

# **Reeves/Chinouth Landmark Conservation District Design Guidelines**



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Boundaries adopted by the Johnson City Board of Commissioners  
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Copies of the Design Guidelines are available from the Johnson City Planning Department,  
601 East Main Street, Johnson City, TN.

For information on obtaining a Certificate of Appropriateness and on historic conservation  
district design standards, call the Johnson City Planning Department at 423/434-6071.

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# **THE REEVES/CHINOUTH LANDMARK CONSERVATION DISTRICT DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES**

## **Introduction**

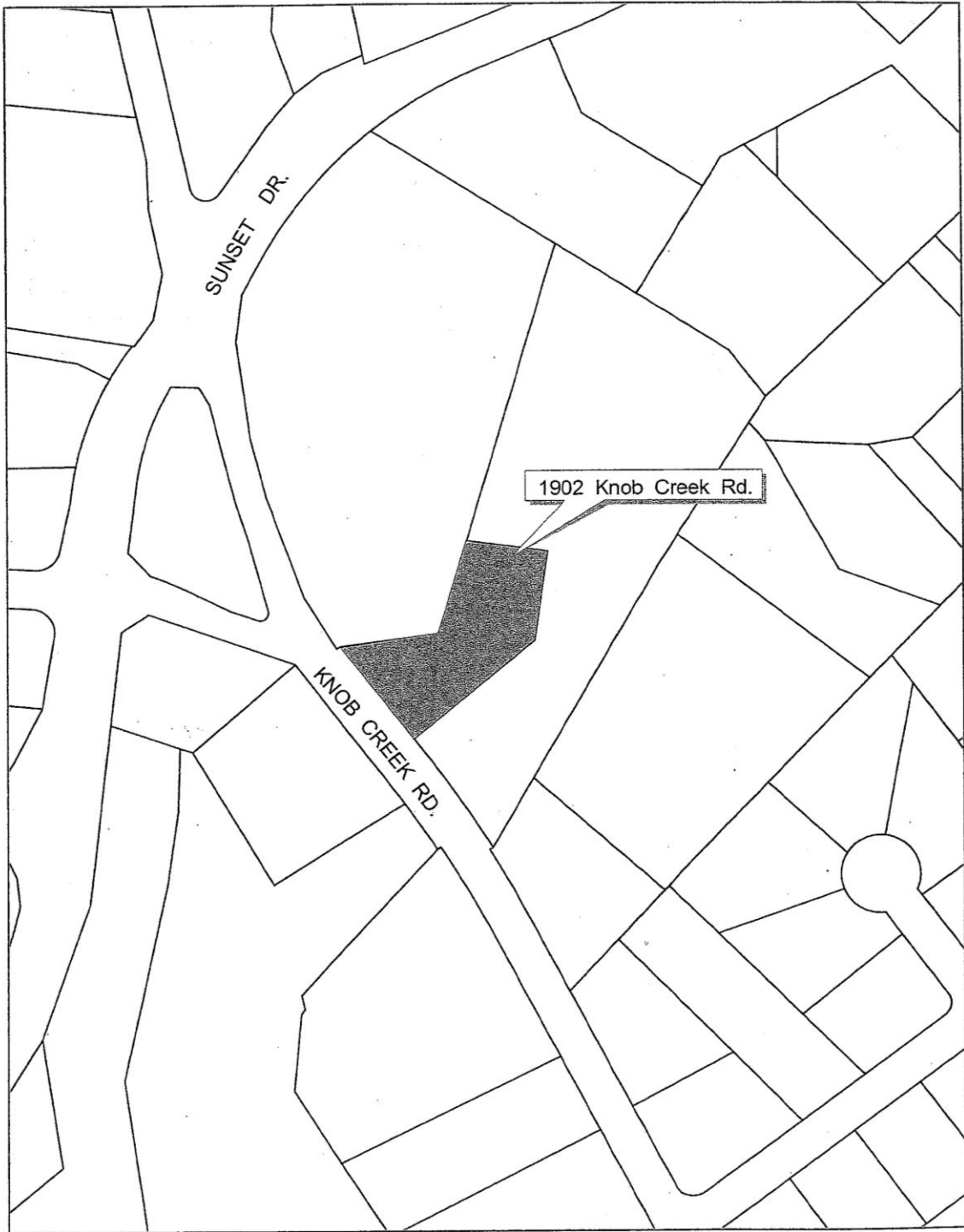
The Reeves/Chinouth Landmark Historic Conservation District (the "District") is approximately 0.62 acre located at 1902 Knob Creek Road. The Peter Miller Reeves / Kyle Chinouth House located on the property was constructed in 1846. The stately two-story residence was constructed by Peter Miller Reeves and was called Sinking Springs due to the fact that at the time there was a spring on the farm which ran about 100 feet before it went back into the ground. The name of the residence was changed to Landmark Farms in the 1970s by Kyle Chinouth, the mayor of Johnson City at the time. According to legend the residence was used as part of the Underground Railroad during until after the Civil War with access to the tunnel in the dining room.

The Reeves/Chinouth House is a vernacular Greek Revival style residence constructed of brick and is an excellent example of a mid 19<sup>th</sup> century farmhouse. Having undergone few exterior alternations, the residence has retained its architectural integrity.

The main facade faces south at a slight angle towards the existing Knob Creek Road. Originally, the residence would have faced the street squarely, but Knob Creek Road has had minor realignments over the years. It is asymmetrically designed with the wooden frame glass front door on the right side and two one-over-one double hung windows on the first floor and three one-over-one double hung windows on the second floor. A one-story full-façade porch wraps around the southeast portion of the resident. The original dentil work along the eaves still exists.

A storage building and a three-bay carport have been constructed on the property and above ground pool is located in the rear yard. The accessory structures are not original, with only a portion of the carport visible from Knob Creek Road.

Once the centerpiece of a large 200 acre farm, the Reeves/Chinouth House now sits on less than 1 acre in an area surrounded by suburban development. Few of the original design features of the house have been altered although the house has been modernized by the installation of electricity, heat, and plumbing.



## Statement of Purpose

The Reeves/Chinouth Landmark Conservation District Design Guidelines are intended as the starting point for the design of buildings, additions, and renovations on the property. The guidelines are design criteria to be used by architects, builders, and the homeowner interested in building in the District. They are intended to encourage design creativity utilizing modern materials and techniques which blend in with the existing structure. The Guidelines do not encourage copies of the structure. The design characteristics which the Historic Zoning Commission will review are following:

**roof line**  
**overhang**  
**building shape**  
**window and door proportions**  
**window and door grouping**  
**outbuilding placement**

Incorporating certain design elements will go a long way towards making an appropriate overall design. The roof line, structure form, and the proportions and groupings of windows and doors should harmonize with those of the main structure.

The end result should be the maintenance and improvement of the existing structure and the construction of new structures with a character which harmonizes with the historic area. The attached plates and illustrations amplify the guidelines.

Remember, new construction should not be “copies” --- they should be “good neighbors.”



## **Design Review**

The Johnson City Historic Zoning Commission (HZC) is responsible for reviewing the expansion of livable space and new construction in the Reeves/Chinouth Landmark Conservation District to see that it is compatible with the existing structures in the conservation district in scale, materials, and siting. A Certificate of Appropriateness from the HZC is required before building begins.

The HZC staff prefers to meet with the homeowner and builder at pre-design stages to become familiar with the site and discuss the guidelines. This will help ensure that the site plan, proportions, and details will have a comfortable relationship to the surrounding buildings that have earned the district historic conservation status.

The HZC reviews any addition, renovation, and new structure that increases the habitable space and is visible from the street. Structures moved into the area also come under review, and no structure can be demolished until reviewed by the HZC. In each of these cases, a Certificate of Appropriateness is required. Interior changes, paint colors, and routine maintenance, repair, exterior alterations (when they do not affect habitable living space) are not reviewed. Appropriate design characteristics will be approved for a Certificate of Appropriateness and inappropriate design characteristics will not be approved for a Certificate of Appropriateness.

The guidelines do not encourage new “old” buildings, but rather, designs that reflect features that are “common denominators” of the site’s rich architectural heritage.

## **Procedure**

- Owner decides to build or alter in the area
- Owner meets with his/her designer to go over guidelines
- Preliminary meeting with HZC staff
- Submit application for review
  - site plan / measured drawings / material information
- Commission reviews application
- When approved owner receives certificate of appropriateness
- Obtain building permit and begin construction



## General Terms

Design Review Guidelines (the “Guidelines”) are criteria and standards which the Johnson City Historic Zoning Commission (the “Commission”) must consider in determining the appropriateness of proposed work within the District.

Appropriateness of work must be determined in order to accomplish the following goals of historic/conservation zoning as outlined in the guidelines and bylaws of the Johnson City Historic Zoning Commission:

- (a) To promote the educational, cultural, and economic welfare of the people of Johnson City;
- (b) To preserve and protect the historical and architectural value of buildings, other structures, or historically significant areas;
- (c) To ensure the compatibility within the Historic/Conservation District by regulating exterior design, arrangement, texture, and materials;
- (d) To create an aesthetic appearance this complements the historic building;
- (e) To stabilize and improve property values;
- (f) To foster civic beauty and community pride;
- (g) To strengthen the local economy;
- (h) To establish criteria and procedures to regulate the construction, relocation, demolition or other alteration of structures or appurtenances within any Historic/Conservation District; and
- (i) To promote the use of Historic/Conservation Districts for the education, pleasure, and welfare of the present and future citizens of Johnson City.

These Guidelines shall be interpreted and constructed in such a manner as to foster and preserve the predominant single-family residential character of the Landmark District.

These Guidelines shall not apply to ordinary repairs and maintenance.

For the purpose of these Guidelines the following definitions shall apply:

**Building:** Any structure having a roof supported by columns or by walls and intended for the shelter, housing or enclosure of persons, animals, or personal property.

**Exterior:** The outside wall. The part of the structure that is visible from the public right-of way and/or from the property lines.

**Ordinary repairs and maintenance:** The reconstruction or renewal of any part of any existing building for the purpose of its upkeep. The process to restore and keep a building in sound condition.

# PRESERVATION GUIDELINES FOR EXISTING STRUCTURES

**Definition:** The alternation of the main façades of the existing residence within the District are subject to review by the Commission pursuant to the Historic/Conservation District Ordinance.

## General Principles

Since the purpose of historic zoning is to protect historic properties, the alternation to the main façades of the existing residence should be avoided since the façade contributes historically and architecturally to the character and significance of the district. The provisions of this section shall apply only to the main facades of the existing residence.

## Design Characteristics for Existing Structures

In considering the appropriateness of alternations to the main facades of existing residence, the Commission shall consider the following design considerations:

**A. Windows and Doors**

There shall be no alternation of size or shape to any fenestration (window or door) in the existing residence.

**B. Roof**

The existing roof shape of the residence shall not be altered.



# DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION

## SECTION I. NEW CONSTRUCTION

Definition: The construction or erection of any free-standing structure or improvement within the District, including new construction which utilizes existing party walls and any additions to existing buildings which are subject to review by the Commission pursuant to the Historic/Conservation District Ordinance.

### A. General Principles

The provisions of Section II shall apply to the exterior of buildings, to areas of lots visible from public rights-of-way, and especially to principal elevations of buildings.

The principal facades (front) and street-related elevations of proposals for new buildings shall be more carefully reviewed than other facades.

Because construction of the main structure in the District occurred in 1846 and a secondary buildings in the second half of the 1900s this results in styles demonstrating the changes in building tastes and technology over the years. New buildings should continue this tradition while complementing and being compatible with other buildings in the District.

New construction should be consistent with existing buildings in scale, setback, rhythm and other design characteristics. The dominance of that pattern and rhythm of design characteristic must be respected and not be disrupted. More weight should be given to compatibility with the existing buildings which is a product of the original and predominant period of construction as opposed to the existing building which was constructed after the original period of construction but prior to the designation of this District as a landmark conservation district.

## **B. Design Characteristics for New Construction**

In determining the appropriateness of proposed new construction, the Commission shall consider, among other factors, the compatibility and consistency of the proposed design of the new construction with the designs of existing buildings in terms of the following design characteristics:

### **B1. Height**

New structures should not be constructed in a manner that will diminish the importance or stature of the existing residence. The overall height of any new construction shall not exceed the height of the existing residence (Reeves/Chinouth House).

### **B2. Scale and Massing**

The size of a new building, its mass in relation to open spaces, and its windows, doors, and openings, should be visually compatible with the existing residence.

### **B3. Relationship of Materials, Textures, and Details**

The relationship and use of material, texture, details, and material of a new building's principal facades should be visually compatible with and similar to the existing residence or should not contrast conspicuously.

### **B4. Proportion and Rhythm of Openings**

The relationship of width to height of windows and doors, and the rhythm of solids to voids in the new buildings should be visually compatible with the existing residence.

### **B5. Roof Shape**

The roofs of new buildings should be visually compatible with the roof of existing residence, by not contrasting greatly with the roof shape and orientation of the residence.

### **B6. Foundations**

New buildings should be constructed on a foundation that is compatible with the existing residence.

## C. Additions to Existing Buildings

The following factors should be considered in reviewing proposed additions to existing buildings:

### Additions to Principal Facades

New additions to principal facades of the existing building should be avoided and, if required, should be kept to a minimum, be reversible, and should be visually compatible in scale, materials, and texture; additions should not be visually jarring or contrasting. Additions should, if at all possible, be located to the rear of the existing building in ways which do not disturb the principal facade.

### Enclosure of Covered Areas

The enclosure of covered areas on the principal facade, to create additional habitable square footage, is usually not appropriate and should be avoided. Notwithstanding, if such enclosure is permitted, it should be accomplished in a manner that preserves the original character of the original principal facade.

### Additions in General

An attached exterior addition to a historic building expands its "outer limits" to create a new profile. Because such expansion has the capability to radically change the historic appearance, new additions should be designed and constructed so that the character-defining features of the historic building are not radically changed, obscured, damaged, or destroyed in the process of rehabilitation.

## D. Outbuildings and Appurtenances

### Outbuildings

Garages and storage buildings should reflect the design character of the principal building on a lot and that of surrounding buildings and should be compatible in terms of height, scale, roof shape, materials, texture, and details. The location and design of outbuildings should not be visually disruptive to the design character of the surrounding buildings.

### Appurtenances

Appurtenances related to new buildings, including driveways, sidewalks, lighting, fences, and walls, shall be visually compatible with the environment of the existing buildings and sites to which they relate. Attached carports, garages, storage facilities and similar structures should generally be placed at or towards the rear of the principal building on the lot.

## **E. Development Standards**

The following standards and guidelines shall apply to all new construction:

### **E.1 Mechanical Equipment**

All ground mounted mechanical equipment shall be screened from view from public or private streets by the use of walls, fences, or landscaping. All roof mounted mechanical equipment shall be properly screened to minimize visual impact, where such screening will be effective. Where screening will not be effective, the color of the equipment shall be the same as the building.

### **E.2 Service, Loading, and Equipment Storage Areas**

Service areas, including storage, special equipment, maintenance, and loading areas, shall be screened with landscaping and/or architectural features so as not to be visible from public or private streets. Refuse collection areas shall be visually screened with a solid perimeter wall consisting of materials and colors compatible with those of the adjacent structure and shall be roofed if the contents are visible from public or private streets.

### **E.3 Parking**

All parking shall be located outside the required front yard setback and any required setback from an arterial street.

### **E.4 Signage**

A freestanding or wall sign shall be ground mounted signs with a maximum height of eight (8) feet and a maximum size of 32 square feet. The following types of signs shall be prohibited: Animated Signs, Balloons, Festoons, Menu Boards, and Off-Premise Advertising Signs.

### **E.5 Lighting**

The maximum height of lights not located in the public right-of-way shall be twenty-five (25) feet.



## SECTION II. FEATURES THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE

### A. Materials

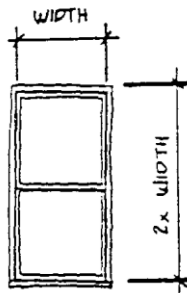
Houses built in the early decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century possess a richness of materials and detail not usually seen in modern houses. New structures or additions in the district should be built of brick similar to the existing residence. Some modern materials such as plastic, vinyl, and mirror glass are not compatible and should be avoided in new construction.

### B. Windows

The original windows in the existing residence are wood one-over-one double hung windows. The relationship of width to height of windows and doors and the rhythm of solids to voids in new buildings should be visually compatible with the existing residence.

For new construction or additions, wood windows are appropriate: patterns may include 1 over 1. The openings should relate well to the overall facade. Irregularly shaped windows or odd shapes and sizes not found in the district are inappropriate.

Some that are appropriate...

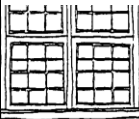
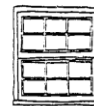


Typical "stock" windows which are compatible with predominate Styles within the district

Some that are inappropriate...

Windows too short for primary facade.

Irregular shape windows not in character with neighborhood.



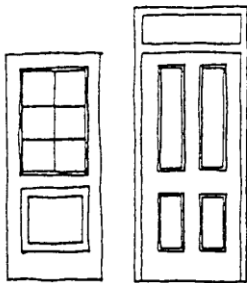
**D. Doors**

Original doors in the district are wood with a variety of glass and panel designs. Doors have transoms.

It is recommended that new doors be of wood of a compatible height. The door features might include panels, hoods, trim, and glass transoms. Full glass storm doors or those with patterns that complement the front door are appropriate.

Flush doors and doors that are not wood are inappropriate. Very ornate wrought iron storm doors do not conform to the District.

Some that are appropriate...

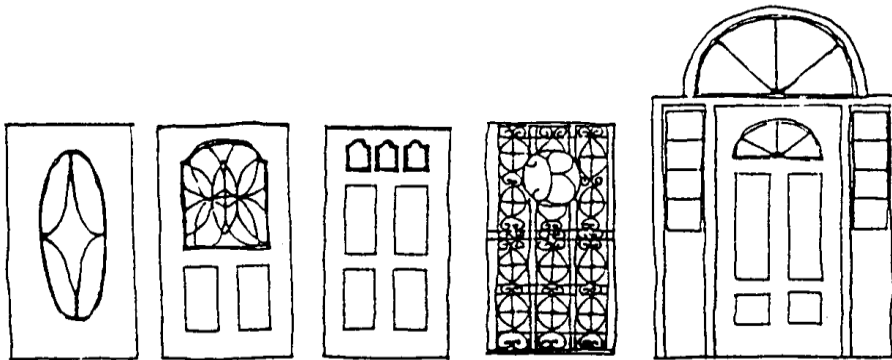


Typical “stock” doors which are compatible to the existing exterior doors of the residence.

Some that are inappropriate...

Typical “stock” doors which do not relate to the existing doors of the resident.

Disproportioned composition of available door elements.





# DEMOLITION

**Definition:** The complete or partial tearing down of a building, object, structure or the removal of a building, object, or structure from the District.

## General Principles

Since the purpose of historic zoning is to protect historic properties, the demolition of a building, object, or structure which contributes historically or architecturally to the character and significance of the district is inappropriate and should be avoided. Should a proposed demolition be deemed appropriate by the Commission, such demolition should proceed only when an immediate reuse is envisioned for the property. The proposed design of new construction should be submitted to, and reviewed by, the Commission in conjunction with the submission and review of the proposed demolition.

## Guidelines for Proposed Demolition

Demolition is appropriate:

1. If a building, object, or structure has lost its architectural and historical integrity and importance and its removal and the proposed new construction will not, in the Commission's reasonable discretion, result in a more negative, less appropriate visual effect on the District;
2. If a building, object, or structure does not contribute to the historical or architectural character and importance of the District and its removal and the proposed new construction will, in the Commission's reasonable discretion, result in a more positive, appropriate visual effect on the District;
3. If the Commission determines by the provisions outlined in the Historic/Conservation Ordinance for Economic Hardship for demolition based on financing; or
4. If the demolition is required by a final and nonappealable order or ruling of a court, governmental body or agency having appropriate jurisdiction, and such order or ruling does not allow for the restoration and continued use of the applicable building, object, or structure.

Demolition is inappropriate:

1. If a building, object, or structure is of such architectural or historical interest and value that its removal would be detrimental to the public interest and the goals of historic zoning set forth above in Article I;
2. If the proposed reuse and new construction would diminish or detract from the predominantly single-family residential character of the District;
3. If a building, object, or structure is of such old or unusual or uncommon design and materials that it could not be reproduced without great difficulty and expense; or
4. If its proposed replacement or lack of replacement, would in the Commission's reasonable discretion, make a less positive visual contribution to the District, would disrupt the character of the District, or would be visually incompatible.

# RELOCATION

**Definition:** Moving a building into the District or from one site to another within the District. Removal of a building, object, or structure from the District shall be considered and reviewed as a demolition of the building, object, or structure.

## General Principles

Moving an existing building which still retains architectural and historical integrity and which contributes to the architectural and historical character of the District should be avoided.

Moving a building which does not contribute to the historical and architectural integrity of the District or which has lost architectural integrity due to deterioration and neglect is appropriate if its removal or the proposal for its replacement will result in a more positive appropriate visual effect on the District.

## Guidelines for Relocation

Relocated buildings must be carefully rebuilt to retain and maintain original architectural details and materials.

A building may be moved into the District if it maintains a sense of architectural unity in terms of style, height, scale, massing, materials, quality of construction, texture, and setback with existing buildings.

A building may be moved from one site to another in the District if:

1. the integrity of location and setting of the building in its original location has been lost or is seriously threatened;
2. the new location will be similar in setting and siting;
3. the building will be compatible with the buildings, adjacent to the new location in style, height, scale, materials, and setback; and
4. the relocation of the building will not result, in the Commission's reasonable discretion, in a negative visual impact on the site and surrounding buildings from which it will be removed.

## ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES

**Definition:** This section contains recommendations which concern the relationship of significant buildings or groups of buildings to the setting in which they are found. In considering a district, it is particularly important to preserve features of the built environment, such as street or sidewalk paving, gateway structures, landscaping and street lighting or signage; these features are indicative of the age and character of an historic area, and make as important a statement about design as the buildings themselves. Whether considering the entire District or an individual structure, these features which show age and historic character should be preserved.

### General Principles

These guidelines shall apply only to areas of lots visible from public right-of-way.

The distinguishing original qualities or character of a street, site, and its environment shall not be destroyed. For example the removal or alteration of any historic material or distinctive architectural or environmental features should be avoided.

Distinctive stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship which characterize an environment, or site shall be treated with sensitivity.

### Guidelines for Conservation of Environmental Features

#### District

##### Appropriate:

Retaining distinctive features such as the size, scale, mass, and material of buildings including roofs, porches, doors, windows, and steps that give the District its distinguishing character.

##### Inappropriate:

Introducing new construction into the District that is incompatible with the character of the District because of size, scale, mass, and materials.

### **Landscape Features**

#### Appropriate:

Retaining landscape features such as gardens, street lights, gateway structures, sidewalks, streets, and building set-backs that have traditionally linked buildings to their environment. Using new plant materials, fencing, sidewalks, and street lights that are compatible with the character of the District in size, scale, and material.

#### Inappropriate;

Introducing street lighting, new plant materials, fencing, sidewalks, and paving materials that are out of scale or inappropriate to the District.

### **Building Site Features**

#### Appropriate:

Identifying and retaining plants, well-established trees, fencing, walkways, street lights, archaeological features, signs, benches, outbuildings, and other items, that reflect the property's history and development. Basing decisions for new site work on actual knowledge of the past appearance of the property found in photographs, drawings, newspapers, and tax records. If changes are made, they should be carefully evaluated in light of the past appearance of the site.

#### Inappropriate:

Making changes to the appearance of the site by removing old plants, trees, fencing, walkways, outbuildings, and other elements before evaluating their importance in the property's history and development.

Leaving plant material and trees in close proximity to the building if the plant material and trees are found to be causing deterioration of historic fabric.

### **Parking**

#### Appropriate:

If provided, parking should be done in a manner that does not detract from the historic integrity of the District, street, structure, building, or site. Screen parking with material and design that are compatible with the character of the District. Screening of parking areas should not be cause for incompatible design of parking area.

#### Inappropriate:

Removing structures that contribute to the character of the District to provide parking spaces.

## MISCELLANEOUS

### **Effective Date and Presumption**

These Guidelines shall take effect upon the date this District is designated a landmark conservation district by the City Commission of the city of Johnson City or as otherwise ordered by the Commission. Upon such date, all property owners owning property within the District and all who shall thereafter become property owners of property within the District, shall be presumed to have knowledge of the provisions of these Guidelines and shall be deemed subject to the provisions of these Guidelines.

### **Amendment**

These Guidelines or the boundaries may be amended from time to time by the property owners of the District, upon:

1. application by any property owner of the District to the Historic Zoning Commission; and
2. notice to all property owners in the District of the proposed amendment(s); and
3. approval of such amendments by the Historic Zoning Commission and any other governmental bodies which are required by applicable law to approve such amendments.

### **Severability**

If any provisions of these Guidelines is determined by a court of law or equity, or other governmental body, having appropriate jurisdiction, to be void or unenforceable, such provision shall be deemed severed from these Guidelines, and the remaining provisions shall continue in full force and effect.

### **Boundaries**

The actual boundaries of the District shall be designated as a Historic/ Conservation District (HD) on the Zoning Map.