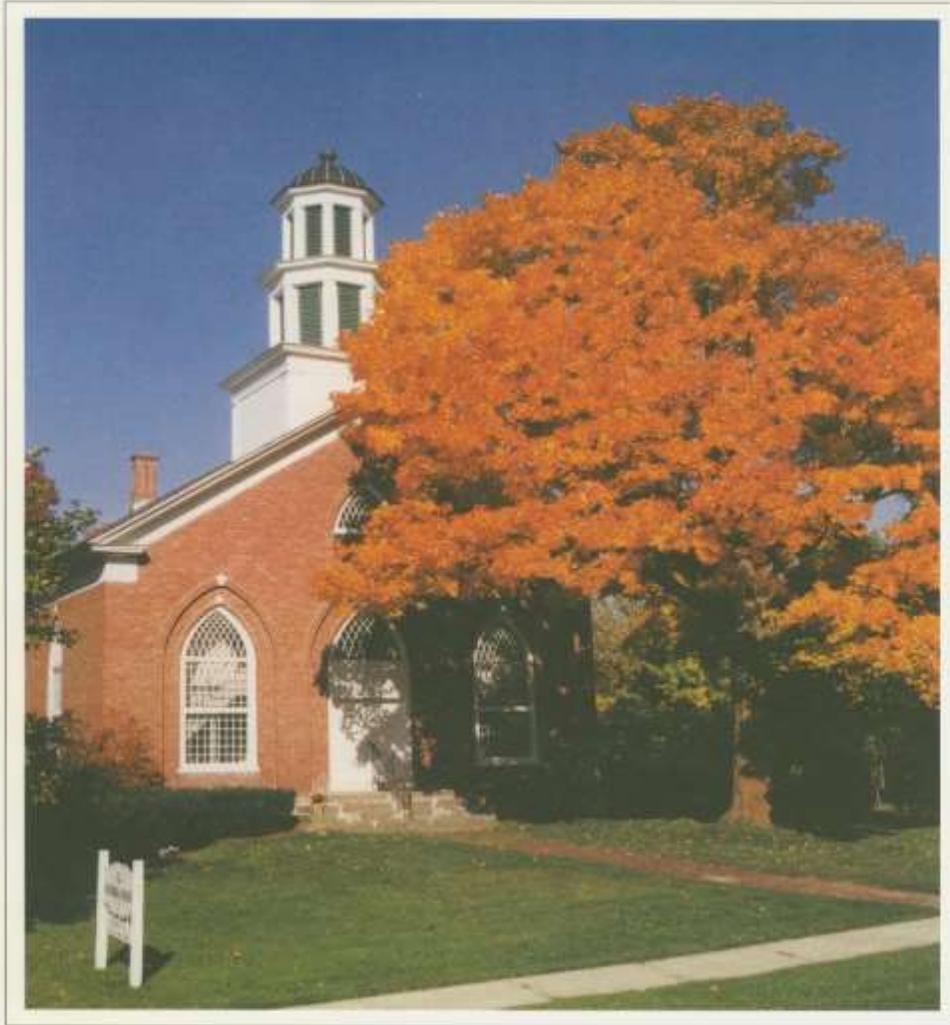


## Appendix H – Williston Village Historic District Design Review Guide



### WILLISTON VILLAGE HISTORIC DISTRICT

*Design Review Guide*





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***What is the Williston Village Historic Preservation District?***

Williston Village is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a Historic District. It contains an impressive collection of 19th century Greek Revival and Federal-style buildings that attest to its role as an important stop along the "Williston Turnpike", the principal route from the Courthouse in Burlington to the Capitol in Montpelier.

The Village remains the civic center of the Town, containing the Town offices, the Central School, the library, the Town green, churches, the Armory, and the fire station. Most of these buildings are arrayed along Route 2, along with a number of residences and a few stores and businesses.

While growth and change are a part of the future of Williston, the historic character of the Village is preserved through the Historic Preservation Guidelines of the Zoning Ordinance.

***Why do we have a historic preservation district?***

Historic preservation promotes community identity. A town's history gives a community its roots and character. It is the goal of the Williston Historic Preservation Committee to preserve the special character of the Village Historic District, the old "Williston Turnpike" and the buildings and sites that represent our community's heritage.

A town's history, architecture and layout are what differentiate it from other communities. It is this enhanced cultural image that attracts people to reside in or visit Williston. Some buildings within the historic village district may seem to be of greater historical significance than other buildings, but all of the buildings and land support and contribute to the historic character of the district as a whole.

Historic preservation enhances property values. Tax credits and grant money may be available for certain types of renovation by property owners in historic districts. Historic preservation also is an asset for Vermont's tourism industry, an important part of our state's economy.

***What is the Historic Preservation Committee?***

The Williston Historic Preservation Committee (HPC) consists of volunteer members who are appointed by the Planning Commission. The Committee is composed of professional and lay members, a majority of whom reside within the town. The Committee serves in an advisory capacity to the Development Review Board concerning new construction, alterations, additions and demolition within the Village. The Committee meets at least once a month, in the Town Hall Annex.

***Building components should be similar in size, shape and material to significant historic structures along the street.***



WILLISTON VILLAGE HISTORIC DISTRICT

***When do you need to go to the Historic Preservation Committee?***

Before beginning your work, check in with the Williston Planning and Zoning office. The Zoning Administrator will determine what approvals and permits you need. If your project requires Historic Preservation Committee input, you will be asked to fill out an application. The HPC will evaluate the application and then make recommendations to the Development Review Board. You cannot proceed until the Development Review Board acts on your application.

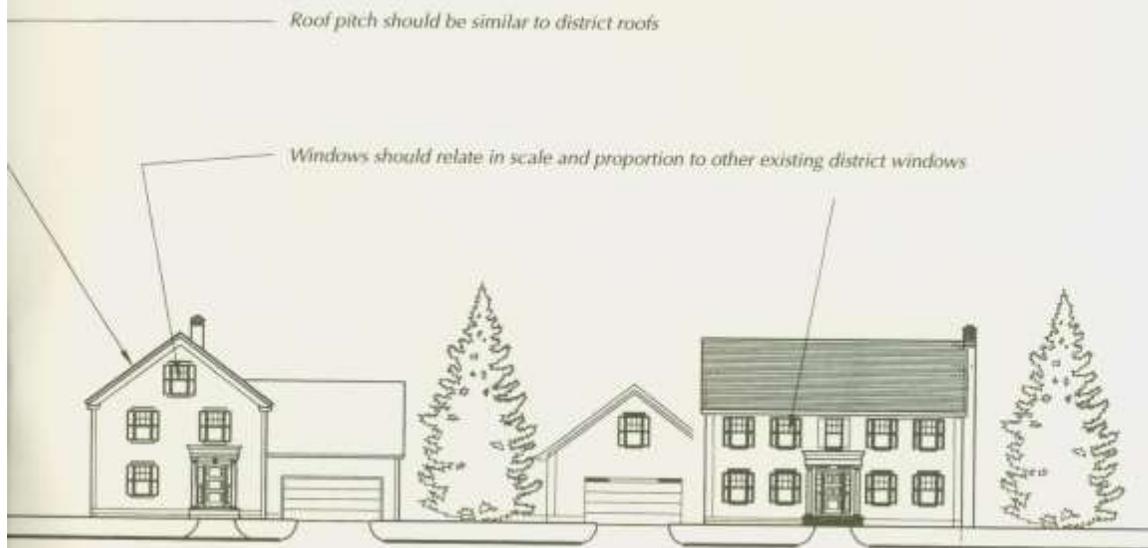
***How does the preservation ordinance work?***

Once you complete your application, the Historic Preservation Committee will invite you to a public meeting to review your project and determine its impact, if any, on the historic character of the Village District. You will have an opportunity to explain your project and respond to any concerns raised by neigh-

bors or Committee members. The Committee will then forward its recommendations to the Development Review Board. The Development Review Board has 30 days to decide either to accept the HPC's recommendations or to make its own determination instead.

***What kind of work needs to be reviewed?***

- ◆ All exterior work requiring a building or zoning permit
- ◆ All exterior alterations
- ◆ All new construction
- ◆ Major site work
- ◆ Signage and demolition



***What kind of work does not need to be reviewed?***

The Williston Historic Preservation Committee does not need to review any:

- ◆ Interior renovations that do not affect the exterior of the building.
- ◆ General maintenance work that does not affect the size, materials or design of the building.

***How are the permit decisions enforced?***

Before you can begin work on any property within the Village Historic District, you must have a Certificate of Appropriateness issued by the Development Review Board. The Williston Zoning Administrator is responsible for enforcing the Development Review Board's decisions.

***For Further Information***

In addition to its review responsibilities, the HPC maintains an inventory of historic sites and structures within the Town's boundaries. The Williston Historic Sites and Structures Survey provides historic and architectural information about many of Williston's historic older buildings and structures. The survey is available for public use at the Dorothy Alling Library, the Town Planning and Zoning Office, and the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation in Montpelier. If you have questions concerning your project's design, there is technical assistance available at the Williston Planning and Zoning Office.

***Williston Planning and Zoning***

6400 Williston Road  
Williston VT 05495  
(802) 878-6704

***For historic preservation and rehabilitation tax credits:***

Vermont Division for Historic Preservation  
National Life Building, Drawer 20  
Montpelier, VT 05620-0501  
(802) 828-3211

***For historic preservation and rehabilitation information:***

Preservation Trust of Vermont  
104 Church Street  
Burlington, VT 05401  
(802) 658-6647

**ALTERATIONS AND RENOVATIONS**

Incorporate elements of the original building, structure, or landmark into the renovation scheme.

- ◆ Do not obscure original materials.
- ◆ Do not alter the shape of original openings such as windows and doors.
- ◆ Do not obscure the facade or facade details by covering them with materials such as metal or plastic panels, signs, by painting them out, etc.

Respect the original character and period of the building, structure or landmark.

- ◆ Do not try to make the building, structure or landmark look "historically" older than it really is. This devalues what is truly historic.
- ◆ Do not try to modernize the architectural features of a building, structure or landmark.

Preserve the original finish of masonry facades.

- ◆ Always use the gentlest cleaning methods possible. Some chemical cleansers may be acceptable, but their effects should be researched before they are used, consult the State Historic Preservation Officer for further suggestions.
- ◆ Never sandblast masonry. Sandblasting removes water and accelerates erosion. Generally, let painted masonry remain painted, and let unpainted masonry remain unpainted.

**ADDITIONS**

The materials used for additions should be compatible with materials used on the original building, structure or landmark. They should be in keeping with the intent of the building.

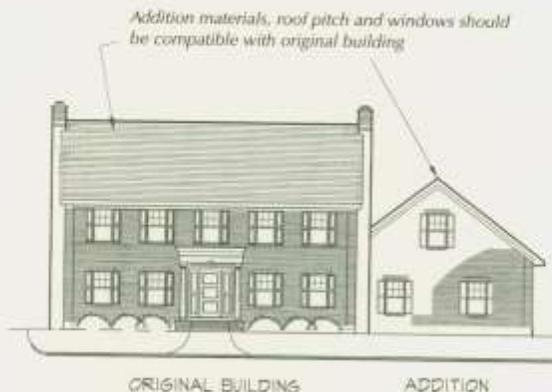
- ◆ Design window additions to be similar to existing or original windows.
- ◆ Design the roof on additions to have the same pitch as the original or existing roof.

Additions that are sympathetic to the original building, structure or landmark yet in the spirit of this day, are encouraged.

Additions required for safety, such as fire escapes or handicap access, must be sympathetic and compatible to the building involved.

The materials used for renovations should be finished in ways that are consistent with the original building, structure or landmark.

- ◆ New siding should have the same dimensions and orientation as original clapboard siding, diagonal or vertical siding not being compatible in most cases.
- ◆ New brick should be of similar size as old brick and mortar should be of matching color, to the extent possible.
- ◆ Wood clapboard siding is preferred.



- ◆ Do not remove fanlights, sidelights, door ornamentation, columns, or pilasters.

Porches should be compatible with the original structure in size, scale and use.

- ◆ A porch addition should match the style of the original or existing front of the structure. (See Streetscape Guidelines under New Construction for further Additions Guidelines.)

### SIGNS

The Williston Sign Ordinance provides specific guidelines for sign proposals. This bulletin is not intended to replace the specific information listed in the Ordinance but rather provide useful suggestions. Please ask for a copy of the Sign Ordinance if you have specific concerns.

Keep signs subordinate to buildings and streetscape. Sign colors, materials, sizes, shapes, and type of illumination should reinforce the composition and preservation of the facade.

- ◆ The size of free standing signs should be limited so that they do not obscure the building's main facade, break patterns of the streetscape's facades and yards, or cause alteration to the greenbelt.
- ◆ Low monument signs are recommended.
- ◆ Signs placed on buildings should be limited to small identification panels at the entrance instead of projecting off the building.
- ◆ Signs should be illuminated with indirect light rather than internally. They should be downward shielded. The source of illumination should not be visible from adjoining properties or the road.
- ◆ Wood is the preferable material for signs, whether they are located in neighborhoods where older buildings of brick or wood prevail, or associated with new construction.

### NEW CONSTRUCTION

Williston Village contains many fine examples of 19th century architectural styles, including Greek Revival, Federal, Queen Anne, Gothic Revival, Italianate, Stick, and Vernacular. The architectural themes provided by these structures should be considered and parallel in the design of any new structures. Sensitivity to surrounding buildings and existing land use patterns is essential to historically conscious development. New structures should be compatible with the Village's significant historical styles and their placement in the Village streetscape. Consider the following guideline criteria:

New construction should enhance and maintain scenic historic vistas as seen from major thoroughfares.

The heights of new buildings or structures should be similar to the heights of existing buildings or structures in order to keep the relationship between building heights compatible.

Setbacks should be compatible with neighboring structures' setbacks.

- ◆ The front yard setback of structures built in the Village, or any other district, are determined by the setback requirements of the underlying zoning regulations, and the relationship between the new structure and adjacent structures.
- ◆ Side yard spacing must conform to the underlying zoning regulations.

Garages and outbuildings should be secondary to the principle structure on the lot.

- ◆ These structures should be positioned so that the principal building is dominant. One way to accomplish this is to site the garage so that its front yard setback is significantly greater than that of the principal structure.
- ◆ The side yard relationship between new garages/outbuildings and neighboring buildings should respect open space patterns commonly found in the Village Overlay or other designated district.

WILLISTON VILLAGE HISTORIC DISTRICT

- ◆ Architectural design and building materials should be similar to those of the principal structure.

Building components should be similar in size, shape and material, to significant historic structures along the street.

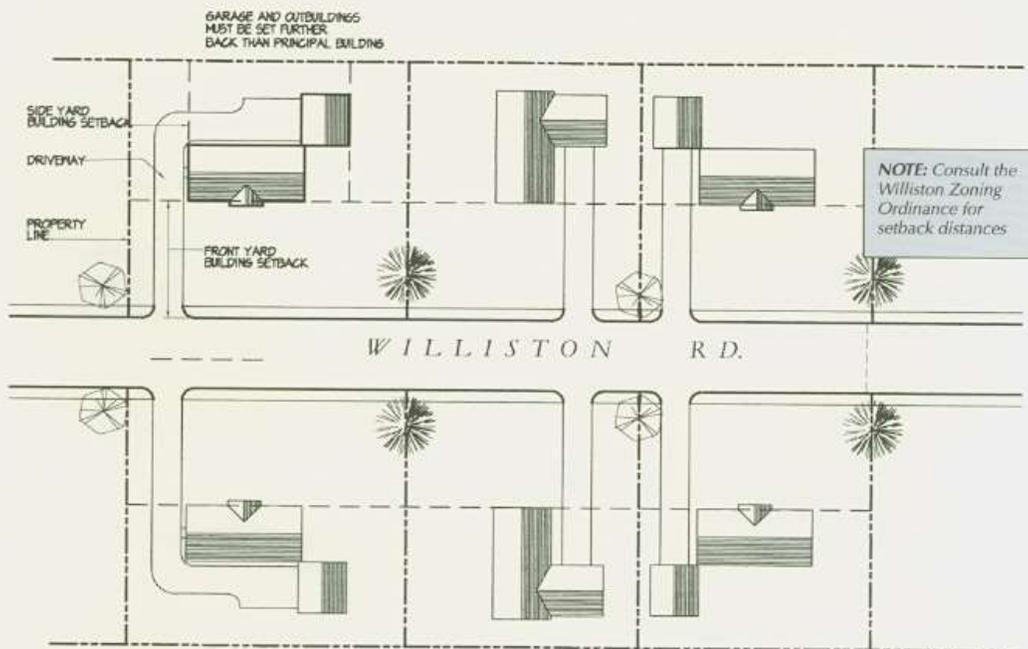
- ◆ Distinctive architectural features and materials, such as double hung windows, gabled roofs, cornices, eave returns, shutters, pediments, window lights, brick and wood clapboard, frequently recur along the streetscape. These details should suggest the extent, nature and scale of details on new buildings. The following components should be carefully considered:
- ◆ WINDOWS: The scale and proportions of the windows should relate to existing surrounding buildings and the building itself. Maintain the pattern created by upper-story windows as well as their horizontal arrangement.

- ◆ ROOF FORM: Roof pitch should be moderate to steep. Similarity and compatibility with roof shapes in the surrounding area shall be considered in the construction.

- ◆ WALLS: Materials should be brick or narrow wood clapboard (3 inch reveal or less).

Maintain the pattern of front entrances.

- ◆ Avoid facades with no strong sense of entry. Historically, the formal entrance for each building is oriented toward the street. This entrance is usually emphasized by a walk leading to it, with steps if above grade.
- ◆ Avoid introducing incompatible facade patterns that upset the rhythm of openings established by the surrounding structures.



Principle buildings, garages, and outbuilding setbacks

Building elements (shutters, brackets, porches, etc.) should look functional.

- ◆ Use shutters with caution and only where the size of the shutters fits the size of the window.
- ◆ Brackets should actually support something.
- ◆ Porches should actually shelter entrances.

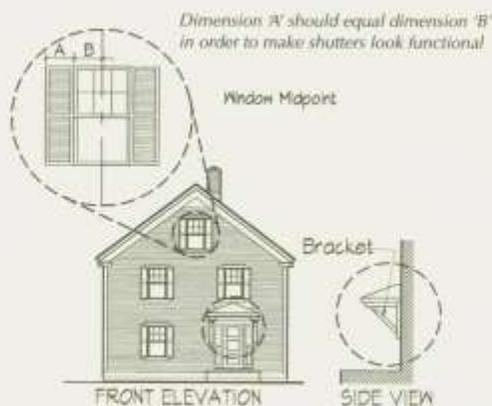
Building widths and mass should be compatible with structures already present in the streetscape.

In order to reinforce the existing streetscape, building placement and siting of new construction should be compatible with surrounding structures.

- ◆ Avoid a building orientation that puts the building at an angle to the street.
- ◆ Building lines should be oriented either parallel or perpendicular to the street.

Minimize modification to existing land contours.

- ◆ Grade changes should be incorporated so as to enhance the existing scale and character of the site.
- ◆ Any site grade modification should relate to grades on adjacent properties.
- ◆ Filling or cutting existing contours and natural areas is discouraged.



**Buildings elements should look functional**

Open space between buildings should be similar to those spaces commonly found in the Village.

- ◆ Side yard setbacks must conform to the underlying zoning regulations.

### GREENBELT

The historic nature of the Village is enhanced by the greenbelt that lines Route 2. The greenbelt's composition is an integral part of the Village streetscape. It provides space for pedestrians, softens the impact of traffic noise and pollution, and serves to frame and give a setting to the historic structures and other buildings found in the Village.

The greenbelt includes the land between Route 2 and any structure. It is comprised of street trees, landscaping, sidewalks and grassy areas. This area must be kept free from built objects that would obstruct its visual continuity.

Preserve and maintain the greenbelt that lines the village streetscape.

- ◆ Maintain size and scale of existing landscaping.
- ◆ Replace lost vegetation, such as trees, with similar, healthy varieties. Plant new street trees of traditional varieties.

Maintain a sense of open space surrounding the village streetscape.

- ◆ New structures built on open land surrounding the Village streetscape should be placed so as to maintain a sense of open space behind the historic streetscape.

### DEMOLITION

Consider all means of preserving historic buildings, structures and landmarks.

Consider such preservation means as:

- ◆ Adding an addition to the present structure
- ◆ Finding a new use for the structure
- ◆ Selling the property
- ◆ Demolishing only part of the structure, -i.e. outbuildings, additions
- ◆ Moving the structure