

9.4 Roofs



Some historic commercial structures had fanciful roofs such as these in Larchmont Village.



The transparency of storefront windows should be preserved. Mirrored finishes are inappropriate.



Others had flat roofs with decorative parapet detail, like this art deco market.

PURPOSE AND INTENT

The character of the roof, including parapet walls, is a major feature for most historic structures. Similar roof forms repeated on a street help create a sense of visual continuity along a streetfront. Roof pitch, materials, size, orientation, eave depth and configuration, and roof decoration are all distinct features that contribute to the character of a roof.

Traditionally, historic commercial structures commonly had flat roofs. These roofs were necessary to the form of the historic commercial building, and should be maintained. Roofing materials for flat roofed buildings on which the roofing material is not visible are generally not a character-defining feature of a structure. The roof-level cornice detail of the structure, however, is an important character-defining feature of the structure, and should be maintained.

GUIDELINES

1. Preserve the historic roof form.
2. Preserve the historic eave depth or cornice design.
3. Historic cornice detail should be preserved in place wherever possible.
4. If historic cornice detail must be removed, it should be replaced with details that match the originals in design, dimensions, and texture.
5. Historic specialty roofing materials, such as tile, slate or built-up shingle, should be preserved in place or replaced in-kind.
6. Replacement roof materials on visible roofs should convey a scale, texture, and color similar to those used originally.
7. Rooftop additions should be located to the rear of the structure and designed so as to minimize their impact on visible roof form.



The pitched mansard roof and dormer windows on this structure help define its architectural character.



Cornice details help distinguish commercial buildings.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

EXEMPTIONS

NONE

DELEGATED AUTHORITY TO THE PLANNING STAFF

NONE

GENERAL BACKGROUND AND ADVICE TO THE APPLICANT

Important elements of your historic roof which must be preserved include the roof form, the eave and cornice design, and any decorative or structural details which contribute to the style of a commercial structure. Before undertaking any work on a commercial roof, first consider photographing the areas where work will be done. Some of these elements may have to be removed while the work is done, and it can be helpful to have a record of what they looked like before work started when the time comes to put them back in place.

Please refer to the Appendix for additional assistance and resources.