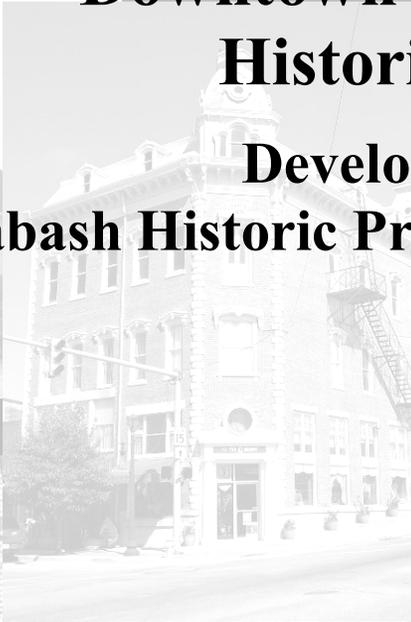


# Design Guidelines

for the

## Downtown Wabash Local Historic District

Developed by the  
Wabash Historic Preservation Commission



Adopted: February 23, 2009

## Table of Contents

Introduction .....	2
Design Review Process: How it Works.....	3
Commission Contact Information	
Historic and Architectural Significance of Downtown Wabash ...	4
Planning Your Project	
Step One: Know Your Building.....	5
The Evolution of a Storefront	
Step Two: Choose an Approach to Rehabilitation.....	6
Approaches to Rehabilitation	
Step Three: Use the <i>Design Guidelines</i> .....	8
<i>Design Guidelines (alphabetically) A-Z—8</i>	
<i>Environmental Elements A-Z—18</i>	
Advice on Energy Conservation and More Information .....	19
Funding Your Project.....	20

## Introduction

In October of 2005, the Wabash City Council adopted a Historic Preservation Ordinance. This ordinance created a Historic Preservation Commission, which is a body of five people, appointed by the Mayor, to protect the historic architecture in the city of Wabash.

The Historic Preservation Commission meets this goal in several ways:

- 1) Educates the public about the importance of historic buildings and preserving them.
- 2) Acts as a resource to building owners who want to make improvements to their buildings.
- 3) Creates local historic districts with attached design guidelines to preserve the historic character of our downtown and residential areas.

When our historic buildings were built, basic design principles, such as texture, color, rhythm, and pattern, were used to make our commercial areas and residential neighborhoods a cohesive, yet unique, place to live, work and play.

These Design Guidelines will follow the same design principles, and aid those rehabilitating historic buildings and building new buildings, by identifying desirable aesthetic qualities for Downtown Wabash.

## Design Review Process: How it Works

Building owners need to obtain and complete a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) application prior to making exterior changes to buildings in the Downtown Wabash Local Historic District. Before planning a project to the exterior of your building, contact the Historic Preservation Commission.

It is beneficial for you to contact the Historic Preservation Commission before you begin your project planning, for several reasons:

- 1) The Commission can help you assess if a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) is necessary for your project.
- 2) If a COA is needed, the Commission can give you the application.
- 3) The Commission can assist your planning phase, to make sure the project is appropriate to the historic character of your building. This will make obtaining a COA much easier.

The Commission shall receive your COA application five (5) business days before their meeting to insure proper review of your application. The COA application is simple to complete, and the Historic Preservation Commission is available to help you.

### Contact Information

To contact the Historic Preservation Commission:

Wabash City Hall  
202 S. Wabash St., Wabash  
(260) 563-4171

Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana  
North Central Field Office  
104 W. Market Street, Wabash  
(260) 563-4534

**A Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) is not required for the following:**

- Landscape maintenance, pruning, or replacement of foliage with plants of similar type and size.
- Repair or replacement of existing sidewalks, driveways, and steps not attached to a building.
- Any work, visible from the street, that does not change the present form of the property and is done as normal maintenance of the property.
- The installation of a single, wall-mounted mailbox near the main entrance on the front of the structure.
- The following roof and gutter repairs and maintenance:
  - Repair of storm damaged roof areas if the surface matches the existing,
  - Replacement of up to 50% of deteriorated roof shingles on any roof surface if they match the existing roof shingles,
  - Repair or re-roofing of any flat roof provided it is not visible from the ground and its shape is not altered,
  - Repair or relining of built-in gutters provided no portion of the gutter visible from the ground is altered,
  - Replacement of deteriorated portions of existing gutters if the replacements match that of the portions removed,
- Replacement or installation of mechanical equipment, skylights, or vents on a flat roof provided the new element is not visible from the ground

**Below is a list of the common reasons a Certificate of Appropriateness is required:**

- Window or door replacement
- Cornice replacement/removal/restoration
- Additions
- Exterior paint colors
- Signs/awnings
- Demolition
- Relocation of a structure
- New construction
- Storefront renovation/restoration
- Tuckpointing
- Antennas/satellite dishes
- Air conditioners
- Fencing
- Siding
- Cleaning of the exterior

## Historic and Architectural Significance of Downtown Wabash

Wabash County and the surrounding areas were open for settlement in 1826 as a result of the Treaty of Paradise Spring, which was signed by the Miami and Potawatomi Indians and the United States Government. Although the site of the signing of the treaty took place right here in Wabash, the city was not platted until April of 1834 when David Burr and Hugh Hanna began planning the plots for the town dubbed “Wabashtown.” Platting of Wabash took place because of the construction of the Wabash and Erie Canal. The first plats of the City were sold just one day after bids for the construction of the canal had been let in May of that year. Development on Canal Street began within a few months.

Although the town of Lagro was larger during the early years of settlement, Wabash was selected as the County Seat because Hanna and Burr agreed to provide a site and building for the county courthouse. The first courthouse was completed in 1839. During the 1830s and 1840s Wabash continued to grow steadily as the canal was extended to Lafayette. In 1840 there were five brick buildings located along Canal Street and log cabins served as shops and homes. On January 16, 1849, Wabash was incorporated.

New plank roads, which provided mail and stagecoach passage to both the north and south, were built in the early 1850s, and in 1856 the Toledo, Wabash and Western Railroad came to town. Increased traffic, by both the railroad and the canal, more than doubled the number of businesses here. Indiana prospered in the years following the Civil War, and Wabash prospered as well. During the years of 1860-1880, the population here nearly tripled, and the number of buildings and businesses grew as well. Interestingly, much of the boom was due to the increasing number of German Jews coming into town. The Jewish cemetery here was established in 1854 and is the oldest Jewish cemetery in Indiana. There were many Jewish businessmen in Wabash, including some names still known today, like Beitman and Wolf whose business ran from 1888 to 1980.

In 1870 a fire destroyed much of downtown Wabash including the courthouse, Tremont Hotel and over thirty-two other buildings. However, the prosperity of Wabash continued and the buildings were rebuilt and businesses continued to increase.

The arrival of the Big Four Railroad in 1872 helped the Wabash economy, but meant the end of the canal. The portion of the canal between Wabash and Lagro closed later the same year.

In 1879 the construction of the new courthouse was completed and on March 31, 1880, Wabash made history with the Brush Arc light, which shone from the top of the new courthouse. Success of the test on the courthouse led to the installation of the street light system. Wabash was the first to adopt and successfully operate the Brush Electric Light System, which lasted until 1886.

In 1881 sixty-seven new buildings were constructed at an expense of almost \$90,000. This year was probably the peak of construction in Wabash, however building continued throughout the 1880s and 90s. Because so many of the buildings were constructed during this period, the Italianate architectural style is common. Italianate features include the tall narrow windows, heavy hood molds, and bracketed cornices. While the Italianate style is very common in many Indiana downtowns, a lesser seen style is also common here. This style is the Romanesque Revival style, which was used here in Wabash between the 1890s through 1901. Romanesque Revival style buildings usually feature stone facades and heavy arches. Memorial Hall, the Bedford Block and the former Jr. High, which was demolished, are examples of the Romanesque Revival. Other architectural styles found in downtown Wabash include Second Empire, Renaissance Revival, Classical Revival, Italian Renaissance, Neo-Classical, Art Deco, and 20th Century Functional.

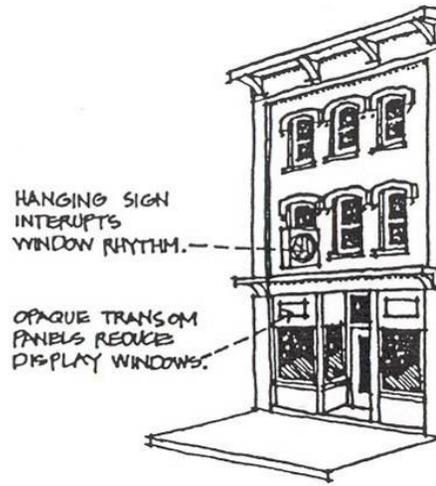
# Step One: Know Your Building

## The Evolution of a Façade

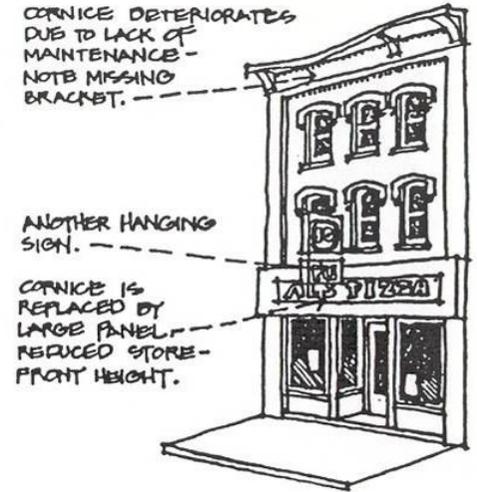
1. THE ORIGINAL FACADE—  
THE VISUAL RESOURCE



2. MINOR FACADE CHANGE



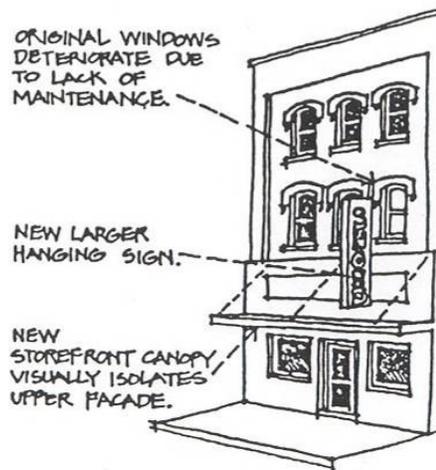
3. MORE MINOR FACADE CHANGE



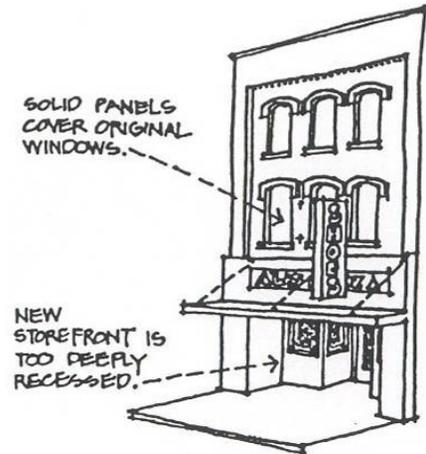
4. STOREFRONT REMODELING—  
THE FACADE LOOKS  
CUT IN HALF.



5. MORE STOREFRONT  
CHANGE

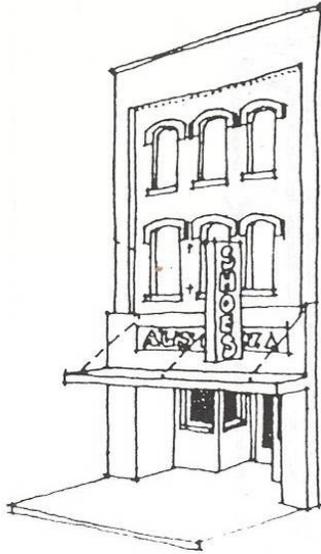


6. ANOTHER STOREFRONT  
REMODELING



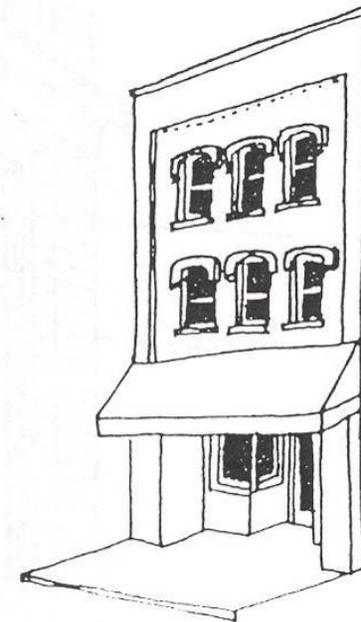
## Step Two: Choose an Approach to Rehabilitation

### Approaches to Rehabilitation



#### **Maintenance/Preservation**

Keeping a building in good repair improves its appearance. This may involve minor repair or replacement of broken materials, removal of oversized or inappropriate signs, cleaning existing surfaces, caulking, tuckpointing and painting. Cleanliness and neatness communicate success and proprietary concern for the community, one's customers.



#### **Minor Rehabilitation/Restoration**

This approach begins with basic maintenance and goes a step further. Selective removal of extraneous or other materials that have been added over time can reveal attractive and exciting details. Canvas awnings provide protection from the elements, add color and movement to the façade, and offer an additional location for signage, addresses and the like. Awnings can also hide unattractive elements of a façade. The proper selection of paint colors can accentuate the good features of a building while making undesirable features less noticeable.

## Step Two: Choose an Approach to Rehabilitation (continued)

### Approaches to Rehabilitation (continued)



#### **Major Renovation**

This approach involves the removal of all incompatible and deteriorated materials and redesigning the façade based on the existing original elements. This approach may be restorative in character, complimenting the existing building and its features, or may project an almost entirely “new” image. The experience of the past thirty years with “new” images is that time tends to render them anonymous and cheap, particularly in comparison to historical styles.



#### **Restoration**

Restoration means returning a building to its original condition. If a building has historic significance or has undergone only minimal alterations, this may be the most desirable approach. Moreover, maintaining or restoring an older building, irrespective of comparative historic or architectural merit, increases the sense of place and time that is unique to each community.

## Step Three: Use the *Design Guidelines A-Z*



### **Awnings & Canopies**

An awning is a sloped projection from a building façade, historically metal with a cloth covering, while a canopy is a flat projection.

#### *Design Guidelines:*

- ◆ Awnings shall be made of canvas or other durable fabric.
- ◆ Unless deteriorated beyond repair, metal awnings that have historical significance shall be retained.
- ◆ Wood, wood shingles, concrete, fiberglass, plastic, aluminum, or other non-traditional materials are prohibited.
- ◆ The color of the awning shall compliment the color of the building, and patterns shall be simple. Themed designs and backlights are prohibited.
- ◆ The positioning of awnings shall be designed to complement other façade elements, such as windows and doors, and shall not detract from the integrity of such elements.

#### *Helpful Tips:*

- Use awnings to prevent harmful UV rays from entering your storefront or upper floors.
- Awnings help protect customers and passersby from the elements.
- Awnings provide a great place for signage for your business.
- Use awnings to add color to your building.

### **For More Information:**

Check out “The Use of Awnings on Historic Building: Repair, Replacement and New Design” by the National Park Service.  
<http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/briefs>



### **Balconies**

Balconies are a railed projected platform, found above the ground floor level of a building, and were generally used for leisure. The detailing found on balconies is important to the character of the building, as well as to the overall district, as they are associated with a building’s architectural style and time period. The removal or closing in of a balcony could significantly destroy the proportion or character of a building and the historic feeling of the district.

#### *Design Guidelines:*

- ◆ Retain and repair original or existing balconies and ornaments that are important to the building’s history.
- ◆ If the original balcony or ornament is missing or beyond repair, the new shall match the original materials and proportions. Documentation, such as historic photographs, shall be used in the rehabilitation or reconstruction of the balcony.
- ◆ Modern treated deck material for balconies is prohibited.

#### *Helpful Tips:*

- Keeping balconies painted will help them stay in good repair.

### **For More Information:**

Contact the Historic Preservation Commission for information on maintaining wood and metal.

## Step Three: Use the *Design Guidelines A-Z*



### **Cornices**

Cornices are an important element to historic commercial buildings because they form a visual “cap” on a building, can give a building a unique identity, and contribute to the horizontal alignment of a streetscape. Generally, cornices are made of brick, metal or wood.

#### *Design Guidelines:*

- ◆ Retain and repair existing original cornices
- ◆ When a cornice is deteriorated beyond repair, or has been removed, the new cornice shall match the original size proportion, massing and materials.
- ◆ When it is cost-prohibitive to replicate the missing or irreparable original cornice, a paint job or simpler design will be considered.

### **For More Information:**

Did you know historic wood can be painted to last 10-15 years?  
Ask the Historic Preservation Commission how!

### **Demolition**

Demolition refers to the substantial deterioration or complete or substantial removal or destruction of any structure. The loss of a historic building that contributes to the district will negatively impact the visual quality and cohesiveness of the area. All demolition within the Historic District must be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Commission.

Demolition is addressed in General Ordinance No. 11, 2005, sec. 10-180.

### **Consider This:**

Instead of demolishing a building, ask a non-profit organization, dedicated to revitalization, to accept it as a donation. You may be able to receive a tax deduction and save thousands in demo costs.

## Step Three: Use the *Design Guidelines A-Z*



### **Doors**

The door or entrance to a historic building can be an important character-defining feature. For commercial buildings, a door is also essential to the image for attracting customers into the store. The removal of an original door, the relocation of a recessed central or side entry, or a change in the glass and wood proportions could destroy a vital design aspect of the building.

#### *Design Guidelines:*

- ◆ Retain the size, proportion and detailing of the original doorway opening.
- ◆ Retain and repair original doors.
- ◆ If a door is missing or has deteriorated beyond repair, the replacement door shall match the original in size, materials and design. If documentation is not found, new doors and storm doors shall be appropriate to the style and period of the building.
- ◆ Choose storm doors that complement, reveal and visually enhance the historic door of the building.
- ◆ Doors that are generally used for residential buildings are prohibited.

### **Foundations**

Foundations found above ground level are often of rough or cut stone or brick. Some have windows or grills to provide light in the basement or crawl space or to create circulation.

#### *Design Guidelines:*

- ◆ New concrete block foundations shall be covered with a brick facing.
- ◆ Keep plantings and other materials away from the foundation.
- ◆ Painting and stuccoing historic foundation walls is prohibited.
- ◆ If basement windows are to be covered, permanent fillers such as brick, stone or concrete block are prohibited.

### **Gutters and Downspouts**

Gutters and downspouts serve the important purpose of collecting and channeling water away from a building and preventing moisture damage. Besides serving an essential function, gutter systems also add to the aesthetics of a historic building. Gutter systems may be constructed of historic building materials, a part of a unique design, or have their own design characteristics. Gutters usually fall into two categories including hung or built-in. Often, gutters were built in and some even formed the crown molding of a building. It is very important to remove debris from your gutters on a regular basis. Make sure your downspouts are secure, and that the water is running away from your building and into a street or alley.

#### *Design Guidelines:*

- ◆ Preserve and repair significant gutters and downspouts.
- ◆ If gutters and/or downspouts have deteriorated beyond repair, the new materials shall match the properties and appearance of the original.
- ◆ New gutters and downspouts shall not cover important architectural features.
- ◆ Box gutters are not visible from the public view. However, if box gutters are to be covered over, trim shall not be removed or destroyed.

## Step Three: Use the *Design Guidelines A-Z*

### Maintenance

Regular maintenance of your property is just as important as rehabilitation. Poor maintenance practices diminish the historic character and property values of an individual property as well as the neighboring properties in the district. The protection of the qualities that all of us find attractive is important to each owner in the historic district.

Although maintenance activity does not trigger the historic review process (unless demolition is occurring because of neglect), section 10-181 of General Ordinance No. 11, 2005 states: "Historic buildings, structures, and sites shall be maintained to meet the applicable requirements established under state statute for buildings generally so as to prevent the loss of historic material and the deterioration of important character defining details and features."

#### *Maintenance Tips:*

- Periodically inspect your building or structure for water and other problems.
- Try to correct the source of the problem right away, not just the symptoms. This will save time, money and effort in the long run.
- Keep property in good repair.
- Preserve the historic and architectural character of the property and the district when conducting maintenance activities.

### For More Information:

Contact the Historic Preservation Commission to obtain a copy of a maintenance schedule to help keep you on track!

### Masonry—Cleaning

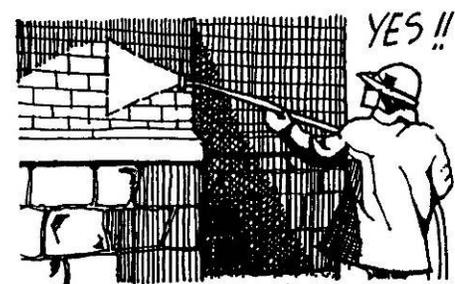
Abrasive cleaning methods, although a quick way to achieve results, will only cause severe damage by eroding the protective surface of a masonry building. Once the protective surface is removed, the exposed material will be highly susceptible to rapid deterioration. It is suggested that professionals be consulted if building materials need to be cleaned.

#### *Design Guidelines:*

- ◆ Use the gentlest means possible when cleaning materials. A test patch will determine the cleaner's effects on the material.
- ◆ Never sandblast or use other strong chemicals on masonry or wood buildings.
- ◆ Protect building materials not being cleaned.



Low Pressure Water Cleaning



### For More Information:

Check out "Assessing Cleaning and Water-Repellent Treatments for Historic Masonry Buildings" by the National Park Service. <http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/briefs>

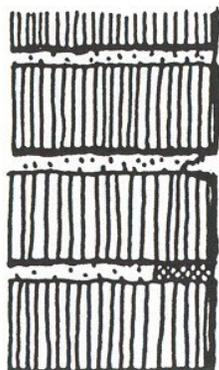
## Step Three: Use the *Design Guidelines A-Z*

### Masonry—Tuckpointing

Lime-based mortars are found in historic masonry buildings. Portland cement, although commonly used today, is destructive to historic masonry because Portland cement mortar is much harder than the masonry brick or stone. Therefore, when the wall expands and contracts with changes in temperature, the bricks “give” rather than the mortar. The visual impact is also an important consideration as Portland cement mortars take on a different color than masonry. Another consideration is the fine craftsmanship that is found in the joint profiles of historic masonry buildings.

#### *Design Guideline:*

- ◆ Materials used in repointing shall match the appearance and properties of the original. This includes the color of the mortar and the joint type.



SOUND MORTAR

DETERIORATED  
MORTAR JOINT

REPOINTED MORTAR  
MATCHING ORIGINAL  
STYLE, SIZE, COLOR  
AND COMPOSITION

#### **For More Information:**

Check out “Repointing Mortar Joints in Historic Masonry Buildings” by the National Park Service.

<http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/briefs/brief02.htm>

### Painting

Your paint color choice will not only alter the appearance of your building, it will affect other buildings on your street.

#### *Design Guidelines:*

- ◆ Painting a masonry building is not permitted, unless it has been painted before or it is necessary to protect the historic materials from further deterioration. Painting unpainted masonry only adds a long-term maintenance item.
- ◆ Original paint colors or appropriate period paint colors shall be used. The Historic Preservation Commission has approved paint colors and schemes on file, which are available to building owners upon request.

#### *Helpful Tips:*

- Use color to accent the important details.
- Consider a scheme utilizing three colors: base, trim and accent.

#### **For More Information:**

Most paint companies have color palettes that are appropriate for historic buildings. Ask the Historic Preservation Commission what style your building is so you can find the right color.

## Step Three: Use the *Design Guidelines A-Z*



### **New Construction**

When new construction occurs in historic districts, the impact of the new building or structure can be positive or detrimental to the visual cohesiveness of the area. A new building or structure that does not fit into the district can be conspicuous, intrusive, and detrimental to the visual harmony of the historic district. The importance of compatibility and context, including the concepts of massing (building shape), scale (building size), materials and architectural features, shall not be underestimated. The common linkages between buildings and settings that give a historic district its character are very important. A wide range of compatible forms and materials are available that do not destroy the cohesiveness of a district. Remember, new buildings may have individual character and don't have to "be bland to blend."

There may also come a time when additional space is necessary in a historic building. Additions to historic buildings are not discouraged, however, they shall be constructed in a manner that does not damage or destroy historic materials or features, nor shall it affect the historic character of the original building. For example, one can minimize the effects on the historic materials and features of a building by constructing the addition on a secondary or rear façade, reducing the size of the addition, or linking the addition via a connector.

### **New Construction (continued)**

#### *Design Guidelines:*

- ◆ Incorporate into the new design similar elements and materials across building facades, building heights, building widths (no wider or narrower than surrounding buildings), roof forms and pitch, orientation, spaces between buildings, and lot setbacks found in surrounding buildings and their environment.
- ◆ Old designs shall not be imitated.
- ◆ The new design shall incorporate the horizontal and vertical alignment and patterns of the surrounding buildings.
- ◆ The proportions of glass, sizes of openings, and location of entrances shall be consistent with existing buildings nearby.
- ◆ Ornamentation that contributes to the rhythm and alignment of the surrounding range of buildings shall be considered.
- ◆ In commercial buildings, maintain the distinction between first and other floors.
- ◆ New buildings shall be of the same quality as the surrounding buildings. New buildings shall be faced with traditional building materials found in the district, such as brick or limestone.
- ◆ Preserve historic views.
- ◆ Additions shall be constructed so as to minimize the damage destruction or effects on the historic materials and elements of the original building and its site.
- ◆ Distinctions shall be apparent between an addition and the original building.
- ◆ The addition shall be related in form, height and proportion to the original building. It shall also be compatible with the original building in materials and scale.

#### Tips for filling out a COA application for new construction:

- \* Include site plan, indicating existing structures.
- \* Include photographs showing a view of the street with the building site and adjacent properties.
- \* Include elevations of the proposed new building or addition.
- \* Include descriptions and/or samples of building materials.

## Step Three: Use the *Design Guidelines A-Z*



### **Roofing**

Roofing is an important character-defining feature of a historic building. Any change in the patterns, forms, color and texture of a roof can dramatically alter the look and feel of a historic building. Unfortunately, roofing systems by design wear out and require replacement. Failure to remedy leaks can cause deterioration of other building materials and even cause the loss of a building. For this reason, the importance of a weather-tight roof shall not be underestimated. A weather-tight roof, however, does not have to compromise historic integrity.

Because most of the roofs in downtown Wabash are flat roofs, and cannot be seen from the ground, modern materials, such as a rubber roofing system, may be permissible. However, if roofing can be seen from the ground, such as a mansard roof, then great care shall be taken to protect the size, scale, form, pattern, texture and colors of the historic materials.

#### *Design Guidelines:*

- ◆ Keep the original roof pitch, form and shape.
- ◆ Retain features and details that give a roof its historic character such as chimneys, cupolas/towers, and dormer windows.
- ◆ Before undertaking a wholesale replacement of a slate or tile roof, fix or replace flashings or valleys.
- ◆ If a historic roof system must be replaced, retain character by matching the size, scale, form, patterns, texture and color of the historic materials.
- ◆ Temporary stabilization materials shall be applied without damaging historic materials.

### **Siding**

The materials used in the construction of buildings in the historic district reflect the time period and local availability of materials. For this reason, these historic building materials contribute greatly to the historic character of the buildings and the entire district, and shall be retained. The primary historic building materials found in downtown Wabash include brick, glazed brick and limestone.

A building's exterior material is a major part of what gives a building its very own historic character. Therefore, a good general rule when choosing wall materials is that nothing will be more appropriate than the original materials. Adding aluminum or vinyl generally requires covering up, or removing, decorative molding or trim, and makes projecting details like doors and windows become flush or inset. This takes away the dimension of the building, and makes it look flat, which not only causes a negative impact to the building, but to the historic district.

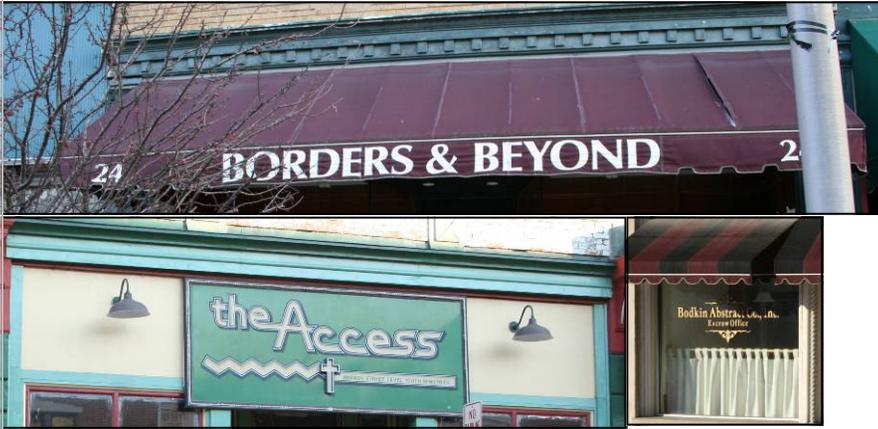
#### *Design Guidelines:*

- ◆ Original materials and historic siding shall be preserved and repaired.
- ◆ If the existing historic materials or siding is irreparable deteriorated or missing, the substitute materials shall match the original in properties, proportion and appearance.
- ◆ The use of artificial siding is prohibited in the district.
- ◆ Siding shall be installed only without irreversibly damaging, removing or obscuring the architectural features and historic materials of a building and shall only cover areas that were originally covered by siding.

### **For More Information:**

Contact the Historic Preservation Commission for more information on siding.

## Step Three: Use the *Design Guidelines A-Z*



### Signage

A pleasing physical appearance and image is crucial in attracting potential customers and business. The first image a potential customer will see is the sign that identifies a business. In historic areas, people are attracted to the variety of architectural styles, materials and well-crafted details. For this reason, there is no need to have large unsightly signs to lure customers, but well-placed and well-designed signs. A sign can serve its purpose while complementing, not detracting from the distinctive architecture and visual character of the historic district.

Historically, buildings from the late 1800s and early 1900s featured signs that were located on flat, continuous surfaces of a building. Spaces for signs typically included glass windows and doors, between the ground and second floors of a building, portions of the cornice and side walls. After the 1920s, signage often projected perpendicularly from the wall to attract passing automobiles.

Here are some typical design types:

Projecting—leading edge extends perpendicularly from a building wall.

Suspended—hung from underneath an awning or canopy

Flush-Mounted Wall—attached directly to the face of an exterior wall, parallel to the building

### Signage (continued)

Wall Painted—usually painted directly on a side wall, often faded with age

Masonry Relief—carved into stone or cast into molded brick or terra cotta

Painted Glass—painted directly onto storefront display windows or glass doors

Transom—painted on, colored or stained glass, spelling out a store's name above the display windows

Banner—temporary sign, usually paper, plastic, or fabric, which are hung with or without a frame

Freestanding Ground—not attached to a building, and sits low to the ground

### *Design Guidelines:*

- ◆ Historically significant signs shall be retained and repaired.
- ◆ Acceptable signs include projecting, flush-mounted wall, painted glass, transom or masonry relief signs.
- ◆ Projecting signs shall not exceed eighteen inches in height or thirty-six inches in width or a combined area of sixteen square feet.
- ◆ The length of flush-mounted wall signs shall be no more than two-thirds of the width of the building, and the height shall not exceed twenty percent of the sign's length.
- ◆ Painted-on window glass signs may be up to twenty percent of the window area.
- ◆ Painted-on door glass and transom signs may be up to fifty percent of the glass area.
- ◆ Signs shall complement and fit in with existing façade in color, composition and materials.
- ◆ Signs shall not cover architectural elements or obscure the display area.
- ◆ A storefront shall not have more than two signs—one primary and one secondary. Primary signs typically have the name of the business, while the secondary signs inform the customer of products sold, services rendered, or phone numbers.

## Step Three: Use the *Design Guidelines A-Z*

### Signage (continued)

#### *Design Guidelines (continued):*

- ◆ A sign shall express an easy-to-read, direct message. Keep it simple.
- ◆ A letter style shall be chosen that is easy to read. Because the contrast between lettering and background greatly influences legibility, light-colored letters on a dark background are preferred. Letter sizes shall be between eight and eighteen inches and occupy only up to sixty percent of the sign board or storefront or wall.
- ◆ Temporary signage announcing construction, sale, lease or other indicated purpose may not exceed sixteen square feet. These signs shall be removed when construction, sale, lease or other indicated purpose is completed. Temporary signs shall not be illuminated.
- ◆ Illuminated signs shall use an indirect lighting method, such as overhead or gooseneck lights. Internally lit signs, fluorescent lighting or spotlights are prohibited in the historic district. Neon lighting is discouraged.

#### Tips for filling out a COA application for signage:

- \* Include exact location, dimensions and area of the sign
- \* Include exact message of the sign (lettering and graphics)
- \* Include sign colors and materials, and method of illumination (if applicable)
- \* Include the method of fastening or supports



### Storefronts—First Floor (see also, awnings, doors, and windows)

An attractive storefront design is an important element for a vital downtown. First floor storefronts are often subject to many alterations through a building's history. For this reason, original materials may be lost. However, some storefronts, though not original, may have obtained their own significance in time. Careful consideration must be taken before rehabilitation work begins.

#### *Design Guidelines:*

- ◆ Storefronts that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
- ◆ Ornamentation shall be retained and repaired. If missing or deteriorated beyond repair, replacement materials shall match the original in appearance and properties.
- ◆ The storefront's configuration and proportion shall be based on historic documentation or appropriate historic designs relating to the building façade. For example, the traditional storefront was composed almost entirely of windows, providing maximum light and display. Think more glass and less wall.
- ◆ Inappropriate historical theme designs that create a false sense of history, such as "wild west," "colonial," or "frontier" designs are prohibited.
- ◆ A storefront shall not be closed down or subdivided.
- ◆ Appropriate materials include wood, cast iron, or anodized aluminum frames; and bulkheads can be wood panels, polished stone, glass, tile or aluminum-clad plywood panels. Prohibited materials include stone, fake brick, and gravel aggregates.

## Step Three: Use the *Design Guidelines A-Z*



### Windows

Windows, besides providing ventilation and light, are crucial visual elements to the façade of a building. They are often linked to certain architectural styles, time periods, building practices, and craftsmanship. Window materials, size, configuration, shape and detailing all contribute to the appearance of a building. In addition, the alignment, pattern, and spacing of windows is an important unifying element in the historic district.

Aluminum and vinyl replacement windows are not recommended. They cannot duplicate the detail, colors, or profiles of historic windows and come in standard sizes, often smaller than the original windows. In order to solve this size problem, the openings are downsized to fit the new windows, consequently altering a structure's appearance. If the original windows are retained and retrofitted, it may be cheaper than purchasing and installing new windows. Original sash can be routed and new glass installed. Window companies now routinely make custom size for preservation purposes. An owner may want to consider traditional storm windows to improve thermal efficiency.

Display windows, transoms and upper story windows all add to the streetscape's rhythm and patterns. Even horizontal elements such as lintels and sills tie a block of buildings together. An important idea is to remember that upper story windows can create an appearance of vitality and use, even if a second floor is not being used.

### Windows (continued)

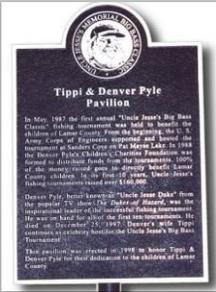
#### *Design Guidelines:*

- ◆ Original windows, hardware, hoods, lintels, pediments, sash, shutters, and sills shall be preserved.
- ◆ Retain original window openings, pattern and size.
- ◆ Transom windows may be of clear, tinted, beveled, etched, or stained glass.
- ◆ Decorative windows and windows made of stained, prism, beveled, cut, or other art glass shall be retained.
- ◆ Display windows shall be transparent. Blinds and interior shutters may be installed for office use.
- ◆ Shutters are prohibited unless they appeared on a building historically. Shutters shall be operable and be the right length and width to cover windows when closed.
- ◆ Storm windows shall have minimal visual impact on the historic windows. This can be achieved by painting the window, matching the location of the rails, and not covering detail.
- ◆ If a window has deteriorated beyond repair, window replacements shall match the original or the style of the building in proportion, pane configuration, profile, texture and color.
- ◆ Aluminum and vinyl windows are prohibited.
- ◆ True divided lights are encouraged. Insert or pop-in mullions are prohibited.

#### **For More Information:**

Did you know historic windows can be as energy efficient as new windows—and last decades longer? Read more at: <http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/briefs/presbhom.htm>

## Step Three: Use the *Environmental Elements A-Z*



### Historical Markers

Building owners may purchase historical markers to place on their building or have mounted in the sidewalk. However, these markers must follow the rules laid out in the City Ordinance and these design guidelines. Following the design guidelines will help unify the markers so that pedestrians will recognize them as they walk downtown. The Historic Preservation Commission has information on companies that manufacturer historical markers.

#### *Design Guidelines:*

- ◆ Rectangular aluminum markers, with a half circle centered at the top, shall be used.
- ◆ Markers will be 22” wide x 30” high. These dimensions may vary two inches in each direction, if needed.
- ◆ Building owners will supply text and any images to be approved by the Historic Preservation Commission. If an image is not submitted, the City Seal or another image approved by the Historic Preservation Commission shall be used.
- ◆ Markers can be applied to buildings so that the center of the marker is at eye level, or, they can be put on a post in the brick portion of the sidewalk. If markers are placed on a post, then the bottom edge of the plaque shall be three feet (3’) off the ground. If markers are placed on a post, the marker shall be perpendicular to the buildings, so that pedestrians walking down the sidewalk can view the plaque.
- ◆ Markers placed on a post may use different images and text on each side, or may use the same text and images on each side.
- ◆ Markers on a post shall not disrupt bricks that have been engraved in the sidewalk.



### Lighting, Sidewalks and Public Utilities

Lighting, sidewalks and public utilities shall follow the streetscape plan for the city of Wabash.



### Parking areas

Parking areas are set aside for vehicular parking. For the pedestrian and passing vehicles, an empty lot or parking area interrupts the visual cohesiveness of the historic district, often producing a negative visual impact.

#### *Design Guidelines:*

- ◆ Parking areas and empty lots shall be screened with landscaping, or fencing if appropriate.
- ◆ Aluminum barriers are prohibited.
- ◆ Large areas of parking lot shall be broken up with islands of plantings.
- ◆ Parking lot edges, where the lot meets the sidewalk, shall contain at least a three-foot planting and screening area.
- ◆ Parking lots shall be located behind buildings whenever possible.
- ◆ Period lighting is most appropriate for parking areas. Overhead, high intensity lighting is prohibited.

## Advice on Energy Conservation and More Information

### Energy Conservation

As building and energy costs rise, it is important to make historic buildings energy efficient. This does not mean that a historic building must be gutted and rebuilt with new materials. That in and of itself is a waste of natural resources, both those used to construct the building in the beginning and the materials that must be made for the rehabilitation. Historic structures were built to take advantage of natural heating and cooling with high ceilings for summer heat and large windows to let in natural light.

Many times a simple fine tuning of existing systems and components is all that is needed to make a historic building energy efficient at a fraction of the cost of an entire retrofit. Listed below are some hints on making your building environmentally friendly and save your money in the long and short term.

#### **Use Awnings, Canopies and Trees**

Historically, these were used to provide shade during the summer months. Used in conjunction with open windows and high ceilings, interiors will stay cooler during summer months. With central air, these items will keep the cooling costs down. Make sure the trees are deciduous so they do not interfere with winter solar heating. Trees shall be planted at least 10 feet from the front of the store.

#### **Reduce Air Infiltration**

Use caulking and weather-stripping to improve efficiency of doors and windows. Air will enter through cracks in trim, windowsills and door jambs. Be sure to use materials that will not detract from the appearance of the building.

#### **Use Storm Windows:**

Storm windows also help reduce air infiltration at a fraction of the cost of replacing the entire window. Mount the storm window on the interior to preserve the original appearance of the exterior. Add weep holes in order to prevent any moisture condensation. Exterior mounting of storms is another option. When this is done, match the existing size and configuration of the window itself.

#### **Use Insulation**

Insulate the attic area of your building. Heat loss through the roof is a major cost and can be prevented with a minimal investment. Consult an insulation professional to determine the best type for your situation. Be sure to ventilate the space properly.

### For More Information

Technical “how to” advice for your building projects:

Preservation Briefs:

<http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/briefs/presbhom.htm>

Preservation Tech Notes:

<http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/technotes/tnhome.htm>

Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana:

[www.historiclandmarks.org](http://www.historiclandmarks.org)

Resources for materials and parts:

Traditional Building:

<http://traditional-building.com/>

## Funding Your Project

### **Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits**

The Federal Government has created an incentive program to assist owners of historic properties located in National Register Districts. Called the Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit –the program provides a 20% Federal Income Tax Credit to the owners of historic properties that undertake a substantial rehabilitation of their property. Generally speaking, the property must be contributing to the National Register District and the rehabilitation must cost more than \$5,000 or more than that adjusted basis of the property.

For more information visit:

<http://www.in.gov/dnr/historic/commtaxcredits.html>

### **Grants**

Wabash Marketplace, Inc. has façade grants and other funding available for projects in downtown Wabash. Contact Wabash Marketplace at (260) 563-0975 or [info@wabashmarketplace.org](mailto:info@wabashmarketplace.org).