



# POLICY STATEMENT FOR WINDOWS

CITY OF CHARLESTON  
2 George Street, Third Floor

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING, PRESERVATION AND SUSTAINABILITY  
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Windows are a major character defining feature of a building and should be of good quality, have sufficient relief and depth, and good materials and details.

1. Materials:

- a. New construction and non-historic structures may utilize vinyl, aluminum, aluminum clad, vinyl clad or solid wood windows.

2. Lite Divisions:

- a. New construction and non-historic structures may utilize simulated divided lites provided an exterior and interior muntin bar and thermal spacer bar (between the two panes of glass) is used. Exterior muntins shall have a profile and a minimum depth of  $\frac{1}{4}$ ".
- b. Sashes shall be deep enough to allow for appropriate simulated divided lites to be applied.
- c. Lite division patterns are to be appropriate to the individual building and neighborhood context.

3. Trim and Positioning within Openings:

- a. Window trim is to be appropriate to the context of its installation. Brick moulding is encouraged in masonry installations. Window casings used in wood or cementitious siding installations should be of an appropriate thickness to provide relief from the siding.
- b. Windows are not to be flush mounted with the exterior walls. Windows are to be recessed into the wall to maximize depth and shadow. This is particularly important in stucco or brick applications; alternate detailing should be explored to provide a maximum window recess.

4. Glazing:

- a. Generally, glazing is to be clear with no tinting.
- b. New construction and non-historic structures may utilize insulated glazing.
- c. Historic structures are to utilize single pane glazing.

5. New Windows in Historic Structures:

- a. Historic windows in historic structures shall be repaired when possible and only be replaced when absolutely necessary.
- b. New windows in historic structures shall be appropriate to the historic building in size, material, lite cut, detailing and cannot be clad.
- c. Plastic jamb liners are not permitted in historic windows.

6. Exterior Finishes:

- a. All finishes, including jamb liners, are to be appropriately applied and durable.

7. Sills, Check Rails and Sashes:

- a. All sills are to be sloped as an architectural and waterproofing detail.
- b. All check rails are to be in keeping with the look and proportions of a double hung window. The check rail should be the thickness of the bottom rail of the top sash.
- c. All windows are to be double hung with a frame and sash of appropriate thickness.
- d. Jamb liners are to match the color of the window sashes.

8. Window Sample:

- a. A full size window is to be presented to the Board when submitting for Preliminary review.

The above criteria are intended as general guidelines. Applications for windows shall be considered on a case by case basis.

This Policy Statement was adopted by a majority on the June 27, 2013 meeting of the Design Review Board.

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Chair