

**SEGUIN
HISTORIC
DISTRICT
DESIGN
GUIDELINES**

Seguin Downtown Historic District Exterior Design Guidelines

- Protecting our Historic Treasures
- Free Design Assistance is Available
- The Historic District Design Review Process
- How to Apply for a Certificate of Appropriate Design
- Standards for Rehabilitation
- Recommendations for Renovation, Repair and New Construction

Protecting Our Historic Treasures

Downtown is the Heart of Our Community

The Seguin Downtown Historic District (DHD) includes 26-blocks of commercial buildings (see Figure 1) that reflect the history and heritage of our community. The majority of this area, and individual properties within it, are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Protecting the historic and architectural integrity of these structures helps in stabilizing property values, creating civic pride in the beauty and accomplishments of the past, and it enhances the historic assets that serve as attractions to tourists, visitors and residents, now and in the future.

Why Regulate Design in the Downtown Historic District?

The City of Seguin adopted a Historic District Design Review Ordinance requiring design review for all exterior improvements requiring a building permit in the Downtown Historic District. The ordinance is intended to preserve and safeguard existing structures and exterior elements, ensure new construction is appropriate, prevent architecturally inappropriate exterior alterations or additions to existing buildings and strengthen the economy by stabilizing and improving property values through protection of its historic assets. Most of Seguin's commercial buildings were constructed between 1885 and 1925. This era of architectural significance and the overall historic character and charm of downtown Seguin can be enhanced through thoughtful design review.

Free Design Assistance is Available

Conceptual Drawings

Seguin is a sustaining member of the Texas Main Street Program, a project of the Texas Historical Commission, dedicated to helping revitalize Texas downtowns through historic preservation. Texas Main Street provides free design services and conceptual drawings to participating cities. Contact the Seguin Main Street Program for more information on this excellent service provided to business and property owners in the Downtown Historic District.

FIX-IT FAÇADE Grants and Other Assistance

Financial assistance is offered on a competitive basis for FIX-IT Façade Improvement Grants offered for properties and businesses in the Downtown Historic District. Federal tax credits, tax abatements on improvements and low interest loans may also be available for property located in the DHD.

Signage

Signage is regulated in the Downtown Historic District. Signs must be constructed and installed by a licensed sign contractor and a sign permit is required for most signs. A Design Guidelines booklet on Signage is available and explains the sign requirements in the DHD.

Color Selection in the Downtown Historic District

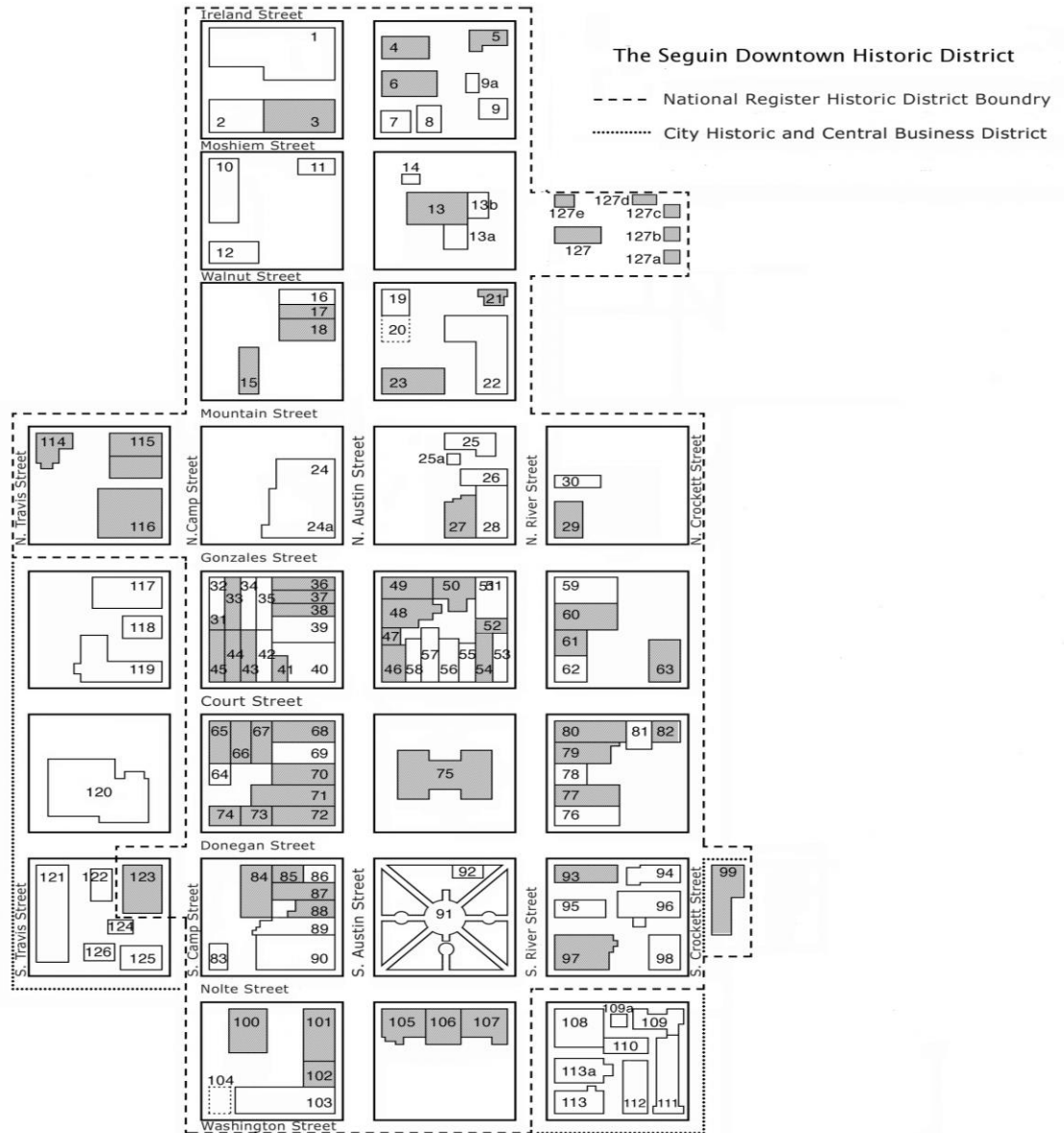
The selection of color for the exterior of buildings located in the Downtown Historic District is not regulated but free color design assistance is available and recommended.

For more information on signage and color or for more information in general about the Downtown Historic District, including other financial incentives, contact the Seguin Main Street Program.

The Downtown Historic District

Historic District Design Review is required for all exterior improvements requiring a building permit for property located in the Downtown Historic District (DHD) as indicated in the map.

Figure 1



THE DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS

Who Completes the Design Review?

The Mayor of the City of Seguin appoints five members to serve on a Historic Design Review Committee (HDRC) to include business or property owners within the DHD and a design professional, like an architect. The Historic Design Review Committee meets as needed. Adjoining property owners are notified ten days in advance of the HDRC meeting in order to provide them and the general public a chance to comment. The HDRC shall approve, approve with modifications, or deny an application. If the HDRC does not take action within 60-days from the request for a building permit then the property owner can proceed without receiving a Certificate of Appropriate Design. Decisions of the HDRC can be appealed to the Seguin City Council by contacting the office of the City Secretary.

What is a Certificate of Appropriate Design (CAD)?

Any person carrying out any work that requires a building permit for exterior alteration, restoration, reconstruction, new construction or moving of a landmark or property within the DHD must obtain a Certificate of Appropriate Design (CAD) from the Historic Design Review Committee. There is no fee for the Certificate of Appropriate Design. A Certificate of Appropriate Design will be provided to the property owner, a copy attached to the building permit and a copy retained on file in the Main Street Program Office. No building permit will be issued for such proposed work in the DHD until the Certificate of Appropriate Design has been issued by the HDRC.

HOW TO APPLY FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATE DESIGN

What is the Procedure for Obtaining a Certificate of Appropriate Design?

Before any work is begun, the property owner or owner's representative shall file an application for a Certificate of Appropriate Design with the building official in the Permit Office of the City of Seguin, Second Floor, City Hall, 205 N. River (see Figure 2).

The Historic Design Review Process
2nd Floor, City Hall
Building Inspections

FIGURE 2

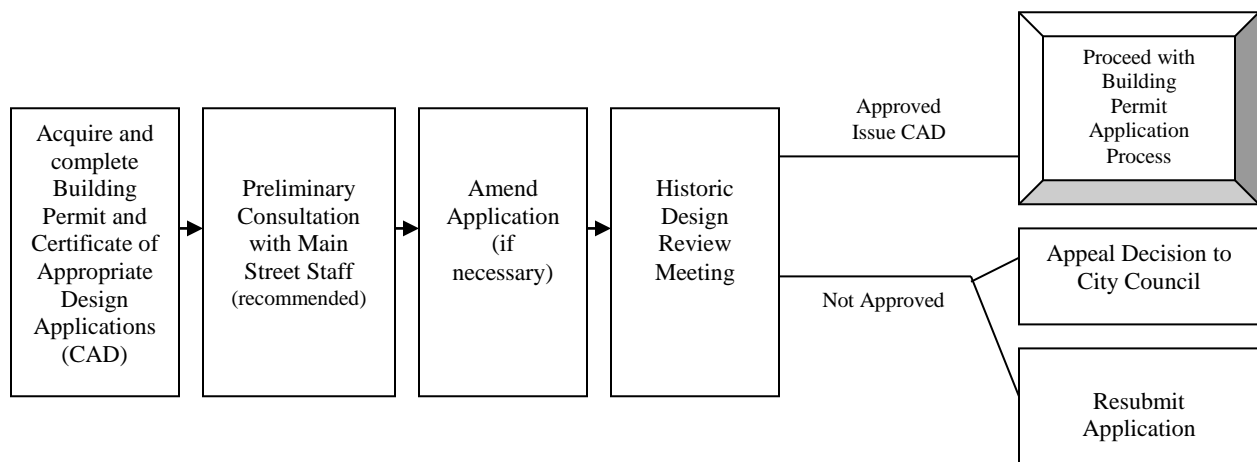
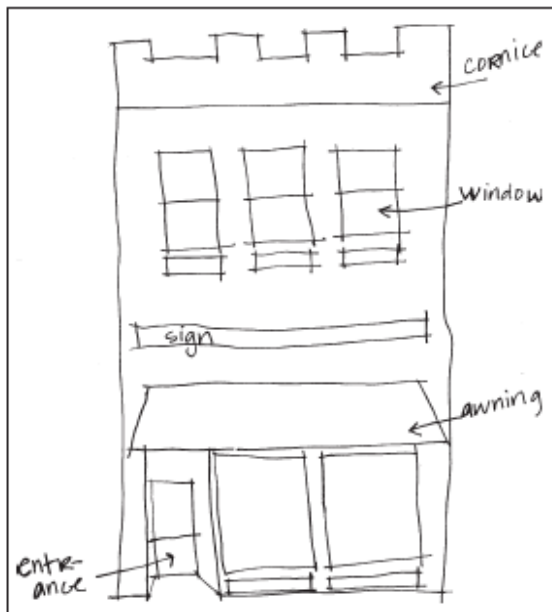
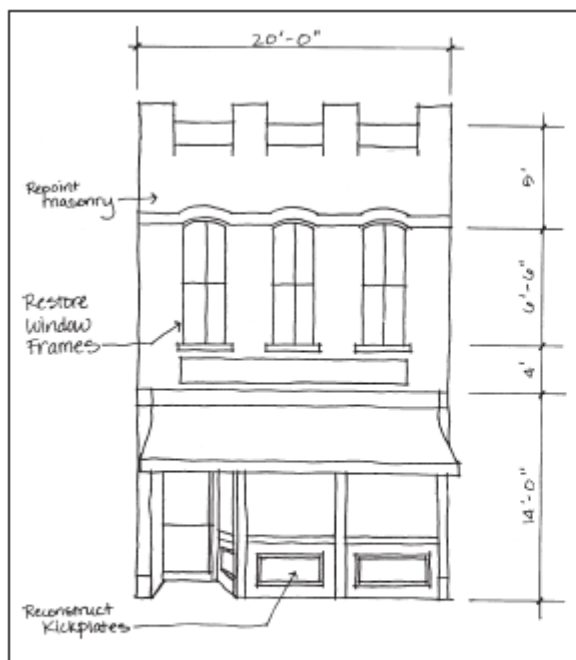


FIGURE 3

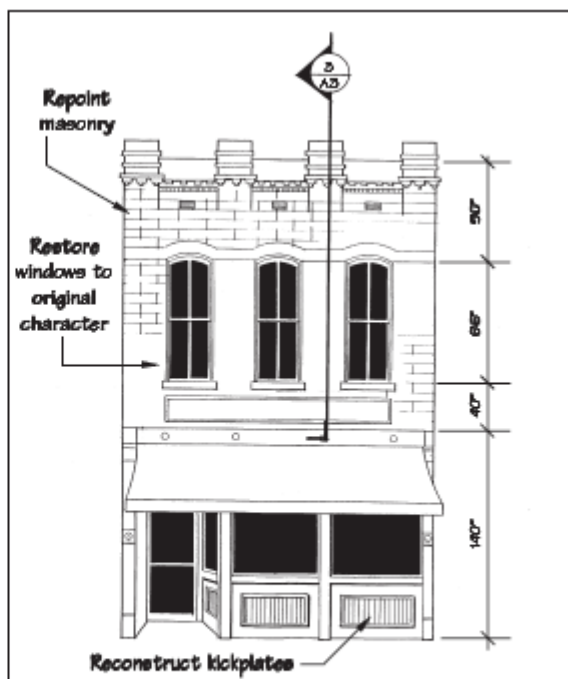
It is suggested that the property owner consult with the City Historic Preservation Officer/Main Street Program Director prior to submission of the permit application. A minimum of ten days notice is required prior to holding a Historic Design Review Committee meeting. The application shall contain: physical address, property owner name, address, telephone number and a detailed description of the proposed work including historic and current photographs and elevation or site drawings of the proposed changes. (See Figure 3).



Inappropriate drawing: the scale and character are not clearly conveyed, nor are there any dimensions.



Appropriate drawing: while in free-hand, this drawing does adequately convey the scale and character of the proposed work.



Appropriate drawing: mechanically drafted to scale, this drawing best conveys the character of the proposed work.

Samples, examples or full descriptions of materials to be used should be provided.

What Guidelines Are Used in Issuing a Certificate of Appropriate Design?

In considering an application for a Certificate of Appropriate Design, the committee is guided by *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings*.

STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards have been widely used over the years to determine if a rehabilitation qualifies as a Certified Rehabilitation for Federal purposes. In addition, the Standards have guided Federal agencies in carrying out their historic preservation responsibilities for properties in Federal ownership or control. State and local officials use the standards in reviewing rehabilitation proposals. They are also used by historic districts and planning commissions across the country.

The Seguin Historic Design Review Committee utilizes the Standards, through the Certificate of Appropriate Design review process, to determine appropriateness of work proposed for buildings located in the Downtown Historic District. The purpose of the review process is to assist the property owner in the preservation of the property's significance by preserving historic materials and features.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

1. Property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change or alteration to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
2. The historic character of the property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a historic property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements, from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
4. Most properties change over time: those changes that have acquired historical significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. When the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities, and where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.

7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken with the gentlest means possible.
8. Significant archaeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property and its environment. The new work shall be differentiated from the old to protect the historic integrity of the property and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural details to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

The Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings provide clear and consistent guidance so that a rehabilitation project can be successfully planned and completed. The recommended courses of action are listed in order of historic preservation priorities. When evaluating a Certificate of Appropriate Design application, check to see if the changes being made to the building are following the correct preservation priorities. The recommended courses of action are listed below, in order of preservation priority:

HISTORIC PRESERVATION PRIORITIES

1. **Identify, Retain, and Preserve:** This is basic to the treatment of all historic buildings. This refers to *identifying, retaining, and preserving* the form and detailing of architectural materials and features that are important in defining the historic character.
2. **Protect and Maintain:** Protection generally involves the least degree of intervention and is preparatory to other work. Protection includes the maintenance of historic material through treatments such as rust removal, caulking, limited paint removal, and the cyclical cleaning of gutter systems. Example: In evaluating a Certificate of Appropriate Design application that involves work to be done on a masonry building, you should be sure that any causes of mortar joint deterioration have been identified and treated such as leaking roofs and gutters, settlement of the building, capillary action, or extreme weather exposure. In evaluating wood, be sure the causes of any wood deterioration have been identified and treated such as faulty flashing, leaking gutters, cracks in siding, deteriorated caulking in joints and seams, plant material growing too close to wood surfaces, or insect infestation. Remember to always ask yourself, "Why is the damage occurring and what is the problem?" Treat the cause not the problem.
3. **Repair:** Guidance for the repair of historic materials begins with the lowest degree of intervention possible such as patching, piecing-in, splicing, consolidating, or otherwise reinforcing according to recognized preservation methods. Repair also includes the limited replacement of extensively deteriorated or missing parts of features when there are surviving prototypes.

- 4. Replace:** Following repair in the hierarchy, guidance is provided for replacing an entire character defining feature with a new material because the level of deterioration or damage precludes repair. While the guidelines recommend the replacement of an entire character defining feature under certain well defined circumstances, they never recommend removal and replacement of a feature damaged or deteriorated that could reasonably be repaired and thus preserved.

Did you know.....

Using sand blasting and high pressure water to remove paint or clean wood or brick surfaces can cause irreparable damage?

Additions to historic buildings are acceptable as long as the addition is compatible with the historic building in size and scale, and is done in such a way as not to damage or destroy historic features. The new addition must be differentiated from the old.

It is better to repair historic features rather than replace them.

Replacing historic features is acceptable as long as the replacement matches the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities.

Historic Design Review Guidelines

These guidelines address the more typical types of situations and improvements encountered when working with existing and historic properties. It is not meant to be an all-inclusive list but rather to help guide the property owner while considering options for renovations and other work in the DHD. Under each category these are activities and procedures that are *Recommended* or *Not Recommended* when dealing with historic properties.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RENOVATION, REPAIR AND NEW CONSTRUCTION

MASONRY

REPOINTING

RECOMMENDED

Repointing only in areas where there is evidence of deterioration such as disintegrating mortar, cracks in mortar joints, loose bricks, and damp walls.

Removing deteriorated mortar by hand raking joints.

Duplicating old mortar in strength, composition, color and texture.

Duplicating old mortar joints in width and profile.

NOT RECOMMENDED

Removing deteriorated mortar from sound joints, then repointing the entire building to achieve a uniform appearance.

Using electric saws and hammers rather than hand tools to remove deteriorated mortar from joints.

Repointing with a mortar of high portland cement content unless it is the content of the historic mortar

CLEANING

RECOMMENDED

Cleaning masonry only when necessary to halt deterioration or remove heavy soiling.

Cleaning masonry with the gentlest means possible such as low pressure water and detergents.

NOT RECOMMENDED

Cleaning masonry surfaces when they are not heavily soiled.

Sandblasting brick using dry or wet grit or other abrasive.

Applying high pressure water cleaning methods.

PAINT

RECOMMENDED

Removing damaged or deteriorated paint only to the next sound layer using the gentlest method possible. Repainting with colors that are historically appropriate to the building.

NOT RECOMMENDED

Removing paint that is firmly adhering.

Using methods of removing paint which is destructive to masonry such as sandblasting, application of caustic solutions, or high pressure water blasting.

Using paint colors inappropriate to the historic building. Applying paint or other coating such as stucco to masonry that has been historically unpainted. Removing paint from historically painted masonry.

DECORATIVE MASONRY FEATURES

RECOMMENDED

Retaining and preserving masonry features that are important in defining the overall historic character of the building (ie: walls, brackets, tailings, cornices, window architraves, door pediments, steps, columns and detailing such as tooling, bonding patterns, coatings, and color).

WATERPROOF/WATER REPELLENT COATINGS

RECOMMENDED

Applying surface treatments such as water repellent only after repointing and only if masonry repairs failed to arrest water penetration problems.

NOT RECOMMENDED

Removing or radically changing masonry features which are important in defining the historic character of the building

NOT RECOMMENDED

Applying water repellent coatings as a substitute for repointing and masonry repairs

WOOD

PAINTING

RECOMMENDED

Removing damaged or deteriorated paint to the next sound layer using the gentlest method possible (hand scraping and hand sanding), then repainting.

Repainting with colors that are appropriate to the historic building

NOT RECOMMENDED

Using propane or butane torches, sandblasting or water blasting to remove paint.

Using colors that are inappropriate to the historic building.

DECORATIVE WOOD FEATURES

RECOMMENDED

Retaining and preserving wood features that are important in defining the historic character of the building (ie: siding, cornices, brackets, window architraves, doorway pediments and their paints, finishes, and colors).

NOT RECOMMENDED

Removing or radically changing wood features which are important in defining the historic character of the building.

CHEMICAL PRESERVATIVES

RECOMMENDED

Applying chemical preservatives to wood features such as beam ends that are exposed to decay and are traditionally unpainted.

NOT RECOMMENDED

Using chemical preservatives which can change the appearance of wood features.

ROOF

ROOF FEATURES

RECOMMENDED

Retaining and preserving roofs and their functional and decorative features that are important in defining the historic character of the building. This includes the shape of the roof, such as hipped, gambrel, and mansard; decorative features such as cupolas, chimneys and roofing material such as slate, wood, tile.

Retaining size, color, and patterning of materials

NOT RECOMMENDED

Changing or destroying features which are important in defining the historic character of the building.

WINDOWS

RECOMMENDED

Repairing window frames and sash by patching, splicing, consolidating, or otherwise reinforcing.

Replacing an entire window that is too deteriorated to repair using the same sash and pane configuration and other details.

NOT RECOMMENDED

Replacing an entire window when repair of deteriorated materials and limited replacement of missing parts is appropriate.

Removing a window and blocking it in with a new window that does not convey the same visual appearance.

Changing the number, location, size, or glazing pattern of windows through cutting new openings, blocking in windows, and installing replacement sashes that do not fit the historic window opening.

ENTRANCES AND PORCHES

REPAIR AND REPLACE RECOMMENDED

Repairing entrances and porches by reinforcing the historic materials or by the limited replacement of extensively damaged or missing parts.

Replacing an entire porch that is too deteriorated to repair using the physical evidence to reproduce the features.

NOT RECOMMENDED

Replacing an entire porch or entrance when the repair of materials and limited replacement of parts are appropriate.

Removing an entire porch that is unrepairable and not replacing it, or replacing it with a new entrance or porch that does not convey the same visual appearance.

ADDITIONS

RECOMMENDED

Constructing a new addition so that there is the least possible loss of historic materials and so that character defining features are not obscured.

Designing new additions in a manner that makes clear what is historic and what is new.

Locating the attached exterior addition at the rear or on an inconspicuous side of a historic building and limiting its size and scale in relationship to the historic building.

NOT RECOMMENDED

Attaching a new addition so that character-defining features of the historic building are lost or destroyed.

Duplicating the exact form, material, style, and detailing in the new addition so that the new work appears to be part of the building.

Designing a new addition so that its size and scale in relation to the historic building are out of proportion.

THIS BOOKLET WAS DEVELOPED BY THE SEGUIN MAIN STREET PROGRAM AND HISTORIC DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE AND IS INTENDED AS GENERAL EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL. IT SERVES TO GUIDE BUILDING OWNERS AND THE HISTORIC DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE IN MAKING DESIGN-RELATED DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS. EACH BUILDING IS UNIQUE AND MUST BE TREATED INDIVIDUALLY. FOR THE FULL TEXT OF THE SEGUIN HISTORIC DISTRICT HISTORIC REVIEW ORDINANCE 06-83.

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