

A. Maintenance and Rehabilitation

1. General Considerations

Your building may need rehabilitation for a number of reasons. It may be in poor condition, or it may have been insensitively remodeled in the past. Similarly, you simply may want to make certain changes to add modern conveniences to your building.

Before rehabilitation even begins, maintenance is critical. If an older structure is properly maintained, it should not require extensive rehabilitation except for necessary modernization of mechanical systems and periodic replacement of items that wear out, such as roofs and paint. Good maintenance practices can extend the life of most features of a historic building.

Many of the guidelines emphasize the importance of and give specific advice on proper maintenance of building elements. Nevertheless, if a historic building has been insensitively remodeled over the years, it may require some rehabilitation to return it to a more historically appropriate appearance.

In many of the chapters you will be directed to one or more Preservation Briefs, publications produced by the Technical Preservation Services of the National Park Service. These publications are written in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and can provide valuable information for your project. Preservation Briefs may be accessed online at <http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/presbhom.htm>.

REHABILITATION CHECKLIST

1. Look at your building to determine its style, age, and the elements that help define its special character. The preceding section, "Looking at Your Building" should be helpful.
2. Is your building income producing? If so, review the information on page 41 on state and federal tax credits to see whether you can qualify.
3. Review the Standards for Rehabilitation printed on page 39. These ten standards must be followed if you are using state and/or federal tax credits. They also are the basis of many of the recommendations of this guidebook.
4. Check the zoning ordinance to make sure that your planned use is allowed. If you are changing the use or working outside of the existing walls, you may need a zoning permit.
5. Chances are you will need a zoning permit and a building permit. Become familiar with the International Building Code (IBC) as it applies to historic buildings and meet with your building inspector early on about your plans.
6. Meet with the zoning administrator early in the process for informal input and helpful technical information.
7. Seek advice from or use contractors experienced in working with historic buildings and materials. Some tasks, such as repointing or cleaning historic masonry, require special knowledge, techniques, and methods.
8. If your project is complicated, consider employing an architect experienced in working with historic buildings.

IV Planning a Project in the Historic District

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2. Required Maintenance



Before.



After.

Article 3.M, Section F.2.G of the Zoning Ordinance requires essential maintenance of historic buildings in the district. Its purpose is to prevent demolition by neglect or a detrimental effect on the entire district. Insufficient maintenance in general can include deterioration of the structure, ineffective protection from the elements, lack of upkeep of the grounds, and any hazardous conditions. If the review board finds such conditions, it notifies the owner, who then has (ninety) 90 days to remedy the violation. If nothing is done by the property owner(s) after the ninety (90) days, the Review Board has the option of recommending that Town Council seek the appropriate legal action against the property owner(s).

All buildings and structures in the HP-O District shall be preserved against decay and deterioration and maintained free from structural defects to the extent that such decay, deterioration or defects may, in the opinion of the Review Board, result in the irreparable deterioration of any exterior appurtenance or architectural feature, or produce a detrimental effect upon the character of the district as a whole or upon the life and character of the structure itself, including but not limited to:

- The deterioration of exterior walls or other vertical supports;
- The deterioration of roofs or other horizontal members;
- The deterioration of exterior chimneys;

- The deterioration or crumbling of exterior plaster or mortar;
- The ineffective waterproofing of exterior walls, roofs, and foundations, including broken windows or doors;
- The peeling of paint, rotting, holes, and other forms of decay;
- The lack of maintenance of surrounding environments e.g. fences, gates, sidewalks, steps, signs, accessory structures and landscaping, and;
- The deterioration of any feature so as to create or permit the creation of any hazardous or unsafe condition or conditions.

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3. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

The guidelines in this publication are based on *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings* (see accompanying box). They express a basic rehabilitation credo of “retain, repair, and replace.” In other words, do not remove a historic element unless there is no other option, do not replace an element if it can be repaired, and so on.

First developed in 1979, these guidelines have been expanded and refined, most recently in 1995. They are used by the National Park Service to determine if the rehabilitation of a historic building has been undertaken in a manner that is sensitive to its historic integrity. The guidelines are very broad by nature since they apply to the rehabilitation of any contributing building in any historic district in the United States.

An interactive web class on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation is available online at http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/e-rehab/welcome_index.htm.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Illustrated Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings is a government publication available from the GPO at <http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/tpscat.htm>.

SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION

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 in 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 archaeological 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, size, 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.

IV Planning a Project in the Historic District

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4. State and Federal Tax Credits for Rehabilitation

If you are undertaking a major rehabilitation of a contributing historic building in the National Register Historic District, which has nearly the same boundaries as the Smithfield Local Historic District, you may be eligible for certain dollar-for-dollar state and federal tax credits.

State Tax Credits

Whether a building is owner-occupied or income-producing this credit of 25% of eligible rehabilitation expenses is available to those who complete a substantial rehabilitation.

Federal Tax Credits

If your building is income-producing you may also qualify for federal tax credits of 20% of eligible rehabilitation expenses.

Expense thresholds and qualifying expenses differ with each program. Contact the Virginia Department of Historic Resources or visit their website at

www.dhr.virginia.gov/tax_credits/tax_credit.htm early in the planning stages of your project. To be a certified rehabilitation under either program, you must file an application with VDHR before any construction begins. Your rehabilitation must follow the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Structures*.

Also available is *A Guide to the Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives Program* online at <http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/tax/incentives/index.htm>.

A. Maintenance and Rehabilitation

B. New Construction

The design of a new building or addition in a historic district is often a difficult issue for property owners, architectural review boards, and architects. The guidelines in this publication reflect the current philosophy that new structures should complement and respect the existing character of historic buildings without copying them. New buildings that are a reproduction of historic buildings may confuse the public as to what is really historically significant and what is not.

NEW CONSTRUCTION CHECKLIST

1. Attempt to accommodate needed functions within the existing structure.
2. Look at surrounding buildings to determine their style, age, and the elements that help define the neighborhood's special character. The preceding section, "Looking at Your Building" should be helpful.
3. Choose a design that relates to the design character of the historic buildings in the area.
4. Follow the last two guidelines in The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation:
 - 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, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
 - 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.
5. Obtain a zoning permit and building permit, which you will need in order to erect a new structure or work outside of existing walls.
6. Become familiar with the BOCA Code and meet with your building inspector early on about your plans.
7. Meet with the zoning administrator or architectural review board early in the process for their informal input.
8. Consider employing an architect experienced in working with historic buildings.