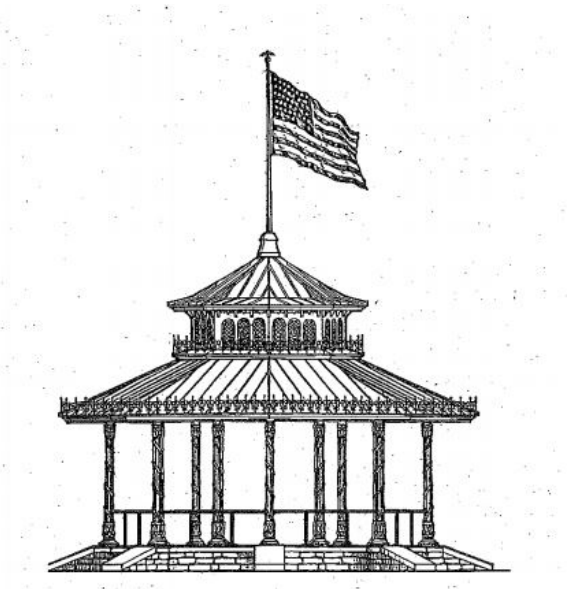
City of Waukesha

LANDMARKS COMMISSION

DESIGN POLICIES



201 Delafield St., Room 200
Phone: 262-524-3529

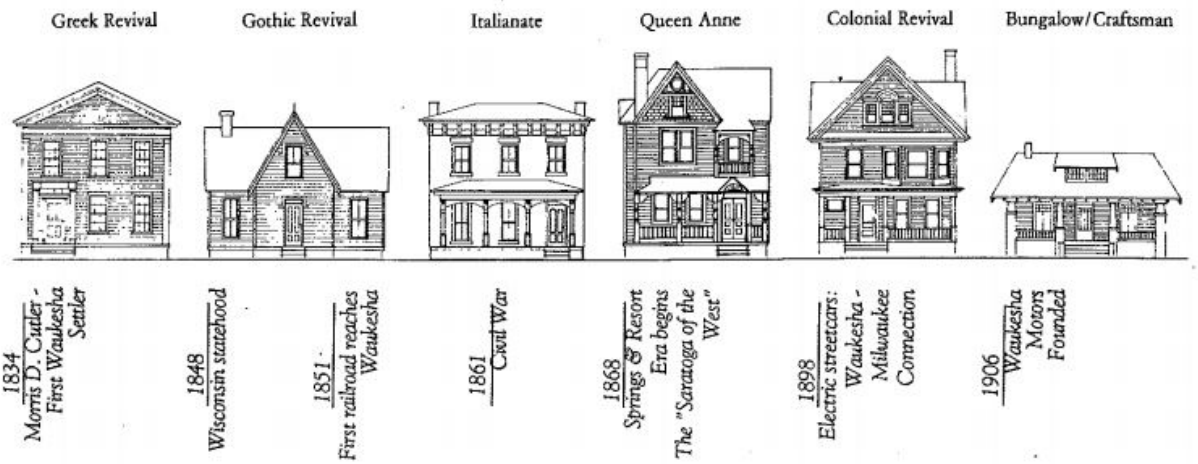
Adopted July 11, 2019

Projects that NEED Landmarks Commission approvals

- Roof repair
- Window repair or replacement
- Siding repair
- Porch or foundation repair
- Chimney repair
- Gutter replacement
- Demolitions
- Painting of masonry - rarely acceptable
- Painting of wood siding, if wood repair is included
- Any other work that has a similar impact

Projects that DO NOT NEED Landmarks Commission approvals

- Site improvements such as landscaping and fence repair
- Painting of wood siding if wood repair is not included
- Interior remodeling work



LANDMARKS COMMISSION DESIGN GUIDELINES

The purpose of the Waukesha Landmarks Commission is to preserve, enhance, and perpetuate the City of Waukesha's history as embodied and reflected in its improvements, landmarks, and historic districts. If you own a home in one of the city's nine historic districts or if your property is listed as a Local Landmark, you will need Landmarks Commission approval before you can proceed with exterior repair work, to ensure the work you are doing will maintain your property's historic identity and integrity. The Landmarks Commission recognizes that it will not be able to achieve its goals without the cooperation of property owners, so it seeks to work with applicants, rather than against them, to help them find the best way to maintain their properties.

The Landmarks Commission's review standards are based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Rehabilitation of Historic Properties. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards are a set of concepts that were created by the Federal Government to define best practices for preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction of historic properties. The Secretary of the Interior, the Wisconsin Historical Society, and local preservationists have created additional guidelines for applying the Standards to specific projects. **The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation are listed on the next page.**

Several Grants and Tax Credits are available to offset the cost of maintaining your historic property.

- Landmarks Paint and Repair Grants can reimburse roughly 10% of the cost of a residential repair project, up to a maximum of $2,000. Most homes that are Local Landmarks or are in Historic Districts are eligible.

- Façade grants cover up to half of the cost of certain types of repairs, to a maximum of $10,000. Commercial properties in or near Waukesha's Historic Downtown may be eligible.

- State and Federal tax credits are also available for both commercial and residential historic preservation projects. If you plan to apply for preservation tax credits you should contact the State Historic Preservation Office before applying for applying for Landmarks Commission approval.

Examples of City of Waukesha local landmarks - St. Joseph's Church, the Nickell Building, and the Andrew Frame house

SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES, APPLIED BY THE WAUKESHA LANDMARKS COMMISSION

To receive a **Certificate of Appropriateness**, a rehabilitation project must be determined by the Landmarks Commission to be consistent with the historic character of the structure(s) and, where applicable, the district in which it is located. The following Standards are to be applied to specific rehabilitation projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility.

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will 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, will not be undertaken.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archaeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will 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 will 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 FOLLOWING ARE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SEVERAL COMMON TYPES OF WORK

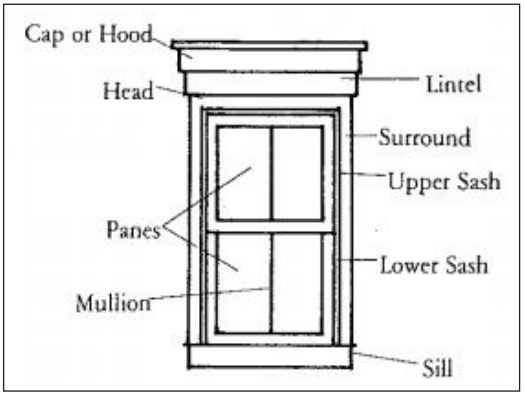
for more details or other types of work, see resources on back cover

Roof Repair or Replacement: Most historic homes were originally roofed with wood shingles, not wood shake. Wood shingles had a uniform size and were laid out in even rows. For high level preservation projects replacing the roof with new wood shingles may be ideal, but asphalt shingles are also an acceptable replacement material. 3-tab shingles are best. Architectural shingles with slight shadow lines are also acceptable. Wood shake, or shingles with false shadow lines or uneven bottoms are generally not acceptable unless you can provide documentary evidence that they were historically present.

3-tab shingles and shingles with a slight shadow line are usually acceptable (Photo Credit: Wisconsin Historical Society)

Window Repair or Replacement. If the original windows are still present on your house it is always better to repair them than replace them. Historic windows can be made more energy efficient than modern windows and should last longer. Repairing existing windows also is often more cost effective than replacing them.

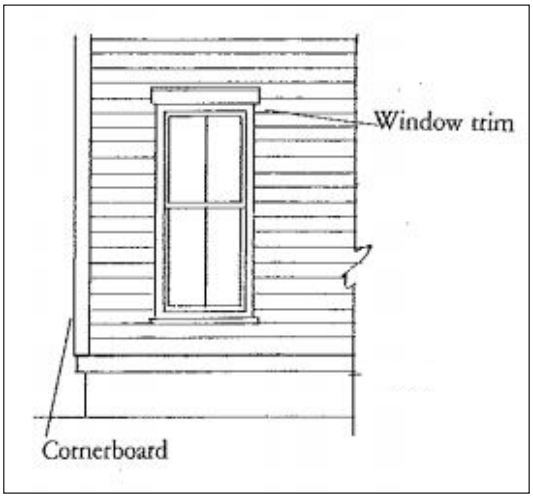
If the original windows are missing or have deteriorated beyond repair, replacement windows should match the original in shape and size, and in the arrangement of window panes. If possible the replacement windows should use the same materials as the original. If no evidence of the original window's appearance is available, replacements should match the style of the house and the size of the window opening. Windows with highly reflective surfaces are inappropriate for historic homes.



Replacement windows that do not match the original size and style can damage your building's historic integrity.

Wood Siding: Wooden clapboard siding is common on many historic homes in Waukesha. With proper maintenance, it can have comparable or better insulating properties and last much longer than modern synthetic materials such as vinyl. It is usually possible to repair or replace one section of rotted wood rather than re-siding your whole house. If possible, replacement wood should be the same kind as the existing wood. More importantly, the slats should have the same width as the existing slats, and any corner boards or other character defining features should be maintained.

Replacing wood siding with vinyl or other synthetic materials is discouraged on historic properties. Ventilation practices have changed significantly since most historic homes were built. unless you fully update the ventilation along with the siding you may experience significant structural damage from moisture trapped inside the walls. Substitute materials such as Hardee Board may be acceptable as long as they are similar to the existing siding in design, scale, and architectural appearance. You should not use siding that includes non-historic false wood texture, and you must maintain any character defining features such as corner boards.



Maintain character defining features such as cornerboards and window trim

Painting: Painting work typically does not require a Certificate of Appropriateness unless you are also applying for a Paint and Repair Grant. However, you should maintain the paint on the wood siding of your historic home to keep the wood waterproof and prevent rotting. If you would like to paint your home in a way that is historically accurate, the Landmarks Commission is happy to advise you on color choices.

The wood siding restoration at 215 N. Charles St. won the Landmarks Commission's George Gunn award in 2009. (Photo Credit: Mary Emery)

Brick or stone repair or replacement, tuckpointing: Many historic homes in Waukesha have red or cream colored brick siding, and many homes have stone foundations. Properly maintained masonry siding can last hundreds of years. The Wisconsin Historical Society recommends that you conduct an annual inspection of your brick siding to identify any deterioration or other issues before it becomes too significant to be easily fixable. Any repair work should be done by a professional mason who has experience working on historic buildings.

The most common repair for brick or stone siding is repointing deteriorated mortar. It is very important that

the color, texture, and hardness of replacement mortar matches the mortar in the surrounding wall. Mortar that does not match the existing color will stand out in an obvious and unsightly way and will damage the historic character of your house. Mortar that does not match the texture of the surrounding mortar will not properly adhere to the bricks and may damage the rest of the wall. Your mason should also ensure that the mortar is installed in such a way as to match the existing joint style.

If you need to replace stones or bricks, the replacements should match the existing materials in color and in hardness. Historic bricks were generally softer than modern bricks, and replacing soft bricks with harder ones can damage the rest of the wall. Modern synthetic wall structures tend to look very different from the originals, so they are generally not considered to be acceptable.

Painting of historic masonry walls can cause serious moisture damage. It is almost never appropriate for historic buildings in Waukesha.

Mortor that does not match existing can damage historic character and surrounding masonry. (Photo Credit: Wisconsin Historical Society)

Replacement mortar should match color, texture and joint style of existing mortar.

New Construction and Non-contributing structures: New buildings in historic districts should be compatible with the bulk, height, scale, and style in the surrounding neighborhood. However, new buildings should not be designed as replicas of historic buildings. They should show sensitivity to the historic structures and show continuity, but they should not be made to look older than they are. Non-contributing structures in historic districts will be evaluated to ensure that they maintain this continuity, but they will not be held to the same standard as historic structures.

125 N. Charles St, center is compatible with the bulk, height, scale, and style of the McCall Street Historic District

RESOURCES

Landmarks Resource Library
waukesha-wi.gov/1041/Landmarks-Resource-Library

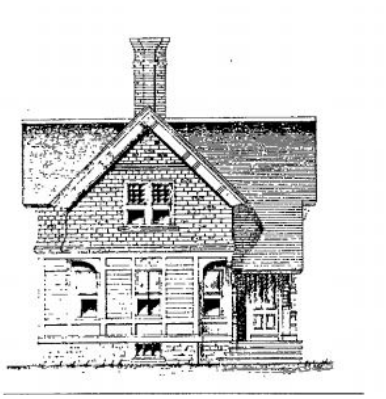
The Secretary of the Interior Standards
https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards.htm

The Wisconsin Historical Society's How to Preserve Your Historic Home Guidelines
https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Article/CS15265

Waukesha Preservation Alliance:
waukeshapreservation.org
262-278-6658

Waukesha County Historical Society
www.waukeshacountymuseum.org
262-521-2859

Landmarks Commission members and staff are happy to assist you in any way they can
cgriffith@waukesha-wi.gov
262-524-3529



Some Key Ideas

Don't remove anything that can be repaired.

Replacement parts should closely match the originals in size, shape, materials, and design.

Don't attempt to make your house look older than it is.