

Chapter V: Guidelines for Additions

The Design Guidelines for Additions, that follow, shall apply to all historic properties in the South Main Street Historic District. The city's Historic Landmarks Board will use the Guidelines for Additions in formal reviews of proposed changes to historic properties. They are also for use by property owners and their architects when developing designs for alteration and strategies for rehabilitation and repair of historic features.

Many historic buildings have experienced additions over time, as need for additional space occurs, particularly with a change in use. In general, additions to historic properties may be considered in the District. When planning an addition to a historic structure, one should minimize the negative effects that may occur to the historic building fabric as well as to its character. While some destruction of historic materials is almost always a part of constructing an addition, such loss must be minimized. Locating an addition such that existing side or rear doors may be used for access, for example, will help to minimize the amount of historic wall material that must be removed.

The addition also must not affect the perceived character of the building. In most cases, loss of character can be avoided by locating the addition to the rear. The overall design of the addition must be in keeping with the design character of the historic structure as well.

Keeping the size of the addition small, in relation to the main structure, also will help minimize its visual impacts. It is also important that this addition not obscure significant features of the historic building. If the addition is set to the rear, it is less likely to affect such features.

The addition must not affect the ability to perceive the historic character of the building, especially from public ways. An alternative to constructing an addition is to consider the use of secondary structures located to the rear of the site as another way to obtain the space from an addition.

Site Planning of an Addition

Existing original site features include building setbacks, walkways, fences, landscaping and gardens are all site features that may be affected when constructing an addition. These features are important elements that create a context and setting for a historic building and often contribute to its significance. It is the goal of the District not to destroy any of these features, so an addition must be designed little intrusion on the District as possible.

5.1 An addition shall adhere to current zoning requirements for setbacks unless otherwise deemed appropriate.

- a. New additions to historic buildings will be considered the same as additions to newer buildings and thereby affected by the same setback, size and building restrictions (see Section 156 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of St. Charles).
- b. In some cases, however, the historic setbacks may be different from these mandated in current regulations.

5.2 An addition should be built on historic footprints where applicable.

- a. In keeping with the historicism of the District, if a structure previously had an historically significant addition, then a new addition should be built in a similar style and location to an original addition.
- b. Such an addition shall be based on historical documentation.
- c. Where no previous addition existed, a new addition shall be built in character to an addition seen on similar structures. Such an addition will be approved on an individual basis.

5.3 Preserve historic alignments that may exist on the street when planning an addition.

- a. Some roof lines and porch eaves on historic buildings in the area may align at approximately the same height. Avoid placing an addition in a location where these relationships would be altered or obscured.

5.4 Maintain the historic relationship of the primary structure to its site and the street when adding a new addition.

- a. Historic buildings and any additions must remain oriented parallel to the lot lines, maintaining the traditional pattern of the District.
- b. Destroying the perception of a public or private space, such as a front yard, with an addition is inappropriate.

5.5 An addition must not obscure the primary entrance to a building.

- a. Locating an addition to the rear is preferred.

5.6 An addition must not significantly alter original landscape features, such as walkways, fences, street trees, special plantings and other ornamental site features, when feasible.

- a. Respect existing original site features in planning an addition.

Building Form, Mass and Scale

The form, mass and scale of a building are some of the most important design issues in the historic district. The traditional scale of the District dominates much of the neighborhood and this enhances the “pedestrian friendly” character of the street. The continuity of form, mass and scale seen currently in the District lends itself to a visual continuity which must not be destroyed by alterations, additions or new construction.

- 5.7 A new addition shall be subordinate to the historic structure in scale and character.**
- a. The addition shall be set-back significantly from primary facades.
 - b. The addition shall minimize destruction of historic material.
 - c. The addition shall be consistent with the scale and character of the historic building.
 - d. Set back an addition from historically important primary facades in order to allow the original proportions and character to remain prominent. Also consider setting the addition apart from the historic building and connect it with a “link.”
- 5.8 The addition shall be built in the style and character of other historic additions.**
- 5.9 Maintain the historic solid-to-void ratio seen traditionally in the District.**

Roofs

Typical roof shapes for historic buildings in St. Charles are gabled, and hipped, as well as flat for some commercial buildings. In some cases, roofs are complex combinations of hip, gable and shed roofs and may include several of these types plus dormers, as well as broadly overhanging eaves, thereby creating deep shadows. These broad eaves, however, are often a location for important detailing such as brackets, cornices and bargeboards. Incorporate such similar shapes, overhangs and detailing in a new addition.

- 5.10 The roof form of an addition must be in character with the historic building.**
- a. If the roof of the historic building or structure is symmetrically proportioned, so shall the roof of the addition be.
 - b. Eave lines on the addition shall be similar to those of the historic building or structure.
 - c. Do not obscure existing roof detailing such as brackets, cornices, parapets, bargeboards and gable-end shingles with an addition.
 - d. A flat roof is generally inappropriate for an addition to a building with a sloping roof.
- 5.11 The addition’s roof material shall appear similar to that of the roof on the primary structure.**
- a. Use materials similar to those on the primary structure. Low profile asphalt shingles, for example, are appropriate replacements for wood shingles.
 - b. Maintain a similar color. Gray, black and brown are typical of many historic roof materials.
- 5.12 The addition shall preserve the established design character of the historic building or structure**
- a. For example, if historically the building or structure had a horizontal emphasis, this perceived orientation shall be preserved.
- 5.13 Using down spouts and gutters that are in character with those employed historically on similar buildings is encouraged.**

Architectural Details

An addition shall generally remain subordinate to the primary structure. An addition which mimics the character of the historic structure is appropriate.

5.14 Preserve, do not obscure, original architectural details of the historic structure.

- a. An addition shall not obscure historically significant features.
- b. When preserving original details, follow the guidelines for the preservation of architectural details in the Guidelines for Historic Properties.

5.15 Incorporate similar architectural details (i.e. brackets, columns, jig-saw ornaments) in the design of an addition.

- a. The use of such elements in the precise manner as on the historic structure is one way of incorporating these elements.
- b. Using a simplified interpretation of these elements is also appropriate.



Similar architectural details (i.e. brackets, columns, jig-saw ornaments) should be incorporated in the design of an addition.

Materials

The materials used to construct a new addition shall appear similar to those used historically. Both the construction technique as well as the building material seen on the primary structure should be employed for a new addition. Brick is the most common material for historic buildings in St. Charles; however, stone and wood were also used.

5.16 Materials shall appear similar in character to those used historically.

- a. Using materials that are the same as those employed historically is preferred.
- b. Substitute materials may be used for replacing individual building elements, but shall not be used for the primary building material. For instance, brick should be similar in size to that used historically.
- c. New materials must have a demonstrated durability in this setting.
- d. Materials should be used in a manner similar to that used traditionally.

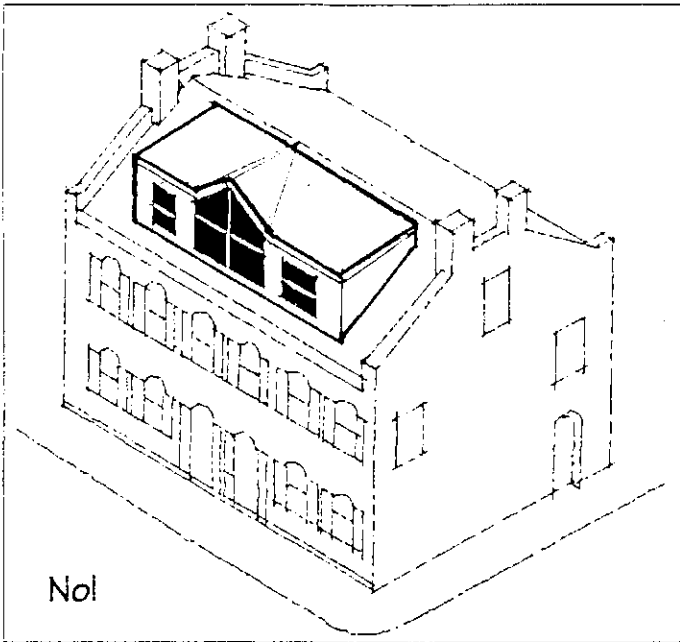
5.17 Simple material finishes are required.

- a. Use matte finishes.
- b. Polished stone, for example, is inappropriate as a primary material.

Street Facades

Noting the importance of the commercial storefront to the South Main Street Historic District, an addition to the storefront, or main facade of historic buildings, will not be allowed. As established in the Guidelines for Historic Properties, the maintenance of the established commercial character is strongly encouraged.

- 5.18 An addition shall not be made to a primary facade.**
- a. An addition made to the rear of the structure shall not be visible from the primary facade.



Inappropriate: An addition shall not be made to a primary facade. A rooftop addition should be stepped back, and not noticeable from the street. The one shown is in an inappropriate position on the primary facade.

Doors and Entries

A front door is among the most important elements of a historic building. It is more than just a way into a building; it serves as a greeting to visitors and acts as a guide into the structure. An addition may not involve hiding, moving or enclosing a primary entrance.

- 5.19 Preserve traditional entrance patterns when planning an addition to a historic building.**
- a. Retain the orientation of historically significant primary entrances, usually facing the street, when planning a new addition.
- 5.20 Doors on an addition shall appear similar in proportion to historic doors found on the primary structure.**
- a. An entrance into an addition should reflect the rest of the historic structure, and shall be similar in size to doors on the rest of the structure.
- 5.21 A door on an addition shall use a design similar to those found historically on comparable structures.**

Windows

Windows, the elements that surround them and their relationship to one another are among the most important character-defining elements of a historic structure. As is the case with doors, an addition shall not obscure or cover historically important windows.

- 5.22 A window on an addition shall be similar in character to those of the primary historic building.**
- 5.23 An addition shall maintain the solid-to-void ratio of the primary structure.**
- a. Incorporate the number and size of windows used historically on an addition.
 - b. An addition shall not be all glass or all solid.
- 5.24 Maintain the historic number of panes as seen on the primary structure.**
- a. If a window historically had multiple panes, windows on an addition must reflect this.
- 5.25 A window on an addition must use materials that appear similar to those seen historically.**
- a. A new window must appear similar in design and construction to historic windows (i.e. wood). However, other materials may be considered if the appearance is similar to that of the historically significant wood window in dimension, profile, and finish.