

Appendix A: Historic District Guidelines and Procedures

(A) Guidelines for When an Application is Required:

- (1) Activity Subject to Review. Except as specified below, no building or structure shall be erected, reconstructed, altered, restored, moved, demolished, or changed as to use unless a certificate of approval shall have been issued. A Certificate of Approval is required for all work, whether or not such work requires a building permit.
- (2) Activity Exempt from Review. No review or Certificate of Approval shall be required for the following activities, provided that they comply with the HDC regulations:
 - (a) General maintenance and repair which does not involve any change in exterior materials or in the outward appearance.
 - (b) Work performed on the interior of buildings provided the work to be performed does not change the exterior appearance or use.
 - (c) Structures, which are not buildings, and which are not visible from a public way. See definitions.
 - (d) Elements which are appurtenant to a building but which are not integral to the building including antennas, satellite dishes, flagpoles, window air conditioning units, and similar elements. Property owners are encouraged to place these elements, when practical, on the rear portions of buildings or where they will be least noticeable from any public way.
 - (e) Installation or removal of any plant, shrub, or tree materials.
 - (f) Application of paint, where colors are those identified by the HDC as acceptable. These are taken from the Historic New England/ Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities paint chart. Chart is available from the Commission, Town Office, or Town Library. Acceptable colors are indicated on the chart.
 - (g) Installation of pavement or other impervious or semi-impervious material on any parking or driveway area. Use of pervious materials is encouraged.
 - (h) Light fixtures which are appropriate to the building's architectural style.
 - (i) Roofing or re-roofing projects conforming, so long as the roof pitch, height, and area remain the same. This includes change of color, addition or removal of ice belts, and change of asphalt shingle style.
 - (j) Siding or residing of structures within the District provided that the siding is 1) similar in style and appearance to the original construction, 2) retains original exposure (reveal)

or has no more than four inches exposed to the weather, and 3) is of an approved material. Residing shall not in any way destroy or cover existing architectural features.

- (k) Storm windows and storm doors provided that the original architectural features are not removed or destroyed.
- (l) Metal or masonry chimney caps.
- (m) Any temporary emergency repairs provided that review and conformance will be required afterward.
- (n) Items which are not explicitly addressed in this subsection but clearly:
 - (i) would not have any negative impact; and
 - (ii) would not be noticeable from any public way

(B) Guidelines for Application Review

The following guidelines shall be used by the Commission in reviewing applications for Certificates of Approval. Recognizing that every property, every proposal, and every situation is unique, the Commission shall utilize its reasonable judgment, and is granted a fair degree of flexibility, in applying these guidelines, consistent with other requirements and limitations.

- (1) The following general principles are adapted from the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation:
 - (a) Every reasonable effort shall be made to minimize alteration of the significant features of the building.
 - (b) The distinguishing original qualities or character of the building shall not be destroyed. The removal or alteration of any historic material or distinctive architectural features shall be avoided where possible.
 - (c) All buildings shall be recognized as products of their own time. Alterations that have no historical basis and that seek to create an earlier appearance shall be discouraged.
 - (d) Changes that may have taken place in the course of time are evidence of the history and development of the building. These changes may have acquired significance in their own right, and this significance should be recognized and respected.
 - (e) Distinctive stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship that characterize a building should be treated with sensitivity.
 - (f) Deteriorated architectural features should be repaired rather than replaced, wherever possible. In the event replacement is necessary, the new material should match the

material being replaced in composition, design, color, texture, and other visual qualities. Repair or replacement of missing architectural features should be based on accurate duplications of features, substantiated by historic, physical, or pictorial evidence, rather than on conjectural designs or the availability of different architectural elements from other structures.

- (g) Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing buildings should not be discouraged when such designs do not destroy significant historical, architectural, or cultural material, and when those designs are compatible with the size, scale, color, material, and character of the property, neighborhood, and environment.
 - (h) New additions or alterations to structures should be done in such a manner that if those additions or alterations were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the building would be unimpaired
- (2) Elements of Design. The following principles also apply.
- (a) Harmony with surrounding buildings. Proposals should be harmonious with the existing building (in the case of additions and alterations) and with contributing neighboring buildings and other buildings within the District, as appropriate, in respect to mass, width, height, proportion, spacing, setback, and all of the other elements of design discussed herein.
 - (b) Scale. Every effort should be made to provide an appropriate scale to new buildings both in their overall size and in their details.
 - (c) Proportion. Buildings and their details should be well proportioned in accordance with commonly accepted design principles so as to create a sense of order and balance.
 - (d) Massing. Large structures should be broken into smaller masses to provide human scale, variation, and depth. These smaller masses should have a strong relationship to one another and, ideally, each smaller mass will have integrity of form and function.
 - (e) Roof. As a design element the roof has a significant effect on the building's character. Extensive areas of visible roof may be broken up with dormers, cross gables, cupolas, chimneys, parapets, balustrades, and towers.
 - (f) Fenestration. Windows are an integral part of a building. It is desirable that the windows and doors establish a coherent, orderly pattern and rhythm. It is preferable that windows be vertical. Horizontally shaped windows are discouraged. Where horizontal windows are sought a series of contiguous vertical windows with mullions in between should be used arranged in a horizontal band. Shutters should

be sized properly for the window opening (approximately one half the width of the opening per shutter).

Preservation of original wood windows is strongly encouraged but not required. Where windows are replaced use of true divided light windows is encouraged but not required. Use of false mullions may be stipulated where appropriate.

- (g) Entrance. The entrance is an important element in defining a building. Articulation of the entrance is encouraged through use of a portico, canopy, awning, sidelights, surround, or other device. Generally, there should be an entrance, if not the primary entrance, located on the front facade.

(3) Other Principles

- (a) Visibility. Generally, the less visible or prominent a structure or facade the less stringent the standards/review.
- (b) Demolition or Removal. Demolition or removal from the District of a contributing structure is strongly discouraged. In most cases, it should only be approved where the applicant demonstrates that denial of the application would result in significant hardship.
- (c) Relocation within the District. Relocation of a contributing structure from its site is discouraged. The Commission may approve such relocation if it determines that there are compelling reasons.
- (d) Noncontributing Buildings. Significantly less stringent review is in order for "noncontributing" buildings. In many cases, demolition or relocation of a noncontributing structure is entirely appropriate, if not desirable.

(C) Procedures

- (1) Application. An application for a Certificate of Approval shall be submitted to the Historic District Commission through the Town Office, no fewer than fourteen (14) days prior to a Commission meeting.

It is the intent of this Section to make the review process as simple and pleasant as practical. The applicant need only submit those materials which the Commission reasonably determines are necessary to conduct an appropriate review. On small or straightforward projects submission of the application, a letter of intent, a verbal description, and/or one or more sketches drawn by the applicant may suffice.

In the case of more elaborate proposals or those potentially having a significant impact upon sensitive properties any or all of the materials listed below may be required as the Commission sees fit. While the use of an architect is not required, there may be situations where it is appropriate.

Applicants should speak with the Commission prior to preparing an application package to get a preliminary sense of which of the items below may or may not be needed. The application package may include any or all of the items listed below as stipulated by the Historic District Commission:

- (a) A completed application form stating the purpose of the proposed project and identifying the nature and extent of the work to be performed.
 - (b) Site plans drawn to scale clearly depicting existing conditions and proposed work.
 - (c) Elevation drawings to scale of each affected facade of the building clearly depicting existing conditions and proposed work.
 - (d) Detail drawings of appropriate elements (such as the balustrade for a handicapped ramp).
 - (e) Photographs of each impacted side of the building.
 - (f) Sample, swatch, and/or manufacturer's cut sheet of materials to be used, as appropriate.
 - (g) Any other items which the Commission may reasonably need to conduct its review.
 - (h) A fee equivalent to the current USPS certified mailing fee, no return receipt, per abutter and applicant. Plus \$25 for new buildings or additions greater than 400 square feet.
- (2) Review of the Application for appropriateness. In deliberating whether to grant (with or without conditions) or deny a Certificate of Approval the Commission shall make a determination as to the appropriateness of the work proposed by determining whether or not the proposal conforms to the provisions of this Document and the HDC Regulations.

(D) Definitions

- (1) Contributing property. A property that contributes positively to the District's architectural quality and integrity as a result of its location, design, history, condition, quality, age, materials, workmanship, feeling, and/or association.
- (2) Building shall mean any combination of any materials, whether portable, moveable or fixed, having a roof and enclosed within exterior walls, built to form a structure for the shelter of persons, domestic animals, chattels or property. For purposes of determining exterior measurements or footprint in order to locate the setback line, "building" shall include all attached structures such as open or closed porches, decks, carports, garages, balconies, stairways and other similar structures.

- (3) Exterior Architectural Appearance. This encompasses the building itself and those individual elements which are integral to the building and are visible on the exterior. It includes colors, materials, texture, arrangement, architectural detailing and trim, the roof, windows, doors, foundation, steps, ramps, porches, decks, awnings, hardware, and light fixtures.
- (5) Massing. The shapes, sizes, and arrangement of the three dimensional forms that compose a building.
- (6) Noncontributing property. A property which - due to its recent vintage (generally less than 50 years), incompatible design, incompatible and irretrievable alterations, or deteriorated condition - would not be considered to contribute to that character or quality of the District which the Town seeks to preserve.
- (7) Proportion. The relation of one dimension to another, such as the height of a window compared to its width. Proportion affects visual order through coordination of such elements as height, width, depth, and spacing.
- (8) Public Way. A town or state maintained road, sidewalk, park, or Canaan Street Lake.
- (9) Scale. The perception of the size of a building or building element relative to the human body or other buildings or objects in the vicinity.
- (10) Structure shall mean anything built for the support, shelter or enclosure of persons, animals, goods, or property of any kind, as well as anything constructed or erected with a fixed location on or in the ground, exclusive of fences.