

How to Sensitivey Rehabilitate Your Westmorland Home

A guide for Homeowners



Prepared by Jen Davel
Supplied by the Westmorland History Committee

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** While Westmorland has a designated residence listed on the National Register of Historic Places, there is not a historic district located in Westmorland. This guide is informational only and is not intended to serve as design guidelines.*

What Makes Up the Neighborhood We Call:

Westmorland

When I ask people what type of house styles come to mind when thinking about our neighborhood, inevitably the answers vary. There is a very good reason for this: Westmorland is made up of a plethora of housing styles. Some of the more common house styles include **Cape Cod, Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, International Style, Lustron, and Ranch**. Of course this does not cover the full range because more times than not a house is a combination of two or more styles.



Perhaps your home is one of the styles listed on the following pages and maybe it is a mix of two or more. It doesn't matter

what matters is that your home is important to you, your family and your neighborhood.

This pamphlet is a guide to help you with any questions you may have on an up-coming rehabilitation project. In order for your rehabilitation to be successful, you must first determine your home's architectural style. Once this is determined you will find many design decisions much easier because answers will be based on your home's architectural style.

Common House Styles in Westmorland:



The **Cape Cod** style house is quite common in the Westmorland neighborhood. This style of house is very simple with very little ornamentation. Cape Cods are usually symmetrically designed with a central front door flanked by two multi-paned windows on either side. Cape Cods found in our neighborhood are usually a story and a half, with a steep pitched roof and end gables. The chimney can be centrally located but here are usually located at one of the end gables. Often times you will also see dormers on a Cape Cod house.



Colonial Revival style houses are usually two full stories in height with the roof ridge running parallel to the street, a symmetrical front facade with an accented doorway and evenly spaced windows on either side of it. The elaborate front doors can have decorative crown pediments and overhead fanlights and sidelights. Window openings, while symmetrically located on either side of the front entrance, are usually hung in adjacent pairs or in triple combinations rather than as single windows. Side porches or sunrooms were common additions to these homes.



A variety of **Tudor Revivals** can be seen in our neighborhood. In general, you will be hard pressed to find two Tudor Revivals alike. Items such as steeply pitched roofs, half-timbering often in-filled with herringbone brickwork, tall mullioned windows, high chimneys, overhanging first floors above pillared porches and dormer windows supported by consoles are some of the more common features integrated into the design.



The **International Style** formed during the early years of modernist design. Standing apart from its traditional design counterparts; the philosophy of International Style was the rejection of ornamentation. International Style houses are very simple asymmetrical forms with flat roofs, no ornamentation, and are made using materials such as glass, concrete and steel. Because International Style was so drastically different, not all homeowners were attracted to this style. Westmorland has many houses of the International Style which contributes to our eclectic mix of housing stock.



Westmorland is home to seven Lustron houses. Not bad for a unique housing style. **Lustron** houses are prefabricated, enameled steel houses developed in the post-World War II era United States in response to the shortage of houses for returning GIs. This is the one housing type that can not be a hybrid of styles as other styles can and often are. There were eight color options to choose from when you ordered your house. The walls were enameled steel panels inside and out. There were two major window types in Lustron homes: “tripartite” and casement



Ranch style houses (also American ranch, California ranch, Rambler, raised ranch or rancher) are noted for their long, close-to-the-ground profile. While there are numerous variations to the Ranch style house, there are many unifying architectural features that define all ranches; these features include: single story, long, low roofline, asymmetrical rectangular, L-shaped, or U-shaped design, attached garage, sliding glass doors opening onto a patio, large windows, (often decorated with shutters) and large overhanging eaves. The roof lines can vary greatly on ranches from cross-gabled, side-gabled or hipped.

Identify Architectural Features

No matter what style your home is, it has architectural features. Step back take a look at your home from the sidewalk. What makes your house the style it is? Do you have wood lap siding or stone? Are there dormers on your house? Do you have detailed window trim? Whatever makes your home's style unique, the best advice in rehabilitating your home is to maintain those features. To explain further, here are three houses of different styles. For each house shown, some architectural features are listed. Hopefully this is helpful in identifying your house's significant architectural features.

Front window trim, muntin pattern on windows, shutters, wood siding



Flat roof, central chimney, asymmetrical façade, stucco cladding



Symmetrical façade, dormers, six over six double hung windows with flower boxes, wood siding

Retain & Preserve

Now that you have a better idea of what the architectural features of your house are, you can see that if these features are changed, it would dramatically change your home's aesthetic.

The Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation or *The Standards* (a link to the Standards is found at the end of this pamphlet in the Resources List) is a great resource on appropriate ways to maintain the integrity (or architectural features) of your house. Below are excerpts from the *Standards*:

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.

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

The Standards state that historic building materials should always be repaired before replaced. If the materials are deteriorated beyond repair, the materials should be replaced with materials-in-kind and should match the historic feature identically. This simple rule of thumb can be applied to almost any of your home's architectural features.

At this point you have an understanding of your home's significant architectural features and why it is important to maintain these features. The following pages outline common building materials and features and how to sympathetically repair or replace these features.

Exterior Cladding - 101

wood

Typically with older homes, the original cladding should be repaired, maintained and preserved. Wood siding can be primed and repainted. Wood is a very durable material if maintained properly. Maintaining wood means protecting it from water. Once water is able to penetrate wood, deterioration occurs. Keeping your wood siding and/or trim primed and painted will allow the historic materials to remain. If you observe deterioration occurring in small areas, wood epoxy can be used. For larger areas of deterioration, entire wood boards can be replaced. Local lumber yards have most varieties in stock for replacement boards.



brick & stone

Brick and stone are very durable exterior cladding materials. Maintenance for brick and stone siding is low as long as the mortar joints between the masonry are sound. Every 50-75 years, the mortar joints may need to be repointed. Repointing is important as it keeps water from entering your walls. Repointing is a term used for the practice of removing a portion of the mortar joint to a depth of $\frac{3}{4}$ ". New mortar can then be laid in $\frac{1}{4}$ " increments to infill the void. Matching the new mortar to the original mortar is essential to a successful repointing job. If the new mortar is too hard, the mortar can damage the adjacent stone. If you think your exterior brick or stone require repointing consult a local mason with experience in repointing. (Refer to the Resources List at the end of this pamphlet.)



stucco

Stucco is also a very long-lasting material as long as water is not allowed to enter the walls through cracks. Water is also able to penetrate exterior walls through ivy or other vegetation. It is always best to keep vegetation off your exterior walls. If upon inspection you find cracks or delamination of your stucco there are local contractors able to help properly infill the cracks. Any sort of caulk or sealant should never be used to infill cracks. This usually will cause additional damage.

new cladding

In some cases replacement siding may be necessary. If so, you are encouraged to consider a material such as fiber cement board rather than vinyl or aluminum siding. Fiber cement board is more durable and more closely matches the appearance of historic wood siding. If you are thinking about fiber cement board, you should also try to match the exposure dimension as well as the depth of the original siding. In doing so will ensure your house's aesthetic remain in tact.



Side Note: If you currently have vinyl or aluminum siding but would like to restore the original wood siding – this is very possible. The first step is to peel away the current siding to determine if the original wood siding is still on the house. If in fact there is still wood siding, it may very well be in good condition. Often times aluminum or vinyl siding was installed over the original simply to avoid repainting – not because the original siding was in poor condition.

Repairing Windows



Windows are often times the most character defining feature of your home.

Once the original windows are gone, the home's appearance can change dramatically. The first option is always to repair before replacing. Repairs such as replacing the glazing compound (as seen at top left) or patching a window sill with wood epoxy (as seen at bottom left) are relatively inexpensive and quite simple to complete. Perhaps your windows require additional repairs; there are local craftspeople (refer to the Resource List) that can sensitively repair historic wood windows. If the windows operate but you are looking for more energy efficiency, storm windows are always a good option too. There are both interior and exterior storm windows available. There are local contractors that can sensitively repair original wood windows (refer to the Resources List).



Replacement Windows

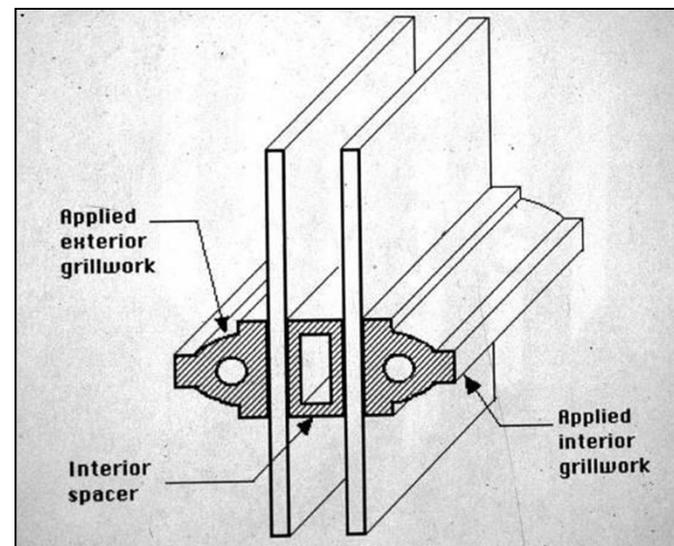
If you are opting for replacing a window, the best approach is to replace the window with a window to match the original. For example if the original window is a wood double-hung with 6 lites over 6 lites (as seen at the right); replacing it with a window to match will maintain your home's aesthetic. Don't forget about the details such as the muntins. Below right is a diagram of an appropriate replacement window muntin section.



Another detail to consider is the glass Visual Light Transmittance (VLT). If the VLT is low the glass may appear tinted and this will alter the overall aesthetic of your house. Most window manufacturers offer an insulated, Low-E glass with a VLT of 72 which will give the look of clear glass.

Many window manufacturers (Pella, Marvin and Anderson just to name a few) have wood window lines that are aluminum clad on the exterior. Aluminum clad wood windows are appropriate and sympathetic to older homes.

Vinyl replacement windows, while less money, are visually inappropriate and their life span is far less than that of a wood window. Vinyl windows will last at the maximum for 15-20 years while a wood window will last 50 years on the average.



Roofing

Most homes in our neighborhood were generally built between 1920 and 1965. Before 1920, houses usually had wood shingle roofs. (Do not confuse wood shingle with wood shake roofs. Wood shake roofs have an uneven appearance and are mostly a product of the bi-centennial era and therefore not an appropriate shingle replacement type for the older houses in our neighborhood.



Wood Shingle



Wood Shake

After 1920 the wide spread use of asphalt shingles became more common. High style homes such as Tudors may have had slate or tile roofs.



Shingle designed to look like slate

Today there are many options for roofs: 3-tab shingles, architectural shingles, standing seam metal, slate and tile. When looking at replacing the roof, you want to select a roofing material that is appropriate to the house's style and age to narrow down the options. You may also want to check if there are any historic photos of your house. Putting a new wood shingle roof on a 1935 colonial revival may not be appropriate unless there is documentation stating this house had a wood shingle roof originally. One other warning, there are many contemporary roofing materials that are one thing but made to look like something else; a great example is the shingle below-left. This shingle has uneven bottom edges and shadow lines trying to look like a slate roof. Just like windows, doors or any other architectural feature, replacing a roof with an inappropriate material will significantly alter the historic appearance of you house.



Standard 3 Tab Shingle



Architectural Shingle

Front Doors

Many times the front door is one of the significant architectural features of the house. And because our Westmorland homes are all different, one door style will not work on all houses. Looking at the four homes to the right; they are four distinctive architectural styles. The front door should reflect this style. Understandably doors are not always repairable so when the time comes to purchase a new door we recommend the same strategy. First consider your home's style and age. If you have historic photos - try to match the look and finish of the original door.

Side Note: A & B below may be appropriate for traditional style homes while Door C may work for the International Style home (remember void of ornamentation) and Doors D & E would be great doors for a number of the Ranch style homes.



Additions to Historic Homes



Living in Westmorland is a wonderful experience, but we all know that our homes can be modest in size. Additions to historic homes can be a great way to stay in the neighborhood you love while giving your family a little extra breathing room. The key to additions to historic homes has to do with scale, location and materials. Sympathetic home additions are usually located at the rear of the house to preserve the historic appearance of the home from the street; however there are successful additions located elsewhere. The scale of the addition is also important as the addition should never exceed half of the original house size in square footage. Lastly, the materials used to clad the addition should compliment the historic home. Additions can be complex; there are many talented local architects that have experience in remodeling and rehabilitation of historic homes (refer to the Resources List). Spending money on your home can be rewarding, especially if it is done correctly.

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. (Excerpts from the Standards)

Summary



A historic photo of 425 Toepfer Street. Historic photos are invaluable when planning a rehabilitation project. From this photo, you are able to see the original roofing, windows, doors, cladding, etc.

“if it walks like a duck and talks like a duck – it’s a duck.”

We all recognize that Westmorland is a special neighborhood not only because of the people that live here but also the built environment – our houses. It is important that any rehabilitation and/or improvements you make to your house are appropriate to your home’s style. In this pamphlet we have discussed the various materials and elements found on our homes and the appropriate ways in which to repair or replace these elements. The bottom line is this:

Allow your house’s character to stand as it currently is and not add elements that may confuse your house style.

A case in point: if you own one of our beautiful ranch style homes; adding Italianate brackets at the soffits would not be appropriate. Italianate homes are beautiful, but if you own a ranch, be proud of your ranch and maintain the historic elements of your ranch house.

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. (Excerpt from the Standards.)

Resources

The following list is not endorsed by the Westmorland Neighborhood Association or History Committee. This list is provided to help homeowners with any questions they may have.

To read the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation:

<http://www.nps.gov/hps/tps/tax/rhb/index.htm>

To Search for Topics in The National Park Service's Preservation Briefs:

<http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/briefs/presbhom.htm>

Search for Historic Photos:

<http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/search.asp>

Frequently Asked Technical Questions:

http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/hp/architecture/faq_brian.asp

To find a Wisconsin architect to help with your addition:

<http://www.aiaw.org/>

Window Manufacturers:

Pella: www.pella.com/windows

Marvin www.marvin.com/?page=Windows

Anderson: www.andersonwindows.com

Door Manufacturers:

Simpson Doors - Traditional: <http://www.simpsondoor.com/door-products/exterior/traditional-doors/>

Crestview Doors - Ranch: <http://www.crestviewdoors.com/products.html>

To find local home remodeling contractors:

Madison Trust for Historic Preservation: Jason Tisch at 608-441-8864

NARI: <http://remodelingmadison.org/Default.aspx?pagelid=503037>