



Interpreting The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

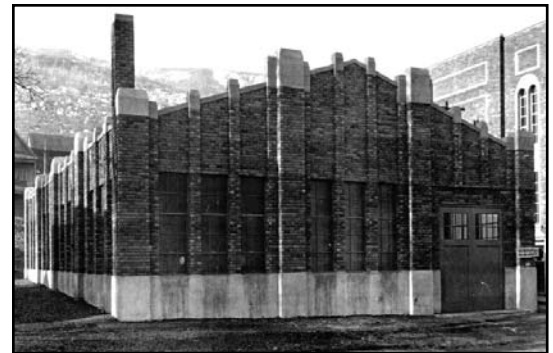
Subject: New Infill for Historic Garage Openings

- Applicable Standards:**
2. Retention of Historic Character
 6. Repair/Replacement of Deteriorated or Missing Features Based on Evidence
 9. Compatible New Additions/Alterations

Issue: Garage doors are often defining elements in the facades of historic buildings, such as firehouses and warehouses, whether there is one single large door or a series of doors creating a rhythm across a building elevation. Inappropriate replacement of these doors can detract from the historic character of the entire building and preclude the project from meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Retaining the historic doors is always preferable. However, during rehabilitation or adaptive reuse projects, new replacement doors may be necessary as their functional use changes, e.g. from vehicular to pedestrian access. The design of replacement doors should maintain the character of the historic building as well as match in size that which they replace. In the case where historic doors have already been replaced with inappropriate infill, any new treatments must still be compatible with the historic character of the building.

Buildings with single garage door openings

Application 1 (Compatible treatment): A "mechanical arts" building, built in 1936 as a WPA project, was recently converted from a high school industrial arts shop to a studio/office/shop. The rehabilitation of this individually listed property included the infill of an historic garage door opening on the front elevation. Historically, the garage door opening was infilled with an oversized pair of hinged wood doors, each divided into two segmented panels by intersecting stiles and rails. The top panels of each door were glazed with eight multi-paned, true-divided lights. At some point, the historic garage doors were replaced by a single roll-up wood door, divided into thirty segmented solid panels by intersecting stiles and rails. As a result of this earlier alteration, the owner had the option of preserving the existing doors, recreating a new unit based on historic photographs, or designing new compatible doors. The owner chose to recreate the doors shown in historic photographs. Fitted with handles, the new doors allow easy entrance while preserving the industrial character of the building.



The original garage door as it appeared in 1940 was an oversized pair of hinged wood doors with no outside handles. Each door was divided into two segmented panels with the top sections infilled with eight true-divided lights.



Just prior to rehab, the existing garage door was a single wood roll-up style, divided into thirty segmented solid panels by intersecting stiles and rails.



The owner chose to duplicate the original garage doors. The new doors preserved the industrial character of the historic building.

Application 2 (*Incompatible treatment*): A second example involves the conversion of a single story, 1930 building in a historic district, from light industrial use to office/residential use. Plans included infilling a large historic garage door opening on the principal elevation. Before rehabilitation, the opening contained an operable garage door and a pedestrian door surmounted by a glazed transom. During the rehabilitation, the owner removed the door units and installed an early-20th century style storefront in the opening, thereby creating a change incompatible with the building's historic character.



Before the work began, the original 1930 garage door opening had an operable garage door and a pedestrian door surmounted by a glazed transom installed as infill.



During rehabilitation the owner infilled the garage door opening with a storefront reminiscent of those used in the early-20th century, which is not in keeping with the historic character of the building.

Buildings with more than one garage door opening

Application 3 (*Compatible treatment*): A 1903 firehouse, located within a historic district, was recently converted into a restaurant. The rehabilitation included infilling a series of three, segmental arched garage door openings. Historically, these openings contained firehouse doors. In 1972, these openings were infilled with concrete masonry. During the rehabilitation the current owner removed the inappropriate masonry infill and installed replacement garage doors with glazed transoms. The design of the new doors consists of multi-paned units, each divided into 16 segmented panels by intersecting stiles and rails. The panels are infilled with three rows of clear tempered glass and V-groove wood siding at the base. This compatible contemporary treatment of the replacement garage doors maintains the historic character of the building, while providing the openness sought by the new owner.



The south elevation of the 1903 firehouse is dominated by three large garage door openings. This photo was taken just prior to rehab and shows the existing infill treatments.



The design of the replacement doors is articulated with multi-paned units, maintaining the historic character of the building.

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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.