



**OWEGO HISTORIC
PRESERVATION
COMMISSION**

**DESIGN
GUIDELINES**

Approved by OHPC December 5, 2019

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PURPOSE OF THE OWEGO HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

The Village of Owego Board of Trustees has found that there exists within the Village of Owego places, sites, structures and buildings of historic or architectural significance, antiquity, uniqueness of exterior design or construction, which should be conserved, protected and preserved to maintain the architectural character of the Village of Owego to contribute to the aesthetic value of the Village and to promote the general good, welfare, health and safety of the Village and its residents.

The Owego Historic Preservation Commission (OHPC) was established by the Village of Owego to provide the identification, protection, enhancement, perpetuation, and use of buildings, structures, signs, features, improvements, sites and areas within the Village of Owego. The duties and responsibilities of the OHPC can be found in Chapter 126 of the Village Code. The OHPC does not review interior work on historic buildings.

The OHPC operates as the village's official heritage preservation review board under the Certified Local Government (CLG) program of the National Park Service, administered in New York State by the New York State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), which is within the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. The Village of Owego and its residents benefit from the pass-through funds available to Certified Local Governments from which it has secured millions of dollars in state and federal grants.

The Village of Owego's Historic Preservation Commission is responsible for the approval or disapproval of proposals for exterior changes, seen from a public right-of-way, for all properties within the boundaries of the Historic District. No person shall carry out any exterior alteration, restoration, reconstruction, demolition, new construction, moving or removal of a designated historic landmark or property within the designated historic district without first obtaining a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) that authorizes such work from the Commission. Work that is considered "repair in kind or "routine maintenance" does not require a COA.

The OHPC, along with every other Historic Preservation Commission across the country, is required to follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings. The following guidelines are adapted from National Park Service resources and historic local OHPC documents. They are intended to help guide the OHPC in its decision making and to help historic property owners make appropriate choices when planning and executing their proposed projects.

THE NATIONAL PARKS SERVICE SECRETARY OF INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR TREATMENT OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards embody two important goals: 1) the preservation of historic materials and, 2) the preservation of the distinguishing character of buildings and historic districts.

Every old building and historic site is unique, with its own identity and its own distinctive character and story. Character refers to all those visual aspects and physical features that comprise the appearance of every historic building. Character-defining elements include the overall shape of the building, its materials, craftsmanship, decorative details, and features, as well as the various aspects of its site and environment. Historic significance associated with properties carries significant weight.

Standards for Rehabilitation

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and usage. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. Deteriorating historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archaeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

INTRODUCTION

GUIDELINES FOR REHABILITATING HISTORIC BUILDINGS

Based on the *Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings*

In Rehabilitation, historic building materials and character-defining features are protected and maintained. Latitude is given in the Standards for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings and the associated Guidelines to replace extensively deteriorated, damaged, or missing features using either the same material or compatible substitute materials. Only the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings and associated Guidelines allow alterations and the construction of a new addition, if necessary, for a continuing or new use for the historic building.

Identify, Retain, and Preserve Historic Materials and Features

The guidance for Rehabilitation begins with recommendations to identify the form and detailing of those architectural materials and features that are important in defining the building's historic character and which must be retained to preserve that character. Therefore, guidance on identifying, retaining, and preserving character-defining features is always given first.

Protect and Maintain Historic Materials and Features

After identifying those materials and features that are important and must be retained in the process of Rehabilitation work, then protecting and maintaining should be addressed. Protection generally involves the least degree of intervention and is preparatory to other work. Protection includes the maintenance of historic materials and features as well as ensuring that the property is protected before and during rehabilitation work. A historic building undergoing rehabilitation will often require more extensive work. Thus, an overall evaluation of its physical condition should always begin at this level.

Repair Historic Materials and Features

When the physical condition of character-defining materials and features warrants additional work, repairing is recommended. Rehabilitation guidance for the repair of historic materials, such as masonry, again begins with the least degree of intervention possible. In rehabilitation, repairing also includes the limited replacement in kind or with a compatible substitute material of extensively deteriorated or missing components of features when there are surviving prototypes features that can be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence. Although using the same kind of material is always the preferred option, a substitute material may be an acceptable alternative if the form, design, and scale, as well as the substitute material itself, can effectively replicate the appearance of the remaining features.

Replace Deteriorated Historic Materials and Features

Following repair in the hierarchy, Rehabilitation guidance is provided for replacing an entire character-defining feature with new material because the level of deterioration or damage of materials precludes repair. If the missing feature is character defining or if it is critical to the survival of the building (e.g., a roof), it should be replaced to match the historic feature based on physical or historic documentation of its form and detailing. As with repair, the preferred option is always replacement of the entire feature in kind (i.e., with the same material, such as wood for wood). However, when this is not feasible, a compatible substitute material that can reproduce the overall appearance of the historic material may be considered.

It should be noted that, while the National Park Service guidelines permit the replacement of an entire character-defining feature that is extensively deteriorated, the guidelines never recommend removal and replacement with new material of a feature that could reasonably be repaired and, thus, preserved.

Alterations

Some exterior and interior alterations to a historic building are generally needed as part of a Rehabilitation project to ensure its continued use, but it is most important that such alterations do not radically change, obscure, or destroy character-defining spaces, materials, features, or finishes.

Code-Required Work

Accessibility and Life Safety Sensitive solutions to meeting code requirements in a Rehabilitation project are an important part of protecting the historic character of the building. Work that must be done to meet accessibility and life-safety requirements must also be assessed for its potential impact on the historic building, its site, and setting.

Resilience to Natural Hazards

Resilience to natural hazards should be addressed as part of a Rehabilitation project. A historic building may have existing characteristics or features that help to address or minimize the impacts of natural hazards. These should always be used to best advantage when considering new adaptive treatments so as to have the least impact on the historic character of the building, its site, and setting.

Sustainability

Sustainability should be addressed as part of a Rehabilitation project. Good preservation practice is often synonymous with sustainability. Existing energy-efficient features should be retained and repaired. Only sustainability treatments should be considered that will have the least impact on the historic character of the building.

New Exterior Additions and Related New Construction

Rehabilitation Guidelines allow for the expanding of a historic building by enlarging it with an addition. New additions should be designed and constructed so that the character-defining features of the historic building, its site, and setting are not negatively impacted. Generally, a new addition should be subordinate to the historic building. A new addition should be **compatible but differentiated** enough so that it is not confused as historic or original to the building. The same guidance applies to new construction so that it does not negatively impact the historic character of the building or its site.

Demolition, Removal, or Relocation of Landmark Buildings

Demolition, removal, or relocation of an individual landmark or of a structure located in and contributing to the significance of a historic district shall be allowed only in case of economic hardship, unless the building department, upon due deliberation has made an express written finding that the structure presents an imminent threat to the public health, safety, and welfare.

Any person desiring to demolish, remove or relocate a designated historic building shall first file an application for demolition with the building department **and** an application for a COA for demolition, removal or relocation from the OHPC.

Applicants must follow the requirements for the COA application procedure as outlined in Chapter 126, Section 18 of the Village Code. The Village of Owego's Historic Preservation Code can be found using this link:

<https://ecode360.com/10890443>

OHPC DESIGN GUIDELINES

(Corresponding to the COA Checklist)

Overall, replacement or repair of historic features in-kind (identical design and materials) is the preferred rehabilitation method. See below for treatment of specific architectural features on historic structures.

MASONRY

(brick, stone, terra cotta, concrete, stucco and mortar, etc.)

If masonry or brick has deteriorated, re-pointing or replacement may be required. All work and replacement should match the existing as closely as possible in style, type, bond pattern, and size. When re-pointing, use a mortar appropriate for the brick type. If cleaning, use the gentlest method possible, since sandblasting or chemical cleaning may damage exterior brick, leading to penetration of dirt and moisture. *Many of Historic Owego's brick structures use material from the quarry on the current site of Brick Pond, which may rapidly deteriorate if improperly repaired or harshly cleaned.* In general, painted brick surfaces should be repainted.

RECOMMENDED	NOT RECOMMENDED
<p>Retaining and preserving masonry features that are important in defining the overall historic character of the building (such as walls, brackets, railings, cornices, window and door surrounds, steps, and columns) and decorative ornament and other details, such as tooling and bonding patterns, coatings, and color.</p>	<p>Removing or substantially changing masonry features which are important in defining the overall historic character of the building so that, as a result, the character is diminished. Replacing or rebuilding a major portion of exterior masonry walls that could be repaired, thereby destroying the historic integrity of the building.</p>
<p>Repairing masonry by patching, splicing, consolidating, or otherwise reinforcing the masonry using recognized preservation methods. Repair may include the limited replacement in kind or with a compatible substitute material of those extensively deteriorated or missing parts of masonry features when there are surviving prototypes, such as terra-cotta brackets or stone balusters.</p>	<p>Applying paint or other coatings (such as stucco) to masonry that has been historically unpainted or uncoated to create a new appearance.</p>
<p>Replacing in kind an entire masonry feature that is too deteriorated to repair (if the overall form and detailing are still evident) using the physical evidence as a model to reproduce the feature or when the replacement can be based on historic documentation. Examples can include large sections of a wall, a cornice, pier, or parapet. If using the same kind of material is not feasible, then a compatible substitute material may be considered.</p>	
<p>When designing and installing a replacement masonry feature, such as a step or door pediment, when the historic feature is completely missing, it should be an accurate restoration based on available historic documentation and physical evidence. A new design that is compatible with the size, scale, and material, of the historic building would be permitted.</p>	

NPS Preservation Brief 2: Repairing Mortar Joints

<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/2-repoint-mortar-joints.htm>

NPS Preservation Brief 6: Dangers of Abrasive Cleaning

<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/6-dangers-abrasive-cleaning.htm>

SIDING/CLADDING

Locally harvested, native “old growth” wooden clapboard has existed on buildings in the Village since the beginning of the nineteenth century and can be maintained indefinitely, with proper care. **Vinyl, aluminum, or other synthetic siding materials are not permitted.** Synthetic siding can damage and alter the appearance of historic buildings. Synthetics generally do not have the same appearance as the material which it attempts to imitate. These materials do not allow the building to breathe, trapping moisture in the wall cavity which leads to damage of the wood structure.

RECOMMENDED	NOT RECOMMENDED
Clapboard should be repaired or replaced with wood siding which has the same profile, material and style as the original.	Removing or substantially changing wood features which are important in defining the overall historic character of the building so that, as a result, the character is diminished.
Decorative wood detail should be maintained and repaired and replaced if necessary.	Removing a major portion of the historic wood from a façade instead of repairing or replacing only the deteriorated wood, then reconstructing the façade with new material to achieve a uniform or “improved” appearance.
	Removing wood that could be stabilized, repaired, and conserved, reinforcing the wood using recognized conservation methods or using untested solvents and unskilled personnel, potentially causing further damage to historic materials.
	Replacing an entire wood feature, such as a cornice or balustrade, prototypes, such as brackets, molding, or sections of siding. when repair of the wood and limited replacement of deteriorated or missing components is feasible.
	Removing a wood feature that is unrepairable and replacing it with a new feature that does not match.
	Using substitute material for the replacement that does not convey the same appearance of the surviving components of the wood feature.
	Replacing a deteriorated wood feature or wood siding on a primary or other highly visible elevation with a composite substitute material.

NPS Preservation Brief 8: Aluminum and Vinyl Siding

<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/8-aluminum-vinyl-siding.htm>

NPS Preservation Brief 47: Maintaining the Exterior

<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/47-maintaining-exteriors.htm>

WINDOWS and DOORS

Windows and doors often the most significant architectural components of a building’s identity. Window and door style, design, placement and craftsmanship are often used to identify the historic architectural features of a building. Windows and doors should be considered significant to a building if they are original, reflect the original design intent for the building, reflect period or regional styles or building practices, reflect changes to the building resulting from major periods or events, or are examples of exceptional craftsmanship or design.

Window replacement or change as seen from a public right of way needs to be reviewed by the OHPC.

RECOMMENDED	NOT RECOMMENDED
Where possible, original windows and doors should always be retained.	Metal wrapping of sills and other window elements is discouraged as it promotes structural decay.
Windows and doors should retain the original shape and size as the original design	The replacement of historic wood windows when repair and rehabilitation is feasible.
Windows and doors should maintain the same material, operation, same size, sidelights, and muntin design (profile style, size and configuration) where possible.	
If a window or door had been altered from the original by a past replacement, the owner shall have the option of retaining the window or door configuration as currently exists. The preference of OHPC is to return to original design if possible.	
For energy conservation, storm windows should have the same configuration as the original window. Another option is to install storm windows to the inside of historic windows.	
OHPC approved replacement windows should be wood, with the same style, design, muntin profile as the original. SHPO has approved some aluminum clad wood replacements, when necessary.	
If energy conservation and heat loss are a concern, consider using storm doors instead of replacing an historic door. Where storm doors are needed, full view glass design should be used, and the door should be the same color as the existing door or surround. Traditional door hardware is encouraged.	

NPS Preservation Brief 9: Wooden Windows
<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/9-wooden-windows.htm>

NPS Preservation Brief 12: Structural Glass
<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/12-structural-glass.htm>

NPS Preservation Brief 33: Stained Glass
<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/33-stained-leded-glass.htm>

NOT PERMITTED: Windows should not be completely or partially “boarded up” in any manner using any materials, except as a temporary rehabilitation step. Window spaces should not be left “open” devoid of a functioning window.

ROOFING/GUTTERS

A weather-tight roof is basic in the preservation of a structure, regardless of its age, size, or design. In the system that allows a building to work as a shelter, the roof sheds the rain, shades from the sun, and buffers the weather.

The roof imparts much of the architectural character of the building. It defines the style and contributes to the building's aesthetics. The hipped roofs of Georgian architecture, the turrets of Queen Anne, the Mansard roofs, and the graceful slopes of the Shingle Style and Bungalow designs are examples of the use of roofing as a major design feature.

No matter how decorative the patterning or how compelling the form, the roof is a highly vulnerable element of a shelter that will inevitably fail. A poor roof will permit the accelerated deterioration of historic building materials—masonry, wood, plaster, paint—and will cause general disintegration of the basic structure. Furthermore, there is an urgency involved in repairing a leaky roof since such repair costs will quickly become prohibitive. Although such action is desirable as soon as a failure is discovered, temporary patching methods should be carefully chosen to prevent inadvertent damage to sound or historic roofing materials and related features. The weather in this region requires periodic repair or replacement of roofing materials.

Changing existing roofing materials requires OHPC approval.

RECOMMENDED	NOT RECOMMENDED
Retaining, and preserving roofs and their functional and decorative features that are important in defining the overall historic character of the building is required. The form of the roof (gable, hipped, gambrel, flat, or mansard) is significant, as are its decorative and functional features (such as cupolas, cresting, parapets, monitors, chimneys, weather vanes, dormers, ridge tiles, and snow guards), roofing material (such as slate, wood, clay tile, metal, roll roofing, or asphalt shingles), and size, color, and patterning.	Removing or substantially changing roofs that are important in defining the overall historic character of the building so that, as a result, the character is diminished.
When replacement is required, the material should complement the structure's age, style, and protection requirements. OHPC will consider a variety of materials in the review process.	Changing the configuration or shape of a roof by adding highly visible new features (such as dormer windows, vents, skylights, or a penthouse).
Missing gutters and downspouts should be replaced to avoid damage to walls, the building foundation, trim and interiors.	Stripping the roof of sound historic material.
When required, new gutters and downspouts should match the existing historic gutters and downspouts in size, configuration, color and finish.	Replacing an entire roof feature when repair of the historic roofing materials and limited replacement of deteriorated or missing components are feasible.
Gutters and downspouts may be added to a historic building, with no historic precedent, when the installation will prevent damage to other historic building materials and features.	Introducing a new roof feature that is incompatible in size, scale, material, or color.
The style and material of new gutters and downspouts should be considerate of and appropriate to the historic roof characteristics, including roof edge,	Installing rooftop mechanical or service equipment so that it damages or obscures character-defining roof

cornice, and trim. Half-round gutters and downspouts are generally preferred.	features or is conspicuous on the site or from the public right-of-way.
	Installing a green roof or other roof landscaping that are visible on the site and from the public right-of-way.
	Historic building details should not be impacted, covered or removed when new gutters or downspouts are installed.

NPS Preservation Brief 4: Roofing

<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/4-roofing.htm>

NPS Preservation Brief 19: Wooden Shingle Roofs

<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/19-wooden-shingle-roofs.htm>

NPS Preservation Brief 29: Slate Roofs

<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/29-slate-roofs.htm>

When faced with a leaking roof, protect materials with temporary fixes, such as plywood or tarps, until permanent repairs can be made. Temporary fixes can help slow deterioration of surrounding building materials.

PORCHES/ENTRYWAYS/DECKS
(pillars, steps, ramps, railings, etc.)

Few architectural features do more to define a building’s historic character than the American porch. Wood porches have made an enduring contribution to our built environment. Porches are significant because of the special character they impart to a historic building and their role in our social and cultural history. A porch is an open sheltered part of a building, providing a covered entrance and, where larger, serving as an outdoor activity room. It represents an outward extension of a building, a place guests can initially be sheltered from the weather, even welcomed and entertained.

The size, style, detailing, and location of a porch can tell volumes about the age and use of a building. Each component, from handrail or baluster to column or post, enhances the architectural character of the porch. Alter or remove the porch and a historic building or streetscape can lose its visual integrity and historic authenticity.

Identifying, retaining, and preserving entrances and porches and their functional and decorative features that are important in defining the overall historic character of the building are priorities of rehabilitation. The materials themselves (including masonry, wood, and metal) are significant, as are their features, such as doors, transoms, pilasters, columns, balustrades, stairs, roofs, and projecting canopies.

RECOMMENDED	NOT RECOMMENDED
Retaining a historic entrance or porch even though it will no longer be used because of a change in the building’s function.	Removing or substantially changing entrances and porches which are important in defining the overall historic character of the building so that, as a result, the character is diminished.
Repairing entrances and porches by patching, splicing, consolidating, and otherwise reinforcing them using recognized preservation methods. Repair may include the limited replacement using in-kind or compatible substitute materials of those extensively deteriorated features or missing components. Features that are surviving prototypes, such as balustrades, columns, and stairs should be rehabilitated.	Cutting new entrances on a primary façade.
	Altering utilitarian or service entrances so they compete visually with the historic primary entrance; increasing their size so that they appear significantly more important; or adding decorative details that cannot be documented to the building or are incompatible with the building’s historic character.
	Removing an historic entrance or porch that will no longer be required for the building’s new use.
	Removing entrances and porches that could be stabilized, repaired, and conserved.
	Replacing an entire entrance or porch feature when repair of the feature and limited replacement of deteriorated or missing components are feasible.
	Removing an entrance or porch that is unrepairable and NOT replacing it.
	Replacing a removed entrance or porch with a new entrance or porch that does not match the original or is compatible with the style of the building.

	Enclosing porches in a manner that results in a diminution or loss of historic character.
	Constructing secondary or service entrances and porches that are incompatible in size and scale or detailing with the historic building or that obscure, damage, or destroy character-defining features.

NPS Preservation Brief 45: Wooden Porches

<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/45-wooden-porches.htm>

Ramps

Ramps installed on “contributing” properties in the historic district should be placed out of sight of the public right of way when possible. If that is not possible, efforts should be made to design ramps to be compatible to the style of the property, neighborhood, and historic district.

NPS Preservation Brief 32: Accessibility

<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/32-accessibility.htm>

Railings

Railings on porches or exterior stairs need to meet Village Code and should be designed, built and finished to be complimentary to the style and period of the structure.

ORNAMENTATION

(light fixtures, decorative trim, skirting, etc.)

Wooden trims and other decorative ornamentations are vulnerable to the elements and must be kept painted to prevent deterioration. The loss of trim would seriously damage the overall visual character of a building, and its loss would obliterate much of the closeup visual character so dependent upon craftsmanship for the moldings, carvings, and the see-through jigsaw work.

Original light fixtures should be safely maintained and used. If missing, modern fixtures should complement period fixtures from the building's era. Commercial lighting must follow Village Code.

RECOMMENDED	NOT RECOMMENDED
Original historic and architectural details on buildings should be retained and maintained.	Metal or vinyl is not permitted to replace or cover wood, brick or masonry since these materials detract from period detail and encourage destruction of underlying original materials.
Where the details have deteriorated, preference should be to repair or reproduce the original, with similar materials, maintaining same design, size, color, and configuration.	Replacement of a wooden pillar with one of synthetic material.
New materials may be considered, if appropriate to the original design.	

NPS Preservation Brief 17 Architectural Character

<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/17-architectural-character.htm>

NPS Preservation Brief 23 Ornamental Plaster

<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/23-ornamental-plaster.htm>

STOREFRONTS

The storefront is the most important architectural feature of many historic commercial buildings. It also plays a crucial role in a store's advertising and merchandising strategy to draw customers and increase business. Frequently, the storefront has become the feature most commonly altered in a historic commercial building. In the process, these alterations may have completely changed or destroyed a building's distinguishing architectural features that make up its historic character.

As more and more people come to recognize and appreciate the architectural heritage of America's downtowns, a growing interest can be seen in preserving the historic character of commercial buildings. The sensitive rehabilitation of storefronts can result not only in increased business for the owner but can also provide evidence that downtown revitalization efforts are succeeding

A key to the successful rehabilitation of historic commercial buildings is the sensitive treatment of the first floor itself. Careful rehabilitation of historic storefronts will enhance the architectural character of the overall building and will contribute to rejuvenating neighborhoods, the business district, the historic district as well as the entire Village.

RECOMMENDED	NOT RECOMMENDED
Preserve the storefront's character. If less exposed window area is desirable, consider the use of interior blinds and insulating curtains rather than altering the existing historic storefront.	Avoid stock "lumberyard colonial" detailing such as coach lanterns, mansard over hangings, wood shakes, non-operable shutters and small paned windows except where they existed historically.
Wherever possible, significant storefronts (be they original or later alterations), including windows, sash, doors, transoms, signs and decorative features, should be repaired in order to retain the historic character of the building.	Don't "early up" a front by creating a "fake" historic façade.
	Avoid use of materials that were unavailable when the storefront was constructed including vinyl and aluminum siding, anodized aluminum, mirrored or tinted glass, artificial stone, and brick veneer.
	In general, do not coat surfaces that have never been painted.

NPS Preservation Brief 11: Storefronts

<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/11-storefronts.htm>

SIGNS/AWNINGS/MURALS/BANNERS

Signs

Signs were an important aspect of 19th and early 20th century storefronts. Today, signs play an important role in defining the character of a business district.

If new signs are designed, they should be of a size and style compatible with the historic building and should not cover or obscure significant architectural detailing or features.

For many 19th and early 20th century buildings, it was common to mount signs on the lintel above the first story. Another common approach, especially at the turn of the century, was to paint signs directly on the inside of the display windows. Frequently this was done in gold leaf.

New hanging signs may be appropriate for historic commercial buildings, if they are of a scale and design compatible with the historic buildings.

Retention of signs and advertising painted on historic walls, if of historic or artistic interest (especially where they provide evidence of early or original occupants), is encouraged

**Signs in the historic district require OHPC review for a COA.
All signs shall meet all applicable Village Codes for size, placement, number of signs,
lighting and type of signage.**

RECOMMENDED	NOT RECOMMENDED
Historic Signs	
Distinctive Historic signs should be retained and, where appropriate, restored.	
Preserve signs that reflect the history of a building or district; are characteristic of a particular historic period or style; are associated with events, people, or places; are evidence of the history of a product or business; display excellent craftsmanship, use of materials, or design; are incorporated into the buildings design its physical fabric.	
Preserve and refurbish historic painted wall signs when possible.	
New Signs	
Signs should be viewed as part of an overall graphics system for the building. Signs should work with the building.	New signs should not obscure significant features of the historic building.
New signs should respect and reflect the size, scale and design of the historic building.	
Sign placement is important. For example, signs above a storefront should fit within the historic signboard.	
New signs should respect and be compatible with neighboring buildings. They should not shadow or overpower adjacent structures.	

Sign materials should be compatible with those of the historic building. Materials characteristic of the building's period and style, used in contemporary designs, can form effective new signs.	
New signs should be attached to the building carefully, both to prevent damage to historic fabric, and to ensure the safety of pedestrians. Fittings should penetrate mortar joints rather than brick, for example, and sign loads should be properly calculated and distributed.	
Lighting and Digital Signs	
Illumination should be accomplished with exterior lights or spotlights.	Backlighting, neon, or flashing lights.
Indirect or subdued lighting is preferred	Unshielded light fixtures or mirrors.
Signs shall be lit directly from separate fixtures focused on the sign and shielded to avoid glare light spillage onto neighboring properties.	Flashing, intermittent, rotating, or moving lights.
Wiring conduit for sign lighting should be carefully routed to avoid damage to architectural details and concealed as much as possible.	Moving, fluttering, flashing, or revolving devices used for advertising or attracting attention.
Historic exterior neon signs should be maintained and preserved.	Exposed neon tube unless used in preservation of historic sign.
	Internally illuminated, translucent "channel" letters.
Awnings	
Where based on historic precedent, consider the use of canvas awnings on historic storefronts or made of materials that do not appear to be vinyl or plastic as these newer materials are not a compatible look for the historic district.	Fixed aluminum awnings and awnings simulating mansard roofs and umbrellas are generally inappropriate for older commercial buildings
Install without damaging the building or visually impairing distinctive architectural features.	

See NPS Preservation Brief 44 Awnings

<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/44-awnings.htm>

See NPS Preservation Brief 11: Storefronts

<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/11-storefronts.htm>

Awnings

For two centuries, awnings not only played an important functional role, they helped define the visual character of our streetscapes. Throughout their history, awnings have had great appeal. Along with drapes, curtains, shutters, and blinds they provided natural climate control in an age before air conditioning and tinted glass. By blocking out the sun's rays while admitting daylight and allowing air to circulate between interior and exterior, they were remarkably efficient and cost effective. Today, continued concerns over energy efficiency have also persuaded building owners and developers to use awnings to reduce heat gain, glare, and cooling costs. Because awnings were so common until the mid-twentieth century, they are visually appropriate for many historic buildings, unlike some other means of energy conservation.

Awnings can help shelter passersby, reduce glare, and conserve energy by controlling the amount of sunlight hitting the store window, although buildings with northern exposures will seldom functionally require them.

Today's canvas awnings have an average life expectancy of between 4 and 7 years. In many cases awnings can disguise, in an inexpensive manner, later inappropriate alterations and can provide both additional color and a strong store identification. Awnings permitted window-shopping on rainy days; In recent years, building owners and others interested in historic buildings have rediscovered awnings. Local "main street" preservation programs encouraging-and in some cases funding-rehabilitation work have helped spur the awning's return.

See NPS Preservation Brief 44: "Awnings"

<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/44-awnings.htm>

Murals

Any mural placed on the surface of a building in the historic district needs to be reviewed by the OHPC in order to be issued a Certificate of Appropriateness. Applicants will assume responsibility for upkeep of the mural over time and present a plan for ongoing maintenance to the OHPC.

Banners

Banners are considered signs. Plans for banners to be displayed in the Historic District require OHPC review for a COA. Applicants and OHPC will agree as to how long the sign shall remain in place and when it needs to be removed.

SITE FEATURES

(fencing, mechanical systems, accessory structures, etc.)

Landscape Fencing and Railings

Landscape fencing needs to be installed according to Village Code. It should be designed to be compatible to the appearance of the Historic District. As seen from the public right of way, natural building materials, such as wood, are recommended over synthetic materials.

GOOD NEIGHBORS MAKE (and build) GOOD FENCES!

Historic Metal Fencing

The Village of Owego is home to some excellent examples of **historic metal fencing**. Retaining and preserving these metal architectural features are important in defining the overall historic character of the district and the surrounding streetscape.

RECOMMENDED	NOT RECOMMENDED
Details such as columns, capitals, pilasters, spandrel panels, or stairways should be preserved when possible.	Removing a major portion of the historic metal instead of repairing or replacing only the deteriorated metal, then reconstructing with new material to achieve a uniform or “improved” appearance.
Repair may include the limited replacement “in kind” or with a compatible substitute material of those extensively deteriorated or missing components of features.	Placing incompatible metals together without providing an appropriate separation material. Such incompatibility can result in galvanic corrosion.
	Replacing an entire metal feature, such as a column or balustrade, when repair of the metal and limited replacement of deteriorated or missing components are feasible.
	Removing a metal feature that is unrepairable and NOT replacing it or replacing it with a new metal feature that does not match.

NPS Preservation Brief 27: The Maintenance and Repair of Architectural Cast Iron
<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/27-cast-iron.htm>

Mechanicals and Utilities

The need for modern mechanical systems is one of the most common reasons to undertake work on historic buildings. Such work includes upgrading older mechanical systems, improving the energy efficiency of existing buildings, installing new heating, ventilation or air conditioning (HVAC) systems, or—particularly for museums—installing a climate control system with humidification and dehumidification capabilities. Decisions to install new HVAC or climate control systems often result from concern for occupant health and comfort, the desire to make older buildings marketable, or the need to provide specialized environments for operating computers, storing artifacts, or displaying museum collections. Unfortunately, occupant comfort and concerns for the objects within the building are sometimes given greater consideration than the building itself. In too many cases, applying modern standards of interior climate comfort to historic buildings has proven detrimental to historic materials and decorative finishes.

Historic buildings are not easily adapted to house modern precision mechanical systems. Careful planning must be provided early on to ensure that decisions made during the design and installation phases of a new system are appropriate. Since new mechanical and other related systems, such as electrical and fire

suppression, can use up to 10% of a building's square footage and 30%–40% of an overall rehabilitation budget, decisions must be made in a systematic and coordinated manner.

For historic properties it is critical to understand what spaces, features, and finishes are historic in the building, what should be retained, and what the realistic heating, ventilating, and cooling needs are for the building, its occupants, and its contents. A systematic approach, involving preservation planning, preservation design, and a follow-up program of monitoring and maintenance, can ensure that new systems are successfully added—or existing systems are suitably upgraded—while preserving the historic integrity of the building.

Satellite dishes, small antennas, and meters for water, electric, and gas etc. should be placed on the building or property that is not visible to view from the right of way. The OHPC will consider appropriate landscaping plans to “hide” mechanicals.

Large scale antennas like internet network antennas are prohibited from being installed in the historic district.

See NPS Preservation Brief 24: “Heating, Ventilation, and Cooling”
<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/24-heat-vent-cool.htm>

Accessory/Exterior Structures

It is recommended that utility, accessory, and outbuilding structures should be placed on the property out of view of the public right of way. All outbuilding structures must meet any building code requirements, including flood mitigation requirements

EXTERIOR ADDITIONS and RELATED NEW CONSTRUCTION

Rehabilitation Guidelines allow for the expanding of a historic building by enlarging it with an addition. New additions should be designed and constructed so that the character-defining features of the historic building, its site, and setting are not negatively impacted. Generally, a new addition should be subordinate to the historic building. A new addition should be **compatible but differentiated** enough so that it is not confused as historic or original to the building. The same guidance applies to new construction so that it does not negatively impact the historic character of the building or its site.

DEMOLITION, REMOVAL OR RELOCATION OF LANDMARK BUILDINGS

Demolition, removal, or relocation of an individual landmark or of a structure located in and contributing to the significance of a historic district shall be allowed only in case of economic hardship, unless the building department, upon due deliberation has made an express written finding that the structure presents an imminent threat to the public health, safety, and welfare.

Any person desiring to demolish, remove or relocate a designated historic building shall first file an application for demolition with the building department **and** an application for a COA for demolition, removal or relocation from the OHPC.

Applicants must follow the requirements for the COA application procedure as outlined in Chapter 126, Section 18 of the Village Code.

Sources:

- The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings , Revised from the 1995 edition by Anne E. Grimmer, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Technical Preservation Services, Washington, D.C. 2017
- Owego Historic Preservation Commission Design Guidelines (date unknown)