

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION REGULATIONS



Formally adopted on October 19, 2011

Last updated on October 3, 2018

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Sec. I Authority

These regulations are adopted under authority granted in Chapter 18, Article V – Historic Districts of the City of Keene Code of Ordinances and in accordance with RSA 674:45, RSA 673:1 and RSA 674:46-a.

Sec. II Applicability

All applications for a Certificate of Appropriateness as required in Keene City Code Sec. 18-359, et seq. shall be subject to these regulations. All application and review procedures related to Certificates of Appropriateness shall be followed by the applicant and the Historic District Commission.

Sec. III Pre application Conference/Project Classification

An applicant proposing any activity set forth in Section 102-360 or 102-361 shall meet with the Planning Director or his/her designee prior to commencing work and/or submitting an application for activities subject to a Certificate of Appropriateness. The Planning Director or his/her designee shall evaluate the proposal and classify the project according to these regulations. Except as listed in Section III A. below, projects shall be classified as follows within 5 business days of the date of the Pre-application conference:

A. Work not visible from a public street or public place

Any work or alteration to an existing building, structure or site that is not visible from a public street, way, park or other public place shall not require the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness. A determination that a proposed project is not visible shall be made by the Planning Director or his/her designee and such determination shall be provided to the applicant within two (2) business days. It shall be the sole responsibility of the applicant to demonstrate that no part of the proposed work is visible from the locations listed in this section. An application for a classification under this section must be made in writing and must be accompanied by photographs, drawings or plans that provide adequate detail to allow the Planning Director to make an informed determination. The Planning Director may request additional information if necessary.

B. Ordinary maintenance and repair.

Ordinary maintenance and repair is defined as any work, the sole purpose and effect of which is to prevent or correct deterioration, decay or damage, including repair of damage caused by fire or other disaster and which does not result in a change to the historic appearance and materials, or alter the character defining features of the building, structure or property. Ordinary maintenance and repair shall not require issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness

- 1) A COA is not required for removal of trees of any size that are dead or diseased, or have otherwise been recommended for removal for safety reasons, as determined by a professional arborist or other qualified professional and documentation of the recommendations has been submitted to the Planning Department.

C. Minor Projects.

Minor Projects shall require a Certificate of Appropriateness issued by the Planning Director or his/her designee according to these regulations. A Minor project is defined as any work including alteration or modification to one or more of the following items:

- 1) Installation of or changes to light fixtures that do not alter character defining features.
- 2) Replacement of less than 25% of existing exterior siding and/or trim when there is no change in general appearance.
- 3) Repair or repointing of masonry when there is no change in materials or general appearance.
- 4) Replacement of existing windows and doors or the installation of two or less windows or doors (during the course of one calendar year beginning with the date approval) in former or existing openings on buildings structures, or sites designated as Non-Contributing or Incompatible Resources.
- 5) Installation of prefabricated accessory buildings or structures on or at buildings structures, or sites designated as Non-Contributing or Incompatible Resources.
- 6) Installation of dumpster, dumpster enclosure or dumpster pad on or at buildings structures, or sites designated as Non-Contributing or Incompatible Resources.
- 7) Installation of satellite dishes or telecommunications facilities on or at buildings structures, or sites designated as Non-Contributing or Incompatible Resources.
- 8) Installation of fences.
- 9) Installation of HVAC and other mechanical equipment.
- 10) Extensions to the expiration date of Certificates of Appropriateness where there is no change in project scope or specifications.
- 11) Replacement of two or less windows or doors during the course of one calendar year (beginning with the date of approval) on buildings, structures or sites designated as Primary or Contributing Resources.
- 12) Removal of non-historic elements that are determined to conceal character-defining features.

D. Major Project.

Major Projects shall require a Certificate of Appropriateness issued by the Historic District Commission according to these regulations. A Major project is defined as any work including alteration or modification to one or more of the following items:

- 1) Additions to a building or structure.
- 2) Construction of a new building or structure.
- 3) Renovation, rehabilitation or restoration of a building or structure.
- 4) Removal, relocation or demolition of an existing building or structure.
- 5) Replacement of exterior masonry walls
- 6) Replacement of more than two windows or doors during the course of one calendar year on buildings, structures, and sites designated as Primary or Contributing Resources or the installation of more than two windows or doors in former or existing openings on buildings, structures or sites designated as Non-Contributing or Incompatible Resources.
- 7) Changes to exterior materials other than those classified as minor projects
- 8) Alterations to storefronts
- 9) Installation of prefabricated accessory buildings or structures on or at buildings, structures, and sites designated as Primary or Contributing Resources.

- 10) Installation of dumpster, dumpster enclosure or dumpster pad on or at buildings, structures, and sites designated as Primary or Contributing Resources.
- 11) Installation of satellite dishes or telecommunications facilities on or at buildings structures, or sites designated as Primary or Contributing Resources.
- 12) Painting of a previously unpainted brick or stone masonry building or structure
- 13) Installation of new paving
- 14) Chemical or physical treatment to the exterior of a building or structure
- 15) Changes to grading
- 16) Removal of trees in excess of 15 inches in diameter at a trunk height of four (4) feet above grade
- 17) Installation of decks, patios or pools
- 18) Creation of new openings for windows or doors.
- 19) Installation of renewable energy systems.

Projects that meet the threshold criteria above may be considered to be minor projects if proposed on properties designated as Non-Contributing or Incompatible and the Planning Director determines that such a project does not warrant review and approval by the Historic District Commission. If found in compliance with the City's codes and these regulations, these projects shall be administratively reviewed and approved by the Planning Director. The Planning Director or his designee shall keep the Board informed of administratively approved projects every three months.

The Board relies upon the professional judgment of the Planning Director to determine whether a proposed project meets the threshold criteria set forth above and must therefore be reviewed by the HDC. There are four possibilities for projects reviewed administratively by the Planning Director: approval, approval with conditions, denial, or the recommendation that the project be reviewed by the HDC in accordance with Section VIII: Major Project Review and Action by HDC.

Any applicant who disagrees with the decision of the Planning Director with respect to the administrative review of a project may appeal the decision by applying for major project review and approval by the HDC in accordance with Section VIII.

Sec. IV Minor Projects

A. If in the judgment of the Planning Director or his/her designee the proposed Minor Project is consistent with the review criteria in Sec. 18-362 and 18-363 and with these regulations and standards, the Planning Director shall:

- 1) Approve the Minor Project; or
- 2) Approve the Minor Project with conditions

B. If in the judgment of the Planning Director or his/her designee the proposed Minor Project is not consistent with all applicable standards and regulations or is of a precedent setting nature, the Planning Director shall, after consultation with the applicant, refer the application to the Historic District Commission for review and action as a Major Project. Any applicant aggrieved by a decision of the Planning Director regarding a Minor Project application may request that the application be referred to the Historic District Commission for review as a Major Project.

C. All decisions shall be in writing and shall be issued within 45 days of the filing of a complete Minor Project application.

D. Upon approval of minor project, a Certificate of Appropriateness shall be issued to the applicant, and a copy filed at the Planning Department and Code Enforcement Department. No construction or demolition shall commence, whether or not a building permit is required, nor shall a building permit be issued prior to the issuance of a COA.

Sec. V Minor Project Application Procedures

A. Filing of Application

Application forms can be obtained from the Keene Planning Department and on the City of Keene Website. When completed, the application and all required information shall be filed with the Keene Planning Department.

B. Fees.

Fees as established by the City of Keene shall be due and payable at the time the application is filed with the Planning Department.

C. Information Required

A Minor Project application for a Certificate of Appropriateness shall include the following information:

- 1) A completed application form (2 copies).
- 2) Narrative description of the activity requiring a COA (2 copies).
- 3) Fees.
- 4) 3 sets of site plans at a maximum scale of 1"=50' depicting existing conditions and all proposed changes and including but not limited to landscaping, accessory buildings, and the footprints of buildings on abutting properties directly adjacent to the site.
- 5) 3 sets of building elevations at a scale of ¼"=1' or better of each building façade proposed for alteration showing:
 - all proposed changes to the exterior of the structure.

- accurate dimensions of architectural details, e.g. (windows, doors, entries, molding, trim, decks).
 - any portions of the structure proposed for demolition or removal.
- 6) Cut sheets of building materials (e.g., siding, roofing trim).
 - 7) Cut sheets and/or specifications for windows and doors.
 - 8) Cut sheets and/or specifications for exterior lighting fixtures.
 - 9) Cut sheets and/or specifications for cleaning products.
 - 10) Samples of mortar and/or brick for projects proposing new or replacement mortar and/or brick.
 - 11) Photographs, renderings, and/or line sketches of neighboring structures which show scale and massing.
 - 12) Additional information as may be required by the Planning Director.
- d) Submittal of items listed above may not be required depending on the nature and scope of the projects and may be omitted from an application for a Minor Project with the approval of the Planning Director.

Sec. VI Major Projects

All applications for a Major Project shall require a Certificate of Appropriateness issued by the Historic District Commission according to these regulations.

Sec. VII Major Project Application Procedures

A. Pre-application Conference.

A pre-application conference is required prior to submitting a Major Project application. Applicants shall meet with the Keene Planning Department and/or Keene Code Enforcement Department prior to submitting an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to determine what information is required to be submitted and to obtain the appropriate regulations and guidelines.

B. Filing of Application.

Application forms can be obtained from the Keene Planning Department and on the City of Keene website. When completed, the application and all required information shall be filed with the Keene Planning Department. Completed applications must be filed 14 days prior to the next scheduled meeting of the Historic District Commission. Late applications shall not be accepted.

C. Fees.

Major Project fees as established by the City of Keene shall be due and payable at the time the application is filed with the Planning Department.

D. Information Required.

Each application for a Certificate of Appropriateness shall include the following information:

- 1) A completed application form (2 copies)
- 2) Narrative description of the activity requiring a COA (2 copies)
- 3) Fees
- 4) A list of all abutters including name, address and tax map number signed by the applicant and notarized with a date within 60 days of application deadline.

- 5) 2 sets of mailing labels for all abutters
- 6) As appropriate, copies of any Zoning Board of Adjustment action undertaken as part of this Application
- 7) 3 sets of site plans at a maximum scale of 1"=50' or better depicting existing conditions and all proposed changes and including but not limited to landscaping, accessory buildings, and the footprints of buildings and site features on abutting properties directly adjacent to the site.
- 8) 3 sets of building elevations at a scale of 1/4" = 1' or better of each building façade proposed for alteration showing:
 - all proposed changes to the exterior of the structure
 - accurate dimensions of architectural details, e.g. (windows, doors, entries, molding, trim, decks)
 - any portions of the structure proposed for demolition or removal
- 9) Cut sheets or specifications of building materials (e.g., siding, roofing trim)
- 10) Cut sheets and/or specifications for windows and doors.
- 11) Cut sheets and/or specifications for exterior lighting fixtures.
- 12) Cut sheets and/or specifications for cleaning products.
- 13) Samples of mortar and/or brick for projects proposing new or replacement mortar and/or brick.
- 14) Photographs, renderings, and/or line sketches of neighboring structures which show scale and massing
- 15) Additional information as may be required by the Historic District Commission

E. Completeness

- 1) Upon the filing of an application for a COA the Planning Department shall review the application to determine if it is complete. If the application is determined to be complete by staff, it shall be scheduled for review at the next scheduled HDC meeting.
- 2) If an application is determined by staff to be incomplete, the Planning Department will work with the applicant to revise the application in a manner to allow a staff recommendation of completeness. Incomplete applications shall not be scheduled for review by the HDC.
- 3) An exemption from providing specific information required in Section d) above may be requested in writing at the time of submission. Such request shall be made to the Planning Director who may issue a provisional exemption upon a recommendation that the specific information is not relevant to the Historic District Commission's evaluation of whether the application complies with all applicable regulations and standards for the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness. During its review of completeness of an application, the Historic District shall review the request for exemption and the recommendation of the Planning Director and shall vote whether to confirm or reject the provisional exemption. If a request for exemption is rejected by the Historic District Commission, the applicant shall submit all required material according to Section D above.

Sec. VIII Major Project Review and Action by HDC

A. Public Notification.

Upon a determination that the application is complete, the Planning Department will schedule a public hearing at the next scheduled HDC meeting and provide notice of such hearing in accordance with Sec. 18-364.

B. Staff Review.

The Planning Department will work with the applicant to improve the application, to coordinate with other city departments and state agencies as necessary, arrange a site visit for the HDC (as needed), and submit a staff report to the HDC prior to the public hearing.

C. Site Visit.

The HDC may hold a site visit, notice of which shall be provided to the applicant at least 48 hours in advance of the scheduled date of the site visit.

D. HDC Completeness Review.

- 1) At the meeting to consider an application, the HDC shall determine whether or not the application is complete and shall vote to accept or reject the application accordingly. If the application is incomplete, staff shall notify the applicant according to RSA 676:3 and shall specify what would be required to make the application complete. If the application is complete, the HDC may, but need not, begin formal consideration of the application at the same meeting.
- 2) The HDC shall only consider a completed application. A completed application means that, in the discretion of the HDC, sufficient information is included or submitted to allow the HDC to make an informed decision.

E. Public Hearing.

The HDC shall hold a public hearing on an accepted application with notice as required in Section 18-364 and in accordance with RSA 676:7. A public hearing on an application for a COA may be continued from meeting to meeting as needed.

- 1) For demolitions, applicants shall post a sign identifying the structure as proposed for demolition in a visible location on the premises at least ten (10) days prior to the hearing. The sign is available from the Planning Department and needs to be returned prior to an issuance of a Demolition Permit.

F. Special Reviews and Studies.

If during the HDC's formal consideration of an application, the HDC determines that additional information is necessary to make a fully informed decision, it may request that the applicant provide such information or may hire a professional consultant with all expenses paid by the applicant.

G. Burden of Proof.

It shall be the sole responsibility of the applicant to demonstrate that its application satisfies all standards of review within the Historic District Commission Regulations, and Historic District Ordinance.

H. HDC Action.

- 1) The HDC shall act to approve, conditionally approve, or disapprove an application for a COA within 45 days of the date an application is deemed complete by the HDC, unless the applicant agrees in writing to a longer time period.
- 2) In making a determination to approve, approve with conditions, or disapprove an application for a COA, the HDC shall take under consideration the Review Criteria in Sec. 18-362 and 18-363, and the regulations and standards established in this document. Sec.18-365]
- 3) In a case of disapproval, the grounds for disapproval shall be adequately stated in a written notice of disapproval and provided to the applicant. No building permit shall be issued for an application which is disapproved by the HDC. Applicants whose application has been disapproved may make modifications to the disapproved plans and may submit a new application for consideration by the HDC which shall review the new submittal without prejudice.
- 4) Upon approval of an application by the HDC, a Certificate of Appropriateness shall be issued to the applicant, and a copy filed at the Planning Department and Code Enforcement Department. No construction or demolition shall commence, whether or not a building permit is required, nor shall a building permit be issued prior to the issuance of a COA.

Sec. IX Duration of Certificates of Appropriateness

A COA shall be valid for either:

- A. the duration of an active building permit issued for construction associated with the COA or;
- B. If no building permit is issued, the approval is valid for one year from the date the COA is issued

Extensions to the duration of a Certificate of Appropriateness may be granted by the Planning Director. No extension shall be granted for a period greater than one year from the current expiration date. No more than two consecutive extensions shall be granted. The Planning Director may refer the request for extension of the duration of a Certificate of Appropriateness to the Historic District Commission if in his/her judgment the extension is not consistent with all applicable standards and regulations.

C. Modifications to Approved Projects

Modifications to approved Major Projects whose work has not been completed shall require approval of the HDC. Modifications to approved Minor Projects whose work has not been completed shall require approval of the Planning Director. Any new changes to work that has been completed shall be treated as a new project and require a separate application.

Sec. X Waivers

In a case where:

- A. Strict application of these regulations would result in a particular and exceptional difficulty or undue hardship upon the owner of the affected property; and
- B. An alternative design or materials meets the design objectives stated in these regulations and in the Historic District Ordinance equally well or better than would strict compliance with these regulations; and
- C. The waiver may be granted without substantial detriment to the intent of these regulations and the Historic District Ordinance, and the public good.

The HDC may waive strict compliance with these regulations where the HDC has determined that the above criteria have been met. To request a waiver an applicant must submit a request in writing and cite the specific regulation or standard and the reason(s) it can not be met.

Sec XI Appeals

Any persons aggrieved by a decision of the HDC shall have the right to appeal that decision according to Section 18-366.

Sec. XII Enforcement and Penalties

These regulations shall be enforced under the authority of RSA 676 and such other authority as may be available.

Sec. XIII Severability

If any of the provisions set forth in these regulations are held to be invalid, for any reason, by a Court of Law, such holding shall not invalidate other provisions contained herein.

Sec. XIV Emergency Repairs

In the event that a building, structure or site is damaged in a manner that creates unsafe conditions, efforts to stabilize the situation should be taken immediately to prevent additional damage or injury. At the earliest possible time, the property owner or affected party shall apply, as necessary, for a Certificate of Appropriateness for any work that has been done or will be done to permanently correct the situation.

Sec. XV Design Standards

A. Streetscape and Building Site

1. Trees, Landscaping and Site Work

a) Background

Many sites within the Downtown Historic District are favored with substantial landscaping, shade trees, ground covers, hedges and other border plantings. Canopies of mature trees line most streets and provide one of the most appreciated characteristics of Keene's historic district. Large trees, such as oak and elm trees, provide shade that protects roofing materials and promotes energy efficiency. Trees serve as windbreakers visual screens, and add beauty. The preservation of Keene's mature tree canopy is of special concern to the Historic District Commission, and an application to remove mature trees will be scrutinized.

b) Design Standards

- 1) Trees that contribute to the character of the historic district and that exceed 15” in diameter at a height of 4’ above grade shall be retained, unless removal of such tree(s) is necessary for safety reasons as determined by a professional arborist or other qualified professional.
- 2) Grading or changes to the site’s existing topography shall not be allowed if existing mature trees might be negatively impacted by altered drainage and soil conditions.
- 3) During construction, paving and any site work, existing mature trees must be protected.

c) Design Guidelines

d) Projects that do not require a COA

- 1) Pruning of trees or clearing of overgrown bushes, vines, saplings and similar vegetation for normal maintenance purposes
- 2) Planting new trees, shrubs, ground cover and other plants
- 3) Planting hedges or flower, vegetable and rock gardens
- 4) Installing flower pots, planters, window boxes, birdbaths, birdhouses and similarly scaled projects
- 5) Landscaping or site work that does not alter the grade or require changes to the topography
- 6) Removal of dead or diseased trees in accordance with Section III.B.1

2. Fences, Walls, Posts and Site Features

a) Background

Fences, walls and posts are important components of an historic setting and are found on many lots within the historic district where there are former residences. Front and side yards are often delineated with low granite walls. Sometimes, the front yard was set off from the sidewalk with a low cast iron or wood picket fence with split granite support posts. Few of these fences survive today, although the posts often remain. Some of the more architecturally sophisticated houses have dressed granite posts at the entrance to the driveway and walkways. Granite mounting blocks survive on a few sites.

b) Design Standards

- 1) Historic fences, walls, posts and granite site features, including but not limited to mounting blocks, shall not be removed from the site on which they are located, and every effort shall be made to leave them undisturbed.
- 2) New fences or walls shall be simple in design and shall complement the materials and design of the building(s) on the site and the character of the site itself. Fences and walls along the street frontage shall be no higher than four feet, unless it can be documented that a higher fence existed historically.

c) Design Guidelines

- 1) Applicants are encouraged to refer to historic photographs of the site or surrounding area for appropriate designs and materials.

d) Projects that do not require COA

- 1) Repairs to existing fences, walls or other site features that do not involve a change in the design, dimensions or materials
- 2) Installing benches and other outdoor furniture, sculptures and other outdoor artwork, trellises and surface patios that do not disturb any historic site features

3. Lighting

a) Background

Lighting on residential properties was historically limited to fixtures mounted on porch ceilings or adjacent to entrances. Several of the commercial and industrial buildings retain historic lighting fixtures, often mounted near a main entrance.

The selection and placement of exterior lighting can dramatically affect the character of the historic district. Since most of the buildings are closely spaced, lighting on one property can easily impact neighboring properties. In most instances, lighting that is mounted at a low height on a dark-colored pole and provides low or moderate intensity illumination is appropriate.

b) Design Standards

- 1) Lighting fixtures and poles shall be compatible in scale, design and materials with both the individual and surrounding properties.
- 2) Only full cut-off fixtures shall be used.
- 3) The location, level and direction of lighting shall be appropriate for the character of the area in which it is situated.

c) Design Guidelines

d) Projects that do not require COA

- 1) Porch light fixtures
- 2) Lamp posts that are less than eight feet in height
- 3) Landscape lighting that has a low-level projection
- 4) Motion lights and spotlights in rear yards
- 5) Christmas or other holiday lighting

4. Walkways, Driveways, Alleys, and Parking Areas

a) Background

Within the areas of the district that are currently or were formerly residential, driveways and curb cuts are generally narrow in width and lead directly to a rear parking area, barn, carriage house or garage. Walkways tend to be brick, asphalt or concrete, sometimes with granite or marble inset slabs, and lead directly from the public sidewalk to the front steps of the house. Traditionally, parking areas were limited to the rear of the building, close to the barn, carriage house or garage. As residences have been converted to commercial use, parking has sometimes moved forward to disturb the side or front yards.

Within the commercial and industrial areas of the district, parking was traditionally placed to the rear of buildings and accessed via service drives or alleyways.

b) Design Standards

- 1) Every effort shall be made to retain the location and configuration of historic driveways, walkways and alleys, as well as their historic materials, if granite, marble or brick.

- 2) New driveways on sites with residences or converted residences shall lead directly to the parking area, and new walkways shall lead directly to the front steps of the house, unless it can be documented that a different pattern existed historically.
- 3) Curb cuts for driveways on sites with residences or converted residences shall be the width of a single travel lane.
- 4) New onsite parking, if required, shall be unobtrusive, with appropriate screening and landscaping, and shall preserve any character-defining features of the site. Grading shall not dramatically alter the topography of the site or increase water runoff onto adjoining properties.
- 5) Where appropriate, parking and access drives shall be shared, in order to reduce the amount of paved surface.
- 6) For new construction, and on sites with residences or converted residences, every effort shall be made to locate parking behind the building(s). Parking shall be located to the rear of the backline of the building or the backline of the main block of the building, as applicable.

c) Design Guidelines

d) Projects that do not require COA

- 1) Replacing, repairing or resurfacing a driveway or walkway as long as such work does not result in a change in material or expansion of the existing.

5. Utility, Service and Mechanical Equipment

a) Background

Though seldom present historically, provisions nevertheless need to be made to incorporate modern utility, service and mechanical systems and equipment into historic buildings and sites. However, if not carefully planned, the placement of such items can diminish the character of properties.

b) Design Standards

- 1) On commercial and industrial buildings, mechanical equipment, such as compressor units, shall be set back on the roof of the building, so as to be minimally visible, or ground-mounted toward the rear of the building, with appropriate screening or landscaping to minimize visibility.
- 2) Every effort shall be made to position heating and air-conditioning equipment, fire alarm panels, telecommunications equipment, satellite dishes, and free-standing antennas and other equipment as low to the ground as possible, and where they are not readily visible from the public right-of-way.
- 3) New mechanical supply lines, pipes and ductwork shall be placed in inconspicuous locations and/or concealed with architectural elements, such as downspouts.
- 4) Bulk waste containers and waste storage containers shall be located – and appropriately screened—so as to be as inconspicuous as possible from the public right-of-way and adjacent buildings in residential use. In addition:
 - Bulk waste and waste storage containers shall be located in rear or side yards and shall be to the rear of the front line of any building;

- Screening shall be required if any portion of the bulk waste or waste storage container is visible from the public way;
 - Screening shall consist of a solid wall or fence and a gate. Screening shall be a minimum of six (6) feet in height or a height equal to the height of the waste container if the container height is greater than six (6) feet;
 - Screening shall be of a material, color, size, and pattern compatible with the building(s) or structure(s) on the site;
 - Chain link fence or chain link fence with interwoven slats shall not be acceptable screening.
- 5) Walls on front or street-facing facades shall not be penetrated for vent openings larger than seventy (70) square inches. Vent caps shall not be larger than two-hundred (200) square inches.
 - 6) On commercial and industrial buildings, satellite dishes and antennas shall be located on the roof, as close to the center as possible, so as to be invisible from the street.

c) Design Guidelines

- 1) Where possible, bulk waste containers should be located to the rear of existing buildings and where containers are screened from view by existing buildings

d) Projects that do not require COA

- 1) New telephone, cable and other telecommunications equipment on existing utility poles
- 2) Gas, electric, telephone or other utility meters, if they are not located on the front or street-facing façade of a building
- 3) Roof antennas or satellite dishes that are less than 24 inches in diameter
- 4) Air-conditioning window units
- 5) New wall vent openings and caps that are less than sixteen (16) square inches regardless of their placement.

6. Paint Colors

a) Background

While paint colors are neither regulated nor subject to HDC review, the HDC is available to offer assistance and advice in the choice of colors for painting buildings, storefronts and other details. Parties interested in promoting the spirit and intent of the district are encouraged to come before the HDC for informal guidance in the selection of historically-appropriate colors or details.

b) Design Standards

c) Design Guidelines

- 1) Colors should be consistent with that of the balance of the district and should be presented in a conventional manner.
- 2) Unconventional colors or color combinations are discouraged.

d) Projects that do not require COA

- 1) All painting unless the surface is an unpainted masonry surface or involves repainting or covering a painted advertisement, sign or artwork that exists on a masonry surface.

7. Renewable Energy Systems

a) Background

While renewable energy systems were not historically present within the Downtown Historic District, the HDC recognizes that modern technologies can allow for significant improvements to historic properties without compromising the historic value of the structure or site. When planning the installation of a renewable energy system, the overall objective is to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment while accommodating system siting requirements for energy production.

In general, all renewable energy installations should be sited in the least visible location possible, be reversible so that the system can be removed without permanent damage to the structure or resource, and should not alter or obscure character-defining features of historic structures. Property owners are encouraged to consult with the HDC early on in the process of considering the installation of a renewable energy system to identify opportunities and constraints for locating these systems on individual properties.

b) Design Standards

- 1) The renewable energy system (hereafter “system”) shall be installed in a location and manner on the building or lot that is least visible and obtrusive and in such a way that causes the least impact to the historic integrity and character of the historic building, structure, site or district while maintaining efficient operation of the system. The order of preference for the system location is as follows:
 - A. The rear or side of the property not facing a public right-of-way;
 - B. On accessory buildings or structures (such as sheds and garages) in a location that is least visible from the public right-of-way;
 - C. On newer additions to the primary structure in a location that is least visible from the public right-of-way;
 - D. On the flat roof of the primary structure, set back so as to be in the least visible location;
 - E. On secondary façades or roofs (i.e. not facing the public way) of the primary structure; and
 - F. On facades or roofs facing the public way. An applicant is required to prove the higher priority locations are not feasible in order for the HDC to approve system installations on more significant parts of the site.
- 2) The system must be installed in such a manner that it can be removed and not damage the historic building, structure, or site it is associated with.
- 3) In order to minimize visual impacts, colors of equipment and assemblies shall either be muted or shall match nearby materials and colors. The solar panels should be positioned to minimize glare onto neighboring properties.
- 4) Roof mounted solar photovoltaic systems on pitched roofs shall be on the same plane as the roof and positioned so as to be in the least visible location.
- 5) Solar array grids should be regular in shape and jointed. Multi-roof solutions should be avoided.
- 6) All supplementary equipment and supply lines shall be placed in inconspicuous locations and/or concealed from view with architectural elements (e.g. downspouts) or other screening.

c) Design Guidelines

- 1) **Minimal Intervention** – Installation of systems should adhere to the principle of Minimal Intervention which states that the less change or alteration done to a historic resource, the greater the integrity that resource retains.

- 2) Reversibility – Installation of systems should be done using the principle of Reversibility which states that nothing should be done to the historic fabric of a structure that cannot be undone or reversed without permanent damage to that historic resource.
 - 3) The least visible application of technologies and their supplementary equipment is recommended.
- d) Projects that do not require COA
- 1) Installations in locations not visible from a public street or public place.

B. Building Rehabilitation: Primary and Contributing Resources

1. General Standards

a) Design Standards

- 1) Each building or structure shall be recognized as a physical and cultural record of its time, place and use.
- 2) The historic character of a building or structure shall be retained and preserved.
- 3) The removal of historic materials or alteration of features that characterize a building or structure shall be avoided.
- 4) Deteriorated historic features significant to the building or structure shall be repaired, rather than replaced. If replacement is necessary due to extreme deterioration, the new feature shall match the historic in size, design, texture, color and, where possible, materials. The new feature shall maintain the same visual appearance as the historic feature.
- 5) All architectural changes shall be appropriate either to the original style or appearance of the building or structure (if it has not been significantly altered) or to its altered style or appearance (if it has been altered within the Period of Significance and those alterations have attained significance).
- 6) Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical or pictorial evidence.

2. Masonry (walls and architectural trim)

a) Background

The vast majority of the historic buildings in the Historic District – commercial blocks, civic and religious buildings, mills and dwellings—are constructed of brick, much of which was produced locally. Granite, cast stone and concrete block round out the variety of masonry used for the walls of buildings. Brick, granite, sandstone, terra cotta and cast stone are used decoratively for window caps, name and date plates, at cornices, on panels and to lend texture and color to wall surfaces. The diverse ways masonry is employed provide interest and richness to the streetscape.

There are several important principles to be aware of with respect to old masonry. One is to be sure that the strength of the mortar is less than that of the brick. Mixtures with Portland cement can put too much stress on most 19th century brick, unlike a lime mortar, which is soft and more flexible. A second is not to clean masonry solely to improve its appearance, as inappropriate cleaning practices can cause irreversible damage to the masonry. A third is not to seal the brick. Sealers and coatings are generally unnecessary and can actually mottle the surface, thus bringing water into the wall; they also require periodic reapplication with cleaning prep of the masonry. Finally, brick walls should not be repointed unless the mortar has eroded more than 3/8 inch from the surface of the

brick, or if cracks have appeared in the mortar joints. Repointing that is not properly done can alter the appearance of a building immeasurably and accelerate future deterioration.

b) Design Standards

- 1) Character-defining architectural trim shall be retained and repaired when technically and economically feasible. If the trim is sufficiently deteriorated that replacement is warranted, the new trim shall match the original in size, scale, placement, detailing, and ideally material. If substitute material is used, it shall convey the same visual appearance as the historic trim.
- 2) Masonry shall be cleaned only when necessary to halt deterioration or remove heavy soiling.
- 3) Masonry shall not be sandblasted or abrasively cleaned, but cleaned with the gentlest method possible, such as low-pressure cleaning at garden hose pressure, using water or detergents.
- 4) Limestone and marble shall not be cleaned with an acidic cleaner, as it may dissolve the surface.
- 5) If currently unpainted, masonry other than concrete masonry shall not be painted, unless there is physical, pictorial or documentary evidence that the building was historically intended to be painted or unless a painted mural is proposed which meets all of the following conditions:
 - i. The mural will enhance or complement the historic or architectural features of the structure or site, and
 - ii. The mural will enhance or complement the historic character or context of the surrounding area, and
 - iii. The mural will showcase images of local places, people, and/or products that have historic significance to Keene and/or the surrounding region, and
 - iv. The mural will be designed by a professional mural artist or sign painter, and
 - v. The mural is not located on the primary elevation of a Primary or Contributing Resource, and
 - vi. The mural will not cover more than 40% of the surface area of a building or structure façade, and
 - vii. The applicant has demonstrated that the proposed surface treatment is appropriate for historic brick or stone masonry materials. Waterproof coatings shall be prohibited.
- 6) Repointing shall be undertaken only to address deteriorated masonry or in areas where moisture infiltration is a problem. The amount of wall area to be repointed shall be limited to the affected area. The new mortar joints shall match the original as closely as possible in terms of profile, width, and mortar composition. The new mortar shall match the color of the mortar used when the building was built; or it shall match aged or weathered mortar color, whichever is more appropriate. The color of all mortar shall come from the aggregate and not the binder. Upon completion of the repointing, all remaining mortar and residual film shall be cleaned from the façade of the building.
- 7) Brick walls that require repair with replacement brick shall be repaired with bricks that match the original as closely as possible in terms of size, color and texture.

c) Design Guidelines

- 1) The most effective way to keep water out of a masonry building is to ensure that rainwater runoff from the roof is adequately directed away from the walls and base of the building and that the mortar joints are sound. Waterproof and water-repellent coatings are unnecessary when the real causes of water penetration have been addressed; in fact, coatings can create problems of their own. They weather differentially, depending on wind and light conditions, to create a mottled appearance that is aesthetically displeasing, but, more importantly, affects how the water travels down—and gets into—the wall. Furthermore, these coatings break down after 6-10 years and necessitate another coat; proper reapplication requires prior cleaning of the masonry, which can cause yet further damage.

d) Projects that do not require COA

- 1) Painting previously painted masonry surfaces, unless the paint job involves repainting or covering a painted advertisement, sign or artwork.
- 2) Painting unpainted concrete surfaces.

3. Wood (siding and architectural trim)

a) Background

Some of the buildings in downtown Keene, particularly those that were built as residences, are sided with wood clapboards. Most of the district's wood-clad buildings exhibit a variety of wood trim, such as decorative shingles, brackets, cornices, frieze boards, corner boards, entrance surrounds, and window and door casings to name the most common. The wood siding and trim add texture and visual interest to the building and the streetscape, as well as express the architectural origins and styles distinctive to that building. When trim is removed, the result is often an anonymous box whose proportions overwhelm its surroundings.

As a building material, wood has been used in Keene for over 250 years with a proven long life expectancy that is rarely matched by new wood or synthetic materials.

b) Design Standards

- 1) Character-defining architectural trim shall be retained and repaired when technically and economically feasible. If the trim is sufficiently deteriorated that replacement is warranted, the new trim shall match the original in size, scale, placement, detailing, and ideally material. If substitute material is used, it shall convey the same visual appearance as the historic trim.
- 2) If replacing missing architectural trim, the appearance and material of the new trim shall be based on physical, documentary, or pictorial evidence.
- 3) Wood surfaces shall not be sandblasted or high-pressure washed.
- 4) Vinyl and aluminum siding are prohibited.

c) Design Guidelines

- 1) Avoid creating a false historical appearance; a building should not be made to look like something it never was.
- 2) Abrasive techniques, such as sandblasting or high-pressure washing may raise the grain and hasten the deterioration of the wood.
- 3) Applicants are encouraged to retain the historic siding on a building, since it adds so much to its historic character. In considering an application for manmade or

synthetic siding other than vinyl or aluminum, the Historic District Commission shall take into consideration the following:

- The condition and type of the existing siding;
- Whether the new siding will alter or remove any original trim or character-defining features, or affect their arrangement or proportions; and
- Whether the proportion of the new siding faithfully duplicates the historic material.

d) Projects that do not require COA

- 1) Painting wood siding or trim. (The Historic District Commission can provide direction on paint schemes appropriate to particular architectural styles or building types.)
- 2) Repairs to wood siding that do not involve a change in design, dimensions or materials
- 3) Replacing wood siding with new wood siding that matches the existing in exposure, dimensions and texture.
- 4) Repairs to trim that do not involve a change in design, dimensions or materials, or involve its removal

4. Roofs and roof structures (including chimneys, dormers, cupolas, iron cresting, flashing, gutters and downspouts)

a) Background

The roof is an important design element of many historic buildings; its shape conveys information about the period of construction, and the roofing material will often reflect locally available materials. Roof shapes, patterns and colors are also important in establishing an historic streetscape. The interplay of roof forms, materials and details helps to give the historic district its unique character. Chimneys, dormers and cupolas, all character-defining features, similarly reflect a building's history and physical appearance, as do trim elements such as cresting.

Commercial and industrial structures in downtown Keene typically have flat roofs, while religious and residential buildings usually have gable, hip, or mansard roof shapes.

Nearly all of the pitched roofs in Keene were originally covered with slate – and much slate survives, a testament to its durability and fireproof qualities. A few roofs in the district are further distinguished by the use of polychromatic slate laid in decorative patterns. Slate is the best roofing material; if properly installed, it will require little maintenance and last at least a century.

Low-pitched roofs were usually covered with metal – tin-plated steel sheets that require painting, rather than standing seam or corrugated metal. Flat roofs were historically covered with tar and gravel built up in successive layers.

b) Design Standards

- 1) The original or historic roofline shall not be altered. Raising or lowering the existing roofline shall only be allowed for the purpose of restoring the roof to its original profile.
- 2) Slate shall be retained, whenever economically feasible.

- 3) Character-defining chimneys shall not be removed, unless determined a safety hazard by the Code Inspector, and repair constitutes an economic hardship. Details of these chimneys, such as corbelling, stepped bases, terra cotta chimney pots and paneled sides, shall not be altered.
- 4) Skylights shall be installed low to the roof, have a flat surface, and dark, non-reflective frames. They shall not be installed on a highly visible roof slope. They are not allowed on mansard roofs or on any polychromatic slate roofs.
- 5) Historic dormers and cupolas on roofs shall be retained.
- 6) Iron cresting shall be retained.
- 7) Unpainted, mill-finished aluminum shall not be used for replacement flashing, gutters, or downspouts.

c) Design Guidelines

- 1) Problems on slate roofs often stem from flashing, substrates, or only a few areas of deterioration. Before slate on a visible roof slope is removed, the applicant shall obtain a written estimate from a roofing contractor highly experienced in slate work with the following information:
 - the condition of the existing slate
 - the percentage of slate that is beyond repair
 - if some of the slates are salvageable, the cost of using new slate where replacement is warranted and reusing existing slate, including relocating some from non-visible roof slopes, if necessary
 - the cost of re-roofing with substitute materials
- 2) If slate on the visible portion of the roof warrants replacement, the new material may be replacement slate; slate salvaged from a non-visible portion of the roof; synthetic slate; or asphalt shingles that are similar in color to slate
- 3) Expansion of existing dormers or adding new dormers may be approved on a case-by-case basis, provided designs are based on physical, documentary, or pictorial evidence.

d) Projects that do not require COA

- 1) Altering or replacing an existing roof covering or surface, provided that the new covering is with the same material and employs the same patterns and colors as the existing; and provided that the roof plane or profile is not altered
- 2) Replacing a flat roof that is covered with tar and gravel with a rubber membrane
- 3) Painting a metal roof

5. Windows

a) Background

Windows play more than a functional role; they are prominent visual elements of historic structures and often reflect the architectural style or period of construction. The location, size, shape, type and muntin arrangement of windows contribute significantly to a building's historic character; in the case of industrial buildings and commercial blocks, windows are frequently the primary design element. When the size of window openings is altered, the scale and proportions of the building are radically affected.

Windows in the historic district are usually double-hung, wooden sash windows with a variety of muntin arrangements that reflect the age and style of the building. Many of the brick buildings and a few of the wood-frame residences have arched window openings,

sometimes with arched sash, as well – both lend a highly distinctive element to the building and streetscape. Windows with stained or colored glass are also highly distinctive and of particular significance.

There are many reasons to retain historic window sash, unless it is beyond repair. Wood window sash typically has a long life expectancy; deteriorated sash can look worse than it really is. The sill and lower rail of the sash (the horizontal section) are most commonly affected and can usually be repaired or replaced without the need to replace the entire window. A sound wood window that is properly weatherstripped and supplemented by a high quality, tightly fitted storm window can be both cost and energy efficient and generally far easier to repair than an insulated replacement window.

Helpful points when considering window replacement have been developed by the Cambridge, MA Historical Commission and are available at <https://www.cambridgema.gov/historic/aboutchc/~media/FF5F4ACDDFB24C1A9A810EE179014735.ashx>. This information is intended to be informative only and not to replace a design standard below or a decision rendered by the Keene HDC. Useful information on repairing and weatherizing wood sash can be found in Preservation Brief #9: The Repair of Historic Wooden Windows.

b) Design Standards

- 1) Removing character-defining historic window sash shall be discouraged, unless repair is not economically feasible.
- 2) Any windows which are approved for replacement shall convey the same visual appearance in terms of overall dimensions and shape, size of glazed areas, muntin arrangement, and other design details as the historic windows. In addition, they shall have:
 - clear-paned, non-tinted glass (except to replace historic stained or other types of translucent or opaque glass); and
 - true divided lights or a permanently affixed muntin grid on the exterior of the window. In either instance, the muntin shall have a raised trapezoidal profile. Snap-in or between-glass muntin grids are not allowed.
- 3) If the historic window to be replaced is wood, the replacement window shall also be wood, or wood clad with aluminum or a material of equal quality and approved by the Historic District Commission.
- 4) If the size or location of the original window opening has been altered, owners shall be encouraged to restore those openings if replacing windows.
- 5) Introducing new window openings into the primary elevations shall generally be prohibited.
- 6) Enlarging or reducing the window rough opening to fit new stock windows shall generally be prohibited.
- 7) Exterior blinds/shutters shall be installed only if documentary evidence shows that they are historically appropriate to that building.
- 8) If replacement blinds/shutters are installed, they shall be wood and match the height and one-half the width of the window opening to replicate a traditional blind/shutter. Their design shall be appropriate to the style and period of the building.

c) Design Guidelines

- 1) Storm windows should be designed to:
 - have a meeting rail that aligns with that of the primary window;
 - have a finish color that is close to the color of the window trim or primary sash and is not unfinished aluminum; and
 - match the shape of the primary sash, including arched upper sashes. (For arched windows, an interior storm window may be the best solution.)

d) Projects that do not require COA

- 1) Installing or replacing storm windows, provided that original architectural features are not altered, removed or demolished
- 2) Repairs to windows that do not involve a change in their location, design, dimensions or materials

6. Entrances, doors and porches

a) Background

Entrances, doors and porches are both functional and prominent visual features, reflecting the architectural style or period(s) of construction of the building. The location, size, shape and type of an entrance, door or porch, as well as any architectural trim, contribute significantly to a building's historic character. Furthermore, the placement and detailing of the entrance conveys information about the historic interior function of the building.

The front entrance of a residential building is almost always the focal point of the building. It consists of the door and any associated features, such as sidelights, transom, fanlight, recesses and any surrounding enframing or trim, as well as railings and steps. In addition to a flat enframing, some entrances have a projecting doorhood, frequently supported on large, ornamental brackets. The front entrance of a non-residential building, while perhaps not as prominent, nevertheless is an important indicator of the building's history and function and often has significant architectural features.

Historic doors on both residential and non-residential buildings are almost always paneled. (Flush doors did not come into existence until the mid-1930s.) The size, type (molded, raised, recessed, glazed, solid) and arrangement of the panels speak to the architectural style and/or periods of construction of the building. All of the historic doors in the district are made of wood.

Many of the building entrances, both primary and secondary, have porches, which are also architecturally important elements of the building. Handrails, balusters, posts, brackets, fascias, ornamental trim and steps all contribute to the character of a porch.

b) Design Standards

(For commercial buildings with storefronts, see also design standards under Storefronts)

- 1) Historic doors, entrances and porches, including their associated features, shall be retained or replaced in-kind. If repair is necessary, only the deteriorated element shall be repaired, through patching, splicing, consolidating or otherwise reinforcing the deteriorated section. If replacement is necessary, the new feature shall match the original in size, design, texture, color and where possible, materials. The new feature shall maintain the same visual appearance as the historic feature.

- 2) Introducing new door openings onto the primary elevations, or enlarging or reducing door openings to fit new stock doors, is generally prohibited.
- 3) Enclosing a front porch with wood-framed screens is allowed. Screens shall be placed behind posts or balustrades, and shall be removable in the future without damaging historic elements of the porch.

c) Design Guidelines

- 1) If an entrance is no longer in use, consideration shall be given to blocking it in from the interior, so as not to alter the exterior historic appearance.
- 2) Every effort shall be made to retain granite steps.
- 3) When installing storm doors, owners are encouraged to:
 - avoid obscuring distinctive features of the primary historic door
 - paint the storm door the same color as the primary door

d) Projects that do not require COA

- 1) Repairs to entrances, doors or porches that do not involve a change in their location, design, dimensions or materials
- 2) Installing or replacing storm doors, provided that original architectural features are not altered, removed or demolished.

7. Storefronts

a) Background

Commercial buildings in downtown Keene were usually designed with a storefront at the ground level, an upper façade with regularly spaced windows, and a cornice that caps the building. Such storefronts were usually the building's most prominent feature, and the building's upper floors related to it. Shifting technological developments and stylistic fashions led to frequent storefront changes, but the overall proportions tended to remain unchanged.

Downtown Keene has examples of well-designed storefronts from a variety of eras. The typical historic storefront is characterized by large display windows that flank a center, often recessed, entrance and rest on a low masonry or concrete base. A transom may be above the windows, and above it a sign board and cornice that span the storefront. Masonry piers and/or iron columns divide the storefront into sections.

A well-designed and proportioned storefront – one that relates to the upper stories as well as to its neighbors – is critical to maintaining the character of the historic business district.

b) Design Standards

- 1) Historic features of the storefront – such as iron or masonry columns or piers, window trim, glass, lintels and cornices, sills, steps, railings and doors – shall be retained and repaired when technically and economically feasible.
- 2) If most of the historic storefront survives and the overall condition of its materials is good, any necessary replacement parts shall match the original or be of a material that conveys the same visual appearance as the historic parts.
- 3) If most or all of the historic storefront does not survive, the storefront shall either be restored to an earlier historic appearance based on physical, documentary, or

pictorial evidence; or be redesigned to conform to the size, scale, and proportions of a traditional storefront appropriate to the building.

c) Design Guidelines

- 1) Every effort shall be made to retain granite steps.

d) Projects that do not require COA

- 1) Re-glazing windows
- 2) Replacing broken windowpanes
- 3) Repairing parts of the storefront when there is no change in materials or appearance

C. Building Rehabilitation: Non-Contributing and Incompatible Resources

1. General Standards

a) Background

A Non-Contributing resource is so ranked for one of two reasons: (1) it is not yet fifty years old, and therefore does not fall within the district's Period of Significance, yet it does not detract from the overall character of the historic district; or (2) it is more than fifty years old, but has undergone significant alterations or other changes that have resulted in a loss of its architectural integrity. An Incompatible resource is also less than fifty years old, but it detracts from the overall character of the historic district due to its setback, massing, scale, height, materials and/or fenestration.

b) Design Standards

- 1) Restoration or rehabilitation of, or alterations to, a Non-contributing resource shall be based on physical, pictorial or documentary evidence and any surviving character-defining features shall be preserved.
- 2) Alterations to an Incompatible resource shall not further disrupt or detract from the established historic architectural character of the surrounding area, nor to the relationship of any existing historical resources, including site features, on the site.
- 3) Materials used for siding shall be those that are common in the district. Acceptable materials include brick, stone, terra cotta, wood, metal and cement clapboard.
- 4) Materials commonly referred to as "vinyl siding" are inappropriate contemporary materials and are therefore prohibited for use in the Historic District except when repairing existing vinyl siding.

c) Design Guidelines

- 1) Efforts to restore or rehabilitate a Non-Contributing resource that is more than fifty years old and has lost its architectural integrity is encouraged.
- 2) Changes that create a false sense of historical development such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings are discouraged.

d) Projects that do not require COA

- 1) Replacement of window sash or doors, as long as the size of the opening is not altered
- 2) Replacement of roofing material
- 3) Repairs to storefronts, siding or trim that do not involve a change in design, dimensions or materials

2. Masonry

a) Design Standards

- 1) Character-defining architectural trim shall be retained and repaired when technically and economically feasible. If the trim is sufficiently deteriorated that replacement is warranted, the new trim shall match the original in size, scale, placement, detailing, and ideally material. If substitute material is used, it shall convey the same visual appearance as the historic trim.
- 2) Masonry shall be cleaned only when necessary to halt deterioration or remove heavy soiling.
- 3) Masonry shall not be sandblasted or abrasively cleaned, but cleaned with the gentlest method possible, such as low-pressure cleaning at garden hose pressure, using water or detergents.
- 4) Limestone and marble shall not be cleaned with an acidic cleaner, as it may dissolve the surface.
- 5) If currently unpainted, masonry other than concrete masonry shall not be painted, unless there is physical, pictorial or documentary evidence that the building was historically intended to be painted or unless a painted mural is proposed which meets all of the following conditions:
 - i. The mural will enhance or complement the historic or architectural features of the structure or site, and
 - ii. The mural will enhance or complement the historic character or context of the surrounding area, and
 - iii. The mural will showcase images of local places, people, and/or products that have historic significance to Keene and/or the surrounding region, and
 - iv. The mural will be designed by a professional mural artist or sign painter, and
 - v. The mural is not located on the primary elevation of a Primary or Contributing Resource, and
 - vi. The mural will not cover more than 40% of the surface area of a building or structure façade, and
 - vii. The applicant has demonstrated that the proposed surface treatment is appropriate for historic brick or stone masonry materials. Waterproof coatings shall be prohibited.
- 6) Repointing shall be undertaken only to address deteriorated masonry or in areas where moisture infiltration is a problem. The amount of wall area to be repointed shall be limited to the affected area. The new mortar joints shall match the original as closely as possible in terms of profile, width, and mortar composition. The new mortar shall match the color of the mortar used when the building was built; or it shall match aged or weathered mortar color, whichever is more appropriate. The color of all mortar shall come from the aggregate and not the binder. Upon completion of the repointing, all remaining mortar and residual film shall be cleaned from the façade of the building.

- 7) Brick walls that require repair with replacement brick shall be repaired with bricks that match the original as closely as possible in terms of size, color and texture.

c) Design Guidelines

- 1) The most effective way to keep water out of a masonry building is to ensure that rainwater runoff from the roof is adequately directed away from the walls and base of the building and that the mortar joints are sound. Waterproof and water-repellent coatings are unnecessary when the real causes of water penetration have been addressed; in fact, coatings can create problems of their own. They weather differentially, depending on wind and light conditions, to create a mottled appearance that is aesthetically displeasing, but, more importantly, affects how the water travels down—and gets into—the wall. Furthermore, these coatings break down after 6-10 years and necessitate another coat; proper reapplication requires prior cleaning of the masonry, which can cause yet further damage.

d) Projects that do not require COA

- 1) Painting previously painted masonry surfaces, unless the paint job involves repainting or covering a painted advertisement, sign or artwork.
- 2) Painting unpainted concrete surfaces.

D. New Construction

The standards for new construction apply to any construction activity that is outside the envelope of an historic building. Thus, the standards apply to any proposed addition to a Primary or Contributing resource; to any addition or alterations to a Non-Contributing or Incompatible resource; and to any new construction that is not attached to an existing building or structure. New construction of any size or type in the historic district has the potential to dramatically affect the quality and feel of the historic district. Therefore, any new construction will be required to be compatible with the character of the neighborhood in which it is being built as well as the district as a whole.

1. Additions

a) Background

Over the years, a high percentage of the buildings and structures in the district have been enlarged through an addition, a move that is often necessary to assure their continued use. An addition has the potential to radically alter a building's historic appearance, however, and should be considered only after it has been determined that sensitive interior alterations cannot meet the need for increased space. A sensitively designed addition will preserve significant historic materials and features, maintain historic character, and make a visual distinction between the old and the new. It will also take the building's context, or immediate surroundings, into account.

b) Design Standards -- Primary and Contributing resources

(See also design standards for Streetscape & Building Site)

- 1) Additions shall not radically change, obscure, damage or destroy character-defining features.
- 2) Additions shall be designed to be compatible with, rather than imitative of the design of the historic building, so that they are clearly identified as new construction.
- 3) Additions shall be compatible in size and scale with the main building.

- 4) Additions that alter the front of the building, or that substantially increase the building's height above adjacent or nearby rooflines, shall not be allowed, unless it can be documented that the addition is historically appropriate for the building.
- 5) Whenever possible, additions shall be located at the rear or on an inconspicuous side of the building.
- 6) Additions shall take into account the historic relationships of existing buildings and site features on the site.
- 7) Materials used for siding on additions shall be compatible with existing materials on the building and shall be those that are common in the district. Acceptable materials include brick, stone, terra cotta, wood, metal and cement clapboard.
- 8) Materials commonly referred to as "vinyl siding" are inappropriate contemporary materials and are therefore prohibited for use on additions except when the addition is to a building where the predominant existing siding type is vinyl. If the proposed addition is larger than the existing building, only materials that are appropriate to the district shall be used.

c) Design Standards Non-Contributing and Incompatible resources:

- 1) Additions shall reflect the context of surrounding historic buildings or structures and not detract from the overall character of the historic district.
- 2) Materials used for siding on additions shall be compatible with existing materials on the building and shall be those that are common in the district. Acceptable materials include brick, stone, terra cotta, wood, metal and cement clapboard.
- 3) Materials commonly referred to as "vinyl siding" are inappropriate contemporary materials and are therefore prohibited for use on additions except when the addition is to a building where the predominant existing siding type is vinyl.

d) Design Guidelines

- 1) Additions should be compatible with the main building and with the surrounding area.
- 2) Additions should be designed to be visually subordinate to the main building
- 3) If it is necessary to design additions that are taller than the main building, the addition should be set back from the primary or character defining facades.

e) Projects that do not require COA

Because of the significance of additions and their impact on the character of the historic district, a COA is required for all projects involving an addition, unless the entire addition is not visible from a public right-of-way. If an addition is screened from the public right-of-way only by landscaping, it shall be considered visible.

2. Construction of new buildings or structures

a) Background

Downtown Keene contains buildings and structures from many eras and representing a wide variety of architectural styles and building types: it is this architectural, historical and cultural diversity that conveys how the downtown has evolved over a period of more than 200 years. The purpose of the design standards for new buildings and structures is to ensure that new construction respects, preserves and complements the historic architecture and character of downtown Keene, while allowing for high caliber new design and uses that will enable downtown to maintain its economic vitality and pedestrian-friendly scale.

b) Design Standards

See also design standards for Streetscape & Building Site

- 1) New buildings or structures shall be sited so that the existing pattern of the historic streetscape —setbacks, spacing, lot coverage, scale, massing, height, orientation—in which they are located is not disrupted.
- 2) The shape, scale and fenestration of new buildings or structures shall respect the established historic architectural character of the surrounding area.
- 3) New buildings or structures shall take into account the historic relationships of existing buildings and site features on the site.
- 4) Exterior cladding shall be of materials that are common in the district. Acceptable materials include brick, stone, terra cotta, wood and metal. Wood shingles, wooden clapboards, concrete clapboards and brick are also acceptable types of siding.
- 5) Materials commonly referred to as “vinyl siding” are inappropriate contemporary materials and are therefore prohibited for use on new construction in the Historic District.

c) Design Guidelines

- 1) New construction that both honors and differentiates itself from the historic buildings of Keene's Historic District shall be encouraged.
- 2) New construction that replaces an Incompatible Resource shall be encouraged.

d) Projects that do not require COA

Because of the significance of new building construction and its impact on the character of the historic district, a COA is required for every new construction project that exceeds sixty square feet, unless no part of it is visible from a public right-of-way. If the new construction is screened from the public right-of-way only by landscaping, it shall be considered visible.

E. Demolition

a) Background

The desire to preserve Keene’s distinctive architecture must be carefully balanced with the desire to maintain the vibrancy and diversity the downtown. By enacting this historic district, the city declared that its historic buildings, structures and sites reflect the city’s distinctive heritage as it has evolved over a period of several centuries and thus have value and warrant protection. The city further recognized that some buildings and structures – those designated Primary or Contributing resources – play a particular role in defining the city’s heritage. Approval for demolition of these resources will be granted only under very limited circumstances.

The city also acknowledges that other buildings and structures – those designated Non-Contributing or Incompatible resources – do not contribute to the architectural or historical significance of the district in the same manner, due to a construction date that post-dates the Period of Significance; and/or to loss of historical or architectural integrity resulting from substantial alterations; and/or to a design or site that detracts from the district’s historic character. While demolition of these resources is allowed, it will be granted only in tandem with consideration of specific redevelopment plans for the site

b) Design Standards Primary and Contributing Resources

- 1) Demolition, or partial demolition, of a building and or structure categorized as a Primary or a Contributing Resource, including secondary buildings and structures located on the same property as a Primary or a Contributing Resource, shall be prohibited unless:
 - the applicant can demonstrate that retaining the resource would constitute economic hardship due to unavoidable quantifiable and verifiable expenditures or a fiscal loss that would ensue should the building not be demolished; or
 - the building or structure has been determined structurally unsound, based upon a written technical report prepared by an architect or professional engineer registered in the State of New Hampshire that clearly demonstrates that the building or structure presents a risk to public health, safety and welfare; or
 - demolition is limited to a secondary building or a free-standing structure on the same property that has not been cited on the survey form as a significant resource or character-defining feature; or
 - the Historic District Commission, by a two-thirds vote, determines that demolition is warranted due to extraordinary circumstances.
- 2) Demolition, or partial demolition, of later additions that are part of a Primary or a Contributing Resource may be allowed. Their removal will be evaluated and determined by the Historic District Commission on a case-by-case basis.
- 3) Applicant shall apply for and receive approval for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the construction of a new building or structure at the site prior to or in conjunction with the consideration of an application for demolition by the Historic District Commission. Any new construction must adhere to the Design Standards for Construction of New Buildings or Structures in these regulations and will be evaluated by the Historic District Commission against those standards.

c) Design Standards Non-Contributing or Incompatible Resources

- 1) Demolition, or partial demolition, of a building or structure categorized as a Non-Contributing or an Incompatible Resource shall be allowed, provided the following occurs:
 - Applicant shall apply for and receive approval for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the construction of a new building or structure at the site prior to or in conjunction with the consideration of an application for demolition by the Historic District Commission. Any new construction must adhere to the Design Standards for Construction of New Buildings or Structures in these regulations and will be evaluated by the Historic District Commission against those standards.

d) Projects that do not require COA

- 1) Demolition of a free-standing building or structure or of an addition that is not visible from a public right-of-way. If the area to be demolished is screened from the public right-of-way only by landscaping, it shall be considered visible.

Sec. XVI. Definitions

Alteration – any repair, reconstruction, restoration, replacement, rehabilitation, alteration, demolition, addition, or new construction proposed for the exterior of a building or its site. The work may involve changes in materials, dimensions, design, configuration, texture, color, or visual appearance.

Architectural Feature – the architectural style, design, detail or general arrangement of outer surfaces of a building or structure that, if altered or removed, would affect its appearance and character. Examples of architectural features include, but are not limited to, building materials, windows, doors, cornices, roofs, porticos, storefronts, and painted signs.

Architectural Trim – exterior elements on a building or structure, including but not limited to cornices, brackets, window lintels and sills, oriels or bay windows, balconies, grilles, grates, lamp brackets, scrapers and handrails.

Building – a roofed structure for the shelter, support or enclosure of persons, animals or moveable property. As applied to historic buildings, the term may apply to the portion of a structure that historically constituted a separate building.

Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) – written authorization from the Historic District Commission to the building owner or project applicant that allows the owner/applicant to conduct any of the regulated activities specified in these regulations.

Character-defining feature – the form, material and detail of those architectural features that are important in defining a building's historic character and whose retention will preserve that character. Character-defining features include, but are not limited to, facades, roofs, porches, windows, doors, trim, massing, shape, orientation and landscape features, such as fences, walls, posts and walkways.

Commercial area – the area within the historic district in which most of the buildings were constructed for commercial uses.

Compatible – possessing characteristics that allow for a harmonious relationship. Compatibility does not require copying or matching of attributes, and may involve the juxtaposition of dissimilar things that nevertheless create an agreeable effect.

Contributing resource – a building, structure or site within the Downtown Keene Historic District that was present during the Period of Significance and that contributes to the district's sense of time and place and historical development

Demolition – the razing, destruction, removal, or relocation, entirely or in significant part and including its facade, of a building, structure or other resource.

Economic Hardship – quantifiable and verifiable expenditures or fiscal loss that is unreasonable to bear under the circumstances. Demonstration of an economic hardship shall not be based on or include any of the following circumstances:

- Willful or negligent acts by the owner.
- Purchase of the property for substantially more than market value.
- Failure to perform normal maintenance and repairs.

- Failure to diligently solicit and retain tenants.
- Failure to provide normal tenant improvements.

Elevation – (1) a wall of a building; (2) an architectural drawing showing the vertical elements, generally exterior, of a building.

Envelope – the exterior surfaces of a building, including walls, roof, foundation and any projecting elements.

Façade – the front of a building or structure or any of its sides that faces a public right-of-way.

Fenestration – the arrangement of windows and other exterior openings on a building.

Historic building – A building or structure within the Downtown Keene Historic District that is categorized Primary or Contributing.

Incompatible resource – a building, structure or site within the Downtown Keene Historic District that has no historic or architectural integrity and whose setback, massing, scale, height, materials and/or fenestration detract from the character of the district.

Industrial area - the area within the historic district in which most of the buildings were constructed for industrial uses.

In kind replacement - replacement of a feature with new material that identically matches the original with respect to design, size, configuration, color, texture and other visual qualities.

Main block – the front, primary section of a residential building, when there is an attached ell, wing, shed or barn

Maintenance – see Repair.

Masonry – Work constructed by a mason using stone, brick, concrete block, cast stone, tile, or similar materials.

Mural – A painting or other work of art executed directly on a wall. Examples of existing murals in Keene include the “Parrish Shoes” mural on the Elliot Block building located at 1 Main Street and the “Coca-Cola” mural on the Bullard and Shedd Block building located at 37 Central Square (see images below).



Muntin – a thin bar, usually wood, used to hold panes of glass in place.

Non-Contributing Resource - a building, structure or site within the Downtown Keene Historic District that is either less than fifty (50) years old and thus was not constructed within the Period of Significance; or is fifty (50) or more years old and has lost its architectural, historical or cultural integrity due to major alterations or other changes and thus has lost the ability to contribute to the character of the historic district. A Non-Contributing resource may become a Primary or Contributing resource when it becomes 50 years old. It may also become a Primary or Contributing resource if its integrity is restored.

Period of Significance – the span of time during which the district attained its significance. For the Downtown Keene Historic District, the period of significance starts in 1785, the year the oldest extant building was constructed, and ends 50 years from present time, as events and buildings within the district continue to achieve importance. The fifty-year benchmark coincides with that recognized by the National Park Service in its preservation programs.

Primary Elevation – the front and/or street-facing walls or a building.

Primary Resource - a building, structure or site within the Downtown Keene Historic District that was present during the Period of Significance and that contributes to the district's sense of time and place and historical development in a particularly distinctive manner

Property – area of land containing a single historic resource or a group of resources.

Public Right-of-Way – any street, alley, park or other location on the ground that is open to and accessible by the public.

Reconstruction – the act of recreating a property that has been destroyed, through documentary research and the use of new materials.

Rehabilitation – the process of returning a property to a state of utility, through repair or alteration, which makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving the character-defining features that are significant to its architectural, historical and cultural values.

Relocation – the act of removing a building, structure or other resource from its existing foundation or location to another foundation or location, including on the same site. For purposes of this ordinance, applications for relocation shall be subject to the same standards as demolition.

Removal - the act of destroying or relocating a building, structure or other resource. For purposes of this ordinance, applications for removal shall be subject to the same standards as demolition.

Renovation – alterations and improvements by repair which enhances or modernizes the building with the basic character of the building preserved.

Re-pointing – repairing mortar by raking and refilling the outer face of mortar joints.

Repair – any work which will involve no change in materials, dimensions, design, configuration, color, texture or visual appearance. In terms of masonry repair, this may involve in-kind spot replacement of masonry units that are damaged or broken.

Residential area – the areas within the historic district that are characterized by residential buildings, including those that have since been converted to commercial use.

Residential building or site – A building or site originally designed and used for residential purposes, including those later converted to commercial use.

Resource – any building, structure, site or object that is part of or constitutes a historic property.

Restoration – the act or process of accurately recovering the form, features and character of a property and its setting as it appeared at a particular period of time, by means of removing features from other periods and reconstruction of missing features from the restoration period.

Safety Hardship – see structural instability.

Shall – used as a verb to indicate those actions which are specifically required to preserve and protect significant architectural elements.

Should – used as a verb to indicate a recommended course of action.

Structure – anything built or erected with a fixed location on or in the ground, or attached to something having location on or in the ground, including, but not limited, to: buildings, fences, walls, terraces, solar photovoltaic systems (ground or roof-mounted), walk ways, driveways, gazebos, etc. .

Structural Instability – the building or structure has been determined by the Code Enforcement Officer to be structurally unsound or deteriorated, such that demolition is required for public health, safety or welfare; and an architect or professional engineer registered in the State of New Hampshire has prepared a written technical report demonstrating that the building or structure presents such a risk.

Tuck pointing – Repairing mortar by removing crumbling and deteriorated mortar and inserting, or “tucking,” new mortar into the cleaned joints.


Window sash – the framework into which panes are set. For windows that open, this is the moveable portion.

CERTIFICATE OF ADOPTION

To the City Clerk of the City of Keene, New Hampshire:

Be hereby advised that the Historic District Commission of the City of Keene, New Hampshire, being duly constituted and having complied with all of the provisions and requirements of the New Hampshire Revised Statutes Annotated, Chapter 675, as in effect on this date, has adopted amendments to the Historic District Commission Regulations.

By the Historic District Commission of the City of Keene, this 3rd day of October, 2018.



Hanspeter Weber, Chair



Andrew Weglinski, Vice-Chair



Thomas Power, Councilor

Joslin Kimball Frank, Alternate



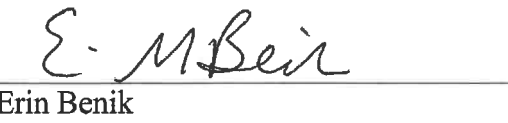
Nancy Proctor

David Bergeron, Alternate



Hans Porschitz

Paul Cooper, Alternate



Erin Benik
