



Subject: Interior Alterations to Detached Residences to Accommodate New Functions

- Applicable Standards:**
- 2. Retention of Historic Character
 - 5. Preservation of Distinctive Features, Finishes and Craftsmanship

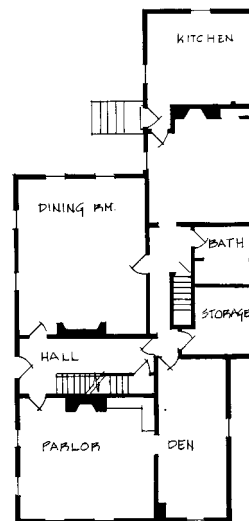
Issue: The adaptive reuse of single family residences for new uses often requires some alteration to historic floor plans, fabric, and trim. Owners view efficient spatial arrangements and modern levels of light, heat, air conditioning, and plumbing as imperative for attracting clientele and ensuring the economic viability of the project. Such modifications, however, must respect the distinctive historic architectural character of the residence. When major historic spaces, like entrance halls and dining rooms, are subdivided, traditional spatial configurations and circulation patterns may be lost and distinctive architectural features destroyed, thereby violating the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. This issue is illustrated in two houses, both originally single-family homes, that were rehabilitated as bed-and-breakfast hostelrys. The first project did not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards largely because of major alterations to important historic spaces. The second preserved the existing configuration and sequence of major spaces while retaining all distinctive trim.

Application 1 (*Incompatible treatment*): The first example is a mid-18th century, 2 1/2-story gambrel roofed house with an earlier ell. In 1937 the building was converted to a boarding house, and virtually all its historic interior trim was removed, except an original paneled chimney breast. Several decades later, when the building reverted to single-family use, the rooms were decorated with contemporary shelving and cabinets, as well as with 18th-century details salvaged from other area houses of the same era. Through all its alterations, however, the house retained its basic central hall plan and its traditional sequence of spaces.

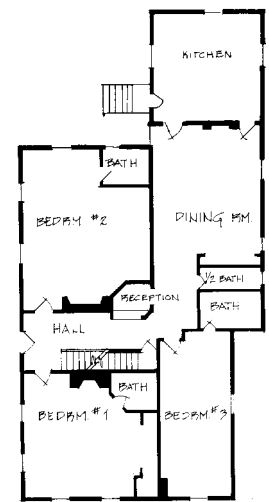
When the house underwent rehabilitation as a bed-and-breakfast inn, existing interior features and trim were kept, but a number of other changes to the first floor were made, including the addition of a bath in each of the two principal front rooms (parlor and dining room); introduction of a small, built-in reception area further altered the dining room; and creation of a wall opening at the end of the entrance hall to connect this space with the new adjoining reception area. Unfortunately, these changes altered an intact historic plan and destroyed the spatial symmetry characteristic of formal, 18th-century interior architectural design. While built-in shelving units had been previously added in the parlor in the same corner as the new



First floor parlor, before rehabilitation. Most moldings were replaced over time and shelving was added in the 1960s. The paneled chimney breast, however, is original and represents virtually the only original trim remaining in the main section of the house.



Existing first floor plan prior to rehabilitation. Note outline of shelving units added to the right of the parlor fireplace during the 1960s rehabilitation.



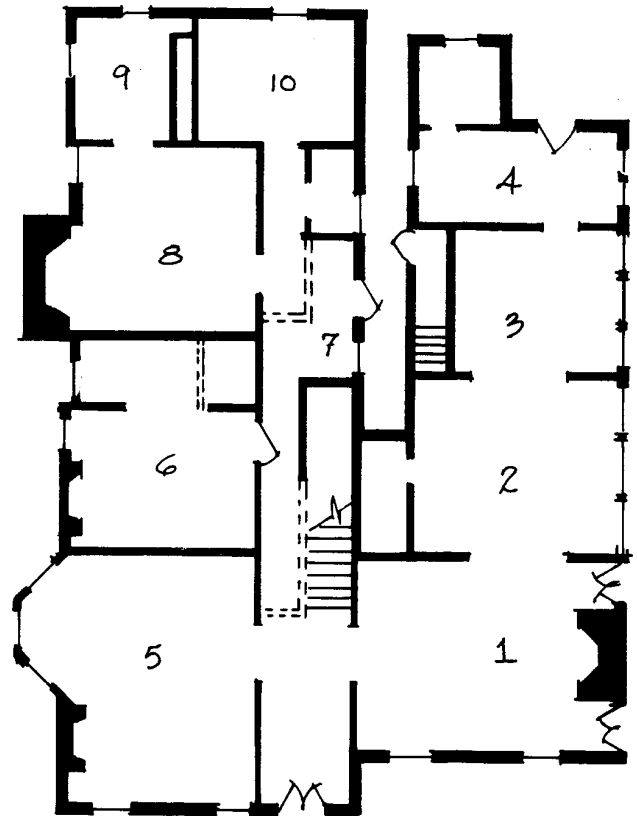
First floor plan, after rehabilitation. Alterations to intact spaces at the front of the first floor (hall, parlor, dining room) destroyed the spatial symmetry characteristic of the formal 18th-century interior design.

bath, these shelves had neither altered the basic room configuration nor protruded as far into the room as did the proposed bathroom. The alterations to the parlor, including the addition of a bathroom, further compromised historic character by virtue of the fact that this room was the only area in the main house to retain its 18th-century paneled chimney breast, the only major original trim remaining in this section of the building.

Application 2 (Compatible treatment): The second project involves the rehabilitation of a large 2 1/2 story Queen Anne-style frame “cottage.” Built c.1886 for a well-to-do client, it is one of the most important residences in a small urban historic district. Sometime in the mid-20th century the house was converted into five apartments; at that time the main staircase was enclosed and some of the rear rooms on both the first and second floors were converted to kitchens.

In the most recent rehabilitation as a bed-and-breakfast inn, the staircase enclosures were removed; the two first-floor front rooms were retained in their existing historic configuration as common areas, and all the interior trim and mantels were repaired. Additional bath space was provided by “usurping” three of the surplus kitchens and adding baths in the corners of the upstairs bedrooms.

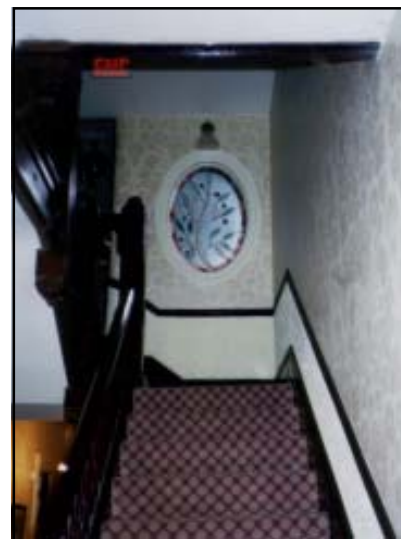
By respecting major spaces and historic interior features and trim, this rehabilitation project conforms to the Secretary’s Standards and demonstrates that the historic character of a building can be retained while providing comfortable and attractive guest accommodations.



Queen Anne cottage, 1st floor plan, showing proposed changes superimposed on existing layout. The two front rooms (1 and 5) were retained as a common dining room and living room. The kitchen added in the 1950s in room 9 was converted into a guest bath; other baths were added on the second floor.



Main hallway, before rehabilitation. The main staircase was enclosed in the 1950s when the house was converted into a five-unit apartment building.



Main hallway, after rehabilitation. This area was restored to its original configuration. Note that the original oval stained glass window was reinstalled on the landing.