



Historic Meridian Park

Preservation and Renovation Guidelines

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References: The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties - <http://www.nps.gov/hps/tps/standguide/>



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PREFACE

The built environment stands as a vital physical link to the historical and architectural development of the city of Indianapolis. The buildings which comprise Historic Meridian Park are regarded as landmarks in our personal and societal development by providing a sense of time and place. For these reasons, the need to preserve and protect the distinctive qualities of historically and architecturally significant buildings or districts is essential in enhancing the quality of life in our city.

This document has been compiled to provide residents and property owners of Historic Meridian Park (HMP) with a set of guidelines to assist residents and property owners in determining appropriate exterior modifications.



EXISTING BUILDINGS

BUILDING MATERIALS - Appropriate

- Wood - Retain original exterior wood siding and trim materials through repair, cleaning, painting, and routine maintenance procedures. Preserve original architectural details and features which characterize the building exterior around and including windows, doors, porches and eaves or replace by using components of the same material and design when deteriorated beyond repair.
- Masonry - Maintain masonry through proper tuck pointing, and cleaning when necessary. Mortar joints shall be re-pointed only when there is evidence of moisture problems or when mortar has deteriorated and allows water to penetrate the building through the joint. Pointing mortar shall duplicate the original in composition, strength, color, texture, joint size, method of application, and joint profile. Remove deteriorated mortar by hand raking or a manner equally sensitive to the historic material. Clean, when necessary, by the gentlest method possible so that the original color and texture of masonry surfaces are preserved (i.e., low pressure water, natural bristle brushes). In some instances, stronger chemicals may be necessary such as muriatic acid and paint strippers (follow manufactures instructions and test in inconspicuous location)
- Stucco - Maintain stucco surfaces through gentle cleaning and repainting when applicable. Use a stucco mixture which duplicates the original in composition strength, texture, and general appearance to repair damaged surfaces.
- Terra Cotta - Retain and preserve architectural terra cotta elements through a program of regular inspection, caulking and replacement of missing pieces, and re-pointing of joints with a mortar compatible to the original in composition, strength, texture, and color. Undertake cleaning with low pressure water, detergent, and natural or nylon bristle brushes.
- Architectural Metals - Identify, retain, and preserve architectural metal features, such as columns, capitals, window hoods, and stairways (including finishes and colors) that are important in defining the overall historic character of the building. Protect and maintain architectural metals from corrosion by providing proper drainage. Clean surfaces, when appropriate, using the gentlest means possible for the particular metal, to remove corrosion prior to repainting or applying other appropriate protective coatings. Repair architectural metal features by patching, splicing, or reinforcing the metal following sympathetic rehabilitation methods. When possible, limit replacement only to extensively deteriorated or missing parts of a feature using in kind materials. If an entire feature is deteriorated beyond repair, replacement units must duplicate the original form and detailing based on physical or photographic evidence.

BUILDING MATERIALS - Inappropriate

The application of siding materials not consistent with the character or style of building or unavailable when the building was constructed and therefore is foreign to the structure, (such as artificial stone or brick, asbestos or asphalt shingle, insul-brick, plywood, particle board, hard board, and aluminum or vinyl siding) is inappropriate.



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Because artificial sidings have been documented to cause serious, costly, and often irreparable damage to underlying materials and structural members, HMP has determined that the use of these siding materials in rehabilitating historically designated properties is inappropriate and incongruous with the goal of preservation. Furthermore, the use of artificial siding materials in new construction projects is considered inappropriate and incompatible with the character of designated historic districts. For these reasons, HMP discourages the use of artificial sidings in local historic districts.

Do not use abrasive cleaning methods, such as sandblasting, on any exterior surface. These methods of cleaning erode the material's surface which allows moisture to accelerate deterioration and changes the original texture and appearance of the building material.

Do not repoint masonry with a mortar incompatible with strength, composition, color and texture of the original. Pointing mortars with high Portland cement content create a bond stronger than the building material itself. Electric saws should not be used to remove mortar as they can cause serious damage to the adjacent brick and change the joint size.

Removal of sound paint from historically painted masonry surfaces is inappropriate. Some buildings are constructed of softer brick and were originally painted for protection; removal of intact painted surfaces may hasten deterioration of the exposed surface. A test patch should be tried before extensive paint removal is attempted.



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EXISTING BUILDINGS

INTERIORS

Hardware
Floors
Woodwork
Light Fixtures
Details



ROOFS AND ROOFING - Appropriate

Preserve unique and inherently durable materials such as slate, tile, and architectural metal used for their permanence and stability through spot repair and preventative maintenance. Retain the original roof shape and all architectural features and detailing which give the roof area its essential character such as brackets, chimneys, cornices, cresting, cupolas, dormer windows, and weather vanes.

Replace deteriorated roofing materials as required, with new material that matches the existing in style, color, texture, size, and composition. Where original materials have been lost, roofing which duplicates the appearance of the original materials is encouraged.

Rain gutters and downspouts often help to define the character of rooflines while serving to channel water away from the building. Identify and preserve designs and materials of distinctive gutters. When severely deteriorated systems warrant replacement, match new systems with the existing in design, size, scale, material, and color.

Advise: Check your insurance! Many policies may require special riders to cover damage of premium materials used in historic properties such as copper flashing, slate, and/or tile.

ROOFS AND ROOFING - Inappropriate

Stripping a roof of character-defining architectural features, materials, or detailing is inappropriate. Do not change the character or shape of the roof by the addition of incompatible design, materials, or architectural features foreign to the original structure or building style.

Placement of mechanical, electrical, and technical equipment such as solar panels and satellite dishes should be discretely located to avoid physically and visually disturbing the character of historic properties and neighborhoods.



PORCHES - Appropriate

Maintain the structural and decorative elements which comprise porches in an effort to avoid costly repair, replacement, or unsafe conditions. Retain existing original porches and steps including features such as handrails, balusters, columns, brackets, spindle work, tiles, roof decorations, etc. Repair or replace missing or deteriorated features with elements that duplicate the originals in design and materials.

Porches not original to the building but which contribute to the character of the property, or have developed architectural or historical significance in their own right, should be preserved.

Base any reconstruction of missing porches on photographs, written documentation or existing physical evidence of their existence. In the absence of documented or physical evidence, new porches should be simple in design and ornamentation, following the New Construction Guidelines. The construction of a missing porch may require a waiver from present-day zoning setback requirements. Check conformance with current codes when planning any new construction.

PORCHES - Inappropriate

Removal or alteration of porches, steps, and details which define the character, style, construction, and historical development of the porch or property is inappropriate. Porches should not be enclosed or used as storage.

Introduction of elements which represent different construction periods, methods, styles, or innovations as replacements or additions to porches is inappropriate. The addition of ornamentation presenting a false historical appearance is inappropriate.



WINDOWS AND DOORS - Appropriate

Retain original windows, doors, and their characteristic elements including sash, lintels, sills, shutters, decorative hoods, pediments and molding, hardware, muntins, and decorative glass. When deteriorated beyond repair, replacement units shall duplicate the original in design, size, scale, material, color, texture, and muntin placement and profile, when appropriate. Wood windows are the most appropriate option when the replacement of original units in residential districts is warranted.

Install shutters only when evidence indicates their original existence or when appropriate to the building style. Applied shutters, whether operable or fixed, must be proportioned to give the appearance of covering the window opening when closed.

Awnings should be of canvas or similar compatible material when used on either commercial or residential buildings.

Wooden frame storm windows and doors painted to match or accent the trim are historically preferable to metal units. Metal storm windows and full view storm doors are considered an appropriate alternative when they are painted, anodized, or coated in a color that compliments the building design and color scheme.

WINDOWS AND DOORS - Inappropriate

Do not introduce new window or door openings or changes in existing openings such as enclosure, relocation, reduction, or enlargement that alter the scale and proportion of the building.

Do not install window or door features of inappropriate style or material such as vinyl or aluminum frame-insulating glass combinations requiring total removal of existing units when original windows, doors, and hardware can be restored and reused in place. Replacement of original or character-defining doors with insulated steel replacement doors is not considered appropriate on highly visible facades.

Metal, fiberglass, and plastic awnings are inappropriate.

Do not apply inappropriate historical detailing which seeks to create an earlier appearance. Highly decorative wrought iron security doors are not considered appropriate, although those of simpler design may be acceptable.

WINDOWS AND DOORS - Note:

Energy conservation does not necessitate the replacement of historic windows as they can be made thermally efficient by historically and aesthetically acceptable means. In fact, a historic wooden



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window, coupled with a high quality storm of wood or aluminum, should thermally out-perform a new double-glazed metal window which does not have thermal breaks. This occurs because the wood has far better insulating value than the metal. In addition, most historic windows have high ratios of wood to glass, thus reducing the area of highest heat transfer. The simple application of weatherstripping, caulking, and the installation of channel kits increases energy efficiency while avoiding the expense of replacement windows.

References: The secretary of the interior's standards for the treatment of historic properties - <http://www.nps.gov/hps/tps/standguide/>



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ENVIRONMENT - Appropriate

Retain distinctive character-defining features, materials, and planting patterns of the neighborhood or building site. These features include parks, gardens, walkways, fences, signs, benches, building setbacks, and those public features and facilities such as streets, alleys, sidewalks and curbing, and streetlights. Mature plantings should also be preserved and treated with sensitivity unless they pose a potential threat to the preservation of, or have been placed in poor composition with, buildings or sites.

Remove or prune trees and shrubs in close proximity to the building that could cause deterioration of the structure, its materials, or surface finishes.

Planting schemes which respect gardening fashions of the time the house was constructed are encouraged.

Compatibility of new plant materials, fencing, lighting, signs, benches, and paving materials is based on the character of the site, surrounding properties and neighborhood in size, scale, material, texture, and color. New fences must be of the slat-style, picket, lattice or wrought iron designs, and be limited to a maximum height of six (6) feet. When enclosing a rear yard, privacy fences should stop at a midway point between the front and rear of the house. The installation of fences, signs, and, in some cases, shrubbery, must comply with applicable land use regulations. It is advisable that applicants consult City Plan staff prior to undertaking environmental projects.

Air conditioning compressors, heat pumps, solar collectors, satellite dishes, and other mechanical devices shall be placed in locations not visible from the streets or screened so as not to disrupt the integrity of the architecture or site.

The appropriateness of new, permanent plantings is based on their placement and size at maturity. Large growing shrubs or trees must be placed in areas where they will not block important architectural features and site views or cause building damage through moisture retention, root invasion, and falling or rubbing limbs.

Parking areas, when required, must be set away and buffered from buildings in either rear or side yards, be appropriately paved, and screened to maintain building, site, and neighborhood relationships.

ENVIRONMENT - Inappropriate

Disruptions in the relationship between buildings and their environments through changes in paving, lighting, fencing, and traffic flow (pedestrian or vehicular) do not conform to the purpose of the ordinance and are inappropriate. Inappropriate environmental changes also include misplaced and inadequately screened parking areas and signage which blocks or interrupts significant views, rhythms, or architectural features.

Do not remove healthy, mature trees that create the overall neighborhood canopy.



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Do not install conspicuous, high-intensity overhead lights. When required, downward facing should be used (i.e., avoid light pollution)

Chain-link, board on board, board and batten, basket-weave, louver, split rail and stockade fence types are inappropriate.

Brightly colored or sharply contrasting stones, tires, logs, or exposed railroad ties are inappropriate. If required, railroad ties, landscaping timbers, and metal and plastic edging materials should be recessed to grade level to facilitate lawn edge maintenance while retaining visual integrity. However, alternative edging materials should be considered.



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NEW CONSTRUCTION - Appropriate

New construction must harmonize with existing, adjacent buildings and neighborhood character in terms of height, scale, mass, setback, materials, rhythm, proportion, and color.

Identify and incorporate rhythms and proportions established by existing buildings into new construction (i.e. window to wall area or solid-void ratio, bay division, proportion of openings, entrance and porch projections, space between buildings, and site coverage) .

Exterior materials used on additions or in new construction must be compatible with the existing structure or the collective character of the district in scale, type, size, finish, texture, and color. Exterior finishes should harmonize and complement existing schemes along the streetscape. In some instances, it may be appropriate to use a material such as “hardiplank” in less visible areas such as garage additions. However, the smooth side should be used.

Roof form and style should replicate, or be similar to, those found in the neighborhood.

Contemporary design and architectural expression in new construction which follows the preceding guidelines is appropriate and strongly encouraged. New construction should be dated but should also complement the existing buildings and neighborhood.

In constructing additions to existing buildings, retain as much of the existing building fabric as possible, so that future removal of the addition could be achieved without significant damage to the original structure.

New construction must comply with present zoning and floodplain requirements, when applicable. Applicants should consult with City Plan staff to ensure compliance with applicable land use laws.

NEW CONSTRUCTION - Inappropriate

New construction designs which are incompatible in height, scale, proportion, mass, character rhythm etc. to the existing environment and buildings are inappropriate.

Additions that radically change the original scale and architectural character of a building are inappropriate.

Siding materials such as asbestos or asphalt shingle, aluminum or vinyl sidings, permastone, or artificial brick are inappropriate and incompatible with historic cladding materials.

Designs for new construction which seek to create a false historic appearance through the imitation of historic styles, periods, or details are inappropriate.



DEMOLITION

The purpose of designating historic districts is to preserve and protect buildings and structures which significantly represent the historical and architectural development of Indianapolis. When a building is threatened with demolition, historic district designation also provides the City and any interested persons or organizations the opportunity to arrange for rehabilitating or acquiring significant properties in an effort to preserve these buildings.

Demolition of historic structures, including residential, commercial or other significant structures or spaces within the historic district is highly discouraged. Change of use from single family to multi family or residential to commercial is discouraged and may require variance to city building codes.

With historic preservation as the primary goal of local district designation, demolition of buildings, structures, or any appurtenance thereof, is considered inappropriate.

Demolition Criteria

The following criteria should be used prior to proceeding with any demolition:

- 1. Potential effect,* positive or negative of the demolition to the integrity and character of the historic district;*
- 2. State of deterioration, disrepair, and structural condition of the subject building or structure by a qualified specialist or organization (i.e., Indiana Landmarks);*
- 3. Balance of the public interest in preserving the historic building and district integrity with the interest of its use and utilization to the property owner; and,*
- 4. Possible alternatives to demolition.*