

Doors and Windows

Doors and windows are among the most important character-defining features of historic structures which give scale to buildings and provide visual interest to the composition of individual facades.

Repair

Repairing, retaining, and maintaining original windows and doors is preferable. This includes the doors and windows themselves, hardware, and trim such as transoms, sidelights, surrounds and hood trim. Unusual decorative windows such as palladian, oriels, bays, Gothic arch, or segmented tops, and doors with decorative panels, detail and hardware shall not be removed or altered.

Introducing or changing the location or size of existing windows, doors and other openings that alter the architectural character of the building shall not be permitted.

Replace

When original windows and doors are missing replacement shall replicate the original. Replacement windows and doors shall fit existing openings and be consistent with existing trim and other feature of the structure.

Replacement windows shall duplicate the appearance of the existing original windows in design, size, proportion, reflective qualities and profiles of sills, sash, rails, stiles, and muntins.

It is important to retain the original door frame as well where feasible. This is important in keeping the size and configuration of the door in scale with the original. Where original doors and windows do not exist, and where there is no documentation indicating original character, replacement should consider original door design typical to the age and style of similar properties within the district and, in order not to overly speculate, consider a simplified version of those original features.



119 West 11th Street

This is a good example of retaining and preserving decorative front door panels.

Historic Materials

Throughout Holland's Historic Districts, the materials of historic doors and windows were almost universally wood and glass. Wooden doors with glass are recommended as replacement doors, particularly on street-fronting facades on the building.

Appearance of the finished window or door is the paramount concern. Steel, vinyl, aluminum, or fiberglass seldom match the appearance of wood, and do not lend themselves to the application of added detailing. Window bars and metal security doors are not appropriate additions. Metal, vinyl or fiberglass shutters, metal-framed screens, exterior blinds, security grills or awnings are inappropriate.

Removal of historic leaded glass, art glass, stained glass, beveled glass, prismatic glass, or Luxfer prisms shall not be permitted unless it is damaged and is technically infeasible to repair.

The use of glass block to fill openings is not appropriate. The only potentially feasible location for the use of glass block, aside from clear documentation that glass block was original to the historic building, is in basement windows and then only when the following conditions are met:

- It is not appropriate in windows that are visible from the street
- Glass block is recessed as deeply as possible in the foundation wall
- Using glass block sizes and glazing patterns to follow as closely as possible other window styles in the structure
- Placing a window screen or obscuring storm window over the window opening to obscure the glass block
- Using textured, obscuring glass block rather than clear, reflective glass block
- Not installing glass block with vents which can destroy the symmetry and glazing and add a second inconsistent feature

Alternative Window Materials

The replacement of original windows with new windows continues to be a major issue for Holland's Historic District Commission. It is the responsibility of the owner/applicant to make an argument to allow alternative materials, an argument that addresses the concerns of the Commission as identified below.

In recent decades, the growth of the replacement window industry along with the renewed emphasis on energy efficiency have led many historic building owners to request the removal and replacement of their original windows. The removal of original windows is discouraged unless they are clearly demonstrated to be beyond repair.

The longevity of contemporary wood windows is understood to be shorter than the historic wood windows coming from "old growth" materials, raising opportunity for consideration of

the use of alternative materials where original wood windows cannot be repaired. The most common proposed window replacement materials are aluminum clad, vinyl, vinyl clad, and composite/fiberglass.

On an aluminum clad window, aluminum is used as the facing material over the wood frame for the trim, sash units, and muntins. Vinyl clad windows are similar, as vinyl (or PVC, polyvinyl chloride) is wrapped over the wood frame. Both options use new growth wood and expend a large amount energy in their manufacturing process. The size, massing, and duplication of some architectural features can be achieved by aluminum clad options, and use of this material will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Composite and fiberglass windows are relatively new on the market and are made of a combination of materials such as fiberglass and wood, and vinyl and wood. Trade names include Fibrex® and Ultrex®. These windows typically have more of a matte finish than the bright plastic appearance associated with vinyl and vinyl clad windows. Since these materials are of recent vintage their longevity is unknown. They will also be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Alternative Door Materials

Occasionally, homeowners request approval to allow alternative materials for the replacement of doors on historic buildings and outbuildings such as garages. Replacement of doors on primary facades will only be allowed if the original door is missing or damaged beyond repair, and then first preference is for replacement in-kind (material, size, design).

Doors made of an alternative material may be considered where they are visually indistinguishable from historic doors and depending on their location on the building and visibility from the street. Doors come in a variety of alternative materials such as aluminum, steel, fiberglass, or composites. Replacement doors of alternative materials will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Thermal Performance

Improving the thermal performance of windows and doors through added weather-stripping or storm windows (interior and/or exterior) or doors is encouraged. Storm windows and doors shall be compatible with the character of the building. They shall be installed without divider muntins. Storm window frames shall match the width and be aligned with the sash frame of existing interior windows including the center meeting rail in double hung windows and other similar features. When consistent with the house base, trim or sash color, wood or aluminum clad (painted) doors and storms are acceptable. Mill (unpainted) or anodized aluminum finish window and doors and Jalousie doors are not appropriate.

Replacement glass in doors and windows may be insulating glass provided the profile of door and window components are not changed significantly. Replacement glass should be clear if the original glass was clear. “Low-E” or similar light-absorbing or

reflective coatings will be permitted only if it can be demonstrated that there will be no appearance of change of glass color or reflectivity when viewed from the street.

Where appropriate historically, replacement windows and doors should have either true divided lights (muntins that penetrate the glass) or simulated divided lights (permanently affixed muntins) applied to both the interior and exterior sealed insulating glass unit. Removable or snap-in muntins on glass panes or muntin grids sandwiched between layers of glass are not appropriate.

Certificate of Appropriateness Application Criteria

The Certificate of Appropriateness application for windows or door replacement shall include at a minimum a sketch or photograph and manufacturer's specification of the proposed window or door detailing a cross section of the existing and proposed dimensions of meeting rails, sash, and muntins. If possible, a sample of the proposed material along with a narrative description of the number, size, color, and locations of the windows or doors proposed shall be included in the application.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Buildings recommends in part:

- Identifying, retaining, and preserving windows, including their functional and decorative features. These are important in defining the overall historic character of the building. Such features can include frames, sash, muntins, glazing, sills, heads, hoodmolds, paneled or decorated jambs and moldings, and interior and exterior shutters and blinds.
- Protecting and maintaining the wood and architectural metal which comprise all parts of the window.
- Replacing in kind an entire window that is too deteriorated to repair using the same sash and pane configuration and other design details. If using the same kind of material is not technically feasible when replacing windows deteriorated beyond repair, then a compatible substitute material may be considered.