CITY OF PROVIDENCE
ZONING BOARD OF APPEAL

IN RE: Appeals by Frank Faltus, Olivia Katz, and Chris Borgstrom from Decisions of the Historic District Commission granting Certificates of Appropriateness for Applications 26.101 and 26.138, 56 Pratt Street

56 Pratt Street (Plat 10, Lot 163)

The Providence Historic District Commission's
Memorandum in Support of its Objection to Appeals

The Providence Historic District Commission ("the PHDC" and/or "the Commission") submits this Memorandum in support of its decisions ("Decisions")[1] to grant certificates of appropriateness for Application 26.101 and Application 26.138 ("the Applications") regarding a proposed development at 56 Pratt Street. The PHDC requests that the City of Providence Zoning Board of Appeals ("the Board") deny and dismiss the appeals of Frank Faltus, Olivia Katz, and Chris Borgstrom ("the Appellants") because the Appellants fail to meet their burden of demonstrating that the PHDC committed clear legal error, prejudicial procedural error, or that the weight of the evidence did not support the PHDC's findings and Decisions to issue the certificates.

PHDC Background and Purpose

Providence's Historic District Commission is enabled by state statute. *See* RIGL §§ 45-24.1-1 et seq. Its purpose includes preserving structures of historic and architectural value, safeguarding the heritage of the city or town by preserving elements of its cultural, social, economic, political, and architectural history, stabilizing and improving property values, fostering civic beauty, strengthening the local economy, and promoting the use of historic districts for the

[1] The Decisions on appeal are attached hereto as ***Exhibit A***.

education, pleasure, and welfare of the community. RIGL § 45-24.1-1. Cities and towns are empowered to create historic district commissions and create historic districts by ordinance, which the city has done by zoning ordinance. *See* RIGL §§ 45-24.1-1, 45-24.1-1.1(6), 45-24.1-3. *See also* Providence Zoning Ordinance §§ 1707 and 1718.

Importantly in this case, in historic districts an owner must obtain a permit from the PHDC, called a "certificate of appropriateness," to *construct*, *alter*, or demolish a structure. RIGL §§ 45-24.1-4 (emphasis added). The zoning ordinance likewise provides that the PHDC is authorized to regulate the *alteration*, repair, *construction*, demolition, removal of any exterior structure and/or appurtenance within any historic district identified on the zoning map. *See* Providence Zoning Ordinance § 1718(B)(6)(emphasis added).

In deciding whether a "certificate of appropriateness" should issue, state statute requires the PHDC consider three things: (1) the historical/architectural significance of a structure or its appurtenances, (2) the way in which the structure and its appurtenances contribute to the historical and architectural significance of the district, and (3) the "appropriateness" of the general design, arrangement, texture, materials, and siting proposed in the plans. *See* RIGL § 45-24.1-4(d).

The statute further requires the PHDC to adopt rules and regulations and publish standards necessary to inform the public of the criteria used to evaluate whether or not a certificate of appropriateness should issue. *See* RIGL § 45-24.1-4. The PHDC has adopted rules and regulations as well as published three sets of standards. The Standards & Guidelines for the Armory, Broadway, College Hill, North Elmwood, South Elmwood, and Stimson Avenue Districts are applicable to this case.[2]

[2] The rules and regulations and the applicable standards and guidelines are attached hereto as ***Exhibit B.*** They are also available at: https://www.providenceri.gov/planning/providence-historic-district-commission-phdc/.

Also, importantly, historic district commissions have wide discretion to make decisions in what is arguably a largely subjective arena—whether or not construction and/or alteration and repair of structures within historic districts is "appropriate" within broadly stated criteria. The historic district enabling legislation, however, has withstood challenges to its constitutionality, including the argument that it is unconstitutionally vague. *See Bellevue Shopping Center Ass. v. Chase*, 574 A.2d 760, 765 (R.I. 1990) ("[a]lthough the board's discretion cannot be entirely eliminated because of the subjective nature of the process, we believe the standards set forth in the historic-zoning legislation sufficiently alert the public of the statute's scope and meaning") (emphasis added); *see also Opinion to House of Representatives*, 208 A.2d 126 (R.I. 1965).

Facts Relating to These Particular Applications

The PHDC will briefly review the travel of these matters for the Board. 56 Pratt Street is a parcel that is currently improved with a 2.5 story single-family home of historical and architectural significance to the College Hill local historic district having been recognized as a contributing structure to the College Hill National Register Historic District. *See* ***Exhibit A****, p. 2*. The applicant and owner of the parcel, Nathaniel Sliney ("the Applicant"), submitted an Application to the PHDC proposing to build an addition to the historic home (considered a major alteration) as well as build a new residential structure (new construction) beside it, with the original lot being subdivided into two lots, north and south. The north lot would contain the historic home and an attached three-story addition[3] in the rear, and the south lot would contain a new, separate three-story structure.[4] For clarity and to avoid confusion, the PHDC chose to bifurcate the

[3] This addition would contain two residential units, and the existing house would remain one unit, for a total of three units.

[4] This structure would contain four residential units (three units and an Accessory Dwelling Unit).

Application into two separate Applications — one for the major alteration/addition on the north lot (Application 26.138) and one for the new construction on the south lot (Application 26.101).

On Monday, June 22, 2026, the PHDC reviewed a preliminary Application for the project. A preliminary application is a non-binding review, allowing an applicant to have an open discussion with the PHDC and receive feedback on a proposal prior to any vote being taken. *See* ***Exhibit C*** (meeting minutes)*, p.4.* The architect for the project, David Sisson, walked the PHDC through the original site plans, and the Commission held a robust conversation regarding the project, including discussions about the massing of the structures, the overall height of the buildings, the grade differentials, how the addition interacted with the historic home, as well as the modern architecture of the new construction. *See id*.[5] At that meeting the PHDC's general consensus on the addition was that it was not subservient and/or secondary[6] to the existing historic house. Suggestions were made to reduce its massing and also to camouflage the addition with material color to help minimize its appearance. Regarding the new construction, the PHDC's general consensus was that the proposed building's mass, siting, and unabashed contemporary form were architecturally and historically appropriate for Pratt Street; the Commission discussed other buildings with modern designs mixed in among historic homes along Pratt and that this proposal for new construction was compliant within that context. *See id*.

On July 27, 2026, the PHDC held a public meeting on both the major alteration/addition and the new construction. Mr. Sisson presented the Applications[7] with revised drawings to the

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[5] *See also* PHDC video from the June 22, 2026 meeting 0:23:29 min to 1:12:00 min available at: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1N0TZmwfqjkm94S-v3FwxtNSYVzRhL9qQ/view?usp=sharing.

[6] *See* Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation at: https://npshistory.com/publications/preservation/its-bulletins/37.pdf

[7] At this meeting, the Commission bifurcated the Applications, separating the addition from the new construction.

PHDC. The proposal for the addition was slightly smaller in height from the original as presented in the preliminary Application in June, but, according the PHDC, it was still too large in scale and mass, with the upper floor a full story above the existing structure's roofline. Furthermore, it was not zoning compliant (exceeding the number of allowed stories per Section 402.A of the Providence Zoning Ordinance), and the PHDC determined that it was not subservient to the historic resource. The PHDC voted unanimously to deny approval for the addition (Application 26.138). *See* ***Exhibit C***, p. 7-8; ***Exhibit A***, p. 3.[8]

The proposal for new construction on the south lot, however, was again well received overall by the Commission. The PHDC described the new construction as "dar[ing] to be different," illustrating Friedrich St. Florian's[9] belief that Pratt Street is a "laboratory" for architectural expression. *See* ***Exhibit C****, p. 6-7.* The Commission determined the Application for conceptual approval for the new construction on the proposed south lot (Application No. 26.101) was appropriate for Pratt Street given its varied historical and architectural context. The PHDC then approved the conceptual Application for the new construction by unanimous vote. *See id.*; ***Exhibit A****, p. 1*.

On August 24, 2026, the PHDC held a public meeting on a revised Application for conceptual approval of the addition (Application No. 26.138) as well as for final approval of the

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[8] *See also* PHDC video from the July 27, 2026 meeting 0:02:22 min to :0:50:34 min available at: https://providenceri-gov.zoom.us/rec/share/zgMU469dTYQa4LTXz_2cWt56VqOH7wcfvPEbe4ns7V0YwKGdeQzbZV1_dydm-KDK.D_t4vvXFPb-W3_tp.

[9] Friedrich St. Florian was an internationally renowned Austrian born American architect who spent a significant amount of his career in Providence. He began teaching at RISD in 1963. He then went on to serve as RISD's Dean of Architecture and Design as well as Acting Vice President for Academic Affairs. He designed two properties on Pratt Street. To learn more about his background and biography, *see*: https://www.nytimes.com/2025/01/06/arts/design/friedrich-st-florian-dead.html and *see* https://risdmuseum.org/exhibitions-events/exhibitions/friedrich-st-florian.

new construction (Application No. 26.101). David Sisson again presented the Applications, and public comment was taken both in support of and in opposition to the project(s). After reviewing all the materials and testimony presented, including the testimony of Clark Schoettle, an expert hired by the Appellants, the Commission voted to grant conceptual approval for the addition[10] and to continue final approval of the new construction for further review. Regarding the addition, the PHDC first voted that the new Application was substantially and materially different from the prior Application, finding that the changes presented in height, massing, and design were both substantial and positive. *See* ***Exhibit C****, p. 13-15.*[11] For final plan presentation, the Commission encouraged the Applicant to continue to consider tweaks to the design in materials, fenestration, and how to best connect the two structures. *See Id.*

Regarding the new construction, which had already been granted conceptual approval, the PHDC withheld final approval. The Commission encouraged the Applicant to make further modifications to the design, such as architecturally emphasizing horizontality over verticality, reducing the number of materials used, exploring alternative material colors to convey a lighter feel to the building, and reducing/removing the third-floor porch roof element. *See* ***Exhibit C****, p.* 11-13. The Applicant agreed to a continuance of that Application to explore these issues. *See Id*.

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[10] There was some discussion at the August 24, 2026 meeting as to whether or not the Application for the addition required both conceptual approval and final approval or just final approval. *See* ***Exhibit C***, p. 15. At the request of the Applicant, the Commission decided to go through both stages of review with Application No. 26.138, granting conceptual approval but withholding final approval until a subsequent meeting.

[11] *See also* PHDC video from the August 24, 2026 meeting 0:01:07 min to 1:43:00 min available at: https://providenceri-gov.zoom.us/rec/share/40zeOaRcLKpXfFtyq2zxFHZ7m0TfpSf-WHo-i-h7hYhblbY2u5rh4uZi27ee9IkN.BqOlroSxzDRb3dgt.

On Tuesday, September 29, 2026, a charrette[12] was held at the Providence Preservation Society to discuss the project. It was attended by Councilor Jill S. Davidson (Ward 2), David Sisson (the project's architect, Principal, David Sisson Architecture), Clark Schoettle (the Appellants' expert, former Executive Director of the Providence Revolving Fund, former Vice Chair and member of the PHDC), as well as Glen Fontecchio (Architect, Principal at Glenn S. Fontecchio Architects, former Chair and member of the PHDC), Joel Vanderweele (Architect, Senior Associate at Union Studio Architecture & Community Design), Jason Martin (Preservation Planner, City of Providence, PHDC staff), Marisa Brown (Executive Director, Providence Preservation Society), and Elisabeth Seidel (Reporter-Researcher, Providence Preservation Society). The charrette was thoughtful and productive; items discussed related to a reduction in height and verticality for both buildings, design changes at the front and roofline to soften façades, window changes, color changes, and landscape changes, among other things. *See* ***Exhibit C***, p. 16.

On October 6, 2026, the PHDC held a public meeting on the Applications for final plan approval for both the addition and the new construction. Revised plans post-charrette, photos, and renderings were submitted for both, including a detailed memorandum of changes made to the buildings since conceptual review. *See* ***Exhibit D***. The Commission's response was positive for both buildings. It considered the revised design for the addition to be more cohesive regarding fenestration, materials, and color choices, and the Commission applauded the thoughtful

[12] A charrette is an intensive, multi-disciplinary, collaborative workshop that aims to further develop a design or vision for a project. Charrette participants work together to find design solutions that will address identified issues as priorities resulting in a clearer, detailed, realistic vision for the project. *See* The National Charette Institute at https://www.canr.msu.edu/nci/.

connection between the historic building and the addition. *See* ***Exhibit C****, p. 18-19*.[13] Regarding the new construction, the Commission agreed with the overall height reduction, the changes to the front porches, as well as fenestration changes that improved the buildings' overall composition. *See* ***Exhibit C****, p. 16-18*. The PHDC voted unanimously to give final approval to the Applications, determining that the addition (Application No. 26.138) and the new construction (Application No. 26.101) were in accord with PHDC Standard 8—to wit, the plans were architecturally and historically compatible with the property and district having an appropriate size, scale, and form that will not have an adverse effect on the property or district. *See* ***Exhibit A***, p. 6-9.

The following appeals ensued. The Appellants make two groundless arguments: (1) the PHDC committed prejudicial procedural error because the notices posted for public meetings were inadequate; and (2) the PHDC's approvals given to the project were not supported by the weight of the evidence. The PHDC refutes each argument in turn below.

Standard of Review

In an appeal from a decision of the PHDC to the Board, the Appellants must demonstrate that the PHDC committed clear legal error, prejudicial procedural error,[14] or that the weight of the evidence did not support the PHDC's findings and decision. The PHDC decision must stand so long as there is relevant evidence that a reasonable person would accept as adequate to support its conclusion. The Board "shall not substitute its own judgment for that of the commission, but must consider the issue upon the findings and the record of the commission." *See* RIGL § 45-24.1-7.2.

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[13] *See also* PHDC video from the October 6, 2026 meeting 0:02:00 min to 1:13:30 min available at: https://providenceri-gov.zoom.us/rec/share/SvDxOV88nwPnQ4iuEmr-M_3-m4565muGFHRcD3ldQpR6sGA7IsOnti3GGTkuDF3E.O7nwit7Edpe-1ip0.

[14] Procedural error is only "prejudicial" if it led the agency to make a different finding/decision or prevented specific facts or arguments from being presented and entered into the record. *See* definition of prejudice: "damage or detriment to one's legal rights or claims," *Black's Law Dictionary*, 2nd edition. *See* also *Sprague v. Zoning Board of Review of the Town of Charlestown*, 2004 WL 2813763 (R.I. Super. Ct. Sept. 21 2004).

"The credibility of witnesses and weight of the evidence is the sole prerogative of the [HDC]." *Coderre v. Zoning Board of Review*, 105 R.I. 266, 270 (1969).

The Board reviews questions of law *de novo*, and it applies the canons of statutory interpretation. Where the provisions of a statute, ordinance, or regulations are clear, it applies the plain and ordinary meaning. If the provisions are unclear or subject to more than one reasonable interpretation, "…the construction given by the agency, or [PHDC], charged with its enforcement is entitled to weight and deference, as long as that construction is not clearly erroneous or unauthorized … even when other reasonable constructions of the statute are possible." *West v. McDonald*, 18 A.3d 526, 532 (R.I. 2011).

Argument

I. The HDC Did Not Commit Prejudicial Procedural Error of Law Because It Gave Proper Notice

The Appellants first argue that the PHDC committed prejudicial procedural error by failing to properly notice the meetings it held regarding the project. Citing Rhode Island's Open Meetings Act (hereinafter the "OMA"), R.I. Gen. Laws § 45-24.1-6, and *Boggs v. Zoning Bd. Of Rev. of Newport*, 107 R.I. 80 (1970), the Appellants argue that the PHDC did not specify the "precise character of the relief sought" by the Applicant – i.e. the notices did not contain whether or not the Applications were before the Commission for "conceptual" or "final" review and, therefore, were inadequate. *See* Appellants' Memo, p. 7. This argument is an absurd stretch and a far cry from what the Open Meetings Act requires, and it does not rise to the level of prejudicial procedural error in the context of these appeals.

The OMA requires that "all public bodies shall give written notice of their regularly scheduled meetings at the beginning of each calendar year," R.I. Gen Laws § 42-46-6(a), and "supplemental written public notice of any meeting within a minimum of forty-eight (48) hours …

before the date." R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-26-6(b). "This [supplemental] notice shall include the date the notice was posted, the date, time and place of the meeting, and a statement specifying the nature of the business to be discussed." *Id*. In fact, the PHDC's Rules & Regulations, Section 4.2, states notice "shall be given… at least seven (7) days prior to the public hearing." ***Exhibit B***, p. 9. The PHDC mails and posts its agendas to Rhode Island Secretary of State in accordance with this rule.

In a seminal case regarding the OMA, *Tanner v. Town Council of Town of Each Greenwich, 880 A.2d 784 (R.I. 2005)*, the Rhode Island Supreme Court interpreted this "supplemental notice" as "fair notice to the public under the circumstances" or "such notice based on the totality of the circumstances as would fairly inform the public of the nature of the business to be discussed or acted upon." *Id*. at 797. The Court stated, "[a]lthough we recognize that this standard is … flexible … we decline to provide specific guidelines or 'magic words.'" It continued, "such an approach accounts for the range and assortment of meetings, votes, and actions covered under the OMA, and the realities of local government, while also safeguarding the public's interest in knowing and observing the workings of its governmental bodies." *Id*.

The PHDC clearly met this "flexible" fair notice standard articulated above. Each of its meetings on 56 Pratt Street were timely posted on the Secretary of State's website; each notice lists the specific address of the project, the request of the Applicant (either the approval of the addition or the new construction), and the fact that said requests were on the agenda *for vote*. *See* ***Exhibit E*** (meeting notices). Each notice does, indeed, cite "the precise character of the relief sought," which is the approval by the Commission of the addition and the new construction on 56 Pratt Street, i.e. the issuance of certificates of approval. This is the *only* relief the PHDC is empowered by statute to give.

The Appellants try to muddy the waters by arguing the fact that the notices do not list whether an application is at a conceptual or final stage is somehow a fatal flaw similar to the notices deemed insufficient by the Court in *Boggs v. Zoning Bd. Of Rev. of City of Newport*, 107 R.I. 80 (R.I. 1070) and *Paquette v. Zoning Bd. Of Rev. of West Warwick*, 118 R.I. 109 (R.I. 1977). The *Boggs* and *Paquette* notices, however, involved a zoning board not describing *the location* or *situs* of a development with enough precision; they had nothing to do with stages of review. In contrast, the notices in this case clearly indicate the exact location of the proposed project: 56 Pratt Street. Regarding said stages of review, conceptual and final, these are merely phases that an application may or may not have to proceed through requiring different amounts of documentation as outlined in the PHDC's Standards and Guidelines. Since the PHDC was established in 1960, its meeting notices have not included the stage of review. The ultimate and only relief sought by the Applicant and described in the notices are the certificates of appropriateness and/or the ultimate approvals of the project(s).

Without a doubt, the notices were precise enough to allow the public and the Appellants to fully participate in the PHDC's process. In fact, the Appellants and their legal counsel attended multiple meetings and presented an expert to express their opinion on the matters, who also, notably, attended the charrette. The Rhode Island Supreme Court has held that if a party attends a public meeting and still challenges the sufficiency of the public body's notice of said meeting, the party must show actual prejudice. *See Gardner v. Cumberland Town Council,* 826 A.2d 972 (R.I. 2003), and *see Graziano v. Rhode Island State Lottery Commission,* 810 A.2d 215 (R.I. 2002). The Appellants cannot show actual prejudice – they were present, and they were heard on substantive (and non-substantive) issues, and their objection to notice is therefore waived.

Importantly for this appeal, however, is the fact that the OMA affords only three possible remedies for a violation of its provisions: attorney's fees, injunctive relief, and/or a civil fine. *See* R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-46-8(d). The Board has no authority to issue any of these remedies in this appeal, so the Appellants conflate a possible violation of the OMA (which the PHDC disputes as argued above) with prejudicial procedural error, the standard of review the Board uses when hearing a PHDC appeal. *See* R.I. Gen. Laws § 45-24.1-7.2.

Separate from the OMA, the term "prejudicial procedural error," is a term of art. As defined in the law, procedural error is only "prejudicial" if it led the agency to make a different finding/decision or prevented specific facts or arguments from being presented and entered into the record. *See Footnote 12 supra*. The Appellants cannot, and indeed do not, argue that the allegedly flawed notices caused prejudicial procedural error—i.e., that the notices prevented specific facts or arguments from being presented, yielding a different result. The Appellants, who had sufficient information to decide to hire legal counsel, were not only able to present their testimony and written objections on multiple occasions to the PHDC, their expert was invited to, and in fact did, participate in the project's charrette. Contrary to the Appellants' position in these appeals, the PHDC's Decisions were fully informed and proper results of the PHDC's thorough, thoughtful, and collaborative process. No different outcome would have resulted had the meeting notices indicated "conceptual" or "final" review. Accordingly, the HDC did not commit a prejudicial procedural error of law.

For these reasons, the Appellants' appeal should be denied on this ground.

II. The HDC's Granting of Approval to the Applications is Supported by the Weight of the Evidence

Secondly, the Appellants argue that the weight of the evidence in the record did not support the PHDC's Decisions—namely, that neither proposed improvement satisfied PHDC's Standard

8, as their size, scale, and mass were not compatible with the property and historic district. Not surprisingly, the Appellants' brief makes little mention of the standard of review in this case. As the Board is aware, the PHDC Decision must stand so long as there is relevant evidence that a reasonable person would accept as adequate to support its conclusion. The Board "shall not substitute its own judgment for that of the commission, but must consider the issue upon the findings and the record of the commission." *See* RIGL § 45-24.1-7.2.

And, as discussed earlier, historic district commissions have wide discretion to make decisions in what is arguably a largely subjective arena—whether or not construction and/or alteration and repair of structures within historic districts is "appropriate" within broadly stated criteria, and this has withstood constitutional challenge. It is the PHDC's charge to determine appropriateness, not the "nimby" neighbors.[15]

As demonstrated in the PHDC's thorough review of this matter, there is ample evidence in the record, including both lay and expert testimony, that supports the PHDC's approvals. The PHDC considered and reviewed the project(s) at four meetings, each time giving thoughtful comments and change requests to the project's architect, including with regard to the massing and height of the buildings, the materials used, the fenestration, how the buildings interacted with the street, how the buildings interacted with each other, and their overall design. *Compare* ***Exhibit C*** *with* ***Exhibit D*** as to the changes made throughout the process. The proposed new construction is zoning compliant and appropriate in size, scale, and mass for Pratt Street, as several other three-family dwellings are present on the street of similar proportions. Its modern design is also appropriate because Pratt Street, as discussed earlier, is a "laboratory" for architectural expression.

[15] The word nimby started as an acronym that has become a recognized word in the English language due to its prevalence. It describes when local residents strongly oppose new real estate, housing, or infrastructure projects built near where they live, even if they claim to support those projects in general. See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NIMBY.

The proposed addition, which is considerably smaller than the original proposed addition, was significantly redesigned through the PHDC's review process to be complimentary of the existing historic structure as well as "subservient" to it, being of a size where its height and width would be minimally (or not at all) discernible from the public rights-of-way. *Id*.

Significantly, prior to giving final approval for either Application, the PHDC suggested a charrette to further encourage collaboration with multiple experts in historic preservation so as to advance the project's design. And notably, while the Appellants' expert maintained that the buildings were not appropriate at the August 24, 2026 meeting, he himself attended the charrette where significant changes were made in response to his particular comments.[16] The size, scale, and mass of both buildings were, indeed, substantially reduced—the addition being reduced by 10'-9" feet in height and 11'-11/2' feet in width, and the new construction reduced by four (4) feet in height. *See* ***Exhibit D***.

The PHDC, however, did not have to rely on expert opinion in rendering its Decisions. The Rhode Island Supreme Court has repeatedly held that "there is no talismanic significance to expert testimony" before administrative bodies. *Restivo v. Lynch*, 707 A.2d 663, 671 (R.I. 1998). It is well within the Commission's purview, as factfinder, to determine witness credibility and bias, weigh competing opinions, and rely on its own expertise in the subject matter, which it did here. *See Smith v. Zoning Bd. of Rev. of City of Warwick*, 103 R.I. 328, 237 A.2d 551 (1968). The Commission, indeed, fulfilled its charge in this matter; it rigorously did its due diligence with an end result that complements the historic elements of Pratt Street (the addition) as well as shows its contemporary edge (the new construction).

[16] There were no experts who appeared and testified at the October 6, 2026 meeting other than Mr. Sisson, the project's architect.

The Commission made appropriate Decisions based on all the evidence; the project as presented was architecturally and historically compatible with the historic district. It had an appropriate size, scale, and form to the area, with no adverse effect on the district as a whole. The Board cannot and should not substitute its judgment for that of the Commission, and the Commission's Decision must stand.

For these reasons, the Appellants' appeal should be denied on this ground.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the PHDC asks the Board to deny the Appellants' Appeals and to affirm the Decisions of the PHDC granting certificates of appropriateness for the Applications.

Providence Historic District Commission,

By and through its attorney,

/s/ Sharon G. Garner
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16 November 2026

EXHIBIT A

Providence Historic District Commission

Brett P. Smiley
Mayor

August 7, 2026

APPLICANT/OWNER
Nathaniel Sliney
56 Pratt Street
Providence, RI 02906

RESOLUTION 26-07
Application 26.101

WHEREAS, the applicant, Nathaniel Sliney, applied to the Providence Historic District Commission for a Certificate of Appropriateness for New Construction at 56 Pratt Street, Plat 10, Lot 163, and,

WHEREAS, the Commission held a properly noticed Regular Meeting on the matter on July 27, 2026, with the following members present: Lund, Brennan, Carden, Fernandez and Mukoyama; and

WHEREAS, Mr. David Sisson, architect, and Mr. Mark Liberati, esq., representing the owner, appeared before the Commission for the scheduled item; and

WHEREAS, the Commission members individually viewed the site which is the subject of the application; and,

WHEREAS, based upon the evidence presented, the Commission made the following findings of fact:

1. 56 Pratt Street is a parcel that contains a structure of historical and architectural significance that contributes to the significance of the College Hill local historic district, having been recognized as a contributing structure to the College Hill National Register Historic District. The parcel shall be subdivided to allow for a vacant parcel that the new construction will be built upon.

2. The application for New Construction is considered complete for conceptual review.

3. The work as proposed consists of New Construction and includes the construction of a three-story with cellar, multi-family residence.

4. The alterations are congruous with the structure, its appurtenances, and the surrounding historic district. The proposed building's form and siting are appropriate for the location. Pratt Street is a location that has minimal historical context as related to its streetscape, as the majority of buildings constructed on the street are from the mid-20th century and later. The Commission has approved multiple buildings of contemporary and modern design along the street, and this proposal is compliant within that context.

5. The proposed work as submitted is in accord with PHDC Standard 8 as follows: the proposed construction is architecturally and historically compatible with the property and district having an appropriate size, scale and form that will not have an adverse effect on the property or district, having determined that the proposed new construction is appropriate being architecturally and historically compatible.

6. The Commission accepts and agrees with the findings in the Staff Report.

WHEREAS, based upon the above findings of fact, the Commission determined that the New Construction as proposed by the Applicant is appropriate. Upon motion made by Ms. Mukoyama, seconded by Mr. Carden, the Commission unanimously voted (5 to 0) to grant Conceptual Approval of the proposal as proposed having determined that the alterations are aesthetically appropriate having determined that the proposed demolition is architecturally and historically compatible with the property and district having an appropriate size, scale and form that will not have an adverse effect on the property or district (Standard 8), as Pratt Street is a location that has minimal historical context as related to its streetscape, as the majority of buildings constructed on the street are from the mid-20th century and later. The Commission has approved multiple buildings of contemporary and modern design along the street, and this proposal is compliant within that context, with the applicant to return to the Commission at a subsequent meeting for final approval.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the application for New Construction as described in the above findings of fact **IS CONCEPTUALLY APPROVED**. Parties wishing to appeal a decision made by the PHDC have 20 days from the date of the resolution to file an appeal with the Zoning Board of Review.

Ryan Haggerty (JBH for)
Ryan Haggerty
Chair

Providence Historic District Commission

Brett P. Smiley
Mayor

August 7, 2026

APPLICANT/OWNER
Nathaniel Sliney
56 Pratt Street
Providence, RI 02906

RESOLUTION 26-08
Application 26.101

WHEREAS, the applicant, Nathaniel Sliney, applied to the Providence Historic District Commission for a Certificate of Appropriateness for Major Alterations at 56 Pratt Street, Plat 10, Lot 163, and,

WHEREAS, the Commission held a properly noticed Regular Meeting on the matter on July 27, 2026, with the following members present: Lund, Brennan, Carden, Fernandez and Mukoyama; and

WHEREAS, Mr. David Sisson, architect, and Mr. Mark Liberati, esq., representing the owner, appeared before the Commission for the scheduled item; and

WHEREAS, the Commission members individually viewed the site which is the subject of the application; and,

WHEREAS, based upon the evidence presented, the Commission made the following findings of fact:

1. 56 Pratt Street is a parcel that contains a structure of historical and architectural significance that contributes to the significance of the College Hill local historic district, having been recognized as a contributing structure to the College Hill National Register Historic District.

2. The application for Major Alterations is considered complete for conceptual review.

3. The application has been bifurcated to remove the proposed New Construction of a three-story with cellar on the lot (lot to be subdivided), which is being reviewed as a separate matter.

4. The work as proposed consists of Major Alterations and includes the construction of a three-story with cellar addition.

5. The work as proposed is not in accord with PHDC Standard 8 being architecturally and historically incongruous with the property and district having an inappropriate size, scale and form that will have an adverse effect on the property or district, as the proposed addition is not subservient to the historic resource, being too large in scale for both height and width, being a full-story above the historic resource and being wider than the existing resource.

6. The Commission accepts and agrees with the findings in the Staff Report.

WHEREAS, based upon the above findings of fact, the Commission determined that the Major Alterations proposed by the Applicant are inappropriate. Upon motion made by Ms. Mukoyama, seconded by Mr. Fernandez, the Commission voted (4 to 1, Members Mukoyama, Fernandez, Lund and Brennan were in favor, Member Carden was against) to deny approval of the proposal as proposed having determined that the alteration is aesthetically inappropriate having determined that the proposed alteration is architecturally and historically incongruous with the property and district having an inappropriate size, scale and form that will have an adverse effect on the property or district (Standard 8), as the proposed addition is not subservient to the historic resource, being too large in scale for both height and width, being a full-story above the historic resource and being wider than the existing resource.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the application for Major Alterations as described in the above findings of fact **IS DENIED**. Parties wishing to appeal a decision made by the PHDC have 20 days from the date of the resolution to file an appeal with the Zoning Board of Review.

Ryan Haggerty (SAM for)
Ryan Haggerty
Chair

Providence Historic District Commission

Brett P. Smiley
Mayor

October 7, 2026

APPLICANT/OWNER
Nathaniel Sliney
56 Pratt Street
Providence, RI 02906

RESOLUTION 26-14
Application 26.101

WHEREAS, the applicant, Nathaniel Sliney, applied to the Providence Historic District Commission for a Certificate of Appropriateness for New Construction at 56 Pratt Street, Plat 10, Lot 163, and,

WHEREAS, the Commission held a properly noticed Special Meeting on the matter on October 6, 2026, with the following members present: Haggerty, Bay, Brennan, Carden and Fernandez; and

WHEREAS, Mr. David Sisson, architect, and Mr. John Garrahy, esq., representing the owner, appeared before the Commission for the scheduled item; and

WHEREAS, the Commission members individually viewed the site which is the subject of the application; and,

WHEREAS, based upon the evidence presented, the Commission made the following findings of fact:

1. 56 Pratt Street is a parcel that contains a structure of historical and architectural significance that contributes to the significance of the College Hill local historic district, having been recognized as a contributing structure to the College Hill National Register Historic District. The parcel shall be subdivided to allow for a vacant parcel that the new construction will be built upon.

2. The application for New Construction is considered complete.

3. The work as proposed consists of New Construction and includes the construction of a three-story with cellar, multi-family residence.

4. The alterations are congruous with the structure, its appurtenances, and the surrounding historic district. The proposed building's form and siting are appropriate for the location. Pratt Street is a location that has minimal historical context as related to its streetscape, as the majority of buildings constructed on the street are from the mid-20th century and later. The Commission has approved multiple buildings of contemporary and modern design along the street, and this proposal is compliant within that context.

5. The proposed work as submitted is in accord with PHDC Standard 8 as follows: the proposed construction is architecturally and historically compatible with the property and district having an appropriate size, scale and form that will not have an adverse effect on the property or district, having determined that the proposed new construction is appropriate being architecturally and historically compatible.

6. The Commission accepts and agrees with the findings in the Staff Report.

WHEREAS, based upon the above findings of fact, the Commission determined that the New Construction as proposed by the Applicant is appropriate. Upon motion made by Mr. Fernandez, seconded by Mr. Brennan, the Commission unanimously voted (5 to 0) to grant Final Approval of the proposal as proposed having determined that the alterations are aesthetically appropriate having determined that the proposed demolition is architecturally and historically compatible with the property and district having an appropriate size, scale and form that will not have an adverse effect on the property or district (Standard 8), as Pratt Street is a location that has minimal historical context as related to its streetscape, as the majority of buildings constructed on the street are from the mid-20th century and later. The Commission has approved multiple buildings of contemporary and modern design along the street, and this proposal is compliant within that context, agreeing with the staff report and with staff to review any additional details.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the application for New Construction as described in the above findings of fact **IS APPROVED**. Parties wishing to appeal a decision made by the PHDC have 20 days from the date of the resolution to file an appeal with the Zoning Board of Review.

Ryan Haggerty CJSM for)
Ryan Haggerty
Chair

Providence Historic District Commission

Brett P. Smiley
Mayor

October 7, 2026

APPLICANT/OWNER
Nathaniel Sliney
56 Pratt Street
Providence, RI 02906

RESOLUTION 26-15
Application 26.138

WHEREAS, the applicant, Nathaniel Sliney, applied to the Providence Historic District Commission for a Certificate of Appropriateness for Major Alterations at 56 Pratt Street, Plat 10, Lot 163, and,

WHEREAS, the Commission held a properly noticed Special Meeting on the matter on October 6, 2026, with the following members present: Haggerty, Bay, Brennan, Carden and Fernandez; and,

WHEREAS, Mr. David Sisson, architect, and Mr. John Garrahy, esq., representing the owner, appeared before the Commission for the scheduled item; and,

WHEREAS, the Commission members individually viewed the site which is the subject of the application; and,

WHEREAS, based upon the evidence presented, the Commission made the following findings of fact:

1. 56 Pratt Street is a parcel that contains a structure of historical and architectural significance that contributes to the significance of the College Hill local historic district, having been recognized as a contributing structure to the College Hill National Register Historic District. The parcel shall be subdivided to allow for a vacant parcel that the new construction will be built upon, which is being reviewed separately.

2. The application for Major Alterations is considered complete.

3. The work as proposed consists of Major Alterations and includes the construction of a two-unit, three-story with cellar addition to the existing building.

4. The proposed work as submitted is in accord with PHDC Standard 8 as follows: the proposed construction is architecturally and historically compatible with the property and district having an appropriate size, scale and form that will not have an adverse effect on the property or district, having determined that the proposed alteration is of a size where its height and width are minimally to not discernible from the public rights-of-way.

5. The Commission accepts and agrees with the findings in the Staff Report.

WHEREAS, based upon the above findings of fact, the Commission determined that the Major Alterations as proposed by the Applicant is appropriate. Upon motion made by Mr. Carden, seconded by Mr. Fernandez, the Commission unanimously voted (5 to 0) to grant Final Approval of the proposal as proposed having determined that the alterations are aesthetically appropriate having determined that the proposal is architecturally and historically compatible with the property and district having an appropriate size, scale and form that will not have an adverse effect on the property or district (Standard 8), as the proposed alteration is of a size where its height and width are minimally to not discernible from the public rights-of-way, agreeing with the staff report and with staff to review any additional details.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the application for Major Alterations as described in the above findings of fact **IS APPROVED**. Parties wishing to appeal a decision made by the PHDC have 20 days from the date of the resolution to file an appeal with the Zoning Board of Review.

Ryan Haggerty (JSM for)
Ryan Haggerty
Chair

EXHIBIT B

PROVIDENCE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

RULES AND REGULATIONS

Adopted 10/28/91; Amended 12/16/91, 2/24/92, 7/26/93, 1/24/94, 7/25/94, 6/24/96, 1/28/02, 7/22/02 & 11/24/03

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
444 WESTMINSTER STREET, Suite 3A
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND 02903
401.680.8400

PROVIDENCE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

RULES AND REGULATIONS

Adopted 10/28/91; Amended 12/16/91, 2/24/92, 7/26/93, 1/24/94, 7/25/94, 6/24/96, 1/28/02, 7/22/02, 11/24/03 & 6/23/14

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SECTION 1 – GENERAL PROVISIONS

1.1 AUTHORITY: These rules and regulations are adopted pursuant to Article V, Section 501 of the Providence Zoning Ordinance (Chapter 1991-29, No. 564, adopted 10/24/91), authorizing the Providence Historic District Commission (HDC) to adopt rules and regulations which are necessary to carry out its functions.

1.2 PURPOSE: To establish procedures for processing applications for Certificates of Appropriateness, for enforcement, and for the internal management of the HDC.

1.3 GENERAL RULES: The HDC shall be governed by the terms of Article V, Section 501, Historic District Zoning, of the Providence Zoning Ordinance (Chapter 1991-29, No. 564), and by the terms of R.I.G.L. 45-24.1 et seq., Historical Area Zoning.

1.4 JURISDICTION: Under Article V, Section 501 of the Providence Zoning Ordinance (Chapter 1991-29, No. 564), the HDC shall have the authority to regulate the construction, alteration, repair, demolition and moving of any structure or appurtenance which results in a change to the exterior of the structure and/or appurtenance within any Historic District in the City, as designated in accordance with the Providence Zoning Ordinance and shown on the official Zoning Map.

SECTION 2 – ORGANIZATION

2.1 MEMBERSHIP: The HDC shall be constituted in accordance with Article V, Section 501 of the Providence Zoning Ordinance (Chapter 1991-29, No. 564) and R.I.G.L. 45-24.1-3.

A. Chair: A Chair shall be appointed by the Mayor. The Chair shall preside over all HDC meetings and shall decide all points of order and procedure, unless directed otherwise by a majority of the HDC in session at the time. The Chair shall appoint any committees found necessary to investigate any matters before the HDC.

B. Vice-Chair: A Vice-Chair shall be elected by the HDC from among its members, by majority vote of its members, and shall be eligible for re-election. The Vice Chair shall serve as acting Chair in the absence of the Chair. At such times, the Vice Chair shall have all the same powers and duties as the Chair. The Vice Chair shall be elected at the first regular meeting of each calendar year.

C. Deputy Vice-Chair: A Deputy Vice-Chair shall be elected by the HDC from among its members in the same manner as the Vice Chair, and shall be eligible for re-election. S/he shall serve as acting Chair in the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair, and at such times shall have the same powers and duties as the Chair. The Deputy Vice Chair shall be elected at the first regular meeting of each calendar year.

2.2 STAFF: The Department of Planning and Development shall supply staff for the HDC's day-to-day operations, and a member of the staff shall serve as the secretary to the HDC. Staff shall not be eligible to vote upon any matter before the HDC. The duties of staff shall be as follows:

A. Keep all records, conduct all correspondence of the HDC, provide public information, and handle the clerical and administrative work of the HDC;

B. Act as liaison between the HDC and all other agencies, departments and organizations to which it must relate in the conduct of its affairs;

C. Consult with applicants and property owners regarding the procedures, rules and regulations, and standards and guidelines of the HDC;

D. Prepare a written analysis of each application pending before the HDC, discussing the historical and architectural significance of the property, consistency of the proposal with standards and guidelines, preservation issues, and other pertinent information;

E. Issue in-house staff approvals for applications for Certificates of Appropriateness for in-kind replacement and repairs, and for other work as defined in the HDC standards and guidelines. The HDC may, by action at a public hearing, direct to staff the approval of any application. In-house staff approvals shall be consistent with the standards and guidelines. Staff may not deny an application, but shall refer such action to the HDC for a hearing; and,

F. Perform such duties and assume such other responsibilities as the HDC may from time to time direct.

2.3 RECORDS: The HDC shall keep written records of its meetings, deliberations, and decisions. The Secretary of the HDC shall have the primary responsibility for keeping the records. The HDC may also require a verbatim, recorded or stenographic record. All records shall be open to the public.

A. Review of HDC Records: Requests to view the HDC's records shall be in writing. Records shall be made available within ten (10) calendar days of the receipt of the request. Copies of the records will be made available for a fee.

B. Minutes: Minutes of HDC hearings shall show the vote of each member on each question, including absences and abstentions. At minimum, minutes shall contain:

1. A listing of HDC members present and absent;

2. A listing of others present, specifically staff, city solicitor, public agency staff, applicants and/or representatives;

3. Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting;

4. Summary of applications for Certificates of Appropriateness and the preservation issues presented, including a description of the relevant features of the building, structure or appurtenance which will be affected;

5. Summary of arguments and materials presented for each application, including supporting documents, objections and corrections;

6. Summary of HDC deliberations for each application, including all references to the HDC standards and guidelines used; and,

7. Findings of fact made, conclusions reached, and actions or motions taken on each application or other general business before the HDC.

2.4 OFFICE: The HDC's office shall be located in the Department of Planning and Development.

2.5 LEGAL COUNSEL: The City Solicitor's office shall be requested by the HDC to assist in all legal matters.

SECTION 3 – MEETINGS

3.1 REGULAR MEETINGS: The HDC shall establish a schedule of regular meetings for the calendar year and post it in the City Clerk's office and the Department of Planning and Development. Regular meetings shall be held on the fourth Monday of each month at 4:45 p.m. in the offices of the Department of Planning and Development or at such other day, time or location accessible to the public announced at least seven (7) days prior to the regular meeting. *[Amended 6/24/96.]*

3.2 BUSINESS MEETINGS: The HDC may hold a business meeting for the purposes of discussing standards and guidelines, rules and regulations, procedures, and such other business as may come before it, including any overflow of applications for Certificates of Appropriateness which could not be heard at a regular meeting because of time limits. Business meetings may be held during a regular meeting, or separately on the second Monday of each month at 3:30 p.m. at the offices of the Department of Planning and Development, or at such other day, time or location accessible to the public announced at least seven (7) days prior to the regular meeting. *[Amended 2/24/92.]*

3.3 SPECIAL MEETINGS: Special meetings of the HDC may be called at any time by the Chair. At least forty-eight (48) hours notice of the time and place of the special meeting shall be given by the staff or the Chair to each member of the HDC and shall be posted in the City Clerk's office and the Department of Planning and Development. *[Amended 11/24/03.]*

3.4 CANCELLATION OF MEETINGS: When in the opinion of the Chair there is good cause, the Chair may dispense with a regular meeting by giving notice to all members and all applicants

scheduled for the meeting, not less than twenty-four (24) hours prior to the time set for the meeting.

3.5 ATTENDANCE: The HDC shall advise the Mayor of any member of the HDC who fails to attend more than five (5) consecutive regular meetings and shall request that the position be declared vacant and a new member be appointed. Absences due to sickness, death, or other emergencies of like nature may be recognized as excused absences. The staff shall notify a member when s/he is approaching the maximum number of unexcused absences. When a member has exceeded the maximum number of unexcused absences, the staff shall notify the HDC. (Providence Home Rule Charter Article XII, Section 1202.)

3.6 CONDUCT OF MEETINGS: All meetings shall be open to the public. The order of business at regular meetings shall include:

A. Call to order;
B. Roll call;
C. Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting;
D. Old business, including continued applications;
E. New business, including applications for Certificates of Appropriateness;
F. New business, including applications for Certificates of Appropriateness that are in response to a Notice of Violation;
G. Other Business, including Preliminary Applications, National Register of Historic Places Nominations, and any other pertinent HDC administrative actions; and,
H. Adjournment. *[Amended 11/24/03.]*

3.7 EXECUTIVE SESSION: For purposes authorized by the open meeting law, the HDC may on a motion duly adopted and for reasons stated on the record, adjourn to executive session.

SECTION 4 – PROCEDURES

4.1 PUBLIC HEARING: The HDC shall hold a public hearing on an application for Certificate of Appropriateness.

A. Applications shall primarily be scheduled for a public hearing at the HDC's regular meeting on the fourth Monday of the month. The last application shall be heard at 7:00 p.m. unless a quorum of the HDC agrees that the meeting may carry on after that time. Applications not heard by 7:00 p.m. shall be rescheduled to a business meeting on the second Monday of the next month, unless the applicant agrees to a further extension. *[Amended 2/24/92.]*

B. Applications involving repair and in-kind replacement, or those items delegated to in-house review under the HDC standards and guidelines, shall not require a public hearing unless referred to one by the HDC staff.

4.2 NOTICE: Notice of the hearing shall be given to the applicant, property owner, and other persons listed on the application form, to abutting property owners, to the HDC members, and to other persons requesting notice, at least seven (7) days prior to the public hearing, by regular mail. The applicant shall supply the HDC with a list of the names and addresses of all abutting property owners from the most current records of the City Tax Assessor.

4.3 QUORUM: A majority of the duly appointed members shall constitute a quorum.

4.4 VOTING: The majority vote of the members making up the required quorum of the HDC at a duly noticed meeting shall be necessary to approve or disapprove of any plans before the HDC, or to amend these rules and regulations or the HDC standards and guidelines. Proxy voting is not allowed. *[Amended 1/28/02.]*

4.5 CONFLICT OF INTEREST: No HDC member shall take part in the consideration or determination of any application for a Certificate of Appropriateness in which s/he is a party or has a financial interest, except as noted in the Rhode Island Ethics Commission Advisory Number 8, dated November 30, 1989. It shall be the responsibility of the HDC member having a potential conflict of interest to disclose such conflict in writing and to recuse him/herself from participation in the discussion or the vote. Minutes shall state that the member has recused him/herself from consideration of the matter.

4.6 CONDUCT OF MEMBERS: Members of the HDC shall be discouraged from expressing individual opinions on the proper judgement of any application with any persons prior to the determination on that application, except in accordance with these rules.

4.7 SITE VISITS: A subcommittee of the HDC, or the staff, shall be available to meet on site with the applicant or his/her representatives at any time in the design process in order to advise them informally concerning the HDC's procedures and guidelines, the nature of the area where the proposed construction is to take place, and other relevant factors. The applicant shall agree, by signing the application, to allow the HDC, as a group or individually, or the staff to make site visits from time to time as deemed necessary.

4.8 ADVISORY OPINIONS: Outside a regular meeting, the HDC shall refrain from any indication of approval or disapproval, but shall not, for that reason, be barred from a reasonable discussion of the applicant's proposals. No advice or opinion given, or reported as having been given, by any member of the HDC at a pre-application hearing, at a site visit, or at an informal meeting shall in any way be official or binding upon the HDC. Only the official vote of the HDC shall be binding.

4.9 APPEALS: Any person aggrieved by a determination of the HDC may appeal that decision within twenty (20) days of the date of the written resolution. Appeals are made to the Zoning Board of Review. *[Amended 7/26/93, 7/25/94.]*

SECTION 5 – APPLICATIONS FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

5.1 APPLICATIONS: An application for Certificate of Appropriateness is required for any change which affects the exterior appearance of a structure or its appurtenances located in a historic district, including construction, alteration, repair, moving or demolition. An appurtenant feature is a feature other than a primary or secondary structure which contributes to the exterior appearance of a property.

A. Application Categories: Applications may be accepted in the following categories:

1. New construction/additions;
2. Alterations/minor modifications;
3. Signage;
4. Awnings/shutters and blinds;
5. Site improvements;
6. In-kind replacement/repairs;
7. Demolition; and,
8. Moving of structures.

B. Preliminary Applications: An applicant seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness for new construction, additions or major alterations shall first file a preliminary application for Conceptual Approval from the HDC. The HDC shall use the same order of business as in reviewing Certificates of Appropriateness, and may grant or deny Conceptual Approval. Conceptual Approval shall provide that the applicant file an application for Certificate of Appropriateness for approval of final details.

C. Pre-Application Hearing: An applicant may seek a pre-application hearing with the HDC when new construction, additions or major alterations are proposed. Such requests shall be submitted in writing. Staff shall review the pre-application request to determine if it warrants HDC review, and may accept the request. The HDC shall use the same order of business as in reviewing Certificates of Appropriateness, with the following exceptions:

1. No formal determination to approve or deny the proposal shall be made;

2. The HDC may provide agencies of the City with advisory opinions, which shall identify preliminary preservation issues, and may suggest solutions; and,

3. After a pre-application hearing the HDC shall provide the applicant with a written advisory. Advisory opinions shall be non-binding.

5.2 FILING OF APPLICATIONS: An application for a Certificate of Appropriateness must be filed in person and by appointment with the HDC staff at least twelve (12) calendar days before the regular meeting on the fourth Monday of the month, except in cases of demolition or economic hardship. Applications for demolition or economic hardship shall be filed at least thirty (30) and

no more than forty-five (45) calendar days before a regular meeting. All applications must be signed by the property owner and applicant. Applications must be accompanied by all documentation reasonably necessary to evaluate the proposal, including photographs, drawings, plans, or other information as requested by the HDC or staff. It is the owner/applicant's responsibility to submit all required documentation. INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. *[Amended 2/24/92, 7/26/9 & 1/24/94.]*

5.3 ACCEPTANCE OF APPLICATIONS: In order for an application to be placed on an agenda, Staff shall make a provisional finding that the application is complete and may be placed on an agenda. Staff shall review all applications for completeness of documentation, according to minimum standards published in the HDC standards and guidelines. Incomplete applications will not be scheduled for a hearing. For compliance with R.I.G.L. 45-24.1-7, the HDC shall vote at the beginning of the hearing on each application, before any presentation or testimony begins, whether an application is complete and can be accepted. Upon acceptance and certification of completeness, the formal review period begins. The failure of the commission to act within forty-five (45) days from said date is deemed to constitute approval, unless an extension is agreed upon mutually by the applicant and the commission. In the event, however, that the historic district commission makes a finding of fact that the circumstances of a particular application require further time for additional study and information that can be obtained within the period of forty-five (45) days, then the commission has a period of up to ninety (90) days within which to act upon the application. *[Amended 2/24/92, 6/23/14.]*

5.4 ZONING VARIANCES: Projects which will require relief from the provisions of the Providence Zoning Ordinance (Chapter 1991-29, No. 564) shall obtain any necessary variances before an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness is filed. Written confirmation that all variances have been granted shall be submitted along with the application; however, the fact that a zoning variance has been granted shall not guarantee that the project will receive a Certificate of Appropriateness. Applications seeking Conceptual Approval may be exempted from this requirement. The HDC may also waive this requirement if the zoning issue is not related to the physical condition of the property or will not compromise the HDC standards and guidelines. Zoning status shall be determined by the Department of Inspection and Standards. *[Amended 7/26/93.]*

SECTION 6 – ACTIONS ON AN APPLICATION

6.1 REVIEW CRITERIA: In reviewing applications for Certificates of Appropriateness, the HDC shall use the criteria set forth in R.I.G.L. 45-24.1 et. seq., Article V, Section 501 of the Providence Zoning Ordinance (Chapter 1991-29, No. 564) and the Standards & Guidelines designated and approved by the HDC. The HDC may designate more explicit design standards and guidelines as it deems necessary. *[Amended 11/24/03.]*

6.2 CONSIDERATION OF APPLICATIONS: The applicant or his/her designated agent shall appear at the hearing on his/her application. All testimony shall be sworn. The order of business for

consideration of applications for Certificates of Appropriateness shall be determined by the Chair and may include the following:

A. A staff report, project review comments and/or subcommittee report;

B. A presentation by the applicant, including arguments and material in support of the application. The presentation shall present the material in a way that both the HDC and the public audience may hear, see and understand the verbal and graphic description of the proposed work and its impact on the features of the buildings, structures, appurtenances and historic landscape features of the property and the district in which it is located;

C. Statements or arguments submitted by any official, commission or department of the City of Providence, any state agency, or any local historical, preservation or neighborhood organization;

D. Public comments from interested parties, abutters, etc;

E. HDC members' questions of the applicant, staff, or subcommittee concerning the application;

F. A summary of the application, arguments and materials presented;

G. After closing the hearing to public comment, HDC deliberation regarding a Certificate of Appropriateness, based upon evidence submitted, adopted Standards and Guidelines, and the impact of the project on the features of the buildings, structures, appurtenances, and historic landscape features of the property; and,

H. Findings of fact, motion(s) to approve or deny the application, and voting. *[Amended 11/24/03.]*

6.3 LIMIT OF TIME FOR TESTIMONY: The Chair may limit the amount of time allowed at a public hearing for verbal testimony regarding any application or other business before the HDC. Such limit shall be announced at the beginning of the hearing or before the hearing of an individual application. Written testimony may be submitted for HDC consideration in cases where verbal testimony is limited. *[Amended 2/24/92 & 11/24/03.]*

6.4 DETERMINATIONS: An application for a Certificate of Appropriateness may be approved, denied, or approved with amendments or conditions by the HDC. Motions to grant or deny a Certificate of Appropriateness shall include findings of fact and a specific reference to the review criteria under which the proposal has been judged.

A. Resolutions: All decisions of the HDC shall be in writing. The HDC shall articulate and explain the reasons and basis of each decision on a record in the form of a Resolution. In the case of a decision not to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness, the HDC shall include the basis for its conclusion that the proposed activity would be incongruous with those aspects of the

structure, appurtenances, or the district which the HDC has determined to be historically or architecturally significant.

B. Issuance/Receipt of a Certificate of Appropriateness:

I. Upon issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness, the HDC or its designee shall:

1. Stamp three (3) sets of all application documents, including the application form and all plans and drawings. The documents will be dated, stamped and signed by the Chair or the staff as directed by the Chair.

2. Return two (2) sets of signed and stamped documents to the applicant along with a copy of the resolution. It is the responsibility of the applicant to file one (1) set of stamped and signed documents and a copy of the resolution with the Department of Inspection and Standards for the necessary permits.

3. Retain one (1) set of stamped and signed documents for the HDC files at the Department of Planning and Development.

II. Upon receiving a Certificate of Appropriateness, the applicant shall:

1. Obtain any necessary building permits; and,

2. Upon the completion of the project as specified in the Scope of Work, shall complete a Confirmation of Work Completed form and shall submit it to HDC staff for approval. Failure to do so before the expiration of the Certificate of Appropriateness expires will result in a Notice of Violation being issued for work done not in compliance with the Certificate of Appropriateness, and a lien being placed on the property;

    a. If work specified in a Certificate of Appropriateness is not undertaken before the Certificate of Appropriateness expires, a letter shall be sent to the HDC requesting an extension, or informing the HDC that the project shall not be undertaken.*[Amended 11/24/03.]*

C. Conditional Approval: The HDC may issue a Certificate of Appropriateness/Conditional Approval where an application would otherwise be approved except that one (1) or more necessary city, state or federal agency approvals are pending. If other necessary approvals are not obtained within 180 days of the Conditional Approval, then the Certificate will become null and void and a new application will be required to proceed with the project. If other agency reviews result in changes to the project approved by the HDC, then those changes shall be brought back to the HDC for approval. *[Amended 12/16/91.]*

6.5 FAILURE TO ACT

A. Automatic Approval: The failure of the HDC to act within forty-five (45) days from the date of the acceptance of a completed application in accordance with these rules and regulations shall be deemed to constitute approval unless an extension is agreed upon mutually by the applicant and the HDC.

B. Extensions:

1. In the event that the HDC shall make a written finding of fact within this forty-five (45) day period that a particular application requires further time for additional study and information, then the HDC shall have a period of up to ninety (90) days from the date of acceptance of a completed application within which to act on such application.

2. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent the applicant and the HDC from mutually agreeing to an extension beyond the ninety (90) days.

6.6 MODIFICATIONS TO A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS: Changes to a project after a Certificate of Appropriateness is issued shall require a new application for Certificate of Appropriateness. Such application shall be submitted before construction of the changes begins, unless the HDC determines at a pre-application hearing that a full application is not required. New applications will be reviewed in accordance with these rules and regulations and the Providence Zoning Ordinance. Any change not so approved shall be deemed a violation of the Certificate of Appropriateness and of the Zoning Ordinance.

6.7 MODIFICATIONS TO AN APPLICATION: A pending application for a Certificate of Appropriateness may be modified by a written request from the applicant to the HDC. Such request shall include a description of the proposed change and shall be accompanied by elevations, plans, photographs and/or sketches as necessary. If an application is modified, it shall be considered a new application and shall be handled in accordance with these rules and regulations.

6.8 EXPIRATION OF A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS: Any Certificate of Appropriateness granted by the HDC shall expire one (1) year after the date of the approval, unless the applicant shall, within the one (1) year, obtain a legal building permit and proceed with construction, or obtain a certificate of occupancy when no legal building permit is required. The HDC, upon written request and for cause shown prior to the expiration of the initial one (1) year period, may renew the Certificate of Appropriateness for a six (6) month period. An applicant's failure to act within the six (6) month extension shall cause the Certificate to become null and void and will require the applicant to file a new application with the HDC. *[Amended 7/22/02.]*

6.9 RESUBMITTAL OF A DENIED APPLICATION: An application for Certificate of Appropriateness which has been denied by the HDC shall not be heard again for a period of one (1) year from

the date the application was denied, unless the majority of the HDC present at a meeting agrees to waive this requirement.

6.10 RECONSIDERATION OF A DENIED APPLICATION: An applicant may request the HDC to reconsider its decision on an application. Such request may be made before the end of the meeting at which the decision was made, or afterwards in writing within a period of one (1) year from the date of the decision. The order of business for reconsideration of applications for Certificates of Appropriateness which have previously been denied shall be as follows:

A. The Chair shall entertain a motion from a member of the HDC that the applicant be allowed to present evidence in support of the request for reconsideration. Such evidence shall be limited to that which is necessary to enable the HDC to determine whether or not there has been substantial change in the facts, evidence or conditions relating to the application; provided, however, that the applicant shall be given the opportunity to present any other additional supporting evidence if the HDC decides to reconsider the application.

   After receiving the evidence, the HDC shall proceed to deliberate whether or not there has been a substantial change in the facts, evidence or conditions relating to the application which would warrant reconsideration. If the HDC finds that there has been such a change, it shall treat the request as a new application.

SECTION 7 – ENFORCEMENT

7.1 ENFORCEMENT: Enforcement of HDC jurisdiction and decisions shall be through the Director of the Department of Inspection and Standards, in accordance with Article VIII of the Providence Zoning Ordinance.

7.2 VIOLATIONS: Any exterior work to a structure or appurtenance within a historic district, which proceeds without a Certificate of Appropriateness from the HDC, or which does not comply with the provisions of a Certificate of Appropriateness, shall be deemed a violation of the Providence Zoning Ordinance (Chapter 1991-29, No. 564). Work in progress or already completed without a Certificate of Appropriateness may be deemed a violation.

7.3 PROCEDURES:

A. Any person may report a violation to the HDC.

B. Staff will confirm that the work is a violation and report it to the Department of Inspection and Standards; if the work is in progress, staff will request the Department of Inspection and Standards to issue a stop-work order.

C. Whether the work is in progress or already completed, staff will contact the property owner to request that an application for Certificate of Appropriateness be filed within 30 days.

D. The HDC shall review the application in accordance with these rules and regulations; any modifications required to bring the work into compliance with the standards and guidelines shall be made conditions of approval, and a deadline for completion shall be set.

E. Failure of the property owner to file an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness within thirty (30) days, or to correct the violation as directed within the deadline set by the HDC, shall cause the matter to be referred to the Department of Inspection and Standards for enforcement.

F. If the HDC issued conditions of approval for work done in violation, staff shall inspect the property to confirm that the violation has been corrected. If so, staff shall inform the Department of Inspection and Standards that the violation may be dismissed.

G. Written records of all violations shall be kept in the HDC's files.

SECTION 8 – AMENDMENTS AND SEVERABILITY

8.1 AMENDMENTS: These rules may be amended at any time by an affirmative vote of the HDC.

8.2 SEVERABILITY: The provisions of these rules and regulations are severable; if any such provision or provisions shall be held invalid or unconstitutional by any decision of any court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not impair or otherwise affect any other provision of these rules and regulations.

PROVIDENCE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION



STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

for the

ARMORY, BROADWAY, COLLEGE HILL,

NORTHERN ELMWOOD, SOUTHERN ELMWOOD

AND STIMSON AVENUE HISTORIC DISTRICTS

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PROVIDENCE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

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ARMORY, BROADWAY, COLLEGE HILL, NORTHERN ELMWOOD, SOUTHERN ELMWOOD AND STIMSON AVENUE HISTORIC DISTRICTS

Adopted January 24, 1994 · Amended March 24, 1997

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INTRODUCTION

The Providence Historic District Commission (PHDC) was established by City Council in 1960 to safeguard and preserve buildings and districts which reflect elements of the City's cultural, social, economic, political and architectural history. The PHDC reviews all proposed work affecting the exterior appearance of any structure, site or its appurtenances, including construction, alteration, repair, moving, demolition and signage, within the historic districts. ***A certificate of appropriateness is required before commencing any exterior work in the historic districts. Building permits for exterior work in local historic districts cannot be issued without a certificate of appropriateness.***

These Standards and Guidelines have been adopted (in accordance with R.I.G.L. 45-24.1-10 and Chapter 1991-29, No. 564, Section 501.3.C of the Providence Zoning Ordinance) to assist the property owner and the PHDC in processing applications for Certificates of Appropriateness.

The intent of the Standards and Guidelines is to guide the inevitable changes to the exteriors of structures and sites within the City's designated historic districts. The most important features of historic buildings are roofs, exterior walls, windows and their openings and trim, doors and entries, porches, steps, stairs, railings, foundations, fences, storefronts, signage and setting. As each historic structure and its site is unique, each application is considered on its own merits in accordance with these Standards and Guidelines.

REVIEW PROCEDURE

1. **Consult with PHDC Staff.** Owners contemplating exterior changes to their properties should contact the PHDC staff at the Department of Planning and Development, 400 Westminster Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02903, telephone (401) 351-4300 (TDD 751-0203). Site visits with staff are required for all applications.

2. **File an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness.** An application is required for ALL exterior projects, whether or not a building permit is necessary. Applications must be accompanied by documentation (photographs, drawings, written specifications and other information) sufficient to illustrate the proposal and its impact on the property. Documentation checklists for various types of projects are included in these Standards and Guidelines. Documentation must be complete in order to begin review of an application; if either the PHDC or its staff determines that additional information is needed, the applicant will be informed in writing.

Applications to be reviewed at a public hearing must be *filed at least 14 days in advance* of a regularly scheduled PHDC meeting in order to be scheduled for review. (New Construction and Demolition projects, and Economic Hardship claims, have different filing deadlines and review procedures; see specific guidelines.) Hearings usually occur on the fourth Monday of each month at 4:00 p.m. in the 4th floor conference room at the Department of Planning and Development. Check with staff regarding specific filing deadlines and hearing dates.

Any necessary **zoning variances** (e.g. for new construction, alterations, signs and paving) should be obtained prior to filing an application for Certificate of Appropriateness. The PHDC may hear an application for conceptual approval of a project, with final review to follow the granting of zoning variances; however, obtaining a zoning variance does not guarantee PHDC approval of a project. It is the applicant's responsibility to find out whether a zoning variance is needed and to obtain one. Contact the Zoning Board of Review at 401-421-7740 (TDD 401-751-0203) for more information.

3. **Application is reviewed.** How an application will be reviewed depends on the proposed scope of work (see "Application Categories," below). Routine repairs and minor projects are generally reviewed in-house by staff within a few days from the filing of a completed application; however, if staff cannot approve an application normally reviewed in-house, the application will be referred to the PHDC for review. All major alterations, new construction, demolition and moving of structures are reviewed by the PHDC at a public hearing.

   Applicants should attend the hearing or send a representative who is familiar with the project and able to negotiate with the PHDC. At the hearing, all those intending to speak about the application are sworn in. The applicant presents the proposal and discusses it with the PHDC. Public comment is invited. At the end of the discussion the PHDC votes whether to approve the application as submitted, to approve with conditions, or to deny the application. The PHDC may also vote to continue the hearing if further information or study is needed.

4. **Decision is issued.** For projects approved in-house by staff, a Certificate of Appropriateness is issued and can be picked up, along with approved (stamped) drawings at the Department of Planning and Development (400 Westminster Street, Providence). It is the applicant's responsibility to find out whether a building permit is needed and to obtain the necessary permits at the Department of Inspection and Standards (190 Dyer Street, Providence). Applicants whose projects are reviewed at a public meeting receive a written resolution describing the PHDC's decision and the reasons behind it. If an application is approved, all conditions of approval must be met by the applicant before a Certificate of Appropriateness and approved (stamped) drawings can be picked up at the Department of Planning and Development (400 Westminster Street, Providence) or are sent to the applicant or their representative. ***If an application is denied, the project may not proceed.***

   Any PHDC decision may be appealed to the Zoning Board of Review within 30 days of the date of the written resolution. The Zoning Board examines the record of the hearing to determine if the PHDC had enough evidence to make its decision, and if any errors were made in the hearing process; it cannot substitute its own judgement on the merits of the application for that of the PHDC. Further appeal may be made to Superior Court.

APPLICATION CATEGORIES

The following projects are reviewed by the PHDC at a public hearing, in accordance with the Standards and Guidelines:

- Alterations: Changes in materials, design, dimensions, configuration, texture and visual appearance, including changes required by building, housing, fire and barrier-free access codes, lead paint laws and other regulations. (Some minor alterations are reviewed by staff or exempt from review, as noted below.)
- New construction: New buildings or structures of any kind, or additions to existing structures.
- Demolition: The partial or complete destruction of any building or structure.
- Moving of structures: Relocation of any structure that is moved within its current lot, brought into the district from an outside site, moved from one site to another within the district, or moved out of the district altogether.

The following projects may be reviewed in-house by staff, without a public hearing, in accordance with these Standards and Guidelines. Staff may not deny an application; therefore, in certain circumstances, the staff may determine that an application normally reviewed in-house must go before the PHDC for a full hearing.

- Repairs, In-Kind Replacement and Restoration
- Awnings
- Fences and Gates
- Mechanical and Electrical Equipment
- Shutters and Blinds
- Signs
- Site Improvements
- Storm/Screen Windows and Doors

General Standards

Complying in intent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitation, these Standards and Guidelines pertain to buildings of all occupancy and construction types, sizes and materials. They apply to permanent and temporary construction on the exterior of existing buildings within the historic districts, as well as new construction. The PHDC cites one or more of these standards in each decision it makes on an application.

1. Original or historically significant materials and/or features of a structure or site shall be maintained and repaired rather than replaced whenever possible.
2. If replacement of existing materials or features is necessary, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture and other visual qualities.
3. Replacement of missing features should be based on historical, documentary, physical or pictorial evidence.
4. Minimal alteration of the building, structure, site or environment shall be made.
5. Each property shall be recognized as a product of its own time. Alterations that seek to create a false sense of historical development shall be discouraged.
6. Changes to a building or site which have taken place over time are evidence of its history and development. Those changes that have acquired significance in their own right shall be recognized and preserved.
7. Where historic architectural or site features are determined by the Commission to contribute to the historic character of the property or the district, proposed alterations or additions affecting such features shall be reviewed more stringently.
8. New additions, exterior alterations or new construction shall not destroy historic materials or general features that characterize the property. The new work may be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale and architectural features of the property and the surrounding neighborhood, to protect the historic integrity of the property and the site.
10. Whenever possible, new additions or alterations to structures shall be done in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the structure and the site would be unimpaired.

Applicants should also refer to PHDC design guidelines for specific application categories.

Exemptions from Review

A number of appurtenant features are *generally not reviewed* by the PHDC. Nonetheless, the visual character of these elements contributes to the overall character of a building and the surrounding historic district. The following is an attempt to guide the property owner in making appropriate and sensitive choices:

1. Flags: Municipal, state, U.S. and foreign national flags may be installed on poles attached to a building facade or in a front, side or rear yard. Flagpoles or brackets attached to buildings should be located so as not to damage or obscure significant architectural features. Flags may be illuminated provided the lighting is directed toward the flag and does not spill over onto neighboring properties or the public way; electrical conduit should not be exposed.
2. Hardware and electrical devices: Door hardware should be compatible with the size and finish of the original examples. Buzzers, intercoms and mailboxes should be located within a recessed entry vestibule whenever possible. Small louvers, registers, exhaust fans, alarm devices, cable boxes, utility meters and other mechanical and/or electrical devices should be

mounted only on inconspicuous locations and painted in such a manner to conceal them, whenever possible and permitted. *Through-wall louvers and exhaust fans requiring an opening exceeding 2 square feet in area will require an application for Certificate of Appropriateness and a hearing before the PHDC (see "Major Alterations" guidelines).*

3. Garden furnishings and lawn irrigation systems: Ornamental statuary, portable planters and urns, lawn furniture, playground equipment, hose bibs, above- or below-ground sprinklers, dog houses, bird houses and birdbaths, etc. are not reviewed. Prefabricated storage sheds (smaller than 20 square feet and less than 6 feet tall) may be installed without review in rear yards only; *larger sheds or alternative locations shall require an application for Certificate of Appropriateness and a hearing before the PHDC (see "New Construction" guidelines).*
4. Lighting: Light fixtures should be appropriate to the style of the building and not overly large or glaring. If exposed conduit must be used, it should be painted to match the background material. Simple period fixtures of appropriate size and design, or unornamented modern fixtures, can be compatible in a historic district. Exterior flood and spotlights should be unobtrusive and should minimize spill-over of light to abutting buildings.
5. Paint color: Paint color on wood, metal and previously painted masonry building surfaces is not reviewed, although technical information on period colors and surface preparation is available upon request. *Chemical, mechanical and abrasive methods of paint removal and the painting of previously unpainted masonry surfaces will require an application for Certificate of Appropriateness (see "Repair, In-Kind Replacement and Restoration" guidelines).* The painting of murals on wood, metal or previously painted masonry surfaces is not reviewed provided the mural's content and purpose is artistic rather than commercial; *however, painted signs require an application for Certificate of Appropriateness (see "Signs" guidelines).*
6. Plant materials: Installation, replacement or removal of trees, shrubs, hedges and plants is not reviewed *except where part of a historic landscape (see "Site Improvements" guidelines).* Trees and shrubbery should not be placed next to the building foundation, since this could lead to deterioration of the building fabric. Climbing plants may also cause deterioration of exterior wall surfaces.
7. Portable window air conditioners: Seasonal window air conditioners should be installed on secondary elevations within existing window openings. *Through-wall air conditioners will require an application for Certificate of Appropriateness and a hearing before the PHDC (see "Major Alterations" guidelines).*
8. Security grilles: Metal security grilles should be simple in design and sized to fit fully within the window opening. They should be painted a dark color, and the horizontal rails should have pierced and not overlapping welded joints. Grilles should be mounted within the reveal of the window and secured. Interior grilles should be considered for storefronts, although exterior security shades or roll-down grilles may be installed.
9. Signs for handicapped access: Signs directing users to an accessible entrance or parking space should be installed to avoid damaging or obscuring significant architectural features, while conforming to the State Building Code Commission's Accessibility Standards (ADAAG). See "Barrier-Free Access" guidelines for more information.
10. Temporary signs: Temporary signs, including sale advertisements, political signs, banners, real estate signs, sidewalk sandwich boards, etc. should be designed and located so as not to damage or obscure significant architectural features. See Section 602.6 of the Providence Zoning Ordinance for regulations regarding size and duration of temporary signs.
11. Window boxes: Wooden window boxes for plants should be painted. The size should match the width of the window opening.

Repairs, In-kind Replacement and Restoration

Proper, regular maintenance is encouraged for all structures in a local historic district. All exterior repairs, no matter how minor, are subject to review and require a Certificate of Appropriateness from the PHDC, regardless of whether a building permit is required. Repairs ordered by another regulatory agency (e.g. repairs ordered by the Department of Inspection and Standards to correct housing code violations) are also subject to review. Repair projects are generally reviewed in-house by staff, without a public hearing.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED

See page 13

DEFINITIONS

Repair
Work meant to remedy damage or deterioration of a structure or its appurtenances, which will involve no change in materials, dimensions, design, configuration, texture or visual appearance.

In-kind replacement
Replacement of an architectural feature, damaged or deteriorated beyond repair, where the new feature will match the feature being replaced in design, materials, dimensions, configuration, texture and visual appearance. *(Replacement features which will differ from the existing in design, materials, configuration, texture, dimensions and other visual qualities shall be reviewed by the PHDC as an alteration; see "Major Alterations" guidelines.)*

Restoration
Re-creating an original architectural element so that it closely resembles the appearance it had at some previous point in time, based on historical, documentary, physical or pictorial evidence.

GENERAL

Deteriorated architectural features should be repaired rather than replaced wherever possible; repair is often cost effective and conserves original historic materials.

If replacement of a historic architectural feature is necessary, the new feature should match the existing as closely as possible in materials, dimensions, design, color, texture and other visual qualities. Replacement in kind of inappropriate elements is permitted, but applicants are encouraged to seek more appropriate solutions.

Restoration of missing historic features, or of original or historical conditions, should be substantiated by documentation (e.g. historic photographs, drawings, physical evidence). Where existing features are not appropriate to the historic structure, and documentation exists as to the original condition, then restoration or reconstruction of the original feature may be reviewed by staff without a public hearing.

COMMON REPAIR/ REPLACEMENT ISSUES

The following guidelines attempt to address the most common repair/ replacement issues in the historic districts. If your project is not listed here, check with PHDC staff about appropriate guidelines.

Exterior Wood *[Amended 3/24/97]*
The decorative patterns, spacing, beaded edges and visual texture of wood shingles and clapboards are character-defining features of historic buildings which should be retained and preserved.

Shingles and clapboards should be repaired wherever possible, and if replacement is necessary they may be replaced to match. Wood trim elements such as corner boards, brackets, belt courses, window and door surrounds, moldings and other decorative features should likewise be repaired or replaced to match.

Wood features should not be stripped of paint to bare wood if they were painted historically; paint protects the surface from moisture and light.

New wood should have a moisture content of less than 20% before installation and finishing, to minimize

the chances of uneven shrinkage, warping, splitting, checking or failure of finishes.

The removal of existing artificial sidings and restoration of original siding materials and details is encouraged.

Pressure treated wood *[Amended 3/24/97]* Treating wood with a high-pressure application of chromated copper arsenate can protect against rot and insect damage, and can also prolong the life of paints, stains and water repellents.

Pressure-treated lumber should be used when replacing wooden elements that are prone to decay, such as structural elements or those features that touch the ground.

Non-structural elements that traditionally are finished with paint or stain, such as deck floors, newel posts and caps, porch lattices and decorative details may also make use of pressure-treated wood. ***However, pressure-treated wood is not recommended for handrails, porch railings or balusters due to its tendency to warp.***

If pressure-treated wood is used, be aware that it can have a moisture content as high as 75% on delivery, so it may need to be air dried for several weeks before installation and finishing to minimize shrinking, warping, splitting, checking or failure of finishes. Wood stamped "S-DRY" (sun-dried), "MC15" (moisture content less than 15%), "KD" (kiln dried) or "KDAT" (kiln-dried after treatment) has already been dried and can be finished immediately.

Non-structural elements should also be properly finished with a top-quality paint, stain or water repellent (as appropriate) as soon as they have dried to a moisture content of between 8% and 14%.

Where pressure-treated wood is approved for non-structural elements, approval shall be with the provision that if the pressure-treated elements shrink or warp unacceptably as determined by the HDC or the staff, the property owner will be required to replace the pressure-treated elements with a higher grade of untreated wood.

Masonry

Brick, stone, stucco and concrete should be repaired with a material closely matching the existing in color, texture and dimension; patching materials should have integral color.

Surface coatings: Sealers and waterproofers are not encouraged, as they can trap moisture within walls and lead to further deterioration; however, they may be permitted in cases of severe deterioration, provided they do not change the color of the masonry or leave a shiny residue. Test patches or material samples may be required.

Masonry that has not previously been painted should not be painted unless deterioration has progressed so far that a protective surface coating is needed. In such cases, use a breathable masonry paint in a color consistent with the natural masonry. Masonry that has previously been painted may be repainted; colors should be consistent with natural masonry colors.

Repointing should preserve original mortar colors and joint profiles; samples may be required. Old mortar should be removed by hand to avoid damaging the surrounding masonry. On 18th and 19th century brick buildings, the soft brick can be damaged by mortars with high concentrations of portland cement; repointing mixes should include a high lime content.

Cleaning methods can damage historic materials and remove the irreplaceable patina of age. Buildings should be cleaned only when necessary to halt deterioration or to remove heavy soils.

Use the gentlest method possible: usually detergent and a low pressure water wash (under 600 pounds per square inch), and scrubbing with natural bristle brushes, will clean surface soils. All cleaning methods should be tested in an inconspicuous location on the building to make sure no damage will ensue.

Chemical cleaners should be used with care: determine the weakest possible solution which will do the job without damaging historic materials, and neutralize afterwards.

Abrasive mechanical cleaners, such as sandblasting, rotary sanding disks and rotary wire strippers are not permitted because they can erode masonry surfaces and shred wood surfaces, leaving pits and scars and increasing the chance of water damage.

Check with the R.I. Department of Environmental Management's Division of Air Resources at (401) 222-2808 about requirements for containing residues and airborne particles resulting from some cleaning methods.

Paint Removal / Lead Paint

Painted surfaces require periodic maintenance, but stripping all paint off of a historic structure is often unnecessary. Removing trouble spots, priming and repainting with one (not thick) layer of new paint will often suffice. Stripping paint can damage wood and masonry materials and remove evidence of early paint schemes, resulting in a loss of important information about the history of the structure. Furthermore, paint removal can also contribute to lead contamination.

Lead in water, dust, soil and paint is hazardous to adults and children, particularly pregnant women and

children under 6 years of age. Lead was a common ingredient in architectural paints until 1978, and many historic structures have lead-based paint. In response to the Lead Poisoning Prevention Act of 1991, the R.I. Department of Environmental Management has developed Air Pollution Control Regulation No. 24, "Removal of Lead-Based Paint from Exterior Surfaces."

The regulation, designed to reduce environmental lead levels, requires that exterior surfaces painted with lead-based paint be maintained or encapsulated to prevent peeling, flaking and chalking; that lead-based paint be eliminated from exterior friction surfaces of windows and doors; and that precautions be taken when removing lead-based paint. *It is important to note that Regulation No. 24 does not require that all lead-based paint be removed from the exterior of a historic structure.*

Compliance with Regulation No. 24's requirements for notification, site preparation, approved removal techniques and site clean-up is required of all persons conducting any lead-based paint removal. Contact DEM's Division of Air Resources at (401) 222-2808 for more information. (For information about removal of lead-based paint from interior surfaces, contact the R.I. Department of Health, Office of Environmental Health Risk Assessment, at (401) 222-3424.)

From the perspective of environmental safety and historic preservation, the least damaging method of preparing a painted surface for repainting is to wet the surface with water and then to hand-scrape and hand-sand failing paint layers, down to a sound layer (dry manual scraping and sanding are not permitted).

Other acceptable methods of paint removal include heat guns or heat plates (temperatures not to exceed 1000 degrees F.), non-flammable chemical paint removers (strippers containing methylene chloride or hydrochloric acid are not permitted).

Thermal methods should only be used by experienced personnel due to the fire hazard. Chemical paint removers should be tested in an inconspicuous location to make sure the solution will not burn, stain or otherwise damage the underlying surface.

Mechanical and abrasive removal techniques, including grit blasting, high-pressure water and rotary disc and wire sanders can severely damage wood and masonry substrates and are not permitted; however, abrasive methods may be used on cast iron and other metals in conjunction with required vacuum equipment and High Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) filters. In all cases, dust and debris must be contained and disposed of properly.

The installation of metal panning on window sills, or of vinyl or aluminum siding on wall surfaces, for the purpose of encapsulating elements painted with lead-based paint is discouraged and will require review by the PHDC at a public hearing; see "Major Alterations" guidelines.

Porches and steps

Original materials, configurations, designs and dimensions should be retained. Railings should have a molded cap and balusters inserted between a top and bottom rail; pressure treated wood should not be used for railing balusters because of its tendency to warp and twist. Nosing profiles on original stair treads should be retained.

Pressure treated wood may be used for substructures, porch decks and steps; exposed elements should be painted or stained as soon as possible.

Roofing and gutter systems

Original roofing materials should be retained, repaired and preserved wherever possible. Replacement in kind is encouraged where replacement is necessary; original historic materials, shapes, colors, patterns and textures should be matched.

Roof colors should be medium to dark in tone, should complement the building's color and define the outline of the roof against the sky.

Asphalt roof shingles are not encouraged as a replacement material for slate. Rolled rubber roofing is an acceptable substitute for tar and gravel roofs.

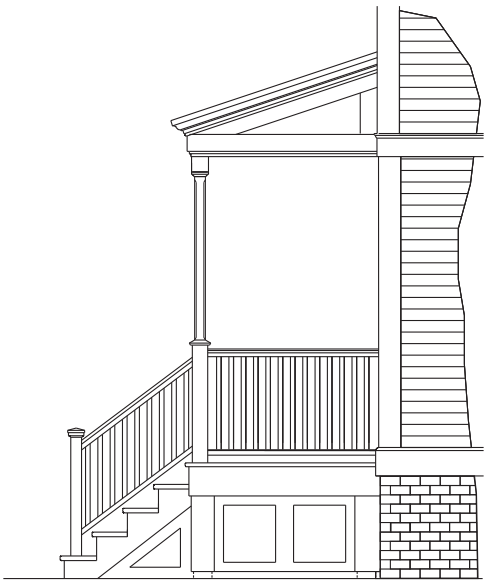
A weather-tight roof with a functioning water run-off system is essential to the preservation of the entire structure. Regular maintenance of gutter systems is encouraged. Built-in gutters should be retained wherever possible, as they are character-defining features of certain architectural styles such as Greek Revival, Italianate and Mansard.

Existing original materials such as wood or copper should be maintained and preserved, but may be replaced in kind. New copper flashing, gutters and downspouts may be allowed to weather naturally, but aluminum gutters, downspouts, leaders and flashing should be painted to blend in with the color of the building, to reduce their visibility. Vinyl gutters may replace aluminum gutters, provided the profile is consistent with the existing and the color matches the background color of the building; vinyl or PVC downspouts with a round profile are not appropriate.

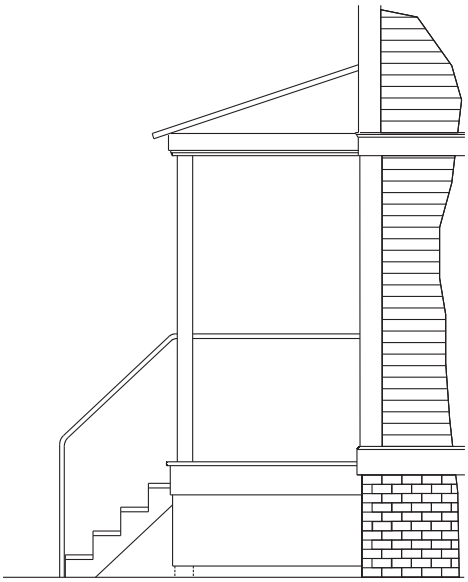
Proposed alterations to roof forms and the installation or removal of cresting rails, balustrades, finials, cupolas, monitors, chimneys, headhouses, roof decks and other rooftop elements will be reviewed by the PHDC at a public hearing; see "Major Alterations" for documentation requirements.

Appropriate and inappropriate railings

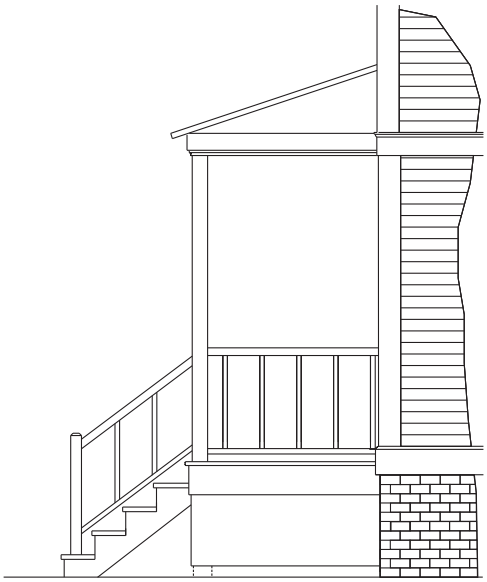
In replacement porches and steps, original materials, configurations, designs, and dimensions should be retained. Additionally, the spacing between balusters is mandated by building code.



▲ **Appropriate** Balusters at appropriate distances; typically spaced at 4" on center. Cap on railing posts.



▲ **Inappropriate** Metal pipe railing. Lack of detailing on column and railing. No visual support for column. No stair nosing.



▲ **Inappropriate** Balusters are too far apart. No visual support for column. No cap on railing post. Lack of molding on roof. Lack of detail on column.

Appropriate and inappropriate porches



▲ **Appropriate** Brick or wood columns with infill.



▲ **Inappropriate** Support for columns has been covered over.



▲ **Inappropriate** Brick or wood columns without infill.



▲ **Inappropriate** Cinderblock porch base.

Windows and doors

Windows: The number, location, size and glazing patterns of original windows, as well as unique features such as curved or bent glass, stained glass, leaded glass and unusual shapes, should be retained and preserved wherever possible.

Windows may often be repaired rather than replaced; even if some windows are deteriorated, it is seldom necessary to replace all windows in a building. Historic wood windows that are properly repaired, caulked and weatherstripped, and provided with well-fitted storm windows, can be as energy efficient as new thermal (double glazed) windows.

Where replacement is necessary due to deterioration, new windows should match the originals in materials, design, dimensions, configuration and number of panes. Avoid replacement windows that don't fit the original window openings.

(If an interior ceiling must be dropped below the height of a window, provide a setback in the ceiling design to allow the full height of the window opening to be preserved.)

Muntins dividing panes of glass in original windows should be retained: multi-pane replacement windows should have true divided lights (muntins penetrating the glass); applied muntins and muntins sandwiched between panes of glass are not acceptable. Double glazing may be acceptable if the muntin widths and profiles match the original. Window glass should be clear, not tinted or frosted; low-E glass with minimal reflectivity may be acceptable.

Aluminum, vinyl and vinyl-clad windows are generally not acceptable substitutes for wood windows, and such proposals must be reviewed by the PHDC at a public hearing. Vinyl windows in particular can close down a window opening with heavy framing, and are not available with true divided lights.

Doors: The number, location and dimensions of original doors should be retained and preserved wherever possible. Repairing original doors is encouraged over replacement. The number and configuration of panels in a replacement door should be consistent with the architectural style of the building.

Replacement of wood doors with aluminum-framed glass or steel doors, and replacement of double doors with single-leaf doors, is discouraged and will require a hearing before the PHDC.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED

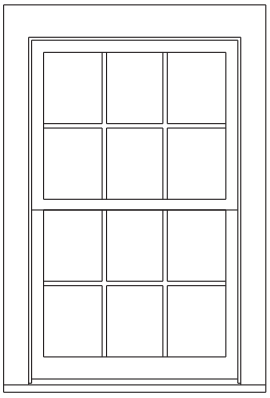
for Repairs, In-Kind Replacement and Restoration

The following information must be filed in person by appointment with the PHDC staff for ***in-house review*** of repair, replacement in kind, or restoration of missing/inappropriate features. Incomplete applications cannot be reviewed.

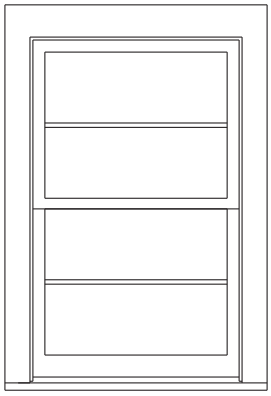
- A completed application form for a Certificate of Appropriateness, signed by the applicant and the property owner, describing existing conditions and the scope of repairs or proposed changes.
- 35mm color or black and white photographs of the building, showing the entire building elevation(s) and closeups of the area where the work will occur. Photos are to be at least 4x6 inches and must be labeled with the street address, compass direction and date.

  High quality digital photographs are acceptable. Color photocopies may be acceptable if the images reproduce clearly. Photocopied prints and instant (Polaroid) snapshots are not acceptable due to lack of clarity and long-term stability. (Photos are not required when replacing an existing asphalt roof with new asphalt.)
- A description of the proposed roofing, gutter or downspout material and color, including manufacturer's specifications and product information. Where new gutters or downspouts are proposed, indicate specific locations.
- Manufacturer's specifications and product information, if available.
- Specifications for repointing, cleaning, sealing or patching of masonry.
- Test patches, material or color samples, if requested by staff.
- Scaled drawings (3 copies) of replacement elements, if requested by staff.
- Historic photographs or drawings, or photographs illustrating physical evidence, of a feature to be reconstructed or restored.

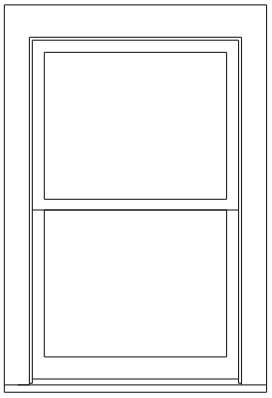
Appropriate and inappropriate window replacement



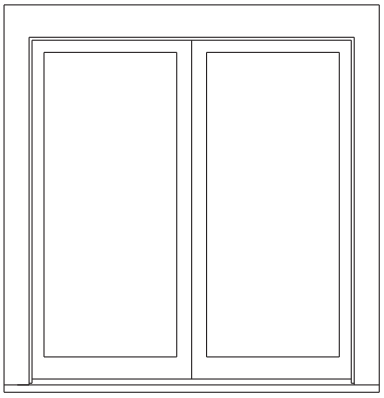
▲ **Appropriate**
Original wood windows with six over six panes.



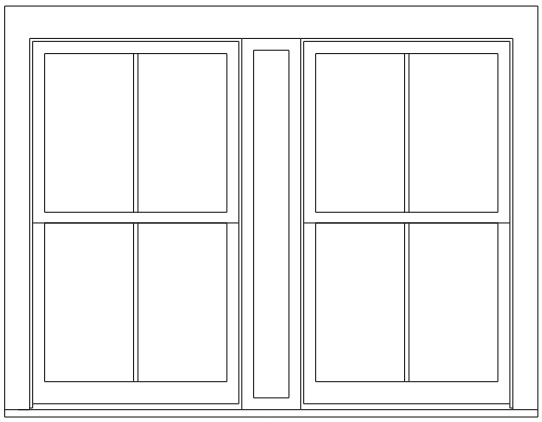
▲ **Inappropriate**
Horizontal without vertical muntins.



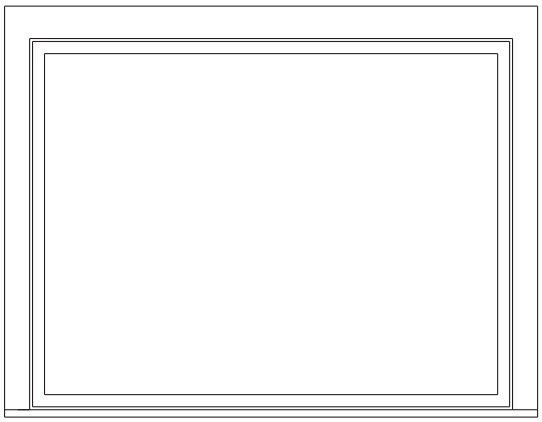
▲ **Inappropriate**
No muntins.



▲ **Inappropriate** Casement sash instead of double hung sash.



▲ **Appropriate** Original wood windows with two over two panes.



▲ **Inappropriate** Picture window, single pane of glass, wider horizontal proportions.

Appropriate and inappropriate window replacement



▲ **Appropriate** House with original double-hung, true divided windows.



▲ **Inappropriate** Horizontally divided window replacements have incorrect number of panes. Missing drip caps.



▲ **Inappropriate** Enlarged window opening for picture window. Window filled in.



▲ **Inappropriate** Replacement single-pane casement window with enlarged opening. Missing drip caps.

Appropriate and inappropriate door replacement



▲ **Appropriate** Original six-panel wooden door with sidelights.

The number and configuration of panels in a replacement door should be consistent with the architectural style of the building. Replacement of wood doors with aluminum framed glass or steel doors, and replacement of double doors with single-leaf doors, is discouraged.



▲ **Inappropriate** Sidelights replaced by mailboxes and buzzers.



▲ **Inappropriate** Door without panels in wood, steel, etc.



▲ **Inappropriate** Door design and aluminum screen.

Appropriate and inappropriate door replacement



▲ **Appropriate** House with original four-panel double doors.

Replacements of double-doors with single-leaf doors is discouraged. The number, location and dimensions of original doors should be retained and preserved wherever possible.



▲ **Inappropriate** Single door instead of double door. No panels. Non-historic glass panel design.

MINOR ALTERATIONS: AWNINGS

Awnings can add color and architectural interest to a commercial or residential building. They can shelter passersby, reduce glare, conserve energy and provide a location for signage.

Materials
Opaque soft canvas, acrylic or vinyl materials are preferable to wood or metal. Translucent fabrics may be used for lettering or graphics.

Colors
Should be compatible with the building.

Installation
Awning installation should not damage the building or visually impair distinctive architectural features. Where possible, awnings should be mounted within a recessed door or window opening rather than directly onto the face of the building. Awnings should be shaped to the opening in which they are installed.

Type/Profile
Awnings may be fixed or retractable (retractable awnings with movable valances are preferred on buildings originally designed as residences). A traditional shed (diagonal) profile awning is preferable to a rounded profile.

Signage
Lettering and graphics may be installed on awning valances; sizes should be proportional to valance dimensions. Lighting for signage on an awning should be directed specifically toward the graphics to prevent the entire awning from glowing. Signs on awnings shall also conform to the requirements of the Providence Zoning Ordinance.

Multiple storefronts
Where awnings are proposed for one or more businesses in the same building, awnings are encouraged to be consistent in materials, shape and profile, height, location, graphics and signage. Colors should be complementary. Development of a master awning plan for buildings with multiple storefronts, to be followed by all tenants, is encouraged. Applications for master awning plans will be reviewed by the PHDC.

Other regulations
A building permit is required for an awning projecting over the sidewalk. Fixed awnings must meet zoning setback requirements. There must be a minimum 7-foot clearance from the sidewalk to the metal frame. The awning projection must be set back at least 12 inches from the curb.

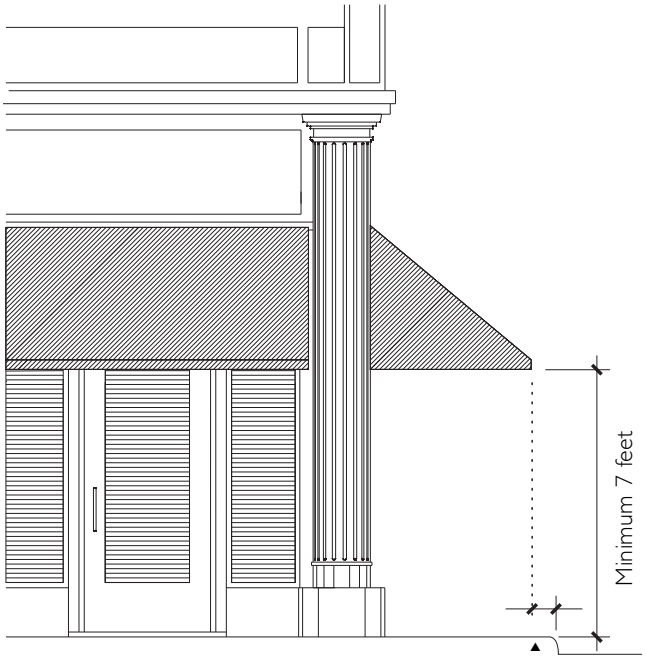
DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED

for Awnings

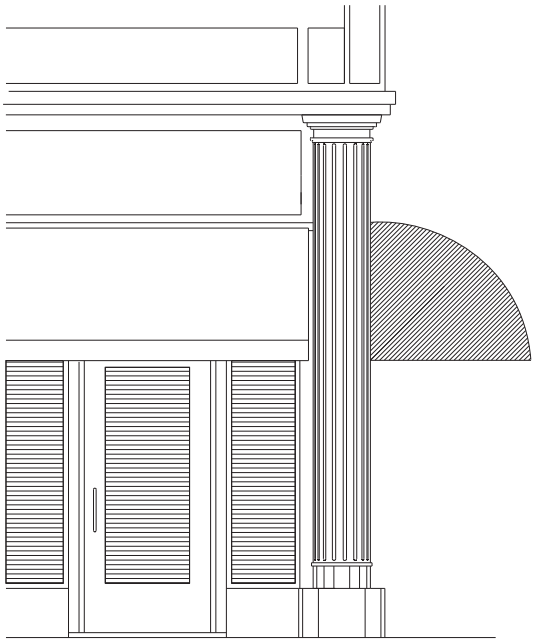
The following information must be filed in person by appointment with the PHDC staff for ***in-house review*** of awnings. Incomplete applications cannot be reviewed.

- A completed application form for a Certificate of Appropriateness, signed by the applicant and the property owner, describing the existing conditions and proposed changes.
- 35mm color or black and white photographs of the building, showing the entire building elevation(s) and close-ups of the area where the work will occur. Photos are to be at least 4x6 inches and must be labeled with the street address, compass direction and date. High quality digital photographs are acceptable. Color photocopies of slides may be acceptable provided the images reproduce clearly. Photocopied prints and instant (Polaroid) snapshots are not acceptable due to lack of clarity and long-term stability.
- Scaled elevation and section drawings of the building (3 copies), showing front and side views of the awning(s) in place on the building, relationship of the awning(s) to other facade elements, and the method of attachment. All dimensions are to be indicated. If signage is to be included, the drawing must also indicate the location, dimensions, colors and typefaces of all lettering and graphics.
- Material and color samples.

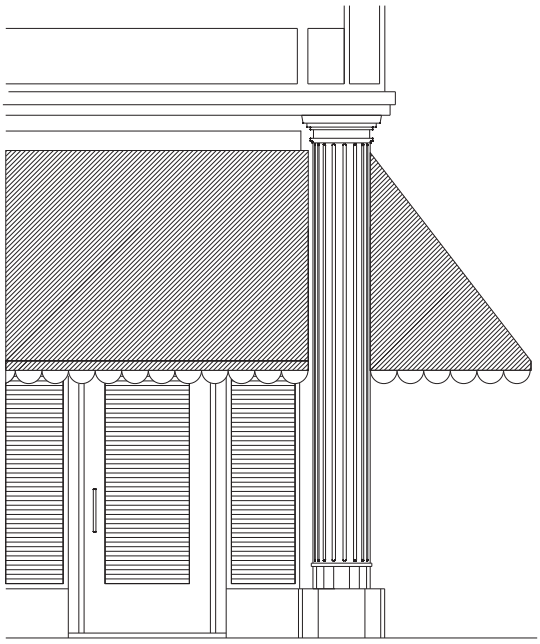
Appropriate and inappropriate awnings



▲ **Traditional shed profile** Is appropriate and preferred.



▲ **Rounded profile** Is acceptable, but not recommended.



▲ **Inappropriate** Mounting is too high and obstructs architectural features.

MINOR ALTERATIONS:
FENCES & GATES

While complete privacy is often not possible in densely built urban areas, a fence can mark the boundary between one property and another, or distinguish public spaces (streets and sidewalks) from semi-public spaces (front yards). Fences are often character-defining features and should be treated sensitively. It is important that the fence design harmonize with the character of the historic structure and the surrounding district.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED

See page 22

Materials

Fences and gates made of wrought iron, cast iron or wood pickets are appropriate for front yards; solid, vertical board wood fences, with a flat cap, are appropriate for rear or side yards. Fences may be painted, stained or left to weather naturally. Woven wire (chain link) and stockade fences (with jagged tops) are discouraged. Barbed wire is not permitted under the Providence Zoning Ordinance.

Design

Front yard fences should be designed to allow views of the yard and building. While fences for rear or side yards may be more opaque, be aware that tall, solid fences that obscure views to the building and the yard can also hide intruders: consider a compromise between privacy and security. Gates should be compatible with any existing fencing, walls or landscaping, and should be designed to swing onto the private walkway or driveway, not onto the public sidewalk.

Other regulations

Fence height is regulated by the Zoning Ordinance. Fences and gates along street frontages may not exceed 42 inches (3.5 feet) in height, to avoid obscuring the view of any driver entering or traveling in traffic. Fences along side or rear lot lines are limited to 72 inches (6 feet) in height. Fences and gates proposed in excess of these height limits must also be reviewed by the City Fence Viewer. Approval from the Fence Viewer does not guarantee approval by the PHDC. Applicants are responsible for contacting the Fence Viewer.

Impacts on abutting properties

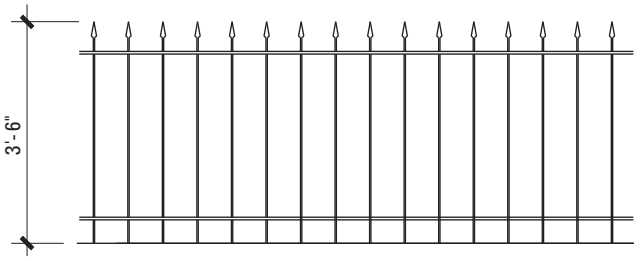
Fences on common property lines can have a negative impact on neighboring properties. For example, if the neighbor's yard is lower than the yard where the fence is installed, then from the neighbor's perspective the height of the fence is increased by the difference in grade. Also, boundary disputes may occur when a fence is proposed along an interior (side or rear) lot line.

To avoid conflicts, and permit a fence application to be reviewed without a hearing, any applicant proposing to alter or install a fence along a common interior lot line should contact the owner(s) of property directly abutting said lot line to confirm that the proposed fence is acceptable, before an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness is filed. If the proposed fence is acceptable to the direct abutter(s), they should be asked to waive in writing their right to a public hearing (abutters may sign a waiver form provided by the PHDC, or write a letter). The waiver shall then be submitted as part of the documentation of the application. If any directly affected abutter is unable or unwilling to waive the right to a public hearing, then the application shall be reviewed at the next available public hearing so that the comments may be heard. (Although abutter comments will be duly considered by the PHDC, abutter consent is not required in order to approve an application.) Boundary disputes should be resolved before the application is filed.

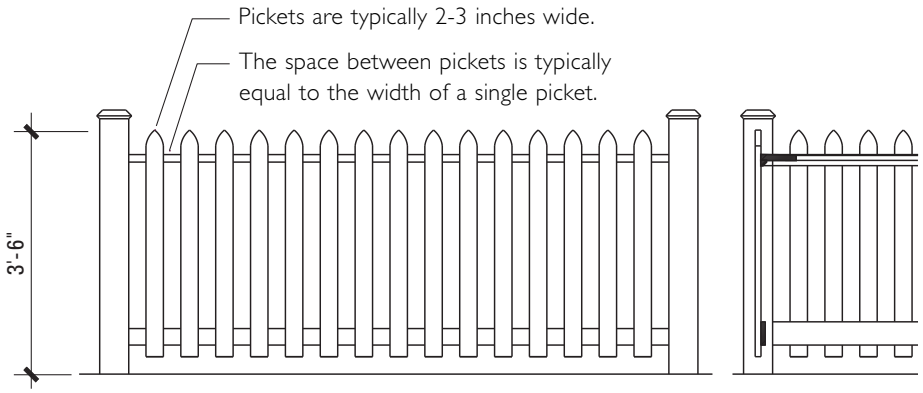
Proposals for replacement in kind of any existing fence, regardless of location, with no change in height, location, material or extension of length, and for new fences along street frontages, shall be exempt from the requirement to obtain abutter approval.

Fence types and basic regulations for front, side and rear yards

Fences in front yards may not exceed 42 inches (3'-6") in height.



▲ **Wrought iron fence** Typical of second Empire and Queen Anne styles.

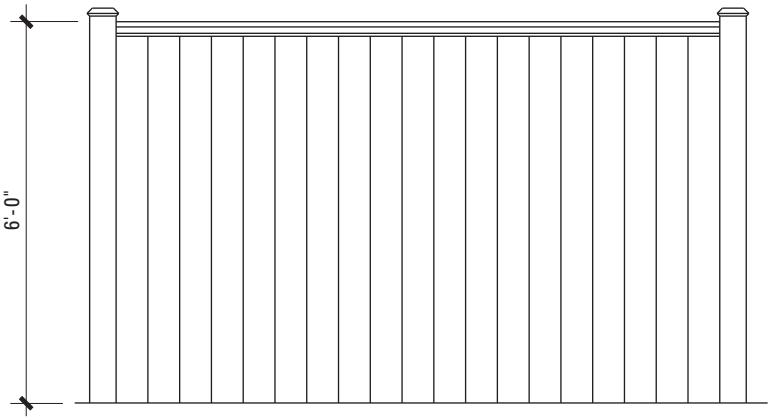


▲ **Wood picket fence** Typical of the Colonial Revival style.

Fences made of cast iron, wrought iron or wood pickets are appropriate for front yards.

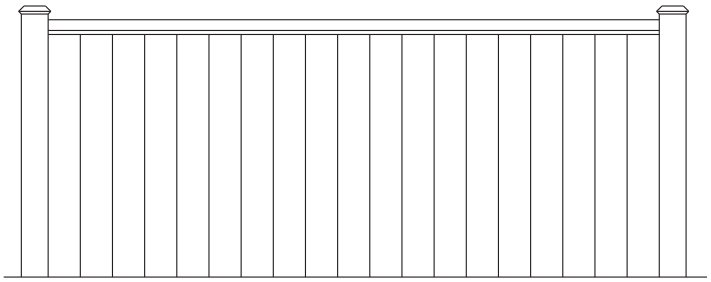
Fence heights are regulated by Providence Zoning Ordinance. Consult the Zoning Ordinance for further information.

Fences in rear or side yards may not exceed 72 inches (6'-0") in height.

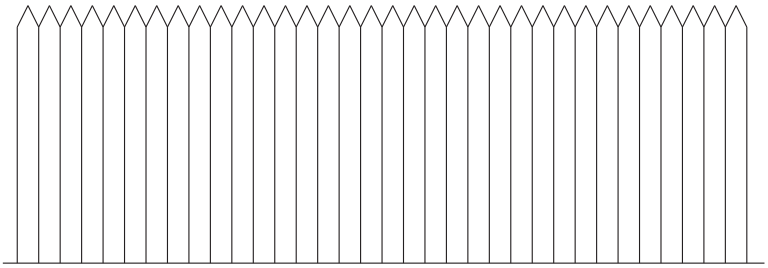


▲ **Vertical board/flat cap fence** Typical of the Greek Revival style.

Appropriate and inappropriate new fences

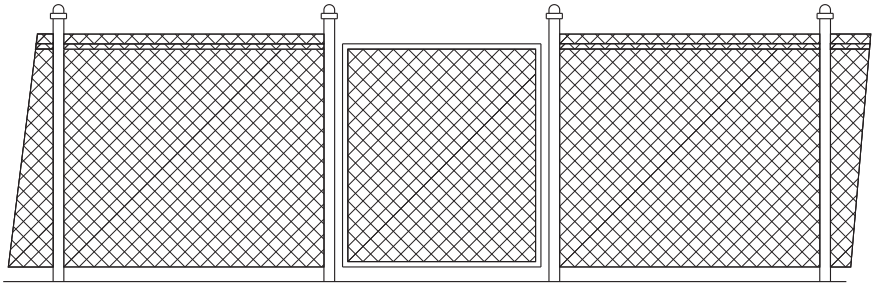


▲ **Solid fence** Appropriate for side and rear yards only.



▲ **Stockade fence** Inappropriate for any yard.

Certain types of fences are inappropriate unless they already exist on the property.



▲ **Woven wire (chain link)** Inappropriate for any yard.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED

for Fences and Gates

The following information must be filed in person by appointment with the PHDC staff for in-house review of fences. Incomplete applications cannot be reviewed.

- A completed application form signed by the applicant and the owner describing the existing conditions and the proposed improvements.
- 35mm color or black and white photos of the building, showing the entire property and closeups of the area where the work will occur. Photos are to be at least 4x6 inches and must be labeled with the street address, compass direction and date. High quality digital photographs are acceptable. Color photocopies of slides may be acceptable if the images reproduce clearly. Photocopied prints and instant (Polaroid) snapshots are not acceptable.
- A scaled elevation drawing (3 copies) showing the design of the proposed fencing in relation to the building and other site elements. Indicate north arrow.
- For fences along common lot lines (excluding street frontages), a completed abutter waiver form (or letter) signed by each owner of abutting property sharing said lot line.

Streetscape showing appropriate and inappropriate fences



▲ **Appropriate** Picket fence.



▲ **Inappropriate** Woven wire fence.



▲ **Appropriate** Wrought iron fence.

Woven wire (chain link) and stockade (jagged tops) are discouraged.

Fences made of cast iron, wrought iron or wood pickets are appropriate for front yards.

Front yard fences should be designed to allow views of the yard and building.

Gates should swing **in** and should be compatible with existing fencing, walls, etc.



▲ **Inappropriate** Stockade fence exceeds height limits.

MINOR ALTERATIONS: MECHANICAL & COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT

Equipment for heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems and communications equipment such as cable television wiring and satellite dish antennae should be installed in a sensitive manner whenever possible.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED

See page 25

Location

HVAC should be located inside the building wherever possible. If exterior installation is necessary, units should be sited in side and rear yards rather than the front yard, or placed on flat roofs out of view from street level; generally, pitched roofs are not appropriate locations for mechanical equipment. Exterior ductwork is discouraged but if necessary should be located inconspicuously.

Communications equipment should be located as inconspicuously as possible, preferably in rear or side yards, or on rooftops out of view from street level. Cable wiring should go underground or along side or rear walls wherever possible.

Dimensions

Equipment should be the smallest size possible without interfering with performance or signal reception.

Design and color

A mesh dish antenna is less obtrusive than a solid dish. Painting equipment or ductwork to blend in with a background color can help diminish visual impact.

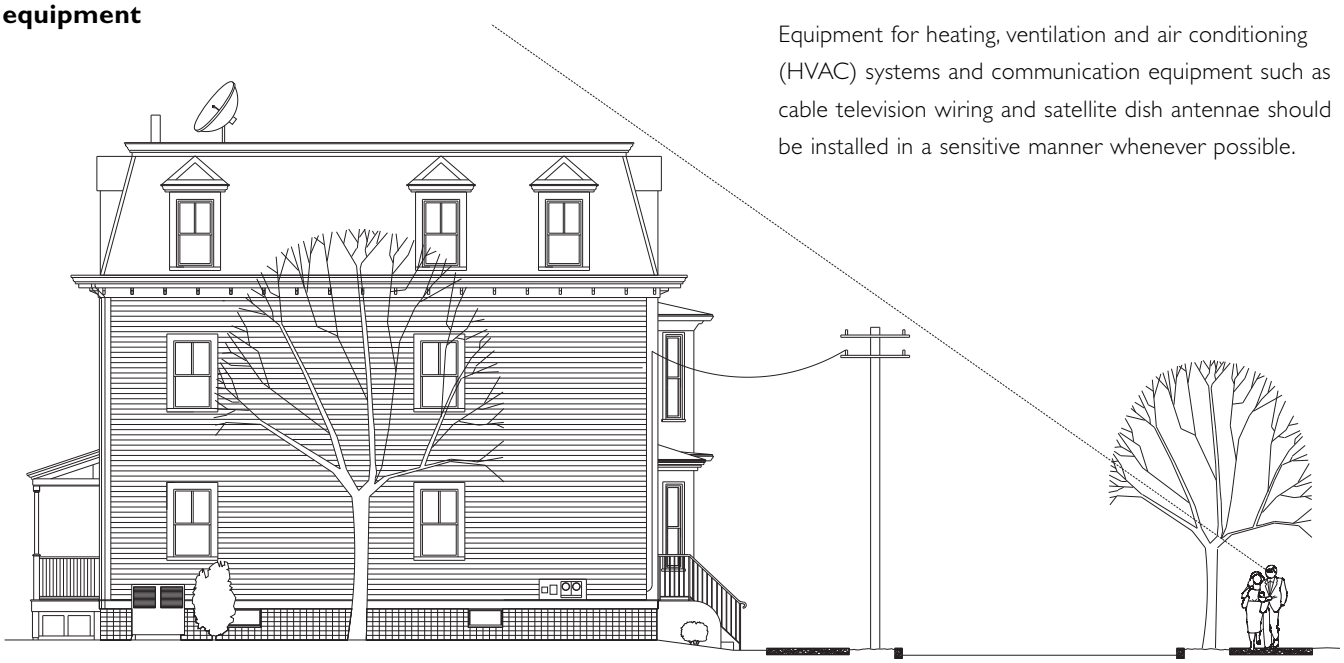
Screening

HVAC equipment in yards should be screened with fencing or landscaping. Communications equipment may be screened if screening does not aggravate a negative visual impact and if it does not interfere with signal reception.

Other regulations

Refer to the Building Code and the Zoning Ordinance for related restrictions on HVAC equipment and rooftop structures. HVAC units may not exceed the allowable decibel readings (noise levels) for residential neighborhoods, according to City Ordinance.

Appropriate mechanical and communications equipment



DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED

for Mechanical & Communications Equipment

The following information must be filed in person by appointment with the PHDC staff for ***in-house review*** of mechanical and electrical equipment. Incomplete applications cannot be reviewed.

- A completed application form for a Certificate of Appropriateness, signed by the applicant and the property owner, describing existing conditions and proposed changes.
- 35mm color or black and white photographs of the entire property, showing the building and the area where the work will occur. Photos are to be at least 4x6 inches and must be labeled with the street address, compass direction and date. High quality digital photographs are acceptable. Color photocopies of slides may be acceptable provided the images reproduce clearly. Photocopied prints and instant (Polaroid) snapshots are not acceptable due to lack of clarity and long-term stability.
- A scaled site plan and/or roof plan (3 copies) showing the proposed location of the equipment in relation to other building or site elements and the property line(s), as well as the method of any proposed screening. (If equipment will be screened with fencing, include 3 copies of a scaled elevation drawing showing the design, material and height of the fence.)
- For rooftop installations, a scaled section drawing (3 copies) indicating sightlines.
- For exterior ductwork, a scaled elevation drawing (3 copies) showing the proposed location and method of attachment, in relation to other building elements.
- Manufacturer's specifications and product information, specifically noting dimensions, design and finish colors.

MINOR ALTERATIONS:
SHUTTERS & BLINDS

Shutters (with solid panels) and blinds (with louvers) were traditionally used to control light and ventilation, and to improve privacy. Today, their primary purpose is decorative. Shutters and blinds were common on houses built before 1860; were sometimes found on Italianate and 2nd Empire styles of the 1860s-1880s; and were also exhibited on Colonial Revival and Neoclassical styles of the early 20th century.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED

See page 27

Materials

Wood (painted a dark color) is the traditional material. Vinyl and metal do not adequately replicate the appearance of wood and are not appropriate.

Dimensions and configuration

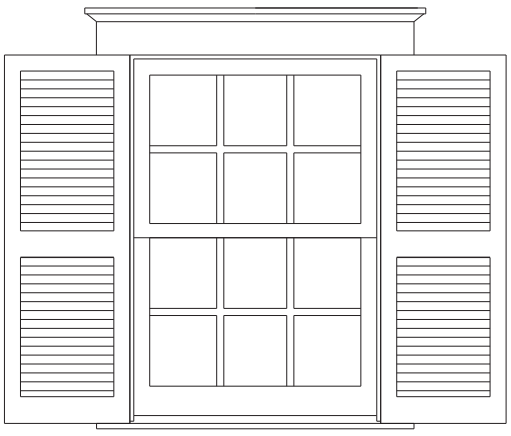
Each shutter or blind should match the height and one-half the width of the window opening. Shutters and blinds are generally inappropriate on windows that are wider than they are tall, such as picture windows. Shutters and blinds for arched windows should follow the shape of the window opening.

Installation

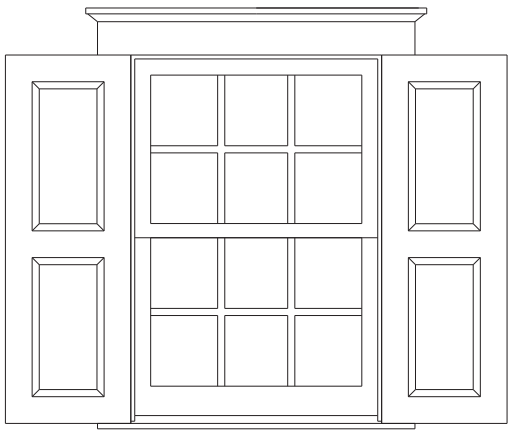
Proper shutter hardware and placement is important. Shutters and blinds can be hung from a variety of hinges, slide bolts, pintels and shutter dogs; historic hardware designs are still available. Check to see if there is evidence of hardware on window frames or on the building. Tacking shutters and blinds onto the face of the building is not appropriate because shutters and blinds should appear to be operable. Blinds should be hung so that the louvers point upward when the blinds are open; the louvers on operable blinds point downward only when the blinds are closed.

ILLUSTRATION **12**

Examples of shutter types



▲ An example of louvered shutters.

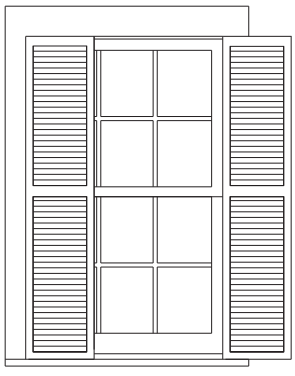


▲ An example of paneled shutters.

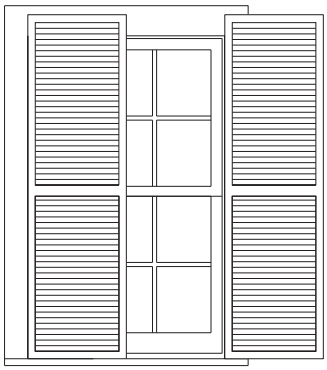
Examples of shutter types



▲ A Greek Revival house with its original shutters. Each shutter is the height and one-half the width of the window opening.



▲ These shutters are **inappropriate** because their width is less than half the width of the window opening.



▲ These shutters are **inappropriate** because their height is greater than the height of the window opening.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED

for Shutters & Blinds

The following information must be filed in person by appointment with the PHDC staff for ***in-house review*** of shutters and blinds. Incomplete applications cannot be reviewed.

- A completed application form for a Certificate of Appropriateness, signed by the applicant and the property owner, describing the existing conditions and the proposed changes.
- 35mm color or black and white photographs of the building showing the entire building elevation and close-ups of the area where the work will occur. Photos must be labeled with the street address, compass direction and date. High quality digital photographs are acceptable. Color photocopies of slides may be acceptable provided the images reproduce clearly. Photocopied prints and instant (Polaroid) snapshots are not acceptable.
- A scaled elevation drawing (3 copies) illustrating the shutters/blinds in place on the building, their relationship to the size and shape of window openings, and method of attachment; ***or*** written specifications detailing the dimensional relationships between the window openings and the proposed shutters/blinds, and the method of attachment.
- Manufacturer's specifications or product information on the proposed shutters or blinds and shutter hardware, if available, including description of materials.

MINOR ALTERATIONS:
SIGNS

Signs are one of the most prominent visual elements on a street. Well designed signs add interest, color and variety to building facades and streetscapes; poorly designed signs can cause visual clutter and be a major distraction from a well designed storefront or converted residential building. Although signs should be clearly visible, signage in historic districts should be scaled to pedestrians, not automobiles.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED

See page 30

Type

The following types of signs may be acceptable: painted or applied wall signs, projecting signs (hung perpendicular to the wall on a decorative bracket), signs on awnings or canopies and freestanding signs. Traditional shapes include the rectangle, square and oval. Lettering on window or door glass and interior window signs are permitted without review.

Location

A sign should be located so as not to obscure architectural details. Most commercial buildings are designed with sign bands in the storefront; these are the most appropriate locations for wall signs. Residential buildings converted to commercial use may not have a designated sign band, so appropriate placement of a wall sign becomes more of a concern; in these cases other sign types, such as projecting signs, lettering applied to windows or doors, freestanding signs and signs on awnings may be considered. The sign location should be coordinated with signs on adjacent storefronts or buildings. Placing a sign higher or lower than an adjacent sign creates confusion.

Materials

Wood is the most traditional sign material; lettering may be carved, applied or painted. A variety of other materials may be considered, including metal, brass, granite, slate, marble, etc. Plastic is discouraged.

Message

A sign should identify the name, function, and perhaps the address of the business. This information can be conveyed in words, pictures, names, symbols and logos. Keep it simple: too many pieces of information clutter the sign and confuse the viewer.

Colors should be compatible with the building and the surrounding buildings. A sign is more easily read when the letters or graphics contrast with the background color.

Lighting

Signs may be lighted indirectly with exterior fixtures. Internally lit signs (back-lit plastic) are incompatible with Providence's historic districts and not acceptable.

ILLUSTRATION **14**

Examples of sign types



Corporate standards

Where corporate standards for logos, colors, dimensions, lighting, sign types and locations are inconsistent with the historic character of the property, these may not be acceptable. Signs should be designed specifically for the property on which they will be placed.

Master sign plans

Where a building houses multiple commercial tenants or activities requiring signage, or signs will be installed on multiple properties by a common owner, a master sign plan governing locations, types, dimensions and materials should be developed and followed by all tenants. Applications for master sign plans will be reviewed by the PHDC.

Other regulations

Projecting signs must have a minimum 10-foot clearance from the sidewalk to the bottom of the sign for RP (Residential/Professional) zoning and a minimum 18-foot clearance for commercial zoning. Signs which project over city property must be hung by a sign company that is bonded and insured with the City of Providence, as required by the R.I. State Building Code, Section 2906, 23-27.3.

Zoning: All signs must conform to underlying zoning regulations (see Article VI of the Providence Zoning Ordinance). Any necessary variances for use, for the number of signs or the dimensions of signs must be obtained prior to filing an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness.

ILLUSTRATION **15**

Storefront sign bands

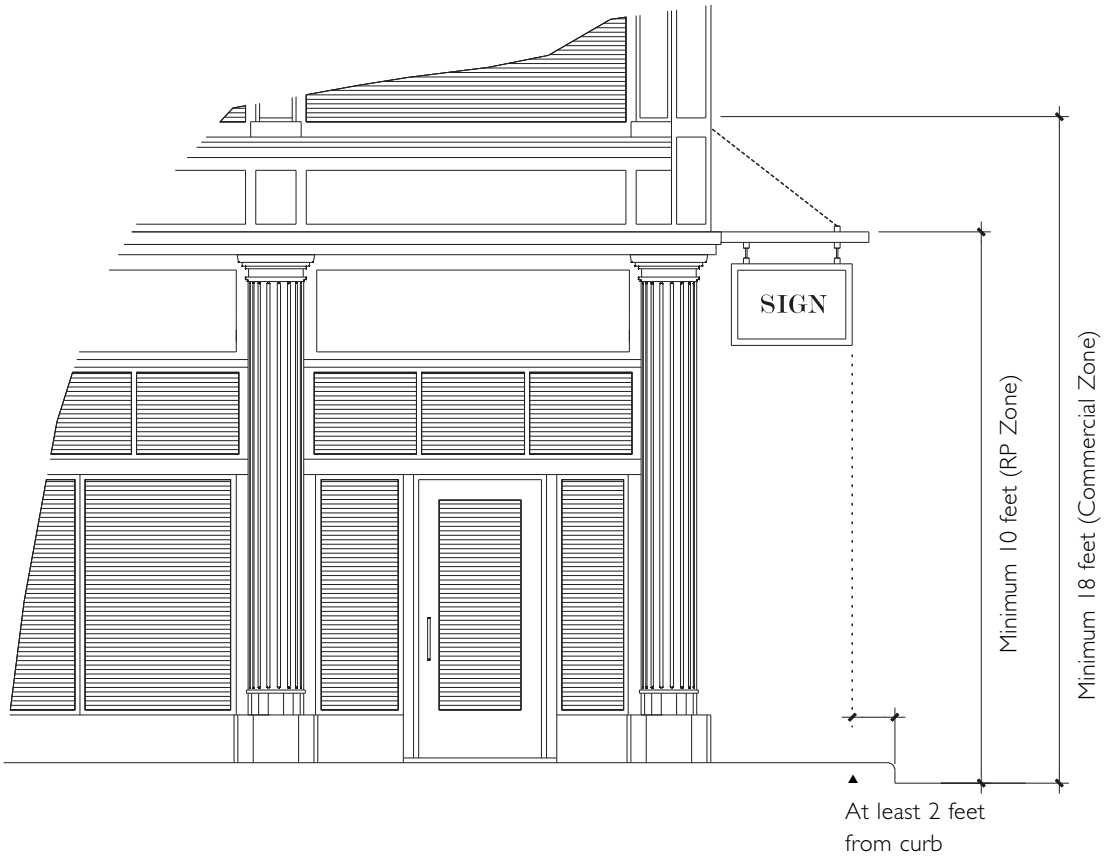


▲ Most commercial buildings are designed with sign bands in the storefront. These are the most **appropriate** locations for wall signs. The sign location should be coordinated with signs on adjacent storefronts or buildings.



▲ Other locations for wall signs are **inappropriate** because they detract from the harmony of the façade.

Sign regulations



DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED

for Signs

The following information must be filed in person by appointment with the PHDC staff for ***in-house review*** of signs Incomplete applications cannot be reviewed.

- A completed application form for a Certificate of Appropriateness, signed by the applicant and the property owner, describing existing conditions and proposed changes.
- 35mm color or black and white photographs of the building, showing the entire building elevation and closeups of the area where the work will occur. Photos are to be at least 4x6 inches and must be labeled with the street address, compass direction and date. High quality digital photographs are acceptable. Color photocopies of slides may be acceptable if the images reproduce clearly. Photocopied prints and instant (Polaroid) snapshots are not acceptable due to lack of clarity and long-term stability.
- A scaled elevation drawing (for wall signs, freestanding signs and awnings), section drawing (for projecting signs and awnings) and/or site plan (freestanding signs) showing the proposed sign(s) in place on the building or in relationship to the building and other site features, including the property line. Submit 3 copies of each drawing.
- A scaled drawing (3 copies) of the sign, indicating its type, dimensions, materials, colors, graphics and lettering, method of attachment and any illumination.
- Written confirmation of zoning status and any variances granted by the Zoning Board of Review.

MINOR ALTERATIONS:
SITE IMPROVEMENTS

The relationship between a historic building and its site features such as green spaces, pathways, paved areas, terraces, retaining walls, boundary walls and grade levels is important in defining the overall historic character of the building and the surrounding historic district.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED
See page 32

Historic landscapes
Historic site plans and features should be identified, retained and preserved.

Walkways
Walkway materials should be compatible with the existing building and site and the setting of the historic district. Appropriate choices include unit pavers of stone, brick or concrete; poured concrete with a surface treatment (tinting, scoring, exposed aggregate or accent materials); asphalt is not appropriate. Walkways of crushed stone or shells are not common in urban settings and are generally inappropriate unless there is documentation for the historic use of such materials on the property.

Accessibility improvements: All paving materials noted above will also provide a hard, stable, regular, slip-resistant path of travel for disabled individuals. Original cobblestones should be reset rather than replaced with another material whenever possible. If a soft surface (such as loose gravel, crushed stone or shells, sand, or wet clay) is a historically accurate material for a pathway, consider using a bonding material to stabilize the surface rather than repaving in another material. Snow/ice melting equipment may be installed under paved areas. Pathways with a slope exceeding 1:20 (1 foot in height for every 20 feet in length) may be regraded as an alternative to installing railings.

Driveways and parking areas
Driveway and parking area materials should be compatible with the existing building and site and the setting of the historic district. Appropriate choices include unit pavers of stone, brick or concrete; poured concrete with a surface treatment (tinting, scoring, exposed aggregate or accent materials) and asphalt. Paving of front or side yards to accommodate parking is discouraged. Driveways of crushed stone or shells are not common in urban settings and are generally inappropriate unless there is documentation for the historic use of such materials on the property.

A landscaped area at least 3 feet in width should be provided and maintained between parking areas and any adjacent property, public street, walk or right of way. In addition to ground cover and small plantings, a translucent vertical screen (including but not limited to trees, evergreen shrubs or decorative metal fencing on top of low masonry walls) should be provided, with a minimum height of 30 inches and a maximum height consistent with the Zoning Ordinance regulations for fencing. Zoning variances may be required and must be obtained before filing an application for Certificate of Appropriateness.

Accessibility improvements: All paving materials noted above will also provide a hard, stable, regular and slip-resistant path of travel for disabled individuals. Original cobblestones should be reset rather than replaced with another material whenever possible. If a soft surface (such as loose gravel, crushed stone or shells, sand, or wet clay) is a historically accurate material for a driveway, consider using a bonding material to stabilize the surface rather than repaving in another material. Parking areas may be striped and identified as needed for accessible parking spaces. Snow/ice melting equipment may be installed under paved areas.

Landscaping
Landscaping is encouraged. Avoid placing trees and shrubs next to building foundations where they can encourage water to penetrate the building, causing deterioration. Installation or removal of plant materials,

including trees, shrubs, hedges and planting beds for flowers and vegetables are not reviewed by the PHDC except where part of a documented historic landscape *(see also "Other Regulations," below)*. Proper drainage should be maintained.

Retaining walls

Retaining walls intended to serve a structural purpose should be designed by a qualified professional engineer or architect, to ensure that wind loads, grade changes and foundation requirements are properly accommodated. Materials may be stone, brick or concrete with a surface treatment (tinting, scoring, exposed aggregate, veneers and accent materials). Railroad ties may be used in inconspicuous locations, such as rear yards. If a height over 4 feet is proposed, consider using terraces (perhaps with planting beds) to alleviate the visual impact.

Boundary walls

Boundary wall materials, scale and design should be compatible with those of the building. Stone walls enclosing gardens and yards are rare in historic urban settings (although possibly appropriate for more recent buildings); check for physical or documentary evidence of an original stone wall. Brick walls should use similar brick colors and sizes, mortar, joining and coursing as found on the building; generally, brick walls should be capped in natural or cast stone. If a height over 4 feet is proposed, a low masonry base with a transparent or semi-transparent iron or wooden fence on top may be an appropriate solution.

Other regulations

The Zoning Ordinance regulates boundary walls and hedges as well as fencing (see Section 411). Hedges on common lot lines may be planted provided the abutting owners agree in writing to maintain and trim them; the agreement is to be filed with the City Fence Viewer. Walls of brick, cement or other material are limited to 6 feet in height, and must be capped and finished neatly on both sides. Stone walls are limited to 4 feet in height, and walls adjacent to driveways are limited to 3 feet in height for a distance of 20 feet back from the property line.

Exceptions to staff review

The following site improvements will be subject to a public hearing before the PHDC: changes in grade over 2 feet, alterations to historic landscapes or settings of highly significant historic buildings, installation of underground parking garages, paving of open space on a street frontage to provide parking, construction of pergolas, decks and wheelchair ramps, enclosures for outdoor seating areas (commercial businesses), and any other applications the staff chooses to direct to the PHDC for review; see "Major Alterations" and "Barrier-Free Access" for documentation requirements.

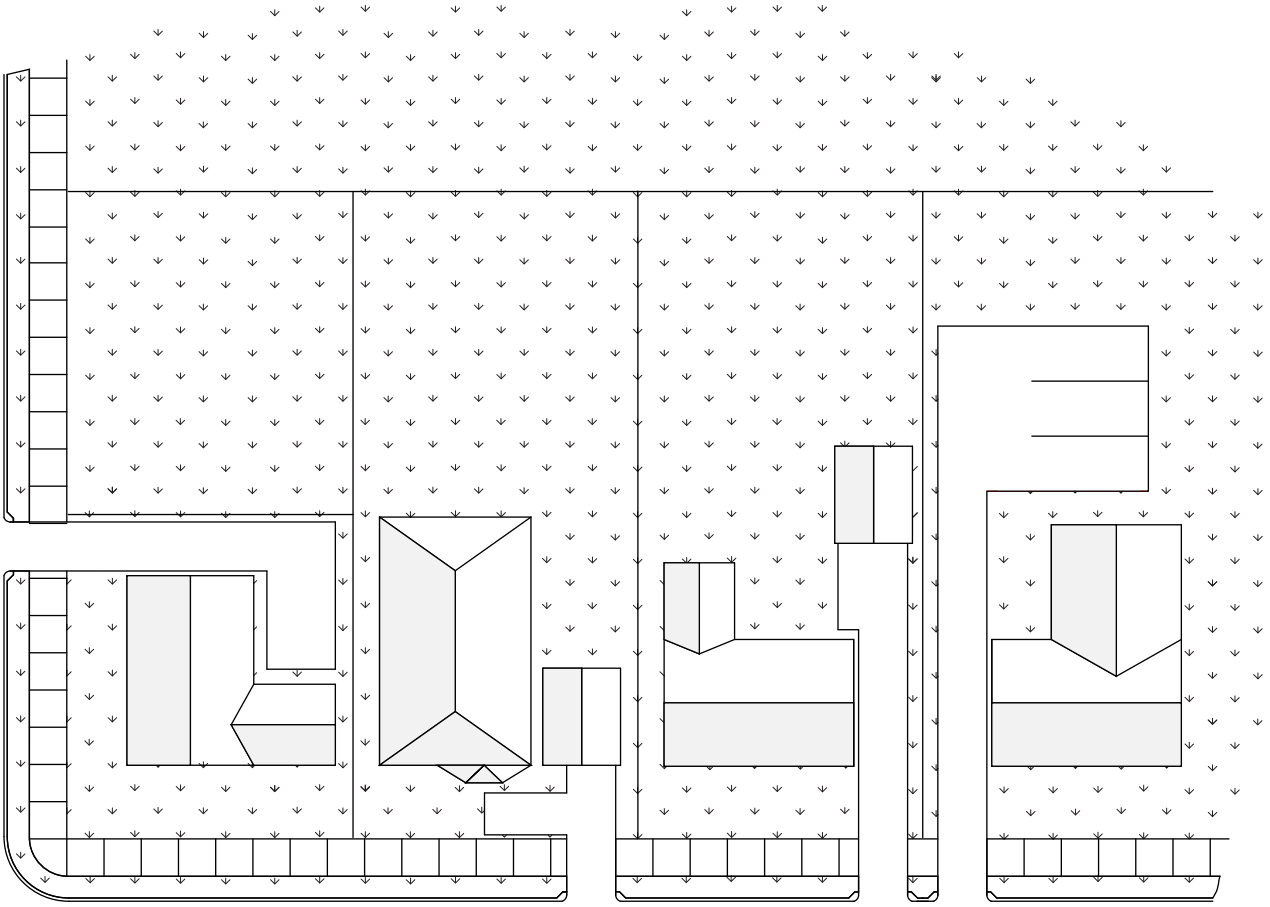
DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED

for Site Improvements

The following information must be filed in person by appointment with the PHDC staff for ***in-house review*** of site improvements. Incomplete applications cannot be reviewed.

- A completed application form for a Certificate of Appropriateness, signed by the applicant and the property owner, describing the existing conditions and the proposed changes.
- 35mm color or black and white photographs of the building and its relationship to the site, showing the entire property and close-ups of the area where the work will occur. Photos are to be at least 4x6 inches and must be labeled with the street address, compass direction and date. High quality digital photographs are acceptable. Color photocopies of slides may be acceptable provided the images reproduce clearly. Photocopied prints and instant (Polaroid) snapshots are not acceptable due to lack of clarity and long-term stability.
- A scaled site plan (3 copies), illustrating the proposed changes in context with the building, other existing site elements, and the property lines. Indicate north arrow.
- For retaining walls, terraces and site improvements other than paving, scaled elevation and section drawings (3 copies) showing the construction in relationship to surrounding site or building elements. Structural retaining walls should be designed by an engineer or other qualified professional.
- A description of the proposed materials; samples may also be requested.

Parking plan with garages



Plan 1
Appropriate A small paved parking area has been created in the rear yard.

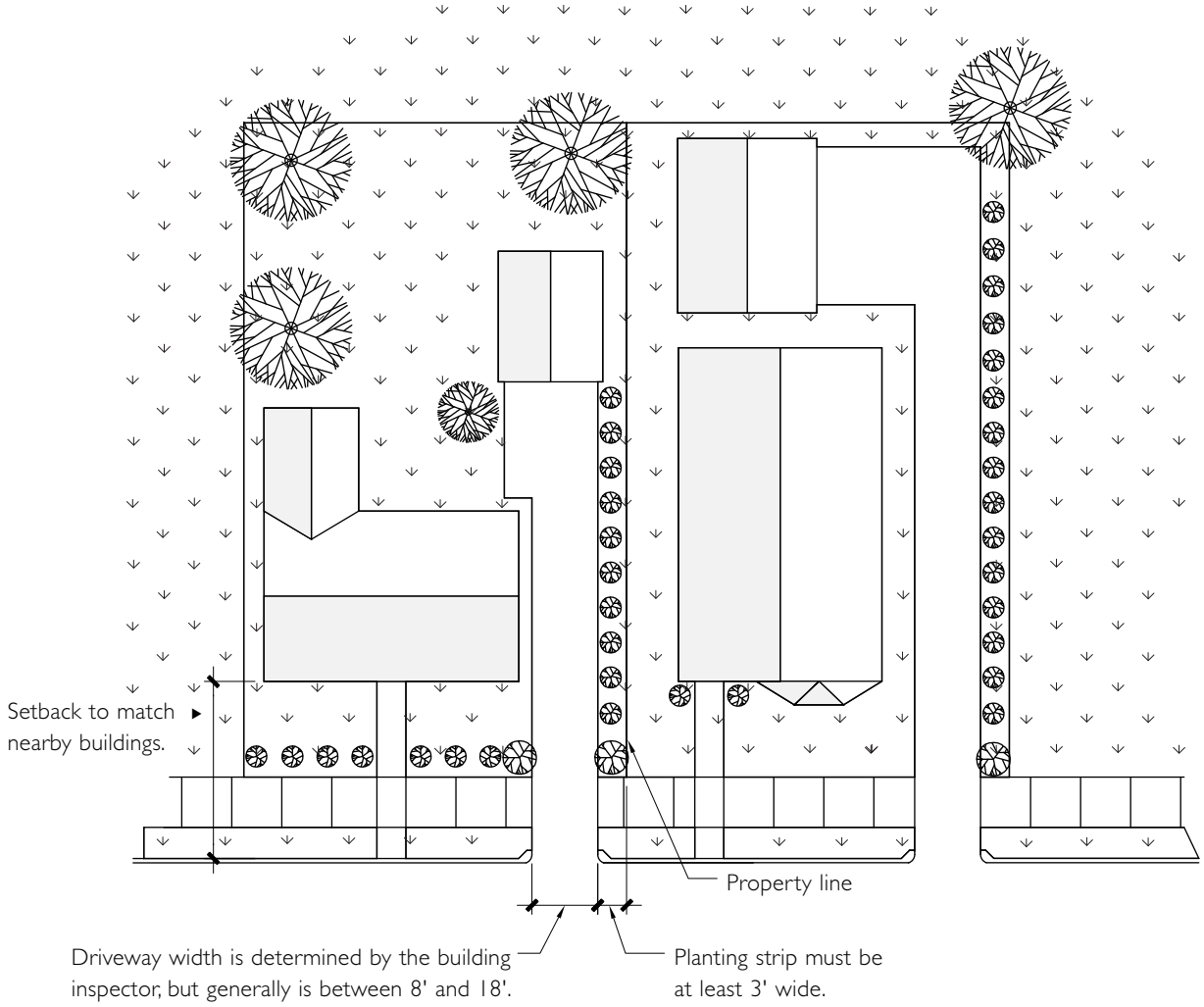
Plan 2
Inappropriate The garage is located to the front of the house and a paved parking area has been created in the front yard.

Plan 3
Appropriate The garage is located to the rear of the house.

Plan 4
Inappropriate A paved parking area has been created in the rear yard, but it is much larger than necessary for a single-family home.

In general, landscaping is encouraged for residential buildings, particularly in front and side yards. Additionally, landscaping is required in many instances, such as along the driveway and parking areas in new construction. Setbacks in new construction must be similar to that of neighboring buildings in order to preserve the continuity of the streetscape.

Appropriate residential site plan



In general, landscaping is encouraged for residential buildings, particularly in front and side yards. Additionally, landscaping is required in many instances, such as along the driveway and parking areas in new construction. Setbacks in new construction must be similar to that of neighboring buildings in order to preserve the continuity of the streetscape.

MINOR ALTERATIONS:
STORM/SCREEN WINDOWS AND DOORS

The high cost of heating fuels and need to conserve energy has made combination storm/screen windows a common feature on historic buildings. Storm windows can protect historic primary sash from the elements and may be a reasonable alternative to replacing original windows.

However, storm windows are not a substitute for weathertight primary windows. In some cases, caulking, reglazing and weatherstripping the primary windows can stop air leaks, making storm windows less of a necessity. Window screens are often sold in combination with storm windows, but are also available separately.

Screen doors may need to be custom made, particularly for wide doorways. Storm doors are often an eyesore on historic buildings, and usually unnecessary if the exterior door is properly weatherstripped.

The goal of any installation should be minimal visual impact on the original primary window or door.

Materials

Wood, painted aluminum or anodized aluminum may be considered. Raw aluminum (with a silver finish) is not appropriate. Glass should be clear; glass is preferable to acrylic, which may scratch and discolor over time.

Colors

Frame colors should match those of the window trim. Many manufacturers can customize colors upon request.

Design

Storm windows should have narrow perimeter framing, and the meeting rails between upper and lower panels should align with the meeting rails of the primary sash. Half screens (e.g. covering only the bottom or top sash) are preferable to full screens covering the entire window opening.

Windows with stained glass, leaded glass, curved glass or unusual shapes or materials may require special custom treatments in order to preserve the window and its unique visual qualities. Storm and screen doors should be as simple as possible, with a plain glass or screen insert; avoid historically inaccurate decorative details.

Dimensions and configuration

Storm and screen windows and doors should be sized to fit the widow or door opening. Rectangular storm windows are not appropriate on windows with unusual shapes; in such cases either a custom fitted exterior storm window or an interior storm panel may be required.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED

for Storm/Screen Windows & Doors

The following information must be filed in person by appointment with the PHDC staff for ***in-house review*** of storm/screen windows and doors. Incomplete applications cannot be reviewed.

- A completed application form for a Certificate of Appropriateness, signed by the applicant and the property owner, describing the existing conditions and the proposed changes.
- 35mm color or black and white photographs of the building showing the entire building elevation and close-ups of the area where the work will occur. Photos are to be at least 4x6 inches and must be labeled with the street address, compass direction and date. High quality digital photographs are acceptable. Color photocopies of slides may be acceptable if the images reproduce clearly. Photocopied prints and instant (Polaroid) snapshots are not acceptable.
- Manufacturer's specifications and product information, including proposed dimensions and colors.

Major Alterations

The primary purpose of the historic district ordinance is to preserve buildings, sites and appurtenances with historic and architectural significance. It is important to identify character-defining features such as height, setback from the street, shape, roof form, wall cladding, trim and ornamentation, windows and doors, porches and stairs, siting, storefronts and signs. Alterations which recognize, maintain and preserve distinctive features, materials, finishes, construction techniques and examples of craftsmanship will help to protect the integrity of the historic property and the district.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED

See page 41

In reviewing proposed plans, the PHDC shall consider: the historic and architectural significance of the structure and its appurtenances; the way in which the structure and its appurtenances contribute to the historical and architectural significance of the district; and the appropriateness of the proposed general design, arrangement, texture, materials and siting, in relationship to the existing historic structure.

Examples of alterations requiring full PHDC review include, but are not limited to, those listed below. Check with PHDC staff if you do not see your project listed. Projects must be approved by the PHDC prior to construction.

Replacement of features resulting in a change in material, dimension, design, texture or visual appearance, including work ordered by any regulatory agency to correct code violations. If existing features are character-defining elements of a historic structure, they should be replaced in kind to match as closely as possible. If existing features are not appropriate to the architectural style of the building, consider replacement with a more appropriate design. Avoid creating a false sense of historical development.

Changes in wall materials and surfaces, including installation of artificial siding, installation of through-wall vents and air conditioners, and addition or removal of projections or recesses. Original or historic bay windows and oriels should be retained and preserved.

Aluminum and vinyl siding are generally not appropriate because:

1. Their installation usually results in the covering or removal of clapboards, shingles, window and door surrounds, cornices, corner boards and quoins, brackets, belt courses, and other character-defining elements;
2. Installation of artificial siding on top of existing siding changes the relationship of elements in the vertical plane of the wall, often eliminating projections and recesses; *and*
3. Artificial sidings will not halt deterioration all by themselves, and thus are not a substitute for proper repairs. Generally, artificial siding may be considered only for non-contributing buildings. Removal of existing artificial sidings and restoration of original wall surfaces is encouraged. Through-wall vents larger than 2 square feet in area should be located inconspicuously on secondary elevations. Through-wall air conditioners are discouraged, particularly on primary elevations.

Changes in fenestration, including installation or elimination of window and door openings. Generally, creating new openings and closing up original openings is discouraged, particularly on primary elevations.

Changes in ornamentation, including installation or removal of trim, brackets, cornices, corner boards, belt courses and other decorative elements. Generally, removal of character-defining trim and ornamentation is discouraged. New trim should be consistent with the architectural style of the building.

Changes in roof form or elements, including construction or removal of dormers, cresting rails and balustrades, monitors, cupolas, skylights, head houses and decks. Original historic roof lines, dormers, monitors, cupolas, skylights, cresting rails and balustrades should be retained. Consider locating new rooftop elements so that they will be out of view from street level.

Skylights should not be located on front roof slopes, and flat profiles are preferable to rounded profiles; however, the PHDC may consider an exception for a non-contributing building.

Changes to porches, stairs and entryways, including enclosure with glass or screens and installation, alteration or removal of railings, steps, handrails, door hoods, transoms and sidelights. Porch enclosures should be located inside the railings and columns, minimizing the visual impact; use clear glass or dark mesh screens. Removal of original stairs, porches and entryways is discouraged. Avoid pressure-treated wood for new railings and trim pieces, as it tends to warp and twist.

Changes in grade levels and foundations. Major grade changes that would alter the historic setting of the property are generally discouraged. Underground parking garages inserted into hillsides may be considered. Cladding original exposed foundation materials in another material is generally discouraged. The permanent raising or lowering of a structure is discouraged.

Installation, alteration or removal of storefronts. Original storefront elements such as display windows, recessed entryways, sign bands, transoms, etc. should be maintained and preserved. Where buildings have been converted to commercial use, new storefronts should be designed in harmony with the historic facade.

Changes to meet other regulatory codes, including installation or removal of fire escapes, construction of wheelchair ramps, etc. *(see "Barrier Free Access" and "Fire Escapes" guidelines)*. Note that state codes may allow exceptions for historic buildings. Wherever possible, seek solutions which will have the least visual impact. Approval from the relevant regulatory agency (Building Board of Review, Fire Dept., Zoning Board of Review, etc.) should be obtained prior to filing an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness.

Appropriate and inappropriate siding types



▲ **Appropriate** Original clapboards.

The decorative patterns, spacing, beaded edges, and visual texture of wood shingles and clapboards are character-defining features of historic buildings which should be retained and preserved. Wood trim elements such as corner boards, belt courses, window and door surrounds and other decorative features should likewise be repaired or replaced to match.



▲ **Inappropriate** Asphalt shingles, windows filled in.



▲ **Inappropriate** Vertical siding.

Appropriate and inappropriate replacement siding



▲ **Appropriate** Original narrow clapboards, typically 3"-4" of exposure.



▲ **Inappropriate** Aluminum or vinyl siding. Loss of cornerboards, window trim and other details.



▲ **Inappropriate** Clapboards are too wide.

Appropriate and inappropriate replacement siding



▲ **Appropriate** Original wooden shingles.



▲ **Inappropriate** Replace shingles with clapboards.



▲ **Inappropriate** Horizontal siding.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED

for Major Alterations

The following information must be filed in person by appointment with the PHDC staff at least ***fourteen (14) days before a scheduled meeting*** for review of major alterations. Staff or the PHDC may request any additional information. Incomplete applications cannot be accepted for review.

- A completed application form for a Certificate of Appropriateness, signed by the applicant and the property owner, describing existing conditions and proposed changes.
- 35mm color or black and white photographs of the building, showing the entire building elevation(s) and closeups of the area where the work will occur. Photos are to be at least 4x6 inches and must be labeled with the street address, compass direction and date. High quality digital photographs are acceptable. Color photocopies of slides may be acceptable provided the images reproduce clearly. Photocopied prints and instant (Polaroid) snapshots are not acceptable due to lack of clarity and long term stability.
- Three (3) sets of scaled plan, elevation and section drawings as necessary, illustrating existing conditions and proposed changes. All drawings should show proposed changes in relationship to major architectural features: e.g., a new door should be shown in context with the entire elevation. Drawings should be titled, indicating the scale, labeled with the street address and dated.

  Examples of the drawings needed for varying types of projects are listed below. *This is not an exhaustive list.* Check with staff about documenting your particular project.

  Site plan for projections and recesses, wheelchair ramps, stairs, ground-level porches and decks, changes in grade, underground parking garages, etc. Show the entire building, adjacent buildings and property lines. Indicate north arrow.

  Floor plans for projections and recesses, window and door openings, upper floor porches and decks, storefronts, barrier-free access, fire escapes, etc.

  Roof plan for dormers, chimneys, monitors, cupolas, skylights, railings and balustrades, headhouses, decks and changes to the roofline.

  Elevations for replacement of features, changes in wall materials and surfaces, ornamentation, fenestration, porches, stairs, entryways, roof forms and elements, grade levels, foundations, storefronts, fire escapes, barrier-free access, air conditioners, through-wall vents, etc. Show front and side views of three-dimensional elements.

  Sections for projections and recesses, changes in roof form, porches and stairs, underground parking garages, details such as railings, trim and ornamentation.
- One (1) complete set of drawings reduced to 11x17 inches for mailing purposes.
- Written approval from the fire department for the design and location of any proposed fire escape.
- Copy of any required zoning, building or access code variances obtained for the project.
- Manufacturer's specifications or literature for elements such as windows and doors, skylights, vents, etc. indicating all dimensions, details and finishes.
- List of the names and mailing addresses of all abutting property owners, derived from the most current records of the City Tax Assessor. "Abutter" is defined as any property whose lot lines touch the front, side or rear lot lines of the subject property; since streets are common property lines, properties across the street are included as abutters. Properties on a corner should include the three opposite corner properties as abutters, in addition to those sharing side or rear lot lines.

BARRIER-FREE ACCESS

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and the Rhode Island Civil Rights of Individuals with Disabilities Act (R.I. General Laws 42-87) extend comprehensive civil rights to individuals with disabilities, and require that equal access be afforded to all citizens in all places of public accommodation, commercial facilities, and state and local governments. Although ADA exempts religious entities, private clubs and private residences from compliance, R.I.G.L. 42-87 covers all entities in Rhode Island, exempting only private residences.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED

See page 44

These laws require:

1. That all new public and commercial buildings and facilities be accessible;
2. That if existing elements, spaces or common areas are altered, then these shall be made readily accessible, consistent with the ADA Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG); *and*
3. That all barriers to accessibility in existing buildings and facilities be removed, on an on-going basis, when it is "readily achievable" to do so (that is, accomplished without much difficulty or expense).

Generally, normal maintenance, re-roofing, painting, asbestos removal and changes to mechanical and electrical systems do not trigger requirements for ADA and R.I.G.L. 42-87 compliance.

For more information about ADA and R.I.G.L. 42-87 requirements, contact the Accessibility Coordinator of the R.I. Building Code Commission at (401) 222-6320, or the Governor's Commission on the Handicapped at (401) 222-3731.

These agencies, along with the R.I. Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission (401) 222-2678, may also have review authority over accessibility improvements for properties in local historic districts. All of them encourage applicants to seek joint consultation and review whenever possible.

EXCEPTIONS FOR HISTORIC PROPERTIES

While historic properties are not exempt from ADA, the law does recognize the national interest in preserving historic properties. ADA Accessibility Guidelines provide alternative minimum requirements for qualified historic structures, such as those listed on the National Register of Historic Places or located within designated local historic districts, that cannot be made physically accessible without threatening or destroying their historic significance. *These alternative requirements may only be used after consultation with the R.I. Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission.* The alternative minimum requirements are:

- One accessible route must be provided from a site access point to an accessible entrance.
- One accessible entrance must be provided, preferably at a public entrance but possibly at a secondary, unlocked entrance. Directional and notification signage must be provided.
- Where toilets are provided, one unisex accessible toilet must be provided.
- Public spaces on the level of an accessible entrance must be accessible, and other public levels should be accessible wherever practical.
- Displays and written information should be located where they can be seen by a seated person.

If the RIHPHC determines that even the alternative requirements will threaten or destroy the significance of a structure, then alternative methods of access may be used, including guided tours and audio-visual materials and devices. This last exception is intended to be narrow and will apply only to a very small group of historic properties. Owners may initiate the consultation process by contacting RIHPHC.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

Exterior alterations to provide universal access to the site and to the structure will usually be reviewed by the PHDC at a public meeting. (Changes to paved surfaces are subject to staff review; installation of identification and directional signage identifying accessible parking spaces and entryways is exempt from review.) Interior alterations to provide access to the main floor, other floors, toilet facilities, drinking fountains and telephones are not reviewed by the PHDC unless they have exterior expression (such as an elevator tower).

Owners contemplating making alterations to improve the accessibility of their properties should follow a three-step process to identify and implement appropriate access solutions:

1. Identify the architectural materials, features and spaces that convey the historic significance of a property. These may include: construction materials such as brick, stone or wood; elements that clearly reflect the design intent of the architect or builder, such as porticos, bay windows, balconies, stairs, porches, columns, gates, paving and entryways; decorative features exhibiting a high level of craftsmanship, such as moldings, trim, carvings or applied ornament; and associated landscape features, such as driveways, walkways, berms, terraces, steps and green spaces.
2. Evaluate the historic property for compliance with state and federal accessibility requirements (whichever is stricter should apply) before planning changes. An "accessibility audit" should survey architectural barriers for persons with mobility, visual and hearing impairments.
3. Evaluate the accessibility options using the PHDC General Standards (page 6) and the guidelines below.

The ideal accessibility solution for a historic building is one which provides the highest level of access, is readily achievable, and does not threaten or destroy the property's historically significant materials, features and spaces. Each building's access problems must be studied and resolved on a case-by-case basis. If access to the primary entrance cannot be provided without threatening or destroying significant architectural features, consider providing access at a well-lit, secure and well-maintained secondary entrance (especially one adjacent to an accessible parking area).

Wheelchair ramps

Consider locations which will have the least visual impact on the historic building and setting. On some buildings, ramps can be integrated into existing stairs or porches with little visual impact.

Materials for ramps and railings should be compatible with the building: wooden ramps are often appropriate for frame buildings and converted residences, while concrete or brick ramps may be best for masonry buildings. Ramp and railing designs should be coordinated with existing elements wherever possible. Wooden ramp surfaces can be painted with a sanded paint for slip-resistance.

State code requires the slope of a wheelchair ramp to be at maximum 1:12, that is, to rise no more than one inch for every 12 inches in length; however, at sites where there is not enough space to accommodate a ramp with a 1:12 slope, ramps with a 1:6 slope are permitted for a run of up to 2 feet, which can overcome one or two steps. In some cases, altering grade levels to accommodate a very shallow ramp slope can alleviate the requirement for railings.

Ramps can be concealed with landscaping.

Wheelchair lifts

Under ADA, wheelchair lifts are less preferable than ramps because they can require assistance to operate and may break down. Nonetheless, lifts may be considered where the site does not provide ample room for a ramp. Both vertical platform lifts (which work like elevators, for a distance of up to 7 feet) and incline lifts (which ride along rails attached to stair railings) require a 25 square foot level platform between the lift and the entryway, and therefore can be extremely intrusive, particularly on a primary entrance. In some cases a telescoping hydraulic lift, which maintains the platform at grade level when not in use, can be a inconspicuous solution.

Entryways and steps

Where an existing door opening is too narrow to accommodate a wheelchair, consider installing offset door hinges to widen the opening. Installing an automatic door opener for a historic double door can create a suitably wide opening without requiring replacement of doors or enlargement of the opening itself. In some cases, replacing double leaf doors with a single leaf off-center door and fixed side panel may be acceptable. Alterations

to door hardware, although exempt from review, should consider reversible solutions such as installing a lever handle over an existing round door knob. Where steps must be replaced to comply with ADAAG, try to maintain as much of the original historic appearance as possible; materials for new steps should replicate the original or be compatible with other materials on the building.

Paving

See "Site Improvements" guidelines, page 31.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED

for Barrier-Free Access

The following information must be filed in person by appointment with the PHDC staff at least ***fourteen (14) days before a scheduled meeting*** for review of accessibility improvements. Staff or the PHDC may request any additional information. Incomplete applications cannot be accepted for review.

- A completed application form for a Certificate of Appropriateness, signed by the applicant and the property owner, describing existing conditions and proposed changes.
- 35mm color or black and white photographs of the building, showing the entire building elevation(s) and closeups of the area where the work will occur. Photos are to be at least 4x6 inches and must be labeled with the street address, compass direction and date. High quality digital photographs are acceptable. Color photocopies of slides may be acceptable provided the images reproduce clearly. Photocopied prints and instant (Polaroid) snapshots are not acceptable due to lack of clarity and long term stability.
- Three (3) sets of scaled plan, elevation and section drawings as necessary, illustrating existing conditions and proposed changes. All drawings should show proposed changes in relationship to major architectural features: e.g., a new door should be shown in context with the entire elevation. Drawings should be titled, indicating the scale, labeled with the street address and dated.

  Site plan for wheelchair ramps and lifts, alterations to stairways and landings, and major changes in grade. Show the proposed changes in context with the entire building, adjacent buildings and property lines. Indicate north arrow.

  Elevations for wheelchair ramps and lifts, alterations to entryways and stairways, etc. Show front and side views of three-dimensional elements in context with the building elevation.

  Sections for major changes in grade. Show changes in relationship to the building and to other site elements.
- One (1) complete set of drawings reduced to 11x17 inches for mailing purposes.
- Copy of any required zoning, building or access code variances obtained for the project.
- Manufacturer's specifications or literature for wheelchair lifts, new doors, etc. indicating all dimensions, details and finishes.
- List of the names and mailing addresses of all abutting property owners, derived from the most current records of the City Tax Assessor. "Abutter" is defined as any property whose lot lines touch the front, side or rear lot lines of the subject property; since streets are common property lines, properties across the street are included as abutters. Properties on a corner should include the three opposite corner properties as abutters, in addition to those sharing side or rear lot lines.

Fire Escapes

State building and fire codes require that in case of emergency, a second means of egress must be provided from all buildings. Accommodation of egress requirements in historic buildings requires careful planning so that public safety may be provided while protecting significant architectural features. Ideally, both means of egress should be located inside the building.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED

See page 46

Be cautious about fire escape installation ordered by a non-regulatory entity, such as when a bank requires it as a condition of issuing a mortgage. If a building has less than four residential units, for example, the state fire code does not require that exterior fire escapes be provided for every unit. Always check with the Providence Fire Department at (401) 421-8290 to confirm that fire escapes are required and for other fire safety requirement information.

Many buildings in Providence's historic districts have been converted from an original single-family use to a multi-family use. In such cases, fire escapes will only be considered for buildings with legal densities.

Before submitting an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness, obtain certification from the Fire Department that the proposed fire escape design and location are acceptable.

Fire escapes

Where necessary, fire escapes should be located on secondary elevations, with escape routes oriented toward the rear of the building rather than the front wherever possible. Consider arranging the interior layout of a building so that bedrooms face away from the street, thus precluding the need for a fire escape on a primary elevation. The least intrusive design is preferable; for example, a ladder has less visual impact than a scissor stair.

Brackets and supports for fire escapes should not be attached to decorative elements such as quoins, cornices and window and door surrounds. Consider painting the fire escape to match the background color of the building, to reduce its visual impact.

Fire doors

Conversion of double hung windows to casement windows for egress, and enlargement of window openings to accommodate fire doors, are discouraged, especially on primary elevations. In many historic buildings, upper floor double hung windows are tall enough to permit egress to a fire escape through the raised bottom sash. Avoid installing fire doors in door openings on primary elevations wherever possible.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED

for Fire Escapes

The following information must be filed in person by appointment with the PHDC staff at least ***fourteen (14) days before a scheduled meeting*** for review of fire escapes and other alterations for fire egress. Staff or the PHDC may request any additional information. Incomplete applications cannot be accepted for review.

- A completed application form for a Certificate of Appropriateness, signed by the applicant and the property owner, describing existing conditions and proposed changes.
- 35mm color or black and white photographs of the building, showing the entire building elevation(s) and closeups of the area where the work will occur. Photos are to be at least 4x6 inches and must be labeled with the street address, compass direction and date. High quality digital photographs are acceptable. Color photocopies of slides may be acceptable provided the images reproduce clearly. Photocopied prints and instant (Polaroid) snapshots are not acceptable due to lack of clarity and long term stability.
- Three (3) sets of scaled plan and elevation drawings as necessary, illustrating existing conditions and proposed changes. All drawings should show proposed changes in relationship to major architectural features: e.g., a new fire escape should be shown in context with the entire elevation. Drawings should be titled, indicating the scale, labeled with the street address and dated. The following drawings may be required:

  Floor plans showing interior room layouts and location of proposed fire doors or fire escapes. Indicate whether an internal second means of egress is possible.

  Elevations showing front and side views of proposed fire escapes (including supports) and new fire doors or replacement egress windows, in context with the entire side of the building.
- One (1) complete set of drawings reduced to 11x17 inches for mailing purposes.
- Written approval from the Providence Fire Department for the design and location of any proposed fire escape.
- Copy of any required zoning variances (relative to density) required for the project.
- Manufacturer's specifications or literature for proposed fire doors or replacement egress windows, indicating design, dimensions and materials.
- List of the names and mailing addresses of all abutting property owners, derived from the most current records of the City Tax Assessor. "Abutter" is defined as any property whose lot lines touch the front, side or rear lot lines of the subject property; since streets are common property lines, properties across the street are included as abutters. Properties on a corner should include the three opposite corner properties as abutters, in addition to those sharing side or rear lot lines.

New Construction & Additions

Since its inception in 1960, the PHDC's philosophy regarding new construction has been to promote high quality new design, often contemporary in nature, that fits within the context of the historic districts. (For the purposes of these guidelines, "new construction" refers to new buildings or structures of any kind, including garages, and to substantial additions to existing structures.) Additions may be designed in the spirit of the existing architectural style, or may be clearly differentiated from the historic structure but compatible with it and with the surrounding historic district. It is not necessary to replicate historic architectural styles; designs should be contextual, but should not seek to create a false sense of historical development.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED
See page 49

It is strongly recommended that the applicant retain the services of a registered architect, design professional or engineer for the design and construction of any new structure or addition within a historic district.

REVIEW PROCESS

Review of an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for new construction generally occurs in four phases, including a minimum of two public meetings (conceptual review, final review), unless otherwise waived by the PHDC. Applications for conceptual approval may be filed and reviewed prior to obtaining any necessary zoning variances; however, variances must be granted before the PHDC will proceed with final review. The four phases of design review for new construction projects are:

1. Pre-application consultation and/or review. Consulting with the PHDC staff and arranging a site visit early in the design process (during preliminary design, and before filing an application) is essential. This is the time to identify issues for both the property owner and the PHDC, and to investigate alternative approaches to resolving these issues. Applicants may also request a non-binding pre-application review with the PHDC, to obtain informal feedback on a design concept before filing an application. At a pre-application review the applicant should be prepared to present a written description of the project, 35mm photographs of the site, and schematic site plans and elevations. Pre-application reviews are an agenda item at PHDC regular meetings, and consequently a written request and accompanying documentation must be submitted by the filing deadline for a specific regular meeting.
2. Conceptual review. Once a complete application is filed (see "Documentation Requirements," below), it is scheduled for conceptual review at a public meeting. The applicant's presentation should include identification of the use of the new structure, a statement of design philosophy and a conceptual design showing height, scale, roof form, setback, shape, rhythm, materials and major site elements. If substantial design modifications are suggested, the PHDC may continue conceptual review until a subsequent public hearing, and establish a subcommittee of its members to work with the applicant in the meantime. If the application is approved in concept, it then passes to final review.

3. Final review. After an application is approved in concept and any necessary zoning variances have been obtained, at a subsequent public meeting the applicant presents final drawings (not for construction) that respond to comments made at the conceptual review, and that clarify relationships of various building and site elements to each other, relate interior arrangements to exterior appearance, address issues such as projections and recesses, doors and windows, trim and ornament, landscaping, etc., and include operating systems (mechanical, electrical, plumbing). If the final design is approved, the application then passes to review of construction details.
4. Construction detail review. Construction drawings and other details (such as material or color samples) are reviewed by staff or the subcommittee after a project's final design has been approved by the PHDC. These drawings show how the structure will actually be built, and are used by the contractor to price the job, obtain permits and carry out the work. Construction drawings can be reviewed informally unless there are substantial changes to the approved final design; staff or the subcommittee will determine whether proposed changes warrant a further public hearing. Construction drawings must be approved (stamped) before a Certificate of Appropriateness and a building permit can be issued.

CHANGES TO AN APPROVED PROJECT

It is common for project details to change during the course of construction. However, a Certificate of Appropriateness for any project is tied to a specific design and details as illustrated in stamped construction drawings. ***All changes must be brought to the attention of the PHDC staff before construction proceeds on those changes.*** Staff will determine whether the changes can be reviewed in-house or whether the phdc needs to review them at a public meeting.

Failure to advise the PHDC of changes to an approved project and to obtain approval for those changes will invalidate the certificate of appropriateness and be deemed a violation of the zoning ordinance. It may also result in refusal by the department of inspection and standards to issue a certificate of occupancy, which can jeopardize yearly tax benefit claims and preclude final payments from lending institutions.

DESIGN CRITERIA

Historic districts in Providence contain a wide variety of building types and architectural styles. While some streets demonstrate great similarity of building sizes, shapes, materials and setbacks, others are characterized by great diversity, demonstrating how a neighborhood has grown over time or how different activities were carried out in the same area. This variety makes it impossible to mandate a specific design for new construction. These guidelines therefore deal with general issues of building height, mass, scale, siting, rhythm, materials, etc. They are intended to provide a framework within which design creativity and the needs of the property owner can co-exist with respect for designated historic districts.

New construction should reflect the design trends and concepts of the period in which it is created, while recognizing that a new building or addition must fit into an existing framework of a variety of older buildings. New structures should harmonize with existing older structures, and at the same time be distinct from the old so that the evolution of the district can be interpreted correctly.

When designing an addition or a new building, consider the following architectural and site features in relationship to the existing structure and/or the surrounding structures:

· Height
· Scale
· Massing, form, proportions
· Topography
· Parking
· Directional expression
· Siting and setbacks
· Landscaping
· Roof shape
· Height of foundation platform
· Views
· Sense of entry, porches, doors, stairs
· Rhythm and size of openings
· Known archeological features
· Color and texture of materials
· Architectural detail
· Development patterns

All new public and commercial buildings must be fully accessible to the disabled under federal and state law. Emergency egress in any new building shall be accommodated inside the building. See also "Site Improvements," "Barrier Free Access," and "Fences and Gates" guidelines.

CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

The following information must be submitted in person by appointment with the PHDC staff ***at least fourteen (14) days in advance of a scheduled public meeting***. Incomplete applications cannot be scheduled for review.

- A completed application form for a Certificate of Appropriateness, signed by the property owner and the applicant, including a description of existing conditions and proposed changes.
- 35mm color or black and white photographs of the site where the proposed new construction will occur, and of all abutting properties (abutters are those properties whose lot lines touch the lot lines of the subject property; streets are considered common property lines). Photos should be at least 4x6 inches and must be labeled with the street address, compass direction and date. High quality digital photographs are acceptable. Color photocopies of slides may be acceptable if the images reproduce clearly. Photocopied prints and instant (Polaroid) snapshots are not acceptable due to lack of clarity and long-term stability.
- One (1) set of scaled architectural drawings of the proposed new construction. Drawings should be titled, indicating the scale, labeled with the property address and dated. The scale should be sufficient to indicate clearly all aspects of the project. Drawings should include:

  Site plan illustrating the location of all new construction in relationship to all other site elements, the property lines and structures on abutting properties. Site plan should be based upon data provided by a registered land surveyor, and shall clearly indicate the location of all design features of the proposed construction, including: building setbacks, paved areas, parking areas, landscape features, fences, walls, mechanical equipment and other planned improvements. Indicate north arrow.

  Conceptual floor plans, roof plan and exterior elevations showing the design concept for all four elevations, all interior floors and the roof. Drawings should illustrate the relationship of the proposed structure to abutting buildings, and shall clearly indicate all design features of the proposed construction, including: building materials and colors of all permanent exterior finish materials; location, configuration and type of doors and windows; overall dimensions; general details of roofing, siding, ornament and trim; location and type of any proposed signs; exterior mechanical equipment; and other building or site features.

  Axonometric or perspective drawings (and/or model), illustrating in three dimensions the proposed construction in context with the surrounding area and abutting buildings.
- One (1) complete set of the above drawings, reduced to 11x17 inches for mailing purposes.
- List of the names and mailing addresses of all abutting property owners, derived from the most current records of the City Tax Assessor. "Abutter" is defined as any property whose lot lines touch the front, side or rear lot lines of the subject property; since streets are common property lines, properties across the street are included as abutters. Properties on a corner should include the three opposite corner properties as abutters, in addition to those sharing side or rear lot lines.

FINAL REVIEW

The following information must be filed in person by appointment with staff ***at least fourteen (14) days before a scheduled meeting:***

- Written list of all changes made to the project design since conceptual approval. Changes shall also be highlighted on the drawings submitted for final review.
- One (1) full-size set of final design drawings, to scale, depicting the final design of the project. Drawings shall include floor, roof and site plans, all exterior elevations, building sections and exterior details. Drawings should be titled, indicating the scale, labeled with the property address and dated.
- One (1) set of final design drawings, to scale, reduced to 11x17 inches for mailing purposes.
- Any other information requested by the PHDC or the staff at the Conceptual Review hearing or at a subsequent sub-committee meeting.

CONSTRUCTION DETAILS

The applicant shall submit three (3) sets of scaled construction drawings to the PHDC staff. Material and color samples, if requested, should be made available on site.

Moving of Historic Structures

When a historic structure is moved from its original site, it loses its integrity of setting and its sense of time and place, which are important aspects of the historic building and its environment. Their loss is irreplaceable. Ordinarily, a contributing historic structure listed on the National Register of Historic Places (as are many of the buildings in Providence's local historic districts) will lose its National Register status if moved from its original site.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED

See page 51

Moving of historic structures into, within or out of historic districts is discouraged except as a last alternative to demolition. In any case, the selection of a new site, appropriate for the building, plays a key role in the success of the relocation project. Consider how the building will relate to the proposed site and to its immediate context in terms of size, massing, scale, setback, texture of materials and parking; and how its architectural style relates to its surroundings and to the district as a whole.

Structures may be moved intact, partially disassembled and completely disassembled. It is important that the structure be moved by a professional building moving firm with experience in moving historic structures. ***Adequate insurance coverage must be provided for all phases of the operation.***

The property owner will need to get various licenses and permits from city agencies such as the public works, traffic engineering, police, fire and building departments; and from utility companies. The owner must provide proof of ability to comply with all local and state safety regulations, and supply the necessary equipment and vehicles. If the owner is using federal assistance to move a structure listed on the National Register, archeological investigations are usually required.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED

for Moving of Historic Structures

The following information must be filed in person by appointment with the PHDC staff at least ***at least fourteen (14) days before a scheduled meeting.*** Incomplete applications cannot be scheduled for review.

- A completed application form for a Certificate of Appropriateness, signed by the applicant and the property owner, describing existing conditions and proposed changes.
- 35mm color or black and white photographs completely documenting the entire structure in context of its original site; and photos of the proposed site to which the structure will be relocated, including abutting properties on all sides. Photos are to be at least 4x6 inches and must be labeled with the street address, compass direction and date. High quality digital photographs are acceptable. Color photocopies of slides may be acceptable provided the images reproduce clearly. Photocopied prints and instant (Polaroid) snapshots are not acceptable due to lack of clarity and long-term stability.
- If the structure is to be moved to a site within a local historic district:

  Site plan (3 sets) to scale, showing the proposed location of the structure, indicating its relationship to the new site and the surrounding neighborhood. Drawings should be titled, indicating the scale and north arrow, and noting the street address and date.

  Elevation drawings (3 sets) to scale, showing the building in its proposed new site in the district, showing its relationship to abutting buildings on all sides; and a scaled foundation plan. Drawings should be titled, indicating the scale, and noting the street address and date.
- If the structure is to be moved from a site within a local historic district: scaled plan, elevation and section drawings (3 sets) as necessary to illustrate any proposed new construction or site treatment (see "New Construction" or "Site Improvements" guidelines for complete documentation information.)
- A certified report from an engineer or the moving company describing the method of moving, expected loss of historic fabric, timetable, etc.
- List of the names and mailing addresses of all abutting property owners, derived from the most current records of the City Tax Assessor. "Abutter" is defined as any property whose lot lines touch the front, side or rear lot lines of the subject property; since streets are common property lines, properties across the street are included as abutters. Properties on a corner should include the three opposite corner properties as abutters, in addition to those sharing side or rear lot lines.

DEMOLITION

Demolition of any historic structure constitutes an irreplaceable loss to the historic district and the City of Providence. Even the demolition of a non-contributing structure, or a secondary structure such as a garage, can have serious consequences for the district as a whole. Consequently, demolition is strongly discouraged.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED
See page 55

Demolition of any historic structure constitutes an irreplaceable loss to the historic district and the City of Providence. Even the demolition of a non-contributing structure, or a secondary structure such as a garage, can have serious consequences for the district as a whole. Consequently, demolition is strongly discouraged.

Demolition proposals are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. The applicant must make a good faith effort to demonstrate that ***all alternatives to demolition have been evaluated*** (including rehabilitation, sale, adaptive reuse and relocation of the structure), and to provide both architectural and financial data to support a conclusion that demolition is the only feasible solution. The documentation requirements for demolition proposals are extensive, but complete information is necessary for the PHDC to make an informed decision.

All demolition proposals should include information about how the site will be treated once the structure is removed. Where demolition of a primary structure is proposed, plans for development of the site with new construction should be included with the application. Replacing a building with a surface parking lot can seriously diminish the architectural integrity of historic districts and is strongly discouraged.

Upon approval of an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for demolition, the PHDC may require that the exterior and interior of the structure be recorded, at the owner's expense, according to the documentation standards of the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) and the Historic American Engineering Record (HAER). Such records would be deposited with the PHDC.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

ALL demolition proposals within a local historic district require an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness. Consultation with the PHDC staff prior to submitting an application is strongly encouraged. The review process consists of at least two monthly public meetings, and is structured to give ample time to the community, the applicant and the PHDC to obtain information and study the proposal thoroughly. Where demolition of a secondary or non-contributing structure is proposed, the PHDC may at its discretion decide to streamline this process.

Review procedures can be summarized as follows:

1. Application is submitted, at least thirty (30) and no more than forty-five (45) days before a scheduled regular meeting. Applications must be documented as outlined below; incomplete applications cannot be reviewed. Check with staff for filing deadlines and hearing dates.
2. Preliminary public meeting is held to determine the architectural and historic significance of the structure and its contribution to the historic district, and to determine whether to accept the application as complete. The applicant and/or property owner shall attend the meeting and present the application to the PHDC. Public comment will be taken.

   The PHDC shall first determine whether the structure proposed for demolition is:
   1) contributing to the significance of the district, and valuable to the City, State or Nation;
   2) contributing to the significance of the district, and valuable for the period of architecture it represents, or to the district; or
   3) non-contributing to the sig-

nificance of the district. The PHDC will use its own judgment in making determinations of architectural and historical significance, and may call upon expert witnesses. Applicants may also present testimony as to the significance of the structure.

Next, the PHDC shall determine whether sufficient information has been submitted with the application to allow thorough review (see "Documentation Requirements," below), and whether all alternatives to demolition have been considered. If the PHDC finds that the documentation is complete and all alternatives to demolition have been considered, it will vote to accept the application and schedule the application for review at the next regular meeting. If the application cannot be accepted because additional information is needed, then the preliminary meeting will be continued until the next regular PHDC meeting or such time as the additional information can be submitted. The application is considered formally accepted as of the date of the vote to accept.

3. Second public meeting is held at the next regular meeting following the vote to accept the application, to review the application in light of the Review Criteria listed below. The criteria vary depending on whether the structure was determined to be a contributing or non-contributing structure in the district. The applicant and/or property owner shall attend, and public comment will be taken.

   If the structure is contributing, the PHDC votes whether the proposal meets the primary review criteria outlined below. If so, then the application will reviewed in light of the secondary review criteria. If the application is consistent with both the primary and the secondary review criteria, then it may be approved, either as submitted or with conditions. If not, the application may be denied.

   If the structure is non-contributing, the PHDC votes whether to approve, approve with conditions, or to deny the application for demolition, using the secondary review criteria outlined below.

   At the second meeting the PHDC will also review any claim of economic hardship (see "Economic Hardship" guidelines, page 56).

4. A written resolution is issued within 15 days of the vote to approve or deny the application, describing the PHDC's decision and the reasons behind it. Any conditions of approval (such as HABS/HAER recording) must be met before a Certificate of Appropriateness is issued and a demolition permit obtained. If an application is denied, a new application for demolition of the structure may not be submitted for a period of one (1) year from the date of the written resolution.

REVIEW CRITERIA

At the second public meeting, the PHDC shall use the following criteria for review, based on whether the structure has previously been determined to be contributing or non-contributing to the significance of the historic district.

Contributing Structures: If a structure is deemed contributing, then the PHDC shall consider whether the application meets the following primary criteria:

1. If the structure is deemed valuable to the City, State or Nation, such that its loss will be a great loss to the City, State or Nation, then in order for the PHDC to approve demolition the structure must constitute a hazard to public safety, which hazard cannot be eliminated by economic means available to the owner, including sale of the structure to any purchaser willing to preserve the structure.
2. If the structure is deemed valuable for the period of architecture which it represents, or to the district as a whole, then at least one of the following requirements must be met in order for the PHDC to approve demolition:
   a) Retention of the structure constitutes a hazard to public safety, which hazard cannot be eliminated by economic means available to the owner, including the sale of the structure on its present site to any purchaser willing to preserve the structure.
   b) Preservation of the structure is a deterrent to a major improvement program which will be of substantial benefit to the community.
   c) Preservation of the structure would cause an undue and

unreasonable financial hardship to the owner, taking into account the financial resources available to the owner including the sale of the structure to any purchaser willing to preserve the structure.

d) Preservation of the structure would not be in the interest of the majority of the community.

If the primary criteria have been met, then the PHDC may consider any or all of the following secondary criteria in deciding whether to approve or deny the application:

1. The merit of the structure to be demolished.
2. The effect of the demolition on the surrounding buildings.
3. The effect of the demolition on the historic district as a whole.
4. The value or usefulness of the proposed replacement structure to the community, and the appropriateness of its design to the historic district.
5. If the lot is to be left open, the impact of open space in that location and on the district as a whole.
6. The effect of the demolition on the local economy.
7. Whether the demolition will foster civic beauty.
8. Whether the demolition will stabilize and improve property values in the district.
9. The effect of the demolition on safeguarding the heritage of the City, State or Nation.
10. The effect of the demolition on promotion of the district for the education, pleasure and welfare of the citizens of the City.

Non-Contributing Structures: If a structure is deemed non-contributing, the PHDC may consider any or all of the secondary criteria above in deciding whether to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for demolition.

EMERGENCY DEMOLITION

In cases of fire, natural disaster or other event which causes the Director of the Department of Inspection and Standards to order demolition immediately due to an imminent public safety hazard, the PHDC may hold a special meeting with 48 hours notice, in accordance with the R.I. Open Meeting Law, to review an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for demolition. Documentation with the application shall include interior and exterior 35mm color or black and white photographs illustrating the building's condition, and written documentation of the nature of the emergency and of the building's irreparable and dangerous condition. The PHDC, in approving an emergency demolition, may require as a condition of approval that the applicant return within a specified period of time with a proposal for new construction on the site.

DEMOLITION ALTERNATIVES

1. An itemized breakdown of the feasibility of all possible alternatives to demolition, and reasons why such alternatives were rejected, including:
2. Sale of the structure on the present site to a party willing to preserve the structure.
3. Sale of the structure for removal and preservation on a new site. Consider the likelihood of a party willing to buy the structure for removal, and the feasibility of removal in both economic and practical terms.
4. Public or quasi-public agencies having any potential use for the structure, or knowing of potential users or purchasers.
5. The availability of financial programs that could assist in the rehabilitation and preservation of the structure.
6. Alternative uses for the structure that would allow its preservation.

FINANCIAL DATA

1. Form of ownership of the property, including the names and addresses of the owners. If the owner is an organization, governmental entity or corporation, include the name, address and telephone number of a contact person.
2. The fair market value of the property as determined by a qualified professional expert.
3. The amount paid for the property, the date of purchase and the name of the seller, including the relationship between the applicant or owner of record and the party from whom the property was purchased.
4. The price asked for the property and any offers received in the previous three years.
5. If the property is commercial or income-producing: the gross annual income from the property for the past three years, the item-

ized operating and maintenance expenses for the previous three years, the depreciation deduction and annual cash flow before and after debt service for the previous three years.

6. The remaining balance on any mortgage or other financing secured by the property and the annual debt service for the past three years.
7. Three bids for the cost of the proposed demolition compared to the cost of stabilizing or "mothballing" the structure, and compared to the cost of rehabilitating the structure.
8. A list of all economic incentives for preserving the structure available to the applicant through federal, state, city or private programs.
9. If making a claim of economic hardship, such financial information as listed on page 46-48 of these guidelines.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED

for Demolition

The following information must be submitted in person by appointment with PHDC staff at least ***thirty (30) days before a scheduled meeting*** for review of demolition. Incomplete applications cannot be scheduled for review.

- A completed application form for a Certificate of Appropriateness, signed by the applicant and the property owner, describing existing conditions and proposed changes.
- List of the names and mailing addresses of all abutting property owners, derived from the most current records of the City Tax Assessor. "Abutter" is defined as any property whose lot lines touch the front, side or rear lot lines of the subject property; since streets are common property lines, properties across the street are included as abutters. Properties on a corner should include the three opposite corner properties as abutters, in addition to those sharing side or rear lot lines.
- 35mm color or black and white photographs of the structure to be demolished, showing all elevations, closeups of details and relationship to surrounding structures. (If the structure to be demolished is a secondary structure, such as a garage, include photos of the primary building(s) as well.) Photos are to be at least 4x6 inches and must be labeled with the street address, compass direction and date. High quality digital photographs are acceptable. Color photocopies of slides may be acceptable provided the image reproduces clearly. Photocopied prints and instant (Polaroid) snapshots are not acceptable due to lack of clarity and long-term stability.
- A site plan, to scale, showing the location of the structure proposed to be demolished in relationship to other structures on the property, and to the property lines.
- A written report from an engineer licensed in Rhode Island, and/or from the Building Inspector of the City of Providence, as to the structural soundness of the building and its adaptability for rehabilitation. Any dangerous conditions should be identified.
- A description of the proposed replacement for the structure, including schematic plan and elevation drawings (see "New Construction" guidelines).

Economic Hardship

In some instances, the preservation of a structure and its features may cause an undue and unreasonable economic burden on the property owner. These guidelines will inform applicants as to the circumstances under which an owner may claim economic hardship and seek approval to alter a property in a manner inappropriate to historic preservation.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED

See page 57

For the purposes of these guidelines, the term "economic hardship" shall refer to an owner's inability to see a reasonable economic return for an investment which will comply with PHDC Standards and Guidelines to preserve the property. Evidence of economic hardship is generally limited to instances when the cost of preservation exceeds the value of the building, or preservation will deprive the owner of reasonable use of the property. An owner's personal financial status is ***not*** an issue that the PHDC may consider.

The PHDC may allow projects to be completed in phases to accommodate the long-term and short-term availability of funds for preservation. Federal and state tax credits and a variety of low-interest loans are available to owners of historic properties for appropriate rehabilitation work. Although the PHDC itself does not provide financial assistance, the staff can provide information on these programs.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

1. A claim of economic hardship shall accompany an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness. Claims of economic hardship shall be documented as described below. The PHDC may require that any of the submitted information be verified by a professional evaluation. All documentation becomes part of the public record.
2. Applications which are accompanied by claims of economic hardship shall be submitted at least thirty (30) days before a regularly scheduled meeting of the PHDC. Claims of economic hardship relative to demolition applications shall be reviewed at the second public meeting on the application.
3. The applicant shall be required to testify at the public meeting. Public comment will be taken. The PHDC shall determine whether the application is complete (see Documentation Requirements, below) and, if no further information is needed, shall consider the following factors:
    a) Whether the property does or does not contribute to the significance of the historic district.
    b) The impact of the inappropriate alterations, construction or demolition on the structure as a whole.
    c) The impact of the inappropriate alterations, construction or demolition on the historic district as a whole.
    d) The economic impact on the applicant of complying with the guidelines of the PHDC.
4. After considering all evidence, testimony and criteria, the PHDC will vote on the application. An approval will include acceptance of the claim of economic hardship; approvals may be made of the application as submitted, or modifications may be required as conditions of approval. A denial will include both the application and the claim of economic hardship. Denied claims of economic hardship may not be resubmitted within one (1) year of the date of the written resolution.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED

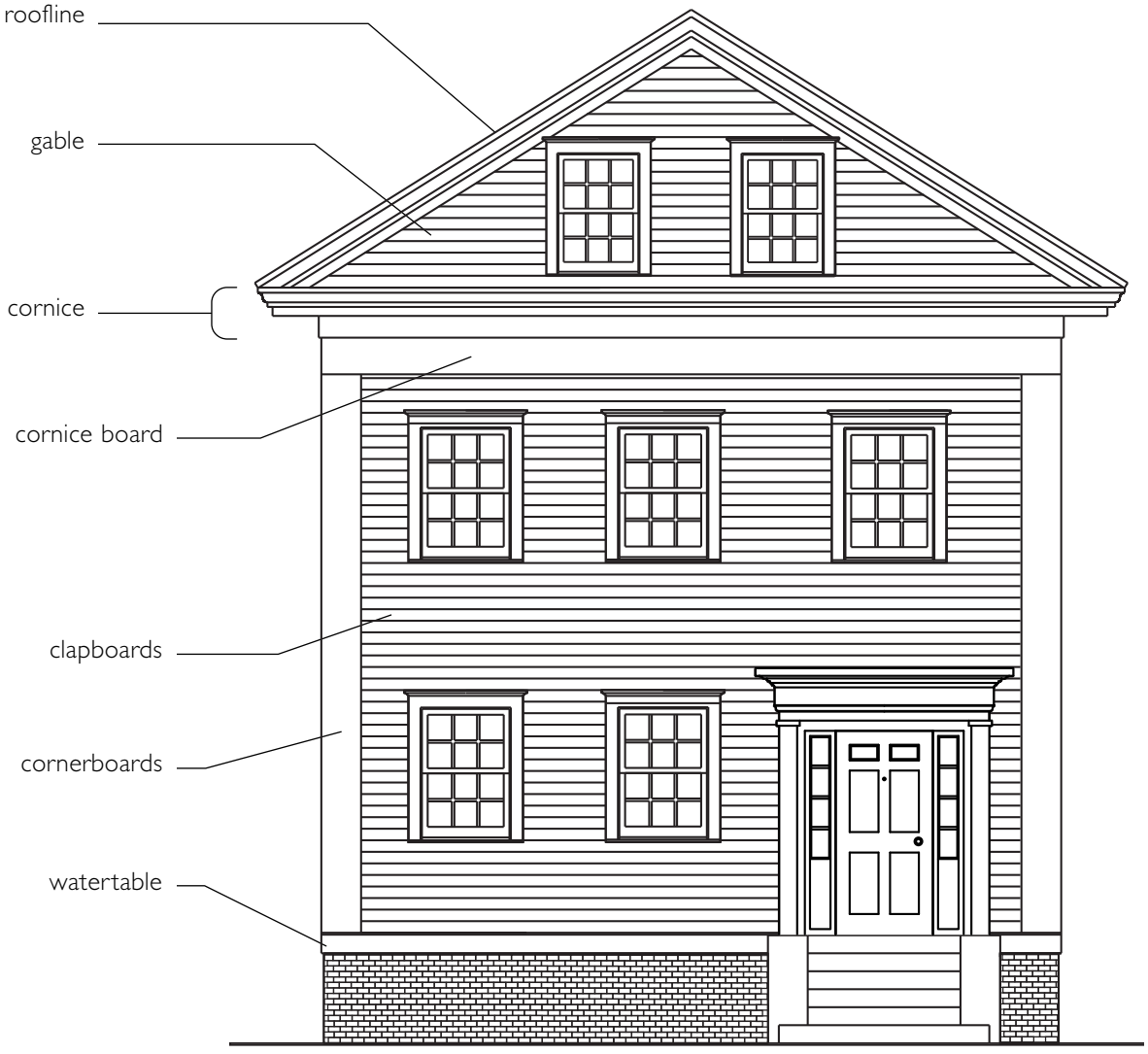
for Economic Hardship

The following information must be submitted in person by appointment with PHDC staff at least ***thirty (30) days before a scheduled meeting***.

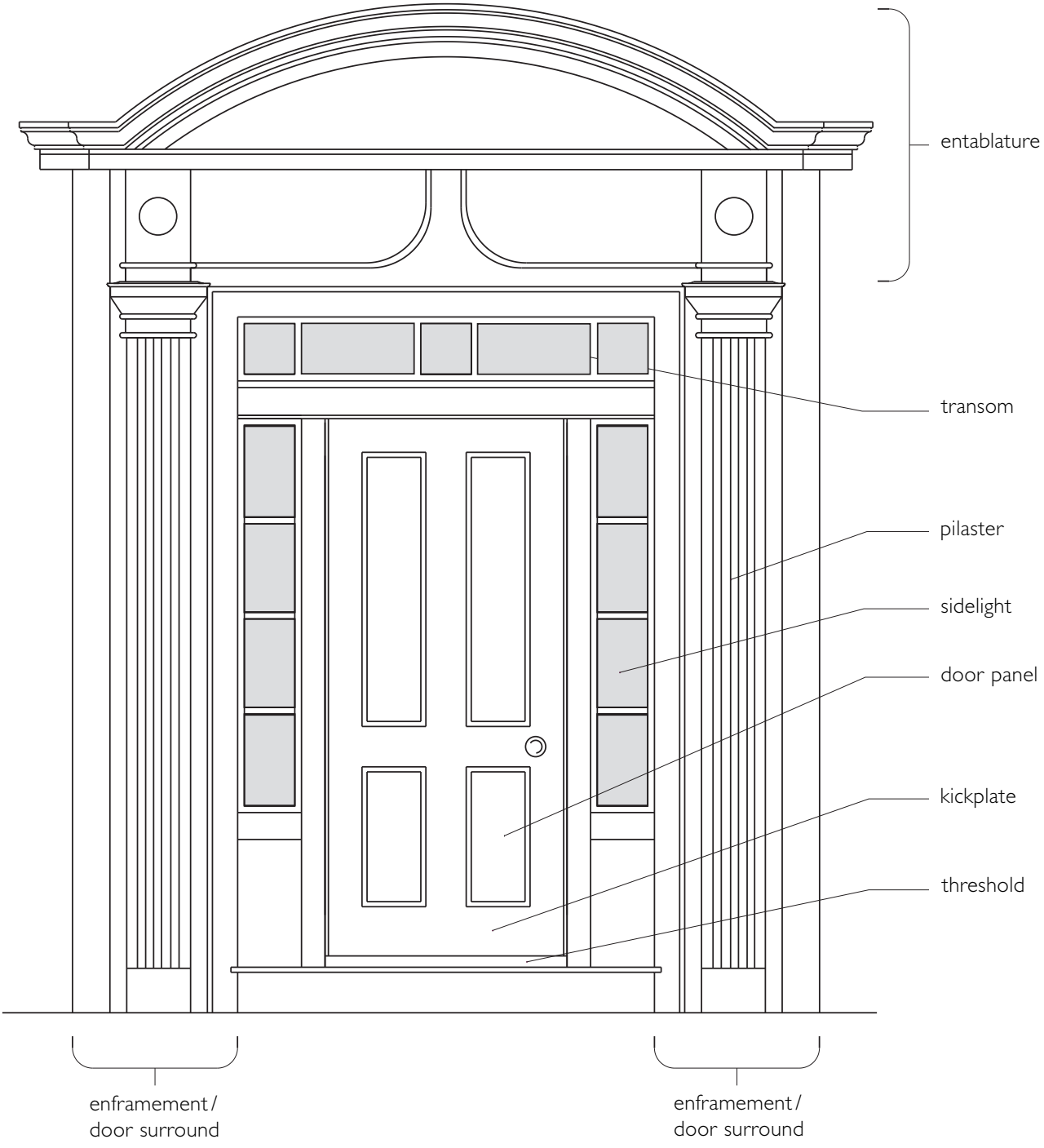
- A completed application form for a Certificate of Appropriateness, signed by the applicant and the property owner, describing existing conditions and proposed changes.
- List of the names and mailing addresses of all abutting property owners, derived from the most recent records of the City Tax Assessor. "Abutters" are defined as those properties whose front, side or rear lot lines touch the lot lines of the subject property, including properties across the street. Abutters of corner lots include the three opposite corner lots, in addition to those sharing side or rear lot lines.
- 35mm color or black and white photographs of the property, showing all elevations, closeups of details and relationship to surrounding structures. Photos are to be at least 4x6 inches and must be labeled with the street address, compass direction and date. High quality digital photographs are acceptable. Color photocopies of slides may be acceptable provided the image reproduces clearly. Photocopied prints and instant (Polaroid) snapshots are not acceptable due to lack of clarity and long-term stability.
- Plans and drawings (to scale) showing all proposed changes (see Alterations, New Construction or Demolition Guidelines, as relevant, for more specific information).
- Form of ownership of the property, including names and addresses of the owners. If the owner is a corporation, institution, government or other organization, include the name and telephone number of a contact person.
- A comparison of the cost of the proposed work with the cost of complying with PHDC Standards and Guidelines (minimum three estimates each).
- Estimated market value of the property: a) in its current condition; b) after complying with PHDC Standards and Guidelines; c) after the proposed alteration.
- Amount paid for the property, the date of purchase and the party from whom the property was purchased, including any relationship between the parties.
- If the property is commercial or income-producing: a) the annual gross income for the previous three years; b) itemized operating and maintenance expenses; c) depreciation deduction; and d) annual cash flow before and after debt service.
- Remaining balance on any mortgage secured by the property.
- Assessed value and real estate tax of the property, according to the two most recent tax assessments.
- Any real estate listing of the property for sale or rent in the past three years, including offers received.
- The long term and short term availability of funds, including income and financing, available to the owner that would allow compliance with PHDC Standards and Guidelines.
- The feasibility of alternative uses for the property that would allow compliance with PHDC Standards and Guidelines.
- Any other information that the PHDC deems necessary for its determination.

GLOSSARY:
COMMON TERMS: HOUSE



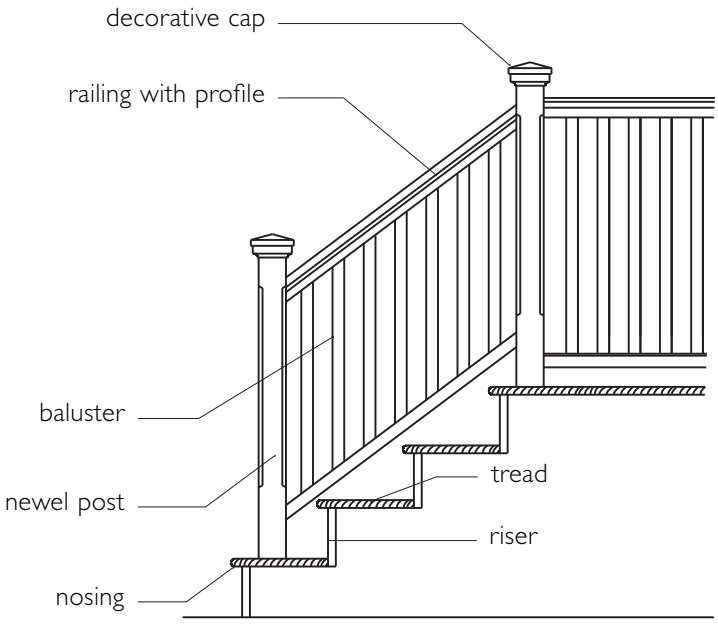

roofline
gable
cornice
cornice board
clapboards
cornerboards
watertable

GLOSSARY:
COMMON TERMS: DOOR



GLOSSARY:
COMMON TERMS: PORCH

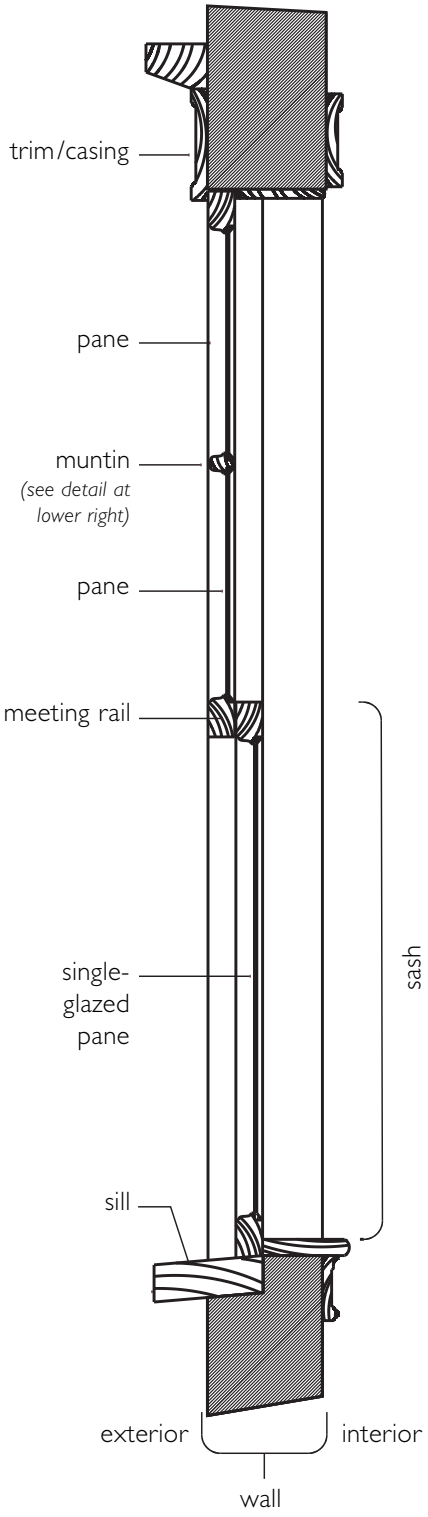


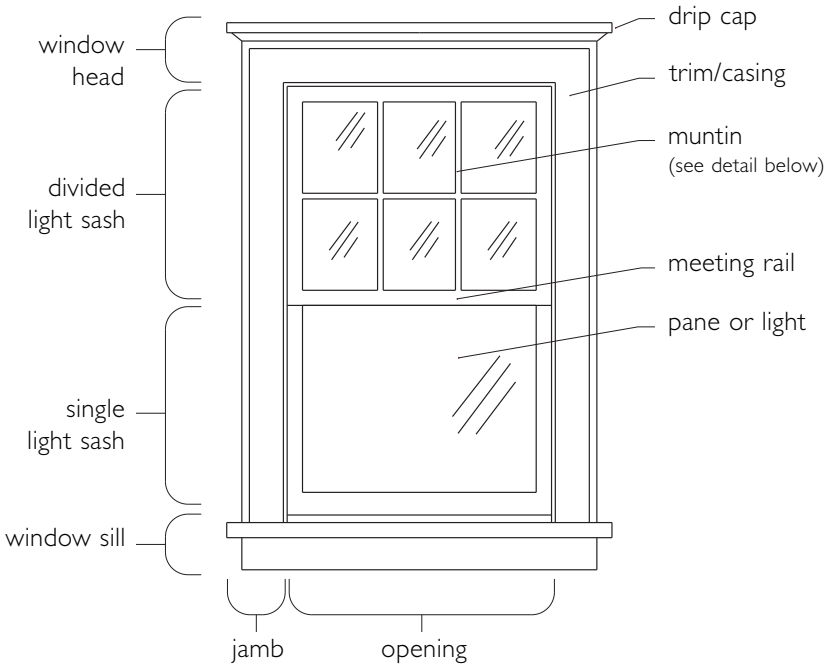


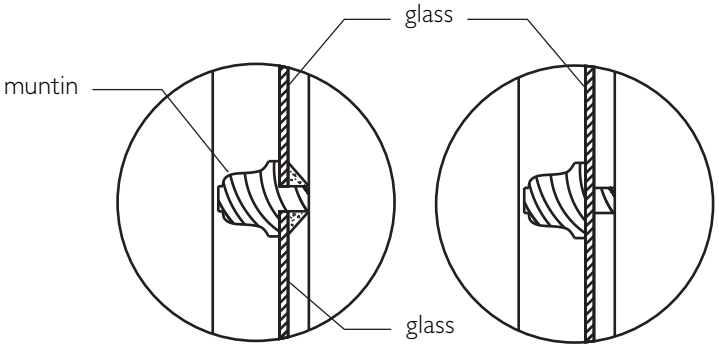
Stair Profile

Tread Horizontal section
Riser Vertical section
Nosing Overhanging portion of tread. The nosing profile should match that of original or typically traditional stairs.

GLOSSARY:
COMMON TERMS: WINDOWS



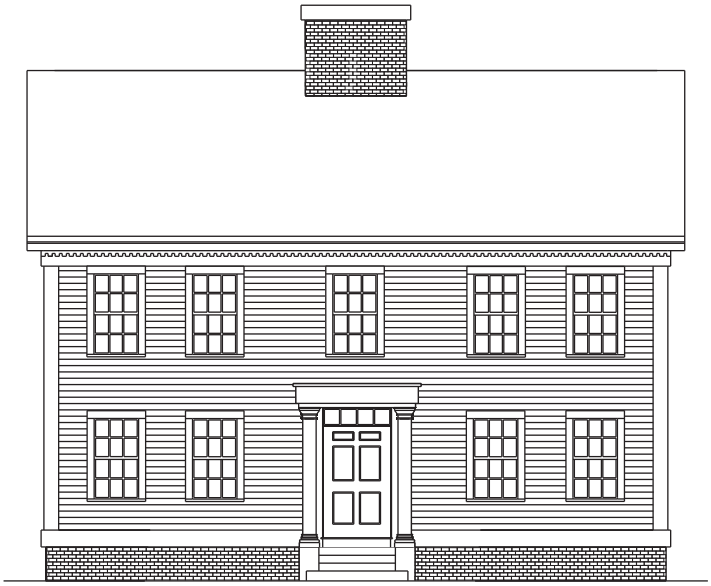




True divided light
Muntin separates two panes of glass.

Simulated divided light False muntin applied to single pane of glass.

GLOSSARY:
HOUSE STYLES



▲ **Federal**



▲ **Greek Revival**

GLOSSARY:
HOUSE STYLES



▲ **Second Empire**



▲ **Queen Anne**



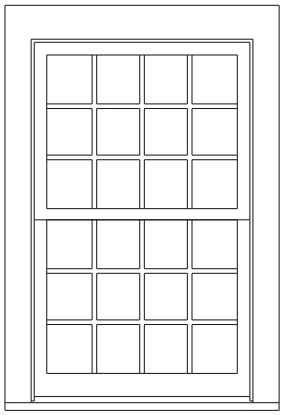
▲ **Colonial**



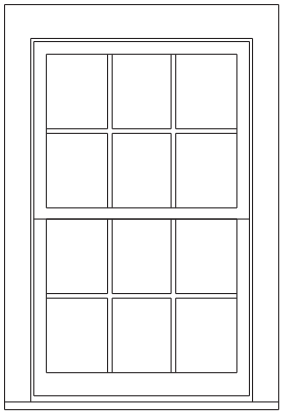
▲ **Triple Decker**

GLOSSARY:
WINDOW TYPES

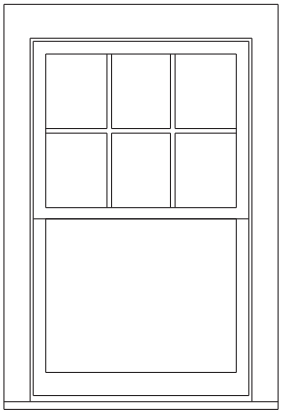
Most historic residential windows are double-hung windows with wooden sashes and true divided lights. Different types of windows are appropriate for different architectural styles and periods. New windows should match originals in materials, design, dimensions, configuration and number of panes.



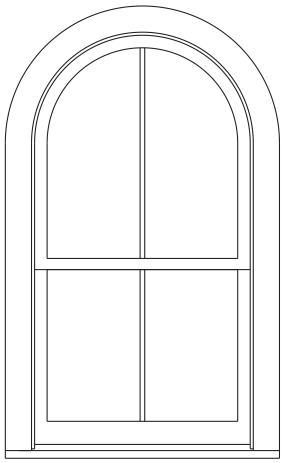
▲ **12/12 Colonial or Federal** (late 18th century)



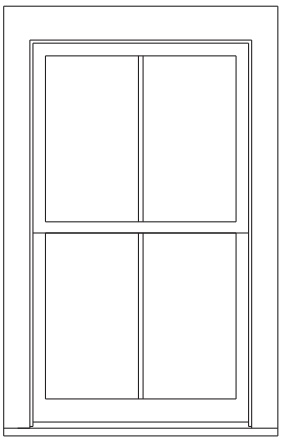
▲ **6/6 Greek Revival** (1830s and 1840s or Federal)



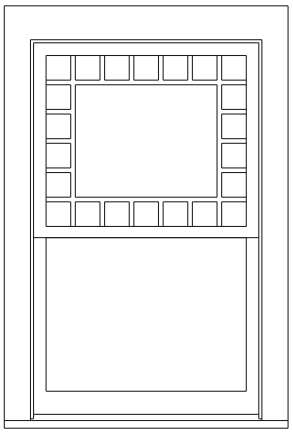
▲ **6/1 Colonial Revival**



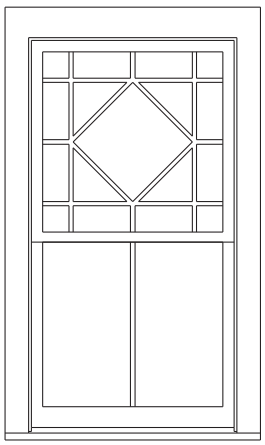
▲ **Arched 2/2 Second Empire** (1860s and 1870s)



▲ **2/2 Second Empire** (1860s and 1870s)



▲ **Multi-light Queen Anne** (late 19th century)

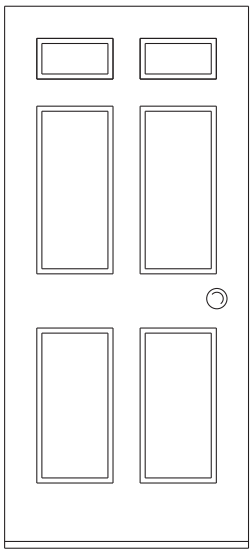


▲ **Multi-light Queen Anne** (late 19th century)

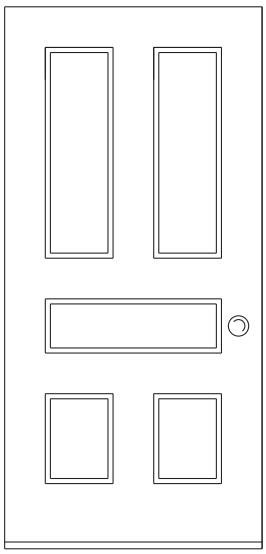
GLOSSARY: DOOR TYPES

Most historic residential doors are wooden paneled doors. In some cases, doors may contain one or more panes of glass.

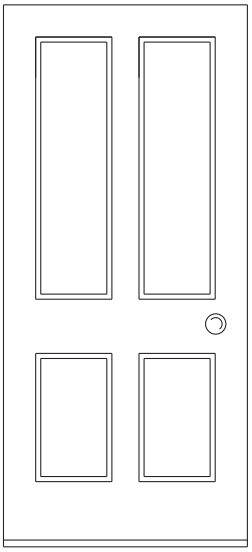
The number and configuration of panels or panes of glass in a replacement should be consistent with the architectural style of the building, and the original dimensions should be maintained.



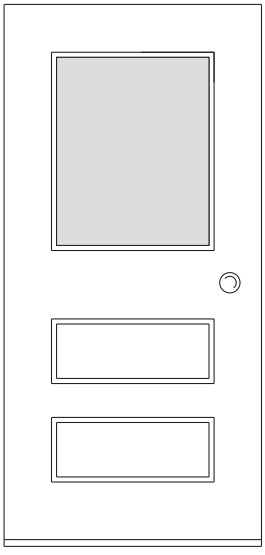
▲ **Six-panel**



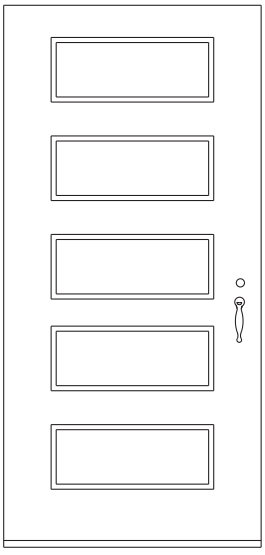
▲ **Five-panel**



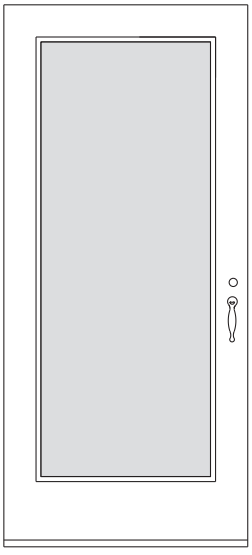
▲ **Four-panel**



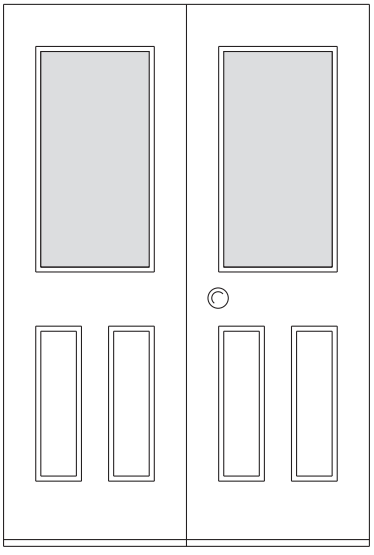
▲ **Three-panel with glass**



▲ **Five-panel**



▲ **Glass**



▲ **Double three-panel with glass**

EXHIBIT C

CITY OF PROVIDENCE

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

MINUTES ● JUNE 22, 2026

Regular Meeting **444 Westminster St., 1st Fl., Conf. Room** **4:45 PM**

Joseph A. Doorley, Jr. Municipal Building, Providence, RI 02903

OPENING SESSION

PRESENT: Lund, Verity, Bay, Carden, Fernandez, Mukoyama, Sharma
ABSENT: Brennan, Haggerty
Staff Present: Jason Martin, Sharon Garner

MINUTES

Approval of March 23, 2026, Historic District Commission Regular Meeting Minutes

RESULT:	**APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER:	**Angela Bay, Regular Member**
SECONDER:	**James Verity, Regular Member**
AYES:	**Sharma, Mukoyama, Bay, Carden, Lund, Verity, Fernandez**

PROJECT REVIEW

1. **CASE 26.062, 25 HOLLYWOOD ROAD, Albert T. Mansfield House c1893 (ARMORY)**

Ms. Mikayla Patterson, applicant/contractor, appeared via Zoom before the Commission requesting the installation of 34 solar panels (13 to the front slope; 21 to the rear slope).

Mr. Martin gave a staff report. 25 Hollywood Road is a structure of historical and architectural significance that contributes to the significance of the Armory local historic district, having been recognized as a contributing structure to the Broadway/Armory National Register Historic District. In February, the applicant applied for solar panels (26.021); this application initially included panels on the front slope; staff advised the applicant that panels on the front slope would be inappropriate for this location and not conform to the solar guidelines, given the prominence and visibility of the house across from Dexter Parade and the property's architectural value; asked if a viable array could be designed that had no panels on the front slope? The applicant was able to design a viable array (21 panels) with no panels on the front slope and that application was approved administratively, now being in conformance with the Commission's guidelines for solar panels; solar permit application was applied for and issued (SOL-26-7). Staff was contacted by the applicant who informed staff that the owner was requesting to have panels on the front. Staff explained that this array would not be in conformance with the guidelines and staff could not approve, nor recommend approval, for the same reasons previously discussed. Staff advised applicant if owner wanted to request this, a new application is to be filed, and the matter would be referred to the Commission for review. The modifications as proposed are not in accordance with Minor Alterations: Solar Energy Systems Guidelines, Section 2, in the following manner: Panel layout shall be sympathetic or appropriate to design and scale of building. Rectangular configurations are preferred, with ample setback from edge of roof, dormers, chimneys, etc. (2.A); Panels shall be compatible in color to existing roofing insofar as possible (2.D); Installation of panels shall be as inconspicuous as possible when viewed from public right-of-way (2.E). Plans and photos have been submitted. The application for Minor Alterations is considered complete. The work as proposed is not in accord with PHDC Standard 8 as follows: the proposed alterations are not in conformance with Minor Alterations: Solar Energy Systems Guidelines, Section 2.A, 2.D and 2.E as described, and are architecturally and historically incompatible with the property and district having an inappropriate size, scale and form that will have an adverse effect on the property or district.

The Chair asked for public comment. No public comment was taken. Public comment was closed.

The Commission had the following comments: given the visibility, prominence and architectural character of the property, agreed that solar panels located on the front facing slope of the property are not appropriate and do not conform to the Commission's guidelines for solar energy systems, particularly since a viable system has been previously submitted and staff approved that does not propose panels on the front slope.

A motion was made stating: The application is considered complete. The application for 25 Hollywood Road, a structure of historical and architectural significance to the Armory local historic district, recognized as a contributing structure to the Broadway/Armory National Register Historic District is considered complete. The Commission cites Standard 8 in denying the application, as the work as proposed is not in accord with PHDC Standard 8 as follows: the proposed alterations are not in conformance with Minor Alterations: Solar Energy Systems Guidelines, Section 2.A (Panel layout shall be sympathetic or appropriate to design and scale of building. Rectangular configurations are preferred, with ample setback from edge of roof, dormers, chimneys, etc.), 2.D (Panels shall be compatible in color to existing roofing insofar as possible) and 2.E (Installation of panels shall be as inconspicuous as possible when viewed from public right-of-way), and given the prominence and visibility of the house across from Dexter Parade and the property's architectural value are architecturally and historically incompatible with the property and district having an inappropriate size, scale and form that will have an adverse effect on the property or district.

RESULT:	**DENIED [6 TO 0]**
MOVER:	**James Verity, Deputy Vice-Chair**
SECONDER:	**Angela Bay, Regular Member**
AYES:	**Verity, Bay, Lund, Fernandez, Mukoyama, Sharma**
ABSTAIN:	**Carden**

2. CASE 26.072, 186 ONTARIO STREET, Two-bay garage, before 1918 (SOUTH ELMWOOD)

Mr. Carlos Quezada, applicant/owner, appeared before the Commission requesting the demolition of the existing garage, a secondary, non-contributing structure.

Mr. Martin gave a staff report. The wood, two-bay, one-story with hip roof garage at 186 Ontario Street is a secondary, non-contributing structure and has minimal to no historical and architectural significance, both on its own merit and in relation to the surrounding South Elmwood local historic district. Significance: The building proposed for demolition is a secondary structure with minimal architectural or historical merit. The existing wood, two-bay, one-story with hip roof garage is not identified within the Elmwood. Research of Sanborn maps show the garage originally belonged to the house to the south, 207 Lexington Avenue. At some point the garage was separated and was then associated with 182 Ontario Street. That property was subdivided and we now have the current situation, where the garage sits individually on its own lot. The owner's intent is to build a residence on this parcel. The removal of the building will not irreparably diminish the architectural or historical character of the property or district as a whole. Demolition Alternatives: Staff is satisfied that given the minimal architectural and historical significance, there are no alternatives to demolition because no reasonable expectation exists that the structure can be sold for preservation either on or off site. It is staff's recommendation that the documentation requirements relative to demolition alternatives and financial information for the garage be waived as it pertains to a secondary, non-contributing structure. Demolition Criteria: Staff has determined that the building slated for demolition is a secondary, non-contributing structure and would use the PHDC's secondary criteria for approving demolition. This proposal meets these criteria, in that it will have little effect on surrounding buildings or on the district as a whole, having been separated and no longer associated with its original property.

The removal of the building is consistent with the non-contributing criteria of the PHDC demolition guidelines, in that it would have little impact on the property and the district as a whole, having been separated and no longer associated with its original property. The application for demolition is complete. The PHDC waives the

requirement for documenting financial information relative to the demolition, because the building slated for demolition is a non-contributing structure. The PHDC is satisfied that there are no alternatives to demolition because no reasonable expectation exists that the secondary structure can be sold for preservation either on or off site. The review of the proposed demolition is hereby completed in one meeting, as allowed for secondary and non-contributing structures under the PHDC demolition guidelines. The work as proposed is in accord with PHDC Standard 8 in the following way: the work will be done so that it does not destroy the historic character of the property or the district.

The Chair asked for public comment. No public comment was taken. Public comment was closed.

A motion was made stating: The wood, two-bay, one-story with hip roof garage at 186 Ontario Street is a secondary, non-contributing structure and has minimal to no historical and architectural significance, both on its own merit and in relation to the surrounding South Elmwood local historic district, having been separated and no longer associated with its original property. The application for demolition is complete. The Commission waives the requirement for documenting financial information relative to the demolition, because the building slated for demolition is a non-contributing structure. The Commission is satisfied that there are no alternatives to demolition because no reasonable expectation exists that the secondary structure can be sold for preservation either on or off site. The review of the proposed demolition is hereby completed in one meeting, as allowed for secondary and non-contributing structures under the Commission's demolition guidelines. The Commission grants Final Approval of the application as submitted, citing Standard 8, as its removal would have little impact on the property and the district as a whole, having been separated and no longer associated with its original property, and the recommendations in the staff report, with staff to review any additional required details.

RESULT:	**APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER:	**Sagree Sharma, Regular Member**
SECONDER:	**Pabel Fernandez, Regular Member**
AYES:	**Sharma, Fernandez, Bay, Carden, Lund, Mukoyama, Verity**

3. PRELIMINARY APPLICATION, 56 PRATT STREET, House, 1857-75 (COLLEGE HILL)

Mr. David Sisson, architect, and Mr. Mark Liberati, esq., representing the owner, appeared before the Commission for a preliminary application for 56 Pratt Street.

Mr. Martin gave a staff report. This is a preliminary application. This is a non-binding review of a proposed development. As part of the subdivision of the property into two parcels, the applicant is requesting the construction of a four-story addition to the existing building (north parcel), and a new three-story multi-family residence (south parcel). Mr. Sisson gave a presentation.

The Chair asked for public comment. No public comment was taken. Public comment was closed.

The Commission had the following comments: relating to the proposed new construction, overall, no major concerns. There were some comments about activating the front of the building to relate more to the pedestrian experience, perhaps with a change in color of the masonry base of the new building. With regards to the new addition, the general consensus was that it was inappropriate as it is too large and needs to be subservient to the existing house. Suggestions were to reduce the mass and also to camouflage the addition with material color to help minimize its appearance.

No action was taken by the Commission.

OTHER BUSINESS
Adoption of Standards & Guidelines for the Wanskuck local historic district.

An ordinance creating the Wanskuck local historic district has been approved by the City Council and signed by Mayor. The Commission is required to adopt Standards & Guidelines for the district.

A motion was made that the Commission adopts the Standards & Guidelines for the Armory, Broadway, College Hill, North Elmwood, South Elmwood, Stimson Avenue, Power Cooke local historic districts to now apply to and include the Wanskuck local historic district.

RESULT:	**APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER:	**Angela Bay, Regular Member**
SECONDER:	**James Verity, Deputy Vice-Chair**
AYES:	**Bay, Verity, Carden, Fernandez, Lund, Mukoyama, Sharma**

ADJOURNMENT (6:15: JV, SS)

CITY OF PROVIDENCE

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

MINUTES ● JULY 27, 2026

Regular Meeting | **444 Westminster St., 1st Fl., Conf. Room** | **4:49 PM**

Joseph A. Doorley, Jr. Municipal Building, Providence, RI 02903

OPENING SESSION

PRESENT: Brennan, Mukoyama, Carden, Lund, Fernandez, Martin
ABSENT: Sharma, Bay, Haggerty, Verity
Staff Present: Jason Martin, Sharon Garner, esq., Blake Horne

MINUTES

Approval of June 22, 2026, Historic District Commission Regular Meeting Minutes

RESULT:	**APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER:	Matthew Brennan, Regular Member
SECONDER:	Pabel Fernandez, Regular Member
AYES:	Brennan, Mukoyama, Carden, Lund, Fernandez

PROJECT REVIEW

1. CASE 26.101, 56 PRATT STREET, House, 1857-75 (COLLEGE HILL)

Mr. David Sisson, architect, and Mr. Mark Liberati, esq., representing the owner, appeared before the Commission requesting that as part of the subdivision of the property into two parcels, the applicant is requesting the construction of a three-story addition with cellar to the existing building (north parcel), and the new construction of a three-story with cellar, multi-family residence (south parcel).

Mr. Martin gave an introduction. This is a conceptual review. Staff recommends bifurcating review into two sections: new construction of a three-story with cellar multi-family residence (south); and major alterations: the construction of a three-story with cellar addition to the existing building (north). The applicant agreed, the application was bifurcated. Mr. Simmons gave an overview of the project.

Mr. Martin continued with his staff report and recommendations. 56 Pratt Street is a parcel that contains a structure of historical and architectural significance that contributes to the significance of the College Hill local historic district, having been recognized as a contributing structure to the College Hill National Register Historic District. The parcel shall be subdivided to allow for a vacant parcel that the new construction will be built upon. The proposed building's form and siting are appropriate for the location. Pratt Street is a location that has minimal historical context as related to its streetscape, as the majority of buildings constructed on the street are from the mid-20th century and later. The Commission has approved multiple buildings of contemporary and modern design along the street, and this proposal is compliant within that context; The street hosts two properties designed by Friedrich St. Florian, who rightly referred to the street as a "laboratory" for architectural expression. The proposed structure will require some fenestration along the gas modified appears to be zoning compliant. Plans and photos have been submitted. The application for New Construction is considered complete for conceptual review. Mr. Martin noted that the cellar level's front (west) elevation would need some glazing to conform to zoning requirements. The work as proposed is in accord with PHDC Standard 8 as follows: as the proposed new construction is conceptually appropriate having determined that the proposed construction is architecturally and historically compatible with the property and district having an appropriate size, scale and form that will not have an adverse effect on the property or district, as Pratt Street has been identified by the Commission as a street that can support contemporary and modern architecture as the majority of properties on the street were constructed in the mid-20th century and later.

The Chair asked for public comment. The following public comment was taken:

- An email in opposition to the proposal from Hank Heneghan and Elizabeth Porter, 109 Pratt St, was read and submitted as part of Exhibit 1;
- An email in opposition to the proposal from Olivia Katz and Chris Borgstrom, 54 Pratt Street, was submitted as part of Exhibit 1;
- Dr. Frank Faltus, 124 Congdon Street, was opposed, objecting to the scale of the proposed construction;
- Maris Brown, Executive Director, Providence Preservation Society, commented that modern architecture was appropriate for Pratt Street. Noted that the design seemed "dark, foreboding" and that a change to "lighter" materials

would be helpful;
- Hank Henegran, 109 Pratt Street, was opposed to the proposal, concerned with size and scale reinforced comments made as part of his email entered, previously entered as part of Exhibit 1; and,

Public comment was closed.

The Commission had the following comments: overall well received by the Commission, the phrase "dare to be different" was used to illustrate what could be appropriate for Pratt Street given its historical and architectural context. Agreed materials could be "lighter".

A motion was made stating: The application is considered complete. 56 Pratt Street is a parcel that contains a structure of historical and architectural significance that contributes to the significance of the College Hill local historic district, having been recognized as a contributing structure to the College Hill National Register Historic District. The parcel shall be subdivided to allow for a vacant parcel that the new construction will be built upon. The Commission grants Conceptual Approval of the new construction, citing Standard 8, having determined that the proposed construction is architecturally and historically compatible with the property and district having an appropriate size, scale and form that will not have an adverse effect on the property or district, citing and agreeing to the recommendations in the staff report, with the applicant to return for Final Approval once the parcel has been subdivided.

RESULT:	**CONCEPTUALLY APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER:	Sumi Mukoyama, Regular Member
SECONDER:	Nathaniel Carden, Regular Member
AYES:	Brennan, Mukoyama, Carden, Lund, Fernandez

Discussion turned to the proposed Major Alterations. Mr. Martin gave a staff report and recommendations. 56 Pratt Street is a parcel that contains a structure of historical and architectural significance that contributes to the significance of the College Hill local historic district, having been recognized as a contributing structure to the College Hill National Register Historic District. Plans and photos have been submitted. The application for Major Alterations is considered complete for conceptual review. The application has been bifurcated to remove the separate proposed new construction of a three-story with cellar on the lot (lot to be subdivided), which is being reviewed separately. The applicant's appeared as a Preliminary Application at the Commission's June 22nd meeting where the proposal was discussed. The Commission's the general consensus was that it was inappropriate as it is too large and needs to be subservient to the existing house. Suggestions were to reduce the mass and also to camouflage the addition with material color to help minimize its appearance. The applicant has revised the drawings, and the proposal is slightly smaller in height but still too large in scale and mass. The upper floor of the addition is a full story above the historic resources' roofline. It is definitively not subservient to the historic resource. The submission is not zoning compliant, at minimum not conforming to section 402.A, exceeding the number of allowed stories. The work as proposed is not in accord with PHDC Standard 8 being architecturally and historically incompatible with the property and district having an inappropriate size, scale and form that will have an adverse effect on the property or district, as the proposed addition is not subservient to the historic resource, being too large in scale for both height and width, being a full-story above the historic resource and being wider than the existing resource. It is Staff's recommendation that the application be denied. The applicant must wait one-year to return to the Commission, or the applicant can return to the Commission with a materially different submission that ideally conforms to zoning as if the Commission votes and accepts that submission.

The Chair asked for public comment. The following public comment was taken:
- Chris Borgstrom, 54 Pratt Street, was opposed to the proposal, concerned with size and scale; also submitted email (Exhibit 1);
- Hank Heneghan, 109 Pratt Street, reinforced comments made as part of his email entered, previously entered as part of Exhibit 1;
- Zehra Rizvi, Pratt Street, was opposed to the proposal, concerned with size and scale of the addition; and,

Public comment was closed.

The Commission had the following comments: members were in agreement with staff that the proposed addition was too large "dwarfs the building" and was clearly not subservient to the historic resource. Agreed denial was the best route, with the applicant able to return with a substantially different application at a future meeting.

A motion was made stating: The application for 56 Pratt Street, a structure of historical and architectural significance to the College Hill local historic district, recognized as a contributing structure to the College Hill National Register Historic District is

considered complete for conceptual review. The application has been bifurcated to remove the proposed separate new construction of a three-story with cellar on the lot, which is being reviewed separately. The Commission cites Standard 8 in denying the application for the proposed addition to 56 Pratt Street as it is not in accord with PHDC Standard 8, being architecturally and historically incompatible with the property and district having an inappropriate size, scale and form that will have an adverse effect on the property or district, as the proposed addition is not subservient to the historic resource, being too large in scale for both height and width, being a full-story above the historic resource and being wider than the existing resource.

RESULT:	**DENIED [4 TO 1]**
MOVER:	Matthew Brennan, Regular Member
SECONDER:	Pabel Fernandez, Regular Member
AYES:	Brennan, Mukoyama, Lund, Fernandez
NAYES:	Carden

2. CASE 26.105, 113 BROADWAY, Commercial Building, pre1875, 1921 (BROADWAY)

Mr. Pedro Borda, applicant/architect, and Mr. Scott Acedo, owner, appeared before the Commission requesting the demolition of the existing building, a non-contributing structure.

Mr. Martin gave a staff report. **Significance:** The building proposed for demolition is a non-contributing structure with minimal architectural or historical merit. The existing building is not within the Armory/Broadway National Register Historic District. This National Register district was expanded in 2008, specifically looking at the properties east of Dean Street and this property was not included, being deemed ineligible. Research within the included structural report and of Sanborn maps show the original wood-frame building was constructed before 1875 and was primarily a residence with some commercial use below. Post 1962 the building was modified to its current configuration which included CMU additions and a brick façade applied to the front elevation (1922). As detailed in the structural report the structure has significant structural deterioration and is a potential hazard to the public. The owner's intent is to build a commercial/hotel property on this location. The removal of the building will not irreparably diminish the architectural or historical character of the property or district as a whole. **Demolition Alternatives:** Staff is satisfied that given the minimal architectural and historical significance, there are no alternatives to demolition because no reasonable expectation exists that the structure can be sold for preservation either on or off site. It is staff's recommendation that the documentation requirements relative to demolition alternatives and financial information for the garage be waived as it pertains to a non-contributing structure. **Demolition Criteria:** Staff has determined that the building slated for demolition is a non-contributing structure and would use the PHDC's secondary criteria for approving demolition. This proposal meets these criteria, in that it will have little effect on surrounding buildings or on the district as a whole, having been modified in a way that has caused its structural integrity to be impacted, creating a public hazard that cannot be remedied at a reasonable cost to the owners

Staff made the following recommendations as findings of fact:

a) The building at 113 Broadway is a non-contributing structure and has minimal to no historical and architectural significance, both on its own merit and in relation to the surrounding Broadway local historic district, having been evaluated for inclusion into the Broadway/Armory National Register Historic District and found to be ineligible. The removal of the building is consistent with the non-contributing criteria of the PHDC demolition guidelines, in that it would have little impact on the property and the district as a whole, having been modified in a way that has caused its structural integrity to be impacted, creating a public hazard that cannot be remedied at a reasonable cost to the owners;
b) The application for demolition is complete. The PHDC waives the requirement for documenting financial information relative to the demolition, because the building slated for demolition is a non-contributing structure;
c) The PHDC is satisfied that there are no alternatives to demolition because no reasonable expectation exists that the non-contributing structure can be sold for preservation either on or off site;
d) The review of the proposed demolition is hereby completed in one meeting, as allowed for non-contributing structures under the PHDC demolition guidelines; and,
e) The work as proposed is in accord with PHDC Standard 8 in the following way: the work will be done so that it does not destroy the historic character of the property or the district, having been modified in a way that has caused its structural integrity to be impacted, creating a public hazard that cannot be remedied at a reasonable cost to the owners.

The Chair asked for public comment. No public comment was taken. Public comment was closed.

A motion was made stating: 113 Broadway is a non-contributing structure and has minimal to no historical and architectural

significance, both on its own merit and in relation to the surrounding Broadway local historic district, having been deemed ineligible for inclusion in the Broadway/Armory National Register Historic District. The application for demolition is complete. The Commission waives the requirement for documenting financial information relative to the demolition, because the building slated for demolition is a non-contributing structure. The Commission is satisfied that there are no alternatives to demolition because no reasonable expectation exists that the secondary structure can be sold for preservation either on or off site. The review of the proposed demolition is hereby completed in one meeting, as allowed for secondary and non-contributing structures under the Commission's demolition guidelines. The Commission grants Final Approval of the application as submitted, citing Standard 8, as its removal would have little impact on the property and the district as a whole, being a non-contributing structure that has been deemed ineligible for inclusion in the Broadway/Armory National Register Historic District, citing and agreeing with the recommendations in the staff report, with staff to review any additional required details.

RESULT:	**APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER:	Sumi Mukoyama, Regular Member
SECONDER:	Matthew Brennan, Regular Member
AYES:	Brennan, Mukoyama, Carden, Lund, Fernandez

3. CASE 26.107, 42 HIDDEN STREET, Simeon Klein House, 1912-13 (COLLEGE HILL)

Mr. Peter Casale, applicant, appeared before the Commission requesting the demolition of the existing garage, a secondary structure, not identified in the College Hill NRHD; the construction of a new two-story garage with Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU); and minor alterations (site improvements) installation of an in-ground, therapeutic pool.

Mr. Martin gave a staff report. The scope of work proposed consists of Demolition, New Construction, and Minor Alterations (Site Improvements). Staff recommends bifurcating the application between the demolition and the new construction/minor alterations. The applicant agreed, the application was bifurcated. Mr. Martin gave a staff report regarding the proposed demolition. **Significance:** The building proposed for demolition is a secondary structure with minimal architectural or historical merit. The existing wood, two-bay, one-story with hip roof garage is not identified within the College Hill . The removal of the building will not irreparably diminish the architectural or historical character of the property or district as a whole. **Demolition Alternatives:** Staff is satisfied that given the minimal architectural and historical significance, there are no alternatives to demolition because no reasonable expectation exists that the structure can be sold for preservation either on or off site. It is staff's recommendation that the documentation requirements relative to demolition alternatives and financial information for the garage be waived as it pertains to a secondary, non-contributing structure. **Demolition Criteria:** Staff has determined that the building slated for demolition is a secondary, non-contributing structure and would use the PHDC's secondary criteria for approving demolition. This proposal meets these criteria, in that it will have little effect on surrounding buildings or on the district as a whole, having been separated and no longer associated with its original property.

Staff made the following recommendations as findings of fact:

a) The wood, two-bay, one-story with hip roof garage at 42 Hidden Street is a secondary, non-contributing structure and has minimal to no historical and architectural significance, both on its own merit and in relation to the surrounding College Hill local historic district. The removal of the building is consistent with the secondary non-contributing criteria of the PHDC demolition guidelines, in that it would have little impact on the property and the district as a whole, having not been identified in the College Hill NRHD;
b) The application for demolition is complete. The PHDC waives the requirement for documenting financial information relative to the demolition, because the building slated for demolition is a secondary non-contributing structure;
c) The PHDC is satisfied that there are no alternatives to demolition because no reasonable expectation exists that the secondary structure can be sold for preservation either on or off site;
d) The review of the proposed demolition is hereby completed in one meeting, as allowed for secondary and non-contributing structures under the PHDC demolition guidelines; and,
e) The work as proposed is in accord with PHDC Standard 8 in the following way: the work will be done so that it does not destroy the historic character of the property or the district.

The Chair asked for public comment. The following public comment was taken:

- An email from Emily Wright, 165 Prospect Street, in support of the proposal was read and entered into the record (Exhibit 2); and,

Public comment was closed.

A motion was made stating: The wood, two-bay, one-story with hip-roof garage at 42 Hidden Street is a secondary, non-

contributing structure and has minimal to no historical and architectural significance, both on its own merit and in relation to the surrounding College Hill local historic district, having not been identified in the College Hill NRHD. The application for demolition is complete. The Commission waives the requirement for documenting financial information relative to the demolition, because the building slated for demolition is a secondary non-contributing structure. The Commission is satisfied that there are no alternatives to demolition because no reasonable expectation exists that the secondary structure can be sold for preservation either on or off site. The review of the proposed demolition is hereby completed in one meeting, as allowed for secondary and non-contributing structures under the Commission's demolition guidelines. The Commission grants Final Approval of the demolition portion of the application as submitted, citing Standard 8, as its removal would have little impact on the property and the district as a whole, having not been identified in the College Hill NRHD, citing and agreeing with the recommendations in the staff report, with staff to review any additional required details.

RESULT:	**APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER:	Matthew Brennan, Regular Member
SECONDER:	Pabel Fernandez, Regular Member
AYES:	Brennan, Mukoyama, Carden, Lund, Fernandez

Discussion turned to the proposed new construction and minor alterations. Mr. Martin gave a staff report and recommendations. 41 Hidden Street is a structure of historical and architectural significance that contributes to the significance of the College Hill local historic district, having been recognized as a contributing structure to the College Hill National Register Historic District. The application for New Construction is considered complete for review. The proposed building's form and siting are appropriate for the location. The proposed structure appears to be zoning compliant. The installation of a below ground pool is appropriate. Plans and photos have been submitted. The work as proposed is in accord with PHDC Standard 8 as follows: as the proposed new construction is appropriate having determined that the proposed construction is architecturally and historically compatible with the property and district having an appropriate size, scale and form that will not have an adverse effect on the property or district.

The Chair asked for public comment. No public comment was taken. Public comment was closed.

A motion was made stating that: The application is considered complete. 42 Hidden Street is a structure of historical and architectural significance that contributes to the significance of the College Hill local historic district, having been recognized as a contributing structure to the College Hill National Register Historic District. The Commission grants Final Approval of the new construction and minor alterations, citing Standard 8, having determined that the proposed construction is architecturally and historically compatible with the property and district having an appropriate size, scale and form that will not have an adverse effect on the property or district, citing and agreeing to the recommendations in the staff report, with staff to review any additional details.

RESULT:	**APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER:	Matthew Brennan, Regular Member
SECONDER:	Sumi Mukoyama, Regular Member
AYES:	Brennan, Mukoyama, Carden, Lund, Fernandez

ADJOURNMENT 6:05PM (PF, MB)

CITY OF PROVIDENCE

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

MINUTES ● AUGUST 24, 2026

Regular Meeting | **444 Westminster St., 1st Fl., Conf. Room** | **4:50 PM**

Joseph A. Doorley, Jr. Municipal Building, Providence, RI 02903

OPENING SESSION

PRESENT: Mukoyama, Carden, Haggerty, Lund, Verity, Fernandez, Chaudhary
ABSENT: Sharma, Brennan, Bay
Staff Present: Jason Martin, Megan DiSanto, Blake Horne

MINUTES

Approval of July 27, 2026, Historic District Commission Regular Meeting Minutes

RESULT:	**APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER:	Pabel Fernandez, Regular Member
SECONDER:	James Verity, Regular Member
AYES:	Fernandez , Verity, Carden, Haggerty, Lund, Mukoyama

PROJECT REVIEW

1. CASE 26.101, 56 PRATT STREET, House, 1857-75 (COLLEGE HILL)

Mr. David Sisson, architect, via Zoom, Mr. Steve Gilbert, architect, and Mr. Mark Liberati, Esq., representing the owner, appeared before the Commission requesting that as part of the subdivision of the property into two parcels, the construction of a new three-story with cellar, four-family residence (aka south parcel).

Mr. Martin gave an introduction. 56 Pratt Street is a parcel that contains a structure of historical and architectural significance that contributes to the significance of the College Hill local historic district, having been recognized as a contributing structure to the College Hill National Register Historic District; The parcel shall be subdivided to create a vacant parcel that the new construction will be built upon. The proposal was granted conceptual approval at the July 27th meeting (Res26-07). The proposed building's form and siting are appropriate for the location. Pratt Street is a location that has minimal historical context as related to its streetscape, as the majority of buildings constructed on the street are from the mid-20th century and later. The Commission has approved multiple buildings of contemporary and modern design along the street, and this proposal is compliant within that context; The street hosts two properties designed by Friedrich St. Florian, who rightly referred to the street as a "laboratory" for architectural expression. The parcel shall be subdivided to create a vacant parcel that the new construction will be built upon. The proposed structure appears to be zoning compliant. Revised plans and photos have been submitted. The application for New Construction is considered complete for review. The work as proposed is in accord with PHDC Standard 8 as follows: having determined that the proposed new construction is appropriate as it is architecturally and historically compatible with the property and district having an appropriate size, scale and form that will not have an adverse effect on the property or district, as Pratt Street has been identified by the Commission as a street that can support contemporary and modern architecture as the majority of properties on the street were constructed in the 20th and 21st Centuries, most reviewed and approved by the Commission, and this proposal is congruous with the street's development. Mr. Simmons gave an overview of the proposed materials.

The Chair asked for public comment. The following public comment was taken:

- An email in opposition to the proposal from Qingqing "Cath" Cai and Henry Hawk, 105 Pratt St, was submitted as part of Exhibit 1;
- An email in opposition to the proposal from Laura Donahue, 101 Pratt St, was submitted as part of Exhibit 1;
- An email in opposition to the proposal from Anne Hart, 162 Pratt St, was submitted as part of Exhibit 1;
- An email in opposition to the proposal from Stephen Lynch, 100 Pratt St, was submitted as part of Exhibit 1;
- An email in opposition to the proposal from Michael Sandoval, 97 Pratt St, was submitted as part of Exhibit 1;

- An email in opposition to the proposal from Peter Andrews, 41 Pratt St, was submitted as part of Exhibit 1;
- An email in opposition to the proposal from Charles and Joy Wharton, 4 Jenckes St, was submitted as part of Exhibit 1;
- An email in opposition to the proposal from Karen Hebb, 120 Pratt St, was submitted as part of Exhibit 1;
- An email in opposition to the proposal from Hank Heneghan and Elizabeth Porter, 109 Pratt St, was submitted as part of Exhibit 1;
- An email in opposition to the proposal from Michael Sandoval, 97 Pratt St, was submitted as part of Exhibit 1;
- An email in opposition to the proposal from Olivia Katz and Chris Borgstrom, 54 Pratt Street, was submitted as part of Exhibit 1;
- An email in opposition to the proposal from Karen Borger, 11 Jenckes St, was submitted as part of Exhibit 1;
- An email in opposition to the proposal from Helen Grundman, 169 Pratt St, was submitted as part of Exhibit 1;
- An email in opposition to the proposal from Karim Khanbhai, 103 Pratt St, was submitted as part of Exhibit 1;
- An email in opposition to the proposal from Douglas Grundman, 169 Pratt St, was submitted as part of Exhibit 1;
- An email in opposition to the proposal from Sarah "Sally" Herreid, 37 Pratt St, was submitted as part of Exhibit 1;
- A petition titled “PETITION OF RESIDENTS OPPOSING THE 56 PRATT STREET APPLICATIONS” containing approximately 33 signatures was submitted as part of Exhibit 1;
- George Wichart, 147 Benefit Street, was in opposition to the proposal;
- Julia Katz, 16 Pratt Street, was in opposition to the proposal;
- Steven & Sue Lynch, 100 Pratt Street, was in opposition to the proposal;
- Joyce Lilly, Williams Street, was in opposition to the proposal;
- Andy Robbins, 44 Pratt Street, was in opposition to the proposal;
- Chris Borgstrom, 54 Pratt Street, was in opposition to the proposal;
- Geraldine Killilea, 93 Pratt Street, was in opposition to the proposal;
- Sue Lynch, 100 Pratt Street, was in opposition to the proposal;
- Helen Grundman, 169 Pratt Street, was okay with proposal but thought building should be set back more;
- Councilor Jill Davisdson, Ward 2, expressed that a sidewalk should be installed as part of the development;
- Amy Goins, Esq., Ursillo, Teitz & Ritch, Ltd., representing Frank Faltus, Olivia Katz and Chris Borgstrom, introduced Clark Schoettle as an expert witness. Mr. Schoettle was accepted by the Commission as an expert witness. The witness contends that the proposed design was not in keeping with the surrounding properties; that the roof form was flat as opposed to gabled and that the openings and fenestration is out of character with its surroundings. Mr. Schoettle suggested the following changes to the design: floor height could be reduced from the proposed 12’, with a reduction to 10’ allowing for a reduction in height by 6½ feet; more continuity to materials; 6-lite windows instead of four would help align and carry design throughout; rethinking how third floor roof overhangs the porch: remove roof, would create a lower sense of front plane of the building; reduce the vertical elements overall;
- Dr. Frank Faltus, 124 Congdon Street, was opposed, objecting to the scale of the proposed construction;
- Sara Bell was in favor of the development;
- Hank Heneghan, 109 Pratt Street, had concerns regarding the ability to negotiate the proposed parking spaces and concern regarding an existing pole-mounted transformer;
- Elizabeth Porter, 109 Pratt Street, was in opposition to the proposal;
- Alex Prosti, 102 Pratt Street, was in opposition to the proposal;
- Laura Donahue, 101 Pratt Street, was in opposition to the proposal;
- Olivia Katz, 54 Pratt Street, was in opposition to the proposal; and,

Public comment was closed.

The Commission has the following comments: articulation of the form that has been granted conceptual can still be modified; agreed with Mr. Schoettle’s points towards massing and emphasizing horizontality over verticality; symmetry is a formal gesture, less memorable; long glazing elements emphasize verticality, could be modified; too many materials: reduce and tone down; examine other material colors so building seems less “masculine”, lighter,

brighter would help; reduction/removal of the third floor porch roof element would be helpful in in reducing appearance of verticalness

With agreement form the applicant, a motion was made to continue the application, with the applicant to return with revised drawings at a subsequent meeting.

RESULT:	**CONTINUED [UNANIMOUS] Next: 10/6/2026 4:45 PM**
MOVER:	Catherine Lund, Vice-Chair
SECONDER:	Sumi Mukoyama, Regular Member
AYES:	Lund, Mukoyama, Carden, Fernandez, Haggerty, Verity

2. CASE 26.138, 56 PRATT STREET, House, 1857-75 (COLLEGE HILL)

Mr. David Sisson, architect, via Zoom, Mr. Steve Gilbert, architect, and Mr. Mark Liberati, Esq., representing the owner, appeared before the Commission requesting that as part of the subdivision of the property into two parcels, the applicant is requesting the construction of a two-unit, three-story with cellar addition to the existing building (aka north parcel).

Mr. Martin gave an introduction. 56 Pratt Street is a structure of historical and architectural significance that contributes to the significance of the College Hill local historic district, having been recognized as a contributing structure to the College Hill National Register Historic District. The applicants previously appeared as a Preliminary Application at the Commission's June 22nd meeting where the previous proposal was discussed. The Commission's general consensus was that it was inappropriate as it is too large and needs to be subservient to the existing house. Suggestions were to reduce the mass and also to camouflage the addition with material color to help minimize its appearance. The applicant appeared at the July 27th meeting. The applicant had revised the drawings, and the proposal was slightly smaller in height but still too large in scale and mass. The upper floor of the addition is a full story above the historic resources' roofline. The submission is not zoning compliant, at minimum not conforming to section 402.A, exceeding the number of allowed stories. It is definitively not subservient to the historic resource. The application was denied (Res26-08). The new submission is substantially and materially different from the denied application and is considered complete for review; Staff recommends a motion be made from the Commission stating this.

A motion was made stating that the new submission is substantially and materially different from the denied application and is considered complete for review.

RESULT:	**APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER:	James Verity, Deputy Vice-Chair
SECONDER:	Nathaniel Carden, Regular Member
AYES:	Verity, Carden, Fernandez, Haggerty, Lund, Mukoyama

Mr. Sisson gave a presentation highlighting the changes in the proposal.

The Chair asked for public comment. The following public comment was taken:

- An email in opposition to the proposal from Qingqing "Cath" Cai and Henry Hawk, 105 Pratt St, was submitted as part of Exhibit 1;
- An email in opposition to the proposal from Laura Donahue, 101 Pratt St, was submitted as part of Exhibit 1;
- An email in opposition to the proposal from Anne Hart, 162 Pratt St, was submitted as part of Exhibit 1;
- An email in opposition to the proposal from Stephen Lynch, 100 Pratt St, was submitted as part of Exhibit 1;
- An email in opposition to the proposal from Michael Sandoval, 97 Pratt St, was submitted as part of Exhibit 1;
- An email in opposition to the proposal from Peter Andrews, 41 Pratt St, was submitted as part of Exhibit

1;

- An email in opposition to the proposal from Charles and Joy Wharton, 4 Jenckes St, was submitted as part of Exhibit 1;
- An email in opposition to the proposal from Karen Hebb, 120 Pratt St, was submitted as part of Exhibit 1;
- An email in opposition to the proposal from Hank Heneghan and Elizabeth Porter, 109 Pratt St, was submitted as part of Exhibit 1;
- An email in opposition to the proposal from Michael Sandoval, 97 Pratt St, was submitted as part of Exhibit 1;
- An email in opposition to the proposal from Olivia Katz and Chris Borgstrom, 54 Pratt Street, was submitted as part of Exhibit 1;
- An email in opposition to the proposal from Karen Borger, 11 Jenckes St, was submitted as part of Exhibit 1;
- An email in opposition to the proposal from Helen Grundman, 169 Pratt St, was submitted as part of Exhibit 1;
- An email in opposition to the proposal from Karim Khanbhai, 103 Pratt St, was submitted as part of Exhibit 1;
- An email in opposition to the proposal from Douglas Grundman, 169 Pratt St, was submitted as part of Exhibit 1;
- An email in opposition to the proposal from Sarah "Sally" Herreid, 37 Pratt St, was submitted as part of Exhibit 1;
- A petition titled “PETITION OF RESIDENTS OPPOSING THE 56 PRATT STREET APPLICATIONS” containing approximately 33 signatures was submitted as part of Exhibit 1;
- Jennifer Laurelli, 16 Pratt Street, was in opposition to the proposal;
- Amy Goins, Esq., Ursillo, Teitz & Ritch, Ltd., representing Frank Faltus, Olivia Katz and Chris Borgstrom, disputed that the application is materially and substantially different; introduced Clark Schoettle as an expert witness. Mr. Schoettle was previously accepted by the Commission as an expert witness. He stated that this design is much better than the new construction design. Addition is large, perhaps larger than the house, but allowed by zoning; no site plan showing abutting properties, questioned whether an engineer’s drawing is required showing proposal and abutting properties; thought this would help in better understanding the projects and how they interact with the surrounding built environment; Ms. Goins argued that Commission is missing a step because not conceptual, but final approval is being requested/given;
- Syed Rizvi, 107 Pratt Street, was in opposition to the proposal;
- Chris Borgstrom, 54 Pratt Street, was in opposition to the proposal;
- Joyce Lilly, 59 Williams Street, was in opposition to the proposal;
- Rachel Bell, was in opposition to the proposal;
- Hank Heneghan, 109 Pratt Street, was in opposition to the proposal;
- Olivia Katz, 54 Pratt Street, was in opposition to the proposal;
- Laura Donahue, 101 Pratt Street, was in opposition to the proposal; and,

Public comment was closed.

The Commission has the following comments: reinforced that the proposal was substantially and materially different; removed height and width, now visually behind the historic resource; the addition is, in some ways, emulating the historic resource, and in other ways, not; it could potentially benefit from taking it a step further to think about what the gesture is, or that we see in the existing home, which seems to be defined by more of a balanced asymmetry versus another kind of symmetrical and vertically oriented architectural language; would encourage the design team to think about particularly the bay window, and how the bay window is a really defining gesture of the architecture for the edition, and if that might benefit from learning from the existing house a little bit more, how the elevations of the front side are not just a grid of windows, for instance, at the street or the sides, and that maybe there could be more of a rhythm to the openings, or maybe the bay window would better serve living rooms and bedrooms versus bathrooms and closets, which seem to be, at least for the upper floors, what part of the building plan, that element is serving; materiality of

that connector; widow's walk details; Grant conceptual approval? Perhaps (Staff explained conceptual approval, how this term is primarily for new construction projects, not additions like this one. That being said the Commission can grant a conceptual approval although in this case the applicant had requested final approval and the applicant would need to agree to conceptual approval. The applicant did agree they would accept a conceptual approval.

A motion was made stating that the application for 56 Pratt Street, a structure of historical and architectural significance to the College Hill local historic district, recognized as a contributing structure to the College Hill National Register Historic District is considered complete for conceptual review. The Commission cites Standard 8 in granting Conceprtual Approval for the proposed addition to 56 Pratt Street as it is in accord with PHDC Standard 8, being architecturally and historically compatible with the property and district having an appropriate size, scale and form that will not have an adverse effect on the property or district, being of a size where its height and width are minimally to not discernible from the public rights-of-way, citing and agreeing to the recommendations in the staff report, with the applicant to appear with revised drawings at a subsequent meeting for final approval.

RESULT:	**CONCEPTUALLY APPROVED [UNANIMOUS] Next: 10/6/2026 4:45 PM**
MOVER:	Catherine Lund, Vice-Chair
SECONDER:	James Verity, Deputy Vice-Chair
AYES:	Lund, Verity, Carden, Fernandez, Haggerty, Mukoyama

3. CASE 26.139, 132-136 PROSPECT STREET, vacant lot (COLLEGE HILL)
This applicant has requested the item be continued**.**

A motion was made to continue the application, with the applicant to appear at a subsequent meeting.

RESULT:	**CONTINUED [UNANIMOUS] Next: 9/28/2026 4:45 PM**
MOVER:	Sumi Mukoyama, Regular Member
SECONDER:	Pabel Fernandez, Regular Member
AYES:	Mukoyama, Fernandez, Carden, Haggerty, Lund, Verity,

ADJOURNMENT (NC, PF; 6:35 PM)

CITY OF PROVIDENCE

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

MINUTES ● OCTOBER 6, 2026

Special Meeting | **444 Westminster St., 1st Fl., Conf. Room** | **4:45 PM**

Joseph A. Doorley, Jr. Municipal Building, Providence, RI 02903

CALL TO ORDER
PRESENT: Haggerty, Bay, Brennan, Carden, Fernandez
ABSENT: Lund, Mukoyama, Sharma, Verity
Staff Present: Jason Martin, Sharon Garner, Blake Horne

PROJECT REVIEW

1. **CASE 26.101, 56 PRATT STREET, House, 1857-75 (COLLEGE HILL)**
   Mr. David Sisson, architect, and Mr. John Garrahy, Esq., representing the owner, appeared before the Commission requesting that as part of the subdivision of the property into two parcels, the construction of a new three-story with cellar, four-family residence (aka south parcel).

   Mr. Martin gave a staff report. 56 Pratt Street is a parcel that contains a structure of historical and architectural significance that contributes to the significance of the College Hill local historic district, having been recognized as a contributing structure to the College Hill National Register Historic District. The parcel shall be subdivided to allow for a vacant parcel that the new construction will be built upon;

   At the July 27th meeting the application was granted conceptual approval (Res26-07). The proposed building's form and siting are appropriate for the location. Pratt Street is a location that has minimal historical context as related to its streetscape, as the majority of buildings constructed on the street are from the mid-20th century and later. The Commission has approved multiple buildings of contemporary and modern design along the street, and this proposal is compliant within that context; The street hosts two properties designed by Friedrich St. Florian, who rightly referred to the street as a "laboratory" for architectural expression;

   At the August 24th meeting in agreement with the applicant the matter was continued. The applicants also agreed to attend a design charette hosted by the Providence Preservation Society (PPS) to discuss proposed design changes that had been articulated by an expert witness, Clarke Schoettle, and comments from the Commission;

   On Tuesday, September 29th, staff attended the charrette at PPS. This meeting was attended by Councilwoman Jill Davidson, the applicant's architect, David Sisson, Clark Schoettle, Glen Fontecchio, Joel Vanderweele, Marisa Brown and Elisabeth Seidel. It was a productive session and the items discussed for this project related to the following: Reduce height; Design changes at front and roofline to soften façade at front and reduce bulk; Deemphasize verticality; Reduce actual and apparent height; Window changes; Color changes; Landscape changes;

   Revised plans, photos and renderings have been submitted. Additional documentation of a memo detailing changes made since conceptual review to this review, and a section drawing have also been submitted and distributed. The application for New Construction is considered complete;

   The proposed new construction has been changed substantially stylistically in an attempt to minimize the verticality while maintaining volume. The overall height has been reduced by 4'. The building is still tall, but

below the buildable envelope allowed by zoning and smaller than what the Commission granted conceptual approval for. The changes to the front, having open porches that emulate a more traditional double- or triple-decker design is helpful; fenestration changes are help reduce the verticality and improve the composition; and,

The work as proposed is in accord with PHDC Standard 8 as follows: having determined that the proposed new construction is appropriate as it is architecturally and historically compatible with the property and district having an appropriate size, scale and form that will not have an adverse effect on the property or district, as Pratt Street has been identified by the Commission as a street that can support contemporary and modern architecture as the majority of properties on the street were constructed in the 20th and 21st Centuries, most reviewed and approved by the Commission, and this proposal is congruous with the street's development.

Mr. Garrahy gave an introduction, and Mr. Sisson gave an overview of the proposal and changes.

The Chair asked for public comment. The following public comment was taken:

- An email from Ian Saxine, 500 Wickenden Street, in support of the proposal was submitted as part of Exhibit 1;
- An email from Mel Rainsberger, 15 Glendale Avenue, in support of the proposal was submitted as part of Exhibit 1;
- An email from Tyler Macmillan, 183 Elmgrove Avenue, in support of the proposal was submitted as part of Exhibit 1;
- Laura Donahue, 101 Pratt Street, was in opposition to the proposal;
- Paul Flynn was in support of the proposal;
- Syed Rizvi, 107 Pratt Street, was in opposition to the proposal;
- David Marks, Esq., Ursillo, Teitz & Ritch, Ltd., representing Frank Faltus, Olivia Katz and Chris Borgstrom, was in opposition to the proposal; also had procedural objections;
- Sara Bell was in favor of the development;

Public comment was closed.

The Commission has the following comments: members commended the applicants for going through the charrette procedure; Pratt Street is a street of varied architectural designs; responded to comments made by the Commission and from the expert witness (Clark Schoettle at previous 08/24 meeting); reduction in height; new changes are materially simple and refined; better proportion of windows (windows proposed to be Pella Lifestyle; still deciding on door systems; Hardie plank, smooth side out; composite trim; full brick; roof: standing seam metal) there are small details that can discussed with staff (materiality of retention walls: reduce Versa-Lok in front, perhaps fieldstone; removal of corbels; color suggestions; finalization of window and door systems); new revisions have helped reduce verticality.

A motion was made stating that: the application is considered complete. 56 Pratt Street is a parcel that contains a structure of historical and architectural significance that contributes to the significance of the College Hill local historic district, having been recognized as a contributing structure to the College Hill National Register Historic District. The parcel shall be subdivided to allow for a vacant parcel that the new construction will be built upon. The Commission grants Final Approval of the proposal, citing Standard 8, having determined that the proposed new construction is appropriate as it is architecturally and historically compatible with the property and district having an appropriate size, scale and form that will not have an adverse effect on the property or district, as Pratt Street has been identified by the Commission as a street that can support contemporary and modern architecture as the majority of properties on the street were constructed in the 20th and 21st Centuries, most reviewed and approved by the Commission, and this proposal is congruous with the street's development, citing and agreeing

to the recommendations in the staff report, with staff or a sub-committee to review any additional details.

RESULT:	**APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER:	Pabel Fernandez, Regular Member
SECONDER:	Matthew Brennan, Regular Member
AYES:	Fernandez, Brennan, Bay, Carden, Haggerty

2. CASE 26.138, 56 PRATT STREET, House, 1857-75 (COLLEGE HILL)

Mr. David Sisson, architect, and Mr. John Garrahy, Esq., representing the owner, appeared before the Commission requesting that as part of the subdivision of the property into two parcels, the applicant is requesting the construction of a two-unit, three-story with cellar addition to the existing building (aka north parcel).

Mr. Martin gave a staff report. 56 Pratt Street is a parcel that contains a structure of historical and architectural significance that contributes to the significance of the College Hill local historic district, having been recognized as a contributing structure to the College Hill National Register Historic District. The parcel shall be subdivided to allow for a vacant parcel that the new construction will be built upon;

The applicants previously appeared as a Preliminary Application at the Commission's June 22nd meeting where the previous proposal was discussed. The Commission's the general consensus was that it was inappropriate as it is too large and needs to be subservient to the existing house. Suggestions were to reduce the mass and also to camouflage the addition with material color to help minimize its appearance;

The applicant appeared at the July 27th meeting. The applicant had revised the drawings, and the proposal was slightly smaller in height but still too large in scale and mass. The upper floor of the addition is a full story above the historic resources' roofline. The submission is not zoning compliant, at minimum not conforming to section 402.A, exceeding the number of allowed stories. It is definitively not subservient to the historic resource. The application was denied (Res26-08);

At the August 24th meeting a new application that was deemed materially and substantially different was reviewed by the Commission. The Commission granted conceptual approval (Res26-12) at the bequest of the applicant. The as the proposed addition is subservient to the historic resource, being of a size where its height and width are minimally to not discernible from the public rights-of-way. The applicants also agreed to attend a design charette hosted by the Providence Preservation Society (PPS) to discuss proposed design changes that had been articulated by an expert witness, Clarke Schoettle, and comments from the Commission;

On Tuesday, September 29th, staff attended the charrette at PPS. This meeting was attended by Councilwoman Jill Davidson, the applicant's architect, David Sisson, Clark Schoettle, Glen Fontecchio, Joel Vanderweele, Marisa Brown and Elisabeth Seidel. It was a productive session and the items discussed for this project related to the following: Aligning floors, Window changes, Canopy add at front door, Front door change, Unique siding at 'transition' portion of addition, Color changes;

Revised plans, photos and renderings have been submitted. Additional documentation of a memo detailing changes made since conceptual review to this review has also been submitted and distributed. The application for Major Alterations is considered complete;

The revised design reflects most of the comments discussed at the charette. The design is now more cohesive. The addition's floors have been lowered and match existing; the fenestration and materials, along with color choices have enhanced the design; and,

The work as proposed is in accord with PHDC Standard 8 being architecturally and historically compatible with the property and district having an appropriate size, scale and form that will not have an adverse effect on the property or district, as the proposed addition is subservient to the historic resource, being of a size where its height and width are minimally to not discernible from the public rights-of-way.

Mr. Garrahy gave an introduction, and Mr. Sisson gave an overview of the proposal and changes.

The Chair asked for public comment. The following public comment was taken:

- An email from Ian Saxine, 500 Wickenden Street, in support of the proposal was submitted as part of Exhibit 1;
- An email from Mel Rainsberger, 15 Glendale Avenue, in support of the proposal was submitted as part of Exhibit 1;
- An email from Tyler Macmillan, 183 Elmgrove Avenue, in support of the proposal was submitted as part of Exhibit 1;
- Chris Borgstrom, 54 Pratt Street, warned about AI- generated public comment;
- Paul Flynn was in support of the proposal;
- Syed Rizvi, 107 Pratt Street, not opposed to housing, this design is better, still concerns over overall proposal;
- David Marks, Esq., Ursillo, Teitz & Ritch, Ltd., representing Frank Faltus, Olivia Katz and Chris Borgstrom, was in opposition to the proposal; also had procedural objections;
- Sara Bell was in favor of the development;
- Olivia Katz, 54 Pratt Street, this design is better, still concerns over overall proposal; and,

Public comment was closed.

The Commission has the following comments: members commended the applicants for going through the charrette procedure; improvement to design; volume's mass has been helped by aligning floors, minimalization of elements; materiality of walls along with differentiation at connector piece is appreciated; noted how shingles will eventually age and be similar in color to the roof; questions of materiality (windows proposed to be Pella Lifestyle; still deciding on door systems; Hardie plank, smooth side out; composite trim; full brick; roof: standing seam metal), there are small details that can discussed with staff (materiality of retention walls: reduce Versa-Lok in front, perhaps fieldstone; color suggestions; finalization of window and door systems); overall well received.

A motion was made stating that: The application for 56 Pratt Street, a structure of historical and architectural significance to the College Hill local historic district, recognized as a contributing structure to the College Hill National Register Historic District is considered complete. The Commission cites Standard 8 in granting final approval for the proposed addition to 56 Pratt Street as it is in accord with PHDC Standard 8, being architecturally and historically compatible with the property and district having an appropriate size, scale and form that will not have an adverse effect on the property or district, being of a size where its height and width are minimally to not discernible from the public rights-of-way, citing and agreeing to the recommendations in the staff report, with staff to review any additional details.

RESULT:	**APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER:	Nathaniel Carden, Regular Member
SECONDER:	Pabel Fernandez, Regular Member
AYES:	Carden, Fernandez, Bay, Brennan, Haggerty

ADJOURNMENT (MB, PF; 6:10 PM)

EXHIBIT D

d a v i d s i s s o n a r c h i t e c t u r e p c

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 | | #

345 Taunton Ave East Providence RI 02914 www.ds-arch.com info@ds-arch.com tel: 401.595.7070

Project: 25005 56 Pratt

Date: 10-06-2026

Attn.: Jason Martin, Principal Planner
City of Providence

Dear Jason,

I wanted to outline changes we have done in the two projects to be located at 56 Pratt Street in Providence. It should be noted that we took into account comments from both the Providence Historic District Commission (HDC) and the Providence Preservation Society (PPS). We met with the HDC on June 22 for the preliminary application, July 27, and August 24. We met with the PPS on September 29.

Since the initial introduction of these two projects (North, the addition to the existing house and South, the new build) we have made these changes. Please note that we have worked hard to incorporate suggestions and have made substantial changes. Note that the South project received conceptual approval at the July 27 meeting, and the North project received conceptual approval at the August 24 meeting. My notes below are for changes since the conceptual approvals.

<u>NORTH - CASE 26.138</u>

- Alignment in floors with the front house
- Change in windows grille style from 9/9 to 4/1
- Alignment of windows with front house, including size
- Removal of bays from addition, this allows the addition to be the same width as the front home
- Change of material at the “joining” section from painted lap siding to natural shingles
- Adjustment of rails at roof deck area to have a reduced visual impact
- Addition of canopy at new side entry; convert opening from a residential style opening mimicking the original front door to a unique storefront opening.
- Worked to clarify site walls – to meet Providence zoning standards for walls
- Changed color from a dark green to a goldenrod yellow with off white trim (dark gray mansard)
- Please note that from the original design of this addition we reduced the height by 10’-9” feet and the width 11’-1 1/2” feet.

<u>SOUTH - CASE 26.101</u>

- Reduction in height of 4 feet (43’-7” to 39’-7”)
- Reduction in ceiling height each level of 2 feet
- Change of roofline from modern/boxy to a mansard, much softer look

345 Taunton Ave East Providence RI 02914 www.ds-arch.com info@ds-arch.com tel: 401.595.7070

- Change in windows from commercial / modern style to residential style with grilles
- Change in windows at the lowest level from clerestory style to residential double hung style
- Clarified brick detailing at the lowest level
- Reduction in number of exterior materials
- Deemphasized the verticality in favor of horizontal elements
- Softened look of the front of the home – working to include elements of the traditional Providence triple decker motif
- Worked to clarify site walls – to meet Providence zoning standards for walls
- Changed color from a dark green to a goldenrod yellow with off white trim (dark gray mansard)

If you have any questions or requests, please do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely,



David Sisson

EXHIBIT E

CITY OF PROVIDENCE
MAYOR BRETT P. SMILEY

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

NOTICE OF REGULAR MEETING

All items on this agenda are for vote or other action unless otherwise noted.

Monday, June 22, 2026. 4:45 P.M.

Joseph A. Doorley, Jr. Municipal Building, 444 Westminster Street, 1st Floor meeting room, Providence RI 02903

The public and applicants may also participate and remotely view the meeting on the Zoom platform using the following link: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84116008514 Participation is also available by telephone by dialing one of the following toll-free numbers: 301 715 8592, 305 224 1968, 309 205 3325, or 646 931 3860. The Webinar ID is: 841 1600 8514

OPENING SESSION/ROLL CALL

MINUTES

Approval of the March 23, 2026, meeting minutes.

PROJECT REVIEW

1. **CASE 26.062, 25 HOLLYWOOD ROAD, Albert T. Mansfield House c1893 (ARMORY)**
   The applicant is requesting the installation of 34 solar panels (13 to the front slope; 21 to the rear slope).

2. **CASE 26.072, 186 ONTARIO STREET, Two-bay garage, before 1918 (SOUTH ELMWOOD)**
   The applicant is requesting the demolition of the existing garage, a secondary structure.

3. **PRELIMINARY APPLICATION, 56 PRATT STREET, House, 1857-75 (COLLEGE HILL)**
   The applicant is requesting the construction of a multi-story addition to the existing house. No formal action will be taken.

OTHER BUSINESS

Adoption of Standards & Guidelines for the Wanskuck local historic district.
Staff reports.

ADJOURNMENT

POSTED 06/15/26

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- All documents for the agenda items can be found no later than Friday, June 19th at: http://www.providenceri.gov/planning/providence-historic-district-commission-phdc/ Those who cannot access the documents electronically may call 401.680-8517 to make other arrangements to view the documents.
- Virtual access options are being provided only as a convenience and not as an official "location" where access to the meeting is guaranteed. Being physically present at the meeting is the only way to guarantee access to the meeting.
- The Commission encourages comments to be submitted no later than 24 hours before the meeting. Comments received after noon on the day of the meeting will not be considered. Comments accepted via email will be discussed at the meeting.
- The City of Providence is committed to providing individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from the City's programs, activities, and services. If you have a disability and require accommodations in order to fully participate in this activity, contact Leonela Felix, Esq., Ethics Education and ADA Coordinator at 401.680.5333 or LFelix@ProvidenceRI.gov. Providing at least 72 hours' notice will help to ensure availability.
- Contact Jason Martin with the Department of Planning and Development at 401.680.8517, jmartin@providenceri.gov if you have any questions regarding this meeting.

CITY OF PROVIDENCE
MAYOR BRETT P. SMILEY

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

NOTICE OF REGULAR MEETING

All items on this agenda are for vote or other action unless otherwise noted.

Monday, July 27, 2026. 4:45 P.M.

Joseph A. Doorley, Jr. Municipal Building, 444 Westminster Street, 1st Floor meeting room, Providence RI 02903

The public and applicants may also participate and remotely view the meeting on the Zoom platform using the following link: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84116008514 Participation is also available by telephone by dialing one of the following toll-free numbers: 301 715 8592, 305 224 1968, 309 205 3325, or 646 931 3860. The Webinar ID is: 841 1600 8514

OPENING SESSION/ROLL CALL

MINUTES

Approval of the June 22, 2026, meeting minutes.

PROJECT REVIEW

1. **CASE 26.101, 56 PRATT STREET, House, 1857-75 (COLLEGE HILL)**
   The applicant is requesting the construction of a new residential building and a multi-story addition to the existing house.

2. **CASE 26.105, 113 BROADWAY, Commercial Building, pre1875, 1921 (BROADWAY)**
   The applicant is requesting the demolition of the existing, non-contributing building.

3. **CASE 26.107, 42 HIDDEN STREET, Simeon Klein House, 1912-13 (COLLEGE HILL)**
   The applicant is requesting the demolition of the existing 1912 garage and the construction of a new two-story garage with ADU, and installation of an in-ground, therapeutic pool.

OTHER BUSINESS

Staff updates/reports.

ADJOURNMENT

POSTED 07/20/26

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- All documents for the agenda items can be found no later than Friday, July 24th at:
  http://www.providenceri.gov/planning/providence-historic-district-commission-phdc/
  Those who cannot access the documents electronically may call 401.680-8517 to make other arrangements to view the documents.
- Virtual access options are being provided only as a convenience and not as an official "location" where access to the meeting is guaranteed. Being physically present at the meeting is the only way to guarantee access to the meeting.
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- Contact Jason Martin with the Department of Planning and Development at 401.680.8517, jmartin@providenceri.gov if you have any questions regarding this meeting.

CITY OF PROVIDENCE
MAYOR BRETT P. SMILEY

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

NOTICE OF REGULAR MEETING

All items on this agenda are for vote or other action unless otherwise noted.

Monday, August 24, 2026. 4:45 P.M.

Joseph A. Doorley, Jr. Municipal Building, 444 Westminster Street, 1st Floor meeting room, Providence RI 02903

The public and applicants may also participate and remotely view the meeting on the Zoom platform using the following link: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84116008514 Participation is also available by telephone by dialing one of the following toll-free numbers: 301 715 8592, 305 224 1968, 309 205 3325, or 646 931 3860. The Webinar ID is: 841 1600 8514

OPENING SESSION/ROLL CALL

MINUTES

Approval of the July 27, 2026, meeting minutes.

PROJECT REVIEW

1. **CASE 26.101, 56 PRATT STREET, House, 1857-75 (COLLEGE HILL)**
   The applicant is requesting the construction of a four-unit, three-story with cellar residential building.

2. **CASE 26.138, 56 PRATT STREET, House, 1857-75 (COLLEGE HILL)**
   The applicant is requesting the construction of a two-unit, three-story with cellar addition to rear of existing building.

3. **CASE 26.139, 132-136 CONGDON STREET, vacant lot (COLLEGE HILL)**
   The applicant is requesting the construction of two, 2½ story single-family dwellings.

OTHER BUSINESS

Staff updates/reports.

ADJOURNMENT

POSTED 08/17/26

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- All documents for the agenda items can be found no later than Friday, August 21st at: http://www.providenceri.gov/planning/providence-historic-district-commission-phdc/
  Those who cannot access the documents electronically may call 401.680-8517 to make other arrangements to view the documents.
- Virtual access options are being provided only as a convenience and not as an official "location" where access to the meeting is guaranteed. Being physically present at the meeting is the only way to guarantee access to the meeting.
- The Commission encourages comments to be submitted no later than 24 hours before the meeting. Comments received after noon on the day of the meeting will not be considered. Comments accepted via email will be discussed at the meeting.
- The City of Providence is committed to providing individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from the City's programs, activities, and services. If you have a disability and require accommodations in order to fully participate in this activity, contact Leonela Felix, Esq., Ethics Education and ADA Coordinator at 401.680.5333 or LFelix@ProvidenceRI.gov. Providing at least 72 hours' notice will help to ensure availability.
- Contact Jason Martin with the Department of Planning and Development at 401.680.8517, jmartin@providenceri.gov if you have any questions regarding this meeting.

CITY OF PROVIDENCE
MAYOR BRETT P. SMILEY

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING

All items on this agenda are for vote or other action unless otherwise noted.

Tuesday, October 6, 2026. 4:45 P.M.

Joseph A. Doorley, Jr. Municipal Building, 444 Westminster Street, 1st Floor meeting room, Providence RI 02903

The public and applicants may also participate and remotely view the meeting on the Zoom platform using the following link: https://providenceri-gov.zoom.us/j/84843355047 Participation is also available by telephone by dialing one of the following toll-free numbers: 301 715 8592, 305 224 1968, 309 205 3325, or 646 931 3860. The Webinar ID is: 848 4335 5047
Virtual access options are being provided only as a convenience and not as an official "location" where access to the meeting is guaranteed. Being physically present at the meeting is the only way to guarantee access to the meeting.

OPENING SESSION/ROLL CALL

PROJECT REVIEW

1. **CASE 26.101, 56 PRATT STREET, House, 1857-75 (COLLEGE HILL)**
   The applicant is requesting the construction of a four-unit, three-story with cellar residential building.

2. **CASE 26.138, 56 PRATT STREET, House, 1857-75 (COLLEGE HILL)**
   The applicant is requesting the construction of a two-unit, three-story with cellar addition to rear of existing building.

ADJOURNMENT

POSTED 09/29/26

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- All documents for the agenda items can be found at:
  http://www.providenceri.gov/planning/providence-historic-district-commission-phdc/
  Those who cannot access the documents electronically may call 401.680-8517 to make other arrangements to view the documents.
- The Commission encourages comments to be submitted no later than 24 hours before the meeting. Comments received after noon on the day of the meeting will not be considered. Comments accepted via email will be will be distributed and entered into the record.
- The City of Providence is committed to providing individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from the City's programs, activities, and services. If you have a disability and require accommodations in order to fully participate in this activity, contact Leonela Felix, Esq., Ethics Education and ADA Coordinator at 401.680.5333 or LFelix@ProvidenceRI.gov. Providing at least 72 hours' notice will help to ensure availability.
- Contact Jason Martin with the Department of Planning and Development at 401.680.8517, jmartin@providenceri.gov if you have any questions regarding this meeting.