

POLICY ON WINDOW TINTING
LOWELL HISTORIC BOARD
Adopted June 8, 1992

Because windows are a character defining feature in most structures throughout the City, and their appearance has a significant impact on the appearance of the individual structure and the streetscape as a whole, the Lowell Historic Board has developed guidelines to assist the property owner in identifying elements which must be carefully considered when repairing, restoring, or replacing window units within the Downtown Historic District. The following policy is intended to clarify and elaborate on existing standards.

The Lowell Historic Board encourages the development of historically appropriate window shading treatments to resolve problems of heat and light infiltration. Examples of window treatments which have historic precedent are awnings and interior shades.

The Board recognizes that historic solutions may not address the needs of new uses within adapted structures. Reviewed on a case-by-case basis, the Board will consider glazing treatments which serve to reduce the amount of light and heat entering the structure. The following criteria will be considered when reviewing proposals for window tinting:

- The Board will consider a tinted glass solution only when the applicant has demonstrated that traditional solutions are not appropriate to the architectural character of a particular building, or are impractical for functional or aesthetic reasons.
- Tinting of isolated window units or groups of units is not allowed. All windows on a single elevation must be treated uniformly. Matching tinting on additional elevations may be required if two or more elevations can be seen at the same time. Exceptions may be considered if a strong visual barrier is apparent. The intent of this restriction is to avoid the visual contrast between clear glass and tinted glass when seen concurrently.
- When a tinted treatment is proposed for new windows or replacement glass in existing windows, an integrally tinted glazing product is required. Reflective coatings such as metal oxide are not allowed. The lightest colored and least reflective glass possible is required, and shades of tinting should be compatible with the color of the window frames. Samples of integrally tinted glass must be submitted for review before the Board will render a determination.
- When a tinted treatment is proposed for existing glazing, adhesive films may be considered. Films should be of the lightest possible shade and show minimal reflectivity. Sample panels must be provided before the Board will render a determination. Proper installation and maintenance of tinted films will be strictly enforced. Any evidence of bubbling, scratching, clouding, peeling or other visual markings will result in the Board requiring immediate removal of all film.