

**Borough of Allentown**

**Design Guidelines**

**(§ 28-16.10)**

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# **Design Guidelines**

**Allentown, New Jersey Historic District and Sites**

Design Guidelines  
**Allentown, New Jersey Historic District and Sites**

**Historic Preservation Commission**

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# 01 Historic Preservation in Allentown

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*The “Design Guidelines for Allentown, New Jersey Historic District and Sites” is intended to increase appreciation of Allentown’s historic buildings and places, to ensure consistency in local decision-making, and to benefit property owners by clarifying community expectations.*

## **Purpose and Overview**

The Design Guidelines were written and adopted to assist the Allentown Historic Preservation Commission (AHPC) in its review of proposed additions, alterations, demolition and new construction in the Historic District in order to comply with the requirements set forth by the United States Secretary of the Interior. It can also guide property owners to plan and design their construction projects. Design guidelines can provide an objective lens for the Commission’s decisions,

can increase public awareness of historically appropriate design, and can discourage the worst kind of insensitive building. Contextual design that maintains or improves the integrity of historic buildings increases market values. Good quality design, however, cannot be achieved through the application of a set of rules. The challenge for the AHPC and property owners alike is knowing how to use the design guidelines to make sound judgments that will preserve our historic resources, while allowing expressions of change and adaptation.

Allentown’s houses, barns, churches, shops and public buildings are representative of more than a chronology of architectural styles. They represent more than three centuries of homes and community in Allentown. These buildings are sited along streets that reflect the early land division of the town, clustered along early transportation routes and near the grist mill on Doctor’s Creek. In order to appreciate the historic character of Allentown village, one must understand its building traditions and styles.

Bringing awareness to the historic significance of the town, its buildings and its historic character allows us to take these features into account and treat them with sensitivity when we undertake a repair, addition, or new construction.

What follows is a brief overview of the major building traditions and architectural styles found in Allentown, beginning with the earliest surviving buildings from the late 18th century and ending with the early-20th century structures. This is intended as a practical guide for identifying the forms and fashions of buildings in Allentown, indicating when they were popular and their significant identifying features. Many buildings reflect combinations of styles rather than pure textbook examples. Alterations and additions over the years also may confound efforts to neatly label a building’s style. The sources cited at the end of this guide are particularly useful in understanding Allentown’s architectural heritage. In addition to consulting architectural reference books, the local library and the Borough Historian, Alice Wikoff, have



collections of books and documents that can assist in understanding the history and design of buildings and the village.

The Commission’s meeting schedule is posted on the Borough website. Any inquiries can first be directed to the Borough Clerk’s office.

# Allentown's Historic Significance

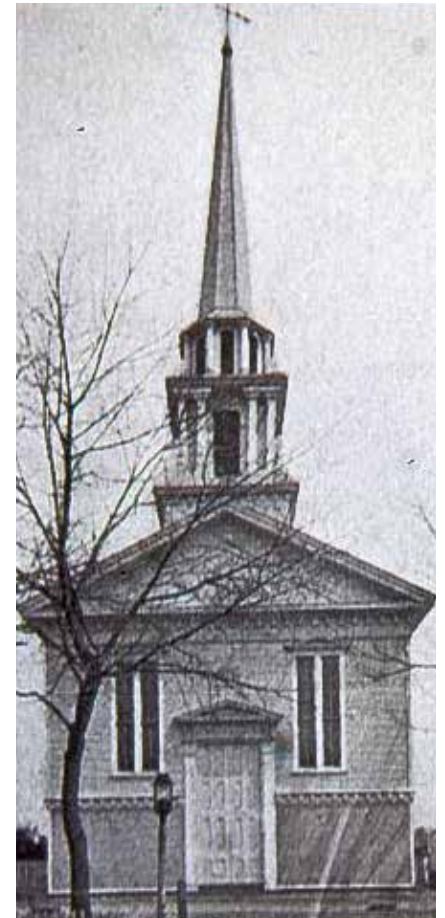
Allentown and surrounding Upper Freehold developed along two Native American Indian paths—one along Doctor's Creek led through Allentown to the rich bay shore and coast, while the other connected the settlements in East and West Jersey. The Lower York Road was the first roadway across New Jersey, connecting the capital of East Jersey—Perth Amboy—with West Jersey's capital—Burlington. Authorized by Deputy Governor Gawen Lawrie in 1683, this road led to a direct route for travelers from New York to Philadelphia. Main Street in Allentown developed from this Lower York Road, also known as Lawrie's Road.

In 1706, Nathan Allen acquired two parcels of land from his father-in-law. One parcel contained 110 acres on the east-side of Doctor's Creek, the other, 528 acres on the north-side

of Indian Run Creek. Allen, cited on many early eighteenth century deeds, became the town's namesake. The name "Allentown" appears on a 1749 Lewis Evans map of Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware, as well as on a 1776 Moses Moon map, with a 1785 inset illustrating "Allens Town Street." By 1795, the Village became "Allentown" on the Samuel Lewis Road Map of New Jersey.

Due to its location somewhat equidistant between the Hudson and Delaware Rivers, Allen's Town was settled by an extremely diverse group of immigrants. Many of the earliest settlers following Nathan Allen were Quakers, but by the mid-1700s two other faiths were firmly established. Presbyterians, mainly Scots and Scots-Irish, were here in 1720 and by 1730, English Episcopalians. Both shared the early

Meeting House and cemetery site located behind South Main Street along Lakeview Drive. Generally, the English, Scots, and Quakers arrived by way of Philadelphia and Burlington, while the French and Dutch arrived via New York and Perth Amboy ports. In 1744, the Presbyterians purchased property on Saw Mill Road (High Street) and built a church in 1756. From around 1730 to the approach of the Revolution, Allen's Town saw slow but steady growth, most likely spurred by Samuel Rogers, Sr.'s 1734 advertisement of a carriage service between New York and Philadelphia. Samuel Rogers, in conjunction with New York's Arthur Brown, transported passengers from Brown's sloop at South River to Philadelphia. The route by way of Burlington across the Delaware River, followed the Lower York Road. Reference the historic map on Allentown Borough's website.



*Allentown Methodist Church circa late 1800's*

# Allentown's Historic Significance

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*View from Allentown Presbyterian Church steeple, circa 1900*

Allentown soon became a crossroads that functioned both as a market village for the surrounding agricultural area and as a travelers' rest stop. As farms in the area grew, so did the need for blacksmiths, coopers, wheelwrights, tailors, and other craftsmen. Since the stage-

coach route usually took two or three days, taverns (also known as ordinaries) were established to serve long-distance travelers. Farmers frequented these establishments when patronizing the mills and small craftsmen-style shops. During the Revolutionary War, three major

battles—Trenton, Princeton, and Monmouth—were fought within 15 miles of Allentown. The Lower York Road was a flanking route used by both armies in the Trenton and Princeton campaigns. Due to its position at the head of the road through the New Jersey Pine Barrens,

Allentown was a strategic location, with access to multiple coastal areas where privateers operated. This most likely accounted for the distinction that most New Jersey Courts of Admiralty cases were heard in Allentown.

In 1834 Gordon's "Gazetteer" described Allentown as containing "from seventy-eight to eighty dwellings, one Presbyterian Church with cupola and bell handsomely situated on the hill on the west, an Academy, two schools, one Methodist Church, gristmill, sawmill, tilt-mill on Doctor's Creek, and a sawmill on Indian Run, below which...is a cotton manufactory."

Notable citizens have included: David Brearley, Jr., a signer of the U.S. Constitution, New Jersey's Chief Justice and pioneer of judicial law precedent; Governor William A. Newell, a skilled surgeon, who, as a Congressman, passed legislation establishing the U. S. Life Saving Service; Maria Frelinghuysen Cornell,

# Allentown's Historic Significance

wife of Presbyterian minister and evangelical leader, John Cornell, who founded the Allentown Sober Society in 1805 and one of the earliest rural Sunday Schools in America in 1809; and George Middleton, a U. S. Congressman who personally supported the transport of fugitive slaves along the Underground Railroad.

The Borough of Allentown is a well-preserved, cohesive district of residential, commercial, and religious structures from the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries. These buildings continue to exist and stand as a record of development of a small residential and commercial New Jersey town, which has served as the hub of the surrounding agricultural area throughout history. Most of the architecture in Allentown can be defined as either Vernacular Traditional or Vernacular Victorian in form and style. From the mid-nineteenth century through the early years of the twentieth century,

architect/builders came to Allentown, filling empty spaces between the earlier buildings with proficiently detailed and varied forms. The first major building period of Allentown's architecture spanned the years 1760 and 1830, which contributed to 13% of the existing building stock. The second era of major building activity occurred from 1830 and 1860, during which 34% of the architecture was constructed. The third major period of construction began around 1860 and continued to 1910, which contributed 38% of Allentown's architecture. The fourth and final period of historic activity overlapped the third and spanned the years between 1900 and 1930, erecting 15% of the total number of properties in the District.

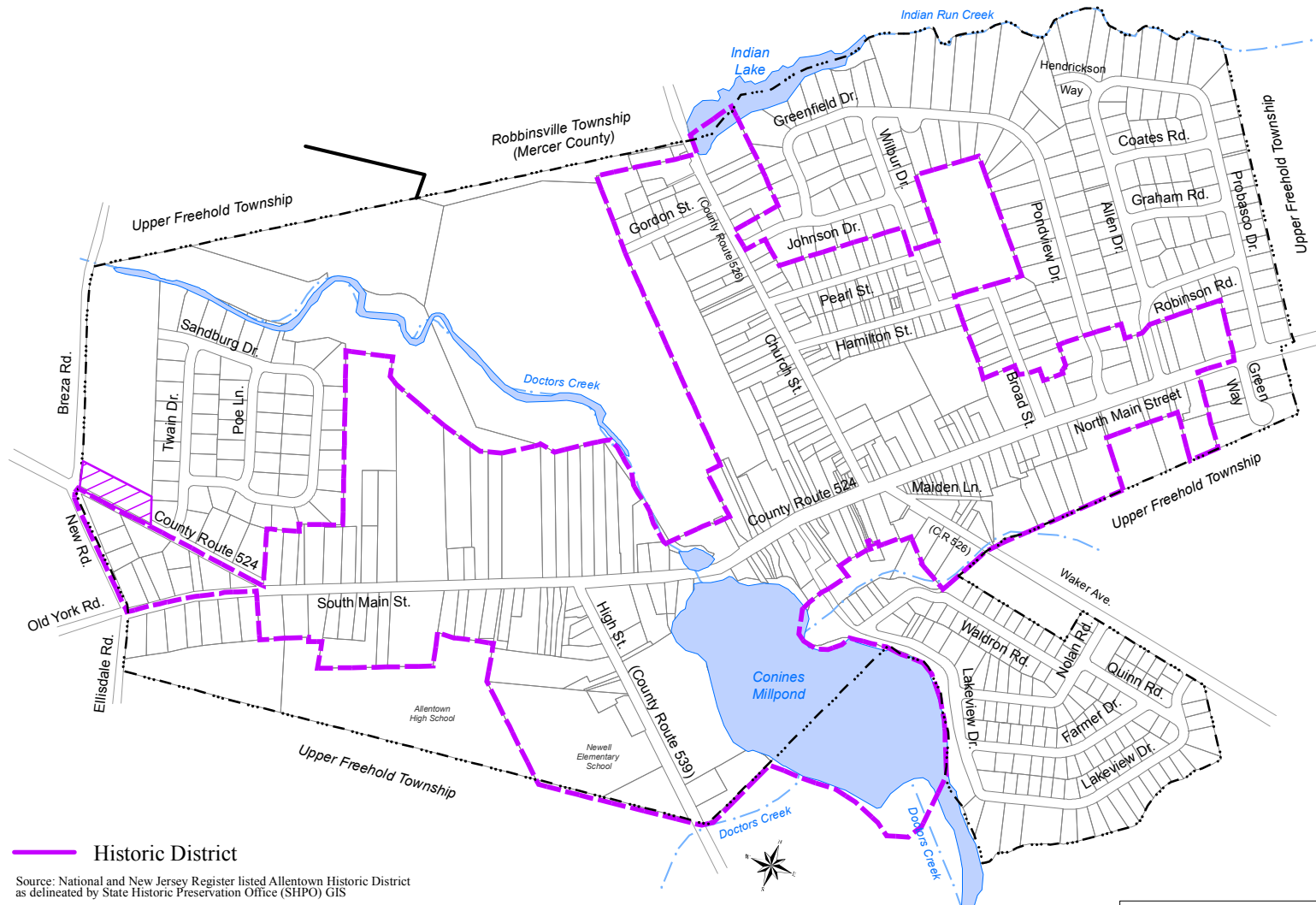
The map on the following page shows the Allentown Historic District as delineated by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) GIS and encompasses the properties identified as contributing structures to the Historic District.



*The Cunningham Hotel, 1 North Main Street*

*The Allentown Historic District was added to the National Register NJ Register of Historic Places effective October 29, 1981 and the effective June 14, 1982.*

# Borough of Allentown, Monmouth County, NJ

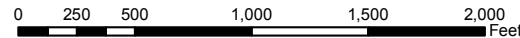


— Historic District

Source: National and New Jersey Register listed Allentown Historic District as delineated by State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) GIS

▨ Historic District Amendment

Source: NJDEP GIS and Allentown Borough Tax Maps (Dec. 2016)  
Prepared: May 3, 2018



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# Allentown Historic Preservation Commission

Allentown established the Allentown Historic Preservation Commission (AHPC) in 1988 to protect, enhance and preserve districts, sites, buildings and structures of historic, cultural or architectural value within the Borough. The Commission is responsible for protecting Allentown's architectural heritage, increasing awareness of its unique historical properties, documenting historically significant properties and advising the Planning Board on all matters which have potential impact on the historic buildings, structures and sites located within Allentown's Historic District as listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places. It also serves as the advocate for safeguarding the heritage of the Borough, promoting the conservation and continued use of historic structures and facilitating appropriate reuse, maintaining and developing an appropriate and harmonious setting for Allentown's historic and cultural resources, and fostering beautification to enhance the visual and aesthetic character of the Borough.

The AHPC can accomplish these purposes through advocacy, education, and its responsibility to review applications pertaining to the exterior of historic sites or property in historic districts that are referred to it. A certificate of appropriateness is required from the AHPC before exterior work is commenced. The guide for its review shall be the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, Allentown's Historic Preservation Ordinance and these Design Guidelines.

## The Principals of Preservation

The following ten (10) principles will serve as a checklist for evaluating proposed projects:

As a guide for evaluating applications, the AHPC uses The Secretary of the Interior's Standards as directed by the historic element of the Allentown Borough Master Plan.

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.



*Allentown Stage Coach on Main Street, circa 1900*

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.
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.

# Allentown Historic Preservation Commission

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*Farmers National Bank, circa 1900*

4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
5. Deteriorated materials, features, finishes and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
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 design, color, texture, and where possible, materials, and replacement of missing features will be sustained by substantiated documentary and physical evidence.
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.
8. Archaeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
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.
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 will be unimpaired.

# Architectural Periods, Styles and Key Buildings

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*Postcards of Allentown*



*Old Mill, Allentown, NJ*



*Postcards of Allentown*



*The Lake and the Mill, Allentown, NJ*

# Architectural Periods, Styles and Key Buildings

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31 North Main Street



Governor Newell House, 81 South Main Street

The Allentown Historic District of 226 separate historic sites was entered on the State Register of Historic Places on October 29, 1981 and the National Register on June 14, 1982.

The **first major period** of construction in Allentown is represented by structures built circa 1760 through 1830, a period of 70 years. The buildings remaining from this early period illustrate Georgian and Federal styles, and comprise 13% of the total building stock. The most notable in Allentown is the

John Imlay House (28 South Main Street), built circa 1790, which is a 5 bay center hall Georgian style house. Representative of the Vernacular Federal Style style are the Gov. Newell House (81 South Main Street) in 1798, and the David McKean House (31 North Main Street) also during the last quarter of the 18th century. Two other notable **Federal style** homes are shown in the Garret Wikoff House (98 South Main Street) built during the last quarter of the 18th century, and the Abel Cafferty House (34-40 South Main Street) circa 1800.

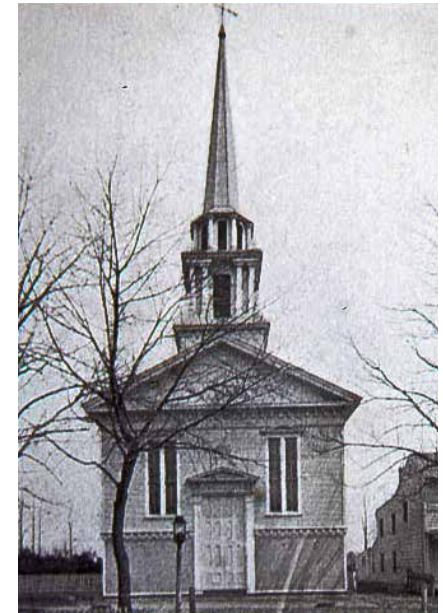
# Architectural Periods, Styles and Key Buildings

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The **second major period** of building in Allentown took place between 1830 and 1860, a period of 30 years. 34% of Allentown's existing architecture originated during this era. **Classical revival styles** heavily influenced this period. Representative of the Greek Revival styles is the Jacob Ford House (18 North Main Street). The **Greek Revival style** might be best illustrated by the Presbyterian Church on High St. with its pediment entrance portico. Roman Classicism influenced the design of the Presbyterian Academy built in 1856, with a replica built alongside and joined in 1934. The Methodist Church on Church Street, which was built in 1859, is a fine example of this style. Additionally, the 1855 Cafferty Grist Mill was built during this period in 1855. A replacement mill, this "modern automated gristmill" was a patented design considered state-of-the-art at the time.



*Presbyterian Academy*



*Allentown Methodist Church c. late 1800's*

# Architectural Periods, Styles and Key Buildings

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A. Robbins House, 114 South Main Street



S. Robbins House and Store, 23 South Main Street

The **third major period** of construction spanned approximately 50 years between 1860 and 1910. Approximately 38% of the total existing architecture of Allentown was built during these years. This was the Victorian Era of American architecture. There are different **Victorian era styles** in Allentown. Striking representatives of **Italianate Styles** are the Robbins House in 1856 (114 South Main Street), C. Meirs House in 1858 (123 South Main Street), and E.B Rogers House at 7 High street in 1870. **Victorian**

**Commercial** style can be seen in the S. Robbins House and Store built in 1860 at 23 South Main Street. The Presbyterian Manse was built in 1875 (118 South Main Street). In 1880 the **Carpenter Gothic Style** took many forms, but represents only six percent of existing building stock. Examples of this style are the M. Rogers building at 35 North Main Street, the Hulse House at 47 South Main Street, the Methodist Parsonage at 23 Church Street, and the Joel Yates House at 21 High St.

# Architectural Periods, Styles and Key Buildings

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The **fourth and last major building period** of activity took place between 1900 and 1930, overlapping the last decade of the Victorian Era. Approximately 15% of the buildings included in the historical district were built between these years. The Colonial Revival style was popular during this time and can be seen in the details of the Farmers National Bank (1905) at 9 North Main Street and The John Naylor house (88 South Main Street) built in 1926. The Bungalowoid Style also saw brief popularity, and can be seen at 16 Church Street, which was constructed in 1930.

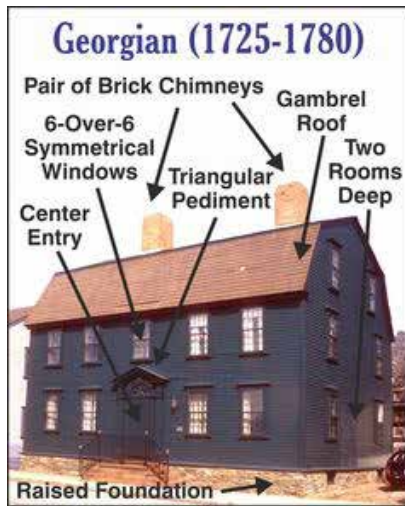


*Robert Pepler House, 113 South Main Street*



*John Naylor House, 88 South Main Street*

# Allentown Historic District Key Buildings



*Presbyterian Manse, 118 South Main Street*



*Jacob Ford House, 18 North Main Street*



*Presbyterian Church, High Street*

# Allentown Historic District Key Buildings

Historic Name	Address	Building Type	Construction Date	Architectural Style
<b>Farmers National Bank</b>	9 North Main Street	Commercial	1905-06	Colonial Revival
<b>David McKean House</b>	31 North Main Street	Residential	1775-1800	Vernacular Federal Style
<b>Jacob Ford House</b>	18 North Main Street	Residential	c. 1780 /c. 1830	Vernacular Greek Revival
<b>John Imlay House</b>	28 South Main Street	Residential	c. 1790	Georgian
<b>Abel Cafferty House</b>	38-40 South Main Street	Residential	c. 1800	Federal
<b>Cafferty Grist Mill</b>	42 South Main Street	Commercial	1855	Early Commercial
<b>John W. Naylor House</b>	88 South Main Street	Residential	1926	Colonial Revival
<b>Garret Wikoff House</b>	98 South Main Street	Residential	1775-1800	Federal
<b>A. Robbins House</b>	114 South Main Street	Res/Coml	1856	Italianate
<b>Presbyterian Manse</b>	118 South Main Street	Residential	1875	Second Empire
<b>Applegate House</b>	122 South Main Street	Residential	c. 1880	Vernacular Victorian
<b>C. Meirs House</b>	123 South Main Street	Residential	c. 1858	Italianate
<b>Unknown</b>	93-95 South Main Street	Residential	c. 1900	Victorian Eclectic
<b>Governor William A. Newell</b>	81 South Main Street	Residential	c. 1798	Vernacular Federal
<b>Hulse House</b>	43 South Main Street	Residential	c. 1880	Carpenter Gothic
<b>S. Robbins House &amp; Store</b>	23 South Main Street	Residential	c. 1860 / 1880	Second Empire Commercial
<b>Methodist Parsonage</b>	23 Church Street	Residential	c. 1886	Carpenter Gothic
<b>Unknown</b>	16 Church Street	Residential	1930	Bungalow
<b>E. B. Rogers</b>	7 High Street	Residential	c. 1870	Italianate
<b>Allentown Presbyterian Church</b>	20 High Street	Religious	1837 / 1858	Greek Revival
<b>Presbyterian Academy</b>	20 High Street	School	1856 / 1934	Vernacular Roman Classicism

## 02 Design Guidelines

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*John Imlay House, 28 South Main Street*

# Home Grounds and the Village Landscape

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*Refer to the National Park Service Protecting Cultural Landscapes website for guidance on landscaping for a variety of conditions.*

<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/36-cultural-landscapes.htm>

Although older homes may closely resemble their earlier appearance, few yards, or “home grounds” as they were often called, are still found in the fashion in which they were originally landscaped. Maps and old photographs are a good source of information about the former appearance of home grounds for the interested contemporary homeowner. Today, evidence of earlier landscape design can still be found in details such as paths and walks, the occasional stone retaining wall or post, fences, garden structures such as arbors and gazebos, and the species and placement of older trees and plantings.

## **Plantings**

Topography, trees, shrubbery, hedges and other landscape plantings are of primary importance to the visual image of the village, and to its historic character as well. Modern landscape schemes like those utilizing inappropriate material can detract from even the most carefully restored older building. While the Allentown Historic Preservation Commission does not regulate residential plantings, it recommends that restoration of older trees and plant material be considered before they are removed. Plantings should be compatible with the historic neighborhood in material and scale to create harmony between structures and their historical and natural landscapes.

# Home Grounds and the Village Landscape

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## Fencing

Historic fences vary with the age and style of buildings. They define the boundary of a yard or garden, and can be a prominent ornamental element. Historic fences in Allentown are most often wooden — such as picket fences — but may also include wrought or cast iron fences. High berms and modern fence types such as chain link, vinyl, aluminum or contemporary metal railings are not appropriate nor are privacy fences. These can be used only when shielded from the public view by other structures or by landscaping.

## Walkways

Brick sidewalks and walkways are still prominent in Allentown. Retain historic walkway materials, and re-set when necessary. Brick, crushed stone, crushed shells and concrete are all appropriate materials for new walkways in the public view; decorative concrete pavers that simulate brick and stone are not appropriate new materials. Encourage maintaining walkway from public sidewalk to main house entrance.

## Additions and New Construction

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*This glass and brick structure is a harmonious addition set back and connected to the rear of the colonial Revival-style brick house. Cunningham/Quill Architects. Photos Maxwell MacKenzie*

Additions to existing buildings and new construction within the Historic District can enhance the existing village character, and can add depth and contribute interest to the district. The success of new construction within the Historic District does not rely on duplication of existing building forms, features and details; these provide a vocabulary, but not necessarily a copybook, for new buildings. See the example on this page.

Successful new construction does depend, however, on an understanding of the village architectural character — the patterns of siting (setback, orientation, spacing) as well as building size, massing, proportion, directional expression, materials and design

features. New construction is to be compatible with site-specific features of the individual property and surrounding buildings and shall also conform to the design guidelines in other sections. How well an addition or new building fits in with its surroundings is determined by a number of design factors in addition to site planning. Size, massing, proportion, and directional expression all are essential considerations when designing an addition to a historic building or a new building in a Historic District. Other important design elements — roofs, surface materials, doors and windows — are covered in subsequent sections of the Design Guidelines.

# Additions and New Construction



*The proposal to add three row houses to the rear ell of this early 19th century residential property doubles its size and **does not** meet the standards because of its size, massing and detailing.*

## Size

Size includes the height, width and overall bulk of a building. On a street of generally aligned facades, new buildings should be within the range of building heights and widths along the block. The overall bulk

of additions and new construction must not overwhelm the original building size or the places to which it is visually related.

## Massing

Similarly, the massing (form and shape) of additions and new

construction should harmonize with the original building and the buildings to which it is related, yet it should be discernible from the original building. Additive massing — the attachment of smaller volumes of related shape — is recommended. Single boxlike forms should be

broken up into smaller varied masses with articulated facades as are common on Allentown's older buildings. To preserve the historic character of a building's mass, additions should be extended to the side and rear; the integrity of the front facade must be maintained.

# Additions and New Construction



*The expansion of a one and one-half story historic bungalow (left) with a large two-story rear addition (right) has greatly altered and obscured its distinctive shape and form.*

## Proportion

The proportions of a building facade are important because the front is the most visible part of the building and is viewed in relation to adjacent buildings. The proportion — relationship of height to width — of

a building's primary facade must be visually compatible to the buildings and places to which it is visually related. Proportion also pertains to window and door openings. The relationship of width and height of windows and doors on a facade must be carefully considered.

## Directional Expression

The shape of a structure, placement of openings and other architectural details provide an overall directional expression to a building facade. Buildings may have a vertical, horizontal or non-directional emphasis. Relate the vertical, horizontal or non-directional facade

character of new buildings to the predominant directional expression of nearby buildings. If, for example, a proposed new building appears too horizontal in relation to more vertical adjacent structures, consider dividing the facade into smaller masses with vertical elements in order to conform to the streetscape.

## Exterior Materials and Finishes

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The wall surface is the skin of a building, a barrier to the weather and an expression of age, style and craftsmanship. The vast majority of buildings in the Allentown Historic District are of wood frame construction sided with clapboard or brick. Depending on the particular architectural style, wall surfaces also include patterned shingles, board and batten siding, applied timber work, stucco, brick, and natural stone. Original surface materials shall be retained and repaired on existing historic buildings.

Recommended repair techniques for wood siding and masonry walls are widely available in publications on home renovation, and on the internet. When removing deteriorated paint from wood siding, avoid destructive removal methods such as sandblasting. Recommended methods include hand scraping, hand sanding, electric hot air guns, and certain chemical strippers. Historically painted wood siding must not be stripped or stained to create a “natural” effect. Maintain

the original color and texture of masonry walls. Stucco or paint must not be removed from historically painted or stuccoed masonry walls. Likewise, paint or stucco must not be applied to historically unpainted or un-stuccoed masonry walls. Clean masonry or mortar only when necessary to halt deterioration or to remove heavy soiling, using the gentlest method possible, such as low pressure brushes. Sandblasting, caustic solutions, and high pressure water blasting must not be used. These methods erode the surface of brick and stone, and accelerate deterioration. Repoint masonry walls when there is evidence of disintegrating mortar, cracks in mortar joints, loose bricks, or moisture retention in the walls. The new mortar must duplicate the old mortar in composition, bonding strength, profile, color and texture. If a masonry wall surface is too damaged to repair, replace it with material of like construction, matching as near as possible in size, shape, texture and color.



*Dayton-James House circa 1758*  
© Trent Bell

## Exterior Materials and Finishes

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*Example of a Colonial Architectural Brick Home circa 1900*

When deteriorated, damaged, or lost features of a historic building need repair or replacement, it is almost always best to use historic materials. In limited circumstances substitute materials that imitate historic materials may be used if the appearance and properties of the historic materials can be matched closely and no damage to the remaining historic fabric will result. Once all reasonable options for repair or replacement in kind have been exhausted, the choice among a wide variety of substitute materials currently on the market must be made.

Refer to the following references for more specific guidance:

- National Park Service Preservation Brief 16: Use of substitute materials on historic building exteriors.
- National Trust for Historic Preservation: Restoring versus Rehabilitating Your Historic House

# Exterior Materials and Finishes

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## Repairs

Existing wood siding on historic buildings shall be retained and repaired. If wood siding is too damaged to repair, replace it with wood material of like construction, matching as near as possible in size, shape, profile, and texture. Materials such as artificial stone ("Permastone") and artificial brick veneer ("brickface") are not permitted for re-surfacing historic masonry buildings. Cement board is not appropriate for repairs to historic buildings.

## New Construction

Vinyl and aluminum siding for new construction is strongly discouraged in the Historic District.

The wall surfaces of new additions and new buildings in the Historic District shall be sided with historically correct materials. Cement board siding (such as HardiPlank) is an acceptable alternative to wood siding on new construction.

## Substitute Material Replacement

In cases where a non-historic artificial siding has been previously applied to a building, restoration of the historic siding material is strongly preferred. Cement board siding is the appropriate substitute material.

# Exterior Materials and Finishes



*Example of wood clapboard siding*



*Classic 6/6 double-hung sash*

## Problems with Aluminum and Vinyl Siding

Synthetic siding hides a building's design details and ornaments. In fact, if your old house has synthetic siding now, the details may have been removed when the siding was installed. Synthetic siding can even ruin the proportions of an early 20th century frame house. Window casings, drip caps, mouldings, and door trim are often obstructed, destroying the three-dimensional appearance. Many sidings act as exterior vapor barriers, trapping excess water vapor, which condenses and damages the wood. Rot and insect attack may proceed unnoticed.

If installed incorrectly or damaged, runoff water may enter behind the siding and be trapped. Also, artificial sidings offer no structural support, so that if continued deterioration leads to failure, the siding will buckle and separate from the building. In addition to all these crimes, aluminum siding tends to dent and scratch, and its color coating can peel and fade. Solid vinyl siding punctures and tears; it is sunlight-sensitive, becoming brittle and faded if not treated with an ultra-violet inhibitor. Since the industry frequently changes its product lines, replacing a section of damaged siding may be impossible. Successfully painting

## Exterior Materials and Finishes

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*Peter Bruhere House Wood Clapboard Siding*



*William T Pierce House, circa 1930  
Executive Tudor with stone exterior and masonry construction*



*Hulse House Brick Exterior*

siding is also difficult. If you're sold on siding for its fire safety and insulation qualities, think again. Aluminum siding may make it difficult to get to a fire's source, while vinyl siding melts, curls and sags. The Federal Trade Commission reports that synthetic sidings have little or no insulation value. Aesthetic value,

of course, is not quantifiable. While siding may enhance the short-term resale value, authentic materials and style increasingly command a premium. Maintaining or restoring historic materials of a property will retain greater value with properly maintained original materials.. Real-estate appraisers and potential

buyers may also wonder what problems the siding may be hiding. The Old House Journal Guide to Restoration (Dutton, 1992).

For additional text about exterior materials, refer to the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

# Trim



Trim refers to the ornamental details applied to a building such as cornices, brackets, pilasters, railings, corner boards, finials, bargeboards, and window and door casings.

Historic trim materials may include wood, cast iron, terra cotta, stone, tile or brick. Architectural trim elements are indicators of a building's historic period and style, and may exemplify skilled craftsmanship, which cannot be duplicated today.

**Removal of an older building's historic trim diminishes its historic, and its financial value.**

Retain and repair in kind to match existing historic trim elements, rather than replace, the trim elements on your historic building. Where it has been determined that features are too deteriorated to repair, replace trim with material that is similar in composition, size, shape, texture and color. Certain substitute materials may be considered where they are compatible in size, proportion, style, and texture.

See also sections on Roofs, Doors, Windows and Porches for additional guidelines on Trim.

References:

- National Park Service Preservation Brief 16: Use of substitute materials on historic building exteriors.
- National Trust for Historic Preservation: Restoring versus Rehabilitating Your Historic House.

# Roofs and Roof Details



The roof is an essential cover for any building, important for maintaining the soundness of the entire structure. Roofs create the shape and appearance of Allentown's skyline. The shape of the roof, the size, color and pattern of roofing materials, and features such as chimneys, dormers, eaves and gutters are all important design elements to consider in repairs, additions and new construction.

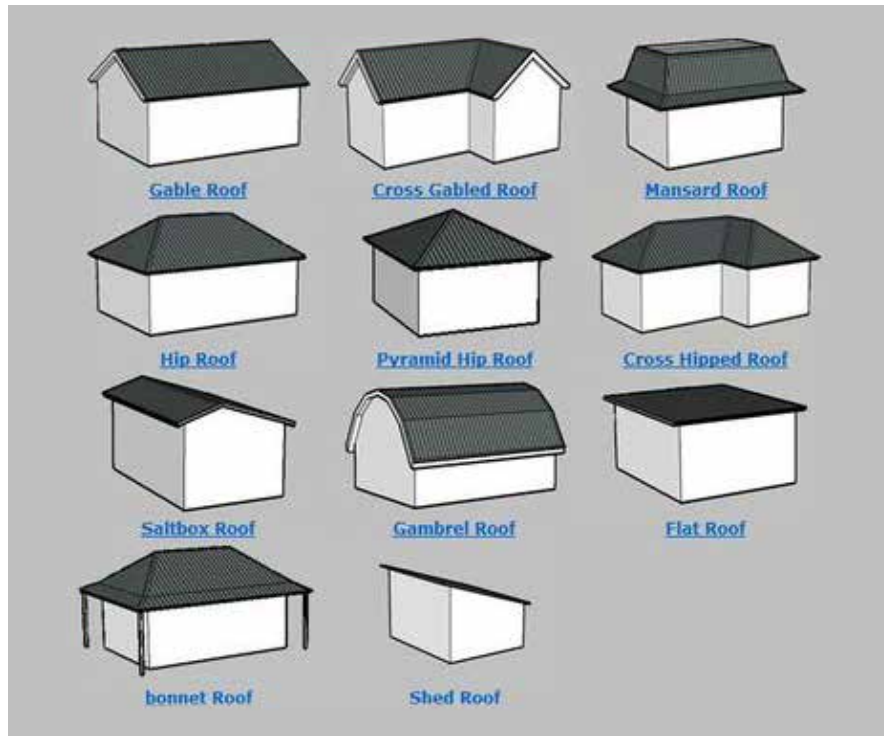
Historic roofing materials include wood shingles, clay tile, slate, metal (sheet metal, tin plate, copper, lead and zinc), and in the 20th century, built-up or roll roofing, concrete and asphalt shingles. On 19th century buildings, steeply sloping complex roofs with ornate decoration are a key part of the stylistic composition. Retain the original shape, pitch, configuration, and material of the roof. If patching a roof, match existing materials.

When replacement of historic roofing is necessary because it is too deteriorated to repair, the use of compatible substitute materials may be considered. Asphalt and fiberglass shingles, for example, may be used to replace slate if the style, shape and color are chosen carefully to resemble historic roofing materials. Preserve the decorative and functional features of the roof, such as eaves, cornices, chimneys, dormers, cupolas, gutters and flashing. If a

feature is too deteriorated to repair, the replacement shall be of like construction, matching as nearly as possible in material, size, shape, texture and color.

Of particular concern in roofing projects are the eaves and gutters. Many older buildings have built-in gutters that are integrated into the design of the eaves and cornice; these are an important part of the historic roof and should be maintained

# Roofs and Roof Details



where possible. External gutters, which are hung at the edge of the roof, are not allowed on structures with built-in gutters. Where hung gutters are appropriate, they must be installed so that they do not interfere with the architectural detail. Half-round gutters are preferred. Roof additions on existing buildings must not damage or obscure the historic character of the roof. The roof pitch, plane, eave overhang and detailing of an addition must be compatible with the main roof.

Locate new chimneys, vent stacks, dormers, skylights, mechanical and service equipment, and solar collectors so that they are inconspicuous from the public street.

Construct new chimneys of masonry, either brick or parged concrete, with a traditional ground-level base, not cantilevered over the foundation of the house.

New roof dormers must be carefully designed and placed to be in scale, proportion and balance with the roof and the building. A dormer should complement, not destroy, the roof plane in which it is placed. For this reason, new dormers are not to be placed on the front elevation, and large dormers that extend the entire length of the roof are not permitted. Roof designs for new construction must harmonize with the shape, rhythm and design features of roofs along the street.

# Windows and Shutters

The size, arrangement, materials, design and craftsmanship of windows are all important to the historic character of a building, and each building has distinguishable windows that reflect its historic period and style. On most buildings, windows comprise a significant percentage of the overall wall area. For these reasons historic windows deserve special consideration. If original windows are removed and replaced with incompatible modern windows, the basic character of the building will be altered substantially.

Wooden double-hung sash windows are the predominant window type in Allentown's older buildings. The size of the sash windows and the number of window panes vary with the age and style of the building. Wooden or steel-framed casement windows are found on later houses, as well as on commercial and industrial structures.

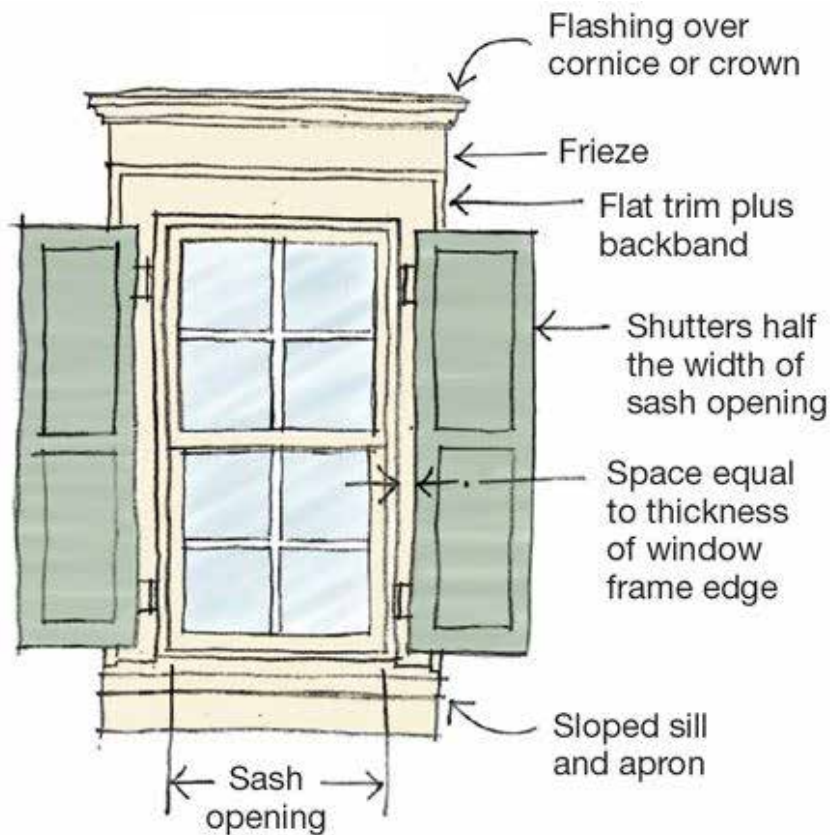
The number, size, shape and locations of existing windows must be retained. Do not "block in" windows or to fit stock sizes. New window openings must not be added to the front elevation.

Preserve original or early windows wherever possible. Retain and repair window frames, sash, decorative glass panes, sills, heads, hoodmolds, mouldings, and exterior shutters and blinds. New or replacement windows on historic buildings must be appropriate to the period and style of the building, duplicating the material and design of the older feature. Replacement sash of wooden windows must be wooden.

On a new addition to an old building, or in new construction, windows must harmonize with the material, scale, proportion, placement and rhythm of windows on buildings to which they are visually related. The use of historic window types is not required, but is encouraged, on additions and new construction.



# Windows and Shutters



True divided light sashes are recommended as opposed to simulated divided lights or snap-in muntins. A true divided-light window has multiple panes of glass that are separated by muntins or grills. Simulated divided-light windows have just one piece of glass with removable muntins attached to both the interior and exterior of the glass, usually with a strong adhesive.

Replacement sills and window frames should be constructed to true historical dimensions to match existing. If duplication of the original window is not technically or economically feasible (such as replacement of an elaborate stained glass window), a simplified version of the original may be acceptable as long as it has the same size and proportion.

Some later windows may have acquired significance in their own right (such as Colonial Revival changes on older houses) and should be respected because they are evidence of the building's history.

Avoid using modern windows that are inappropriate to the historic period of the house. Modern window types which are inappropriate include large picture windows, sliding glass doors, casements, and bay and bow windows, unless they are original to the building.

# Windows and Shutters

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## Shutters

Replacement shutters on windows must be wooden, and sized to cover the entire window when closed. Fasten shutters to the window frame, not to the siding. Preserve and repair your early shutter hardware; hinges, holdbacks, and latches are valuable and must be retained. Window features such as plastic and metal awnings, or fake non-operable synthetic shutters and blinds, are not appropriate.



## Storm Windows

Many styles of storm windows are available to improve the thermal performance of existing windows. The use of exterior storm windows should be investigated whenever feasible because they are thermally efficient, cost-effective, reversible, and allow the retention of original windows (see "Preservation Briefs: 3"). Wood-framed storm windows are preferable; if metal storm windows are used, they should be anodized or painted to blend with the trim. The use of unfinished aluminum storms should be avoided. The visual impact of storms may be minimized by selecting colors which match existing trim color. Arched top storms are

available for windows with special shapes. Although interior storm windows appear to offer an attractive option for achieving double glazing with minimal visual impact, the potential for damaging condensation problems must be addressed. Moisture which becomes trapped between the layers of glazing can condense on the colder, outer prime window, potentially leading to deterioration. The correct approach to using interior storms is to create a seal on the interior storm while allowing some ventilation around the prime window. In actual practice, the creation of such a durable, airtight seal is difficult.

# Windows and Shutters



## Wood Window Replacement

All too often, replacement of historic wood windows is the quick-fix for reparable problems such as peeling paint, a rotten section of sash, or loose glazing. If you have original or early windows on your building, consider repair before replacement.

Most wood sash windows and steel-framed windows can be repaired, insulated, weather stripped and re-fitted for about the cost of a

good quality replacement window. Older windows are often needlessly replaced because of the promised insulating qualities of new windows. But weatherization of historic wood windows — a combination of new weather stripping and exterior storm windows — is an economical alternative to replacement windows and will greatly improve the thermal performance of existing windows.

In fact, an older wooden window with a high quality storm window is about 15% more energy efficient than a new double thermal paned vinyl replacement window. In addition, the components of vinyl replacement sash have a relatively short life span compared to historic wooden windows. The vinyl and PVC materials, and plastic and neoprene sealants in these windows degrade within a much shorter time frame than wooden window components.

# Doors

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# Doors

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Doorways are often the central focus of historic buildings, and integral to the overall design. Each building has doors that directly relate to its historic period and style. In Allentown, doors range from traditional six-panel doors to double-leaf arched doors with ornate mouldings, and can be highly decorative and characterized by fine craftsmanship. Removal and replacement of original or early doors will diminish the historic integrity of older buildings.



Retain the number, size, shape and locations of existing entrances. Primary entrances must not be moved, and new door openings must not be added to the primary elevation. Maintain doors, fanlights, sidelights, pilasters, door frames, and finish hardware.



All the doorway details — mouldings, decorative glass, hinges and doorknobs — add substantially to the character and value of your building. Repair of historic wood doors is always preferable to replacement; patching and repairing, using epoxies and splice repairs, can be a cost effective alternative to replacement.



# Doors

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If a door is too deteriorated to repair, use the existing door (or evidence of the building's original or early door) as a prototype for replacement. New or replacement doors on historic buildings must be appropriate to the period and style of the building, duplicating the material and design of the older feature.

Salvage yards are often a good source for good old doors. On a new addition to an old building, or in new construction, the use of historic door types is encouraged. Doors on a new building should be constructed of wood and must harmonize with the scale, proportion and rhythm of windows and doors of buildings to which it is visually related.



# Porches



*Well preserved wrap around front porch*



*Well preserved porches with Main Street frontage*

Rows of projecting front porches of all sizes and kinds are a distinctive visual element in Allentown's Historic District, and part of its overall charm. The porch is one of the most notable architectural features of a building. Consequently, its preservation is vital to preserving its architectural integrity. The detailing, proportion and location define the architectural style and vintage of the building.

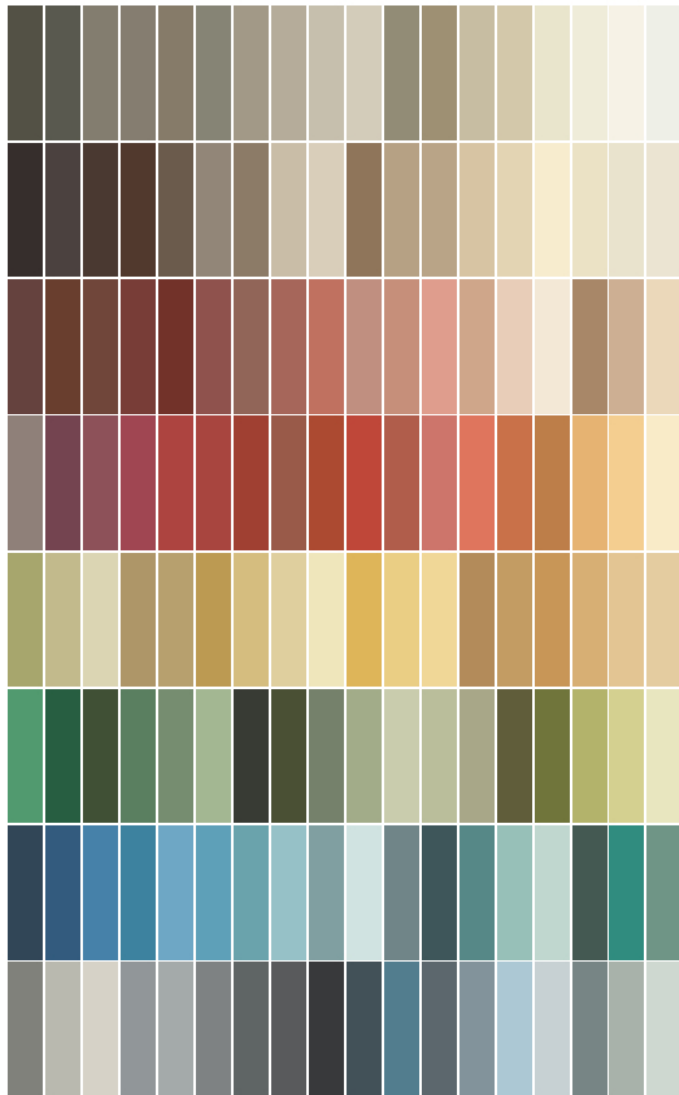
**Historic porches shall not be removed.** Retain original porch features — the roof and its decorative cornices, the porch columns, railings and balustrades, as well as the flooring, steps, and base all combine to create a porch's historic character. Do not remove or discard elements if they can be repaired and re-used. Dutchman repairs and epoxy consolidation are cost effective, time-tested methods for repairing damaged sections of posts or trim without replacing the whole component.

Some porches are early 20th century additions on older houses, and should be respected because they are part of the building's history. Porches may not be enclosed with opaque walls or screened.

If it is necessary to replace any original porch elements, the replacement must match in material and design. Use the original feature as a basis to reconstruct replacements. Restoration of original features is always preferred to simplified replacement versions. **Brick, concrete and pressure-treated decking material are all unsuitable for porches with historical wood flooring;** the original orientation of the deck material (perpendicular or parallel to the face of the building), which should be maintained. Extensive replacement of porch elements may be avoided by an approach that includes selective repair rather than total replacement.

# Paint

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*Note: The Historic Preservation Commission does not regulate paint colors, but provides assistance on historic paint colors and placement.*

A good paint job is fundamental to the preservation of your old building, establishes its architectural personality, and contributes to the overall character of the village. Prior to repainting, determine if any problems exist that would shorten the life of a new paint job. Moisture problems, incompatible paints, or poor surface preparation may cause paint deterioration. Proper surface preparation is the key to a good paint job. Removing old paint is time consuming but will prevent problems in the years to come.

When choosing a color scheme, first consider the period and style of the building. Where historically authentic colors are desired, microscopic paint analysis will reveal the original and subsequent paint schemes. Paint analysis is best done by a conservator, who will take the samples and interpret the findings. For most paint projects, however, a familiarity with period colors and their placement is sufficient to determine an appropriate color palette. The HPRC is happy to offer assistance on choosing an appropriate color palette.

# Signage and Lighting



*Signs should allow for individual artistic expression*

Appropriately designed signs enhance the building façade while contributing to the visual harmony of the streetscape. Signs also play a crucial role in advertising and attracting business. On the other hand, poor signage detracts from even the most attractive storefront and diminishes the historic character of the building and its surroundings.

New signs are covered by the Allentown Borough sign ordinance and require review by the Code Officer and the Historic Preservation Commission. A Certificate of Appropriateness is required prior to the installation of new signs in the districts.

1. The size, shape, materials and placement of signs should complement the design of the building and neighboring buildings. Signs should not conceal important architectural detail, overpower or clutter the façade, or otherwise detract from the historic character of the building.

2. In general, painted wood signs with painted or raised letters are most appropriate for 19th century commercial structures. Non-wood materials are reviewed on a case by case basis. Lettered signs painted on the window glass of the storefront are also appropriate. Signs may be illuminated from an indirect light source, but plastic signs and internally lighted signs are not appropriate.
3. Signs can be mounted flush to the building or mounted on brackets perpendicular to the building depending on the most appropriate siting for the building.

A well designed sign or awning can:

- Identify the unique qualities of a business
- Provide variety and vitality to the streetscape
- Create a visual connection between the building and the surrounding Historic District

# Signage and Lighting

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## Number and Size

- i. **General**—Please refer to the Allentown Borough Ordinance, Section 32-9, Borough Ordinance Signs.
- ii. **New signs**—Select the type of sign to be used based on evidence of historic signs or sign attachment parts along the building storefront where possible. Design signs to respect and respond to the character and/or period of the area in which they are being placed. Signs should identify the tenant without creating visual clutter or distracting from building features and Historic Districts.
- iii. **Scale**—Design signage to be in proportion to the facade, respecting the building’s size, scale and mass, height, and rhythms and sizes of window and door openings. Scale signage (in terms of its height and width) to be subordinate to the overall building composition.

## Historic Signs

- i. **Preservation**—Preserve historic signs, such as ghost signs or other signs characteristic of the building’s or district’s period of significance, whenever possible.
- ii. **Maintenance**—Repair historic signs and replace historic parts in-kind when deteriorated beyond repair.

## Placement and Installation

- i. **Location**—Place signs where historically located and reuse sign attachment parts where they exist. Do not erect signs above the cornice line or uppermost portion of a facade wall, or where they will disfigure or conceal architectural details, window openings, doors, or other significant details.

## ii. Obstruction of historic features

—Avoid obscuring historic building features such as cornices, gables, porches, balconies, or other decorative elements with new signs.

## iii. Damage

—Avoid irreversible damage caused by installing a sign. For example, mount a sign to the mortar rather than the historic masonry.

## iv. Pedestrian orientation

—Orient signs toward the sidewalk to maintain the pedestrian oriented nature of the Historic Districts.

## Design

- i. **Inappropriate materials**—Do not use plastic, fiberglass, highly reflective materials that will be difficult to read.

## ii. Appropriate materials

—Construct signs of durable materials used for signs during the period of the building’s construction, such as wood, composite wood, wrought iron, steel, aluminum, and metal grill work.

## iii. Color

— Select a color scheme that provides contrast between the background and lettering to make signs more legible.

## iv. Typefaces

—Select letter styles and sizes that complement the overall character of the building façade. Avoid hard-to-read or overly intricate styles.

# Signage and Lighting

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## Lighting

- i. **Lighting sources**—Use only indirect or bare-bulb sources that do not produce glare to illuminate signs. All illumination shall be steady and stationary. Internal illumination should not be used.
- ii. **Neon lighting**—Neon lighting is not permitted.

## Prohibited Signs

An abbreviated list of the types of signs prohibited within Allentown’s Historic District and on historic landmarks is provided below.

Billboards, junior billboards, portable signs, neon signs and advertising benches. Pole signs. Revolving signs or signs with a kinetic component. Roof mounted signs, except in the case of a contributing sign. Digital and/or LED lighted signs, not to include LED light sources that do not meet the definition of a sign. Moored balloons or other floating

signs that are tethered to the ground or to a structure. Any sign which does not identify a business or service within the Historic District or historic landmark. Any non-contributing sign which is abandoned or damaged beyond 50 percent of its replacement value, including parts of old or unused signs.

Notwithstanding the above, signs designated as a contributing sign or structure by the historic preservation officer shall not be prohibited unless or until such designation is revoked.

# Retail Storefronts



*The many faces of the Robbins House and Store at 23 South Main Street.*

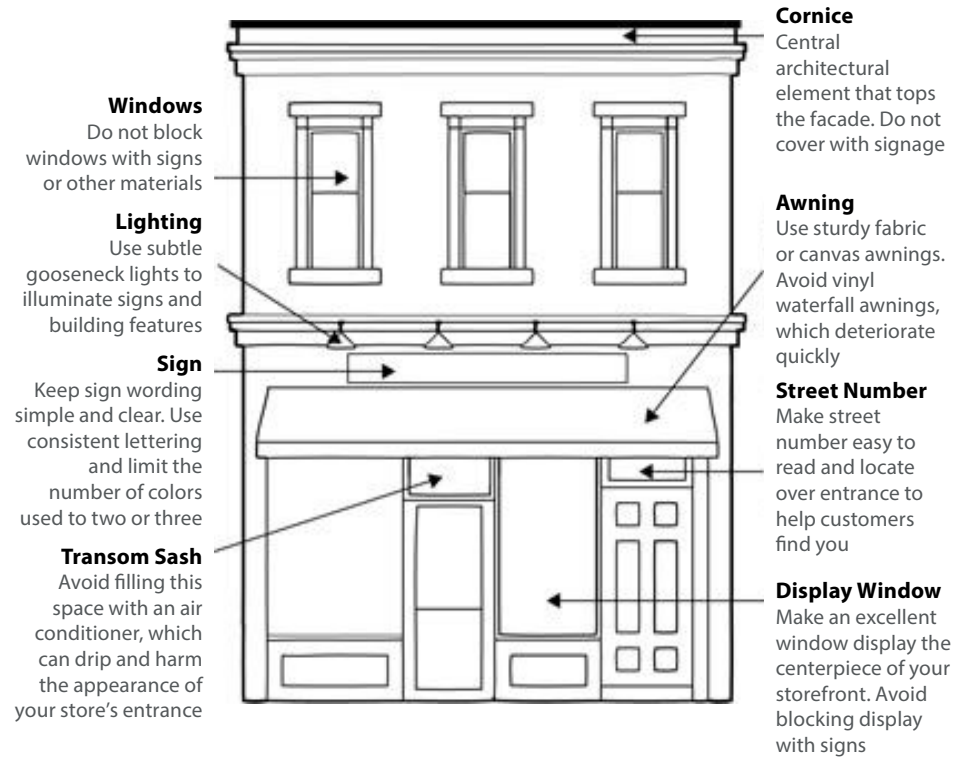
# Retail Storefronts

The storefront is the most prominent architectural feature of most commercial buildings. Alterations to storefronts are common because storefronts play an important role in advertising and merchandising. These alterations, however, can completely change or destroy a commercial building's historic character. Conversely, sensitive rehabilitation of historic storefronts will enhance the character of the overall building and make the storefront more attractive to shoppers.

Significant surviving storefront elements — including windows, sash, doors, transoms, signs and decorative features — shall be retained and repaired. Accurate restorations based on historical research and physical evidence are encouraged. Consistent with encouraging adaptive re-use of historic buildings, where original or early storefronts no longer exist, or where no evidence exists to

document the storefront's original or early appearance; the design of a new storefront shall be compatible with the size, scale, color, material and character of the overall building. Conjectural designs that have no historical basis, or designs that copy traditional features from other buildings create a false historical appearance and are discouraged.

Avoid inappropriate historical themes on storefront rehabilitation. Small windowpanes, colonial doors, non-operable / inappropriately scaled shutters, and mansard roof overhangs are examples of stylistic elements that do not belong on most 19th and 20th century storefronts. Outside light fixtures should be in keeping with the era of the storefront, appropriate in scale, and style should enhance the overall storefront appearance.



# Retail Storefronts

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The storefront is the most important architectural feature of many historic commercial buildings. It also plays a crucial role in a store's advertising and merchandising strategy to draw customers and increase business. Not surprisingly, then, the storefront has become the feature most commonly altered in a historic commercial building. In the process, these alterations may have completely changed or destroyed a building's distinguishing architectural features that make up its historic character.

As more and more people come to recognize and appreciate the architectural heritage of America's downtowns, however, a growing interest can be seen in preserving the historic character of commercial buildings. The sensitive rehabilitation of storefronts can result not only in increased business for the owner but can also provide evidence that downtown revitalization efforts are succeeding.

Once a decision is made to rehabilitate a historic commercial building, a series of complex decisions faces the owner, among them:

- If the original storefront has survived largely intact but is in a deteriorated condition, what repairs should be undertaken?
- If the storefront has been modernized at a later date, should the later alterations be kept or the building restored to its original appearance or an entirely new design chosen?
- If the building's original retail use is to be changed to office or residential, can the commercial appearance of the building be retained while accommodating the new use?

This Preservation Brief is intended to assist owners, architects, and planning officials in answering such questions about how to evaluate and preserve the character of historic storefronts. In so doing, it not only addresses the basic design issues associated with storefront rehabilitation, but recommends preservation treatments as well.

Finally, although the Brief focuses on storefront rehabilitation, it is important to review this specific work in the broader context of preserving and maintaining the overall structure. Money spent on storefront rehabilitation may be completely wasted if repair and maintenance problems on the rest of the building are neglected.

# Retail Storefronts

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# Outbuildings

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## Outbuildings

If constructed at a similar time, they often reflect architectural styles of the main house with similar roof lines, eaves and other details. When built at a later date, they often reflect the style of the time. New outbuildings should reflect similar roof line materials and style of the main house or those found within the Historic District.



# Demolition

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## Demolition

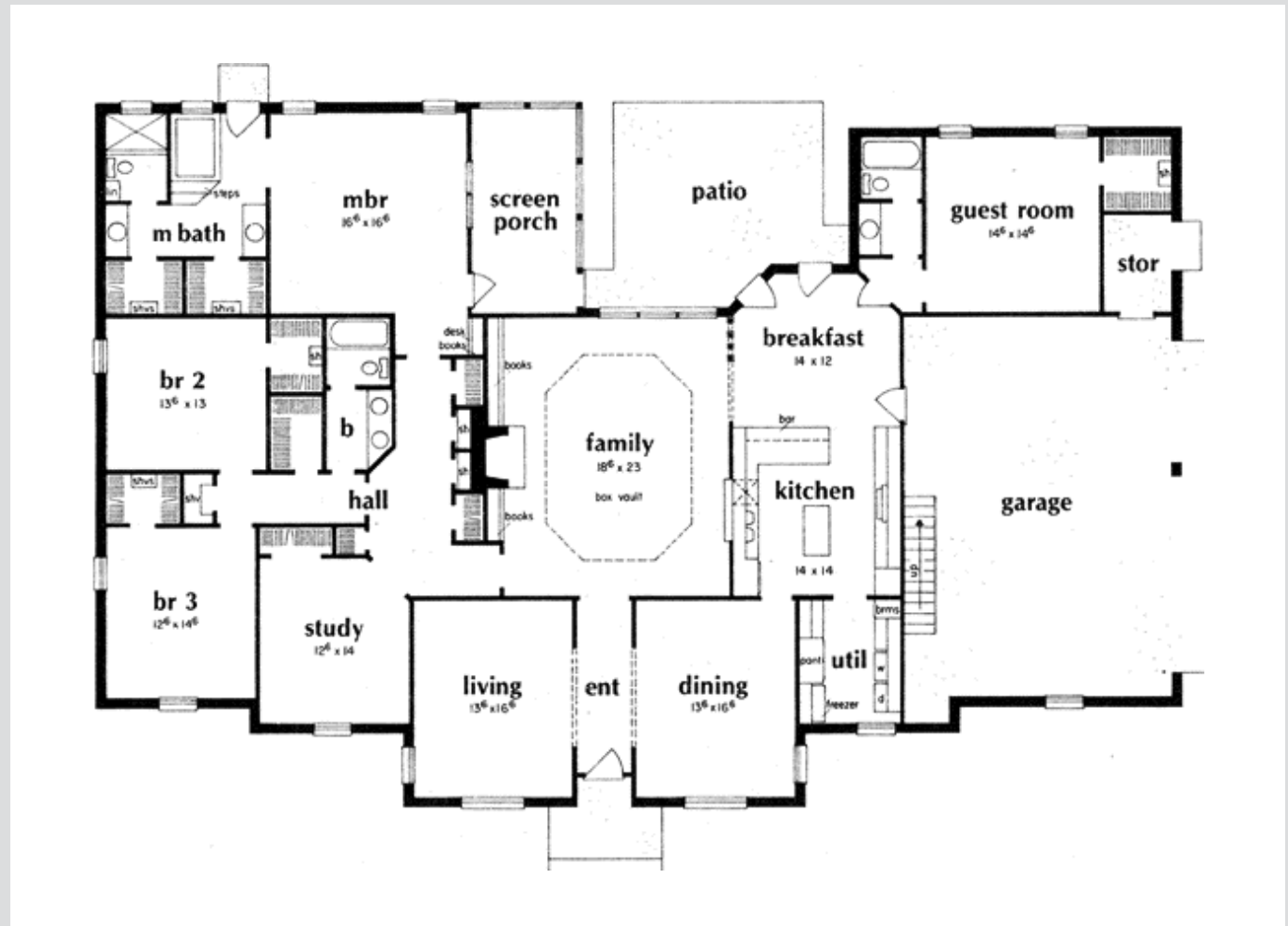
Demolition shall mean the partial or total razing, dismantling or destruction, whether entirely or in significant part, of any building, structure, site, object or improvement. Demolition includes the removal of a building, structure, site, object or improvement from its location or the removal or destruction of its facade or surface.

Refer to the Historic Preservation Ordinance in Allentown's Land Use Development Regulations for guidelines about how to proceed with demolition work on historic structures or sites.

## 03 Planning Your Project

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- Reach out to the Borough Office
- Reach out to the HPC Chair to discuss project particulars or schedule a concept review meeting
- Research inventory of historic sites on the Historic Preservation Commission page at [allentownboronj.com](http://allentownboronj.com)



# Planning Your Project

As you'll find out, historic homeownership brings with it a unique set of questions, decisions, and goals. Let's address one of the most basic questions first: Should you restore or rehabilitate your house?

Your decision will influence the house's finished character, the project cost, and the amount of time it takes. It will also impact how much of the work you take on yourself and how much you'll hand off to professionals.

The four treatment approaches are Preservation, Rehabilitation, Restoration, and Reconstruction, as defined below:

**Preservation** is defined as the act or process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of an historic property. Work, including preliminary measures to protect and stabilize the property, generally focuses upon the ongoing maintenance and repair of historic materials and features rather than



extensive replacement and new construction. New exterior additions are not within the scope of this treatment; however, the limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make properties functional is appropriate within a preservation project.

**Rehabilitation** is defined as 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.

**Restoration** is defined as the act or process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of features from other periods in its history and reconstruction of missing features from the restoration period. The limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and

plumbing systems and other code-required work to make properties functional is appropriate within a restoration project.

**Reconstruction** is defined as the act or process of depicting, by means of new construction, the form, features, and detailing of a non-surviving site, landscape, building, structure, or object for the purpose of replicating its appearance at a specific period of time and in its historic location.

# Choosing the Appropriate Treatment

**Choosing the most appropriate treatment for a building requires careful consideration about a building’s historical significance, as well taking into account its physical condition and proposed use.** What is the existing condition—or degree of material integrity—of the building prior to work? Has the original form survived largely intact or has it been altered over time? Are the alterations an important part of the building’s history? Preservation may be appropriate if distinctive materials, features, and spaces are essentially intact and convey the building’s historical significance. If the building requires more extensive repair and replacement, or if alterations or additions are necessary for a new use, then rehabilitation is probably the most appropriate treatment.

## Proposed Use

These key questions play major roles in determining what treatment is selected. An essential, practical question to ask is: will the building be used as it was historically or will it be given a new use? Many historic buildings can be adapted for new uses without seriously damaging their historic character; special-use properties such as grain silos, forts, ice houses, or windmills may be extremely difficult to adapt to new uses without major intervention and a resulting loss of historic character and even integrity.

**Source:** National Park Service, Technical Preservation Services, The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties, 1995.

[www.nps.gov/history](http://www.nps.gov/history)

With that said, here are 10 things to keep in mind when determining which approach will work best for you:



# 10 Tips for Restoring or Rehabilitating your Historic House

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**1.** Identify the factors that will shape your decision. Deciding whether to restore or rehabilitate your house, and to what extent, involves understanding its history; its architecture; and the present condition of its materials, finishes, and systems. You should also consider your household's lifestyle and what personal needs the finished house must accommodate. More broadly, local historic district designations, local building codes, property insurance, and other regulatory or financial considerations will impact the path you take.

**2.** Review the house's history. Who lived in the house and when? Did important events occur there? Did either (or both) scenarios have historical significance? If so, you could consider restoring the house to that period to help interpret its history.

**3.** Know what "restore" means. To restore a house means to return its interior and exterior appearance to a particular date or time period. Strict restorations—ones that eliminate everything not present during the period chosen—are rare for homes, with most owners opting to maintain

modern systems (plumbing, anyone?) and sympathetically designed changes, such as later additions, that add to the house's history.

**4.** Know what "rehabilitate" means. To rehabilitate a house means to make it useful and functional for contemporary living while preserving important historic and architectural features. For example, a rehabilitated old house would always include modern electrical, mechanical, and plumbing systems, a modern kitchen, and other attributes typical of present-day homes.

**5.** Choose your approach. The major difference between restoring and rehabilitating is to either exactly duplicate a particular period or concentrate on preserving a sense of the changes that have occurred over time. For example, if an Italianate-style house had lost its wood eave brackets, a restoration project would duplicate them in wood as they originally appeared, while a rehab project would add new brackets of a compatible design in an appropriate substitute material (ex. fiberglass).

**6.** Evaluate existing alterations. Consider the quality, design, materials, and craftsmanship of the original house as well as the changes that have occurred over time. Compatible interior and exterior changes of the same or better quality than the original house, even if done in different styles or materials, should probably be kept and restored. Conversely, you should probably remove any poorly designed or executed changes.

**7.** Design new additions and alterations with attention to detail. When adding to or altering your home, consider its scale (apparent size), actual dimension, and massing (proportion/balance). Use materials, textures, and colors similar to those of the original building.

**8.** Integrate modern touches with care and caution. The key to a quality rehabilitation is how well it accommodates modern technologies and living styles. Keep changes non-intrusive and compatible with the house's design and style, and don't let alterations destroy or cover historically or architecturally significant features or materials.

**9.** Take care not to falsify the history of the house. This might seem counter-intuitive, but you actually do want to be able to tell additions apart from the original. That way, the house's history is visible and transparent. Also be careful not to design additions that make the house appear to date from an earlier or later period, or alter the house's details to an extent that suggest a different architectural period.

**10.** Look to the experts. For a more detailed list of recommendations, check out the [Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties](#). This jam-packed resource from the National Park Service includes guidelines on preserving, rehabilitating, restoring, and reconstructing historic buildings.

There's no right or wrong answer when it comes to determining whether you should restore or rehabilitate your historic home. Let your property, capabilities, and needs help guide your decision, and chances are you'll arrive at an accurate, appropriate solution.

# References and Publications

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## References and Publications to Guide You

Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (Alfred A. Knopf, 1984)

Robert Guter and Janet Foster, *Building by the Book: Pattern Book Architecture in New Jersey* (Rutgers University Press, 1992)

Alan Gowans, *The Comfortable House: North American Suburban Architecture* (M.I.T. Press, 1986)

National Park Service, Technical Preservation Services, *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties*, 2017.

[www.nps.gov/tps](http://www.nps.gov/tps)

National Trust for Historic Preservation:

<https://savingplaces.org>

Allentown NJ Historic District Inventory:

[https://www.nj.gov/dep/hpo/hrrcn\\_sandy\\_MON\\_](https://www.nj.gov/dep/hpo/hrrcn_sandy_MON_)

[GB 133 136 139 PDF/MON GB 136 ID7827 Allentown.pdf](#)



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# Glossary of Architectural Terms

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**Adaptive use**—changing an existing, often historic, building to accommodate a new function; may include extensive restoration or renovation and removal of some building elements.

**Apron**—panel or wide trim under a windowsill.

**Architrave**—beam running on top of a row of columns; also, mouldings around doors and windows.

**Asbestos shingle**—an exterior shingle composed of cement reinforced with asbestos fibers; popular siding material in the early to mid 20th century.

**Asphalt shingle**—a shingle composed of rag felt or (after 1970) fiberglass, saturated with asphalt.

**Baluster**—a spindle or post supporting the railing of a balustrade.

**Balustrade**—a railing supported by balusters that is installed on a porch, above a roof cornice, an ornamental parapet on a balcony, bridge, or terrace.

**Bargeboard**—decorative or plain trim attached to the eaves of a gable.

**Bay**—a bay is the space between architectural elements, a recess or compartment or the regular external division of a building marked by windows or other vertical elements (as in a three bay façade).

**Bracket**—a curved or saw-cut projecting element which supports a horizontal member such as a cornice, window or door hood.

**Capital**—the top element of a column or pilaster.

**Cast iron**—molten iron that is poured into a mold to achieve a design.

**Classical**—pertaining to the architecture of Greece and Rome, and to the styles inspired by this architecture such as Georgian, Greek Revival, Neoclassical, etc.

**Column**—a vertical pillar or shaft, usually supporting a member above.

**Corner boards**—mitered or butted vertical trims at the junction of two walls.

**Cornice**—a projecting molding at the top of a roof, wall or other element.

**Cupola**—a small structure projecting above the roof that provides ventilation or is used as a lookout.

**Dentil**—molding composed of equally spaced rectangular blocks; from the French for tooth.

**Dormer**—a small window with its own roof projecting from a sloping roof.

**Eave**—the projecting overhang at the lower edge of a roof.

**Façade**—the front face or elevation of a building.

**Fanlight**—semicircular window with radiating muntins, often placed over a door or window.

**Fascia board**—trim covering rafter ends at the end of a roof pitch.

**Finial**—projecting ornamental element at the top of a gable, spire or pointed roof.

**Frieze**—the middle part of the deep flat boards under a classical cornice.

**Gable dormer**—gable-ended structure with a window that projects from a roof.

# Glossary of Architectural Terms

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**Gable roof**—a roof with a central ridgepole and one slope at each side. A gable is the triangular section of wall under the roof edge.

**Gambrel roof**—a roof with a central ridgepole and two sloping roof sections

**Hip roof**—a roof with uniform slopes on all four sides of a building.

**Hood**—shallow overhang above a door or window.

**Lattice**—open woodwork produced by interlacing of laths or other thin strips of wood used as screening, often on the base of a porch or on fencing.

**Leaded glass window**—composed of pieces of glass that are held in place with lead strips; the glass can be clear, colored, or stained.

**Light**—transparent portion of a window; also, single pane of glass.

**Mansard roof**—a roof that has four sloping sides, each of which becomes steeper halfway down.

**Meeting rail**—the top member of the lower sash and bottom member of the upper sash in a double-hung window.

**Modillion**—an ornamental horizontal block or bracket placed under the overhang of a cornice.

**Mullion**—a vertical divider in a window.

**Muntin**—the wood dividing strips between the panes or “lights” in a multi-paned window.

**Newel**—decorative structural post at either end of a stair rail. The post at the top or bottom of a flight of stairs, supporting the handrail.

**Newel cap**—decorative element atop a newel.

**Palladian window**—assembly of windows in which two lights flank one with an arched top.

**Parapet**—low wall or barrier railing at a balcony or roof edge.

**Pediment**—the triangular gable end of a roof; also, any similar crowning element used over doors and windows, usually triangular but may be curved.

**Pier**—load-bearing elements that rises from a footing.

**Pilaster**—a shallow pillar attached to a wall, resembling a classical column; used commonly on windows and doors.

**Portico**—a columned entrance porch.

**Preservation**—1. The protection of a material from physical deterioration or disintegration because of natural elements or human activity by various technical, scientific, or craft techniques. 2 the process of protection and enhancement of historic sites, structures, and objects.

**Rail**—horizontal structural member of a door or sash.

**Raking cornice**—molding that follows the slope of a pediment or gable.

**Reconstruction**—the process of duplicating the original form, materials and appearance of vanished building or structure at a particular historical moment through historical research.

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