

Design Guidelines

Historic Downtown Greenville, Ohio



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Introduction

The purpose of design standards in Historic Downtown Greenville District is to preserve, protect and enhance the distinctive historical character of buildings in the district.

These standards are intended to direct the property owner in the design of building and signage improvements. They will be applied by the City of Greenville Architectural Review Board in evaluation of applications for a certificate of appropriateness.

Goals for these Design Guidelines for Historic Downtown Greenville is to:

- Promote historic preservation and economic development
- Preserve and restore historically and architecturally significant buildings
- Protect property values and encourage the viability of building usage in the district.

Promote retail, trade and tourism and professional businesses with effective reuse of structures, interiors and atmosphere.

National Register Significance

Greenville's Downtown District is placed on the National Register of Historic Places due to architectural and commerce significance from 1800-1920.

The Downtown Commercial District on S. Broadway is significant as a rural county seat that became wealthy from providing services for a large and prosperous farming area. It has been called the "retired farmers' town" and did not acquire any large industries until the 1950's when Fram Corporation and the Corning Glass Works located here. The commercial buildings record Greenville's orderly growth and development. The oldest buildings, modest mid-nineteenth century stores, are nearest to the public square. The grand 1880's Victorian business blocks follow these between Third and Fourth Streets. The less ornate structures erected in the early decades of the twentieth century are found in the 600 of S. Broadway.

Greenville platted in 1808, became the county seat of Darke County when it was organized in 1817. Progress was interrupted by the War of 1812 and again by the national stagnation of the 1840's. The settlement grew rapidly in the 1850's when three railroads and four turnpikes connected Greenville with other thriving and prosperous communities. In 1900, an Inter-Urban electric traction line joined Greenville with Dayton and Union City. These transportation routes allowed the area farmers access to markets that paid cash for their produce. This cash in turn allowed Greenville merchants and bankers to prosper.

For more information visit:

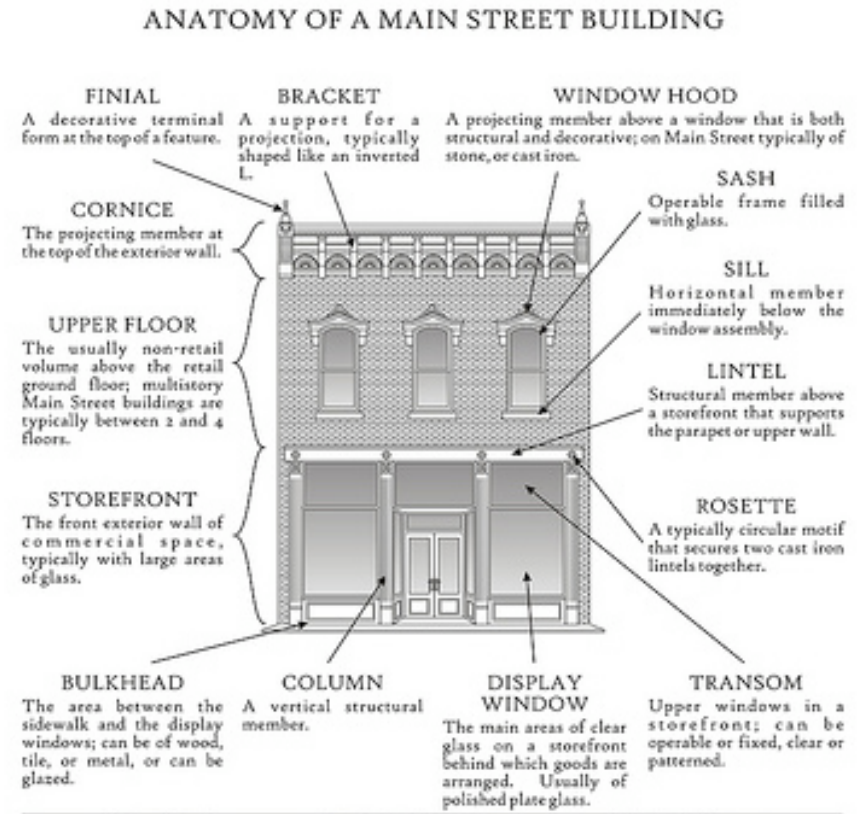
http://www.nps.gov/history/local-law/arch_stnds_8_2.htm

Funding Support

Contributing properties on the National Registered are eligible for a 20% Rehabilitation Tax Credit. Please contact Main Street Greenville for more information at 937-548-4998.

Design Assistance is available from Main Street Greenville please call 937-548-4998 or www.DowntownGreenville.org

Parts of a Historic Building

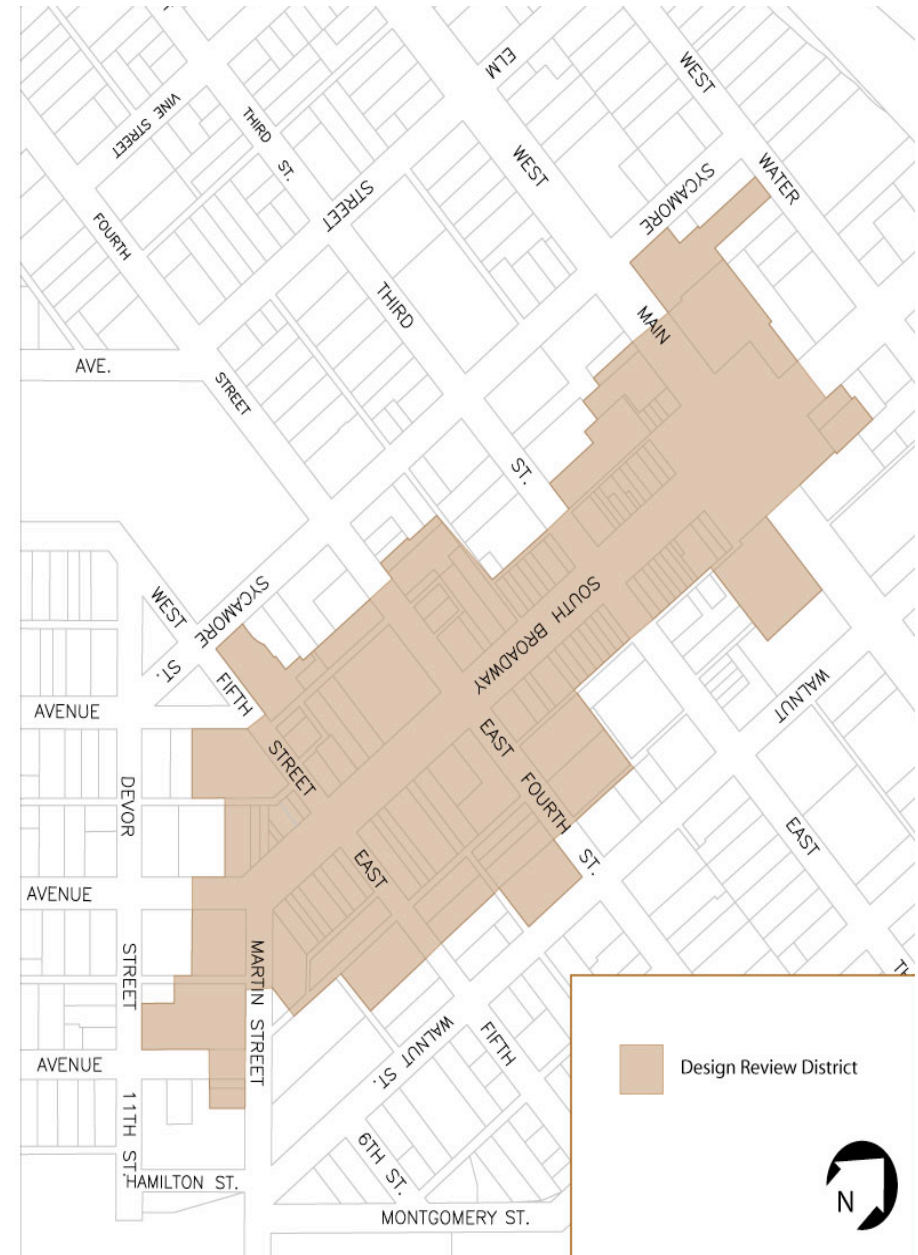


The Historic Downtown Greenville District Design Guidelines are based on the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. The Standards consist of eight general principles:

REHABILITATION STANDARDS

1. If the original use of the building is not feasible, every effort should be made to provide a compatible use, which will require minimal alterations to the building.
2. The distinguishing original qualities or character of the building should not be destroyed. The removal or alteration of any historic material or architectural features must be held to a minimum.
3. Deteriorated architectural features should be repaired rather than replaced. If replacement is necessary, the new material should match the material being replaced in composition, design, color, texture and other visual qualities. Repair or replacement of missing architectural features should be based on accurate duplications of original features, substantiated by physical or pictorial evidence rather than on conjectural design or the availability of different architectural features from other buildings.
4. Distinctive stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship, which characterize older structures and often predate the mass production of building materials, should be treated with sensitivity.
5. Well-designed changes to a building, which have taken place in the course of time, are evidence of its history. These changes may have developed significance in their own right and should be treated with sensitivity.
6. All buildings should be recognized as products of their own time. Alterations to create an appearance that is inconsistent with the actual age of the building is discouraged.
7. The surface cleaning of structures shall be undertaken with the gentlest means possible. Sandblasting should not be undertaken on any historic masonry surface.
8. New additions or alterations to existing buildings should be done in a manner that is compatible with the size, scale, color, material and character of the structure and its environment.

City of Greenville Design Review District Map



Design Guidelines for:

LANDSCAPING

DO – Retain trees, grass, plants, fencing, benches and outbuildings that are an important part of the property's history and development. Although little landscaping exists in Historic Downtown, the Courthouse and County Administration Building provide an excellent example of where this principle applies.

DO – Base landscaping decisions on actual knowledge of the past appearance of the property from photos, drawings, newspapers and tax records.

DO – Take advantage of modern landscaping conveniences and low maintenance features as much as needed, but take care to hide them from the viewing public

DO – Use plants native to the region. Plants and landscaping styles from the time period of construction should be a primary factor in landscape design.

DO – Consider modern landscaping alternatives that mimic the original when the original is too costly or otherwise inefficient. Never use an alternative without taking the time to price the original. It may not be as costly as you assumed.

DON'T – Make changes to the landscaping of the property by removing old trees, grass, plants, fencing, benches and outbuildings without evaluating their importance to the history and development of the property. Don't introduce landscaping where there formerly was meant to be none.

DON'T – Base landscaping decisions on conjecture or today's latest landscaping craze.

DON'T – Introduce tropical plants into a traditional setting or wildflowers into a historically formal setting.

DON'T – Display sprinkler systems and other landscaping conveniences where they will distract from the historic character of the property.

BRICK

DO – Clean brick only when necessary to halt deterioration and always with the gentlest method possible. Low pressure water and soft natural bristle brushes are recommended. Always start with a test patch in an inconspicuous area and allow it to dry before proceeding with the entire job. Be sure you like the results before proceeding.

DO – Retain original masonry and mortar, whenever possible, without the application of any surface treatment.

DO – Retain the original color and texture of masonry surfaces. Not all brick was meant to be exposed. It may have been painted or whitewashed for practical and aesthetic reasons. Study the building's history before undertaking this risky and expensive project.

DO – When a coating application is necessary, start with a test patch in an inconspicuous area and allow it to dry proceeding with the entire job. Examine the test patch to be sure that light reflects from the coating in a manner that is consistent with the rest of the building.

DO – Consider modern alternatives that mimic the original brick only when the original is too costly or otherwise inefficient. Never use an alternative to brick without taking the time to price the original. It may not be as costly as you assumed.

DON'T – Sandblast historic brick. This will remove the hardened outer coating, exposing the soft inner surface to the elements, which will cause deterioration of your brick. Modern brick can be sandblasted because its inner surface is hard rather than soft.

DON'T – Use chemical cleaning products, which could have an adverse chemical reaction with brick. For example, acid should not be used on limestone or marble.

DON'T – Apply waterproof or water repellent coatings or other treatment unless absolutely required to solve a specific technical problem that has been studied and identified. Coatings are frequently unnecessary and expensive. Furthermore, inappropriate coatings will accelerate deterioration of historic masonry rather than protect it.

DON'T – Apply coatings that lend a shiny texture to buildings that were originally dull brick.

DON'T – Remove paint from masonry surfaces because you assume it was originally bare brick. You may find that bricks underneath do not match each other or have been damaged by fire over time. Use the gentlest means possible if you determine that the paint should indeed be removed.

REPOINTING

DO – Check with a professional in historic preservation or a commercial building inspector before repointing to be sure it is absolutely necessary. Unnecessary pointing will cause more problems than it solves. As a rule, unless the mortar is worn away half of the depth of the brick, pointing is not necessary.

DO – Duplicate old mortar in composition, color, and texture when repointing. Always start with a test patch in an inconspicuous area and allow it to cure. Be sure you like the results before proceeding with the entire job.

DO – Duplicate old mortar in joint size, method of application and joint profile when repointing. Always start with a test patch in an inconspicuous area and allow it to cure. Be sure you like the results before proceeding with the entire job.

DON'T – Repoint unless it is absolutely necessary.

DON'T – Repoint using mixtures high in Portland cement content, which will create a bond that is stronger than the historic mortar material. This will cause deterioration as a result of the different coefficients of expansion and the different porosity of the original material and new mortar, worsening rather than solving your problem.

DON'T – Repoint with mortar joints of a different size or joint profile, color or texture.

STUCCO

DO – Repair or replace, where necessary, deteriorated material with new material that duplicates the old as closely as possible.

DO – Repair stucco as needed with a stucco mixtures duplicating the original as closely as possible in appearance and texture. Always start with a test patch in an inconspicuous area and allow it to cure. Be sure you like the results before proceeding with the entire job. Historical stucco is notoriously difficult to match.

DO – Clean stucco only when necessary to halt deterioration and always with the gentlest method possible. Low pressure water and soft natural bristle brushes are recommended. Always start with a test patch in an inconspicuous area and allow it to dry. Be sure you like the results before proceeding with the entire job.

DO – Use gentle cleaning products or clear water when cleaning stucco. Always start with a test patch in an inconspicuous area and allow it to dry. Be sure you like the results before proceeding with the entire job.

DO – Consider modern alternatives that mimic the original stucco only when the original is too costly or otherwise inefficient. Never use an alternative to stucco without taking the time to price the original. It may not be as costly as you assumed.

DON'T – Apply new materials which are inappropriate, such as siding.

DON'T – Repair stucco with mixtures that do not blend with the original.

DON'T – Use chemical cleaning products which could have an adverse chemical reaction with stucco. For example, acid should not be used on limestone or marble.

STONE AND OTHER MASONRY

DO – Use gentle cleaning products or clear water when cleaning stone. Always start with a test patch in an inconspicuous area and allow it to dry. Be sure you like the results before proceeding.

DO – Repair or replace, where necessary, deteriorated material with new material that duplicates the old as closely as possible.

DO – Repair or replace, when necessary, significant architectural features such as stone lintels and sills, brackets and brick detailing.

DON'T – Use chemical cleaning products which could have an adverse chemical reaction with stone. For example, acid should not be used on limestone or marble.

DON'T – Apply new materials which are inappropriate, such as siding.

DON'T – Remove architectural features such as stone lintels and sills, brackets and brick detailing.

FRAME BUILDINGS

DO – Retain and preserve significant architectural features whenever possible.

DO – Repair or replace, as needed, deteriorated material with new materials that duplicates in size, shape, and texture the original as closely as possible.

DO – Consider modern alternatives that mimic the original exterior only when the original is too costly or otherwise inefficient. Never use an alternative without taking the time to price the original. It may not be as costly as you assumed.

DON'T – Remove architectural features such as cornices, brackets, window architraves, and doorway pediments.

DON'T – Resurface buildings with new materials that do not duplicate the original.

ARCHITECTURAL METALS

DO – Retain original material whenever possible.

DO – Clean, as needed, with appropriate gentle methods.

DO – Retain or restore color and texture to metals; many were meant to be coated with paint or other materials and need to be for aesthetic and protective reasons.

DO – Consider modern alternatives that mimic the original architectural metals only when the original is too costly or otherwise inefficient. Never use an alternative without taking the time to price the original. It may not be as costly as you assumed.

DON'T – Remove architectural features made of metals.

DON'T – Clean with abrasives which may harm the surface.

DON'T – Expose metals that are meant to be coated.

ROOFS

DO - Preserve the original roof slope, shape and features such as skylights and dormer windows if possible. Roof slope is especially important in the “brick row buildings”.

DO – Retain or mimic the original roofing material if the roof is visible to passersby.

DO – Preserve or replace, where necessary, all architectural features which give the roof its essential character – such as domes, skylights, dormer windows, cupolas, cornices, brackets, chimneys, cresting and weather vanes which are visible to passersby.

DO – Replace deteriorated roof coverings with materials that match the old composition, size, shape, color and texture.

DO – Place television and mechanical equipment, such as air conditioning units, where they cannot be seen from the street.

DO - Constantly clean and maintain gutters and downspouts in order to prevent deterioration of building materials and water damage. Uncontrolled water is the number one enemy of historic structures.

DO – Consider modern alternatives that mimic the original only when the original is too costly or does not meet modern roofing standards. Never use an alternative without taking the time to price the original. It may not be as costly as you assumed.

DON'T – Replace deteriorated roof covering with materials that do not match the old in composition, size, shape, color and texture.

DON'T – Change the original roof slope, shape or add features inappropriate to the essential character of the roof such as oversized dormer windows or skylights if they are visible from the street.

DON'T – Apply new roofing material that does not mimic the original, especially if it will be visible from the street.

DON'T – Remove architectural features from the roof if they are visible to passersby. Don't apply inappropriate architectural details that will change the character of the roof.

DON'T – Place television and mechanical equipment where they can be seen from the street.

DON'T – Neglect downspouts and gutters or run them in such a way as to facilitate water damage to your own or another's property.

DON'T – Use roofs over windows and doors. You may want to consider using an awning in these spots for protection from sun, rain and snow.

EXTERIOR PAINTING

DO – Repaint with colors that are appropriate to the age of the building and character of the neighborhood. Please consult the color chart for suggestions or ask a historian, decorator, or painting professional.

DO – Remove loose paint using gentle means before repainting.

DO - Repaint with finishes that are appropriate for your property. Please consult the color chart for suggestions or ask a historian, decorator, or painting professional.

DO – Consider conducting your own research to discover the colors used on your building in the past. Since old photographs and drawings are unlikely to show colors, use this simple method. In an inconspicuous area, use a sharp knife or razor to cut a slit 2” – 6” long through all layers of paint and finish. Dip a rag in paint remover and rub in a circular motion over the slit. You will reveal each layer of paint one by one. You may have to rub very hard and you will have to dip the rag over and over again. The last layer should be close to the original color (assuming it did not fade too much before the second layer was applied). Repeat this procedure where different colors may have been used, like cornices, trim, windows and other architectural features.

DO – Use an appropriate number of colors (usually 2 to 5) to bring out the architectural detail in your building.

DON'T – Repaint with glossy finishes where flat is appropriate or visa versa.

DON'T – Use white as the dominate color of the buildings. Historically, white was mainly used for trim.

DON'T – Repaint with colors that are inappropriate for the age of the building and the character of the neighborhood.

DON'T – Remove paints and finishes down to the bare surface. Strong paint strippers, whether chemical or mechanical, can permanently damage the surface of sensitive historical materials.

DON'T – Limit yourself to only one color or use more than five colors on your building.

WINDOWS AND DOORS

DO – Retain existing windows and door openings including window sash, glass, lintels, sills, architraves, shutters (where original), door, pediments, and hoods.

DO – Use a method which will retain the original appearance from the exterior of the building if blocking down is necessary to accommodate interior design needs.

DO – Use commercial building materials in commercial windows and doors. First story glass in as much a security as an aesthetic issue, be sure that it is strong.

DO – Duplicate the material, design and hardware of older doors if you replace them with new.

DO - Consider replacing the glass in your windows with more energy efficient options rather than replacing the entire window. This method requires a professional consultant to deal with weight considerations.

DO – Consider restoring your old windows rather than replacing them. You may be surprised at the savings. You can sand and refinish the windows yourself or get help from a painter, furniture refinisher or other craftsman. Contact a glass shop to replace damaged or broken panes. Take care to replace old glazing and caulking for maximum energy efficiency.

DO – If you choose to replace your windows, find windows that mimic the size of the window panes and sashes. Call any good custom window company for estimates. Changes here will destroy the scale and proportion of the building.

DO – Consider going without storm windows, they are a modern invention, not appropriate to older buildings. If you feel you must have them, consider interior

storm windows rather than outside storms which detract from the detail of historical windows.

DON'T – Introduce new window and door openings.

DON'T – Close in window and door openings. If the opening needs to be closed to accommodate interior design needs, steps can be taken to preserve the look of a window or door from the exterior view.

DON'T – Enlarge windows or door openings. Especially avoid changing the window and door size to fit modern stock sizes.

DON'T – Reduce window or door openings. Especially avoid changing the window and door size to fit modern stock sizes. This practice is known as "blocking down."

DON'T – Use residential building materials, especially residential windows and doors on first stories.

DON'T – Assume that replacement windows are the most cost efficient option. Older building can be surprisingly efficient when windows are properly caulked and sealed.

DON'T – Install double pane glass in your old windows without professional help. The weighting mechanisms that lower and raise the window may not be able to handle the new glass.

DON'T – Replace your windows with new ones that have either more or fewer panes.

DON'T – Install a new door without regard for the design and materials in the original.

DON'T – Install inappropriate new windows or door features such as aluminum storm and screen covers that change the character of the building.

AWNINGS

DO – Use canvas awnings on commercial buildings if you wish. The size, shape, color, placement and texture should be compatible with the building and its neighbors. They shield the sidewalk from elements of rain, sun and snow and provide cool shade for interior of the building.

DO – Consider where you will place your sign if you install an awning.

DO – Use your awnings as a sign if you wish. The sign should be located on the front center of the awning.

DO – If you wish to have an awning and a conventional sign, hang the sign in the center, directly above your awning. You can only do this if the proportions of your building, sign and awning allow you to do so without covering second story windows or other architectural features such as the first story cornice.

DON'T – Use plastic or metal strip awnings that were popular in the 1950's and later. They detract from the character and appearance of the building.

SHUTTERS

DO – Use shutters only where they are appropriate.

DON'T - Assume that because your windows are currently shuttered that they always were. Many of the shutters were applied to hide the boarded up windows and should be taken off when the windows are restored. Look at old pictures or drawings of your building; you will probably find that shutters are a recent addition.

DO – Replace or repair as needed, shutters where they are indicated in the historical record. Shutters should be of original material or material that mimics the original.

DON'T – Replace shutters where they are not indicated in the historical record. Do not apply plastic or metal shutters where they should be wood.

DO – Be sure that your shutters are the right size. Shutters should be the same height as the window and they should touch each other in the center if they were closed. In other words, shutters should appear to work.

DON'T – install shutters that are shorter or thinner than needed to cover your windows.

SIGNS

DO – Investigate the historical record (pictures, newspapers, drawings) to see where signs were originally placed on your building.

DO – Use a sign that is compatible with the size, scale, mass and dimensions of the building.

DO – Build your sign of wood or similar appearing modern materials which mimic what was there in the past.

DO – If you want your sign to be lit, consider tasteful exterior floods on a timer to light the sign.

DO – Consider having your sign made professionally.

DO – Use sign colors that compliment the building and its neighbors. Consult the chart for some suggestions.

DO – Consider display window lettering for your sign if you wish.

DO – Use your awning as a sign if you wish. The sign should be located in the front center of the awning.

DO – If you wish to have an awning and a conventional sign, hang the sign in the center directly above your awning. You can do this only if the proportions of your building, signs and awning allow you to do so without covering second story windows or other architectural features such as the first story cornice.

DO – Follow all current zoning regulations regarding signage.

DO – Be sure that your sign lies against the building.

DON'T – Erect a sign that disregards the architecture of your building.

DON'T – Erect a sign that is so large that it covers important architectural features or overlaps windows or overcomes the building's character. Neither would you want a sign that is too small to serve its purpose.

DON'T – Build your sign of modern materials that clash with the historic nature of the building.

DON'T – Install interior lit signs without permission from the Architectural Review Board. They are often bulky and inappropriate for the design of the building. Neon signs are not permitted in the historical district.

DON'T – Erect signs that look unprofessional.

DON'T – Use sign colors that are historically inappropriate or that clash with the building and its neighbors.

DON'T – Leave out-of-date signs and flyers in your windows. Some guidelines recommend that historic districts avoid placing these materials in windows as they detract from the building and store sign.

DON'T – Erect a sign that projects out over the sidewalk or awning.

RHYTHM, HEIGHT and SCALE

DO – Retain distinctive features of the neighborhood’s existing architecture such as the size, scale, mass, color, materials, and details, including roof lines, building height and width, and presence of windows that give the historic district its special character.

DO – Notice and respect the rhythm created by the repetitive size and spacing in your building. These repetitive elements should be treated as a group when renovating. For example, use the same color scheme on each window when painting.

DO – Notice and respect the rhythm created by the similar size and shape of buildings along Broadway.

DON'T – Introduce features into the neighborhood that are incompatible with the character of its architecture because of indifferences in size, scale, mass, color, materials and details.

DON'T – Jeopardize this rhythm by changing the size or spacing of repetitive, rhythmic elements. Do not treat them independently of one another when they should be treated as a group; for example, painting them differently when they should be painted alike.

DON'T – Jeopardize the rhythm of the neighborhood by joining buildings together when they should be separate or separating a building into multiple elements when it should be one; for example, awnings should respect building boundaries.

NEW CONSTRUCTION

DO – Respect the setbacks in the neighborhood. Generally, this means that the building or in-fill construction should begin at the sidewalk.

DO – Design new work to be compatible in materials, size, scale, color and texture with the earlier buildings in the neighborhood.

DO – Consider the height of the surrounding buildings.

DO – Protect architectural features that contribute to the character of the existing structure when building an addition.

DON'T – Set the project back further than its neighbors. This would destroy the corridor character of the historic district.

DON'T – Imitate earlier style or periods of architecture in new additions.

DON'T – Add new height to the building that changes the scale and character of the building. Additions in height should not be incompatible with those done traditionally in the district and should not dwarf neighboring buildings.

DON'T – Destroy or demolish any building in the historic district unless it is a hazard to public safety or completely beyond redemption.

ZONING

DO – Contact the Greenville City Engineering Department for zoning regulations and permits @ (937)548-4930.