

SOME OF CLOSTER'S PORCHES



GUIDELINES FOR PORCHES AND EXTERIOR TRIM



Recommended: Retain and maintain historic porches, such as this one.

Porches and exterior trim, such as cornices, brackets, friezes, pilasters, railings, and bargeboards, are features that contribute to a building's historic style. Frequently, these architectural details are examples of skilled craftsmanship. They also contribute the rich character of streetscapes within Landmark Districts.

When initially constructed, most historic houses in Closter had wood porches. Typically decorative exterior trim was wood. The visual character of these porches and other decorative exterior trim varies considerably from the very simple to elaborate wraparound porches with a profusion of ornamentation. The open front porches of many of Closter's buildings are among the community's defining architectural features.

Porches and trim of other materials than wood are only historically appropriate if the historic building originally employed such materials and the substitute material is compatible with the historic architecture.

For Landmarks and buildings and structures within Landmark Districts, a Certificate of Appropriateness (C/A) is not required for the maintenance and repair of existing porches and exterior trim involving no change in the design, scale, material, color, or appearance of the feature and of the building or structure. A C/A is required for work that will change the exterior appearance of the building or structure including removing porches or any decorative features of porches and changing or removing exterior trim. Sandblasting exterior materials of porches and exterior trim also

requires a C/A and in most instances will not be allowed. A C/A is required for any work that does not replicate existing materials and workmanship.

A C/A is required for Non-Contributing Buildings in a Landmark District only when the proposed change requires a building permit and will be visible from the public view.

GUIDELINES

Identify, retain, and maintain historic porches and exterior trim.

If altered porches and/or exterior trim have significance of their own, they should be retained and maintained.

Whenever possible, repair rather than replace deteriorated features, whenever possible.

Replace character-defining historic materials and features of porches and trim only when a material or feature is too deteriorated to repair. The replacement should match the historic materials and features.

Make alterations and new additions that are compatible with the historic buildings and district.



Recommended: Retain and maintain later porches that have significance of their own, such as this Colonial Revival porch added to a Second Empire house.



Recommended: Repair and, when necessary, replace porch features and other exterior trim with ones that match the originals or, when documentation does not exist for original appearance, with ones, such as these, that are compatible with the historic building.

For Landmarks and Key Contributing and Contributing Buildings in Landmark Districts

RECOMMENDED

- Retain, maintain, and repair original porches and exterior trim or altered ones with their own architectural or historic significance. Follow the recommendations of the sources found in the boxes, *Resources for Porches and Exterior Trim* in this chapter and *Resources for Ordinary Repairs and Maintenance* (in the *Guidelines for Ordinary Repairs and Maintenance* chapter). Replace only the deteriorated sections rather than the entire feature. Regularly paint previously painted porches and exterior trim.
- Only replace historic porches and exterior trim when too deteriorated to repair. The replacement should be in-kind, matching the historic original in visual characteristics (size, shape, design, decorative details, texture, finishes, and, where possible, materials). Compatible synthetic or substitute materials may be used in some instances. Simplification of detailing may be allowed under special circumstances. Any historic feature should be photographically recorded prior to removal.

- If the building has altered porches and/or exterior trim that do not contribute to its architectural or historic significance, consider replacing them with ones that match the documented originals or which are compatible with the historic building. Restoring altered porches and exterior trim will enhance the historic architectural character of the building. However, altered features may be retained or replaced with ones of matching design.
- Consider installing a new porch to the street facade when the original is missing, when a porch was originally a key contributing architectural feature of the building, and/or when porches are a characteristic of the streetscape. The new porch should not damage or destroy historic fabric. The visual characteristics of the porch should be appropriate to the building and, if in a Landmark District, the streetscape. Refer to the *Guidelines for New Additions and New Constructions* chapter.
- For porch roof information, refer to the *Guidelines for Roofs* chapter.
- For window and door trim information, refer to the *Guidelines for Windows and Doors* chapter.
- For masonry and stucco porches and exterior trim, refer to the *Guidelines for Masonry and Stucco* chapter.



Recommended: Retain and maintain historic exterior trim, such as this cornice, raised panel, and pilaster.

For Landmarks and Key Contributing and Contributing Buildings in Landmark Districts

NOT RECOMMENDED

- Removing architecturally significant porches, porch features, and exterior trim.
- Enclosing an existing historic open porch or installing of an enclosed porch in a streetscape of open porches. The enclosing of a side or rear porch may be acceptable if the basic architectural characteristics of the porch remain unchanged so that the enclosed space continues to appear to be an open porch rather than an enclosed room. This might be accomplished through placing the enclosure framing inside of the porch piers/columns and railing, using a temporary or reversible enclosure system, or using an enclosure system that is predominately translucent.
- Installing porches and exterior trim in a style that is not typical of the style or type of the portion of the building where the replacements will be located. The style of the replacements should not appear to be older than or more elaborate than original historic features. Alterations that have no historical basis are discouraged. If there is little evidence of the original porch's appearance, consider having a porch of contemporary compatible design.
- Leaving new porches and exterior trim unpainted or unstained unless the materials have intrinsic color or the building's original materials were not painted or stained.
- Replacing wood steps and porch floors with concrete or brick or other masonry materials.
- Damaging or destroying historic fabric in the installation of new porches and decks. Greater design flexibility is allowed for these additions when not visible from the public view. They should be simple in design and relate visually to the historic building.

For Non-Contributing Buildings in Landmark Districts

RECOMMENDED

- Repair or replace damaged or deteriorated porches and exterior trim. Any replacement features should be compatible with the streetscape.
- Install new porches and decks that are compatible with the streetscape. Refer to the *Guidelines for New Additions and New Construction* chapter.

NOT RECOMMENDED

- Installing elaborate new porches and exterior trim that are visible from the public view and that compete for attention with the historic architecture in the streetscape.
- Installing of an enclosed porch in a streetscape of open porches.

RESOURCES FOR PORCHES AND EXTERIOR TRIM

Hopewell, New Jersey, Historic Preservation Commission, *Design Guidelines: Guidelines for Porches, Guidelines for Exterior Woodwork, Guidelines for Exterior Maintenance*, <http://208.55.240.96/Guidelines-Historic-Properties.html>

National Park Service, *Preservation Brief 16: The Use of Substitute Materials on Historic Building Exteriors*, <http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/brief16.htm>