

Historic Properties Guidelines

Purpose

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide for the protection and preservation of buildings and places of historic value and to promote the maintenance and restoration of design features which are compatible with the history and small-town character of Cornish.

1. Ensure that alterations to buildings and sites of historic value and other properties within the Historic District are appropriate and built in a manner compatible with historic character in terms of scale and visual effect.
2. Assure that new buildings adjacent to historic buildings and those within the Historic District are designed and built in a manner compatible with historic character in terms of scale and visual effect.
3. Provide a process which assures that material changes to contemporary buildings and new construction do not detract from adjacent historic buildings or the general historic character of the surrounding area.
4. Provide additional guidance for the enforcement of Section 2.8.10 - Historic Building in the Town of Cornish Land Use and Development Ordinance.

Definitions (these only apply in the Historic District)

Building: Any three-dimensional enclosure using any building materials or any space, for any use or occupancy, temporary or permanent, including swimming pools, foundations or pilings in the ground and all parts of any kind of structure above ground including but not limited to decks, railings, dormers and stairs.

Board: Cornish Planning Board

CEO: Code Enforcement Officer

Demolition: The permanent removal, dismantling or destruction of all or any portion of an existing building including the main structure, attached structures and accessory structures.

Elevation: Exterior qualities of a building including but not limited to windows, shutters, doors, trim, railings, roofing, chimneys, porches, light fixtures, visible foundation materials and steps.

Historic Easement: Any easement, restriction, covenant, or condition running with the land designed to preserve, maintain, or enhance all or part of the existing state of places of historic significance.

Historic Properties: Properties within the Historic District Overlay and other properties listed in Appendix A – HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND LOCATIONS (reference attachment).

Historical Properties Committee of Cornish: Resource available to the CEO, as well as the Board to support the evaluation of modifications to historic buildings and sites listed in Appendix A.

Material Changes: Modifications to the architectural style, general design, and general arrangement of the elevation of a building and/or structure including the type and texture of materials. This includes applicable fixtures and features such as lighting, railings, signs, walks, walls, fences, driveways, and parking areas.

Neighborhood Significance: Building or site which contributes to the creation of a physical setting representing an important period in the history of Cornish. This refers to buildings, features, open spaces and other natural and architectural features.

Preservation: Action(s) taken to maintain the current condition and/or to prevent deterioration

Reconstruction: The rebuilding, or constructing again, of a building or part of a building

Rehabilitation: The upgrading of a building previously in substandard condition for habitation or use

Restoration: The replication of a building's original architectural features

Visually Compatible: Be in harmony with historical and architectural setting and environment

Guidelines

A. Design of Structures and Sites

Existing buildings and sites as well as newly constructed or reconstructed buildings within the Historic District and those listed in Appendix A shall be visually compatible with buildings and properties to which they are visually related. The following factors will be considered when proposing new construction or alterations to buildings within the Historic District and those properties listed in Appendix A.

- Historical importance and dominance of structure and relationship to adjacent buildings and sites
- Scale
- Height
- Proportion and location of windows and doors
- Roof Shape
- Materials to be used for windows, doors, siding, walkways, fencing, and driveways
- Site features including the location of the building on the lot such as walks, walls, fences, signs, driveways, and parking area(s)

B. Material Changes to Elevations of Historic Buildings and Sites

Any material change to the elevation of a building, site or feature in the Historic District and any other building or site included in Appendix A, will require an application to be reviewed by the CEO and the Board.

Application review considerations will include:

1. The condition of the building or property and features as compared to original (as best as can be determined through resources and expertise) – to include physical condition and changes previously incorporated

2. The importance of building or site in Cornish's history – to include location, origination, function, or home of historic person(s) or place of significant historic event(s)
3. Visibility of changes to be made from sidewalks and street(s) or road(s)
4. Architectural, historical or neighborhood significance

C. Removal or Demolition

Any building or site included in Appendix A, or any component of the elevation thereof, shall only be moved, reconstructed, altered, or maintained in a manner that will preserve its historical significance. As with material changes, any alteration will require an application to be reviewed by the CEO and the Board.

Before any action is taken, should a property owner wish to demolish or remove all or any portion of a building included in Appendix A, they must abide by Section 2.8.10 HISTORIC BUILDINGS in the Town of Cornish Land Use and Development Ordinance before proceeding with plans.

Additional Resources

The U.S. Department of the Interior website has a great deal of information including Online Training for preserving and maintaining Historic Properties:

<https://www.doi.gov/library/internet/historic>

On the state level, see the Maine Historic Preservation Commission for information on Historic Resource Identification and Evaluation, Incentives and Technical Assistance and Education:

<https://www.maine.gov/mhpc/home>

Many cities and towns in Maine have Historic Property Guidelines which can be found on their respective websites.