

## Architecture Glossary

ashlar - squared stones, or sometimes wood shaped to look like squared stones that faces a building

awning window - a window attached at the top of the window, which pushes out from the bottom to open

balloon framing- a method of wood framing (begun in the 19th century) where the exterior walls are continuous from foundation to roof plate, and all the framing members are secured with nails

baluster - one of a series of uprights, often vase-shaped, used to support a handrail

balustrade - the low wall made up of a series of balusters and railings

bargeboard - fancy, wooden ornately carved scrollwork, attached to and hanging down under the eaves of the projecting edge of a gable roof

baseboard (skirting board) - interior finish trim hiding the wall and floor junction

bay - sections of a building, usually counted by windows and doors dividing the house vertically [related to massing]

bay window - an alcove projecting from an outside wall and having its own windows and foundation

board and batten - a siding for a house consisting of wide vertical boards with strips (battens) covering where the boards join

bond - the pattern in which bricks are laid, either to enhance strength or for design

bracket - historically, a support element used under eaves or other overhangs. In Victorian architecture, exaggerated brackets used under wide eaves are decorative rather than functional.

capital - top part of a column, usually decorated. (see column for the three classical Greek Orders)

carpenter gothic - ornate wood decoration; also called gingerbread, carpenter's lace

cast-iron - iron, shaped in a mold, brittle, hard, cannot be welded; in the 19th century it was used in fencing and in American commercial architecture, with cast-iron units used to form entire facades.

cladding - exterior surface material that provides the weather protection for a building

clapboard (weatherboard) - a house siding of long, narrow boards with one edge thicker than the other, overlapped to cover the outer walls of frame structures

column - upright pillar serving as a support or ornament for a building

Classical Orders:

- Doric (earliest and simplest) Doric columns usually have no base; the shaft is thick and broadly fluted, the capital is plain.
- Ionic (second) Ionic columns are usually slender, with fluted shafts, and prominent volutes on the capital.
- Corinthian (latest and most ornate Order) Corinthian columns are slender, usually fluted, with capitals elaborately carved with acanthus leaves.

coping - a cap or covering on top of a wall, either flat or sloping, to shed water

cornice - (1) a decorative feature found under the eaves of a roof; (2) projecting ornamental molding hiding joint of a ceiling or roof, and wall

course - a continuous horizontal row of brick or stone in a wall

cupola - small tower raised above the roof, also called a belvedere

dentils - small, oblong blocks spaced in a band to decorate a cornice

dormer - an upright window projecting from the sloping roof of a building; also the roofed structure housing such a window

eave - the projecting overhang at the lower edge of a sloping roof

eclectic - mixing elements from different sources, including styles, colors, or materials

elevation - one of the external faces of a building; an architectural drawing (to scale) of a building facade

ell - an addition or wing to a house that shapes it like an "L" or a "T"

entablature - in classical architecture, the part of the structure between the column capital and the roof or pediment

environmental setting - (1) The boundaries of a designated site, including buildings and grounds, within which the HDC will review proposed alterations; (2) The area associated with an historic site that contributes to its overall historic character, including buildings and grounds.

facade - the faces of a building, often identified by the cardinal direction (N,S,E,W) which it faces

fascia - a plain horizontal band; a fascia board will cover the joint between the wall and the projecting eaves

fanlight - a semicircular or fan-shaped window with radiating members or tracery set over a door or window; may or may not be operable [see transom]

fenestration - the pattern of windows in a building

finial - an ornament, often urn-shaped, used to decorate the top of a spire, gable, or pinnacle

frieze - an ornamental horizontal band or strip in a wall

gable - (1) that part of the wall, triangular in shape, defined by the sloping sides of a double pitch or gable roof; (2) the end wall of a building.

glazing - the glass in a window

half-timbering - wall construction in which spaces between wooden timber framing are filled with brick, stone, or other material; used decoratively in 20th century houses

head - the top of the frame of a window or door

header - the end of the brick seen in a brick course

jamb - the straight vertical side of a doorway or window

joist - horizontal structural members to which the boards of a floor or the lath for a ceiling are nailed

keystone - a wedge-shaped stone in the crown of an arch or center of a lintel to bind the structure

lancet - a narrow pointed arched opening seen in Gothic Revival

lattice - openwork produced by interlacing of wood laths or other thin strips, used as screening, especially under a porch

leaded glass - small panes of glass held in place with lead strips; glass may be clear or colored (stained)

lean-to - a small building added to another building, usually covered by a sloping (or shed) roof

light (lite) - small panes of window set into an individual sash

lime mortar - lime sand water; used prior to late 19th century to lay brick and stone, and for parging exterior masonry walls

lintel - the horizontal top piece of a window or door opening

masonry - work done by masons, including brick, stone, or concrete block

massing - the expression of interior volume as form

mortar - a material used in the plastic state and troweled into place to harden (see lime mortar, portland cement); used to consolidate brick, stone, and concrete block work

mullion - the subsidiary vertical member of a frame of a door or window

muntin - the thin vertical bars that vertically divides a window or other opening into small lights

newel - the principal post in a banister at the foot of a staircase and at the corners of landings

oriel - a projecting window on an upper floor, often supported with brackets

Palladian windows / doors - a round-headed window or door flanked by lower rectangular windows, and separated by columns

parapet - a protective railing or low wall at the edge of a roof, balcony or terrace

parging (pargeting) - to coat with plaster, particularly foundation walls and rough masonry (see stucco)

pediment - a triangular section, or gable end, often used above doors and windows or at porch entrances

piazza - an American term for a broad veranda

pier - point foundation, such as may support a column, or porch

pilaster - a flat form of a pillar or column applied to a wall and used as decoration

pitch - the degree of slope of a roof, usually given in the form of a ratio, such as 6:12

porch- a roofed exterior space on the outside of a building

porte-cochere - a large covered entrance porch through which vehicles can drive and passengers can alight from a vehicle and enter a building

portico - a covered and usually projecting entrance porch supported by classical columns and often crowned with a pediment, forming the centerpiece of the front facade of the building

Portland cement - a high-strength material (commercially dating to 1824) used as a component of concrete and modern hard mortars.

quoins - rectangles of stone or wood used to accentuate and decorate the corner of a building

rafter - framing member supporting the roof

repointing - removal of old mortar from joints of masonry construction and filling in with new mortar

return - the part of a pattern that continues around a corner

ridge - the [top] line of intersection of the opposite sides of a sloping roof

riser - the vertical face of a step (see tread)

roofs - gabled: roof sloping downward in two parts from a central ridge; the gable is the part of an outside wall in the shape of a triangle between the sloping roofs

- gambrel mdash; a ridged roof with two different slopes on each side of the ridge, the lower slope having a steeper pitch (sometimes called a Dutch gambrel roof)
- hipped mdash; a roof with four uniformly pitched or sloping sides
- jerkinhead mdash; a gable roof with a hipped end
- mansard mdash; two slopes on each of its four sides; one part very steep and curved, often with dormers

rusticated block - concrete block formed to replicate rough stone

sash - the moveable framework holding the glass in a window or door

sill - the horizontal water-shedding element at the bottom of a window or door frame

siding - the exterior wall covering of a structure

- German - common 19th century wood siding pattern, with a combination of concave curve and flat profile
- novelty - general term for 19th century wood siding with a decorative profile

spire - a tapering roof topping a tower; steeple

shingles - thin pieces of wood used in overlapping rows to cover roofs and exterior walls of houses; can be cut in decorative shapes

sidelights - windows at either side of a door; often in conjunction with a transom above door and sidelights

soffit - the underside of a beam, arch or other architectural element.

stoop - the landing and stairs, covered or uncovered, leading to the main entrance of a house

streetscape - the combined visual image from all of the physical elements found on both sides of a street, including the property up to the building front

stucco - exterior plaster

stretcher - the long side of a brick when laid horizontally

studs - the upright framing members for a wall

transom window - a window above a door; commonly hinged for separate operation

tread - the horizontal surface of a step (see riser)

trim - the framing of features on a facade which may be of a different color, material, or design than the adjacent wall surface

turret - a little tower, set at an angle to the main wall; often at a corner and projecting above a building

veranda - a roofed, open gallery or porch; a large covered porch extending along one or more sides of a building and designed for outdoor living.

verge board - see bargeboard

vernacular - used to describe buildings with little or no stylistic pretension, or those which may reflect a rural interpretation of high-style architecture of the day

watertable - a slight projection of the lower masonry or brick wall a few feet above the ground as a protection against rain

windows - glass set into a sash, or frame

- double-hung-a window with two sashes, one above the other, arranged to slide vertically past each other
- casement - a window with the sash hung vertically and opening inward or outward

Sources:

copy; Centre County Historical Society, 1999

The Elements of Style, Stephen Calloway and Elizabeth Cromley (1996)

Construction Dictionary, Greater Phoenix, Arizona chapter #98 of the National Association of Women in Construction (1985)

Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (2001)