II C--CRITERIA FOR JUDGING
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In the course of the College Hill study, an attempt has been made to set up criteria for judging architectural and historic worth, both to be used as a guide for developing the local program for preservation of historic buildings and to serve in developing similar programs elsewhere. There is presented here a review of the criteria used by the National Trust for Historic Preservation: a discussion of the concepts developed in the current study; and a list of guides to help in making judgments of the architectural and historic merit of buildings and areas. The application of these guides in collecting, scoring, and mapping data on the buildings in the study area is taken up in a subsequent section.

NATIONAL TRUST CRITERIA

Of primary importance in the "Criteria for Evaluating Historic Sites and Buildings" developed by the National Park Service, and adopted in general by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, is "to serve as a guide for groups concerned with the "protection, restoration, maintenance and the interpretation of sites, buildings and objects significant in American history and culture." The most important concepts of the "Criteria" are summarized here:

**Historical and Cultural Significance:**

- Broad historical values representing the "cultural, political, economic or social history of the nation, state or community..."
- Identification with historic personages.
- Identification with historic events.
- Architectural or landscape values, emphasizing the value of "an architectural type-specimen, inherently valuable for a study of a period-style or method of construction; or a notable work of a master builder, designer, or architect whose individual genius influenced his age." Mere antiquity is not considered a sufficient reason for preservation except where other more significant examples have disappeared or when the structure forms a part of an especially characteristic section of a given community. Smaller structures, such as the first squared-log cabins or the sod houses

of the pioneers are recognized as having as much importance as the mansions of the past.

- Identification with aboriginal man.

**Suitability:**

- Extent of surviving original material. The "Criteria" suggests that structures or sites considered for preservation should have a preponderance of original material or other physical remains which have retained their integrity. Integrity is defined as a composite quality derived from original workmanship, original location and intangible elements of feeling and association. The report adds that "repair or restoration of original elements or reconstruction of a building long destroyed demands high professional standards of historical and scientific techniques" and states as a principle of procedure that "it is better to preserve than repair, ...better to restore than reconstruct."
- Adequacy of property boundaries, accessibility and several other similarly practical concepts are also listed under this heading.

**Educational Values:**

- Capacity for public use and enjoyment.
- Place in other preservation programs.
- Cooperation with other agencies.

**Other Factors:**

Such matters as cost of restoration and of maintenance, as well as finding suitable sponsorship, are also listed by the National Trust for consideration.

**COLLEGE HILL STUDY CONCEPTS**

It is recognized that the criteria set up by the National Park Service and the National Trust form a basic guide for the designation of buildings and sites which fall into a category of first importance nationally, covering those monuments which no matter where they are located, should receive a high priority rating and as much protection as possible.
An additional concept of this study has been based on the recognition that cities are the product of continuing development and that the resultant architectural evolution is important. An attempt has therefore been made to develop an approach to the evaluation of buildings which respects the integrity and the salient qualities of each architectural style, and to recommend a program which assures the perpetuation of important building of the various periods and encourages a visual integration of the past and the present.

A second concept has been developed which holds that, while museum buildings serve an important purpose and that isolated outstanding monuments should be preserved, groups of surviving related buildings in their original setting can explain the characteristics of other eras and can give an added cultural and historic dimension to the modern city in ways that single monuments cannot. A conscious effort, therefore, has been made to place emphasis on the early neighborhoods and to aim at retaining most of the early structures in such areas, keeping them in active use and paying attention to their original appearance and the elements of their setting such as yards, trees, shrubs, pavements, outbuildings, and their placement in relation to sidewalks and streets. In turn, neighborhoods have been considered from the point of view of their unified or consistent character.

In essence, while the framework of the study has been designed to make possible the evaluation of each building on its own merit, it has also been planned to evaluate each building as 1) an example of its architectural period, and 2) a part of its neighborhood.

WORKING GUIDES

Based on the thinking outlined above, which represents a combination of the concepts set forth in the National Trust Criteria and the concepts developed in the College Hill Study, the following guides have been used for evaluating the historic architecture of the College Hill area:

- Examples of styles and buildings by important master builders or architects, or of buildings which were deemed outstanding when they were constructed, have a special significance and should be marked for particular consideration.
- Continued loss of old buildings has given surviving structures added significance. Their preservation becomes important since they are tangible evidence in explanation of the past. Sole survivors of a style or era are of utmost importance in terms of architectural history and its reflection of the corresponding social and cultural history.
- A successive development of architectural styles is interesting, and the preservation of such developments is important in giving the time dimension to the total character of our old cities.
- Typical buildings are important. Where numbers of typical buildings of related periods have survived, consideration should be given to methods of preserving them which will explain their historic aspects in relation to their neighborhood setting.
- Buildings associated with historic events have both historic and academic importance.

ARCHITECTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

Additional factors need to be considered in making judgments of architectural worth. Some of these go well beyond the matters of historical association or mere age. A summary of the thinking developed during the field inspection of over 1,350 structures of varied architecture is presented here as essential background for a full understanding of the survey methods applied in College Hill.

Style

A building should be judged as much as possible in terms of the ideals and intent of its builder. This means that it is necessary to understand the aims as well as the characteristics of any one building period in order to judge the worth of its products.

This objective approach is sometimes difficult to achieve since it requires a knowledge of the styles of building and a recognition of good design and workmanship in terms of the style in question. In a previous section of this report, the development of Colonial and American architectural style as found in the College Hill area has been discussed in detail.
Scale

Scale is an all-important consideration in any architectural evaluation, and must be kept in mind not only as a factor of each individual building, but for the relationships of one building to other buildings in a neighborhood.

In buildings of the same style span, unity has generally occurred automatically due to a common concept of building and a common understanding of scale. This was particularly true in American building of the Colonial and early post-Colonial periods, because all during this time carpenters and architects were building by a series of rule-of-thumb proportions drawn from English tradition, and later from English carpenter handbooks. The result was a kind of scale common to all building in this long era. It meant that relationships of building to building were apt to be satisfying since all buildings were part of the same tradition and of a commonly held, clear-cut understanding of design.

The same principles hold true for judging scale in building of the Greek revival period as for the Colonial. The ideals of proportion of this era were based on a return to classical Greek building with its sense for broad simple forms in which the adornment is an inseparable part of the building mass. They, therefore, deviate from the Colonial concepts, but since Colonial building stemmed from the classical tradition, enough of the same approach obtains so that Greek revival building merged satisfactorily with its predecessors. However, it is in this period that buildings are sometimes found that are too high and narrow for their neighbors. But such buildings are the exception, and the rows of houses with Greek detail keep a scale which is somewhat related to that of the building of the past, as well as satisfactory in its own right.

The first major break in scale and style occurred in the Victorian period when builders turned to a variety of sources for models in the search for the picturesque which characterized the latter half of the nineteenth century. The resultant successions of eclectic styles broke the old Colonial and post-Colonial sense for spatial relationships and scale. Gothic and Romanesque revival buildings emphasized jagged, asymmetrical vertical height. Italian villa inspired structures stemmed from classical tradition, but they were expanded and heightened and their detail was designed to be bolder, higher and more overhanging. The mansard-roofed buildings of the eighteen-sixties, to the eighties, gave a new plastic appearance to the buildings. When taste turned toward Queen Anne and Georgian revivals, the scale of the new buildings was related to Victorian rather than to Colonial models.

When these radically different buildings were inserted into earlier neighborhoods, the relationships of scale were often disturbed. In cases where the neighborhood has had a long and continuing building history, the result can be confusing. But as has been shown in the discussion of Victorian styles, Victorian building has important architectural qualities and a concept of scale of its own.

It requires an understanding of what has happened in the past to judge contemporary building with perceptiveness. The eclectic approach to design inherited by the twentieth century resulted in a confusion of scale and spatial relationships. The Beaux Arts training in vogue at the end of the century also had its influence. More than ever before, buildings were conceived on the drawing board “in the Gothic style”, “the Renaissance style” or “the Georgian style”. In many instances the requirement of the project was for a building of huge size but since the designer was committed to a “style” he applied traditional ornament conceived originally for smaller buildings. The result has generally been meaningless, scaleless and dry, and twentieth century architects have tended to omit eclectic detail and to explore the possibilities inherent in new forms, methods, and materials. This experimental approach has resulted in many buildings of excellent scale and spatial relationships. It has also produced its crop of poor buildings. Moreover, modern utility buildings are often mass-produced and watered-down versions of earlier styles. The flat-topped, one-story rows of stores, or the three-decker tenements, are, in contrast to the common buildings of earlier periods, poor both in scale and in appearance.

The break of contemporary building with the past makes the problem of relationship to earlier architecture a delicate one. Sensitive felt relationships of scale can go far to set each building period off to best advantage. However, the responsibility for achieving this goal necessarily lies with the contemporary designer. He needs to conceive his new building in terms of relationships compatible with the surrounding structures from the first stages of design, and as an aid in accomplishing this, can find it useful to include scaled drawings of the adjacent buildings in all his design sketches as clues for height, bulk and placement of the new structure.
Workmanship and Materials

Modern practices of mass production and the use of new materials have altered basically the character of building construction, of finish and detail. Houses put up before 1840, and even as late as 1850 and 1890, were built by methods no longer feasible today. Therefore, the framed construction, the finish made with manual planes and tools, and the handmade nails and hardware, lend at least an academic importance even to Colonial barns and yard buildings. Structures employing such methods will not be built again. They were "meant to last", and their builders followed typical practices, and therefore, Colonial houses, or for that matter, most buildings put up before 1850, can be considered interesting structurally. Beyond the matter of solid construction, the importance of an early structure should be judged by the elaboration and execution of the exterior and interior finish and by such other factors as size, although even wealthy men built comparatively small houses in New England because of the severe winters and dependence on fireplaces for heat.

In Providence, workmanship rather than the building material used should serve as the criterion of quality in early building. Wood was the common building material throughout the Colonial period. The American carpenter's flexible use of wood is of great interest and Providence was no exception to this evidence of his skill. Brick houses were occasionally built in Providence after 1730. After the Revolution, this material was in constant use for public buildings and for some of the wealthy merchants' mansions which were built in numbers on the slope of the hill and on the Weybosset side. Nonetheless, wood continued to be used for houses of all degrees of importance.

Use of a solid framed construction, although lighter than that common in the Colonial period, continued throughout the Greek revival period. Divergences in importance and quality of the buildings became increasingly pronounced and it was during this period that a great number of type houses, similar and often identical to one another, were produced. Stucco and stone were considered important building materials, but here again, wood never went out of favor and some of the best houses of this period were of wood.

The same principles of construction continued to be applied to early Victorian buildings, but it was at this time that new methods were introduced which changed the practices of building. In wood buildings, the balloon frame replaced the old framed and pegged construction. It suggested in this medium the skeleton construction which has been the basis of modern steel structure. Iron was also used, chiefly at first for facades of business buildings.

Wide differences in the quality of materials used and of workmanship first became evident in the Victorian period. Most of the small Victorian "cottages", Gothic revival houses, board and batten houses, and the one story box-like manbard-roofed houses, although unpretentious, were solidly built. Builders of the great houses of the Victorian period were lavish in the use of fine materials and expected outstanding workmanship as a matter of course. However, at this time, large blocks of houses and some row houses appeared, which violated rules of space, scale and crowding. Just before 1900, the flimsy three-decker tenements which mar the appearance of Providence today began to go up in numbers.

In the twentieth century, the differences between the well-built and cheaply-built houses have become increasingly sharp. As a result, the quality of workmanship must be particularly considered in evaluating present day building. Modern builders have made use of a great variety of materials. The traditional materials of brick, stone, stucco and wood are used in conventional and unconventional ways. Added to these materials are steel for framework, concrete, and a variety of artificial and of new materials. The use of any of these materials must be evaluated in terms of the successful total result of the finished building, both of itself and in relation to its surroundings.

The success of a guide for the evaluation of historic and architectural merit will be shown by the help it can give planners and citizens to make wise decisions about the selection of new buildings and areas which should be guaranteed care and protection. The following section describes how the broad considerations of 1) historic significance, 2) architectural quality, and 3) importance of various buildings to community and neighborhood discussed above have been used to form a yardstick reference and data sheet. It also explains how this data sheet has been used in the process of collecting, charting and scoring information about the buildings and neighborhoods in the study area.
II D--SCORING AND MAPPING

The first step in acquiring the information needed to designate and evaluate the architectural character of the structures in the College Hill area was to devise a system for collecting, recording, and charting information pertaining to the historic and architectural features of each structure. In addition, a method of scoring has been developed to give a comparative rating to each structure which could then be readily shown on a map.

DATA SHEET

After a review of many types of housing evaluation forms, a new data sheet was worked up and tested in the field. The form shown on this page is the result of many revisions based on house-to-house field work. It has been planned so as to record historic data, architectural data, and value of the building historically, architecturally, and as part of the neighborhood. An attempt was made to maintain an objective approach. Nevertheless, valuations of the sort called for must, to a certain extent, be subjective. This evaluation sheet is intended for use by someone relatively conversant with the development of American architectural style. Any group planning to make such an evaluation would do well to call in students of American architecture and local history to help set up the data sheets to fit local needs.

In the case of the College Hill Study, one person was made responsible for completing the forms for the entire area. This prolonged the data collecting period, but guaranteed that a consistent point of view for evaluations would be maintained.

It was found that the person charged with scoring buildings ought not work too long at one time or his judgments tended to become blurred; two hours at a stretch seemed to be a maximum. This much could be done daily and then the information could be checked and mapped on the same day in the office.

It was also found to be helpful to have another qualified person, particularly the planner charged with the designs for the area, go through the area too, in order to make his own evaluations and then to check the two sets of results against each other for analysis and correction. This double check has helped to crystallize standards and an understanding of local characteristics.
SCORING SYSTEM

A scoring system was devised and applied to each sheet in order to rate each building with a quantitative measure of its overall significance. Each building’s score is the sum of separate judgments as to its historic value, architectural worth, importance to the neighborhood, and structural and neighborhood conditions. The weights for various factors are indicated on the data sheet shown here, although in actual practice they were not printed on the forms used in the field. In the interest of added objectivity, the scoring was done in the office using a perforated card placed over each form, with cut-out spaces for entering the scoring figures based on the location of field checkmarks made in the various boxes. Several systems of weighting were studied before evolving the final formula, which places about half of the total possible score in terms of architectural factors. Almost one-third of a perfect score is dependent on historic aspects, while less than one-quarter reflects physical conditions. This proportionate division of scores is of considerable importance in relation to the categorizing of scored buildings in a later step in the evaluation process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical and Environmental Conditions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This section consists of three relatively simple field observations, each of which does not carry a great deal of weight, but which cumulatively represent an important and practical factor which needs to be taken into account.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CATEGORIZING OF SCORED BUILDINGS

After the buildings were scored, they were grouped into several broad categories, reflecting their relative historic and architectural evaluation, as follows:

100–70 points .......... exceptional
69–60 points .......... excellent
59–40 points .......... good
39–20 points .......... fair
19–0 points .......... poor

It is important to note that no structure which did not rate some score in regard to historic significance would fall in the “exceptional” category.

1,350 of the approximately 1,700 buildings in the College Hill area have been individually surveyed and scored. In the entire area 275 were built before 1830. Based on the above method of scoring, 29 of the pre-1830 buildings rank as exceptional architecturally and historically, 116 as excellent, 100 as good, 20 as fair, and 10 as poor. Seven post-1830 buildings score as exceptional, 52 as excellent, 230 as good, 400 as fair and 386 as poor.

Of the total 1,350 buildings scored, 36 rank as exceptional, 168 as excellent, 330 as good, 420 as fair and some 396 scored poor. The 350 remaining buildings not scored separately belong in a settled residential neighborhood built up almost entirely after 1875 and are shown on the map which dates the building in the area.
MAPPING

The data collected during the structure-by-structure survey was transferred to a series of study maps which showed various factors about the area. One of the more revealing of these is the map showing the year in which each structure was built, a sample portion of which is shown on this page. The buildings are mapped by five major periods, thus:

- Colonial (before 1775)
- Post-Colonial or Federal (1775–1830)
- Greek Revival (1825–1850)
- Victorian (1835–1900)
- Modern (1900 to date)

Such chronological mapping has given a clear picture of 1) the location of all the older structures in the area, 2) what neighborhoods have retained a unified building period, 3) where intrusive additions have been made, and 4) the pattern of growth for the area in point of view of time. All of these are important factors in the analysis of the area and determination of practical steps for action to protect concentrations of older building. This type of map, however, is limited in that it shows nothing in regard to the condition or the relative significance of various structures. For this reason, other study maps were prepared.

The simplest picture of historic and architectural worth is shown in the accompanying portion of a comprehensive map of College Hill, plotting individual buildings by their total score earned on the Historic Building Data Sheets. These are shown in color for the five categories, thus:

- exceptional
- excellent
- good
- fair
- poor

Although this map gives a broad overall picture which was very useful in public presentation of the study findings, it was also found helpful for purposes of analysis to prepare two other types of maps which presented more detailed considerations, all drawn from the Data Sheets.

Architectural Merit

This study map showed only the quality of architecture, with buildings rated in the five categories listed above. For it, the color system selected put all buildings in the categories of exceptional,
excellent, and good in one color group and the buildings in the fair and poor classifications in a different one. Because one intent of the mapping has been to indicate which buildings could be written off as expendable examples of architectural style, the group of buildings designated as fair has been studied particularly carefully. In some cases, buildings in this category add to the total picture of the neighborhood because they belong in date, or represent another aspect in the cross section of the neighborhood development. When this is true, their importance to the neighborhood has been the deciding factor and the score for architectural significance has been raised to good.

Master Study Map

This map was developed from the basic date map, first described above, and showing in color the five major periods in which the buildings were built. To this map were added four other classes of data, using different sets of symbols as follows:

- ARCHITECTURAL MERIT represented by a number:
  1. exceptional
  2. excellent
  3. good
  4. fair
  5. poor

- PHYSICAL CONDITION represented by a letter:
  A. good
  B. fair
  C. poor

- AMOUNT OF ALTERATION represented by a circle:
  fully blacked in; considerable alteration
  partially blacked in; a moderate amount of alteration

- HISTORIC IMPORTANCE represented by a star:
  black, for national significance
  red, for state-wide significance
  blue, for community significance

A section from this map is shown on this page. This map containing, as it does, separated information, gives a clear picture of the location of buildings by date and the growth of the neighborhoods. At the same time, it gives complete information about the architectural worth of the building and its physical condition. This information together with the historic significance of the buildings gives a fully-detailed picture of the several factors that need to be considered jointly in any historic area survey, and which have been summarized in the map of scores described earlier.
CATEGORIES OF BUILDING PRIORITY

On the basis of the scoring system developed in this study, three separate lists of buildings have been drawn up. Those buildings receiving a score of from 100-70 and ranking as exceptional have been placed in a category of “first priority”. They are considered to be the buildings which, no matter where they are located, should receive a maximum of protection. This list, including twenty-eight structures, is given in a later section of this report concerned with historic area zoning.

Buildings built before about 1830 or 1835 and ranking as excellent (scoring 69-60) or good (scoring 59-40) and buildings put up after 1830 or 1835 ranking as excellent have been placed in a category of “second priority” as a list of structures which should receive protective consideration. About two hundred and seventy buildings fall into this category of second priority. The list of these buildings is also included in the section on historic area zoning.

Buildings scoring from 19-40 and from 39-20 and designated as poor or fair have generally been considered as unimportant from the point of view of historic and architectural significance. They appear on the master study map now in the Providence City Plan Commission files.

As a result of the mapping showing the dates of buildings in the area and of this grouping into categories of worth, a picture of the distribution of important buildings and neighborhoods has been developed which has clarified the problem of drawing boundaries of areas to be recommended for particular action. The following section takes up in detail the ways in which the evaluation of the historic architecture in the area can serve as a basis for making the recommendations and decisions needed to strengthen, protect and rehabilitate the historic and architectural heritage of a community.

II E--USES OF DATA

The techniques developed in the College Hill Study for surveying and judging historic buildings have already been put to considerable use. The detailed data on individual buildings in the study area which has been collected, studied, and mapped has served as one of the guiding factors in development of the general plan for College Hill and the program for its implementation presented in Part Three of this report. Some further uses to which this material is being put, and for which comparable information for other historic areas may be applied, are suggested below:

FOR URBAN RENEWAL

The maps showing historic building, taken into consideration with other planning factors, will help in the delineation of boundaries of areas being considered for the following types of urban renewal action:

a) Clearance, where lines can be drawn to avoid as much as possible the inclusion of historic and architecturally important buildings, (designated as exceptional, excellent and good on the maps). When buildings of a high rating have to be included in such an area, the public agencies responsible for planning will have the information at hand. Ways to protect the buildings, either by removal to a new location or by including them in the development plans can then be explored.

b) Rehabilitation, where the renewal project lines can be drawn to include clusters of historic buildings in a rundown or deteriorating condition or neighborhood. When the survey shows concentrations of buildings designated exceptional, excellent and good and thus warranting extra consideration, it is recommended that ways be found under the Urban Renewal Program to put the neighborhood in order by rehabilitating rather than removing the historic buildings involved. The appearance of such concentrations also points up the need to find ways of making new construction compatible, at least in matters of scale and bulk, with the character of the old.
FOR PRIVATE INVESTMENT

The study results will help point out where private capital and individuals interested in preservation can invest with a view toward protecting the historic architecture, improving the older neighborhoods, and capitalizing on structures of tourist interest. Substantial activity in this direction has already started in College Hill as a result of interest generated by the demonstration grant study.

FOR LEGAL PROTECTION OF HISTORIC AREAS

The results of this study have been used to form the basis of a historic area zoning recommendation, since the mapping presents the definitive picture of the concentrations of historic and important buildings in the area. From this data lines can be drawn for a historic zone including structures deemed important enough to warrant some form of legal protection. The areas recommended for such protection can be made as restricted as possible and their selection can be based on the concentrations of buildings rated as exceptional, excellent, and in some instances good, as shown on the maps. The maps also pinpoint exceptional buildings which fall outside the areas of concentration of valuable structures but which should be recommended for special protection through means other than historic area zoning.

FOR OTHER PURPOSES

- As an aid in attracting visitors.

Historic structures have a potential for development as tourist attractions. The study of maps of historic architecture has, in the case of Providence, highlighted the fact that a historic trail could be developed along Benefit Street and that such a trail could be made the major element in a program of great interest to tourists as well as to students of architecture and history.

- To guide institutional expansion.

The data now available about the historic character of College Hill provides statistical evidence and makes it possible for the various major educational institutions in the area to take into account the location of historic structures as they develop plans for future expansion. It is anticipated that the institutions will use the material now available to them when any future plan for expansion is considered.

- For guiding public works projects.

Again, the ready availability of information as to the location of important historic buildings and concentrations of buildings makes it possible for the Redevelopment Agency, the Plan Commission, the Public Works Department and other public agencies to avoid jeopardizing the historic buildings as they develop plans for parks, roads, public buildings, and other new public works.

- For developing the Master Plan.

The city's master plan can be drawn for historic areas with greater recognition of individual valuable structures, which are too often ignored in the master planning process. As a legal document, the master plan can have far-reaching effect on the future of a historic area and the availability of the body of information gathered by this survey can provide greater validity to the master plan.

- For arousing general community interest.

The facts brought forth by the study in the form of usable information are already helping to change the climate of public opinion from one of indifference and apathy to one of active concern for the city's architectural heritage.

The fact that the study has been made, maps drawn and plans developed has given an impetus to individual efforts on College Hill; development of a comprehensive picture of the area has encouraged people to take part in the several programs active during the course of the demonstration grant study.

This report will be brought to the attention, not only of people interested in preservation, but of the real estate board, business associations, banks, insurance companies, churches, architects, and others, with the hope that each group can find ways to share in the rehabilitation and maintenance of historic building. As a result, any individual or group of individuals interested in the area can feel that, when he restores a building, helps with plans to establish a historic trail, or gives favorable mortgage terms, he is participating in a large program developed with the intent to improve the entire area as well as to preserve an important body of architecture which will give historic dimension to the entire city.