



Collegeville Design Guidelines

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Purpose and Vision	4
PART I	
Introduction and Statement of Intent	5
Scope of Area	7
Historical Background	9
Regional Setting	10
PART II	
Architectural Overview	12
PART III	
Guidelines for Making Improvements—Buildings	14
General Principles	14
Design Principles	15
Site	15
Proportion, Scale and Massing	16
Rhythm	17
Design Elements	18
Garages	18
Windows and Doors	19
Shutters	20
Porches	21
Awnings	22
Modern Amenities	22
Colors	23
New Construction	25
Building Additions	25
Existing Building Alterations	27
Infill Construction	28
Maintenance	30
PART IV	
Streetscape	31
Existing Streetscape Elements	31

TABLE OF CONTENTS (continued)

PART V	
Signs	32
Awning Sign	33
Freestanding Sign	33
Wall Sign	33
Window Sign	34
Projecting Sign	34
Sandwich Board Sign	35

PART VI	
Landscaping	37
Street Trees	37
Examples of Selected Street Trees Suitable for Canopies	38
Planting Buffers and Beds	39
Planting Boxes	40

Part VII	
Hardscape	41

Conclusion	42
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APPENDIX	
Architectural Styles	43
Italianate	43
Second Empire	44
Eastlake	44
Queen Anne	45
Period Revival	46
Vernacular	47
Definitions	48
References	51



Purpose & Vision

The purpose of the Collegetown Main Street Program is to improve the quality of life of our community by strengthening the downtown as a center for economic and social development, based on the strong foundation of our historic past, through concentrated efforts in organization, promotion, design and economic restructuring.

PART I

Introduction and Statement of Intent

The Collegeville Central Business District (CBD) is full of seasoned, Victorian Era buildings with pedestrian friendly setbacks and front porches or display windows and a network of sidewalks which all form a foundation that allows Collegeville to be an attractive small town. However, as is the case for many of Pennsylvania's small towns that have lost the strength of their downtown economic vitality, some buildings are worn down, inappropriately renovated or suffer from other noticeable signs of disinvestment and lack of attention to the design details that help to mold a central business district.

To that end, in 2004, Collegeville Borough enacted updated guidelines for the Main Street area which provide the basis for these guidelines and are endorsed by the Collegeville Economic Development Corporation (CEDC).

The purpose of the CEDC Guidelines is to:

- Develop criteria for Design Guidelines and implement Main Street façade

improvements and restorations;

- Help to develop relationships with key groups and individuals to support the development of creative design options;
- Investigate other local zoning ordinances, adapting best in class;
- Develop working relationships with property and business owners; and
- Guide the use of Design Challenge grant money from DCED and other sources.

One of the special features of Collegeville is its historic buildings. These buildings were largely built well before World War I, with many of the buildings dating back as far back as the Victorian Era with such building styles as Queen Ann, Second Empire and Federal styles. There are also Gothic Revival and Italianate style buildings, adding to the diversity of building options available in the CBD.

Participating Pennsylvania Main Street communities develop design guidelines that will foster historically sensitive façade improvements utilizing a combination of Collegeville Main Street and DCED funding. These guidelines will not be mandatory for all Main Street improvements, but will be required for façade improvements regarding Main Street Grants.

Collegeville Main Street wants to remind our residents that these qualities are our heritage. By improving the appearance and creating beautiful, clean, and safe downtown environments, we are giving residents and visitors the visual message that we care about our town. We are convinced this message will translate into more people coming to and socializing in our commercial areas for shopping, dining, and/or entertainment. By following the suggestions in these design guidelines we can create attractive communities, rooted in the past, but very much attuned to contemporary needs and desires. These design guidelines are the first steps in improving the town in which we live.

The purpose of the CEDC Design Guidelines is to provide a vision for the revitalization of our borough's commercial downtown district.

These guidelines also create a framework for property and business owners, who desire to make improvements to their properties. Suggesting ways to: improve the building's façade, construct harmonious additions and building modifications, advertise the business with attractive signage and lighting, and enhance the neighborhood with streetscape and landscaping designs, the guidelines contain many recommendations designed to preserve, restore, and enhance the qualities which makes our borough a unique place to live and work.

The guidelines are also created to allow the borough businesses to participate in the Pennsylvania Commonwealth's Main Street Design Challenge Grant Program. This program provides funding to businesses wishing to enhance and upgrade their storefronts. Compliance with the recommendations in these guidelines is mandatory to participate in the program.

For residents or businesses located outside the designated downtown district, it is hoped that these guidelines will also be useful when planning your property's improvements.

The recommendations found here are purposely written in somewhat

general terms, so they will be appropriate to any building in the designated Main Street area and beyond.

By providing these guidelines, the Main Street Program wants to encourage the property owners of Collegeville to enhance their buildings and properties by bringing back the traditional charm and highlighting the remaining historic features. The results of these efforts, by both business people and residents, will not only improve our quality of life, but will also contribute to economic development in our borough, and allow us to promote a Main Street that is attractive and distinct from surrounding malls and shopping centers.

Scope of Area

The borough has a distinctive downtown district. In Collegeville, the primary downtown area extends along both sides of Main Street from First to Fifth Avenue, and back to areas of Chestnut Street. For the purpose of these guidelines, the downtown area is defined as follows:

- **Main Street from First to Fifth Avenue**
- **Chestnut Street from Third to Fourth Avenue**
- **Third Avenue from Main Street to Chestnut Street**
- **First Avenue from Main Street to Trans Fleet**

These streets are composed of businesses, interspersed with private residences as well as buildings that have been converted into apartments or duplexes. Some former residences have also been modified into office spaces.

This work is complemented by PennDOT plans for the intersection of Route 29 and Main Street and the Collegeville Borough plan for streetscape of Main Street only through the entire borough.

Historical Background

Collegeville, like all of Pennsylvania, was originally part of a grant made to William Penn by Charles II of England in 1682. Penn designated the area which is now the borough as the Gilbert tract. The tract also included the present townships of Upper and Lower Providence and parts of Perkiomen and Worcester.

The first family of settlers was the Lane family. In 1689, Edward Lane constructed a house that has been enlarged and remodeled into the Perkiomen Bridge Hotel, a major landmark in the region. The hotel is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, as is the nearby bridge.

In 1708, Edward Lane constructed the first mill on the Perkiomen Creek. It was located near the site of the old Collegeville Dam. This mill, which survived until 1972, was a major element in the early settlement of Collegeville. However, it was not until 1799, with the construction of the Perkiomen Bridge, that settlement began in earnest. It was located along the banks of the creek and soon developed into a village known as Perkiomen Bridge.

By the mid-nineteenth century, another village, called Freeland, was

founded. About one-half mile from the older village, it was clustered along the western end of Main Street, while Perkiomen Bridge continued in this location near the creek.

Collegeville began to take on its present form after the arrival of the railroad in 1868. The two villages had vied for both the location and name of the train station. The railroad settled the matter with a compromise. The station was placed between the two villages and named Collegeville, after the nearby Pennsylvania Female College.

The railroad's choice proved prophetic, for as the two villages began to grow together, and with the founding in 1869 of Ursinus College, Collegeville became the accepted name. The present Borough of Collegeville was incorporated in 1896 when it was formally separated from Upper Providence Township.

Regional Setting

Historically, a small college town surrounded by farmland, Collegeville is presently in the midst of a rapidly suburbanizing region. Collegeville's position in the lower half of the Perkiomen Valley places it in the Route 422 growth corridor. This corridor will continue to be one of the fastest growing sections of the county through the next decade.

Its eastern border is the intersection of Route 29 and Ridge Pike. These roads provide direct access to Collegeville; permitting the surrounding areas to utilize the borough's commercial districts. With the presence of a redeveloping commercial district on Main Street and the existing shopping centers on Route 29, the borough is thriving as a sub-regional shopping center. It provides convenient shopping and everyday goods and services to much of the lower portion of the Perkiomen Valley. The presence of three major pharmaceutical companies and other office buildings nearby has transformed the rural landscape to a business campus. It is expected that more companies will settle in this area.

Ridge Pike and Route 29 also provide the borough's residents with convenient access to the region's

major retail and employment centers. Ridge Pike provides direct access to the county's two largest boroughs: Norristown, the county seat and Pottstown, a site for a satellite campus of the county's community college. Route 29 provides direct access to Route 422, via an interchange just south of the borough. This interchange provides Collegeville, and the entire valley, with direct access to King of Prussia, a major retail and employment center, the Pennsylvania Turnpike, and the cities of Philadelphia and Reading.

Collegeville is also served by public transportation. The Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) provides bus service to the borough, through a line that extends from Norristown to Pottstown. In Norristown, the line terminates at a regional transportation center. This provides a direct connection to the SEPTA regional rail network.

The borough's most significant natural feature is the Perkiomen Creek. This creek, located on the borough's eastern border, is part of a vast watershed that extends far beyond the county's border. Both the county and the borough own land along the creek, which includes the newly-opened Perkiomen Trail

from Green Lane to Valley Forge Park.

The other, most significant feature of Collegeville is the beautiful campus

of Ursinus College which spans both sides of Main Street between 5th and 9th Avenues.

PART II

Architectural Overview

Buildings in a community reflect the era in which the community was founded, the styles and tastes of the ethnic groups living in that community, and also the influence of the country's architectural trends. However, sometimes building owners were more concerned with shelter, function, and the ease of construction rather than with architectural design. Examples of all these influences are found in Collegeville's downtown buildings.

Although constructed in the 19th century, our earliest downtown buildings are based on simple architectural designs from England that have been labeled "Old Colonial." These buildings are generally rectangular in shape and have steeply pitched roofs with gables at each end. The gabled house usually has two forms. The "broadside" has a roofline facing the street, while the "gable end," has its gable fronting the street. In Collegeville, the majority of buildings are "broadside."

In later years, some buildings of this type were often decorated with details of styles that were popular when they were constructed. They

are the oldest structures in the downtown areas and show characteristics from every architectural period from the Greek Revival to the late Victorian period.

These characteristics may include the inverted "V" center dormer characteristic of the Gothic Revival style or porches with brackets and spindles as well as "fish scale" patterns on outside walls with Eastlake detailing.

Around the turn of the 20th century, buildings in Collegeville began to be constructed in the latest and most fashionable styles that were being influenced by national styles and trends. Turrets and towers in the Queen Anne style appear on new buildings. Colonial Revival houses are constructed. Cornices, parapets, or Italian Renaissance detailing are applied to older simple buildings. Any of these buildings could be found in other small towns throughout America.

Although Collegeville was initially settled by Welsh or English immigrants, the dominant ethnic group has been Germans from the Palatinate region, Along with, and

often identified as Germans, were Swiss, Dutch Mennonites, and French Huguenots. These settlers constructed gable buildings but often added their German-style pent roofs, which are evident on a few of our borough buildings of both older and more modern construction.

It is the architectural styles and elements as outlined above that provide a unique sense of place for

our community. The retention, preservation and/or replacement of these features should be of primary importance as we enhance and revitalize our downtown area.

The “Architectural Styles” section of the Appendix provides more details on the specific features of each architectural style found in Collegeville.

PART III

Guidelines for Making Improvements – Buildings

This section, which is divided into specific categories, details the guidelines for making improvements. Through the implementation of these guidelines, the Main Street district will be enhanced and the existing historic fabric will be used to create a pleasant and attractive environment.

General Principles

When restoring or remodeling older buildings the recognized benchmark for maintaining a building's integrity are the ten guidelines contained in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. It is the intent of these standards that they be applied to projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration both fiscal constraints and available technology.

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 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, 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.

The goal of the design principles outlined below is to preserve and enhance the architectural integrity of existing structures in the commercial districts. These criteria will be utilized in the grant review process.

Design Principles

Site

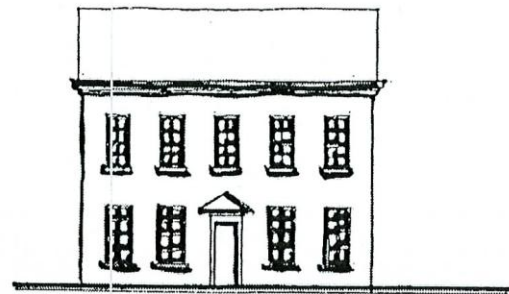
A viable, workable Main Street community is enhanced by having buildings either front on the sidewalk for easy access or with related activities between the building and the sidewalk. (For example, outdoor tables for an eating establishment). Since our Main Street district has both sidewalk-front and setback street use, it is important to harmonize them into a unified, “walkable” whole.

Proportion, Scale and Massing

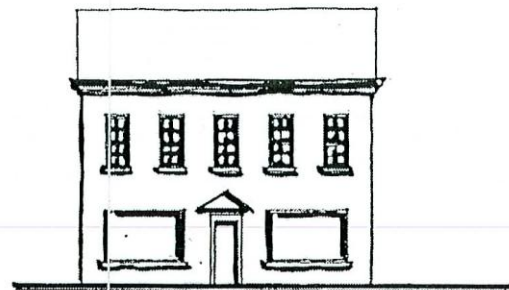
A building's proportion is the relationship of its height to its width. It also can be the relationship of a building's individual elements or features to the structure as a whole. A building's scale is its relationship to surrounding structures. Is it the same height as its neighbors? Along most of the street corridors in Collegeville, any building over three

stories would be out of scale with its neighbors.

A building's mass is its bulk when viewed from its most common view. How does its shape or its form relate to surrounding structures? Along the corridor, massing is particularly important when dealing with the inter-relationships of freestanding structures. With attached structures the inter-relationships of scale and proportion is often more important.



Proper proportion of windows

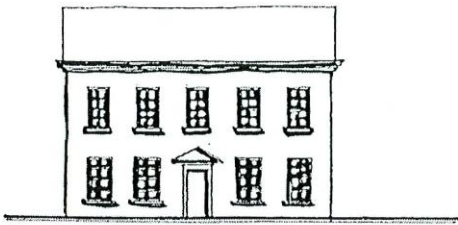


First floor windows out of scale with other windows and building

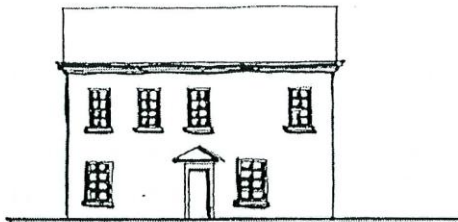
Rhythm

Rhythm is measured by the façade of a structure, both with the building itself and with its neighbors. Rhythm is created by the spacing and the number of openings in a building's façade, such as doorways and windows. A sense of rhythm is created and sustained when these

openings balance each other through their placement and size. When this rhythm is disrupted, through the closing of an opening or the enlargement of one beyond its correct proportion, the individual structure's balance or rhythm is lost and this affects both the structure and the streetscape.



Harmonious rhythm created by wall openings



Rhythm is disrupted by uneven pattern.



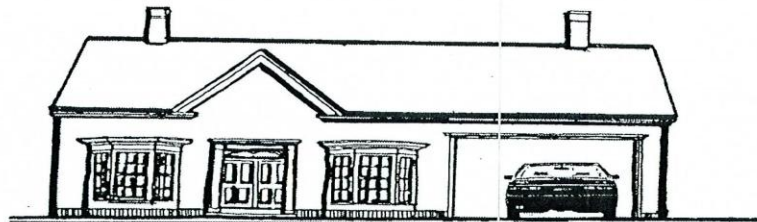
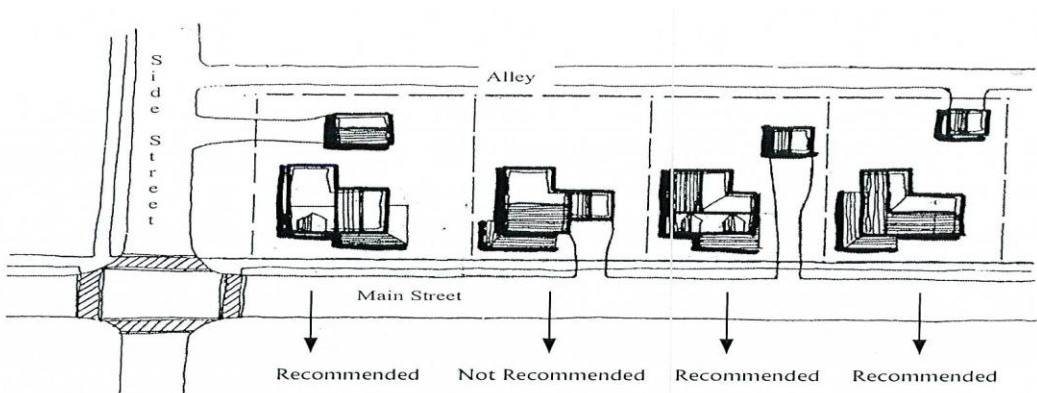
Rhythm is continued on the second and third floors and discontinued on the first floor.

Design Elements

Garages

First floor garages, particularly those that face the street are discouraged. Not only is a garage door historically inaccurate for most buildings in the main street area, its appearance would disrupt the street rhythm by introducing a wall opening that is not in scale with traditional openings such as doors and windows.

Also, garages along these corridors reduce on-street parking opportunities through curb cuts and can cause pedestrian and traffic disruptions. In general, all garages should be located to the rear of the property and, when possible, take access from alleys or side streets.



Garage doors should not be in Main Street façades.

Windows and Doors

While the retention of original windows and doors is preferable, this is not always practical.

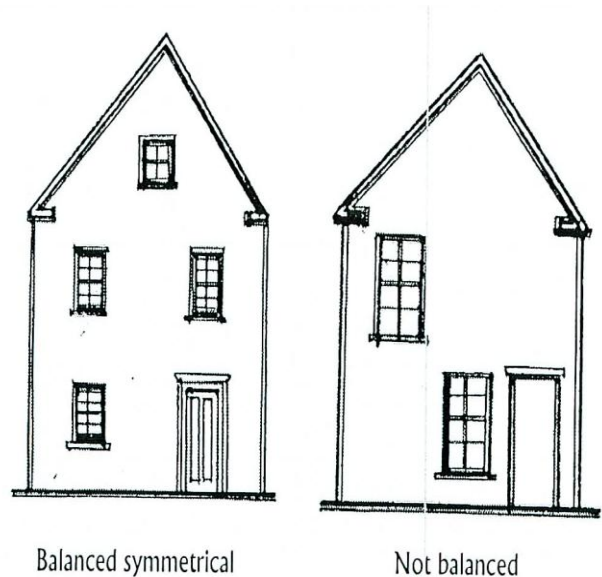
However, in recent years many manufacturers have begun making replacement windows and doors that are not only energy efficient but also historically accurate.

Therefore, the following general guidelines should be applied to window replacement:

- All new windows should duplicate the originals in size, shape, location, and style and meet the earlier guidelines on "Rhythm." (If the original windows were sash, then casement windows should be avoided.)
- Picture windows should only be used in structures originally designed for them, such as early 20th century commercial buildings.
- The type of window used should compliment the original design of the building. A colonial style

window is as disruptive in a Victorian or 20th century building as a picture window is in a Colonial building.

Doors, too, should be of the same style and size as the originals. In most cases, existing openings should not be enlarged for new doors or windows. If handicapped access is required and must be located in the front, an architect should be retained to design an access whose



proportions and scale do not disrupt the rhythm of the façade or the streetscape.

Shutters

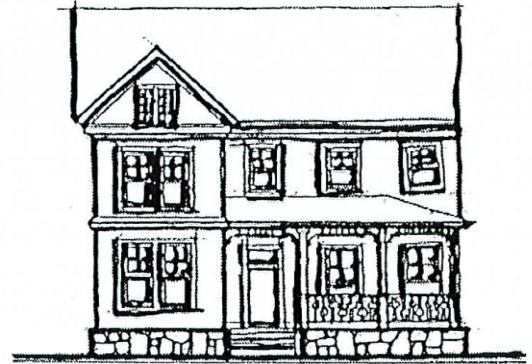
Shutters should not be added to create a Colonial or traditional appearance on a building when they are inappropriate to the building's original design. This is often the case where an owner adds them to a large picture window. Throughout the borough's Main Street areas there are buildings for which shutters are appropriate, especially those built prior to the Civil War and those designed in the Colonial Revival styles of the early 20th century. When they are used, their width must be in proportion to the window that they flank and should be made of period materials. Narrow shutters should not be used for wide windows and never should they be used in conjunction with picture windows.



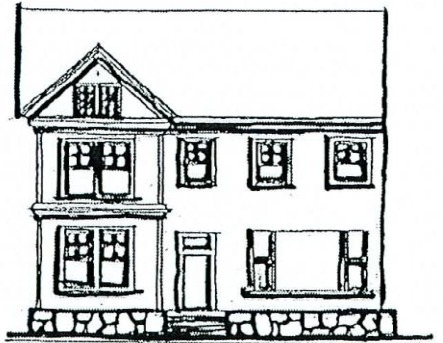
Proper shutter width for the windows

Porches

In most cases existing porches should be preserved and left open. The enclosing of porches with opaque material along Collegeville's Main Street to increase interior space has created, in certain blocks, a disruptive and jarring streetscape. If porches must be enclosed, large glass areas should be used to retain the appearance of the porch and every attempt should be made to retain as much of the original decoration as possible and incorporate it into the design. One way to extend a building toward Main Street is to add a period porch.



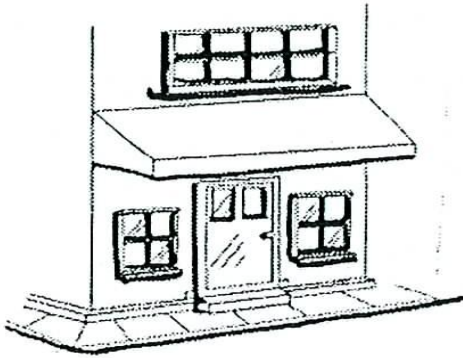
Recommended preserved porch



Not recommended removed porch

Awnings

Many buildings, both commercial and residential, used awnings years ago. They provided shade from the hot sun and, for commercial properties, were also an effective way to advertise a business. Only fabric, permanent or foldout awnings should be used. Back lighted awnings should not be permitted.



Modern Amenities

Features of the modern age such as air conditioning units, especially window units, satellite dishes, and television or other antennas should be screened from view along street frontages. The preferred placement of these utilities is to the side or rear of a property. For pitched roofs, placement should be on the slope not visible from the street.

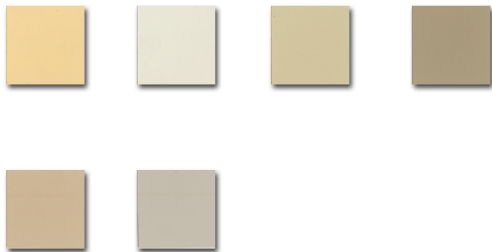
Colors

Color choice for a building is often a personal one and representative of an individual's taste. However, since certain colors are not appropriate for buildings of a particular period, and since appropriate colors not only enhance an individual structure, but can also be used to unify the streetscape, it is important to develop a criteria for them. A pleasing color scheme throughout an area can make it more inviting and attractive to shoppers and residents.

The Collegeville Main Street program has identified a color palette as a guideline. There are a wide range of colors that are appropriate for the majority of the buildings in the Main Street areas and the following color schemes are related to architectural style:

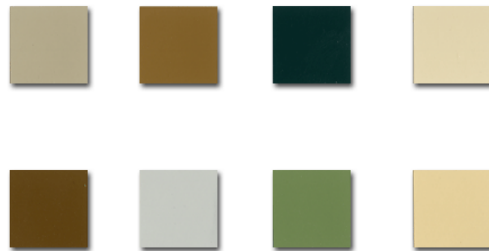
Greek Revival structures tend to be monochromatic and utilize only a few colors—with white being the most prevalent.

Greek Revival historic color palette



Victorian and early 20th century buildings used a wide variety of bold colors often utilizing different colors to emphasize architectural details.

Late Victorian historic color palette



The Gothic Revival and Italianate styles used colors based upon nature.

Gothic historic color palette



The Queen Anne style used bright colors, often utilizing pastels.

Queen Anne historic color palette



The early 20th century styles had a strong reaction against late Victorian exuberance – numerous colors are

appropriate for buildings in these styles.

The goal is to create a harmonious streetscape through the use of colors. A series of Victorian houses, all wildly painted, may create an interesting streetscape, but in a downtown area this could lead to a lot of chaos.

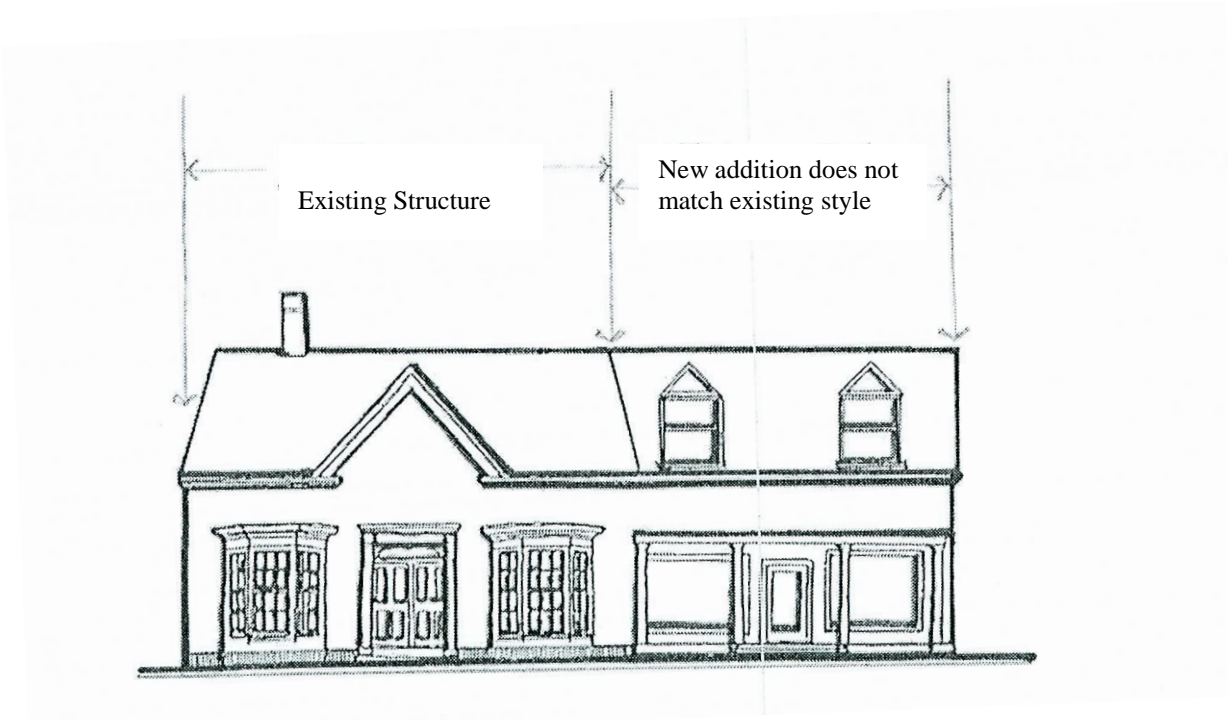
When reviewing Façade Improvement Grant Applications, the Design Committee may recommend a limited choice of colors to foster visual harmony.

New Construction

Building Additions

Additions are generally viewed as having a deleterious effect on the historic fabric of a building and the streetscape. However, some building additions are desirable and can enhance the design of the existing building. They can be an indication that a commercial area is healthy and that property owners are willing to make an additional investment in their property. Additions should only be regarded as harmful if their design detracts from a building or streetscape. New construction can be used to bring the front of the building to the sidewalk.

There are several basic guidelines that should apply to any building additions. Overall, the addition should compliment the existing structure by conforming to its style and building materials. The scale, proportion, and massing of the original building should be reproduced in the new addition to avoid any disruption of a given street's rhythm.



The following guidelines should be followed:

- Preserve the front façade and existing roofline.
- Maintain the original building's character.
- Additions should be constructed of the same materials as the original structure and should be built in the same architectural style.
- The floor levels and rooflines of the new addition shall compliment the original structure.

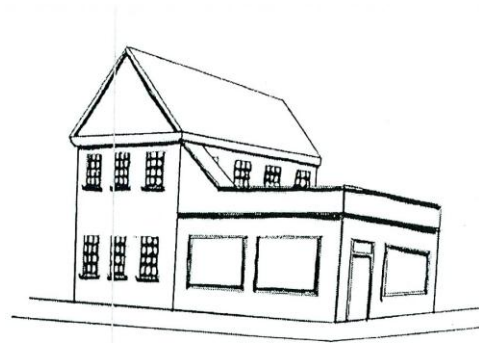
Conversely then, the following should be avoided:

- Changing the style of the existing building or removing original features to accommodate the new addition.
- Placing new windows and doors in a way that disrupts the existing rhythm of the original structure.
- The use of colors or materials that clash with the original building and/or streetscape.

Existing Building Alterations

These are different than additions only in that they have occurred in the past and may have been present for so long that they should now be considered part of the building's historic fabric. These are especially apparent in the downtown area where older houses have had their front porches replaced with storefronts. It is both unreasonable and financially unrealistic to expect a property owner to remove this improvement and replace it with a historically accurate porch. It would also be historically disingenuous. Storefronts added to old houses in commercial areas are present throughout America. Whatever one may think about their attractiveness, and some can be very attractive, they represent a very practical solution for a structure's reuse. Their presence, too, helps us to remember that many commercial areas started as residential areas. Therefore, the issue is not to remove them, but instead to determine which period of time the building's dominating

design style represents. As with other buildings discussed in this guideline, they should reflect the period of time when they were built. Therefore, an Art Deco façade should not be Colonialized or Victorianized, but rather reflect good Art Deco design. By adhering to this, the creation of an artificial streetscape will be forestalled and the variety found in a streetscape that evolved over a 100-year period will be preserved and highlighted.



Infill Construction

While much of this document has been concerned with existing buildings, it is also important to address new construction.

Development of underutilized sites and the demolition of deteriorated sites will create opportunities for new buildings. Similar to additions, this should not always be viewed as a negative occurrence but rather as an indication of a healthy business district. The focus then, should not be on prohibiting new construction, but as was the case with additions, should be on design.

Anyone familiar with any of the main street districts is aware that stylistic conformity is not a hallmark of these areas. Developed over the past 150 years, these areas contain buildings of numerous styles. Therefore, the approach to new construction should focus on two main points:

1. **New structures should respect the adjacent buildings in regard to scale, proportion, massing, and material; and**
2. **The design of any new building should be compatible with the surrounding structures.**

Not recommended new infill building



Recommended new infill building



By compatibility, it is not intended that a new building be a slavish recreation of an earlier style, but rather that it incorporate design elements present in the district in which it is located. Such an approach is consistent with the Post-modern movement in architecture, where traditional design elements are applied to a new building. Such an approach should forestall the creation of a bland theme-oriented village and would not tie a designer's hand to a single style. Rather it would allow flexibility to be creative within the guidelines contained in this document.

Therefore, the following guidelines should be followed for all new buildings:

- The scale, proportion, and massing of a block, and in particular, of the adjacent buildings should be maintained.
- Building materials and colors should be consistent with the existing buildings in the district.
- The rhythm of the block and, in particular, adjacent buildings should be continued and maintained through the placement of windows, doors, floor levels, and rooflines that is compatible with these existing structures.
- New buildings should contain design elements to help them fit into the existing streetscape. The elements should not be used, however, to produce a building that is a reproduction of an earlier style.

-

Conversely, the following should be avoided:

- Building designs that draw attention to themselves by not respecting the existing streetscape and buildings.
- Street façades without windows or entrances.
- The slavish re-creation of a particular style.

Maintenance

Proper and diligent maintenance is necessary to preserve an individual structure. Special attention must be given to design details and features, the elements of a building that add much to a streetscape, for they are often removed because of deterioration brought upon by years of deferred maintenance. The culprit that causes most deterioration is water. Water, generally in the form of moisture can silently accelerate a structure's deterioration until it is beyond repair. Therefore, maintaining a building's integrity is an important consideration in the Façade Improvement Program. Design features, in particular, are cheaper to preserve than replace.

While most maintenance techniques are understood by building owners, there are many modern techniques that will actually accelerate deterioration and damage a structure when applied to an older building. For example, prior to the 1870s bricks were softer than their modern counterparts. Repointing using a modern mortar mixture (a preponderance of Portland cement) can cause them to crack and lose their protective covering. The Internet website for the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Illustrated Guidelines for Restoration provides a lot of helpful information. As part of the Main Street program, information on proper historic building maintenance will be available from the Main Street office at 476 East Main Street.

PART IV

Streetscape

As important as design guidelines are for buildings, it is also useful to formulate policies for the streetscape. Included in this section are recommendations for types of signs, landscaping, and hardscaping. Through the implementation of these policies, the rhythm, harmony, and unity stressed by the building guidelines can be carried over to the features found in the streetscape.

Existing Streetscape Elements

The Borough of Collegeville has an approved plan for streetscape on Main Street. This plan includes:

Increased landscaping, period streetlights, and amenities such as a plaza, bicycle racks, and seating are planned. To continue aspects of these ideas along other streets in the borough would enhance these streets and create a sense of unity throughout the area.

For example, the period streetlights should be installed throughout the area, as should street trees.

Concrete, stamped and colored to appear as brick, is an effective, yet inexpensive and desirable method to distinguish crosswalks. Through this delineation the streetscape is enhanced and drivers are notified that they are sharing a space with pedestrians.

Regarding other hardscape improvements, street furniture, trash receptacles, and streetlights should not try to replicate a particular style, but should harmonize with all the various styles found throughout the main street districts.

A simple and traditional appearance should be emphasized over elaborate re-creations of a particular style.

It is features such as these that future improvements should enhance. The repetition of these features throughout an area is often as important as a significant individual building in maintaining the rhythm and harmony of a streetscape.

PART V

Signs

Perhaps the most controversial of all regulations are those pertaining to signs. For business owners these are often the single most important aspect of advertising their business and any restriction on them is sometimes viewed with suspicion, if not outright hostility. The purpose of these guidelines is to make business owners realize that a certain uniformity in signage creates an attractive streetscape. It precludes the creation of signs that compete with one another, thereby causing such dissonance that they are often ignored and their purpose negated. An attractive sign is more than an element in a well-designed streetscape, it is also an effective advertisement for the business it represents.

The simpler the sign the more effective it is. Too much information is difficult, if not impossible, for a viewer to absorb. Signs for businesses should identify the business and perhaps one other item, such as a principal product. Often a simple graphic is the best way to convey a product or service.

Similarly, the use of color should be limited to two or three colors.

Likewise the chosen colors, while they should not clash, should be distinguishable enough to provide a clear contrast. Light colored lettering on a dark background provides the most readable format, because it reduces glare in the daylight and reflects light better at night.

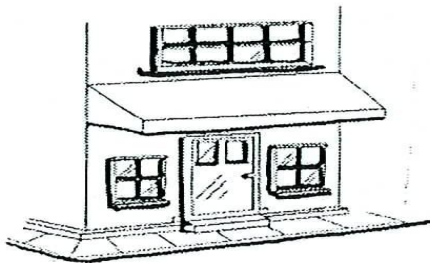
The materials used in the sign should reflect the traditional character of the borough's downtown. Wood or metal are traditional materials and were most common years ago.

Natural materials are preferable over artificial ones, such as plastic. However, some modern materials can be made to resemble wood and in some cases may be appropriate. In general, though, painted or carved wood signs or painted metal signs are those most appropriate for the main street district. They most clearly reflect the architectural heritage of the borough.

The lighting of signs can also be controversial. Few businesses want unlit signs. However, in keeping with the traditional appearance sought for signs, internally lit signs should be avoided. Instead signs should be externally lit through the use of a lighting source that shines on the sign's surface. Glare can be reduced from the light source by using shielded light fixtures or, by landscaping if the lighting is ground mounted.

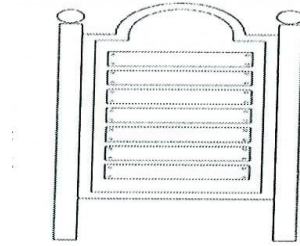
The following are the types of signs appropriate for the Main Street district. No more than two of each sign type is recommended for each business.

Awning Sign



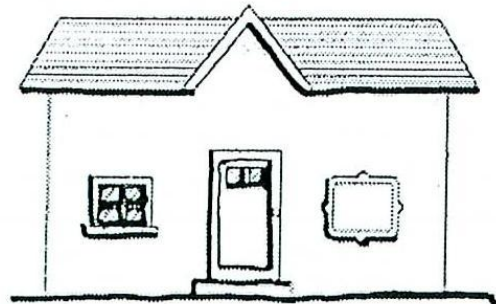
An awning sign is a sign painted on or applied to a structure made of cloth, canvas, or similar material which is affixed to and projects from a building.

Freestanding Sign



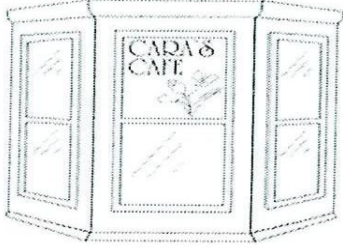
A freestanding sign is permanently supported by an upright support that is anchored in the ground. This type of sign is best used for businesses that are setback from the street and have front yards. Similar to the recommended materials for signs, the supports should be of wood or metal.

Wall Sign



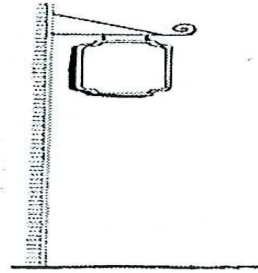
A wall sign is affixed to a building's wall. They are effective not only for listing multiple tenants, but for also advertising business hours and the property's address. Care should be taken not to obscure architectural details when using a wall sign.

Window Sign



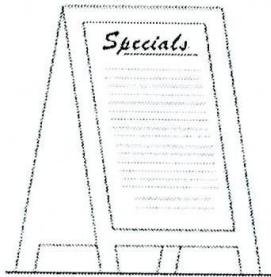
A window sign is either painted or attached to the inside surface of a window. Unlike wall signs, these do not obscure architectural features and were quite common during the Victorian period. Size limitations are necessary to avoid cluttering up the entire surface of a property's windows.

Projecting Sign



A projecting sign is attached to the façade wall of a structure and projects out from that wall. An effective sign is placed well above the sidewalk and does not project into the cartway of the street nor block significant architectural features.

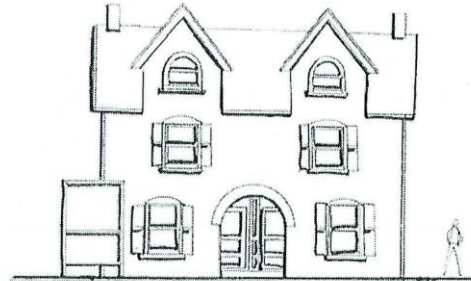
Sandwich Board Sign



Essentially an A-Frame design made up of two boards containing text which are placed in front of a store, this type of sign has long been used by shopkeepers to advertise daily specials or sales. Effective and eye catching, these signs are often banned by municipalities, because their placement on public sidewalks can be a hazard and create liability issues. However, they are a traditional sign form found along Main Street and if properly used, can be an integral part of a commercial district.

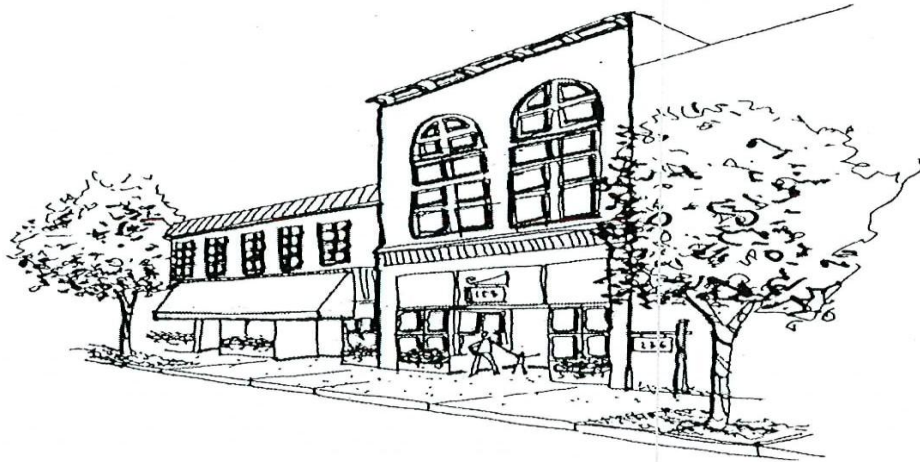


Recommended



Not recommended

In conjunction with adopting these sign guidelines, the borough should review the sign ordinances in the zoning codes to ensure that they provide the proper regulations for these types of signs.



Recommended



Not Recommended

PART VI

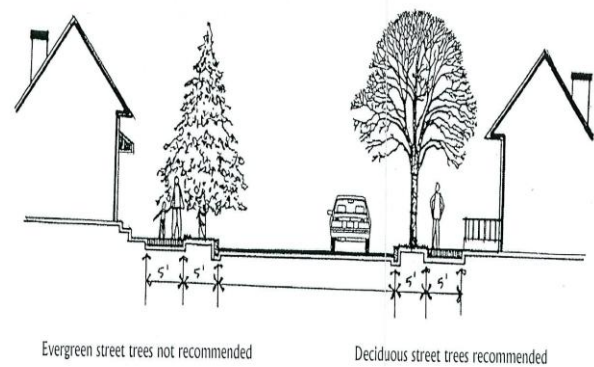
Landscaping

Landscaping is an important aspect of any successful streetscape. It can be used to create a street rhythm, reduce heat and sun glare, and soften the hard edges created by the built environment. In the main street areas, landscaping can take several forms. It can be street trees, planting buffers and beds or window boxes. If properly done and maintained it will always provide an inviting presence. The advice of a landscape designer is encouraged before the start of any landscape project.

Street Trees

Shade trees should be used for street trees. Generally, these are trees that grow from 30 to 40 feet in height. While smaller ornamental trees may be desirable in certain situations, it is shade trees that are best suited for most streets. Unlike smaller trees, their lower limbs can be removed so the visibility of businesses and their signs are not blocked. Many have a branching structure that will arch over the street, providing a green canopy that is quite attractive.

Only deciduous trees should be used as street trees. Conifers are not appropriate, both for their branching structure and their lack of heat tolerance. Any chosen tree must be able to withstand soil compaction, salt and heat, and should not have an invasive root system or drop a lot of leaf litter.



It is also important to plant the proper tree for the chosen location. If light shade is desired, a finely leafed tree with a compound leaf structure would be the right choice. Such trees are also appropriate because they do not obscure architectural features on the upper floors of buildings. Conversely, if shade is desired, a simple leafed tree with a dense habit is preferable.

Size limitations must also be a concern. In a confined area, fastigiated varieties of trees, those bred to grow upright, should be considered. In more open areas or places where a wide canopy is preferable, wide spreading trees should be considered. However, there is no perfect tree. All have desirable and undesirable attributes. Therefore, when choosing a street tree, its specific location and its natural characteristics must be taken into consideration.

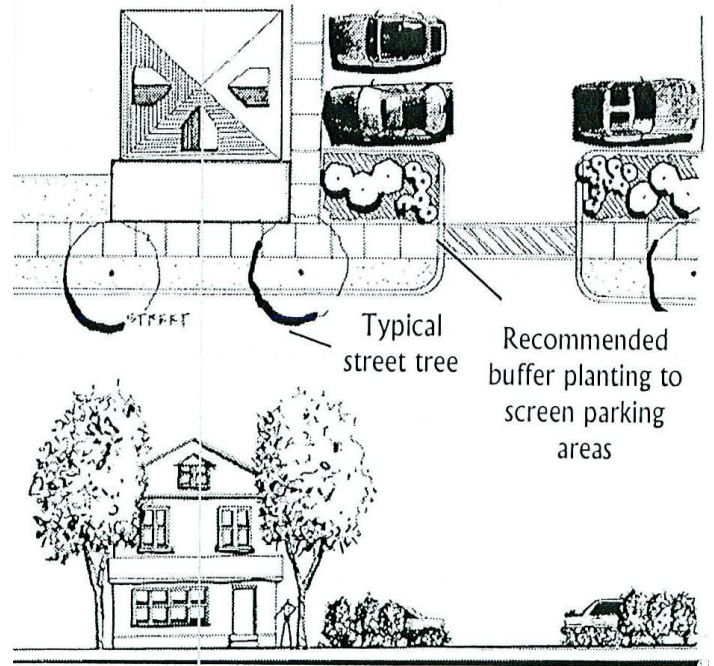
Examples of Selected Street Trees Suitable for Canopies

These trees were chosen among the best overall street trees for this region by the Pennsylvania State University College of Agriculture. While this is by no means an exhaustive list, these trees exhibit more positive than negative qualities and are hardy for planting along borough streets.

<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>Common Name</u>
Acer rubrum	Red Maple
Celtis occidentis	Hackberry
Fraxinus Pennsylvania	Green Ash – Use Patmore or Marshalls Seedless
Gleditsia tricanthos (inermis)	Thornless Honeylocust
Plantanus x acerifolia “Bloodgood”	London Planetree
Quercus imbricaria	Shingle Oak
Quercus phellos	Willow Oak
Quercus coccinea	Scarlet Oak
Ulmus paruiifolia	Chinese Lacebark Elm
Zelkova serrata	Japanese Zelkova
Liquidambar styraciflua	Sweet Gum (look for fruitless cultivar)

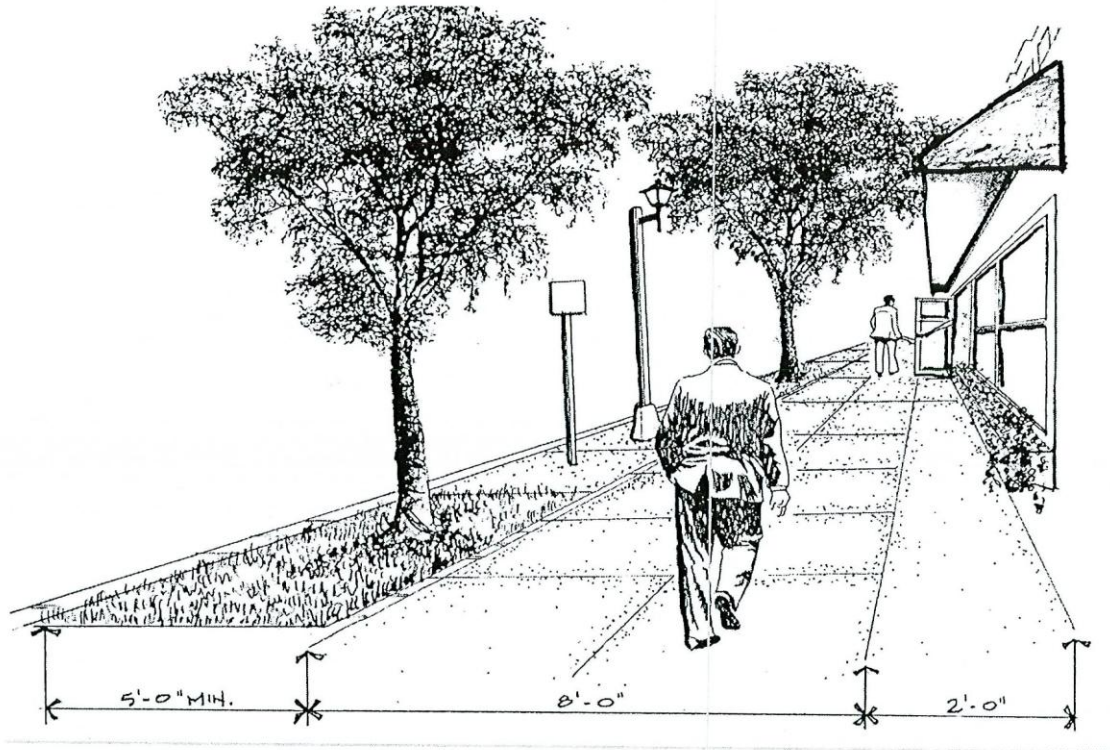
Planting Buffers and Beds

Buffers are an effective screening device for parking areas, utility boxes, dumpsters, and service areas. The best buffers use a variety of deciduous and coniferous shrubs, and shade trees. Properly chosen plants can create year-round interest while providing an effective buffer for screening parking lots, loading areas or trash receptacles. Planting beds, especially those that feature perennial and annual flowers, were a popular Victorian feature found in most yards. Appropriate for front yards or pocket parks, they provide summer color and can be an effective method for handling stormwater runoff



Planting Boxes

In the absence of front yards, planting boxes, either attached to windows or placed on sidewalks can bring an element of nature to areas generally devoid of it. They provide color and soften the hard textures of downtown commercial buildings. They also signal to those who pass by that business or property owners care about the property's appearance.



Overall streetscape scene with street trees, awning, and planting boxes

PART VII

Hardscape

The non-natural design features that make up a streetscape are known as hardscape—the street lights, sidewalks, and street furniture that can make a downtown inviting and worth exploring. In recent years the borough has used consultants to design plans for areas of downtown. The plans recommended improvements that contain both landscaping and hardscaping features.



Collegetown

Conclusion

Unless a business or property owner is applying for a facade grant, the guidelines contained in this report are simply recommendations. However, it is hoped that this information will inspire property owners to take a closer look at their buildings and, when embarking upon improvements, to make careful considerations before removing or covering design features.

While the nature of improvements may be incremental, Design Guidelines contribute to the long-term success of Main Street by creating a sense of cooperation that brings out the best not only in the buildings but in the people who live, work and shop in our towns.

APPENDIX

Architectural Styles

The following is a brief description of the various architectural styles that are found in the downtown area of Collegeville. It covers the period from the mid-1800s to the 1950s, the roughly 100-year period during which most of the extant buildings were constructed. It should not be viewed as a comprehensive guide to all of the architectural styles popular during this time period.

Italianate (1850s–1878s)

Another picturesque style, it was based on Italian villas. Similar to the Gothic style it was meant for country houses, but was applied to everything from mansions to row houses to commercial properties. It is characterized by a general asymmetrical shape, although sometimes it is found in a cube

shape that is accompanied by towers or cupolas. Windows are round-headed and often with hood moldings. Roofs are low-pitched with wide eave overhangs. These overhangs are decorated with brackets. It is characterized by the following:

- Heavy eave brackets.
- Low-pitched roofs.
- Towers, cupolas or belvederes.
- Rounded or segmental arched windows, often with heavy moldings at the top.
- Bay windows.
- Detailed cornices.

Few, pure Italianate style buildings exist in the borough, however many properties contain elements of the style, such as eave brackets, rounded or segmental arch windows, and Italianate-styled bay windows.



Second Empire (1860s–1880s)

This style was created in France during the reign of Louis Napoleon, which is why it was named Second Empire. It is characterized chiefly by its use of the mansard roof. The style became popular in the United States shortly after the Civil War. Besides this roof, there are few other design elements identified only with this style. It was often used in conjunction with Italianate detailing.



Many older houses, including Colonial dwellings, were modernized with the mansard roof, which was popular because it provided an additional full story. It is characterized by the following:

- Symmetrical façade.
- Mansard roof.
- Round or segmented arched windows.
- Projecting center tower.

- Dormers with pediment.

A style best known today for its association with the cartoons of Charles Addams and the Addams family, few pure examples exist in the main street area. However, numerous Mansard roof houses exist throughout, often this roof masks their earlier origins.

Eastlake (1870s–1880s)

This style is not so much a style as a form of detailing; it was named after an English architect. In America it was primarily an appliqué, almost always in wood, that was applied to houses constructed in other styles or to simple Vernacular dwellings of no discernible style. It was often used for porches or as wall treatments. Much of what we identify today as Victorian gingerbread is actually Eastlake detailing. It is characterized by the following:

- Heavy, elaborate carved wood scrolls, brackets and spindles, generally used in porches or at the top of gables.
- Fish scales and herring bone patterns on outside walls.

Numerous porches along Main Street are in the Eastlake style, it is generally applied to simple dwellings, which were either modernized with this style or “dressed up” by it.

Queen Anne (1880s–1910s)

The style most popularly identified as Victorian, this style, named after an English Queen, consists of an irregular form with detailing applied, seemingly, everywhere. Turrets, towers, wall panels, and wrap around porches—early examples were in the Eastlake style, later ones contained classical detailing—and steeply pitched roofs with dormers are characteristic of the style. Early examples used elaborate heavily carved details, while later examples became simpler and used Neo-Classical or Georgian elements. It is characterized by the following:

- Steeply pitched roofs with dormers.
- High elaborate chimneys.
- Turrets and towers.
- Wrap around porches.
- Decorative wall panels.
- Eastlake, Neo-Classical or Georgian detailing.

While few high style Queen Anne houses are in the main street area, they do exist throughout the borough. Many of these dwellings in the downtown area have been altered.



Period Revival (1900s–1940s)

Around 1900, it became popular to either construct buildings in earlier historic styles or to apply detailing from historic styles to them. While this could range from constructing fake Greek temples or Elizabethan villas, it was most commonly used to construct Colonial Revival houses or to apply historic detailing to commercial buildings. Examples of the latter are found throughout the main street area. Many a simple commercial structure was made more elaborate by the addition of a classical cornice or Italian Renaissance detailing. In particular, windows, cornices or parapets received this detailing. It is easy to see why. These elements are the most adaptable when trying to create a distinctive style. They can be applied without altering the basic utilitarian form of the structure.

The Period Revival style is characterized by the following:

- Authentic reproductions of earlier styles.
- Details from earlier styles applied to modern or utilitarian buildings.



Vernacular (1850s–1950s)

As discussed above, throughout the main street areas are buildings that have no formal style, but are simple, plain functional structures. Some have had details from a style applied to them either through remodeling

or through a builder's efforts to transform a basic structure into something more elaborate. Many have had a style affixed to them through a center Gothic "V" gable or an Eastlake porch. Yet, many old commercial structures were also devoid of style.

Definitions

Architrave: The lowest horizontal member of a classical entablature below the cornice and the frieze.

Bargeboard: A sloping ornamental board along a gable which conceals the ends of rafters.

Bay Window: An angular projection of a house filled by fenestration.

Belvedere: A roof-top pavilion.

Broadside: A gabled roof house where the roof plane faces the street.

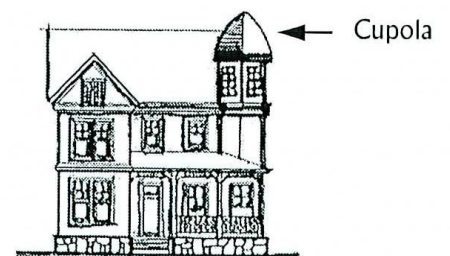
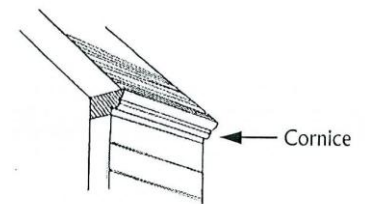
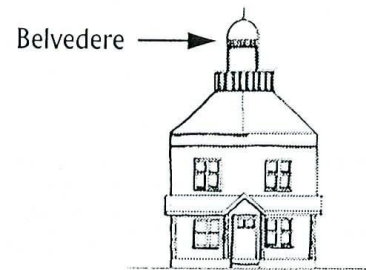
Casement Window: A window containing two casements separated by a mullion (vertical dividing bar).

Colonnade: A series of regularly spaced columns.

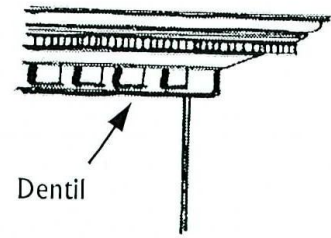
Cornice: The projection at the top of a wall; the top course or molding of a wall when it serves as a crowning member; in classical architecture the cornice rests above the frieze.

Corinthian Order: A classical order characterized by slender fluted columns and ornate capitals decorated with stylized acanthus leaves.

Cupola: A small dome crowning a roof or turret. Cupola as a term is sometimes used interchangeably with belvedere.



Dentil: Small, square, tooth-like blocks found in series on many cornices, moldings, etc.



Doric Order: A classical order characterized by a plain capital, heavy fluted columns, and no base.

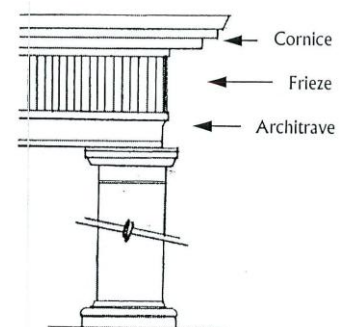
Dormer: A vertical window projecting from the slope of a roof; usually provided with its own roof.

Entablature: In classical architecture, part of a building that consists of the architrave, frieze, and cornice.

Facade: The front elevation of a building.

Fenestration: The arrangement of windows and other exterior openings on a building.

Frieze: The middle horizontal member of a classical entablature above the architrave and below the cornice.



Gable: The triangular end of an exterior wall in a building with a sloping roof.

Gable-End: A gabled roof house where the gable faces the street.

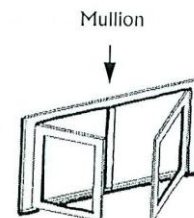
Hip-Roof: A roof formed by four pitched slopes.

Hood Moldings: A protective and often decorative cover found over doors, windows, etc.

Ionic Order: A classical order of columns characterized by a capital with opposing volutes (spiral design).

Mansard Roof: A roof that is often gabled and has on each side a relatively flat top slope, usually containing dormers.

Mullion: A vertical or horizontal dividing member of a frame between windows.



Pediment: A triangular section framed by a horizontal molding on its base and two sloping moldings on each of its sides often used as a crowning element for doors, windows, etc.

Picture Window: A large, often single-paned window designed to frame an exterior view.

Portico: A covered walk or porch that is supported by columns or pillars; see colonnade.

Sash Window: Any framework of a window that may slide in a vertical plane.

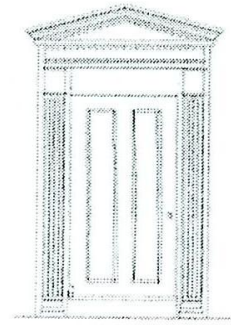
Scrollwork: Ornamental work that contains scroll-like elements.

Segmental Arch: An arch formed by an arc or by the segment of a circle.

Transom Window: A small window or a series of panes above a door, casement or double hung window with a transom (a horizontal bar of wood or stone).

Turret: A small and slender tower often located at a corner of a building.

Vernacular: Regional architectural style.



Pediment

References

Web Sites:

National Park Service Preservation Briefs

<http://www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/briefs/presbhom.htm>

National Park Service Information on Historic Buildings and Structures

<http://www.cr.nps.gov/buildings.htm>

The Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

<http://www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/tax/rehabstandards.htm>

Bureau of Historic Preservation, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum
Commission

<http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/BHP/>

Preservation Pennsylvania

<http://www.preservationpa.org>

National Trust for Historic Preservation

<http://www.nationaltrust.org/>

<http://www.nationaltrust.org/Magazine/>

Preservation Contractor Directory

<http://www.preservationweb.com/>

Main Street Links:

Pennsylvania Downtown Center

<http://www.padowntown.org/>

National Main Street Center, National Trust for Historic Preservation

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