



South Greensboro Historic District Design Guidelines

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City of Greensboro Department
of Housing and Community
Development and the
Community Partners Program of
the National Trust for Historic
Preservation

The South Greensboro Historic District Design Guidelines were developed in response to the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's Policy Statement: "Affordable Housing and Historic Preservation," adopted June 26, 1995. The policy statement was developed to provide a framework for Section 106 consultation and local historic preservation planning in communities where economic or design constraints could affect the development of affordable housing. The policy statement stresses flexibility, encourages community involvement, and emphasizes the treatment of exteriors.

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Introduction



The South Greensboro Historic District was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1992. The district's boundaries encompass parts of the Ole Asheboro and Arlington Park neighborhoods which have been undergoing revitalization as Community Development Target Areas since 1978. Located just south of downtown Greensboro and the tracks of the former North Carolina Railroad, the district is one of Greensboro's earliest suburbs. Still primarily a residential neighborhood, South Greensboro developed in a linear form along Asheboro Street (now renamed Martin Luther King, Jr., Drive). It still retains much of the urban and architectural character that distinguished it as the city's most fashionable residential neighborhood at the turn-of-the-century. Construction of Queen Anne and Italianate homes in the late 1800s was followed by Colonial Revival houses and bungalows in the twentieth century.

The character of the South Greensboro Historic District is not defined solely by its fine houses. Features such as streets with granite curbs and brick gutters, sidewalks, parks, stone retaining walls, garages, tree canopies, and a rolling topography all contribute to the neighborhood setting. These features have evolved and changed over time, but much of the early twentieth century appearance and character remains intact.

Unfortunately, some of the changes made to the historic houses themselves since the 1950s have compromised their architectural character. For example, architectural trimwork has been concealed or removed on many houses as original wood clapboards were covered in asphalt shingles or vinyl siding. On others, front porches have been enclosed or their distinctive columns and railings replaced with modern stock elements. Today, the neighborhood is committed to preserving and capitalizing on its historic architectural character as improvements are made. General guidance for preserving the historic character of these houses as they are upgraded is given in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and is further expanded by the South Greensboro Design Guidelines.

Although these design guidelines were written specifically for the South Greensboro Historic District, they are also relevant for other older Greensboro neighborhoods.

Secretary of the Interior's Rehabilitation Standards

The U. S. Department of the Interior developed ten national standards which address the rehabilitation of historic buildings. The standards describe a hierarchy of appropriate preservation treatments. That hierarchy values ongoing maintenance and protection of historic properties to minimize the need for more substantial repairs and, in turn, values repair over replacement of historic features.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards are used in reviewing rehabilitation projects for federal and state Preservation Tax Incentive programs.

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. Archaeological 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.

Purpose



These design guidelines would apply to the rehabilitation of neighborhood houses like this one in the Historic House Marketing Program.

The purpose of the South Greensboro Design Guidelines is to encourage the preservation of historic houses through the use of rehabilitation techniques that are economical yet do not sacrifice historic architectural features which the City of Greensboro Department of Housing and Community Development, the State Historic Preservation Office, and local residents have identified as being important to the neighborhood. These guidelines will be used by the City in reviewing proposed rehabilitation plans for the Historic House Marketing Program and for other federally funded projects in the South Greensboro Historic District. They may also be useful as a voluntary guide for private property owners by providing a framework for selecting the most appropriate option for repair and replacement decisions when planning a rehabilitation project.

The guidelines are intended to protect the historic character of the district. They are based on the principle that architectural features which are visible from the street are more important from a historic district standpoint and should be preserved if possible. Those features that are not as visible are less significant to the district character, so greater flexibility is allowed in terms of rehabilitation techniques. While consistent in principle with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation in advocating the preservation of historic features and materials, the guidelines emphasize flexibility on changes which will not have a strong, visible impact on the historic district and the guidelines take into account economic or design constraints as they relate to affordable housing. Fortunately, the emphasis of the guidelines on retaining and repairing building materials and features is often the least costly choice for property owners.

The guidelines are not a comprehensive checklist of all the steps involved in any rehabilitation process. Rather, they focus on the rehabilitation changes that may have a visual consequence. They also do not present a list of specific replacement options that are acceptable for all houses. Recognizing that the current condition of each house varies in terms of how extensive its rehabilitation needs are and that the significant architectural features of each house vary as well, the guidelines propose a process for tailoring a rehabilitation plan to the specific conditions and significant features of each house.

Planning Process

The guidelines call for a four step process in making decisions regarding the sensitive rehabilitation of a historic house with costs figured into those decisions. Since each rehabilitation project presents a different set of historic features and existing conditions, the process will result in a different combination of options for each project. But, the goal remains the same: the appropriate, affordable rehabilitation of a historic house in the South Greensboro Historic District.

The Four Step Process

Step #1: Identify the most historically significant features of the building—prioritize these features in terms of their visibility from the street, giving preference to the exterior of the house over its interior, and to the public, first floor interior spaces over less important interior spaces. Following this approach, it would be more important to keep historic features on the front of the house than on the back of the house. Similarly, it would be more important to save historic features in the front parlor or dining room than in less public interior spaces like a kitchen or upstairs bedroom.

Step #2: Review the ranked options for each part of the rehabilitation:

- Retain and repair historic materials or features.
- Replace to match the original materials or features as closely as possible.

OR:

- Replace the original with a compatible substitute material or feature that matches it in as many characteristics as possible.

Step #3: Weigh the quantity or extent of all work items and the related costs. For example, if only one window needs to be replaced, that presents a different situation than if all the windows must be replaced.

Step #4: Make the best overall decisions for the entire project—after considering all the options and costs—with the emphasis placed on keeping the most visible and significant historic features but with flexibility provided for less visible and less important features.

Rehabilitation Options



Most projects, like this one, will incorporate a combination of the three rehabilitation options. Original windows, porch columns with sawn brackets, and much exterior trimwork were retained and repaired. The front porch floor and ceiling were replaced to match, while compatible new porch railings and a substitute exterior siding were installed.

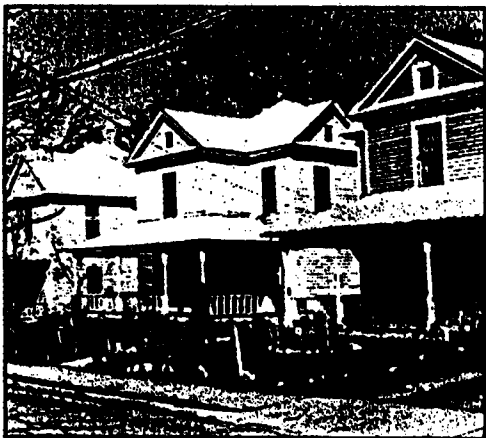
The following guidelines provide a series of ranked options to consider when repair or replacement is necessary for specific elements which are part of an overall rehabilitation. For each historic building, the most appropriate options will vary depending on which elements are most important, on the physical condition of those elements, and on the costs for various rehabilitation options. The options are ranked, like the Secretary's Standards, to favor keeping important historic features rather than replacing them. So, the first option which calls for the repair of important historic features is the most desirable from a preservation standpoint. It is the least intrusive rehabilitation choice and often—depending on existing conditions—the least expensive rehabilitation option.

Sometimes, the historic building has already been unsympathetically altered or neglected to the extent that the first option is not a viable choice. This situation triggers consideration of the second option—replace to match the historic feature or material. If option two replacement costs prove too high, then option three—replacement with a compatible substitute material or feature—should be considered.

Decisions about which option is most appropriate should recognize the flexibility the guidelines provide as they emphasize the importance of the building's street facade and are less concerned with changes to the rear. Likewise, the guidelines are more concerned with highly visible exterior changes than with less visible interior changes. Decisions about specific options should also be made with an understanding of the entire scope of the rehabilitation and what is best for the overall project.

Property owners seeking state or federal tax credits for rehabilitations of historic buildings must obtain approval of their rehabilitation plans from the State Historic Preservation Office prior to beginning any work.

Building Site and Building Exterior



Prominent front porches and repetitive setbacks of these Queen Anne houses contribute to the visual character of the district streetscape.



Hedges and mature shade trees are common amenities of many front yards in the neighborhood.

The historic character of the South Greensboro Historic District is defined not only by its fine historic houses but also by the neighborhood itself. The siting, setback, spacing, and orientation of the houses along the neighborhood streets contribute to the district character as do the granite curbs, brick gutters, street trees, retaining walls, fences, driveways, and landscaping. It is the combined visual effect of all these elements that creates the overall character of the neighborhood. Consequently, visual changes to the building sites themselves and to the street front facades of the historic houses must be thoughtfully planned and carefully considered.

If changes to the front yard are necessary, it is important to retain the original arrangement of front walkways and steps, that typically lead directly up to the front porch, and the pattern of single lane driveways, leading from the street to a garage or parking space in the rear yard. It is also important to locate new meters, lines, pipes, transformers, mechanical equipment, and communication equipment inconspicuously so that the street facade of the house is not compromised. Even larger changes such as compatible garages, storage buildings, and decks can usually be accommodated in rear yard locations without compromising the front yard or the building's street facade.

Historically, front yards in the district were sometimes bordered by stone or brick retaining walls, hedges, or—less frequently—open picket fences. Traditionally, utilitarian rear yard fences were constructed of vertical wood slats, or woven wire attached to wood posts. While privacy or safety concerns may lead to the addition of fencing in the rear yard, it is not historically appropriate to add such utilitarian fencing—especially vinyl or chain link fencing—in front yards or in highly visible side yard areas.



Craftsman style elements such as the exposed gable brackets and the wood shingles in the front gable embellish many of the early twentieth century bungalows, like this one, in the historic district.



An enclosed front porch, compromises the historic character of the house and streetscape.

Queen Anne, Italianate, and Colonial Revival style houses along with numerous Craftsman style bungalows are found throughout the South Greensboro Historic District. The size, mass, and scale of historic houses shifts within the neighborhood from large two and one-half story houses to modest one story dwellings. The roof shapes of bungalows with simple bracketed gable roofs and Queen Anne style houses with far more complex roof forms contribute more variety to the streetscape.

Although the architectural styles represented in the district are quite diverse, a prominent front porch is an almost universal feature. The size and scale of these porches contribute significantly to the overall scale and character of the neighborhood. While some porches have been altered over the years, many still retain their original features and details. Beyond the porches, corbeled brick chimneys, distinctive windows in a variety of pane configurations, exterior walls clad in wood siding, and decorative trimwork are all significant exterior building features that distinguish and differentiate houses in the district.

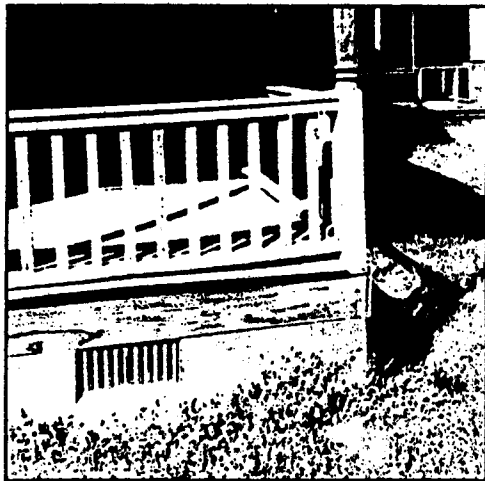
As exterior changes are planned for any house, it is important to identify the most significant exterior features for that specific house. In turn, as the options are weighed and tradeoffs considered, compromises to those features should be avoided. Sometimes, earlier changes may have concealed or eliminated distinctive exterior features. For example, a front gable with wood shingles may have been covered with vinyl siding or a front porch enclosed to make another room. In these cases, reversing the earlier change as part of a more sympathetic rehabilitation may warrant serious consideration.

The guidelines that follow address various elements of the building exterior. But, it is important to relate the options selected for the individual exterior elements back to the overall appearance of the building from the street and, in turn, the visual impact of the selected option on the neighborhood's historic character.

Foundations, Chimneys & Steps: Rehabilitation Options



Moisture damage and settlement have caused some deterioration of this foundation wall. The recommended repair will require resetting some brickwork and repointing all loose mortar joints.



This economical, brick veneer replacement foundation matches the height and bond pattern of the original brick foundation while new vents improve air flow in the crawl space.

Brick foundations, chimneys, and front steps are found throughout the South Greensboro Historic District. Other distinctive masonry features of some historic homes include stone retaining walls, granite front steps, brick porch piers, and massive stone or brick porch column bases.

1. Retain and repair significant historic masonry foundations, chimneys, and exterior steps—including their materials and features.

Repointing is generally the best method of repairing deteriorated brickwork. Correct repointing requires the removal of loose mortar and replacement with new mortar to match the original in composition, color, strength, and texture. Masonry coatings, such as water repellents or concrete parging, are usually poor substitutes for repointing and repair of historic masonry. They should only be considered if traditional methods are not effective. From a preservation and maintenance standpoint, it is best not to paint unpainted exterior masonry. If it was already painted, repaint as needed in colors compatible with the original brick or stone.

2. If all or parts of historic foundations, chimneys, or steps are missing or too deteriorated to repair, remove any severely deteriorated masonry and replace to match the original as closely as possible.

Brick remains a popular and readily available material making in kind replacement of historic brick features quite feasible in many cases; however, duplication of decorative treatments such as corbeling requires an experienced mason.

3. If Option #2 proves too costly, consider replacing missing or severely deteriorated historic masonry foundations, chimneys, or steps with a compatible new feature that matches as many characteristics of the original masonry feature as possible.

It is especially important to approximate the appearance of highly visible masonry features—such as front steps, front porch piers, half-columns, and prominent chimneys—if they require replacement.

Porches & Entrances: Rehabilitation Options



This porch rehabilitation involved various options: the turned columns, cornice, and beaded board ceiling were repaired, the floor was replaced, and only a single missing bracket was special ordered.



To save costs, compatible replacement railings will be used between the original porch columns which were repaired and stripped of lead paint.

Front porches are the most prominent features of many houses in the South Greensboro Historic District. Whether they are highly decorative Victorian or simpler bungalow porches, they contribute in important ways to the district's historic streetscapes. Given their prominence, front porches should not be enclosed to create interior rooms.

1. Retain and repair significant historic porches and entrances—including their materials, features, and details.

Every effort should be made to retain and repair distinctive porch columns, brackets, spindles, and railings. Typically, the repair of tongue and groove porch flooring and beaded board ceilings includes selective replacement of deteriorated sections. Since porches and entrances are especially vulnerable to sun and rain, caulking exposed joinery and keeping a sound coat of paint on all wooden porch features is critical to preserving them. Deteriorated lead paint on porches requires additional precautions and procedures during rehabilitation—the appendix includes more on lead paint.

2. If all or parts of a historic porch or entrance are missing or too deteriorated to repair, remove any severely deteriorated components and replace to match the original as closely as possible.

While custom millwork can duplicate even the most ornate porch feature, often stock items can be slightly modified or combined to match railings and columns.

3. If Option #2 proves too costly, consider replacing a missing or severely deteriorated historic porch or entrance component with a compatible substitute that matches as many characteristics of the original as possible.

It is best to replace any original wood porch features requiring replacement with wood features. For beaded board ceilings, plywood panels with a compatible surface pattern would be a better substitute material than vinyl. If replacing railings, columns, or decorative trim with either salvaged or new stock features, it is especially important to approximate the size and scale of the original.

Exterior Walls: Rehabilitation Options



Small sections of deteriorated wood siding were replaced in kind and the original siding was stripped of lead paint before repainting this house.



Here, deteriorated wood clapboards were replaced with fiber-reinforced cement siding to match their size and spacing. The wood trim was retained.

Most houses in the district are frame structures with the original wood clapboards still in place. Sometimes, wood shingles were used in combination with the clapboards to highlight gables ends or upper wall areas. Over the years, many of these wood clad houses have been covered over with asphalt or asbestos shingles, aluminum siding, or vinyl siding. These coverings compromise the appearance of a historic house by concealing original materials, details, and texture. For this reason, if a historic houses still retains its original wood siding, covering the original siding with vinyl or other siding materials is not recommended.

- 1. Retain and repair significant historic exterior walls—including their materials and features. If original siding has been covered with substitute siding, remove the substitute siding and repair the original siding.**

Wood surfaces can last indefinitely if they are kept painted and free of excessive moisture. If a house has been neglected for a number of years, selective replacement of deteriorated clapboards and extensive preparation of the siding before repainting may be necessary. Similar repairs and preparation should be anticipated if the original siding is uncovered during rehabilitation. The presence of deteriorated lead paint on exterior walls requires additional precautions and procedures during rehabilitation to ensure a lead-safe site and building. The appendix includes more information on lead paint.
- 2. If all or parts of the historic exterior walls are missing or too deteriorated to repair, remove any severely deteriorated components and replace them to match the original as closely as possible.**

This option would normally involve installing new wood clapboards that match the original in size, spacing, texture, and edge detail. Similarly, any wall area covered in wood shingles would be replaced with matching shingles. A variety of stock wood siding and shingle choices are readily available so custom millwork is not usually required to match original materials.



The wood clapboards on this house had been covered by asphalt shingles earlier. Vinyl siding was installed over the asphalt shingles, but the wood shingles in the front gable and the original trimwork were retained and repaired.



The wood clapboards on this house had been covered first in asphalt shingles and then vinyl siding. Since the vinyl siding was intact except for the small area seen on the front wall, the vinyl was repaired and retained.

3. If Option #2 proves too costly, consider the following treatments for missing or severely deteriorated historic exterior wall materials:

- Replace them with a compatible substitute material that matches as many characteristics of the original as possible **OR**
- Cover the existing materials with a compatible substitute material that matches as many characteristics of the original as possible **OR**
- If the original siding is already covered with a substitute siding that is intact, retain the substitute cladding and repair as necessary.

The selection of which treatment is best for a specific house will depend on the extent of repair or replacement that is necessary and the corresponding costs. For example, retaining an earlier exterior covering materials may be the best approach if it is intact and there are other more immediate rehabilitation needs.

If selecting a replacement siding, it is especially important to consider how closely it matches the original siding in terms of the siding's exposed width, texture, and edge detail. In addition, it is important to consider how closely the replacement siding would approximate the relationship of the original siding to adjacent trimwork.

If covering original siding, the same visual considerations of approximating the siding's exposed width, texture, and edge detail apply. In addition, it is important to install the substitute material properly and not to compromise the historic character of the building by covering architectural trimwork and areas clad in wood shingles. In fact, it may be necessary to furr out existing casings, cornerboards, and other exterior trimwork in order to maintain the relationship of trimwork to the siding. This customizing of the installation is critical to properly covering original siding. One advantage of covering versus replacing historic siding is that the treatment is reversible—at a later date, the substitute material may be removed and the original siding exposed.

Exterior Trimwork: Rehabilitation Options



Projecting brackets and exposed rafters like those found on this bungalow are distinctive exterior trimwork features that should be retained.



When vinyl siding was installed, this porch pilaster was left exposed—although the added depth of the new siding partially conceals it.

Cornerboards, window and door casings, cornice moldings, brackets, skirtboards, and pilasters are examples of exterior trimwork that add ornament and stylistic details to historic buildings. Unfortunately, as many houses were covered with substitute sidings, the exterior trimwork was often removed or covered as well. Concealing or eliminating decorative trimwork is not recommended.

- 1. Retain and repair significant historic exterior trimwork—including their materials and features. If original trimwork is covered over with substitute materials, remove the substitute and repair the original trimwork.**

Routine maintenance of wood trim involves preventing moisture infiltration by sealing exposed joints and maintaining a sound paint coating. Deteriorated lead paint on trimwork requires additional precautions and procedures during rehabilitation. The appendix provides more information on lead paint.

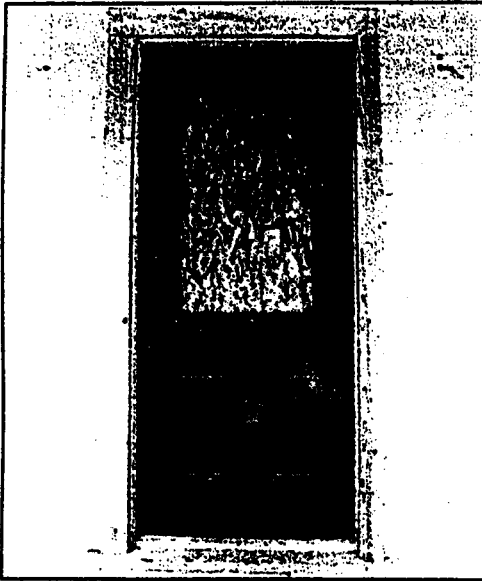
- 2. If all or parts of the historic exterior trimwork are missing or too deteriorated to repair, remove any severely deteriorated components and replace them to match the original as closely as possible.**

Historic wood trimwork can often be duplicated with readily available stock trim—sometimes slightly modified. In other cases, more costly custom millwork may be warranted.

- 3. If Option #2 proves too costly, consider replacing missing or severely deteriorated historic exterior trimwork with a compatible replacement that matches as many characteristics of the original as possible OR if the original trimwork is covered over with an intact substitute material, consider retaining the substitute material and repairing as necessary.**

Replacement trimwork should closely match the original, especially in dimension. A simplified or similar stock version of the original can often provide a compatible substitution.

Exterior Doors: Rehabilitation Options



This compatible replacement front door is a salvaged wood door (installed, but not yet reglazed).



This readily available, new wood door replaced a deteriorated front door. It is a compatible replacement door for many houses in the district.

The front doors of historic houses are usually consistent with the architectural style of the house. Within the district, solid wood doors with clear glazing above a lower paneled area are quite typical.

1. Retain and repair significant historic doors—including their materials and features.

Historic doors are generally more sturdy than contemporary hollow core wood or steel doors. Also, they are often oversized compared to the standard exterior door sizes readily available today, making their repair rather than replacement even more preferable. Often, the addition of a deadbolt lock and exterior lighting can enhance the security a historic door provides. From an energy efficiency viewpoint, the addition of storm doors in compatible styles and colors may be desirable; however, studies show that storm windows reduce energy bills more dramatically than the addition of storm doors. Installing weatherstripping, recaulking exposed joinery, and maintaining a sound paint film are typical ways an original door is upgraded. Deteriorated lead paint on exterior doors requires additional precautions and steps during rehabilitation. See the appendix for more information on lead paint.

2. If a historic door is missing or too deteriorated to repair, replace to match the original as closely as possible.

This option usually requires having a new door custom-made to match the original.

3. If Option #2 proves too costly, consider replacing a missing or severely deteriorated historic door with a compatible new or salvaged door that matches as many characteristics of the original as possible.

Stock wood doors are readily available in a variety of sizes and configurations. In selecting a replacement door, it is important to closely approximate the overall dimensions of the original door so that the door jamb and casings do not have to be replaced as well.

Windows: Rehabilitation Options



These paired arched windows are so distinctive, any replacements would have to be custom built.



The doublehung wood windows on this house were retained and repaired during rehabilitation and low-profile operable storm windows were properly installed to increase energy efficiency.

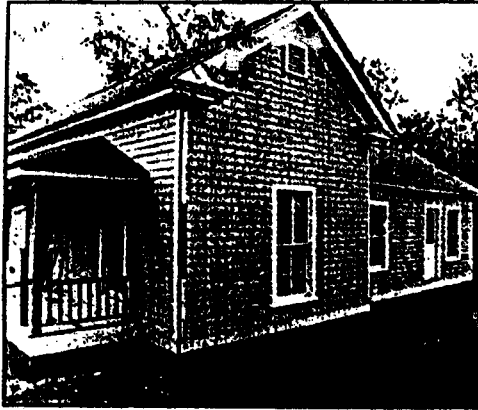
Doublehung wood windows in a variety of pane configurations punctuate the facades of houses throughout the historic district. Stained glass and distinctive gable windows embellish many Victorian houses in the neighborhood. Given their visual prominence, every effort should be made to save and maintain historic windows.

1. Retain and repair significant historic window sash and frames—including their materials and features.

Wood windows require routine recaulking and repainting to prevent deterioration. Proper maintenance and weatherstripping can improve the energy efficiency of existing windows as can the installation of storm windows—select narrow profile storm windows, in a compatible color, sized to fit the full opening and divided to align with existing sash. The presence of deteriorated lead paint on historic windows—especially the friction surfaces—requires additional precautions and procedures during rehabilitation to ensure a lead-safe site and building. The appendix provides more information on lead paint.

2. If all or parts of a historic window are missing or too deteriorated to repair, remove any severely deteriorated components and replace them to match the original as closely as possible.

If neglect has seriously deteriorated a historic window on the street facade or a visible side facade, it is best to replace it with the same size window that matches the original as closely as possible. Typically, this would require a custom built wood replacement unit. When possible, it is preferable to replace only the sash and to retain the existing casing, trim, and framing.



On this cottage, the original wood windows, with their 2 over 2 sash configuration, were retained and repaired. Stock doublehung wood window units with the same sash division replaced deteriorated windows on the less visible rear addition.



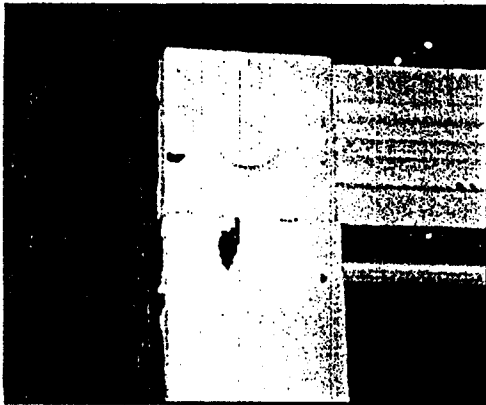
This stock double-glazed wood window replaced an original 2 over 2 sash. The casing was also replaced with a wider trim piece to accommodate the slightly narrower width of the new window.

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- 3.** If Option #2 proves too costly, consider replacing a missing or severely deteriorated historic window with a compatible substitute window that matches the overall size and as many other characteristics of the original as possible. Often a stock wood window that closely approximates the size of the original window and matches most of its characteristics can be found. If tradeoffs are made, it is more important to match the materials and overall dimensions of the window than the pane subdivision of the sash. Only wood replacement windows are appropriate for locations that are visible from the street. In less prominent locations a deteriorated wood sash might be replaced with a vinyl sash unit of similar size and design.

Building Interior



Many historic interiors have been through a series of unsympathetic alterations like this front hall. Often, distinctive original features—such as the bull's eye corner block and casing (below)—are still intact and, when preserved, add character and charm to the rehabilitated interior.



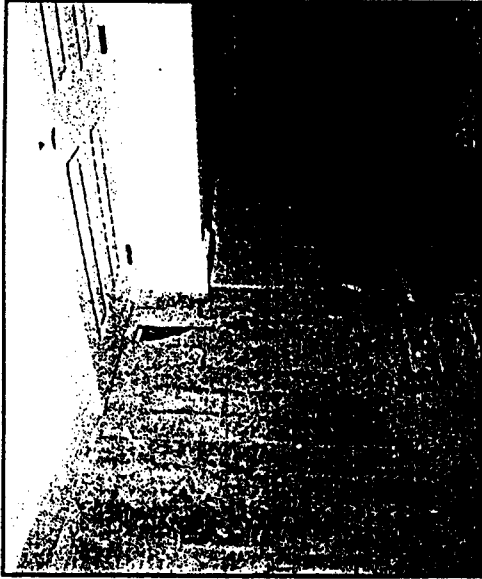
Decorative moldings, plaster walls, hardwood floors, large windows, spacious parlors, high ceilings, tile-faced fireplaces, and decorative mantels are found in many house interiors throughout the historic district. While interior changes are obviously less visible and consequently less important in preserving the overall character of the historic district, it is still important to carefully plan the interior rehabilitation.

Interior changes should be designed so that the most public and visible interior spaces are not compromised. For example, the front hall and parlor are principal public interior spaces that warrant special attention. Secondary spaces, like bedrooms, kitchens, and bathrooms, are less public and generally less significant to preserve. These design guidelines provide for more flexibility in considering interior changes—especially to such secondary spaces. Many times, historic interiors require additional closets and bathrooms as well as updated and enlarged kitchens to accommodate contemporary lifestyles. In planning such changes look for ways to incorporate them into secondary spaces and consider their impact on the original floorplan and any special historic features.

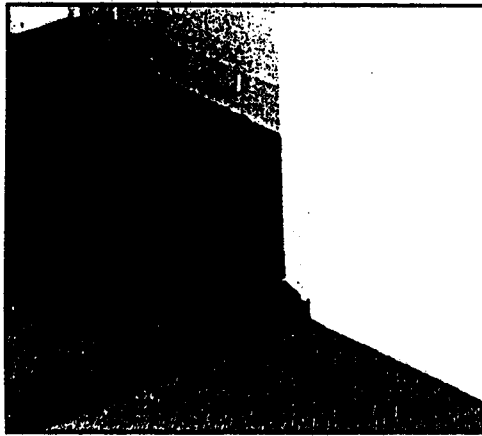
The full rehabilitation of a historic building includes many upgrades that can have visual consequences. It is important to install new building systems—including plumbing lines, electrical service, and mechanical systems—with care so that alterations to the historic house are minimized and its character-defining interior spaces and features are not compromised.

For the Historic House Marketing Program, the City of Greensboro will limit its review of interior changes to those most public, principal interior spaces that are visible from the street. But, the guidelines that follow will provide a voluntary guide for anyone involved in the rehabilitation of a historic interior. The guidelines address various elements of the building interior separately. However, it is important to relate the options selected for the individual interior elements back to the total interior rehabilitation and the overall impact on any significant interior spaces.

Floors: Rehabilitation Options



In this rehabilitation, the hardwood floors in the front hall (foreground) will be repaired and refinished, while other damaged wood floors were replaced by new subflooring and will be carpeted.



New carpeting was added over the existing wood floors and the raised wooden thresholds were left exposed in this rehabilitation.

Hardwood floors, considered an asset in any home, are found in most houses within the South Greensboro Historic District. Often, over time, they were covered by linoleum, carpet, or vinyl tiles.

1. Retain and repair historic floors—including their materials and features—in significant interior spaces.

If the original wood floor is generally in good condition, it may be worth the time and effort to repair and refinish it—especially for the most public first floor spaces. Small sections of damaged floorboards can be replaced with matching new boards or sections salvaged from an attic, closet, or secondary space. Occasionally, wood floors were painted. Deteriorated lead paint on floor surfaces requires additional precautions and procedures during a rehabilitation. More information on lead paint can be found in the appendix.

2. If all or parts of a historic floor are missing or too deteriorated to repair, remove any severely deteriorated flooring and replace to match the original as closely as possible.

Tongue and groove wood flooring is still readily available for in kind replacement.

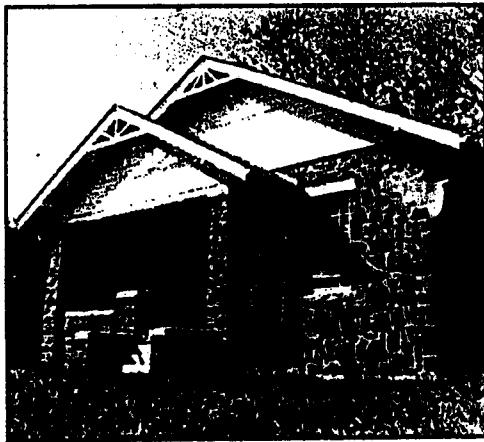
3. If Option #2 proves too costly, consider replacing missing or severely deteriorated historic flooring with a compatible substitute material that matches as many characteristics of the original as possible OR retain the original floor and cover it with new flooring.

Installing carpet over wood floors is one solution to concealing any poorly patched areas while keeping open the possibility of repairing and refinishing the wood in the future. In utilitarian spaces, like kitchens and bathrooms, adding a resilient floor covering, such as vinyl, may be a more desirable substitute for wood flooring from a maintenance standpoint.

Roofs: Rehabilitation Options



The complexity of this significant roof with its multiple gables, turret, and corbeled chimneys makes it vulnerable to leaks and water damage. Routine inspections and cyclical maintenance are important in preserving prominent roofs like this in the neighborhood.



The decorative trimwork in the simple roof gables of this modest bungalow add a great deal of architectural interest to its street facade.

Simple hip and gable roofs contrast with more complex, and irregular Victorian roof forms within the South Greensboro Historic District. Historic features found on these roofs include dormers, chimneys, turrets, exposed brackets, and a variety of soffit details. While the original roofing shingles on some of these houses may have been pressed metal or wood shingles, those surfaces have generally been replaced with asphalt or composition shingles over the years.

1. Retain and repair original roofs and significant historic roof features including chimneys, dormers, cornices, and brackets.

Inspecting a roof regularly for deterioration and replacing worn shingles promptly will prevent more substantial water damage to the structure and interior. Beyond maintaining a sound roof surface, keeping moisture from penetrating the roof planes requires routine cleaning of gutters and downspouts and maintenance of flashing around chimneys and beneath roof valleys.

2. If all or parts of a historic roof or roof features are missing or too deteriorated to repair, remove any severely deteriorated components and replace to match the original as closely as possible.

Depending on the specific feature, this option may involve a variety of work from rebuilding a distinctive chimney to replacing decorative cornice brackets.

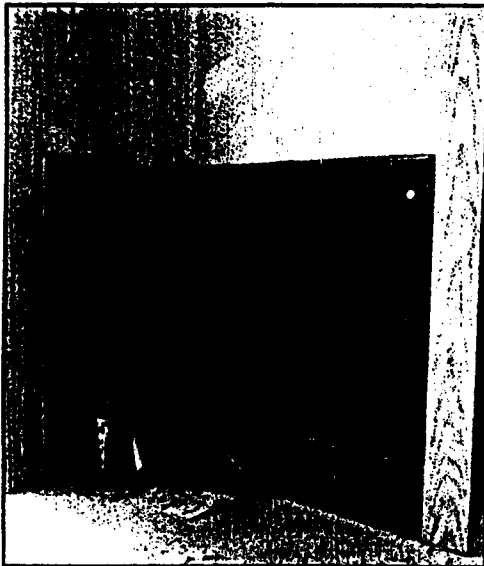
3. If Option #2 proves too costly, consider replacing a missing or severely deteriorated historic roof component with a compatible substitute component that matches as many characteristics of the original as possible.

While the preservation of distinctive dormers, prominent chimneys, built-in gutters, or stylistic cornice and soffit details is important, deteriorated roof features that are not significant to the overall historic character of the building—including flat fascia boards, downspouts, gutters, and minor, utilitarian chimneys—may be replaced with compatible, contemporary features, or even eliminated.

Interior Walls: Rehabilitation Options



A torn sheet of plywood paneling reveals the original plaster walls. Since the plaster is quite damaged, it will be replaced with gypsum board.



A new beaded board wainscot below gypsum board approximates the original wall's appearance.

The most typical original interior wall finish in the South Greensboro Historic District is smooth plaster—usually painted but sometimes papered. Interior walls and wainscots of beaded board or wood paneling are also found in many of the historic homes.

1. Retain and repair historic walls—including their materials and features—in significant interior spaces.

If plaster walls are basically sound with only small areas of deterioration, then patching those areas with new plaster is recommended. The presence of deteriorated lead paint on interior walls requires precautions and additional procedures during rehabilitation. The appendix provides more information on lead paint.

2. If all or parts of a historic interior wall are missing or too deteriorated to repair, remove any severely deteriorated sections and replace to match the original as closely as possible.

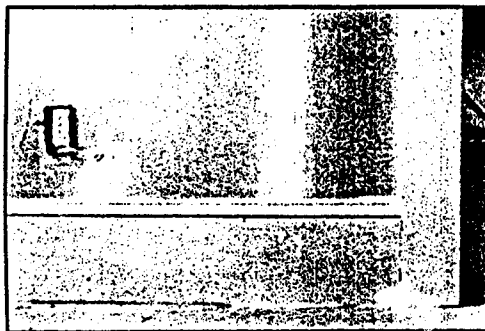
Plaster and beaded board or paneled wall surfaces can all be replaced in kind. If replacing the wall material, it is especially important to retain the original relationship of the wall plane to surrounding trimwork.

3. If Option #2 proves too costly, consider replacing a missing or severely deteriorated wall surface with a compatible substitute material that matches as many characteristics of the original as possible; OR retain the original wall and cover it over with a compatible substitute material; OR, if the original wall is covered with an intact substitute material, consider retaining the substitute material. Contemporary gypsum board is a compatible substitute for smooth plaster walls. However, since gypsum board is not as thick as a three-coat plaster finish, care must be taken to install the new material so that the relationship of the wall plane to the surrounding trimwork remains the same.

Interior Trimwork: Rehabilitation Options



Distinctive moldings and corner blocks like these should be preserved when possible.



This replacement baseboard matches the height and approximates the cap detail of the original.

Distinctive baseboards, window and door casings, corner blocks, chair rails, picture moldings, and crown moldings are all examples of interior trimwork that add visual character and stylistic details to historic interior spaces.

1. Retain and repair historic interior trimwork—including its materials and features—in significant interior spaces.

Historic trimwork is often more detailed and three dimensional than contemporary moldings—making its preservation desirable. The presence of deteriorated lead paint on interior trimwork requires additional precautions and procedures during rehabilitation. Information on lead paint is provided in the appendix.

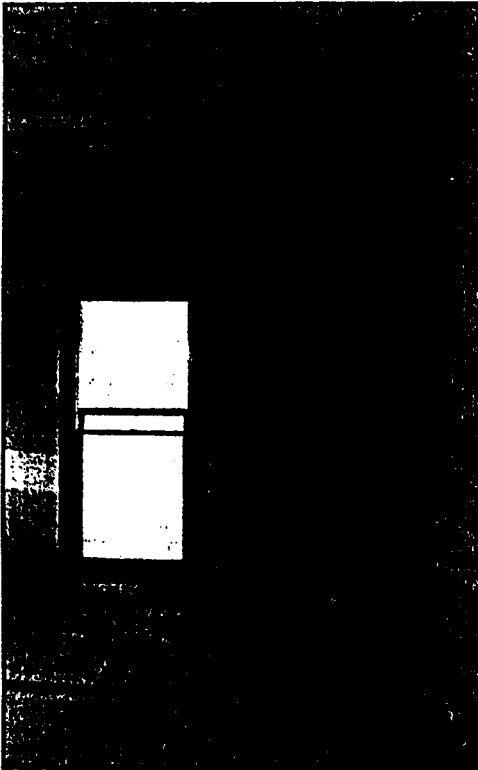
2. If all or parts of historic interior trimwork are missing or too deteriorated to repair, remove any severely deteriorated components and replace to match the original as closely as possible.

Sometimes a section of distinctive trimwork in a significant interior space can be replaced with matching trimwork salvaged from a closet or secondary space within the house. Other times, it may be duplicated out of available stock moldings or even custom milled.

3. If Option #2 proves too costly, consider replacing missing or severely deteriorated trimwork with a compatible substitute component that matches as many characteristics of the original as possible.

In selecting replacement trimwork, it is important to look for moldings that match the overall dimensions of the original trim and have a similar projection from the wall plane.

Ceilings: Rehabilitation Options



A deteriorated plaster ceiling in this front parlor is replaced with a gypsum board ceiling that maintains the gracious height and smooth texture of the original.

High ceilings often contribute to the gracious character of the primary rooms of historic houses in the South Greensboro Historic District. The ceilings are typically finished in smooth plaster, but board ceilings are also found, particularly in secondary spaces such as kitchens, enclosed back porches, and bathrooms. Where leaks or structural problems damaged original plaster ceilings, they were often covered by other materials, such as acoustical tiles, sheetrock, and homosote or plywood panels. Occasionally, the ceiling height has been lowered in the process.

- 1. Retain and repair historic ceilings—including their materials and height—in significant interior spaces.**
Retaining the original ceiling height and intact plaster or board ceilings in primary interior spaces is desirable both to retain the historic interior and to reduce rehabilitation costs. If the plaster is in good shape with limited cracks or holes, patching the damaged areas may be all that is necessary. Deteriorated lead paint on ceilings requires additional procedures—the appendix gives more information on lead paint.
- 2. If all or parts of a historic ceiling are missing or too deteriorated to repair, remove any deteriorated areas and replace to match the original as closely as possible.**
Both plaster and wood board ceilings can be replaced to match their original finish.
- 3. If Option #2 proves too costly, consider replacing a missing or severely deteriorated historic ceiling with a compatible substitute material that matches as many characteristics of the original as possible OR retain the original ceiling and cover it with a compatible substitute material. In installing the new material, minimize any change to the original ceiling height.**
It is important to install new heating and cooling systems so that the ceilings in significant rooms are not lowered. Gypsum board is often used as a compatible replacement for deteriorated plaster ceilings. Given the smooth appearance of most historic plaster ceilings, adding a sprayed-on textured ceiling finish is not a compatible choice for an important interior space. Textured ceilings are also more difficult to clean and repaint.

Interior Doors: Rehabilitation Options



Stock six panel wood doors are a compatible interior door replacement choice for many homes in the district. Here one is used to replace a missing door from the front hall into the parlor.

The panel configuration of wooden interior doors and the decorative casings that surround their openings contribute to the character of many historic interiors. Some grander houses in the South Greensboro Historic District even contain distinctive pocket doors, spanning wide openings to the hall from principal, front rooms.

1. Retain and repair historic interior doors and frames—including their materials and features—in significant interior spaces.

Retaining intact historic interior doors and their casings is always desirable from an economic as well as a preservation perspective. The presence of deteriorated lead paint on interior doors—especially the friction surfaces—requires additional precautions and procedures during rehabilitation to ensure a lead-safe building. See the appendix for additional information on lead paint.

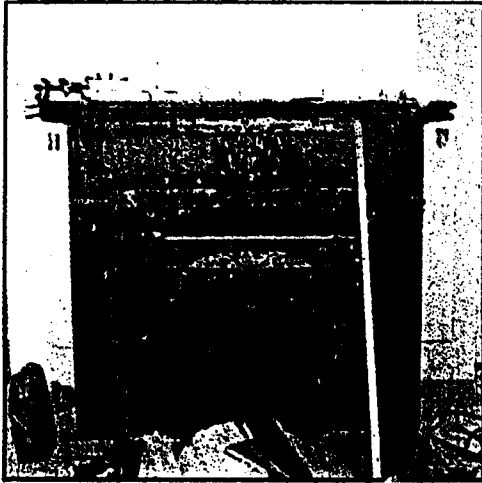
2. If all or parts of a historic door and frame are missing or too deteriorated to repair, remove any severely deteriorated components and replace to match the original.

If a door to a principal interior space is missing or damaged, a matching door from a less visible location in the same house may be the best replacement choice. Some times, a matching salvaged door can be found.

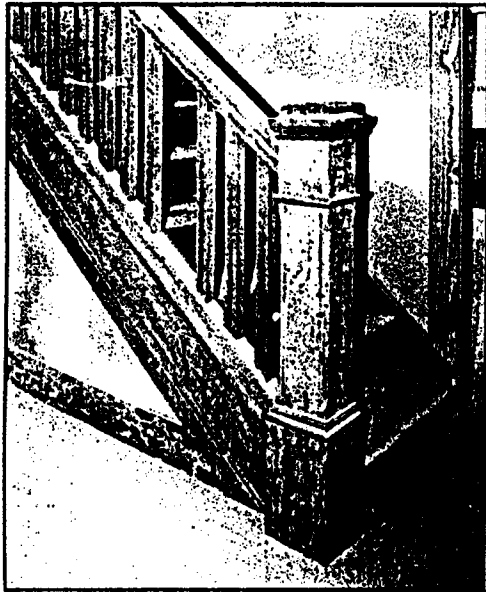
3. If Option #2 proves too costly, consider replacing a missing or severely deteriorated historic door with a compatible substitute door that matches as many characteristics of the original as possible.

Interior wood doors in a variety of panel configurations are readily available today. While the dimensions of a historic door may vary from contemporary standard sizes, minor differences can sometimes be accommodated by trimming the new door or modifying the casing opening. Plain, hollow core doors with no panel divisions are not appropriate replacements for doors in principal, front rooms as they are not compatible with the historic character of houses in the district.

Interior Features: Rehabilitation Options



This wooden mantel was reinstalled in a front parlor after it was stripped of lead paint.



This front hall staircase, including its distinctive woodwork, is being repaired and retained as part of a total rehabilitation.

Significant interior features, such as stairways, fireplaces, mantels, and built-in cabinetry, add character and distinction to many of the houses in the South Greensboro Historic District. During rehabilitation, it is important to save such distinctive features—particularly if they are found in the more public interior spaces. For example, tile-faced fireplaces with decorative wood mantels are desirable to retain even if they are not longer functional because they give so much visual character to a front parlor or dining room. In an upstairs bedroom, however, the need for additional wall space may outweigh retaining a fireplace.

- 1. Retain and repair distinctive historic interior features, such as stairways, fireplaces, mantels, and built-in cabinetry, in significant interior spaces.**
Preserving distinctive interior features that have deteriorated lead paint surfaces requires additional precautions and procedures during rehabilitation to ensure a lead-safe building. See the appendix for additional information on lead paint.
- 2. If all or parts of a historic interior feature are missing or too deteriorated to repair, remove any severely deteriorated components and replace to match the original.**
For interior features, following Option #2 would probably require custom millwork.
- 3. If Option #2 proves too costly, consider replacing a missing or severely deteriorated historic interior feature with a compatible substitute feature that matches as many characteristics of the original as possible.**
If an original newel post or stair railing is missing, a simpler but stylistically compatible, stock replacement might be selected. Likewise, a missing wooden mantel might be replaced with a simple wooden mantel shelf.

Appendix: Resources

Local Resources

To obtain information on the application of these guidelines and the Historic House Marketing Program contact:

Department of Housing and Community Development, City of Greensboro
Room 315 Melvin Municipal Building
300 West Washington Street
Post Office Box 3136
Greensboro, NC 27402-3136

Telephone: 910/373-2349

State Resources

State Historic Preservation Office
North Carolina Division of Archives and History
109 East Jones Street
Raleigh, NC 27601-2807

For information on the National Register program, contact the Survey and Planning Branch at 919/733-6545.

To obtain technical restoration assistance and information on preservation tax credits, contact the Restoration Branch at 919/733-6547.

National Resources

Community Partners
National Trust for Historic Preservation
1785 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20036

For information on the Community Partners Program, call 202/588-6000.

Appendix: Lead-based Paint



Deteriorated lead-based paint on this front porch presents a triple health hazard. Lead dust from the paint could be inhaled by someone scraping and repairing the porch surfaces, a child could ingest lead paint if chewing on the railing, and falling paint chips can contaminate the surrounding yard.

Lead-based paint was commonly used in buildings well into the twentieth century. Consequently, most buildings constructed prior to 1950 contain it. Although its use has been prohibited since the 1970s, the presence of lead based paint in most houses—including historic houses—is an ongoing concern. Lead is a toxic substance, which poisons the human body and attacks both its organs and systems. Because lead poisoning is especially harmful to the early development of the brain and nervous system, the critical health concern with lead is for children under the age of six and pregnant women. Lead dust is the source of almost all lead poisoning. This dust is transmitted in two ways: inhalation and ingestion. Inhalation, the breathing in of lead dust, is the primary way that adults are poisoned. Ingestion, the eating of lead dust, is the main way that children are poisoned.

Although the presence of lead-based paint by itself does not constitute a health hazard, there are several ways lead from paint can become a hazard: lead in surface dust, lead in adjacent soil, surfaces with lead-based paint whose condition is a source of lead dust, and surfaces with lead-based paint that are accessible and chewable. There are three key ways in which the condition of lead-based paint creates one of these hazards. The first is if it is applied to an impact surface. For example, a painted baseboard or door surround may be struck repeatedly during routine occupancy releasing lead dust into the air. The second means is through friction: an operable door or window that is coated in lead-based paint may discharge lead dust each time the painted surface rubs against another surface as it is open or shut. The third source of lead dust is from surfaces with deteriorated lead paint. As the paint flakes off, lead particles are emitted into the air or soil.

The two basic approaches to mitigating lead paint hazards are 1) eliminating the lead paint source through complete abatement or 2) taking steps to control the hazard and create a lead-safe building or site. Different abatement steps include removal of the painted component, stripping the paint from the surface, enclosing the surface, or encapsulating the surface with a new coating. Measures recommended to ensure a lead-safe environment include controlling all dust through specialized cleaning procedures and ongoing maintenance, maintaining paint surfaces and monitoring them for signs of deterioration, and special treatment of friction and impact surfaces.

(continued on next page)



Operable windows that are coated in lead-based paint can pose an ongoing health hazard. Each time doublehung windows are opened or closed, surface friction caused by the moving sash may release lead dust into the room. This large doublehung window in a front parlor was stripped of all lead paint during rehabilitation to ensure its operation would not generate lead dust.

During the rehabilitation of a building, many interior and exterior surfaces coated with lead-based paint are disturbed resulting in the release of lead dust. Property owners should always alert contractors to the potential presence of lead-based paint. In turn, it is the contractor's responsibility to follow all applicable laws for safe work and clean-up practices. For example, deteriorated lead paint surfaces might be wet sanded or chemically stripped to control the release of lead dust into the air. While additional safety precautions and technical procedures are necessary, historic properties can be made lead-safe without removing significant decorative features, trimwork, and finishes that contribute to the building's historic character.

Property owners should be aware that federally assisted loan guidelines require that the rehabilitation of older homes includes measures to render houses lead-safe. Current and future Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) lead paint abatement regulations may have an impact on which rehabilitation option is appropriate under these design guidelines.

For additional information on the safe treatment of lead-based paint, contact:

Regional Environmental Health Specialist
Division of Environmental Health
Winston-Salem Regional Office
585 Waughtown Street
Winston-Salem, NC 27107
Tel: 910/771-4608

Restoration Branch
State Historic Preservation office
109 East Jones Street
Raleigh, NC 27601-2807
Tel: 919/733-6547