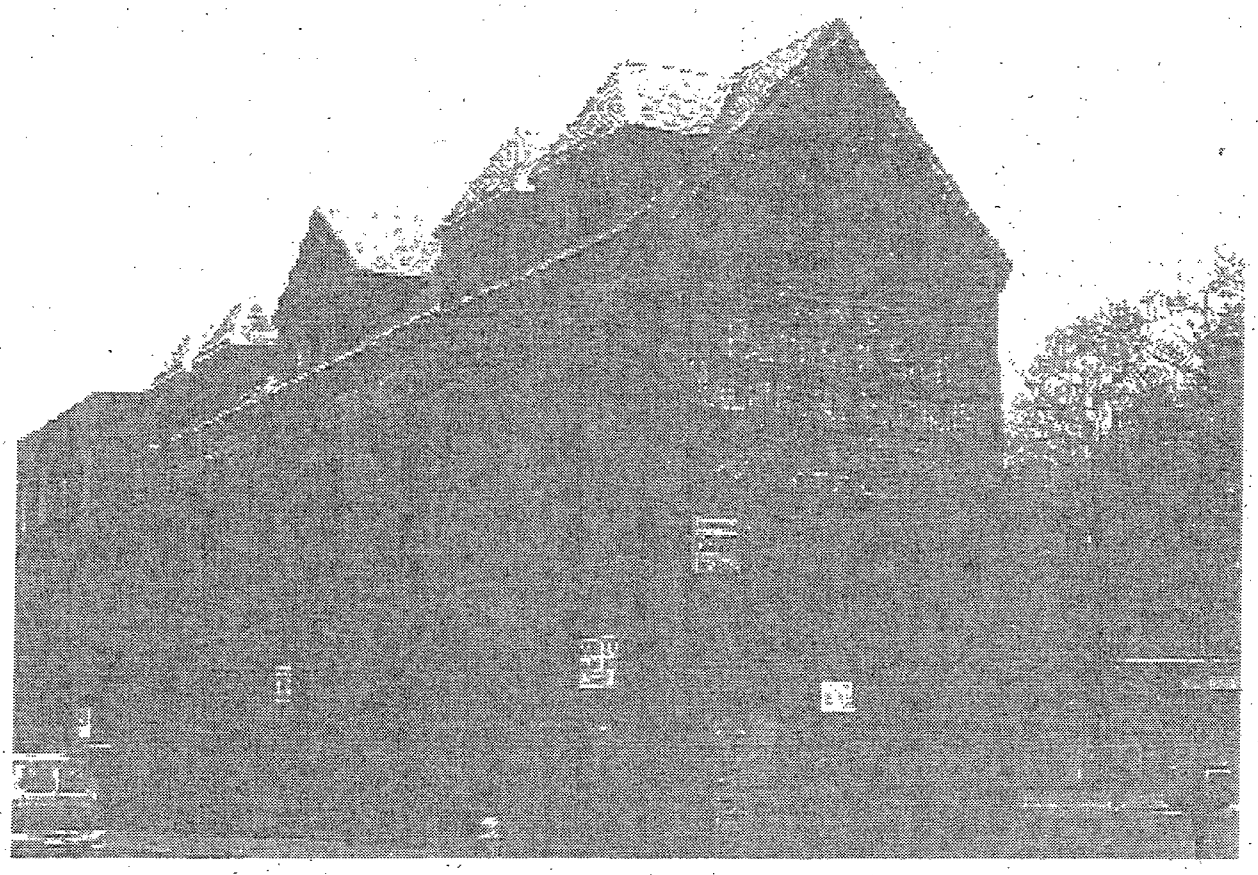
# Chapter 4

# Signs, Awnings, and Lighting

## IF YOU'RE WORKING ON A BUILDING AND YOUR WORK INVOLVES:





# Chapter 4

# Signs, Awnings, and Lighting

## Introduction

Signs, awnings, and lighting are design elements that are applied to the exterior of new and historic buildings. They are usually considered less-than-permanent fixtures when installed, but tend to accrete on a given building so that signs, light fixtures, and awnings from several improvement campaigns may be on a building at the same time.

Signs, awnings, and some light fixtures are elements that are intended to draw attention to the buildings to which they are affixed. As they compete for the attention of passersby, their aggregate effect upon a streetscape can be overwhelming. Their design, selection, and installation should be carefully considered so that the restrained buildings of the Great Falls Historic District (GFH District) are not overwhelmed by the cumulative effect of their presence. Unlike other elements that have been discussed thus far, the design of signs, awnings, and lighting must take into consideration their effect in both day and night lighting conditions.

Design guidelines for signage, awnings, and light fixtures apply to projects involving rehabilitation, restoration, and new construction and additions.

## Signs

Signage has a critical effect, positive or negative, on the character of historic districts and their commercial streetscapes. Inappropriately designed and located signs overwhelm buildings, obscure historic fabric, and detract from the character of the street. Conversely, well designed, appropriately located signs can preserve and highlight historic fabric and unify a commercial street while serving to identify and promote effectively the businesses housed within individual shops.

Signs are first and foremost a means of advertising, of attracting patronage. They are intended to capture the attention of the passerby, and in consequence rely on the innovation and creativity of the designer. The potential variety, vitality, and quality that can be achieved from freedom of design can be more valuable than unduly heavy restrictions that dictate conformity. The most successful signage guidelines will be those that permit the greatest design flexibility while prohibiting those elements which are indisputable detriments to the character of the streetscape and the district.

The most important principle in establishing and reinforcing the character of the commercial streetscape is to consider the entire facade of a building as the "sign." For commercial shop owners, the entire elevation of the storefront was conceived to attract shoppers—signage, windows displaying merchandise, and architectural character. Consequently, the sign is an integral part of the building facade in both design and function, and the entire building facade should be considered when designing signage, and not just the sign itself. New signage should always be designed to complement and be subsidiary to the character of the building facade. Buildings whose facades are carefully considered and well maintained do not require the tremendously over-scaled signs that plague many modern streets today. A range of architectural storefronts within the GFH District can be a principal form of advertising for the small businesses located there.

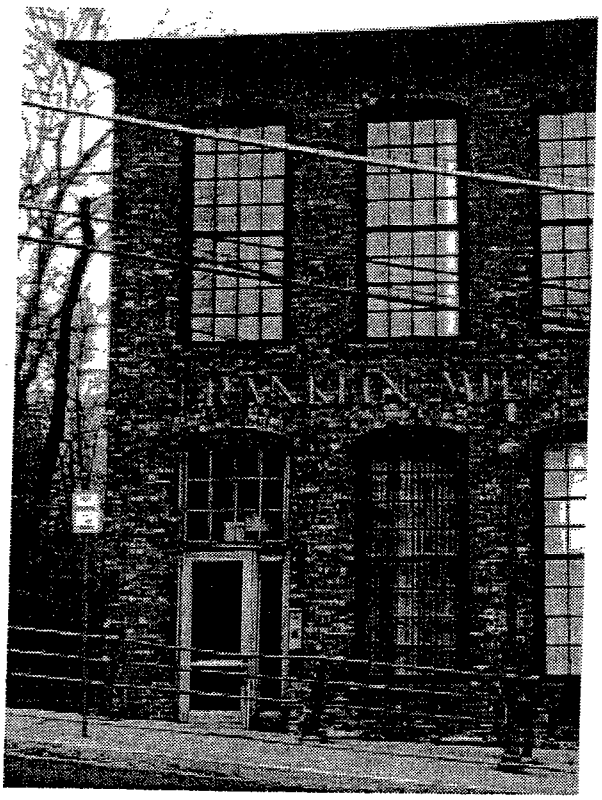
Existing historic signs are important resources within the GFH District. Several signs, now "ghost signs," were painted directly on the masonry to advertise the products or location of historic businesses. Plaques were attached to the walls of some buildings, with the names of the original founders of the companies that built the building. Such historic signs and plaques should be left in place and considered in new designs. Work that takes place around historic signs and plaques should be performed in a manner that protects them. Restoration should be carried out by a qualified restoration artisan and should be directed towards the preservation of the historic character of these signs, stressing preservation of historic fabric over renewal of the sign.

Article IX, Sign Regulations of the Zoning and Land Development Ordinance of the City of Paterson, prohibits some historic sign types that would otherwise be considered appropriate within the GFH district, most notably neon signs and signs painted directly on the surface or facing material of buildings. Further, the Ordinance limits sign area to 10% of the area of the building facade, and allows only one sign per business per street frontage. Further, the gross area of window signs may not exceed 30% of the gross window area of the facade or 10% of the entire facade, whichever is less. The following guidelines regarding signage are written to conform with the existing zoning code. While other types and sizes of signs may, in fact, be appropriate for the GFH District, guidelines for these cannot be included until such time as the zoning code is revised.

*Historic precedents exist for several types of signs within the GFH District.*

## Approved

✓ A sign must be consistent and compatible in terms of its style, scale, absolute size, material, texture, color, type face, location, and mounting material, and should be integrated into the architectural design of the building on which it is located.



*An appropriately-scaled sign on the secondary facade of the Franklin Mill.*

✓ One over-scaled sign on a commercial street will reduce the visual quality of the streetscape and may foster competition elsewhere. Large-scale signs may be appropriate to the character and scale of the building on which they are to be located or there may be historic precedent and documentation sufficient to determine the appropriateness of a large sign for a par-

## Not Approved

✗ Signs that obscure significant architectural features of any historic building are not approved.

✗ Signs that are of an earlier style than the building on which they appear are not approved.

✗ Back-lit fluorescent signs are not approved. Internally-lit plastic signs are not approved for buildings in the district. Section 901.2 of the City of Paterson Zoning Ordinance lists further materials and types of signage which are not permitted within the district.

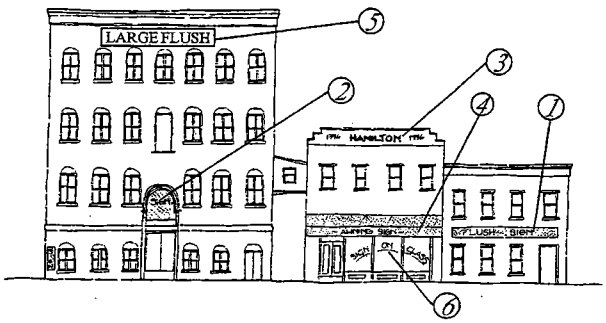
✗ Signs should not be suspended from balconies or gables.

✗ Murals on primary facades are not approved.

**Approved cont'd...**

ticular facade. Both absolute size and size relative to the size of the building to which it is mounted are critical considerations in designing a sign. Generally, within the GFH District, the area of individual signs should be kept below 5% of a building's facade area, or below 120 square feet, whichever is less.

✓ Signs within the GFH District must be designed to complement the overall appearance of a building, drawing attention to the businesses inside, but not away from the building itself.




*"Approved" sign locations and types*

*1. Small flush sign*
*2. Sign within arch over door*
*3. Cornice sign*
*4. Simple awning lettering*
*5. Large flush sign*
*6. Small, permanent, painted lettering on glass.*

**Not Approved cont'd...**


*"Not Approved" sign locations and types*

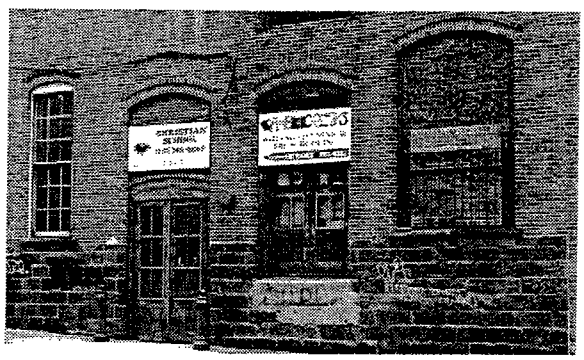
*1. Projecting sign that obstructs views or sidewalks*
*2. Sign covering architectural features*
*3. Free-standing sidewalk sign*
*4. Temporary signs cluttering storefront*
*5. Rooftop sign*
*6. Banner sign*

**Approved cont'd...**

✓ The removal of back-lit fluorescent signs, large signs with distinctive logos, and signs that obscure significant features is encouraged.

✓ Appropriate locations for signs on commercial buildings are horizontally at the storefront lintel, on the inside of glass, on plate glass windows, hanging signs that are appropriately scaled, and small lettering on awnings.

✓ Signage on historic mill buildings must be located where it best complements the building, and within existing facade features—on blank expanses of wall, in insets, fascia, cornices, awnings, structural bays, spandrel panels, lintels, pilasters, plate glass windows, hanging, or painted directly onto brick.



*The sign on the left fits within the infill panel above the door. The sign on the right covers the wood doors, a significant architectural feature.*

✓ Signs must be fastened to buildings in a manner that does not harm the historic fabric of the building. The Historic Preservation Commission will review the methods used to fasten signs to historic buildings within the GFH District.

## Not Recommended

- Plastic signs are not recommended.
- Large-scaled graphics are not recommended, especially at pedestrian level.
- Large signs, either larger than 5% of the area of the facade or larger than 120 square feet, whichever is less, are not recommended.
- Banners and flags are not recommended, unless temporary. They contribute to visual clutter, can be difficult to read, and are subject to deterioration from the elements, presenting a maintenance problem.
- Temporary, visually assertive signs set behind, on, or in front of display windows are not appropriate. These would include signs with large lettering and bold colors advertising sales or discounts.
- An excessive number of signs or sign types on an individual building is inappropriate. The resulting visual clutter will make individual signs difficult to read. The entire building should be thought of as the sign; each individual sign is a component of the overall design of the facade. A few, small, well-placed signs may have a better impact than several large "loud" signs.

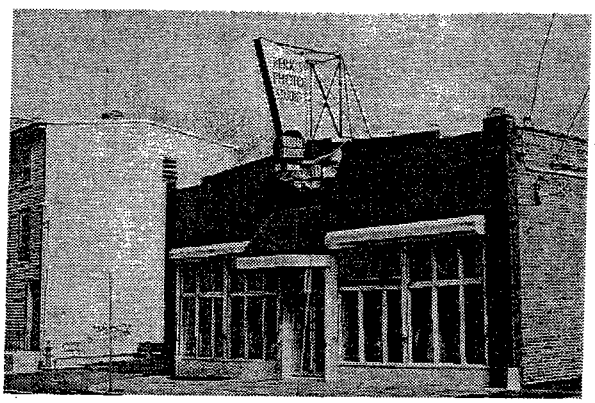
**Approved cont'd...**

✓ Historic signs and advertising painted on the sides of buildings must be retained.

*A historic sign plaque at the Essex Mill.*

✓ Wood, metal, and fiberglass signs are recommended.

✓ Any appropriate period sign that reflects historical authenticity of design, materials, and placement for the architectural style it serves is recommended, regardless of limitations imposed upon contemporary signage.



*This sign is appropriate to the scale and character of this 20th-century building. Although affixed to the roof and projecting, it is directed towards pedestrians and immediate vehicular traffic, and does not obstruct views or the sidewalk.*

**Not Recommended cont'd...**

- Murals are not recommended within the GFH District.
- Signs whose size, lettering, color, or shape detract from the character of the building on which they are located are not recommended.
- The style of a sign should not be from a period earlier than the building on which it is placed. For instance, a small Colonial-style sign should not be placed on a late-19th-century mill building. Similarly, an elaborately scripted Victorian-style sign should not be placed on an early-20th-century building.

**Approved cont'd...**

- ✓ Signs must not project from the building to the extent that they are a visual obstruction or physical hazard to pedestrian or vehicular traffic. Similarly, new signs must not interfere with a neighboring store by obscuring its signs or architectural features.

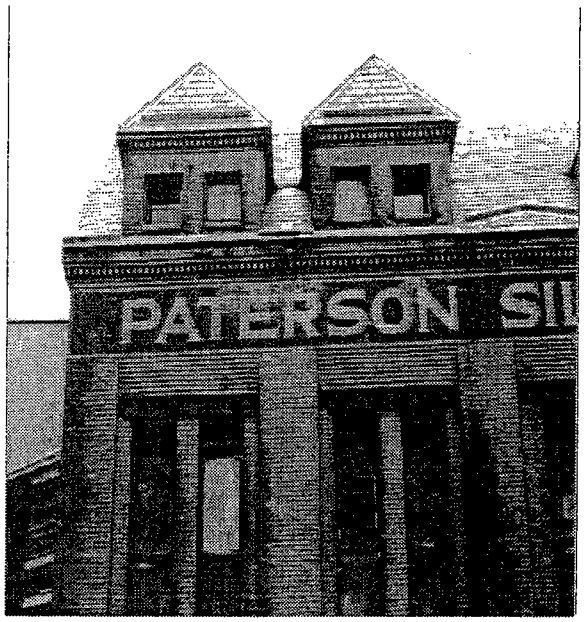
- ✓ Signs at the storefront level should be oriented primarily to pedestrians and should thus be sized and designed for pedestrian vision. For projecting signs at pedestrian level, a maximum projection of 4'-0", or half the width of the sidewalk, from the building is recommended, whichever is less. 8'-0" minimum clearance from the sidewalk is required.

- ✓ There is a degree of flexibility with regard to the graphic design of signs. Generally, no more than four colors and three different type faces should be employed in the design of any one sign, including any logos. Lettering may be either vertical or horizontal but not both.

- ✓ Concealed incandescent lighting for signage is recommended in the GFH District.

- ✓ Signs should be proportional either to the size of the space that they occupy, or to the size of the facade on which they are suspended. That is, a sign on a pilaster should be primarily vertical; a sign on a fascia should be horizontal.

- ✓ The design and construction of signs, especially more permanent signs, should be




*Historic signs painted on masonry, should be left intact, but will fade & wear off eventually.*

**Approved cont'd...**

executed by a professional.

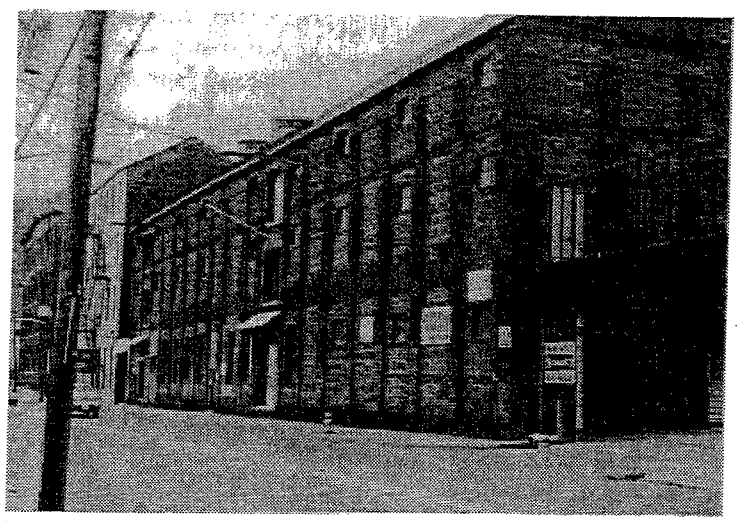
- ✓ The colors used on a sign should relate to the colors of the building on which it is mounted.

- ✓ The size of individual signs, the total area of signs, and the font size of lettering on a sign should all be proportional to the size of a building's facade.

- ✓ Signs should be indirectly lit with an invisible light source. Sign lighting should not cause glare.

- ✓ Signs should be mounted in such a way that the method of installation is concealed and their position on the building will not interfere with, or obscure, window and door openings or architectural features.

- ✓ Information on signs may include the name of the store or business, the address, the name of the proprietor, the goods or services available, and possibly illustrations of merchandise.



*Signs should not be placed randomly on building facades.*

# Awnings

Awnings are effective devices for reducing the cooling load in summer months, and reducing glare year round. Awnings can also be part of an overall signage scheme for a commercial building.

## Approved

✓ Awnings must be proportional to the size of the window and the facade that they occupy.

✓ The placement of awnings on facades must leave revealed and undamaged the architectural elements of historic buildings, including where the awning and frame are fastened to the building. On masonry buildings, fasteners should be installed in masonry joints, and not into masonry. Where masonry joints are too thin to accommodate fasteners, they should be installed in the center of individual bricks, to allow the hole to be patched if the awning is removed later.

✓ The top of an awning must conform to the top of the opening and be contained within it.

✓ The bottom of first-floor awning valances should be no lower than 7 feet above the sidewalk.

✓ Awnings must be sloped, and as simple as possible in design so as not to detract from the architectural features of the building.

✓ Awnings must be solid or striped, and opaque.

## Not Approved

✗ Umbrella, "bubble," and waterfall awnings are not approved within the GFH District.

*"Waterfall" awnings are not approved in the GFH District.*

✗ Metal window awnings are not approved within the GFH District. (There are precedents within the district for metal awning-type roofs, but only on certain 20th-century buildings and at loading docks on secondary facades.)

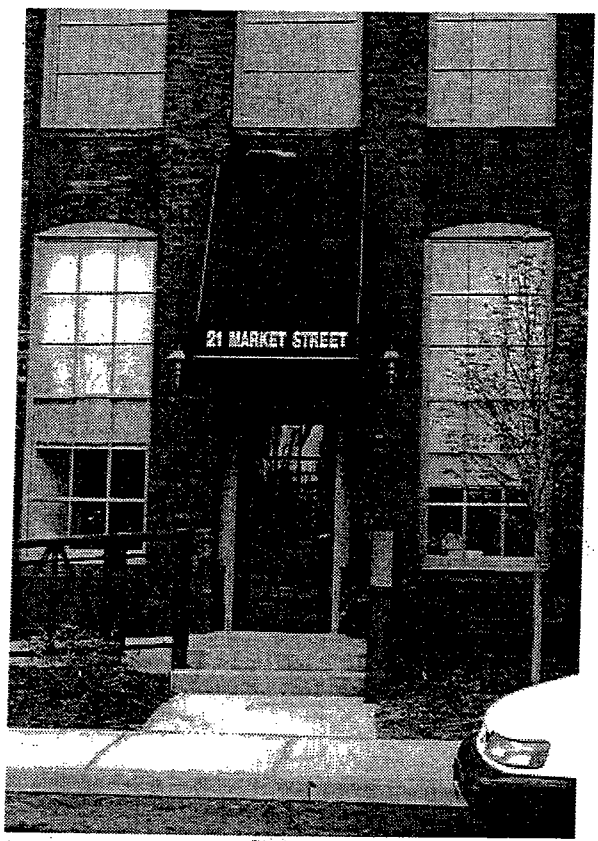
**Approved cont'd...**

✓ The color chosen for an awning should relate to the colors of the building on which it is mounted.

✓ Awnings may be illuminated from within or without, but should not emit a translucent glow.

✓ Awnings should be opaque vinyl or fabric.

✓ Awnings will last longer if they are properly maintained. Keeping them clean will contribute to their durability as will repairing tears and holes immediately.




*This awning should have been designed to fit in the panel between the two piers. Note also the residential scale and style of the two light fixtures, not recommended for historic mill buildings.*

**Not Approved cont'd...**

✗ Awnings must not be placed in such a way that they obscure any architectural features of a structure, such as doors, windows, trim, cornices, belt courses, and roof lines.

✗ New awnings must not interfere with existing signs on a building.

✗ Translucent awnings that glow when illuminated are not approved.

## Not Recommended

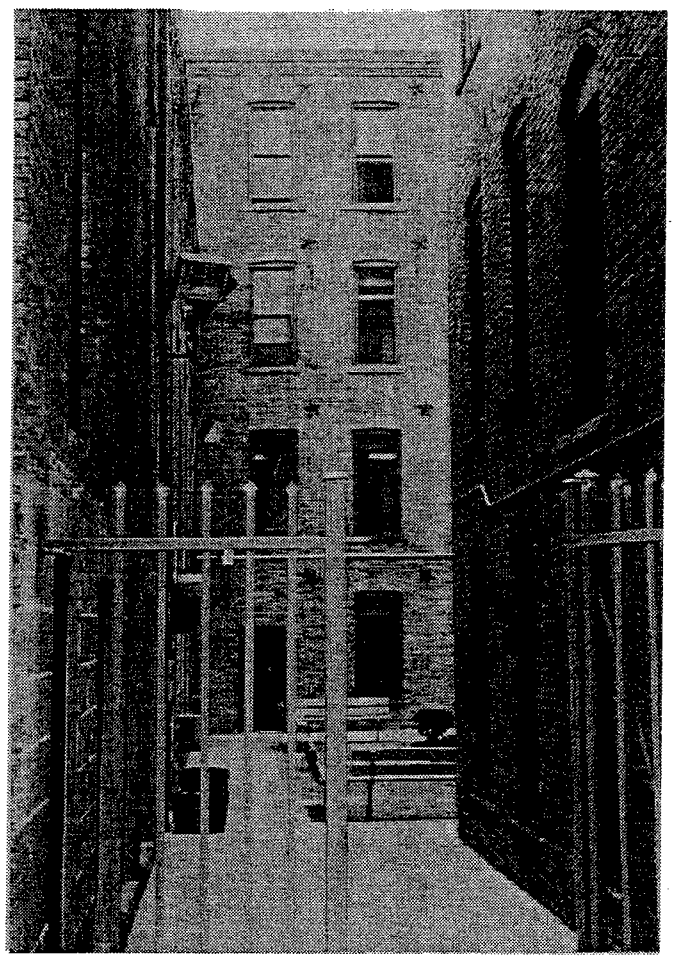
- New awnings must not interfere with existing street trees or street furniture (such as lighting fixtures).

## Lighting

✓ Light fixtures should be appropriate to the style of the building to which they are attached. Small-scale residential buildings should have residential scale and style light fixtures. Historic mill buildings should have larger and more industrial-type fixtures. Given the utilitarian nature of the buildings and the district, understated fixtures are preferable to overly elaborate fixtures.

✓ The use of reproduction light fixtures must be very carefully considered. While reproduction fixtures need not replicate the actual historic fixture that was once on a building, they should be similar in scale, material, elaboration, and general character to the fixture that is documented as having once been on the building.

✓ Simple, modern light fixtures are appropriate within the GFH District.



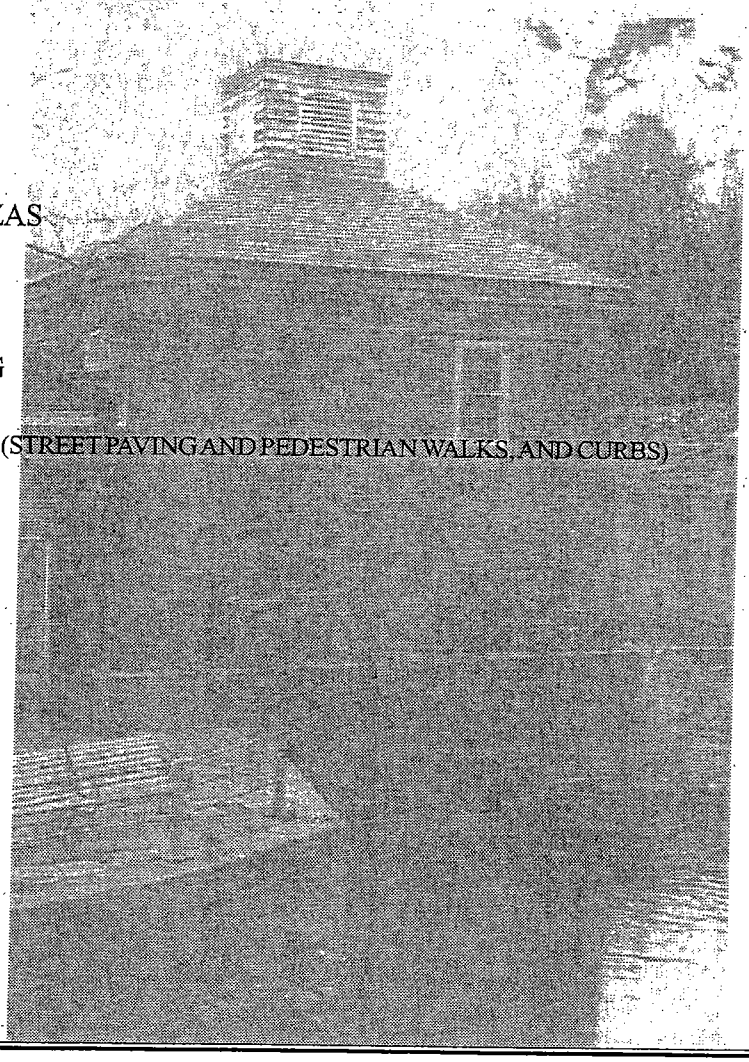
*Security lighting fixtures should not be mounted to buildings.*

# Chapter 5

# Landscaping, Site Amenities, Public Improvements, and Open Space

## IF YOU'RE WORKING ON A BUILDING AND YOUR WORK INVOLVES:



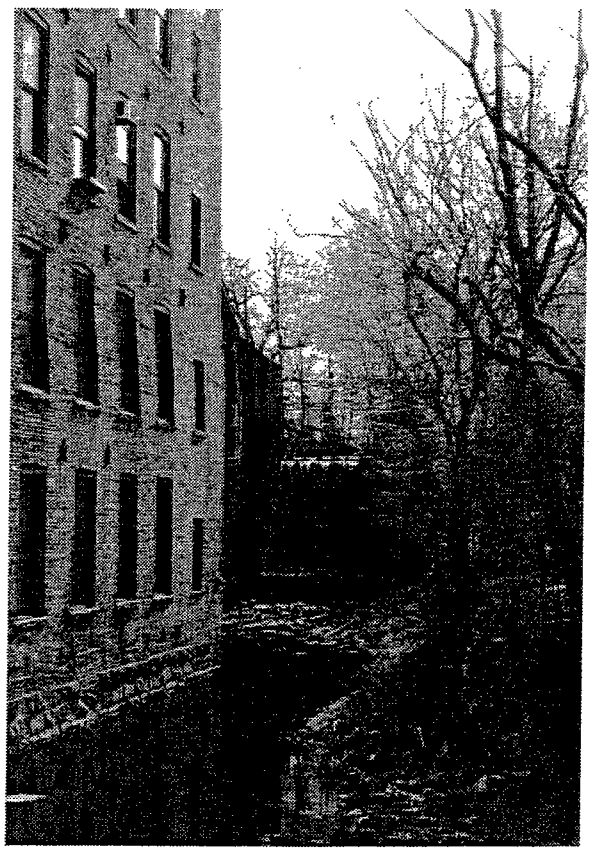


# Chapter 5

# Landscaping, Site Amenities, Public Improvements, and Open Space

## Introduction

Landscaping, site amenities, public improvements, and open space are the elements of the Great Falls Historic District (GFH District) that provide the setting for the historic buildings and define the relationships between them. Landscaping generally refers to plant materials; site amenities include walls, fences, walks, and paved areas such as plazas, courtyards, site lighting, and parking lots; public improvements are generally considered sidewalks, street paving, public lighting, street furniture, and public signage; open space refers to public land that is intended to remain open, such as the raceway parks and the park land along the Passaic River and overlooking the Great Falls. The appropriate handling of these elements will give strong definition to the character of the GFH District and will serve to unify the sense of the district as a defined and significant place. They are the matrix in which the buildings are fixed in place and time. As such, improvements and changes should be designed using appropriate colors, textures, and materials.

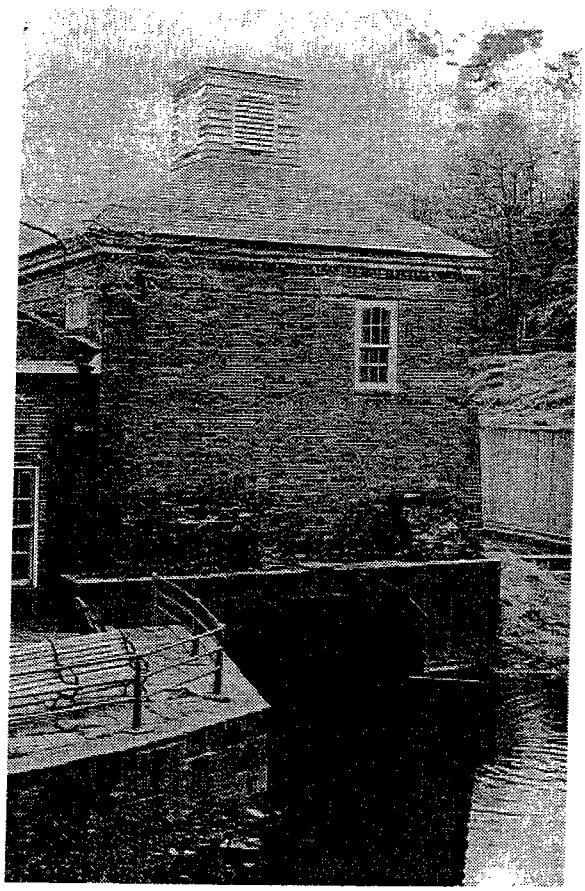


*Spillway of middle raceway between the Essex Mill and the ATP site.*

There are several historic resources within the district that are in the realm of historic infrastructure and have become a part of the landscape. The preservation of these resources is essential to maintaining the character and interpreting the significance of the GFH District. The raceways stand out as extraordinary resources, but the historic bridge that carries Spruce Street over the middle raceway and the bridge over the lower raceway where Passaic ends at Mill Street are also impor-

tant examples. The abandoned pipes and huge hopper behind the Essex Mill and even abandoned areas of Belgian block paving should be preserved.

The maintenance of landscaping, site amenities, public improvements, and open space is as important as their design. Unfortunately, landscaping requires annual maintenance at a minimum. By definition, exterior features lack protection from the elements, wear-and-tear, and vandalism, and require that a thorough maintenance program be established and followed.



*Public park at the Ivanhoe Wheelhouse.*

As stated in Chapter 4 of this document, there is a near certainty that excavation for landscaping and site amenities within the GFH District will encounter archeological resources. The Historic Preservation Commission and applicants for building permits should anticipate the impact of excavating in archeologically-sensitive areas.

## Landscaping and Site Amenities

Although landscaping is not a traditional feature of the GFH District, when used judiciously it can disguise and soften the appearance of some of the less attractive modern features of the district such as parking lots, recycling bins, and mechanical equipment. It can also be used to enhance the beauty of the district, making it a more attractive place for both residents and visitors, and can even provide shade that will help conserve energy.

The following design guidelines apply to all planting in the GFH District.

### Approved

✓ Use landscape elements to create buffers around parking lots, mechanical equipment, and garbage or recycling bins which would otherwise be visible from the street.

✓ When possible, locate utilities underground.

✓ Unless a deliberate contrast is desired, select and locate plant material so as to accent and enhance significant architectural forms, rather than to obscure them. Plant material should not overwhelm or detract from the views of historic buildings. Plant materials should not block the view of significant elements such as entrances, watertables, or windows.

✓ Consider the "texture" of a plant—its branch structure and degree of transparency. Consider also its "habit"—i.e., its form, be it round, columnar, horizontal, etc.

✓ Combine finely-textured, airy plants with finer architectural detail, and dense, coarse-textured plants with massive construction such as solid brick. Columnar plants complement vertical elements such as columns and pilasters, while lower rounded forms will complement foundation features.

### Not Approved

✗ Landscape elements must not obliterate the views of historic buildings and storefronts, or obstruct the flow of traffic.

**Approved cont'd...**

- ✓ Use plants at the perimeter of foundations to reinforce the rhythm of the building itself. For example, where a building's repetitive pilasters establish a strong rhythm of vertical elements with infill, plantings could follow that rhythm with vertical landscape elements centered on the pilasters alternating with lower plantings, or blank wall spaces, between. Continuous foundation planting did not become popular until the early 20th century.

- ✓ Select and locate plant material according to site conditions of sun, shade, soil, and adjacent plant material.

- ✓ Select plant material according to its mature size to allow for the long-term impact of the mature plant.

- ✓ Select plant species appropriate to the climate and growing conditions of Paterson.

- ✓ Every effort should be made to save large trees.

- ✓ Where planting to screen or complement masonry walls, provide a wire or wood frame for the vine or plant to cling to. This technique is known as "espalier," and will prevent roots from infiltrating into masonry joints.

- ✓ Do not "over plant." Allow for the mature size of trees and shrubs.

- ✓ Provide enough space between buildings and plantings so that the structure and site will not be visually "crowded." This will also prevent roots from infiltrating into foundation walls and will promote air circulation that will prevent organic growth such as moss and molds that will also con-

## Not Recommended

- Without the advantage of either physical remains or documentary evidence, "historic" garden design is highly speculative. As a rule, the design of formal plantings should be as simple as possible, concentrating on location and groupings of planting material. In the absence of strong historic evidence, the introduction of paved walks, beds raised with retaining walls, and garden structures such as gazebos, pergolas, and arbors is not recommended.

- Continuous foundation planting is not recommended for all architectural styles in Paterson.

- Concrete block and painted rocks are inappropriate landscaping in the GFH District.

- Do not permit plant material to destroy architectural fabric. Ground cover and vines that have grown on masonry walls may be accelerating the deterioration of the masonry. (See discussion of "espalier" technique in the "approved" section.)

**Approved cont'd...**

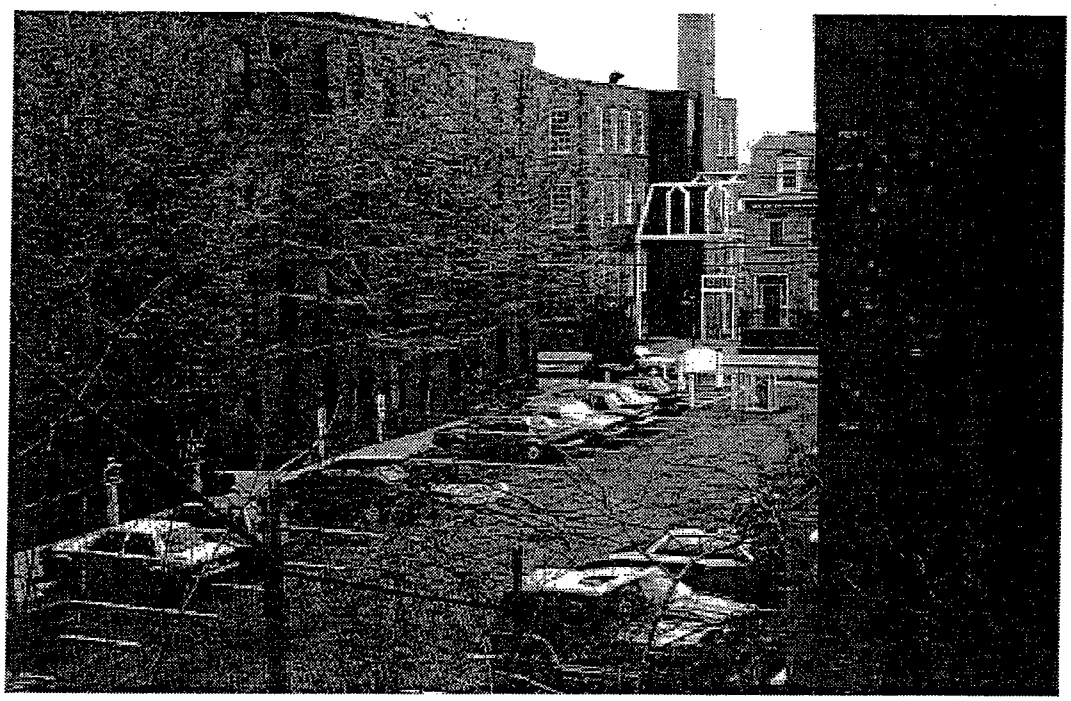
tribute to deterioration of the exterior building elements.

- ✓ Any lot left vacant over one year should be landscaped so as not to become an eyesore.

- ✓ Provide adequate drainage away from structures on a site.

- ✓ While the "overgrown" effect adds to the character of the district, tree roots and branches should be kept trimmed and away from masonry buildings and site walls.

- ✓ The design, landscaping, and paving of spaces to the rear of structures should be considered if they are used by customers for parking or other reasons, even if they are not visible from the public right-of-way.



*In the GFH District, site design must include consideration of the views from the public raceway parks.*

## Fences and Walls

There are historic precedents for sturdy wood and iron fences throughout the GFH District. It is clear that security has been an issue historically throughout the Great Falls area; industrial property owners have had to protect their property for a variety of reasons including the area's being largely vacated at night, and the fear of vandalism during the worker uprisings of the early 20th century.

At present, fences are often erected around vacant or semi-vacant lots in the GFH District in order to prevent vandalism. Since long periods of time often elapse before these sites are redeveloped, these fences become aesthetic features, and defining characteristics of the district. As such, their design must be carefully reviewed. The following guidelines apply to fences which remain standing for longer than eight months.

### Approved

✓ Walls and fences must be made of durable materials, and must be compatible with the surrounding buildings and street furniture with regard to style, materials, and color.

✓ Design and install fencing that establishes a regular rythm; for instance, the solid-and-void rythm of brick piers and metal pickets.

✓ Chain-link fencing can be used in areas which are not visible from the public right-of-way—either the street or the raceway parks—provided that the fencing is painted dark green or black. Where it exists, chain- link fence may be successfully planted out by encouraging vines to trail across and through it.

✓ Board-on-board wood fencing is permitted in areas which are not visible from either the street or the raceway parks.

✓ Generally, site fences and walls in the GFH District should not exceed 6'-0" in height,

### Not Approved

✗ Concrete walls are not approved as a fencing material visible from a public right-of-way within the GFH District and should be prohibited. Existing concrete walls visible from a public right-of-way should be stuccoed and painted; existing masonry screens made of perforated blocks should be painted black or dark green.

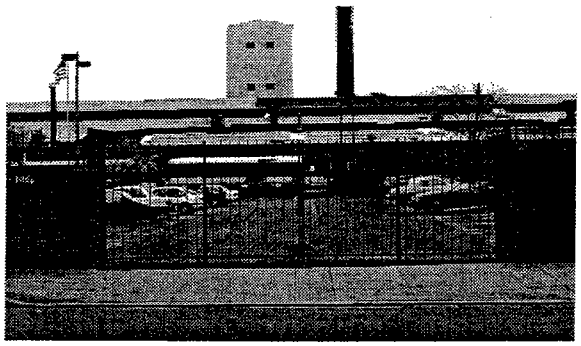
✗ Split-rail wooden fencing, barbed wire or razor wire fencing, and highway-style guardrail fencing are not approved.

✗ Chain-link fence visible from a public right-of- way is not approved.

**Approved cont'd...**

should be transparent, and should be designed to be permanent.

✓ The fence along the ATP site on Van Houten Street and the fence around the museum of the city of Paterson are good models.



*The Paterson Museum parking lot is enclosed along Spruce Street by an attractive wall that combines brick with metal fencing.*

✓ Cast-iron fencing is appropriate for new fences. Existing cast-iron fencing should be repaired or replaced in-kind.

✓ New metal fences should be transparent and of relatively simple design with regular horizontal and vertical members. Vertical pickets may be pointed to discourage scaling.

✓ There is precedent in Paterson for solid, unpainted wood fences of durable non-pressure-treated lumber.

✓ Rustic wood-rail fences are approved for use in the natural areas of Stoney Road.

## Not Recommended

- Chain-link fencing suggests exclusion and confinement. It is not recommended for use in the GFH District. Where it exists, it may be successfully planted out by encouraging vines to trail across and through it. Where a new installation is proposed it should be limited to side and rear yards. At side yards, chain-link fence should not be placed forward of the front of the building. At corner properties, chain-link fence should not be installed along either street frontage.
- Woven wood fencing and any modern or "fancy"-style fence, such as one that includes elaborate pickets, is not recommended.
- Unpainted pressure-treated wood fences are not recommended.

# Site Lighting

Site lighting is required to provide visibility for safe walking and to provide security for people and the buildings themselves.

## Approved

✓ Site light fixtures should be appropriate to the style of the surrounding buildings and with the style of street fixtures. Small-scale residential buildings should have residential-scale and -style light fixtures. The historic mill buildings should have larger and more industrial-type fixtures. Given the utilitarian nature of the buildings and the district, understated fixtures are preferable to overly elaborate fixtures. Simple, modern light fixtures are appropriate within the GFH District.

✓ The use of reproduction light fixtures must be very carefully considered. While reproduction fixtures need not replicate the actual historic fixture that was once on a building, they should be similar in scale, material, elaboration, and general character to the fixture that is documented as having once been on the building.

✓ Lighting within the district should create an even, glowing effect with a minimum of bright or "hot" spots. The color of the light created by the lamps should be warm and not harsh.

## Not Approved

✗ Highway-type and cobra-head street and yard light fixtures are not approved.

✗ Low-pressure sodium and mercury vapor lights are not approved within the GFH District.

✗ Residential-scale fixtures are not approved for use on and around the large-scale commercial buildings in the district.

### Not Recommended

- The illumination of historic buildings within the GFH District is not recommended. When it is undertaken, it should be done subtly, casting an even glow across facades.
- Highlighting specific building or site features with high levels of illumination is not recommended.

## Courtyards and Plazas

In Paterson, the ongoing expansion of the mills, their dependence on daylight, and their need for secure outdoor areas for deliveries, shipping, and lay-down of raw materials created courtyards and plazas almost by accident.

Courtyards and plazas are semi-public outdoor spaces, surrounded on at least three sides by buildings. They can serve to mediate between the noisy and busy streets of the district and the interior of buildings, and offer opportunities to create pleasant, easily secured outdoor space. Two very different but very good examples of the potential uses for courtyards exist at the Essex Mill and at the Phoenix Mill.

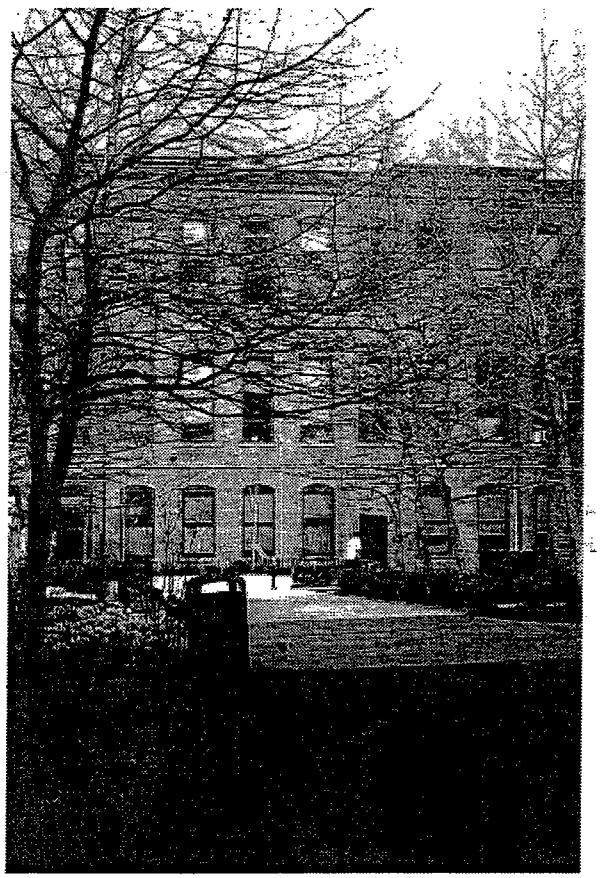
### Approved

✓ The edges of courtyards and plazas should be defined by buildings, walls, fences, or planting. These spaces should not occur on corner lots.

✓ Courtyards and plazas must relate to their immediate environment, including adjacent buildings, pedestrian routes, historic features, and available views.

✓ Courtyards and plazas must be designed for year-round use, including shade in the summertime and good sunlight in the winter.

✓ Courtyards and plazas must include elements that make them desirable places to be in and use such as landscaping, lighting, textured paving, planters, and benches.



*The courtyard at the Phoenix Mill has been landscaped to provide a real amenity to the residents.*

# Parking Lots

Parking lots are the unfortunate by-product of our mobile culture. Their incorporation into historic districts, while essential, is never easy. The guidelines that follow are intended to minimize the visual effect of parking lots on the character of the GFH District.

## Approved

✓ Public parking garages are preferable to open-air lots, and should be encouraged.

✓ Where permitted by the Zoning Ordinance, parking lots must be located to the back of new construction, or to the interior of a site where the visual impact to adjoining properties and the street is minimized.

✓ When parking cannot be accommodated behind a commercial building, it can be placed to the side of the building, set back between five and fifteen feet from the sidewalk to provide a buffer zone. This type of lot must be located mid-block and between two lots, not on a corner.

✓ New and existing parking lots that can be seen from the street or from the raceway parks should be kept to a minimum size with minimum street frontage, and landscaped with low walls parallel to the street, trees, and planted strips to screen cars. The parking lot between the Franklin and Essex Mills, two car rows wide, provides a good model, although it would benefit from more visual screening from the street.

✓ Parking lots should be laid out and buffered to avoid spill-over light, glare, noise, and exhaust fumes from affecting adjacent properties or public streets.

## Not Approved

✗ Surface parking located on corner lots is not approved.

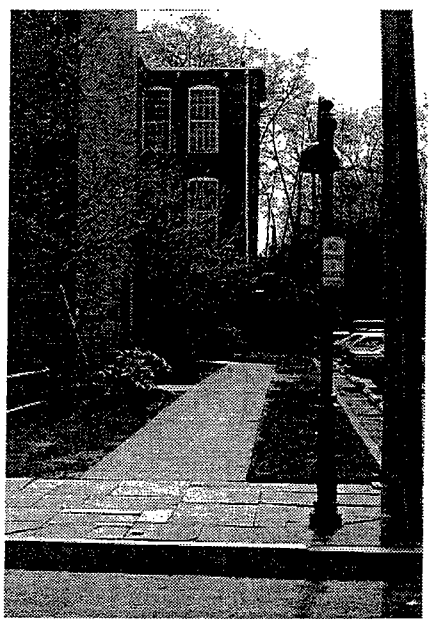
✗ Parking in front yards or on lots in front of buildings is not approved.

### Not Recommended

- The creation of surface parking lots, especially the conversion of open space visible from the public way, is not recommended.

**Approved cont'd...**

- ✓ Vehicular access to parking lots should be from side streets whenever possible.
- ✓ The number and width of curb cuts should be minimized.
- ✓ Transition areas between a parking lot and the building it serves, and between the parking lot and the public street, must be designed with landscape elements including paving.
- ✓ Pedestrian passage must be provided between parking areas and public streets.



*Pedestrian passage between the street and the parking lot between the Franklin Mill and the Essex Mill.*

## Paving and Bordering

The paving along or within the perimeter of a property serves as the continuation of the sidewalk and/or street.

### Approved

✓ Existing historic paving materials such as Belgian block, bluestone, or brick should be preserved in place and incorporated in new walks, or removed and reused.

*Existing historic Belgian block at the parking area behind the Cooke Locomotive Company Office Building.*

✓ Brick, bluestone, Belgian block, gravel, granite, cobblestone,compressed earth paths, and paving are approved.

✓ Brick paving should be dry-laid in one of several patterns.

✓ Tinted concrete and exposed aggregate walks are approved in the GFH District.

✓ Repairs to or replacement of public sidewalks should follow the existing prototype for the GFH District—either bluestone or scored concrete. See the following section on Public Improvements.

### Not Approved

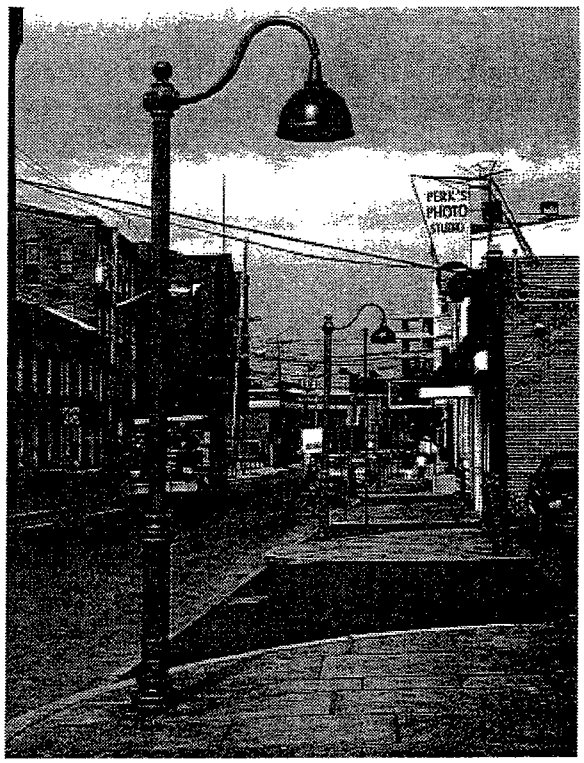
✗ The removal of historic paving surfaces such as Belgian block or brick is not approved within the GFH District.

**Not Recommended**

- The use of railroad ties for border or paving materials is not recommended.
- Asphalt paving is not recommended for walks within the GFH District.

# Public Improvements: Street Paving, Pedestrian Walks, and Curbs

In 1979, Paterson established standards for the design of street lighting, sidewalks, curbs, and street furniture (see Appendix). The standards for public improvements require the use of particularly good quality materials such as bluestone walks, granite curbs, and pavers at curb cuts, or, alternatively, the distinctive treatment of more common materials such as concrete sidewalks scored with an ashlar pattern. The standardized public improvements are important elements of the image and coherence of the district as an important place, and should be extended and maintained throughout the district. Street paving within the GFH District will most likely be predominantly asphalt, which is inexpensive and easily replaced for utility work.




*The public improvements within the GFH District provide an attractive consistency that helps to give the district a clear identity.*

## Approved

✓ The sense of the district as a significant place would be reinforced by a change in texture at intersections and crosswalks.

✓ The design of sidewalks is established by existing guidelines. The design of pedestrian walkways throughout the district should complement the design of the public sidewalks and promote the district as a good place to walk.

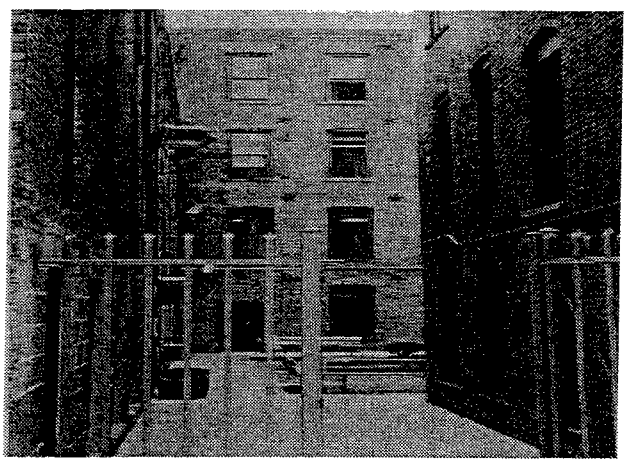
✓ Gravel paths are appropriate for the raceway park and river walk. Transitions between different paving materials should relate to an element in the landscape, and should be articulated by a border or "threshold," not just butted into one another.

# Public Signage

Public signage that identifies the GFH District or provides direction to or within the district is virtually non-existent. Interpretive signage is inconsistent.

## Approved

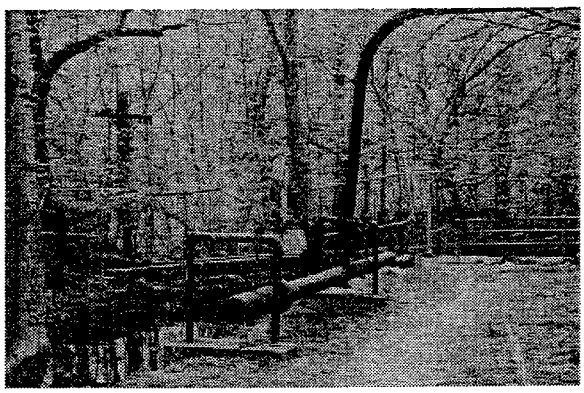
- ✓ A comprehensive signage program should be established that will create a logic and consistency to the signs that direct visitors to and around the GFH District and interpret its history.
- ✓ There should be some sense of a gateway that indicates when a visitor is entering the district. This could be provided by permanent signs or, more literally, by the reconstruction, based on historic documentation, of factory gates over the streets that bring most of the traffic into the district.
- ✓ All city signs should have a coordinated graphic system with design standards regulating graphics, colors, and sign placement. Signs within the GFH District should have their own style and/or color.
- ✓ Signs should be installed that mark the boundaries of the GFH District and direct visitors to sites and public parking facilities.
- ✓ Interpretive signs should be added to sites in the district.
- ✓ The visual impact of all regulatory and directional signs should be minimized.



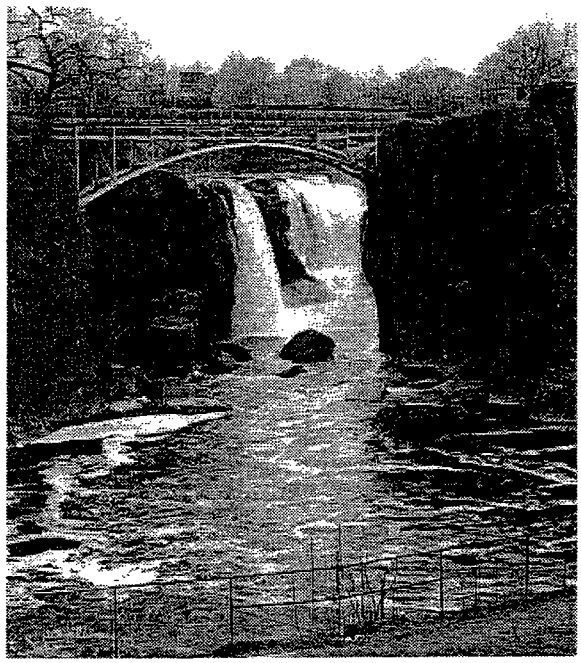
*Clear, simple signs, similar to the street signs on the left of this photo, are appropriate.*

## Open Space

Open space is an important amenity within the GFH District. It provides the chance to experience the dramatic physical setting that determined the founding of the city and its industrial past. The open space within the GFH District also lends a certain poetry to the place, recalling the American myth of the machine.



*The presence of the past is everywhere in the GFH District. Ruins, such as these abandoned pipes at the northeast end of the middle raceway, are important historic resources and must be preserved.*



*Exploring the GFH District on foot is the best means to appreciate fully the relationship between Paterson's extraordinary natural setting, the complexity of the engineering feats that captured the power of the Passaic River, and Paterson's remarkable history.*

# Chapter 6

# New Construction and Additions to Existing Buildings

## IF YOU'RE WORKING ON A BUILDING AND YOUR WORK INVOLVES:



# Chapter 6

# New Construction and Additions to Existing Buildings

## Introduction and Approach

The Zoning and Land Development Ordinance of the city of Paterson (Section 1211.2) requires that, for property within the Great Falls Historic District, all building permit applications for

> ...construction, reconstruction, demolition, restoration, exterior or interior replacement, alteration or other work which would change the exterior appearance of any structure, including erection or removal of signs, except for identical replacement of worn-out or damaged building elements which do not affect the appearance of the building...

be forwarded by the city's Construction Official to the Historic Preservation Commission for design review. The Historic Preservation Commission will issue a letter recommending either approval or denial of the permit application, based on the Commission's evaluation of the appropriateness of the proposed work and its potential impact upon the character of the Great Falls Historic District. (See Chapter 1 for a full discussion of design review and the regulatory process.)

The purpose of this requirement and the Commission's evaluation of a project's appropriateness is to encourage and accommodate new construction that preserves and enhances the existing character of the Great Falls Historic District (GFH District), and preserves its value as a unique historic and cultural resource. New construction and additions planned for the GFH District, therefore, must aspire to a positive visual and functional relationship to the historic buildings already in the district, enhancing the perceptual quality of the district.


*The GFH District has many features that make it an attractive location for new construction.*

The guiding philosophy of the design guidelines for new construction and additions to existing structures within the GFH District is that there is a collection of precedents, an evolving historical and physical context, and that new

construction must be informed by and positively contribute to that context. The design guidelines that follow in this section are intended to encourage contemporary design that is compatible with the character of the district. Because good architectural design cannot be reduced to a formula or a recipe of elements, it must be recognized that strict adherence to the design principles presented in these guidelines is no guarantee that good buildings will result. Creativity, inspiration, and innovation must be brought to bear on the design of new buildings and additions within the GFH District, directed and tempered by the principles of historic preservation. Conversely, if the design guidelines presented here are *not* followed, new construction will probably not be compatible with the visual character of the GFH District, resulting in the progressive loss of that character.

Compatibility, as defined in these guidelines, does not pertain to the literal reinterpretation or reiteration of historic buildings and styles. These design guidelines specifically discourage the literal restatement of historic styles and elements that would tend to confuse the authentic history of Paterson and the GFH District. Rather, compatibility refers to the design of buildings that, in a broad sense, will "fit" into and blend with the visual and urban character of the GFH District. The concept of "fit" is a flexible one, and can pertain to a wide range of building styles and types.

New construction and additions within the GFH District should be subsidiary to existing historic buildings; new construction and additions should be conceived of as background to significant historic buildings. Existing buildings within the district, including large industrial, mid-sized office, and small residential, are generally dignified in their simplicity. New construction and additions in the GFH District should favor understatement and avoid elaborate, bold, or flamboyant designs.

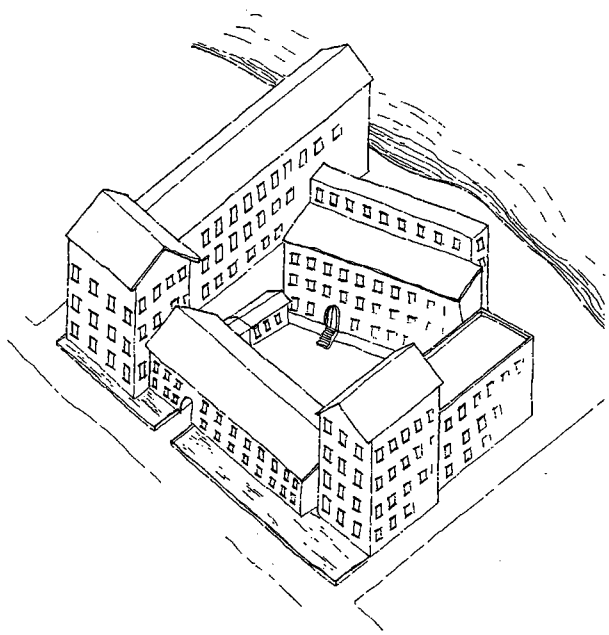
Specific guidelines follow for new construction and additions to existing buildings planned for the GFH District.

# New Construction — Site Design

The design of new construction within the GFH District must begin with a thorough understanding of the immediate site that the building will occupy. An understanding of the context of Paterson and the GFH District will begin to suggest where a building should sit on its site, how much space should be around the building, and how that open space should be treated.

When inserting a building into an exiting historic context, it is customary to respond to the setbacks and building heights of adjacent buildings, and to maintain and contribute to the established street line. Because there are several large building sites in Paterson that do not have adjacent buildings as precedents, and because in Paterson there are often buildings of different scales and uses adjacent to one another, designers must also understand the traditional pattern of siting buildings within the district.

The siting of the mill buildings was determined historically by the location of raceways—the source of power—as well as the layout of the streets. Buildings were thus clustered close to one another, right up to the sidewalk line. Driveways permitted access to rear yards and enclosed courtyards where loading occurred for shipments and deliveries. As the mills expanded, the rear yards and courts were built out, and flying walkways connected mills at the upper levels. The resulting texture was an extremely dense and complex urban industrial precinct.



*Historic development of the buildings at the Congdon and Phoenix Mills.*

Residential construction in the district was similarly dense, for the most part one-, two-, and three-story wood and then brick rowhouses and apartments, often with commercial enterprises on the first floor.

While it is important that the site of each structure be attractive and fulfill the needs of the building's owner, the relationship between structures is equally important, for the relationship of structures to each other and to their architectural and historical context are defining features of the streetscape and the district.

# Front Yard Setbacks

Front yard setbacks are the distance between the building line and the street. Front yard setbacks are a modern zoning tool intended to prevent the density that occurred in urban settings, to promote light and air making their way into front windows, and, some would argue, to allow streets to be widened if necessary. The GFH District was built-out prior to the development of this modern zoning concept, so front yard setbacks are not relevant in the GFH District.

The following guidelines should inform decisions regarding building permits for new construction within the GFH District.

## Approved

✓ New construction in the GFH District, both commercial and residential, must be constructed with minimal setbacks in order to reinforce the traditional street wall. Buildings should define the edge of the street and spatially enclose the street.

✓ Where the density of existing buildings is not sufficient to create a street wall, new construction must be sited so as to contribute to the creation of a street wall.

✓ Historic building lines must be respected. For vacant lots, the historically dense texture might be recreated by the construction of three- and four-story buildings that fill historic building footprints as closely as possible.

✓ There is precedent for building over portions of the lower raceway. New construction that is built out over an existing stretch of raceway should conform with clearly documented historic precedent, and be located precisely where the raceway was historically covered over. The entrance to the building should be included in that part of the building built over the raceway.

## Not Approved

✗ Front yard setbacks are not approved in the GFH District. The only exception is where there is a raceway between the street and the building site.

✗ Open corner plazas which disrupt the continuity of the street are not approved.

✗ Parking in front yards is not approved in the GFH District.

*The Congdon Mill, built in 1876 as the Harmony Textile Mill, was built out over the lower raceway.*

## Spacing Between Buildings

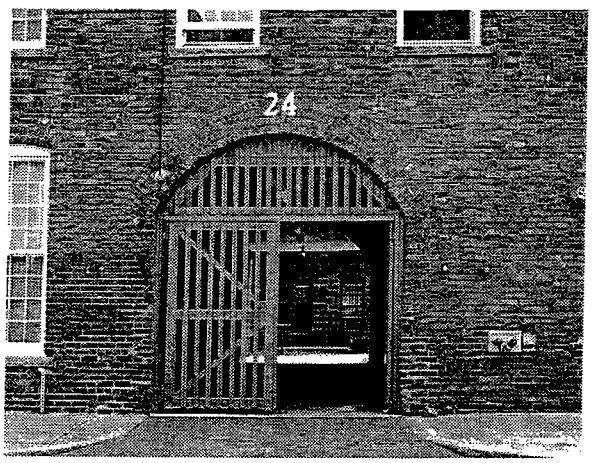
The spacing between buildings creates a rhythm along the street and contributes to the definition of the character of the GFH District. It is worth noting that for the most part, the space between buildings was historically intended to give access to rear yards and courtyards, and not to provide space around the buildings. It is often the case that there are no side yards; openings in the buildings themselves give access to rear yards and courtyards through covered passageways.

The following guidelines should inform decisions regarding building permits for new construction within the GFH District.

### Approved

✓ Generally, buildings must occupy the breadth of their street frontage in a manner that maximizes the sense of the street wall and minimizes side yards.

✓ In place of side yards, covered passageways through ground floors, as at the Essex and Phoenix Mills, are approved.

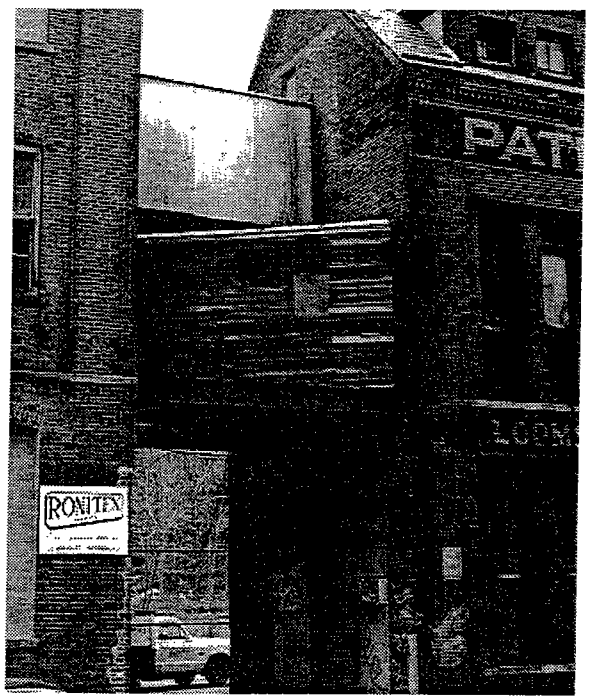



*Covered ground-floor passageway to interior courtyard at Essex Mill.*

✓ New mill-type buildings may be placed directly adjacent to one another, or can be spaced between 12 feet and 20 feet apart

### Not Approved

✗ New buildings and building types that disrupt an existing recognizable rhythm of building width and spacing, or whose breadth relative to the width of their site do not contribute to a relatively uninterrupted street wall, are not approved.



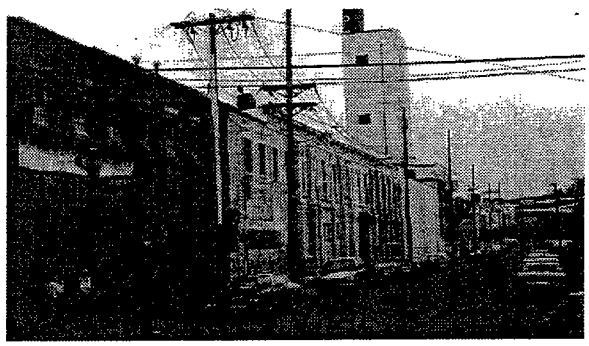

*Throughout much of the GFH District, there was very little space around buildings, and that space was often bridged over at upper levels.*

**Approved cont'd...**

to allow for vehicular access to the rear of the building.

✓ Residential buildings and small commercial buildings must be built adjacent to one another without space in between, in order to reinforce the traditional street wall.

✓ Where access is required to rear yards between rowhouses and townhouses, a covered walkway can be constructed.



*In the GFH District, buildings generally should occupy their entire frontage and be built to the sidewalk.*

*At the ATP site, the ruins of historic buildings suggest the once-dense character of the district.*

## Plazas, Courtyards, and Landscaping

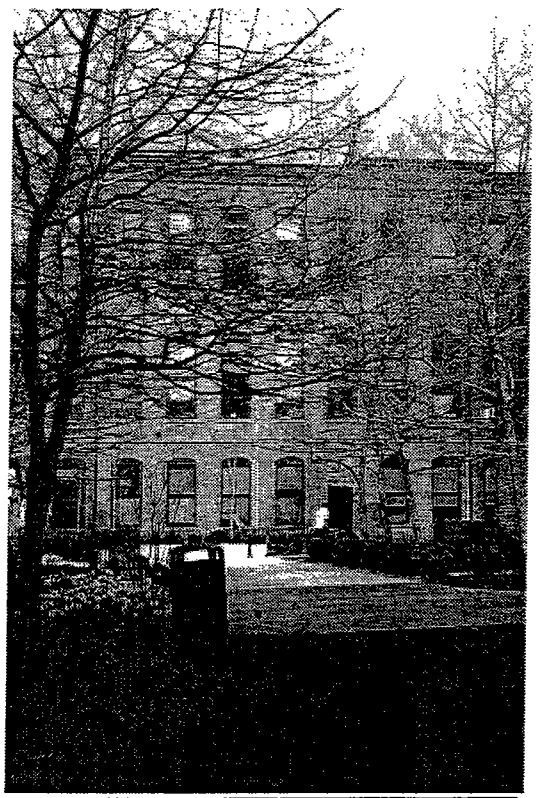
As mill buildings grew to accommodate increased demand and new processes, they evolved into complexes of interconnected buildings, often organized around a central courtyard. Where feasible, new construction located on historic mill sites, and designed on the scale of these historic structures, should incorporate courtyards and open spaces. The following guidelines should inform decisions regarding building permits for new construction within the GFH District.

### Approved

✓ Parking lots are an awkward by-product of a mobile culture. Their incorporation into historic districts is always problematic. The Zoning Analysis portion of this document recommends that individual surface parking lots not exceed 24 cars, and encourages the construction of centralized parking in multi-level parking garages. Because surface parking lots must be directly adjacent to buildings in order to provide the best access, their design must be carefully considered.

✓ For specific design guidelines for surface parking lots, see Chapter 5.

✓ Courtyards and exterior spaces must have a strong sense of enclosure. They should be defined on at least three sides, preferably by building walls. At a minimum, they should be defined on two sides by building walls, and on one or more sides by landscaping elements.



*Landscaped courtyards such as this one at the Phoenix Mill can be a real amenity to residents of historic mill buildings.*

✓ Courtyards should be landscaped with paved and green areas, trees, and shrubbery to provide year-round softening of the space.

✓ Landscaping is not a traditional feature of the GFH District, and therefore should be kept to a minimum. When used judiciously, plant materials and site structures can disguise and soften the appearance of some of the less attractive modern features of the district such as parking lots, recycling bins, and mechanical equipment. Landscaping can enhance the appearance of the district for visitors and residents, adding to its appeal as a place to walk and explore.

✓ See Chapter 5 for a full discussion of issues pertaining to landscape.

## Service Areas and Loading Docks

Consistent with the goals of attracting industrial use to the district, allowance must be made for service areas and loading docks, sometimes for large trucks.

### Approved

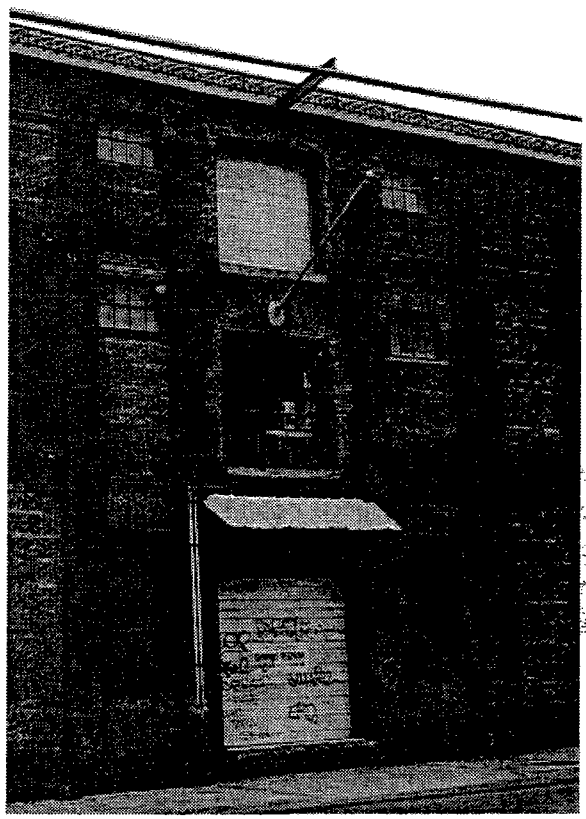
✓ Where permitted by the Zoning Ordinance, service areas, loading docks, and waste-handling facilities must be located to the rear of a site, or to the interior of a site where the visual impact to adjoining properties and the street is minimized.

✓ When these functions cannot be accommodated behind a commercial building, they should be placed to the side of the building, set back from the street, and screened by landscape elements.

✓ Service areas, loading docks, and waste-handling facilities must be buffered to avoid spill-over light, glare, noise, and exhaust fumes from affecting adjacent properties or public streets.

### Not Approved

✗ Unless there is a historic precedent, locating service areas, loading docks, and waste-handling facilities on a primary elevation is not approved.



*Unless there is no alternative, loading docks, service areas, and waste- handling and recycling facilities should be located behind or to the sides of buildings.*

## New Construction—Building Design

The basic elements that contribute to determining a building's form are its absolute size, scale, massing, orientation, proportion, and material. Similar to the site issues discussed above, it is commonly desirable when designing new construction in historic districts to respond to the elements of adjacent buildings in a manner that is compatible and sympathetic to adjacent structures.

Because Paterson has several large potential building sites and because there is precedent in Paterson for large-scale industrial buildings and small-scale residential buildings to be on the same block, adjacent buildings may not always provide the designer with much helpful direction.

The forms prevalent in the buildings of the GFH District are mostly simple and straightforward expressions of each building's function and structure. Some of the more identifiable and prominent "forms" reflected in buildings in the GFH District are the gable ends, roof configurations, clerestories, projecting bays, towers, projecting fire stairs, and shapes of window and door heads. New construction should incorporate these forms in a simplified, contemporary manner that contributes to the continuum of form and the legibility of the district as a whole.

The following guidelines should inform decisions regarding building permits for new construction within the GFH District.

### Approved

✓ Design new construction according to the elements of buildings within the GFH District that are of the same general type and size of the new building. For example, the design of a large-scale residential, industrial, commercial, or mixed-use building should be based upon the elements that are typical of large-scale historic mill buildings.

✓ Similarly, the design of single-, two-, and three-family dwellings should be based upon the elements that are prevalent in that type of building within the GFH District.

### Not Approved

✗ New construction should not imitate historic structures through "reproduction" facades. It is inappropriate to replicate details of historic buildings in the design of new construction.

**Approved cont'd...**

- ✓ The roofs of new construction within the GFH District should be consistent with the roof type, shape, pitch, and texture of other buildings of their type.
- ✓ Mill buildings are composed of a variety of separate buildings with gable and hipped roofs in various orientations, occasionally intersecting. Due to heavy timber trusses, roof slopes tend to be shallow.
- ✓ Residential/townhouse structures have either flat roofs or gable roofs that slope to the street. There are very few precedents for dormer windows, but it may be the case that several of these have been removed.
- ✓ Small commercial structures generally have flat roofs with parapet walls.
- ✓ Rooftop elements including, but not limited to, satellite dishes, antennae, and mechanical equipment should not be visible from the public right-of-way—either the streets or the raceway parks.

*"Approved" and "Not Approved" Forms.*

## Absolute Size and Scale

"Absolute size" refers to the overall length, width, and height of a structure. The "scale" of a building is its degree of relatedness to the size and proportions of both the human body and adjacent construction. The following factors affect a building's scale:

- Building Height
- Cornice Height
- Floor-to-Floor Height
- Window and Door Size/Relationship of Solid Wall to Openings

In general, the more similar a building is in absolute size and scale to the buildings which surround it, the better it fits into the neighborhood. If a building or complex is planned which diverges from the scale of either its neighbors or the historic buildings of its type within the district, this disparity can be somewhat remedied by paying particular attention to the building's siting, setback, and facade treatment.

Within the GFH District, the absolute size of types of buildings varies within a range. That is, residential structures tend to be between twenty-five and fifty feet wide and two to four stories tall. Mill buildings are usually over 100 feet in at least one dimension, sometimes several hundred feet long, and between three and five stories tall.

The following guidelines should inform decisions regarding permits for new constrcution within the GFH District.

### Approved

✓ The absolute size of new construction should be within the range of that which already exists within the GFH District for that particular building type. The more established and dense the immediate adjacent context, the closer should the new construction be to the absolute size of the adjacent buildings.

✓ Similarly, the scale of new buildings should conform to their context and type. A single large rectangular building and a block of repetitive townhouses may both be designed to occupy the same historic footprint, but the larger scale of the single building will be more consistent with the character of the district.

# Building Height

Building height is an important feature which relates a new building to those which surround it. Buildings that are inordinately low compared to their neighbors create voids at higher floor levels which interrupt the feeling of enclosure on the street; disproportionately tall buildings will overpower the smaller structures which surround them. Building height is another feature that distinguishes one building type from another in the GFH District.

The following guidelines should inform decisions regarding building permits for new contruction within the GFH District.

## Approved

✓ New buildings should be constructed to a height compatible with existing adjacent or neighboring buildings or consistent with historic precedents for buildings of the same type and general floor areas and street frontages.

✓ New buildings should have the same number of stories, and be within 15% of the average height of existing adjacent buildings and/or similar building types.

✓ Large-scale developments and new industrial buildings should be three to five stories high, depending upon the heights and number of stories of the historic mill buildings adjacent to them.

✓ Residential townhouses should be two or three stories in height, depending on the heights of their neighbors. Corner buildings should be taller than, or at least equal to, those located mid-block.

✓ Storefront commercial structures should be equal in height to the structures which surround them. These buildings are generally two to three stories in height, although there is precedent for one-story commercial structures.

## Not Approved

✗ New buildings that vary more than 20% in actual height or number of stories from the existing buildings of their type within the district are not approved.

## Cornice Height

When a series of buildings share a uniform cornice line, they create a rhythm along the street. In such a context, new construction should continue, not interrupt, this rhythm in order to maintain the visual coherence of a street.

In the GFH District, however, it is rare to find a uniform cornice line. A new building's cornice may be higher or lower than that of adjacent buildings, yet consistent within the non-uniform context of the block.

The following guidelines should inform decisions regarding building permits for new construction within the GFH District.

### Approved

✓ New construction must conform to the dominant cornice line of a street if one exists.

✓ In the absence of a uniform cornice line, the cornice line of new construction should be no lower nor higher than those of adjacent and nearby buildings of its type.

### Not Approved

✗ New construction must not ignore the dominant cornice height of adjacent buildings. New construction which does so destroys the rhythm of the street. New construction whose cornice is not within 1/2 story of that of adjacent buildings is not approved.

# Floor-to-Floor Height

A row of neighboring buildings often possesses the same floor-to-floor heights. The resulting similarity in scale can cause buildings to have windows, belt courses, and cornices at the same heights as well, creating a series of horizontal lines along the street, and contributing to the sense of the street wall.

This important element of scale is often ignored in new construction, and since new construction tends to have lower ceiling heights than historic structures, the rhythm of the street can be destroyed.

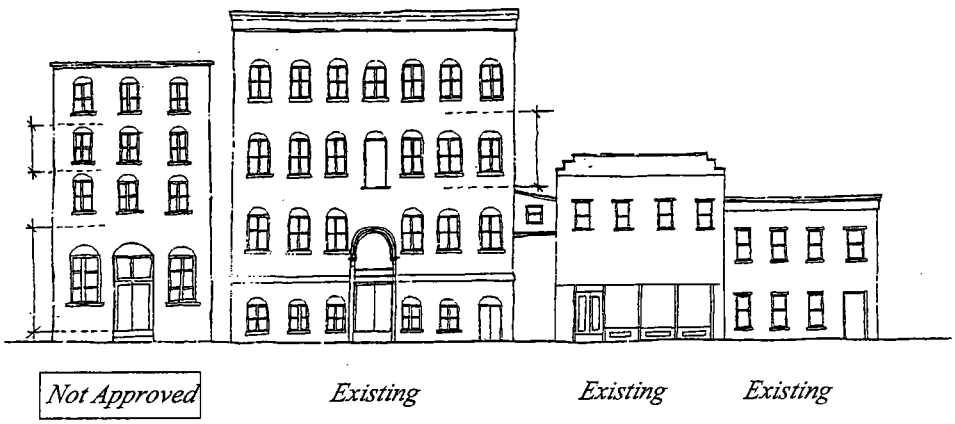
The following guidelines should inform decisions regarding building permits for new construction within the GFH District.

## Approved

✓ Where a relatively consistent floor-to-floor height is expressed in the facades of a given street, new construction must conform to that height.

## Not Approved

✗ The floor-to-floor heights of a building should not vary more than 15% from those of its neighbor or its type.




*Floor-to-floor heights should be within 15% of adjacent buildings.*

✓ Where there is not a consistent floor-to-floor height, new construction must be within 15% of what is typical for nearby buildings of the same building type.

## Bay Size: Windows and Doors

The scale of a building is strongly affected by proportions of the components of its principal facade, as well as by the proportions of the facade as a whole. Window and door openings are two such components. These features divide the building visually into what are commonly termed "bays." In order to maintain visual unity on a street, new construction should have a similar size, proportion, rhythm, and number of bays.

The following guidelines should inform decisions regarding permits for new construction within the GFH Distirct.

### Approved

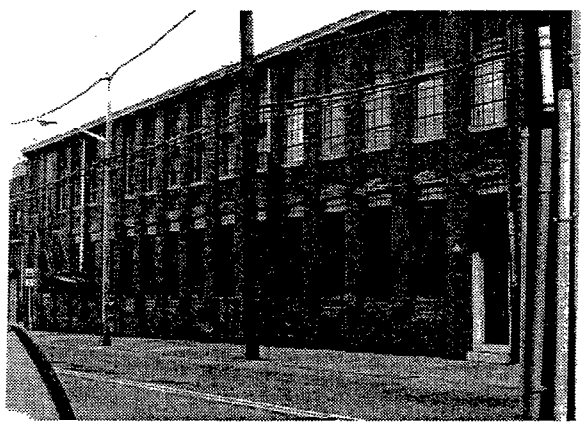
✓ The facade of a proposed building should reflect the size, proportion, rhythm, and number of bays contained in nearby structures of the same type.

✓ The facade of a proposed building should draw upon the proportion and absolute size of the windows and doors of adjacent structures of the same type.

✓ The number of bays in nearby residential structures should inform the number of bays in new residential construction. In larger mill-type buildings, the number of bays may vary greatly depending upon the size of the building.

### Not Approved

✗ New construction should not vary dramatically from its neighbors in the size of its bays, windows, or doors.



*The number of bays of historic mill buildings was a function of the industrial processes within and the space available on the site. Narrow bays accommodate the structural imperatives that result from heavy floor loads, wide spans, and maximum open area for daylight.*

# Massing

The term "massing" refers to the complexity of a building's form, as well as the apparent lightness of the structure as determined by the number and size of its openings. Large overhangs and vast expanses of brick combined with small windows make a building appear "massive." Large windows combined with light trim make a building appear light and delicate.

The following guidelines should inform decisions regarding building permits for new construction within the GFH District.

## Approved

✓ The massing of a new building should be similar to that of existing historic buildings of its type. Residential townhouses should be simple rectangular boxes, perhaps with small setback additions to the rear. Individual large-scale buildings should consist of relatively simple rectangular forms. Large mill-type buildings may have more complex massing, consisting of a series of differently proportioned rectangular structures with open courts between them.

✓ New facades should attempt to relay the same feeling of lightness or weight as nearby buildings of the same type by maintaining a similar number and size of facade openings as these structures.

## Not Approved

✗ New buildings should not significantly vary from dominant patterns of form and shape of the historic building types within the district.

✗ The infilling of the window openings at several historic mill buildings should not be taken as a precedent for the massing of new large-scale structures.


*Massing: the sense of "heaviness" or lightness" resulting from the ratio of solid wall to glass or open areas (voids).*

# Orientation and Directional Expression

"Orientation" refers to a building's relationship to the street. "Directional expression" refers to the dominant proportion of a building's facade, either vertical, horizontal, or non-directional.

The following guidelines should inform decisions regarding building permits for new construction within the GFH District.

## Approved

✓ Principal facades of new construction must be oriented to the street, as they are throughout the district.

✓ Buildings with facades located on a public street must have their primary entrance located on that street.

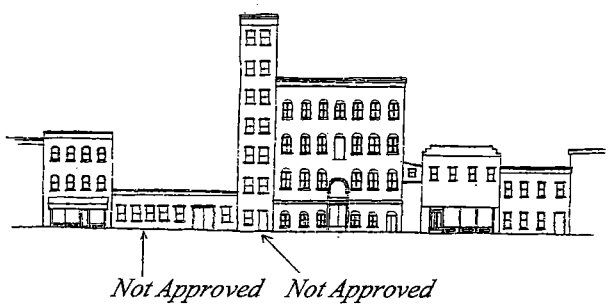
✓ New construction must have the same directional expression as adjacent structures of the same type. In the GFH District, residential structures are primarily vertical. There are precedents for both horizontal and vertical expression in large-scale buildings, sometimes in the same building. The facade of the Union Works Building, for example, is horizontal along Spruce Street, and vertical along Market Street.

✓ Multiple-building developments, such as those modeled after the historic mill compounds, must have a primary facade and a primary entrance on a public street.

✓ Buildings located on the interior of sites as a part of a larger complex should relate to one another if they cannot relate to the street. These buildings should be positioned so as to form courtyards and other exterior spaces similar to those that characterize the historic mill complexes.

## Not Approved

✗ Locating a main entrance on secondary, non-street facades is not approved.

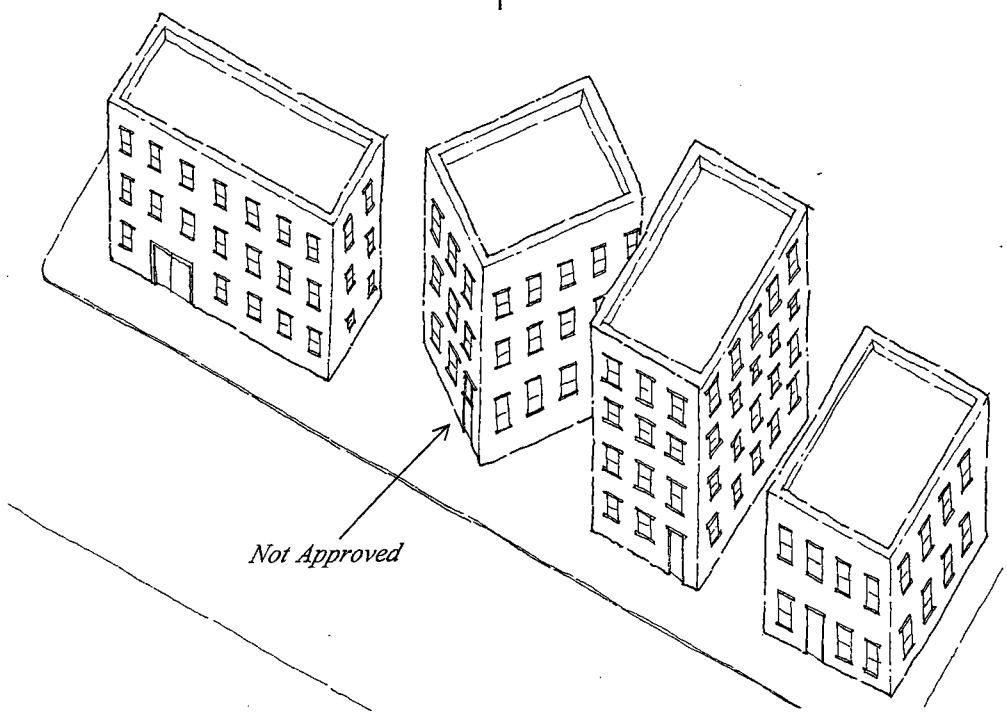



*Directional Expression.*

**Approved cont'd...**

- ✓ Residential and commercial buildings must relate to the street, not to a parking lot. Their front facades must face the public street(s).

- ✓ Facades of buildings on a corner site should differentiate between the two. Each facade of a corner building should reflect the character of the street upon which it fronts.




*Buildings must be oriented to the street.*

# Proportion

Proportion refers to the relationship of a building's width to its height, as well as the width to height relationship of the building's features such as its windows and doors.

The following guidelines should inform decisions regarding building permits for new construction within the GFH District.

## Approved

✓ The proportions of new construction should relate to the dominant proportions of the adjacent buildings of its type.

✓ New construction should reflect the height/ width ratios of the facade elements such as foundations, entrances, doors, windows, and storefronts of adjacent buildings of its type.

## Not Approved

✗ Buildings which dramatically vary from the dominant proportions of adjacent buildings of the same building type are not appropriate.

# Materials

The sympathetic use of appropriate construction materials is an important principle in designing new construction for the GFH District. Building materials used for new construction should be similar to historic building materials in terms of size, texture, scale, color, tooling, craftsmanship, and the applicability of a material to the function it performs. The visual properties of some modern materials are not necessarily similar to their historic counterparts. For instance, modern brick is available in sizes, colors, textures, and finishes that would not be appropriate within the GFH District. The materials and textures of neighboring buildings must be carefully studied before finishes are specified for new construction.

The following guidelines should inform decisions regarding permits for new construction within the GFH District.

## Approved

✓ The materials and textures used in new construction should be compatible with the building's architectural style. A building designed of an architectural style which normally includes a certain material(s) should have that material incorporated into its design. For example, multi-story mill buildings are constructed of masonry, specifically red brick. New construction of this scale must also be of masonry, not siding or stucco.

✓ The materials and textures used in new construction should be compatible with and complement adjacent buildings, or buildings of the same type. New materials should relate to old in terms of size, texture, scale, color, tooling, and craftsmanship. Large-scale structures most likely will be of brick.

✓ Construction materials should always be appropriate for the function they are to fulfill. For example, metal roofing is appropriate within the GFH District, but metal siding is not.

## Not Approved

✗ New structures should not be constructed of materials and textures that dramatically differ from adjacent buildings of the same type.

✗ The use of the following materials is not approved within the GFH District: glazed or metal curtain walls, dryvit panels, white brick, chain-link fencing, exterior carpet, flush exterior doors, jalousie and picture windows, horizontal windows, asphalt siding, unpainted wood, and vertical wood siding.

# Color

The color of the materials used for new construction should be consistent with the color of materials on existing construction. It should be noted that the GFH District was historically a utilitarian and gritty place; buildings for the most part were containers for work to be performed within. There is no precedent for garish or lurid colors and they are inappropriate.

## Approved

✓ The colors of materials used for new construction must be coordinated with the colors of existing construction, particularly in areas where color is consistent between structures.

✓ Within the general category of red, there is a range of appropriate colors for brick.

✓ Generally, the utilitarian nature of the mill buildings and the modest nature of the residential structures call for straightforward paint schemes involving no more than three subdued colors. Darker hues are recommended for trim on brick buiildings.

## Not Approved

✗ Bright, garish, and lurid paint colors are not approved.

✗ Buildings should not be painted in colors which make them stand out from their neighbors and draw undue attention to them.

✗ White or yellow are not approved brick colors within the GFH District.

# Windows

Windows are the moving parts of a building. They visually connect the interior to the exterior of the building, and are used to moderate the climatic conditions of the interior. In the GFH District, windows played the crucial role of bringing natural daylight to the industrial processes within the mills. The long facades of the mills were regularly punctured by large doublehung windows on each floor.

New construction should follow the very strong precedent for the design of windows and window openings within the GFH District. The following guidelines should inform decisions regarding building permits for new construction within the GFH District.

## Approved

✓ Doublehung wood windows with authentic divided light sash are approved within the GFH District. These should have profiles and setbacks that approximate those of historic wood windows.

✓ The form of windows should be simple rectangles or rectangles with arched heads.

✓ The ratio of solids (walls) to voids (window and door openings) of new buildings should be similar to historic buildings of their type. Generally, historic buildings have a lower ratio of window-to-wall space than contemporary structures. The mills of Paterson have a relatively high ratio of window-to-wall, due to the need for natural light and ventilation.

✓ The rhythm and placement of windows on the facades of new buildings should be similar to historic buildings of their type.

✓ The ratio of height-to-width of window openings should be similar to historic buildings of their type.

## Not Approved

✗ Windows must not be grouped in any buildings in the GFH District.

✗ Picture windows are not approved.

✗ Windows that are wider than they are tall are not approved.

✗ Windows that do not align horizontally and vertically with other windows on the facade are not approved.

✗ New windows must not be flush with the wall surface.

✗ Unfinished aluminum-framed windows and windows with plastic frames and/or muntins are not approved.

✗ Air conditioner units must not be placed in windows on the front facade of commercial or industrial and large-scale residential structures.

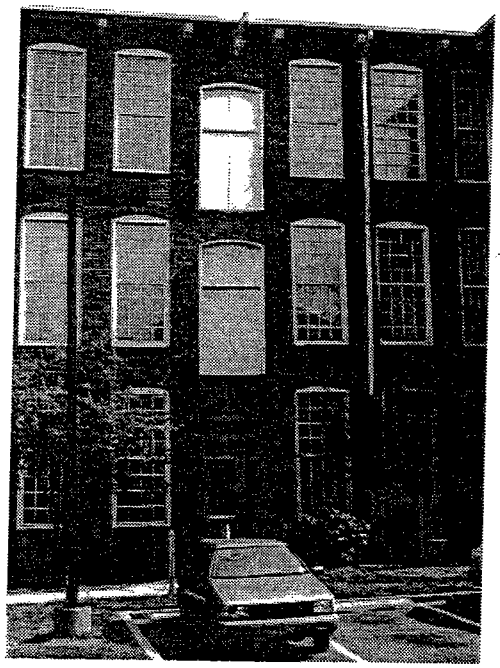
**Approved cont'd...**

- ✓ Windows of new construction should be aligned horizontally and vertically whenever possible.
- ✓ The articulation of windows should be similar to historic buildings of the same type as the new construction. Articulation refers to the distance that the window frames are set back from the face of the building.
- ✓ Later mill buildings incorporated hopper and awning steel windows, which are also recommended in the GFH District. True divided lights are required. Simulated divided lights are visually unconvincing.
- ✓ Residential/townhouse windows should be doublehung. Divided lights are preferred, but not required. If divided, they must be true divided lights.
- ✓ All window frames must be painted.

## Not Recommended

- Snap-in muntins are not recommended for residential structures.
- Aluminum and vinyl windows are not recommended for new construction.
- Anodized and baked enamel windows are not recommended for new construction.
- "Sandwich" muntins do not provide a true divided light sash and are not recommended.
- Windows with unusual shapes, such as triangles or non-rectangular quadrilaterals, are not recommended.

*The industrial sash windows on the Dolphin Jute Mill are important character-defining elements.*



*True divided light sash at the Franklin Mill contribute to the retention of the historic character of the building.*

# Decorative Features

Consistent with the sober and utilitarian character of the GFH District, decorative features for new construction should be integral to the architectural expression of a building, not applied to it. Precedents are plentiful in the district for the appropriate articulation of such decorative elements as cornices, window bays, watertables, belt courses, lintels, corbels, pilasters, and jack arches. These precedents should be studied and incorporated into new design, if the character and scale of the building warrant; new construction is not required to incorporate these elements.

The following guidelines should inform decisions regarding building permit applications for work on buildings within the GFH District.

## Approved

✓ The use of decorative elements abstracted from those already in the district is recommended when used in the corresponding location (i.e., the profile of an existing watertable could be abstracted and used to design a watertable for a new building.)

✓ The introduction of simple restrained decorative elements, integral to the design of the building, is recommended.

*The decorative elements of buildings within the GFH District tend to be relatively straightforward and integral to the architectural expression of the building, as seen above in the decorative brick cornice and recessed window bays.*

## Not Recommended

- Duplicating and incorporating details from existing historic buildings in the design of new buildings, in an attempt to copy those buildings, is not approved.
- Applied ornament that is not integral to the envelope of the building is not recommended on large-scale buildings, but may be appropriate on storefront-type commercial buildings.

## Secondary Structures

Similar to additions, new secondary structures should be subordinate to the primary structure on the lot and visually complementary to the existing building. New secondary structures should in no way compromise the historic character of the existing structure on the lot. The secondary structure may or may not be located so as to be visible from the street. In most cases, secondary structures should be located to the rear of a given lot.

Secondary structures may be free-standing or linked to the primary structure. The design guidelines above regarding proportions, massing, materials, form, orientation, and siting apply to secondary structures as well.

## Archeological Resources

The Secretary of the Interior's Standard 8 requires the preservation and protection of archeological resources. There is near certainty that excavation for new construction in the GFH District will involve historic archeological resources. While efforts should be made to consider and protect those resources, the extent to which this consideration will affect the evaluation of appropriateness will vary from project to project. Certainly, applicants for building permits should be cognizant of a project's possible impact on sensitive archeological areas. Excavations should be closely monitored by qualified individuals whenever possible to confirm that valuable resources are not being lost. It should be noted that projects benefiting from either federal or state funding will require consultation with the SHPO and may eventually involve archeological mitigation.

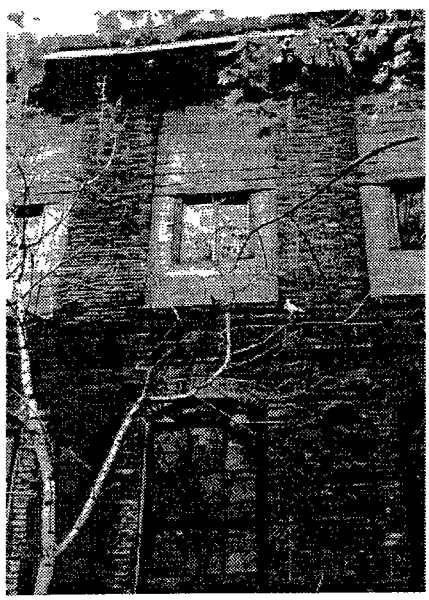
# Additions to Existing Buildings

Additions to existing buildings in the GFH District include construction that results in additional habitable space, as well as porches and decks. The design guidelines for new construction above apply to additions to existing buildings, with the exception that instead of compatibility and relationship to its neighbors and/or building type, an addition has the original building as its strongest context and precedent.

There are strong precedents for adding to buildings within the GFH District. Subsequent campaigns of additions resulted over time in a complex of connected structures. Close inspection also reveals that entire floors were often added in a manner that enhanced the appearance of the original structure.

In general, to conform to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards 9 and 10, an addition to a building in the GFH District should be designed to be distinguishable from the original building, and should read clearly as an addition. Standard 9 states that contemporary design and additions to existing properties should not destroy significant historic architectural fabric and should be compatible with the design of the property and neighborhood. Standard 10 states that wherever possible additions to structures shall be done so that future removal will leave unimpaired the essential form and integrity of the historic structure.

Specific guidelines to be considered in permit applications for additions to structures within the GFH District are as follows.



*The top floor of the Granite Mill was added after the original construction in 1881.*

## Approved

✓ Siting: Additions must be sited to have the least possible visual impact upon the existing structure from the public right-of-way. New additions to front facades are not approved. Additions to side facades should be held back as far as possible from the street, but one bay at a minimum. Rear additions are usually the most appropriate and, given the narrowness and depth of most lots in the GFH District, often the most feasible.

✓ Scale and overall size: The scale of an addition should be no larger than the original building. The volumes of larger additions should be broken up by introducing small step-backs in the plane of the facade, cornices, and discontinuous roofs.

✓ Elevation of the first floor: The first- floor elevation of an addition must be equal to or slightly lower than the original building, but may not be higher than that of the original building.

✓ Floor-to-floor heights: Floor-to-floor heights must be equal to or no more than 10% less than the original building, but may not be taller than those of the original building.

✓ Massing: The massing of an addition—the relationship of solid to void—must complement, but not necessarily be the same as, the original building. A rough guideline would be that the ratio of the area of solid to void of the addition should be within 15% of the original building's ratio.

## Not Approved

✗ Roof-top additions that are visually prominent from the public right-of-way must not be constructed. These would disturb the proportions of the building and the historic form of the roof.

✗ Decks and balconies added to small-scale residential buildings are not approved on front or side facades. Decks may be inappropriate on rear facades as well, if they cannot be screened from the public right-of-way at the raceways.

✗ The architectural style of an addition must not predate the style of the existing building.

✗ Decks and balconies added to industrial buildings are not approved unless not visible from a public right-of-way.

✗ Additions to primary elevations are not approved.

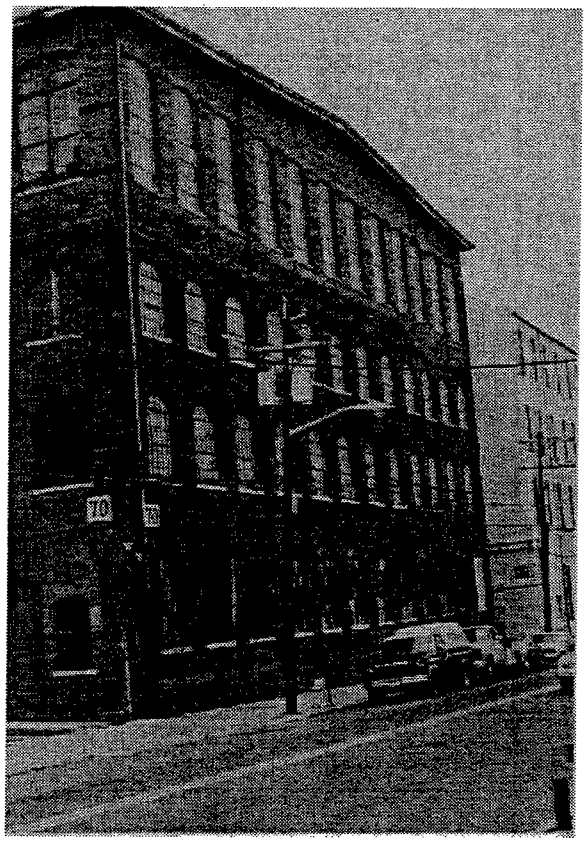
**Approved cont'd...**

✓ Orientation: The addition should be located, planned, and detailed so as not to confuse the dominant historic orientation of the original building. The addition may or may not have its own hierarchy of facades, but it should not have the effect of creating a primary facade out of a secondary facade. The addition should not assert itself visually, but should be screened from the street as much as possible. If the addition is along a secondary street, screening is not necessary.

✓ Proportion and directional expression: The overall proportions of an addition should be complementary to the proportions of the original building. That is, the proportions of an addition to a horizontal building will most likely be horizontal; the proportions of an addition to a vertical building will most likely be vertical.

✓ Materials: An addition may be made of the same material as the original building, or it may be made of subordinate material (i.e., siding is subordinate to brick which is subordinate to stone). A brick building should have a brick or wood addition, but a house with siding should not have a brick addition. The material restrictions in the section on new construction, above, apply to additions to existing construction.

✓ Forms: Similar to proportions, the form of additions should be complementary to the overall form of the house. A shed-roof addition is appropriate on a gable-roofed or hip-roofed structure, as would be a gable or hip roof. Flat roofs are also appropriate for additions in the GFH District.



*The fourth floor of the Dolphin Jute Mill was added after the original construction.*

**Approved cont'd...**

✓ The design of the addition should make clear what is new and what is original. This may be done in a variety of ways, including simplifying or varying of details, changing materials, slightly altering proportions, or even slightly varying paint color.

✓ Design accessibility ramps to be unobtrusive. Regardless of where they are located, the diagonal edge of the sloped surface of the ramp should be screened such that the slope of the ramp does not detract from the horizontal elements of the building to which it is attached. New ramps should be constructed in a manner that does not require the removal of historic fabric and does not damage the existing building. The ramp should be constructed in a manner such that its future removal will not damage existing historic fabric.

## Not Recommended

- Handicapped access ramps should not be located on the primary facades of historic buildings. Regardless of where they are located, the diagonal edge of the sloped surface of the ramp should be screened such that the slope of the ramp does not detract from the horizontal elements of the building to which it is attached. New ramps should be constructed in a manner that does not require the removal of historic fabric and does not damage the existing building. The ramp should be constructed in a manner such that its future removal will not damage existing historic fabric.

- The addition of dormer windows and skylights is not recommended, but may be appropriate if not visible from a public right-of-way.