

# Wright-Dunbar Village Business District Design Guidelines

City of Dayton  
Department of Planning and Community Development

Prepared by  
**Wright-Dunbar Inc.**



October 2002

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# Table of Contents

Introduction .....	1
<b>The Parts of a Commercial Building.....</b>	<b>2</b>
Storefront Frame .....	3
Storefront Window Base .....	4
Storefront Doors .....	5
Storefront Display Windows.....	7
Storefront Transom Windows.....	9
Signs.....	10
Storefront Sign Band .....	13
Upper Facades .....	14
Paint .....	16
Roofing Materials.....	17
Sidewalk Covering.....	18
Lighting.....	19
<b>New Construction: Additions .....</b>	<b>21</b>
Materials.....	21
Proportion of Openings.....	22
Roofing.....	22
<b>New Construction: Infill .....</b>	<b>23</b>
Height .....	23
Width .....	23
Setback.....	24
Proportion of Openings.....	24
Horizontal Rhythms.....	25
Materials.....	25
Roof Form.....	26
Utilities and Mechanicals.....	26

# Introduction

The following document was prepared by the Wright-Dunbar Village Business District Program as a set of standards to guide the redevelopment of the Wright-Dunbar Village Business District. The City of Dayton adopted these guidelines to supplement the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*. This document applies to any exterior modification or new construction within the West Third Street Historic District.



Landmarks Commission – Approved 5/16/2002

City Plan board – Adopted 8/20/2002

City Commission – Adopted 10/9/2002  
ORD Number: 5229-02

# The Parts of a Commercial Building

In the early 19th century, buildings began appearing that were designed specifically for conducting business. These buildings contained the elements of the traditional Main Street storefront that we are familiar with today. The entire facade of a commercial building is defined by three parts: the storefront, upper stories and decorative cap or cornice.

The street-level facade of the storefront generally lies within the same plane as the upper stories. The supporting members of the facade, the vertical piers and horizontal lintels, create a strong frame within which the storefront elements of a central doorway and flanking display windows are symmetrically arranged. The storefront frame typically displays a three-part division: a lower window panel, window base or knee wall of masonry or paneled wood rising from the sidewalk; a transparent zone of windows and doorways; and a capping device such as a flat lintel or a sign band.

Despite technological advances and changing architectural styles, this storefront format remained the same until well into the twentieth century.

The following are a list of architectural building elements and guidelines for restoration that are components of a typical building facade in the historic district:

# Storefront Frame

The original proportions and building materials of the storefront shall be respected, maintained, and/or restored.

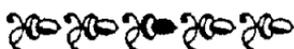
## Appropriate

- \* Compatible storefronts designed to fit within the existing original openings
- \* Replacement of missing storefront elements with appropriate, quality materials
- \* Replicating original ornamentation and architectural features in original materials
- \* Brick repaired with replacement brick which matches the original in size, color, texture and consistency
- \* Replacement mortar matching the original in color, composition, texture and application in order for the joints to be unnoticeable

## Prohibited

- \* Storefronts that exceed the property line and/or original storefront frame of the building
- \* Creating a false historical appearance by adding architectural details not related to the building
- \* Use of replacement materials that do not convey the same visual appearance as existing materials
- \* Alterations that are incompatible in scale, size, material or color to the storefront
- \* Adding elements which obscure, damage, or destroy original features of the building
- \* Blocking existing or original windows or doors
- \* Recessing a storefront within the frame of an existing building
- \* Treatments which would alter the proportion and scale of the storefront by the removal of the

- windows, pilasters and/or horizontal panels
- \* Removal or alteration of original window and door openings, ornamentation, and materials
  - \* Storefront treatments utilizing few visible supports and large uninterrupted expanses of glass, metal, vinyl or wood
  - \* Covering facades completely with non-original metal, vinyl, wood or glass
  - \* Cleaning masonry by sand blasting, wire brushing, or using abrasive chemicals
  - \* Vinyl and aluminum ornamentation
  - \* Unpainted metal storefronts



## Storefront Window base, knee wall or bulkhead

The scale, placement and building materials of the original window base shall be respected, maintained, and/or restored.



### Appropriate

- \* Window bases consistent with the building's original design, scale, size, and original materials

- \* Retained, maintained, repaired or uncovered original materials.
- \* Replacement materials that are highly durable and match or exceed the quality of the original materials

## Prohibited

- \* Elimination of the window base
- \* Changing the height of the window base
- \* Use of materials that are easily damaged or that deteriorate quickly, such as low-grade plywood



## Storefront Doors

The scale, placement and building materials of the original storefront doors shall be respected and maintained. Additional entries shall be added only when legally required. Loading and service entrances should be located to the rear or side of a building.

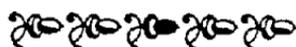


## Appropriate

- \* Retaining, restoring and protecting original doors
- \* Visible entries located on the primary street
- \* Doors with large glass panels that provide visibility into a business
- \* New doors compatible with the overall character of a building
- \* Wood frame doors are typically required
- \* Roll-down security gates if mounted on the inside, recessed, with a hood covering over the roll and in a color compatible with the building

## Prohibited

- \* Adding new or secondary entrances that are incompatible in size, scale or material
- \* Enclosing old entrances with solid materials such as wood or masonry
- \* Converting glass door panels to opaque materials
- \* Using doors with a false historical appearance
- \* Doors which do not fit the existing opening
- \* Decreasing or enlarging the existing opening
- \* Flush steel or flush wood doors, or interior doors used on the exterior
- \* Iron bars and wrought iron security doors
- \* Roll-down security gates mounted on the outside
- \* Roll-down security gates in raw aluminum, silver, or mill finishes



# Storefront Display Windows



The scale, placement and building materials of the original window shall be respected and maintained. Historic features such as frames, special glazing and decorative moldings shall be preserved or where necessary recreated.

## Appropriate

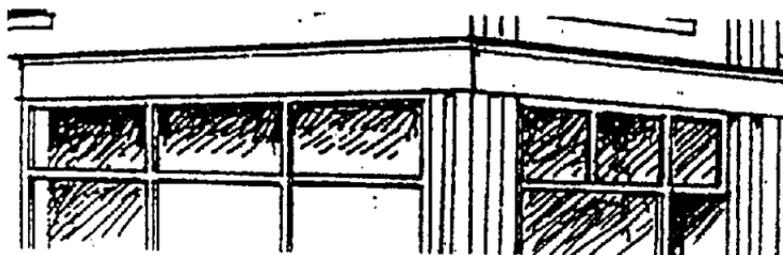
- \* Replacement windows of the same material, size, proportion, style and configuration as an original window
- \* Clear vision glass
- \* Wood framed storefront framing systems are typically required
- \* Unblocked display windows which provide a clear view into the business
- \* Roll-down security gates if mounted on the inside, recessed, with a hood covering over the roll and in a color compatible with the building

## Prohibited

- \* Covering or blocking a display window opening, or filling the opening with non-transparent material
- \* Filling a window opening with glass block
- \* Changing the pattern, number or size of original storefront openings
- \* Covering or obscuring existing window trim
- \* Removing historic windows or window components
- \* Making interior alterations which change the appearance of storefront windows, such as installing a new ceiling which blocks windows
- \* Small paned windows, unless characteristic of original building or style
- \* Use of Plexiglas or similar material, tinted or mirrored glazing
- \* Vinyl or raw aluminum storefront framing systems
- \* Roll-down security gates mounted on the outside
- \* Roll-down security gates in raw aluminum, silver, or mill finishes



# Storefront Transom Windows



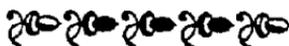
The scale, placement and building materials of the original transom window shall be respected, maintained, and/or restored.

## Appropriate

- \* Retaining the original pattern and material of transom openings
- \* Making transom window frame of a compatible material and design to that of the display window and door frame

## Prohibited

- \* Covering transom with any non-transparent material
- \* Filling transom area with masonry, glass block or other non-transparent material



# Signs

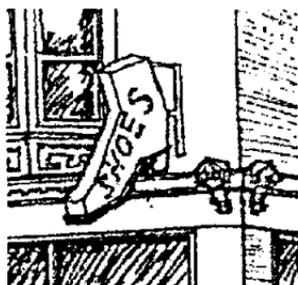
Signs shall relate in placement and size to other building elements. Sign material, style and color shall complement the building facade. Individual shop signs in a single storefront shall relate to each other in design, size, color, placement on the building, and lettering style.



## Appropriate

- \* Signs scaled to fit the design of the building and storefront
- \* Well designed, legible signs and graphics
- \* Signs placed in clear, architecturally defined areas on windows, awnings, or suitable wall spaces such as the sign band
- \* Removal of all old, non-functional signs and brackets
- \* Panel, wall or flush mounted signs forming a clearly articulated band on the face of the building
- \* Use of durable material types such as MDF, plywood, metal, or molded letters
- \* Projecting signs or blade signs, perpendicular to the sidewalk, when scaled for pedestrian use and located over the main entrance to the store

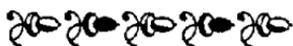
- \* Painted window signs providing an additional level of information about the business, such as store hours or types of services



- \* Icon, graphic or three dimensional signs
- \* Restoring historic signs if they contribute to the business image
- \* Painting signs directly on building's surface
- \* Opaque, reverse channel letters that are illuminated from behind (These are different from internally illuminated plastic letters, which are not acceptable)
- \* Icon-type neon signs
- \* One or two signs per use
- \* Total sign area of less than 100 square feet
- \* Projecting signs with a maximum thirty-two square feet or sixteen square feet per face
- \* Restrained and appropriate use of window signs
- \* Ground projecting signs at parking lots, where the building setback is greater than that established on the street, or in instances where the building setback is consistently deep
- \* Traffic control and historic district identification signs

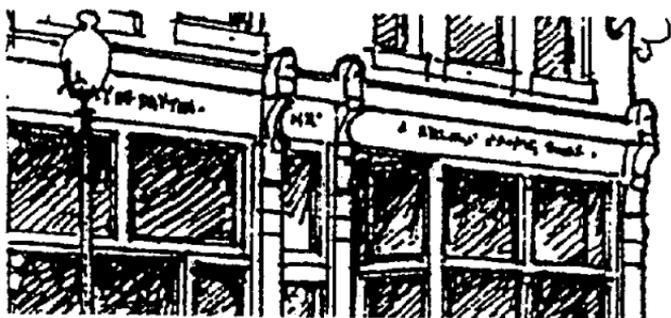
## Prohibited

- \* High intensity sign lights
- \* Internally illuminated or backlit plastic signs
- \* Obscuring or removing building elements such as windows, cornices, or decorative details to accommodate signs
- \* More than two signs per use
- \* Total sign area of more than 100 square feet
- \* Moving and flashing signs
- \* Plastic signs
- \* Billboards
- \* Portable signs
- \* Advertising signs
- \* Poster panel/billboard signs
- \* Signs extending above the wall of any structure to which they are attached
- \* Projecting signs anywhere except over the main entrance to the store
- \* Projecting identification signs of more than 16 square feet per face



# Storefront Sign Band

The scale, placement, materials and function of the original sign band shall be respected, maintained, and/or restored. Generally, signs mounted within the sign band should be flush with the building.

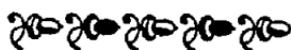


## Appropriate

- \* Signs which fit within the original space of the sign band
- \* Awnings attached to the building at or below the lower edge of the sign band
- \* Creation of a similar effect to a sign band if one does not exist by locating signs or panels in a consistent location on adjacent storefronts

## Prohibited

- \* Oversized signs which extend beyond the sign band area
- \* Inappropriately placed awnings which obscure the sign band



# Upper Facades

The scale, placement, detailing and building materials of the original upper facade shall be respected, maintained, and/or restored.

## Appropriate

- \* Replicating original ornamentation and architectural features in original materials
- \* Replacement of missing elements with quality materials replicating the original design



- \* Wood or clad wood replacement windows which match the original window in size and style (including muntin pattern and thickness)
- \* Finished aluminum storm windows having the same color as the trim
- \* Brick repaired with replacement brick which matches the original in size, color, texture and consistency
- \* Replacement mortar matching the original in color, composition, texture and application in order for the joints to be unnoticeable
- \* Low profile or flush mounted skylights with bronze frames or frames painted to match roof color if not visible from the street

## Prohibited

- \* Changing historic features or removing historic materials
- \* Creating a false historical appearance by adding architectural details not related to the building
- \* Use of replacement materials that do not convey the same visual appearance as existing materials
- \* Alterations that are incompatible in scale, size, material or color
- \* Adding elements which obscure, damage, or destroy original features of the building
- \* Blocking existing or original windows
- \* Treatments which would alter the proportion and scale of the facade by the removal of the windows, pilasters and/or horizontal panels
- \* Removal or alteration of window openings, ornamentation, and materials
- \* Covering upper facades with metal, vinyl, wood, stucco or glass
- \* Cleaning masonry by sand blasting, wire brushing, or using abrasive chemicals
- \* Vinyl and aluminum ornamentation
- \* Vinyl and raw aluminum replacement windows
- \* Inappropriately sized or inappropriately mounted shutters
- \* Glass block windows



# Paint

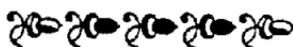
Trim colors shall relate to the natural materials found on the building. Colors should be historically appropriate. Contrasting colors which accent architectural details and entrances are encouraged. More than one vivid color per building is not recommended. A chart of some appropriate color combinations is available from the Landmarks Commission. A color rendering is an appropriate tool for illustrating a paint scheme and is a useful tool to help secure the necessary Landmarks Commission approval before painting can begin.

## Appropriate

- \* An appropriate painting scheme which highlights the architectural details of the building
- \* Use of more than one trim color
- \* Painting metal storefronts when appropriate

## Prohibited

- \* Arbitrary painting of decorative lines, bands or graphic devices directly on the wall
- \* Colors and shades which have no historical precedent for the style of the structure to be painted
- \* Self-cleaning paint
- \* Leaving historically painted metal storefronts unpainted
- \* Painting previously unpainted brick, stone, concrete or glass
- \* Removing paint by sandblasting, wire brushing, or using abrasive chemicals



# Roofing Materials



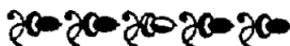
The placement, configuration and building materials of the original roof shall be respected, maintained, and/or restored.

## Appropriate

- \* Medium to dark roof colors, preferably shades of black, brown or gray
- \* Replacing clay tile or slate roofing with the same material

## Prohibited

- \* Replacing clay tile or slate roofing with other materials
- \* Aluminum or plastic roofing
- \* Light colored shingles
- \* Removal of ornamental elements such as ridge caps, cresting or roof finials
- \* Removal of decorative fascia or soffit

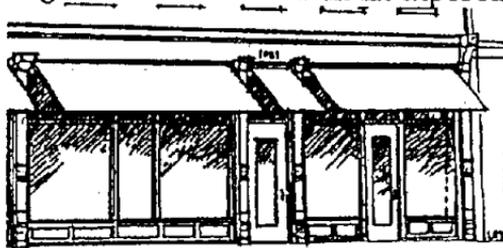


# Sidewalk Covering

The use of awnings is encouraged. Placement of awnings shall occur at the top of an opening, and awning shapes shall relate to the shape of the top of the opening. Design consideration should be given to the cumulative effect of awnings along the street.

## Appropriate

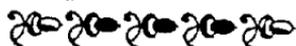
- \* Canvas awnings
- \* Simple awning shapes
- \* Under-awning lights which illuminate the sidewalk and storefront
- \* Separate awnings for each storefront opening so that the building frame and details remain exposed



- \* Consistency of size, profile and placement of awnings on a building
- \* Signage (if applicable) located primarily on the valance

## Prohibited

- \* Vinyl, plastic or metal materials
- \* Concealing architectural details with continuous awnings
- \* Back lit or internally illuminated awnings
- \* Unusually shaped awnings or bullnose awnings not compatible with storefront design or existing architectural forms
- \* Signage on the sloped portion of the awning



# Lighting

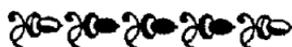
Lighting shall be compatible with the historic nature of the district. The scale and style of light fixtures shall be in keeping with the storefront design. Lighting shall attract attention to signs, store information or building details but not to itself. A variety of light sources and locations is encouraged, including sign lights, display window lights, and architectural lighting.

## Appropriate

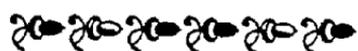
- \* Indirect lighting
- \* General interior lighting of display windows
- \* Up-lighting of architectural features
- \* Decorative fixtures such as sconces

## Prohibited

- \* Flashing, pulsating, dynamic or moving lights
- \* Lights which glare onto the street, public way, or adjacent properties
- \* Residential style fixtures, or fixtures which do not correspond to the character of the building
- \* Large, highly visible floodlights on street facades

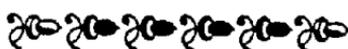


# New Construction



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# New Construction: Additions



Additions to historic buildings are generally located to the rear of the structure. Side additions shall meet the requirements for infill construction listed below. An entrance to the building through an addition may not replace the street entrance. In order to assure that new construction blends in with the ambiance of the district, all new construction shall follow the guidelines for roof material, color, sidewalk coverings, signs and lighting required for renovation of the historic buildings.

## Materials

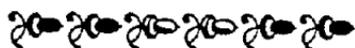
The most common materials used in the historic districts are brick with wooden, stone and metal trim and clear vision glass. Use of these materials is encouraged. The use of the highest possible quality facing materials is strongly encouraged.

### Appropriate

- \* Construction materials compatible with the original building's materials
- \* Materials that are of compatible quality, color, texture, finish and dimension to those common in the district
- \* High quality materials such as stone, brick, terra cotta
- \* Clear vision glass

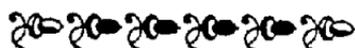
## Prohibited

- \* Artificial sidings such as aluminum, vinyl, non-cementitious imitation brick and stone products
- \* Materials that are easily damaged or that deteriorate quickly, such as low-grade plywood
- \* Rough sawn material, such as wood paneling, simulating a false historical look
- \* Tinted or highly reflective glass



## Proportion of Openings

A proportion, spacing and character of openings similar to that in the existing historic architecture shall be maintained.

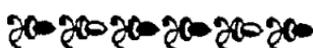


## Roofing

Roof design and materials shall directly relate to that of the original building.



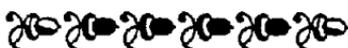
# New Construction: Infill



The goal for new construction is compatibility with the existing historic buildings without attempting to mimic historic architectural styles. In order to assure that new buildings blend in with the ambiance of the district, all new construction shall conform to the following standards as well as follow the guidelines for roof material, color, sidewalk coverings, signs and lighting required for renovation of the historic buildings.

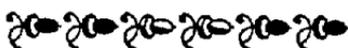
## Height

The height of new construction shall be consistent and compatible with the buildings within the block. Generally speaking, a building height ranging between approximately 30 and 45 feet will be appropriate.



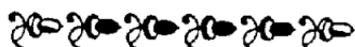
## Width

The existing building wall shall be maintained by new building widths and the percentage of frontage covered. They shall be consistent and compatible with existing structures within the block. If two or more lots are combined into a single project, consider respecting the primacy of the existing lot width. A rhythmic division of the facade that maintains the original rhythm shall be designed.



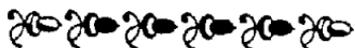
# Setback

The alignment of facades along the sidewalk edge shall be maintained. Storefronts shall not be recessed within the frame of a building.



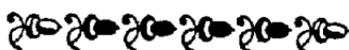
# Proportion of Openings

A proportion, spacing and character of openings similar to that in the existing historic architecture shall be maintained. An appearance of a storefront with window bases, display windows, recessed entry doors, transoms and sign bands is required.



## Horizontal rhythms

A clear visual division between street level and upper floors shall be maintained. The use of canopies or awnings to maintain or extend a strong shared streetscape element is encouraged.



## Materials

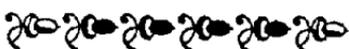
The most common materials used in the historic district are brick with wooden, stone and metal trim and clear vision glass. Use of brick as the primary building material on street facing facades is preferred.

### Appropriate

- \* Materials that are of compatible quality, color, texture, finish and dimension to those common in the district
- \* High quality materials such as stone, brick, terra cotta
- \* Clear vision glass

### Prohibited

- \* Artificial sidings such as aluminum, vinyl, imitation brick and stone products
- \* Materials that are easily damaged or that deteriorate quickly, such as low-grade plywood
- \* Rough sawn material, such as wood paneling, simulating a false historical look
- \* Tinted or highly reflective glass



## Roof form

Gable or residential-type roofs are usually inappropriate for commercial structures. The preferred roof form is a single slope structure, with the slope facing away from the street facade and the roof plane hidden from view on the front facade through the use of decorative devices such as parapets or decorative cornices. Exposed gutters or downspouts are prohibited on the street facade.



## Utilities and Mechanicals

Utilities and meters shall be placed in the rear and screened from view. Larger mechanical equipment can be placed on roofs out of sight from the street elevation. Window air conditioners and through-wall HVAC units are prohibited.

