National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Technical Preservation Services

ITS Number 22

Interpreting The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

Subject: Adding New Entrances to Historic Buildings

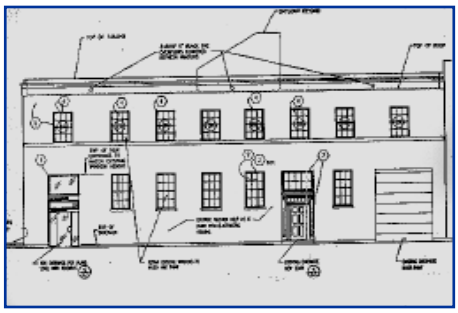
Applicable Standards:

2. Retention of Historic Character
9. Compatible New Additions/Alterations

Issue: The rehabilitation of a historic building may sometimes require the addition of another or a second entrance on a primary facade, or the introduction of an entrance on an elevation that historically did not have one. Another entrance is most commonly needed when the building will have multiple uses after rehabilitation, for example, commercial or office use on the first floor with apartments upstairs, for which a separate entrance may be required for the residents. A new entrance may also be needed on what was originally a secondary elevation but which has assumed greater importance over time or with the new use.

Generally, to meet the Standards, a new entrance should be simple in design; it should not appear historic; it should blend in with the historic facade; and it should be unobtrusive and modestly scaled. Adding a new entryway on a secondary elevation of a building should not give that elevation excessive prominence, nor should it 'reorient' the building or detract from the historic entrance. In other words, the historic front of the building should still read clearly as the primary entrance. Although it is always preferable that a new entrance be added to a rear or side elevation, in some instances a new entrance may be added on a primary elevation in a manner that is compatible with the character of the historic building.

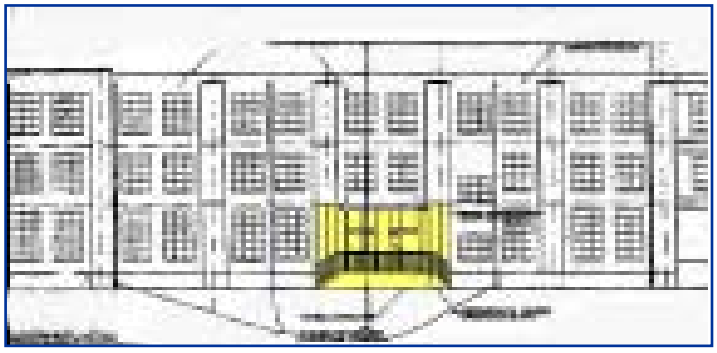
Application 1 *(Compatible treatment)*: This two-story, eight-bay masonry structure was built in 1886 as an ice manufacturing plant. Originally constructed with only one entryway, a garage door had been added later when the building served as a warehouse. As part of the building's conversion into offices, a second pedestrian entrance was added to the street elevation during the rehabilitation to make it easier to get to some of the offices. The size of the new opening is the same as that of the existing historic entrance. But, the new entrance is almost entirely glazed, and consists of a simple butt-mounted glass door with sidelights, and a single-light transom. It is clearly a compatible, contemporary design that does not draw attention to itself. It cannot be confused with the historic entrance, and it does not change the character of the building. Thus, it meets the Standards.




This building was constructed with a single pedestrian entrance in 1886, and a garage door was added later (left). When the building was rehabilitated for office use, an existing window was removed from the end bay and replaced with a new glazed entryway (center and right).

Application 2 (*Compatible treatment***):** A larger, free-standing, three-story warehouse building constructed in 1922, with a 1940s addition, was to be rehabilitated into commercial and retail spaces on the first floor with residential apartments on the upper floors. The building featured a loading dock on one side and three utilitarian, non-significant entrances on various elevations. As part of the rehabilitation a new entrance was proposed to be added on a side of the building that never had an entrance. An entrance on this elevation would improve visibility and access to the new shops and businesses, and it would also help increase security for the upstairs apartments since existing entrances could be restricted for residential tenant use. Accordingly, a new glass and steel entryway which reflects the industrial character of the building and its historic metal windows was designed for this side of the building. The new entrance is compatible with the character of the historic building. It is unobtrusive and it does not noticeably impact or change the appearance of this elevation or of the warehouse building as a whole.

This historic warehouse had entrances on three elevations of the building prior to rehabilitation.



A compatible, new entrance was added to the fourth side of the building during rehabilitation.

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