



LAWRENCEVILLE RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

Created to assist homeowners with façade restoration, these guidelines help to preserve, enhance and celebrate the historical integrity of Lawrenceville's architectural heritage.

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1814



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IT TAKES A COMMUNITY.

One of Pittsburgh's largest and oldest neighborhoods, Lawrenceville is currently undergoing an incredible revitalization. While there's a lot to see and do, it's the authentic character of the neighborhood that makes it so unique. Here, you can be yourself and become part of something much bigger than you. Whether you live, work, or play here, we invite you to make yourself at home!

For additional information, contact the Lawrenceville Corporation at 412.621.1616 x106 or info@lawrencevillecorp.com.

For more information about the Lawrenceville community, visit www.lvpgh.com.

INTRODUCTION

Historically Appropriate Improvements

Lawrenceville is one of Pittsburgh's most vibrant, active, and growing neighborhoods. Among the many reasons why people own a home here – or plan to – is the attractive and affordable housing selection. The neighborhood is large, diverse, and close to downtown – family-friendly and cosmopolitan at the same time. Today, city data on home sales prove that there is significant market appreciation. Property values are on the rise. The Lawrenceville Residential Design Guidelines were created to encourage and support this movement.

The goals of this guide are to encourage good, compatible design, and educate homeowners on local architectural history and contextually appropriate building improvements. Our mission is to encourage homeowners to make improvements to their properties that add long-term value to both individual properties and to the broader neighborhood. Thoughtful, appropriate building improvements increase property values for homeowners and contribute to the beauty, architectural significance, and historic charm that define a neighborhood. Small improvements to a building's façade – done thoughtfully and carefully – can transform the look and feel of an entire neighborhood and reinforce Lawrenceville's perception as a neighborhood of choice.

With funding from the Design Center and the Urban Redevelopment Authority, the LC contracted with Joyce Design Group, a Lawrenceville-based architecture firm, to study the neighborhood's housing stock and make recommendations for façade improvement. The content of this booklet is a compilation of that study, and has been recently redesigned and updated to serve as a resource for the entire Lawrenceville neighborhood.





PENN & LIBERTY AVENUES, 1932



44TH & BUTLER STREETS, 1960



52ND BETWEEN KEYSTONE & DUNCAN - 1910

OUR HISTORY

It Takes a Community... to Overcome

Our neighborhood wasn't always so inviting. Cast in shadows by the decline of the steel industry, the streets struggled to maintain their vitality amidst shuttered businesses and empty warehouses. But over the years there grew a powerful grassroots commitment to restoring original architectural charm, exposing natural beauty, and keeping the neighborhood safe and enjoyable. A renaissance came to light. Entrepreneurs, artists, and dedicated community members led the way; many followed. Newcomers moved in next to long-time residents, adding to the diversity of ages, ethnic groups, and interests. Lawrenceville is now home to a creative mix of businesses, residents, and activities, and the community has a personality and vibe all its own.



4400 BLOCK, BUTLER ST, PRESENT DAY



It Takes a Community... to Remake

Whether you've lived here your whole life, recently made the move, work or own a business – **we're glad you're here!** We are the Lawrenceville Corporation (LC), a non-profit community development corporation (CDC) with the mission to act as a catalyst and conduit for reinvestment in the Lawrenceville community. The LC is a 15-member Board of Directors, a five-person staff, and a growing group of volunteers and committee members. Our commitment is to build on years of grassroots efforts to expand revitalization strategies while focusing on business and real estate development, community planning, and neighborhood beautification. We work closely with our partner organization, Lawrenceville United, whose focus is resident advocacy, public safety, and improving neighborhood quality of life.





Hillside Houses



Federalist Style



Romanesque Style

Victorian Style

LAWRENCEVILLE: THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Living In Working Class Classics

Lawrenceville has a wide variety of housing types and styles. The styles range from Romanesque to Victorian to early frame Federal houses with clapboard siding. The houses on the hill are unique in that they sit off the street and have a front yard and a porch that serves as a buffer. Most other houses are built to the front property line and share a common party wall along the side. An example of this is the row house, which were typically built for workers in the mills.



Gothic

St. Matthew's Parish is a good example of gothic architecture. Much of the original architectural detail is still intact and the structure is a prominent feature in Upper Lawrenceville. Large, historic structures like St. Matthew's provide the neighborhood with architectural focal points and can be used as inspiration for surrounding structures.

Alley Houses

These brick alley houses may be small by today's standard but can provide affordable housing for residents with low-to-moderate incomes.

Greek Revival

This Greek revival farmhouse was built in 1830 and was one of the original farmhouses in the area, sitting on 100 acres with various outbuildings. An historic renovation of the property is currently underway.

Row Houses

Row houses typically had 4 to 6 houses in each row. Each house was built identically with the same doors, windows, window lintels and sills, and equal sizes and proportions. These common elements form a pleasant symmetry and rhythm. Today, row house design should be preserved in order to maintain this attractive symmetry and rhythm.

RENOVATION COMPARISONS

The Do's and Don'ts of Building Updates



DO

Do paint facades 2 or 3 colors to accentuate the trim.



DO

Do add trim colors. They add a level of detail to the facade.



DON'T

Don't install vinyl siding over mansard roofs.



DON'T

Don't install vinyl siding over masonry. Restore brick if possible by pointing & cleaning. Paint or side only if brick is in complete disrepair.



DON'T

Don't install exterior trim that is inappropriate to the style of the house.



DON'T

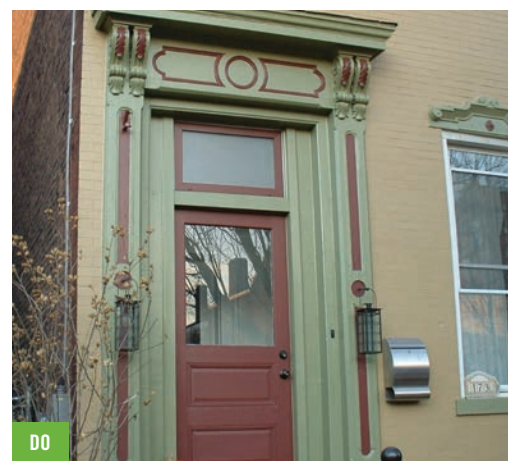
Don't Remove Brackets & Trim.



Before & After Windows

Use replacement windows that keep the existing opening intact and are similar in style to the original. Restore existing stone sills. Aluminum-clad wood windows are an acceptable alternative to wood windows.

Restore windows by removing infill brick at hood and sill. Replace with limestone, sandstone, or wood trim. Two or three color paint scheme on windows adds a nice level of detail.



Don't alter existing door and window openings

Do maintain existing openings for windows and doors. Wood trim should be restored or replaced. Do strip off exterior paint on bricks. And restore any stone hoods and sills above and below windows.

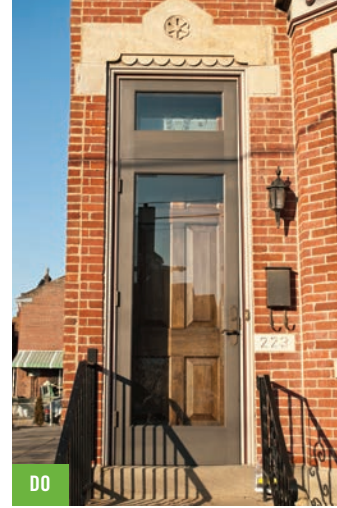


Windows

A building's windows play a substantial role in a facade's aesthetic. However, due to the perceived cost, they're frequently not kept in a historically accurate state.

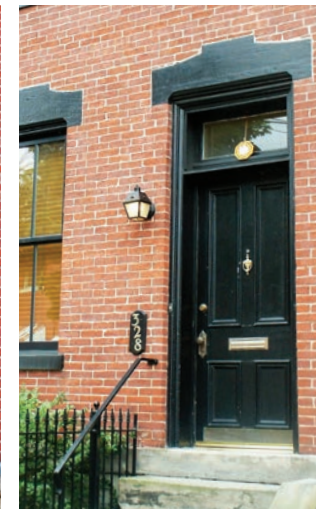
Original window openings should not be altered, either by enlargement or by closing them in. All closed-up or bricked in windows in the front façade should be reopened to their original sizes, windows should match the style of the original window. Original wood windows should be retained and repaired, if possible. If the existing windows cannot be repaired, or if the existing windows are inappropriate for the building, they shall be replaced by new windows. If old windows are aluminum, consider recycling them.

For Defined Architectural Terms, See the Glossary on Page 27



Storm Doors

Although storm doors are non-original features to these houses, they can be a good addition to the entry by adding light, ventilation, and additional insulating value. Storm doors and their frames should not obscure the original door frame. Full glass lites in a dark finish (at left) is recommended.



Entry Doors

Original door openings and their transoms should be retained. If an entry door and its transom have been altered or filled in, the transom opening and window should be replaced. Entry doors were typically a solid wood paneled door and any replacement door should be the same style and fit of the original door frame. The door can then either be stained or painted.

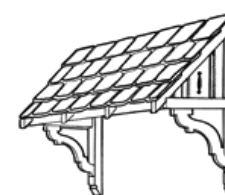


Porches

A porch is the gateway to the home and its components should be repaired and maintained. Original columns were made from wood with a turned profile, and any replacements to these or railings should be similar in material and style.

Awnings

Awnings are not original to most houses. They are a modern day adornment to add protection to the home's entry; however, many actually take away from the appearance. When done properly, they can make the home's entrance more inviting. Stay away from the typical aluminum awning and instead get one custom made or ordered. Several companies make decorative awnings with brackets and shingled roofs as shown in the illustrations. Keep in mind the style of your home.



Exposed
Rafter



Frieze



Bullnose



Lights

Exterior lights enhance the appearance of an entry while adding increased security. Select a light that matches the style of your house. Most of these houses were built in the late 1800's, so a contemporary fixture would not be recommended. Pick a fixture that has some traditional styling with a mounting arm and metal housing in a dark metal finish. These lights can be bought at most lighting and home improvement stores. Mount the light at about the height of the entry door.



Brackets

Brackets typically appeared in two locations, under the eave of the box gutter and under the cornice at the door surround. Brackets were made from turned wood and served two purposes; support and decoration. If brackets need to be replaced, they can be made from wood or molded polystyrene.

For Defined Architectural Terms, See the Glossary on Page 27



Exterior Paint

All efforts should be made to maintain existing brick. Brick that is in poor repair should be cleaned and re-pointed, while painting the brick should be seen as a last resort. Monochromatic color schemes are discouraged. The exterior trim should be painted with 2 or 3 accent colors to accentuate the detailing in the trim.

DESIGN SOLUTIONS

The Good, the Bad and the Vinyl Siding

These are two examples of facade improvements. The first solution is highly discouraged.

Never add vinyl siding over existing brick. Hours before this photo was taken, this house matched its neighbors. Now, it interrupts the rhythm of the streetscape. Also, vinyl siding is manufactured from petroleum products and cannot decompose organically in a landfill.

If the brick veneer is in total disrepair or if you are residing in a frame house, composite siding is a much better alternative to vinyl siding. It is manufactured with recycled content and is much less harmful to the environment.

The second picture shows a renovation that takes into account the continuity of the row by maintaining the integrity of the existing row's proportions and scale. The window replacement maintains the original size and includes new stone lintels and sills.

Larger windows do not mean the home will be less energy efficient. In fact, replacement windows with low-e insulated glass can help save energy. Larger windows also allow for more daylight to enter the home, resulting in a passive heating effect that helps reduce the amount of energy required to heat a home. Larger windows also help to ventilate a home more rapidly in warmer weather.





Example Two

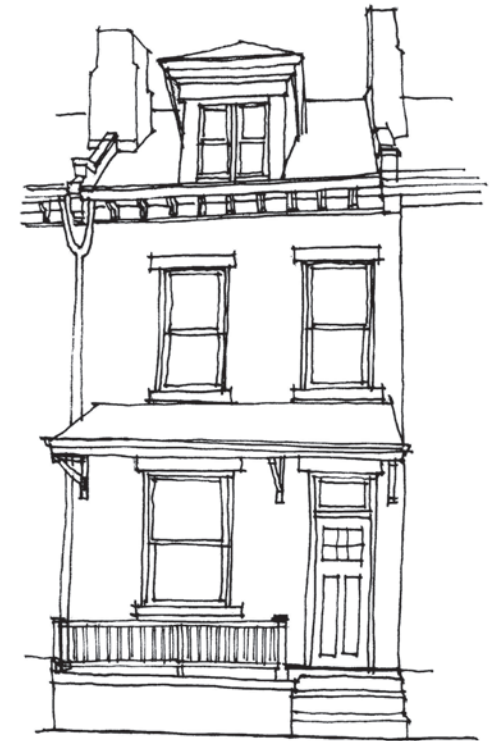
Architectural elements in rows should be identical or mirrored. In the above example, infill brick around the window and door has made this façade clash with the rest of the row. The illustration below shows the row ideally restored with awnings removed, window hoods restored, and the proper sized windows installed.



For Defined Architectural Terms, See the Glossary on Page 27

Example Three

The house to the right has had a stone veneer and aluminum awnings added to the historic façade. A restoration of this façade would include removing the stone veneer to expose the original brick, removal of aluminum awnings and iron railing and the installation of a wood awning and railing seen in the sketch below.



Example Four

The two pictures below are examples of full restoration of front doors and trim. The picture to the right and the one below it are the same house! The picture below is the result of sanding down to and repointing the brick, replacing the window hoods and sills, and restoring the original gutter with corbels and appropriate trim. Finally, a dormer was added to increase livable space on the third floor of the house.



Example Five

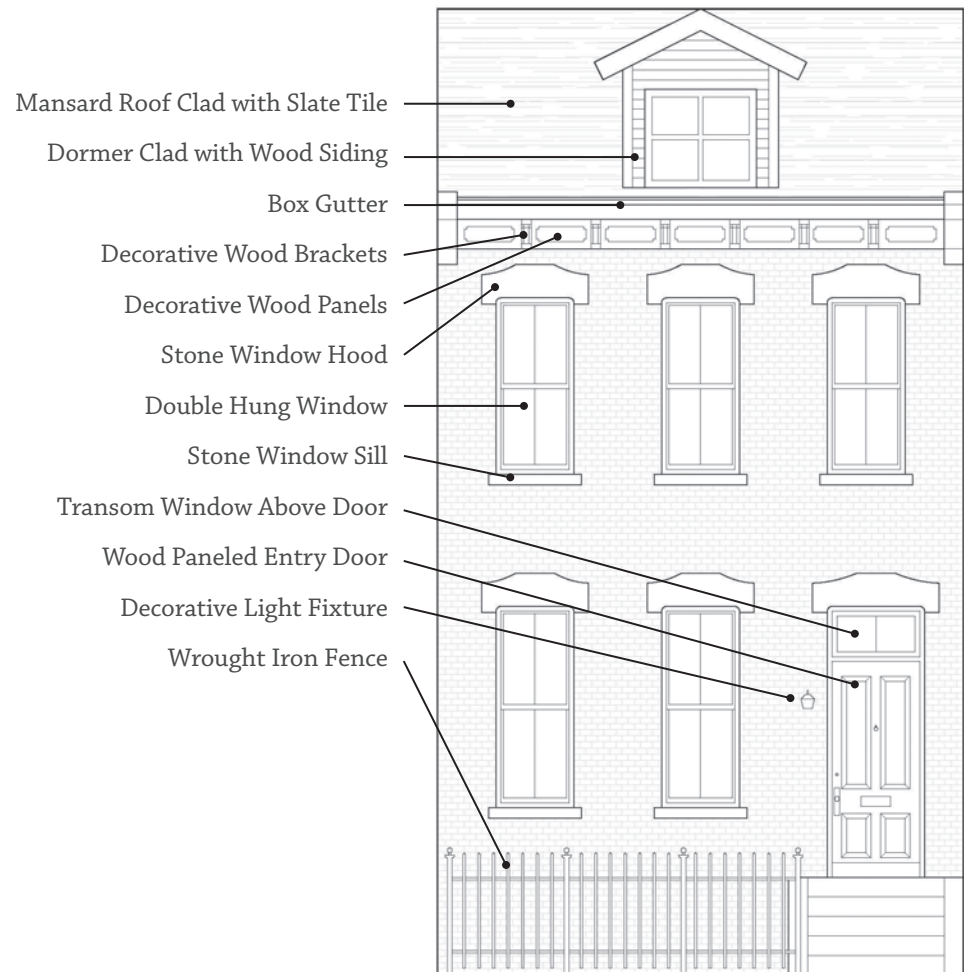
To the right is a house as it currently stands and below is a sketch of an historic rehab of the property. The sketch shows shingles on the mansard roof to replace the current siding, a restoration of the transoms above the window and front door, and a new wood paneled entry door to replace the current vinyl finished door.





REFERENCE

Anatomy of an Historic House



Architectural Glossary

Awning A roof-like structure often made of canvas or aluminum, usually attached to the front of a building to protect the entry and or windows.

Brackets A bracket is a decorative or weight-bearing structural element, two sides of which form a right angle with one side against a wall and the other under a projecting surface, such as an eave or a bay window. Brackets are often in the form of scrolls, and can be carved, cast, or molded. They can be entirely ornamental and serve no supporting purpose. Among these types of brackets is the corbel

Box gutter A gutter on a roof usually rectangular in shape; may be lined with metal, asphalt, or roofing felt; may be concealed behind, a parapet, the eaves or in a roof valley.

Corbels A corbel is a piece of stone or wood jutting out of a wall to carry any superincumbent weight.

Cornice A cornice is horizontal molded projection that completes a building or wall.

Dormer A dormer is a structural element of a building that protrudes from the plane of a sloping roof surface. Dormers are used, either in original construction or as later additions, to create usable space in the roof of a building by adding headroom and usually also by enabling addition of windows.

Facade Principal face or front elevation of a building.

Fenestrations The arrangement of windows and other exterior openings on a building.

Flashing Pieces of non-corrosive metal used around wall and roof junctions and angles as a means of preventing water leaks.

Hood An external moulded projection from a wall over an opening to throw off rainwater. This moulding can be terminated at the side by ornamentation called a label stop.

Leaded Glass Small panes of clear or stained glass that are held in position by means of lead strips.

Lintel A horizontal structural member that supports a load over an opening, such as a door or window opening. It is usually made of wood, stone or steel.

Mansard roof A Mansard or mansard roof refers to a style of hip roof characterized by two slopes on each of its four sides with the lower slope being much steeper, almost a vertical wall, while the upper slope, usually not visible from the ground, is pitched at the minimum needed to shed water. This form makes maximum use of the interior space of the attic and is considered a practical form for adding a storey to an existing building

Masonry Work constructed by a mason using stone, brick, concrete block, tile, or similar materials; most often, the building blocks are joined by mortar.

Moulding A continuous decorative band; serves as an ornamental device on both interior and exterior surfaces, often services to obscure the joint formed when two surfaces meet.

Mortar A mixture of plaster, cement, or lime with a fine aggregate and water; used for pointing and bonding bricks, stones, or cement blocks.

Ornament Details added to a structure solely for decoration; to add shape, texture, depth, color, and visual interest to an architectural composition.

Pointing The treatment of masonry joints by filling them with a high quality mortar; used to protect against weather or simply to improve the appearance of a masonry wall.

Restoration The process of returning an historic building and/or property to a state of utility, through repair or alteration.

Soffit Describes the underside of any construction element, usually at a gutter or box gutter. Soffit exposure profile (from wall to fascia) on a buildings' exterior can vary from a few centimeters (2-3 inches) to well beyond a meter (3 feet) depending on construction.

Transom A fixed window over a door or another window.

Trim The decorative finish around a door and window; the wooden casing used around door and window frames.

The Lawrenceville Corporation

The Lawrenceville Corporation (formerly the Lawrenceville Development Corporation or LDC) was formed and incorporated as a 501(c)(3) community development corporation in 1984 by several business owners concerned about blight and residential, commercial, and industrial abandonment throughout the community.

Over 20 years later, the LC has facilitated more than 220 Streetface façade improvement projects, yielding public investments of over \$2.4 million and private investments of more than \$4.2 million. Real Estate development has included 35 townhouses and the redevelopment of historic commercial properties. Business development efforts include the design and distribution of the Lawrenceville Neighborhood Guide and Lawrenceville Business Guide to more than 100,000 shoppers from Southwest PA and outside the region.

While much has been accomplished in Lawrenceville, there's still work to be done – to attract new businesses and residents, eliminate blight, and keep the neighborhood clean, safe, and green. There are many ways you can get involved. Whatever your skill sets or interests, the LC welcomes you. We invite you to become a member, join a committee, or volunteer with us. We will help you find your niche!

Our work is made possible by the generosity of grant makers, in-kind supporters, sponsors, local business owners, and individual members. This publication was made possible through the generous support of PNC Bank, The Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh, The Design Center, and an Anonymous Donor.

This guide was originally produced by the Joyce Design Group and redesigned in 2013 by David P. Crawford. David is also responsible for a majority of the detailed photography. This guide was printed on recycled paper by Multiscope Imaging Services.

For additional information, contact the Lawrenceville Corporation at [412.621.1616](tel:412.621.1616) x106 or info@lawrencevillecorp.com.

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