

Sec. 115-319. - Design standards for the Historic Overlay District known as the Tenth and Cass Neighborhood District.

(a) *Purpose* . Pursuant to this division, the purpose of this section is to foster the City's Comprehensive Plan to identify the City's historic and architectural resources for designation and protection, to establish a coordinated preservation program and to provide tools to protect significant resources. The local district designation of the Tenth and Cass Neighborhood Historic District is created to encourage preservation of the historic resources of the district, which district was named to the National Register of Historic Places in 2000. This subsection will provide design standards and review procedures to guide preservation, rehabilitation, new construction, relocation and demolitions within the Tenth and Cass Neighborhood Historic District (District).

(b) *Boundaries* . The Tenth and Cass Neighborhood Historic District boundary is as follows (generally described as the area between King Street, Ninth Street, Cameron Avenue and Eleventh Street):

Beginning at the southwest corner of Cass Street and South 11th Street, then south along the west curb line of South 11th to the alley that bisects this block longitudinally, then west along the rear lot lines of 1024, 1018, 1010 and 1004 Cass Streets, then continuing west across South 10th Street to the east curb of South 10th, then proceeding south along the east lot line of 324 South 10th Street to the northwest corner of the intersection of South 10th and Cameron Avenue, then west along the north curb line of Cameron Avenue to the alley west of 923 Cameron, then north along the west lot line of 923 Cameron to the alley at the rear of the property, then east a short distance to the southwest corner of the lot of 924 Cass, then north along the west lot line of 924 Cass to the south curb line of Cass Street, then continuing north across Cass Street to the north curb line of Cass Street, then west along the north curb line to the alley at the rear of 236 South 9th Street, then proceeding north along the rear lot lines of 236, 224, 220, 212-214 and 204-210 South 9th Street, then east along the north line of 204-210 South 9th Street to the west curb line of S. 9th Street, then proceeding east across South 9th Street to the east curb line of South 9th, then north along the 9th Street curb line to the southeast corner of the intersection of South 9th Street and King Street, then east along the south curb line of King Street to the northeast corner of the lot of 916-920 King Street, then proceeding north across King Street to the north curb line of King Street and the southwest corner of the lot of 929 King Street, then north along the west boundary of said property to the northwest corner of the lot associated with 136-138 South 10th Street, then east along said lot line to the northeast corner of the lot and the west curb line of S. 10th Street, then south along said curb line to the northeast corner of the lot associated with 929 King Street, then proceeding east across South 10th Street to the east curb line of South 10th and the northwest corner of the lot at 1003 King Street, then continuing east along the rear [north] lot line of said property to the east lot line of 1003 King, then continuing south to the north curb line of King Street, then proceeding south across King Street to the alley and the rear [east] lot line of 203 South 10th Street, then continuing south along the rear lot lines of 203, 209 and 221 South 10th Street to the northeast corner of the lot associated with 237 S. 10th Street, then east along the rear lot line of 1024 Cass Street to the northeast corner of said lot, then south along the east lot line of said property to the north curb line of Cass Street, then proceeding south across Cass Street to the south curb line of Cass Street and the northwest corner of the lot associated with 1024 Cass Street, then continuing east along the south curb line of Cass Street to the point of beginning at the southwest corner of the intersection of Cass and South 11th Streets.

(c) *Height regulations* . In the Tenth and Cass Neighborhood Historic District, no building shall hereafter be erected or structurally altered to exceed 35 feet or 2½ stories in height, except as provided in section 115-390. In any request for a variance as provided in section 115-390, the Historic Preservation Commission shall consider that proportions of new construction should respect the average height and width of the majority of the buildings on the block face.

(d) *Regulation of construction, renovation, rehabilitation, relocation and demolition* .

(1) No owner or person in charge of a structure within the district shall renovate, rehabilitate, alter, move any building or demolish all or any part of the exterior of such property or construct any

improvement unless a certificate of appropriateness or certificate of appropriateness for demolition has been granted. The Fire Department - Division of Fire Prevention and Building Safety shall not issue a permit for any such work unless a certificate of appropriateness or certificate for appropriateness for demolition has been granted. If work begins prior to obtaining the necessary permits, a stop work order may be issued by the Fire Department - Division of Fire Prevention and Building Safety.

(2) Certificate of appropriateness.

- a. Prior to obtaining any building permit, an application for a certificate of appropriateness shall be filed with the Department of Planning and Development along with a fee in the amount established by resolution.
- b. The Department of Planning and Development shall have available upon request applications for certificates of appropriateness and a handout, approved by the HPC, identifying the information and documentation needed in order to complete the application. Applications shall include drawings, photographs, plans or other complete documentation to fully illustrate the property and the proposed work. The HPC shall determine the application requirements.
- c. Administrative review of minor work. The Director of Planning and Development may issue a certificate of appropriateness after review of a completed application if the project concerns minor work. Minor work includes the following and as further defined by the HPC in its handout: re-roofing with similar materials; repair or replacement of porches, windows, siding, trim and doors if new materials match existing; installation or removal of door and window openings in rear elevations; chimney reconstruction if completed with similar materials; exterior cleaning, refinishing and tuckpointing; construction of retaining walls, fences and landscaping; screening of parking lots and dumpsters; other work as designated minor by the HPC.
- d. HPC review of major work. Upon the filing of any application for major work, the HPC shall consider said application within 45 days of receipt of the completed application by the Department of Planning and Development. Major work includes the following and as further defined by the HPC in its handout: construction of garages or carriage houses; roof alterations and skylights; alterations to the front or side elevations visible from the public street; additions; alterations to windows, siding, entries, and trim; masonry finishing; construction of chimneys; erection of signs; site design; new construction; and relocation.
- e. In making its decision about issuing a certificate of appropriateness involving new construction, renovation or rehabilitation, the HPC shall consider the design review standards set forth in this subsection. Alterations to building interiors and the choice of exterior paint colors are not subject to design review.
- f. In making its decision about issuing a certificate of appropriateness for relocation, the HPC shall consider that the structure be of an age, architectural style and massing consistent with existing structures within the district.
- g. The HPC shall issue a certificate of appropriateness or deny the application within 45 days of the filing of the application, unless the time period is otherwise extended by written agreement between the HPC and the applicant.
- h. The issuance of a certificate of appropriateness shall not relieve the applicant from obtaining other permits or approvals required by applicable Federal, State or local code.

(3) Certificate of appropriateness for demolition.

- a. An application for a certificate of appropriateness for demolition shall be filed with the Department of Planning and Development. The Department of Planning and Development shall have available, upon request, applications for certificates of appropriateness for demolition and a handout, approved by the HPC, identifying the information and documentation needed in order to complete the application.

- b. The HPC shall issue a certificate of appropriateness for demolition or deny the application within 45 days of the filing of the application, unless the time period is otherwise extended by written agreement between the HPC and the applicant.
  - c. In determining whether to issue a certificate of appropriateness for demolition, the HPC shall:
    - 1. Consider factors such as whether the structure is of historical significance, the state of repair of the building, and whether denial of a permit would create a significant economic hardship for the owner.
    - 2. Issue the certificate only if the owner can demonstrate that the building is structurally unsound and/or that denial of a demolition permit would create a significant economic hardship for the owner.
- (4) Nothing contained in this subsection shall prohibit the demolition or alteration of any structure within the district pursuant to order of any governmental agency or court, for the purpose of remedying emergency conditions determined to be dangerous to life, health or property. In such cases, no approval from the HPC shall be required.
- (e) *Design review standards for renovation and rehabilitation* . These standards specify appropriate maintenance, renovation, and repair of elements on properties within the district.
- (1) *Masonry walls and foundations* .
- a. *Repair* .
    - 1. When there is evidence of deterioration, masonry walls and other masonry features should be repaired by repointing of mortar joints.
    - 2. Brick, stone and mortar should be replaced with the materials used in original construction or materials that closely resemble the original.
    - 3. Repointing of mortar should match the original brick and mortar joint profile, including width and depth. Mortar should duplicate the original in color, texture and strength. Mortar mixtures should duplicate the original composition in lime, sand, and cement proportion.
    - 4. Repair stucco by duplicating the original material in strength, composition, color and texture.
    - 5. Artificial stone, brick veneer, or vinyl or aluminum products should not be applied over masonry surfaces.
    - 6. The term "color" in this section, refers to matching the existing or overall color, to the extent practicable.
  - b. *Cleaning* .
    - 1. Clean masonry walls only if necessary to halt deterioration or remove heavy soiling.
    - 2. When cleaning is necessary, the gentlest cleaning method shall be used, as appropriate, such as low pressure water, mild detergents and soft brushes.
    - 3. Surface cleaning tests must be conducted to determine the most appropriate cleaning method. Adequate time must be allowed to observe the results of the test to determine the gentlest cleaning method.
    - 4. Sandblasting or abrasive cleaning is prohibited.
  - c. *Painting* .
    - 1. Masonry should not be painted (or stuccoed) if it has not been painted historically.

2. Paint should not be removed from historically painted masonry unless the removal is historically appropriate and the removal can be accomplished without damage to the masonry.
    - (i) Remove damaged or deteriorated paint only to the next layer, using the gentlest method (such as handscraping) prior to repainting.
- (2) *Wood siding and shingles.*
- a. *Repair .*
    1. Wood siding should be maintained with paint or stain.
    2. Deteriorated wood siding should be replaced with new material resembling the original in width, thickness, profile and texture.
      - (i) Siding should match the original pattern (usually horizontal placement) except where vertical or diagonal siding was used.
      - (ii) Wood shingles or other material should not be used to replace horizontal wood siding.
      - (iii) If replacement of wood siding is not feasible for financial or other reasons, the HPC may approve an alternative material.
  - b. *Exterior trim .*
    1. Exterior features such as corner boards, frieze boards, drip caps or other features should be included in repairs and/or new siding.
    2. Decorative siding treatments, such as shingles in gable ends, should be retained in repairs and/or new siding. If replacement is necessary, new shingles should match the original in width, pattern, thickness, profile and texture.
  - c. *Vinyl, aluminum and manufactured siding .*
    1. Vinyl, aluminum and other types of manufactured siding are not recommended for buildings in the district.
    2. If the HPC determines that the original siding is not salvageable, it may consider the following options:
      - (i) Replacement of original siding with a modern cementitious product (such as "Hardiplank") that duplicates the original in width, pattern, thickness, profile and texture;
      - (ii) Original exterior features such as corner boards, frieze boards, window surrounds or other trim should be retained as noted above; if replacement is necessary, features should be duplicated to match the original as closely as possible.
      - (iii) If the original siding is already covered with substitute siding and renovation is needed, it is preferable to remove the substitute siding and repair the original siding and exterior trim features.
      - (iv) If the original siding is already covered with substitute siding and only repairs are needed, retain the substitute siding and repair as necessary.
  - d. *Paint .* Original wood siding and replacement hardboard siding should be maintained with paint or stain.
- (3) *Roofs, chimneys and dormers.*
- a. *Roofing repair.*

1. When partial roofing repairs are necessary, replacement roofing should match the existing in composition, size, shape and texture.
  2. If the HPC determines that retention of the original roof is not feasible, new asphalt or fiberglass shingles may be used.
  3. Metal roofs are typical in La Crosse and may be approved by the HPC for appropriate properties.
  4. Rolled roofing should be used only on flat or slightly sloped roofs not visible from the street.
- b. *Alterations to roof shape.*
1. The original roof type, slope and overhangs should be preserved.
  2. Alterations to the roof shape on the side and rear should be compatible with the architectural character of the building.
  3. The shape of dormers should not be altered unless compatible with the original design.
  4. Dormers or other features may be added to restore a building to its original appearance, based on evidence indicating such features.
  5. New dormers, roof decks, balconies or other additions should not be added on the front or sides visible from the street. These additions may be acceptable on the rear or sides of the buildings not readily visible from the street.
  6. Skylights should not be installed on the front roof plane or sides visible from the street. When used, they should be flat and as close to the roof plane as possible. "Bubble" skylights should not be used.
- c. *Chimneys .*
1. Chimneys should be retained and repaired whenever possible.
  2. If chimneys require rebuilding, original details such as decorative panels and corbels should be replicated to match the original as closely as possible.
  3. When rebuilding, effort should be made to use salvaged brick that matches the original in color and texture. Mortar should be matched to the original in strength, color and joint tooling.
- (4) *Entries and doors.*
- a. *Maintain and conserve .*
1. Features of historic entries, including doors, door surrounds and hardware are the focal point of the façade and should be maintained.
  2. Original features of the entry, such as hoods, columns, sidelights, fanlights and transoms should be retained.
  3. If replacement is necessary, historic trim details should be retained.
- b. *Size and shape.*
1. The original size of the door opening should not be enlarged, reduced, or shortened in height to fit a new door.
- c. *Doors .*
1. Historic doors should be repaired rather than replaced.

2. If replacement of historic doors is necessary, replace with salvaged doors, or with a replacement door that is compatible with the material, design and hardware of the older door.
  3. Fiberglass doors and/or other alternatives that resemble wood doors, may be used if approved by the HPC.
  4. Steel replacement doors are not acceptable at front entrances; they should be used only at rear or side entrances that are not visible from the street.
  5. Historic door surrounds and trim should not be removed when replacement doors are installed.
  6. Windows in doors should be glass, rather than Plexiglass.
- d. *New entries* .
1. New doors should not be added at locations where they did not originally exist. If required to meet safety codes, doors should be added at the rear or side of buildings where they are not readily visible from the street.
  2. Sliding glass doors or French doors should be added only at the rear or sides of buildings where they are not readily visible from the street.
- e. *Storm and screen doors* .
1. Original storm and screen doors should be preserved and maintained when feasible.
  2. New doors should be compatible with the interior door in size and shape.
  3. New doors should preferably be constructed of wood; doors of aluminum with an anodized finish in colors complementary to the building may also be acceptable.
- (5) *Windows* .
- a. *Maintain and conserve* .
1. Existing window openings should be retained. Window openings should not be filled in with wood, brick, or any other materials.
  2. Retain all decorative trim around windows, including lintels, pediments and hoods.
  3. If replacement of trim is necessary, maintain the appearance of the original material.
  4. New window openings should not be added on principal elevations.
  5. If new windows are required, wood windows are preferred. (If metal is chosen, it should have a baked enamel or other appropriate factory finish.)
  6. Sash should be replaced with the same size and number of panes as the original sash. New sash, if required, should match the original. Replacement of double-hung windows with single panes of glass or crank-out windows is not appropriate.
  7. The HPC may require samples/examples of replacement windows to determine whether an option is an appropriate replacement.
- b. *Decorative glass*.
1. Decorative windows (stained, colored, or leaded glass) should be preserved in their original location, size and design with original materials and pattern.
  2. Decorative windows should be repaired rather than replaced.
  3. Decorative windows that are not original to a building should not be added to principal elevations.
- c. *Storm, screen and security windows* .

1. Repair or replicate wood storm windows and screens when possible.
  2. If metal storm windows are required, they should have a baked enamel factory finish.
  3. Storm windows and screens should be sized to fit the window opening and should match the divisions of the historic sash (center divide at same location as sash).
  4. Security bars should not be used in windows on principal facades; historic trim or features should not be removed for security bars or other security features.
- d. *Shutters* .
1. Shutters should not be installed on buildings where they were not originally used.
  2. Where appropriate, shutters should appear to be operable and mounted to the window casing.
  3. Shutters should be constructed of wood.
- (6) *Porches and steps*.
- a. *Repair and replacement* .
1. Retain and conserve porches, steps and handrails that are original and/or appropriate to the dwelling.
  2. If partial replacement or rebuilding is necessary, reconstruct the porch using historical research to determine an appropriate design.
  3. Porches on the front of buildings should not be enclosed.
  4. Reopening of previously enclosed front porches is encouraged when appropriate to the original dwelling.
- b. *Porch elements*.
1. Posts, columns and railings should be preserved and maintained.
  2. If partial replacement or rebuilding is necessary, use material to match the original in dimensions and detailing. Elaborate details on posts may be simplified, if necessary.
  3. Railings and balusters should be replaced or rebuilt in the original space, section and profile as the original.
  4. Replacement balusters on a porch railing should be appropriate for the dwelling's style and period.
  5. Metal posts and metal railings should not be used to replace wooden porch materials.
  6. Wood porch floors should be replaced with wood rather than concrete.
  7. Open sections of the porch foundation may be filled in with materials such as lattice panels that are appropriate for the age and style of the dwelling. Research should be conducted to identify appropriate materials.
- c. *Steps and stairs* .
1. Steps and stairs should be retained in their original location and configuration.
  2. Wood and concrete steps should be repaired to match the original.
  3. If new steps are necessary, wood and concrete steps should have treads, risers and handrails to match the original.
  4. Concrete steps should not be used to replace wooden steps.
- (7) *Decorative trim*.
- a. *Repair and replacement* .

1. New material used to repair or replace deteriorated trim should match the original as closely as possible.
  2. Deteriorated trim or features should be photographed or documented before being removed for repair or replacement so that the feature can be used as a pattern in selecting replacement materials.
  3. With HPC approval, elaborate trim may be replaced with simplified trim that matches the old in design and placement.
  4. New trim should be added only when there is clear evidence that such trim was original to the dwelling, or when there is documentation that similar trim was used on other dwellings of that style and age.
  5. Wood epoxy may be used to repair deteriorated or damaged trim if approved by the HPC.
- (f) *Design review standards for new construction* . These guidelines apply to additions to existing houses, including additions of porches or decks; (accessory buildings), including carriage houses; and a complete new structure.
- (1) *General design considerations* .
    - a. New construction of primary buildings, such as dwellings, should reflect the historic and architectural character of the district in building scale, massing, proportions and materials. New construction should reflect its own era, however, and not attempt to be falsely "historic."
    - b. Additions should reflect the building scale, massing, proportions and materials of the original building. Additions should be designed to blend with character of the original building.
    - c. Accessory buildings should reflect the general style of the primary building but are not required to replicate the style in detail.
  - (2) *Building placement* .
    - a. Placement of new buildings and additions should reflect the placement of surrounding buildings on the block face.
    - b. New construction shall meet the established front yard setback line, or fall within the range established for that block face.
    - c. New construction shall conform to the established side yard setback pattern for that block face.
  - (3) *Building massing and proportions*.
    - a. *Height and width* . The proportions of new construction should respect the average height and width of the majority of buildings on the block face.
  - (4) *Building elements*.
    - a. *Windows and doors* .
      1. Most windows within the district have a vertical orientation, with proportions of 2 or 3 to 1 (height to width). The proportion, size, rhythm and detailing of windows and doors in new construction should be compatible with that of adjacent buildings, but need not exactly replicate them.
      2. Internal window divisions (mullions) should match the original building on walls facing the street. On nonstreet facades or rear walls, one-over-one wood sash may be substituted for more complex mullion patterns.
      3. Window openings should be recessed, to create a pattern of light and shadow.

(See "Renovation" standards on window material.)

- b. *Roofs* . Roofs of new buildings or additions should be compatible in pitch, shape and materials with the principal building or nearby buildings. No vents, skylights, or other openings should be located on the front roof plane or sides visible from the street.
  - c. *Decks* . Unenclosed decks are incompatible with the character and historical period of the district. Decks shall be constructed only at the rear of buildings or where they are least conspicuous from the public way. Decks should not extend beyond the width of the building.
  - d. *Entries* . Entries should be located on the facade facing the public way. Entries to new principal buildings should be articulated with a porch or portico similar in character to nearby buildings.
  - e. *Exterior details* . Exterior details such as building trim or window and door hardware should be generally compatible with the style and materials of the original building, but need not replicate every detail of the original building.
- (5) *Building materials* . Building materials used in new construction should conform to those used on existing contributing buildings within the district: masonry, wood siding and wood shingles. However, if approved by the HPC, synthetic siding may be used on accessory buildings such as carriage houses to simulate horizontal lapsiding. Cementitious siding ("Hardiplank") is the most satisfactory in simulating wood siding.
- (6) *Additions* . Exterior additions to existing buildings can radically alter their appearance. Additions that are visible from a public street or sidewalk should be designed with scale, shape and materials that are consistent with those of the existing building. However, the addition should not be "disguised" as original: the use of the same wall plane, roof line or cornice height as the original building is not recommended.
- a. Additions on sides of buildings are discouraged, while additions at the rear of a building should not extend beyond the width of the building.
  - b. The roof of an addition should be lower in height than the main roof of the existing building, but compatible in pitch, shape and materials.
  - c. The foundation of an addition should match the material or appearance of the original foundation, and should also match the foundation sill height of the existing structure to present an unbroken line around the building's ground-level perimeter.
- (7) *Accessory buildings* . Accessory buildings include carriage houses, garages and other small buildings.
- a. *Carriage houses* . Carriage houses are among the character-defining features of the Tenth and Cass Neighborhood Historic District. Originally designed as small barns, they now generally function as garages, although their height allows for other uses such as home offices. As a unique type of accessory building, carriage houses in the City's older neighborhoods are subject to special provisions in this chapter, allowing greater height and building coverage. This chapter provides general design guidance for carriage houses: "The architecture of the accessory structure shall be historically compatible with the architecture of the primary structure appropriate to the period. The architecture of the accessory structure is not required to match the architecture of the primary structure so long as the architecture is appropriate to the period." The following standards apply to carriage houses and other accessory buildings as well.
    - 1. Placement on lot. Outbuildings shall be located in rear yards with vehicular access from the alley, in keeping with the established pattern.
    - 2. Wooden garage doors are recommended but not required. Metal doors, where used, should be simple in shape and without ornamentation.

3. Windows should generally match the shape of windows on the principal building, but may be smaller in size, consistent with the scale of the building, and may employ simpler divisions (one-over-one wood sash, or windows with fixed, simulated muntins).
  4. Materials similar to those of the principal building are preferred. However, if approved by the HPC, synthetic cementitious siding (such as "Hardiplank") or vinyl siding may be used to simulate wood siding, with a profile and lap exposure similar to that of the principal building.
- (g) *Site design* . Most houses within the district, with or without porches, are set back a relatively even distance from the street. Front yards are typical of many residential neighborhoods: many have lawns extending to the sidewalk, while others have low ornamental fences or stone walls at the edge of the sidewalk. Some lawns slope upwards slightly from the street level. Many houses have foundation plantings, and mature shrubs are found within most yards. Boulevards with evenly spaced canopy trees are located between the sidewalk and the street. All these elements give a pedestrian scale to the street and create a transition between public and private spaces. Driveways are typically concrete and single-lane in width. Most driveways take access from alleys to detached carriage houses or garages or parking areas at the rear of each lot. There is currently only one off-street surface parking lot within the district; providing parking for an adjacent medical office outside the district. The "alleyscape" differs from the streetscape. Alleys bisect every block within the district, and provide access to most garage and parking areas, with the exception of outbuildings on a few corner lots. Most rear yards are separated from the alley by a fence or wall, usually higher than those in the front yard and by the wall of the carriage house or garage. Improvements or changes in site design should be consistent with the pattern described above.
- (1) Off-street parking shall be located to the rear of the principal building, in locations that are least visible from the street.
  - (2) Surface parking areas visible from the street shall be fenced with ornamental iron or painted wooden fences or low stone walls. Fencing within front yards shall be no higher than four feet.
  - (3) Wooden or ornamental iron fences are encouraged along rear lot lines abutting the alley.
  - (4) Front yards may remain open to the street or may be fenced, if desired, with ornamental iron or painted wooden fences or low stone walls. Fencing shall be no higher than four feet, in order to allow visibility into front yards.
  - (5) Air conditioners, heat pumps, and other outdoor equipment should be located where they are least visible from the street.
  - (6) In planting strips along the street, canopy trees should be added to "fill in" locations where they are lacking.
- (h) *Appeal* . Applicants may appeal any HPC decision to the Common Council. An appeal shall be in writing specifying the grounds upon which the appeal is based and shall be filed with the City Clerk within 30 days of the date of the decision of the HPC that is being appealed.

(Code 1980, § 15.38(G); Ord. No. [4911](#), § I(attch.), 1-14-2016)