



CITY OF
WOODSTOCK

Policy Guide for

Window or Door Repairs or Replacement Requests

**Within the City of Woodstock Downtown Business
Historic Preservation District**

**Prepared by the
Woodstock Historic Preservation Commission
October, 2003**

Introduction

The windows and doors on many historic buildings are an important aspect of the architectural character of those buildings. The fenestration, or pattern of windows and doors, often defines the architectural style, period, material, ornamentation, mass and scale of the historic structure. Their design, craftsmanship or other qualities make them worthy of preservation.

The Woodstock Historic Preservation Commission has developed this policy guide to assist owners of properties within the historic district(s) with their decisions on repairing or replacing historic windows or doors. It is also intended to provide them with an understanding of the criteria used by the Community Development Department and the Woodstock Historic Preservation Commission for granting Category 1 Minor Project and Category 2 Major Project Certificates of Appropriateness.

Since the City of Woodstock has been granted Certified Local Government status (a federal program administered by the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency), historic property owners may qualify for tax incentives for the rehabilitation of their property. Commercial property owners may qualify for the 20% Federal Income Tax Credit, homeowners may qualify for the Illinois Property Tax Assessment Freeze Program and not-for-profit organizations may qualify for an Illinois Heritage Grant. Contact the Community Development Department or the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency (IHPA) for more information.

Obtaining a Certificate of Appropriateness

Prior to beginning any exterior work, property owners should first contact the Community Development Department to review the project scope and to obtain a copy of the *Design Review Guidelines for Properties in the City of Woodstock Downtown Business Historic Preservation District*.

Except for ordinary maintenance, all property owners must obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness before any exterior work can begin on any structure located within the historic district(s). Ordinary maintenance is defined on page 46 of the *Design Review Guidelines for Properties in the City of Woodstock Downtown Business Historic Preservation District* as, “That which does not alter the exterior features of a historic site or historic resource within a historic preservation district. Exterior features include the architectural style, design, and general arrangement of the exterior: the nature, and the texture of building materials; and the type and style of all windows, doors, light fixtures, signs, and similar items found on, or related to, the exterior of a historic site or historic resource within a historic preservation district. Ordinary maintenance is that which will have no material effect on the historical, architectural, cultural, or archaeological value of the historic site or historic resource within a historic preservation district.”

A Category 1 Minor Project Certificate of Appropriateness is generally described as those projects that do not require a building permit

Window and Door Facts

- Windows and doors convey building character.
- Historic windows and doors are made of irreplaceable materials.
- All windows and doors need periodic maintenance.
- Renovation of windows and doors is realistic and affordable.

and can be approved by the Community Development Department. This includes rehabilitation, repairs, and painting of windows and doors. The Community Development Department may, at its discretion, refer a Category 1 Minor Project request to the Historic Preservation Commission for its review.

A **Category 2 Major Project Certificate of Appropriateness** is generally described as those projects that require a building permit and must be approved by the Woodstock Historic Preservation Commission. This includes replacement of windows and doors that require a change in openings and/or size.

Once a Certificate of Appropriateness is granted, it must be displayed in a window that is visible from the street for the duration of the rehabilitation project. A Certificate of Appropriateness is valid for one year from the date of issue.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

The Woodstock Historic Preservation Commission and the Community Development Department use the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (Standards)* when reviewing specific rehabilitation projects in the historic district(s) and granting Category 1 Minor Project or Category 2 Major Project Certificates of Appropriateness. They have also been incorporated into the Woodstock Historic Preservation Ordinance and approved by the City Council.

The following *Standards* should be considered when under-taking the repair or replacement of historic windows and doors.

Standard #2 The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.

Standard #4 Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained or preserved.

Standard #5 Distinctive features, finishes and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.

Standard #6 Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.

Based on these *Standards*, the approach to the repair and replacement of historic doors and windows should be prioritized as follows:

- 1. Repair of historic materials;**
- 2. Replacement with the same type of materials, and as a last resort;**
- 3. Replacement with similar or like materials.**

Energy Conservation

Energy conservation is no excuse for the wholesale destruction of historic windows which can be made thermally efficient by historically and aesthetically acceptable means.

Weather-stripping is the single most cost-effective way to improve the energy performance of your windows.

Window or Door Significance

Not all windows or doors are equally significant. Factors determining significance include:

- Age of windows or doors
- Design of windows or doors
- Physical integrity
- Street facing façade
- Architectural or historical significance

Windows or doors should be considered significant if they:

1. Are original or historic.
2. Reflect the original design intent for the building.
3. Reflect a period or regional styles or building practices.
4. Reflect changes to the building resulting from major periods or events.
5. Are examples of exceptional craftsmanship or design.

Why Save Wood Windows and Doors?

Wood windows and doors are part of the original, irreplaceable historic fabric of a building. The *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* are explicit about saving all original fabric where possible. Skilled craftsmen can restore any wood window or door to its former beauty.

About the Wood in Historic Wood Windows and Doors

- The wood in historic windows and doors likely came from virgin forests and was more dense and enduring. Today's wood comes from tree farms where fast-growing trees are fed growth stimulants and the cell structure is not as dense.
- The wood chosen for historic windows and doors was clear and knotless with very fine graining, and there was an abundance of different wood species. Typically pine was used for the sash and hardwood for the trims. Today, it is difficult to buy certain wood species and the quality is not as high.
- Historic window and door systems used full dimension lumber, and the sash and frames were always milled much thicker. Some of these frame members were up to 15 feet or more in length. It is no longer possible to buy this thick, lengthy lumber. Today, only laminated boards can approach these same lengths.

The Craftsmanship of Historic Wood Windows and Doors

- Older windows and doors were built right into the wall by skilled craftsmen, producing solid, very stable windows and doors. Great care was taken to match door and window trims with other architectural features on a building. The

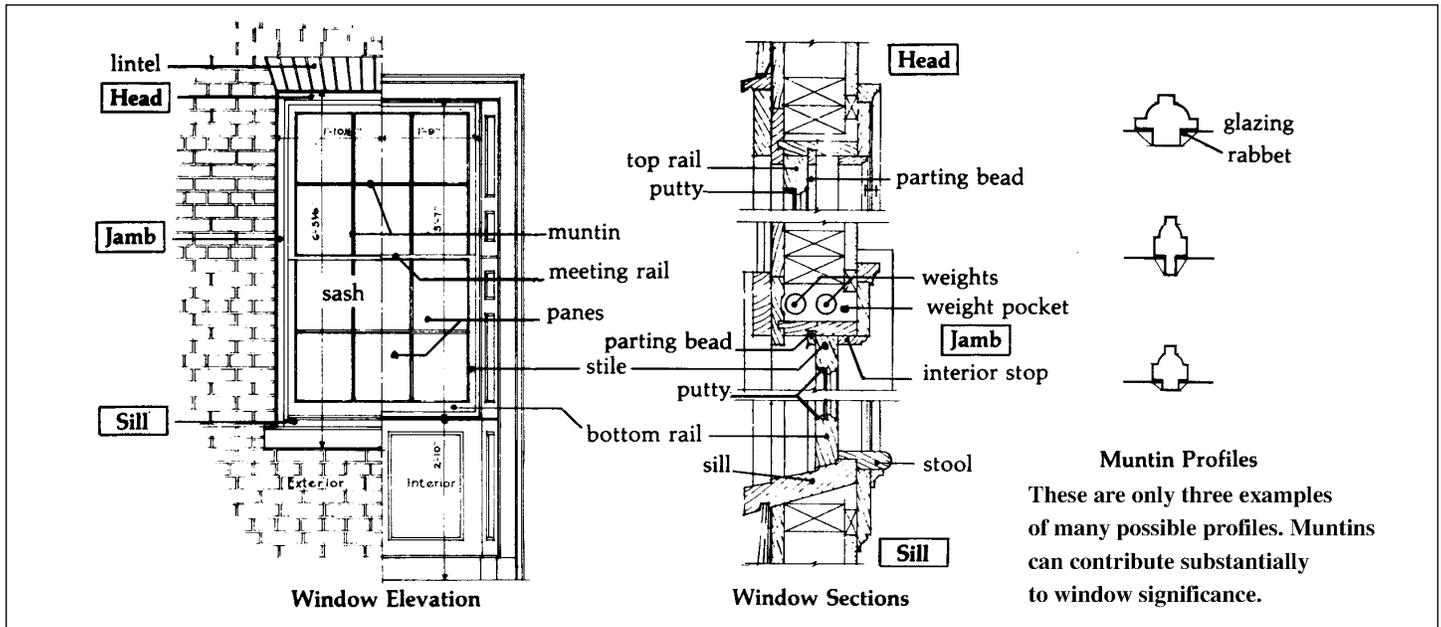
craftsmanship was precise and the tolerances tight. There were no gaps in the joinery.

- All of the window and door joints were of mortise and tenon construction, which is the best joint possible—especially for windows. When these joints are restored, the door or window will not wrack or warp, and will stay square for years to come. Joints on windows today are finger joints, or other styles, and are typically glued together.
- Many unique door and window shapes and styles were created because wood could be crafted into any shape. Today’s doors and windows are mass-produced, and unusual features such as rope brick mold or lugs on the sash are very difficult to create.

The Window Mechanisms

- The original weight and chain balance system is still the best balance system available from the standpoint of durability and service. It will last another 50 years and it is also very attractive after restoration.

Source: Preservation Briefs #9:
 The Repair of Historic Wooden Windows;
 U.S. Department of the Interior, National
 Park Service Preservation Assistance Division,
 Technical Preservation Services



Storm Windows

The use of exterior storm windows should be investigated whenever feasible because they are:

- 1. Thermally efficient**
- 2. Cost-effective**
- 3. Reversible**
- 4. Allow the retention of original windows**

Storm windows, in combination with historic windows, can provide better energy performance than most modern windows, which utilize insulating glass. Wood storm windows are preferred as wood has a better insulating value than metal. However, aluminum clad storm windows may be allowed provided they do not cover the trim. Storm windows can also provide significant protection from the weather to your historic windows. If old or historic storm windows exist, consider continuing to use them. Storm windows can also be placed on the inside of a window. Interior storm windows are available and do work best in some situations.

What is the Condition of Your Windows or Doors?

When evaluating the physical condition of windows or doors, look at the following:

- 1. Window or door location**
- 2. Condition of paint**
- 3. Condition of window frame and sill or door frame and threshold**
- 4. Condition of sash (rails, stiles and muntins) or door trim**
- 5. Glazing problems**
- 6. Hardware**
- 7. Overall condition (excellent, good, fair, poor, etc.)**

Moisture is the primary contributing factor in wooden window or door decay.

Failure of the paint should not be mistakenly interpreted as a sign that the wood is in poor condition and hence, irreparable. Wood is frequently in sound condition beneath unsightly paint.

Window or Door Repair

Routine maintenance needed to upgrade a window or door to “like new” condition normally includes the following:

- 1. Some degree of interior and exterior paint removal.**
- 2. Removal and repair of sash (including reglazing and replacement of sash cords and chains, where necessary).**
- 3. Repairs to the frame.**
- 4. Weather-stripping of jambs liners and reinstallation of sash.**
- 5. Repainting**

How You Can Determine if a Window or Door Is Deteriorated Beyond Repair?

Window and door replacement can be an expensive undertaking for historic property owners. It is usually more cost-effective and thermally efficient to maintain and repair windows or doors than it is to replace them. However, the Woodstock Historic Preservation Commission recognizes that there may be instances when a historic door or window is deteriorated beyond repair.

To help with that determination, the property owner should provide to the Community Development Department:

- 1. Detailed photographs of the interior and exterior of the window(s) or door(s).**
- 2. Two (2) estimates for repairing the window(s) or door(s).**
- 3. Two (2) estimates for replacing the window(s) or door(s) with the same material and configuration.**
- 4. Two (2) estimates for the owner’s preferred solution for the window(s) or door(s).**

Window and Door Replacement

Replacement windows or doors should match historic windows or doors in:

- Style and operation
- Dimensions
- Materials
- True-divided lite
- Clad windows may be acceptable on secondary or utilitarian facades

Look at the following when replacing windows or doors:

1. Pattern and size of the openings.
2. Proportions of the sash and frame.
3. Configuration of the windowpanes.
4. Muntin profile.
5. Type of wood.
6. Paint color.
7. Characteristics of the glass.
8. Other details (arched hoods, decorative elements, etc.)

5. Detailed product specification sheets for the replacement window(s) or door(s) that includes styles, dimensions, profiles, materials, colors, method of construction, product guarantee/warranty, etc.
6. Historic reference photos, where available, of the original window and/or door configuration. (The Community Development Department or the Woodstock Public Library may be able to assist property owners in obtaining copies of historic reference photos.)
7. Schedule an on-site inspection of the window(s) or door(s) with the Community Development Department and/or the Woodstock Historic Preservation Commission prior to the review of their Certificate of Appropriateness.

Materials to Avoid

The *Design Review Guidelines for Properties in the City of Woodstock Downtown Business Historic Preservation District*, approved by the City Council, specifically state that among the materials to avoid in the historic district(s) are:

1. Vinyl windows
2. Vinyl siding, shutters or trim
3. Metalized reflective glass
4. Glass block

The use of these materials is inconsistent with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* and for approved use by the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency. Additionally, the use of these materials will likely result in a negative decision from the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency (IHPA) for historic property owners who apply for the Federal Income Tax Credit, the Illinois Property Tax Assessment Freeze program or the Illinois Heritage Grant program—all programs administered by the IHPA.

Review Considerations for Replacing Door(s) or Window(s)

When reviewing requests for replacement of historic doors or windows, the Woodstock Historic Preservation Commission will consider the following:

1. The Woodstock Historic Preservation Ordinance.
2. The *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*.
3. *Design Review Guidelines for Properties in the City of Woodstock Downtown Business Historic Preservation District*.
4. Is the building considered a contributing structure to the historic district(s)? Is it within the National Register of Historic Places District? Is it a national or local landmark? Does the structure have special historic or architectural significance or architectural interest?
5. Is it considered a non-contributing structure to the historic district(s)?

- 6. Is the façade original, nearly original or has it been greatly altered?**
- 7. Is it a recent, but non-intrusive structure?**
- 8. Will the replacements be on the primary façade (visible from street level), the secondary façade (upper story windows, but visible from the street) or utilitarian façade (generally, the backs of buildings and not visible from the street)?**
- 9. Do the replacement windows or doors reflect the original architectural style, design, and general arrangement of the building exterior; the nature and texture of the original building materials; and the type and style of the original windows and doors of the historic site or historic resource within the historic district?**

The following policies will be used by the Woodstock Historic Preservation Commission to determine the appropriateness of replacing historic door(s) or window(s):

1. Contributing (or landmark) buildings. Includes Commercial, Industrial, Residential, Public and Institutional.

Thoroughly assess the condition of the door or window sash and frames. Repair first, assuming windows or doors are original or historic. If the assessment determines that windows or doors are deteriorated beyond repair, replacements should be of materials, detailing and styling that are consistent with that of the original or existing historic windows or doors.

2. Non-contributing buildings.

Thoroughly assess the condition of the door or window sash and frames. Repair first. If the assessment determines that windows or doors are deteriorated beyond repair, the style and proportions of replacements should be consistent with building style, however, more flexibility should be allowed in the window or door material.

3. Existing additions to contributing (or landmark) buildings prominent and easily viewed from the street.

Thoroughly assess the condition of the door or window sash and frames. Repair first, assuming windows or doors are original or historic. If the assessment determines that windows or doors are deteriorated beyond repair, replacements should be of materials, detailing and styling that are consistent with that of the original or existing historic windows or doors.

4. Existing additions to contributing (or landmark) buildings not prominent or easily viewed from the street.

Thoroughly assess the condition of the door or window sash and frames. Repair first. If the assessment determines that windows or doors are deteriorated beyond repair, the style and proportion of replacements should be consistent with building

**Woodstock
Historic Preservation Commission**

**Woodstock Historic Preservation
Commission
c/o Community Development
Department
City of Woodstock
121 W. Calhoun St.
Woodstock, IL 60098
815-338-4305**

**Meetings are held the first Monday of
each month at 7:00 P.M. in City Council
chambers and are open to the public.
The facility is handicapped accessible.**

style, however, more flexibility should be allowed in the window or door material. Original historic portion will always be addressed by #1.

5. New additions to contributing (or landmark) buildings.

Windows and doors should match material, detailing and styling of existing windows and doors if on a prominent façade, but allowing flexibility of materials if addition is not prominent or readily visible from the street. Original historic portion will always be addressed by #1.

6. New additions to non-contributing buildings.

Windows and doors should match material, detailing and styling of existing windows and doors if on a prominent façade, but allowing for flexibility of materials if addition is not prominent or readily visible from the street.

7. New commercial or residential construction.

Flexibility should be allowed in material, however, styling, detailing, spacing and proportions should be appropriate to the suggested architecture or styling of the new structure. Interior snap-in or false, between-pane grids are not appropriate.

Resources

- **Fixing Double Hung Windows**, Old House Journal (no. 12, 1979): 135
- **Window Shopping**, Old House Journal (no. 5, 2003): 82
- **Preservation Brief #3: Conserving Energy in Historic Buildings**, Baird M. Smith, Washington, D.C., Technical Preservation Services, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1978
- **Preservation Brief #9: The Repair of Historic Wooden Windows**, John H. Myers, Washington, D.C., Technical Preservation Services, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1981
- **Preservation Brief #10: Paint Removal from Historic Woodwork**, David W. Look, Washington, D.C., Technical Preservation Services, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1982
- **Preservation Brief #13: The Repair and Thermal Upgrading of Historic Steel Windows**, Sharon C. Park, Washington, D.C., Technical Preservation Services, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1981
- See the following web page to view the Preservation Briefs:
<http://www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/briefs/presbhom.htm>
- **Epoxies for Wood Repairs in Historic Buildings**, Morgan Phillips and Judith Selwyn, Washington, D.C., Technical Preservation Services, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, (Government Printing Office, Stock No. 024-016-00095-1), 1978
- **Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation & Illustrated Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings**, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, National Park Service, 1983
- **NPS Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings:**
<http://www.gsa.gov/web/p/hftp.nsf/Guidelines+Rehabilitating+Historic+Buildings/OpenView>
- **Sealing Leaky Windows**, Old House Journal (no. 1, 1973): 5
- **Residential Windows: A Guide to New Technologies and Energy Performance**, John Carmody, Lisa Heschong and Stephen Selkowitz, New York, W.W. Norton & Company, 1996
- **Caring for Your Historic House**, Heritage Preservation and National Park Service, New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1998
- **A Field Guide to American Houses**, Virginia McAlester and Lee McAlester, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1997
- **The Window Handbook: Successful Strategies for Rehabilitating Windows in Historic Buildings**, (16 different NPS Tech Notes on Windows.)
- **The Window Workbook for Historic Buildings** (Companion to the Handbook, contains technical papers and listings for windows and restoration products.)
- See the following web page to view the Preservation Tech Notes:
<http://www.gsa.gov/web/p/hftp.nsf/NPS+Preservation+Tech+Notes?OpenView>
- **Repairing Old and Historic Windows: A Manual for Architects and Homeowners**, Washington, D.C., The Preservation Press, 1992
- **Save Your Wood Windows**, John Leeke; see Historic Homeworks website for ordering information:

<http://www.historichomeworks.com/hhw/reports/reports.htm#Save%20Your%20Wood%20Windows>

- **Creating Windows of Energy-Saving Opportunity**, Home Energy Magazine, Sept/Oct 1997 (article can be viewed at:

<http://www.homeenergy.org/archive/hem.dis.anl.gov/eehem/97/970908.html>

- **Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credits:**

http://www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/fax/tax_t.htm

- **Illinois Property Tax Assessment Freeze Program:**

<http://www.state.il.us/hpa/PS/financial.htm>

- **Illinois Historic Preservation Agency:**

<http://www.state.il.us/HPA>

- **National Trust for Historic Preservation:** <http://www.nationaltrust.org>