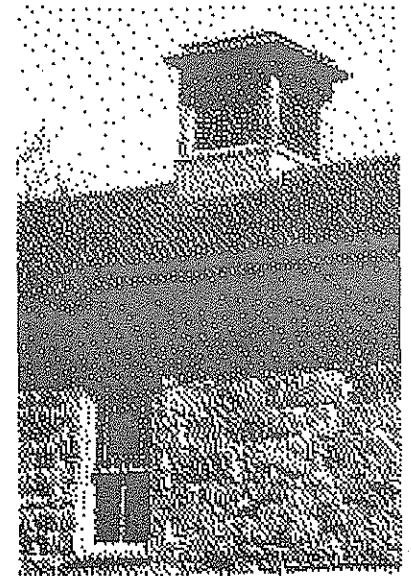
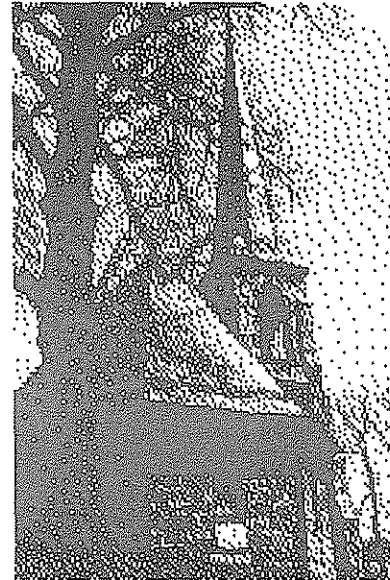
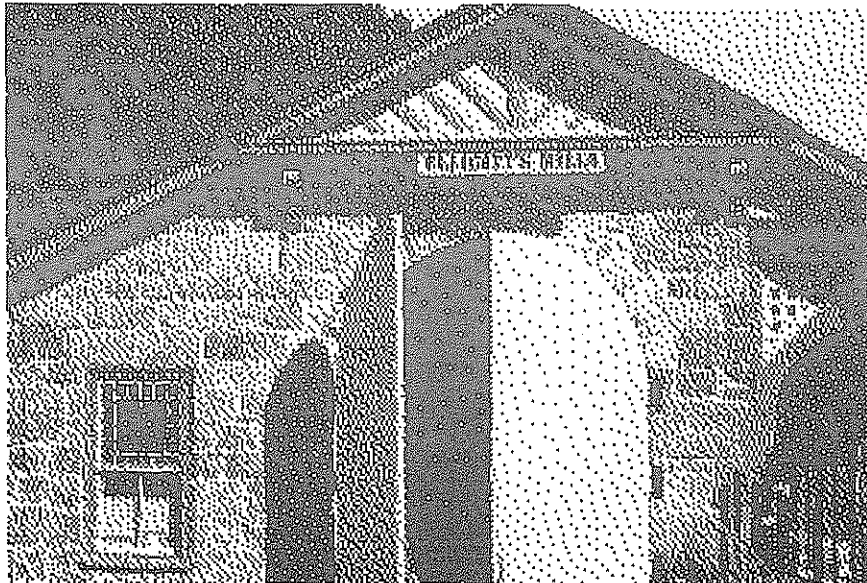




Ellicott City Historic District Design Guidelines



Howard County, Maryland / 1998

Ellicott City Historic District Design Guidelines

Adopted by the Historic District
Commission on May 7, 1998



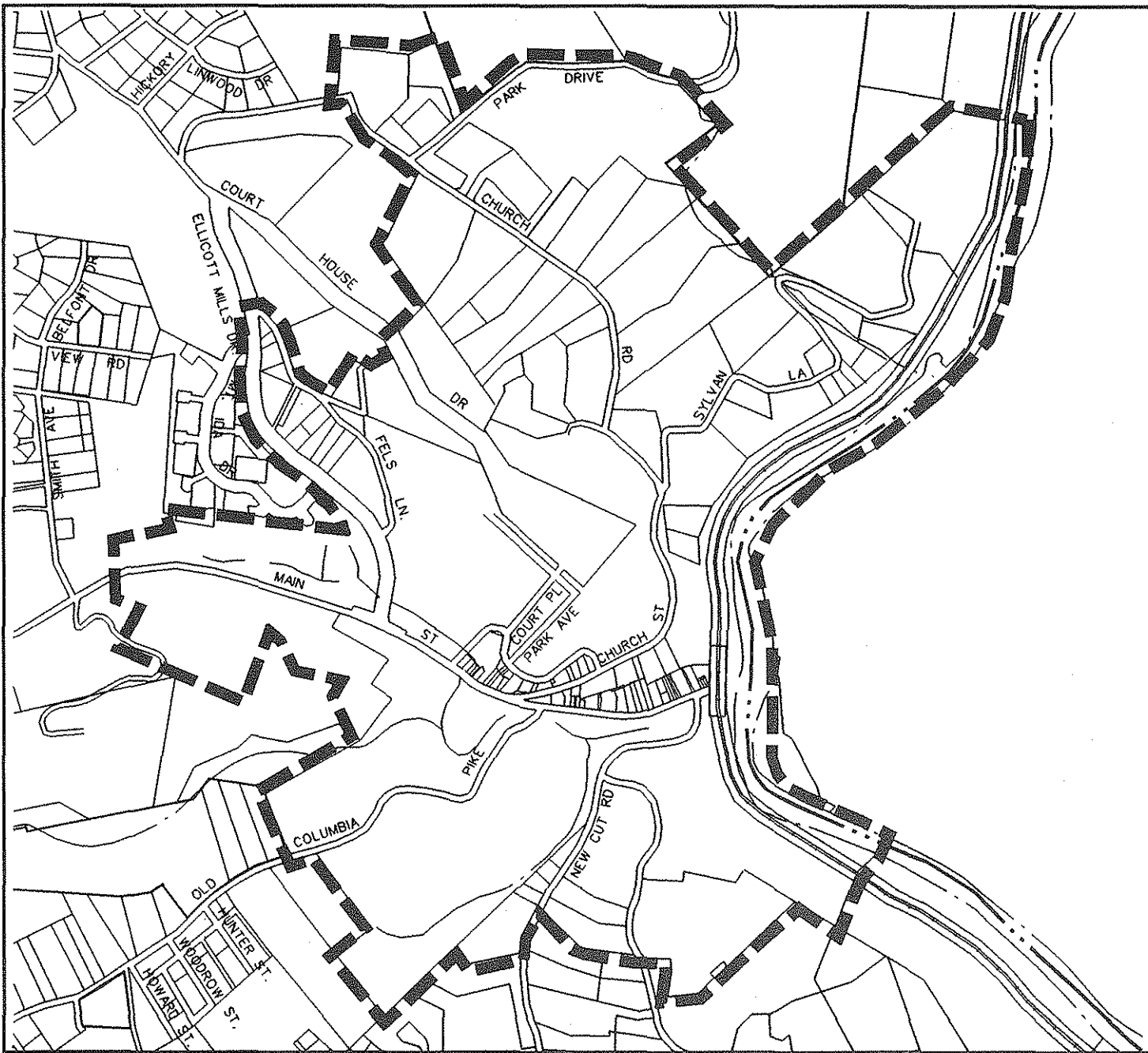
Historic District Commission
3430 Courthouse Drive
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043
410-313-2393
(TTY 410-313-2323)

Forward

Design guidelines are no substitute for good design. To achieve effective design in a historic district, the principal participants needed are a property owner or applicant responsive to the goals of historic preservation, a good designer (for projects where a design professional is employed), and an alert and sympathetic governing body. The glue of community understanding holds them together and, in most cases, contributes the ingredients required for a good project to emerge.

Ellicott City is no exception. Many responsive applicants and good designers are apprehensive about government regulations and/or review boards. Review groups such as the Historic District Commission should be understanding and helpful in applying regulations and review principles. Cooperation, coordination and care are the three "Cs" of planning for historic

districts. These guidelines are dedicated as a tool to promote the three "Cs" and to assist all persons in improving the Ellicott City Historic District of Howard County, Maryland.



ELLICOTT CITY HISTORIC DISTRICT

--- Boundary

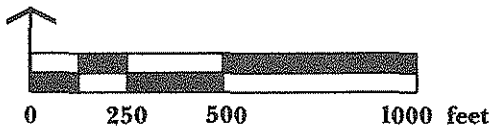


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


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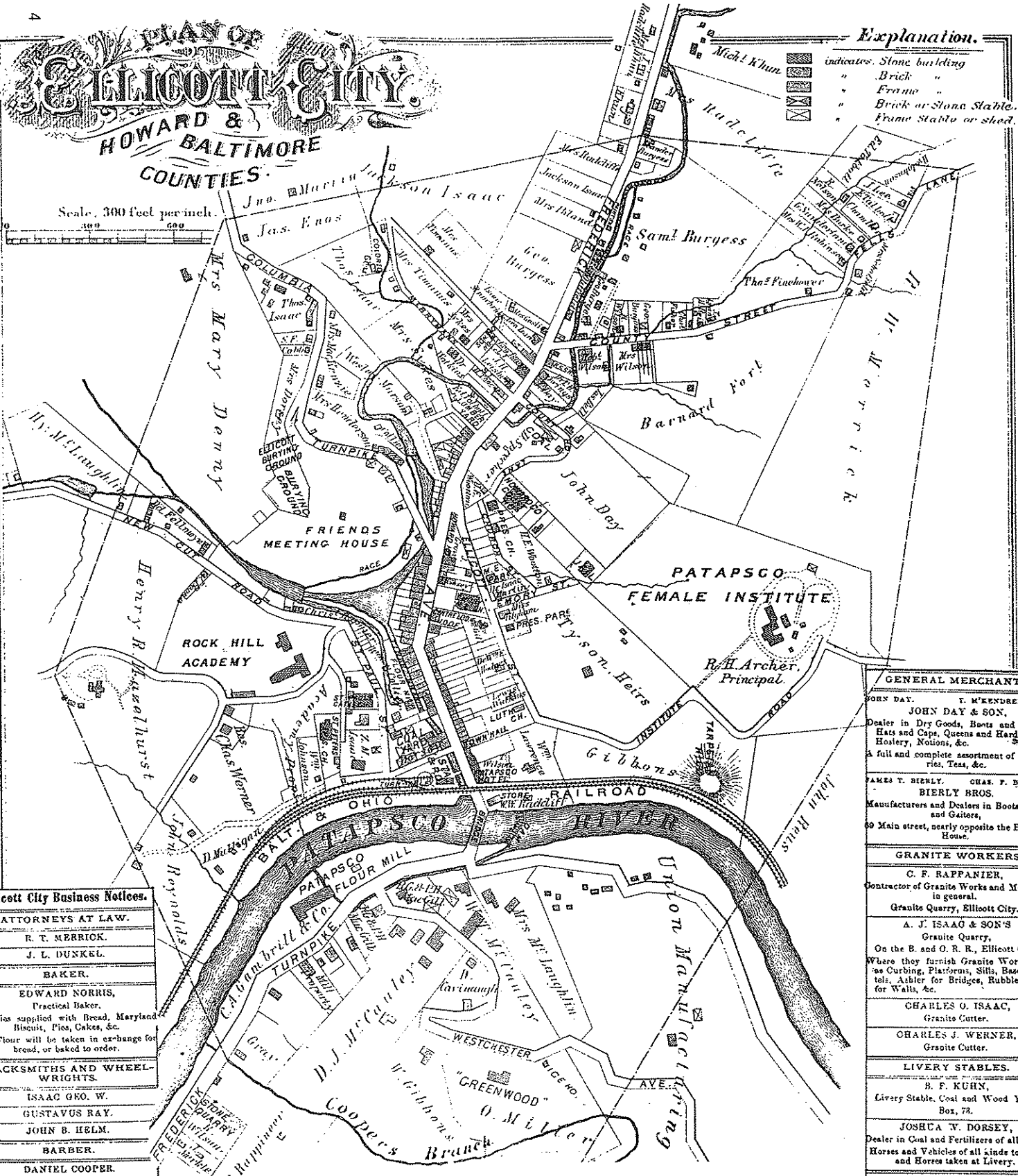
PLAN OF ELLICOTT CITY

HOWARD & BALTIMORE COUNTIES

Scale, 300 feet per inch.

Explanation.

-  indicates Stone building
-  " Brick "
-  " Frame "
-  " Brick or Stone Stable "
-  " Frame Stable or shed "



Ellicott City Business Notices.

- ATTORNEYS AT LAW.**
 R. T. MERRICK.
 J. L. DUNKEL.
- BAKER.**
 EDWARD NORRIS,
 Practical Baker.
 Families supplied with Bread, Maryland
 Biscuit, Pies, Cakes, &c.
 Flour will be taken in exchange for
 bread, or baked to order.
- BLACKSMITHS AND WHEEL-
 WRIGHTS.**
 ISAAC GEO. W.
 GUSTAVUS RAY.
 JOHN B. HELM.
 BARBER.
 DANIEL COOPER.
- CIGAR MANUFACTURER.**
 T. D. HALL.
- EDITORS AND PUBLISHERS.**
 AMERICAN PROGRESS,
 L. Wolfersberger, Editor and Proprietor
 Published every Friday, at Ellicott City.
 Terms, \$1.50 a year, in advance.

ELLIOTT CITY TIMES,
 John R. Brown, Jr., Editor and Prop'r.
 Published every Saturday, at Ellicott City.
 Terms, \$2.00 a year, in advance.

- GENERAL MERCHANTS.**
 JOHN DAY, T. M'KENREE DAY,
JOHN DAY & SON,
 Dealer in Dry Goods, Boots and Shoes,
 Hats and Caps, Queens and Hard Ware,
 Hosiery, Notions, &c.
 A full and complete assortment of Groce-
 ries, Teas, &c.
- JAMES T. BIERLY, CHAR. F. BIERLY,**
BIERLY BROS.
 Manufacturers and Dealers in Boots, Shoes
 and Gaiters,
 60 Main street, nearly opposite the Howard
 House.
- GRANITE WORKERS.**
 C. F. RAPPANIER,
 Contractor of Granite Works and Masonry
 in general.
 Granite Quarry, Ellicott City.
 A. J. ISAAC & SON'S
 Granite Quarry,
 On the B. and O. R. R., Ellicott City.
 Where they furnish Granite Work, such
 as Curbing, Platforms, Sills, Bases, Lin-
 tels, Ashler for Bridges, Rubble Stone
 for Walls, &c.
- CHARLES O. ISAAC,**
 Granite Cutter.
CHARLES J. WERNER,
 Granite Cutter.
- LIVERY STABLES.**
 B. F. KUHN,
 Livery Stable, Coal and Wood Yard,
 Box, 72.
 JOSUCA V. DORSEY,
 Dealer in Coal and Fertilizers of all kinds;
 Horses and Vehicles of all kinds to hire,
 and Horses taken at Livery.
- PHYSICIAN.**
 THOMAS B. OWINGS.
- POST MASTER.**
 ROBERT N. WHARRY.
- STATIONER.**
 J. S. STRAWBRIDGE.
- TAILOR.**
 C. P. CASSIDY.

ATLAS OF HOWARD COUNTY, MARYLAND, 1878

Originally compiled by
 G. M. Hopkins

Chapter 1. Introduction

- In 1974, the Howard County Council designated Ellicott City as the County's first officially recognized historic district. The district's boundaries followed the municipal boundaries of the portion of Ellicott City within Howard County from the period when Ellicott City was an incorporated town (1857-1935). In 1990, the district expanded to include additional properties along Church Road, Sylvan Lane and Park Drive.

Ellicott City has also been listed on the National Register of Historic Places since 1978. Listing on the National Register of Historic Places provides certain benefits, including:

- Consideration of the district in planning for projects funded or licensed by the Federal or State government;
- Eligibility for federal income tax benefits for approved rehabilitation of income-producing structures;
- Eligibility for Maryland income tax benefits for approved rehabilitation of

income-producing structures or owner-occupied residences; and

- Eligibility to apply for federal and state grants and state low interest loans for historic preservation projects.

The National Register listing does not impose any regulation or design requirements on property owners unless the owner applies for and accepts tax or funding benefits.

Historic District Requirements and Benefits

Properties in the historic district are subject to requirements and benefits that preserve the town's historic value. The Howard County Historic District Commission must approve any exterior changes to properties in the district. In addition, property owners who make repairs to a building that contributes to the significance of the historic district may qualify for a Howard County property tax credit. Maryland law also allows a state income tax credit for rehabilitation of contributing buildings.

To qualify for the state credit, the work must be approved in advance by the Maryland Historical Trust as well as the Historic District Commission.

Before beginning any work that will change the exterior appearance of their property, property owners must obtain approval from the Historic District Commission. The Commission reviews the proposed work and issues a Certificate of Approval if the changes will be compatible with the historic character of the property and the district. A Certificate of Approval is required for new construction, demolition, changes to exterior building features and changes to other improvements such as signs, landscaping, sidewalks, driveways and street furniture. The Historic District Commission's authority and the general standards it must use are found in Title 16, Subtitle 6 of the Howard County Code.

Owners of historic district properties are not required to maintain or restore their properties. Historic District Commission review or approval is not required for alterations to the interior of buildings.

Furthermore, some exterior repairs and minor changes to properties are classified as routine maintenance and do not require approval. Routine maintenance is explained in more detail in Chapter 5.

Design Guidelines

The design guidelines describe the architectural and landscape elements that reflect Ellicott City's history and suggest guidelines for rehabilitation and new construction that will best preserve the town's historic character. The guidelines provide a framework for the Historic District Commission's review of applications and help property owners plan their projects and prepare applications for the Commission. Guidelines do not dictate specific solutions that must always prevail; they are not regulations. Their purpose is to provide consistent ground rules for residents and the Historic District Commission, while allowing creativity and individual solutions.

Ellicott City has been growing and changing since it was founded by the Ellicott brothers. It is not a museum to be preserved as a pure example of one period of history. Consequently, the Historic District Commission may often make decisions not based solely on historic preservation goals. Many other factors may affect the Commission's decisions, such as current development

regulations, the availability of materials, the budget constraints of property owners, or modern necessities (such as parking lots or air conditioning) never considered during Ellicott City's early history. In spite of these complexities, the historic district requirements and the efforts of community residents and property owners over the past two decades have helped to protect the historic features that make Ellicott City unique. These guidelines should further support these efforts in the coming years.

These are the first guidelines written for Ellicott City since 1981, when the *Ellicott City Design Manual* was completed. The *Ellicott City Design Manual* was prepared by Kamstra, Dickerson and Associates, Inc., under contract with Howard County government and has been used by the Historic District Commission since its completion. These new design guidelines draw on the background material and recommendations of the 1981 work and also address issues and details not covered by the 1981 guidelines.

The Howard County Department of Planning and Zoning acts as staff to the Historic District Commission and is responsible for processing applications for Certificates of Approval. Please call or write the Department if you have questions about historic district requirements or these guidelines.

Howard County
Department of Planning and Zoning
3430 Courthouse Drive
Ellicott City, MD 21043
410-313-2393 / (TTY 410-313-2323)

Chapter 2. Historic Background

□ Ellicott City was founded by Joseph, Andrew and John Ellicott, three brothers from Bucks County, Pennsylvania, in about 1772. The Ellicotts selected a site to build a mill where the Patapsco River cut a ravine through two rock escarpments. They were aware of a 1669 Maryland law that said "any man who builds a water mill may take up to 20 acres of land on either side of the stream, and hold the same at the valuation of jurors for 80 years." The Ellicotts also purchased 700 acres of land in the Patapsco River valley at a reputed price of \$3 per acre.

The initial settlement at Ellicott's Mills contained a granary, saw mill, workers' houses and a granite quarry, all built within 18 months. Tobacco was the dominant local crop, but the Ellicott brothers worked to introduce wheat as an economical crop. Wheat, when converted to flour, could be sold at a handsome profit. Charles Carroll, a signer of the Declaration of Independence and one of the richest men in the colonies, aided the establishment of Ellicott's Mills by

converting his efforts from tobacco to grains and helping to finance construction of the first road to Baltimore to market local products. The Ellicotts subsequently established an iron and copper works, a cotton mill and a general store, and donated land for a school, a Quaker meeting house and the Patapsco Female Institute.

The Ellicott brothers brought workers, including stone cutters, with them when they settled and built. Stone quarries were established on both sides of the Patapsco River and continued to operate into the 1870s, with two quarries and two granite cutters listed in the 1878 Hopkins' Atlas. The first Ellicott's Mills buildings were wood, but many early buildings were granite. This early granite construction, combined with the area's natural rock outcroppings and steep terrain, established patterns of construction and land development that remain today as important elements of the town's environment.

Early buildings were constructed in the Federal style, with a simplicity of line and

detail that reflected the Quaker background of the Ellicott brothers. The early Quaker influence continued to be expressed in many later buildings which, though varied in architectural styles, are relatively simple in form and detail.

The influence of the Ellicott brothers and their descendants lessened after 1837, when the mills and property were sold to Charles Carroll and Charles Gambrill. In 1840, the Ellicotts provided for the division of their property along Main Street into town lots.

The railroad was key to the second phase of Ellicott's Mills' growth. Completed in 1830, the B&O Railroad from Baltimore to Ellicott's Mills was the first commercial railroad built in the United States. The railroad later expanded west, reaching Cumberland, Maryland, in 1842. Ellicott's Mills' original stone railroad station was completed in 1830. Like many of the town's early buildings, it has architectural details typical of later styles (in this case, Queen Anne features) due to renovations made later in the 19th century. In 1885, a brick freight station

was built to relieve crowding at the original station. The restored railroad station, a National Historic Landmark, has been a railroad museum since the 1970s.

The access provided by the railroad and improved roads attracted more people to the growing town, then part of Anne Arundel County. Population growth led to the creation in 1840 of a new Howard District, and a new courthouse was planned and constructed in Ellicott's Mills in 1841-1843. This structure, built of granite in the Neo-Classic Revival style, continues to serve as a courthouse as well as a local historic landmark.

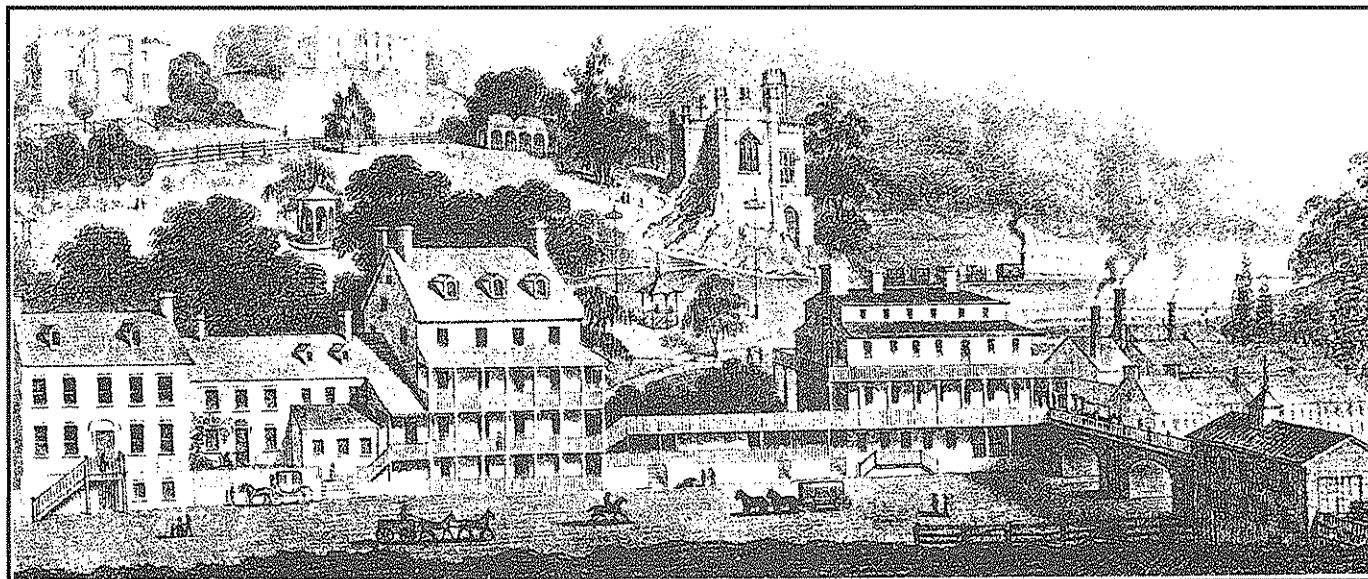
Ellicott's Mills was chosen as the county seat when the new Howard County government was created in 1851. In 1857, the town was incorporated and its name changed to Ellicott City. Ellicott City included land on both sides of the Patapsco River, in Baltimore County and Howard County. In 1914, the boundaries were changed and the Baltimore County portion was no longer part of the incorporated town.

Buildings constructed during the mid-19th century demonstrate a variety of architectural styles, including elements of Neo-Classical,

Gothic, Italianate and Mansard. Most buildings were still relatively plain with spare detailing, reflecting the town's roots as a Quaker mill town.

Ellicott City's role in the Civil War was determined by its strategic location on one of the nation's primary rail lines. Several army camps were set up in the vicinity, buildings in town were used by the U.S. Army for a variety of military purposes, and federal officers on leave stayed in the hotels on Main Street. The rail line ferried troops and supplies to the front and, on the return trips, sent wounded soldiers and prisoners of war to Baltimore.

In 1868, a major flood destroyed mills, houses and villages located close to the Patapsco River. Many were never rebuilt. Commerce moved closer to the port city of Baltimore and away from the threat of flooding. This flood also sparked a trend away from water power. The mills of Ellicott City were converted to steam and to new machinery which could be moved away from the river during floods. Although several mills continued to operate until World War II, their role in Ellicott City's economy diminished. Ellicott City thrived more as an agricultural and mercantile trading center after the 1868 flood.



Ellicott's Mills

During the latter part of the 19th century, Ellicott City became an important center of trade and a summer retreat for Baltimoreans avoiding the city heat. During the winter, the town was an educational center, with the Patapsco Female Institute, Rock Hill College and St. Paul's School all providing finishing touches for young Americans. Stores, hotels, banks and fine homes were built in Ellicott City during this period. Architects and builders designed buildings using many styles, often combining elements of different styles on one building. Elements of styles such as Queen Anne, Italianate and Romanesque were used. Many older buildings were enlarged or improved, with additions in the styles of later periods.

Commerce prospered in Ellicott City during the late 1800s and early 1900s, as seen in the growth of stores, taverns and stables along Main Street. During World War I and World War II, growth in the mills helped to sustain the town's economy. Automobile showrooms and garages replaced the stables. Ellicott City gave up its city charter in 1935.

The years after World War II were a period of accelerated decline. Many of Ellicott City's stores became vacant. An increasingly automobile-based society was moving out to the main highways. Trolley service, then railroad passenger service and finally bus service to Baltimore were abandoned as people

obtained their own cars and trucks, and Ellicott City lost its connections to Baltimore. New highways bypassed Ellicott City. Although Ellicott City remained the seat of Howard County's government and courts, some of the strong ties to the county seemed lost as well. Many buildings stood empty, while others were occupied by antique shops and other specialty retail businesses beginning in the 1960s.

Organized efforts to renew the town began with the formation of Historic Ellicott's Mills, Inc., in 1960. In 1970, local citizens and merchants formed the Ellicott City Bicentennial Association to celebrate the town's 200 years of history. The bicentennial celebration took place in September 1972, in spite of a major flood caused by Hurricane Agnes in June of that year. The Bicentennial Committee then joined with Historic Ellicott's Mills, Inc., to form Historic Ellicott City, Inc. Active citizen interest in the history of Ellicott City increased, leading to the creation of the Historic District Commission in 1973 and establishment of the Ellicott City Historic District in 1974.

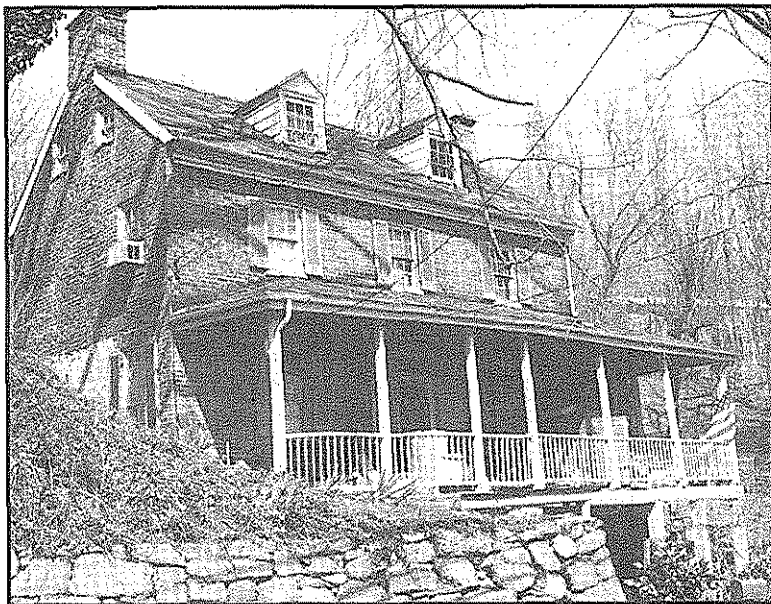
Creation of the historic district was only one step taken by residents, business owners, and local and state government to restore, renew and preserve historic Ellicott City. Other subsequent accomplishments include the 1976 comprehensive planning study, "Ellicott

City: New Life for an Old Town," adoption of an Ellicott City Master Plan and Comprehensive Zoning Plan in the early 1980s and creation of the Ellicott City Restoration Foundation in 1980.

Today, Ellicott City's commercial area is a thriving mix of shops, restaurants, banks, offices and apartments, surrounded by attractive, historic residential neighborhoods. Worries about the economic decline of the post-World War II era have given way to coping with problems of prosperity such as managing traffic and parking. During the 20+ years since the district was established, many of Ellicott City's historic buildings have been restored. The Historic District Commission has played a major role in guiding the changes brought about by Ellicott City's renewed prosperity. This role continues to be important for preserving and nurturing the qualities that make historic Ellicott City a unique, attractive place to live, work and visit.

Chapter 3. Architectural Styles in Ellicott City

□ As times and tastes change, so have American architectural styles. This chapter helps the reader identify characteristics that distinguish one style from another. The glossary at the end of the design guidelines explains specific architectural terms.

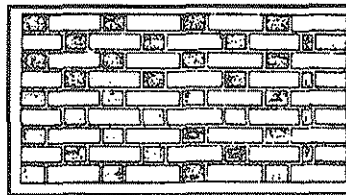


This house shows Georgian Colonial influence in the Flemish bond pattern on its front facade, corbeled brick cornice and overall proportions.

Vernacular

As in most communities, few of Ellicott City's buildings are a pure form of one architectural style. The term *vernacular* applies to the majority of the town's buildings of all time periods.

By definition, vernacular buildings (good and bad) typify the time and place of their origin; they are "home grown" or "utilitarian." Many used locally available materials, such as the native stone (granite) and wood



The Flemish bond pattern of intricate brickwork features alternating headers (bricks with end exposed) and stretchers (bricks with side exposed).

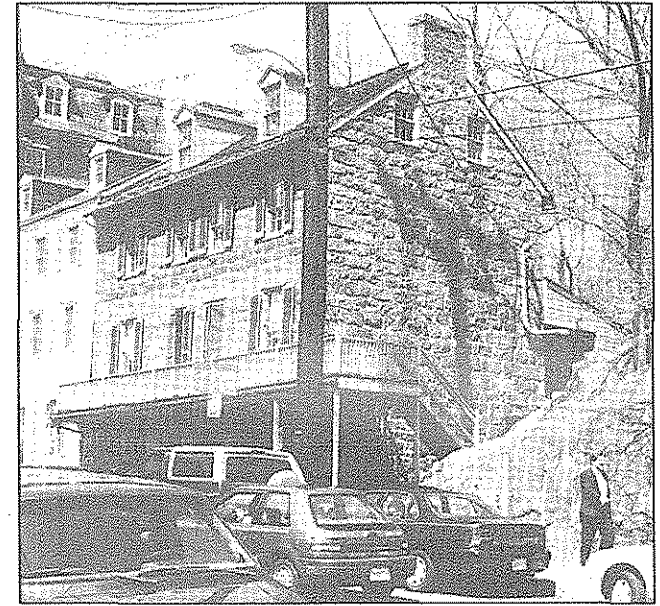
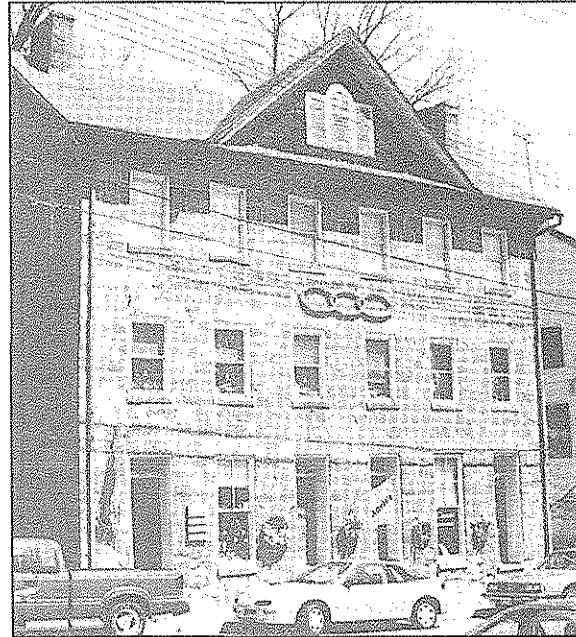
(chestnut timbers for log cabins and floor joists). In response to the local climate, brick chimneys were constructed to provide ventilation for heating, whether by fireplace, stove or furnace. These structures were built to answer a specific need. Many were created without architects or plans. Some of the builders repeated features from one structure to the next, creating a local style, or copied designs they had seen in pattern books.

Early Styles

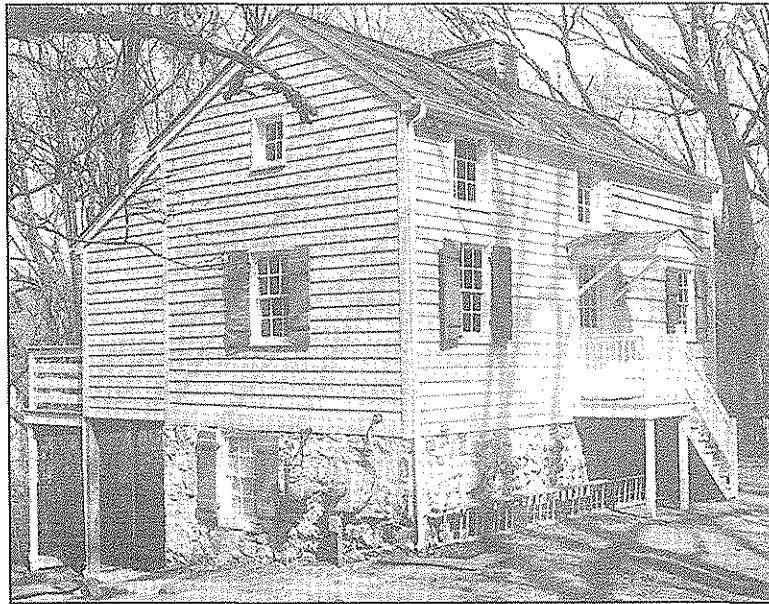
Georgian Colonial 1770-1800

Ellicott City's Georgian Colonial influence was limited to vernacular versions of the style. Features included thick moldings around windows and doors, dentiled or corbeled cornice details and brick structures built with Flemish bond pattern (at least on the front facade). The proportions of the openings tended to be more squat than those of the later Federal style.

Right: Two vernacular buildings: the I.O.O.F. building, c.1848 (left), and the Walker Chandler House, c. 1790s (right). Ellicott City's vernacular granite buildings have a distinctive style of their own. Their simple, strong form and the use of local granite are defining characteristics of the Ellicott City Historic District.

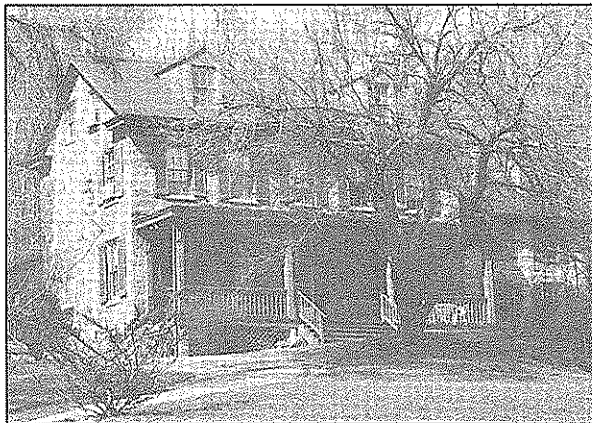


Below: Vernacular frame buildings: a cottage on Ross Road (left) and attached houses on Frederick Road dating from around the turn of the century (right).



Federal 1790-1820

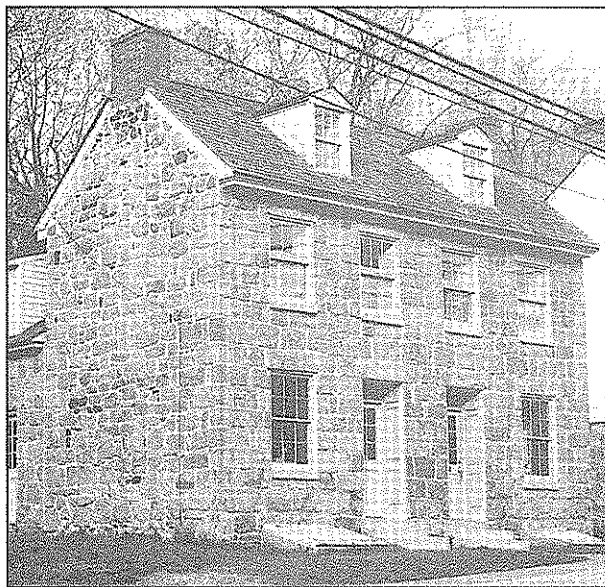
Federal period architecture was the most popular style in America after the Revolution. The style is usually identified with English influence and features delicate detail, fan lights and elaborate doorways, often with sidelights. In Ellicott City, however, the Quaker influence dictated narrow, unadorned entries. The doors themselves had either six or eight panels and the windows six-over-six sashes with narrow muntins. The well-proportioned, gable-roofed structures usually offered symmetrical window and door openings. Although shutters were a common Federal period feature, Ellicott City's builders rarely used them.



Two granite buildings showing Federal influence in their vertical proportions and steeply pitched roofs

Neo-Classicism 1825-1860

The burgeoning democracy in the United States sought new architectural styles to represent its independent ideals. The shift away from English influence focused on classical Greece and Rome. Roof pitches were shallower and wall surfaces were as smooth as the materials would allow. Arches, not found in Greek architecture, were replaced with flat lintels; fanlights were replaced with rectangular transoms and sidelights. Across America, the Greek temple form, noted for its columns, cropped up everywhere from outhouses to residences to prominent public buildings. The 1837 Patapsco Female Institute and the 1841-1843 Courthouse incorporated the pedimented gable temple form with the



ridge line running from front to back. The Courthouse cupola shows a Roman influence. In this first truly American architecture, square pillars and pilasters were often substituted for classical columns, as can be seen at both Mt. Ida and the Courthouse. Often called "Greek Revival," this style influenced vernacular residences, such as the one at 3723 Old Columbia Pike. In turn, the truly vernacular workers' housing across the street at Tongue Row copied the basic aligned proportions, simple detail, and smaller upper windows.

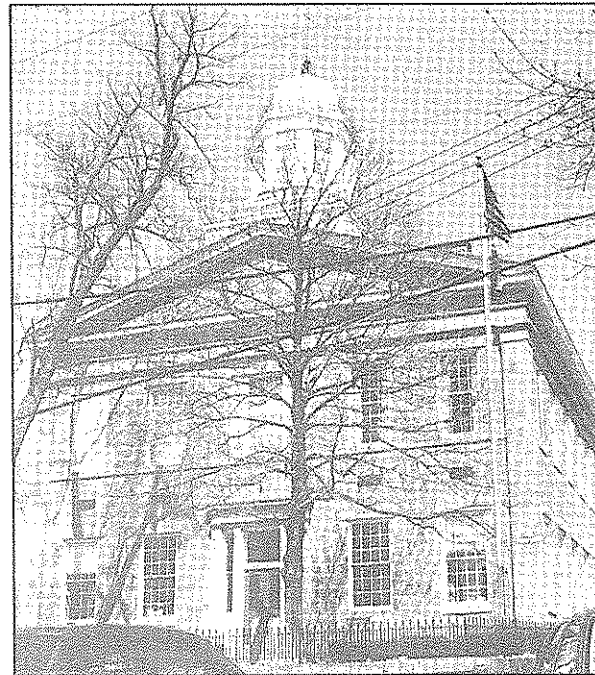
Victorian Styles

A number of styles are associated with the period corresponding to the long reign of England's Queen Victoria (1837-1901). Although there are numerous Victorian influences on the architecture of Ellicott City, few buildings are pure in form. Ellicott City's vernacular structures from this period demonstrated local traditions and building materials, but often incorporated influences and style details popular elsewhere.

Gothic Revival 1830-1860

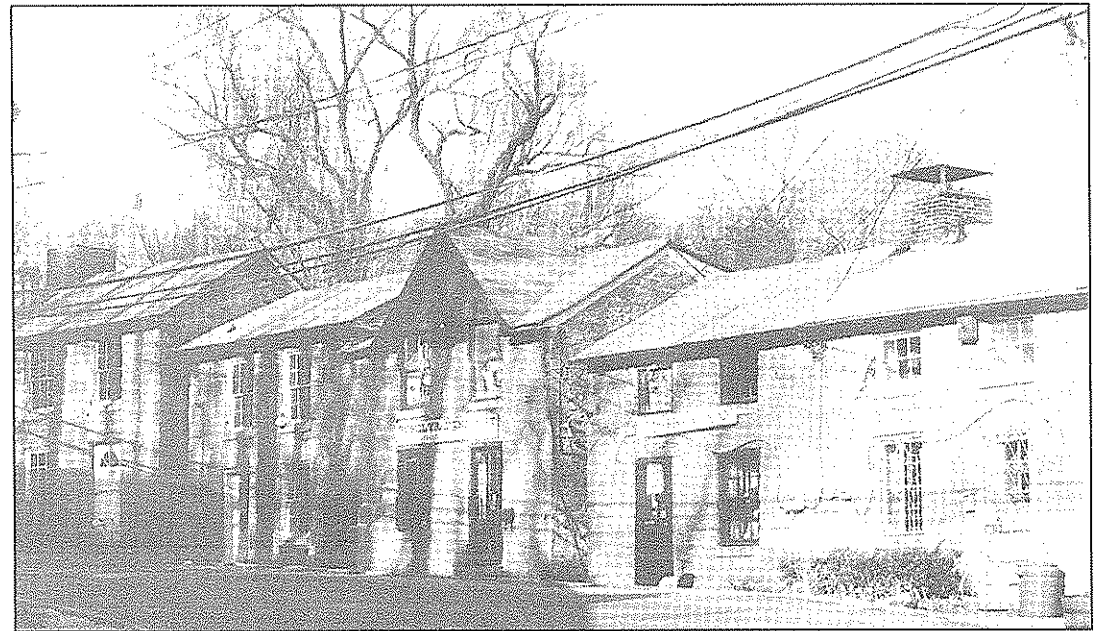
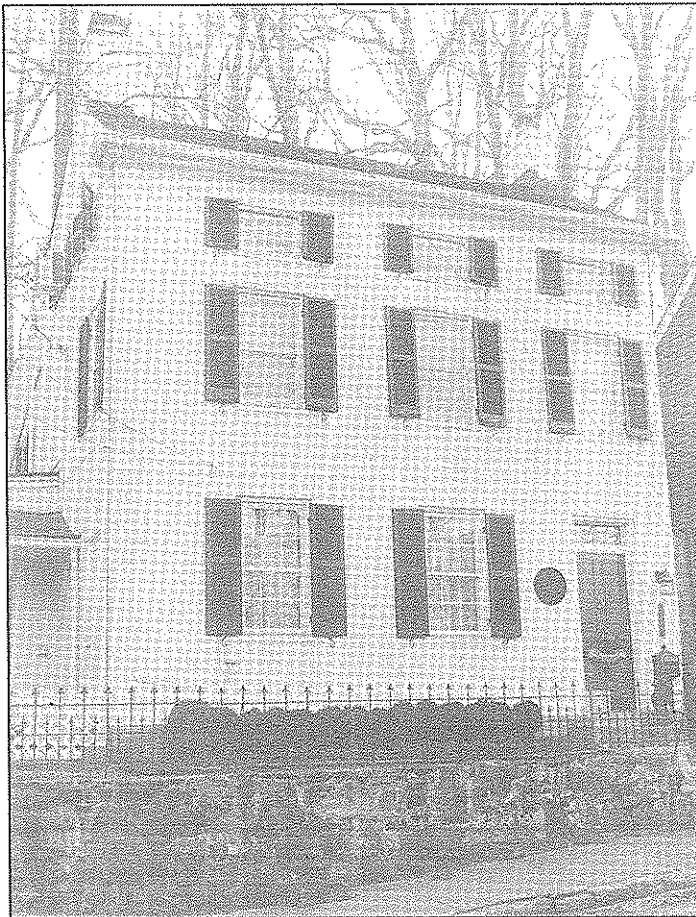
Romantic attitudes and imaginative carpentry influenced much mid-19th century American architecture. Classic pointed arch windows characteristic of the Gothic style can be seen at Angelo Cottage (1830s). The board and batten siding and steeply pitched roof of the

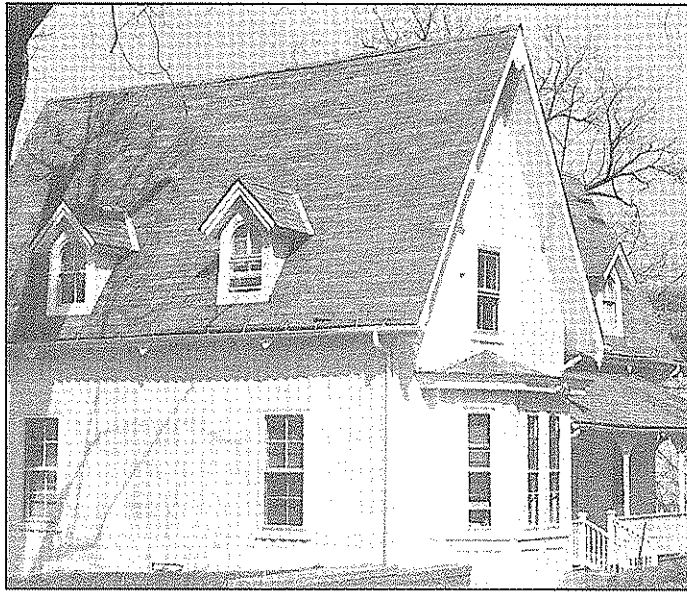
cottage on the site of St. Paul's Church emphasize the style's characteristic verticality. The shadow-casting broad eaves enhanced with ornamentation also can be seen at Lilburn (1850s) and the decorative barge board outlining the front gable at 3420 Sylvan Lane. Elements of this style were revived again at the end of the 19th century as seen in the 1894 First Presbyterian Church, now the Howard County Historical Society.



Left: the 1841-43 Neo-Classical Courthouse

The workers' granite homes of Tongue Row (below) and a larger brick dwelling (below, left) display Neo-Classical influence in their small upper windows, roof pitch and proportions. The steeply pitched cross gable on Tongue Row is a Victorian era modification.





A Gothic Revival cottage

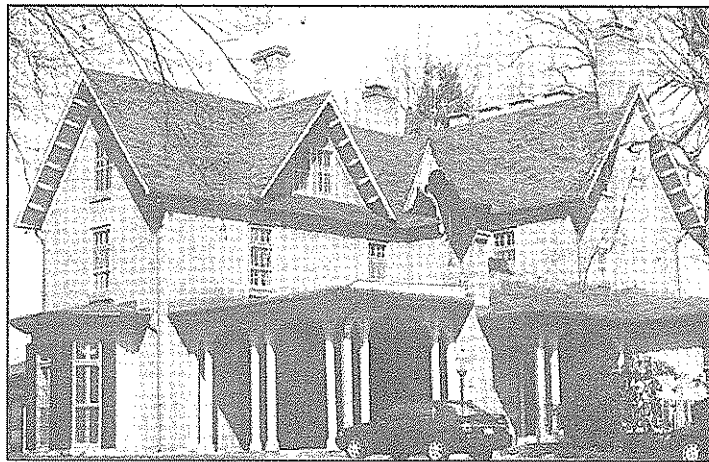
Second Empire Mansard 1850-1870

This French-influenced style, exemplifying prestige and wealth, is noted for its upper roof being almost flat and the almost vertical slope of the lower section of roof. Dormers, often with decorative details, highlight the steep pitch of the sometimes patterned, wood

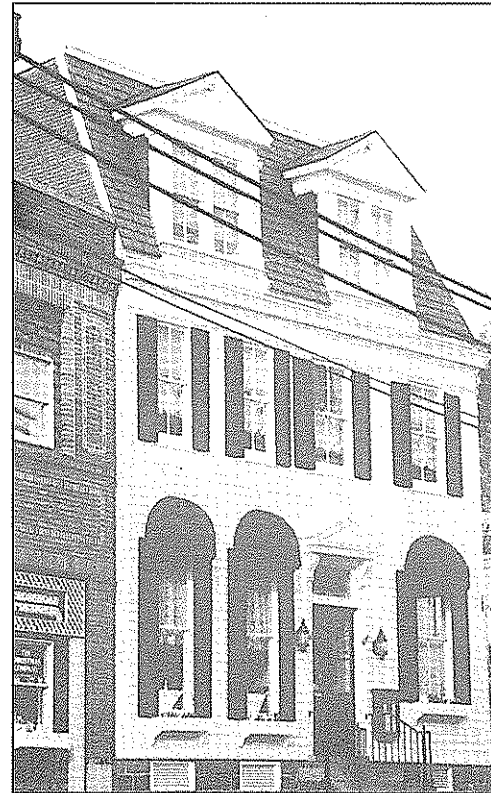
shingle and slate roofs. Brackets, bay windows, and formal double front doors are other characteristic features.

Italianate 1850-1880

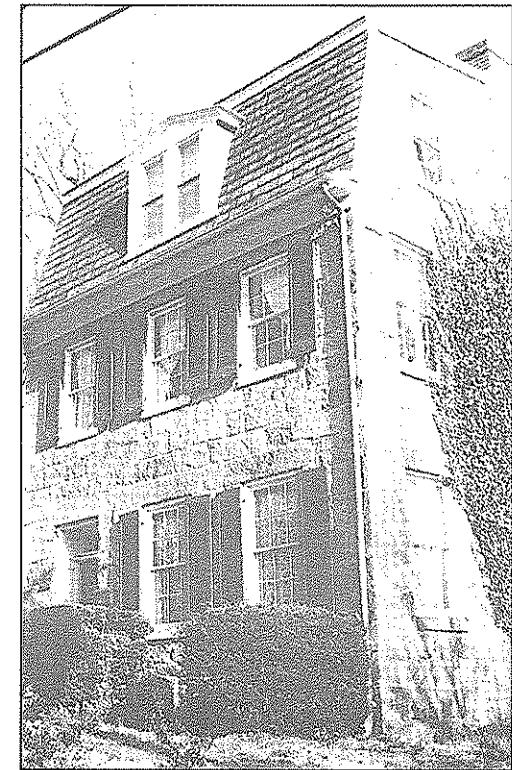
Influenced by Italian country villas, the most prominent features of the style are the almost flat roofs and the shaped wooden brackets that decorate porches and cornices. The windows are more vertical in proportion than those of



Lilburn, c. 1857, a Gothic Revival house



Frame Mansard dwelling, now a restaurant



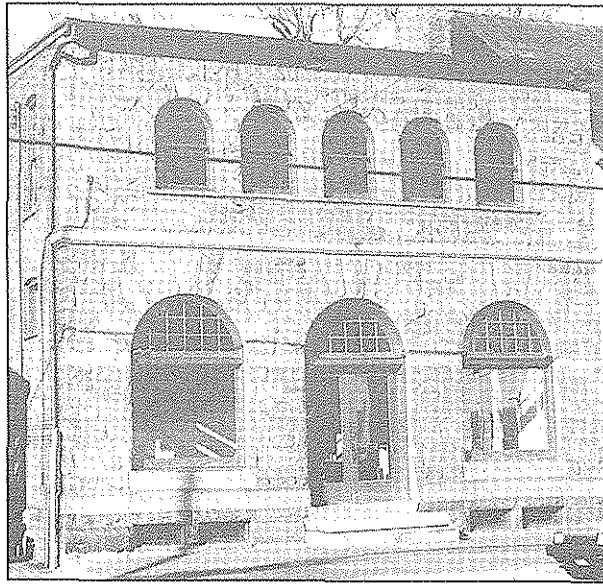
Granite Mansard dwelling, c. 1840

earlier buildings, and window sashes with two-over-two panes are the most common. Windows with four-over-four sashes are also used, especially in residences. Deeply molded panel doors with tall upper panels, sometimes round headed, are typical. As this style flourished during Ellicott City's prosperous years, many older structures were "modernized" by the addition of Italianate details.

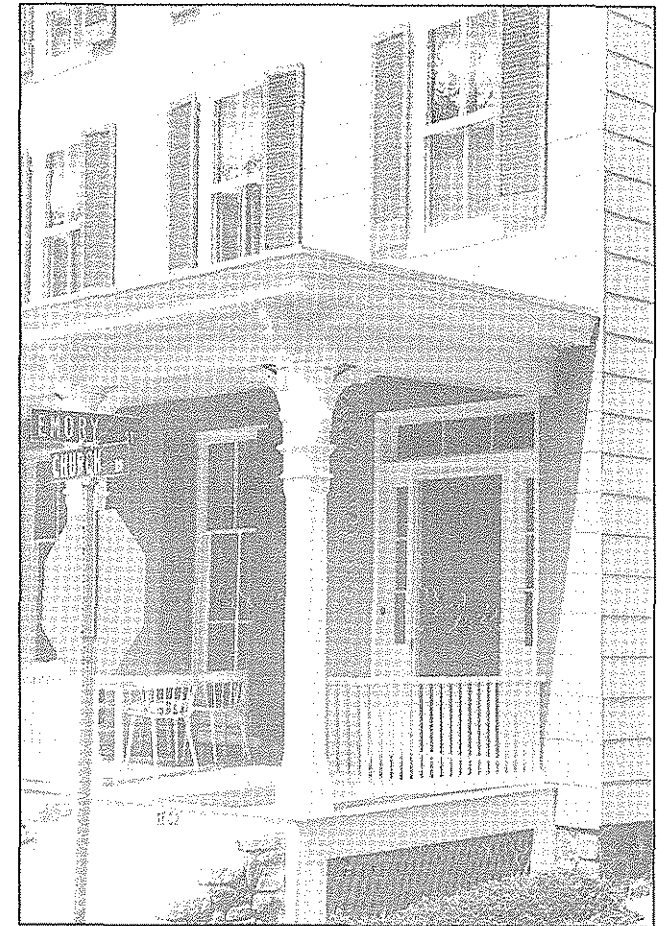
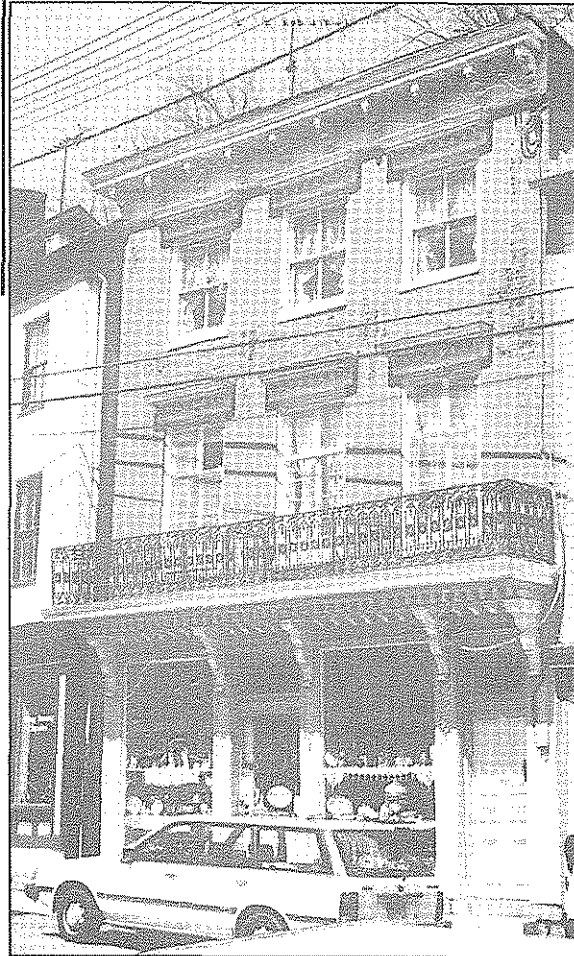
Richardsonian Romanesque 1870-1910

This style is named after Henry Hobson Richardson (1838-1886), an American architect who pioneered and popularized

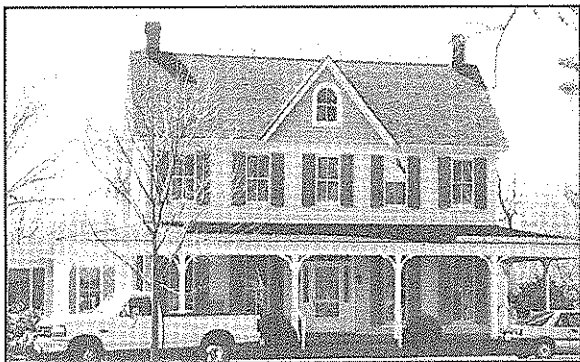
the use of Romanesque round arches, towers with pyramid roofs, turrets and bays in masonry buildings. His designs emphasized grouped windows, carved details, and the weight and texture of the masonry. The heavy stone geometry and Romanesque detailing can be seen locally at Talbot's Lumber and the Presbyterian Church.



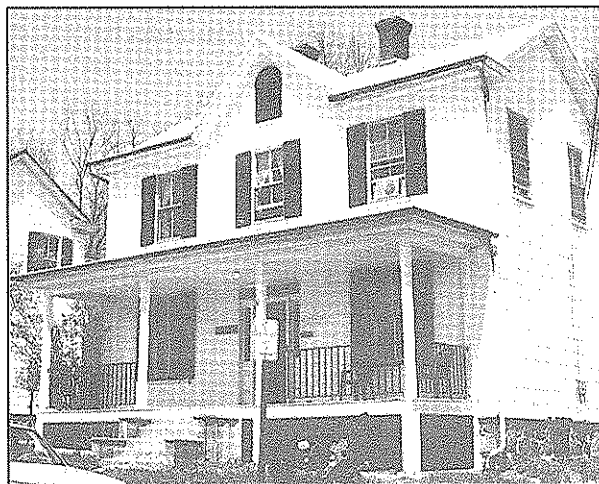
The Talbot Lumber Company building, c. 1885



Italianate details: The commercial building on the left has shaped wooden cornice brackets, window hoods and a heavily molded paneled door. The residence has vertically proportioned, two-over-two and two-over-four windows and porch brackets that could be either Italianate or Queen Anne.

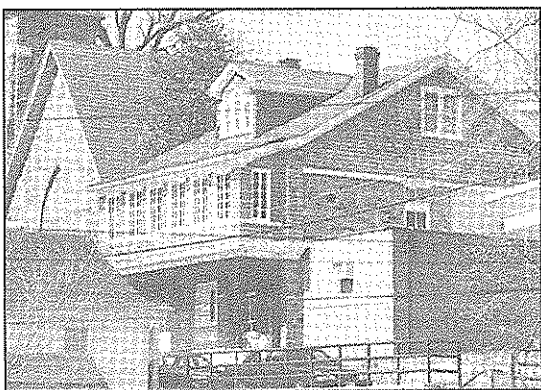


Maryland Farmhouse 1850-1900: A common, regionally evolved style of dwelling is a wide, gable-roofed house highlighted by a central cross gable. Often these three- or five-bay wide frame houses have symmetrical interior chimneys and a porch across the front facade.

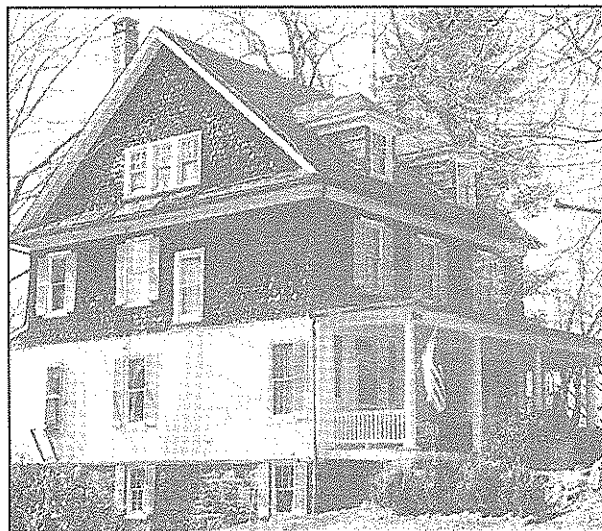


Queen Anne 1880-1910

Perhaps the most whimsical of the late 19th century architectural styles, Queen Anne takes its name from an 18th century English queen and was initially inspired by medieval English country cottages. The style emphasizes functional layout, often resulting in rambling floor plans and irregular roof lines. The hipped and gabled roofs are often broken with dormers and towers. Rich surface textures are achieved with combinations of clapboard, wood shingles, shaped shingles, and panels of wooden ornament (as are seen on the B&O Railroad Museum). Projecting bay windows and broad, wrap-around porches are important features. Characteristic Queen Anne windows have small square panes of glass outlining a larger central pane in the top sash of double-hung windows. The final decorative effects are appropriately highlighted by combining textures and painted color finishes that pick out details.

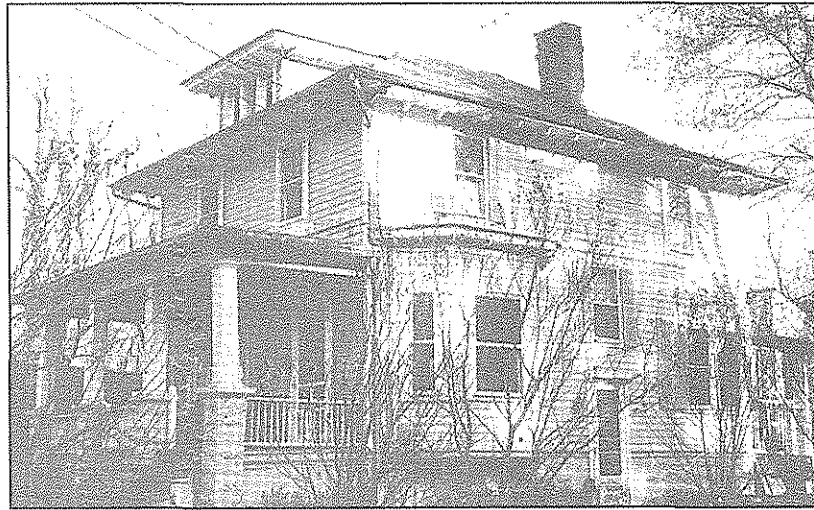


Shingle Style (late 1800s): There are no classic Shingle Style structures in Ellicott City, but the style's influence is seen on the upper floor of the Historical Society Library (above, left) where the shingles wrap like an uninterrupted skin around the enclosed porch, appearing to stretch around the flared base. Use of the style's characteristic siding material was also revived in the early 20th century when shingles clad later buildings, such as the upper half of the house shown in the above right photograph.

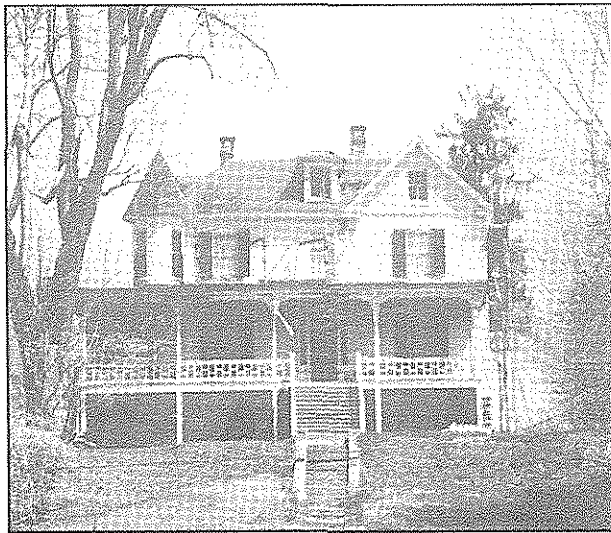


20th Century Styles

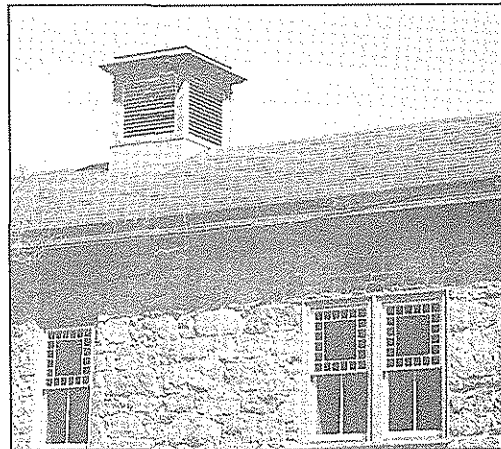
New materials and methods of construction available around the turn of the century allowed builders to do what they had never done before. For example, by the first decade of the 20th century, entire houses could be ordered from a catalog; the pre-cut materials were shipped by rail and assembled on site. Within the historic district, Ellicott City has at least one Aladdin Company, Inc., (Bay City, Michigan) American Foursquare house on Old Columbia Pike and a Sears Company house on College Avenue. Steel windows were tried out as a replacement for wooden ones. New siding materials included glazed terra cotta and cement asbestos shingles.



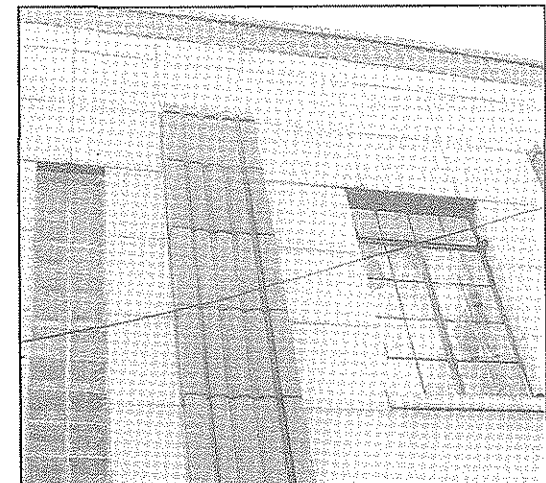
The Virginian," an Aladdin Company, Inc., house from the 1917 catalog



A Queen Anne residence



Queen Anne-style windows and other details were added to the B&O Railroad Station in the late 1800s.



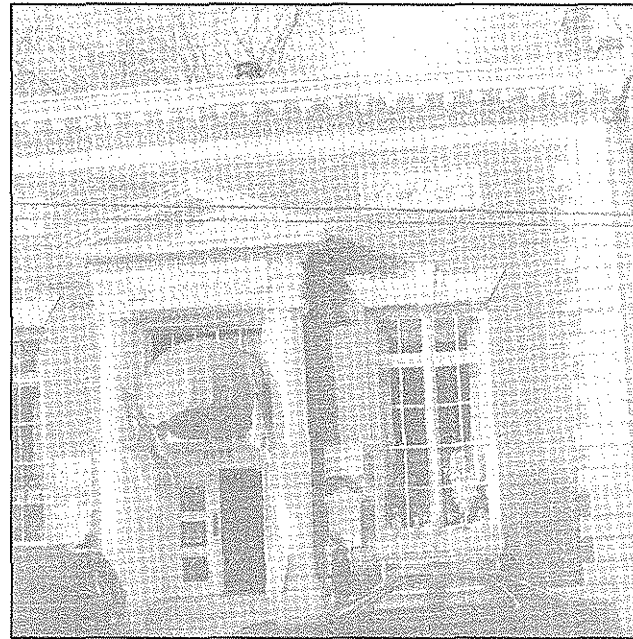
Glazed terra cotta, used on Ellicott City's movie theater, was first used in the early 20th century.

Classical Revival 1895-1930

Many architects during this period had been trained abroad under the French "Ecole de Beaux Arts" architectural educational system. They brought back with them the influences of Renaissance Revival, Roman Revival, Georgian Revival, Classical Revival, Gothic Revival and Tudor Revival. The finest public buildings of the time were designed with these influences, including Ellicott City's 1904 Farmers and Mechanics Bank and the stone and brick Classical Revival bank across Main Street, now called the Bankers Galleria. During this time, everything that could be borrowed from past styles was likely to be used, and the details were often enlarged to enhance their emphasis.

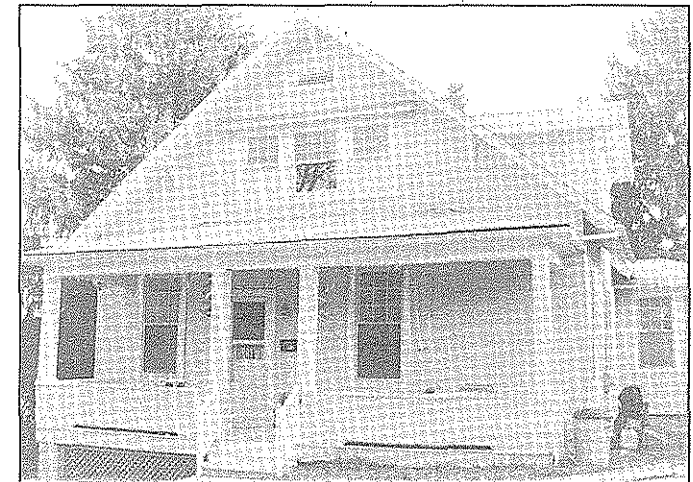
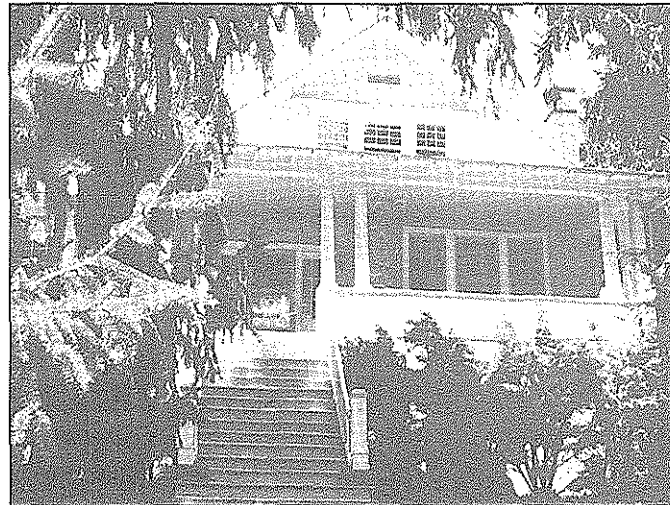


This porch displays Classical Revival influence in its columns and turned balusters.



Classical Revival building, originally a bank

Right: Front and back views of a Craftsman-style bungalow: the left view shows the original front facade. The dominant gable roof, low dormers, grouped porch supports and windows, generously sized porch and porch bracket are typical features of this style.

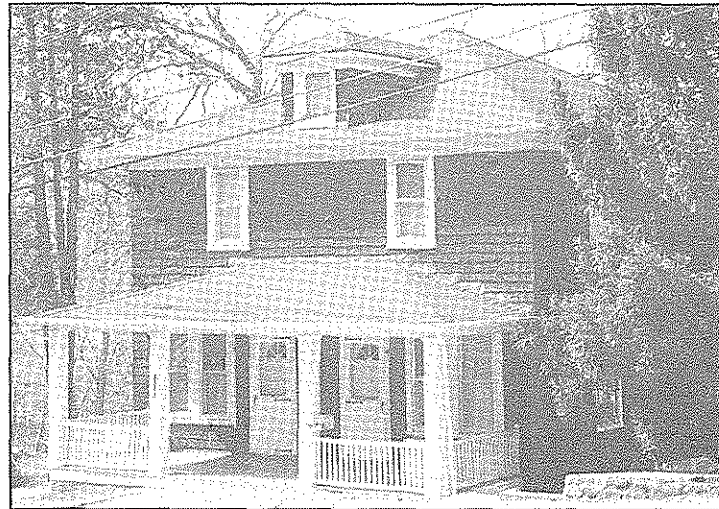


Craftsman/Bungalow 1900-1930

These typically one or one-and-a-half story homes with dominant hipped or gable roofs, often broken by low dormers, give the impression of being wide and low. The broad, overhanging roof eaves are supported by brackets that are both decorative and functional. Windows and porch supports are grouped in series. The generous porches provide a way of integrating the house's interior with the outdoors and their posts typically are set on wood or masonry bases. Textured or rock-faced concrete block is a common building material.

American Foursquare 1910-1930

These simple square boxes, usually two-and-a-half stories in height, are characterized by hipped roofs with broad, shadowing eaves. Hipped dormers and interior chimneys project from the roofs and bay windows and/or rear/side additions break out of the box. Hipped roof porches span the full width of the front facades, supported with either square posts or simple columns made of wood. One-over-one windows predominate in this style.

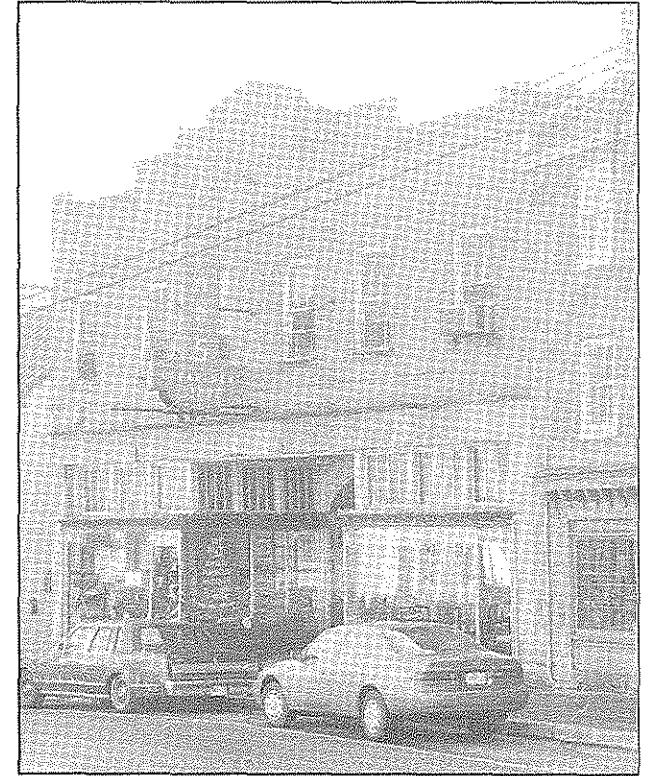


An American Foursquare duplex: the shape, hipped roof and dormer, broad eaves and full width porch with square posts are typical of this style.

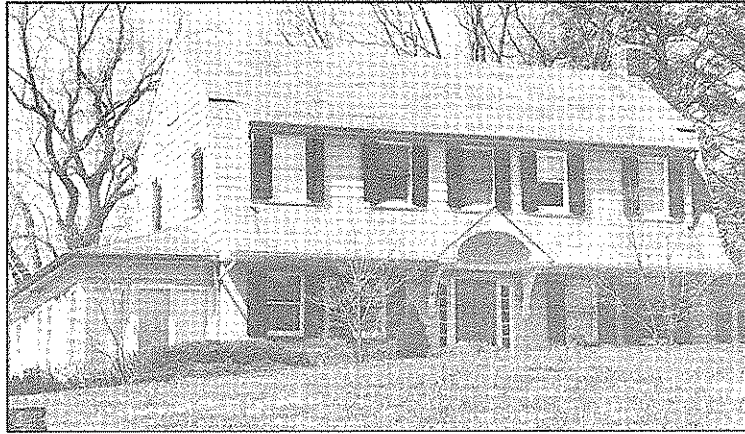
Commercial 1920-1950

Many of Ellicott City's special Main Street buildings fall into this architectural style, generally classified as multi-storied, straight front buildings with slight projections, flat roofs and level or stepped skylines. The ornament or detail was subordinate to the windows and large, plate glass display windows were used for the first time. Caplan's, Taylor's and Yates's grocery store fall within this category, as do the Fishbein Building (*Howard County Times*) and Reedy Electric Company, although the

latter buildings have been renovated, removing the original storefronts. With retail below, the upper floors were used for offices and apartments, cooled in summer with transom vents and operable single and double-hung windows.



The Caplan's Department Store building is an example of the Commercial style with many original features intact, including the shaped cornice, metal storefront cornice, transom windows and recessed entryway with ceramic tile floor.

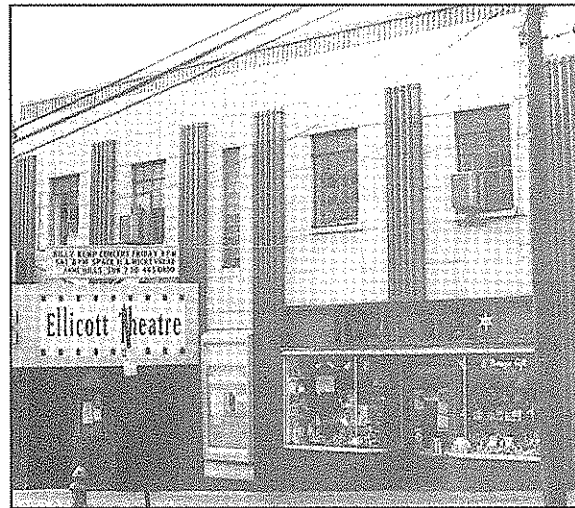


Dutch Colonial Revival 1910-1940: This style revived a type of residential architecture popular in America 150 years earlier. The most noticeable feature is the exaggerated gambrel roof. The lower slope of the roof encloses the second floor and flares beyond the walls of the house, forming a deep overhang. Wide clapboard, entry door sidelights, gable-end chimneys and board-and-batten shutters are other characteristic features.

Although the three styles shown on this page have only one example in the historic district, their architectural contributions to the district should be noted.



Cape Cod or Williamsburg Colonial 1920-1950: This Colonial Revival style harkens back to simple, 17th century New England and tidewater Virginia homes noted for their steeply pitched, gable roofs with prominent, centrally located chimneys.



Art Deco 1925-1940: The Art Deco and Art Moderne styles, influenced by the 1925 Art Decoratifs exposition in Paris, were short-lived but exciting in their divergence from traditional architectural detail. Surfaces were flat with modern decorative detail. Materials such as terra cotta and structural glass permitted new colors. Ellicott City's movie theater has two shades of glazed terra cotta, "modern" steel casement windows and a curved storefront that recalls the streamlined contours of the era's automobiles and trains.

Chapter 4. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards

- The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 directed the Secretary of the Interior to develop and make available information on the treatment of historic properties. In response to this act, the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Rehabilitation of Historic Properties were first issued in 1975 and revised in 1983 and 1992. The Standards are widely used throughout the United States as a guide for treatment of historic properties.

The 1992 Standards, listed below, are the basis for the Ellicott City Design Guidelines. These federal standards are very general; the Ellicott City guidelines are much more detailed and specific. Both sets are *guidelines*; literally, they guide the Commission in its decision making. They are not requirements.

Standards for Rehabilitation:

- 1. A property shall be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces and spatial relationships.
- 2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces and spatial relationships 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 elements from other historic properties, shall not be undertaken.

- 4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
- 5. Distinctive materials, 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, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
- 7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used.
- 8. Archeological resources shall be protected and preserved in place. 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, features and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the 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 National Park Service has published a more detailed text, *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation & Illustrated Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*, to further explain the Standards. This publication can be purchased from the National Park Service and is available for review at the Department of Planning and Zoning.

Chapter 5. Routine Maintenance

- The Historic District Commission has broad authority to review all changes, even minor ones, to the exterior appearance of properties in the historic district. However, maintenance, repairs and alterations that are classified as routine maintenance do not require review by the Historic District Commission.

According to the Howard County Code (Section 16.609), routine maintenance is "work that does not alter the exterior features of a structure and has no material effect on the historic significance of the structure." The Code lists the following activities as routine maintenance:

- 1. Repair or replacement of roofs, gutters, siding, external doors and windows, trim, lights and other appurtenant fixtures using the same materials and design.
- 2. Minor landscaping that does not substantially affect the character of the structure.

- 3. Paving repair using like materials of like design.
- 4. Painting previously painted surfaces using the same color.
- 5. Other minor maintenance and repair work which is described as routine maintenance in design guidelines approved by the Historic District Commission.

Activities that are considered routine maintenance are listed in each chapter of these guidelines. Routine maintenance includes the repair and, in many cases, the replacement of building features with materials that exactly match the existing features. New construction or demolition of existing buildings is never routine maintenance. Staff of the Department of Planning and Zoning can answer specific questions on whether a proposed action constitutes routine maintenance.

Chapter 6. Rehabilitation and Maintenance of Existing Buildings

This Chapter provides guidelines for the treatment of existing buildings. Sections A and B give general recommendations for historic buildings and non-historic buildings. The remaining sections address specific building components. This chapter applies to all existing buildings, including garages and other outbuildings.

Guidelines cannot identify all the situations that may arise in a historic district with architecture as varied as Ellicott City's. Consequently, some sections list "Possible Exceptions" to the recommended guidelines. These exceptions are examples, *not* an exhaustive list, of possible variations from the recommended guidelines.

A. General Guidelines for Historic Buildings

Ellicott City's historic buildings tend to be simple, with few but strong details. Therefore, maintaining and repairing the details characteristic of a building's period and style are very important. When original details are missing or must be replaced, matching materials should be used, if possible. Saving damaged parts or finding historic documentation of the building's appearance can help in accurately restoring a building's historic appearance.

Deciding how best to restore or preserve historic features is sometimes complicated by alterations made to the original building. These earlier alterations may have acquired historic significance in their own right, particularly for the numerous Ellicott City buildings constructed prior to 1850 that

were enlarged or embellished during the late 19th century. Historically or architecturally significant alterations should be retained. For buildings altered more recently, it is often best to uncover and restore details hidden by alterations. This is particularly true of historic materials covered by modern siding materials.

Changes will continue to be made to historic buildings to meet the needs of new owners or to make necessary repairs. These changes should be carefully planned to preserve a building's characteristic features. Alterations should not make the building appear either older or newer than it is known to be by using details from another style or period.

It is not always possible to preserve all historic elements of a building. Protecting highly visible or unique historic features is a higher priority than preserving features with little visibility.

The workmanship and materials of old buildings are part of history and, once lost, cannot be replaced. Nevertheless, the Historic District Commission must balance the goal of protecting historic elements against other factors, such as the cost or availability of materials.

B. General Guidelines for Nonhistoric Buildings

Generally, buildings less than 50 years old are not considered to contribute to Ellicott City's historic significance. The Historic District Commission's authority extends to all structures in the historic district, old or new. However, Section 16.607(c) of the County Code states that the Historic District Commission is to be lenient in its review of alterations to buildings of lesser historic value, "except where such plans would seriously impair the historic or architectural value of surrounding structures or the surrounding area."

Well-designed buildings of various periods coexist in the historic district. To maintain the quality established by the district's older buildings, nonhistoric buildings should have details that are simple, honest and functional. Alterations to a nonhistoric building should be compatible with the existing building, as well as with the historic streetscape and neighboring buildings.

Modern buildings should not imitate the appearance of historic structures.

The context of the particular building is very important in applying these guidelines to nonhistoric buildings. If a modern residence has a front porch similar in scale to the historic homes on the same block, the porch on the modern house will help sustain the rhythm of the streetscape, and many of the porch guidelines in this chapter would apply. On the other hand, if a non-contributing building has little visibility from streets or other properties, the Commission can consider the building's minimal influence on the appearance of the historic district and be flexible in applying these guidelines.

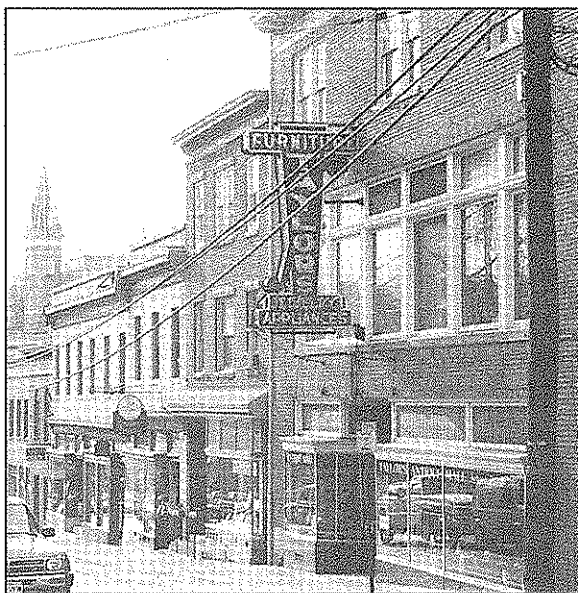
An example of how these guidelines could be applied to modern structures may be helpful. If a property owner applied to replace the wood windows in a 20-year old house, the applicant and Commission would review the guidelines for windows in section H. The guidelines that recommend preserving rather than replacing existing features generally refer to features that represent historic materials or workmanship. Therefore, the applicant would likely be allowed to replace the windows with similar, new wood windows. However, if the property owner wanted to install vinyl windows with snap-in muntins, the Commission in applying these guidelines would question exchanging a simple, functional

window for a modern replacement that ineffectively imitates an older style. A simple, one-over-one vinyl window would often be appropriate for a nonhistoric house, except that the guidelines express caution regarding vinyl windows on a prominent building facade close to a public street.

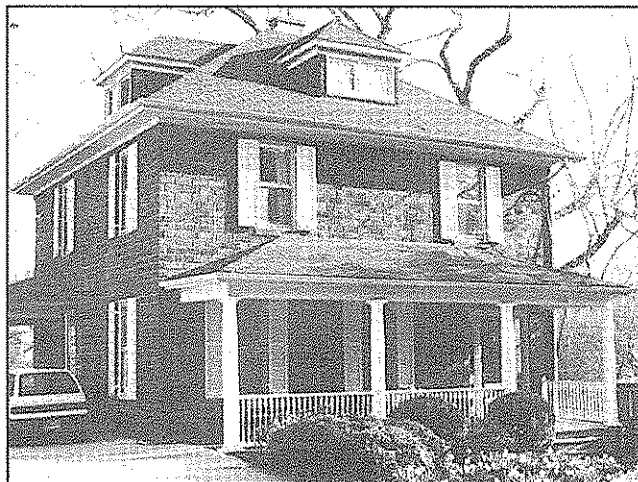
C. Masonry

Granite, a common building material in Ellicott City in the 18th and 19th centuries, is one of the most distinguishing characteristics of the historic district. Used most commonly on buildings constructed between 1800 and 1840, its use continued into the 20th century, as seen in the Courthouse addition (1939) and the facade of the Talbot's Lumber Company building (1905). Numerous buildings are constructed primarily of granite blocks. Granite was also used for lintels, sills, exterior steps, and the foundations of frame or brick buildings, as well as for fence posts and retaining walls. Preserving these granite buildings and features is crucial for protecting Ellicott City's character.

Brick buildings are not as common as stone or frame in Ellicott City, although brick chimneys are important features of many historic buildings. Many Ellicott City building styles, particularly the early buildings, feature dominant end chimneys. The use of brick for buildings



Brick is a common building material for Main Street buildings.



An early 20th century block residence

became more common after 1900, when stonework became too costly to be used often.

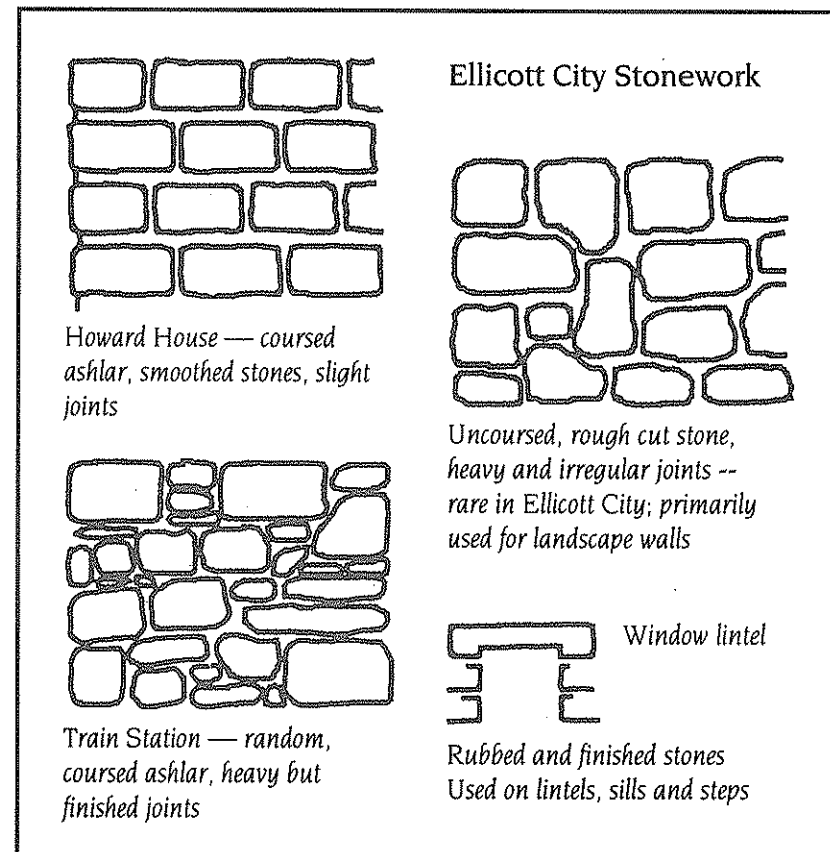
Other historic masonry includes fieldstone, concrete block from the early 20th century, and stucco.

Masonry is easily damaged by harsh cleaning, paint removal or waterproofing methods, or use of the wrong type of mortar. Consequently, masonry repairs must be made carefully. Because of the potential for damage to historically significant materials, cleaning, repairing and repointing masonry is not routine maintenance (except for minor repairs to small areas) and must be reviewed by the Historic District Commission. An application to repair, clean or remove paint from masonry must specify in detail the method to be used. (For information on masonry repair, see Preservation Briefs #1, "Cleaning and Waterproof Coating of Masonry Buildings," and #2, "Repointing

Mortar Joints in Historic Brick Buildings," published by the National Park Service.)

1. Recommended

- Maintain or restore granite buildings, foundations, steps, lintels, sills, fence posts and retaining walls.
- Maintain or restore original brick, stone, concrete block or stucco. Make repairs with materials that match the original as closely as possible.

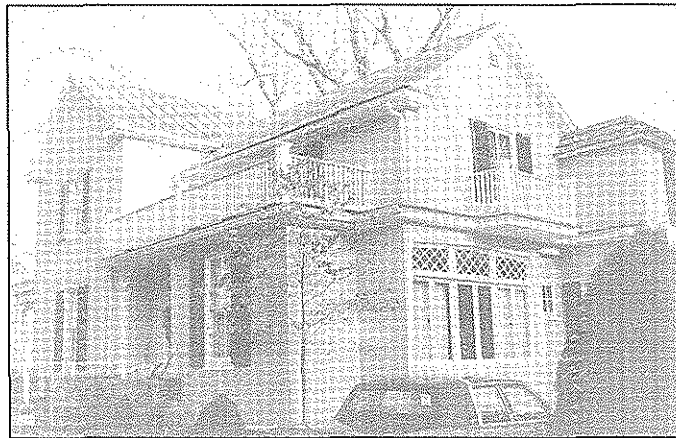


- Carefully remove modern materials that have been applied over historic masonry.
- Repair rather than replace masonry walls, through repointing and limited replacement of masonry with units that match the size, color and texture of damaged or missing units.
- If a masonry wall or feature must be replaced, use material as similar to the original as possible, particularly if the materials are visible from a public road or are key elements of the building's style or character.
- Use mortar mixes that are compatible with early stone and brick.

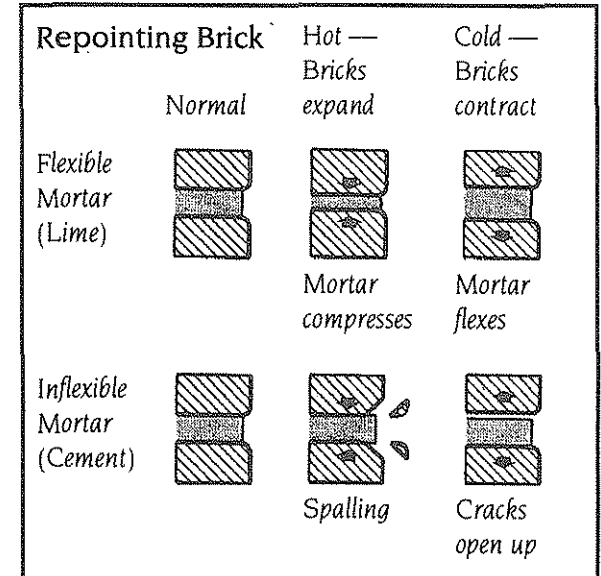
- Maintain previously painted masonry surfaces, including repainting when needed.

2. Not Recommended

- Replacing or covering original masonry construction.
- Changing the width of mortar joints in a masonry wall or repointing using incompatible mortar.
- Removing functional mortar in order to repoint. Remove and replace deteriorated mortar only.
- Painting historic stone or historic brick that has never been painted or removing paint from masonry walls that were originally painted.

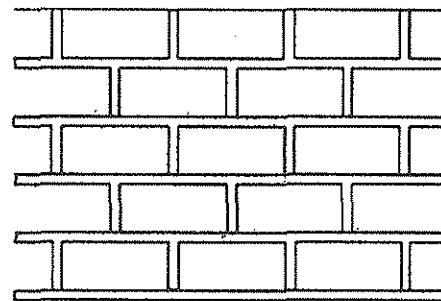


A stucco residence

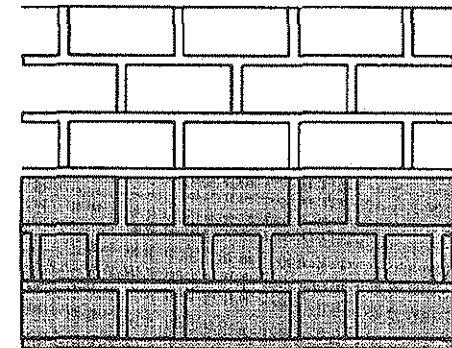


Flexible mortar expands and contracts with temperature changes. Bricks or stones bonded by inflexible mortar tend to separate from the mortar in cold weather. Bricks bonded by inflexible mortar also tend to spall at the edges in hot weather.

Replacing Brick



Mortar, joints and bricks are matched in original and new sections.



Color of brick and mortar and bonding pattern in new section do not match the original.

- Cleaning or removing paint from masonry walls using methods that damage the masonry.
- Applying water-resistant or water-proof coatings to the exterior of masonry. This may cause water to be trapped in the masonry and damage the material.

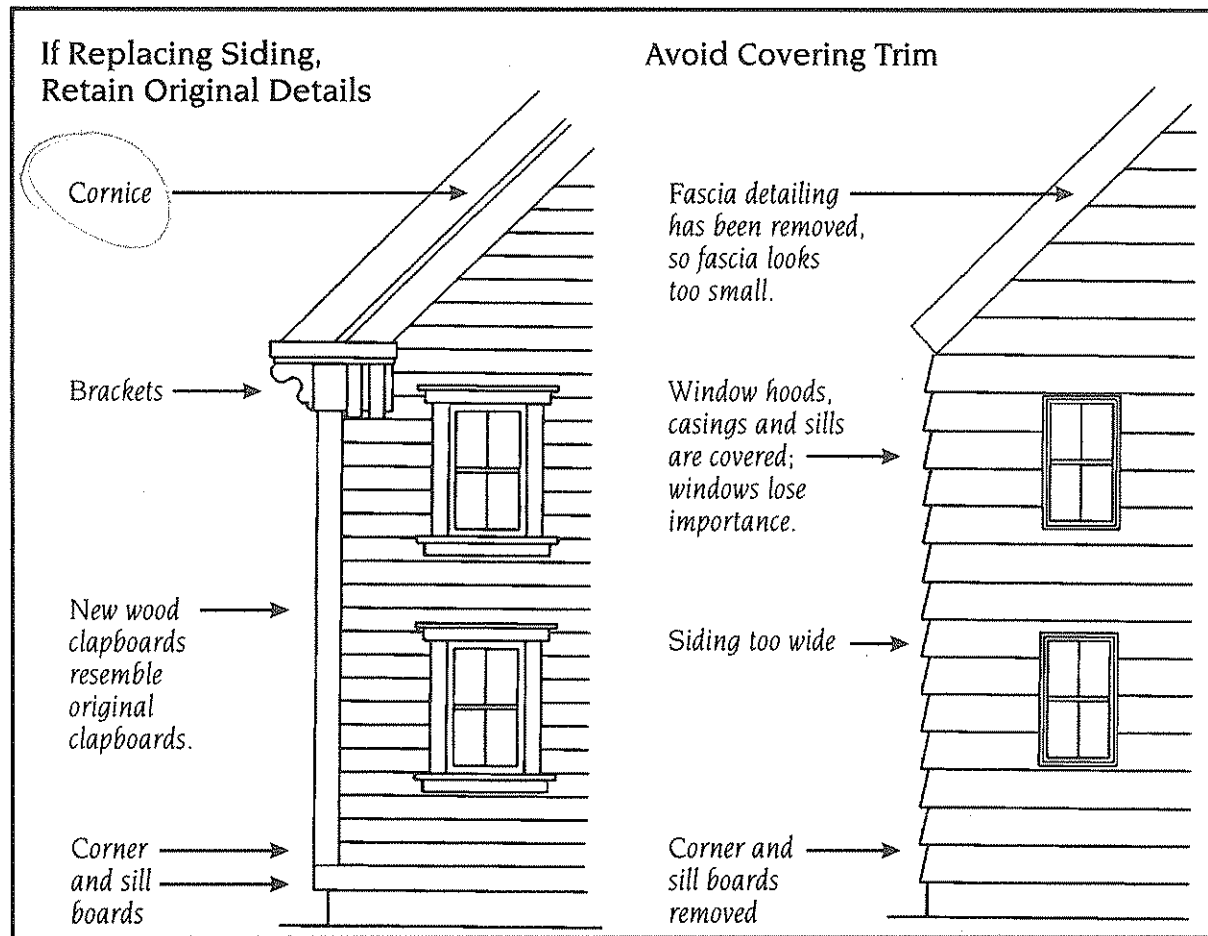
3. Possible Exceptions

- When historic masonry must be replaced, it may be necessary to use modern materials if historically accurate materials cannot reasonably be used for economic or other reasons. The materials chosen should be as compatible as possible with the original.

4. Routine Maintenance

(work that does not require a Certificate of Approval)

- Spot pointing worn areas with new mortar that exactly matches the existing, unweathered mortar in color, texture, composition and joint profile.
- Replacing damaged bricks or concrete blocks with new units that exactly match the existing material.
- Repairing stucco using a mixture that matches the existing stucco in texture, strength and appearance.



D. Wood Siding, Shingles and Logs

Wood is the most common building material in Ellicott City. German siding and wood shingles are found on many buildings; clapboard siding is also found but is less common. The historic district also contains a few log buildings from the late 18th or early 19th century.

Every effort should be made to maintain and repair original wood siding, shingles, or log construction and related details such as cornerboards and cornices. When siding must be replaced, the new siding should retain the typical profile and four- to six-inch width of historic wood siding. Wood siding currently available often has a width of eight inches. This greater width loses the scale

of the narrower siding common to historic buildings.

Many frame buildings have been covered with modern siding materials such as vinyl, aluminum, asphalt or asbestos. These treatments obscure the historic materials and details such as cornerboards and cornices, and can cause damage to the structure by sealing in moisture. Vinyl or aluminum siding may also result in damage by allowing wasps or termites to nest undetected between the old and new siding.

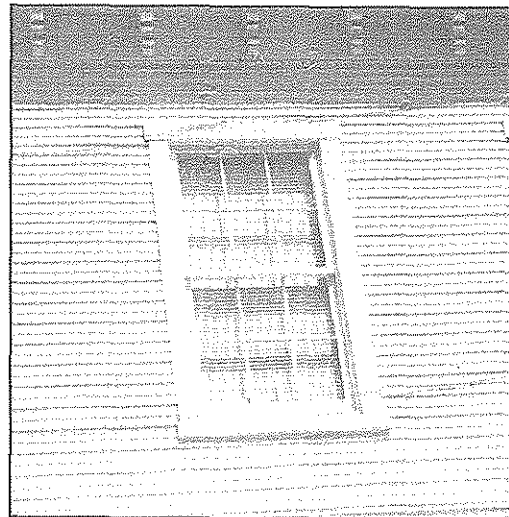


Varieties of historic wood construction: German siding

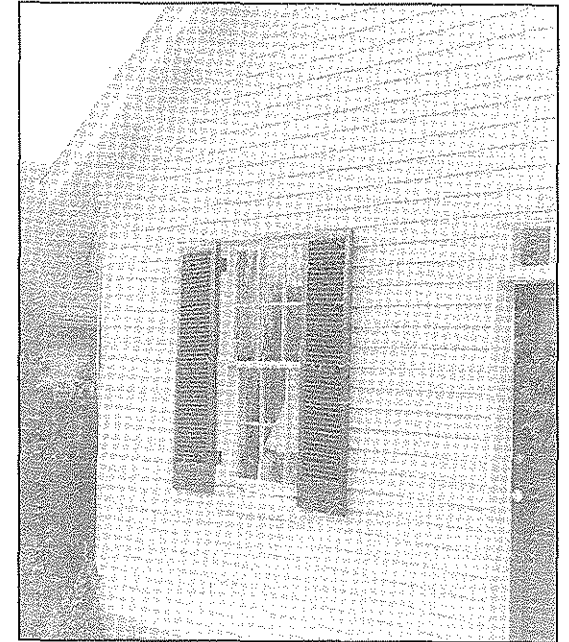
New siding materials are becoming available that can be closer in appearance to wood siding than vinyl or aluminum. These materials, usually composites of wood fibers and binding ingredients, are varied in their appearance and maintenance qualities.

1. Recommended

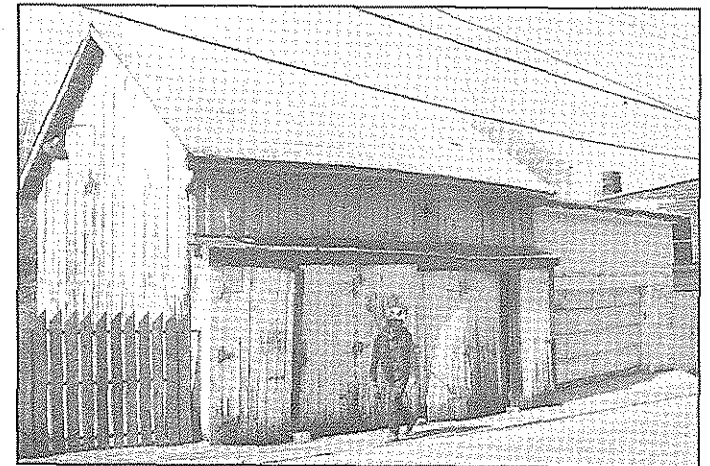
- Maintain, repair and protect (with paint or UV inhibitor if appropriate) wood siding, wood shingles or log construction.
- When necessary, replace deteriorated wood siding or shingles with wood siding or shingles that match the original as closely as possible in



Double lap siding, popular in the 1920s



Clapboard siding



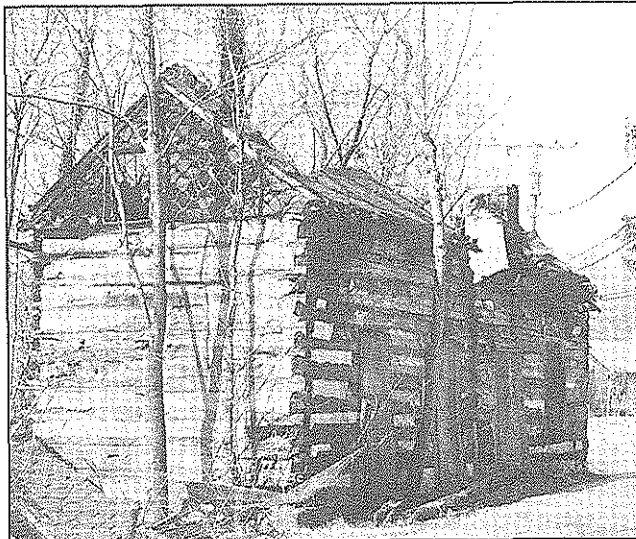
Board and batten siding, used primarily on outbuildings but also on residences

width, shape, and profile. Maintain the original shape and width of details such as cornerboards, cornices, and door and window trim.

- Remove asbestos shingles, aluminum siding or other coverings from historic buildings and repair or restore the original wall material.

2. Not Recommended

- Covering or removing sound wood siding.
- Using vinyl, aluminum, artificial stone, artificial brick or other substitute materials on historic buildings or additions to historic buildings, or on



A historic log cabin, demolished in 1996

nonhistoric buildings in locations visible from a public way.

- Changing the scale of siding, e.g. replacing clapboard with an exposed width of four to five inches with new clapboard having an exposed width of eight inches.

3. Possible Exceptions

- If wood siding must be replaced on a historic building, a composite siding material may be considered, if wood is not a viable option, the composite siding conveys the appearance of the historic material, and application of the substitute material does not damage or obscure historic features. The texture, width, shape, profile and finish of the substitute siding material should be similar to the wood siding it replaces.

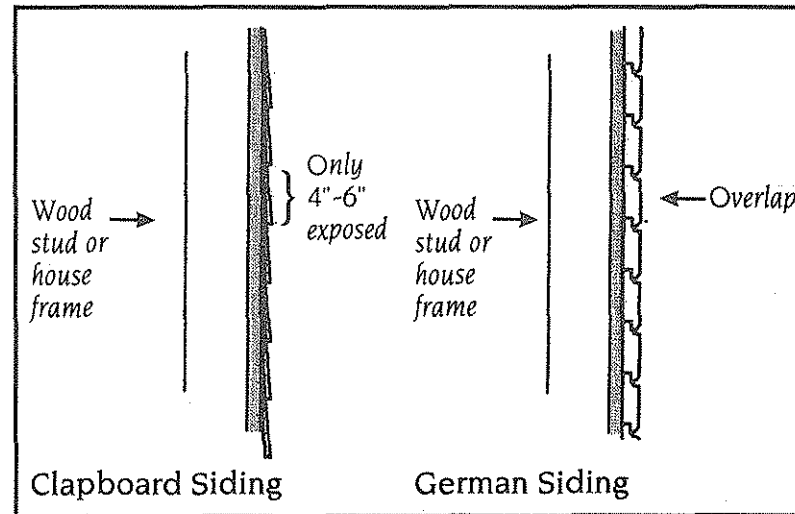
- Composite siding materials may be used to replace wood siding on nonhistoric buildings if the particular material proposed is compatible in appearance with the building itself and with wood siding used on nearby historic buildings.

- Especially on nonhistoric buildings, vinyl or aluminum siding may be replaced with a similar material, preferably one that is an improvement over the existing material in appearance. (Replacement with a matching material is routine maintenance).

4. Routine Maintenance

(work that does not require a Certificate of Approval)

- Maintaining and repairing existing siding or shingles.
- Replacing deteriorated siding or shingles with materials that exactly match the existing siding or shingles and do not cover or alter details such as cornerboards, door and window trim and cornices.



E. Roofs, Dormers and Gutters

Roof Shape

Most Ellicott City buildings have simple roof lines. Gable roofs, often with dormers and cross gables, are the most common. Buildings from the 18th and early 19th centuries usually have steeply pitched gable roofs with the ridge parallel to the front of the building. On later gable roofs, the pitch is more variable and the ridge may be either parallel or at right angles to the building front.

Other common roof shapes in Ellicott City include Mansard roofs, found on a number of buildings constructed or enlarged during the late 1800s; flat roofs (actually slightly pitched), found on commercial buildings constructed around 1900 and later; and shed roofs, often used on porches and building additions.

Roof Material

Historic roofing materials include wood shingles, metal and slate. Wood shingles were used on the earliest buildings. Metal (including copper, terne metal and, later, galvanized steel) and slate became common roofing materials in the mid 19th century. Around 1900, flat asphalt sheets laid in tar or asphalt became popular for flat roofed commercial

buildings. Asphalt shingles, introduced around 1910, are now the most commonly used roofing material.

The original roof material has been replaced by asphalt shingles on many pre-1910 buildings. Wood shingle roofs are now rare in the historic district. To retain the district's historic character, every effort should be made to repair and preserve historic wood, metal or slate roofing, particularly for roofs visible from public ways, and to replace historic roofing with similar material.

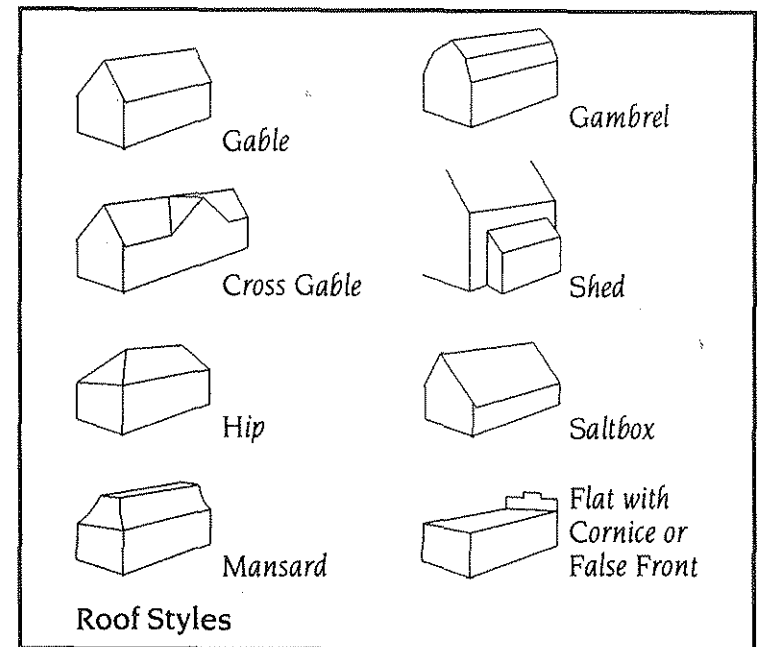
Generally, strong colors should be avoided for visible roofing materials. Colorful roofs draw attention away from the more important building features. Neutral grays allow a much wider selection of colors on the lower parts of the building.

Gutters and downspouts

Gutters, downspouts and drains help protect the exterior walls of a building from water damage. To avoid damage to the structure, gutters and downspouts should be properly sized for the roof area and maintained in good condition, free of obstructions, clogs and misalignments.

1. Recommended

- Maintain original roof line and dormers. Maintain details such as dormer windows or louvers.
- Retain and repair historic roofing material. If necessary, replace small areas of roofing using material matching the original in size, shape, color and texture.
- Replace historic roof materials only when necessary due to extensive deterioration; use replacement material that matches or is similar to the original. If this is not possible, a different material characteristic of the building's style, construction methods



and period may be used. (For example, replacing wood shingles with standing seam metal may be appropriate for some early 1800's buildings.)

- Replace historic roofing with asphalt shingles or other modern materials only if historically accurate materials cannot reasonably be used. Use asphalt shingles that are flat, uniform in color and texture and of a neutral color. A modern material similar in appearance to the original, such as a

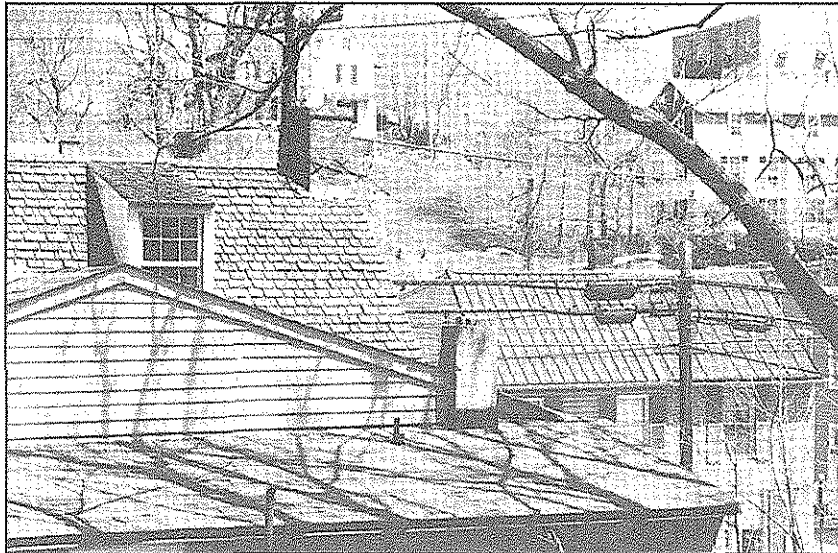
synthetic that reproduces the appearance of slate, may be used.

- Add new dormers only if they are compatible with the architectural style of the building, preserve the balance and massing of the building and match the proportions, shape and materials of existing dormers.
- Add skylights or roof vents only on roof surfaces not visible from a public way.

- Use gutters and downspouts of painted metal or prefinished aluminum in a color consistent with the building's exterior walls or trim. Locate downspouts along natural vertical lines and corners of the building.

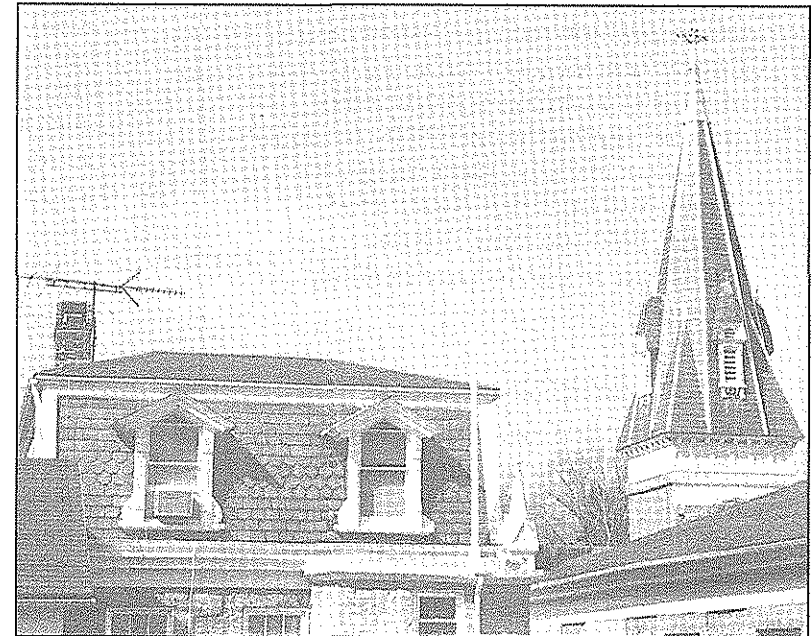
2. Not Recommended

- Replacing historic roofing materials that could be retained and repaired.
- Removing historic roofing materials in order to add a skylight or vent.



Historic roofing materials add character and texture to Ellicott City's buildings.

Wood shingles, standing seam metal and modern asphalt shingles are visible in the photograph above. The building to the rear has the original standing seam metal roof on the right side (coated with asphalt) and an appropriate standing seam metal replacement roof on the left side.



Slate shingles with decorative patterns are a common feature of Mansard roofs.

3. Routine Maintenance

(work that does not require a Certificate of Approval)

- Repairing roofs, including the replacement of small areas of roofing material, using material similar to the existing roofing in dimensions, shape, color and texture.
- Replacing roofing or dormer windows with new materials that exactly match the existing materials.
- Maintaining gutters and downspouts and installing replacements of a similar size, location, and finish, in the same color as existing gutters and downspouts or a color consistent with the exterior building walls.

F. Porches and Balconies

Porches are important to a building's sense of scale. Removing, enclosing or altering a porch can dramatically alter the appearance of a building. If a porch must be replaced, the replacement porch, even if simplified in detail, should reflect the size and visual weight of the original.

Although not common on early Ellicott's Mills structures, porches and balconies were later added to a number of the early buildings. Historic sketches show porches and balconies added to Main Street structures, particularly lower Main Street, which had a boardwalk and two- or three-story porches. Ornate cast iron porches and

balconies were used on a number of buildings during the second half of the 19th century. Although few of these additions have survived, those that remain should be retained and restored whenever possible.

Substantial yet simple front porches are a prominent feature for many homes constructed during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Along upper Main Street and Fels Lane, most of the houses from this period have front porches that run the full width of the house. Loss or alteration of these porches would compromise not only the individual house but also the form and rhythm of the streetscape. In other areas of the



The front porches on these vernacular houses are important to the streetscape.

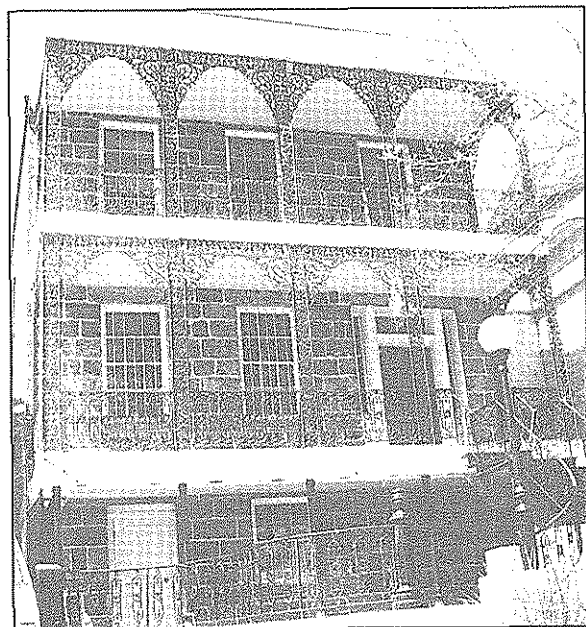


This porch was recently renovated, with new brackets, railings and posts consistent with the character of the older components.

historic district, porches are a major design feature of individual historic buildings.

1. Recommended

- Maintain and repair porches and balconies, including flooring, ceilings, railings, columns, ornamentation and roofing, that are original or that reflect the building's historic development.
- Replace deteriorated features with new materials as similar as possible to the original in material, design and finish.

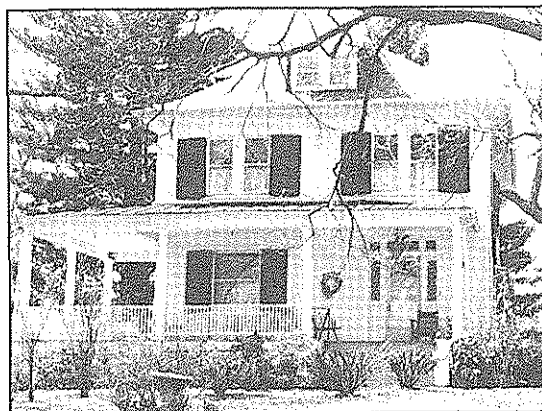


*Ornate cast iron porch on the Courthouse annex
(The top two tiers of the porch are original.)*

- Replace missing features, such as missing supports or railings, with materials that are appropriate in scale, proportion and style.

2. Not Recommended

- Removing a porch or balcony that is original or that reflects the building's historic development.
- Adding or replacing porch features using materials not appropriate to the building's style. Materials generally not appropriate for historic porch replacements include unpainted pressure-treated wood, poured concrete and metal (other than the cast iron porches described above). Examples of inappropriate alterations include replacing painted,



The spacious wrap-around porch is important to the character and scale of this American Foursquare house.

tongue-and-groove flooring with pressure-treated decking or poured concrete, or replacing wood steps with concrete or brick.

- Enclosing a historic porch, especially on a building's primary facade.

3. Possible Exceptions

- If additional enclosed space is needed, enclose a porch on a less visible side of a building in a manner that does not destroy its apparent openness and retains details that indicate its original character.
- Removing a historic porch that is too deteriorated to reasonably repair. If the porch is integral to the design of the building, replace it with a new porch similar in style, scale and detail.

4. Routine Maintenance

(work that does not require a Certificate of Approval)

- Maintaining and repairing porches.
- Replacing deteriorated features with new materials that exactly match the existing materials.
- Replacing missing porch supports, railings, floorboards or decorative details with new materials that exactly match the existing features.

G. Entrances

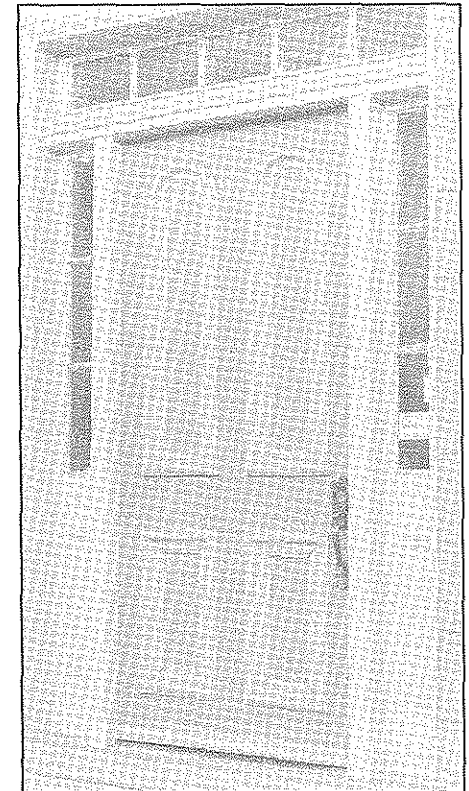
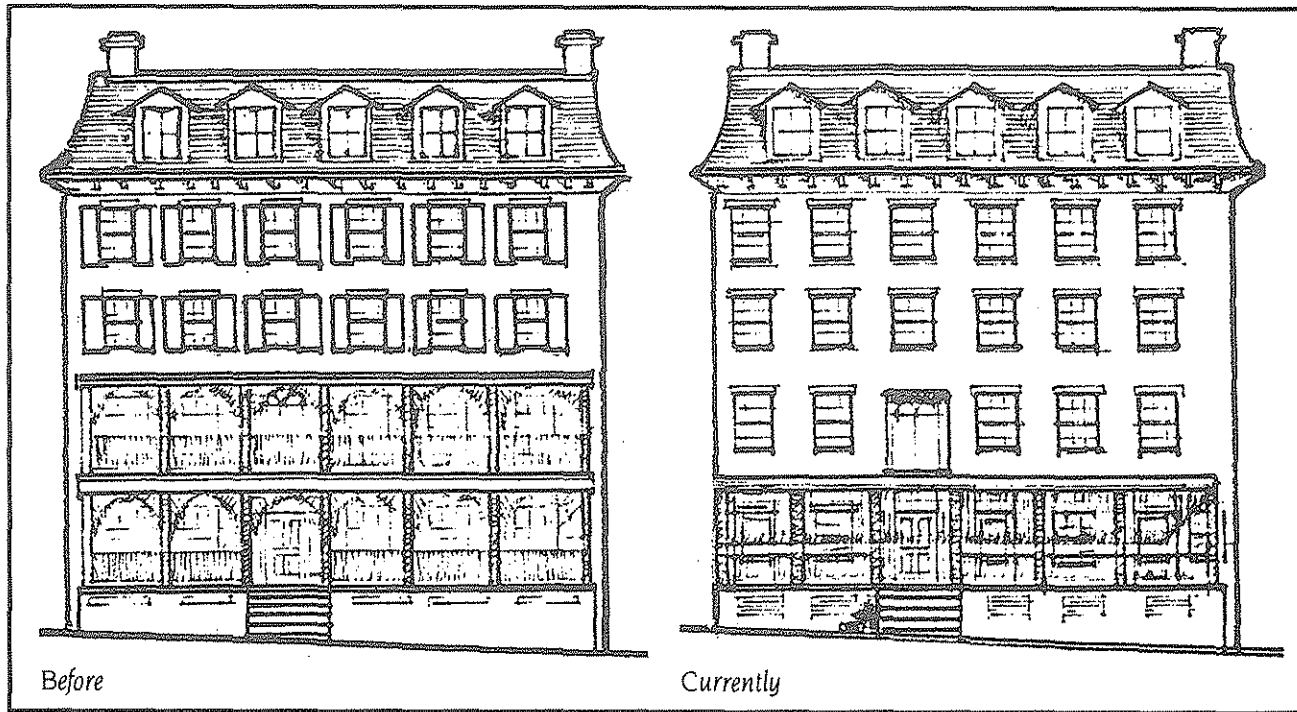
Most Ellicott City buildings (especially before 1850) had simple, narrow entrances, often with narrow transoms or sidelights. The tradition of simple entry ways continued after 1850, although more elaborate doorway details are found on some of the larger buildings of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Granite entrance features are important to many early buildings. Original carved granite sills and lintels survive on many

18th and 19th century buildings. Surviving granite entrance steps are less common.

Historically, most Ellicott City doors were painted, paneled wood. Six-panel and eight-panel doors were used during the early period. In the Victorian era, four-panel, arched doors were common. Typical commercial doors from the late 19th and early 20th century were paneled wood with glass panes in the top half.

These doors remain common in the commercial area of the historic district, although modern metal and glass doors are also found.

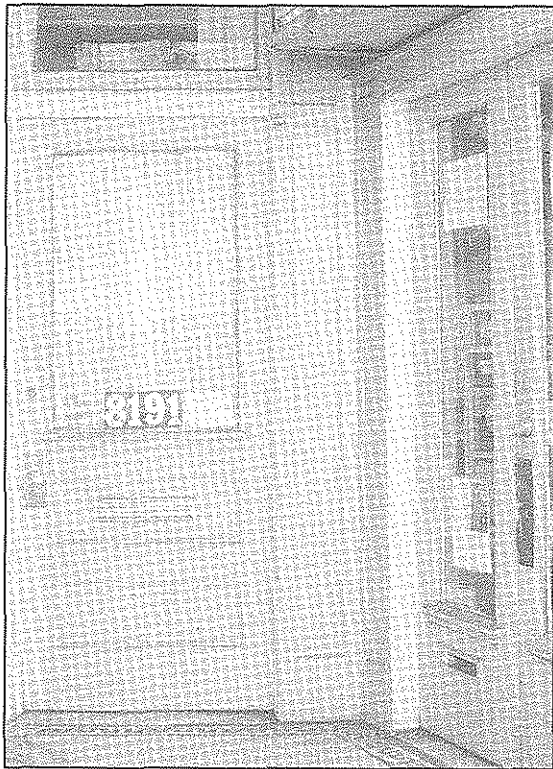
A building's main entrance is a highly visible feature when buildings are close to a street. Ellicott City's secondary entrances, although usually less visible, often have a unique character of their own. Because of the town's steep terrain,



An Italianate-style door in a typical entrance with transom and sidelights

The Howard House, a granite Mansard building constructed in 1850, makes a strong positive contribution to Main Street, although the loss of the second tier of its original cast iron porch (during the World War II scrap metal drive) changed the sense of scale of the building.

rear entries may be several stories above or below the main entry. Apartments or service doors may be accessed by narrow alleys between buildings or steps that climb rock outcroppings. The relationship of an entrance, primary or secondary, to the street, the terrain and other site features should be recognized and valued.



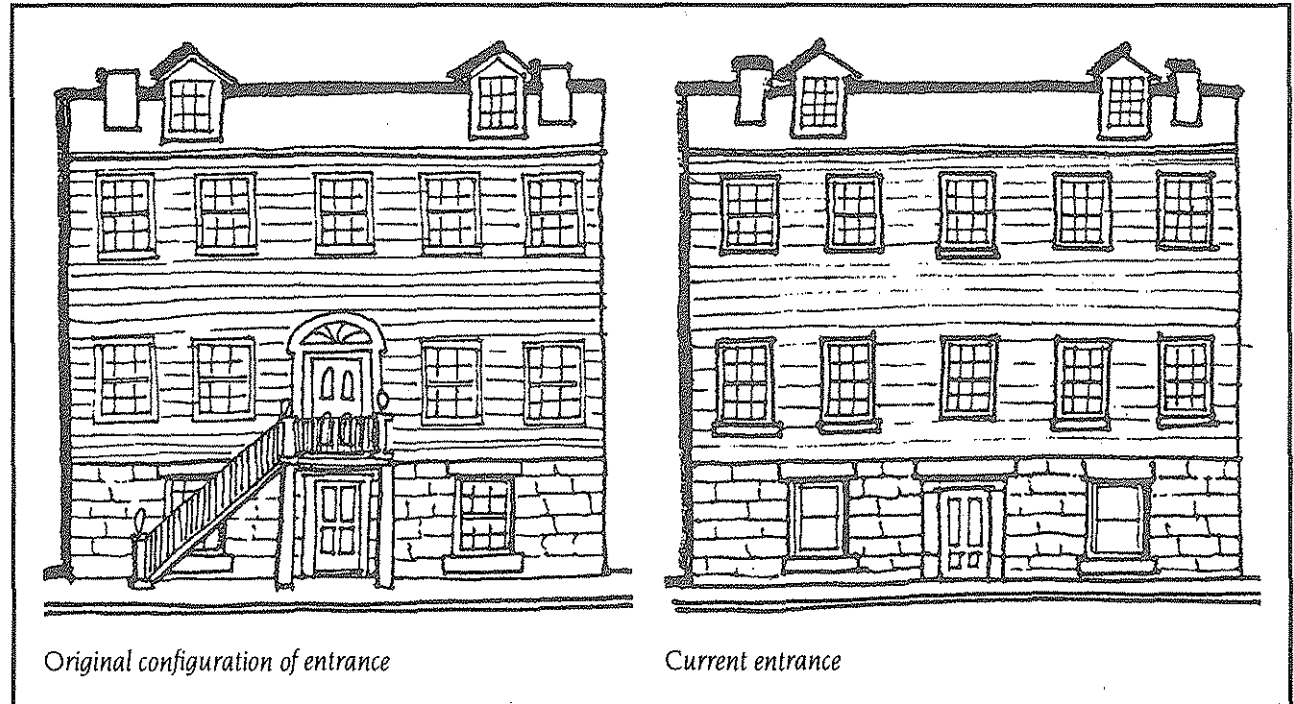
Two commercial entries typical of the late 1800's. The paneled door with half glass and double door with full glass are both common in Ellicott City.

Many alterations have been made to historic building entrances, from minor changes such as replacing wood panels with glass to major changes that diminish historic character such as filling in door openings, transoms or sidelights; creating new door openings on a building's primary facade; removing historic trim and details; or adding details that obscure the original entrance.

When a new door is needed, it should reflect the character of the original door. Simple paneled doors of wood or wood

and glass are usually best, but metal doors with an appropriate style and finish can convey a similar appearance. Painted or enameled metal doors are best; shiny or mill finish metal should be avoided.

Storm doors and security doors can substantially change the appearance of an entrance. Simple wooden screen or storm doors with narrow frames that allow the main door to be seen are most appropriate for Ellicott City. For front entrances in the commercial area and on

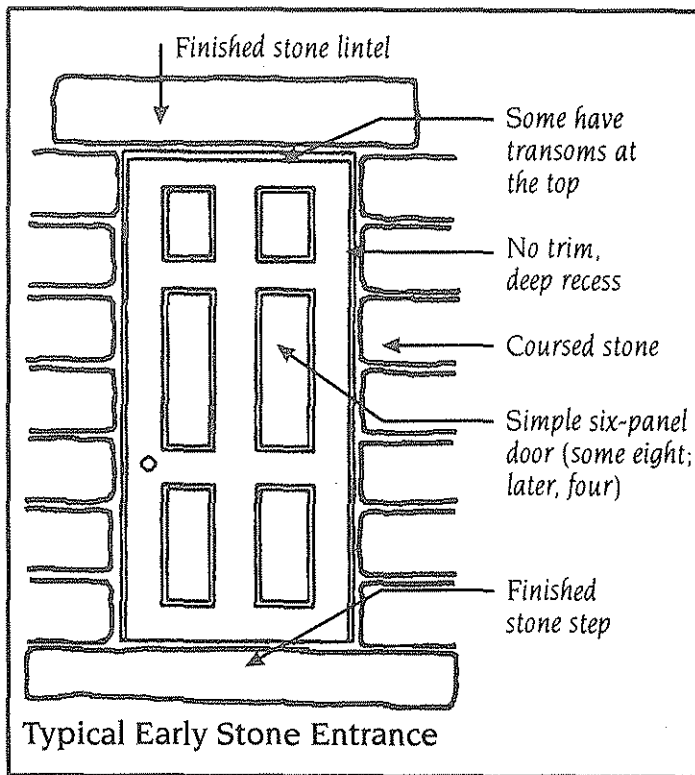
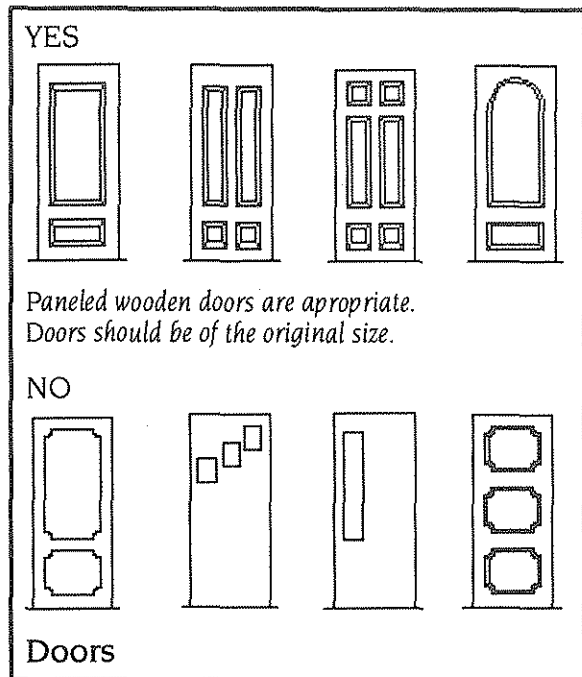


The older, more elaborate entrance to this Federal-style Main Street building is documented through historic records.

other historic buildings where the entrances are highly visible, only these types of screen or storm doors should be used. In other areas, metal screen or storm doors of an appropriate style and finish may be used.

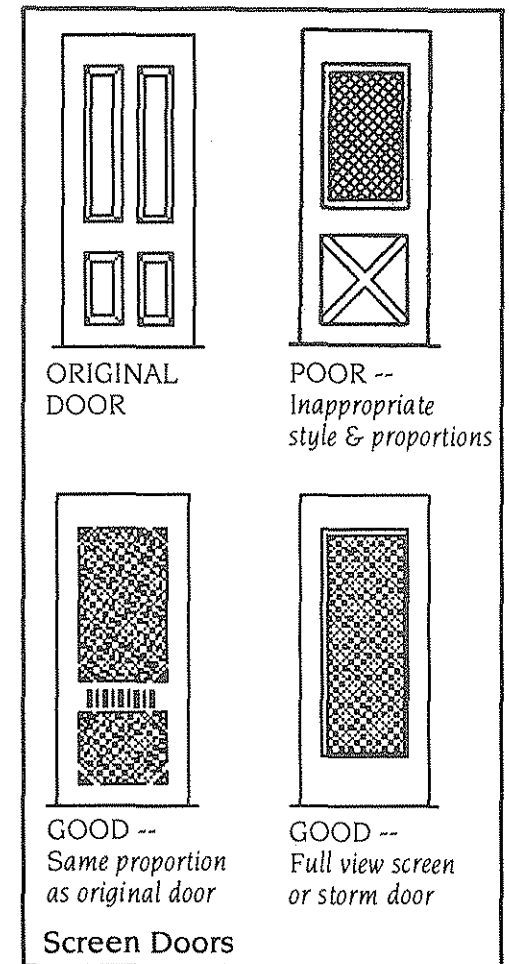
1. Recommended

- Maintain and repair original doors, frames, sills, lintels, side lights and transoms; weatherstrip doors to reduce air infiltration.
- When repair is not possible, replace historic doors and entrance features with features of the same size, style and finish.



- Replace inappropriate modern doors with doors of an appropriate style. If documentary evidence of the original door is available, choose a new door similar to the original. Otherwise, use a door appropriate to the period and style of the building.
- Restore doorways, transoms or sidelights that have been filled in, using physical, pictorial or documentary evidence to accurately restore the building's historic appearance.

- On historic buildings, use narrow-framed wooden screen or storm doors. If the entrance is not highly visible from a public way, simple, narrow-framed screen or storm doors of painted or enameled metal may be used. The paint or enamel color should match that of the primary door it covers.



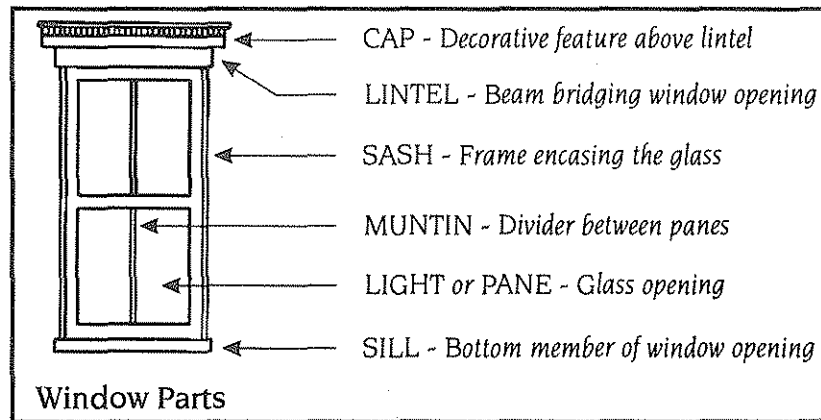
2. Not Recommended

- Unnecessarily replacing original doors and entrance features on historic buildings. Removing historic trim or details.
- Changing the size of door openings; blocking or filling door openings, transoms or side lights.
- Using flush doors without trim or panels, or doors with small windows or staggered glass openings on historic buildings or on nonhistoric buildings in a highly visible location.
- Using doors or door frames that are overly decorative, out of character with the style of the building, or imitative of styles that do not fit the period or style of architecture.
- Cutting a new entrance into a primary facade or in any location where it destroys historic features important to the building's character.

- On historic buildings, using screen, storm or security doors that block the view of the main door or that have an ornate design out of character with the building. Using mill finish aluminum doors.
- Using storm doors on sunny elevations where heat build-up can accelerate deterioration of the finish or warp the wood of a historic wood door.

3. Possible Exceptions

- Many historic buildings have secondary entrances not visible from streets or other properties. Where these entrances already have a modern replacement door, a new door does not necessarily need to be of a historically appropriate style. (Replacement in kind would be considered routine maintenance.)



4. Routine Maintenance

(work that does not require a Certificate of Approval)

- Maintaining and repairing doors, door frames, side lights and transoms.
- Installing weatherstripping.
- Replacing entrance features with materials that exactly match the existing materials.

H. Windows

Windows do much to establish the scale and character of a building. The arrangement, size and shape of windows, the details of window frames and sashes and the arrangement of glass panes all contribute to a building's personality.

Ellicott City windows vary from the many-paned windows of early buildings to the large glass storefront windows of the late 19th and 20th centuries. (Storefront windows are discussed in Section L of this Chapter.) Most windows in the historic district have a double hung sash with vertically proportioned frame, sash and glass panes. All windows were made of wood until the late 19th century when window frames for some storefronts began to be made of metal. Granite lintels and sills are common on 18th and 19th century masonry buildings.

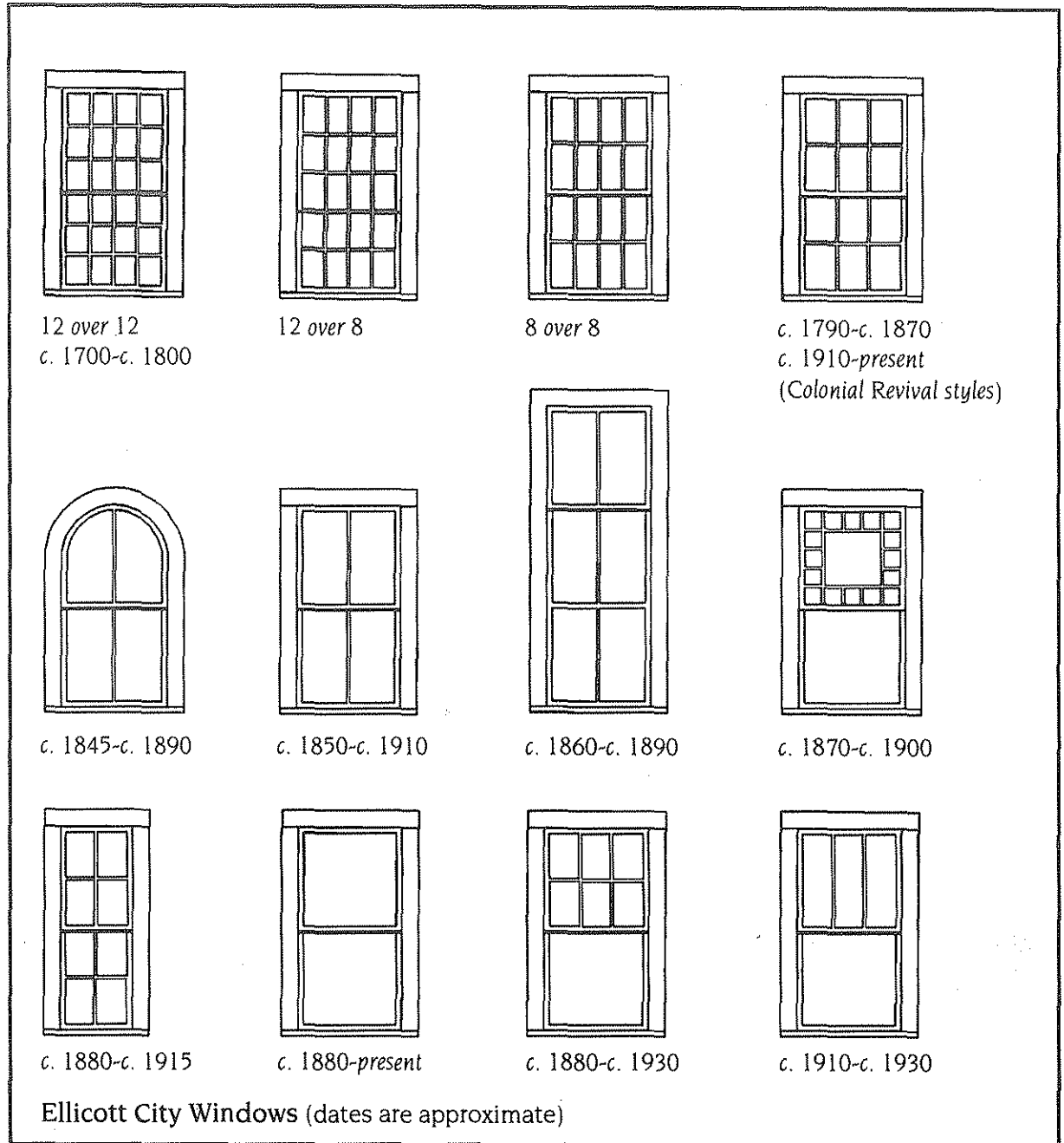
Typical original double-hung window pane patterns for Ellicott City's historic buildings are:

□ On pre-1840 buildings, numerous small panes were used. Before 1800, windows were usually smaller on the upper floors of a building, leading to such arrangements as 12-over-12 panes on the first floor, 12-over-eight panes on the second floor and eight-over-eight panes on the third floor. An example of this pattern is seen in the original windows on the Disney Tavern building. Windows with six-over-six panes became common in the early 1800s and were used through much of the 19th century.

□ Most mid- to late-19th century buildings had two or four window panes per sash.

□ Patterns vary on 20th century buildings. Some early 20th century buildings have multi-pane upper sashes and single-pane lower sashes. Simple one-over-one windows are common, as are six-over-six on Colonial Revival-style buildings.

Many buildings have windows that vary in style or window pane pattern. These variations should be retained if they reflect decisions made when the building was constructed or the varying ages of different sections of the building. However, some buildings have modern replacement windows that change in



style from floor to floor. In these cases, it is desirable to install consistent, historically appropriate windows.

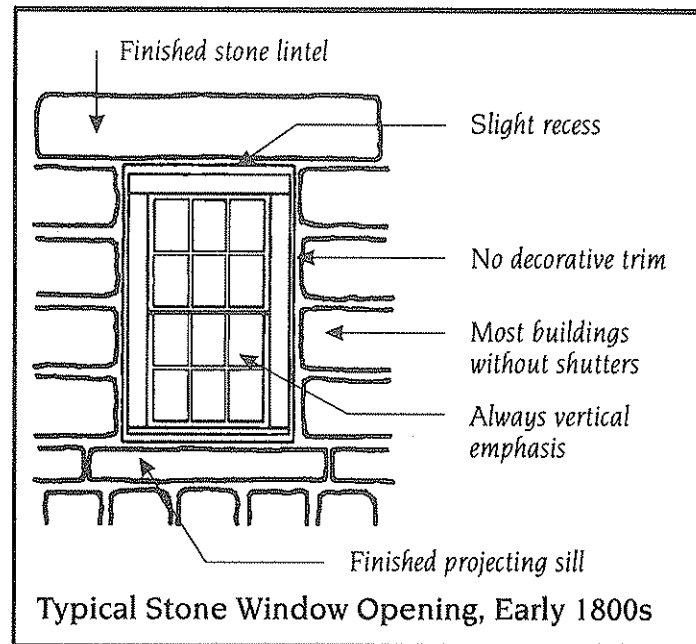
Vinyl or metal replacement windows do not have the same profile and detailing as wood windows and should be avoided on historic buildings. Although they are usually appropriate on modern



Original 12-over-12 windows on Disney's Tavern, c. 1790

buildings, vinyl windows can be detrimental to a historic streetscape if used on a prominent, highly visible facade of a nonhistoric building close to historic buildings. Wood windows clad with a permanent finish are a good, low maintenance alternative.

Windows in the historic district should generally have true divided lights, rather than sandwiched or interior snap-in muntins. Windows with sandwiched or interior muntins reflect light differently than windows with divided lights. Windows with permanent exterior grilles are an alternative that can be similar in appearance and reflective qualities to true divided lights.



1. Recommended

- Maintain and repair original window openings, frames, sashes, sills, lintels and trim. Maintain glass, putty and paint in good condition. Install weatherstripping to reduce air infiltration.
- When repair is not possible, replace original windows, frames and related details with features that fit the original openings and are of the same style, material, finish and window pane configuration. If possible, reproduce frame size and profile and muntin detailing.
- Replace inappropriate modern windows with windows of appropriate style. If documentary evidence of the original windows is available, choose new windows similar to the original. Otherwise, select windows appropriate to the period and style of the building.
- Restore window openings that have been filled in, using physical, pictorial or documentary evidence to accurately restore the building's historic appearance.
- Consider installing interior rather than exterior storm windows if exterior storm windows would significantly detract from the appearance of the building.

2. Not Recommended

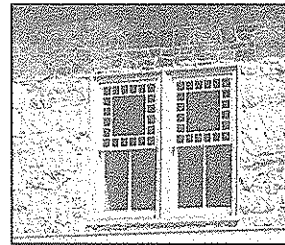
- Replacing sound wood windows and frames, even if paint, putty and glazing need repair or replacement.
- Removing, adding or altering a window opening on a building's primary facade or in any location where it affects historic features key to the building's character.
- Replacing wood windows with metal or vinyl. Using metal or vinyl windows



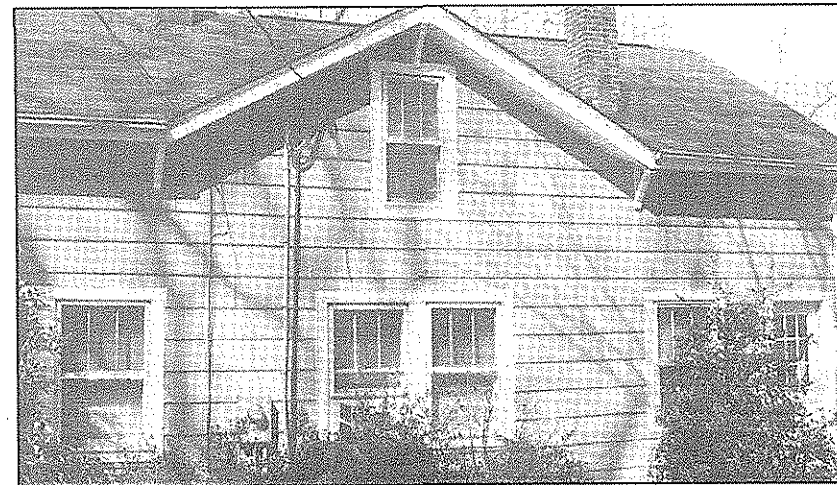
Window forms from the mid 1800s are visible in the projecting ell on the left side of this house: a bay window; narrow-paned windows on the second floor; and gable window. The two-over-two windows on the right side of the house could be from the same time period.

on historic buildings or in highly visible locations, except for appropriate, metal-framed storefront windows.

- Installing windows with interior snap-in or sandwiched muntins, or other types of windows that do not have the appearance of true divided lights, on historic buildings or in locations visible from a public way.



Queen Anne windows, late 1800s (above); Early 20th century Craftsman-style windows (below)



- Installing storm windows with vertical or horizontal divisions that conflict with sash divisions, or with borders wider than the frame of the primary window sash.
- Installing storm windows that have mill finish aluminum frames or are finished in a color incompatible with the primary window sash and frame.
- Installing thermo-pane glass in a single-glazed primary sash, unless the sash is sufficiently strong to sustain the additional weight.

3. Possible Exceptions

- Vinyl windows may be acceptable for modern additions to historic buildings if the addition is to the rear of the building with little visibility from public ways or neighboring properties.

4. Routine Maintenance

(work that does not require a Certificate of Approval)

- Repairing windows, including replacement of clear glass and putty.
- Installing weatherstripping.
- Installing replacement windows that exactly match the existing windows in all details including window pane pattern.

I. Shutters and Blinds

Although wooden blinds (louvered shutters) were a common feature of Federal-style buildings elsewhere, most early Ellicott's Mills structures maintained a tradition of simple, often closely spaced windows without shutters or blinds. Shutters and blinds were used more often on late 19th century residences.

Where original shutters and blinds exist, they should be carefully repaired and maintained. Shutters or blinds should be added to historic buildings only if there is evidence that they were used on the building originally or in its early period.

I. Recommended

- Maintain and repair original shutters, blinds and hardware.
- For replacements, install shutters or blinds that maintain the size, style and placement of the original.
- Install shutters or blinds of painted wood. Shutters or blinds should be correctly sized for the window and operable, or at least appear operable with hinges and hold backs (shutter dogs) appropriate to the period of initial construction.

2. Not Recommended

- Unnecessarily removing original shutters.
- Installing shutters or blinds on a historic building if there is no evidence of their use during the historic period.
- On any building, installing shutters or blinds that are too small or too large to fit the window frame when closed.
- Aluminum or vinyl shutters or blinds.

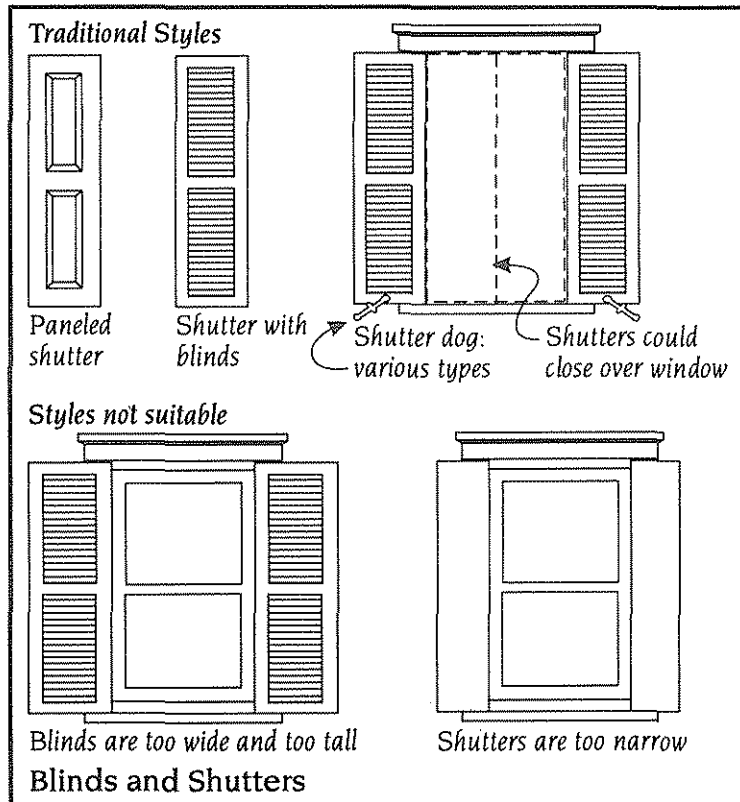
3. Routine Maintenance

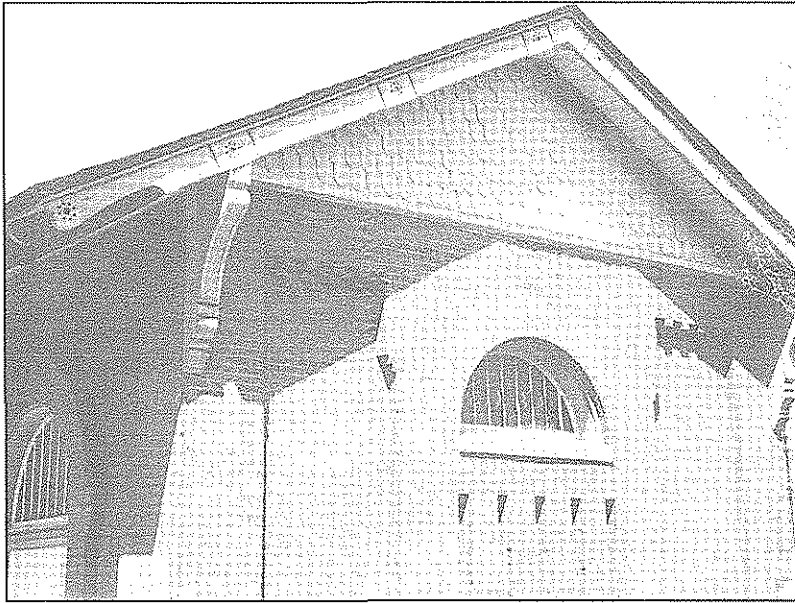
(work that does not require a Certificate of Approval)

- Maintaining and repairing shutters or blinds.
- Installing new shutters or blinds that exactly match the existing ones.

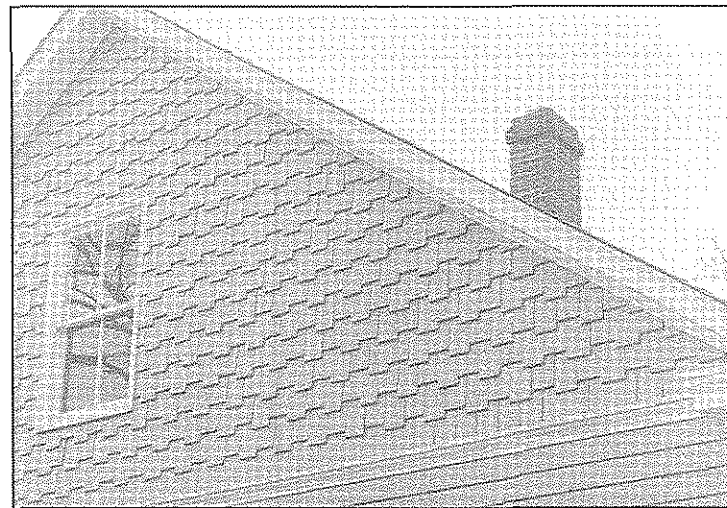
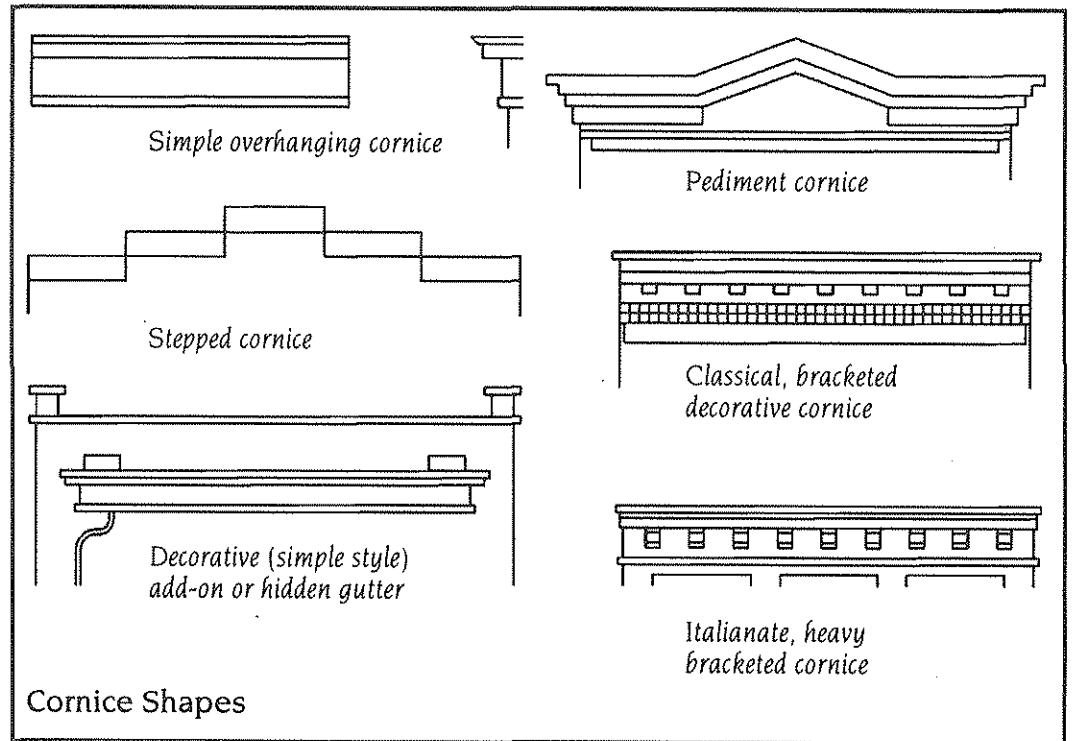
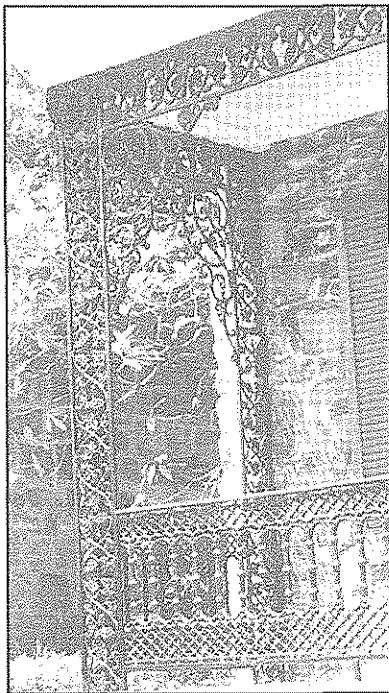
J. Cornices and Ornamentation

The use of ornamental details on Ellicott City buildings was very limited in the first half of the 19th century. These buildings often did not have cornice features. Later periods show more elaborate details, including carved brackets, dentil moulding and varied cornice shapes and detailing. These, together with intricately patterned iron porch and window railings, are the most prominent ornamental details on Ellicott City buildings.





19th century ornamental details: Ornate iron porch railings (left); staggered butt shingles (right); Queen Anne-style fishscale shingles, brackets, and pierced woodwork detailing (above).





Decorative details such as this 19th century bracket may be sound even if they need maintenance such as scraping and painting.

1. Recommended

- Maintain and repair original cornices and ornamentation or details added to the original building that have acquired historic significance.
- Replace deteriorated features with materials as similar to the original as possible.
- Replace missing original features that can be documented by physical evidence, photographs or other means.
- Uncover original details obscured by later additions.

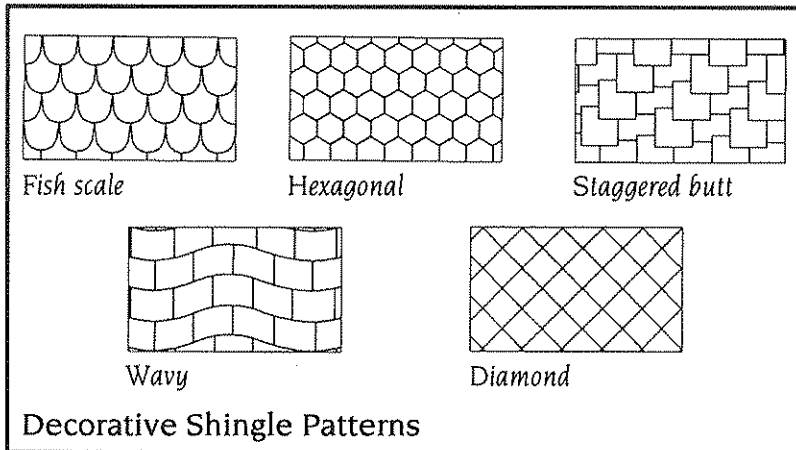
2. Not Recommended

- Unnecessarily removing or covering original cornice details or ornamentation.
- Decorating a building by adding trim that did not exist on it historically.

3. Routine Maintenance

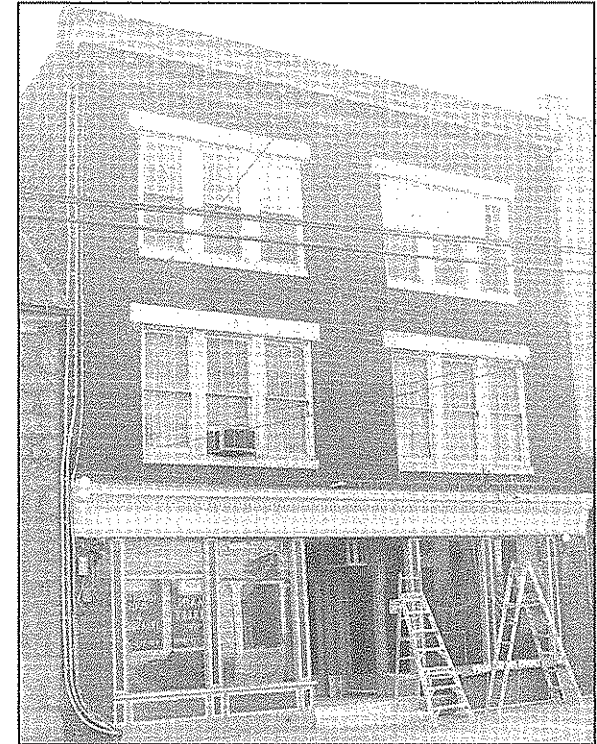
(work that does not require a Certificate of Approval)

- Maintaining and repairing cornices and ornamentation.
- Replacing cornice details and ornamentation with materials that exactly match the existing materials.



K. Storefronts

Downtown Ellicott City's commercial buildings were constructed over the past two centuries and display a variety of styles, forms and materials. Today, buildings in the commercial area are used for shops, restaurants, banks, offices, dwellings and public uses. Some uses have been continuous, but many



This building, constructed in the early 20th century, has a newer wooden storefront under the original pressed metal storefront cornice. The new storefront is compatible in scale, form and detail with the building as a whole.

buildings have been converted from original uses that included hotels, lumberyards, stables, automobile sales and manufacturing.

Many of the oldest storefront buildings — those built prior to 1840 — were originally dwellings. Those built for commercial purposes differed little in form from the early dwellings. Some of these buildings have been altered very little. Doors and windows have often been replaced, but no changes have been made to the original window and door openings or to the basic form of the building. Other early buildings have been substantially altered, most often by the addition of large storefront windows. Other common changes include altering a door opening or a roof line.

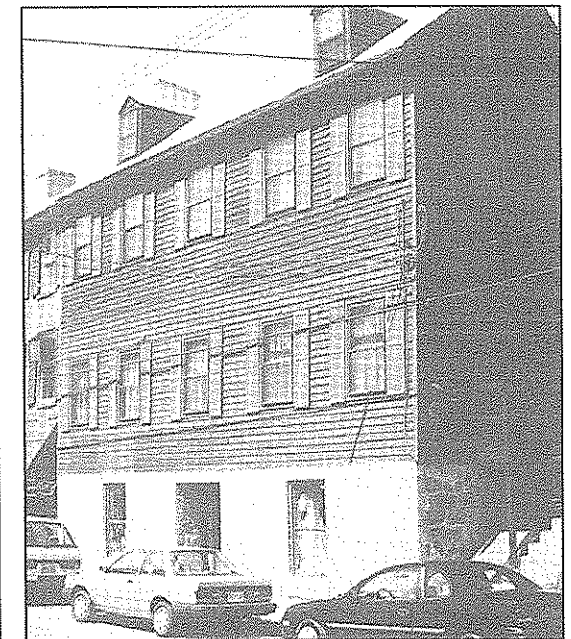
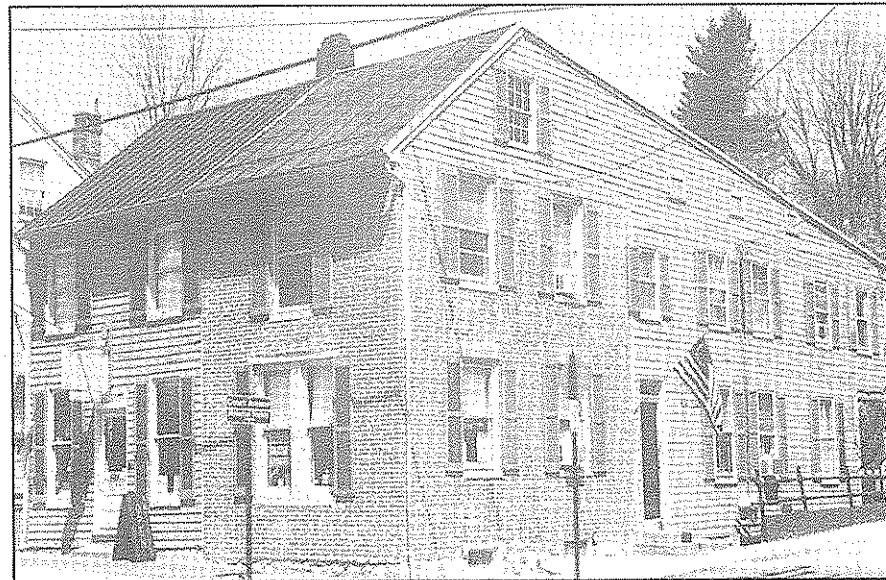
In the 1850s, the development of plate glass made larger storefront windows possible. During the late 1800s and early 1900s, display windows became larger while the structure supporting the upper floors became less visible. The original form and materials of turn-of-the-century storefronts should be preserved or, if feasible,

restored where they have been altered. Historic features and materials that should be recognized and preserved include wood or metal cornices separating the storefront from the upper stories; leaded glass transoms over storefront windows; recessed entryways, sometimes with ceramic tile floors and pressed tin ceilings; marble or polished granite bases below storefront windows; cast iron grilles; and sheet metal cornices, fascias and other trim elements.

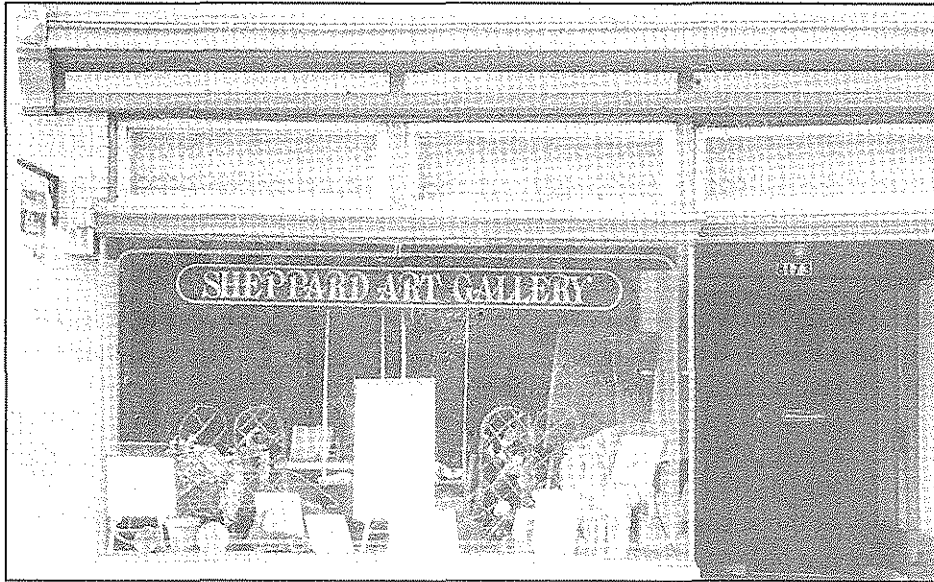
Pent roofs or cornices have been added to the facade of some commercial buildings at the second story level. A pent roof is a narrow, continuous shed roof attached to the building wall, often used to extend a showcase window from the original building facade. Removal of

pent roofs and cornices and restoration of the earlier form of the building facade would improve the visual character of these buildings. Where this is not practical because of the structural alterations involved, it may be possible to better integrate these features into the facade.

Renovations and repairs to storefronts need to be designed to make the



These Main Street buildings are examples of buildings converted to shops with little change in their original form. A brick and frame duplex (left); one of the earliest existing buildings (above), built as a residence c. 1800. Another example is the I.O.O.F. building, a granite structure c. 1848, shown on page 11.

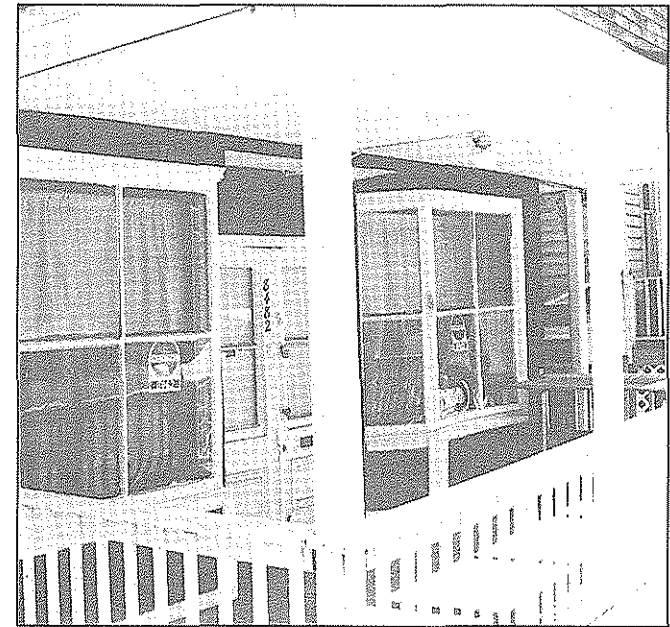


Ellicott City has numerous late 19th and early 20th century storefronts with original features intact. The example above has leaded glass windows above the storefront and a sheet metal storefront cornice. The building to the left, originally the Easton Sons Funeral Parlor, has a limestone facade and arched window framing.

storefront an integral part of the building facade. If the storefront design is related to the style and detailing of the upper floors, the storefront becomes an integral part of the total building and makes a stronger, more cohesive statement.

1. Recommended

- Preserve the form and details of existing historic storefronts. Uncover or replace architectural detailing that has been obscured by later additions.



This Victorian storefront, with original porch, windows and door, is in a building no longer used as a store. The panels below the windows have been covered and the porch railings changed.

- Repair historic metal, glass, stone or wood details. If elements are too deteriorated to repair, replace in kind or with compatible substitute materials.
- Where physical, photographic or other documentation exists for an earlier storefront, or for the building's appearance before a storefront facade was added, restore the earlier storefront design if the later renovation has not acquired historic significance of its own. Remove nonhistoric fronts, panels, cornices and pent roofs.
- When planning storefront repairs or alterations, unify the upper and lower floors in the new design. Use appropriate and matching materials and colors throughout the facade; use materials appropriate to the style and period of the building; and use details of one time and type, within the limits of that building and its date of construction. Incorporate locations for signage into the overall design of the facade.
- Design new storefronts to fit within the first floor building openings as formed by columns, piers and cornices.

2. Not Recommended

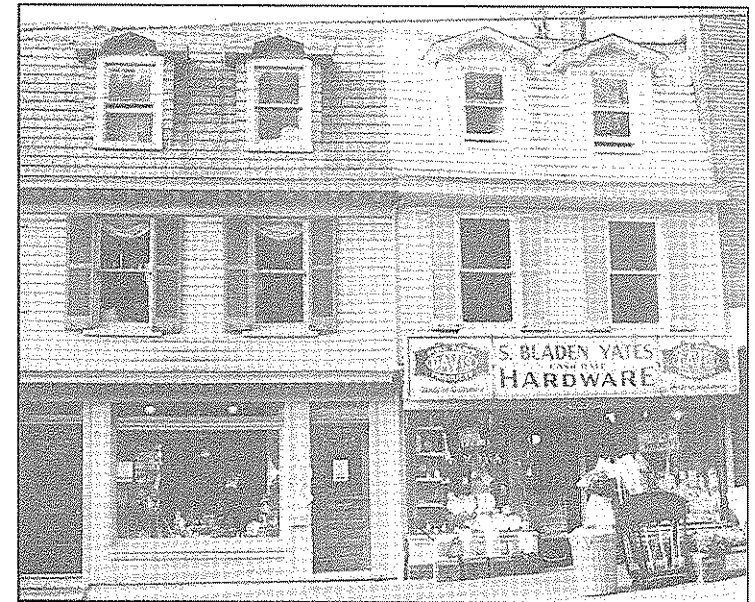
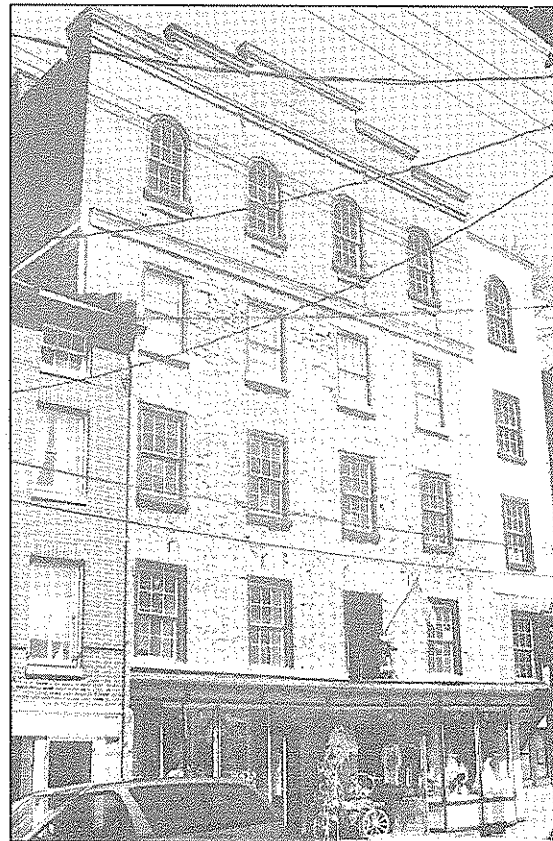
- Using a new storefront design that is not based on the building's historic facade.
- Removing or replacing historic storefront details that could be repaired.
- Adding trim that did not exist on the storefront in the historic period, such

as wood shakes, large sign panels, or false pent or mansard roofs.

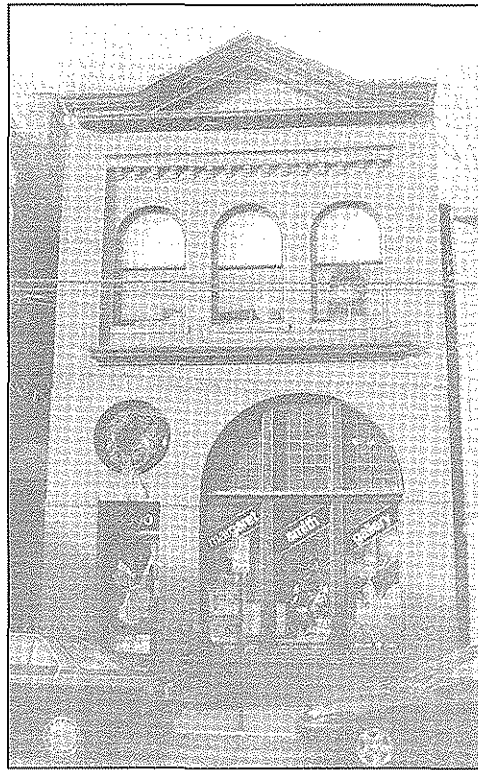
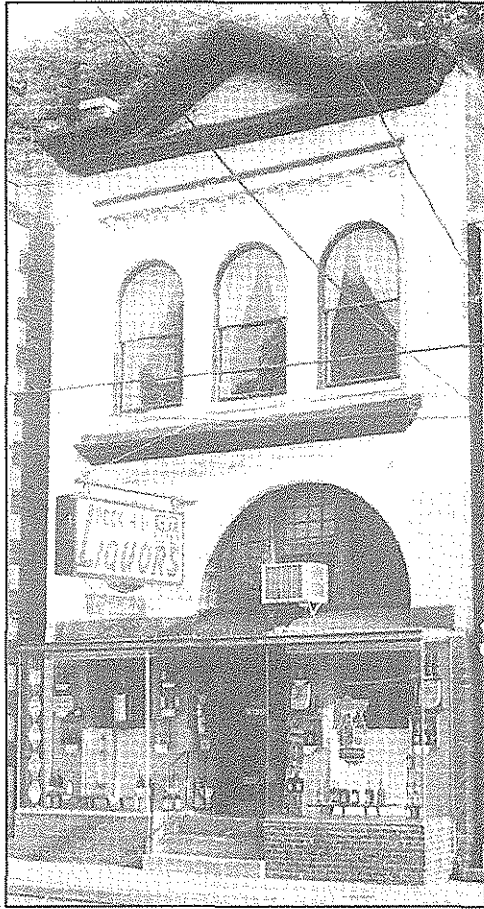
3. Routine Maintenance

(work that does not require a Certificate of Approval)

- Maintaining and repairing storefronts.
- Replacing storefront details with materials that exactly match the existing materials.



Examples of storefront buildings with substantial alterations that now have architectural significance of their own: The Opera House (left) has a first floor storefront added in the late 1800s. The brick fifth floor and cornice and the recessed right wing are also additions. The early buildings shown above were updated with Mansard roofs and storefronts, also in the late 1800s.



Before and after. The 20th century storefront shown in the picture to the left was removed, returning this 19th century Romanesque Revival building to its original configuration.

L. Awnings and Canopies

Awnings were typical on some storefront buildings of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Although not common in Ellicott City today, canvas awnings can be appropriately added to the first floor of some commercial buildings to provide shelter for pedestrians. Upper story

awnings have traditionally not been used in Ellicott City.

1. Recommended

- When installing awnings or canopies, use shed-style awnings that are scaled appropriately for the building size and window spacing. Awnings should be

made of nonreflective canvas or another strong fabric, in a color compatible with the building facade.

- For first floor awnings adjacent to a public way, provide a minimum clearance of eight feet above the sidewalk.
- Provide a 10-inch to 12-inch valance on awnings. On commercial buildings, use only the awning's valance for signage.

2. Not Recommended

- Awnings made of aluminum, plastic or vinyl.
- Awnings on the upper floors of a building, or first floor awnings that are placed high enough to abut the second floor window sills.
- Awnings that obscure character-defining features of the building.
- Awnings that are internally illuminated so that they glow.

3. Routine Maintenance

(work that does not require a Certificate of Approval)

- Maintaining and repairing awnings.
- Replacing awnings with new material that exactly matches the existing material.

M. Equipment and Hardware

Modern equipment, such as antennas, air conditioning units, heat pumps, solar collectors, alarm systems, security bars, satellite dishes and utility meters must often be accommodated on historic buildings.

In areas where buildings are widely spaced with substantial yard area, equipment can usually be located where it is not visible from streets or neighboring properties. In more densely developed areas, this becomes more difficult. In the commercial area and other areas with attached buildings or very small yards, air conditioning and similar equipment often must be located on rooftops. Because of the hilly terrain, Ellicott City's downtown rooftops usually form part of the scenic view for nearby properties and streets. Where it is not possible to hide equipment, it should be designed to blend as much as possible with the structure and should not obscure or damage important historic details.

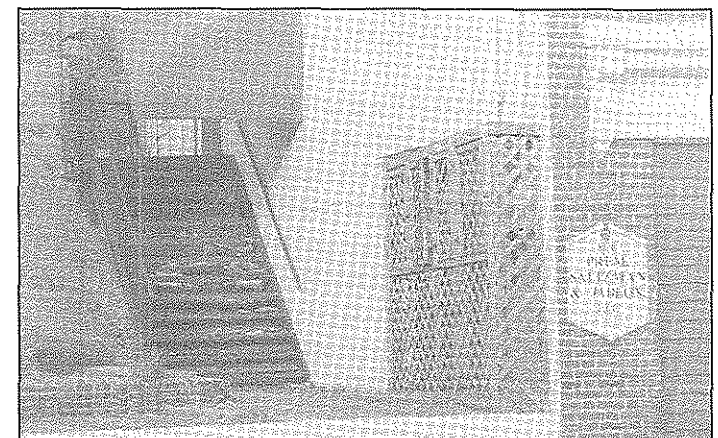
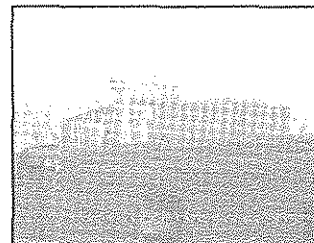
The installation of hardware such as door or window locks, doorknobs, mail slots and individual mailboxes is routine maintenance and does not require a Certificate of Approval. The historic character of a building will be enhanced if original hardware is retained. Modern

hardware should be simple and unobtrusive.

1. Recommended

- Whenever possible, install equipment out of sight of public ways or other properties.
- Use landscaping or low fencing to screen ground level equipment placed in a location visible from a public way or neighboring property.
- If rooftop equipment would be visible from ground level, screen it with an appropriately designed architectural screen that blends with the building. If the roof is visible from higher elevations within the historic district, paint the exterior equipment housings to blend with the building.
- If possible, install through-the-wall or window air conditioners on side or rear facades rather than on the building's primary facade. Ensure that their condensation does not damage window sills, siding, masonry or foundations.

A wooden fence screens rooftop equipment (right); latticework conceals utility meters on the side of a building (far right).



- Select security systems to be unobtrusive, using systems other than security bars whenever possible. When using bars, install them inside windows and outward swinging doors rather than on the outside.

2. Not Recommended

- Altering historic building features to accommodate equipment, e.g. removing sound, original roof materials to install solar collectors.
- Installing equipment on a roof section visible from a public way, unless no other option exists.

3. Routine Maintenance

(work that does not require a Certificate of Approval)

- Installing utility meters, heat pumps, central air conditioning condensers,

antennas (including satellite dish antennas) and alarm systems in locations that do not require alteration of historic building features and, without need for screening, that are not visible at any time of year from public ways or other properties.

- Installing window air conditioners that do not require permanent alterations to the window.
- Installing or altering door or window locks, doorknobs, mail slots, individual mailboxes and other minor hardware.

N. Colors and Painting

Color choice derives from personal taste, but can have a significant effect on the character of buildings and streetscapes. Even on unpainted stone or brick buildings, the trim colors can have a strong influence on the building's character. Therefore, colors of walls, roofs and building details must be approved by the Historic District Commission.

Common colors for buildings have varied for different time periods and architectural styles. Due to the great variety of periods and styles represented by Ellicott City's buildings, few generalizations are possible. However, property owners can often determine the colors historically used on their building by following these steps:

1. Using a pocket knife, carefully scrape an area of the building that has been protected from weathering and direct sunlight, such as underneath a porch, an overhanging roof or a storefront cornice.
2. Cut away the built-up layers of paint at a shallow angle and sand down the resulting bull's eye to reveal concentric circles of color. Moisten the resulting paint cross section with clear oil to bring out the true hues.
3. Discount the layer closest to the wood, which in most cases was applied as a primer under the original finish coat. Also remember that time, sunlight and chemical leaching may have grayed or bleached the original shade.

This technique can be applied to various features of the original structure and later additions to track changes over time.

WARNING: Historic buildings are likely to have lead paint. Anyone working with lead paint should learn about the hazards associated with this type of work before beginning a project. Guidelines are published by the Maryland Department of the Environment for methods of abating lead paint hazards, and by the Maryland Occupational Safety and Health Administration for the safety of construction workers exposed to lead.

1. Recommended

- Use colors that were historically used on the building.
- Use colors appropriate to the period and style of the building.
- Use colors that are generally compatible with (and do not clash with) the colors used in the district, particularly on neighboring buildings. On attached buildings, use the same colors or a coordinated color scheme whenever possible. In general, use calm or subdued colors, reserving bright colors for small, important details, such as doors or trim.

2. Not Recommended

- Using primary colors, bright orange, bright purple and grass green. These are not historically appropriate and generally will not blend with the district's architecture.
- Using too many colors. This may detract from the architectural design of the building.

3. Routine Maintenance

(work that does not require a Certificate of Approval)

- Painting previously painted surfaces using the same color as the existing paint.



Chapter 7. New Construction: Additions, Porches and Outbuildings

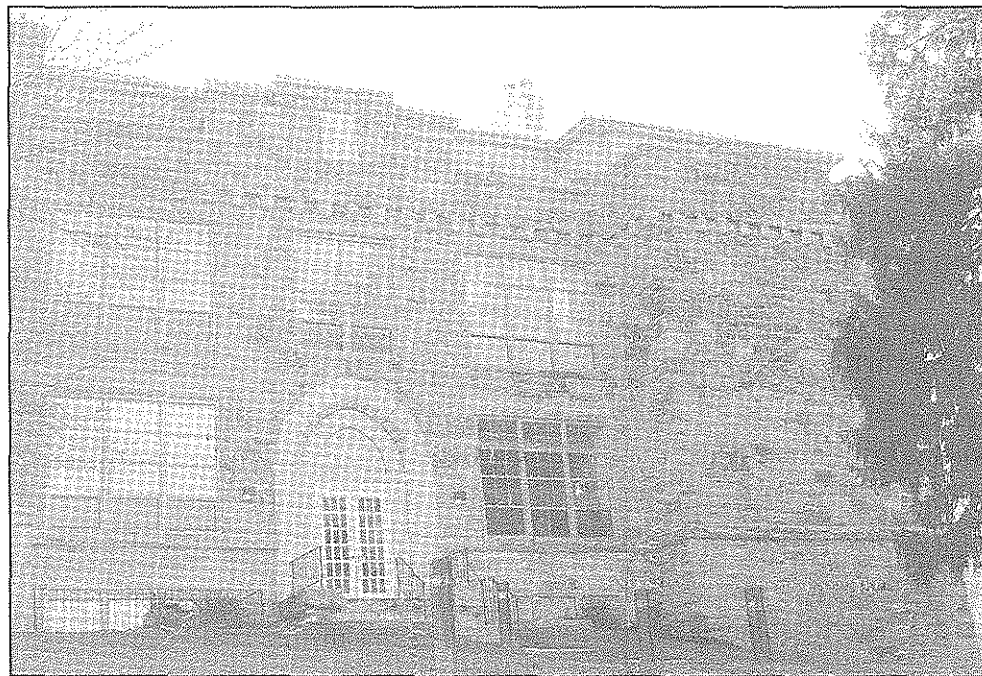
- As occupants and uses of buildings change, existing buildings sometimes need to be enlarged or new outbuildings constructed. The guidelines in this Chapter will help to ensure that this new construction blends with and enhances the town's historic fabric.

The guidelines for landscaping and site design (Chapter 9) should be consulted for new construction. Because of the importance of the natural setting to Ellicott City, the impact of a project on topography, landscaping or views may be as much a concern as the design of the structure itself.

A. Building Additions

Additions should be subordinate to historic buildings and not compete with or obscure the existing structure.

Typically, the primary view of a building is its front facade. However, Ellicott City's hilly topography and winding streets



A third floor was added to the Ellicott City Elementary School building when it was converted to condominiums. The addition is partially hidden by the parapet walls and retains the original cornice line.

often provide prominent views of a building's rooftop, side or rear elevations as well as the front facade. When designing an addition, all views of the building should be considered.

1. Preserving Historic Building Features

- Design and fit additions to avoid damaging or obscuring key architectural features of a historic building.
- Attach additions to the side or rear of a historic building to avoid altering the primary facade. Consider the impact of the addition on side, rear and rooftop views of the building from public ways.
- Design additions so that the form and integrity of the historic structure would be unimpaired if the addition were to be removed in the future.
- Design additions in a manner that makes clear what is historic and what is new. Additions may be contemporary in design or may reference design motifs from the historic building, but should not directly imitate the historic building.
- Minimize disturbance of the terrain around the building to avoid destroying or damaging important landscape features or possible archeological remains.

2. Size, Scale and Form

- Design an addition to be subordinate to the historic building in size, height, scale and detail and to allow the form of the original structure to be seen. Distinguish the addition from the original structure by using a setback or offset or a line of vertical trim between the old section and the new.
- For any building, design the addition so that its proportions (relationship of width to height), the arrangement of windows and doors, and the relationship of solids (wall area) to voids (window area) are compatible with the existing structure. Use a roof design that echoes or complements the original roof line. Gable and shed roofs are common for additions in Ellicott City.

3. Spacing

- Preserve the prevailing spacing between buildings. Where buildings are separated from one another by side yards, building additions should maintain the side yards. If the spacing of buildings and side yards creates a rhythm, this rhythm should be preserved.

4. Details

- Design windows to be similar in size, proportion and arrangement to the existing windows. On historic buildings, or any building visible from a public way, windows should have true divided lights rather than interior or sandwiched muntins. A possible alternative is windows that do not have divided lights but have permanent exterior grilles, appropriately detailed to be compatible with historic wood windows.
- Do not use sliding glass doors, bay windows, skylights and similar features on additions to historic buildings unless they are in an unobtrusive location. (Hinged atrium doors with divided lights are an alternative to sliding glass doors more compatible with historic architecture.)
- Use doors and simple entrance designs that are compatible with those on the existing building or similar buildings nearby.
- Install shutters or blinds only if they exist or once existed on the original building.

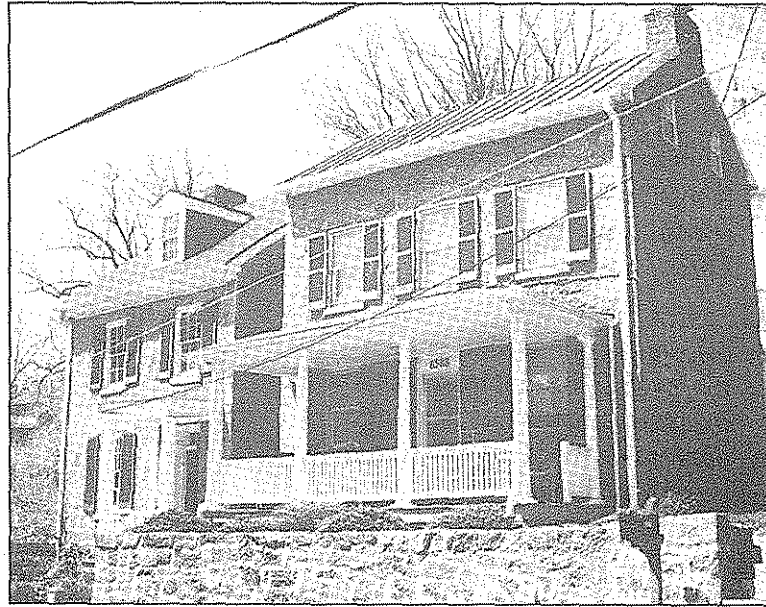
5. Materials

- On any building, use exterior materials and colors (including roof, walls and foundations) similar to or compatible with the texture and color of those on the existing building. Avoid exact replication that would make an addition appear to be an original part of a historic building.
- For frame construction, use wood siding or wood shingles similar in appearance to the siding or shingles on the existing building. Aluminum, vinyl or another substitute siding may be acceptable if already used on the existing building. A substitute siding material that is compatible in width, profile, shape, texture and finish to the wood siding on the existing building may be used for additions to nonhistoric buildings, or for additions to historic buildings if wood siding is not a viable option.
- Roofing material may be similar to historic roofing material on the existing building or may be an

unobtrusive modern material such as asphalt shingles. Asphalt shingles should be flat and uniform in color and texture.

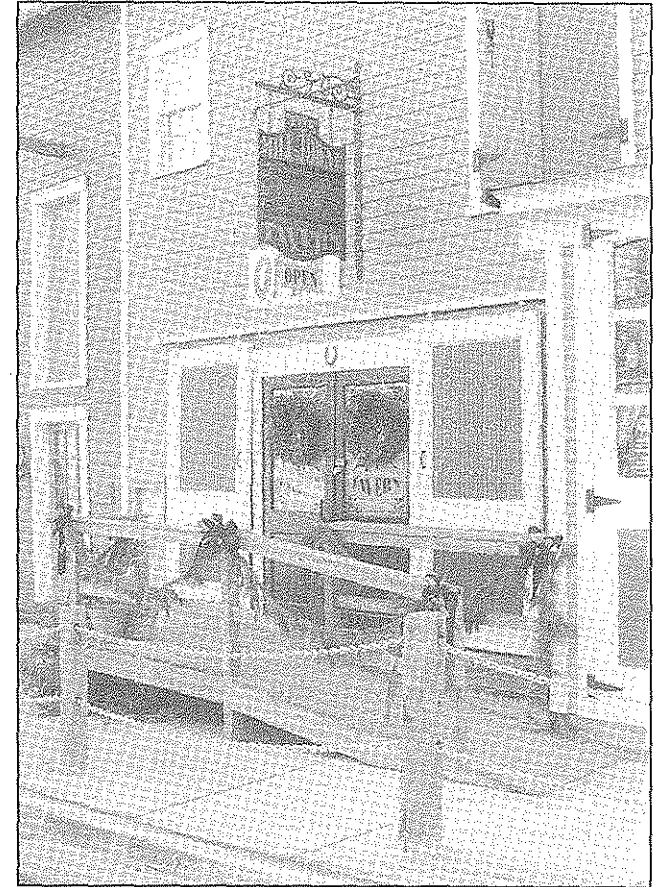
B. Construction of New Porches and Decks

Porches or decks added to historic buildings should be simple in design and not alter or hide the basic form of the building. Particular care is needed for adding porches to Ellicott City's pre-1850 buildings. These seldom included porches as part of their



The porch on this granite house is not new, but was not part of the house originally. It is a compatible addition, in scale with and not obscuring the form of the building.

original design, and front porches in particular can easily obscure the simple historic form of the building. Porches must be compatible in design with the style of the building.



A simple ramp for handicapped access has been added to this historic building.

Proposals to add decks (without walls or roofs) of unpainted, pressure treated wood to the rear of historic buildings are not uncommon. Although these additions are obviously modern, they usually obscure little of the building facade and require little change to historic building features. Decks should not be added to a historic building's primary facade or a facade highly visible from a public way. They should be substantial in appearance, having more of the character of a porch (avoid decks that appear to stand on "toothpicks"), and should be related in detail as much as possible to the style and character of the building.

Similar design issues arise when adding ramps or other features to make historic buildings more easily accessible to people with disabilities. These sometimes need to be placed on a building's primary facade. As with other additions, alterations to improve accessibility should be designed to preserve architectural features and arrangements important to the building's character, and whenever possible should have details that relate to the building.

The guidelines for building additions also apply to new porches, decks, ramps and steps. In addition, the following specific recommendations apply.

1. Design and location

- Design new porches and decks to be simple, compatible in design with the existing building, and in scale with the existing building in size and roof height.
- Add a porch to the front of a building only if it does not alter the streetscape by encroaching into an established front setback line.

2. Materials

- On historic buildings, construct porches of painted wood rather than poured concrete, metal, or unpainted wood. Use stained or unpainted wood only for less visible features of a new porch, such as the decking and step treads, or for simple decks (with railings but no walls or roofs) on the rear of the building in a location not facing or highly visible from a public way.
- Stoops and exterior stairways may be of poured concrete rather than wood if the location is unobtrusive or if masonry construction is more appropriate because concrete or stone is used for similar features on neighboring historic buildings.
- Use materials compatible with the existing building for the exposed masonry foundation or piers of a new porch. Poured concrete or concrete

block foundations or piers should be given a surface treatment compatible with historic building materials.

C. Construction of New Garages, Sheds and Other Outbuildings

Garages, sheds and other outbuildings exist in a variety of forms in Ellicott City. In residential neighborhoods with larger lots, many are unobtrusively located in a side or rear yard. In other areas, garages and other outbuildings are sometimes adjacent to a public road. Attached garages and carports are rare in the historic district. Most outbuildings in Ellicott City are of frame construction with painted wood siding.

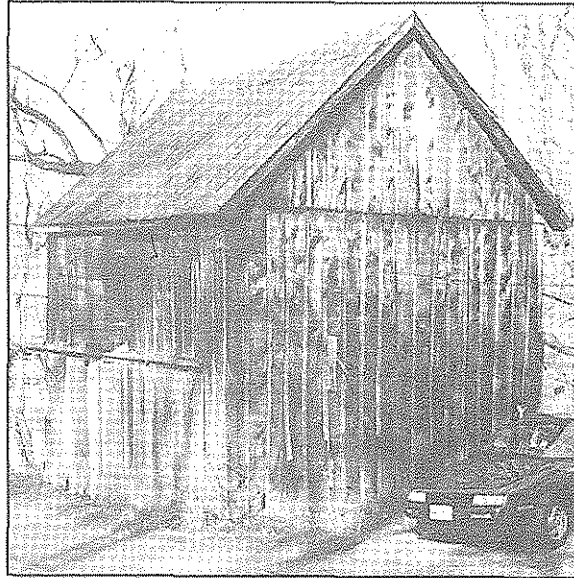
New garages and sheds should follow the historic pattern of being detached from the main building and, if practical, located in a side or rear yard. Outbuildings should be located adjacent to a public street or in a front yard only in neighborhoods where there is historic precedent. Carports are generally not appropriate.

1. Design and Location

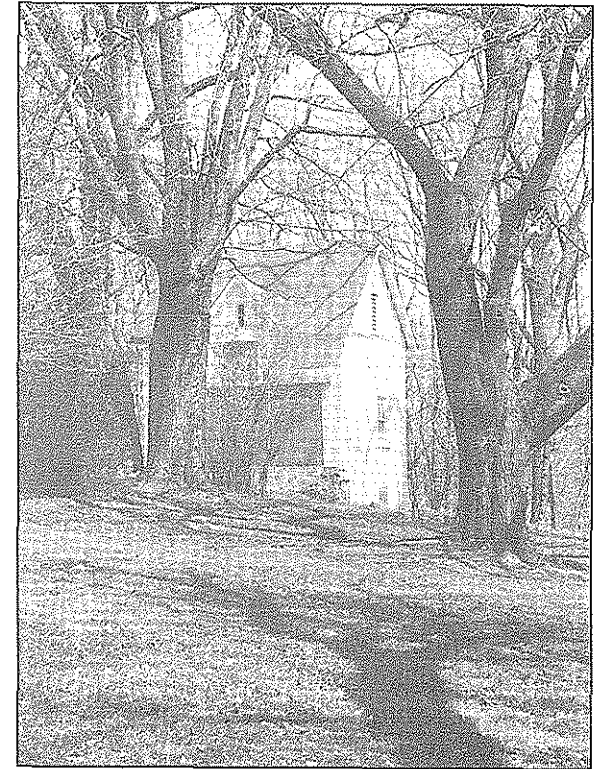
- If allowed by the size and shape of the property, place new outbuildings to the side or rear of the main building, separated from the main building by a substantial setback.
- Do not place a new outbuilding where it blocks or obscures views of a historic building.
- Do not attach a new outbuilding to the principal building.
- Design outbuildings visible from a public way to be compatible in scale, form and detailing with historic structures and outbuildings in the neighborhood.
- Design outbuildings to be subordinate in size and detail to principal buildings in the immediate vicinity.

2. Materials

- Use materials compatible with the main building on the lot or with historic outbuildings in the immediate neighborhood. (The guidelines for materials for building additions will usually apply.)



New outbuildings should follow the example of older buildings and be compatible in form, siting and materials with nearby buildings.



Chapter 8. New Construction: Principal Structures

A. General

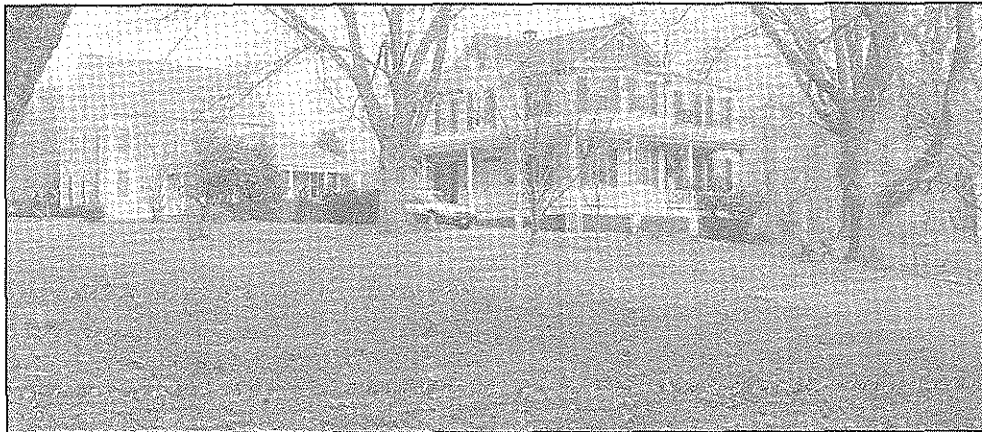
The County Code requires the Historic District Commission to be lenient in its evaluation of new buildings "except where such plans would seriously impair the historic or architectural value of surrounding structures or the surrounding area" (Section 16.607(c)). New buildings need not imitate old styles. Buildings that are contemporary in design can be compatible additions to the historic district.

The guidelines in this chapter need to be applied carefully, as priorities will differ in different areas of the historic district.

In the less densely developed areas, new buildings of diverse styles can be constructed without impairing the historic or architectural value of the area. General compatibility in form and siting, and preservation of existing topography and landscape

features are key to preserving the historic value of these areas.

In much of the historic district, however, the density of existing development is such that all aspects of a new building's design can affect the historic streetscape. The size, height, trim, roof shape and other details of a new building, if not



Two examples of new buildings, simple and modern in design, and compatible in form and scale with older buildings in the same area of the historic district: Above, a new house on Church Road; left, the new Church Road house in context with a neighboring house; and on the next page, a row of new commercial buildings on Main Street.

compatible with neighboring buildings, can considerably alter the streetscape and diminish the historic value of the area. New buildings need not imitate historic forms, but they must respect and be compatible with neighboring historic buildings.

Compatibility with neighboring buildings in terms of form, proportion, scale and siting is the highest priority. If these are resolved, details such as colors, material or window design can be more easily dealt with. Since the majority of Ellicott City's historic structures are simple, straightforward and unassuming, simplicity in design is important for any new construction.

The site design and landscaping guidelines of Chapter 9 should be applied to any new construction.



B. New Building Design

The human scale and tightly knit development pattern of Ellicott City's buildings, streets and public spaces stem from its 18th and 19th century roots, before automobile travel and other modern technology altered the scale of much new development. The scale of new buildings — their perceived size in relation to other buildings — is key to preserving Ellicott City's character. New buildings should not be disproportionately large or out of proportion to nearby historic buildings.

Building forms are varied within Ellicott City as a whole, but are often similar within a particular area of the historic district. Repetition of form, such as in Tongue Row, holds an area together and makes it a recognizable part of the community. Using a different form than the surrounding area makes a building stand out. Repeating existing forms, so that new buildings blend with the historic context, will usually produce the best results in Ellicott City, particularly for new buildings close to historic buildings.

Along some of Ellicott City's streets, the repetition from building to building of similarly positioned door and window openings creates a rhythm which should be repeated on the face of a new building. The floor to ceiling height of new buildings should also correspond to the dimensions on neighboring buildings if the new building is to blend with the existing streetscape.

1. Size, scale and form

- Design new buildings to be compatible with neighboring buildings in bulk, ratio of height to width, and the arrangement of door and window openings.
- Integrate a new building wider than neighboring buildings by breaking the new building facade into sections that are similar to the widths of neighboring buildings. Likewise, design a large new building as a series of building sections compatible with the neighborhood.
- Design new buildings so that the floor to ceiling height and the heights of cornices and eaves are similar to or blend with nearby buildings. Generally, there should not be more than 10 percent difference in height between a new building and neighboring buildings if the neighboring buildings are similar in height. Most buildings in the historic district are two to three stories high,

although several four- or five-story buildings are found on Main Street. (The Zoning Regulations limit new building height to 34 or 40 feet, depending on the location.)

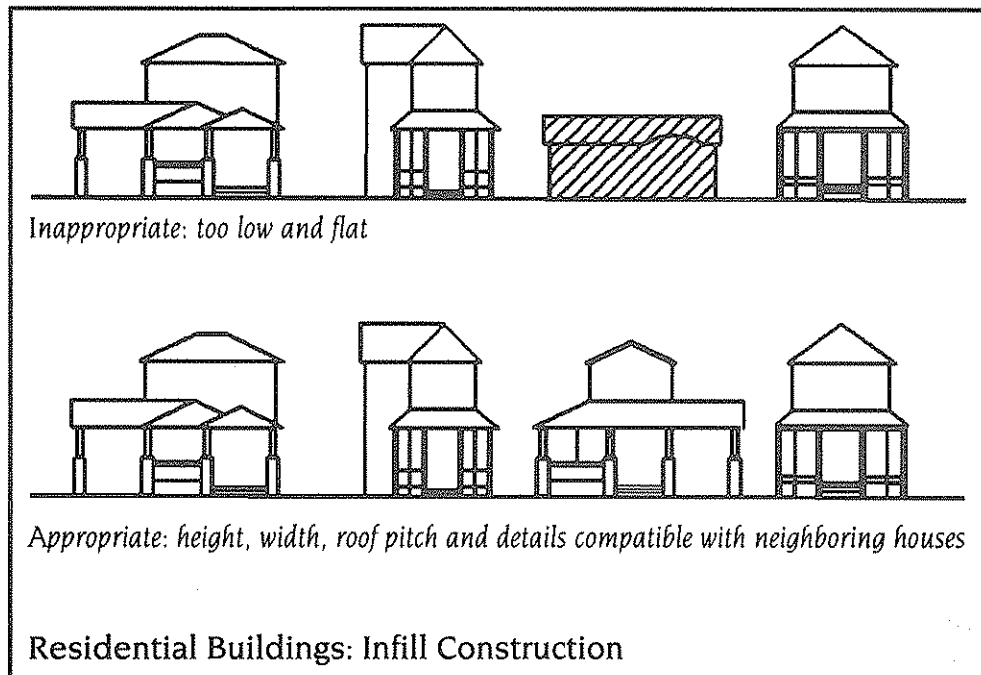
- Use a roof shape and slope that echoes the roof forms of neighboring historic buildings.
- Use a building form or shape compatible with historic buildings that are part of the same streetscape. This is particularly important for new buildings on infill lots where the existing buildings along the street are similar in form.

2. Details

- Use elements such as porch shapes, window or door openings, dormer style and spacing and other characteristics that echo historic Ellicott City buildings.
- In areas where front porches or stoops occur on most buildings facing the same street, incorporate porches or stoops similar in scale to existing designs into new building designs.
- Design entrances and windows to be similar in scale and proportion to those on nearby historic buildings, particularly for new buildings close to

a public way. Simple transoms and sidelights can be appropriately used. Double-hung, vertically proportioned windows (with the height close to twice the width) are most often appropriate. A variety of window pane patterns can be used, but windows should have true divided lights or give the appearance of true divided lights with a permanently applied exterior grille. A simple, one-over-one window pane pattern is an appropriate, honestly modern form.

- Shutters, if used, should be operable or appear to be operable, appropriately sized, and made of painted wood. Metal or plastic shutters are not recommended.
- Place sliding glass doors, large bay windows and similar features on the side or rear of a new building, not on a primary facade. Place skylights on roof areas not visible from a public way.



3. Materials

- Use materials common to the historic district, such as wood siding, wood shingles, brick, stone or stucco, and compatible with materials used in the immediate vicinity. Along upper Main Street, upper Church Road and Fels Lane, wood siding is dominant and is most appropriate for new buildings. In residential areas with more varied building materials, such as Old Columbia Pike and Hill Street, new

buildings of wood, brick or stone can be appropriate. In the commercial area (including Main Street and its intersecting streets), the immediate context is important in determining the most compatible material for new buildings.

- Where wood siding is used, use painted siding compatible with the forms of traditional siding found in the historic district.

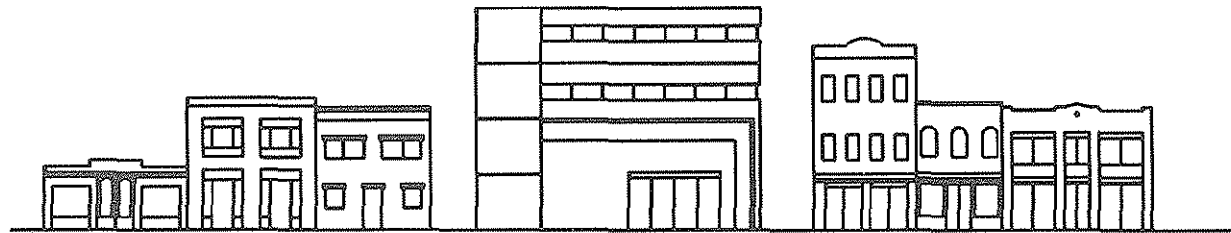
Substitute siding materials can be appropriate if they are similar in width, profile and texture to wood siding. (The detailed appearance of substitute siding materials is less important for new buildings not visible from a public way.)

- Use roofing materials compatible with materials used elsewhere in the historic district. Asphalt shingles should generally be flat, uniform in color and texture, and of an unobtrusive color.
- Do not use imitation brick siding, imitation stone siding, plywood or metal for exterior walls.

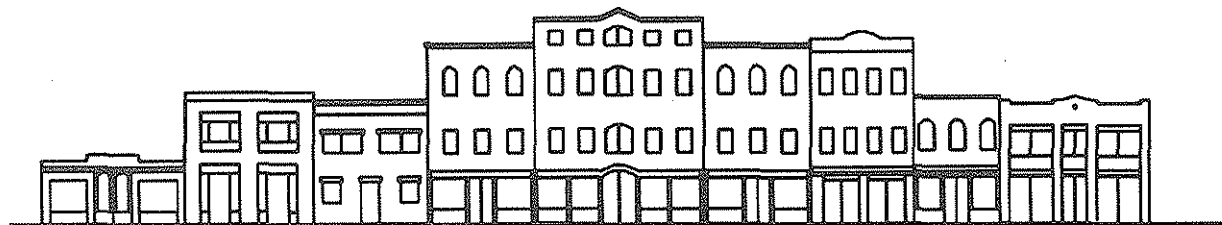
C. Siting New Buildings

- The siting of buildings varies in different areas of the historic district. Portions of a few streets, including part of the Main Street commercial area, have uniform front setbacks. However, most streets have varied front building setbacks.

- New buildings should respect historic development patterns. In most cases, this will mean siting new buildings in a similar manner to neighboring buildings. Within the constraints of the particular building lot, new buildings should maintain setbacks from streets and other buildings consistent with those of nearby historic buildings and should avoid



Inappropriate: new building's height and width are out of scale with rest of street.



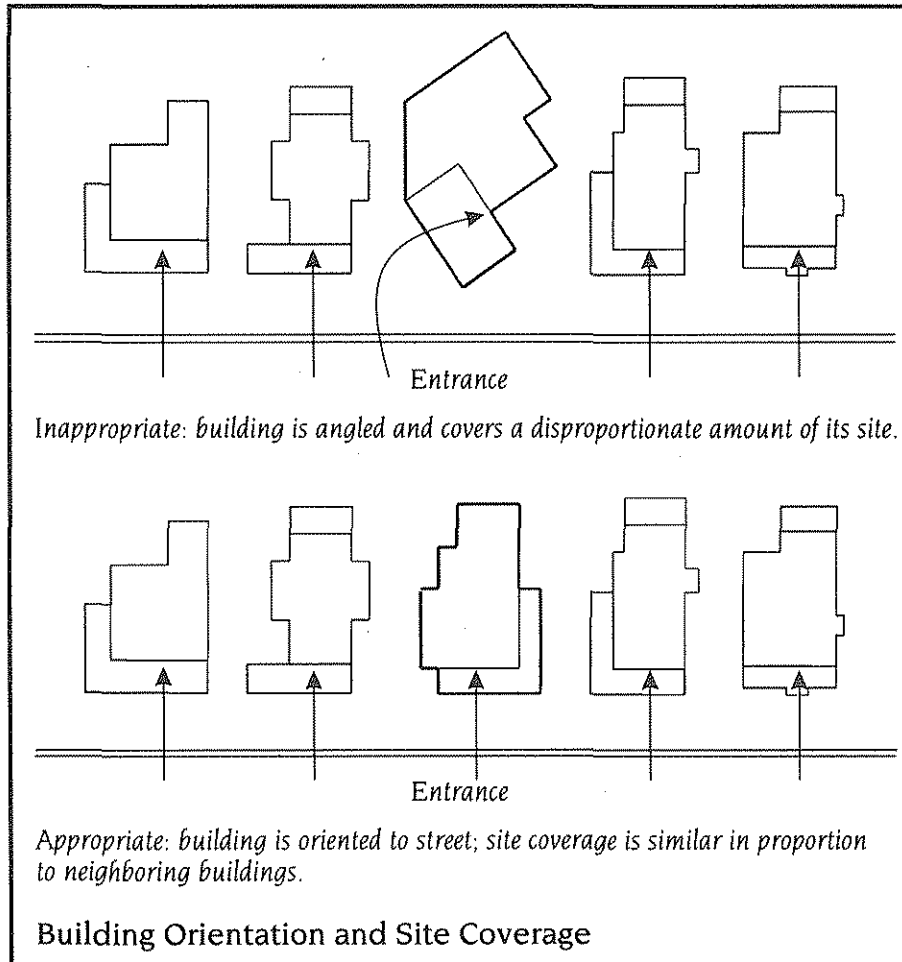
Appropriate: new building steps down in height and breaks up in width to reflect scale of street.

Commercial Buildings: Infill Construction

blocking important views of Ellicott City and its terrain.

1. Spacing

- Preserve the prevailing spacing between buildings. Where buildings are built to the side lot lines, new buildings should extend to the side lot



lines to maintain the sense of a wall along the street. Where buildings are separated by side yards, new buildings should maintain the side yards. If the spacing of buildings and side yards creates a rhythm, this rhythm should be preserved.

2. Setbacks and orientation

- Evaluate the appropriate front setback based on the pattern along the public street(s) adjoining the property. Where existing buildings maintain a uniform setback, locate new buildings in accordance with the established setback.
- Whenever practical and consistent with neighboring buildings, orient new buildings with the front door and primary facade facing the street. This is a consistent pattern through most of Ellicott City, but may not work in some locations due to the hilly terrain, winding streets and irregular lot patterns.

3. Views

- When possible within the constraints of the particular building lot, locate new buildings to avoid blocking prominent views from public ways of the historic district, important historic buildings, and natural features such as the Patapsco River and its tributaries.

D. Design of New Subdivisions

In most cases, new construction in Ellicott City will occur on existing lots. However, there are some larger tracts of land that could be subdivided into several new building lots. Under current zoning, land in the historic district could be subdivided to allow such new uses as single-family detached houses, attached houses (townhouses or duplexes) or office buildings.

Subdivision of land is controlled by county, state and federal regulations that address density, lot size, setbacks, street and parking lot design, storm water management, extension of water and sewer service, floodplain and wetland protection, fire safety and other issues. Subdivision plans do not require approval by the Historic District Commission. However, the improvements constructed after a property is subdivided will require Certificates of Approval.

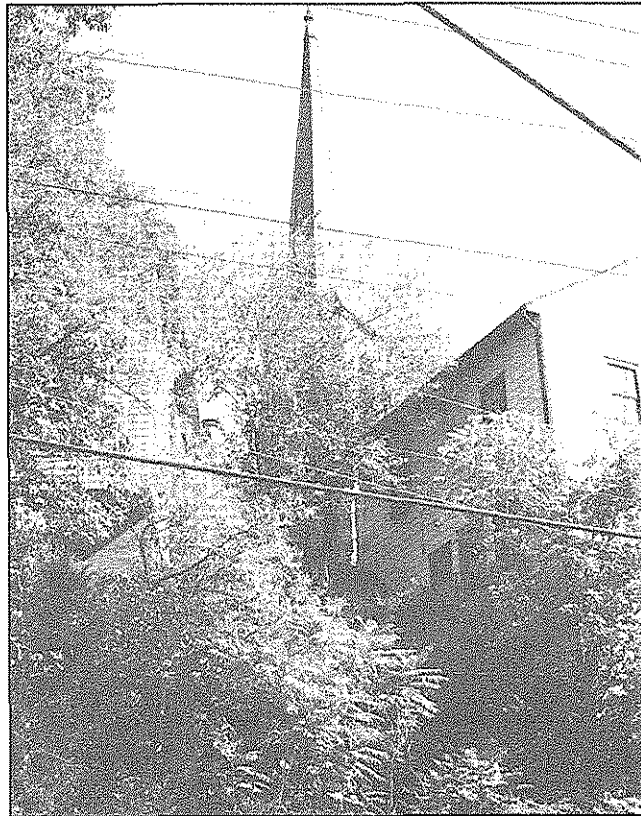
In addition to architectural design, improvements in a new subdivision that require a Certificate of Approval include driveways, parking areas, retaining walls, fences, street lights and landscaping. The location and design of certain public improvements, e.g., storm water management facilities and public streets, are dictated by detailed design

requirements and the physical characteristics of the property. The Commission has little flexibility to require changes, except on minor related items such as the design of landscaping, fencing or street lights. The Commission has more leeway when it reviews improvements such as parking areas, driveways, buildings, walls, fences and other structures that will be located on the new subdivision lots.

Property owners who are subdividing land should seek comments from the Historic District Commission before the final subdivision plan is approved and recorded in the county land records. The advisory comments made by the Commission will alert property owners to the issues they may face when applying for Certificates of Approval after the subdivision is recorded, and will enable them to plan for improvements in a manner sensitive to the historic district.

New subdivisions should follow the design guidelines given in Section C above (on siting new principal buildings) and in Chapter 9 (on landscaping and site design). New development will fit best into the historic district without impairing the historic or architectural value of the surrounding area if the layout of new building lots allows buildings to be sited and the site to be graded, landscaped and improved in accordance with those guidelines.

Chapter 9. Landscape and Site Elements



Ellicott City's steep, rocky terrain is evident in this view from the foot of Church Road.

- The Historic District Commission's authority includes reviewing proposed changes to Ellicott City's environmental settings, defined by the County Code (Section 16.601) to include such elements as trees, landscaping, waterways, rocks, walkways and driveways. This chapter provides guidelines for preserving the historic relationship between Ellicott City's buildings and the natural features and other landscape elements that are part of their setting.

A. Topography and Water Courses

Ellicott City's natural setting is essential to its character. In projects that involve grading land, clearing vegetation or building new structures, care should be taken to protect and enhance natural features, views of important natural features, and the environmental setting of historic buildings. The Historic District Commission will review the impact of such proposals on the historic setting of

Ellicott City and particularly on the relationship of historic buildings to their sites. Depending on the type and size of the project, clearing and grading may also require review of the environmental impacts of the activity through review by county agencies of a site development plan, grading plan and forest conservation plan.

Steep, rocky slopes form the backdrop for much of the historic district. Ellicott City's buildings and streets were fitted into the steep hillsides without major changes to the natural land forms. Retaining walls or the outer walls of buildings have been used to terrace the land to create the narrow, level areas needed for buildings, roads, gardens and other improvements. Many of Main Street's buildings are built directly atop the indigenous granite, using the bedrock as a foundation. The unaltered granite may be seen as the inside back walls of some buildings and outdoors between structures and adjacent to the sidewalks. Early stone tooling and blasting marks are still evident.

Ellicott City's ridge top areas are characterized by more gently rolling hills, large mature trees and forested areas. In these less densely developed areas of the historic district, houses, driveways and streets are integrated with the contours of the land. The natural grades have been altered very little and retaining walls are rare.

The steep valley walls of the Patapsco River, Tiber Creek and other tributaries form the backdrop to the historic district. The importance of water to the area's topography is evident to visitors who cross the stream on Sylvan Lane, who turn the bend from Hill Street to Merryman Street, or who see the rushing waters of the Patapsco River when the leaves have fallen. However, the water courses themselves are not highly visible in the center of the historic district. Views of the Patapsco are blocked by buildings and woodlands. Tiber Creek flows



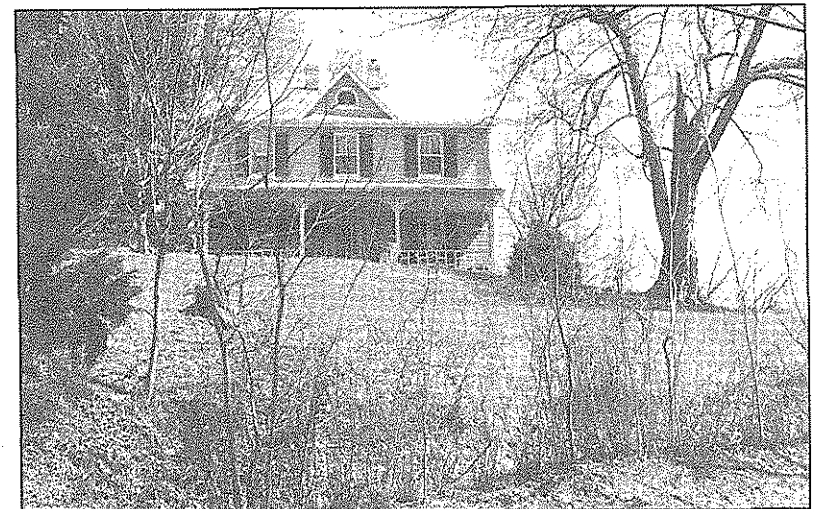
parallel to Main Street, through Ellicott City's central commercial area, but is confined to channels behind buildings or culverts beneath roads and buildings. Recent changes in downtown Ellicott City have helped to make Tiber Creek visible from public areas. These and similar projects that open up views of streams or rivers help to emphasize the relationship of Ellicott City to its natural setting.

I. Recommended

- Preserve the relationship of historic buildings to their sites.
- Minimize grading by siting new structures and other improvements to make use of the land's natural contours. When necessary, use

appropriately designed retaining walls or building walls to create the minimum level area needed for a new use in accordance with historic development patterns.

- Maintain and reinforce natural landscape elements, such as rock outcroppings, water courses and tree lines. Make views of natural elements, especially the Patapsco River and its tributaries, available to the public where possible. Provide walkways, sitting areas and casual stopping



These photographs show Ellicott City's ridge top areas, where houses fit into a landscape of rolling hills and mature trees. The iron fences and stone walls of downtown give way to open terrain, with property lines usually unmarked except by vegetation or open, split rail or board fences.

spots in parks, plazas, and other areas open to the public.

2. Routine Maintenance

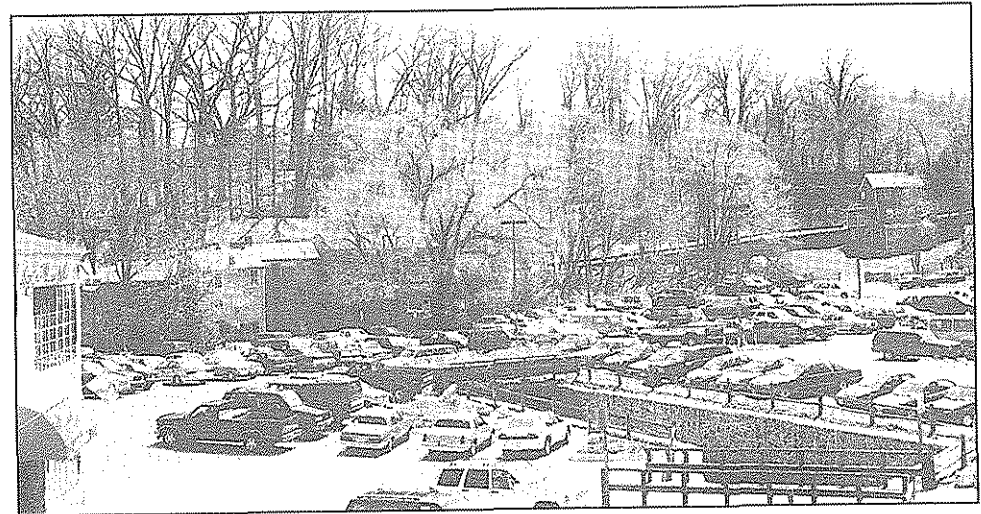
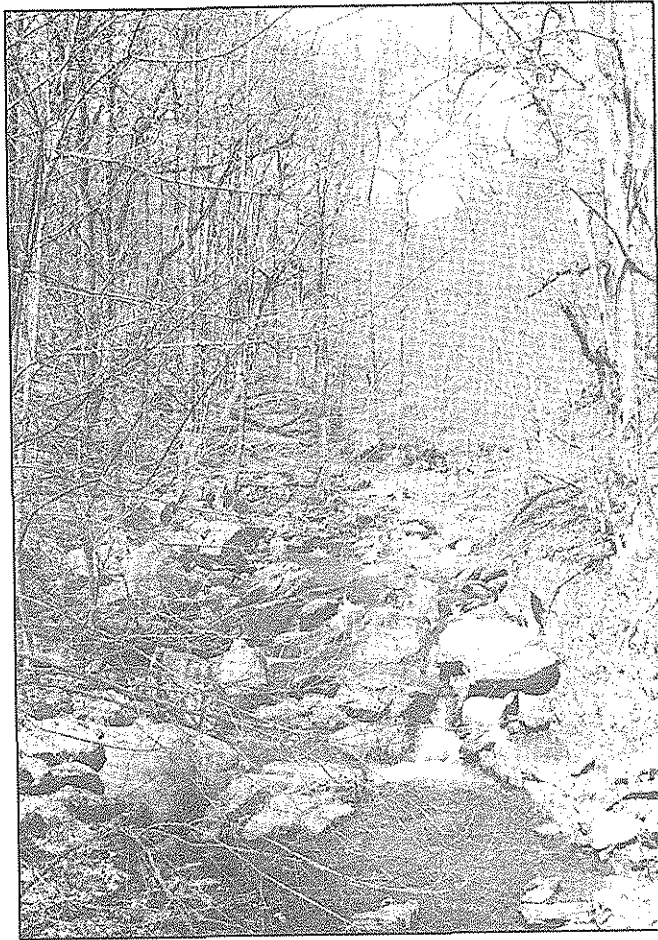
- Clearing or grading within the boundaries of an existing lot to accommodate minor landscape changes. (Clearing or grading to accommodate improvements such as

buildings or driveways, or that requires removal of trees with a diameter of 12 inches or greater 4.5 feet above ground level, requires a Certificate of Approval.) Clearing refers to the removal of all vegetation from an area; grading refers to changing the contours of the land and removing or disturbing the roots of vegetation.

shrubs and gardens where land is available. Large open lawns and formal, repetitive planting patterns are not typical. In the commercial and office areas, landscaping varies from hillsides overgrown with shrubs and wildflowers to formal public spaces such as the Tiber Pocket Park and the terrace around the Howard County Courthouse. The treatment of public, highly visible landscaped areas is important to the neighboring historic buildings and the historic district as a whole. New plantings help to retain Ellicott City's landscaping tradition, and the use of indigenous plant materials emphasizes its unique sense of place and ties to the past.

B. Trees and Other Vegetation

Landscape plantings in Ellicott City are generally informal with an abundance of trees,



Tributaries of the Patapsco River: left, the stream crossing on Sylvan Lane at the edge of the historic district; above, Tiber Creek flows through a concrete and stone channel in a downtown parking lot.

The Ellicott City 225th Birthday Committee has selected three indigenous plants, serviceberry, pepper bush and purple sage, to commemorate the 225th anniversary of the town's founding. The Committee is seeking to have these plants used with other landscape materials to create a recognizable theme throughout the historic district.

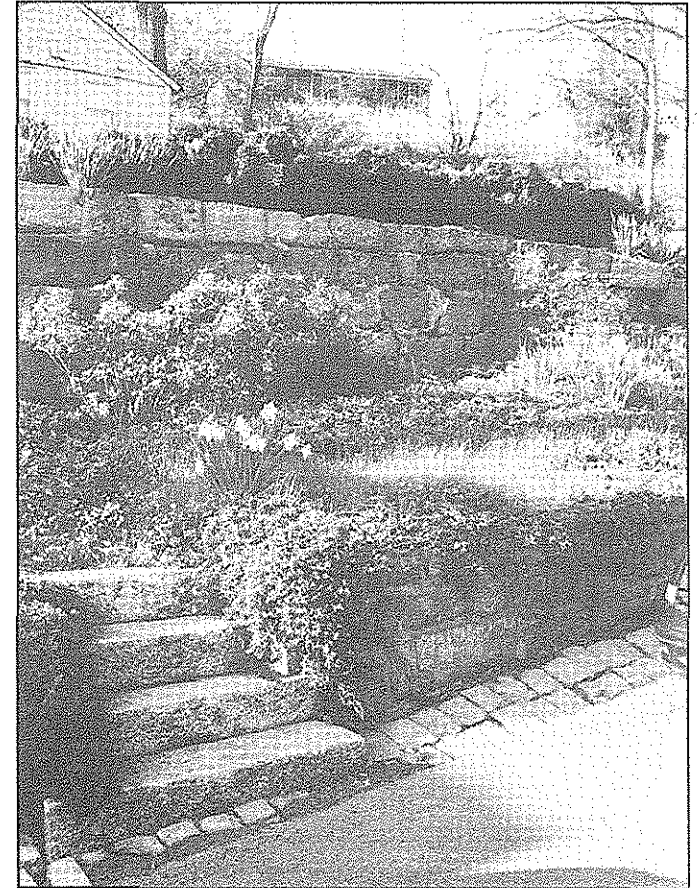
Mature trees are important to Ellicott City. The street trees along Main Street, evident in 19th century photographs, were lost when the street was widened to accommodate parking. Along other streets, however, large, mature trees remain an important part of the streetscape. Some, such as the silver maple trees along upper Church Road (planted in 1888), are similar in age to nearby historic buildings. These and other trees that are tied to the history of the area should be carefully protected.

Varied landscape planters are used in the historic district. These have no clear historic precedent, but most are not permanent improvements requiring review by the Historic District Commission. Planters made of materials traditional to the historic district, including brick, stone, dark metal or painted wood, will be the most effective.

1. Recommended

- Retain mature trees and shrubs. Provide for their replacement when necessary.
- Retain landscaping patterns that reflect the historic development of the property. Use historic photographs or landscaping plans if these are available.
- Include landscaping improvements as part of any construction project in locations visible from a public way. In most cases, use plant varieties native to the area.
- During construction or grading, protect vegetation to be retained, particularly mature trees, by placing fencing or other barriers or markings at the drip line of the vegetation before beginning construction. For very large or old trees, consulting an arborist or forester to recommend specific protection measures may be desirable.
- Plant new trees and shrubs far enough from buildings to avoid moisture problems and damage to the buildings from falling limbs and roots as the plants grow.

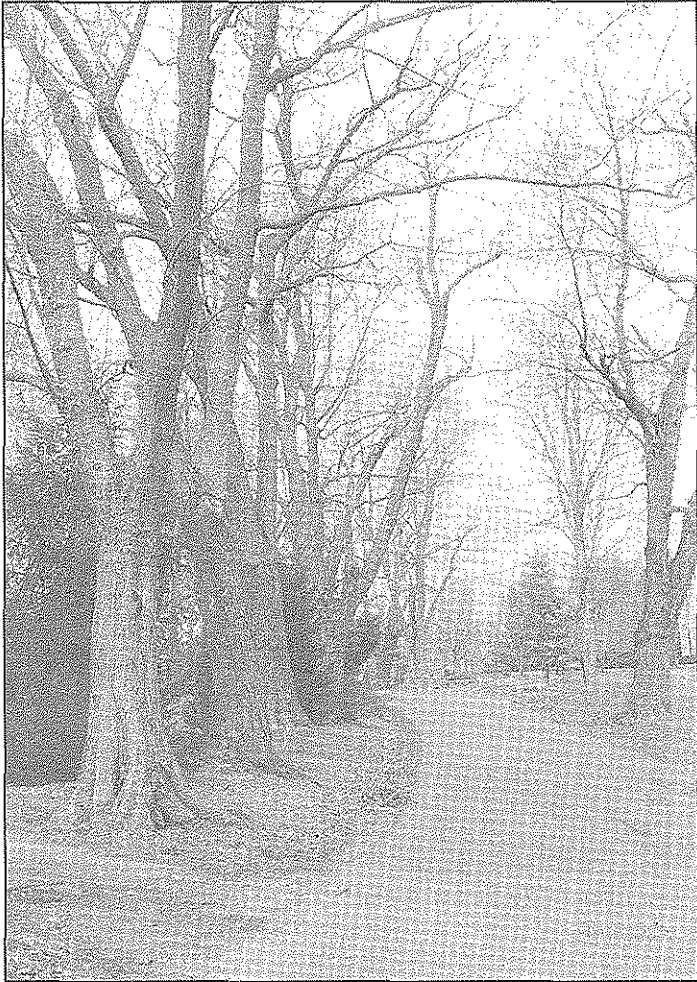
- Locate, drain and maintain landscape planters to minimize moisture retention that could damage the siding and foundations of adjacent buildings.



An Ellicott City garden: granite steps and walls with terraced plantings

2. Not Recommended

- Removal of live mature trees, unless it is necessary due to disease or to prevent damage to historic structures.

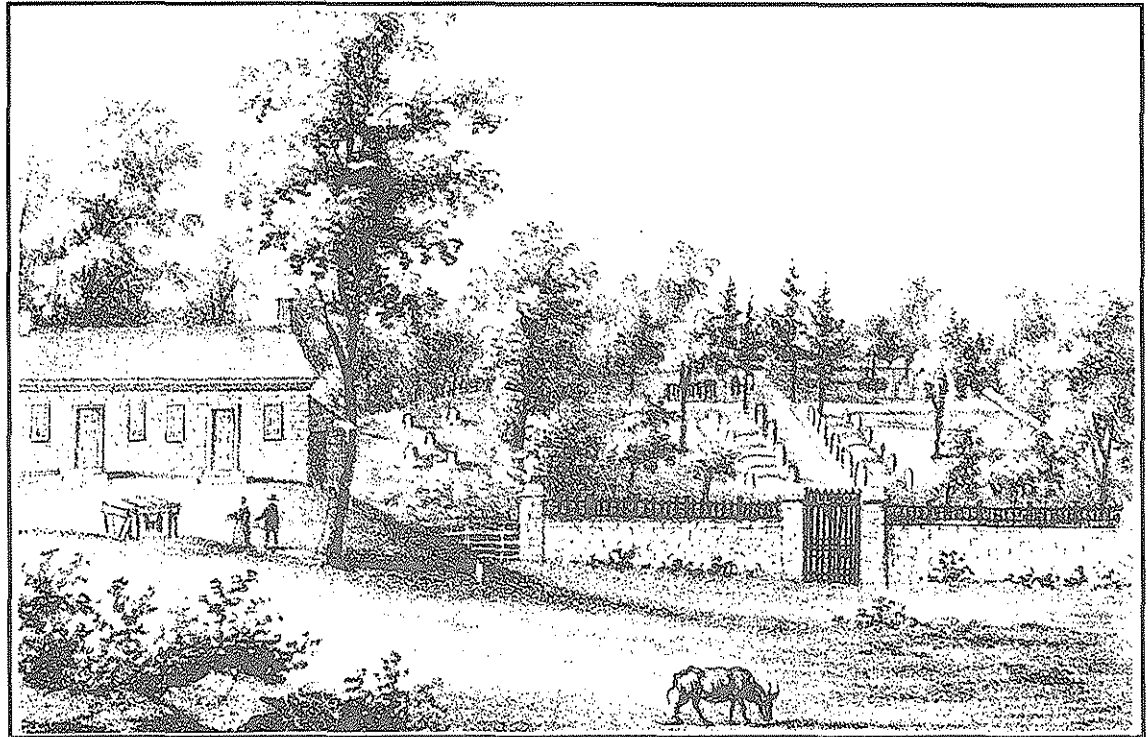


Mature trees lining upper Church Road are important elements of the landscape.

- Extensive clearing for new construction that can be accommodated by more limited removal of vegetation.
- Topping trees, i.e., cutting off the main leader or other large top branches.
- Landscape planters made of materials such as white concrete not generally found in the historic district.

3. Work that Requires a Certificate of Approval

- Removing live trees with a diameter of 12 inches or greater 4.5 feet above ground level.
- The initial landscape treatment of a site after a building is demolished, a new building is constructed, or a new parking area or driveway is installed.



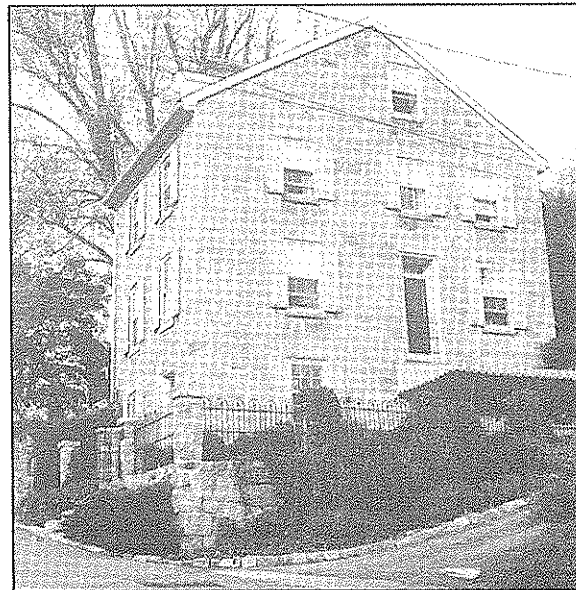
A drawing of the Quaker Meeting House, built in the late 1790s (now a private residence) and the Ellicott family graveyard

- Installing or removing landscaped areas in plazas, parking lots, public parks or public rights-of-way. Major changes to the plantings in such landscaped areas, including planting or removing trees or large shrubs.
- Landscape planters that are permanently attached to the ground or to a structure.

4. Routine Maintenance

(work that does not require a Certificate of Approval)

- Removing dead or certifiably diseased trees. (An arborist's certificate will be accepted for diseased trees.)
- Removing trees that have a diameter of less than 12 inches 4.5 feet above ground level.
- Removing shrubs and other low vegetation.
- Planting trees, shrubs or other vegetation, except as listed above under "Work that Requires a Certificate of Approval."
- General gardening activities, including mowing, trimming, pruning, and installing ground covers.



C. Cemeteries

Ellicott City contains two cemeteries, the Ellicott Cemetery and the Quaker Cemetery, located adjacent to each other and close to the historic Friend's Meeting House (now a private residence). Both cemeteries were established by the Ellicotts in the 1790s and are key historic sites that must be protected and maintained. Landscape features important to the setting of these cemeteries also need to be preserved, including mature trees and the stone wall and iron gate enclosing the Ellicott Cemetery.

D. Walls, Fences, Terraces, Walkways and Driveways

Because of Ellicott City's hilly terrain, retaining walls, terraces and steps are common throughout the town. A variety of historic and modern materials has been used for these structures. Fences and walls that mark property lines, create private yards, or screen electrical or mechanical equipment are also common.

It is important to identify and retain outdoor features that contribute to the



Granite posts or walls and iron fences are often seen in combination in Ellicott City. Left, a wrought iron fence with granite posts supported by a granite retaining wall; above, the remnants of a 19th century iron fence, with iron and granite posts, across the street from a granite wall.

historic character of Ellicott City sites. These include:

- Granite walls, steps, fence posts, curbs and street gutters. Granite features, especially those visible from public ways, should be preserved with the same attention given to historic buildings. They provide a strong link

not only to the town's past but also to its unique topography.

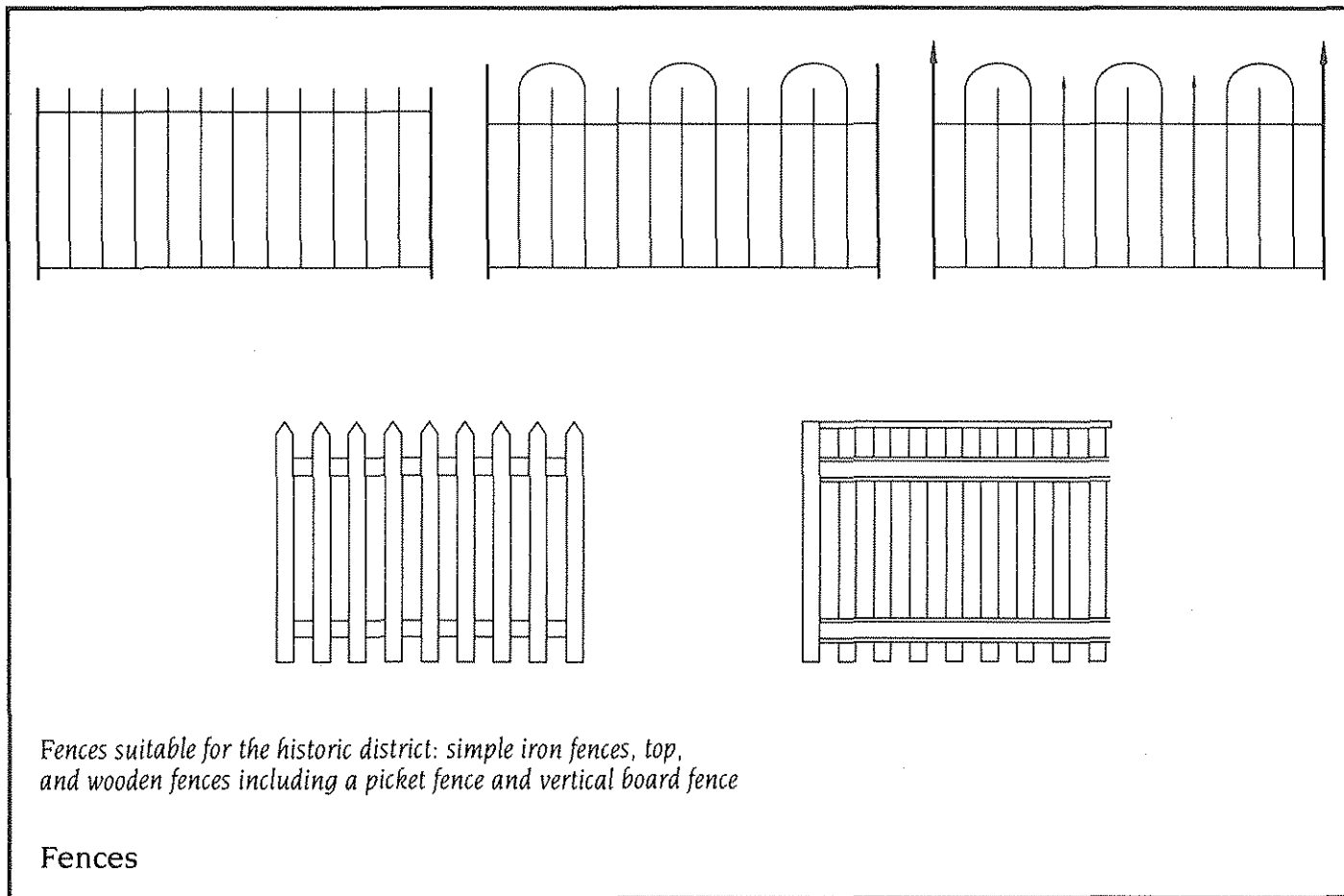
- Steps, terraces, walls, curbs and street gutters that reflect the historic development of the site. Original materials, which include stone, brick and wood, should be preserved. Even if the original material has been replaced by a modern alternative such

as concrete, the location, size and grade of these features are often important to the setting of historic buildings.

- Wrought iron, cast iron and wooden picket fences from the 19th and early 20th centuries.

- Driveway alignments on larger residential properties, such as those along upper Church Road and College Avenue. The driveway surface materials are usually modern, but the alignments are often original and help identify the historic orientation of the residence.

The most appropriate design and materials for new walls, driveways and other features depends on the specific context. As a rule, they should be simple in design and require minimal changes to existing topography and natural features. Simple designs will be consistent with historic Ellicott City structures and help new elements to blend with their context. Working with the natural contours of the land will minimize the need to remove mature vegetation and preserve the relationship of historic buildings to the land. Whenever possible, the materials used should be those used historically in the particular area of the



Fences suitable for the historic district: simple iron fences, top, and wooden fences including a picket fence and vertical board fence

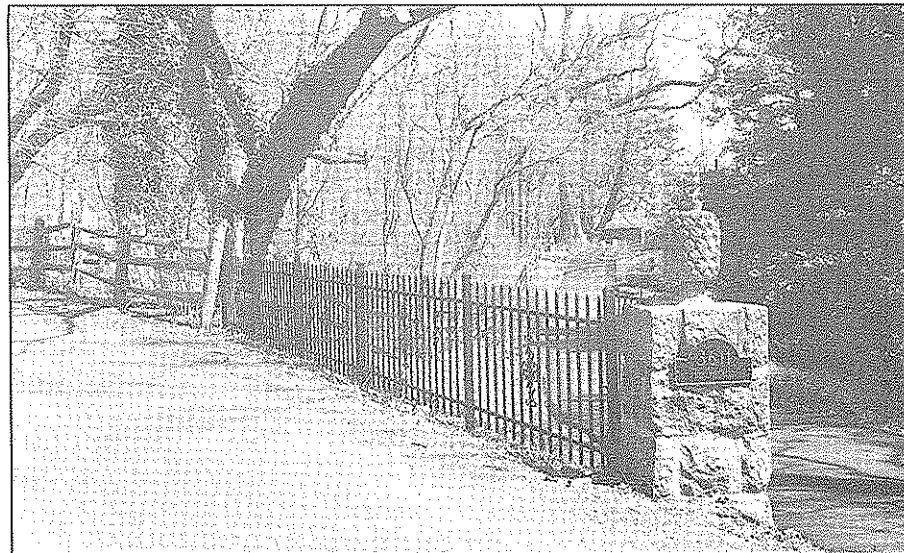
Fences

district, especially for features that will be readily visible from a public way.

Retaining walls of granite, brick or timber may be appropriate, depending on the context. Concrete walls can be used in locations with very little visibility. New granite walls are expensive, but retaining walls faced with granite or with a surface treatment that resembles Ellicott City's typical stonework can be appropriate in visible locations.

The County Code requires a fence at least four feet high on top of a retaining wall with a vertical drop of four feet or more, if the retaining wall is in a public right-of-way or near a walkway. The historic district has several examples of iron fences along the top of granite retaining walls, a combination particularly appropriate for Ellicott City.

Fences of wood or iron can be used. Fencing is also available in other metals such as aluminum, but shaped and finished to resemble iron.

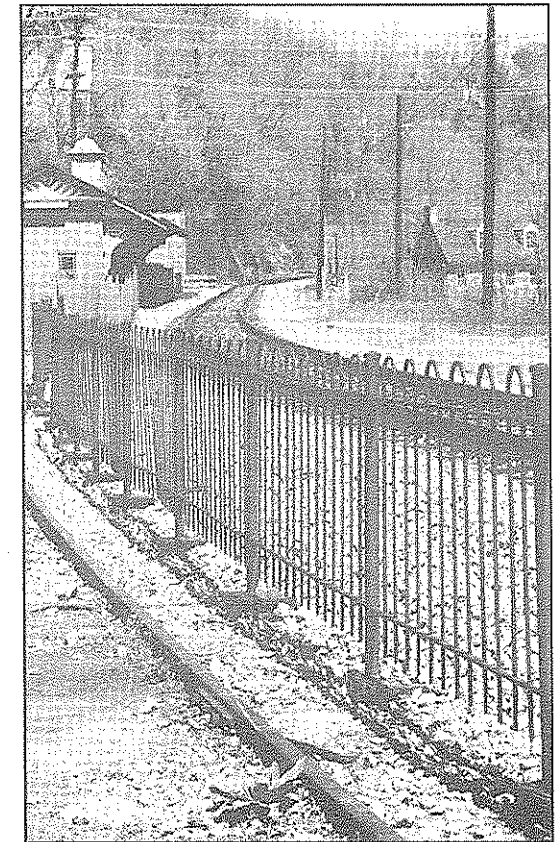


The old granite post marks the entrance to the Vineyard. The iron fence is an appropriate modern style, giving way to the split rail fencing characteristic of upper Church Road.

A simple, painted picket fence is suitable for many of the district's residences (especially smaller or less formal homes). A basic picket fence has either a half-round or half-octagon shape at the top, while a framed picket fence is topped by a railing. Split rail or post and rail fences are more appropriate in less densely developed areas such as upper Church Road, Sylvan Lane and Park Drive. Solid board fences have been used since Colonial times and are currently found enclosing side or rear yards in a few areas of the historic district. They are not common, and should be used only in areas where a precedent exists. (They are

also helpful for enclosing dumpsters or screening roof-mounted equipment.)

Historic metal fences found in the historic district include wrought iron fences, the ornate cast iron fences that became common in the 1840s, and the simple metal fencing found along the



The iron fencing along the railroad track is a model that can be used in many areas of the historic district.

railroad line, known in Ellicott City as railroad fencing. New fences that emulate these older metal fences are appropriate for many areas of the historic district, especially for commercial and office areas and for formal residences. There are many examples of simple, modern, dark metal railings, which blend unobtrusively with Ellicott City's historic structures. Ellicott City's historic iron fences are often supported by granite posts, some simple and some carved to provide decoration.

Chain link fences can be found in the historic district but do not blend well with historic building materials. Chain link, other metal fences such as chicken wire and expanded metal screening, and concrete block walls are not suitable for older homes or for highly visible locations.

Patios and walkways can be of a variety of materials. Brick and stone are common. Large poured concrete slabs are not usual, but concrete walks are typical in many areas. Some residential areas, e.g., Fels Lane and upper Main Street, have a pattern of concrete walks leading from the public sidewalk to the front steps of the houses. A front walk of brick or other contrasting material would be out of place in these areas.

Driveways are common on larger residential properties. On-street parking is used for most businesses and

residences, although it is not uncommon for a driveway or parking space to be squeezed into a small front or side yard. Most residential driveways are one lane wide and constructed of gravel, asphalt or concrete. New driveways and off-street parking should be located to avoid major changes to topography, disturbance of mature trees, or other changes that alter the setting of historic buildings or streetscapes.

1. Recommended

- Identify and retain site features that are important to the historic character of a site.
- Preserve historic features, such as retaining walls, freestanding walls, fences, terraces, walkways, driveways and steps. When possible, reuse the historic building materials to repair or restore these structures.
- Construct new site features using materials compatible with the setting and with nearby historic structures, particularly for features visible from a public way.
- Install open fencing, generally not more than five feet high, of wood or dark metal. Use closed wood fences only for side and rear yards in areas where a precedent exists. Construct closed wood fences of painted vertical boards, with straight or angled rather than scalloped tops.

- Construct new terraces or patios visible from a public way from brick, stone or concrete pavers designed to look like indigenous stone.
- Where needed, install new residential driveways that are narrow (one lane) and follow the contours of the site to minimize the need for clearing and grading. If possible, locate off-street parking spaces in side or rear yards.
- Where appropriate, use landscape plantings to buffer views of driveways or parking spaces from public ways and neighboring properties.

2. Not Recommended

- New driveways, parking areas, walkways, terraces or other features that substantially alter the setting of a historic building.
- Poured concrete or concrete block walls in locations visible from a public way or neighboring property.
- Metal fences such as chain link, chicken wire, and expanded metal screening, except in connection with nonhistoric buildings in locations not visible from a public way.
- New patios of poured concrete slabs in readily visible locations.

3. Routine Maintenance

(work that does not require a Certificate of Approval)

- Maintaining, repairing and replacing existing features, such as walls, fences, walks, steps, terraces and driveways, using materials that exactly match the existing materials.
- Building a new retaining wall no more than two feet high and 12 feet long in a location not visible from a public way at any time of year.
- Installing new patios, terraces, walkways or steps in locations not visible from other properties or public ways at any time of year, provided no alterations are made to existing features such as buildings, walls, fences, steps and other structures.
- Removing metal fences such as chain link, chicken wire or expanded metal screening.
- Installing wood picket fencing, painted white and no more than three feet high, in the side or rear yard of a residence.
- Recoating an existing asphalt area or blacktopping an existing gravel driveway without increasing the length or width of the driveway.

E. Outdoor Lighting Fixtures

Guidelines for streetlights and public parking lot lights are given in Chapter 10. This section addresses other types of outdoor lighting.

Outdoor lighting in Ellicott City varies from the brightly lit downtown area to outlying residential areas that have no streetlights and minimal outdoor lighting. For commercial facades, indirect lighting from streetlights and internal display and window lighting is usually sufficient. In residential neighborhoods, low level lighting along driveways or attached to buildings is appropriate.

New lighting fixtures do not need to replicate the style of historic lamps. Nevertheless, they should be simple and unobtrusive and scaled for the pedestrian environment of the historic district. Traditionally styled fixtures mounted on lampposts or attached to buildings will blend with Ellicott City's structures.

Modern fixtures such as floodlights generally should not be used on historic buildings. If needed, they should be placed under eaves or in other unobtrusive locations. If not attached to a building, they should be located where they will be screened by vegetation during daylight hours. Recessed lights

can be installed to be essentially invisible during daylight hours.

1. Recommended

- Choose and locate lighting fixtures to be visually unobtrusive. Use dark metal or a similar material.
- Place attached lighting fixtures in traditional locations next to or over a door.
- Use freestanding lights that are no more than six feet high for individual residential properties and no more than 14 feet high for commercial or institutional properties or for groups of residences.
- To the extent possible, direct or shield lighting so that it does not create glare or spill onto neighboring properties. Design lighting to provide a reasonable level of brightness for the intended purpose.

2. Not Recommended

- Use of modern fixtures such as floodlights on historic buildings or in locations visible from a public way or neighboring properties.
- Lighting fixtures out of scale with Ellicott City's pedestrian environment.

3. Routine Maintenance

(work that does not require a Certificate of Approval)

- Maintaining and repairing existing lighting fixtures.
- Replacing an outdoor light with a new fixture that generally matches the existing light.
- Installing a light fixture attached to a building, other than a floodlight or spotlight, in a location not visible from public ways.

F. Temporary and Minor Structures

Some improvements are of such a temporary or minor nature that their installation is considered routine maintenance, not requiring Historic District Commission review. These include lawn ornaments, individual mailboxes, individual newspaper delivery boxes, above-ground swimming pools that are dismantled each year, basketball nets, and children's play equipment such as swing sets, sliding boards and climbing equipment. (Some of these features are required to comply with setback requirements of the Howard County Zoning Regulations.) Major or permanent improvements to a site, such as tennis courts, in-ground swimming pools, or permanent above-ground swimming pools, do require a Certificate of Approval.

Chapter 10. Parking Lots, Public Streets and Street Furniture

- Streets, sidewalks and parking lots form much of the public environment of the historic district. In combination with the natural setting, these public travelways are the backdrop for Ellicott City's historic structures. Good design choices in these areas help to identify Ellicott City as a historic district and create a suitable environment for enjoying its historic structures. Poor choices diminish the character of the historic district.

Design of public improvements is constrained by government budgets, other laws and regulations, public safety and other factors. In a few cases, when a county agency must do work in order to provide a necessary service or to comply with the law, and the work can be done only in a particular way (there are no other options), there may be no issues that the Historic District Commission can decide. However, Commission approval is needed for the great majority of public projects that affect the appearance of the

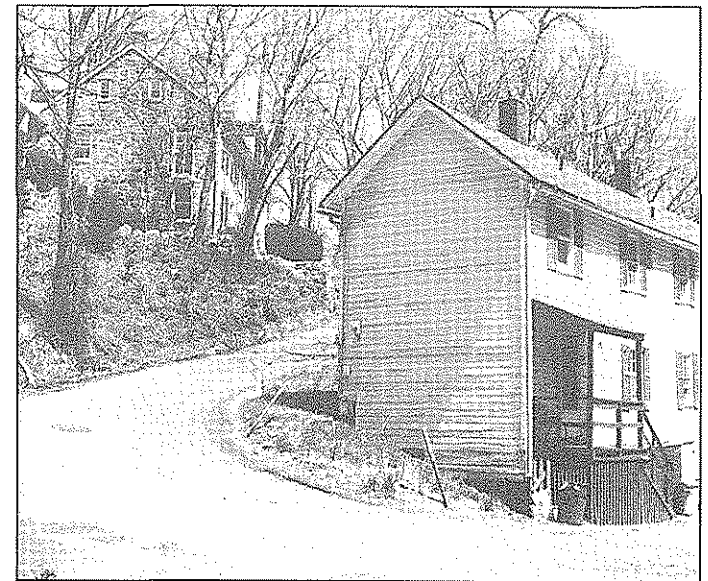
historic district. The Commission's voice and decision-making authority is critical to ensure that sensitivity to historic character is a factor in the design of improvements within the public rights-of-way.

A. Paving Materials and Street Design

Ellicott City's streets and sidewalks — narrow, winding, often steep — contribute to its historic character. Certain types of street improvements, particularly those related to public safety, take priority over retaining historic characteristics. However, the relationship of historic buildings to the adjacent public streets should be preserved to the extent possible when street improvements are designed.

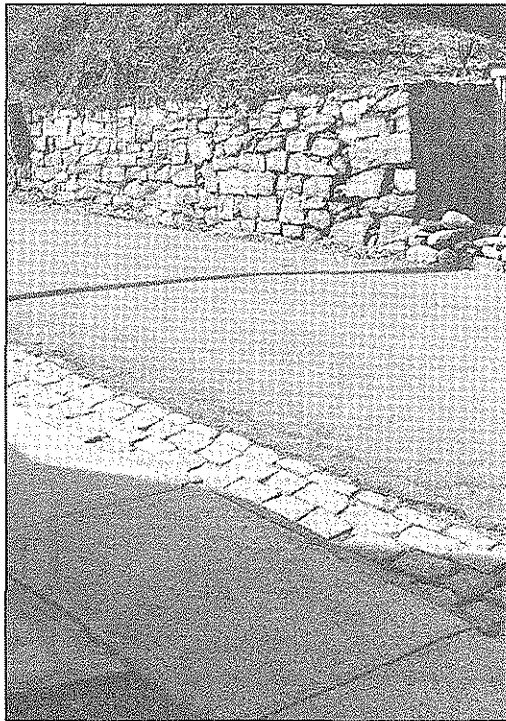
Because of the normal wear and tear on public streets, little

historic paving material remains in Ellicott City. Cobblestone surfaces and granite curbs and gutters such as those found along Tiber Alley, Main Street, Fels Lane, Hill Street and Church Road are exceptions that should be preserved.



Narrow, winding streets are characteristic of the historic district.

A variety of paving materials can be used as alternatives to asphalt or concrete. The brick sidewalks and crosswalks used along portions of Main Street blend well with the mix of historic building materials. Granite pavers or stone walks would be in keeping with the early Ellicott's Mills period of the historic district's growth. During the later Ellicott City growth period (mid- to late-19th century) granite curbs with asphalt block and London Walk pavers would have been used. Use of materials such as



This section of roadway has retained its historic granite curbs and gutters.

these for plazas, parking areas, driveways or walkways will help to provide an appropriate public environment for the historic district.

The concrete sidewalks along Main Street should continue to be replaced with brick when possible. The uniform use of brick for these sidewalks will help to create an identifiable, attractive historic commercial area.

1. Recommended

- Where historic materials such as cobblestone surfaces and granite curbs and gutters exist, maintain and preserve these materials in place.
- Preserve the historic relationship between Ellicott City streets and the adjacent buildings and landscape features.
- When opportunities arise, replace concrete sidewalks with brick along Main Street between Ellicott's Mills Drive and the Patapsco River.
- For plazas, driveways, parking lots, walkways and other paved areas, use stone or stone-like materials as alternatives to asphalt or concrete where practical.

2. Routine Maintenance

- Repairing, replacing or restriping paved surfaces, curbs, gutters and guardrails using materials that match the existing materials.
- Installing storm drain inlets.
- Installing underground drainage and utility lines, provided the surface is restored to its previous appearance and no trees or structures are affected.

B. Off-Street Parking

Privately owned parking lots in Ellicott City are generally small areas adjacent to a public street. Most of the parking for commercial or institutional uses has traditionally been provided on the street or, in recent years, in larger public parking lots. The visibility of these larger parking lots varies. Those located to the rear of Main Street commercial buildings are effectively screened from Main Street, but are highly visible from the hillsides overlooking Main Street. Others, such as the parking spaces adjacent to Maryland Avenue and the Courthouse parking lot, are highly visible from the adjacent public street but have minimal visibility from other parts of the historic district.

The need for the large expanses of paving associated with parking lots is a recent development. Within the historic district, paved areas should be no larger than necessary and landscaped areas should

be used to help these necessary modern amenities blend better with historic Ellicott City. Plantings can be used to buffer views of parking areas, break up large expanses of paving and provide shade. New parking lots should be designed to minimize changes to historic streetscapes or to the setting of historic buildings.

The *Parking Management and Financing Strategy Plan for Ellicott City*, Feindesign Associates, Inc., 1995, recommends a parking structure as a long term strategy for Ellicott City's commercial and office areas. The guidelines of Chapter 8 for new structures would apply to a parking structure. A parking structure can be simple and honestly modern in design, with careful attention to scale and exterior materials to help it blend with its historic district setting.

1. Recommended

- Locate new parking facilities to minimize the impact on historic buildings and streetscapes. Design parking areas, curb cuts and driveways to be no larger or wider than necessary to accomplish their function. Minimize disturbance of existing topography and mature trees.

- Use landscaped areas, including trees, around the border of and within parking areas to provide shade and visual interest and to break up large expanses of paving.

2. Routine Maintenance

- Maintaining, repaving and restriping existing parking areas.

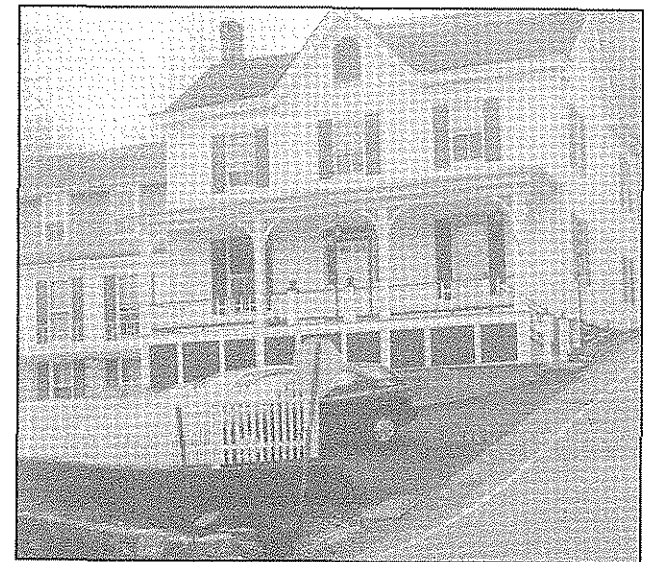
C. Street Furniture

Most street furniture consists of modern necessities not found along Ellicott City's original narrow streets. Utility poles, overhead wires, traffic signals, street signs, directional signs, street lights, newspaper boxes, trash receptacles, and telephone booths are among the items found in Ellicott City's public rights-of-way. This accumulation contributes to a cluttered public environment that can detract from appreciation of the town's historic structures. To minimize clutter, special care should be given to the design and location of street furniture. Well designed street furniture not only avoids detracting from the historic setting, but also helps to identify Ellicott City as a historic district.

The commercial section of Main Street is confined between Tiber Creek and a solid granite hill. Road widening to create on-street parking required the removal of shade trees and resulted in

a narrower sidewalk. This constricted public right-of-way must accommodate projecting building facades and signs, varied street furniture, truck loading spaces and automobile parking, as well as street and sidewalk traffic. Particular caution should be used in placing items within the public right-of-way in this area.

The Historic District Commission does not regulate all objects placed in the public right-of-way. Sidewalk displays of merchandise are too temporary in nature to fall under the Commission's jurisdiction. The county's ability to regulate newspaper boxes in the public right-of-way is complicated by numerous court decisions based on the First



A small parking lot, partially screened by a picket fence, in front of a house converted to offices

Amendment to the United States Constitution. To avoid disputes, the county and several newspapers have reached a voluntary agreement on the placement and appearance of newspaper boxes within the historic district.

1. Recommended

- Use street furniture that is simple in design and constructed of traditional materials such as wood and dark metal.



Newspaper boxes are clustered next to the post office.

- Improve consistency in design throughout the historic district for items such as street lights, traffic signals, public signage, trash receptacles and other street furniture.
- Select street furniture that reinforces Ellicott City's identity as a historic district.
- Carefully evaluate the need before placing additional street furniture on narrow historic district streets and sidewalks.
- Particularly along the commercial section of Main Street, place street

furniture in areas where the sidewalk is wider or where adjacent public open space (such as the plaza next to the railroad museum) provides a more spacious public environment.

2. Not Recommended

- New items of street furniture that are not necessary or that obstruct or hinder vehicular or pedestrian traffic.
- Selecting new items of street furniture without considering whether the design is appropriate for the historic district and consistent with existing, similar items.



Street furniture of traditional design and materials enhances the historic district.

3. Routine Maintenance

- Repairing street furniture or replacing items with others of identical design.
- Removing items of street furniture without replacing them, if any damage caused by their installation or use is repaired.

D. Streetlights

Streetlights and parking lot lights are installed to enhance safety and security by properly lighting public areas. If they are properly designed, these fixtures can contribute to and reinforce the character of the historic district.

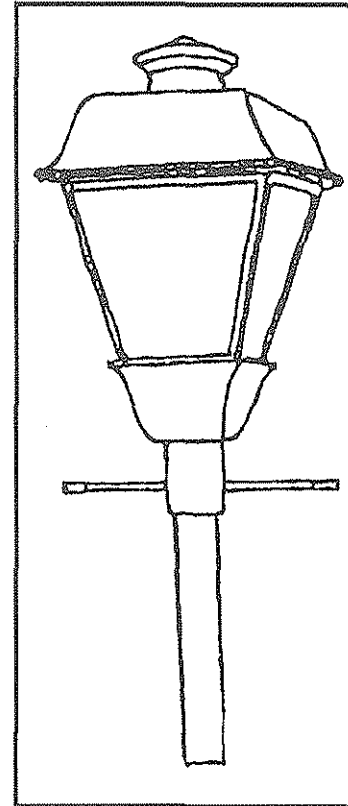
Currently, the following types of street lights are used in the historic district:

Post-top or lamppost style lights. Three styles are used, each appropriate for the historic district: acorn-style lights, used on the Patapsco River bridge; the Traditionnaire carriage-style lights, used in the parking lot off lower Main Street next to the Patapsco River, and another carriage-style light, used in the plaza in front of the railroad museum. These lights are generally 14 feet high, a suitable height for areas scaled to pedestrians. The Traditionnaire is the standard light used along most county streets. Lamppost type lights are most in character with the historic district and are best for pedestrian plazas and

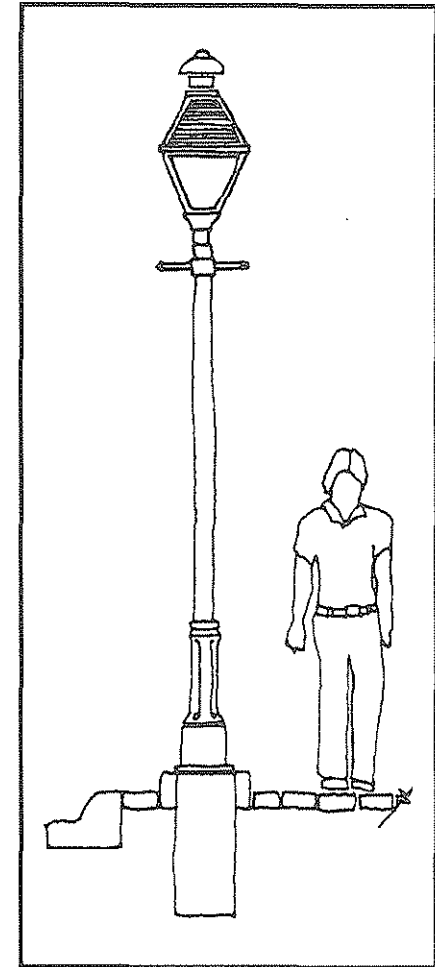
walkways, small parking areas, and most streets in the historic district.

Two different wattage lamps have been used in the acorn-style lights. When illuminated, the lower wattage of the Patapsco River Bridge lights offers a gentler and more visually pleasing light than the more intense illumination of the acorn lights near the fire station.

Rectilinear or box lights, used in public parking lots and along the lower section of Fels Lane. A dark pole with a simple box light, although modern in style, is unobtrusive during the day and highly efficient at night. They are better than the post-top lights for certain uses because they are taller (generally 28 to 40 feet high) and more efficient due to the use of full cut-off shields. As



The Traditionnaire light, the standard post-top light stocked by BGE, approved by the Historic District Commission for use anywhere in the Ellicott City Historic District



A post-top style light appropriate for Ellicott City. Illustration from the Ellicott City Streetscape Manual, Kamstra, Dickerson and Associates, 1980.

a result, fewer of these fixtures than the post-top lights are needed to illuminate a given area. They are a good choice for large parking lots and some intersections.

Cobra-style lights, used along Main Street and in several other locations. These do not blend with Ellicott City's historic streetscapes. However, they are currently the only option available for mounting lights on utility poles. A change in light fixtures along Main Street is unlikely unless the utility lines are moved underground. If other designs become available and practical, the cobra lights should be replaced with lights of a more traditional design, or at least with less obtrusive fixtures that have a dark finish rather than the silver metal finish.

1. Recommended

- Whenever possible, use a consistent design of light poles and fixtures within a given area of the historic district.
- When new streetlights or parking lot lights are needed, install traditional style, post-top fixtures made of dark metal or a material that resembles dark metal, particularly in highly visible locations. Use simple box lights, also with a dark finish, only for large parking lots, or for intersections where a taller pole is necessary.
- Use cobra fixtures only when no other option is practical.

2. Routine Maintenance

(work that does not require a Certificate of Approval)

- Maintaining and repairing existing streetlights.
- Replacing streetlights with new fixtures that exactly match the existing lights.
- Installing new streetlights or replacing existing streetlights with the Traditionnaire carriage style light on a pole with a dark finish and a height of 14 feet or less.

Chapter 11. Signs

- This chapter provides guidance in selecting appropriate styles, sizes, materials and locations of signs. The use of appropriate and compatible signs helps to protect property values and the character of the historic district.

A Certificate of Approval from the Historic District Commission is required to install or alter a sign in the historic district. All new signs must also meet the requirements of the Howard County Sign Code. If it is not clear that a proposed sign would comply with the Sign Code, applicants should seek the opinion of the Sign Code Administrator before presenting the sign to the Historic District Commission. The Commission cannot allow a sign that does not meet the size, height, setback or other requirements of the Sign Code. However, the Commission can be stricter than the Sign Code in limiting the size or location of signs and in reviewing sign materials, colors and designs.

A. General Guidelines

Ellicott City's historic architecture conveys the simplicity and restraint of its early Quaker roots. To be in character, signs need to be simple and well-crafted. Because most of the historic district was developed during the 19th century, before automobile travel, the district is scaled to the pedestrian. Signs in the district should reflect this heritage and also be scaled to the pedestrian. Because the signs will be close to viewers, quality and detail are more effective than overwhelming size.

Old photographs and illustrations of Ellicott City show the types of signs used historically. During Ellicott City's historic period, graphics were costly and signs were, therefore, few in number and carefully executed. Graphic symbols were often used to denote a building's use, such as a boot for a shoemaker or a red and white pole for a barber shop. Lettering was kept to a minimum.

Simple and easy-to-read text and graphics are the most important features of a successful sign. Key words or symbols should be used to identify the nature of the establishment. Signs are usually most effective when no more than two or three colors are used. The choice of colors affects legibility; for example, using light letters on a dark, matte background highlights the wording and reduces reflected glare. The use of traditional materials appropriate to the building helps to maintain historic character. Trim around the perimeter of a sign adds visual interest and can reflect the architectural detail of the building.

A sign not only identifies an establishment but is also a type of permanent advertisement. The graphics, typeface, placement, color and overall professional quality should combine to form a positive image. Well-designed signs draw customers to the particular establishment and also make positive contributions to the appearance of the historic district's buildings and streetscapes.

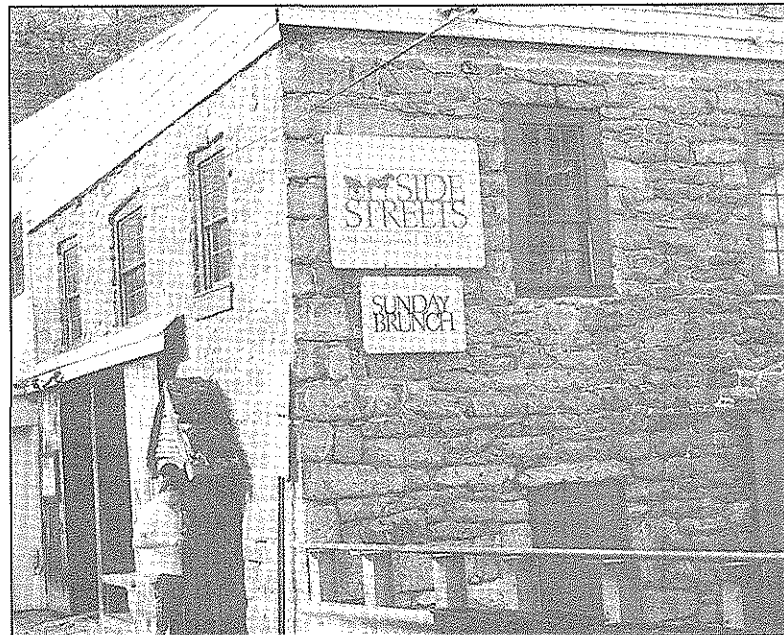
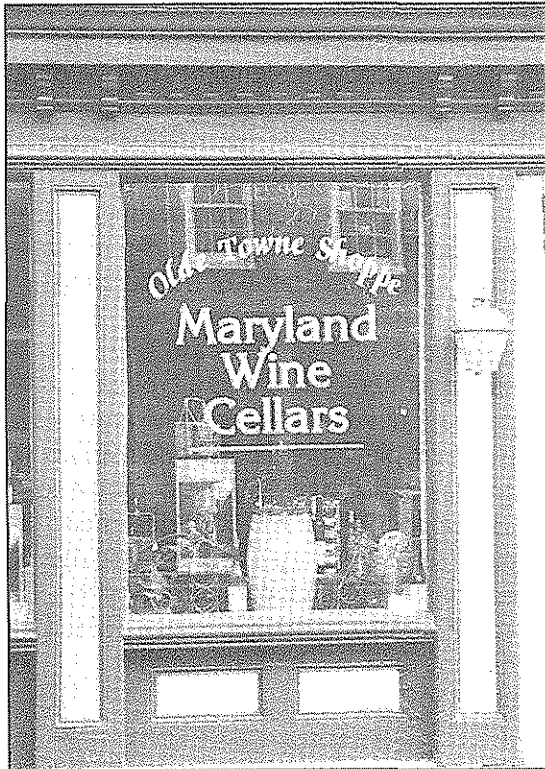
1. Recommended

- Use simple, legible words and graphics.
- Keep letters to a minimum and the message brief and to the point. In many cases, symbols or illustrations that communicate the nature of the business can be used.
- Use a minimum number of colors, generally no more than three.

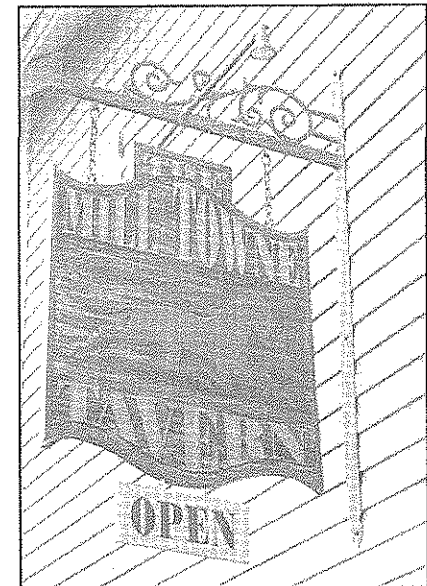
Coordinate sign colors with the colors used in the building facade.

- Use lettering that is between one-third and one-half of the sign height and covers no more than 75 percent of the face of the sign.
- Emphasize the identification of the establishment rather than an advertising message on the face of the sign.

- Use historically appropriate materials such as wood or iron for signs and supporting hardware. Select hardware that blends with the style of the sign and is neither flimsy nor excessively bulky.



Three examples of signs with simple, legible words and graphics: a window sign (left); a flat mounted sign (above); and a projecting sign (right). The small lights directed at the sign face of the projecting sign are a good example of appropriate lighting fixtures, unobtrusive and matching the material of the supporting bracket.



- On masonry walls, drill into the mortar joints rather than into the stone or brick to attach fasteners for the brackets supporting the sign.
- Use indirect lighting or concealed light fixtures with concealed wiring to illuminate signs. If the light source will be visible, select a fixture compatible with the style of the building. Minimize glare by focusing the light on the sign.
- Properly maintain and promptly repair all signs.

2. Not Recommended

- Glossy surfaces that produce glare.
- Neon signs on buildings where they would impair or detract from the historic or architectural value of the building, the surrounding structures or the streetscape.
- Internally lit plastic signs.
- Signs made of modern materials that do not relate to the historic structures.

3. Routine Maintenance

(work that does not require a Certificate of Approval)

- Restoring or repairing a sign with materials that exactly match the existing materials; changing only the text of a sign while all else remains the same.

B. Commercial Buildings

Ellicott City's historic structures, steep terrain and natural features create a unique, attractive downtown commercial area. Well-designed signs identifying downtown businesses can enhance these positive features. However, signs need to be used with restraint. The visual clutter caused by too many, too large or poorly designed signs creates confusion and difficulty in reading the signs and detracts from the characteristics that draw people to Ellicott City.

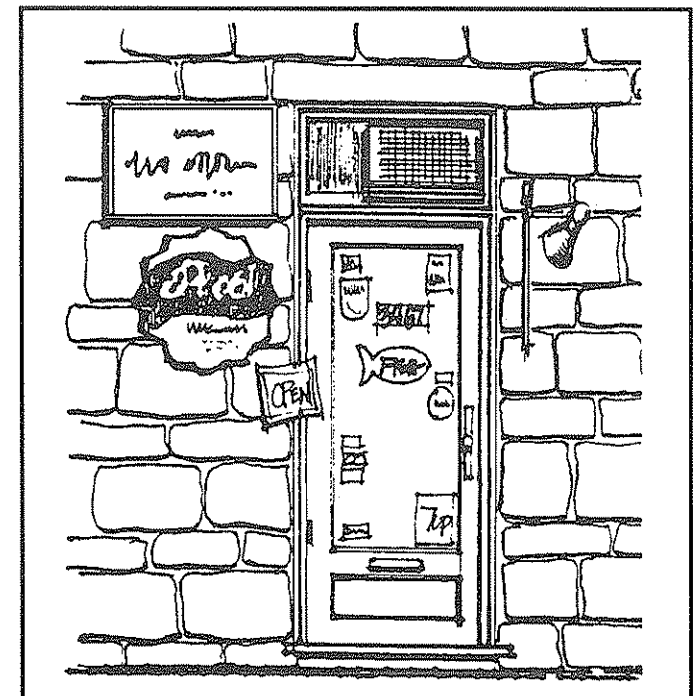
1. General: Scale and Number of Signs

Main Street and other streets in the commercial and office areas of the historic district are narrow and winding, lined with parked cars and historic structures. High speed automobile traffic is impractical and the streetscapes are scaled to the pedestrian. Consequently, large, highway-scaled signs are inappropriate and unnecessary. Although the Sign Code allows large signs, smaller signs are more appropriate within the historic district.

Signs need to be in scale with the particular building and therefore are not uniform in size throughout the historic district.

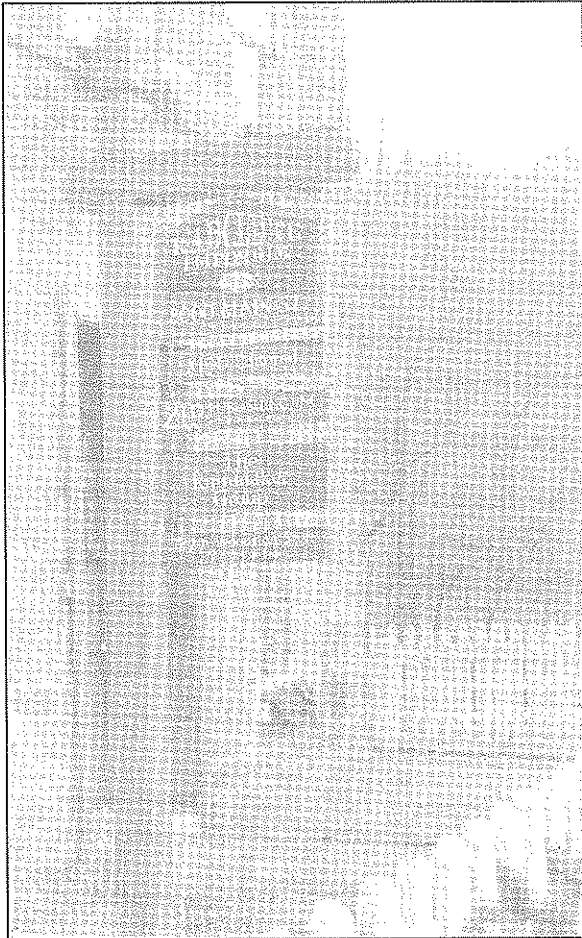
For example, the small shops of Tongue Row require smaller signs than a more massive structure such as the former Talbott Lumber Company building.

Proliferation of signs is a risk in a commercial area such as Ellicott City's with numerous small businesses. In most cases, one well-designed sign per business is the most effective. Most buildings should not have more signs than uses or occupants. In a few cases a location may call for two signs for a business. When the two signs are on the same building facade, the best



Too many signs confuse.

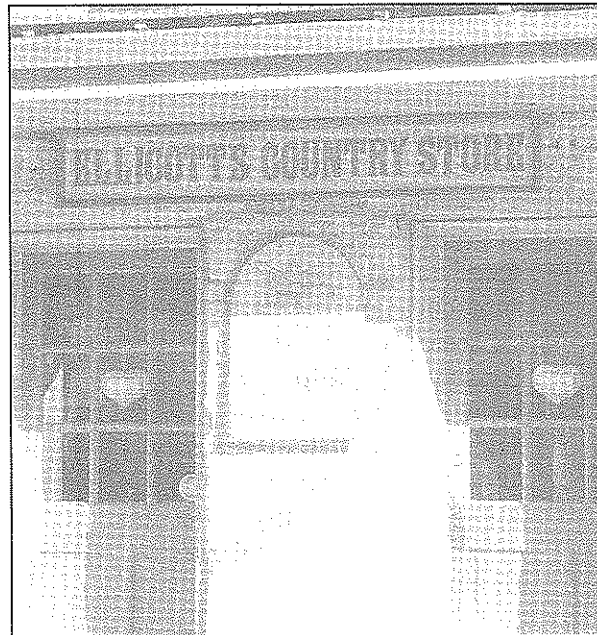
combination will often be one flat-mounted or window sign and one projecting sign. Multiple signs need to be coordinated so that the cumulative effect does not clutter or obscure the building facade.



A directory sign is effective for a building with several tenants.

a. Recommended

- For buildings with several businesses, especially office buildings, use a single, directory type of sign that lists all of the businesses in a uniform format.
- If more than one sign is used to identify a building's tenants, use signs that are similar in scale, harmonious in style and color, and located symmetrically or uniformly on the building.



The two flat-mounted signs for Ellicott's Country Store work well in combination.

b. Not Recommended

- Two signs where one is sufficient to provide an easily visible identification of the business.
- More than two signs per business per facade.

2. Flat-Mounted Signs

Typically, flat-mounted signs are located on the front of the building, most often on the first floor. The wall area adjacent to the main entry is a suitable location for signage on many Ellicott City buildings. The lintel above the ground level storefront, a traditional sign location in many historic commercial areas, is not commonly used in Ellicott City but is a good location for signs if available.

In general, signs should not be mounted on an upper story, where they have limited visibility and can easily create the appearance of clutter and excessive signage. Limiting signs to the first floor helps in maintaining a visual boundary between the storefront and upper story facades. A defined boundary between storefronts and upper facades helps to create a well ordered, attractive commercial streetscape.

Building name or date signs, if integrated with the building design, may be appropriate on an upper story; e.g., the "Caplans" sign carved into the

upper story masonry or the 1926 date plaque on the Fishbein building.

a. Recommended

- Incorporate the sign into the facade of the building. Signs should fit within the lines and panels of the facade as defined by the building frame and architectural details.
- On most buildings, place signs no higher than the window sill of the second story.
- Apply the sign to the storefront lintel, if available.
- If there is more than one flat-mounted sign on a building facade, coordinate their locations. For example, signs may be placed in the same horizontal plane or in a column on the wall adjacent to the door.
- In most cases, limit the area of signage to one-half square foot of sign area for each linear foot of primary street frontage, with a limit of eight square feet in area for any one sign. More sign area is appropriate for some of Ellicott City's larger buildings, where these limits would result in signs that are ineffective or not in scale with the building.
- Attach signs flat against the wall.

b. Not Recommended

- Placing a sign in a location where it hides or crowds architectural details and features.
- Hiding or altering a sign which is integral to the structure of the building, such as a name or date chiseled in stone.
- Attaching letters directly to the building facade without benefit of surround, unless the letters fit within and are framed by architectural detailing.

c. Signs Not Requiring a Certificate of Approval

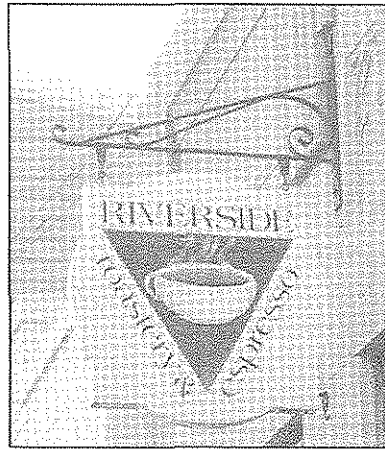
- Temporary real estate signs not exceeding six square feet in area and limited to one sign per frontage.

- "No Parking" and "No Trespassing" signs not exceeding two square feet in area.

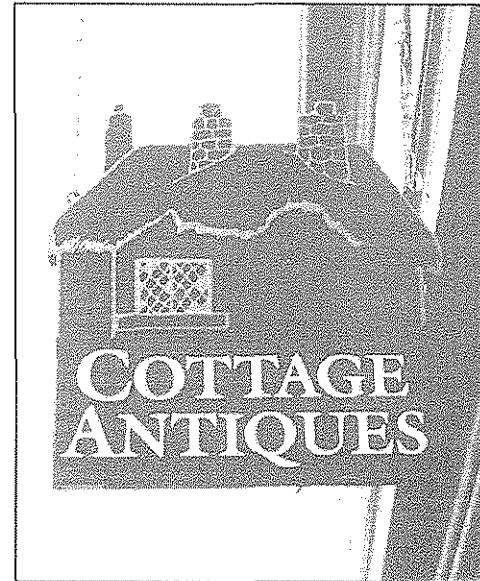
3. Projecting Signs and Porch Signs

Signs attached to and projecting at a right angle from a building are easily read by approaching pedestrians and are very appropriate for Ellicott City. The county Sign Code requires that projecting signs have a minimum clearance of 10 feet above a sidewalk, be set back at least three feet from the curb line and extend no more than 42 inches from the wall of the building.

Because several of Ellicott City's commercial buildings have front porches, signs suspended from a



Two well-designed projecting signs



porch ceiling are sometimes effective. Hanging signs may be either at right angles or parallel to the building facade, but are generally most visible if parallel to the building facade. Signs suspended from the porch ceiling are usually preferable to signs attached to porch railings or pillars, which may obscure features contributing to the building's character.

Projecting signs in the shape of an object representative of the business have historic precedent (e.g., a boot-shaped sign for a shoe store) and can be effective.

a. Recommended

- Place projecting signs at a 90 degree angle to the building facade. Signs suspended from a porch ceiling should usually be parallel to the building facade.
- Use only one projecting or hanging sign per building. On buildings with more than one business, each having its own entry from the sidewalk, one sign per entry may be appropriate if the signs are uniform in size and location.
- Limit the sign area to be in scale with the building. Projecting or hanging signs of four to six square feet are appropriate for many of Ellicott City's small, attached commercial buildings.

- Place the sign in the lower limit of the allowable height range for easier readability by pedestrians.

b. Not Recommended

- More than one projecting sign per facade of a structure.
- Extending the sign vertically above the window sill of the second story of the structure. (See discussion under Flat Mounted Signs on limiting signs to the storefront level.)

4. Roof Signs

Historically, roof signs have not been used in Ellicott City. The pedestrian scale and narrow width of the streets do not encourage motorists or pedestrians in the commercial area to look up to the rooftops. Because of the town's topography, a roof sign on many of the commercial buildings would be inappropriately visible from the neighborhoods on the hillsides overlooking the downtown commercial area.

5. Freestanding Signs

The Howard County Sign Code permits freestanding signs on property with at least 40 lineal feet of lot frontage. The allowed size is based on the sign's setback from the public right-of-way. Most of Ellicott City's commercial structures are located

adjacent to the sidewalk, leaving no room for a freestanding sign. Buildings that are set back from the sidewalk often do not have the minimum frontage required by the Sign Code for a freestanding sign. Therefore, freestanding signs are not common in the historic district.

On property with sufficient frontage and setback, permanent freestanding signs that are scaled to be viewed by pedestrians may be appropriate.

"Sandwich boards" and other signs that are placed on the sidewalk during the business day cannot meet the required setback from the public right-of-way and usually serve properties that do not have at least 40 feet of lot frontage. Therefore, these sidewalk signs are not allowed by the Sign Code and the Historic District Commission has no power to approve them.

a. Recommended

- Where they are permitted, limit a freestanding sign to a height below the window sill of the second story of the building with which it is associated.
- To respect the pedestrian scale, limit the size of a freestanding sign to four to six square feet in area.

b. Signs Not Requiring a Certificate of Approval

- Temporary real estate signs not exceeding six square feet in area and limited to one sign per frontage.
- "No Parking" and "No Trespassing" signs not exceeding two square feet in area and located on private property.

6. Banners and Flags

The county Sign Code allows banners only on a temporary basis, to advertise the grand opening of an establishment or a public entertainment or event. Grand opening banners are allowed for no more than 14 days. Generally, large banners on the facade of a building, such as commonly seen in commercial areas, are geared toward vehicular traffic and are not appropriate for a pedestrian-scaled district. Street banners, which the Sign Code allows for no more than 14 days before and seven days after a public entertainment or event, have been appropriately used in Ellicott City to advertise public events in the historic district. The county executive's approval is required for such banners. Because they are allowed for no more than 14 or 21 days, these banners do not require a Certificate of Approval.

Flags that identify a product or the name or function of a business are

considered signs and require a Certificate of Approval from the Historic District Commission. Decorative flags, United States or Maryland flags, and similar types of flags are not signs and, because of their temporary nature and the minimal hardware required to support them, do not require a Certificate of Approval.

a. Recommended

- Limit the size of temporary banners (not including street banners) to no more than 12 square feet on

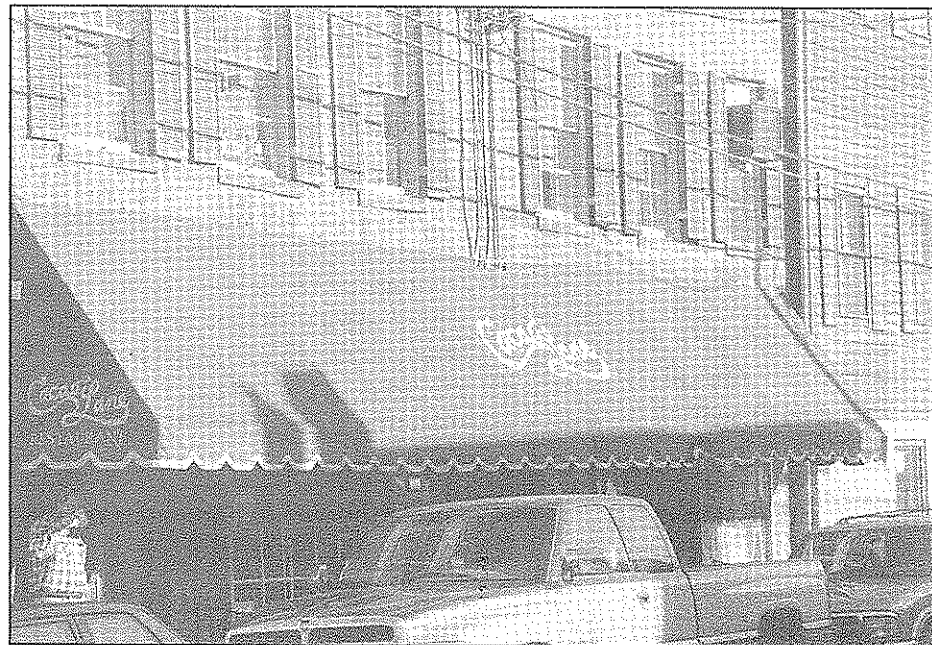
two-story buildings and no more than 16 square feet on buildings of three or more stories.

b. Work Not Requiring a Certificate of Approval

- Installing and removing banners and flags (other than flags that function as a sign identifying an establishment).

7. Signage on Awnings

Awnings are a traditional location for signs. Signs on awnings require a sign permit and a Certificate of Approval.



An awning can be effectively used for lettering identifying a business.

Recommended

- Place lettering on the valance of the awning where it will be visible whether the awning is open or closed.
- Use graphics and lettering that are compatible in style and color with the building and the awning itself.
- Use graphics and lettering that are painted or silkscreened onto the awning. Letters should not be cut out and back-lighted.

8. Marquees

Marquee signs are associated with theaters, such as the movie theater on Main Street. This type of sign is appropriate only to such entertainment businesses, to identify the establishment and to announce upcoming events.

9. Wall Murals

Painting a sign directly on a wall or other structural part of a building is not permitted by the county Sign Code. However, the Board of Appeals may grant a variance for such signs if they are found to contribute significantly to the historical, architectural or aesthetic character of the area. A wall mural that does not advertise a business or identify an area is not a sign and is not regulated by the Sign Code.

Well-executed artwork such as wall murals can make a positive contribution to the historic district. Any wall mural, whether or not it is a sign, requires approval by the Historic District Commission.

C. Residential Zones

Small signs are appropriate for permitted office uses and other home occupations in residential districts. These signs may be wall mounted, projecting or free standing. The Sign Code allows signs of no more than two square feet in area; two signs are permitted for a home occupation in a single-family residence.

Recommended

- Limit the size of signs to no more than two square feet in area.
- Install only one sign per structure. Two signs may be appropriate in some situations; e.g., if a property has frontage on two streets, or, for houses with a substantial setback from the street, a freestanding sign may be placed near the road and a wall mounted sign next to the entrance to the house.
- Locate the sign to harmonize with the architecture of the structure.

D. Traffic, Directional and Other Public Signage

The historic district contains numerous informational or directional signs. These include parking regulation signs, such as signs designating parking areas or loading zones; signs directing visitors to parking areas, public buildings or other attractions; and street name signs. The use of a unified, appropriate design for these signs (including the supporting poles and hardware) would reinforce Ellicott City's identity as a historic district. Combined with a program to identify locations where signs will be most effective and to eliminate unnecessary signs, such a unified sign program would reduce some of the clutter that detracts from the historic character of Ellicott City's streetscapes.

Informational signs must be approved by the Historic District Commission. However, the location and design of traffic control signs (e.g., stop signs and speed limit signs) are strictly standardized and do not require Commission review.

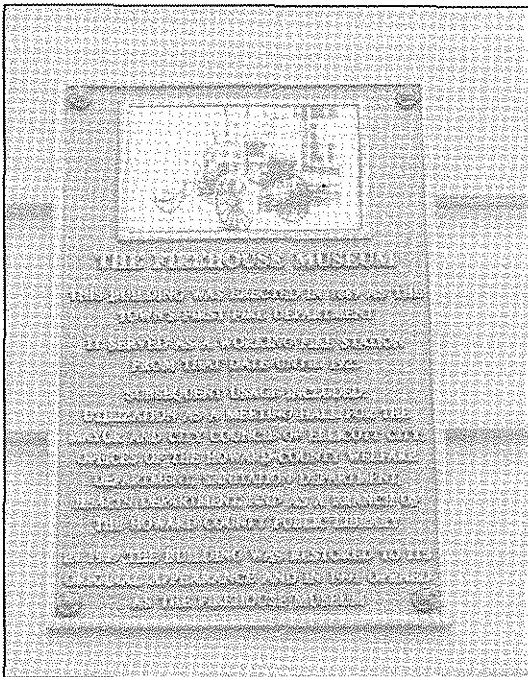
1. Recommended

- Use directional and informational signs conservatively, in locations that will maximize their effectiveness. Limit the number of freestanding poles to minimize streetscape clutter.

- Design signs of a particular type (e.g., all street name signs or all signs directing visitors to parking areas or public buildings) with a consistent style, lettering, size, color and logo.
- When possible, mount signs on existing poles or poles of a traditional design and material.

2. Routine Maintenance

- Installing or removing traffic control signs.



An example of the historic plaque design approved by the Historic District Commission

E. Historic Plaques

Plaques placed on historic buildings to identify their construction date and original use are encouraged. At the request of the Ellicott City Restoration Foundation, the Historic District Commission has approved a plaque design to be used in the historic district. Use of this approved design for historic plaques will help to unify and identify the district.

1. Recommended

- Identify historic buildings with a plaque of the design approved by the Historic District Commission.

2. Routine Maintenance

- Installing one eight-inch by 12-inch bronze plaque, in the design approved by the Historic District Commission, on a historic building.

Chapter 12. Demolition and Relocation

- Demolition or relocation of any structure requires a Certificate of Approval from the Historic District Commission. This requirement applies to structures such as retaining walls, sheds and garages as well as houses.

Historic buildings are irreplaceable resources. Because their demolition will have a permanent detrimental effect on the historic district, the Commission will consider approving demolition only after all possible alternatives to preserve the structure are exhausted.

For structures of particular historic importance, the County Code (Section 16.608) authorizes the Commission to endeavor to work out with the owner an economically feasible plan to preserve the structure. If no economically feasible plan can be formulated, the Commission may delay making a decision for up to 90 days while seeking a means of preserving the building, including negotiating with the owner and other interested individuals and organizations who might provide assistance.

If demolition of a historic building is approved by the Historic District Commission, the Commission may require that the owner provide opportunity for the building and its site to be documented prior to demolition.

Relocation will detract from the integrity of a historic structure and its site and requires strong justification. If relocation is approved, the building should be moved to a similar setting, preferably within the historic district, by a competent company with experience in moving historic structures.

If the Historic District Commission finds that a structure is not historically significant and does not contribute to the character of the historic district, demolition or relocation will be routinely approved. For any demolition or relocation, the treatment of the site after removal of the structure and the new location and site design for a relocated building (if the location is within the historic district) must also be approved by the Commission.

For more information on the procedures used by the Commission when considering an application for demolition, please refer to the Historic District Commission's Rules of Procedure, available from the Department of Planning and Zoning.



Glossary

Ashtar: Stone cut into rectangular blocks and the masonry built of such hewn stone. It may be coursed, with continuous horizontal joints, or random, with discontinuous joints.

Baluster: One of many closely spaced, vertical members used to support a railing.

Balustrade: An entire railing system, including the top rail and its balusters, and sometimes a bottom rail.

Barge Board: A board, often ornately curved, attached to the projecting edges of a gabled roof; sometimes referred to as verge board.

Batten: A strip of wood put over a vertical seam between boards to fasten them or cover any gap.

Bay Window: The window of a protruded bay; commonly the windowed bay itself, rising from the ground one or more stories.

Blind: A hinged, louvered window or door covering, either functional or decorative.

Bracket: A support element under eaves, shelves or other overhangs; often more decorative than functional.

Casement: A window with a vertically hung sash that opens by pivoting inward or outward.

Cast Iron: Iron, shaped in a mold, that is hard and brittle, cannot be hammer-welded, and must be kept painted to deter rusting.

Chamfer: Surface left when the corner of a post is cut away, usually at a 45-degree angle; to remove the edge or corner, bevel.

Clapboard: A long, narrow board with one edge thicker than the other, overlapped to cover the outer walls of frame structures; typically with four-inch to five-inch exposure. It is also known as weatherboard when the exposure is increased to six-inch to nine-inch.

Corbel: A small projection constructed outward from a masonry wall to support the eaves of a roof or from a chimney to support a larger decorative top.

Cornice: Projecting ornamental molding along the top of a building, wall or storefront.

Dentil: Small square blocks closely spaced to decorate a cornice.

Dormer: A window that projects from a roof; the roofed structure housing such a window.

Double-Hung Sash Window: A window with two sashes, one above the other, arranged to slide vertically past each other.

Drip Line (of vegetation): A vertical line extending from the outermost edge of the tree canopy or shrub branch to the ground.

Eaves: The projecting overhang at the lower edge of a roof.

Ell: An extension or wing at right angles to the main structure.

Fanlight: A semi-circular window over a door with radial mullions in the form of an open fan.

Facade: The face or elevation of a building.

Fieldstone: Slab units, split from rock and suitable for setting as dry-wall masonry.

Finial: A relatively small ornament used at the top of furniture or a building, usually at the peak of a gable or spire.

Fish-Scale Shingle: A shingle cut with a scalloped edge.

Flagstone: Hard stone split into flat pieces and used in paving walks, terraces, etc.

Flemish Bond Pattern: Intricate brickwork with alternating headers (bricks with end exposed) and stretchers (bricks with side exposed).

Gable: A triangular wall segment at the end of a double-pitched or gabled roof.

Gable Roof: Roof form composed of two pitched surfaces.

Gambrel Roof: A ridged roof with two slopes on each side, the lower slope having the steeper pitch.

German Siding: An exterior wall cladding of horizontal wooden boards with a concave upper edge which fits into a corresponding groove in the siding above.

Hipped Roof: A roof with four uniformly pitched sides.

Hood Mold: A large molding over a window, originally designed to direct

water away from the wall and window; also called a drip molding.

Lintel: A horizontal architectural member supporting the weight above an opening.

Louver: Horizontal slats tilted to exclude rain, sunlight and view, but allowing air to pass.

Mansard Roof: From Francois Mansart, French architect 1598-1666. A roof which has two pitches, usually on all four sides, the lower pitch being very steep and the upper pitch almost horizontal.

Masonry: Wall construction of materials such as stone, brick, concrete or tile.

Molding: A continuous band that is either carved into or applied to a surface.

Mortar: A mixture of sand, water, lime and cement, used to bind together units of masonry.

Muntin: A division separating panes of glass in a window sash or door.

Ornament: Detail that is incised, molded, painted or otherwise added to a building, usually against a plain surface, with the purpose of embellishment.

Picket: An upright, pointed stake used in fences.

Repointing: Treatment of joints in masonry by removing mortar from between the joints of masonry units and refilling with mortar.

Ridge, Ridge Line: The area of the roof where the upper slopes of the roof meet horizontally.

Rubble: Irregularly-formed stones which have not been cut to form regular faces or which have been shaped by fracture.

Sash: A frame in which the panes of a window are set.

Shed Roof: The simplest roof, consisting of a single inclined plane; often used for additions and outbuildings.

Shingles: Pieces of wood, slate or other material, such as asphalt-based material, used as an overlapping outer covering on walls or roofs.

Shutter: A hinged, solid, usually paneled window covering, either functional or decorative.

Side Light: A framed area of fixed glass along the side of a door or window opening.

Sill: The horizontal member at the bottom of a window or door frame.

Stockade Fence: A fence made of upright, tightly-spaced wooden slats.

Terra Cotta: From Latin, "cooked earth." A ceramic material made from clay slip poured into molds and fired; used as a sheathing material — particularly when glazed.

Tongue and Groove: Flooring or sheathing in which the jutting edge or tongue on one board fits exactly into a groove in another.

Transom: A horizontal window over a door.

Wrought iron: Iron that can be squeezed, hammered or rolled into the desired form.



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