

CITY OF AFTON'S OLD VILLAGE PRESERVATION DESIGN GUIDELINES

Prepared for the Afton Heritage Preservation Commission



Prepared by Thomas R. Zahn & Associates LLC
Summer 2013

CREDITS

Cover Photograph: *Late 19th Century photograph of the Cushing House, later known as the Afton House today.*

Historic photographs included in this report are from the collections of the Afton Historical Society and the Minnesota Historical Society.

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PREFACE



Village of Afton plat map as certified by the town proprietors in May of 1855.

The City of Afton is pleased to present the City of Afton's Old Village Design Guidelines. This publication provides building preservation and rehabilitation information for property owners within the Afton's Old Village.

One of Afton's greatest resources is its unique concentration of historic and architecturally interesting buildings. This manual is designed to demonstrate how using guidelines can often uncover and preserve a building's hidden historic or architectural value.

The Afton Design Review/Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) and City Staff have answered many questions from property owners about improvements or repairs to their buildings since the establishment of the Afton HPC, ranging from the proper treatment for doors, windows and signs, to dealing with new construction within the Village. The written guidelines and visual examples within this manual are meant to aid those desiring to understand, care for and/or recycle an historic property. The illustrations, comprehensive in nature, represent the ideal. However at times, due to financial constraints, a property owner may incorporate only part of the plan or undertake long-term phasing of the plan.

This guide is part of a continuing effort to encourage Old Village building improvements. It provides information on programs designed to encourage the rehabilitation and preservation of Afton's commercial and residential architecture. The City has resources available including the "Preservation Briefs," National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, to assist property owners with restoration and rehabilitation projects. Additional programs and financial assistance may be available. For more information, contact the Afton City Offices at (651) 436-5090 and visit the HPS (Heritage Preservation Services) website of the National Park Service at: www.nps.gov/history/hps

AFTON'S OLD VILLAGE STREET & STRUCTURES MAP

The Afton Design Review/Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) is responsible for monitoring change for those properties within the Old Village district (VHS)*— shown on the adjacent map. The district retains the scale and character of a mid-late nineteenth century rivertown settlement. Afton's commercial and residential area stretches primarily along St. Croix Trail for ten blocks. This collection of early commercial and residential architecture is comprised of approximately 110 brick and wood frame structures.



* The City of Afton's **Code of Ordinances** defines the Village Historic Site (VHS) as consisting of two components: **VHS-C** for commercial uses (darker tone) and **VHS-R** for residential uses (all other light tone areas).

INTRODUCTION

The first recorded settler in Afton Township, arriving in 1837, was Gaspare Bruce, a French Canadian voyageur. Two years later two New Englanders joined Bruce, one of whom, Joseph Haskell, became the first local farmer with a crop of corn and wheat. They followed in the footsteps of a handful of French soldiers who arrived in the late seventeenth century via Lake Superior, looking for trade with local Indians. Encouraged by the Homestead Act of 1862, first Germans and then Swedes began to arrive during the Civil War years. Originally this small community was called Catfish Bar for the sand bar in the river that afforded a crossing for cattle and horses between what became the Minnesota and Wisconsin Territories. Historical accounts credit a Mrs. C.S. Getchel for calling the community Afton, from the Robert Burns poem “Afton Waters”.

Industry in early rural Afton followed a path dictated by the natural environment. Early settlers from the East Coast built sawmills to process the white pine forests that surrounded the immediate area. By the 1910s the depletion of timber resources, that resulted from excessive clear cutting of the forest, drove a surge in truck farming. A co-op was organized in 1914 (the Afton Fruit and Produce Association) to handle the business of hauling strawberries, raspberries, gooseberries and currants to the market in St. Paul. By the advent of World War II this form of farming was no longer viable, brought down by the Great Depression and the drought of the 1930s.



The first school in Afton was started in 1855 in a private dwelling. St. Croix Academy, one of the first high schools in the state, was built in the village in 1868. The 1876 brick schoolhouse located at 15888 34th Street remained in a school use until 1903. The Academy and 34th Street schoolhouse have been adaptively reused as residential dwellings.

When Afton township and Afton village merged around 1971, the new city of Afton numbered almost 2000 residents, then an all-time population high. Today Afton’s idyllic setting lures a growing number of residents to the community, now numbering some 3000.

Since its first settlement in the mid-1800s Afton has evolved into a picturesque river town with a blend of residential, commercial and marina related uses. Like the casual growth of the community, the vernacular architecture reflects change and adaptation through time. Today the Old Village serves as home to some, and a highly-valued tourism destination to many in the region.

Enhanced 1868 photograph of the Afton Congregational Church. The Afton Museum is now located in the former Congregational Church building. Over the years it housed the Congregational and American Methodist congregations and later was a meeting place for fraternal organizations, such as Modern Woodmen of America and the American Legion and Auxiliary. In about 1926, after the flood, the building was moved onto a new basement on an adjacent lot south.

BUILDING PROJECT CATEGORIES

Like the Village's historic structures, each construction or rehab project is unique and full of hidden dimensions. However, most work falls into one of the following categories:

Preservation—For buildings that have experienced little change through time

Preservation is essentially retaining and properly maintaining the existing historic aspects of a building. Buildings that retain and reflect the historic character of the district serve as the backbone among new and altered structures. It is impossible to overstate the importance of maintenance. As buildings weather, deteriorate, age, and erode, maintenance is easy to postpone. Simple preventative measures such as caulking windows, repainting exposed and worn surfaces, and guarding against water leakage are time proven money savers.

Restoration—For buildings that have architectural significance, but have gone through some change

Afton has buildings that are historically and/or architecturally significant, but have been altered. Restoration is the process of returning the structure to its original appearance. Restoration, however, does not imply the creation of a precious museum piece. The structure must have an economically feasible use in order to justify restoration.

Renovation—For buildings that have been modified extensively

Many buildings benefit from some degree of renovation using modern materials and techniques that convey the character of missing original features. But it is important to preserve the integrity of an aged building. Renovation often involves the undoing of previous generations of maintenance, such as removing layers of old paint, peeling off applied wood siding, and uncovering original floors. This process involves stripping away one or more layers of “modernization.”

Recycle—For buildings that have outlived their original use

New uses can be found for single purpose older buildings. Creameries, warehouses, banks, and in the Old Village residences are all examples of single-use structures. Here, the challenge is to recycle buildings, whose original use is obsolete, by finding new uses that add to the economic vitality of the village.

Redesign—For buildings which that are sound but do not enhance the streetscape

Inevitably there will be a certain number of buildings which are basically sound, but do not enhance the historic character the city wishes to express. These buildings can be redesigned to support the historic village. There is often much latitude in the redesign of such structures. However, it is important that the new facade appear appropriate and compatible in the context of the overall streetscape.

New Construction—For filling gaps in the streetscape

An important element in a historic district is the quality of infill construction. The desired effect of new construction in a district is to complement existing structures. It is important that new construction not be allowed to dominate or overpower its more historic neighbors. Its basic design elements (size, mass, material, color) must be compatible with surrounding structures. These guidelines will suggest ways of achieving this.



PLANNING A BUILDING PROJECT

Evaluate Your Building

Look closely at your building. It's often clear to see where changes have been made. Look at similar buildings in the Village that may not have had major alterations. Look for historic photographs. Photographs may be found at the Afton Historical Society and the Washington County History Center, or the Minnesota Historical Society. Search through storage areas, basements, garages and attics for missing facade elements.

Set A Budget

Once you have a good idea what your building looked like, you will need to decide what you can afford to do about it. Don't feel that you have to do everything at once. While your plan should reflect an overall approach, you may want to complete the actual work in phases. Keep in mind that there are potential sources of assistance. Federal tax incentives, accelerated depreciation, or tax credits may also be available and should be explored as part of your budget planning. (See page 8)

Decide On An Approach

The previous section described the typical building project improvement options. Your project may fit into one of these categories or it may straddle categories. Let your budget and your building be your guides. Pay special attention to the impact of your plans on neighboring buildings and on the whole streetscape.

Apply the Design Guidelines

The Afton Design Review/Heritage Preservation Commission is responsible for preserving and enhancing the historic character of Afton's Old Village and, in that capacity, provides design review for building improvement projects that impact the historic character of community.

The design guidelines in this manual cover most of the issues likely to arise in the course of facade remodeling. They are intended to illustrate the kinds of renovation approaches and details most likely to require Heritage Preservation Commission approval. The HPC and the City will be able to give additional guidance in special situations. Remember that the goal is to promote and to preserve the historic character of the Old Village district.

The Afton Design Review/Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) is pleased to assist property owners in improving commercial and residential property in a historically appropriate manner. The following information explains the HPC's approval process for exterior alterations to properties located within the Afton Historic District (VHS).

APPROVAL PROCESS FOR EXTERIOR ALTERATIONS

Statement of Charge

The Afton City Council has charged the Afton Design Review/Heritage Preservation Commission with the review of any exterior changes to buildings within the Afton Old Village.

Scope

The HPC will take into consideration the size, scale, color, material, character and adjacent environment of your building when reviewing a request for modification.

DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS

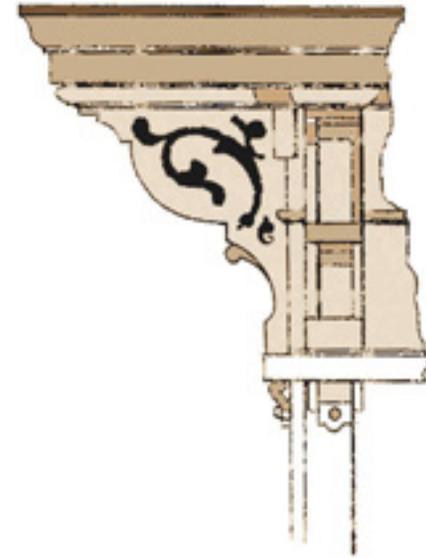
If your building is within the Afton Historic District (VHS) village, and you are planning modifications to the exterior of your property, the HPC encourages you to discuss the plans with the HPC or Afton Building Inspector prior to your application for a building permit. At this informal discussion the HPC can answer questions regarding preservation techniques, and offer advice regarding appropriate exterior modifications for your property.

The Commission encourages all applicants for building permits to contact the committee at an early stage for a concept review of the initial plans. In discussion with the commission, plans are often altered to establish period correct designs. Because of this, for the review process at the first meeting, present only an initial idea/sketch and supporting information before drawing up the final official plans.

A formal building review will take place at a regularly scheduled meeting after a building permit has been requested and the following items have been submitted for HPC review and approval:

- A. Photographic documentation (also, if available, older/historic photographs should be submitted).
- B. Narrative of work to be done and how the work relates to the historical appearance of the building.
- C. Scaled site plan and elevation drawing of side(s) to be modified, indicating materials to be used.
- D. Building material or sign samples if not otherwise clearly defined.
- E. A preliminary timeline for the project

These submissions must reach the City Administrator 15 days prior to the regularly scheduled DR/HPC meeting.



FINANCIAL INCENTIVES FOR BUILDING OWNERS

Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credits

Historic Preservation Tax Credits are available to building owners interested in substantially rehabilitating historic buildings. Commercial, industrial and rental residential structures that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places or within a National Register district qualify for a 20% investment tax credit.

Minnesota Historic Preservation Tax Credits

In 2010 the State of Minnesota enacted a 20% historic preservation tax credit program. Minnesota's state historic preservation tax credit will allow a state income tax credit equal to 20 percent of the cost of rehabilitating a qualifying historic property. The program mirrors the federal rehabilitation tax credit, a provision that has been in place since 1976. Projects are eligible to claim the state credit if they are allowed the federal credit, a program which requires properties to be listed in the National Register of Historic Places or within a National Register district.

For further information go to *Appendix IV • Historic Preservation Tax Credits* on page 59.

Older Building Tax Credits

Substantially renovated buildings that do not qualify for Historic Preservation Tax Credits, are eligible for a 10% investment tax credit for non-historic buildings put into service before 1936.

Local Incentives

In some communities, business owners may qualify for low-interest loans or other financial incentives for capital improvements to real property located within designated zones or districts. Check with your city officials to see if your community offers local incentives.

Facade Easement

A commercial building facade can be donated to a preservation organization such as the Preservation Alliance of Minnesota, and leased back to the building owners to provide tax benefits. The program is most beneficial for historic buildings requiring major investment. For more information contact the Minnesota State Historic Preservation office or the Preservation Alliance of Minnesota.

National Trust Loan Fund (NTLF)

NTLF specializes in pre-development, acquisition, mini-permanent, bridge and rehabilitation loans for residential, commercial and public use projects. Eligible borrowers include not-for-profit organizations, revitalization organizations or real estate developers working in designated Main Street communities, local, state or regional governments, and for-profit developers of older and/or historic buildings.

BASIC ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN IN AFTON

Historic Building Types in Afton

Some of the early builders in Afton tried to establish a sense of stability and permanence in the community, constructing solid buildings made first of wood and then later, brick. Most of the key buildings within the Old Village were built in the mid-late 19th Century and many of them remain relatively intact, architecturally. The major changes that have taken place were in response to changing fashions in merchandising and perhaps more significantly in an attempt to be "modern and up-to-date." The following are examples of the most common commercial and residential building types in Afton's Old Village.

The Boomtown Block

Boomtown architecture refers to the 1-2 story, woodframe commercial buildings built in the late 19th century, which lacked the detailing of a formal style. The Boomtown type usually has a false front upper-facade that conceals the true roofline, giving the building the appearance of more mass, epitomizing the minimum of style, and the maximum of utility. A good wood frame example is the Wolff's Saloon/Lerk's Bar and Herb's on St. Croix Trail South.

One-Part Commercial Block

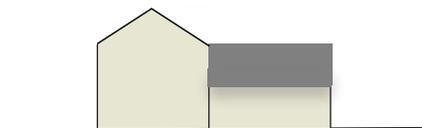
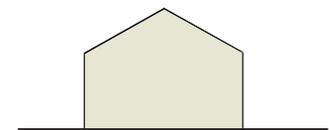
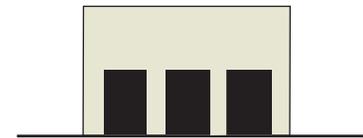
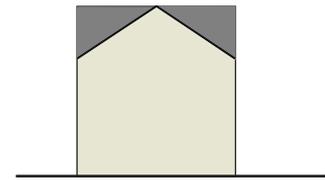
This building type was sometimes developed as speculative retail development on land of lower value. During the Victorian era and the early twentieth century, the one-part commercial block often housed a bank or other financial institution. In downtown Afton, this type is represented historically by the L.A. Bluff Bank building in the 3300 block of St. Croix Trail South.

Greek Revival Vernacular Cottage

This building type is the most common early residential structure form in the Old Village. It has a rectangular footprint and has a gabled roof. The gables can either be at the ends of the main, street facing facade, or a gable could be on the main elevation facing the street. The simple profile of the structure is styled after the outline of a Greek temple.

Vernacular Homestead Gabled-L

The Homestead/Gabled-L layout refers to the non-style conscious house design which evolved from the rural dwelling of the mid-19th century to the modern home after the turn of the century. Simple in layout, with two intersecting gabled blocks, the Homestead is defined by shape, rather than architectural detailing. A porch, tucked in the "L" generally runs the length of the secondary massing. This building type served as home to an emerging working class, and remained simple, utilitarian, and popular into the early 20th century.



Historic Building Styles in Afton



The Peterson's Market was a good example of Boomtown architecture. It was once located on the bluff side of St. Croix Trail in the Village's commercial core, the wood frame structure displayed a tall "false front" with a bracketed wood cornice.

The Congregational Parsonage located in the 3100 block of St. Croix Trail is a good example of the Gabled-L Homestead property. In this case the tucked-in porch wraps around to the front, gabled portion of the main facade. Characteristics and details for the Gabled-L dwelling include:

- *Minimal architectural detailing*
- *Defined by shape, rather than architectural detailing*
- *Tri-gabled, in the shape of an L, with the front porch tucked into the crook of the L*
- *Simple, box-like massing*
- *Wood frame construction with clapboard siding*

Buildings of a similar type provide continuity for the community. Differences in style create visual variety and help to distinguish one building from another. These differences result from what was popular at the time of construction, the use of the building, or the whim of the builder, or owner. Learning about the style of one's building can help answer many preservation questions, including those regarding original treatments, color schemes, and what should replace missing elements.

The majority of the historic buildings in Old Village were constructed during the mid-late 19th Century. While a few of Afton's buildings were constructed in sturdy brick, the majority were frame-built in wood and covered in clapboard siding. Some of Afton's 1800s commercial construction was in a distinctive architecture style characterized by elevated rectangular false fronts, often with display storefront windows on the street level that announced from a distance that they were commercial businesses. These "boomtown" false fronts generally were built on wooden structures and concealed gabled roof peaks and more mundane buildings behind. Known as "boomtown architecture," it was a typical style of many frame buildings built hastily in growing frontier towns along railroads, rivers, and land transportation routes, and was most common from about 1870-1900 in the American Midwest and West.





BUILDING MAINTENANCE AND GUIDELINES: MATERIALS

Masonry

Masonry is a popular construction material in Afton. Brick, and to a more limited and recent extent, stucco and concrete block were used as structural and exterior finish materials. Regionally quarried stone is also a material found in Afton. Its strength and rugged beauty are its chief assets. Concrete block and stucco are a rare, and the use of these materials in new construction and in work on historic buildings is not recommended.

Moisture

Masonry should be checked regularly for moisture penetration. Moisture can enter masonry through leaky roofs, gutters or down spouts, poor drainage, or a condition known as rising damp. Rising damp occurs when moisture is drawn up from the ground through brick by capillary action.

Tuckpointing

Repair masonry walls and other masonry features by repointing the mortar joints where there is evidence of deterioration, such as disintegrating mortar, cracks in mortar joints, loose bricks, or damaged plaster work. Remove deteriorated mortar by carefully hand-raking the joints to avoid damaging the masonry. New mortar joints should match the original in style, size, mortar composition, and color. It is especially important to repoint with a mortar of the same hardness as the original, usually two parts sand to one part lime - with up to 20 percent of the lime combined with cement. Harder modern mortars with a high content of Portland cement will resist the warm weather expansion of the brick, causing cracking and spalling of the brick surface. In cold weather, this same inflexibility may cause cracks to open up as the historic bricks contract.

Cleaning

Although cleaning masonry can have a dramatic impact on the appearance of a building, it should nevertheless only be done to halt deterioration, and not merely to attain a 'new' facade. Cleaning and removing paint generally requires knowledgeable contractors. The Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office keeps a list of qualified cleaning contractors who operate in the State.

Whether owners hire professionals or decide to clean the masonry themselves, masonry should always

be cleaned by the gentlest possible method. In many cases low pressure water washing (no more than 220 psi), together with scrubbing with a natural bristle brush, may be sufficient.

If paint or heavy grime must be removed, a chemical cleaner may be required. There are a wide range of chemical cleaners available, and a qualified cleaning contractor should be consulted to evaluate your building and recommend a treatment. Whatever treatment is selected, a test patch should first be tried and allowed to weather for a few weeks or months. If the results of the test are satisfactory and no damage is observed, it should be safe to proceed.

Sandblasting

Sandblasting is especially harmful to brick surfaces, eroding the hard outer layer to expose a softer, more porous surface that will weather rapidly. **Be aware that sandblasting will disqualify a project from consideration when applying for federal tax credits.**

Painting

In general, exposed masonry should not be painted. Unless the surface was painted from the beginning, as was sometimes the case with very soft brick, cleaning and tuckpointing of the masonry is usually preferable. A previously painted surface should be chemically cleaned. Only if chemical paint removal proves impracticable (due to a cementitious paint coat, for example) should previously painted brick or stone be repainted.

Some buildings in Afton may be constructed of soft brick. When reviewing the application of new paint over a soft brick exterior, the HPC, in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office, should determine if such an application will benefit or hinder the preservation of the structure under review.

References

The following publications contain more detailed information about masonry.

Preservation Brief #1—The Cleaning and Waterproof Coating of Masonry Buildings

Preservation Brief #2—Repointing Mortar Joints in Historic Brick Buildings

Preservation Brief #6—Dangers of Abrasive Cleaning to Historic Buildings

Preservation Brief #38—Removing Graffiti from Historic Masonry

Introduction to Early American Masonry: Stone, Brick, Mortar, and Plaster by Harley J. McKee, FAIA.,
National Trust/Columbia University Series on the Technology of Early American Buildings Vol I.
New York

Masonry: How to Care for Old and Historic Brick and Stone by Mark London, Preservation Press, Washington D.C.

Sandblasting is never an appropriate cleaning method for historic masonry.

All *Preservation Briefs* are from the Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Cultural Resources, Heritage Preservation Services—and are available at the City Office—or online at:
www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/briefs/presbhom.htm



Wood

The most popular building materials in the Old Village is wood, due to its structural flexibility, economy, and strength. Storefronts, cornices, brackets, and other decorative facade elements were often made of wood. These original exterior woodwork elements should be retained wherever possible. Regular maintenance will prevent deterioration.

Check periodically for soft, rotted areas, splits, dampness, and pest infestation. Damaged or decayed sections can usually be repaired by re-nailing, caulking, and filling. Epoxy pastes and epoxy consolidants can also be very effective in repairing even seriously rotted wood. **DO NOT** caulk under individual siding boards or window sills - this action seals the building too tightly and does not allow the building to 'breathe.'

Keep all surfaces primed and painted to prevent wood deterioration from moisture. If a new coat of paint is necessary, it is vitally important to clean the wood before any work is done. Remove dirt with household detergent and water to allow new paint to adhere to the wood. Hand scraping and sanding is recommended for removing damaged and deteriorated paint. Only in extreme cases should all paint down to the bare wood be removed, such as where the paint has blistered and peeled. Use electrical hot air guns on decorative wood features and electric heat plates on flat wood surfaces when additional paint removal is required. Chemical strippers may be used to aid in the cleaning process - be certain to follow directions to thoroughly neutralize the chemicals after use; otherwise, new paint will not adhere to the surface. When painting, use an oil-based primer followed by two final coats of oil-based or quality latex paint.

Severely rotted or missing pieces may be reproduced by a good carpenter or millwork shop. It is best to match or at least complement the existing details when replacing woodwork. It is a good idea to remove vegetation that grows too closely to wood.

References

The following publications contain more detailed information about wood.

Preservation Brief #10—Exterior Paint and Problems on Historic Woodwork

Respectful Rehabilitation-Answers to Your Questions About Old Buildings by the Preservation Press, Washington D.C.

Metals

Cast iron and sheet metal are sometimes used in ornamental and practical roles in the district's historic buildings. Intricate detail was reproduced in cast iron or stamped sheet metal as an architectural ornament at low cost, while practical hardware such as fences, gutters, down spouts, structural supports and roofing were done in metal as well. The decorative or utilitarian components in metal give buildings their human scale and liveliness.

These architectural elements are essential to the character and appearance of your building. They should not be removed unless absolutely necessary.

Cast iron was used for storefront columns and window lintels and is quite permanent. A sound paint coat is essential to prevent rust and corrosion. Rust or paint buildup may be removed by chemical treatment or low pressure dry grit blasting (80-100 psi). If parts are missing, they can be reproduced in fiberglass or aluminum using existing pieces to make a mold. If the missing pieces are relatively free of ornamental detail, wooden pieces might be substituted.

All metals requiring painting should first be primed with a commercial metal primer, followed by two finish coats of oil-based paint.

References

The following publications contain more detailed information about metals.

Preservation Brief #13—The Repair and Thermal Upgrading of Historic Steel Windows

Metals in America's Historic Buildings: Uses and Preservation Treatments by Margot Gayle, David W. Look, AIA, and John G. Waite, Government Printing Office, Washington D.C.

Other Materials

Some buildings in Afton have been covered with other materials to modernize their appearance or limit the necessity for maintenance. Stucco is a common example. The materials often obscure important details or cause them to be removed, such as cornices, window trim, or the storefront as a whole. They frequently can cause or intensify internal structural problems, and they reduce the visual interest of a complex wall surface.

The loss of original detail is the most obvious problem encountered with applied sidings. An impervious layer of siding can allow serious decay or insect damage to go unseen and unchecked as well. Moisture from condensation or interior water vapor can rot wooden materials or damage masonry in the wall.

Today there are many synthetic and metal siding types that are intended to mimic wood lap siding. Synthetic siding such as vinyl, aluminum, and steel siding should not be applied to buildings in the historic village. Whenever possible, such materials should be removed in the course of maintenance and improvements to properties.

Technology is constantly changing, and new building materials such as fiber cement siding may be approved for new construction within the district. The Heritage Preservation Commission, through the city, maintains a file on new building materials that are acceptable for renovations and construction in the downtown area.

References

The following publication contains more detailed information about substitute siding materials.

Preservation Brief #8—Aluminum and Vinyl Siding on Historic Buildings

BUILDING MAINTENANCE AND GUIDELINES: COMMERCIAL

General Storefront Design Considerations

Whether restoring a storefront or considering a more contemporary treatment, your plan should be based on a traditional storefront design. One characteristic of the traditional commercial facade is a well-defined frame for the storefront. This area is bounded by a pilaster or pier on either side, the sidewalk below and the storefront cornice above. It is important to contain the storefront within this frame. When the storefront is allowed to extend beyond its frame, it may no longer appear as an integral part of the overall facade design; rather, it may appear tacked on. Look at historic photographs of your building or of similar buildings to learn the original configuration of your storefront.

The following are several ideas to consider when planning your storefront renovation. Each originates in the design of the traditional storefront; however, they are not solely historical concepts. They represent sound design principles aimed at enhancing both appearance and accessibility.

Contain the storefront

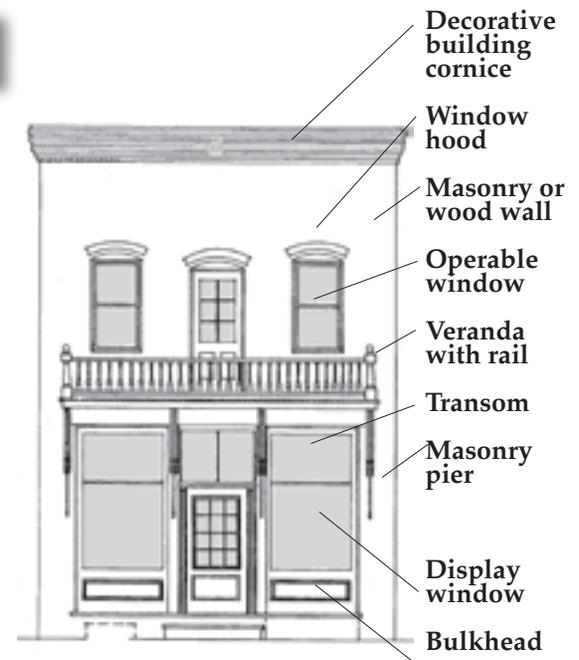
A storefront should be designed to fit within the original facade opening and not extend beyond it. The storefront might be set back slightly (perhaps 3 inches) from the plane of the facade to accentuate this sense of containment.

Transparency

Large display windows were a prominent feature of the traditional storefront. As a design element, they are integral to the overall proportioning of the facade. Functionally, the large glass area provides maximum light and display area, while visually opening the facade to the street. As a rule, the storefront should be composed primarily of glass, while the upper facade should be more solid and contained with smaller, evenly spaced windows and door openings.

Appropriate materials

The color and texture of the storefront materials should be simple and unobtrusive: (1) The storefront frame can be wood, cast iron, or aluminum with a baked enamel finish; (2) the display windows should be clear glass; (3) the entrance door should have a large glass panel and can be made of wood, painted steel, or aluminum with a baked enamel finish; (4) the base panels (bulkheads) can be of wood, polished



stone, glass, tile, or pre-finished or painted aluminum-clad plywood panels; (5) the storefront cornice can be made of wood, cast iron, or sheet metal, or appropriate prefabricated painted components, or sometimes the horizontal supporting beam can serve as the storefront cap; (6) the side piers should be of the same material as the upper facade.

Inappropriate materials

Certain materials and design elements should never be used on a traditional historic commercial building. A mansard roof with wooden shingles, rough textured wood paneling, stucco, metal siding, fake brick or stone, and gravel aggregate materials are not appropriate. Inappropriate historical themes should also be avoided. Small window panes, and colonial doors are 18th-century elements that do not belong on most 19th- or 20th-century facades.

Simplicity

Whether you are renovating an existing storefront or designing a new one, remember that the emphasis should be on transparency. The fundamental design should include large display windows with thin framing members, a recessed entrance, a cornice or a horizontal sign panel above the storefront to separate it visually from the upper facade, and low base panels to protect the windows and define the entrance.

This same basic arrangement will be equally appropriate whether constructed using traditional or modern materials.



Note the awning and broad steps on the old grocery store that was once located on St. Croix Trail.

Doors, Windows, and Awnings

Doors and windows help to define the architecture of historic downtown Afton. The upper story windows establish a rhythm in the streetscape that ties the facades together. The storefront with its large glass area opens the store to the street, inviting pedestrians to look and possibly come inside. Most doors in the district were wood frame with a large glass area to match the openness of the storefront as a whole.

Doors and windows should be carefully maintained and repaired. Always retain original doors and windows if at all possible. Replacement of elements should duplicate the original form of the material closely. The original size and spacing of window muntins dividing the sash are particularly important. The size and division of window sashes should be appropriate to each building's style. Hardware is often a troublesome repair problem. Window and door hardware which reproduces turn-of-the-century forms is now readily available. Inoperable decorative shutters are inappropriate for use in the district. On buildings that originally featured shutters, make sure the panels exactly match the size and shape of the window opening.

Storefront entry doors

Storefront entry doors should present an attractive appearance and should be visually appropriate for your storefront. Original doors should be retained if possible. If a new door is to be installed it should closely resemble the design and proportions of the original door. Wood is the preferred material, but steel or aluminum with a baked enamel finish may also be used. Colonial era style doors, ranch style doors, unpainted aluminum doors and other very decorative door designs should be avoided.

Replacement windows

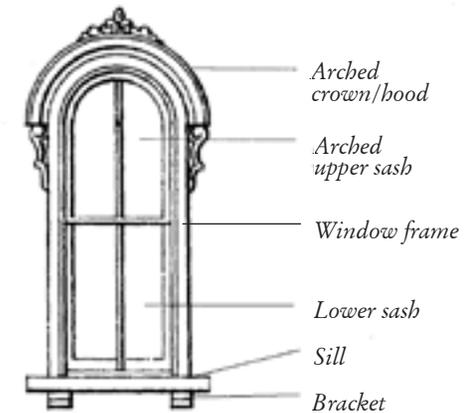
When more energy efficient double-glazed aluminum or wood windows are to be used as replacements, they should match the original wood windows in size and style. Never replace a multi-pane window with a single large pane of glass. Aluminum windows should be in a baked enamel finish rather than the color of clear unfinished aluminum.

Storm windows

Storm windows may be desirable on upper story windows for energy conservation. An exterior storm window can also serve to protect and upgrade older wooden sashes. They should conform with the size and shape of the existing sash and be painted to match as well. Interior storm windows are a good choice where original windows might be obscured by the addition of exterior storm sash.



Original storefront doors were often recessed, constructed of wood with a large window above a single or double panel that complemented the bulkhead design below the display windows



Original window

Inappropriate window treatments



Yes



No



No

Awnings

Canvas awnings were a familiar feature of 19th-century storefronts. Apart from their primary function of sun and glare protection, they also offer shelter to pedestrians and can be an attractive addition to the storefront. Additionally, the valance can serve as a sign panel for your business.

Select awnings that closely follow historical precedents in shape and design. Awning sizes and mounting height should be based on the original storefront design, and be operable, unless evidence of a building's original awning suggests otherwise. Always fit the awning within the storefront opening. Awnings should never extend continuously across several storefronts. Choose a water-repellent canvas or vinyl-coated canvas material; aluminum awnings or canopies are inappropriate. A wide variety of canvas colors are available, and you should pay special attention to choosing a color or color combination that coordinates with your building and its surroundings.



Awnings have been used since the 19th century for storefronts in Afion's commercial district.

The application of new fabric awnings is encouraged where appropriate.

To be historically appropriate, and to allow ample clearance above the sidewalk areas, awnings may need to cover or conceal decorative transoms containing patterned cut glass. The use of bubble, concave, or convex awning forms were not common to early storefront design and should be avoided. Vinyl coated fabric, fixed metal, transparent or opaque vinyl or wood awnings are inappropriate. Awnings that are backlit are not acceptable.

References

The following publications contain more detailed information about windows.

Preservation Brief #3—Conserving Energy in Historic Buildings

Preservation Brief #9—The Repair of Historic Wooden Windows

Preservation Brief #10—Exterior Paint Problems on Historic Woodwork

Preservation Brief #11—Rehabilitation of Historic Storefronts

Preservation Brief #13—The Repair and Thermal Upgrading of Historic Steel Windows

Architectural Details

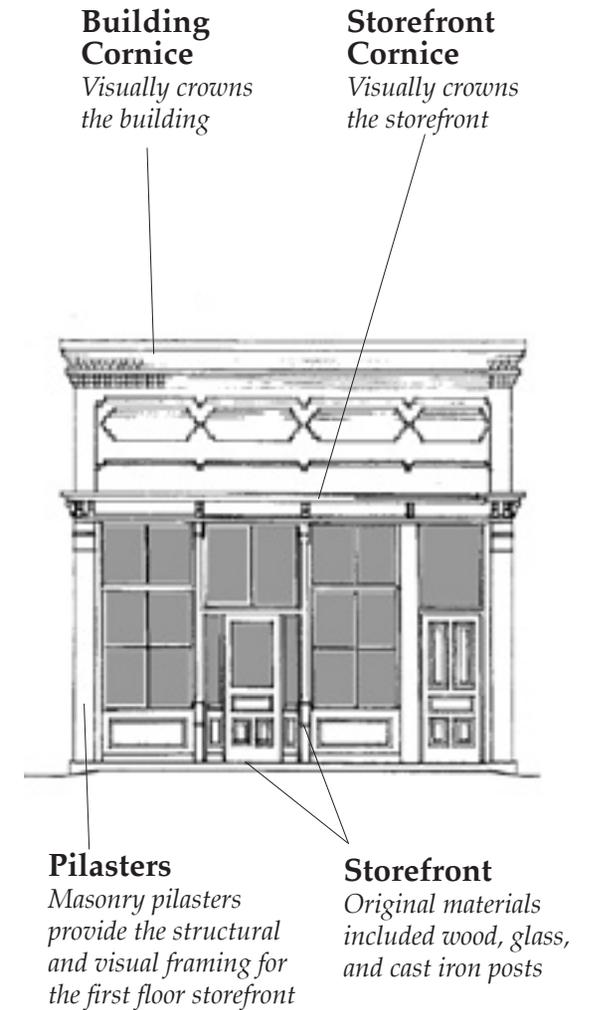
Architectural details are among the most distinctive elements which identify the different styles in downtown Afton. Brackets, bulkheads, cornices, columns, pilasters, decorative moldings, and window hoods were used extensively to embellish buildings. These features are crucial to the historic and architectural character of the building.

Architectural details should be retained on existing structures within the historic Old Village. New construction should mirror existing details, or display contemporary details that harmonize with its neighbors. It is essential that architectural detailing be carefully maintained in order to ensure its long term survival. Modern artificial siding frequently covers cornices or window trim and involves the destruction of much architectural detail. This practice is not appropriate.

Added Elements: Necessities such as electric meters and boxes, condensing units, gas meters, solar panels, air conditioners, television antennae and satellite dishes are contemporary features in downtown Afton. They can seriously impair the visual qualities of historic architecture if improperly located. All added elements should be located on the roof or to the rear of buildings in the district and screened by appropriate plantings or fencing. Solar panels and television aerials should be situated as far out of public view as possible.

Paint Colors

Painting is the traditional method used to protect wooden and some metal and masonry buildings from the attack of moisture and other destructive environmental factors. It is more often thought of as a decorative element. Paint should provide the district's buildings with both a strong protective and a decorative surface layer. Oil based paints have traditionally been used on the district's wooden trim elements, and it is generally the best policy to continue using these paints on wood, rather than latex paints, unless careful preparations are made. Colors used originally vary with the age and style of the building. White paint was often applied to early, classical, vernacular-cottage architecture. Earth tones (greens, dark reds, pale yellows and browns) were popular in the latter half of the 19th Century; lighter shades predominated in later decades. However, there is no clear rule for paint colors in a stylistically mixed group of buildings like those in the district, other than to avoid bright or unusual colors. Those who desire precise guidance can perform, or hire a consultant to undertake, paint analysis to determine paint colors at a specific time in a building's history.



The City of Afton strongly recommends that property owners keep their buildings regularly painted and follow these guidelines in selecting the type and color of paint.

It is recommended that the elements of a building be painted to utilize colors consistent with an integrated design for all material and color choices of the entire exterior. Typically, trim elements that have the same function on the exterior receive same or similar colors: for example, all window and door frames are the same color, or cornices use the same or similar colors. The window sash and doors can be painted a darker color than the walls and trim. Avoid painting masonry that is not painted. Prepare the surface to be painted by removing all loose paint and sanding all rough edges that remain. Prime the surface with a high quality oil-base primer and follow with two finish coats of oil-base or quality latex paint.

Paint Color Hierarchy



Minor Trim

- *Window sash*
- *Doors*
- *Storefront frame*
- *Small details on cornices, window hoods, bulkheads, brackets, and corbels*

Major Trim

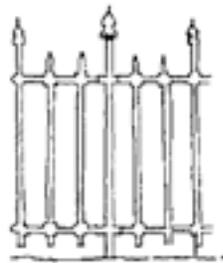
- *Building cornice*
- *Window hoods*
- *Window frame*
- *Storefront cornice*
- *Storefront columns*

References

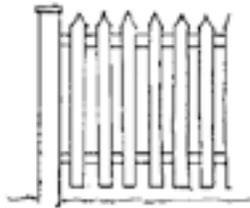
The following publications contain more detailed information about painting.

Preservation Brief #10—Exterior Paint Problems of Historic Woodwork

Paint in America: The Colors of Historic Buildings by Roger W. Moss (Editor), Preservation Press, Washington D.C.



Wrought Iron



Pointed Picket

Fencing

A variety of fencing types can be found within the Old Village. These include wood picket, wood plank, and wrought iron fencing. Such diversity corresponds to the range in character of the districts and the many different uses intended for the fences.

There is no single appropriate fence for the historic districts, but walls and fences above 3' in height are generally discouraged near the front of a property. Fences that are compatible with the style of the building and strengthen the historic flavor of the districts, especially if based on historical photographs, are preferable.

Modern fencing, such as western split rail, chain link or vinyl are inappropriate and would detract from the character of the downtown commercial district. The Afton HPC follows The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, Appendix I, in recommending the repair and retention of original fencing whenever possible. New fencing is judged on a case by case basis, in terms of design, materials and location.

SIGNAGE AND LIGHTING



Backlit plastic signs and underlit awnings with lettering are inappropriate for historic buildings.



Flat signboards, low-profile projecting signs, painted lettering on the display windows and awning valance are appropriate.

Signage is an essential element in any commercial district. Anonymity is clearly not good for business. Unfortunately, signage has often been one of the most disfiguring elements in the urban landscape. A visual clutter of oversized and ill-positioned signs presents a negative image for the entire street.

A business sign is important not only as an identifier, but equally significant as an expression of an image for the business. Don't underestimate the value of quality signage. A clear message, presented with style, will encourage passersby to venture in. Money spent on quality signage is usually money well spent.

When thinking about signage, consider the following:

Size and placement

Signage should be directed at and scaled to the pedestrian. Don't assume that the largest sign is the best. Pay particular attention to how your sign relates to your building. Look for logical signage locations on your facade.

On commercial architecture the best location for signage is at the continuous flat wall areas above storefront display windows and below the upper level windows. Where such space is limited by the location of the storefront cornice or a balcony, signage can be applied to the display windows or on low-profile projecting signboards. Don't cover windows, doors, or architectural ornaments. A good sign looks like it belongs where it was placed. It should be an extension of the overall design of your facade.

Since many of the Village's businesses are located in residential structures, their commercial signage is often provided on free-standing, sign posts in front yards. Further signage discussion and city requirements for both permanent and temporary signs are listed in *Appendix V - Business Signage* beginning on page 60.

Message and design

A good sign is simple and direct. Don't be tempted to say too much. Choose a letter style or graphic treatment that projects your image and is clear and easy to read. Coordinate sign colors with the colors of your building. Remember that visual clutter will only dilute your message.

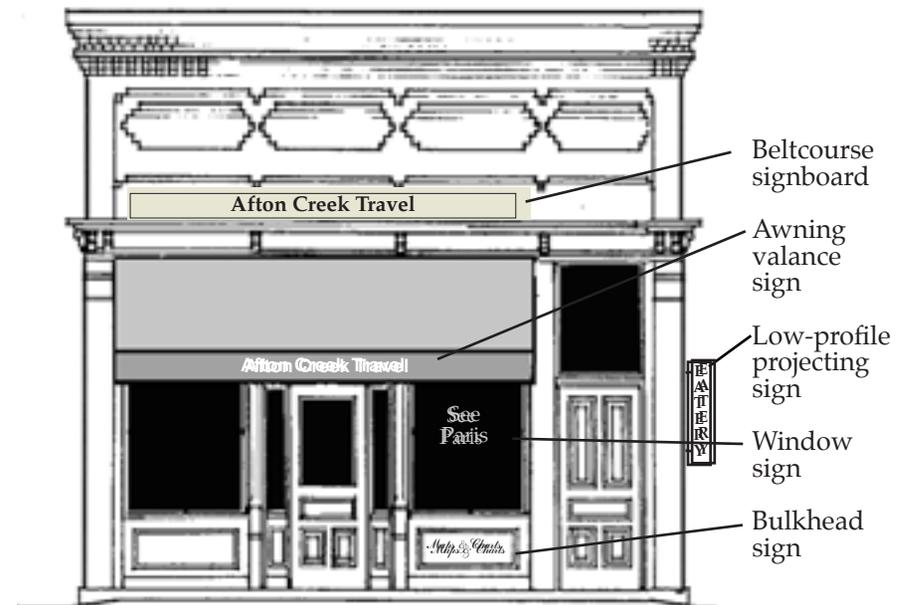
A good sign can take many forms. It may be painted on a flat panel, or it might have a sculptural quality. Individual letters might be applied to the facade. Logos or lettering can be painted, stenciled, or engraved on windows. Even the valance of an awning can be an excellent signboard. Sign design that brings additional identity to storefront businesses, by using three-dimensional signs, symbols, or representations of the business (mortar and pestle, scales of justice, barber poles, etc.) is encouraged. Small two-sided signs that project perpendicularly over the sidewalk are excellent for communication for pedestrians. Neon signage cannot be used on the building exterior. Lighting for other kinds of signage should be limited to direct illumination by soft/warm LED or compact florescent light fixtures.

Inappropriate signs

Certain sign types are generally considered inappropriate in an historic commercial district. These would include large projecting signs, rooftop signs, and internally illuminated awnings and signs.

General Sign Guidelines

- Signs should be made of traditional materials such as wood or metal panels with painted or ornamental metal lettering.
- Signage should be sized appropriately and in proportion to its building.
- Signs and graphics should have colors that are coordinated with the overall building colors and the colors of the adjacent buildings.
- Signs should have a lettering typeface generally of the era of the building, such as letters in a serif or script style for the earliest buildings, and with the possible use of more modern sans-serif style lettering for more recent buildings. However, each sign shall contain no more than two lettering styles, and the lettering shall not occupy more than 60 percent of the total sign area. Where businesses are required to utilize a corporate image or the sign lettering style and/or color is part of the business identity, the corporate image may be acceptable by utilizing other mitigating historic sign design features such as a raised sign boarder, dimensional letters, small lettering size and scale.
- Signage should be placed at traditional sign locations including the storefront beltcourse, upper facade walls, hanging or mounted inside windows, or projecting perpendicularly from the face of the building.



- Signs should not conceal any architectural features.
- Signage mounting brackets and hardware should be anchored into mortar, not masonry.
- Signs which are lit should have concealed lighting—spot or up-lit lighting for signs is recommended.
- Internally-lit or flashing signs are not appropriate for historic commercial districts.

General Lighting Guidelines

- Commercial sign lighting fixtures should be simple in design or concealed.
- Concealed light fixtures or fixtures appropriate to the building's period are encouraged.
- Spot or up-lit lighting for signs is recommended.
- Light fixtures should be low profile and have minimal projection from building face.
- Lighting should not conceal any architectural features.
- The light source should not be visible from the public right-of-way.
- Incandescent illumination is the most appropriate light source for historic commercial signage.
- "Historic" theme light fixtures such as "Colonial" coach lanterns are not appropriate to the Afton Historic District (VHS).
- Internally-lit plastic signs and awnings are not appropriate.
- Flashing lights are not appropriate for historic commercial districts.
- Light fixture mounting brackets and hardware should be anchored into mortar, not masonry.
- Neon signage is not appropriate on the building exterior.



The L.A. Bluff Bank in 1913 during construction in the Village Center. The signage was painted on the large plate glass windows. Note the public scale of the original gaslight fixture in front of the bank on St. Croix Trail.

BUILDING MAINTENANCE AND GUIDELINES: RESIDENTIAL

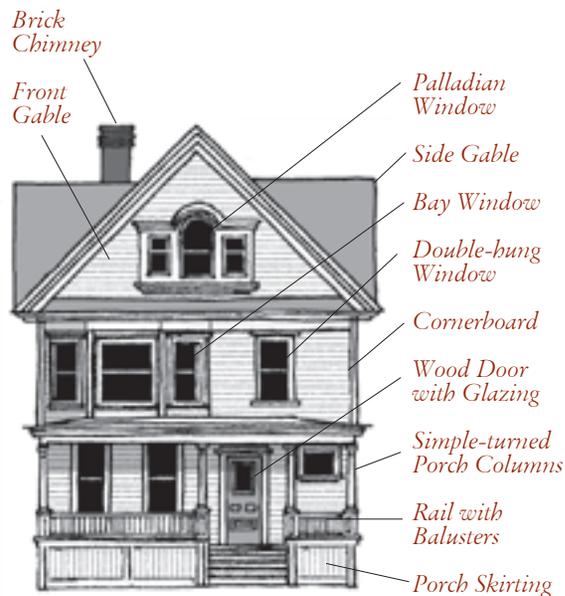
Afton has a broad and deeply textured tradition of significant vernacular housing patterns accented with some and "high-style" residential architecture. This chapter builds on that basic understanding of the evolution of residential styles and provides guidelines and design direction that homeowners, architects, contractors, local building officials, and preservation commissions can apply in the preservation and maintenance of our ever-expanding architectural heritage and resources.

Retention of Distinguishing Features

Most structures in our historic Afton possess some components that contribute architectural character. It is important to identify, retain, and preserve these character-defining elements whenever possible. Materials (such as brick, stone, wood clapboard siding, stucco, shingle siding) and design features (such as brackets, cornices, posts, and balustrades) collectively provide architectural continuity, integrity and interest, as well as provide information about the local culture and values during that period of the community's development. Misdirected renovation can result in the destruction of character-defining detail or the addition of details which are inappropriate to the building's style or period.

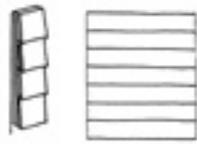
The preservation principles that should guide the care and treatment for our historic homes—and help us avoid remodeling mishaps—are simple:

- Retain and repair historic materials and features where possible. If replacement is necessary, the new feature should replicate the old in size, shape, material, and texture.
- Design compatible, reversible additions. If alterations are necessary, they should be compatible with the design of the original structure and made with the least negative impact on the historic fabric, leaving no scars if removed at a later date.

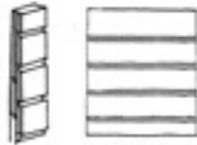


Basic Upkeep

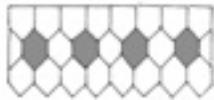
From a maintenance perspective, it is important to protect the resource from the intrusive destruction of moisture and exposure to the elements. The structure's shell should be watertight with effective flashing materials, vapor barriers and a sealed finish. Roofs, chimneys, exterior walls, windows, doors and foundations should be inspected on a regular basis to insure they provide a good seal. Providing vigilant and regular maintenance will help eliminate future costly repairs.



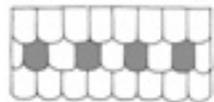
Clapboard Siding



Weatherboard Siding



Diamond Shingles



Fish-Scale Shingles

Exterior Wall Materials & Finishes

Wood Elements

In the Old Village, and throughout most of the country, wood is the most commonly used material for residential architecture. Wood is a highly durable material that, if maintained properly, will provide a long and useful life. Wood elements include clapboards, shingles, cornices, brackets, columns and balustrades. These wood features are important in defining the historic character of the building, and their retention, protection, and repair are of particular importance in rehabilitation projects.

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. Only the tops of the boards are nailed, and the bottom of each board covers the top of the course below it. This method of nailing helps the siding to shed water. The exposed width of each clapboard (the "reveal") is an important characteristic of each individual building.

Wood Siding Guidelines

- Wood siding should be maintained with paint or stain.
- Original wood siding should not be resurfaced with shingles, brick, stucco, artificial stone, brick veneer, vinyl or aluminum siding.
- Wood siding that has deteriorated beyond repair should be replaced only with new material resembling the original in width, thickness, profile, and texture.
- In any repair or replacement of wood siding, the distinctive wood features should be retained, or if necessary replaced with matching wood elements.

Wood Wall Shingle Guidelines

- Original wood wall shingles should be repaired rather than replaced.
- If replacement is necessary due to deterioration, the new shingles should match the original in size, placement, texture and design.

Wood Maintenance Suggestions

- Wood should be periodically checked for soft or rotted elements, splits, and insect infestation.
- Cracked wood can often be repaired with waterproof glue or plastic wood. Large cracks may be filled with caulk followed by putty or plastic wood. The surface should then be sanded, allowed to dry, and painted.
- All exposed wood should be kept painted or treated with preservatives.
- In exterior siding replacement, use pressure-treated wood to prevent deterioration.
- Use paints (oil or latex) consistent with the existing paint surface for exterior siding.
- Trees, shrubs, and other plants should be kept well away from the wood above the foundation to prevent damage from moisture and root movement.

- Keep exterior brick clean of mildew, efflorescence, and dirt. Also keep exterior brick clean of vines, ivy, and other plant materials. Washing with detergents and water are best for exterior masonry and mortar. Sandblasting, water-blasting and other abrasive cleaning methods are detrimental to historic buildings and should not be used.
- It is always wise to hire a skilled mason for any major masonry repair projects.

More information on moisture problems, tuckpointing, cleaning, and painting of masonry walls are discussed in the **BUILDING MAINTENANCE AND GUIDELINES: MATERIALS** on pages 11.

Foundation Guidelines

Many Minnesota dwellings have finely crafted foundations of native stone. While limestone is the most prominent foundation material, some Afton houses are supported with other masonry foundations.

- All original foundations should be preserved and maintained in their original design and with original materials and detailing.
- Repointing and repair of masonry foundations should follow masonry guidelines listed above and discussed on pages 11-12.

Foundation Maintenance Suggestions

- Peripheral grading should direct all surface water away from the building to prevent water from collecting around the foundation walls.
- Trees, shrubs, and other plants should be kept well away from the foundation to prevent damage from moisture and root movement.

References

The following publications contain more detailed information about wood and siding.

Preservation Brief #8–Aluminum and Vinyl Siding on Historic Buildings

Preservation Brief #10–Exterior Paint and Problems on Historic Woodwork

Preservation Brief #37–Appropriate Methods for Reducing Lead–Paint Hazards in Historic Housing

Respectful Rehabilitation–Answers to Your Questions About Old Buildings by the Preservation Press, Washington D.C.

The following publications contain more detailed information about masonry.

Preservation Brief #1–The Cleaning and Waterproof Coating of Masonry Buildings

Preservation Brief #2–Repointing Mortar Joints in Historic Brick Buildings

Preservation Brief #6–Dangers of Abrasive Cleaning to Historic Buildings

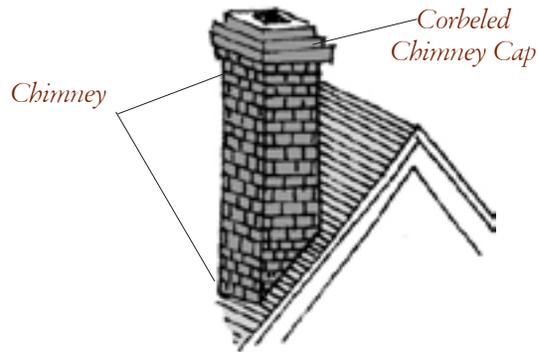
Preservation Brief #38–Removing Graffiti from Historic Masonry

Introduction to Early American Masonry: Stone, Brick, Mortar, and Plaster by Harley J. McKee, FAIA.,

National Trust/Columbia University Series on the Technology of Early American Buildings Vol I. NY

Masonry: How to Care for Old and Historic Brick and Stone by Mark London, Preservation Press, Washington D.C.

Roofs and Chimneys



The character of a building's roof is a major feature for most historic structures. Similar roof forms along a street help create a sense of visual continuity for the neighborhood. Roof pitch, materials, size, orientation, eave depth and configuration, and roof decoration are all distinct features that contribute to the character of a roof. Many of Minnesota's historic residential structures originally had wood shingle or tile roofs.

Roof and Roof Addition Guidelines

- Original roofs should be preserved in their original size, shape, pitch, and eave depth with original features (such as cresting, chimneys, finials, cupolas, etc.), and, if possible, with original roof material.
- The materials used in a partial roof repair should match the original units in composition, size, shape and texture.
- Replacement roof materials should convey a scale, texture, and color similar to those used originally. Very light-colored asphalt shingles are generally inappropriate.
- Rolled roofing should only be used on flat or slightly sloped roofs which are not visible from the street.
- New dormers or skylights should only be added to rear or side rooflines that are not visible from the street.
- Skylights which are flush with the roofline or lay flat are more appropriate than those with convex or "bubble" designs.
- If repair is no longer practical, replacement with asphalt or fiberglass roof materials is appropriate.

Chimneys

Chimneys often feature decorative brickwork or designs that contribute to a building's architectural character.

- Chimneys should be preserved and maintained in accordance with the brick and mortar guidelines.
- Chimneys should be repointed and cleaned according to masonry guidelines to match original materials, colors, shape, and brick pattern.
- If chimneys have been extensively repointed resulting in mismatched colors and textures, painting the chimney to match the original color may be appropriate.
- If rebuilding is necessary, original brick details such as decorative panels and coffers should be replicated.

- In the absence of evidence of the original appearance of the chimney, repair or rebuilding should be compatible with the building style or type.
- New chimneys and stovepipes should not be added to the front roof plane.

Roof and Chimney Maintenance Suggestions

- Check the roof regularly for leaks, deterioration of flashing, and worn roof surfaces such as rolled or asphalt shingles.
- Inspecting upper floors and attic spaces during or following a rainstorm may also guard against water-related problems.
- Know what metals are used in your cornice or roof's flashing and use only similar metals during replacement or repair. Different metals should not touch each other or a galvanic reaction may occur leading to corrosion.
- Metal roofs and cornices should be kept painted to prevent rust and deterioration. Appropriate paints include those with an iron-oxide oil base. Asphalt-based paints and aluminum paints should not be used on historic metals as they could accelerate the rusting process.
- Gutters and downspouts should be inspected annually, and cleaned if necessary, to prevent water backup.
- Invasive tree branches should be trimmed away from the roof and eaves to prevent shingle and roof damage.
- Chimneys should be regularly checked for cracking, leaning, spalling, and infestation by birds and insects. The use of low-profile chimney caps over chimneys or flue openings is recommended to keep out moisture.

References

The following publications contain more detailed information about roofs and chimneys.

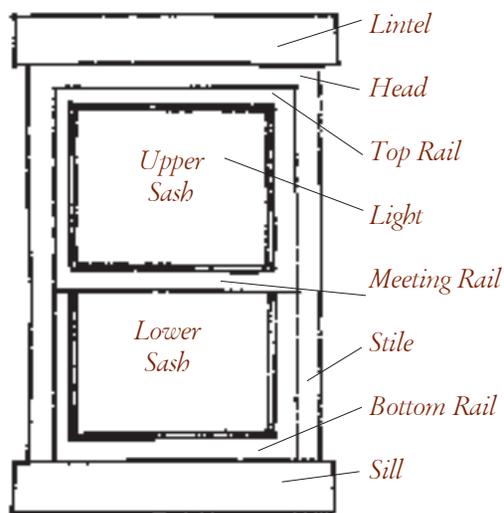
Preservation Brief #4—Roofing for Historic Buildings

Preservation Brief #19—The Repair and Replacement of Historic Wooden Shingle Roofs

Preservation Brief #29—The Repair, Replacement, and Maintenance of Historic Slate Roofs

Residential Windows

The pattern of windows, doors, and other openings on the facade of a historic structure strongly defines its character through their shape, size, construction, arrangement, and profile. Changing these can have a negative impact on the historic integrity of structure. Windows in historic houses were generally wood sash. Many of the historic windows of residential structures have double-hung sash and a vertical orientation. Windows are important design elements and establish the visual rhythm, balance, and



Sash Window

Storm Window Suggestions

Storm windows may be desirable for energy conservation. An exterior storm window can also serve to protect older wooden sashes. They should conform with the size and shape of the existing sash and be painted to match as well.

general character of the facade. Any alteration, including removal of moldings or changes in window size or type, can have a significant and often detrimental effect on the appearance of the building as well as on the surrounding streetscape.

One unusual type of window that is prevalent in the Old Village is the short, horizon knee-wall windows in the upper-story side walls. While later alterations to these windows included heightening the glazing with gable additions, these knee-wall windows should be preserved as character defining feature somewhat unique to the Old Village.

Maintaining historic windows and doors often makes good economic sense, as they were typically better constructed than modern windows and have a much longer life span. If you are thinking about replacing your historic windows or doors, please consult a preservation-sensitive contractor or repairperson for suggestions on simple, inexpensive repairs which might extend their useful life.

Window Guidelines

- Windows should be preserved and maintained (including lintels, sills, surrounds, pediments, and hoods) in their original location, size, and design, with original materials and numbers of panes.
- If windows are deteriorated beyond repair, the installation of new wood windows should match the original window in design, size, and proportion.
- Vinyl-clad windows or windows of anodized aluminum may be more appropriate at the rear or sides of dwellings that are less visible from the street.
- If only one or two windows on the main elevation of the house are deteriorated, and need to be replaced, consider moving good-condition windows of like size and design from secondary elevations to the more prominent facade.
- Original window openings should not be covered, concealed, or down-sized to accommodate the addition of smaller, stock replacement windows.
- Original wood storm windows and screens should be preserved and maintained.
- New windows should not be added to primary facades or to secondary facades where visible from the street.
- The addition of window screens to historic windows is appropriate if the screens are full-view design or have a central meeting rail to match the historic window.
- Wood-framed screens are an important component of wood-framed windows and should be used instead of the commonly available aluminum.
- Crank-out units should not be used to replace original double-hung sash units, particularly where visible from the public way.
- Shutters should not be affixed to buildings not originally designed for them.
- If there is documentation, and often remaining hardware, operable wood shutters may be mounted to the window casing.

Replacement Windows

Recently, replacement aluminum and vinyl-framed windows have become widely available. Replacement of historic wood or steel-framed windows with these modern windows can greatly harm the integrity of a historic structure and is strongly discouraged. While gridded designs are available in these aluminum and vinyl replacement windows to make them appear to be more "historic," the gridding is usually sandwiched between panes of glass and not laid out in a historic pattern.

Storm Window

If combination metal storms are installed, they should have a baked-enamel finish. Storm windows should not have vertical or horizontal divisions which conflict with the divisions of the original sash. The installation of storm windows can help in lowering energy costs and are appropriate for older dwellings. Storm windows should be full-view design or have the central meeting rail at the same location as the historic window behind it. Windows of dark anodized aluminum or baked enamel are preferred to those of "raw" mill finish or shiny aluminum.

References

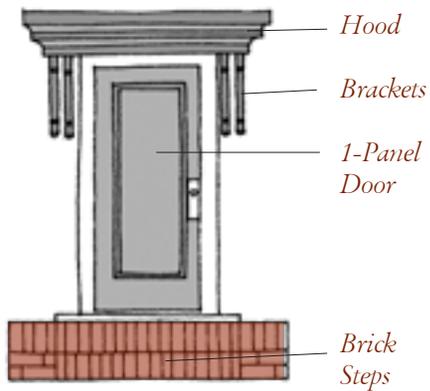
The following publications contain more detailed information about windows.

Preservation Brief #3—Conserving Energy in Historic Buildings

Preservation Brief #9—The Repair of Historic Wooden Windows

Preservation Brief #10—Exterior Paint Problems on Historic Woodwork

Preservation Brief #33—The Preservation and Repair of Historic Stained and Leaded Glass



Entry Doors

As with 19th-century storefront entries, residential front entries are often important focal points in the composition of the main facade. Framed by other character-defining features such as elaborate surrounds, sidelights, fan lights, and transom windows, these entrance sets help define the stylistic treatment of the main house. An Italianate design may have a small entry porch leading to a set of double doors. A Colonial Revival entrance may be crowned with a broken pediment or a full pediment with fanlight. A Prairie or Bungalow-style entry may include a simple, projecting hood supported on brackets.

Entry Door Guidelines

- Original entryways, with all their architectural features (including hardware), should be preserved and maintained in their original opening and configuration.
- New doors should not be introduced into principal elevations.
- If any component of the entry set is beyond repair, historic trim details should be replicated.
- In replacing missing original doors, replacement doors should be similar in design to the original in style, materials, glazing (glass area), and lights (pane configuration).
- If the original design is unknown, a secondary entrance may contain a similar original door which can be moved to the main entrance.
- Steel-covered hollow-core doors should not be installed on primary elevations unless compatible with the mid-century or later design of the house.
- Mill-finish aluminum storm doors should not conceal an original wood or wood and glass-panel set.
- Sliding glass doors should not be introduced to the primary facades of historic buildings, unless the original design included this type of modern unit.



Note the Colonial revival door surround at 15990 32nd Street. Also here are examples of the knee-wall window that is unique in Afton's early architecture.

Replacement Doors

Doors of “decorator” designs available from wholesale hardware stores usually are usually an awkward fit in historic front entrances. These doors are not similar enough to the original door designs of most historic dwellings. Doors with fake leaded glass inset designs cheapen the appearance of a well-crafted historic home.

Storm and Screen Doors

Screen or storm doors should be simple in design with ample open area for maximum door visibility. Screen or storm doors should not mimic incompatible architectural styles.

Brief History of Porches

The front porch has played an important cultural, architectural, and social role in the United States. It provides shelter from the elements, but it also serves as an outdoor living space. The word “porch” is derived from the Latin word porticus, which was a roofed area surrounded by columns. It is now defined as a covered platform that is placed at the entrance to a building.

Porches were common to several different house styles, and also to vernacular houses. For example, the Gabled-L, a vernacular building type, has a porch tucked into the crook of the L footprint. In the late 1800s, porches with decorative details like trim and brackets were common on Queen Anne style architecture. In the early 20th century, the Craftsman style was characterized by the features of the Craftsman porch which included heavy columns or piers, exposed rafter ends and gable porch roofs. This was the last style to incorporate a porch into its design configurations.

The incorporation of porches into new construction declined in the 20th century. Still, many structures built before 1940 have porches that contribute to the character of their houses and are important design elements. Their maintenance and preservation is important to the integrity of the properties.



This recent addition to the photography archives of the Minnesota Historical Society shows a young woman standing on a Queen Anne style front porch ca. 1890.

Porches and Steps

Most 19th- and early-20th-century houses had unenclosed front porches. Historically, residential porches in their various forms served many functions. They defined a semi-public area to help smooth the transition between the public street and the private space of the home. They provided a sheltered outdoor living space in the days before internal climate-control systems were available. They also provided an architectural focus to help define entryways and broaden the architectural detailing of the main structure. Porches are one of the most important defining characteristics of pre-1955 residences..

The porch usually stretched across the full width of the front facade, but in some cases only covered the entry. (See entry discussion above.) Since porches and steps are exposed to the weather and receive hard use, some buildings have had a succession of replacements which reflect the changing architectural aesthetic and economics. In some cases turn-of-the-century dwellings had their original porches removed and replaced with porches of a later style. These changes reflect the historical and architectural evolution of the property and may be significant features in their own right.

Porches, like other elements, are vulnerable to weather damage. Moisture is the worst enemy of most porches. Moisture damage, which can be caused by precipitation, poor drainage, and condensation, can cause great damage. It causes rot, deterioration, and decay, and moisture may eventually cause collapse. The accurate reconstruction of a lost porch will require physical clues, historical research, and/or photographic documentation research to complete the job.

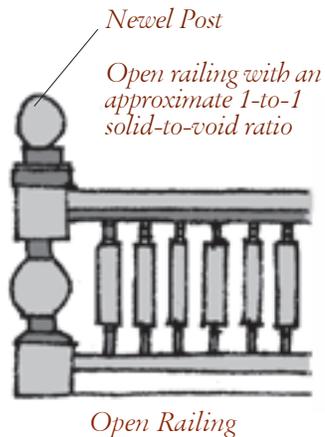
When repairing a porch, it is best to start from the top of a structure and work down, so you probably want to start at the porch roof. The roof provides protection for the other parts of the porch, so it is important to check it thoroughly for damages. Repair the roof first and then the foundation. Then attack the problems in between the roof and foundation.

Porch Guidelines

- Original porches, including their character-defining features (such as roof form, eave depth, brackets, turned posts and spindles, railings, wood decking, and beadboard ceilings) should be maintained and preserved.
- Porches that were originally open should not be enclosed.
- In the repair or the replacement of porch features it is important to identify key design elements and that the work be compatible in materials, design, and detailing to the original features.
- In a missing porch railing, the original spacing (ratio of solid to void) and profile of balusters should be maintained.
- Replaced wood steps should always have full-wood risers and appropriate skirting on the sides.
- Additional porch elements, such as “gingerbread,” should not be added if they did not exist on the original structure.
- Porches did not always include balustrades, and they should not be added unless there is



The Tracy House at 3632 St. Croix Trail, as it appeared circa 1860, was a fine example of the decorative wrap-around front porch.



Open railing with an approximate 1-to-1 solid-to-void ratio

Railing Suggestions

Most open balustrades on porches of historic homes serve as a screen between the public yard and the semi-private porch space of the property. Consequently, exterior balusters are generally much thicker and bulkier than interior balusters, and range from 1-to-1 to 1-to-3 solid-to-void spacing. Using interior staircase balusters on exterior replacement railings should be avoided.

- evidence that a balustrade existed on a porch historically.
- Aluminum, wrought iron, or other modern material railings or posts should not be used to replace lost wood railings and posts.

Screen Porch Enclosures

Screened or glass-enclosed porches should generally be added only to the back of the main structure so they do not alter the appearance of the main facades. However, historically front porches were often seasonally screened and therefore well-design screens are not discouraged. Framing for the screen should be set back behind the plane established by the rail and baluster and it should follow the existing structure of the porch. The framing should not obstruct the open sections of the porch or should do so minimally. The framing should always be located behind the balustrade and it should not cause irreversible damage to the original fabric of the porch. The frame paint color should match the color of the original storm and screen window frames.

Decks

Outdoor wood decks are popular additions and can usually work well with older buildings. As in the case of adding rooms, wood decks should be built only at the rear of buildings. Decks on the sides of buildings may be appropriate if they are not visible from the street. Deck features should be simple rather than ornate in design and be compatible with the architectural features of the main house..

Lighting

Many dwellings retain original exterior light fixtures at the porch ceiling or adjacent to the maintenance. Often these distinctive features add to the building's character and should be maintained and preserved. If the original light fixtures are missing, light fixtures with simple designs and detailing are preferred to large, ornate, "colonial"-style fixtures. Many companies now provide light fixtures based upon historic designs, and the addition of these types of period fixtures is appropriate and encouraged.

Lighting Guidelines

- Original light fixtures should be maintained and preserved.
- New light fixtures introduced to the main facades should be simple in design if new, based on traditional designs of the primary structure.
- Security lights, such as flood lights, should be mounted on rear or sides of buildings.
- Walkway lighting should be provided by low footlights rather than "historic" post-mounted fixtures.
- Carriage lamps or any fixtures of a period earlier than the original residence should be avoided.

References

The following publication contains more detailed information about porches and steps.

Preservation Brief #15—Preservation of Historic Concrete: Problems and General Approaches



The Squire House at 3390 St. Croix Trail was built in 1970 and displays finished brackets in its primary gables.

Exterior Trim and Architectural Features.

Architectural detailing is a major component in defining a building's character and style. The rich texture of wood siding, shingles, and machine-made decorative trim add visual interest and often playfulness to the facades of both "high-style" and vernacular 19th- and 20th-century residences. Wood features, if well-maintained, can add durability and longevity to the architecture of our neighborhoods.

Decorative bargeboards, wall shingles, brackets, uniquely shaped windows, rood-ridge cresting, and/or other architectural feature sets are not uncommon to turn-of-the-century Queen Anne, and Shingle style homes. In many cases, Victorian home that have been later sheathed with patterned tar paper, synthetic siding, asbestos or asphalt shingles, may have encapsulated original wood lap siding and decorative ornamentation may be relatively well-preserved.

Exterior Trim Guidelines

- Original architectural detailing (including "Gingerbread" millwork, bargeboard, eaves, brackets, dentils, cornices, moldings, shingles, columns, pilasters, balusters, window and door moldings, or any decorative or character-defining features) should be maintained and preserved.
- If the details need to be replaced, the new materials should match the original as closely as possible.
- In the replacement of exterior trim and architectural features, the materials used should match the original based upon physical, pictorial, or historical evidence (not guesswork) in materials, scale, location, proportions, form, and detailing.
- Trim work should not be added unless original and authentic to the building.

Exterior Trim Maintenance Suggestions

- Photograph documentation should be made of any decorative trim, scheduled for removal, repair and reattachment.
- If there are repeating features (such as modillions, brackets, and dentil sets) that are missing or need to be replaced, intact pieces should be templated for accurate duplication in a mill shop.
- In the replacement of missing features, house "pattern book" sources may be able to provide direction for acceptable new trim features.



An appropriate addition should complement the historic architecture with compatible siding, window size and rhythm, and roof treatment. Garage doors may be added to the back facade of a side addition.



Avoid the use of incompatible and multiple siding treatments and roof profiles. Also, avoid using windows that are not compatible with the original windows in size, pattern and type. Garage doors should not appear on the front facades of historic homes—unless it is a replacement door on a mid-century design that originally incorporated a front garage entry.

Additions to Historic Buildings

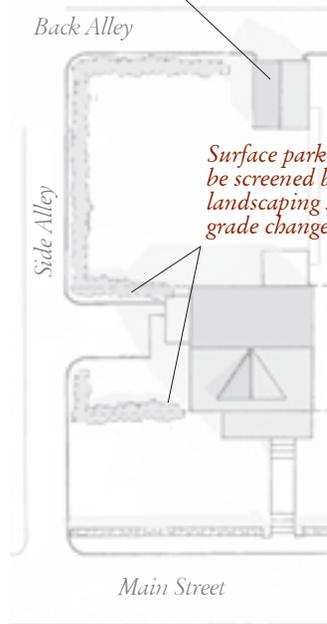
Our homes should be able to adapt to the needs of each generation of occupants and this may include adding additional living space. However, with historic properties, any change in the footprint or profile of the structure should be designed to have minimal impact on the major "public" elevations. Nothing can alter the appearance of a historic structure more quickly than an ill-conceived addition. Additions can not only radically change the appearance of a structure, but can also result in the destruction of much significant historic material in the original structure. Careful planning of additions will allow for the adaptation of historic structures to the demands of the current owner, while preserving historic character and materials.

In planning additions the best approach is to place additions where they are not visible from the street, or where they will have the least negative effect on the building's overall form and plan. The rear of buildings are the best locations for the addition of rooms, wings, porches, or decks.

Addition Guidelines

- Additions should be located at the rear of the historic structure.
- They should be of a compatible design in keeping with the original building's design, roof shape, use of materials, color, and location of windows, and cornice heights, etc.
- Character-defining architectural features, as well as significant landscape features and views should not be removed, damaged or hidden by new additions.
- While being compatible, additions should remain simple and not imitate an earlier historic style or architectural period. For example, a Queen Anne style rear porch addition would not be appropriate for a 1920s Craftsman/Bungalow house.
- If an addition to the original structure is visible from the public right-of-way, it should appear distinguishable from the historic building, not an exact copy of it. The addition should be set back from the front-facade plane, be smaller in mass, and be constructed of materials and features compatible with the historic fabric of the house.
- If an addition necessitates the removal of architectural materials, such as siding, windows, doors, decorative elements, and the like, these should be carefully removed and reused in the addition where possible.
- Secondary entryways are generally discouraged on front-facing additions.

New garages should be detached and located at the rear of the site whenever possible.



Surface parking should be screened by traditional landscaping such as hedges, grade changes, or low fences.

Garages and Outbuildings

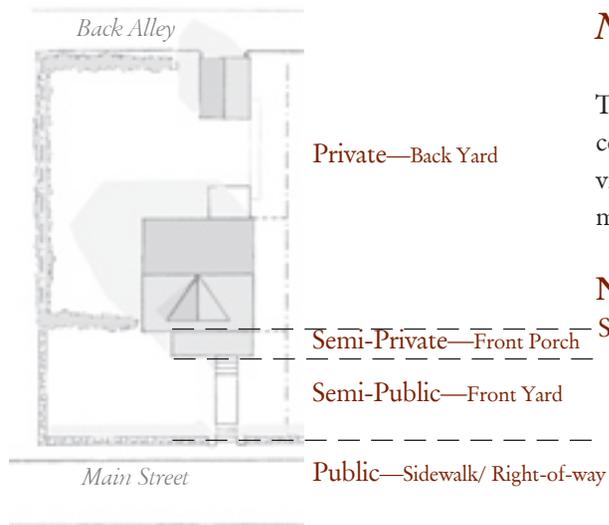
Historically, original garages, sheds, and other outbuildings were utilitarian in design and, although they may have echoed the architecture of the main structure, were almost always much simpler in design and detail. Traditionally located on alleys or to the side and set back from the main house, these buildings often contribute to the character of the historic neighborhoods and should be preserved and retained as long as possible. However, the guidelines recognize that outbuildings may have outlived their usefulness in terms of size and condition. This is especially true of historic garages, which often accommodate only one small car.

Original Garage and Outbuilding Guidelines

- Garages that contribute to a property's historic character or are original to a property should be preserved and maintained.
- Original features should be maintained and repaired to match the original.
- Garages and outbuildings original to a property should not be moved or relocated to another part of the lot.
- Original garage doors should be maintained if possible, but may be retrofitted with modern hardware and custom garage door openers.
- Any new additions or changes to a historic garage or outbuilding should preserve the character of the original by maintaining the overall shape, materials, fenestration, colors, and craftsmanship.

New Garage and Outbuilding Construction Guidelines

- New garages should be smaller in scale and reflect the general character of the primary building in design, shape, materials, and roof shape. For example, use gable-roof forms if the main dwelling has a gable roof; use hipped-roof forms if the main dwelling has a hipped roof.
- New garages should be detached and located at the rear of the site whenever possible.
- The siding of garages and outbuildings should be compatible with those used on the main house. If located towards the rear of the lot, secondary buildings may have exterior-siding materials that differ from the main house.
- For highly-visible, front-facing garage doors wood-paneled doors are generally more appropriate than paneled doors of vinyl, aluminum, or steel. Wood-paneled, overhead, roll-up doors are widely available and are appropriate for new garages.
- Metal garage doors may be appropriate for mid-century and later residential sites.
- New carports should be located at the rear of the principal structure. Most readily available carport designs have flat roofs and metal support columns and are not compatible with older building designs.
- Surface parking should be screened from the street by hedges, grade changes, or low fences.



Public-to-Private Zones

New Residential Construction

The following guidelines are intended to help ensure that the design and development of new homes are compatible with the adjacent older homes in the neighborhood. While new construction should provide visual compatibility to the streetscape, it should not attempt to replicate its older neighbors, but rather maintain the quality of the streetscape through a new design.

New Construction Guidelines

Site Issues

- New construction should be compatible with the front facade orientation, height, setback, proportion, and scale of the older properties in the neighborhood.
- The architectural style and design of building elements should be consistent within itself and complimentary with the neighborhood. Consider foundation height, building proportions, exterior siding or facade treatment, roof pitch, roof style and materials, door and window style and materials, color, and texture.
- The design of a new home should not maximize the allowable lot coverage. It should provide ample open space around a structure and incorporate a variable footprint within the required set backs.
- New homes should respect the natural features and assets of the site, including land forms and trees. Site design that requires altering land forms and removing trees is discouraged.
- The site design should reflect the zone transitions of the neighborhood. Most often these are from public (sidewalk/right-of-way) to semi-public (front yard) to semi-private (front porch /portico) to private interior and back yard.

Materials

- If the new construction is of brick, the brick should be compatible with typical mortar and brick color tones found in the district and along the block.
- If the new construction is of wood, the siding should be compatible with the application of wood on neighboring structures.
- Generally, vinyl, and metal siding are discouraged.
- The use of artificial brick or stone veneers are discouraged.

Details

- Roof skylights and exposed metal flues should not be visible on the front elevation.
- Parking should be screened from the street and located to side and rear of the new construction.



Many communities have a well-planned residential pedestrian/vehicular circulation system with the public sidewalks adjacent to planted boulevards that provide a buffer from the more hectic pace of the motorized vehicles.

Public and Semi-Public Landscaping Features

Just as unique architectural features provide a residential structure with character, the public landscaping features are an important component of a neighborhood's public character. Every neighborhood has a defined character. Its identity should be maintained by public engineering and services that complements the traditional street, boulevard, planning, and sidewalk infrastructure.

Public Landscape Guidelines

Street and Alley Patterns

- Communities and neighborhoods should respect and maintain their traditional street and alley patterns.
- Streets should retain their traditional widths.

Boulevard and Sidewalks

- Communities should preserve their mature tree canopy whenever possible.
- If boulevard trees are lost to disease, the boulevards should be reforested with disease-resistant trees planted at regular intervals with equal spacing between the sidewalks and curbs.
- The sidewalk and boulevards should retain their traditional widths.

Fences or low, retaining walls are generally used on residential properties to separate lots and outline front yards. Fences were typically constructed of wood, cast iron, brick, stone, or wire. In recent decades chain link fences have been popular, however, chain link fencing is generally considered an industrial feature and not visually compatible with the public or semi-public areas in a residential neighborhood.

Traditional retaining walls were usually constructed of limestone, brick, field stone, or poured concrete. More recently most street-facing retaining walls are being constructed of a variety of variations in color, texture and shape of concrete block.

Fence and Retaining Wall Guidelines

Fences

- Original historic fences should be preserved and maintained.
- If the original fence is missing, it may be reconstructed based on physical or pictorial evidence.
- Fences enclosing a front yard should allow some visual access to the yard and generally not be taller than three feet.
- Privacy or open-lattice fences enclosing rear yards should generally be no taller than six feet.
- Fences should be stained or painted to blend with the dwelling or building.



Wood picket fences are a classic in neighborhoods with a predominance of clapboard siding, however, they do require a good deal of maintenance.

- Wrought iron, cast iron and aluminum replicating cast iron may be allowed if compatible with the original design of the site.
- Wooden fences may be of flat board only. Stockade fence—round and half-round boards—is discouraged.
- Fences of synthetic materials such as vinyl are discouraged for front yards

Chain Link

- Chain link fences are not appropriate for front yards or side yards that face side streets.
- Chain link fences may be acceptable in rear yards or side yards where not visible from the street.
- The painting of visible sections of chain link fences in dark green or black colors is recommended.
- Plastic coatings for chain link fences in green and black colors are also available and are recommended.
- The screening of chain link fences with hedge, ivy, or other vining cover is also encouraged.

Retaining Walls

- Original walls of stone, brick, stucco or concrete should be preserved and maintained.
- The repair and maintenance of masonry walls should follow the masonry guidelines on page 29.
- If possible, new retaining walls should be constructed of traditional masonry materials.

General

- New fences or walls must be designed so as to minimize their impact on existing historic fabric at the site.
- New fences or walls should be removable without impairing the essential form and integrity of the historic property
- Many municipalities regulate fence height, so check with your local building official to determine the local standards.

New Construction in the Afton's Historic District (VHS)

Much has been written (and argued) on the issue of new construction in historic areas. An exhaustive discussion of the issue could fill a book and is beyond the scope of this guide. However, the general principle to follow is that new buildings should be complimentary to their surroundings.

B. Clarkson Schoettle of the Main Street Center has most succinctly summarized the other basic design considerations as follows:

Proportions of the Facade

The average height and width of the surrounding buildings determines a general set of proportions for an infill structure or the bays of a larger structure.

Composition

The composition of the infill facade (that is, the organization of its parts) should be similar to that of surrounding facades.

Rhythms that carry throughout the block (such as window spacing) should be incorporated into the new facade.

Proportions of the Openings

The size and proportion of window and door openings of an infill building should be similar to those on surrounding facades.

The same applies to the ratio of window area to solid wall for the facade as a whole.

The infill building should fill the entire space and reflect the characteristic rhythm of facades along the street.

If the site is large, the mass of the facade can be broken into a number of smaller bays, to maintain a rhythm similar to the surrounding buildings.

Detailing

Infill architecture should reflect some of the detailing of surrounding buildings in window shapes, cornice lines, and brick work.

The true beauty and integrity of Afton's 19th century architecture is its utilitarian simplicity. Care should be taken to avoid the temptation of introducing overly-fussy "Victoriana" detailing, signage, and applied elements that distract from that original simplicity of the community.

Materials

An infill facade should be composed of materials similar to adjacent facades. The new building should not stand out from the others.

Color

Colors utilized should relate to each other in a coherent and consistent design, and also be selected in response to the existing materials and colors of surrounding buildings. Color selections for each building will include all the visible elements on the exterior, in order to achieve an integrated and coordinated design approach; and, thus it will include such elements as: the wall materials, accessory items such as flashing and hardware, all the trim components around doors, windows, at cornices and applied panels; the painted or pre-finished components such as windows and doors; and for awnings, signs and exterior lighting fixtures.

Building Setback

Afton's commercial growth patterns, as retail uses expanded into the adjacent residential structures, do not follow a standard setback or facade rhythm. In fact, the irregularity of the rhythm of placement is a major factor in the Village's charm and appeal. Any new construction should reflect somewhat the relaxed nature of the community's evolution.

New Building Materials

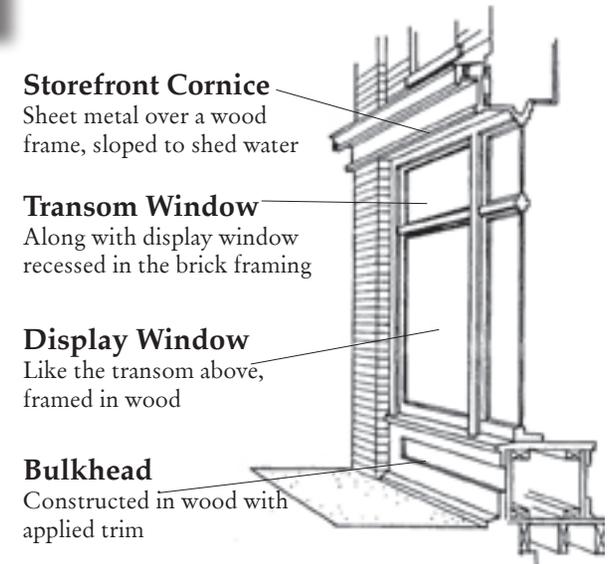
While the commercial property owner is encouraged to use traditional materials in the reconstruction of missing or altered building elements, often it is economically infeasible. Therefore, the owner may consider using newer building materials that emulate the appearance of the traditional elements.

When designing a new storefront for your commercial property, you should meet with the Afton Heritage Preservation Commission to determine what contemporary building materials are acceptable and available.

The traditional storefront is generally constructed of a combination of materials, such as wood framing, plywood moldings, metal flashing, and plate glass. The typical elements of the storefront were the metal-clad window crown or cornice, the wood framed transom window, the wood framed display window, and the wood or metal bulkhead. The window and bulkhead are generally set back in the storefront opening at least six inches.

The reconstructed storefront can create the same “look” using newer building materials such as insulating glass and aluminum framing. However, the proportions and placement of the different elements need to closely match the elements of the original storefront. □

□ Excerpts from *Keeping Up Appearances* from the National Trust for Historic Preservation

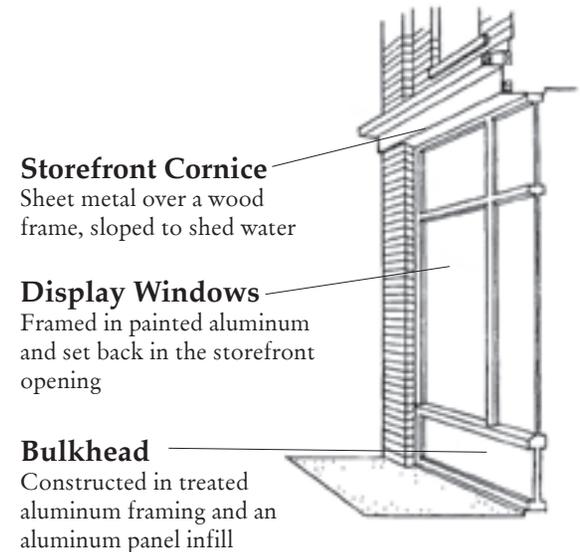


Storefront Cornice
Sheet metal over a wood frame, sloped to shed water

Transom Window
Along with display window recessed in the brick framing

Display Window
Like the transom above, framed in wood

Bulkhead
Constructed in wood with applied trim



Storefront Cornice
Sheet metal over a wood frame, sloped to shed water

Display Windows
Framed in painted aluminum and set back in the storefront opening

Bulkhead
Constructed in treated aluminum framing and an aluminum panel infill

APPLYING THE GUIDELINES TO AFTON STRUCTURES

EXISTING CONDITION

The following examples were selected to illustrate the application of the design guidelines. These examples display renovations that can be used to guide appropriate improvements in other buildings within the Village.

The roof appears to need some repairs.

There are both original wood storm windows and commercial, extruded aluminum storms.

The visible woodwork on the house is in need of repair and repainting.

The entire house is covered with fibrous cement shingles over the original lap siding.

The porch has lost its original posts which have been replaced by undersized, stock poles.

The porch is skirted with unframed commercial vinyl latticework.



PROPOSED RENOVATION

Repair and re-shingle the house and porch roofs as needed.

Remove any commercial, extruded aluminum storm windows and replace them with storms that are more compatible with the existing wood storms on the house.

Remove the fibrous shingles that cover the original lap siding.

Repair or replace any damaged siding, and sand, prime and paint all the woodwork on the exterior of the house in compatible colors.

Remove the undersized poles, and install appropriately sized and placed porch posts.

Frame the lattice skirting around the porch deck.



EXISTING CONDITION

The schoolhouse, built in 1876, remains on Upper 34th Street S across from the Town Square Park. The structure originally displayed a tall, open bell tower at the ridge of its front gable.



While the property has been well maintained over the years, the schoolhouse has lost its original bell tower.

Over time the brick building has settled and there has been minor cracking in some mortar joints. Unfortunately, the mortar repair was done with a mortar mix that is now deep red in color, calling undue attention to the repair.



PROPOSED RENOVATION

If the bell tower is rebuilt, special attention should be paid to reproducing the structure accurately in scale and design as documented in the circa-1880 photograph of the school.



The clapboard Schingledecker School, built in 1887 to the northwest on the prairie above Afton, displays the same bell tower architecture (with bell) and a hexagonal window in the front gable.

An application compatible in color to the original mortar color should be applied to the crack repairs on the main elevation(s).

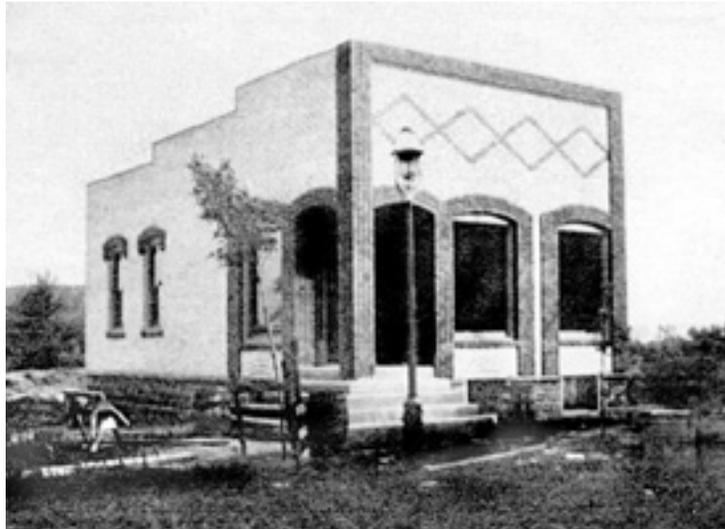
Although the octagonal window in the front gable is not original to this schoolhouse's architecture, a similar window and placement has been documented on another old schoolhouse in the area.

The true beauty and integrity of Afton's 19th century architecture is found in its utilitarian simplicity. This is especially true of early schoolhouses. Care should be taken to avoid introducing "Victoriana" elements that distract from that original simplicity.

If the framing evergreens are ever removed, future foundation plantings should be low and not obscure the profile of the architecture.



EXISTING CONDITION



The bank, built in 1913 by L.A. Bluff, remained in operation as a bank until 1929. Since that time it housed a number of businesses. Note in this early-20th century photograph the public-scale gaslight fixture that sat at the southwest corner of the main facade.



The brick shows signs of staining.

There is obsolete hardware on the building.

There are currently four residential scale gaslights that frame the two major elevations of the bank building. None of them match in design, height and/or scale.

PROPOSED RENOVATION

The roof and parapet should be inspected and repaired as required.

Remove obsolete hardware and repair any remaining holes.

Tuckpoint, repair and clean brick as necessary.

Consider removal of the under-scaled gas lights and replace them with a public-scale fixture (as seen when first constructed).

Clean and repair the front steps as required.

With the proposed street improvements scheduled for St. Croix Trail, the Village should consider the viability of both new, public-scaled street lights, and the possibility of burying or relocating the feeder power lines to the back of the buildings that face the street.



PHASING A HOME RENOVATION PROJECT

When planning the renovation of your home or business, remember that it may make financial sense to phase the project over time. The completion of each phase would increase the aesthetic and actual value of your building, while getting you one step closer to the completion of your project. The following example demonstrates how the phasing could be implemented.

Existing Condition

This Homestead-style residence has lost its original porch post. The porch roof is currently supported by commercial 2x2 and 4x4 stock commercial poles. The base of the porch is covered in frameless, commercial vinyl skirting. Also, the exterior has been enclosed with fibrous cement shingles over the original clapboard siding. Often this type of shingle contains asbestos fiber.



Phase 1

This phase may be as simple as: repairing and painting the fascia of the porch; removing the aluminum storm window in the front dormer window and replacing it with a wooden storm that matches the other windows on the front elevation; and repainting all the windows and fascia on the house.



Phase 2

This phase may include: the removal of all the fibrous wall-shingles; repairing or replacing any damaged siding; and painting the house in compatible paint colors.



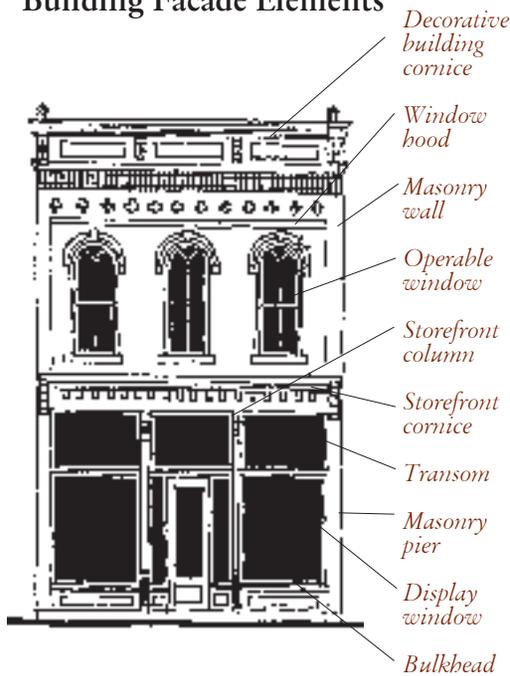
Phase 3

This final phase shows the house with: a repaired and re-shingled porch and main roofs; framed skirting around the base of the porch; and decorative porch posts with Victorian brackets. Plantings should be added in the spring to visually soften the handsome stone foundation.

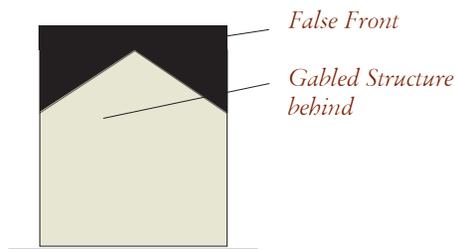


Appendix I • Glossary of Architectural Terms Found in the Guidelines

Building Facade Elements



False Front Facade



Arch

An architectural structural system for spanning a door or window opening. Arches are often constructed of wedge-shaped stones or bricks, and are designed to bear the weight of the materials above.

Belt Course

A horizontal board across a building usually flat with a molding.

Bracket

A projection, sometimes decorative element, which supports or appears to support a projecting cornice, lintel, sill or roof.

Bulkhead

The storefront member that forms a base for the display windows and side windows of a commercial entry. In historical downtowns these are often decorative with raised or recessed panels.

Clapboard

Narrow, horizontal, overlapping wooden boards, usually 4 to 6 inches wide, used as siding. (*pronounced "kla'berd"*)

Crown Molding

Any molding member forming the crowning or finishing member of a structure.

Column

A perpendicular supporting post, circular or rectangular in section.

Coping

The cap for covering the top of a wall.

Elevation

Any of the sides of a building. The east elevation faces east, the south elevation faces south, etc.

Facade

The face or chief elevation of a building.

False Front

A front wall which extends above the roof behind. (As seen at 208 Sibley Avenue.)

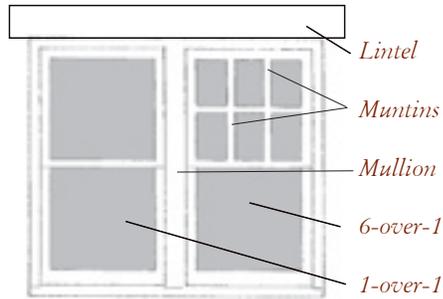
Fenestration

The arrangement, proportions and pattern of window and door openings on a facade.

Flashing

A thin impervious material used to prevent water penetration between a roof and wall.

Double-hung, Operable Window



Architectural Details

Gable

The triangular portion of the end wall of a building.

Lintel

A horizontal structural member that supports the load over an opening such as a door or window.

Masonry

Wall construction using stone or brick with mortar.

Molding

A member of construction or decoration used to introduce varieties of outline or contour in edges or surfaces.

Mullion

A slender bar or pier forming a division between panels or units of windows, screens, or similar frames.

Muntin

The members dividing the glass or openings of window or door sash.

Parapet

An extension of the wall above the roof line.

Pier

A member or column designed to support the weight from above, usually in the form of a thickened section placed at intervals along a wall providing lateral support.

Pilaster

An engaged pier or pillar, often projecting from the wall, that frames the fenestration of a building.

Pediment

A low, triangular architectural feature formed by horizontal and sloping cornices, often found above the main entry or windows.

Pent Roof

A short, hood-like roof section between the first and second floor.

Quoin

In masonry, a hard stone or raised brick suggesting a stone block, creating a decorative pattern often at the front corners of a building. (An example is seen in the piers at 231-239 Sibley Avenue.)

Sash

The framework that holds the glass in the window.

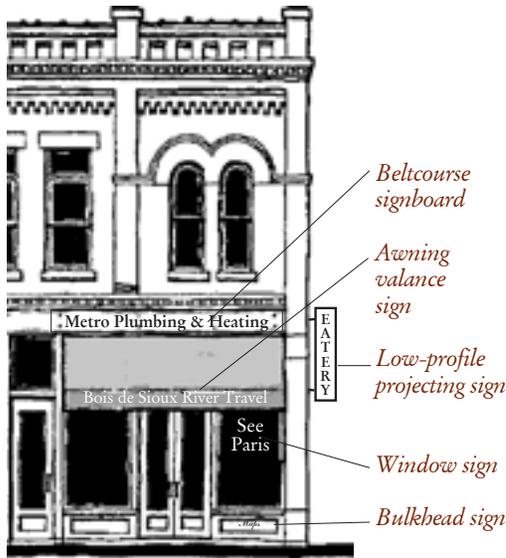
Shake

Any thick hand-split shingle. Often made of cedar and used as an inappropriate design addition to historic storefronts.

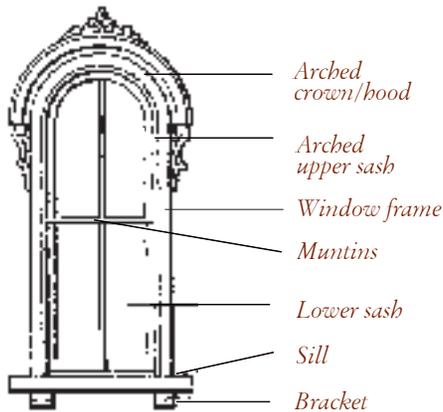
Shingle

A thin piece of wood or other material used to cover the roof or walls of a house.

Storefront Signage



Window Elements



Shutters

A movable screen or cover used to cover a window opening.

Signboard

A display board or surface used to advertise a business with the use of text and graphics. Signage can also be placed on the awning valance, on a low-profile projecting board, painted on the display window or on the bulkhead.

Storefront

The pedestrian level of the main facade of historic commercial buildings. See elements in illustration.

Stucco

An exterior finish composed of Portland cement, lime, and sand mixed with water.

Symmetrical

A design system where elements are exactly the same on each side of the center of a façade (or face of a building). Asymmetry is the lack of symmetry.

Transom Window

A sheet glass or glass block window that is generally stationary, but sometimes operable, that is located above a display window or above an entry door in a storefront.

Window Hood or Crown

The projecting wall element at the top of a window opening. (As seen in the crowns on the upper story windows of 109-113 Sibley Avenue.)

Window Sill

A wood, stone or brick horizontal member of a window frame.

APPENDIX II • Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

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

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of 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 historic property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old 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.

Resources

The following publications contains more detailed information about the Standards.

Weeks, Jay D. and Anne E. Grimmer, *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Illustrated Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstruction of Historic Buildings*. Washington, D.C.: Heritage Preservation Services, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1995. 188 pp.

Birnbaum, Charles A., FASLA, and Christine Capella-Peters, Editors, *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes*. Washington, D.C.: Heritage Preservation Services, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1996. 148 pp.

Appendix III • Historic Preservation Tax Credits

While there are many reasons to preserve, restore, rehabilitate, and recycle older buildings, financial incentives can be the most tangible. Financial incentives for rehabilitation have been developed on the state and national levels. With the implementation in 2010 of the Minnesota rehabilitation program, improvements to historic commercial properties has never been more feasible for the property owner.

Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program Benefits

The Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program benefits the owner, the occupants, and the community by:

- Encouraging protection of landmarks through the promotion, recognition, and designation of historic structures
- Increasing the value of the rehabilitated property and returning underutilized structures to the tax rolls
- Upgrading downtowns and neighborhoods and often increasing the amount of available housing within the community.

Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program

Historic Preservation Tax Credits are available to building owners interested in substantially rehabilitating historic buildings. Commercial, industrial and rent producing residential structures that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places or are a "contributing" structure within a National Register district qualify for a 20% investment tax credit. Buildings not currently on the National Register can use tax credits if they become listed.

Federal Program Provisions

To qualify for the Investment Tax Credit, a property owner must:

- Have a certified historic structure. To be certified, the building must be listed individually on the National Register of Historic Places or be a contributing part of a historic district that is either listed on the National Register or certified as eligible for the National Register
- Use the building for an income-producing purpose such as rental-residential, commercial, agricultural, or industrial
- Rehabilitate the building in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's "Standards for Rehabilitation" and "Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings." The National Park Service (NPS), with advice from the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office, determines whether a project meets the standards.
- Spend an amount greater than the building's adjusted basis (roughly the current depreciated value of the building not including land value) on the approved rehabilitation project
- Complete the work in a timely manner. Projects must meet the minimum expenditure test within a two-year measuring period, but applicants may take up to five years to complete a phased project if the plans and specs are approved in advance of construction.
- Pay a fee to the NPS; the fee shall be no less than \$250 and no greater than \$2,500 and shall be based upon the qualifying rehabilitation expenditures.

Minnesota Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program

In 2010 the State of Minnesota enacted a 20% historic preservation tax credit program. Minnesota's state historic preservation tax credit will allow a state income tax credit equal to 20 percent of the cost of rehabilitating a qualifying historic property. The program mirrors the federal rehabilitation tax credit, a provision that has been in place since 1979. Projects are eligible to claim the state credit if they are allowed the federal credit, a program which requires properties to be listed in the National Register of Historic Preservation to qualify. Minnesota currently has over 1,600 listings in the National Register representing almost 7,000 individual properties. Projects must be income-producing to use the credit, therefore, homesteaded residential projects are not eligible.

The Minnesota program allows the project proposers to choose either a certificated, refundable credit or grant option. The state grant, like the tax credit, comes at the completion of the project, and is equal to 90 percent of the allowable federal rehabilitation tax credit. The grant option may have some advantages in the syndication of tax credits, and widens the investor pool by allowing individuals, teams, and/or non-profit organizations to participate in the state program.

Minnesota Program Provisions

The state provisions are the same as the federal provisions, with the exception that the tax credit would be available for a property that is any of the following:

- Listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
- Certified as a contributing element of a National Register Historic District.
- Certified as historic by local heritage preservation commission or Certified Local Government.

APPENDIX IV • Public Signage

Few communities in Minnesota have addressed the issue of public signage within or around historic districts. The community must balance the desire for a visually appealing commercial center with the necessity to maintain the public's safety and to effectively direct traffic flow. As a rule, public signage should be clear and use conventional shapes, colors, and reflectivity. Public signage falls into three categories: traffic signs, limit signs, and directional/informational signs.

Traffic Signs

Traffic signs are the most critical to downtown Afton. They ensure a smooth and orderly flow of traffic and minimize the possibility of accidents. They must conform to the *Minnesota Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices* (MMUTCD) from the Minnesota Department of Transportation. While considerably limited, there is some latitude in the design of these signs. Determining minimum requirements and reducing redundancy is necessary to making Downtown Afton more attractive.

Limit Signs

Limit signs, such as parking limits, handicap, and no parking zones, although not as critical to safety, still need to be visually pleasing. These signs also have more latitude in their design. They should be uniform in style. They should be prominently displayed and large enough to be easily read, but should not overpower their surroundings. Using professionally designed signs and posts and placement, the public signage can enhance the overall appearance of downtown Afton.

Directional/Informational Signs

Informational signs include historic district directions and announcements, public parking, and other directional information to guide people to key areas in downtown Afton. These signs have little regulation and, therefore, the most latitude in design. They still need to be professionally designed, clear, and uniform with the other signage in downtown.

- Less is more. Using the least required signage in downtown will help keep the appearance from being cluttered or overpowering. Researching the minimum requirements and potential waivers is imperative for controlling the proliferation of public signage.
- All public signage within the Afton Historic District needs to be uniform and of high quality design and construction.
- Signage can be effectively placed on existing decorative light posts and on well designed sign posts.
- Signage, as well as banners and other temporary displays, should be color coordinated with a limited palette of colors complementary to those used for the store awnings. Turn-of-the-century colors tended to be muted and earth-tone based. Most major paint companies have paint chip charts of “historical” colors.
- Uniform signage should be developed to identify all public parking lots. Signs should be large enough and prominently displayed, but not overpower the surroundings. Using an easily identifiable logo helps the motorist find their way to the lots.
- Temporary banners on the outside of commercial buildings may be used subject to approval by the Heritage Preservation Commission.

Appendix V • Business Signage

City of Afton • Design Review/Heritage Preservation Commission

Consolidated Afton Code for Business Signage — Permanent

1. Sign, business, means a sign that directs attention to a business or profession or to the commodity, service or entertainment sold or offered upon the premises where such sign is located or to which it is attached. 12-210. B. 6.
2. No sign shall be allowed that prevents ingress or egress from any door, window or fire escape; that tends to accumulate debris as a fire hazard; or that is attached to a standpipe or fire escape or in any other way constitutes a hazard to health, safety, or general welfare of the public. 12-210. E. 1.
3. Signs shall not be painted directly on the outside wall of a building except by special permit. Signs shall not be placed or mounted on a fence, tree, stone or other natural growth nor on any utility pole or structure. 12-210. E. 2.
4. Roof signs are prohibited in all zoning districts. 12-210. E. 3.
5. Signs on benches, newsstands, car stands, bus stop shelters and similar places shall be prohibited. 12-210. E. 4.
6. No sign shall contain any indecent or offensive picture or written matter. 12-210. E. 5.
7. Sign, illuminated, means a sign that is lighted with an artificial light source, that meets government mandated regulations and is appropriate to the application of a building's historic period. 12-210. B. 9.
8. Obsolete signs. Any sign for which no permit has been issued or business has ceased to function shall be taken down and removed by the owner, agent or person having the beneficial use of the building, or land upon which the sign may be found within 30 days after written notice from the Zoning Administrator. 12-210. U.
9. The owner of any sign shall be required to have such sign properly painted at least once every two years, if needed, including all parts and supports of the sign, unless such parts or supports are galvanized or otherwise treated to prevent rust or decay. 12-210. R. 6. a.
10. Unsafe or dangerous signs. Any sign which becomes structurally unsafe, in disrepair, abandoned or endangers the safety of a building or premises shall be taken down and removed or structurally improved by the owner, agent, or person having the beneficial use of the building, structure, or land upon which the sign is located within ten days after written notification from the Zoning Administrator. 12-210. T.
11. The sign shall be painted and constructed of quality sign-grade wood, metal or plastic with historically appropriate colors that are compatible with and complimentary to the architecture of the historic buildings and character of the local Downtown and National Historic Districts. An appendix containing images of recommended business signs and colors is available upon request. *Design Review/Historic Preservation Committee*
12. Sign sizes vary in each zone, check your zone before proceeding. The above information is an overview of general sign information.
13. FOR MORE SPECIFICS ON SIGN REGULATION IN ALL ZONING DISTRICTS PLEASE SEE **AFTON CITY CODE, SECTION 12-210. SIGNS.**

Disclaimer

This outline of sign regulations is included as a convenience to Afton's citizens and the business community. Please note that the City Council may have made amendments, additions or deletions to the sign regulations subsequent to this publication. The only official edition of the City Code is the printed version maintained by City Staff.

Consolidated Afton Code for Business Signage — Portable/Temporary

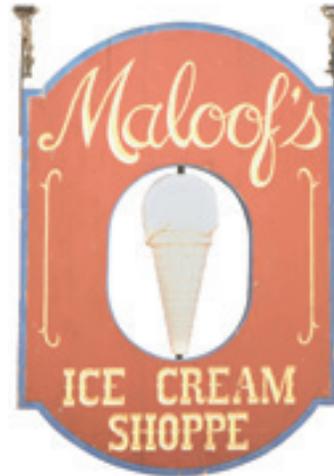
1. There will be no more than 1 portable sign per business. (VHS-C district) 12-120 N. 1.
2. A sign permit is required for all portable signs. In the VHS-C district, approval of the HPC is required for portable signs. 12-120 N. 3.
3. Sign, portable means an unlighted sign not affixed to the ground or building and easily carried or moved. 12-120 B. 12.
4. Portable signs shall not be larger than 36 inches by 48 inches (12 sq. ft.) of display space on each side with a total height of no more than four feet. The size of a portable sign shall not be included in the total square footage allowed on other permitted signs. 12-120. N. 2.
5. All portable signs shall be located on the same parcel on which the business is located. The sign shall not be located on the road right-of-way or placed so as to interfere with pedestrian traffic. 12-120. N. 4.
6. Portable signs, and mobile signs on wheels must be secured so as to not create a public safety hazard by acts of nature or movement by vandals. 12-120. N. 7.
7. No more than two temporary signs are allowed per parcel. (VHS-R) 12-120 O. 6.
8. A temporary sign permit is required. 12-120. 0. 7.
9. Sign, temporary, means any sign, except a banner sign, not exceeding 12 sq. ft., placed in such a manner as not to be solidly affixed to any building, structure or land and advertising an event such as a bazaar, special sale, sporting event, or similar situation. 12-120 B. 16
10. Sign, Banner means any sign made of a flexible material not exceeding 30 sq. ft., hung up on a crossbar or between two points of any permanent structure or poles advertising an event such as a grand opening, special sale or similar situation. 12-120 B. 5.
11. Inflatable signs are not permitted. 12-210 N. 6.
12. In no event shall banner signs be place on any lot or parcel of land for a period to exceed 30 days out of any 12 month period. 12-120 P. 2.
13. Sign sizes vary in each zone, check your zone before proceeding. The above information is an overview of portable/temporary/banner sign information.
14. FOR MORE SPECIFICS ON SIGN REGULATIONS IN ALL ZONING DISTRICTS PLEASE SEE **AFTON CITY CODE, SECTION 12-210. SIGNS.**

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Permanent Sign Examples for Afton's designated "Old Village."

1890-1935 - To be used as historical reference for acceptable type styles and sign design.





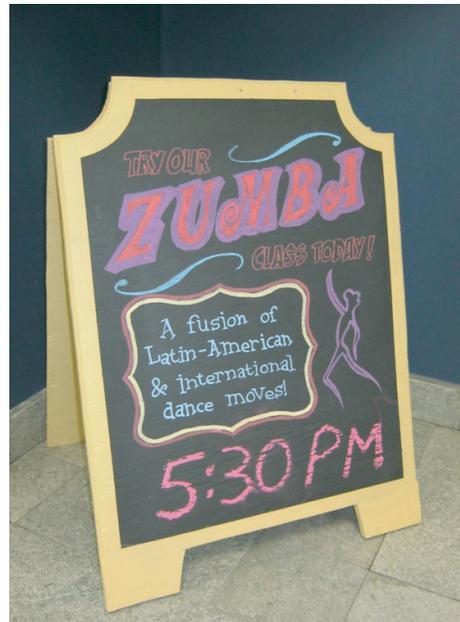
**Existing permanent Sign Examples for Afton's designated "Old Village."
To be used as historical reference for acceptable type styles and sign design.**



Existing permanent Sign Examples for Afton's designated "Old Village."
To be used as historical reference for acceptable type styles and sign design.



**Portable & Temporary sign examples for Afton's designated "Old Village."
Acceptable examples of temporary and portable self standing outdoor signs.**



Portable & Temporary sign examples for Afton's designated "Old Village."
Acceptable examples of temporary and portable self standing outdoor signs.



Type Face examples for Afton's Designated "Old Village."

For historical reference only and not limited to these type styles.
These typefaces are available on most computers.

Bernard MT Condensed

Blackoak Std

Century Schoolbook

ENGRAVERS MT

Goudy Old Style

Gloucester MT Extra Condensed

Lucinda Blackletter

Mona Lisa Solid ITC TT

PlayBill

ROSEWOOD STD

Santa Fe LET Plain

To find more historical period designs including the late 1800's go to these web sites:

<http://www.letterheadfonts.com/fonts/alpha/A.php>

<http://www.letterheadfonts.com/fonts/styles/late1800s.php>

Historical Sign Fonts: The Adobe site (link below).

<http://store1.adobe.com/cfusion/store/html/index.cfm?type=category&code=historical&store>

[=OLS-US&event=searchFonts&cat=theme&nr=0&newsample=Afton+Museum&view=View](http://store1.adobe.com/cfusion/store/html/index.cfm?type=category&code=historical&store=OLS-US&event=searchFonts&cat=theme&nr=0&newsample=Afton+Museum&view=View)