

HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGN GUIDELINES

PURPOSE:

Design Guidelines are criteria and standards which the Jackson – Madison County Historic Zoning Commission must consider in determining the appropriateness of proposed work within a historic district.

Appropriateness of work must be determined in order to accomplish the goals of historic zoning, as outlined in Article V, Section 18 (Historic District Regulations) of the Official Zoning Ordinance of the City of Jackson, Tennessee:

- (a) To preserve and protect the historical and/or architectural value of buildings or other structures;
- (b) To regulate exterior design, arrangement, texture, and materials proposed to be used within the historic district to ensure compatibility;
- (c) To create an aesthetic appearance which compliments the historic buildings or other structures;
- (d) To stabilize or improve property values;
- (e) To foster civic beauty;
- (f) To strengthen the local economy; and
- (g) To promote the use of historic districts for the education, pleasure, and welfare of the present and future citizens of Jackson and Madison County.

ALTERATIONS TO EXISTING BUILDINGS AND PROPERTY

Definition: A change in building material, the addition or elimination of any architectural features of a structure; a repair that reconstructs any part of an existing building; an addition that extends or increases floor area or height of any building, or construction of an appurtenance.

General Principles

These guidelines shall apply only to the exterior of buildings and to areas of lots visible from public rights-of-way. Proposals for exterior work to be done on such public facades (front and street-related elevations) shall be more carefully reviewed than that to be done on other facades.

Every reasonable effort shall be made to provide a compatible use for a property, requiring minimal alteration of the building, structure, or site and its environment, or to use a property for its originally intended purpose.

The distinguishing original qualities or character of a building, structure or site and its environment shall not be destroyed. The removal or alteration of any historic material or distinctive architectural features shall be avoided.

All buildings, structures, and sites shall be recognized as products of their own time. Alterations that have no historical basis and which seek to create an earlier appearance shall be discouraged.

Changes that may have taken place in the course of time are evidence of the history and development of a building, structure, or site and its environment. These changes may have acquired significance in their own right, and this significance shall be recognized and respected.

Distinctive stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship that characterize a building, structure, or site shall be treated with sensitivity.

Deteriorated architectural features shall be repaired rather than replaced whenever possible. In the event replacement is necessary, the new material should match the material being replaced in composition, design, color, texture, and other visual qualities. Repair or replacement of missing architectural features should be based on accurate duplications of features, substantiated by historic, physical, or pictorial evidence rather than on conjectural designs or the availability of different architectural elements from other buildings or structures.

The surface cleaning of structures shall be undertaken with the gentlest means possible. Sandblasting and other cleaning methods that damage historic building materials shall not be undertaken.

Every reasonable effort shall be made to protect and preserve archeological resources affected by, or adjacent to, any project.

Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties shall not be discouraged when such alterations and additions do not destroy significant historical, architectural, or cultural material; and when such design is compatible with the size, scale, color, material, and character of the property, neighborhood, or environment.

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

GUIDELINES FOR ALTERATIONS

Additions

Additions are areas that increase the living or working space of a structure. This does not include the addition of architectural elements.

Generally, an addition should be situated at the rear of building in such a way that it will not disturb either the front or the side public facades.

Additions shall follow the guidelines for new construction.

Roofs

Original roof pitch and configuration should be maintained.

The original size and shape of dormers should be maintained. Dormers generally should not be introduced where none existed originally.

Original roof materials and color should be retained. If replacement is necessary, original materials should be used. Asphalt shingles may be substituted for original roofing when it is not economically feasible to replace or repair with original materials or when the original roof is beyond repair. The color and texture of asphalt shingles should be appropriate to the architectural style and period of the house.

Porches

Original details and shape (outline, roof height, and roof pitch) should be retained.

Original porch materials and architectural details should be maintained. If different materials are substituted, they should be a close visual approximation of the original.

The enclosing of front porches is inappropriate.

The enclosing of side porches may be considered appropriate if the visual openness and character of the original porch is maintained.

Windows

The original size and shape of windows should be maintained.

The original number and arrangement of panes should be maintained.

The characteristic window shape appropriate for the area is vertically rectangular (higher than it is wide). Horizontal windows and picture windows are generally not appropriate.

Shiny, raw aluminum storm windows and screens are not appropriate. Blind stop storm windows painted to match sash color may be appropriate.

Shutters, unless appropriate to the style of the building, should not be introduced. Shutters should fit an opening in height and width so that if they were closed, the opening would be covered.

New window openings should not be introduced unless they match the existing window configuration and their placement harmonizes with the existing rhythm of openings.

Original windows should not be filled in.

Doors

The original size and shape of door openings should be maintained.

Original transom side lights and doors should be maintained.

Replacement doors should be compatible with original doors in terms of style and material. Flush doors are generally inappropriate.

Shiny aluminum storm doors and screen doors are not appropriate. Blind stop, full-view storm doors, painted to match the doorframe, are appropriate.

Generally, new door openings should not be introduced to facades visible from the street.

Original door openings should not be filled in.

Architectural Details

Original details should not be removed.

The replacement of irreparable details should be made with close visual approximations of the originals.

The replacement of missing original details should be based on accurate duplication, or should be close visual approximations of the originals, based on historic, physical, or pictorial documentation.

Architectural details of any period or style not original to the building should not be introduced.

Changes that have taken place in the course of time which are evidence of the history and development of a building and its environment may have acquired significance in their own right; their significance should be recognized and respected.

Materials

Original building materials include wood, brick, stone, terra cotta, and stucco. Original roof materials include slate, metal, and, on twentieth century buildings, asphalt shingles.

Original building and roofing materials should be retained. If replacement is necessary, it should be with original materials or close visual approximations of the original.

Masonry

Masonry repointing should be done with care to match the original mortar color. The use of Portland cement should be avoided when repointing old brick.

Original tooling configuration and joint width should be maintained.

Cleaning should be done with the gentlest means possible. Since sandblasting causes severe damage to brick and mortar, its use should be avoided.

The painting of brick is inappropriate unless it is mismatched or so deteriorated that it cannot withstand weather. If painting is necessary, original natural colors should be used.

Painting of stone is inappropriate.

Wood

Wood siding should be retained. Original siding should not be covered or replaced with a material or texture not original to the building.

Replacement wood siding should be consistent with the original in size, direction, and lap dimension.

Original wall shingles should be maintained.

Color

The Jackson – Madison County Historic Zoning Commission does not review or regulate specific paint colors on wood.

Appurtenances

Appurtenances related to a building (fences, walls, streetlights, steps, paving, sidewalks, and signs) should be visually compatible with the environment to which they are related.

Fences

Low retaining walls in front yards should be kept where they exist. Introduction of retaining walls where none existed should be avoided.

New or reclaimed iron fencing may be appropriate for properties with pre-1900 houses. Iron fencing is generally not appropriate for later homes.

Wood-picket fences are appropriate in front or rear yards of houses when suited to the architectural style of the main structure.

Board fences, usually taller with wider boards set close together, are appropriate only around rear yards.

Chain link or woven fences are generally inappropriate for front or visible side yards. They may be used in rear yards. If a portion of a rear fence is visible from the street, it should be camouflaged with hedge or vines.

Signs

The appearance, size, position, method of attachment, texture of materials, color, and design of signs shall be in keeping with the collective characteristics of the structures surrounding the property on which the sign will be located.

Off-site signs shall not be permitted.

Business Signs shall be limited to one (1) sign for each street frontage per premise.

Signs located within residential historic overlaid zones shall not exceed nine (9) square feet.

The maximum height of all freestanding signs in all districts shall not exceed five (5) feet in height.

Freestanding residential signs should be setback at least eighteen (18) inches from the sidewalk.

No more than sixty (60) percent of the sign face shall be occupied by lettering.

No sign that flashes, blinks, revolves, or is put in motion by atmosphere shall be permitted. No visible bulbs, neon tubing, luminous paints, or plastics will be permitted as a part of any sign.

Buildings and signs may be illuminated by remote light sources, provided that these light sources are shielded to protect adjacent properties.

Signs attached to the structure shall not cover any architectural detail.

Real estate signs shall be removed not more than ten (10) days after the closing of a sale of a house or lot.

Landscaping

All aspects of site development should be sympathetic to the character of landscape development, types of plants, and spatial treatment of adjacent properties.

Lighting

Original light fixtures should be retained.

Carriage lamps mounted on the wall or hanging from the ceiling of a house as inappropriate.

Recessed or ceiling mounted fixtures not visible from the street are appropriate.

Freestanding lampposts in yards are not appropriate.

Miscellaneous

Other freestanding objects in front yards may be required to come under consideration of the Jackson – Madison County Historic Zoning Commission, as deemed necessary by the historic zoning commission planning staff.

NEW CONSTRUCTION

Definition: The construction of any freestanding structure on any lot.

General Principles

These guidelines shall apply only to the exteriors of buildings and to areas of lots visible from public right-of-way.

The public facades (front and street-related elevations) of proposals for new buildings shall be more carefully reviewed than other facades.

New buildings should not imitate past architectural styles; they should reflect the era of their own construction, since it is usually impractical to accurately imitate architecture of the past and since it creates pseudo-old buildings.

Since construction in a historic district has usually taken place continuously from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a variety of building types and styles result which demonstrate the changes in building tastes and technology over the years. New buildings should continue this tradition while complementing and being compatible with other buildings in the area.

Reconstruction may be appropriate when it reproduces facades of a building which no longer exists and which was located in the historic district if: the building would have contributed to the historical and architectural character of the area, if it will be compatible in terms of style, height, scale, massing, and materials with the buildings immediately surrounding the lot on which the reproduction will be built, and if it is accurately based on pictorial documentation.

Because new buildings usually relate to an established pattern and rhythm of existing buildings, both on the same and opposite sides of a street, the dominance of that pattern and rhythm must be respected and not disrupted.

New construction should be consistent with existing buildings along a street in terms of height, scale, setback, and rhythm, relationship of materials, texture, details, and color, roof shape, orientation, and proportion and rhythm of openings.

Height

New buildings must be constructed to the same number of stories and to a height that is compatible with the height of adjacent buildings.

Scale

The size of a new building, its mass in relation to open spaces and its windows, doors, openings, and porches should be visually compatible with the surrounding buildings.

Setback and Rhythm of Spacing

The setback from front and side yard property lines established by adjacent properties must be maintained. When a definite rhythm along a street is established by uniform lot and building width, infill new buildings should maintain that rhythm.

Relationship of Materials, Texture, Details, and Material Color

The relationship and use of materials, texture, details, and material color of a new building's public facades shall be visually compatible with and similar to those of adjacent buildings, or shall not contrast conspicuously.

Roof Shape

The roofs of new buildings shall be visually compatible, by not contrasting greatly with the roof shape and orientation of surrounding buildings.

Orientation

The site orientation of new buildings shall be consistent with that of adjacent buildings and shall be visually compatible. Directional expression shall be compatible with surrounding buildings, whether that expression is vertical, horizontal, or non-directional.

Proportion and Rhythm of Openings

The relationship of width to height of windows and doors, and the rhythm of solids to voids in new buildings shall be visually compatible with surrounding buildings.

Additions to Existing Buildings

New additions to existing buildings should be kept to a minimum and should be compatible in scale, materials, and texture. Additions should not be visually jarring or contrasting.

Additions should not be made to the public façade of existing buildings. Additions may be located to the rear of existing buildings in ways that do not disturb the public facades.

Additions must not imitate earlier styles or periods of architecture.

The creation of an addition through enclosure of a front façade porch is inappropriate and should be avoided.

Outbuildings

Garages and storage buildings should reflect the character of the existing house and surrounding buildings and should be compatible in terms of height, scale, roof shape, materials, texture, and details.

Garages, if visible from the street, should be situated on the lot as historically traditional for the neighborhood.

The location and design of outbuildings should not be visually disruptive to the character of the surrounding buildings.

Appurtenances

Appurtenances related to new buildings, including driveways, sidewalks, lighting, fences, and walls, shall be visually compatible with the environment of the existing buildings and sites to which they relate.

DEMOLITION

Definition: The tearing down of a building.

General Principle

Since the purpose of historic zoning is to protect historic properties, the demolition of a building that contributes historically or architecturally to the character and significance of the district is inappropriate and should be avoided.

Guidelines

Demolition is inappropriate:

If a building is of such architectural or historical interest and value that its removal would be detrimental to the public interest;

If a building is of such old or unusual or uncommon design and materials that it could not be reproduced or be reproduced without great difficulty and expense; and

If its proposed replacement would make a less positive visual contribution to the district, would disrupt the character of the district, or would be visually incompatible.

Demolition is appropriate:

If a building has lost its architectural and historical integrity and importance and its removal will not result in a more negative, less appropriate visual effect on the district;

If a building does not contribute to the historical or architectural character and importance of the district and its removal will result in a more positive, appropriate visual effect on the district; or

If the denial of the demolition will result in an economic hardship on the applicant, the Commission may, after reasonable notice, set an application for public hearing and may consider any or all of the following:

- 1) Estimate the cost of the proposed redevelopment, alteration, demolition, or removal and an estimate of any additional cost that would be incurred to comply with the recommendations of the Commission for changes necessary for the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness.
- 2) A report from the Housing Code Enforcement Officer and City Building Official as to the structural soundness of the structure on the property and the suitability for rehabilitation.
- 3) Estimated market value of the property in its current condition, after completion of the proposed redevelopment, alteration, demolition, or removal, after any changes recommended by the Commission, and, in the case of a proposed demolition, after renovation of the existing property for continued use.

- 4) In the case of a proposed demolition, 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.
- 5) Amount paid for the property, the date of purchase, and the party from whom 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 terms of financing between the seller and buyer.
- 6) 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 previous two years, and depreciation deduction and annual cash flow before and after debt service, if any, during the same periods.
- 7) Any other information considered necessary by the Commission to a determination as to whether the property does yield or may yield a reasonable return to the owners.

Request for reconsideration shall be taken up at a public hearing with reasonable notice and consideration given to any or all of the factors listed above.

RELOCATION

Definition: The moving of a building in a district from one site to another.

General Principles

The moving of an existing building which retains architectural and historical integrity and which contributes to the architectural and historical character of the district should be avoided.

The moving out of the district of a building which does not contribute to the historical and architectural integrity of the district or which has lost architectural integrity due to deterioration and neglect shall be appropriate if its removal or the proposal for its replacement will result in a more positive, appropriate visual effect on the district.

Guidelines for Relocation

Relocated buildings must be carefully rebuilt to retain and maintain original architectural details and materials.

A building may be moved into the district if it maintains a sense of architectural unity in terms of style, height, scale, massing, materials, texture, and setback with existing buildings along the street.

A building may be moved from one site to another in the district if:

- ◆ The integrity of the location and setting of the building in its original location has been lost or is seriously threatened;
- ◆ The new location will be similar in setting and sitting;

- ◆ The building will be compatible with the buildings adjacent to the new location in style, height, scale, materials, and setback; and
- ◆ The relocation of the building will not result in a negative visual effect on the site and surrounding buildings from which it will be removed.