STOREFRONTS IN HISTORIC DISTRICTS
Application Guidelines
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Completed and revised by the staff of the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission.

Concept, layout, and graphics: Lesa Rozmarek, Assoc. AIA

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STOREFRONTS IN HISTORIC DISTRICTS

Storefronts are a vital part of New York City's streetscapes, creating and reinforcing a vibrant dialogue with its busy thoroughfares. This is why any proposal to change them, regardless of whether it is contextual or contemporary, should relate well to the buildings and neighborhoods where they are located, and reflect the common characteristics of historic storefronts.

There are several Commission rules and master plans that allow staff-level permits to be issued for restorative work and storefronts in the Jackson Heights and Stone Street historic districts, and along Madison Avenue in the Expanded Carnegie Hill, Metropolitan Museum and Upper East Side historic districts.

Section 2-17 of the Commission's rules, also known as the "Restoration Rule," enables LPC's staff preservationists to issue permits for proposals that replicate a missing historic storefront if the design is based on documented historic precedents, and the proposal does not involve the removal of historic fabric.

Permit applications that do not conform to the Restoration Rule or to the rules and master plans in the above historic districts, will require a review before the full Commission at a public hearing. Please visit LPC's website for a copy of the rules: http://www.nyc.gov/test/lpc/downloads/pdf/pubs/rules.pdf

Section 2-17 also allows for staff-level approvals of storefront designs, storefront security gates, housing, ventilating and equipment, as well as proposed designs that are not technically restorative, but are based on relevant historic precedents within the historic districts where the building is located, and feature the typical components of historic storefronts, including large display windows, bulkheads and transoms (for more information on these components, see Components of Historic Storefronts on page 3 of this chapter).

1930s Tax Photo from Brooklyn, NY
Design Guidelines

Please consider the following when submitting a storefront proposal:

- No significant historic fabric should be removed
- New storefront infill should be framed by the existing or historic piers and lintels
- If piers and lintels have been removed, a new opening should conform to the building’s bay rhythm
- If the original storefront opening was reduced, it must be restored to its original size. If interior conditions prevent this, the storefront opening should be enlarged to the greatest extent possible, and the storefront surround should be consistent with the materials and details of the historic base of the building
- Proportions, configuration, details, materials, and finish of the storefront should be consistent with the age and style of the building
- Design of the storefront should be harmonious with other storefronts in the building and streetscape
- Modern storefronts may be approved if they evoke the scale and proportions of historic storefronts elsewhere in the historic district where the building is located
- Security gates must roll down on the interior of the storefront

A staff-level approval may be granted if:

- No significant fabric is removed
- Your proposal meets LPC’s "Restoration Rule," (Section 2-17)
- You submit photographic evidence, physical evidence, or drawings documenting the authenticity of the proposed design of the restoration
- No evidence of the historic storefront is available and the applicant certifies a search was undertaken using the resources listed in the Restoring Architectural Features chapter of this manual; in this case, the design may be based on the designs of buildings of similar age and style
- The building is in the **Jackson Heights Historic District**, the **Stone Street Historic District** or along **Madison Avenue** in the Expanded **Carnegie Hill, Metropolitan Museum** and **Upper East Side** historic districts and meets the storefront rules or master plans for each of those districts, available by following the below links:
  
  - Jackson Heights Historic District:  
    [http://on.nyc.gov/zd6NIH](http://on.nyc.gov/zd6NIH)
  
  - Stone Street Historic District:  
    [http://on.nyc.gov/ArnYBe](http://on.nyc.gov/ArnYBe)
  
  - Madison Avenue in the Carnegie Hill Historic District Extension:  
    [http://on.nyc.gov/xrSzba](http://on.nyc.gov/xrSzba)
  
  - Madison Avenue in the Metropolitan Museum Historic District:  
    [http://on.nyc.gov/wvxRle](http://on.nyc.gov/wvxRle)
  
  - Madison Avenue in the Upper East Side Historic District:  
    [http://on.nyc.gov/zQyuLC](http://on.nyc.gov/zQyuLC)

A Commission-level approval may be granted if:

- Your presentation clearly shows the historic condition, the existing condition and the proposed changes
- Your proposal addresses the design guidelines at the top of this page
Components of Historic Storefronts

Historic storefronts are found in a variety of styles, including vernacular, high-style, and modern, in a variety of building types, from row houses and hotels to commercial lofts and department stores. Despite these differences, all historic storefronts feature common components:

**Bulkhead:** Rarely absent, and usually flat or paneled wood or metal and approximately 12 to 24 inches high.

**Display Windows:** Always present outside of early vernacular storefronts. Depending on the age of the storefront, could be multi-paned, single paneled, or projecting and the framing could be either simple metal or wood framing, decorative turned posts and columns.

**Transoms:** Usually present, often present above entry, even if not above display windows, transoms were generally standard rectangular and approximately 12 to 36 inches high. Depending on the age and building type, some storefronts featured tall, rectangular transoms that were approximately half the height of display window, decorative, square, or multi-paned transoms.

**Entry:** Entrances were centered, recessed, off-center, at the corner of the building, and featured either single or paired doors and sometimes sidelights. Recessed entrances could have splayed or straight returns.

**Piers, Columns and Cornices:** These features represent the structural bays of the façade, and the shape, size and proportions of storefront openings were defined by these elements. Pier styles typically found at storefronts include turned posts, large, square piers or columns at corners, round columns flanking entry, and square columns flanking each display window. Cornices were ornamental features that visually separated the storefront level from the rest of the building and varied in the level of ornament depending on the style of the building.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Characteristics of All Storefront Types</th>
<th>Variation in Detail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Standard form and elements with variations</td>
<td>• Level of architectural detail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Elements proportional to one another</td>
<td>• Arrangement of entry and display windows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Level of transparency—display windows</td>
<td>• Bulkhead height and material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dominate streetwall; clear glass</td>
<td>• Display window proportions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Oriented to sidewalk and pedestrian traffic</td>
<td>• Transom proportions and configuration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use of transom, awnings, and emerging</td>
<td>• Door placement and type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>technology to control light, climate</td>
<td>• Piers and columns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Signage zones limited to windows, signband</td>
<td>• Storefront cornice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and spandrel area</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Altered over time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Bulkhead**
The lower solid portion of a storefront window. Sometimes it may be adorned with trim or tiles.

**Sill**
Horizontal member that bears the upright portion of the frame. It also sheds water that runs down the face of the window.

**Sill**
Horizontal member that bears the upright portion of the frame. It also sheds water that runs down the face of the window.

**Display Window**
Pane of glass that is transparent to display goods and services.

**Transom Window**
Window directly above the display window or door. It can be transparent, translucent, or made out of specialty glass, like prism glass.

**Transom Bar**
Horizontal member that separates the display window from the transom window.

**Security Screen**
Preferred location of the placement of a security screen is behind the storefront.

**Sign Band**
Ideal location for a commercial storefront sign.

**Lintel**
Usually made of steel or masonry, this is the bearing plate for the masonry above the window.

**Cornice**
Decorative trim that protrudes from the plane of the building that separates the ground floor from the upper floors. Not found on all storefronts.

*NOT TO SCALE*
What to Expect: Storefront Review Process

My Building is

Located in
- Jackson Heights Historic District
- The Expanded Carnegie Hill Historic District, Metropolitan Museum Historic District, Upper East Side Historic District on Madison Avenue

Located on
- Columbus Avenue between 72nd & 79th Streets

OR
The proposed work meets the criteria of Section 2-17 of LPC's rules

LPC Staff Level Approvals

Storefronts that meet the above rules or Section 2-17 of the LPC's rules may be issued a Certificate of No Effect (CNE) or a Permit for Minor Work (PMW)

Buildings with an approved Storefront Master Plan may be issued an Authorization to Proceed (ATP)

If the application does not meet the criteria of the rules, it will be reviewed by the full Commission at a public hearing.

Public Hearing Approvals

Applications that come before the Commission for review and approval, may be granted a Certificate of Appropriateness (CofA).

These applications must be complete and include historic photographs of the site and building, color photographs of the existing building, color renderings of proposal and dimensioned drawings. Your staff preservationist will notify you of any missing pieces of information. Please follow the recommendations and guidance of your staff preservationist. See Appendix C for details on the public hearing process.

STOREFRONTS
Application Checklist for Storefronts

Below is a list of required descriptive materials for your storefront proposal. These materials will help the Commission evaluate the impact of your proposal on the associated landmark site.

- Permit application signed by the building owner
- Color photographs of the building and close-ups of the existing storefront
- Elevation drawings of the existing and proposed storefronts and an overall building elevation
- Large-scale section details of the head, jamb, bulkhead and sill
- Enlarged floor plan of storefront area
- Large-scale partial plan showing the plane of the storefront in relation to building wall drawings of signage, lighting and security
- Color and material sample(s)

If you have met all of the requirements and staff has confirmed you are able to receive a staff-level approval, you must submit two sets of filings drawings signed and sealed by a licensed architect or engineer if the proposed work requires a Department of Buildings permit before the LPC approval may be issued.

An LPC staff preservationist will contact you if additional materials are required.
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Sample Application Materials
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Label the photograph or on the back of the photograph denote which elevation the photograph is representing; i.e. Howard Street Elevation.
View from Crobsy Street

Label the photograph or on the back of the photograph denote which elevation the photograph is representing; i.e. Crosby Street Elevation.
Adjacent Buildings on Howard Street (both photos)

Label the photograph or on the back of the photograph denote which elevation the photograph is representing; i.e., Howard Street Elevation.
Adjacent Buildings on Crosby Street

Label the photograph or on the back of the photograph denote which elevation the photograph is representing; i.e., Crosby Street Elevation.
SCOPE OF WORK INCLUDES:
REMOVAL OF EXISTING
SECURITY SCREENS,
CORNICE RESTORATION,
INSTALLATION OF NEW
INTERNAL SECURITY
SCREEN, INSTALLATION OF
NEW EXTERIOR TILE ENTRY
FLOOR, PAINTING OF
CORNICE, STOREFRONT,
AND WOOD TRIM,
INSTALLATION OF NEW
CUSTOM WOOD DOORS.

STOREFRONT
REHABILITATION TO
INCLUDE: SELECTIVE
DEMOLITION OF EXISTING
STOREFRONT TO EXPOSE
POSSIBLE HISTORIC FABRIC.
NEW TEMPERED LAMINATED
GLASS WINDOWS SET IN
ALUMINUM STORE FRONT
FRAMING WITH WOOD
SURROUND.

IF HISTORIC FABRIC
REMAINS: FABRIC TO BE
EVALUATED FOR REUSE
AND THE STOREFRONT
SHALL BE RECONSTRUCTED
BASED UPON EVIDENCE.
STOREFRONT INSTALLATION
311 HOWARD ST., NEW YORK, NEW YORK

Proposed Howard Street Elevation
Scale: 1/4"=1'-0"

Proposed Crobsy Street Elevation
Scale: 1/4"=1'-0"

DOOR HARDWARE
ALL HARDWARE TO BE US10B, OIL RUBBED BRONZE FINISH. MANUFACTURER'S CUT SHEETS ARE INCLUDED IN THIS PACKAGE FOR DESIGN REVIEW.
EXISTING METAL CORNICE TO BE REPAIRED AND PAINTED.

EXISTING STRUCTURAL FRAMING

NEW ALUMINUM STOREFRONT SYSTEM WITH TEMPERED LAMINATED INSULATED GLAZING WITH ULTRA CLEAR LOW-E COATING ON #3 SURFACE. DESIGN TO MATCH HISTORIC DOCUMENTATION.

EXISTING CAST IRON COLUMNS TO REMAIN. TO BE RESTORED.

EXISTING METAL CORNICE TO BE REPAIRED AND PAINTED.

EXISTING STRUCTURAL FRAMING

NEW ALUMINUM STOREFRONT SYSTEM WITH TEMPERED LAMINATED INSULATED GLAZING WITH ULTRA CLEAR LOW-E COATING ON #3 SURFACE. DESIGN TO MATCH HISTORIC DOCUMENTATION.

EXISTING CAST IRON COLUMNS TO REMAIN. TO BE RESTORED.

EXISTING METAL CORNICE TO BE REPAIRED AND PAINTED.

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NEW ALUMINUM STOREFRONT SYSTEM WITH TEMPERED LAMINATED INSULATED GLAZING WITH ULTRA CLEAR LOW-E COATING ON #3 SURFACE. DESIGN TO MATCH HISTORIC DOCUMENTATION.
EXISTING COLUMNS TO REMAIN

NEW TILE ENTRY RAMP TO COMPLY W/ ADA

NEW SECURITY SCREEN

SIDEWALK CURB

Scale: 1/4"=1'-0"
Bulkhead Tile: Clay or Bust Inc., Style: Non-Slip Modern Funk Hexagon, Color: Pearl Essence.


Bulkhead Tile: Clay or Bust Inc., Style: Non-Slip Modern Funk Hexagon, Color: Onyx.

Affix sample tile here.

Affix color chip of proposed paint sample here.

Affix color chip of proposed stain sample here.

Affix sample tile here.