

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS

CITY OF NEWPORT

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

43 Broadway, Third Floor

Newport, Rhode Island

401-845-5472

www.newportri.gov

The Historic District Commission has created Guidance Documents in accordance with Newport, R.I., Code of Ordinances § 17.80.040 to provide homeowners detailed direction on specific alterations that meet the Newport Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

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HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
POLICY STATEMENT ON STAFF ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS

CITY OF NEWPORT

DEPARTMENT OF ZONING AND INSPECTIONS

43 Broadway, Third Floor

Newport, Rhode Island

401-845-5472

www.cityofnewport.com

By city ordinance the Commission has the authority to delegate some decisions on Certificates of Appropriateness to the city staff. This delegation is hereby put into effect with the details and amplifications outlined below.

By motion of the Historic District Commission at their January 21, 2020 meeting, in accordance with Newport Ordinance the authority was granted to the Preservation Planner to process applications for the following within the historic districts:

1. **Repairs and/or In-kind Replacements:** Staff may process applications for any exterior repairs to include, but not limited to siding, roofing, fenestration and foundation work using standards adopted by HDC and that do not change the appearance of the structure.
2. **Signage:** Staff may process applications for signage, using the standards adopted by HDC on signs, except for signs and/or murals painted on the building.
3. **Mechanical Units:** Staff may process applications for location of service meters and HVAC systems and generators and any necessary screening.
4. **Telecommunications Equipment.** Staff may process applications for telecommunications equipment replacing existing equipment or new equipment not attached to a contributing building. All other installations should be reviewed by HDC.
5. **Windows and Doors:** Staff may process window and door replacements following guidelines and standards adopted by HDC standards on Windows and Doors.*
6. **Landscape Elements:** Staff may process applications for walks, permanent planters, screening of garbage cans, pools, firepits, trellises, arbors, gazebos and historic walls (see Newport Ordinance Chapter 17.74 – “Historic Stone Walls”).*
7. **Accessory Buildings:** Staff may process applications for the construction of minor accessory buildings that are minimally visible from the public right-of-way.*
8. **Demolitions:** Staff may process applications of detached garages, utility buildings, and additions or annexes that are of no historic or architectural value, and are considered non-contributing in their context.*
9. **Approval Extensions:** Staff may approve an extension request from the applicant if a written request is received before the one-year expiration date of the original approval. If approval has expired, applicant must request extension from HDC. If approval has already been extended for one-year, another extension request must go to HDC. If more than two years has passed from original approval date, application must go to HDC for full review.

10. **Minor Modifications to Plans:** Staff may approve minor modifications to plans previously approved by the commission.*

11. **Fees.** Staff may approve the waiver of application fees for demonstrated financial hardship.

* ALL APPLICATIONS FOR ALTERATIONS TO CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURES of PROPERTIES ARE TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION AND ARE NOT INCLUDED IN THE ABOVE LIST EXCEPT FOR NUMBERS 1, 2, 3 AND 12.

STAFF RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REFER ANY APPLICATION TO THE BOARD. APPLICANTS MAY APPEAL ANY STAFF DECISION TO THE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS.

Definitions:

"In-kind replacement" means replacement of an architectural feature, damaged or deteriorated beyond repair, where the new feature will match the feature being replaced in dimensions, design, configuration, texture and visual appearance, and match materials as closely as possible. Replacement which differs from the existing in material, design, configuration, texture, dimensions and other visual qualities is an alteration and not an in-kind replacement.

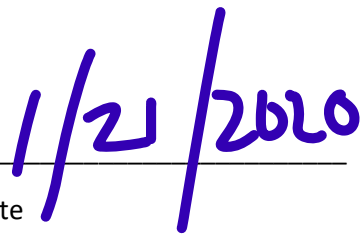
"Major alteration" means an alteration which significantly affects the historic, cultural, or architectural integrity, interpretability, or character of a building, structure, site or district. Generally, includes the kind of work which is normally done with the aid of a professional drafter or professional quality plans.

"Minor alteration" means an alteration which does not significantly affect the historic, cultural, or architectural integrity, interpretability, or character of a building, structure, site or district. Generally it includes the kind of work which is normally done without the aid of a professional drafter or professional quality plans.

"Minor modification" means a revision to approved plans that is deemed to be minor in nature and not incongruous with all other approved elements of that plan.

APPROVED BY RESOLUTION:


Chair, Historic District Commission


Date

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
POLICY STATEMENT ON APPLICATION CONTINUANCE

CITY OF NEWPORT

DEPARTMENT OF ZONING AND INSPECTIONS

43 Broadway, Third Floor

Newport, Rhode Island

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By motion of the Historic District Commission at their May 16, 2023 meeting, the following language regarding Continuance of Applications was reviewed, voted, approved, and adopted.

“Unless, specifically approved by the Commission, an Application may be continued at the request of the Applicant or their legal representative for up to three months. Following the third continued month on the agenda with not action, the Application will be dismissed without prejudice. The Application Fee will be waived if it is re-presented to the Historic District Commission with one year of original Application date.

This language will be added to the HDC Mission, Policy and Procedures, the Certificate of Appropriateness Application, and the City Website.

APPROVED BY RESOLUTION:

Karl Andrew Bjork

5-16-2023

Karl Andrew Bjork

Date

Chair, Historic District Commission

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
GUIDANCE ON DECKS

CITY OF NEWPORT

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

43 Broadway, Third Floor

Newport, Rhode Island

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By motion of the Historic District Commission at their June 11, 2024 meeting, the following guidelines and standards were adopted concerning decks on properties within Newport's Historic Districts.

References:

- 1) Newport Standards – Ordinance: 17.80.060
- 2) US Secretary of the Interior Standards

Decks are a modern architectural element that generally lack a counterpart in historic buildings. Decks added to contributing historic properties have a substantial negative impact on the authentic character and visual qualities these structures possess. Decks on non-contributing structures require special attention to retain the historic character of the district and the building.

Existing decks and other elements covered under this section on both contributing and non-contributing structures are grandfathered until changes, upgrades or alterations are proposed, at which time these elements must comply with the current guidelines as enumerated herein.

Therefore, the Historic District Commission establishes the following guidelines and standards:

For Contributing Buildings and Properties:

1. Proposals for new decks on contributing historic structures are not considered appropriate. Unless definitive historical evidence is presented showing a deck on or attached to the original historic structure, the proposal will be rejected. Replacement of an existing deck at the ground floor level will be considered on a case-by-case basis and held to the standards herein. The creation of a new deck on existing building additions are not appropriate.
2. If historic precedent of a deck is established,
 - a. The new deck should be situated in the same or similar location as established by the historical evidence presented. The new deck must neither damage nor obscure the historic fabric of the structure and its character-defining features or details. A deck must be installed to be structurally self-supporting without damage to the historic structure if future removal is necessary.
 - b. The design and detail of deck and associated supports, pillars, railings, balusters, steps and other finishing details must reflect the scale, proportion and appropriate materials of the historic building of the deck for which historical precedent has been established.
 - c. Cable railings are not compatible with contributing properties and will be rejected.
3. Roofs are a major character-defining feature of historic buildings. Roof decks significantly alter the appearance of a roof and damage historic material; therefore, roof decks are not considered

appropriate in Newport's Historic Districts. Proposals for roof decks with no historical basis will be rejected.

4. Widow's Walks may be considered appropriate depending on individual circumstances and characteristics of the building. Historical evidence for prior existence of a Widow's Walk must be presented with any request for a new Widow's Walk on a contributing structure; it must be compatible in scale, proportion, design and materials with the existing structure.
5. Where a contributing building or property is not a single-family residence and has existing decks as part of previous renovation work, new proposals for repair/replacement of these decks shall be held to the standards herein. Alterations to decks which are part of an egress stairway shall be reviewed with preference for decks or landings minimized to meet the pertinent building codes for egress, thus minimizing the impact on the contributing building.

For Non-Contributing Buildings and Properties:

1. Deck must be sited in an inconspicuous location, usually on the building's rear elevation and inset from the rear corners. Careful consideration should be given to sightlines from any public right of way, including public waterways. It is preferred that the proposed deck is not visible from any public vantage points.
2. Deck must be aligned with height of the building's first floor (ground) level or stepped down. Visually tie the deck to the building by screening with compatible foundation materials such as skirt boards, lattice, masonry panels, or dense evergreen foundation plantings. Decks proposed above the first-floor level will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
3. In rare instances where it may be appropriate to site a deck in a location that is either visible to the public right-of-way (i.e. the side of a building), or above the first floor (ground) level (i.e. multi-family dwellings where upper levels have no other access to ground level), a deck should be treated in a more formally architectural way. Careful attention should be paid to materials, details and finishes, including painting or staining the deck's rails and structural support elements in colors compatible with the building. Landscape materials are encouraged to screen the impact of a deck and opaque screening structures are not appropriate.
4. Design and detail of decks and associated supports, pillars, railings, balusters, steps and other finishing details must reflect the scale, proportion and appropriate materials of the building. Cable railings will be considered in context of the non-contributing building.
5. Proposals for roof decks with no historical basis will be rejected.
6. Proposal of a deck requiring removal of a significant building element or site feature such as a porch or a mature tree will be rejected.
7. Proposal of a deck that will detract from the overall historic character of the building, site or district will be rejected.

8. Exterior stairs and stair landings necessitated by building code may be incorporated but shall not exceed the minimum size required for code compliance.

For New Construction:

1. When incorporated into new construction, a deck must be sited in an inconspicuous location, usually on the building's rear elevation. Careful consideration should be given to sightlines from any public right of way, including public waterways. It is preferred that the proposed deck is not visible from public vantage points.
2. Deck must be aligned with height of the building's first floor (ground) level or stepped down. Visually tie the deck to the building by screening with compatible foundation materials such as skirt boards, lattice, masonry panels, or dense evergreen foundation plantings. Decks proposed above the first floor level will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
3. Proposal of a deck that will detract from the overall historic character of the site (including other contributing buildings on the property) or district will be rejected. Roof decks are not appropriate.
4. In rare instances where appropriate to site a deck in a location visible to the public right-of-way or above the ground floor (i.e. multifamily dwellings where upper levels have no other access to ground level), a deck should be treated in a more formally architectural way. Careful attention should be paid to proportion and scale, materials, details and finishes. Landscape materials are encouraged to screen the impact of a deck and opaque screening structures are not appropriate.
5. Proposal of a deck requiring removal of a significant site feature on the property such as a mature tree will be rejected.

For all projects:

Drawings, materials list and cut sheets must be provided as part of the application. Historic photos, reference documents and material samples should be presented wherever possible.

The above criteria are intended as general guidelines to give property owners, architects, builders and others involved in proposed projects within Newport's Historic Districts a general awareness of the commission's expectations. Additional guidance may be found in the Standards and Guidelines for the Newport Local Historic District, (Revised 4.2016)

APPROVED BY RESOLUTION:

Deanna Amorello

Chair, Historic District Commission

June 11th, 2024

Date

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
POLICY STATEMENT and DESIGN GUIDELINES
FOR ELEVATING HISTORIC BUILDINGS

CITY OF NEWPORT

43 Broadway, Third Floor

Newport, Rhode Island

DEPARTMENT OF ZONING AND INSPECTIONS

401-845-5472

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By motion of the Historic District Commission at their January 21, 2020 meeting, and updated with Appendix A by motion at their September 19, 2023 meeting, the following guidelines and standards were adopted concerning the elevation of buildings within Newport’s Historic Districts:

Appendix A: Graphical Support to Building Elevation Design Concepts

Appendix B: Additional Flood Mitigation Options for the Homeowner

Appendix C: Landscape Best-Practices and Recommendations Related to Flood Mitigation and Building Elevation

Newport has historically been plagued by significant flooding issues in its low-lying areas in part due to the development on filled-in land where marshes once stood. However, in recent years there has been an intensification of flooding due to hurricanes, severe storms and high tides. Newport’s Historic District Commission has concluded the best policy for the long-term preservation of historic structures is to support elevating structures to FEMA requirement, when necessary.

Newport is aligned with federal and state guidelines regarding flood adaptation for historic buildings. United States Department of the Interior Memorandum dated November 18, 2019 – “Changing weather patterns, stronger hurricanes, and other extreme weather events have increased the risk of flooding, both in terms of frequency and magnitude. Historic properties that have never flooded before are now exposed to this risk, and those that flooded infrequently in the past are experiencing more instances of flooding with water reaching higher levels than ever before.”

This document focuses on four key areas to guide elevation projects for historic buildings:

- 1) Streetscapes and Context Consideration
- 2) Site Design Consideration
- 3) Foundation Design Consideration
- 4) Architecture and Preservation

Building Categories:

- Contributing Buildings
 - All elevation projects require Commission review and subsequent approval.
 - All elevation projects must demonstrate that the building is in the FEMA Flood Zone with a Flood Elevation Certificate defining Base Flood Elevation (BFE).
 - All Streetscape, Context, Site Design, Foundation Design, Architecture and Preservation Guidelines in this document are mandatory for these structures.
 - Encourage the use of FEMA Historical Structures Variance to minimize change to only that height necessary to avoid flood hazard. Maximum height allowable is Base Flood Elevation (BFE) plus one (1) foot.

- Before being approved for elevation, applicants must provide thorough documentation of the building in its existing state, to include 'As-built' elevations, floor plans, building sections, site plan, elevation certificate and exterior photographs. Interior photographs are highly desired if interior floorplans need to be changed to accommodate the building elevation.
- In addition to exterior details, the Commission needs to understand how an elevation will impact the interior floor plan and structural integrity of the building. Supporting interior floorplans and structural engineering plans are integral to the overall approval.
- Non-Contributing Buildings
 - All elevation projects require Commission review and subsequent approval.
 - All elevation projects must demonstrate that the building is in the FEMA Flood Zone with a Flood Elevation Certificate defining Base Flood Elevation (BFE).
 - Before being approved for elevation, applicants must provide thorough documentation of the building in its existing state, to include as-built elevations, floor plans, building sections, site plan, elevation certificate and exterior photographs.

Across all key areas outlined for historic building elevations, sustainable building concepts, and Community Resilience shall be considered by both the Historic District Commission and the Applicant. See definitions at the end of this document.

Streetscape and Context Considerations

Guidelines:

- Broadly, submittals must include careful consideration of the following:
 - Impact on important streetscape features (fences, walls, etc.)
 - Impact on relationship to immediate context and neighboring buildings
 - Impact on streetscape scale and building patterns
 - Impact on property and neighborhood greenspace, trees and landscape features
- More specifically, submittals for elevations must include careful consideration of contextual examples, including but not limited to elevated buildings, typical materials, and the following specific architectural details:
 - Relationship of entrance to the street
 - Staircases and stair configuration
 - Railings and Ironwork
 - Foundation Treatment
 - Walls (garden and site)
 - Fenestration Patterns
 - Eave Heights
 - Landscaping
- Building 'Set-Backs' or minor relocation of buildings on the same lot may be more sympathetic to the context of historic streetscape. For example, moving a house back to allow for the construction of steps typical.
- Elevation of sister houses should be architecturally coherent within the grouping. The first sister house to be elevated shall provide a reference point for the future elevation of structures within

the grouping. The HDC requires the highest quality of design of the first building in a sister house grouping to be elevated, along with others that follow.

Site Design Considerations:

Guidelines:

- Buildings should not be moved to accommodate additions, parking, etc. Buildings should remain in their original location on the lot, unless doing so prevents the reasonable introduction of stairs, as required by elevation to allow access to building.
- Applicants should make every effort to maintain a distinct stair connection to the sidewalk.
- Entry stairs should be consistent in design and material with the architectural style of the building.
- In unique situations, it may be acceptable to move buildings being elevated back on a lot to correspond to adjacent properties (i.e. to align with neighboring properties)
- If necessary, to move the building on the property, the impact should be minimized with existing porches, low walls, fencing, planting beds and terraced landscaping in a manner that is in keeping with the building's architectural style. The addition of a porch, if not existing, is not appropriate.
- Maintain existing historic hardscape features, such as planter walls, fences, gates. See Newport Ordinance Chapter 17.74 – "Historic Stone Walls."
- Retain to the greatest extent possible, existing pathways from the street/sidewalk to the building.
- Introducing planter walls (30" or below) will help mitigate transition height.
- Front fencing when introduced as part of an elevation should be historically appropriate materials, such as iron or wood.
- Encourage the use of plantings or other pervious materials to help absorb water.

Foundation Design Considerations

Guidelines:

- Exterior foundation designs and materials should be based on historic evidence of original foundation of the building and on neighborhood/context specific examples.

- Foundation components should complement existing façade features:
 - Visual support of columns
 - Pilaster expression
 - Solid foundation wall under main body of house, especially at the street front, and piers at porch with infill screening
 - Use traditional masonry materials
 - Use existing elements as visual references to be repeated and extended throughout the foundation design
- Pier infill (if used) where piers are introduced or required, techniques could be:
 - Recessed or proud
 - Use louvers or custom lattice
- New foundation material should match the historic foundation material, and when possible, use salvaged material from the historic foundation. When building onto existing foundation, delineation between new and original is desired.
- Required flood venting should be limited to the sides and rear of the house. On occasion, if required by engineering, venting may be acceptable at the front of the house not to detract from the historic elements of the building.
- If front elevation flood vents are required, these may include decorative iron vents/grilles. They may be minimized by skirt board/water table, landscaping, elevated planters, staircases, etc. Use of creative openings/windows to break up wall expanse is also encouraged.
- Parking underneath elevated contributing buildings is not permitted. Parking underneath elevated non-contributing and new construction buildings may be considered depending on proposed design and context of surrounding historical neighborhood.
- For non-contributing buildings and new construction, garage doors on front elevations are prohibited.

Preservation and Architecture Considerations:

Guidelines:

- Quality of historic materials and detail shall be maintained throughout.
- Buildings that have a direct architectural relationship with their neighbors (such as sister houses or adjoined houses) will be considered within their context and the effect on one another and future elevations.
- Historic, character-defining features should be retained first, salvaged and reused second, or rebuilt in-kind when necessary as a last option.

- Chimney options (in order of preference):
 - Preferred method: retain chimney and elevate with the structure.
 - Elevate the house around the chimney and extend the chimney accordingly with materials to match.
 - Other chimney options require an engineering report and recommendation.
- Primary entries should maintain the existing door locations and pathways to the street.
- Employ architectural strategies relating to the specific context to lessen the overall impact of the raised structure:
 - Continue siding down foundation.
 - Lowering window level to relate to streetscape pattern and pedestrian scale on new buildings. This pertains only to non-contributing and new structures.
 - Add a skirt board/water table.
- Significant elevation changes without site adjustment or mitigation should create the appearance of an additional full floor that proportionally relates to the floors above and fenestration patterns on the streetscape.

Definitions:

1. Building Sustainability and Resiliency; Community Resiliency
 - a. 'Sustainability' and 'Resiliency' as they pertain to buildings
 - i. Building Sustainability – The main objectives of sustainable design are to reduce or completely avoid depletion of critical resources like energy, water, land, and raw materials; prevent environmental degradation caused by facilities and infrastructure throughout their life cycle; and create built environments that are livable, comfortable, safe and productive.
 1. 5 Characteristics
 - a. Environmental Sustainability
 - b. Technical Sustainability
 - c. Financial Sustainability
 - d. Organizational Sustainability
 - e. Social Sustainability
 - b. Building Resiliency – is the capacity of a building to continue to function and operate under extreme conditions, such as (but not limited to) extreme temperatures, sea level rise, natural disasters, etc. As the built environment faces the impending effects of global climate change, building owners, designers and builders can design facilities to optimize building resiliency.
 - c. Community Resiliency - is also an important concept for consideration. This includes how the city, community or neighborhood respond to extreme conditions noted above, specifically with respect to city, state and federal resource allocation when required.
2. Terms:
 - a. Base Flood Elevation (BFE).
 - i. The elevation to which flood waters are anticipated to rise during the base flood (1-percent-annual chance) event with wave effects included in coastal areas.

- ii. The BFE is the basis of insurance and floodplain management requirements.
 - iii. BFE is measured at the bottom of the lowest non-water resistant, horizontal structural member (of the first floor).
-
- b. Sister Houses. 2 or more houses built side by side with identical (very similar) dimensions, floor plans and architectural details. Usually constructed by same builder or same family.
 - c. Adjoining or Adjoined Buildings. 2 or more buildings of separate address, separate floor plan and likely separate ownership that are adjoined by a common wall.

The above criteria are intended as general guidelines to give property owners, architects, builders and others involved in presenting elevation projects to the Historic District Commission general awareness of the Commission's expectations.

APPROVED BY RESOLUTION:



Chair, Historic District Commission

September 19, 2023

Date

Appendix A

Graphical Support to Building Elevation Design Concepts

Approved by motion of the Newport Historic District Commission at their meeting on September 19, 2023.

Appendix is a separate document available on the City of Newport Website, section on Historic District Commission.

Appendix B

Additional Flood Mitigation Options for the Homeowner

To be added.

Appendix C

Landscape Best-Practices and Recommendations Related to Flood Mitigation and Building Elevation

To be added.

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
POLICY STATEMENT ON GUTTER REPAIR AND REPLACEMENT

CITY OF NEWPORT

DEPARTMENT OF ZONING AND INSPECTIONS

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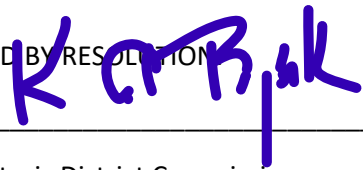
By motion of the Historic District Commission at their 17 September 2019 meeting, the following guidelines and standards were adopted concerning gutter repair and replacement on properties within Newport's Historic Districts:

Gutters are a character-defining feature of historic buildings. Historic gutters of wood, galvanized steel, copper are highly significant elements of the buildings in Newport's historic districts and should be preserved. Not only do gutters serve to protect the buildings from roof water run-off, they also form an important part of the visual experience of the building. Therefore, the Historic District Commission establishes the following standard and statement of policy:

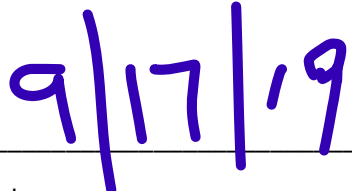
1. Wherever possible, historic gutters shall be repaired rather than replaced. No historic gutter shall be replaced in total unless it can be demonstrated with photographs that the gutter is beyond reasonable repair.
2. For Contributing Buildings - When a gutter must be replaced due to deterioration, it shall be replaced in kind. Construction methods and materials should match the historic gutter. (Example: if replacement is necessary and approved, original 6" copper half-round gutters should be replaced with 6" copper half-round gutters).
3. Aluminum and Synthetic materials (for example, plastic or fiberglass) are generally not appropriate for use in historic buildings within the district, however they may be used on new construction and Non-Contributing Buildings. It is acceptable to replace wooden gutters on Contributing Buildings with fiberglass, provided the exterior profile is an exact match to the original gutter.
4. Exact gutter cut sheets should be provided as part of the application.
5. Gutter samples should be brought to the meeting.

The above criteria are intended as general guidelines to give property owners, architects, builders and others involved in presenting roofing projects to the Historic District Commission general awareness of the Commission's expectations, samples and level of detail. Additional guidance may be found in the Standards and Guidelines for the Newport Local Historic District, (Revised 4.2016)

APPROVED BY RESOLUTION



Chair, Historic District Commission



Date

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
POLICY STATEMENT ON ROOFING REPAIR AND REPLACEMENT

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By motion of the Historic District Commission at their 17 September 2019 meeting, the following guidelines and standards were adopted concerning roofing repair and replacement on properties within Newport's Historic Districts:

Roofs are a character-defining feature of historic buildings. Historic roofing types like slate, standing-seam metal, wood shingle, and tile are highly significant elements of the buildings in Newport's historic districts and should be preserved. Not only do roofs protect the buildings beneath, but they also form an important part of the visual experience of the city. Therefore, the Historic District Commission establishes the following standard and statement of policy:

1. Wherever possible, character defining roofs shall be repaired rather than replaced. No roof of a Contributing Building shall be replaced in total unless it can be documented by an accepted roofing expert that the roof is beyond reasonable repair. Expert letter must be provided on letterhead and signed.
2. For Contributing Buildings - When a roof must be replaced due to deterioration, it shall be replaced in kind. Construction methods and materials should match the historic roof. (Example: if replacement is necessary and approved, original slate roof tiles should be replaced with slate roof tiles).
3. For Non-Contributing Buildings – in kind replacement is highly encouraged, but not required. When appropriate, applicants are encouraged to 'upgrade' roofing to the most historically accurate material. (Example: replace an asphalt roof with a cedar shingle roof).
4. Synthetic materials (for example, artificial slate or tiles) are generally not appropriate for use in historic districts. Rubber or TPO roofs may be considered provided they are obscured from the street. In such cases, parapet or other edge treatments should be explored to eliminate visibility.
5. Roofing cut sheets should be provided as part of the application.
6. Exact roofing samples should be brought to the meeting.

The above criteria are intended as general guidelines to give property owners, architects, builders and others involved in presenting roofing projects to the Historic District Commission general awareness of the Commission's expectations, samples and level of detail. Additional guidance may be found in the Standards and Guidelines for the Newport Local Historic District, (Revised 4.2016)

APPROVED BY RESOLUTION

Chair, Historic District Commission

Date

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
POLICY STATEMENT ON SIGNS AND AWNINGS

CITY OF NEWPORT

DEPARTMENT OF ZONING AND INSPECTIONS

43 Broadway, Third Floor

Newport, Rhode Island

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By motion of the Historic District Commission at their October 17, 2023 meeting, the following guidance on Signs within Newport’s Historic Districts was reviewed, voted, approved, and adopted.

References:

- 1) Newport Standards – Ordinance: 17.80.060
- 2) US Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation, Technical Preservation Services, The Preservation of Historic Signs, <https://home1.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/25-signs.htm>
- 3) US Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation, Technical Preservation Services, Rehabilitating Historic Storefronts, <https://home1.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/11-storefronts.htm>

As part of Newport’s built environment, signs and awnings have a significant visual impact. In the past, businesses were primarily locally owned, and signs reflected local aesthetics. In the modern, global age, many businesses answer to national or international corporate entities. Signs developed by these global marketers are often intended for suburban, high-traffic areas and are not compatible with pedestrian-oriented streets and the architectural heritage of Newport. Therefore, the Historic District Commission makes the following statement of policy for signs and awnings within Newport’s historic districts:

1. Standard corporate sign packages that make no reference to their context, surroundings or background generally will not be allowed. Signs should respect the architectural character of the building and its immediate surroundings, in addition to the building’s size, scale, design, and material.
2. There shall be no presumption of approval for corporate logos or branding; instead, signs will be reviewed as part of an overall graphics system for a building, regardless of when the submission for approval is made. If multiple tenants occupy one building, their requests for signage, if any, will be reviewed in terms of size and placement to avoid a dis-coordinated or cluttered appearance to the whole of the building and its context. Private agreements regarding tenant signage to which the City is not a party are irrelevant to the submission for approval and will not be considered.
3. Signs should contain the business name and the minimum amount of information necessary to convey the type of business. Repetitive signs or extraneous information, such as telephone numbers, hours of operation, products and or services sold, etc., will not be allowed.
4. Sign and awning materials should be compatible with those of the historic building and should not obscure significant architectural features. Externally illuminated signs will be considered on a case-by-

case basis. Internally illuminated signs, including neon and neon substitutes are not permitted. Awning material, color, and hardware should reflect historic precedence as well as be consistent with other awnings in the same building or connected commercial environment.

5. Signs should be attached to the building carefully to prevent damage to historic fabric (for example, fittings should penetrate mortar joints rather than brick).

6. Signs historically were most commonly either flat to the building or attached on a right angle. For signs protruding from the building on a right angle, consideration will be given to the appropriate overall scale of the sign and specifically its width as compared to the sidewalk's width (if applicable) so as not to impede pedestrian traffic or sightlines.

7. Awnings, specifically, when serving as a sign, in addition to its purpose of screening a door or window, shall comply with all applicable policies above related to signs.

8. Modern Street Signs design and placement may contribute or detract from the city's historic districts, while at the same time providing needed directional reference points for automobile and pedestrian traffic. The Historic District Commission welcomes the opportunity to collaborate with other city departments in the determination of the most appropriate Street Signs for historic districts.

9. This policy statement is intended to supplement, not supersede, previous site-specific existing signage or signage agreements.

For all projects, material cut sheets and detailed description of techniques and methods must be provided as part of the application.

The above criteria are intended as general guidelines to give property owners, architects, builders, and others involved in presenting applications to the Historic District Commission general awareness of the Commission's direction, expectations, samples, and level of detail.

APPROVED BY RESOLUTION:



October 17, 2023

Chair, Historic District Commission

Date

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
POLICY STATEMENT ON SOLAR PANELS

CITY OF NEWPORT

43 Broadway, Third Floor

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Newport, Rhode Island

401-845-5472

www.cityofnewport.com

By motion of the Historic District Commission at their April 19, 2022 meeting, the following design guidelines and standards were adopted concerning solar panels on properties within Newport's Historic Districts.

References:

- 1) Newport Standards – Ordinance: 17.80.060
- 2) US Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation, Technical Preservation Services, Sustainability, New Technology, Solar Panels on Historic Buildings

Solar panels mounted on the roof of a contributing or non-contributing building within a Newport Historic District are typically not allowed. Solar panels added to historic properties can have a significant impact on the character and visual qualities that convey a property's cultural significance. Solar panel installations should not become prominent new elements that detract from the character-defining features of a building or landscape.

Roofs are a character-defining feature of historic buildings both for their slope and gabling, as well as for their material. Historic roofing types like slate, standing-seam metal, wood shingle, and tile are highly significant elements of the buildings in Newport's historic districts and should be preserved.

Therefore, the Historic District Commission establishes the following standard and statement of policy:

For Contributing Buildings and Properties:

1. Solar panels installed on a historic property in a location that cannot be seen from the ground will generally meet Newport's Standards for retaining historic character (**Ordinance: 17.80.060.A.1**). Conversely, an installation that negatively impacts the historic character of a property will not meet the Standards. Every project is different and must be evaluated on its own merit.
2. Solar panels shall not be installed on a roof within a Historic District if it can be seen in any fashion from a street view vantage point.
3. Solar panels shall not be installed on a building's roof, where the roof is considered a character defining feature of the building – due to architectural design and or material (such as slate, standing seam metal, wood shingle, tile or synthetic material intended to replicate natural materials). Nor should solar panels be installed if it requires removing or otherwise altering historic roof configurations, including dormers, chimneys and/or other character defining features.

4. Solar panels installation may be considered on a completely flat roof set back from the edge to minimize visibility. Pitch and elevation should be adjusted to avoid view from the public right-of-way.
5. Solar panels may be considered for installation on a recent addition made to the historic structure where it is obvious the addition is not part of the original historic structure and has not gained historic significance on its own (**Ordinance: 17.80.060.A.3**) and not in public view.

~~6.—6. Freestanding or detached on-site solar panels may be considered and should be installed in locations that minimize visibility from public right of way. These systems should be screened from the public right of way with fencing, shrubbery, or other vegetation. Placement, design, and distance from existing historic structure(s) should not detract from the historic character of the site or destroy historic landscape material or walls. Solar panels may be considered if installed on the property, separate from the historic building (example: pole mounted array), and if it does not interfere with any historic landscaping or walls.~~

~~7.6.~~ Mechanical equipment associated with the photovoltaic system should be unobtrusive as possible and always installed on the rear slope.

For Non-Contributing Buildings and Properties:

1. In cases where the roof gable is a considerably low slope, and the roof is not a prominent feature, solar panels may be installed with minimum view from the street. Panels shall be installed flat on the rear slope and not alter the pitch of the roof.

For all projects, solar panel cut sheets must be provided as part of the application, along with aerial view of panel lay-down, mounting bracket detail and exterior mechanical and battery positioning.

The above criteria are intended as general guidelines to give property owners, architects, builders, and others involved in presenting window and door replacements to the Historic District Commission general awareness of the Commission's expectations, samples and level of detail. Additional guidance may be found in the Standards and Guidelines for the Newport Local Historic District, (Revised 4.2016)

APPROVED BY RESOLUTION:



4/19/2022

Chair, Historic District Commission

Date

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
GUIDANCE ON WINDOWS, DOORS, & SKYLIGHTS

CITY OF NEWPORT

43 Broadway, Third Floor

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Newport, Rhode Island

401-845-5472

www.cityofnewport.com

By motion of the Historic District Commission at their April 8th, 2025 meeting, the following design guidelines and standards were adopted concerning window and door replacements on properties within Newport's Historic Districts:

Windows and Doors are character-defining features of historic buildings. Historic windows and doors are highly significant elements of the buildings in Newport's historic districts and should be preserved. Historic Newport windows and doors form an important part of the visual experience of the city. Therefore, the Historic District Commission establishes the following standard and statement of policy:

Wherever/Whenever possible, historic windows and doors should be repaired rather than replaced (Newport City Ordinance 17.80.060.A.5). No original windows or doors shall be replaced unless it can be documented by an accepted door or window expert that they are beyond reasonable repair or otherwise proven to the HDC by way of the following: providing physical proof, necessary images and/or site visit.

Expert documentation **is strongly recommended**, must be provided on letterhead and signed, and should be accompanied with a 'Window Inventory' (examples included in Exhibit A) to include the following information:

- A complete inventory of all existing windows and/or doors documenting size, location, operation, details and measured drawings showing sash dimensions, details, muntin profiles and pattern, glazing, and pertinent details, citing all repairable or irreparable conditions. Reference **Exhibit B: NEWPORT HDC WINDOW & DOOR DIAGRAM** for terminology.
- Persons compiling and documenting the existing window and/or door inventory and assessing their condition must submit credentials qualifying them as experts in the field and be represented at the hearing.

[Exhibit A: Example Window Restoration Expert Report](#)

Simple applications with up to two windows may be submitted using the Newport HDC Window or Door Diagram, Reference **Exhibit B**.

WINDOWS

1. When windows must be replaced due to deterioration, the following guidelines shall be adhered to:

a. For Contributing Buildings:

If the wood windows to be replaced are original (or considered to have historic value) they shall be replaced in-kind. Any “new” or replaced windows shall be authentic to the “original” window, including but not limited to, size, materials, profile, muntin type and pattern, glazing, operation and finish. New or added windows shall match existing in all details. These complete details must be included in the window inventory for record keeping and comparison to new construction.

Note: the term “original” refers to the descriptive entry as part of the buildings nominating papers, and terminology included in the “facts and findings” description from the Preservation Planner as part of the application.

a1. Replacement in-kind: If the window assessment inventory shows the existing windows are beyond repair, and reason for replacement is accepted by the Preservation Planner and the HDC, then new all-wood windows of traditional construction duplicating the existing shall be acceptable.

a2. Non-original replacements: If the windows are determined to be replacement windows themselves, the applicant shall consider replacement with the most historically accurate characteristics and materials, typically an all-wood window. Vinyl composite, clad, or “insert” windows (new jamb liners and less detailed sash profiles or changes in the sash overall dimensions) are **NOT** acceptable.

b. For Non-Contributing Buildings:

b1. If existing windows are all-wood, the replacement units should also be wood, aluminum or composite clad may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

b2. If the existing windows are not all-wood, then the replacement window(s) will be considered case-by-case. Replacement windows shall be of quality material and appropriate for the age or style of the house. Replacement units may be clad windows matching all details in the window inventory. Vinyl composite or “insert” windows (new jamb liners and less detailed sash profiles or changes in the sash overall dimensions) are **NOT** acceptable.

2. Windows required for egress will be considered on a case-by-case basis and must closely match the existing windows except for operation.

3. It is strongly recommended that the applicant retain any original windows on-site for potential future use.

SKYLIGHTS

Skylights added to historic properties can have a significant impact on the character and visual qualities that convey a property's historic significance. Roofs are a character-defining feature of historic buildings, both for their slope and architectural composition, as well as their material. Historic roofing types like slate, wood shingle and tile are highly significant elements of the buildings in Newport's historic districts and should be preserved.

a. For Contributing Buildings

a1. Skylights shall not be installed on a roof within a Historic District if it can be seen from a street view, right of way vantage point.

a2. Skylight proposals on contributing historic structures in a location that cannot be seen from the ground will generally meet Newport's Standards for retaining historic character (**Ordinance 17.80.060.A.1**). Conversely, an installation that negatively impacts the historic character of a property will not comply with the standards. Every project/application is different and will be evaluated on its own merit.

a3. Skylights shall not be installed on a building's roof, where the roof is considered a character defining feature of the building - due to architectural design and/or material (such as slate, wood shingle, tile or synthetic material intended to replicate natural materials). Nor shall skylights be installed if they require removing or otherwise altering historic roof configurations, including dormers, chimneys and/or other character defining features.

b. For Non-Contributing Buildings

b1. Proposals for the addition of skylights on **Non-Contributing and New Construction Buildings and Properties** will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Skylights must be sited in an inconspicuous location, usually on the building's rear elevation and inset from the rear corners.

The above criteria are intended as general guidelines to give property owners, Architects, builders and others involved in presenting window and door replacements to the Historic District Commission for understanding of the Commission's expectations, samples and level of detail. Additional guidance may be found in the Standards and Guidelines for the Newport Local Historic District, (Revised 4.2016).

DOORS

1. Doors are a character-defining feature of historic buildings, including their style and accompanying architectural details. When doors, including garage doors, must be replaced due to deterioration, the following guidelines shall be adhered to:

a. For Contributing Buildings

a1. Doors (front, side and back), shall be replaced in-kind. Materials and construction methods shall match the type and quality of the original doors. (Example: if replacement is necessary (and approved), original wood doors should be replaced with all-wood replacement doors, then finished to match the original existing conditions). Doors with glazing shall match criteria listed in the "Window" section for Contributing buildings.

b. For Non-Contributing Buildings

b1. When front and front-facing doors to be replaced are original, the applicant is encouraged to replace them with a quality door that reflects the style of the building. Materials and finishes should be of those typical in historic buildings.

b2. In no cases shall any doors visible from the public right of way be constructed of metal, fiberglass, composites or vinyl; such materials may be appropriate when not visible from a public right of way.

2. French Doors or sliding doors shall be of traditional stile and rail configuration and have glazing and muntins compatible with that defined in respective sections above. Sliding doors are considered on a case-by-case basis but generally are not appropriate in Contributing Buildings.

3. Applicants are strongly encouraged to bring samples of materials to hearings.

ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS – SIDELIGHTS & TRANSOMS

1. Complementary architectural details include sidelights, transoms and similar features. Architectural details in conjunction with doors in Newport’s historic districts should be preserved and restored whenever possible.

a. Proposals for the addition of new architectural details on **Contributing Buildings and Properties** are not considered appropriate. Unless definitive historical evidence is presented showing architectural detail on the original historic structure, the proposal will be rejected.

b. If historic precedent of architectural details is established on a Contributing Building and Property,

b1. Architectural features, including sidelights and transoms should be situated in the same location as established by the historical evidence presented.

b2. The design and detail of the architectural feature shall be replaced in-kind and must reflect the style, scale, proportion and materials of the original architectural details.

2. Proposals for the addition of new architectural details on **Non-Contributing and New Construction Buildings and Properties** will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Proposed designs shall be compatible with other structures in the surrounding historic district (**Ordinance 17.80.060.B1**) and not present a false historic appearance (**Ordinance 17.80.060.C3**), respectively.

APPROVED BY RESOLUTION:

Deanna Amorello

Chair, Newport Historic District Commission

April 14th 2025

Date

EXHIBIT B: NEWPORT HDC WINDOW & DOOR DIAGRAM

WINDOW & DOOR TERMINOLOGY

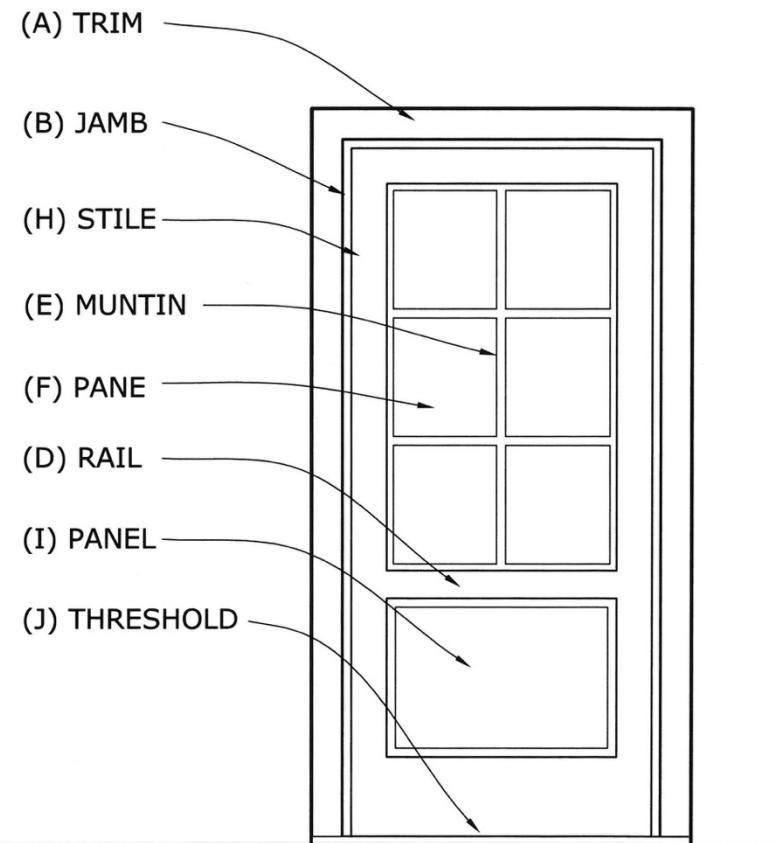
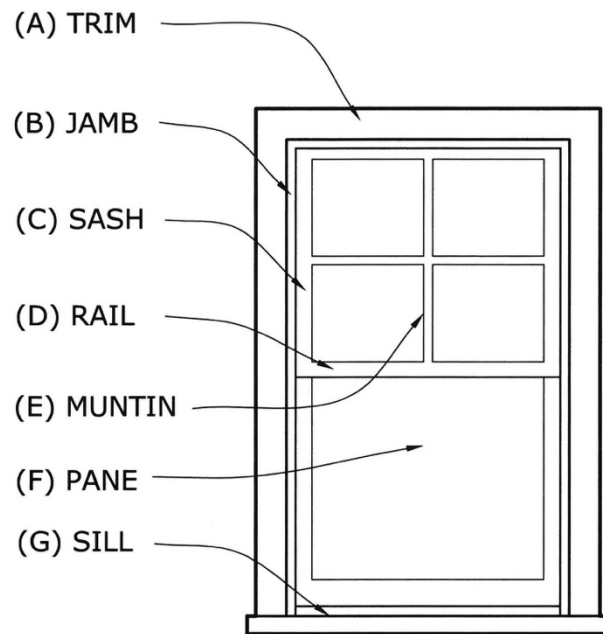


EXHIBIT B: NEWPORT HDC WINDOW & DOOR DIAGRAM

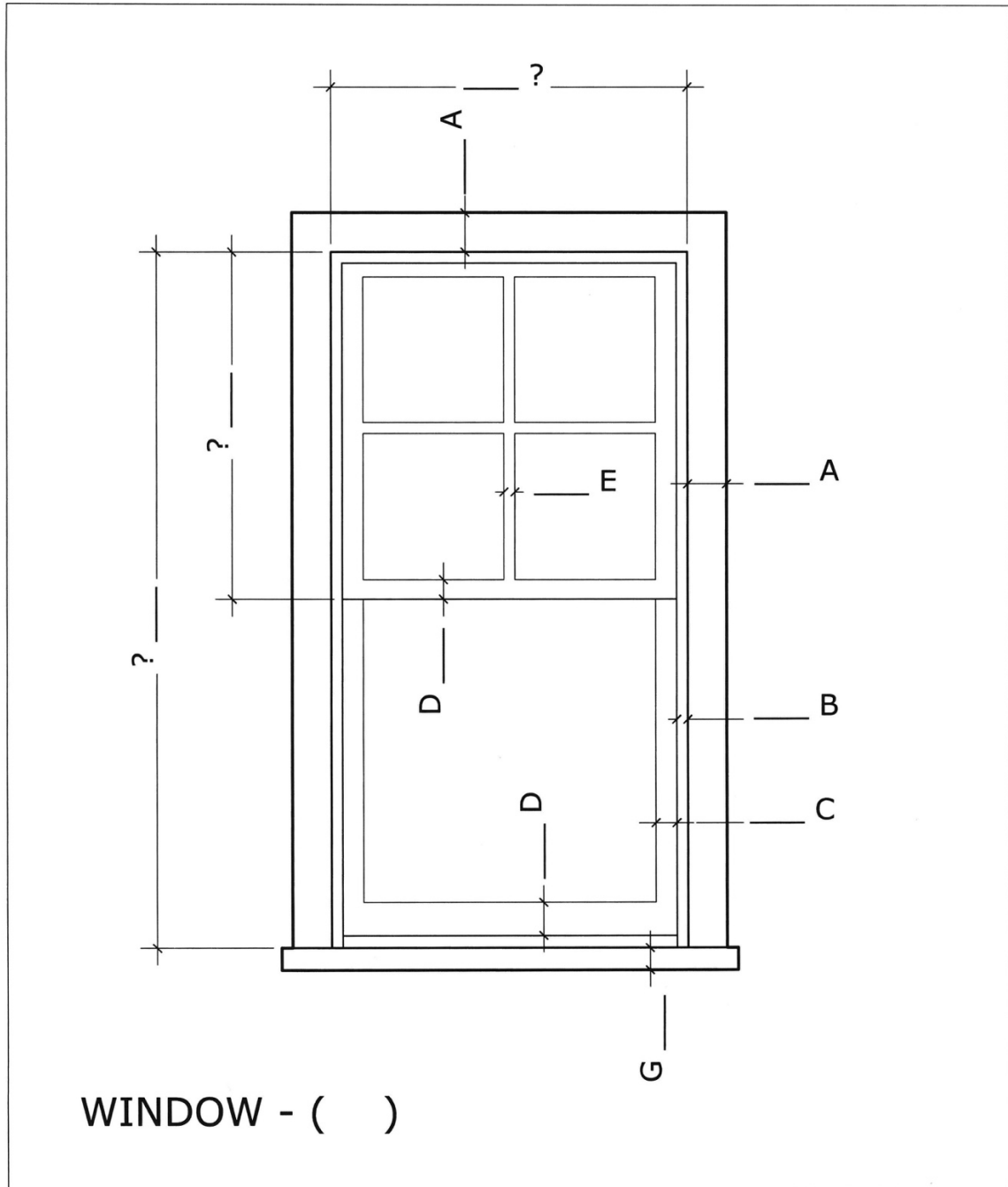


EXHIBIT B: NEWPORT HDC WINDOW & DOOR DIAGRAM

