

Historic Area Commission Citizen Information

During meetings of the Historic Area Commission (HAC), requirements are discussed specifically for each project. In stating the motion for approval of a project, Historic Area Commission members often summarize requirements for construction. This information summarizes the full text of the HAC Guidelines.

Masonry

Repointing: Existing mortar is to be matched in color, texture and tooling. Extensive repointing will be demonstrated in a sample and approved by HAC. The joints should be cleaned out so as to not damage the surrounding masonry units. New material is applied into the joint, not onto the face of the masonry. Additional, pointing materials should be formulated to be weaker than the surrounding masonry units, so as to preserve the units.

Brick: Building and sidewalk brick should be dark red and molded and should be similar in appearance to old brick in New Castle. Glen Gary 52DD is a readily available product for building bricks as well as pavers. Pavers should be used on walks and driveway aprons. Building bricks have the wrong proportions to form patterns other than running bond. Simulating the pressed brick of Victorian facades is much more difficult. Samples need to be supplied and compared to the existing building. Some modern brick has dark stripes applied to make a machine-made product look old. These “flash-styled” bricks are not to be used. Antique bricks are often not sorted between face and common (salmon) brick. The common brick is not suitable for exposed use.

Stone: Stone finish, types and colors should be similar in appearance to old stone in New Castle. The crisp, shiny surfaces of machine-shaped stone is not appropriate.

Stucco: Stucco finish and colors should be similar in appearance to old work in New Castle. Crisp corners and metal control joints are to be avoided, as are fake quoins (i.e. cornerstones) and other detailed and artificially rough surfaces.

Wood

General: The following siding and trim materials are prohibited:

- plastic, metal, fiber reinforced concrete, asphalt, clad;
- hard board, “Masonite”;
- plywood with exposed grooves, “T 1-11”;
- plywood in exposed sheets;
- foam;
- factory finishes other than paint (cladding).

Siding: Siding is to be painted or stained with opaque stain. Care should be exercised in choosing siding. Much new wood is poor quality and does not last like the original material. The southern yellow pine German siding is particularly bad. Use cedar and when installing, ventilate and back-prime.

Trim: Trim is to be painted or stained with opaque stain. Thickness and moulding profiles have to be chosen carefully. Modern moulding is flatter and smaller. It is better to use simpler details rather than wrong imitations. “Brick Mould” is not to be used on doors and windows. Use 5/4” thick by desired width instead.

Fiberglass reproductions of trim and detail will be considered on a case by case basis.

Windows, Doors and Shutters

Windows: For factory-made windows, the following is permitted: wood, true divided lights, permanent simulated muntins, plank moulds, full glass. If divided, the proportions and sizes of the real or simulated lights should be traditional.

Aluminum storm windows are permitted if they are painted to match the house trim and meeting rails align with the prime windows.

Shutters: Shutters and blinds must fit the openings and include hardware. Typically, shutters (i.e., louvered) are installed on the first floor with blinds (solid shutters) above. Shutters are not installed on upper floors.

Doors: For factory made doors, the following is permitted: wood, traditional panel patterns appropriate to the building.

Door Blinds: Door blinds are peculiar to New Castle, possibly having originated in the 1930s. Do not use thin, interior louver doors. Match the blinds appropriate to the house.

Storm Doors: These must be all wood design.

Gutters and Downspouts

The following is acceptable: wood or metal, recessed behind eaves, pole, or slots in the roof. If the metal is exposed, use half-round gutters and round downspouts. If exposed bare metal, use dull gray lead, galvanizing or copper. If painted, then the paint color is to match house trim.

Roofing

Wood: Use shingles, not shakes. Shingles, which now are sawn, give the appropriate appearance. Shakes are very rough, textural and are wrong for New Castle.

Metal: The following is acceptable: standing or flat seam, bare copper, lead-coated copper or terne-coated stainless steel, painted terne coated steel (tin).

Asphalt: Use plain three-tab shingles or “laminated” or “dimensional” shingles. Lamination gives the appearance of texture to asphalt. Acceptable examples and colors: Certainteed, “Independence Shingle”, “Weathered Wood Blend” (a dark greyed-out brown). Similar products are available from several manufacturers.

Materials used on flat or concealed roofs are not regulated.

Building accessories

Chimney caps: If necessary, these are to be painted black.

Utilities: These should be located around the side, fenced and painted out.

Heating and Cooling: These utilities should be located around the back or side and be fenced or planted out.

Fences and Railings

General: Good quality, custom made, meeting code (good side out, proper height). Prohibited: Woven wire, chain link, plastic.

Wood: Boards or pickets, simple design, painted or stained. See the pages of examples in the full version of the Guidelines. Prohibited: “shadow box”, stockade.

Metal: Steel, painted. Cast iron, painted. Antique wrought iron, painted.