

**Edition**

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# **TOWN OF OXFORD**

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## **Historic District Commission**



# **Guidelines**

Town of Oxford  
PO Box 339  
100 Market Street  
Oxford, Maryland 21654

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Adopted Pursuant to Ordinance 1407

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## Introduction/Overview

Oxford is one of the oldest towns in the State of Maryland, tracing its founding back to 1683. For centuries, it has charmed residents and visitors who arrived by horseback, steamboat, ship, train or automobile. Its streets (which are based on a grid laid out in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century) are lined with structures built in the late 1800's and early 1900's, with a few buildings dating back to the 18<sup>th</sup> century. A variety of architectural styles are represented. Most residences are oriented to the street and feature front porches,

brick chimneys, and decorative fences. Sidewalks are predominantly brick. The scale of structures and building materials is relatively consistent and harmonious. In 2005 the National Park Service recognized the Oxford Historic District as a cultural resource worthy of preservation by including it in the National Register of Historic Places.

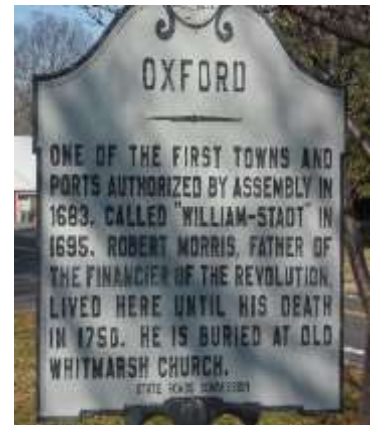
Throughout the years, the citizens of Oxford have worked to preserve the town and its unique water-oriented environment. These guidelines reflect a continued effort to accomplish that goal. They are offered to assist owners and tenants of historic properties, architects, builders, members of the Historic District Commission and others to understand the appropriate treatment of historic structures and their environs. These guidelines will provide a basis for evaluation of any proposed changes within the Historic District. To that end, these guidelines are offered to accomplish the following objectives:

Provide current and prospective property owners with guidance, in a clear and concise format, in planning new structures as well as alterations and additions to existing buildings.

Provide a tool to help emphasize and maintain the visual appearance and historic character of the Historic District.

Provide encouragement for the restoration and preservation of ALL historic structures within the Historic District.

Provide the Historic District Commission with criteria to assess applications for restoration and renovation, alterations, additions, moving, demolition and new construction.



Preserve the value of property in the community.

The Oxford Historic District Commission is tasked with the preservation of sites and structures of historical, archeological or architectural significance, together with their appurtenances and environmental settings within the Historic District. The commission has a further mandate to safeguard the heritage of the town by preserving important elements of its cultural, social, economic, political and architectural history. It is hoped that the preservation of these treasured elements will stabilize and improve property values, foster civic beauty, strengthen the local economy and promote the use and preservation of the Historic District for the education, welfare and pleasure of the residents of and visitors to the town. These guidelines build upon the hard work of past concerned citizens, with a goal of preserving Oxford's unique character for years to come.



## The Application Process

Building Permits for exterior projects within the Historic District require approval by the Historic District Commission. Ordinary maintenance or repair does not require review or approval by the Commission; however, it is best to have a determination made by the Town Office prior to starting a project. Ordinary maintenance or repair is work on a structure or site, which does not alter in any way the exterior features of the

subject property, including the architectural style, design and general arrangement of the exterior, as well as the nature, texture, color, details and dimensions of existing building materials and components.

Additionally, a consultation may be scheduled with the Historic District Commission, if there are questions as to what approvals are necessary. Any questions regarding the permitting process should be directed to the Town Office. Applicants are encouraged to present preliminary plans for initial review by the Historic District Commission, scheduled as a consultation, before committing significant time and expense to detailed plans and specifications.

The Historic District Commission meets at 5:00 PM the first Monday of each month. A maximum of six significant submissions or consultations will be scheduled for each meeting. Submissions in excess of six may be postponed to a special meeting or to the next regularly scheduled meeting. Only (a) complete submissions or (b) requests for consultations will be scheduled.

Applicants with projects scheduled for review by the Historic District Commission should deliver the following to the Town Office no later than one week prior to their scheduled appearance. A complete submission must include the following:

- Adherence to the requirements of Section 10.02 of the Zoning Ordinance, Applications for Building Permits,
- A short summary of the proposed work i.e. new structure, renovation, alteration or expansion of existing structure, fence installation, etc.,
- Three (3) sets of plans detailing the exterior of the structure including all four elevations. The plans must be specific as to proposed/existing materials, scale, trim, siding, windows, roofs, shutters, etc.,
- Samples of the siding, roof material, brick, and paint colors. Samples are not required for wood clapboard, cedar shingles or standing seam metal, and
- Three (3) copies of marked photos or drawings illustrating the streetscape with any physical changes proposed for the property. The streetscape scale should demonstrate the proposed structure's relationship to neighboring structures.

Approval by the Historic District Commission does not imply that an applicant is eligible for any historic preservation incentives or tax credits. Applicants pursuing incentives for historic preservation may need to comply with different standards.

Approval by Historic District Commission is part of the Oxford Zoning Ordinance Building Permit process and is subject to the same six month time frame for commencement of work and 12 month limitation for completion of the work applicable to building permits.

Applicants have the right to appeal decisions of the Historic District Commission to the Oxford Board of Zoning Appeal.

## General Design Elements

All buildings, sheds, fences and accessory structures in the Historic District are subject to these guidelines, regardless of size or age or relative historical importance. These guidelines apply to all renovations, alterations, repairs, and remodeling of existing structures, and new construction if a building permit is required.

### Precedent

Designs and changes approved or rejected previously in the Historic District do not act as a precedent for a design or change under consideration. All applications will be considered individually based on their own merit and unique situation within the Historic District.

### General Principles

When reviewing a proposed project, the Historic District Commission review is guided among other things by the principles contained in The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, including the Standards for Rehabilitation. The Standards for Rehabilitation allow property owners common-sense guidelines to provide sensitive contemporary uses for their sites while retaining their architectural and cultural heritage.

In reviewing projects, the Historic District Commission encourages sensitive rehabilitation involving the least amount of intervention or change as identified in the following guidelines:

- Identify, retain, and preserve the overall form, materials, and details that are important in defining the architectural and historical character of the building and site. Documentary evidence including old photographs, speaking to neighbors, and installations on nearby buildings may offer clues about original structures.
- Protect and maintain historic materials and features. This involves protection from other work that may occur in proximity to the historic materials, and also protection through regular maintenance. A regular program of protection and maintenance usually involves the least degree of intervention, and can prevent or postpone extensive and costly work.
- Repair rather than replace deteriorated historic materials and features. Repairs maintain the building in its current condition while making it weather-resistant and structurally sound. Repairs should involve the least intervention possible, concentrating specifically on areas of deterioration. When repair is not possible, the Historic District Commission encourages replacement in-kind, reproducing by new construction the original feature exactly, including the original material, finish, detailing, and texture. Although not preferred, substitute materials are acceptable when they convey the appearance and finish of the original feature.
- Replace missing or deteriorated historic materials and features when the extent of deterioration precludes repair. Similar to repair, the preferred approach is to replace the entire feature in-kind to match the original material, finish, detailing, and texture. Since this is not always technically or financially feasible, substitute

materials are acceptable when they convey the appearance and finish of the original feature.

### Streetscape/Scale, Massing, and Proportions

**Streetscape** is the setting or expanse consisting of the street, landscaping, trees, fencing, sidewalks and structures along the street, as seen by the eye in one view. **Streetscape includes the harmonious mix of structures, sidewalks, and the distance at which the structures are set back from the curb edge.**

Architectural elements, both vertical and horizontal, should be designed to complement the local streetscape. Attention should be paid to compatible building size, shape, and set-backs from the street. Vertical elements should be sympathetic to and support the streetscape.



**Scale** is a measure of the relative size of a structure or building component in relation to a known unit of measure, such as the height of a person, or the customary size for such a component. The principle of scale applies both to individual buildings and to streetscapes.

In the Historic District, where each structure forms a part of a larger streetscape, scale is of paramount importance. Proposed new structures and renovations should take into account the existing height, bulk, and size of neighboring structures as well as the scale of properties throughout the district.

If neighboring structures are one story in height, new structures and additions, alterations and renovation of existing structures should be designed in a way that minimizes any apparent difference. If a new structure is taller than its neighbors, setting the taller element back from the lower level at the street façade may be appropriate. Structures located on corner or through lots should utilize this type of setback on both frontages.

**Massing and Building Proportions** of established structures should be reflected in new structures and renovations. Massing refers to the overall bulk of a structure and how it is distributed in space. Proportion refers to how the parts or elements of the structure relate to each other in terms of dimensions. The purpose of proportion is to establish harmony throughout the structure. Harmony is achieved in a building façade when façade elements are proportional to each other and to the overall façade.

When similar massing or proportions are not possible to achieve, the structure façade of a dwelling can be broken into smaller elements creating an illusion of a smaller structure in scale with its neighbors.

Building scale should reflect the existing height and width of structures in the immediate vicinity and the general scale of properties throughout the town.

Massing is the single most important characteristic to consider in the evaluation of proposed additions and new construction.

**Rhythm** is the pattern and spacing of repeating elements, such as windows or porch columns in a façade. The spacing of structures in the Historic District streetscape creates a rhythm also. Building patterns and rhythms, which define the visual character, should be respected. A street will develop a certain pattern or rhythm giving cohesiveness to the whole streetscape. A sudden change in this pattern can appear disruptive and visually upsetting.

**Building Materials.** Most of the buildings, and especially those buildings of significant historical value, are constructed of traditional building materials – wood siding, brick, and wood shingle, asphalt and metal roofing. The repeated use of these traditional materials creates an architectural cohesiveness and harmony that gives the Historic District much of its distinctive character.

**The Principal Architectural Façade** should face the street. The main entrance to the building should also face the street. All principal and accessory structures located on a corner lot, or on a lot which runs through to another street, or which has water frontage bear additional responsibilities because of their increased visibility from the public way.



## Specific Design Elements

The architectural elements discussed below help to define the character of the Oxford Historic District as a whole as well as each structure within the town. The treatment of these character-defining features is critical to the protection and preservation of the town's historic fabric and the overall streetscape. Architectural elements such as doors and windows, siding, trim, chimneys, porches, shutters, and all other character defining features and finishes should reflect the traditional quality and detail found throughout the town.

Property owners should identify, retain, and preserve the overall form, materials and details that define the architectural and historic character of the buildings and the site. Historic materials and features should be protected and receive regular maintenance. It is preferable that historic materials and features be repaired rather than replaced, and that repairs be executed in a manner that involves the least intervention possible. When necessary, replacement of historic materials and features should take place using in-kind materials. If this is not technically or financially feasible, substitute materials may be acceptable if they convey the appearance and finish of the original feature. New work, including additions and new construction, should be differentiated from existing historic structures but compatible in size, mass, form, fenestration and detailing with the historic building and surrounding structures within the streetscape.

### WINDOWS AND DOORS

- Define the character of a building and streetscape
- Act as interior and exterior building features
- Typically comprise approximately one quarter of the surface area of exterior walls
- Can identify architectural style
- Can retain connections to the past
- Help define the architectural building period
- Can display craftsmanship and durable construction

#### Windows – Storm Windows

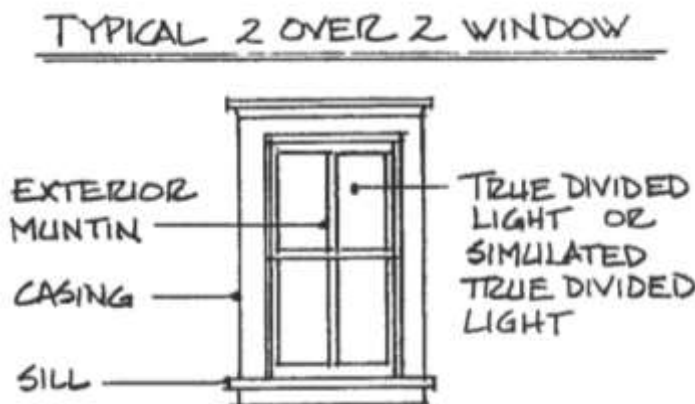
Windows and their components are important features in defining the overall historic character of a building. The components of a window can include frames, sash, muntins, glass, sills, heads, hood molds, decorated jambs or moldings and shutters. Because they are so important in defining the building's historic character, windows should not be removed or materially changed or else the

building's historic character will be diminished. Existing historic windows should be retained if at all possible. The following changes should be avoided and are discouraged:

- Changing the number, location size or glazing pattern of existing windows by cutting new openings, blocking-in windows, or installing replacement sashes that do not fit the window opening.
- Changing the historic appearance of windows through the use of inappropriate designs, materials, finishes or colors which noticeably change the sash depth of reveal, and muntin configuration; the reflectivity and color of the glazing; or the appearance of the frame.
- Obscuring historic window trim with metal, fiberglass or other material.
- Stripping windows of historic material such as wood, cast iron, and bronze.
- Replacing windows solely because of peeling paint, broken glass, stuck sashes, rot and high air infiltration. These conditions, in themselves, are no indication that windows are beyond repair.

In the event the owner of a building wishes to replace a window, an in-depth survey should be conducted of the conditions of the existing window so that repair and upgrading methods or possible replacement can be fully explored. When deciding whether to repair or replace an entire window frame, an important step is to examine the window frame closely and decide whether the sill or the frame needs to be replaced. Repair is always preferable to replacement. Repair may also include replacement in kind, or with compatible substitute material, of the parts that are either extensively deteriorated or that are missing. Surviving prototypes can be used in the design of the replacement parts. For the replacement part, using substitute material that is incompatible and does not convey the visual appearance of the surviving parts of the window is unacceptable.

If the window frame and its component parts are too deteriorated to repair, it should be replaced with a window of the same size, with the same number of light divisions and the same style as the original window. Windows should have muntins on the exterior of the window. Window openings should not be blocked



down or made smaller or larger to fit a standard size replacement window. When replacing windows deteriorated beyond repair, a compatible substitute material may be considered if using the same kind of material is not technically or economically feasible. Awning, casement, and sliding windows and sliding doors will not be permitted on the front façade.

The installation of interior or exterior storm windows is a preferred rehabilitation treatment to achieve energy conservation. Exterior storm windows should have a finish to match the color of the historic window and frame. The meeting rails of the storm sash should line up with the existing windows. If exterior storm windows significantly detract from the appearance of the building on the primary façade of the building, then interior storm windows should be used.



Round Top Attic Window



### Doors - Screen Doors - Storm Doors

Doors and other entrance features, such as moldings, transoms, sidelights, sills, and hardware are important in defining the overall historic character of a building. Removing or changing entrances that are important in defining the overall historic character will in itself diminish the character of the entire building. In Oxford paneled wood doors were most common in residential buildings.

#### Historic Window Restoration

Original doors, including transom lights and side lights and hardware should be retained whenever possible. Since doors tend to be one of the most utilized elements on the exterior of a building, they are most susceptible to deterioration from wear or damage and generally require more regular maintenance such as painting and varnishing. If deterioration occurs, selective repair or replacement of damaged parts is all that is required to retain the original door. If original doors are deteriorated beyond repair, the replacement door should duplicate as closely as possible the size, design, proportion and shape of the original door. Wooden doors are strongly encouraged.

Similar to storm windows, storm or screen doors should conceal as little of the door as possible and should complement the door configuration. A simple wood storm door with a single large tempered glass opening with as little detail or

ornamentation as possible is strongly preferred. The storm door frame should be painted to match the color of the frame of the door.



Tombstone or Oxford Doors

### **Windows and Doors – New Construction**

When determining the proportion, size, design and detailing of windows and doors in new construction, including additions, the design should relate to the corresponding features on existing and adjacent structures. Façade openings of the same general size as those in adjacent buildings are encouraged. Wooden double hung windows should be considered first. Double glazed windows, often selected for energy efficiency, may be used in new construction and new additions to existing structures. If multiple pane sashes are used, the units must be either true divided light or simulated true divided light with muntins permanently glued to the exterior in addition to spacer bars between the panes of glass. For new construction and new additions, metal or other artificial cladding may be appropriate.

## SIDING AND TRIM



German Lap Siding with Corners

The siding style indigenous to Oxford is wood clapboard. German lap siding and wood shingles are also in evidence. The use of wood-like composite material other than wood siding may be acceptable if it successfully mimics historic materials already present.

The preservation of historic siding and trim begins with intelligent maintenance including routine caulking and painting. Protecting and maintaining wood features by providing proper drainage so that water is not allowed to stand is also crucial. Care should always be taken not to damage, remove or obscure the architectural features or character of the structure. Wood siding should be painted or opaque stained. Wood or wood-like composite corner boards, window and door trim and fascia are preferred.



Traditional Clapboard Siding

Replacing sound or repairable historic siding and trim material is NOT appropriate. Where damage has reached a point beyond which repair is possible, the best replacement is one that uses the same material already installed. Substitute siding and trim material should be considered only if the form, detailing and overall appearance conveys the visual appearance of the original, historic material. Resurfacing historic buildings with inappropriate new material may actually damage the structure and should be avoided.



Clapboard Siding with Corner Board

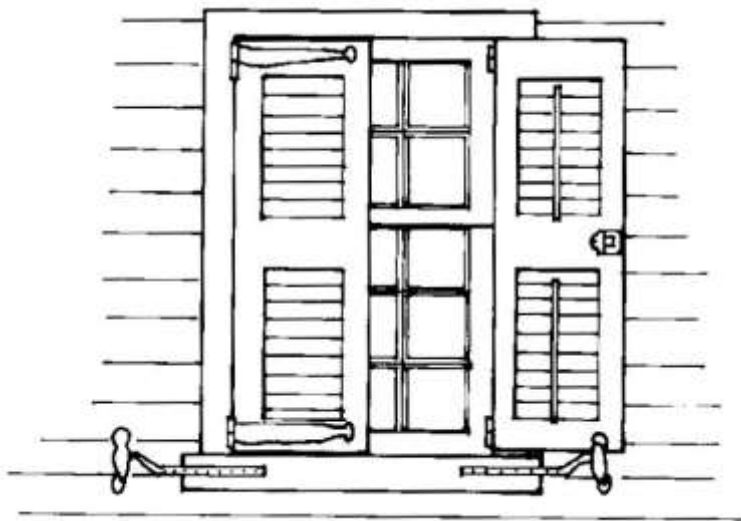


Composite Shake Siding

## SHUTTERS

Historic Shutter refers to a visually correct, properly mounted and designed shutter. Where historic exterior shutters and blinds survive, they should be carefully preserved and repaired. If no shutters are present but there is evidence that they once existed (as evidenced in either historic photographs or surviving hardware), they can be installed as part of any proposed rehabilitation project. If no evidence exists for shutters or blinds, they should not be added to the building.

When a historic shutter is in the closed position, the louvers should be pointing downward to shed water away from the window it is covering. When in an open position, the louvers will be pointing upward.



Replacement shutters and blinds should be custom sized to each opening so that the pair entirely closes the opening in the plane of the window frame. Shutters shall be hung on existing repaired hardware (including pintles, hinges, shutter dogs, and sliding bolts) or accurate reproduction hardware where original hardware no longer survives. Shutters should not be mounted on the outside casing of the window frame, and shall be fabricated of painted wood or wood like composite materials if acceptable and **not of vinyl or aluminum. If not actually functional, they should appear to be functional.**

### Shutter Hanging (Mounting)

Historic shutters were mounted on hinges. There are two parts to a hinge. One part is attached to the house and the other part is attached to the shutter. The part of the hinge that is attached to the house contains a pintle – a pivot point for the shutter hinge to rest on. This part of the hinge can either be mounted to the house on the face of the window casing OR on the inside edge (jam) of the window. **A correctly mounted shutter should APPEAR to be attached to a hinge, protruding from the house.**

### Shutter Tie-Backs

A Tie-Back on a shutter is usually referred to as a Shutter Dog or Shutter Catch. A Shutter Dog holds the shutter in place from the front. Since it is visible, there are many decorative Dogs to choose from. “S” style Shutter Dogs were mass produced in 1930’s. They should be used only on houses built during or after this period.



### Historical shutter information

*Shutters have a functional history, they were used for security, provided privacy from outsiders passing by, added an extra layer of insulation during winter weather (with wood having a high R value) and blocked out the sun, preventing damage to furniture.*

*Solid panel exterior shutters were typical on pre-1780 buildings, fixed louver blinds on Federal period buildings, and movable louver blinds on Greek Revival and later styles. After World War I, buildings imitative of earlier styles featured shutters or blinds.*



Raised Panel Shutters with  
Shutter Dogs

*Operable louvered shutters (blinds), that are regulated by a tilt rod began to be manufactured around 1830-1840. Movable louvers, adjusted by a tilt rod, regulated air-flow and light. A tilt rod is an important feature that greatly affects the shutter's appearance. A false tilt rod should be attached to fixed shutters to appear operable.*

*The louvers in a stationary open position allow a certain amount of air and light to pass through. The louvers should be fixed in an approximately 25 degree open position. (A fixed louvered shutter with flat closed louvers (0 degrees open) results in a flat artificial appearance).*



Fixed Louver Shutters with Shutter Dogs

## CHIMNEYS

Chimneys are distinctive roof features and should be retained. Chimneys should not be altered, shortened, or removed, but rather, repaired as necessary. Even if an interior fireplace is to be removed, every effort should be made to retain the existing exterior stack.

Chimney repair and replacing brick or other masonry material requires a selection that matches the size, color, and texture of the damaged or missing units. Details of chimney work and samples of brick and mortar must be submitted.

Existing painted brick surfaces maybe repainted. Where weathering has returned painted brick close to its original state, or where the brick has never been painted, the natural unpainted brickwork should be kept. Paint should not be indiscriminately removed from masonry surfaces without proper historic documentation as some masonry surfaces were originally painted.

Metal pipe extensions should be avoided.

Metal chimneys inside false work are discouraged on new construction.

Traditional  
Brick  
Chimneys



Twin Painted Brick Chimneys





## PORCHES

Porches and their component parts are often the focal point of homes located within the Historic District streetscape. They are graceful and welcoming, and introduce the house to the passerby. Oftentimes, the porch also serves as a place of neighborhood social interaction, and harkens back to a time before central air-conditioning and television. Porches serve an additional function of protecting the primary entryway into the home and also offer shade and cooling to the structure as a whole.

Porches and their component parts, including steps, railings and columns should be consistent with the historic style of the building. The porch should be constructed of wood and supported by brick piers. Steps to porches should be constructed of either wood or brick, with closed risers. Wooden steps must be painted or opaque stained. Composite

materials may be acceptable if they closely resemble wood. Porch roofs are generally standing seam metal. Less elaborate decks may be permitted in a location not visible from the public way. In new construction, the proportion of the porch to the front façade should be consistent with other porches in the immediate neighborhood.

As they are an exterior component of the structure, porches require a program of maintenance and care to protect against the elements. Great care should be



taken to allow water to drain off the porch and gutters must be kept clear to allow proper drainage. Any deteriorated elements of the porch should be repaired with materials similar to the original. If a porch becomes damaged beyond repair, a replacement porch should be constructed using the original footprint and dimensions and materials similar to the original deteriorated porch. The screening of porches may be acceptable if the screen is translucent and the open appearance of the porch is maintained. The permanent enclosure of porches is highly discouraged.

## ROOFS, GUTTERS AND TRIM

A building's roof provides the first line of defense against the elements, and its design greatly affects the overall appearance of that structure. Throughout the Oxford Historic District many types and styles of roofs are present, although the gable style is predominant. One principal roof form should be chosen for the main body of the house which will set the roof slope and material for all other roof elements. Other character features such as dormers, eaves, and secondary roof elements over porches and bays are encouraged to reduce the impact of large roof areas and to provide a proper sense of scale to the house. Details that characterize the roof should reflect style, slope, material choice, soffit, overhang depth and decorative trim that is common to the streetscape. Cornice returns and appropriately scaled roof overhangs are strongly encouraged. Roof valleys on homes with shingles should be metal – not woven.

As roof styles vary throughout Oxford, so do materials used. Wood shingle (fire treated), standing seam metal, slate and architectural grade composite shingles are commonly employed. Each material provides a specific color, texture, and pattern to a roof surface. When choosing the roofing material for an historic structure, some investigation may be necessary starting in the attic to determine original layers installed. Documentary evidence including old photographs, speaking to neighbors, and installations on nearby buildings may offer clues about original roofing materials. Color choices should take into account both overall energy efficiency (light colors vs. dark) as well as the aesthetics of the streetscape. Like-kind replacement of deteriorated roofing on historic structures is strongly encouraged.



Penetrations of the roofing surface can provide a visually pleasing break and, when appropriate, complement the building's style. Gable dormers or single window shed dormers are seen throughout the town. Large shed dormers visible from the public way are discouraged. Skylights visible from the public way are not permitted. Gutters that channel rain water away from the structure are strongly encouraged.

Cedar Shake Roofing with Dormers and Decorative Trim





Standing Seam Metal Roofing



Asphalt Shingle Roofing with Metal Valleys



Slate Roofing



Cedar Shake Roofing with Widow's Walk



Cedar Shake Roofing with Dormers



Cedar Shake Roofing with Dormers

## HARDSCAPE AND FOUNDATIONS

### Sidewalks, Paths and Driveways

Brick is the preferred material for all public sidewalks, paths and entranceways. Driveways Pothole materials such as gravel or shell may be deemed acceptable. Paths of flagstone may also be acceptable. Brick used for these purposes should complement existing masonry used throughout the property and the broader streetscape.



### Foundations and Masonry



Typical Brick Foundation

Many homes in Oxford were originally built on brick piers. Foundations of rubble stone or brick are traditional and appropriate. Block foundations may be acceptable if they are parged or covered with a brick veneer. Homes that have been raised (or built) to accommodate flood regulations should take special care to fit into the existing streetscape and to make a minimal impact on the historic character of the structure.

All masonry surfaces require a program of maintenance and care that stresses the use of the most gentle preservation methods available. The use of high pressure equipment and/or caustic cleaning chemicals is highly discouraged.



Rubble Stone Foundation



Typical Brick Foundation with Flood Venting



## LIGHTING

Exterior lighting should be historically accurate, in proportion to the structure being illuminated, and compatible with the architectural style of the property. Where it exists, historic light fixtures should be maintained or restored by qualified individuals familiar with their care. If restoration is not possible, some reproduction light fixtures are readily available and may be acceptable. When adding lighting, great care should be taken NOT to damage historic materials that are present. A balance should be maintained between the minimum lighting requirements of current building codes and the historically minimalist approach to lighting older buildings.

Lighting should NOT shine directly on abutting properties or in the line of sight when using the streets, alleys, or sidewalks. Floodlights illuminating façades of properties is not allowed.



Typical Entry Lighting



Lighting for Large Driveways

## FENCES AND WALLS

All fences and walls should blend harmoniously within the overall streetscape, matching both the subject property as well as the overall neighborhood. Throughout Oxford, several types of decorative wooden fences can be seen. It is crucial that any fencing or walls should complement rather than hide a subject property.

Fences are traditionally wooden, picket style. Also acceptable are iron, typically hoop or hoop-and-spike fences, painted black. Composite fencing that closely mimics wood may be acceptable. Height transition with any neighboring fences should be kept to a minimum. All fences are to be painted or covered with an opaque stain.

Post and rail, split rail, chain link, and stockade type fences are not permitted. All fences and walls must comply with applicable zoning ordinances.



Oxford White Picket Fence



## COLOR

Paint colors should reflect the historical age and style of the subject property and be used to highlight the best features of the design. While color choices will represent the current property owner's taste, these choices should be selected to blend harmoniously into the streetscape. This method of choosing colors does NOT mean that every house in a neighborhood should be painted in the same color. There exists a wide range of attractive colors which may be combined in hundreds of ways to provide individuality without upsetting the fabric of the streetscape. Some investigation (including scrapings in selected areas) may yield information about colors used in the past and is highly recommended.

Fences and accessory structures must either be painted or coated with an opaque stain. Fences and accessory structures should also be painted in a color scheme that reflects their relationship with the primary structure on the property.





## MODERN EQUIPMENT

The installation of modern equipment on historic structures is a delicate and often difficult task. Items such as HVAC units, power metering devices, fuel storage tanks, solar panels, wind turbines, satellite dishes, television antennas and other modern devices are a ubiquitous part of everyday life but seem inconsistent in an area of historic structures. As a general rule, these devices should be installed in an area that is not visible from the public way.

Location of any of these devices in the primary street facing area is strongly discouraged. Additionally, this equipment should be installed in locations that create the least disturbance to the appearance of the structure and involve the fewest structural alterations of the building. Under no circumstances should historic materials be damaged to facilitate installation. Where an option to place these items underground is available, that course is preferred. Otherwise, all efforts to screen this equipment should be employed.



HVAC units  
concealed by  
fencing



Solar Panels  
Concealed by  
Trim





## ACCESSORY STRUCTURES

Accessory structures such as barns, sheds, carriage houses and other outbuildings were commonly found in the rear yards of homes in the Historic District. These structures contribute to the historic character of the property and should be preserved. New accessory structures should be designed and located so that they do not detract from the historic character of the primary structure on the site or from the character of neighboring structures. The scale and detailing of the accessory structure should be similar to the primary residence and to other outbuildings in the Historic District. Accessory structures that are re-purposed should retain their utilitarian character and their relationship to the primary structure.



## Demolition



Applications for demolition of all or exterior portions of any structure within the Historic District require approval by the Historic District Commission. Demolition of any “Contributing” structure within the Historic District is strongly discouraged and alternatives to demolition are highly recommended. (*Contributing as identified in the 2005 Historic Places Registration Form*)



This building, in very poor condition and nearly demolished, was elevated for flood protection and beautifully restored.



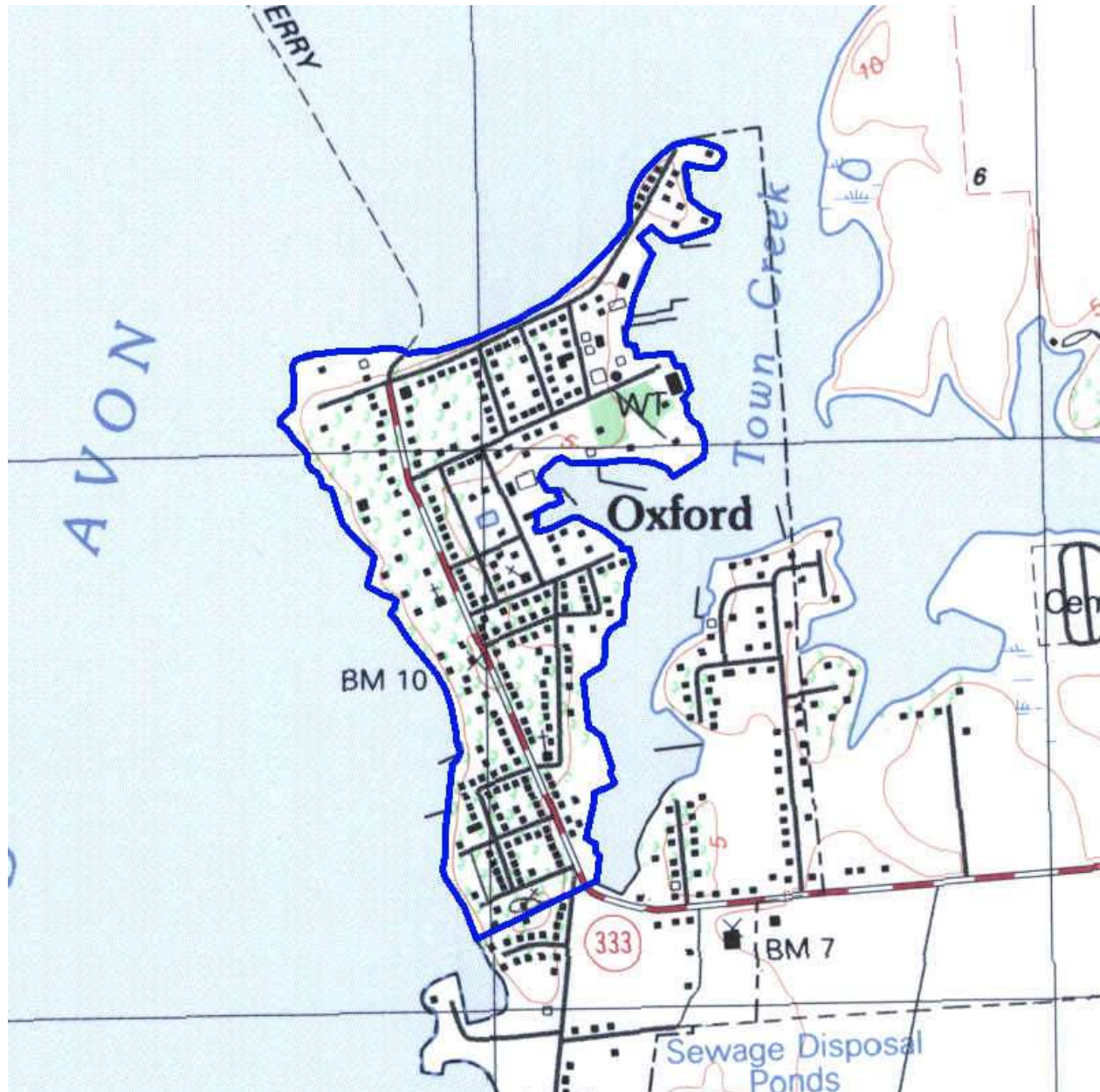
Historic building raised to appropriate Flood Protection Elevation and awaiting approved restoration.

## Enforcement

Refer to Section 17. Penalties for Violation, Zoning Ordinance, Oxford, MD - Amended 10.4.13



## Historic District Boundary Map



Oxford's National Register of Historic Places Form

## Historic District Description

**Property Name:** Oxford Historic District

**Date Listed:** 12/28/2005

**Inventory No.:** T-1158

**Location:** Oxford, Talbot County

**Description:** The town of Oxford occupies a peninsula bounded by the Tred Avon River and Town Creek. The streets of the town are laid out in a rough grid plan oriented to the principal north/south avenue, Morris Street, which dead ends at the Strand, an east/west road that borders the Tred Avon River. Along the Strand, at the north end of Morris Street, is the landing for the Oxford/Bellevue ferry, established in 1683, that connects Oxford with the small town of Bellevue on Ferry Neck. The district is primarily defined by streetscapes of frame dwellings erected between 1875 and 1910 with varying degrees of decorative detailing. There are no structures remaining in Oxford from the 17th or early 18th centuries. A few buildings dating from the mid to late 18th and early 19th centuries are located along North Morris Street near its intersection with the Strand. Most of these are or originally were 1 1/2 stories in height. Some of the few mid-19th century structures in town are Greek or Gothic-Revival in style. Following the arrival of the railroad in 1871, Oxford experienced a building boom that lasted through the turn of the 20th century. Over 90% of the buildings that define the historic district date from the period from 1870 through 1910. Most of these incorporate Victorian details, although some have Second-Empire features. The early 20th century brought a few Colonial Revival and American Foursquare dwellings, as well as modifications to existing Victorian houses, such as the addition of Tuscan columns to older porches. Little construction occurred during the Great Depression, apart from the replacement of the Town Office in 1932 following a fire which destroyed a row of frame commercial buildings on North Morris Street. Following this period, resident citizens or visitors maintained the housing stock built during the boom years, or in other cases, rented them to the remaining work force employed in the shipyards and dwindling number of seafood and/or fruit packers. Ever since the 19th century, and especially during the second quarter of the 20th century, Oxford has been seen as a pleasant place to buy a summer house or retire in a quieter, less harried village atmosphere.

**Significance:** The Oxford Historic District is historically significant for its association with the development of the Eastern Shore region of Maryland. Oxford is one of Maryland's earliest towns, with a fledgling village established on the edge of the Tred Avon River by the mid to late 1660s. During its first hundred years, Oxford developed into a principal port for the region, second only to Annapolis prior to the rise of Baltimore and Chestertown during the mid 18th century. While there are no surviving resources representative of the town's first century, the Tred Avon ferry has been in operation with various vessels since it was established by the Talbot County court in 1683. The district derives additional significance for its architecture, as an exceptionally cohesive and well-preserved collection of domestic, commercial, and ecclesiastical properties primarily dating from the town's principal period of growth, i. e., the last quarter of the 19th century through the World War I era. Integral to the district are a number of significant properties that predate that period, representing its late-18th and early-to-mid-19th century history. The town's early-18th century grid plan, documented by a survey completed in 1707,

remains essentially intact. The period of significance, c. 1668-1950, encompasses the period between the founding of the town and the mid 20th century, by which time the district had substantially achieved its present form and appearance. Although Oxford's position as a viable port and location for trade declined steadily after the Revolutionary war, the town resurfaced as an important site for shipbuilding and oyster and fruit processing during the mid to late 19th century, particularly with steamboat transportation and a railroad line across Oxford Neck by 1871. With newfound wealth derived from the water and the land, Oxford experienced economic prosperity and growth that were evident tangibly in a rebuilding of its housing stock and expansion of its town limits. Oxford developed into one of the three most populous and commercially active towns in Talbot County by the last decades of the 19th century. Unusual to the town as well is its historical association with the Maryland Military and Naval Academy, a preparatory school for young men, during the mid to late 19th century, which is represented by the architecturally prominent Academy House. Oxford's housing stock is representative of the priorities and livelihoods of town residents for the past 230 years. The town's oldest structures, the Barnaby house and a portion of the Robert Morris Inn, reflect third quarter of the 18th century frame building traditions and finishes. While only a handful of structures date to the early to mid 19th century, the town's collection of late-19th century frame dwellings is especially extensive and reflects largely middle class aspirations in building façades characterized by modest levels of architectural elaboration. Also significant architecturally are the town's three historic churches.

Oxford's National Register of Historic Places Form

## Resources

*Oxford Treasures, Then and Now*, by Doug Hanks

*Oxford (Maryland): the First Three Centuries* by Dickson J Preston

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation  
[www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation.htm](http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation.htm)

The collections of The Oxford Museum

The Maryland Room at the Talbot Free Library, Easton, MD.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation  
[www.preservationnation.org](http://www.preservationnation.org)

National Register of Historic Places For The Town of Oxford  
*available for review at the Town Office*



**Town of Oxford, Talbot County, Maryland  
Historic District Guidelines**

