

SAINT PAUL IRVINE PARK HERITAGE PRESERVATION DISTRICT  
GUIDELINES FOR DESIGN REVIEW  
SUMMARY

The City of Saint Paul has created a Heritage Preservation District for the Irvine Park area. The purpose of designating an Irvine Park Heritage Preservation District is to protect and enhance the unique architectural, visual, and historical character of Irvine Park, one of Saint Paul's oldest neighborhoods. This protection is provided through the review of building permit applications by the Heritage Preservation Commission. The Commission is empowered to review permit applications for demolition, housemoving, new construction, exterior alterations, or signs. The Commission does not review permit applications for interiors or exterior paint color. The Commission approves permits which are compatible with the historic character of the area and/or the particular structure, and may deny any permit applications which are not compatible. The Commission must review any permit application within 45 days, and any decisions by the Commission may be appealed to the City Council. (The Commission cannot require any changes of the existing appearance of buildings within the District. It only reviews the proposed changes of building permit applications.)

The following Guidelines for Design Review will serve as the basis for the Heritage Preservation Commission's permit review decisions in the Irvine Park Heritage Preservation District. The guidelines define the most important elements of the district's unique physical appearance and state the best means of preserving and enhancing these elements in rehabilitation or new construction. These guidelines are not hard and fast regulations. They are flexible criteria. Their purpose is to provide assurance to property owners that permit review will be based on clear standards rather than the taste of individual Commission members. The guidelines will be interpreted with flexibility depending on the particular merit of the building or area under review. Consideration will be given to the unavailability of historical materials. When applying the guidelines the Commission will also be considerate of clearly defined cases of economic hardship or deprivation of the owner of reasonable use of his/her property.

The design guidelines cover five general areas: (1) demolition; (2) house moving; (3) new construction; (4) rehabilitation; and (5) signs.

The demolition guidelines provide that the Commission shall review the architectural/historical merit of the present building, and the comparative economic usefulness of the present building versus proposed new structures. (Designation of a district does not mean that demolition is forbidden. It simply means that every proposed demolition is reviewed by the Commission.)

Proposals for moving a house off property within the district are reviewed with guidelines for demolition. Proposals for houses to be moved into the district are reviewed with the guidelines for new construction and rehabilitation. Proposals for houses moved within the district are reviewed under demolition guidelines, then under new construction and rehabilitation guidelines.

Guidelines for new construction encourage utilization of those design elements which are common in Irvine Park's historic architectural styles. They do not ask for the re-creation of a particular style of building, but rather that the new structure's primary design elements (such as height or massing) fit in with the character of the nearby area. New structures should provide massing, rhythm, materials, roofs and chimneys, windows and doors, porches, setback, landscaping and garages compatible to surrounding buildings.

The guidelines for restoration and rehabilitation follow this general principle: "All work should be of a character and quality that maintains the distinguishing features of the building and the environment." Guidelines cover specific areas such as masonry cleaning and tuckpointing, siding, roofing, windows and doors, and porches.

The guidelines for signs ask that the design and placement of signs harmonize with the character of the structures on or near which the signs are placed.

If you have questions, please call Terry Pfoutz, City Planning, 292-6229, or write to the Heritage Preservation Commission, 25 West Fourth Street, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102.

#### IRVINE PARK HERITAGE PRESERVATION DISTRICT ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

The Irvine Park Historic District is the only complete representation of residential development in the metropolitan area from the start of white settlement in the late 1840's until the close of the nineteenth century. It contains homes built during all major phases of economic growth in nineteenth century Saint Paul, without complete obliteration of previous phases. As a fashionable nineteenth century address; Irvine Park was home to important figures in city, state and national history. Irvine Park contains excellent examples of Federal, Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, French Second Empire, Italianate, Queen Anne, and Romanesque Revival houses, surrounding one of the few remaining authentic public greens in the city.

ST. PAUL HISTORIC IRVINE PARK HERITAGE PRESERVATION DISTRICT  
GUIDELINES FOR DESIGN REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

The following guidelines for design review will serve as the basis for the Heritage Preservation Commission's permit review decisions in the Irvine Park Heritage Preservation District. The guidelines define the most important elements of the Irvine Park district's unique physical appearance and state the best means of preserving and enhancing these elements in rehabilitation or new construction. These guidelines are not hard and fast regulations. They are flexible criteria. Their purpose is to provide assurance to property owners that permit review will be based on clear standards rather than the taste of individual Commission members. The guidelines will be interpreted with flexibility depending on the particular merit of the building or area under review. Consideration will be given to the unavailability of historical materials. When applying the guidelines, the Commission will also be considerate of clearly defined cases of economic hardship or deprivation of the owner or reasonable use of his/her property.

ST. PAUL HISTORIC IRVINE PARK HERITAGE PRESERVATION DISTRICT  
GUIDELINES FOR DESIGN REVIEW

A. DEMOLITION

The Heritage Preservation Commission will follow the guidelines stated in the Heritage Preservation Ordinance (#16006), Section 6 (1)(2), when reviewing permit applications for demolition:

"In the case of the proposed demolition of a building, prior to approval of said demolition, the Commission shall make written findings on the following: architectural and historical merit of building, the effect on surrounding buildings, the effect of any new proposed construction on the remainder of the building (in case of partial demolition), and on surrounding buildings, the economic value or usefulness of building as it now exists, or if altered or modified in comparison with the value or usefulness of any proposed structures designated to replace the present building or buildings."

B. HOUSE MOVING

In evaluating proposals for moving of structures the following guidelines shall be used throughout the district:

- I. Permits for moving a structure off property located within the Irvine Park district will be reviewed, using the guidelines for demolition.
- II. Structures being moved into the Irvine Park district or structures whose relocation within the Irvine Park district has been approved (see Demolition), should be selected and sited in conformity with section C (below) and rehabilitated in accordance with section D (below). Special attention should be paid to the historical significance, architectural style and character of buildings moved into the district.

C. NEW CONSTRUCTION

New construction refers to totally new structures, moved-in structures, and new additions to existing structures undergoing restoration and rehabilitation. The Irvine Park Historic District is characterized by architecturally diverse structures oriented toward a common green space, the park. This diversity of styles within the district - Greek Revival, Neo-Classical, Italianate, Victorian Gothic and Queen Anne - illustrates the evolution of American architectural styles, tastes, and construction methods from 1850 to 1910. Though stylistically diverse, Irvine Park architecture demonstrates similar organization of massing, rhythm, materials, and building elements, which together express a harmony and continuity in the streetscape. New construction should incorporate the general massing, rhythm, materials, and building elements of historic Irvine Park structures, and should be sensitive to the architectural styles evidenced in the Park.

In evaluating proposals for new construction, the following guidelines shall be used throughout the District.

I. Massing

New construction should conform to the massing of existing adjacent structures, respecting the height, volume, and scale of the neighborhood. Most district buildings are two or three stories high, three or four bays wide, and 20 to 40 feet high. The buildings around the park itself are examples of the extremes in massing - from the rambling, low-hipped roof Humphrey Willis house at 240 Ryan, to the solid, turreted peak of its neighbor, the Justus Ohage House at 59 Irvine Park. The height of new construction should be no lower than the average height of all buildings surrounding the park; measurements should be made from street level to the highest point of the roof.

II. Rhythm

Rhythm on Irvine Park streets is created in several ways - uneven space between buildings, an average two and one-half stories height, the juxtaposition of jagged and subdued rooflines, a continuity of projections and porches, and a dominant vertical direction emphasized by the superposition of vertically oriented windows and doors. Because there are a variety of built forms in Irvine Park, flexibility as well as compatibility is possible, but the rhythm of new construction should be typical of the varying existing adjacent structures to maintain the overall rhythm of the street.

III. Materials and Details

While most Irvine Park structures are wood-framed and clapboarded, variety in the use of architectural materials and details adds to the intimacy and visual delight of the district. When first confronted with this variety, it is easy to overlook the continuity provided by these 19th century building materials. This continuity is threatened by the availability of inappropriate materials and building parts in today's expanded marketplace. The purpose of this section is to encourage the proper use of appropriate materials and details. New construction materials and details should relate to materials and details of adjacent buildings. Materials imitating other materials are generally unacceptable.

Roofs of slate, cedar shakes and standing seam metal are preferred, but materials which match their approximate color and texture are acceptable substitutes.

Siding running diagonally is unacceptable. Imitative materials such as asphalt siding, wood-textured metal siding or artificial stone should not be used. Wooden four-inch or six-inch clapboard is preferred as a siding material.

Foundations, when exposed, should simulate the rock-faced limestone, brick or stone veneer in a running bond pattern characteristic of the area. Concrete block foundations should be pigmented and rock-faced above grade, and may be smooth-faced only when underground.

#### IV. Building Elements

Individual elements of a building should be integrated into its composition for a balanced and complete design. The individual elements of new construction should complement existing neighboring structures.

##### a) Roofs and Chimneys

Gable, hipped and mansard roofs are the most common forms in Irvine Park. These forms are used with great variety, offering several options for new construction roof profiles. Chimneys should be proportionate to the overall structural massing. For example, a building several stories high with a vertical emphasis and peaked roofline should display a tall, thin chimney, while a smaller, more rectangular structure should have a shorter, squarer chimney. Brick as a chimney material is encouraged, as are characteristic corbelling and horizontal bands. New roof and chimney designs should be compatible with existing adjacent structures.

##### b) Windows and Doors

The proportion, size, and detailing of windows and doors in new construction buildings should relate to the facade openings of existing adjacent buildings.

Most windows in the district have a vertical orientation, with a common proportion of between 2:1 and 3:1 (height to width). Wooden double-hung windows are traditional in the district, and are preferred for new construction. Window mullions should emphasize their vertical direction. Paned casement windows, although not common historically, will often be acceptable because of their vertical orientation. Horizontal sliding windows or awning windows are not common in the district, and because of their horizontal proportion, would usually be undesirable. Doors flanked by sidelights or pilasters and capped by fanlights or transoms are common in the district and desirable.

Although not usually improving the appearance of a building, metal windows or doors need not necessarily ruin it. The important consideration is that they look like part of the building and not like raw metal appliances. Appropriately colored or bronzed-toned aluminum or vinyl-clad wood is acceptable. Mill finish (shiny silver) aluminum will not be allowed.

##### c) Porches

Many houses in Irvine Park have roofed front porches, while in most modern construction the front porch has disappeared. These porches are a consistent visual element in the district and often clarify rhythm and scale or provide vertical facade elements. The porch treatment of new structures should relate to the porch treatment of existing adjacent structures. It is preferred that porches be left

open, but screened or glassed-in porches may be acceptable if well detailed. Most, but not all, porches in the Park district are one story high. Along some streets, where a strong continuity of porch size or porch roofline exists, it may be preferable to duplicate these formal elements in new construction. The vertical elements supporting the porch roof are important. They should look substantial enough to actually support the weight of the porch roof. If a porch is not built, the transition from private to public space should be articulated with some other suitable design element.

## V. Site

Typically open space in the park is divided into public, semi-public, and private space; that is, streets and sidewalks, front lawns, homes and back yards. The guidelines are concerned with private space only when it is visible from the street. Setback, site landscape, and ancillary buildings should be integrated with the total park environment.

### a) Setback

Due to varying lot sizes, orientation, and type and date of construction, setbacks in the Irvine Park District vary considerably. Generally, new construction setbacks should be within 10% in line with existing adjacent buildings. However, reduced or extended setbacks can lend a delightful variation to the park, and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

### b) Landscaping

A central green is the outstanding asset of Irvine Park. Landscaping should respect the open feeling of the park, treating the park and street as a "public room." The public space of the street and sidewalk is often distinguished from the semi-public space of the front yard by a change in grade, a low hedge, or a visually open fence. The buildings and landscaping elements in front yards provide a "wall of enclosure" from the street "room." Enclosures, though uncommon and generally not preferred in the district, should allow visual penetration of semi-public areas, through wrought-iron fences, low hedges, or limestone retaining walls. Cyclone fences, though visually transparent, may not be used because they violate the historic character of the District, both in their design and use of materials. This approach contrasts with complete enclosure by undesirable opaque fences, and all "weathered wood" fences or tall hedge rows.

When lots are vacant as green space or parking, a visual hole in the street "wall" may result. Landscape treatment can eliminate this potential problem by providing a wall of enclosure for the street. Traditional street furniture of the area, such as lamp posts or fountains, should be preserved.

c) Garages and Parking

New construction of garages should be similar to the overall design and materials of the building they accompany. If an alley is adjacent to the dwelling, a new garage should be located off this alley. Where alleys do not exist, one-lane driveway curb-cuts may be acceptable. Garages should be located at the rear of the lot. Garage doors should not face the street. If this is necessary, single garage doors should be used to avoid the long horizontal proportions of double doors. Parking spaces should be adequately screened from the street and sidewalk by landscaping. Henceforth, there shall be no curb cuts on the street surrounding Irvine Park. Other ancillary buildings will not be permitted unless specifically approved.

D. RESTORATION AND REHABILITATION

General Principles for Restoration and Rehabilitation:

1. All work should be of a character and quality that maintains the distinguishing features of the building and the environment. The removal of architectural features is not permitted.
2. Deteriorated architectural features should be repaired rather than replaced whenever possible. In the event of replacement, new materials should match the original in composition, design, color, texture and appearance. Duplication of original design based on physical or pictorial evidence is preferable to using conjectural or "period" designs or using parts of other buildings.
3. Distinctive stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship characteristic of structures of a period should be treated sensitively. Furthermore, if changes in use of a building are contemplated, they should be accomplished with minimum alteration to the structure and fabric.
4. In general, it is expected that buildings will be restored to their original appearance. However, alterations to buildings are sometimes significant because they reflect the history of the building and neighborhood. This significance should be respected, and restoration to an "original" appearance may not always be desirable. All buildings should be recognized as products of their own time and not be altered to resemble buildings from another era.

In evaluating proposals for restoration or rehabilitation, the following guidelines shall be used throughout the district:

I. Masonry and Foundation

Original masonry and mortar should be retained whenever possible without the application of any surface treatment. A similar material should be used to repair or replace, where necessary, deteriorated masonry. New masonry added to the structure or site, such as new foundations or retaining walls, should be compatible with the color, texture and bonding of original or existing masonry.



Masonry should be cleaned only when necessary to halt deterioration and always with the gentlest method possible, such as low pressure water and soft natural bristle brushes. Brick and stone surfaces should not be sandblasted. This method of cleaning erodes the hard surface of the material and accelerates deterioration. Chemical cleaning products which could have an adverse chemical reaction with the masonry material should not be used.

When repointing, it is important to use the same materials as the existing mortar. This includes matching the color, texture, and ingredient ratio of the original mortar mix, creating a bond similar to the original. Repointing with Portland cement mortar may create a bond stronger than is appropriate for the building materials, possibly resulting in cracking or other damage. The original mortar joint size and profile should also be retained.

The original or early color and texture of masonry surfaces should be retained. Paint should not be indiscriminately removed from masonry surface as some brick surfaces were originally meant to be painted.

## II. Siding and Surface Treatment

Deteriorated siding material should be replaced with material used in original construction or with materials that resemble the appearance of the old as closely as possible, spacing horizontal lines, or laps, to match the original. Resurfacing frame buildings with new material such as artificial stone, artificial brick veneer, or asbestos and asphalt shingles, is inappropriate.

## III. Roofs

The original roof shape should be preserved. Original roofing materials should also be retained unless deteriorated. Wood shingled roofs should be restored either with the original type or a modern brand as approved. Slate roofs may substitute an asbestos product of similar appearance. Metal roofs may be restored with standing seam metal roofing.

When partially reroofing, deteriorated roof coverings should be replaced with new materials that match the old in composition, size, shape, color and texture. When entirely reroofing, new materials which differ to such an extent from the original in composition, size, shape, color or texture that the appearance of the building is altered should not be used.

## IV. Chimneys

Wherever portions of the existing chimneys are still in existence or wherever there are original photographs that clearly indicate the original design, the chimneys should be restored to their original condition. In the absence of any documentation, the chimneys shall be in keeping with chimney design of the period. They should generally be treated in a similar manner with horizontal brick banding, vertical panels and/or corbelled tops. The type of brick construction should also be consistent with the original, and can usually be determined by stripping stucco or examining the chimney in the attic or other part of the house.

## V. Windows and Doors

Unlike other districts, front, side, and rear elevations in Irvine Park are often visible from several angles. All elevations therefore become important and are read as a public view. New windows and door openings should not be introduced into the principal elevations. Existing window and door openings should be retained. Enlarging or reducing window and door openings by "blocking up" or "blocking down" to fit stock window sash or new stock door sizes is unacceptable. The size of window panes or sash should not be altered. Such changes destroy the scale and proportion of the building.

The stylistic period or periods a building represents should be respected. Window sash, glass, lintels, sills, architraves, doors, pediments, hoods, steps and all hardware should be retained, if possible. Discarding original doors and hardware, when they can be repaired and reused in place, should be avoided. If a replacement of window sash or door is necessary, the replacement should duplicate the material, design and hardware of the older window sash and door.

Wooden storm windows custom fabricated to resemble the inner window as closely as possible in shape and appearance are strongly encouraged. Standard mill finish aluminum combination windows will not be allowed.

## VI. Porches, Steps, Cornices and Applied Architectural Features

Porches and steps which are appropriate to the building and its development should be retained. Porches and additions reflecting later styles of architecture are often important to the building's historical integrity and, if so, should be retained. Porches, steps and doorways which have been removed should be restored, if possible, through photo documentation and historical research. A similar material should be used to repair or replace, where necessary, deteriorated architectural features of wood, iron, cast iron, terra-cotta, tile and brick. Similar material should be used to replace missing architectural features such as cornices, brackets, railings and shutters, whenever possible.

## E. SIGNS

This section of the Irvine Park District Design Guidelines is intended primarily for the few parts of the District which are commercially zoned. Generally, signs should be compatible with the character of the District, and blend with the character of the structures on or near which they are placed. In evaluating permit applications for signs, the following guidelines will be used:

- I. Signs should not conceal architectural detail, clutter the building's image, or distract from the unity of the facade; but rather should complement the overall design.
- II. Sign materials should complement the materials of the related building and/or the adjacent buildings. Surface design elements should not detract from or conflict with the related structure's age and design.
- III. No facade should be damaged in the application of signs, except for mere attachment.