

INTRODUCTION

About the Design Guidelines

From 1986 to 1988, the City of Liberty designated five local historic districts to encourage the preservation, conservation, restoration, and rehabilitation of historically and architecturally significant areas in the city. Historic district zoning enhances property values and helps to safeguard the heritage of the community for the education, pleasure, and enrichment of all citizens.

By ordinance (Article VIII of the City of Liberty's Unified Development Ordinance [Chapter 30 of the City Code]), any proposed alteration to the exterior of a property located in those historic districts is subject to review by the City's Historic District Review Commission (HDRC).

The purpose of the Historic District Design Guidelines is to assist property owners when planning an improvement project, to ensure that the proposed work will help preserve the historic character of the property and the neighborhood.

The Guidelines have been written to help preserve the historic integrity of the original architecture of the buildings in the historic districts, while allowing for flexibility in meeting the practical needs of the residents and property owners. The Guidelines allow for change when it is accomplished in a sensitive manner that maintains the special character of the property and the historic districts.

The guidelines are based on accepted practices for historic preservation, outlined in *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings* (see page 54). These standards, along with the following design principles, are used by the HDRC when considering an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness.

Design review decisions are based on the same set of principles for all properties in the historic districts, but structures that possess a greater degree of integrity, originality, craftsmanship, and historic significance may have the principles more stringently applied than those with lesser significance. These principles are applied for all alterations, construction, demolition, or repairs affecting the exterior appearance of the property.

It is important to remember that any exterior changes to your property (alterations, minor repairs, new construction, demolition, fences, sidewalks, decks, etc.) are subject to review before the project begins.

The Unified Development Ordinance (UDO)

The UDO is the City's official zoning and development ordinance, and includes the historic preservation overlay districts (historic districts). These Historic District Design Guidelines are a supplement to the UDO, and serve as an aid in the interpretation and implementation of the UDO. Both the UDO and the Design Guidelines must be consulted when considering the appropriateness of an application.

When UDO standards apply, in such cases as new construction, fences, signs, and accessory structures, for example, those standards are included within the appropriate section of the Design Guidelines as a reference and for the sake of convenience. The UDO is amended periodically, however, and so the most current version of the code will apply.

The definitions used in the Design Guidelines are consistent with those outlined in the UDO. The words "shall," "will," and "must" are mandatory, and the words "should" and "may" are permissive.

Both the Design Guidelines and the UDO are consulted when determining the appropriateness of a project.



INTRODUCTION

Liberty's Historic Districts

Dougherty

The Dougherty Historic District is the gateway to downtown Liberty, running along west Franklin and Kansas Streets. This district is named for Dr. W.W. Dougherty, whose residence was at 305 West Kansas Street, and who served as mayor of Liberty. This neighborhood grew from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century and has a wide variety of architecturally significant structures.

Jewell

The Jewell Historic District is the largest of the districts, with over 200 buildings. It is significant for the variety of residential architecture found in the neighborhood. Some of Liberty's oldest residences are on East Franklin Street and date from before the Civil War.

Liberty Square

The downtown business district, with the courthouse as the focal point, features traditional

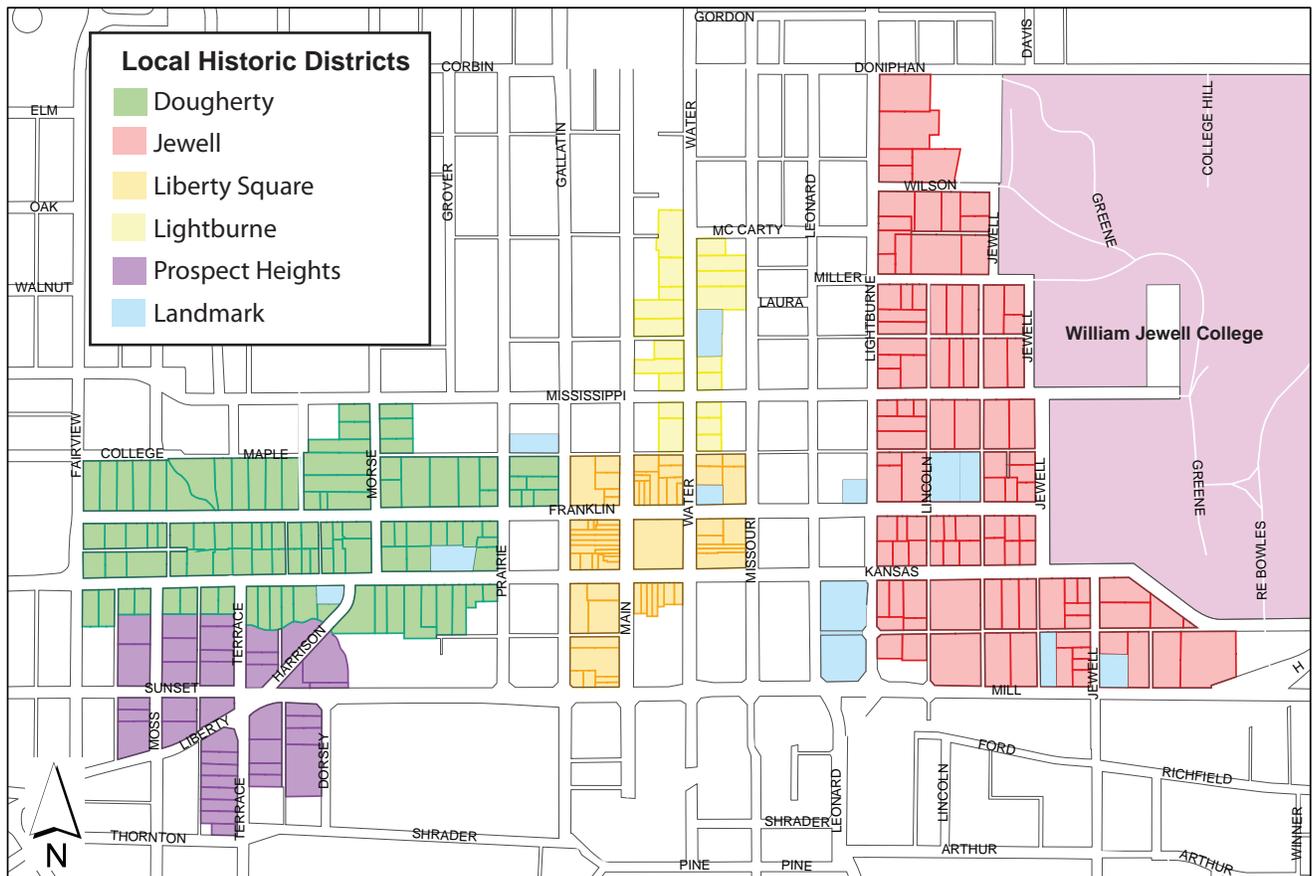
commercial architecture dating from 1875. The historic square gives Liberty its unique identity and sense of place.

Lightburne

Lightburne is the smallest of the districts, with only about 20 buildings on two blocks of North Water Street. It is named for Alvan Lightburne, who once owned the land now incorporated in the historic district, and who, in 1852, built the Georgian Revival style Lightburne Hall. Found also in the district are some fine examples of Queen Anne, Craftsman, and Tudor Revival styles.

Prospect Heights

This district is centered on the Prospect Heights Addition, which was established in the early twentieth century. It features more modest homes on smaller lots, such as Queen Anne cottages and Craftsman bungalows.



ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER

American settlers began to arrive in the Liberty area in the early 1800s, and by 1822 the settlement had grown to become the county seat for Clay County. Incorporated in 1829, Liberty is the second oldest incorporated town west of the Mississippi River. The earliest settlers in Liberty were from Kentucky, North Carolina, and Tennessee. Those who settled north of the Missouri River were farmers who brought with them their agrarian traditions and building traditions that reflected types dominant in the American South.

Type

Houses are often categorized by their style, reflected in the architectural decoration, and their form or shape, identified by the structure's floor plan and elevations. Queen Anne and Prairie are examples of architectural styles, while I-house and four-square are examples of architectural types or forms.



I-Houses

I-houses are a form that has continued from the antebellum period and are typically two stories high, two rooms wide, and one room deep. Many of Liberty's I-houses are one and a half stories high, with a central dormer. The one story variation of the I-house is known as the hall & parlor or Cape Cod. Variations are found in the porch size and roof shapes, differing chimney placements, and additions.



Four-Square

Four-square houses are two stories high, two rooms wide, and two rooms deep. They are most often found with a one-story porch, and a pyramidal or hipped roof, with a central dormer. Four-squares usually have Colonial Revival, Prairie, or Craftsman style elements.



Bungalow

The bungalow or bungalowoid was one of the most popular forms of housing for the working class in early twentieth century America. Typically identified with the Craftsman style, the term bungalow refers to a one or one-and-a-half story house with a front porch roof extending over a full or half-width porch. The Craftsman details are found in the porch supports, windows, and exposed rafters. The bungalow is one of the most common residential types found in Liberty.



ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER

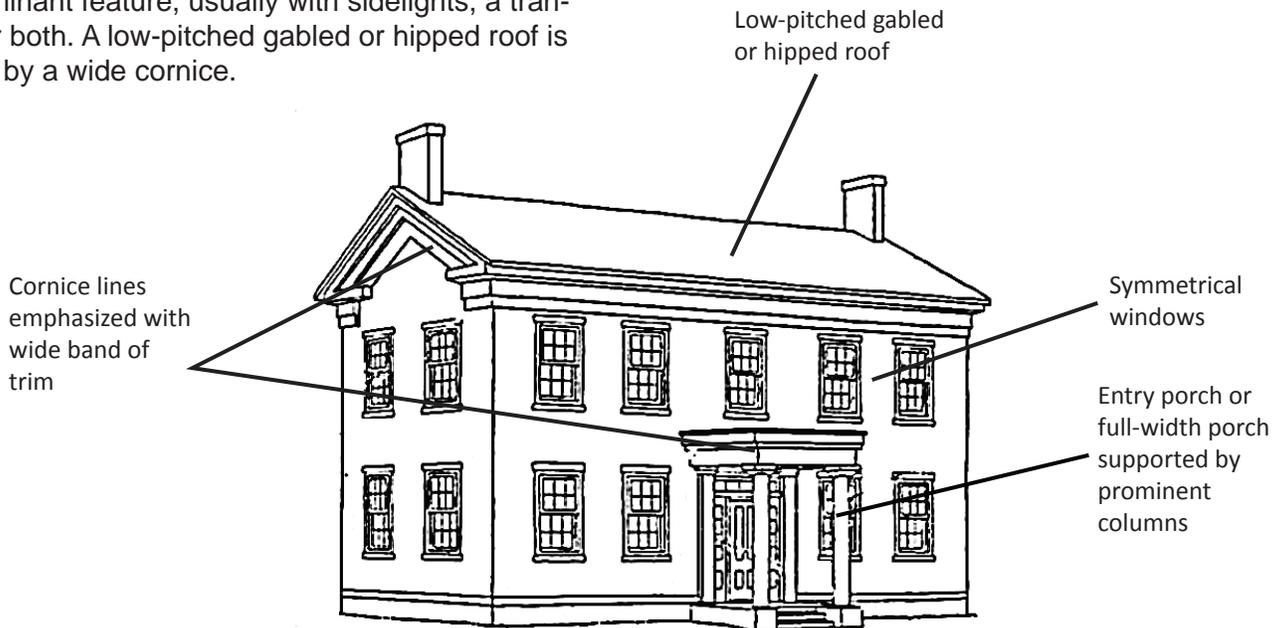
Style

Following the Civil War, and through the end of the nineteenth century, Liberty experienced a housing boom, with the construction of hundreds of new homes. These houses displayed a variety of architectural styles, but mostly they were simple structures in the regional style with little decoration. Lacking any definable architectural style, these homes are categorized as vernacular, or National Folk, and display a great variety of building forms and types. Liberty has examples of nearly every type of late nineteenth century vernacular housing type.



Greek Revival

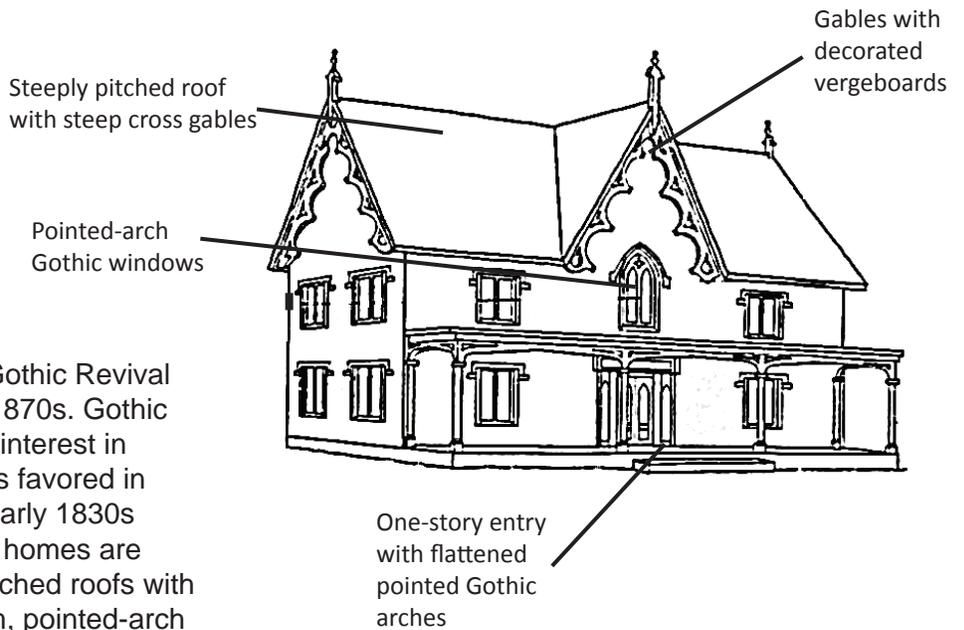
Built from the 1830s through 1860s and usually constructed of brick, Greek Revival residences were often the first permanent homes built in and around Liberty after the initial settlement dwellings. This style is distinguished by its simple rectangular form with a symmetrical facade. The main entry door is usually the dominant feature, usually with sidelights, a transom, or both. A low-pitched gabled or hipped roof is framed by a wide cornice.



ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER

Gothic Revival

There are a few examples of the Gothic Revival style in Liberty that date from the 1870s. Gothic Revival was a result of a renewed interest in Europe's Medieval period, and was favored in America as a rural style from the early 1830s through the 1870s. Gothic Revival homes are easily identified by their steeply pitched roofs with steep cross gables, decorative trim, pointed-arch (Gothic) windows, and a one-story entry porch.



Victorian/Queen Anne

Victorian is the term used for the styles made popular during the reign of Britain's Queen Victoria, from about 1860 to 1900. In Liberty, most Victorian homes are in the Queen Anne style, which are recognized by their steeply pitched roofs of irregular shape, a variety of materials and textures to avoid a smooth-walled surface, asymmetrical facades, partial, full-width, or wrap-around porches, and windows of various types and sizes.

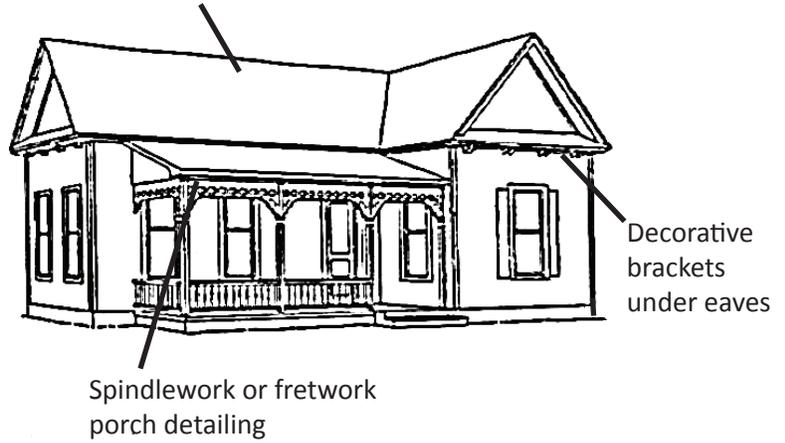


ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER

Folk Victorian

These homes are recognized by the Victorian details, which are less elaborate than a Queen Anne. Often, the details are found only on the porch. The form is a simple folk house, either one or two stories. The one story type is very common in Liberty.

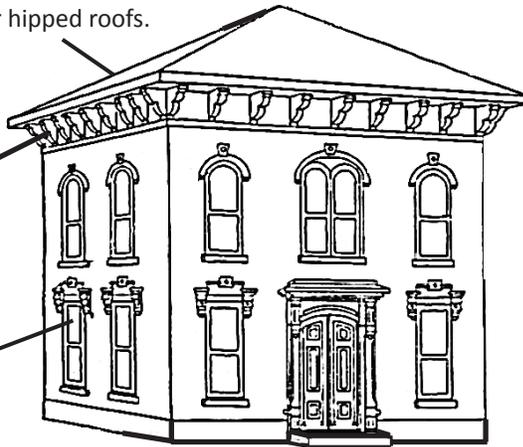
One or two stories with simple I or L shape plan



Low pitched gabled or hipped roofs.

Wide, overhanging eaves supported by decorative brackets

Windows are tall and narrow and many have elaborate molded crowns.



Italianate

Liberty's Italianate houses are two stories and have low-pitched gabled or hipped roofs. The wide, overhanging eaves are supported by single or paired decorative brackets. The windows are tall and narrow, sometimes paired, and may have elaborate molded crowns. Nearly all of Liberty's Italianate houses are brick.

Tudor Revival

The examples of Colonial and Tudor Revival Styles in Liberty are generally modest, but are typical of those found in the region in the twentieth century. Common features of Liberty's Tudor Revival include the steeply pitched roof and ornamental half-timbering and stucco in the upper story.

Steeply pitched roof

Ornamental half-timbering in the upper story

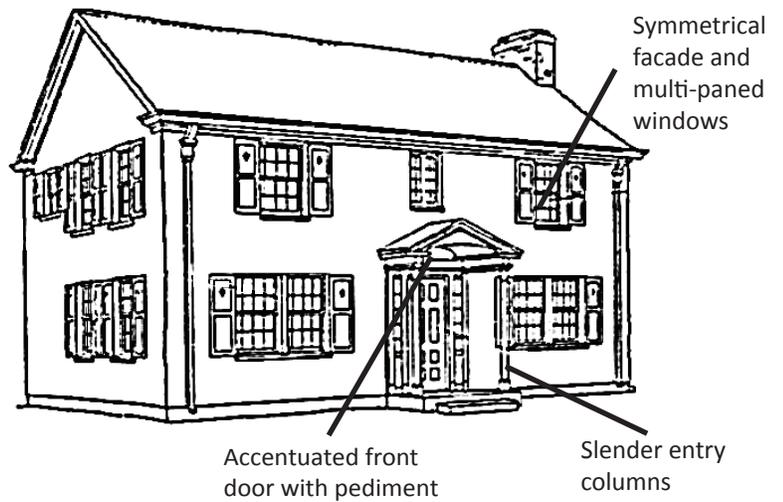
Tall, narrow windows



ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER

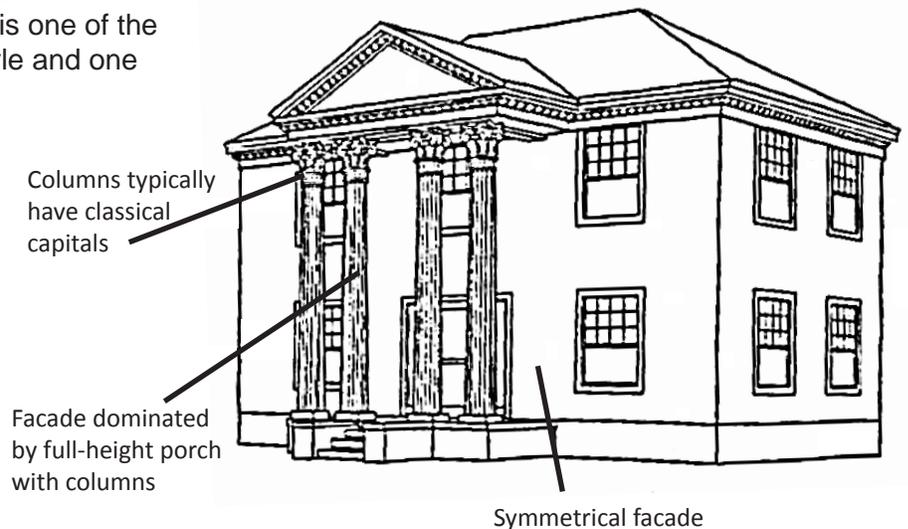
Colonial Revival

Colonial Revival houses in Liberty are simple, featuring symmetrical facades and multi-paned windows. The front door is often accentuated with a pediment supported by slender entry columns and a fanlight over the door.



Neo-classical

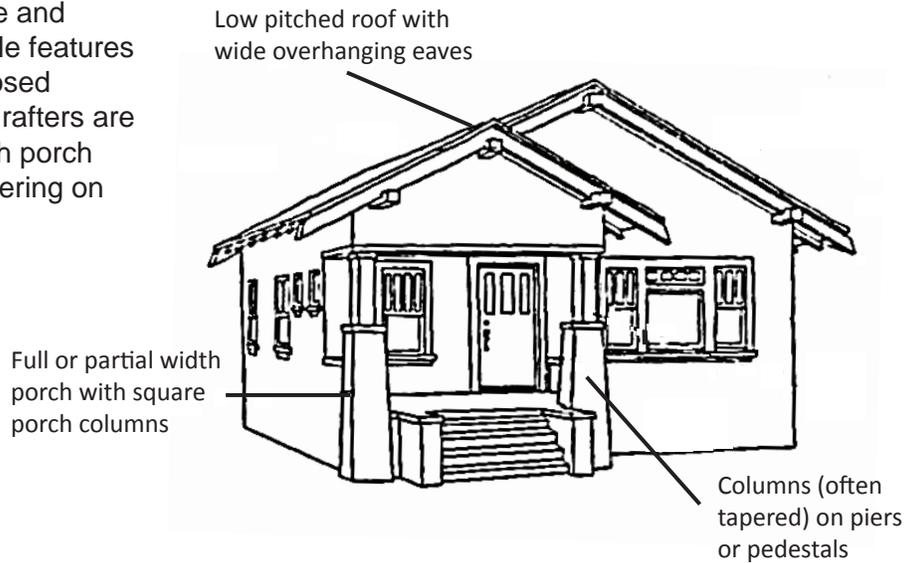
The Neo-classical style was also popular in Liberty, both for new construction and for alterations to existing buildings. Many earlier antebellum homes were updated with a massive two-story Neo-classical entry porch in the early twentieth century. The porch is one of the main identifying features of this style and one that sets the building apart.



ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER

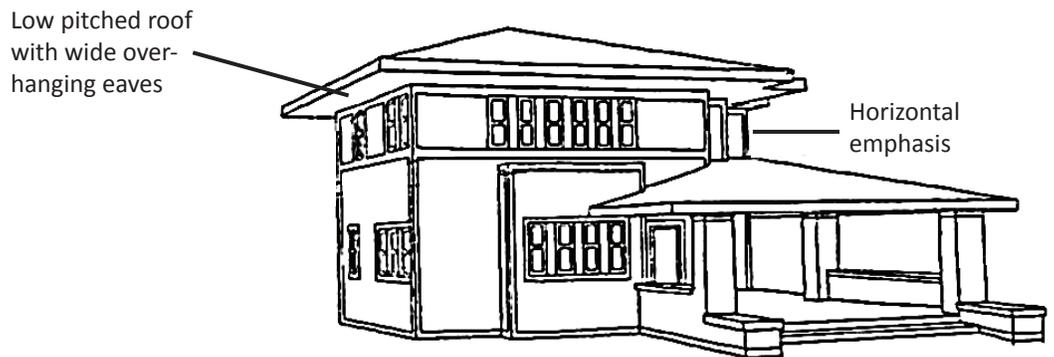
Craftsman

The two predominating styles for the first half of the twentieth century were the Prairie and Craftsman styles. The Craftsman style features a low-pitched roof with wide, unenclosed overhanging eaves in which the roof rafters are usually exposed. A full or partial width porch has square porch columns, often tapering on piers or pedestals.



Prairie

The Prairie style, one of the few indigenous American styles of architecture, is typified by a low-pitched roof with widely-overhanging eaves. The emphasis is on the horizontal, although the massing may be vertical or square. Craftsman and Prairie details were often applied to modest buildings such as four-squares and bungalows.



ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER

Commercial and Religious Architecture

Commercial buildings were often built in the same styles as houses. The Liberty Square features two-story commercial buildings in the Victorian, Italianate, and Neo-classical revival styles.

Romanesque Revival was also commonly used for commercial buildings and churches. In Liberty, the First Presbyterian Church and 5 East Kansas Street are fine examples of the rounded arches and rusticated stone accent used in this style.

The Liberty Christian Church on East Kansas Street is a fine example of High Victorian Gothic, with its pointed windows and variety of materials. Gothic was associated with moral integrity, so it was often used for churches.



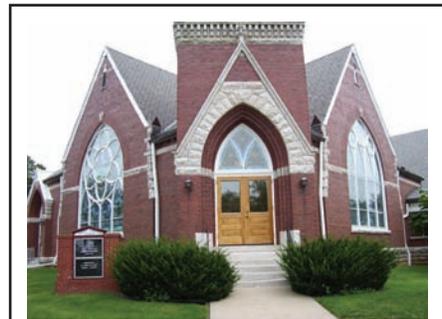
Non-Contributing Buildings

Non-contributing buildings are those within the historic districts that do not contribute to the history or architecture of the district. Typically, buildings less than 50 years old are considered non-contributing unless they are noted for their architectural or historical merit that surpasses age. Most non-contributing buildings in Liberty's historic districts were built before the districts were designated, and usually have setbacks or style that is not in keeping with the districts.

Considerable flexibility is warranted when making changes to non-contributing buildings. Proposals that make practical and aesthetic sense, but that may be contrary to specific guidelines, are welcome when they uphold the overall intent of the guidelines.



5 East Kansas Street is a good example of Romanesque Revival.



The Liberty Christian Church is a fine example of High Victorian Gothic.



This split level house is less than 50 years old and so does not contribute to the historic character of the neighborhood.

THE HISTORIC DISTRICT REVIEW COMMISSION

The Historic District Review Commission (HDRC) is a panel of nine Liberty residents who each have some knowledge or special interest in historic preservation. The mayor and City Council appoint the volunteer members who, as a group, are responsible for preserving the character of Liberty's historic districts.

The HDRC reviews applications for Certificates of Appropriateness (CoA) to ensure that exterior changes made to properties in the historic districts maintain historic integrity and reflect the intent of the Design Guidelines. The HDRC consults the Guidelines when reviewing each application, to determine the appropriateness of the work proposed, and to review each project in a consistent manner.

All meetings of the HDRC are open to the public. The HDRC meets at City Hall twice monthly, on the second and fourth Mondays, when there are applications to consider.

Design Subcommittee

The HDRC has a standing subcommittee of experienced preservationists who are available to meet with applicants *on-site* before or during the application process. The Design Subcommittee will review and comment on proposed applications, at no charge to the applicant.

City Staff

The City's historic preservation planner serves as staff to the HDRC and makes recommendations based on the zoning ordinances, UDO and Design Guidelines. The preservation planner is also available to answer questions about living in the historic districts, the design review process, and other issues regarding the care and maintenance of older homes.



HOW TO USE THE DESIGN GUIDELINES

The Design Guidelines are organized into sections by project type. Each section contains examples of what is (and is not) recommended and any pertinent information from the City's Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). The UDO specifies regulations for new construction, size and placement of signs, fences, and accessory buildings, and any other development. Both the Design Guidelines and the UDO are consulted when determining the appropriateness of a project.

Here is an example of the information found in each section:

WALLS & FENCES

Each section begins with a Design Principle, which defines the appropriate treatment for that subject. The number corresponds to the section and paragraph in the Unified Development Ordinance of the City Code.

30-72.11 Design Principle: Fences and decorative walls should be placed and scaled in a manner that does not cover, block, or damage significant building facades or elements. Fences and walls should be of a style or period that corresponds with the style or period of the building or buildings they serve. Original fences, walls, and sidewalks and those that have acquired significance by virtue of age or craftsmanship should not be removed or destroyed and should be maintained and preserved.

Recommended

■ Steel, aluminum, or iron: If considering installing a new metal fence, it is best to follow historical precedent. If old photos show original iron fencing on the property, an appropriate reproduction could be chosen. If no historical precedent can be established, it is best to select a simple pattern over an ornate one.

Not Recommended

■ Chain link or cyclone fences are not appropriate for use in the historic districts.

UDO Sec. 30-81.1.2. Fences

1. In residential districts fences may be permitted in accordance with the following:

- a. Front Yard: Fence may not exceed 4 feet in height and shall be uniformly open to an extent equal to but not less than 50% of its surface area. Prior to the installation of a front yard fence, the written consent of all abutting property owners, including directly across the street, is required;
- b. Side and rear yard street side elevations: A fence adjacent to any public street shall be no greater than 5 feet in height and must also be uniformly open or perforated;
- c. Side and rear yard: Maximum height is 6 feet; and
- d. No fence shall impede vision of traffic on adjacent streets, alleys and drives.



Photos or drawings to illustrate each principle.



Application Requirements:

- ▶ Signed application form with complete project description
- ▶ Photos of existing conditions
- ▶ List of materials and specifications
- ▶ Scaled drawings of proposed fence
- ▶ Site plan

A list of application requirements.

Supplemental criteria, which help clarify the Design Principle with more specific information, recommendations for complying with it, and any applicable UDO standards.

