



SEVENTH STREET DESIGN GUIDELINES
SEVENTH STREET DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
2008



view looking north at 200 block

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MISSION AND VISION STATEMENT OF MAIN STREET

The Seventh Street Development Committee's (SSDC) mission is to provide the spark and energy to continually improve Seventh Street's quality of life, enhance the shopping and business environments, and create a destination that people will want to experience.

The Seventh Street commercial area shall

- offer customers a wider array and depth of goods and services, and
- increase the area's attractiveness by featuring its historic architectural assets complimented with ethnic accents.

It will be an enduring and self-reliant organization, representative of the community's diversity and committed to unity and cooperation. It will be the force making Seventh Street an even better place to live, work, shop, and do business.

Seventh Street is the gateway to Downtown Allentown. It is a vital neighborhood shopping area serving the multi-cultural and pedestrian-oriented residents of Allentown's substantial Center City area.

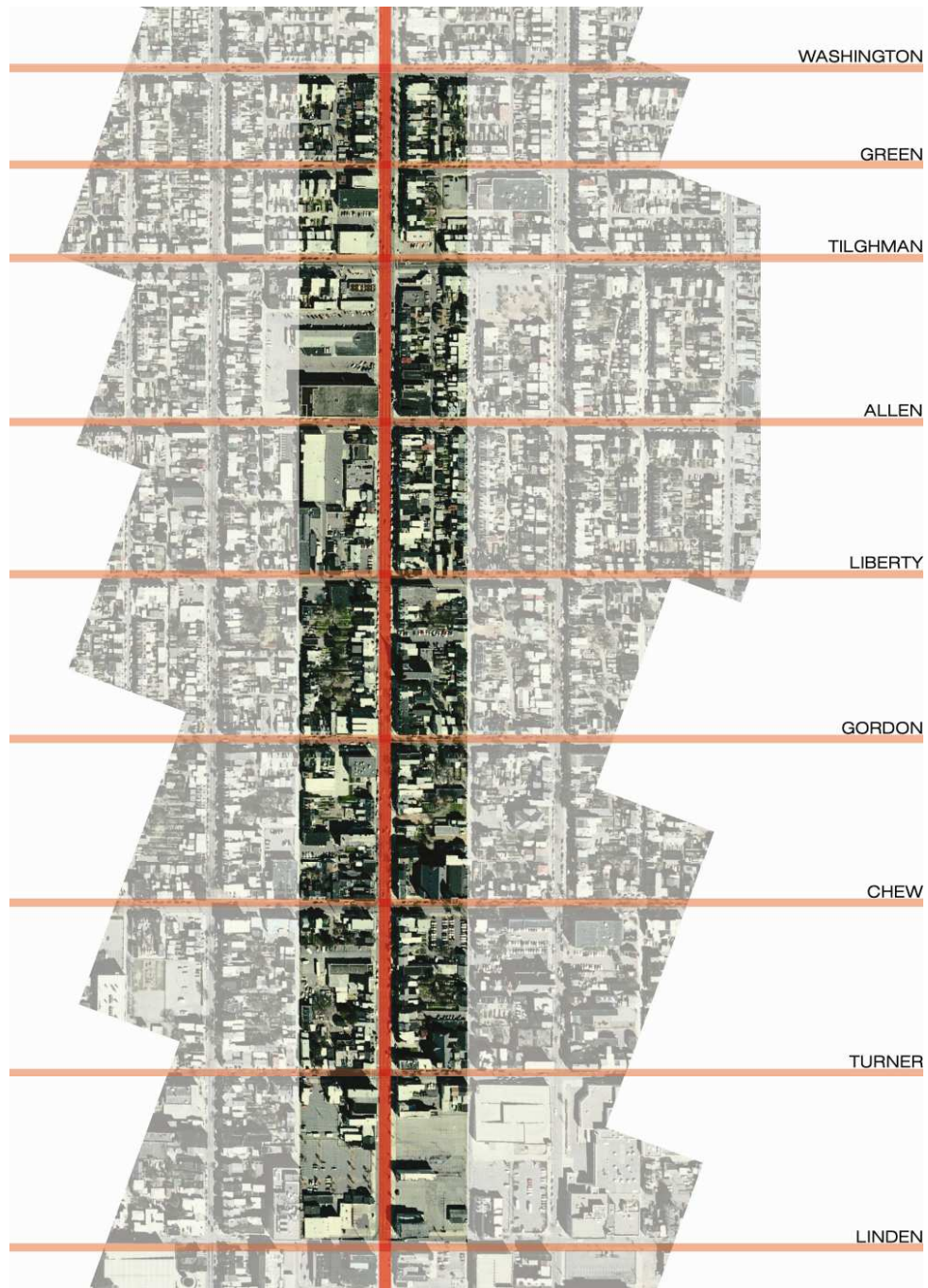
The Seventh Street Main Street program's vision is to make an active and successful neighborhood commercial area that is a safe, clean shopping and dining location distinguished by its culturally diverse stores and restaurants.



PROGRAM BOUNDARIES AND AREA DESCRIPTION

Program Area

The SSDC's Program Area includes the east and west sides of Seventh Street from Linden Street to Washington Street and designated portions of intersecting side streets in Allentown, Pennsylvania.



USING THESE GUIDELINES

The Design Guidelines are intended to be used as a tool to:

- Help business and property owners identify key historical elements on their buildings;
- Assist owners in judging the acceptability of any proposed changes to the designs of their buildings;
- Enable builders and designers to preserve the unique characteristics of 7th Street buildings;
- Improve the quality and value of property owners' buildings; and
- Have the overall effect of creating an inviting historic commercial corridor.

These Design Guidelines should be helpful to anyone involved in planning simple repairs, full rehabilitation projects, or new construction on a property along 7th Street – building and business owners, contractors, and architects, as well as the Main Street staff and volunteers.

These Design Guidelines are not meant to stifle creativity or individuality. The Seventh Street Development Committee does not want every building along 7th Street to be painted the same color or to have the exact same signage. Individual business and property owners are encouraged to be creative in thinking about the image that their renovated and improved buildings will portray as part of the entire corridor.

What follows is an introduction to 7th Street's Main Street program, an overview of key terms, tips for rehabilitating or adding onto your property, suggestions for signage and awnings, a description of the design review process, and contact information for local and national resources.

When in doubt, do not hesitate to call the Main Street Manager, Pete Lewnes, at 610-433-5703. Pete has a variety of reference materials and samples that all 7th Street business and property owners are welcome to consult.

ELEMENTS OF DESIGN

DEFINITIONS

Adaptive Re-use — Improvements made to a building that render the structure suitable for a purpose of which it was not originally intended. For example, an old school building redesigned and used for senior housing, or an old mill renovated as a conference center and hotel facility.

Architectural Element — A permanently affixed or integral part of the building structure which may be decorative and contributes to the composition of the facade. For example: Cornices, trim boards, brackets, lintels, dentils, columns, capitols, etc.

Architectural Integrity — Refers to staying true to the original style in which the building was designed. Additions should be complimentary to the architectural style of the original building.

Footprint — The outline of a building's ground plan from a top view.

Infill — New construction where there had been an opening before. Applies to new structures such as a new building between two older structures or new material such as block infill in an original window opening.

National Register of Historic Places — The nation's official list of buildings, sites, and districts which are important in our history or culture. Created by Congress in 1966 and administered by the states.

Preservation — The act of maintaining the form and character of a building as it presently exists.

Reconstruction — The accurate recreation of a vanished or irreplaceably damaged structure, or part thereof.

Rehabilitation — The process of returning a building to a state of usefulness through repair or alteration which preserves those features that are historically or architecturally significant.

Restoration — The process of accurately recovering the form and details of a building as it appeared at an earlier time.

Scale — A term used to define the proportions of a building in relation to its surroundings.

Setback — A term used to define the distance a building is located from a street or sidewalk.

Stabilization — The essential maintenance of a deteriorated building to weatherproof the structure and establish structural stability.

Streetscape — The combination of building facades, sidewalks, street furniture, etc. that defines the street.

STOREFRONT ELEMENTS



Entrance



Storefront

ROOFLINE ELEMENTS



Parapet & Sign



Corbelled Parapet

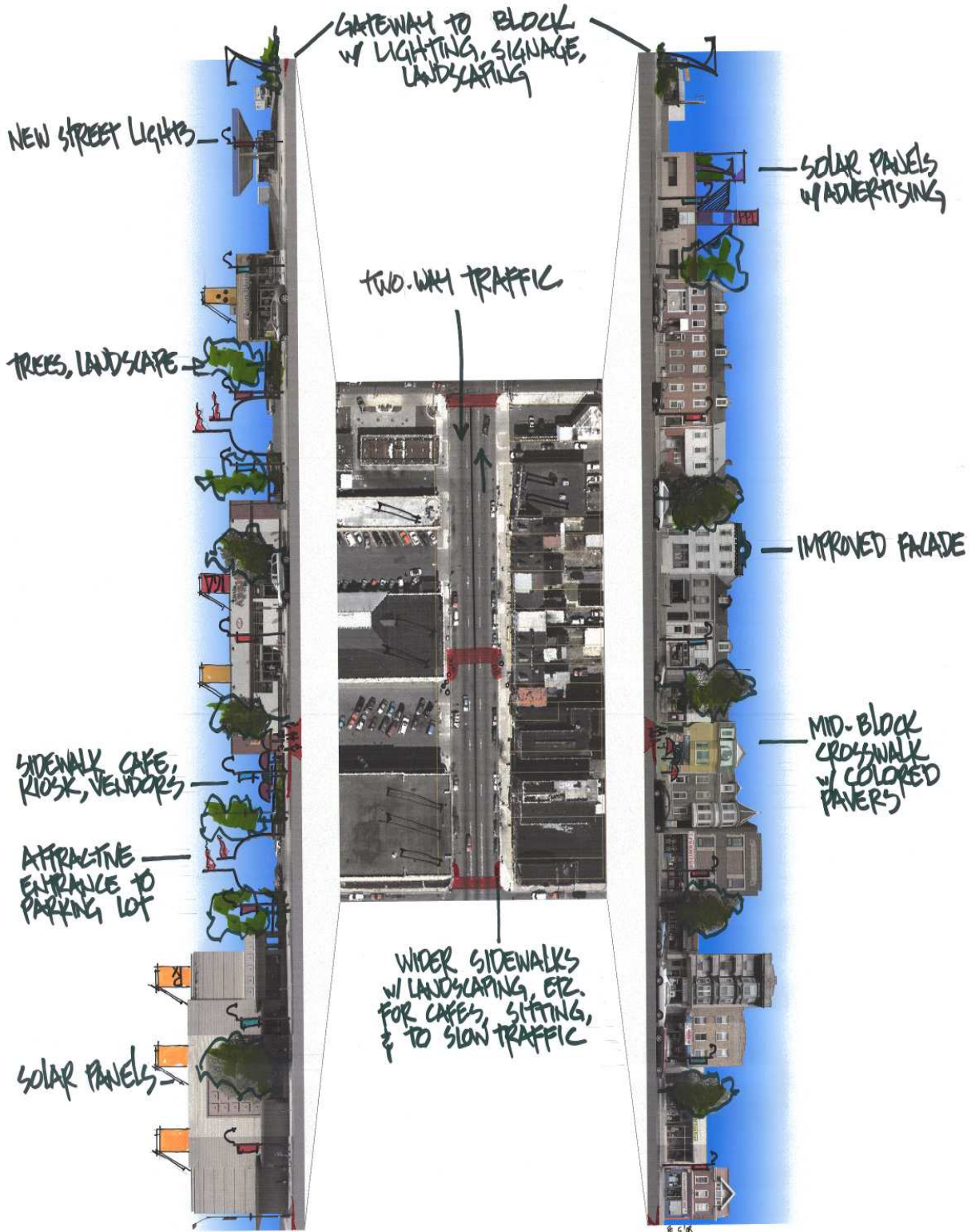


Cornice



Dormer

The **streetscape** is as important to the visual character of 7th Street as are the buildings themselves. The overall appearance of the **streetscape** is the result of the layout of streets and lots, the way buildings were placed on the land, and how buildings relate to each other and open spaces.



SEVENTH STREET DESIGN GUIDELINES

The size and proportion of **fenestrations** (window and door openings) of a building should be similar to those on surrounding exemplary facades. The same applies to the ratio of window area to solid wall for the facade as a whole.



REHABILITATING YOUR PROPERTY

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

WINDOWS



Arched Window



Double Hung Sash Window



Window Hood



Divided Light Window

WINDOW REPLACEMENT



Appropriate



Appropriate



Inappropriate



Inappropriate



Inappropriate



Inappropriate



Inappropriate

PRESERVE – PROTECT – REPAIR – REPLACE

1. Identify, Retain, and *Preserve* Historic Materials and Features

The character of a historic building may be defined by the form and detailing of exterior materials, such as masonry, wood, and metal; exterior features, such as roofs, porches, and windows; interior materials, such as plaster and paint; and interior features, such as moldings and stairways, room configuration and spatial relationships, as well as structural and mechanical systems.

2. *Protect* and Maintain Historic Materials and Features

Protection generally involves the least degree of intervention and occurs before other work. For example, protection includes the maintenance of historic material through treatments such as rust removal, caulking, limited paint removal, and re-application of protective coatings; the cyclical cleaning of roof gutter systems; or installation of fencing, alarm systems and other temporary protective measures. Although a historic building will usually require more extensive work, an overall evaluation of its physical condition should always begin at this level.

3. *Repair* Historic Materials and Features

The repair of historic materials such as masonry, wood, and architectural metals again begins with the least degree of intervention possible, such as patching, piecing-in, splicing, consolidating, or otherwise reinforcing or upgrading them according to recognized preservation methods. Repairing also includes the limited replacement in kind--or with compatible substitute material--of extensively deteriorated or missing parts of features when there are surviving prototypes (for example, brackets, dentils, steps, plaster, or portions of slate or tile roofing). Although using the same kind of material is always the preferred option, substitute material is acceptable if the form and design as well as the substitute material itself convey the visual appearance of the remaining parts of the feature and finish.

4. *Replace* Deteriorated Historic Materials and Features

If the level of deterioration or damage of materials precludes repair, *replacing* an entire character-defining feature with new material is possible. If adequate historical, pictorial, and physical documentation exists so that the feature may be accurately reproduced, and if it is desirable to re-establish the feature as part of the building's historical appearance, then designing and constructing a new feature based on such information is appropriate. However, a second acceptable option for the replacement feature is a new design that is compatible with the remaining character-defining features of the historic building. The new design should always take into account the size, scale, and material of the historic building itself and, most importantly, should be clearly differentiated so that a false historical appearance is not created.

Like the guidance for repair, the preferred option is always replacement of the entire feature in kind, that is, with the same material. Because this approach may not always be technically or economically feasible, provisions are made to consider the use of a compatible substitute material. It is never recommended to remove and replace features that could reasonably be repaired and thus preserved.

TIPS FOR PAINTING

There are an unlimited number of colors and color combinations, and the appropriateness of any given color or combination for a particular building will depend on a number of factors, including, architectural style and details, building material, building size, building context, etc. (When in doubt, do not hesitate to call Pete Lewnes, the Main Street Manager. Pete has a variety of photos and sample paint palettes that all business and property owners are welcome to consult.)

In general, exterior colors should be compatible with the surrounding character district and adjacent buildings. Where appropriate, building colors should reflect the basic colors of the architectural style or period of the building. Historic color palettes based on research, old photographs, and historic records is strongly encouraged.

It is best to use no more than three colors on a façade. Use more subtle colors on larger buildings. Use stronger colors only to highlight elaborate detailing.

Stain and flat paints, and matte finishes, are desirable and encouraged, while glossy paints and finishes are strongly discouraged.

Color should **not** be used to obscure the integrity of natural building materials. Painting unpainted masonry elements that were not coated historically is inappropriate. At the same time, the removal of paint from masonry surfaces is not recommended unless the brick is of high quality and was intended to be exposed. Undertake removal only with a chemical paint remover specifically formulated for masonry. Always test the remover on an inconspicuous area or a test panel first. **Do not sandblast.**





Appropriate Historical Color Scheme



Appropriate Modern Color Scheme



Inappropriate Color Scheme



Inappropriate Color & Paint Scheme

ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS

Some exterior and interior alterations to a historic building are generally needed to assure its continued use, but it is most important that such alterations do not radically change, obscure, or destroy character-defining spaces, materials, features, or finishes. Alterations may include providing additional parking space on an existing historic building site; cutting new entrances or windows on secondary elevations; inserting an additional floor; installing an entirely new mechanical system; or creating an atrium or light well. Alteration may also include the selective removal of buildings or other features of the environment or building site that are intrusive and therefore detract from the overall historic character. The construction of an exterior addition to a historic building may seem to be essential for the new use, but it is emphasized in the **Rehabilitation** guidelines that such new additions should be avoided, if possible, and considered only after it is determined that those needs cannot be met by altering secondary, i.e., non character-defining interior spaces. If, after a thorough evaluation of interior solutions, an exterior addition is still judged to be the only viable alternative, it should be designed and constructed to be clearly differentiated from the historic building and so that the character-defining features are not radically changed, obscured, damaged, or destroyed.

SIGNS AND AWNINGS

Signs can go a long way toward enhancing the attractiveness of downtown. The most common types of signs are *flush mounted, hanging, and window signs*.

Flush mounted signs are signboards or individual die-cut letters placed on the face of a building. Many 7th Street buildings have a recess or horizontal molded band designed to accommodate the sign. The Seventh Street Development Committee strongly encourages business and property owners to take advantage of these existing sign bands when mounting new signs.

Hanging signs are hung from sidewalk coverings or mounted perpendicular to the sidewalk. These signs are the most visible to both pedestrians and vehicular traffic.

Window signs are also pedestrian-oriented. They are commonly designed so that the majority of the display area is open for pedestrian window-shopping.

General Sign Guidelines

- Each sign (including the mounting framework) should complement the building on which it is placed in style, color, and material. Buildings with a recognizable style (such as Greek Revival, Victorian, Art-Deco, etc.) should use signage of the same style.
- The size of the sign and its letters should be in proportion to the building and the neighboring structures and signs.
- Signs should set the tone for what the consumer may expect inside and add to the community image as a whole.
- Signs should provide information simply and legibly, and should be limited to advertising the name of the business and its main goods and services.
- All signs must comply with the City of Allentown's zoning ordinance. A copy of the complete ordinance can be obtained by calling City Hall at **XXXXXXXXXXXX**.

Sign Materials

- All signs should be made from durable materials.
- The Seventh Street Development Committee encourages local business and property owners to use sandblasted, carved, or painted signs of traditional materials, such as wood, metal, stone, or brick. The use of resin or composite materials that give the appearance of traditional materials may also be used as appropriate.
- Plastic, vinyl, and commercially supplied internally lit signs are generally discouraged.
- Signs may be lighted with overhead incandescent lights with simple metal spun lampshades in colors and materials that complement the building.

Sign Mounting and Placement

- The Seventh Street Development Committee strongly encourages the use of perpendicular signage as it is more likely to catch the attention of both pedestrian and vehicular traffic.
- Signs should be mounted or erected so they do not obscure the architectural features or openings of a building, and so they take advantage of pre-existing sign bands.
- Signs may not be located in the right-of-way, except for sandwich board signs.
- No sign or portion of a sign shall extend above the cornice line at the top of the building face. Roof top signs are prohibited



Appropriate Flush Mounted Signage



Appropriate Hanging Signage



Inappropriate Signage Location & Scale



Inappropriate Signage Scale



Vinyl Awning



Inappropriate Awning Scale

Provided that they are selected with care, awnings can create an inviting pedestrian feel to the downtown area. Awnings may be retractable or of fixed design, complementing the features of the building. Internally illuminated fluorescent awnings should be avoided.

General Awning Guidelines

- The color of the awning should complement both your own and neighboring buildings and signs in terms of both style and color.
- Awning shapes should relate to the shape of the façade's architectural elements. The use of traditionally shaped awnings is encouraged when appropriate.
- Canvas and fire-resistant acrylic are preferred awning materials. Use of metal, plastic, or fiberglass awnings or awnings with "stock" national trademarks is discouraged.
- The impact of the shaded area on window displays may require interior lighting to be adjusted.
- Contact Main Street Manager Pete Lewnes at 610-433-5703 for sample awning materials and colors.

[Include Allentown's Zoning/Sign Ordinance]

MISCELLANEOUS ELEMENTS



Balcony



Balcony



Appropriate Security Grille



Inappropriate Security Grille



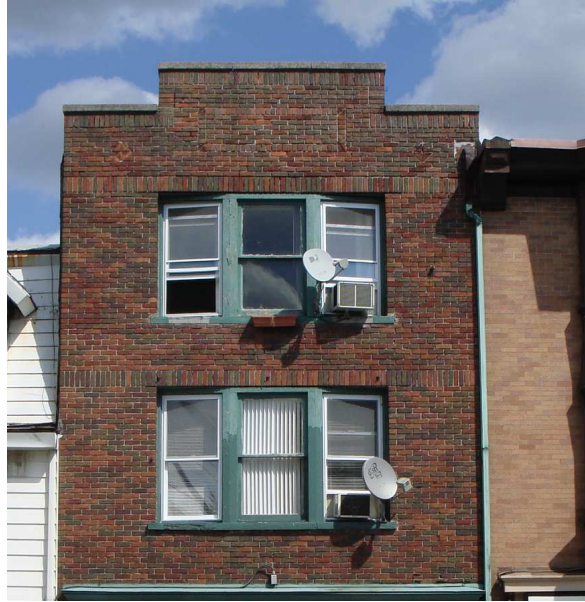
Appropriate Railing



Inappropriate Railing



Inappropriate Façade Elements



Inappropriate Façade Elements



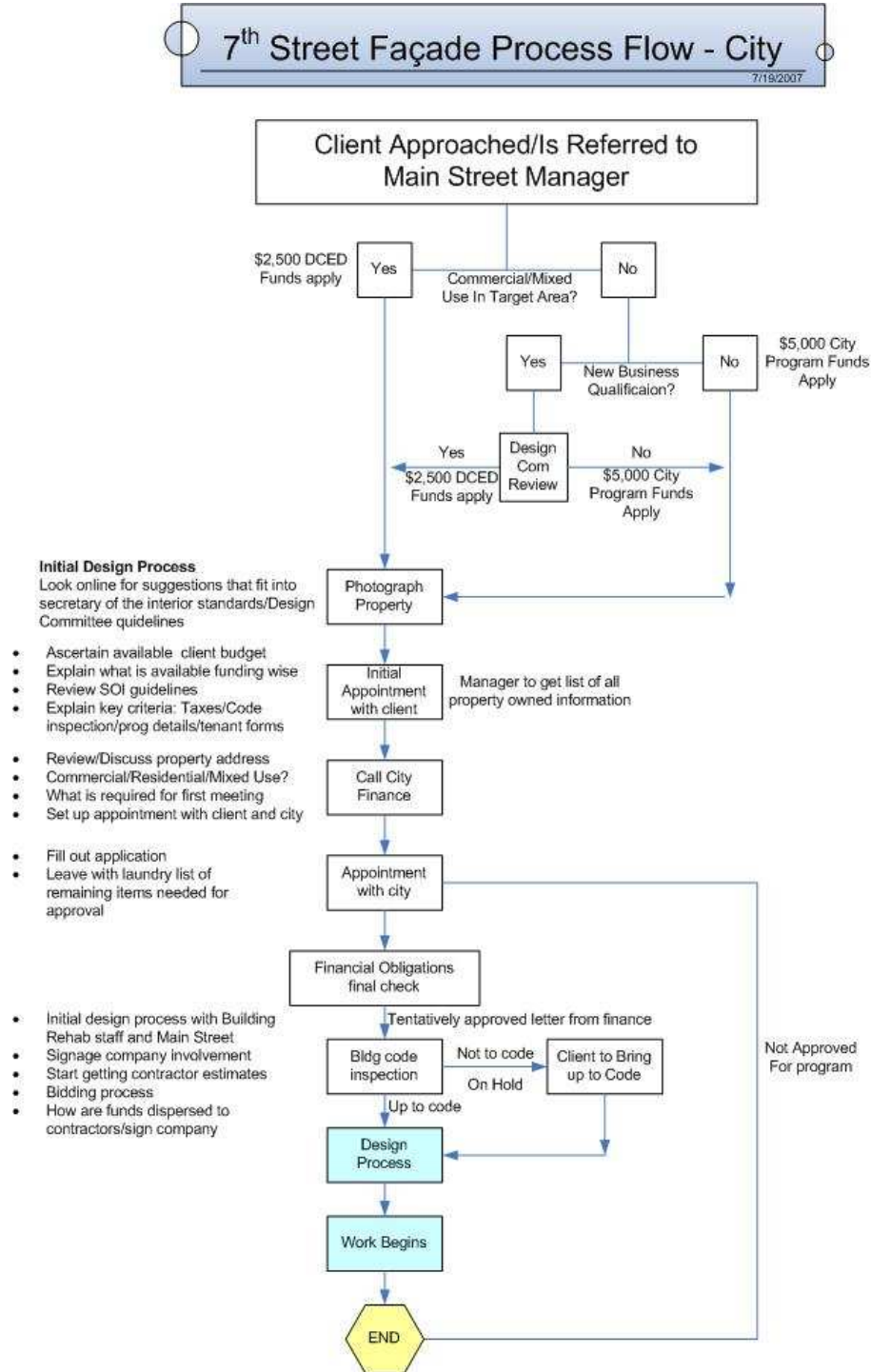
Brick Façade with Terracotta Roofing



Stone Façade

DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS FLOW CHART

The design review process is established to encourage the pursuit of the historical community significance, along with the best professional design for individual identity. The ultimate goal is to enhance property values within the city and develop a distinct historical personality that is visually harmonious with surrounding sites and structures.



Design review board

RESOURCES

Pete/Main Street

City agencies

Local historic resources (OAPA, Allentown Preservation League, etc.)

State and federal agencies