

OTHER BUSINESS

Introduction of proposed changes to Standards & Guidelines.

See attached draft. Staff will brief. Intent is for Commission to comment and review language, a sub-committee may be created to expedite review of proposed changes, with a revised draft to then be redistributed to the members with the matter to be taken up for discussion and action at the October 28th regular meeting. If desired, a Business Meeting could be scheduled as an alternative.

SIGNIFICANCE OF HISTORIC RESOURCES

The local historic districts (LHDs) are comprised of properties that from the Commission's perspective are of varying architectural and historical significance. Cases are reviewed on a case-by-case basis as each resource has its own unique characteristics. For years the Commission has used the terms Singular, Contributing and Non-Contributing. This amendment seeks to clarify those definitions, so as to better guide property owners and applicants as to what is expected from the Commission in how buildings will be maintained.

▪ **Singular Properties**

Singular properties are those properties which are of significant architectural and/or historical significance, as guided by the Commission's, the Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission's, and the Secretary of the Interior's rules, regulations, standards and guidelines. This would include individually listed structures listed on the National Register of Historic Places or contributing structures to a National Historic Landmarks District (a portion of the College Hill LHD is located in such a district, which is the highest Federal classification of architectural and historical significance). Those properties that meet the Commission's definition of being of Singular architectural and or historical significance will be required to meet the Secretary of Interiors Standards for Rehabilitation (XX) and be required to consult with the Commission's staff before applying for review (See XX).

Examples:

52 Power Street, John Brown House, College Hill LHD, CHNHLD, NHL

75 North Main Street, First Baptist Church, College Hill LHD, CHNHLD, NHL

514 Broadway, Kendrick-Prentice-Tirocchi House, Broadway LHD, Broadway/Armory NRHD

19 Stimson Avenue, Joseph E Fletcher House, Stimson LHD, Stimson Avenue NRHD

153 Ontario Street, George Wilkinson House, South Elmwood LHD, Elmwood NRHD

▪ **Contributing Structures**

Contributing Structures account for the majority of buildings within the Commission's purview. These properties will typically have architectural and/or historical significance that is pertinent to the history of Providence and/or the State of Rhode Island. These buildings will be evaluated based on the determined significance with most properties being held to a high level of review. There may be some accommodation allowed on non-visible elevations, or to elements of the property deemed secondary.

Examples:

225 Adelaide Avenue, John S. Tripp, Jr. House, South Elmwood LHD, Elmwood NRHD

210 Doyle Avenue, Ladd Observatory, PLD-ICBD, Individually listed on NR

48 Princeton Avenue, William T. Peck House, Elmwood LHD, Elmwood NRHD

77 Parade Street, Mary L. and Frederick W. Hartwell, House, Armory LHD, Broadway/Armory NRHD

- **Secondary Resources “Background Buildings”**

Antoinette Downing would refer to some properties in the local historic district (LHD) as being “background buildings”. By this she meant that there are buildings located within the LHDs that are architecturally and historically appropriate as far as their size, scale and form and perhaps detail but typically have no individual significance (the ubiquitous “Triple-decker” is often an example of this type, but there are many others). They are part of the larger picture of the architectural and historical development of the city and the historic districts. These properties will be reviewed with this in mind as to the application of Standards for repair/replacement and other modifications and alterations proposed by applicants.

Examples:

213 Lexington Avenue, Albert G. Carpenter House, South Elmwood LHD, Elmwood NRHD
97 Princeton Avenue, Double-decker, North Elmwood LHD, Elmwood NRHD

- **Non-Contributing and Properties of Potential Significance**

The Commission considers all properties within its jurisdiction as being “Contributing” resources unless a determination is needed as to its status, typically when considering demolition applications. When a National Register district is approved, the properties within the district are categorized as “Contributing” and “Non-Contributing”. This determination is based on the Period of Significance that is established in the National Register nomination process. This process places buildings that do not fit into the defined period of significance as “Non-contributing” however, the Commission uses these determinations only as guidance to a building’s significance. The Commission reserves judgment on final determination based on the specific characteristics of the resource and the historical evolution of the resource past the nomination’s “Period of Significance”. The Commission may require the building be reviewed as a Significant, Contributing, or Background Building or Property of Potential Significant based upon its determination.

Examples:

2 Keene Street, c1960, College Hill NHL, Potential Significance
127 Congress Avenue, PHA Housing, 1978, South Elmwood LHD, NC

Adoption of New Standards:

- **WINDOW REPLACEMENT:** would be a new standard, incorporation RIGL language pertaining to lead, energy, etc.
- **NEW CONSTRUCTION:** Standard that speaks directly to NC, could be a new standard or modification of existing (STD 8)

WINDOW REPLACEMENT POLICY

One of the most common applications to the Commission is for window replacements. The main reasons applicants request replacement is for energy efficiency and lead hazard reductions, with aesthetics being another common request. Windows are a character defining element and are important to the overall architectural character of a property. In the past only wood, single-pane replacement windows were deemed appropriate. Over the past 25 years the Commission's response to these requests has evolved.

Of course, for many years wood windows were the only windows available, with aluminum and then vinyl windows becoming more common. Today composites are also available. There also were many trades-people available to perform repairs and build new matching replacement windows as needed. No one was concerned about lead paint issues. Although multi-pane insulated windows were first introduced in the 1930s but did not become prevalent until the 1970s. Most windows were single-pane and required originally wooden and then metal storm-windows as a matter of necessity. Metal storm-windows are not considered architecturally or aesthetically significant. In fact, some applicants have requested insulated replacement windows so they can remove the "ugly" storm windows.

While storm windows are undeniably unaesthetic, they also served to protect older wooden windows from deteriorating. One of the guiding elements in historic preservation is that original or significant fabric should be retained for as long as it is viable. When it is no longer viable, it should be replaced with materials that closely match in presentation. As technology has evolved, insulated windows have become more typical. At first there were "sash-pack kits" that allowed for just the sash to be replaced within the existing window opening. These were once widely available but are becoming increasingly rare. Window companies have moved away from this type of unit as installation was always difficult, particularly in older properties, where conditions were often not ideal as the openings were no longer true, out of square and plumb. Window companies started producing window replacement units, often called "frame-within-a-frame" units which allow for easier installation and come clad in aluminum or vinyl eliminating the need for painting. As building technology has evolved these window replacement units have become acceptable by the Commission in most situations as long as the loss of glass area is less than a total 3" from side-to-side.

- Evolution of buildings: age/energy/lead (RESERVED)

General Guidelines:

Type of Residence:

- Single Family Residence
Do not require lead-safe certificates, so analysis of significance of resource as well as condition of windows is expected; various options for replacement
- Multiple Family Residence
Due to multiple factors, primarily energy and lead regulations as well as the age of the majority of buildings within the Commission's purview, retention of existing wooden windows is not expected; various options for replacement

Amendment to PHDC S&G 2024

Resource Significance:

- Singular Properties. Some properties will meet the Commission's definition of being of Singular architectural and or historical significance (See XX). These properties will be required to meet the Secretary of Interiors Standards for Rehabilitation (XX) and be required to consult with the Commission's staff before applying for review (See XX)
- Contributing Resources:
- Secondary Resources
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Standards for Approval

Approval Process:

- Applicant contacts Staff for guidance on process.
- Determination: property is determined by Staff as to which category will be used for review. Staff may always refer this determination to the Commission as deemed necessary.
- Application
- Documentation/Permit-submission
- Review
- Approval (Those applications that do not meet the procedural requirements will be considered incomplete and withdrawn after XX days)
- Inspection/documentation