APPENDIX H. THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION EXPLAINED

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The Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation Explained

Standard 1: A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.

Make sure that the new proposed use for a building is compatible with its original use. If the new use requires too many alterations to the existing building (infilling windows, altering window and door opening patterns, making new garage door openings, raising the roof, etc.), then it's probably not the best use for the building.

Some buildings naturally adapt to new uses. For example, office buildings make good hotels and vice versa because of the multiple small rooms, whereas warehouses are more easily adapted to gyms or theaters because of the existing large open spaces.

Standard 2: The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.

Avoid altering or removing historic features because this can irreparably damage the historic character of a building. For example, Craftsman influenced buildings sought natural materials and played with textures. These houses often would have very narrow clapboard on the first story and shingles on the second. However, covering these with a synthetic material, such as vinyl siding, loses that contrast in texture, and typically alters the profile of the exposed siding, changing the architectural character of the building.

So, before removing features, first consider how you can keep what you have. You will not be able to get materials and craftsmanship you see in some historic buildings today, at least not at a price anyone can afford. Preserve those priceless features!

Standard 3: Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.

Avoid fake history. Don't imitate earlier styles, add historic details on new construction, reconstruct a missing feature without documentation of its original appearance and placement, or design a new feature or building to look as if "it's always been there."

Standard 4: Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.

Remember, previous modifications may also be historic. Buildings have long lives and while a building constructed in 1820 may be the focus of your interest, the addition or modification made in 1920 can also reflect a significant historical trend, such as changing social norms regarding public and private spaces in a residence. Another way to think about this is that it isn't okay to automatically remove a porch or addition just because it's not part of the original building, and it isn't always necessary to restore a building back to its original appearance. Perhaps the only

buildings where removal to a certain time is necessary are museums seeking to portray a specific time-period. Most people are not willing to forgo indoor plumbing and closets for this level of accuracy – nor is it required!

Standard 5: Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.

Whenever possible, preserve historic features. This is almost a repeat of Standard 2, but the take away with all the Standards is to always try to preserve in place, rather than replace.

Standard 6: Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.

Again, if the distinctive historic feature is deteriorated, first consider repair rather than immediately opting for replacement. Repairing distinctive historic features may involve some investigation by a qualified architectural historian or historic architect to determine whether repair is an option. Remember, necessary replacements should match the original in terms of design, color, texture, dimension, and materials, where possible. Use documentary or physical evidence as the basis for the replacement item. If too many historic features are replaced instead of repaired, this negatively impacts the historic integrity of the property. Eventually, the property would no longer be considered historic, but a reconstruction, which is typically not eligible for the NRHP.

Standard 7: Chemical of physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.

Clean the building using the gentlest means possible – no blasting (including use of sand, walnut shells, or water) or corrosive chemicals. Some forms of cleaning may actually change the look of the building and speed up deterioration. For example, sandblasting brick buildings can change the appearance by enlarging the mortar joints and speed up deterioration of the brick because the inner “soft” core of the brick is left exposed to the elements. Think of this as the “Do No Harm” standard.

Standard 8: Significant archaeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.

Preserve archaeological resources or, if you can’t preserve the archaeological resource, hire a professional to recover significant information prior to damaging the resource through ground disturbing activities.

Archaeological resources are referred to as “non-renewable” resources like coal or oil – once they are gone, they can’t be replaced or remade.

Standard 9: New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

Design of new construction should be guided by the principle of "different but compatible." So, don't destroy historic materials, do differentiate new from the old, do make the new compatible with massing, size, scale, and features of the old. A good rule of thumb is to ask yourself if the new construction is so jarring that it makes your head turn and your jaw drop when you drive by or do you simply see the new construction out of the corner of your eye and recognize it as new?

Standard 10: New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Modifications to the building should be removable or reversible. The goal is to leave as much of the original materials intact, and undamaged, as possible. Synthetic siding, for example, can be removed, but if the prep work for its installation required removal of all the details to "flatten the surface" for the new cladding, it is not considered reversible. Typically, lost details in this instance are details around window hoods and sills, and trim boards. If original windows or doors are removed (and hopefully stored so they can someday be reinstalled), the new window or door shouldn't require larger or smaller openings that necessitate alterations to the wall materials.

Additions and changes to the original massing may be more challenging to remove, and therefore should be carefully considered before their construction.