

CHAPTER 19

DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR THE McGLASHAN ADDITION CHARACTER AREA



The McGlashan Addition is located in the northwest portion of the community, bounded on the north by I-80 and the south by High Street and on the east by Bridge Street.

Historic Significance

Charles McGlashan, a noted community developer, is credited with undertaking development of this area in the 1890s. McGlashan built his mansion near Rocking Stone, mostly because of a shortage of good residential lots in Truckee at the time.

The Richardson Brothers, also a significant force in the community, operated a business and constructed a beautiful home in this neighborhood as well. One of the community's few historic brick residences is also located in the McGlashan Addition.



The McGlashan Addition was initially developed by Charles McGlashan, a noted community developer, in the 1890s.

☞ Please see page 91 (Chapter 13: General Guidelines for New Buildings) for a map that shows this Character Area in its Truckee context.

Historic Character Description

Historically, the McGlashan Addition was organized around the three primary east-west streets—High, Keiser and Perkins—which were all single-loaded, with residences on only the uphill side. Accessory structures and rear yards were typically accessed from the next street up the hill. Building setbacks varied on each of these streets, but they fell into a limited range overall. Front porches also were prominent features.

Historic maps from 1890, 1898 and 1907, also show that additions were a part of the area's early tradition. Connecting smaller structures to the main house with "linking" elements was also a part of this tradition. These same maps show that High Street evolved from a row of single-family residences in 1890, to larger structures by 1898 due to many additions, and to a mixed use character with some commercial structures or uses seen along the street by 1907.

The western end of this neighborhood, around the area where McGlashan's Mansion stood, was much less developed than the eastern half. Although the Interstate is now in this area, it did not appear to be developed historically.



The Richardson House retains much of its original integrity and decorative woodwork in the eaves and on the porch. Compare with how the structure looked historically in the photo on the left.

Current Character

Development in the McGlashan Addition Character Area continued through 1910-1950 and the architecture reflects the diverse characteristics of construction design and style for various periods (including Vernacular, Craftsman, Folk Victorian, Italianate and Gothic Revival). Several buildings representative of early Truckee can be found here.

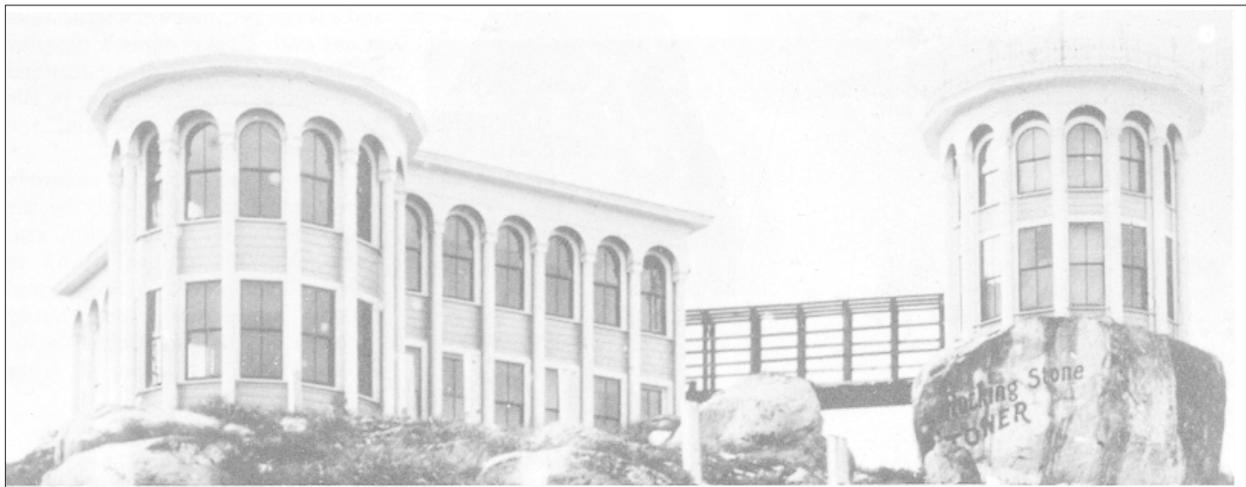
Buildings range from small, wood frame, single-family cottages to larger, single-family homes. One story residences make up the majority of the structures. Most buildings are simple in design, although some ornamentation was used historically. A limited range of detail is an important characteristic of the area. It also contains several residences of historical importance that serve as “accents” within the neighborhood: the McGlashan Mansion shelter and the Standard Oil building at Perkins and High Streets.

Exterior wall materials were horizontal wood siding. Stone was used generally for foundations.

A limited combination of roof forms found on many buildings creates another striking feature. Most are simple gabled or hip roofs. Steep pitches are common. Wood shingles and standing seam metal were used on many early roofs, while today composition shingles are frequently used.



The McGlashan Mansion and Museum served as a significant landmark to both the Character Area and Truckee as a whole. Today, all that remains is the shell from the butterfly museum. The historic photograph below shows how “McGlashan’s Crystal Palace” once appeared.



The historic photograph above shows how “McGlashan’s Crystal Palace” once appeared.

Some key design characteristics of this Character Area include:

- A hilltop location with an overview of downtown Truckee and the Truckee River
- Walkable streets, but sidewalks do not exist
- One, two and three story buildings (three story buildings are mostly on the downslope side of the street)
- Many streets have buildings on only one side, because of the steep slopes
- Primary building facade is oriented downhill
- Garages in front are both attached and detached
- Winding, steep roads
- Wood frame structures
- Pitched roofs, usually symmetrical, with wood shingles
- Front porches face the street
- Some buildings are on raised foundations
- Varied building setbacks
- Single lot depth
- Retaining walls and fences define property lines



One of the guiding principles in the Character Area is to maintain the traditional building mass, scale and form that is a part of the context.

Design Goals & Policies

The McGlashan Addition Character Area should continue to develop with buildings that relate in mass and scale to the building forms seen historically.

The design goals for the McGlashan Addition Character Area are:

- To emphasize the preservation and restoration of historic structures, when feasible
- To continue the use of traditional building materials
- To preserve and maintain views to below
- To maintain traditional building mass, scale and forms
- To minimize visual impacts of hill cuts; use stepped retaining walls and landscaping
- To encourage the use of residential building forms
- To encourage the use of front porches that face the street
- To minimize visual impacts of parking platforms, on downhill sites
- To encourage first floors that are raised from grade and accessed with steps, on uphill sites
- To minimize the visual impact of garages by “tucking” under the structure and concealing it with matching materials, on uphill sites

Design Guidelines for New Buildings

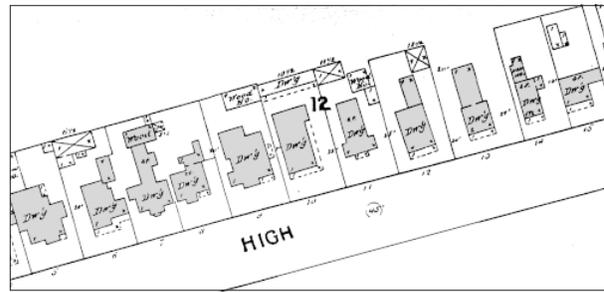
1. Building Setbacks

Most front facades align at a relatively uniform setback from the street in each block. The rhythm created by the placement of buildings and side yards is an especially important characteristic of the area. This historic development pattern contributes to the visual continuity of the neighborhood and should be preserved.

A. Maintain the alignment of building fronts along the street.

- 1) Setbacks should fall within the established range of setbacks in the block.
- 2) For additions to existing buildings, set them back from the front of the structure such that they do not alter the perceived character of the front. Typically a setback from the building front should be, at a minimum, equal to the width of the facade.

B. Side yards should match the dimensions of historic yards along the street.



This historic map of High Street illustrates the uniform setbacks that were established within the McGlashan Character Area.

2. Building Orientation

New projects in the McGlashan Character Area may be seen from lower viewpoints, and therefore any project has the potential for significant visual impact on the overall character of the town. Visual impacts of any hillside development should be minimized.

A. Align buildings with others in the McGlashan Character Area.

- 1) Setbacks should fall within the traditional range of setbacks found within the Character Area.

B. Minimize cuts into the hillside that would increase the visual impact of the structure from lower viewpoints.

- 1) Use stepped retaining walls and landscaping to decrease the visual impact of hillside cuts.

C. In order to minimize the impact of foundations either conceal or decrease the visible portions of the foundation.

D. Orient the primary entrance of a building toward the street.

- 1) Buildings should have a clearly defined primary entrance. For example, provide a porch on a residence.

References:

☞ See also Chapter 10: Design Guidelines for Site Features and Chapter 13: General Guidelines for New Buildings.

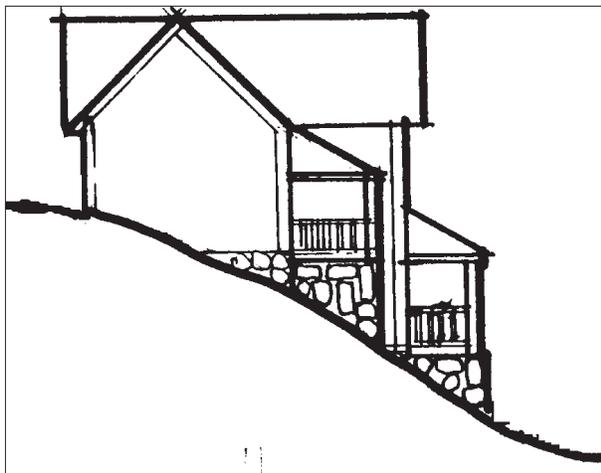
3. Mass and Size

The height, width and depth of a new building should be compatible with historic buildings within the McGlashan Character Area and especially with those structures that are immediately adjacent to the new building. The size of a building also should relate to its lot size. A limited mix of "small" and "large" building sizes exist in the McGlashan Character Area. Even on larger lots where larger buildings occur, the traditional building size is preserved. This established range of building sizes should be maintained.

A. New construction should appear similar in mass and size to historic structures found in the McGlashan Character Area.

- 1) Residences in the Character Area from one- to two-stories, but are typically one and one-half story.
- 2) The tradition of one to two story street facades should be continued.
- 3) Break up the massing of larger buildings into components that reflect this traditional size.

B. A facade should appear similar in dimension to those seen historically in the town.



Buildings that cut into slopes are encouraged where they can help minimize the perceived mass and size.

C. Use building masses that reinforce the perception of the natural topography.

- 1) Buildings that cut into slopes are encouraged where they can help minimize the perceived mass and size.
- 2) Step buildings down at hillside edges, to minimize visual impacts and reduce the apparent height.
- 3) Avoid placing tall buildings at high points on the site or in other highly visible areas.

4. Building and Roof Form

Traditionally, simple building forms appeared in the area. Most were modest rectangular shapes. In some cases, larger masses were achieved by combining two or more simple masses, in which case one of the masses typically appeared to be the "dominant" element, while others appeared to be attached to it. The "integrity" of the dominant form was a distinctive feature. Maintaining this tradition of building is vital to the protection of the character of Truckee and the visual relationship with the McGlashan Character Area.

A. Use building forms similar to those seen traditionally in the McGlashan Character Area.

B. Roof slopes that repeat the slope of the hillside are encouraged.

- 1) Roof forms that protect views of significant features and existing view corridors are encouraged.
- 2) Use muted colors that blend with the hillside.

5. Garages

Although not a part of the historic street scene in Truckee, the automobile and its associated storage is part of contemporary life. Therefore, the visual impacts of parking, which include driveways, garages and garage doors, should be minimized. On-site parking should be subordinate to other uses and the front yards should not appear to be a parking area.

A. A garage should not dominate the street scene.

- 1) A garage should be subordinate to the primary structure on the site.

B. A detached garage is preferred.

- 1) In order to minimize the impact of a garage on the street scene, locate it to the rear of the building. Setting a garage back substantially from the primary building front, may also be considered.
- 2) This will help reduce the perceived mass of the overall development.
- 3) The material and detailing of a detached garage should be utilitarian, to be compatible with other historic accessory structures.

