

# Guidelines for New Construction – DRAFT

## Sophienburg Hill, Stock, Mill Street Historic Districts

### Building and Entrance Orientation

1. **Orientation and Entrances** – New buildings should feature a setback from the front property line that is consistent with the historic structures along the street frontage. Where a variety of setbacks exist, use the median setback of buildings along the street frontage. Orient the primary entrance and porches of new buildings to be consistent with the predominant orientation of historic buildings along the street frontage.

### Building Massing and Form

1. **Similar height and scale**— The overall height and scale of new buildings shall be visually compatible with nearby historic buildings.
2. **Similar roof forms** — Incorporate roof forms that are consistent with those predominantly found on the block. Roof forms on residential building types are typically sloped (i.e., gable, hip), while common roof forms on non-residential building types are typically flat and screened by an ornamental parapet wall.
3. **Relation of solids to voids in front facades** - Incorporate window and door openings with a similar proportion of wall to window space as typical with nearby historic facades.
4. **Lot Coverage** - New construction should be consistent with adjacent historic buildings in terms of the building to lot ratio. Limit the building footprint for new construction to no more than 50 percent of the total lot area, unless adjacent historic buildings establish a precedent with a greater building to lot ratio.

### Building Materials

1. **Use of complementary materials**—Use materials that complement the existing materials traditionally found in the historic district. Materials should not be so dissimilar as to distract from the historic appearance of the district. For example, corrugated metal siding would not be appropriate for a new structure in a district comprised of homes with wood siding.
2. **Roof materials**—Select roof materials that are similar in terms of form, color, and texture to traditionally used in the district.
3. **Synthetic materials** — Synthetic material such as fiberboard siding or brick and stone veneer may be appropriate for new construction if the new materials are visually similar to traditional material found in the district in terms of dimension, finish, and texture. For example, Hardie Board siding may be appropriate if the reveal is similar to those found historically in the district.

### Architectural Details

1. **Historic context**—Design new buildings to reflect their time while respecting the historic context of the district. While new construction should not attempt to replicate historic features, new structures should not be so dissimilar as to distract from or diminish the historic interpretation of the district. Attempting to create an exact replica of historic styles for new construction blurs the distinction between old and new buildings and makes the architectural evolution of the historic district more difficult to interpret.
2. **Architectural details**—Incorporate architectural details that are in keeping with the predominant architectural style along the block face or within the district when one exists. Details should be simple in design and should

complement, but not visually compete with, the character of the adjacent historic structures or other historic structures within the district.

### **New Garages and Outbuildings**

1. **Height**—The height of new garages and outbuildings shall not exceed that of the primary structure on the site.
2. **Building size** – New garages and outbuildings shall not feature a footprint larger than that of the primary structure on the site.
3. **Character**—Relate new garages and outbuildings to the period of construction of the principal building on the site using complementary materials and simplified architectural details.
4. **Garage doors**—Incorporate garage doors with similar proportions and materials as those traditionally found in the district.
5. **Orientation/Setbacks**—Match the predominant garage orientation found along the block. For example, if most garages along the block are detached and located at the rear of the property then any new garages should match this pattern. In some instances, historic setbacks are not consistent with current zoning requirements and a variance may be required.

### **Downtown Historic District**

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#### **Building Massing and Form**

1. **Similar height and scale** — New buildings shall conform to the established pattern of the district in terms of overall height and scale of existing historic structures. New structures being built around Main Plaza shall not exceed the height of the Comal County Courthouse.
2. **Roof forms** — Roofs shall be flat or low-pitched with parapet walls to screen roof pitch/mechanical equipment. Rooftop equipment (air conditioners, antennas, elevators, etc.) shall be screened so as not to be visible from the street level.
3. **Relation of solids to voids in front facades** – The primary façade of new commercial buildings should be in keeping with established patterns. Maintaining horizontal elements within adjacent cap, middle, and base precedents will establish a consistent street wall through the alignment of horizontal parts. Avoid blank walls, particularly on elevations visible from the street.

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2. **Synthetic materials** — Synthetic material such as fiberboard siding or brick and stone veneer may be appropriate for new construction if the new materials are visually similar to traditional material found in the

district in terms of dimension, finish, and texture. For example, Hardie Board siding may be appropriate if the reveal is like those found historically in the district.

### **Architectural Details**

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2. **Architectural details**—Incorporate architectural details that are in keeping with the predominant architectural style along the block face or within the district when one exists. Details should be simple in design and should complement, but not visually compete with, the character of the adjacent historic structures or other historic structures within the district.

### **Structured Parking**

\*\*Is this something that should be considered? Does it need specific guidelines?