



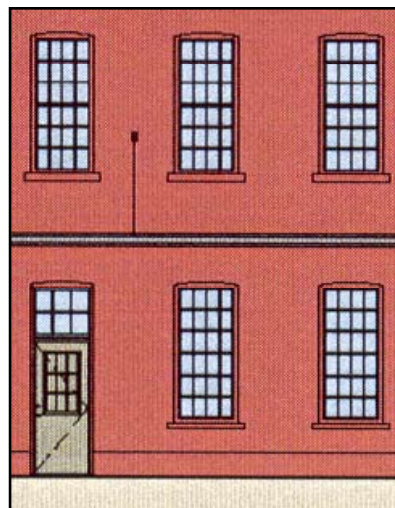
**Subject:** New Entries on Mill Buildings

**Applicable Standards:** 2. Retention of Historic Character  
9. Compatible New Additions/Alterations

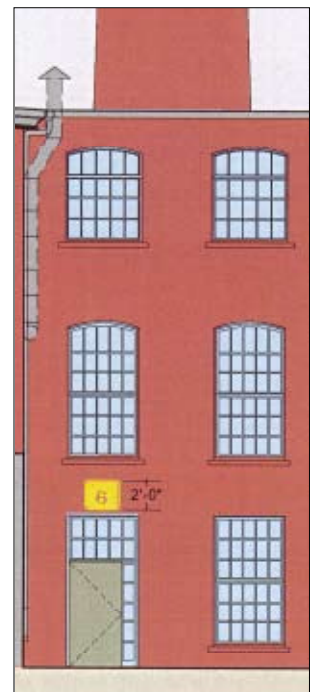
**Issue:** The rehabilitation of historic mill buildings may require the addition of a pedestrian entrance or entrances in walls where few openings previously existed. They are often needed when industrial buildings are converted to multiple uses where commercial or office space occupies the first floor with apartments above. Even when mill buildings are converted solely to housing, additional entries are needed for the residents.

To meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, new entrances should be simple in design; they should not appear historic; they should blend in with the facade; and they should be unobtrusive and modestly scaled. Mill buildings are often defined by their large multi-paned windows and even fenestration. The number of new entry openings should be limited so that this character-defining aspect is retained. Extending an existing window opening down to accommodate a new pedestrian door may be an acceptable approach especially if the essence of the historic window can be conveyed with multi-paned transoms and surrounds.

**Application 1 (Compatible entrance):** The buildings in this 19th century mill complex are being converted to a combination commercial/residential use. The plans called for commercial or office space occupying the first floor with apartments above as well as townhouse units with independent entries. In an effort to keep the industrial character of the buildings as conveyed with the large multi-paned windows and even fenestration, the new entrances were introduced by extending the existing historic window openings. Steel entrance doors, some solid and some with multi-paned glazing, were installed. Glazed transoms with a paned configuration to match the adjacent windows surmounted the doors. When the openings were wider than the standard 3'-6", a multi-paned glazed sidelight was also installed. Both treatments are compatible and, thus, meet the Standards.



Existing historic window openings were extended to allow the installation of new pedestrian entrances. Multiple-paned glass transoms and surrounds matching the historic grid pattern were used to keep the sense of historic glazing.

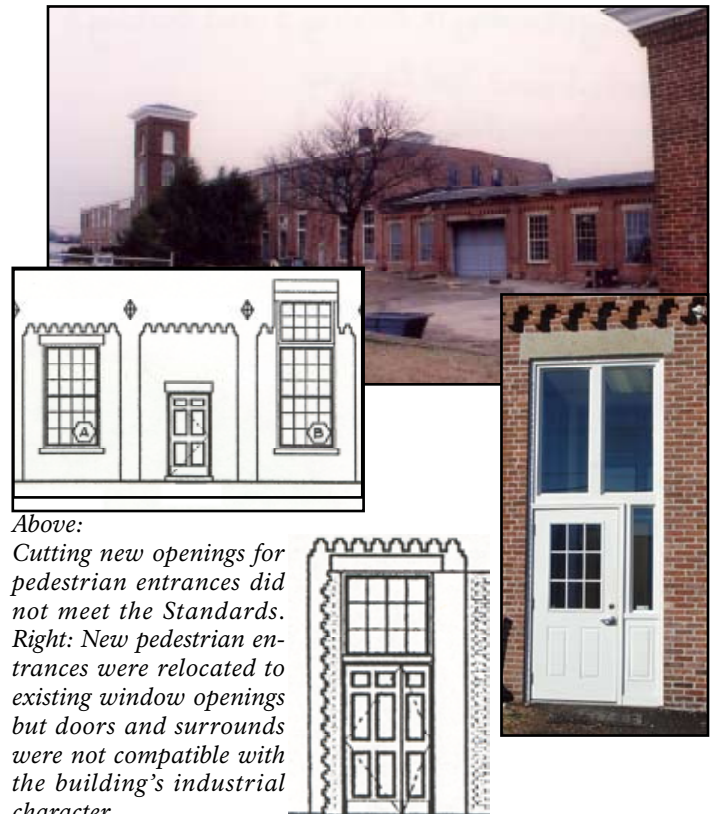


**Application 2 (Compatible entrance):** Another example where compatible new pedestrian entrances were added to historic mill buildings can be seen in this early 20th century complex. The new residential plan called for single-loaded corridors with interior residential entries as well as new entrances on an exterior wall. The existing historic window openings were much wider than those in the previous example. As a result, double-glazed doors with multi-paned glass, surmounted by an arched glazed transom with a pane configuration matching the adjacent windows, were installed. This treatment allowed for new exterior entrances while keeping the historic fenestration pattern and, therefore, met the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.



Existing historic window openings were extended to allow for the new below-grade pedestrian entrances. In order to keep the important historic fenestration pattern, double doors with multi-paned glazing, surmounted by a glazed transom, were installed. The pane configuration of both the door and transom units matched that of the adjacent windows.

**Application 3 (Incompatible entrance):** This mill complex with buildings dating back to the pre-Civil War era, once housed light forging, carpentry, and tooling machinery. Recent rehabilitation work has converted the buildings to offices. As part of the rehabilitation, new pedestrian entrances were proposed at various locations around the complex. Part 2 application drawings proposed residential-style doors with 6 raised panels, some with multi-paned glazed transoms above. The State Historic Preservation Office encouraged the owner to keep the entries within existing historic window openings and to install entrances that reflected the industrial character of the buildings. Although the owner followed the state's advice to install the new pedestrian entrances within the existing window openings, the entrances with sidelights and doors with multi-paned glass are residential in character. In order for the project to meet the Standards, these entrances must be revised to be more compatible with the industrial nature of the complex.



Above:  
Cutting new openings for pedestrian entrances did not meet the Standards. Right: New pedestrian entrances were relocated to existing window openings but doors and surrounds were not compatible with the building's industrial character.

Kaaren Staveteig, Technical Preservation Services, National Park Service

These bulletins are issued to explain preservation project decisions made by the U.S. Department of the Interior. The resulting determinations, based on the [Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation](#), are not necessarily applicable beyond the unique facts and circumstances of each particular case.