

CHAPTER SIX

PRESERVATION APPROACH

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INTRODUCTION

The goal of the *Washington and Lee University Preservation Master Plan* is to assist university decision-makers, planners, staff, and facility managers in preserving the historical integrity of the campus while accommodating needed change. The University is the steward of a rich collection of diverse historic buildings and landscapes that are visible reminders of its proud history in the 19th and 20th centuries. Because of the architectural, landscape, and historical significance of Washington and Lee, and university-owned historic buildings and landscapes both on campus and in Lexington, historic preservation considerations are important to the performance of routine maintenance and planning for future development.

The distinctive character and human scale of the buildings and landscapes at Washington and Lee are valuable assets. This important physical legacy reinforces and promotes interaction and provides a tangible link to the past. Understanding and reinforcing these unique characteristics is central to preservation. When students, faculty, residents, and visitors walk through this thriving and diverse academic environment, they should recognize the special characteristics that make it different from other places. Familiar buildings and landscapes, not just the most significant ones, contribute to this distinctive identity. Since historic resources are strongly identified with campus character, their preservation is crucial in creating what planners call a “sense of place.”

Preservation is a practical discipline that can accommodate growth and change while continuing to preserve the characteristics that make a University special. Building uses come and go, but once lost, original historic fabric can never be reclaimed. Therefore, the goal of preserving and maintaining original historic fabric, features, materials, and design elements is central to a sound preservation approach. The importance of routine cyclical maintenance using methods and materials appropriate to the historic resources cannot be overstated. Facility managers and maintenance personnel should be conversant with the recommended treatment guidelines for landscapes and historic buildings presented in the following chapters.

PHILOSOPHY AND PRINCIPLES

The philosophy behind the *Preservation Master Plan* is that historic preservation contributes to a viable, healthy campus by preserving and strengthening character and by accommodating change in a sensitive manner. A primary goal is to preserve the maximum amount of historic building and landscape fabric and thereby enhance the campus as a significant and distinctive place. Continued education of students, faculty, staff, and visitors regarding the history and significance of the University is important in building support for the preservation of its resources. Appropriate maintenance is vital to the conservation of historic building fabric. Flexibility in planning and design is the key to developing solutions for changing needs that will last for the long-term.

The intent of the preservation philosophy outlined in these guidelines, encouraging and facilitating the long-term preservation of historic buildings and landscapes, can be summarized in the following general principles that should be considered in planning maintenance, reuse, renovations, new construction, and other future work at Washington and Lee:

- Continue to use a property as it was historically used, or find a new use that minimizes necessary changes to character-defining features.
- Identify and retain distinguishing historic qualities and characteristics.
- Protect and repair existing historic features, materials, and finishes. If features are deteriorated beyond repair, replace in-kind.
- Be authentic: if a feature is missing, use historic documentation to guide replacement.
- Respect the evolution of historic changes, fashion, taste, and use.
- Do not use methods or materials that damage historic fabric.
- Traditional university buildings offer opportunities for creative new uses. Often found with multiple layers of history, these resources can also inspire compatible designs for new construction.
- New construction should not destroy historic features or materials, nor alter historic character.
- New construction should speak of its own time but should be compatible with the University's historic character.

PRESERVATION TREATMENTS

The historic preservation field uses a variety of terms to describe the treatments that may be applied to historic preservation. Although many of these terms are used loosely in discussions about historic buildings, they have specific meanings. Four key terms are generally used to describe the treatment of historic buildings and landscapes: Preservation, Rehabilitation, Restoration, and Reconstruction.

Of these four terms, *Preservation* requires retention of the greatest amount of historic fabric, features, and materials. *Rehabilitation* acknowledges the need to alter or add to a property to meet continuing or new uses and retaining historic character. *Restoration* allows for an accurate depiction of the property's appearance at a particular time in its history. *Reconstruction* establishes a framework for re-creating vanished historic elements with new materials. Reconstruction is generally used for interpretation; it is not anticipated that it will be applicable to future projects at the University.

Because of the historical significance and high degree of integrity of the historic buildings and landscape at Washington and Lee, Preservation and Rehabilitation are the most appropriate and applicable treatments for the University's buildings and landscapes. These terms have been used in Chapters 4 and 5 in recommending overall treatment approaches to individual historic buildings and landscape character areas. The protection, maintenance, and repair of historic resources should always be a priority and should precede considerations related to intervention and treatments for individual buildings, landscapes, and features. Management zones should be identified based on the recommendations included in these guidelines.

Preservation

Preservation is defined as the process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of an historic property. Work, including preliminary measures to protect and stabilize features, generally focuses on the ongoing maintenance and repair of historic materials and features. Removals, extensive replacement, alterations, and new additions are not appropriate. Preservation stresses protection, repair, and maintenance, and should be the baseline treatment for all historic resources at Washington and Lee.

Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation is defined as the process of creating a compatible use in a historic property through carefully planned minimal alterations and compatible additions. Often referred to as adaptive reuse, rehabilitation protects and preserves the historic features, materials,

elements, and spatial relationships that convey historical, cultural, and architectural values. In this context, new, expanded, or upgraded facilities should be designed to avoid impacts to historic elements. They should also be constructed of compatible materials. Retention of original historic fabric should be the primary consideration in undertaking a program of rehabilitation and adaptive reuse.

Restoration

Restoration refers to returning a resource to its appearance at a specific previous period of its history. Restoration is the process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared at a particular time by means of removal of features from other periods in its history and the reconstruction of missing features from the restoration period. In this context, historic plans, documents, and photographs should be used to guide the work. Limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems, as well as code-related work to make a property functional, are all appropriate within a restoration project.

Reconstruction

Reconstruction is defined as the process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a non-surviving historic property using new construction for the purpose of replicating its appearance at a specific period of time and in its original location. A reconstruction is a new resource made to replace an historic resource that has been lost. Reconstruction is not anticipated to be relevant to future projects at Washington and Lee.

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR THE TREATMENT OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES

The philosophy behind the recommendations in this document is based on a set of federal guidelines entitled *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*, commonly called the "Secretary of the Interior's Standards." The *Secretary of the Interior's Standards* were established by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 to provide national standards and guidelines for the treatment of historic resources. An individual set of standards was developed for each of the four preservation treatments described above. All federally funded and permitted activities affecting historic resources are evaluated with respect to these standards. The *Standards for Rehabilitation* are most applicable to anticipated projects at Washington and Lee.

In the language of community planners, these *Standards* are a list of "best practices" for historic preservation. They ensure that important issues about the care of historic buildings and landscapes are not forgotten in the process of making decisions about other issues. When these guidelines are used in the context of a new project involving an historic building, they provide a starting point for the discussion of proposed changes to the building's historic character and fabric. They were developed to ensure that policies toward historic resources were applied uniformly, even if the end result was different in every case.

All preservation efforts, whether they are publicly or privately funded, can be informed and enhanced by understanding the "*Secretary of the Interior's Standards*." Because the *Standards* outline a sensitive approach for assessing changes to historic properties, they are often included in preservation plans, ordinances, and regulations that govern activities affecting local historic districts. These *Standards* articulate basic principles that are fundamental to historic preservation. Although they have been modified over the years to accommodate changing views of historical significance and treatment options, their basic message has remained the same.

The durability of the *Standards* is testimony not only to their soundness, but also to the flexibility of their language. They provide a philosophy and approach to problem solving for those involved in managing the treatment of historic buildings, rather than a set of solutions to specific design issues. Following a balanced, reasonable, and disciplined process is often more important than the exact nature of the treatment option that is chosen. Instead of predetermining an outcome in favor of retaining or recreating historic features, the *Standards* ensure that all the critical issues are considered. The

Standards are useful in consideration of the construction of new buildings in an historic context and the alteration of older buildings as necessary for reuse, safety, accessibility, or maintenance. As with any public policy issue, the public interest in preserving historic buildings and landscapes must be balanced with other public interests.

The language of the *Standards* is contained in United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 36 CFR (Code of Federal Regulations), Part 67. They are available in publications available through the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, and they are available online at www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/standguide/index.htm, including definitions for the preservation terms discussed above in this chapter.

The ten standards that comprise *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* are quoted in full below, followed by a brief discussion of the implications of each.

STANDARD 1 – *A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.*

Standard 1 recommends compatible use in the context of adaptive reuse and changes to historic buildings and landscapes. This standard encourages owners and managers to find uses that retain and enhance historic character, not detract from it. For example, the work involved in reuse projects should be carefully planned to minimize impacts on historic features, materials, and spaces. The destruction of character-defining features should be avoided.

STANDARD 2 – *The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.*

Standard 2 recommends the retention and preservation of character-defining features. It emphasizes the importance of preserving integrity and as much existing historic fabric as possible. Alterations that repair or modify existing historic fabric are preferable to those that require total removal.

STANDARD 3 – *Each property shall 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 architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.*

Standard 3 focuses on authenticity and discourages the conjectural restoration of an entire property, feature, or design. It also discourages combining and/or grafting historic features and elements from different properties, and constructing new buildings that appear to be historic. Literal restoration to an historic appearance should only be undertaken when detailed documentation is available and when the significance of the resource warrants restoration. Reconstruction of lost features should not be attempted without adequate documentation.

STANDARD 4 – *Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.*

Standard 4 recognizes that buildings change, and that many of these changes contribute to a building's historical significance. Understanding a building's history and development is just as important as understanding its original design, appearance, and function. This point should be kept in mind when considering treatments for buildings that have undergone many changes. Most historic buildings contain a visual record of their own evolution. This evolution can be identified, and changes that are significant to the history of the building should be retained. The opportunity to compare multiple periods of time in the same building lends interest to the structure and helps communicate changes that have occurred within the larger landscape and community context.

STANDARD 5 – *Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.*

Standard 5 recommends preserving the *distinctive historic components* of a building or landscape that represent its historic character. Workmanship, materials, methods of construction, floor plans, and both ornate and typical details should be identified prior to undertaking work.

STANDARD 6 – *Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.*

Standard 6 encourages property owners to *repair historic character-defining features* instead of replacing them when historic features are deteriorated or missing. In cases where deterioration makes replacement necessary, new features should closely match historic conditions in all respects. Before any features are altered or removed, property owners are urged to document existing conditions with photography and notes. These records assist future choices that are appropriate to the property's historic character.

STANDARD 7 – *Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.*

Standard 7 warns against using *chemical and physical treatments* that can permanently damage historic features. Many commercially available treatments are irreversibly damaging. Sandblasting and harsh chemical cleaning, in particular, are extremely harmful to wood and masonry surfaces because they destroy the material's basic physical properties and speed deterioration.

STANDARD 8 – *Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.*

Standard 8 addresses the importance of below-ground prehistoric and historic features. This issue is of paramount importance when a construction project involves excavation. An assessment of a site's archeological potential prior to work is recommended. If archeological resources are found, some type of mitigation may be required. Solutions should be developed that minimize the need for excavation of previously unexcavated sites.

STANDARD 9 – *New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.*

STANDARD 10 – *New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall 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.*

Standards 9 and 10 are linked by issues of the compatibility and reversibility of additions, alterations, and new construction. Both standards are intended to 1) minimize the damage to historic fabric caused by building additions, and 2) ensure that new work will be different from, but compatible with, existing historic conditions. Following these standards will help to protect a building's historic integrity.

In conclusion, the basis for the *Standards* is the premise that historic resources are more than objects of aesthetic merit; they are repositories of historical information. It is important to reiterate that the Standards provide a framework for evaluating preservation activities and emphasize preservation of historic fabric, honesty of historical expression, and reversibility. All decisions should be made on a case-by-case basis. The level of craftsmanship, detailing, and quality of materials should be appropriate to the significance of the resource.

MANAGEMENT AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The Getty Campus Heritage Program and Washington and Lee are partners in an initiative to make preservation and stewardship a major goal in University strategic planning. The *Preservation Master Plan* is a tool that can assist Washington and Lee in meeting the highest standards of campus preservation and best practices now and in the future.

University commitment to the implementation of the principles, recommendations, and guidelines included in the plan is the vital link between the vision and reality. Responsible stewardship of Washington and Lee's historic building and landscape resources needs to be supported by the highest level of decision-makers within the institution, specifically the President and the Board of Trustees. It is recommended that the Board of Trustees formally adopt this *Preservation Master Plan* and direct that it be consulted as part of the University's maintenance, planning, and design processes. As discussed previously in this chapter, this *Preservation Master Plan* is intended to be a flexible guide to inform good decision-making.

Adoption of this plan by the Board will establish a campus-wide preservation policy that will reinforce the importance of stewardship and help develop an awareness of best practices by managers, consultants, faculty, and staff. The preservation policy should include processes for appropriate decision-making that promote communication, collaboration, and teamwork, and make preservation an institutional value. There are several key factors that are crucial to Washington and Lee's success in fulfilling its stewardship responsibilities:

- oversight by staff with awareness of and commitment toward preservation,
- participation of consultants with expertise in historic preservation,
- an internal design review process that considers preservation issues,
- best-practice guidelines for historic buildings and landscapes (this *Preservation Master Plan*),
- experienced, trained personnel, and
- funding levels that support effective stewardship and preservation.

With respect to the ongoing maintenance and treatment of historic building fabric, it is recommended that the University hire one or more staff members experienced in preservation issues and their practical application as *Preservation Specialists* within its Facilities Department. Experience in work with historic fabric should be one consideration in the interviewing and hiring of all new maintenance personnel. It is recommended that existing staff be permitted to participate in workshops providing hands-on training in appropriate preservation treatment techniques. Such workshops are available in a variety of locations.

The *Preservation Specialist* should be a foreman, supervisor, conservator, or master craftsman experienced in hands-on work with historic building fabric and responsible for management and oversight of ongoing maintenance work related to historic resources. The *Preservation Specialist* should monitor and conduct routine maintenance procedures and make improvements with respect to the appropriate treatment of historic building fabric.

Since a program of sound preventative maintenance is the foundation for good stewardship, the *Preservation Specialist* should participate in creation of cyclical maintenance plans for buildings and landscapes that include information on schedules for each type of maintenance; recommended products, methods, and materials; repair; and best-practice techniques for the maintenance and repair of historic materials. If it is not done already, a system of record keeping should be kept that records maintenance work undertaken on a year-by-year and building-by-building basis. As the systems evolve, the cyclical maintenance plans and record keeping will become the institutional memory, transmitting crucial facility and treatment information to new managers and maintenance staff.

The *Preservation Specialist* should be responsible for finding contractors experienced in specialized types of preservation work. Repairs typically handled by maintenance staff and/or contractors

unfamiliar with preservation practices could result in damage to historic fabric and features. A group of specialized contractors that the University could count upon would help in supplementing the expertise of facilities staff. Specialized knowledge and skills are often required for complex work on historic roofs, masonry, windows, and other important features.

Similarly, the University should retain the services of a *Historic Preservation Consultant* to assist the University Architect and Director of Facilities with preservation issues on an ongoing basis. The *Historic Preservation Consultant* should be involved in planning and design with respect to historic buildings and landscapes. A *Historic Preservation Review Committee* should be established consisting of the Advisory Committee for this *Preservation Master Plan* to provide review and input on planning and design projects involving historic resources.

When undertaking construction projects at Washington and Lee within the landscape character areas described in Chapter 4, it is recommended that the following process be followed:

- Retain a *Historic Preservation Consultant* to be a part of the project team;
- Review project-specific programs for the buildings and landscapes involved in the project to be provided by, or developed in conjunction with, the University;
- Consult with the Facilities Department on building-related issues, requirements and codes;
- Consult with the University's Department of Anthropology for an assessment of the archeological sensitivity of any landscape areas to be disturbed; if sensitive areas cannot be avoided and will be disturbed, conduct an archeological investigation to collect information that will be lost as a result of the project;
- Consult the landscape and building assessment and guidelines portions of this *Preservation Master Plan* for information on the general project approach and treatments with respect to the specific landscape character area and/or historic building being affected;
- Consult the design guidelines included in this *Preservation Master Plan* for information on the recommended treatment of historic fabric that will be affected;

- Submit conceptual plans for the proposed work that describe the project in drawings and text and demonstrate how the proposed work will be in accordance with these guidelines; include options and alternatives that have been considered if appropriate; the historic preservation consultant should be part of the design team;
- Obtain approval by the University and its advisors with respect to the conceptual plan; it is recommended that a *Historic Preservation Review Committee* experienced with historic preservation issues be part of the review process on an advisory basis;
- Prepare construction documents for the work consistent with these guidelines and submit them to the University for review; the *Historic Preservation Consultant* should be part of the construction document design team;
- The University should designate a historical preservation review function to the University Architect working with the *Historic Preservation Consultant* to respond to potential design and preservation treatment issues associated with building and landscape improvement projects.