



ROSSMORE AV

RYLAND AV

LIDLAW AV

REGENT AV

CALIFORNIA AV

CAROLINA AV

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# Old Bond Hill Historic District

# CONSERVATION GUIDELINES: OLD BOND HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT

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## GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

The Old Bond Hill Historic District contains a mixture of building types and dates of construction. The earliest houses were built around the 1880s and are 2½ story brick with the long end of the house to the street. These may or may not have one-story front porches.

Buildings constructed around the turn of the century are a different shape. Instead of rectangular, they are often L-shaped and have the peaked end of the house facing the street. A few of the turn of the century houses are square and have steep hip roofs, which have four slopes instead of two.

Later buildings, which were built around 1910-1930, are either 1½ or 2½ stories high. Many of them keep the gable end to the street.

Houses continued to be built in Old Bond Hill well into the 1940s. These last buildings look “boxy”. Some of them have hip roofs, but these hip roofs are not as steep as the turn of the century hip roofed houses. Some of them are sloped so little that the roof looks almost flat.

## BUILDING TYPE: “VERNACULAR”

The type of house built in the Old Bond Hill Historic District reflects the unique history of this area. Many of the early brick buildings were built from plans of the Cooperative Land and Building Association, which purchased and subdivided the land in 1877.

The bylaws of the Association required that dwellings be erected in the center-front of each lot, 15 feet from the sidewalk. Two or three basic house plans of one and two family density were offered. The result is that most of these early brick houses have a basic similarity and simple design. They do not fall into one stylistic category, but rather have elements of various styles: a Stick style porch or an Italianate style window trim, for example.

Since these houses were built by their owners or local craftsmen instead of architects, and since they use a basic house type with decorative elements that fit into more than one stylistic category, they are called “vernacular.” This tradition of vernacular building continued in Old Bond Hill until the 1920s, when buildings fit into one or two stylistic categories of Tudor or Bungalow.

## ALTERATION AND REHABILITATION REVIEW CRITERIA GENERAL GUIDELINES

Since there is such a variety of house types in Old Bond Hill, each project should be reviewed individually. There are, however, a few guidelines that apply to all rehabilitation work:

1. Avoid removing or altering historic material or distinctive architectural features: if it's original and in fairly good shape, try to keep it. This includes even small details like chimney pots.
2. Don't try to make the house look older than it really is. Although many people add "Colonial" details like eagles and Paul Revere lanterns because they think it is appropriate for a "historic" house, adding these decorations should be avoided. These features, which were never part of the house, reflect a time period before Bond Hill homes were ever built. If you want to know how your house originally looked, first look at other houses in the neighborhood. Then look for physical evidence of things that might have existed on the house (outlines of porches or additions on the wall, for example). At the same time, research the house. Old photos or documents might provide additional information about what the house looked like originally.
3. A later addition to an old house may have gained significance on its own. Don't assume it's worthless just because it's not part of the original building. A 1910 porch on an 1880s house is now over 70 years old. It is another piece of architectural evidence, which traces the history of the house.
4. Repair rather than replace whenever possible. (see specific guidelines)
5. Be sensitive to distinct stylistic features and examples of skilled craftsmanship, like turned or carved wood porches (turned wood was rotated on a lathe to get rounded decoration).
6. Surface cleaning should be done by the gentlest means possible. Don't sandblast or use other strongly abrasive methods.
7. New additions should look new. They should be compatible with the existing structure but should not try to copy the old building. New additions should be built using a contemporary (new) design, which fits with the character of the building – new additions can look new but be compatible with an older building by using the same materials and keeping the right scale and proportion. Proper scale and proportion keep the building from looking too big or too small and "sticking out like a sore thumb." New additions should be compatible but should not try to imitate the old. When trying to decide what size and shape a new addition should be, the best guide is your eye. Look around at original additions on different kinds of buildings in the district. Additions to early brick houses in Old Bond Hill were often wood frame with a shed roof (shed roofs have only one slope). Since materials are not the same today as the materials used in old buildings, the result of imitation is often a "bad copy." Except in rare cases where a new design would detract from the unity of a grouping of structure, trying to reproduce the old is not recommended. Especially avoid imitation in new construction, which has a modern function.

**ALTERATION AND REHABILITATION REVIEW CRITERIA  
SPECIFIC GUIDELINES**

**1. MATERIALS SHOULD MATCH ORIGINAL AS CLOSELY AS POSSIBLE**

The earliest houses and some of the latest houses in the Old Bond Hill Historic District were built of brick. Some of the ones in between – the ones built at the turn of the century and in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century – were constructed of wood. Siding on these wood houses is typically narrow-lapped boards, usually about 4" wide. Where necessary, missing or deteriorated material should be replaced with recycled or new materials, which match the original as closely as possible with regard to:

type of material	color	placement
size of unit	shape	detailing
composition	texture	
style	type of joint	

**2. NEVER, NEVER, NEVER SANDBLAST!**

Cleaning of existing material should be done by the least damaging method available, ranging from washing with a mild detergent and soft bristle brushes (never wire brushes) to chemical cleaning. Always test the proposed cleaning method first on a small section of the wall where it will not show.

Sandblasting destroys brick and lessens the life of the buildings. Sandblasting removes the protective “skin” of brick and exposes the soft inner core, which is much more water-absorbent and susceptible to weathering. Exposed soft brick absorbs water, which freezes in winter and thaws in spring. This expansion and contraction can cause the surface of the brick to fall off (spalling). As well as blasting off the protective surface of brick, sandblasting blasts away mortar (the material which connects bricks). During sandblasting, edges, corners, and raised detailing take a special beating so that one distinctive features look like someone had used a giant eraser and rubbed out the design.

### 3. AVOID WATERPROOF AND REPELLENT COATINGS

Water repellent and waterproof coatings (silicone) should never be used unless there is actual water penetration through the walls and the problem is not caused by faulty or missing mortar, poorly functioning gutters and downspouts, or rising ground water.

If water is penetrating through the masonry (masonry can be brick or stone) to interior surfaces, then only the affected area should be treated, and only after the masonry has been allowed to dry out.

Waterproof and repellent coatings should be avoided because they trap interior moisture (generated from bathroom, kitchen, etc.) in the brick walls, which causes problems with plaster and paint on the inside. If the trapped moisture freezes, the outside surface of the brick can fall off. This is called “spalling.” Coatings can also trap salts inside the surface of the brick. These deposits are unsightly and cause eventual deterioration of the surface. Coatings are usually not effective on either inside or outside walls.

### 4. IF IT WAS PAINTED, PAINT IT AGAIN

Painted brick buildings should be repainted rather than stripped or cleaned to reveal the natural brick color. The color of trim and decorative detailing on a building should be different from the wall paint color to highlight the details. While it is not necessary to have a sharp contrast, light colored buildings should have darker trim and dark colored buildings should have lighter trim. At no time should the detailing and trim be painted the same color as the walls.

### 5. REPOINTING: USE THE RIGHT CEMENT AND MATCH THE MORTAR JOINTS

Older, softer bricks require a softer mortar. It is important to simulate the old lime and sand mortars both in appearance and in composition. This will insure that during periods of freezing and thawing, the expansion and contraction characteristics of brick and mortar will be nearly the same. If a hard, modern mortar with a high portland cement content is used, the softer bricks may crack or break during freeze/thaw periods.

A mixture consisting of one part of white masonry cement, two parts of lime, and seven to nine parts of the smallest available mesh sand (to match the original sand) is recommended.

In general, the mortar joint should be concave, as this gives the greatest bond of mortar to brick. In restoration work, however, the type of original joint should be matched with new work.

### 6. ROOF MATERIALS

Roof material for the earliest houses in Bond Hill was standing seam metal (tin). These were painted red or green, but some have been covered with tar, or other waterproof coating, so are now black.

Some of these roofs have been replaced with asphalt shingle roofing. Standing seam metal roofing is still available and should be encouraged if roof replacement is necessary. If cost prohibits the use of this material, asphalt or asbestos shingle roofing, if dark red, dark green or slate color, is acceptable.

### 7. WOOD SIDING: TRY REPLACEMENT WITH WOOD FIRST

Wood clapboard should be used as the repair or replacement material for wood frame dwellings where appropriate. The use of aluminum or vinyl siding for resurfacing should be avoided if at all possible. In cases where they are used, however, the exposed width of such siding should not exceed

4". Artificial stone, brick veneer, asbestos, asphalt shingles and other similar resurfacing materials are strongly discouraged because they do not fit with other houses in the neighborhood.

Architectural features such as cornices and window sills should not be removed or covered over when resurfacing material is applied. Siding is usually applied horizontally but some additions and outbuildings (sheds, garages) in Old Bond Hill were vertical board and batten. This combination of wide boards and narrow strips is appropriate for additions and outbuildings but not for the main part of the house. All wood siding should be painted. Wood or aluminum siding should never be applied to brick walls for resurfacing.

## 8. DOUBLE HOUSES

Double houses can be different but complimentary. Some houses in the Old Bond Hill Historic District are double houses with separate owners of each half. When exterior improvements such as painting or roofing are made, coordination between owners is encouraged. If possible, the roof on the entire building should be the same. Not only is this important for a unified appearance, but problems of leakage are lessened if there are fewer seams. Paint colors need not be the same for each half but should go together. One idea is to reverse the trim and main colors on each half.

## 9. WINDOWS/DOORS: THE "EYES" OF THE BUILDING SHOULD REMAIN OPEN

Perhaps the most distinctive features of any building are its openings. Original window and door openings should not be reduced or enlarged in size. Many of the early brick houses in Old Bond Hill had floor-to-ceiling windows on the front façade (wall). If these still remain open, they should not be altered.

Doorways of houses in Old Bond Hill are simple and plain. There are usually no sidelights (long windows on either side of the door), although there is sometimes a glass transom above the door. Some of the houses built between 1915-1950 have projecting entranceways or door hoods of various kinds, but these are not original to the earliest houses.

Doors on early houses in Old Bond Hill had a large single pane of glass at the top with one or two wood panels below. Below are illustrations of doors which are found on early Old Bond Hill houses and which would be acceptable replacement doors on early houses.

Doors below are typically found on later Old Bond Hill houses built after 1910. When selecting a replacement door, try to match the original as closely as possible. If the original door is missing, look at houses similar to yours to see what the original might have looked like.

## 10. SHUTTERS SHOULD SHUT: LIGHT FIXTURES SHOULD BE SIMPLE

Some houses in Old Bond Hill still have their original shutters. Shutters should not be installed, however, if there is no evidence of the house ever having had them (look at the sides of the window for hardware, which held shutters). If shutters are appropriate, they should be the right size. They should shut, meeting in the middle of the window and covering the whole window. They should be wood. Original shutters had louvers so that in the summer, sun could be kept out but breezes could come in.

Other outside attachments to the house, like light fixtures, should be compatible. In general, the "colonial" light fixture should be avoided. Something simple and modern is usually more appropriate. Some owners choose a small "can light" fixture which is recessed in the frame above the door. The light fixture is hidden, but the spotlight shines down on the porch or steps.

## 11. PORCHES: REPAIR AS CLOSE TO ORIGINAL AS POSSIBLE

One-story front porches or small side porches are distinctive features of many homes in Old Bond Hill. Some of these are quite elaborate with bracketed posts and carved detailing. Every effort should be made to retain these features. If replacement is necessary and duplication is not possible, a

simplified version, which keeps the same proportions, may be acceptable. Some porches were replaced or added many years ago. Generally, they should be kept and maintained, even though they might not be original.

The handsome, turned wood porch supports, which so characterize Old Bond Hill, should never be replaced by light “wrought iron” metal supports. Structurally, this type of support might not be strong enough to support the weight of the roof it should hold. Historically in Old Bond Hill, porch supports were not metal. On all types and styles of buildings built in Bond Hill, they were wood.

Replacing the original solid wood posts with open metalwork posts often makes the porch roof look like it’s hanging in mid-air because you can hardly see this type of metal support from a distance. While some early Bond Hill houses did have open-work porch posts, these were wood and were connected with similar decorative brackets. Usually these were painted a light color so they stood out and did not “disappear” in the shadow of the porch.

## 12. WALLS AND FENCES: AVOID IF POSSIBLE

Fencing or retaining walls are not commonly found in the area. Hedge is commonly used to define front and/or side yards. Chain-link is sometimes found dividing side yards. Fencing of front yards would detract from the pleasant, open quality of Old Bond Hill. The use of hedge to define property lines and to provide privacy is encouraged instead of fencing. The use of chain-link, while generally considered inappropriate in a historic district, would be acceptable in the rear yards and on the side yards if concealed with hedge. Other types of fencing will be considered by the Historic Conservation Board on a case-by-case basis.

## 13. KEEP SITE AND SETBACK CONSISTENT AND COMPATIBLE

The alteration or removal of existing walkways, steps and plantings, which contribute to the character of the district, should be avoided. All new site improvements should be compatible with the architectural character of the district. Most houses are set back 15’ from the street and the distance between buildings is generally 30’ to 60’. These setbacks should be maintained. Houses are commonly sited on raised land which rolls down to the front property line. This feature should also be maintained.

## **DEMOLITION: PERMITTED ONLY UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES**

Demolition shall not be permitted unless one of the following conditions exist:

- (a) Demolition has been ordered by the Director of Buildings & Inspections for reasons of public health and safety;
- (b) The owner can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Historic Conservation Board that the structure cannot be reused nor can a reasonable economic return be gained from the use of all or part of the building proposed for demolition;
- (c) The demolition request is for a garage or an inappropriate addition, and the demolition of said structure will not adversely affect the streetscape as determined by the Historic Conservation Board.

## **NEW CONSTRUCTION/ADDITIONS**

New Construction should not try to imitate the old, but should be compatible with respect to the following:

1. **MATERIALS** – The type of materials and their color, texture, scale and detailing should be compatible with those of the District and/or the original building. Since both brick and narrow clapboard siding are used in the district, both would be acceptable materials for new construction.
2. **SCALE** – The scale of new work and its constituent parts should be compatible with the District and/or the original building and the scale of its parts.

3. **FORM** – The shape, massing (form), and proportions of new work should be compatible with the District and the original building.
4. **DETAILING** – The detailing including, but not limited to, the following features and their placement on additions and new construction should be compatible with the District:
 

walls	roofs	chimneys
eaves	cornices	doors
railings	windows	porches
5. **HEIGHT** – The height of an addition should not exceed the height of the original building. Buildings in the Old Bond Hill Historic District vary from one and one-half to two and one-half stories high. The height of the new buildings should be comparable to the height of existing adjacent buildings and should not detract from the character and appearance of the District.
6. **SETBACK** – The setback of new buildings should be comparable to the setbacks of existing adjacent buildings. Buildings are commonly siting 15’ from the sidewalk and 30’-60’ on the side from adjacent buildings.
7. **HISTORIC INTEGRITY** – Compatibility of new work to original work is required, but imitation of old work in new construction should be avoided. If original openings are filled in on the side or rear, the outline of the original opening should remain apparent by setting new infill material back from the surface and leaving original sills and lintels in place.

**WHEN WAS YOUR HOUSE BUILT?**

Dates are approximate and based on building types and stylistic features.

EARLY (1870-1885)

1403 Regent	1402 Regent	1412-1414 Regent
1334-1335 Regent	1324 Regent	1323 Regent
1317-1319 Regent	3112 Regent	1307-1309 Regent
1308 Regent	1302 Regent	1303 Regent
1236 Regent	1237 Regent	1225 Regent
1216 Regent	1215 Regent	1224 Laidlaw
1303 Laidlaw	1302 Laidlaw	1313-1315 Laidlaw
1312 Laidlaw	1323-1325 Laidlaw	1326 Laidlaw
1322 Laidlaw (later addition)	1334 Laidlaw	1333 Laidlaw
1402 Laidlaw (later addition)	1413-1415 Laidlaw	1412 Laidlaw
1411 Ryland	1403 Ryland	1335 Ryland

MIDDLE (1886-1910)

4932 Oberlin	1328 Regent	1313 Regent
1220 Regent	1209 Regent	1219 Regent
1228 Laidlaw	1227 Laidlaw	1237 Laidlaw
1238 Laidlaw	1316 Laidlaw	1329 Laidlaw
1407 Laidlaw	1403 Laidlaw	

LATE (After 1910)

1325 Regent	1318 Regent	1314 Regent
1230 Regent	1231 Laidlaw	1232 Laidlaw
1305-1307 Laidlaw	1308 Laidlaw	1309 Laidlaw
1318 Laidlaw	1321 Laidlaw	1407 Ryland

## **THESE GUIDELINES ARE NOT CAST IN CONCRETE**

Alteration, new construction and demolition must be reviewed when such projects are undertaken within the historic district. However, location in the historic district does not require anyone to make changes, even if something already in existence does not conform to these guidelines.

For example, if your house already has had its porch replaced in a way that is not recommended in the guidelines, you do not have to change it. Existing conditions in the historic district are permitted to continue. Also, the guidelines can be waived or adjusted if the owner shows that sticking to the guidelines would cost more than he/she can afford.

Applicants are encouraged to consult with Historic Conservation Office staff before they make final plans and formally apply for a building permit.