

SOUTH END LANDMARK DISTRICT  
Standards and Criteria  
Revised April 27, 1999

## **INTRODUCTION**

The statute creating the Boston Landmarks Commission (chapter 772 of the Acts of I of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts) requires Standards and Criteria for each district designated by the commission. These Standards and Criteria serve two purposes: one, to guide property owners in planning the rehabilitation of buildings; and two, to assist district commission in determining those architectural changes that are appropriate to district. The Standards and Criteria are not retroactive and apply only to changes proposed after the formal designation of the district. They also may not have anticipated every possible change which may be proposed.

The South End was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1973 as the largest urban Victorian neighborhood in the country, representing over 300 acres of land which was filled along the necklands and developed during the mid-nineteenth century. Substantially intact, the South End was designated a landmark district in 1983.

A landmark district is any area designated by the commission containing any physical features or improvements or both which are of historical, social, cultural, architectural or aesthetic significance to the city and the commonwealth, the New England region or the nation and cause such area to constitute a distinctive area of the city.

The Standards and Criteria may not have anticipated every possible change which may be proposed. For any property located within the boundaries of the landmark district, the commission must approve all exterior alterations (with the exception of those specific exemptions cited in Section O. of the Standards; also see Section P. for definition of exterior alterations). No building permit may be issued for exterior alterations unless accompanied by a certificate from the commission, and all zoning issues must be legalized before architectural review. If there are any questions regarding the standards and criteria, please contact commission staff for clarification.

Owners contemplating exterior changes to their properties should contact the commission office to file an application for design review. The commission meets once a month in a public hearing to review the applications and issues a certificate of Design Approval when it determines that the proposed work conforms to the Standards and Criteria. In rare instances, such as proven economic hardship, the commission may allow a variance from the Standards and Criteria.

Additional Standards and Criteria for commercial properties and for those within the Protection Area are available from the commission office.

It is generally recommended that deteriorated architectural elements be repaired with new material which duplicates the old as closely as possible. While alterations that intend to create an earlier appearance than that of the building are discouraged, previous changes to a building have often acquired significance and may warrant preservation.

## **I. SPECIFIC RESIDENTIAL STANDARDS AND CRITERIA SOUTH END LANDMARK DISTRICT**

### **A. GENERAL**

1. The intent of these standards and criteria is to preserve the physical features, architectural character and appearance of the South End, a cohesive district of 19th-century Victorian red brick rowhouses with various institutional and commercial structures. The dominant architectural feature of the South End Landmark District is the 19th-century rowhouse block. Houses appear relatively uniform in size, material, and style, the individuality of the unit being subordinated to the harmony of the street. The district is punctuated with occasional buildings of extraordinary architectural form, usually institutional structures such as churches.
2. The standards and criteria are intended to guide the inevitable changes to the exteriors of buildings and physical features within the district to make those changes sensitive to the architectural character of the district and to prevent intrusions. Under these guidelines, no work is required unless initiated owner of the property. "Should" as a verb in these guidelines indicates a recommended course of action; "shall" as a verb indicates those actions which are specifically required to preserve and protect significant architectural elements.
3. The most important feature of buildings are the facades that face the streets and avenues (including all elements of that facade, and the front yard) and the portions of roofs that are visible from public streets and avenues therefore the only parts subject to review.
4. All proposed changes or alterations to the elements mentioned in No. 3 above will be reviewed unless specifically exempted; preference will be given alterations that maintain, preserve, or restore according to the standards and criteria for elements identified below.
5. Rear wall or side walls unless directly facing a public street or avenue will not be reviewed.
6. When changes to a condominium or other buildings in multiple owners proposed, the entire building shall be considered and treated uniformly. Work on any building may, however, proceed in stages.

### **B. ENTRANCES**

#### **1. Steps, Stairs**

The original steps, if existing, including stringer, riser, treads, sidewalls, and any decorative element, shall be retained and repaired. If such stairs or steps have deteriorated to the degree that they have been removed or require removal, the replacement must appear like the original in massing and must not change location. Brownstone and granite may be replaced with material of similar texture and color such as concrete. Iron or wood stairs shall be replaced with the original material if possible. Enlargement or replacement of the doorway or window under the stoop may be approved but must be reviewed. (Refer to Sections B.3 and B.4, and section D).

#### **2. Railings, Balustrades and Decorative Balconies**

Existing cast iron stair railings, balustrades and decorative balconies shall be retained. If they are badly deteriorated or non-existent, replacement elements must be of a size and massiveness consistent with the remaining original elements of the design or consistent with the size, massing, profile and complexity of remaining examples of iron work on nearby buildings. Simplified adaptations may be allowed if they meet the above criteria. All iron work should be black in color. (See separate Sections G and H on fire escapes and fences).

#### **3. Entryways**

All entryways (including decorative hoods, canopies, surrounds and moldings) shall be retained. If entryways are missing or are badly deteriorated, replacement of elements shall approximate the original design, material, proportion and arrangement.

#### **4. Entry Doors and Vestibules**

- a. All original entry doors and visible elements of vestibules shall be retained and repaired. Replacement doors, if required, shall match the original in material and in design including proportion, number of leaves (i.e., single or double doors), placement within doorframe and general arrangement of panels. Single doors replacing double doors will not be approved.
- b. Transoms, sidelights, and other features shall be retained and repaired and may not be removed or blocked down to fit smaller doors and frames.
- c. Gates or grilles directly outside or in place of main doors may be allowed and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

### **C. EXTERIOR WALLS**

#### **1. Masonry (brick, stone and concrete) (See also Section D.2.).**

- a. Existing historically appropriate walls shall be retained and repaired.
- b. Painting of any masonry surface will be considered for approval only if the masonry is extremely damaged or the surface is already painted. The proposed color must approximate the original masonry in appearance.
- c. Repointing shall match the original mortar in color, texture, joint width and profile.
- d. Sand blasting (wet or dry) will not be approved on any masonry or wood surface.
- e. Brick (appearing mottled, grayish or whitish, etc.) will not be approved for additional masonry work. Brick shall match original existing brick as close as possible.
- f. Brownstone may require special treatments involving replacement materials and coatings; each situation will be considered individually based on condition of existing material and proposed situations. The replacement material must approximate brownstone in appearance and texture; the color may be matched by painting or staining.
- g. Covering masonry in another material will not be approved.
- h. New openings in the wall are discouraged but may be approved on a case-by-case basis.
- i. Original brick chimneys (and chimney caps and pots) should be retained.

#### **2. Wood**

Retention and repair of existing walls is preferred. Approval of synthetic siding may be considered provided the original trim and proportions and the arrangement of trim and other elements are not altered or removed. The design and proportion of the synthetic siding should faithfully duplicate the original material, and no grained-surface or vertical siding will be allowed. New openings in wooden facades are discouraged, but may be allowed on a case-by-case basis. Painting of wood trim is exempt from commission review. (See Exemption #1 in Section O.).

### **D. WINDOWS, WINDOW OPENINGS AND TRIM**

The original window design and arrangement of window openings on all facades within the Commission's jurisdiction shall be retained. Changing window openings to accommodate larger or smaller sash and frame will not be approved. Restoring window openings to the original size where original elements are still visible is encouraged. New openings shall not be allowed.

#### **1. Repair vs. Replacement**

- a. The Commission maintains that original or historically correct wood windows should be repaired rather than replaced. The slender dimensions of sash frame, the economy and efficiency of original pulley systems, and the tested longevity of the original wood window systems point toward the long-term benefits of retaining original materials. In most cases, the commission has found that the original windows can be repaired, and at a more economical rate than full window replacement. Additionally, the repair of the original windows can be done much more easily than

the repair of a new replacement window. Commission staff shall be contacted about repairing original wood windows before any replacement window application is submitted.

- b. If it has been shown that the original windows, or older wood windows with historic proportions, must be replaced, they shall be replaced with wood windows that meet the commission's policy for window replacement. The commission views these historically correct wood windows as an integral part of the rowhouse design, and therefore of the district. The further loss of original and/or historically correct wood windows in the district is not acceptable.
- c. Several properties within the district have already lost their original or historically correct wood windows. They have been replaced with either aluminum window units or inappropriately designed, poorly constructed and installed wood window units. The commission strongly encourages the replacement of these units with wood windows that meet the standards for window replacement. However, since the original resource has already been lost, and an inappropriate window unit has been since installed, the commission will allow the installation of aluminum replacement window units that meet the Standards and Criteria for window replacement.
- d. In cases of economic hardship, the commission will consider the replacement of original or historically appropriate wood windows (straight sash) with aluminum window units. Please contact commission staff to receive more information on economic hardship applications.
- e. In no instance will the commission allow the replacement of original curved sash with curved or straight sash aluminum window units, or straight sash wood units, nor will aluminum replacement sash be allowed in adjacent window openings where curved sash has been retained.
- f. In certain cases, where the applicant has documented that the existing appropriate or original wood windows must be replaced and where the building is viewed by the commission to be of a style warranting additional consideration, the installation of aluminum windows may be considered. This determination is made on a case-by-case basis, and in general excludes the typical South End rowhouse so prevalent in the district.

## **2. Policies for Window Replacement**

Early consultation with commission staff is strongly encouraged and will result in a speedier review process. The following policy statement is intended to provide guidance to applicants: all proposals for window replacement will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Applicants shall obtain the window replacement application from commission offices.

- a. Wood replacement windows are allowed. Both single glazed and thermally insulated windows will be considered, based on their exact dimensions as they will appear installed. The commission will review replacement window specifications with consideration to their approximation of original window dimensions. Specifically, the commission will not allow a significant reduction in original glazed openings either by increased framing or wide sash and muntin dimensions.
- b. Only structural (true) muntins or exterior applied muntins which are integral with the sash frame will be considered, simulated muntins inserted between the panes of glass or exterior snap-in muntins are not allowed. Muntins must replicate the original muntin dimension and profile, or have a raised trapezoidal profile. Their configuration must replicate the original pattern, based on documentary evidence.
  - a. The commission will require the use of dark colored jamb-liners, the use of anodized spacer bars between thermal panes, and the replication of brick mold dimensions and profile.
  - b. The approval of appropriate aluminum windows (see Section C.1., part c. above) is based on the framing dimensions matching that of wood and the use of a dark non-reflective metal. The use of an integral muntin measuring no more than 7/8-inch in dimension will be required; simulated muntins inserted between the panes of glass or interior muntins are not allowed. Muntins must have a raised trapezoidal profile and their configuration must replicate the original pattern based on historical documentation. The commission will require the use of wood brick mold painted the

same color as the metal sash and will only allow the panning of the original wood sill where absolutely necessary. The commission will require the use of dark jamb liners and the use of anodized spacer bars between thermal panes. Finish shall be of black anodized or enamelled paint in a color approved by the commission.

- c. Vinyl or vinyl-clad windows will not be allowed.
- d. Only half-window screens with dark screening and painted frames and tracks are allowed.
- e. The commission will require the full replacement of any windows which are installed without a certificate of Design Approval or which do not meet the specifications of a certificate of Design Approval.

### **3. Sills and Lintels (See also Section C. 1.).**

Window sills and lintels shall be retained and repaired. If severely deteriorated, replacements shall be of a material, arrangement, color and proportion similar to the original in appearance. Replacement sills in brick will not be approved. Decorative lintel details such as applied or incised designs should be retained.

### **4. Window Grilles and Iron Balconies (See also Section B.2).**

Ornamental or highly decorative grilles and balconies may be allowed and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. (See Exemption #10 in Section O.).

## **E. BAYS, ORIELS AND PROTRUSIONS FROM WALL**

Bays, oriels, and other similar protrusions from the exterior wall may not be removed. If altered, the design shall approximate the original; new synthetic covering materials will not be approved.

## **F. ROOFS (including rooflines, cornices and dormers, skylights, greenhouses, arbors, penthouses, roof fences and decks, mechanical penthouses, solar panels, and devices, and the like).**

1. The original roof configuration and cornice line shall be retained. Additional floors visible from the public streets and avenues may be permissible in special circumstances provided the addition does not interrupt a contiguous row of even cornice lines. Raising or lowering the existing roofline will only be allowed for the purpose of restoring the roof to its original profile. Alterations or new construction such as greenhouses, penthouses, arbors or trellises, solar panels and devices, mechanical and electrical equipment, if visible from a public street or avenue, may be approved only on a case-by-case basis but in general are discouraged. Approval criteria shall be:
  - a. placement to minimize visibility,
  - b. minimizing visible mass,
  - c. non-reflective dark appearance, and
  - d. conformance to State Building Code Requirement.
2. Roof decks, including decking and railing, should not be visible from any public way. Partial visibility of the railing may be allowed on a case-by-case basis based on criteria listed in #1 above. Any visible railings must be black metal.
3. Skylights are never allowed on mansard roofs. Visible skylights on other roofs are discouraged, unless original to the building, but may be approved, provided that the projection is less than one foot above the roof and at least one foot back from the visible edges of the roof; framing of the skylights should also be dark and non-reflective.
4. Original dormers on roofs shall be retained and repaired or restored. Expansion of existing dormers or adding new dormers may be approved on a case-by-case basis provided designs are based on historic models.
5. Wood, masonry, and metal cornice elements shall be retained and repaired or restored.

6. Original slate should be retained or repaired. If the visible portion of the roof requires replacement, slate or a non-reflective material similar in color and texture to slate may be allowed.
7. Gutters, downspouts, flashing, whether new or replacement, must be of a dark, non-reflective material and non-obtrusive in appearance; unfinished metal (other than copper) will not be approved.

## **G. FENCES AND YARDS**

### **1. Fences (Refer to Section B.2.).**

Original front yard fences shall be maintained and repaired or restored. If completely deteriorated or non-existent, replacement by a copy is preferred; an appropriate contemporary design may be acceptable. Gates and chainlink, concrete block, light gauge metal, and wooden picket or lattice fences are inappropriate for front yards.

### **2. Front Yards**

- a. Excavation of front yards below existing grade of front yard will not be approved except for small areaways to accommodate existing windows, ventilation, or for drainage purposes.
- b. Covering of front yards with concrete, asphalt, or similar materials will not be approved. Planting is encouraged.
- c. Construction of storefronts or other ground level projections in the front yard will not be approved.
- d. Excavation for auxiliary entrances may be allowed provided they are based on historic models. They will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- e. Placement of any sort of utility/mechanical equipment will not be allowed in the front yard. (Refer to Section N.).

## **H. FIRE ESCAPES**

New fire escapes on street facades of buildings will be permitted only when required for safety and an alternative egress route is clearly not possible. Fixed diagonal stairways are discouraged. (See Section B.2 for decorative balconies.).

## **I. SIGNS – IN AREAS ZONED RESIDENTIAL**

### **1. General**

All signs within the district will be subject to the Boston Sign code although more restrictive controls may be applied.

### **2. Professional Signs and Directories**

- a. Signs that announce a service within the building, e.g., a doctor's office, are allowed provided the design and material of the sign reinforce the architectural character of the building.
- b. Advertising or general information signs are not allowed.

### **3. Lighting**

- a. No back-lit signs are allowed.
- b. Signs should not be flood-lit. Small, shielded light sources may be used if no spill-over is visible to abutting properties.

### **4. Billboards**

Billboards are not allowed.

### **5. Multiple Signs**

- a. Signs on adjacent buildings of similar architectural appearance should be consistently designed and located.
- b. Signs on buildings owned and operated by a common entity should be consistently designed and located.

- c. Multiple signs on buildings designed for residential use are discouraged.

## **J. SIGNS – IN AREAS ZONED NON-RESIDENTIAL**

1. Proposed signs should conform to the Boston Sign Code, although compliance may not ensure approval.
2. Signs should be sized and placed to reinforce the architectural elements of the façade.
3. No sign will obscure any significant detail or decorative element of the existing building.
4. Electrically-operated signs are not permitted; sign lighting should be shielded and indirect. Backlit signs with opaque backgrounds and illuminated letters may be considered. Neon signs may be approved when installed inside storefront windows.
5. Free-standing signs are discouraged and will be approved only on a case-by-case basis.
6. Trade-marks will be limited to approximately 25% of the total allowable sign area.
7. New billboards are not allowed.
8. Fixed or retractable awnings or canopies may be used as signs for commercial uses provided no significant architectural detail is obscured or damaged by the installation. The design and material of the awning or canopy must be integral to the commercial front and/or the design of the building.

## **K. DEMOLITION**

Demolition of entire structures is prohibited except when, in the opinion of the commission, warranted for extraordinary circumstances. Partial demolition of later additions (such as storefronts) is subject to review on a case-by-case basis.

## **L. COMMERCIAL FRONTS**

1. General
  - a. Any façade changes intended to increase the amount of visibility of commercial space will be subject to review and approval by the Commission.
  - b. The essential character of the building as originally designed will be preserved in all changes, including retention of doorways and major architectural features.
  - c. Façade changes for commercial use will not be allowed above the main floor of the building.
2. Materials
  - a. The maximum amount of original material possible will be retained in the new façade design. The intent of the design should be an appeal to pedestrian traffic.
  - b. New materials should be sympathetic to those of the existing building.
3. Design
  - a. Proposed façade changes will be designed to compliment the design of the buildings.
  - b. Façade changes may be clearly contemporary and detailed to match the quality of the original building.

## **M. ADDITIONS**

Architectural changes that increase the height above existing contextual rooflines, or that substantially alter the profile of the building, will not be allowed unless they are based on documented historical models. Alterations to atypical buildings may be allowed on a case-by-case basis.

## **N. UTILITY/MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT**

1. Mechanical Equipment, such as compressor units, should not be visible from any public way within the district. Such equipment should be located either on the roof of the building, in a non-visible location, or at the rear of the building. Front yard placement is not appropriate.
2. Vents are most appropriately located on the uppermost roof in an inconspicuous area. Wall penetration for vents is inappropriate on street-facing facades.

3. Satellite dishes and antennas shall be located on the roof, as close to the center as possible so as to be invisible from the street.
4. Communication and Service Equipment, including telephone electrical, television wiring or other utility equipment should not be installed on a street-facing facade on any building within the district. All wiring and equipment should be black.
5. The location of visible and audible fire alarms must be reviewed by the Commission.

## **O. EXEMPTIONS FROM REVIEW**

These items are not subject to the review and approval of the District Commission; the following comments are, however, recommended. The commission staff can provide additional information to interested individuals who request it.

**1. COLOR (WOOD):** It is encouraged that wood trim and window sash and frames be painted in muted dark tones on Victorian-era structures. Lighter tones are appropriate for the few pre-Victorian and Classical Revival buildings.

**2. SHUTTERS** When used, shutters should be of a wood louver design. Each shutter should match the height and one-half the width of the window opening. It is recommended that the shutters be installed on shutter hardware and be operable or made to appear operable. Shutters should also be black or dark in color.

**3. INTERCOM/BUZZER DEVICES:** Buzzers and intercom boxes should be inside the vestibule and not mounted onto the brick face of the building. Individualized buzzers are more appropriate than metal panels.

**4. TEMPORARY SIGNS:** Such signs should be installed so that their removal will not scar the face of a building or fence. Temporary signs should also not obscure significant architectural details.

**5. AIR CONDITIONERS:** Portable, seasonal window air conditioners are exempt from review.

**6. EXTERIOR LIGHTING:** It is encouraged but not required that vestibules and doorways be illuminated. Lighting on the facade was not a part of 19th-century South End rowhouse design. Exterior lighting should be generally concealed (e.g., recessed over doors) and should not imitate earlier 18th-century styles (i.e., colonial lanterns). Simple contemporary fixtures are a suitable alternative.

**7. DOOR HARDWARE:** Existing original door hardware should be retained wherever possible. New replacement hardware should replicate the original or be of a simple contemporary design.

**8. STORM WINDOWS:** Installation of storm windows is allowed. The color of storm windows should closely match the trim to which they are affixed. Storm windows should have a narrow frame that does not protrude beyond the facade plane of the building. Storm sash should closely align with the window sash, particularly the meeting rail. Natural aluminum is not allowed.

**9. AWNINGS** Fixed or retractable awnings are allowed at window openings provided they fit accurately within the masonry opening and are of a material and design appropriate to the building. Canvas or canvas-looking material is encouraged. Metal or vinyl awnings are not allowed.

**10. GRATES:** Window and secondary door grates are allowed provided the ironwork is mounted within the masonry reveal of the window or door opening. The design should be consistent with that of the building. Re-use of period grilles and designs is encouraged.

**11. BULLETIN BOARDS AND DISPLAY BOXES:** Permanently affixed bulletin boards and display boxes are allowed and if installed may be included in the calculation of allowed signage. Exterior walls may not be used as display or bulletin boards.

**12. SECURITY SYSTEMS:** Devices integral to security systems, such as alarm boxes or sirens should be concealed from view and colored to blend or camouflage with their surroundings.

## **P. GLOSSARY**

1. Exterior Alterations: Any repair, reconstruction, restoration, replacement, rehabilitation, alteration, demolition, addition, or new construction proposed for the exterior of a building, and including the front



- yard. this work may involve changes in materials, dimensions, design, configuration, texture, color, or visual appearance (and includes masonry cleaning, repointing, repair and painting).
2. Maintenance and Repair: Any work which will involve no change in materials, dimensions, design, configuration, color, texture or visual appearance.
  3. Shall: Shall as a verb in these guidelines indicates those actions which are specifically required to preserve and protect significant architectural elements.
  4. Should: Should as a verb in these guidelines indicates a recommended course of action.

## **II. NEW CONSTRUCTION**

### **A. GENERAL STATEMENT OF INTENT**

1. The District contains vacant parcels of varying sizes and shapes, many of which once held rowhouses. New construction on these sites have a potential for reinforcing and enhancing the streetscape of the South End. Inappropriate design could introduce the intrusive elements of incompatible bulk, material and detail. To insure that new construction has a positive effect on the historic physical character of the Landmark District, proposals for new construction will be reviewed for compatibility with the existing architecture in such critical factors as land coverage, bulk, material, and proportion. Therefore, the focus of the standards and criteria is on the compatibility of new construction with the existing character of the South End without dictating style or taste.
2. Plans of proposed new construction shall be submitted to the South End District Subcommittee for review. A building permit may not be issued prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Design Approval or of Exemption.
3. These regulations shall apply only to facades visible from a public street or avenue, existing or proposed, in accordance with Sections 1.A., 3 and 5.
4. For buildings of monumental character, such as schools, churches, or other institutional uses, the Commission may waive portions of these standards and criteria which it deems to be inappropriate. The standards and criteria pertaining to height and materials shall be enforced. Where a new non-residential building has frontage on a block of predominantly residential rowhouse character, the Commission may require stricter adherence to these standards and criteria for that frontage alone.
5. The Landmark Commission shall determine the required degree on conformity of the new construction to the architecture of adjacent buildings, according to the strength of the existing neighborhood design and the configuration of the parcels to be developed. The applicable definitions and intent of the two categories are as follows:
  - a. Category A, defined as any vacant parcel or collection of parcels that share a party wall with an existing structure. Within this category, stricter conformity will be required of the new construction on the narrower parcels, especially those with existing buildings adjoining two sides, corner parcels, and parcels on a block of exceptionally strong or uniform character.
  - b. Category B, defined as any parcel or group of parcels which is not abutted by an existing structure. Within this category, less strict conformity to existing neighborhood design will be required.
6. Traditional architectural designs are permitted if in nineteenth century styles which are appropriate to the Landmark District, but shall not be expressly required by these standards and criteria.
7. These regulations shall not be deemed to supplant or nullify provisions of the Boston Zoning Ordinance or Sign Code, beyond the immediate scope of these provisions, nor any portion of the Massachusetts Building Code.

## **B. HEIGHTS**

1. The maximum height of any new construction shall be seventy feet, and minimum shall be thirty feet, the latter being exclusive of eaves.
2. Within this limitation, the following shall apply to any new construction on parcels in Category A:
  - a. The new building shall have the same height and cornice line as adjacent existing buildings having common property lines.
  - b. In the event a new building has two such abutters of differing heights and cornice lines, it shall conform to one of them, or it may step to match, i.e., each at the common property line.
  - c. In the event the height of the adjacent existing building is greater or smaller than the overall limitation, or is radically different from the remainder of the block, the Commission may set the height for the new building.

## **C. SETBACK:**

1. The maximum setback for a new building shall be ten feet, except as follows:
  - a. A new building in Category A shall have the same setback as adjacent buildings having common property lines.
  - b. In the event a new building in Category A has two such abutters with different setbacks, it shall have the same setback as one of them, or it may step to match both of them.
  - c. A corner building in Category A shall have the same setback as its abutters on the primary frontage. No setback is required on the secondary frontage; if one is provided, it shall be the same as the adjacent building on the secondary frontage.

## **D. LOT COVERAGE:**

A new building shall occupy the full width of its primary frontage, at the property or setback line.

## **E. BUILDING MATERIALS:**

The following materials shall be required on all exterior surfaces within the scope of these regulations:

1. Walls shall be of masonry construction similar in color and texture to the majority of adjacent buildings. In general, smooth-textured red brick in standard size and coursing is acceptable; a standard brick being defined as 2 1/4" x 4"x8", nominal dimension. Other materials will be judged on their own merits and the neighborhood design context.
2. Exterior steps shall be of stone, or concrete having the appearance of stone on exposed surfaces. Lintels and sills, if expressed, shall be of similar material.
3. Cornices, if expressed, shall be of brick, wood or a combination thereof. If metal is used as a flashing or covering, it shall be of an appropriate finish or color; white or shiny metal other than copper is unacceptable.
4. Windows, storm sash and trim shall be wood or anodized aluminum in appropriate colors and finishes; white or shiny metal is unacceptable.
5. Visible roofs, such as mansards and gables, shall be of slate or of composition shingle similar in appearance to slate. Metal may be allowed if subdued in color and detail; white or shiny metal other than copper is unacceptable.

## **F. DESIGN FEATURES:**

For new buildings in Category A, the following features are required; for Category B, they are recommended.

1. A new building shall match its abutters at common property lines in general conformation of roof and cornice; details may be simplified. In the event there are two abutters with differing roof forms, the new buildings shall conform to one of them, or it may match each at the common property lines.

2. Window openings shall approximate the number, size and positioning of those of its abutters. The vertical dimension of the opening should exceed the horizontal.
3. The entrance doorway shall approximate those of adjacent buildings in overall size, proportion and position.
4. For new buildings in either category, the use of elements which give the existing buildings of the district their essential character is recommended. Where used, they should approximate the proportions and materials of the existing buildings. These elements include, but are not limited to the following:
  - a. Bay, bow, oriel, and dormer windows
  - b. Mansard and gable roofs
  - c. Cornices
  - d. Exterior steps
  - e. Decorative ironwork, railings and fences
  - f. Recessed doorways
  - g. Entrance canopies
  - h. Chimneys
  - i. Exterior lighting
5. It is not required that new buildings on the larger parcels in Category A or B conform internally to the narrow rowhouse configuration typical of the district. It is recommended that such larger buildings avoid the appearance of monolithic apartment blocks through the use of design elements characteristic of the rowhouse blocks. Entrance doorways and steps should occur at a maximum of 45 feet on center; a more frequent spacing of 18 to 28 feet is recommended; the use of repeating bay, bow or oriels is especially recommended.

### **III. PUBLIC AREAS**

#### **A. GENERAL**

The intent is to retain and improve those aspects of the public areas which contribute to and enhance the character of the South End. Alterations to existing street layouts or proposed new streets must be reviewed for conformance to the criteria below:

##### **1. Sidewalks and Curbs:**

- a. Public sidewalks should be designed and constructed to reinforce the character of the district.
- b. Granite and brick are preferred materials, but concrete walking surface may be allowed after review. Existing brick sidewalks must be repaired and restored. New or repaired concrete sidewalks must be approved for color or tone, and may not be patched with asphalt.
- c. Granite curbs must be retained and reused wherever possible.
- d. Existing sidewalks shall not be reduced in width.
- e. Permanent use of Jersey barriers is not allowed.

##### **2. Street and Park Furniture**

- a. Miscellaneous public hardware and furniture such as news vending machines, trash receptacles, cluster mail boxes, benches and the like should be of a dark color and located, when possible, in areas other than residential streets and should be selected and located to reinforce the pattern of the district.
- b. Materials used should be sympathetic to the appearance of the district. Cast materials and stone and simply detailed wood are the preferred materials.
- c. Existing antique fences, fountains, hitching rings, slate coal chute covers and the like must be repaired and restored.

##### **3. Utility Items**

- a. Public utility furnishings (telephone panels and booths, poles, meters, street and traffic lights and boxes and the like) must be placed to prevent visual or pedestrian obstruction.
- b. They must be painted a dark color.

- c. Street lighting is limited to 19 feet high on major thoroughfares and 16 feet high on residential or side streets.
- d. Existing gas light type fixtures must be repaired or replaced with similar fixtures.
- e. Public transit furnishings and their location must be reviewed.

**4. Overhead Wires and the Like**

- a. New poles for overhead wires are prohibited. When wiring systems for cable television or telephone or other services must be placed underground the street and sidewalk form, materials, detailing must be repaired exactly to match the original conditions. Placement of boxes and receptacles associated with cable television must be reviewed.
- b. Design of overhead current collection system for public transit must be reviewed.

For applications and additional information call the staff at (617) 635-3850.



City of Boston  
Landmarks Commission



City of Boston  
Mayor Michelle Wu

## TRANSLATIONS & INTERPRETATIONS

The Boston Landmarks Commission offers translations and interpretation services for communication and mobility impairments, as well as the most common languages spoken in the City of Boston **at no charge to you**. Should you require any of these services, please contact our office as soon as possible to arrange for accommodations. You can find translated [applications in 12 of the most common languages spoken in the city on our application portal](#).



LARGE  
PRINT



**ENGLISH:** Interpretation, translation, and disability accommodation services are available to you at no cost. If you need them, please contact us at [BLC@boston.gov](mailto:BLC@boston.gov), [LCA@boston.gov](mailto:LCA@boston.gov) or 617-635-1935.

**SPANISH - ESPAÑOL:** Hay servicios de interpretación, traducción y adaptaciones para discapacidades a su disposición sin costo alguno. Si los necesita, por favor póngase en contacto con nosotros mandando un correo electrónico a [BLC@boston.gov](mailto:BLC@boston.gov), [LCA@boston.gov](mailto:LCA@boston.gov) o llamando a 617-635-1935.

**HAITIAN CREOLE - KREYÒL AYISYEN:** Sèvis entèpretasyon, tradiksyon, ak sèvis akomodasyon pou andikape disponib pou ou gratis. Si w bezwen sèvis sa yo, tanpri kontakte nou nan [BLC@boston.gov](mailto:BLC@boston.gov), [LCA@boston.gov](mailto:LCA@boston.gov) oswa 617-635-1935.

**TRADITIONAL CHINESE - 繁體中文:** 我們可以為您提供免費的口譯, 筆譯, 和殘疾人士合理照顧服務。如有需要, 請前與我們連絡, 發電子郵件至 [BLC@boston.gov](mailto:BLC@boston.gov), [LCA@boston.gov](mailto:LCA@boston.gov) 或致電 617-635-1935.

**VIETNAMESE - TIẾNG VIỆT:** Các dịch vụ thông dịch, dịch thuật và hỗ trợ người khuyết tật được cung cấp miễn phí cho bạn. Nếu bạn cần họ, vui lòng liên lạc với chúng tôi theo địa chỉ [BLC@boston.gov](mailto:BLC@boston.gov), [LCA@boston.gov](mailto:LCA@boston.gov) hoặc 617-635-1935.

**CITY of BOSTON**

20 CITY HALL AVENUE FL. 3 BOSTON, MA 02018 | 617-635-1935 | [BLC@BOSTON.GOV](http://BLC@BOSTON.GOV)



City of Boston  
Landmarks Commission



City of Boston  
Mayor Michelle Wu

**SIMPLIFIED CHINESE - 简体中文:** 我们可以为您提供免费的口译, 笔译, 和残疾人士合理照顾服务。如有需要, 前与我们联系, 发电子邮件至 [BLC@boston.gov](mailto:BLC@boston.gov), [LCA@boston.gov](mailto:LCA@boston.gov) 或致电 617-635-1935.

**CABO VERDEAN CREOLE - KRIOLU:** Nu ta ofere-se-bu sirvisus di interpretason, traduson y sirvisus di komodason pa gentis ku difisénsia di grasa. Si bu meste kes sirvisu la, kontata-nu pa email [BLC@boston.gov](mailto:BLC@boston.gov), [LCA@boston.gov](mailto:LCA@boston.gov) ó pa telefóni, pa númeru 617-635-1935.

**RUSSIAN -РУССКИЙ:** Услуги устного и письменного перевода и по приспособлению инвалидов предоставляются бесплатно. Если Вам они нужны, просьба связаться с нами по адресу электронной почты [BLC@boston.gov](mailto:BLC@boston.gov), [LCA@boston.gov](mailto:LCA@boston.gov) либо по телефону 617-635-1935.

**PORTUGUESE - PORTUGUÊS:** Disponibilizamos serviços de tradução e interpretação e adaptações especiais para pessoas com deficiências gratuitamente. Para solicitar, envie e-mail para [BLC@boston.gov](mailto:BLC@boston.gov), [LCA@boston.gov](mailto:LCA@boston.gov) ou ligue para 617-635-1935.

**FRENCH - FRANÇAIS:** Les services d'interprétation, de traduction et d'adaptation aux personnes handicapées sont à votre disposition gratuitement. Si vous en avez besoin, veuillez nous contacter à [BLC@boston.gov](mailto:BLC@boston.gov), [LCA@boston.gov](mailto:LCA@boston.gov) ou au 617-635-1935.

**SOMALI - AF SOOMAALI:** Adeegyada tarjumaadda luuqadaha iyo hoyga naafada ayaa diyaar kuu ah adiga oo aan wax kharash ah ka bixin. Haddii aad u baahatid iyaga, fadlan nagala soo xiriir [BLC@boston.gov](mailto:BLC@boston.gov), [LCA@boston.gov](mailto:LCA@boston.gov) ama 617-635-1935.

#### العربية - ARABIC

خدمات الترجمة الشفوية والتحريرية والتسهيلات لذوي الإعاقة متوفرة لك دون تحميلك أي تكلفة. إذا احتجت لهذه الخدمات، يرجى التواصل معنا على البريد الإلكتروني [LCA@boston.gov](mailto:LCA@boston.gov)، [BLC@boston.gov](mailto:BLC@boston.gov)، أو على رقم الهاتف

1935-635-617

**CITY of BOSTON**

20 CITY HALL AVENUE FL. 3 BOSTON, MA 02018 | 617-635-1935 | [BLC@BOSTON.GOV](mailto:BLC@BOSTON.GOV)