

Doors and Entrances

Much of Bennington's character comes from the entrances to its buildings. Entrances include doors, together with the moldings, transom windows and other decorative features around them. Some entrances are plain, with simple wood doors surrounded by wood moldings; others have elaborately paneled doors, with columns, pilasters, cornices and other ornamental features around them. One of the most common entrance changes to residential buildings in Bennington is adding aluminum storm doors to conserve heat in winter. While storm doors are usually appropriate, it is important that they be in keeping with the design and color of the original entrance.

Basic Guideline

Maintain the form, materials and dimensions of historic doors and entrance features, including surrounding moldings, columns, transom windows, etc. If adding storm doors, match the color and form of the existing door as closely as possible, and avoid ornament which clashes with the original design.



Fig. 5-8: 507 Main St. This existing entry has been maintained in its original design.



Fig. 5-9: 507 Main St. The storm door which has been added here is designed to match and reveal the original front door behind it.

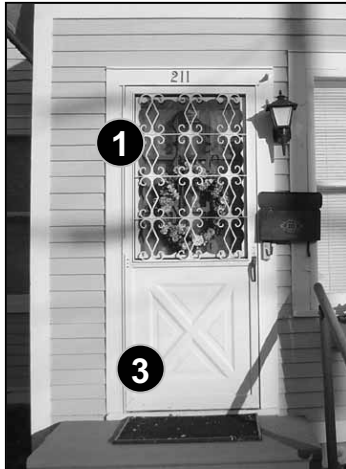


Fig. 5-10: 211 Park St. Example of an inappropriately styled storm door.



Fig. 5-11: This entryway has been altered by the removal of the original woodwork found above the door. [Date unknown.]



Fig. 5-12: 218 Park St. The commercial storefront door shown here is not appropriate on a residential structure.



Fig. 5-13: 213 Washington St. The painted wood storm door on this entry blends in with the entry design.



Fig. 5-14: 102 Jefferson St. The bare aluminum storm door here would blend in with the architecture of the doorway more if it were recessed slightly, and painted.

Appropriate

- A** Keeping historic doors and entrance features, repairing them where necessary. Weather-strip existing historic doors to avoid heat loss instead of replacing them, if possible.
- B** Adding storm doors if necessary to conserve heat, following these principles:
 - Try to match original materials: when historic doors are wood, it is best to use a wood storm door.
 - If using aluminum storm doors, make sure they are a color similar to the historic door or entrance features. Do not use unpainted aluminum doors.
 - Select the sizes and proportions of glass and panels on storm doors carefully to avoid covering or conflicting with those of the historic doors.
- C** Painting existing aluminum storm doors, preparing the surface properly and using colors which blend with existing doors and entrances.
- D** The street address should be clearly visible from the street and displayed either directly above or next to the doorway.

Not Appropriate

- 1 Using storm doors with inappropriate ornament like scallops around glass, curving metal grilles, eagles, imitation hinges, x shaped bottom panels, or bare metal finish.
- 2 Removing historic doors or entrance trim.
- 3 Replacing existing doors with new ones of incompatible design or material (examples: replacing wood doors with steel; using colonial style paneled doors to replace doors from another period and style).
- 4 Changing the size of existing doors or entrance openings.



Fig. 5-15: 216 Park Street. The existing colored glass doorway on this house has been preserved and left visible, however the metal kick-plate on the bottom could be painted to match the door to make it less obvious.