

VILLAGE OF GREENPORT
236 THIRD STREET, GREENPORT, NEW YORK, 11944
631-477-0248, <https://villageofgreenport.org/>
Historic Preservation Commission (HPC)
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)



1. What is the purpose of the Greenport Historic District?

Chapter 76 of the Village of Greenport Code [<https://www.ecode360.com/10976458>] outlines procedures to (1) identify, preserve and enhance the landmarks and historic districts which represent distinctive elements of Greenport's historic, maritime, architectural and cultural heritage, (2) foster civic pride in the accomplishments of the past, (3) protect and enhance Greenport's attractiveness to residents and visitors, thereby supporting and stimulating the economy of the Village, (4) provide for architectural review to prevent such design and appearances as are incompatible with the historic or architectural characteristics of a landmark or historic district and (5) ensure the harmonious, orderly and efficient growth and development of the Village, consistent with its historic integrity.

The Greenport Village Historic District was added to the National Register of Historic Places on September 13, 1984. I.D. # 84002973.

<https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/index.htm>

2. Where may I find a map of the Greenport Historic District?

A map of the historic district may be found in an appendix of the *Guidelines for Applications for a Certificate of Appropriateness for Buildings in the Greenport Historic District* and on the Village website at <http://villageofgreenport.org/files/Zoning-Map-06-29-09-D-size.pdf>

3. What are the boundaries of the Greenport Historic District?

The Greenport Village Historic District consists of a dense concentration of (primarily wood frame) residential and commercial structures radiating out in a fan shape from the village's Main Street waterfront business district (on the south). This large district comprises Greenport's historic eighteenth-century core and surrounding areas of nineteenth and early twentieth century development.

4. What is the significance of Greenport’s Historic District?¹

The Greenport Village Historic encompasses most of the older commercial and residential core of Greenport and contains a large, dense collection of largely unchanged structures which date from circa 1750 to the 1930’s. Included within the Greenport Village Historic District are the remnants of Greenport’s early settlement, the most intact section of the village’s waterfront business district, and the large residential areas which spread out around Main Street. Various architectural types and styles are represented in the district beginning with simple eighteenth and nineteenth century settlement houses, a large representative mixture of mid-to-late nineteenth century residential design, a small Main Street commercial district, and architecturally distinctive churches and institutional buildings.

The buildings included in the Greenport Village Historic District exemplify Greenport’s growth and development from its pre-Revolutionary agrarian beginning through the heyday of its shipyards and whaling industry to the late nineteenth and twentieth century role of the village as a transportation and supply center and vibrant ship-building, fishing and oystering port.

5. How large is the Greenport Historic District?

There are 264 buildings within the 80-acre Greenport Village Historic District, with 254 contributing historic structures and 10 non-contributing structures.

6. Where may I find more information about the preservation of historic buildings in Greenport?

Chapter 76. Preservation of Historic Areas in the Village of Greenport, NY code, available on the Village website, [<https://www.ecode360.com/10976458>] provides detail about historic preservation in Greenport. *Guidelines for Applications for a Certificate of Appropriateness for Buildings in the Greenport Historic District* should also be consulted for a summary of the process as well as for a checklist to assist applicants in preparing for an HPC review.

7. What is the process for new construction or renovations to property in the Greenport Historic District?

Owners must complete an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness which may be obtained at Village Hall or on the Village website [<http://villageofgreenport.org/building-department-forms/HPC1-Historic-Preservation.pdf>] for an architectural review to ensure that the proposed design and appearance are not incompatible with the historic or architectural characteristics of a landmark or historic district. Where a building permit is required, a Certificate of Appropriateness must be obtained prior to carrying out any exterior alterations, restoration, reconstruction, demolition, new construction or moving of a landmark or property within the historic district.

8. What is a Certificate of Appropriateness?

¹ Content taken from Austin O’Brien, New York State Division for Historic Preservation, Greenport Village Historic District, nomination document, 1984, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, Washington, D.C.

A Certificate of Appropriateness is a certificate issued by the Greenport Historic Preservation Commission authorizing an alteration, construction, removal or demolition of a landmark or of a structure within the Historic District.

9. What parts of a property are subject to review by the Historic Preservation Commission?

The architectural character and general composition of the **exterior of a structure**, including but not limited to the kind, color and texture of the building material and the type, design and character of all windows, doors, light fixtures, signs and appurtenant elements are subject to review by the Historic Preservation Commission. Both the streetscape and areas of the property that are not visible from the street are subject to review.

10. What are the steps for obtaining a Certificate of Appropriateness?

Please consult the *Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) Certificate of Appropriateness Application Checklist*, available at Village Hall or on the Village website [<http://villageofgreenport.org/hpc-forms-applications/HPC-Application-Checklist.pdf>], for an overview of the Historic Preservation Commission application process, and the materials required for each step. In brief, a completed application and supporting materials must be submitted to Village Hall two weeks prior to attendance at a meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission during which the application will be reviewed. After review, the members of the Historic Preservation Commission may approve the application and issue a Certificate of Appropriateness or request additional information prior to voting on the application.

11. Must applicants attend the Historic Preservation Commission meeting at which their application is reviewed?

Applicants should plan to attend or have a representative attend the Historic Preservation Commission meeting at which the application is considered to describe the project, provide samples of proposed materials and answer Board Members' questions. Attendance is highly recommended to facilitate the review process; the application may be deferred to a future meeting if the applicant is not available and no alternative arrangements are made with Village Hall.

12. Who may attend meetings of the Historic Preservation Commission?

Applicants, representatives of applicants and members of the public may attend meetings of the Historic Preservation Commission.

13. What types of information/materials must be included in an application for a Historic Preservation Commission review?

Please refer to the *Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) Certificate of Appropriateness Application Checklist* available at Village Hall and on the Village website [<http://villageofgreenport.org/hpc-forms-applications/HPC-Application-Checklist.pdf>]. In summary:

- a. a completed application and the appropriate fees are required
- b. along with a Building Permit, if the proposal requires a permit,
- c. a site plan, photos of adjacent properties to illustrate that the proposed renovations/construction are compatible with the historic or architectural characteristics of the historic district,

- d. details about the proposed materials including specifications, photos and **actual samples of the materials.**

Applications may be prepared by the owner, an architect or contractor.

14. What are the criteria used to approve applications for a Certificate of Appropriateness?

Several principles guide approval decisions:

- a. Properties which contribute to the character of the historic district shall be retained, with their historic features altered as little as possible.
- b. Any alteration of an existing property shall be compatible with its historic character or with the character of the surrounding historic district.
- c. New construction shall be compatible with the historic district in which it is located.

15. What types of building materials are typically approved by the Historic Preservation Commission?

Plans for renovation or new construction are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Whenever possible, property owners are urged to retain or restore original features of the property using original materials. For recommendations regarding materials that are “Recommended” and those that may “Not be Recommended,” please consult the *Guidelines for Applications for a Certificate of Appropriateness for Buildings in the Greenport Historic District* available at Village Hall and on the Village website [<http://villageofgreenport.org/hpc-forms-applications/HPC-Guidelines-Updated.pdf>].

16. How long does the application review process generally take before a Certificate of Appropriateness is approved?

Typically, applications are acted on within 30 days from the receipt of a completed application although the process may take longer if the application is incomplete or if Board members determine that additional information is required in order to complete their review. For applications involving major alterations, the Commission may hold a public hearing to provide the opportunity for the public to present their views on the project. If a public hearing is held, the Commission will approve, deny or approve with modifications the application for a certificate of appropriateness within 30 days from the date of the public hearing.

17. How does an application get on the agenda of a Historic Preservation Commission meeting?

Applications must be complete and submitted to Village Hall at least **two weeks prior** to the next scheduled HPC meeting. The Clerk to the Boards will notify the applicant of the date and time of the meeting at which their application will be reviewed by the Commission.

18. May an owner start work on a repair, renovation or new construction prior to going before the Historic Preservation Commission for a review?

No, a Certificate of Appropriateness is necessary before repairs, renovations or new construction takes place on the exterior of a property in the historic district. A Building Permit may also be required depending upon the nature and extent of the work.

19. What happens if a small repair turns into a major renovation once work has already begun?

If major renovations or repairs prove to be necessary, the work should be suspended and an application for a review of the planned work must be submitted to the Historic Preservation Commission.

20. What if applicants believe that the conditions imposed by the Historic Preservation Commission result in economic hardship?

Applicants may apply for a certificate of economic hardship for the purpose of obtaining relief from the strict application of Chapter 76 on the grounds of economic hardship

[\[https://www.ecode360.com/10976458\]](https://www.ecode360.com/10976458).

21. How often, when and where does the Historic Preservation Commission meet?

The Commission meets monthly at 5 pm, generally on the third Thursday of the month at the Third Street Firehouse, Greenport, NY. Applicants are urged to contact the Clerk to the Boards at Village Hall for information about the date and time of a specific meeting.

22. Who are the members of the Historic Preservation Commission?

The Commission is comprised of five residents of the Village of Greenport who have been appointed by the Mayor and approved by the Village Board of Trustees.

23. Are owners of homes in the historic district eligible for tax credits?

Owners of historic commercial, office, industrial or rental residential buildings may qualify for a tax credit as per The Tax Reform Act of 1986. Information is available at <https://parks.ny.gov/shpo/tax-credit-programs/frequently-asked-questions.aspx> Suffolk County also provides for tax exemptions under specific conditions, to the extent of any increase in value is attributable to such alteration or rehabilitation. Specific information is available at <https://ecode360.com/14955520>

24. Whom do I contact if I have any questions about whether I need to go before the Historic Preservation Commission or about the review process?

The contact is the Clerk to the Boards, 236 Third Street, Greenport, New York, 11944, 631-477-0248.