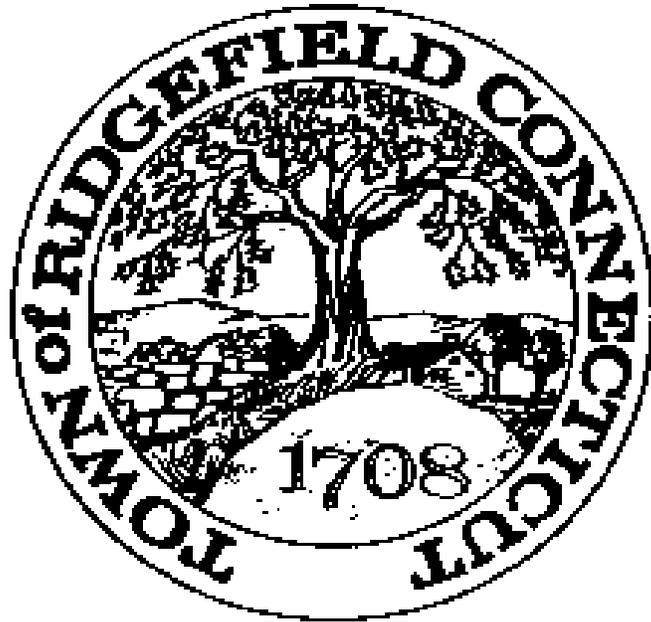


**TOWN OF RIDGEFIELD
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**



RIDGEFIELD HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGN GUIDELINES

Table of Contents

Ridgefield Historic District Design Guidelines

	Page
<u>SECTION I: BACKGROUND</u>	
Ridgefield’s Historic Resources	1
Ridgefield Is a Certified Local Government	1
Use of the Guidelines	1
Changes Can Be Made to a Historic Resource	2
Potential Flexibility on a Façade that is not Visible	3
Preservation Benefits	3
Historic Context	4
<u>SECTION II: STRUCTURE EXTERIOR</u>	
Chapter 1 – Windows	6
Chapter 2 – Doors	11
Chapter 3 – Exterior Woodwork	12
Chapter 4 – Masonry	14
Chapter 5 – Roofs and Chimneys	16
Chapter 6 – Porches and Balconies	20
Chapter 7 – Decks	22
<u>SECTION III: PROPERTY GROUNDS AND STREETScape</u>	
Chapter 8 – Pergolas, Trellises, and Arbors	23
Chapter 9 – Lighting	24
Chapter 10 – Stone Walls, Fences, Entry Gates, and Stone Piers	25
Chapter 11 – Parking, Driveways, and Garages	27
Chapter 12 – Sidewalks and Walkways	29
Chapter 13 – Utilities and Equipment	30
Chapter 14 – Signs and Mailbox Posts	31
Chapter 15 – Swimming Pools, Yard Equipment, Satellite Dishes, and Accessory Structures	32
Chapter 16 - Playground, Sporting, and Entertainment Equipment	33
<u>SECTION IV: NEW CONSTRUCTION, ADDITIONS AND DEMOLITIONS</u>	
Chapter 17 – New Construction	34
Chapter 18 – Additions	38
Chapter 19 – Demolitions	40
<u>APPENDICES</u>	
A. Ridgefield’s Historic Resources	A-1
B. Local and State Information and Funding Resources Available to You	B-1

SECTION I: BACKGROUND

RIDGEFIELD'S HISTORIC RESOURCES

Ridgefield's community character is defined in large part by its place in history and its historic buildings and sites. Ridgefield has a great many historic resources, including seven historic districts and approximately 450 properties and sites recognized on the State Register of Historic Places. In addition, four of the historic districts and ten (10) of the properties and sites are listed on The National Register of Historic Places. (For more information on Ridgefield's historic resources, please refer to **Appendix A, Ridgefield's Historic Resources**, based upon information as presented in Ridgefield's **2020 Plan of Conservation and Development**.)

IMPORTANCE OF RIDGEFIELD'S HISTORIC DISTRICT'S CHARACTER

The character of Ridgefield's Historic District is important to its residents and visitors. Over the years, many people indicate that the character of our historic district is what attracted them to Ridgefield. The concept of this character which contributes to this positive perception and special sense of time and place includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Architectural designs covering the 300+-year history of Ridgefield
- Preserved sites of the 1777 Battle of Ridgefield, the only Revolutionary war battle fought in Connecticut
- Many homes with stately front and side open spaces allowing for open vistas and views across properties
- Low and understated fences and stone walls serving as visual covers for property boundaries and landscape features
- Lighting on pathways, entryways and signs which are understated and provide for indirect or downward facing lighting

RIDGEFIELD IS A CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Ridgefield is one of 50 Connecticut municipalities (out of 167 towns) which has qualified for Certified Local Government ("CLG") status from the National Park Service. For reference, refer to **Appendix B, Local and State Information and Funding Resources Available to You**, for information on the benefits of being a CLG, as well as references for sources of valuable information on grants, tax credits and other assistance available for historic resources.

USE OF THE GUIDELINES

The property owner of a historic resource is a steward of Ridgefield's heritage. Living in a historic building allows the property owner to celebrate the Town's historic character while enjoying the benefits of modern living.

These Design Guidelines are intended to be a tool and resource for property owners, design professionals, contractors, and the Historic District Commission ("HDC" or "Commission"). The overarching goal of the Guidelines is to protect the historical and architectural integrity of significant historic structures and streetscapes in Ridgefield. Incorporating these Guidelines into a project's design will encourage more compatible architecture, attractive development and design, and contribute to the overall historic character of the Town.

These recommended treatment guidelines for historic resources and new construction are based on the **Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties**. See [nps.gov/tps/standards.htm](https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards.htm) and [nps.gov/tps/standards/applying-rehabilitation/successful-rehab/new-construction.htm](https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/applying-rehabilitation/successful-rehab/new-construction.htm). These preservation guidelines provide a strong but flexible philosophical foundation for preservation approaches and principles for the preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction of historic resources and sites, including new construction within a historic district.

The Design Guidelines describe the criteria by which the HDC evaluates proposed exterior alterations to historic resources within the historic district subject to the purview of the HDC. The purpose of these Design Guidelines is to provide the Commission with a set of standards to use as a reference when considering the appropriateness of proposed modifications. The Design Guidelines are not absolute standards for appropriate design as each application for a Certificate of Appropriateness is based on its own merit. Because of the often individual and sometimes unique aspects of any given application for a Certificate of Appropriateness, the HDC must use its own discretion in determining appropriateness.

Design Guidelines provide:

- An overview of the recommended preservation approach for historic resources.
- Principles and standards governing exterior alterations, repairs, and additions to historic resources.
- Specific guidelines for preservation of specific character-defining elements to achieve design compatibility for project proposals.
- Specific guidelines and recommendations for new additions and new construction to maintain design compatibility with existing historic structures.
- Specific guidelines and recommendations for preservation of streetscape elements and design compatibility.

CHANGES CAN BE MADE TO A HISTORIC RESOURCE

Many homeowners are concerned about strict restrictions if they live in a designated historic resource. In reality, there is significant flexibility. The design review required as part of a proposed project can be very helpful and result in a successful project that provides property owners with new, modern amenities that are sensitive to the property's historic character.

Living in a designated historic resource does not mean you cannot update some of the building's character-defining elements. In addition to restoration, acceptable projects may include a compatible addition, alteration, or rehabilitation that modifies the building for the desired use, while incorporating or reusing as much of the original material as possible. Proposed changes that affect exterior components or character-defining features require review and approval by the HDC and the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness.

Certain activities are nonregulated and not within the purview of the HDC including interior alterations, painting and choice of paint color, and landscape planting. Please refer to the Commission's Rules of Procedures available at ridgefieldct.org/historic-district-commission. Such Rules of Procedure cover topics such as the Commission's application procedures, public hearings and decision process, enforcement procedures, and administrative matters. A map of the properties within the Historic District is also included. An application for a Certificate of Appropriateness is also available for download from the web page.

POTENTIAL FLEXIBILITY ON A FAÇADE THAT IS NOT VISIBLE

Historic resources need to accommodate change as owners make adaptations for modern living and new uses. While alterations and additions to any façade must be considered on a project-by-project basis, alterations and additions may sometimes be acceptable on a façade that is not visible from the street or public vantage points. Alterations and additions are most likely to be acceptable when they do not impact the form of the structure and do not involve significant architectural details. When considering the level of exterior change acceptable for a less visible facade on a historic structure, the primary factors to consider are:

1. Impacts on the character defining features of a building, property, or district.
2. Impacts on the preservation of a structure's overall form and mass.
3. Visibility from public vantage points.
4. Significance of the structure, noting that a property with a high level of architectural significance on all four sides or a Town landmark may not have the same level of flexibility.

The Guidelines are not intended to be prescriptive. They are applied on a case-by-case basis to allow for flexible, content-sensitive solutions.

PRESERVATION BENEFITS

Historic preservation is not just about regulations that prevent inappropriate changes to historic resources. Residential homeowners also find that property values are generally more stable or increase when historic preservation standards are used in rehabilitating their homes. This occurs in part because of the investments made to rehabilitate the homes, as well as the added prestige of owning a designated structure. Nationwide studies also show that preservation projects contribute more to the local economy than do new building programs because each dollar spent on a preservation project has a higher percentage devoted to labor and to the purchase of local materials. By contrast, new construction typically has a higher percentage of each dollar spent devoted to materials that are produced outside the local economy and to special construction skills that may be imported. Historic preservation provides the following benefits:

- Increases neighborhood stability
- Increases property values
- Preserves the physical history of the area
- Promotes an appreciation of the physical environment
- Fosters community pride and self-image by creating a unique sense of place and local integrity
- Increases the awareness and appreciation of local history
- Increases visitors to the Town and is good for business

HISTORIC CONTEXT

The context in which a structure, historic or new construction, possesses to other structures within the historic district is critically important in terms of the particular structure's proposed size, massing, scale, rhythm, and orientation.

Size

When considering size, the HDC evaluates the width and height of a building. Designs are encouraged that are similar in size to neighboring buildings. When adjacent buildings are of various sizes, the HDC would also consider the rhythm of building sizes along the street. Architectural devices can aid applicants in either reducing or enlarging the apparent size of a building. For instance, a gambrel or mansard roof adds another story without adding to the façade height.

Massing

When examining massing, the HDC examines the form of the building, its shape and its proportions. The shape of the roof is an important element of massing. A street's rhythm is often influenced by its characteristic roof forms, so roof styles become an important element in new designs and additions. Roofs may run parallel or perpendicular to the street. They may be gabled, hipped, gambrel or many other types. The pitch may be steep, flat, or shallow. Appropriate roof designs will reflect the characteristic roof form of the neighborhood and the historic district.

When considering massing, the HDC also reviews the shape of the building. In general, the older the building is, the simpler the shape. Over time, some historic buildings gained porches, bay

windows and the like, which have historic value in their own right. These additive modifications are generally smaller in size and an accessory to the more primary form to which they are attached.

Massing can be symmetrical or asymmetrical. Generally, 18th and early 19th century buildings are relatively symmetrical and balanced. Mid to late 19th century architecture exhibits a more dynamic and deliberately asymmetrical balance. Symmetry regained popularity during the late 20th century.

When considering proportion, the HDC encourages design that will reflect the overall proportions of abutting properties and the rhythm of the street at large.

Scale

Scale is the relationship of individual design elements to the structure as a whole and the relationship of the structure to its neighboring structures, street, and topography. The scale of a structure is a primary consideration in determining whether a building is compatible with its setting. A building that is larger in scale than its neighbors may require a larger set back and side lots. In general, public buildings are larger in scale than residential ones.

Scale should be considered in terms of both the structures itself and the space that surrounds it. Characteristic scale typically varies within any historic district, as for instance between residential and commercial. Scale should be sympathetic to the streetscape. For instance, in Ridgefield different scales exist in the Main Street business district area versus the more open areas of Main Street south of the business district and High Ridge Avenue. Usually the pattern of existing buildings along a street line is basic to establishing scale.

Rhythm

Rhythm is a recognizable pattern created by the repetition of design elements along a street or within a single structure. A repetition of similar front porches, roof shapes, dormers or balconies can create a rhythm along a street. The placement of windows on the façade of a single building can create a rhythm. To consider the rhythm, the HDC examines the pattern of relationships on a street. Street rhythms may be complex or simple.

Orientation

Orientation is a building's position on the site in relation to the street. Differences in set back and side lot affect the rhythm of the street. New construction should take neighboring set backs and side lots into account.

SECTION II: STRUCTURE EXTERIOR

CHAPTER 1: WINDOWS

Windows are one of the most visible, yet commonly under-appreciated components of older and historic homes and historic resources. Many historic structures in Ridgefield have original wood windows that have lasted over a century. They may have intricate details that give depth, light, and shadow to a building's façade. Original windows reflect the design intent for the building, including the period, regional style, and building techniques. In fact, many wood windows are considered hand-crafted pieces of art that are examples of exceptional craftsmanship and design.

Windows give scale to a building and provide visual interest to the composition of individual facades, while distinct designs help define many historic building styles. These openings define character through their material, profile, shape, size, configuration, and arrangement on the façade. These Guidelines will help property owners consider all the factors and options when repairing or replacing original windows.

BENEFITS OF KEEPING HISTORIC WINDOWS

Original windows are a key component of a historic building's design and appearance. The benefits of maintaining and repairing a building's original windows include:

- Maintaining original windows helps to retain the historic character of the building.
- Wood windows made prior to 1940 are likely made from old-growth wood that is significantly denser, more durable, and more rot-resistant. These qualities mean that when properly cared for, older wood windows can last centuries. In contrast, many new windows are made from materials that may last only ten to 20 years, and vinyl windows, in particular, often warp from sun exposure.
- Original windows were made specifically to fit their window openings and were custom installed. New windows will likely have to be custom ordered to fit into the original openings.
- Traditional windows were made from individual components. Each piece can be individually repaired or replaced, including rails, stiles, muntins, stops, sills, stools, and jambs. In contrast, windows composed of vinyl, aluminum, fiberglass and composite materials are manufactured as a unit. Their individual components generally cannot be repaired.
- Repairing and increasing the energy performance of existing wood windows can be cost-effective.
- Hiring a window repair specialist to refurbish windows supports skilled local labor.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Commonly, homeowners are eager to replace their historic windows because companies promise that their replacement windows will not only save them time and money, but that their products and services are the “green” thing to do. In fact, a thriving industry has grown around the perceived need to replace rather than restore. However, restoring original windows can be a choice that is actually better for environmental conservation. Original windows have embodied energy – a factor often overlooked when evaluating environmental efficiency. Embodied energy is the amount of energy it takes to create a product, including everything from milling the wood to transportation, manufacture, and installation. Tearing out historic windows for replacement units not only wastes their embodied energy, it requires additional energy to remove and dispose of them. Every window that is thrown away is adding more waste to landfills.

Window replacement is thought of as a solution to make homes more energy-efficient, and older windows are often mistakenly blamed for energy loss. A common misconception is that single pane glass or wooden frames lead to energy loss, when in fact most of the problems are caused by gaps or “leaks” in the window surround, which can be addressed without extensive work or replacement. Unfortunately, wood windows are blamed for much of the air penetration and loss resulting in unwanted high electric and gas bills. Wood windows are usually the first items to be replaced in an effort to reduce those bills. However, windows themselves are not always the main culprit. Air infiltration wafts through openings in floors, walls, and ceilings. Adding just 3½ inches of insulation in an attic has a greater impact on thermal resistance than replacing a single-pane window with a high energy efficiency replacement window. Adding weather stripping and an interior storm window to a historic wood window in good repair will significantly improve its energy efficiency and the occupants’ comfort level without having to replace the entire unit.

WINDOW REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE

Properly maintained, original windows will provide excellent service for centuries. Most problems occur from a lack of proper maintenance. In most cases, windows are protected if a good coat of paint is maintained. The accumulation of layers of paint on a wood sash may make operation difficult, but proper painting techniques, including removing paint layers before repainting or refinishing, can solve this problem. Damage occurs when the painted layer is cracked or peeling. A good layer of paint protects the wood window from water damage and from ultraviolet degradation caused by sunlight. Decay can result that may make operation of the window difficult, and if left untreated, can lead to significant deterioration of window components. In terms of maintenance, wood windows do require painting every five to ten years, depending on their location, sun exposure, water exposure, paint quality, priming, wood quality, etc. Although vinyl and aluminum windows do not require painting, they are rarely maintenance free, and economy grade vinyl and aluminum windows can fail within a few years. Finishes on vinyl and aluminum can deteriorate through UV exposure, oxidation, and denting. Quality wood windows can last indefinitely, depending on maintenance and the quality of wood used. Double hung painted wood windows can also be installed with metal or vinyl tracks, making them easier to open and close as they age. Draftiness, sticking sashes, and loose putty are all problems that are easy to repair, and they are not reasons to remove and replace historic windows. Changing a sash cord, re-puttying a window or waxing a window track are easy repairs that can extend the life of the window.

REPLACEMENT WINDOWS

Before investing in replacing original wood windows, understanding the materials of replacement windows is critical. Many people do not like the maintenance of having to paint old windows. Replacement windows are not maintenance-free, though they may be easier to clean. This maintenance-free claim is most often used with companies that sell vinyl, aluminum, aluminum-clad, fiberglass, and composite windows that will require regular cleaning in order to avoid mold and mildew build-up. They are manufactured as a unit and their individual components cannot be repaired. When a part fails, or the insulated glass seal breaks, or the vinyl warps, the entire unit must be replaced. In fact, some new windows need to be completely replaced as frequently as the original wood windows would need a coat of paint. Vinyl and aluminum windows cannot be painted and discolor over time. Once this occurs, homeowners must invest in new replacement windows. Be cautious of the short lifespan of most non-wood replacement windows. They will likely need to be replaced repeatedly.

WHAT ABOUT WOOD WINDOWS THAT HAVE VINYL, FIBERGLASS, OR ALUMINUM CLAD EXTERIORS?

For clarification, a clad window is part of a window system that is primarily constructed of wood but has an additional material, such as aluminum, applied to the exterior face for maintenance purposes. Generally, clad windows are not appropriate, especially on older residential and commercial properties. However, in some instances they may be acceptable, and if proposed, shall be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Most clad window products do not have Ogee lugs (the small wood element under the top sash), which are an important feature of older double hung wood windows. In addition, a true divided light option is not offered for clad windows by any manufacturer. Another issue with vinyl-clad window systems is that they often show seams, as some of these windows are clad with vinyl strips on the outer surface. Aluminum and fiberglass finishes can come in a variety of colors and often have a finish that more closely resembles a painted surface. There are a number of windows constructed of substitute materials on the market today that strive to match the styles and profiles of historic windows. The HDC is always open to reviewing any new products for compatibility with older properties. A quick way to get initial feedback about a new product is to bring the manufacturer's specification sheet to the Commission's meeting to review. In some cases, the HDC may consider approving clad replacement windows that are visible from the street or other public right-of-ways if their architectural compatibility can be adequately demonstrated in terms of overall size, glazing, operation, finish, exterior profiles, and arrangement.

The manufacture of vinyl (polyvinyl Chloride, or PVC) windows requires a highly toxic production process. Dioxin, a toxic carcinogen, is formed when PVC is manufactured and when it is burned. Firefighting has become a serious problem at vinyl-encased homes. Fortunately, the windows are not toxic while they are being used, but they are toxic to produce and to dispose.

Also, while it is often desirable to have all wood windows in your building or house, in many cases, you may choose to use replacement windows of a substitute material in light wells or rear facades that are not visible from the street or other public right-of-ways.

REQUIREMENTS TO REPLACE AN ORIGINAL WINDOW

1. Are the windows truly deteriorated beyond repair? Photographs and a written evaluation from a window restoration expert must be provided that the windows warrant replacement of original fabric on a historic resource.
2. Can the deteriorated portions of the window be repaired?
3. Is every window beyond repair? Can some be restored rather than replaced?
4. Can the existing windows be made more energy efficient? Adding weather-stripping and an interior insulating window to a historic wood window in good repair will significantly improve its energy efficiency and the occupants' comfort level without having to replace the entire unit.
5. Has a thorough cost comparison between repair and replacement been completed? A homeowner should seek estimates for repair along with estimates to install replacement windows that truly match the originals. As per the Secretary of Interior Standards, replacement windows need to match originals in material, profile and configuration. This often will require custom-made wood windows to match the originals that fit in the original wood opening. This can cost more than restoring the original windows.
6. Provide specifications of new windows, including profiles, and life expectancy of the new windows. Some new windows only last ten to 15 years and will need to be replaced again. What are the benefits of the new windows?

GUIDELINES

- 1.1. Repair the original materials and design of historic windows and their surrounds, including hardware, in original openings.
- 1.2. Replace deteriorated windows to match the original windows in size, shape, arrangement of panes, materials, hardware, method of construction and profile. Avoid altering the size and proportions of historic windows.
- 1.3. Replace true divided, single pane light windows with true divided-light windows and replace wood windows with wood windows. Traditional single pane window glass is preferred over double (or thermal) pane glass, where the latter will have a negative visual effect but a minimal relative effect in preventing heat loss from an old building.
- 1.4. Avoid altering historic patterns or locations of window openings on a façade.
- 1.5. Set the window back into the wall the same distance as the historic windows. Carefully look at how the existing window is set in an opening. Many replacement windows are surface-mounted and most historic windows are recessed in the opening.

- 1.6. Muntin thickness is a critical aspect of building design, and any alteration to the configuration, however minor, can be visually disturbing. Snap-ins are generally not appropriate.
- 1.7. Repair/replace awnings and shutters that match originals in materials, design, size and operation and install only on openings that had them originally.
- 1.8. Match new window openings in materials, type, and size to others on the building. Make sure the window header heights line up to create a consistent rhythm on the façade. Avoid installing new window openings to building front facades.
- 1.9. Match trim elements of new windows and doors to be consistent with others on the house.
- 1.10. Consider using tempered glass, which is difficult to break, for added security.
- 1.11. Avoid installing air conditioners in street-facing windows.

Storm Windows

- 1.12. The design of storm windows and use of materials on a historic resource should be considerate and consistent with the historic character of the structure.
- 1.13. Only minimal damage to the historic windows should occur in mounting the storm windows.
- 1.14. Use inconspicuous hardware on the storm windows.

CHAPTER 2: DOORS

Doors define character through their shape, size, pattern, materials, glazing, decorative details, hardware, and arrangement on the façade. Changing these elements has a strong negative impact on a building. Doors are often distinguished by the placement of surrounding windows, sidelights, or other architectural detailing. It is important to preserve these features to retain the architectural character of the building.

DOOR REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE

Maintaining historic doors makes good economic sense, as they will typically last much longer than modern replacement doors. Stock replacement doors often do not fit the size and proportions of historic openings and often do not include the level of design and detail found in historic doors. Problems with peeling, paint, draftiness, sticking, and loose glazing are problems that are often quite easy to repair. Applying weather stripping, reputtying the glazing, or sanding down the bottom of a door are simple, cost-effective repairs that will allow your original wood door to continue to function for many decades.

GUIDELINES

- 2.1. Repair or replace materials to match original in material, size, profile, exposure, detail, relief, and dimension.
- 2.2. Repair serviceable original wood doors, transoms, and glass panes.
- 2.3. Repair trim and hardware including hinges, doorknockers, latches, and locks.
- 2.4. Avoid replacing a door or a component of the door when repair and proper maintenance will improve the original door's performance and preserve historic elements.
- 2.5. Install a wood screen door that matches the original opening and configuration of the original door.
- 2.6. Avoid installing new doors that do not fit the original opening by making an entrance larger or smaller.
- 2.7. Avoid removing original door trim.
- 2.8. Avoid moving the original location of the door opening or altering the spatial relationships of doors and their arrangement on the primary façade.
- 2.9. Avoid installing modern leaded glass, hollow metal doors, and fiberglass doors as they are not historically appropriate.

CHAPTER 3: EXTERIOR WOODWORK

The scale, texture, and finish of exterior woodwork contribute significantly to the character of a structure. Common types of wood siding in Ridgefield include weatherboards (lap siding) and shingle siding. In some historic resources, vertical board-and-batten siding is used. The best way to preserve these features is through well-planned maintenance. Exterior wood trim includes window and door frames, corner boards, rake boards, eaves, and wood sills. In addition to wood trim, there are numerous types of wood ornaments applied to historic resources including quoins, brackets, rafter tails and fascia boards.

EXTERIOR WOOD REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE

Before replacing wood siding, make sure replacement is necessary. In many cases, all that is necessary is patching the original siding with repair materials that match the original. If replacement of wood siding is necessary, match the existing wood siding in material, size, and profile, and install siding so that it lines up correctly with the original siding. Only repair or replace the sections of wood siding that need to be replaced. Replacement of deteriorated wood siding requires careful attention to the scale, texture, pattern and detail of the original material. If you are replacing an entire wall of wood siding and adding sheathing, adjust for the new wall thickness in relation to the window trim and sills. Siding should not extend past the face of window trim and the window should have a sill. The use of vinyl, aluminum, or stucco to cover or replace wood siding or shingles is inappropriate and results in a loss of original fabric, texture, and detail. These treatments also change the dimensions of the walls and can cause and conceal moisture damage, termite damage, or structure deterioration.

All wood surfaces should be painted or stained. Without a protective coating of paint, wood is susceptible to deterioration from the sun, water, and pests. Prior to painting or staining, remove damaged or deteriorated paint or stain using the gentlest means possible. Paint should be breathable latex. Avoid use of elastomeric paints or cement paints, which do not allow the building to breathe and can cause serious moisture deterioration on historic resources.

Avoid adding ornamentation or other decorative elements that never existed. Conjectural “historic” designs for replacement parts that cannot be substantiated are inappropriate, as they give the building a false sense of history. Details may be copied from similar historic resources within the neighborhood when there is evidence that a similar element once existed. For example, where “scars” on exterior siding suggest the location of decorative brackets but no photographs exist of their design, the designs for historic brackets on historic resources that are clearly similar in character may be used as a model.

NON-WOOD SIDING

Non-wood siding, such as aluminum or vinyl clapboards, asbestos or asphalt shingles, are products of the 20th century, and, as such, are by nature inappropriate for use within the Historic District. Despite the efforts of the manufacturers to duplicate the appearance of other building materials, these products nearly always have a glossy uniformity which reveals their true nature. In addition,

even though these products are sold to reduce maintenance, they may, in fact, create new maintenance problems.

GUIDELINES

- 3.1. Clean wood siding regularly.
- 3.2. Perform a test patch to determine that the cleaning method will cause no damage to the material's surface.
- 3.3. Paint or stain exposed wood siding to protect it.
- 3.4. Remove non-original siding that is covering original wood siding and restore the original wood.
- 3.5. Fix leaks around gutters, chimneys, roofs, and windows. Water leaks lead to wood damage and can attract pests such as termites.
- 3.6. Caulk and paint to fill in holes, cracks, joints, and seams to seal out water and insects.
- 3.7. Repair damaged siding by "piecing in" with materials that match the original.
- 3.8. If an early paint layer was lead-based, special procedures are required for removal and encapsulation. A qualified contractor should be consulted.
- 3.9. If asbestos siding, a hazardous material, was used to cover original materials, it should be removed by a qualified contractor.
- 3.10. Provide proper drainage and ventilation to minimize rot.
- 3.11. Avoid covering or replacing wood siding or wood trim with vinyl siding, aluminum, or stucco materials.
- 3.12. Avoid covering or replacing wood siding or wood trim with masonry.
- 3.13. Avoid covering or replacing wood siding or wood trim with plywood sheet siding such as T1-11 siding.
- 3.14. Avoid replacing wood siding or trim that does not match the original in dimension, reveal, and profile.

CHAPTER 4: MASONRY

Exterior masonry, such as stone and brick, is an integral component of a building's architectural style and character. Masonry walls give mass and depth to a building's facade. Functionally, exterior masonry is a principal element in the structural system, establishing a weather-tight enclosure providing protection from rain, wind, and sun.

MASONRY

Masonry is comprised of brick and stone. If a stone element needs to be reinforced or rebuilt, photograph the existing wall so that it can be reconstructed to match the original. Salvage and reuse the original stones. Match the replacement mortar with the color, texture, pattern, joint size, and tooling of the historic mortar. Repair or replace original stone retaining walls to match existing. If reinforcement is required, finish materials should match the original in materials and design.

MORTAR TUCK POINTING

Replacing damaged mortar with compatible mortar is called repointing. Check the mortar between the stone or brick regularly. Mortar that has worn away from the brick or stone face or has vertical cracks should be replaced. The compatible mortar mixture must be the correct composition or it can cause damage and spalling to the stone or brick. A professional mason with experience in historic masonry may be required to do the work.

CLEANING MASONRY

It is critical to use proper cleaning methods that will not accelerate the deterioration of stone walls. Many procedures can actually result in accelerated deterioration or may damage materials beyond repair. Use a chemical cleaning or low-pressure water wash (no more than 300 psi). Abrasive methods such as sandblasting are not appropriate, as they permanently erode building materials and finishes and accelerate deterioration.

PAINT AND WATERPROOF COATINGS

Do not use paint or any other waterproof coatings on stone or brick. These treatments may claim they are maintenance-free, but they trap water in the masonry that can cause serious damage to the interior walls of the building. Many water repellent coatings are transparent or clear when applied and discolor over time.

REMOVING PAINT

If masonry has been painted, use chemical paint strippers that are developed specifically to remove paint from historic resources. Many historic resources have lead paint, so make sure to have a professional remove the hazardous paint safely.

GUIDELINES

- 4.1. Repair water leaks and direct water runoff away from the historic resources.
- 4.2. Repair brick, stone, and mortar to match the existing in color, composition, texture and pattern.
- 4.3. Replace damaged stone or masonry by patching in new materials that match the original.
- 4.4. Avoid use of brick or stone veneer on a historic structure.
- 4.5. Avoid painting previously unpainted brick or stone.
- 4.6. Avoid covering brick or stone with an alternative material.
- 4.7. Avoid sandblasting masonry.
- 4.8. Avoid coating brick or stone with waterproof coatings.

CHAPTER 5: ROOFS AND CHIMNEYS

Rooflines define a building's style and its relationship with the streetscape. The pitch, orientation to the street, height, eave depth, roof decoration, and materials are elements that make historic resources unique. When repeated along the street, the repetition of similar roof forms contributes to a sense of visual continuity for the historic streetscapes. Maintaining the traditional pattern of roof configurations is an important goal in the preservation of neighborhood character. Historic roof details include dormers, eaves, gutters, downspouts, chimneys, ventilation, and skylights.

ROOF REPLACEMENT

Ridgefield's historic houses typically would have had wood shingles or slate roofs. The HDC encourages the preservation of existing slate and wood roofs and their replacement with other materials is not considered to be appropriate. Asphalt shingles are not considered appropriate where the historic roofing is an important decorative feature. However, if asphalt shingles are an existing condition on a historic structure, the HDC generally does not object to replacement with a like product as long as the design and appearance of the asphalt replacement material has been presented to and approved by the Commission.

Restoration of original roofing materials is always encouraged and the HDC encourages the use of traditional materials characteristic to the neighborhood in new construction.

ROOF ELEMENTS

Dormers

Dormers protrude from the roof surface with a window providing light and additional headroom under roof eaves. Dormers have various roof shapes but are typically gabled or hipped.

Eaves

Eaves are a location for important detailing such as brackets, exposed rafters and intricate rafter tails, cornices, and fascia boards. The depth and décor of eaves define a building's style and the shadows created by traditional overhangs contribute to the perception of the building's scale.

Gutters and Downspouts

Gutters and downspouts protect historic resources from water damage to walls, foundations, and piers. Built-in gutters are hidden from view from the ground within or behind architectural features such as cornices or parapets. Hanging gutters are metal with a half-round or profiled cross section. Gutter and downspout materials have different life spans. Generally, copper has the longest potential life span, followed by steel, with aluminum being highly susceptible to punctures, tears, dents, and galvanic reaction to other metals.

Chimneys

Chimneys are strong architectural elements on the exterior of historic resources. They are made of varying materials, such as brick or stone, with a variety of cap treatments, including simple brick, stepping (or corbelling) of courses of brick or stone, terra-cotta caps, bishop's cap (a pointed brick arch), flat stone coping, or a simple metal cap. Mortar joints on masonry chimneys need to be maintained and repaired to match the original in composition in order to maintain the structural strength of the chimney.

Historic chimneys constructed of brick and the softer mortars used a century ago often need lining to prevent fire or smoke damage due to deteriorated mortar joints. This can be done without changing the exterior of the chimney. Replacement chimneys should reflect the form and material of the original, or suitable, style of the building.

Roof Vents

Roof ventilation is used to evacuate the warm, moist air that escapes from the living space below. If this air lingers, it can condense on the underside of the roof and rot the sheathing. Roof vents can also greatly reduce the heat in an attic and home. If your home is fitted solely with small gable-end vents or a ventilator high in the roof, you might want to consider adding soffit vents to increase airflow. These vents allow outside air to enter the attic at the lowest point of the roof, along the underside of the eave. They are most effective when used in conjunction with a continuous ridge vent. Roof ventilation systems are generally located along or on the roof ridge. If using modern, projecting roof vents, set them back from the main elevation at least ten feet so that the original roof line is not interrupted.

Skylights

Skylights should be flat, made of non-reflective material, not visible from the front of the building and street, or screened by the building form, landscaping, or parapet.

Solar Panels

Solar panel system installations may be installed on historic structures so that the front elevation of the historic resource visible from a public right-of-way is not impacted. If solar panels are placed on roofs, place panels as flat as possible and locate facing a rear yard or as far back on a side sloping roof. If panels are placed on south facing roofs that are highly visible, the installation will negatively impact the integrity of the resource.

All electrical equipment and pipe conduits should also be painted or screened from view so that the equipment is effectively screened. For panels that are not flat, consider using custom-fitted walls that match the structure to screen system frames and supports.

Building integrated solutions such as photovoltaic shingles, laminates and glazing may be appropriate on historic structures where they are not publicly visible. Depending on system design, historic significance of the host building, and visibility, building integrated technology may

sometimes be acceptable on visible portions of historic structures, but these proposals would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

ROOF REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE

A building's roof provides the first line of defense against the elements. When a roof begins to experience failure, many other parts of the structure may also be affected. For example, a leak in the roof may lead to damage of rafter tails or even wall surfaces. Common sources of roof leaks include:

- Cracks in chimney masonry
- Loose flashing around chimney's and ridges
- Loose or missing roof shingles
- Crack in roof membranes caused by settling rafters
- Water backup from plugged gutters

GUIDELINES

- 5.1. Preserve original roof form and roof details. When repairing or **altering a roof**, it is important not to alter the pitch of the historic roof or its orientation to the street.
- 5.2. Avoid replacement of **wood shingles** and **slate roofs** with a substitute material.
- 5.3. Preserve the original **chimney**.
- 5.4. Rebuild the **chimney**, if necessary, to match the original form, materials, and detail as closely as possible. If available, use original brick or stone as a veneer.
- 5.5. Avoid use of clapboard, shingles, or other wood siding materials on the exterior of new wood-framed (prefabricated metal firebox) **chimneys**. New wood-framed chimneys should be covered in brick or stone for a more authentic look.
- 5.6. Replace **original roof details** if they are lost and must be replaced. Base designs on historic photographic evidence. If no such evidence exists, base the design of replacement details on a combination of physical evidence (indications in the structure of the house itself) and evidence of similar elements on houses of the same architectural style in the neighborhood.
- 5.7. Preserve the original depth of the overhang of the **eaves**.
- 5.8. Protect **rafter** tails from rot.
- 5.9. Avoid cutting back roof **rafters** and **soffits**.
- 5.10. Retain existing **dormers**.

- 5.11. Reconstruct **dormers** on historic resources where there is clear evidence that they existed.
- 5.12. Construct new **dormers** to match the style of the building in form, spacing, dimensions, proportions, style, and detailing.
- 5.13. Avoid adding roof **dormers** to the front elevation of the roof or that are out of scale with the original building.
- 5.14. Install inconspicuous **attic venting** under the eaves or with low profile ridge vents or low-profile power vents in non-visible locations.
- 5.15. Install **roof-mounted equipment** (including mechanical equipment) such as vents, television dishes, antennae, solar panels, and skylights in a manner that is as visually unobtrusive as possible from the street.
- 5.16. Install **skylights** so they are not visible.
- 5.17. Install **solar panel** equipment facing a rear yard or as far back on a side slope as possible.
- 5.18. Repair/replace **gutters** to match any special molding, strap, or bracket used to support or attach the gutter to the historic resources.
- 5.19. Ensure that **gutters** are maintained and functional in order to protect the house from damage that can quickly become costly to repair.
- 5.20. Install **downspouts** so they do not detract from character-defining features and mount them to the building, rather than a porch column.
- 5.21. Avoid installation of **vinyl gutters** and downspouts as they easily become brittle and fail.
- 5.22. Avoid addition of **fascia boards** on eaves where none previously existed.
- 5.23. Avoid installation of **wind turbines** as roof vents.

CHAPTER 6: PORCHES AND BALCONIES

Historic porch and balcony design, scale and detail vary with the architectural style of the building. For example, revival style historic resources often have porches and also have front façade balconies as one of the main featured elements. Residential porches, porticos, porte cocheres, and verandas provided sheltered outdoor living space in the days before reliable climate control. They define a semi-public area to mediate between the public street areas and the private area within the home. They also provided an architectural focus to help define entry ways and allow for the development of architectural detail. Typically, areas covered by a porch, including windows, doors, and wall surfaces, tend to require less maintenance than other more exposed areas of the house. The shade provided by porches can reduce energy bills. However, steps, railing, and roofs are usually exposed to the weather and may require additional maintenance. Porch design, scale, and detail vary widely between architectural styles.

PORCH REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE

Due to the importance porches play in the perception of historic resources and streetscapes, original materials and details should be preserved. Porch elements which have deteriorated due to moisture or insect damage should be carefully examined to determine if the entire element is unsalvageable. If only a part of the element is damaged, then piecing in or patching may be a better solution than removal and replacement. If replacement is necessary, carefully document, through photos and careful measurements, before the original element is discarded in order to replace the element to match the original.

GUIDELINES

- 6.1. Maintain and preserve original porches.
- 6.2. Paint wood features regularly.
- 6.3. Repair the porch to its original state in terms of design, details, and materials.
- 6.4. Replace damaged porch and balcony elements with new elements that match the original design and materials. When original details have been lost and must be replaced, designs should be based on historic photographic evidence. If no such evidence exists, the design of replacement details should be based on a combination of physical evidence (indications in the structure of the house itself) and evidence of similar elements on houses of the same architectural style and age in the neighborhood.
- 6.5. Design a new porch to be appropriate to the historic style of the house in terms of scale, location, materials, and detail.
- 6.6. Avoid adding porch elements if they did not exist historically.
- 6.7. Avoid adding a balustrade unless there is evidence that one originally existed.

- 6.8. Avoid enclosing a porch that was originally open.
- 6.9. Avoid removing decorative details of the porch or balcony including columns, railings, and brackets.
- 6.10. Avoid installing exposed conduit, wiring, or junction boxes.
- 6.11. Avoid replacing wood or wrought iron elements with modern vinyl or metal columns and railings made of hollow metal pickets or thin metal that does not match traditional thickness or configuration.

CHAPTER 7: DECKS

Wood decks are a modern architectural feature and not appropriate on the front elevation of a historic building. They may be considered on a rear of a historic building if out of the view from any public right-of-way.

GUIDELINES

- 7.1. Avoid installing decks on the front elevation or on side and rear elevations that are visible from the public view.
- 7.2. Design decks in a manner compatible in material with surrounding historic architecture.

SECTION III: PROPERTY GROUNDS AND STREETScape

CHAPTER 8: PERGOLAS, TRELISES, AND ARBORS

The appeal of the trellis, pergola, and arbor is that it is a piece of architecture defining outdoor space. With the increasing use of garden structures in landscapes, many are confusing the terms pergola, trellis, and arbor, using them interchangeably. A trellis is typically a latticework built to support climbing plants or vines. It can be a simple panel attached to the side of a building, or it can be freestanding in a garden or yard. An arbor usually incorporates a trellis into its structure, creating a tunnel-like passageway of climbing plants. Arbors have a continuous run of latticework from one side of the “tunnel” to the other, often in an arched shape. Pergolas, too, are designed to support climbing plants. Unlike arbors, though, pergolas simply have posts supporting a roof like structure. They are most commonly used to shade a walkway or a deck.

GUIDELINES

- 8.1. Repair or replace pergolas, trellises and arbors to match original.
- 8.2. Avoid installing pergolas, trellises and arbors in the front yard where none originally existed.

CHAPTER 9: LIGHTING

Traditionally, lighting within a site was minimal. Exterior lighting was a subordinate element and exterior lights were simple in character. Most lighting was incandescent lamps with low intensity and were shielded with simple shade devices. The light was typically hung centered over the front entrance or sconces on either side of the front entrance. The type and placement of lighting plays an important role in maintaining the authentic historic character of a building. On residential historic resources, exterior lighting is typically located at the porch. Each style of historic building has a different style of appropriate porch light. At times there may be additional security lighting on the side and rear elevations. Lighting fixtures should be appropriate to the historic context of the building.

GUIDELINES

- 9.1. Install new street-side lights that are designed to be subtle and unobtrusive.
- 9.2. Preserve light fixtures that are original to a house or integral to the house's architectural style.
- 9.3. Do not remove copper patina from original fixtures.
- 9.4. Replace damaged fixtures beyond repair to match the original.
- 9.5. Install all lighting in a manner that only illuminates the porch or front entry and walkway surfaces without light spillover onto adjacent properties or into the night sky.
- 9.6. Locate porch lamps near the primary entrance and install in a manner that minimizes damage to historic fabric.
- 9.7. Evenly space lighting across porch bays.
- 9.8. Center lighting over or around the front door.
- 9.9. Scale light fixtures appropriately for the proposed location.
- 9.10. Install new exterior lights that are simple in character and low in intensity. Avoid installing new street lighting that is highly ornamental which evokes a false sense of history. Installing fluorescent tube lighting and flood lights are not appropriate at street elevations.
- 9.11. Install new exterior lights that are appropriate to the building in terms of size and style.
- 9.12. Place safety and security lighting on the corner and side elevations with motion sensors that automatically turn lights on and off.
- 9.13. Prevent glare onto adjacent properties by using shielded and focused light sources that direct light to the ground. Avoid washing an entire building facade in light and up-lighting a building.

CHAPTER 10: STONE WALLS, FENCES, ENTRY GATES, AND STONE PIERS

Historically, stone walls and wood picket fences were low in height and were used at the front of a property. They were relatively transparent in nature, allowing views into front yards. Maintaining open vistas as much as possible throughout the historic district is an important consideration by the HDC in its determination of appropriateness of a new fence.

New fences should be appropriate to the period of the property and the Historic District. High masonry walls, barricade fences, and other large imposing fence-like structures are discouraged because they are not characteristic of the Historic District. Chain link and vinyl fences are generally not appropriate.

GUIDELINES

Stone Walls

- 10.1. Preserve and repair original stone walls to original condition.
- 10.2. Maintain existing retaining walls.
- 10.3. Replace only the portions of stone walls that are deteriorated to match the original in color, texture, size, and finish. Use original stone if a wall is collapsing and needs to be reconstructed.
- 10.4. Re-point stone walls using a mortar mix that matches the original mortar and match the original joint design.
- 10.5. Rebuild stone walls where collapsed with the salvaged original materials.
- 10.6. Install new walls with materials to match existing historic walls in the area. Such new stone walls should be low.
- 10.7. For new stone walls, avoid using stone that is not indigenous to New England, including sandstone, limestone, or manufactured stone.

Fences

- 10.8. Keep the front yard open where no fence currently or historically existed.
- 10.9. Match new fences, gates, and stone walls in material, height, and design with those that appear historically in the neighborhood and the architecture of the house.
- 10.10. Select new front yard fencing that is simple and made of see-through wood picket fencing or wrought iron so that the building is the focal point, not the fence.

- 10.11. Maintain fences or shrubbery fronting a house at a low height and transparency in order to preserve views to and from the street appropriate to the preservation of a “street-friendly” relationship.
- 10.12. Stain or paint wood fences.
- 10.13. Avoid the use of hollow metal picket fences with welded bars. These fences have a very short life span and are not an appropriate replacement for wrought iron.
- 10.14. Avoid installing metal, chain link, or plastic fences or stone walls of non-traditional material, such as concrete block, railroad ties, or faux materials.
- 10.15. Avoid installing tall, solid wood fencing in front of your property.
- 10.16. Avoid installing a fence style that does not match your building.

Entry Gates

- 10.17. New gates should consider historical precedence, type of gate, scale, height, context, and period of the home.
- 10.18. Set gates within the stone wall, not in front of or behind it.
- 10.19. Gate height should be equal to or slightly lower than adjacent stone walls.
- 10.20. Use wood or iron metal for gate.

Stone Piers

- 10.21. New stone piers should consider the historical precedence, scale, height, context, and period of the home.

CHAPTER 11: PARKING, DRIVEWAYS, AND GARAGES

Ridgefield's historic district was initially developed before the automobile. While auto dependence is a fact of modern life, minimizing the visual impacts of the necessary accommodations for automobiles is important if we are to succeed in preserving the traditional flavor of our historic district.

The HDC evaluates the following areas to determine the appropriateness of a parking area: size, location, visibility of cars, paving materials, and lighting.

Off-street parking areas should be concealed from the street view wherever possible and preferably should be located to the rear of the building. Wide curb cuts are not appropriate and parking areas should be accessed by as narrow a driveway as is practical.

Paving materials which contrast with the adjoining roadway are preferred so as to provide a visual break in both texture and color.

Asphalt may be acceptable as appropriate materials for parking areas but the use of more textured paving materials is encouraged, especially for larger parking areas. Textured paving materials include gravel, brick pavers, granite paving blocks, or cobblestone.

Parking lot sidewalks should be gravel, brick, granite, or concrete in keeping with the characteristic neighborhood traditions. Curbs should be granite and gutters, if provided, should be granite paving block or cobblestone.

Parking which remains visible from the public right-of-way should be suitably screened. Landscaping may also help reduce the apparent size of parking areas.

GUIDELINES

Parking, Driveways

- 11.1. Build driveways to be as minimally intrusive as possible. Avoid locating parking or garages in front yards of property.
- 11.2. Use paving materials that will minimize the impact a driveway will have on a streetscape.
- 11.3. Keep paved area to a minimum.
- 11.4. Driveway aprons should match the material of the driveway or the adjoining street.
- 11.5. Curbing and edging should be the minimum practical thickness.

Garages

- 11.6. Preserve historic garages where they exist.
- 11.7. Maintain the character-defining features of a historic garage such as the primary materials, roof materials, roof form, window and door openings and architectural details.
- 11.8. Locate replacements of historic garages in the same location of the original.
- 11.9. Design new or replacement garages to reflect the architecture of the main structure.
- 11.10. Design garages and parking facilities to be as minimally visible from the street as possible and preferably located to the rear of the property, utilizing the traditional relationship to the site and development pattern of the neighborhood.
- 11.11. Consider sectional wood garage doors which mimic traditional swing-out carriage-house doors. Avoid use of metal or fiberglass “coil-up” doors or overly elaborate garage doors, which may call attention to the subordinate garage structure where they can be seen from any public right-of-way.

CHAPTER 12: SIDEWALKS AND WALKWAYS

Sidewalks are historically significant elements that contribute to a neighborhood's inviting atmosphere and provide spaces for walking and personal interaction.

Walkways that lead from the sidewalk to each house entry contribute to the sense of visual continuity on a block. The alignment of original sidewalks and driveways with the street and neighborhood is important.

GUIDELINES

- 12.1. Preserve historic features such as stone carriage steps, stone curbs, horse hitching posts, and street lamps.
- 12.2. Preserve original walkways and other hardscape features in the front yard or repair or replace with materials to match the existing in the same location.
- 12.3. Repair and replace sidewalks to match originals. Avoid widening existing walkways and sidewalks.
- 12.4. Replace only those portions that are deteriorated beyond repair.
- 12.5. Match replacement materials as closely as possible to the original in color, texture, size, and finish.
- 12.6. Install new sidewalks and walkways to be compatible with the historic character of the streetscape so that new sidewalks align with existing sidewalks separated from the curb.

CHAPTER 13: UTILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

New technologies in heating, ventilating and telecommunications have introduced mechanical equipment into historic areas, where they were not seen traditionally. Minimize the visual impacts of such systems so that one's ability to perceive the historic character of the building is not significantly affected. Locating equipment so that it is screened from public view is the best approach.

GUIDELINES

- 13.1. Locate utility boxes, connection devices, conduit, and meters away from the front of the house, and screened from street view.
- 13.2. Locate equipment such as window air conditioners, heaters, or fireplace vents, away from the front facade.
- 13.3. Locate roof-mounted satellite dishes away from street view.

CHAPTER 14: SIGNS AND MAILBOX POSTS

Signs and the placement thereof together with any related lighting within the Historic District are subject to approval by the HDC. Applicants for signs should also be aware that Planning & Zoning has regulations on the size and location of signs.

The style of the sign should reflect the style of the building to which it is attached and the prevalent style of the Historic District. The size of signs should be appropriate to the scale of the building. Signs of wood construction are preferred.

GUIDELINES

- 14.1. Match size of sign to the scale of the building.
- 14.2. Use materials for the construction of the sign which are compatible with the building and the Historic District.
- 14.3. Wooden signs attached to wood posts are encouraged.
- 14.4. Mailbox size should conform to USPS regulations and not include any ornamentation.
- 14.5. Mailbox posts should be wooden and generally nondescript.

CHAPTER 15: SWIMMING POOLS, SATELLITE DISHES, YARD EQUIPMENT, AND ACCESSORY STRUCTURES

Locate equipment for swimming pools and permanently installed yard equipment, playgrounds, barbecue pits, greenhouses, and pet enclosures in the rear yard and/or screen them so they are not visible from public view. In-ground pools are preferable to above-ground pools. Take into consideration the possibility of damage to surrounding historic resources and other features when determining the equipment's location. Accessory structures include sheds, trash enclosures, and structures for pool equipment. They should be unobtrusive and not visually compete with the historic building. The accessory structure should remain subordinate in terms of mass, size, and height to the primary structure.

GUIDELINES

- 15.1. Historic out buildings such as barns, sheds, well houses, carriage houses, corn cribs, wood sheds, and any other such historic structure should be preserved.
- 15.2. Use traditional range of building materials on accessory structures including wood siding, wood planks, or vertical board-and-batten siding.
- 15.3. Use basic rectangular forms, with hip, gable, or shed roofs.
- 15.4. Locate facilities for storage of trash containers in areas screened from public view.
- 15.5. Avoid installing ornate detailing on accessory structures.
- 15.6. Avoid installing details on an accessory structure which detracts from the historic resource.
- 15.7. Locate permanent swimming pools or other recreational equipment in the rear yard so as not to be visible from the public right-of-way.
- 15.8. Satellite dishes should be small (approximately 18" in diameter) and installed in an inconspicuous location out of public view.

CHAPTER 16: PLAYGROUND, SPORTING, AND ENTERTAINMENT EQUIPMENT

Playground, sporting, and entertainment equipment which is permanently affixed to the ground is regulated by the HDC and includes but is not limited to:

- A. Installed swing sets
- B. Installed or non-portable playhouses
- C. Treehouses
- D. Multi-use sports courts
- E. Tennis courts
- F. Basketball courts
- G. Bocce courts
- H. Hockey rinks
- I. Trampolines
- J. Non-portable basketball hoops
- K. Installed goal posts, cages, and nets
- L. Outdoor kitchens and entertainment areas
- M. Outdoor fireplaces
- N. Installed outdoor art work

SECTION IV: NEW CONSTRUCTION, ADDITIONS AND DEMOLITIONS

CHAPTER 17: NEW CONSTRUCTION

The intent of these guidelines on new construction is to ensure that patterns of new construction do not destroy the character of Ridgefield's Historic District. An important issue with new construction is creating compatibility with the historic resources maintaining consistency and balance between historic resources and new construction. Use the following design criteria while designing a new building to ensure its compatibility with the neighboring historic resource:

- A. Location and Site Design
- B. Orientation to the Street
- C. Roof Forms
- D. Height
- E. Massing, Proportion, and Scale
- F. Foundations and Floor-to-Ceiling Heights
- G. Foundations and Floor Heights
- H. Fenestration and Doorways
- I. Materials and Details

A. LOCATION AND SITE DESIGN

Site design includes how a building is placed on the site in relation to other structures and the street. The spacing and location of historic structures establishes a rhythm that is essential to the character of the neighborhood. The front setback is the distance between the front of the building and the front property line. The extent of the setback and the treatment of the open space in the front setback are the primary ways a building relates to the sidewalk. The front setback provides a transition between the public realm of the street and the private realm of the building and must be treated so that it provides a pedestrian scale for the building and enhances the open space along the street. A uniform setback of historic resources as they line the street creates a street wall and is essential to preserving the character of the neighborhood. New construction should respect the street wall created by its neighbors.

GUIDELINES

- 17.1. Design the setback of new construction to be consistent with other historic resources on the street.
- 17.2. Provide a pedestrian scale and enhance the street with the front setback treatment.
- 17.3. Dedicate the front and side yards to landscaping.

- 17.4. Design parking and garages to be toward the rear of the lot to match traditional patterns of the neighborhood.
- 17.5. Use a progression of public to private spaces in the front yard with a walkway from the sidewalk to the porch or portico that defines the front entryway.
- 17.6. Avoid detracting from traditional house-to-street visual relationships with automobile parking accommodations in the front set back.

B. ORIENTATION TO STREET

Nearly all historic residential structures in the Ridgefield Historic District were designed to present their face to the street and not a side or rear yard. It is critical to maintain the relationship to the street by designing front entries and porches with the same orientation as existing resources on the block. This will provide continuity of the building wall of the street.

GUIDELINES

- 17.7. Maintain the traditional pattern in which historic resources relate to the street.
- 17.8. Orient the front of the house, including the front entry and porch, to the street in order to be consistent with those historically found along the street frontage and to preserve the “pedestrian friendly” atmosphere of the historic neighborhood.

C. ROOF FORMS

It is often true that the structures on one block of a historic neighborhood share a common architectural style. This common style is frequently articulated by a familiar roof form which helps establish a predominate character for the street.

GUIDELINES

- 17.9. Replicate the rooflines and the roof’s orientation to the street with those existing traditionally in the neighborhood.
- 17.10. Echo the roof forms of the surrounding historic structures in areas with a common architectural style.
- 17.11. Design new roofing materials to appear similar to those traditionally used in surrounding historic residential structures.
- 17.12. Locate rooftop equipment to the rear so as to not be visible from the street.

D. HEIGHT

The height of historic structures in a historic neighborhood is generally uniform along the streetscape. New construction should be consistent with the general character of the district. Structure height of new construction should be consistent with the general structure heights within the historic district.

GUIDELINES

- 17.13. Design the roofline to be consistent with the adjacent rooflines. Do not design new rooflines higher than one story above adjacent roofs or step rooflines back from the prevailing roof or cornice line at the streetscape.
- 17.14. Align heights of eaves, cornices, porches, windows, and door moldings to be harmonious with the historic structure on the streetscape.

E. MASSING, SCALE, AND FLOOR-TO-AREA RATIO

It is important that the mass, scale, and proportion of new construction is designed in such a manner that they do not obstruct or detract from public views of adjacent traditional historic resources. New construction should not overwhelm, impede view of, or interfere with the setting of nearby or adjacent historic resources.

GUIDELINES

- 17.15. Utilize the neighborhood's traditional patterns in mass, scale, and form.
- 17.16. Maintain the traditional neighborhood proportions.

F. FOUNDATIONS AND FLOOR-TO-CEILING HEIGHTS

Regular patterns of foundations and floor-to-ceiling heights along a street and throughout a district help to create a sense of cohesiveness of character as well as balance and proportion. New construction floor-to-ceiling heights should be consistent with the majority of existing historic resources along the street, which typically range from 7' to 9'.

Large exposed areas of concrete foundation are not considered appropriate. For new construction of high foundation walls or raised basement, the use of brick facing or traditional stonework may be appropriate.

GUIDELINES

- 17.17. Align eaves, cornices, and ridge lines with those of the neighboring historic structures.

G. FENESTRATION AND DOORWAYS

The pattern of windows, doors, and other openings on the façade of a historic structure establishes a rhythm for the street. Any new construction should be harmonious with the established composition. These openings define the structure's character through their shape, size, construction, and arrangement on the façade, the repetition of which develops the neighborhood's character. It is important, therefore, that architectural features such as windows, entries, porches, and detailing should be visually compatible with those traditionally appearing in the area.

GUIDELINES

- 17.18. Design new construction to have a similar facade solid-to-void ratio to those found in surrounding historic structures.
- 17.19. Design windows to be similar in shape, scale, materials, and construction to those found in surrounding historic structures.
- 17.20. Design dormers to be similar in scale to those found on surrounding historic structures.

H. MATERIALS AND DETAILS

Traditionally, the materials used to form the major façade of a residential structure were intended to work harmoniously with the architectural details of the building in order to present a unified architectural style. It is essential that new construction within a historic district highlights the vocabulary of materials and design details which help to form the district's character. Use building materials (such as siding and roofing) which are compatible in appearance with those used historically in the district.

GUIDELINES

- 17.21. Incorporate materials similar to those traditionally used in neighboring historic structures.
- 17.22. Use materials similar in scale to those in neighboring historic structures.
- 17.23. Echo, but not necessarily imitate, the architectural details such as newel posts, porch columns, and rafter tails, of surrounding historic structures.
- 17.24. Avoid using aluminum, plywood, or vinyl siding.
- 17.25. Avoid using imitation stone or brick veneer.
- 17.26. Avoid using aluminum awnings.

CHAPTER 18: ADDITIONS

New additions are a useful means to adapt historic structures to meet current demands. However, nothing can alter the appearance of a historic structure more quickly than an ill-planned addition. It is important that additions do not destroy or obscure significant historic features or materials, and that they are compatible with both the main structure and the neighborhood. Careful planning of an addition can ensure respect for the character and integrity of the original structure while giving owners additional space.

SUCCESSFUL ADDITIONS TO HISTORIC RESOURCES

An addition should not attempt to strictly imitate or replicate portions of the original structure, or to try to blend it so seamlessly with the original structure as to obscure its identification as a product of its own time. An accurate “reading” of a historic building should reveal the chronological development of the structure. On the other hand, the addition should contribute to, rather than detract from, the historic character of the main structure.

An early addition may have taken on historic significance. It may have been constructed to be compatible with the original building and it may be associated with a specific “period of significance”, thereby meriting preservation in its own right. In contrast, more-recent additions usually have no historic significance. Some later additions detract from the character of a building and may obscure significant features, and, without historic significance, should be considered for removal.

The height and depth of a building expansion into the rear yard can impact rear yard open space. Depending on the context of other historic resources that define the space, expansions into the rear yard may be inappropriate if they are uncharacteristically deep or tall.

GUIDELINES

- 18.1. Locate additions toward the rear of the main structure, away from the main façade and street front. Set back side additions from the primary façade in order to allow the original proportions, form, and overall character of the historic building to remain prominent. Avoid blocking or obstructing views of the front of the original structure.
- 18.2. Preserve original architectural details. Avoid damaging, removing, destroying, or obstructing significant architectural details of the original structure.
- 18.3. Design the addition to be compatible with the original structure’s mass, scale, and proportions. Avoid using a style different from that of the original structure.
- 18.4. Design the addition to be subordinate to the main building and not “compete” with it.

- 18.5. Relate the addition to the main structure, rather than overwhelming it, by separating or linking it using a connecting structure, or breaking up its mass into components that relate to the original.
- 18.6. Minimize the impact of a second-story addition to the main structure so that it appears to be an integral part of the overall design and not an obvious addition.
- 18.7. Echo roof forms and materials of the original structure.
- 18.8. Distinguish the addition from the original structure through simplified architectural details.
- 18.9. Use windows in the addition that are similar in character to those of the main structure.
- 18.10. Design new dormers to be in character with the primary structure's design, in scale with those on similar historic structures. Avoid overwhelming or "cluttering" the roofline in size or number of dormers.
- 18.11. Preserve an older addition that has achieved historic significance in its own right.
- 18.12. Remove inappropriate recent additions.

CHAPTER 19: DEMOLITIONS

The Demolition Town Ordinance (see Town Ordinance Chapter 136 – Building, Demolition of) is applicable to any structure built for the support, shelter or enclosure of persons, animals, or personal property of any kind. Demolition of any structure that is within the Historic District requires that the property owner first obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness from the HDC before the property owner may apply for a demolition permit from the Building Department.

GUIDELINES

- 19.1. Obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness from the HDC and a Demolition Permit from the Building Department prior to undertaking demolition of any structure.
- 19.2. Deterioration of a structure is not a basis for the proposed demolition of a historic resource.
- 19.3. For historic structures, consider restoration or alternative uses of the structure or relocation of the structure, if possible.

Ridgefield's Historic Resources

Historic buildings and sites make a major contribution to community character. Ridgefield is home to a number of recognized historic resources, as shown on the map and in the following table (the letter corresponds with the location of the resource on page 2 of the map of this Appendix).

The Ridgefield Historic District Commission is governed by Connecticut State Statutes (Sections 7-147a-147k) as well as Ridgefield's local ordinance (Chapter 208). As such, Ridgefield has two historic districts subject to statutory oversight and compliance. Four of the individually recognized historic properties listed below are either sited within such historic districts or otherwise under the purview of the HDC.

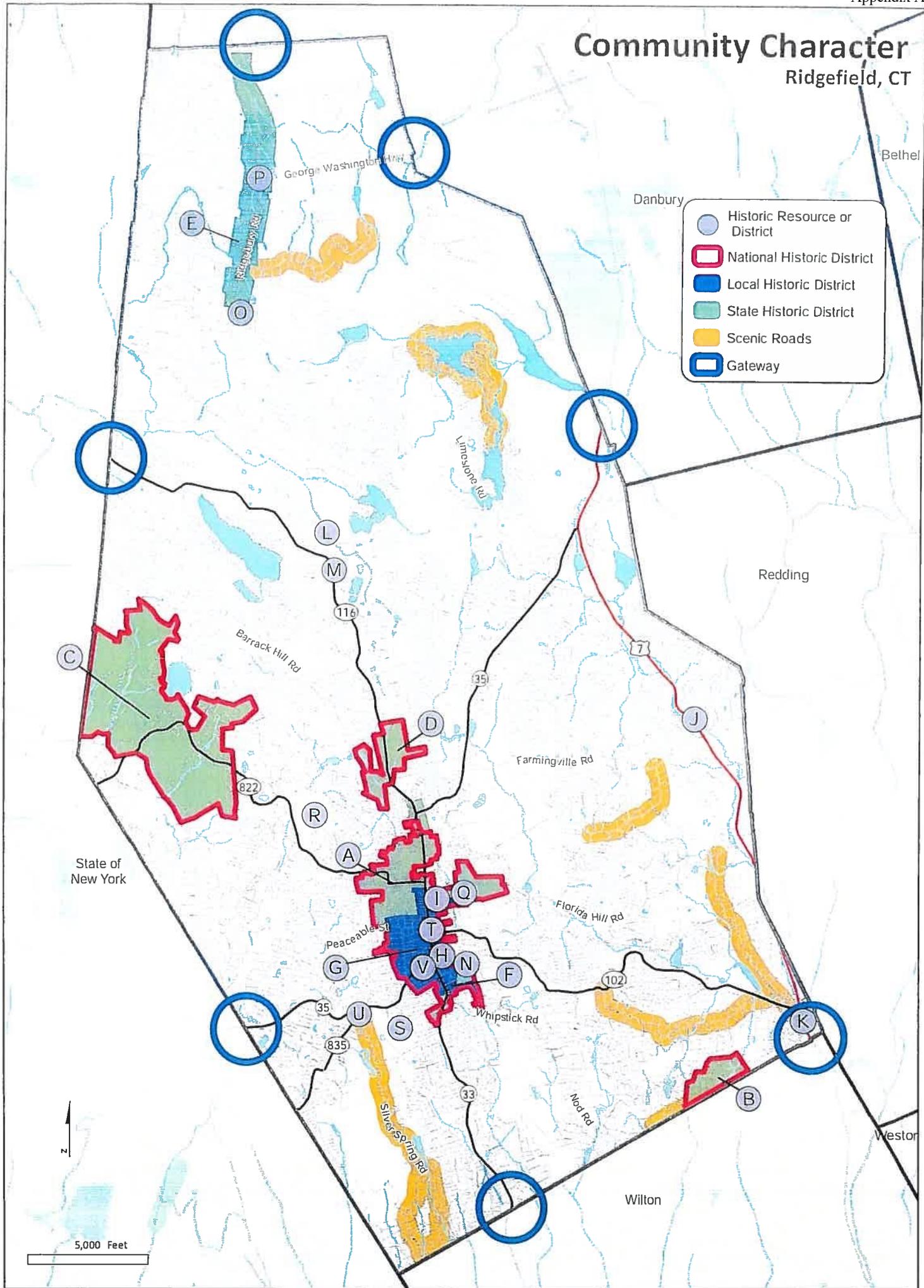
The National Register of Historic Places ("National Register") identifies resources significant in the history of the nation. The State Register of Historic Places ("State Register") identifies resources significant in the history of the state. The designations may be for districts (areas containing multiple properties) or for individual properties. In addition to those areas and properties listed below, there are approximately 450 Ridgefield properties and sites also listed on the State Register. These designations, while not regulatory in nature, generally provide opportunities for possible federal and/or state funding.

Map Reference	"Recognition" District	National Register	State Register	HDC Regulatory
A.	Ridgefield Center Historic District	■	■	
B.	Weir Farm Historic District	■	■	
C.	West Mountain Historic District	■	■	
D.	Titicus Hill Historic District	■	■	
E.	Ridgebury Historic District		■	
"Regulatory" Districts				
F.	Ridgefield Historic District #1		■	■
G.	Ridgefield Historic District #2		■	■

Individual Property Listings				
H.	Keeler Tavern	■	■	
I.	Governor Lounsbury House	■	■	■
J.	Fulling Mill / Woolen Mill Archeological Site	■	■	
K.	Branchville Railroad Tenement	■	■	
L.	Thomas Hyatt House	■	■	
M.	Lewis June House	■	■	
N.	Benedict House and Shop	■	■	■
O.	Rochambeau March Route	■	■	
P.	Ridgebury Congregational Church	■	■	
Q.	Old Ridgefield Playhouse		■	
R.	Frederic Remington House	■	■	
S.	Stephen Olmstead House		■	
T.	Thomas Hawley House			■
U.	Peter Parley Schoolhouse (Local Designation)			
V.	Cass Gilbert Fountain			■

Community Character

Ridgefield, CT



Local and State Information and Funding Resources Available to You

1. Certified Local Government (“CLG”) Benefits

Ridgefield being a CLG opens the door for funding, technical assistance, training, and other benefits.

- **Funding:** 10% of funding received by the State Historic Preservation Office (“SHPO”) from the Federal Historic Preservation Fund must be given to CLGs. CLG grants can fund surveys, National Register nominations, rehabilitation work, design guidelines, educational programs, training, structural assessments, and feasibility studies, among other projects.
- **Technical Assistance:** As a CLG, communities have direct access to SHPO staff for assistance with their historic properties commissions, building assessments, surveys and nominations, and general preservation assistance.
- **Trainings:** The SHPO and the National Park Service offer regular training for CLGs.

2. The Ridgefield Historical Society (ridgefieldhistoricalsociety.org)

The Ridgefield Historical Society (“RHS”) is a valuable source of information on individual historic properties and sites throughout Ridgefield. RHS collects and catalogues documentary materials and provides a valuable data of information about Ridgefield’s history.

3. State Historic Preservation Office (portal.ct.gov/DECD/Services/Historic-Preservation)

The State Historic Preservation Office administers a range of federal and state programs that identify, register and protect the buildings, sites, structures, districts and objects that comprise Connecticut’s cultural heritage. It seeks new opportunities for collaboration on restoration and community revitalization. Among other programs, SHPO provides the following:

- **Grants** including funding for historic preservation, basic operational support for nonprofits, survey and planning grants, and the Certified Local Government program.
- **Tax Credits** for historic preservation and rehabilitation.
- **Historic Resources** including guidance to qualify for National and State Registers of Historic Places, a Statewide Historic Resource Inventory, Municipal Historic District & Property Designations, and commemorative plaques.

4. Preservation Connecticut (preservationct.org)

Preservation Connecticut is a nonprofit organization established by special acts of the State legislation to preserve, protect and promote buildings, sites, and landscapes which contribute to the State’s heritage and vitality. Preservation Connecticut works closely with the State Historic Preservation Office. Preservation Connecticut offers grants, mini-grants, loans, and tax credit assistance to property owners and developers seeking to preserve historic assets.