

Neighborhood Character Overlay Olympia Mill Village

(1) Purpose

The purpose of the Neighborhood Character Overlay – Olympia Mill Village is to preserve and protect the architectural style and characteristics of the historic mill houses and other historic structures in the Olympia neighborhood. The overlay also seeks to encourage any change in the neighborhood, whether through new builds, renovations, or demolitions, to reflect and contribute to the architectural character of the historic neighborhood.

(2) Applicability

- (a) The overlay standards are applicable for renovations and demolitions to historic structures as determined by architectural type, as referenced in the Olympia Architectural Overlay Style Guide (Style Guide), and date of construction within the period of significance. The standards also apply to new construction and major renovations of non-historic structures within the overlay district.
 - Old Hill Period of Significance: 1900-1903, 1914-1915
 - New Hill Period of Significance: 1940s
- (b) The overlay standards are applicable to any structure permitted after adoption of these standards.
- (c) Overlay standards are applicable to features of parcel that are visible from the public right-of-way.
- (d) The boundaries of the overlay include all unincorporated parcels within the boundaries of the Olympia Mill Village Historic District, as defined by the National Register of Historic Places.
- (e) Any standards not addressed by the overlay shall defer to the standards of the underlying zoning district.

(3) Standards for NC-O OMV

(a) Location of proposed buildings or additions;

- (i) Detached garages and accessory structures (not including carports) shall be in the rear of the primary building.
- (ii) Additions shall be made toward the rear of the property. They shall not align with the front façade, nor project in front of the original front façade.
- (iii) Additions to non-historic structures shall not increase the total floor area by more than 25%, based on floor plan at time of adoption of these standards.

(b) Required yards;

- (i) Front yard setbacks shall align with the setbacks of any historic houses on the block.

(c) Building height;

- (i) Historic buildings shall be limited to one or two stories, depending on the original housing type, with maximum story height defined by Land Development Code.
- (ii) A two-story addition to a one-story building shall be built at the rear of the historic building. (The roof height of the new addition shall be as low as possible to minimize visual impact.)

(d) Building size (for principal and accessory structures);

- (i) Building footprints shall be of a rectangular or L-shape, depending on the historic housing type defined in the Style Guide.
- (ii) The building footprint of a new build shall not be the same as that of the houses on either side, if those houses are historic buildings.

(e) Building orientation;

- (i) New builds shall be oriented the same as the building across the street, determined by the street address of the parcel, if that building is historic.

(f) Exterior building materials and colors;

- (i) Historic houses: Exterior walls shall be repaired with like materials that match or simulate the weathered material of the original structure in color and texture. Only sections that are deteriorated beyond repair shall be replaced. Siding materials must match or simulate the original siding in size and scale.
- (ii) Additions to historic houses: Additions shall only be made of wood lap siding or fiber cement board siding. Plywood or metal siding is not allowed. Differentiating the exterior wall materials of the addition from the existing house by using a different compatible material can be acceptable if the scale is maintained.
- (iii) New builds: Exterior wall material of new construction shall be constructed of materials that can be found on other houses within the neighborhood. Primary building materials such as wood need to be used in comparable ways that they were used on historic buildings. For example, lap wood siding was historically used in a horizontal pattern; using lap wood siding vertically is not allowed.

(g) Building roof line and pitch;

- (i) Roof shapes on historic houses shall be either hipped, side-gable, front-gable, or cross-gable. There are also hipped roofs and shed roofs on porches. The original roof shape and slope as seen from the street shall be maintained. Multiple peaks and complex roofs are not allowed. Dormers and decorative gable ends are not allowed.
- (ii) Roof materials shall duplicate the appearance and profile of the historic materials. The color of the new roofing material shall be comparable to the color of the historic material.
- (iii) Roofs on additions shall not be visible above the ridgeline of the original roof. If it is not possible for the roof to be below the original ridgeline, the new roof shall be a simple roof style gable or hipped. The slope of the roof shall match the slope of the existing house. Roof materials shall match or simulate roof materials on the existing house in color, scale, and texture.
- (iv) Roofs on new builds shall be a simple hipped, front-gable, or side-gable, reflecting the character of the roofs of existing houses within the neighborhood. Multiple peaks on roofs are not allowed. Dormers and eyebrow windows are not allowed.

(h) Garages and garage location;

- (i) Garages and sheds shall be placed in the rear of the lot, behind the primary building.
- (ii) Carports shall be located on the side of the primary building and shall be placed a minimum of 10' behind the front façade.

(i) Building foundation treatment;

- (i) Historic structure foundations have pier and beam construction. Foundation skirts of historic buildings shall be made of wooden lattice, brick, concrete block, or stucco sheathing.
- (ii) New builds shall have the exterior appearance of pier and beam construction or the appearance of foundation skirting, similar to the historic houses in the neighborhood.

(j) Front porches;

- (i) Historic houses in Old Hill: The original front porch elements such as columns, balustrades, and decorative trim shall be retained. Damaged elements shall be repaired whenever possible. Elements deteriorated beyond repair shall only be replaced by using materials that match or simulate the original. If original porch features are missing, there must be sufficient documentation to accurately reproduce missing elements. Addition of porch elements that were not historically present is not allowed, with the exception of handrails. The removal of non-historic porch elements is allowed.
- (ii) Enclosing front porches is not allowed, but screening is acceptable. If a front porch is screened, it shall be constructed so that the primary architecture elements are still readily visible from the street. The addition of screen materials must be made in a manner that is reversible and does not damage any historic features.
- (iii) New porches or decks shall not be added to a front elevation if one never existed.
- (iv) Historic houses in New Hill: Original stoop elements, such as gable or shed projecting roofs and stoop columns, must be retained. These elements must be decorative metal or wood posts and turned columns, as appropriate.
- (v) Adding a stoop that was not originally present is not allowed.
- (vi) Enclosing front stoops is not allowed. Enclosing side stoops with the same siding as on the main body of the house is allowed.
- (vii) New construction in Old Hill shall have a front porch. Porch columns, railings, balustrades, and detailing should reflect the simple details of the original houses.
- (viii) New construction in New Hill shall have a front stoop and a side stoop. Stoop roofs shall be front-gable or shed. Railings shall be decorative metal or wood posts.

(k) Landscaping and screening;

- (i) Street trees shall be large canopy trees that are 40-50' in height at maturity. Smaller ornamental trees should be planted nearer to the primary building. Shrubs should be limited to foundation plantings and shall be no more than 10' in height.
- (ii) Yards shall be grass or low plantings. Front yards shall not be paved or graveled, except for permitted driveways and walkways.
- (iii) All plantings should be native and noninvasive species.
- (iv) Front yard fences shall be constructed with wooden pickets, woven wire in historic patterns, or welded wire mesh. Front yard fences must be no higher than 42" in height and at least 50% visually permeable.

(l) Paving requirements or limitations;

- (i) Driveways must be no more than 12' wide.
- (ii) Driveways shall be located to the side of the lot and must not be directly in front of a house.

- (iii) A shared driveway with the neighboring property is allowed. The shared driveway shall not be wider than 12'.
- (iv) Front yards shall not be paved or graveled, except for driveways and walkways.

(m) Required features on a front façade;

- (i) Required front features on historic houses must be maintained according to the house type.

(n) Views of or from specific locations;

- (i) New additions shall complement and be subordinate to the existing building and shall be located as inconspicuously as possible. New additions shall be located behind the rear façade of the historic building, whenever possible. Aligning an addition with the front façade or having a new addition project in front of the original front façade is not allowed. Additions that are visible from the street shall have windows that are the same proportion to the walls and that follow the same patterns as those on the existing house. The addition shall have similar floor-to-floor heights and compatible bay divisions with those of the existing house.
- (ii) Two-story additions to one-story homes shall be built at the rear of the historic building to preserve the original one-story character. The historic building's appearance as viewed from the street shall appear relatively unaltered. Whenever possible, the roof form of the new addition shall not be visible above the ridgeline of the original roof when the front of the historic building is viewed from the street.

(o) Exterior Doors:

- (i) Historic Buildings: Enlarging or enclosing original door openings on the front elevations is not allowed. Moving or adding doors is not allowed. However, restoring original doors or original door openings that have been enclosed is encouraged.
- (ii) Retain and repair original doors, door surrounds, and transoms using materials that match or simulate the original. If replacement is required due to deterioration, the replacement shall match or simulate the style, materials, and finish of the ~~original~~ historic style. Solid wood doors with recessed panels and frames are appropriate for the neighborhood. Steel and hollow-wood doors are not allowed for main entries. For historic houses in New Hill, doors are allowed to be more decorative, with lite openings and with aluminum or wood screen doors.
- (iii) Additions: Doors in an addition shall complement those of the existing house. More latitude in the design of the doors can occur if not visible from the street.
- (iv) New builds: Front doors shall be visible from the street. Solid wood doors with or without lites shall correspond to the style and design of the original houses in that area. Doors with panels and recesses are most appropriate in the neighborhood. Flat unadorned doors are not allowed. Wood or aluminum screen doors are only allowed in New Hill.

(p) Windows:

- (i) Historic buildings: Enlarging or enclosing original window openings on the front elevation is not allowed, unless required by the building code. Moving or adding new window openings to the front elevation is not allowed. However, restoring original window openings that have been enclosed is encouraged.

- (ii) For areas visible from the right-of-way, retain and repair original windows, window surrounds, and screens using materials that match or simulate the original. If replacement is required due to deterioration, replacement windows shall maintain the same size, profile, configuration, finish, and details as the original windows. During installation of replacement windows, the jamb must be recessed from the front façade at the same depth as the original windows.
 - (iii) If storm windows are installed, they must be installed in a manner that they do not damage historic jambs and surrounds.
 - (iv) Windows on New Hill houses can have decorative shutters, provided they are wood and compatible with shutters on surrounding houses.
 - (v) Additions: Windows visible from the right-of-way shall emulate the windows of the historic structure in terms of fenestration pattern, size, configuration, profile, and finish, especially if they are visible from the street. Windows located on the rear or not visible from the street need not match the original window patterns or sizes. Windows on New Hill houses can have decorative shutters, provided they are wood and compatible with shutters on surrounding houses.
 - (vi) New builds: Windows shall reflect the patterns of windows in historic buildings within the neighborhood. The vertical shape of the windows from the wall surface shall be similar to those in historic buildings within the neighborhood, so that shadow lines are significant and reflect the historic character. The style of the windows shall relate to the architectural style of the original houses.
- (q) Chimneys:**
- (i) Original chimneys visible from the right-of-way must be maintained, unless determined to be structurally or functionally unsound, in which case they may be replaced with a functional or non-functional chimney of similar design. In New Hill, it is appropriate to have chimneys visible on the front façade.
- (r) New construction styles:**
- (i) Architectural styles of new builds must be similar to the building types that were historically present within Olympia Mill Village. Historical styles that were not present shall not be used as a basis for new construction. Contemporary design and style can be appropriate if the building respects the scale, massing, proportions, patterns, and materials prevalent among contributing houses within the neighborhood.
- (s) Accessibility:**
- (i) Ramps, lifts, and accessible entrances shall be designed in such a way to avoid damage to character-defining features of a historic building.
- (t) Parking:**
- (i) New builds and major renovations must identify off-street parking, as required by the Land Development Code. Parking in the front of the house shall be limited to parking in the driveway (see section 3.I.).
- (u) Demolition of structures;**
- (i) Demolishing a historic structure within the Olympia Mill Village to build a new structure shall always be subject to review by the Board of Architectural Review.
 - (ii) Criteria for Review:

- The historic or architectural significance of a structure
- A determination of the cost to rehabilitate vs the cost to replace
- A determination of whether the subject property is capable of earning a reasonable economic return on its value without the demolition, consideration being given to economic impact to property owner of subject property
- The importance of the structure to the ambience of a district
- Whether the structure is one of the last remaining examples of its kind in the neighborhood, city, or region
- Whether there are definite plans for the reuse of the property if the proposed demolition is carried out, and what the effect of those plans on the character of the surrounding area would be
- The existing structural condition, history of maintenance and use of the property, whether it endangers public safety, and whether the county is requiring its demolition
- Whether the structure is under orders from the county to be demolished
- No contributing historic structure shall be moved out of the neighborhood. No contributing historic structure shall be repositioned on its lot unless there is historic evidence of a different location on the lot.
- A structure being moved into the neighborhood should be compatible in style. The proposed siting for a relocated main building shall be consistent and compatible with the existing structures on the same block face. This includes the setbacks, orientation, and spacing.