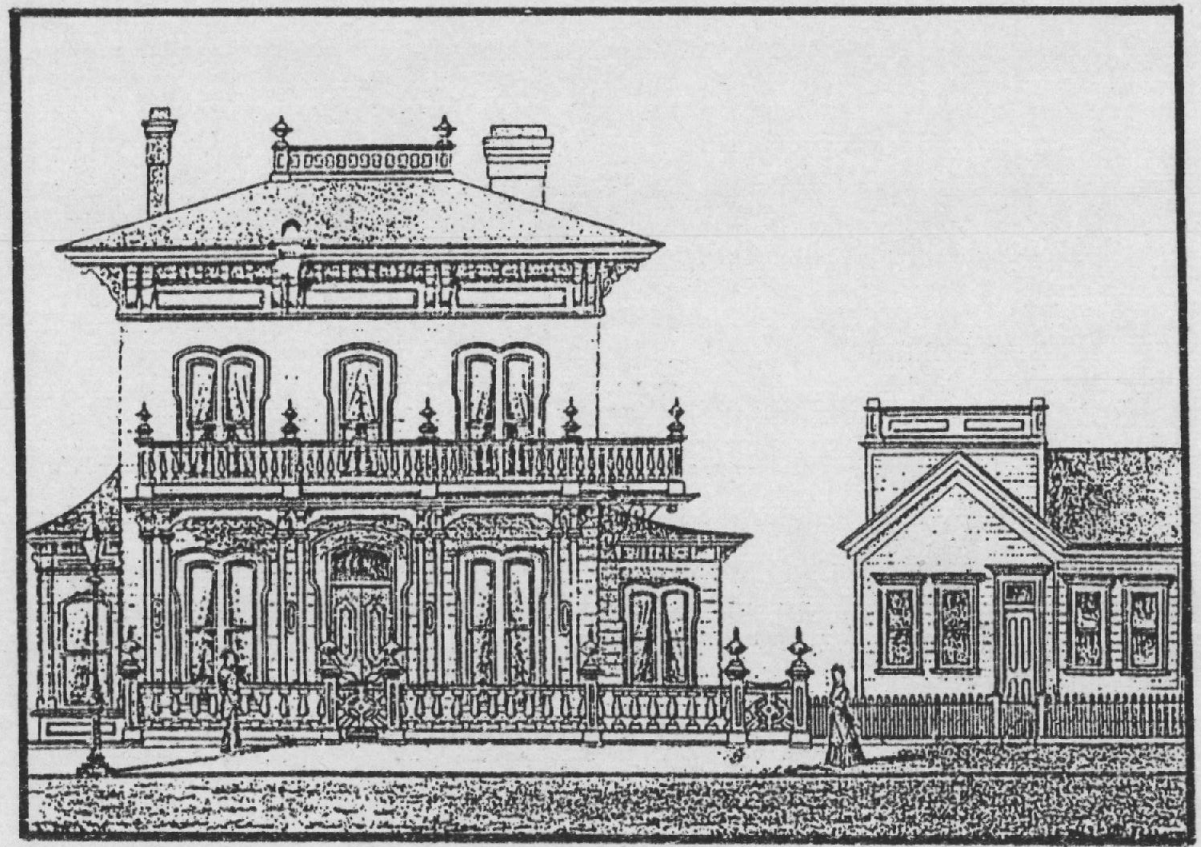
COMSTOCK HISTORIC DISTRICT
CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS



RESIDENCE OF JAMES G. FAIR, VIRGINIA, NEVADA.

COMSTOCK HISTORIC DISTRICT CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS
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THE COMSTOCK HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

The Comstock Historic District Commission (CHDC) is responsible for the maintenance and protection of buildings, structures, and sites of areas of historical significance within designated boundaries in Storey and Lyon Counties including portions of Virginia City, Gold Hill, Silver City, and Dayton. The Commission was established in 1969 by the Nevada State Legislature through enactment of the "Comstock Historic District Act" (N.R.S. Chapter 384) and is charged with reviewing structures to be erected, re-constructed, altered, restored, moved, or demolished within the District boundaries. Structures include such things as buildings, outbuildings, paving, fences, walls, ruins and signs.

Persons who wish to do such work must obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Commission prior to commencing any work. Failure to do so may result in unecessary project delays, stop work orders or fines of up to $500.00 per day.

In its review process, the Commission determines whether the proposed action is appropriate to the "interests of the Historic District and congruous with the historic aspects of the surroundings and the environment of the District" (N.R.S. 384.140). The criteria the Commission considers in the evaluating the Certificates of Appropriateness include the following:

1. Historic and architectural value and significance.
2. Architectural style.
3. Location on the lot.
4. Position of the structure in relation to a public way and visibility from a public place.
5. General design, arrangement, texture, material, color, and size of the exterior architectural features and the relationship of a to others in the immediate neighborhood.
6. Relationship of a structure's exterior architectural features to the recognized styles of early western architecture of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

APPLYING FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Prospective projects must be submitted to the CHDC for review and approval at their regular monthly meeting. CHDC notification requirements dictate that an application for a Certificate must be submitted to the CHDC office well in advance of the monthly meeting. Please contact the CHDC office to ascertain when the next available meeting is and when an application must be filed. Items which are not properly noticed and placed on the CHDC meeting agenda cannot be reviewed or discussed at the meeting.

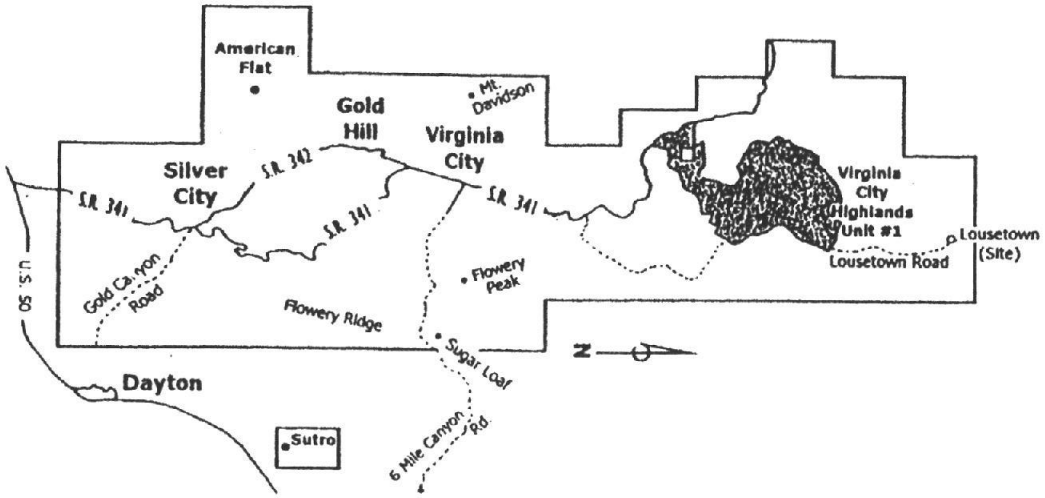
In many instances detailed plans of the proposed work must be presented to the CHDC at their monthly meeting. These plans need to contain the following information: **1.** name of the owner; **2.** address of the project, lot and block and/or assessors parcel number (APN); **3.** plans drawn to scale depicting all four elevations of the proposed structure plus a plot plan to scale showing all existing structures, proposed new construction, property lines, a north arrow, and all public rights-of-way. All elevations must be properly labeled. CHDC staff may also request that photos be taken of the proposed work site or building. Additional information may be obtained from the CHDC office.

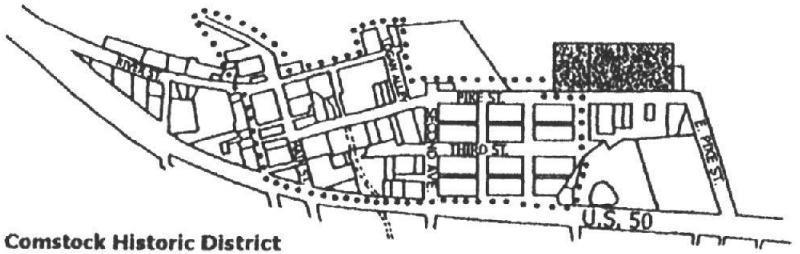
Work on a project can commence only after having recieved approval from the CHDC, a Certifcate of Appropriateness is issued and all submitted plans have been stamped by the CHDC office with any modifications noted. **Any modifications to projects after issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness must first be reported to CHDC staff for notation and approval**. The CHDC reserves the right to re-hear any approved project for which significant changes are proposed.

For the efficient transaction of CHDC business and the convenience of the persons with whom business is transacted, CHDC staff are often required to be away from the office. Given our limited staff--and in accordance with NRS 281.110(1)--we are open to the public by appointment only. Please contact us at (775) 847-0281 to arrange an appointment. CHDC staff does try to maintain a presence in the office as often as practicable. If staff is present in the office the public is generally welcome to stop in. Thank you in advance for your understanding and cooperation.

The CHDC offices are presently located at 372 South "C" Street in Virginia City. In the near future the office will be relocated to a new facility located at 20 North "E" Street, Virginia City.

COMSTOCK HISTORIC DISTRICT MAP





Comstock Historic District

Dayton district Boundary

Removed for Adminstrative Purposes

History of the Comstock Mining District

Nevada's Comstock Mining District, founded in 1859, produced millions of dollars in gold and silver, invented technologies and mining methods used throughout the West, and affected monetary policies as far away as Europe. Wealthy men, such as George Hearst, John Mackay, Adolph Sutro, and William Ralston made fortunes working and investing in Virginia City and Storey County. The mines spawned the successes of William Stewart, John P. Jones, William Sharon, and James Fair, each of whom served in the U.S. Senate. The prosperous mining district attracted immigrants from throughout the world. People from North, South and Central America, Europe, Asia, and Africa came to the mining district, hoping to capture some of the success that had become internationally famous. The communities within the Comstock include Virginia City, Gold Hill, Silver City, and Dayton.

From 1860 through the early 1870s, the Comstock's bonanzas captured international headlines, then beginning in the late 1870s, its mines began to fail. By the 1930s, Virginia City and Gold Hill's combined population of 20,000 had declined into a town of fewer than 1,000 people. These residents became impromptu custodians of a remarkable inheritance that included hundreds of nineteenth-century buildings, countless documents and photographs, archaeological resources, and abandoned shafts and adits. Today, thousands of historic sites and buildings are part of the Comstock's rich heritage, attesting to the significance of a place the National Park Service recognizes as one of the largest historical landmarks in the fifty states. The Nevada State Legislature established the Comstock Historic District Commission in 1969 to protect historic structures, recognizing the area as an important national resource.

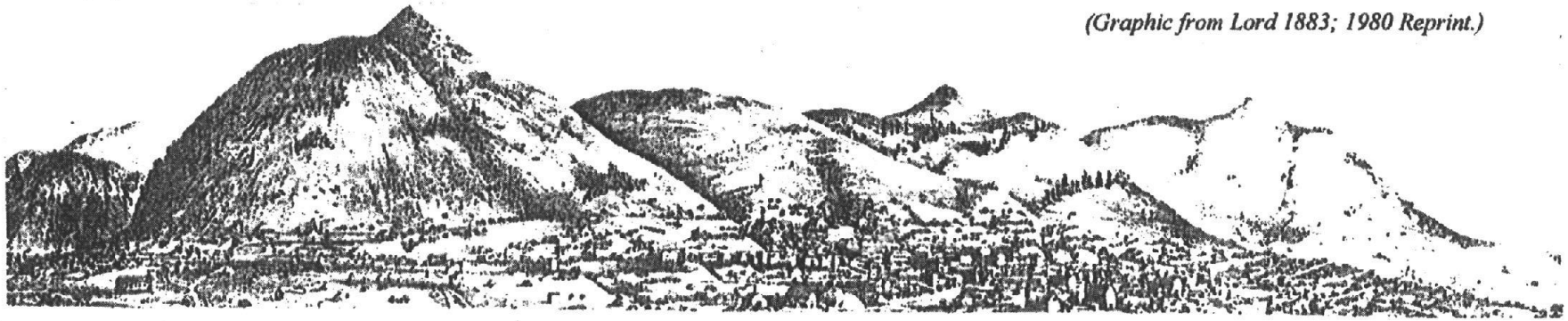
Comstock Building Styles

Over 20,000 people populated the district's core cities during the Comstock's mining "heyday," constructing numerous private homes, industrial works, commercial structures and public buildings. Comstock house styles ranged from the simple miner's shacks to the elegant mansions. Many house styles were influenced by the architectural fashions that were in vogue at the time. In doing so, people attempted to import a cosmopolitan setting into the mining district's frontier environment.

Today the Comstock exhibits a unique character through the charm of its extant historic structures juxtaposed in the mining landscape of the American West . These construction standards portray the array of historic building styles and influences of the Comstock residents. The Comstock Historic District Commission is responsible for ensuring proposed projects are congruous with the historic aspects of the district.

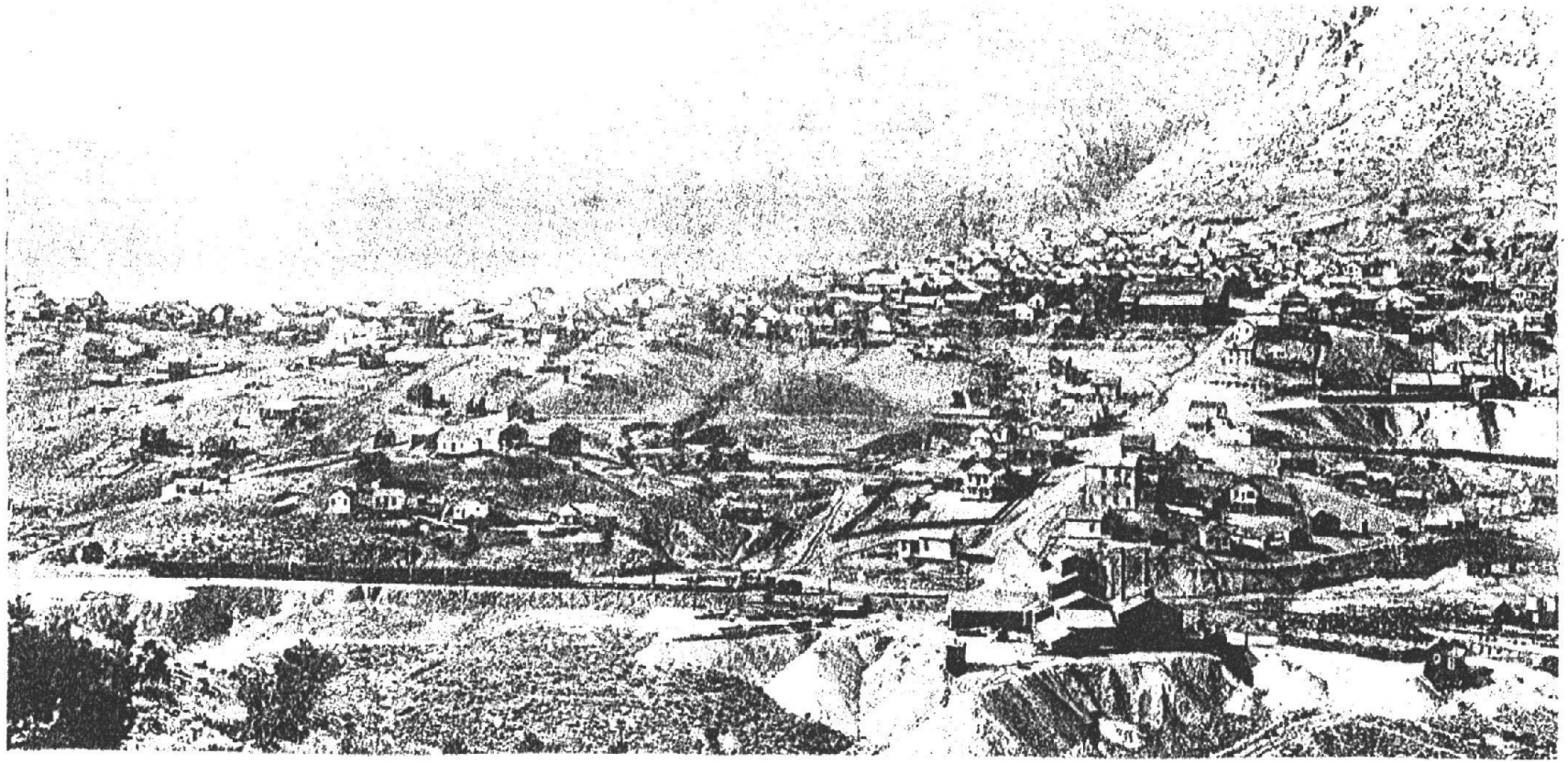
STYLES: Vernacular, Italianate, Gothic Revival, Second Empire, Queen Anne, Victorian Folk, Industrial, and Commercial. The next pages describe histories of and show sample building styles of each community in the district (Virginia City, Gold Hill, Silver City, and Dayton) followd by descriptions of the various building styles found on the Comstock Historic District.

(Graphic from Lord 1883; 1980 Reprint.)



VIRGINIA CITY: A BRIEF HISTORY

Virginia City was the site of the original mining camp settlement around the Ophir Mine where gold and silver was discovered in 1859. The first buildings were erected at random, but soon a street system was laid out following A, B, and C Streets. By 1860-61, the town was built up rapidly, with brick and stone "fireproof" buildings being constructed in the following years. As mine production increased, greater numbers of people were attracted to the new city, which assumed the appearance of a thriving metropolis with fraternal societies, churches, schools, theaters, restaurants, saloons, and businesses of every sort. By 1875 an estimated 20,000 people were living in Virginia City and its environs. On October 26, 1875, a fire broke out in a lodging house on A street and destroyed about 2000 buildings, including mills, mining structures, churches, homes, and many of the buildings on the C Street commercial district. The town was completely rebuilt by the following years, a result of the region's immense mineral wealth.



(Graphic from Lord 1883; 1980 Reprint.)

GOLD HILL: A BRIEF HISTORY

Gold Hill was an intensely developed region on the Comstock. The earliest producing mines were located here, including the Crown Point, Yellow Jacket, Imperial, Kentucky and Confidence. Gold Hill grew rapidly because of its proximity to several mines and mills, and was eventually built up to the divide where it merged with Virginia City. In its heyday during the 1870s, Gold Hill boasted a population of approximately 8000 people, second only to Virginia City. It had a thriving business district including an office for the Bank of California, which stands today, several lodges, hotels, churches, schools, and other public amenities.



(GraphicCourtesy of Ray Walmsley Collection)

SILVER CITY: A BRIEF HISTORY

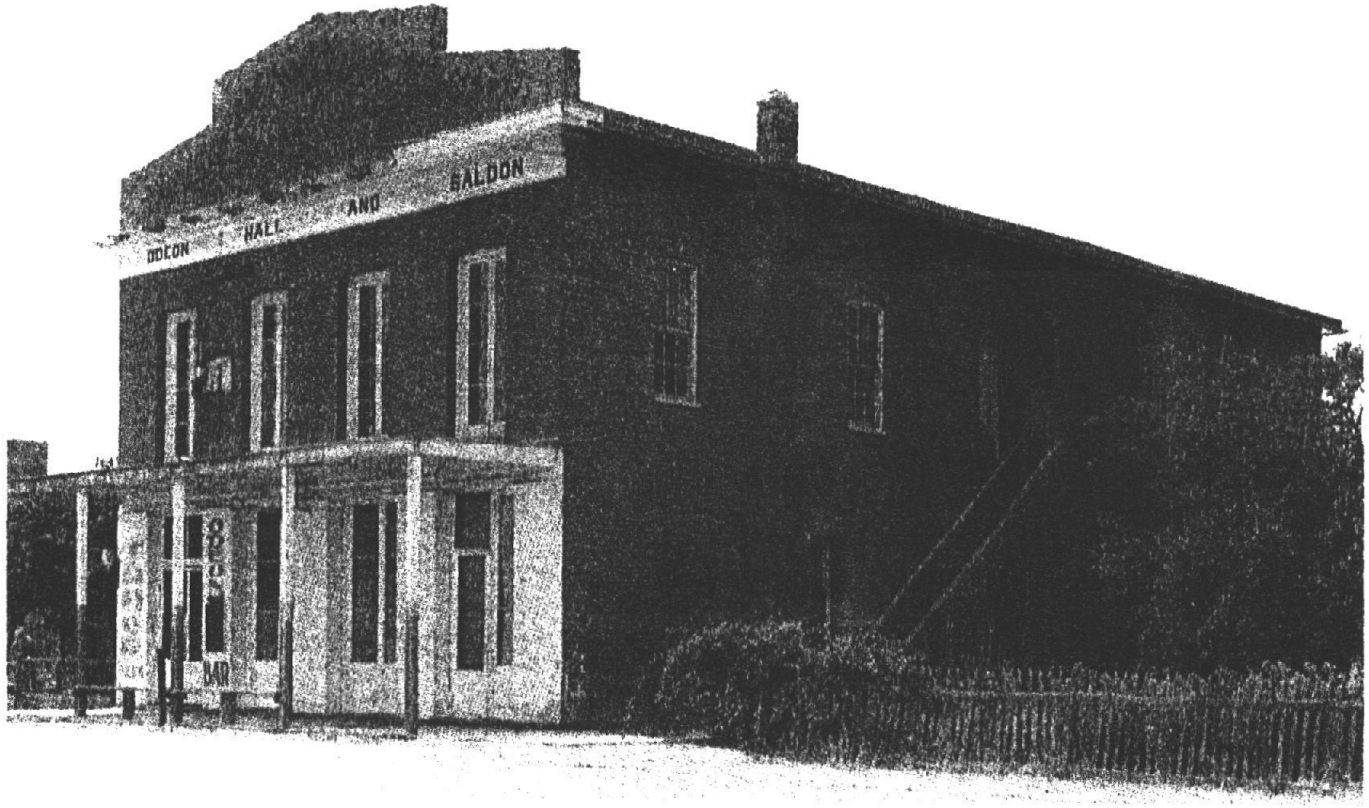
Silver City was settled before Virginia City in 1859 and was already of considerable size by 1860. The town had four hotels, ten stores, two drugstores, two butcher shops, three blacksmith shops, and numerous dwellings. In 1861, there were over 1000 people living in Silver City. The mines in this area, however, were never as productive as those in Gold Hill and Virginia City. As a result, it remained a comparatively small community, whose major role emerged as a milling center and as a connection on the transportation route between Virginia City and the Carson River.



(GraphicCourtesy of Cann Collection)

DAYTON: A BRIEF HISTORY

Dayton was one of the earliest settled towns in Nevada. It was the site of an emigrant station known as "Spofford Hall's Station" and later as "McMartin's Station" in 1854. A large Chinese community settled here in 1857 after being brought out to dig the Reese or Dayton ditch, and the settlement was subsequently referred to as "Chinatown." In 1860 the site was renamed "Mineral Rapids" after a mill built in the vicinity. In 1861 the town was named "Dayton" in honor of John Day, County Surveyor, and became the Lyon County seat. Although Dayton was a thriving mill center for decades, it never grew as large as the other Comstock towns. Dayton experienced two major fires in 1866 and 1870 - and thus most of the existing historic buildings date from the 1870s. There has been remarkably few alterations in the core of this small community which has a Main Street view similar to that of a century ago.



(Graphic Courtesy of Comstock Historic District Commission Collection)

SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION

Rehabilitation is defined as the process of returning a property to a state of utility, through repair or alteration, which makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions and features of the property which are significant to its historic, architectural, and cultural values. The Comstock Historic District Commission employs the following standards whenever possible.

THE STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. Every reasonable effort shall be made to provide a compatible use for a property which requires minimal alteration of the building , structure or site and its environment or to use a property for its originally intended purpose.

2. The distinguishing original qualities or character of a building, structure site and its environment shall not be destroyed. The removal or alteration of any historic material or distinctive architectural features should be avoided when possible.

3. All buildings, structures, and sites shall be recognized as products of their own time. Alterations that have no historical basis and which seek to create an earlier appearance shall be discouraged.

4. Changes which may have taken in the course of time are evidence of the history and the development of a building, structure, or site and its environment. These changes may have acquired significance in their own right, and this significance shall be recognized and respected.

5. Distinctive and stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship which characterize a building, structure or site shall be treated with sensitivity.

6. Deteriorated architectural features shall be repaired rather than replaced, whenever possible. In the event replacement is necessary, the new material should match the material being replaced in composition, design, color, texture, and other visual qualities. Repair or replacement of missing architectural features, substantiated by historic, physical, or pictorial evidence rather, than on conjectural designs or the availability of different architectural elements from other buildings.

7. The surface cleaning of structures shall be undertaken with the gentlest means possible. Sandblasting and other cleaning methods that will damage the historic building materials shall not be undertaken. or

8. Every reasonable effort shall be made to protect and preserve archeological resources affected by, or adjacent to any project.

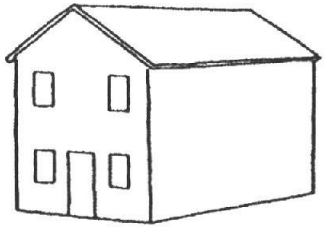
9. Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties shall not be discouraged when such alterations and additions do not destroy historical, architectural or cultural material and such design is compatible with the size scale, color, material, and character of the property, neighborhood or environment.

10. Whenever possible, new additions or alterations to structures shall be done in such a manner that if such additions or alterations were to be moved in the future, the essential form and integrity of the structure would be unimpaired.

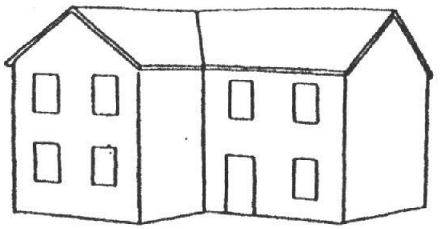
VERNACULAR 1850-1890

Vernacular houses are native and characteristic of a locality; they are typical of a geographical area but not representative of any formal architectural style as they lack sufficient ornamental detail to characterize them as belonging to a recognized style.

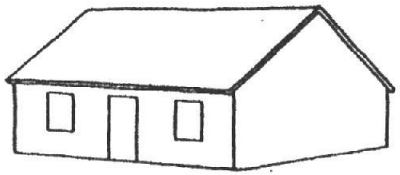
The vernacular house style is predominant within the Comstock Historic District. It is the simplest of any residential style. The massing is monolithic rather than broken into separate masses. Boxlike forms rise from rectangular or square floor plans under plain hip or gable roofs. Rear forms, both original to the house or early additions, also tend to be simple repetitions of the main front form. Since the houses are generally small, shed additions were added at the rear of the building to extend their usefulness. Siding and other details of additions often failed to match those of original construction.



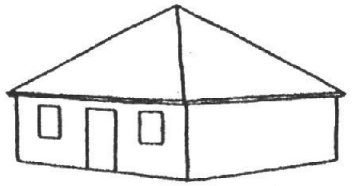
GABLE FRONT
(MOST COMMON)



GABLE FRONT & WING



HALL & PARLOR
MASSED-PLAN, SIDE GABLED



PYRAMIDAL/HIP

(Graphics adopted from McAlester and McAlester 1984)

COMMON ELEMENTS OF THE STYLE

PLAN VIEW:	EXTERIOR SIDING:	WINDOWS	ORNAMENTATION:
rectangular, square, ell	shiplap, drop, board-and-batten drop, channel shiplap/clapboard	tall narrow, 1 over 1, 2 over 2, 4 over 4, 6 over 6	boxed cornices, decorative crowns
HEIGHT:	**ROOF:**	**ENTRANCE:**	
one to three stories (depending on location)	high pitched, gabled or hipped	tall paneled door	

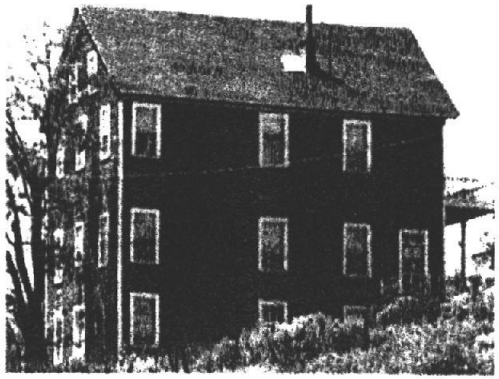
VERNACULAR HOUSES FOUND IN THE COMSTOCK HISTORIC DISTRICT



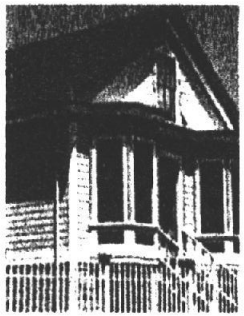
GABLE FRONT
SPITE HOUSE
SOUTH D STREET
VIRGINIA CITY, NV



PYRAMIDAL/HIP
NORTH B STREET
VIRGINIA CITY, NV



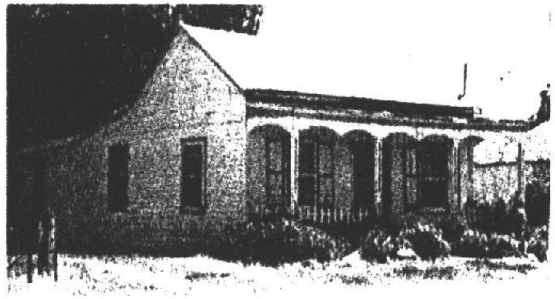
GABLE FRONT
BOARDING HOUSE
SOUTH C STREET
VIRGINIA CITY, NV



GABLE FRONT
MCCARTHY HOUSE
SOUTH I STREET
VIRGINIA CITY, NV



GABLE FRONT
HIGH STREET
SILVER CITY, NV



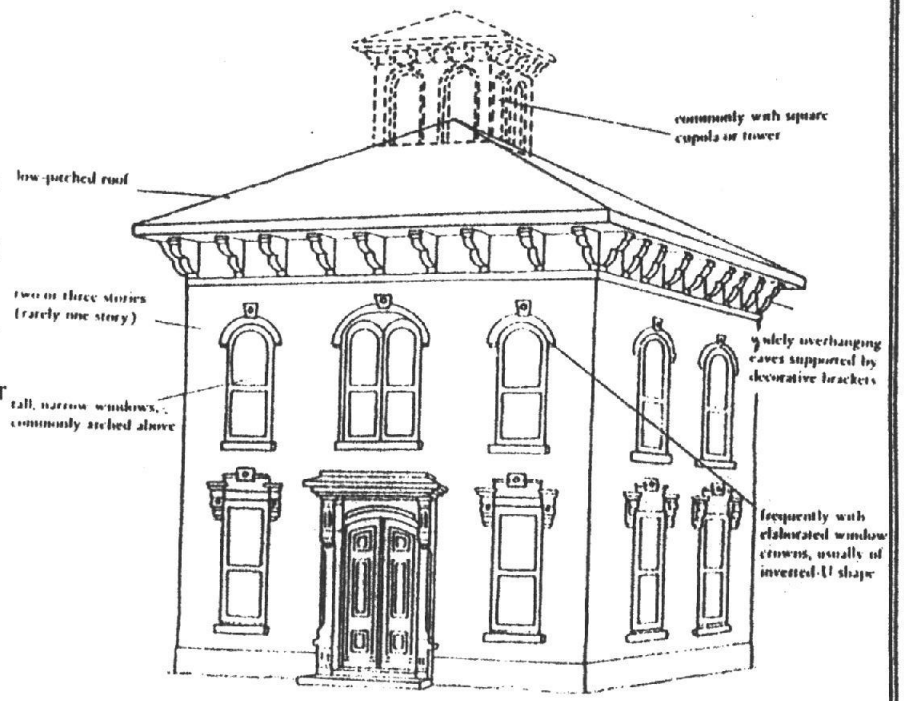
SIDE GABLE
SILVER STREET
DAYTON, NV

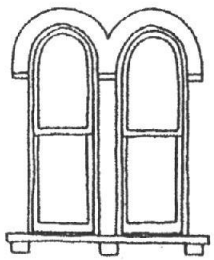
ITALIANATE 1875-1900

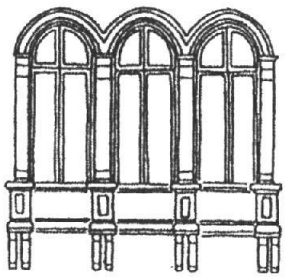
The Italianate style was derived from the rural architecture of northern Italy and came to United States via England as part of the Picturesque movement. The Picturesque movement was a reaction to the earlier classically influenced styles and includes both the Gothic Revival and the Italianate architectural styles. Introduced into the United States during the 1830s, the Italianate style dominated American domestic architecture between 1850 and 1880, but was uncommon on the Comstock until rebuilding following the Great Fire of 1875. Its popularity was spread by the landscape gardener, Andrew Jackson Downing, who utilized the designs of architect Alexander Jackson Davis.

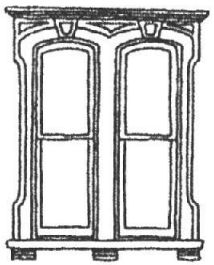
Italianate style buildings are identified by heavy wooden cornices, window surrounds and door overhangs. Window bays, cupolas, and entry hoods also are typical of the style. Roofs are typically low, hipped or gabled and finished with a boxed cornice. Windows are tall and narrow.

A large number of Italianate residences survive in Virginia City. Many of these houses designed from the 1870s and 1880s, such as "The Castle" on south B Street, combine some Italianate style influences along with other styles. Most Italianate homes on the Comstock Historic District are row houses, such as the Beebe House in North A Street. These were designed for little or no space between buildings, so detailing is almost always on the front elevation. Also present are homes built with detailing on all sides such as"The Castle."



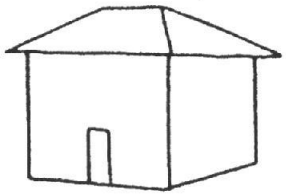




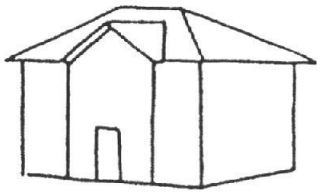


(Graphics adopted from McAlester and McAlester 1984)

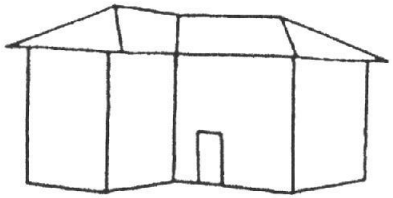
ITALIANATE CONTINUED



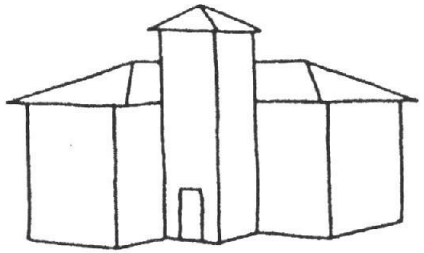
SIMPLE HIPPED



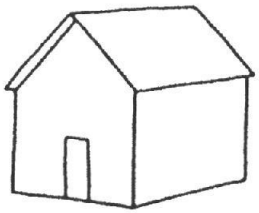
CENTERED GABLED



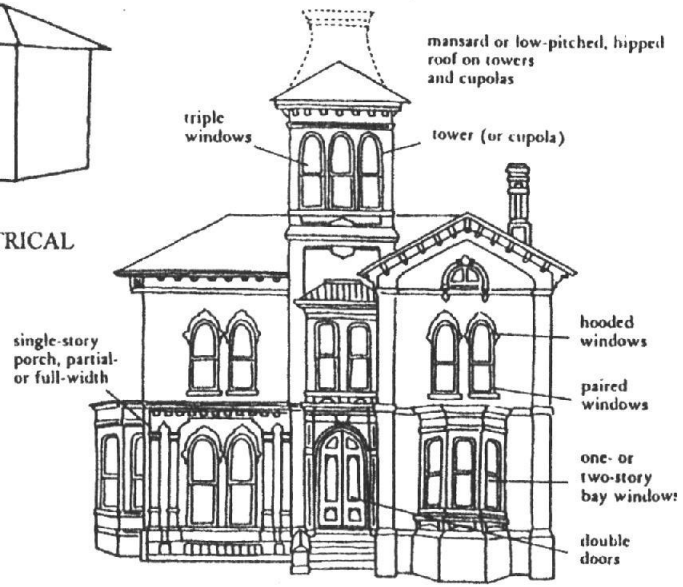
ASYMMETRICAL



TOWERED



FRONT GABLED ROOF



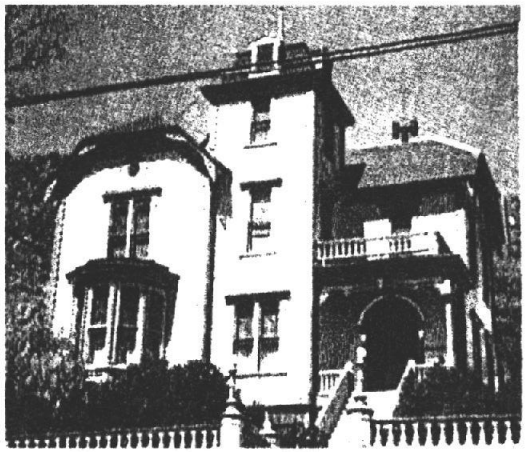
INFORMAL ITALIAN VILLA

(Graphics adopted from McAlester and McAlester 1984)

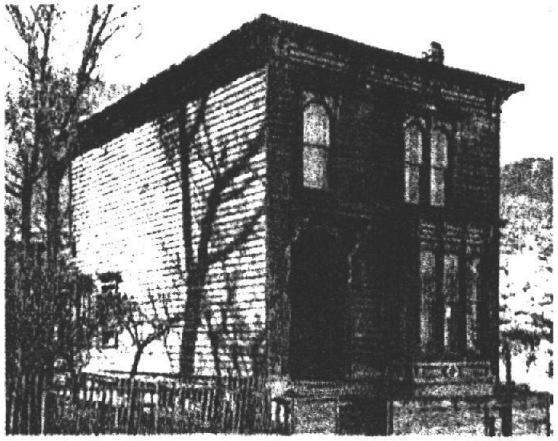
COMMON ELEMENTS OF THE STYLE

PLAN VIEW: rectangular	EXTERIOR SIDING: shiplap, drop	WINDOWS tall narrow, sometimes arched one-over-one with heavy and elaborate crowns	ORNAMENTATION: boxed cornice with brackets, bay windows, cupolas, entry hoods
HEIGHT: two stories or more	ROOF: low pitched, hipped, gabled, asymmetrical, towered	ENTRANCE: tall door with transom, recessed paneled entry	

ITALIANATE HOUSES FOUND IN THE COMSTOCK HISTORIC DISTRICT



INFORMAL ITALIANATE VILLA (TOWERED)
"THE CASTLE"
SOUTH B STREET
VIRGINIA CITY, NV



SIMPLE HIP
PIPER-BEEBE HOUSE
NORTH A STREET
VIRGINIA CITY, NV



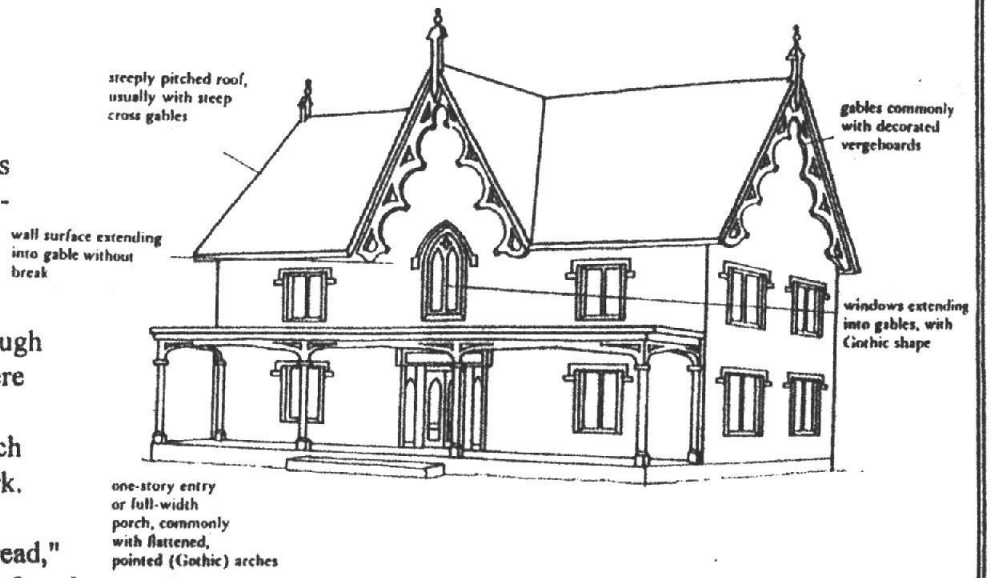
FRONT GABLE
ZIEGLER HOUSE
SOUTH G STREET
VIRGINIA CITY, NV

GOTHIC REVIVAL 1850-1875

Inspired by the romantic movement of the late 18th and early 19th centuries, the Gothic Revival style came to America from England. Proponents proclaimed the superiority of the Christian medieval past and sought to replace the formal, pagan Greek and Roman architectural styles. Made popular by the designs of architect Alexander Jackson Davis through pattern books of landscape gardener, Andrew Jackson Downing, the Gothic Revival style was seen as appropriate for the rural American landscape.

The Gothic Revival style, introduced to Nevada during the 1850s, was popular through the 1870s for residential design. Although the style was used in Virginia City primarily for church design, there are Gothic influences visible in some houses.

The Gothic Revival style is distinguished by the pointed arch (used with doors, windows, entries, etc.) and its elaborate woodwork. The invention of the jigsaw allowed builders to produce an endless variety of fancy wooden details, commonly referred to as "gingerbread," cheaply and quickly. These decorative wooden embellishments are found on Gothic Revival style buildings in the form of bargeboards, pendants, finials, brackets, and other jigsawn ornaments.

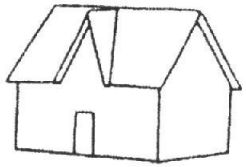


(Graphics adopted from McAlester and McAlester 1984)

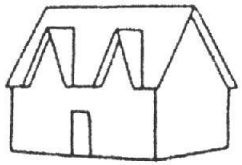
COMMON ELEMENTS OF THE STYLE

PLAN VIEW: rectangular, L-shaped	EXTERIOR SIDING: clapboard vertical board-and-batten	WINDOWS tall narrow, pointed arched or Gothic shaped commonly located at the gable end	ORNAMENTATION: jigsaw-cut-bargeboards, brackets, balustrades, porch frieze
HEIGHT: one-and-one-half story	ROOF: steeply pitched, cross gabled	ENTRANCE: pointed arch door sidelights and transom	PORCH one story

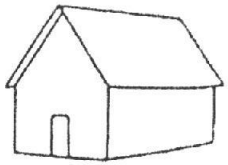
GOTHIC STYLES & BUILDINGS FOUND IN THE COMSTOCK HISTORIC DISTRICT



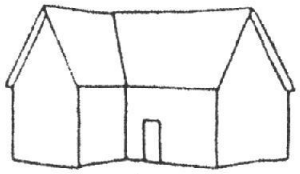
CENTERED GABLE



PAIRED GABLES

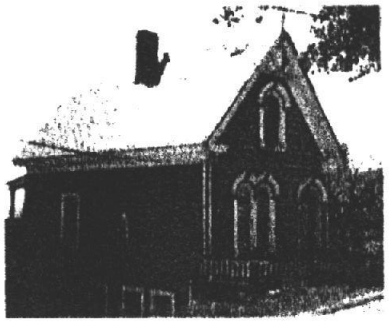


FRONT- GABLE



ASYMMETRICAL

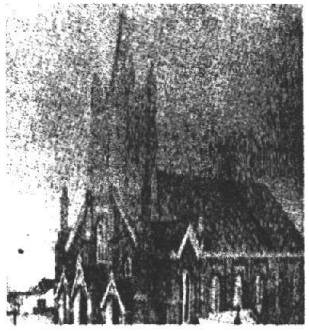
(Graphics adopted from McAlester and McAlester 1984)



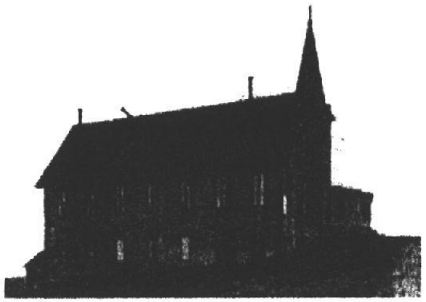
FRONT GABLE
SOUTH A STREET
VIRGINIA CITY, NV



CENTERED GABLE
NORTH B STREET
VIRGINIA CITY, NV



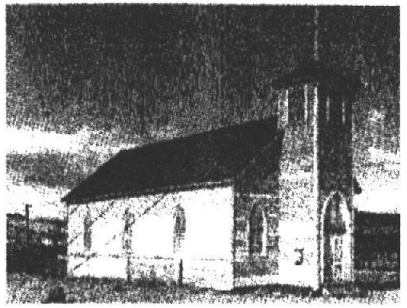
FRONT GABLE WITH ASYMMETRICAL ELEMENT
ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH
SOUTH E STREET VIRGINIA CITY, NV



CENTERED GABLE WITH TOWER
EPISCOPAL CHURCH
SOUTH G STREET



CENTERED GABLE
SHARON HOUSE
SOUTH B STREET



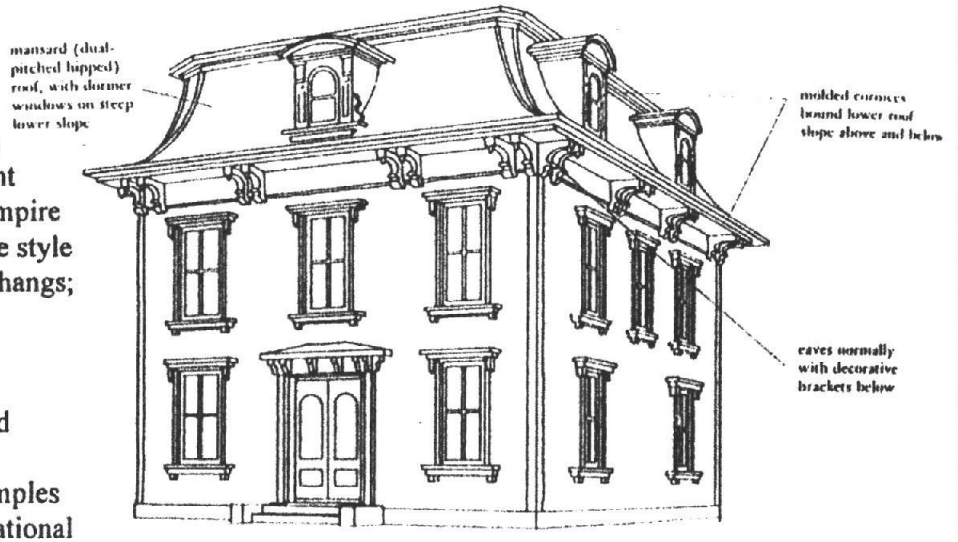
GOTHIC INFLUENCE
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
DAYTON, NV
(DEMOLISHED)

SECOND EMPIRE 1860s-1880

The Second Empire style originated in France and takes its name from the reign of Napoleon the III (1852-1870). Considered a "modern" style, its most identifying feature is the Mansard or dual-pitched hipped roof introduced by French architect of the 17th century Francois Mansart. The full-bodied roof line allows a full story of usable attic space.

This style is characterized by: a mansard roof; roof dormers; decorative patterns in the material- often wooden shingles of different cuts; and a tower with a curved roof line. Below the roof, Second Empire style houses may borrow many of the characteristics of the Italianate style including: heavy wooden cornices, window surrounds and door overhangs; tall and narrow windows, window bays, cupolas, and entry hoods.

The Second Empire style was popular in the United States between 1860 and 1880. Used for many public buildings during President Grant's administration (1869-1877) it is sometimes referred to as the General Grant style. The Second Empire style was not widely used in the West, although Virginia City boasts of a few examples including the Savage Mine office/superintendent's home; the International Hotel (no longer standing);and Nevada's most prominent Second Empire building, the 4th Ward School.

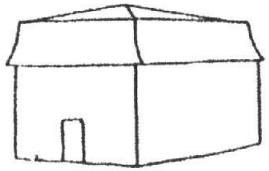


(Graphics adopted from McAlester and McAlester 1984)

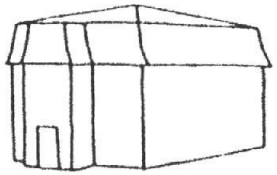
COMMON ELEMENTS OF THE STYLE

PLAN VIEW: rectangular	EXTERIOR SIDING: shiplap	WINDOWS tall narrow, one-over-one, two-over-two, four-over-four	ORNAMENTATION: boxed cornices with brackets, heavy elaborate crowns, window bays, cupolas, entry hoods
HEIGHT: two or more stories	ROOF: mansard with dormers often patterned wood shingles	ENTRANCE: recessed tall door with transom paneled entry	

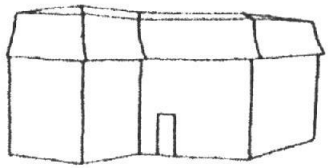
SECOND EMPIRE STYLES



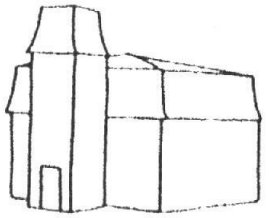
SIMPLE MANSARD ROOF



CENTERED WING OR GABLED



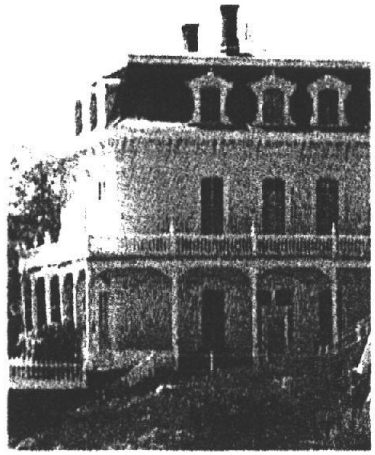
ASYMMETRICAL



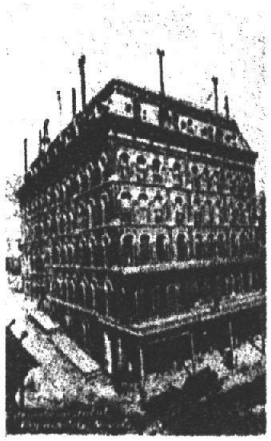
TOWERED

(Graphics adopted from McAlester and McAlester 1984)

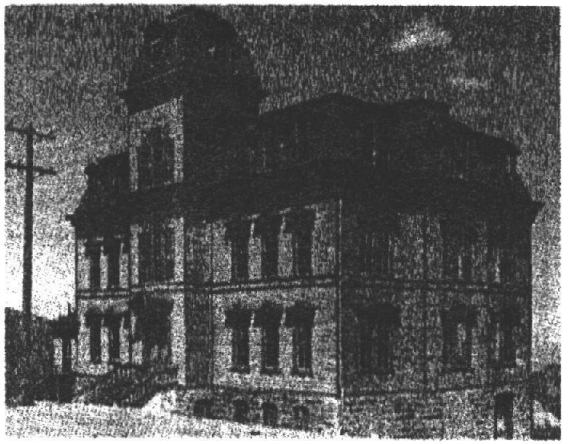
SECOND EMPIRE BUILDINGS FOUND IN THE COMSTOCK HISTORIC DISTRICT



SIMPLE MANSARD ROOF
SAVAGE MINE OFFICE
SOUTH D STREET
VIRGINIA CITY, NV



SIMPLE MANSARD - COMMERCIAL
INTERNATIONAL HOTEL
(FORMERLY AT) NORTH B STREET
VIRGINIA CITY, NV

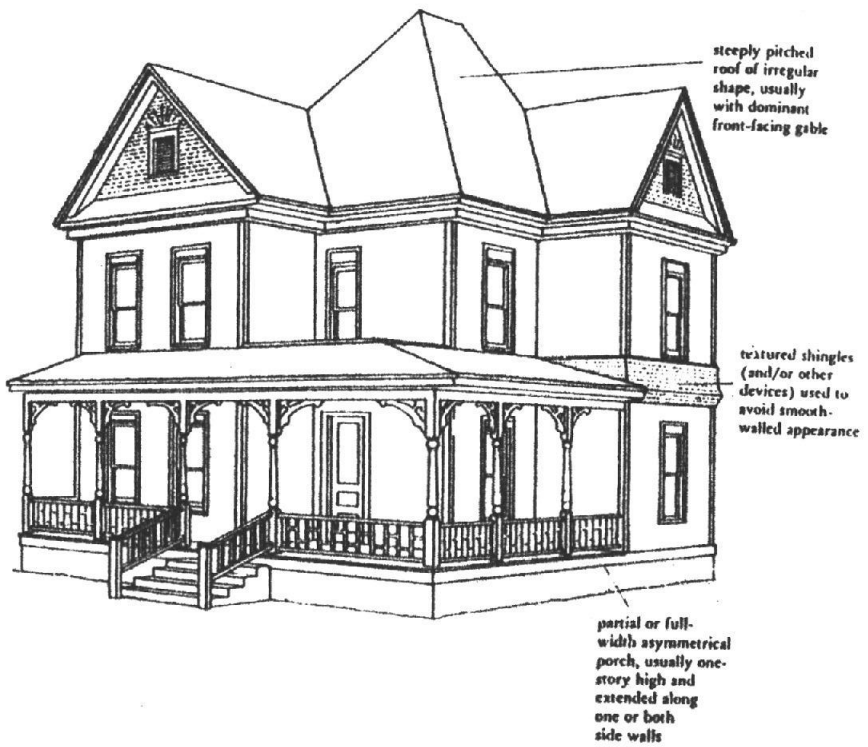


TOWERED
FOURTH WARD SCHOOL
SOUTH C STREET
VIRGINIA CITY, NV

QUEEN ANNE 1880-1905

Queen Anne style has little to do with England's Queen Anne or the style of formal Renaissance architecture popular during her rein. The style was named and popularized in England by a group of architects led by Richard Norman Shaw. The most popular domestic style of architecture during the last two decades of the 19th century, the Queen Anne is conspicuously eclectic and romantic. The Comstock's mining bonanza was diminishing by the last two decades of the 19th century, and the Queen Anne was not common in the Comstock Historic District. Today it has been used for new construction projects attempting to portray historical buildings of the past. It is not recommended in areas of the Comstock historically dominated by styles such as Italianate. It is more appropriate for outlying areas.

The style is richly decorated with bright colors and a generous variety of wall textures. The Queen Anne house is typically asymmetrical and large with multi-gabled roofs and tall, decorated chimneys. Towers with conical roofs and turrets protrude from corners. The style frequently uses: a multiplicity of window types including rectangular, oval, round, square; slanted and square bays; and oriels. Wrap around porches and verandas with turned posts are typical of the Queen Anne style. There are many variations of the Queen Anne style in the United States. Some are based on different roof types and others are based on various types of ornamentation. Throughout the United States about half of the Queen Anne houses are ornamented with spindle work. Spindle work, delicately turned wooden pieces, were used as porch balustrades, porch friezes, and in gables.



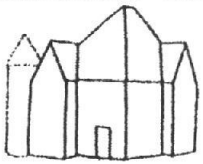
(Graphics adopted from McAlester and McAlester 1984)

QUEEN ANNE CONTINUED

About one third of the Queen Anne houses in this country used Classical ornamentation. Classical columns replaced posts with spindle work; Palladian windows, cornice line-lintels were also employed. Other expressions of the Queen Anne style include half-timbered work and patterned masonry.

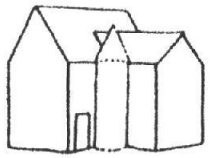


QUEEN ANNE STYLE - DAYTON, NV

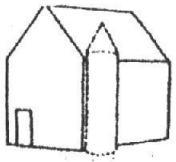


HIPPED ROOF WITH LOWERED CROSS-GABLES

The Queen Anne Cottage style is also derived from the Queen Anne style. This smaller version (usually one or one-and-one-half stories) first appeared in the 1880s and was ideally suited for smaller city lots. It retains the asymmetrical massing of the large Queen Anne and is dominated by a tall gable roof. Ornamentation is usually confined to the gable end. Typically a front window bay, corner porch, and a variety of window types are included.



CROSS-GABLED ROOF



FRONT-GABLED ROOF

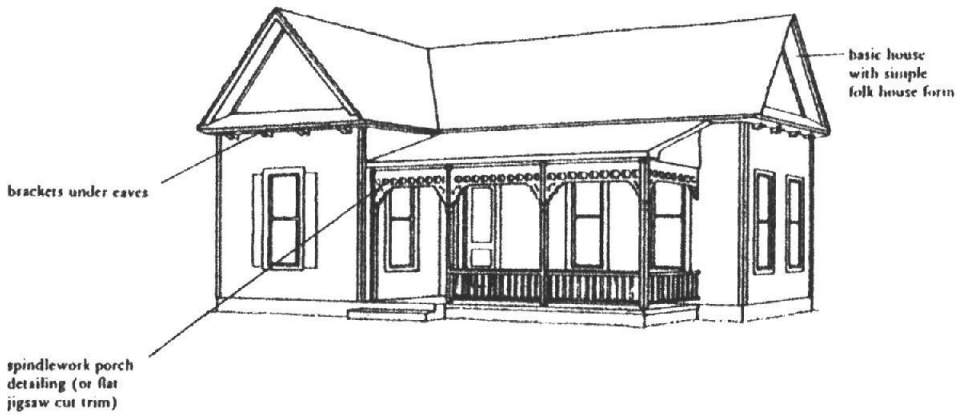
(Graphics Adapted from McAlester and McAlester 1984)

COMMON ELEMENTS OF THE STYLE

PLAN VIEW: irregular	EXTERIOR SIDING: shiplap, clapboard fancy cut shingles for 2nd floor/gable	WINDOWS many types and shapes	ORNAMENTATION: spindle work: turned posts, balustrade, frieze
HEIGHT: two or more stories	ROOF hipped or gabled or combination conical roof over tower/turret	ENTRANCE: Classical or ornate single or double doors	Palladian windows Classical: columns, dentils

VICTORIAN FOLK 1870-1910

Victorian Folk style is defined by the presence of Victorian decorative detailing on simple folk house forms, which are generally much less elaborate than the Victorian styles they attempt to mimic. The details are usually of either Italianate or Queen Anne inspiration, and occasionally the Gothic Revival provides a source. The primary areas for the application of this detailing are the porch and cornice line. Porch supports are commonly either Queen Anne-type turned spindles, or square posts with the corners beveled (chamfered) as in many Italianate porches. In addition, lace-like spandrels are frequent and turned balusters may be used both in porch railings and in friezes suspended from the porch ceiling. The roof-wall junction may be either boxed or open. When boxed, brackets are commonly found along the cornice. Centered gables are often added to side-gabled and pyramidal examples. Window surrounds are generally simple or may have a simple pediment above. Most Folk Victorian houses have some Queen Anne spindle work detailing but are easily differentiated from true Queen Anne examples by the presence of symmetrical facades and by their lack of the textured and varied wall surfaces characteristic of the Queen Anne. Many Victorian Folk houses also utilize a "shotgun" form (one story, narrow) with Victorian detailing. Several Comstock House Styles exhibit this shotgun form.



(Graphics Adopted from McAlester and McAlester 1984)

COMMON ELEMENTS OF THE STYLE

PLAN VIEW:
rectangular, ell

EXTERIOR SIDING:
shiplap, clapboard, drop
fancy cut shingles for 2nd floor or gable end

WINDOWS
many types and shapes

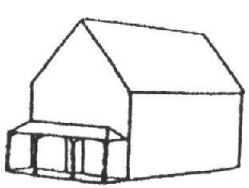
ORNAMENTATION:
spindlework:turned balustrade, frieze, turned posts
Classical: columns, dentils and Palladian windows tower/turret stories

HEIGHT:

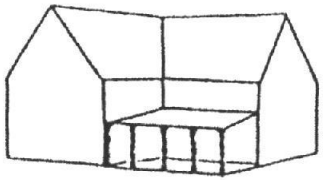
ROOF
hipped or gabled or combination
conical roof over tower/turret

ENTRANCE:
Classical or ornate single or double doors; often a single light

VICTORIAN FOLK STYLES



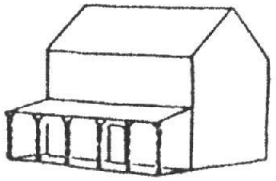
FRONT GABLED ROOF



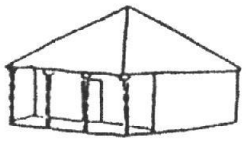
GABLE FRONT & WING



SIDE GABLE ROOF
ONE STORY



SIDE GABLE ROOF
TWO STORY



PYRAMIDAL

(Graphics adopted from McAlester and McAlester 1984)

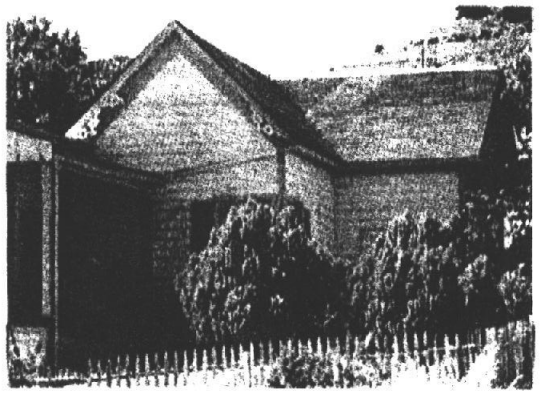
VICTORIAN FOLK HOUSES FOUND IN THE COMSTOCK HISTORIC DISTRICT



FRONT GABLE
NORTH B STREET
VIRGINIA CITY, NV



GABLE FRONT AND WING
"PINK HOUSE"
(OFF) MAIN STREET
GOLD HILL, NV



GABLE FRONT AND WING
HIGH STREET
SILVER CITY, NV

GARAGES, SHEDS, & OUTBUILDINGS: INDUSTRIAL STYLE

This is a vernacular style adapted to the needs of mines, mills, and other businesses to provide inexpensive, well-ventilated, and well-lit working space ranging from fairly small to larger than any extant buildings on the Comstock. Design elements from the industrial buildings have been used successfully in the design of garages, studios, meeting halls, and residences.

This style is devoid of ornamentation except single windows and door trim. Windows are abundant, usually in evenly-spaced rows, typically double hung 6 over 6 pane. Forms are usually gabled with many shed additions and siding of either board-and-batten or galvanized iron. Roof lines are complex with varying heights and pitches and often with clerestory windows. Roof materials are milled wood or galvanized iron. Metal siding and roofing was introduced in the 1870s and dominated construction by 1900. Wood industrial buildings were usually painted red, often consisting of stained with the district's red brown earth pigment mixed with turpentine and linseed oil, while window and door trim were painted off white.

GUIDELINES FOR GARAGES, SHEDS, OUTBUILDINGS

Garages

Garage styles must match those of adjacent structure(s) and garage doors should face away from areas of high public visibility.

Sheds and Outbuildings

Sheds and outbuildings should depict their historic counterparts on the District, portraying structures such as industrial buildings that were predominant on the landscape (see illustrations on following page). Prefabricated sheds are discouraged and reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

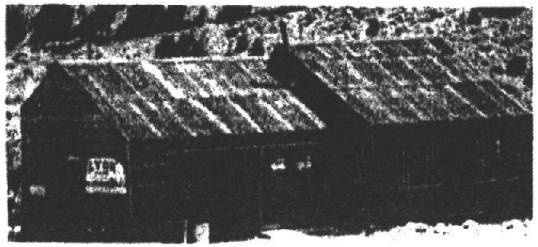
Temporary Sheds and Construction Trailers

Property owners frequently wish to use sheds and trailers on a temporary basis, particularly during construction projects. The CHDC considers a six-month span as an appropriate temporary period.

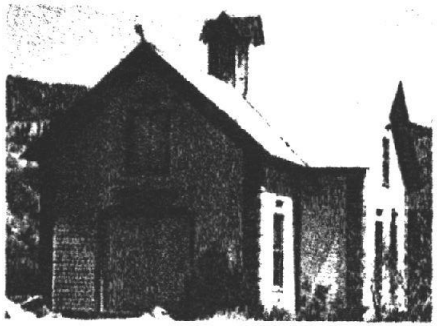
SAMPLE DESIGNS FOR INDUSTRIAL STYLE GARAGES, SHEDS, & OUTBUILDINGS



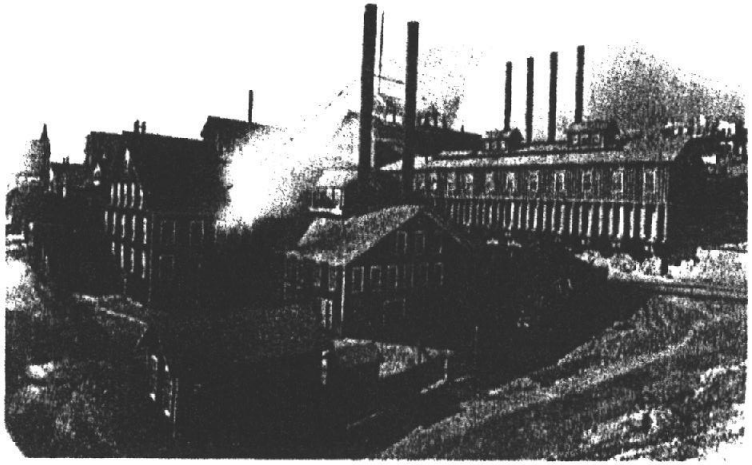
STORAGE SHED
GOLD HILL



GARAGE-WORKSHOP
SILVER CITY



CARRIAGE HOUSE AT "THE CASTLE"
(REHABILITATION 1997)



INDUSTRIAL BUILDING AND SHEDS



INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS AND SHED

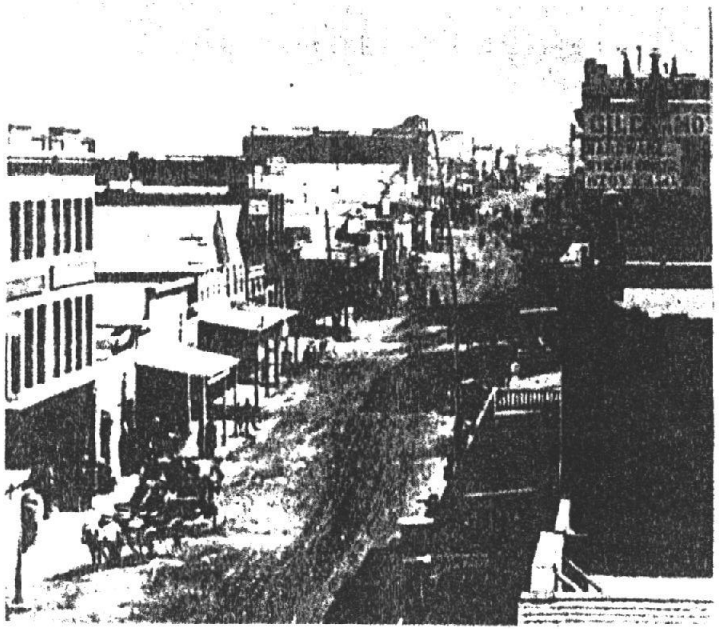
(Historic Photos of Industrial Buildings from Comstock Historic District Commission Collection)

GUIDELINES FOR COMMERCIAL AND PUBLIC BUILDINGS

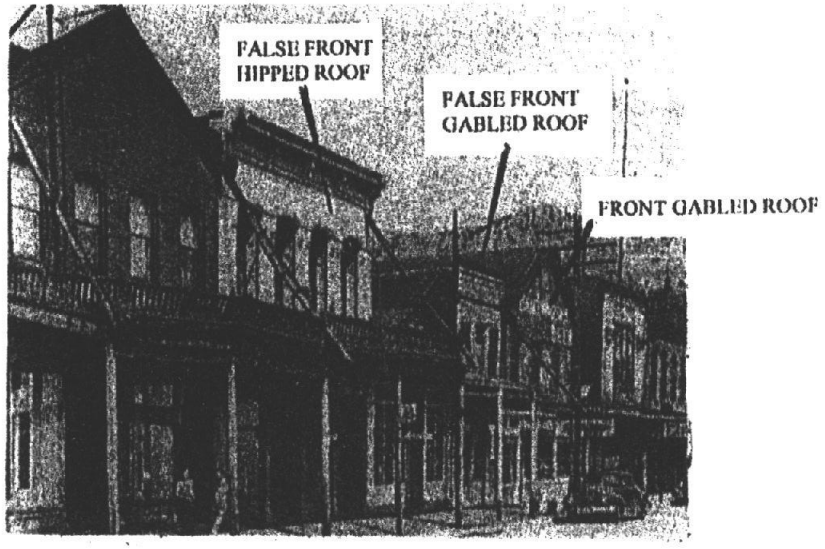
Originally the commercial buildings were primarily located on "B" Street with "C" Street as the secondary business area. The buildings built in the 1860s had gable roof pitch and false fronts while the buildings after the fire of 1876 still had false fronts but predominantly with hipped roofs. The building material used most was brick, then wood with clapboard siding. Many of the Empire style architecture were used in a commercial application. (See "Second Empire" herein.)

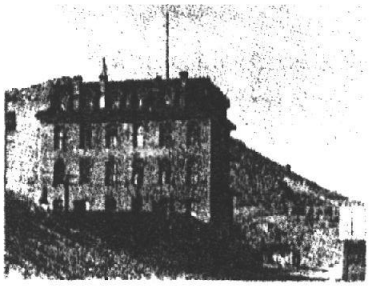
The store fronts had porches in abundance; the look was simple and utilitarian. The glass display windows were typically large, fixed and four paned; some had a device similar to a removable bay which could be rolled out during the day and then rolled in at night. The doors had glassed windows on top and wood on the lower part. Typically, the materials used on the doors were of either imported wood such as walnut and mahogany or of Douglas Fir woodgrained to simulate those exotic woods.

Ironwork was used for the fancy pilaster and metal shutters which were used to cover the recessed doors and windows when the building was not in use. It was also placed on a roof ridge line, under the eaves and over the windows as decorative detailing.



VIRGINIA CITY COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR LATE 19TH CENTURY
(Photo Courtesy Kit Krieger Collection)





FRENCH MANSARD
FREDERICK HOUSE



CROSS GABLED
ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL/ART CENTER

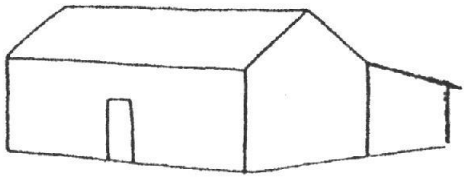
GUIDELINES FOR ADDITIONS TO HISTORIC BUILDINGS

The primary objective of the Comstock Historic District Commission is to protect and maintain the integrity of the historic resources in the historic district. However, the CHDC is committed to provide for the development of these resources in such a manner that does not impair their utility. It is recognized that additions are often necessary for a historic building to become functional in a modern context. It is also recognized that additions must be designed to be compatible and not detract from the building, in its immediate surroundings as a whole.

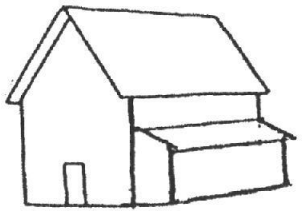
Guidelines for additions to Historic Buildings: Additions to historic buildings need to be compatible in their configuration, design, style, scale, materials and architectural details with the distinctive character defining elements of the building. Additions shall be done in such a manner that they do not destroy significant original historical or architectural material and if removed in the future will not impair the essential form and integrity of the building or damage the historic fabric. Additions which seek to create an earlier appearance are discouraged. Additions which are obviously incongruous to the building, or buildings in the immediate vicinity, or the district shall not be approved. *(Secretary of Interior Standard Number: 9, 10)*

Guideline for Additions to Non-historic Buildings: Additions to non-historic buildings in the district will be treated in the same manner as additions to historic buildings.

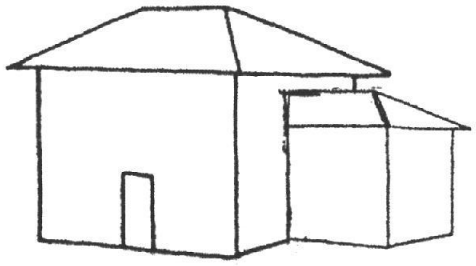
Guideline for Trim Details for Historic Buildings: Original trim elements should be retained and repaired when at all possible. Trim that is inconsistent with the original building style and design shall not be added.



GABLE FRONT ONE STORY WITH SHED ADDITION



GABLE FRONT TWO STORY WITH SHED ADDITION

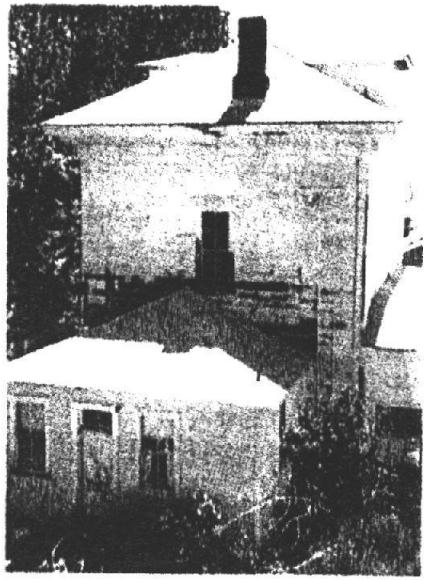


TWO STORY HIP WITH HIPPED ADDITION

ADDITION STYLES USED IN THE COMSTOCK HISTORIC DISTRICT



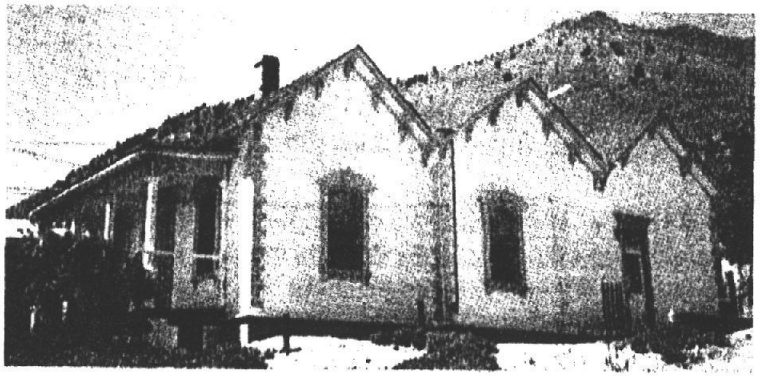
SHED ADDITION ON HIPPED COMMERCIAL



HIPPED WITH HIP ADDITION



ONE-AND-A-HALF STORY WITH SHED ADDITION



SINGLE GABLE WITH TWO GABLE ADDITIONS

GUIDELINES FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION

New construction which is appropriately designed is encouraged by the CHDC. The historic district should be an active and vital part of the city. The design of the new construction needs to be compatible and respectful of the historic building stock that surrounds it so that visual conflict and confusion are avoided. There is no formula to guarantee "good design." There are specific elements of building design which can be identified and therefore addressed in a review process so that consistency can be achieved.

The following elements shall be individually assessed for their degree of appropriateness for each project.

Scale and Massing: The overall size and height of the new building should be consistent with the surrounding buildings.

Setback: The front and side yard setbacks for the building should be approximately the same as others in the surrounding area and conform to Storey and Lyon County Codes.

Shape: The overall shape of the building, particularly its roof type, height, and design emphasis (horizontal and vertical) should be consistent and harmonious with others in the surrounding area.

Windows and Doors: The rhythm and arrangement of the windows and doors should reflect the style of the building design and the predominant patterns found in existing buildings of the area. The ratio of the total surface areas of openings to total wall surface area of new buildings should reflect that of historic buildings in the district.

Materials: Exterior siding should reflect the prevailing style of the neighborhood. A vertical style siding should not be used when the predominant style is horizontal or shiplap type. The exterior siding should blend in, not stand out.

Details and Other Elements: Trim details need to be given careful and thorough consideration in any new building design. They represent a design opportunity for establishing the compatibility of a new building within the district. *(Secretary of Interior Standard Number: 9, 10)*

Trim details are often the single most relevant design feature which can be utilized to give harmony and compatibility to a new building. If existing buildings have boxed eaves do not leave rafter tails exposed.

If windows and doors have fanciful trim, incorporate trim with architectural weight. If trim work is typically simple, do not use "ginger bread." Seek to design the new building so that the trim and architectural details compliment the existing buildings in the area.

GUIDELINES FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION

CONTINUED

Site Elements: When at all possible avoid substantial site alteration by importing or exporting fill materials. Generally speaking vacant lots in the district were occupied by a building. Attempt to place the new building as near as possible to the same grade as the original. Carefully consider the placement and relationship of the public sidewalk, side and front yard fences driveways gardens and accessory buildings, when determining the location of the new building on the lot.

Floor Elevations: The elevation of the first floor in relation to the street and the finish grade is often a critical design feature. For example, if surrounding buildings normally have steps leading from street level, then the new building should have a similar entrance level.

Guidelines for Trim Details: Although often perceived to be insignificant or frivolous, trim details play a very important part of defining a buildings character. Designs for new buildings as well as additions should incorporate the appropriate trim details. The detailing can act to harmonize a building with its neighbor or tie a new addition to the original. *(Note: **Do not mix styles.** Check with the CHDC Office for help if unsure of details appropiate on same structure.)*

Guidelines for Demolition: Property owners often wish to demolish existing structures to make way for new construction. Demolition of structures dating from the Historic District's Period of Significance (1859-1942) is discouraged by the CHDC. The CHDC will consider approving the demolition of a structure dating from 1859-1942 if the applicant presents appropriate plans for the removal and reuse of the building and if the applicant presents plans for new construction. Documentation of the historic building is typically required.

If a structure proposed for demolition dates after 1942, the property owner should provide the CHDC with proof of its post-1942 date by submitting a historical research package and detailed photo documentation of structure(s) prior to demolition.

GUIDELINES FOR WINDOWS

The majority of buildings in the historic district are characterized by the 19th-century styles of architecture. ***Windows and there arrangement in a structure are often one of the most significant architectural features of a building.*** *The insensitive treatment of windows and their components can virtually destroy the original character of a building.* The majority of original windows on the Comstock were symmetrically placed, vertically proportioned, wood framed, with clear glass. In today's market a variety of windows are available which are comparable in size and proportion to those originally used. They are available in wood frames which can be painted. The general appearance of the window itself and its placement in the structure as a whole are the important factors in considering the appropriate window design. The most common window used historically on the Comstock measures 2'8" by 5'8" or taller.

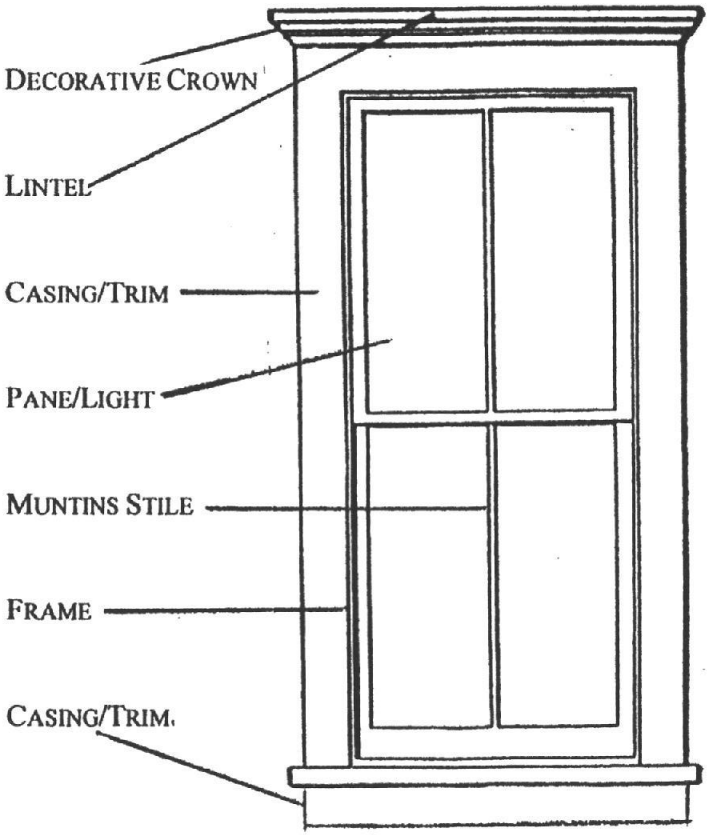
(Note: Most of today houses have interior wall heights of 8'. Because it's less expensive to buy a new window in whole sizes, either the window size 3' x 5' or 3' x 6' are the closest to the district's windows in proportion. If the interior height of the walls are 9' or greater than the height of the window could be 3' x 6' or taller. There are many historical photos available in the CHDC office which are excellent reference material.)

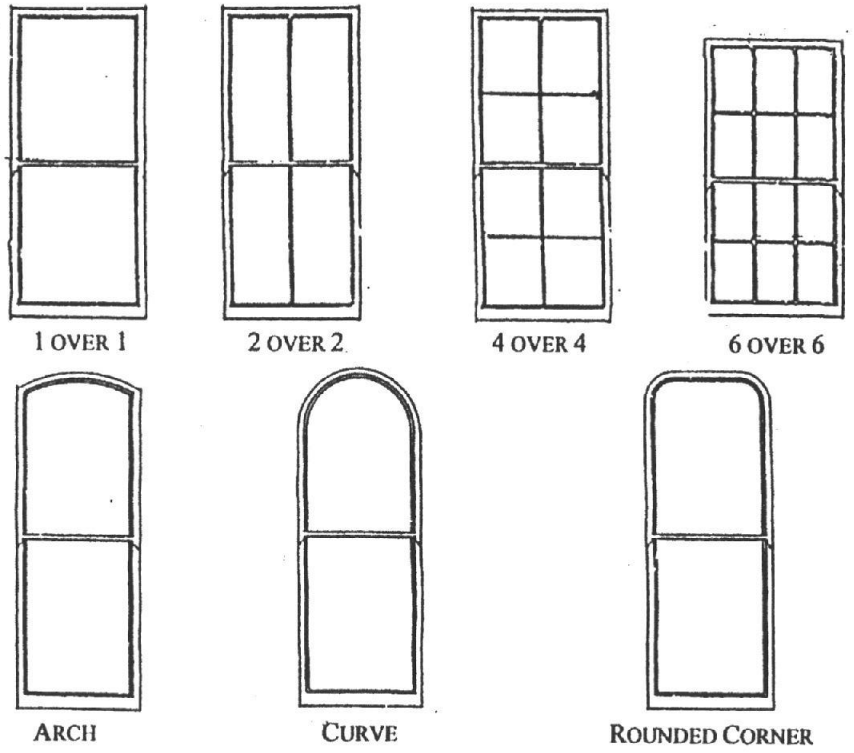
Guideline for Historic Buildings: Original windows shall be retained and repaired whenever possible. When replacement is necessary a window of duplicated design shall be used. The size, pane configuration, design shall replicate that of the original. Original sashes, lintels, frames, sills ,etc. shall be preserved with duplicated designs. Bronzed aluminum framed windows are not appropriate for use in an historic building. Although not commonly used in the district, original stained glass windows are vary valuable and should be retained. The addition of stained glass into openings that did not historically have stained glass is discouraged *(Secretary of Interior Standard Number: 2, 6).*

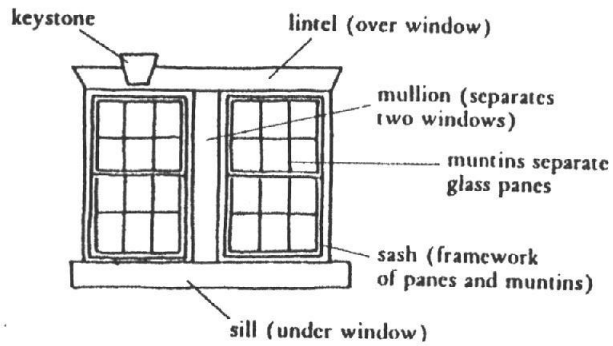
Guideline for New Construction: Windows in new buildings should emulate historic styles. New windows shall be vertically proportioned and shall be single or double hung with a 1-over-1, 2-over-2, 4-over-4 or 6-over-6 pane configuration. Windows shall be wood framed with clear glass panes. The use of mirrored, tinted or smoked glass is not appropriate for the use in the District. Any window configuration that can be historically documented as being used in the District during original construction is also considered appropriate if used in a compatible style.

GUIDELINES FOR WINDOWS
CONTINUED

WINDOW ANATOMY







KITCHEN WINDOW EXAMPLE:
SEPARATED BY MULLIONS WITH MUNTINS DIVIDING GLASS PANELS

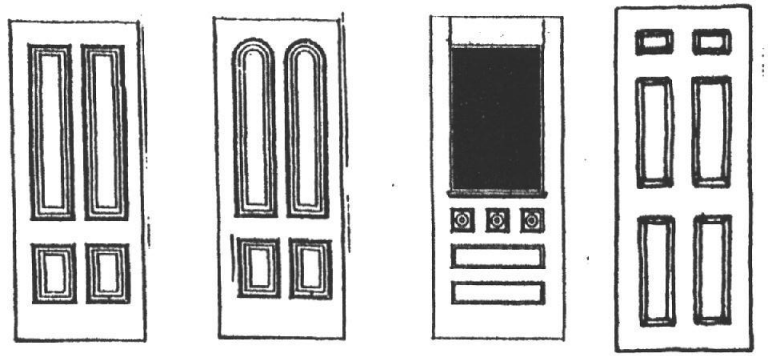
GUIDELINES FOR DOORS

Doors are an important design element of any building. Their location and style contribute to the overall character and frequently act to define the style of the building. Typically even the simplest historic homes have beautifully paneled doors. Original doors have often been replaced by newer inappropriate doors under the false assumption that greater energy efficiency can be achieved. Properly executed repairs and/or replacement of jams, thresholds, stop mouldings, hinges and weather stripping will achieve the same energy efficiency and maintain the same historic value. Older doors may have dried and shrunk in size. Numerous lock sets, latches and /or strike plates may have been installed in the door. Original doors are probably one of the most easily reconstructed and restored elements of a building. They are generally constructed from high quality materials, most have design characteristics which are unavailable in today's market and can easily be removed from the building for repairs in a specialized shop.

Guideline for Historic Doors: Original doors shall be matched in color, size, material, design, ornamentation and configuration. The original trim and surround moulding should be retained intact/or duplicated when a door is replaced *(Secretary of Interior Standard Number: 2, 3, 5, 6).*

Guideline for New Doors in Historic Buildings: The addition of a new door may be warranted for a building to properly function in a modern use. When new doors are to be installed a contemporary design which is sympathetic and harmonious with the original doors shall be used. The placement of the new openings shall not disrupt the original design of the building *(Secretary of Interior Standard Number: 2, 3, 5, 6, 9, 10).*

Guideline for Doors in New Construction: The overall style of the new building will determine the appropriate design characteristics of the doors to be used. Doors and entries make a strong design statement for any building. Balance, proportion and scale must all be considered when determining the style and design of doors. The use of highly ornamented and /or carved wood doors is discouraged. Likewise entry sidelights and/or transom windows should be simple in design. For side and back entrance, French double doors are acceptable, but sliding patio doors are inappropriate.



FOUR-PANELED STRAIGHT | FOUR-PANELED CURVED | GLASS FRONT (COMMERCIAL) | SIX PANELED

GUIDELINES FOR ROOFS

The roof's shape, the roofing material and its special features are extremely important in defining the building's overall architectural style. The roof style should match the scale and architectural style of the rest of the structure. Also, the roofing material should not detract from the structure as a whole. Many different historic roof shapes are found in the Comstock Historic District: gable, hip, mansard and shed. The pitch or slope of the roof changes from style to style. Although the 10/12 pitch was predominant in the district, this was a reaction to snow loads that Virginia City received and the construction methods of the time. The CHDC recommends an 8/12 gabled pitch on houses but allows a 6/12 minimum pitch. A 4/12 pitch was commonly used on commercial structures and may be considered appropriate for such structures and will be reviewed by the CHDC on a case-by-case basis. The type and style of roof features also change with the building style as do a variety of dormers. Sawn or milled wood shingles of cedar or redwood were the predominant historic roofing material in the district. Standing seam or corrugated metal were used on out buildings.

Guideline for New Construction: Contemporary roofing material and features to be retained and repaired if at all possible. If new roofing is necessary or desired, preferred treatment is to replace the original with identical new material. If this is not possible, standardized roofing materials are listed on the following page. Other roof features such as chimneys, dormers and /or decorative elements are to be retained. New mechanical systems, solar panels, skylights and /or other devices on the roof are placed so that no damage is done to any character defining features of the building. Dull finish galvanized metal sheeting, which can be achieved either by color choice or oxidation treatment, is preferred, but grays and browns are also appropriate. Other colors are discouraged *(Secretary of Interior Standard Number: 2, 6)*.
(Note: These devices are reviewed on a **case by case basis** for their appropriateness.)

Guideline for New Construction: Contemporary roofing materials are available in variety of sizes, residential or accessory to residential, is a major factor in determining the appropriate roofing material to use. Today's requirements for fire safety must not be overlooked. If fire safety is an issue, fiberglass matt composition and fire retardant treated sawn/milled wood shingles are the alternately preferred materials for use within the district. Mechanical systems and other devices which are roof mounted are to be designed in such away that they are not visible from the street and are harmoniously incorporated into the overall building style.

Roofing Materials

Wood Shingles: Taper-sawn or re-sawn both sides cedar redwood. Average dimensions: 18" to 24" by 3" to 8", 3/8" to 1/2" thick, laid 6' to the weather.
Color: Natural (with preservative), graphite mix black, red or green.

Composition Shingles: Asphalt organic felt or fiberglass matt, preferably thick- butt style. Average Dimensions: 36"x 12" with a 5" exposure.
Color: Solid or slightly variable in brown, black, red or green.

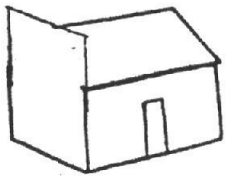
Metal Sheeting: Corrugated or standing seam type with galvanized or pre-weathered finish. Average dimensions: 26" x 6' to 8'.
Color: Gray, red-brown or chemically aged.

Built up Asphalt and Tar: For use on shed-roof additions or mansard roofs.
Color: Solid black, brown, red, gray or green.

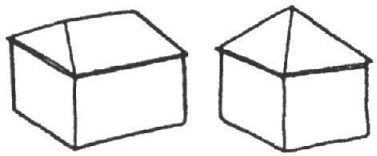
Certain of these materials may require additional treatment for preservative, fir protection or aesthetic purposes. The following treatments are considered appropriate within the Comstock Historic District:

Wood Shingles - An oil or other wood preservative & graphite mixture.
Built-up Asphalt &Tar - Re-surface with granulated ceramic, fine gravel.
Metal Sheeting - A new rubber coating product is on the market to seal, preserve, and match original colors of historic roofing materials.

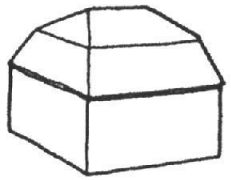
Roof Types



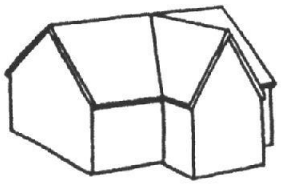
False Front



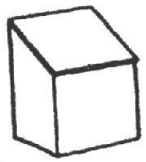
Hip



Mansard



Cross Gable



Shed



High Gable

(Adopted from McAlester and McAlester 1984)

GUIDELINES FOR EXTERIOR SIDING MATERIALS

A somewhat limited variety of exterior siding materials was used during the construction on the Comstock. Vertical wood board and batten and horizontal wood shiplap, drop and clapboard were most common. The use of wood shingles accenting gable ends was not typically found in the district. Today the use of wood shingles is incorporated in some types of residential structures such as Queen Anne or Folk Victorian. Often the gable ends were accented and decorative in nature, never covering the entire structure. The shingles have sculptured ends that achieved a variety of textural effects. Other exterior sidings which can be found include brick, stone, stucco (over adobe and "bale" construction), and vertical corrugated or standing seam metal. Metal siding was typically used on industrial and outbuildings.

Historically, wood buildings in the district were painted. They were not stained or left "natural" (except due to neglect during the decline years). The exception to this were the industrial buildings which used a linseed oil/turpentine base mixed with pigments of dried earthen today's market there are paints as well as opaque stains available in exterior finishes or red lead to recreate the look of industrial buildings.

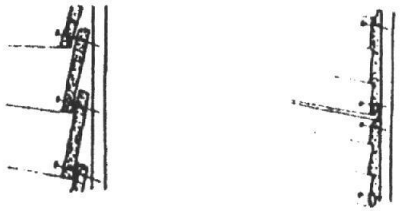
Guideline for Historic Buildings: The original exterior siding material shall be retained and repaired whenever possible. When replacement is necessary the new material shall match the original in size, design, composition and texture. The use of steel, aluminum and vinyl siding is not appropriate for historic building *(Secretary of Interior Standard Number: 6, 2)*.

When contemplating work on the exterior of a historic building, cleaning the existing material should be the first step to determine its condition and course of action. Cleaning shall be the gentlest means possible. Sandblasting and other cleaning methods which cause damage to the historic materials shall not be undertaken *(Secretary of Interior Standard Number: 7)*. Technical information on cleaning historic building materials is available in the CHDC office.

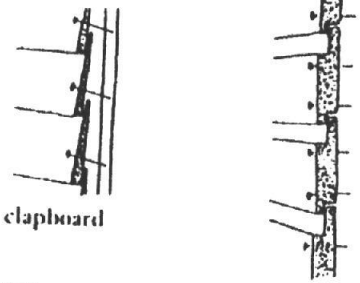
Guideline for New Construction: New construction within the district needs to be compatible with the historic styles present. The type of building i.e. residential, outbuilding or commercial, is a major factor in deciding on an appropriate siding material. Authentic materials such as wood shiplap or clapboard siding are strongly encouraged. Contemporary materials such as masonite and seamless steel are acceptable when sensitively utilized and properly designed and applied *(Secretary of Interior Standard: 6)*.

EXTERIOR SIDING MATERIALS

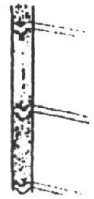
HORIZONTAL SHIPLAP OR DROP
GENERALLY 1"X 6" TO 1"X 8" MILLED FOR SHIPLAP OR DROP TYPE JOINTING; SIMULATIONS OF THIS TYPE AVAILABLE IN MASONITE OR PRESSBOARD



CLAPBOARD/CHANNEL SHIPLAP
HORIZONTAL BOARDS TAPER-SAWN FOR OVERLAP, GENERALLY 1"X 6" OR 1"X 8"

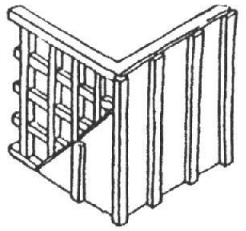


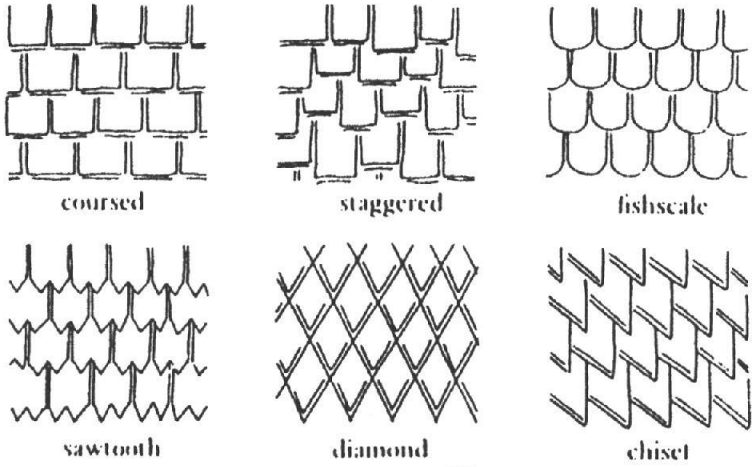
V-GROOVE



VERTICAL BOARD AND BATTEN
GENERALLY 1"X 6" TO 1"X 14" WITH BATTEN BOARDS 1"X 2" TO 1"X 3"







PATTERNED SHINGLE - (FISH SCALE)
GENERALLY USED FOR DECORATIVE PURPOSES ON GABLED ENDS OR MANSARD FACES WITH SCULPTURED ENDS

(GRAPHICS ADOPTED FROM MCALESTER AND MCALESTER 1984)

GUIDELINES FOR MASONRY ELEMENTS

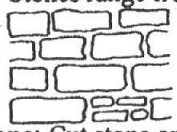
Masonry elements found in the historic district include brick or cut stone foundations, porches and/or basements, and entire stone or brick buildings. Some masonry retaining walls and/or fences are also found. All native rock was acquired within a few miles of Virginia City; no river rock was used. Masonry as an architectural design element generally produces a powerful visual image and imparts a sense of permanence and strength. Careful consideration therefore need to be given all designs which incorporate masonry elements.

Guideline for Historic Buildings: The original masonry material shall be retained and repaired when at all possible. When replacement is necessary the new material shall match the original in size, design, composition and texture. Often repointing the original masonry elements is all that is necessary. When repointing it is imperative to determine the composition of the original mortar. Repointing historic masonry with contemporary mortar mix with portland cement can cause severe damage to the building. (Note: Modern mortar containing portland cement is acceptable for stone masonry). Repointing should be accomplished with a mortar that matches the original in color, composition and strength *(Secretary of Interior Standard Number: 6, 2).*

Note: When contemplating work on the exterior of an historic building, cleaning the existing material should be the first step to determine its condition and a course of action. Cleaning shall be the gentlest way possible. Sandblasting and other cleaning methods which cause damage to original historic materials shall not be undertaken (Secretary of Interior Standard Number 7).

Guideline for New Construction: In contemporary construction, brick or stone is used as a veneer over a wood frame, concrete block, poured concrete or bale structural frame. When using a wire cut standard brick or block, a flush tooled joint is highly recommended. When using stone, the size, shape color , texture and style of laying should replicate the visual qualities found in the historic construction where stone composed the major structural element of the building. The use of "culture stone" or other artificial materials is discouraged. Gray or earth tone split-face concrete blocks are acceptable for visible retaining walls and foundations. Concrete may be acceptable if textured and perhaps stained to emulate stonework.

Cut Native Stone: Stones range from 12" x 6" x 6"to 18" x 36" x 18"



Rubble Native Stone: Cut stone or brick was used at corners or openings



General Notes:

1. Any masonry walls may be used for foundations, retaining walls, or as exterior structural walls. Any specific application should be reviewed by a qualified structural engineer.
2. All mortar joints are to be finished flush to the outside with uniform thickness, have a tool finish or be "bead moulded". (Cut native and rubble native stone walls may be constructed without mortar.)
3. Mortar joints may be finished flush or slightly recessed.
4. Cut native and rubble native stone walls may be constructed w/o mortar.
5. Mortar used to repair existing masonry walls should duplicate the composition of the original as closely as possible. Modern mortar with portland cement **should not be used** as it is too hard and will damage historic masonry.



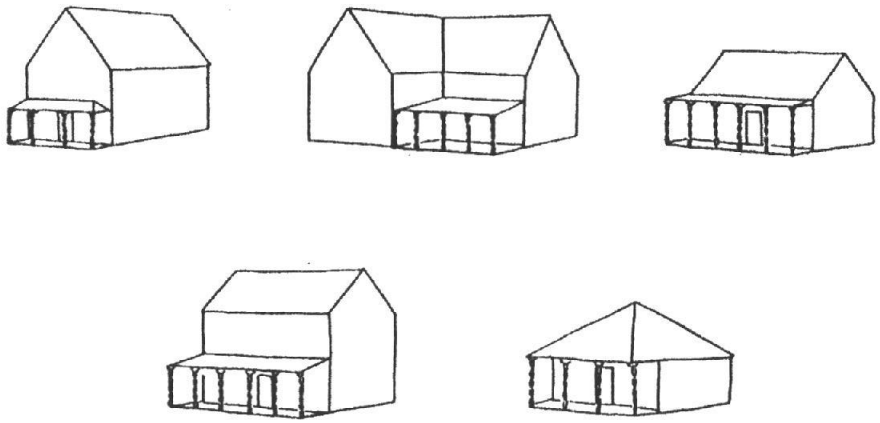
GUIDELINES FOR PORCHES

Porches constitute a significant architectural feature of any building; they are a character defining design feature. The placement, style, scale, massing and trim detail of porches in the historic district reflect a wide range of architectural styles. Because of their architectural impact porches are of particular concern in the district. A porch of inappropriate scale, placement and/or design, added to an historic building which did not have a porch originally, can be particularly detrimental to the historic integrity of the building and to the character of the district as a whole. Conversely porches can be effectively utilized as a building feature in new construction to create a contemporary architectural design compatible with the historic district's character. The Victorian Folk house style (see description herein) incorporates various porch details inspired by Italianate, Gothic, and Queen Anne influences.

Guideline for Historic Buildings: A porch that is part of the original design of an historic building shall be maintained in its original configuration, design, style and detailing if at all possible. If suitable documentary evidence can be presented which demonstrates the original existence of a porch that no longer exists, the porch may be reconstructed to match the original as best as possible. If a porch cannot be demonstrated to have originally existed on the building, a porch may be added with the condition that the configuration, design, style and detailing are suitable and compatible with the architectural style of the building and does not adversely impact the historic integrity of the building. Any new additions to the building shall be performed in such a manner that if removed in the future the original building will not be adversely affected *(Secretary of Interior Standard Numbers: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10)*.

Guideline for New Construction: New construction in the district shall be encouraged to utilize porches as suitable character defining architectural elements. The configuration, design, style, and detailing of the porch needs to be suitable and compatible with the architectural style of the building and the buildings in the immediate vicinity. Porches shall not be approved when their design would adversely affect other buildings as a whole, or where the design is obviously incongruous with the building.

Note: The roof style and slope are critical design elements of a porch. Careful attention to these elements is necessary in both historic and new buildings with porches.



(Graphics Adopted From McAlester and McAlester 1984)

GUIDELINES FOR ADDITIONAL ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

In review of the distinctive architectural features of the styles represented in the district, the following additional architectural features are exhibited. Designs for the new buildings as well as additions or alterations to the historic buildings can effectively incorporate one or more of the following design elements.

Dormers: Dormers can be a very cost effective method of increasing the usable floor space, lighting, and ventilation of a building. Often historic buildings are modified by the addition of dormers. Care must be taken when adding dormers to the historic buildings that the scale, massing and proportion of the building is not disrupted. In new construction dormers play a very effective role in harmonizing the contemporary building design with the existing historic styles *(Secretary of Interior Standard Number: 2, 3, 5, 9, 10)*.

Transom Windows: Transom windows over doors, particularly front entry doors , are a common feature of historic buildings in the district *(Secretary of Interior Standard Number: 2, 3, 5, 9, 10)*.

Bay Windows: Bay Windows are often a character defining element of a building. As an exterior feature they can often provide a focal component of the design. Proportion, rhythm, scale, Symmetry and emphasis are important considerations in the design and placement of a bay window *(Secretary of Interior Standard Number: 2, 3, 5, 9, 10)*. Although superficially similar, greenhouse"pop-out" windows are not appropriate.

Recessed Door Entries: Recessed door entries are often found in the district. In new construction recessed entries can play a very effective role in harmonizing the contemporary building design with the existing historic styles *(Secretary of Interior Standard Number: 2, 3, 5, 9, 10)*.

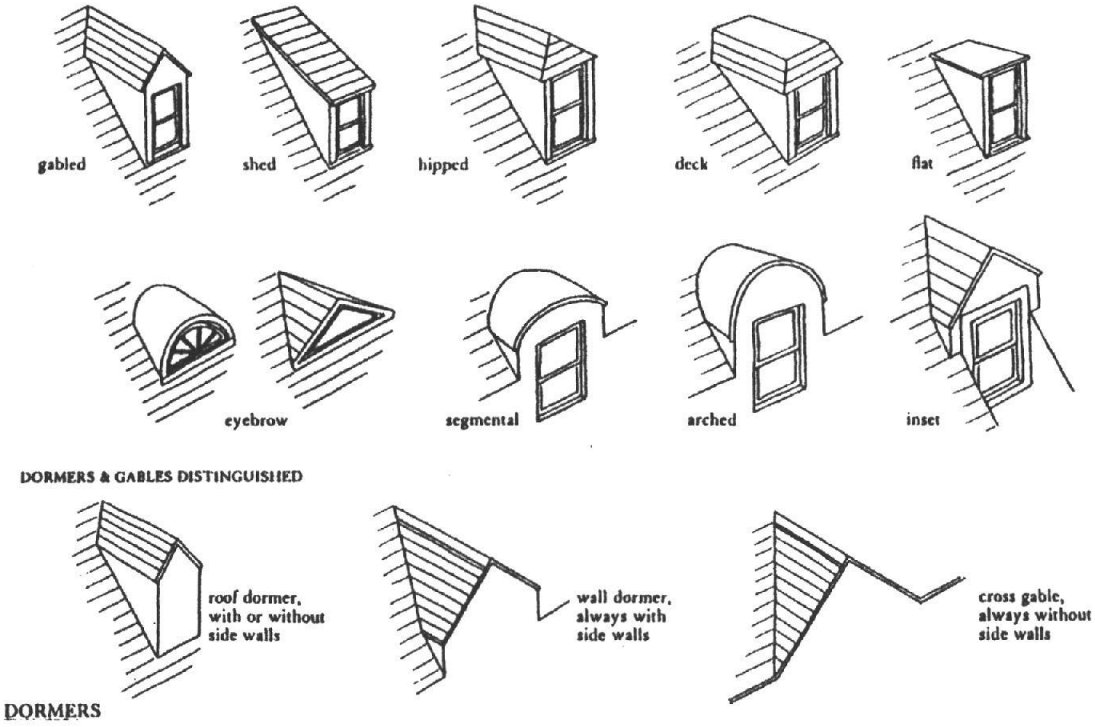
Barrier Free Handicapped Access: The accommodation of ramps, elevators lifts and other building elements designed to allow handicapped access can be a difficult design problem. Scale, massing, proportion, detailing and balance all need to be carefully considered. *(Secretary of Interior Standard Number: 2, 9, 10)*.

Skylights: Skylights were rarely used on historic buildings of the Comstock. Bubble skylights are not appropriate; flat skylights are acceptable in certain building forms, particularly on portions of the roof that are not highly visible from public places.

Solar Panels: Solar panels were not present historically on the Comstock. They are only acceptable in the district on roofs that are not visible from public places.

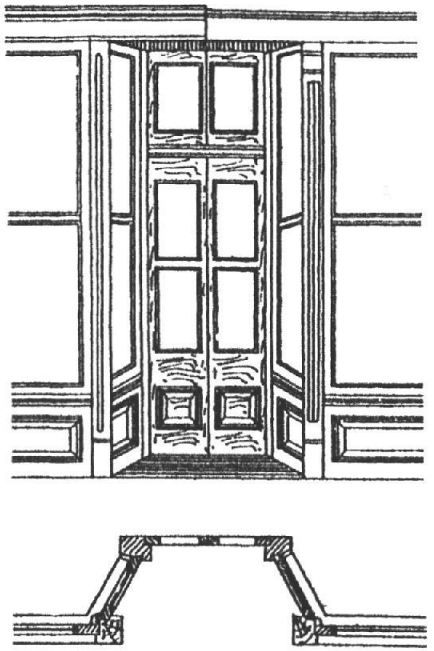
Chimneys: Retain original chimneys, repairing or replacing in-kind the corbeled tops. If shortened, rebuild to original height. Mortar loose masonry units and/or chimney caps. Wooden false chimneys disguising stovepipes are not appropriate. Many chimney caps are available, but the type most seen on historic buildings are simple caps and H-shaped caps.

ADDITIONAL ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES: ILLUSTRATIONS



(Graphics Adopted from McAlester and McAlester 1984.)

RECESSED DOOR



GUIDELINES FOR FENCES

Fences serve a variety of purposes for a property owner. They can define property lines, provide security and protection from trespassing, furnish safety for children and pets, and provide visuals screens for privacy and serve as protection from the elements. The design of a fence is a critical element in the overall visual quality of a property and how it relates to its neighbors. It can also be important from a public safety standpoint, particularly on corner lots. Typically front yards in the district were delineated by low profile, painted, wood picket-style fences three to four feet high. Solid fences typically were used to enclose commercial areas or residential back or side yards. A few metal and/or masonry fences were present as well. The CHDC library has references that depict historically appropriate wood and metal fence styles.

A fence design needs to be considered in context. Scale, rhythm, material , and style are the critical design elements of a fence. The fence design needs to be compatible to the building as well as to the surrounding property. A fence can provide a delicate design element which will greatly enhance a property.

Note: The construction or removal of any fence in the historic district requires review by the CHDC.

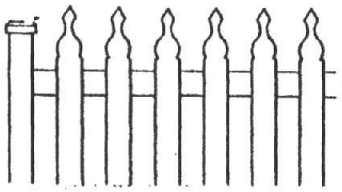
Guideline for Historic Fences: Original fences should be retained and repaired when at all possible. When reconstruction must occur, the original should be matched in color, materials, size, scale, texture and composition. New fences for historic houses should emulate historic styles and designs found in the district (*Secretary of Interior Standard Number: 2, 4, 5, 6*).

Guideline for New Fences: The appropriate design for a fence will be determined by its intended function and its location. No fence should be constructed which adversely effects the primary view(s) of any building. Fence designs should enhance the overall visual presentation of a building.

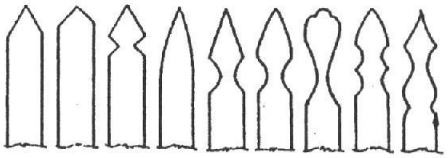
A fence should also contribute to the character and defining features of any building in a positive manner (*Secretary of Interior Standard Number: 9*). Board width on picket styles should be 1" x 11/2" to 4" and overall fence height should not exceed 48". Solid board fence widths may range from 1" x 6" to 12" and overall fence height should not exceed 5', although fences may be treated on a case-by-case basis. Some chain link fences were installed before the formation of the CHDC, however **modern chain link fences are not approved by the CHDC.**

Temporary Fences: Temporary fences may be necessary for safety in certain circumstances or on construction projects. The CHDC reviews temporary fences on a case-by-case basis, but generally considers a six-month limit on such projects.

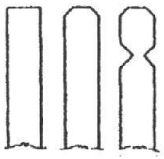
TYPICAL FENCE WITH CORNER OR GATE POST

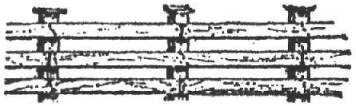


TYPICAL PICKETS 1"x 11/2" TO 4"



SOLID BOARD FENCE 1" X 6" TO 12"





GUIDELINES FOR EXTERIOR PAINT COLORS

Virtually all wooden structures within the Comstock Historic District were originally painted. Colors from the "Historical Color Collection" by Benjamin Moore or the "Heritage Colors" by Sherwin Williams are appropriate within the District. Because paint was prevalent on wooden structures in the District, wood stains are discouraged.

The Comstock Historic District Office has appropriate historic paint color charts on file for public reference. The property owners must choose colors that match those color charts for approval. If the property owner request a color(s) that does not match the appropriate color charts, the paint color project must be placed on a Commission meeting agenda. At the meeting, the property owner must provide a large sample of their chosen color painted on a poster board (minimum 17 x 22 inches) to allow the Commission the chance to view the controversial paint color on a large scale.

SUGGESTED GUIDELINES FOR EXTERIOR LIGHTING

Exterior lighting in the district is characterized by public and private fixtures illuminating common areas, signs, yards and buildings. Historically, exterior lighting was generally restricted to illuminating entry and porch areas. Contemporary attitudes have expanded the desire for, and modern technology has provided the ready availability and relatively low cost, of exterior lighting.

The design of exterior lighting involves two elements: the fixture and the illumination pattern produced by the fixture. Both elements need to be considered carefully in the review of any application. The illumination pattern should be functional, but not obtrusive on neighbors. New fixtures which provide outdoor flood lighting shall be placed so that they are hidden from view during daylight hours.

Guidelines for Historic Buildings: The addition of light fixtures and illumination patterns to historic properties shall be undertaken with sensitivity to the property and its neighbors.
Original lighting fixtures and illumination patterns shall be retained when at all possible. *(Secretary of Interiors Standard Number: 2, 3, 5, 6)*

Guidelines for New Construction: Exterior lighting in new construction needs to be sensitively designed. Lighting fixtures should reflect the style and design of the new building. The illumination pattern of the lighting should not intrude, but should compliment the building and its environs. *(Secretary of Interior Standard Number: 9, 10)*

SUGGESTED GUIDELINES FOR LANDSCAPE ELEMENTS

Guideline for Historic Properties: Historic landscape features should be retained when at all possible. Fences, trees, hitching posts, carriage steps, sidewalks and walkways provide a visual consistency and harmony of setting to the district (*Secretary of Interior Standard Number: 2, 3, 4, 5, 9*).

Guideline for New Construction: New construction in the district should include landscape elements which reflect the scale rhythm, texture, material, color, style and visual qualities of the historic landscape present (*Secretary of Interior Standard Number 9, 10*).

Parking Areas: The construction of parking areas in association with commercial development in the district often presents a difficult design task. They need to be designed and located in such a manner that their effect on the district's environs is minimized. They also need to be landscaped with appropriate plant material to provide a visual screen and to soften their impact to the site.

Windmills, Radio Towers, and Similar Structures: Windmills, towers, and similar structures are a modern intrusive landscape feature in the historic district, and each will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis because the various sizes, colors, textures, and locations of these structures all contribute to their visual impact(s). If approved, these structures should be placed in the least visible location on the property, and fencing or vegetation/shrubbery can be provided to lessen their visual impact(s).

Satellite Dish Antennas: Satellite dish antennas are an inherently intrusive and incongruous landscape feature in the District. The size, color, texture, and location of the dish all contribute to its impact. Dishes should be placed in the least visible location on the property.

SIZE: Dish antennas of any type are not to exceed 10 feet in overall diameter. The 18 inch diameter dishes are suggested because of their compact, less intrusive size.

LOCATION: Dish antennas are to be placed in the least visible location possible on the property. Visibility of the dish from the primary facade of the building should be strictly avoided or fully screened. All connecting cables, wiring, or other appurtences should be placed underground. The location of the dish should not adversely affect the adjoining property.

ARCHITECTURAL CONTINUITY: The size, shape, height, and basic massing of a satellite dish is unlike any commercial, residential, or industrial architectural feature found in the district. Together with size, color, and location, there are certain design mitigations which can be taken to lessen the visual impact of dish installation such as lattice-type enclosures or vegetation/shrubbery to visually screens the visibility of the dish.

GUIDELINES FOR SIGNS

Guidelines for signs can enhance the economic vitality and visual character of a commercial district. By working together in designing signs, businesses can create a cohesive visual environment. The Comstock Historic District Commission reviews sign designs, while the Storey and Lyon County Building Departments have the final say in size and placement. Four general principles should be considered in developing signs for commercial areas. A well-designed sign should: 1) convey a message; 2) identify a site; 3) be clear and readable; and 4) create an appropriate image for the business, compatible with environment

Businesses should consider the image of the commercial district in which they are located and coordinate the following five characteristics of a sign's design: 1) location; 2) size; 3) style; 4) materials; and 5) illumination

Location

When a sign is well-placed, it can compliment a building's facade. A clear message, which identifies the business, creates a positive image for an establishment. Signs should be oriented toward the pedestrian, a commercial district's major customer. Signs can also be painted directly on the storefront window surfaces. Black with gold-leaf highlighting is suggested. Signs mounted flush with a building were also popular in the Victorian period and could be effectively used in the commercial district. **Location (and size) of a sign must meet local County sign ordinances.** For details, please contact the Storey County Building Department in Virginia City at (775) 847-0966 or the Lyon County Building Department in Yerington at (775) 463-6591.

Size

The Storey County Sign Ordinance states that a sign should not exceed 24 square feet. For details, please contact the Storey or Lyon County Building Department.

Style

Traditionally, signs were rectangular or square-shaped. Using ornamentation and lettering from a particular period in the area's history could create a compatible visual environment (see illustrations at right). Most commercial buildings on the Comstock date from the Victorian period. Signs from that period used highly stylized lettering to convey messages. Strong colors such as reds and blacks were often used. Simple, clear graphics reflecting the Victorian style and a limited number of colors are recommended.

Materials

In the nineteenth century, signs were predominantly constructed of wood and were hand-painted. Plastic has no historical precedent and should be avoided for signs on buildings in the commercial district.

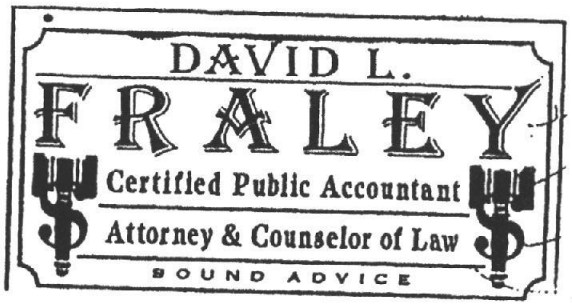
Illumination

Signs should be illuminated by indirect or concealed lighting. Incandescent fixtures are superior over fluorescent fixtures.

GUIDELINES FOR SIGNS
CONTINUED







SIGNS APPROVED BY THE CHDC



HISTORIC SIGN FONTS

ADDITIONAL SIGN AND FONT DESIGNS AVAILABLE AT THE CHDC OFFICE.
PLEASE CALL FOR AN APPOINTMENT (775) 847-0281.

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GLOSSARY

ARCADE - a covered passageway, of which one or both sides is a series of arches supporting a roof

ARCHITRAVE - the lower part of a classical entablature, resting directly on the capital of a column

AXIAL ENTRANCE -pivots on an axis

BABOON FRAME - a timber-frame construction having uprights (studs) that extend in one piece from foundation line to the roof with horizontal members (joists) nailed to them

BALUSTER - an upright support for the stair railing or bannister

BARGEBOARD (VERGE BOARD) -a stylized rafter set out from a gable, usually pierced with jig-sawn design; used especially on Gothic Revival houses

BATTER - a sloping or inclined face of a wall or pier

BAY - a structural set, composed of columns and beams or piers and vaults; it is one of a group of such sets; each added unit makes another bay; a projection from an exterior wall which rests on its foundation and creates space within

BAY WINDOW - a small, windowed projection from the main body of a structure, usually polygonal in plan, with the most popular being rectangular, or with sections of hexagons or octagons; however, when the projection is circular in plan, it is known as a bow window.

BELT COURSE - a band or strip of building material or molding such as bricks, wood, or stone around a building, or along the length of the facade

BOARD-AND-BATTEN - vertical siding composed of wide boards that do not overlap and narrow strips-battens nailed over the spaces between the boards.

BRACKET - a supporting member for a projection floor, shelf, or eave; often used as a decorative feature connecting an overhanging cornice to the frieze board.

CANTILEVER - an unbraced projection which is anchored at one end only and used for carrying the cornice or extended eaves of a building.

CAPITAL - the top, decorated part of a column or pilaster crowning the shaft and supporting the entablature.

CASEMENT - a window with sash hung vertically and opening inward or outward.

CHANNEL SHIPLAP - a long, narrow board with one edge thicker than the other, overlapped to cover the outer walls and for a weatherproof, exterior wall surface; a western North American term for channel shiplap.

CLAPBOARD - a long, narrow board with one edge thicker than the other, overlapped to cover the outer walls and for a weatherproof, exterior wall surface; an eastern North American term for channel shiplap.

CLERESTORY - an outside wall of a room or building that rises

above an adjoining roof and contains windows.

CLASSICAL - of, or based upon, the art of architecture of ancient Greece or Rome.

COBBLESTONE - masonry which is composed of broken, untrimmed stone; also called rubble masonry.

COLONNADE - a row of columns.

COLUMN - an architectural support of definite proportions, usually cylindrical in shape, with shaft, capital, and sometimes, a base; may be free-standing or attached to a wall.

CORBEL - a projection of one or a series of projections, each stepped progressively farther forward in height; anchored in a wall, story, column, or chimney and used to support the eaves of a roof or some other feature.

CORINTHIAN ORDER - the most ornate of classical Greek orders of architecture, characterized by a slender, fluted column with a bell-shaped capital decorated with stylized acanthus leaves; variations of this order were extensively used by the Romans.

CORNICE - in classical architecture, the upper, projecting section of an entablature; projecting ornamental molding along the top of a building or wall.

CRESTING - an ornamental decoration along the ridge of a building often of wood or iron work.

CROWN - any upper terminal feature in architecture.

CUPOLA - a small dome and the shaft that supports it, sits on top of a building.

DENTIL - a small, square block used in a series for ornamentation in Ionic and Corinthian cornices.

DORIC ORDER - the oldest and simplest of the classical Greek orders, characterized by heavy fluted columns with no base, plainsaucer-shaped capitals, and a bold simple cornice.

DORMER - a shed, single gable or single hipped roofed structure projecting from a sloping roof; usually pierced by a window.

DOUBLE HUNG SASH WINDOW - a window with two sashes, one above the other, arranged to slide vertically past each other.

DROP SIDING - wood sheathing whose edges are channeled or grooved from the face of a member to make an overlapping joint.

EAVE - the projecting overhang at the lower edge of a roof.

ECLECTICISM - the selection of elements from diverse styles for architectural decorative designs, particularly during the second half of the 19th century in Europe and the United States.

ELEPHANTINE POST - tapered post, usually used as a supporting porch member on a bungalow.

ENTABLATURE - in classical architecture, the part of a structure between the column capital and the roof or pediment, comprising the architrave, frieze, or cornice.

FACADE - the front or face of a building; the entire aspect of the

side of a building.

FANLIGHT - a semi-circular window over the opening of a door, with radiating bars in the form of an open fan.

FINIAL - the carved or molded ornament crowning a gable, gatepost, pinnacle, spire, or other roof point.

FRIEZE - a flat, horizontal band, sometimes decorated with sculpted relief, usually placed just below a cornice.

GABLE - a triangular wall segment at the end of a double-pitched or gabled roof.
cross gable - a gable set parallel to the roof
side gable - an additional gable along the side of a building

GOTHIC WINDOW - a window topped with a pointed arch.

GRILLWORK - material which functions as or has the appearance of a grill.

HALF-TIMBERING - wall construction in which the spaces between members of the timber frame are filled with brick, stone, or other material.

HIPPED ROOF - a roof with four uniformly pitched sides.

IONIC ORDER - and order of classic Greek architecture characterized by a capital with two opposed volutes.

LIGHTS - the panes of glass in a window.
LINTEL - a horizontal structure beam resting on two separate posts, often bridging an opening such as a door or window.

MANSARD ROOF - a steep, dual-pitched hipped roof allowing a tall attic space; frequently used to add to an upper story.

MASONRY - wall construction of materials such as adobe, brick, and stone; also, a masonry veneer product exists which can be applied over wood.

MODILLION - an ornamental, horizontal, black or bracket under a projecting cornice.

MULLION - a horizontal or vertical member that holds together two adjacent lights of glass, units of sash, or sections of curtain wall.

MULLION COVER - (also mullion trim) a molding covering the vertical joint between two window frames.

MUNTIN - (also sash bar, window bar, glazing bar) a secondary framing member (horizontal, vertical, or slanted) to hold the window panes in the sash. This term is often confused with "mullion."

OCULUS - a round or oval window without tracery or muntins.

ORDER - any of several specific styles of classical and Renaissance architecture characterized by the type of column used.
ORIEL - a unit projecting from a wall and carried on brackets, corbels, or a cantilever,

PALLADIAN WINDOW - a three part window with a central, top arched portion and rectangular windows on both sides.

PARAPET - a low, solid, protective wall or railing along the edge of a roof or balcony.

PAVILION - on a facade, a prominent portion usually central or terminal, identified by projection, height and special roof forms.

PEDIMENT - a wide, low-pitched gable surmounting the facade of a building in a classical style; any similar triangular crowning element used over doors, windows, and niches.

PENDANT - a hanging ornament on eaves, ceilings, and soffits often at the end of a gabled roof.

PIERS - a column designed to support a concentrated load.

PILASTER - a shallow pier that is attached to a wall; often decorated to resemble a classical column.

PITCH - the angle at which a roof slopes.

PORTICO - a major porch, usually with a pedimented roof supported by classical columns.

POST AND BEAM - framing in which horizontal members rest on posts.

PRINCIPAL RAFTER - one of the diagonal members of a roof's structure which supports the purlins on which the column rafters rest.

PURLIN - a piece of timber laid horizontally on the principal rafters of a roof to support the common rafters on which the roof covering is laid.

QUATREFOIL - a four-lobed or circular segment pattern.

QUOINS - units of stone, brick, or wooden block used decoratively to accentuate the corners of a building.

RAFTERS - one of a series of members to which a roof covering is fixed.

RAKE - portion of the roof which extends beyond the gabled wall.

RIBBON WINDOW - a stained glass window which has a strip of bar or lead to hold the edge of the glass.

RIDGE - the horizontal line at the junction of the upper edges of two sloping roof surfaces.

RIDGE BEAM - a beam at the upper ends of the rafters, below the ridge of the roof.

RIGID SYMMETRY - a type of design which does not allow much fluctuation in style.
SASH - a frame in which the panes of a window ar set.

SHAFT - the main part of a column between the base and the capital.

SHEATHING - the covering placed over exterior siding or rafters of a building.

SHED ROOF - a single plane sloping roof.

SHIPLAP - wood sheathing whose edges are channeled or grooved from the face of a member to make an overlapping joint.

SHOTGUN - a house style in which all the rooms are in direct line

with each other, usually front to back.

SIDELIGHTS - a window usually placed on each side of a door but occasionally found only on one side; is frequently narrow and may be the same height as the door.

SILL - the bottom member of a window or door frame; the mating of foundation with the above structure.

SPANDREL - a wall panel filling the space between the top of a window in one story and the sill of a window in the story above.

SPINDLES - round turned balusters.

STUCCO - an exterior finish usually textured and composed of portland cement, lime and sand, mixed with water.

STYLIZED RELIEF - an ornate, decorative addition carved to a building which enhances the architectural style.

TAPER - a gradual diminution of thickness in an elongated object, like a column or post.

TRACERY - delicate intersecting lines of muntins or glazing bars that form ornamental designs in a window.

TRANSOM - a small window over a door or window usually hinged or pivoted, used for ventilation and decoration.

TURRET - a diminutive tower, characteristically projecting outward from a corner.

VERANDA - a covered porch or balcony, extending along the outside of a building.

VERNACULAR - indigenous, characteristic of a locality; refers to structures typical of a geographical area but not representative of any formal architectural style as they lack sufficient ornamental detail to characterize them as belonging to a recognized style.

V-GROOVE SIDING - shiplap siding that has a V-shape at both ends. This is a siding currently available to replace historic shiplap when the latter can not be acquired.

VICTORIAN FOLK - a house style (c.1870-1910) defined by the presence of Victorian decorative detailing on simple house forms which are generally less elaborate than the Victorian styles (Italianate, Queen Anne, Gothic Revival) they attempt to mimic. The decorative detailing is primarily applied to the porch and cornice line.

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