

DESIGN GUIDELINES PART I: STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION

The *Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* (1995) sets forth standards for four types of treatments or approaches to historic properties. These treatments are Preservation, Rehabilitation, Restoration, and Reconstruction. It is important to understand that a single project may involve one or more treatments. The *Standards* provide excellent guidance in evaluating Certificate of Appropriateness applications and assessing a project's impact on a historic property.

There are several factors to consider when deciding upon the appropriate treatment, or treatments, for a historic property. These factors include the following:

- **property's historic significance**
- **property's physical condition**
- **proposed use**
- **intended interpretation.**

In Topsham, intended interpretation may not be applicable for many projects because it relates primarily to a property that is open to the public as a house museum. The majority of Certificate of Appropriate applications in Topsham will probably involve rehabilitation. For this reason, the first section of the Design Guidelines focuses on the Standards for Rehabilitation. The other treatments are included in the Appendix for easy reference.

What is Rehabilitation?

The Secretary of Interior's Standards define rehabilitation as follows:

The act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.

Rehabilitation may be considered an appropriate treatment for a property in the following cases:

- when repair and replacement of deteriorated features is necessary;
- when alterations or additions to the property are planned for a new or continued use;

- when its depiction at a particular period of time is not appropriate.

Before starting any rehabilitation work a property's existing conditions should be documented. Photographs and/or drawings are the best way to document a building. Also, drawings should be developed for any rehabilitation work. Plans may include a site plan, exterior elevation(s), detail drawings and floor plans. Drawings should clearly show the existing features of a building and how the rehabilitation work will impact those features, if at all. The drawings should clearly communicate scale, overall form, details, texture, and material.

Smaller scale projects such as the modification of a porch railing may not require an extensive set of drawings. If there is any question about the level of documentation needed for an application, the applicant should contact the Historic District Commission prior to submitting an application.

A typical approach to reviewing a Certificate of Appropriateness application is to first determine which of the following standards apply to the project and then how those standards relate to the given project.

Standards for Rehabilitation

1. **A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.**

Generally, the best course of action for rehabilitating a building is to maintain its original use. For example, a house is obviously intended to be used as a residence and continued use as a residence is recommended. If the use of a building is going to be changed, several key factors should be taken into account. First, those aspects of form, architectural detailing, and site which are important to defining the historic character of the building should be identified and documented. Second, the identified features should be preserved with minimal, if any, changes.

When considering a new use for a historic building, the following factors should be taken into account: the overall form of the building, materials, fenestration pattern, and the relationship of the building to the site

and nearby structures. A change in use will often trigger new health and safety code requirements. For example, a second means of egress may be required if a residential property is going to be converted into use as apartments. The changes that will result from a proposed change in use should be carefully considered. In some instances, the new use may be completely inappropriate for a building.

Any changes to address code issues should be compatible with the existing architectural features of the building and result in minimal change, if any, to the existing features. Every reasonable effort should be made to locate these alterations to the side or rear of the building where they will minimally impact the historic character of the building and/or will not be visible from the public way.



This house has been converted to apartments with minimal changes to the overall form of the building.

2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.

The historic character of a property is defined by the sum of its parts: form, scale, proportion, materials, architectural details and relationship to the street. Combined, all of these elements reflect the period in history when a building was constructed or altered and are the defining features of a stylistic period. Although the removal of a “small” detail may seem minor, this sets the stage for more “small” changes, which over time result in the complete degradation of a building’s historic character. In addition, the removal of materials or alteration of features diminishes the historic integrity of a building. Although, some building elements may

be reproduced, a building’s integrity can never be replaced.

For example, it would not be appropriate to remove or cover-up paneled corner pilasters on a Greek Revival house because they are one of the key defining features of a house from that stylistic period. Similarly, it would not be appropriate to replace the existing six-over-six double hung windows in a Federal style house with windows that are one-over-one.

3. Each property will 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 elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.

A property is a physical reflection of a community’s history and development. The construction techniques and building materials speak to the era in which the building was built. The form, use of ornament and materials reflect the work of a builder or architect.

For example, a builder may have used an unusual window form consistently in their buildings – almost like a trademark of their work. This trademark is an important feature for particular buildings, built in a specific time period by a certain builder. It is not appropriate to apply this type of treatment to a building that did not originally have this type of window. Why? It would give a false interpretation to the public that a specific builder has constructed the building when that is not the case. Likewise, applying architectural features from a later stylistic period to an earlier structure and vice versa is not appropriate unless there is documentation to support it.

4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.

Buildings are not static objects. Frequently, a structure may have been “updated” as styles changed. For example, it is not uncommon to see a Federal style house that has been updated to reflect the Victorian era by adding decorative porch brackets or a small bracketed roof over an entrance. Changes such as these may have taken on their own historical significance and need to be evaluated relative to the integrity of the historic structure.



This Federal style entry was modified in the late 1800s with the addition of an Italianate entry pediment supported by pairs of elaborate brackets. Although the brackets and pediment were added later, they have taken on their own significance and should be preserved and maintained.

5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.

Craftsmanship is something that can be replicated only to a point. Some materials available at the time of original construction are now difficult to find and may no longer be available. Also, the cost of building with those same materials today may be very expensive. The loss of an original detail means the loss of an original piece of craftsmanship that can never fully be replaced. Therefore, every reasonable effort shall be made to preserve the original features, finishes, materials and craftsmanship in a property.

6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, wherever possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.

Every reasonable attempt shall be made to preserve the original historic features. However, if a feature is beyond repair then replacement must be considered. The replacement should match the old in form, scale, texture, color and material. Before removing the deteriorated features, they should be documented photographically. If similar features are intact on the building then they should be used as a model for the replacement. For example, if an eave bracket needs to be replaced and there are other intact brackets, then they

should be used to guide the creation of the replacement bracket.

7. Chemical or physical treatments if appropriate will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.

There are numerous chemical treatments available which can greatly expedite the removal of paint, graffiti and grime on historic properties. However, a conservative approach is recommended when considering the use of any chemical or physical treatments. Sand blasting is not an acceptable technique for cleaning historic woodwork or masonry because it causes irreversible damage to the surface. Propane or butane blow torches are not an acceptable method for cleaning wood surfaces because they can scorch the wood and start a fire.

Pressure washing wood and masonry is acceptable within a certain range of pressure and with the proper equipment. One of the biggest pitfalls when using a chemical treatment is that the wood is not properly neutralized after the application of the chemical. The result is that new paint will not adhere. Because each situation differs, testing is important to determine effective procedures for a site.

A property owner should consult with a preservation professional and the Maine Historic Preservation Commission to learn about recommended guidelines for any cleaning method.

8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.

The built environment is only one layer of history from which we can learn more about our past. Often, the clues that lie underground are equally as important and can tell us a great deal about how a community developed and about the daily life of the people that lived there.

The recommended course of action in dealing with archeological resources is to avoid disturbing them at all as a result of any new construction or alteration to an existing historic structure. In many instances, local historians and/or planning department staff may be aware of archeologically sensitive sites. Topsham has

several extensive reports on the archeological resources in the area and property owners should check with the Planning Office to inquire whether their property might be included in one of the studies.

Generally, if a site has been disturbed through the years (extensive landscape changes, driveway grading, extensive trenching for water infiltration problems, etc.) then any items of archeological value have probably been destroyed and/or their context destroyed. If there is any indication that an area may be archeologically significant, then an archeologist should conduct test pits in the proposed area to determine if there is anything of significant archeological value.

Before conducting any construction or rehabilitation work, the Town of Topsham Planning Department and the Maine Historic Preservation Commission should be contacted to determine the probability of any significant archeological resources at the site.

9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

Additions to historic houses present some of the most challenging design problems. Every reasonable effort should be made to minimize the impact of new construction on the historic building both visually and physically. Visually, the addition should not overwhelm or obscure the historic structure. In other words, the scale, mass and volume of the addition should be taken into account when evaluating the appropriateness of an application. Obviously, the actual physical impact on the historic building is a critical consideration. The connection between the addition and the historic building should be carefully designed so that it minimizes the destruction of historic materials and character defining features. New additions should be located on non-primary facades.

When considering an addition several things should be taken into account: the historic building's character defining features, the type and color of its exterior materials, details of craftsmanship, and site

characteristics as they relate to the historic building. Once these items have been identified they can be used to assess the compatibility of the new design.

New construction and additions must be differentiated from the historic structure. It must be clear that the addition is not of the same period as the existing structure. It is not appropriate for an addition to imitate the historic building so closely that the public can not discern a difference between historic and new.



The attached one-story porch shown here is a good example of an alteration to a historic house. The porch columns are unadorned and the proportions clearly reflect modern materials. The cornice line on the porch is also simple and clearly modern.

10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will 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.

When planning an addition to a historic structure, it should be designed in such a way that it can be removed at some point in the future without destroying the integrity of the original structure. In other words, if an addition is removed in the future it should not cause irreparable damage to the historic structure. There are many different design solutions that allow for new additions which would allow for removal with minimal disturbance to historic fabric.

DESIGN GUIDELINES PART III: SPECIFIC ELEMENTS

Doors

Doors and door openings are an important character defining feature of any property. The size, scale, placement and architectural detailing of and around a door, or doors, contribute greatly to the pattern and rhythm of a building's façade. Doors also tend to be subjected to a great deal of weathering depending upon the direction the door is facing. The main entry is typically a focal point on a façade and where one looks for clues about a building's architectural style. Paneled wood exterior doors and wood doors with fixed panes are typical throughout the Topsham districts. Entries with paired or double doors are also common in the districts.

1. Every reasonable effort shall be made to repair the original door and door opening. Repairs should be made with as little intervention as possible by patching, piecing-in, splicing, consolidating or otherwise reinforcing the deteriorating material using the same material as the existing door.
2. Entry pediments should be maintained and preserved.
3. Photographically document the door and any other related features prior to any repair or rehabilitation work.
4. If it is necessary to replace any section of a door or a door surround, the replacement shall be made from the same material as the original and should match the original in size, scale, shape, and detail. Any details such as paneling, glazing pattern, and door surround molding shall be duplicated in the replacement. In the event that it is not possible to match the material, a compatible substitute material is acceptable.
5. The design for a new door shall be compatible with other doors on the property and/or with adjacent properties. A new door shall be made from the same material as the original. In the event that it is not possible to match the material, a compatible substitute material is acceptable.

6. Original door openings shall not be altered to accommodate stock doors.
7. If a door has any decorative windows such as sidelights, fanlights or transoms, these shall be maintained and preserved.
8. Storm doors shall be compatible with the existing door in material and color. Storm doors shall be mounted so that they will not permanently damage the original door surround and trim. Storm doors should be designed in such a way that they do not completely obscure the historic door.
9. It is not appropriate to alter the character of an entrance by either removing or adding historic elements that never existed on the property.
10. It is not appropriate to replace paired or double doors with a single door.
11. It is not appropriate to add entrance vestibules or porches on the primary facade where there is no historic precedent for such an architectural feature existing on a building.



This is an appropriate storm door installation because the storm obscures only a small part of the entry door.



There are several houses in the historic districts that have paired or double doors.

Outbuildings (Garage, Carriage House, Storage Building)

Garages and carriage houses are important structures in Topsham's historic districts. Topsham has a range of building forms including freestanding single and double bay garages, attached carriage houses, freestanding barns and small storage buildings. In many cases, these buildings are visible from the street and echo the details of the main building on the property.



This attached carriage barn is an excellent example of the level of architectural detail that can be found on an outbuilding. Note the use of brackets as a "support" of the bay and the elliptical window.

Doors, roof elements, windows and exterior wall surface are some of the character defining elements on outbuildings. In Topsham, many of the doors are paneled with a single row of glass panes. In some cases these doors function by swinging open or sliding on a track. It is important to maintain the existing functionality of exterior doors. Topsham has many instances where outbuildings have taken on a new use as living quarters. In these cases, the character defining features shall be maintained. Alterations to an outbuilding should be reviewed using the same standards one would apply to a primary structure. (See Design Guidelines Part 1: Standards for Rehabilitation.)

1. Existing outbuildings shall be maintained and preserved.
2. Every effort shall be made to repair the existing outbuilding and any character defining architectural features of the building. Repairs should be made with as little intervention as possible by patching, piecing-in, splicing, consolidating or otherwise reinforcing the deteriorating material using the same material as the existing structure.

3. Photographically document the outbuildings and any other related features prior to any repair or rehabilitation work.
4. If it is necessary to replace any element of an outbuilding, the replacement shall be made from the same material as the original and should match the original in size, scale, shape, and detail. In the event that it is not possible to match the material, a compatible substitute material is acceptable.
5. Double and triple width garage doors are not appropriate. New garage doors should utilize the existing opening(s) and should be not be a smooth surface.
6. Every reasonable effort should be made to preserve the existing functionality of a door on an outbuilding.
7. If constructing a new outbuilding, the structure shall be compatible with the existing primary structure in materials, building and roof form, and detailing. The design for a new outbuilding shall be compatible with the primary structure, but it should be clear that it is not from the same time period as the primary structure.
8. Any new or temporary outbuilding should be located behind the primary structure and shall be compatible with the location of adjacent outbuildings.



This is an excellent example of introducing a new opening and yet maintaining the historic context. The integrity of the historic sliding barn door is maintained even though a new opening has been added.

Porch

A porch often marks the main entrance to a house and it serves as a transition from the street to the building's interior. There is ample opportunity for architectural expression on porches with details such as columns, pilasters, decorative brackets, railings, and balustrades.

Porches are found in various locations on a building and one building may have several porches. The steps and railings leading up to a porch are an equally important exterior feature. There are several properties in the Topsham historic districts that have porches. There are a mix of porch configurations in Topsham including the following:

- one-story attached entry porch
- one-story attached wrap around porch
- one-story attached porch that span the full width of the front façade
- one-story attached side porch.



Attached side porches like this one are found on several houses in the historic districts.

The majority of Federal and Greek Revival style houses in Topsham do not have entry porches. There are several properties where a small pediment was added to the main entry during the mid-late 1800s.

1. Existing porches and their character defining elements shall be maintained and preserved.
2. Every reasonable effort should be made to repair the existing porch and any character defining architectural features of the porch (brackets, columns, balustrade or railing, flooring, ceiling, roof, and steps). Repairs should be made with as little intervention as possible by patching, piecing-in, splicing, consolidating, or otherwise reinforcing

the deteriorating material using the same material as the existing porch.

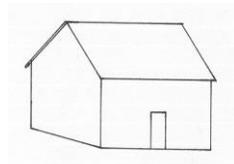
3. Photographically document the porch and any other related features prior to any repair or rehabilitation work.
4. If it is necessary to replace any element of a porch, the replacement shall be made from the same material as the existing porch and should match the historic feature in size, scale, shape, and detail. In the event that it is not possible to match the material, a compatible substitute material is acceptable.
5. It is not appropriate to cover porch elements with vinyl or aluminum siding.
6. It is not appropriate to enclose an existing porch on the primary building façade.
7. It is not appropriate to replace historic stone steps. In many instances, resetting stone steps and repointing can solve many related problems.
8. Screens may be added to a porch if they can be attached in such a manner that will not cause damage to historic fabric and the modification is completely reversible.
9. It is not appropriate to add a porch or deck where there is no evidence to suggest that one ever existed.
10. It is not appropriate to add ornamentation to a porch that is not appropriate to the stylistic period of the house.
11. It is not appropriate to add decks, glass enclosed rooms, or sun porches where they will be visible from the public way.

Here the side porch columns have been replaced with modern metal supports. This change in material and form is not a compatible replacement.

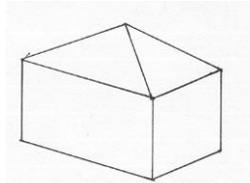


Roof

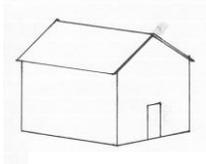
A roof is an extremely important character defining element of a building. There are several different aspects of a roof to consider: 1) overall shape of a roof, such as hipped, gambrel and gable; 2) decorative features, such as cresting, dormers, cupolas, and chimneys; and 3) roofing material such as slate, wood and metal, as well as the material size, color, and patterning.



Side gable roof.



Hipped roof.



End gable roof.

The predominant roof forms in Topsham are gable and hipped. Metal and asphalt shingles are the predominant roofing materials. Shed roofs on rear facades and flat roofs on porches are also not uncommon.

1. The shape, pitch, overhang and material of a historic roof shall be maintained and preserved.
2. Any character defining elements of the roof (cupolas, vents, and dormers, etc.) shall be maintained and preserved.
3. Every reasonable effort should be made to repair the existing roof. The materials used to repair the roof shall match the existing roof in color, material and configuration. If a substitute material is necessary, it should match the existing roof material in color and configuration.
4. If replacing an entire roof, the replacement material may revert back to an original material if historic documentation is available. For example, if removing an asphalt roof and early photographs clearly show a metal roof, then it would be acceptable to revert to a metal roof.

5. Photographically document the roof and any other related features prior to any repair or rehabilitation work.
6. If replacing a metal roof, the proportion of the seams and trim shall match the original. Generally, it is not appropriate to substitute a commercial-grade architectural metal on a residential structure where there is no evidence that one existed originally.
7. It is not appropriate to destroy historic detail when installing replacement gutters.
8. It is not appropriate to attach elements to the roof such as antennae, skylights, vents, and decks on front elevations or areas that are visible from the public way.



The carriage barn has an end gable roof adorned with a cupola that has a weathervane. Also, note that a shed roof marks a later addition on the left side of the building. All of these elements are important character defining features.



Metal roofs are common on many houses in the historic districts.

Exterior Walls and Trim

The materials used on the exterior of a building have a dramatic impact on the character of the building. The exterior material contributes to the scale of the building and the rhythm of the facade. Wood clapboard is the predominant exterior material in Topsham. Wood shingles of various configurations are also used in Topsham, particularly on some of the late 19th and early 20th century buildings. Some studies have shown that painting is a better value than applying vinyl siding in both up-front costs and over the life of the product. For more information on painting see the Resources section in the Appendix.

Aluminum or vinyl siding may seem like an acceptable substitute material, but it is not appropriate to use in the historic districts for several reasons. The installation of aluminum or vinyl siding often results in damage to or obstruction of historic detail. The loss of detail can be significant when door and window surrounds, cornices and pilasters are covered. The whole character of a house is altered which diminishes the historic character of a district. In addition, covering up or removing wood clapboards or shingles diminishes the historic integrity of a building.

The application of aluminum or vinyl siding over clapboards can also trap and conceal moisture and insect problems, which may result in extensive damage to a structure. In addition siding can be dented and cracked, which once damaged it loses any semblance to the material it was attempting to simulate. Therefore, aluminum or vinyl siding is not appropriate in the historic district.

1. Historic exterior wall surface and trim should be maintained and preserved.
2. Every effort should be made to repair the original clapboards and trim. The repair shall be made with the same kind of materials as the existing clapboards and trim.
3. It is not appropriate to cover up historic trim.
4. Photographically document the exterior wall surface and any other related features prior to any repair or rehabilitation work.

5. If replacement of historic wall surface and trim is necessary, then the materials used for repair should match the existing in color, material and

configuration. If a substitute material is necessary, it should match the existing wall material in color and configuration



Vinyl or aluminum siding can be damaged. The damage shown in the picture to the left allows moisture into the building thus creating more building problems which will not be immediately visible until extensive damage has been done.



Wood clapboards are the typical exterior wall treatment in Topsham.

Site

The term “site” includes several different elements. Site features include fences, walls, lighting, driveways, off-street parking, and landscape features. Every reasonable effort should be made to preserve and maintain historic site features. Topsham has several examples of granite retaining walls that mark the grade change between the front yard and the sidewalk.

Wooden front and side yard fences, of which a few exist in the historic districts, are important character defining features. Since fences sustain a great deal of wear and tear, it is unlikely that any original fencing survives. Property owners can look to historic photographs to determine if their property had fencing and, if so, the design and scale of the fence. Front, side, and rear yard fences should be compatible in material, design, detail, and size to other historic fences in the district and to the materials of the primary structure on the property. Wood and granite are the most prominent fence and wall materials in the district.



Wooden fences are an important site defining feature.

Driveways and their entrances establish a rhythm along the street and should be maintained. Topsham has several properties where adjoining lots share a driveway. In almost all cases, the driveway leads to parking along the side of the house or in the rear where there may be a garage or outbuilding.

The location of parking areas is an important issue particularly when considering a new use for a property. For example, if a house is going to be converted for use as an office, the placement of the parking area should be carefully considered. Landscape features such as hedges, terraces, and mature trees are also character defining elements.

1. Any new building shall be setback from the street a minimum of five (5) feet or according to zoning code.
2. A new building should be compatible with the setback of adjacent properties.
3. When considering the siting of an addition, it should be placed where it will have the least impact on the primary façade. The placement of the addition should be compatible with other properties in the district that have historic additions.
4. Distinctive landscape features such as terraces, mature trees, and hedges shall be maintained and preserved.
5. Concrete block is not an appropriate material for retaining walls and steps.
6. Stock precast concrete is not appropriate material for steps.
7. Every reasonable effort should be made to preserve and maintain the historic fences and features such as retaining walls.
8. If replacement of a section of fence is necessary, the replacement section should replicate the existing sections in material, height, and detail. Wood is the predominant fencing material in Topsham.
9. If it necessary to replace a large section of fence or an entire fence, the replacement section should match the historic fence in material, height, and overall design.
10. Chain link is not an appropriate fencing material for any areas that are visible from a public way.
11. It is not appropriate to install fencing in the front-yard where there is no historic precedent.
12. Parking areas should be located to the side or rear of the primary building.
13. Dumpsters or other large trash receptacles should be located to the side or rear of the property and, if necessary, screened using materials that are in keeping with the primary structure. Vegetative screening is not recommended.

Storefront

The majority of the surviving storefronts in Topsham are located in the Lower Main Street Historic District. Many of these buildings have seen great change through the years. However, the characteristic elements of a storefront are still intact in some cases. Large, clear display windows, recessed entry, sign panel, piers or pilasters, bulkhead, cornice and transom windows are the traditional defining elements of a storefront.

Storefronts are often subject to a lot of cosmetic change over the years. It is important to recognize that a later alteration may be historic in its own right. The majority of the storefronts in Topsham have been carved out of structures that may have originally been used primarily for residential purposes. However, any surviving evidence of the earliest transformations into storefronts is important to preserve.

1. Every reasonable effort shall be made to repair the existing storefront and its character defining elements. Repairs should be made with as little intervention as possible by patching, piecing-in, splicing, consolidating or otherwise reinforcing the deteriorating material using the same material as the existing storefront.
2. Photographically document the storefront and any other related features prior to any repair or rehabilitation work.
3. If it is necessary to replace any section of the storefront, the replacement shall be made from the same material as the original and should match the original in size, scale, shape, and detail. Any details such as display windows, sign band, cornice, piers or pilasters and entry shall match the original element. In the event that it is not possible to match the material, a compatible substitute material is acceptable.
4. Use historical information as a resource when designing a new storefront where one is missing.
5. The design for a new storefront shall be compatible with other historic storefronts in the district.
6. It is not appropriate to alter the character of a storefront by either removing or adding historic elements that never existed on the property.

7. It is not appropriate to reorient or relocate the main entrance to a store.
8. Infill of storefront openings is not appropriate. Large display windows are a defining characteristic of a storefront.



The rhythm of storefront windows and openings contributes to the character of the village streetscape.



Storefronts such as these along lower Main Street have been greatly altered through the years. In some cases, historic details may survive beneath the aluminum or vinyl siding.

Streetscape

The relationship between buildings, their setting, and landscape features helps to define the character of a historic neighborhood. Sidewalks, street light fixtures, fences, granite walls, pillars, trees, and setback from the street all impact the character of a neighborhood. The sidewalk paving material, the placement of trees, curbing material, and open spaces (parks, cemeteries, and fair grounds) should be taken into account when looking at the context of a historic property.

The street trees along certain roads are very important streetscape features and should be maintained. Trees have a dramatic impact on the scale and character of a town. In Topsham, brick sidewalks survive on a few streets and thus are an appropriate material for the streetscape.

1. The relationship between buildings and streetscape features shall be maintained and preserved.
2. Every reasonable effort shall be made to maintain the relationship between the building and the streetscape elements when making an alteration to an existing building.
3. A new structure shall maintain the relationship between the streetscape and buildings established by adjacent properties. If there is variation in the setback within a district, then the location of previously existing structures on the site should guide the placement of a new building.
4. Street trees should be maintained wherever possible. Review historic photographs to determine type and placement of trees. Consult with an arborist to determine appropriate tree species.
5. Historic paving materials such as granite and brick should be maintained and preserved.
6. If replacement of the paving material is necessary, then every reasonable effort shall be made to use historically appropriate materials and match the historic material.
7. Landscape features such as hedges, terraces, and slopes shall be maintained and preserved.



Topsham's streetscapes are defined by sidewalks, trees, fences, and the various building setbacks from the street.

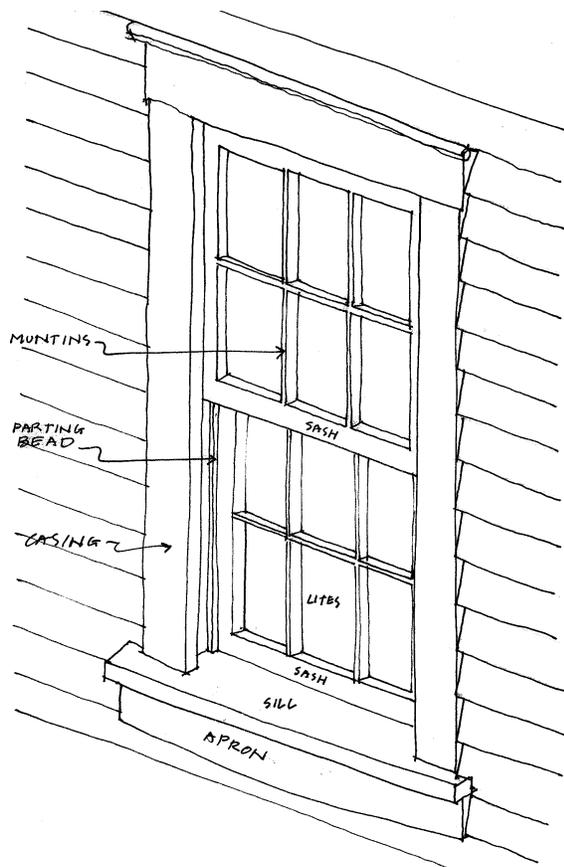


Dramatic landscape features like this alley of trees are vital to defining the relationship of this particular house to the street.

Windows

Windows are an important character defining feature on any historic property. The size, scale, placement and architectural detailing around windows contribute greatly to the pattern and rhythm of a building's façade. Windows, like doors, tend to be subjected to a great deal of weathering depending upon the orientation of the building. Every reasonable effort should be made to maintain and preserve a property's historic windows.

Original materials are often a better grade than what is available economically today, and they have proven their longevity. The destruction of a perfectly good original window in the name of energy efficiency is a misnomer, as it doesn't consider the larger question of the cost of human and oil energy to manufacture the original and the new replacement. In addition, the mechanisms and hardware in older windows are generally of a better quality than the hardware on new windows.



The parts of a window.

Repair and Rehabilitation

The standard argument for replacement windows is that "the old windows are drafty," yet the heat loss attributed to old windows occurs more often through parts that have loosened over time rather than through the glass itself. Generally windows can be restored to good working condition with the application of weatherstripping, recaulking the glass, and replacing minor pieces.

Another consideration for air infiltration is the use of storm windows. Storm windows may be used on the exterior or the interior of a property. Although they may compromise the visual appearance of a building's exterior, storm windows are not permanent and may be removed in the future without permanently altering the historic building. Storm windows can also be painted the same color as your sash (originally often flat black) and almost disappear in their unsightliness.



Maintaining or replicating the original exterior wooden storms is an appropriate design solution for older windows. The storms should match the configuration of the windows.

Window Replacement

When is a window too far gone to consider rehabilitation? If replacement is necessary, some alternatives are superior to others for replacement windows in a historic house.

One rule of thumb for evaluating window conditions is that when a window sash has more than two broken parts, such as a broken tongue and groove corner joint or broken muntins, it is time to consider replacement. Otherwise, any good woodworker can repair a sash with minor breaks. Old counterbalanced sash are very simple in their design. Window sash are made to be

taken apart for repair, as well as to glide easily when maintained.

So for replacement windows, the first and best option to maintain historic character is to look for a replacement in kind – a window that matches the size, material, muntin configuration, and detail of the existing window. One option is to look to local salvage yards for old sash that match the existing windows. These often will have the old wavy glass, known as cylinder glass, and will most closely replicate the original window sash in detail and species. They can be rehabilitated to make a fine replacement window. Depending on the age of the window, more likely than not the sash would have been made in New England out of eastern white pine. These windows have milled joinery and are made of solid stock, a far superior product and technique than compared to the finger joints or staples commonly available today in even the best commercial wood windows.

The other option is to work with a millwork shop to create a new in-kind wood window sash. If it is necessary to replace multiple windows the set-up cost for the muntin and sash profile knives is offset in the larger quantities. You can also explore options of double glazing each pane or light of glass. Some glass manufacturers make restoration glass, which is similar to the cylinder glass. In a few cases, contractors will go so far as to stockpile old sash to be able to salvage the old glass for reuse. This could be reused in other old sash or in new sash if the choice is made to stay with single glazing.

In some cases, commercial window manufacturers are able to take almost any of their standard products and customize them as replacement sash. They can route a pocket in the sash edge for the counterbalance sash line to fit. In some cases a double-insulated sash from one of these manufacturers can be installed in the original opening. This is ideal in that it doesn't require a carpenter to tear out the frame or do any special refurbishing of the frame (short of attaching new sash line to old counterbalances and then to the new sash). A successful replacement sash should not diminish the original opening size.

In looking for a replacement windows there are many options. Some windows achieve the objectives of maintaining historic character better than others. The cost of each is dependent on many factors. To get an accurate read on the breadth of a particular situation, it

is best to survey the condition of each window carefully. Some may need minor repair, while others will require replacement. Unless a house was severely neglected it would be unusual to find that all the windows are beyond repair. Sometimes the windows on one exposure have suffered more than others. Attic windows often hold clues as to the historic window configuration, as these windows often survive the changes of previous renovations. Although the attic windows will tell the story, they will probably be the ones requiring the most work. An accurate understanding of the condition of windows and a comprehensive approach to window repair will allow for ease of pricing out different repair options and finding the most cost effective long term solution.

The predominant window form in Topsham is wood, double-hung with multi-lights in both sash. Decorative windows like three-part windows and fanlights are also prevalent.

1. Original windows shall be maintained and preserved.
2. Every reasonable effort shall be made to repair the existing windows. Repairs should be made with as little intervention as possible by patching, piecing-in, splicing, consolidating or otherwise reinforcing the deteriorating material using the same material as the existing window.
3. If it is necessary to replace any section of a window or an entire window, the replacement should be made from the same material as the original and should match the original in size, scale, shape, and detail. Any details such as glazing pattern, and window surround molding should be duplicated in the replacement.
4. Original window openings shall not be altered to accommodate stock sizes. Snap-in muntins are not an appropriate substitute for true divided light windows.
5. Storm windows shall be attached so that existing windows and frames are not damaged. If possible, exterior storms should be painted to match the color of the existing windows. Interior storms are another option.
6. Original shutters shall be repaired and maintained.

7. If it is necessary to replace any section of a shutter, the replacement should be made from the same material as the original and should match the original in size, scale, shape and detail.
8. It is not appropriate to introduce shutters where there is no evidence that they ever existed.
9. Vinyl windows are not appropriate replacement windows.



Wood double-hung windows are typical of houses throughout the district.