



# HISTORIC DISTRICT GUIDELINES FOR THE TOWN OF SCOTTSVILLE

## Site/Paint/Fences/Amenities

# 4



### Overview

While Pamphlets 2 and 3 discuss existing structures and new construction, respectively, this pamphlet focuses on the building site and its particular amenities such as walls, fences, lighting, and signage. This pamphlet also discusses suggested paint schemes for both new and old structures, as well as the aforementioned amenities.

### Building Site

Whether you are planning to rehabilitate your existing building, add an addition, or propose new construction on a vacant parcel, the building site is important to consider in the overall project development. The building site and the “improvements” should work hand-in-hand—an Historic District is composed of not only the buildings, but also the unique natural and man-made features such as streams and rivers, rock outcroppings, trees and shrubs, roads and walks, fences, gates and walls, and other building site-related features.

### *1. Identify, retain, and preserve*

#### Recommended:

- a. Identifying, retaining, and preserving buildings and their features as well as features of the site that are important in defining its overall historic character. Site features may include circulation systems such as walks, paths, roads, or parking; vegetation such as trees, shrubs, fields, or herbaceous plant material; landforms such as terracing, berms or grading; decorative elements such as a sculpture, statuary or monuments; water features including fountains, streams, pools, or lakes; and subsurface archeological features which are important in defining the history of the site.



- b. Retaining the historic relationship between buildings and the landscape.
- c. Providing proper drainage to assure that water does not erode foundation walls; drain toward the building; or damage or erode the landscape.
- d. Minimizing disturbance of terrain around buildings or elsewhere on the site, thus reducing the

possibility of destroying or damaging important landscape features or archaeological resources.

- e. Surveying and documenting areas where the terrain will be altered to determine the potential impact to important landscape features or archaeological resources.

#### Not Recommended:

- a. Removing or radically changing buildings and their features or site features which are important in defining the overall historic character of the property so that, as a result, the character is diminished.
- b. Removing or relocating buildings or landscape features thus destroying the historic relationship between buildings and the landscape.
- c. Removing or relocating historic buildings on a site or in a complex of related historic structures—such as a mill complex or farm—thus diminishing its historic character.
- d. Moving buildings onto the site, thus creating a false historical appearance.
- e. Radically changing the grade level of the site. For example, changing the grade adjacent to a building to permit development of a formerly below-grade area that would drastically change the historic relationship of the building to its site.
- f. Failing to maintain adequate site drainage so that buildings and site features are damaged or destroyed; or alternatively, changing the site grading so that water no longer drains properly.
- g. Introducing heavy machinery into areas where it may disturb or damage important landscape features or archaeological resources.
- h. Failing to survey the building site prior to the beginning of rehabilitation work that results in damage to, or destruction of, important landscape features or archaeological resources.

## 2. *Protect and maintain*

#### Recommended:

- a. Protecting, e.g., preserving in place, important archaeological resources.

- b. Planning and carrying out any necessary investigation using professional archaeologists and modern archaeological methods when preservation in place is not feasible.
- c. Preserving important landscape features, including ongoing maintenance of historic plant material.
- d. Protecting building and landscape features against arson and vandalism before rehabilitation work begins, i.e., erecting protective fencing and installing alarm systems that are keyed into local protection agencies.
- e. Providing continued protection of masonry, wood, and architectural metals which comprise the building and site features through appropriate cleaning, rust removal, limited paint removal, and reapplication of protective coating systems.
- f. Evaluating the overall condition of materials and features to determine whether more than protection and maintenance are required, that is, if repairs to building and site features will be necessary.

#### Not Recommended:

- a. Leaving known archaeological material unprotected so that it is damaged during rehabilitation work.
- b. Permitting unqualified personnel to perform data recovery on archaeological resources so that improper methodology results in the loss of important archaeological material.
- c. Allowing important landscape features to be lost or damaged due to a lack of maintenance.
- d. Permitting the property to remain unprotected so that the building and landscape features or archaeological resources are damaged or destroyed.
- e. Removing or destroying features from the building or site such as wood siding, iron fencing, masonry balustrades, or plant material.
- f. Failing to provide adequate protection of materials on a cyclical basis so that deterioration of building and site features results.
- g. Failing to undertake adequate measures to assure the protection of building and site features.

### 3. Repair

#### Recommended:

- a. Repairing features of the building and site by reinforcing historic materials.

#### Not Recommended:

- a. Replacing an entire feature of the building or site such as a fence, walkway, or driveway when repair of materials and limited compatible replacement of deteriorated or missing parts are appropriate.
- b. Using a substitute material for the replacement part that does not convey the visual appearance of the surviving parts of the building or site feature or that is physically or chemically incompatible.

### 4. Replace

#### Recommended:

- a. Replacing in kind an entire feature of the building or site that is too deteriorated to repair if the overall form and detailing are still evident. Physical evidence from the deteriorated feature should be used as a model to guide the new work. This could include an entrance or porch, walkway, or fountain. If using the same kind of material is not technically or economically feasible, then a compatible substitute material may be considered.
- b. Replacing deteriorated or damaged landscape features in kind.

#### Not Recommended:

- a. Removing a feature of the building or site that is unrepairable and not replacing it; or replacing it with a new feature that does not convey the same visual appearance.
- b. Adding conjectural landscape features to the site such as period reproduction lamps, fences, fountains, or vegetation that is historically inappropriate, thus creating a false sense of historic development.

### 5. Design for Missing Historic Features

#### Recommended:

- a. Designing and constructing a new feature of a building or site when the historic feature is completely missing, such as an outbuilding, terrace, or driveway. It may be based on historical, pictorial, and physical documentation; or be a new design that is compatible with the historic character of the building and site.

#### Not Recommended:

- a. Creating a false historical appearance because the replaced feature is based on insufficient historical, pictorial, and physical documentation.
- b. Introducing a new building or site feature that is out of scale or of an otherwise inappropriate design.
- c. Introducing a new landscape feature, including plant material, that is visually incompatible with the site, or that alters or destroys the historic site patterns or vistas.

## Paint

Paint is a powerful building material—it can make a project shine or, if used improperly, can produce disastrous effects. What might be an appropriate color scheme on a Queen Anne-style house could be a failure on a Federal-style building.

A successful paint color scheme can be developed for most buildings, depending on their style, using only three colors: a **base** color for the walls, a **trim** color for the windows, door frame and cornice/eaves/fascia, and an **accent** color for the door or other features such as shutters. Some building styles, such as the Neo-Classical, may have a more limited color palette, particularly where white is used for both the base and trim colors. Other buildings, particularly those in a highly ornamented style such as Queen Anne, may require two or more accent colors.

Certain building styles are historically associated with particular families of colors. The following list offers some general guidance as to appropriate color families for various building styles:

<i>Period</i>	<i>Typical Building Styles</i>	<i>Recommended Color Families</i>
Early American	Colonial Federal	Muted (grayed-out) colors in neutral tones that evoke natural building materials like stone, brick, and wood; occasionally includes muted blues and greens. <i>See Benjamin Moore reference (Wmsbg.)</i>
Neo-Classical	Greek Revival Jeffersonian	Typically white or off-white to simulate the marble of Roman architecture, often with Neo-Classical green-black or Jefferson grassy-green shutters.
Early Victorian	Gothic Revival Tuscan	Colors are based on natural features of the environment—sand, straw, earth, slate—giving rise to a palette of grays, yellows, tans and pinks. <i>See Sherwin-Williams references</i>
High Victorian	Italianate Mansard	A darkening of the colors from the previous period along with an increase in contrast between these colors (a variety of darks and lights). <i>See Sherwin-Williams references</i>
Late Victorian	Stick Style Shingle Style Queen Anne Eastlake	Rich, dark colors (browns, olives, reds oranges) that emphasize the mass, volume and structure of a building. <i>See Sherwin-Williams references</i>
Edwardian	Bungalow Prairie School Arts & Crafts Early 20th Century Commercial	Similar to colors of the Early Victorian period but also include muted greens and blue-grays. <i>See Sherwin-Williams references</i>
Colonial Revival	Neo-Georgian Neo-Federal	Similar to but a bit brighter than colors of the Early American period; includes whites, ivories, grays, yellows. <i>See Sherwin-Williams references</i>

The Scottsville Architectural Review Board does not maintain a list of acceptable paint colors for buildings within the Historic District. Instead, applicants are referred to the historic exterior paint colors of the major manufacturers (Benjamin Moore, Sherwin-Williams, Valspar, Pratt & Lambert). The best references are printed brochures: Benjamin Moore's *Historical Collection (Interiors &) Exteriors*, and Sherwin-Williams' *American Heritage Exterior Historic Colors* are both excellent.

Online references are also useful, although colors are more difficult to assess when shown on screen.

- Benjamin Moore's Williamsburg collection:  
<http://www.benjaminmoore.com/en-us/for-your-home/williamsburg-color-collection>

- Valspar's National Trust Collection: <http://www.valsparpaint.com/en/explore-colors/painter/color-selector.html> (choose from National Trust)
- Sherwin-Williams' Exterior Color Preservation Palettes: <http://www.sherwin-williams.com/homeowners/color/find-and-explore-colors/paint-colors-by-collection/historic-collection/>

With paint, there are some dos and don'ts:

- It is recommended not to paint unpainted brick or stone.
- Painted masonry (brick, stucco, stone, etc.) should have a slight gloss (soft gloss), but not semi-gloss.
- Wood siding should receive semi-gloss paint, though a higher gloss is recommended.



- Full gloss is recommended for metal and all wood trim as it assists in washing away airborne pollutants.
- Natural or stained wood should be retained through regularly scheduled cleaning, sanding, and revarnishing.
- Staining or painting wood Shingle sidewalls may be appropriate; however, staining or painting a wood shingle roof will only shorten the roof's lifespan.
- The highest quality paints always should be used; the cost of upgrading from an average grade of paint to a high grade of paint is small in comparison to the labor and prep work, and frequency of repainting.

## Signs

The size of signs is governed by the Zoning Ordinance; however the Architectural Review Board may be asked to review proposed signs from the standpoint of lettering style, color, and overall design. A sign that looks good on paper might be difficult to read when it is made full size. The size of the lettering, overall composition, and color contrast should be taken into consideration. It is highly recommended that you preliminarily discuss your sign concept with a professional sign painter. The painter may provide a design sketch for you to present to the ARB; often, this is a service that the painter provides for free with the painting of the sign.



Signs can be painted or mounted directly on the face of a building, on a vertical post (where applicable), or appropriately hung from a building using an appropriate metal bracket. The use of sidewalk “sandwich-style” signs should be avoided as they could provide a tripping hazard for persons with eyesight difficulties.

## Fences and Site Walls

Fences, walls, and gates that are visible from a public street or accessway require a Certificate of Appropriateness by the Architectural Review Board. Fences and walls are significant visual features of the historic, defining outdoor spaces, enhancing landscaping, and providing a sense of enclosure for property owners. Fences are an appropriate means to provide privacy, screening, and containment. Fences and walls also are stylistically important.



Fences are often partially transparent and are usually constructed of wood, masonry or brick. Garden walls are made of masonry and sometimes serve to retain planting beds. Gates are constructed of a number of different materials, including wood and metal.

In planning a fence, look around the neighborhood. See if there are comparable buildings that have appropriate fencing. Consult with an architectural historian, designer, or architect. Look in pattern books, or research old photographs, and, finally, consult your neighbor who might be affected by the fence that straddles the line between your property and the adjacent site.



## GUIDELINES FOR FENCES, WALLS & GATES

The materials, design and scale of fences, walls, and gates must be appropriate to the architectural period and character of the principal structure and site they adjoin or surround. Fences and walls of brick or stone are generally appropriate. Wood is also a traditional material for fences and gates. Traditional wood fences in downtown Scottsville generally have vertical wood pickets. Ornamental iron or metal fences and gates are appropriate for late-19th and early 20th century Victorian structures.

Where possible, existing wood picket or wrought iron fences and stone walls should be preserved.

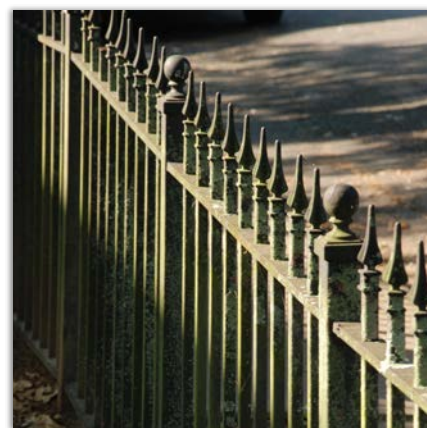
Modern wood stockade fencing, unpainted redwood, rough cedar, and unfinished concrete block fences are not generally appropriate in the historic district. Fences, walls, and gates made of synthetic materials such as fiberglass or poured concrete are also not appropriate. Metal chain link fences are not appropriate except in certain public uses, such as school playing fields.

Wood fences, except for natural split rail fencing, must be painted or stained.

Multiple styles of fencing should be avoided, and when used should have consistent elements of material, color, and aesthetic.

Height of fences generally should not exceed 4 feet in front yards and 6 feet in back yards. (Front, side, and rear lot lines are defined in Zoning Ordinance Chapter 3.)

Retaining walls of dry-laid stone, stone or brick faced masonry are preferred over wood landscaping timbers.

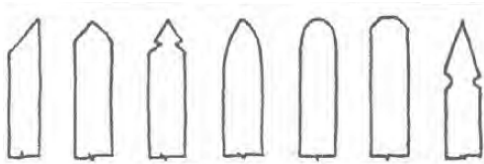




## GUIDELINES FOR FENCES, WALLS & GATES

When located within a front yard, fences that are visually open, rather than solid and opaque are preferred. Solid wood fences may be appropriate where necessary to provide screening for delivery, storage or utility areas otherwise visible from a public street or accessway. Where permitted, solid wood fences over four feet in height should be landscaped with appropriately sized perennial plantings to soften their appearance.

Simple picket designs



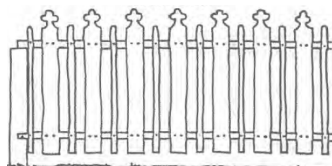
Simple iron fence design, typical to Greek Revival



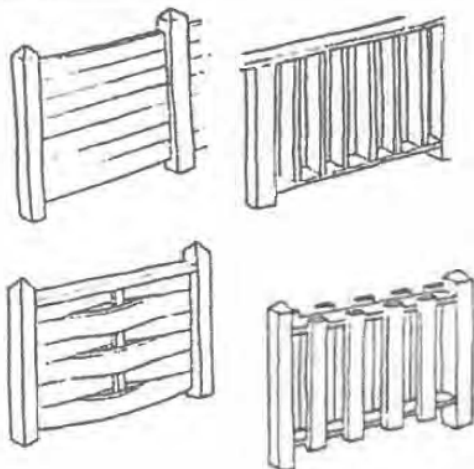
Iron fence designs proliferated in the 19th century



Gothic Revival style elements also extended to fencing



Solid privacy fences are often inappropriate.



## Exterior Lighting

The design of electric lighting should be of the same period and style for the property. Appropriate Colonial fixtures might look suitable on a mid- to late-1700 house, however, could be inappropriate on an early-20th century commercial building. Up until the 1840s, candles were the predominant lighting source. From the mid-1800s through the turn of the century, oil typically was used, though gas was used briefly in the late-1800s/early-1900s. With the advent of the electric light bulb in the late-1800s, exterior lighting typically respected the “older style” in its fixtures (i.e., Federal or Colonial candle-type); often smaller versions of large street/boulevard lights were used on commercial buildings. Neon lighting, developed in the 1920s/1930s, is discouraged.

The intensity and color “temperature” of the exterior lighting also should be considered. Lighting should provide broad illumination around the building to provide security, as well as coverage of the ground. However, it should not be distracting or glaring to the pedestrians and motorists. Upward shining lights that illuminate signs should have accessory baffles shielding the bare bulb. Incandescent tungsten lighting is the most popular, though most commercial parking lots utilize high-pressure sodium or metal halide. High-pressure sodium will give soft yellow/orange glow; metal halide’s color will be bright whitish-blue. Mercury vapor, the older “whitish-blue/green” street lighting “standard”, should be avoided.



Originally compiled and edited by Dalglish, Eichman, Gilpin & Paxton, Architects, Charlottesville, Virginia, 2001. Updated by the Scottsville ARB, 2020.