



PAINT & COLOR

Overview

Painted finishes are just as much a defining part of historic character for individual properties and historic districts as other features and materials. Exterior paint has both an aesthetic purpose and a practical one. Paint provides an opportunity to reinforce a historic building's architectural style and accentuate its significant features through the appropriate selection of paint color. It also provides a sacrificial first line of defense against the elements for more costly materials like wood and metal. Although copper, bronze, and stainless steel surfaces are intended for direct exposure to the elements, paint protects all other metal surfaces from corrosion due to exposure to air and water. Also, paint helps protect wood surfaces from the effects of weathering due to moisture and ultraviolet light. Proper preparation and application of paint films is critical to preventing the deterioration and the need for replacement of vulnerable exterior surfaces. Therefore, proper maintenance of paint coatings is one of the most important parts of building preservation. At the same time, it is equally important for unpainted surfaces to remain unpainted. Application of paint films can alter the ability of materials like brick masonry to release moisture, leading to deterioration. Unpainted masonry is also part of the historic character of the district.

Hammond is historically a city of earth tones, colors derived from the organic material of the brick in its commercial buildings. Use of this color range, which includes all browns, beiges, terra cotta, brick red, lead white is encouraged for all painting done on the façade surface of the building. Residential buildings have more historic variety in their palettes depending upon the style of the building. Queen Anne houses display the most exuberant use of color. Craftsman Bungalows often combined exterior materials such as shingles, stucco, and brick. Usually the brick was unpainted, the shingles were stained, and the stucco was painted a light neutral or buff color. Any trim or wood introduced was usually painted white, gray, or an earth tone. Preservation or restoration of historic paint schemes through the use of historic documentation or paint analysis can enhance the historic character of a building.

Lead Safety and Regulation

Property owners should be aware that as of April 2010 all exterior work on a pre-1978 building that disturbs more than 20 square feet of painted surface and any window replacement must be performed in compliance with the Environmental Protection Agency's Renovation, Repair and Painting (RRP) Rule (<http://www.epa.gov/getleadsafe/#>). This rule requires that any contractors performing such work are lead-safe certified. Homeowners doing their own work on their own home are exempt from the training and certification required of contractors, but should educate themselves about lead safety. The intent of the RRP Rule is to protect children from lead poisoning in all environments. This includes the children of contractors, who can be poisoned by contamination brought home by their parents. Everyone should learn about the dangers of lead and how to best contain it. Good lead-safe practices include protecting the work area with plastic sheeting; wearing gloves, masks, coveralls, and booties; minimizing the creation of dust; thorough cleanup during and after work; and proper bagging of lead waste after completion. See the EPA's guide, "Steps to Lead Safe Renovation, Repair, and Painting" (<http://www.epa.gov/getleadsafe/#>) for more information.

Care and Maintenance

Appropriate ways to preserve paint and color include the following, but always check with the Administrative Officer of the Historic District Commission to see if your work will require a COA.

- Inspect painted surfaces to determine if repainting is necessary or if cleaning the surfaces will suffice.
- Use the gentlest techniques possible, such as handscraping and handsanding with wood or brick, and wire brushing and handsanding with metals, to remove loose paint layers down to a sound paint layer. Employ infrared heaters and chemical paint strippers only when gentler methods are not successful and more thorough removal is necessary, and use them with caution. Heat guns should be avoided because of fire risk.
- Use of pressure-washers and grit-blasting on wood and masonry is not permitted.
- Use of disc sanders and grinders for paint removal on wood and masonry is not permitted.
- Follow proper surface preparation, applying compatible paint-coating systems, including priming all exposed wooden surfaces.
- Use stain or varnish on surfaces previously varnished or stained.

GUIDELINES FOR PAINT & COLOR

1. Protect original building material that was painted by maintaining a sound paint film.
2. Painting of unpainted wood, brick, stone, copper and bronze is not permitted. Applications for the painting of previously painted buildings that have experienced substantial loss of paint will be evaluated on a case by case basis.
3. Surfaces that were varnished or stained, must not be painted with an opaque film.
4. Enhancement of the architectural character of the historic building through appropriate placement of exterior paint colors and finishes is encouraged. The composition and color of all paints and finishes must be approved by the commission.