

GREENHILLS HISTORIC PRESERVATION DESIGN GUIDELINES

Exterior Materials – Retain and repair original exterior materials—whether wood, asbestos siding, brick, stucco or concrete block. For exterior wall resurfacing, use materials that match the appearance of the original. Wood or fiber-cement board (such as Hardie plank) may be used to repair or replace deteriorated exterior board siding. EIFS (Exterior Insulation and Finish System) is a good substitute for stucco. If vinyl siding is used, use 8”-wide boards with an exposed width of 6 ¾” to 7” to match original siding found in the district. Architectural features such as windowsills, transoms and door trim should not be removed or covered.

Paint Colors – Use neutral colors such as white, beige, or gray. Contrasting colors may be used on doors, trim and porch recesses, with no more than 3 different colors on a building or storefront. No vivid colors. Do not paint brick that is not already painted.

Windows -- Retain or restore original window openings facing a street; do not reduce or enlarge. Maintain the rhythm of original window openings. Replacement windows should fill the entire opening. Vinyl windows are permitted but aluminum, aluminum-clad wood, or fiberglass-resin (AKA Fibrex) windows will last longer. Double-hung windows with one-over-one sashes may be used for dwellings, paired or tripled or combined with picture windows in wide existing openings. Do not use muntin grids between the glass only as they do not look authentic. Projecting bow or bay windows are not consistent in style with 1930s-period homes or commercial buildings. When replacing windows in a multi-unit building, make windows consistent throughout.

It IS possible to restore original steel windows by removing paint and rust and repainting and installing new glazing compound. They are generally not energy efficient, but they can be made more so by caulking around the openings, adding weather-stripping, adding storm windows or installing thermal glass in place of the existing glass.

For commercial and institutional buildings—shopping center, community building/school, churches—retain existing historic metal and glass-block windows. If replacement is necessary, match the originals in size, material, profiles and configuration.

Storefronts - The shopping center is lined along the front by storefronts in bays divided by brick pilasters. When the shopping center was remodeled circa 1995, it was refaced with synthetic stucco and some storefronts were altered, but several original storefronts remain, which have a low brick bulkhead, three-part aluminum-framed display windows, transoms, and 3/4-glazed doors. Retain existing or restore storefront openings and clear glass windows and transoms. Use 3/4-glazed doors. The treatment of the rear of the shopping center, which has many alterations, is more flexible, but remaining original features such as steel windows, aluminum panels and flat canopies, should be retained.

Doors – Retain original door openings facing a street; do not reduce or enlarge in size. Retain original doors, such as the glass-and-wood-doors with horizontal panes on 1930s dwellings and six-panel wood doors on 1940s homes, if they are in good condition. Replacement doors should be of a simple, compatible style; Victorian-style doors with stained or leaded glass or doors with oval or arched windows are not consistent with the period or style of dwellings in Greenhills.

Energy conservation may be achieved with a storm door; full-glazed designs are preferred if original storm doors are beyond repair. Full-glazed aluminum doors are appropriate for the shopping center and other commercial and institutional buildings.

Doorhoods – Maintain original doorhoods or replace in-kind to match. Often, they were flat-roofed with pipe columns or brick or stucco supports. Colonial-inspired homes and Cape Cod cottages had doorhoods with shed, hipped or gabled roofs supported by wood brackets. Flat roofs on doorhoods may be slightly sloped to improve drainage while maintaining a flat appearance.

Awnings– Awnings are permitted only on commercial buildings; they must be shed-style awnings, not curved or “waterfall”-style. Cloth or synthetic materials that replicate woven cloth are preferred. Vinyl and shiny plastic materials are prohibited. Colors for awnings should complement the building and streetscape. Vivid colors are prohibited.

Colonnade – A flat-roofed colonnade with square brick columns is a character-defining element of the shopping center. In 1995, the fascia, or sign board, at the edge of the colonnade roof was raised and the roofline subsequently altered with gables. Retain the colonnade and fascia as-is or restore to their historic appearance.

Roofs/Parapets – Retain the historic roofline or parapet—whether flat or gabled. Mansard roofs are prohibited. Use roofing materials that are compatible in color with the building. Black and gray are preferred; avoid shades of brown, green, red, etc. Dimensional fiberglass shingles are a good alternative to slate. Avoid the addition of skylights and rooftop utilities where they can be seen from the street. A standing-seam metal roof is a practical and attractive alternative for the Farmers’ Market Shed behind the shopping center.

Porches, Breezeways, Carports, and Decks – Preserve original porches and breezeways. In all new construction or alteration of these items, use a compatible design and materials such as glass, wood or brick. New decks are limited to rear elevations to minimize their visual impact.

Attachments - All attachments, such as light fixtures, street number signs and shutters, should be compatible with the building on which they are installed. Use simple contemporary light fixtures. Preserve original street number signs. Shutters were not used on houses in Greenhills before 1950 and are not consistent with International-style buildings or paired or grouped windows. If used, shutters should match the height of the window and be sized properly to cover the window if closed.

Utility Systems - Utility and mechanical systems, such as central air-conditioning units, satellite dishes and solar panels, should be inconspicuously placed, avoiding visibility from a street. Permanent installation of air-conditioning units through walls or in windows is not allowed on the front, but removable window units are permitted on a seasonal basis. Roof-mounted solar panels shall be installed to match the slope of the roof. In the case of a flat roof, solar panels may be angled, provided they are not visible from a street.

Walls, Fences and Screens - Retaining walls and fences are not typical of the district. Fences, including those installed to screen waste containers, should be compatible in material, design and color with the building.

Garages and Garage Doors – Retain original garages, which were typically simple, flat-roofed masonry buildings. When replacing garage doors, use 16-panel steel doors, preferably solid. If garage doors with windows are desired, select single-pane rectangular windows, not arched or divided lites, across the top. For grouped garages, keep doors consistent. Carriage-style doors are not consistent with the district.

Accessory Structures – Accessory structures, not including garages, should be limited to garden sheds of gable-roofed wood construction with a maximum floor area of 100 square feet and a maximum height of 10 feet above grade. Only one shed is allowed for each dwelling unit and must be located in a rear yard.

Site Improvements and Street Furniture – Retain original walkways, steps, landscaping and lighting that contribute to the character of the district. All new site improvements, including street furniture such as tables, chairs, benches, waste containers, and sidewalk enclosures, shall be compatible with the character of the district. Use muted rather than vivid colors. Wrought iron, wood and aluminum or powder-coated steel that gives the appearance of wrought iron are preferred for street furniture. New patios and terraces associated with dwellings may occur on the rear or side but not the front to minimize their visual impact.

Signs – In addition to regulations in Chapter 1149 Sign Regulations in the Greenhills Code of Ordinances, the following guidelines apply to signs in the historic district. Signs shall be compatible in design, material, color and style with the style and period of the building and the historic district. They must fit within the fascia to which they are attached. Signs may include not more than 2 different fonts, 3 lines of type and 3 colors, including black and white. Simple capital letters are preferred. Logos are permitted, but vivid colors are not. Window signs shall not cover more than 50 percent of the window area.

NEW CONSTRUCTION AND ADDITIONS

Materials - The type of materials and their color, texture, scale, and detailing should be compatible with those of the District and/or the original building.

Scale - The scale of new construction/additions and constituent parts should be compatible with the District and/or the original building and the scale of its parts.

Form - The shape, massing, and proportions of new work should be compatible with the District and/or the original building.

Detailing - The detailing, including, but not limited to, the following features and their placement on additions and new construction: walls, roofs, windows, doors, eaves, chimneys, railings, and attachments should be compatible with the District and/or the original building.

Height - The height of an addition should not exceed the height of the original building. The height of new buildings should be comparable with the height of existing adjacent buildings. The height of new buildings constructed in undeveloped areas should not detract from the character and appearance of the District.

Setback - The setback of new buildings should be comparable to the setbacks of existing adjacent buildings and to what existed historically in the District.

Historic Integrity - Compatibility of new work to original work is required, but imitation of old work in new construction should be avoided. New work should appear to be new work. Where new additions meet original work, the connection should be carefully designed so as not to detract from the original but also to show that the connection is new. Design new buildings, structures, attachments, additions, and connections so that they do *not* appear to have been constructed when the affected historic structure was originally built.

NON-CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS

Non-Contributing Buildings are usually of a different character than the contributing buildings due to their age and difference in their scale, massing, material, and detailing. All buildings not identified as landmarks or contributing within an historic district are considered to be non-contributing buildings. Additions and alterations to a Non-Contributing Building shall either be compatible with its own style and character or make it more compatible with the district.

EXCEPTIONS

Per Section 1143.07 in the Historic Overlay District regulations, the Planning Commission may modify certain review criteria in cases of handicapped access or other hardship. When there is no economically feasible alternative that would conform to the guidelines, the applicant must demonstrate to the Commission that an economic hardship exists and that alternatives that meet the guidelines have been explored. When the applicant demonstrates that an alteration not consistent with the guidelines would permit the applicant to achieve substantial benefits without substantial harm to the historic district, the Commission may approve it upon such conditions as it may determine. See Section 1143.07 for information on how to make a case for economic hardship.

DEMOLITION

Per Section 1143.06 Standards for Reviewing Applications, the Planning Commission may consider the following criteria in evaluating applications for demolition of a property in the historic district.

A. Economic hardship. The owner can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Planning Commission that preservation of the historic property will cause substantial economic hardship for the applicant, as defined in Section 1143.07.

B. Non-significant elements. The demolition request is for an inappropriate addition or a non-significant portion of a historic property and the demolition will not adversely affect those parts of the historic property that are significant as determined by the Planning Commission.

C. Non-contributing buildings. Non-contributing buildings may be demolished if the demolition will not adversely affect the character of the district. Any new construction on the cleared site will be subject to the applicable guidelines per Section 1143.06(b)(3).

For more information, see Section 1143.06 in the Greenhills Code of Ordinances.