



Review Standards of the Chelmsford Historic District Commission

Accepted at the May 2, 2022 Historic District Commission meeting.
To replace any existing Rules and Regulations previously used by this Commission.

1. PURPOSES

- 1.1. The purpose of the Standards is to guide rehabilitation and construction in the historic district in the Town of Chelmsford in order to preserve and protect the distinctive characteristics of buildings and places significant in the history and architectural heritage of the town through the maintenance and improvement of settings for such buildings and places, through the encouragement of design compatible therewith, and through the prevention of development which would impair or be unduly detrimental to the locally or nationally significant structures of the district. The Commission shall be guided by these Review Standards when acting on any application.
- 1.2. The goal is to minimize reliance on the individual tastes and preferences of those who happen to be awarding permits and instead establish clear rules and guidelines that everyone will understand.

2. WORK REQUIRING A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

- 2.1. A Certificate of Applicability shall be required for any change to, construction of, removal of, relocation, addition or alternation to a building, structure, site or sign, provided that said change, construction, removal, relocation, addition and/or alteration, when completed, is subject to public view, or otherwise effects that portion of a building, structure, site or sign presently to public view from a public way, public park or public body of water. The following work would generally require a Certificate of Appropriateness:
 - A building
 - Air conditioner, permanently installed (that is, one for more than twelve (12) consecutive months)
 - Alteration of any exterior feature
 - An addition
 - Any interior signage and window lighting visible from a public way
 - A window, exterior door or door frame
 - Awnings and Canopies
 - Change of roofing material
 - Change or replacement of exterior material
 - Chimney
 - Driveway
 - Exterior light fixtures
 - Fence
 - Foundation
 - Garage, shed, other dependent building
 - Landscaping
 - Permanent signs/Replacement of signs/Temporary signs
 - Solar panels
 - Stonewall
 - Swimming pool or tennis court
 - Walk or curb

Pursuant to the Town of Chelmsford Historic District By-Law, a Certificate of Appropriateness is not required for the following categories of work on buildings or structures or exterior architectural features: (a) color or paint; (b) the color of materials used on roofs; (c) the reconstruction substantially similar in exterior design of a building, structure or exterior architectural feature damaged or destroyed by fire, storm or other disaster, provided such reconstruction is begun within one year thereafter and carried forward with due diligence; and (d) storm doors and windows, screen doors and windows.

In the event that the Historic District Commission determines that the work sought to be completed is not subject to public view, or does not affect that portion of a building, structure, site or sign subject to public view, it may issue a Certificate of Non-Applicability. Applicants are encouraged, however, to refer to these Review Standards even in instances where a Certificate of Appropriateness is not required, in order to ensure that any proposed building rehabilitation or construction is consistent with the spirit and intent of historic preservation.

2.2 For Purposes of these Review Standards, the definitions contained in G.L. c. 40C, subsection 5 are incorporated by reference herein.

2.3 Enforcement and Penalties

2.30 The Historic District Commission shall determine whether a particular activity is in violation of these Review Standards or not, and the Historic District Commission shall be charged with the enforcement of these Review Standards.

2.31 The Historic District Commission, upon a written complaint of any resident of the Town of Chelmsford, or owner of property within the Town of Chelmsford, or upon its initiative, shall institute any appropriate action or proceedings in the name of the Town of Chelmsford to prevent, correct, restrain or abate violation of these Review Standards. In the case where the Historic District Commission is requested in writing by any resident or owner of property within the Town of Chelmsford to enforce these Review Standards against any person allegedly in violation of same and the Historic District Commission declines to act, the Historic District Commission shall notify, in writing, the party requesting such enforcement of any action or refusal to act and the reasons therefore, within twenty-one (21) days of receipt of such request.

2.32 Whoever violates any of the provisions of these Review Standards shall be punishable by a fine of up to \$300.00 for each offense. Each day during any portion of which such violation continues to exist shall constitute a separate offense.

2.33 The Historic District Commission shall designate the Building Commissioner of the Town of Chelmsford to act on its behalf and to enforce these Review Standards under the direction of the Historic District Commission.

3. EXISTING STRUCTURES

3.1 Removal of Structures

3.10 Demolition

3.101 There shall be a presumption toward retaining all buildings in the district.

3.102 Demolition shall be allowed only when the new construction relates better to the Historic District than does the existing building, and when all the other requirements below are satisfied.

3.1021 A prerequisite for demolition shall be an application for Certificate of Hardship, which shall contain a financial report detailing the costs of rehabilitation and evidencing that the existing building is incapable of producing a reasonable economic return on the investment. The maximum rate of return which is theoretically possible on the land, with new buildings, shall not constitute such evidence, if the existing buildings can generate a reasonable return.

3.1022 If an applicant's request for permission to demolish a structure or part of a structure is based upon structural instability or advanced deterioration, a technical report prepared by an architect or professional engineer registered in Massachusetts and approved by the commission shall be submitted, detailing the nature and extent of the specific problems, and providing reasonably accurate cost estimates for their correction.

3.1023 Applications for permission to demolish existing structures shall be accompanied by complete plans for the new development proposed on the site, together with a timetable and a budget for both the demolition and the reconstruction, as well as satisfactory evidence that adequate financing is available.

3.1024 A standard condition of approval for demolition shall be the documentation of the building's elevations, including details of specific notable architectural features (windows, doors, cornices, etc.), through measured drawings and photographs. Such data shall be provided according to the procedures established by the Historic American Building Survey available online at <https://www.nps.gov/hdp/habs/index.htm>.

3.1025 In addition, demolition of any structure over 75 years old is subject to review by the Historical Commission under Town Bylaws.

3.11 Relocation

3.111 Buildings shall be retained on their present sites. Relocation shall be considered only as an alternative to demolition. Standards 3.1021, 3.1023, 3.1024, and 3.1025 above shall apply.

3.112 Buildings shall be relocated preferably within the District or to sites where they would be compatible with the architectural, cultural and landscape surroundings.

3.2 Maintenance Advisory

- 3.20 Owners of all buildings shall provide sufficient maintenance to keep such buildings from falling into a state of poor repair.
- 3.21 Owners shall therefore be responsible for providing maintenance necessary to prevent the deterioration of the structure, which could cause either an unsafe condition or a detrimental effect upon the character of the Historic District or which could lead to a later claim that deterioration has become so advanced that demolition or removal of the architectural features is necessary, owners should monitor and maintain;
- 3.211 Foundations, exterior walls or other vertical supports (exterior or interior);
- 3.212 Roofs or other horizontal members (including joists, beams, etc.);
- 3.213 Chimneys or chimney support system;
- 3.214 Architectural features (including but not limited to windows and door trim, parapets, roof cresting, cornices);
- 3.215 Rainwater drainage systems (gutters, downspout) whether exterior or interior;
- 3.216 Water-proofing systems (roofing, flashing, windows, doors, paint on wooden or corrosible metallic surfaces); and
- 3.217 Any other elements which, if not adequately maintained, would eventually cause the building to crack, bulge, buckle, sag, rot, crumble or collapse, in whole or in part.

In cases where deterioration has already progressed to an advanced stage, and where immediate removal is requested by the owner, the standards for demolition shall be applied.

3.3 Changes to Structures

3.30 General Participation

3.301 Historic Architectural Character

- 3.3011 The historic architectural character of each building shall be maintained or restored. Buildings shall be rehabilitated to reveal their historic materials and details. Missing architectural elements shall be recreated. Significant existing materials shall be retained by stabilizing, repairing or matching them with compatible new materials as required.

3.3012 The architectural character of each historic period is made up of several key factors. Each period interpreted these design elements in its own characteristic fashion. These factors or elements are:

Scale — Relationship to human size, form and perception.

Rhythm — The pattern of repeating elements such as windows, columns, arches and other facade elements, trees, other buildings, etc.

Form — Overall shapes, combinations or shapes as seen from different perspectives, skylines, and contours.

Massing Height, setback of major building elements, roof panes.

Proportion — The relationship among the dimensions of various elements.

Features Building elements such as windows, doors, cornices, roofs, porches, widow walks, balconies, cupolas, and decorative trim.

Materials — The "skin" of each building, consisting traditionally of brick, cast iron, steel, sheet metal, wood, glass, terra cotta and slate.

3.3013 The viability of the District's residential neighborhoods shall be enhanced by restoring and preserving residential buildings while respecting the historic character created by the various architectural features defining roof and facade.

3.302 Commercial Streets

The commercial integrity of the Chelmsford Town Center District shall be protected through sensitive rehabilitation and new construction that provides a continuity of shops along the street frontages.

3.31 Historic Materials

3.311 Masonry - Shall be returned to a serviceable and visually acceptable state by replacing missing masonry units and mortar with matching elements and repointing and stabilizing using proper techniques and materials. Cleaning shall be accomplished using the gentlest effective means possible, so as not to damage either the masonry unit or the mortar joints. Cleaning specifications shall be submitted to the Historic District Commission for review prior to commencement of the work. Coatings to stabilize or waterproof masonry shall be permitted only if they have been proven not to block the masonry's water vapor permeability or to contribute to its long-term deterioration.

3.3111 Old mortar should be duplicated in joint size, method of application, and joint profile.

- 3.3112 Masonry should be cleaned only when it is necessary to halt deterioration and always with the gentlest method possible, such as low-pressure water and soft natural bristle brushes. DO NOT HIGH-PRESSURE WASH OR SANDBLAST MASONRY UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES. Chemical cleaning products which could have an abrasive reaction with masonry should be avoided.
- 3.3113 Deteriorated original materials should be repaired or replaced, where necessary, with new materials that duplicate the old as closely as possible. Replacement bricks should be carefully matched in size and color to the originals.
- 3.3114 New additions should follow traditional brick coursing and appearance.
- 3.3115 Foundations should be repaired or extended with the material of the existing foundation, wherever possible. The exposed portion of a foundation for a new building will be evaluated on an individual case basis.
- 3.3116 The original or early color and texture of masonry surfaces should be retained whenever possible. Brick or stone surfaces may have been painted or whitewashed for practical and aesthetic reasons. Indiscriminate removal of paint from masonry surfaces may be historically incorrect and may also subject the building to harmful damage. Masonry facades shall not be painted unless there is evidence that the building was painted originally.
- 3.3117 Chimneys are an important architectural feature. They should not be shortened or removed but repaired as necessary.
- 3.3118 Existing stucco should be repaired with a stucco mixture duplicating the original as closely as possible in appearance and texture.
- 3.312 Wood — Missing or deteriorated wooden features shall be sensitively replaced with new wood milled to match the original elements and existing features shall be repaired whenever possible.
- 3.3121 Deteriorated material should be repaired or replaced, where necessary with new material that duplicates the original as closely as possible. If a house is to be re-clapboarded, the clapboards should line up to match the window heads and sills. Clapboards should be applied smooth side exposed.
- 3.3122 Synthetic sidings (such as vinyl) are not allowed for properties in historic districts, unless approved by the Historic District Commission. Their installation is discouraged because of the loss of architectural detail when it is carelessly applied; because the long-term effects (such as rot or deterioration) on the underlying

wooden structure are unknown; because they can create unsuspected fire hazards; and because the synthetic siding is difficult to repair and will itself need painting in time. Wood has been the most traditional siding material in Chelmsford. Wood is easily worked, has natural insulating qualities, is adaptable, plentiful, relatively inexpensive, and resistant to denting. It can be patched, refinished, and repainted or stained. And it has its own singular beauty. For all of these reasons, every reasonable effort should be spent to keep the original siding on a building. If replacement is absolutely necessary, new wood clapboards will look better than any synthetic material and will, with care, last longer.

3.3123 Original details such as trim, cornice, brackets, corner and sill boards, quoins, window and door hoods and casings, and all other decorative elements shall be retained or replicated in kind.

3.3124 Wood shingles are only appropriate for exterior cladding if they were used as a siding material of the style of the structure in question. Shaped shingles and shingle patterns for such a structure should be duplicated in kind where repair and replacement are necessary.

3.313 Metals — Missing or deteriorated architectural metals shall be replaced with original or substitute metal fabrications or other visually compatible and durable features manufactured from acceptable alternative materials.

3.314 Colors — It is recommended that architectural features should be restored with colors and finishes appropriate to the nature of the materials and to the character of the original building. Where original colors are not to be used, historic colors within the spirit of the period should be substituted.

3.32 Major Building Elements

3.321 Commercial Storefronts — Existing historic storefronts shall be retained and rehabilitated. Generally, the term "historic" in these standards shall refer to the appearance of the building fifty or more years ago. Storefronts which have been altered or removed shall be restored or compatibly redesigned. Research should be done to discover each storefront's original appearance, and to learn what architectural features might be covered by existing siding or facing material.

3.322 Doors and Entries — Existing historic doors shall be retained and rehabilitated. Where doorways must be altered to meet current building code and safety requirements, doors and entranceways shall be designed also to respect the exterior architectural integrity of the building.

3.3221 Original or historically significant entries (including reveals, doors, surrounds, vestibule sidewalls, transoms or fanlights, sidelights and other features) may not be altered.

- 3.3222 If replacement doors are necessary, new doors shall be appropriate to the existing surround in style, material and proportions.
- 3.3223 Residential doors should be made of wood. Pine and fir are most commonly used for exterior doors. Replacement doors should have the appropriate panel arrangement for the date of the building's construction. Metal doors on houses are not acceptable.
- 3.3224 Generally, it is not appropriate to introduce a new door opening into the principal or front elevation. The appropriateness of new side or rear doors depends upon their design. (See 3.3225.)
- 3.3225 The elaborateness of the entrance is related to the design of the house. Simple houses tend to have relatively plain doorways while more ornate houses have more highly decorated doorways. Therefore, when a replacement doorway is necessary on the principal facade or a new doorway is being added on a side or rear facade, it should harmonize with the style of the house as far as the type and extent of detail. Large sheets of glass are not generally in keeping with the character of an historic house.
- 3.3226 Doorways above ground level which provide secondary egress must be individually evaluated. In general, approval will result only when visibility from the street is minimal. The addition of exterior staircases to buildings is generally not acceptable.
- 3.3227 Deteriorated porticos, porches, steps and railings should be repaired with materials that duplicate the original. Front steps should be replaced in-kind with the material historically used with the particular style building.
- 3.3228 It is recommended that storm doors be consistent with the historic period of the building. Replacement door hardware should replicate the original or be of an appropriate design.
- 3.3229 Exterior lighting shall be in traditional locations. The design of these fixtures should be of an appropriate size and not imitate styles earlier than the building. Sodium vapor lights are not permitted on private property.
- 3.324 Awnings and Canopies — Use of awnings and canopies on entranceways and front facing windows is strongly discouraged.
- 3.325 Windows — Existing historic windows shall be retained and repaired whenever possible. Where replacement is essential, new windows shall match the originals or be in character with the building. The original window type (hung sash, casement, pivot, awning, etc.) shall be retained, as shall be the appearance of the individual lights of glass formed by the muntin grid. The original width and depth of the individual elements (such as exterior molding

and/or casing, exterior frame, exterior sash members and exterior muntin) shall be reproduced or be closely approximated.

3.3251 Replacement windows for original wood windows should be made of wood. Aluminum and vinyl windows are not recommended.

3.3252 The muntin thickness and profile of replacement windows should approximate those of the original historic windows. Also, the proportions of the frame to the sash should be preserved. Windows with removable muntin bars are not acceptable.

3.3253 Only clear-pane, non-tinted glass shall be used (except to replace original stained glass). Mirrored and tinted heat-reflective glass are not appropriate.

3.3254 The frame and decorative window trim should be retained and repaired, if necessary, with materials that duplicate the original as closely as possible. Application of metal or vinyl panning over original wood trim is not allowed.

3.3255 Exterior window shutters may not be appropriate to every architectural style and the Commission should be consulted before action is taken to remove or install them. Where replacement shutters are installed, they shall be wood constructed and match the height and one-half the width of the window opening and replicate a traditional shutter. All shutters shall be properly secured with shutter hardware so as to be operable, not nailed to the window casing.

3.3256 Original skylights should be retained, repaired or replaced in kind. Size, location and materials are important determinants for the acceptability of skylights. Bubble skylights are not permitted.

3.326 Roofs — Features which give the roof its essential historical character shall be preserved or restored to the extent that they are visible from the ground. The principal considerations include the original roof shape; original roofing materials or materials compatible with the old in composition, size, shape and texture; and architectural details such as dormer windows, cupolas, cornices, brackets, chimneys, cresting and weathervanes.

3.3261 Roof replacement materials should be sensitive to the original. Slate roofs should be retained whenever possible. Slate should not be removed without a careful evaluation of the cost of its repair.

3.3262 Wooden or cooper gutters can be an important architectural feature. In older houses, they were often designed as part of the eave moldings. Therefore, gutters should be properly maintained and only replaced in cases of extreme deterioration.

3.3263 New gutters and downspouts should be replaced in an architecturally sensitive manner and match the surface and color on which they are installed.

3.3264 Historic dormers shall be retained and repaired or restored. Expansion of existing dormers or adding new dormers may be approved on a case-by-case basis provided designs are based on historic models.

3.327 Industrial Hardware — Historically significant industrial hardware shall be preserved and contemporary hardware judged to be of a significant design shall be retained.

3.328 Mechanical Equipment — Essential outdoor mechanical equipment (ducts, fans, solar panels, etc.) shall be installed in locations which create the least disturbance to the historical appearance of the building and which involve the minimum alteration to its structural integrity. All mechanical equipment must be screened from public view.

3.329 Solar Panels — Only roof mounted solar panels shall be allowed in the Chelmsford Historic District, provided the following guidelines are met: Installation of solar collectors shall not permanently change any architectural feature. A minimum of two (2) feet of roof surface should be visible surrounding the collector array. Framing, piping insulation, etc. should match the roof surface. Collectors should be mounted to match roof slope (parallel to roof and no more than three (3) inches above the roof surface). Piping should be concealed from view.

A Certificate of Appropriateness is required for all solar panel installations within the Chelmsford Historic District visible from a public way or place. In deciding whether to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness, the Commission will consider, among other things, a building's importance, prominence and historic significance, visual impact and glare.

All equipment should be installed in locations which (a) create the least disturbance to the historic appearance of the building, (b) involve the least additional structural alterations and (c) are screened, hidden or otherwise shielded from view to the extent possible.

Proposed installation of all solar collectors will be subject to the rules and guidelines of the Chelmsford Historic District Commission.

4. NEW CONSTRUCTION

4.1 General Principals

4.10 Character - New Construction on currently vacant sites in the town center shall be encouraged to reinforce the character embodied in the traditional New England town pattern, closely framing the road.

4.11 Continuity — New buildings should not be designed as freestanding objects but instead shall generally conform to the tradition of continuous structures holding the lines of streets, canals, etc.

4.12 Ground-Level Design — On commercial streets, ground-level building design shall generally follow existing patterns created by the type and scale of shops, street facades, sign design, shop window configurations and materials traditional to the town center.

- 4.13 Materials — New buildings shall utilize exterior materials in keeping with the exteriors seen in the district and follow guidelines indicated in Section 3.31 Historic Materials.
- 4.14 New Buildings — New buildings and structures shall reflect the traditional height, scale, preparations, rhythms and mood of historic structures. These traditional architectural values should be interpreted into new building design, but the use of imitation historic building details and ornaments is discouraged. Building design must also be internally consistent and amalgamation of historically unrelated stylistic elements shall be generally prohibited.

5. SIGNAGE

5.1 General

- 5.10 All new signs and all changes in the appearance of existing signs displayed so as to be visible from public ways require a Certificate of Appropriateness.
- 5.11 Temporary signs are those intended to be used for a period of thirty (30) days or less and shall not be allowed for more than thirty (30) days. Temporary signs do not require a Certificate of Appropriateness but do require an application for a Certificate of Non-Applicability.
- 5.12 If there is a conflict between these standards and the requirements in the Town Sign Code (Article VII “Signs and Outdoor Lighting”), the stricter shall apply.

5.2 Location and Size of Signs

- 5.20 Signs must not dominate building facades or obscure their architectural features (arches, transom panels, sills, moldings, cornices, windows, etc.).
- 5.21 The size of signs and individual letters shall be an appropriate scale for pedestrians and slow-moving traffic.
- 5.22 Signs on adjacent storefronts should be coordinated in height and proportion and color. The use of a continuous sign-band extending over adjacent shops within the same building is recommended, as a unifying element.
- 5.23 Portable signs located on sidewalks, driveways or in parking lots, or mounted on wheels, trailers, or motor vehicles if those vehicles, trailers, or wheeled signs are regularly located for fixed display, are not allowed. Sandwich boards, blackboards, dry erase boards and other similar temporary freestanding menu displays are not permitted, unless permitted under a Certificate of Appropriateness.
- 5.24 Wall signs shall be located no higher than the windowsill line of the second story. A roof-mounted sign is not permitted.

- 5.25 Signs displayed during business hours only, such as those which are removed every evening and displayed again the following morning, constitute an on-going advertising format and shall be construed as being permanent signs rather than temporary signs, if such display continues for more than fourteen (14) calendar days. The date when such sign was first displayed shall be affixed in a permanent manner to the sign so as to be readily seen.

Signs located within a building and visible from a public way, public street, public park or public body of water, through windows, doors or otherwise, are not permitted unless permitted under the Town Sign Code (Article VII "Signs and Outdoor Lighting").

5.3 Messages and Lettering Signs

- 5.30 Messages should be as simple and brief as possible. The use of pictorial symbols or logos is encouraged.
- 5.31 Lettering should be of a traditional block or curvilinear style which is easy to read and not incompatible with the style of the building. No more than two different styles should be used on the same sign.
- 5.32 Letters should be carefully formed and properly spaced, to be neat and uncluttered. Generally, no more than 40% of the total sign area shall be occupied by lettering.

5.4 Color

- 5.40 Colors should be chosen to complement, not clash, with the facade color of the building. Signs should normally contain not more than three different colors. Neon and/or florescent colors are not allowed.

5.5 Materials and Illumination

- 5.50 The use of durable and traditional materials is strongly encouraged (metal and wood). Signs shall not be made of plastic. All new signs shall be prepared in a professional manner. Paper signs for advertising or identification purposes shall be allowed for not more than fourteen (14) days, as temporary signage.
- 5.51 The date on which a paper sign was first displayed shall be written on the sign, so as to be readily seen.
- 5.52 No neon lighted signs will be permitted if visible from a public way.

5.6 Other Stylistic Points

- 5.60 The shape of a projecting sign shall be compatible with the period of the building to which it is affixed and shall harmonize with the lettering and symbols chosen for it.

5.61 Supporting brackets for projecting signs shall complement the sign design and not overwhelm or clash with it. Screw holes must be drilled at points where the fasteners will enter masonry joints to avoid damaging bricks, etc.

6. OTHER DEVELOPMENT

6.1 Pedestrian Amenities

6.10 While pedestrian amenities must be compatible with the town's historic character, variations shall be permitted in order to respect the vitality and the variety of the town's different thoroughfares and neighborhoods.

6.11 Different types of public spaces should respond to the following general performance criteria:

- a. Commercial streets shall be treated simply with maximum open sidewalk space, minimal obstruction on the ground and pedestrian preference for street crossing.
- b. Historic, non-commercial pedestrian streets and walks shall have a smaller scale, more intimate design using textures and smaller elements that stimulate interest along the path.
- c. Parking areas must be carefully designed and landscaped due to their large size and first impression impact upon visitors.

6.2 Streetscape

6.20 Paving and Planting

- 6.201 Tree corridors or canopies, stonewalls and roadside planting should be extended and strengthened.
- 6.202 The existing streetscape should be enriched, especially around historic buildings and heavily used pedestrian areas. Historically appropriate improvements should create some consistency while avoiding complete uniformity.
- 6.203 Historic paving features shall be retained whenever possible and incorporated into the streetscape improvements.
- 6.204 Subtle variations in paving patterns and materials shall be used to enrich sidewalks and plazas, such as by lighting patterns in streetlights, trees, furniture, street crossings and entryways.
- 6.205 Planting shade trees and shrubs shall be encouraged where they would enhance the historic character or create more inviting spaces. Removal of healthy trees over six (6) inches in diameter, measured ten (10) feet above the ground level, shall be reviewed by the Historic District Commission..

6.206 Shrubs and trees may be planted as screening for modern equipment, i.e. HVAC, and must be maintained by the property owner.

6.21 Street Furniture

6.211 Placement of street furniture which is appropriate to the context, attractive and durable shall be encouraged. Placement of furniture shall be based upon careful study of how people tend to use a street.

6.22 Lights, Signs and Traffic Signals

6.221 Public signs shall utilize compatible graphics, colors, proportions, dimensions and fabrication methods, in order to create greater consistency and improve their compatibility with their historic setting.

6.222 Streetlights shall be designed to harmonize with their surroundings and traffic signal poles and mounts shall be as unobtrusive as possible, both physically and visually.

6.3 Parking — When possible, parking facilities shall be situated in the rear of a building away from public view.

6.4 Open Space

6.40 Parks and Public Spaces

6.401 Existing parks and public spaces shall be preserved and enhanced. The addition of structures in existing parks and public spaces shall be prohibited other than historic markers and monuments.

6.402 The removal of existing historic structures to create new parks shall be prohibited.

6.5 Fencing and Screening

6.50 Fencing

6.501 Fences are significant architectural features. Architecturally important fences should be repaired or replaced with new materials that duplicate the old.

6.502 Fences along the street facades of historic houses were meant to serve a decorative purpose. Such fences should not block a house's view but complement it; they should be in scale to the property and they should be open, not solid.

Narrow pickets (approximately 2 1/2 inches in width) are preferred to wide pickets. Back and side yard fences which serve a screening purpose may be higher and solid.

- 6.503 The design of a residential fence should be sensitive to that of the house. Since Federal architecture stressed delicate proportions, the fence in front of such a house should also be delicate in scale, whereas the fence in front of a more massive Victorian house could be heavier. Elaborate fences are suitable for elaborate houses; simple houses should have simple fences.
- 6.504 If wood is to be used, picket, capped picket or spindle fences are recommended for anywhere around the yard. Capped, flat board fences are most appropriate for side and back yards and dumpsters. The flat board fence with a lattice top is an excellent privacy option for side or rear yards.
- 6.505 The Commission encourages the retention of suitable cast and wrought iron fences. Such fences should be repaired and painted as necessary. If sections are missing and it is financially feasible, replacement sections should be obtained. Otherwise, it is preferable to consolidate the existing sections of the fence than to remove the fence altogether.
- 6.506 Historically, fences were located along the sidewalk and the continuity of such fences is an important asset to the street. The Commission generally discourages the fence relocation to accommodate off-street parking. Gates may be required as an alternative to relocation.
- 6.507 Chain link, stockade, vinyl and wire-type fences are not appropriate in historic districts. Low brick walls and brick planters are also not acceptable unless documented to be an original design feature.

6.61 Screening

- 6.611 Outdoor storage areas and other uses which are to be screened from view shall be enclosed with an opaque fence or wall built of traditional materials (such as wood or brick) in a manner which is not inconsistent with the historic character of the district.

7. CERTIFICATES OF HARDSHIP

7.1 Exceptions — Where the Historic District Commission finds that extraordinary and unnecessary hardships may result from strict compliance with these standards or where there are exceptional circumstances, it may vary these standards so that substantial justice may be done. In order to issue a Certificate of Hardship, the Commission shall make specific factual findings demonstrating that:

- 7.10 Owing to conditions specific to a particular building or structure, but not affecting the historic district generally, failure to approve an application will result in substantial hardship, whether financial or otherwise, to the applicant, and
- 7.11 That granting the application will not involve substantial detriment to the public welfare or substantial derogation from the intent and purpose of the historic by-law.

7.2 Waivers — In granting waivers, the Historic District Commission may require such conditions as will, in its judgment, secure substantially the objectives of the standards which have been waived. A Certificate of Hardship shall then be issued.

APPENDIX: LISTING OF FORMS

The following application forms can be obtained by contacting the Clerk of the Historic District Commission:

- Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness
- Application for a Certificate of Hardship