

# **SOUTH MUSIC ROW**

## **CONSERVATION ZONING DISTRICT**

# **HANDBOOK AND DESIGN GUIDELINES**

### **METROPOLITAN HISTORIC ZONING COMMISSION**

Metropolitan Government of  
Nashville and Davidson County

Sunnyside in Sevier Park  
3000 Granny White Pike  
Nashville, Tennessee 37204  
862-7970 fax: 862-7974

Adopted: January 1997  
Map Amended: July 1997

Metropolitan Historical Commission does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, sex, color, national origin, religion, or disability in admission to, access to, or operations of its programs, services, or activities. The Metropolitan Historical Commission does not discriminate in its hiring or employment practices. The following person has been designated to handle questions, concerns, complaints, requests for accommodation, or requests for additional information regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act: Terri Johnson, 3000 Granny White Pike, Nashville, TN 37204 Phone: (615) 862-7970, Fax: (615) 862-7974. The following person has been designated as the Metro Title VI Coordinator to handle questions, concerns, complaints, or requests for additional information regarding Title VI of The Civil Rights Act: Michelle Lane, Department of Finance, 222 3rd Avenue North, Suite 650, Nashville, TN 37201, Phone: (615) 862-6170, Fax: (615) 862-6175. Inquiries concerning non-discrimination policies other than ADA and Title VI compliance should be forwarded to: Veronica Frazier, Department of Human Resources, 222 Third Avenue, Suite 200, Nashville TN, 37201, Phone: (615) 862-6640.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

## PART 1: INTRODUCTION

A Short History of South Music Row .....	1
The Conservation Zoning District .....	1
What Are the Design Guidelines? .....	1
Getting Approval for Your Project .....	2
Available Design Assistance .....	2

## PART 2: THE DESIGN GUIDELINES

I. PURPOSE OF THE DESIGN GUIDELINES .....	4
II. NEW CONSTRUCTION AND ADDITIONS	
Principles .....	5
Guidelines	
<i>New Construction</i> .....	8
<i>Additions</i> .....	11
III. DEMOLITION .....	12
IV. RELOCATION .....	13
V. DEFINITIONS .....	14

# PART 1: INTRODUCTION

---

South Music Row, like neighborhoods in some two thousand other towns in the United States, uses conservation or historic zoning as a tool to protect its unique architectural character. There are quantifiable reasons for historic zoning: it gives neighborhoods greater control over development, it can stabilize property values, it decreases the risk of investing in one's house, it promotes heritage tourism, it protects viable urban housing stock, it preserves natural resources by conserving building materials. And there are less quantifiable, but equally important, reasons for conservation zoning -- it protects our past for future generations, it nurtures a sense of community, and it provides a sense of place.

## A SHORT HISTORY OF SOUTH MUSIC ROW

The South Music Row Conservation Zoning District is a small portion of the Music Row area which generally runs along Sixteenth and Seventeenth Avenues South from Wedgewood Avenue north to Division Street. The conservation zoning district runs along Seventeenth Avenue South from Wedgewood to Horton Avenue and along Sixteenth Avenue South for much of the same block. (see the map on page 2).

Nashville's booming population increased by more than 70 percent in the 1870's. Beginning in 1875, Vanderbilt University attracted population westward, making the vicinity of the University the city's fastest growing area. Sixteenth Avenue South and adjacent tracts were developed as fashionable residential areas during the 1880's and 1890's, with rapidly increasing property costs. A 1904 city ordinance changed the names of streets running north and south and lying west of the Cumberland River to numbered avenues. Prior to the change, 16th Avenue S. and 17th Avenue S. were called Belmont and Addison respectively.

The lots in the conservation district were among the last in the area to be developed with construction of homes occurring in the early part of the twentieth century. In fact the blocks in the conservation district were largely undeveloped as late as 1908 with only seven buildings shown on a fire insurance map of that year. During the period of development, fine examples of American Foursquare, Craftsman, Bungalow and Tudor Revival houses were constructed with many remaining in the neighborhood today. A wide range of building materials and detail are exhibited among the houses of any of these given styles. While the area included in the conservation zoning overlay is a small one, it is an area that contains a high concentration of historic early twentieth century residences and serves as record of the original residential development of Music Row.

The South Music Row Conservation Zoning overlay was approved by Metro Council in January 1997.

## THE NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION ZONING DISTRICT

The boundaries of the South Music Row Neighborhood Conservation Zoning District are shown on the map on page 2. Conservation zoning districts are **locally** designated and administered by the Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission (MHZC), an agency of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County. Conservation zoning is a type of overlay zoning, applying in addition to the base or land-use zoning of an area; *conservation zoning does not impact use.*

Like the National Register of Historic Places, conservation zoning honors an area's historical significance, but with that recognition, certain exterior work on buildings -- new construction, additions, demolition, and relocation -- is reviewed to ensure that the neighborhood's special character is preserved.

Some other neighborhoods in Nashville have historic preservation zoning. In addition to the projects reviewed in a conservation zoning district, historic zoning addresses exterior alterations to existing buildings -- such as replacing siding or installing a fence. Districts with historic zoning are not more historically significant than those with conservation zoning; it has just been a matter of determining which type of zoning is most compatible with the goals for a particular neighborhood.

## WHAT ARE THE DESIGN GUIDELINES?

The Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission (MHZC) is the architectural review board that reviews applications for work on properties within the zoning overlay districts. Its seven members, appointed by the mayor, include representatives from zoning districts, the Metropolitan Planning Commission, the Metropolitan Historical Commission, architect(s) and others. Design review is administered according to a set of design guidelines. The guidelines are criteria and standards, developed by the MHZC with assistance from South Music Row property owners, which are used in determining the architectural compatibility of proposed projects. The guidelines provide direction for project applicants and ensure that the decisions of the MHZC are not arbitrary or based on anyone's personal taste.

The guidelines protect the neighborhood from new construction or additions not in character with the neighborhood and from the loss of architecturally or historically important buildings.

By state and local legislation, design guidelines for conservation zoning districts must be in accordance with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* -- criteria developed by the National Park Service and used by private and public preservation organizations throughout the country.

## GETTING APPROVAL FOR YOUR PROJECT

- If you are planning to
- **BUILD** a new structure,
  - **ADD** to an existing building,
  - **DEMOLISH** a structure, or
  - **RELOCATE** a structure,

one step is added to getting approval for the work: **you must first obtain a Preservation Permit from the MHZC.**

1. Call the MHZC at 862-7970 to confirm whether or not the MHZC needs to review your project; and if so, to make an appointment to meet with the staff.

The staff will meet with you, your contractor or architect at your house to discuss the project, answer any questions, and advise you on whether the plans meet the design guidelines. The staff can assist in making your plans meet the guidelines and can offer design suggestions.

In order for the MHZC to determine whether a proposed project complies with the design guidelines, all applications must be accompanied by complete site plans, elevation drawings, specifications and any other appropriate information. When you submit these materials, the staff will determine whether a Preservation Permit can be issued immediately or if the work, like most, requires referral to the full Commission.

Regular meetings of the Commission are scheduled for the third Wednesday of every month. If a complete application is received more than fifteen working days prior to a scheduled meeting, a special meeting can be called. The MHZC staff will issue a Preservation Permit upon approval of the application by the Commission.

2. Take the Preservation Permit to the Metropolitan Department of Codes Administration.

Officials at Codes will review your plans for compliance with regular zoning and building code regulations -- applicable whether or not your property is in a conservation zoning district. Permit fees (amount charged depends on the type and value of the work done) will be charged to you then. Codes is located on the second floor in the rear section of the Metro Howard Office Building, 700 2nd Avenue South. For permits to remain valid, work must begin within six months of the date of issue.

***NOTE: Subject work done without a preservation permit is in violation of the Historic Zoning Regulations established under Chapter 17.120, Historic District and Landmarks, of the Code of Laws of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County. Like the Building Code, the South Music Row Design Guidelines are a legal document. Work done without prior review and approval by the MHZC is subject to fines and other penalties. Appeals to decisions of the Historic Zoning Commission staff can be made to the Commission; appeals to decisions of the Commission can be taken to a court of competent jurisdiction as provided for by law.***

## AVAILABLE DESIGN ASSISTANCE

The MHZC staff often meets a property owner on site to discuss a restoration project, maintenance problem, historically appropriate paint color, or other issue not necessarily reviewed under conservation zoning. We have a library of materials on historic architecture and restoration technology, and files on preservation products and services, which are available to the public. Call for more information.



## **PART 2: THE DESIGN GUIDELINES**

*Italicized sections contain interpretive information; they are not part of the guidelines themselves. It is important to remember that each project or building is different and what may be appropriate in one case may not be appropriate in another.*

### **I. PURPOSE OF THE DESIGN GUIDELINES**

---

A. Design guidelines are criteria and standards which the Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission must consider in determining the appropriateness of proposed work within a historic district. Appropriateness must be determined in order to accomplish the goals of historic zoning, as outlined in Chapter 17.120 of the Zoning Regulations for Nashville and Davidson County:

1. To preserve and protect the historical and/or architectural value of buildings or other structures;
2. To regulate exterior design, arrangement, texture, and materials proposed to be used within the historic district to ensure compatibility;
3. To create an aesthetic appearance which complements the historic buildings or other structures;
4. To foster civic beauty;
5. To strengthen the local economy; and
6. To promote the use of historic districts for the education, pleasure, and welfare of the present and future citizens of Nashville and Davidson County.

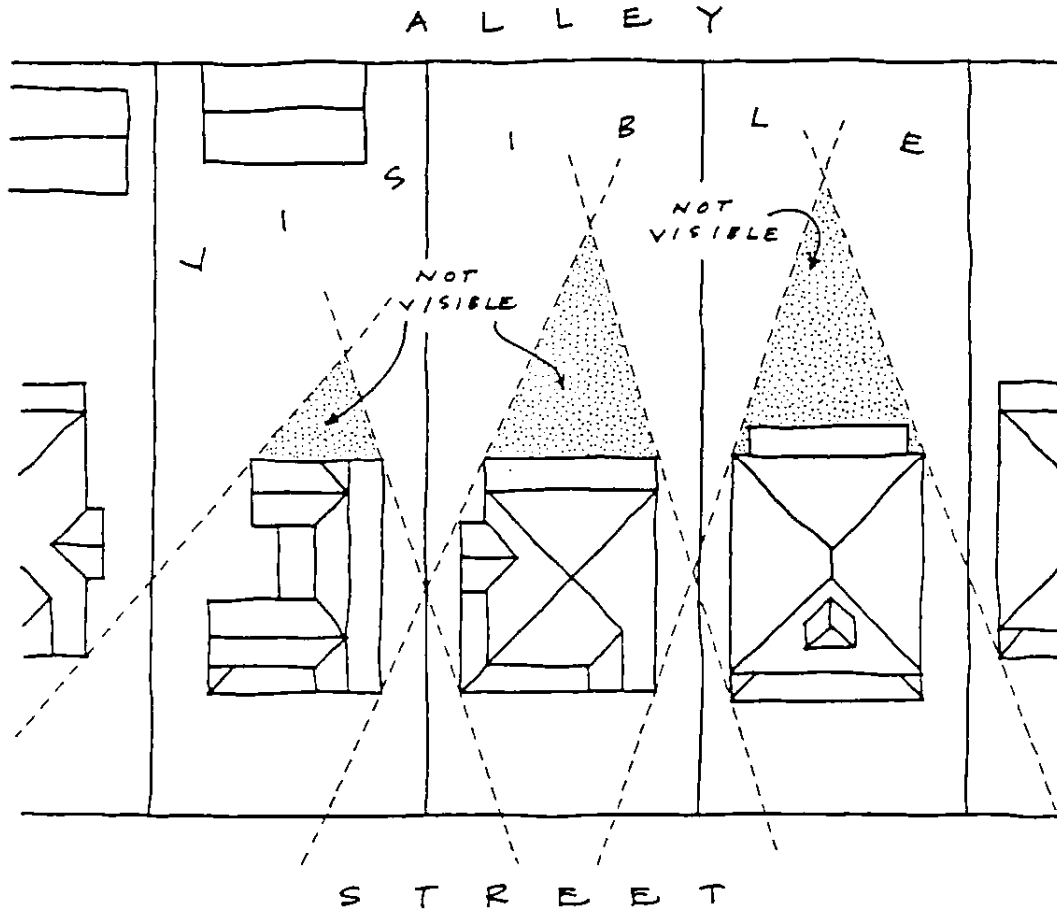
## II. NEW CONSTRUCTION AND ADDITIONS

---

### A. PRINCIPLES

1. These guidelines shall apply only to the exteriors portions of proposed new buildings and additions which will be visible from public rights-of-way

*For the purposes of conservation zoning, alleys are not considered public rights-of-way.*



2. The front- and street-related facades of proposed new buildings and additions shall be more carefully reviewed than other facades.
  3. The design of a proposed new building or addition should respond to the planning and architectural context established by surrounding historic buildings, by not contrasting greatly.
-

## II. NEW CONSTRUCTION AND ADDITIONS

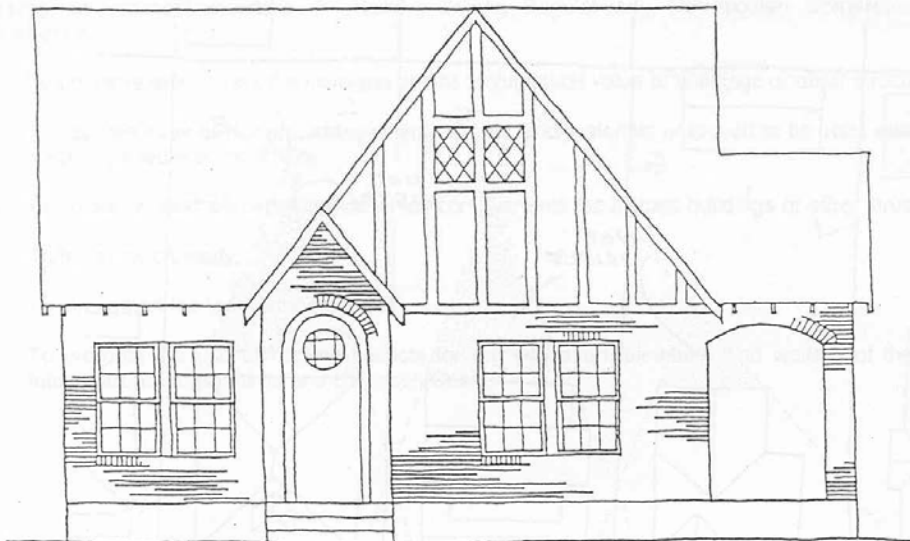
### A. PRINCIPLES Continued

---

4. Proposed new buildings should not imitate past architectural styles; they should reflect the era of their own construction. It is usually impractical to accurately imitate architecture of the past and it creates fake old buildings. For an exception to this principle, see number 5.



BUNGALOW



TUDOR REVIVAL

## II. NEW CONSTRUCTION AND ADDITIONS

### A. PRINCIPLES Continued

---



5. Reconstruction may be appropriate when it accurately reproduces a no-longer existing building on its original site, if the building (1) would have contributed to the historic and architectural character of the area; (2) will be compatible in terms of style, height, scale, massing, and materials with the buildings immediately surrounding it; and (3) is accurately based on documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
  6. The number of additions to a building should be minimized.
  7. A proposed new addition should be constructed in such a manner that historically or architecturally significant materials are not destroyed, and that if the addition were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the original structure would be retained.
  8. Adapting residential buildings for commercial purposes can create unique design problems and needs. The Historic Zoning Commission will acknowledge such concerns while ensuring compliance with the design guidelines.
-

## II. NEW CONSTRUCTION AND ADDITIONS

### B. GUIDELINES

---

#### 1. *New Construction*

---

##### a. Setback and Rhythm of Spacing

The setbacks for new buildings from front and side property lines shall be compatible by not contrasting greatly with those of surrounding historic buildings.

*Generally, a dominant rhythm of spacing is established along a street by uniform lot and building width. Infill buildings should reinforce that rhythm.*

##### b. Height

The height of the foundation wall, porch roof(s), and main roof(s) of a new building shall be compatible by not contrasting greatly with those of surrounding historic buildings.

##### c. Building Shape

The shape of a new building shall be compatible by not contrasting greatly with those of surrounding historic buildings.

##### d. Roof Shape

The roof(s) of a new building shall be visually compatible by not contrasting greatly with the roof shape, orientation, and pitch of surrounding historic buildings.

##### e. Orientation

The orientation of a new building's front facade shall be visually consistent with surrounding historic buildings.

##### f. Proportion and Rhythm of Openings

The proportions of window and door openings, and the rhythm of solids (walls) to voids (door and window openings) in new buildings shall be compatible by not contrasting greatly with surrounding historic buildings.

##### g. Materials, Texture, Details, and Material Color

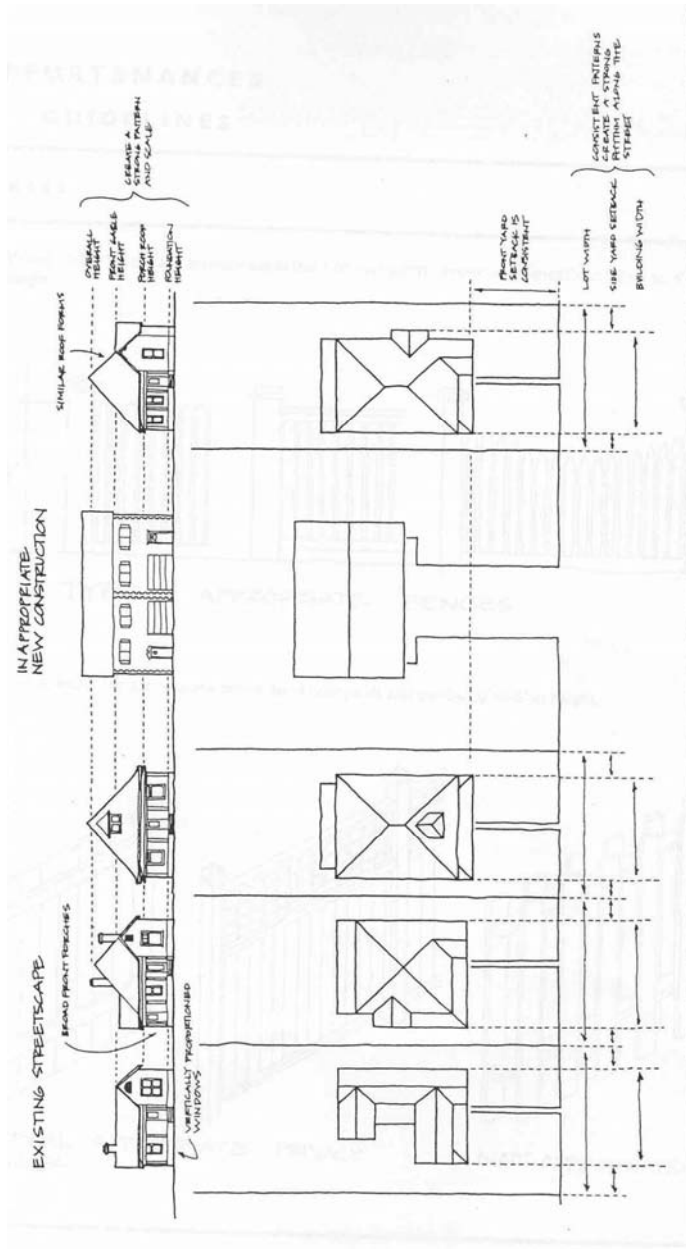
The materials, texture, details, and material color of a new building's public facades shall be visually compatible by not contrasting greatly with surrounding historic buildings. Vinyl and aluminum sidings are not appropriate.

---

## II. NEW CONSTRUCTION AND ADDITIONS

### B. GUIDELINES Continued

#### 1. New Construction continued



## II. NEW CONSTRUCTION AND ADDITIONS

### B. GUIDELINES Continued

---

#### **1. *New Construction continued***

---

##### h. Outbuildings

- 1) Outbuildings shall be situated on the lot as is historically typical for the neighborhood.

*Most historic outbuildings are located as close as possible to the rear corner of a lot.*

- 2) The design of a new outbuilding shall be compatible by not contrasting greatly with surrounding historic outbuildings in terms of height, scale, roof shape, materials, texture, and details.

## II. NEW CONSTRUCTION AND ADDITIONS

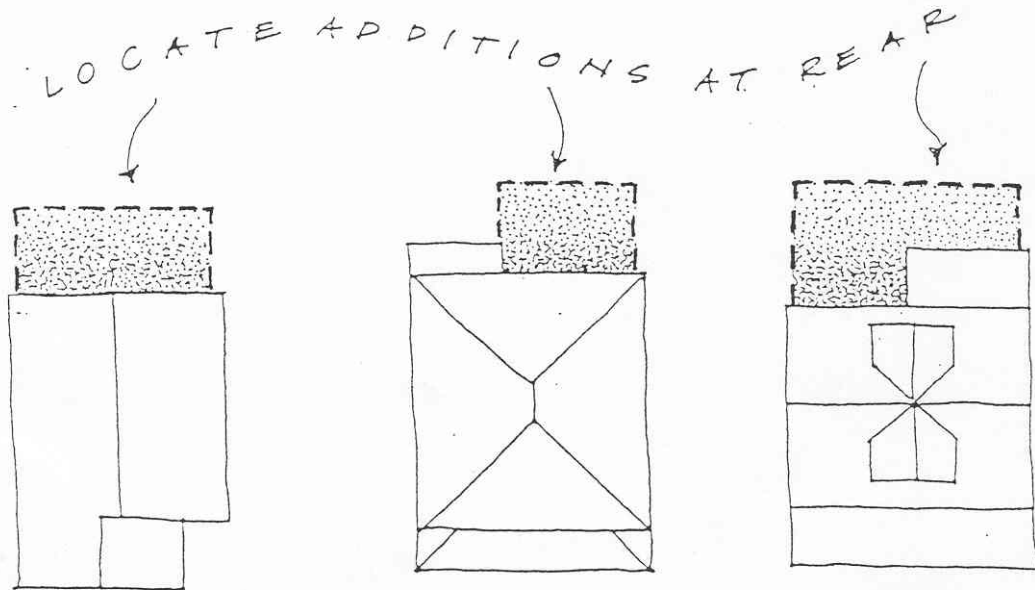
### B. GUIDELINES Continued

---

#### 2. Additions

---

- a. Generally, an addition shall be situated at the rear of a building in a way that will minimize the visual impact upon public facades.



*Additions to the front of non-historic buildings can be appropriate if they result in a design that is more visually compatible with the surrounding historic buildings.*

*An addition that connects adjacent buildings can be appropriate if it is located at the rear of the buildings and meets all other design standards herein.*

*A new roof dormer located on a front or side facade can be appropriate if (1) roof dormers are typical to the particular building type; (2) the proposed dormer is positioned on the roof in a way that is typical of historic dormers; and (3) the dormer meets all other design standards herein.*

- b. An addition shall connect to the associated building in such a way that the original form of the building is visually evident.
- c. The creation of an addition through enclosure of a front porch is not appropriate.
- d. An addition shall be compatible by not contrasting greatly with the height, scale, roof form, proportion and rhythm of openings, materials, texture, details, and material color of the associated building.
- e. New additions shall follow the guidelines for new construction.
-

### III. DEMOLITION

---

#### A. PRINCIPLE

The demolition of a building, or major portion of a building, which contributes historically or architecturally to the character and significance of the district is not appropriate and should be avoided.

#### B. GUIDELINES

---

##### 1. *Demolition is not appropriate*

---

a. if a building, or major portion of a building, contributes to the architectural or historical significance or character of the district.

---

##### 2. *Demolition is appropriate*

---

a. if a building, or major portion of a building, does not contribute to the architectural or historical character or significance of the district; or

b. if a building, or major portion of a building, has irretrievably lost its physical integrity to the extent that it no longer contributes to the district's architectural or historical character or significance; or

c. if the denial of the demolition will result in an economic hardship on the applicant as determined by the MHZC in accordance with section 17.120.190, as amended, of the historic zoning ordinance.

---

## **IV. RELOCATION**

---

### **A. PRINCIPLES**

1. Moving a historic building from its original site should be avoided.
2. When relocation is appropriate, a building should be moved carefully in order to retain the integrity of original architectural details and materials.

### **B. GUIDELINES**

1. Moving a building into the district is appropriate if the building will be compatible with the historic buildings surrounding the new location in terms of height; scale; setback and rhythm of spacing; materials, texture, details and material color; roof shape; orientation; and proportion and rhythm of openings.
2. Moving a building out of the district is not appropriate unless:
  - a. the building does not contribute to the architectural or historical character or significance of the district; or
  - b. the building has irretrievably lost its physical integrity to the extent that it no longer contributes to the district's architectural or historical character or significance; or
  - c. the building's architectural and historical integrity in its original location is eminently threatened.
3. Moving a building from one location to another within the district is not appropriate unless:
  - a. the building will be compatible with the historic buildings surrounding the new location in terms of height; scale; setback and rhythm of spacing; materials, texture, details and material color; roof shape; orientation; and proportion and rhythm of openings; and
  - b. the building's architectural and historical integrity in its original location is eminently threatened.

## V. DEFINITIONS

---

**Addition:** A structural change to an existing building that increases living or working space, and is capable of being heated or cooled.

**Appropriate:** Suitable for, or compatible with, a property, based on established standards and techniques for historic preservation.

**Certificate of Appropriateness:** See Preservation Permit.

**Demolition:** The tearing down of a building, or major portion thereof.

**Facade:** An exterior side of a building.

**Historic:** A structure or site, usually over fifty years old, which possesses historical or architectural significance, based on the criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

**New Construction:** Any freestanding structure on a lot constructed after the designation of the conservation zoning district.

**Non-Historic:** A structure or site, usually less than fifty years old, which does not possess historical or architectural significance, based on the criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

**Preservation Permit:** A legal document issued by the Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission confirming review and approval of work to be done on the exterior of a property within the boundaries of the historic zoning district. A preservation permit is necessary prior to acquiring a building permit. Previously called a Certificate of Appropriateness.

**Public Right of Way:** Publicly owned and maintained streets and walkways. For the purposes of conservation zoning, alleys are not considered public rights-of-way.

**Reconstruction:** Construction of an accurate replica of a historic building or significant portion thereof, based on physical, pictorial or documentary evidence.

**Relocation:** The moving of a building from one site to another.

**Shall:** What must happen.

**Should:** What must happen unless circumstances illustrate why an alternative is more appropriate.