All non-masonry surfaces should be protected prior to cleaning.

Chemical cleaning should be considered only after mild cleaning methods have failed to produce acceptable results, although serious consideration should be given to allowing stains to weather away naturally. In no event should sodium hydroxide (more commonly known as caustic soda), muriatic acid or lye be used on historic brick, nor should acidic cleaners be used on historic marble or limestone. Strong chemical solutions are not appropriate and will not be approved.

Cleaning tests, whether using simple or complex methods, should be applied to an area of sufficient size (approximately four sq. ft.), in an inconspicuous location on the building. These test areas will help determine the degree of cleaning necessary to clean but not to damage the surface of the masonry. They also serve as a means to evaluate the skills of the contractor performing the work.

Finally, sandblasting, including dry and wet grit or other abrasives, is never an acceptable cleaning method because it erodes the surface of the masonry and accelerates deterioration. The outer surfaces of brick and of much stone are harder than the interior material; exposing the soft interior can greatly speed deterioration. Sandblasting is inappropriate and will not be approved.

### **III.2.3 Paint**

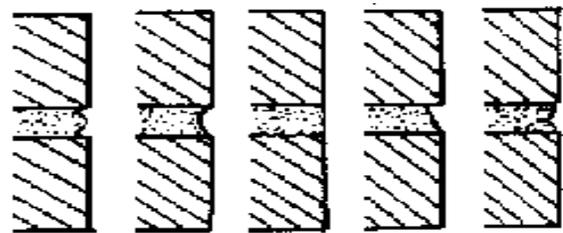
Where possible, the original color and texture of masonry surfaces should be retained. Painting previously unpainted masonry structures, or applying stucco and concrete veneers such as Formstone to previously uncoated structures, is not appropriate and will not be approved. Conversely, paint should not be indiscriminately removed from masonry surfaces, as some brick surfaces originally were intended to be painted. The low-fired and porous masonry of the pre-20<sup>th</sup> century was often painted to prevent water penetration. It is therefore inappropriate to remove paint from a building that was historically painted and it will not be approved.

### **III.2.4 Masonry Repair**

The repair of historic masonry, beyond simple repointing, may be necessary if the structural integrity of a wall has been weakened from movement or from the surface deterioration of masonry units. Repair may entail the limited placement of masonry units which match size, color, and texture of the extensively damaged or missing units.

### **III.2.5 Repointing**

Replacement of (or touching up) the mortar in a masonry wall is called “repointing.” The decision to repoint is often related to some obvious sign of deterioration such as failing mortar, cracks in the mortar joints, loose bricks, damp walls or damaged plasterwork. The true cause of the deterioration should be determined before beginning any repointing work. Leaking roofs or gutters, differential settlement of the building, capillary action causing the rising damp,



Grapevine, Concave, Flush, Raked and V joints

or extreme weather exposure should all be dealt with immediately.

Before beginning any work, observe the profile of an existing mortar joint to determine the type of joint used (see section 2.1 above). Close examination of both the vertical and horizontal joints will reveal the sequence and method of tooling, which affects the finished appearance of the wall. The mortar used for repointing must match the color, texture, strength, joint width, and joint profile of the existing historic masonry.

The removal of the existing deteriorated mortar should be accomplished by hand, using a hammer and cold chisel. Power tools, including grinders and circular saws, are inappropriate and will not be approved. Remove the old mortar to a depth of one-half inch to one and one-half inches and spray away small loose particles with a light, quick stream of water.

A good starting point for most buildings constructed in the 1800s is a repointing mortar mix containing one part hydrated lime mixed with two parts (by volume) sand of historic color and enough water for a workable mix. This mixture can be modified if necessary, to improve drying and workability, by adding a small amount of white Portland cement. The Portland content should not exceed 20% of the combined volume of lime and cement. Mortar mixed with a high percentage of Portland cement should not be used on buildings constructed prior to 1900 and will not be approved.

The color of the repointing mortar should match the unweathered interior portions of the historic mortar. The simplest way to check the match is to make a small sample of the proposed mix and allow it to cure; this sample is then broken open and the broken surfaces compared to the unweathered interior portions of the historic mortar. If available sand does not produce an acceptable color match, it may be necessary to use some modern mortar pigment, and, in fact, some historic mortars did use such additives. Additional information on repointing can be found in the National Park Service's *Preservation Brief 2*, available on line at <http://www.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/brief02.htm>.

In choosing a contractor or mason, perhaps the best way to award the contract is for this individual to demonstrate his or her skill in a test panel: a small demonstration section of joint preparation and repointing actually done on historic masonry. The test panel should be carefully selected to include all types of problems to be encountered on the job. Usually a three foot by six foot area can be tested in an inconspicuous yet readily accessible place.

### **III.2.6 Sealants**

The use of sealants is discouraged, except in cases where exceptional conditions warrant their use. Although sealants have improved in recent years, the potential for discoloration and other changes in appearance requires that very careful testing be done to assure that there will be no detrimental impact. Requests to use sealants will be judged on a case-by-case basis.

### **III.2.7 Prevention**

Most damage to masonry is a direct result of water penetration. Water can cause expensive

damage through freezing and expansion inside the walls or by causing destructive chemical reactions. Prevention is cheaper than repair, so it is important to keep roof flashing, drains, gutters, and downspouts in good repair.

### **III.3. WOOD**

Although most of the oldest surviving buildings in Chestertown have brick exteriors, other early buildings were constructed almost entirely of wood, and even brick structures have interior wood framing and utilize exterior wood trim for cornices, door surrounds, windows, porches, and stairways. The type of wood used, the way in which it was cut and molded, and the manner in which it was applied varied over time and can contribute significantly to the character of a building.

#### **III.3.1 Character-defining Elements**

The wood on early buildings came from trees felled by an ax, after which beams were hewn with a broadax and finished with an adze, leaving characteristic marks on the surface of the beam. Although these are rarely visible on the exterior of a building, they are characteristics that should be retained when visible. The wood siding on early buildings was cut with a pit saw; as the wood was forced along the saw by hand, the saw left irregular diagonal marks on the cut face. Somewhat later, mill-driven saws left more regularly spaced vertical marks, while much later circular saws left their own characteristic patterns. Although the details may have been obscured over time by weathering and multiple coats of paint, exposed wood (such as siding) on earlier buildings will look less regular than that of later buildings, a characteristic that should be retained if possible. This also is true for more detailed elements of a building such as trim or cornices, which might have been hand-planed or carved and should be retained.



Pearce House, Maple Avenue

In general, all original character-defining wood elements of a building should be identified, retained, and preserved. These include, but are not limited to, clapboards and other wood siding, brackets and trim, cornices, entablatures, porches, windows, window frames and trim, shutters, doors and frames, railings and balustrades. Removal or modification of character-defining wood elements will not be approved, as it will destroy irreplaceable features.

#### **III.3.2 Repair or Replacement**

Wood elements should be kept in good repair and protected from damage by water, insects, and weather. This requires measures such as an adequate painting schedule, keeping gutters and downspouts in good repair, and inspection and remediation for insect damage.

When character-defining wood elements such as cornices or balustrades are missing, recreation of these elements is appropriate if historical, pictorial, or physical documentation exists. If such documentation does not exist, the best solution is a compatible approach using contemporary materials. The use of alternate materials shall be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the HDC.



Wood porch railing, High Street

### III.3.3 Painting

Exterior paint provides important protection to wood. It provides a shield against the greatest enemy of wood, which is moisture penetration. Damage caused by moisture threatens not only the siding and trim of a building, which is where the paint is typically applied, but also the framing. It is essential to adopt a regular painting schedule to protect the wood, as a good paint job will last for more than ten years if proper procedures are followed.

Although the Chestertown HDC does not review paint colors, all wood elements on a structure must be finished, either painted or stained with an opaque stain.

The National Park Service has published a highly useful guide, *Preservation Brief 10* in their Technical Preservation Brief series. It is available on-line at <http://www.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/brief10.htm>.

### III.3.4 Wood Siding (also see Section III.5 below)

Wood siding should be retained and repaired. If replacement becomes necessary, the new siding should match the original in terms of material, type, size, profile, and application. As with the repair and replacement of other features, the HDC will review the use of alternative materials on a case-by-case basis.

### III.3.5 Pressure-treated Lumber

Experience has demonstrated that the use of pressure-treated lumber as a finish material on buildings, whether for repair or replacement, is not cost-effective or aesthetically appropriate except when used as non-exposed framing. In general, treated wood is of lower quality, with a high moisture content and many knots. As a result, it is susceptible to warping, splitting and checking. If treated wood is left exposed, such as deck framing or fencing, it must also be painted or stained to ensure its longevity and appropriate appearance. Pressure-treated wood should be allowed to weather for one year prior to painting. Good quality paint or stain on untreated lumber suitable for exterior use will be just as effective a protectant, without the other problems inherent in pressure-treated wood. The use of pressure treated wood shall be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

## III.4. METAL

Many of Maryland's commercial buildings from the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century utilized cast iron in storefront facades. Although this was not done in Chestertown, many buildings used smaller cast

iron components, sheet metal, or iron fencing. Iron was used in a variety of other ways, such as the common use of wrought iron tie rods with decorative plates. More recent design influences have introduced metals such as porcelain steel, stainless steel, and aluminum to the Historic District.

#### **III.4.1 Character-defining Elements**

All character-defining metal components should be identified, retained, and preserved. These include but are not limited to tie-rods, railings, fences, standing-seam or metal shingled roofs, window hoods, and storefront elements. Removal of character-defining metal elements will not be approved, as it will destroy irreplaceable features.

#### **III.4.2 Repair or Replacement**

Repair of metal features is preferred over replacement. Replacement is only appropriate if the original material is damaged beyond repair. Period replacements may be available from architectural salvage firms, or replicas may be found in architectural restoration catalogs. If necessary, replacement pieces can be fabricated from sheet metal to match the existing materials. Intricate details can be reproduced in materials such as fiberglass.

When repairing or replacing metal elements, avoid physical contact between two different types of metal, as this can cause a chemical reaction leading to rapid corrosion.

Additional information is available in the National Park Service's *Preservation Brief 27*, available on-line at <http://www.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/brief27.htm>.

#### **III.4.3 Painting**

Although the HDC does not review color, the use of historically appropriate colors is encouraged, and the methods used to clean metal surfaces must follow these Guidelines. If repainting is necessary, completely remove all loose, flaking, and peeling paint. Rust should also be removed.

- Sandblasting is not an appropriate method for removing paint or rust, as it causes irreparable damage to the historic fabric.
- Metal will be better preserved and a paint job will last longer if the metal is properly primed and if the primer and finish paints are compatible with one another.
- The joints between metal panels should be caulked and filled to avoid water penetration.

### **III.5. SIDING**

The siding or exterior surfacing of Chestertown's buildings has been done in a variety of ways, including wood clapboard, wood shingles, asbestos or other types of artificial shingles, stucco, and vinyl or aluminum siding. Sometimes these were used during the original construction, while at other times they have been introduced as replacement elements. Siding produced more than fifty years ago, and in some cases over a century old, was generally made with tight-grained hardwoods that hold up extremely well, whereas most of the commercially available wood siding

sold today is not nearly as stable, the exceptions being redwood and knot-free cedar.

### III.5.1 Types of Wood Siding

The most common wood siding is known as *clapboard*, consisting of long horizontal boards that are nailed to the building's frame from the ground up. The bottom of each board covered the top of the course below it. The exposed width of each clapboard (the "reveal") is an important characteristic of each individual building, as is the shape of the boards. In *beveled* siding, clapboards are thinner on their upper edge, whereas boards of equal thickness are known as *simple-drop or colonial* siding. In either case, the bottom edge could also be *beaded*. In *shiplap* siding, the edges are rabbeted and nailed so that the siding is flush. Sometimes the upper edge of such boards is also routed out or milled to produce what looks like a shallow horizontal groove between the boards, sometimes referred to as *V-rustic* or *German lap* siding.



Beveled lap siding



Beaded siding



German lap siding

Other techniques included *board-and-batten* siding and *shingling*. In board-and-batten siding, boards were nailed onto the frame vertically. The joint between boards was then covered by a much smaller vertical strip of wood referred to as a batten; this prevented the entry of moisture. Board-and-batten siding is not common in Chestertown. Shingling, on the other hand, is more frequently seen. Sometimes these were used to clad an entire structure. Elsewhere, shingles were used in conjunction with other types of siding to produce the complex surfaces and textures sought in Queen Anne style buildings. Such houses often made use of clapboard on lower stories or the first and second stories, while shingles covered gable ends, towers, or upper stories. Shingles could be cut in a variety of patterns, including rounded bottoms that produced a fish-scale effect. In the past, wood shingles were sometimes installed over existing clapboard to avoid the maintenance of painting.

### III. 5.2 Repair or Replacement

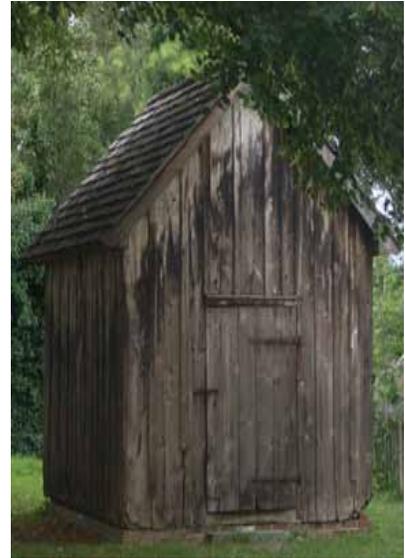
Preserving historic siding materials begins with a routine maintenance program that generally involves the least amount of work needed to preserve the materials and features of the building. Maintenance of a frame building would include caulking and painting, or where paint is extensively cracking and peeling, its removal and the re-application of a protective paint.

Replacing sound or repairable historic siding material is never recommended. However, if

the historic material cannot be repaired because of the extent of the deterioration or damage, then it will be necessary to replace it. The preferred treatment is always replacement in kind, and every effort should be made to replicate the material and its unique characteristics, such as shape, profile, reveal, and texture.

### **III. 5.3 Resurfacing**

Resurfacing frame buildings with brick veneer, artificial stone, asbestos or asphalt shingles, and vinyl or aluminum siding is not appropriate. If a structure was previously resurfaced with inappropriate materials, the Commission encourages their removal and repair of underlying surfaces. Before undertaking removal of inappropriate siding, a small area should be tested for feasibility. When previously applied inappropriate materials reach the end of their useful life, they should be replaced with materials more appropriate to the original character of the structure.



Outbuilding with board and batten siding, Mill Street

### **III. 5.4 Aluminum and Vinyl Siding**

Aluminum and vinyl siding are not appropriate in the Historic District because they conceal or obscure character-defining elements. In addition, they increase deterioration of buildings through rot (from moisture infiltration) and from the fasteners used, which penetrate the earlier sheathing. Monitoring the health and stability of the building hidden beneath the siding is almost impossible. In addition, even vinyl and aluminum siding must eventually be repainted; once this stage is reached, repainting must occur with the same frequency as wood. Because the color of these siding materials varies from batch to batch and weathers over time, replacement of sections is very difficult to do unobtrusively.

Although such siding is often advertised a cost-saving measure, the hidden costs from possible deterioration often make it less cost-effective. It also offers little or no long-term gain over the cost of painting. Normally vinyl or aluminum will cost from two to three times as much as a good paint job on the same house (more if the application is sensitive to trim and historic detail), while paint should last from eight to ten years. For vinyl or aluminum to save money over the long haul then, it must last for sixteen to thirty years and not require any painting. By themselves, vinyl and aluminum offer no increase in insulation, and the insulation backing applied to them is too thin to provide significant energy savings. Finally, application of such siding results in loss of the unique qualities of a building, and this can reduce property value.

### **III. 5.5 Composite Siding**

The use of modern synthetic or composite materials may on occasion be considered to be compatible with the architectural character of sites, buildings and structures within the Historic District when its use is limited to additions and new construction, or on non-contributing buildings or façades. Requests for its installation will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Composite siding

shall not be used to cover or to replace viable historic exterior sheathing or for repairs of features of a historic building such as gables, bays, dormers, and open or enclosed porches.

## III.6. DOORS AND WINDOWS

### III.6.1 Doors

Whenever possible, retain the building's original doors. Deteriorated doors can be temporarily removed and refinished, cracks and holes can be filled, surfaces can be relaminated, hinges can be repaired or replaced, and rotted frames can be replaced. Any original hardware on the door should be retained and repaired whenever possible.

If the present door is too deteriorated or is not original, several alternatives exist for replacement. A similar exterior door from a side or rear entrance could be removed and installed on the front. Salvage yards can be a good source for doors of the same period and profile. A custom door can be milled to the exact specifications of the old door. Lastly, if a new door must be purchased, an attempt must be made to duplicate as closely as possible the size, proportion, shape, materials and number of panels of the original door.



Front door with transom

### III.6.2 Screen and Storm Doors



Entrance with appropriate storm

Screen doors allow the solid doors to be left open during milder months, offering limited security and insect protection for the occupants, while allowing air and light into the entry-hall. Care should be taken when considering the installation of screen doors, however, since some architectural styles were not designed to incorporate them.

If a screen door is to be installed, select a simple wooden door with as much open screen area as possible to minimize the interference with the appearance of the main door. Paint it the same color as the main door to lessen contrast. Finally, keep the screen door the same size as the main door.

The same general considerations apply for storm doors. Screen and storm doors should not obscure the primary door or change the character of the entry. Storm doors also should have a large opening and should be painted to match the main door. A good solution is a full-view wood or metal combination storm and screen door, with interchangeable inserts for winter and summer.

### III.6.3 Windows



Bay window with decorative trim

Windows are one of the most important and character-defining features of a structure. Most historic windows are double-hung. The number of lights (or panes) in a window sash varies with the architectural style of the structure. In the late 1800s, the two-over-two and one-over-one sash windows were introduced, creating more light for the interior of the building.

Original windows should be retained whenever possible, with their defining elements repaired rather than replaced. In general, windows manufactured prior to World War II were made with tight-grained hardwood components that last much longer than later, mass-produced windows, which utilized newer, more open-grained woods. Applications to replace windows that are less than 50 to 70 years old are more likely to be approved by the HDC than the replacement of older windows, as these newer windows deteriorate more quickly than their older counterparts.

Before assuming that a sash or an entire window frame must be replaced due to deterioration, examine it closely to determine if only some parts need to be repaired or replaced. In many cases, the sash can be reglazed and the sill can be repaired by one of three methods, depending on the severity of the deterioration.

- If the sill or sash contains numerous holes and cracks, treat the sill or sash for one day with a wood preservative containing pentachlorophenol, then paint it liberally with linseed oil and finally patch all the holes and cracks with putty.
- If the sill or sash has begun to rot, use the marine epoxy to stop the spread of the rot and then apply an epoxy filler to smooth out the surface.
- If the deterioration is severe apply several layers of epoxy wood filler to build up the surface. Allow each layer to dry thoroughly between applications, sand, then prime and paint. Where necessary, frame and muntin sections can also be replaced with pieces that are milled to match the original components.

If the entire window frame is so deteriorated that it cannot be saved, replace it with a window of the same size, shape, design, and number of light divisions as the



Sash window with paneled shutters

original. The width and profile of the replacement window muntins should closely match those of the original muntins. Window openings should not be blocked down or reduced in size to accommodate a smaller, standard replacement window. Likewise, substitution with a different style, such as a fixed picture window, is not appropriate.

Six-over-six and other multi-light sashes should only be used when appropriate to the architectural style of the structure. Snap-in muntins, which simulate the appearance of true-divided lights in vinyl and clad windows are not recommended. The use of mirrored or tinted glass is not appropriate and should be avoided.

Some residential buildings have transom windows located over the entrance door. These windows should be preserved, and defining elements such as trim should be repaired rather than replaced. If replacement is necessary, it should be consistent with the original window.

### **III.6.4 Lead Paint**

As the dangers of lead paint have become more widely recognized, homeowners have had to contend with new state and federal regulations during rehabilitation. This often prompts requests for complete removal and replacement of the windows in a building for lead abatement purposes. This drastic measure, which is counter to the principles of these guidelines and the *Secretary of Interior's Standards*, can be avoided through a number of different methods.

A variety of new encapsulant paints and coatings have been developed to contain lead paint and prevent exposure. Lead paint is most likely to create a hazardous dust at friction points, such as window sashes, and this can be controlled with sash liners. If paint is deteriorating and must be scraped or removed, lead exposure can be controlled through wet sanding, controlled sanding, and the use of low temperature heat guns and chemical strippers. It also is possible to have window sashes removed for sanding off site under controlled circumstances. Care should be taken to avoid spreading lead dust throughout the house during any rehabilitation project, and proposed federal regulations may make it necessary to hire specially trained and certified professionals.

Additional information on lead paint abatement can be found in the National Park Service's *Preservation Brief 37*, which can be found on-line at <http://www.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/brief37.htm>. The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) offers additional resources at [http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program\\_offices/healthy\\_homes/healthy\\_homes/lead](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/healthy_homes/healthy_homes/lead). The Kent County Health Department also can provide information and literature, including current HUD recommendations.

### **III.6.5 Shutters**

Many historic structures are equipped with shutters, which in served to protect the building from weather and could be left closed for extra security. When replacing or adding shutters to a building, be sure that they are installed so that, if fixed, they appear to actually function. The shutters, if they could be closed, should be sized so that they would fill the window cavity. They should be attached to the window frame with hinges, not screwed or nailed into the adjacent wall surface. Non-wood shutters are inappropriate for a historic house and will not be approved.

Installation of shutters in locations where they did not exist historically is inappropriate. If replacement becomes necessary, the replacement shutter should match the original in size, scale, detail, thickness, and hardware. There are several manufacturers of reproduction wood shutters and hardware that can be consulted on-line, or other sources such as the *Old House Journal*.



Storm window properly installed

### III.6.6 Storm Windows

The first step in reducing heat loss through windows should be installing or replacing damaged or inadequate window weather stripping and caulking. The installation of exterior storm windows can also assist in energy conservation and is preferred over window replacement. Exterior storm windows permit the retention of existing historic wooden windows and dramatically reduce their maintenance needs. A wooden sash with exterior aluminum storm window can perform just as well as a two-pane replacement unit and is far more cost-effective to install.

Triple track exterior or interior storm windows recommended, and these should have a finish that matches or complements the color of the historic frame. The meeting rails of the storm sash must align with those of the existing windows. Care should be taken not to allow the storm window to conceal details of the sash window. Interior storm windows are recommended in cases where exterior storm windows would significantly detract from the appearance of the building.

## III.7. ROOFS

A variety of roof shapes, pitches and sheathing types have been used in the Historic District. These include double-pitched, hipped, gable, mansard, and a single-slope shed forms. Roofs are an essential element in defining building styles and for these reasons it is not appropriate to alter or obscure them. Much of a building's historic character is derived from its roof shape.

The original roof design should be preserved and the original roofing materials retained unless deteriorated to the point that it cannot be repaired. The HDC will assist in making this determination. When partially re-roofing, deteriorated roof coverings should be replaced with new materials that match the old in composition, size, shape, color, and texture. Materials (slate or metal) should not only be the same, but the form should be the same. Corrugated sheet metal, for example, is no substitute for the original standing seam panels found on many Chestertown roofs. When entirely re-roofing, new materials should not be used which differ to such an extent from the old composition,



Metal standing seam roof

size, shape, color, or texture that the appearance is altered.

Wood shingles are appropriate only if there is pictorial, historical, or physical evidence that they were once used on the historic building, or if they were typical of a certain style. Functional and decorative features such as cupolas or lanterns, dormers, cresting, finials, weathervanes, and chimneys should be preserved.

In certain circumstances (for example on non-character-defining portions of a building or in areas that are not visible from the public way), modern alternative products may be appropriate, as long as they are compatible in appearance. These types of shingles will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Alterations or modifications that substantially change, damage, or destroy a roof's defining historic characteristics are not appropriate. New additions such as skylights, antennas, satellite dishes and mechanical equipment should be installed in such a manner that they are screened or not visible from the public view. Bubble-shaped, faceted, or dome skylights are not appropriate and should be avoided. Flat, sloped skylights may be approved on a case-by-case basis for elevations on non-contributing buildings that are not character-defining, in new construction or additions where the skylights will not have a negative effect on the surrounding streetscape. Materials and color should be compatible with existing materials.

The maintenance of roofs on historic properties can be costly and require frequent inspections. However, there is no substitute for the durability and appearance of slate and patterned or seamed tin. These materials should be valued by the property owner as an asset that contributes to property value.

### III.8 PORCHES



Victorian porch on Maple Avenue

Many older residential structures have covered entrances, ranging from bracketed hoods to porches which wrap around one or more sides of the structure. Large porches became popular during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and were often added to older homes.

The porch structure itself includes the landing and other elements, which support the roofed open area. Ornamentation, such as turned or sawn wooden balusters, fretwork, and columns, helps to define the character of most porches, along with size, scale and placement.

Every effort should be made to retain as much of the original porch materials as possible. If a porch must be replaced, it should be built to its original configuration. The usual set back distance and overall width of the original porch should also be maintained.

Most porches originally were constructed of wood and supported by brick piers. Reha-

bilitation efforts should incorporate the use of these materials. Porches should not be replaced with inappropriate materials such as brick, concrete, concrete block, or inexpensive ironwork. Doing so would destroy the historical integrity of the structure as well as interrupt the rhythm of the streetscape. It is better to embark on a slow rebuilding project using original materials than to use unsuitable substitutes.

Many porches have lattice screens installed between the support piers. For most historic periods, lattice would have been installed with battens running horizontally and vertically, rather than on a diagonal, and this approach is preferred. The use of high quality wood is recommended for porches, rather than pressure treated wood, composite or vinyl materials. High quality untreated wood, properly painted and cared for, will outlast pressure treated wood. Treated wood is made of an inferior grade of wood that warps easily and contains knots and other irregularities, and is only appropriate for framing and other applications where it will not be exposed to view.

Porches must be kept painted or stained, and new porches and repairs must be painted right away to ensure the porch's longevity and appropriate appearance.

### **III.9 COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS**



High Street commercial building

Chestertown's historic commercial core is concentrated along High Street, Cross Street, and Park Row. These commercial buildings, like their residential counterparts, are low in scale and seldom exceed three stories in height. Also like their residential counterparts, they reflect the changing styles that were popular in different periods. Their storefronts are a character-defining element of the buildings and of the District as a whole, so they are worthy of preservation.

The rehabilitation guidelines in preceding sections apply equally to commercial properties, but commercial architecture differs in form. The storefront level typically is differentiated from the upper stories, and storefronts often have elements that are unique to commercial buildings. These character-defining elements include bulkheads, piers, display windows, transoms, entrances, friezes, and parapets. Whatever the current use of these buildings, the defining elements should be identified, retained, and preserved.

#### **III.9.1 Bulkheads**

A bulkhead is the base that supports the storefront window, and they were constructed of a variety of materials. Intact bulkheads should be preserved, and repair is always preferable to replacement. If replacement should become necessary, the original should be replicated as closely as possible. Plywood or rough wood paneling requires more frequent maintenance and should not be used to replace original wood bulkheads. Vinyl, aluminum, composite materials, and imitation brick or stone are not appropriate and should not be used.

### III.9.2 Piers

Above the bulkhead is a vertical piece that frames window or door openings. This vertical component is called a pier, and they were often designed as a flat column or pilaster. Intact piers should be preserved, and defining elements and materials should be repaired rather than replaced. If replacement becomes necessary, it should be done with materials and techniques that match the original as closely as possible. It is inappropriate to cover or obscure piers with unsympathetic materials such as plywood, rough or sawn wood, imitation stone, vinyl or other synthetic materials.

### III.9.3 Display Windows

Display windows usually extend from the bulkhead up to the transom, and are framed by piers. They are often an essential and character-defining elements in a storefront, unless they were added late in a building's existence. Display windows should usually be preserved, along with defining elements and materials such as trim, reveals, and muntins. Should replacement of the display window become necessary, the new window should match the original in size, material and configuration. Display windows should never be fully or partially filled, blocked off, or concealed. Glass block is not compatible with the original function and design of display windows.

### III.9.4 Transoms

As in residential structures, a transom is a window or series of windows located above a door or display window, and they are usually made of glass. Transoms should be preserved, along with their character-defining elements such as trim and material. If replacement becomes necessary, the replacement should match the original in all character-defining aspects and be consistent with existing transom windows. Depending upon the date and construction style of the building, stained or lead glass may not be appropriate and therefore might not be approved. Transom windows should be preserved, and defining elements such as trim should be repaired rather than replaced. If replacement is necessary, the new window should be consistent with the original.



Door with transom on Cross Street

### III.9.5 Entrances

Entrances can be flush with the façade or recessed to provide shelter from the elements. In either case, they are an important part of the building. If the entrance originally was recessed, retention of this feature is recommended. Other elements of an entrance, such as columns, pilasters, and above-door entablatures, should also be preserved and repaired, rather than replaced or removed. If replacement is necessary, materials and form should be as close to the original as possible. Major alterations to entrances are unlikely to be approved, however the HDC recognizes that modern needs and uses may sometimes require alterations. These are handled on a case-by-case basis. Doors

that are flush with the sidewalk should be avoided.

### **III.9.6 Doors**

Original doors also contribute greatly to the character of historic buildings, and they should be identified, preserved and repaired. If doors are so deteriorated that they must be replaced, the replacement should match the original as closely as possible; if a modern door is to be replaced, pictorial, historical, or physical evidence should be used to identify the original door type. If no such evidence exists, the style should be appropriate to the building's style and function. Hardware should also match the original or be compatible, and commercial buildings should utilize glass panels to fit with their function and provide visual access to the interior. Steel-covered hollow core doors have a poor finish appearance and often cannot be found in sizes and styles appropriate for historic buildings. Storm doors should not obscure the details of the original door and should be of an appropriate style.

### **III.9.7 Friezes and Parapets**



Storefront with parapet wall at roof

A frieze is a horizontal band, frequently combined with a cornice, that sets off horizontal divisions in a façade. A parapet is a low protective wall that extends above the roof of a building.

Friezes often set the ground floor storefront apart from an upper story, or they may provide a decorative element to the parapet. First floor friezes often were used for signs, and this practice is encouraged. Intact friezes should be maintained. Obscuring or removing all or part of a frieze is inappropriate and will not be approved. The use of incompatible materials such as aluminum, vinyl or other synthetic materials on friezes is inappropriate. If a frieze is missing, a replacement can be installed based on pictorial, historical or other reliable evidence. Awnings (if themselves appropriate) should be installed below the frieze, rather than on or into it.

Existing parapets should be preserved, repaired and restored. Water damage is a primary cause of damage to parapets, so maintenance of flashing and coping is important, along with regular painting or sealing. Repairs should match the original as closely as possible, and replacement should be considered only if repair is not feasible. Replacements should be based on sound evidence and match the original as closely as possible.

## **III.10 ACCESSORY OR AUXILIARY BUILDINGS**

Garages, sheds, and other small accessory structures were common historically. Such accessory buildings are usually associated with residential structures, and they contribute to the overall character of a property and the district. More modern accessory structures such as patios

may also be important elements of a property.

Accessory buildings that contribute to the principal structure or the character of a property of the District are significant in their own right and should be preserved. Their siting, orientation, design, scale, materials of construction, and detailing also are worthy of preservation. Deteriorated accessory buildings and their distinctive features and details should be repaired if necessary, using the same materials or ones that are similar to the originals in scale, form, color, and texture. If missing accessory buildings or those deteriorated beyond repair are to be replaced, they should be replaced with new ones that are compatible with the principal structure in siting, scale, proportion, fenestration, materials and colors. Proposed changes to modern accessory structures or non-significant elements must likewise be compatible with the character of the property and the Historic District.



Smoke House on Spring Street

### III.11 LIGHTING



Lighting on Water Street

If original lighting fixtures are present, these should be preserved and repaired. If original fixtures are not present, period lighting should be installed only if there is sound evidence supporting its use on the structure originally. Fixtures should be appropriate to the style and scale of the building and the element to which it is attached. New fixtures should be attached to the mortar of masonry buildings to avoid damage to historic masonry.

All exterior architectural lighting must be reviewed and approved by the HDC, including street and sidewalk lights. Sodium vapor lamps should be avoided because of their harsh light; incandescent lights are preferred because of their warmth, effect on color, and non-glaring qualities. Lighting should not adversely affect neighboring buildings, pedestrians, or automobile traffic. In general, lower levels of lighting are more appropriate than higher ones and existing or historic lighting colors and intensities should be matched wherever possible.

### III.12 MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT & ACCESSORIES

#### III.12.1 Heating and Cooling Equipment

Heating and cooling equipment has components that often are installed on the exterior of a building. They can have both visual and audible impacts, and installation can have an impact on the historic fabric of structures. The installation of all exterior mechanical equipment must therefore be reviewed and approved by the HDC. Mechanical equipment should be installed in such a way that it does not damage or destroy a building's character-defining elements or fabric. Rooftop mechanical equipment must be installed in such a manner that it is not visible from the

public way. If it is not possible to install rooftop equipment so that it is invisible from the street, it must be screened from view using appropriate and sympathetic materials. Window air conditioning units are discouraged and should not be used on the front elevations of buildings. They should instead be placed on the sides or rear of structures and screened from view wherever possible. Heat pumps and other HVAC units that are placed on the ground should be located to the sides or rear of a property and screened from view. It is also recommended that the affects of equipment noise on neighbors be considered when determining placement.

### **III.12.2 Satellite Dishes and Antennas**

Satellite dishes and radio and television antennas require HDC approval before installation. These additions are incompatible with the District's character and the Commission therefore strongly discourages their use in visible areas. If they must be used, the smallest possible equipment should be installed, and this must be done as unobtrusively as possible. Satellite dishes will not be approved on the front elevations of buildings. If it must be placed on another significant elevation, it should be screened with fencing materials or vegetation. Rooftop antennas should be mounted as far back from the roofline as possible. Other ordinances may also apply, so applicants should consult with the Town Office.

### **III.12.3 Utilities**

Electrical, telephone and cable service should be placed underground wherever possible. Where this is not possible, side or rear placement is preferred. Utility boxes such as gas and electric meters or cable boxes should be installed on secondary facades rather than primary facades. Boxes that are visible should be painted to match the building.

### **III.12.4 Vending Machines**

Any vending machine installed in the public way must be approved by the Historic District Commission. These items are not compatible with the Historic District and have an adverse impact on the streetscape.

### **III.12.5 Automated Teller Machines (ATMs)**

Automated teller machines (ATMs) proposed for the exterior of a building require HDC approval. In general, these devices are not compatible with the character of the District, but the Commission recognizes their importance to businesses and residents. ATMs should be installed on the least important façade, wherever possible, and installation in building recesses and entryways is encouraged. ATMs should be installed in a manner that causes the least amount of damage to the building's historic fabric. They also should be as small in scale as possible while meeting banking needs, and lighting should be provided by unobtrusive fixtures. Light emitted should be at the lowest level possible while ensuring customer safety. Litter receptacles are required elements in all ATMs.

### III.12.6. Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Systems

The goal of all energy efficiency improvements is to reduce energy consumption and lower greenhouse gas production. Before deciding on which retrofits to implement, the owner should get an energy audit from a certified energy efficiency contractor. An energy audit will determine where a house is losing energy (i.e. heat in winter, air conditioning in summer), and provide a prioritized list of recommended retrofits that will yield the most energy savings. These retrofits can include installing additional attic insulation, stopping air infiltration through exterior walls, repairing leaky window sashes, installing storm windows, and upgrading existing heating and cooling equipment to more energy efficient models. **The recommendations provided in an energy audit should be followed before any energy generating technologies are pursued.** The National Trust for Historic Preservation has devoted a section of their web pages to weatherization, which can be found at <http://www.preservationnation.org/information-center/sustainable-communities/weatherization/>.

The installation of equipment or systems that (1) reduce energy use and/or (2) generate energy on site for a property in the Historic District is generally encouraged. Pursuant to the first two Secretary of the Interior's Standards, **the HDC requires that the historic character of the property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of the features, spaces or landscapes that characterize a property shall be avoided. Installation of any renewable energy systems or ancillary equipment should avoid or minimize visibility from the public way.** For more information on sustainability and historic preservation, see the National Trust's website at <http://www.preservationnation.org/information-center/sustainable-communities/sustainability/green-lab/>.

#### Solar Hot Water and Solar Photovoltaic Collectors

Once an owner has completed the retrofits recommended by an energy auditor, solar hot water and photovoltaics can be considered, as long as their installation is consistent with the goals of the Historic District, which is to preserve and protect historic materials, architectural features and streetscapes. Roof mounted systems shall consist of low profile solar collectors at the same angle as the adjacent roof, in a color that complements the existing roof color. The collectors shall be located away from the primary façade on secondary roofs or other appropriate locations, and to the maximum extent feasible shall not project above the ridge line or otherwise be visible from the public way. A solar array may not obscure significant features or change the perception of the overall character of the roof form and the property in general. If placing an array on a flat roof, the panels can be installed flat or at an angle, but in either case they should be placed so that they are not seen from a primary public way. Any leeway to these requirements may be granted on a case by case basis.

Ground mounted solar arrays should be located away from the house and should not be visible from the public way or adjacent neighbors. Screening may be necessary to minimize visibility, similar to the way that mechanical systems are screened, which can be achieved through plantings and structural means. The overall size of a system, the height of the array and visibility from the public way will be carefully considered by the HDC.

As was stated earlier, solar system installations **must be reversible** and not result in damage to the historic character or fabric of the building or the district. The HDC acknowledges that solar systems can, by design, be easily installed and removed and they should therefore be installed so that they do not substantially change, damage, or destroy a property's defining historic characteristics or landscape features, and not result in the loss of original or historic materials. In the case of contributing buildings, the HDC will not approve the removal of historic roofing materials, altering the historic roof configuration (including chimneys, dormers, parapets, trim, or other features), or allow any other installation or maintenance procedures that will cause irreversible changes or damage to historic features or materials.

## Wind Turbines

Chestertown does not have sufficient winds to rationalize the installation and use of residential grade wind turbines (NOAA 2010 wind study). In the future, if wind turbine design and engineering is improved so that they become more efficient at lower wind speeds, the same guidelines in effect for solar installations will guide the HDC's review.

## III.13 SIGNS



Hanging sign on Cross Street

This section of the Design Guidelines is intended primarily for historic areas which are commercially zoned. Generally, signs should be compatible with the character of the neighborhood and blend with the character of the structures on or near which they are placed. In evaluating permit applications for signs, the following guidelines will be used:

- Signs should not conceal architectural detail, clutter the building's image, or distract from the unity of the façade, but rather should complement the overall design.
- Sign materials should complement the materials of the related building and/or the adjacent buildings. Surface design elements should not detract from or conflict with the related structure's age and design.
- Panel and hanging signs should have a molding applied around the edges, which will help resist deterioration and fading of the sign.
- No façade should be damaged in the application of signs. On masonry buildings, fasteners must be installed only in mortar joints, not in the masonry itself.
- Internally illuminated cabinet signs, neon "Open" signs, and flashing or blinking lights are not permitted in the Historic District.
- Building directories are encouraged for multi-tenanted buildings, rather than individual signs for each business.

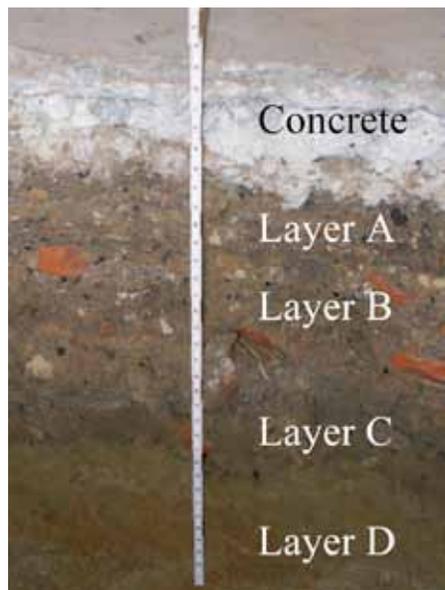
Chestertown has a separate sign ordinance, with requirements that vary by zoning district. These are available at the Town Office, and all applications must also meet these requirements.

### III.14 ACCESS TO THE DISABLED

Providing disabled access to commercial buildings in the Historic District is mandated by the federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). It can be very challenging to create handicap access while preserving the aesthetics of a historic building.

ADA requirements should be met with the least amount of damage to historic fabric and distinctive elements. The HDC recognizes the importance of equal access and encourages creative solutions to these challenges. The National Park Service's *Preservation Brief 32*, available online at <http://www.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/brief32.htm>, provides much useful guidance in complying with ADA requirements. Basic questions about ADA requirements can be obtained from the Department of Justice's website at <http://www.ada.gov/> or by calling the toll-free hotline, 800-514-0301.

### III.15 ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACTS



Sectional view of an excavation  
(Photo courtesy Meghan Habas Siudzinski)

Chestertown's Historic Zoning ordinance specifically calls for the preservation and protection of archaeological resources in the Historic District. The best preservation method is leaving these resources in the ground, undisturbed. Rehabilitation sometimes requires significant ground disturbance, including trenching for utilities and footers, excavation for landscaping, and grading for driveways and parking areas.

For any major rehabilitation and/or new construction project involving a significant amount of ground disturbance (e.g. an addition or trenching for utilities), it is required that a professional archaeologist assess or survey the area prior to, and during, construction. If important resources are likely to be disturbed, the best course of action is to design the project to avoid them. If avoidance is the option chosen, steps should also be taken to ensure that equipment does not damage remains that are being left in the ground. If it is not possible to design the project to avoid archaeological resources, archaeology and recording should be done according to best practices prior to construction. Archeological investigations should conform to the Maryland Historical Trust's *Standards and Guidelines for Archeological Investigations in Maryland*, available online at [http://mht.maryland.gov/documents/PDF/Archeology\\_standards\\_investigations.pdf](http://mht.maryland.gov/documents/PDF/Archeology_standards_investigations.pdf). The Trust also maintains a list of professional archeologists that can conduct assessments and excavations. The list and the *Standards and Guidelines* are available on line at [http://mht.maryland.gov/consultant\\_directory.html](http://mht.maryland.gov/consultant_directory.html). Archeologists at local or regional colleges and universities also are sometimes available to conduct archeological assessments.

## IV NEW CONSTRUCTION AND ADDITIONS

### IV.1 INTRODUCTION



New construction on Cannon Street

The careful and thoughtful design of any new construction in Chestertown's Historic District is of the utmost importance because it must harmonize with the character of the neighborhood and also be compatible with existing structures. A lack of attention to general design, to details, and to the context within which the building will be placed can have severe adverse impacts for the area. As a result, proposals for new construction receive serious scrutiny.

The following guidelines are not intended to require particular architectural features or dictate architectural style. Instead, they are very general in nature and are intended to identify a range of design options that will encourage development compatible with the existing character of the district.

Contemporary designs and materials executed in a manner sensitive to the district are strongly encouraged. Economic feasibility and durability of proposed improvements, in addition to aesthetic harmony, should be primary concerns. The primary principle behind new construction

is that it should recall historic themes, style, scaling, and detailing, without trying to precisely duplicate any one building or specific element. The challenge is to design a building or addition that is clearly a product of the present, while at the same time being sensitive to existing design traditions and neighboring buildings.

The following factors should be taken into account when planning and designing new construction. They apply both to entirely new structures and additions to historic buildings.

### IV.2 PROCESS & PROCEDURES

**All projects involving major new construction require a two hearing process.** Small additions or minor construction projects such as a shed or garage may be require only one hearing, but photographs of the building site, façade elevations, samples of materials, and scaled drawings will be required, possibly with additional information. At the first hearing, the HDC will review the project in general terms, while details and specifics of the project are considered at the second hearing.

## IV.2.1 Required information

The following information, at a minimum, is required for all new construction projects:

- a written scope of work
- photographs of the building site and photos of the surrounding streetscape
- elevation and plan drawings for the exterior of the structure
- samples of all exterior building materials, including doors, windows, siding, roofing

For major projects, the Commission may also require scaled drawings that show the street elevations, with existing buildings and the proposed new structure. A scaled model, three-dimensional drawing or axonometric drawing may be required, showing the proposed building in context. Since the project is heard in two hearings, the application for new construction is best broken into two parts, which are described more fully below.

## IV.2.2 Hearings

At the first hearing, the project will be reviewed in general terms. For this hearing, the following criteria will be considered:

- location
- footprint of the new building
- massing
- height
- setback
- scale
- façade
- roof forms
- materials

When these issues have been addressed and approved by the HDC, the next level will be considered. In the subsequent part of the application, details and finishes are considered.

- texture
- openings (doors, windows, etc.)
- lighting
- site plan
- landscaping
- detailed facades and elevations
- final articulation with the surrounding area

When both parts of the hearing process have been completed and all elements have been approved, the project may proceed.

**NOTE: FOR MAJOR PROJECTS SUCH AS NEW HOMES OR COMMERCIAL STRUCTURES, THE TWO HEARINGS MAY BE SPREAD ACROSS TWO SEPARATE**

## **MEETINGS TO ALLOW FOR ADEQUATE CONSIDERATION.**

Most major construction projects will also require approvals from other review bodies or commissions. If a variance is required, this should be acquired prior to submission of an HDC application. Planning Commission approval, if required, can be pursued concurrently to HDC approval. If final site plan approval is required from the Planning Commission, that review should occur between the Level I and Level II HDC hearings.

For new buildings and additions, the following design elements should be considered when designing the project.

### **IV.3 DESIGN ELEMENTS**

#### **IV.3.1 Style**

As described in Chapter I of these Guidelines, Chestertown's Historic District is comprised of buildings in a wide range of styles. No single style is mandated for new construction, but designs should complement and reflect the architectural heritage of the town. New construction should avoid the introduction of historic styles that are not commonly found in the District, and it should also avoid a false sense of history through the precise duplication of other historic buildings.

#### **IV.3.2 Rhythm**

The relationship between the width and height of the façade of a building should be visually compatible with adjacent buildings. Additionally, the relationship of the new building to the open spaces between it and adjoining buildings should be visually compatible with the spacing of adjacent buildings. When one moves past a sequence of buildings, one experiences the proportion of the width to height of the buildings as well as a rhythm of recurrent building masses to the open space between them. New construction designs should analyze existing patterns or rhythms and incorporate them into the project.

#### **IV.3.3 Height**

As a small county seat in an agricultural region, Chestertown has few tall buildings. Most residential structures are two stories in height, and few commercial buildings exceed three stories. These historic characteristics should be taken into account during new construction design. The height of a proposed building should be visually compatible with adjacent buildings, both in the number of floors, the height of each floor and the height of the roof.

One of the most distinguishing features of any historic neighborhood is the strong horizontal line established by the structure's cornices. It is important that this line be introduced into the design solution for new construction, thus ensuring continuity from one building to the next. It is not necessary to duplicate an adjoining structure in terms of height but, instead, to maintain the appearance or feel of a strong horizontal line between the dwellings. There should not be more than a 10% difference in a visual field where the majority of buildings are similar in height. An

exception would be in a visual field where there are original buildings of varied height. Porches, first floor elevations, and the number of stories should also be consistent with adjacent buildings.

#### **IV.3.4 Scale**

Scale may be defined as the relative sizes of architectural elements compared to each other, to the building as a whole, and to the observer. The size of a building and its mass will have a relationship to open spaces, windows, doors, porches, and balconies. On larger structures, for example, windows and doors tend to be somewhat larger. For new construction, these relationships should be compatible within the building and with other buildings in a visually related field. Scales for buildings vary according to style, and some of those scale issues were discussed in Chapter I of these Guidelines. Chestertown is above all a town for pedestrians, and new buildings should maintain that human scale.

#### **IV.3.5 Mass**

Mass may be defined as the enclosed volume formed by a building's exterior. Mass can be different for different parts of a building. Chestertown's commercial buildings, for example, have a dominant mass along the main street front, with smaller masses of varying heights in the rear. A new structure that reversed this sequence of massing would look out of place. New construction should instead try to maintain the pattern of primary and secondary masses.

#### **IV.3.6 Materials, Texture, and Color**



Alexander Building, High Street

Relationship of materials, texture, and color of the façade of a building should be visually compatible with the predominant materials used in buildings to which it is visually related. Variety in the use of architectural materials and details adds to the intimacy and visual delight of the district. When first confronted with this variety, it is easy to overlook the overall thread of continuity provided by the relatively limited palette of materials available to earlier builders. This continuity is threatened by inappropriate building materials available in today's market place. The materials and details of new construction should relate to the materials and details of existing adjacent buildings.

While slate, tin, and standing seam metal roofs are preferred, asphalt shingles of appropriate color and texture may be acceptable. Diagonal and vertical sidings are generally unacceptable. Imitative materials such as asphalt siding, wood-textured metal siding, or artificial stone, when well installed and carefully detailed, may be acceptable in some cases. Materials will be reviewed to determine their appropriate use in relation to the overall design of the structure.

Chapter III includes a detailed review of the types of building materials most commonly found in the Historic District, while Chapter I discusses historic trends and styles. These sections

provide information that will be useful in preparing sympathetic new designs.

### **IV.3.7 Roof Shapes and Materials**

Roof profiles are an important element in defining the architectural character of an area. Various roof styles were described in Chapter I. The shape and orientation of a new building's roof should be visually compatible with the buildings to which it is visually related. Many structures in the District have dormer windows, and it may be desirable to incorporate these into a new building. This can be appropriate, but dormers must be of appropriate scale and not dominate the roof slope and elevation. The pitch of dormers should repeat that of the main roof. Shed dormers are likely to be appropriate only on secondary elevations.

As discussed in Chapter III, skylights can disrupt the continuity of a roofscape along a street and they must therefore be designed with care. If they are necessary, it is advisable to locate them on secondary facades where they are not visible from the public way. They also should be carefully integrated into the overall design, so that they do not stand out. Dome or bubble-shaped skylights are not appropriate and will be approved only on a case-by-case basis. The total skylight area should not exceed 10% of the corresponding floor area, and the proportion of skylight units should be comparable to those of façade openings.

Slate and standing seam metal are the traditional materials most appropriate for roofing new contemporary buildings. Although these materials are preferred, asphalt shingles of appropriate color and texture may be acceptable.

### **IV.3.8 Windows and Doors**



New construction on Cross Street

The proportion, size, detailing, and number of windows and doors in new construction should relate to those of existing adjacent buildings. Fenestration patterns (the patterns of solids and voids on a building's façade) contribute significantly to the rhythm of a streetscape. The fenestration pattern on new construction should mimic that of adjacent buildings.

Many windows in historic neighborhoods have a vertical orientation, with a proportion of between two and three to one (2:1 or 3:1, height to width). This varied with different architectural styles, but openings of existing buildings generally show a vertical orientation that should be maintained in new construction.

Individual windows can be square or horizontal if the rest of the building conveys the

appropriate directional emphasis. Façade openings of the same general size as those in adjacent buildings are encouraged, but the size and orientation of a building's openings also can be used to help define a building's bulk and mass. A tall building can be made to appear shorter by using horizontal openings, while the converse also is true; a short building can appear taller when given vertical openings.

Wooden double-hung windows are traditional and should be the first choice when selecting new windows. When ordering new windows, it is important to consider the directional emphasis of the muntins.

New construction within the commercial part of the District should incorporate into the design a strong storefront element. The facades of such buildings also should follow the existing pattern of distinguishing between the street level storefront and the upper levels.

Side and rear elevations of new construction also should be carefully designed, harmonizing both with the primary façade and with neighboring buildings.

#### **IV.3.9 Spacing, Setback, and Location**

The spacing between individual buildings varies throughout the Historic District. A new building's relationship to adjacent structures should be consistent with the spacing along that portion of the block. Existing building widths also can provide a guide for dividing the facade of a larger building into a series of smaller and more compatible components. The location for a proposed structure, including its distance from the road or sidewalk (setback) and distance from other buildings (spacing) must be appropriate.

In the commercial part of town and in some other areas, most building fronts are placed directly on the sidewalk, and new structures should maintain the setback common to that block face. Elsewhere, especially in residential areas, existing buildings may be set farther back from the street. In these areas, new structures should maintain a setback similar that of existing buildings. If there are good reasons for increasing or decreasing the setback from the street edge, the variance should not be more than five percent of existing street to façade setback of adjacent buildings. Reduced setbacks may also be acceptable at corners.

#### **IV.3.10 Site Features and Landscape**

Fences, landscaping, and other site features should be compatible with the surrounding streetscape, both in design and materials. Sidewalks and curbs must conform to Town standards, and paving materials and design of driveways and parking areas must be appropriate to the Historic District. New driveways, parking areas, and garages should be designed so that they are not visible from the public way; if this is not possible, they should be screened with appropriate plantings.

The landscaped setting in which a structure is placed helps to define the streetscape and establish its mood and character. The patterns and types of trees, shrubs, and flowers (possibly window boxes) should provide sufficient privacy and at the same time enhance, not hide, the appearance of the structure.

Trees act as natural air conditioners to cool streets, yards, and buildings in summer and admit the sun's warmth in winter. The location of plantings should be carefully chosen. For best results, select the types of trees that grow well on the property – whether sunny, partly sunny, a narrow lot, etc. It is always wise to check with a nursery for advice.

For additional information on landscaping and site feature guidelines, please refer to Section V below. The Town has published the highly useful *Chestertown Green Book*, which has numerous tips on landscaping curbside design.

#### **IV.4 ACCESSORY BUILDINGS**

Garages, sheds, and other small accessory structures are common historically and may be proposed as new construction. Such accessory buildings are usually associated with residential structures, and they contribute to the overall character of a property and the district. More modern accessory structures such as decks, patios and pools also may be proposed, but must be compatible with these guidelines and the character of the Historic District. Please refer to Sections IV.6 and V.6 below for additional information of decks, patios, and pools.

If possible, new accessory structures or construction should be located so they cannot be seen from a public right-of-way. If this is not possible, they should be sited as unobtrusively as possible. Accessory structures should meet all of the other design criteria for new construction and should be compatible with the size, shape, design, and materials of the principal building on the property. They should not obscure the view of the principal building or compete with or diminish it in any way.

#### **IV.5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACTS**

Please refer to the requirements for archaeological monitoring on page 48.

#### **IV.6 NEW ADDITIONS**

All of the guidelines outlined above in this chapter apply to additions to existing buildings, but several additional issues should be noted.

Because a new exterior addition to a historic building can damage or destroy materials and change the building's character, it should be constructed in a manner that preserves significant materials, features, and historic character. Avoid constructing an addition on a primary or other character-defining elevation to ensure the preservation of significant materials and features. Make sure that the size, scale, massing, proportions, and design of the new addition are compatible with the historic buildings to ensure that its form is not expanded or changed to an unacceptable degree.

Place the new addition on an inconspicuous side or rear elevation so that the new work does not result in a radical change to the form or character of the historic building. The Commission recommends setting an addition back from the historic building's wall plane so that the form of

the historic building can be distinguished from the new work. Plan the new addition in a manner that provides some differentiation in material, color, and detailing so that the new work does not appear to be a part of the historic building.

Decks, patios and pools also must be compatible with these guidelines and the character of the Historic District. Decks built with pressure treated lumber are not recommended (please refer to III.3.5 above), nor are decks that would obscure, alter, or otherwise compromise the character of a significant building or building elevation. Please refer to Section V.6 below for additional information of decks, patios, and pools.

#### **IV.7 SIGNS**

Please see the Signs section on page 47.



Cross Street hanging sign

# V. Public Spaces and Landscape Areas

## V.1 INTRODUCTION



Cannon Street

Chestertown’s unique character and identity have as much to do with streetscapes and landscapes – trees, plantings, street widths, sidewalks, and the like – as they do with its historic buildings. Well-designed and maintained landscaping enhances the District, as do well-designed streets, sidewalks, and parking lots. Publicly used spaces should be both functional and aesthetically pleasing, while enhancing the character of the area. In commercial parts of the town, landscaping and design should reflect the commercial nature of the area, while other landscape design should reflect the residential nature of the area.

Although the Town bears the primary responsibility for major streetscape improvements and maintenance, individual property owners contribute to the area through plantings and landscaping in yards and along commercial buildings, through paving of walks, and through a variety of other features such as fences and walls. The maintenance of these streetscapes and landscapes is important to the well-being of the Historic District. If new construction requires alterations to existing streetscapes or landscapes, new elements should be designed and installed that are compatible with the District.

## V.2 STREETS, SIDEWALKS, DRIVEWAYS & PARKING LOTS

Streets and sidewalks knit the District together, providing a network along which cars and pedestrians travel. They should be designed with these functions in mind. Sidewalks are maintained by the Town and may be constructed of concrete or brick. Repairs to sidewalks should be done so that they match the older sections in texture, color, materials, and design. New sidewalks should be constructed in a manner that is compatible with the character of the Historic District. Tinted materials or concrete scored and tinted to resemble brick are not appropriate in the Historic District.

Walkways that connect sidewalks, driveways, and parking lots with other structures are made of a variety of materials, including brick and concrete. As with sidewalks, repairs to walkways should match the original as closely as possible, and new construction must either duplicate the original in texture, color, materials, and design, or be executed in a form that is compatible with adjacent properties. Walkways should be appropriate for the style of the principle structure on the property.

Driveways in Chestertown’s Historic District are constructed of brick, concrete, asphalt and gravel. Repairs to driveways should duplicate the original, using the same materials, colors, textures and designs. New driveways should be in keeping with adjacent properties and appropriate both to the District and to the style of the principle structure on the property.

Off-street parking lots tend to break the rhythm and consistency of a streetscape, and they should therefore be placed at the rear (or side) of a building or lot whenever possible. They are most appropriate in the commercial sections of the Town and should be screened from view. The screening

requirements will vary based on the size and location of the lot, but a four-foot deep landscaping edge is recommended. Plantings should be high enough to screen vehicles from immediate view, but should still allow visual access into the lots. The design and materials for parking lots must be approved by the HDC prior to construction.

### **V.3 STREET FURNITURE**

Element such as trash receptacles, benches, parking meters, utility poles, and street lights are referred to as street furniture. Street furniture can have an aesthetic impact on an area, and should be designed with this in mind. Such elements also should be safe and convenient, as well as designed to require minimal maintenance.

The style, design, materials and colors of street furniture should be appropriate to the different parts of the Historic District, as residential and commercial areas will have differing requirements. Street furniture located on sidewalks should not obstruct or impede pedestrian traffic, nor should it obscure views for motorists.

### **V.4 TREES, SHRUBS & OTHER PLANTINGS**

Trees, shrubs, flowers, and grass can have a strong visual impact. Planting can offer shade and privacy, while adding color and texture to the area. If trees or shrubs are planted, they should be located with their mature size in mind. Plantings should be considered as building elements to balance and proportion in accordance with the buildings they surround.

The Historic District Commission recommends that landscaping in front yards be designed to reflect the period or style of the principle structure on the property. Styles of landscaping changed over time, as did the types of plants that were popular. Up to the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, native plants were most common, while a variety of exotic species were used during the Victorian period. Victorian landscapes often set the front yard apart from the street or sidewalk with a low brick wall, cast iron or wood fences, or by a change in elevation. Plantings were used along property lines to separate properties, and flowers and shrubs were used to hide building foundations. While front yards tended to be landscaped in aesthetically pleasing ways, rear yards were more utilitarian, serving as a focus for accessory buildings, as well as for kitchen and house-related chores. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, cast iron and ornamental fences were less commonly used, and landscapes were created with isolated trees and foundation plantings. Shrubs and fences often were used to separate individual properties. Accessory buildings typically were placed in side or rear yards.

The Commission recommends the following:

- Trees greater than six inches in diameter should be conserved whenever possible.
- Plantings and landscapes that are significant in defining the character of a property or area should be retained.
- Diseased or deteriorated plantings and landscapes that are significant in defining the character of a property or area should be replaced with healthy specimens of identical or similar species, and the landscape should be retained.

- Landscaping in front yards should be designed to reflect the period or style of the principle structure on the property.

The Town has published the highly useful *Chestertown Green Book*, which has numerous tips on landscaping curbside design. A landscape architect or a local nursery will be able to provide additional information on site improvements. Please also refer to section IV.3.10 above.

## V.5 WALLS AND FENCES



Board fence and gate, Cannon Street

Walls and fences are also important streetscape elements, and they work in conjunction with plantings (see V.4 above). Brick walls are common in Chestertown, as are painted wood board fences and cast iron fences. Unless they can be concealed by plantings, concrete block walls, and natural wood board, stockade, and split rail fences should be avoided.

The Commission recommends the following:

- Flat, vertical board fences, painted or stained with straight tops are most suitable for interior lot and other secondary locations to screen yards, driveways, and walks and to provide privacy for residential backyards.
- Chain link, where visible from the public way, is not a preferred material and its use will not be approved.
- Vinyl or plastic fencing is easily recognizable and produces reflections or glare that is not seen on wood. Such fencing is out of character with in the Historic District and will not be approved in areas where it is visible from the public way.
- Concrete block walls, and natural wood board, stockade, and split rail fences are not recommended in most areas.
- Fences and walls that contribute to the character of a property or an area, such as cast iron fences or brick walls, should be retained whenever possible.
- If a significant fence or wall requires repair, repairs should be made using materials, design, color and textures that match the original. For masonry walls, please refer to Section III.2 for guidelines on masonry repairs.
- If a significant wall or fence is so deteriorated that it requires replacement, replacement should be done in kind, using design, materials, and colors that duplicate the original as closely as possible.

Fences have traditionally been a pleasing part of older neighborhoods, adding variety to the streetscape while marking property lines and outdoor spaces. A fence should be chosen to harmonize with the structure and the surrounding area.

## **V.6 DECKS, PATIOS, & POOLS**

Decks, patios and pools are discussed in Section IV.4 and IV.6 above. As these types of installations may also be considered landscape elements, they are noted here as well. Decks, patios and pools also must be compatible with these guidelines and the character of the Historic District. Decks built with pressure treated lumber are not recommended on significant historic structures (please refer to III.3.5 above), nor are decks that would obscure, alter, or otherwise compromise the character of a significant building, building elevation, or significant landscape. When considering installation or enlargement of an in-ground pool, it should be noted that this requires significant ground-disturbance and will almost certainly require an archeological assessment. Above-ground pools are not recommended and will not be approved if visible from the public way.



Deck at Washington College Alumni House, Washington Avenue

# VI

## Demolition & Moving Buildings

### VI.1 INTRODUCTION



Demolition in preparation for Cross Street redevelopment

The request to relocate or demolish historic properties sometimes arises, often as a last resort for an economically unfeasible rehabilitation or to make way for a higher use for the property. The majority of the buildings in Chestertown's Historic District, however, contribute in some fashion to the District's significance. The loss of any contributing historic building diminishes the District, and it can never be replaced. Since the purpose of Chestertown's Historic Area Zoning is to protect historic structures, the demolition or relocation of buildings that contribute to the Historic District's significance is

generally inappropriate and should be avoided. It will be permitted only when all possible alternatives have been exhausted, and only after the structure has been thoroughly and professionally researched and documented.

Relocating or moving historic buildings also is a serious matter. Moving a building can threaten its structural integrity, changes the character of the property and surrounding area, and removes the building from its archeological context. Relocation therefore will be permitted only after all other efforts have been exhausted and as an effort to prevent the structure's demolition.

Unusual circumstances may require the consideration of demolition or relocation, and the process outlined below will apply to all such applications.

### VI.2 DEMOLITION APPLICATION PROCESS

#### VI.2.1 The Process

Most requests for demolition of a building will require a minimum of two hearings, and the Historic District Commission will not take action on any redevelopment plans until after formal action has been taken on the proposed demolition.

In the first hearing, the significance of the structure (i.e., whether it is contributing or non-contributing) will be determined by the HDC. If the structure does not contribute to the significance of the Historic District, the HDC may take action on the proposed demolition and begin review of the subsequent replacement plan in one hearing.

If the structure is a contributing resource, however, additional hearings will be required. At the second hearing, the HDC will take formal action to approve or disapprove the request for demolition. If the demolition proposal is approved, the Commission will then consider the proposal for replacement or new construction on the site. Depending upon the complexity of the proposed replacement, this portion of the process may require an additional hearing before notice to proceed is given.

**No demolition permit will be issued until proposals for replacement have been approved**, unless the structure poses an imminent threat to the public health or welfare.

## **VI.2.2 Hearing I**

At the first hearing, the HDC will discuss with the applicant the reasons for the proposed demolition and replacement plans, if any. The next step in the process is to determine whether or not the structure is a contributing or non-contributing resource, and this is the primary focus of the first hearing. “Contributing” and “non-contributing” refer to the extent to which the structure contributes to the significance of the Historic District (see page 24 for an explanation of the terms “contributing” and “non-contributing”).

### *Criteria for Determining Significance*

The criteria listed below are used by the HDC to determine a building’s significance. In order to be considered a contributing resource, it must:

- have character, interest or value and contribute to the Town’s heritage; or
- be associated with the life of an outstanding historical person or persons; or
- be the site of an historic event with a significant effect upon the cultural, political, economic, social, or historic heritage of the Town of Chestertown; or
- represent one or more periods or styles of architecture, landscape architecture, building or construction with significant character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage, or culture of Chestertown; or
- reflect outstanding attention to architectural design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship; or
- demonstrate characteristics that make it a recognizable entity, the preservation of which is essential to the integrity of the Historic District; or
- represent an established and familiar feature of the Historic District due to its unique location or singular physical characteristics; or
- provide historic or scenic value that is significant to the area; or
- contribute information of historical, cultural, or social importance relating to the heritage of the community; or
- have yielded, or may be likely to yield, archaeological information important in history or

prehistory.

If a building or resource meets one or more of these criteria, it is deemed a contributing structure, one that contributes to the significance of the Historic District as a whole. If the structure fails to meet any of these criteria, it is deemed to be a non-contributing structure, one that does not hold significance for the District.

After the building's significance has been determined, the Commission may take one of two actions. If the Commission determines that the structure does not meet any of the above standards, and therefore does not contribute to the District's significance, the HDC will approve the demolition. The Commission may also begin the review of replacement plans, although this application for new construction will require an additional hearing to finalize. All plans for new construction must meet the guidelines and application requirements outlined above in Section V and elsewhere for new construction.

If the Commission determines that the structure contributes to the District's significance, a second hearing will be required. During the first hearing, the Commission may review and discuss replacement plans, but no formal action will be taken on either the demolition of the contributing structure or the replacement plans until the second hearing.

### *Application Requirements*

In order for a proposal to be considered at the first hearing, it is important that the Commission have all of the information needed to make a sound and informed decision. Applications for demolition must be received at least 25 days prior to the scheduled hearing. In addition to all of the usual information required for a proposal, applicants must provide the following information before an application can be considered complete:

- the precise location of the building in the District;
- a history of the building and date of construction, consulting appropriate historical sources, deeds, maps, etc.;
- a description of the building's architectural style and character;
- photographs showing all of the building's exterior facades, exterior details, landscape features, the relationship of the structure to adjacent buildings, and the streetscape;
- any available architectural drawings of the building;
- any other information that may aid in assessing the building's character and significance.

### **VI.2.3 Hearing II**

At the second demolition hearing, the Commission will take formal action to approve or disapprove the proposed demolition. The Commission shall weigh the impact that the loss of the structure will have on the integrity of the Historic District and determine whether or not disapproval would create "substantial detriment to the public welfare" or "substantial hardship to the applicant." Substantial hardship occurs when the property cannot be put to some reasonable beneficial use.

### *Economic Hardship*

If the applicant believes that maintaining or rehabilitating the property would create substantial economic hardship, it is the applicant's responsibility to prove financial hardship. In such cases, the Commission will determine whether the building can be put to reasonable beneficial use without the approval of demolition. In the case of income producing properties, the Commission will also consider whether the existing building will yield a reasonable economic return. In order to evaluate these conditions, the Commission must have a complete application before it no less than 25 days prior to the scheduled hearing (please refer to the section below on "Application Requirements").

If the applicant satisfies the Commission that he will suffer substantial hardship if a demolition permit is not approved and that the demolition of the structure is without substantial detriment to the public welfare, the demolition shall be approved. If the applicant fails to demonstrate substantial hardship, the Commission will deny the application.

### *Application Requirements*

A complete application for the demolition of a contributing structure must be received at least 25 days before the next scheduled hearing in order to be placed on the agenda for that meeting. In order to be considered complete, an application for demolition of a contributing structure must include the following:

- Documentation of the structure, including:
  - a site plan drawn to appropriate scale illustrating the site as it presently exists and any resource to be removed – the site plan must cover the subject property, as well as 75 feet in all directions outside the property lines;
  - a series of 8" x 10" black and white photographs showing the existing resource in relation to all adjacent properties located within a 75 foot radius of the subject property;
  - a series of 8" x 10" black and white photographs showing all elevations of the building;
  - a series of 8" x 10" black and white photographs documenting any historic resources that might be adversely affected by the proposed demolition, as determined by the Commission.
- Form of ownership of the property.
- A list of alternative uses or approaches to rehabilitation of the building that were considered, along with the costs involved, the names of contractors and any bids submitted. The reasons for rejecting those alternatives rejected must also be submitted.
- Cost of the proposed demolition and documentation of those costs.
- The fair market value of the property as determined by an appraisal from a qualified professional.
- Price asked and offers received, if any, for the property within the previous two years and efforts to find another owner. Most recent assessed value of the property and real estate taxes.
- A report from an engineer licensed in the State of Maryland as to the structural soundness of the structure and its adaptability for rehabilitation; any dangerous conditions should be included.
- An assessment of the archeological impacts of demolition or moving on the site.

If the applicant wishes to move the structure, the following information also must be submitted in the application:

- A report from an engineer licensed in the State of Maryland as to the structural soundness of the structure and its ability to withstand the stress of moving.
- Cost of relocating the building to another site and documentation of those costs.
- A site plan for the new location, if it is to be moved within the Historic District, including information on driveways, landscaping, utilities, and other relevant aspects outlined elsewhere in these Guidelines.
- An assessment of archeological impacts on the new building site.

If the applicant wishes to plead economic hardship, the following information also must be submitted in the application:

- An itemized breakdown from a professional experienced in rehabilitation as to the economic feasibility of rehabilitation or reuse of the existing structure.
- Amount paid for the property, the date of purchase, and the party from whom it was purchased, including a description of the relationship, if any, between the owner of record or applicant and the person from whom the property was purchased, and any items of financing between the seller and the buyer (include Settlement Sheet). Remaining balance on any mortgage or other financing secured by the property and annual debt service, if any, for the previous two years.
- If the property is income-producing, the annual gross income from the property for the previous two years; itemized operating and maintenance expenses for the past two years; and depreciation deduction and annual cash flow before and after debt service, if any, during the same period.

The Commission may request additional information from the applicant that is relevant to its determination and may seek professional comments regarding the applicant's submittal. The Commission reserves the right to present any of the above information to consultants, as needed.

#### **VI.2.4 Replacement or New Construction**

If the proposal for demolition is approved and the applicant proposes new or replacement construction on the property, the Commission will review the proposed replacement project. Action may be taken on the proposed new or replacement construction during this hearing or it may be deferred until the following meeting, at the discretion of the Commission. Applicants often wish to obtain demolition approval before incurring the costs associated with the design of new construction, so plans may not be available at the second hearing.

All proposals for new construction must meet the guidelines outlined in Section V and elsewhere above in these Guidelines.

#### **VI.2.5 Partial Demolitions**

When considering a proposal for the partial demolition of a building, the Commission will

apply the same steps and standards outlined above in Sections VI.2.1-4. If, for example, demolition of a wing on a larger structure is proposed, the first step will be to determine the significance of the wing to the primary structure and the Historic District. If it is determined to be insignificant and no replacement or new construction is proposed, only one hearing may be required. If the wing is determined to be significant, then an additional hearing will be required to consider the demolition request. A third hearing may be required to review any proposed replacement or new construction.

### **VI.3 FURTHER REQUIREMENTS**

Once a proposal for demolition is approved and a permit is issued, work must begin within six months or a new application must be filed and reviewed by the HDC. New or replacement construction also must commence within six months of the permit issuance.

The Commission may, at its discretion, require financial proof of the ability of an applicant to complete the replacement project, including but not limited to the submission of the following:

- a performance bond;
- a letter of credit;
- a trust for completion of improvements; or
- a letter of commitment from a financial institution.



Entrance to Hynson-Ringgold House Garden

# APPENDICES

## **1. Checklist for Applications to the Historic District Commission**

The Historic District Commission meets in Town Hall at 4:00 p.m. on the first Wednesday of every month. Applications and supporting documents must be submitted to the Town office no later than 4:00 p.m. on the deadline date. Deadlines for specific types of projects are:

- applications with complete supporting materials for new construction or demolition permits must be received no later than twenty-five (25) days prior to the regularly scheduled hearing
- all other applications and supporting materials must be received no later than one (1) week before the scheduled hearing

Applications for changes to existing buildings, new construction or additions must include:

- Completed application form with full description of the project
- Current photographs including building, area of proposed work, and any other relevant views
- Samples of materials and/or manufacturer's literature

Applications for new construction and additions must also include:

- A written description of the work.
- Photographs of the project location and adjacent areas, for example, several photos taken from the street on which the property fronts, and any other views that provide information about the impacts of the project upon the historic property, as well as adjoining areas, including the streetscape.
- Scale plans and elevations.

Applications for business signs must include:

- Information on the sign's size, color, lettering, materials, method of illumination (if any), method of attachment and location.
- A color rendering of the sign.
- Photo(s) of proposed location on building, with an outline of the sign to scale

Demolition permits require additional information (see the Design Guidelines).

