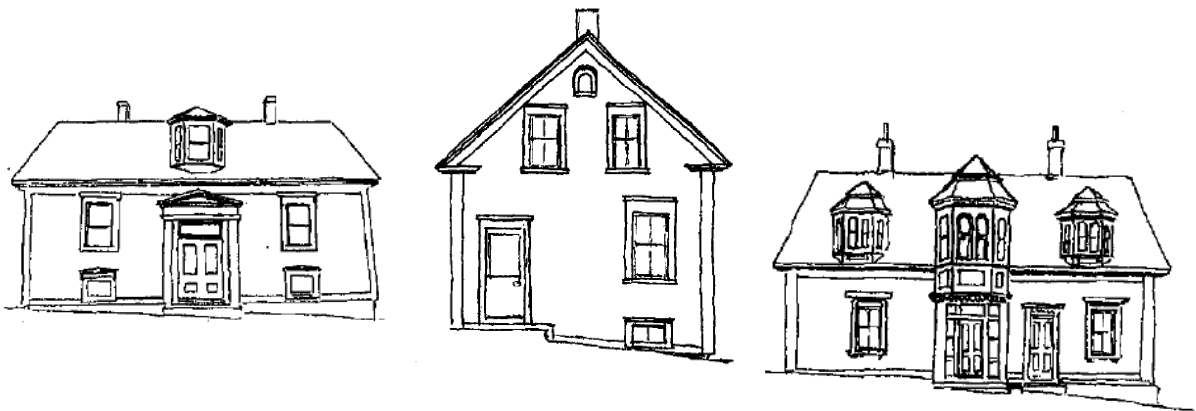


Old Town Lunenburg Heritage Conservation District

RESIDENTIAL DESIGN & CONSERVATION GUIDELINES

March 2026



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1 INTRODUCTION

As Old Town Lunenburg continues to evolve, thoughtful change is essential to maintaining the character that defines our Heritage Conservation District. This Illustrated Residential Design Guidelines document has been prepared to help property owners, designers, and builders better understand and apply the **design requirements of the Heritage Conservation District Bylaw**.

The purpose of this guide is to provide clear visual illustrations that explain the Design Guidelines for residential development within the district, including new buildings, alterations and additions to existing buildings, and the construction or adaptation of outbuildings.

Within the HCD Bylaw, two types of guidance are used. **Prescriptive language** such as “shall” and “is prohibited” identifies mandatory conservation requirements that must be followed. These are identified in bold. **Permissive language** such as “should” and “may” describes design guidelines intended to encourage compatible development while allowing flexibility in how those objectives are achieved. Together, these approaches protect the district’s character-defining elements while enabling sensitive change.

These guidelines are also intended to promote and support well-designed infill housing within the Heritage Conservation District. This includes new residential buildings on vacant lots, the conversion of single-unit dwellings into multiple units through thoughtful additions or alterations, and the introduction of accessory dwelling units within new or existing outbuildings. When carefully designed, infill development can strengthen the vitality of the district while respecting its historic character.

This document should be used in conjunction with the **Land Use Bylaw**, which regulates zoning matters such as permitted uses, setbacks, building height, lot coverage, and the number of dwelling units permitted on a property. While the Land Use Bylaw establishes what may be built, the HCD Bylaw and these illustrated guidelines address how development should be designed to fit within the historic context.

2 NEW RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

- 2.1 Form
- 2.2 Principal Façade Design
- 2.3 Windows and Doors
- 2.4 Trim and Ornamentation
- 2.5 Materials



Sensitive Infill complements scale, form, setback, orientation and materials of Old Town HCD

2.1 FORM

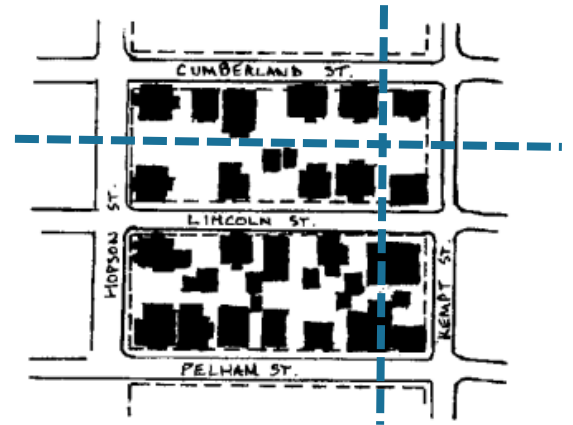
HEIGHT

The height and scale of new residential buildings SHALL be less than or equal to the average height and scale of character-defining residential structures along the same side of the street of the same block.



ORIENTATION TO THE STREET

New residential buildings SHALL align with the district's gridiron plan, i.e. new residential buildings shall be oriented to the district's historic street grid at a right angle.



SETBACK

New residential buildings SHALL have the same setback and distance to neighbouring structures as residential character-defining structures on the same block as the new residential building.



ROOF SHAPE AND FORM

A new residential building's roof SHALL have a similar shape and pitch to character-defining residential buildings on the same block as the new residential building. Historic roof forms in Lunenburg include but are not limited to gable roofs, hipped roofs, hipped gable roofs, gambrel roofs, mansard roofs, hatch roofs, and complex Queen Anne forms with and without dormers. Flat roofs are prohibited for new residential buildings.

Flat roofs are prohibited for new residential buildings.



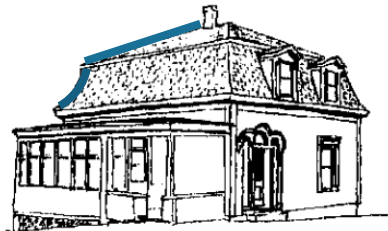
GABLE ROOF



HIPPED ROOF



HIPPED GABLE ROOF



MANSARD ROOF



GAMBREL ROOF



HATCH ROOF

SIZE & MASSING

New houses with a footprint larger than 140 metres squared (1500 square feet) should have at least one projecting bay, ell, porch, veranda, dormer, frontispiece, or other variation in form.



HOUSES UP TO 1500 SQ. FT. IN GROUND FLOOR AREA MAY HAVE SIMPLE RECTANGULAR FORM UNDER SIMPLE ROOF STRUCTURE.



HOUSES OVER 1500 SQ. FT. SHALL HAVE VARIED MASSING UP TO MAXIMUM GROUND FLOOR AREA OF 2050 SQ. FT.

DORMERS & FRONTISPIECES

Dormers, including extended and overhanging dormers like the Lunenburg bump, are strongly encouraged for new residential development. Dormers SHALL be inspired by historic examples found on residential character-defining structures, including but not limited to Gothic, Scottish, Peaked, Pedimented, Hipped, Round-headed and Shed dormers. Dormers SHALL not exceed one third (1/3) of the structure's total roof area.



GOthic DORMER

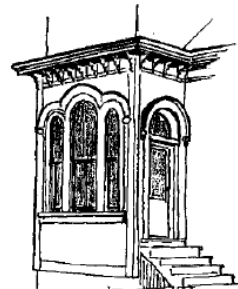
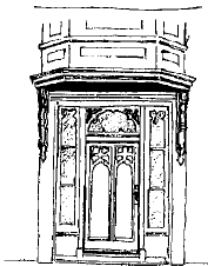


SHED DORMER



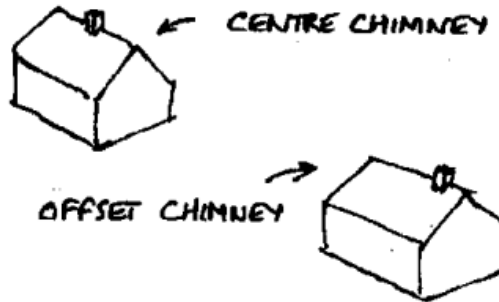
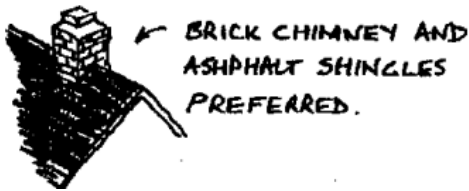
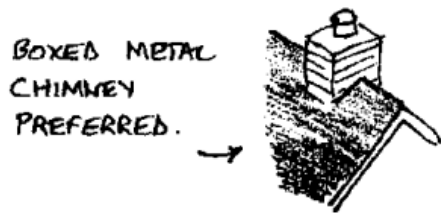
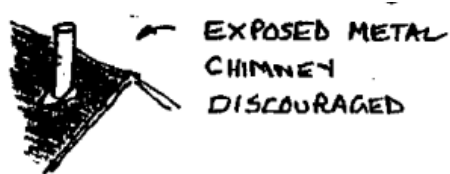
SCOTTISH DORMER

Elaborate frontispieces inspired by residential character-defining structures are encouraged.



CHIMNEYS

Chimneys should preferably be constructed of brick and should protrude through the roof at or near the ridge, as centre or offset chimneys, in the model of chimneys on character-defining residential structures in Old Town Lunenburg Heritage Conservation District. Metal chimneys are discouraged. If used, they SHALL be placed unobtrusively and SHALL be boxed in a wooden structure which replicates the form of a traditional brick chimney.

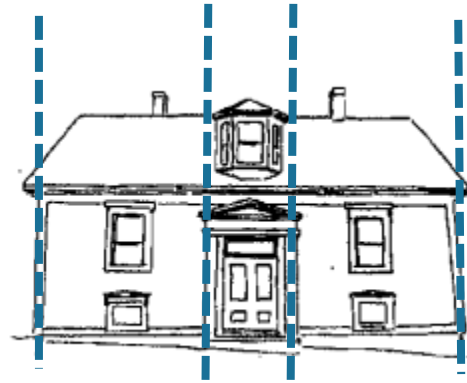


2.2 PRINCIPAL FAÇADE DESIGN

DIRECTIONAL EMPHASIS

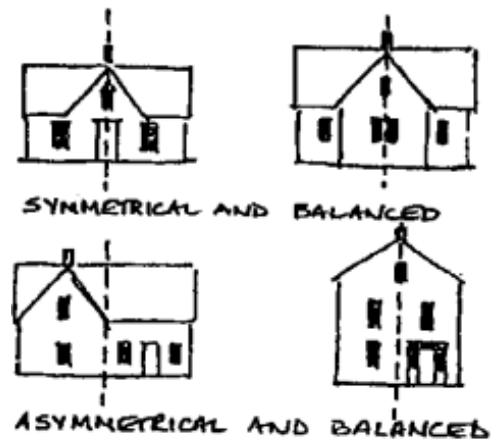
Principal façades should have a vertical emphasis through elements including, but not limited to:

- steeply pitched roofs,
- vertically proportioned windows
- vertical trim boards,
- projecting bays
- pedimented porches and dormers.



VISUAL BALANCE

Principal façades should be balanced through either bilateral symmetry or asymmetrical balancing. The former may be achieved by aligning similar elements, such as windows, doors, and trim.



DORMERS & FRONTISPIECE

The main entrance to new residential buildings SHALL be in the principal façade facing the street.

Frontispieces inspired by residential character-defining structures are encouraged.

Dormers should be balanced with openings either vertically aligned with window and door openings, Again, dormers SHALL not exceed one-third (1/3) of the structure's total roof area.

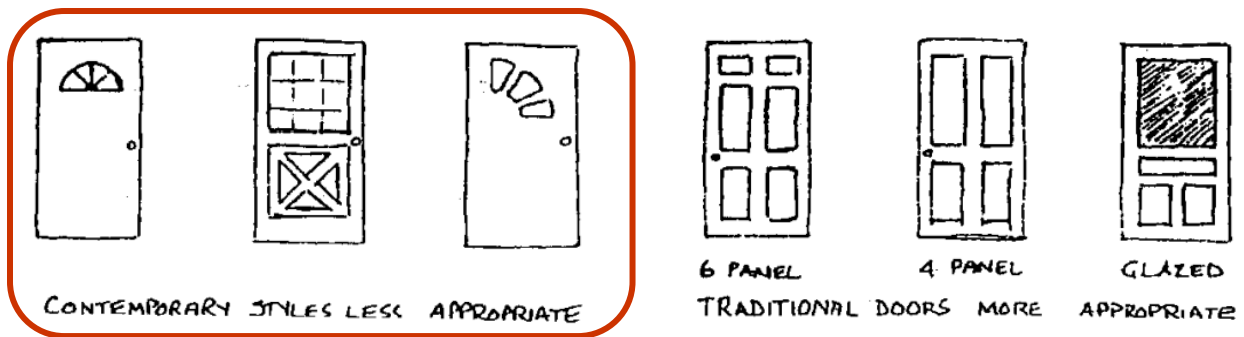


2.3 WINDOWS AND DOORS

DOORS

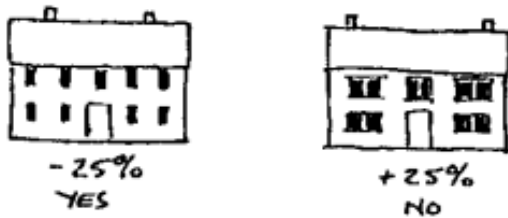
Doors visible from the public realm should preferably be made of wood and rail and stile construction with recessed or raised panels or interpretations of panelling and glazing inspired by historic doors in residential character-designing structures.

Modern door styles which depart significantly from the historic doors found in residential character-defining structures are discouraged.



WINDOW TO WALL RATIO

The area of any façade visible from the public realm occupied by window and door openings SHALL be no greater than 25%, other than sunrooms, where an area of up to 80% on one level may be approved.

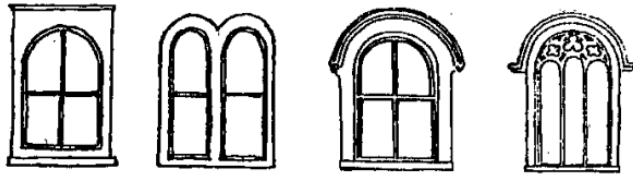


SKYLIGHTS

Four skylights are permitted. More than four skylights may be approved, provided the total number of skylights on a roof slope does not exceed the total number of bays on the corresponding elevation.

WINDOWS

Windows visible from the public realm should be vertically oriented single- or double-hung, vertically sliding sash windows. However, round-headed, pointed, diamond-shaped, circular or any other shaped window modelled on historic examples found in residential character-defining structures are permitted, particularly under the gable ends of roof peaks.



Slider windows, picture windows and curved bow windows are prohibited.

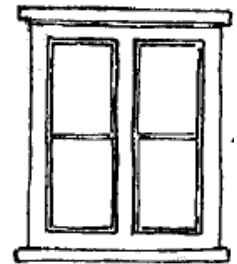
Horizontal or square windows are only permitted in non-principal façades to accommodate internal functions related to, for example, bathrooms and kitchens.

Wide window openings may be achieved by combining windows in a mullioned frame.

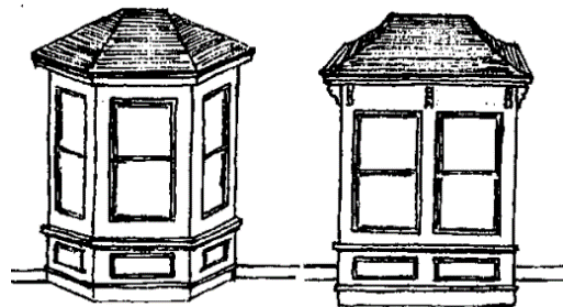
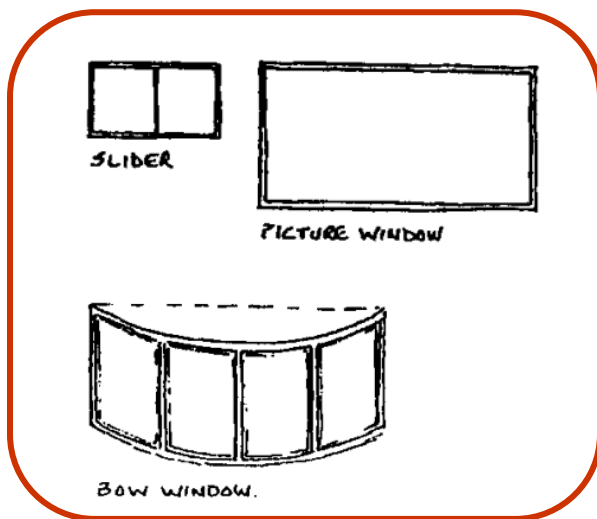
Three and five-sided bay windows modelled on windows found in residential character-defining structures are permissible.



SQUARE WINDOW TO ACCOMMODATE KITCHEN



MULLIONED FRAME



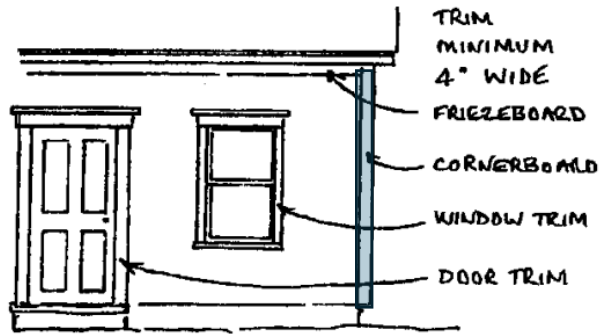
BAY WINDOWS

2.4 TRIM AND ORNAMENTATION

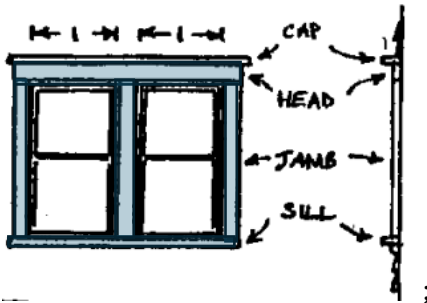
New residential construction SHALL include some decorative elements, elaborate or plain, inspired by decorative elements found on Old Town Lunenburg's residential character-defining structures.

New residential buildings SHALL include at least four of the following:

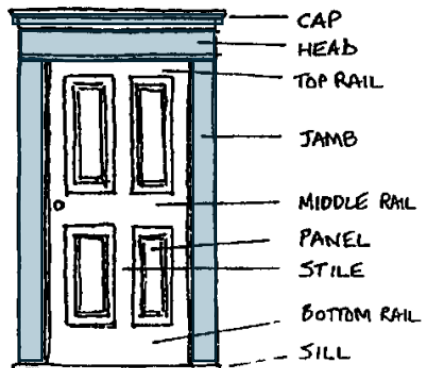
1. Corner boards a minimum of 14 centimetres (5.5 inches) wide;



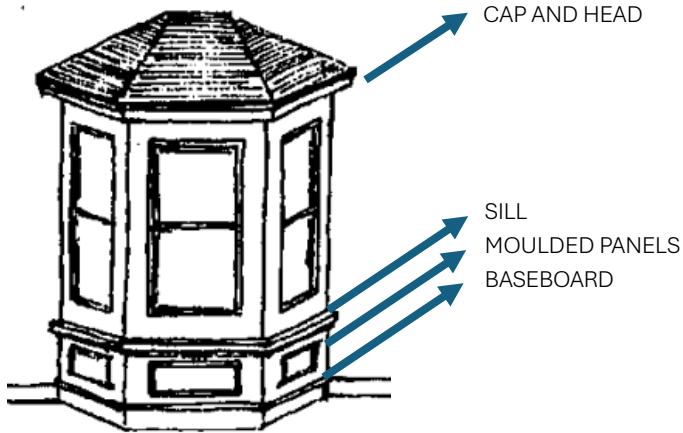
2. Window trim a minimum of 9 centimetres (3.5 inches) wide, preferably consisting of a cap, head, jamb and sill



3. Door trim a minimum of 9 centimetres (3.5 inches) wide, preferably including a well articulated cap;



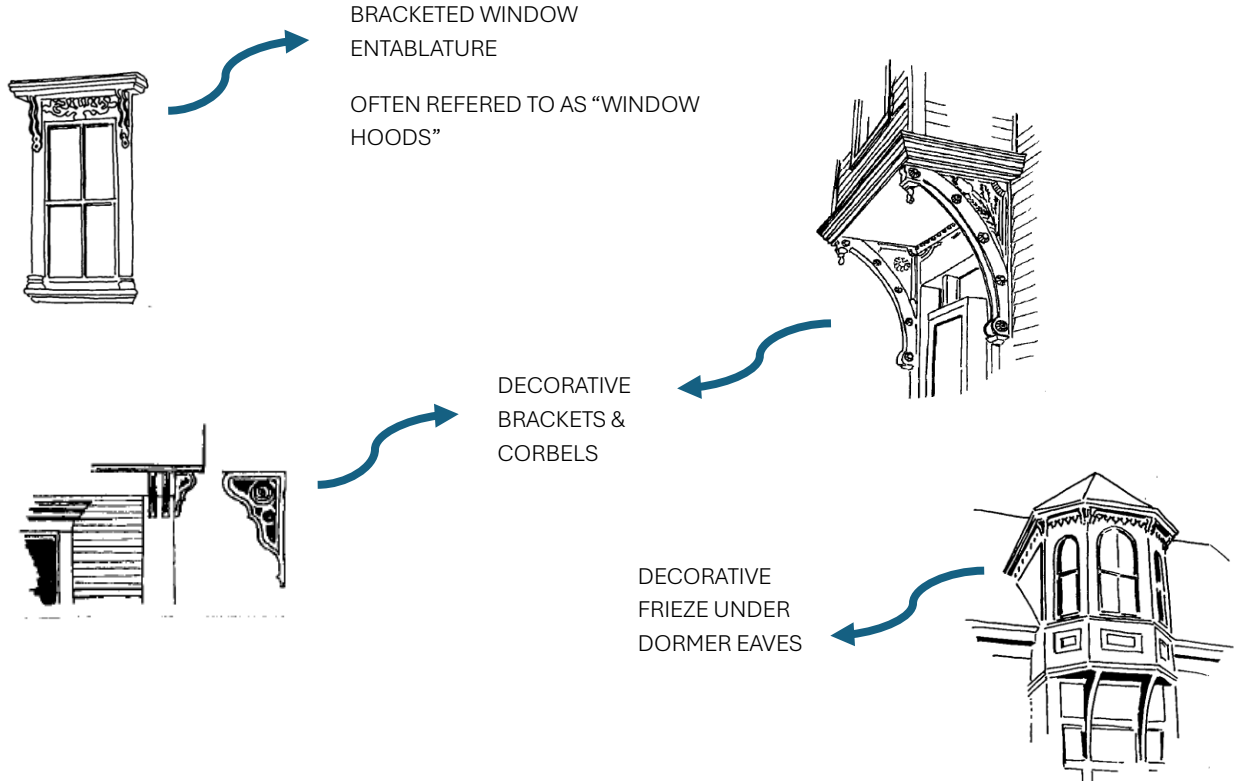
4. Bay window trim, preferably including a prominent cap and head, a well-articulated sill, moulded panels below each window and a baseboard or moulding to define the bottom edge;



5. Porches, verandahs and/or balconies, preferably with upper and lower rails and vertical balusters nailed from the top and bottom based on the traditional design. Face nailing of balusters SHALL be prohibited.



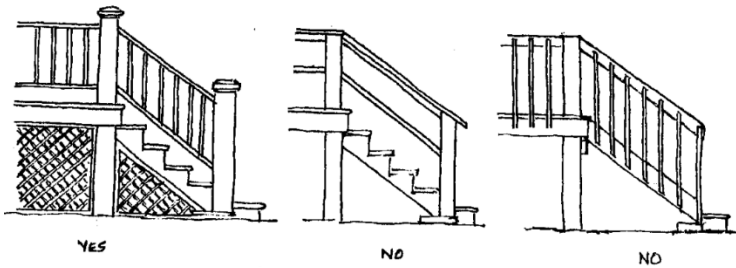
- 6. Decorative brackets, cornices, and/or eaves; and/or
- 7. Any other decorative work found on residential character-defining structures.



EXTERIOR STAIRS

Stair carriages SHALL be constructed with closed risers and treads, with traditional handrails where the balusters are nailed from the top and bottom. Face nailing of balusters SHALL be prohibited.

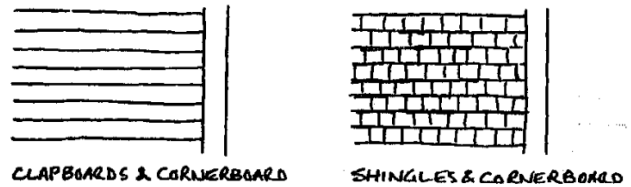
Except for steps associated with a principal or secondary entrance, porch or veranda, exterior staircases SHALL be located on the side or rear of a new residential building.



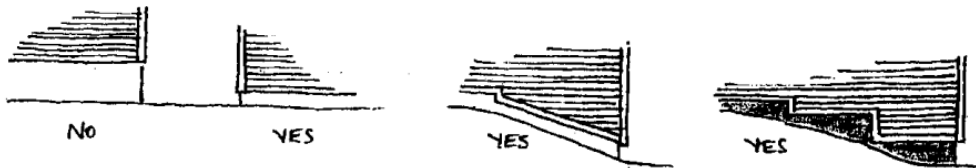
2.5 MATERIALS

SIDING

New houses SHALL be clad in wooden clapboard or shingles laid in horizontal courses approximately 11.5 centimetres (4.5 inches) to the weather.



Foundations SHALL not have large areas of exposed concrete or stone. The height of any exposed foundation may not be greater than 0.305 metres (1 foot) from grade. On sloping sites, cladding and trim SHALL be stepped, and no exposed foundation may be taller than 0.305 metres (1 foot) from grade.



ROOFING

Shingles, especially traditional wooden shingles, are favoured for roofs. However, any material is permissible, including metal roofs, if it does not detract from character-defining structures on the same block as the new residential building. Dark colours are preferred. Bare metal is prohibited. Metal roof slopes within an edge within 1.5 metres (5 feet) of a public right-of-way SHALL have snow guards. Corrugated metal roofs are prohibited. Wood is preferred, but nonwooden doors and windows are permitted.

DECORATIVE DETAILING

Required decorative details inspired by the district's residential character-defining structures SHALL be wooden.

PORCHES, VERANDAHS, AND BALUSTRADES

Porches, verandahs, and balustrades SHALL be wooden. Handrails SHALL be wooden or wrought iron.

STAIRS, RAMPS, AND FENCING

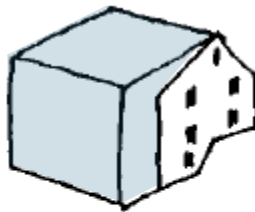
Wood is preferred, but non-wooden stairs and ramps, such as natural stone, are permitted. On principal façades, non-wooden stairs SHALL not exceed one step, and non-wooden ramps are prohibited. Plastic stairs are prohibited.

3 ADDITIONS TO RESIDENTIAL CHARACTER-DEFINING STRUCTURES

- 3.1 New Wings and Extensions
- 3.2 New Rooftop Elements, including Dormers and Skylights
- 3.3 New Windows and Doors
- 3.4 New Decks, Porches, Verandahs, Balconies, Ramps and Stairs



YES - ADDITION
UP TO 25% OF
EXISTING GROUND
FLOOR AREA.

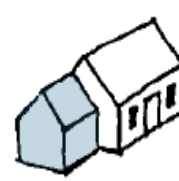


NO - ADDITION
OBSCURES ORIGINAL
STRUCTURE.

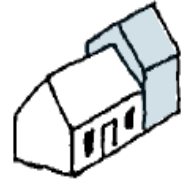
3.1 NEW WINGS AND EXTENSIONS

HEIGHT

No new wing, extension or other additions may be taller than the residential character-defining structure.



YES

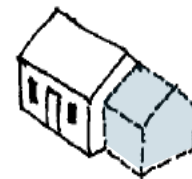


NO

LOCATION

New wings, extensions or other additions SHALL be located to the side or back of residential character-defining structures. Additions to the front of existing principal façades are prohibited.

New wings, extensions or other additions SHALL be offset approximately 1 foot (a third of a metre) from the principal façade (i.e., deeper into the lot, further away from the street).



YES



NO

MATERIALS

New wings, extensions or other additions SHALL be constructed in wood and clad in the same material to the exact specifications as the cladding of the residential character-defining building, except where non-combustible materials are required under the Building Code.



DIFFERENT CLADDING
AND TRIM
NO



SAME CLADDING
AND TRIM
YES

ROOF SHAPE AND FORM

New wings, extensions or other additions SHALL have a roof shape similar or complementary to the roof shape of the residential character-defining building.

While attics may be modified for use, lifting a roof and adding an extra storey to a residential character-defining structure is prohibited.



YES



YES



NO

WINDOWS

New windows SHALL respect the proportions and detailing and be horizontally and vertically aligned with the existing openings of the residential character-defining structures. Windows on new wings, extensions or other additions SHALL continue the pattern, rhythm, proportions, and alignment of windows on the existing building.

The area of any façade visible from the public realm occupied by window and door openings SHALL be no greater than 25%, other than sunrooms, where an area of up to 80% on one level may be approved.

Any rearrangement of windows should be done on the parts of buildings least visible from the public realm. The arrangement of windows on the principal façade may not be altered.

Four skylights are permitted. More than four skylights may be approved, provided the total number of skylights on a roof slope does not exceed the total number of bays on the corresponding elevation.

DOORS

The form, appearance, proportion, materials, door panel style and details of new doors should match those of existing openings on the residential character-defining building and respect the hierarchy of entrances.

TRIM AND DETAILING

New wings, extensions or other additions to residential character-defining structures SHALL include trim and decorative detailing commensurate in material and style with the residential character-defining structure. They should not substantially diverge in alignment or size.

Additions to residential character-defining structures SHALL incorporate door and window trim that complement the historic trim work on the character-defining building.



New wing addition is smaller in height and massing and located at the back of the main building. New wing also features material, windows and doors, trim and detailing complementary to main building.

3.2 NEW ROOFTOP ELEMENTS, INCLUDING DORMERS AND SKYLIGHTS

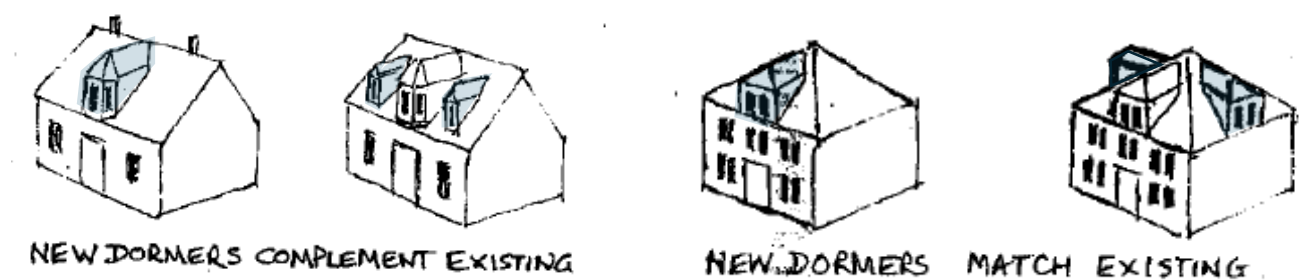
NEW DORMERS

New dormers are encouraged on existing buildings but SHALL not substantially alter the established shape or form of the roof. New dormers should not detract from the roofline or visually overwhelm existing dormers in design, placement, or scale.

Dormers, including existing dormers, SHALL not exceed one-third (1/3) of the structure's total roof area. No more than four dormers SHALL be permitted on any one single roof. Notwithstanding the preceding, more than four dormers may be approved, provided the total number of dormers does not exceed the number of bays on the building's corresponding wall elevation.

Dormers should be vertically aligned or centred between the existing window or door openings in the corresponding façade. Dormers may be offset from window openings if it provides for an overall balanced façade design.

Where dormers already exist on the roof of a residential character-defining building, new dormers SHALL be similar or complementary to the existing dormers in style, proportion, size, trim and window style, profile, and orientation.



Where no dormers already exist on the roof of a residential character-defining building, dormers SHALL be inspired by historic examples found on residential character-defining structures, including but not limited to Gothic, Scottish, Peaked, Pedimented, Hipped, Round-headed and Shed dormers and overhanging dormers like the Lunenburg Bump. Shed dormers should be inset from the roof edges so that they do not obscure the roof's shape.

Large, shed dormers should preferably be located at the rear of residential character-defining structures to preserve the architectural integrity of the principal façade.

SKYLIGHTS

Four skylights are permitted. More than four skylights may be approved, provided the total number of skylights on a roof slope does not exceed the total number of bays on the corresponding elevation.

Skylights SHALL be placed in a visually balanced arrangement relative to the width of the roof and the arrangement of window and door openings in the corresponding façade. Skylights SHALL be centred on the roof or vertically aligned with window and door openings. Skylights may be offset from window openings if it provides for an overall balanced façade design.

Skylights SHALL be parallel with the roof slope and possibly be flush with the roof's pitch but shall not exceed 30.5 centimetres (12 inches) in height from the roof's surface.

Skylights may be vertically oriented or square in profile. They may be constructed of wood or metal, provided the metal has a dark or medium-tone matte colour finish that is compatible with the colour of the roof.

Bubble-style skylights and mirrored glass skylights are prohibited.

OTHER ROOFTOP ELEMENTS

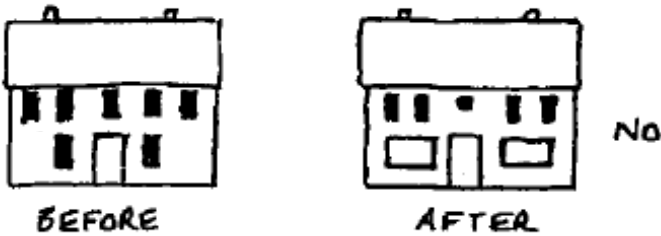
Additions to roofs, such as access stairs, elevator or mechanical equipment housing, and decks and terraces, are discouraged. Such additions SHALL not substantially alter the established shape or form of roofs. Rooftop decks on the principal roof are prohibited.

Whenever possible, locate new rooftop elements, such as vents, drainage components, satellite dishes, solar panels, skylights, etc., out of view of the public realm. Again, such additions SHALL not substantially alter the established shape or form of the roof.

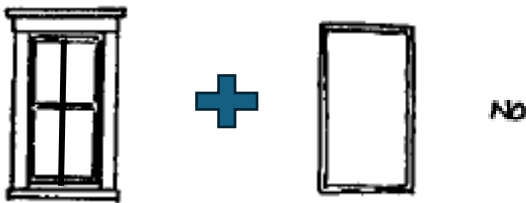
3.3 NEW WINDOWS AND DOORS

NEW WINDOWS

New windows SHALL respect the proportions and detailing and be horizontally and vertically aligned with the existing openings of the residential character-defining structures.



New windows SHALL match the existing windows' profile (glazing style) and be trimmed similarly.

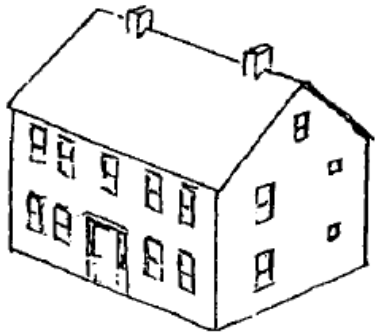


Windows on new wings, extensions or other additions SHALL continue the pattern, rhythm, proportions, and alignment of windows on the existing building.



Round-headed, pointed, diamond-shaped, or circular windows modelled on the various traditional examples SHALL be permitted, provided they are consistent and compatible with the building's architectural style.

Square or horizontally orientated windows may be allowed on non-principal façades to accommodate internal functions such as kitchens and bathrooms.



WINDOW ALTERATIONS LESS NOTICEABLE ON SIDE OR REAR ELEVATION.

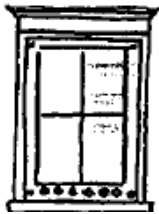


SMALL WINDOW LOOKS BEST IF ALIGNED WITH EXISTING WINDOW AND TRIMMED SYMPATHETICALLY.

Slider windows or curved bow windows are prohibited.

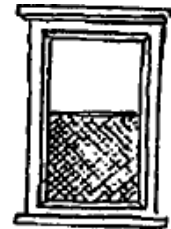
The addition of shutters without historical evidence of their prior existence is prohibited.

While removable wooden storm windows are preferred, fixed metal or aluminum storm windows are permitted, provided they have sash divisions that correspond with those of the windows being covered or otherwise have no sash divisions and provided they have a painted matte finish. Exposed bare metal, bright reflective, and shiny metal storm windows SHALL be prohibited.



WOODEN STORM WINDOWS PREFERRED

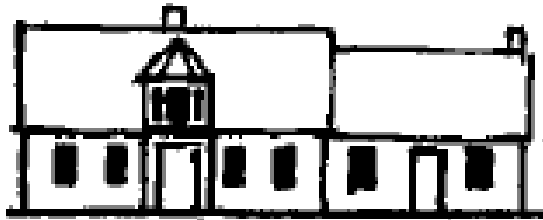
ALUMINUM STORM WINDOWS OK IF SASH DIVISIONS CORRESPOND AND IF METAL SURFACE IS PAINTED



NEW DOORWAYS

New doorways should not be visible from the public realm if possible.

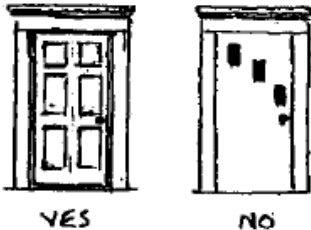
New doorways may not be added to existing principal façades. However, new doorways may be added to the street-facing elevations of new additions.



STREET-FACING SECOND ENTRANCE LOCATED ON NEW ADDITION

New doors SHALL be traditional solid wooden, fibreglass or metal-panelled doors in conformance with the building's style.

Modern door styles such as flush surface doors (no panels), doors with diagonal moulding patterns, and doors with non-traditional glazing patterns are prohibited.



New doorways SHALL not compete with principal entrances. Historic hierarchies of entrances on buildings should be maintained where they exist.

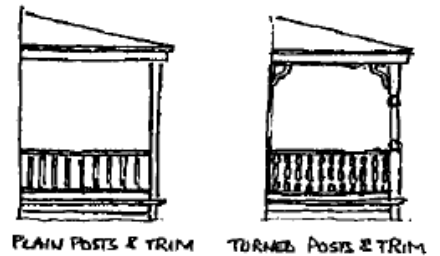
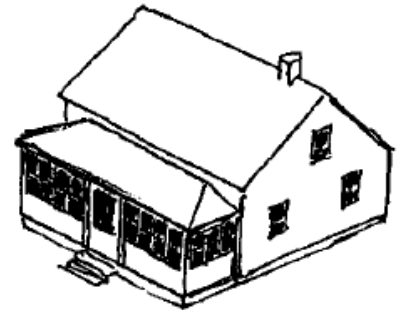
Fully glazed patio doors are prohibited on the principal front façade and/or the principal flanking façade.

3.4 NEW DECKS, PORCHES, VERANDAHS, BALCONIES, RAMPS AND STAIRS

New decks, porches, verandahs, balconies, ramps, and stairs SHALL be constructed of wood.

New decks, porches, verandahs, balconies, ramps, lifts, and stairs by applicable codes, regulations, or accessibility standards SHALL be done in a manner that does not detract from the character defining structure. New decks, porches, verandahs, balconies, ramps, and stairs SHALL be compatible with, subordinate to and distinguishable from the character-defining structure upon close inspection.

Except in the case where a new design that is physically, visually, materially and stylistically compatible with, subordinate to and distinguishable from the character-defining building upon close inspection is replacing a missing historical element of the building (for example, a Victorian verandah that was at one time removed and not replaced), new decks, porches, patios, balconies, stairs and verandahs SHALL not be added to the existing principal façade. However, new decks, porches, patios, balconies, stairs, and verandahs may be added to the street-facing elevations of new additions.



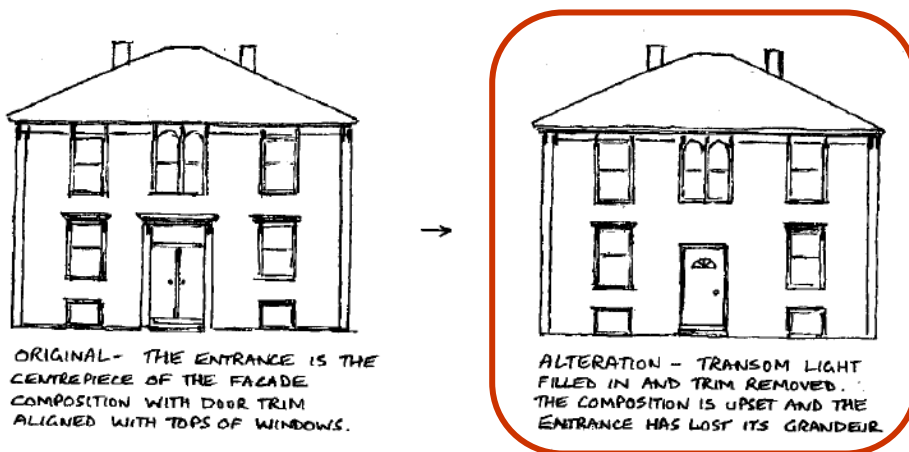
4 ALTERATIONS TO RESIDENTIAL CHARACTER-DEFINING STRUCTURES

4.1 ALTERATIONS THAT MAY BE APPROVED

- Modifications to existing entrances, doors, stairs, porches, balconies, or verandahs to meet accessibility and code regulation requirements. Changes SHALL not detract from the character defining structure and SHALL be compatible with, subordinate to and distinguishable from the character-defining structure upon close inspection. Owners are strongly encouraged to work with case specialists to determine the most appropriate solutions to health, safety, security, and accessibility requirements with the most negligible impact on character-defining structures.
- Present-day materials and technologies should be chosen and used with the greatest caution and only in cases where the durability and structural behaviour of the materials and construction techniques have been satisfactorily proven over a sufficiently long period.
- Adding new features to meet sustainability requirements, such as solar panels or a green roof, in a manner that respects the exterior form and minimizes impact on the character-defining structure.
- Replacement glazing may be approved when historic glazing is damaged or windows are being retrofitted to improve sustainability.
- Replacement doors, including those made of non-historic materials, may be approved if they are physically, visually, and stylistically compatible with the character-defining building. Compatibility includes, but is not limited to, their detailing, profile, and proportion. The door opening SHALL not be altered. Where a doorway has sidelights, transom windows or double doors, these aspects shall be preserved. Surrounding trim SHALL also be preserved.
- New roof coverings may be approved if the pitch, shape and architectural detailing, including, but not limited to, architectural details like dormers, cornices, brackets, dentils, fascia, and widows' walks remain the same, and the new materials are physically, visually and stylistically compatible with the character-defining building.

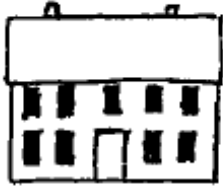
4.2 ALTERATIONS PROHIBITED

- No attempt should be made to 'correct' deflections that have occurred over time and which have no structural significance, and present no difficulties of use, simply to address present-day aesthetic preferences.
- Changes over time should be appreciated and understood as essential aspects of vernacular architecture. Extensive restoration is prohibited.
- Replacement or covering of traditional cladding materials with non-wooden materials, including but not limited to stucco, vinyl siding, aluminum siding and brick or stone veneer.
- Replacement of narrow clapboard or shingles with wide siding or shingles.
- Removing without replacing in kind dormers, frontispieces, bay windows, and architectural decoration such as door and window trim boards, corner boards, and undersides of projecting elements.
- Changes to the dimension, detailing and placement of historic entrances. Entries should be maintained as functioning entrances. Historic hierarchies of entries on buildings should be maintained where they exist.
- Changes to the dimension, detailing and placement of historic windows.
- Blocking or removing historic window and door openings.





NO

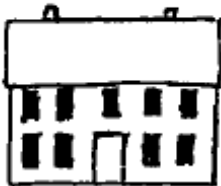


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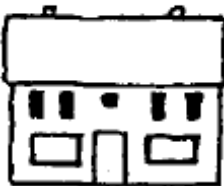


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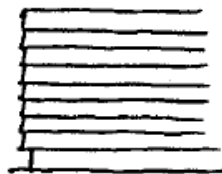


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5 OUTBUILDINGS &

ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS

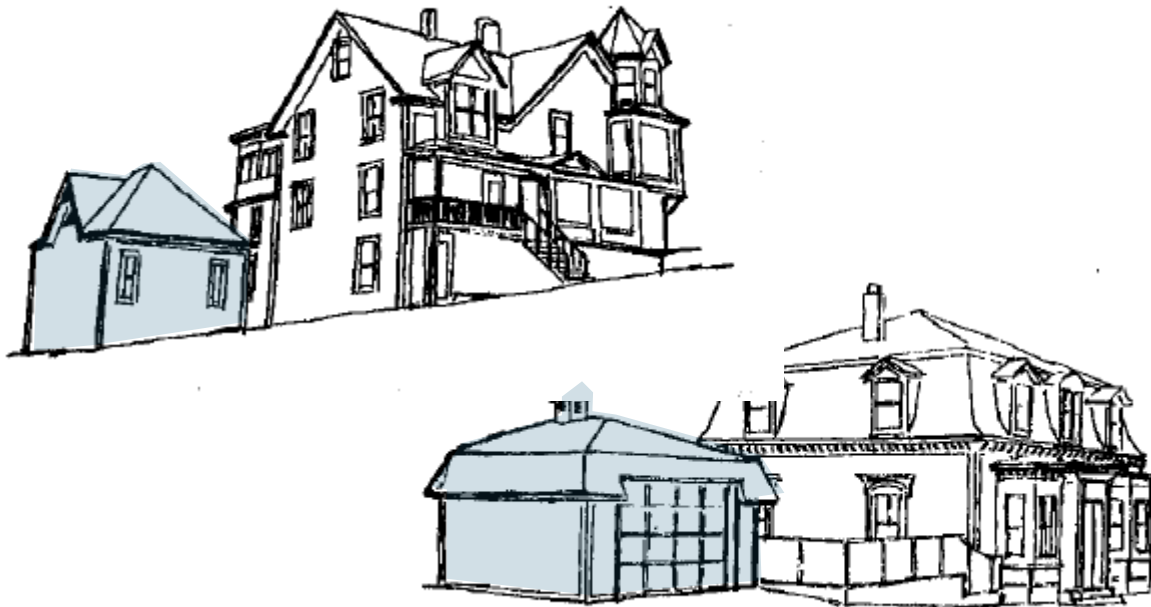
Provisions in this section apply to new outbuildings and the alteration of existing outbuildings.

Outbuildings, including but not limited to sheds and garages, SHALL be physically, visually, and stylistically compatible with and subordinate to the property's main building.

Outbuildings SHALL be stylistically coherent with the main building. This can most easily be accomplished by incorporating similar roof types and pitches, window designs, exterior cladding materials, colour, and architectural detailing.

New outbuildings in all areas except the Waterfront SHALL be clad in wooden clapboard or shingles. Materials other than wood are permitted for windows, doors, and roofs.

Prefabricated metal or plastic storage sheds are prohibited outside the Waterfront Area.





The conversion of this outbuilding creates an opportunity to add housing (often called “infill housing”) within our Old Town Heritage Conservation District.