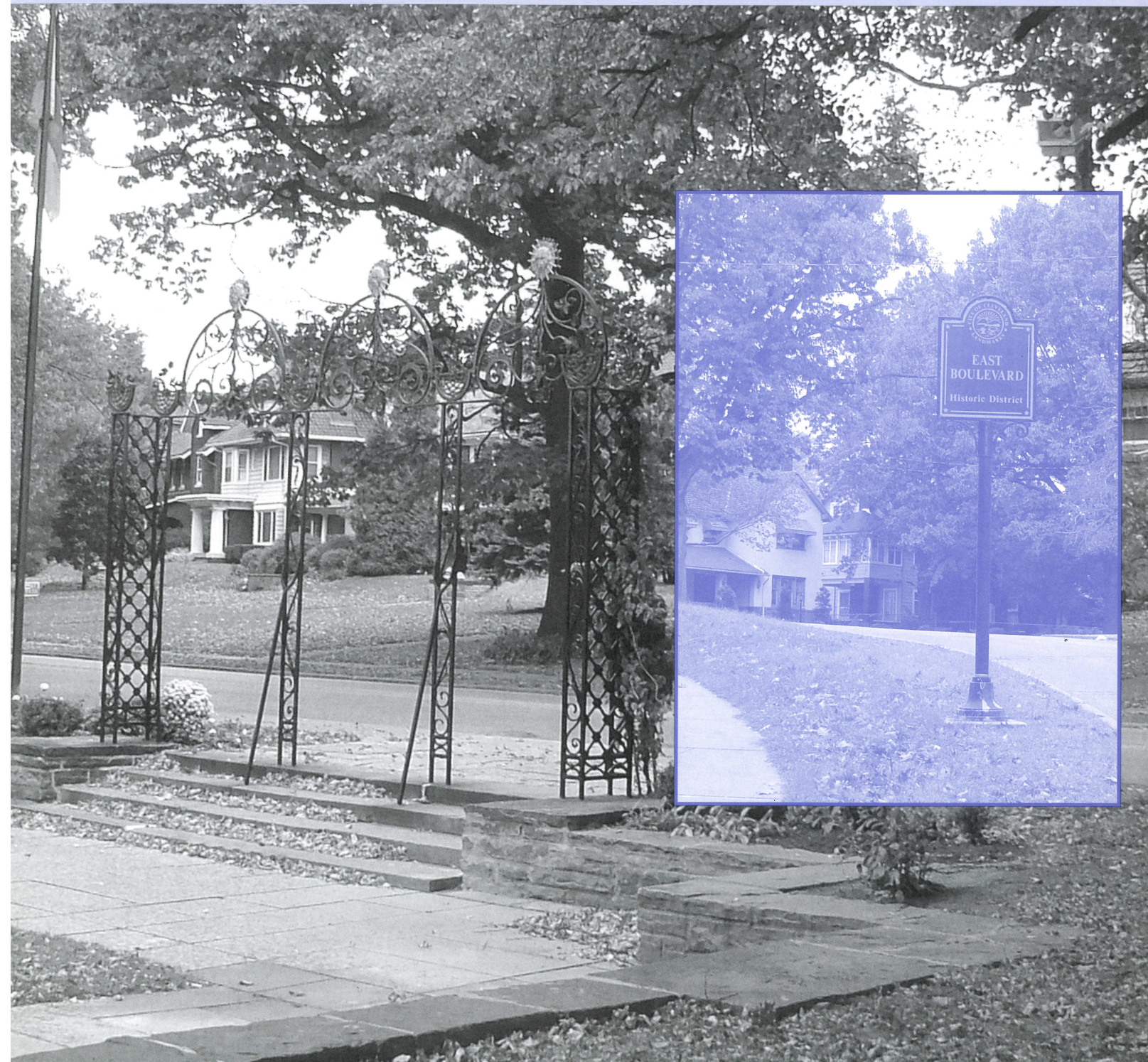


An Enduring Legacy

A Guide to Design Review in
The East Boulevard Historic District



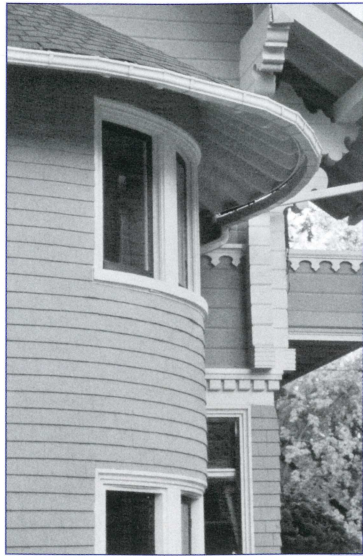
WHAT IS A LANDMARK HISTORIC DISTRICT?

Amid the many urban design changes of the past thirty five years, Cleveland City Council passed codified ordinances to create Landmark Historic Districts. The Landmark designation honors and provides a mechanism to protect and preserve the rich history and architecture of our oldest neighborhoods. From East Boulevard to Brooklyn Centre, Ohio City to Little Italy, the Warehouse District to Shaker Square, the character of our older and historic residences, commercial buildings, houses of worship, and other structures is thus protected from inappropriate exterior changes.

City Council established the Cleveland Landmarks Commission in 1972 to "encourage the preservation of historically and architecturally significant buildings and historic districts within the City of Cleveland." The Landmarks Commission is an eleven-member board of preservation-minded individuals consisting of architects, historians, property owners, attorneys, Cleveland City Council representatives, the Director of City Planning, and the Commissioner of Architecture. The Landmarks Commission follows established criteria listed in the city's Landmarks

Ordinance and uses the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for Rehabilitation* to review proposed changes to individual Landmarks or properties within historic districts. The Landmarks Commission also reviews proposed new construction projects within historic districts.

The Landmarks Commission is empowered to appoint Local Design Review Committees within designated historic districts to serve strictly as advisory committees. The local committees advise on the issuance of Certificates of Appropriateness for exterior rehabilitation projects within their respective districts; the designation of properties as Landmarks within a district; the modification of boundaries of the district; and other issues referred to the Local Committee by the Landmarks Commission. A Certificate of Appropriateness is confirmation that a property owner's proposed design changes do not harm the historic character of a Landmark Historic District. The Certificate applies only to the design of a proposed project. Homeowners and their contractors must still comply with local zoning and building code ordinances.



East 98th Street and Westchester Avenue, circa 1903



East Boulevard (between Parkgate and Shakespeare), 1950s

HISTORIC EAST BOULEVARD

Several architectural and cultural factors combine to make the East Boulevard Historic District significant to the history of Cleveland. From the many fine examples of twentieth century architectural styles and the residential work of distinguished architects (including Meade & Hamilton and the Kauffman Architectural Company) to the ornamental stone bridges that grace the winding Martin Luther King Jr. Drive (Charles Schweinfurth, architect), the East Boulevard Historic District is one of the few remaining links to the City Beautiful Movement of the early 1900s. The City Beautiful Movement sought to humanize American cities through formal planning of streets, open spaces, landscaping, and classical design around existing natural features. In Cleveland, residential subdivisions were planned along the east and west boulevards.

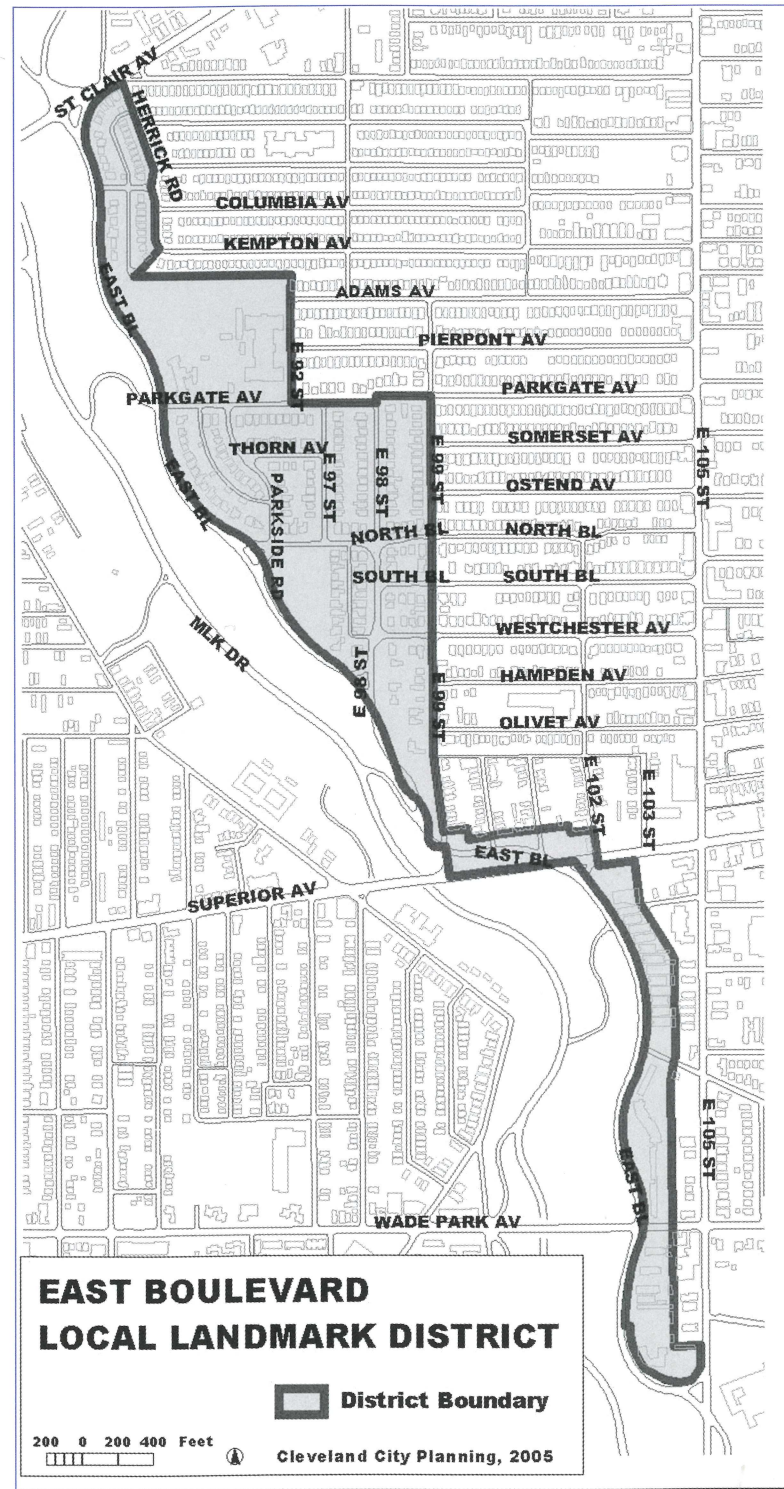
Homes in the East Boulevard district are primarily two and one half story single-family residences built in the numerous revival styles popular during the early years of the twentieth century. The largest homes and lots are along East Boulevard facing Rockefeller Park. The large front lawns of these homes extend the visual depth of the park. The district also includes several apartment buildings that because of similar shapes, sizes, and detailing form a coherent group. Significant non-residential buildings include Michael R. White Elementary School (formerly Miles Standish Elementary School), St. Mark's Presbyterian Church, and the Amasa Stone House for Aged Women.

The series of Cultural Gardens in Rockefeller Park, dedicated as a unit in 1939, is the only broadly conceived plan within any American municipality to honor various racial and ethnic groups in a population. The gardens are historically significant because they represent early, official recognition of diversity within the United States. Restoration work has taken place recently in the gardens and several new gardens are in the planning stage.

Early residents of the East Boulevard district included Frank J. Kern, a leader in Cleveland's early Slovenian community; Frank Catalano, a pioneer Italian produce merchant; and Isadore Grossman, one of the founders of the Cleveland Legal Aid Society.

Since the mid-1940s, the East Boulevard neighborhood has been home to many of Cleveland's most successful African American citizens, including Chester K. Gillespie, who served as assistant city law director in 1921 and soon became a leading civil rights attorney; Lawrence Payne, who served on Cleveland City Council in 1929; architect Julian Madison; Judge Lillian Walker Burke (a founding trustee of the Cleveland Restoration Society); and banker and civic leader Bertram Gardner. Former Mayor Michael R. White lived in the East Boulevard Historic District throughout his three terms. Design review protects the legacy of these distinguished individuals.

The East Boulevard district is also listed on the prestigious National Register of Historic Places. The National Register is the official list of historic properties recognized by the federal government as worthy of preservation for their local, state, or national significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, or culture.



DESIGN REVIEW IN THE EAST BOULEVARD DISTRICT

Upon the recommendation of Judge Lillian Walker Burke, an East Boulevard homeowner and member of the Landmarks Commission in the 1980s, East Boulevard and certain surrounding streets were designated as a Cleveland Landmark Historic District by City Council in 1986. (See boundary map, left) The Landmarks Commission created the East Boulevard Design Review Committee in 2003.

The East Boulevard Design Review Committee is composed of neighborhood residents, other property owners, and staff members of the Famicos Foundation, the community development corporation serving the larger neighborhood of Glenville. The Landmarks Commission encourages the involvement of individuals with professional experience in architecture and construction as well as an understanding of history, aesthetics, and community standards.

In reviewing proposed projects, the Landmarks Commission will consider the recommendations of the local design review committee before it approves or denies a Certificate of Appropriateness.



The Landmarks

Commission encourages the involvement of individuals with professional experience in architecture and construction as well as an understanding of history, aesthetics, and community standards.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

I am planning an exterior rehabilitation project. What should I do first?

- Apply for a Building Permit before you begin any work or purchase materials. The City of Cleveland requires building permits for most exterior projects throughout the city. Failure to do so will result in fines to the homeowner. You or your contractor should contact the Department of Building & Housing - Permits at (216) 664-2927.
- Contact the staff of the Landmarks Commission at (216) 664-2531 for instructions on proceeding with your design review case. Your case will be placed on the next agenda of the East Boulevard Historic District Design Review Committee. The staff of the Landmarks Commission will provide you with the date, location, and time of local design review committee meetings.

Overall, how long will the review take?

The Landmarks Commission and the local design review committee generally meet twice a month. Decisions can be reached on the same day of your hearing at the Landmarks Commission. Property owners and contractors can expedite a review case by submitting required information on proposed projects (e.g., permits, site plans, building elevation drawings, color photos, and building material samples) prior to the local design review committee meeting.

Are interior projects subject to design review?

No. Design review only applies to exterior home rehabilitation projects.

Does the Landmarks Commission review proposed new construction and additions?

Yes. The Commission will consider how new construction and additions should be integrated within the existing housing stock and to what degree the proposed projects should complement historic architectural styles. The Commission may also require that new construction and additions adhere to the prevailing historical style or are compatible with the historic setting.

Are garages subject to design review?

Yes. New garage construction, rehabilitation, and demolition of existing garages are also subject to design review.

What if my proposal is denied?

The Secretary of the Landmarks Commission will explain why your project was not approved. You may request an informal review by the Landmarks Commission to obtain suggestions for revising and re-submitting your proposal.

If I am unable to immediately afford a historic rehabilitation project, will I lose my home?

No, that is a myth. The goal of the Landmarks Commission and local design review committee is to maintain the character of historic districts.

What type of assistance is available to homeowners?

Older and historic homes require special expertise and you should not entrust your home rehabilitation project to inexperienced contractors. The non-profit Famicos Foundation and the Cleveland Restoration Society (CRS) offer programs to help homeowners maintain and rehabilitate their property. Design review committee members are also available to discuss their experiences with historic rehabilitation contractors.

The Cleveland Restoration Society's **Neighborhood Historic Preservation Program** provides free expert advice on preserving the unique character of your home. Call CRS to obtain free advice on masonry repair, roof repair and replacement, window preservation, porch repair, and exterior paint color selection. In cooperation with participating Cleveland City Council members, CRS also coordinates a reduced rate, 12-year term home rehabilitation loan program.

PRESERVATION STANDARDS

• **SIDING** Preserve your home's original wood siding. Wood-sided houses have character and provide a sense of the past. Quality-minded homeowners must be aware that most houses in Cleveland built in the early twentieth century contain "old growth" wood which is far superior to today's construction lumber. Old growth lumber is an irreplaceable natural resource that offers highly stable structural qualities and decay resistance. Such wood can last indefinitely if properly maintained.

If there is severe deterioration, it is best to replace wood with wood. Replacement material should match the original siding in texture, color, design, composition, and other visual qualities.

Non-original, synthetic siding (e.g., aluminum and vinyl siding) can only mimic the appearance of wood. Synthetic siding frequently hides ornamentation, window and door trim, and other historic details that are critical to the architectural character of a home. In a historic district, this fact can detract from a home's market value. (Asphalt and imitation brick are also "fake" exteriors, which can detract from your home's historic value.) Contrary to media advertisements, aluminum and vinyl siding are not "maintenance free." Maintenance is merely postponed. Aluminum can scratch or dent. In frigid temperatures, vinyl siding can crack and shatter. With both aluminum and vinyl siding, fading and discoloration can occur after about 15 years. Homeowners are consequently forced to paint their siding. Aluminum and vinyl siding pose an even higher cost to homeowners because they trap moisture into a structure. This can ultimately result in expensive repairs.

• **PORCHES** Porches should retain their original dimensions, features, and details. Because porches are integral to the design of your house, they should not be removed or enclosed. If the original cannot be rehabilitated, new elements should match the original in design and materials as closely as possible. Care should be taken that porch railings and spindles are in keeping with the architectural character of the house.

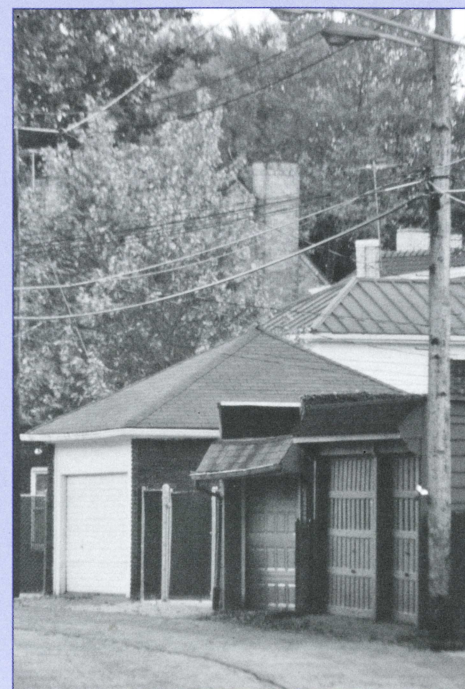
• **WINDOWS** Removing or replacing your original windows with vinyl windows changes the character of your home. New vinyl windows look out of place on an older or historic home because vinyl window manufacturers are unable to duplicate the look of true divided light windows. Vinyl



windows are only available in white or cream colors. When faced with damaged original windows, first try to preserve them. You'll save money! Often, homeowners can independently perform needed repairs, which include replacing broken window ropes, re-glazing windows, caulking gaps, installing weather stripping. Installation of new high quality aluminum storm windows is also an excellent way to preserve historic windows and increase the thermal integrity of older single pane windows. The Cleveland Restoration Society's historic rehabilitation team is available to answer questions and guide your window repair and preservation project. If your original windows are indeed beyond repair, look for wood or aluminum-clad wood windows to approximate the appearance of your original windows. Call the Cleveland Restoration Society at (216) 426-1000 to discuss affordable and appropriate options to vinyl replacement windows.

Preserving your original windows also provides a safety benefit. Most original windows are made of old-growth wood, which is certainly harder and of better quality than vinyl. According to local law enforcement officials, burglars find it easier to remove or "pop out" vinyl windows to enter homes.

• **ROOFS** Special roofs such as slate and clay tile roofs are rare and can last many years. They should be preserved if at all possible. If replacement is necessary and cost is an issue, use new substitute tiles and slates, made of fiberglass or architectural cement. Replacement with modern asphalt shingles is acceptable if the size and color match the original roof.



SECRETARY OF INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION

The Secretary of the Interior is responsible for establishing standards for all programs under Departmental authority and for advising Federal agencies on the preservation of historic properties listed on or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The intent of the Standards for Rehabilitation is to assist the long-term preservation of a property's significance through the preservation of historic materials and features.

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.
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.
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.
4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.
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.
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.
8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
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.
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.



A Guide to Design Review in the East Boulevard Historic District

FOR FURTHER REFERENCE

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Illustrated Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings. U.S. Department of the Interior. National Park Service.
<http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/tax/rhb/>

The Boulevard Neighborhoods of Cleveland, Cleveland Restoration Society

Preservation Briefs. U.S. Department of the Interior. National Park Service.
<http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/pres-bhom.htm>

INFORMATIONAL RESOURCES

Cleveland Landmarks Commission
601 Lakeside Avenue, Fifth Floor
Cleveland, Ohio 44114
(216) 664-2531
www.city.cleveland.oh.us

Cleveland Restoration Society
3751 Prospect Avenue
Cleveland, Ohio 44115
(216) 426-1000
www.clevelandrestoration.org

Famicos Foundation
1325 Ansel Road
Cleveland, Ohio 44106
(216) 791-6476
www.famicos.org

City of Cleveland
Division of Building & Housing
601 Lakeside Avenue, Room 505
(216) 664-2927 - Building Permits
(216) 664-2007 - Code Complaint Center

Cuyahoga County Archives
2905 Franklin Boulevard
Cleveland, Ohio 44113
(216) 443-7250
(Historic house photos; limited hours, call first)

Produced by the East Boulevard Design Review Committee in cooperation with The Cleveland Restoration Society, Cleveland Landmarks Commission, and the Famicos Foundation.

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James Graham, Douglas Shaw,
CRS Collection, Cleveland State University

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