

# Wright-Dunbar Village Historic District Guidelines for New Construction



City of Dayton  
Department of Planning and Community Development

Prepared by  
City of Dayton Landmarks Commission  
Wright-Dunbar Village Neighborhood Association

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## INTRODUCTION

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Once the cultural center of African American life in Dayton, Wright-Dunbar Village is a neighborhood comprised of primarily working-class residential structures. Wilbur and Orville Wright lived in the neighborhood at 7 Hawthorne Street and are credited with inventing the airplane at their bicycle shop on West Third Street. Famed African-American poet and scholar Paul Laurence Dunbar, a friend of the Wright Brothers, lived a few blocks away on Summit Street (now North Paul Laurence Dunbar St.) and was often found reciting his works throughout the community. The Wright-Dunbar Village neighborhood became a locally designated historic district in March 2002.

The neighborhood is unique as an historic district due in part by the large amount of vacant, developable land located within the boundaries of the district. This undeveloped residential land present a great opportunity to redevelop the Wright-Dunbar Village neighborhood into a completely unique historic community by carefully and sensitively blending the existing, historic housing stock with new residential development. These guidelines were developed to insure that new, infill development is compatible with existing development in the neighborhood. These guidelines will be used by the City of Dayton Landmarks Commission when reviewing proposals for new development in the Wright-Dunbar Village Neighborhood.

## NEIGHBORHOOD GOALS

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Through meetings with the Wright-Dunbar Village Neighborhood Association the following items were identified as important goals for new development in the neighborhood:

- New structures should be compatible with the surrounding structures in the district in their setback, size, scale, mass, rhythm, and construction materials.
- It is important that new development continue to promote the historic ambiance of the neighborhood and therefore new development that resembles historic construction design and details are encouraged.
- Contemporary design elements should not be prohibited, however their use should be skillfully designed and be reflective of existing design elements found in the neighborhood. Structures containing contemporary design elements must work to enhance the streetscape and not detract from it.

These goals were used as the foundation for this document. These guidelines work to insure that new development in Wright-Dunbar Village responds to these goals, and therefore the resulting new development will be compatible with the architecture of the district as well as the goals of neighborhood residents.

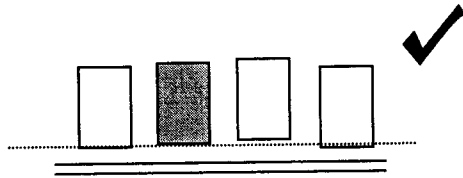
## GUIDELINES FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION

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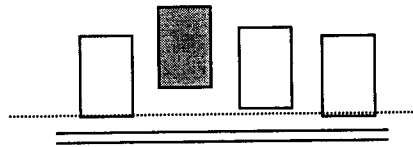
The following guidelines shall apply to the evaluation of the appropriateness of proposed new development in the Wright-Dunbar Village Neighborhood:

### A. *Setback, Spacing and Orientation*

1. The **setback** (the distance from the front wall of the building to the street right-of-way) should be based on the setbacks of the existing structures on the block face. This produces consistency in the streetscape and is reflective of the existing development pattern of the neighborhood.

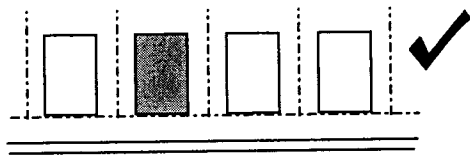


New building setback is reflective of the existing pattern of development

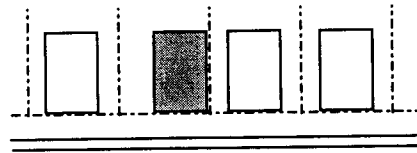


New building setback is not reflective of the existing pattern. Streetscape consistency is not maintained.

2. The **spacing** between buildings shall be reflective of the existing spacing of structures on the block face unless unique circumstances of the lot prevent similar spacing of the structures. This also produces consistency in the streetscape.

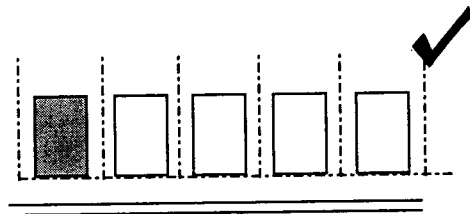


Appropriate spacing between buildings



Inappropriate spacing between buildings

3. The building shall be oriented on the lot in a manner that is consistent with the **orientation** of existing structure on the block face.



Appropriate building orientation



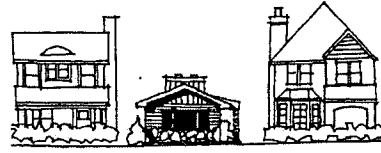
Inappropriate building orientation

B. *Size and Shape*

1. The **height** of a new structure as viewed from the street shall be compatible with adjacent contributing properties. Offsets may be used at upper levels as a design element to add variety and interest to the facade of the new building. In addition to overall height, floor heights and foundation heights should be compatible with existing structures.

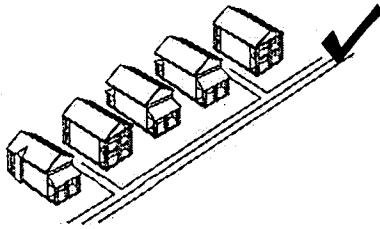


Appropriate building height maintains character of the streetscape



Inappropriate building height. Building does not relate to its neighbors

2. The new structure should match the surrounding buildings in **proportion**, being the height to width ratio (tall and narrow or short and wide)

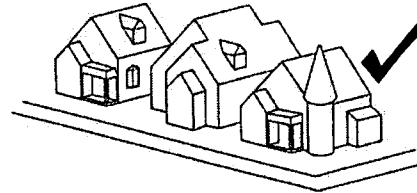


Buildings have compatible proportions

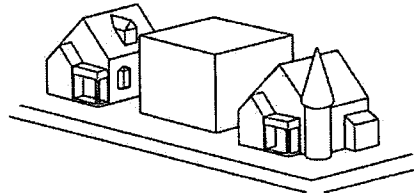


Buildings do not have compatible proportions

3. The **massing and shape** of the new building must take into consideration the massing patterns of the existing buildings on the street.

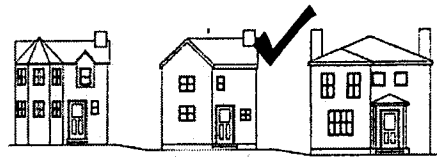


4. The **roof shape and roof pitch** shall be reflective of the existing buildings in the district. Most houses in the districts have simple gable roof forms with a gable facing the street. Hipped and gambrel roof forms are also found in the neighborhood, however they are much less common.

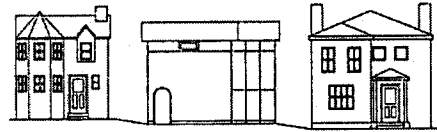


5. **Porches** are a common design element in the district and therefore new structures should incorporate porches in their design. Porch size and shape should be reflective of existing structures in the district.

6. Historic buildings were designed in a way that produced a **rhythm** along the front façade. Window and door opening proportions and locations create a rhythm on the façade of a building. New structures shall have window and door openings of similar size, proportion and location as existing structures in the district.



Rhythm is also created by projections and offsets (porches, bays, entrances) in the façade to visually break up a large expansive façade into smaller scale elements. New structures should draw elements from existing adjacent buildings to add visual interests to the façade of the proposed structure.



7. Exterior elevations void of window or door openings are normally not acceptable. These **blank walls** are not representative of typical home construction in the neighborhood. All street facing and other highly visible elevations shall include window and door openings. Every effort should be made to incorporate window or door openings on the front half of side elevations, at a minimum, to help maintain consistency along the streetscape. If floor plans do not allow for window or door openings on the side elevations, those elevations should include design elements that visually break up the scale of those elevations.

### C. Construction Materials

1. **Roofing materials** should be consistent with that of neighboring buildings. Roofing materials should be dark in color.
2. Acceptable **Siding** material includes the following:
  - Wood siding
  - Concrete “clapboard” siding
  - Brick
  - Stucco

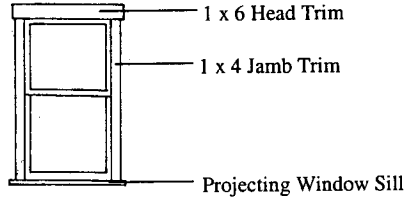
Wood siding and concrete “clapboard” should be installed with an exposure similar to that found on existing houses in the neighborhood. Generally a 3” – 5” exposure is acceptable.

Vinyl or aluminum siding is prohibited.

3. The **foundations** of new buildings should have a height that is consistent with the surrounding structures. Foundations can be made of brick, poured in place concrete, or split face block. Smooth faced concrete block is permitted, however it must have stucco applied as a finish.
4. **Windows** on a new building should have a proportion that is consistent with the window proportions of surrounding structures. Generally windows should be twice as tall as they are wide. Windows shall be made of wood. Vinyl-clad wood or aluminum-clad wood windows are acceptable. All vinyl new construction or replacement windows are prohibited. Windows with mullions installed between the glass of a double-pane window is not acceptable.

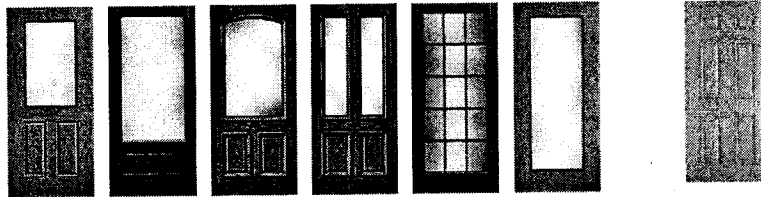
**Window Trim** is an important design element that must be incorporated into new construction. Trim around windows facing a public street should be compatible to window trim found on existing, historic structures in the neighborhood. Trim around non-street facing windows may be simpler in design. Windows without exterior trim are prohibited.

An example of minimal window trim for non-street facing windows:

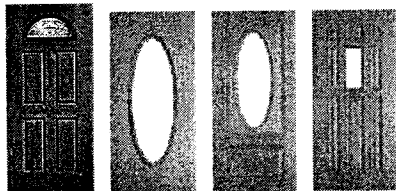


- Doors** are style elements on the front façade of a home and should be designed to complement the style of the building. Front doors for this neighborhood typically consisted of one large rectangular area of glass in the upper ½ to ¾ of the door. Below the glass area were two raised panels. This style is readily available today in either wood or steel. Side and rear doors do not need to contain as much glass area, however they should be a style that complements the design of the house. Doors with fan light windows are prohibited, as are flush doors installed on the exterior of the house.

Examples of appropriate doors include:

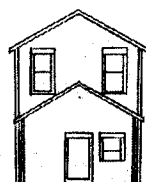


Examples of inappropriate doors include:



#### D. Building Additions

Building additions should be of a size and scale that is consistent with the house on which they are constructed. Building additions should be designed to clearly differentiate the addition from the original structure. This can be achieved by in-setting the sides of the addition from the sides of the original structure, or by applying a trim board where the addition meets the original structure. Building additions that are wider than the original structure are normally not acceptable.



Building addition is appropriate width for primary structure



Building addition is too wide for primary structure.

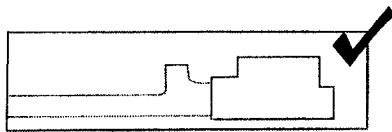


The exterior siding materials that are acceptable for building additions are the same as those acceptable for primary structures. The siding material should compliment the primary structure. Roofing shingles shall be the same style and color as the primary structure. Windows and doors should be of similar proportions and placement as the original structure and it is important that the head heights of the new windows and doors align with the original windows and doors.

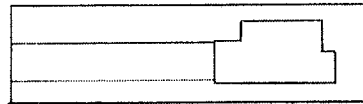
#### E. Accessory Structures

**Garages** should be designed to complement the primary structure. As with building additions, the siding materials of a garage should be compatible with those used on the primary structure. Detached garages are preferred, however attached or integrated garages may be appropriate if the overall design is compatible with the surrounding structures in terms of scale, mass, and rhythm. It is important that structures with attached or integrated garages be design to minimize any potential impact that the garage element may have on the streetscape.

Garages, detached or attached, shall be situated with the automobile doors facing an alley. For instances where an attached or integrated garage is facing an alley, the driveway shall be designed to allow the maximum amount of green space in the rear yard.



Building and driveway are designed to allow maximum green space. The driveway is kept as narrow as possible.

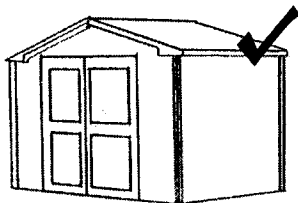


Building and driveway are not designed to allow maximum green space. The driveway is too wide and centered in the rear yard.

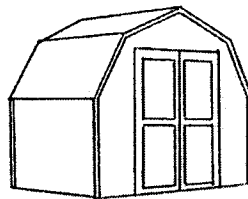
If an alley is not available, automobile doors may face the street, however those doors must be of a higher design quality than a typical, raised panel overhead garage door. The design of those doors must be compatible to the design of the house and help to enhance the streetscape rather than detract from it.

If a garage is situated with the automobile doors facing the street, the garage/driveway should not be sited in a way that promotes the obstruction of pedestrian movement along the sidewalk.

**Storage sheds** are acceptable as long as they are appropriately designed and constructed of wood. Storage sheds with a gambrel roof, or barn roof, are prohibited. Vinyl or aluminum storage sheds are prohibited.



Appropriate, wooden storage shed with simple gable roof design.



Inappropriate, wooden storage shed with gambrel, or barn, style roof. This is too rural for an urban setting

## ARCHITECTURAL VARIETY

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One unique aspect of the Wright-Dunbar neighborhood is the wide variety of architectural styles and detailing. New structures should be designed to continue this variety throughout the neighborhood. Similar house designs can be used, however they must be dispersed throughout the neighborhood and shall be limited to three structures that have the same, or similar, design. This will continue to promote the historic ambiance of the neighborhood and the possibility of creating a repetitive suburban feel.

## GENERAL APPLICABILITY

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This document is meant to supplement the City's current historic district design guideline document, *The Blueprint for Rehabilitation*. It is not intended to replace it. In instances where this document does not address a specific topic, *The Blueprint for Rehabilitation* shall be the document for which those items must comply.