

TOWN OF WASHINGTON
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
Calhoun-Ives, Sunny Ridge, and Washington Green Historic Districts

CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS

Enclosed with this packet please find:

1. Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness
2. Section IV of the Historic District Commission's Rules of Procedure
3. Application Review Checklist

Application deadlines fall three weeks prior to the next scheduled meeting of the Historic District Commission. Please see the calendar posted on the town's website for meeting and deadline dates. Complete applications received after the deadline will be moved to the appropriate month's agenda.

Should applicants have questions regarding design criteria, a copy of the Washington Historic District Commission Design Guidelines is available on the town website. Hard copies are available in the Washington Land Use Office, located in the lower level of Bryan Memorial Town Hall.

Kindly complete the included application (pages 2-3), along with any and all pertinent documents and the \$50 application fee, and return to:

Washington Historic District Commission
2 Bryan Plaza – P.O. Box 383
Washington Depot, CT 06794

Any questions regarding application submissions may be directed to the Washington Land Use Office at (860) 868-0423.

TOWN OF WASHINGTON
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

\$50 application fee – checks payable to Town of Washington

The undersigned, being the owner of a property situated in a Historic District in the Town of Washington and hereinafter referred to, states that he or she has read and understands the attached Section IV of the current Rules of Procedure of the Washington Historic District Commission, and hereby makes application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the action described herein on the location hereinafter referred to:

1. Property Owner:

Name _____

Address _____

Home Phone _____

Cell Phone _____

Email _____

2. Location of Property: _____

3. Occupant, if not Property Owner:

Name _____

Address _____

Home Phone _____

Cell Phone _____

Email _____

Owner's representative if retained to represent the Property Owner or to supervise the work:

Name _____

Address _____

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

Email _____

5. Full description of all work to be done and materials to be used as they affect exterior appearance (attach additional pages as needed):

6. Documents accompanying this application:

Survey Map _____
Site Plans _____
Elevations _____
Blueprints _____
Drawings _____

Photographs _____
Samples of Materials _____
Specifications of Materials _____
Other (please specify) _____

7. The work described above is expected to be completed no later than _____ / _____ / 20_____.

Dated at Washington, Connecticut, this _____ day of _____ 20_____.

Signature of Property Owner _____

=====
For HDC use only

Received by _____ / / _____

\$50.00 Application Fee Paid by Cash _____ or Check # _____ / / _____

Reviewed by _____ / / _____

Reviewed by _____ / / _____

Accepted as Complete by _____ / / _____

Signature

Title

*Section IV of the Washington Historic District Commission's Rules of Procedure Regarding
Certificates of Appropriateness*

A. Definitions

The words and phrases listed below shall have the following meaning:

BUILDING--a combination of materials forming a shelter for persons, animals, or property;

STRUCTURE--any combination of materials (other than a building) which is affixed to the land, and shall include, but not be limited to, roads, driveways, parking areas, curbs, sidewalks, fences, walls, dams, bridges, docks, outdoor fireplaces, tennis courts, utility structures, gazebos, swimming pools, lampposts, monuments, statuary, signs, bill posters, and any other feature of the built environment;

ERECTED--constructed, built, installed, or enlarged;

ALTERED--changed, modified, rebuilt, reconstructed, restored, razed, demolished, removed, or moved;

EXTERIOR ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES--such portion of the exterior of a structure or building as is open to view (without regard to existing or proposed vegetation) from a public street, way, or place;

B. Jurisdiction of the Commission

1. No building or structure within view of a public way shall be erected, altered, or demolished within a Historic District until after an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness as to exterior architectural features has been submitted to, and approved by, the Commission. A Certificate shall be required whether or not a building or zoning permit is required.
2. Except for such parking areas as were in existence prior to the establishment of the Historic District in which they are located, no area within any Historic District may be used for industrial, commercial, business, home industry, or occupational parking until after an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness as to parking has been submitted to and approved by the Commission, regardless of whether such area is zoned for such use.
3. For projects requiring a Certificate, no building or demolition permit shall be issued until such Certificate has been issued by the Commission. If a building or structure is to be demolished, no demolition shall occur for ninety (90) days from issuance of a demolition permit if during such time the Commission or the Connecticut Historical Commission is attempting to find a purchaser who will retain or remove such building or who will present some other reasonable alternative to demolition. During the 90-day period, the Town may abate all real property taxes. At the conclusion of such 90-day period, the demolition permit shall become effective and demolition may occur.
4. While a Certificate of Appropriateness may not be necessary (See Exceptions below), the Commission would be grateful if a property owner would inform the Historic District Commission in writing of any contemplated changes in the exterior of a structure for any work contemplated, even if it simply involves replacement or repair of materials in kind.
5. A Certificate of Appropriateness need not be applied for in the following circumstances:

- a) Ordinary maintenance or repair of a building, structure, or architectural feature which does not involve a change in its appearance or design or materials to be used;
- b) The erection, alteration, or demolition of any building, structure or portion thereof which the Building Inspector or similar agent has certified as being necessary for the public safety;
- c) The erection, alteration, or demolition of any building, structure, or portion thereof under a building permit (or demolition permit) issued prior to the date on which the Historic District was created; or
- d) If a building, structure or portion thereof is not visible from a public way and would not be seen even in the absence of current natural vegetation or barriers, such as trees and shrubs.

While of interest to the Commission, matters pertaining to a building's use, the arrangement of its interior features, and the color of paint applied to its exterior are not within the Commission's legal jurisdiction. The Commission may, however, recommend adaptive re-use of any building or structure compatible with the historic architectural aspects of the District.

C. Application Procedure for a Certificate of Appropriateness

1. General

- a) Applications may be obtained from the Land Use Office at Bryan Memorial Town Hall. Applications shall be signed by the property owner(s) or, in the case of corporations and institutions, by their chief executive officer or authorized agent. Applications with respect to jointly-owned property may be made by one owner.
- b) All applications shall be accompanied by a fee, payable to the Town of Washington in the amount specified on the application form, to help offset the administrative costs of publicizing and conducting the Public Hearing relative to such application.
- c) Applications should be addressed to the Commission and filed in the Town Hall.
- d) Commissioners will be available at their regular monthly meetings to have preliminary discussions with prospective applicants regarding any aspect of the application procedure or required documentary evidence. Such discussions are not a substitute for a formal application. Neither party is bound by comments made during such preliminary discussions.

2. The Application

- a) All applications shall be accompanied by a site plan, elevations, blueprints, drawings, survey map, photographs, samples or specifications of building materials, and/or whatever other evidence is accessible to show fully the nature of the work to be performed. Technical documentation shall be prepared by an architect, engineer, surveyor, or qualified building contractor unless the Commission waives this requirement in case of minor construction work. All drawings shall be to a scale which can be easily read, and the scale shall appear thereon. Photographs shall be no smaller than 3"x5" in size, and shall be identified as to the point from which they are taken.
- b) Applications involving the rehabilitation or restoration of buildings, structures or any portion thereof should include:

- i. a description of existing materials and their condition;
 - ii. a statement supported by physical or documentary evidence for the proposed changes; and
 - iii. if possible, historical photographs.
- c) Applications for new construction should include a streetscape elevation or photographic mock-up showing the new design in the context of its surrounding neighborhood.
 - d) Applications for signs and bill posters shall specify their respective style, material, size and location.
 - e) Applications involving demolition or removal shall include a statement as to the anticipated appearance and condition of the property after the proposed work has been completed.
 - f) The completeness of an application shall be determined by the Secretary, Chair or Vice Chair of the Commission.

3. Public Hearing of Applications

- a) Completed applications will be heard at a public hearing, the date of which will normally coincide with the next regular monthly meeting of the Commission, provided applications are received at least fourteen (14) business days prior to the date of that meeting. The date of receipt is determined by the date of the next regular meeting or 35 days after the application's submission – whichever is sooner. Applications received less than fourteen (14) business days before a regular monthly meeting of the Commission will normally be scheduled for a public hearing on the date of the Commission's second successive regular meeting. A certified letter with return receipt requested will be sent to each applicant, stating the date, time and place of the public hearing at which his/her application will be heard. Applicants are requested to submit documentation to address omissions prior to the public hearing. Applications which are not complete must be withdrawn by the applicant or face the probability of denial by the Commission.
- b) Copies of the application will be available for review by both the Historic District Commission and the public in the Land Use office at Town Hall prior to the pertinent public hearing.
- c) A sub-committee may review each application for completeness prior to the hearing.
- d) The Commission reserves the right to request a site visit and tangible evidence of the proposed work.
- e) At the public hearing, the applicant or any interested party may appear in person, by agent, or by attorney, and may offer any relevant evidence or comment on the application and supporting materials. The Chair shall conduct the hearing in an orderly, expeditious and fair manner.
- f) Failure of the Commission to act within sixty-five (65) days of its receipt of an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness shall constitute automatic approval of such application.

D. Standards for Determining Approval

1. Buildings and Structures

In making its determination as to whether or not exterior architectural features are appropriate, the Commission shall consider the following, in addition to any other pertinent factors:

- a) The overall character of the proposed structure and its compatibility with its site, existing structures on the site, and the historic district as a whole;
- b) The scale of the proposed structure relative to its site, existing structures on the site, and the historic district as a whole;
- c) The shape and massing of the proposed structure, and the compatibility of these qualities with those of existing structures on the site and in the historic district;
- d) Patterns in the proposed work, such as those caused by window mullions, fenestration, or columns, and their compatibility with existing structures and the historic district as a whole;
- e) Trim and decorative detail, and their compatibility with the proposed structure and existing buildings on the site;
- f) Materials;
- g) The visibility, style and scale of utility structures, light fixtures, signs and such, including mechanical structures, as described in the Washington Historic District Commission's Guidelines.

2. Site Development - Including Parking Areas and Driveways

The Commission shall consider these and other similar factors:

- a) Size;
- b) Material;
- c) Visibility of cars;
- d) Location and relation to building(s); and
- e) Lighting and signs.

E. Variations

Where, by reason of topography or because of other unusual circumstance, strict adherence to the standards will impose exceptional practical difficulty or undue hardship on the applicant, the Commission may vary or modify its standards so as to relieve such difficulty or hardship, provided such variation remains in harmony with the general character of the District.

F. Actions by the Commission

After the public hearing has been concluded, the Commission will, at its next regular meeting or at a special meeting called for that purpose, deliberate as to whether or not the proposed erection, alteration or demolition of the building(s), structure(s), feature(s) or parking area(s) are incongruous with the historic or architectural aspects of the District, and thereupon vote on the pertinent application. The concurring vote of three seated members of the Commission shall be necessary to issue or deny a Certificate of Appropriateness.

1. Approval

- a) If the Commission approves an application, a Certificate will be issued. The Certificate may contain stipulations clarifying or identifying types of materials, design modifications and limitations on the location of features. Each Certificate will indicate the time span within which the work must be completed.
- b) The original Certificate, together with a cover letter, will be sent by certified mail/return receipt requested to the applicant. The letter will remind the applicant that the Commission's approval pertains only to work specified in the accompanying Certificate, and that any changes or modifications will require a supplemental application before such work may commence.
- c) A copy of the Certificate will be distributed to both the Town's Building Inspector and its Zoning Commission. A file copy, along with the original application and attachments thereto, will be placed with the Historic District Commission's permanent records in the Town Hall.

2. Amendments and Extensions

Requests either to amend or to extend an outstanding or expired Certificate of Appropriateness will be considered by the Commission upon receipt of a request for the amendment or extension of the Certificate previously issued by the Commission. The Commission Chair or Secretary shall decide if the change is significant enough to require a new public hearing or Certificate. If not, the Commission may make a ruling on its own. If the Chair or Secretary decides that the change is significant enough to require a new public hearing or Certificate, a new application will be submitted in accordance with Section IV of the Washington Historic District Commission's Rules of Procedure.

3. Denial

- a) An application for a Certificate of Appropriateness will be denied if, in the judgement of the Commission, the work proposed is not consistent with the character of the district. The reasons given shall be recorded in the minutes of the pertinent meeting.
- b) Written notice of denial will be sent by certified mail/return receipt requested, to the applicant. The notice will specify the basis for the Commission's reasoning and may also include recommendations relating to the design, arrangement, texture, material and similar features.
- c) Applications for exterior architectural features whose primary purpose is to utilize renewable resources will be denied only if the Commission finds that such feature(s) cannot be installed without substantially impairing the historic character and appearance of the District. A Certificate of Appropriateness for such feature(s) may nevertheless include stipulations requiring design modifications and limitations on its location which would not significantly impair its effectiveness.

G. Appeal Procedure

Anyone who has been aggrieved by the decision of the Commission may, within fifteen (15) days of the rendering of that decision, take an appeal to the Superior Court of the Judicial District of Litchfield in accordance with Section 7-147i of the General Statutes.

H. Enforcement

The Commission will take action to prevent the violation of any rule or procedure contained herein or any section of the applicable Statute(s) and/or Town ordinance(s). The Historic District Commission is assigned its own Enforcement Officer, with the approval of the Board of Selectmen and with the necessary budgetary appropriation.

In addition to its other remedies, the Commission may also institute an action in the Superior Court of the Judicial District of Litchfield to restrain any violation and order its correction or removal.

It shall be the responsibility of the person(s) found to be in violation to notify the Commission in writing at such time as the violation has been remedied.

If a property owner has not remedied an identified violation within ninety (90) days of notification – and in the Commission’s judgment has no intention of doing so – the Commission is empowered to attach a “Notice of Violation” to the relevant property deed on record in the Washington Town Hall. The removal of that notice will depend upon the Commission’s judgement as to whether the violation has been remedied.

Application Review Checklist

Please complete the application as thoroughly as possible, including any maps, drawings or explanations that will facilitate its initial review. Material samples and design specifics are typically brought to the public hearing, and presented by the applicant or his designated representative. To avoid the application being denied or continued due to lack of information, consider making your presentation as thorough as possible. Should you have any questions regarding design expectations, a copy of the Washington Historic District Commission Design Guidelines is available on the Commission's web page, or in the Land Use Office of Bryan Memorial Town Hall.

Some suggested presentation materials include:

1. A Site Plan

- A locus map showing primary and secondary roads, or
- Existing and proposed site plan showing:
 - Dimension of the lot
 - Orientation
 - Location and size of existing structures and neighboring structures, if any
 - Location and size of proposed structures and extent of demolition
 - Location and size of proposed fencing/gates/posts/etc.
 - Indicate all streets and/or public ways
- Indicate all equipment such as a compressors, exterior lighting, etc.

2. Existing and Proposed Drawings

- Floor plans/exterior elevations/building and wall sections
 - Floor plans and exterior elevation drawn to scale showing existing, proposed, and areas of demolition
 - Explanation of buildings and wall sections
 - Details of door and window types
 - Porch (steps, rails, columns, eave) detail
 - Indicate finish floor and ceiling heights and grade
- Rendering indicating three dimensional forms of structure

3. Photographs

- Photos of all elevations of existing structures
- Photos from public way or street

4. Samples and Materials

- Stock items indicated by catalog number and specific item
- Samples, such as shingles, paving, gravel, etc.
- Catalog cutouts or photos of proposed items

5. Miscellaneous Information

- Schedule of expected work
- Written explanation of why the proposed work is appropriate to the Historic District in which it is located