Chapter 2

Changes to Buildings

Non-Residential Guidelines

2.1 Storefronts

The storefront is the single most identifying characteristic of the historic commercial façade. Turn-of-the-century commercial buildings, the predominant building type in downtown Salisbury, commonly included storefronts with large display windows, transom bars or windows, and recessed entryways.

The storefront is the first-floor commercial area of the historic commercial façade. It includes such elements as large display windows, transoms and recessed entryways.

The combination of these features, while attractive, are also quite functional in that they create an area for the display of goods and allow light to enter into the store. Other architectural features found in these storefronts include bulkheads below the display windows, columns or pilasters to support the façade above the storefront, and awnings.

As the years went by, these storefronts were commonly altered or covered-up and, unfortunately, Salisbury was no stranger to this practice. However, here in Salisbury with active preservation efforts along with municipal façade grants and historic tax credits, this trend has been reversed.

111 East Innes Street

(1983). After historic storefront was destroyed.

Redesign of historic storefront

Due to fact that many of these original façades were effectively destroyed, the guidelines for storefronts and upper façades have been written to encourage preservation and reconstruction whenever possible, but also addresses new designs and their compatibility with the historic district.

Storefront Guidelines:

Preservation

1. Retain and preserve historic storefronts and storefront features such as entryways, display windows, doors, transoms, corner posts, etc.

Storefront detailing:

- *Corbelled brick*
- *Cast iron column*
- *Large display windows with lower panels and window box*
- *Awning fitting within frame of window*

2. Whenever possible, retain and preserve historic materials. Avoid the removal of historic materials or architectural features.
3. Whenever repairing or renovating, it is recommended that any non-historic storefront or façade treatments including metal cladding or other non-historic alteration be removed.

Reconstruction

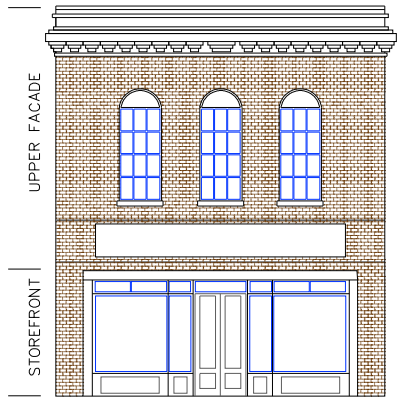
4. If replacement of a deteriorated storefront or storefront feature is necessary, replace only the deteriorated element to match the original in size, scale, proportion, material, texture and detail.
5. When reconstructing a historic storefront, base the design on historical research and evidence. Maintain the original proportions, dimensions and architectural elements.
6. Whenever changes are required to meet building or accessibility codes, they should be done in a way that is the least intrusive to the façade and without destroying historic materials and features.

New Design

7. Where original or early storefronts no longer exist or are too deteriorated to save, retain the commercial character of the building through contemporary design which is compatible with the scale, design, materials, color and texture of the historic buildings.

2.2 Upper Façades

The front elevation of turn-of-the-century commercial buildings is commonly made up of the storefront and the upper façade. In Salisbury, many of our historic downtown buildings were designed for, and still used as, commercial on the street level and office or residential on the upper levels. Therefore, the façade treatment is quite different between the first and upper floors.



The upper façade is any area of the building above the first-floor commercial storefront.

While most buildings in downtown Salisbury are two and three-stories, there are examples that are much larger, such as the seven-story Plaza building. The upper façades of Salisbury's downtown buildings are constructed of brick with varying levels of detail including brick corbelling, quoins, arched windows, and window awnings. Some buildings use brick stringcourses or stonework to create accents in the overall design.

During the 1950s and 60s, there was an unfortunate trend where historic upper façades were covered in aluminum cladding or other non-historic treatments. Often this would include destroying key architectural features. Over the last several years here in Salisbury, much of this metal cladding has been removed, usually uncovering an attractive, historic façade that can be restored.

"Empire Block"

With metal cladding

After metal removed and façade restored

Upper Façade Guidelines

Preservation

Retain and preserve historic façades and façade details such as corbelled brick, stringcourses, cornices, windows, and stonework.

Upper façade detailing

***Mayfield Building**. Metal cladding removed revealing Art Deco façade.*

1. The covering of upper façades is not appropriate. Whenever possible, remove metal or other non-historic covering from upper façades.
2. It is not appropriate to remove or replace original upper façade windows with modern materials. The enclosing or bricking in of windows shall not be permitted.
3. When upper floor windows must be replaced, match the original in configuration and materials.

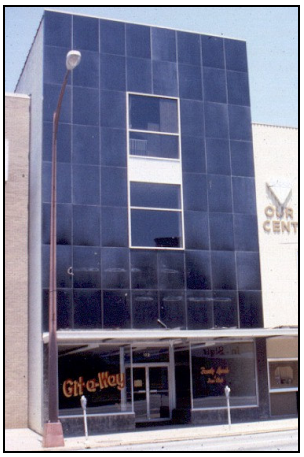
Reconstruction

4. If replacement of a deteriorated façade feature is necessary, replace only the deteriorated element to match the original in size, scale, proportion, material, texture and detail.
5. It is only appropriate to use alternate materials when all the original windows are missing or destroyed.
6. When reconstructing a historic façade or feature, base the design on historical research and evidence. Maintain the original proportions, dimensions and architectural elements. If no evidence of the design of the feature exists, a new design, compatible with the overall character of the building, should be used.

New Design

7. If new construction of an upper façade is necessary, make sure that the design is compatible with the existing structures in the district including size & spacing of windows or other fenestrations, proportion, scale, and detailing.

Oestreicher Building



Oestreicher building with non-historic façade treatment. Original façade was completely removed.

Metal removed and new "contemporary compatible" façade designed in keeping with historic fabric of downtown.

2.3 Side and Rear Façades

Side Façades

Many of Salisbury's downtown commercial buildings have side façades that can be seen from public streets, parking lots, sidewalks, and alleyways. As with the primary front façade, these side elevations are important character-defining elements of the downtown historic district. Usually, these façades exist on corner buildings fronting on two streets, but can also occur mid-block where the adjacent property is vacant or is an alleyway.

The side façade generally carries the same design elements and details as the main elevation including fenestrations, brickwork, etc. They are likely to serve a more private utility in providing access to upper-floor office and residential uses and not engage the consumer or the pedestrian like the typical storefront. Still, some of these buildings take advantage of the additional frontage and use the side façade as additional display area, advertising, or even providing additional access for the customer.

***118 N. Lee**. Historic advertisement on side façade.*

***Bell Block Building**. Façade treatment of upper floors the same as front.*

Rear Façades

The rear façade is also important to the historic character of the building and district. The rear elevation provides access for merchants, their workers, and in some cases, customers. It also continues the same general material treatments as front and side façades. More often than not, rear entrances on Salisbury's downtown commercial structures serve as a service entry and, as a result, are the location of any necessary mechanical equipment and garbage receptacles. This translates into a less detailed design with a more private appearance than front and side façades that face public rights-of-way.

There are some instances in downtown where the rear façade serves as public or semi-public access. Usually, the design of these façades reflects this public utility

resulting in an elevation with similar detailing to its primary façade that is more inviting to the consumer or general public.

***Center Court**. This rear façade, while redesigned as a result of a fire, serves as public access to its office uses as well as to Main Street.*

Rear entrances and parking area in the 100 Block of North Main Street.

Side and Rear Façade Guidelines

Preservation

1. Retain and preserve historic façade details and materials on side and rear elevations.
2. Historic painted advertisements represent an important historic element in downtown Salisbury. While not required, it is recommended that they be preserved whenever possible.
3. Whenever a side or rear façade can be seen from the public right-of-way or parking area, it is encouraged that any unnecessary utility lines, mechanical equipment, pipes, etc. be removed. Whenever introducing new utility or service features such as mechanical units and garbage receptacles, screen them from public view with fences, low walls, or landscaping.

Reconstruction

4. If replacement of a deteriorated façade feature is necessary, replace only the deteriorated element to match the original in size, scale, proportion, material, texture and detail.
5. When reconstructing a historic façade or feature, base the design on historical research and evidence. Maintain the original proportions, dimensions and architectural elements.
6. If there is historic evidence of a public entrance on a rear façade, rehabilitate the façade to provide for an attractive access from rear parking areas.

7. Downtown buildings with rear access should use small signs or awnings to provide for visual identification.

New Design

8. If new construction of a side or rear façade is necessary, make sure that the design is compatible with the existing structures in the district including size & spacing of windows or other fenestrations, proportion, scale, and detailing.
9. Whenever possible, new designs for rear façades should provide access to the public from rear parking areas and alleyways.

2.4 Materials & Details

2.4.1 Architectural Details & Ornamentation

Architectural details in downtown Salisbury include everything from simple masonry treatments such as corbelled brick and stringcourses to very detailed ornamentation like cast iron, stone relief, and wooden & masonry cornices. Variations in material, fenestration, and paint color all contribute to the level of ornamentation on the individual structure.

Architectural Details & Ornamentation Guidelines

1. Retain and preserve any architectural features and details that are character-defining elements of downtown structures, such as cornices, columns, piers, brickwork, stringcourses, quoins, etc.

Relief detail on upper façade.

Cornice and window detail on Empire Hotel.

2. If replacement of an architectural element is necessary, use new materials that match the historic materials in composition, size, shape, color, pattern, and texture. Consider substitute materials only if the original materials are not technically feasible.
3. It is not appropriate to remove or cover any original detail or ornamentation. If original features are currently covered, it is encouraged that these features be uncovered, exposed, and repaired.
4. If the entire architectural detail is missing, design the replacement feature based on historic documentation. If there is no documentation, but evidence that the element was originally on the building, any new design should be compatible with the historic character of the building and district.

2.4.2 Windows and Doors

Windows and doors by their proportion, shape, positioning, location, pattern, and size can contribute significantly to a building's historic character and are particularly indicative of stylistic periods. These openings in a building's exterior also provide opportunities for natural light, ventilation, and visual connections to the interior.

Windows and Doors Guidelines

1. Retain and preserve original windows and doors.
2. Retain and preserve openings and details of windows and doors, such as trim, sash, glass, lintels, sills, thresholds, shutters, and hardware.
3. If replacement of a window or door element is necessary, replace only the deteriorated element to match the original in size, scale, proportion, pane or panel division, material, and detail.
4. It is not appropriate to replace windows or doors with stock items that do not fill the original openings or duplicate the unit in size, material, and design.
5. Protect and maintain existing windows and doors in appropriate ways:
   - Maintain caulking and glazing putty to prevent air or water infiltration around glass.
   - Weatherstrip windows and doors to prevent moisture and air infiltration.
   - Check sills and thresholds to ensure that water runs off and does not collect.
   - Maintain a sound paint film on all wooden windows and doors.
   - Monitor the condition of wooden windows and doors.

   Note: Both the peeling of paint and the widening of joints may create the false appearance of deteriorated wood.
6. Repair original windows, doors, and frames by patching, splicing, consolidating, or otherwise reinforcing deteriorated sections.
7. Construct replacement shutters of wood, size them to window openings, and mount them so that they are operable. It is not appropriate to introduce window shutters where no evidence of earlier shutters exists.
8. The use of reflective or highly tinted glass is discouraged.
9. It is not appropriate to fill in existing window or door openings or to replace or cover them with plywood.

10. It is not appropriate to introduce new windows or doors if they would diminish the original design of the building or damage historic materials and features. Keep new windows and doors compatible with existing units in proportion, shape, positioning, location, size, materials, and details.

11. If a new window or door is required to meet building and safety codes, it should be done in a way that is the least intrusive to the façade and without destroying historic materials and features.

12. If exterior storm windows are desired, they should have little visual impact. Storms windows should be painted to match the building and the color of the window sash. Storm windows should match the existing in size and proportion. Install them so that existing windows and frames are not damaged or obscured.

2.4.3 Masonry

By far, the primary construction material in the downtown historic district is brick.

Brick, stone, terra-cotta, concrete, stucco, and mortar are all typical masonry materials found on the exterior of historic buildings. The texture, the scale, the color, the bonding pattern, the joints, and the detail of masonry surfaces can all contribute significantly to the overall character of the historic building. Masonry features such as chimneys, arches, quoins, lintels, sills, cornices, and pediments further define a building's historic character.

Maintenance and Repair

Masonry surfaces are relatively long-lasting and require little maintenance. Moisture is the most common cause of deterioration in masonry. If water can enter the wall, the roof, or the foundation through loose masonry joints or cracks, it will cause additional damage as it works its way through the structure. Typically, mortar joints slowly deteriorate over a period of years because of exposure to the elements. The deterioration allows moisture to penetrate brick walls or foundations. Consequently, the life of a brick or stone wall depends on proper maintenance of its mortar joints. The process of replacing deteriorated mortar joints with new mortar is called repointing. All loose and deteriorated mortar is carefully raked out of the joint by hand, and new mortar is inserted. To maintain the historic character and the structural integrity of the wall, the original mortar should be matched in composition, color, texture, and strength.

The dimension and the profile of the original mortar joint should also be duplicated.

Heavy soiling or vegetation that allows moisture to remain on a masonry surface contributes to the deterioration of masonry elements. If cleaning is necessary, the gentlest method possible should be used. Periodic cleaning with simple techniques such as steam cleaning or low-pressure water washing with or without a mild detergent, complemented by scrubbing the surface with a natural bristle brush where needed, is generally all that is necessary. If these techniques are not successful, chemical masonry cleaners may be indicated. Chemical cleaners should always be tested on an inconspicuous area well in advance to determine if they cause any discoloration or damage to the masonry. High-pressure cleaning techniques such as sandblasting and waterblasting, because of their abrasive nature, permanently damage the surface of historic masonry and accelerate its deterioration. Consequently, such techniques are not appropriate in the historic district.

Masonry Guidelines

Preservation

1. Retain and preserve original masonry walls, foundations, and roofs.
2. Retain and preserve all masonry construction features that are character-defining elements of historic buildings, including walls, foundations, roofing materials, corbels, chimneys, piers, arches, quoins, cornices, and lintels.
3. Retain and preserve historic masonry materials whenever possible. If replacement is necessary, use new masonry materials and mortar that match the historic materials in composition, size, shape, color, pattern, and texture. Consider substitute materials only if the original materials are not technically feasible.
4. It is not appropriate to apply paint or other coatings to unpainted masonry elements that were historically not coated.
5. It is not appropriate to apply nontraditional masonry coatings such as waterproofing and water repellents to masonry as a substitute for repointing or repair. Use such coatings only if masonry repairs have failed to eliminate water-penetration problems.
6. Paint previously painted masonry elements in colors that best reflect the color of the masonry material.

7. Removal of paint from masonry surfaces is encouraged when the brick is of high quality and was intended to be exposed. Undertake removal only with a chemical paint remover specifically formulated for masonry. Always test the remover on an inconspicuous area or a test panel first.
8. When removing paint from a masonry surface, use the gentlest means possible. High-pressure water cleaning (greater than 500 PSI) or other harsh methods can destroy the surface of historic brick and damage the mortar between bricks.

Maintenance

9. Protect and maintain historic masonry in appropriate ways:
   - Monitor masonry for cracks and signs of moisture damage.
   - Ensure that water does not collect at the base of a masonry foundation or chimney.
   - Clean masonry only if necessary to remove heavy soiling or prevent deterioration.
   - Eliminate any vegetation that may cause structural damage or hinder ventilation and surface drainage of a masonry element.
   - Use the gentlest means possible to clean historic masonry. Cleaning with a low-pressure (500 pounds per square inch or less) water wash, using detergents and natural bristle brushes, is preferred over harsher methods.
   - Test any proposed cleaning method on an inconspicuous sample area first.
10. If cracks in mortar joints, crumbling mortar, loose bricks, damp walls, or damaged plaster indicate deterioration, repoint mortar joints of masonry surfaces in appropriate ways:
    - Carefully remove deteriorated mortar by hand-raking the joints. Using electric saws or hammers can damage the masonry.
    - Duplicate the strength, the composition, the texture, and the color of the original mortar. Replacing a softer mortar with one high in portland-cement content can cause serious damage to existing masonry.
    - Duplicate the width and the joint profile of the original mortar joints.
11. It is not appropriate to use high-pressure cleaning methods such as sandblasting and waterblasting on historic masonry surfaces. Such cleaning techniques permanently damage the masonry surface and accelerate deterioration by removing the outer edge and exposing the softer inner core of the brick.

2.4.4 Wood

Window sashes, doors, bulkheads below display windows, and cornices are the most common wooden design elements found in downtown. The functional and decorative detailing wood provides is an important part of the historic character of the building and district.

Maintenance and Repair

Wood is a traditional building material with good insulating qualities. It will last indefinitely if it is kept properly caulked and painted. Because wood expands with the introduction of moisture, caulks and flexible sealants are typically used to seal wood joints and prevent the entry of water beneath the wood surface. Paints and coatings on the wood surface protect it from deterioration due to ultraviolet light as well as moisture. The guidelines for paint provide additional information on the preparation and the maintenance of painted surfaces.

Stains or evidence of mildew indicates that a wood surface is remaining damp, inviting insect and fungal attacks as well as wet rot. Wooden elements should be sloped to shed water, and roof and gutter systems should provide additional protection to the surface. Chemical treatment of wooden members either during manufacture or following installation can enhance wood's ability to resist rot and insect infestation. Some chemical treatments result in an initial resistance to surface paint films, requiring a weathering period of a few months before painting. Chemical treatment is particularly advantageous if the wooden element is to remain unpainted or is in direct contact with the ground.

The repair of deteriorated wooden elements or details may require partial replacement of the original wood or the introduction of a wood consolidant to stabilize the deteriorated section and prevent further decay. Wood consolidants are particularly appropriate when they prevent the removal of decorative details and trim that cannot easily be replicated or when replacement of the deteriorated section of a larger element would be difficult to achieve in place.

Wood Guidelines

Preservation

1. Retain and preserve all wooden features that are character-defining elements of a historic building, such as siding, shingles, brackets, cornices, balustrades, columns, pediments, and architraves.

2. Retain and preserve historic wooden fabric whenever possible. If replacement is necessary, use new wood that matches the original in dimension, shape, detail, and texture.
3. Repair original wooden elements and details by patching with wood or epoxy, splicing, consolidating, or otherwise reinforcing deteriorated sections.
4. If replacement of a wooden element or detail is necessary, replace only the deteriorated element to match the original in size, scale, proportion, material, and detail.
5. It is not appropriate to replace wooden siding, trim, or window sash with contemporary substitute materials such as vinyl or aluminum.

Maintenance

6. Protect and maintain wood surfaces and elements in appropriate ways:

- Inspect wood surfaces and features regularly for signs of damage from moisture, insects, fungi, or mildew.
- Monitor the condition of wood surfaces and features. Note: Both the peeling of paint and the widening of wood joints may create the false appearance of deteriorated wood.
- Keep wooden joinery adequately sealed to avoid water penetration.
- Maintain a slope on horizontal wood surfaces, such as porch flooring or window sills, to ensure that water does not collect but runs off.
- Maintain roofs, gutters, and downspouts to protect wood surfaces and features from water damage.
- Prime all exposed wood surfaces before painting.
- Maintain a sound paint film or other coating on wood to prevent damage from ultraviolet light and moisture.

7. It is not appropriate to clean wood surfaces with high-pressure methods, such as sandblasting and waterblasting.
8. It is not appropriate to overexpose wood surfaces to caustic chemical strippers that will raise the grain of the wood and roughen the surface texture.

2.4.5 Architectural Metals

Cast iron, wrought iron, copper, tin, sheet metal, aluminum, steel, and bronze are all traditional architectural metals that contribute to the architectural

character of historic buildings through their distinctive forms, finishes, and details.

A protective paint film is essential for metals that corrode, or rust, when exposed to air and moisture. Consequently, routine maintenance of painted metal surfaces includes prompt attention to any signs of deterioration of the paint film and subsequent corrosion. If the metal surface has begun to flake and rust, it must be thoroughly cleaned before repainting. Because the corrosion continues as long as the metal is exposed to air, immediate painting with a metal primer after cleaning is essential to prevent deterioration of the metal.

Cleaning techniques vary according to the specific metal. Chemical solutions are typically used on soft metals such as lead, tin, copper, zinc, and terneplate. Copper and bronze surfaces develop a protective greenish patina over time, and it is generally desirable to maintain that patina and the protection that it provides.

Wire brushing and handscraping are appropriate techniques for cleaning hard metals, such as steel and cast or wrought iron. A more abrasive technique, such as low-pressure dry-grit blasting, should be used only if gentler techniques are unsuccessful and if a test area reveals no damage to the metal surface.

If repair of a deteriorated metal element requires replacement of a metal section, it is important to match the original metal in kind to avoid corrosive galvanic reactions where the metals join.

Architectural Metal Guidelines

Preservation

1. Retain and preserve original architectural metals, including cast iron, wrought iron, steel, pressed tin, copper, aluminum, and zinc, as well as their finishes and colors.
2. Retain and preserve architectural metal features that are character-defining elements of a historic building or site, including fences, gates, cornices, rails, roofs, gutters, downspouts, and hardware.
3. Retain and preserve historic metal fabric whenever possible. If replacement is necessary, use new metal that matches the original in composition, dimension, shape, detail, and texture. Consider substitute material only if the original material is not technically feasible.
4. If replacement of an architectural metal element or detail is necessary, replace only the deteriorated element to match the original in size, scale, proportion, material, and detail.
5. Repair original architectural metal elements and details by patching, splicing, consolidating, or otherwise reinforcing deteriorated sections.

Maintenance

6. Protect and maintain historic architectural metals in appropriate ways:

- Monitor metal for cracks and signs of deterioration or corrosion.
- Clean metal when necessary to remove corrosion before repainting or coating.
- Maintain a sound paint film or other coating on metals that corrode.

7. Use the gentlest means possible to clean historic architectural metals, including appropriate chemical solutions for soft metals and wire brushing or handscraping for hard metals.

8. It is not appropriate to clean soft metals, such as lead, tin, copper, zinc, and terneplate, using a high-pressure technique like sandblasting. If wire brushing and handscraping prove ineffective in cleaning hard metals, such as steel, cast iron, and wrought iron, use low-pressure dry-grit blasting if it will not damage the metal surface.

2.15 Paint

Masonry, the primary building material in downtown Salisbury, was historically not painted. Therefore, most of the brick or stone structures in downtown are unpainted and take on the natural color of the brick, granite or other masonry material of which it is constructed. There are instances, however, where a brick wall has been painted - sometimes in order to provide a protective coating to deteriorated brick.

Although painting of unpainted masonry surfaces is not recommended, repainting of previously painted masonry and stucco using compatible paint coatings after proper cleaning and preparation is recommended. Some painted brick structures have been restored to their original, natural brick finish.

Before and after photos of Kluttz' Drug Store

Generally, the painted surfaces in Salisbury's downtown structures tend to be window trim, ornamentation, metal details, or any other architectural feature that provides a visual accent to the masonry façade. While this painting often serves a protective role to the underlying material, it also provides an opportunity to reinforce a historic building's architectural style and accentuate its significant features through the appropriate selection of paint color

Paint Application and Maintenance

Proper preparation and application of paint films is critical in preserving most historic exterior wood and metal surfaces. Although copper, bronze, and stainless steel surfaces are intended for direct exposure to the elements, paint protects all other metal surfaces from corrosion due to exposure to air and water. Also, paint helps protect wood surfaces from the effects of weathering

due to moisture and ultraviolet light. Consequently, maintaining a sound paint film on most metal and wood surfaces is essential to their long-term preservation.

Maintaining wood surfaces that were previously painted requires routine cleaning of the surface. Often the perceived need to repaint may be eliminated with the removal of the surface dirt film through conventional washing. However, repainting is called for if the paint film itself is deteriorated or damaged. Proper preparation includes removal of all loose or detached paint down to the first sound paint layer. It is unnecessary and undesirable to remove additional sound paint layers to expose bare wood, particularly if the wood will remain uncoated for any length of time. It is always best to remove loose paint layers with the gentlest methods possible. Handscraping and handsanding are often all that is needed. Destructive methods such as sandblasting or waterblasting and the use of propane or butane torches are never appropriate for historic wood surfaces because of the permanent damage that they will cause to the wood surface itself. Electric heat plates, hot air guns, and chemical paint strippers are appropriate only if gentler techniques have failed.

Before it is repainted, any exposed wood should always be primed with a compatible primer coating. If a surface is damp or soiled, the new paint film will not adhere correctly, and the wet surface may take up to two weeks to dry out completely. Once the surface is clean and dry, the application of a compatible paint coating will result in continued protection of the wood surface.

Painted metal surfaces require similar inspection and routine cleaning before repainting. However, for metals, it is critical that all corrosion be removed and a primer coat be applied immediately to protect the surface from additional corrosion. If cleaning loose paint and corrosion from hard metals such as cast iron, wrought iron, and steel by handscraping and wire brushing is unsuccessful, low-pressure grit blasting may be necessary. It is always best to test such techniques in an unobtrusive area first to determine if there will be any damage to the metal surface.

Paint Guidelines

1. It is not appropriate to paint unpainted brick and stone, or to paint copper and bronze.

2. If repainting of a previously painted masonry surface is necessary, use an appropriate masonry paint and choose a color that matches that of the original masonry as closely as possible.

3. Protect original building material that was painted by maintaining a sound paint film.

4. Maintain previously painted surfaces in appropriate ways:

- Inspect painted surfaces to determine if repainting is necessary or if cleaning the surfaces will suffice.
- Use the gentlest techniques possible, such as handscraping and handsanding with wood or brick, and wire brushing and handsanding with metals, to remove loose paint layers down to a sound paint layer. Employ electric heat guns, heat plates, and chemical paint strippers only when gentler methods are not successful and more thorough removal is necessary, and use them with caution.
- Follow proper surface preparation, applying compatible paint-coating systems, including priming all exposed wooden surfaces.
- Apply new paint only to clean, dry surfaces to ensure that it will properly bond.

5. While specific colors are not addressed in these guidelines for downtown buildings, it is encouraged that selected paint colors be appropriate to the historic building and district.

6. Enhance the architectural character of a historic building through appropriate placement of exterior paint colors.

7. Spray-on vinyl coatings are not an appropriate substitute for paint.

2.6 Safety and Accessibility

A new use or a substantial rehabilitation of a historic building can result in requirements to meet contemporary standards for both life safety and accessibility to people with disabilities. The North Carolina State Building Code and the federal guidelines for adhering to the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 both provide some flexibility in compliance when dealing with historic buildings. Review of proposed exterior alterations to meet life safety and accessibility standards is based on whether the alteration will compromise the architectural and historic character of the building and the site.

Introducing a large feature on the exterior of a historic building without destroying or diminishing significant architectural features is clearly a challenge. Likewise, adding an exterior fire stair or fire exit requires careful study of all alternatives. Regardless of the magnitude of an alteration to a historic building, temporary and reversible changes are preferred over permanent and irreversible ones.

Safety and Accessibility Guidelines

1. Review proposed new uses for existing historic buildings to determine if related building code and accessibility requirements are feasible without compromising the historic character of the building and the site.

2. Meet health and safety code and accessibility requirements in ways that do not diminish the historic character, features, materials, and details of the building.

3. Where possible, locate fire exits, stairs, landings, and decks on rear or inconspicuous side elevations where they will not be visible from the street.

4. It is not appropriate to introduce new fire doors if they would diminish the original design of the building or damage historic materials and features. Keep new fire doors as compatible as possible with existing doors in proportion, location, size, and detail.

5. When introducing reversible features to assist people with disabilities, take care that the original design of the porch or the entrance is not diminished and historic materials or features are not damaged.

6. If possible, comply with accessibility requirements through portable or temporary, rather than permanent, ramps.

2.7 Utilities & Energy Retrofit

Many features of historic buildings are inherently energy efficient. For example, operable transoms, windows, awnings, and shutters provide opportunities for conserving energy. Capitalizing on energy-efficient historic features and sensitively retrofitting historic buildings can maximize their energy-conserving potential.

Often, the energy efficiency of older windows is compromised when the weatherstripping around the sash is not maintained and the glazing compound that seals the glass panes within the wooden sash deteriorates. Weatherstripping around doors must be maintained as well, to prevent air infiltration. Once existing windows have been repaired as needed, storm windows can be installed to provide a second barrier to the elements. Care must be taken not to damage or obscure the windows and the doors in the process. Interior storm windows are encouraged as an alternative to exterior storm windows. However, exterior storm windows with a painted or baked-enamel finish in a color appropriate to the color of the building are acceptable. Stained or painted wooden storm doors with large glass panels are also acceptable.

Utility work on the public right-of-way or on private property may require a certificate of appropriateness. For example, the installation of a new mechanical box on the sidewalk in downtown would require a certificate.

When introducing new mechanical and electrical equipment and lines, care must be taken that historic features of the building are not damaged or obscured. All such equipment should be located in the least visible location and appropriately screened.

Large antennas, satellite dishes, and communication equipment are intrusive, but would be appropriate if installed in inconspicuous areas on the building or lot and screened from view – such as on a rooftop behind a parapet wall.

Utilities and Energy Retrofit Guidelines

1. Retain and preserve the inherent energy-conservation features of a historic building, such as operable windows, transoms, awnings, and shutters.
2. Improve thermal efficiency by installing weatherstripping, storm windows, caulk, and if they are historically appropriate, awnings and shutters.
3. It is not appropriate to replace transparent glass in windows and doors with tinted or mirrored glass.
4. It is not appropriate to replace multiple-paned doors or window sashes with thermal sashes using snap-in, false muntins, or muntins between the glass.
5. Generally, it is not appropriate to replace operable windows or transoms with fixed glass.
6. Install storm windows so that the existing windows and frames are not damaged or obscured. Select exterior storm windows that are coated with paint or a baked-enamel finish in a color appropriate to the color of the building. Storm windows should be of an appropriate size and proportion so that they match the existing window.
7. If awnings are historically appropriate, install them in door or window openings so that architectural features are not concealed or historic materials damaged. Select colors appropriate to the color of the building.
8. If wooden shutters are historically appropriate, install them sized to window openings and mounted so that they are operable.
9. Locate roof ventilators, hardware, antennas, and solar collectors inconspicuously on roofs where they will not be visible from the street.
10. Install mechanical equipment, including heating and air conditioning units, in areas and spaces requiring the least amount of alteration to the appearance and the materials of the building such as roofs. Screen the equipment from view.
11. Locate exposed exterior pipes, wires, meters, and fuel tanks on rear elevations or along an inconspicuous side of the building. Screen them from view.
12. Locate window air-conditioning units on rear or inconspicuous elevations whenever possible.
13. It is not appropriate to install large antennas and satellite dishes in the historic district. Small, digital satellite dishes should not be visible from a public street and should be screened from view.