Historic Review Board Policies

Approved by City Commission on August 7, 2019

Each and every historic building plays a significant part of the ongoing preservation of Oregon City's local heritage. Historic buildings reflect the lives and aspiration of past generations and their preservation defines the community in many ways. Most of all, thoughtful stewardship of our buildings and surrounding environment can ensure that our sense of identity is passed along to future generations.

These policies are authorized by Section 17.40.060 of the Oregon City Municipal Code and apply to designated historic structures in Oregon City, including:

- All properties in the Canemah National Register Historic District, as the District boundaries existed on Feb. 1, 2017.
- All designated structures in the McLoughlin Conservation District
- All structures individually designated on the National Register before February 1, 2017 and local landmarks located outside of historic districts

Projects that meet the Historic Review Board (HRB) policies do not have to request approval from HRB and rather may obtain administrative staff approval. Where an alteration does not meet the policies, a Type III review by the HRB will be necessary. City staff are available to help property owners determine if their projects satisfy the HRB policies. Property owners are strongly encouraged to seek advice from City staff before proceeding with changes to historic properties. Changes that do not meet the policies are subject to code enforcement action. The policies do not apply to regular maintenance or repair of existing structures.

Owners of properties that do not fall under the Historic Review Process are encouraged to follow the Policies set forth by the HRB by making exterior alterations that maintain the structure's integrity and are compatible with the neighborhood.

HRB Policy #1 (First Adopted 1986; Revised 2019) - Construction and Repair of Foundations
The finished floor elevation of the structure shall not be raised or lowered in relation to the ground level as a result of foundation construction or repair. Any new foundation shall be covered with skirting that matches the original skirting on the structure.

HRB Policy #2 (First Adopted 1986; Revised 2019) - Storm Windows and Doors
Storm window frames and members shall be made of wood, baked enamel, or anodized aluminum. If wooden or enameled, the frames and members shall be painted to match the color of the existing window trim. Mill finish aluminum storm windows are not permitted. Interior storm windows are encouraged.

HRB Policy #3 (First Adopted 1986; Revised 2019) - Repair or Replacement of Siding
On designated structures and contributing structures in the Canemah National Register District, new siding shall match original siding both in material and style. **If fiber cement is desired as a replacement for wood siding, HRB shall review the proposal.** HRB's decision factors will include how well the substitute material matches the original siding in profile and design.
Fiber cement siding is permitted without HRB review under the following circumstances:

a. On new and existing detached accessory buildings
b. On non-contributing structures in the Canemah National Register District
c. As a replacement of vinyl siding on a designated structure
d. Only smooth fiber cement boards are permitted
e. Shakes or shingles shall have a straight edge

HRB Policy #4 (First Adopted 1986)- Gutters and Downspouts
Replacement of wooden gutters and downspouts are permitted. Galvanized or enameled aluminum gutters and downspouts shall be painted to match the house. All support straps shall be painted to match the house. New downspouts shall be located to avoid visual interference with architectural features of the street façade. Plastic gutters and downspouts are not permitted. If the downspout empties onto the ground, splashblocks shall be placed at the outflow to disperse the water away from the foundation.

HRB Policy #5 (First Adopted 1986; Revised 2019) - Roofs
Structures shall be re-roofed with either wood shingles, 3-tab composition shingles, or "architectural style" composition shingles. If the roof slope is less than 4/12, rolled composition roofing may be used. Red, dark green, black, dark brown or green and white composition material is encouraged. Slate, tile or tar and gravel roofs may be re-roofed with like materials. The following roof materials are not permitted without Board approval: metal, fiberglass, plastic, corrugated roofing, or shake shingles. Any alteration to the overhang, soffit, or rake board requires Board approval.

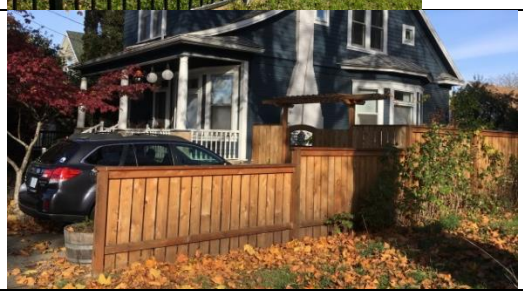
HRB Policy #6 (First Adopted 9/88; Revised 6/91; Revised 2019) - Fences and Walls
The following policy is hereby adopted by the Oregon City HRB regarding the construction or alteration of fences and walls within Historic Districts, on designated sites in Conservation Districts, or on individual sites designated as landmarks.

The HRB advises property owners that fences and walls are an extension of the architecture of the house. According to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, additions such as fences "should be compatible with the size, scale, material and character of the property, neighborhood or environment." Fences in the front yard are typically more open and decorative, while fences in the side and rear yards are more utilitarian.

Front yard fences or walls and corner side yard fences or walls shall be no more than 42 inches in height and shall not create a traffic sight obstruction (as defined in Chapter 10.32 of the Oregon City Municipal Code). Along rear yards and interior side yards (beyond the front building line), fences or walls may be up to six (6) feet in height. Fences or walls on vacant properties may utilize materials that are in the "ACCEPTABLE" category in front and corner side yards; HRB review is required if rear yard fence types are desired.

Staff may approve fences or walls that are listed in the "ACCEPTABLE" category through an administrative review. Fences or walls that are not listed, or that are specifically listed under the "NOT ACCEPTABLE" category shall be submitted for review and decision by the HRB. Fences or walls that are made of "not allowed" materials may be utilized if fully obscured. Pressure-treated wood may only be used for fence posts and not for any other portions of the fence, and shall be non-incised.

ACCEPTABLE FENCE AND WALL TYPES IN FRONT AND CORNER SIDE YARDS	
DESCRIPTION	**EXAMPLE**
Wood Picket: Wood fence with vertical pickets spaced at least one inch apart to six inches apart. Pickets may be pointed or straight, and boards may be flat or square. Includes traditional white painted (preferred); unpainted or different color paint is also acceptable. May be scalloped or straight on top, or topped with a railing.	
Iron Picket: Includes wrought iron picket fences with simple or ornate designs	
Ornamental Cast Iron: cast iron fences and gates with ornamentation or detailed designs	
Brick: Includes bricks of any color or size. Allowed in combination with other masonry types	
Basalt Stone: Basalt Stone was quarried locally in Oregon City's past. Basalt stone may be mortared or stacked. Basalt Veneer is typically mortared. This does not include manufactured stone veneer products. May be topped with bricks.	

Combinations of Iron and Masonry: Brick, stone, or cast-in-place concrete with iron fencing atop or integrated into the wall	
Woven Wire: Decorative woven wire with loop top design and with wood posts and rails	
Cast-in-place concrete: Poured concrete wall with smooth or textured finishing	
Steel or aluminum rail: Permitted only on non-residential properties (e.g. commercial buildings, schools, religious institutions)	
Solid wood board (un-spaced picket): Vertical wood boards without spaces between boards. May be scalloped or straight on top, or topped with a railing.	

NOT ACCEPTABLE FENCE AND WALL TYPES IN FRONT AND CORNER SIDE YARDS	
DESCRIPTION	**EXAMPLE**
Chain-link: Consists of steel wire woven to form a diamond-shaped mesh. Includes uncoated, powder coated, and with or without slats. Also includes chain-link hedge slats.	
Post and Rail / Split Rail: Also known as a log fence, zigzag fence, worm fence or snake fence, made out of timber logs, usually split length-wise into rails. Uses two to four rails and is divided into sections with wood posts.	
Concrete Block: Includes pre-cast panels, CMU, hollow or solid blocks. Both split faced and smooth.	
Chicken Wire: Unframed fence of thin, flexible metal wire with varied pattern including hexagonal or rectangular shapes. Known as chicken wire, hog wire, or welded wire. May include repeating wood or metal posts.	
Solid wood board or Stockade: Wood fence with vertical or horizontal boards and no spacing. Includes good neighbor fence and stockade fence. May be topped with square lattice or other wood design. May have a scalloped or straight top. Not allowed when obstructing view of historic structure.	

Vinyl/ Plywood / Hardboard or Asbestos Panel: Plastic, vinyl, fiber cement or asbestos panels. Includes solid fences/walls or those designed to look like wood picket fences.	

ACCEPTABLE FENCE AND WALL TYPES IN ALLEYS, REAR AND INTERIOR SIDE YARDS	
DESCRIPTION	**EXAMPLE**
All that are acceptable in front yards	
Concrete Block: Includes pre-cast panels, CMU, hollow or solid blocks. Both split faced and smooth.	
Horizontal Board: Wood fence with at least five horizontal boards. Boards may be spaced or have no spacing. May be topped with square lattice or other wood design.	
Solid wood board or Stockade: Wood fence with vertical or horizontal boards and no spacing. Includes good neighbor fence and stockade fence. May be topped with square lattice or other wood design. May have a scalloped or straight top.	
Wood lattice: Square vertical/horizontal pattern of wood panels with spacing.	

Gabion wall: Consists of rocks or stones enclosed in a metal wire basket	
Goat fence: Welded wire fence with frame of wood around each panel. Known as wire trellis fence, goat fence or livestock fencing.	
Non-basalt stone: May include sandstone, limestone, lavarock, or other rock that would not have been quarried within the Pacific Northwest and used in the historic era.	
Recycled Concrete: Irregularly sized concrete pieces or chunks stacked like stones.	
NOT ACCEPTABLE FENCE AND WALL TYPES IN INTERIOR AND SIDE YARDS	
All that are not acceptable in front yard, unless explicitly listed as acceptable in interior side yards, alleyways, and rear yards.	

HRB Policy #7 (First Adopted 8/96; Revised 2019) – Construction of Accessory Structures
Accessory structures which are 200 square feet or smaller may be reviewed and decision made by staff. The criteria to be used by staff in making the decision shall be as follows:

The building/structure materials shall match the primary resource structure;
The roofing materials shall match the material on the historic/primary resource structure; if the roofing material on the historic/primary structure does not match the original roofing material, HRB Policy #5 shall apply;
The accessory structure shall be painted to match the historic/primary resource;

The structure shall be placed a minimum of three (3) feet from any interior lot line as per Section 17.54 - Accessory Structure Standards.
Any structure that does not meet this standard shall be referred or submitted to the HRB for review and decision.

HRB Policy #8 - Exterior Alterations to Buildings in National Historic Districts, or Structures in Conservation Districts or Landmark Structures
Additions shall be reviewed by the HRB. Other alterations are subject to administrative review. Alterations are permitted if they duplicate existing building materials and styles. Wood siding is encouraged if the siding is replaced. Aluminum and vinyl siding and vinyl and aluminum mill finish windows are not permitted, unless the building was originally constructed of such materials and they are greater than 50% of the materials on the building. Wood sash doors are encouraged. Roof alterations shall conform to HRB Policy #5.

HRB Policy #9 - Screen Doors
Wood storm and screen doors are preferred. If aluminum or other metal storm/screen doors are used, they shall be prefinished or painted a color to match the door or trim. Unless replicating an historic storm/screen door, screen doors shall not obscure the primary door design, and shall not include decorative details or simulated muntins (grids).

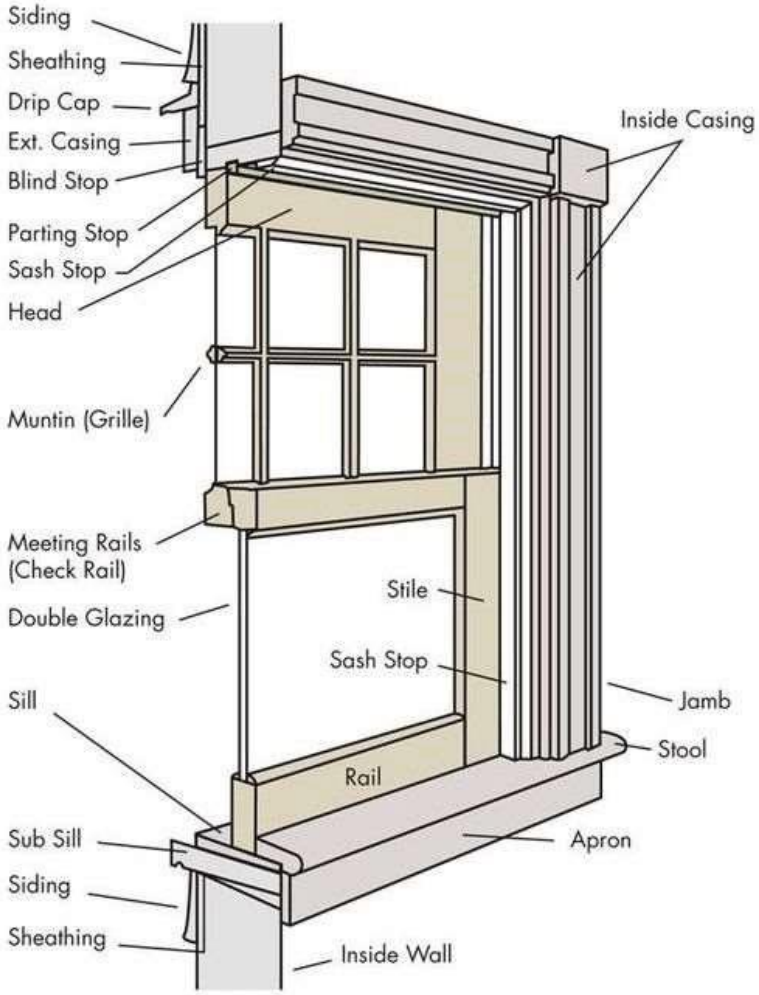
Policies 1-9 were reviewed and revised by the HRB at worksessions on October 12, November 9, 2000, and December 14, 2000, and were formally adopted on December 14, 2000 at the HRB's duly noticed public meeting, and revised again in 2019.

HRB Policy #10 (Adopted 10/2001; Revised 2019) - Window Repair and Replacement
Original wood windows are important architectural features in any historic building. They are the "eyes" of the structure and they convey a sense of handcraftsmanship and detail that cannot be achieved with substitute materials. The HRB maintains that original windows should be retained and repaired whenever possible. If repair is not feasible, replacement of windows is acceptable in accordance with the following:

a. For structures listed individually on the National Register before February 1, 2017, and locally designated resources, replacement of windows shall be reviewed by the HRB.
b. For locally designated historic landmarks, designated structures in the McLoughlin District, and contributing structures in the Canemah National Register District, wood, aluminum clad wood, and fiberglass clad wood windows are permitted as replacement windows if they match the original window design. A different window type may be used for egress purposes (for example, casement in place of a picture window) as long as the appearance, including muntins, is the same. It is the owner's responsibility to document the design of the original windows.
c. If a structure was originally built with aluminum or vinyl windows, vinyl replacement windows are permitted. The owner shall provide evidence of the original window material.

d. On new and existing accessory structures, and on new and existing non-contributing structures in Canemah National Register District, fiberglass and wood/plastic blended material windows are permitted.
e. Interior window grids are not permitted.
f. Replacement windows should match dimensions of original window stiles, rails, and sill depth.
g. Any proposal that does not meet these policies may be reviewed by the Board. The applicant shall provide a determination of the window's architectural significance and condition to assist the HRB to determine the repair and replacement options for the property.

Owners of non-designated structures are also encouraged to follow this policy for window repair and replacement.



HRB Policy #11 (Adopted 2019) – Porches and Decks

Replacement or alteration of porches and decks older than 50 years shall meet HRB Policy #8. The construction of new front porches shall be reviewed by HRB. Alteration of existing front porches, or construction of new rear porches or decks are permitted without Board review in accordance with the following:

a. Porch and deck railings shall use vertical balusters and top and bottom rails. Baluster attachment shall be between the rails, not attached on the side of the rail.
b. Wood decks and porches shall be painted to match a color of the designated structure. Paint-stain is also acceptable if it matches a color of the designated structure.
c. No pressure treated wood shall be visible.
d. Composite material (e.g. Trex, Timbertech, Azek) is allowed only for new or existing decks or porches less than 50 years old that are attached to the rear of a structure, to the interior side of a structure, and for detached deck structures in the interior side or rear yard. Composite material color shall match a color of the designated structure.
e. Aluminum rails on porches and decks are not permitted.
f. Deck or porch materials made from 100% vinyl are not permitted.

HRB Policy #12 (Adopted 2019) – Solar Technology

Solar technology that meets the criteria in the list below may be utilized on historic properties through staff review. Any proposal that deviates from this policy shall be considered by HRB.

a. Sloped roof location: Solar panels are permitted on secondary facades of historic buildings and on accessory structures.
b. Design: Panels on sloped roofs shall project five inches or less from the roof surface and be installed flat; they shall not alter the slope of the roof.
c. Color: Panels and mounting systems shall be the same color as established roof materials. Mechanical equipment associated with the photovoltaic system shall be as unobtrusive as possible.
d. Flat roof structures: Solar panel installations on flat roofs shall be set back at least five feet from the roof edge to minimize visibility unless fully obscured from the street by a parapet.
e. Shingles: Solar shingles are permitted on secondary facades if they match the roof color.
f. Freestanding: Freestanding or detached on-site solar technologies are permitted in locations behind the front of the home in side and rear yards, unless the side or rear yard abuts an improved public right of way.