

## Historic Downtown District Design Guidelines for Commercial Properties

The Historic Downtown District includes the entirety of the B-3 zoned district, the contiguous R-4 zoned district which extends North along Wooster Avenue to Slingluff Avenue and the S-1 zoned district which surrounds the square and is wholly contained within the B-3 area. There exists an overlay of the North Wooster Historic Home District and the R-4 portion of the Historic Downtown District; as such, there may be considerations which are slightly different for a residence as opposed to a business within the overlay area, and each shall be subject to guidelines appropriate to its use.

The City of Dover has set forth these guidelines as minimum standards whereby properties in the Historic Downtown District can be improved or built upon; it is in the best interest of the City and its residents to have a downtown that is pleasing to walk, motor through and conduct business in, all the while maintaining an environment that preserves, to a reasonable extent, the heritage and history of Dover. Any improvement or building project should be undertaken with care and consideration of these goals.

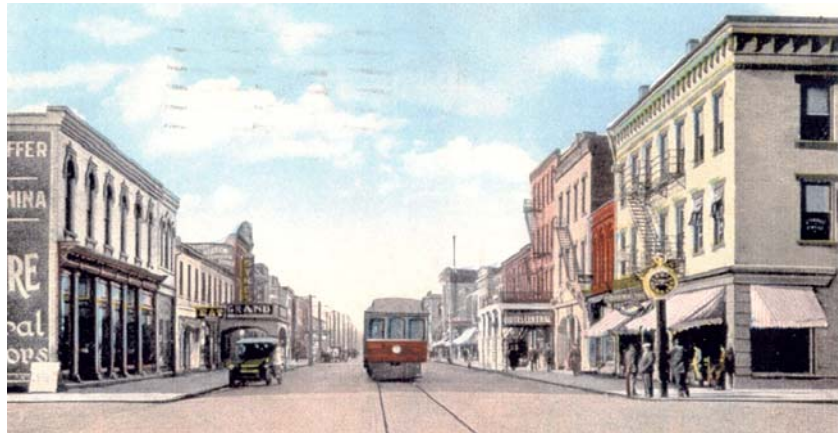
Downtown Dover is made up of a rich mix of buildings. The majority of the commercial buildings were built between 1870 and the mid 1930s. Many of the downtown buildings have been altered from their original appearance, most often at street entry level, and occasionally across their entire facade. It is the purpose of these guidelines to establish minimum standards by which alterations affecting the aesthetics of existing buildings shall be undertaken and establish aesthetic considerations for the construction of new buildings; these guidelines shall also cover certain aspects of the development of areas of the property surrounding commercial structures within the Historic Downtown District. These guidelines apply to any portion of commercial and/or institutional properties visible to pedestrians and/or motorists within the Historic Downtown District; separate guidelines exist for historic homes which lay within a portion of the district.



*Many buildings in the downtown have been altered over the years, most often at entrance level.*



*It is important that new buildings are built in such a way that they complement existing buildings.*



*For most of the last 150 years the downtown was a center of activity and business, while the needs have changed it is the City's responsibility to facilitate positive change and development, with the goal of facilitating the change to a new kind of vitality for the downtown while preserving the heritage and history of the city.*



*Progress is important, but it should be handled in a sensitive fashion. In the case of many downtown buildings what was done as contemporary work married to an older building has proven to become problematic; if the original work had been done in a fashion that was not in conflict with the original design of the building(s) it would stand as appropriate 25, 50 or more years later- it is our duty to change negative trends into positive development that is sensitive to our past, while taking us into the future.*



*A typical downtown scene, showing changes of done over time.*

## **Section 1- Existing Buildings**

The restoration or renovation of a storefront should attempt to return the façade to its original character; in cases where the original character cannot be determined it may be acceptable to incorporate features that emulate those of the buildings in its immediate vicinity in terms of general design, massing, window size and location, etc.; such emulations should be done in such a way that it is obvious that they are a nod to history and not an attempt to create an artificially historical building. In cases where original features exist, details and the shape and size of original window openings shall be maintained; it is preferred that original material be maintained or a like replacement be used. Original elements such as display or transom windows that have been covered or removed should be uncovered and/or replaced as may be appropriate.

It is important to note that some additions or alterations that are long-standing and have added materially to the fabric of the building, while not a part of the original building design, have, in effect, become so integral to the identity and history of the building that they should be treated as original; the ARB shall have the authority to make such determinations.



*An example of the effect of maintaining original style and design elements and how the downtown buildings can, in effect, continue to be vital and appropriate at any age.*

Building renovation and alterations should restore architectural details of cornices, brickwork, transom, display windows and bulkheads, to the extent possible and practical.

Painting previously unpainted brick is not permitted unless it is done to obscure significantly differing brick that may have been used to repair a wall- dissimilar brick used to fill in a doorway or window opening at a prior time is not considered sufficient to warrant painting unpainted brick walls, an appropriate solution would be to replace the dissimilar brick with a more suitable substitute that more closely matches the original. If a building requires repointing it is strongly recommended that the work be done by a qualified contractor; at the very least research should be done as to the correct use of mortar, as using a mortar harder than the surrounding brick can lead to damage to the original masonry.

The color of buildings should complement the adjacent buildings' colors. The color of brick or other natural building materials should dictate the color family choice. Bricks in the red and brown tones are encouraged. Buildings should use primarily earth tones with light and bright colors used only as minor accents. The accent colors should complement the primary color.

Rehabilitation or redevelopment projects should be constructed to be long lasting and use materials and detailing that maintains the distinct character and harmony of the Downtown Historic District.

In order for a building rehabilitation project to be eligible for certain state and federal tax incentives a very high degree of the retention of original materials or replacement with like materials and adherence to the original design is required, and will likely exceed that required by the ARB. The ARB encourages these steps on the part of property owners who have an interest in taking such extra measures to both return the appearance of the building to its original state and enjoy such incentives as may exist.

### **The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation**

#### ***To be eligible for Federal Tax Incentives, a rehabilitation must meet all ten Standards in 36 CFR 67***

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old design, color, texture and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical or pictorial evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials, shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.
8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such

a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

### **Reference Materials Available**

The City of Dover shall maintain available for loan or purchase appropriate reference materials published by The Secretary of the Interior, which would serve as a useful reference for those improving existing buildings in the downtown, especially if they desire to truly rehabilitate an existing building and derive potential tax credit from such state and federal incentives, in such cases owners should seek specific program guidance from the State or Federal Agency who administers the program. Review of appropriate available reference material is strongly recommended in any case for building owners seeking to make improvements, as it is a useful tool for owners of historic buildings, and any measures taken as spelled out in the reference text will likely at least meet, and probably exceed, the requirements of the City of Dover.

### **Section 2- New Construction in the traditional “downtown” area of north Tuscarawas Avenue to 4<sup>th</sup> Street and West 3<sup>rd</sup> Street from Wooster Avenue to Apple Alley**

Buildings should work together to create a "wall of buildings" effect associated with traditional downtown areas; generally, new construction and infill buildings must maintain the alignment of facades along the sidewalk edge; exceptions may be granted if the setback is pedestrian-oriented and contributes to the quality and character of the streetscape, or if the lot size, shape and the intended use of the building require substantial associated onsite parking. In instances where there are large parking areas abutting the street, the sidewalk edge must be delineated with landscaping such as may be appropriate, likewise, fencing or partial fencing, with or without columns may be considered in combination with landscaping.



*It is important that new infill buildings maintain similar height, style and characteristics to surrounding buildings.*

A minimum of 30% of the ground level front façade and 20% of the ground level sides of buildings adjacent to public right of ways shall be consist of any combination of windows and

doors with large glass panels, as shall a building's rear façade if it faces a public right of way, parking area or open space. Windowless upper floors are not permitted and the windows should be vertically oriented. Arched tops, columns framing the windows and decorative lintels, where appropriate, are encouraged.

Infill construction should reflect some of the detailing of surrounding buildings in building massing, window shape, cornice lines and brick work.

### **Section 3- New Construction in the rest of the Downtown Historic District**

New development and redevelopment should complement the existing pattern of building heights, setbacks and styles.

If a new commercial building is constructed within the R-4 section of the Downtown Historic District its design should likewise compliment its environment, and should include design elements, proportion, colors, etc. as may be appropriate- context will always be a key consideration of the ARB.

Tile, stone, glass block, copper flashing, metal and wood are among the type of materials that should be considered for accents to buildings. Preference is for a high level of design and architectural detail.

### **Section 4- All Buildings in the District**

Traditional materials including brick and stone (including cast stone) should be used as the primary building materials for both rehabilitation and new construction, except where the North Wooster Historic Home District overlays the Downtown Historic District, where materials and design consideration should approximate the environment- context can be the over-riding consideration of the ARB in most cases.

With the exception of existing, the following materials are not permitted for use on the façades or sides of buildings adjacent to public right of ways:

- \* Brick larger than 4" in height, 12" in length
- \* Aluminum, vinyl or fiberglass siding
- \* Concrete masonry units, other than limited use of split faced block which may be considered for accent lines or the emulation of foundation stone if appropriate
- \* Materials that attempt to mimic traditional materials (an example would be fiberglass panels that are molded to look like brick); a singular exception to this is the judicious use of cultured stone.

Lighting in the downtown should serve to illuminate façades, entrances and signage and provide an adequate level of personal safety while enhancing the aesthetic appeal of the buildings, and should in no case detract from it.

With the exception of existing signage and related lighting must be either indirect and reasonably unobtrusive or decorative in nature. Backlit signs attached to buildings are not permitted in the Historic Downtown District. For exterior sign illumination, shaded gooseneck lamps are encouraged. Existing non-compliant signs are permitted. The Building and Zoning Administrator has the authority to order non-compliant signage removed when a building is sold, and it shall not be replaced.

The use of flower boxes, planters and hanging flower baskets is encouraged.

Rear entrances are distinct from service or delivery entrances and require additional considerations; the rear entrance should be clean and well maintained, a combination of lettering, lighting, a small sign, awnings, display windows and planter boxes can improve the appearance and should be considered. At rear entrances the primary materials should be used in a way that highlights the entrance.

Fabric awnings are encouraged, but with certain limitations. Awnings cannot extend across multiple storefronts and/or multiple buildings. Awnings must be constructed of durable, protective, and water repellant fabric, and the colors should complement the color scheme of the building; any colors or patterns should be subtle as opposed to bright or bold, awnings must be evocative of historical awnings that could have been in use in the past. Awnings having a modern appearance are not permitted. Awnings must project a minimum of 36" from the building and the bottom of any awning shall be no lower than 8 feet from the sidewalk. Other than existing, fiberglass, metal or wooden awnings are not permitted. Existing non-compliant awnings shall not be replaced if deteriorated necessitating substantial repair or removal.

Reflective glass is not permitted.

Utility services shall be underground.

## **Section 5- Screening**

Roof equipment should be screened from public view if visible from adjacent streets or alleys.

Utility areas and mechanical equipment should be designed so that they do not detract from the aesthetic appeal of the district.

To the extent possible, exterior trash and storage areas, service yards, loading areas and air conditioning units must be screened from view with structural material (such as walls or fencing) or landscaping that does not detract from or conflict with the aesthetics in the vicinity.

## **Section 6- Landscaping Considerations**

Landscaping treatments should be used to enhance the pedestrian experience, complement architectural features and/or screen utility areas. Landscape plans must be submitted to the ARB for approval.

## **Section 7- Fences**

Other than as mentioned under New Construction as associated as a possible use associated with large parking areas abutting sidewalks or for screening purposes as mentioned earlier, the only permissible use of fencing in the Downtown Historic District is as it is associated with beer gardens and outdoor dining areas, with a singular exception for existing fences, and these fences shall only be permitted to be replaced when they fall into disrepair and they can be proven to be reasonably necessary for business interests- use to delineate property lines shall in no case be considered as being necessary for business interests, and such fences shall be considered to be non-complying. The Building and Zoning Administrator shall have the authority to have existing non-compliant fences removed when a property is sold, likewise, it shall be within his authority to have existing fences that have fallen into disrepair and are not reasonably necessary for business interests removed. In any case where fences exist but lack gates (having open spans) or whose gates have been left open day and night for extended periods, such fences shall be considered as not being necessary for business interests, however, if a portion of said fence encloses a smaller area and provides security for that smaller area, then that portion may be allowed to remain. No part of this section shall apply to fences on residential property within the Historic Downtown District, such regulations appear in relevant section(s) of Dover Ordinances.