

6.0 ARCHITECTURAL REHABILITATION GUIDELINES

These guidelines are intended not only to assist the DeKalb County Historic Preservation Commission in evaluating Applications for Certificates of Appropriateness but also to assist property owners planning preservation projects. These guidelines seek to ensure the preservation of the historic character of individual historic buildings within the district as well as of the district as a whole. An underlying impact of the use of these guidelines, however, will be protection of many of the qualities that give these properties a high market value. Reference to these guidelines will help a property owner make the best decision for preserving the historic and architectural qualities of his property that are so highly valued.

An excellent source of information on architectural rehabilitation and maintenance is the Preservation Briefs Series available from the National Park Service. (See *Sources of Information* in the *Appendix* for a more complete reference.) At the present time, thirty-eight briefs have been published addressing a wide range of topics, including "Roofing for Historic Buildings" and "The Repair of Historic Wooden Windows."

6.1 Building ELEMENTS AND DETAILS

6.1.1 EXTERIOR MATERIALS

The dominant exterior materials used in a neighborhood or historic district contribute to the visual relationships among buildings. If only a few materials are visible, the result is uniformity and continuity. It is also possible for considerable variety of surface materials and treatments to characterize an area, and yet even in such cases the addition of certain materials would greatly disrupt the predominant visual textures.

Druid Hills - Brick is the predominant exterior wall cladding material. Stucco and wood, such as weatherboard and shingles, are less common. Fieldstone and granite are frequently used as accent materials.

Guideline - Original masonry should be retained to the greatest extent possible without the application of any surface treatment, including paint. Repointing of mortar joints should only be undertaken when necessary, and the new mortar should duplicate the original material in composition, color, texture, method of application, and joint profile. Repaired joints should not exceed the width of original joints. The use of electric saws and hammers in the removal of old mortar is strongly discouraged as these methods can seriously damage adjacent bricks.

The original exterior masonry on this house, including its mortar joints, has been well maintained.



The unusual “knobby,” appearance of this masonry is an important character-defining feature of this house’s exterior and should be maintained.



The stone masonry provides accent to this house’s front entrance and should be properly maintained.



Guideline - Original stucco should be retained to the greatest extent possible without the application of any surface treatment including paint. Stucco facing requires periodic maintenance and should be repaired with a stucco mixture that matches the original material in both appearance and texture.

The rough textured stucco exterior of this house is an important character-defining feature. Repairs to the stucco should duplicate the original texture.



The smooth texture of this stucco exterior should be maintained.



Guideline - The application of artificial or nonhistoric exterior siding materials such as brick veneers; asphalt shingle siding; and cementitious, aluminum, or vinyl siding is discouraged. These materials are not successful in mimicking details of original wood siding (the most common material over which they are applied); subsequently, their use greatly compromises the historic integrity of buildings. Application often results in the loss or distortion of architectural details, and improper installation can result in damage of historic materials.

Use of compatible and high quality “look-a-like” synthetic building materials may be allowable, especially in order to reduce costs, provided (1) the original materials are beyond repair, (2) the substitute material can be installed without irreversibly damaging or obscuring the historic material and architectural features and trim of the building, (3) the substitute material can match the historic material in size, profile, and finish so that there is no change in the historic character of the building.

Artificial siding has been applied to this house, altering its exterior appearance and presenting the possibility of damage to original materials underneath.



6.1.2 ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS

Stylistic details, such as brackets, cornerboards, moldings, cornice details, decorative window and door trims, and shingles are essential to the historic character of buildings and districts.

Druid Hills - One of the defining features of Druid Hills is its outstanding collection of high-style buildings representing the entire spectrum of early-twentieth-century architecture.

Guideline - Stylistic details should be maintained and treated with sensitivity. The removal of such details or application of details inappropriate to the period or style of a house is strongly discouraged. Damaged elements should be repaired rather than replaced if at all possible. Historic details that have been lost or are beyond repair may be replaced with new materials, provided that their earlier presence can be substantiated by historical documentation and that the new materials match the original in composition, design, color, and texture.

The half-timbering, stone window and door surrounds, and corner quoins are important stylistic details of this example of the English Vernacular Revival style.



The eave brackets, exposed rafter ends, and decorative half-timbering of this roof gable are typical features expressing the materials and craftsmanship important to the Craftsman style.



6.1.3 ENTRANCES AND PORCHES

Entrances and porches are quite often the focus of historic buildings, particularly when they occur on primary elevations. Together with their functional and decorative features, they can be extremely important in defining the overall historic character of a building.

Druid Hills - The period residences of Druid Hills display a variety of porch forms ranging from a modest Colonial Revival entrance porch to an elaborate two-story Neoclassical portico, from a recessed arcaded corner porch on an English Vernacular Revival cottage to a columned porte cochere typifying the Prairie style. One-story, side porches flanking a two-story central mass are common in the district and associated with many different styles. Many of the early-twentieth-century revival styles highlight the primary entrance with pilasters, pediments, hoods, sidelights and fanlights, and various other details. In contrast, the Minimal Traditional house form of Emory Grove displays a very modest entrance. Regardless of the degree of stylistic expression, these porches and entrances are essential to the character of their buildings.

Guideline - Original porches and steps should be retained. Repair of porches should not result in the removal of original materials (such as balusters, columns, hand rails, brackets, and roof detailing) unless they are seriously deteriorated. If replacement materials must be introduced, the new should match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features should be substantiated, if possible, by documentary and physical evidence.

Guideline - The enclosure of front porches and side porches visible from a right-of-way should utilize transparent materials, such as screen or glass, which will help maintain the original open character of the design and should be fully reversible.

This side porch has been enclosed with screen, helping to maintain its original open character.



Guideline - Porte cochères are important stylistic features of many homes in Druid Hills. Removal and enclosure are discouraged.

The open pergola design of this entrance porch, side porch, and porte cochere is a significant stylistic feature of this house and should be maintained.



Guideline - Second-story additions should not be made to one-story porches visible from the public right-of-way.

Guideline - Original doors should be retained unless deteriorated beyond repair. Screen and storm doors should not detract from the character of the house and should be designed to be compatible with original doors. In the case of a replacement for a deteriorated door, the new door should be similar to the original in design and materials.

This simple entrance hood is a primary character-defining feature that focuses attention on this house's main entrance.



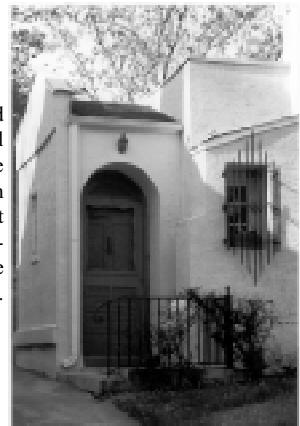
This heavy wood door in its original arched entrance is a major stylistic feature of this English Vernacular Revival style house.



This simple screen door does not detract from the Colonial Revival/Craftsman style entrance.



The arched Spanish Colonial Revival style entrance is an important character-defining feature of this house.



6.1.4 Windows

Windows are very important in creating rhythm on a house and also play a role in the directional emphasis and scale of buildings. Highly decorative windows with distinctive shapes or glazing patterns are always character-defining features of buildings and contribute greatly to the architectural variety of the district.

Druid Hills - The period residences of Druid Hills display a variety of window types and materials. Double-hung sash, casement, pivot, and decorative fixed windows are all common. Wood sashes are most typical, but metal, as in the case of casement, is also present. Single, grouped, tri-partite, and even banded, as seen on the Art Moderne apartments on Briarcliff, are all arrangements found throughout the district. Bay windows are an important massing element. The light patterns, materials, and arrangements of windows play a key role in defining the styles of Druid Hills architecture and contribute to the overall appearance of the district.

Guideline - Existing windows, including sashes, lights, lintels, sills, frames, molding, shutters, and all hardware should be retained and repaired through routine maintenance whenever possible. When deteriorated elements must be replaced, new elements should be compatible with the original in terms of material, design and hardware. Should it be necessary to replace an entire window, the replacement should be sized to the original opening and should duplicate all proportions and configurations of the original window.

Guideline - The addition of storm windows should be accomplished without seriously compromising original window appearance. Storm windows should not damage original window frames and should be able to be removed at a later date, thus guaranteeing sensitive placement. Interior storm windows are recommended as an alternative to the usual exterior application. Replacement windows, if using insulated glass, should have true divided lights with muntins no larger than the original. These windows are now available at reasonable cost.

These double-hung windows, with six-over-one pane configuration typical of the Craftsman style, have been well-maintained.



This group of round arched windows is a characteristic feature of the Italian Renaissance Revival style.



The row of stepped windows on this house provides the front facade with a distinctive pattern that should be maintained.



6.1.5 Roofs, CHIMNEYS, AND DORMERS

Original roof form—with its shape; features such as dormers, cresting, and chimneys; slope; material and color; and patterning—is an essential and character-defining feature of a building. Roof forms frequently create street patterns through repetition of pitch, orientation, and/or shape. In addition, sound roofs are essential to a building's preservation.

Druid Hills - Hipped, gabled, flat, parapet, cross-gabled, cross-hipped, jerkinhead, and gambrel are all principal roof forms widely represented in Druid Hills' architecture. Massing elements such as projecting bays, porches, and dormers display secondary roofs that may connect with and impact the overall impression of the roof form. An unusually high number of slate and clay tile roofs are present in the district. All of these elements are important character-defining features that contribute to the stylistic expressions of buildings.

Guideline - The original roof form should be retained to the greatest extent possible. No addition to a house should greatly alter the original form of a roof or render that form unrecognizable. Original or historic roof dormers should also be retained. Skylights should be installed so as to be as unobtrusive as possible. If additional upper-story space is required, consider using dormers—placed out-of-view of public right-of-way—to create this space.

The side-gabled gambrel roof with shed dormer is a primary feature of the Dutch Colonial Revival style, and its form should be maintained.



The characteristic gabled and bracketed dormer of the roof of this Craftsman-style house should be retained.



Guideline - Historic roofing materials, such as clay tile and slate, should be repaired rather than replaced, if at all possible. While repair or replacement with like materials is often considered to be cost prohibitive, it should be remembered that life expectancies of these roofs (slate, 60 to 125 years and longer; clay tile, 100+ years) is considerably greater than most replacement materials. Clay tile and slate roofs are always character-defining features of their buildings; therefore, if replacement is necessary, new materials should match as closely as possible the scale, texture, and coloration of the historic roofing material.

This clay tile roof is an important character-defining feature of this house and should be maintained and repaired rather than replaced.



This slate roof will last for many years if it continues to be well maintained. The roof dormers are also important stylistic features that should be maintained.



Guidelines - Original chimneys often add to the character of historic houses and should be properly maintained; they should not be covered with stucco or any other material, unless historically covered. A chimney that is no longer in use still functions as an important element in the overall composition of a house and should not be covered, partially or completely removed, or replaced.

This front-facade brick chimney adds to the picturesque character of this English Vernacular Revival style house and should be maintained.



The random-stone masonry of this chimney is unusual in Druid Hills and should be properly maintained.



This interior brick chimney is a small but important element of the roofline of this house.



6.1.6 FOUNDATIONS

Foundations primarily play a functional role by protecting the undersides of buildings. Oftentimes they are subtle elements that blend with the rest of the building. They can also contribute to the stylistic expression of a building by utilizing contrasting materials.

Druid Hills - Foundations in Druid Hills are, for the most part, solid brick or granite. Houses in the area of Emory Grove south of N. Decatur Road display solid granite foundations.

Guideline - Work involving foundations should, to the extent possible, preserve original appearances and materials. The primary issues in Druid Hills will be repair and maintenance and the application of inappropriate surface treatments such as stucco (see guidelines under Section 6.1.1 Exterior Materials). Where additions are made to houses with granite foundations, the addition's foundation may use a veneer stone if it matches the existing in color, pattern, and mortar.

This granite foundation is characteristic of houses found in Emory Grove and should be properly maintained



6.1.7 GUTTERS

Adequate roof drainage is necessary to (1) insure that roofing materials provide a weather-tight covering and (2) prevent water from splashing against walls and foundations or draining toward buildings.

Druid Hills - The high-style buildings in the district often feature colonial "hidden" gutters and copper downspouts with decorative attachments.

Guideline - Gutters and downspouts should be maintained in their original appearance and location if functioning properly.

Guideline - New downspouts should be placed along the edges and corners of buildings and along porch supports so as to create minimal visual disruption. In locating new downspouts, consideration should be given to water flow with regard to avoiding seepage into basements and impacts to foundation plantings.

This downspout is appropriately placed along the corner of the house and directs water away from the house's foundation.



6.2 MECHANICAL SERVICES

Guideline - The installation of exterior mechanical services, such as HVAC units and solar panels, shall be done in a manner that does not detract from the historic integrity of the building. It is best to install exterior mechanical elements on the side or rear of a property, in order to avoid disrupting the front elevation of the building and keeping it out of sight from the right-of-way. In the event, however, that the installation of a mechanical service on the front of the property cannot be avoided, it should be done so in a manner that decreases its visible impact; this may be accomplished through landscaping with appropriate plantings and vegetation

This window air conditioning unit is inappropriately placed on the house's front facade. It would be better placed on a view-obstructed facade and buffered so as to be as unobtrusive as possible.



6.3 ACCESSORY BUILDINGS

Guideline - Garages, garage apartments, and other accessory buildings that have historic or architectural significance should be preserved as significant site elements. Rehabilitation treatments should follow the design guidelines provided in *Section 6.1.1 Building Elements and Details*. For construction of new accessory buildings see *Section 7.0 Additions and New Construction*.

This wood-framed garage is an important site element of its historic property and should be preserved and maintained.



6.4 ADAPTIVE USE

Guideline - A dwelling converted to a non-residential use must retain its historic architectural integrity and residential character.

6.5 HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE COMPLIANCE

Guidelines - Compliance with health and safety codes and handicapped access requirements should be carried out with a minimum of impact to the historic character of community institutional buildings. Adding handicapped ramps is a common issue. Placement of new ramps should be done so as to minimize visual impact to the building, particularly the principal elevation (front) of the building.

Recommendation - Necessary access ramps on the front facade should be constructed in such a way that they can be removed without damage to the facade.

6.6 DEMOLITION by NEGLECT

Demolition by neglect occurs when a building is allowed to deteriorate due to lack of maintenance and security. Efforts should be made to minimize the occurrence of this condition through the education of property owners concerning proper methods of upkeep and preservation.

Druid Hills - The DeKalb County Historic Preservation Ordinance authorizes the Historic Preservation Commission to monitor the condition of historic properties located in the historic district. If the Commission determines that failure to provide ordinary maintenance and repair results in "demolition by neglect," it is authorized to take certain steps to correct the situation. See Section 10 of the Preservation Ordinance, "Failure to Maintain Historic Property."

Guideline - Property owners shall avoid demolition by neglect.

Proper maintenance of this property has been neglected, and it is now deteriorating.



6.7 MAINTENANCE

See *Sources of Information* in the Appendix for list of references on maintenance and rehabilitation.

Recommendation - The most effective and economical way to preserve a historic building and its site features is to provide regular maintenance, thus minimizing the need to replace historic materials.

6.8 EXTERIOR COLORS

Paint color will not be reviewed by the DeKalb County Preservation Commission.

Appropriate paint colors are usually related to the style and type of the property in question.

Guideline - The initial painting or application of other surface treatment of and to masonry and stucco will be reviewed by the preservation commission. The specific color of the paint, however, will not be reviewed. Appropriate paint colors are usually related to the style and type of the property in question. (Approved 6-18-2018 and Updated 12-15-25)

Recommendation - ~~Homeowners considering painting their homes are encouraged to determine the range of paint colors and techniques applicable to the particular architectural period of their property so that a proper choice might be made. The placement of different colors on a house (i.e., the primary color as well as trim colors) is also of critical importance.~~

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6.9 INTERIORS

Although proposed changes to interiors will not be reviewed by the DeKalb County Preservation Commission unless those changes would have an effect on exterior architectural features, it would be wise for property owners to make every effort to preserve the historic characters of their building interiors as they are valuable assets of the property. Following are some helpful recommendations for property owners:

Recommendation - When planning a rehabilitation, particularly in the case of adaptive use, preserve as much of the significant historic floor plan as possible. If changes are needed, attempt to make changes in such a way that they are reversible and do not damage or result in the loss of historic materials.

Recommendation - Care should be taken to preserve character-defining interior features such as wood floors, molding, picture rails, fireplaces, paneling, plaster details, and other details that distinguish historic buildings from new construction.

Recommendation - The visible interior features of heating, lighting, air conditioning and plumbing systems may contribute to the overall character of a building. Retaining these elements, when possible, should be considered. This will likely require upgrading and augmenting the system components themselves.

