

**St. Joseph Public Library  
Historic Building and Grounds Consultations Guidelines**

The St. Joseph Public Library (SJPL) system contains three historic buildings and two historic parks. The Washington Park branch is a Carnegie Library. The Carnegie branch is a Carnegie Library and on the National Register of Historic Places. The Downtown branch is on the National Register of Historic Places and sits at the edge of the Museum Hill District. To preserve and care for the historic elements appropriately, in whole or part, of these buildings and grounds, and out of long-term fiduciary responsibility, SJPL shall seek consultations concerning the scope of work, design, appropriateness of materials used, and appropriateness of application/craft, as applied to historic buildings and grounds before conducting or bidding buildings and/or grounds work, repair, projects, or maintenance.

Historic appropriateness consultations should be applicable to interior and exterior building structures and elements, major and minor. Consultations are applicable to grounds in whole or in part, for example: historic trees, wall, infrastructure footprint, staircase, etc. Exceptions can be made at the discretion of the Director and Branch Manager for the removal and/or addition of recent interior and exterior elements.

The purpose of historic appropriateness consultations is for SJPL to:

- establish a working file of appropriate materials, workmanship, craftspeople, and vendors for specific repair work, maintenance tasks and buildings that can then be utilized to complete later repairs and maintenance in a verified sound manner
- to mitigate and prevent physical damage to building structures, elements, architecture, and infrastructure, and to branch parks and park elements
- to protect the historical integrity of building structures, elements, architecture, and infrastructure, as well as branch parks and park elements
- prevent actions based on ignorance and misinformation regarding historical appropriateness
- bring the Library in line with Best Preservation Practices, as stated in *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, Rehabilitating, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings*<sup>1</sup>
- ensure fiduciary responsibility, as remediation of repairs, maintenance, and alterations not in line with sound preservation methods and Best Preservation Practices can be exceedingly expensive

To obtain historic appropriateness consultations, SJPL shall refer to tradespeople with restoration and preservation experience and appropriate qualifications, whether in person or by correspondence. Saint Joseph's Landmark Committee and the City of Saint Joseph's Historic Preservation Planner are good resources to make recommendations of appropriate tradespeople and businesses. A secondary list of community members and historians that are actively involved in local restoration and preservation shall be maintained as well, as community members can often offer sound recommendations, especially in the areas of design and materials.

At least two consultations per project and/or element shall be utilized whenever possible to help provide breadth of given information. Classes in preservation and restoration skills (i.e. working with

---

<sup>1</sup> A copy of this guide can be found at <https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards.htm>

lime plaster, wood window restoration) are recommended for maintenance and related staff as continuing education, to encourage a more comprehensive knowledge about historic buildings and elements. As standard practice, any historic element removed from buildings and grounds shall be retained so that it can be evaluated, replicated, reintroduced, etc.

Adherence to this practice has numerous benefits for SJPL:

- it allows time for the Director, Branch managers, maintenance personnel, and hired entities to come to a mutually-agreed to plan or plans for repairs, maintenance, and projects before beginning work
- working with various community members promotes community participation and interest in SJPL
- following best preservation practices provides more grant opportunities for SJPL