

CITY OF CANANDAIGUA

A GUIDE TO CANANDAIGUA'S HISTORIC ZONING ORDINANCE

Richard Brown, AICP
Director of Development & Planning
(585) 337-2180
Richard.Brown@CanandaiguaNewYork.gov

City Hall
2 North Main Street
Canandaigua, NY 14424
www.CanandaiguaNewYork.gov

Revised 2017

ESTABLISHMENT OF HISTORIC DISTRICTS

Beginning in 1975, the City of Canandaigua established local ordinances to safeguard the heritage of the City of Canandaigua by preserving districts and buildings in the City which reflect elements of its cultural, social, economic, political and architectural heritage. This ordinance is intended to:

- Stabilize and improve property values.
- Foster civic pride.
- Strengthen the local economy.
- Promote the use of historic districts, buildings and structures for the education, pleasure and welfare of the citizens of the City.

The Historic Zoning Ordinance regulates creates properties that fall within one of several overlay districts:

North Main Street
Central Business District
Gorham Street Gibson Street
Howell Street Park Place
Center Street Bemis Street
Bristol Street Brigham Hall
Boathouses

In addition, there are also another 30 separate “individually designated” structures that are regulated as historic properties.

Most of these districts have since been accepted to the New York State and National Register of Historic Places.

ALTERATIONS TO HISTORIC PROPERTIES

The City Planning Commission is responsible for reviewing proposed exterior **alterations** within the historic districts in to ensure that these districts retain their historical character.

“Alteration” here is defined as a change to the design, material, or outward appearance of a feature, when that alteration is visible from a public right-of way (i.e., city street or sidewalk).

Interior changes and exterior alterations not visible to the general public are not subject to review.

Repair work, or replacement “in kind”, is not considered an alteration. If you are in doubt as to whether a project requires approval, please call and ask.

Projects which need Planning Commission approval include, but are not limited to:

- New construction, additions, or demolition, including sheds and other accessory structures.
- Fences, walkways, and other “appurtenant fixtures”.
- Window replacements involving a change of material (e.g. vinyl or aluminum sashes)
- Siding and roofing, involving a change of material.
- Painting when it involves a change of color.
- Commercial signs and exterior light fixtures

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Property owners (or their contractors) should prepare an application detailing their proposal, complete with scaled drawing, photographs, product catalog cuts, and material and color samples, etc. Feel free to call the Director of Development & Planning to discuss a project or if you need assistance in preparing an application.

The Planning Commission regularly meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 7:00 pm.

Applications are due one week prior (i.e., the first Tuesday of the month).

There is no application fee.

The property owner, or their contractor, is expected to attend the meeting to answer questions and discuss the proposed project with the Planning Commission.

While precedents have developed over the years, each application is reviewed on a case-by-case basis. What is appropriate for one property, under a certain set of circumstances, may not be appropriate for another under different circumstances.

Most applications are concluded at a single meeting.

SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION

In accordance with local law, when reviewing applications, the City Planning Commission shall generally adhere to the "Secretary of The Interior's Standards For Rehabilitation" (a division of the National Parks Service). More detailed recommendations and guidelines can be found at:

<https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards.htm>

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.