



6.0 New Construction Guidelines

The development of vacant or under-utilized land in historic districts, sometimes referred to as infill, can be a problem for preservation commissions and architectural review boards. On the one hand, governments are usually eager to see such development occur because it can revitalize substandard areas and even increase tax bases and reduce infrastructure costs. On the other hand, while new construction can contribute to the revitalization of neighborhoods and commercial areas, it can also damage the historic character of a district.

These guidelines for new construction serve as standards for new building activity in historic areas. Spartanburg is composed of a diverse collection of buildings from different periods with different architectural styles. The guidelines are not intended to specify an appropriate style for each area of Spartanburg or to allow only new construction that imitates that style. It is instead hoped that these guidelines will help the people of Spartanburg to evaluate how proposed new buildings might fit into the community's historic areas. The underlying guideline for new construction and additions is to consider one's neighbors and nearby structures and reinforce the existing historic character through sensitive, compatible design.



6.1 Defining the Area of Influence

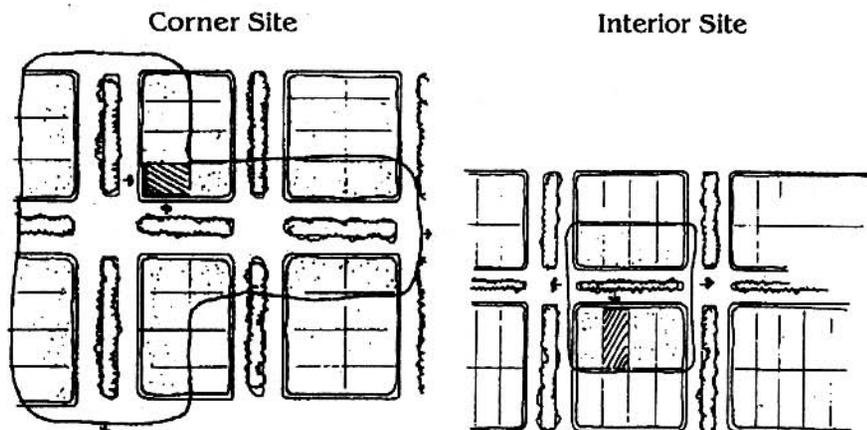
The area of influence may be the back of a historic property, a streetscape, or several blocks. To define the area of influence for the new development, ask questions such as:

❁ *How large an area will the new development impact?*

❁ *Is it to be an addition to the rear of a building that will not even be visible to the public? Or is it a new building that will impact the whole streetscape?*

❁ *Will the new building be in the middle of a block with only one facade visible to the public or will it be on a corner lot, and therefore will have two facades clearly visible?*

Evaluate also if the project will generate the need for additional parking or impact traffic in the area.



Area of Influence: Each site within a historic district will have its own unique area of influence. Shown here are two different examples with suggested minimum areas that might be considered. Neighboring buildings should be examined to determine the consistent patterns of design concepts and architectural elements that are present.

Guideline - Define the area of influence. In considering the appropriateness of a design for a new building in a historic district, it is important to determine the area of influence of the site of that new development. This area should be that which will be visually influenced by the building, i.e. the area in which visual relationships will occur between historic and new construction. A consistent streetscape will result when new buildings are designed in consideration with what already exists.

6.2 Recognizing the Prevailing Character of Existing Development

Every building, whether historic or modern, is a product of design, and the design of buildings is determined by the way in which various basic design concepts and elements are utilized:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Building Orientation and Setback | Proportions |
| Directional Emphasis | Rhythm |
| Shape | Scale/Height |
| Massing | Materials/Architectural Elements |

These concepts form the basis for visual relationships among buildings, which in turn influence the ways in which buildings are perceived by the public. When a new structure is built among historic buildings, the level of success with which it relates to existing buildings - and whether it contributes to or detracts from the area - will be determined by the ways in which its design recognizes the prevailing design expression in the area of influence.

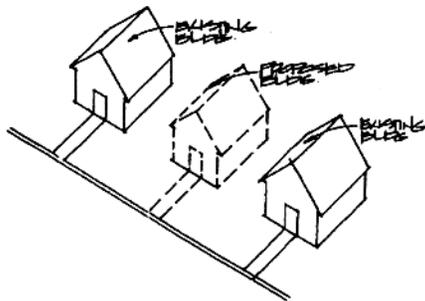
This section identifies and defines principal concepts of design and offers guidelines for referencing predominant design characteristics in evaluating the appropriateness of a proposed new building or addition. Illustrations are intended only to point out the types of relationships between historic and new buildings that are of importance and are not meant to serve as examples of real-life design solutions.

Guideline - Identify and respect the prevailing character of adjacent historic buildings and surrounding development.

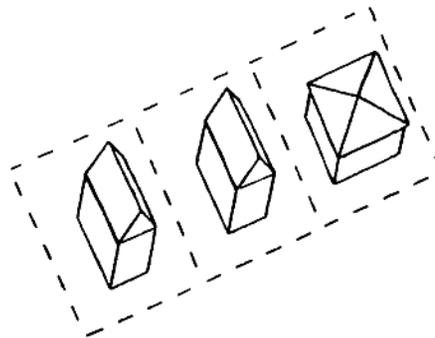
6.2.1 Building Orientation and Setback

Building orientation refers to the directional placement of the building on the site, while setback refers to how far back the building is from the street and side lot lines. Typically, historic areas have strong predominant orientations and setbacks.

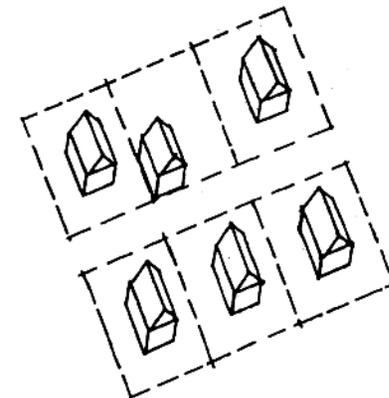
Guideline - The orientation of a new building and its site placement shall appear to be consistent with dominant patterns within the area of influence, if such patterns are apparent.



Building Orientation/Setback - Appropriate: The proposed building in this illustration respects prevailing orientation and setback patterns.



Building Orientation - Inappropriate: This example shows two houses with front-to-back orientations and a neutrally oriented new building that, due to its square plan shape, is inconsistent with the established orientation pattern.

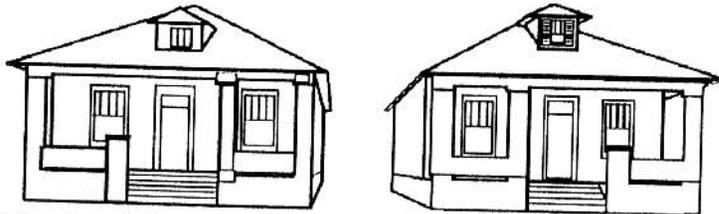


Building Setback - Inappropriate: This example shows a new building in violation of the established setback pattern along this street. The new building, however, is properly oriented front-to-back on its site.

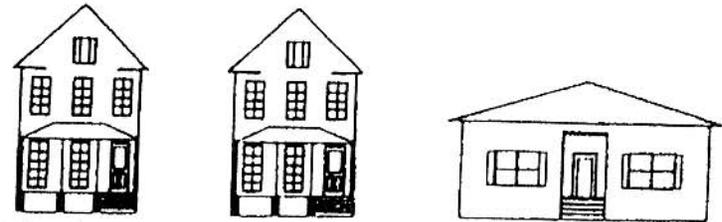
6.2.2 Directional Emphasis

Most buildings are either vertical or horizontal in their directional emphasis, which is determined by the size and placement of elements and openings on a building's front facade as well as by the building's overall shape. Directional emphasis may also be influenced by surface materials and architectural detailing.

Guideline - A new building's directional emphasis shall be consistent with dominant patterns of directional emphasis within the area of influence, if such patterns are present.



Directional Emphasis - Consistent: The two nearly identical houses shown here both exhibit horizontal directional emphasis.



Directional Emphasis - Inappropriate: Shown here are two historic houses, each with a vertical directional emphasis, and a new house that is clearly horizontal in emphasis. This new building is not sympathetic nor consistent with the established pattern of directional emphasis along this street.

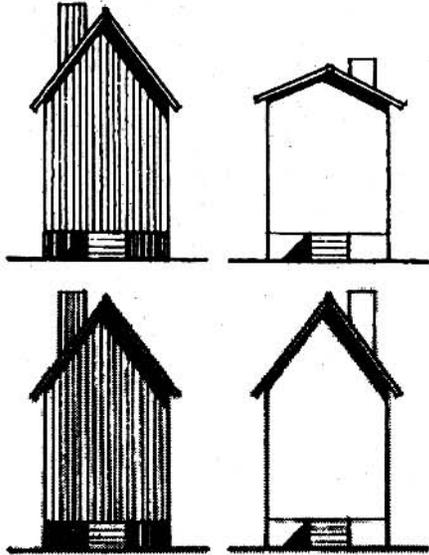
6.2.3 Shape

A building's surfaces and edges define its overall shape. This overall shape, in concert with the shapes of individual elements (such as roof pitch, porch form, and window and door openings), is important in establishing rhythms in a streetscape. Shape can also be an important element of style.

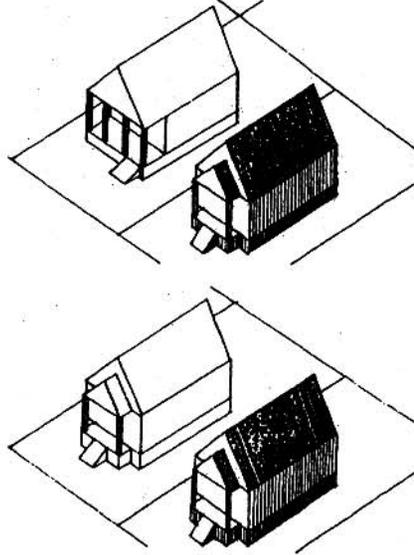
Guideline - Roof Pitch: The roof pitch of a new building shall be consistent with those of existing buildings within the area of influence, if dominant patterns are apparent.

Guideline - Porch Form: The shape and size of a new porch shall be consistent with those of existing historic buildings within the area of influence, if dominant patterns are apparent.

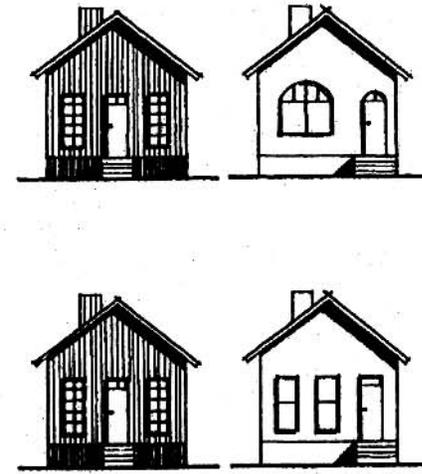
Guideline - Building Elements: The principal elements and shapes used on the front facade of a new building shall be compatible with those of existing buildings in the area of influence, if dominant patterns are apparent.



Shape - Roof Pitch - Inappropriate/Appropriate Examples: These two comparisons depict relationships between historic and new buildings in terms of roof pitch. The example on the top is that of a historic house (shaded) with a steeply-pitched roof standing next to a new building with an inappropriate shallow-pitched roof. The example on the bottom shows a more compatible roof pitch on the new building.



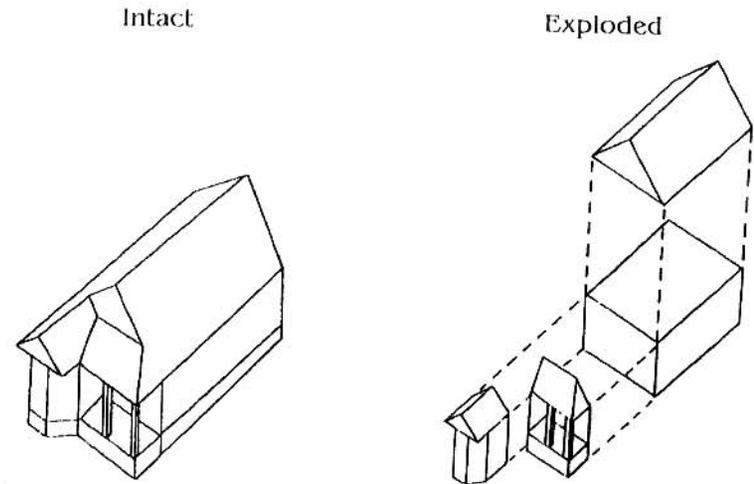
Shape - Porch Form - Inappropriate/Appropriate Examples: These two comparisons depict relationships between historic and new buildings in terms of porch form. The example on the top is that of a historic house (shaded) with an extending front gable porch standing next to a new building with an inappropriate integral porch. The example on the bottom shows a more compatible porch form on the new building.



Shape - Building Elements - Inappropriate/Appropriate Examples: These two comparisons depict relationships between historic and new buildings in terms of building elements. The example on the top is that of a historic house (shaded) with flat-arched window and door openings standing next to a new building with inappropriate round-arched window and door openings. The example on the bottom shows more compatible window and door openings on the new building.

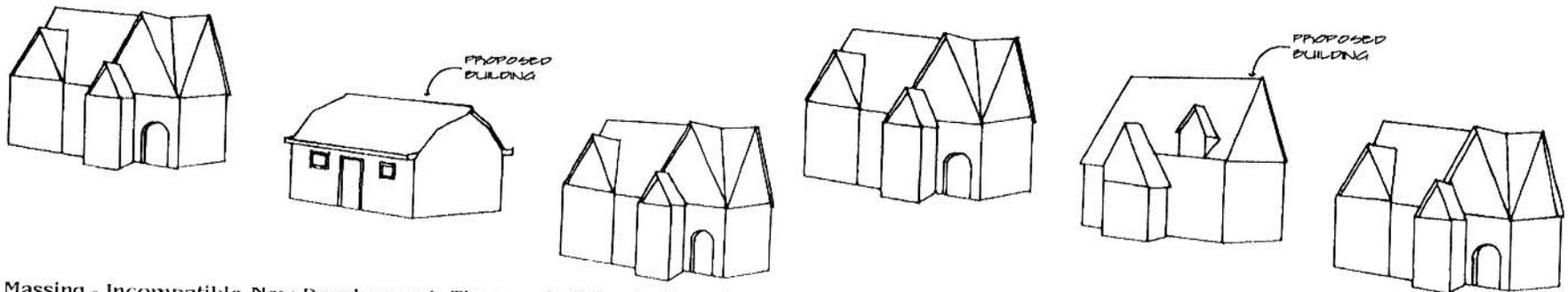
6.2.4 Massing

Massing has to do with the way in which a building's volumetric components (i.e., main body, roof, bays, overhangs, and porches) are arranged and with the relationship between solid wall surfaces and openings.



Massing: These drawings show a house "intact" and "exploded" to illustrate its various volumetric components.

Guideline - The massing of a new building shall be consistent with dominant massing patterns of existing buildings in the area of influence, if such patterns are apparent.

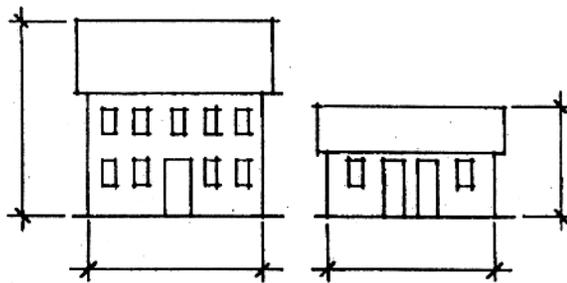


Massing - Incompatible New Development: The new building in the middle has used a massing scheme that is not compatible with the patterns established by the historic buildings to either side.

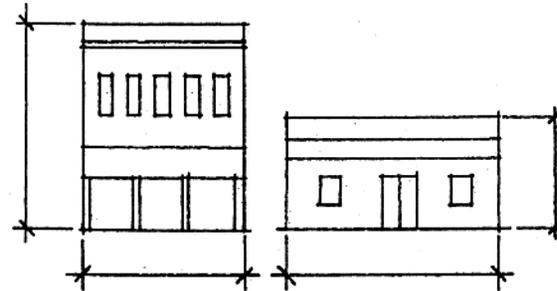
Massing - Compatible New Development: The new building in the middle has used a massing scheme that is compatible with the patterns established by the historic buildings to either side.

6.2.5 Proportion

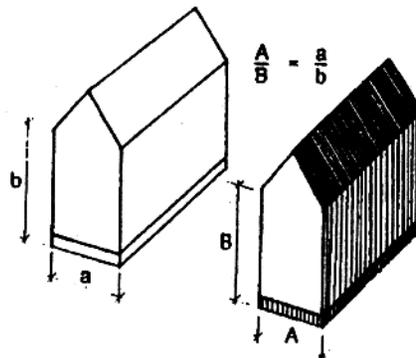
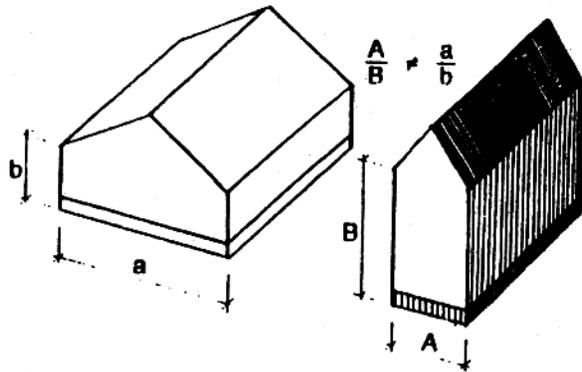
Proportion is the relationship of one dimension to another; for example, the relationship of the height to the width of a building, or the height and width of windows and doors. Individual elements of a building should be proportional to each other and the building.



Residential Proportions: The above graphic illustrates the concept of proportion using residential building dimensions.



Commercial Proportion: The above graphic illustrates the concept of proportion using commercial building dimensions.

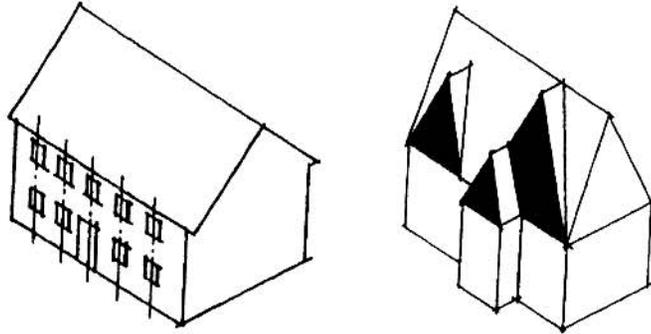


Proportion - Inappropriate/Appropriate Examples: These two comparisons depict relationships between historic and new buildings in terms of front-facade height-to-width ratio. The example on the left is that of a historic house (shaded) with a height-to-width ratio resulting in a very vertical expression standing next to a new building with a horizontal height-to-width ratio. The example on the right shows a more compatible height-to-width ratio on the new building.

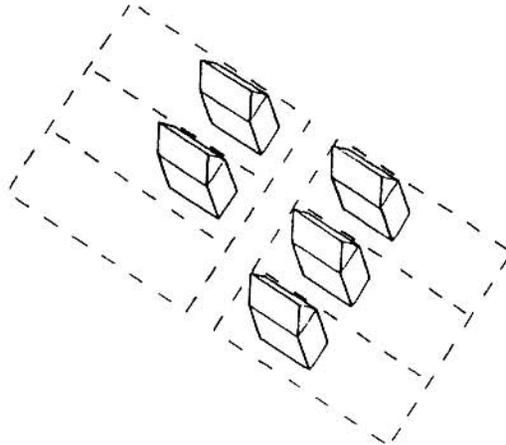
Guideline - The proportions of a new building shall be consistent with dominant patterns of proportion of existing buildings in the area of influence, if such patterns are apparent.

6.2.6 Rhythm

Rhythm is the recurring patterns of lines, shapes, forms, or colors (materials) on a building or along a streetscape. For example, the rhythm of openings on a house refers to the number and placement of windows and doors on a facade. Rhythm also occurs on the larger scale of streetscapes as created by development patterns (orientation and setback) and details of individual buildings (directional emphasis, scale, height, massing, etc.).

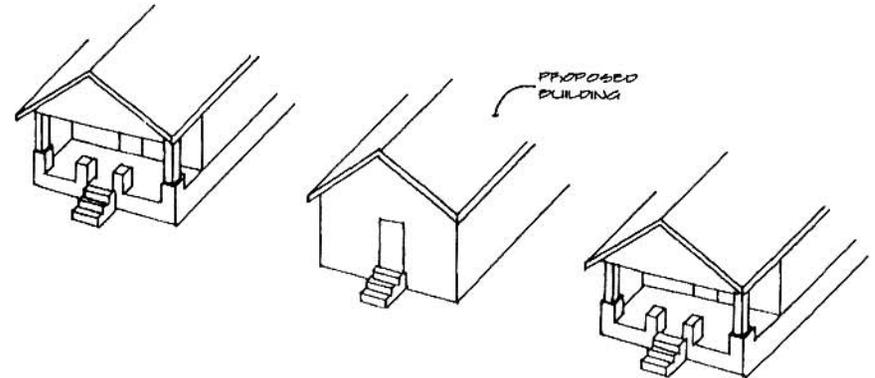


Rhythm - Symmetrical/Asymmetrical: These two houses illustrate different types of rhythms created by individual building elements. On the left is a building with a regular placement of elements creating a symmetrical facade. The building on the right has an irregular placement of elements creating an asymmetrical facade.



Rhythm - Established Setback Rhythm: These five houses have expressed a well-defined setback and placement rhythm along this street. A new building on the vacant parcel will either continue or disrupt this pattern.

Guideline - New construction in a historic area shall respect and not disrupt existing rhythmic patterns in the area of influence, if such patterns are apparent.



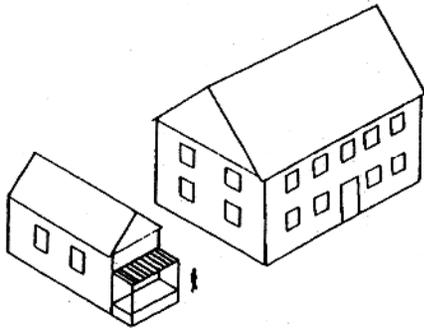
Rhythm - Inappropriate New Construction: Consistent cornice heights are one of the building elements that can create rhythm along a street by establishing a strong building line. Where this strong line exists, it is important for a new building to have a similar cornice height. The proposed building (middle) in this sketch disrupts the existing rhythm.

6.2.7 Scale/Height

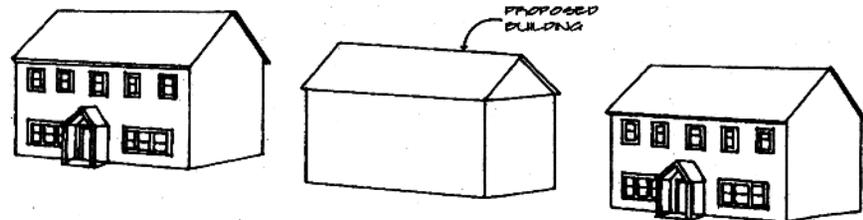
Scale refers to the apparent relationship between two entities, such as the relationship of a building's height to human height, the relationship between different buildings' heights and sizes, or the relationship between the size of an addition and the building to which it is attached. The two most important issues are (1) the relationship of new construction to historic and (2) the relationship of additions to the historic building to which they are being added.

Guideline - New construction in historic areas shall be consistent with dominant patterns of scale within the area of influence, if such patterns are present. Additions to historic buildings shall not appear to overwhelm the existing building.

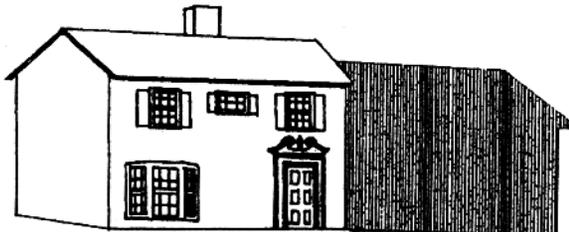
Guideline - A proposed new building shall appear to conform to the floor-to-floor heights of existing structures if there is a dominant pattern within the established area of influence.



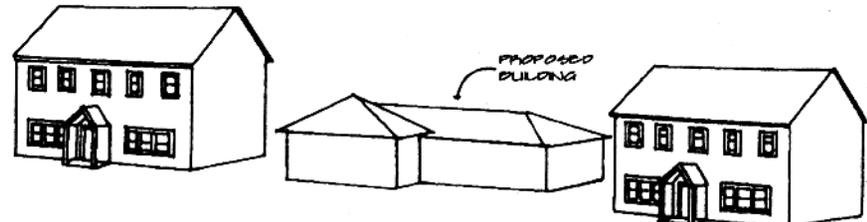
Scale/Height - Illustration of Different Scales: These buildings obviously express different scales.



Scale/Height - Appropriate New Construction: The scale of the proposed building in the middle is compatible with that of the historic buildings to either side.



Scale/Height - Inappropriate Addition: This addition (shaded) is too large and overwhelms the original historic structure. It also juts forward thus accentuating its presence.



Scale/Height - Inappropriate New Construction: The scale of the proposed building in the middle is incompatible with that of the historic buildings to either side.

6.3.2 New Construction

To be compatible with its historic environment, new construction should respect established design patterns within the area of influence, paying particular attention to the guidelines set forth in Section 6.2. Following are some additional guidelines for new construction.

Guideline - Build a new structure to the rear of a historic building, where it will have little or no impact on the streetscape. If the new building will be visible from the street, respect the established setbacks and orientations of the historic buildings in the area. Landscaping is also an important component. A concrete or brick plaza adjacent to the sidewalk is incompatible in an area dominated by grassy lawns.

Guideline - New construction shall reference predominant design characteristics that make an area distinctive in order to achieve creative and compatible design solutions that are more than just mere imitations of existing buildings.

6.3.3 Alterations To Non-Contributing Buildings Within Historic Areas

Alterations to buildings that do not contribute to the historic character of the area pose a challenge.

Guideline - Do not add false historical details to try to make a nonhistoric property fit into a historic area but make every effort to ensure that additions and alterations to the property do not detract even further from the character of the historic environment, keeping in mind the design concepts discussed in Section 6.2.

6.3 Respecting the Prevailing Character When Designing New Development

After identifying the area of influence and assessing the prevailing character of the development within that area, the next step is to begin the design of the project. Each project is unique and needs to be taken on a case-by-case basis to meet the needs of the owner while at the same time protecting the historic character of the property and area. There are some general concepts, however, that can assist with the design of the new development. Use these in tandem with the guidelines presented in Section 6.1 and 6.2.

6.3.1 Additions to Historic Buildings

Property owners considering making an addition to a historic building should ask themselves three questions:

-  *Does the proposed addition preserve significant historic materials and features?*
-  *Does the proposed addition preserve the historic character?*
-  *Does the proposed addition protect the historical significance by making a visual distinction between old and new?*

Guideline - Additions to historic buildings shall not be added to the main historic facade or facades of the building. Locate the proposed addition away from the principal public view, possibly to the rear of the building. Respect the proportions of the building to which it is being added, so the addition does not dominate its historic environment. Do not obscure character-defining features of the historic building with the addition.

Guideline - Set an additional story well back from the roof edge to ensure that the historic building's proportions and profile are not radically changed.

Sometimes historic photographs can give clues to where previous additions were constructed on the building and thus provide guidance for the location of new additions.

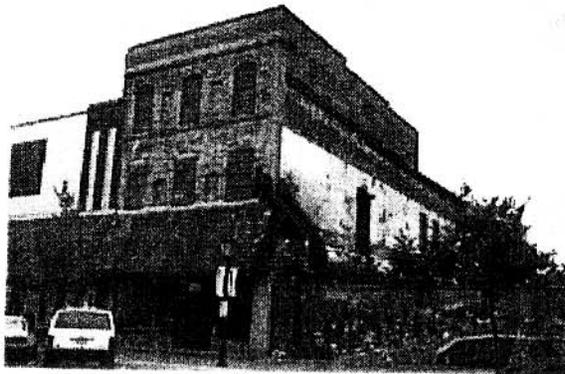
Guideline - Additions must respect the character and integrity of original buildings and should incorporate design motifs that relate it to the historic building. No matter what its design, it should be of quality workmanship and materials. The addition should be designed so that at a later date it could be removed without compromising the historic character of the building.

Guideline - While the addition should be compatible, it is acceptable and appropriate for the addition to be clearly discernible as an addition rather than appearing to be an original part of the building. Consider providing some differentiation in material, color, and/or detailing and setting additions back from the historic building's wall plane.

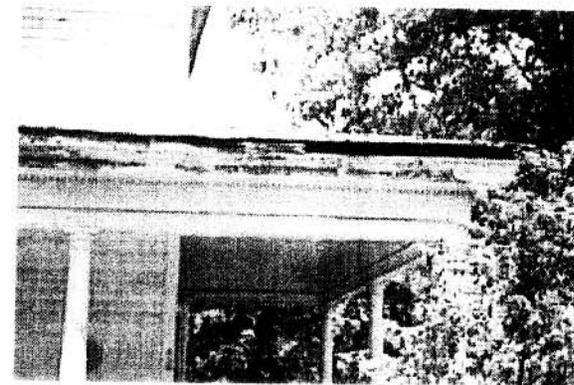
6.3.5 Demolition by Neglect

Demolition by neglect is a situation in which a building is left to deteriorate due to lack of maintenance and security. In Spartanburg, the Board of Architectural Design and Historic Review is authorized by the Historic Preservation Ordinance to monitor the condition of historic properties located in designated historic districts. If the Board determines that a historic property is being allowed to deteriorate due to neglect, the Board is authorized to encourage the owner to make sufficient repairs to arrest the deterioration. The Board may also petition the City Building Official to require the needed repairs to preserve or protect a structure. See Section 10.28 Maintenance Requirements of the Historic Preservation Ordinance.

Guideline - Minimize the occurrence of demolition by neglect through the education of property owners concerning proper methods of upkeep and preservation.



Vacant commercial building that has been neglected.



Lack of maintenance of a house's features and materials leads to deterioration.