CITY OF MANSFIELD

DESIGN GUIDELINES

FOR

COMMERCIAL HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND DISTRICTS

COMMERCIAL
FORM AND MATERIALS

General Guidelines

1840—1870

- Retain original trim and details, in both storefronts and upper floors
- Use only those materials that would be found in the building's period—mainly wood, stone, some iron and sheet metal; do not use plastics, aluminum and other modern materials.
- Do not use "rustic" materials such as shake—type shingles and rough—sawn or varnished wood to create a "frontier" appearance

1870—1900

- Retain first floor storefront details
- If building is part of a row, keep details, trim, and other elements that help the building to blend in with adjacent buildings
- Retain/repair decoration and trim, both on storefront and upper story windows
- Retain/repair materials typical of period, including wood, stone, sheet metal, cast iron, terracotta

1900 —1920

- Retain simplified trim and details often found in later buildings of period
- Retain/repair modern materials such as aluminum, stainless steel and architectural glass, especially late in period
- Keep upper floors less decorative, simpler than storefront area, especially later in period

1920—1940

- Retain hallmark materials of period: architectural glass, glazed tiles, aluminum and other metal trim, neon signage
- Retain storefronts of this period, even when they have been applied to much older buildings
- Use details and materials of period, to preserve the "modern," "streamlined" appearance of the original design

COMMERCIAL
DOORS AND ENTRANCE TREATMENTS

General Guidelines

1840—1870

- Maintain original entrance locations; if new entrances are needed, add them in inconspicuous side or rear locations
- Retain original door and entrance materials; repair if needed; replace in—kind if repair is not feasible
- Use door designs correct for period; almost always had glass window of substantial size; do not use flush type or heavily carved doors in this period
- Rather than complete replacement of doors, try weather-stripping, storm doors or winter vestibules

1870—1900

- Retain typical recessed entrance area with display windows to either side
- Use storm doors or vestibule rather than replacing original doors
- Retain transom, sidelights, glazed floor tiles in entrance, and other original features
- Retain secondary entrance doors, even if used only as fire exit or if not in use at all

1900—1920

- Retain original doors, trim, glazed tiles and other details
- Use doors with windows; no solid wood or steel doors; avoid residential—type doors with small windows
- Retain door details such as kick-plates, protective bars, brass or bronze handles, locks
- Retain stained, leaded or similar glass in transoms
- Keep entrance in same location, even if storefront is entirely rebuilt

1920—1940

- Retain door and entrance materials of this period, especially aluminum and stainless steel shapes, glazed tiles, metal panels
- Retain original lighting fixtures
- Maintain recessed entrances where they are original
- Keep original doors or original door designs, which often had full—length windows

COMMERCIAL
UPPER STORY WINDOWS, BAYS, BALCONIES AND DOORS

General Guidelines

1840—1870

- Retain surviving original windows, especially multiple—paned sash
- Retain later windows if originals have not survived, rather than replacing with reproductions
- Repair and retain hood-molds and other window trim
- Repair and retain bays or balconies original to building; use of modern wrought iron or aluminum to replace original balcony materials is not recommended

1870 1900

- Maintain upper story windows as important design elements by retaining sills, lintels, hood molds and other trim
- Use window sash with proper number of panes (usually no more than two to four per sash in this period)
- Keep window openings at original size; enlargement or reduction of openings detracts from character
- Repair and retain original balconies and bays; do not cover over with siding or other materials

1900—1920

- Use one—over—one sash, unless evidence shows more panes were used in past
- Use storm windows, inside or out, instead of replacing existing windows to increase energy efficiency
- Maintain simplicity of upper story windows which became common in period, especially toward 1920
- Retain bay windows and balconies, even when they are more decorative than functional

1920—1940

- Use correct window sash, based on history of building; usually should avoid multiple—paned sash, also avoid new, fixed single—pane sash; double—hung or fixed windows with a panel that opens are the most common
- Retain Art Deco or other “Modernistic” details typical of period; may be of stone, bronze, copper, brass, aluminum or stainless steel; plastic materials still not common and should be avoided

COMMERCIAL
AWNINGS AND CANOPIES

General Guidelines

1840—1870

- Retain surviving awnings, repair to a sound or operating condition when feasible
- Use materials appropriate to period—mainly wood and canvas
- Keep awnings in operating condition to get maximum usefulness from them

1870—1900

- Use design appropriate to building's period, and based on research: evidence should show whether awning or canopy or both would be correct
- Use materials correct for period—wood and canvas still common, but some fixed metal canopies would be correct for period, too
- Awnings or canopies may be used as signage surfaces

1900—1920

- Retain original canopies, awnings and hardware; replace in—kind if necessary, especially canvas awnings
- Use awning colors appropriate to building—usually striped in two colors, or all in one color; blend colors with building, avoid bright or flashy colors or designs
- Keep awnings in working condition to maximize their usefulness
- Usually an awning is preferable to a fixed canopy (if there is no strong evidence supporting one over the other) because of lower cost and ease of removal

1920—1940

- Awnings not common in period; canopies more typical
- Use proper materials for period: architectural metals, neon lighting; little wood, canvas; avoid plastics and aluminum—siding shapes

COMMERCIAL
CORNICE, FRIEZE AND PARAPET

General Guidelines

1840—1870

- Retain simple design of early cornices and friezes
- Use materials correct for period: mostly wood, some cast iron, a small amount of pressed sheet metal
- Rely on the building itself to guide selection of detail and trim materials
- Retain original surviving materials, especially parapets and building or owner's name

1870—1900

- Retain original trim and detailing as much as possible; replace in—kind when necessary
- Use correct materials: less wood, more cast iron and stone; pressed sheet metal very common by end of period; repair materials where necessary rather than replace
- Retain any decorative brick patterns, repoint carefully
- Retain parapets and names applied to building

1900—1920

- Increasingly simple cornice, frieze and parapet treatment during this period; building's age and history should guide design of these elements
- Common use of simple brick patterns and modest stone elements to mark cornices, friezes and parapets; avoid use of salvaged materials from earlier periods
- Let building speak for itself and do not try to impose a history or style it did not have, such as half—timbering, "Wild West," log cabin

1920—1940

- Period of simplest treatment of cornice, parapet and frieze areas; avoid removal of simple original materials or application of incorrect decoration
- Retain smooth, uninterrupted building surface from storefront through upper floors to parapet

COMMERCIAL SIGNAGE

General Guidelines

1840—1870

- Simplicity of materials and design should guide signage for this period; use painted wood, plain block letters (though some lettering styles were elaborate)
- Place signs correctly: painted on display windows; suspended over sidewalk; fastened to or painted on facade above display windows; self—supporting sidewalk signs
- Sign lighting should be unobtrusive: incandescent lights shining down from "gooseneck' holders, shining up from ground or top of storefront
- Pictures or symbols may be used to identify businesses
- Colors should be limited to one or two during this period

1870—1900

- More elaborate lettering may be used; greater detail work on signs themselves
- Wood still most common sign material, some metal
- Use signboard above storefront if one exists
- Signage may also appear on awnings, painted on display windows; windows should not be covered with signage material
- Avoid plastic and interior—lighted signs
- Scale signs to fit the building's facade without dominating
- Use colors compatible with building; avoid clashing colors, jarring designs

1900— 1920

- Hanging signs, signs painted on display windows (often with gold leaf appearance) and building—mounted signs are commonly used; still too early for neon
- Use incandescent lighting fixtures shining on signs, as recommended for other periods; interior—lighted signs beginning to be used and would be appropriate; plastic materials still not appropriate

1920—1940

- Hanging signs, set perpendicular to sidewalk and with bottom edge at least ten feet above sidewalk, most typical of this period
- Glass, metal, neon and some plastics are correct for period; much less use of painted wood, though it is still correct
- Retain and repair original signs of this period, including neon lighting fixtures
- Signage on canopies, awnings and applied to glass windows rather than fastened on building surface, if possible
- Retain Art Deco geometric/stylized lettering, even if business or name has changed
- Mount new signs over old in a way that will not damage the old signs and will permit their later restoration

COMMERCIAL
STOREFRONTS

General Guidelines

1840— 1870

- Retain historic display window, or replace with a new window that duplicates size and shape of panes, thickness of framing and trim details of original
- Use paint colors selected from colors correct for period
- Use historically correct materials such as wood, stone and cast iron, rather than aluminum, plastics and other 20th century materials
- Maintain full height of display window; if a suspended ceiling is installed on interior, it should slope upward to the original ceiling at the display window so a portion of the window does not have to be covered

1870—1900

- Keep vertical proportions of storefront; maintain full window height even when ceiling inside is lowered
- Retain transom over display window, if one exists, with clear glass to permit light to enter
- Retain original sheet metal or cast metal trim; leave iron or stone posts and columns uncovered
- Retractable canvas or synthetic cloth awnings in colors compatible with colors of this period may be used
- Use single or double doors, preferably painted, with windows; windows generally should be single—paned, tall and narrow

1900—1920

- Retain leaded prism glass or similar transom materials
- Maintain original display window height and width; keep original wood or metal framing materials, or replace them in—kind
- Retain original window and door plan: angled windows, recessed doorway, projecting display area
- Retain tile, terra cotta, metal panel or other trim materials, especially in the bulkhead area below the display windows
- If awnings are to be used, use retractable canvas or synthetic cloth awnings in colors compatible with colors of this period
- Use doors with windows; doors could be painted or varnished; windows usually very large plate glass (safety glass or plastic window materials could be used)

1920—1940

- Retain and repair tile, Carrara Glass, aluminum and other modern materials original to the storefront
- Maintain display window and door plan from the period:

recessed entry, angled or squared—off windows

- Retain window dimensions original to the storefront; maintain window openings framed by Carrara Glass
- Retain leaded prism glass or similar transom materials
- Use paint colors compatible with colors of this period

COMMERCIAL
NEW CONSTRUCTION

The goal of new construction design in historic areas is visual compatibility with the area's historic character. This does not mean that new structures should mimic older buildings or try to duplicate historic details and materials. Instead, new construction design should be executed in modern materials, finishes and techniques, but take its "cue" from its surroundings in an effort to fit into the broad visual patterns of the historic environment.

Mansfield's historic areas contain a rich diversity of architecture which developed over time. Within that diversity, one can also see unity and compatibility; commercial building facades forming a single front along a street; cornices of similar height and heaviness; similarity in roof height and building setback along a residential street. This compatibility developed because builders in Mansfield's past keyed their designs to what had come before. They built new and modern buildings for their time within that framework.

New construction may take the form of a completely new free—standing structure; an addition to an existing older building; or infill construction which fills a gap in a row of commercial or residential building facades. No matter what the building being built, new construction design should follow certain principles. In developing a his/her design, a builder should look at adjacent and surrounding buildings and note the following considerations:

1. Height

New construction should be of similar height to that of adjacent and nearby buildings. Some cities have mandated that new buildings be constructed to a height within 10% of the average height of existing adjacent buildings.

2. Proportions of front facades

This is the relationship between the width and the height of a building's front facade: tall and narrow, low and squat, square. New construction should follow similar proportions.

3. Proportions of openings

Window and door openings in a building have their own proportions, and often—but not always—these are similar to the building facade's proportions. New designs should reflect adjacent and nearby buildings' window and door proportions.

4. Rhythm of solids and voids

In any building facade, window and door openings (voids) alternate with wall areas (solids). Usually, but not always, the resulting pattern of solids and voids is symmetrical: a central door with two evenly—spaced windows to either side, for example. New construction designs should reflect the solid—void rhythms of adjacent and nearby structures.

5. Rhythm of building spacing

Often a function of building lot size, the open spaces between buildings are as important as the buildings themselves. Sometimes large lots permit a great deal of space between buildings, giving an elegant, refined feel; and sometimes there is no space at all, as in the continuous commercial facades found in the downtown area. New construction should observe the rhythm of open spaces that already exists in the area.

6. Scale

Scale refers to the relationship between a structure and the size of a human being. Intimate scale is created when structures and their details are smaller than, and create spaces and openings that are smaller than, human size normally dictates: doorways that require people to duck, narrow spaces between buildings, little doorknobs, windows set below the normal line of sight all help to create a feeling of intimate scale. Grand scale, of course, is just the opposite, where spaces, buildings and details are larger than human use and needs would dictate: massive door knockers, fifteen—foot doors, high ceilings, for example. New construction design should observe the scale of surrounding and nearby structures.
Note also that scale should be consistent within a given structure. If a building is small and closely spaced with its neighbors and has low ceilings and narrow doors and windows, then the application of massive details and decoration would be inappropriate.

7. Direction of front elevation

This refers both to the direction in which the main facade
of a building faces—usually it is toward the main street, but not always—and to the apparent "direction" of the facade itself—does it have a vertical feel, a horizontal feel, or a non—directional feel? Note that this is related to the proportions of a building's facade, but it is not necessarily the same: a building with proportions that give a low, squat feeling may nonetheless have a vertical feel within the main facade (this feel may be created by tall, narrow windows, use of columns and pilasters, arcading and similar treatments). New construction designs should observe the predominant directionality of adjacent and nearby facades.

8. Rhythm of entrance and porch projections

In a residential area, and in some commercial areas, porches, stoops and canopies form an important part of the visual scene. Due both to historical precedent and to a desire not to block a neighbor's view of the street, these elements usually were of similar size, height, width and projection out from the building. New construction should observe these same considerations.

9. Relationship of materials, textures and colors

Any given historic area will show a predominance of materials (brick, stucco, wooden siding, stone, cast iron, sheet metal), textures (smooth brick, smooth or rough stucco, flush siding, clapboards, smooth or rough stone), and colors (unpainted brick, painted brick, unpainted or painted stucco, trim colors). New designs should try to reflect the predominant materials, textures and colors in an area.

10. Relationship of architectural details

Buildings in a historic area usually have a comparable level of detail, including chimneys, window and door trim, cornices, and corner details. Again without necessarily trying to recreate the same details, new construction should strive for a similar level of "busy—ness" in its design. Chimneys in partcular can be important because of their size and visibility.

11. Relationship of roof shapes.

New construction design should observe the predominant roof shapes of the area: mansard, gable, flat, gambrel. For pitched roofs such as gable or gambrel, new designs should use comparable pitches to those already existing.
Building walls often combine with trees, plantings, fences, retaining walls and planting beds to define the

edges of properties and to enclose individual parcels. New construction design should observe these site considerations as part of the overall design and should strive to create a feeling of continuity or enclosure comparable to that already existing.
Landscaping, both as part of this enclosure or within the parcel of land itself, should be of similar species, mass, shape and size to that used on adjacent and nearby parcels.

13. Ground coverings

Sidewalks, paths and driveways may be of various materials. New construction should observe the predominant materials and the ways in which they are used:
textured or smooth concrete, type of brick patterns, whether borders and edges are used, and how they are made.

COMMERCIAL
COLOR

Color probably has a greater visual impact than any other exterior architectural feature. This refers not only to exterior paint, but also to roof colors and colors employed in attachments such as awnings, canopies and storm windows and doors.

Choice of color is very often a matter of personal preference. In the case of historic buildings, however, certain colors are more appropriate to the building's form, style and setting than others. This is especially important in historic districts where buildings relate to each other through patterns of design or development.

The Mansfield Design Review Commission [*Now the Historic Preservation Commission*] can offer two types of assistance to property owners in selecting paint colors: 1) guidance for application of color to the building and its trim and 2) a range of appropriate colors for use in particular building styles.

General Guidelines

1. Wherever possible, original paint colors for the building in question should be researched.
2. In general, do not coat surfaces that have never been painted.
3. Choose paint colors that are appropriate to the period and style of the building by referring to the recommended color range below.
4. For late 19th century buildings, contrasting colors may be appropriate, but avoid too many colors on one building. The simpler the building, the fewer the number of colors.
5. The same rules apply to commercial as to residential buildings. In commercial buildings, the color selected for the storefront is often repeated on the upper facade detailing.

Greek Revival (1830—1860): The Greek Revival style was traditionally painted white (often with green shutters) to create a classical appearance. Transitional buildings which exhibit features of Greek Revival along with later styles may have been painted light shades other than white, such as yellow.

Gothic Revival (1840—60): This style had its roots in a more natural expression of the building in relation to the land (as opposed to the stark white of the Creek Revival). Colors are soft earth tones—simulating sand, earth, straw, slate—that include greys, yellows, tans, and pinks. Trim was very often painted the same color as the body, with colorful accents being created in shutters, awnings or roofs.

Italianate (1860—1890): Early Italianate buildings (pre—1870) were often painted with the same range of light earth tones (greys, yellows, tans and pinks) as the Gothic Revival style. After 1870, however, colors become noticeably darker as greens, oranges and olives begin to appear. Trim is almost always picked out in a darker color that complements the main body color, although this is sometimes reversed. Brackets, the most common feature of the Italianate style, were usually painted the same color as the cornice.

French Second Empire (1870—1890): Greater complexity of surface presented the opportunity for greater color complexity in this style. Darker trim such as dark green or maroon would be appropriate, with lighter body colors such as pale yellow or light green. Earth colors such as browns and brown—reds would also be appropriate for trim colors, with beige body colors.

Queen Anne, Stick and Shingle Styles (1880—1900): These styles probably presented the best opportunity for successfully mixing colors. Sometimes as many as five colors would be used on a facade, although the scheme had to be thought out carefully. The light—body, dark—trim approach was abandoned, and color was used to accent and draw out variations in surface texture and finish. Brighter hues of orange, red, green, yellow and brown were introduced, although the traditional darker colors continued to be used.

Colonial Revival (1880—1940): A return to the more classical, light colors of the past for these buildings. Body colors moved toward pastels, such as cream or yellow, and white was most often used for trim. By the 1920s, all white was the popular scheme.

Spanish Mission Revival (1880—1940): Appearance of stuccoed walls and tiled roofs are important to this style. Walls were beiges or light browns, with deep brick red as the standard roof color. No differentiation was made in trim.

Craftsman Bungalow (1900—1940): Natural and stained woods which brought out the material's beauty were common finishes. When these buildings were painted, lighter colors prevailed, with a simple color scheme. Contrast between body and trim was played down or avoided entirely. Earth tones of white, pale yellow, brown and green were common colors.

American Four—Square (1900—1940): These buildings continued the Colonial Revival trend toward lighter exterior colors, part of the reaction to dark, heavy Victorian design. Since Four—Square design centered on economy and simplicity, paint colors followed suit. Light colors such as whites and pale yellows were used and contrasting trim was played down.

Vernacular Cottage (range of dates): Simple or vernacular buildings were often used as workers' housing, and their paint colors reflected their economy of construction. Simple, neutral colors, rather than rich or bold colors, would be most common. Trim may have been highlighted in a complementary color.