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# CHAPTER 9

## DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR INFILL CONSTRUCTION IN HISTORIC DISTRICTS

The guidelines in this section are intended to ensure that patterns of new infill development do not destroy the character of Riverside's Historic Districts. The major intent of infill in a district is to be a good neighbor. It is not merely an accumulation of borrowed features that achieves a successful relationship between old and new; the greatest chance of success comes from a combination of efforts including:

- A respect for the site
- Sensitivity to the houses in the neighborhood
- Assessment of the essential characteristics of the neighborhood
- The weaving of these considerations into a respectful design concept

The single most important issue of infill development is one of compatibility, especially when considering larger homes. When an infill project is developed adjacent to older single family residences, measures need to be taken to ensure that the height and bulk of the project does not negatively impact the area's historic structures. Building height, mass and site setbacks should be compatible.

New construction should suggest the design principles of the Historic District. Size, scale, proportion, color and materials are important factors to consider in new building design. New design should allow for modern technology and material usage, but in a manner sensitive to surrounding historic structures.

In taking all of the above factors into account, it is possible that a compatible design scheme will be thoroughly contemporary, with compatibility achieved through the creative use of shapes, materials, rhythms, and other design elements. In this regard, quality, contemporary designs and materials can be successfully used, provided they pass the above tests for compatibility.

The use of an architect or design professional is highly encouraged in the design of new infill construction for a Historic District. It is possible to approach the infill design challenge of compatibility while remaining within desired economic parameters. Good design need not mean extra expense.

### **9.1 LOCATION AND SITE DESIGN**

The spacing and location of historic structures within an historic neighborhood usually establish a rhythm that is essential to the character of the neighborhood. The vocabulary of setbacks, front yards and side yards must be maintained by new construction within historic neighborhoods so that the character of these neighborhoods is not lost.

#### **Guidelines**

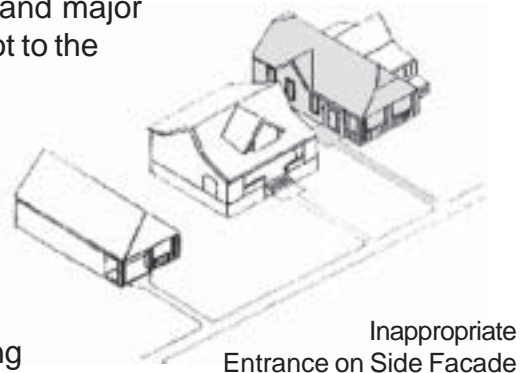
- 1) New residential structures should be placed on their lots to harmonize with existing historic setbacks and orientation of the block on which they are located.
- 2) Front and side yard areas should be largely dedicated to landscaping. Expanses of concrete and parking areas toward the front of the site are not allowed.
- 3) Paving and parking areas should be located to the rear.

### **9.2 MASSING AND ORIENTATION**

The height and massing of historic structures in an intact historic neighborhood will generally be fairly uniform along a blockface. Nearly all historic residential structures were designed to present their face to the street and not to a side or rear yard.

#### **Guidelines**

- 1) Infill structures should harmonize in style and massing with the existing surrounding historic structures. For instance, a narrow two-story structure should not be built in a block largely occupied by one-story bungalows.
- 2) Infill structures should present their front door and major architectural facade to the primary street, and not to the side or rear yard.
- 3) On corner lots, two architectural facades with a corner entry may be appropriate in some cases.
- 4) A progression of public to private spaces in the front yard is encouraged. One method of achieving this goal is through the use of a porch to define the primary entryway.



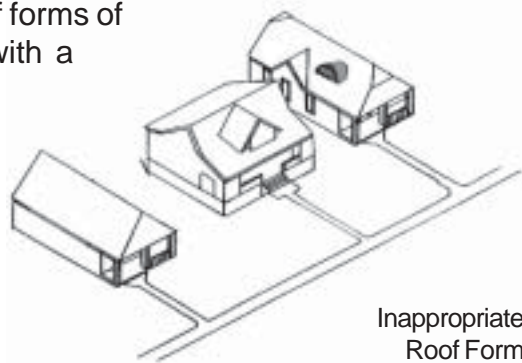
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### 9.3 ROOF FORMS

It is often true that the structures on one block of a historic neighborhood share a common architectural style. This common style frequently is articulated by a common roof form, which helps establish a common character for the block.

#### Guidelines

- 1) New residential structures should echo the roof forms of the surrounding historic structures in areas with a common architectural style.
- 2) Roof pitches at very high and low extremes were historically uncommon in most single-family residences and should be avoided for new residential construction.
- 3) Roofing materials should appear similar to those used traditionally in surrounding historic residential structures.
- 4) Generally mechanical equipment should not be located on a roof surface. If this is unavoidable, rooftop equipment should be located to the rear so as not to be visible from the street.



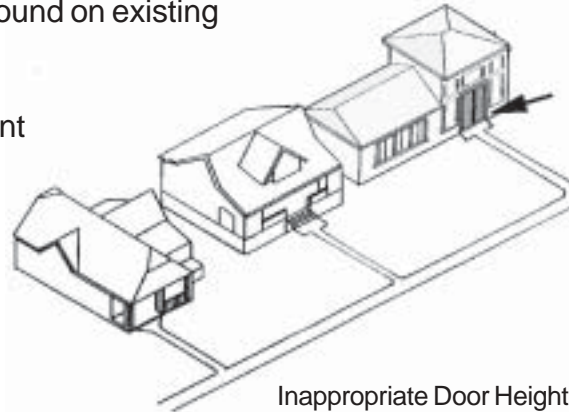
### 9.4 FENESTRATION AND DOORWAYS

The pattern of windows, doors, and other openings on the facades of a historic structure strongly define the character of the structure's design. These openings define character through their shape, size, construction, and arrangement on the facade. Repetition of these patterns in the historic structures of a district helps to define the distinctive character of the area. It is important, therefore, that new construction in these areas reflect these basic historic design patterns.

#### Guidelines

- 1) New construction should have a similar facade solid-to-void ratio to those found in surrounding historic structures. Generally, large expanses of glass are inappropriate.
- 2) Windows should be similar in shape, scale, materials, and construction to those found in surrounding historic structures.

- 3) Dormers should be similar in scale to those found on existing historic structures in the area.
- 4) Main entryways should be located on the front facade of a new structure, facing the street.



Inappropriate Door Height



Porch Marking Entryway

- 5) The placement of a porch to define the front entryway is encouraged.

- 6) Porches on new construction should be similar to those found on historic residential structures in the area, especially in size and height.

## 9.5 MATERIALS AND DETAILS

Traditionally, the materials used to form the major facade of a residential structure were intended to work in harmony with the architectural details of the building to present a unified architectural style. It is essential that new construction within a Historic District reflects the vocabulary of materials and design details which help to form the district's character.

### Guidelines

- 1) New construction should incorporate materials similar to those used traditionally in historic structures in the area.
- 2) Materials used in new construction should be in units similar in scale to those used historically. For instance, bricks or masonry units should be of the same size as those used historically.
- 3) Architectural details such as newel posts, porch columns, rafter tails, etc., should echo, but not necessarily imitate, the architectural details on surrounding historic structures.



Inappropriate Material Scale



Appropriate Simplified Architectural Detail

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4) Additions should not use the following as exterior finish materials:

- Diagonal wood siding
- “Pecky” cedar siding
- Aluminum or vinyl siding
- Plywood
- Stucco (unless compatible with the architectural style)

5) Additions should not use the following detail or accent materials:

- Imitation stone or brick
- Aluminum awnings

## 9.6 RELOCATING HISTORIC STRUCTURES

In most cases, the proposed relocation of an historic structure to a Historic District should be evaluated in much the same way as a proposed new infill construction project. There are, however, several additional considerations that should be taken into account to ensure that the historic integrity of both the structure to be moved and the district to which it will be moved are preserved.



### Guidelines

- 1) Relocation of a structure within its original neighborhood is strongly preferred.
- 2) Relocation of a structure to a lot similar in size and topography to the original is strongly preferred.
- 3) The structure to be relocated should be similar in age, style, massing, and size to existing historic structures on the blockfront on which it will be placed.
- 4) The structure to be relocated should be placed on its new lot in the same orientation and with the same setbacks to the street as its placement on its original lot.
- 5) A relocation plan should be prepared to ensure the least destructive method of relocation will be used.
- 6) Alterations to the historic structure should be evaluated in accordance with the preceding Rehabilitation Guidelines.
- 7) The appearance, including materials and height, of the new foundations for the relocated historic structure should match that original to the structure as closely as possible, taking into account applicable codes.

