

## **DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR ALTERATIONS.** *[Section 31.13 of the Ames Municipal Code]*

***An Alteration is defined as, “any act or process that changes one or more of the exterior features of a structure, without increasing the amount of gross floor area.”***

**(1) Use of Substitute Materials.** Historic materials shall be used unless otherwise excepted. The Design Guidelines include specific substitute materials for some building elements that are approved as an acceptable alternative to the historic materials for alterations for those building elements. Other substitute materials not listed may be used only if the Commission determines that all of the following conditions are met:

- (a) the historic material on the structure is so deteriorated or damaged that it cannot be repaired; and
- (b) the historic material on the structure is not readily available; and
- (c) the substitute material can be installed without irreversibly damaging or obscuring the architectural features and trim of the building; and
- (d) the substitute material matches the historic material in size, design, texture, and other visual qualities.

**(2) Chimneys.**

- (a) Existing brick or stone chimneys shall be retained whenever possible.
- (b) Building and fire codes shall be met in regard to proper heights and other requirements.
- (c) Chimney alterations shall be consistent with the architectural style.

**(3) Decks and Similar Exterior Entrance Features.**

- (a) Alterations to decks shall follow the design guidelines for the new construction of decks.

**(4) Dormers.**

- (a) Dormers shall be retained whenever possible.
- (b) Dormers shall be constructed in the same shape, style, and scale as any historic dormer on the building, or in the same shape, style, and scale of dormers on houses of the same architectural style.
- (c) Dormers are not typical on certain styles of historic architecture and adding them in this case shall not be permitted.

**(5) Exits, Second and Third Story.**

- (a) Historic second and third story exits shall be retained whenever possible.
- (b) Exit stairs located on the exterior shall be consistent with the architectural styles.
- (c) The stairs shall be constructed in the most compact form.
- (d) Exit stairs from upper level apartments shall be accommodated inside the existing building whenever possible.

**(6) Fences and Retaining Walls.**

- (a) Historic retaining walls and perimeter fences shall be retained, whenever possible.

**(7) Foundations.**

- (a) Existing foundations shall be retained whenever possible.
- (b) Historic door and window openings and storm cellar entrances in the foundation shall be retained.

- (c) The adjacent grade at a foundation shall not be raised to cover any part of the foundation that was historically exposed. Minimal grade changes necessary to solve destructive drainage problems shall be permitted when no reasonable alternative exists.
- (d) Masonry and concrete foundations which were never painted shall not be painted.
- (e) Historic brick, stone, and rusticated masonry foundations shall not be coated with cement plaster or stucco where exposed above grade.

#### **(8) Garages and Accessory Buildings.**

- (a) Garages shall be retained, whenever possible. Demolition is allowed only if it is determined by the Commission that the adopted criteria for demolition of a contributing garage are met.
- (b) Retain and preserve the character-defining materials, features, and details of historic garages, including foundations, roofs, siding, masonry, windows, doors, and architectural trim, in accordance with Design Guidelines for each exterior feature, and Design Criteria for the architectural type of the principal structure.
  - (i) Exception: that this requirement does not prohibit replacement of a historic garage door with an overhead door that matches the historic garage door in design and dimensions.
- (c) Replace features in kind that are too deteriorated to repair using physical evidence to guide the new work. Match the original element or detail in design, dimension, texture, and material.
- (d) Alteration of contributing garages by using materials, configurations, and designs that do not match the design appropriate for the period and the garage is prohibited.
- (e) Repair of historic garage door features or portions of features shall utilize the same material and design.
- (f) If matching the historic door is not possible, the proposed replacement door shall contain as many of the elements of the historic door or of a garage door design appropriate for the period and design of the structure, as is possible.
- (g) A garage door shall be no larger than necessary to enclose the existing opening.
- (h) When replacing a non-historic door or replacing a missing door, the new door shall be consistent with doors of the period in design character and dimensions or with the historic character of the building in terms of quantity of doors, height, width, proportion, trim, corner details, pattern of panels, and glass.
- (j) Garage doors shall be single wide. Double wide garage doors are not permitted.
- (k) Changing an existing contributing garage to an ADU is allowed as long as the character defining features of the garage are not significantly altered.

#### **(9) Gutters and Downspouts.**

- (a) Built-in gutters and other historic drainage provisions such as wood gutters shall be retained whenever possible.
- (b) Downspouts and gutters may be added if they have not previously existed.
- (c) Metal gutters and downspouts shall be permitted when dealing with a building where a water removal system never existed or where repair of the historic system is not possible.
- (d) Half-round gutters and round downspouts or Roman ogee (K-style) gutters and rectangular downspouts shall be permitted.
- (e) Downspouts shall be run vertically. Diagonals crossing roof planes and walls shall not be permitted.

#### **(10) Porches and Similar Exterior Entrance Features.**

- (a) Historic porches, verandas, patios, or similar exterior entrance features shall be retained whenever possible.
- (b) Alterations to existing porches, verandas, patios, or similar features shall be consistent with the architectural style of the dwelling.
- (c) Enclosing a porch shall be permitted only if consistent with the architectural style.

- (d) Second or third story sun porches or balconies, historic in design, shall be retained. Doors leading out to these shall also be retained.
- (e) Porch balustrades shall be constructed with materials of the same size, height, detailing, and baluster spacing consistent with the historic architectural style.  
 Note: It will be necessary to obtain authorization from the City Building Official prior to constructing a balustrade which does not meet the minimum requirements, as specified by the Building Code. When the lower and historically correct height of a porch rail cannot be considered to be life threatening, the Commission shall support the applicant's request for special consideration under the Historic Buildings Section of the currently adopted Building Code.
- (f) Handrails required on porch steps, if not of a historic design and materials, shall be a simple metal rail or similar to other balustrade elements on the porch.
- (g) When designing enclosures for historic porches, required by the new use, in a manner that preserves the historic character of the building, this can include using large sheets of glass and recessing the enclosure wall behind existing scrollwork, posts, and balustrades.
- (h) Composite material is permitted for use on porch floors when not visible from the street or other historic resources.
- (i) Fiberglass material is allowed for porch columns, provided the columns have the historically correct proportions to resemble historic wood columns.
- (j) Vinyl material is prohibited for porch columns and all other elements of a porch.
- (k) Stair risers shall be enclosed.
- (l) Locate ramp to minimize its visibility from the public way; to incorporate it behind an existing historic feature; and, if it is providing access to a porch, to enter the porch from the side
- (m) Locate and design ramps to minimize damage to existing materials
- (n) Locate and design ramps to allow for their removal and for restoration to the historic original appearance with no loss of architectural integrity
- (o) Minimize loss of historic features at the point where ramp connects (porch, railings, steps, windows)
- (p) Design of ramps shall be simple and non-obtrusive, with historic materials or materials compatible with historic materials.

**(11) Roofs.**

- (a) The historic roof shape and roof features, including eaves, shall be maintained.
- (b) Historic roofing materials and roof features shall be retained whenever possible.
- (c) Asphalt shingles are permitted as a substitute for the historic materials.
- (d) Elements of solar design, either active collectors, trombe walls, or passive collectors, shall be kept to the back or a side away from the street and incorporated into the building design to result in site placement, massing, and roof forms which are consistent with the architectural styles in the district. Solar collectors shall be mounted flush to the roof plane and at the same angle as the roof plane.
- (e) Skylights, roof windows, wind generators, and radio and television reception equipment and other mechanical equipment which are roof mounted shall be designed in such a way that they are not visible from the street.

**(12) Siding/Exterior Materials.**

- (a) The historic exterior siding material shall be retained whenever possible.
- (b) Cementitious siding (smooth finish) of an appropriate profile is permitted for portions of the structure that are not part of the original structure, and on additions that were built after 1941.

**(13) Windows and Doors.**

- (a) Deteriorated historic windows and doors shall be repaired rather than replaced, whenever possible.
  - (ii) In the event replacement is necessary for windows and doors on the original portion of the historic structure, or on any portion of the structure related to the period of significance, the original window materials shall be replaced with historic materials and match the original in design and profile.
  - (iii) In the event replacement of windows is necessary for a portion of the structure that was added to the original after the period of significance, aluminum clad wood windows, with an anodized or baked enamel finish may be used as a replacement material in lieu of historic materials and designed to match the original in the design and profile.
- (b) New door and window openings shall follow the pattern of door and window openings of the historic architectural style, and shall meet 13(a), above.
- (c) The shape of historic window divisions shall not be changed. New muntin bars and mullions shall duplicate the original in size and profile shape.
- (d) Replacement frame profiles shall be consistent with those of the historic frame profiles.
- (e) Combination aluminum, steel, or vinyl storms may be used as a substitute for wood.
- (f) Historic stained glass windows shall be retained. In the case where the window must be replaced, the replacement shall be complementary in design and ornamentation to the historic window.
- (g) The addition of stained glass windows into openings which did not historically have stained glass is not permitted.
- (h) Historic door and window openings shall not be blocked down to accommodate stock sizes.
- (i) Plastic or metal shutters shall not be permitted.
- (j) Plastic, metal, or wood awnings shall not be permitted.

*Amended by Ordinance 4516, Adopted 01-09-24*