



Village of Roslyn Historic District Board

GUIDELINES FOR ADDITIONS & NEW CONSTRUCTION



This garage complements the historic house in form and materials. The shed roof addition at the main residence is appropriate in scale and location.

PURPOSE

These *Guidelines* were prepared to assist property owners with information when considering an addition or new construction within the Historic District. They are not intended to replace consultation with qualified architects, contractors and the Historic District Board (HDB). The HDB will be happy to provide a preliminary consultation addressing design or materials issues to potential applicants free of charge.

These *Guidelines* were developed in conjunction with the Incorporated Village of Roslyn's Historic District Board (HDB). The HDB reviews Permit applications for proposed exterior alterations to properties within the Historic District. The applicant is responsible for complying with the provisions of the Zoning and Building Codes at the time of application. The applicant must obtain all necessary permits prior to proceeding with any work. For more information, or to obtain permit applications, please call the Building Department at (516) 621-1961.

Please review this information during the early stages of planning your project. Familiarity with this material can assist in moving a project quickly through the approval process, saving applicants both time and money. Additional *Guidelines* addressing other historic building topics are available at Village Hall and on its web site at www.historicroslyn.org.



The first section of the Williams-Wood house was constructed in 1770 and an addition was added in 1827. It represents one of the oldest buildings in the Village. The building was saved by the Roslyn Preservation Corporation in 1964.

ADDITIONS AND NEW CONSTRUCTION WITHIN A HISTORIC CONTEXT

New construction is a sign of the economic health and vitality of a community and can take many forms including:

- Additions to a historic or existing building
- New primary buildings along a street
- New secondary structures such as garages, sheds, or other outbuildings
- New porches and decks

Although a demonstration of economic health, new construction can result in a dramatic change to the visual appearance and perception of a community. Because of this, new construction and additions are encouraged to be designed to be compatible with the historic character of the area and the streetscape. In the case of demolition of all or part of a building or structure, applicants are encouraged to consider the historic value of the property to the streetscape and area as a whole, and pursue alternative actions such as adaptive reuse, additions or relocation.

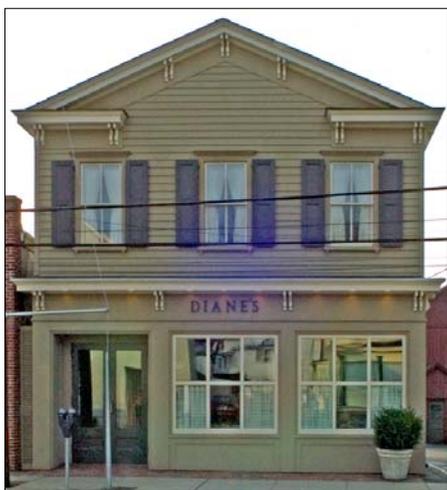
NEW CONSTRUCTION

New construction on a historic property or within a historic district can dramatically alter its appearance and that of the streetscape. Because of the historical sensitivity of the area, property owners should take great care when proposing new construction, understanding how contemporary design will be viewed within the streetscape and neighborhood context.

The following information is intended to provide the elements and principles of appropriate design to allow maximum creativity while allowing plans for new construction to be assessed fairly, objectively and consistently. They are intended to encourage the designer of new construction to consider existing historic buildings as a starting point in the design process and not the final goal. In many cases, the most successful new buildings are those that are clearly contemporary in design but compatible with the character of neighboring properties. The experience of the community can be enriched by buildings that have merit in their own right and are sensitive to their setting and environment.

The HDB encourages:

- Preservation of the cohesive ambiance of historic properties and areas with compatible, sympathetic, and contemporary construction
- Compatible contemporary designs reflective of the time that are not visually overwhelming
- Matching setbacks (distances to property lines) of adjacent buildings on a streetscape
- Compatible siting, proportion, scale, form, materials, fenestration, roof configuration, details, and finishes to adjacent and nearby properties



This commercial building was constructed in a similar form, scale, setback and similar materials to other commercial structures within the historic district. The storefront windows are more contemporary.



An inappropriate addition can have a detrimental impact on the historic buildings and streetscape.

ADDITIONS TO EXISTING BUILDINGS

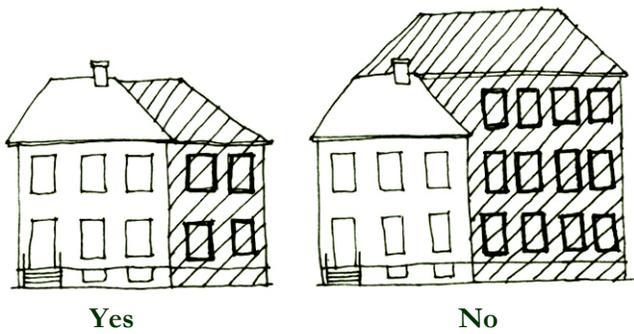
Historically the need for increased space was often addressed by constructing additions to existing buildings. Additions to existing historic buildings can provide increased space while maintaining the historic character of the original building and streetscape.

In conformance with *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards*, an addition to a historic building should be subordinate to the historic building and read clearly as an addition. The subordinate appearance of an addition can be achieved through its placement, form, size, massing, materials and details.

Contemporary design and additions to existing properties should not obscure, damage or destroy significant architectural material, and should be compatible with the design of the property and the neighborhood. Whenever possible, additions should be constructed in a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic building would be unimpaired.

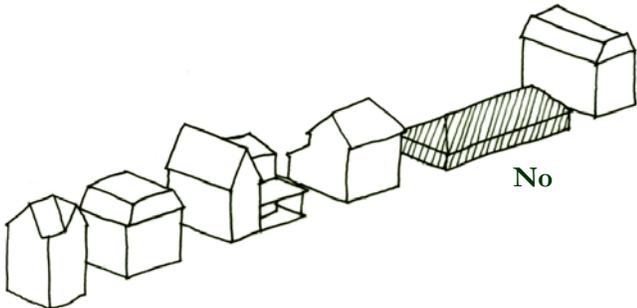
The HDB encourages:

- Construction of additions at rear or side elevations wherever possible that are subordinate to the historic building, and compatible with the design of the property and surrounding neighborhood
- Construction of additions so that the historic building fabric is not radically changed, obscured, damaged, or destroyed



The addition to the left has a similar and appropriate scale, proportion, overall form and window pattern as the existing building. The addition to the right is significantly larger than the existing building and is visually overwhelming and inappropriate.

Size and Scale: New construction should reflect the dominant cornice and roof heights of adjacent buildings and the proportions of building elements to one another and the streetscape. In cases where the street does not have an obvious or dominant rhythm of cornice heights and window openings, the decision of the HDB will be based on a consideration of actual height and composition of major volumes of the proposed building within the streetscape.



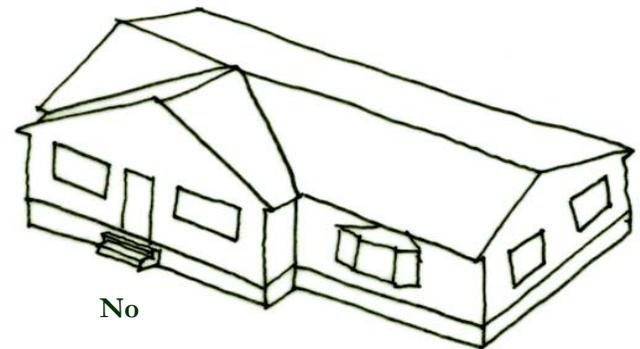
When several adjoining buildings in the same row are the same relative height and width, variation can be very obtrusive. The new building is significantly wider and lower than the adjoining buildings. The building size, scale and proportions are inappropriate for the streetscape.

In Village of Roslyn, where two and three story buildings are the norm, buildings that digress from these standards by any great degree can seriously impact the neighborhood. If large scale construction is considered, particular attention will be given to the location, siting, setbacks (distance to the property lines,) façade treatments (materials, window and door openings, etc.) and the effect of the proposed building on the streetscape and neighborhood as a whole. An addition should be smaller than the original building with similar floor-to-floor and first floor heights.

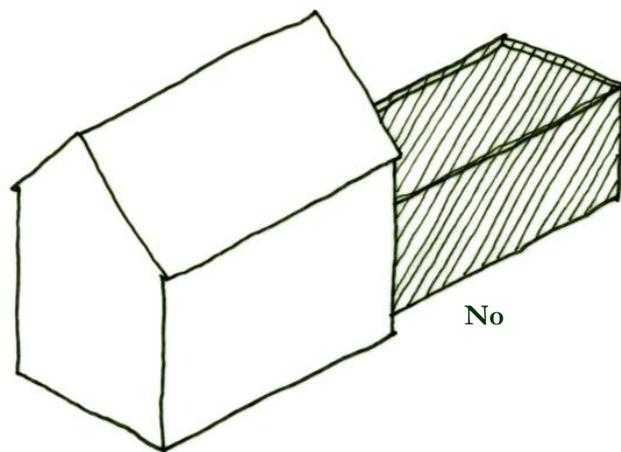
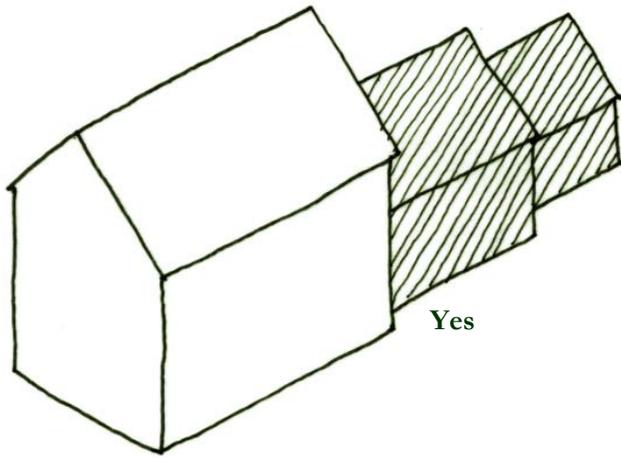


The one-story residence is not an appropriately sized or proportioned building for the streetscape. The form has a horizontal rather than vertical emphasis. The new building to the right is a similar size and has a similar form to the existing buildings.

Proportions: New construction should relate to the dominant proportions of the buildings on the streetscape while new additions should relate to the dominant proportions of the existing building. The proposed design should closely reflect the height and width ratios of the overall building proportions as well as that of doors, windows, porch bays and storefronts.



Although both of the proposed houses have intersecting gable roofs, the massing and proportions of the house below are significantly more horizontal in comparison to the more traditional house above, which is more vertical in emphasis. Because of its vertical emphasis, the more traditional house would be more appropriate within the context of Village of Roslyn's historic buildings. In addition, the house above has a more varied form with the wrapping front porch, enhancing the overall building geometry.



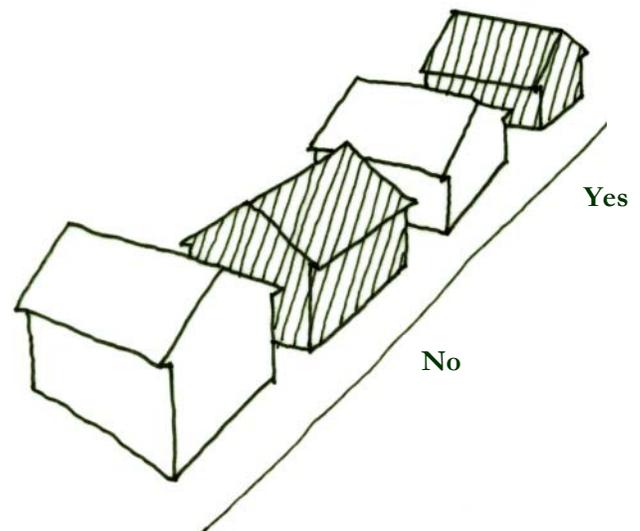
The two gable roof additions with decreasing roof heights and widths shown in the upper example represent an appropriate composition with regard to form, mass and proportions to the original gable roof building. Additions similar to this with decreasing geometry are typical of historic construction. The lower example of a flat roofed addition is an inappropriate form for the original gable roof building. The length of the mass visually competes with the original structure.

Form and Massing: Form refers to the shape of major volumes of a building while massing refers to the overall composition of the major volumes of a building, particularly if there are major and minor elements. The façades of new construction should reflect the form of neighboring buildings including the feeling of lightness or weight with similar proportions of solids (walls or siding) to voids (windows and door openings) and projecting porches, bays and overhangs. The massing of additions should complement, but not necessarily match the original building. For example, a glassed-in side porch might be a “lighter” variation of the original façade massing while a solidly infilled side porch might not be appropriate.

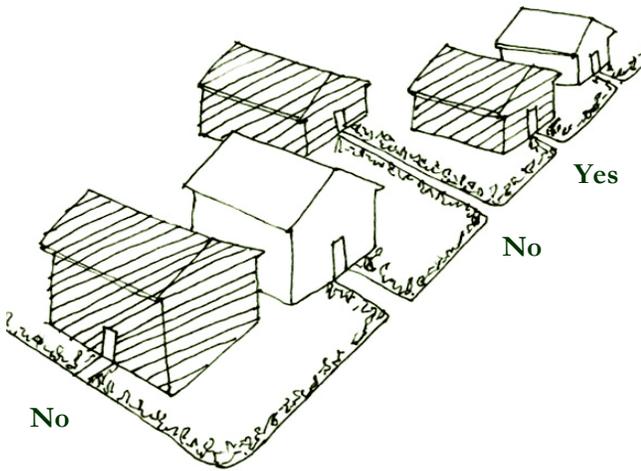


The size and placement of all four additions is similar, however the roof forms vary. It is generally more appropriate to add a sloped roof addition to a historic building unless the historic building originally had a flat roof.

Orientation: The principal façade of new construction should be oriented in the same direction as the majority of the buildings on the streetscape. In the case of new construction on a corner site, the front façade should face the same direction as the existing buildings on the street and follow the rhythm of the streetscape. When adding to an existing building, the addition should be located, planned, and detailed so as to not confuse the dominant historic orientation of the original building. The addition should not have the effect of creating a new primary façade. The addition should not be visually dominant, and should be screened from the street as much as possible.

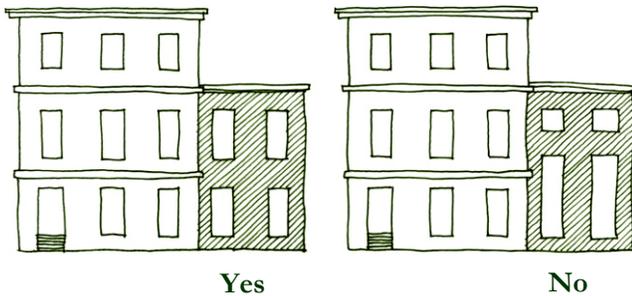


The orientation of the existing buildings is with the gable end facing the street. In cases where there is an overwhelming existing orientation, it is recommended that new buildings be similarly oriented.



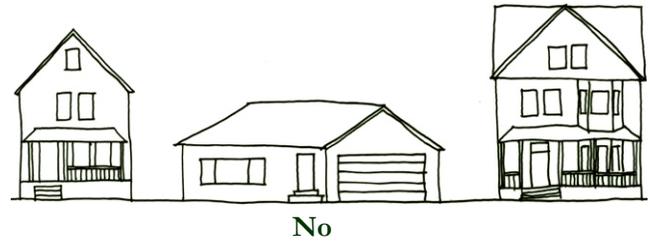
Although all of the new buildings have the appropriate form, the setback of the middle building from the sidewalk is much greater than the existing buildings and inappropriately large. The entrance of the corner building is oriented towards the perpendicular street and is inappropriate.

Rhythm and Patterns: The rhythm and patterns of principal façades of new construction should reflect and maintain neighborhood and streetscape patterns. The rhythm and patterns of principal façades of an addition should reflect that of the original building.



The proportions of the windows at the left addition are consistent with those found at the original building. By contrast, the first floor windows at the right addition are significantly taller and the second floor significantly smaller. The proportions of the right addition are not appropriate for the building.

Rhythm and patterns across the width of a façade typically include the number of bays and the location and spacing between doors and windows. Vertical considerations for rhythm and patterns include floor-to-floor heights, first floor height above the ground, cornice heights, and the vertical distance between rows of windows and windows and cornices. In some instances, where the proposed use for a new building prevents maintaining rhythms and patterns, the property owner is encouraged to incorporate detailing to suggest them.



Street facing garage doors and oversized picture windows are typically not appropriate in a neighborhood with historic residences. The scale of these large openings is inconsistent with the surrounding architecture.



Although the size, scale, form and mass of the two new buildings are consistent with the neighboring buildings, the new building to the right has enlarged window openings inconsistent with the buildings found on the streetscape.

Window and Door Openings: For new construction, the size, shape, design, proportions and placement of storefronts, windows and door openings should be similar to those in the surrounding historic buildings. For additions, the size, shape, design, proportions, spacing and placement of windows and door openings in the addition should be similar to those in the existing building. Windows should be functionally similar, such as double hung windows, and have similar muntin or grid patterns as the neighborhood's historic buildings. Doors should reflect the historic proportions of windows and panels.



The form and of the original house and addition are similar, with the roofline of the addition of a lower, similar pitch. The upper floor windows were omitted from the addition, simplifying the design and reducing its scale, while the first floor double-hung windows with shutters are similar in both sections of the house. The materials are compatible, with the clapboard addition having simpler detailing than the historic residence.

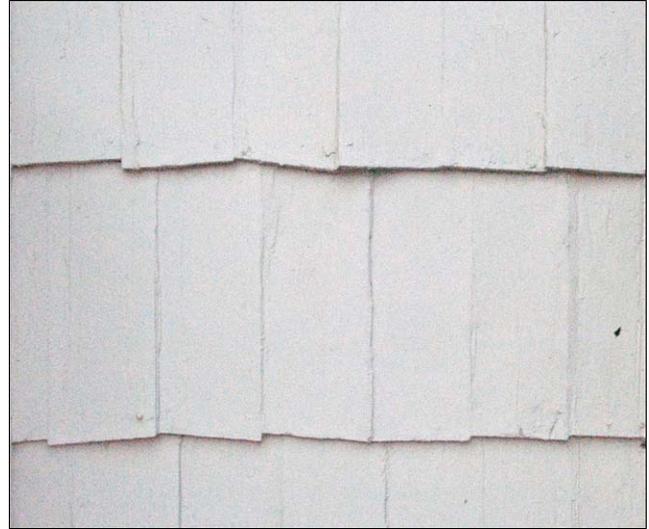


Some buildings feature elaborate wood moldings such as this Stick Style house that includes decorative barge boards, vertical boards at the gable end with sawtooth bottom edge, as well as projecting window hoods. Because of the complexity of the details, in most instances it would be prohibitively expensive to attempt duplication in an addition. If an addition were considered, a simpler version of the details would be recommended.

Architectural Details: The character-defining features and details of the historic neighborhood buildings should be reflected in the design for the new construction and additions. These architectural details include roof form, porches, porticos, cornices, lintels, arches, quoins, chimneys, projecting bays, and the shapes of window and door heads. In many instances these details can be “simplified” to provide compatibility without requiring duplication of historic features.



The historic clapboard building dominates the public view from the principal roadway. A small side gable roof addition is located to the right of the main block.



It is not unusual for historic building materials to become slightly uneven over time, providing additional texture and character to the historic resource.

Materials and Textures: New construction should use materials and textures in a manner that is sympathetic to the historic buildings found in the Village of Roslyn and on the streetscape where they will be located. Materials should be of a similar or complementary color, size, texture, scale, craftsmanship, and applicability to the function performed. Traditional materials common in the historic buildings of Village of Roslyn such as wood, stone, brick and stucco are recommended.

A sympathetic use of materials should not imply that materials used in new construction should duplicate the old in detail, nor that new construction attempt to duplicate historic structures. Rather, it is a matter determining the compatibility of the new with the old. It is often appropriate to simplify details such as cornices and moldings. This gives the new building or addition a more contemporary appearance and not like a historic replica.

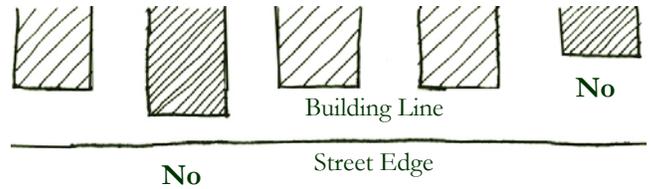
Although new additions can use materials similar to those used in the historic building, there are times when this is not economically feasible or practical. In these cases it is appropriate to alter materials at additions as long as the material at the addition is a “lesser” material than the original construction. This would include adding a wood clapboard or stucco addition to a stone or brick building; however it is not appropriate to construct a brick or stone addition onto a wood clapboard or shingle building.



The front of this house appears diminutive, and the rear addition is not apparent in this view.

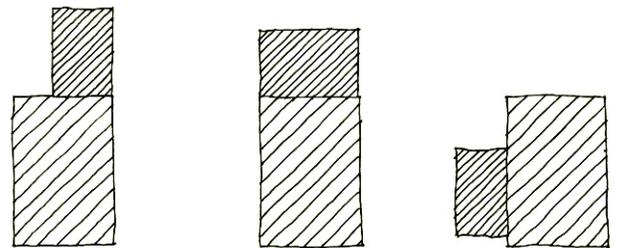


When the same residence is viewed from the rear, a large scale addition is visible, including a lower level garage. The addition has a similarly sloped gable roof form as the historic building. Similar details are used at the addition including at the eaves and multi-paned double hung windows. The use of wood clapboard for the wall material at the addition is appropriate on a clapboard residence.



New construction should not step forward from or recede back from adjacent buildings on the streetscape.

Streetscapes: New construction should reflect prevailing setbacks (distances between the building and the property line or street or sidewalk) and physical elements that define the historic buildings on a streetscape, such as stone walls, wood fences, building facades or combinations of these which form visual continuity and cohesiveness with the period buildings.



Yes **Yes** **Avoid**

The visibility of the left and middle additions would be limited from the sidewalk and the street. The addition to the right is very visible from the sidewalk and street and should be avoided.

When possible additions should be positioned to have the least visible impact from the street, with additions at front façades strongly discouraged and rear additions generally most appropriate. Additions at side elevations are generally appropriate, although it is recommended that they be held back as far as possible from the street.



At times Roslyn's topography necessitates additions be placed at the side elevation of the main block, although the rear is preferred.

SECONDARY BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES

Most properties in Village of Roslyn include more than a single principal building. In many instances, secondary buildings, structures and landscape features are also present and contribute significantly to the overall property, setting and historic district.

Secondary buildings and structures include but are not limited to barns, stables, sheds, carriage houses, garages, detached decks, farm related buildings, outhouses, hot tub enclosures, play houses and animal shelters.

Secondary buildings and structures can contribute significantly to our understanding of Village of Roslyn's history and character. Although some of Roslyn's secondary buildings were designed to be utilitarian, in many cases buildings associated with residences such as carriage houses and garages were constructed to reflect or be complementary to the property's principal building. These similarities can include similar forms, materials and detailing.



Outhouses are some of the smallest secondary buildings. Although they were ubiquitous at the beginning of the twentieth century, very few remain. Similar to principal buildings, secondary buildings require regular maintenance to avoid costly major repairs, replacement or eventual demolition.



The garage is located to the rear of the residence away from the street corner. Its diminutive size, front gable form, materials and paint colors complement the historic house while being subordinate to it from the streetscape.

A secondary building or structure is significant if it was:

- Constructed at the same time as the principal building on the site
- Constructed after the principal building on the site but was used for a significant function
- Represents an important architectural design or construction method
- Associated with an important event or person related to the property
- Built incorporating distinctive characteristics of form, style, materials or detailing or shares those characteristics with other buildings on the site



The garage is located at the rear of the residence. It is clearly subordinate to the house and sympathetic in design and form with simpler details using a jerkin roof with overhanging eaves and of similar materials.



The Jerusha Dewey Stable was originally constructed in 1862 and moved to its current location in 1976.

The following guidelines are recommended when addressing historically significant secondary buildings and structures.

The HDB encourages:

- Maintaining significant secondary buildings and structures as carefully as principal buildings
- Carefully maintaining significant and unique details at secondary buildings and structures including cupolas, barn doors, overhead doors, etc.
- Adapting functionally obsolete buildings for new uses such as converting a carriage house into a garage

The HDB discourages:

- Demolition of significant secondary buildings and structures



Secondary structures with prominent visual features such as this former barn are important to the historic district and streetscape.



This former stable has been converted into a residence, while retaining much of its historic character.

DEMOLITION OF SECONDARY BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES

Because secondary buildings and structures can contribute to the overall property, historic setting and streetscape, demolition or removal from the site is strongly discouraged and should be avoided. In some instances, secondary buildings can become functionally obsolete on a property, such as a carriage house or outhouse. Before considering demolition as an option it is recommended that alternative uses that maintain the historic character be explored. Carriage houses have successfully been converted into garages and outhouses can be easily adapted into garden sheds. In addition, several secondary buildings have been relocated to new sites within the historic district.

There are a few cases in which more contemporary secondary buildings are not compatible to the historic property or district and are not appropriate, most typically garages or garden sheds. If demolition of non-compatible secondary buildings is considered, it is recommended that it be conducted as sensitively as possible.

The HDB encourages:

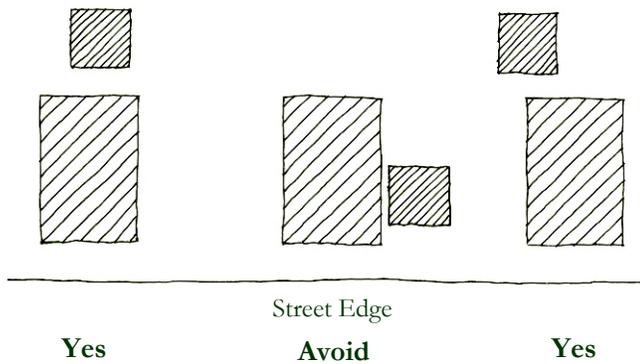
- Ensuring that demolition will not damage other parts of the historic building, neighboring buildings, or landscape features
- Documenting the secondary building or structure with photographs and/or drawings prior to demolition
- Considering reuse of salvageable materials such as windows, doors, hardware, shutters, bricks or siding for other buildings on the site or other projects preventing disposal of these materials in landfills



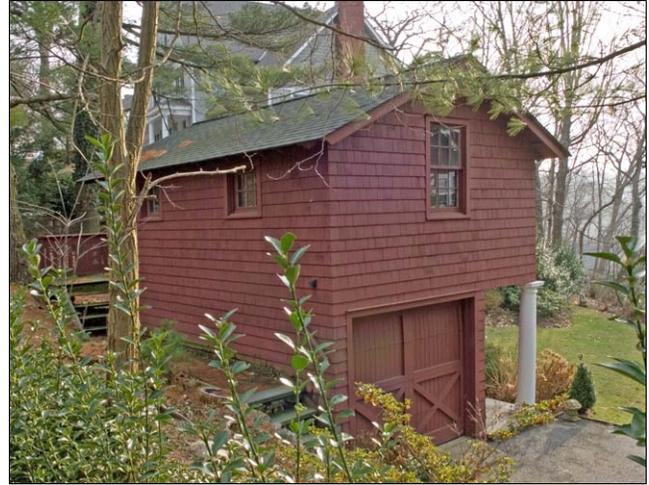
Roslyn's hilly landscape allows its residents a variety of challenges and opportunities when locating secondary buildings such as garages. In this case, the principal residence is located above the roadway on the slope of the hill. The garage was placed immediately adjacent to the roadway, minimizing the disturbance of the landscape. The detailing of the garage openings is similar to the front porch at the house.

NEW SECONDARY BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES

Similar to additions, secondary buildings and structures should be subordinate to and visually compatible with the primary building without compromising its historic character. Ideally the secondary structure should be located so it is not visible from the street and if that is not possible, so that the visibility is limited.



The visibility of the secondary structures at the right and left is limited from the roadway. The secondary structure in the middle is very visible from the roadway and should be avoided.



This secondary building is nestled into the hillside, reducing the apparent scale from the streetscape. By placing the garage at the lower level, the upper level can be used as a habitable space with a view towards the valley.

The HDB encourages:

- Adapting functionally obsolete buildings for new uses, such as converting a carriage house into a garage rather than constructing new buildings
- Locating secondary buildings and structures at the rear of the main building and away from the principal entrance
- Designing secondary buildings and structures to complement the principal building and other buildings on the site; using similar form, materials and simplified detailing
- Construction of new secondary buildings in a manner that does not damage other resources on the site

The HDB discourages:

- Construction of new secondary buildings or structures in a location that is highly visible from public thoroughfares



The location of this garage minimizes its visibility from the road.

BUILDING RELOCATION

It is always preferable to retain a building in its original historic setting; however there are circumstances when that is not feasible or practical. Instances where this might not be realistic include buildings located within a flood plain or buildings in a location that would be disturbed by a major infrastructure project such as road widening. The Village of Roslyn has a long history of relocating buildings to save them from demolition.

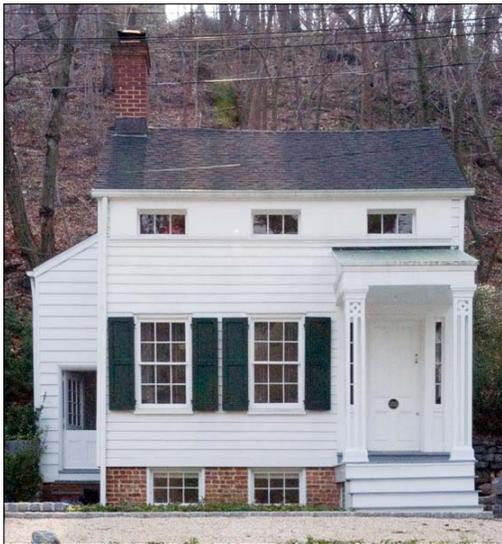
When it has been determined that retaining a historic building at its original site is not feasible and all other alternatives have been explored, relocation can be considered. It is important to remember that buildings are best appreciated within the appropriate setting and duplicating the major elements of that historic setting should be considered.

The HDB encourages:

- Selecting a site with similar characteristics as the original site including elevation changes and major tree placement
- Locating the building in a similar setting as the original site including orientation and distance from the roadway, and proximity to trees and other landscape features
- Relocating related resources and landscape features such as secondary buildings and structures, stone walls, wood fences, stone walkways, etc. to the new site to re-establish original relationships

The HDB discourages:

- Altering the historic spatial relationship between the relocated building and its surrounding historic features



The James Sexton Cottage was originally constructed in 1850 and relocated to its present site in 1972.



Not all buried resources are as clearly marked as this cemetery.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES AND EXCAVATION

Although the Village of Roslyn's regulations do not specifically address archaeological resources, it is recommended that property owners treat potential below grade areas with potential resources carefully. Once a site has been disturbed by untrained lay persons, the ability to reveal the site through professional interpretation might be lost forever.

If the construction of a new building or addition will require substantial excavation on a previously undisturbed archaeological site or adjacent to an existing historic building or complex, there is the potential to uncover important archaeological resources. Many of the Village's oldest dwellings may contain or be surrounded by archaeological deposits. It is recommended that property owners with known sites leave those sites undisturbed until the site may be professionally uncovered and recorded.

If you are considering excavation and would like more information regarding potential archaeological resources or have begun excavation and uncovered what appears to be an archaeological resource, you are encouraged to contact the New York State Historic Preservation Office at:

New York State Historic Preservation Office
Peebles Island
PO Box 189
Waterford, New York 12188-0189
Tel: (518) 237-8643
www.nysparks.state.ny.us/shpo



Demolition is an irreversible action that alters the character of the streetscape and surrounding area. The HDB strongly recommends against the demolition of buildings or features that are significant architecturally or because of their association with a significant individual or event in the history of the Village of Roslyn.

DEMOLITION

Demolition of an existing building is a drastic action and an irreversible act whose effect can reach far beyond a single parcel. The demolition of historic buildings alters the character of the streetscape, and surrounding buildings, as well as the specific demolition site.

Once buildings that contribute to the historic district and history of the community are destroyed, they cannot be replaced. This could represent a lost educational resource for the community, whether the building was an example of past construction techniques, or has associations with a significant individual or event in our history. As a result, demolition is rarely considered to be an appropriate alternative.

The HDB encourages:

- An evaluation of the significance of the historic building proposed for demolition
- All attempts to reuse a historic building be exhausted before considering demolition

If reuse in the historic building in the original location is not feasible, the HDB encourages:

- Relocation of the historic building proposed for demolition to an appropriate location within the Historic District that provides a comparable setting and context as the original location

The HDB does not recommend demolition unless:

- The proposed demolition involves a non-significant addition or portion of the building, provided that the demolition will not adversely affect those portions of a building that are significant
- The proposed demolition involves a non-significant building, provided that the demolition will not adversely affect those parts of the site that are significant
- Public safety requires the removal of the building and it is deteriorated beyond repair, in danger of collapse and cannot be stabilized
- The structural instability of the building has been documented by the report of a structural engineer or architect and appropriate documentation of the existing building has been completed

If demolition is determined to be the only alternative, it is recommended that it be conducted as sensitively as possible.

The HDB encourages:

- Ensuring that demolition will not damage other parts of the historic building or neighboring buildings
- Documenting the building with photographs and/or drawings prior to demolition
- Considering the donation of salvageable materials such as windows, doors, hardware, shutters, bricks or siding to an architectural salvage company so they can be used for other projects and not be disposed of in landfills



This publication was initiated and overseen by the Incorporated Village of Roslyn and the Roslyn Landmarks Society. This project was made possible through a grant provided by the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA). However, the contents and opinions do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the NYSCA nor does the mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation by the NYSCA.

Dominique M. Hawkins, AIA, of Preservation Design Partnership in Philadelphia, PA, prepared this publication.