



# TOWN OF OCCOQUAN

Town Hall, 314 Mill Street, Occoquan, VA 22125  
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## ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD MEETING

July 23, 2024 | 7:30 p.m.

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Citizen Comments**
3. **Approval of Minutes**
  - a. May 28, 2024 Meeting Minutes
4. **Exterior Elevation Applications**
  - a. ARB2024-003 402 Mill Street (Sculpture)
5. **Reports**
  - a. Town Council Report
  - b. Deputy Town Manager's Report
  - c. Planning Commission Report
  - d. Chair Report
6. **Discussion Items**
  - a. Draft Amendments to ARB Design Guidelines Relating to Public Art
7. **Adjournment**

Brenda Seefeldt  
Chair, Architectural Review Board



# TOWN OF OCCOQUAN

## ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD

### Agenda Communication

<b>3. Approval of Minutes</b>	<b>Meeting Date:</b> July 23, 2024
<b>3A: Request to Approve May 28, 2024 Minutes</b>	

**Attachments:** a. May 28, 2024 Minutes

**Submitted by:** Philip Auville  
Town Clerk

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**Explanation and Summary:**

This is a request to approve the meeting minutes from May 28, 2024.

**Proposed/Suggested Motion:**

"I move to approve the meeting minutes from May 28, 2024 as presented."

OR

Other action the Architectural Review Board deems appropriate.



**TOWN OF OCCOQUAN  
ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES  
28 May 2024**

In Attendance: Brenda Seefeldt, Darryl Hawkins, Mary Craig, Lisa Terry and Merial Curren

Excused Absences: Jennifer Shown and Rick Fitzgerald

Excused Tardy: Theo Daubresse

**1. Call to Order-** Brenda called the meeting to order at 7:36pm

**2. Citizen's Comments** – None

**3. Approval of Minutes**

Change to minutes. Brenda noted that Lisa was tardy not absent at April's meeting. Mary moved to accept as amended. Darryl seconded. Minutes were approved.

**4. Exterior Elevation Applications**

a. ARB2024-002R 440 Mill Street (Doors) – applicant clarified that the door is fiberglass with a Mahogany overlay in natural wood color. Lisa moved to accept the application. Mary seconded. The application was approved.

b. ARB2024-003 402 Mill Street (Sculpture) – The dragon has been deemed an architectural structure but the Zoning Commission and therefore needs approval from the ARB. After discussing, Brenda made a motion to defer ARB2024-003 402 Mill Street until the ARB can create adequate guidelines for art in the Historic District. Lisa seconded. The motion passed.

**5. Reports**

a. Town Council – N/A

b. Town Manager - Matt Whitmoyer - Budget passed. River Walk expansion committee submitted report. July 1 Town Staff will begin moving forward with the design and plans. Will work with owners for easements. At the Town Council meeting 18 June, they hope to have a resolution for Carol Bailey and Brian Soma. New signage is officially installed.

c. Planning Commission – Discussing accessory dwellings (750 sq ft)

d. Chair Report – Thank you for working on the applications. Jennifer wants to become an alternate. Mary will become the regular member.

**6. Adjournment** – 8:25 p.m.



# TOWN OF OCCOQUAN

## ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD

### Agenda Communication

<b>4. Exterior Elevation Applications</b>	<b>Meeting Date:</b> July 23, 2024
<b>4A:</b> ARB2024-003 402 Mill Street	

**Attachments:** a. ARB2024-003 402 Mill Street (Sculpture)

**Submitted by:** Philip Auville  
Town Clerk

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#### **Explanation and Summary:**

This is an Architectural Review Board (ARB) Exterior Elevation Application for a sculpture of a dragon at 402 Mill Street.

**Relevant Sections of ARB Guidelines:** Structures such as public art and sculptures are not explicitly covered by the ARB Guidelines. Therefore, the code sections on which the ARB Guidelines are based are provided.

**Relevant Sections of the Town Code:** Section 157.179, "Matters to be Considered by the Board", which read as follows:

(A) *"The board shall not consider interior arrangement, relative size of the building or structure, detailed design, or features not subject to any public view. The Board shall not make any requirements, except for the purpose of preventing developments obviously incongruous to the old and historic aspect of the surroundings.*

(B) *The board shall consider the following in passing upon the appropriateness of architectural features:*

- (1) Exterior architectural features, including all signs, that are subject to public view from a public street, way or place;*
- (2) General design and arrangement;*
- (3) Texture, material and color;*
- (4) The relation of the factors, (B)(1)through(B) (3) above, to similar features of the buildings and structures in the immediate surroundings;*
- (5) The extent to which the building or structure would be in harmony with the old and historic aspect of the surroundings;*
- (6) In the case of a building to be razed, a primary consideration will be the extent to which its continued existence would tend to protect irreplaceable historic places and preserve the general historic atmosphere of the town; and*

(7) *The extent to which the building or structure will promote the general welfare by:*

- (a) Preserving and protecting historic places and areas;*
- (b) Maintaining and increasing real estate value;*
- (c) Generating business;*
- (d) Creating new positions;*
- (e) Attracting tourists, students, writers, historians, artists and artisans, and new residents;*
- (f) Encouraging study of and interest in American history;*
- (g) Stimulating interest in and study of architecture and design;*
- (h) Educating citizens in American culture and heritage; and*
- (i) Making the town a more attractive and desirable place in which to live.*

**Staff Recommendation:** Make a determination based off the proposed work's compliance with the ARB guidelines and the review criteria set forth within Town Code §157.179 (B).

Any denial of an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness must include the reason for denial and a reference to the relevant ARB guideline(s).

**Proposed/Suggested Motion:**

"I move to approve ARB2024-003 402 Mill Street (Sculpture) as is."

OR

"I move to not approve ARB2024-003 402 Mill Street (Sculpture) for the following reason:  
\_\_\_\_\_."

OR

Other action the Architectural Review Board deems appropriate.



# TOWN OF OCCOQUAN ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD

## APPLICATION FOR EXTERIOR ELEVATIONS Commercial and Residential Exterior Improvements Within the Old and Historic District

All exterior changes and modifications to the exterior of structures located within the Old and Historic District must be reviewed by the Architectural Review Board (ARB) for issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) prior to the work being performed. Applicants should review the Architectural Review Board Design Guidelines for guidance of appropriate colors, materials, designs, etc.

The ARB meets regularly on the fourth Tuesday of the month at 7:30 p.m. at Town Hall. Applications must be filed at Town Hall by close of business on the Tuesday of the week prior to the meeting. Applicants must submit supplemental materials at time of application. Additional paint and material samples, product brochures and spec sheets, renderings, architectural drawings, photographs of the structure or other supplemental materials may be requested by the ARB prior to the hearing. The applicant or a representative must be present at the meeting during which the ARB will review the application. All fees must be paid prior to scheduling for ARB consideration.

### Section I: Applicant and Owner Information

Applicant Name <u>Zaina Murad Bertoldo</u>	Owner Name _____
Business Name (if Applicable) <u>ORGANIC ALLURE</u>	Address (No., City, Address, Zip) + PO Box _____
Address (No., City, Address, Zip) + PO Box <u>202 Union St. Suite 102</u>	Email _____
Phone Number [REDACTED]	Phone Number _____
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Same as Applicant Information

### Section II: Property Information

Project Address: _____	Structure Style: _____
Type of Use (Select One): <input type="checkbox"/> Residential <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed-Use <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	Exterior Elevation Type (Select all that apply): <input type="checkbox"/> Improvement/Repair to Existing Structure <input type="checkbox"/> New Development/In-Fill or New Accessory Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Demolition <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: <u>Art Exhibiting</u>
Brief Description of Project: <u>A permit to display an art sculpture of a dragon in the front of the 402 Mill St. Property.</u>	
<b>Notice to Applicant/Property Owner:</b> Prior to construction and/or installation of improvements, it is your responsibility to determine the existence of any restrictive covenants and/or deed restrictions governing property improvements. Other permits or approvals may be required from the Town or other agencies such as Zoning Compliance Review and/or Building Permits, among others. It is your responsibility to comply with all applicable regulations and to determine any other applicable private restrictions.	
Applicant Signature <u>[Signature]</u>	Date Submitted <u>5/6/2024</u>

Section III: Application Check List	
<input type="checkbox"/> Paint Sample ( <i>identify which Architectural feature samples are included</i> ) List:	<input type="checkbox"/> Material Samples ( <i>identify which Architectural feature samples are included</i> ) List:
<input type="checkbox"/> Spec Sheets/Product Brochures: ( <i>identify which Architectural feature spec sheets are included</i> ) List:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Photo of existing structure(s)  <input type="checkbox"/> Schematic(s)/Rendering(s) illustrating proposed improvement(s) on structure(s)  <input type="checkbox"/> Architectural Plans
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (List):	
<p><b>Note to Applicants:</b> Applicants are responsible for providing supplemental materials for proposed improvements. Applicants are responsible for ensuring proposed improvements are based on requirements listed in the Architectural Review Design Guidelines (as amended) and included under § 157.179 of the Town Code regarding matters to be considered by the ARB. At the time of the ARB meeting, the ARB may request additional information or documentation in order to complete a thorough review of the application.</p>	
Section IV: ARB Certificate Of Approval (COA)	
Date to Architectural Review Board:  	<input type="checkbox"/> COA Issued <input type="checkbox"/> COA Denied  <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 60%;">Signature (ARB Chair or Designee)</div> <div style="width: 35%;">Date</div> </div>
Section V: TOWN STAFF ONLY	
	<b>ARB APPLICATION NO.:</b> ARB2024 - 003
<b>Plan Reference Numbers:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Zoning Approval _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Site Plan _____ <input type="checkbox"/> SUP _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<b>Notes:</b>

CONTINUE TO NEXT SECTION





# TOWN OF OCCOQUAN ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD

## APPLICATION FOR EXTERIOR ELEVATIONS SUPPLEMENTAL APPLICATION

### Section V: Supplemental Application For New Builds, Improvements to Existing Structures and Combination Projects - Commercial, Residential and Mixed-Use

Project Address: 402 mill st.

ARB Application No.: ARB2024-003

Complete only the sections below that are applicable to the application. More information on each section is included in the ARB Design Guidelines available on the Town's website at [www.occoquanva.gov](http://www.occoquanva.gov). Note: Words included on any improvements constitute a sign and are not part of the Exterior Elevation review process; a separate sign application process is required.

1. Type of Improvement(s): ☐ New Build ☒ Improvements to Existing Structure(s) ☐ Combination

#### 2. Additions and New Builds

☐ Accessory Structure: Size: \_\_\_\_\_ Location relative to Main Structure: \_\_\_\_\_

☒ New Build: Size: 10-Foot-tall Location on site: Front of the 402 mill st. property.

General Description/Use of Structure: The Dragon sculpture is a unique 10-foot-tall metal artwork crafted from recycled motorcycle parts.

☐ Rendering required ☐ Plan showing location on site required ☐ Architectural Plans required  
*Complete applicable sections below.*

#### 3. Awnings ☐ New ☐ Repair/Replacement

Existing Material, Color and Design: ~~existing material~~

Proposed Material (canvas or similar material): \_\_\_\_\_ Color: ~~black~~

☐ Sample Included (Type): \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Spec Sheet Included ☒ Photo Included

#### 4. Exterior Walls on Structure ☐ New ☐ Repair/Replacement

Existing Material, Color and Pattern: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed Material: ☐ Brick ☐ Siding ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Paint ☐ Material Replacement

Material Type: \_\_\_\_\_ Color: \_\_\_\_\_ Pattern: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Mortar: Color \_\_\_\_\_ Joint Pattern \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Sample Included (Type): \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Spec Sheet Included ☒ Photo Included



**5. Windows** ☐ New ☐ Repair/Replacement

Existing Material, Color and Pattern: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed Material: \_\_\_\_\_ Grid Profile: \_\_\_\_\_

Grid Color: \_\_\_\_\_ Shutter Color: \_\_\_\_\_ Trim Color: \_\_\_\_\_

Location (identify location of windows and types – provide exhibit): \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Sample Included (Type): \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Spec Sheet Included ☐ Photo Included

**6. Doors** ☐ New ☐ Repair/Replacement

Existing Material, Color and Pattern: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed Material: \_\_\_\_\_ Style: \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Window (Style): \_\_\_\_\_

Door Color: \_\_\_\_\_ Trim Color: \_\_\_\_\_ Window Color: \_\_\_\_\_

Location(s) (identify location of doors and types – provide exhibit): \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Sample Included (Type): \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Spec Sheet Included ☐ Photo Included

**7. Roofs and Gutters** ☐ New ☐ Repair/Replacement

Existing Material, Color and Pattern: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed Roof Material: \_\_\_\_\_ Roof Pitch \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed Roof Color and Style: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed Gutter Material and Color: \_\_\_\_\_

Gutter Locations (provide exhibit): \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Sample Included (Type): \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Spec Sheet Included ☐ Photo Included

**8. Dormers** ☐ New ☐ Repair/Replacement

Existing Material, Color and Pattern: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed Material: \_\_\_\_\_ Existing Pitch \_\_\_\_\_ New Pitch \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed Color and Style: \_\_\_\_\_ Window Color and Style: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Sample Included (Type): \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Spec Sheet Included ☐ Photo Included

**9. Fences, Retaining Walls, Foundations, Decks, Porches, Screenings, Patios, Enclosures etc.**

☐ New ☐ Repair/Replacement Proposed Structure Type: \_\_\_\_\_

Existing Material, Color and Design: \_\_\_\_\_ Type: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed Material: \_\_\_\_\_ Color/Stain: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed Pattern/Design: \_\_\_\_\_ Decorative Trim/Hardware: \_\_\_\_\_

Mortar Color: \_\_\_\_\_ Joint Pattern: \_\_\_\_\_

Porch/Deck Post(s) Size: \_\_\_\_\_ Spindle Design and Color: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Sample Included (Type): \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Spec Sheet Included ☐ Photo Included

**10. Other Exterior Improvements** ☐ New ☐ Repair/Replacement

Existing Material, Color and Design: \_\_\_\_\_ Type: \_\_\_\_\_

Existing Material, Color and Design: \_\_\_\_\_ Type: \_\_\_\_\_

**Lighting**

Light Fixtures: Color \_\_\_\_\_ Style \_\_\_\_\_ Placement \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Spec Sheet Included

**Ramps**

ADA Ramps: Color \_\_\_\_\_ Style \_\_\_\_\_ Location \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Spec Sheet Included

**Chimneys**

☐ Brick ☐ Stone Color \_\_\_\_\_ Style \_\_\_\_\_ Location \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Spec Sheet Included

**Other**

Material: metal Art Color Black/silver Type \_\_\_\_\_ Location Front of  
402 mill St. property

**Other**

Material: \_\_\_\_\_ Color \_\_\_\_\_ Type \_\_\_\_\_ Location \_\_\_\_\_

Brief Description:

☐ Spec Sheet Included ☐ Photo Included

Applicant Signature

Date

**TOWN STAFF ONLY**

**Notes:**

## Request for Permit to Display Art Sculpture at 402 Miller Street

Greetings,

My name is Zaina Murad Bertoldo, and I am the owner of the property located at 402 Mill Street. I am writing to formally request a permit allowing the permanent placement of a dragon-themed metal art sculpture at the front corner of my property.

This sculpture, standing 10 feet tall and crafted from recycled metal parts, is the result of a nine-month collaborative effort by five talented artists with no two parts used in their construction are ever the same. This particular piece has become a beloved fixture in our community, drawing admirers daily and contributing positively to the town's energy and aesthetic.

The dragon sculpture has enhanced the visual appeal of our area and also embodies the spirit of creativity and sustainability that our town values. It has become a symbol of uniqueness and artistic spirit, making a significant impact on residents and visitors alike.

Given its importance and the joy it brings to our community, I respectfully request that this sculpture be granted the necessary permits to remain as a permanent installation on my property. Your support in this matter would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you very much for considering this request. I look forward to your positive response and am happy to provide any further information required.

Warm regards,

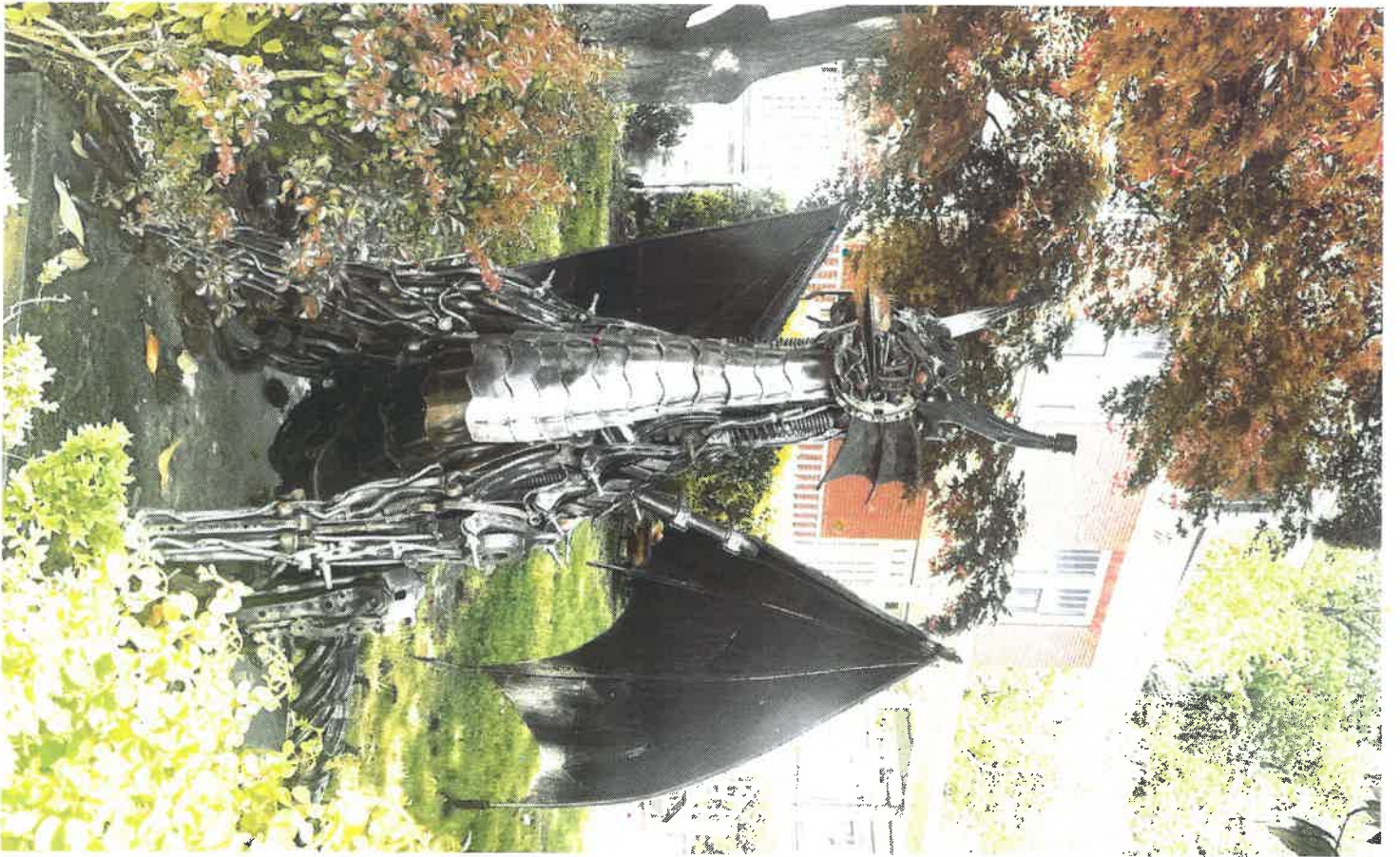
Zaina M. Bertoldo

Owner, 402 Mil St. Historic Town of Occoquan, VA 22125

Organic Allure Visionary, Creator, Owner, Director.

202 Union St. Suite#102 Historic Town of Occoquan, VA 22125





402 Mill St.  
Occoquan, VA 22125



# TOWN OF OCCOQUAN

## ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD

### Agenda Communication

<b>5. Reports</b>	<b>Meeting Date:</b> July 23, 2024
<b>5B: Deputy Town Manager's Report</b>	

**Attachments:** a. July Sign and COA Violation Report

**Submitted by:** Matt Whitmoyer  
Deputy Town Manager

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#### **Explanation and Summary:**

This is the Deputy Town Manager's monthly ARB report.

The report includes both sign and COA violations, showing the violation number, address, violation description and the status of the violation. All code violations follow the code violation standard operating procedure (SOP), including a tiered notice system of informal notices progressing to formal notice of violation letters. Most violations are resolved at the informal tier and do not necessitate a formal notice of violation and subsequent legal action.

Title	Violation Type	Address of Violation	Date of Observation	General Description of Violation	Status
OCV-2024-004 (In Part)	COA	402 Mill Street	4/4/2024	Structure (dragon sculpture) erected in HOD without COA	Town Hall Processing
OCV-2024-008	Signage	201 Union Street	4/16/2024	Window signs occupying more than 25% of area; internally lit signage; three temporary signs (materials and no permanent attachment); box sign larger than 4.5 sqft	Town Hall Processing





# TOWN OF OCCOQUAN ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD

## Agenda Communication

<b>6. Discussion Items</b>	<b>Meeting Date:</b> July 23, 2024
<b>6A:</b> Draft Amendments to ARB Design Guidelines Relating to Public Art	

**Attachments:** a. ARB Design Guideline Draft Amendments

**Submitted by:** Matt Whitmoyer  
Deputy Town Manager

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### Explanation and Summary:

This is a discussion item to review draft amendments to the ARB Design Guidelines relating to artistic structures and murals installed in the Old and Historic Occoquan District.

The draft amendments cover scale, placement, colors, materials, contextual relevance, and quantity for artistic structures and murals erected or installed in the Old and Historic Occoquan District, based off discussion with the Board, Chair and Town staff. The amendments also include the addition of a definition for a period of significance.

**Staff Request:** Please provide feedback to staff on revisions to the draft amendments.





**TOWN OF OCCOQUAN**  
**ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW**  
**BOARD**  
**DESIGN GUIDELINES MANUAL**

Prepared by the Architectural Review Board

Adopted November 2005

Updated October 2022; August 2023

## Table of Contents

I. Introduction .....	<a href="#">32</a>
II. Map of the Historic District .....	5
III. A Brief History of Occoquan .....	6
IV. District Character .....	8
V. Definitions .....	11
VI. Rehabilitation and Construction .....	12
1. Additions .....	12
2. Awnings .....	12
3. Bricks .....	12
4. Chimneys .....	13
5. Colors .....	13
6. Doorways .....	14
7. Fences and Walls .....	14
8. Foundations .....	15
9. Handicap Ramps .....	15
10. Landscaping .....	15
11. Lighting .....	15
12. Materials .....	15
13. Porches .....	16
14. Public Art .....	16
15. Roof Pitch and Material .....	17
16. Skylights .....	18
17. Rooftop Screening .....	18
18. Satellite Dishes .....	18
19. Solar Facilities (Photo Voltaic Systems) .....	18
20. Screening .....	18
21. Streetscape .....	18
22. Vending Machines .....	19
23. Windows .....	19

## I. Introduction

In 1983 the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, after conducting a survey of structures within the Town of Occoquan, designated 13.25 acres as a historic area. Consequently, the United States Department of the Interior's National Park Service added the Town of Occoquan to the National Register of Historic Places. The Occoquan Town Council subsequently enacted ordinances that created an Architectural Review Board (ARB) to "preserve the unique cultural heritage represented by the original section of the town" and gave the ARB certain powers to regulate rehabilitation and new construction in the Historic District, as well as the right to approve or disapprove signs within the business district. The ARB works to uphold the intent of the ordinances and to further the aims set forth in the Comprehensive Plan.

The Code of Ordinances of the Town of Occoquan (Code), Section 157.179, "Matters to be Considered by the Board", states:

*(A) "The board shall not consider interior arrangement, relative size of the building or structure, detailed design, or features not subject to any public view. The Board shall not make any requirements, except for the purpose of preventing developments obviously incongruous to the old and historic aspect of the surroundings.*

*(B) The board shall consider the following in passing upon the appropriateness of architectural features:*

- (1) Exterior architectural features, including all signs, that are subject to public view from a public street, way or place;*
- (2) General design and arrangement;*
- (3) Texture, material and color;*
- (4) The relation of the factors, (B)(1)through(B) (3) above, to similar features of the buildings and structures in the immediate surroundings;*
- (5) The extent to which the building or structure would be in harmony with the old and historic aspect of the surroundings;*
- (6) In the case of a building to be razed, a primary consideration will be the extent to which its continued existence would tend to protect irreplaceable historic places and preserve the general historic atmosphere of the town; and*
- (7) The extent to which the building or structure will promote the general welfare by:*
  - (a) Preserving and protecting historic places and areas;*
  - (b) Maintaining and increasing real estate value;*

- (c) Generating business;*
- (d) Creating new positions;*
- (e) Attracting tourists, students, writers, historians, artists and artisans, and new residents;*
- (f) Encouraging study of and interest in American history;*
- (g) Stimulating interest in and study of architecture and design;*
- (h) Educating citizens in American culture and heritage; and*
- (i) Making the town a more attractive and desirable place in which to live.*

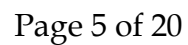
Note that the ARB considers the following things before issuing a certificate of appropriateness.

1. Exterior features that are subject to public view.
2. General design and arrangement.
3. Texture, material, and color.
4. Compatibility of factors 1, 2, and 3 with the surrounding buildings.
5. The harmony of the building or awning or bricks with the old and historic aspect of the surroundings.

The ARB must consider each and every one of these criteria in their decisions. Take note that interiors are exempt from ARB review as well as “detailed design or features not subject to any public view.”

This Design Guidelines Manual has been created to assist members of the ARB, builders, merchants, residents, and the public in protecting the historic character of Occoquan. It is the hope of the ARB that this document will assist in the ARB review application process by better informing and preparing applicants for presenting their plan to the ARB for review.

# TOWN OF OCCOQUAN HISTORIC DISTRICT



### III. A Brief History of Occoquan

Occoquan derived its name from the language of the Dogue Indians. It is believed that the Dogues had settled next to the Occoquan River due to the abundance of fish and ease of travel it afforded. It was the river and its location at the head of the tidewater that eventually made Occoquan a natural location for water-borne commerce. The “falls” of the fall line prevented ships from sailing farther upstream, and because the river is at its narrowest point, it became a natural spot for river crossings between what eventually became Fairfax and Prince William Counties. Early records indicate that agents of Robert “King” Carter hauled copper ore from the Frying Pan Copper mine near present day Dulles Airport. A tobacco warehouse was built as early as 1736, and an industrial complex began in 1750. In the 1790’s, Oliver Evans established and patented a milling process at the Merchant’s Mill; thus making it the first automated gristmill in the nation. The mill remained in operation for 175 years until it was ultimately destroyed by fire. The only remaining structure, the Miller’s office, is now a museum operated by the Occoquan Historical Society.

By 1828, Occoquan had a cotton mill , and by 1835, several mercantile stores and various mechanics had established themselves here. Farmers and traders came from as far as the Blue Ridge Mountains to patronize the town’s businesses, and those who traveled here often stayed overnight at the Alton, Occoquan, or Hammill hotels, the last of which still stands today.

Prior to the Civil War, shipbuilding began in Occoquan, specializing in schooners and longboats. In addition to products from the cotton and gristmills, there was a lucrative trade in cord wood, fish and river ice. Occoquan also built the first commercial ice storage house in this area. River ice, railroad ties and large logs were shipped upriver from Occoquan to Washington, D.C. and points north.

A mail stagecoach route was established through Occoquan in 1805. During the Civil War, both Washington D.C. and Alexandria were under blockade, and as a result, the Occoquan Post Office played a key role in passing letters and packages between North and South. During one winter, the Hammill Hotel served as temporary headquarters for Confederate General Wade Hampton.

The dawn of the 20th Century saw a town bustling with grocery stores, a lumber and hardware store, drugstore, millinery, churches, school, jail, blacksmith, barber,

undertaker, doctor, and pharmacy. The Oddfellows Hall became a performance venue in the area, and the Lyric Theater brought people to town by car, thus making Occoquan a social and commercial center. For Occoquan, the twentieth century also unfortunately brought one economic disaster followed by another. In 1916, a devastating fire destroyed many of the structures located in the historic center of town. The coming of the automobile and silting of the river heralded the end of shipping as the main commercial highway of the area.

With the opening of Route 1 in 1928, Occoquan no longer stood astride the major north- south travel route. The construction of Interstate 95 in later years caused an explosion of residential and commercial building in nearby Woodbridge, and as a result, the town's standing as the area's primary center of commerce declined. Then in 1972, the ravaging waters of Hurricane Agnes destroyed buildings, sidewalks, streets and the iron truss bridge that crossed the Occoquan River.

Any one of these events could have meant the demise of our small riverside town, but Occoquan is a town destined to survive. After every tragedy, townspeople and merchants alike repaired, rebuilt, and restored it creating a unique place that offers boating, fishing, shopping, and pleasant dining in an historic atmosphere. Antiques, collectibles, fine art, crafts, clothing, gourmet food, and unique gifts have replaced mills, ice houses, lumberyards, and shipyards. Through good times and bad Occoquan is a town that refuses to die. As history has shown time and time again and with each passing year, Occoquan shall remain as it has always been--unique, special, and unforgettable.



## IV. District Character

Geographically, Occoquan is bounded to the north by the Occoquan River and to the south by wooded bluffs. The streets are laid out in a simple grid pattern that stretches up a light sloping hill to the south. Five major streets—Mill, Union, Commerce, Washington, and Ellicott—comprise the district.

The potential value of the site on a river that opens into the Potomac River was recognized as early as 1755 by John Ballendine, who hoped to establish forges, mills, stores, and dwellings on the site. As early as 1804, Occoquan achieved the status of an official town. A map which survives from that date illustrates a street pattern nearly identical to the present layout. Over thirty structures are noted on the map, including a mill and cooper shop. Few buildings constructed during the town's settlement years stand today. Most notable is Rockledge, constructed by Ballendine in 1758. The Georgian two-story stone house with elaborate work rises on a rock ledge overlooking Mill Street and the Occoquan River.

The most widely recognized structure in Occoquan was a flour mill owned by Nathaniel Ellicott. Illustrated in Oliver Evans' *The Young Mill-Wright and Miller's Guide*, the building was destroyed in 1924. However, the miller's office, now the Mill House Museum, still stands on Mill Street immediately southeast of the mill site. The small one-story stone and brick structure above a raised basement covered by a gable roof was erected in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century or early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The house is presently occupied by Occoquan Historical Society, which uses the building for exhibition space. A replica of the original mill is found in the museum.

Occoquan continued to flourish throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Both commercial and residential structures remain from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. The circa 1830 Hammill Hotel, located in the center of the district at the intersection of Commerce and Union streets, is a square, three-story building constructed of five-course American bond brick beneath a hipped roof.

Evidence of Occoquan's continued prosperity during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century survives in a large number of residences that line Commerce and Union streets. Constructed primarily in the building vernacular of folk Victorian tradition, the two-story frame buildings frequently display German siding and decorative porches. Buildings in the 200 through 300 blocks of Commerce Street are examples of this type. Typical of

these houses is 202 Commerce Street, a two-story frame, five-bay building with a gable roof, the façade decorated by a porch consisting of stylized Doric columns and sawncut balustrade. Dating to the same period is 306 Commerce Street, a two-story frame, three-bay house with a shed roof fronted by a porch supported on chamfered posts with scroll brackets connected by a sawnwork balustrade. A variety of simple un-ornamented buildings also exist in the district, including 209 Commerce Street, a two-story frame house covered in German siding beneath a gable roof, and 304 Commerce Street, another two-story, three-bay building sheathed in weatherboards.

Fire swept down Mill Street in 1916 destroying many of the town's major commercial structures. However, a few residential structures which date to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century still stand at the west end of Mill Street and have now been converted to businesses. Among these is 406 Mill Street, a two-story, five-bay building with a porch consisting of turned posts and a decorative sawncut balustrade. The residence at 402 Mill Street, now a business, is a good example of early twentieth century craftsman or bungalow architecture. There are several of these in the Historic District. Most of the commercial buildings are simple commercial vernacular structures built after the fire.

The Historic District contains few public buildings. Two churches, both dating to the 20<sup>th</sup> century, are located within the boundaries. The Ebenezer Church, built in 1924, stands on Washington Street. The Methodist congregation constructed their church at 314 Mill Street in 1926 which now serves as Town Hall.

Toward the end of the last century improved economic conditions in town and an increase in the population of Northern Virginia combined to create an atmosphere favorable to new commercial and residential construction. Keeping true to the tradition of eclectic design in Occoquan, these buildings reflect Federal, vernacular, even Tudor influences. Several townhouse developments have dramatically changed the landscape of the town.

Each major period of Occoquan's history is represented in its buildings. Well-kept, shaded yards surround many of the residential structures on Washington, Commerce, and Ellicott Streets. Shops and commercial buildings on Mill Street are tightly knit and open directly onto the paved streets. The lawns and decorative details of the residential structures, in contrast with the density of the commercial

core, create a unified, yet varied, combination of buildings and building types within the Historic District.

--Adapted from *District Character* by Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

## V. Definitions

**Period of Significance:** The period from 1736 through 1928, reflecting the date of construction of the earliest building with the District to the end of historical development in the Town with the opening of Route 1, approximately 50 years prior to the creation of the Old and Historic Occoquan District.

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## V.VI. Rehabilitation and Construction

### 1. Additions

An exterior addition to a historic building is acceptable with three suggestions strongly recommended:

- a) Locating the addition so as not to be conspicuous.
- b) Limiting the size and scale of the addition in order not to compromise the integrity of the building or any structures surrounding it.
- c) Using materials compatible with the historic building and the other buildings nearby.

The Occoquan Code requires a building permit when constructing, enlarging, altering, repairing or demolishing a building or structure.

### 2. Awnings

The use of attractive awnings and canopies is encouraged in the Historic District. Fabric shall be limited to canvas or similar cloth. Vinyl, plastic, and aluminum are not compatible materials for use in the Historic District. The color should be in the palette of historic colors. See Colors.

Words on your awning are considered signs and must be preapproved by the ARB.

### 3. Bricks

18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century bricks were much larger than 20<sup>th</sup> century bricks and the use of the oversized bricks is encouraged. Brick color shall be in the terra cotta or reddish-orange tones. Colored bricks were unknown in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. All bricks were made from natural clays, and varied in shade depending on the region of the origin. Burned or black bricks were usually used only on the gable ends or chimneys.

Mortar shall be sand-colored. "C-73" is an example of a modern mortar which most closely resembles historic mortar. Blue Bond or gray mortar is prohibited. Mortar joints were "grapevine" or other patterns were used rather than the smooth joints used in modern times.

Bricks were laid to form patterns, such as Flemish bond, English bond, common bond, rather than modern-day running bond. A “water table” course was built about two feet about the foundation to deflect running off the roof.

#### 4. Chimneys

Chimneys shall extend at least six (6) feet above the roof ridge, corbelled and be of a design appropriate to the architectural style. Suitable materials are brick or stone.

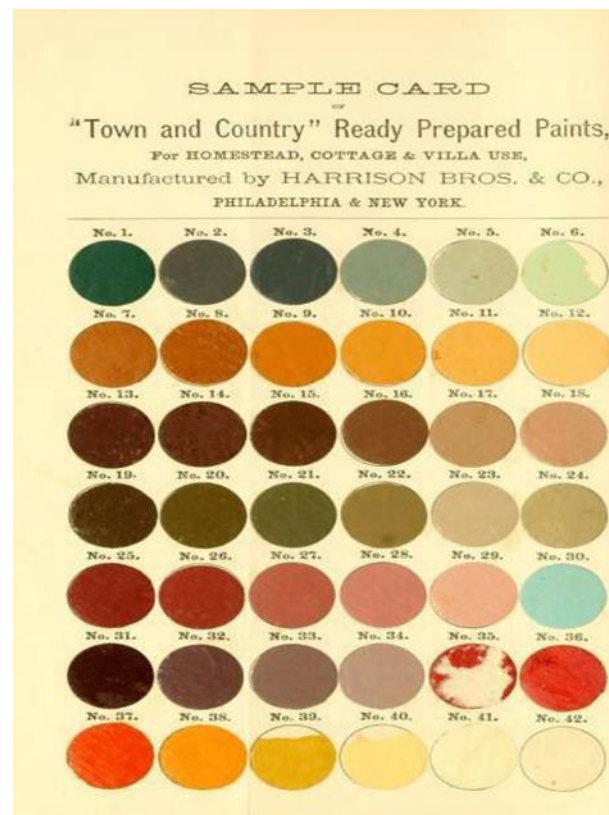
#### 5. Colors

Exterior paint colors shall be appropriate for the architectural period of the building. Colors of a building shall take into consideration roof and foundation colors. It is encouraged that when rehabilitating Craftsman or Victorian style homes to use period-appropriate color pairings. In addition, for rehabilitation or replacement of windows, “earth tone” colors are appropriate.

The book *A Century of Color* is an excellent reference. Another resource is the following color chart which is taken from the website Archive.org and the document “Every Man His Own Painter!” which was originally written in 1872.

Note that none of these colors are modern paint chips. Use these colors as a guide as you pick out your exact paint colors. Most popular exterior paint brands now have historic palettes available.

Painting of brick or stone is not recommended. Existing paint may be removed if done in a manner which will not damage the surface of the structure. Methods such as sandblasting, chemical application and heat guns tend to damage the structure.



## 6. Doorways

The placement and proportions of windows and doors are of paramount importance in achieving an historic reproduction. Original doors should be repaired and rehabilitated if possible. Storm doors shall allow visibility of the original door. Sliding glass doors are not considered to be in keeping with the character and architectural detail of the Old and Historic District and are prohibited if visible from the street (waterfront is also considered a street).

Style of doors from:

18 <sup>th</sup> Century	Six-panel (cross and open Bible); small glass light above door Solid wood or stone header over top of door 1775-1800 had very elaborate doorways, with sidelights and fanlights above front door and columns beside door or entry porch
19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Wide variety of elaborate doorways Stained glass in doors Double doors Columns

On storefronts, doors may be constructed of painted wood or wood-look-alike, and may include large areas of glass. Paneled or glazed paneled doors are appropriate for residential buildings. Unfinished aluminum is not recommended. Security and fire-resistant updates to doors are welcomed.

## 7. Fences and Walls

If fences and walls are to be used as screens or accent elements, the design, colors, and choice of materials shall be consistent with the design and materials of the building. Landscaping can be used in conjunction with these structures to strengthen their screening properties. Chain link, stockade, bamboo, vinyl, and snow fencing are not considered appropriate. Composite fencing can be considered appropriate if it has historic features.



## 8. Foundations

Foundation walls shall be covered with brick, stucco, stone, aluminum, vinyl, or wood siding. Paneling and exposed cinder or concrete block or monolithic concrete walls are not considered appropriate.

## 9. Handicap Ramps

Handicapped ramps shall be ADA compatible and located at the rear or side of a building, if possible. The design shall be consistent with the design, textures, materials, and colors of the building.

## 10. Landscaping

Trees, shrubs, and flowering plants contribute greatly to the character of an area; therefore, existing vegetation, especially trees, should be preserved if at all possible. Adding shrubbery does not need ARB review. Taking out trees 4" in diameter or more needs permission from the Town Manager.

## 11. Lighting

Exterior lighting for structures in the Historic District shall reflect the style and era of the building. Freestanding lights shall not exceed 15 feet in height, and all light shall be directed downward into the site. A combination of freestanding and wall-mounted fixtures is recommended in order to yield varied levels of lighting. Appropriate decorative fixtures are desirable over utilitarian fixtures. Sodium vapor lighting or anything that looks like neon is inappropriate in the Historic District.

## 12. Materials

Siding – Original siding materials shall be repaired to retain the original character of the surface rather than removed or covered. Often this is not possible so a look-a-like and modern material will be sufficient as long as all efforts are made to maintain the same appearance.

Exterior trim – Dentil molding and crown molding were simple in the early part of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, and elaborate in the later with columns added. 18<sup>th</sup> Century trim consisted of dentil and crown molding on the fascia boards, corner moldings, and lentils above windows. Lentils were of brick, stone, or a solid piece of wood. Brick lentils were laid to form an arch, either a "jack" arch or a "segmented" arch. The

segmented arch was curved rather than straight.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> Century trim was elaborate. The mid- to later part of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century has often been called the “Gingerbread Age” with immigrant skilled laborers providing elaborate trim on fascia boards, soffits, rake boards, windows, doors, and porches at low costs. Brackets attached to the soffits were commonplace.

### 13. Porches

Porches are the welcoming hand to any structure, sometimes covered, sometimes not. Porches have played an important role in many Historic Districts, including Occoquan, and consist of many styles over the years. Historically porches were made of wood and/or masonry. Wood is still preferred in the Historic District but a realistic woodgrain look is acceptable.

New or modified porches in the Historic District should reflect the styles and appearance of existing porches in the Historic District as to scale and aesthetics. When modifying a porch, the property owner must maintain or enlarge the existing dimensions of the porch and must match or retain the profiles of the porch’s elements (such as column bases, shafts and capitals, balusters, and ornamental millwork). Existing open-air front porches on primary elevations must not be enclosed. Any building with an existing primary-elevation porch should not have an additional porch created. For contributing structures, a ramp for ADA access should work with the existing porch rather than alter the features of the structure.

### 14. Public Art

Public art includes artistic structures and murals erected on properties in the Historic District for non-commercial purposes.

Scale – For murals, the size shall not exceed 30% of the principal building’s exterior wall surface area, ensuring it remains in scale with the building’s architecture and does not overwhelm the structure. For artistic structures, the structure’s height must not exceed 50% of the height of the principal building, and its footprint should be no larger than 10% of the total lot area, ensuring it is proportionate to the building and site.

Placement – No public art shall be placed in a manner that obscures or distorts the architectural features of a principal building. Murals shall be placed on secondary

façades, avoiding primary or street-facing elevations, to minimize the visual impact on the building's historical character. Murals must be applied to surfaces that are not historically significant or have already been altered, such as previously painted surfaces, modern extensions or non-original walls, to preserve the integrity of historic materials. Alternatively, murals can be installed on removable materials attached to the wall. When possible, artistic structures should be placed in rear or side yards, avoiding placement in front of or directly attached to historic façades, to reduce their impact on the historic streetscape. Artistic structures should be free-standing or attached to modern extensions where possible.

Reversability – Installation methods must be non-invasive, such as using removable paint or surface-mounted panels, avoiding any damage or permanent alterations to the original historic materials or features. An artistic structure should be easily removable without causing damage to the property.

Contextual Relevance – The public art shall have colors (see Colors) and materials appropriate to the architectural period of the principal building. Styles and themes should be from the period of significance.

Public art shall not contain information advertising goods or services provided by a business, whether located on the parcel on which the public art appears or elsewhere. Such installations are subject to the Town's Sign Ordinance, § 157.300 and interested applicants are advised to follow that process.

Only one structure and one mural are permitted per property in the Historic District to maintain the district's historical integrity and prevent visual clutter.

#### 14.15. \_\_\_\_\_ Roof Pitch and Material

Pitch - The pitch of a roof shall be a minimum of 8/12 except on a hip roof, mansard, or gambrel (barn). On a flat roof, a parapet with trim should be erected above the roofline (such as a store or Italianate Victorian).

Materials – Cedar shingles were widely used during the 18th Century (approximately 90 percent), and the remainder of the structures most often had oak shingle roofs. Shakes were used on outbuildings only. During the 19th Century, roofs were standing ridge (metal) or slate shingles. Modern composition shingles shall be chosen in colors to match the color of weathered historic roofing materials.

Wherever pressed tin or standing seam style roofs exist an effort should be made to preserve and/or refurbish. The same roof style shall be extended on any addition to buildings with existing pressed tin roofs.

#### 15.16. \_\_\_\_\_ Skylights

An application for a skylight must either (i) be based on ~~a historical example from the period 1736 through 1928~~ the period of significance or (ii) show installation in a location not visible from the adjacent right-of-way.

#### 16.17. \_\_\_\_\_ Rooftop Screening

If roof-mounted mechanical equipment is used on a flat roof, it shall be screened from public view on all sides by a parapet. If additional screening is necessary, the screening material and design shall be consistent with the design, textures, materials, and colors of the building. The screening shall appear as an integral part of the building. All effort should be made to locate equipment in a location that takes full advantage of the screening provided by the parapet from a street perspective.

#### 17.18. \_\_\_\_\_ Satellite Dishes

FCC rules allow for satellite dishes even though they are not historically accurate. If a satellite dish is installed it should be placed in an obscure location.

#### 18.19. \_\_\_\_\_ Solar Facilities (Photo Voltaic Systems)

Solar Facilities (Photo Voltaic Systems) are allowed in the Town of Occoquan even though they are not historically accurate. Solar facilities are permitted on contributing structures only if the panels are made of materials that closely match the color of the existing roof and panels are mounted flush with the roof. Solar facilities are permitted on non-contributing structures if mounted flush with the roof and gray, black, or silver in color, or if they match the existing roof color.

#### 19.20. \_\_\_\_\_ Screening

All outdoor utilities, transformers, meters, trash dumpsters, and mechanical units shall be screened from the public view by walls, fences, or landscaping as long as such uses are compatible with zoning regulations. Screening should appear to be an integral part of the overall site plan.

#### 20.21. \_\_\_\_\_ Streetscape

Town standards must be adhered to when sidewalks are placed on public right-of-way. Benches, trees, trash receptacles, and street lights may not be placed on public right-of-way.

#### 21.22. Vending Machines

Vending machines are not allowed in the Historic District.

#### 22.23. Windows

The placement and proportions of windows and doors are of paramount importance in achieving a historic reproduction. Most glass manufacturers 125 years ago did not have the capability to create large sheets of glass. That's why old window sashes are comprised of a collection of smaller pieces of glass separated and held in place by muntin bars.

Traditional windows have depth and a windowsill, as well as true divided lights or interior and exterior fixed muntin with internal spacers to reference traditional designs. No mirrored or tinted glass.

The architecture style of Craftsman homes and Victorian homes often used colors for muntin and sashes. That is encouraged using the earth tone colors.

In new construction simulated true divided light windows in the appropriate style and color (earth tones) shall be used.

Storm windows shall not be used unless the design allows the original window to show through.

18 <sup>th</sup> Century	Small panes; six over six window lights and up 1775-1800 arched at top, shutters Proportions – one-half the width of the height Placement – Lined up one above the other and over doorways Headers – Wood, solid beam; stone; brick; jack arches or segmented arches; lighter brick often used around windows
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19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Windows in the early 19 <sup>th</sup> Century were usually six over six. The emergence of styles such as neo-Gothic, Italianate and
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Queen Anne led the use of two over two, one over one, and in Queen Anne a multiplicity of combinations. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, two over two dominated and this is the pattern most often seen in 19<sup>th</sup> Century houses in Occoquan  
Proportions – Usually, one-half width of height  
Headers – Elaborate, eyebrow, segmented and jack arches

*For information on the Architectural Review Board, visit [www.occoquanva.gov](http://www.occoquanva.gov).*