# LOWRY HILL EAST RESIDENTIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGN GUIDELINES





Prepared for the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission

City of Minneapolis Community Planning & Economic Development (CPED)

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## **Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission**

Laura Faucher, Chair Paul Bengtson Alex Haecker Chris Hartnett Susan Hunter Weir Ginny Lackovic Linda Mack Dan Olson Ian Stade Constance Vork

# **Department of Community Planning & Economic Development (CPED)**

Craig Taylor, Executive Director

Steve Poor, Development Services Director

John Smoley, Ph. D., Senior Planner, Development Services

Alex Young, City Planner, Development Services

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# INTRODUCTION

## Scope

These guidelines are meant to be used in conjunction with the latest version of *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.* These guidelines identify the district's period of significance, indicate historic uses, and state character-defining features. This document also specifies additional guidelines for exterior changes specifically suited to the district. These guidelines apply only to the exteriors of the buildings within the district. Noncontributing buildings are encouraged to be restored, but this is not mandated. Noncontributing buildings constructed within the period of significance can have their contributing status reevaluated in the event of any restoration work that brings the property back to its historic appearance. This document also contains guidelines for any future new infill construction, which noncontributing buildings also follow.

# **Period of Significance**

The period of significance is from 1882 - 1920. Lowry Hill East was platted for development by 1882 and the first horsecar line was extended down Lyndale Avenue South in 1884. A few houses already existed in the area. Soon after, a boom in residential construction began. The majority of homes in Lowry Hill East were constructed before 1920.

## **Historic Uses**

During its period of significance, the district was home to single-family residences, duplexes and apartments. Within this period, many residences were subdivided into multiple units.

# **Character-Defining Features**

Character-defining features are the form and detailing of those architectural materials and features that are important in defining the districts' historic character and which must be retained in order to preserve that character. The residences in the district represent an eclectic mix of architectural styles. The Colonial Revival and Queen Anne architectural styles are predominant within the district. A few Craftsman and Prairie style residences are also represented, but these examples and two apartment buildings are outliers.

Heights most commonly range from two to two-and-a-half stories. Palladian window placements are common, as are fanciful dormers.



Fanciful dormers, decorative window detailing and Palladian windows. Note the treatment of the eave conditions.

Single-story front porches are supported with columns decorated by capitals of the classical orders. The streetscapes of the Lowry Hill East **Residential Historic District are** created by the interplay of high pitched rooflines, open balustrade front porches, and bay windows set alongside tree-lined boulevards. These elements are typical of this period of neighborhood residential design. As a whole, these intact resources possess physical characteristics that form a concentration of residential buildings with continuity of design and visual appearance through the use of similar setbacks, proportion, scale, material and use of ornamentation. Collectively, all of the aforementioned elements are the character- defining features that these guidelines aim to protect.













Open balustrade front porches, high pitched roof lines, classical column capitals, projecting bay windows, curved windows, decorative glass and ornamentation provide a continuity of design and visual appearance throughout the district.



Figure 1. Lowry Hill East Residential Historic District Map

# **Alterations to Contributing Resources**

These design guidelines exist to aid in the preservation and restoration of the contributing resources. Contributing resources are houses, garages and carriage houses that were built during the period of significance and retain their historic integrity. Regardless of the treatment, historic material should be preserved unless it is too deteriorated to provide a functioning building envelope.

Beyond the standards and guidelines stated in *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*, changes to individual properties must meet these standards:

- The entire exterior of contributing resources shall be protected. Noncontributing additions to contributing properties are considered non-historic features that have been added to a property over time.
- Alterations and additions to contributing resources shall be compatible with the historic character of the structure.

## **Alterations to Noncontributing Resources**

Changes to individual properties that are noncontributing must meet the following standard because they are located in the district:

For noncontributing properties, these guidelines for new infill construction shall apply, because
preservation of remaining features is not required. Instead, the main objective is to assure that future
alterations will be compatible within the district, just as new construction should be.

Several noncontributing properties have been substantially altered; as a result they have lost their integrity and no longer resemble their appearance from the period of significance. Most of these noncontributing properties can be considered "compatible" with the character of the district, but do not contribute to the era of history in the district that is being preserved. Noncontributing buildings constructed during the period of significance that are restored to their historic appearance may have their contributing status reevaluated. Noncontributing buildings are encouraged to be restored, but this is not mandated.

# **GUIDELINES FOR CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES**

## **General Principles**

The following are principles for the preservation of the contributing resources in the district.

- The distinguishing original qualities and character shall be preserved. The removal of historic material should be avoided when possible.
- Alterations that create a false sense of history are discouraged.
- Changes that have taken place during the period of significance shall be recognized and respected.
- Distinctive stylistic features and examples of skilled workmanship that characterize the district shall be treated with sensitivity.
- Deteriorated architectural features shall be repaired rather than replaced whenever possible. In the event that replacement is necessary, the new material should match the material being replaced in color, texture, design, and other visual qualities. It may be an accurate restoration using historical, pictorial, and physical documentation. If this is not possible, it may be a new design that is compatible with the size, scale, material, and color of the historic building.
- Surface cleaning shall be done by the gentlest means possible.
- Compatible additions to properties should be sympathetic to the historic character of the district.
- New alterations and additions shall be done in such a manner that if they were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic building would remain intact.

# **Exterior Siding and Cladding**

The majority of the homes in the district are clad with horizontally oriented wood siding and shingles.

- A. Repair Before Replacement: First consideration for the replacement of deteriorated cladding materials should be replacement with the same material used in original construction (wood for wood, stucco for stucco, brick for brick, etc.) especially if there is a small amount of deterioration. If this is not possible, replacement with high-quality materials such as fiber cement board may be acceptable if it closely resembles the general dimensions, texture, reveal, and appearance of historic wood cladding. Stucco that is minimally deteriorated shall be repaired as per *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.* There is no suitable replacement for deteriorated brick other than brick that closely matches historic brick.
- **B.** Covered Historic Siding: All historic siding which is intact under non-historic siding shall not be removed. Rotted or significantly deteriorated siding should be replaced.
- **C. Design:** Width, pattern, and profile of the original siding should be duplicated. Narrow wood siding is common in the district and is between 3 and 6 inches in width on average. Re-siding should not alter bordering trim. Wide siding greater than 6 inches in width is not permitted. Vertically or diagonally oriented siding is not permitted. Artificial stone or artificial brick veneer is also not permitted.
- **D. Paint:** Siding and trim shall have painted surfaces and shall not be of natural finish. Paint color is not regulated by the Heritage Preservation Commission, but should be complementary to the residence and its surroundings.
- E. Other Materials: Vinyl and metal siding are not permitted.

## Stucco

**A.** A few residences were originally built or later clad with stucco during the period of significance. This historic building material should be retained and maintained through adherence to *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* as applied to stucco surfaces. Some properties clad in stucco after the period of significance still retain their historic integrity even if this alteration is not considered to have gained significance in its own right. Re-cladding buildings such as these with painted wood siding shall be permitted.

#### Masonry

**A.** The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties shall be administered in the maintenance of masonry portions of structures.

#### Roofs

- **A. Shape:** Preserving roofs are important in defining the overall historic character of the district. This includes preserving individual roof shapes found in the district, such as hipped, gabled and gambrel roofs.
- **B.** Decks and Terraces: Additions to roofs such as decks and terraces should be inconspicuous and least visible from the public right-of-way.
- **C. Shingles:** Flexibility should be employed in approving new roofing materials and colors and determining their compatibility. Building permits show that essentially all of the residences in the district have been re-roofed and there is likely no extant historic roofing material in the district. The most important factor in choosing replacement roof material is that it is complementary to the visual appearance associated with the period of significance in the district.

#### Colonial Revival Residences

Square tab asphalt shingles were commonly used in the district after 1890 and are a very appropriate choice for replacement roofing material especially for residences built in the Colonial Revival style. These shingles are presently installed on the majority of homes within the district. During the period of significance, the most common colors were solid, uniform and deep red or solid, uniform and deep green.

#### Queen Anne Residences

At present, square tab asphalt shingles cover the roofs of the Queen Anne style homes in the district. It was a material available and in use during the period of significance and is entirely acceptable to use in the district. In homes built before the 1890s shingles were made of wood and were often stained to give them a dark brown, deep red, or dark green color. Wood shingles are an acceptable replacement; especially for the Queen Anne residences predating 1890. Fish-scale and other more ornamental shingles are also appropriate to the Queen Anne style homes. Slate is also an acceptable replacement building material, although not commonly used in the district.

#### Craftsman and Prairie Residences:

Square tab asphalt shingles cover the roofs of these properties in the district. This material, in a solid color, makes for a compatible replacement. Wood shingles, clay tile and slate were all available during the period of significance and would be compatible replacement roofing materials.

**D. Skylights:** If skylights are added to structures, they shall be located towards the rear and should be inconspicuous from the street. They shall be flat in design so that they are close to the roof plane.

- E. Mechanical and Other Equipment: The installation of mechanical and other equipment such as vents, air conditioning units, satellite dishes or transformers should be inconspicuous and least visible from the public right-of-way. Any such equipment should not obscure character-defining features. Solar panels should preferably be located either in the backyard or on the garage roof in a way so that they are inconspicuous from the public right-of-way. If located on the garage they should be installed flat against the roof. They should not be installed on a house, but if they are, they should be inconspicuous and least visible from the public right-of-way and should be located at the rear of the house and should be installed flat against the roof.
- **F.** Chimneys: Repairs to chimneys should be made with like materials to emulate original designs. Mortar color should match original historic mortar in color and composition.
- **G. Gutters:** New or replacement gutters should be of metal or wood and should have a painted finish. Copper gutters shall be allowed to age naturally. Vinyl gutters are not permitted.
- **H.** Eaves: New or replacement eaves should be constructed of wood. Brackets shall be retained as well as other ornamental features. Vinyl or metal eaves are not permitted.

#### Porches

- A. Original Material and Ornament: No original material of ornamental quality shall be removed from porches unless it is deteriorated beyond the point of repair.
- **B. Open Porches:** Open, balustrade front porches are a character-defining feature of the district. They shall function as such and shall not be enclosed. Screening-in of porches may be acceptable as there is photographic evidence of this during the period of significance. However, any porch screen must be well-detailed and designed to be easily removed with minimal harm to historic materials. This guideline applies also to back porches. Side porches are not permitted.
- C. Rebuilt Porches: If new porches are added or original porches are rebuilt, they should be in the spirit of the original design. It may be an accurate restoration using historical, pictorial, and physical documentation. If this is not possible, it may be of a new design that is compatible with the size, scale, material, and color of the historic structure. However, it should not create a false sense of history.
- D. Railings and Columns: Replacement railings and wood columns shall match the original based upon historical documentation. If documentation does not exist, they may be a new design that is compatible with the size, scale, material, and color of the historic structure. Wood is the preferred material for any replacement of deteriorated or missing porch material. However, in some instances, composite wood products may be an acceptable substitute if



Screened-in porch 2421 Bryant Ave S, 1905



2437 Colfax Ave S

they can closely resemble the dimensions, texture, reveal, and appearance of wood.

- E. Entry Steps: If repaired or replaced, entry steps shall be of concrete, wood or brick construction.
- F. Porch Reconstruction: Reconstruction of missing porches is encouraged.

### Windows

- A. Preservation of Historic Windows: Retaining and preserving windows, both their functional and decorative features, is important in defining the overall historic character of the district. Every effort should be made to preserve all extant historic windows. Maintaining the sash, frame, and glazing is recommended to avoid the costs of total replacement. If it is within reason to salvage historic windows on contributing properties, it should be done. Replacing windows solely because of peeling paint, broken glass, stuck sash, and high air infiltration is not recommended. These conditions alone are often not evidence that the windows are beyond repair.
- B. Replacing Non-Historic Windows: Designing and installing new windows when the historic windows (frames, sash and glazing) are completely missing is recommended. The replacement windows may be an accurate restoration using historical, pictorial, and physical documentation, or be of a new design that is compatible with the window openings and the historic character of the building.

When replacing non-historic windows, replacement windows shall be double-hung frames constructed of wood and have a painted finish unless they are to replace fixed pane windows. Replacement or new windows shall match the original in proportion and size. Vinyl replacements are not permitted. Aluminum, fiberglass and other composite windows with high thermal performance may be acceptable. It is most important that replacement windows accurately conform to the visual appearance of painted wood.



2412 Bryant Ave S



Historic windows and storm windows



Appropriate replacement window

C. Divided Lights: Divided lights are a prominent feature within the district. When restoring historic windows, or when installing replacement windows, if the historic division of lights is known, new windows should replicate this feature. If this is unknown, it is recommended to use a simple one-overone double hung window. Divided lights should be of wood with a painted finish or of a material that accurately conforms to the visual appearance of wood painted windows. Applied muntins and interstitial spacers are an acceptable way to replicate this feature in a replacement window.



**D. Glazing:** Glass used in any replacement windows should match or complement the color and reflectivity of glass found in the residence and throughout the district.

Divided lights

- E. Decorative Glass: All original cut glass, stained glass or decorative glass shall be retained.
- **F. Replacement Storm Windows:** Replacement or new storm windows should be constructed of wood and have a painted finish. Aluminum or metal storm windows are permitted if they are painted to complement the surrounding trim and provide a flush appearance that minimizes shadow lines, to best resemble historic wood storm windows.
- **G. Window Alterations:** Removing or radically changing windows so that the character is diminished as a result is not permitted. Changing the number, location, size or glazing pattern of windows, through cutting new openings, blocking-in windows, and installing replacement sash that do not fit the historic window openings is also not permitted. Changing windows on a façade of a residence that is not visible or hardly visible from the public right-of-way may be permitted if there is compelling reason in which to do so.
- **H. Basement Windows:** Many basement windows throughout the district have been infilled with glass blocks. While glass blocks were available during the period of significance, their use was uncommon in residential buildings until after the period of significance, therefore, installing glass blocks is not an appropriate treatment for basement windows. Any replacement of non-historic or deteriorated basement windows shall have a sash that is wood with a painted finish, or a material that has the appearance of painted wood. Glazing shall be clear to be compatible with the district.

#### **Foundations**

- **A. Cladding:** Cladding material should not be used to cover up existing stone or concrete block foundations.
- **B.** Foundation Replacement: Replacement of damaged foundations shall be constructed of stone or rock face concrete block to match or complement the original. If a damaged foundation is to be completely replaced, and is constructed of site cast concrete or concrete blocks, the exterior part of the foundation that is exposed below the cladding shall have a limestone, brick, or rock-faced veneer to replicate the appearance of the original foundation.

### Doors

- A. Preserving Original Doors: Original exterior doors and transoms shall be retained, especially on facades that are visible from the public right-of-way.
- **B. Replacement Doors:** New or replacement doors shall be of a compatible design. It may be an accurate replacement of the historic door, or if this is not known, they shall be made out of solid wood and should incorporate design elements such as raised panels, or other elements that are compatible with the structure. Doors shall have a painted, stained or natural wood finish.
- C. Door Openings: Existing door openings shall be retained. Enlarging or reducing door openings to fit stock door sizes shall not be permitted. Alterations to the rear or to portions of the structure that are not visible from the public right-ofway will be reviewed with greater flexibility in comparison to the more visible portions.



2447 Bryant Ave S

### Decks

A. Decks: Decks shall be visually refined and integrated into the overall design of the structure. They shall not be located on any primary façade of the building that is visible from the public right-of-way. A raised deck projecting from a side wall generally appears disjointed from the overall design and is generally unacceptable. Decks should be constructed out of painted or stained wood finish or of a material that recreates the appearance of painted wood.

### **Stairs**

**A.** Egress Stairs: Exit stairs added to multi-family dwellings shall be located at the rear when possible or be located on the façade that is least visible from the public right-of-way. They shall be visually refined and of painted or stained wood finish, or of painted steel to complement the character of the district.

## Landscaping

A. Public, Semi-Public, Semi-Private and Private Space: Open space in the Lowry Hill East Residential Historic District that can be experienced from the public right-of-way is divided into public, semi-public, semi-private and private space. The public space of the street and sidewalk is distinguished from the semi-public space of the front yard by a change in grade, cultivated plantings and sometimes a visually open fence or retaining wall. Boulevards are tree-lined, planted with turf grass and perennials and lit by lantern style streetlamps. While these elements are common to many residential neighborhoods of Minneapolis, they are a character- defining feature of the district. The ongoing maintenance of this semi-private and semi-public space on the part of property owners is encouraged (see Figure 2).



Figure 2. Landscape and Streetscape

- **B.** Plantings / Vegetation: Trees, low shrubbery and perennial plantings are encouraged in the front yards as they add beauty and character to the district. No tall hedge rows that obscure views are permitted in front yards.
- **C. Mature Trees:** Mature trees should be protected. Every reasonable effort should be undertaken to protect mature trees, especially during any construction.
- **D. Retaining Walls:** Retaining walls that retain natural grade are permitted so long as they are of brick, or stone. Landscaping timber and concrete blocks are not permitted as materials for the construction of retaining walls.
- **E.** Screening: Landscaping elements such as shrubs should be used to screen mechanical equipment such as vents or air-conditioning units, especially if these already exist and are noticeable from the public right-of-way.

#### Fences

- **A.** Front Yard: Fences, if they are constructed in the front spaces near the sidewalk, should be low in height and visually permeable. Opaque fences are not permitted in the front of the property. It is recommended that fences be made of wrought iron, mild steel or wood.
- **B.** Back Yard and Side Yards: Tall opaque fences are permitted towards the rear of the lot and may be installed in the side yards.
- C. Other Fences: Chain-link or cyclone fences are not permitted anywhere in the district.

### Additions

- A. Preservation of Historic Material: Any additions should be constructed in a manner where there is the least possible loss of historic materials and so that character-defining features are not obscured, damaged or destroyed.
- **B.** Differentiation: New additions should be designed in a manner that makes clear what is historic and what is new. Additions should be compatible, subordinate, reversible and inconspicuous with limited visibility from the public right-of-way. Generally, additions to the front and side façades would have a substantial adverse impact and would not be appropriate.

# **NEW INFILL CONSTRUCTION – PRIMARY BUILDINGS**

## **Massing and Height**

- **A. Massing:** New construction should conform to the general massing, height, volume and scale of the surrounding structures (See Figure 3).
- **B.** Compatible Height: New construction should be no taller than the average height of the structures on the block face. New infill construction should be two to two and-a-half stories tall (See Figure 3).
- **C.** Foundations: Foundations on new houses should be set approximately 36" above grade to harmonize with the existing foundations in the district.



A. Average Setback: New structures should be built in line with existing structures on the block face. This element is found consistently throughout the district. There may be some small variation from this for it creates visual interest in the streetscape.



## **Roof Pitch**

**A.** Roof pitch should complement the steep roof pitches found in the district. As a guide, a rise to run ratio between 8/12 and 12/12 is recommended (See Figure 3).

# **Rhythm and Directional Emphasis**

**A. Vertical Emphasis:** The uniform size of the narrow lots sets up a strong rhythm of buildings in relation to open space. Throughout the district, vertical façade elements create a strong vertical directional emphasis. The design of new construction should relate to this directional emphasis found throughout the district (See Figure 5).



Figure 5. Directional emphasis and rhythm

**A.** Building on Multiple Lots: Combining lots is not permitted. Building a single structure on two lots is not permitted. Any future multi-family housing must conform to these guidelines for height, mass and setbacks (See Figure 6).



Figure 6. Massing and scale

## **Materials and Details**

- A. Continuity of Design and Materials: There is an overall thread of continuity provided by the materials and ornamental details that were used in the district during the period of significance. Materials and details of new construction should relate to those found in the district. Wood, stucco, stone, concrete and brick may be used in traditional or even innovative new ways. Other materials may be used so long as they are compatible with the district and do not detract from the historic architecture (See Figure 7).
- **B.** Ornamental Details: The replication or incorporation of ornamental details in new buildings is not required or even encouraged. Future designers of new buildings in the district should attempt to understand how these details were used in the district and are encouraged to invoke thoughtful use of these details that provide visual interest to the facades of new buildings. The use of details shall be appropriate to the design perspective of any proposed building and should not try to replicate historic designs.

**C. Exterior Cladding Materials:** Narrow horizontal wood siding is common throughout the district and its use is encouraged. Diagonal and vertically oriented siding is generally unacceptable, however incorporation of some vertical siding elements may be a way to differentiate between what is old and what is new. Stucco and brick are not commonly used in the district, but these materials would be considered to be generally acceptable and compatible. As guidance, materials available from the period of significance should be given first consideration in any new infill construction, and using these materials in ways that do not replicate historic styles is encouraged (See Figure 7).



Figure 7. Materials and details

#### Windows

- **A. Window Ratios:** Within the district windows have a vertical height orientation and an approximate height to width ratio that ranges from 2:1 to 3:1. New construction should maintain this vertical height orientation within an overall design (See Figure 8).
- **B.** Window Shape: Individual windows may be square or circular in shape if the overall configuration of windows conveys a vertical height orientation on primary facades that can be seen from the public right-of-way (See Figure 9).
- **C. Operable Windows:** Wooden double hung-windows with a painted finish are common in the district and should be given first consideration in new construction. Casement windows and other modern windows may be acceptable as long as the overall design is compatible with the character of the district.
- **D. Window Setback:** Windows are encouraged to be set back from the façade in order to create a reveal, a feature commonly found throughout the district.



Figure 9. Window shape, proportion and configuration

- **E. Traditional Details:** Elements found throughout the district such as window trim, divided lights and corner boards are recommended. Articulating them in new ways from traditional detailing is encouraged.
- **F. Glazing:** Clear glass or glass with non-reflective coatings shall be used to complement the surrounding buildings in the district.
- **G. Materials:** Aluminum and fiberglass are acceptable window materials provided they have a finish that complements windows found throughout the district.
- **H. Contemporary Designs:** Sliding glass doors, large picture windows and horizontally oriented windows should not be visible from the public right-of-way. Generally, they should be located at the rear.

### Doors

**A.** Exterior Doors: Wood exterior doors are encouraged. They may or may not incorporate elements such as raised panels, or other elements that are compatible with the district. Doors shall have a painted, stained or natural wood finish.

### Porches

A. Open Porches / Entry Element: In general, porches are ubiquitous throughout the district. For all new construction, open front porches or some other suitable design element that provides an entry transition is required. This establishes a transitional zone from the public space of the street to the semi-private and private spaces in front yards that are part of the spatial configuration of the district. Porches may be screened-in if well detailed and if the screen element is easy to remove. Enclosing porches is not permitted (See Figure 10).



Figure 10. Porches

- **B.** Materials: Porches should be constructed of wood. However, in some instances, composite wood products may be an acceptable substitute if it can closely resemble the dimensions, texture, reveal, and appearance of wood.
- **C.** Vertical Orientation: The vertical elements of any porch roof should carry the actual and visual weight of the porch roof. The balustrade should relate to the solid-to-void ratio found in the district.
- **D.** Screened-in Porches: Open porches are required. They may be screened-in if well detailed and if the screen element is easy to remove. Enclosing porches is not permitted.

## Landscaping

**A.** See previous landscaping section A on page 13. In any new construction front yards should be defined by a change in grade and plantings as found throughout the district.

# **NEW INFILL CONSTRUCTION - GARAGES**

- **A. Roof Pitch:** The roof pitch shall be consistent with the roof pitches of the main residence (See Figure 13).
- **B.** Garages: Garages shall be detached from the main structure. No attached or tuck under garages are allowed.
- C. Garage Access from Alley: If an alley is adjacent to the lot, any new garage should be accessed from the alley. (See Figure 11).



STREET

Figure 11. Garage access from alley

D. Garage Access from Street: Only when alleys do not exist are curb cuts acceptable. Ideally, garages should be located towards the back of the lot. They should be positioned entirely or partially behind the principle structure. If this is not possible, using plantings as a visual screen to soften the visual appearance of the garage from the street is encouraged (See Figure 12).



Figure 12. Garage access from street

E. Single Width Garage Doors: Single width garage doors should be used in any new garage construction. Double width garage doors may be allowed if vehicle maneuverability is impeded but preference shall be given to designs for garages with single width garage doors. Garage doors should be compatible with the character of the principal structure and shall have a painted surface. A simple design is appropriate (See Figure 12).

- **F.** Exterior Cladding: Siding, trim and shingles should match or complement the principal structure. No vinyl or aluminum siding is permitted.
- **G.** Skylights: Skylights shall be flat in design.
- **H. Windows:** Proportions of windows should be consistent with those of the principal structure. Vinyl windows are not permitted.
- I. **Design:** The design of the garage shall complement the overall design of the principal structure (see Figure 13).

