



## 7.0 ADDITIONS & NEW CONSTRUCTION - PRESERVING FORM & LAYOUT

The Druid Hills Local Historic District continues to change and evolve over time. For this area to meet contemporary needs, additions are built, uses change, and new buildings are constructed. The challenge is not to prevent change but to ensure that, when it does inevitably happen, it is compatible with the historic character of the area.

A new building is compatible with its historic setting when it borrows design characteristics and materials from adjacent buildings and integrates them into a modern expression. Before undertaking new development, be it a new building or changes or additions to existing buildings, take time to evaluate what makes the property and the neighborhood distinctive. Evaluate what type of impact the new development will have on the property and neighborhood. Decide how the development can best be designed to complement the property and area.

The underlying guideline for new construction and additions is to consider one's neighbors and nearby structures and reinforce the existing historic character through sensitive, compatible design.

Note that many of these guidelines refer to new development or new construction but are equally applicable to additions to existing buildings.

## 7.1 DEFINING THE AREA OF INFLUENCE

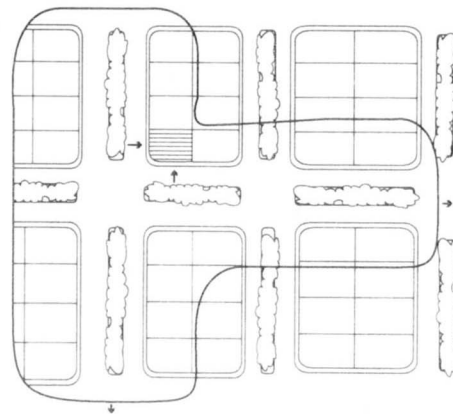
The area of influence may be the back of a property, a streetscape, or several blocks. A consistent streetscape will result when new buildings are designed in consideration with what already exists. To define the area of influence that the new development or addition will have, ask questions such as:

- ☞ *How large an area will the new development impact?*
- ☞ *Is it to be an addition to the rear of a building that will not even be visible to the public? Or is it a new building that will impact the whole streetscape?*
- ☞ *Will the new building be in the middle of a block with only one facade visible to the public or will it be on a corner lot, and therefore will have two facades clearly visible?*
- ☞ *Will the project generate the need for additional parking or impact traffic in the area?*

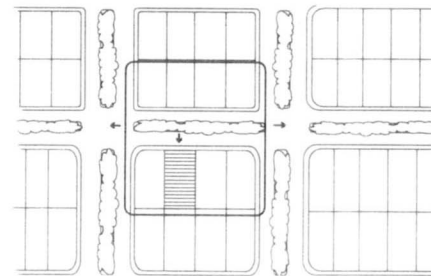
**Guideline - In considering the appropriateness of a design for a new building or addition in a historic district, it is important to determine the area of influence. This area should be that which will be visually influenced by the building, i.e. the area in which visual relationships will occur between historic and new construction.**

AREA OF INFLUENCE:  
Each site within a historic district will have its own unique area of influence. Shown here are two different examples with suggested minimum areas that might be considered. Neighboring buildings should be examined to determine the consistent patterns of design concepts and architectural elements that are present.

CORNER SITE



INTERIOR SITE



## 7.2 RECOGNIZING THE PREVAILING CHARACTER OF EXISTING DEVELOPMENT

Every building, whether historic or modern, is a product of design, and the design of buildings is accomplished through the utilization of several basic design concepts:

Building Orientation and Setback

Proportions

Directional Emphasis

Rhythm

Shape

Scale/Height

Massing

Materials/Architectural Elements

These concepts form the basis for visual relationships among buildings, which in turn influence the ways in which buildings are perceived by the public. When a new structure is built among historic buildings or an addition is made to an existing building, the level of success with which it relates to existing buildings—and whether it contributes to or detracts from the area—will be determined by the ways in which its design recognizes and is a function of the prevailing design expression in the area of influence.

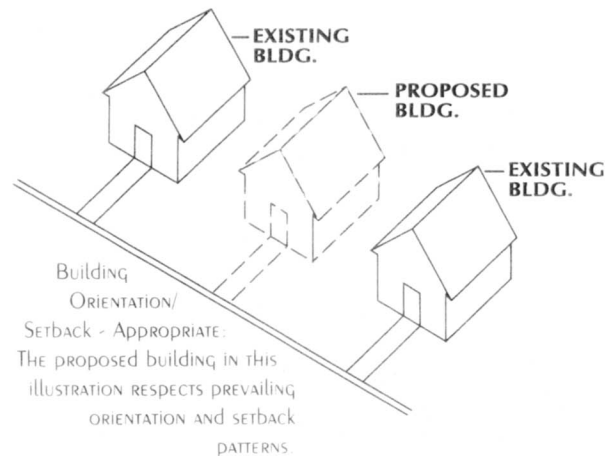
**Guideline - When looking at a series of historic buildings in the area of influence, patterns of similarities may emerge that help define the predominant physical and developmental characteristics of the area. These patterns must be identified and respected in the design of additions and new construction.**

This section identifies and defines principal design concepts and offers guidelines for using these concepts in evaluating the appropriateness of a proposed new building or addition. Illustrations are intended only to point out the types of relationships between historic and new buildings that are important and are not meant to serve as examples of real-life design solutions.

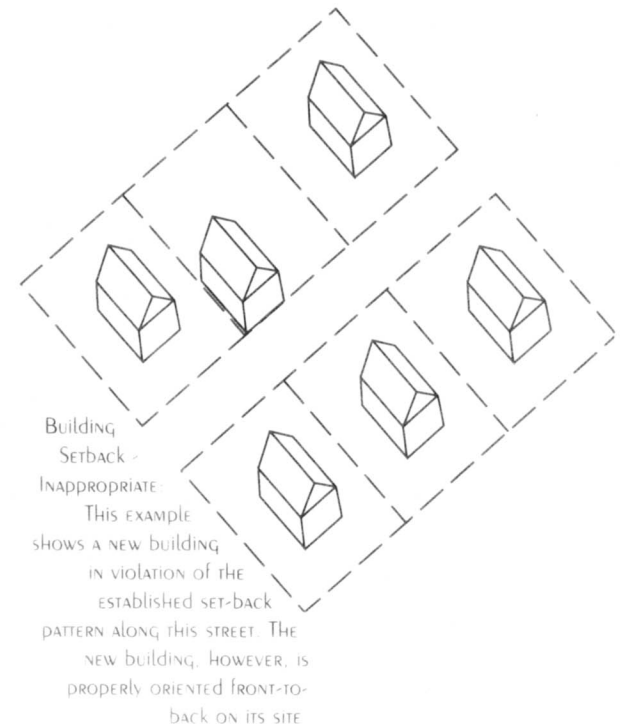
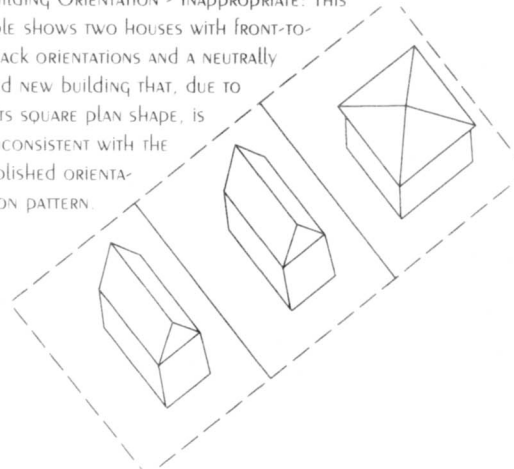
## 7.2.1 Building Orientation and Setback

Building orientation refers to the directional placement of the building on the site, while setback refers to how far back the building is from the street and side lot lines. Typically, historic areas have strong predominant orientations and setbacks.

**Guideline - The orientation of a new building and its site placement should appear to be consistent with dominant patterns within the area of influence, if such patterns are present.**



Building Orientation - Inappropriate: This example shows two houses with front-to-back orientations and a neutrally oriented new building that, due to its square plan shape, is inconsistent with the established orientation pattern.

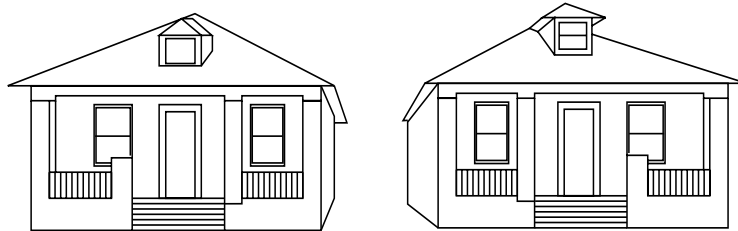


## 7.2.2 DIRECTIONAL Emphasis

Most buildings are either vertical or horizontal in their directional emphasis, which is determined by the size and placement of elements and openings on a building's front facade as well as by the building's overall shape. Directional emphasis may also be influenced by surface materials and architectural detailing.

**Guideline - A new building's directional emphasis should be consistent with dominant patterns of directional emphasis within the area of influence, if such patterns are present.**

Directional Emphasis - Consistent: The two nearly identical houses shown here both exhibit horizontal directional emphasis.



Directional Emphasis - Inappropriate: Shown here are two historic houses, each with a vertical directional emphasis and a new house that is clearly horizontal in emphasis. This new building is neither sympathetic nor consistent with the established pattern of directional emphasis along this street.



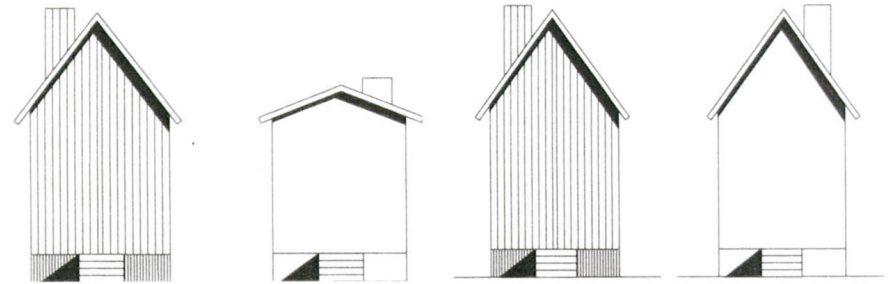
## 7.2.3 Shape

A building's surfaces and edges define its overall shape. This overall shape, in concert with the shapes of individual elements (such as roof pitch, porch form, and window and door openings), is important in establishing rhythms in a streetscape. Shape can also be an important element of style.

**Guideline - Roof Pitch:** The roof pitch of a new building should be consistent with those of existing buildings within the area of influence, if dominant patterns are present.

Shape - Roof Pitch - Inappropriate/Appropriate Examples: These two comparisons depict relationships between roof pitches

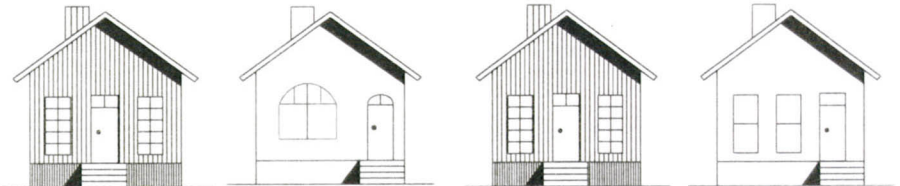
of historic and new buildings. The example on the left is that of a historic house (shaded) with a steeply-pitched roof standing next to a new building with an inappropriate shallow-pitched roof. The example on the right shows a more compatible roof pitch on the new building.



**Guideline - Building Elements:** The principal elements and shapes used on the front facade of a new building should be compatible with those of existing buildings in the area of influence, if dominant patterns are present.

Shape - Building Elements - Inappropriate/Appropriate Examples: These two comparisons depict relationships between building elements of historic and new buildings. The example on the left is that of a historic house (shaded) with flat-arched window and door openings

standing next to a new building with inappropriate round-arched window and door openings. The example on the right shows more compatible window and door openings on the new building.

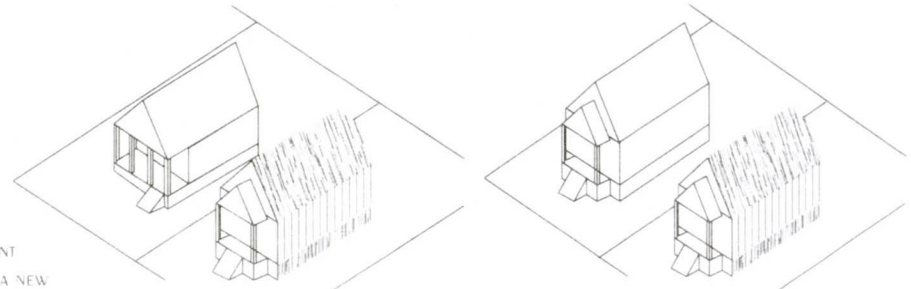


Porches throughout the Druid Hills district tend to be small entry porches, side corner porches, porte cocheres, and flanking sun or screened porches.

**Guideline - Porch Form:** The shape and size of a new porch should be consistent with those of existing historic buildings within the area of influence, if dominant patterns are present.

Shape - Porch Form - Inappropriate/Appropriate Examples: These two comparisons depict relationships between historic and new buildings in terms of porch form. The example on the left is that of a historic house (shaded) with an extending front gable porch

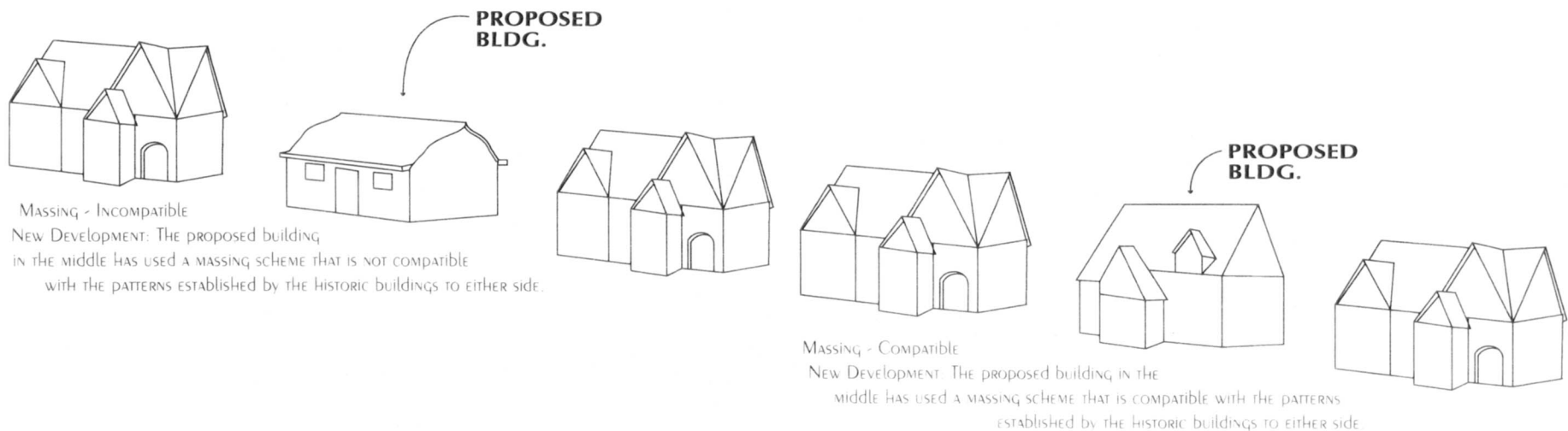
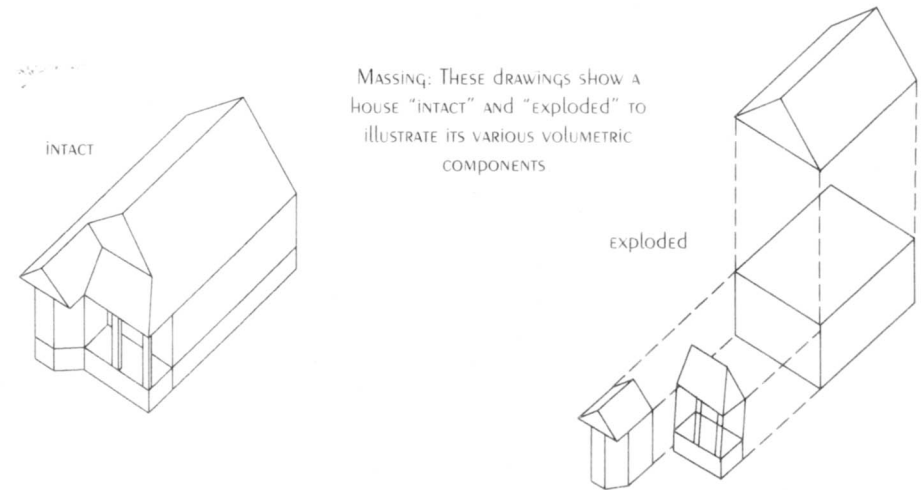
standing next to a new building with an inappropriate integral porch. The example on the right shows a more compatible porch form on the new building.



## 7.2.4 MASSING

**M**ass relates to the height, width, and depth of a building and its elements. A building is often composed of several different massing components—for example, the main mass or body, the roof, projecting bays, and additions. Think of a building as a compilation of various building blocks. If there are similar types of massings in an area, or if irregular massings are the norm, this pattern should be taken into account.

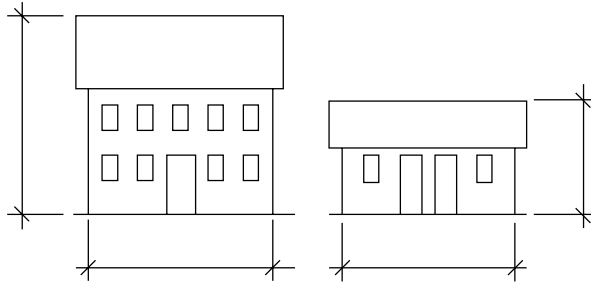
**Guideline - The massing of a new building should be consistent with dominant massing patterns of existing buildings in the area of influence, if such patterns are present.**



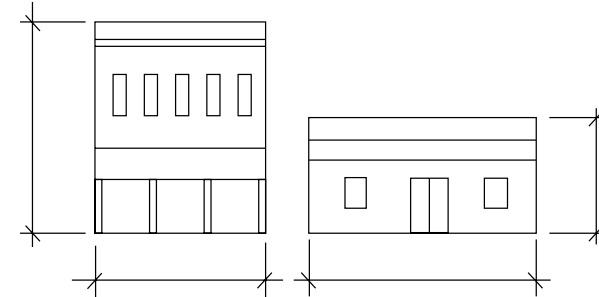
## 7.2.5 PROPORTION

Proportion is the relationship of one dimension to another; for example, the relationship of the height to the width of a building, or the height and width of windows and doors. Individual elements of a building should be proportional to each other and the building.

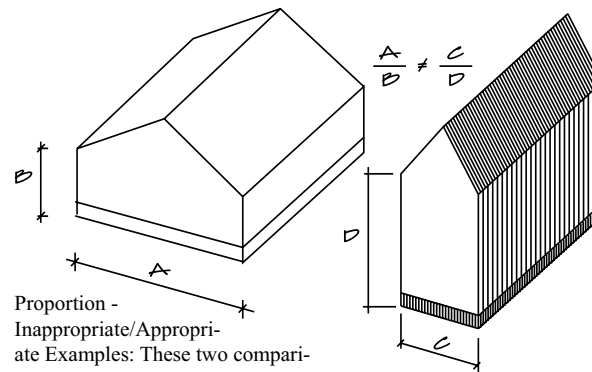
Residential Proportions: This graphic illustrates the concept of proportion using residential building dimensions.



Commercial Proportion: This graphic illustrates the concept of proportion using commercial building dimensions.



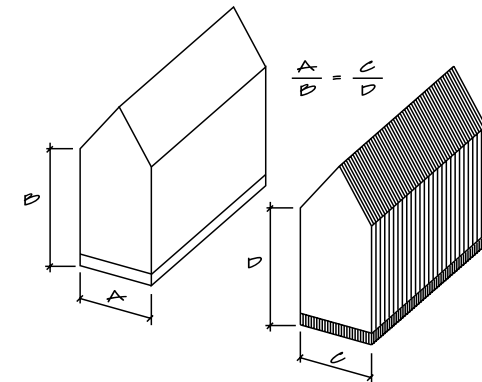
**Guideline - The proportions of a new building should be consistent with dominant patterns of proportion of existing buildings in the area of influence, if such patterns are present.**



Proportion - Inappropriate/Appropriate

Examples: These two comparisons depict relationships between front-facade height-to-width ratio of historic and new buildings.

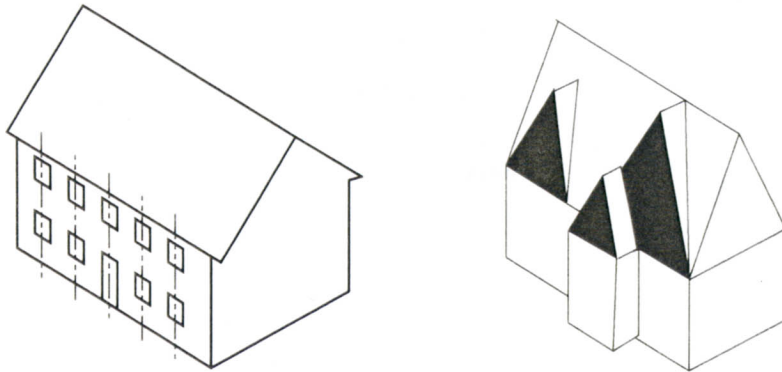
The example on the left is that of a historic house (shaded) with a height-to-width ratio resulting in a very vertical expression standing next to a new building with a horizontal height-to-width ratio. The example on the right shows a more compatible height-to-width ratio on the new building.





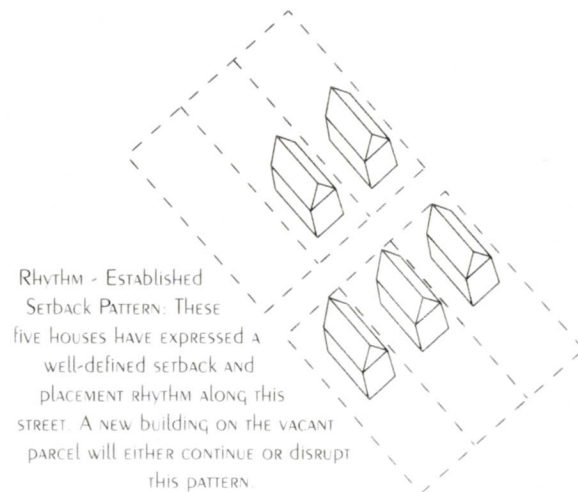
## 7.2.6 Rhythm

Rhythm is the recurring patterns of lines, shapes, forms, or colors (materials) on a building or along a streetscape. For example, the rhythm of openings on a house refers to the number and placement of windows and doors on a facade. Rhythm also occurs on the larger scale of streetscapes as created by development patterns (orientation and setback) and details of individual buildings (directional emphasis, scale, height, massing, etc.).

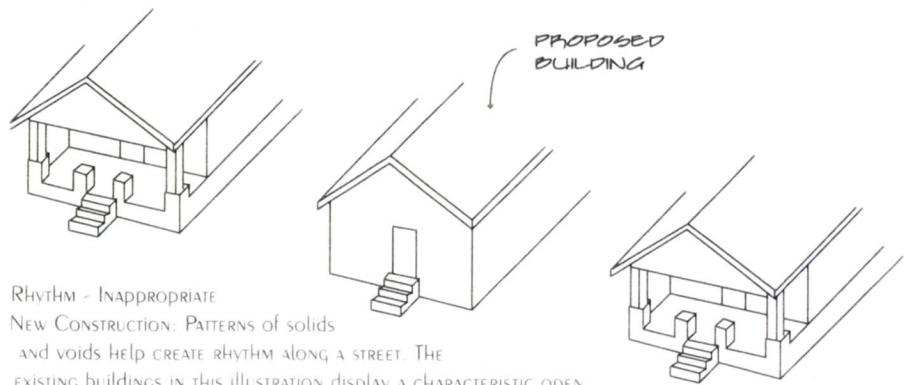


Rhythm - Symmetrical/Asymmetrical: THESE TWO HOUSES ILLUSTRATE DIFFERENT TYPES OF RHYTHMS CREATED BY INDIVIDUAL BUILDING ELEMENTS. ON THE LEFT IS A BUILDING WITH A REGULAR PLACEMENT OF ELEMENTS CREATING A SYMMETRICAL FACADE. THE BUILDING ON THE RIGHT HAS AN IRREGULAR PLACEMENT OF ELEMENTS CREATING AN ASYMMETRICAL FACADE.

**Guideline - New construction in a historic area should respect and not disrupt existing rhythmic patterns in the area of influence, if such patterns are present.**



Rhythm - Established Setback Pattern: THESE FIVE HOUSES HAVE EXPRESSED A WELL-DEFINED SETBACK AND PLACEMENT RHYTHM ALONG THIS STREET. A NEW BUILDING ON THE VACANT PARCEL WILL EITHER CONTINUE OR DISRUPT THIS PATTERN.

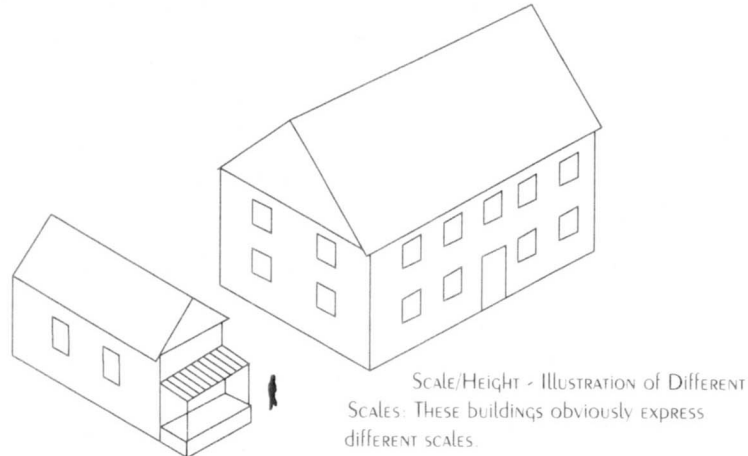


Rhythm - Inappropriate New Construction: PATTERNS OF SOLIDS AND VOIDS HELP CREATE RHYTHM ALONG A STREET. THE EXISTING BUILDINGS IN THIS ILLUSTRATION DISPLAY A CHARACTERISTIC OPEN PORCH SPACE. THE PROPOSED BUILDING IN THE MIDDLE PRESENTS A SOLID, FRONT WALL SURFACE THAT DISRUPTS THE EXISTING RHYTHM.

## 7.2.7 Scale/Height

Scale refers to the apparent relationship between two entities, such as the relationship of a building's height to human height, the relationship between different buildings' heights and sizes, or the relationship between the size of an addition and the building to which it is attached. In Druid Hills the two most important issues are (1) the relationship of new construction to historic and (2) the relationship of additions to the historic building to which they are being added.

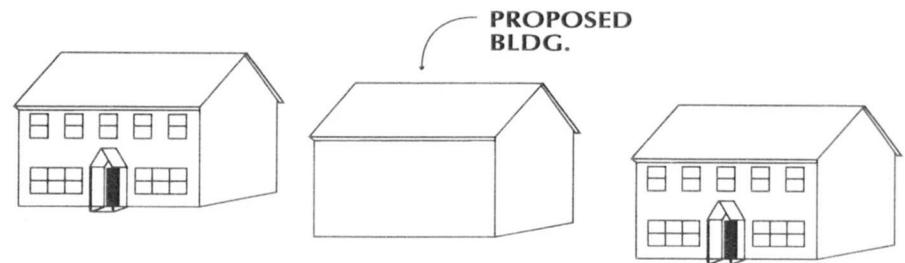
**Guideline - New construction in historic areas should be consistent with dominant patterns of scale within the area of influence, if such patterns are present. Additions to historic buildings should not appear to overwhelm the existing building.**



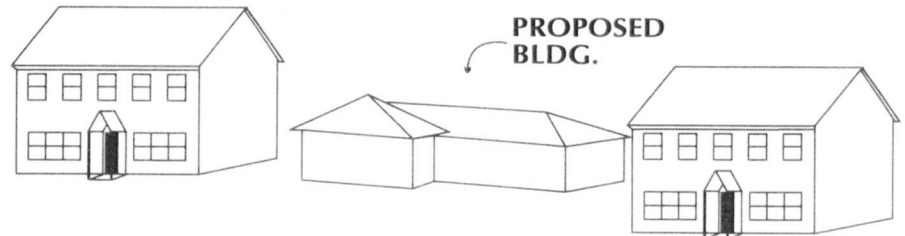
Scale/Height - Inappropriate Addition: This addition (shaded) is too large and overwhelms the original historic structure. It also juts forward thus accentuating its presence.



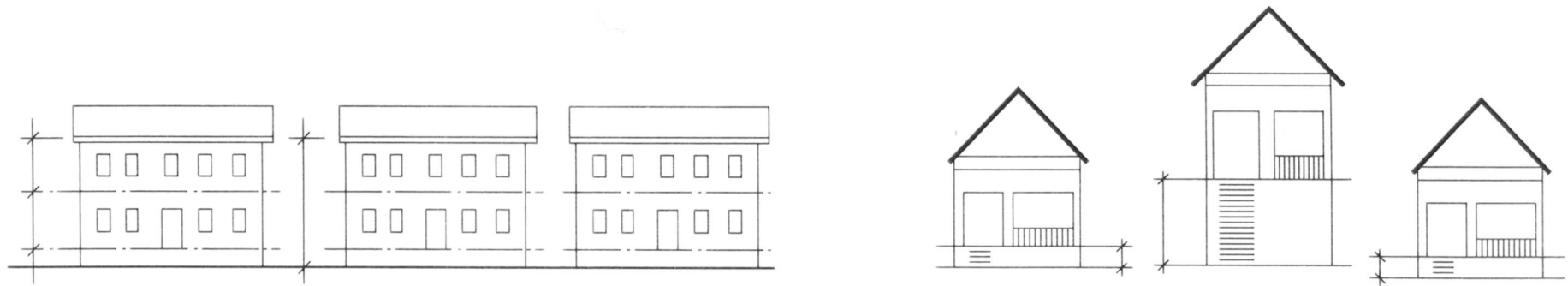
**Guideline - A proposed new building should appear to conform to the floor-to-floor heights of existing structures if there is a dominant pattern within the established area of influence. Dominant patterns of cornice lines, string courses, and water tables can be referenced to help create a consistent appearance.**



Scale/Height - Appropriate New Construction: The scale of the proposed building in the middle is compatible with that of the historic buildings to either side.



Scale/Height - Inappropriate New Construction: The scale of the proposed building in the middle is incompatible with that of the historic buildings to either side.



**SCALE/HEIGHT - CONSISTENT FLOOR-TO-FLOOR HEIGHTS.** The sketch on the left shows three buildings with consistent floor-to-floor heights resulting in a uniform sense of proportion and scale. In the sketch on the right, the middle building displays a first-floor height that is inconsistent with the dominant street pattern. As a result, the building appears to be out of scale and proportion even though the main body of the house is identical to that of the other two.

## 7.2.8 Individual Architectural Elements

**P**redominant architectural and site elements in the area of influence should be taken into account. New construction and additions need not attempt to create a “new historical work” but rather acknowledge predominant patterns in a contemporary manner. Following is a list of different types of elements that should be assessed before proceeding with new construction.

- ☛ **Roofs** - A variety of roof shapes, pitches, and types is often found within a historic area. Roof details such as chimney design, gable ornamentation, ridge decoration, and roofing materials may also be a predominant characteristic.
- ☛ **Walls** - The surfaces of the walls may be relatively smooth and uninterrupted, or they may be broken by projecting windows, porches, and other architectural elements.
- ☛ **Windows and Entrances** - There may be patterns of window and entrance placement, size, or ornamentation that are a strong visual component of the area. Shutters and window trim affect this patterning.
- ☛ **Details** - Facia, soffit, eave, and cornice trim; porch columns and supports; and other decorative details can provide a pattern and scale to historic buildings and areas.
- ☛ **Materials** - Buildings may incorporate a variety of materials such as wood, masonry, stucco, stone, and others. These materials may have different textures and shapes, such as coarsely surfaced brick versus a smooth stucco exterior facing. The use and presentation of materials contribute to the overall character of an area.
- ☛ **Landscaping Elements** - Specific types of vegetation such as oak trees, shrubs, or expanses of grassy lawn may predominate in an area. Elements such as walks and drives may also contribute to visual continuity along the street.

**Guideline - New construction and additions should be compatible and not conflict with the predominant site and architectural elements—and their design relationships—of existing properties in the area of influence.**

## 7.3 RESPECTING THE PREVAILING CHARACTER WHEN DESIGNING NEW DEVELOPMENT

After identifying the area of influence and assessing the prevailing character of the development within that area, the next step is to begin the design of the project. Each project is unique and should be taken on a case-by-case basis to meet the needs of the owner while at the same time protecting the historic character of the property and area. There are some general concepts, however, that can assist with the design of the new development. Use these in tandem with the guidelines presented in *Sections 7.1 and 7.2*.

### 7.3.1 Additions

Property owners considering making an addition to a historic building, should ask themselves three questions:

- 1 *Does the proposed addition preserve significant historic materials and features?*
- 2 *Does the proposed addition preserve the historic character?*
- 3 *Does the proposed addition protect the historical significance by making a visual distinction between old and new?*

**Guideline - Additions should not be added to the main facade of the building and should not appear to dominate the original structure. It is preferable to build new additions to the rear of a historic building, where it will have little or no impact on the streetscape facade. Design and materials should be compatible with the existing building. Avoid obscuring character-defining features of the historic building with the addition.**

**Guideline - Additional stories should be set well back from the roof edge to ensure that the historic building's proportions and profile are not radically changed.**

Sometimes historic photographs can give clues to the location of previous additions to the building and thus provide guidance for the location of new additions.

**Recommendation - The Secretary of the Interior's Standards recommend that an addition be designed so that at a later date it can be removed without compromising the historic character of the building.**

**Recommendation - While an addition should be compatible, it is acceptable and appropriate for it to be clearly discernible as an addition rather than appearing to be an original part of the building. Consider providing some differentiation in material, color, and/or detailing and setting additions back from the historic building's wall plane.**

Alterations to buildings that do not contribute to the historic character of the area pose a challenge. If the building is out of scale with its historic neighbors, often little can be done to make it compatible.

**Recommendation - These guidelines do not recommend adding false historical details to a noncontributing building in an effort to make it more compatible with surrounding historic buildings. Every effort should be made, however, to ensure that additions and alterations to the property do not detract further from the character of the historic environment, keeping in mind the design concepts discussed in *Section 7.2*.**

### 7.3.2 NEW CONSTRUCTION AND SUBDIVISION DEVELOPMENT

**Guideline - To be compatible with its environment, new construction should follow established design patterns of its historic neighbors, including building orientation, setback, height, scale, and massing.**

**Guideline - New construction should respect the historic character that makes the area distinctive, but it should not be a mere imitation of historic design.**

### 7.3.3 DEMOLITION AND RELOCATION

**B**uildings and structures that are proposed for demolition or relocation should be thoroughly evaluated for historic and architectural merit and importance to the character of the site and district. If significant, alternative uses that permit continued preservation should be thoroughly investigated. Proposed plans for the redevelopment of the site that effect the appearance should be a part of this evaluation.

~~**Guideline - Historic buildings and structures should not be demolished unless they are so unsound that rehabilitation is not possible. Historic buildings should not be moved off the property or relocated on the site, nor should other buildings be moved onto the site. Removed 12-15-25.**~~

**Guideline - Demolition of a historic structure should not occur and should be avoided. Demolition of a historic structure may only be permitted in the event that public safety and welfare requires the removal of the building or structure, the building has lost its architectural and historical value, and/or the building does not contribute to the historical or architectural character of the historic district and its removal will not adversely impact the integrity of the historic streetscape and the historic district.**

**Guideline – In applying for the demolition of a historic structure, the applicant must submit a historic structure report with a statement regarding the feasibility that the structure may be rehabilitated. The historic structure report must be completed by a Secretary of the Interior qualified licensed preservation architect or licensed structural engineer.**

**Guideline – If approved, the demolition of a historic structure should be completed in a manner that will preserve the historic landscape of the area and not cause harm or have an adverse impact on the historic district.**

**Guideline – If approved, the demolition of a historic structure should be completed in a manner that will salvage historic material and architectural details, such as timber, windows, doors, flooring, and other fixtures, that may be recycled or reused for future construction.**

**Guideline – The demolition of a historic or a nonhistoric structure shall not be approved unless plans for a new structure to replace the existing structure are also submitted and approved as well. The demolition of a historic or a nonhistoric structure shall not be approved if there are no plans to construct a new structure in the existing structure's place.**