

A black and white historical photograph of a three-story brick building. The ground floor features large display windows and a sign that reads "ANDERSON BROTHERS" in the center, with "GROCERIES & CROCKERY" on the left and "DRY GOODS & CLOTHING" on the right. Several horse-drawn carriages are parked in front of the building, and several men in suits are standing on the sidewalk. The building has multiple windows on the upper floors and a decorative cornice. The text "City of Batavia Historic Preservation Design Guidelines 2009" is overlaid on the image in a large, elegant, black serif font.

*City of Batavia  
Historic  
Preservation  
Design Guidelines  
2009*

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# INTRODUCTION

The City of Batavia is one of approximately one hundred municipalities in Illinois that maintain local preservation programs to protect and preserve historic resources. In 2002 the Batavia City Council passed a Historic Preservation Ordinance creating the Historic Preservation Commission. This was followed by the approval of the ordinance that created the City's first historic district, the Downtown Historic District, in 2006. Batavia has many other areas with historic and architectural merit, which have the potential to be designated as historic districts.

## *What is the Historic Preservation Commission?*

The Batavia Historic Preservation Commission is an advisory board made up of five members appointed by the Mayor and approved by the City Council. At least four members shall be residents of Batavia, including at least one member being an architect with an interest in historic preservation and one member part of the downtown business community. The Commission has a broad range of duties and responsibilities regarding the protection, preservation and promotion of Batavia's architectural, historic and cultural resources. As part of the protection of Batavia's architectural and historic resources, the Commission's responsibilities also include the development of Design Guidelines.

# INTENT & PURPOSE OF GUIDELINES

The Batavia Historic Preservation Commission, (BHPC), reviews all proposed work affecting the exterior appearance of any structure, site or its appurtenances, including construction, alteration, repair, moving, demolition and signage, designated as a landmark or located within the historic district(s). A Certificate of Appropriateness, (COA), is required before commencing any exterior work in the historic district(s) or of a designated landmark. Building permits for exterior work cannot be issued without a COA.

These Design Guidelines have been adopted to both assist the property owner and the BHPC in processing applications for Certificates of Appropriateness, as well as provide guidance to property owners considering work that does not require approval of a COA

The intent of the Design Guidelines is to guide the inevitable changes to the exteriors of structures and sites within the City's designated landmarks and historic district(s). The most important features of historic buildings are roofs, exterior walls, windows and other openings and trim, doors and entries, porches, steps, stairs, railings, foundations, fences, storefronts, signage and site. As each historic structure and its site is unique, each application is considered on its own merits in accordance with these Design Guidelines.

## REVIEW PROCEDURE

1. **Consult with Community Development staff:** Owners contemplating exterior changes to their properties should contact City staff. Site visits with staff for applications that are significant in scope, may be appropriate.
2. **File an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness:** An application is required for ALL exterior projects, when a building permit is necessary. Applications must be accompanied by documentation (photographs, drawings, written specifications and other information) sufficient to illustrate the proposal and its impact on the property. Documentation must be complete in order to begin review of an application; if either the BHPC or its staff determines that additional information is needed.
3. **Applicants must attend the meeting:** or send a representative who is familiar with the project and able to discuss the project with the BHPC. The applicant must present the proposal and discuss it with the BHPC. Public comment is invited. At the end of the discussion the BHPC votes whether to approve the application as submitted, to approve with conditions, or to deny the application. The BHPC may also vote to table the discussion to a future meeting if further information or study is needed. Upon approval of the application, the Commission shall issue a signed copy of the Certificate of Appropriateness application. The COA will become part of the building file. A copy will be forwarded to the Building Commissioner.

# GENERAL STANDARDS

General Standards are intended to complement the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitation. These Standards and Guidelines pertain to buildings of all occupancy and construction types, sizes and materials. They apply to permanent and temporary construction on the exterior of existing buildings within the historic districts, as well as new construction. The BHPC cites one or more of these standards in each decision it makes on an application.

1. Original or historically significant materials and/or features of a structure or site shall be maintained and repaired rather than replaced , to the extent possible.
2. If replacement of existing material or features is necessary, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture and other visual qualities.
3. Replacement of missing features should be based on historical, documentary, physical or pictorial evidence if available.
4. Minimal alteration of the building, structure, site or environment shall be made.
5. Each property shall be recognized as a product of its own time. Alterations that seek to create a false sense of historical development shall be discouraged.
6. Changes to a building or site, which have taken place over time, are evidence of its history and development. Those changes that have acquired significance in their own right shall be recognized and preserved.
7. Where historic architectural or site features are determined by the Commission to contribute to the historic character of the property or the district, proposed alterations or additions affecting such features shall be reviewed more stringently.
8. New additions, exterior alterations or new construction shall not destroy historic materials or general features that characterize the property. The new work may be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale and architectural features of the property and the surrounding neighborhood, to protect the historic integrity of the property and the site.
9. Whenever possible, new additions or alterations to structures shall be done in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the structure and the site would be unimpaired.

Applicants should also refer to BHPC design guidelines (Title 12 – Chapter 6) for specific application categories.

## EXEMPTIONS FROM REVIEW

A number of appurtenant features are generally not reviewed by the BHPC, except as part of a larger project that does require review. Nonetheless, the visual character of these elements contributes to the overall character of a building and the surrounding historic district. The following is an attempt to guide the property owner in making appropriate and sensitive choices. Please be aware that although the following are generally not reviewed by the BHPC a building permit may be required. Be sure to check with the City's Community Development Department before beginning work.

- 1. Flags:** Flagpoles or brackets attached to buildings should be located so as not to damage or obscure significant architectural features. Electrical conduit supplying power for the illumination of a flag should not be visibly exposed.
- 2. Hardware and electrical devices:** Door hardware should be compatible with the size and finish of the original examples. Buzzers, intercoms and mailboxes should be located within a recessed entry vestibule whenever possible. Small louvers, registers, exhaust fans, alarm devices, cable boxes, utility meters and other mechanical and/or electrical devices should be mounted only on inconspicuous locations and painted in such a manner to conceal them, whenever possible and permitted. Through-wall louvers and exhaust fans requiring an opening exceeding 2 square feet in area will require an application for Certificate of Appropriateness and a meeting before the BHPC (see "Major Alterations" guidelines).
- 3. Paint color:** The BHPC will review and give advice regarding paint color on wood, metal and previously painted masonry buildings. Technical information on period colors and surface preparation is available upon request. Chemical, mechanical and abrasive methods of paint removal and the painting of previously unpainted masonry surfaces will require an application for Certificate of Appropriateness (see "Repair, In-Kind Replacement and Restoration" guidelines).
- 5. Plant Materials:** Installation, replacement or removal of trees, shrubs, hedges and plants is not reviewed *except where part of a historic landscape* (see "*Site Improvements*" guidelines). Trees and shrubbery should not be placed next to the building foundation, since this could lead to deterioration of the building fabric. Climbing plants may also cause deterioration of exterior wall surfaces.
- 6. Portable window air conditioners:** Seasonal window air conditioners should be installed on secondary elevations within existing window openings. *Through-wall air conditioners require an application for Certificate of Appropriateness and a meeting before the BHPC* (see "Major Alterations" guidelines).

7. **Security grilles:** Metal security grilles should be simple in design and sized to fit fully within the window opening. They should be painted a dark color, and the horizontal rails should have pierced and not overlapping welded joints. Grilles should be mounted within the reveal of the window and secured. Interior grilles should be considered for storefronts, although exterior security shades or roll-down grilles must be submitted for BHPC review.
8. **Signs for handicapped access:** Signs directing users to an accessible entrance or parking space should be installed to avoid damaging or obscuring significant architectural features, while conforming to the State and Federal Accessibility Standards.
9. **Temporary signs:** Temporary signs, including sale advertisements, political signs, banners, real estate signs, sidewalk sandwich boards, etc. should be designed and located so as not to damage or obscure significant architectural features. Period designs are encouraged.
10. **Window boxes:** Wooden window boxes for plants should be painted. The size should match the width of the window opening.

# **AWNINGS & CANOPIES**

Awnings can add color and architectural interest to a commercial or residential building. They can shelter pedestrians, reduce glare, conserve energy and provide a location for signage.

## **Materials**

Opaque soft canvas or metal materials are preferable to vinyl, wood or acrylic.

## **Colors**

Should be compatible with the building.

## **Installation**

Awning installation should not damage the building or visually impair distinctive architectural features. Awnings should be shaped to the opening in which they are installed.

## **Type/Profile**

Awnings may be fixed or retractable (retractable awnings with movable valances are preferred on buildings originally designed as residences). A traditional shed (diagonal) profile awning is preferable to a rounded profile.

## **Signage**

Lettering and graphics may be installed on awning valances; sizes should be proportional to valance dimensions. Lighting for signage on an awning should be directed specifically toward the graphics to prevent the entire awning from glowing.

## **Lighting**

Internally illuminated awnings and canopies are not historically correct and should not be permitted.

## **Multiple Storefronts**

Where awnings are proposed for one or more businesses in the same building, awnings are encouraged to be consistent in materials, shape and profile, height, location, graphics and signage. Colors should be complementary. Development of a master awning plan for buildings with multiple storefronts, to be followed by all tenants, is required.



## **BARRIER-FREE ACCESS**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and the Illinois Accessibility Code, (71 Illinois Administrative Code 400), effective May 1, 1988, extends comprehensive civil rights to individuals with disabilities, and require that equal access be afforded to all citizens in all places of public accommodation, commercial facilities, and state and local governments.

### **EXCEPTIONS FOR HISTORIC PROPERTIES**

While historic properties are not exempt from ADA, the law does recognize the national interest in preserving historic properties. ADA Accessibility Guidelines provide alternative minimum requirements for qualified historic structures, such as those listed on the National Register of Historic Places or located within designated local historic districts that cannot be made physically accessible without threatening or destroying their historic significance. These alternative requirements may only be used after consultation with the BHPC.

If the BHPC determines that even the alternative minimum requirements will threaten or destroy the significance of a structure, then alternative methods of access may be used. Owners may initiate a consultation with the BHPC to investigate other alternative methods of access.

### **DESIGN GUIDELINES**

Exterior alteration to provide universal access to the site and to the structure will usually be reviewed by the BHPC at a public meeting. (Changes to paved surfaces are subject to staff review; installation of identification and directional signage identifying accessible parking spaces and entryways is exempt from review.) Interior alteration to provide access to the main floor, other floors, toilet facilities, drinking fountains and telephones are not reviewed by the BHPC unless they have exterior expression (such as an elevator tower).

Owners contemplating making alterations to improve the accessibility of their properties should follow a three-step process to identify and implement appropriate access solutions:

1. Identify the architectural materials, features and spaces that convey the historic significance of a property. These may include: construction materials such as brick, stone or wood; elements that clearly reflect the design intent of the architect or builder, such as porticos, bay windows, balconies, stairs, porches, columns, gates, paving and entryways; decorative features exhibiting a high level of craftsmanship, such as moldings, trim, carvings or applied ornament; and associated landscape features, such as driveways, walkways, beams, terraces, steps and green spaces.

2. Evaluate the historic property for compliance with state and federal accessibility requirements (whichever is stricter should apply) before planning changes.
3. Evaluate the accessibility options using the BHPC General Standards and the guidelines below.

The ideal accessibility solution for a historic building is one which provides the highest level of access, is readily achievable, and does not threaten or destroy the property's historically significant materials, features and spaces. Each building's access problems must be studied and resolved on a case-by-case basis. If access to the primary entrance cannot be provided without threatening or destroying significant architectural features, consider providing access at a well-lit, secure and well-maintained secondary entrance, as allowed and required by the Illinois Accessibility Code, (especially one adjacent to an accessible parking area).

### **Wheelchair ramps**

Consider locations which will have the least visual impact on the historic building and setting. On some buildings, ramps can be integrated into existing stairs or porches with little visual impact.

Materials for ramps and railings should be compatible with the building. Wooden ramps are often appropriate for frame buildings and converted residences, while concrete or brick ramps may be best for masonry buildings. Ramp and railing designs should be coordinated with existing elements wherever possible. Wooden ramp surfaces can be painted with a sanded paint for slip-resistance. Ramps can be concealed with landscaping.

### **Wheelchair lifts**

Lifts may be considered where the site does not provide ample room for a ramp. Both vertical platform lifts and incline lifts require a level platform between the lift and the entryway, and therefore can be extremely intrusive, particularly on a primary entrance. In some cases a telescoping hydraulic lift, which maintains the platform at grade level when not in use, can be an inconspicuous solution.

### **Entryways and steps**

Where an existing door opening is too narrow to accommodate a wheelchair, consider installing offset door hinges to widen the opening. Installing an automatic door opener for a historic double door can create a suitably wide opening without requiring replacement of doors or enlargement of the opening itself. In some cases, replacing double leaf doors

with a single leaf off-center door and fixed side panel may be acceptable. Alterations to door hardware, although exempt from review, should consider reversible solutions such as installing a lever handle over an existing round doorknob. Where steps must be replaced to comply with ADA, try to maintain as much of the original historic appearance as possible. Materials for new steps should replicate the original or be compatible with other materials on the building.

### **Paving**

See "Site Improvements" guidelines.

# DEMOLITION

Demolition of any historic structure constitutes an irreplaceable loss to historic districts and the City of Batavia. Even the demolition of a non-contributing structure, or a secondary structure such as a garage, can have serious consequences for districts as a whole.

Demolition proposals are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. The applicant must make a good faith effort to demonstrate that all alternatives to demolition have been evaluated including rehabilitation, sale, adaptive reuse and relocation of the structure, and provide architectural and ultimately, financial data, to support a conclusion that demolition is the only feasible solution. The documentation requirements for demolition proposals are extensive, but complete information is necessary for the BHPC to make an informed decision.

All demolition proposals should include information about how the site will be treated once the structure is removed. Replacing a building with a surface parking lot can seriously diminish the architectural integrity of historic districts and is strongly discouraged.

Upon approval of an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for demolition, the City Council may require that the exterior and interior of the structure be recorded, at the owner's expense, according to the documentation standards of the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) and the Historic American Engineering Record (HAER). Such records would be deposited with the BHPC and the Batavia Historical Society.

## APPLICATION REVIEW PROCEDURES

All demolition proposals for properties located within a historic district, or that are locally landmarked, require an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness. Consultation with the BHPC staff prior to submitting an application is strongly encouraged. The review process consists of at least two monthly public meetings, and is structured to give ample time to the community, the applicant and the BHPC to obtain information and study the proposal thoroughly. Applicants or property owners will need to attend all meetings where the application is discussed. Where demolition of a secondary or non-contributing structure is proposed, the BHPC may at its discretion decide to streamline this process.

### First Public Meeting

1. The first public meeting will be held to consider the architectural and historical significance of the building and to initially review and discuss the proposed demolition. The BHPC may call upon expert witnesses as needed. Applicants may also present testimony as to the significance of the structure.

2. Next, the BHPC will determine whether sufficient information has been submitted with the application to allow thorough review, and whether all alternatives to demolition have been considered. (See "Documentation Requirements Supporting Demolition," below)
3. If the BHPC finds that the documentation is complete and all alternatives to demolition have been considered, it will vote to accept the application and schedule the application for review at the next regular meeting. If the application cannot be accepted because additional information is needed, then the preliminary meeting will be continued until the next regular BHPC meeting or such time as the additional information can be submitted. The application is considered formally accepted as of the date of the vote to accept it.

### **Second Public Meeting**

1. The BHPC will review the application using the Review Criteria listed below. The criteria may vary depending on whether the structure was determined to be a Significant, Contributing or Non-Contributing structure in the district.
2. At the second meeting the BHPC will also preliminarily review any claim of economic hardship (see "Economic Hardship" guidelines).
3. All applications for demolition of entire buildings or structures that are either Landmarked or located within a Historic District shall require the approval of the City Council upon recommendation of the Historic Preservation Commission.

### **REVIEW CRITERIA**

The Batavia Historic Preservation Commission shall use the following criteria for review.

If the structure is deemed Significant or Contributing, then at least one of the following requirements must be met in order for the BHPC to recommend approval of the demolition:

1. Retention of the structure constitutes a hazard to public safety, which hazard cannot be eliminated by economic means available to the owner, including the sale of the structure on its present site to any purchaser willing to preserve the structure.
2. Preservation of the structure is a deterrent to a major improvement program, which will be of substantial benefit to the community.
3. Preservation of the structure would cause an undue and unreasonable financial hardship to the owner, taking into account the financial resources available to the owner including the sale of the structure to any purchaser willing to preserve the structure. .
4. Preservation of the structure would not be in the interest of the majority of the community.

If one or more of the primary criteria have been met, then the BHPC may consider any or all of the following secondary criteria in deciding whether to recommend approval or denial of the application:

1. The effect of the demolition on the surrounding buildings.
2. The effect of the demolition on the historic district as a whole.
3. The value or usefulness of any replacement structure to the community, and the appropriateness of its design to the historic district.
4. If the lot is to be left open, how the space will be treated and the impact on the district as a whole.
5. The effect of the demolition on the local economy.
6. Whether the demolition will foster civic beauty.
7. The effect of the demolition on safeguarding the heritage of the city, state or nation.
8. The effect of the demolition on promotion of the district for the education, pleasure and welfare of the citizens of the city.

Non-Contributing Structures: If a structure is deemed non-contributing, the BHPC may consider any or all of the secondary criteria above in deciding whether to recommend approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for demolition.

## **EMERGENCY DEMOLITION**

The requirement for a Certificate of Appropriateness may be waived in emergency circumstances, which require immediate relief, repair, or demolition, where the Fire Chief or Building Commissioner determines that an emergency exists.

## **DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS SUPPORTING DEMOLITION**

1. Consideration by the property owner of profitable adaptive uses for the property.
2. A report from a licensed architect or engineer with experience in rehabilitation as to the structural soundness of any structures on the property and their suitability for rehabilitation.
3. An estimate from an architect, developer, real estate consultant, appraiser, or other real estate professional experienced in rehabilitation as to the economic feasibility of rehabilitation or reuse of the existing structure on the property including removal of the structure for preservation on a new site.
4. Any other information necessary to determine if the property can be reasonably used or yield a reasonable return to present or future owners.

# FENCES & GATES

It is important that the fence design harmonize with the character of the historic structure and the surrounding district. A building permit is required.

## Materials

Fences and gates made of wrought iron, cast iron or wood pickets are appropriate for front yards; solid, vertical board wood fences, with a flat cap, are appropriate for rear or side yards, fences may be painted, stained or left to weather naturally. Woven wire (chain link) and stockade fences are discouraged.

## Design

Front yard fences should be designed to allow views of the yard and building. Fences for rear or side yards may be more opaque. Gates should be compatible with any existing fencing, walls or landscaping, and should be designed to swing onto the private walkway or driveway, not onto the public sidewalk.

## Impacts on abutting properties

Fences on common property lines can have a negative impact on neighboring properties. For example, if the neighbor's yard is lower than the yard where the fence is installed, then from the neighbor's perspective the height of the fence is increased by the difference in grade. Also, boundary disputes may occur when a fence is proposed along an interior (side or rear) lot line.

# **FIRE ESCAPES**

State building and fire codes require that in case of emergency, a second means of egress must be provided from all buildings. Accommodation of egress requirements in historic buildings requires careful planning so that public safety is provided while protecting significant architectural features. Before submitting an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness, consult with the Building Division to ensure that the proposed fire escape design and location are acceptable.

## **Fire escapes**

Required fire escapes should be located on secondary elevations, with escape routes oriented toward the rear of the building rather than the front. The least intrusive design is preferable. Brackets and supports for fire escapes should not be attached to decorative elements such as quoins, cornices and window and door surrounds.

## **Fire doors**

Conversion of double hung windows to casement windows for egress, and enlargement of window openings to accommodate fire doors, is discouraged, especially on primary elevations. In many historic buildings upper floor double hung windows are tall enough to permit egress to a fire escape through the raised bottom sash. Avoid installing fire doors in door openings on primary elevations whenever possible.



## MAJOR ALTERATIONS

The primary purpose of the historic district ordinance is to preserve buildings, sites and appurtenances with historic and architectural significance. It is important to identify character-defining features such as height, setback from the street, shape, roof form, wall cladding, trim and ornamentation, windows and doors, porches and stairs, siting, storefronts, and signs. Alterations, which recognize, maintain, and preserve distinctive features, materials, finishes, construction techniques and examples of craftsmanship, will help to protect the integrity of the historic property and the district.

In reviewing proposed plans, the BHPC will consider: the historic and architectural significance of the structure and its appurtenances; the way in which the structure and its appurtenances contribute to the historical and architectural significance of the district; and the appropriateness of the proposed general design, arrangement, texture, materials and siting, in relationship to the existing historic structure.

Examples of alterations requiring full BHPC review include, but are not limited to, those listed below. Check with City staff if you do not see your project listed. Projects must be approved and issued a Certificate of Appropriateness by the BHPC prior to construction.

Replacement of features resulting in a change in material, dimension, design, texture or visual appearance, including work ordered by any regulatory agency to correct code violations. If existing features are character-defining elements of a historic structure, they should be replaced in kind to match as closely as possible. If existing features are not appropriate to the architectural style of the building, consider replacement with a more appropriate design. Avoid creating a false sense of historical development.

Changes in wall materials and surfaces, including installation of artificial siding, installation of through-wall vents and air conditioners, and addition or removal of projections or recesses are discouraged. Original or historic bay windows and oriels should be retained and preserved. Aluminum and vinyl siding are generally not appropriate because:

1. Their installation usually results in the covering or removal of clapboards, shingles, window and door surrounds, cornices, corner boards and quoins, brackets, belt courses, and other character-defining elements;
2. Installation of artificial siding on top of existing siding changes the relationship of elements in the vertical plane of the wall, often eliminating projections and recesses; and
3. Artificial siding alone will not halt deterioration and thus is not a substitute for proper repairs.

Aluminum and vinyl siding generally will be considered only for non-contributing buildings. Removal of existing artificial siding and restoration of the original wall surfaces is encouraged. Through-wall vents should be located inconspicuously. Through-wall air conditioners are discouraged, particularly on primary elevations.

**Fenestration:** Changes to fenestration, including the installation or elimination of window and door openings, particularly on primary elevations, are discouraged.

**Ornamentation:** Changes in ornamentation, including installation or removal of character-defining trim, brackets, cornices, corner boards, belt courses, other decorative elements and ornamentation are discouraged. New trim should be consistent with the architectural style of the building.

**Roof Form and Elements:** Changes in roof form or elements, including construction or removal of dormers, cresting rails and balustrades, monitors, cupolas, skylights, head houses and decks, are discouraged. Original historic rooflines, dormers, monitors, cupolas, skylights, cresting rails and balustrades should be retained. New rooftop elements should be located so that they will be out of view from street level. Skylights should not be located on front roof slopes, and flat profiles are preferable to rounded profiles.

**Porches, Stairs and Entryways:** Changes to porches, stairs and entryways, including enclosure with glass or screens and installation alteration or removal of railings, steps, handrails, door hoods, transoms and sidelights, are discouraged. Porch enclosures should be located inside the railings and columns, minimizing the visual impact; use clear glass or dark mesh screens. Removal of original stairs, porches and entryways is discouraged. Use pressure-treated wood in non-visible areas.

**Grading and Foundation:** Major grade changes that would alter the historic setting of the property are discouraged. Below grade parking garages recessed into hillsides may be considered. Cladding original exposed foundation materials in another material is discouraged. The permanent raising or lowering of structure is discouraged.

**Storefronts:** Changes to storefronts, including installation, alteration or removal of storefronts, are discouraged. Original storefront elements such as display windows, recessed entryways, sign bands, transoms, etc. should be maintained and preserved. Where buildings have been converted to commercial use, new storefronts should be designed in harmony with the historic façade.

**Regulatory Codes:** Changes to historic buildings may be needed to meet the requirement of other regulatory codes, including installation or removal of fire escapes, construction of wheelchair ramps, etc. (*see "Barrier Free Access" and "Fire Escapes" guidelines*). Note that state codes may allow exceptions for historic buildings. Wherever possible, seek solutions which will have the least visual impact. Approval from the relevant regulatory agency should be obtained prior to filing an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness.

# **MECHANICAL & COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT**

Equipment for heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems and communications equipment such as cable television wiring and satellite dish antennae should be installed in a sensitive manner.

## **Location**

The HVAC unit should be located inside the building whenever possible. If exterior installation is necessary, units should be sited in side and rear yards rather than the front yard, or placed on flat roofs out of view from street level. Generally, pitched roofs are not appropriate locations for mechanical equipment. Exterior ductwork is discouraged but if necessary should be located inconspicuously. Window units should be placed in side or in rear windows.

Communications equipment should be located as inconspicuously as possible, preferably in rear or side yards, or on rooftops out of view from street level. Cable wiring should go underground or along side or rear walls wherever possible.

## **Dimensions**

Equipment should be the smallest size possible without interfering with performance or signal reception.

## **Design and Color**

Equipment and ductwork should be painted with a background color to help diminish visual impact.

## **Screening**

HVAC equipment in yards should be screened with fencing or landscaping. Refer to section on Fences and Gates

## **MOVING OF HISTORIC STRUCTURES**

Moving of a historic structure affects its integrity of setting and its sense of time and place. Ordinarily, a contributing historic structure listed on the National Register of Historic Places will lose its National Register status if moved from its original site.

Moving of historic structures is discouraged except as a last alternative to demolition. The selection of an appropriate site plays a key role in the success of the relocation project. Consider how the building will relate to the proposed site and to its immediate context in terms of massing, scale, setback, materials and style.

Structures should be moved intact. It is important that the structure be moved by a professional building-moving firm with experience in moving historic structures. If the owner feels partial or complete disassembly is required, they will be required to provide detailed plans for disassembly, moving and reassembly.

The property owner will need to get all required licenses and permits from governing agencies. If the owner is using federal assistance to move a structure listed on the National Register, archeological investigations are usually required.

## **NEW CONSTRUCTION & ADDITIONS**

Since its inception, the BHPC's philosophy regarding new construction is to promote high quality design within historic districts. For the purposes of these guidelines, "new construction" refers to new buildings or structures of any kind, including garages and additions to existing structures.

New construction and additions to historic buildings often expand the mass and proportions of the structure creating a new building profile. Because such expansion has the capability to radically change the building's historic appearance, an exterior addition should be considered only after it has been determined that the new use cannot be successfully met by altering the non-character defining interior spaces. If the new use cannot be met in this way, then an attached exterior addition is usually an acceptable alternative.

New additions should be designed and constructed so that the character-defining features of the historic buildings are not radically changed, obscured, damaged, or destroyed in the process of rehabilitation. New designs should be compatible with the historic structure's original architectural style and character, but should not duplicate or imitate the exact form, material, detail, historic style or period of architecture so that the new work appears to be part of the historic building. The design should be compatible with the character-defining features of the historic building and surrounding structures, but should clearly differentiate what is historic and what is new.

It is strongly recommended that the applicant retain the services of a registered architect, design professional or engineer for the design and construction of any new structure or addition within a historic district.

### **DESIGN CRITERIA**

Historic districts in Batavia contain a wide variety of building types and architectural styles. While some streets demonstrate great similarity of building sizes, shapes, materials and setbacks, others are characterized by great diversity, demonstrating how a neighborhood has grown over time or how different activities were carried out in the same area. This variety makes it impossible to mandate a specific design for new construction. These guidelines therefore deal with general issues of building height, mass, scale, sitting, rhythm, materials, etc. They are intended to provide a framework within which design creativity and the needs of the property owner can co-exist with respect for designated historic districts.

New construction should reflect the design trends and concepts of the period in which it is created, while recognizing that a new building or addition must fit into an existing framework of a variety of older buildings. New structures should harmonize with existing older structures, and at the same time be distinct from the old so that the evolution of the district can be interrelated correctly.

When designing an addition or a new building, consider the following architectural and site features in relationship to the existing structure and/or the surrounding structures:

- Height
- Scale
- Massing, form, proportions
- Topography
- Parking
- Directional expression
- Sitting and setbacks
- Landscaping
- Roof shape
- Height of foundation platform
- Views
- Sense of entry, porches, doors, stairs
- Rhythm and size of openings
- Known archeological features
- Color and texture of materials
- Architectural detail

#### **CHANGES TO AN APPROVED PROJECT**

It is common for project details to change during the course of construction. However, a Certificate of Appropriateness for any project is tied to a specific design and details as illustrated in construction drawings. All changes must be brought to the attention of the City staff before construction proceeds on those changes. Staff will determine whether the changes can be reviewed in-house or whether the BHPC needs to review them at a public meeting.

Failure to advise the City of changes to an approved project and to obtain approval for those changes will invalidate the Certificate of Appropriateness.

# **REPAIRS, IN-KIND REPLACEMENT AND RESTORATION**

Proper, regular maintenance is encouraged for all structures in a local historic district. Deteriorated architectural features should be repaired rather than replaced wherever possible; repair is often cost effective and conserves original historic materials. Replacement of a historic architectural feature should match the existing as closely as possible in materials, dimensions, design, color, texture and other visual qualities. Replacement, in kind, of inappropriate elements shall not be permitted. Applicants are encouraged to seek more appropriate solutions. Restoration of missing historic features, or of original or historical conditions, should be substantiated by documentation (e.g. historic photographs, drawings, physical evidence).

## **DEFINITIONS**

### **Repair**

Work meant to remedy damage or deterioration of a structure or its appurtenances, which will involve no change in materials, dimensions, design, configuration, texture or visual appearance.

### **In-kind replacement**

Replacement of an architectural feature, damaged or deteriorated beyond repair, where the new feature will match the feature being replaced in design, materials, dimensions, configuration, texture and visual appearance.

### **Restoration**

Re-creating an original architectural element so that it closely resembles the appearance it had at some previous point in time, based on historical, documentary, physical or pictorial evidence.

## **COMMON REPAIR/REPLACEMENT ISSUES**

The following guidelines attempt to address the most common repair/replacement issues in a historic district. If your project is not listed here, check with Community Development staff about appropriate guidelines.

## **Exterior Wood**

The decorative patterns, spacing, beaded edges and visual texture of wood shingles and clapboards are character-defining features of historic buildings, which should be retained and preserved.

Shingles and clapboards should be repaired wherever possible, and if replacement is necessary they should be replaced to match. Wood trim elements such as corner boards, brackets, belt courses, window and door surrounds, moldings and other decorative features should likewise be repaired or replaced to match.

Wood features that are stripped of paint to bare wood should be repainted. Paint protects the surface from moisture and light.

The removal of existing artificial sidings and restoration of original siding materials and details is encouraged.

## **Masonry**

Brick, stone, stucco, mortar and concrete should be repaired with a material closely matching the existing in color, texture and dimension; patching materials should have integral color.

The application of new or non-historic surface treatments such as water-repellent coatings to masonry should be done only after repointing and only if masonry repairs have failed to arrest water penetration problems.

Masonry that has not previously been painted should not be painted unless deterioration has progressed so far that a protective surface coating is needed. In such cases, use breathable masonry paint in a color consistent with the natural masonry. Masonry that has previously been painted may be repainted.

Repointing should preserve original mortar colors and joint profiles: samples may be required. Old mortar should be removed by hand to avoid damaging the surrounding masonry. Soft brick and stone can be damaged by mortars with high concentrations of Portland cement. Repointing mixes should duplicate the original mortar in strength, composition, color and texture.

Cleaning methods can damage historic materials and remove the irreplaceable patina of age. Buildings should be cleaned only when necessary to halt deterioration or to remove heavy soils.

Use the gentlest method possible. Usually a low pressure water wash using a mild detergent and scrubbing with natural bristle brushes, will clean surface soils. All cleaning methods should be tested in an inconspicuous location on the building to make sure no damage will ensue.



Chemical cleaners should be used with care: determine the weakest possible solution which will do the job without damaging historic materials, and neutralize afterwards. Abrasive mechanical cleaners, such as sandblasting, rotary sanding disks and rotary wire strippers are not permitted because they can erode masonry surfaces and shred wood surfaces, leaving pits and scars and increasing the chance of water damage.

### **Paint Removal/Lead Paint**

Painted surfaces require periodic maintenance, but stripping all paint off of a historic structure is often unnecessary. Removing trouble spots, priming and repainting with one (not thick) layer of new paint will often suffice. Stripping paint can damage wood and masonry materials and remove evidence of early paint schemes, resulting in loss of important information about the history of the structure. Furthermore, paint removal can also contribute to lead contamination.

The least damaging method for preparing a painted surface for repainting is to wet the surface with water and then to hand-scrape and hand-sand failing paint layers down to a sound layer.

Mechanical and abrasive removal techniques, including grit blasting, high-pressure water and rotary disc and wire sanders can severely damage wood and masonry substrates and are not permitted; however, abrasive methods may be used on cast iron and other metals.

### **Porches and steps**

Original materials, configurations, designs and dimensions should be retained. Railings should be retained. Railings should have a molded cap and balusters inserted between a top and bottom rail. Nosing profiles on original stair treads should be retained.

### **Roofing and gutter systems**

Original roofing materials should be retained, repaired and preserved wherever possible. Replacement in-kind is encouraged where replacement is necessary; original historic materials, shapes, colors, patterns and textures should be matched.

Roof colors should be medium to dark in tone, should complement the building's color and define the outline of the roof against the sky.

Regular maintenance of gutter systems is encouraged. Built-in gutters should be retained wherever possible, as they are character-defining features of certain architectural styles such as Greek Revival, Italianate and Mansard.

Existing original materials such as wood or copper should be maintained and preserved, but may be replaced in kind. New copper flashing, gutters and downspouts may be

allowed to weather naturally, but aluminum gutters, down spouts, leaders and flashing should be painted to blend in with the color of the building, to reduce their visibility.

Proposed alterations to roof forms and the installation or removal of cresting rails, balustrades, finials, cupolas, monitors, chimneys, head-houses, roof decks and other rooftop elements will be reviewed.

## **Windows**

The number, location, size and glazing patterns of original windows, as well as unique features such as curved or bent glass, stained glass, leaded glass and unusual shapes, should be retained and preserved wherever possible.

Windows may often be repaired rather than replaced; even if some windows are deteriorated, it is seldom necessary to replace all windows in a building. Historic wood windows that are properly repaired, caulked and weather-stripped, and provided with well-fitted storm windows, can be as energy efficient as new thermal (double glazed) windows.

Where replacement is necessary due to deterioration, new windows should match the originals in materials, design, dimensions, configuration and number of panes. Avoid replacement windows that don't fit the original window openings.

Muntins dividing panes of glass in original windows should be retained: multi-pane replacement windows should have true divided lights (muntins penetrating the glass). Applied muntins and muntins sandwiched between panes of glass are not acceptable. Double glazing may be acceptable if the muntin widths and profiles match the original. Window glass should be clear, not tinted or frosted; low-E glass with minimal reflectivity may be acceptable. Aluminum, vinyl and vinyl-clad windows must be reviewed.

## **Doors**

The number, location and dimensions of original doors should be retained and preserved wherever possible. Repairing original doors is encouraged over replacement. The number and configurations of panels in a replacement door should be consistent with the architectural style of the building.

Replacement of wood doors with aluminum-framed glass or steel doors, and replacement of double doors with single-leaf doors, is discouraged.

# SHUTTERS

Shutters with solid panels or louvers were traditionally used to control light and ventilation, and to improve privacy. Today, their primary purpose is decorative.

## **Materials**

Wood is the traditional material. Vinyl and metal do not adequately replicate the appearance of wood and are not appropriate.

## **Dimensions and Configuration**

Each shutter should match the height and one-half the width of the window opening. Shutters are generally inappropriate on windows that are wider than they are tall, such as picture windows. Shutters for arched windows should follow the shape of the window opening.

## **Installation**

Proper shutter hardware and placement is important. Shutters can be hung from a variety of hinges. Slide-bolts, pintels and shutter dogs are examples of historic hardware designs that are readily available. Their use is encouraged. Check to see if there is evidence of hardware on window frames or on the building. Tacking shutters onto the face of the building may not be appropriate because shutters should appear to be operable.

# SIGNS

Signs are one of the most prominent visual elements on a street. Well-designed signs add interest, color and variety to building facades at streetscapes; poorly designed signs can cause visual clutter and be a major distraction from a well-designed storefront. Although signs should be clearly visible, signage in historic districts should be scaled to pedestrians, not automobiles. Signs should be designed specifically for the property on which they will be placed.

## Type

The following types of signs may be acceptable: painted or applied wall signs, projecting signs (hung perpendicular to the wall on a decorative bracket), signs on awnings or canopies and freestanding signs. Traditional shapes include the rectangle, square and oval.

## Location

A sign should be located so as not to obscure architectural details. Most commercial buildings are designed with sign bands in the storefront; these are the most appropriate locations for wall signs. Residential buildings converted to commercial use may not have a designated sign band, so appropriate placement of a wall sign becomes more of a concern. In these cases other sign types, such as projecting signs, lettering applied to windows or doors, freestanding signs and signs on awnings may be considered. The sign location should be coordinated with signs on adjacent storefronts or buildings. Placing a sign higher or lower than an adjacent sign may create confusion.

## Materials/Colors

Wood is the most traditional sign material; lettering may be carved, applied or painted. A variety of other materials may be considered, including metal, brass, granite, slate, marble, etc. Plastic is discouraged. Colors should be compatible with the building and the surrounding buildings.

## Lighting

Signs may be lighted directly with exterior fixtures. New internally lit signs (back-lit plastic) are incompatible with Batavia's historic districts and are generally not acceptable. Neon window lighting and signage, whether interior or exterior, is strongly discouraged.

## Master Sign Plans

Where a building houses multiple commercial tenants or activities requiring signage, or where signs will be installed on multiple properties by a common owner, a master sign plan governing locations, types, dimensions and materials should be developed and followed by all tenants.

# **SITE IMPROVEMENTS**

The relationship between a historic building and its site features such as green spaces, pathways, paved areas, terraces, retaining walls, boundary walls and grade levels is important in defining the overall historic character of the building and the surrounding historic district.

## **Historic Landscapes**

Historic site plans and features should be identified, retained and preserved.

## **Walkways**

Walkway materials should be compatible with the existing building and site and the setting of the historic district. Appropriate choices include unit pavers of stone, brick or concrete; poured concrete with a surface treatment (tinting, scoring, exposed aggregate or accent materials); asphalt is not appropriate. All accessibility improvements such as ramps or railings will be reviewed by the BHPC.

## **Driveways and Parking Areas**

Driveway and parking area materials should be compatible with the existing building, the site and the existing buildings in the historic district. Appropriate choices include unit pavers of stone, brick or concrete; poured concrete with a surface treatment (tinting, scoring, exposed aggregate or accent materials) and asphalt. Paving of front or side yards to accommodate parking is discouraged.

## **Retaining Walls**

Retaining wall materials may be stone, brick or concrete with a surface treatment (tinting, scoring, exposed aggregate, veneers and accent materials). Landscaping timbers may be used at inconspicuous locations, such as rear yards. If a height over four feet is proposed, consider using terraces or taller retaining walls to alleviate the visual impact.

## **Boundary Walls**

Boundary wall materials, scale and design should be compatible with those of the building. Checking for physical or documentary evidence of an original stone wall is encouraged. Brick walls should use similar brick colors and sizes, mortar, joining and coursing as found on the building; generally, brick walls should be capped in natural or cast stone. If a height over four feet is proposed, a low masonry base with a transparent or semi-transparent iron or wooden fence on top may be an appropriate solution.

# **STORM/SCREEN WINDOWS AND DOORS**

The high cost of heating fuels and the need to conserve energy have made combination storm/screen windows a common feature on historic buildings. Storm windows can protect historic primary sash from the elements and may be a reasonable alternative to replacing original windows.

Storm screen doors may need to be custom made, particularly for wide doorways. Storm doors are often an eyesore on historic buildings, and should be carefully selected so as to minimize visual impact on the original primary window or door.

## **Materials**

Wood storm and screen doors are strongly encouraged. Painted aluminum or anodized aluminum may be considered. Glass should be clear and acrylic is not acceptable.

## **Design**

Storm windows should have narrow perimeter framing, and the meeting rails between upper and lower panels should align with the meeting rails of the primary sash. Half screens (e.g. covering only the bottom or top sash) are preferable to full screens covering the entire window opening.

## **Windows/Stained Glass**

Windows stained glass, leaded glass, curved glass or unusual shapes or materials may require special custom treatments in order to preserve the window and its unique visual qualities.

## **Dimensions and Configurations**

Storm and screen windows and doors should be sized to fit the window or door opening. Rectangular storm windows are not appropriate on windows with unusual shapes; in such cases either a custom fitted exterior storm window or an interior storm panel may be required.

## **ECONOMIC HARDSHIP**

In some instances, the preservation of a structure and its features may cause an economic burden on the property owner. These guidelines will inform applicants as to the circumstances under which an owner may claim economic hardship and seek approval to alter a property in a manner inappropriate to historic preservation.

For the purposes of these guidelines, the term "economic hardship" shall refer to an owner's inability to see a reasonable economic return if required to comply with BHPC Standards and Guidelines to preserve the property. Evidence of economic hardship is generally limited to instances when the cost of preservation exceeds the value of the building, or preservation will deprive the owner of reasonable use of the property. An owner's personal financial status is *not* an issue that the BHPC may consider.

The BHPC may allow projects to be completed in phases to accommodate the long-term and short-term availability of funds for preservation. Federal and state tax credits and a variety of low-interest loans may be available to owners of historic properties for appropriate rehabilitation work. Although the BHPC itself does not provide financial assistance, the staff can provide information on these programs.

## **APPLICATION PROCEDURES**

See the Batavia Municipal Code Title 12, Chapter 7

The applicant shall be required to give a presentation at a public meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission. Public comment will be taken. The BHPC shall determine whether the application is complete and, if no further information is needed, shall consider the following factors:

- a. Whether the property does or does not contribute to the significance of the historic district.
- b. The impact of the non-conforming alterations, construction or demolition on the structure as a whole.
- c. The impact of the non-conforming alterations, construction or demolition on the historic district as a whole.
- d. The economic impact on the applicant of complying with the guidelines of the BHPC.

After considering all evidence, statements and criteria, the BHPC will vote on the application and make a recommendation to the City Council. An approval will include acceptance of the claim of economic hardship. Approvals may be made of the application as submitted, or modifications may be required as conditions of approval. A denial will include both the application and the claim of economic hardship.

## **DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS**

See the Batavia Municipal Code Title 12, Chapter 7