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# Garyville Historic District

Design Guidelines

Row 10 Historic Preservation Solutions, LLC

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# I. Project Background & Purpose

In 2017, St. John the Baptist Parish (St. John Parish) passed Ordinance No. 17-27. This ordinance established local historic districts, identified local historic landmarks, and created the Historic District Commission. The Commission is responsible for the "preservation and stewardship of designated historic districts" in the Parish; the ordinance gives the Commission the authority to review building and development activity within the historic districts and for designated local landmarks, including using design guidelines to manage and evaluate these activities.

St. John Parish retained Row 10 Historic Preservation Solutions, LLC (Row 10) for the purposes of developing district-specific guidelines for four local historic districts: Garyville Historic District, LaPlace Historic District, Reserve Historic District, and the River Road Historic District. Previously, St. John Parish had relied on the Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and other preservation guidelines to direct decisions regarding the demolition, renovation, and construction within its historic districts. St. John Parish sought specific guidelines that took into account the unique architecture and settlement patterns of the parish and these historic districts to provide a more tailored approach for its historic fabric.

Row 10 relied on previous surveys, survey reports, and parish inventories to tailor these guidelines to the unique characteristics of each district, particularly as related to the historic building types and notable architectural styles. To supplement these inventories, Row 10 referenced resources such as *Louisiana Speaks*, Virginia McAlester's *A Field Guide to American Houses*, and other texts. Widely accepted preservation guidelines, such as the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, the National Park Service *Preservation Briefs*, and other historic district guidelines from across Louisiana, were also used to inform relevant sections of the guidelines.

These guidelines are for the Garyville Historic District.

# II. History of the Garyville Historic District

Through the 18th and 19th centuries, St. John the Baptist Parish and the Garyville area was chiefly agrarian and focused on the waterways that were the primary means of travel.[1]

After the Civil War, many once prosperous sugar cane plantations across the Mississippi River delta began to change ownership as the owners were no longer benefiting from the labor of enslaved peoples. In the late 19th century, the old-growth cypress forests that covered much of Louisiana attracted the next wave of industry, logging, and lumber.[2] In 1903, the Lyon Cypress Lumber Company of Chicago purchased parts of the Emilie, Godchaux, and Glencoe plantations at a bend on the East bank of the Mississippi. The company established the planned community of Garyville to support their new state-of-the-art lumber mill, which they sited near the New Orleans and Texas Railroad line, rather than along the riverfront. The company built the community to house the management staff, mill workers, logging staff, employees' families, and the commercial and institutional buildings that would be required to support a settlement. The town was named for the president of the lumber company, John W. Gary.[3]

The lumber mill and office building were situated on the north side of the East-West railroad line, on North Railroad Street (present day Museum Street). The mill complex included a lumber mill, planing mill, 20-acre mill pond, and an overhead monorail track to move the lumber through the complex. In addition to multiple storage buildings, the company also built a railroad line that transported workers into the swamps to harvest the cypress and bring the felled trees and workers back to town. At its height, the mill was capable of milling 100,000 board feet of cypress lumber daily.[4]

The company built the original residential area on three North-South streets that ran from the railroad line back towards the levee, West, Main, and East Streets (now called Historic West, Historic Main, and Historic East streets, respectively). Workers' housing consisted of primarily one-story cottages along West and East streets. Main Street, however, had a grouping of two-story homes for management and workers with large families. Main Street also saw the construction of some boarding houses and commercial buildings.[5] The original company built and owned residences were described in a 1907 article as uniform in style and setback, with no fences, and painted orange. Workers were charged rent from $8 to $15 every two weeks, depending on the size of the home, which was deducted directly from wages. The town was provided water and electricity from the company's sawmill works. Workers who wanted to own their own homes built on land on either side of the company-built streets, in areas called 'Little Hope' and 'Big Hope".[6]

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[1] "History of St. John the Baptist Parish", Visitors, St. John the Baptist parish website, accessed March 6, 2024, https://www.sjbparish.gov/Visitors/History.

[2] Donna Fricker, "The Louisiana Lumber Boom, c. 1880-1925", Historic Context, Louisiana Office of Cultural Development, accessed March 26, 2024, www.crt.state.la.us/Assets/OCD/hp/nationalregister/historic_contexts/The_Louisiana_Lumber_Boom_c1880-1925.pdf.

[3] "Important Development in the Realm of Cypress- A New Source of Supply", *American Lumberman*, September 10, 1904, 30, https://archive.org/details/sim_home-improvement-center_1904-09-10_1529/page/30/mode/2up and "Garyville Booming", *The Times-Democrat*, April 21, 1904, 4.

[4] "Important Development", *American Lumberman*, 1904 and R. Christopher Goodwin & Associates, Inc., "Historic Resources Survey of Garyville Historic District", 2018, 7 &10.

[5] Goodwin, "Historic Resources Survey", 10.

[6] "Garyville is Unique, Majority of Homes Built on Same Style", *Semi-Weekly Times-Democrat*, May 14, 1907, 10.

The primary commercial development lined the street facing the railroad, at the time called South Railroad Street (now Front Street). These company built and owned buildings were mostly freestanding, one or two-story, and of brick or wood construction.[7]

Historical photographs show the company-built settlement to have a uniform building setback from the street, which was lined with utility poles; sidewalks on both sides of the street; similar appearance among the residences, many of which incorporated front porches; and an overall lack of architectural ornamentation.[8]

The town grew quickly as the lumber company employed anywhere from 900 to 1400 workers to operate the mill 24 hours a day, six days a week.[9] Residential development expanded along North Apple and Church Streets, and further South along West, Main, and East Streets. Commercial expansion included the opening of Gary State Bank on South Railroad Street (Front Street) and an ice plant in 1909.[10] A men's social club offered activities such as billiards, dominos, checkers, a performance stage, and Saturday night cinema features as well as a library association on the second floor.[11] A six-room schoolhouse was constructed on West Street in 1913. St. Hubert Catholic Church and rectory were built at the corner of North Church and present-day Anthony F. Monica streets in 1907, which was soon followed by the company-built Presbyterian Church on Main Street.[12] By 1915, H.S. Preston was advertising the sale of "The King" automobiles in local newspapers in Garyville, a "popular priced" eight-cylinder vehicle.[13]

The year 1915 was a significant year for the lumber company as they had depleted their cypress resources and retrofitted the lumber mill to process hardwood and other pines, in addition to changing their name to Lyon Lumber Company.[14] In 1917, the mill complex included a 380-foot-long sorting shed, a storage shed that could hold approximately nine million board feet of lumber, and six drying kilns, which measured 180 feet in length. The mill complex measured two miles wide by 900 feet long.[15]

In 1925, the mill complex lost the storage shed and contents in a fire, which was followed in 1928 by a larger fire, which again consumed the storage yard as well as 37 homes.[16] With the onset of the Great Depression and the depletion of natural resources after nearly 30 years of logging, the Lyon Lumber Company closed in 1931, leaving almost 1,000 residents unemployed. However, in 1932, former manager Walter J. Stebbins purchased the mill and company-owned property and opened Stebbins Lumber & Supply Company.[17] In addition to offering employment, albeit at a smaller scale than Lyon, Stebbins offered

[7] Goodwin, "Historic Resources Survey", 11 & 12.
[8] "Principally Pine", *Logging*, March 1917, 74, https://www.google.com/books/edition/_/aahAAQAAMAAJ?hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjNh5mG9byFAxUb5ckDHffhD6AQre8FegQIERAG.
[9] "Important Development", *American Lumberman*, 1904, 30.
[10] Gary State Bank charter, *Le Meschacebe*, November 28, 1908, 4.
[11] "A Trip to Garyville", *St. Francisville Democrat*, June 12, 1909, 1.
[12] Goodwin, "Historic Resources Survey", 12.
[13] advertisement, *Le Meschacebe*, August 14, 1915, 2.
[14] Goodwin, "Historic Resources Survey", 12.
[15] "Principally Pine", *Logging*, March 1917, 72-83.
[16] "$350,000 Blaze at Sawmill in Garyville, LA", *Crowley Post-Signal*, March 12, 1925, 1, and "Desastrous [sic] Blaze", *L'Observateur*, September 22, 1928, 1.
[17] "W. J. Stebbins, Garyville Leader, Succumbs at 81", *L'Observateur*, November 30, 1961, 4.

residents the opportunity to purchase their homes outright.[18] Through Stebbin's efforts to maintain employment opportunities in Garyville, the town was able to survive until industrial opportunities were developed along the Mississippi River later in the 20th century. This enabled Garyville to be one of only four Louisiana cypress company mill towns in the state to survive with any measure of recognizable original building stock in the form of the Lyon company headquarters, commercial buildings, and groups of original workers' housing.[19]

Garyville grew slowly but steadily for the next few decades, surging after World War II with the 1940 population of 1,800 residents increasing to 2,389 by 1960. As sugar cane fields along the East Bank of the Mississippi were replaced by industrial complexes through the 20th century, residential development in River Parish towns like Garyville expanded to house the workers. Garyville did sustain damage from Hurricane Betsy in 1965, losing St. Hubert Catholic Church, the original railroad depot, and tthe widow's walk and second story porch on the Stebbins Lumber Company headquarters (the original Lyon Cypress Lumber Company building).[20] St. Hubert's was replaced in 1967, the depot was not rebuilt, and Stebbins' widow's walk and porch were reconstructed in 1993, though the company had closed in the early 1970s.

The last three decades of the 20th century introduced industrial complexes in Garyville, which have become important to the town's economy. The Nalco chemical manufacturing plant covers 220 acres along Garyville's western border with Mt. Airy.[21] The San Francisco Plantation, along Garyville's eastern border with Lions, was purchased by the Energy Corporation of Louisiana, which then sold the land to Marathon Petroleum Corporation. Marathon operates an oil refinery on land stretching from the plantation house on LA-44 (River Road) over a mile and a half inland, almost to US Hwy-61 (Airline Highway).



[18] Goodwin, "Historic Resources Survey", 12.
[19] Fricker, "The Louisiana Lumber Boom", 19.
[20] "Timbermill Museum tour", *L'Observateur*, November 22, 2000, 13 & 16.
[21] "Huge chemical plant for state", *Daily News*, April 30, 1969, 14.

# III. Characteristics of the Garyville Historic District

As a corporate mill-town built at the beginning of the 20th century, Garyville's first buildings were mostly vernacular, simple forms. There are stylistic trends, however, that can be traced through the development and expansion of the town over the last 120+ years.

The original town was founded with the lumbermill and company office north of the east-west railroad lines, off of what is now Museum Street. Commercial buildings were located on the south side of the railroad lines, facing the tracks, on what is now Historic Front Street. Residential housing was built on three north-south blocks south of the commercial area, Historic West, Main, and East Streets, running back towards the river levee. While Lyon was still in operation, some residential housing was also built north of the tracks and west of the lumbermill on North Church and Apple Streets. The original layout for the town was on a grid pattern, parallel to the railroad. The historic district encompasses most of the original layout of Garyville, with connecting streets to those stated above as the residential sections grew through the mid-20th century.

Garyville Historic District has two periods of significance: 1903 to 1931, covering the span of Lyon Lumber Company's ownership and operation of the mill; and 1932 to 1968, which covers the post-Lyon adjustment period of town growth and expansion during increasing industrialization.

The following historic building types and architectural styles are drawn from the Historic Resources Survey of Garyville Historic District completed by R. Christopher Goodwin & Associates in 2018; no additional survey was conducted as part of the guidelines project.

## Historic Building Types

### Cottage

**Type vs. Style**

A building type is the basic form of the building. A building's architectural style includes the decorative features that are draped over the form.

A popular historic residential building throughout Louisiana is the cottage-type building, which make up approximately one-third of the historic homes in Garyville's historic district. The original residential homes built by Lyon Cypress Lumber Company for workers' housing were cottages along the three original residential streets of West, Main, and East streets (Historic West, Historic Main, and Historic East streets, respectively). Common characteristics of Cottages are as follows:

- Typically, one or one and a half stories in height.
- The six surviving two-story cottages with first floor, full-width porches on Historic Main Street were built by Lyon in 1903 to house management and workers with large families. These homes originally featured distinctive, wide-set second floor windows.
- Pier foundations.
- Front gable roofs are most common in the district, though examples of side-, hip-, and cross-gabled roofs are also extant. Pyramidal roofs are similarly common in early Lyon Company worker's cottages.

- The majority of cottages in the district have a full-width porch with shed roof. Some cottages have partial-width porches integrated under the primary rooflines.
- Cottages are typically asymmetrical, as shown in the two rooms wide by three rooms deep examples constructed by Lyon in 1903.
- Original wood windows are typically double-hung sash.

*Figure 1- c.1905 Cottage, 338 Historic West Street*

*Figure 2- c. 1905 two-story Cottage, 470 Historic Main Street*

## Bungalow

Bungalows became a popular residential building type throughout the United States during the early 20th century. They share many stylistic characteristics with cottages, with the addition of certain aspects that became popular during the Arts and Crafts movement.

- Asymmetrical facades.
- Generally one or one-and-one-half stories.
- Prominent porches, often incorporated under the main roof.
- Complex roof configurations.
- Often have Craftsman-style architectural details (see below).

*Figure 3- c.1915 Bungalow, 206 Museum Street*

## Minimal Traditional Cottage

During the Great Depression, vernacular residential housing tended to be simple in style, with minimal architectural detail. This continued into the post-World War II housing boom that saw an emphasis on quantity rather than artistic style. Minimal traditional cottages were faster and more affordable to construct than Craftsman bungalows. Typical characteristics are as follows:

- One-story in height and modest in scale.
- Commonly have shallow gabled roofs with little to no overhang.

*Figure 4-c.1920 Minimal Traditional, 149 North Apple Street*

## Ranch

Ranch houses originated in California in the 1930s but spread nationwide in the 1950s and 1960s. This style has many distinctive stylistic characteristics such as:

- One-story buildings on concrete slab foundations.
- Asymmetrical façade with a strong horizontal emphasis.
- Low pitched roofs.
- Brick exteriors are typical.
- Garages are often integrated into the house plan.

*Figure 5- c.1960 Ranch, 120 North Church Street*

## Freestanding Commercial

Commercial buildings are primarily identified by a ”storefront” entrance, typically on the ground level with a generous use of glass in the façade to display merchandise. Some typical characteristics of early 20th century commercial buildings are:

- Utilization of transom windows above entrance doors and display windows on front façade.
- Use of parapets along the top of flat front building facades, sometimes in front of low-slope roofs.
- Full glass entrance doors.

*Figure 6- c.1910 Freestanding Commercial, 200 Museum Street*

## Late 20th Century Domestic

Though the period of significance for the historic district ends in 1968, residential expansion in the district has been ongoing since that year. Though non-contributing to the district, a percentage of the extant homes were built in the late 20th century and reference no historical architectural style. These residences fall into two categories, single-family and multi-family dwellings.

The appearance and size of single-family dwellings can vary widely and range from one to two stories in height. Poured concrete slab foundations are most common, as are brick facades; however, vinyl siding and stucco are also popular choices of cladding. Hip or side-gabled roofs with either asphalt shingles or metal roofing is typical. Windows are primarily vinyl or metal-frame. Many of these homes have porches or stoops on their front façade.

*Figure 7- c. 2005 Late 20th Century, 337 Historic Main Street*

## Mobile Homes

Mobile homes spread in popularity in the United States beginning in the 1950s as a low-cost alternative to traditional building methods. Though non-contributing to the historic district, mobile home "parks" and singular units are located within the district. These one-story, prefabricated structures have rectangular footprints and typically have metal cladding. Their pier foundations may or may not be obscured by foundation skirting.

*Figure 8- c.2000 Mobile Home, 386 Historic West Street*

# Architectural Styles

## Queen Anne

Queen Anne homes are known for their architectural detailing such as decorative wood cutouts ("gingerbread trim"), irregular massing, shingle cladding, and use of bow windows. They became popular in the United States in the late 19th century. In the Garyville historic district, this style is seen in simple expressions, such as decorative brackets on porches and an irregular footprint. Typical characteristics of this style include:

- Steeply pitched roof of irregular shape.
- Patterned shingle siding.
- Cutaway bay windows or other irregular massing.
- Asymmetrical façade with partial or full-width porch.
- Round, square, or polygonal towers.

*Figure 9- c1905 Queen Anne, 157 Historic Front Street*

## Craftsman

The Craftsman style became popular across the United States at the turn of the 20th century and was common through the 1930s. The style was heavily influenced by the Arts and Crafts movement and became one of the most popular smaller house styles across the country. Typical characteristics of this style include:

- Low pitched gabled roof with an unenclosed eave overhang.
- Exposed roof rafter ends.
- Decorative beams or braces under gables.
- Full or partial width porches with distinctive columns supporting the porch roof.
- Double or tapered columns on column bases.
- One or one-and-a-half story, wood framed construction is more common than two-story homes.

*Figure 10- c.1925 Craftsman Bungalow, 112 North Apple Street*

## Ranch

Ranch homes became the most popular style of American home by the 1960s. They have many typical characteristics such as:

- One story asymmetrical facade with a horizontal emphasis.
- Low pitched roof with moderate to wide eave overhangs.
- Often incorporates a garage in the footprint.
- Brick exteriors are very common.
- Concrete slab foundation.

*Figure 11- c1960 Ranch, 153 North Apple Street*

# Character-defining Features of the Garyville Historic District

## Roadways

The roadways tend to be narrow with no medians or stone curbing. The town is primarily without sidewalks and features deep ditches between streets and lots, but some stretches of original, early 20th century sidewalks remain. Many of the driveways in the historic district require a culvert to allow drainage through a street-side ditch. Culverts range from metal and concrete pipes to concrete piers.

## Setbacks

The buildings constructed in the early 20th century have a consistent setback with a shallow front yard. Buildings are oriented towards the streets, which are primarily set in a grid pattern. Later 20th century construction has deeper setbacks to the street and properties tend to feature paved parking.

## Landscaping

Most residential lots are landscaped with a mix of trees and shrubs with older construction featuring mature specimens. New construction does show some planting of trees and shrubs at lot edges. Shallow front lawns are typical of many of the early 20th century houses.

## Street furniture

The historic district does not have any notable street furniture, such as historic lampposts, benches, or bus stops. Street signs are utilitarian and small in size.

## Driveways

The majority of residential lots have dedicated parking areas. Driveways throughout the district are either compacted gravel or concrete pad.

## Fences

There are few historic fences within the historic district. Primarily, fencing is modern metal chain-link fencing at property edges and backyards. Some decorative modern picket fencing is located throughout the district.

# IV. Design Review Process

The following outlines the steps in the design review process, including the role of the Historic Preservation Commission and the Certificate of Appropriateness (CoA).

## Ordinance 17-27

Ordinance 17-27 establishes the Historic Preservation Commission, its role in historic preservation in St. John Parish, and the design review process. The ordinance passed in 2017 in response to the loss of historic building stock in the Parish in recent years.

Ordinance 17-27 grants the Commission the authority to "preserve, protect, and enhance" St. John Parish's historic districts, including via design guidelines and a design review process. The Commission consists of seven members, with three members appointed by the Parish President and four members appointed by the Parish Council. Each member serves a four-year term; the position is volunteer and unpaid. The Commission members are made up of representatives of the historic districts, individuals with a background in historic, cultural, educational, archaeological, architectural, artistic, and preservation organizations, and electors of St. John Parish.

The ordinance also establishes the four historic districts in St. John Parish, identifies the Certificate of Appropriateness (CoA) process, the appeals process in regards to a CoA, steps related to any violations, and other preservation-related matters for the Parish.

Ordinance 17-27 is available here.

## Certificate of Appropriateness Process and Role of the Historic Preservation Commission

One of the chief activities of the Commission is issuing CoAs. To complete work on a historic building within the Garyville historic district, a property owner must obtain a CoA. The CoA certifies that the proposed work is in keeping with historic preservation and the historic district guidelines of St. John Parish.

A CoA is required for the following types of work within historic districts, design review corridors, or local landmark sites:

- Demolition of a historic building or structure.
- Alteration, renovation, or rehabilitation of a historic building or structure beyond ordinary maintenance and repair. CoAs are required for alteration, renovation or rehabilitation projects that affect the exterior of a building; solely interior work does not require a CoA.
- New construction and additions if within a design review corridor or part of a local landmark.
- New signs or alterations to existing signs.

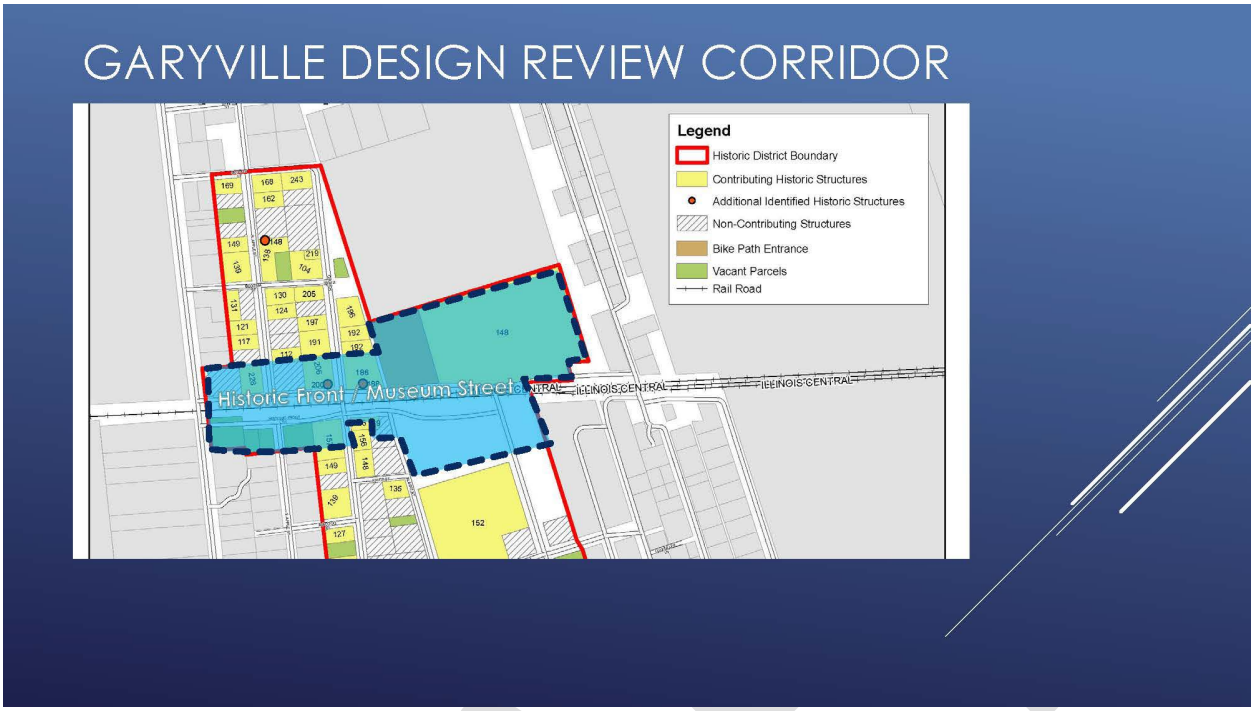



*Figure 12: Garyville Design Review Corridor*

A CoA is obtained by submitting a Historic District Application (available here) to the St. John Parish Planning and Zoning Department. The Historic District Application identifies the supporting materials a property owner must submit for review by the Historic District Commission, including photos, elevations, and floor plans. Upon receipt of a full and complete application, the St. John Parish Historic District Commission will review the application and schedule the project for review during a public Commission meeting; the property owner must attend the meeting.

If the Historic District Commission approves the proposed work, a CoA is issued, and the property owner can proceed with the work once he or she obtains all other necessary permits. If the Historic District Commission rejects the proposed work, the property owner has the opportunity to revise the proposed work and resubmit.

Some work, such as routine maintenance measures, may be approved by Planning and Zoning staff and not require Commission approval; a full application package must still be submitted for review.

Any work, including demolition, conducted without a valid CoA will receive a stop work order from the St. John Parish Planning and Zoning Department. If the issue is not resolved via the issuance of a CoA, additional steps will be taken.

## Appeals

If the property owner wishes to appeal the decision of the Commission, an appeal must be submitted in writing to the Planning and Zoning Department; the appeal must be received within ten days of the written decision of the Commission. The appeal is considered by the Parish Council, who can confirm or reverse the decision of the Commission.

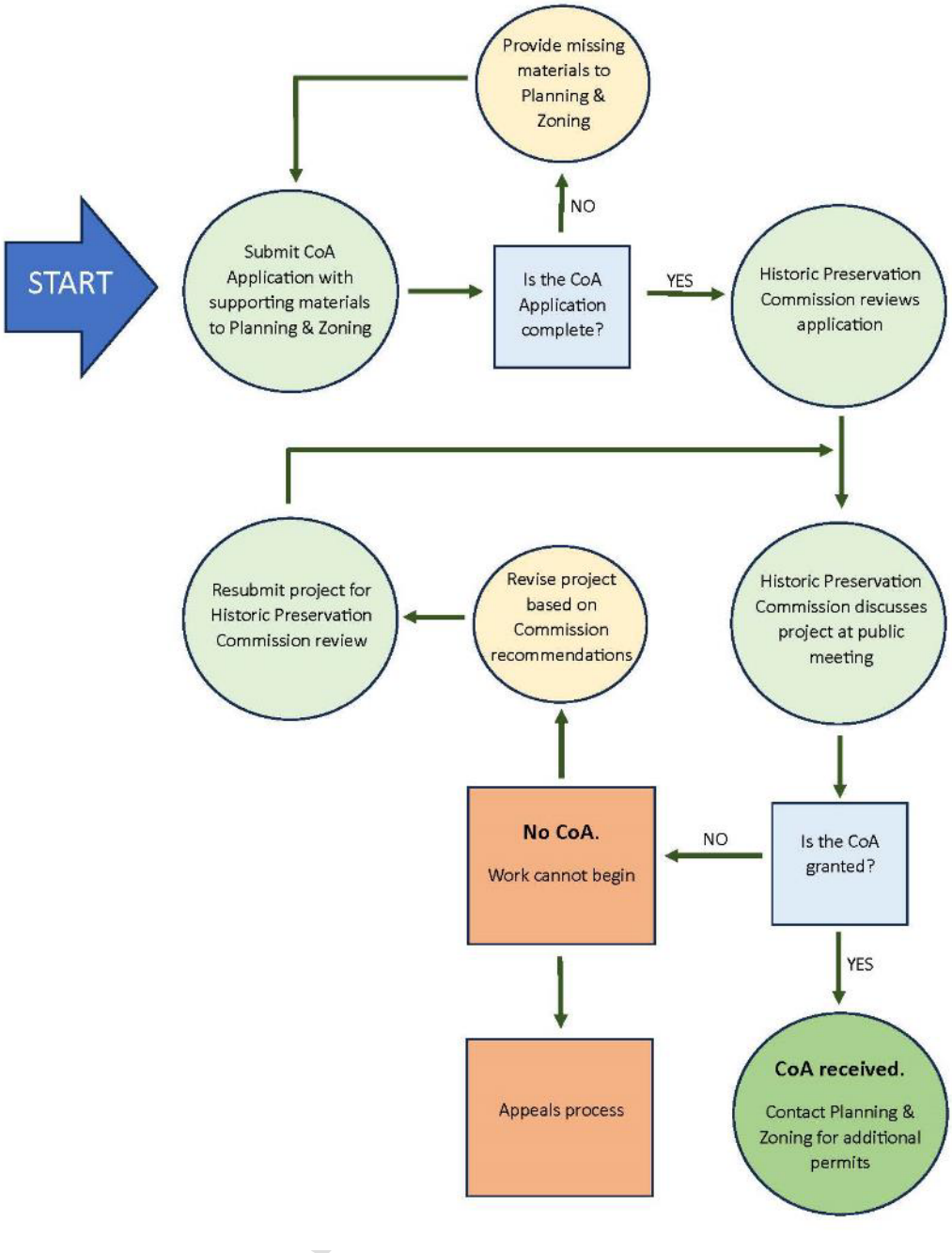



*Figure 13: The process for obtaining a CoA.*

# V. Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

The Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation underpin these guidelines and provide guidance for appropriate treatment of historic properties. The Standards for Rehabilitation allow for flexibility in rehabilitation projects by taking into account the financial and technical viability of a project, as well as recognizing the unique set of circumstances that accompany renovating historic buildings. The following Standards should be used to make appropriate decisions for repairs, alterations, and additions to historic properties:

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 in 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.

# VI. Roofing

## General Recommendations

Roof repairs or replacements should retain the historic appearance and characteristics of the historic roof. Consider the roof configuration, slope, and materials. Adding new features or changing the characteristics of the roof is not appropriate unless there is evidence in historic photographs or drawings that the building had these features in the past.

Historic decorative features or details on a roof should not be permanently removed. If they must be temporarily removed during repairs or other roof work, when replaced, they should maintain their historic location and orientation.

If there is damage to a roof due to high wind or hurricanes, temporary roof coverings should be installed as soon as it is safe to do so. Tarps are useful in this situation, however, roll roofing that carefully patches the damaged portion of the roof can allow time to document the roof materials, current conditions, and order appropriate materials.

## Materials

Roof repairs and replacements should be done with in-kind materials. i.e., replace slate tiles with slate tiles of similar shape, size, and appearance as the historic tiles. Materials should not just match in color but should match in material as well.

If not possible to replace with in-kind materials, modern materials that mimic historic materials—such as synthetic slate—would be considered appropriate if they resemble the historic materials and have an appropriate degree of longevity.

Replacement with a different, historically appropriate material is an option if the material is sympathetic with the building's architectural style and/or historic evidence (such as an old photograph of the house) shows the material was present at one time.

*Figure 14: Example of synthetic slate roof*

### Slate Roofs

- Use slates that match in appearance, including color and texture, along with size and scale to replace any missing slates.
- Maintain any distinctive decorative patterns or designs on the roof; any replacement slate should not interrupt the original pattern.
- If a slate roof requires replacement, and a synthetic slate material is chosen as a replacement material, choose synthetic slate that closely matches the original slate roof in color and appearance.

## Tile Roofs

- Use tiles that match in color, appearance, size, scale, and shape to replace any missing tiles.
- Patch any cracked tiles with roofing cement tinted to match the color of the historic tiles.
- Select tiles that match the color, shape, scale, and size of the historic roof if a tile roof requires full replacement.

*Figure 15: Example of a ridge tiles on an asphalt roof*

## Asbestos Shingle Roofs

- Involve a certified asbestos contractor in any project that requires removal or replacement of an asbestos shingle roof.
- Assess the condition of the shingle attachments; any loose or rusted nails require replacement. Reattach any loose shingles.
- Match any replacement shingles in size, shape, and general appearance to the original shingles.
- When replacing an asbestos roof, ensure the project complies with local and environmental regulations, including disposal of the old shingles.

*Figure 16: Example of an asbestos shingle roof*

## Asphalt Shingle Roofs

- Match any damaged or missing asphalt shingles with replacement shingles that are of the same size, color, appearance, and scale.
- Assess shingle condition; any loose nails should be replaced or reattached to ensure the security of the shingles.
- If an entire asphalt shingle roof requires replacement, match the original shingles in size, scale, color, and general appearance.

*Figure 17: Example of an asphalt shingle roof.*

## Metal Roofs

- Protect metal roofs from rust and/or deterioration by repainting as needed (if applicable).
- Use materials of similar appearance to patch any holes or gaps in the roof.
- Patch any damaged, missing, or corroded areas with compatible materials that visually match the roofing materials.



*Figure 18: Examples of a modern metal roof, brick chimney, and dormer.*

## Chimneys

- Maintain any decorative features of a chimney, such as chimney pots or corbeling. Any repair projects should ensure these features are retained in their original location.
- Use mortar that matches in appearance and composition to the original for repointing any open or weakened mortar joints.
- Use compatible materials of the same size, texture, color, scale, and materials to replace any missing or deteriorated chimney components.
- Removing an interior fireplace should not result in removing the exterior chimney.

## Dormers

- Retain any existing dormers, including the style, window frame, and roof shape.
- Avoid adding dormers to a historic building that did not previously have one.
- Consider removing non-historic dormers on a historic building.

## Gutters and Downspouts

- Install new gutters and/or downspouts in a manner that is minimally intrusive to the historic character of the building.
- Ensure the installation does not unnecessarily damage any historic materials.

*Figure 19: Example of a gutter and downspout*

# VII. Cladding

In keeping with the Secretary of Interior's *Standards for Rehabilitation*, the goal is to keep as much historic material as possible, repair as much as you can, and, if replacement is necessary, choose new materials that match in material and appearance. This guidance applies to any type of siding on the house, even if there is more than one type of siding. Historic decorative features of the siding should be retained, replaced, or replicated.

## General Recommendations

- Use replacement materials that match in size, shape, thickness, and general material.
- Replicate any distinctive patterns or styles in the siding.
- Don't encapsulate architectural features under new cladding.
- Use the gentlest approach to cleaning historic cladding. Do not utilize sandblasting, metal brushes, grinders, or high-pressure power washing, as these methods can damage historic material.

## Paint

- Paint is not only a decorative feature of your building but also a protective element of exterior woodwork and stucco, extending the life of the material. Paint can be destructive when non-permeable paint is applied to historic masonry or stucco, trapping moisture and weakening historic masonry, stucco, and grout.
- Maintain the painted surface of historically painted buildings or features. Choose colors based on the age and architectural style of the building.
- Avoid painting a previously unpainted masonry building.
- Use the gentlest means possible when removing old and failing paint. Removing paint by hand, through scraping, using hand tools, moderate heat, steam, or sanding is recommended to avoid damaging the underlying historic material. Sandblasting, high-pressure power washing, blowtorches, and paint thinning solvents will damage the surface of the historic material, decreasing its lifespan.
- If existing paint is protecting damaged masonry or other surface materials from disintegration, it should not be removed.
- Buildings built prior to 1978 are likely to contain lead-based paint. Ensure removal is undertaken in compliance with local and environmental regulations in order to protect yourself, family, and pets. Keep children and pets away from any paint removal projects and use caution around any dust generated by the removal process.

*Figure 20: Examples of various types of wooden siding - drop siding (L), clapboards (center), and fishscale shingles (R).*

## Wood

- Maintain and repair exterior woodwork. If only a small area or component is damaged or rotted, patch as needed with wooden materials of the same size, shape, thickness, and general appearance.
- If replacement or repair materials are required, ensure any distinctive features are replicated or reproduced on the replacement materials, such as a beaded edge on a clapboard.
- Match any replacement shingles with the same size, shape, materials, thickness, and general appearance. Ensure the shingle pattern is maintained and replicated during any repair or replacement projects.
- Do not encapsulate existing historic woodwork under synthetic siding, such as vinyl or aluminum.
- If the exterior woodwork requires full replacement, choose a new siding that replicates the existing woodwork in size, shape, profile, and appearance. Match the historic pattern and orientation. Never replace shingle siding with lap siding.
- Do not use fiber cement siding, such as Hardieplank, on historic buildings as the material is incompatible with historic wood siding in dimension and appearance.

## Masonry

- Replace any missing or damaged historic bricks with bricks of similar size, color, and shape. Maintain the original brick pattern and any decorative brickwork.

- Clean historic masonry with mild detergent and a soft brush. Avoid cleaning a historic masonry wall with sandblasting, metal brushes, or grinders, as these methods are likely to damage the surface of the masonry.
- Do not a previously unpainted brick surface. Modern paints can damage historic brick by trapping water behind the paint surface, and masonry details such as decorative brick patterns should not be covered or concealed.
- Replace missing or damaged concrete blocks with blocks of similar size, color, and shape.
- Do not paint a previously unpainted concrete block wall.
- Modern mortar mix can damage historic brick. Ensure the mortar mix is compatible with the age of the brick and existing mortar by consulting a mortar mix or historic masonry professional.
- Use the gentlest possible manner when removing loose or powdery mortar prior to repointing.
- Match new mortar to cleaned, historic mortar in both color and joint profile. Be careful to not damage historic brick when removing old mortar. Removal of mortar is safest when done with hand tools.
- Do not alter the width of the mortar joins during repointing.

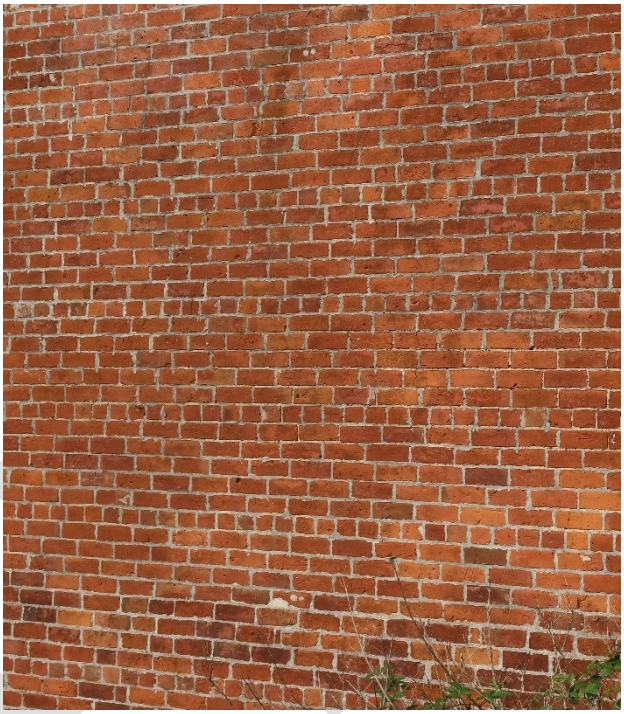


*Figure 21: Example of a brick wall laid in common bond with sixth row headers*

## Stucco

- Patch damaged existing stucco where feasible. Match patching material in color, consistency, and finish to historic stucco finishes.
- Do not add a stucco finish to areas that previously did not have stucco.
- Do not apply create a false historic appearance by adding stucco or stucco-like treatments, such as “German Schmear” to a historic building.
- Do not encapsulate historic stucco behind new cladding. Trapped moisture will damage the stucco and the framing behind the stucco.

*Figure 22: Detail of a stucco clad wall*

## Synthetic

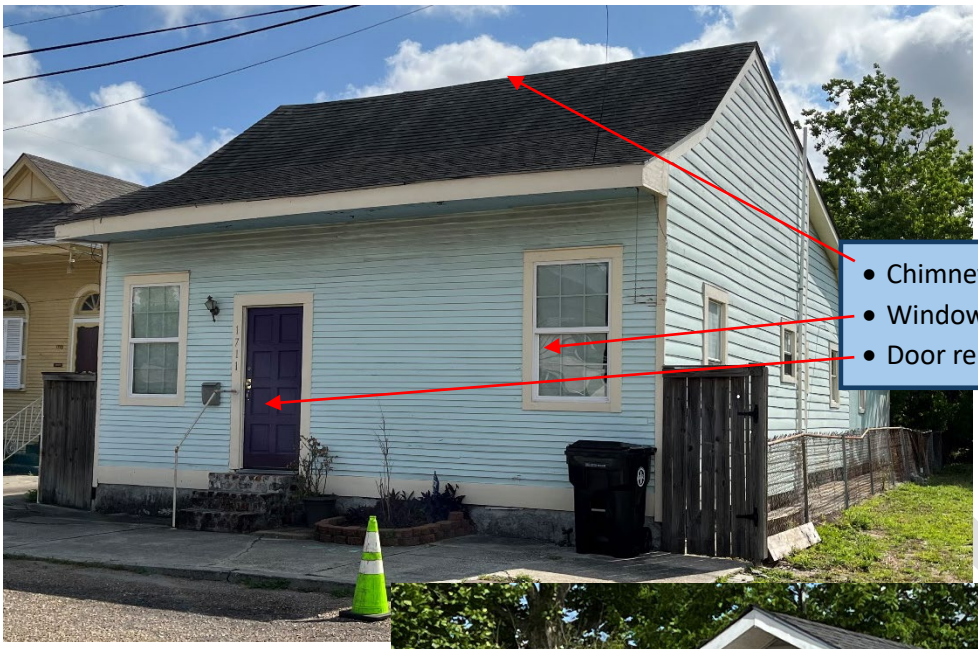
- When replacing vinyl or aluminum siding, match the style and pattern as closely as possible.

## Other

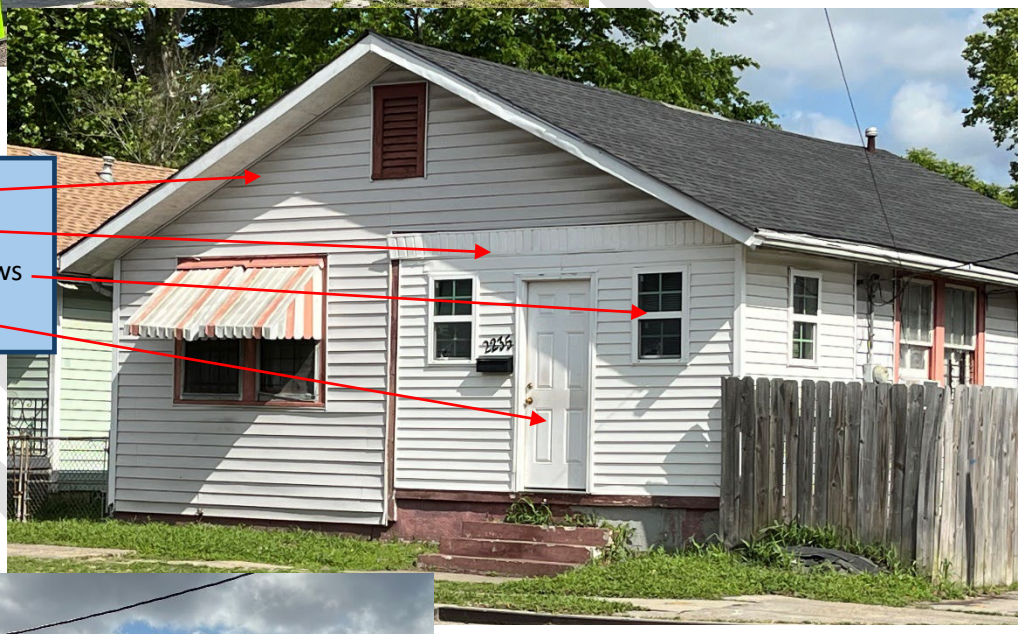
- Asbestos siding shingles are hazardous to remove. Ensure removal is undertaken in compliance with local and environmental regulations in order to protect yourself, family, and pets. Keep children and pets away from any asbestos removal projects, and use caution around any dust generated by the removal process.
- Replace or reattach any loose or rusted nails attaching asbestos shingles to the wall.
- Replace missing or damaged asbestos shingles with non-asbestos shingles that match in size, style, and shape.

*Figure 23: Example of aluminum siding (L) and asbestos shingle siding (R)*

## When Bad Decisions Happen to Good Buildings



- Chimney removed
- Windows replaced
- Door replaced



- Vinyl siding
- Porch enclosed
- Unsympathetic windows
- Door replaced

- Cornice enclosed
- Unsympathetic windows
- Replacement porch components
- Vinyl siding

# VIII. Windows

Historic windows have distinctive features and characteristics that contribute to the overall architectural style of the house, and these details should be retained. Windows may have a variety of configurations, such as casement, double-hung sash, triple-hung sash, or hopper types. Prioritize repair, instead of replacement, of these historic windows. The configuration, materials, appearance, and number of windowpanes, frames, mullions, and muntins are all important parts of historic windows.

## General Recommendations

- Repair historic windows instead of replacing them.
- Do not install windows bought off the shelf from "big box" home improvement stores. These windows are generally incompatible with the architecture, materials, and appearance of a historic building.
- Seek out salvaged windows to replace a damaged window or sash.
- Match new windows in size, shape, configuration, and general appearance to the historic windows.
- Do not alter the opening to accommodate a new window.

## Repair of Wooden Windows

Full replacement of wooden windows should be avoided, as wooden window components are often easily repaired. Cracked or broken glass, missing putty, and rotten rails can all be repaired and are not indicative the entire window requires replacement. A damaged upper or lower sash can be replaced with a sash of similar size and appearance, thus maintaining the historic character of the building. Addressing any damaged or broken window components in a timely manner will help extend the life of historic windows.

- Monitor for rot, insect damage, missing glazing putty, or cracked panes of glass and repair as needed.
- Repair and replace missing components, such as glass, glazing putty, muntins, and sash cords.
- Replace clear glass with clear glass; avoid using colored or beveled glass in a window that previously had clear glass.
- Repair and retain window surrounds, trim, and hardware.
- Maintain the muntin pattern and glass type and configuration.

## Replacing Windows

- Choose windows with clear glass. Avoid installing windows with colored or beveled glass if the previous windows were clear. Frosted glass may be appropriate in certain circumstances.
- Find a salvaged window of the same size, materials, and appearance as the historic window. Salvaged windows are preferrable over new windows.
- Source a high-quality replacement window if an appropriate salvaged window cannot be located. Any new window must match in size, appearance, and profile as the historic window.
- Ensure any replacement or salvaged windows are installed at the same position within the wall. Avoid installing new windows flush with the exterior wall if the historic windows were set back.
- Keep any hardware, historic trim, drip cap, trim and other historic features as part of any window replacement project.

- Do not change the location, size, or shape of a historic window opening to accommodate a replacement window. Do not install infill panels between a smaller new window and the historic opening.
- Do not modify the type of window, i.e. do not replace a double-hung sash window with a casement window.
- Do not modify the shape of a window, i.e. do not replace an arched window with a flat window or a flat window with a bow window.
- Do not install modern vinyl or aluminum windows; these window types are generally incompatible with most historic buildings.
- Do not add blackout or mirrored privacy films to historic windows; these finishes are incompatible with most historic buildings.

## Shutters

- Do not install fixed shutters.
- Match shutters to the architectural style and historic character of the building.
- Match the shutters to the windows. Ensure any shutters correspond to the size, shape, and opening of the windows, i.e. don't use shutters that are too small for the windows.
- Retain any historic shutter hardware, such as shutter dogs.
- Maintain operable shutters.
- Do not install roll down hurricane shutters on historic buildings.

*Figure 24: Example of wooden shutters.*

# IX. Doors

Historic doors are a significant part of a building's historic character; they contributing to the building's architectural style, are character defining features of the building and neighborhood, and provide valuable information on the history of building.

*Figure 25: Example of a Craftsman style door.*

## General Recommendations

- Retain and maintain historic doors.
- Retain and maintain historic door surrounds, transom lights, sidelights, and hardware.
- Attempt repairs before replacing an historic door. Repair methods should retain the historic appearance and as much historic fabric as possible.
- If replacement is required, utilize a salvaged historic door similar to the door being replaced in size, material, thickness, style and configuration. Ensure the replacement door is of corresponding architectural style as the building.
- Do not change the style or size of an historic doorway.
- Replace any missing glass in a door with clear or uniformly frosted glass unless the missing or damaged glass was colored and/or decorative.
- Clean and reuse historic hardware, even on a replacement door.
- Repair and maintain historic screen doors and shutters.

# X. Porches

Porches, balconies, and galleries are distinctive architectural features of many Louisiana buildings, particularly on homes built before the widespread use of air conditioning.

*Figure 26: A porch with intact historic details.*

## General Recommendations

- Retain and maintain historic porches, including the architectural details, dimensions, size, and scale.
- Repair deteriorated or damaged porches, including replacing missing features and elements.
- Repair missing or damaged porch components with materials of the same general appearance, size, shape, and material.
- If a railing or column has deteriorated to the point it must be replaced, ensure the new railing or column matches the historic component in appearance, shape, size, and architectural characteristics. Do not replace an historic component with one of a different material, height, or architectural style.
- Do not enclose a porch with exterior cladding. When enclosing a porch with screening, minimize the visual changes to the porch by setting screen framing behind railings and columns. Design the screen door to blend with the scale and style of the building.
- Do not lower the porch floor to grade.
- If rebuilding or replacing a missing porch, reference the original architecture of the building in terms of scale, design, and architectural features. Consult historic photographs or drawings of the building to inform the design for a replacement porch. If these materials aren't available,

reference historic porches on buildings of similar architectural style, building type, and age in the surrounding neighborhood.

- Do not add a porch, balcony, double gallery, or similar feature on a building or building type that did not previously have such a feature or if it would be historically inaccurate.
- Installation of new light fixtures on a porch should keep with the historic character and scale of the historic building.

# XI. Architectural Details

Architectural details are the quoins, spindles, fretwork, brackets, and other features that contribute to the buildings architectural style, appearance, and historic character. These decorative features are important parts of historic buildings and require attention while maintaining and preserving a historic building.

*Figure 27: Historic building with various types of architectural details.*

## General Recommendations

- Retain historic architectural details; avoid permanently removing any significant and historic details of a historic building.
- If a project requires temporarily removing any architectural details, replace the details in the original location and orientation. Do not move them to new locations.
- Do not obscure or hide any architectural details under siding or other materials.
- If the condition of an architectural detail is deteriorated, prioritize repair of the feature over replacement.
- If an architectural element is missing or cannot be repaired, find a replacement feature. A salvaged element is preferable. Whether the replacement piece is new or salvaged, ensure it is period-appropriate for the building and matches in general characteristics and appearance, such as size, scale, and material.
- Use historic images to determine the appearance of any missing or damaged historic architectural elements. If historic images cannot be located or are not useful, use historic buildings of a similar age and architectural style to determine an appropriate replacement.

# XII. Additions

Additions often allow historic buildings to adapt to modern usage, but any additions must maintain the historic character of the building. Large additions that overwhelm the original building are incompatible with historic buildings and historic districts. Nor should the additions be indistinguishable from the historic portions of the building. An addition may prove to be a beneficial change if it prevents loss of significant and historic interior details of a historic building.

## General recommendations

- Design and construct additions smaller than the existing buildings; additions should not overwhelm the original building in scale or size.
- Use similar form and massing for additions.
- Maintain significant architectural and construction details consistent with the original buildings, such as roof slope, fenestration patterns, and trim.
- Prioritize locating additions to the rear of the building. If an addition is located on the side of the building, place it towards the rear to the extent feasible.
- Avoid constructing additions on the front of a historic building.
- Do not fabricate or create a false historic appearance, such as adding a double gallery porch addition on a building that would not have had one.
- Use compatible building materials for exterior cladding of additions.
- Minimize intrusion and removal of historic building fabric, to the extent feasible.

# XIII. Commercial Buildings

The following recommendations address commercial buildings as well as former residential buildings converted to commercial use that are located within the LaPlace Historic District.

## General Recommendations

- Maintain historic storefronts, including the window and door style and configuration, period-appropriate materials, and general appearance. Avoid enclosing or removing any historic features of the storefront.
- Reopen and restore previously infilled windows on historic storefronts.
- Restore missing or damaged storefronts, including restoration or replication of any missing ornamental features. Refer to historic images or drawings of the building to accurately recreate the historic façade and storefront. If these images aren't available, draw on similar examples from the LaPlace district of the same approximate age and architectural style.
- Maintain and repair large display windows, if applicable, on storefronts. Use clear glass for any repairs.
- Maintain and repair historic doors. Avoid altering the size of doorframes.
- Replace any missing doors, windows, or architectural features with period and style appropriate elements.
- If the building was formerly residential, retain the residential features and characteristics of the building.
- Replacement awnings and canopies should be of similar size, design, and shape as historic precedents for the building's age and style.
- Locate external modern equipment and utilities, such as electric meters, HVAC equipment, solar panels, antennas, and satellite dishes, on the roof or rear of the building to minimize visual intrusion to the historic architecture.
- Install exterior light fixtures that are appropriate to the building's age and architectural style.
- Do not obscure or damage architectural features with exterior light fixtures.

## Signage

- In accordance with Ordinance No. 17-27, the following types of signs are prohibited in historic districts:
    - Electronic variable message signs,
    - Billboards,
    - Portable or changeable letter signs, and
    - Flashing signs or signs with intermittent or fluctuating lighting.
- Preserve and maintain historic signage, including ghost signs.
- Design and locate signs in keeping with the historic architecture of the building and in proportion with the façade.
- Where applicable, anchor signage and light fixtures in mortar instead of masonry. Do not anchor signage in historic architectural features or remove architectural features to accommodate signage.
- Signs with exposed bulbs must be approved by the Commission.

# XIV. New Construction

Design new buildings to fit within the general size, scale, setback, height, and appearance of adjacent buildings within the historic district.

## General Recommendations

- Design new buildings to be visually compatible to adjacent buildings in the historic district.
- Maintain current setbacks.
- Orient new construction in a manner similar to adjacent historic buildings.
- Do not copy historic buildings, but reference historic buildings for materials, fenestration patterns, height, and configuration of the façade.
- Use similar scale, form, and massing as adjacent buildings for new construction.
- Reference historic character of the neighborhood in any designs for new construction.

# XV. Demolition

Demolition of a building within a historic district should be avoided; loss of a contributing building irrevocably alters the historic district and contributes to the loss of historic character of St. John the Baptist Parish.

In evaluating the demolition of a historic property, the Commission may take into consideration the significance of the building, the alternatives to demolition presented by the property owner, condition of the building, proposed plans for the future use of the property, and the importance of the building to the historic character of the district and the Parish.

Demolition without a CoA is considered a violation and will result in a stop work order being issued by the St. John Parish Planning and Zoning Department. If the issue is not resolved via the issuance of a CoA, additional steps will be taken.

In cases of Demolition by Neglect, Parish code enforcement inspectors will review the building upon receipt of a complaint, including assessing deterioration of the walls, flooring, framing, roof, chimneys, finishes, and other features. The property owner will receive a notice of violation; the property owner then has 30 days to apply for a CoA. The Parish may pursue emergency measures if the building presents a threat to the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of the St. John Parish. More information is available in Ordinance 17-27, located here.

## General Recommendations

- Demolition of the building cannot take place until a CoA has been issued.
- Salvage and donate historic building materials for reuse.
- Develop a plan for future use of the property.
- Secure and maintain the property between demolition and new construction.

# XVII. References and Resources

**For more information on historic building types and architectural styles, see:**


Keller, Gerald J. *Precious Gems from Faded Memories: A Pictorial History of St. John the Baptist Parish*. Dexter, MI: Thompson Shore Publishing, 2007.
NB: Available at St. John the Baptist Parish Library.

McAlester, Virginia. *A Field Guide to American Houses: The Definitive Guide to Identifying and Understanding America's Domestic Architecture*. New York: Knopf, 2013.

Louisiana State Historic Preservation Office, *Louisiana Architecture: A Handbook On Styles*, 1998.
NB: Available online here.

Urban Design Associates, *Louisiana Speaks*. 2007.
NB: Available online here.


**The Louisiana State Historic Preservation Office maintains a list of preservation consultants and professionals, such as architects, craftsman, and masonry repairs, here.**

**The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties provides guidance on preserving, restoring, and rehabilitating historic properties. The full text of the Standards can be found here.**

**The National Park Service provides information on maintaining and rehabilitating historic buildings via a series called Preservation Briefs. The full list of Preservation Briefs is here. Specific Briefs relevant to St. John Parish are also linked below.**

Repointing Mortar Joints in Historic Masonry Buildings

Improving Energy Efficiency in Historic Buildings

Roofing for Historic Buildings

Repair of Historic Wooden Windows

Exterior Paint Problems on Historic Woodwork

Rehabilitating Historic Storefronts

New Exterior Additions of Historic Buildings

Use of Substitute Materials on Historic Building Exteriors

Repairing Historic Flat Plaster – Walls and Ceilings

The Preservation and Repair of Historic Stucco

The Preservation and Repair of Historic Clay Tile Roofs

Preserving Wooden Porches