



KINGMAN PARK HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGN GUIDELINES



DC HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD



INTRODUCTION

Kingman Park is listed as an historic district on the DC Inventory of Historic Sites and in the National Register of Historic Places. In a designated historic district, work requiring a building permit, such as exterior alterations, new construction, demolition, and subdivisions, are subject to a design review process under the D.C. historic preservation law. The purpose of the law is to ensure that such work preserves important character-defining features of historic properties and is compatible in character with the historic district.

These design guidelines have been developed to assist property owners in understanding the principles and practices of preserving and compatibly altering and adding to buildings in the Kingman Park Historic District. Guidelines seek to identify the important architectural characteristics of historic properties that should be retained during renovation projects, while also providing assurance to property owners that those alterations that do not affect important features will be allowed. They are intended to provide clarity, transparency and predictability to the decision-making process for property owners. These guidelines supplement the policies established by the city's preservation law, regulations and standards. In instances where policies within these district guidelines may differ from city-wide policies, the historic district guidelines shall take precedence.

The cost of owning and maintaining a home, especially as families grow and needs change, has been expressed as a primary concern by Kingman Park residents. These guidelines seek to accommodate those considerations through flexibility in the application of design principles in a manner appropriate to the neighborhood and its history. The focus of the guidelines is on maintaining the physical features that are most fundamental to the community's character, while allowing substantial freedom in the treatment of less-significant features. The guidelines also seek to avoid undue building maintenance and construction costs by allowing a variety of options for repairs and home improvements.

PRESERVATION REVIEW

The preservation review process is administered by the D.C. Historic Preservation Office (HPO) which has a professional staff of architects and preservation specialists who can provide architectural and technical assistance on products and methods appropriate to the renovation of older properties. Property owners are encouraged to consult informally with the HPO before submitting a building permit application for exterior work. The staff can approve most types of work, such as in-kind repair and replacement, minor alterations, and small additions in an expedited "over-the-counter" permit review process.

More substantial work, such as new construction, demolition of a building, or large additions, is subject to review by the D.C. Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB). The HPRB meets monthly to consider these larger cases. HPO can provide further guidance and direction on preparing for submission of a project for the Board's review.



For further information and full texts of the preservation law and regulations visit the Historic Preservation Office at 1100 4th Street, SW, Suite 650, or see the website at www.preservation.dc.gov.

PRESERVATION GOALS AND PRINCIPLES

The city's preservation law describes the public purposes of preservation and establishes the standards for the review of work affecting historic properties. These include retaining and enhancing historic properties, ensuring that changes are compatible, and encouraging adaptation of historic property for current use.

Design guidelines establish the principles applied for achieving these purposes. In giving more specific advice, these guidelines also reflect several well-established considerations applied in the design and review of work affecting historic property.

These considerations include:

Visibility or prominence from the street:

Changes to historic property that are visible to the public are more likely to affect a property's character. As a general rule, changes that are prominently visible from a street should be more carefully considered, while greater flexibility should be given for changes that are minimally or not visible from the street.

Primary vs. Secondary Elevations:

Alterations to primary building elevations are more likely to affect a property's character than those undertaken on secondary elevations. Primary elevations are those that face a street or public open space, or possesses a significant architectural composition or features. A secondary elevation is one that does not face a street or does not possess significant architectural features. Alterations and additions to secondary elevations, particularly for rowhouses, are not uncommon and are often necessary for the adaptation of buildings for current use.

Temporary and additive change vs. permanent and destructive change:

Alterations that are temporary or easily reversible have less of a lasting impact on the character of historic property, while alterations that permanently change or remove features have a greater impact. Adding a new element – while retaining significant characteristics – is a better preservation solution than destroying and replacing characteristic features.

Contextual and compatible design:

The design of features on historic property should display an awareness of and response to the specific qualities of the property and its environment.

Quality of design and materials:

Historic buildings often display a high quality of design and materials that should be retained. Additions and alterations to historic property should exhibit this tradition of building excellence.

Achieving a reasonable balance:

Adapting old buildings requires a thoughtful consideration of practical needs and the civic benefits of protecting architectural and historical characteristics valued by the community.



SIGNIFICANCE AND CHARACTER OF KINGMAN PARK

The Kingman Park Historic District is significant as a neighborhood occupied, built and marketed for African Americans during a time of racial segregation in the District of Columbia. Beginning in the 1920s and for decades after, Kingman Park grew as a community that allowed African Americans to prosper as citizens in ways systematically denied them in other parts of the District.

Kingman Park contains several different building types and contexts, including rowhouses, apartment buildings, commercial buildings along Benning Road, public school buildings, and Langston Golf Course.

Rowhouses

Rowhouses are the predominate building type in Kingman Park. The rowhouses between 19th and 21st streets consist of groupings of modest, flat-front rowhouses clad in brick or siding. East of 21st Street, the streets were developed with architecturally composed block-long rows consisting of two-story red and buff brick houses with one-story front porches and architectural detailing in metal, brick and stone; these houses are set behind open planted front yards on shady tree-lined streets. While the rowhouses are not individually distinctive and have been individually modified over the years, they collectively form a coherent and distinguishable residential neighborhood.

Apartment Buildings

In 1935, the federal government began construction of the 274-unit Langston Terrace Dwellings, an architecturally innovative garden apartment complex consisting of two-story duplexes sited around significant open spaces, to provide modern low-cost rental housing for African Americans. Small duplexes and flats similar in scale and character to the neighborhood's rowhouses were constructed along Oklahoma Avenue in the early 1940s.

Benning Road

The buildings on Benning Road consist of rowhouses, some of which have long been converted to commercial uses, and purpose-built commercial buildings that were constructed to provide services for the community. The street contains several large non-contributing buildings that present opportunities for mixed-use commercial and residential redevelopment.

Schools

The neighborhood contains an impressive complex of Colonial Revival public schools constructed by the District to accommodate African American families. These include Young (1931), Browne (1932), Phelps (1934) and Spingarn (1952).

Langston Golf Course

The golf course was opened by the federal government in 1939 as a recreational facility for African Americans in the neighborhood and throughout the region.

These design guidelines primarily address the rowhouses and the Benning Road commercial properties of Kingman Park. Treatment standards for Langston Terrace Dwellings, the public school buildings, and Langston Golf Course are guided by the federal Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation that are applicable to government-owned properties.



KINGMAN PARK HISTORIC DISTRICT



DESIGN REVIEW PRINCIPLES

The Kingman Park Historic District design guidelines seek to recognize and preserve the important aspects of the neighborhood and its history, while also recognizing that it is a neighborhood that will continue to evolve. The guidelines are based on the following characteristics and principles:



1. The rowhouses of Kingman Park represent a cohesive and intact collection of two-story houses that have a consistent height, scale, quality of design, materials and workmanship. Distinctive character-defining features on primary street-fronting elevations of rowhouses -- including their two-story height, front brick wall surfaces, one-story front porches, metal cornices, and stone and brick detailing -- should be retained.
2. The architectural character of Kingman Park is conveyed through the primary, street-fronting facades of the buildings. The secondary alley elevations are more utilitarian in design. While all exterior alterations are subject to preservation review, greater flexibility should be given to the review of alterations or additions that affect only rear, secondary elevations.

3. The continuous open front yards establish the setting for the rowhouses in the Kingman Park Historic District. Front yards should be retained primarily as green space, with paving incidental to the landscape, and fences and walls kept low and open so as to not disrupt this continuity.
4. The architectural character of Benning Road in Kingman Park is varied, with houses, former residences converted to commercial uses, commercial buildings, and large sites containing non-contributing buildings. The review of projects on Benning Road should balance the dual goals of retaining historic buildings and encouraging high-quality redevelopment that is consistent with the city's land use policies.
5. Kingman Park has traditionally been a neighborhood for residents of modest means, and the potential costs of home repairs remains a primary concern today. These guidelines seek to reflect the concerns expressed by residents of the potential costs of home repairs and is intended to provide flexibility.



BUILDING FEATURES

1.0 Wall Materials and Details

The majority of row buildings in Kingman Park are constructed of unpainted brick and have modest inset panels or other types of detailing in brick or stone. Cornices are typically of metal, and some houses have decorative stucco pediments with wood trim. The few frame houses in the neighborhood, originally clad in wood, have been covered in siding.



- 1.1 No permit or preservation review is required to paint. Painted buildings can be re-painted and any unpainted building can be painted. However, painting unpainted brick and stone is discouraged as these materials have visual and material qualities that contribute to the visual continuity neighborhood, and once painted, will require regular maintenance and repainting.
- 1.2 Masonry walls should be repointed with mortar that replicates the general appearance of original mortar. Mortar for spot pointing should match and maintain visual continuity with adjacent mortar.
- 1.3 Brick façade surfaces should remain uncovered. Applying a covering over front façade masonry, such as vinyl or other siding, is not permitted. Existing coverings can remain, but removal is encouraged.

- 1.4 Removal of non-original siding on frame houses and replacement with wood is encouraged but is not required. New cementitious siding is allowed on frame houses.
- 1.5 Decorative masonry wall features should be maintained and repaired.
- 1.6 Decorative masonry wall features should not be removed or covered over with alternative materials.
- 1.7 If beyond repair, decorative masonry wall features should be replaced or reconstructed to match the historic features using the same materials, or materials that have the same visual appearance.
- 1.8 Rear elevations do not contribute to the historic character of the neighborhood, and many have been changed over time. Rear elevations may be re-clad or rebuilt in siding (wood, cementitious or vinyl), stucco, or masonry.
- 1.9 Penetrations through or the removal of fire walls between connected rowhouses is restricted by the DC Construction Code.



2.0 Front Porches

The one-story front porches on Kingman Park's rowhouses are one of their most distinctive features. The porches typically have concrete stairs and decks, metal handrails and square brick piers that support flat roofs. The area under front porches is left open or is enclosed with lattice panels or decorative masonry block; some houses have secondary basement entrances underneath front porches. Some of the porches have been enclosed, or have metal awnings to provide shade protection.



Front porches with brick piers.

- 2.1 Front porches and their brick piers should be retained.
- 2.2 Original metal front porch railings should be retained if possible. Replacement railings should match the original in height (36"), spacing of vertical pickets (4" on center), and overall appearance.
- 2.3 Maintaining front porches as open is encouraged. Enclosing front porches is allowed, but should retain a sense of openness, such as with a high proportion of glazing.
- 2.4 Removing, enclosing, building or replacing a rear porch is allowed.

- 2.5 Front porch roofs in Kingman Park were not constructed to support the weight of a deck. Adding decks and guard railings on front porch roofs is not permitted.

3.0 Windows

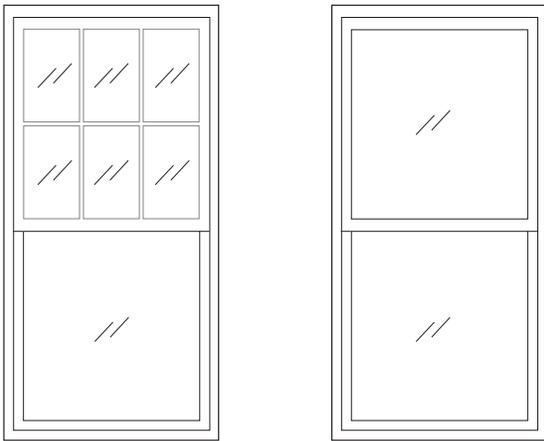
The windows on front elevations of Kingman Park rowhouses were originally wood double hung sash, typically with six panes in the upper sash and one pane in the lower (referred to as 6-over-1 sash). Windows on some houses are grouped in pairs or in a bank of three. Over time, most of the district's original windows have been replaced, often with vinyl units.

- 3.1 Existing windows may remain, be repaired or replaced.
- 3.2 If remaining, window framing elements on front elevations, such as center mullions that separate grouped windows and serve as a structural support for large openings, should be retained. If window framing elements have been capped with vinyl or other coverings, removal of these coverings is encouraged but is not required.
- 3.3 Expanding masonry window openings or blocking them down in size is not allowed on front elevations.



Original second floor and dormer windows.

- 3.4 Replacement windows on front elevations should fit and fill the original openings.
- 3.5 Replacement windows on front elevations that replicate the original six-over-one appearance are encouraged but are not required. One-over-one windows are allowed.
- 3.6 Replacement of windows on front elevations with wood sash is encouraged but is not required. Vinyl, fiberglass or aluminum sash windows are allowed.
- 3.7 The size, material and appearance of replacement windows on rear secondary elevations are not required to match the original appearance. Window openings on rear elevations may be expanded or reduced in size.
- 3.8 Installation of storm windows, screens and security bars is allowed and does not require a building permit or preservation approval.

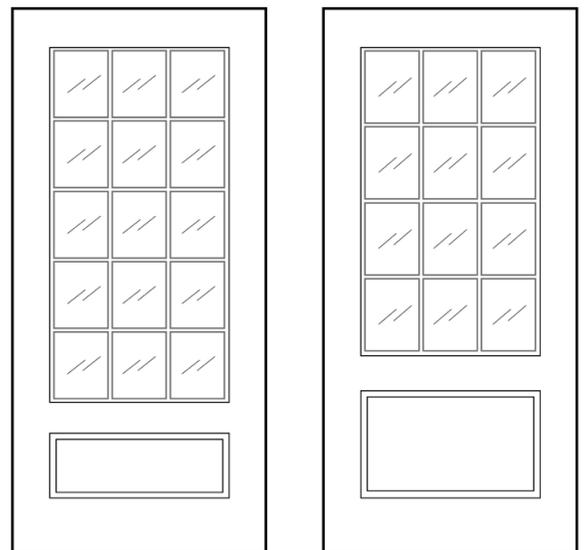


*An original 6-over-1 window (left).
A 1-over-1 window (right).*

4.0 Doors

Front doors in Kingman Park were originally wood with multiple small panes of glass. (most often 9 or 12 panes). As with windows, there are relatively few original doors remaining. Existing non-original doors range from those that are solid with no glass to doors with panes in a variety of configurations, and are found in materials that include wood, metal and fiberglass.

- 4.1 Existing doors may remain, be repaired, or replaced.
- 4.2 Expanding or reducing the width or height of a door opening on a front elevation is not allowed.
- 4.3 Replacement front doors should fit and fill the original width of the opening.
- 4.4 Replacement front doors that replicate the original appearance is encouraged but is not required. Replacement front doors can be solid, glazed, or a combination of paneled and glazed, and can be of wood, metal or fiberglass.



Original doors on Kingman Park houses

- 4.5 The size, material and appearance of replacement doors on rear elevations are not required to match the original appearance. Door openings may be expanded or reduced in size.
- 4.6 Installation of storm doors, screen doors, and security gates is allowed and does not require a building permit or preservation review.

5.0 Roofs

The roofs of Kingman Park rowhouses are generally sloped or flat and not visible beyond the cornice lines of the façades. Some rows of houses have parapet walls or small front roofs with dormers and overhanging eaves.



Rowhouse roofs with overhanging eaves, cornices, dormer windows and parapet walls on the sides.

- 5.1 Existing roof heights, as visible from street view, and decorative roof features such as pent roofs, eaves, cornices and/or dormers should be maintained and preserved.
- 5.2 Replacement of decorative roof finishes should replicate the size, scale, texture and appearance of the original. Replacement of slate in-kind is encouraged but synthetic slate or asphalt shingles are allowed.
- 5.3 The flat portion of roofs that are not visible from street view can be replaced with metal, membrane or other materials. Green roofs are allowed.

- 5.4 Rooftop mechanical, solar and communications equipment should be set back from the edge of the roof so they are not visible rising above a primary building elevation. (See page 12 for diagrams explaining visibility above primary and secondary elevations.)

6.0 Additions

Adding to the rear of a rowhouse is typically the best way to add extra space without affecting the architectural character of an historic building or streetscape. Rooftop additions and roof decks may be possible provided they are set back sufficiently so that from the street they are not seen above a primary building elevation. (See page 12 for diagrams explaining visibility above primary and secondary elevations.)

- 6.1 In the case of corner lots, or locations where rear additions will be prominent from street view, additions should be compatible with the character of the historic district in terms of wall materials and window sizes. Brick or siding (wood or cementitious) are encouraged.
- 6.2 Greater flexibility will be given for the design, materials and character of rear additions on mid-block rowhouses that are not prominently visible from street view.
- 6.3 Rear decks and porches are allowed.
- 6.4 Rooftop additions are allowed if they are set back sufficiently to the rear portion of the roof so that they are not seen rising above a primary building elevation. Roof additions on corner properties, which have two primary elevations, are not allowed.
- 6.5 Rooftop additions should not alter or result in removal of decorative roof elements.

7.0 Landscape Features

The open planted front yards and low brick retaining walls that line the public sidewalks provide a unifying setting to the houses in Kingman Park. Originally, front gardens were not fenced, although chain link and other metal fences have long existed on many properties. Lead walks were originally concrete. Some houses have secondary stairs leading down to basement entrances below the front porch.



The front yards of most Kingman Park rowhouses are retained by low brick walls.

- 7.1 No permit or preservation approval is required for planting.
- 7.2 The low brick retaining walls along the streets in Kingman Park should be maintained in good repair to prevent erosion of front yards and avoid the need for replacing them.
- 7.3 Replacement retaining walls should be comparable to other walls on the block. Brick is encouraged, but stone, concrete block and landscape timbers are allowed with suitable landscaping.
- 7.4 Front yard fences should be no taller than 36" high, and respect the open character of front yards on the street.

- 7.5 Replacement stairs and lead walks should be finished in smooth concrete, stone or masonry pavers. Materials should be of a single, unvariegated color that provides a monolithic appearance.



The front Lead walks and stairs are smooth concrete.

- 7.6 New basement stairs and walkways are allowed if consistent with the principles outlined in the guideline "Preservation and Design Guidelines for Basement Entrances and Windows" (<https://planning.dc.gov/node/594332>). Flexibility to these guidelines shall be given to allow replication of local original conditions, such as the straight-run basement walks found on 21st Street.
- 7.7 Chain link, and wood or vinyl privacy fences up to 7 feet in height (8 feet with the consent of the abutting property owner) are allowed, as per the DC Construction Code.

8.0 Secondary Buildings

Some properties in Kingman Park have small rear yard sheds or garages. These structures do not contribute to the character of the historic district and can be removed or replaced.



Rear yard garages

- 8.1 New garden sheds, garages and secondary buildings are allowed in rear yards.

9.0 Utility Meters and Satellite Dishes

Utility meters and communications equipment are necessary for modern life but should be installed so that they don't visually detract from the character of the building or streetscape.



Painted electrical meters

- 9.1 Electric and gas meters and television and communications equipment should be installed so that they are as visually unobtrusive as possible from public view, and should not cover over window openings or architectural detailing.

- 9.2 Utility meters placement should be consistent with the principles outlined in the guideline "Utility Meters on Historic Property" (<https://planning.dc.gov/node/594322>)

10.0 New Construction

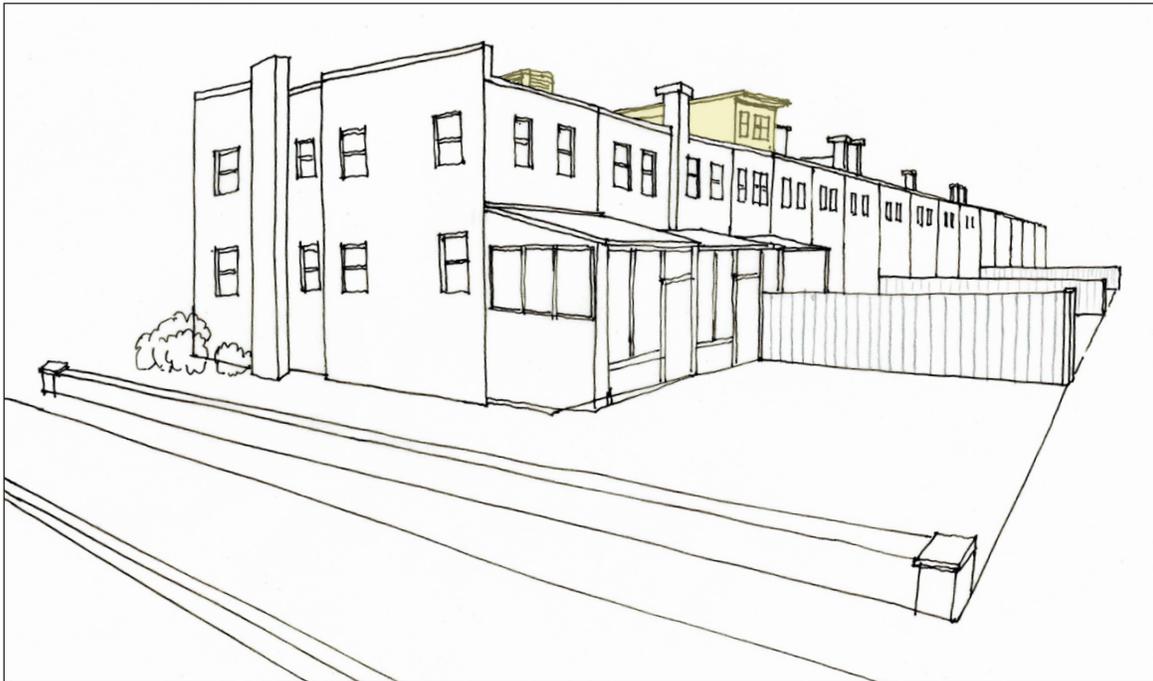
New construction should be compatible with its site, taking into account the immediate context and the broader character of the historic district. Compatibility does not mean or require duplicating existing buildings, and the review of new construction is not intended to discourage good contemporary design or creative architectural expression.

New construction along Benning Road should be consistent with the city's zoning regulations and Comprehensive Plan policies that support mixed-use development (ground floor retail and upper story residential uses) and with streetscape improvements that improve visual and urban design qualities.

VISIBILITY FROM STREET



NOT COMPATIBLE: Roof additions and mechanical equipment that are visible above primary elevations (the front or side of a corner building) are not permitted.



COMPATIBLE: Roof additions and mechanical equipment that are only visible above secondary elevations (the rear) are permitted.

BUILDING PERMIT REVIEW

Work Not Subject to Review

The following work on property in the Kingman Park Historic District is not subject to historic preservation design review:

- Interior alterations, except those involving substantial structural demolition;
- Exterior painting and paint colors;
- Window screens, storm windows, security bars, and removable window air conditioning units;
- Landscaping, including planting, maintenance, or removal of trees and shrubs. However, before removing trees, owners should consult with the DC Department of Transportation's Urban Forestry Division (www.ddot.dc.gov/ufo)
- Impermanent and moveable site features not requiring a foundation, including outdoor furniture, play equipment, and garden sculpture or ornaments.

Work Subject to Review

Exterior work in the Kingman Park Historic District that requires a DC building permit is subject to historic preservation design review. Interior work, whether it requires a building permit or not, is not subject to historic preservation design review unless such work affects a building's structural system or support members. The types of work below require a building permit and are thus subject to historic preservation review:

- Roof replacement
- Masonry repair and repointing
- Window and door replacements
- Fences, retaining walls and paving
- Exterior mechanical equipment
- Additions and new construction
- Other exterior alterations

Permit applications can be downloaded from the DC Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs website (www.dhra.dc.gov), and homeowners seeking their own permits can take advantage of expedited service at the Homeowner Center at the DCRA Permit Office at 1100 4th Street, SW on the 2nd Floor (Waterfront Metro). To discuss a project with Historic Preservation Office staff prior to applying for a permit, please call HPO at 442-8800 to speak to a preservation specialist.

For more information on the preservation review process: <https://planning.dc.gov/page/historic-preservation-office>





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