

BRISTOL HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

**GUIDELINES FOR REHABILITATION, ADDITIONS
AND NEW CONSTRUCTION**

**BUILDINGS WITHIN THE DESIGNATED DISTRICT AND
INDIVIDUALLY LISTED BUILDINGS OUTSIDE OF THE DISTRICT**

The Historic District Commission was established by the Town of Bristol to carry out the regulation of buildings within the designated boundaries of Historic Districts and of listed structures outside of the District. This Ordinance was enacted to:

1. safeguard the heritage of Bristol by preserving historic district(s) and designated structures of historic and/or architectural value to the Town of Bristol which reflect elements of Bristol's cultural, social, economic, political, and architectural history;
2. stabilize and improve property values in established historic districts and designated structures of historic and architectural value;
3. maintain and foster the civic beauty of Bristol;
4. strengthen the economy of Bristol; and
5. promote the use of historic districts and other designated structures for the education, pleasure, and welfare of the citizens of Bristol.

The following Guidelines will be considered by the Bristol Historic District Commission in fulfilling its legal responsibilities to review all applications for building permits or for work on Town owned buildings or lots within the District or to buildings and lots individually listed outside of the District. The historic or architectural value and significance of a particular structure and its relationship to the historic or architectural value of the surrounding area will be of prime importance.

These Guidelines are based upon the Secretary of the Interior's STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION AND GUIDELINES FOR REHABILITATING HISTORIC BUILDINGS. A copy of this National Park Service (Preservation Assistance Division) publication is available for review at the Bristol Town Hall. In all cases, the more detailed standards as presented in this publication will be used by the Bristol Historic District Commission in reviewing applications. Applications and submittal requirements are available at the Town Hall, Building Official's Office. TOWN HALL HOURS: WEEKDAYS, (8:30 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.

HOW TO USE THESE GUIDELINES

These Guidelines are divided into five (5) sections:

- I - (PAGES 3-4) Guidelines for Rehabilitation of an existing building in the District or an individually Listed building;
- II - (PAGES 5-7) Guidelines for additions to existing buildings in the District or an individually listed building;
- III - (PAGES 8-9) Guidelines for new construction in that portion of the District located WEST of Hope Street;
- IV - (PAGES 10-11) Guidelines for new construction in that portion of the District on Hope Street and to the EAST;
- V - (PAGES 12-13) Guidelines for new construction on the site of an individually listed building.

IF YOUR APPLICATION INVOLVES ACTIVITIES IN MORE THAN ONE OF THESE CATEGORIES, PLEASE BE SURE YOU CONSULT ALL THE APPROPRIATE SECTIONS.

APPLICANTS SHOULD SUBMIT THE TOTAL CONSTRUCTION AND REHABILITATION PLANS FOR A PROJECT WITH THE INITIAL APPLICATION. THE COMMISSION DESIRES TO REVIEW ALL THE ACTIVITIES OF A PROJECT AT ONE TIME EVEN IF THE WORK IS TO BE SPREAD OVER A FEW MONTHS.

ALL APPLICANTS ARE URGED TO CONSULT WITH THE COMMISSION DURING THE EARLY STAGES OF THE PLANNING AND DESIGN PROCESS. THE GOAL OF THE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION IS TO ASSIST IN PRESERVING THE ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORIC CHARACTER OF BRISTOL. NEW BUILDINGS SHOULD ADD TO THE RICHNESS AND VITALITY OF THE TOWN AND TO PROVIDE CONTINUITY WITH THE EXISTING SCENIC AND HISTORIC FABRIC.

REHABILITATION

GUIDELINES FOR REHABILITATION OF AN EXISTING BUILDING IN THE DISTRICT OR AN INDIVIDUALLY LISTED BUILDING.

ADVISORY: Applicants should note that all zoning, planning and other town regulations must be addressed and satisfied. These regulations are available in Town Hall at the Building Official's Office.

GENERAL CRITERIA

1 - Buildings have been placed under Commission review because of their individual and collective historic and architectural significance. Thus, all activities need to consider both the effects on the individual building, and also the impact on the total District or listed building site.

2 - The style and approximate construction date of all buildings in the District or individually Listed are available by consulting the records of the Rhode Island Historic Preservation Commission. Copies of these records are available at the Town Hall.

3 - The aim of all rehabilitation should be to retain and enhance the historic and architectural materials and elements of the specific building.

SPECIFIC CRITERIA SUBJECT TO COMMISSION EVALUATION

1 - **MATERIALS:** Natural materials (stone, brick, wood clapboard, wood shingles, etc.) are the preferred materials for historic buildings. The materials used should be appropriate for the architectural style and the age of the building.

2 - **BUILDING OPENINGS:** Historic buildings receive specific characteristics from their doors, windows and other openings. Repairs should avoid drastically altering this relationship and consideration should be given to replacements that are appropriate to the individual building's style and age.

(Rehabilitation Guidelines continued)

3 - **EXTERIOR APPENDAGES:** Porches, stairs, outbuildings and other exterior building appendages may be important elements of the building's historic and architectural integrity. Thus, consideration will be given to their removal or alteration.

4 - **COLOR:** Historically appropriate colors are encouraged, but color will not be considered unless it is integral to the material used in the rehabilitation project.

5- **ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS:** Consideration will be given to floor definitions, cornices, corner treatments, bays, door and window surrounds, railings, cresting and other architectural details. These should be repaired if possible or replaced with like design and materials if necessary.

6 - **LANDSCAPING:** Consideration will be given to fences, lighting, signs, plantings, outbuildings, and other detached features of a project.

ADOPTED OCTOBER 19, 1987

II

ADDITIONS

GUIDELINES FOR ADDITIONS TO EXISTING BUILDINGS IN THE DISTRICT OR AN INDIVIDUALLY LISTED BUILDING.

ADVISORY: Applicants should note that all zoning, planning and other town regulations must be addressed and satisfied. These regulations are available in Town Hall at the Building Official's Office.

GENERAL CRITERIA

- 1 - The Historic District was created because of the importance of the buildings as they relate to the other structures in the area. Thus, both the historical and physical integrity of the individual buildings and their relationship to the other buildings in the District will receive a high priority in all evaluations of applications.
- 2 - Buildings receiving individual listing under the Ordinance were selected because of their outstanding historic and/or architectural importance. Thus, the historical and physical integrity of these buildings and their siting are of highest priority in all evaluations of applications.
- 3 - Additions to existing buildings should not permanently damage any exterior feature of the building. In all cases, the principle of reversibility will be a serious consideration. This means that the ability to remove the addition with minimal damage to the original building is an important review factor.
- 4 - Contemporary designs are encouraged, but the importance of these existing buildings is paramount and, thus, new construction should be designed to be both secondary and complementary to the existing.
- 5 - The siting and public visibility of the Listed Buildings are extremely important and additions should fully consider both these conditions.

SPECIFIC CRITERIA SUBJECT TO EVALUATION

- 1 - **MATERIALS:** Natural materials (stone, brick, wood clapboard, wood shingles, etc.) are the preferred materials for additions. The material of the existing building and its compatibility with the proposed will be seriously considered.
- 2 - **BUILDING SHAPE:** The relationship between the horizontal and vertical thrust of the existing structure is the major factor in consideration of proposals for additions.
- 3 - **ROOF SHAPES AND MATERIALS:** The style, shape, protrusions and materials of the existing building should be carefully considered in all additions.
- 4 - **BUILDING OPENINGS:** The existing configuration, size, shape and number of windows and doors of the existing building will establish the criteria for evaluating new additions. In no case, should an addition alter or block the major elevations of the existing building.
- 5 - **EXTERIOR APPENDAGES:** Consideration will be given to the size, shapes and designs of all exterior stairways, fire escapes, porches, bays turrets and other "external" elements of the design.
- 6 - **COLOR:** Appropriate colors are desired, but color will not be considered unless it is integral to the material used in the construction and is not easily reversible.
- 7 - **ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS:** Consideration will be given to floor definitions, cornices, corner treatments, bays, door and window surrounds, railings, cresting and other architectural details, especially as these relate to the existing building.
- 8 - **PARKING:** Garages, driveways and surface parking should be located so as not to interrupt the siting or public views of the existing building.

9 - LANDSCAPING: Consideration will be given to fences, lighting, signs, plantings, outbuildings, and other detached features of a project, especially as these impact on the existing building.

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III

NEW CONSTRUCTION WEST OF HOPE STREET

GUIDELINES FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION IN THAT PORTION OF THE DISTRICT LOCATED WEST OF HOPE STREET

The following Guidelines are for all new construction along the waterfront of Bristol. For the purposes of these Guidelines this is defined as any lot from the WEST side of Hope Street (but not including Hope Street.) to the water, including Church, John State, Bradford, Franklin and Thames Streets. This area is defined separately because of its unique physical, historical and environmental characteristics.

ADVISORY: Applicants in this area should be aware that all zoning, planning, wetlands and Coastal Resource Management Council regulations must also be fulfilled. These regulations are available in Town Hall at the Building Official's Office.

GENERAL CRITERIA

- 1 - Public views of the waterfront, from both public property and existing private structures, must be considered in all new construction.
- 2 - The design of buildings for this area will be judged from all elevations, including those visible from the water.
- 3 - With the exceptions of the mill complexes on the north and south ends of Thames St., the area is characterized by small buildings on conventional size lots. This small scale should be respected and new projects should not require the combining of existing lots.
- 4 - Current zoning requirements for front and side yardage are not always in keeping with the existing character of this area. Thus, the HDC would be willing to support approved designs that require an application for a variance to the Zoning Board of Review.
- 5 - Contemporary designs for new construction are not discouraged in this area. Neither are designs that reflect earlier architectural styles common in the area or the specific historic building which once occupied the site.

III. New Construction Guidelines Continued - West of Hope Street

SPECIFIC CRITERIA SUBJECT TO EVALUATION

1 - **MATERIALS:** Natural materials (stone, brick, wood clapboard, wood shingles, etc.) are the preferred materials for buildings in this area.

2 - **BUILDING SHAPE:** The relationship between the horizontal and vertical thrust of the structure should be designed in the context of the historic buildings in the immediate vicinity of the site.

3 - **ROOF SHAPES AND MATERIALS:** The area is characterized by a variety of roof shapes, protrusions and materials and new designs should be complementary to this diverse character.

4 - **BUILDING OPENINGS:** Consideration will be given to the number, size and shape of all doors and windows especially in the context of the building shape and massing. Additionally, the major entrance should be on the street front of the structure.

5 - **EXTERIOR APPENDAGES:** Consideration will be given to the size, shapes and designs of all exterior stairways, fire escapes, porches, bays, turrets and other "external" elements of the design.

6 - **COLOR:** Historically appropriate colors are encouraged, but color will not be considered unless it is integral to the material used in the construction and is not easily reversible.

7 - **ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS:** Consideration will be given to floor definitions, cornices, corner treatments, bays, door and window surrounds, railings, cresting and other architectural details.

8 - **PARKING:** Garage entrances should not be on the street front and parking should be in the rear or well screened on the side. The Commission's desire to assist in Variances for setbacks should be noted here. Note should also be made of the Coastal Resources Management Council requirement of permeable materials for parking surfaces.

9 - **LANDSCAPING:** Consideration will be given to fences, lighting, signs, plantings, outbuildings, and other detached features of a project.

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IV

NEW CONSTRUCTION HOPE STREET AND EAST

GUIDELINES FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION IN THAT PORTION OF THE DISTRICT ON HOPE STREET AND TO THE EAST.

ADVISORY: Applicants should be aware that all zoning, planning and other town regulations must be addressed and satisfied. These regulations are available in Town Hall at the Building Official's Office.

GENERAL CRITERIA

- 1 - Since the number of existing, buildable lots in this area of the District is very small, applicants will need to pay very careful attention to the existing historic buildings in the vicinity of their proposal. This includes buildings on both sides of the street from the proposed new building.
2. The most important design elements will be those that are visible to the public from public property. "Hidden" elevations will be considered more leniently.
3. If the predominant characteristic in the area is to have front and side yardage not in conformity to current standards, the HDC would be willing to support approved designs that require an application for a variance to the Zoning Board of Review.
4. Contemporary designs are encouraged, but the limited number of buildable lots means that primacy will be given to maintaining the existing historic character of the area.

SPECIFIC CRITERIA SUBJECT TO EVALUATION

1. **MATERIALS:** Natural materials (stone, brick, wood clapboard, wood shingles, etc.) are the preferred materials for buildings in this area.
2. **BUILDING SHAPE:** The relationship between the horizontal and vertical thrust of the structure should be designed in the context of the historic buildings in the immediate vicinity of the site.

IV. New Construction Guidelines Continued - East of Hope Street

3 - ROOF SHAPES AND MATERIALS: Each area is characterized by a variety of roof shapes, protrusions and materials, and new designs should be complementary to this character in the immediate vicinity of the site.

4 - BUILDING OPENINGS: Consideration will be given to the number, size and shape of all doors and windows especially in the context of the building shape and massing. Additionally, the major entrance should be on the street front of the structure.

5 - EXTERIOR APPENDAGES: Consideration will be given to the size, shapes and designs of all exterior stairways, fire escapes, porches, bays, turrets and other "external" elements of the design.

6 - COLOR: Appropriate colors are desired, but color will not be considered unless it is integral to the material used in the construction and is not easily reversible.

7 - ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS: Consideration will be given to floor definitions, cornices, corner treatments, bays, door and window surrounds, railings, cresting and other architectural details.

8 - PARKING: Garage entrances should not be on the street front and parking should be in the rear or well screened on the side. The Commission's desire to assist in variances for setbacks should be noted here.

9 - LANDSCAPING: Consideration will be given to fences, lighting, signs, plantings, outbuildings, and other detached features of a project.

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NEW CONSTRUCTION ON LISTED BUILDING SITES

GUIDELINES FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION ON THE SITE OF AN INDIVIDUALLY LISTED BUILDING

The following Guidelines are for all new construction on the same legal lot as a building individually listed by the Bristol Historic District Zoning Ordinance.

ADVISORY: Applicants should be aware that all zoning, planning and other town regulations must be addressed and satisfied. These regulations are available in Town Hall at the Building Official's Office.

GENERAL CRITERIA

- 1 - Buildings receiving individual listing under the Ordinance were selected because of their outstanding historic and/or architectural importance. Thus, the historical and physical integrity of these buildings, their outbuildings, landscaping and siting are of highest priority in all evaluations of applications.
- 2 - The public visibility of the Listed Buildings is extremely important, so the design of new buildings will be judged from all elevations, including those visible from the water.
- 3 - Contemporary designs are encouraged, but the importance of the existing historic building is paramount and, thus, new construction should be designed to be both secondary and complementary to the existing.

SPECIFIC CRITERIA SUBJECT TO EVALUATION

- 1 - **MATERIALS:** Natural materials (stone, brick, wood clapboard, wood shingles, etc.) are the preferred materials for new construction. The material of the existing building and its compatibility with the proposed new construction will be seriously considered.
- 2 - **BUILDING SHAPE:** The relationship between the horizontal and vertical thrust of the existing structure is the major factor in consideration of proposals for new structures on the same site.

V. New Construction on Listed Building Sites Continued

3 - ROOF SHAPES AND MATERIALS: The style, shape, protrusions and materials of the existing building should be carefully considered in all new construction.

4 - BUILDING OPENINGS: The existing configuration, size, shape and number of windows and doors of the existing building will be considered in evaluating new proposals.

5 - EXTERIOR APPENDAGES: Special consideration will be given to the size, shapes and designs of all exterior stairways, fire escapes, porches, bays turrets and other "external" elements of the design.

6 - COLOR: Appropriate colors are desired, but color will not be considered unless it is integral to the material used in the construction and is not easily reversible.

7 - ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS: Consideration will be given to floor definitions, cornices, corner treatments, bays, door and window surrounds, railings, cresting and other architectural details, especially as these relate to the existing building.

8 - PARKING: Garages, driveways, and surface parking should be located so as not to interrupt the siting or public views of the existing building.

9 - LANDSCAPING: Consideration will be given to fences, lighting signs, plantings, outbuildings, and other detached features of a project, especially as these impact on the existing building and existing landscaping features.

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